

Aimee Fernandez, Keely Grande-Torres & Dajonique Small  
 Professor Zamboni  
 EDST 210

### ¿Verdad o Chisme? Rules

Ready to enter the world of *¿Verdad o Chisme?* Enjoy a debate-driven TRPG where you dish the gossip and pick up the Spanish.

Quick Description: *¿Verdad o Chisme?* is a multiple-player tabletop role playing game where four friends converse in Spanish and weigh different possibilities why a friend arrives late to a restaurant. At the end of the game, players will decide to stay, leave, or exclude the late friend.

- Players: Multiple-players (maximum four players in total; 3 players and 1 facilitator)
- Duration: The game ends when the last card ‘Your late friend has arrived. Would you like to stay, leave or exclude the late friend?’ is drawn.
- Audience: 14-18 years Spanish learners; intended for a mature audience.

Disclaimer: *This game is designed purely for entertainment purposes and incorporates exaggerated characters and scenarios that may draw on cultural or racial stereotypes. These elements are not intended to offend or misrepresent any individual, group, or culture. Our goal is to create a fun and engaging experience while fostering understanding and respect. We encourage players to approach the game with an open mind and a sense of humor, and we welcome constructive feedback to ensure inclusivity and sensitivity.*

Minimal materials required:

1. Deck of prompt cards
2. Player menus
3. Pen, pencil, or any other writing utensil

Core Dynamics: Exploration, Construct or Build, and Solution

*Game Goal:* Imagine and weigh the different options when a friend arrives late to a restaurant by creating a fictional world in conversational Spanish.

*Game-Set Up:*

- Design and Layout:
  - The menu handout is styled to mimic a real restaurant menu format to align with the game’s theme. The menu items are designed to be accessible.
  - The purpose of **appetizers, main course, and desserts** is to serve generous helping of drama, designed to create moments in the game. Players should use

these prompts to build on their, skew their narrative to a shock, or to build momentum to their conclusion whether to dine, exclude, or conclude meal plans without the ‘late friend’. These prompts will be given to the players by the waiter.

- The Prompt Cards + Safety Tools
  - Prompt Cards are given and used by the players in the first initial rounds to build up their characters and their story. They should only be used in the first two game rounds, afterwards the game would be guided and driven by the menu prompts.
- Character Notes and Story-Building Tool
  - On the other side of the **player menu** is an interactive space designed to help players keep track of critical story details. By filling in blanks and writing down notes in either Spanish. This feature of the game setup ensures continuity in storytelling ,

### *Mechanics & Rules:*

- 1) **Discuss Safety Tools:** Players will discuss the topics that should or not be touched on during the game.
  - a) Players will fill up a card that records what they are not comfortable discussing under the “lines & veils”, *no explanation is needed or owed to the group on what topics they do not feel comfortable discussing.*
  - b) There will be an “X” card present to stop any conversation that was previously agreed upon as untouchable, or to skip over a prompt that students feel does not fit into the story they are actively creating in game.
  - c) Additionally, players will have access to a “pause card”, which allows them to temporarily pause the game and ask the “waiter” for clarification or assistance if a term or phrase is shared aloud.
- 2) **World Building:** Players will input their creative ideas when creating the restaurant and their own characters.
  - a) Restaurant Creation: Open-conversation between players that will be written in the “setting portion” of the player menu.
    - i) Players decide on the type of restaurant (i.e. diner, fast-food, fine dining).
    - ii) Players discuss the level of restaurant occupancy. In other words, the group will decide on if the setting is a crowded or spacious environment. This will affect the formal or informal conversation prompted by the facilitator.
    - iii) Players will decide on a time of day for the restaurant.
  - b) Character Creation: Open-conversation between players that will be recorded in the “character” section of the player menu.
    - i) Players choose an archetype within a friend group (ex. leader, entertainer, rational, hot headed character) to embody in the game.

