

The Psion Dilemma - Overall assessment

Most of the principal characters have recognisably different voices. The flatmates are particularly easy to distinguish, even when several are speaking in the same scene. However, the differentiation is stronger among the supporting characters than it is between **Jack and Amy**, whose dialogue sometimes settles into a shared, neutral conversational register.

I would score the overall character-voice differentiation at approximately **7.5/10**.

The strongest voices

Jack Corral

Jack has a clear central voice: self-deprecating, guarded, impatient and occasionally sarcastic. He tends to use short responses when uncomfortable—"Progress," "I'm fine," "Never mind"—and humour when he wants to avoid emotional exposure.

His characteristic mode is defensive understatement:

"I did what anyone would have done."

He becomes more abrasive and fragmented as his medication runs out and his paranoia increases. His confrontation with Brendan contains recognisably Jack-like phrases such as "Are you for real?", "be my guest" and "Go hassle someone else!"

That progression works because his voice changes emotionally **without becoming a different voice**. Early Jack is awkwardly humorous; later Jack uses the same dismissive instinct as a weapon.

Rees

Rees has perhaps the most immediately identifiable dialogue. He is casual, laddish, insensitive and perpetually convinced that he is being helpful. His repeated use of "man," "bud," "chick," "babes" and blunt profanity gives him a strong verbal signature.

For example:

"C'mon, the bitch is obviously jealous."

"Hey, I'm on your side man!"

These lines could not convincingly be reassigned to Simon or Lizzy.

He also filters serious situations through shallow practicalities or sexual opportunity. Even Jack's public heroism becomes "Babes will be lining up." That consistency makes his voice memorable.

Simon

Simon speaks through calculation, probability and detached rationalism. His voice is cooler and more intellectual than the others:

"There is a high probability he has, if you look at the variables."

"Statistically, placebos are just as effective."

Even when he speaks casually, he sounds as though he is analysing a problem rather than participating emotionally. This creates a good contrast with Rees's instinctive laddishness and Annette's confrontational certainty.

The distinction is especially clear when Simon describes the situation as "tough," while Rees simply admits, "we haven't helped."

Annette

Annette's voice is blunt, judgmental and ideologically certain. She uses emphatic declarations—"Outrageous!", "Utter nonsense!"—and tends to speak as though her conclusions should end the discussion. Her argument with Rees over the strikes clearly separates her passionate political language from his more cynical pragmatism.

Her most revealing lines are often short:

“You lied to me.”

“Correct.”

“In your condition you should know better.”

She does not soften or qualify her opinions, which suits both her apparent protectiveness and the later revelation that her behaviour is more controlling than Jack understood.

Lizzy

Lizzy is the emotional mediator. Her vocabulary is warmer, more therapeutic and occasionally spiritual:

“We need a reset.”

“We each deserve some privacy.”

“All these people...in a world of their own.”

She asks questions, encourages disclosure and tries to restore harmony rather than win arguments. Her meditation, talk of needing a “reset,” and repeated attempts to protect Jack give her a soft, holistic register distinct from Annette’s severity.

There is also an effective edge beneath the warmth. “Excuses, excuses” and “You need to help yourself” show that she is not merely gentle; she can become firm when Jack resists her.

KP

KP has a highly distinctive voice: clipped, formal, cryptic and almost anachronistically serious.

“Keep looking ahead.”

“The girl is in danger.”

“Certainly not.”

“Her role brings parity that weakens their influence.”

His refusal to use Jack’s casual idiom makes him sound like someone from a different world. Jack says, “You’re shitting me?” KP answers, “Certainly not.” That contrast efficiently defines both men.

There is a risk that some of KP’s exposition becomes overly formal, but it is unquestionably character-specific.

Gerrat Tensh

Tensh speaks in ominous, aphoristic fragments:

“What you know you may not see.”

“She will destroy everything.”

“It’s not you I’m after.”

That makes him immediately distinguishable, although his voice is presently more of a **dramatic motif** than a fully dimensional conversational voice.

This may be intentional because he is perceived as an almost supernatural threat. A little more dialogue showing how he speaks when he is not issuing warnings would make him feel more like a person and less purely like an embodiment of menace.

Voices that could be differentiated further

Amy Lee

Amy has a pleasant, playful quality. She teases Jack about stalking her, calls him “superman,” jokes about his cape and tights, and describes herself as “a killer with a paint brush.”

That gives her warmth and flirtatious energy, but her basic sentence construction often resembles Jack’s and Lizzy’s. A number of her functional lines could be transferred to another supportive character without much alteration:

“You OK?”

“That is weird.”

“What did you do?”

“Good on you.”

“You fine with that?”

Her artistic identity appears in jokes and setting, but not consistently in how she observes or describes the world. You could strengthen her voice by letting her think more visually—through colour, shape, light, composition, texture or instinctive observation. She does this occasionally, but not enough for her profession to shape her speech.

Her formality also fluctuates. “I’d like that very much” is composed and slightly traditional, whereas “Get out of it! Seriously?” and “one of my fave spots” are much more casual. Both can belong to the same person, but a clearer baseline would help.

Brendan Clements

Brendan has a recognisable occupational voice: persistent, probing and able to turn flattery into pressure. Lines such as “Valour is a rare thing these days” reveal the polished broadcaster, while “It’s my job, Jack. It’s called journalism” shows his defensive professional identity.

Nevertheless, his off-camera dialogue is sometimes generic:

“Just a quick word.”

“What are you hiding?”

“Why the secrecy?”

He would become more distinctive if he had one stronger personal tendency—for example, compulsively framing events as headlines, talking in broadcast-ready sound bites, feigning casual friendliness, or asking questions that quietly contain the answer he wants.

At present, he is recognisable mainly because of **what he wants**, rather than entirely because of **how he speaks**.

The flatmate ensemble

The flatmates pass the most useful dialogue test: **remove the names and you could still identify many of the speakers**.

- “There is a high probability...” is Simon.
- “Babes will be lining up” is Rees.
- “Utter nonsense!” is Annette.
- “We need a reset” is Lizzy.

Their apology scene demonstrates the differentiation particularly well: Annette is terse, Rees casual, Lizzy conciliatory and Simon soberly analytical.

That is a major strength because the story depends on the audience initially accepting them as a lively, functioning household before questioning their reality and intentions.

One broader issue

Several characters occasionally use similar neutral phrases:

- “You OK?”
- “Seriously?”
- “It’s nothing.”
- “Never mind.”
- “You sure?”
- “That’s amazing.”
- “I’m fine.”

These are natural expressions and should not all be removed. The issue is accumulation. During functional exchanges, the individual voices sometimes flatten until the next overtly characteristic joke, argument or revelation.

A useful polish test would be to highlight ten lines from each major character **without their names attached**. Jack, Rees, Simon, Annette, Lizzy and KP would generally survive that test. Amy and Brendan would be less consistently identifiable.

Verdict

The characters **do have their own voices**, with the following approximate strength:

Character	Voice distinction
Rees	9/10
Simon	8.5/10
KP	8.5/10
Annette	8/10
Lizzy	8/10
Jack	8/10
Gerrat Tensh	7.5/10
Brendan	7/10
Amy	6.5–7/10

The screenplay is not suffering from a general “everyone sounds the same” problem. The most valuable next step would be a **targeted Amy-and-Brendan voice pass**, while preserving the very effective contrasts already established among Jack and the flatmates.