

CAMERA MOVEMENT STYLE IN INDONESIAN OTT ORIGINALS: TWO-CASE USING NIELSEN'S FIVE FUNCTIONS

Fajar Aji^{1*}; Ranang Agung Sugihartono²

¹Program Studi Seni, Fakultas Pascasarjana, Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia 57126

¹Program Studi Televisi dan Film, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Jember, Jember, Indonesia 68121

²Program Studi Seni, Fakultas Pascasarjana, Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia 57126

¹fajaraji@std.isi-ska.ac.id; ²ranang@isi-ska.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Indonesian original series produced for over-the-top (OTT) platforms increasingly rely on cinematic camera mobility. However, scholarship has rarely clarified how camera movement operates as a recurring directorial style in Indonesian OTT originals, particularly when its functions are specified systematically. This article addresses this gap through a qualitative two-case study of Little Mom (2021) and Zona Merah (2024). The analysis is conducted within Bordwell's poetics-of-cinema approach. It is anchored in Nielsen's five functions of camera movement (orienting, inflectional, rhythmic, reflexive, and abstract), which are applied to selected key scenes where camera movement is formally salient. Data were generated through repeated scene observation, interviews with key creators, and document and literature review. Findings indicate that each series develops a patterned movement signature. In Little Mom, sustained drift and crab movement, together with follow-orbit mobility, recur as a stylistic strategy that modulates melodramatic affect. At narrative peaks, CGI-assisted traversal and compositing extend movement possibilities and cue a limited reflexive awareness of the image's constructedness. In Zona Merah, one-shot handheld traversal is combined with follow-and-scan pans and whip-pan impact beats to maintain spatial orientation under threat while intensifying sensory tension. Across both cases, orienting, inflectional, rhythmic, and reflexive functions recur most consistently, whereas the abstract function appears only marginally in the analyzed corpus. The article conceptualizes camera movement as a recurring directorial style in Indonesian OTT originals. It proposes a two-case analytical framework linking motion patterns, visual stylistic identity, and immersive viewing experience.

Keywords: camera movement, directorial style, Indonesian OTT originals, Nielsen's five functions, poetics of cinema

INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, over-the-top (OTT) platforms have reshaped viewing practices and the distribution and production logics of audiovisual content, with broadcast television and cinema exhibition ceding ground to on-demand streaming services (Salsabila et al., 2025; Winarko & Susilo, 2024). This shift realigns aesthetic and narrative paradigms by altering consumption patterns and positioning OTT as a major distribution space for serialized screen content (Nijhawan & Dahiya, 2020).

In Indonesia, it intersects with evolving OTT-related policy debates and supports themes and formats less accommodated in legacy broadcast contexts (Siregar & Sazali, 2025; Trisnawati et al., 2023). Accordingly, creators increasingly deploy salient stylistic strategies, including sustained camera mobility, long takes, and Computer-Generated Imagery (CGI)-assisted movement. These strategies can enhance immersive viewing and, at times, foreground the image's technological construction as part of the viewing experience (Srivastav & Rai, 2021; Srivastav & Rai, 2022).

Advances in digital technology have produced increasingly complex, multidimensional screen visuality. Computer-generated imagery (CGI), virtual reality, and digital imaging devices have become instruments of cinematographic expression (Pecheranskyi, 2023), and the camera is no longer merely a recorder of reality but a conceptual medium that shapes viewers' perceptions of space, time, and emotion (Kabelen, 2025; Widyaevan, 2023). These developments widen filmmakers' latitude to treat camera movement as more than coverage, while raising expectations of cinematic polish within OTT originals. Here, its symbolic and reflexive qualities are examined by mapping movement patterns in selected key scenes onto Nielsen's five functions, focusing on sustained mobility, one-shot virtuosity, and CGI-assisted traversal that foregrounds image construction. Mahajan and Gautam (2023) note that looser regulations and censorship on digital (OTT) platforms further enable more expressive visual aesthetics. Accordingly, camera movement can be understood as a patterned stylistic choice that organizes effects and consolidates directorial style, aligning with Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith's (2024) conception of style and with Nielsen's (2017) functional account of camera movement in narrative film.

The OTT wave in Indonesia has reshaped the media ecosystem and audience consumption (Manik & Aristio, 2023). The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this transition, positioning services such as Netflix, WeTV, and Vidio as primary outlets, with subscriptions rising steadily since 2022 (Kania et al., 2025; Prihantoro, 2024). The shift reflects a flexible, choice-driven digital consumption culture in which media use becomes increasingly individualized and platform-based (Arianto, 2021; Herianto et al., 2021). Studies of streaming distribution during Covid-19 likewise show how online video platforms reorganized screen distribution and accelerated platform-centered consumption (Changsong et al., 2021; Vlassis, 2021). Comparable OTT-oriented behavioral shifts have also been reported in India (Sridhar & Phadtare, 2022). Against this backdrop, *Little Mom* (a movie, shown in 2021) and *Zona Merah* (a movie, shown in 2024) are selected as two contrasting cases across genre and stylistic strategy to enable a two-case analysis of camera-movement patterning in Indonesian OTT originals. Rather than claiming representativeness, the cases are used to refine a functional and stylistic framework for reading camera movement as directorial style.

Cinematic camera mobility has become increasingly prominent in Indonesian OTT original series. However, scholarship has not provided a detailed account of movement patterning as recurring directorial style or systematically mapped it through narrative functions. This study therefore poses three research questions. First, how are camera movements in selected key scenes of *Little Mom* and *Zona Merah* mapped onto Nielsen's five functions of camera movement? Second, what recurring movement

schemas such as encompassing movement types, durations, and stabilization modes constitute each series' stylistic signature across episodes and key scenes? Third, how do these patterned deployments shape viewers' immersive and affective engagement within OTT viewing contexts? Building on these questions, this study analyzes how the aesthetics of camera movement support storytelling, cultivate viewers' visual and emotional experience, and operate as a directorial style. Our aesthetic analysis is anchored in Jacob Isak Nielsen's five functions in narrative cinema (orientation, inflection, rhythmic, reflexive, and abstract) (Nielsen, 2017).

