

Parameters: A Room, A Voice, A Film with Two Endings

MED4040:

Final Major Project Assignment

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1) Research for the Practical Project

1. Project Introduction

Parameters is a ten-minute, single-room short set in a small working corner. The camera stays mostly in third-person compositions, and when the viewer needs to see the phone screen or the hands that operate it, brief first-person inserts appear so that the experience remains close to everyday device use.

First, the film follows one recording of a self-introduction that looks plain on the surface, yet it unfolds inside a system that keeps offering advice. More specifically, three in-ear voices shape the speech together. The first, which claims to be the speaker ten minutes from now, nudges the pace and steadies the eye line. The second, which sounds like a platform supervisor, reads out details such as the length of pauses, the percentage of a smile and the degree of eye lift. The third, a smoother synthetic voice, replaces awkward words with phrasing that flows more easily.

Next, the system triggers a tool called No Filter. Although the tool says it does not change the language, tiny shifts in word order make the sentence sound more polished, which brings the question of parameterized speech to the front. As the prompts accumulate, compliance gives way to doubt. When the future in-ear voice glitches, the speaker departs from the script and speaks plainly. When the synthetic voice returns, delivery becomes easier to like while personal agency narrows.

In terms of structure, the story runs on a single timeline. First the film presents an open and honest ending. Then a short system text card saves that cut and proposes an alternate, after which the system-generated ending plays, so the two outcomes sit side by side and the viewer can compare who speaks and who is heard.

Therefore, the film uses no score and relies on breath, room tone, light UI beeps and small changes in light, which also keep a one-person, low-budget set-up workable. The intended platforms are classroom screening and online submission, and the purpose is to examine how platform-borne prompts reshape tone and choice. The message is that when parameters and suggested phrases keep rewriting speech, resistance and compliance

can coexist, and the viewer must decide where the voice still belongs to the speaker.

In addition, this inquiry matters because it delivers comparability without interactivity, since the juxtaposition is felt within a single sitting; at the same time, it turns off-screen guidance into three audible functions that can be reused in low-budget, one-actor, single-space settings.

Accordingly, the contribution is threefold: first, it sets a clear test for who speaks and who is heard; second, it offers a procedure that keeps readability within a short duration; and third, it shows a sound-led pathway that suits both classroom screening and online submission.

2. Broader Context

First, over the past decade personal expression has moved from gatekept outlets to platform-led circulation, which is shaped by recommendation rules that nudge what kind of speech gets noticed. As a result, many creators adjust pace, pauses and wording toward styles that travel well online, and the devices that carry those habits, which include earbuds, phone screens and subtle prompts, have become everyday interfaces of self-presentation.

Next, it helps to compare related approaches. Desktop and screen-life work often place the screen inside the frame, which turns the interface into a visible character. Technology parables tend to externalise control through high-concept settings or late twists. By contrast, this project shifts the interface into sound, so the audience hears guidance that bends speech while the image remains grounded in a single room. The camera stays in third-person observation that keeps a modest distance, and at moments when viewers need to read the screen or see the hands that operate it, brief first-person inserts appear, which bring the action closer without changing the overall stance.

Then, from a genre and industry point of view, single-location microfilms favour concentrated time, restrained audiovisual choices and clarity for online viewing. Therefore, the film drops music, keeps a clean room tone

and uses gentle UI beeps only where meaning depends on them. In addition, a mixed ecology of classroom screenings and online submission, which values short and discussable pieces, supports low-budget work that is carried by sound.

Finally, these strands show where the film sits. It continues traditions of restricted-space and everyday cinema while speaking to a platform environment in which visibility and suggested phrases shape how people talk. For this reason, the project uses third-person coverage with selective first-person inserts and treats the in-ear prompts as an active counterpart, so that viewers can feel a simple question that matters here: after the system has helped reshape the line, whose voice remains.

3. Influences and Case Studies

First, I drew on single-location dramas that let unseen voices carry tension, which suits a sound-led project. *Locke (2013)* confines the action to a car, and *The Guilty (2018/2021)* advances information and emotion through phone calls. In both films, voices that enter through devices keep raising pressure inside stable frames. Therefore, the present film uses third-person observation as the default, and it adds first-person inserts only when viewers need to read the screen or see the hands that operate it, so distance is kept while key details come closer ([1] IMDb, 2016)([2] IMDb, 2019)([3] AFI Catalog, 1985).

