CHAPTER II

INTRINSIC THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1. Narrative Aspect

According to Bordwell and Thompson (2013), the core of cinema lies in its ability to create immersive experiences for viewers. To fully appreciate film as an art form, it's essential to examine the reasons behind the design choices made in a particular cinematic piece. Consequently, this study will focus on intrinsic elements such as, character and characterization, conflict, and setting.

2.1.1. Character and Characterization

Bordwell and Thompson (2013) state that characters in films are typically human beings or human-like entities. They serve as the driving forces of the story, and their traits and motivations are essential for the audience's understanding and engagement with the film. Characterization is particularly important, as it involves methods for creating and developing characters. This process includes the use of dialogue, actions, appearance, and other aspects to convey a character's traits, motivations, and identity (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013:77).

2.1.2 Conflict

Conflict is the lifeblood of cinematic storytelling. At its core, it functions as the mechanism that propels the narrative, challenges characters, and sustains audience engagement. Without conflict, a film becomes static—devoid of tension, progression, or transformation. Bordwell and Thompson (2013) state in *Film Art:*

An Introduction, most film narratives are constructed around a central character who faces obstacles in pursuit of a specific goal. The unfolding of these obstacles be they internal or external is what generates narrative momentum.

Internal conflict refers to a struggle that occurs within a character's mind. It involves emotional, psychological, or moral dilemmas, often related to identity, purpose, or decisions. This type of conflict is crucial in character-driven narratives, where the psychological depth of the protagonist shapes the audience's emotional investment (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013: 87).

External conflict occurs between the character and external forces such as other characters, society, nature, or technology. This type of conflict is more action-driven and often manifests through physical or social confrontation. Robert McKee, in *Story: Substance, Structure, Style, and the Principles of Screenwriting*, explains that external conflict "provides the visible surface of the story while internal conflict provides the emotional depth" (McKee, 1997:210). External conflicts are crucial in plot-driven genres like thrillers, action films, and political dramas.

2.1.3. Setting

According to Bordwell & Thompson (2013), setting refers to the physical and temporal environment in which a film's narrative unfolds. It includes not only the geographical location and historical period but also the cultural, social, and political context that surrounds the story. Setting can serve multiple functions: it may establish realism, symbolize abstract ideas, or create emotional tone. Whether naturalistic or stylized, settings contribute significantly to how viewers interpret the

story, helping to guide attention, shape expectations, and deepen understanding of the film's world.

2.2. Cinematographic Aspects

According to Bordwell and Thompson (2013), cinematographic elements are the strategies that filmmakers employ to record and show pictures on screen, which influence how viewers perceive and interpret visual narrative. Cinematography is a narrative device that interacts with *mise-en-scene* and camera angles to create meaning and emotional impact in a film.

2.2.1. *Mise-en-scène*

The term *mise-en-scene* comes from French, which means "what is placed in the scene" or "what is presented before the camera" (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013:96). It refers to all of the visual components that appear within the frame and are organised independently of the camera's movement, location, or editing. (Monaco, 2009:155).

Mise-en-scene is critical for understanding how filmmakers convey meaning beyond conversation and storyline. It influences the mood, directs audience perception, and frequently transmits symbolic or ideological subtext (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).

2.2.1.1 Costume

Costume serves as a fundamental element of *mise-en-scène* in cinema, contributing not only to the visual style of a film but also to its narrative and

character development. "Costume can furnish another element of character, support the setting and help to define a character's social milieu" (Bordwell and Thompson 2013:116). Costumes help to establish period, location, class, and even moral alignment, working in tandem with other cinematic elements to shape audience perception.

Moreover, the transformation of a character can often be traced through the evolution of their costume. A shift from formal attire to more relaxed clothing may signify a descent into chaos, loss of control, or emotional deterioration. Conversely, the adoption of a uniform or a distinctive costume may reflect increased power, conformity, or ideological commitment. As a result, costume design becomes essential to the visual storytelling process, subtly guiding viewers through a character's psychological or moral journey.

2.2.1.2 Lightning

Lighting is a crucial aspect of mise-en-scène that significantly influences how a film communicates mood, character psychology, time, and thematic undertones. "Lighting shapes the way we perceive a shot and guides our attention to certain objects or actions" (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013:114). Lighting not only ensures visibility, but also functions as a storytelling tool that helps structure space, suggest emotional states, and symbolize abstract ideas such as morality, power, or isolation.

Moreover, lighting plays a significant role in directing audience focus. High-key lighting, which minimizes shadows and provides even illumination, is

often associated with a sense of realism or transparency, frequently used in comedies or dramas. In contrast, low-key lighting—characterized by stark shadows and selective illumination—generates mystery, suspense, or emotional intensity. These contrasts are not only aesthetic but also ideological, influencing how we interpret characters and events.

2.2.2. Camera Distance

2.2.2.1. Close-Ups

Framing in which the scale of the thing depicted is relatively large; most typically depicting a person's head or a detailed object. A close-up depicts only the head, hands, and feet, or a small object. It emphasises face expressions, gesture details, or a meaningful item (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).

2.2.2.2. Medium Shots

Frames the human body from the waist upwards. It strikes a balance between displaying the surroundings and the topic. It lets viewers observe both face expressions and gestures. It maintains a realistic and comfortable distance from the topic. The medium picture shows the human figure from the waist up. Gesture and expression are now more visible (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).