Camera movement functions as a vehicle for visual storytelling; combinations of dolly, crane, tracking, and follow moves can generate dynamic visual rhythm while deepening narrative texture (Ding, 2023). Neurocognitive studies indicate that moving-camera footage (e.g., steadicam movement) can elicit sensorimotor-cortex activation in spectators, and that large-scale, camera-induced global motion fields may modulate responses to emotional content in movies (Dayan et al., 2018; Heimann et al., 2019). While these findings are not specific to OTT contexts, experimental work similarly suggests that camera-movement techniques can modulate viewers' involvement and, under certain conditions, immersion, supporting the argument that camera mobility becomes especially salient in personalized OTT viewing conditions (Yilmaz et al., 2023).

Treating camera movement as directorial style foregrounds visual aesthetics as artistic identity. Since early cinema, filmmakers have mobilized movement to expand spatial information and guide attention. Camera movement supplies shifting perspectives and can render objects sharper and more vivid than a static frame (Bordwell et al., 2024). In post-Reformasi Indonesian cinema, camera mobility is often thick with reflexive textures, marking contemporary stylistic complexity (Purnama, 2023). Here, directorial style is operationalized as recurrent movement schemas across selected key scenes and episodes (consistent preferences for movement type, duration, and stabilization) that repeatedly align with comparable narrative functions to shape visual identity and viewer experience. The parameters tracked include tempo and stability, direction or amplitude, distance and height shifts, and their relation to blocking, continuity structure, and CGI involvement. As with style formation more broadly, such patterning may be deliberate or relatively unpremeditated (Bordwell et al., 2024). Accordingly, the varied uses of camera movement in the original series *Little Mom* and *Zona Merah* can be read as the directors' aesthetic choices for articulating their visual worlds.

To map the recent state of the art, we ran a Scopus search via Publish or Perish on 6 October 2025 (publication year 2020 onward; Title-words query "camera movement" AND "film," including "camera movement in film"). Because broader keyword combinations did not consistently retrieve the most

relevant items in initial trials, results were screened to retain peer-reviewed works that theorize camera movement as an aesthetic or narrative strategy rather than technical manuals. This process foregrounded three closely aligned studies: Allison (2020) on non-narratively motivated movement as directorial subjectivity, Purnama (2023) on post-Reformasi reflexive mobility and virtuosity of transport, and Pattanayak et al. (2024) on AI-based automation and new camera-aesthetic dimensions.

A targeted Google Scholar scan (2020–2025) indicates three recurrent emphases in recent camera-movement studies. First, several studies discuss camera movement as an affective and rhythmic cue that shapes mood and intensifies emotion through dynamic visual narration (Paranata et al., 2024; Sintowoko, 2022). Related practice-based studies show how camera-movement techniques are deployed in screen works to organize dynamic visual narration and establish rhythmic progression (Prasetyo et al., 2022; Saputra & Manesah, 2025). Second, scholarship emphasizes synergy among movement, composition, and transitions to generate visual tension and strengthen narrative drive (Prasetyo & Ahmad, 2024). Third, studies on one-shot/long-take strategies argue that integrating movement with camera angle and shot size can enhance immersion and cinematic appeal (Dewandra & Islam, 2022; Hari Wibowo, 2022). However, this body of work largely addresses films, trailers, or open-platform web series, leaving limited attention to Indonesian OTT originals and to movement as directorial style when mapped systematically through Nielsen's functional framework. Addressing this lacuna also clarifies how streaming-era production dynamics reshape relations among lead firms, directors' expression, and content value (Castro & Cascajosa, 2020; Idiz, 2024). It further helps explain how platform-oriented logics can standardize production systems while still enabling stylistic differentiation (Chalaby, 2023). Accordingly, this article positions camera movement as a recurring directorial style in Indonesian OTT originals. It proposes a two-case analytical framework linking motion patterns, visual stylistic identity, and immersive viewing experience.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative two-case study design focusing on Indonesian OTT original series, *Little Mom* and *Zona Merah*. The unit of analysis is the examination of camera movement in selected key scenes, treated as bounded units appropriate for investigating complex, contextual cinematographic phenomena (Chawa et al., 2018). The analysis is grounded in Nielsen's five functions of camera movement (Nielsen, 2017) and conducted within Bordwell's (2008) poetics of cinema framework.

Camera-movement aesthetics are operationalized as the observable configuration of

camera mobility within a scene. This configuration is coded by movement type (including CGI or virtual movement) and by the following parameters: duration/tempo, stability, directionality and amplitude, distance change (approach or withdrawal), and camera-height change. The coding also covers the relation of camera movement to blocking (follow/lead/lag, reframing, reveal), the continuity structure (one-shot or long take versus movement interrupted by cuts), and movement motivation (diegetic, narrative, or psychological motivation versus reflexive, virtuosic, or abstract display), including whether the movement is achieved practically or through CGI.

The authors surveyed all episodes and flagged candidate scenes when camera movement was stylistically salient. A scene was included if it met one or more criteria: sustained movement within a single take (≥ 5 seconds), long-take or one-shot mobility structuring continuity, CGI or virtual movement, rapid movement at a narrative turning point, distinct mobility supports (e.g., drone, gimbal, jib), and/or recurrence of a similar movement schema across episodes. The final corpus comprises six key scenes, summarized in Table 1 at the beginning of the Results and Discussion section.

Primary data were generated through systematic observation of each key scene, viewed at least twice (Cutting et al., 2012). The first viewing logged movement events and types; the second coded aesthetic parameters and preliminary functional cues. Observation employed a standardized sheet recording episode/timecode, event boundaries, type and duration, stability, directionality/amplitude, distance and height shifts, cut versus one-shot continuity, relation to blocking, CGI involvement, and function notes, supported by pausing, frame-by-frame inspection, and annotated stills when needed. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three informants (the director of *Little Mom* and the director and producer of *Zona Merah*) focusing on intended functions, constraints, and production decisions. Interview excerpts are cited selectively to clarify intent, constraints, and post-production decisions. Informed consent was obtained, participation was voluntary, and materials were stored securely and anonymized when necessary. Secondary sources (production materials, public statements, and scholarly works) triangulated visual findings with creator accounts and contextual evidence.