Next, I compared screen-centred approaches that turn the interface into a visible character. Works such as *Searching (2018)* and *Unfriended (2014)* place the screen inside the frame, which makes the interface part of the scene. However, this project moves that force into sound, so guidance is heard through in-ear prompts and UI beeps. This choice aligns with Michel Chion's idea of the acousmatic voice, which names a voice whose source is not seen but which can still shift the narrative centre and the relations of power ([4] Netflix, 2018)([5] Columbia University Press, 2019)([6] BFI, 2018).

Then, I looked at technology parables for tone and structure. Episodes of

Black Mirror, including “Nosedive,” which shows how rating systems reshape speech, and “Smithereens,” which presses platform pressure onto choice, helped set a restrained tone. Yet the film narrows the scale to one recording, so that suggested phrasing unfolds in front of the viewer rather than arriving as a final twist ([7] *BFI*, 2014,)([8] *Google Books*, 2019).

After that, I considered audience strategies and endings. On one side, *Clue* (1985) shows how a story can circulate with different endings; on the other side, *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* (2018) offers branches that the audience selects. Since this project is designed for classroom screening and online submission, it does not use interactivity. Instead, it places two endings in sequence, first the open version and then the system-generated alternate after a short system text card, so viewers can compare agency with compliance within a single run ([9] *Google Books*, 1997)([10] *Internet Archive*, 2001).

Finally, the links between influence and practice can be stated plainly. The idea that sound carries tension leads to no score, a clean room tone and careful use of prompts. The decision to translate the interface into sound supports third-person coverage with selective first-person inserts. The restrained tone taken from parables replaces large external set-ups with events that happen in a single timeline. The comparability of multiple endings justifies showing both outcomes back-to-back, which lets the viewer see how speech changes and whose voice remains.

4. Practical Research and Development

First, in the sound and interface design, I began by recording a human voice recording and shaping it with EQ and de-essing to make it smoother. However, this version did not separate clearly enough, since viewers could easily mistake it for the narrator’s own voice. For that reason, I tested AI text-to-speech tools, including the built-in TTS function in CapCut and the ElevenLabs service, while also using Siri as a reference for system-like voices. The comparison showed that AI-generated speech was not only clearer and more neutral, but it also

carried a slightly hollow yet polished quality, which fitted the film's aim of representing a "system prompt." Therefore, the final cut adopted an AI synthetic voice with only minor adjustments to resonance and sibilance, while UI beeps were kept at a very low level to avoid masking the dialogue ([13] Netflix, 2021)([14] CapCut Help Center, 2024)([15] ElevenLabs, 2025).

Next, in the camera and perspective design, I compared alternative approaches. On one hand, full third-person coverage sustained a detached and observational tone; on the other hand, inserting occasional first-person shots, such as views of the screen or the hands, provided a direct way for the audience to grasp the source of the prompts. As a result, the project relied mainly on third-person framing, with first-person inserts added only at key moments. At the same time, the lighting was fixed as a combination of a desk lamp and the screen itself, which make sure reproducibility and allowed subtle brightness changes to mark system intervention.

Then, in the timing and endings, I confirmed that a short system text card was necessary between the open ending and the system-generated ending. The card both marked the first version as saved and signalled that an alternate would follow, so that viewers would recognize the change of mode. In addition, the system-generated ending was given a longer pause, which made the contrast between the two outcomes more distinct.

Finally, in terms of challenges and adjustments, several key decisions were made. Since the human-processed recording lacked separation, the AI synthetic voice was adopted. Since the No Filter shifts were too subtle, the delay was extended and extra breaths were inserted. Since first-person shots were too frequent in the draft, only the essential ones were kept. Since the two endings were not sufficiently contrasted, a system text card and a fixed bridging time were added. Together, these refinements allowed the project to remain achievable under modest conditions while keeping both the narrative clarity and the thematic focus intact.

5. Preliminary Application of Theory

- **Sound theory (acousmatic voice)**

First, I draw on a view of the voice whose source is not seen, which suggests that when a voice stays off screen, it often gains authority because the audience relies on what is heard rather than on what is shown. Since listeners tend to follow small cues in timing and tone, the off-screen voice can guide delivery. On this basis, Parameters places three in-ear voices outside the frame, which play different roles: a future self that reassures and reminds, a platform-style director that gives parameters and rules, and a synthetic system that keeps a neutral cadence and replaces awkward phrasing.

Next, so that viewers can tell the voices apart quickly, the voices keep distinct timbres and levels. I remove the score, and I keep room tone, breath and light UI beeps at key turns, so the sound layer carries the story. In this way the viewer can recognise who is steering the speech even without reading a graphic prompt. Finally, because the voices remain off screen, third-person coverage can stay steady, while brief first-person inserts appear only when the screen or the hands need to be seen, which gives a clear division of labour between sound and image.

