Introduction into Continuity Editing

MEDIA STUDIES
Today you will LEARN: To develop your understanding of film language key concepts

Why? This will lead to your understanding of a range of key media concepts.

Progress will be demonstrated by showing

You understand basic film language terminology.

You can demonstrate how film language terms are employed in analysis.

You can reflect on your understanding of key terms after successfully demonstrating their correct application in an analytical context.

Fantastic Progress!!

Good Progress

Great Progress!
**Continuity Editing**

**The Rules:**
- Establishing shot
- Shot/reverse shot
- 180° rule
- Crosscutting
- Match on Action
- Eyeline Match
- Re-establishing shot

**Definition:** A system of cutting used to maintain continuous and clear narrative action by following a set of rules.

**The Benefits:**
- The narrative has structure
- The shot sequences flow seamlessly into each other
- It’s easy to watch the film!
Establishing shot

Definition: A long shot or extreme long shot, usually with loose framing, that shows the spatial relations between the important figures, objects and setting in a scene.

From Spartacus (Stanley Kubrick, 1960)
Shot / reverse shot

Definition: Two shots edited together that alternate characters, typically in a conversation situation. Usually characters in one frame look left, and in the following frame look right.

Stills taken from Robert Bresson’s The Trial of Joan of Arc (1962).
Shot-reverse-shot

- It may not be filmed in the correct order but will be edited together afterwards.
- Must ensure that the right amount of shots are filmed to make the ‘shot-reverse-shot’ sequence work.
If you’re shooting two characters talking to each other, here’s how to do it.

- Film it once with a ‘master shot’, which shows both characters.
- Film it again with the camera in closeup on one character.
- Film it again with the camera in closeup on the second character.
- Film individual shots of each character in ‘big closeup’ when you need to show strong emotion.
- You can also include other shots, such as mid shots, if you need them.
180° rule

Definition: The angle between any two consecutive shots should not exceed 180°, in order to maintain spatial relationships between people and objects in any given sequence of shots.
Rules for continuity editing

180 degree rule

- This is a principle which underpins all TV and Film production.
- It’s important not to cross the ‘line of vision’ between two characters.
- Otherwise the viewer may not be able to make sense of the scene.
- The same rule applies to a moving subject: keep to one side of the direction of motion.
Crosscutting

Definition: Editing that alternates between shots occurring simultaneously in two or more different location.

Match on Action

Definition: A cut between two shots that places two different framings of the same action next to each other, making it seem to continue uninterrupted.
Eyeline Match

Definition: A cut between two shots, in which the first shot shows a person looking off in one direction, and the second shot shows either a space containing what he or she sees, or a person looking back in exactly the opposite direction.

Stills taken from Ben Hur (William Wyler, 1959)
Definition: A shot that returns to a view of a space or location after a series of close-ups.

Answer the questions in the following Editing Terminology Test and then apply your understanding and analyse the use of Editing and Camerawork in the film sequence.

Re-establishing shot from ‘Tomorrow Never Dies’ (Spottiswoode, 1997)