Data analysis employed Bordwell's poetics of cinema, encompassing poetic analysis and historical poetics (Bordwell, 2008). First, the authors logged each key scene and segmented it into movement events (from initiation to cessation or to a cut). Second, each event was coded using a movement taxonomy and the operational parameters (tempo or duration, stability, directionality or amplitude, distance or height change, continuity via cuts versus one-shot, relation to blocking, and CGI). Third, events were mapped onto Nielsen's five functions by assigning a primary function and, where clearly

evidenced, a secondary function. Fourth, the coded parameters were interpreted within the poetics framework to explain how construction choices generate effects, and then synthesized within and across cases to specify recurring schemas as stylistic signatures. Finally, interview statements and secondary documents were integrated as explanatory evidence concerning creative intent, constraints, and post-production decisions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis draws on six key scenes from *Little Mom* and *Zona Merah*, selected using the sampling criteria described in the Methods. Table 1 outlines the scene corpus (episode and timecodes) and previews the dominant camera-movement schemas together with the mapped Nielsen functions. For each scene, the discussion first describes movement parameters (type, duration or tempo, stability, directionality or amplitude, distance and camera-height changes, relation to blocking, continuity via cuts or one-shot, and CGI). Then it justifies the functional mapping through explicit cues such as: spatial reorganization for orienting, affect modulation for inflectional, pacing or temporal articulation for rhythmic, and foregrounded constructedness or virtuosity for reflexive. Across the corpus, four functions recur (orienting, inflectional, rhythmic, reflexive). In contrast, the abstract function does not appear in the selected scenes, suggesting that camera mobility remains tethered to narrative, spatial, or affective tasks even in moments of heightened virtuosity.

The discussion begins with *Little Mom*, where camera movement recurrently articulates melodramatic

affect through sustained mobility and occasional CGI-assisted traversal, and then turns to *Zona Merah*, where mobility is frequently tied to spatial orientation, sensory tension, and long-take immersion.

In episode 2 of *Little Mom* (timecode 14:07–17:57), Naura is overwhelmed by fear, anxiety, and confusion after realizing that her pregnancy is starting to be detected at school. She pressures Yuda to discuss possible solutions and what steps they should take, while Yuda is preoccupied with training to become a professional basketball player. This sequence foregrounds a crab move combined with a slightly unstable camera, marked by subtle shaking (see Figure 1).

Formally, the scene is dominated by a slow crab movement that shifts right and left at a measured pace. This movement keeps the distance between the camera and the subject relatively constant, with a stable camera height. Medium two-shots and medium close-ups dominate the shot scale, so faces and upper bodies become the primary sites of affect throughout the shift. The camera moves laterally with limited displacement, and its speed remains relatively steady across the scene. The resulting movement reads as controlled motion rather than accelerated repositioning that would reconfigure spatial relations. Most importantly, this literal shift does not cross the axis of action, so screen direction remains consistent within the shot or reverse-shot orientation between Naura and Yuda. As a result, the space remains legible without any abrupt left–right reversals.

The image also shows persistent subtle shaking. This shake indicates a slightly destabilized or handheld shooting mode rather than full stabilization, such as a gimbal’s floating smoothness. The visible instability functions as a formal cue for nervousness and urgency,

Table 1 Scene Corpus and Dominant Camera-Movement Schemas (With Mapped Nielsen Functions)

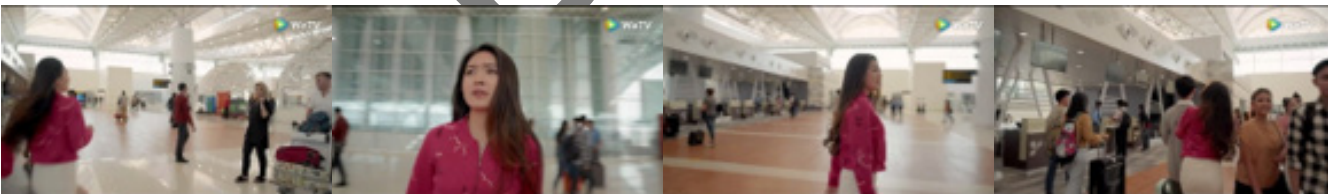
No	Series	Episode	Timecode	Narrative moment	Dominant movement schema/ markers	Continuity / VFX	Mapped Nielsen functions
1	<i>Little Mom</i>	2	14:07–17:57	Naura is gripped by anxiety over a possible pregnancy	Slow crab move, subtle shakiness (instability) emphasizing emotion	Multi-shot, practical	Inflection (expressive)
2	<i>Little Mom</i>	2	50:30–52:14	Naura races to the airport, pursuing Yuda as he is about to depart	Free-ranging mobility across shots, pan/ tilt/ crab/ follow/ push/ orbit, accelerated pacing	Not one-shot, continuous motion across cuts	Rhythmic (with orienting cues described)
3	<i>Little Mom</i>	2	53:48–54:40	Yuda struggles with the weight of leaving, while Naura returns home consumed by grief.	CGI-assisted traversal (push-out through airplane window), composited aircraft reflection	VFX or CGI-assisted	Reflexive (“virtuosity of transport”)

Table 1 Scene Corpus and Dominant Camera-Movement Schemas (With Mapped Nielsen Functions) (Continued)

No	Series	Episode	Timecode	Narrative moment	Dominant movement schema/ markers	Continuity / VFX	Mapped Nielsen functions
4	<i>Zona Merah</i>	2	53:00–53:23	Ella is encircled by “Mayit” on the road	Follow and fast pan (OTS), POV-like scanning left or right	Practical	Orienting
5	<i>Zona Merah</i>	3	01:30–01:50	Ella kills a “Mayit” for the first time	Whip-pan and motion blur, practical effects and CGI blood-splatter	Practical and CGI	Reflexive (impact aesthetics and technological construction)
6	<i>Zona Merah</i>	3	32:12–34:39	Chaos erupts at the illegal logging camp	One-shot 2m27s, handheld free-ranging follow, booming to high angle, crab-left reveal, integrated practical and CGI.	One-shot or long take, practical and CGI	Rhythmic (primary), reflexive (both secondary)



Figure 1 Naura Emotional Scene

Figure 2 Naura and Her Family at the Airport
(Source: Screenshot from *Little Mom*, episode 2)

especially because the blocking remains relatively restrained and the emotional intensity is conveyed more through facial expression than through physical action (Hart, 2023; Stewart, 2024). Taken together, the maintained shot scale, the constant tempo, and the micro-instability concentrate attention on Naura’s facial expression as the scene’s primary expressive register (see Figure 1).

Functionally, the formal cues in this scene most strongly activate the inflection function. Such emphasis on a character’s emotional and psychological state is often termed the expressive function (Nielsen, 2017). This is because the movement modulates affect and renders psychological shading observable, rather than serving as a device for spatial reorientation or as a conspicuous display of artifice (reflexive). The slow crab movement sustains emotional pressure by

keeping Naura’s face as the framing’s focal point, while the image’s subtle shake signals an unsettled inner state. In this way, camera movement communicates character psychology as a stylistic visual parameter, reduces reliance on overt bodily performance, and reinforces the melodramatic affect that shapes the viewing experience of *Little Mom*.

