

JAY SANDHOUSE

LESSON PLAN

CAMERA MOVEMENT & SHOT COMPOSITION



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Instructional Goal

The Television Studio Camera Operator understands and demonstrates the knowledge of shot composition and the ability to respond to commands given by the Director over the headsets.

Results of Analysis

Instructional Need: In the fast-paced world of live or taped studio production, the Camera Operator must understand how to compose a shot in little or no time at all, either on their own, or at the command of a Director in the control room.

Instructional Analysis

Cognitive: Focus of the camera, tilt, pan, dolly, truck, zoom, lead-room (more or less), head-room (more or less).

Psychomotor: Adjusting speed control of zoom on the camera, using the zoom control, using the focus control, physically moving the pedestal from side-to-side (truck) and/or front-to-back (dolly), adjusting headset volume controls (if any).

Affective: Must be able to work well under pressure. Must have "thick skin," (nothing is ever personal; everything said stays in the television studio) as the language and delivery of commands may become very intense.

Entry skill/Knowledge: Rolling out the cameras to their designated positions, turning on the studio lights, bringing out the headsets and microphones, setting up the white card to white balance the cameras, setting up the grey scale card for the engineer.

Conditions and Constraint: Functional television studio with cameras, pedestals, remote camera controls (zoom, focus), headsets, lights, microphones, control room, crew, and talent.

Learner Analysis (who are the learners and what learner characteristics are important to developing this instruction?): Students at the Community College level, either obtaining their A.S. degree, their A.A. degree, or students already in possession of a college degree looking to upgrade their production skills. They should be enrolled in the class (Television Studio Production 1), which meets Tuesday and Thursday from 9 am to 11:30 am. They should have attended the lectures and taken the quizzes on shot composition, camera movement and engineering. They must have the physical stamina to stand in front of a television camera for at least one-hour with a level of concentration to obey commands, as well as make decisions on their own. They must have the mindset that this is not like any other class they have taken in school. The productions may get very intense, and they may be spoken to in a tone (and with language) they are not accustomed to. They must understand that it is never "personal." This is critical for their ultimate success in the television industry.

Objectives

Objective Number 1 – Identifying the major camera movements within a television studio (Cognitive).

Given oral questions about the different camera movements executed in a television studio, the television production student states the definitions of zoom, tilt, pan, truck and dolly, orally without references.

Objective Number 2 – Demonstrating the ability to pan television Studio camera from one guest to another while “On the Air” (Psychomotor).

Given a verbal command from the Director (over the headsets), the television production student executes a pan from one guest to another guest with smooth and continuous movement, while maintaining proper shot composition.

Objective Number 3 – Demonstrating the ability to zoom In (Push In) on the television studio camera designated for the wide (Establishing) shot while “On the Air” (Psychomotor).

Given a verbal command from the Director (over the headsets), the television production student executes a zoom on Camera 2 (the camera designated as the wide or establishing shot) with smooth and continuous movement, while maintaining proper shot composition.

Objective Number 4 – Demonstrating the ability to give more or less “head room” (Tilt) on television studio camera while “On the Air” (Psychomotor).

Given a verbal command from the Director (over the headsets), the television production student executes proper “head room” (tilt) with smooth and continuous movement, while maintaining proper shot composition.

Objective 5 – Demonstrating the ability to physically dolly and truck the pedestal and camera within the television studio (Psychomotor).

Given a verbal command from the instructor, the television production student executes the proper technique to dolly and truck the studio camera and pedestal.

