

Objective Analysis of Video Documents

We are going to analyze the sequence “**Julia reads a letter from Ramón**” from the film **The Sea Inside** (*Mar adentro*), observing how the form of this message has been articulated, how the form of each shot has been designed, and later we will attempt to relate it to the associated content.

**Image /
Sound**

Objective Variables to Analyze

1. Lines; 2. Lighting; 3. Color; 4. Sizes; 5. Height of Point of View; 6. Space; 7. Movements; 8. Editing; 9. Time; 10. Sound

F1



Objective Features

Marked horizontal lines in the foreground: the horizontality of the bed and the passing train, contrasted with the verticality of the curtains and window; Julia’s slightly curved body half-raised in bed stands out.

Low-key lighting, slightly darkened by the blind placed in front.

Dominant blue color (cold).

Size: Group shot (descriptive).

Point of view height: Slight high angle.

Three-dimensional space emphasized by elements at different distances (blind, Julia lying down, street and exterior train).

Movement: Static shot; the train movement stands out.

Interpretation

Horizontal/vertical tension structures the frame.

Creates intimacy and melancholy.

Emotional coldness, sadness.

Situates character in environment.

Mild vulnerability of Julia.

Strong depth sensation.

External world moves while Julia remains still.

F2



Objective Features

Editing: transition to next shot by cut.

Time: two simultaneous situations — Julia in bed and husband watching her.

Sound: silence stands out.

Husband's gaze line toward off-screen space.

Size: Close-up (expressive).

Space: recovers us from a subjective camera.

Interpretation

Direct continuity.

Shared emotional moment.

Silence intensifies drama.

Suggests emotional tension.

Emotional concentration.

Reorients viewer spatially.

F3



Objective Features

Editing by cut on husband's movement.

Size: Medium shot (descriptive of environment).

Similar lighting continues (low key), color (cold blue range), fixed and slightly low angle point of view.

Sound: voice-over enters.

Interpretation

Motivated transition.

Contextual framing.

Stylistic continuity.

Letter begins to dominate narration.

Voice-over:

Dear Julia: When they told me that a lawyer had offered to take my case...

F5**F7**

Objective Features

Size: Medium close shot moves into close-up (expressive).

Camera movement: slow dolly in toward Julia.

Lines: Julia's gaze line initially toward the letter, then toward exterior space. This horizontality contrasts with verticality of window and exterior buildings.

Space: Empty space left on right side. This "air" invites us to occupy that area (later filled by Ramón's room images). Relief emphasized by gaze redirected outward.

Sound: voice-over continues while music begins.

Interpretation

Emotional intensification.

Growing intimacy.

Inner reflection opens toward another world.

Transition toward Ramón's inner world.

Emotional elevation.

Voice-over:

...there was one factor that weighed more than any other in my decision, and it was that the lawyer suffered from a degenerative illness. I thought that only someone in that condition could truly understand mine and share my hell.

Voice-over:

Now I know that sometimes it is worth living in that hell if one can meet people like you.

MUSIC

It was worth sharing a cigarette with them, or now to caress them even if only by writing this foolishness...

F9**F10**

Objective Features

Julia's window lines dissolve into Ramón's window lines.

Editing: transition by dissolve.

Space: We move from hospital space to Ramón's room.

Time: Dissolve and sound indicate jump to the past (flashback).

Camera movement: backward dolly opposite to previous movement.

Editing: series of dissolves modify only the figure of the letter.

Space: We are placed in protagonist Ramón's position through subjective camera of his vision and writing.

Interpretation

Visual bridge between worlds.

Fluid passage.

New subjective world.

Memory activated.

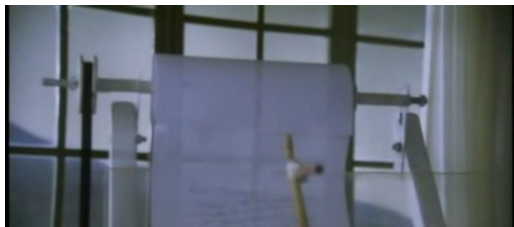
Spatial reversal.

Letter unifies times/spaces.

Viewer inhabits Ramón's interior world.

Voice-over:

And speaking of foolishness... I am correcting my writings...

F11

Objective Features

Color changes to browns, reds, oranges (warm, domestic).

Dominant lines in following shots are the characters' gazes directed toward Ramón / spectator.

Point of view height in successive shots is low angle and coincides with subjective camera in Ramón's position.

Shot sizes become close-ups (expressive: Javi, Rosa...) for close characters, and medium shots (descriptive) for less intimate characters.

Interpretation

Home warmth, emotional refuge.

Emotional dialogue.

Viewer becomes Ramón.

Emotional hierarchy among people.

Voice-over:

...with the hope that soon you can come back and lend me a hand. For now my nephew Javi started helping me by transferring them to his computer; otherwise life goes on here as always, you know...

F12



Objective Features

Camera movement: slow dolly in (following successive characters). Continuous emotional flow.

Interpretation

Voice-over:

Aurora spent the whole month making sure to tuck me in so autumn wouldn't catch her unprepared...

F13



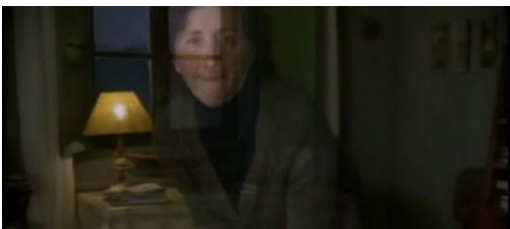
Objective Features

Time: Shots are a flashback, Ramón's memory, but the succession of memories does not follow linear continuity. Different moments are linked together, concretized by the narration as one month, but suggesting a whole lifetime of subjective time.