Next, in the closing sequence of episode 2 (timecode 50:30–52:14), Naura and her parents rush to intercept Yuda and his family before they depart for Japan. The scene employs free-ranging camerawork that combines pans, tilts, crab moves, follow moves, push moves, and orbiting shots. The scene also sustains continuous camera activity across a chain of shots rather than through a single uninterrupted long take. Although the sequence is edited, camera movement remains the dominant visual principle that drives the

chase action forward (see Figure 2).

Formally, the scene is composed of several segments in which shot scale shifts rapidly between medium framing and wider views. These shifts occur as the camera alternates between tracking moving bodies and reasserting the airport's spatial layout. The camera's movement direction repeatedly changes from forward follow or push moves (closing the distance to Naura and her family) to lateral re-centering (a crab-like adjustment) and to rapid pans or tilts that redirect attention to routes, obstacles, or off-screen targets. The speed profile also varies across segments: it increases during turns and while navigating obstacles, then briefly stabilizes when the camera reorients. As a result, movement intensity is not uniform but is modulated by the dynamics of the chase. In terms of continuity and screen direction, the reframing maintains a consistent direction of travel through the airport. Therefore, viewers can still follow the pursuit path even though shot scale and camera angle change frequently.

The stability cues in this sequence align more closely with a free-ranging mobility mode than with fully stabilized gliding movement. Subtle shake and rapid reframing appear in urgent moments, while smoother tracking emerges when the camera "locks" onto the forward chase line. The relation to blocking is direct. The camera's movement is repeatedly motivated by Naura's forward motion, with the camera following, moving ahead, or pivoting to keep Naura legible within the frame as surrounding figures and architectural lines pass through the background. The editing rhythm also becomes part of the movement aesthetic, because cuts do not halt mobility but carry it forward. The sequence creates a sense of sustained forward drive across shots. This combination aligns with scholarship arguing that mobile camerawork can orient viewers within diegetic space while also shaping tempo, affect, and meaning-making through rhythmic escalation (Muzakki & Adiprabowo, 2025; Purnama, 2023).

Functionally, this scene most strongly activates Nielsen's rhythmic function. This is because camera movement coordinated with the density of cuts and the fast-tempo music generates the sequence's temporal drive and heightens urgency (see Figure 2). At the same time, the camera also performs an orienting function by repeatedly reasserting navigable pathways within the airport, points of entry, and the line of pursuit; however, this orientational work primarily serves to support rhythmic escalation as the more dominant effect. In other words, the sequence uses mobile framing and cutting to sustain tempo as its organizing principle, while maintaining spatial clarity only to the extent necessary to underpin the pursuit's mounting panic. This pattern reinforces *Little Mom's* stylistic tendency to treat camera movement as a dynamic rhythmic device for intensifying melodramatic tension while preserving the legibility of the action.

In the subsequent closing sequence of episode 2 (timecode 53:48–54:40), the scene foregrounds

Yuda's hesitation to leave Naura and Naura's psychological distress as she exits the airport. The staging and temporal pacing in this passage underscore uncertainty, separation, and an irrecoverable sense of loss. Within this interval, the sequence presents two distinct explorations of camera movement enabled by CGI-assisted techniques. These techniques allow the camera to glide smoothly and to shift perspective beyond what conventional on-location movement would permit (see Figure 3).

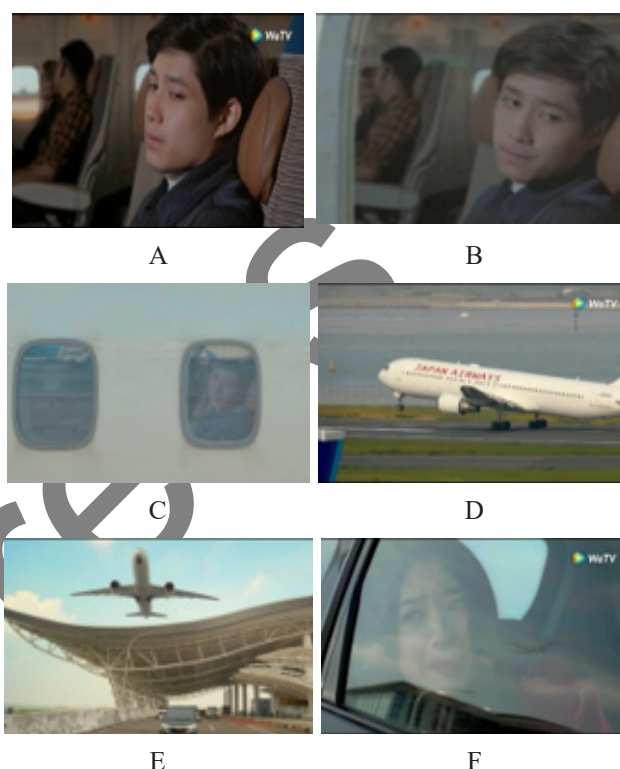


Figure 3 Yuda hesitates to leave Naura and Naura departs the airport
(Source: Screenshot from *Little Mom*, episode 2)

The shot begins inside the airplane cabin with a close-up framing of Yuda's expression (Figure 3A), then executes a push-out move that passes through the spatial barrier of the cabin window and resolves on Yuda's face as framed through the window from outside the aircraft (Figure 3C). Formally, this movement combines a pronounced distance shift, moving from interior proximity to an exterior vantage point. The move maintains continuity by eliminating visible cuts or the mechanical constraints that typically mark physical camera repositioning. Shot scale also changes across the trajectory, shifting from an intimate interior close-up to an exterior framing that re-situates Yuda within the aircraft's spatial context. At the same time, the movement preserves a smooth velocity profile without abrupt acceleration. The visualization therefore foregrounds the technical quality of the transition. The second visual-effects construction in this sequence frames Naura from outside a car

window while compositing the aircraft's movement as a receding reflection on the glass surface (Figure 3F). In this way, distance and spatial separation are articulated through the compositing of multiple image elements rather than through on-location photography alone.

