COURSE CODE:

FMC312

COURSE TITLE:

FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

FMC312: FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

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Editor:

FMC312- 3 UNITS

INTRODUCTION

FMC 312 is a 3 units course that has been designed to familiarize you with the process of film analysis and criticism. As communication students, it will interest you to know that there are several dimensions to the conceptualisation and production of films. This course will enable you to understand this process for you to carry out an informed analysis and criticism.

This course guide is for learners enrolling in the National Open University of Nigeria's B.Sc. Mass Communication programme. This handbook is one of the many resources available to you to assist you in completing this course and, eventually, your programme.

You will discover a wealth of information about this course in this study guide, including the following: goals, objectives, what the course is about, what course materials you will be using, available services to support your learning, and information on assignments and exams. It also gives you suggestions on how to organize your study time, as well as the amount of time you will spend on each study unit and your tutor-marked assignments.

Before you start studying the course, please ensure that you read through this course guide. Along with your assignment, please always note your questions whenever you are studying this material. The questions will be answered during your online facilitation sessions or the physical class facilitation session if your centre organises such for your class. Submit the feedback form to your tutorial facilitator. Several of your questions will be answered during the tutorial.

If you have any more questions, do not hesitate to contact your study centre. I wish you the best with your studies as you complete this course.

COURSE AIM

This course aims to expose you to the art and science of film analysis and criticism so that you can become vast by providing you with an understanding of the process and elements of film production, the genre of film, the socio-cultural function of film and approaches to film analysis.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Broadly, when you complete this course, you should be able to comfortably analyse or critique any film using the fundamentals addressed in this course guide. Specifically, you should be able to:

- Explain the concept of film and its historical perspective;
- Discuss the different genres of films;

- Evaluate the societal relevance of film
- Discuss the concept of film analysis and criticism;
- Explicate the major steps in film analysis and criticism
- Explain the approaches to film analysis and criticism;
- Discuss the major elements of film production in film analysis and criticism.

COURSE MATERIALS

The major materials you will need for this course are the:

- This course guide
- Your assignments file
- Relevant textbooks (including the ones listed under each unit)
- Open Educational Resources (OER) that are embedded in this course guide
- Recommended films to be watched as stated in this course guide

STUDY UNITS

Module 1- Introduction to Film

Unit 1- Concept and Genre of Film

Unit 2- Film and Society

Module 2: Components of Film Analysis and Criticism

Unit 1: Concept of Film Analysis and Criticism

Unit 2: Steps in Film Analysis and Criticism

Module 3: Types and Approaches to Film Analysis and Criticism

Unit 1: Types of Film Criticism

Unit 2: Approaches to Film Analysis and Criticism

Unit 3: Cinematic Elements in Film Analysis and Criticism

Textbook and References

Audissino, E. (2017) *Film/music analysis: A film studies approach.* United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan

Bergan, R. (2011) *The film book a complete guide to the world of film*. United States of America: DK Publishing

Braudy, L. & Cohen, M. (2009) *Film theory and criticism introductory readings*. (7th Edition). New York: Oxford University Press

Lewis, J. (2014). *Essential Cinema: An introduction to film analysis*. USA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning

Petrie, D. & Boggs, J. (2012). *The art of watching films*. (8th Edition). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Piper, J. (2014) *The film appreciation book*. New York: Allworth Press

Rushton, R. & Bettinso, G. (2010) *What is film theory? An introduction to contemporary debates*. United Kingdom: McGraw-Hill Education

Ryan, M. (2012) *An introduction to criticism: Literature film culture*. United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell

Sikov, E. (n.d) *Film studies: An introduction*. New York: Columbia University Press

Villarejo, A. (2007) *Film studies the basics*. New York: Routledge

Course Summary

This course has 3 modules with a total of 7 units that address the theme of each module. Module 1 introduces you to the concept of film, film genres (types) and the relevance of film in society. You need this background information to successfully analyse any film. Module 2 treats the components of film analysis and criticism including the definitions, history, forms and steps in film analysis and criticism. In Module 3, you will learn about the major types of film analysis, the three major approaches to film analysis and the major film production elements in film analysis and criticism. These elements are largely the things that you will look out for when you are analysing any film, to understand why certain elements might have been used in a particular film and how much these might inform your views and eventual judgement on such a film.

Self-Assessments

The Self-Assessment questions have been embedded to help you in the step-by-step understanding of the content of this course materials. You are likely to see 2 or 3 self-assessment questions in each unit under the modules. Please endeavour to attempt them before you get to the end of the unit. Doing this will help you to personally assess your assimilation of what you are learning. If there are issues when answering these questions, please note them and ask your facilitator during your online facilitation session or your physical facilitation session in your centre. You may also consult some of the textbooks and reference materials compiled at the end of each unit.

Counselling

Please endeavour to utilise the counselling opportunities that you have been provided in the course of this programme when necessary. You will learn more effectively when you

take advantage of this service. Academic and personal counselling are two types of counselling available to you. Student counsellors are on hand at the study centres to assist you with any personal issues that may be interfering with your studies. Your study centre manager and tutorial facilitators can help you with academic issues like course materials, facilitation, and understanding of the grading system among other things. Make a list of your study centre's phone numbers and email addresses, as well as the phone numbers and email addresses of the various individuals that may be of assistance to you as you go through this course.

Assignment Files

Self-Assessment Exercises, Tutor-Marked Assignments; and a written examination are the three components of assessment for this course. You are required to use the knowledge gained during your study to complete the assignments. The following sections provide thorough instructions on how to complete each task:

1. **Self-Assessment Exercises:** These will be found in each unit in this course material. Each exercise should be attempted immediately after reading the section before it. The course material provides possible answers to the exercises at the end, however, you should examine the answers only after you have completed the exercises. The activities are meant to help you assess your knowledge and are not meant to be submitted.

2. **Tutor-Marked Assignment**: For this course, there will be Tutor-Marked Assignments. The assignments are meant to cover all of the topics covered in the course. Your assignments and due dates will be given to you at your study centre or through your Learning Management System (LMS) platform for the course. You must attempt all the Tutor-Marked questions. You will be graded on all of them, but the top three will be used for your continuous assessment (CA) score. Each assignment is awarded 10% of your grade, and they all add up to 30% which is the total grade for your CA. Your tutorial facilitator must get the completed assignments for formal assessment on or before the deadlines for submission. Remember that the assignments that are submitted to your tutorial facilitator for evaluation will account for 30% of your overall course grade.

3. **Final Examination**: The final exam will be a two-hour examination. Every aspect of the course will be examined. Make time to read through the units thoroughly before your exam. The final exam will account for 70% of the overall mark for the course. The exam will comprise questions that are similar to the kind of self-assessment exercises and tutor-marked assignments you have completed previously. In addition, every part of the course will be evaluated. You should review the entire course promptly before taking the exam.

Course Marking Scheme

The following table has the breakdown of the course marking scheme:

Assessments	Marks
The score for the best 3 TMAs	30%
Final Course Examination	70%
Total	**100%**

Course Overview and Schedule

I will advise you to create a schedule for studying this course material. Due to the individual schedule, I may not be able to specify an exact time, however, since there are 13 weeks in a semester, I will advise that you divide the units into twelve weeks by reviewing the theme and sub-themes for your convenience. By doing that, you will be able to complete all 7 units and also revise before your examination. Also, ensure that you complete your TMAs during this period to ensure that you meet up with the submission and attain your grade.

How to Get the Best From This Course

The Study Units take the place of the university lecturer in distance learning. You can read and work through the course materials at your own pace and at a time and place that is convenient for you. Consider it similar to reading a lecture rather than listening to a lecturer. Your Study Units provide activities for you to undertake at appropriate times, just like a lecturer could give you in-class exercises. Each Study Unit has aspects in common that are meant to help you learn. The first feature is an introduction to the unit's subject matter and how it is connected to other units and the course as a whole. Following that is a list of learning outcomes. These learning outcomes specify what you will be able to do by the end of the unit. These goals should serve as a guide for your study.

After you have finished the unit, go back and double-check that you have met all of the expected learning outcomes. Self-Assessment Exercises are included throughout each study unit, with solutions provided at the end. These exercises are intended to assist you in remembering what you have learned and self-evaluating your progress. Each Self-Assessment Exercise should be completed as you progress through the study section. The summary at the end of each unit also aids in recalling all of the major issues mentioned in the unit's main content.

Other features that have been included in the course content are Open Educational Resources (OER) which you can access online. They are in form of videos and pictures that would further aid your understanding of the course content. Please, click on the links or scan the QR Codes provided within the units to watch or view for a better understanding of the subject matter for which they have been provided.

On your LMS platforms, there are Tutor-Marked Assignments. Working on these tasks will assist you in meeting the unit's learning outcome and will prepare you for the assignments you will submit as well as the final test. A study unit, including exercises and assignments, should take you approximately two hours to complete. Take note of how long it took you to complete the first study unit and use that information to create a timetable to guide your study for the rest of your course. Endeavour to jot down significant ideas or key points that you can use later by using an electronic highlighter (for e-reading) or markers if you have printed the course material.

You can learn in a variety of ways as an open and distance student. You learn when you connect with the content in your course materials in the same manner that a student in a traditional university interacts with the lecturer. When you are directed through the course, you learn as well; yet, you are not taught the course. Instead, the course content serves as your teacher. Because you will be unable to obtain answers to any questions that may emerge as a result of your study of the subject from the material that you have, the delivery of this course is backed up by tutorial, facilitation, and counselling support services. Please take maximum advantage of these opportunities.

Facilitators/Tutors and Tutorials

Tutorial sessions are important to your understanding of this course. The tutorial sessions may be online or physical at your study centre. The school/study centre will provide necessary information that would aid your choice of tutorial. Although tutorial sessions are not compulsory at this point, they are highly recommended due to the advantages that they provide for learners. During tutorial sessions, you will have an opportunity to interact with the course facilitator and your colleagues in a collaborative active format. You will be able to ask questions or seek clarifications on what you might have read in the course material. Some of the questions asked by the facilitator may also give you insights into areas that you need to pay attention to in the course materials, particularly regarding your approach to answering your exam questions. The estimated hours for tutorials for this course is 8 hours which could be spread across 8 weeks depending on the arrangement made by the school with the facilitators and the schedule made by the facilitator.

Summary

This course guide is your companion for achieving greater success in this course. Ensure that you take your time to familiarise yourself with the content, diligently read through and complete all the exercises. By the end of the course, you would have been significantly empowered in the art of film analysis and criticism.

MODULE 1- INTRODUCTION TO FILM

Unit 1: Concept and Genres of Films
Unit 2: Film and Society

UNIT 1:   CONCEPT AND GENRES OF FILMS

1.1   Introduction
1.2   Learning Outcomes
1.3   The Concept of Films
1.4   Definitions of Films
1.5   History of Film Making
1.6   Genres of Film
1.7   Summary
1.8   References and Further Readings
1.9   Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercise

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Once again, I welcome you to this class. I am sure we all enjoy watching a well-produced film. Sometimes, when we watch these films, we make some comments in form of an analysis or criticism of the contents of the films. However, do you know about the process and other activities that go into film production? In this unit, you will learn about the definitions of film, the different genres of films and how films affect society. These are part of the background knowledge that you need to become a good film critic.

1.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Define and discuss the concept of a film
2. Narrate the origin and growth of film over the years
3. Discuss the different genres of films

1.3 THE CONCEPT OF FILM

You need to understand that the huge cost of making movies highlights the fact that filmmaking is both a business and art. A film is the result of a complicated relationship between businessmen and artists. Although the commercial and aesthetic components often create a dispute for parties in film production, you must have it in mind that film remains a distinct and potent form of art when compared to others such as painting, sculpture, music, literature, and theatre. However, the film is related to other artistic media in terms of expression. The film uses the visual arts' creative aspects of line, form, mass, volume, and texture and takes advantage of light and shadow to project.

Despite these comparisons, film is distinct from other forms of media because of its capacity to move continuously. Film transcends the static limitations of painting and sculpture in the complexity of its sensual appeal as well as its ability to communicate simultaneously on multiple levels due to the continual interaction of sight, sound, and motion. Film even outclasses theatre in terms of showing several points of view, depicting action, manipulating time, and conveying an infinite feeling of space. Unlike a stage drama, a film can give a continuous, uninterrupted flow, blurring and minimizing transitions while maintaining the story's continuity. Unlike the novel and the poem, a film communicates directly through real images and sound rather than abstract symbols like words on paper.

Furthermore, films can cover an almost limitless range of topics. Films have the potential to portray almost anything we can think of or observe. The unseen can be exposed by slowing or speeding up time. Almost like magic, scenes can become 'realities'. Films can provide us with experiences that we would not otherwise have. Film is limitless not only in terms of the subject matter but also in terms of how it approaches that material. The tone and presentation of a film can range from lyric to epic. A film's point of view can span the entire range from absolutely objective to passionately subjective. It can dive into the intellectual and philosophical, or it can focus on the superficial reality and the merely physical. A film may transport you to the distant past or the far future; it can stretch a few seconds into hours or compress a century into minutes. A film can evoke a wide range of emotions, from the most delicate, sweet, and lovely to the cruellest, violent, and unpleasant.

Therefore, when we discuss films, what do we talk about? The discussion begins with likes and dislikes, and subjective answers that reflect our experience, knowledge, and temperament about the film. The interest gets higher regarding what we say and how we say it- a discussion that often reveals if we love or hate a film that we have watched. Let me ask you a question. How do you feel when you like a film and recommend it to a friend who also enjoys it? I believe that you would smile when such a friend tells you. But what if the friend says no? Most likely, you may want to know why and thereby set up a conversation that reflects an analysis of the film. You must appreciate the fact that the subjective reactions to a film either from you or your friends are the result of rigorous creative design, with choices made about story structure, visual design, camerawork, editing, and sound to elicit specific responses.

In the modern era, film exists at the intersection of three main forces which are *creativity, industry and advanced technology* and that makes it an interesting object of study. Film analysis allows us to see how the filmmakers worked their magic on us, and how all of the film's constituent elements came together to produce that magic. Do you know why this background information is relevant to this course? Before we answer and relate to film analysis, we must provide and discuss some operational definitions of a film before we proceed.

1.4 DEFINITIONS OF FILM

Over the years, several scholars and authors have reviewed the concept of film and have given different definitions that will help you to understand more about films as you prepare to analyse or criticise any film. We will consider some of these definitions here.

According to Enwefah (2009), films are nothing but 'moving' pictures or pictures in 'motion'. They are a series of slightly different pictures (still pictures) passing before our eyes in sequential order and at a regular speed to tell a story. This movement is referred to as optical illusion.

Film, according to Oyero, Amodu, and Usaini (2015), is a term that incorporates both individual motion pictures and the field as a whole. A film, often known as a "movie" or a "motion picture," is a collection of moving images that tell a story and are displayed on a screen, generally with sound. A style of entertainment in which a tale is told using music and a series of visuals that provide the impression of continuous movement (Vocabulary.com, 2020). A film is a collection of moving images that have been recorded for projection in a cinema or on television. A film tells a story or depicts a real-life situation (Collins Online Dictionary, 2020).

Oloruntola (2009) also defined film as a record of an image through light upon a sensitive material called cellulose. Oyero *et al* (2015) further explained that the name 'film' originated from a photographic film that is also called *filmstock* which has historically been the primary medium for recording and displaying motion pictures.

In the sense that they tell a story, films are similar to books or short tales. Romantic, historical, detective, thriller, adventure, horror, and science fiction are among the genres covered by books. Films, on the other hand, can be divided into subcategories such as action, comedy, tragedy, westerns, and war films. Although the procedures used to study a film are similar to those used to examine literature, films are multidimensional. They are forms of visual media that are intended to be viewed by others. Films use a greater number of our senses to generate unique atmospheres, moods, and sentiments. Therefore, for you to conduct an informed analysis of any film, you must be able to identify the type of film, or what we refer to as film genres. Can you guess some of the genres of films that are available? Let us consider the next subheading.

1.5 HISTORY OF FILMMAKING

Before we discuss the different genres of films, I believe it will serve you a lot of good if you are reminded about the history of filmmaking. This brief review will help you to better appreciate the efforts that have gone into what we all sit down to watch as a film in our leisure time. This understanding with also help you to understand some fundamental developments while you analyse or criticise a film.

The film comes from the photographic film (also known as film stock), which has been the principal medium for recording and projecting motion images for many years. Motion pictures are derived from the Greek word *kinema*, which means "movement." Other words include motion pictures, the silver screen, photoplays, picture shows, flicks, and, of course, movies. Scripts, sets, lighting, costumes, direction, actors, audiences, storyboards, choreography, and music are all common aspects of theatre and dance, which are the ancient foundations of film. However, film is made possible due to the camera.

According to Baran (2013), the first cinema, movie, or motion picture was created in 1873 as a result of former California Governor Leland Stanford's attempt to win a bet he made with a friend that a horse in full gallop has all four feet off the ground. In 1877, he enlisted the help of famed photographer Eadweard Muybridge, who eventually devised a solution. Muybridge set up a series of still cameras along a stretch of a racetrack, each taking a photograph of a horse sprinting. Stanford won his bet as a result of this experiment, but not without leaving a mark.

Muybridge began filming various human and animal behaviours after the experiment's success and the appearance of motion created when the images were examined sequentially. He invented the *Zoopraxiscope*, a contraption that projects visuals (slides) onto a remote surface. The impact of this invention on the public was immediate. People saw the graphics as if they were moving when they watched the swiftly projected sequential slides. The persistence of vision is a physiological phenomenon in which the images our eyes receive are kept in the brain for roughly 1/24 of a second. As a result, when photographic frames are shifted at a rate of 24 frames per second, viewers perceive them to be moving.

The relationship with inventor Thomas Edison in 1888 gave Muybridge's finding a greater scientific and economic dimension. A superior projector dubbed *Vitascope* (Onabanjo and Isiekwenagbu, 2009) was designed in collaboration with William Dickson, setting in motion concepts and inventions for improved filming. Dickson created a motion picture camera that took 40 photos per second by combining Hannibal Goodwin's *celluloid* roll film with George Eastman's simple Kodak camera. He eventually began filming all forms of theatrical performances with his *kinetograph*. It should be mentioned, however, that without *photography*, film or filming would not have been conceivable (Baran, 2013). Edison and the Lumiere brothers from France eventually started commercial motion picture display, which is essentially a portrayal of everyday life.

Later, the narration was added by George Melies, montage was added by Edwin S. Porter, and full-length feature films were made by D.W. Griffith. Following that, at the turn of the twentieth century, cinema became a major business, dominated by big studios and other forces. It is interesting to note that in today's digital, convergent media world, the three-component systems of the movie industry, namely production, distribution, and exhibition, are undergoing a major transformation. Movie creation is rapidly incorporating technology to generate more realistic effects and films; the distribution includes distributing films to television and cable networks, DVD manufacturers, Internet streaming and downloading services, and individual viewers. In terms of presentation, movies are increasingly being exhibited in cinemas, with the use of digital technologies. Convergence is effectively transforming the film business, with significant potential to change the sector's structure and economics, particularly as new distribution formats boosted by the Internet and related mobile technologies continue to advance (Baran 2013; Adamu, 2013).

1.6 GENRE OF FILMS

To start with, you must know that 'genre' is a word that was derived from the French language which means a style or category of art, music, or literature. In film studies, film genres are classifications that categorize films based on their narrative themes. The types of stories told by each genre are distinct. Over time, genres have evolved and changed, resulting in various subgenres that further define filmmaking approaches. However, when a film is categorized as a Western, a musical, or a comedy, viewers have preconceptions about what to expect. Films within each genre may differ in many ways, but they will all follow similar, recognized patterns in terms of theme, time, setting, plot, symbolism, and characters. Scriptwriters and filmmakers can use genres to organize, cast, and structure their stories inside a manageable, well-defined framework (to speak a common 'language'). Genres also provide studios with an easily marketable product, as well as pleasing, expected, and predictable choices for audiences.

Again, some experts believe that the genre of a film is usually a reflection of the perspective of the writer, the producer or the director. Normally, all films belong to a genre but over time, it has been noted that some films may be referred to as crossbreeds or hybrids because they address various themes across the different genres. When you are aware of the genre of film that you wish to analyse, then you can anticipate and make the necessary research before you start. Now, let us consider in detail some of these genres.

i. Action Films

Action films are fast-paced and feature lots of action, such as fight sequences, chase scenes, and slow-motion shots. Superheroes, martial arts, and spectacular stunts are all possibilities. These elevated flicks are more concerned with the story's execution than with the plot itself. The style is associated with non-stop action—dramatic chases, shoot-outs, and explosions—often centred around a male hero struggling against terrible odds. Action films offer pure escapism and entertainment to the audience and are regularly big box-office hits. Action films are supposed to be entertaining to watch and keep the audience on the edge of their seats. Action movies include cop movies,

disaster flicks, and certain spy films. Some of the main sub-genres include War and Military Action; Spy and Espionage Action; Martial Arts Action; Western Shoot 'Em Up Action; and Action Hybrid Genres.

Some of us may be familiar with films by Arnold Schwarzenegger, popularly known as 'Commando'- the title of one of his action films. He also starred in films like *Terminator* 1 and 2 and *Predator*. In Nigeria, *Hostages*, a film by Tade Ogidan (1998), and *Rattle Snake- The Armadas* a 2020 Nigerian action film produced by Charles Okpaleke and directed by Ramsey Nouah. Figures 1 and 2 below show the poster of *Terminator* and *Rattle Snake*

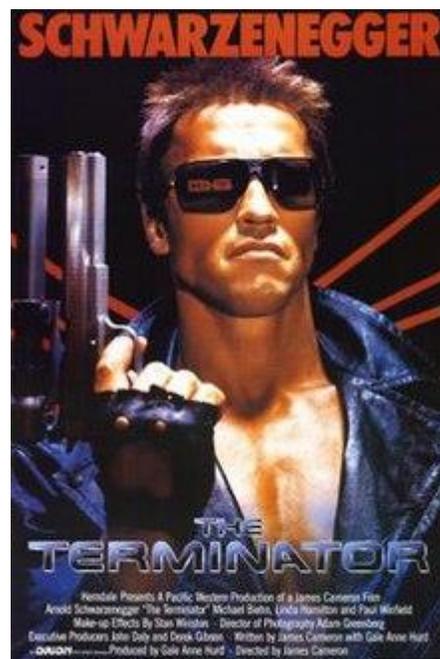Figure 1   Figure 2
Source: Wikipedia, 2022

As you can notice in the posters, there are elements of combat, fierce outlook, and showmanship with someone at the centre of the conflict. These are regular features of an action film.

ii.   **Adventure Films**

Because the adventure and action genres are so similar, adventure films are frequently classed as action/adventure films. Adventure films typically have the same core genre characteristics as action films, with the setting serving as the primary differentiator. Adventure films are frequently set in a faraway, exotic, or unusual location. Traditional martial combat or pirate films, serialized films, and historical spectacles (similar to the epics film genre), searches or expeditions

for lost continents, "jungle" and "desert" epics, treasure hunts, disaster films, or explorations for the unknown are also examples of the adventure genre. A typical example of an adventure film is *Lord of the Rings* directed by Peter Jackson, based on the novel written by J. R. R. Tolkien and *Igodo: The Land of the Living Dead, a* Nigerian movie produced by Don Pedro Obaseki and directed by Andy Amenechi in 1999. You can scan the QR codes below to watch Igodo and the thriller of *Lords of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* (2001).
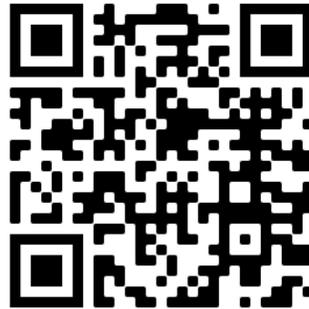
QR Code_Igodo   QR Code_Lord of the Rings

iii.   **Comedy Films**

Have you ever watched a film that made you shed joyous tears while laughing and probably roll on the floor? If you have, then may have likely watched a comedy film. One of the oldest theatrical genres is comedy. It was better adapted to silent films than tragedy, as it was derived from the commedia dell'arte (improvised comedy from 16th-century Italy) and the burlesque, circus, and vaudeville traditions. Comedies are lighthearted stories that exaggerate the scenario, the language, the action, the relationships, and the characters to entertain and induce laughter (with one-liners, jokes, and so on). This section discusses slapstick, screwball, spoofs and parodies, romantic comedies, black comedy (dark satirical comedy), and other types of comedy throughout cinematic history. Good comedies are more about telling a globally relatable, true-to-life story with complicated characters who learn an essential lesson than they are about making nonstop jokes. The comedy genre has also shown to be one of the most adaptable, with its roots infiltrating the very fabric of film and its many subgenres. The art of warming a viewer's heart and bringing a smile to their face will never go out of style. Films such as *Big Momma's House 1 and 2* and *Home Alone* are samples of comedies. A good example of such films produced in Nigeria are *Aki and Paw Paw; The Return of Jenifa; Osuofia in London* etc.

A scene from *Aki and Paw Paw*. *Source: YouTube*

iv. **Drama**

You can easily conclude that the dram genre is your regular film. Drama is characterized by stories with high risks and multiple conflicts. They are plot-driven, and every character and scene must advance the plot. Dramas have a **well-defined narrative story structure and depict real-life or severe circumstances with emotionally charged individuals**. **Usually, they are not focused on special effects, comedy, or action.** Dramatic films are probably the largest film genre, with many subsets. Historical drama, romantic drama, teen drama, medical drama, docudrama, and film noir are examples of drama sub-genres. A good example of a drama movie is *Half of a Yellow Sun* a 2013 Anglo-Nigerian drama film directed by Biyi Bandele and based on the novel of the same name by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. The film is historical fiction that follows two sisters who are caught up in the outbreak of the Nigerian Civil War. Another example of a drama movie is *Titanic* a 1997 American epic romance and disaster film directed, written, produced, and co-edited by James Cameron. Incorporating both historical and fictionalized aspects, it is based on accounts of the sinking of the RMS Titanic.

A scene from *Half of a Yellow Sun*. *Source: Variety*

v.   Epic

Most times, epical films are those set in history. Costume dramas, historical dramas, war films, medieval thrillers, or 'period pictures' are all examples of epics, which often cover a lengthy period and are set against a broad, panoramic backdrop. Epics typically have characteristics in common with the genre of elaborate adventure films. Epics take a historical or imagined event, a mythic, legendary, or heroic figure, and add elegance, spectacle, dramatic perspective, high production values, and a panoramic musical score, as well as an exotic location or time, expensive clothes, and a sweeping musical score. Epics are usually a more elaborate, spectacular form of a biographical film. Epic movies typically feature vast panoramas, with hundreds of extras, and are likely to be historical or Biblical stories containing spectacular scenes. Films that fall under this category include *Gladiators* and *Troy*. One of the films in that category produced in Nigeria is *Sango: The Legendary African King* (1997) written by Wale Ogunyemi and produced and directed by Obafemi Lasode. The film depicts the life and reign of the legendary fifteenth-century African king Sango, who ruled as the Alaafin of Oyo and became an important deity of the Yoruba people.

A scene from *Sango: The Legendary African King*. *Source: Twitter*

vi.   Horror Films

When you watch a film and you cannot sleep at night, you might have watched a horror film. If for some reason you kept having nightmares when you sleep after watching a film, you might have watched a horror film or a film that has a significant level of fear element. Horror movies tap into our deepest fears and anxieties, and what is suggested is often more frightening than what is revealed. The German expressionist films of the 1920s, influenced by the English Gothic novel, were among the first examples of the genre. People are left with an overpowering sense of terror and fear after seeing horror films. Serial killers or monsters are frequently featured as persistent, evil adversaries in horror films, to play on viewers' anxieties or imaginations. Horror movie lovers seek out these films expressly for the adrenaline rush provided by ghosts, gore, monsters, and jump scares. Ghost stories, gothic horror films, science fiction horror films, supernatural films, dark fantasy films, psychological horror films, and slasher films are all horror sub-genres. Examples of these films include *Wrong Turn* (2011) written and directed by Declan O'Brien and *Dawn of the Dead* a 2004 American action horror film directed by Zack Snyder. *Nneka the Pretty Serpent*, a two-part 1994 Nigerian horror drama film directed and written by Zeb Ejiro

and *Diamond Ring* (1998) directed by Tade Ogidan are examples of horror films made in Nigeria.

A scene from **Land of the Dead**. *Source: Tugamedia.com*

vii.   Musical/Dance Films

Sometimes when you watch a film, you will observe that over 80% of the film has musical performances. Dialogue may be going on between two persons, and the next thing you will hear would be a musical sound from the background. When you notice this, you might be watching a musical film. To advance the tale or further develop the characters, musical films use songs or musical numbers in the narrative. The movie musical, which began with the invention of sound, had its roots in vaudeville (a light often comic theatrical piece frequently combining pantomime, dialogue, dancing, and song) and opera. Musical films provided audiences with an accessible and instant escape from life, with their creative blending of fantasy and reality.

Musicals are frequently associated with romance films, but they are not restricted to that genre. Musical films feature large-scale stage productions that incorporate major plot or character elements into the sequences. Musical/dance films are films that feature full-scale scores or song and dance routines in a substantial way (typically with a musical or dance performance interwoven into the film story), or films that have a mix of music, dance, song, or choreography. Musical comedies and concert films are two popular subgenres of musical films. Hollywood and Bollywood often produce films in this genre. Examples of musical films include *Step Sisters* a 2018 dance comedy film directed by Charles Stone III; *Lakshmi* a 2018 Indian Tamil-language musical dance film written and directed by A. L. Vijay; *High School Musical 3: Senior Year* a 2008 American

musical film written by Peter Barsocchini and directed by Kenny Ortega; and *The Campus Queen*, a 2004 Nollywood musical written by Akinwunmi Ishola and directed by Tunde Kelani and produced Mainframe Films and Television Productions.

A scene from **The Campus Queen** featuring Sound Sultan and Faze. *Source: Tunde Kelani TV/YouTube.*

viii. Science-Fiction (Sci-Fi) and Fantasy Films

The influence of scientific discoveries and projections has influenced film production across the world. When growing up, you might have watched some of those films that would take you into space and made you think that life in space presents some fantasies that you should desire. Those are some of the features of science fiction and fantasy films.