Assessment

Selected Response Items

1. To "Dolly" the camera, the camera operator physically moves the camera either towards or away from the talent.
TRUE

2. The Director asks for more "head room." The move that the camera operator would execute would be?
 - a) Pan Right
 - b) Tilt Up**
 - c) Zoom In
 - d) Tilt Down
 - e) Pan Left

3. One reason a Director might ask the camera operator to "tilt up" would be to include more of the talent's body.
FALSE

4. What combination of procedures would the camera operator execute to go from a "one-shot" to a "two-shot"?
 - a) Tilt-up, zoom out and pan**
 - b) Tilt-up, zoom in and pan
 - c) Truck, zoom out and pan
 - d) Truck, zoom in and pan
 - e) Dolly, zoom out and tilt up

5. The term "lead room" is used to describe the distance from the subject to the end of the screen.
TRUE

Constructed Response Items

1. During the open of a program, the Director may ask the camera operator to either zoom in or to _____ on camera 2 (the establishing shot) to add movement to the production.

Dolly

2. Why would you give "lead room" in a shot, rather than to center your talent?

It implies that the talent is speaking to someone off camera.

3. What is the definition of the term "truck?"

To physically move the camera and the pedestal from side to side.

4. As a camera operator, it is your responsibility to get a shot of each guest speaking. Outline the procedure from going from one guest to the next.

Depending on the size discrepancies of the guests, pan (left or right), tilt (up or down), zoom (in or out)

5. What combination of camera movements is used from going from a close-up of a guest, to an over-the-shoulder shot of the guest and the host?

Tilt up, zoom out, pan left (or right)

Formative Evaluation Form

Instructional Personnel: Television Professor, Production Assistant, Video Engineer and On-Air Talent (3).

Number of Students Required: One student at a time (up to 20 students).

Location: Television Studio.

Materials Required For Student: No materials necessary; all materials are present in Television Studio.

Materials Required For Instructor: Grading score sheets, recording media (video tape), white card and registration chart.

Technology Required: Video cameras, lighting, headsets and control room equipment.

Recording Devices (If Needed): Video tape recorder (VTR), audio mixer and microphones.

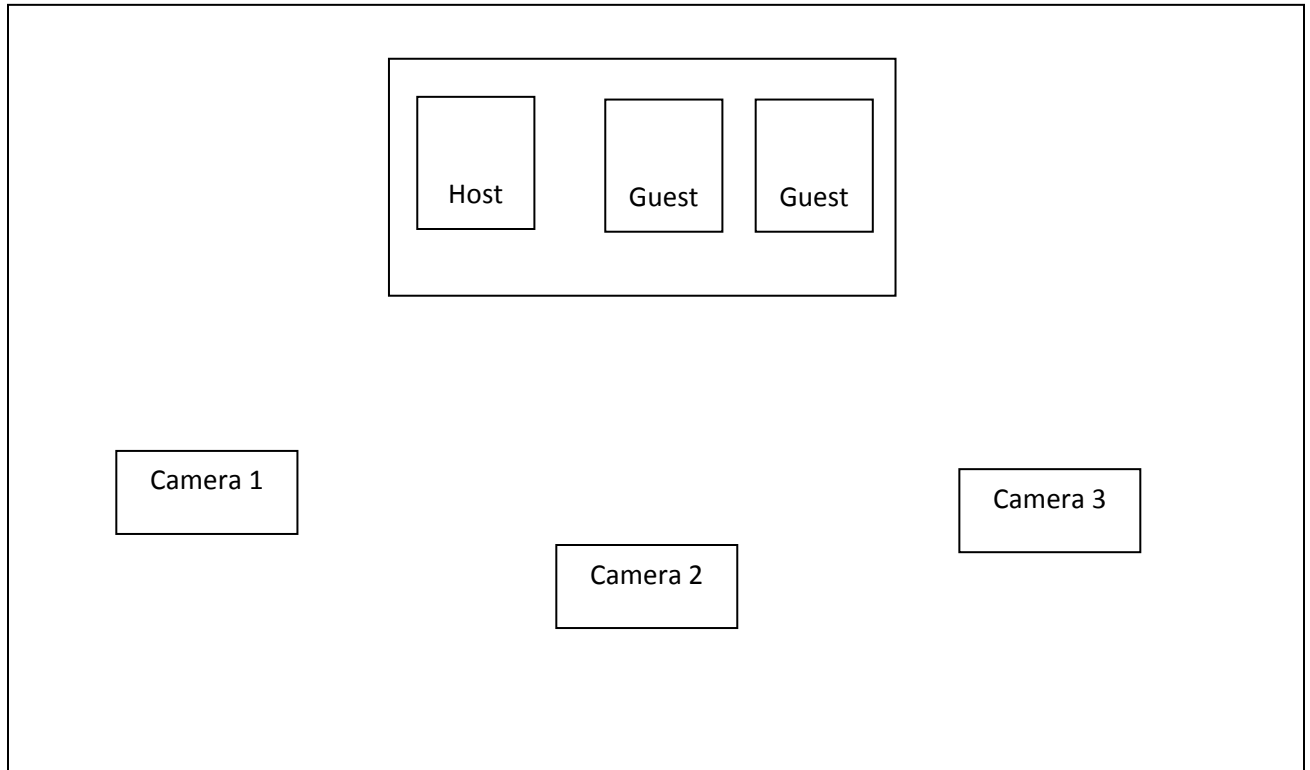
Set-Up Time: 15 to 20 minutes.