Both moments present stability as an exceptionally smooth gliding motion, in sharp contrast to the micro-instability in episode 2 (timecode 14:07–17:57) and the free-ranging urgency of the airport pursuit in episode 2 (timecode 50:30–52:14). The camera's relation to blocking also differs: rather than tracking bodies moving through space, the camera traverses layered spatial planes (interior and exterior zones, reflections, and foreground elements) and relies on compositing to produce a continuity that would be difficult to realize physically. These formal cues align with the notion of virtuosity of transport, in which camera movement becomes a point of attraction by staging seamless trajectories across obstacles and distances (McQuire, 2000; Purnama, 2023). The effect not only figures separation and loss but also foregrounds technical construction and invites a distinct mode of viewer engagement.

Functionally, the sequence activates the reflexive function. This is because the camera movement foregrounds its own artifice and prompts viewers to attend to technical construction alongside narrative affect. The push-out through the window exemplifies impact aesthetics, subtly inviting spectators to register the physical impossibility of the move and the visual-effects labor that enables it. Likewise, the aircraft reflection composited onto Naura's window image intensifies her sadness and despondency while simultaneously signaling that the image is a constructed artifact. The visualization thus encourages a mode of viewing oriented toward appreciation of cinematic construction (Nielsen, 2017). Within the *Little Mom* corpus, these CGI passages consolidate a stylistic trait in which camera mobility intermittently shifts from affective and rhythmic functions toward reflexive display at narrative peaks that mark separation and loss.

The three *Little Mom* scene corpora discussed above consistently mobilize camera movement as a stylistic strategy for shaping melodramatic affect and regulating scene tempo. This mobility does not merely record events for narrative clarity; it is designed to produce specific emotional and rhythmic

effects. Episode 2 (timecode 14:07–17:57) establishes a baseline pattern in the form of a measured crab move that keeps Naura within a relatively stable shot scale and camera height while retaining subtle visible micro-instability. This visualization centers attention on facial expression and supports an inflectional (expressive) emphasis on anxiety and uncertainty. Episode 2 (timecode 50:30–52:14) develops the earlier movement pattern through freer, sustained mobility relayed across multiple set-ups. The camera's motion continues across cuts without rupturing continuity, making the rhythmic function most dominant, while orienting cues remain operative to preserve the spatial legibility of the airport pursuit. At the narrative peak in episode 2 (timecode 53:48–54:40), *Little Mom* deploys CGI and compositing so that smooth traversal across layered spatial planes becomes conspicuous and activates reflexive engagement through virtuosity of transport.

These recurrent patterns are reinforced by interview evidence from *Little Mom*'s director, who states a directorial preference for keeping either the camera or the subject in motion and for minimizing fully static imagery except when required by narrative demands. He also characterizes orbital movement as a deliberate stylistic “statement” (Soeharjanto, personal interview, 24 June 2025). This claim aligns with the repeated appearance of orbital mobility and reframing as expressive intensifiers in selected scenes. Accordingly, the internal profile of this case is not only inferable from recurrent formal parameters and Nielsen-function alignments; it is also supported by creator testimony that frames sustained mobility as an intentional visual storytelling strategy rather than an incidental technical choice.

At the same time, the mobility signature identified here cannot be explained solely as the product of an individual director's creativity. Sustained mobility and CGI trajectories also depend on broader enabling conditions. OTT-era production logics and contemporary imaging technologies make certain movement schemas and continuity solutions more feasible, more repeatable, and more conspicuous within original-series production. For this reason, the historical-poetics section following the two-case discussion will synthesize these enabling determinants such as technological development, production support, and broader stylistic influences.

In the closing moments of *Zona Merah* episode

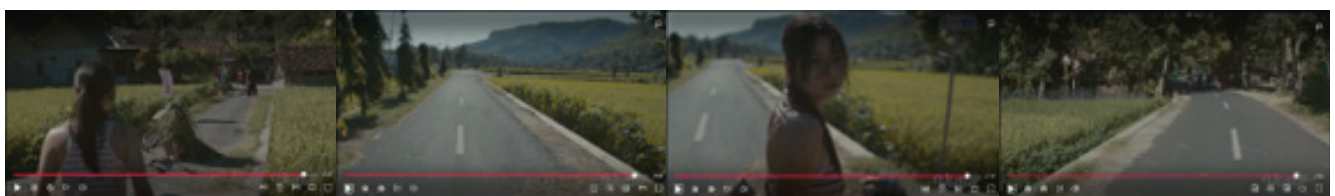


Figure 4 Ella Amid the “Mayit”
(Source: Screenshot from *Zona Merah*, episode 2)

2 (timecode 53:00–53:23), Ella is surrounded by “mayit” dispersed across a village after an attack that results in her mother’s death. The “mayit” encircle her from the road ahead and from both the left and right, narrowing the available escape route. The sequence foregrounds Ella’s hesitation and her rapid assessment of the situation immediately before she decides to fight using a hoe nearby. The passage combines follow movement and panning to register Ella’s perceptual field directly (see Figure 4).

Formally, the scene begins with a medium shot that follows Ella from behind as she walks toward a crossroads. The camera then shifts into a series of fast pans sweeping left and right. Camera motion alternates between forward following (low-to-moderate speed) and horizontal reorientation (higher speed), and each pan covers a sufficiently wide arc to redistribute attention across multiple threat positions. Shot scale remains predominantly medium to preserve spatial relations between Ella and the surrounding roadway environment, and camera height stays relatively stable across the brief interval. In addition, the over-the-shoulder alignment maintains consistent screen direction and does not cross the axis of action, preserving spatial legibility even as the camera redirects attention rapidly.

The over-the-shoulder vantage establishes Ella’s perception as the viewer’s primary reference point. The movement presents objects and events in a manner proximate to the character’s visual access (Aronowitz & Helton, 2024; Cannavò et al., 2024), allowing the camera to convey sightlines and the “mayit” encirclement without explanatory dialogue. The movement is also directly tied to blocking; Ella’s brief stop at the crossroads motivates the shift from following to scanning pans, and the camera stabilizes briefly at each pan endpoint so viewers can register a distinct cluster of threats. In other words, camera mobility regulates the relationship between character movement and viewer access to a dangerous space.

Functionally, these formal cues most strongly activate the orienting function because camera movement steers attention toward salient narrative information and organizes the scene’s primary field of action (Nielsen, 2017). The follow movement acts as a directional cue, while the rapid pans supply spatial data that clarifies entrapment and grounds Ella’s decision to confront the threat with an available tool. In *Zona Merah*, this scene exemplifies a recurring pattern: the

series uses camera movement to clarify space when threats emerge and emphasizes orientation to intensify action.