- **Dual endings (narrative multiplicity and audience agency)**

Then, I use a sequential dual-ending design. The film first presents an open ending, and a short system text card saves that cut and signals an alternate, after which a system-generated ending follows. The reason is simple. When two outcomes sit in a single viewing, the audience will compare them, which makes the gap between free expression and parameterised speech easier to notice ([11] *BFI*, 2013).

At the same time, although there is no clickable choice, viewers still make a mental decision about which ending feels like the speaker's real voice. Therefore, the film keeps one timeline yet relies on order to build contrast, so the pace is not broken and the focus stays on the question of who is heard. Finally, because this structure needs a clean handover, the bridge remains very short, and the pause in the system ending is slightly

longer, so the point of contrast becomes clearer.

2) Contextual and Practical Research for the Project

1. Research Question

First, the central question is simple: in a single-room short that is driven by sound, how can a first-time viewer tell who speaks, who gives prompts, and who rewrites phrasing in Parameters. I ask this because the three voices do not appear on screen, and a voice that stays unseen can be confused with another one unless the roles are made clear.

In addition, I break the question into two tracks. The first is the sound. I set the roles for three in-ear voices: the one that sounds like a future self, which calms and reminds; the one that sounds like a platform supervisor, which states things like pause length and pace; and the synthetic voice, which replaces awkward words with lines that are easier to say. To avoid confusion, I also keep simple differences in strength and rhythm, and I add brief first-person inserts only when the screen or the hands need to be seen, so that what is heard in the ear matches an action that can be seen.

Then, the second is the ending track. I use a sequential dual ending. The open ending comes first. After a short pause, a very brief system text card says that the first cut is saved and an alternate will follow, and then the system-generated version plays. The aim is clear, since viewers compare the two outcomes within one sitting rather than reading the second as a repeat.

After that, I set a check that keeps the plan practical. The check has two parts. The first part is first-viewing intelligibility, which means a viewer can hear that the three voices do different jobs without on-screen labels. The second part is smooth flow, which means the bridge between the two endings feels short and clean while the meanings land far enough apart. Finally, if these two parts holds, the research question is answered in practice, because it guides how the voices are written and how the order and the bridge of the endings are set.

2. Literature Review

- **Sound: off-screen voice and auditory space**

First, writing on off-screen voice holds that when the source is not shown, listeners rely on rhythm, pauses and tone, which often grants the voice authority. Moreover, the same writing warns that without audible functional differences, audiences may merge speakers, which reduces legibility. In addition, accounts of music-free scenes note that when music steps back and dialogue with ambience carries meaning, the organisation of sound cues becomes central to clarity. Therefore, the film treats prompts, parameters and phrasing as three roles that the ear can tell apart and keeps a simple relation of strength (*[6] BFI, 2018*)(*[16] Apple Support, 2025*).

- **Dual endings: multiplicity and audience agency**

Next, work on multiple endings suggests that juxtaposition places viewers in a comparative mode so that a mental choice follows. At the same time, scholarship distinguishes interactive branching from non-interactive sequencing, the former relying on clicks and the latter on clear cues and timing. As a result, the film keeps the order “open first, system second” and uses a very short text card as the bridge, so attention stays on how the same line can end differently. Therefore, the measure of success is whether a single viewing lets a viewer state the difference in one sentence (*[12] Danish Film Institute, 2018*).

3. Analytical Case Study

- **Sound cases: loading tension onto off-screen voice**

First, single-location films that keep frames steady while phone calls drive the plot show that pressure can come from what we hear rather than from shot changes. In addition, other titles use restrained ambience and minimal music so that attention remains on speech. Taken together, these methods show that when the image holds back, audibly distinct roles can carry narrative weight. Therefore, the project assigns prompt, parameter

and phrasing functions to three in-ear voices with differences in wording and strength.

- **Sound cases: when the interface becomes a character**

By contrast, screenlife place screens inside the frame and let windows and alerts deliver meaning; by contrast, this film voices the interface, so the mechanism that rewrites speech is heard rather than shown.

Therefore, since a voice that is not seen is usually taken as guidance rather than commentary, this move lets control be felt more directly.

- **Dual-ending cases: versions and mental comparison**

At the same time, earlier features circulated with more than one ending, and recent pieces show that viewers readily compare paths. Therefore, this project avoids interactivity and uses sequential juxtaposition instead. The open cut lands first, system text card follows, and the system cut lands next, so viewers compare outcomes and decide which voice feels like the speaker's own.

4. Application to My Work

- **Sound applied**

First, the three in-ear voices are written as audibly functional roles: the future self is lighter and closer, the platform director is direct and brief, and the synthetic system keeps a steady, low-emotion cadence. Moreover, the score is removed while clean room tone and small prompts remain, so turns rest on breath and pauses. In addition, simple differences in strength and consistent diction keep identity clear without extra labels.

