

# Fourth Person POV:

## A Study of Game “Pavilion”

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**Abstract**—Common point of view in digital games are first person and third person point of view (POV). However, in 2014 a fourth person puzzle game entitled Pavilion is published. This paper aimed to overview the role of 4th person POV in game Pavilion by analyzing the POV, the character, the gameplay and the game environment. This paper used instrumental case study to explain the game through data collection methods such as play-testing the game, literature review and interviews. Findings indicate that point of view is about how the character in the game are being portrayed, and fourth person point of view means that the character is non-playable. The non-playability element is quite similar to an older game called Lemmings which was published in 1991. However, that’s the only similarity both the game have. To conclude, the POV, the non-playable character, the genre, the gameplay and the game environment are unique only to Pavilion Game.

**Keywords**—fourth person; game POV

### I. INTRODUCTION

The commonly use term in digital games are first person and third person, which refer to the usage of camera in game, the game environment perspective or point of view. First person point of view is an egocentric perspective [1]. The world that the player sees on the screen is through the eyes of the character or avatar. Basically, when the player moves the camera means the player moves the avatar [2]. Meanwhile, third person point of view means that the player sees the avatar interact within the game environment. Usually the camera shot the scene or game environment from behind or slightly above the avatar or the character’s body. Thus, the player sees the characters they are playing, while in first person POV the players cannot see the characters they are playing.

The term of first person is also used as the term for game genre, which called as “first person shooter”. First person shooter genre is the only genre that included its uses of camera point of view in the game. Later, another game called Pavilion use a fourth person puzzle adventure game as its genre. A bit similar to first person genre, but the comparison is the point of view the games use. Aside from that, Pavilion uses mix genre in the game such as puzzle game and adventure game. However, games with mix genre are common this day.

Pavilion is a fourth person puzzle adventure game made by Vissiontrick Media—Rickard Westman as game designer,

Henrik Flink as illustrator and Tony Gerber as sound designer. The game designer meant fourth person as the player cannot control the game’s character [3]. Which is totally different than first person—where the player becomes the character—and third person—where the player controls the character.

Game POV have been discussed by a number of researchers, such as references [2, 4-8]. However, these studies only limited to analyzing point of view in games as part of camera design and point of view as part of games’ genre. Moreover, these studies have not discussed fourth person point of view in digital game which I believe happened since Pavilion is the one and only game advertised as fourth person game to this day.

Camera in digital game works in different way than camera in movies, though the basics are the same. Through the camera, players not only able to enjoy the visual of the game world but player can also feel connected to the character or avatar they are playing and control. Such thing—the feeling of connected or immersion [9]—ceased to happen within fourth person point of view as player would no longer be able to be or control the character.

This study focuses on analyzing game Pavilion, such as the game’s POV, gameplay, character, and environment. This study hopes to presents significant findings on the case study of Pavilion game and its definition of fourth person game.

### II. METHOD

This paper uses instrumental case study, which means that this study does not meant to generalize the phenomenon but only to identify the pattern [10]. The first step is to do a literature review about game, POV and game camera. A comparison between game’s POV and POV in literature works are done for better understanding of the definition of point of view. The second step is play-testing the game itself to investigates and analyzes the game for better understanding of the game and the gaming experience. In this step researchers also documenting and collecting data about the game. Next is collecting data by interviewing gamers, game scholars about the gameplay, the visual, the characters and literature scholar about point of view. And the last step is validating the data by using triangulation.

**III. FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

This paper study the character, the POV, the gameplay, and the game world of Pavilion in order to see and understand the fourth person puzzling adventure game. But, this paper is not aimed to generalize what is a fourth person puzzle game.

As mentioned before, Pavilion uses mix genre such as puzzle adventure. Puzzles aren't integrated into game story [11], quite different than an adventure game which usually have a large complex world to explore and also an interesting characters and story. It is a puzzle game where player try to solve a maze, a timed door, it also has a quality of an adventure game with large beautiful world to explore and a story to reveal. However, it is not an open world game, and players cannot explore the character.

**A. The POV**

Point of view in games can be affected by camera design or even the game concept design itself. In storytelling there are three point of view such as first person, second person, and third person—and some are a slight variation of the three (Hayati, personal communication, July 17, 2018). First person is when the story is about the narrator. The key element would be using the word "I", as the narrator is the character inside the story. Second person is when narrator ("I") told a story about another person through the perspective of said narrator, such as "I met Mr. X yesterday, he was an extraordinary person, he works...", which means that the narrator—"I"—didn't talk about "myself" but talk about someone else using "my" point of view. Lastly, third person means that a story told by all knowing person (as narrator) about a character, and he or she knows about the character, but this all knowing person isn't included in the story.

Meanwhile, in game design, point of view commonly refers to the use of camera, a first person or a third person. First person is where the screen the player sees is through the eye of the character (avatar). Therefore, the player becomes the character which is similar to first person point of view in literature works. Third person means that the player sees the character (avatar) interaction within the game environment. Even though the character is being controlled by the player, the player knows about the character as if seeing the character's life being documented. In short, there is similarity between POV in games and POV in literature works, although the medium is quite different, one is visual and the other is text.