Early in episode 3 (timecode 01:30–01:50), Ella kills a *mayit* for the first time using a hoe. This passage functions as a narrative turning point that confirms her shift from avoidance to confrontation. Within this interval, camera movement does not merely cover the action; it foregrounds the impact moment as a salient visual event (see Figure 5).

Formally, the scene is dominated by a whip-pan that follows the arc of Ella’s swing. The movement features abrupt acceleration and deceleration and an extremely rapid lateral trajectory. It produces pronounced motion blur that temporarily reduces image detail at peak speed. Shot scale and distance are recalibrated primarily through the pan’s endpoints rather than sustained tracking, so the movement reads as forceful reorientation that prioritizes impact timing. The sequence also integrates practical effects and CGI to depict the hoe embedded in the *mayit* skull and the blood-splatter (see Figure 5). This combination renders the strike as an engineered effect, not simply a physical event.

Motion blur functions as a formal marker that the camera operates at a speed exceeding ordinary visual clarity, and this optical consequence becomes part of the scene’s design. The movement is synchronized with blocking. Whip-pan is motivated by Ella’s swing, and the camera holds briefly at the endpoint to register the immediate result of the blow. The combination of practical effects and CGI consolidates the impact beat as a technically constructed audiovisual moment, with the blood effect and embedded weapon serving as confirmation cues of contact and consequence. Viewer attention is thus directed both to the action and to the manufactured intensity of the image.

Functionally, this passage most strongly activates the reflexive function because the whip-pan blur and effects-assisted impact make cinematic mediation perceptible at the moment of violence (Nielsen, 2017). The scene remains narratively motivated, but it foregrounds optical and technological mediation as part of how the event is experienced. This passage also reflects a recurring strategy in *Zona Merah*. The series selectively intensifies mobility at turning points to produce a conspicuous impact event that complements its broader emphasis on threat spatialization and escalating action.

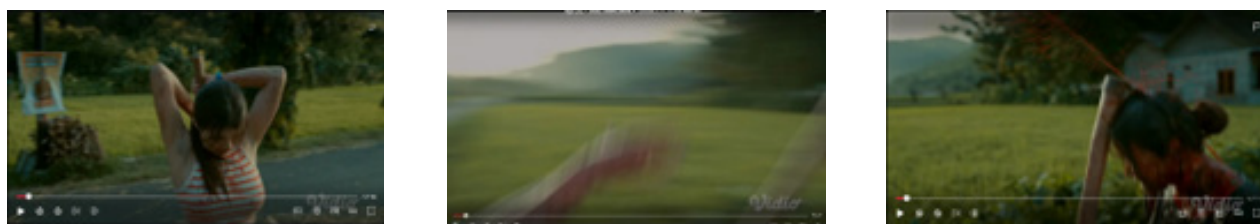


Figure 5 Ella's First Kill of a “Mayit”
(Source: Screenshot from *Zona Merah*, episode 3)

The final close reading of the *Zona Merah* original series centers on a mid-episode 3 sequence (timecode 32:12–34:39). The sequence depicts escalating chaos at a logging camp as individuals bitten by "mayit" transform into *mayit*. Personnel tasked with killing the *mayit* become overwhelmed because they have turned the assignment into a betting spectacle. Adi and Risang encounter each other within this sequence. The passage employs free-ranging handheld camerawork that follows characters as they enter and exit tents, before executing a boom move and a crab-left reveal that discloses the riotous camp from a high-angle wide shot. A combination of practical effects and CGI supports the staging. The entire passage is executed as a continuous one-shot lasting 2 minutes and 27 seconds.

Formally, the one-shot construction relies on handheld, free-ranging camerawork that repeatedly changes direction, distance, and framing priorities without a cut. The camera follows Adi through tent entry and exit (see Figures 6A–B). It then shifts to Purwo and Risang as they are attacked (see Figures 6C–D). Next, the camera booms upward to a higher position and executes a crab-left movement that reframes the camp's disorder in a high-angle wide shot (see Figures 6E–F). The camera subsequently returns to Adi as he attempts to fight and flee from pursuing "mayit" (see Figures 6G–H). Within this one-shot, shot scale remains dynamic because the camera alternates between closer follow framings and wider views generated by pull-back distance changes and the boom-up shift. Camera height becomes a key formal parameter, since the boom move materially reconfigures spatial comprehension by disclosing a broader field of action than ground-level following alone would allow.

The handheld stability mode is marked by visible micro-jitter and responsive correction as the camera navigates blocking and obstacles. This parameter contributes to a restless kinaesthetic profile associated with handheld style (Bordwell et al., 2024; Primett et al., 2025) while sustaining continuity across the uninterrupted take. Because the camera does not cut, the scene's internal segmentation emerges through transitions between movement phases rather than through editing. Sound design intensifies the atmosphere of acute tension and panic through musical pacing, "mayit" roars, shouted commands, and gunfire (Kwon et al., 2022; Supiarza, 2022). Camera movement remains tightly coupled to blocking. Each shift of attention follows character entry or exit and immediate threat emergence, so viewer attention is repeatedly redistributed as action density increases. In addition, the integration of CGI and practical effects (e.g., gunfire and creature effects) supports continuity by sustaining the impression of an unbroken action field across complex multi-point staging.

Functionally, the sequence activates two Nielsen functions in a bounded multifunctional pattern: rhythmic and reflexive (Nielsen, 2017). The rhythmic function emerges because the camera's

uninterrupted traversal structures tempo temporally inside the take without relying on cutting, producing a felt acceleration even though the action is recorded as a single continuous shot. The reflexive function appears because the camera continuously navigates space and reconfigures framing within the one-shot, inviting viewers to register the deliberately constructed continuity and to attend to the technical accomplishment of the movement. This uninterrupted exploration of space-time without editorial interruption constitutes a salient property of such camera movement (Purnama, 2023). As a stylistic marker, the sequence consolidates *Zona Merah*'s reliance on one-shot mobility as a principal strategy: the series uses this strategy to organize action clearly, preserve spatial continuity, and sustain tension over time.

Across the three *Zona Merah* corpora discussed above, the series organizes camera movement through a consistent progression of functions and formal parameters. Episode 2 (timecode 53:00–53:23) prioritizes orienting mobility through an over-the-shoulder configuration that follows the character and deploys fast scanning pans to construct a legible field of threat while maintaining axis consistency and relatively stable camera height. Episode 3 (timecode 01:30–01:50) intensifies the action register through whip-pan and motion blur combined with practical- and CGI-assisted impact, generating reflexive cues that make cinematic mediation perceptible at a narrative turning point. Episode 3 (timecode 32:12–34:39) then consolidates handheld one-shot traversal as a governing device for rhythmic escalation and for reflexive awareness of continuously constructed continuity.