In science fiction and fantasy films, imaginary worlds and scenarios are constructed, most times by special effects, to make the unlikely likely. Sci-Fi movies are frequently quasi-scientific, visionary, and imaginative, with heroes, aliens, faraway planets, impossible quests, absurd locations, fascinating places, enormous dark and sinister villains, futuristic technology, unknown and unknowable powers, and incredible monsters ('things or creatures from space'), either made by furious scientists or created by a nuclear disaster. They are occasionally a spin-off of more metaphysical action movies (or superhero films), or they are similar to action/adventure films. Science fiction frequently conveys the potential for technology to harm humanity and frequently crosses over into

horror films, especially when technology or extraterrestrial life forms become hostile. The science fiction genre creates universes and alternate realities that are full of imagined things that do not exist in reality. Science fiction covers a wide range of topics, including time travel, space travel, future settings, and the implications of technical and scientific advancements. For the viewers to accept the tale and universe, sci-fi films often entail rigorous world-building with significant attention to detail. There are many other types of science fiction: apocalyptic or dystopic, space opera, futuristic noirs, speculative fiction, and so on. Examples of Sci-Fi films include *The Matrix Resurrections*, a 2021 American science fiction action film produced, co-written, and directed by Lana Wachowski; *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*, a 2019 American epic space opera film produced, co-written, and directed by J. J. Abrams; and *Ratnik*, a 2020 Nigerian apocalyptic science fiction dystopian-action film written, directed and produced by Dimeji Ajibola. It is the first of its genre in Nollywood Entertainment. You may click on this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zd-IGM8IrNI to watch the thriller of *Ratnik*.

A scene from **Ratnik**. *Source: YouTube*

ix. **Romance/Love Films**

Love stories are the focus of romance films. They follow two protagonists as they explore many aspects of love such as relationships, sacrifice, marriage, obsession, and destruction. Illness, betrayal, tragedy, or other challenges for the love characters to overcome are sometimes featured in romance films. Popular romance subgenres include romantic comedies, gothic romance, and romantic

action. The romance genre, like the action and comedy genres, has become a fundamental factor in almost every other film genre. It is difficult to see a film now without a romance theme in it. Even though early cinema was known for classic romance plots as well as several mixes of styles, the romance genre has evolved. Examples of romance films include *Fifty Shades of Grey,* a 2015 American erotic romantic drama film directed by Sam Taylor-Johnson; *365 Days* a 2020 Polish erotic thriller film directed by Barbara Białowąs and Tomasz Mandes; *When Love Happens* a 2014 Nigerian romantic comedy film co-produced and directed by Seyi Babatope and *Phone Swap* a 2012 Nigerian romance comedy-drama film written by Kemi Adesoye, directed and produced by Kunle Afolayan.

A scene in ***Phone Swap***. *Source: YouTube*

x. **Documentary Film**

Documentary films present you with reality. Which you may not have been able to see in a long time or even in a lifetime. Do you not feel excited when you watch those animal kingdom films that bring live into your living room what happens in the jungle? Amongst other things, that is what documentaries do.

The documentary film, often known as a non-fiction film, has a long history in cinema. The genre could be regarded as the most durable of all film types, having undergone a resurgence and being more popular since the turn of the twenty-first century. A documentary film, simply known as a documentary, aims to "capture reality, primarily for instruction, education, or the preservation of historical records." Documentary filmmaking is a discipline with a cinematic heritage with a broad scope of subjects that would attract a diverse audience of diverse

interests. Also known as 'actuality films', early documentaries lasted for about one minute or less. However, production in this genre has grown and expanded to full-length films and scope over time and covering a wider range of topics. Documentaries include nature documentary that showcases animals in the jungle and the changes or developments in the environment and life in the oceans. Aldredge (2020) identified 6 types of documentaries which are poetic documentaries, expository documentaries, observational documentaries, participatory documentaries, reflexive documentaries and performative documentaries.

A scene of Kangaroos fighting in *ONE HOUR of Amazing Animal Moments* | BBC Earth
Source: YouTube

So far, we have considered 10 genres of films. When you read additional materials, you may find some other genres that we may not have mentioned here such as animation films, war or anti-war films, propaganda films, religious films, western films, crime/gangster films etc. Some of these other kinds of films often have some characteristics that are similar to the ones that we have discussed. However, if you get familiar with the genres discussed in this material, you can easily adapt to any other genres that you may find in the course of your analysis.

> **Self-Assessment Exercise 2**:
> Attempt the following questions before you move to the next section: This will take you about 10 minutes.
> 1. List at least five genres of film that you know.
> 2. Explain the elements of at least 3 of the five genres of film that you know.

> **SAMPLE**
> As you study this unit, I am sure you may be wondering about how the exciting world of movie making and how best you can apply some of these understanding as you analyse a film. In addition to all you have read, I believe that you will gain more by watching this explanatory video titled: **Film Genres and TV Categories | Genres of Film with Examples**. Please right-click on the video title and click "Open Hyperlink" to watch the video. You may also copy the title in your Google Search Engine.

1.7 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt about the concept and definitions of a film which is a collection of moving images that tell a story and are displayed on a screen, generally with sound. You have also been exposed to some historical facts about filmmaking. You have learnt that films connect us with the past, help us to understand the present and also provide us with an insight into the future. You have also studied the components and elements of at least 10 genres of films. This background knowledge will help you as you analyse the different kinds of films that you may come across as you show your understanding of each genre.

1.8 GLOSSARY

- **Film**: also called a movie, motion picture, moving picture, or photoplay, is a work of visual art that uses moving images and sound to reproduce experiences and express ideas, tales, perceptions, feelings, beauty, or ambience shown in a cinema, on a television or other audio-visual devices like smartphones, desktops or laptops.
- **Filmmaking**: The process of producing a film from conceptualisation to scripting, to casting, to filming, to editing and finally the release of a film for the cinema or home viewing.
- **Genres**: These refer to the different kinds of films usually determined by the theme expressed by the film producer or the form of production of any particular film.

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1.10   POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

Self-Assessment Exercise 1:

1. **Describe the concept of film and why studying film can be interesting.**
   In answering this question, I expect that you will define film as a work of art that record moving images using a camera (audio-visuals) and simulated experiences that communicate ideas, perception and feelings about factual or non-factual events for viewership either in a cinema, on the television or any other electronic means. Conceptually, film connects us with the past, explains the present and also helps us to project into the future. Because of its ability to move continually, film stands out among other types of media. Due to the constant interaction of sight, sound, and motion, film overcomes the static restrictions of painting and sculpture in terms of the richness of its aesthetic appeal as well as its ability to communicate equally on several levels.

2. **Briefly trace the history of filmmaking from the age of the galloping horse to the digital era.**
   In answering this question, I expect that you will trace the origin of filmmaking to the era of the galloping horse which became a subject of betting. The word 'film' was from the Greek word *Kinema* which means *movement*. Former California Governor Leland Stanford's attempt to win a bet with a friend that a horse in full gallop has all four feet off the ground resulted in the creation of the first motion picture in 1873. He enlisted the expertise of renowned photographer Eadweard Muybridge in 1877, who eventually came up with a solution. Muybridge set up a network of still cameras along a racecourse, each photographing a horse sprinting. As a result of this experiment, Stanford won his bet. The Zoopraxiscope, created by Muybridge, is a device that projects pictures (slides) onto a distant surface. Muybridge's discovery gained scientific and economic significance thanks to his partnership with inventor Thomas Edison in 1888. Vitascope, a superior projector created in partnership with William Dickson, set in motion concepts and technologies for better filming. Celluloid and the kinetograph were developed later. Later on, George Melies added narration, Edwin S. Porter introduced montage, and D.W. Griffith produced full-length feature films. Following that, cinema became a major business around the start of the twentieth century, governed by major studios

and other factors. It is indeed worth noting that in today's digital, convergent media world, the movie industry's three-component systems, namely production, distribution, and exhibition, are still relevant.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2:

1. **List at least five genres of film that you know.**
   In answering this question, I expect that you will define a film genre as the classification of films that is determined by the theme treated in the film or the nature of the film's production. Some of the genres of film include horror, romance/love, documentary, action, epic, science-fiction, drama etc.

2. **Discuss the elements of at least 2 of the five genres of film that you know.**
   Action films: These are high pace films usually with the main protagonist that wants to either uncover a sinister plot and save society or a target of a group that wants him or her dead. It is an American-style genre that usually features gunshots, swift movements, fighting scenes, chasing scenes and other adrenaline-pumping moments that would always leave the viewers on the edge of their seats.

   Horror films: Horror films leave the audience with an overwhelming sense of anxiety and fear. In horror films, serial killers or monsters are frequently presented as persistent, wicked enemies to play on the fears or imaginations of the audience. The adrenaline rush provided by ghosts, gore, monsters, and jump scares is why horror movie fans seek them out. All horror sub-genres include ghost stories, gothic horror films, science fiction horror films, supernatural films, dark fantasy films, psychological horror films, and slasher films.

UNIT 2: FILM AND SOCIETY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

I welcome you to unit 2 of this module. In unit 1, you have learnt about the concept of film and the different genres of film. You may be wondering about the relevance of this unit to this study, however, the reason is not far-fetched. In film analysis, beyond the technical production details, part of your function as a film critic may include relating the element of your criticism to society. You may have to pass comments on the themes that the film address and how well such themes have been expressed and interpreted by the actors (characters) in the film. These themes may cut across different elements in the socio-cultural, socio-economic or socio-political issues in society. Therefore, an understanding of the functions of film in society will help you with such appraisal. In this unit, you will learn about the socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political functions of film in society.

2.2   LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:
- Discuss the socio-cultural functions of film in society
- Explain the socio-political function of film in society
- Discuss the different classifications of films in Nigeria

2.3   THE SOCIO-CULTURAL FUNCTION OF FILM IN SOCIETY
A film can reach a large audience, inform and inspire change by engaging audiences and reflecting on society. People are united by a common sense of humanity and shared duty in a social film drama, giving it tremendous power to help inspire positive change. Here, we refer to the socialization function of film.

Films, when integrated into social marketing and change programmes, can attract people's attention, start the change process, and keep it going. Audiences that are likely to cause trouble in society have been silent, people who desire to talk about social changes have also had an opportunity to use film to project their thoughts.

Films do more than creating awareness in terms of social issues. Films have become a powerful vehicle for culture, education, leisure and propaganda. Culturally, a film serves as a reminder of history and culture, as a custodian of history and culture and as an agent for enforcing cultural values in a society.

Films with social themes entice you to immerse yourself in the plot and the lives of the characters. They get under your skin, challenge your perceptions, raise consciousness, and stay with you long after you have seen the movie to give you a deep understanding of the situation. They have the power to break down and dissolve personal barriers and preconceptions, allowing transformation to occur. After watching a film with a social theme, you may feel motivated to speak up, take action, or do something to address the issues raised or left unaddressed in the film.

Social films have been utilized to arouse and challenge audiences, encourage self-reflection about one's attitudes, promote group discussion about how an issue arose and what could have been done better, and foster deeper comprehension and a desire for more learning. Some of the changes films help to create in society could bother on correcting or eliminating some entrenched health beliefs and behaviours, domestic violence, child abuse and some cultural practices that are causing disunity or endangering the lives of people in a society.

An example of a film that is performing this role is *Dazzling Mirage* a 2014 Nigerian drama film produced by Tunde Kelani. The film features the story of a young lady suffering from the sickle-cell disease who overcomes social stigma, prejudice, and low self-esteem, to achieve success in marriage and motherhood. You can catch a glimpse of the thriller here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eR6rCwOJ1Gc

Tunde Kelani's (right) directing a scene in the movie *Dazzling Mirage*. *Source: The Nigerian Voice*

It may also interest you to know that beyond these functions, some researchers have also found films to be therapeutic both socially and physically. Experts have found that going to the movies can have a significant positive impact on mental health. Watching films can have independent and robust effects on mental wellbeing due to the experience provided by the narratives and visual stimulation to the senses in an engaging and controlled manner. Furthermore, cinema is unusual in that it is a widely accessible social art form that is enjoyed by people of all socioeconomic backgrounds. At the same time, going to the movies allows you to express your personal preferences and satisfy your need for distinction. In a nutshell, going to the movies may be a personally expressive activity, as well as enjoyable and therapeutic. Konlaan, Bygren, and Johansson discovered in a landmark study in the year 2000 that frequent moviegoers have lower mortality risks than those who never go to the movies. Those who never go to the movies have mortality rates about four times greater than those who go at least once a year. Their findings revealed that social involvement, particularly in a creative environment like movies, is critical for human survival (Shah, 2011).

Generally, film, which combines commercial and technological elements, tends to bring together multilingual and multicultural groups of people involved in pre-production, production, post-production, screenwriting, animation, cinematography, festival organization, distribution, directing, acting, and other activities. Films can break cultural, religious, and political boundaries if everyone involved devote their attention to a shared

purpose. In terms of economics, the global film market continues to grow by incorporating an increasingly diverse population of those involved (Shesha & Yusu, 2021).

2.4 THE SOCIO-POLITICAL FUNCTION OF FILM IN SOCIETY

Films can significantly influence how the populace views government, political office holders and the policies made by the government at any given time. Historically, the advent of films has a strong background in political discourse. For instance, many films produced during the World War were to sway peoples' perspectives in favour of a particular government's reason for engaging or not engaging in war. Many of these films were classified as tools of government propaganda.

Researchers have attempted to establish these socio-political functions of a film. For instance, research by Michelle C. Pautz examined the impact of two films, *Argo* and *Zero Dark Thirty*, on the audience's perceptions of government in the United State of America. The study found that after viewing the two films, many of the study participants' views changed, with most expressing greater levels of trust in government and having a more positive view of government performance.

Political situations or issues, such as suspicious dealings within a large organization, a politician's struggle for power, a community's effort to come to terms with some collective issues, etc., are often the primary subjects of films that address socio-political themes. The films frequently use their story to make a point about the failings or nobility of political institutions. When a society is experiencing difficult political situations, usually occasioned by perceived poor policies and government initiatives, filmmakers often create films that could address the issues. Such films may also address misbehaviour or obvious incompetencies of a particular politician or conspiracies among politicians and government officials that are impacting negatively on the social and economic activities of the society.

Given this, we can conclude that the socio-political function of a film includes:

1. Identifying socio-political issues that are affecting society.
2. Showcasing the influence of such acts on the socio-political well-being of the society
3. Proffering solutions by showcasing the short and long-term impact of the actions.

However, you need to know that the socio-political function of film is not only about showcasing the negative parts of the government. It may also involve honouring and exalting good governance collectively or by individuals. Sometimes, films are used to foster political awareness. For instance, during elections, films can be produced to inform and educate the people on the need for active participation and the possible effect of political violence during an electioneering process. In doing these, filmmakers may adopt

a fiction or non-fiction approach in their films so long as the message would be sufficiently passed. Some could be in the form of a satire, comedy or thriller.

An example of a film that treats socio-political themes is *Official Secrets*. The film is a 2019 British drama film based on the case of whistleblower Katharine Gun, who leaked a memo exposing an illegal spying operation by American and British intelligence services to gauge the sentiment of and potentially blackmail United Nations diplomats tasked to vote on a resolution regarding the 2003 invasion of Iraq (*Wikipedia*, 2022).

Another example is *Kòseégbé* (Immovable), a 1995 Yoruba film directed by Tunde Kelani and based on a stage play of the same name by Akinwunmi Isola. The film features a morally decent customs officer who takes over from a senior official who was fired due to corruption. He seeks to sanitize the system at his new post, but he was met with resistance from the equally corrupt junior officers. The junior officers framed him for immoral behaviour to orchestrate his dismissal; however, he was able to secure their confession and exonerate himself (*Wikipedia*, 2022). You can watch *Koseegbe* by clicking this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gp1pHqxdnyU and make your assessment.

A scene from **Koseegbe** features Kola Oyewo (Mako) the indefatigable Custom Officer and Peju Ogunmola (Silifa) the 'bait' used to lure Mako into immorality. *Source*: *Tunde Kelani TV/YouTube*

In summary, your understanding of these functions of a film will help you as you analyse any film in the following ways:

1. It will help you to adequately classify what role the film aims to play through the themes that are expressed in it.
2. It will help you to fully appreciate the direction and production of the film in line with the broad concept of the film.
3. It will help contextualise, that is to relate the themes in the film to the society, particularly the audience in the locale of the film.
4. It will also help you to pass an informed judgement on your film of interest.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1
Attempt the following questions before you move to the next section: This will take you about 10 minutes.
   1. Discuss the socio-cultural function of film in society.
   2. Explain why a film critic should understand the functions of a film in society.

2.5 FILM CLASSIFICATION IN SOCIETIES

Having learnt about the functions of film in society, I am sure that you will be able to appropriately situate the themes in any film that you may wish to analyse. However, there is one more thing that you need to understand before we delve into the nitty-gritty of film analysis and criticism. That is the regulatory or official classification of films. Why do you need to know about film classification? Knowledge of film classification will assist you with commenting on how appropriate the theme of a particular film is concerning the target audience of the film. In order words, film classification will help you to know if the film is appropriate for the audience that it aims to address. For instance, a film with a classification of 'family' should not have 'adult contents" such as sexual intercourse or excessive kissing. As a film critic, you would be able to pass judgement when such rules are violated. For this class, we will restrict our consideration of the classifications to Nigeria, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and India. The choice of these countries was based on the fact that Nigeria has some relationships with them in terms of collaboration and system of governance (democracy).

2.5.1   Film Classification in Nigeria

In Nigeria, the National Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB) is the organisation that has the responsibility of classifying films produced in Nigeria. The NFVCB was established by Act 85 of 1993 as the official regulatory agency for the film and video sector of the Nigerian economy. There are 7 classifications for films in Nigeria and below is a table showing the classifications by NFVCB (2022)

| S/N	Symbols	Descriptions

1	**General**	**The 'G' Classification** This classification rating indicates that the movie is suitable for viewing by persons of all ages**.**
2	**Parental Guidance**	**The 'PG' Classification** This rating is applicable where the themes or content of the film may not, in the opinion of the Board, be suitable for all children therefore parental guidance is advised.
3	**Not Suitable for Person Below 18**	**The "18" Classification** A film is to be classified as 18 where in the opinion of the Board, it is suitable for viewing by persons 18 years and above, because the film may contain explicit violence, frequent coarse language, horror, and simulated sex scenes. It is an offence to exhibit an "18" film to a person younger than 18**.**
4	**Restricted Exhibition**	**The "RE" Classification** A film is to be classified "RE" where in the opinion of the Board, it is not suitable for persons under 18 and it is exhibited wholly in specially licensed premises for a specialized audience. The film may contain frequent use of disturbing content.
5	**Not Suitable for Persons Under 12**	**THE "12" Classification** A film is to be classified "12" where in the opinion of the Board, the theme or content of the film, is suitable for persons 12 years and over. Also, no one younger than 12 may rent or buy a "12" rated film.

6	**Not Suitable for Persons Under 12 Except with an Adult**	**The "12A" Classification** No one younger than 12 years old may see a "12A" movie in a cinema unless accompanied by an adult. It is an offence to exhibit a "12A" film to a person younger than 12, unaccompanied by an adult.
7	**Not Suitable for Persons Under 15**	**THE "15" Classification** A film is to be classified as "15" where the film, in the opinion of the Board, is suitable only for persons, 15 years and above. No one younger than 15 may see a "15" film in a cinema or rent or buy a "15" rated video. It is an offence to exhibit a "15" film to a person younger than 15.

2.5.2 Film Classification in the United States of America

In the United States, the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) through the Classification and Rating Administration (CARA) is responsible for film ratings. The film rating system, which was established in 1968, gives parents the information they need to assess if a film is appropriate for their children. There are 5 classifications for films in the United States of America and below is a table showing the classifications:

Symbols and Descriptions	
GENERAL AUDIENCES Nothing that would offend parents for viewing by children.	**PARENTAL GUIDANCE SUGGESTED** Parents urged to give "parental guidance." May contain some material parents might not like for their young children.

PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED

PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED
PG-13
REASONS BOX. FILL IN RATING REASON HERE. REASONS BOX. FILL IN RATING REASON HERE.
Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 13
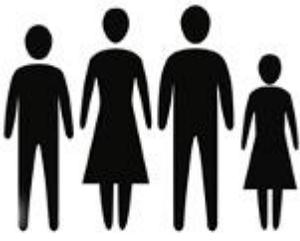
Parents are urged to be cautious. Some material may be inappropriate for pre-teenagers.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED
R
REASONS BOX. FILL IN RATING REASON HERE. REASONS BOX. FILL IN RATING REASON HERE. REASONS BOX. FILL IN REASON.
Under 17 Requires Accompanying Parent or Adult Guardian
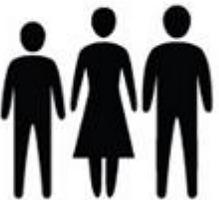
Contains some adult material. Parents are urged to learn more about the film before taking their young children with them.

NO ONE 17 AND UNDER ADMITTED

ADULTS ONLY
NC-17
REASONS BOX. FILL IN RATING REASON HERE. REASONS BOX. FILL IN RATING REASON HERE.
No One 17 and Under Admitted

Clearly adult. Children are not admitted.

Source: The Classification and Rating Administration (CARA)

2.5.3 Film Classification in the United Kingdom

The British Board of Film Classification (BBFC) was established in 1912 (formerly the British Board of Film Censors) and is responsible for film classification in the United Kingdom. BBFC's mission, in addition to evaluating films for content deemed improper, is to categorize them into several categories to give audiences a forewarning on what to expect in terms of suitability for different age groups. There are 6 classifications for films in the United Kingdom and below is a table showing the classifications:

Symbols	Names	Descriptions
	Universal	A 'U' film should be suitable for audiences aged four years and over, although it is impossible to predict what might upset any particular child. U films should be set within a positive framework and should offer reassuring counterbalances to any violence, threat or horror.
	Parental Guidance	General viewing, but some scenes may be unsuitable for young children. A PG film should not unsettle a child aged around eight or older. Unaccompanied children of any age may watch, but parents are advised to consider whether the content may upset younger or more sensitive children.
	12A	Films classified 12A and video works classified 12 contain material that is not generally suitable for children aged under 12. No one younger than 12 may see a 12A film in a cinema unless accompanied by an adult. Adults planning to take a child under 12 to view a 12A film should consider whether the film is suitable for that child.
	12	
	15	Suitable only for 15 years and over. No one younger than 15 may see a 15 film in a cinema. No one younger than 15 may rent or buy a 15-rated video work.
	18	Suitable only for adults. No one younger than 18 may see an 18 film in a cinema. No one younger than 18 may rent or buy an 18-rated video work.
	R18	To be shown only in specially licensed cinemas, or supplied only in licensed sex shops, and to adults, only The R18 category is a special and legally restricted classification primarily for explicit works of consenting sex or strong fetish material involving adults. Films may only be shown to adults in specially licensed cinemas, and video works may be supplied to adults only in licensed sex shops. R18 video works may not be supplied by mail order.

Source: British Board of Film Classification (BBFC)/Wikipedia.com

2.5.4 Film Classification in India

The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) is a statutory film-certification organization within the Indian government's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Its mission is to regulate the public screening of films under the Cinematograph Act of 1952. Films that have been shown in theatres and on television may only be publicly presented in India after being certified and edited by the board. There are 4 classifications for films in India and below is a table showing the classifications:

S/N	Symbols	Descriptions
1	**"U"** Unrestricted public exhibition	The 'U' classification indicates that a film is suitable for unrestricted public viewing and is family-friendly. Education, family, drama, romance, science fiction, action, and other universal themes may all be found in these films. These films may include some moderate violence, but they should not be excessive. It could also include some modest sexual moments (without any traces of nudity or sexual detail).
2	**"A"** Restricted to adult audiences	Films having an 'A' rating are available for public screening, but only to adults (aged 18+). These films may contain graphic violence, intense sexual scenes, harsh abusive language (but not words that ridicule or humiliate women or any social group), and even certain controversial and adult themes that are not appropriate for young audiences. Such films are frequently re-certified with V/U and V/UA for TV and video watching, although U and U/A certified films are not.
3	**"UA"** Unrestricted public exhibition subject to parental guidance for children below the age of twelve	Films with the 'U/A' certification can include mild adult themes that are not violent and can be watched by children under the age of 12 with parental supervision. Moderate to strong violence, moderate sexual scenes (traces of nudity and moderate sexual detail might be detected), terrifying sequences, or subdued abusive language are all present in these films.
4	**"S"** Restricted to specialized audiences such as doctors or scientists	'S'-rated films should not be seen by the general population. Only individuals who are affiliated with the theme treated such as engineers, doctors, scientists, etc. are allowed to view the films. Essentially, "S" rated films are for specialised viewers.

As you may have noticed, the classifications across the four countries that were reviewed have some common characteristics. They all have films that can be viewed by everyone regardless of their age ('G' or 'U' classified), films that require parental guidance ('PG' or 'UA'), and those that are strictly for adults (18+).

Self-Assessment Exercise 2:
Attempt the following questions before you move to the next section: This will take you about 10 minutes.
1. Explain why a film critic should understand the different types of film classifications in societies.
2. Discuss at least two common film classifications that are available to Nigeria and the United States.

2.6 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt about the functions of film in society. You have read about two major functions which are the socio-cultural functions and the socio-political functions. You have read about why a film critic needs to understand these roles to adequately understand the concept of a film and also contextualise his/her analysis. As part of the required background knowledge in film analysis and criticism, you have also learnt about how films are classified across societies for audience suitability and protection.

2.7 GLOSSARY

- **Film Classification:** This refers to how governments of film industry associations in societies categorise the different films produced based on the genres or themes that the films address so that the potential viewers can make informed decisions on their choice of films.
- **Film Functions**: These are some professionally ascribed roles that a film plays in a society based on the thematic direction of such a film. These functions can be socio-political or socio-cultural.

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2.9 POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

1. **Discuss the socio-cultural function of film in society.**
   In answering this question, you are expected to state that film over the years has remained a major work of art that has helped in shaping societies. The socio-cultural function of the film includes how film helps to address socialization and cultural preservation across societies while addressing social ills associated with them. Films are used to inform people about social ills and also inspire them toward change. Films have been used to create awareness about people with special health conditions and how such individuals can be supported. Films have been used to bond people across societies, particularly those in multi-cultural societies like Nigeria with a specific focus on unity among the people. Culturally, film has helped societies to keep their cultures and project the values of such cultures by reminding them of the past, curating their knowledge about the present and providing what may be the dynamics of the future of such cultures and how the people can benefit from such projections.

2. **Explain why a film critic should understand the functions of a film in society.**
   A film critic must understand the functions of film in society because such knowledge will help him or her to competently carry out the analysis. By understanding the functions of film in a society, a film critic will be able to pass judgment on how well the film producer has successfully addressed the intended theme or themes in the movie production. The critic will be able to comment on the relevance of the film to society and how the audience or the society, in general, can benefit from the subject treated in the film. The critic will also be able to apply this knowledge to make recommendations for future productions.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

1. **Explain why a film critic should understand the different types of film classifications in societies.**
   A film critic needs to understand the different classifications of films because it will help him or her in analysing how well the film fits that classification it has gotten. One of the functions of a film critic is to help is to identify when the theme treated by a particular film is inappropriate for the classification given to such film. In order words, a film critic can pass an informed judgement on whether a film has the right classification or not only when he/she understands the difference in the classifications. Such analysis will help the film producers in future film production, it will help the regulators in improving their functions while also protecting the unsuspecting audience in their choice of movies.

2. **Explain at least two common film classifications that are available to Nigeria and the United States**.

   The two classifications are General (G) and Parental Guidance (PG). The films categorized under general can be watched by anyone without an age limit. They are usually of mild themes that cut across all ages with little or no violent scenes and expressions. Films in this category usually have now sex themes or other adult-rated expressions in their scenes and are thereby suitable for children. However, the films categorized under parental guidance are not suitable for everyone. Such films may have scenes or treat themes that the parents may not want their children to view. Therefore, the parents serve as a regulator for their children.

MODULE 2: COMPONENTS OF FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

Unit 1: Concept of Film Analysis and Criticism
Unit 2: Steps in Film Analysis and Criticism

UNIT 1: CONCEPT OF FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

1.1   Introduction
1.2   Learning Outcomes
1.3   The Concept and Definitions of Film Analysis and Criticism
1.4   History of Film Analysis and Criticism
        1.4.1   The Western Experience
        1.4.2   The Nigerian Experience
1.5   Summary
1.6   Glossary
1.7   References and Further Readings
1.8   Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

1.1 INTRODUCTION

You are welcome to Module 2 of this course. After the background knowledge which you have acquired in Module 1, I am sure that you will be eager to see how you can apply that knowledge. In this unit, you will learn about the concept of film analysis and criticism, the value of film analysis and criticism and some misconceptions about it.

1.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the concept of film analysis and criticism
- Discuss the history of film analysis and criticism

1.3 THE CONCEPT AND DEFINITIONS OF FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

The study of human cultural life is known as criticism. Criticism does to cultural life what science does to physical existence. It deconstructs it, investigates it, and determines why it functions the way it does. The procedures used to create cultural artefacts such as novels, movies, music, and paintings, as well as the concepts included in such artefacts, the universe from which they emerge, and their significance in our lives, are all subject to such criticism.

You need to know that the definition and parameters of film criticism are being debated. This type of dialogue is an important aspect of critical practice since it clarifies the connections between criticism, art, and history. The Greek word *krinein*, which means to separate, decide, discern, and judge, is the basis of the words "criticism," "criterion," and "crisis". As a result, these words are associated with the concept of a decision or a decisive moment. Generally, art criticism is based on a reflection on the uniqueness of a work that complements it, rather than on a general ideal or standard. As a result, the link between criticism and judgment is more about appreciating than it is about condemning, less about evaluating (determining the value) and more about valuing (giving value). With this background, we will discuss some definitions of film analysis and criticism so that we all can have a better understanding. However, would you want to try based on this brief background and your residual knowledge reading about films?

According to Branco (2015), criticism may be defined simply as an argued appreciation of the value of a work of art, for instance, a film. Villarejo (2007) describes film analysis as "the study of film "like a language" through a taxonomy of its form and an examination of its rules". Long, Minervini and Gladd (2022) define film analysis as "the process in which film is analyzed in terms of semiotics, narrative structure, cultural context, and mise-en-scene, among other approaches". Reviewing the foregoing definitions of film analysis, you may wonder, why do you also have "film criticism"? You will do well to remember that in our introduction to this unit, we try to create a picture of what happens when we study film and this includes analysis and criticism. In the process of analysis, you may pass judgement on certain elements of the film and by that, you would be making a criticism. Now, let us examine some definitions and descriptions of film criticism.

The Research Guide (2017) published by the University of Vermont describes film criticism thus:

> Film criticism is the study, **interpretation, and evaluation of a film** and its place in cinema history. Film criticism **usually offers an interpretation of its meaning, an analysis of its structure and style, a judgement of its worth by comparison with other films**, and an estimation of its likely effect on viewers. Film theory (e.g. feminist, postmodernist, etc.) often informs the critical analysis of a film. Criticism may examine a particular film or **may look at a group of films in the same genre, or a director's or actor's body of work**. Film criticism differs from movie reviews in several ways: **it entails both analysis and judgement**; it may be published many years after a film is released; it is usually longer and more complex than a movie review.