2.2.2.3. Medium Full Shots

Frames the human figure from the knees up, also known as medium long shot. This type of shot is often used to show a character in relation to their immediate environment, while still allowing the audience to clearly observe

gestures and body language. It strikes a balance between the individual and their setting, making it a popular choice in dialogue scenes or moments where posture and physical stance are important (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).

2.2.2.4. Full Shots

The figure is portrayed in complete, with its surrounds visible; also known as long shot. The grandeur of the photograph highlights the setting rather than the character. It depicts a subject's relationship to their surroundings and can make a character appear tiny or solitary, depending on composition. In the long view, the human form is more visible, but the background remains dominant (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).
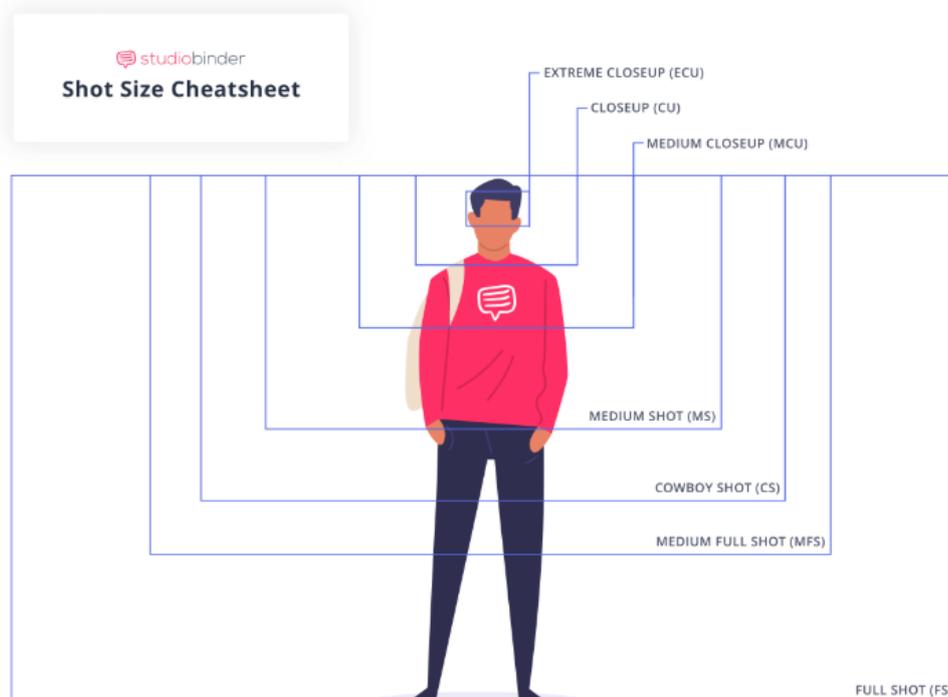
Picture 2.2.2 Camera Distances

2.2.3. Camera Angle

2.2.3.1. Eye-level Angle

The camera angle with the lens positioned at the subject's eye level is impartial and objective. The primary goal of this angle is to make the situation appear natural to the spectator. Wide views are very frequent in realism films. The eye-level shot is standard; it appears as if we are staring directly at the topic (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).
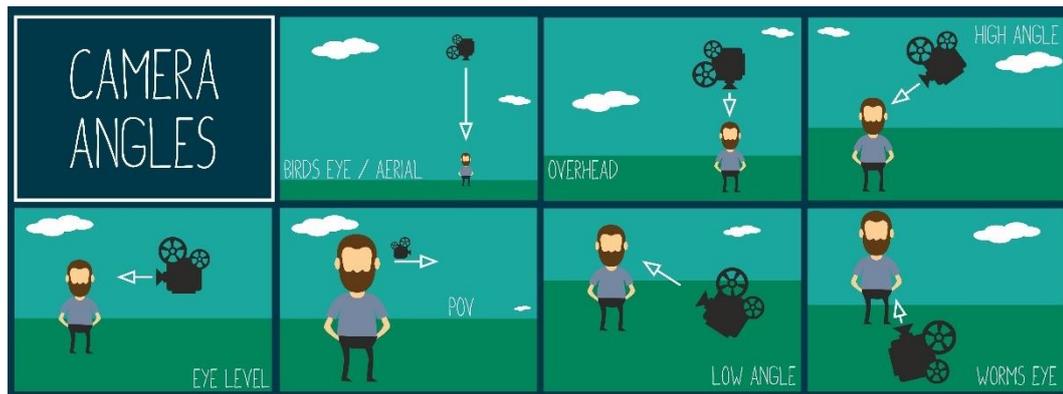
2.2.3.2. Straight-on Angle

The most neutral and popular angle. The camera is positioned at the character's eye level, displaying the topic straight on. This viewpoint conveys a sense of equality and authenticity, as if the spectator were standing right across from the character (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).

2.2.3.3. High Angle

It sets the camera above the subject and looks down. This viewpoint tends to make the character look smaller, weaker, or more vulnerable. It is frequently used to convey control or impotence (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).

2.2.3.4. Low Angle

The camera is positioned below the subject, gazing upward. This might help the character appear stronger, intimidating, or heroic. It emphasises height and authority (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013).

(Source: https://steemit.com/art/@marinauzelac/steemit-film-school-film-class-1-essential-camera-shots)