Interview evidence supports the interpretation that one-shots and sustained mobility function as deliberate directing commitments rather than incidental outcomes. In an interview, director Fajar Martha Santosa describes the one-shot approach as a jointly agreed "trademark" developed after *Pertaruhan* and pursued because it increases production engagement and produces on-screen intensity (Santosa, personal interview, 6 May 2025). From the production perspective, producer Wicky V. Olindo emphasizes a facilitative stance toward directors with strong creative ambition and points to the extended one-shot action sequence in episode 3 as an expression of that directing drive (Olindo, personal interview, 31 July 2025). These statements align with the formal patterns identified above, particularly the sustained handheld traversal and the continuity strategies that keep action unfolding without editorial relief.

At the same time, the movement signature observed in *Zona Merah* should be understood as shaped by enabling conditions as well as by authorial preference. The feasibility of extended one-shots, the integration of CGI with practical effects, and the coordination of complex blocking across multiple action points indicate the influence of OTT-era production determinants and contemporary imaging technologies. Accordingly, the historical-poetics

synthesis after the two-case discussion will address how these determinants facilitate recurring movement schemas and how such schemas circulate as stylistic solutions within Indonesian OTT originals.

Finally, mapping camera movement onto Nielsen's five functions across the two case studies, *Little Mom* and *Zona Merah*, clarifies mobility as a recurring directorial style rather than a neutral technique. Both cases exemplify bounded multifunctionalism as a characteristic of contemporary Indonesian film style (Purnama, 2023). Across the selected corpora, camera movement is repeatedly organized around four functions (orienting, inflectional, rhythmic, and reflexive) while the abstract function is not foregrounded. This pattern suggests that mobility remains anchored to narrative, spatial, or affective tasks even when technique becomes conspicuous. Read through a poetics-of-cinema approach, the alignment between functional emphasis and recurring formal parameters demonstrates how movement variables, continuity choices, stability modes, and CGI deployment generate effects that accumulate into identifiable stylistic signatures. The virtuosity dimension of camera movement in these original series further elicits operational aesthetics, namely viewers' appreciation of the technical skill and operational complexity made visible on screen (Purnama, 2023).

The following discussion examines the factors that shape and enable the use of camera movement in the growth and production of Indonesian original series. It seeks to investigate how and why these principles emerge and change under particular empirical conditions. Poetics is defined by the phenomena it studies (principles of construction and cinematic effects) and by the questions it poses about them: how they are formed, how they function, to what ends they are directed, and how they are historically realized (Bordwell, 2008). In this study, attention centers on three drivers: technological developments, the influence of mainstream and arthouse cinema, and production support.

Advances in digital cinematography during the 2000s reshaped both national and global filmmaking (Alforova et al., 2021). Lighter, more compact cameras enabled free-ranging camerawork. In Indonesia, early-to-mid-2000s cinematographers used digital cameras ranging from Sony Digital Betacam to Panasonic Varicam, Sony CineAlta F900, Canon XLH1, and Panasonic P2HD (Purnama, 2023). By the late 2000s, digital cameras had become standard production tools alongside the shift from celluloid projection to DCP (digital cinema package) (Cipriani, 2021). The proliferation of mobility-support gear, notably the DSLR shoulder rig, facilitated hyperactive camera movement with steadicam-like stability at lower cost (Purnama, 2023). These material shifts are historically relevant to the present two-case study because they expand the feasibility of sustained mobility as a repeatable stylistic solution, visible in *Little Mom*'s controlled drift and free-ranging pursuit mobility

(Ep2 14:07–17:57; 50:30–52:14) and in *Zona Merah*'s handheld long-take traversal with height and distance changes (Ep3 32:12–34:39). In parallel, advances in computer-generated imaging further broadened movement possibilities and encouraged exploratory uses of traversal and compositing.

Across the 2010s, titles such as *Garuda* (a movie, shown in 2015) and *Gundala* (a movie, shown in 2019) demonstrated markedly improved CGI quality relative to the 2000s, enabling visualizations unattainable by manual means, as in the dead time movement exploration in *Kala* (a movie, shown in 2017) (Purnama, 2023). In this context, VFX (including CGI and compositing) becomes integral to the production system and provides a technical basis for VFX-enabled (CGI-assisted) traversal and compositing strategies observed in the present corpus. This linkage is visible in *Little Mom*'s window traversal and aircraft reflection composite (Ep2 53:48–54:40) and in the VFX-assisted impact beat in *Zona Merah* (Ep3 01:30–01:50).

Mainstream Indonesian cinema across genres intensified its use of diverse camera movements during the 2000s. Films that explored these styles include *Kuldesak* (a movie, shown in 1998), *Puisi Tak Terkuburkan* (a movie, shown in 1999), *Eliana, Eliana* (a movie, shown in 2002), *Janji Joni* (a movie, shown in 2005), *Catatan Akhir Sekolah* (a movie, shown in 2005), *Keramat* (a movie, shown in 2009), *Sang Penari* (a movie, shown in 2011), *The Raid: Redemption* (a movie, shown in 2011), *Something in the way* (a movie, shown in 2013), *The Raid 2: Berandal* (a movie, shown in 2014), and *Siti* (a movie, shown in 2014). Among these conventions, free-ranging camerawork emerged as a primary strategy, often combining orbiting shots, tracking shots, handheld work, booming and aerial shots, follow shots (via dolly, steadicam, fig rig, or other stabilizers), and even autonomous motion (Purnama, 2023). Beyond Indonesia, camera-movement exploration also characterizes international original series; for example, the Battle of Castle Black in *Game of Thrones* (Season 4, Episode 9, 2011, HBO) uses free-ranging camerawork to signal Castle Black's defenses being breached and overwhelmed by the Wildlings.

These historical repertoires matter for the present cases because they supply a shared stylistic vocabulary of mobility that is reconfigured into case-specific signatures. *Little Mom* draws on orbit and pursuit mobility to organize melodramatic affect and pacing (Ep2 14:07–17:57; 50:30–52:14), whereas *Zona Merah* mobilizes follow-and-scan orientation and *one-shot* handheld continuity to maintain spatial legibility and intensify action escalation (Ep2 53:00–53:23; Ep3 32:12–34:39). Taken together, these cases show that intensified exploration of varied camera movements has become integral to post-Reformasi Indonesian film production and has circulated into original-series practice as a repeatable stylistic resource.