**TABLE I. POINT OF VIEW ON GAME AND LITERATURE WORK**

<b>POV</b>	<b>Game</b>	<b>Literature work</b>
First Person	Player becomes the character in games	Narrator told the story about him/herself. Using word "I"
Second Person		Narrator told the story about another person through the perspective of said narrator "I have a friend named Mr. X. Mr. X is a..."
Third Person	Player controls the character in games	The story told by all knowing person about a character
Fourth Person	Player can't be the character, player can't control the character, player only guide the character by manipulating the environment (definition by Pavilion's game developers)	

In table 1 we can see the comparison between point of view in game and literature work. Even though games and literature works use different medium, the similarity is there. However, what is possible in game—such as fourth person point of view—is impossible in literature works. On Pavilion game, the character is seen as a third person POV, however, unlike most third person game, the protagonist is not controlled by the player, that's what the game designers meant as fourth person [12]. Player doesn't know about the character they play. Player also doesn't know about the backstory or even the motivation of the character of the game. Its mystery only adds more to the puzzle and adventure genre. It is not a third person point of view, since player can't control the character and player doesn't know anything about the character. Could it be that this slight variation of meaning and understanding of third person point of view between games and literature works is what the game designer work on.

Although this kind of element—the non-ability to be and control the protagonist—that pavilion offer is not necessarily original. Another game such as Lemmings—a puzzle-platform game designed by Jones in 1991—though different in game's objective and genre, also use similar gameplay where the lemmings is already programmed to walk automatically—thus, not able to be controlled by the player—and change direction when meet an obstacle, therefore, the player can't control the lemmings (Lesmana, personal communication, June 20, 2018). However, in Lemmings, the player must assign specific skill for the characters (the lemmings), meanings that players have a choice and indirectly control the character. This is not possible with Pavilion, because the player cannot assign skill to the character, cannot choose and cannot directly or indirectly control the character.

**B. The Character**

When playing games, players are given some controls to choose the characters that they want to play. Even if they aren't given the freedom to choose, a character—in the form of an avatar—are the key for the player to connect to the game world. In order for the players to feel connected to the character is to implant personality to the game character. This personality can be seen through the character's physical appearance. For example, shapes can communicate different personalities—circles perceived as friendlier than a triangle [13, 14]. This physical-personality connection can be understood by the players.

To understand the protagonist character in Pavilion is to analyze it visually—the characters shape, the face, the outfit and also the way the characters interact with the environment. In this game, the protagonist is a male in late 20s or early 30s with no background story as well as no information about the protagonist motivation throughout the game. Visually, the protagonist is wearing a dark blazer jacket on top of a white simple shirt, overall the outfit gives a serious aura of a worker. The character itself always running around from one point to another, never walking.

Now let's try to break down the protagonist's personality. Three words to describe the protagonist's personality are smart, hard-working, and fragile. The first personality is smart, which

is depicted by the outfit, an office worker like attire, the clean cut look—blazer, trouser and what assumed as loafers—even the haircut is clean (Fig.1). Aside from the attire, the smart personality can also be concluded from the character’s interaction within the game world. The character is always calculating his move through the environment, for example, every time he enters new stage he always seeks a warm and lit spot “to rest” while waiting the players to “instruct” him to move. Though this is all programmed, his move shows the “smart” personality. The protagonist also prefers lit area rather than dark area—this connected to his third personality which will be discussed later—but overall this interaction emphasize the smart category.



Fig. 1. Left to right: character concept, character’s idle movement in every new stage.

The second personality is hard-working, which is depicted by the character’s movement, running around from one spot to another. It is by default that the character is running, not walking, unless the character is hurt and he will limp for a moment, but still get the job done. Another key is the protagonist doing an adventure through a surrealist world by himself, looking for a mysterious puzzle, which is also hold a quality of a brave person.

The next personality is fragile, although the two previous personality told us a common quality of a hero protagonist, the last personality makes the character more in tune with players in the real world. He may be smart, he may be hard-working, but he is also fragile like us mere human. As visual goes, the protagonist is lean and tall, it doesn’t make him look as strong as a superhero, at the contrary, and it makes him look fragile. Not to mention that the micro animation of the character where his thin blazer softly blown by “permanent wind” emphasized the fragile look. Also, in some part of the game where the protagonist fell down he will limp for a moment. Moreover, the protagonist is afraid of the dark, as he will not move to a dark area. When he suddenly found himself trapped in a dark area he will curled up, not moving around, as though he is seriously scared of the dark.

As far as the personality goes, the character depicted as relatable to human in real world—which has the quality of good and bad. A good hero—or protagonist—should be relatable, they should have problems like real human would,

and that’s what makes a realistic characters [15]. A realistic character is easier to relate to, and it’s one of the key aspect for the game to be enjoyable—a sense of belonging.