- **Dual-ending track applied**

Therefore, the order is fixed as open first and system second. A very short card marks the save and signals the alternate, Meanwhile, the system ending holds a slightly longer pause so that the contrast is felt. At the same time, third person framing stays primary, while first-person inserts appear only when hands or screens must be seen, which supports the comparison.

5. Critical Reflection

- **Sound reflections**

First, translating the interface into sound works because it matches everyday listening and places the issue of voice in the ear, so the viewer does not need on-screen prompts to follow control. In addition, two aspects require care. One is the natural quality of the synthetic voice, since a voice that sounds too mechanical may break immersion even if it is clear. The other is the length of key pauses, since breath and short room tone need enough space to signal turns yet should not slow the line. Meanwhile, I keep two simple checks for the mix: whether a first-time viewer can name the three roles by ear, and whether prompts interrupt dialogue more than they help. Therefore, the goal for the sound layer is clarity without harshness and restraint without coldness, because once the three in-ear voices separate quickly, the theme lands cleanly.

- **Dual-ending reflections**

First, I place the two endings back-to-back because this order lets viewers compare them within one sitting, and it helps them see why the same speech can land in a different place under different conditions. At the same time, I keep the open version first and the system-made version second, since that order follows a common viewing habit: people receive the open ending first, and they immediately see a replacement that comes from the system, which makes the contrast direct and leaves less room for confusion. Then, this arrangement keeps attention on the question of who is heard, because viewers move between the two versions and decide which one still sounds like the speaker.

After that, I use two small controls so that the structure stays clear and tight. The first control is the system text card, which must be brief and precise, so it does only two things: it says that the first cut is saved, and it says that an alternate will follow. The second control is the pause in the system ending, which should be noticeable but not long; therefore, I keep it around a breath to two beats, so viewers have time to register the shift

without losing pace.

Therefore, I keep two checks that I can use while writing and editing. The first check asks whether I can explain the difference between the two endings in one line; if I cannot do that, the bridge or the pause still needs work. The second check asks whether anyone reads the second cut as a repeat; if that happens, I will move the timing of the card or fine-tune the last pause in the system ending.

In sum, if further polish is required, I will start with two adjustments. I will first adjust the timing of the card, which tells the viewer when the version changes, and I will then adjust the last pause of the system ending, which gives the contrast its weight. If these two points are clean, the comparison between the endings will be easy to follow, and the theme will stay focused on who is heard.

3) Conclusion

First, this study asked a plain question that still matters in practice: in a single-room short that is led by sound and keeps three in-ear voices off screen, can a first-time viewer tell who speaks, who prompts, and who rewrites phrasing. Next, by splitting the inquiry into a sound line and an ending line, I set choices that fit low-cost work while keeping clarity. Then, the three in-ear voices are written as roles that the ear can tell apart, since one steadies the speaker, one states simple parameters, and one replaces awkward words with lines that are easier to say. In addition, third-person coverage remains primary, while brief first-person inserts appear only when hands or screens must be seen.

After that, the structure uses a sequential dual ending, in which the open ending lands first, a short system text card signals a switch, and the system-generated ending follows. Because the two versions sit together, comparison happens without extra cues, and the bridge stays clean. Therefore, the checks are first-viewing intelligibility and narrative coherence, which together guard both flow and meaning.

Finally, if polish is needed, I would first tune the timing of the card and the final pause, and I would keep shaping the natural quality of the synthetic voice. Overall, Parameters offers a compact route that can be repeated, while leaving a simple question for the audience to hold on to who speaks, and who is heard.

4) Reference

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- [16]. Apple Support, 2025, *Change Siri's voice or language*, viewed on 18th August 2025, <<https://support.apple.com/HT207174>>.

5) Appendices

1. Storyboard

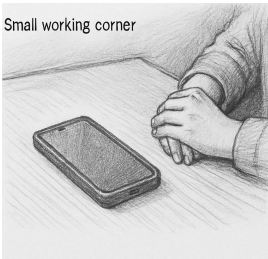


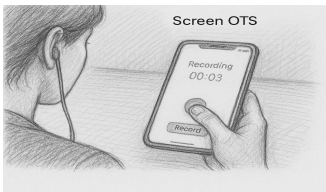
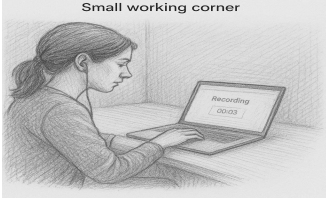