I have decided to emphasise the bold phrases based on our earlier discussion on the concept of film analysis and criticism. From this description, you will have a good understanding of the connection between 'analysis and criticism'. Therefore, plot summaries, critiques of

performances and visual and aural aesthetics, character evaluations, and commentary on the film's political and cultural context are all examples of film criticism. Along with literary, theatrical, and art criticism, all of which accept narrative dominance, film criticism has both scholarly and popular approaches with strong traditions of aesthetic analysis.

Another scholar known as Aren Bergstrom's said film criticism is the evaluation of what a film is doing, narratively, thematically, and formally. It typically takes the form of published reviews and essays that are meant to inform readers with an interest in the art form. Furthermore, film criticism attempts to explore why films are or are not working. Therefore, generally what defines a film critic is his or her "expertise, insight and an ability to provide a judgement of a film's quality that's backed up with a cogent argument, a clear indication of the critic's position and standards for evaluation, and a style that engages the reader of whatever particular publication the criticism appears in." It is important to clarify that the film critic tries to understand why a film works, how it works, and what effects it has on people; while the film reviewer looks at a film's production values and general enjoyability. I believe that by now, your understanding of the concept of film analysis and criticism would be clearer. However, it would be interesting for you to understand how the art of film analysis and criticism became a mainstay in film studies. The next sub-heading will provide some insights.

> **Self-Assessment Exercise 1:**
> Attempt the following questions before you move to the next section: This will take you about 10 minutes.
>   **1.** Discuss briefly the concept of film analysis and criticism

1.4   HISTORY OF FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

1.4.1 The Western Experience

It is important to note that the art of criticism of works of art is as old as when man invented those different forms of art including craft, music, dramas and so on. As film grew, so did film analysis and criticism grow. Many people took interest in watching films and expressing their opinions about what they have watched. It is important to note that there are many materials on this subject, however, for our understanding of when and how film analysis and criticism became a formal trade among scholars and professionals, we would rely on the historical perspectives provided by Aren Bergstrom in 2015.

Popular film critique, like all criticism throughout history, began in print. Auguste and Louis Lumière, two French film pioneers, invented what we now call films around the turn of the twentieth century. At vaudeville shows and technology demonstrations, their short films depicting labourers leaving a workplace or workers tearing down a wall were enormous hits. Journalists from trade publications went to the shows and reported on what

they saw. These reports were, in a sense, the first film reviews. The New York Times, for example, published a brief review of a Lumière film show in Paris in 1895, and another review of a film exhibition at New York's Koster and Bial's Music Hall in 1896. These uncredited assessments were as much about general cinema technology as they were about the short films themselves.

Beyond North America, writers like Maxim Gorky, a well-known Soviet playwright, reported what they saw at the Lumière shows. Gorky reflected on the reality of the films and contemplated the medium's potential to showcase sex and violence, but he still regarded the film as a thrilling invention. None of the early film writers was passionate about the medium. They were only reporting on current entertainment trends.

Over time, it became evident that film was here to stay, and writers began to focus solely on the medium. Movie reviews began to appear in American trade publications such as The Moving Picture World, The New York Dramatic Mirror, Variety, and Views and Film Index. Frank E. Wood, America's first dedicated movie critic, published "Reviews of Late Films" on one page of The New York Dramatic Mirror in 1908. Wood was also the first critic-turned-filmmaker in the world. He worked frequently with D.W. Griffiths, the era's titan, and was credited as a writer on his racist blockbuster The Birth of a Nation in 1915. He was also a member of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, which was founded in 1927.

W. Stephen Bush, Louis Reeves Harrison, and Epes Winthrop Sargent, among other film critics, had a significant impact on the early years of film. They were not only witnessing the birth of a new artform, but they were also learning about the medium's capabilities and limitations alongside the filmmakers, who would read their trade paper reviews and respond to public opinion in their next film. However, Pevere points out that "much of what passed for film criticism in the English world was primarily brief reviews" rather than comprehensive assessments of the medium as a whole and this reflects the delay in taking the business of film criticism serious in countries like the United States of America and the United Kingdom.

Sergei Eisenstein, a Soviet film theorist and filmmaker, is a wonderful example of this mature European appreciation for the art form. Eisenstein is best known today as the director of silent masterpieces such as Strike (1925) and Battleship Potemkin. He was a strong communist and admirer of the Bolshevik regime (1925). In addition to being a director, he was also a pioneering film writer, developing a radical technique of editing known as Soviet montage. Soviet montage is a technique for advancing political ideology by utilizing the power of linear editing. Eisenstein was implying that filmmakers may control the effects of editing to subtly influence viewers' beliefs and emotions.

With the films of F.W. Murnau (Nosferatu in 1922 and Sunrise: A Song of Two Humans in 1927), silent cinema reached its artistic apex in the late 1920s, and western film criticism started growing. With their writings in newspapers like The Nation and The New Republic, critics like Otis Ferguson, James Agee, and Manny Farber helped to standardize film criticism. These critics were not academic film theorists, but they were the first to speak passionately about the film on its terms. Many other critics at the time used theatrical language to explain movies, while writers like Ferguson and Agee recognized that film required its vocabulary. Their work mostly consisted of short newspaper reviews, but they were entertaining and insightful.

In 1951, André Bazin, Jacques Doniol-Valcroze, and Joseph-Marie Lo Duca formed Cahiers du cinéma in France, which would mark the beginning of the next great movement in popular cinema criticism. The Cahiers writers would permanently change film criticism and production. Young film critics such as Claude Chabrol, Jean-Luc Godard, Jacques Rivette, and François Truffaut reinvigorated film criticism by criticizing old European arrogance and appreciating the impact of Hollywood films and directors such as Alfred Hitchcock and John Ford. These young writers not only influenced the way Hitchcock, Ford, and others' films were viewed, but they also became immensely significant filmmakers and put their critical perspectives into practice.

The French New Wave was a period of filmmaking that produced classics such as Truffaut's The 400 Blows (1959) and Godard's Breathless (1960). Other film critics were motivated to pick up a camera and follow in the footsteps of the Cahiers writers including American film critics like Peter Bogdanovich and Paul Schrader who also went into filmmaking. Truffaut, Bazin, and Alexandre Astruc of the Cahiers were also influential in creating "la politique des Auteurs"—author policy or auteur theory. The notion changed the discipline by arguing that the director of a film is its primary author and the single master of its unified artistic vision. In his 1962 essay "Notes on the Auteur Theory," American critic Andrew Sarris adopted the concept for American viewers, and since then film criticism has continued to develop. The auteur theory has since been the de facto perspective in film criticism. Instead of giving credit to the broad group of artists who worked together to create a film's creative vision, critics tended to glorify the director. The auteur idea still holds weight in today's criticism, as almost every film review will credit the director of a film. While the auteur theory's effect is obvious, it is also one of the most easily abused film theories.

Roger Ebert…Source: *Wikimedia*

As the auteur theory gained ground in film criticism, critics such as Pauline Kael of The New Yorker began to pay more attention to film critics. With her contemporary Roger Ebert, Kael was a huge personality with passionate beliefs about the film. For Ebert, his criticism was generic, easy to understand, and popular. He remained the first name that most people think of when they think of film critics. Ebert made film criticism appealing by reviewing films for the Chicago Sun-Times and later on his ABC television series, *At the Movies*. For people to comprehend his point of view, he wrote in a clear, simple, and deeply personal manner. He would avoid any jargon or reasoning that might confuse an ordinary reader or listener.

On his show which he co-hosted with Chicago Tribune critic Gene Siskel, Ebert popularized the "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" approach of film criticism, which reduced a movie's merit to a simple hand gesture, although the system was highly criticised. Ebert was the first film critic to receive the Pulitzer Prize, and he swiftly rose to prominence as the world's most popular film critic. In the classic sense, Roger Ebert was the last great film critic. Perhaps Ebert's most enduring legacy is his influence on future film critics. The modern world of criticism is populated by film critics who got into the field after reading Roger Ebert. A Nigeria film reviewer Oluyomi Ososanya in his article said Roger Ebert reviewed movies for 40 years and it was said of him that, "not only did he advise moviegoers about what to see, but also how to think about what they saw."

1.4.2 The Nigerian Experience

Film criticism in Nigeria become recognized when Nigerians started making films post-independence. According to a foremost Nigerian film critic, Shaibu Husseini, documented critique of Nigerian films started post-independence around 1972 when more Nigerian

stage actors started venturing into the production of films on celluloid. Before that period, most of the films available were Western films, Chinese Films and Indian films which were only been watched simply for entertainment. However, film producers such as Ola Balogun, Hubert Ogunde, and Francis Oladele among others created a buzz in the production of indigenous Nigerian films which critics can now analyse and criticise within the Nigerian context of folkloric films. In the 1970s through the early 1990s, film criticism and reviews were majorly published in newspapers particularly Daily Times the foremost Nigerian newspaper then. Later, The Guardian started publishing film analyses and reviews. The Sun newspaper at some point also published film reviews and criticism.

It should be noted that film analysis and criticism grew from late 1970 through to the present times with film critics like Ben Tomoloju, Jahman Anikulapo, Hyginus Ekwuazi, Steve Ayorinde, Shaibu Husseini, Ijeoma Okegbu, Oris Aigbokhaevbolo, Amara Iwuala, Isabella Akinseye, Wilfred Okichie, Muritala Sule among others.

However, film criticism as a profession is experiencing challenges in Nigeria. According to Husseini, film producers in Nigeria often protest what the film critics write about their films. In some instances, newspapers which are the media for such film reviews and critiques have had to either stop the publication or reduce the number of art pages to discourage the critics. Despite the challenges in passing their messages across through newspapers, some critics now use social media by creating blogs to communicate their messages.

Shaibu Husseini…*Source: Channel1-Fred*   Jahman Anikulapo…*Source: ArtXLagos*

1.5 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have studied the concept of film analysis and criticism by examining some definitions and perspectives. We have also been able to trace the history from the global level to Nigeria. I will encourage you to attempt the self-assessment exercises if you have not done so to test your understanding as we go ahead in this course.

1.6 GLOSSARY

- **Film analysis**: Film analysis is the process in which film is analyzed in terms of semiotics, narrative structure, cultural context, and mise-en-scene, among other approaches.
- **Film Criticism**: Film criticism is the comparison, analysis, interpretation, and/or evaluation of films.

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1.8 POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Self-Assessment Exercise

Discuss the concept of film analysis and criticism

Film analysis involves the evaluation of themes, narratives mise-en-scenes and other elements of a film. It is the interpretation of how a film becomes relevant to the society in which it has been produced. In criticism, an informed judgement is passed. Criticism as a concept has its background in the Greek word *krinein*, which means to separate, decide, discern, and judge. Therefore, what film analysts and critics do is discern how a film has been built to fulfil certain criteria beyond just entertainment.

UNIT 2: PROCEDURES AND VALUES OF FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

2.1   INTRODUCTION

In unit one, we discussed the concept of film analysis and we were able to trace the history to some extent. In this unit, you will learn about how valuable film analysis is to the film industry and society. You will also learn about the major steps you need to take to conduct a thorough analysis of a film.

2.2   LEARNING OUTCOME

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Discuss some of the values of film analysis and criticism
2. Explain some of the misconceptions about film analysis and criticism
3. Explain the procedures for conducting film analysis

2.3   VALUES OF FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

Now that you have read about the concept and some historical perspectives to film criticism and analysis, you may be wondering about why the interest in film? As earlier stated in Module 1, the film represents the life of a society. It reflects what society was, what it is and what it may be in the future. Based on this crucial role that films play in our social wellbeing, we must understand what the productions reflect; if they are well done; if they are worthy to watch and also understand the areas of improvement where they are necessary.

Regarding the value of film criticism, Matt Zoller Seitz, Editor in Chief of Roger Ebert.com and New Yorker Film Critic said it is the responsibility of film reviewers to explain to

audiences how form and content interact and how form expresses content. Film analysts who decline to write about form in any depth relinquish their responsibility and promote visual illiteracy. In essence, film critics are the mirror through which the audience sees the relevance of a film to them and society.

Analysis as a concept entails examining the whole to determine the nature, size, purpose, and connections between the components. Therefore, film analysis assumes the existence of a complete and logically ordered artistic work. With the aid of analysis, we can learn the most profound truths that only the artist in us can truly comprehend. The analytical approach is crucial to the craft of watching films because it allows us to observe and comprehend how each component works to add its vitality and dynamics as a whole.

Film analysis aids in retaining memories of experiences so that we can enjoy them in the future. Analyzing a movie allows us to interact intellectually and creatively with it, making it more completely our own. Analysis should also refine our tastes because it involves our critical judgments in the process. We may be too impressed by a bad movie at first, but after giving it some thought, we may come to dislike it. A fantastic or very good film will hold up to scrutiny; the more we learn about it, the more we will admire it.

Thus, there are several obvious advantages to film analysis. It enables us to draw accurate conclusions about the significance and worth of a movie, aids in the mental retention of a movie's experience, and generally perfects our critical judgements. The fact that analysis offers new awareness channels and understanding perspectives is its ultimate goal and biggest advantage. The assumption that we will appreciate art more fully the more knowledge we have seems logical. The love we feel for an art form will be more solid, more durable, and of greater worth if it is founded on intellectual understanding rather than just on irrational and entirely subjective reactions

Although this does not mean that analysis will make someone enjoy films, it can generate love for a film by creating an intimate and personal union between films and the audience. If we truly appreciate movies, we will realize that analysis is worthwhile because it increases our comprehension and heightens our enthusiasm. Film analysis will amplify and deepen that experience rather than negate the emotional impact of seeing the film. New levels of emotional experience will emerge as we sharpen our perception and examine the film more thoroughly (Petrie & Boggs, 2012).

Generally, generations of discerning viewers have been taught how to distinguish between good and terrible films by film critics, who have also highlighted the positive and negative aspects of films. Film critics have revived films that had been hastily written off or that had trouble finding early audiences. They praised exceptional directors while frequently highlighting the accomplishments of their team members, including the cinematographers, production designers, screenwriters, costume designers, and actors. For readers to

comprehend the aesthetic visions, storytelling sensibilities, and emotional intent inherent in films as well, film critics do provide the pathway. This history of leading the way, examining, investigating, applauding, and criticizing has been followed by many critics.

2.4   MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

Despite the values that film analysis and criticism bring to both the critics and the audience, there are some misconceptions regarding the whole process. As a student in this class or eventually when you become a professional in the business of film analysis and criticism, you may face some of these challenges. However, in any circumstance, you must ensure that you abide by the principles so that you can stand out. Let us now consider some of the misconceptions about film analysis and criticism.

I.   Film criticism guides the audience

Many comments on social media accuse film critics of trying to impose influence on audiences by advising them on what to watch. Given that film criticism, notwithstanding star ratings, is not a consumer guide, this influence is almost nonexistent. For many film critics, star ratings do not inform their analysis and judgement but they may only mention the ratings to fulfil certain editorial criteria. Therefore, what critics do is approach a piece of work analytically and provide a judgment of its qualities and defects, including what it aims to achieve. Although a few critiques do contain language that suggests a recommendation, these are typically the exception and are frequently the result of extraordinary situations.

II.   Film critics influence box office

Most times, this claim reoccurs across societies where film criticism thrives. However, what has been noted over time is that films that are analysed sometime do not make the top list at the box office. What this means is that the critics despite his critique may not influence the box office ratings due to other factors that are responsible for such ratings. The chances of this occurring may be occasional and not constant.

III.   Film critics believe that their opinions are fact

This is another misconception about film critics. The claim that critics believe their words to be the absolute truth is a typical one used to discredit the profession. This is not true because any critic will tell you that they love nothing more than sharing their ideas with others, whether it be readers or colleagues, as long as the discussion is respectful and civil. This is particularly valid if the opinions differ. Furthermore, critics' viewpoints do change continuously. Although some critics may be overbearing with their critique, it has been noted that such critics are usually amateurs who may be into film criticism as a hobby rather than a profession. In their quest to counter the so-called biases of professional critics,

these non-professionals operate smaller websites or YouTube channels to promote their so-called authentic positions on films. Large, their actions do not reflect respect for their peers.

IV. Film critics should 'always' be objective

Another frequently voiced opinion is that critics should put aside their prejudices and try to be as impartial as possible. Like all people, critics have their prejudices and experiences that form their perspectives and distinguish their voices from those of others. Although certain elements of a film such as a storyline summary, cast and crew, can fully pass the objective stage, some professionals have argued that the critic will still have to interpret from his perspective. Of course, there are some empirical factors to consider while evaluating a movie, including camera motions and angles, but those are only unprocessed data. If we were to judge a film solely on how objectively it adheres to established cinematic grammar, any movie that thinks decided to be creative and do some things differently may be viewed negatively. Therefore, film critics cannot afford to deal with only the evidenced component but to interrogate the whole process from their perspective and make submissions which might reflect some subjectivity.

V. Film critics are those who could not succeed in making their own films

Another popular misconception is that most critics are unsuccessful filmmakers who are jealous of successful directors. Aside from the fact that there would be no favourable critiques if that opinion were to be true, there are pieces of evidence that critics have historically made excellent filmmakers. Additionally, creating a film and critiquing one are extremely distinct activities that require very different learning strategies.

VI. Film critics hate films

This is a misconception that negates logic. If film critics hate films, how come they watch hundreds of films year-in, year-out to critique them. Hatred would not make them engage is such a daunting task for which they may have to sit for hours, playing back certain scenes several times to make an observation.

VII. Film critics are bribed by studios to write good reviews

As earlier noted, film critique in most instances has no major influence on the box office ratings of a film. Not too many people look out for analysis beyond the advertisements posted on a film before they go to watch it. Therefore, it may not be wise for film producers/studios to bribe film critics. Where such exist, most times, the film critic is not a professional.

> **Self-Assessment Exercise**
> Attempt the following questions before you move to the next section: This will take you about 10 minutes.

1. Discuss the value of film analysis and criticism to the Nigerian film industry.
2. Explain at least 2 misconceptions about film analysis and criticism.

2.5 MAJOR STEPS IN FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

Since you are now familiar with the values that film analysis offers to the film industry and society, you would want to ensure that when you conduct a film analysis, you do it the right way and follow the normal procedure. These steps are simple but you must not take them for granted else, you run the risk of falling victim to some of the misconceived notions about film criticism since the outcome of such non-procedural steps may be faulty. Essentially, you must understand what to do before, during and after watching a film which you intend to analyse.

2.5.1 Before Watching the Film

The first question to ask is what task have I been asked to do in this film? Your understanding of the task would to a large extent guide all the next steps you will take because you would have understood the objectives. Before starting your analysis, you should take into account the barriers to impartiality due to our preconceptions and biases as well as the specific circumstances surrounding our viewing of the film. We all respond differently and sensitively to internal and environmental factors that are out of the director's control. Although these factors have no direct impact on the film itself, they can affect how we view it. Knowing about these factors should enable us to counter them or at the very least reduce their impact. The prejudice that causes us to disregard particular film genres is among the most challenging to eradicate. For instance, you may not like epic films, however, as a film critic, if you have a job to analyse the film, such prejudice must not reflect in your analysis.

Even though it is normal to prefer some genres over others, the majority of us can find something to like or admire about practically any film. It is important to remember that not every film will match our expectations. Expecting too much from a film, regardless of whether it has garnered praise from critics, audiences, or friends, is another subjective aspect that affects film evaluation. If we particularly enjoy a book that is later made into a film, our expectations could become unreasonably high. When we have unreasonable expectations, a movie cannot possibly live up to them, and our disappointment taints what would otherwise be a great piece of art.

Others might overlook interesting films because they are unwilling to deviate from the norm. Audiences with rigid notions about what movies should be are another group with a limited perspective. Critics who establish their own standards for what constitutes a good film and disapprove of those that follow different guidelines are closely connected. Excellent films might not be appreciated because the characters are unlikeable or the action

is unrealistic. You must avoid these kinds of assumptions and attempt to be receptive to the film's goals, meanings and message.

After you have purged yourself of prejudices or preconceptions and you have selected a film to analyse, for factors may help to further provide some background. First, you may consider what reviewers have written about the film either in newspapers, magazines, on television, radio or online. The majority of reviews also touch on the crucial and attention-grabbing aspects of the film. By comparing the film to other works by the same filmmaker or production team, or to similar works by other directors, the review may aid in helping us understand the film's context. A review could dissect the film into its component pieces and assess each one's makeup, dimensions, purpose, and relationships. Despite the fact that most journalistic reviews are hurriedly drafted to meet deadlines, they nearly always contain some sort of value judgment, such as an assessment of the overall quality of the film. While this may serve as a basis for your initial thoughts, you must remember that the reviewers may have their own biases which may have influenced what they have written. Except where you are familiar and sure of a fair review, do not totally rely on the reviews.

Second, you may gather thoughts from the publicity given to the film. Our responses may be influenced by the massive amount of publicity that practically every film receives from producers, studios, and frequently, media sources that are owned by the same conglomerates that operate the studios. Interviews with actors and directors from freshly released movies are a common element on television discussion shows. The third source of information is word-of-mouth from friends who have watched the film. Numerous people can now express their ideas and engage in real-time conversation regarding recent films thanks to online chat rooms and blogs. The fourth option is to find reviews on specialized movie websites. They include themoviepenci.com, nollywoodreinvented.com, BellaNaija/Nollywood, and kemifilaninews in Nigeria. All these, including getting familiar with the film terms to be used are all part of the research that you must do. A good understanding of the film terms will help you as you take your notes when watching the film. Some of the terms are listed below:

CU: Close-up
XCU: Extreme close-up
MCU: Medium close-up
MS: Medium shot
LS: Long shot
XLS: Extreme long shot
MLS: Medium long shot
HA: High angle
LA: Low angle
SL: Screen left
SR: Screen right

CM: Camera movement
TS: Tracking shot
HH: Handheld
CR: Crane shot
Z: Zoom
LT: Long take
S/RS: Shot/reverse shot
DISS: Dissolve
FI: Fade-in
FO: Fade-out
DS: Diegetic sound
NDS: Nondiegetic sound
VO: Voice-over
OS: Off-screen

2.5.2 While Watching the Film

Having succeeded with making your decision on the film to watch, when, where and how many times you want to watch it, you have to create a schedule for yourself. If you intend to capture all the elements you may draw up a schedule that will align with the forms and approaches to film analysis that will be examined in Module 3.

You must record your observations swiftly either during or right away after the viewing, while your impressions are still fresh, as you do not want note-taking to interfere with how much you enjoy the film. You should not be concerned with how the entries might tie into an argument or thesis. Write down any ideas that come to mind. Whether it is your first time watching a film, the key is to identify significant, unusual, and transitional moments: a pivotal moment in the story, a change in the film's visual or aural aesthetic, a memorable scene, a sound or line of dialogue that appears repeatedly with slight variations, or an image. These observations will assist you in selecting the scenes that you will focus on.

The film might need to be seen more than once because further online or DVD viewings will enable you to take more detailed notes and halt the action as you write. Using acronyms for terms related to camera work, editing, and sound will enable you to take notes more quickly. As you record, you might need to make notes about minutes of action etc. You can support your analysis of the film with precise information from your notes. Additionally, they can assist you in identifying key patterns in the scene that might serve as the basis for an interpretation. The significance of such unique details such as strange shadows, and the way the image is lit, how the character looks might be thought of as a whole in your analysis.

Outstanding examples of film techniques must be noted. You will also benefit from your segmentation- that is how you classify the different elements that you are looking out for such as lighting, camera movement etc. When you have identified the main organizational structure of the film, you can pinpoint key techniques, spot trends throughout the entire movie, and suggest roles for those techniques. Some of the questions you want to answer are:

1. Do you notice the camera tracking when and where it is?
2. Do you notice when and where the camera tilts and zooms?
3. How frequently do you see eyeline match shots?
4. The eyeline match shots in this clip highlight what?

2.5.3   After Watching the Film

After watching the film, what is expected of you is to gather and organize your notes. Remember that before you started you have drawn up an outline of what you what to achieve. However, your notes may also include things that you observed that you may not have envisaged. Such may be a technique deployed by the director that looks very unique.

Although no one method works for all writers, it is always a good idea to arrange your notes before you start writing. Outlining is beneficial for many writers. An outline can be a straightforward list of concepts or a selection of noteworthy images and scenarios. Moving from generalities to specifics is facilitated by adding details or instances from your notes. When you are prepared to begin writing, you should formulate your interpretative notion into a theme and then convey that idea in a clear, short manner. Each paragraph must contribute to the development of your analysis and be logical, consistent, and have a clear understanding of what it is attempting to express.

However, you must clear your thoughts adequately before you start creating your report. Clearing your thoughts will help to reduce the possibilities of what may be regarded as excessive subjectivity in your analysis. Remember that earlier, we explain that although a film analyst is expected to be objective, our exposure, background and preferences still present some level of subjectivity in us. Therefore, you may consider some of the following questions which may guide you:

Do you have any strong preconceptions about this specific kind of film?
If yes, how did these biases influence your reactions to the film?
How much do the actors, how sexually explicit the content is, and how violent the scenes are all personally subjectively impact your evaluation of the film?

Generally, your introduction must link perfectly with the body and the conclusion must be clear for the readers to know exactly where you stand.

2.6. SUMMARY

So far, in this unit, you have learnt about the values of film analysis and criticism. You have understood that film analysis is not about condemning a film but helping the viewers appreciate and make their choice of films, helping film producers to improve on the productions and also develop the industry. You have learnt about the steps to writing your film analysis.

2.7 GLOSSARY

- **Box Office**: It is a place at a theatre or cinema where tickets are bought or reserved to watch a film. It is also used to refer to the commercial success of a film in terms of the audience size or earnings that they generate.
- **Close-up**: A shot of a person's face, or any shot that offers a detail of the subject. The variations include the medium close-up (usually face and chest) and the extreme close-up.
- **Crane shot**: An aerial or overhead shot by a camera operator on the platform of a moving crane.
- **Eyeline match**: is a film editing technique to indicate to the audience what a character is seeing.
- **Long shot:** A shot that includes the entire person and background, you can see everything in the shot even if they appear small. The dimensions can be extreme-long shots or medium-long shots.
- **Tracking shot:** A shot produced with a camera that moves smoothly alongside, behind, or ahead of the action.

2.8 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READINGS

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2.9 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. **Discuss the value of film analysis and criticism to the Nigerian film industry.**

The Nigerian film industry will benefit from film analysis and criticism because film analysis improves our ability to make accurate judgments about the significance and value of a movie, helps us remember the experience of seeing one, and all-around strengthens our critical judgments. Film analysis provides new awareness pathways and comprehension vistas. It makes sense to assume that as we gain more information, we will be able to enjoy art to its fullest. If our passion for an art form is based on intellectual understanding rather than only on irrational and completely subjective reactions, it will be more substantial, more lasting, and of more value. When film producers see these benefits as objectives, they will be encouraged to do their best to produce better films that would meet international standards.

2. **Explain at least 2 misconceptions about film analysis and criticism.**

Film analysis and criticism have evolved, although not without some challenges in the form of misconceptions around what film analysis aims to achieve. One of the misconceptions is that film critics are those who failed in their attempts at filmmaking. Whereas, it has been established that the art of film analysis and criticism is different from the process of

filmmaking. Also, the interesting part is that there are pieces of evidence to show that some film critics have produced outstanding movies across the world. Another misconception is that film critics attempt to manoeuvre the audience into watching certain films through their criticism. However, studies have shown that film analysis has little or no influence on the box office rating of films because there are other factors involved.

MODULE 3: TYPES AND APPROACHES TO FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

Unit 1: Types of Film Criticism
Unit 2: Approaches to Film Analysis and Criticism

UNIT 1: TYPES OF FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

1.1   Introduction
1.2   Learning Outcomes
1.3   Journalistic Film Analysis and Criticism
1.4   Academic Film Analysis and Criticism
1.5   Summary
1.6   Glossary
1.7   References and Further Readings
1.8   Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous module, we examined the value of film analysis to the film industry and the steps to writing a film analysis. In this unit, you will learn about the two types of film analysis and criticism. It is important to know what you are doing exactly so that you can effectively convey your message about a film.

1.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Explain the elements of journalistic film analysis
2. Discuss the concept of academic film analysis

1.3 JOURNALISTIC FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

Newspapers, general magazines, television shows, and websites are where you find journalistic film critiques. The success of a movie at the box office is frequently influenced by these reviews, which are extensively read by the general audience. Analysis can be so influential that studios frequently refuse to release films in advance for which there is a chance of poor reception. But certain movies frequently earn a lot of money while receiving nearly unanimously negative reviews from critics. The role of journalistic criticism is one of vigilance and critique of the film industry.

However, the advent of increasingly sophisticated marketing strategies by studios and the rise of the Internet has led to a fall in the position of journalistic film criticism. The overall

quality has been diluted as a result of the frequent equal weighting of reviews of junk movies, largely by non-professionals and those written by seasoned journalists. Some so-called online movie aggregators have also found ways to make a comparison between film analysis done by untrained journalists and that done by trained journalists and give a verdict. However, the place of journalistic film analysis is not gone but more effort should be made to show its relevance. An example of journalistic film analysis in Nigeria was the *Moving Run* published in *The Guardian* newspaper by Shaibu Husseini. Some well-known journalistic critics have included: James Agee (*Time, The Nation*); Vincent Canby (*The New York Times*); Roger Ebert (*Chicago Sun-Times*); Mark Kermode (*BBC, The Observer*); James Berardinelli; Philip French (*The Observer*); Pauline Kael (*The New Yorker*); Manny Farber (*The New Republic, Time, The Nation*); Peter Bradshaw (*The Guardian*); Michael Phillips (*Chicago Tribune*); Andrew Sarris (The Village Voice); Joel Siegel (Good Morning America); Jonathan Rosenbaum (Chicago Reader).

SAMPLE

I am sure that you may be wondering what a journalistic film analysis looks like. Below is a sample of a journalistic film analysis done by a reporter of *Premium Times*- a foremost and authentic online newspaper in Nigeria. Please read through and take notes for comparison when your read about academic analysis and criticism.

PREMIUM Times

June 28, 2022

Swallow

Movie Review: 'Swallow' is sweet, bitter pill for Nigerian audience

The movie is sweet because it is a reminder of the travails of the average Nigerian seeking greener pastures abroad.