Interpretation

Psychological rather than chronological time.

F15



Objective Features

Space: Several overlapping worlds exist: (1) what Julia reads, (2) Ramón's subjective vision and world around him, (3) the outside world referenced by the window and corridor.

Interpretation

Layered narrative realities.

F16



Voice-over:

Javi continues arguing with his grandfather; I invent little tasks for them so they spend more time together.

Objective Features

Lighting alternates with window references; low key generally dominates.

Interpretation

Slight dramatic sadness.

F17



Objective Features

Sizes are medium shots, close to expressiveness but without reaching dramatic intensity.

Interpretation

Everyday emotional realism.

F18



Voice-over:

This month many friends came to see me, some have been doing so for 25 years...

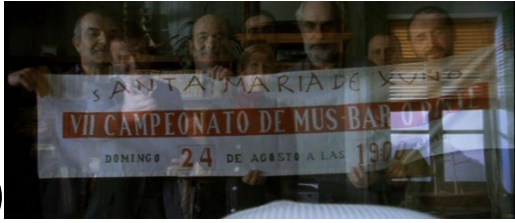
Objective Features

Although cold blue tones dominate, reddish warm touches appear in specific elements (lamp, poster, books, faces...).

Interpretation

Warm humanity punctures cold environment.

F20



Voice-over:

...which never ceases to cause admiration...

Objective Features

Constant camera movement resembles protagonist's subjective gaze, only able to pan following characters' movements, with slight dollies toward specific people.

Interpretation

Ramón's immobilized body replaced by moving gaze.

F21



Voice-over:

They enjoy telling me their stories...

Objective Features

Editing: duration between dissolves oscillates between 3 seconds for less emotionally important characters and up to 6 for closest ones (Rosa, Manuela...).

Interpretation

Temporal hierarchy of affection.

F22



Objective Features

Lines (figures, gazes, movement paths), lit zones (rest in low key), dominant blue color (cold), group shot size (descriptive) determine dominant figures separated from background: faces, windows, corridor...

Interpretation

Main iconic figures of sequence clearly emphasized.

F23



Objective Features

Space and depth sensation, links between previously cited worlds, always present through the window (always blue, distant, cold).

Interpretation

Window limits Ramón's relation with other worlds.

F24



Voice-over:

...and I am delighted.

Objective Features

Lighting alternates between low-key interior situations and exterior day/night lighting.

Interpretation

Temporal evolution indicated visually.

F25 / F26 / F27 / F29



Voice-over excerpts:

Do you remember Rosa, the girl from the cannery?

I think she found here a kind of refuge.

The other day she wanted to help Manuela change my clothes...

...and they ended up arguing.

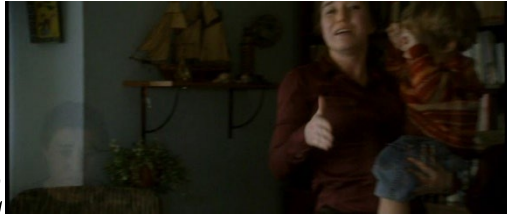
Objective Features

Editing: 12 dissolves in the sequence, visible because of their duration (more than one second).

Interpretation

Dreamlike continuity.

F31/F32



Objective Features

Space: Characters emerging from shadows (memories) begin and end actions at lateral thirds intersections, never in center of frame. Many are framed again by the window behind them.

Interpretation

Avoids symmetry; dynamic balance.

F33/F34



Voice-over:

I realized once again that when one depends on others for everything, one loses intimacy.

F36/F37



F38/F40



F41



Voice-over:

Anyway, I hope to keep my little kingdom in order... until you can brighten me once more with your presence. A warm embrace.

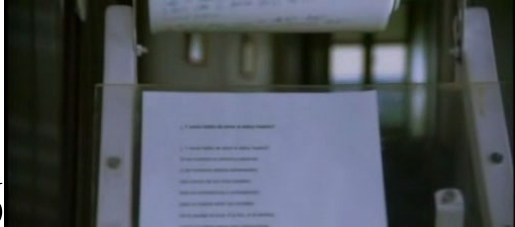
Objective Features

Editing: succession of dissolved figures gives continuity, turning sequence into a pseudo-long take without real external montage.

Interpretation

Flowing mental continuity.

F46



Objective Features

Time: Sequence ends by returning to Ramón's present time before his letter.

Interpretation

Closure of memory loop.

F47



Objective Features

Constant camera movements contrast with Julia's stillness (at beginning) and Ramón's stillness (final shot).

Space: sequence ends with protagonist's gaze almost toward camera, again emphasizing relief.

Shot size: close-up, expressive, concentrating the protagonist's only gestures.

Interpretation

Movement belongs to imagination.

Direct emotional contact.

Final emotional concentration.

Subjective Conclusion

Guided by this objective study, we may later conclude that:

The set of these variables (specifically centered on an audiovisual narrative) recreates the passing of an inner world, a dynamic fantasy of a real story that happened, and of a recreated vital space: Ramón's. The movements in the sequence avoid the claustrophobic terror experienced through the stillness of a tetraplegic man who cannot move. Thus, the space through which he moves is that of imagination, feelings, and sensations. In that universe, some figures and some warm colors wander around him day after day, and are now narrated in the form of a letter to another person (Julia), who is far away from him, also physically.