Scene Number	Shot Number	Scene	Shot Size	Content	Duration (seconds)	Narration/Sound Effect
1	1	Small working corner	Close Up	Desk and hands settle; phone idle	20	Room tone, breath
1	2	Small working	Medium Shot	Earbuds on; recording app opens	25	Soft UI beep

		corner				
1	3	Small working corner	Close Up	Profile set; eye line and breath adjusted	40	Future in-ear voice steadies pace
1	4	Screen OTS	Over-the-Shoulder	Tap “Record”; timer starts	30	Platform supervisor states pause and pace
1	5	Small working corner	Medium Shot	First fluent paragraph completes	90	Three in-ear voices alternate, no overlap
1	6	Earbud ECU	Extreme Close Up	Tiny blink; minor glitch	15	Future voice glitches briefly
1	7	Small working corner	Medium Shot	Off-script plain speech	45	Supervisor nudges speed up
1	8	Screen OTS	Over-the-Shoulder	Glance at prompts; return to script	50	Synthetic voice smooths a long line
1	9	Small working corner	Close Up	Calm gaze builds the open landing	25	Future voice marks breath only
1	10	Small working corner	Medium Shot	Press stops; open ending lands	30	Room tone, very soft UI ping
1	11	Small working corner	Insert	One-beat quiet to separate versions	15	Silence
2	1	System text card	Title Card	Black card: “Saved. Alternate will play.”	5	Very soft UI ping
2	2	Small working corner	Medium Shot	System version begins; framing echoes prior	60	Synthetic leads; other voices lower
2	3	Hands and mouth	Close Up	Cleaner order; polished delivery	60	Supervisor notes smile target met
2	4	Small working corner	Medium Shot	Two-beat pause for contrast	20	Room tone becomes noticeable
2	5	Small working corner	Medium Shot	Press stops; system-generated ending	30	Synthetic: “recording

		corner		lands		complete”
3	1	Earbuds	Close Up	Remove earbuds; small exhale	20	All three voices silent
3	2	Desk wide	Wide Shot	Desk settles; screen dark	20	Low ambience holds to fade

Notes

- Interior only; permits not required.
- First-person inserts appear only when screens or hands must be seen.
- Keep the three in-ear voices clearly distinct in timbre and level.
- No score; only room tone, light UI beeps, and the three voices.
- The above content is not the final version. If there are any changes, the actual shooting will prevail.

<p>Shot 1 Desk and hands settle; phone idle</p>	<p>Shot 2 Earbuds on; recording app opens</p>	<p>Shot 3 Profile set; eye line and breath adjusted</p>
<p>Small working corner</p> 	<p>Small working corner</p> 	<p>Small working corn</p> 
<p>Shot 4 Tap “Record”; timer starts</p>	<p>Shot 5 First fluent paragraph completes</p>	<p>Shot 6 Tiny blink; minor glitch</p>
<p>Screen OTS</p> 	<p>Small working corner</p> 	

2. Visual Research

- **Mood Boards**

Ref No.	Board / Scene	Frame / Type	Content (What it shows)	Use in Film (Why we need it)
B1	Palette & Density	Board	Cool greys, plaster white, wood accent, cold screen light; minimal background items	Fix overall look; keep third-person shots calm and readable
B2	Typography & System Card	Board	Black card with white sans-serif; “Saved. An alternate will follow.”; high contrast	Establish system text card style for the bridge between endings
B3	Framing Key Shots	Board	MS Front, OTS Screen, CU Mouth, ECU Earbud (diagram panels)	Define when to insert first-person shots; keep earbud “glitch cue” legible
B4	Minimal Lighting Plan	Top View	Single soft key at 45°, mild back light; desk and actor positions	Prevent glare on phone; keep eye-light; maintain low-budget set-up

• Test Diagrams

Ref No.	Test / Scene	Shot Size	Content (How to stage it)	Checkpoint (What to verify)
T1	MS Front framing	MS	Actor at desk; eye line slightly above lens	Face readable; background minimal but distinct
T2	OTS Screen glare	OTS	Desk lamp at 45°; screen at ~60% brightness	No harsh glare; on-screen text readable at 1–2 m
T3	CU Mouth de-essing	CU	Speak one sentence naturally	Sibilance control feels natural; lips in focus
T4	ECU Earbud cue	ECU	Focus on earbud shell; one-blink “glitch” cue	Cue is visible without music; not distracting
T5	System text card read	Board	Black card with white type (Fig. B2) shown on device	Readable in mid-shot; fade timing feels clean
T6	Two-beat pause	MS	Same framing as system ending; hold 1 vs 2 beats	2-beat pause clarifies contrast without drag