By Emmanuel Onu
 October 17, 2021
 4 min read
Movie title: '**<u>Swallow</u>**'
Based on Sefi Atta's novel of the same title
Running Time: 2hours 8minutes
Directors: Kunle Afolayan
Writers: Sefi Atta and Kunle Afolayan
Producers: Netflix studios
Lead cast: Eniola Akinbo (Niyola), Ijeoma Grace Agu (as Rose), Deyemi Okanlanwon (as Sanwo), Eniola Badmus (as Mrs Durojaiye), Chioma Akpotha (as Mama Chidi), Kevin Ikeduba (as OC), Offiong Anthony Edet (as Johnny) and veteran Olusegun Remi (as Mr Salako).
Date of Release: October 1, 2021.

For greener pastures outside of Nigeria, the lead characters in Kunle Afolayan's latest movie, Swallow, are ready to risk it all-literally, everything, including their lives. The movie, which is an adaptation of the screen adaptation of Sefi Atta's third novel 'Swallow', was shot in the city of rusty roofs, Ibadan in Oyo State, and Lagos.

It follows the story of a naive bank secretary, Tolani Ajao, who, after a series of career woes, considers her roommate's offer to work as a drug mule in mid-1980s Lagos. However, Tolani faces a crisis of conscience, and as she questions her morality in a repressive military regime, she finds herself flung into a journey of self-discovery.

It is the first screenwriting credit for the Nigerian novelist, who co-wrote the screen adaptation with Afolayan. Nollywood is fast evolving from the era of predictable storylines to dynamic and thematic narrations which is an offshoot of the vast skills, knowledge, and trends in filmmaking.

Great movie adaptations are usually tasking because they go beyond just screenplay. It requires extra efforts to coherently birth the story (with its peculiarities) into a movie and create relative psychological proximity between the book and the movie. To this end, Afolayan deserves some accolades.

However, Afolayan, who is in the attitude of casting non-actors in lead roles in his movies, should, from his wealth of experience, understand that these non-actors suffer certain shortfalls. Not many of them can, in reality, provide the ingredients that spice or if you like, make a good movie. Was swallow a sweet or bitter pill for the Nigerian movie audience?

Plot

The original story, "Swallow" by Atta tells a simple and interesting narrative about the quest for survival by young women entangled by their unifying struggle to survive in a patriarchal society. The plight of these women depicted in the characters of Tolani Ajao and Rose, her obstinate friend and roommate, is relatable and this realisation is keenly detailed enough to keep the readers glued to the book.

The movie, reminiscent of Lagos in the 1980s, takes into cognizance the customs, the currency value, the vehicles in use, the discourse, and the Nigerian football games aired via radio, all depicting a typical 80s lifestyle. Set in the heart of the war against indiscipline, a hallmark of Muhammadu Buhari's 1983-1985 military government, Tolani and her roommate Rose, two proud independent women, suffer injustice in a bid to survive the bureaucratic system of the bank where they work as clerk and secretary respectively.

Aside from work, they live together in a small room, at an open compound, amongst people from various ethnic groups in Nigeria. One cannot forget the interesting characters of her neighbours like the strict and busy nurse, Mrs Durojaiye, played by Eniola Badmus and the intelligent Igbo housewife, Mama Chidi, played by Chioma Chukwuka.

Rose, fed up with the harassment from her obsolete and corrupt boss, Mr Salako, resigns from her job, while Tolani replaces her as secretary. However, Rose seeks financial assistance from her relative who owns a salon but was turned down. This opens her to the reality of life and survival. Tolani on the other hand is optimistic as she continued with her job, holding in high esteem the values her father instilled in her at a young age. Tolani unbending to the illicit advances thrown to her by her boss and the controversial rumours being peddled around the office encounters similar difficulties as Rose and is on the verge of giving up.

Turning point

However, Rose meets OC, an acclaimed 'big boy' who showers her with gifts and soon introduces her to his source of livelihood-smuggling drugs with a stable of female drug mules. Rose, decides to join OC in his illegal business, to swallow drugs and travel abroad to evacuate them in the bathroom for sales. Rose begins to practice and in no time gains mastery on how to swallow and keep the drugs in her abdomen

Rose soon introduces Tolani to the business. She agrees at first but clinging to her father's instructions and her mother's advice back at Makoku (her hometown), "Protect your reputation. Don't let life or any man take it away from you," "be content with what you have." Tolani refrains from joining Rose on the trip. This is where the plot thickens and the drama we signed up for, truly begins.

Props

The dominant languages in the movie were English, Yoruba, and pidgin English and they helped set the tone for the film. The conscious employ of indigenous languages in recent Nollywood movies like Igbo in 'Lionheart', Hausa in 'Voiceless', and Yoruba in 'Citation' and 'Swallow' is applaudable.

The producers paid extra attention to the tiny details which are hitherto overlooked in most Nollywood movies. The set designers deserve accolades for the set and props. It is definitely no mean feat shooting an 80s movie in 21st-century contemporary Nigeria and bringing into reality some 1980s relics and props which gave the movie a rich taste of history. Sweet bitter because it is not the regular movie we see where the hero or heroine always wins. Bitter because it is a tragedy, sweet because there are lessons to learn from it.

Conclusion

Singer Niyola, popularly known as Eniola Akinbo, struggled with the role. Having featured in music videos that require less action, the conscious ability to impersonate and bring the character 'Tolani' to life was majorly lacking. However, the supporting lead, Ijeoma Grace Agu, who played the role of Rose, owned the spotlight.

The lead character should shine throughout the film, but Agu's brilliant portrayal of Rose gave the much-needed 'action' that we all longed for in the film. It is safe to say Afolayan, and perhaps his cast, played too safe in the film. Clearly, the director focused too much attention on achieving a believable 80s setting but failed at delivering the much-needed punch where it was needed especially at the climax of the movie. For instance, we were expecting more action towards the end of the movie, especially in the plane scene where Rose died. We did not want to be told how she died, it would have made more sense if it was vividly portrayed.

Verdict

'Swallow' is a sweet and bitter pill for the Nigerian audience. It is a reminder of the travails of the average Nigerian seeking greener pastures abroad against all odds and bitter because it is a stark reminder of a time when things actually worked in Nigeria. It is a good movie worth watching especially as a family. It is didactic and entertaining.

Rating: 6/10

1.4 ACADEMIC FILM CRITICISM

Academic criticism also referred to as film theory or film studies, investigates film in greater depth than do journalistic film reviews. The critics attempt to investigate the reasons behind a film's success, its aesthetic or political merits, its significance, and its impact on viewers. Instead of writing for mass-market publications, their pieces are

frequently published in academic journals and books that are frequently associated with university presses, as well as occasionally in upscale periodicals.

The majority of academic film criticism frequently uses a similar structure. They typically feature story summaries to either remind the reader of the plot or to support the notion that the genre of the film is repetitive. Following this, there are frequent discussions about the sociocultural context, prominent themes and recurring patterns, and specifics regarding the film's legacy. Academic film criticism examines a variety of filmmaking, production, and distribution issues. These specialities include digitalization, lighting, sound, and camera work. It studies and evaluates a variety of factors when providing criticism, including narratives, dialogues, themes, and genres.

Academic criticism is often divided and taught as a variety of disciplines that approach criticism in various ways. These may consist of:

i.   *Formalism* is the study of how things are done and how they appear in form or shape.
ii. *Structuralism* investigates how narratives are organized, have a distinct style, and how language and art itself can convey meaning.
iii. *Historical* criticism examines a film's culture and context rather than the explicit messages that are being conveyed. The historical critic will infer significance from something that isn't expressed or demonstrated in the movie.
iv. *Psychoanalysis* dissects the unconscious feeling that one may have when seeing a particular movie.
v.   *The political and economic analysis* examines not only how politics and the economy are portrayed in the movie but also how they affect the movie's production, promotion, distribution, and purchase.

A few well-known academic film critics are Kristin Thompson, David Bordwell, Sergei Eisenstein, Jean-Luc Godard, and François Truffaut.

SAMPLE

As discussed earlier, academic film analyses are usually more in-depth and longer. They would typically analyse concepts and theoretical frameworks regarding particular film production. Also, remember that they are usually published in academic journals or scholarly publications either online or printed. Below is the abstract of one of such articles copied from a journal. You will also find the link below the abstract. Please right-click on the link and open it in a new tab. You may also simply copy the link and place it in the search bar on your web page. After reading the article, compare your notes with that of the journalistic analysis. What are the differences that you noticed? Note them for your review.

Creating Meaning through Interpretations: A Mise-En-Scene Analysis of the

Film 'The Song of Sparrows'

Jayakrishnan Sreekumar, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, India

Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies Special Issue –

September 2015

Abstract

Cinema is a mass medium and it stimulates experiences in its pursuit to put across ideas and perceptions (Acker, 1991). Filmmakers adopt different ways to transfer their thoughts and perceptions to the audience. Elements like décor, lighting, space, costumes, and acting, which can be collectively referred to as mise-en-scene, play a crucial role in creating mood and meaning to the shots (Barsam and Monahan, 2010). Specific scenes from the Iranian film 'The Song of Sparrows' are identified to discuss each of the five elements and their importance in the storyline and their possible effects on the audience are analyzed using content analysis. The paper concludes that meanings can be created through the interpretation of these five mise-en-scene elements. Close observation and analysis of these elements in the film could lead to a much-enhanced film-watching experience.

Keywords: Film, Mise-en-scene Analysis, Majid Majidi, Content Analysis

Available at: https://www.ojcmt.net/download/creating-meaning-through-interpretations-a-mise-en-scene-analysis-of-the-film-the-song-of-sparrows-5687.pdf

> **Self-Assessment Exercise**
> Attempt the following questions before you move to the next section: This will take you about 5 minutes.
>   1. Explain the difference between journalistic film analysis and academic film analysis.

1.5 SUMMARY

This unit provides you with an opportunity to know the two major types of film analysis and criticism. Simply, journalistic analysis is written by professional journalists who have taken interest in film reviews and analysis whereas, academic analysis and criticism are those written by scholars who look at films deeper and from theoretical perspectives.

1.6 GLOSSARY

- **Film theories**: They are theories about the nature of motion pictures and how they affect viewers' emotions and minds.
- **Plot duration**: The period encompassing only those story events that are selected for the plot.
- **Plot order**: The sequence of events adopted in the telling of a story.

- **Plot**: Story events presented on screen.

1.7 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READINGS

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1.8 POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain the difference between journalistic film analysis and academic film analysis.

The major difference between journalistic film criticism and academic film criticism is that the scholars (academics) frequently relate their criticism with a theory that may influence the production whereas the journalists simply conclude by comparing the film with others and examining the narratives. In order words, journalistic criticism is written by trained journalists and appears regularly in newspapers, magazines and other popular mass-media outlets while academic criticism is written by film scholars who are informed by film theory and are published in academic journals and other relevant scholarly publications. However, it should be noted that neither style of film criticism has a higher intrinsic value than the other. Both require expertise and dedication to write. Despite taking different routes, each approach ends up at the same point which is explaining to the potential audience why a film might or might not be important.

UNIT 2: APPROACHES TO FILM ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In film analysis, you must understand precisely what you want to analyse in the film. Four such analyses are referred to as formal film analyses. Although further studies may show a few others or present these four using a different approach as you will learn here, what is important for you is to understand the basic elements of the analysis. We will keep our learning to the following four which are the semiotic analysis, the narrative analysis, the mise-en-scene analysis and the cultural and historical analysis.

2.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Explain the concept of semiotics analysis in film
2. Recognise and discuss the narrative structure of a film
3. Analyse the components and design elements of mise-en-scene in film
4. Discuss cultural and historical perspectives in film analysis

2.3   SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS

Philosophy, linguistics and literary analysis are the fields that have contributed to the study of how media representations transfer meaning. The word "semiotics," which American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce coined in 1867 to denote the study of symbols or signs and the logic by which they transfer meaning, is credited to the likes of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and other academics. The conversation eventually moved from Saussure's research on language and how words and their arrangement make meaning, in the dynamics of *semiology* to *structuralism*. These scholars examined the effects of narratives, language, popular culture components meaning structures on. Structuralism is predicated on the idea that words, pictures, objects, and behaviours within cultural systems have unique meanings derivable from their interactions with other systemic items in a recognizable structure. Eventually, semiotics became popular.

Semiotic analysis is the interpretation of symbols and signs, frequently using characters from a film as well as inanimate things as metaphors and parallels. Because symbols can have multiple interpretations, writers frequently have to decide what a certain symbol means both within the setting of the film and in a larger cultural or historical context. It is the study of signs (semiosis), or any activity, conduct, or process involving signs, including the creation of meaning as it relates to moving visuals. Every kind of art contains certain hidden signals that the viewer is free to interpret therefore, the study of how an idea or thing communicates meaning — and what meaning it expresses — is known as semiotics. Semiotics, as a concept, can also be linked to the structuralist movement.

Let me further explain this concept. Sometimes, when you watch a film and you noticed that the camera pans from the right where an actor is to the left where you have a clock and back to where you have the actor. By that movement, the film producer has established a connection (meaning) between the action of the action and the essence of having a clock there. When you take the time to watch and understand the film, you will be able to establish the relationship between the animate object (the actor) and the inanimate object (the clock).

The focus of the study of representation in semiotics is on the sign, a rare but infrequently taken into account narrative unit in film criticism. The signifier and the signified are the two components that make up signs, which are units of meaning. The signified refers to the social meanings associated with the signifier, which is the physical component of the sign. For instance, a heart-shaped chocolate container is both a candy container (the sign's signifier) and a representation of love for one's sweetheart (what is signified).

Denotation and connotation are two more concepts with semiotic elements that are frequently used by other academics who are researching representation. Denotation, or an evaluation of the actual picture and narrative and their most obvious, outward aspects, is usually the first area of attention in a study of representation in a film, television show, or other media text. This would mean concentrating on aesthetic components or doing a

stylistic analysis of a media text. After that, the film critic would proceed to determine the connotative, or hidden, implications of these aesthetic decisions which may include the associated cultural meanings, ideologies, and myths. Such meanings are culturally constructed to the specific time and location in which a representation circulates, rather than merely being tied to a particular image.

Another concept in the semiotic analysis is ideology and discourse. Understanding representation in connection to associated meanings and social impact also comes from an understanding of ideology and discourse, which are related concepts. Systems of ideals and ideas are referred to as ideologies, especially those that support a society's prevailing politics and social norms. Discourse, a phrase used to describe both concepts, refers to socially accepted patterns of thinking that limit what can be stated and how a subject is represented. Thus, discourse can also be seen as having dominant characteristics. Discourses can be seen in popular culture and have a significant influence on how civilizations are shaped.

Another concept is stereotyping. Although restricted in what it reveals, the idea of stereotyping served as an early foundation for the study of representation. Generally, cognitive psychologists noted that we classify things and people to make sense of the world. Mediated stereotypes can take the shape of stock characters that inaccurately represent a community when these concepts are included in media narratives. Due to this understanding, scholars in the social sciences began to pay attention to the later rise of film, radio, and television as well as how stereotypes were incorporated and how this affected consumers.

Generally, studying the symbolic meaning of a film and deconstructing the signs and symbolism within the film through semiotic analysis requires strong attention to detail. As it can be very difficult to make the connection between all of the hidden signs or symbols in some films. Filmmakers work to elicit a more profound and thoughtful response from viewers and that is the place of representation in films. To transmit its message or meaning, film "represents" or manipulates this reality in this way. Filmmakers express this representation using filmic language or techniques. Be it in the attire worn by the characters, the narrative's setting, the set's colour, the acting, etc. These minute details can—and frequently do—represent society or convey a message. A setting or region in the story might stand in for a particular religion or segment of society, for example. Everything depends on the filmmaker's goals. These subtle messages are inserted into movies thanks to the work of the production design, director, cinematographer, art director, hair and makeup, and wardrobe departments. They all extensively utilise various filmmaking techniques to create the story's setting or mise-en-scene.

Because there are so many symbols in film, it is easy to miss out on the relevance of a particular sign or symbol. However, following the steps and understanding the concepts

will help you. To conduct a semiotic analysis, here are a few other questions that you may want to consider:

1. How could the symbols be associated with particular signs or historical elements in reality?
2. How does a symbol or object relate to other symbols and objects, that is, what is the relationship between the film's signs?
3. How does the director associate a character with small signs, such as certain colours, clothing, food, or language use?
4. What could the objects mean?
5. What objects or images are repeated throughout the film?

A scene in *Agogo Eewo* (Directed and produced by Tunde Kelani) showed the potential king of Jogbo Kingdom, Adebosipo (Dejumo Lewis) in a simple Safari made from Adire (an almost regular fabric for the low and middle-income) with a woven hat on his farm amidst the affluently dressed palace chiefs who have come to persuade him to become the King. Adebosipo's dressing connotatively depicts a humble farmer who appears just satisfied and would not overtly fancy the possibility of becoming a king. *Source: Tunde Kelani TV/ YouTube*

SAMPLE

Semiotics analysis presents an interesting dynamic for analysing films because of the diverse concepts that represent its interpretation. For you to better understand this element of film analysis, please click on the following link to watch a short video in which real film examples were used to explain the term.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1
Attempt the following question before you move to the next section: This will take you about 10 minutes.
1. Discuss what semiotic analysis in film entails.

2.4 NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

As a film analyst and critic, your ability to identify the flow of a film presents you with an edge in your analysis. That kind of flow is what you can achieve with narrative analysis. The word narration means to relay or compellingly relate a message or information for an absolute understanding from the audience. Now, let us discuss in detail narrative analysis in film.

Narrative analysis is an investigation of the story's plot, characters, and narrative structure. This kind of analysis takes into account the complete film as well as the storyline it aims to present. Both the entire sequence of events that we as viewers put together (the story) and the events that are depicted in the movie are included in the narrative structure (the plot). To put it differently, the plot is a specific selection and arrangement of the story's events. There is a difference between story order, which relates to the chronological order of narrative events, and plot order, which refers to the sequence of events adopted in the telling of the story. A common approach for developing a narrative arc or shape is the three-act structure. Act 1 sets higher expectations. Expectations are muddled in the second act. Finally, in the third act, expectations are fulfilled and resolved either in the form of an acknowledgement, a rejection or a revelation that could be found to be absurd. This is often done in a way that appears moderately surprising.

The hero narrative is similar to the three-act structure. The three steps of this pattern, which has its origins in Greek mythology, are: the hero sets forth, he encounters a challenge, and at last, he comes home having gained insight from his adventure. A and B, or kernel and satellite, storylines, are a common dual structure used in film narratives. This technique tracks a second story while prioritizing one of the storylines. The time that passes between the first and last events that are significant to the story being told is referred to as the story's length or duration. The plot duration is made up of the compilation of selected story lengths

while the screen duration, refers to the amount of time spent in screening the film. Now let us discuss characterisation as a major element in the narrative analysis of a film.

2.4.1 Characterisation

A major element in narrative analysis is characterization. Characters in a film are essential to our understanding of the plot because they are expected to interpret the director's intentions in the film for ease of understanding for the audience. Our emotional and intellectual involvement in a story is greatly influenced by the characters. We follow plot events with strong interest because we can relate to and idealize movie characters. Characters are essentially made up of all the visible, observable details on the outside, such as looks, gestures, speech, and actions. We start to understand who they are and why they act the way they do in the film's plot from our observation of such little information. Understanding a character's motivation, the primary cause of their behaviour, or some other explanation is crucial to developing a greater understanding of them. Importantly, this emphasis on motivation reflects a process previously engaged in by the actors chosen to portray these characters, as they also attempt to contextualize the character. Their various character motivations (such as avenging a past misfortune) and attitudes (such as venting anger and killing) give the story its shape and consistency. It helps if characters in a film about good vs evil clearly represent these traits. Dramatic tension need not be created by absolute opposite character types. Characters can further highlight the plot of the story by using dialogue and narration.

The motivation for Prince Aderopo (Demola Adeodoyin) for killing five ladies in *October 1* (produced by Kulne Afolayan) was to avenge the six years of molestation and sexual violation he

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received from the Reverend Father Dowling (Colin David Reese) in Lagos. His motivation was only revealed when he was about to kill the sixth lady Tawa (Kehinde Bankole) who was saved by Inspector Danladi Waziri (Sadiq Daba). *Source: YouTube.*

Also, you should understand that filmmakers regularly use *dialogue and narration* to fully express the personalities, motives, and views of their characters. Dialogue is what the characters say while they are in the story while the narration is the commentary that is given outside the story. Both are stated in the screenplay and spoken by actors, whose interpretation of the sentences changes their intended meaning. Screen characters, in contrast to those in literary works, are "embodied," meaning that we see them rather than imagine what they look like based on a description. As with most films, we learn about the characters by paying attention to what they say and do. In terms of narration, some movies have a narrator who introduces the plot and offers commentary on the action. Like in literature, if that individual is a character in the narrative (indicated by the pronoun "I"), then their comments are referred to as first-person narration. On the other hand, unseen observers rather than story characters make up third-person narrators.

Since the invention of cinema, recognizable character types have been a crucial component of film narrative. Given our discussion on characterization, it would be good for you to be able to quickly point out in what form a filmmaker introduces or uses characters in a film. The categorization of character introduction will help you as you analyse any film:

1. *Characterization through appearance*: A significant element of character development in films is instantly and visibly exhibited. Most actors are not as versatile as others who may be able to portray completely distinct attributes in several roles. We form opinions about most actors the moment we see them on the screen based on things like their appearance, clothing, physical make-up, mannerisms, and movement. Although our initial perception of the actor may be incorrect as the story develops, it is undoubtedly a vital tool for developing character.

2. *Characterization through dialogue*: The grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, and specific dialects used by actors can tell us a lot about the social and economic status, educational background, and thought processes of their characters. As a result, we must develop a sharp ear that is sensitive to the smallest and subtlest differences of meaning conveyed through the human voice. We must pay close attention to both what is said and how it is expressed.

3. *Characterization through external action:* A person's actions are the best indicators of their character. Naturally, it must be assumed that actual characters are more than just tools for the plot and that what they do is motivated by reasons compatible with their overall personalities. As a result, there should be a clear connection between a character's actions and personality; the actions should flow organically from the

nature of the character. If the reason for a character's behaviour is made plain, the character and the plot become inseparably connected, and every action the character does in some way reflects the characteristics of his or her unique personality. In essence, beyond the surface or expected actions, when characters do a few other things that may not be expected, for instance, it may show them as more caring or worse than what they basically portray.

4. *Characterisation through internal action*: Secret, unspoken thoughts, fantasies, aspirations, recollections, anxieties, and fantasies constitute the inner action of characters, which takes place within their minds and emotions. People's anxieties and doubts might be more terrifying to them than any truly catastrophic failure, and their goals, dreams, and aspirations can be just as vital to knowing who they are as any true accomplishment. By immersing us visually or musically in the character's thoughts, we can see or hear the things that the character imagines, recalls, or thinks about. This is the most evident way that a filmmaker can show inner reality. This can be done by maintaining an internal perspective or by catching glimpses through metaphors. The director may use tight close-ups on an extremely sensitive and expressive face (reaction shots) or may use the musical score for essentially the same effect, in addition to revealing the sounds and images the character imagines he sees and hears.

5. *Characterisation through reactions of other characters:* Characters are frequently well-developed through the perspectives of other characters. Through such methods, a character may occasionally already have been given a considerable number of mentions before they first appear on the screen.

6. *Characterization through Contrast-Dramatic Foils*: Foils are contrasting characters who are the total opposite of the main characters in terms of their conduct, attitudes, ideas, lifestyle, physical appearance, and other characteristics. This is one of the most powerful characterization strategies. Techniques such as contrasting colours and height that directors occasionally employ in showcasing characters. Such representations could be made between two or more characters using attire, hairstyles, and other objects.

7. *Characterization through caricature and leitmotif*: Actors sometimes exaggerate or misrepresent one or more major features or personality qualities to swiftly and permanently imprint a character in the minds and memory of the audience. This tool is known as a caricature, from the technique used in cartooning. Also, leitmotif, a similar technique for character development, is when a character repeats a single action, phrase, or idea until it almost becomes their signature or anthem. Such a method functions very much like caricature since it simply exaggerates and highlights through repetition.

8. *Characterization through the choice of name:* Using names with the right sounds, meanings, or connotations is a crucial component of characterization. The term

"name typing" refers to this method. A screenwriter typically gives great thought to the names of his characters. Because you want people to repeat the name, it must be euphonious. Beyond that, you should include at least one element that is symbolic or expressive. Since names are carefully chosen, they should not be taken for granted and should instead be thoroughly analyzed for the meanings they convey. Some names have apparent and distinct implications, while others might merely have vague ones. Sometimes a name's impact comes from both its sound and meaning. In a similar line, names for performers in movies are frequently modified to fit the image they portray due to the connotative power of names.

Reading through the different forms through which film producers introduce, use and depict characters in their films, you would be amazed at the level of thinking that goes into producing a good film. Even at this, there are still variations in the role played by characters in films. We will discuss three of those variations here. They are:

a.   Stock Characters versus Stereotyped Character
b.   Static Versus Dynamic or Developing Characters
c.   Flat Versus Round Characters

a. Stock Characters versus Stereotypes Characters: Minor characters known as "stock characters" are those whose acts are entirely foreseeable or typical of their line of work or line of business such as traders in a market scene in a Nollywood film. They are in the movie just because the circumstances require them to be there. They function as a natural component of the environment, similar to how stage props like a light or a chair might in a play. However, stereotypes play characters who are somewhat more significant to the movie. They fit into established behavioural patterns that are typical of, or representative of, a sizable portion of the population even in a fictional film.

b. Static Characters versus Dynamic or Developing Characters: The action of the plot—whether internal, external, or both—has a significant impact on developing characters, causing them to go through significant changes in personality, attitude, or outlook on life. They experience a significant, long-lasting transformation, not just a passing mood swing that will return the next day. The character will never again be the same person they were before the movie's action started. Any form of change is crucial to the overall makeup of the person going through it, regardless of its nature. Characters that change with time get angrier, smarter, happier, or more self-assured. They could have a fresh perspective on life, grow in maturity or responsibility, or change their morality for the better or worse. They might simply become more knowledgeable and wiser, and less inexperienced or naive. Static characters basically stay the same throughout the entire film. Their lives are not

significantly impacted by the action unlike the hero of an action/adventure film who typically does change. Static characters are incapable of developing or changing since they are unaware of the significance of the activity. For instance, a static character in Campus Queen, produced by Tunde Kelani was Saka played by Afeez Oyetoro. Saka was comical all through his appearance since he was introduced to the end of his act.

c. *Flat Character versus Round Character:* Flat characters are two-dimensional in that they are relatively uncomplicated and do not change throughout a work. By contrast, round characters are complex and undergo development, sometimes sufficiently to surprise the reader (Britannica, 2018). Sometimes, please misrepresent static characters for flat characters and dynamic or developing characters for round characters. Let us distinguish between the four. While a round character is a character with a complex personality, a dynamic character changes throughout a story. Where a flat character is two-dimensional, a static character does not change throughout the story. Most flat (uncomplex) characters are static (unchanged by the end of the story), but not all static characters are flat.

We have extensively discussed the form and shape of narrative analysis in film. I am sure you will be amazed at the many thoughts and dynamics that go into how filmmakers get to produce their films, how they build the plot, and structure, introduce and use characters to interpret their scripts. Generally, on plot and structure, you want to analyse:

1. Are events chronological, or does the film use flashbacks or flash-forwards?
2. Does the plot revolve around multiple characters?
3. Does the plot revolve around one character?
4. For example, are events presented out of order and to what effect?
5. How do these characters develop across the film?
6. How does the film correspond to the Three-Act Structure: Act One: Setup; Act Two: Confrontation; and Act Three: Resolution?
7. How does this plot differ from the narrative, that is, how the story is told?
8. What is the plot of the film?

For instance, in characterization, you may need to conduct a character mapping using a table to capture and record how the characters play out. You may record notes about the personalities of the main characters while also considering the secondary characters and their narrative purposes. In your discussion, you may consider the following:

Appearance/physical attributes: How is the character presented visually via facial look, body shape and costuming? What do these attributes suggest about the character?

Design: How does the design of the character help to achieve believability? How does design encourage the audience to feel empathy for the character?

Voice: How do the character's words and voice (tone, inflection-modification of word to reflect something else), and timbre) help to establish the character? What does it suggest about the character?

Action: How do the character's actions and behaviours help to establish the character? What other personal traits are evident? What are the character's motivations, fears and desires?

Role: How does the character relate to the other characters? What effects does the character's behaviour have? Describe the character's role in the overall storyline.

Framing: Where is the character placed in the frame? What else is placed in the frame with the character? What shot types and angles are used?

On the setting, you may analyse inquisitions such as: how does the setting relate to the narrative? In other words, why has a background, location or set for a particular scene/sequence been chosen? Are any of the props significant? How do the mood and ambience of the setting create meanings for an audience?

Regarding the structure of time in the film, you may analyse how the narrative manipulates time; how the events are ordered using chronology, flashbacks or flashforward; and how the film producer explored the duration of events which includes the expansion or contraction of time. Again, you can also examine how frequently events or scenes are shown in comparison with their presumed occurrence and existence.

Narrative analysis of a film may also investigate how the director introduces characters and later creates individual character attributes to build the story. This is usually referred to as the point-of-view usually depicted by the director. In analysing this, you may ask:

1. Do we see the narrative through one character's eyes or more than one? Why? What are the effects of this?
2. From whose POV is the narrative presented? Is it the first-person point of view or the third-person point of view?
3. How is POV technically communicated to an audience?
4. Is the POV different from that of the other characters? What is the effect of this?
5. What story information is given or withheld at different points in the narrative? What effect does this have?

The causes and effect examination for the narrative analysis would answer questions like what motivates the characters? What events are motivated by character? If there are natural or supernatural causes, what are their consequences? For the opening and closure, the critic may ask if there are conflicts, motivations and issues resolved or unresolved by the end of

the film; what expectations are established in the beginning and resolved or remain unresolved at the end; how character developments, themes/issues and resolutions are dealt with in the closing sequences. On themes, you may also examine what themes and issues are introduced and how are they developed and explored? Are certain themes and issues exclusively related to particular characters? How do the themes and issues work in with the storyline?

SAMPLE

Below is a sample of a narrative analysis done on the "Titanic". Please take time to read through Did you see all or some of the elements of narrative analysis as we have discussed? Would you want to attempt a narrative analysis of your chosen film?

A Narrative Analysis Of The Film, "Titanic"
Alev Fatoş Parsa

Abstract
This analysis is about "Titanic", directed by James Cameron in 1997. As a formal system, film is a narrative and uses some or all the principles of narrative construction borrowed from Propp's functions and categories of personae. In this brief analysis, issues such as how the narrative in a movie is constructed and how the meaning is built will be addressed via a structural analysis of the content and communication channels peculiar to the art of cinema-like sound and images.

