

Ambient noise level and chuck essay

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“ Damn, how unlucky life can get sometimes?” or “ What would have I done if I was on that island?” are the questions that often arise when people watch a movie about a person or group of people getting stranded on a lonely island. Such movies as “ Mysterious Island,” “ Swiss Family Robinson,” “ Lord of the Flies” and “ Cast Away” share this concept. However, “ Cast Away” can really strike a viewer emotionally inside.

Cast Away is a successful drama film about Federal Express engineer Chuck Nolan (Tom Hanks) who works at FedEx. He returns from work to spend a Christmas holiday with his girlfriend Kelly and proposes marriage to her. Suddenly everything gets interrupted when Chuck’s forced to fly overseas for a quick assignment. Very soon, the plane gets caught in the storm and goes off-course, which leads the plane to crash in the ocean.

Chuck survives the catastrophe and eventually the ocean drops him at the deserted island where he spends few years of hard surviving, until he finally abandons the island. This movie reveals strong emotions to the viewer; it involves sorrow, excitement, a bit of comedy, but mainly sympathy. Each scene was edited that way to put a viewer into a character’s shoes.

There are various editing techniques that they use throughout the film. The flow, pacing of each scene, the use of music, ambient sound, and the mood of this story, delivers great emotions and here is why it can keep anyone engaged from the beginning to an end. Having a nice and appropriate flow in the movie is crucial because it’s one of the biggest factors that any editor has to keep in mind when he or she edits the film. Cast Away is a great example of a good flow and how it is consistent throughout the entire movie.

First of all, the overall editing of the movie consists of jump cuts that really work well in telling a story. For example, there is a night scene on the island when Chuck sleeps under his rubber raft, and he gets awakened by one of the coconuts falling on the sand, and then a shot jump cuts right to the morning scene of Chuck walking down the shore and picking up the parcel that tide brought in. Then, another shot of Chuck placing his parcels under his rubber raft, when suddenly he hears the coconuts falling again.

Then the character tries to discover how to break a coconut to drink the liquid inside of it. These 3 cuts showed how it was cut from a night scene to a day scene, and it was cut right to the action, straight to the point, which made the sequence look relevant to the character's experience on that island. At first, some of the small scenes of Chuck's daily routine on the island may appear irrelevant, but later on the viewer realizes that these routines connect well to the character, and it gives the viewer the idea to understand that anyone can be in Chuck's shoes, once marooned on that island. Nevertheless, the flow of this movie is not the last aspect the viewers will like, because it delivers much more. Pacing is an important aspect of any film and *Cast Away* had an appropriate speed of sequences. First of all, the editors didn't make the emotional scenes look cheesy and the pacing was changing slowly and correctly from scene to scene. Even though the island scenes did not have a lot of dialogues, the slow pace portrays the alienation and confusion of being stuck on the island.

Therefore, the viewer will get the character's vibe, his frustration, desperation and confusion of being on that island. The pacing is slow in the

early scenes, where Chuck Nolan tries to learn his temporary habitat and the surviving tricks. When pacing changes in *Cast Away*. It starts to change from the scene where Chuck builds a fire. In addition, those are the first scenes where he starts to talk to Wilson (the volleyball) too.

From there the pacing becomes a bit faster and from there it skips to a section where few years have passed and Chuck is more experienced and adapted to the island. The viewer sees a different Chuck, matured Chuck and he is physically and emotionally prepared to abandon the island anytime. In addition, the pace of the scenes starts to change slowly when Chuck escapes to the sea, the pace is slowed down because at this stage of the movie he is shown in one location, sailing on his hand made raft.. There are scenes of Chuck sailing on the sea in the calm weather and then it jump cuts to the sea storm scene where chuck is all shriveled from the cold and heavy wind, then a second later it cuts to the scene were chuck is comfortably sailing again.

However, even at this stage, editors still stick to their cut style and the pace, and it works well. The overall pace of the movie is slow, because it's a drama film with very emotional message in it and the editors did a great job at delivering those emotions. The use of ambient noise and music is always important to have in any movie.

If an editor knows how and where to apply them effectively, it can have an interesting impact on the movie and the viewer. One of the interesting aspects about *Cast Away*, is that the film barely relies on music, instead it uses ambient noise, and leave the powerful music theme at the very end stages of the movie. There wasn't any music in any of the scenes with Chuck

on the island. Instead, the sounds of nature were present, and played the huge role throughout the entire island scenes. For example, a scene where Chuck tries to create a fire, is probably one of the powerful ones in this movie. In this scene Chuck realizes that he cannot eat raw food anymore, and if he won't learn how to make fire his chances to survive on that island will dry out in no time.

Here is the scene, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vP2P8mhif-g> Daveandjen4eva. "Cast Away (I HAVE MADE FIRE)" YouTube.

2 May 2010. Web. 9 February 2013. This was a great example of effective editing. The 3 minutes of that clip were so intense.

The fast cuts, close ups, the sound of a stick scrubbing another stick and at the end when Chuck creates a fire, the viewer feels happy for the character, as if the viewer was there with Chuck. It is certain that the music would have distracted the intensity of this scene, even the moment when fire appeared in front of Chuck, the addition of any track would've ruined the flow, therefore the ambient sound fits the atmosphere perfectly, because it highlights the character's alienation and desperation to make a fire and the viewer realizes that the man is there to face new nature's challenges. When the viewer finishes watching the movie he or she can usually tell the overall mood of the movie.

The flow the pacing, music, ambient sounds contribute to this aspect very well and Cast Away is a great example to it. It is very hard to tell the mood of this drama film in the first twenty minutes of it, but that's choice the editors

and director wanted to go with. They wanted to introduce the character by showing what he does for living and how he's being professional in his job position. He loves his girlfriend Kelly and wanted to propose her a marriage, but then he has to leave for a short assignment overseas. The story starts to unfold, when his plane crashes into the ocean and the viewer starts to get that dark and frightening vibe, because no one knows what is going to happen next.

Throughout the entire island scenes and all the way to the end of the movie, a viewer feels a sympathy and sorrow, because after all the struggles Chuck went through, at the end when the ship spots him in the ocean, he finally has a chance to meet his girl, but then he realizes he lost her again because she got married and the character lost his love of his life. Overall mood of the story is very depressing but it delivers a great point across that we should never give up and keep breathing, no matter how life is turned upside down for us. In conclusion, Cast Away was really well edited, because all the tiny aspects like, flow, pacing and the music theme, the ambient sounds, perfectly flowed with this story concept. Even though, the concept about a person getting marooned on the island is not original and it can be predictable, Cast Away manages to twist the story wisely and deliver some great emotions, therefore these techniques will keep any viewer engaged and from start to finish. I would recommend everyone to see this movie; it is one of those classics that you can sit down and enjoy and analyze.