However, the personality is not the unique aspect of the game. Usually when we play a game, the player plays the character, the player becomes the character, and in other word the player has the control over the character. Nevertheless, in Pavilion, players cannot control the character. To play the game the player manipulates the environment in order to move the character. This will be discussed in the gameplay section.

### C. The Gameplay

Firstly, players only able to control the environment, to suggest where the protagonist should go. A few elements that player can control such as lamps, bells, a rectangular stone that can be pushed around and sometimes illuminates.

The rules are the characters won’t be able to go to a dark area on the screen so players must tap the lamp to light the darker area. There could be a few lamps on the stage but players must choose carefully which lamp to light since the lamps cannot be lit at the same time. But lighting the way won’t make the protagonist go that way. To instruct the protagonist to go to certain way players must ring a bell, then the character will run to where the sound is. As it is a puzzle game off course players should solve which lamp and which bell to control and also which lamp or bell to tap first and then next. A rectangular stone (Fig. 2), especially the one in the dark area can be a source of light as it illuminates when players tap it. The same rule applies to the stone, it can only be lit alternately, and therefore the players must choose wisely. Aside from that, the rectangular stone can be pushed around, so it’s helpful to navigate the protagonist through the maze—as lamps are fixed to a place and cannot be moved around. Players can also use the rectangular stone as a ladder so the protagonist can reach upstairs or downstairs.



Fig. 2. Rectangular stone that can be pushed around and help lit dark area.

Secondly, there are obstacles along the way, such as doors to another stage, a wolf like 3d portrait that turns alive when the protagonist walked in front of it. Doors can only be opened when the protagonist step on certain marks on the floor. Those marks are timed and placed far from the door (Fig. 3). Sometimes there are combination of marks that should be stepped on which also timed differently, so players must

choose which order of the marks considering where it is placed on the game and how it is timed.



Fig. 3. A timed door with a mark to open it and a bell to guide the character around.

Players learn how to play through written rules that are documented in the game such as tutorials included in the game,<sup>14</sup> however, Pavilion game offers no written rules as there is no tutorial or “how to play” the game. An interview to Professor Mikami on September 10th 2018 told that written rules is not a must, as player can learn how to play the game along the way—the professor also tried the game with experimenting which part to tap. He also emphasized that certain parts of the environment usually give players clue which part to interact, although some elements on Pavilion game can deceive player as it lured player to tap it.

#### D. Game Environment

Gameplay theme defined the game style and game environment [16]. Game camera and POV is also a deciding factor on how the game visualized. Pavilion uses isometric camera, therefore the environment uses an isometric perspective (Fig. 4). An isometric camera is an environment with a toy-like view with smooth scrolling of 3D world on 2D display [13]. It is 2D but feels a bit 3D because it enables a 3D like depth.



Fig. 4. Isometric camera on Pavilion Game.

Furthermore, this isometric (iso) camera creates a better environment layout which is good for puzzle solving. Although the environment can be detailed and beautiful, the downside of the isometric camera is the size of the character compared to the world is much smaller—that’s why in Pavilion game player

can use zoom in. Pavilion use a fixed camera movement which is different than third person camera. A fixed camera means that player can’t control where the camera face the environment, however player still able to scroll the screen up and down or from side to side. Pavilion offers a linear environment which players can only follow the path that are already designed in the game [17]. Although it minimized the problem of navigating through the game world, this kind of environment is not re-playable—as mentioned before that puzzle games are not re-playable—but it works better with narrative storytelling.

A good artwork such as a beautiful environment is a part of an enjoyable game (Mikami, personal communication, September 10, 2018). In Pavilion, the isometric perspective gives the player a visual pleasure. The environment itself has a surrealism feels or even a pseudo-utopia feels. The game world is beautiful at first glance, a perfect world, but as perfection cannot be achieved, it’s only a pseudo-utopia (Spalanzani, personal communication, September 11, 2018).

No matter what the style or the feel of the game world is, players will be able to enjoy the game as long as the game offers a focused and detailed environment. Details in game environment is when the player can distinguish between an interactive elements with non-interactive element, therefore, the player knows which element to tap. An interactive element mostly more detailed, slightly illuminates, and has different texture which makes it stands out more than the rest non-interactive background. As mentioned by Mikami that some elements of Pavilion also slightly illuminate it brings the player to tap which actually has no results.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Although Fourth Person point of view in game design is new and never been heard before, it actually bore similarities with older game such as Lemmings. The resemblance is in the part that the character is non-playable, and the player only able to manipulate the environment. It affect the feel of connectivity, immersion, and closeness between the player and the character of the game. However, these characteristics closely match the puzzling mystery of the Pavilion’s game genre. The design of the game’s POV, gameplay, and character brings ads to the game’s concept of mysterious journey the character must venture of and brings puzzle to the players. To conclude, the POV is unique to the game only as it is matched the game concept and genre.

More identification about the comparisons and similarities of fourth person game and another digital games is recommended for the next study. Moreover, another recommended research is to analyze whether fourth person point of view is truly part of digital games’ point of view in addition to first person and third person, or it is just a statement made by a game developer to get an exposure for digital game market.

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