Introduction
Narratives surround us. Narrative is a way of interpreting the world around us. In other words, it is a kind of "rewording of circumstances." People are encircled by narrations of daily life. Children are brought up with fairytales and legends. Principles of narrative analysis were shown in Vladimir Propp's famous study, *Morphology of the Folktales*. In *Morphology of the Folktales*, first published in 1928, Vladimir Propp (1985) analyzed hundreds of Russian fairy folktales and then compiled a list of thirty-one functions and seven categories of characters. He found that these thirty-one functions of characters remained unchanged in all folktales. While some tales contained all these thirty-one functions, the others contained less.

As the prominent technological developments of the 20th century, television and cinema employ such a narrative form to address common people. Films have a visual language; they consist of images and include many filmic elements that have also a narrative construction. The form and content of a film need to follow a very careful way of constructing expression. Aesthetics film quality is created between the balance of content

and formal construction of the film story because the basic building blocks-form and content- cannot be separated; they have to complete each other just like the two sides of a coin. Films, whether fictional or documentary, are one of the principal storytelling forms in contemporary societies. Culture has a tradition evolving through centuries of storytelling. Have the basic units of traditional fairytales anything to do with recent high-tech movies? The expressive visual language that is based on images comes out with a narrative including many filmic elements.

The case study is one of the most expensive Hollywood films, "Titanic" (1997) directed by James Cameron. The motive was to find any relation between Propp's narrative units and the syntagmatic formation (edition) of "Titanic" (1997). Syntagmatic analysis studies the surface structure of a text. We can explore common elements of traditional fairy tales and character structure in the movie. A comparison between fairy elements and filmic elements has been made according to structural narrative analysis methods.
Many scholars have applied syntagmatic narrative analysis patterns, first described by Propp, to films and television programs so far. For example, Arthur Asa Berger (1981) studied a series "Prisoner" (In ed: Adler, 1981), Roger Silverstone on "Intimate Strangers" (1981), Peter Wollen on the movie "North by Northwest" (1976) and Will Wright's work "Six Guns and Society: A Structural Study of the Western" (1975).

Methodology
Structuralism as methodology stress that each element within a cultural system derives its meaning from its relations to every other element in the system. Narratology or narrative theory focuses on the structural units in any kind of visual or literal text.

The narrative analysis concentrates on the interaction between the various strata of the narrative work. It distinguishes structural elements such as story outline and plot structure, the spheres of action commanded by different characters, the way narrative information is channelled and controlled through point-of-view, and the relationship of the narrator to the inhabitants and events of the story-world (Stam, Burgoyne, Flitterman-Lewis 1992).

According to narrative theory, every narrative can be divided into two parts: *story*, that is, 'what happens to whom' and *discourse*, that is 'how the story is told' (Allen, 1992, p. 69). Story and discourse complete each other.

Structural Units In Narrative
Having analyzed hundreds of Russian folktales, Propp (1985) noted a similar narrative structure in all fairytales and inferences other researchers by supplying methodological categories and formulas. He described changed and unchanged values as the basic criteria in narrative structures. In other words, he observed that although the names of the heroes have changed with time, their deeds, or functions, have remained unchanged. Propp (1985) classified narrative structures of fairy tales into six different subcategories, which are

preparation, conflict, transference, struggle, return and recognition. Thus, he provided one of the earliest examples of syntagmatic analysis as structural narrative analysis.

Functions
Propp (1985) described thirty-one narrative functions, virtually unchanged in the syntagmatic analysis of fairy tales and scheduled them into six main categories in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Narrative Functions (Propp, 1985; see also Fiske, 1987; Hansen, Cottle, Negrine, Newbold, 1998; Parsa & Parsa, 2002; Turner, 1993)

Preparation

1. A member of the family leaves home
2. A prohibition or rule is imposed on the hero
3. This prohibition is broken
4. The villain attempts reconnaissance
5. The villain learns something about his victim
6. The villain tries to deceive the victim to get possession of him and his belongings
7. The victim unknowingly helps the villain by being deceived or influenced by the villain

Complication

8a. The villain harms a member of the family
8b. A member of the family lacks or desires something
9. This lack or misfortune is made known; the hero is given a request or command and he goes or is sent on a mission/request
10. The seeker (or the hero) plans action against the villain

Transference

11. The hero leaves home
12. The hero is tested, interrogated, and as a result, receives either a magical agent or a helper
13. The hero reacts to the actions of the future donor
14. The hero uses the magical agent
15. The hero is transferred to the general location of the object of his mission/quest

Struggle

16. The hero and villain join in direct combat
17. The hero is branded
18. The villain is defeated
19. The initial misfortune or lack is set right

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Return

20. The hero returns
21. The hero is pursued

22. The hero is rescued from pursuit
23. The hero arrives home or elsewhere and is not recognized
24. A false hero makes false claims
25. A difficult task is set for the hero
26. The task is accomplished

Recognition

27. The hero is recognized
28. The false hero/villain is exposed
29. The false hero is transformed
30. The villain is punished
31. The hero is married and crowned

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Propp (1985) called these thirty-one narrative morphemes "functions" because he wanted to emphasize that what they do to advance the narrative is more important than what they are.

Characters

Propp (1985) located characters in fairy tales according to their functional unity, not their psychological characteristics. The deeds of characters (the donor or provider, the helper and the villain) are naturally more important than their psychological structures or psychological depths on the personification level. Since Propp's (1985) analysis, similar problems about personae in the narrative have been modelled through structural narrative analysis.

According to Propp (1985), not all narratives necessarily convey these functions, but if they do, they are composed of those listed above. Those functions can be combined with the roles below defined by Propp (1985) as well. Roles conveyed by the characters are enlisted below:

1. the villain
2. the donor or provider
3. the helper
4. the princess and her father
5. the dispatcher
6. the hero
7. the false hero. (Quoted in Hansen et. al. 1998, p. 149).

Function and deed in a narrative are suggestive actions of a character in the course of events. The organization of these events is crucially significant to grasping the inherent meaning of the text. The roles of characters, their missions and their sphere of action are defined in Figure 2.

Figure 2
Fairytale Heroes Described By Propp
(Fiske, 1987, p. 137)

Character Role	Sphere of Action
Villain	Villainy, fighting, action
Donor (Provider)	Giving magical agent or helper
Helper	Moves the hero, makes good a lack, rescues from pursuit, solves difficult tasks, and transforms the hero
The Princess & Her Father	A sought-after person: assigns difficult tasks, brands, exposes, recognizes, punishes
The Dispatcher	Sends hero on quest/mission
The Hero	Departs on search, reacts to the donor, and attempts difficult tasks, marriage
The False Hero	Unfounded claims to the hero's sphere of action

Story, Plot And Narrative In Film

The most important concepts in a narrative analysis are story, plot and narrative. They are also complicated. All the events in a narrative, both illustrated and told, directly refer to the story. A story in a narrative is a chronological sequence of a plot. Here, events are described as changing incidents from one situation to another. In real life, events take place quite coincidentally. However, in a narrative, they are based on personal choices rather than coincidences. For example, event X is followed by event Y. The plot may be considered as a part of the narrative and the essence of a story told with an audio-visual presentation, and some other elements such as music, graphics and credits might be included as well. The plot in a narrative has a multifaceted structure suggesting incomprehensible changes in space and time. Analyzing how the plot and other elements of the story get together in the narrative structure comprises the essence of narrative analysis. According to Bordwell, "a narrative is a chain of events in cause-effect relationship occurring in time and space." (Bordwell and Thompson, 1986, p. 83). "If we begin by understanding the narrative as a relationship of cause and effect, forming a plot which occurs in the moving image's construction of time and space, then we can start to identify and examine the dynamics of narrative and the structure of the narrative. That is, the events that combine to create the direction that the story-telling takes." (Hansen et. al., 1998, p. 143).

Film and Narrative

While the first discussions of narrative structure in the film were conducted by Russian Formalists in the late 1920s, the two most important influences on the development of film narrative analysis in the 1970s were the structuralist theory of Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966) and the folklore studies of Vladimir Propp (Stam et.al., 1992, p. 76). The narrative serves as a mechanism for generating meaning in two dimensions. Narrative analyses investigate not only the inherent meanings of the texts but also the ways ideological influences interact through the same narrative structure. Narrative analyses stem from two sources:

- "The Syntagmatic Approach is based on the formalist work of Vladimir Propp and examines the sequential development of the narrative plot.
- The Paradigmatic Approach emerges from the structuralist work of Claude Lévi-Strauss (1966) and considers the patterns of oppositions that exist within the narrative and how they contribute to the development of the story." (Hansen et. al. 1998, p. 142).

Analysis of the correlation among technical and symbolical elements, codes and nominal, which are present in the narrative structure, will certainly help to reveal the meaning of the text. Because the plot inextricably intertwines with the sequential development of the story, these terms need to be explicated in advance.

"Titanic" (James Cameron, 1997) follows two different storylines. One of them is the frame storyline. Frame stories build up a short and informative structural frame within the

narrative and they unfold the rest of the story by using several flashbacks (Miller, 1993, p. 56). The latter is the main storyline, which takes up most of the movie. The main storyline is based on two main characters, Rose (Kate Winslet) and Jack (Leonardo Di Caprio), while the frame storyline is built upon old Rose (Gloria Stuart) and the treasure hunter, Brock Lovett (Bill Paxton).

Cinematic stories are also based on certain formulas, but the narrative styles of films are different. The coexistence of a story does not suffice to construct a narrative; the presence of a narrator and an audience is necessary.

Filmic narrative has very powerful inner dynamics. Commercial entertainment cinema is a means of fictional narrative. The art of cinema has exhibited an astounding development in a company with the technological innovations and rising consumer culture in the 20th century. The film industry has been moulded in harmony with the rules of the capitalist system.

In the classical filmic narrative, action is the crucial principle and what sets the action in motion is the plot. The action starts with an introduction, rises with points of tension (difficulties and conflicts) and reaches a peak with the climax. The climax in a film is at the same time the turning point of the plot. Afterwards, the action slows down and the narrative rapidly ends. Thus, while the traditional filmic narrative is formulated within an introduction-development-conclusion pattern, it also follows a sequential course. An event, or an action, in the introduction, may appear in the conclusion with a new emphasis; such as a flashback, flash-forward or linear may be chosen.

Ellis (1982) lists the characteristics of filmic narrative as:
➢   "Cinema proposes an image that is the perfection of the photographic. It provides a large image.
➢   It also provides a particular set of circumstances for watching this image; the audience is seated in rows, separated from each other to some degree and the image is projected in near-darkness.
➢   This induces a particular kind of mental state in the commercial cinema viewer: a concentration of psychic activity into a state of hyper-receptivity.
➢   The image is larger than the spectator; the sounds are loud and usually well-balanced. The spectator looks up towards the image: image dominates the proceedings (Ellis, 1982, p. 40-41)".

Narrative Analysis of "TITANIC"

Narrative Phases of "Titanic"

Every narrative includes five different phases (Kıran & Kıran, 2003, p. 21-22). Here are those phases as employed in the movie.

1. The Outset: It is the part when the characters, space and time are introduced just before the disturbance of the established setting (Kıran & Kıran, 2003). This opening sequence manifests the characters and the setting and lasts 18 minutes in the movie. The movie begins with Brock Lovett's (Bill Paxton) story 84 years after the transatlantic ship Titanic struck an iceberg in the Atlantic Ocean and sank. He searches for a brilliant necklace once said to be worn by Louis XVI and expects to find it in the wreck. Rose (Gloria Stuart), a 101-year-old woman, views Lovett on TV and calls him to talk about the necklace. Thereafter, she visits the ship and tells him about the maiden voyage, what had happened during the journey, and the fate of the necklace with a flashback. In the second sequence, we are introduced to the main characters. We meet Jack Dawson (Leonardo Di Caprio) who catches the cruise just in time and subsequently class distinctions are highlighted.

2. Transforming Element: All of a sudden, something disturbs or overturns the initial setting (Kıran & Kıran, 2003). As a preparation for this element, in the third sequence, at the first-class restaurant of the transatlantic ship, the glamour and luxury of the transatlantic and Rose's (Kate Winslet) discontent about her life, her mother, and her fiancé are underscored. The audience's attention is drawn to the story and an upcoming conflict is foreshadowed. A transforming element of this narrative is the suicide scene where young Rose attempts to commit suicide by throwing herself into the deep ocean but is rescued by the hero.

3. Set of Actions: Things develop quickly (Kıran & Kıran, 2003). A progressing set of actions forms the actions part that serves as the development part connecting the introduction and the conclusion. Meanwhile, some other crises are involved which come out as conflicts between the hero and himself, the hero and another group, the hero and a natural force or the hero and social values (Miller, 1993). Such crises and conflicts use in the development part of the film quite frequently. Rose's disagreement with her mother and her fiancé Cal, crises caused by the class distinction between her and her lover Jack, Jack's being arrested for theft and Cal's attempts to kill them even when the Titanic is sinking may be examples of these conflicts. Throughout the movie, the bow and the stern of the transatlantic ship are used symbolically during the crises intentionally created by the director. The front part represents a new life and order, while the back part symbolizes setting oneself from self-identity and social values.

4. Balancing and Organizing Elements: The event that ends the set of circumstances and balancing the setting occurs (Kıran & Kıran, 2003). The Titanic strikes the iceberg and begins sinking. The turning point where the conflict dissolves commences. Seeing that the Titanic splits in half and goes down to the bottom of the ocean and finally, the main characters' coming to the surface after a struggle with waves provides the audience with a kind of catharsis, in other words, declining of rising dramatic curve rooted in Aristotle. All the crises in the development part start to be dissolved, which implies the deciding point. The characters strive to survive despite all predicaments. Nevertheless, Jack Dawson, whose social and national ties

remain unknown to the audience dies, whereas Rose goes on living as a middle-class American.

5. <u>Conclusion:</u> It all turns back to the initial setting or a completely new setting appears (Kıran & Kıran, 2003). In this phase, things are counterbalanced, crises are dissolved and there are no open-ended crises at the end of the film. Rose returns the necklace, which is given in the first sequence, and around which all the story is woven, where it belongs, into the ocean. She dies in her bed at the age of 101 and reunites with her lover, Jack, as well as with the other passengers who died on the transatlantic ship.

The Syntagmatic Approach And Narrative Functions In "Titanic"

Function and deed in a narrative are suggestive actions of a character in the course of events. The organization of these events is crucially significant to grasping the inherent meaning of the text. The functions of characters, their missions and their range of operation are confined. Propp (1985) depicted 31 basic functions, virtually unchanged in a syntagmatic analysis of fairytales and scheduled them into six main categories in Figure 1. According to Propp (1985), not all narratives necessarily convey these functions, but if they do, they are composed of those listed in Figure 1.

These narrative functions have yielded the results below when applied to our case study, "Titanic."

0. Function: This function is the outset of the movie. The characters and the set of circumstances are introduced and then the main storyline is presented with a flashback.

1. Function: Departure function, illustrating that Jack Dawson departs his living place and acquaintances after winning a 3rd class ticket in gambling.

2. and 3. Function: Prohibitions and violation of prohibited functions; Jack wanders around the first-class deck and rescues Rose who has just attempted to commit suicide due to the distresses and identity crises she has been suffering. Creating such a setting serves to get two characters together. Later, we get to know Rose's fiancé Cal Hockley, the aggressive villain of the story. The poor hero Jack has grown up in a small town. He violates various prohibitions by intruding into the community of first-class deck where class discrimination and different social values are apparent, and by getting closer to Rose.

4. Function: Hero under investigation function. Rose's fiancé Cal accomplishes this function with the help of his servant who is the old police chief.

5. Function: Gathering information function; Rose's fiancé Cal invites Jack to dinner at the first-class restaurant and gathers information about the personality of the hero.

6. Function: The villain of the story Cal and Rose's mother attempt to scorn Jack and make him fall out of favour.

7. Function: The complicity function cannot be found in the film.

8. and 8a- Function: According to Propp (1985), a fairytale is stirred up after this function. Cal beats Rose and he wants her to act like a woman about to get married and prohibits her from seeing Jack. However, Rose disobeys him because; she feels if she

obeys him, she is not living her life her way. She breaks the barriers and wishes to experience love freely.

9. **Function:** Mediation or transition function; this function appears as Jack's passionate love for Rose, who dispatches him on a mission, is revealed.

10. **Function:** Jack talks to Rose. He says he has nothing but his love to give her and persuades her. Afterwards, the counteraction starts.

11. **- 12. - 13. - 14. - and 15. Functions:** Propp (1985) underlines the hero being supplied with a magical object and his being dispatched to the mission. In the film, spatial changes, or transference, do not exist as the hero is cruising on a transatlantic ship. The helper offering the magical object is presented when Molly Brown, a newly-rich woman, gives Jack a swallow-tailed coat. With that costume, Jack turns into a handsome gentleman that night, and he is invited to dinner. Here, the lineage of functions has changed but this is what Propp already predict (1985, p. 112).

16. Function: The hero encounters the villain. While drawing a portrait of Rose, Jack is seen by Cal's servant. A chasing scene follows while we are shown the labourers working at the lower levels of the ship.

17. **Function:** In this function, the hero is given a special sign. Rose sleeps with Jack.

18. **and 19. Function:** Victory and completion lack function; Rose leaves her family and her fiancé and decides to live with Jack, which is an obvious sign of Jack's victory. Rose breaks the barriers and she makes her free choice to live with Jack and thus completes the lack in 8a function. Meanwhile, the Titanic strikes the iceberg and it is severely damaged.

20. **Function:** Jack and Rose turn back to inform others that the transatlantic ship is badly damaged and the threat is grave. However, a spatial change is not under consideration.

21. **Function:** Cal cannot endure Jack's victory and he accuses him of stealing the necklace. Jack is arrested and he gets into a difficult position in a sinking transatlantic ship.

22. **Function:** Rose rejects getting in the lifeboats and rescues the hero from where he is captured.

23. **Function:** According to Propp (1985), in this function, the hero arrives home or elsewhere. This function does not exist.

24. **Function:** According to Propp (1985), a false hero makes false claims. This function does not exist.

25. **Function:** The hero takes on a hard mission. Cal tries to kill them even when the transatlantic is sinking little by little. He and Rose manage to flee and come to the surface. Young lovers who cannot get in the lifeboat struggle to survive in the cold ocean. The hero dies, and he wants Rose to go on living at any cost, thus burdening her with a hard mission.

26. **Function:** The mission is accomplished as Rose lives as a middle-class American until the age of 101. It becomes evident that although she keeps the necklace in her possession, she prefers to live an ordinary life. Then, she throws the necklace into the ocean, where the narrative suggests it belongs.

27. Function: Unlisted in the passenger list, Jack Dawson is now a well-known hero thanks to Rose.

28. Function: The villainy of Rose's fiancé, Cal, is apparent from the beginning.

29. Function: That reformation function does not exist.

30. Function: Rose is rescued and though she has seen her fiancé rescued, she never returns to him. She punishes him for making a new life. Later on, bankrupted and ruined Cal commits suicide, which implies that director James Cameron also punished the villain by terminating him.

31. Function: That function is a sign of a happy conclusion. Older Rose returns to her bed after having thrown the necklace into the ocean and dies in peace. She reunites with her lover, Jack, as well as with the other passengers who died at the transatlantic shipwreck.

The Paradigmatic Approach Of "Titanic"

The paradigmatic approach is rooted in Claude Lévi-Strauss' structuralist (1966) works and analyses binary oppositions included in the narrative and their contributions to the development of the story. Lévi-Strauss (1966) was mainly interested in the relationship between myths and society. For Lévi-Strauss (1966), myths are coded messages that societies produce for their members, which exist in the deep structure of narratives. It is the job of the researcher to unpack or reveal these messages hidden in deep structure (Hansen et. al., 1998). Such a listing contributes to the analysis of myths, ideologies and point of view included in the text and the identification of common themes. Finding out the central oppositions serving in the construction of narrative structure helps to set forth the meaning of the film.

The paradigmatic structure in "Titanic" is based on such binary oppositions (Figure 3):

Figure 3
Binary Oppositions In "Titanic"

Woman	Man
Sea	Land
Human	Nature
Upper Classes	Lower Classes
Life	Death
White race	Other race
Powerful	Weak
Consuming	Producing
Noble	Commons
Politeness	Rudeness

Present tense	Past tense
Justice	Injustice
Tenderness	Violence
Love	Hate
Richness	Poverty
Good	Evil
Conservatism	Modernism

These central oppositions have been built within the narrative structure of the film. The paradigmatic analysis concentrates on a series of opposing models in the discourse. Specifying such oppositions used in various media discourses facilitates interpreting connotations, that is, the substance of the text. What the film "Titanic" brings into mind from an ideological perspective can be itemized as follows:
- The supremacy of the dominant on the subordinate,
- Injustice between classes,
- The overwhelming power of capitalism,
- Family ideology accompanied by generational gaps,
- The hero's death is at the expense of revolting against the traditional values, beliefs and authority.

Conclusion And Evaluations
James Cameron made one of the most expensive movies of all time with a budget of 200 million dollars. A typical romance, "Titanic" returned a profit of 2 billion dollars throughout the world. Cameron made a "love story" with his words and visuals. Its main theme is very familiar to the audience, based on a simple "good rich girl and poor handsome boy" opposition, which makes it an ordinary love story.

The capitalist system has brought about some fundamental changes and capitalist decadence has extended its domination. Moreover, everything has been commercialized and turned into a part of show business. In addition, class distinctions and discriminations have become amplified. The Hollywood film industry utilizes these issues largely and transforms them into a means of entertainment.

The narrative structure of the film, its theme and the plot are identical to the principles of the art of drama derived from Ancient Greece and as well as 19th-century literary traditions. "A classical tragedy" makes use of the same methods and the same classical narrative for centuries but is also enriched with "action" scenes and visual effects built upon technological investments and huge budgets.

At the end of the film, the death of the hero leaves some questions to think about. He has opposed the established system. Rose has been questioning her life and feels depressed. He helps her to take steps towards self-awareness. Metaphorically, the message is very obvious. Crises may occur under the nature of the capitalist system, yet these crises may be overcome, which becomes concrete in Rose's survival and her choice, that is to say, she renounces richness for a middle-class American life.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2
Attempt the following question before you move to the next section: This will take you about 10 minutes.
1. Reading through the sample narrative analysis of the film *Titanic* presented in this section, discuss the major elements in the narrative analysis of a film.

2.5   MISE-EN-SCENE ANALYSIS

When you are watching a film, you would have noticed the way that film producers set up the scenes. Sometimes, it could be a market scene with many elements such as pepper seller, bead seller, the rich that are buying items and dressed in some nice cloth as against hustlers whose clothes are torn. The mix of all these elements is referred to as the mise-en-scene. Film producers create scenes, like the one I just painted, to send or communicate a message in the film. A lot of time, even when we do not remember camera moves, dissolves and other techniques in film production, we may still recall the dress worn by a character, the hair-do or the fantastic scenery that caught your attention in the film.

The arrangement of compositional elements in a scene or even a single shot in a film is the subject of a mise-en-scène analysis. This kind of analysis groups the many components of a scene to examine how their interplay creates meaning. You can concentrate on ***blocking, lighting, design, colour, and costume***, as well as how these elements interact with decisions made about ***sound, cinematography, and editing***. You can also concentrate on anything that lends meaning to the formal effect produced by a certain scene. Mise-en-scene concentrates on the inventive process that primarily takes place behind the camera. The expression, which is loosely borrowed from theatre jargon, refers to the visual components seen by the camera—all facets of how the performers and environments looked.

For the sake of emphasis, mise-en-scene is a French expression that means 'putting into the scene,' originally used to describe the staging done by a theatrical director, namely how they placed all the visual elements on stage. It emphasizes the substance of each frame,

unlike montage, which derives its meaning from the relationship between one frame and the next through editing. The phrase has gained popularity in film criticism and new meanings and associations as a result of its filmic context. In discussions of movies, the term refers to how each frame is put together, including the placement of items, people, and masses; how light and dark interact; the colour pattern; the camera's position and point of view; and any movement that takes place within the frame.

Expressly, mise-en-scene refers to both what is filmed (setting, props, costumes, etc.) and how it is filmed (cinematographic properties of the shot, such as depth of field, focus, lighting, and camera movement). This latter feature is occasionally referred to as *mise-en-shot* to avoid ambiguity in the term. Depending on the objectives and talent of the director (*the metteur-en-scène*), mise-en-scène is one method of establishing meaning in movies that can be both simple and incredibly complicated. Although special effects are frequently applied to an image during post-production and cinematography is performed by the camera, both are considered to be components of mise-en-scène by this definition. While mise-en-scene is usually planned, filmmakers often have to make a quick adjustment or admit and adopt an unplanned line added by an actor on set as part of the mise-en-scene. Some producers have mentioned that the occasional malfunction of lighting sometimes gives them a new perspective on the pre-planned element to create an almost different mise-en-scene that will further add to the cinematic effect of the film.

As a film analyst, you must be able to separate realism from what the film director tries to depict in a mise-en-scene. Viewers often judge mise-en-scene by the standards of realism, a judgement that may be wrong. For instance, a particular gesture may not seem realistic because normal people do not act that same way. However, what is important is understanding how that action or scene contributes to the overall cinematic appreciation of the film vis-à-vis what the film producer wants to communicate. Filmmakers can employ mise-en-scene to create surroundings that look realistic or to allow performers to act as organically as possible. Viewers have also been drawn to imaginations throughout the history of cinema, and mise-en-scene has frequently served this goal. Therefore, it is better to investigate the function of a mise-en-scene than to criticise the elements for not agreeing with our concept of realism.

Essentially, the set; costumes, make-up and hair; acting, blocking and performance; and the light constitute the critical aspects in mise-en-scene analysis. Let us examine them with some examples

2.5.1 The Setting

The design of a film includes a lot of sets, which usually serve to suggest the broader real environment where a story takes place. The set may be built or it may be a real place. The

setting can take centre stage; it need not just serve as a vessel for human occurrences but can also actively participate in the story's action. The set is essential for immersing the viewer in a particular setting, whether it is in the historical past, the present, or an imagined location, and for revealing information about the characters' circumstances. The film set creates a "creative geography" where the plot takes place in science fiction, future, and fantasy movies. Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) may be used by modern filmmakers to improve or completely create the set. A few films purposefully create artificial or stylistic sets to achieve a specific expressive goal, such as expressing a character's emotional condition, presenting an original argument about life in the future, or drawing attention to the artificiality of film.

A film director may choose a location from an already-existing setting or create a set on a studio lot or sound stage. A combination of newly built and existing environments may also be used in films. In many cases, the setting's main goal is to convey authenticity, and the set's content and design are determined by what is appropriate for the time and place of the story. Periodic films are frequently promoted based on the setting's aesthetic appeal as well as the efforts made to present accurate historical recreations. The setting is essential to giving the narrative diegesis—the imagined environment in which we assume a story takes place—plausibility and clarity.

In *The Narrow Path* (produced and directed by Tunde Kelani), the setting for a discussion between Awero (Sola Asedeko) reflects an ancient village business of tie-and-dye (the making of adire attire) as a viable business in the community. The scene also portrays the occupation as that common among women in the community as all persons in the scene were women. *Source: YouTube.*

In manipulating the setting in a shot, the filmmaker may create props (properties) to achieve a particular expression or effect that is related to the function of the scene in the film. Therefore, when an object has a function in the ongoing action, it is referred to as a prop. Props are therefore more than just "things" that are used to decorate the set; they can also serve as iconographic representations of the genre. For instance, most action films are associated with guns. In Nigeria, epic films are associated with drums, beads etc. Props can be used to advance the plot; and, most importantly, they can have figurative significance. Numerous options exist for using props to advance the plot. Props can also help the story develop by influencing how the action is staged in both time and space.

Filmmakers sometimes use props to influence the character's motivation. For instance, in *Diamond Ring* (directed by Tade Ogidan), Mrs Gladys' (Liz Benson) diamond ring was the motivation for Chidi (Gbadewonuola Oyelakin-Teju Baby Face) as he sought to show his prowess to members of his cult group XG.

Often, a prop may become a motif. This means that a prop may so become a part of the ongoing actions that it is seen at every other time in the scene "actively" engaged. For instance, in *Figurine-Araromire* (a film produced by Kunle Afolayan) the Araromire Sculpture- Figurine which started as just a prop became a motif taking up other functions in different shots. It started as an item stolen from the Araromire shrine by Femi (Ramsey Nouah) and Sola (Kunle Afolayan), to the object of success adored by Femi and later an object of deception, frustration and despair that brought negative feelings, bad luck and death in the film. Filmmakers create story motifs by repeating one type of prop or colour motif by using colour to create parallels among elements of the setting.

The Figurine…*Source: Movie Nation*

Depending on how the camera is focused on the props or how the conversation refers to them, the objects themselves may also have symbolic importance. Given that metonymy is one of the most prevalent and expressive types of cinematic metaphor, they play a vital role in the ability of a film to convey metaphor and connotation. When an item or detail connected to an idea is used in place of the idea itself, this is referred to as a metonymy.

To indicate a wide range of meanings beyond what is presented, props are crucial in cinematic metonymy. They are a rich and cost-effective means of expressing connotation.

2.5.2 Costumes, Make-Up and Hair

Costumes, make-up, and hair, collectively known as "human design," aid performers in becoming the fictional or real-life characters they portray on screen. The transition can be particularly dramatic in some subgenres (horror, science fiction, and historical dramas). We can deduce information about a character's socioeconomic status, line of work, and outlook on life from their attire, makeup, and haircut. Variations in costume may equally reflect changes in a character's psychology. Whether due to ageing, a change in employment or social standing, or both, a character's shift over time can be conveyed through their attire, cosmetics, and haircut. The colours of the set and the patterns and colours of the costumes are coordinated in an integrated or coherent design. The director, the production designer, the costumer, the actor, as well as the hairstylist and the makeup artist, all participate in the entire process of costume design after the colour scheme has been chosen, each with varying degrees of decision-making authority.

Costumes may be stylized and called attention to their graphic qualities while also playing important motivic (used as a motif) and casual roles in film narratives. It must be noted that any portion of a costume may become a prop e.g. a pair of glasses worn by an actor at a point may become the object of murder in the same shot or the next. The relevance of a costume may also depend on how it relates to other props. The use of complimentary costume, setting, lighting, and performance elements gives the appearance of a unified, cohesive visual design in which people and environment are combined.

Costume, make-up and hair as mise-en-scene elements showing the Benin Culture in Invasion 1897 (produced by Lancelot Imasuen). Source: TV Nolly/YouTube

In film narratives, costumes can serve as causal elements. Costumes may be utilised merely for their graphic elements. Virtual costumes have been added to totally computer-generated characters or the numerous extras in the backdrop of large crowd scenes. Although they are less prevalent, fully computerized clothes for human actors are now being used in science fiction and fantasy movies.