- (1) Leader: Starter of each conversation, leads discussion and recall on memories that they are almost always present to.
  - (2) Entertainer: Takes serious situations less seriously than their friends, finds humor in these spaces instead.
  - (3) Rational: Considers fact and logic when assessing a situation before their feelings.
  - (4) Hot headed: Short tempered, easily triggered at memories that they would like to repress.
- ii) Players then answer these background questions to familiarize themselves with their character.
    - (1) Name and Pronouns
    - (2) How did you arrive at the meal? (ex. bike, car, taxi, uber, etc.)
    - (3) What are you wearing? How are you walking? How are you sitting down in the restaurant?
    - (4) How are you feeling about this gathering (ex. excited, happy, nervous, scared, ect.)
  - iii) Friend Group Decisions
    - (1) Player will discuss the friend group dynamic that would lead the game.
    - (2) Players will decide to give a Name and Pronoun to the ‘late friend’
- 3) **Facilitator Introduction & Disclaimer:** The facilitator introduces the restaurant scenario and themselves as a character with mobility.
- a) Restaurant Scenario: A group of friends gathers for a dinner together, puzzled by their late friend’s unexplained delay. At the end of the game, players will decide whether to leave, stay, or exclude the late friend.
  - b) Facilitator Disclaimer: *The facilitator will be performing the character of a restaurant waiter. This means they will be actively listening and engaging with the players and their archetype. The personality of the waiter depends on the story building, they will not be given an archetype.*
    - i) Facilitator also states two facts to develop the character of the late friend. After the two facts are presented, all players will from now on read the playing prompt cards as ‘[insert late friends given name]’
- 4) At each player’s turn, clockwise, they will need to draw one card and answer the question and prompt in character.
- 5) Players can choose to answer the prompts directly or expand on what a previous player has shared, adding their own perspective or building on the story (e.g., “I was there too for *that*, and this also happened”, or “Actually, I remember *that* happening differently”).

- 6) Players will begin by engaging in 2 rounds of conversation using the provided prompts or questions. During these rounds, players will remain fully in character, responding as their chosen persona or role within the narrative. This interaction should encourage creativity and collaboration as they use the prompts to develop the story, building on one another's answers to create a dynamic and immersive group experience.
- 7) After the second round, the waiter will approach the group and ask if they are ready to order. By the end of the second round, all players must come to a collective agreement and begin 'ordering' (the facilitator will help instigate the closing of the round/the group of players ordering. More detailed instructions for this player are in the facilitator's guide).
  - Once everyone is ready to order, appetizers will be introduced. Players will be informed that their order corresponds to the type of clue they receive. These clues are unique to each player and should not be shared with the group. The clues are designed to provide personal insights or possibilities regarding why their friend is late, adding layers of intrigue and mystery to the game.
- 8) Players will now engage in another 2-3 rounds of conversation, incorporating the clues they've received. During these rounds, players can choose to share their clues or use them to inform their responses, adding new perspectives or theories about why their friends are late.
- 9) The end of *¿Verdad o Chisme?* is signaled when the waiter announces the late friend is arriving. At that point, considering all that has been said, each player decides if they want to remain at the restaurant to be with the friend, or leave the restaurant. Additionally, each player must present and defend their decision and convince the other players to make a unanimous conclusion.
- 10) Debrief: Upon conclusion of the game, players will engage in a debrief, aimed to bring everyone back together, and discuss any feelings about the game. Some questions to guide this debrief include but are not limited to the following:
  - a) How is everyone feeling?
  - b) Are there any moments being in character that anyone would like to discuss?
  - c) What was exciting about your role? What was difficult?
  - d) Were there any vocabulary words/phrases that inhibited your gameplay?

### **How to Play**

#### **Round 1: Introductions and Initial Prompts (15–20 minutes)**

- **Distribute Prompt Cards:**
  - Pass out prompt cards for Round 1. Each player draws one and responds in character.

- Players can build on others' responses, adding details or perspectives in their own turn and contribute to the narrative.
- **Facilitate Dialogue:**
  - Ensure players stay in character and encourage natural Spanish dialogue.
  - Step in as the waiter to ask clarifying or leading questions if needed (e.g., "That's interesting! Can you tell me more about that?").

Round 2: Additional Prompts and Story Expansion (15–20 minutes)

- **Introduce More Prompts:**
  - Distribute Round 2 prompt cards.
  - Encourage players to deepen the story and expand on clues or theories.
- **Facilitate Scene Transitions:**
  - At the end of Round 2, approach the table and ask, "Are you ready to order?"
  - Transition the group to the next phase.