Explorations of camera movement in film and original series would not materialize without strong

production support, particularly in terms of budget, equipment, and post-production resources. In *Little Mom*, the production context afforded the director considerable latitude to pursue stylistic choices that enhanced visual expressivity and narrative emphasis. This creative flexibility is reflected in the following statement by Guntur Soeharjanto:

Kalau secara pekerjaan saya sih saya bebas-bebasnya ya untuk membuat kreatifnya seperti apa ya. Bahkan beberapa waktu ada beberapa CEO WeTV datang ngelihat prosesnya gitu, kita diskusi kayak gitu. Mereka sih kalau untuk ke visual, ke directing sih bebas sih. Cuman kalau secara konten mungkin dengan produser mereka udah diskusi ya... begitu udah turun naskah prove log itu, udah on my hand lah semuanya, terserah saya mau dibikin kayak apa. Yang jelas satu treatment bahwa film ini, apa series ini harus sinematik, harus kayak film gitu treatmentnya (Soeharjanto, personal interview, 24 June 2025).

“An approximate English rendering is as follows: From a production standpoint, I was given full creative freedom to shape the project. Several WeTV CEOs visited the set, and we discussed the process; they were very open about visuals and directing and essentially gave me free rein. Content decisions were likely settled earlier with the producers. After the script was approved and officially locked, the realization was entirely in my hands. The core requirement was that the series had to look cinematic and be approached like a feature film.”

This aligns with Hitmaker’s (n.d) statement on its website that the series was produced with great rigor, treated with the same approach as a feature film. The production spanned more than twenty locations, deployed a spectacular budget, and employed advanced techniques and equipment. Echoing Hitmaker’s model of production support, Wicky V. Olindo, producer of the original series *Zona Merah*, remarked:

Sebagai produser kita cari bekerjasama dengan kreator yang punya spark tinggi itu gitu lo. Jadi menurut saya itu sangat bahaya kalau kita sebagai produser sangat mudah meredupkan api yang ada gitu. Malah on contrary kadang-kadang kita harus membantu supaya api itu membesar. Jangan kita padam gitu loh. Karena ketika filmmaker-nya sangat ambisius, sangat passionate. Itu terlihat kok di kerjaan gitu loh. Kalau misalnya mungkin Mas Fajar nonton Zona Merah episode 3 gitu. Yang adegan action yang di hutan itu. Itu kan satu shot dengan sekuens sepanjang itu dengan area set way itu. Itu namanya passion Mas (Olindo, personal interview, 31 July 2025).

“An approximate English rendering is as follows: As producers, we aim to work with creators who have a strong creative spark, and it is risky when producers suppress it rather than help it develop. A filmmaker’s ambition and passion become visible in the work. In Zona Merah episode 3, for example, the forest action sequence is staged as an extended single continuous shot across a large-scale set; this is a clear marker of that passion.”

Both original series received substantial production support for stylistic choices that reinforce storytelling and contribute to the works’ overall audiovisual form. This support extends beyond logistical provision, encompassing creative latitude, technical resources, and post-production capabilities that enable more elaborate visual strategies. In this context, the explorations of camera movement were not incidental but were explicitly endorsed and facilitated by both the production houses and the OTT platforms.

The three points above do not yet provide a comprehensive historical account of the influence of camera-movement exploration on Indonesian original series. They do, however, indicate historically inflected determinants for the explorations in *Little Mom* and *Zona Merah*. Such explorations are enabled by technological availability, by aesthetic impulses toward camera movement established in earlier Indonesian films and original series, and by production facilitation. In this light, these practices are not merely the product of individual artistic brilliance; they emerge from a history of style and an interwoven set of factors that collectively make particular stylistic configurations possible (Purnama, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

The shift to OTT platforms has reconfigured distribution and viewing practices, while simultaneously generating a production context in which camera movement is increasingly treated as a recurrent directorial style rather than merely a technical device. This study poses three research questions and finds, first, that the camera movements observed in *Little Mom* and *Zona Merah* can be mapped systematically onto Nielsen’s functional framework for narrative cinema. Across the selected key scenes, four functions recur most consistently, such as orienting, inflectional, rhythmic, and reflexive, whereas the abstract function is not foregrounded in the analyzed corpus. This uneven distribution indicates that camera mobility in Indonesian OTT original series remains anchored to narrative, spatial, and affective tasks even when it becomes conspicuous as a display of stylistic technique.

Second, the two case studies show that directorial style becomes legible through recurrent movement schemas and stable function–pattern

alignments across episodes and key scenes. In both series, these alignments are most pronounced at narrative peaks. In *Little Mom*, the signature is consolidated through sustained mobility (controlled drift and crab moves) supported by follow and orbit configurations that modulate melodramatic affect. At peaks, CGI-enabled traversal and compositing strengthen reflexive emphasis. In *Zona Merah*, the signature is built through follow-and-scan patterns that manage orientation as threats emerge, punctuated by whip-pan impact moments. Extended handheld one-shot traversal then structures tempo within a single take. For immersive engagement, *Little Mom* concentrates attention on psychological gradation and affective pressure. In contrast, *Zona Merah* sustains spatial legibility under duress and intensifies sensory tension through continuous mobility and maintained continuity.

The article's scholarly contribution is to demonstrate, through a qualitative two-case design, that camera movement can be evidenced as a recurrent marker of directorial style in Indonesian OTT original series by integrating operationalized descriptions of movement aesthetics, systematic functional mapping, and a poetics-informed interpretive account. This framework clarifies how formal parameters (movement type, tempo, stability, directionality and amplitude, shifts in distance and camera height, relations to blocking, continuity organization, and CGI involvement) accumulate into patterned stylistic identities while remaining accountable to narrative effects and viewer-facing outcomes.

Several limitations should be noted. The study examines only two cases, and the key-scene selection strategy may not fully represent the range of camera-movement variation across entire seasons. In addition, the interview material draws on only three informants. Finally, the analysis does not incorporate quantitative measurements of movement. Future research could expand the corpus across genres, platforms, and additional Indonesian OTT originals, and complement close analysis with computational metrics (e.g., average shot length or cutting-rate measures, and motion-vector-based quantification) as well as comparative inquiry into how platform logics and production norms shape the circulation of movement aesthetics across local and transnational contexts.

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