A computer-generated costume in ***Ratnik*** (directed by Dimeji Ajobola). *Source: YouTube.*

2.5.3   Acting, Blocking and Performance

In acting, a story is told by an actor or actress who takes on a role and enacts it on stage, in a movie, on television, on the radio, or in any other kind of mimetic media. A wide range of abilities is required for acting, including a sharp imagination, emotional finesse, physical expressivity, vocal projection, linguistic clarity, and the capacity to understand a film. Additionally, acting requires the use of accents, dialects, improvisation, imitation, mime, and stage combat.

Again, in acting, the synchronized arrangement of the camera and the performers is referred to as blocking. Blocking, which is a crucial component of composition and is described with framing, is produced by combining mise-en-scène and camera work. The playing out of a scene as actors walk to particular "marks" (typically taped or sketched on the floor) in response to scripted signals, pre-written lines of conversation, or scripted physical movements is a crucial component of blocking. Characters may choose to block in a static manner (staying still for the duration of the shot) or a flowing one (characters moving to prescribed marks). Blocking simulates how people might position themselves while they converse and perform in a certain context and is supposed to look natural. The positioning of figures in relation to the design of the image is something that filmmakers consider in addition to employing blocking to visually communicate the dynamic between characters.

In essence, blocking is the stylistic arrangement of characters' movements in a shot. For instance, in a shot (scene), a character may start by standing by the window, however, before the end of that scene, he or she might have moved to the bedside and end up lying on the bed. A simultaneous movement to another character in the scene might have also made his move from the door, to the refrigerator and then to the bed. When filmmakers do these, they aim to create a narrative that will explore the setting. The positioning of figures in relation to the design of the image is something that filmmakers consider in addition to employing blocking to visually communicate the dynamic between characters.

Again, we talk about performance. While performance is a broader concept that encompasses both acting (embodiment of character) and appearances as oneself or a generic type, acting entails the representation of fictional characters. Studies of film performance focus mostly on the vocal and physical aspects of how famous actors embody fictional characters.

Performance is a field of cinematic expression that is very rich. Many aspects of film acting, like the narrative itself, have their roots in theatrical conventions that were adopted. Because of this, the theatrical history influences the kinds of performances frequently seen in musicals and comedies, where physical skills, such as dancing, acrobatics, slapstick, or mime, may be required. Many performances that look more realistic and closer to how we perceive people behave in "real life", are influenced by the more intellectual theatrical traditions of professional theatre, especially those where the emphasis is focused on the actor's voice.

However, it is crucial to remember that concepts like "naturalism" and "visibility" are relative in the sense that they function in relation to accepted conventions and viewer expectations. As a result, a performance that may look overly stylized and overdone to a group of viewers may appear highly naturalistic to the other. This is because these judgments are made based more on what viewers are accustomed to seeing on stage and screen than on how people actually behave in real life. Any performance analysis entails dissecting an actor's actions into different components. This can be challenging because we are used to interpreting performances in terms of the intentions and feelings of the characters rather than the acting skills. However, scholars have identified the following as some elements of performance that may be analysed. They are facial expressions, voice, and gestures of body parts like hands, arms, neck, legs, and eyeballs. Others include body movement (movement of the whole body, including how someone stands up or sits down, how they walk, run, etc.); and body posture (how someone is standing or sitting).

Usually, our common understanding of daily human body language shapes actors' performances and how we decode them. For instance, we know that when clutches his or her fist, it could depict anger. Occasionally, a performance by an actor might only exist in

the film's soundtrack such as when you hear a voice of an actor but do not see the face. Therefore, because films have a wide range of acting styles, we must strive to understand what kind of acting style the film is aiming for rather than assuming that acting must be realistic.

We are aware that the performances in any fictional film are a product of the abilities and choices of the actors when we watch it. When we refer to successful performance as "larger than life," we appear to be recognizing the actor's talent. To properly analyze a film, we typically need to look beyond realistic presumptions and take into account the functions that the actor's performance provides. We can inquire as to how well the performance fits the genre, storyline, and overall mise-en-scene provided by the movie. Whether realistic or not, performance should be evaluated using the overall design by the film director.

Performance can be thought of in two different ways. It is possible to *stylize or individualise* a performance. When we consider a realistic performance, we frequently keep both of these forms in mind. Individualized performance is typically dominating, that is, the actor imposes the character and leaves a lasting impression of it through his or her actions while the stylized performance is neither flat nor extravagant. Again, extroversion and exaggeration are two ways that filmmakers can produce stylized performances.

The core terms, given the circumstances, objectives, actions, and units of action (or beats), can capture and explain the meaning of actors' physical and verbal nuances, making *script analysis* valuable when analysing performances. Four questions are posed when utilising script analysis to look at finished performances. The questions include:

1. How do characters try to achieve their separate objectives?
2. What methods does each character employ to accomplish that goal?
3. What objective actions do they employ to affect the other character's behaviour?
4. What other physical or vocal changes indicate a change in the type of action being performed?
5. What role does each character play in the scene's goals?
6. What specific details about each character in the scene are provided?

These questions are relevant when either studying a script to construct a characterization or examining performances in a finished scene.

You may also see how acting seamlessly blended with other film techniques by looking at how an actor's performance fits into the larger picture of the film. For example, the actor is always a graphic component of the film and some films emphasize this. Editing can also influence performance. Actors perform in segments because a film is shot over a long period, with several shots capturing various parts of a scene. This procedure may be advantageous to the filmmaker. The editor can choose the best gestures and expressions

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from multiple takes of each shot to produce a composite performance that is likely to be superior to any sustained performance. The filmmaker can enhance the performance still by including sound and additional shots.

When the performers are not actors or even humans, context issues become much more crucial. Filmmaking skills like framing and editing can influence how well-trained animals perform. Acting gives an infinite variety of creative options, just like every other aspect of a film. Without considering the shape of the entire film, it is impossible to evaluate performance on a general scale.

Alhaja Eniola Salami (Sola Sobowale) displayed a 'realistic' performance in her role in *King of Boys 1* (produced and directed by Kemi Adetiba). *Source: my9jatv.com/YouTube*

2.5.4 Lighting

Lighting is an important element in mise-en-scene analysis. Over the years and as film production technology grows, filmmakers have made creative use of light in telling their stories. As a major component, you cannot do without taking note of the dynamics of light in a well-produced film.

The design of lighting is similar to that of sets and costumes, and it is combined with the other components to form the mise-en-scène. Lighting design has the power to draw attention to or eliminate shadows, vividly illuminate a scene, envelop it in unsettling darkness, or simply denote the time of day or night. It can draw our attention to a specific area of the frame, mould our perceptions of the characters, or evoke a certain feeling. Fundamentally, lighting makes it easier for us to see what's happening on the screen, and how this is done in the movie contributes significantly to its visual style.

Lighting can come from things we see on screens such as lamps, torches, candles, and other items that are decorations or props. However, lighting usually comes from sources that are off-screen but in the background. The kind of story and the filming location has a big impact on how lighting affects the way a film looks. So that we are not distracted from the action of the story by light beams that seem to appear out of nowhere, lighting setups in the conventional film are typically created to be consistent with the light sources we see on-screen. This will help to focus our attention on the narrative rather than technical aspects. Occasionally, lighting can be used for unpleasant purposes such as what is experienced in a horror film.

Lighting in creative filmmaking is more than just the illumination that makes it possible for us to view the action. Each shot's overall composition is influenced by the lighter and darker portions of the frame, which also serve to draw our attention to certain objects and movements. A prominently lit area could bring our attention to an important gesture, but a shadow might hide something or create a sense of suspense about what else might be there. Textures can also be articulated by lighting. Additionally, colour offers a significant stylistic alternative in lighting setups.

To enable us to perceive the scene as the filmmaker intended and to engage us visually concerning plot, theme, and mood, decisions are made regarding how many lights (sources) to utilise, where to place and aim these lights (direction), and how powerful the lights should be (intensity or quality). A director can outline and shape the proportions and planes of the subject, express emotional mood and atmosphere, and provide unique dramatic effects by manipulating the intensity, direction, and diffusion of the light. Hence, the dramatic impact of a scene is significantly influenced by how well it is lighted. Essentially, highlights and shadows produced by lighting give objects their shape. Not only does lighting produce textures, but also overall shape. Setting and lighting work together to influence how much space we sense in a situation.

With your understanding of the importance of lighting and its cinematic effect on films, you must also understand what has been referred to as lighting schemes (patterns) that film directors use to communicate their narratives and make an impression on the scene on the audience.

Film directors may use a two or three-point lighting scheme. Most contemporary filmmakers, particularly in Hollywood films, use the three-point lighting scheme. The three-point lighting is a balanced lighting scheme that employs three points of illumination which are: a bright light that directs our eyes to the subject in the form of a *key or primary light* that is facing the subject (actor); a balancing and less intense *fill-light* that fills and softens the shadows created by areas not covered by the key light to create contrast at an appropriate ratio; and the *backlight* also called the *rim light* usually placed behind the

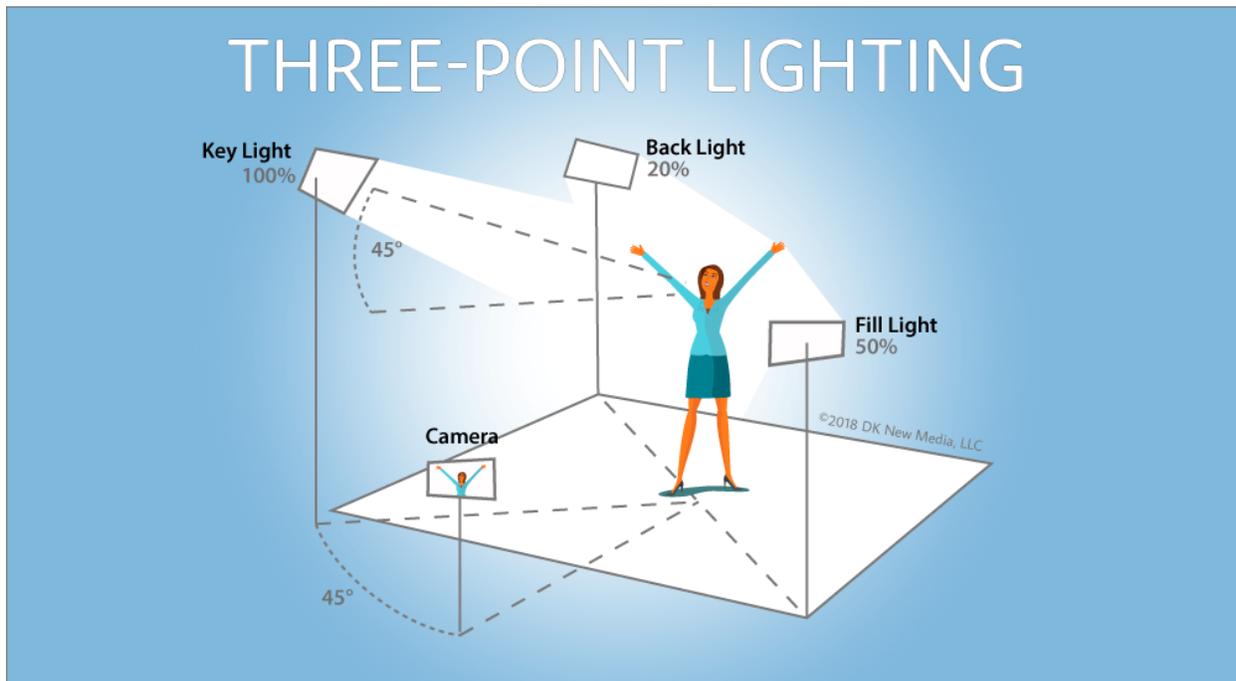subject to add highlights, create a halo effect and often used to separate the character from the background.

Figure showing the three-point lighting system in film production…*Source: Martechzone*

Also, there are two approaches to the density of lighting in film production. Density refers to how "intense" or "slight" a director allows light to reflect in a particular mise-en-scene. This approach could either be the **high-key** approach or the **low-key** approach.

High-key lighting is an all-encompassing lighting scheme that employs backlighting and fill-lighting to produce a minimal difference between lighter and darker parts. Typically, the light is soft, which renders shadowy parts quite visible. High-key lighting can convey many lighting situations or times of day, rather than just depicting a brightly lighted environment like a glittering ballroom or a sunny afternoon. It works well for comedy and lively settings, such as those in musicals. In general, scenes with strong contrast, with a broad range of differences between bright and dark areas, produce more potent, dramatic effects than situations with an even concentration of lighting. Essential, it can be agreed that high-key lighting makes a scene very bright and makes all elements clear and visible.

On the other hand, in low-key lighting, only a few lights define the subject putting most of the set in shadow. In mystery and horror movies, this kind of lighting heightens the suspense and fosters a gloomy tone. Stronger contrasts and sharper, darker shadows are produced by low-key illumination. Frequently, fill light is reduced or completely absent due to the harsh lighting and results in extremely dark and luminous areas of the image.

Sometimes, low-key lighting is achieved by using only one light source. As a result, low-key lighting is used when there is a noticeable contrast between completely lit and dark regions of the image due to the intensity difference between the key and fill-lights.

> **Note**: Low-key lighting puts most of the set in shadow and shows the subjects with just a few highlights, increasing the intimacy and dramatic intensity of the scene. High-key lighting opens up the frame with light in background areas and balances the lighting throughout the set. Although high-key lighting diminishes the intimacy and dramatic intensity that the scene has with low-key lighting, it provides more complete visual information about the two women and the setting. (Petrie & Boggs, 2012)

In analysing lighting, you may also consider four other areas from which a film director may deploy lighting, particularly when used for characterisation. The four areas are *lighting quality*, *lighting direction, lighting source* and *lighting colour*.

The relative intensity of the illumination is referred to as *lighting quality*. While soft lighting produces diffused illumination, hard lighting produces sharp edges, precise textures, and well-defined shadows. In the natural world, the midday sun produces hard light, but a cloudy sky produces soft light. Although the phrases are relative and there are various lighting conditions in between, we can typically tell the differences.

The light's path from its source or sources to the illuminated object is referred to as the *lighting direction* in a shot. This is differentiated as **side lighting, frontal lighting, backlighting, underlighting** and **top lighting**. Sidelight (also known as a cross light) shapes the character's features, while frontal lighting tends to reduce shadows. Backlighting illuminates a subject from behind. The light can be positioned from a variety of angles, including directly above the figure, at different angles to the side, directly in front of the camera, and from below. When used alone, backlighting frequently results in *silhouettes*. The method can provide a faint contour when used in conjunction with more frontal sources of light. Edge lighting or rim lighting is the term for this application of backlighting. Whereas, under lighting implies that the subject is lit from below. Under lighting is sometimes employed to provide dramatic horror effects because it tends to distort features, but depending on the situation, it may also just denote a genuine light source, like a fireplace or flashlight. Where the spotlight beams down from—typically almost directly on the subject—is an example of top lighting. Top lighting is frequently employed to produce a glamorous appearance. Top lighting used in a subdued manner (low key lighting) at crime scenes where a suspect is being questioned might convey the intense nature of the activities taking place there. Manipulating the direction of light may create what is referred to as "character of light" which could be direct, harsh, or hard lighting, medium and balanced lighting or soft and diffused lighting.

A silhouette shot in a film...*Source: Rawpixel*

The *lighting source* is a decision that the film director takes for an effective setting and characterization that would help the narrative intended in the film. The light source may be natural sources as depicted with a bright sunny day or a starry night that would require little extra light. The intention of the director in the scene or what he intends to be in the performance may determine the source of light. In terms of lighting, most modern filmmakers aim for a very natural effect. For instance, they use any type of illumination when filming a documentary. However, to have more control over how the scene looks, most fictional films employ additional light sources. Usually, the streetlights and table lamps in a set are not strong or diverse enough to produce a strong impression. Therefore, the director will frequently produce a lighting scheme that appears to match the sources in the scene because often, the visible sources are what drive the lighting pattern. This is sometimes referred to as motivated and unmotivated lighting a situation where what is available determines the source and choice of lighting. As a result, as previously explained, film directors often choose two main sources: the key light and a fill light. Artificial lighting could also be required even if the filmmaker chooses to use natural light to give the movie a more authentic or natural appearance. Whereas, some filmmakers adhere to the realism principle and refrain from using artificial lighting in their works. Hence, in addressing the issue of the light source, the film director must aim for a balance.

In *Wedding Party 1* (directed by Kemi Adetiba) the shot motivated natural lighting through the window. The linen curtain reduced the flash effect to create a bright but clement shot. *Source: YouTube.*

The *lighting colour* presents a unique dynamism in mise-en-scene. Lighting can be shaded to cast different colours over the backdrop and the characters, and these colours may be significant to the plot. During production, filters are occasionally utilized to colourize a scene for dramatic effect. A thin film of polycarbonate or polyester, known as a coloured gel in film production, is placed in front of a light source or glass to create this tinting effect. We frequently assume that film lighting is only available in two colours: the gentle yellow of incandescent room lamps or the white of sunlight. In reality, filmmakers that decide to manipulate lighting often choose a light that is as white as possible. The filmmaker can colour the onscreen illumination in any way by adding filters in front of the light source. The source of colourful light in the environment can be realistic or unrealistic, depending on what the director wants to achieve. With the advent of digital technology, directors are now able to create more artificial lighting that portrays colours as they want them. A lot of animated and fictional films have benefitted from these technologies to achieve dramatic expression.

In **King of Boys** (directed by Kemi Adetiba) the director manipulated the lighting colour with a match of blue that smashes into the white colour towards the door as the scene shows Kemi Salami's (Adesua Etomi) moody reflection on her past, how she became an orphan and a member of a notorious gang. *Source: my9jatv.com/YouTube.*

So far, we have extensively discussed the major elements for analysis in a mise-en-scene. As stated earlier, you need to understand the basics so that you will know what to actually look out for when you are dealing with this aspect of film analysis. Generally and with the knowledge you have gained so far, the following are some of the questions that this fore-knowledge will guide you to ask and answer in a mise-en-scene analysis:

1. Are any lighting effects employed, for instance, to highlight a character, an object, or an action?
2. Are there any characters the crowd finds repulsive? Why?
3. Does the actor give the character connotations from outside the story?
4. Does the character evolve throughout the course of the film, and if so, how do the character's costume, make-up, and hairstyle reflect on this change?
5. Does the set design depict an imaginative setting, and if so, how might this relate to a more significant creative assertion?
6. Does the viewer feel a connection to the characters? How is that done?
7. How and why are items positioned within the frame?
8. How are patterns and shadows utilised in lighting to generate mood, ambience, and meaning?
9. How does a scene work to express a broader point to the film's plot?

10. How does it evoke a feeling or establish an event? Why is this and how successful is it?
11. How does the actor's portrayal affect how the character is portrayed?
12. How does this scene represent the theme of the movie?
13. How have the actors in this scene been changed by their clothing choices, makeup, and hair if you are familiar with how they appeared off-screen?
14. Is the lighting realistic, expressive, or both natural and artificial?
15. Is the stage designed to be dramatic or artificial, and if so, why?
16. What bigger setting for the plot is implied by the indoor and external architecture, furnishings, and objects in the scenes?
17. What can you conclude about a character's social standing, line of work, and outlook on life from how they look?
18. What can you conclude about the characters' personal histories, hobbies, employment situations, and social and economic standing from the set?
19. What effects are created in a scene, and what is their purpose?
20. What impact does this have on the acceptability or belief of the character?
21. What is contained within the frame? What's been omitted?
22. What role do any important props play in the scene? Do they have symbolic significance or do they offer hints about the action?
23. Where and why is the action taking place?
24. Where in the frame are the characters placed, and why?
25. Which historical era is evoked?

I have deliberately outlined these questions for a better understanding of the perspectives of a mise-en-scene analysis. Your analysis may be this long or shorter depending on your objectives. So, would you like to practice with these questions by picking a movie that you love and analysing it? I am sure you will find the exercise very rewarding and interesting.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3
Attempt the following question before you move to the next section: This will take you about 10 minutes.
   1. Identify and discuss the major elements in a mise-en-scene analysis of a film.

2.6 CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL ANALYSIS
I am sure that reading through how semiotic analysis, narrative analysis and mise-en-scene analysis are done in film analysis and criticism would have generated some interest in you. I also believe that your appreciation of the process of filmmaking would have improved. However, we still have one more form of a major analysis in film- the cultural and historical analysis.

Examining a film's link to its larger cultural, historical, or theoretical settings is one of the most popular types of analysis. Films are always a product of the culture or era in which they were created, regardless of whether they actively comment on their setting or not. This kind of analysis investigates how the film reflects, contests, or subverts certain interactions, whether they be historical, social, or even theoretical by setting the movie in a specific context.

For instance, *symptomatic meanings* serve as a helpful reminder that meaning is primarily a social phenomenon. Many of a movie's meanings are ultimately ideological, that is, they originate from structures of culturally specific views of the world. Our ideological frame of reference is made up of our political beliefs, political ideologies, racial, gender, and social class perceptions, as well as our most entrenched assumptions about what is important in life.

Sometimes, we are prone to believe that our views provide the most comprehensive accounts of how the world operates. But when we contrast our ideology with that of a different society or time, we can understand how heavily influenced by history and society many of those beliefs are. It is possible to study the symptomatic meanings of films. However, the generality and abstraction of these interpretations may distract us from the specific structure of the film. We should root symptomatic meanings in the particular elements of the film, much like when evaluating implicit meanings. Through its format, a film enacts ideological meanings. Films have meaning because we give them meanings and often, the director leads us to specific interpretations while we may also arrive at interpretations that the director did not want.

What this tells us about cultural and historical analysis of film is that it must be sufficiently contextualised within the society that the film was made, the target audience that the film seeks to address or the historical perspectives that the film seeks to portray. For instance, some films are set in the Western culture- and even in the Western culture, we have had to deal with analysing films with the German ideology, French ideology and Hollywood films for the United States. The Chinese films, Japanese films, Nollywood films and Bollywood films all present different perspectives on cultural analysis. Therefore, a film critic must ensure that he or she gets familiar with these variations which are often reflected through the genre of the film. When watching a film, we look for symptomatic, referential, explicit, and implicit meanings. In light of this, it is feasible to interpret a film's explicit or implied meanings as including elements of a specific set of social values.

We often hear about films that are termed "Eurocentric" or "Afrocentric"- trying to reflect socio-cultural ideologies. That means we assess the film as a manifestation of a concept that has intellectual, moral, social, or cultural significance and the potential to positively impact our lives. This means that for the sake of film analysis, the production, as well as the viewing of films, are defined by their cultural, political, and sociological settings. The

analysis, therefore, will focus on repeated patterns that are culturally attuned to the film and the social outcomes of interpretation rather than the specific subject who watches a film.

For instance, in *Invasion 1897*, the film director, Lancelot Imasuen showcased the cultural identity of the Benin tribe in Edo State Nigeria as well as the historical perspectives on how the British invaded the Benin kingdom leading to the exile of Oba Ovonramwen to Calabar. The costume, hair-do and props extensively showcased the cultural practices in the region. Although the language of the film was English, there was intermittent use of the Benin language particularly among the palace chief. The film chronicled the plot to showcase the stages of the event in a systematic presentation. In *Campus Queen* directed by Tunde Kelani, social and political issues such as corruption were explored amidst the culture of decency and mutual respect which the film also portrayed.

The British Colonial Masters rejoiced after deposing Oba Ovonramwen and carting away all the bronze artefacts in the historical movie Invasion 1897. Source: tvnolly/YouTube

Half of a Yellow Sun is a historical fiction that showcased the Nigerian Civil War post-independence between 1967-1970. The first Nigerian Independence Day, which was celebrated on October 1, 1960, marks the start of the movie, which ends with the end of the Nigerian Civil War in 1970. Stock video from old television newscasts covering political developments in Nigeria is spliced throughout the movie. Therefore, in cultural and historical analysis, then you could ask:

1. Based on the examination of the historical balance of the movie, do particular aspects of film theory apply?

2. How do fundamental aspects of tone, plot, and storyline change as a result of production within the era or period?
3. How does the film address, support, or even critique social and political concerns prevalent at the time of its release, such as those about racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual identity?
4. How does the film's creation date affect your opinion of it?
5. How might a particular film theory offer a vocabulary or set of concepts for expressing the characteristics of the film?
6. What impact may a biographical knowledge of the film's authors and their historical setting have on your perception of the work?
7. What was the time frame or era that the film production depicts?
8. Would the film's real interpretation change if it had been made in a different historical era?

2.7 SUMMARY

We have covered the semiotic, narrative, mise-en-scene, cultural, and historical aspects of film analysis in considerable detail. While cultural and historical analysis focuses on how films are connected to cultural and historical perspectives of society, semiotic analysis deals with the use of signs and symbols, narrative analysis deals with the film structure, including characterization, and mise-en-scene deals with the elements of design in a shot, and so forth.

2.8 GLOSSARY

- **Blocking**: The planned placement of the camera and the actors (s)
- **Exposition**: The presentation of narrative information that establishes setting and/or location, as well as character development, to offer context for the story and storyline.
- **Film Set**: Frequently describes a set that is built on a studio lot or soundstage. Also referred to more broadly as any genuine or made-up location where filming takes place
- **Flashback**: A moment that breaks up the story's chronological flow by alluding to a previous time.
- **Flash-forward**: A scene that jumps ahead in time to a later time, breaking the narrative's linear progression.
- **High-key lighting**: lighting design that creates a low contrast between the bright and dark portions of the frame is referred to as high-key lighting, which is typically achieved using a three-point technique.
- **Location shooting**: is the practice of recording scenes outside of a set or studio.

- **Low-key lighting**: is a word used to describe a lighting scheme in which the sections of the frame that are lit and those that are darkened are in sharp contrast to one another. It is frequently created using just one light source.
- **Metonymy**: Using one of a part's characteristics to symbolize it, a metaphor is used. E.g. using the pen to represent journalism
- **Mise-en-scene:** is a phrase used in the theatre that is typically rendered as "staging" or "what has been placed in the scene." In a film, the term "mise-en-scène" describes how the scene is set up, illuminated, and framed for the camera in addition to the sets, costumes, props, and placement of the characters. Using mise-en-scène, a filmmaker (the metteur-en-scène) can give movie meanings that are either very simple or very complicated, depending on their aims and their expertise.
- **Narrative economy**: How effectively a film delivers its story.
- **Natural lighting**: Using natural sunshine (or occasionally moonlight) to illuminate interior or outside situations.
- **Plot Duration**: The period that solely includes the story events chosen for the plot.
- **Prop:** A shortened form of property used in a film scene which could be crucial to the action.
- **Semiotics analysis**: states that the meaning of a word—or, in the case of film, an image or sound—can be complicated and layered.
- **Story Duration**: The time frame that includes all of the story's events.
- **Three-point lighting**: a well-balanced lighting arrangement which uses a key light that is bright and draws attention to the object, a fill light that is balancing and less powerful that softens the shadows cast by the key light, and a backlight that is behind the subject and adds depth.

2.9 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READINGS

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2.10   POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

Self-Assessment Exercise 1:

Discuss what semiotic analysis in film entails.

When interpreting symbols and signs, semiotic analysis typically uses fictional characters from movies as well as inanimate objects as metaphors and comparisons. Because symbols can be interpreted in many different ways, authors frequently have to choose what a particular symbol means concerning both the film's setting and a wider cultural or historical background. It is the study of signs (semiosis), as well as any action, behaviour, or procedure involving signs, such as the process of infusing moving images with meaning. Semiotics is the study of how an idea or item communicates meaning and what meaning it expresses. All forms of art contain hidden signals that the observer is free to interpret. The sign, an uncommon but underappreciated narrative unit in cinema criticism, is the subject of the study of representation in semiotics. The two elements that makeup signs, which are units of meaning, are the signifier and the signified. The social meanings connected to the signifier, which is the visible part of the sign, are referred to as the signified.

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Self-Assessment Exercise 2:

Reading through the sample narrative analysis presented in this section, discuss the major elements in the narrative analysis of a film.

Investigating the plot, characters, and narrative structure of a story is called narrative analysis. This form of analysis considers the entire movie as well as the plot it attempts to present. The narrative structure includes both the full series of events that we, as viewers, piece together (the story) and the events that are represented in the film (the plot). Or to put it another way, the plot is a certain selection and organization of the events in the story. There is a distinction between plot order, which refers to the order of events used in telling the story, and story order, which deals with the chronological order of narrative occurrences. In the narrative analysis of *Titanic*, the critic identified the three-point plot which shows the beginning, the crisis and the resolution. The analysis further divided the three-point structure into five to ease the understanding of the film structure. The structure of the analysis showcased the outset, transforming element, set of actions, balancing and organizing elements and conclusion. (You can then provide examples of what you have observed)

Self-Assessment Exercise 3:

Identify and discuss the major elements in a mise-en-scene analysis of a film.

The setting; costumes, make-up, and hair; acting, blocking, and performance; as well as the lighting, are essentially the key elements in a mise-en-scene analysis.

Many sets are used in a film's design, which typically serves to imply the larger real setting where a tale is located. Either a built-in set or a real location could be used. The environment can take centre stage; it need not just operate as a container for human events but can also actively take part in the plot. The set is crucial for transporting the audience to a certain location, whether it is in the present or the past, real or imagined, and for giving details about the characters' circumstances. The authenticity of the setting is frequently its primary concern, and the content and design of the set are decided by what is appropriate for the time and place of the story.

Human design, which includes costumes, make-up, and hair, helps actors transform into the fictional or real-life characters they play on television. From a character's appearance, cosmetics, and hairstyle, we can infer information about their socioeconomic background, line of work, and view on life. Changes in a character's attire might also indicate psychological shifts. A character's evolution over time can be depicted by their clothes, cosmetics, and hairstyle, whether it is as a result of ageing, a change in employment or

social position, or both. The patterns and colours of the costumes are harmonized with the colours of the set to create an integrated or coherent design.

In acting, a person assumes a role and performs it on stage, in a film. Acting requires a wide range of skills, including the ability to comprehend a film, a keen imagination, emotional delicacy, physical expressivity, vocal projection, and vocal clarity. Blocking is the term used to describe the coordinated positioning of the performers and the camera in acting. By combining mise-en-scène and camera work, blocking, a vital element of composition that is characterized by framing, is created.

Performance, on the other hand, is a more general term that includes both acting and making an appearance as oneself or a particular kind. Any performance analysis involves breaking down an actor's actions into their parts. Because we are accustomed to analyzing performances in terms of the intents and emotions of the characters rather than the acting abilities, this can be difficult.