Appetizers (Clues and Theories)

- **Present Appetizers:**
  - Hand out appetizer "clue cards." Each player receives one personalized clue.
  - Explain that the clues are private and meant to inform their next responses.
- **Guide New Rounds (15–20 minutes):**
  - Encourage players to integrate their clues into the conversation.
  - Players can reveal their clues or keep them secret, using them to drive the story forward.
- **Support Dynamics:**
  - Monitor group interactions to ensure everyone has equal opportunities to participate.
  - Step in as the waiter to redirect the conversation if it stalls or veers off track.

Step 5: The Decision

- **Announce the Late Friend's Arrival:**
  - "Your late friend has arrived. Now it's time to decide: will you stay, leave, or exclude them?"
- 2. **Facilitate the Debate:**
  - Allow players to present and defend their decisions in character.
  - Guide the group toward a unanimous conclusion. If players can't agree, use the facilitator role to offer a compromise or prompt further discussion.

Step 6: Debrief

- **Bring Players Out of Character:**
  - "Great job, everyone! Let's take a moment to reflect on the game."
- **Ask Debrief Questions:**
  - How did it feel to play your character?
  - Were there any moments that stood out to you?
  - Did any vocabulary or phrases challenge you during the game?
- **Encourage Feedback:**
  - Ask for suggestions to improve the experience for future sessions.

Facilitator Guide:

- Role of the Facilitator: As the facilitator, you play the role of the restaurant waiter, guiding the gameplay, ensuring a safe and engaging environment, and encouraging players to stay in character. Your primary responsibilities include introducing the game, helping set boundaries, providing clues and keeping the narrative (constructed by the players) flow smoothly. You keep to the narrative by summarizing responses or asking follow up questions to create a narrative.
- **Before the Game:**
  - Materials/Setting Scene:
    - Ensure to place the deck of prompt cards on the table.
    - Pass the *player menu* for each
    - Initiate the conversation to complete the *lines and veils* section of the menu.
    - Explain the rules of the “X” card and the ‘Pause Card’
- **Introduction:**
  - Introduce yourself as the water,
  - Provide a brief overview of the game:
    - Example: “Tonight, we’re going to immerse ourselves in the drama of four friends navigating a mystery in Spanish”
  - *Explain the Goal:* “The objective is to practice Spanish by creating a story about why your friend is late. At the end, you’ll decide whether to stay, leave, or exclude your late friend”
  - *Establish the Setting:*
    - Guide the group in defining:
      - The restaurant type (e.g., dinner, fine dining).
      - The restaurants occupancy (crowded or spacious)
      - The time of day
  - *Create the ‘Late Friend’:*
    - Ask the group to decide on:
      - The late friend's name and pronouns.
      - Present (to the facilitator) two traits of the late friend
- **Character Creation**
  - Guide Players:
    - Have each player select an archetype (Leader, Entertainer, Rational, Hot-Headed).
    - Prompt players to answer the following about their character:
      1. Name and pronouns.
      2. How they arrived at the restaurant.
      3. Their outfit, body language, and feelings about the dinner.
  - Encourage Collaboration:

- Ask players to share their characters briefly with the group to establish dynamics.
- **Facilitator Tips:**
  - Stay Neutral: Avoid influencing players' decisions or storytelling unless absolutely necessary.
  - Encourage Creativity: Prompt players to use their imaginations and take risks with their Spanish.
  - Monitor Boundaries: Keep an eye on the Lines and Veils list and enforce safety tools as needed.
  - Engage as the Waiter: Use humor, curiosity, or mild exasperation to add flavor to your character and keep the mood light.

Learning Objective:

The learning goal of *¿Verdad o Chisme?* Is to help intermediate to advanced Spanish speaking students develop fluency in Spanish by improving their public speaking skills, and engaging in natural dialogue. Ultimately, students will practice differentiating between informal and formal conversations in a real world setting.

The game is set in a restaurant where players are expected to switch from informal to formal conversation when interacting with fellow diners and then with the restaurant staff. Additionally, players are encouraged to adjust their manners to suit the setting. In a restaurant environment, it's important to politely or respectfully avoid certain conversation topics. However, given the language level of our target audience, it is crucial to provide an accessible and direct way to steer the conversation away from sensitive topics if they arise. The facilitator's role is also significant throughout the game where provide creative guidance throughout. Furthermore, players will use their Spanish language skills and creativity to drive the tabletop role-playing game.