Instructional Time: Two hours.

Accommodations for Learners With Special Needs: Volume controls in headsets, chairs for students with difficulty standing for long durations of time and wheelchair ramp for accessibility to studio building.

General Description of Lesson Flow: The students will have already attended lectures and successfully completed quizzes on shot composition, camera movement and engineering. Each student is brought into the television studio individually and placed as an operator on one of the three cameras. The Director provides video commands over the headsets for the student to perform. The activity simulates production of a live television show, utilizing shot composition and camera movements previously learned in lecture and practiced in lab. The performance of these activities will be taped for purposes of evaluation, using a standardized grading rubric.

Diagram of Room Layout



Debriefing Questions (should have a minimum of 4-5, some general, some focused)

- 1) Did the lesson clearly explain the concepts of shot selection and shot composition?
- 2) Was the technology provided adequate to perform the required activities?
- 3) How might the activity be revised to make it more effective for this group?
- 4) Did the commands given by the Director come across as intimidating?
- 5) Were the commands given by the Director easily understood?
- 6) Were the variety of different shot compositions easily understood?
- 7) Were the variety of different shot selections easily understood?

THE EVENTS OF INSTRUCTION

1. Stimulation to gain attention to ensure the reception of stimuli.

The students are shown a 30 minute talk show previously recorded in the television studio. The Director's audio track has been recorded as well as that of the guests.

2. Informing learners of the learning goals to establish appropriate expectancies.

The Television Studio Camera Operator understands and demonstrates the knowledge of shot composition and the ability to respond to commands given by the Director over the headsets.

3. Reminding learners of previously learned content for retrieval from LTM.

The students will be asked to perform tasks based on previous lectures regarding camera movement and engineering. The students were also afforded the opportunity to practice these camera movements during lab time in the television studio.

4. Clear and distinctive presentation of material to ensure selective perception.

The material was presented in the television studio in the form of a lecture, followed by a hands-on demonstration. Additional information was presented in the text book, as well as a supplemental web site.

5. Guidance of learning by suitable semantic encoding.

Students are asked to come into the television studio during taping of programs for the college television network. The students will get additional guidance from the network Production Manager, as well as crew members.

6. Eliciting performance, involving response generation.

Students are asked to rotate positions in the crew, as the instructor issues a series of commands to simulate a production.

7. Providing feedback about performance.

Students get immediate feedback, as the instructor will ask them to either "fix" their shot, or to "hold" their shot. In language used will be a good indicator as to whether the student is understanding or not.

8. Assessing the performances involving additional response feedback occasions.

The students will be tested one at a time as they simulate a live television talk show. They will be graded by a rubric in the areas of shot composition and speed of the tasks. 90% to 100% will reflect the show could air as is (broadcast quality).

9. Arranging variety of practice to aid future retrieval and transfer.

Students will participate in a newscast in which they will rotate positions every class period for the last four weeks in the semester.