In analyzing a mise-en-scene, lighting is crucial. Filmmakers have used light in inventive ways to create stories over time as filmmaking technology has advanced. You cannot avoid observing the dynamism of light as a key element in a well-made movie. Lighting has a similar design to sets and costumes, and it is incorporated with the other elements to create the mise-en-scene. A scene can be brightly illuminated, shrouded in a frightening darkness, or simply designated as day or night by using lighting design. Shadows can also be highlighted or eliminated. It can alter our impressions of the people, focus our attention on a particular section of the frame, or arouse certain emotions.

UNIT 3: CINEMATIC ELEMENTS IN FILM ANALYSIS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear students, I am sure that by now you would be agitating to lay your hands on that film of your choice so that you can attempt analysing it. That would be an interesting thing to do. However, before you go ahead, let us discuss a few other major elements that could impact your final analysis. Remember that film is a collection of so many creative elements such as cinematography (camera works), sound and editing. We will discuss this element significantly in this unit.

3.2 LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Describe how camera works are used to create a cinematic experience in film.
2. Explain how sound contributes to narratives in film.
3. Discuss the components of editing in film production.

3.3 CINEMATOGRAPHY (CAMERA WORK)

The science and art of making motion pictures is called cinematography. It involves methods like general scene composition, lighting of the set or location, selection of cameras, lenses, filters, film stock, camera angle and movement, and integration of any special effects. The director of photography, sometimes known as the cinematographer, first cameraman, lighting cameraman, or director of photography, is in charge of getting the director's desired photographic images and effects. All these issues may involve a large crew on a feature film.

Since every component that is added to a given shot is captured by a camera, noticing any single aspect of mise-en-scène also means noticing a component of cinematography. The primary responsibility of the camera crew is to capture the mise-en-scene's design elements in motion. The camera positions us as viewers of the mise-en-scène, determining our viewpoint on a scene, which is unique to cinema. Importantly, this viewpoint heavily depends on what we see and how the director has chosen to present it to us. The director and cinematographer collaborate to plan and carry out the camera works in the film. In essence, the camera works depict the depth, the aesthetics and in other words, the beauty of what we see on our screens.

Therefore, in analysing the cinematography of a film, you want to understand and evaluate the fundamentals of camera placement, including angle, distance, and framing. Also, you will describe the various camera movements and their aesthetic and literary implications, and know and describe the fundamentals of the depth of field and focal length.

To successfully examine these elements, you must understand how the film director manipulates the camera to achieve these cinematic effects. We will consider three major aspects of such camera manipulation which are:
   i.   Camera Placement
   ii.   Camera Movement
   iii.   Focus and Depth

3.3.1   Camera Placement
Generally, when we talk about camera placement, we are discussing the placement of the camera in relation to the subject of focus. To achieve these, directors place the camera at different angles to capture the essence of what they intend.

For instance, directors use **low-angle shots** or **high-angle shots**. A camera is placed below the subject and is pointed upward in a low-angle shot while a camera pointed upward above the subject, creates a high-angle view. Especially with subjects that are positioned very near to the camera, low-angle images tend to exaggerate size. Low angles are frequently used in movies to convey power, majesty, and divinity, or to give a character the appearance of seriousness or danger. Low-angle photos are frequently unattractive. So sometimes, the low angle is used by filmmakers to show something fundamentally

unpleasant about a character. On the other side, high-angle pictures are more attractive and tend to humanize in part because they downplay size and scale. A high angle usually tends to minimize the effect of the camera. This explains why attractive film actors are frequently photographed from high angles because it is a pleasant visual aesthetic for those accustomed to flattery. Scale inside the shot can also be manipulated by using a high angle. A high-angle shot dwarfs the figures and makes them look smaller whereas a low angle magnifies their size in comparison to the background. High-angle shots can offer a birds-eye perspective of a scene.

A high-angle shot in the music video of the soundtrack of **Merry Men** (directed by Toka McBaror) shows the geographical location of the shot. *Source: YouTube.*

A high-angle shot in *My Wife and I* (directed by Bunmi Ajaikaye) shows an intruder lying on the floor while the husband comes in. *Source: YouTube*

A low-angle shot in *Wedding Party* (directed by Kemi Adetiba) expresses the worried facial expression of Chief Felix Onwuka (Richard Mofe Damijo) at the presence of Rosie (Beverly Naya) at his son's wedding party during a discussion with Lady Obianuju Onwuka (Ireti Doyle). *Source: YouTube*

Other variations of camera angles are an **eye-level shot** which is a shot made by placing the camera at eye level with the subject; a **canted shot** made by tilting the camera at an angle on the subject.

To establish the distance, a director may use a **long shot** that includes the entire person and background or a shot where the subject appears relatively small. The long shot could be an **extreme long shot** or **medium long shot**, a shot of a person from the subject's knees up or a shot where the subject is slightly smaller than a medium shot. A camera that is set far away from its target is referred to as being in an extreme long shot in the terminology used to describe camera distance. An extreme close-up is when the camera is positioned very close to the subject. The extreme long shot, often known as an **establishing shot** in the film industry, is frequently employed to introduce a certain area or location. We think that a room is within a building when we see a scene being played out there after seeing its exterior (typically from a distance, hence the extreme long shot), even when the scene may be taking place on a soundstage in a studio. In films, specifically, the extremely long shot is utilized to establish the geographic context.

These also include a **medium shot** of a person from the waist up, or with on a scale of moderate size; **close-up** which is a shot of a person's face, or any shot that offers a detail of the subject such as a medium close-up (usually face and chest) and the extreme close-up which is only the face.

An extreme close-up shot in *The CEO* (directed by Kunle Afolayan). Source: YouTube

You need to know that the dynamics of the camera placement are important to your analysis because if you do not understand the concept behind the placement, you may not be able to objectively critique what the film director intended. However, another leg to this analysis is the camera movement.

3.3.2 Camera Movement

Since the camera is not a living thing, how does it move? The camera moves through the dynamics of the director to depict an intended narrative. One of the most exquisite and most undervalued effects in all of the art is camera movement. Movement across space on screen can be incredibly smooth, despite how much we take it for granted. A camera also shows much more than just the space it goes through by its simple movement that can convey feelings. However, there are techniques to how the director and the cameraman achieve this objective as we will now discuss.

For instance, a '**pan**' is when the camera itself is still but moves on its axis from side to side (moving from left to right and right to left). A **tilt** is when the camera is stationary but moves up and down in what may be referred to as a '**vertical pan**'. Both of these camera actions are similar to moving your head but not your body: by merely moving your head side to side (a pan) or nodding up and down (a tilt). The camera does not move from its fixed location on the ground either on a tripod or any other supporting device. When cameras pan and tilt, they display more space within the shot.

Placing a camera on a moving item, such as a car, train, ship or the camera's mobile device, is the easiest way to move it and that is referred to as a **'moving shot'**. In camera movement, we have the **'tracking shot'** or 'dolly tracking' which refers to a shot in which the camera moves parallel to the ground. A tracking shot is often used to describe any shot that moves smoothly alongside, behind, or ahead of refers to a shot in which the camera moves parallel to the ground. A tracking shot is often used to describe any shot that moves smoothly alongside, behind, or ahead of the action even when a track is not used. Another form of movement is the **'crane shot'**. A crane is a vehicular device with a carrier that helps move the camera up and down through space. The camera is attached on a form of cherry-picker for a crane shot, allowing it to soar extremely high in the air and back to the ground. However, it must be noted that the use of cranes for taking shots is gradually being taken over by the use of drones. With advanced technology, many filmmakers are experimenting with the use of drones which they would control using a computerized handle-held device. In tracking shots and crane shots (or what may be called drone shots the camera moves through space.

A crane was used in the production of **October 1** (directed by Kunle Afolayan) *Source: YouTube.*

A drone camera is used for filmmaking. *Source: Y.M. Cinema Magazine*

A motion picture camera, which used to be big and heavy, became so much smaller and lighter thanks to technological advancements that a camera operator could hold the camera

while filming. These produce 'hand-held shots' and are referred to as hand-held cameras. In further development, cameras can now be installed on a device called a 'Steadicam' which attaches to the body of the camera operator (via a vest) so that when the person walks, the movement will not make the recording in the shot bumpy.

You must know that in camera works, the character also plays a role in what has been described as motivated and unmotivated camera movement. Whether the movement is motivated or not is left up to the movie's characters. For instance, the camera movement is regarded as motivated if a character starts to move to the left and the camera follows her. It is unmotivated if the character remains motionless while the camera moves closer to her. As far as it establishes the characters' reality as being independent and distinct from the filmmaker's perspective on that world, this distinction is useful. Therefore, unmotivated camera movements are those that are related to the director's comments on the characters and events; motivated camera movements are those that are prompted by the characters and events in the film.

3.3.3 Camera Focus and Depth
Focus and depth are major parts of camera manipulation for cinematic effect in films. Contrary to the human eye, the camera may be adjusted to "see" in a variety of ways by altering the lens's size and aperture. Technically speaking, the *focal length* of a lens is the distance from its optical centre to the point at which light rays are focused in a clean and clear image on a photographic surface, video or digital sensor. The perspective of the shot is thus managed by the interaction between field of view and distance from the subject and a major way to achieve this is by zooming the lens.

Depth of field, which describes how much of the foreground, middle ground, and backdrop planes are kept in focus, is another aspect that the cinematographer can manipulate. The depth of field is determined by the distance between the closest and farthest object kept in focus within the frame. Let us discuss this by considering some of the techniques used to achieve focus and depth.

Therefore, what is a zoom? An optical illusion of motion caused by a specific type of lens rather than a moving camera is known as a zoom. When using a zoom, the camera operator changes the focal length of the lens from wide-angle to telephoto or from telephoto to wide angle, creating the impression that the camera is moving. Varifocal lenses are another name for zoom lenses. Therefore, zoom is a type of artificial movement. With a zoom, there is no actual movement; instead, the image is either enlarged or magnified when the lens changes from wide-angle to telephoto or, conversely, is demagnified as it changes from telephoto to wide angle.

Zoom has two extremes which are the telephoto and broad angle. The broad angle range which is like any wide-angle lens enhances the impression of depth, whilst the telephoto

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range tends to make space appear flatter. Realizing that film gives the appearance of a three-dimensional world—height, width, and depth—on a two-dimensional screen will help you to comprehend the differences in visual impact between a tracking shot and a zoom.

Deep focus, makes use of specialized lenses to enable the camera to focus simultaneously and typically with similar clarity on objects anywhere between two feet and several hundred feet away. The ability of the human eye to view a wide variety of objects in sharp focus is most closely approximated by this depth of focus. The audience's perception of the dramatic action is significantly impacted by the consistent usage of this method.

Again, filmmakers can focus on one aspect of the scene (foreground, for instance) while leaving another (background, for instance) out of focus using a method called *racking (pulling) focus*. The filmmaker can then rapidly and precisely change the focus via rack focusing. Racking, as an obtrusive camera technique for focus, draws attention to the object and directs our eyes as we analyze the scene. Filmmakers use racking focus to emphasize spatial relationships (between objects or characters in the foreground and background) or to make comparisons (typically between characters), to demonstrate incompatibility (e.g., that one is held in sharp focus while the other is not, or that the two characters cannot be held in focus at the same time because they are so different).

 A racking focus shot on Nez Okigbo (Jim Iyke) with a lady in the background in ***Merry Men*** (directed by Toka Macbaror). *Source: YouTube*

I am sure that with the foregoing explanations, you will be able to analyse efficiently how a film director may have intelligently used the camera to create cinematic effects in a film. But there is still one more thing to know which is the ***cinematic point of view***. What is the cinematic point of view?

A cinematic point of view (or cinematic perspective) is a narrative point of view intended to simulate the experience of viewers when they watch films. It is about understanding *how* the film is been shown and *why* it has been shown that way to completely understand how the cinematic film works and successfully expand our perception. Some of the questions that must be answered when examining the cinematic point of view are:

1. How do variations in cinematic perspective impact our response?
2. How does our reaction to the action change depending on where the camera is positioned and how it views the action?
3. What angle and what sort of eyes does the camera use to capture the action?

We will limit ourselves to the following four cinematic points of view that filmmakers use in film production which are:
1. The objective point of view (camera as sideline observer)
2. The subjective point of view (camera as a participant in the action)
3. The indirect-subjective point of view
4. The director's interpretive point of view

1. **The Objective Point of View**: the objective point of view uses a static camera as often as possible. It focuses on the actors and the action without calling attention to the camera. An emotional separation between the camera and the subject is suggested by the objective camera, which appears to be capturing the story's character and events as simply and directly as possible. The director primarily employs natural, typical, uncomplicated sorts of camera positions and camera angles. The objective camera simply records the action, letting it play out without making any interpretations or comments. From the vantage point of an impersonal observer, we witness the action. If the camera moves, it does so discreetly and without drawing attention to itself. Most films use the objective point of view to some extent to maintain continuity and clearly communicate the dramatic action. The objective perspective encourages us to recognize small, but potentially important, visual elements on our own. However, excessive use could make us bored.
2. **The Subjective Point of View**: The subjective point of view gives us access to the character's emotional state and visual perspective on the action. We are tempted to become the characters and go through their emotions due to the camera movement, which produces visual sequences that heighten the suspense. Editing that is skilful and a perspective that is near to the action are key components in achieving this type

of subjective immersion. When the point of view in a movie is subjective, we feel more immediate and intense emotions since we are so close to the action. Usually, a moving camera keeps this point of view, forcing us to see exactly what the character is seeing and, in a sense, to take on the role of the character. A fully subjective point of view is nearly impossible to maintain throughout a movie. It is obvious that maintaining such a point of view for a full movie is challenging because a movie typically needs to vary between the objective and subjective points of view to be clear and consistent in its storytelling. As we have noticed that both the objective and subjective point of view may be boring, filmmakers often alternate the camera movement to reflect both views to create a cinematic effect. They often start with the objective view that appears to distance the viewers from the object (character) and later end with a subjective view that creates an incline into what the character is thinking based on what was shown earlier.

3. **The indirect-subjective point of view:** The indirect-subjective point of view does not offer the perspective of a participant, but it does place us close to the action, making us feel deeply connected and intensifying our visual experience. Think about a close-up that depicts a character's emotional response. Even though we are aware that we are not the characters, we find ourselves emotionally engaged despite this. In contrast to an objective photo taken at a longer distance, a close-up of a face contorted in misery lets us feel that pain more intensely. Without really portraying the activity through the eyes of a participant, the indirect-subjective point of view gives us the impression that we are taking part in it. The indirect-subjective viewpoint's success depends on this closeness.

4. **Director's Interpretive Point of View**: Our perspective is constantly being subtly manipulated by the director. The director decides what to show us as well as how we should view it. A particular tone, emotional attitude, or style is imposed on the image by the photographer by using specific camera angles, lenses, slow or fast motion, and other techniques. As a result, we are compelled to respond to what we see in a particular way, experiencing the interpretive point of view of the filmmaker. We are cognizant of the director's desire for us to view the action uniquely. A director instructs the actors on how to perform in a specific scene, prepares the scene for a particular tone, and moves the actors about for a variety of purposes.

Self-Assessment Exercise 1
Attempt the following question before you move to the next section: This will take you about 10 minutes.
1. Discuss the three major ways that film directors manipulate the camera in film production as they are relevant to film analysis.

So far, you have been exposed to perspectives on cinematography regarding how the camera works in film production. You have learnt about the different points of view that

the film director may depict in the camera placement, camera movement, focus and depth. Therefore, when you are analysing a film, you should be able to discuss these aspects. In analysing cinematography, the following are some of the questions that may help you as you watch the film of your choice:

1. Does it alternate between different parts of the scene? How does this lens change your perspective and the photograph's meaning?
2. Does the camera appear to be representing a character's point of view or is it objective?
3. Does the camera move around the room with ease or is it handheld?
4. Does the camera tilt or pan? If so, how does this approach change the scene's significance?
5. Does the off-screen area help you understand the shot better?
6. How do the camera's positioning and angle affect the perception of the scene and its significance?
7. How does camera distance impact your perspective and the image's meaning?
8. How does the camera navigate the cinematic environment?
9. How does the crane movement alter my perspective and my interpretation of the image?
10. Is it a zoom, telephoto, or wide-angle lens?
11. Regarding the image's foreground, middle ground, and background planes that are kept in sharp focus, how does the focus affect the setting and how do you interpret the shot?
12. What impact does the image's framing have on its meaning?
13. What kind of focal length or angle of view does the camera's lens seem to be providing when looking at the scene?

SAMPLE

So far, you have learnt a lot regarding camera work. As an additional resource, please scan the QR code below to listen to more information on "how to read cinematography". In case you do not have a QR Code Scanner, you may simply right-click on this YouTube link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dhWIDCnktwc

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3.4 SOUND

There is hardly any film production without sound. Although the theatre has miming which is the theatrical technique of expressing an idea or mood or portraying a character entirely by gesture and bodily movement without the use of words, film (motion picture) seems not to have made headway in this regard. Therefore, sound is a critical part of filmmaking.

As a film analyst, you are duty bound to examine the effect of sound in the film's narrative because they connote and denote different moods, meaning and so on. Even in situations where quiet seems to be the norm, sound engages a unique sensory realm that requires careful attention. Sound serves a variety of purposes. Sound actively influences how we perceive and interpret the image and is not just an accompaniment to the image. It focuses our attention on specific areas of the image and gives us hints to create expectations. As with image elements, sound elements or kinds can also serve as motifs and can also easily become stereotypes.

In analysing sound, you want to recognize some important connections between sounds and pictures as well as the intricacy of sound design. You want to examine the many voice recordings used to tell a story, including conversation, voice-over, and direct address. You want to recognize the many purposes and features that music serves in a movie's soundtrack, the role that sound effects play in the enjoyment of watching a movie and also determine and examine how sound design influences how we perceive the events on the screen. Now, let us consider some details.

A film's soundtrack may feature soundtracks, ambient noise, dialogue, sound effects, and/or ambient or background noise and the experience of watching a film is always improved by some form of sound. The three major components that make up the sound in a film are **speech (dialogue), sound effects (noise), and the musical score**. The range, depth, and intensity of our experience are significantly increased by these factors compared to what can be attained solely by visual means. They also offer additional levels of meaning and provide sensuous and emotional sensations. Often, we typically accept the soundtrack without giving it much attention because we are more attentive to what we see than what we hear. As a result, we react instinctively to the information it gives while ignoring the sophisticated methods used to elicit those responses. But as a film critic, you must pay attention to sound since it will aid in your analysis of the storyline. Let us discuss this in some detail.

3.4.1 Speech (Dialogue)

Speech is not limited to language, although the dialogue is one of the most fascinating mechanisms in narrative film, binding the actor to the character and making that persona recognizably to the audience through the texture of the voice. There are other purposes for speech in movies besides naturalism. Instead of serving as an image's companion, sound may provide a counterpoint that helps the viewer make sense of an objective visual display.

Speech brings us closer to the nuances of emotion and puts us into proximity with the "reality" that is been displayed on the screen.

A major aspect of speech as earlier noted is **dialogue**. All of the spoken words in a film are considered dialogue. Dictionary definitions of the word "dialogue" state that it refers to a two-person conversation as opposed to a *monologue*, which is a lengthy speech given by one person. We must be aware of the distinctive features of film dialogue since it differs from stage dialogue in significant respects. Any spoken words, including conversations, speeches, chance utterances heard in crowd scenes, and voiceover narration, are referred to as dialogue in the production of movies. We naturally focus a large portion of our attention on sound in contemporary films to comprehend the speech, as most films' dialogue provides us with a wealth of crucial information.

In certain regulated circumstances, dialogue—scripted or improvised conversation—can be captured live on the set. Sound recordists commonly listen for or record the "sound of the room" in the absence of talk or movement before a take begins. Later on, during post-production, the recorded tone may be used as a baseline or constant background sound "presence" or mood for sound editing.

Again, when a character in a play breaks the perceived wall which separates the audience from the world portrayed in the movie by looking straight into the camera and addressing the audience, it is referred to as a *direct address*. Direct address disrupts the story's flow and, for a brief while, suggests that the fictitious characters are aware that they are in a movie, or at the very least, that a viewer or listener is watching and listening to them.

Similar to direct address, *voice-over narration* replicates the action of a narrator speaking to us directly while providing background information and commentary on the story. The narrator may also be a character in the story. However, unlike direct address, the character is not visible while they talk. Voice-over narration is nondiegetic because the lines are directed at the movie audience and are not heard by other characters in the narrative. In literary adaptations, a voice-over is frequently employed to "read" into the movie-specific passages from the source text.

3.4.2 Sound Effects (Noise)
All other sounds, both diegetic and nondiegetic, are considered sound effects. Every sound that is not spoken words or music, such as the crashing of the ocean, birds tweeting, a cannon's roar, or amusing honking noises, is regarded as a sound effect, whether it is diegetic or not. The main purpose of sound effects is to let the viewer feel as though the setting and action of the movie are happening. As viewers, we anticipate the sounds that the things we see on the screen will produce. We can hear the rumble of an approaching car's engine. The ocean is visible, and the wave roar is audible. We hear a dog barking and see him and so on.

You must understand that sound effects, do not necessarily have to be realistic. Rather, they simply need to live up to our expectations, some of which have been shaped by prior viewings of the film. For instance, the sound effects in a movie might be chosen from previously recorded sounds or they might come from original recordings. For example, if a scenario is taking place at a beach cabin, recordists go to the coast and capture the sound of the waves crashing against the rocks. When it is necessary, a foley artist who works with the sound design team makes sounds in a studio using a variety of items to enhance the story that is being told in a shot.

Again, sound effects can be used in conveying the narrative of a story. Sounds can have a simply ambient purpose or they can directly and specifically aid in delivering the story. Other basic sound effects, such as the sound of a phone ringing and TV static, can be cleverly incorporated into the narrative of the film. The sound of TV static indicates the beginning and conclusion of a shot, whereas the sound of a phone could represent dread or something that might prompt the character to act or respond. Simple sound effects' *timbre, volume (amplitude), and pitch* can all significantly advance the narrative. Volume refers to loudness and softness in varying degrees and can be used to increase or decrease tension as well as replicate the intensity of real sound. According to a scale from high to low, pitch describes the frequency of sound waves while the term "timbre" refers to the harmonic elements of sound which appear to give a sound a particular aspect or sensation.

How the filmmaker manipulates the timbre, volume and pitch in a sound effect contribute to what is called *sound perspectives*. The term "sound perspective" describes the location of the sound source within the frame of a movie or what could be described as the 'presence' of the sound. A sound can appear to be close or far, right or left, and so on. Because sound perspective and visual perspective are linked, the voices of characters speaking in a close-up, for example, would be more present than if they were speaking from a distance.

Another component of sound perspective is the employment of effects by sound engineers, recordists, and mixers to convey a feeling of the scale of a scene's setting. Usually, this happens in post-production when filmmakers create such effects. Similar to dialogue and music, sound effects can be utilized to inform us of what is happening even before we see anything on the screen. These kinds of sounds are known as sound cues because similar to a play's stage cue, they announce an impending character or action. Sound cues are frequently used to build tension. Sound effects can be utilized to draw our attention, make comments about, or accentuate the substance of a scene when realism is not the intended goal. To limit our understanding of what a character can hear and to evoke a feeling of mystery or suspense, sounds may be purposefully muffled or altered. Additionally, muffled audio effects might reflect a person's emotional condition.

Interestingly, do you know that *silence* can also be used as a form of sound effect? A brief *dead track*, or utter silence, can occasionally be just as striking as the loudest sound effect. Without sound, a film's frightening, unnatural quality compels us to focus intensely on the scene. The conscious rhythms of the scene become as natural as the rhythms of sound effects, conversation, and music, and when these rhythms cease, we immediately experience an almost physical sense of anxiety and suspense, as though we are holding our breath and cannot wait to begin breathing again. Sometimes, filmmakers combine this with the freeze frame to create a stunning effect on the film audience. We can be momentarily stunned by the abrupt transition from raucous, vivacious action to motionless, frozen stillness. A perfect blend of creativity.

3.4.3 Musical Score

The score, a musical accompaniment created especially for the film, serves as the main musical component for the majority of films. The music is typically written by the score's composer to go with already-filmed scenes. Music scores are composed to serve as a reflection on the pictures we see onscreen. The score can significantly impact how we understand a scene, even though it is added late in the post-production process. The rhythm, a harmonious or dissonant harmonic structure, and even the musical instrument selection can have a big impact on how we feel and how we react to the activity on the screen. Music can help us to relate to the mood and atmosphere (romantic or violent), the social, cultural and historical context of the film, communicate and build up to events of different nature and suggest the character's role and responsibility.

This musical score might be simple or rich and orchestral and it mostly serves as non-diegetic background noise. Because it emphasizes, highlights, conveys, signals, or speaks about the narrative as it unfolds on screen, background music is also referred to as *underscoring*. This might also entail the utilization of *stock music*, which is already recorded music that has been reworked for a score. In addition to each music being linked to specific emotions, the stock music aids in providing the historical context. Filmmakers frequently include a repeating tune or subject into the soundtrack to create a musical motif. Sometimes, the motif may be so closely associated with a certain cultural product or a programme that is well known to the audience. However, if the filmmaker finds such a motif extremely important to the communication of the narrative in the film, he or she would incorporate and adapt it.

Therefore, music can be used to elicit emotion in a similar way to speech, but it can also easily turn corny. For instance, a 'sting' which is the brief, piercing bursts of orchestral music that signal the entrance of the villain may be used to heighten tension and suspense for the viewers. However, music can also be used to make a film's plot more complex. Music can be utilized to create a sense of place, time, and emotion. For instance, hearing continuous beats before a scenario may indicate that danger is approaching. Tunde Kelani

used this type of music to represent crisis scenarios when citizens resisted unjust government in *Saworo Ide* and *Agogo Eewo*.

What about the music played during movies, you might ask? Instead of or in addition to commissioning original scores, filmmakers may decide to employ previously released popular music. Pop music can be non-diegetic or have a connection to the story's setting. Scenes in modern movies where characters lip sync or dance to music playing on the radio or a stereo are popular examples of diegetic pop music. Nondiegetic pop music is sometimes used by directors to mark the change from one scene to the next, from one mood to another, or from one character to another.

Another dimension to the use of musicals is by creating **backstage musicals** and **musical comedies**. The musical performances in the backstage musical are set up as a carnival. They are quite simply presented on a stage after rehearsal. The songs are not incorporated into the film's storyline and are unrelated to the drama and romance that make up the film's plot. In essence, a backstage musical is a type of musical with a story that takes place in a theatrical setting and is focused on staging a play or musical performance. The plot of the movie frequently stops to allow for a performance one or more times. The songs that are performed in this setting are referred to as diegetic numbers since they physically occur in the storyline even though they do not always advance the plot.

However, characters in musical comedies stop talking and begin singing. Although it may look strange, that performance is a significant component of the plot of the film. A play or movie that features singing and dance as part of the plot and is humorous and enjoyable is called a musical comedy. It typically has a light love plot with speech, singing, and dancing interwoven. The song has a straightforward story and focuses on musical numbers. Again, a theatrical performance that combines musical numbers into the plot is referred to as a musical comedy. This genre has produced a large number of stories, although many of them have a few repeating themes.

For emphasis, the difference between backstage musicals and musical comedies is that while musical comedies are part of the main plot of the film narrative, backstage musicals are not. The content of musical comedies has a direct impact on how the storyline unfolds while that of backstage musicals has little or no impact on how the storyline unfolds.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2
Attempt the following question before you move to the next section: This will take you about 10 minutes.
  1. Identify and discuss the three major components of sound that could be examined in analysing a film.

3.4.4   Classification of Sounds

With your understanding of the concept and elements of sound in film production, it is important to note that sounds are also classified based on their function, form and usage. As you analyse a film, you should be able to explain what kind of sound is been used, the function and the form usage. Let us consider some of these classifications that would help you greatly in this instance.

1. **Diegetic and Nondiegetic Sounds:** Diegetic and nondiegetic sounds are frequently used in films. Diegetic sound is defined as audio that comes from the film's location or from one of the characters within that setting. However, for nondiegetic sound, the setting of the movie is not the source of the sound. Again, the diegetic sound is sound that originates from the film's setting while the soundtrack or music score is an example of non-diegetic sound, which is audio that originates from 'outside' the film world. Understanding diegetic sound is crucial because it creates a real sense of place in your movie. Filmmakers will nearly always use diegetic sound in films unless they are creating a silent film or a music video. Sometimes, diegetic sounds are not recorded during filming but are added in post-production.

   Film analysis relies heavily on the ability to distinguish between diegetic and nondiegetic sounds in a scene. Diegetic sound synchronizes our perception of the scene with how the movie characters perceive it. The diegetic sound may consist of character voices, kitchenware clanging in the distance, or piano music being played on screen. Nondiegetic sound, on the other hand, usually provides a point of view on the action or establishes mood and tone. In other words, nondiegetic sound directs our reading of a scene in a similar way to how a narrator's description might in a work of literary fiction. Non-diegetic sound examples include ***voice-over narration*** (commentary that originates from a world other than the one shown on screen), music that accompanies the image from outside the movie rather than from a source inside it that is music that we presume the characters do not hear; or noises on the soundtrack that are also intended solely for the audience's ears. Nondiegetic pop music is sometimes used by directors to mark the change from one scene to the next, from one mood to another, or from one character to another.

   Therefore, for emphasis, you must know that diegetic is sound ***occurring within the context of the story*** *and able to be* ***heard by the characters*** while non-diegetic sound has a ***source that is external to the context*** of the story, and ***not heard by the characters.*** However, the line between diegetic and non-diegetic sound may be blurred in movies, sometimes for comedic effect and other times as a form of artistic aesthetics. Filmmakers frequently combine diegetic and nondiegetic sounds in a single scene. The use of both diegetic and non-diegetic sound enables the filmmakers to both play out and comment on a scene simultaneously.

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2. **Synchronous and Nonsynchronous (Asynchronous) Sound:** When a sound is said to be *synchronous*, it indicates that it is heard at the same moment that its source shows on the screen. The words are spoken while we watch a character opens his mouth. When a guest rings the doorbell, we can hear it. Music starts to play when a lady turns on the radio in a room. When all these actions occur, it means that the visuals and sounds are synchronized in both time and space. The image track is put together first, and then the voice, music, and sound effects tracks are edited to it. Sometimes the link is an exact match, such as when moving lips and uttered words, dancing movements and musical rhythms, a gun fires and we hear a blast, a loud thud and a door being slammed or a strike of matches and fire. These are all examples.

   In contrast, *nonsynchronous* sounds are those that take place at a separate time or location from what is seen on the screen. Also known as *asynchronous* sound, it refers to audio that has not been timed to the actions, movements, or visual environments on the film set. These sounds are frequently employed for aesthetic reasons to convey a prior activity or to evoke a sound advance. Nonsynchronous noises are frequently used by directors and editors to make cuts between scenes softer and less abrupt. Some filmmakers have found a creative way to utilize these sounds. For instance, consider a scene where you can see the leg of two men walking down a dark path while a dog barks but you cannot visualize the dog. The bark of the dog becomes asynchronous because you can only hear the sound. The asynchronous use of the dog's bark could create tension in the film because the viewers may be wondering about what the relationship between the dog's bark and the men's movement could be, thereby generating suspense.

   However, it must be noted that by design or because of a flaw in the technology, some sounds are not synchronized with the image. This is sometimes apparent when action continues after a sound has stopped. Additionally, subtitled cinema dialogue is nonsynchronous because characters' lips move to generate phrases that are clearly different from those heard on the audio. This is frequently seen in Bollywood movies and Telenovelas, which are primarily from India and Latin America respectively. The recorded sounds do not match the lip movement on the screen because English is the official language of Nigeria.

3. **On Screen (visible) and Off-Screen (invisible) Sound:** The distinction between on-screen and off-screen sources for sound in a scene is another important one for analysis. The sources we can see in the frame, such as a couple of bickering, a door slamming, or a car squealing away, are those that appear on the screen. When used in the film, on-screen sounds give the impression of reality while directing our attention to different parts of the frame.

On the other hand, off-screen sound comes from outside the frame, such as when a character who is not in a shot but still has a place in the film's diegesis (storyline) speaks or sobs. Horror movies frequently include off-screen sound, which has the effect of altering our relationship with the image by directing our attention specifically to the area outside the frame. Off-screen sound comes from an unseen source. However, unlike non-diegetic sound, we still recognize these off-screen sounds as existing within the universe of the film. For instance, the sounds of the couple, the door, and the automobile can be heard as the camera is fixed on a young girl listening in her bedroom. The off-screen sound increases the scope of the picture outside the frame and enables viewers to relate to some characters more deeply.

In essence, we may conclude that filmmakers were able to liberate sound from its limited function of merely completing the visual once they understood the distinctive and dynamic potential of unseen sound. Invisible (off-screen) sounds now perform a highly expressive or even symbolic function as separate images, occasionally holding even more value than the visual image. For some reason, the modern film needs this inventive use of off-screen sound. Because we do not need to or cannot search for the sources of many of the sounds we hear in everyday life, they go unnoticed. As a result of this realisation, films today use sound as a distinct storytelling component that can stand alone and convey information. When sound is employed in this way, it enhances the image rather than just replicating its effects. For instance, even if we do not see an accompanying visual, we can infer that someone has left the room if we hear the sound of a door closing. As a result, the camera is liberated from what might be thought of as regular tasks and can concentrate on the most important topic. This is particularly crucial when the focus is on response rather than action and the camera leaves the speaker's face to focus on the listener's face. In some circumstances, invisible sound can act more strongly on its own than an accompanying image could.

However, as we consider these classifications, it is important to note that filmmakers do manipulate elements in the different classes to create what is referred to as a *sound bridge*. As it is with a regular bridge that connects one end to the other, film directors can use non-synchronised sound to link a synchronised sound. They can use off-screen sound to link an onscreen sound. The same can also happen with non-diegetic sound and diegetic sound. Let us consider some scenarios.

A man is handcuffed and being led away after one scene. Before the director pans to a full shot of the man, now a prisoner, in his cell, the sound of a cell door clanging shut can be heard on the soundtrack as a prelude to the following scene. The clanking sound is nonsynchronous with the image for the final few seconds of the previous scene, but it synchronizes up with the image when the new scene starts.

Again, a diegetic sound from a character tapping his fingers furiously on the table as he discussed a thorny issue with another character could be linked with a fast-paced non-diegetic sound that could heighten the tension in the scene for a probable physical encounter between the two characters. An off-screen sound of a dog barking is the soundtrack on a close shot of the legs of two men that are running links up to the sound from the police siren as the next frame showed the two men now surrounded by police cars.
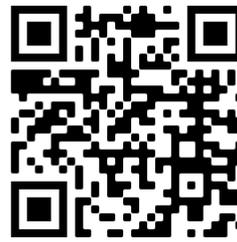
Therefore, as you analyse the use of sound in your choice film, the following are some of the questions that you may ponder about and take note of:

1. Are musical themes used in the plot of the movie? How, if so?
2. Are there any noises that carry over from a previous or subsequent scene, and if so, how does that sound bridge connect the plot points from the two scenes?
3. Are there situations where sound effects are distorted or muffled? What role does this technique play in the story?
4. Are there any songs from the past that you recognize in the movie? How is it used if so?
5. Do any sounds come from outside the frame, and if so, how does that change how you interpret the scene?
6. Do sound effects serve as clues or a means of creating tension?
7. Do the effects as a whole help you feel like you are in a real place?
8. Does the prerecorded music make any comments about the action or help set the mood and tone?
9. Does the video have a voice-over, and if so, what kind of commentary does it offer?
10. How does the music influence how you interpret a certain scene and the entire movie?
11. How does the sound mix's dynamic range—its range of highs and lows—affect how you perceive the action?
12. How much does the diegetic sound add to the plot?
13. Is there a direct address moment, and if so, how does that change the mood and significance of the scene?
14. Is there any silence in the movie?
15. What diegetic sounds are there? What noises don't belong in a scene?
16. What impact do the non-diegetic sounds have on how you perceive the scene?
17. What impact do the performers' line readings have on how you interpret the scene?
18. Which element of the sound mix—the speech, the music, or the effects—stands out the most? Why?

3.5 EDITING

In our discussion so far, you would notice that we have alluded to the term editing in one form or the other. Yes, after filming, the next level is editing because what we see as a continuous scene in a film is actually a collection of many shots that are curated to give the cinematic impression and expression sort by film viewers. However, because this is not a film production class, we will limit ourselves to those aspects that are relevant to film analysis in the first instance. Therefore, what is editing?

Fundamentally, editing entails cutting and linking shots to create up a scene, then a run of scenes, and finally the finished film using computer software. Film editing is both technically and creatively challenging. The fundamental job may be simple, but choosing and organizing them is a process. The real act of editing entails cutting together many film clips. Film editors have the responsibility of reviewing all captured footage, "cutting" unnecessary information, and combining the appropriate strips of film in the proper order. Each takes consists of one or more exposed frames on a length of film stock.

Editing entails compiling different shots in the desired order and editing them until they appear to be the appropriate length. Editing decisions can also shape the way a film looks overall. The expressive and narrative potential of the film would not be near as rich without editing. The strength of editing resides in its capacity to establish contrasts, which have the potential to alter the effect and significance of any individual shot.

3.5.1 Components and Techniques of Film Editing

Editing can influence how we react to certain scenes and the entire film by connecting shot to shot and segment to segment. Typically, editing allows the filmmaker to manipulate **time**, **space**, and **pictorial qualities** in ways that shape the viewer's experience of the film. It is a good idea to get practice in noticing editing, including looking for edits and learning what they typically do. Once you can recognize edits and their purposes, you will find that you can develop a sense of the editing pace, opening up rhythmic combination possibilities, as well as the purpose of graphic, spatial, and temporal linkages between shots.

It is a good idea to get practice at noticing editing, including looking for edits and learning what they typically do. Whatever your preferred approach, if you can tell apart edits and their purposes, you will find that you can develop a sense for the editing pace, giving you access to rhythmic combination possibilities, as well as for graphic, spatial, and temporal linkages between shots. In essence, editing offers the filmmaker four basic areas of choice and control and they are:

1. **Graphic relations between shot A and shot B**: creating matches and clashes and contrast.
2. **Rhythmic relations between shot A and shot B**: creating flash frames and rhythmic cuttings.
3**. Spatial relations between shot A and shot B**: establishing and manipulating space, and constructive editing with the Kuleshov effect
4. **Temporal relations between shot A and shot B**: editing shapes chronology, editing for condenses or expanded duration, editing for repeated actions.

The majority of conversations about how directors craft sequences revolve around these four categories, and it is important to note how they vary depending on the category of film. For instance, most movies combine shots of various lengths, yet certain movies and some movie sequences combine shots in recognizable patterns that have different effects. Shots can be lengthened to allow for relaxation, meditation, or contemplation whereas shots might be shortened to increase tension or suspense. For analysis, we will identify some editing techniques and decisions that generally support how film editors achieve the four basic areas of choice which are graphic relations, rhythmic relations, spatial relations and temporal relations.

The *shot* is the editor's primary working tool. A shot is a strip of film produced by a single continuous run of the camera. The editor puts together a scene by connecting or splicing some shots such that they convey a single event occurring at a certain moment and location. The editor then joins several scenes together to create a sequence, which plays a vital role in the dramatic structure of the movie much as an actor does in a play.

After choosing the content, the editor links the shots by cutting from one shot's end to another's beginning. The *cut* is the most typical join. A cut enables a seamless transition

from one shot to another. Other techniques for joining photos result in more gradual adjustments. A *fade-in* lightens a shot from black, and a *fade-out* gradually darkens the conclusion of a shot to black. The beginning of shot B and the finish of shot A are briefly superimposed by a *dissolve*. During a *wipe*, shot B swaps out shot A with a boundary line that moves across the screen vertically or horizontally. Both images briefly appear on the screen at the same moment in this instance, but they do not mix like in a dissolve. Finally, there is the *iris-in* and *iris-out* which is an opening or closing of the screen to a circle.

These editing elements-cut, fade-in/fade-out, dissolve, wipe, iris-in/iris out, are most frequently utilized today for comedic effect or as the kind of self-aware element seen in the modernist narrative, and they were originally intended to be added attractions to the phenomenon of the moving image. Wipes and iris shots, for instance, heighten the tone's sardonic fun. In a narrative film, various transitions have come to represent distinct sorts of plot organization; as a result, fades in and out frequently denote scene breaks. Dissolves occasionally imply narrative ellipses. For instance, the boys' night in the wilderness is depicted utilizing fades to display bits of their meandering, amusing talk around the campfire. Dissolves and fades help depict ellipses because they offer visual descriptions for missing story time throughout their gradual transitions.

To generate their temporal and spatial worlds, abstract films primarily rely on rhythmic editing and graphic editing, whereas only a small portion of narrative filmmaking is guided by the principles of graphic combination even though the juxtaposition of one image to another creates a graphic relationship between them. Between narrative films, one common visual basis for combining is the *graphic match*, where graphic resemblances in two shots justify the cut. Since narrative films create imaginary worlds that are more or less cohesive in space and time, the temporal and spatial logics of combination tend to dominate.

Editors use an *establishing shot* at the start of the scene to give us a general idea of the environment in which the scene is taking place. follows a logical order, focuses on orienting us to the new environment, and uses *outside/in editing*. It enables us to enter a new environment from the outside and gradually move inside to the specifics. Each step's logical context is made explicit, ensuring that we always know where we are in the process. An establishing shot of the entire environment gives us a sense of where we are before we enter it and begin to pay attention to its specifics. editing that transitions the audience from a confused state to understanding what is happening is called *inside/out editing.*

The editor can condense an hour's worth of action into a few seconds by using *jump cuts*, which remove a section of pointless or unnecessary action from a continuous shot and are used to shorten the amount of time in a shot. *Parallel cuts*, also known as *intercutting*, are one of the most efficient methods of editorial cutting because they instantly switch between two acts occurring in different places. Cutting in parallel gives the impression that both

actions are happening at once to take care of the issue space. It can be a potent tool for creating tension.

Slow motion, the frozen frame, the thawing frame, and stills are the other four essential editing methods that filmmakers use to lengthen or shorten the time. *Slow motion* emphasizes the grace of physical action, suggests the passage of time, intensifies the emotional quality of the moment, emphasizes effort, exhaustion, and frustration, and suggests superhuman speed and power. Slow motion also serves to contrast sharply with normal motion.

When a film is shown, the motion appears to stop and the image on the screen remains still, giving the impression that the projector has stopped or the image has been frozen. This is known as the *freeze-frame* effect. The freeze frame is most frequently used to either signal the conclusion of an intensely dramatic scene (and transition to the next) or to signify the conclusion of the entire movie. A freeze frame shocks us after a potent episode, giving the impression that time has stopped.

An initially frozen image thaws and comes to life in a *thawed frame*. This technique can be used to introduce a scene or the entire movie, or it can act as a transition. The frozen image that first appears in the movie is frequently a painting or drawing that gradually transforms into a photograph before thawing into life.

Stills are images captured in pictures that do not move. As the camera travels toward, away from, or over them, there is a sense of motion. Each still usually fades gently into the next when numerous stills are used in succession, giving the sense that information is being remembered or emerging over time.

Another technique is the ***Kuleshov effect*** used to describe how cutting together different parts of space causes the viewer to imagine a larger space than what is actually seen. Most frequently, this occurs as a result of the director skipping an establishing shot which could have given out the information in the first instance.

For temporal relations particularly when editing to condense or expand duration, the film editors use ***elliptical editing***. In elliptical editing, the editor uses cuts to move us along in the plot by removing parts of the larger story (which we most time imagine by the time we see the next shot) to manage the time in the narrative. As a result, editing provides the director with a visual shorthand—cinematic versions of storytelling that quickly reveal what happens next. For instance, all we need to see is the transition from daylight to darkness to realize that a day has passed. While the filmmakers only had a few hours to tell the story onscreen, much more time has passed in the world of the narrative, as evidenced by a simple sequence showing the change of the seasons or an insert showing the pages of a calendar torn off. In the same way, the first shot of a man holding a gun and a second

shot of a person lying on the ground with blood on his chest indicate that a murder has occurred without necessarily demonstrating how it occurred. We also have the ***overlapping technique*** in expanding and still under elliptical editing if the action from the end of one shot is partially repeated at the start of the next. This extends the action past the allotted time for the story.

It is important to note that ***montage*** is another common elliptical editing technique. The word "montage sequence" refers to a specific film method in which a series of quick shots are used to summarise a section of the narrative. Films that focus on lengthy periods, such as biographical films, typically employ montages to depict the passage of time, the growth of relationships, and the ageing of characters. Montage sequences are still used in movies with shorter stories to swiftly cover plot themes that do not require much exposition. The portrayal of sex scenes is another frequent application of elliptical editing. Shots of disjointed body parts in quick succession suggest the real sex act that the producers dare not fully depict to comply with censorship regimes.

Are you already thinking of the film that you recently watch in which you might have noticed some scenes that reflect some of these techniques? Yes, that is what the film director and editor want you to feel either as an expression of realism or 'artificial reality. However, in putting all these shots together using any of the techniques discussed so far to take care of spatial, rhythm, graphic and temporal elements, the film editor carries out continuity editing.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3
Attempt the following question before you move to the next section: This will take you about 10 minutes.
1. Identify and discuss at least three techniques used by filmmakers to achieve spatial, rhythm, graphic and temporal effects while editing a film.


3.5.2   Continuity Editing (Invisible Editing)

Continuity editing is a set of editing techniques that establish spatial and/or temporal continuity between shots. In other words, it refers to any of the numerous strategies used by filmmakers to keep their stories progressing logically and smoothly, without abrupt changes in space or time, and without alerting the audience that they are watching a piece of art. In addition to minimizing interruptions, continuity editing actively works to maintain a feeling of spatial and narrative coherence and stability despite the presence of hundreds or even thousands of individual images. When a scene is put together from several takes and diverse takes, continuity editing gives the impression that it happens in a continuous time and space.

Also, continuity editing is used to keep the audience interested in and comprehending the storyline. It deals with the subtle presentation of techniques so that viewers keep their attention on what is happening rather than on how things are shown. It is a methodical use of a technique, depending on choices made by the filmmakers, that is intended to create specific effects on viewers. In doing this, shots are typically placed next to one another to minimize the disruption caused by editing. Cuts are intended to prevent confounding ellipses and disorienting shifts in the screen's layout. Generally, the goal of the continuity style is to convey narrative information clearly and smoothly through a succession of images. Therefore, editing the moment-by-moment flow of the story's information plays a part in narration.

How do filmmakers do this? First, graphic elements are often maintained basically throughout each picture. The action takes place in the centre of the screen, the figures are evenly distributed and symmetrically placed within the frame, and the overall lighting tone is consistent. Second, directors typically tailor the cutting rhythm to the size of the images. Close-ups are displayed on the screen for a shorter amount of time than long shots and medium shots. This provides the viewer more time to appreciate the wider perspectives, which include more details. Scenes with rapid editing, however, favour smaller, more manageable views. This process confirms the fact that in addition to minimizing interruptions, continuity editing actively works to maintain a feeling of spatial and narrative coherence and stability despite the presence of hundreds or even thousands of individual shots. Now, let us discuss some of the techniques that film editors use to achieve continuity editing. (Do note that you will learn more about these production techniques in your film production and editing classes. Therefore, what we will discuss here is a summary of the techniques which could be enough for your film analysis at this level)

1. **The 180 Degree System:** This fundamental principle maintains that there is an axis of action that runs down a fictitious horizontal line in a particular sequence. It is used during filming so that the editor has usable footage. The camera cannot cross the **axis of action**; it must remain within one-half of the imaginary circle that this line bisects, which is an area of 180 degrees (as seen in the figure below). When filmmakers wish to switch back and forth between people during sequences including conversation, they can do so by following the 180-degree rule. The 180° system prevents elements of mise-en-scène from appearing on another side of the frame instead of where the element has appeared before to maintain spatial consistency across subsequent frames. Naturally, this creates a spatial relationship between on-screen objects that your audience can understand, allowing them to quickly orient themselves because they are aware of everyone and everything's positions. The 180° system ensures that relative positions in the frame remain consistent; ensures that eye-lines are consistent and also ensures consistent screen direction. **Screen direction** refers to the directional relationships within a scene that are established by the placement of characters and objects, the direction in which they move, and the matching of their eye lines.
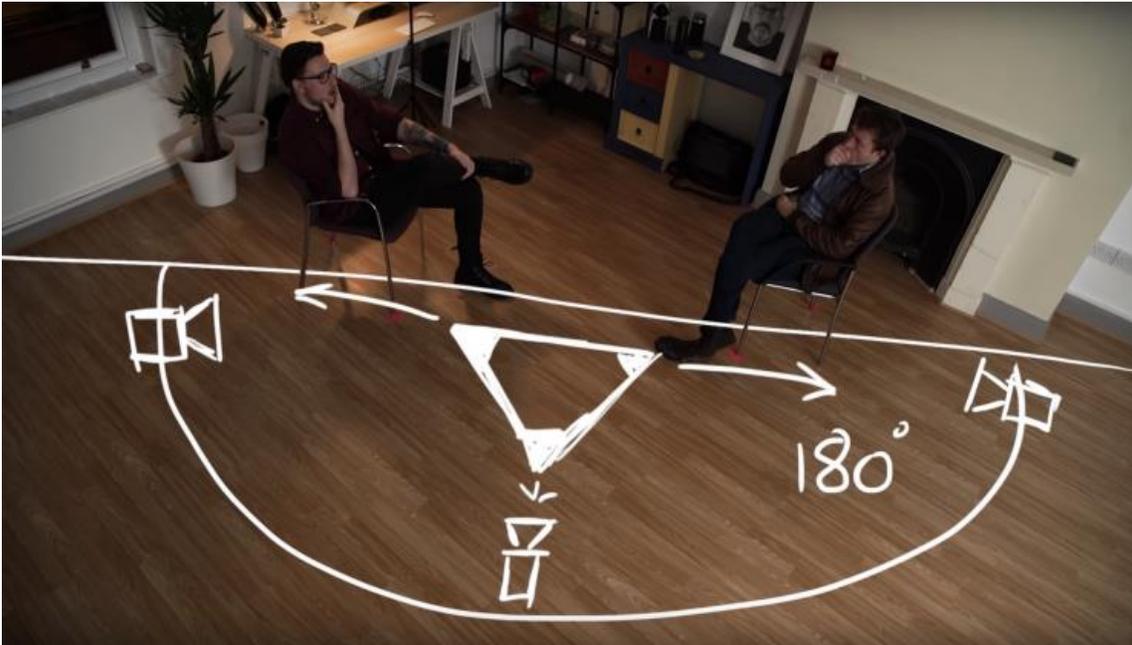
An image showing the 180-degree system. *Source: No Film School*

2. **Editing Matches:** Editing matches can lessen the startling impact of cutting. According to how the match is made, there are three fundamental techniques to match one shot to another. ***Matching-on-Action, Eye-line Matching, and Graphic matching*** are the three.

When a physical motion from the first shot is repeated in the second shot, this is known as *matching-on-action*. For illustration, a character unlocks a door in the first shot; in the second, he passes through the entryway. His motion gives the two shots the necessary continuity. The audience will slide visually from the first shot to the second uninterrupted if the shots are well-set up and the editor is skilled.

Eyeline matching initially shows where someone is looking before revealing what they are looking at. A character's point of view is always revealed to us when an eye-line match follows their gaze to an object, a location, or a person. When someone is shown staring at something off-screen in shot A, then shot B shows us what they are looking at, this happens. Both the looker and the item are absent in both pictures.

Graphic matching is the process of matching objects based on a prominent shape or compositional element. By cutting (or dissolving, fading, or wiping) from one shape in the first shot to another shape that is comparable and in the same relative location in the frame in the second shot, graphic matches are created. In essence, a graphic match cut, also known as a "visual match cut," connects two distinct scenes by making use of aesthetically complementary shapes, colours, or patterns. Graphic matches typically do

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not explicitly aim to deepen the sequence's significance. Graphic matches, such as matches-on-action and eye lines, are typically used to mask cuts smoothly rather than draw attention to them.

3. **Shot/Reverse Shot Pattern:** These are most typically employed to stage discussions between two characters, with the camera looking each character over their shoulders as they speak. The method allows for intimacy in the staging of character interactions while also giving us a clear understanding of where each speaker is situated and what they perceive. The camera does not cross over to its opposite position because that would mean going against the 180° axis system, hence the word "reverse" in this context does not actually signify an absolute reversal of the camera's place. Instead, shot/reverse shot describes how the shots alternate between two camera angles (positions), one pointing left and the other right, rather than between the two characters.

A shot-reverse shot in *Wedding Party*

Definitely, your understanding of these elements and techniques will allow you to analyse from an informed angle rather than just being critical. Therefore, when you are analysing the film of your choice regarding how the shots have been edited, the following questions will guide you:

1. Are the shots spatially continuous or discontinuous, and if so, what editing technique was employed to get there?
2. Do the filmmakers use any cuts that are not cut, such as a fade, iris, or dissolve, and if so, how did those work?
3. Does the movie's editing bring attention to itself or is it completely undetectable?
4. Does the scene's sequence pay particular attention to the 180-degree scheme when there is a lengthy conversation?
5. How are shot and reverse shots utilized to capture the scene's narrative and visual elements?
6. How does the 180° system produce continuity if the photos are spatially continuous?
7. How does the editing accomplish seamless continuity and coherence by successfully guiding our ideas, connections, and emotional reactions from one image to the next?
8. How does the film's editing affect its tempo and rhythm?
9. How graphically continuous or irregular are the shots?
10. How much and how effectively does the editor convey information through sarcastic transitions, montages, and other creative juxtapositions?
11. Identify any tonal or graphic similarities or differences between the images.
12. Identify the sequence's master shot. How are the spatial relationships in the scene created by the establishing shot?
13. Concerning the other shots in the sequence, how does the meaning of each shot change?
14. Is the editing effortless, unforced, and natural, or is it awkward and self-conscious?
15. Is there an eyeline match in the sequence, and if so, how is the plot conveyed through this device?
16. What do the individual shots mean on their own, without reference to the earlier and later shots?
17. What metrical relationships are established?
18. What would you say about the pacing or rhythm of the scene or the entire movie?

So far, you have learnt a lot regarding editing in film. As an additional resource, please scan the two QR codes below to listen to more information on sound analysis with practical scenes that will further help your understanding. In case you do not have a QR Code Scanner, you may simply right-click on these YouTube links:

1. Editing | Introduction to Film Analysis
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_wZ4KGj3kw
2. Introductory Film Studies 03: Editing
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zoj2nIulQDQ

3.6 SUMMARY

We have come to the end of our lessons on film analysis and criticism with our consideration of cinematography, sound and editing, which are the major element in film analysis. The cinematography helps you with the analysis of the camera placement, camera movement, camera focus and depth. A review of the concept of sound has also contributed to our understanding of how filmmakers creatively and effectively use sound to advance the narrative of a film. Regarding editing, you have learnt that film editors creatively use editing to create rhythm and tempo in the film, to reduce or expand space and also to communicate time in the past, present or future.

3.7 GLOSSARY

- **Crane shot**: An aerial or overhead shot executed by a camera operator on the platform of a moving crane.
- **Cut**: The joining of two strips of film in the editing room, and the resulting immediate change from one image to another on screen.
- **Diegetic Sound**: The elements of a film that originate directly within the film's narrative.
- **Dissolve**: A transitional device in which one shot disappears as another appears.
- **Fade**: A transitional device in which a shot slowly darkens and disappears (fade-out) or lightens and appears (fade-in).
- **Eye-line matching**: An editing pattern that cuts between a character looking and the object of his or her gaze.

- **Impact editing**: Editing that produces violent contrast between images, most often by switching between close and long shot scales.
- **Internal diegetic sound**: A character's thoughts and memories are heard but not spoken aloud.
- **Iris**: A transitional device in which the image contrasts or expands within a small circle.
- **Iris-in/Iris-out**: Editing techniques in which the transition from one image to another is marked by the closing and reopening of an 'iris' or circular hole in the centre of the frame.
- **Long take**: A single continuous shot of unusually long duration.
- **Non-diegetic sound**: Any element that remains outside the world of the film, such as voiceovers, credits and mood-setting music, that does not originate from the world of the film.
- **Non-simultaneous sound**: Sound from the past or the future within the story world.
- **Off-screen sound**: Sound that originates from a source that we cannot see but assume nonetheless to be part of the story world.
- **On-Screen Sound**: Sound that emanated from the source that we can see in the frame.
- **Overlapping Editing**: Editing where shots repeat part or all of the action shown in the previous shot.
- **Pitch**: The height or depth of a musical sound that is determined by its frequency relative to other notes.
- **Subjective point-of-view shot**: A shot that simulates what a character sees
- **Synchronous sound**: Sound that is matched temporally with the movements occurring in the images, as when dialogue corresponds to lip movements
- **Telephoto lens**: A lens of long focal length that affects a scene's perspective by enlarging distant planes and making them seem close to the foreground plane
- **Tracking shot**: A shot produced with a camera that moves smoothly alongside, behind, or ahead of the action
- **Wipe:** A transitional device where one image appears to be pushed aside by the next

3.8 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READINGS

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3.9 POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

Self-Assessment Exercise 1

Discuss the three major ways that film directors manipulate the camera in film production as they are relevant to film analysis.

The three major ways that filmmakers manipulate the camera to create cinematic effects are through camera placement, camera movement and camera focus and depth. Camera placement deals with the camera angles, that is the position of the camera as at when the shots were being taken. These angles include high angle shots, low angle shots, extreme long shots, eye level shots, and close shots among others. These shots can be used to create impressions about the geographical nature of a location, to expose hidden things (props or characters) of which the actor is "unaware" of the world of the film among others. Camera movement deals with the left to right (panning) move of the camera while filming. It also includes the up and down (tilting) move of the camera by the cameraman. The tracking shots and moving shots also provide filmmakers with a great opportunity to create tempo, suspense and tension as the viewers seek to know what is next thing. Major aspects of camera manipulation for cinematic effect in films include focus and depth. In contrast to the human eye, a camera's lens size and aperture can be changed to "see" in a variety of ways. The distance between a lens' optical centre to the point at which light rays are concentrated into a sharp image on a camera surface, video camera, or digital sensor is known technically as the focal length of the lens. Thus, the relationship between the field of vision and distance from the subject determines the perspective of the shot, and zooming the lens is a key tool for achieving this. Another element that the cinematographer can control is the depth of field, which determines how much of the foreground, middle ground, and backdrop planes are kept in focus. The distance between the nearest and farthest object kept in focus inside the frame determines the depth of field. Let's talk about this by taking a look at several methods for achieving focus and depth.

Self-Assessment Exercise 2

Identify and discuss the three major components of sound that could be examined in analysing a film.

The three major components of sound are speech, sound effects and musicals. The speech deals with dialogue, in some instances monologue and narrations. In the film industry,

dialogue refers to any spoken words, including dialogue from speeches, discussions, chance outbursts in crowd scenes, and voiceover narration. Modern movies require us to pay close attention to sound to understand speech because most conversation in movies gives us a wealth of important information. Whether a sound is diegetic or not, it is still considered a sound effect. Examples include the smashing of the waves, birds chirping, a cannon's boom, and humorous honking noises.

The fundamental goal of sound effects is to give the spectator a sense of the location and action of the film. We anticipate the sounds that the visuals on the screen will make as viewers. The sound of an approaching car's engine can be heard. The sound of the waves may be heard, and the ocean is visible. A dog is barking, we see him, and so forth. Most films' primary musical accompaniment is the score, a piece of music composed expressly for the picture. Usually, the composer of the score will write the music to accompany sequences that have already been filmed. To reflect the images we see on TV, music compositions are created. Despite being added late in the post-production process, the score has a big influence on how we interpret a scene. We can sense and respond to the action on the screen in different ways depending on the rhythm, the harmonic structure, and even the musical instrument choice. The social, cultural, and historical setting of the movie, as well as the communication and build-up to events of all kinds, can all be related to music, as can the character's role and responsibilities.

Self-Assessment Exercise 3:

Identify and discuss at least three techniques used by filmmakers to achieve spatial, rhythm, graphic and temporal effects while editing a film.

Filmmakers attempt to create cinematic effects by using different techniques to achieve spatial, rhythm, graphic and temporal effects in their films. Amidst the various available techniques, I will discuss three. The three are fade, parallel cuts and elliptical editing. A fade-in gradually brightens a shot from black, while a fade-out gradually makes the end of a shot darker until it is black. One of the most effective ways of editorial cutting is parallel cutting, often known as intercutting, which seamlessly switches between two acts taking place in different locations. Cutting simultaneously creates the illusion that both actions are being taken to address the problem area simultaneously. It may be an effective means of raising stress. In elliptical editing, the editor employs cuts to advance the plot by omitting portions of the bigger tale, which we typically have already imagined by the time we see the next shot. Since cinematic forms of narrative can swiftly reveal what will happen next, editing gives the director a visual shorthand. For instance, all we need to observe to know that a day has passed is the change from daylight to darkness. Even though the filmmakers

only had a limited amount of time to present the story onscreen, considerably more time has passed in the world of the story as shown by a simple scene showing the changing of seasons or an insert showing calendar pages torn out.