

**Design Document for:**

# **“Learn to dance” or “Dance with Commands”**

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# Design History

Currently the game is still in the design stage. I hope to create the game this winter/spring and perhaps try it fall 2014.

Initially I considered a game with no linguistic twists, but with a focus on culture. Later I added the topic of the prepositions “por” and “para” and called the game “Dance through prepositions” so that it would be a stronger piece to my Spanish thesis. After speaking further with my thesis director, I switched the linguistic component to commands. Commands fit the topic of teaching Spanish culture with a focus on dance and music because students can learn the commands so that they could possibly take a salsa dance class for example, without having to ask what the instructions mean.

## Version 0.10

*Version 0.10 includes the design document.*

1. *I shared my idea with my peers in the game course.*
2. *I shared my idea with my Spanish thesis instructor and received feedback that I needed to add a linguistic piece to the game.*

## Version 1.10

*Version 1.10 includes a change in the linguistic component in the design document.*

1. *I shared my idea with my Spanish thesis instructor and received feedback. I wanted students to be able to understand instructions for a dance class. The thesis topic now includes explicit Spanish commands that can be used in dance.*
2. *I've updated the design document to reflect the change in the linguistic component.*

# Game Overview

## Vision Statement

### Game log line: Dance with commands

There are some games available to help learn Spanish grammar, but few of them involve culture topics. There are many quizzes available to assist first year students in learning how to use commands, but none that are in a game format or involve culture. Students can learn about culture at the same time that they learn correct Spanish grammar.

There are 3 levels to the game. The first level is exploration, the second is comprehension, and the third is production. The exploration level allows the participant to actively learn the vocabulary. There are no wrong answers. Participants select a command and see what happens.

In the comprehension level, participants hear a command and select the action so that they follow their partner's lead. If they make a mistake, then they will be directed to an explicit instruction on what the command is.

In the production level, the player will give a command to their dance partner if they select the male role and they will have to select the correct command request based on the action they see if they play the female role. If you miss 1-3 of the responses, then your partner will simply correct your choice and explain why. If you miss more than 3 of the responses, then your partner will give you a brief lesson. At the end of the game, you will be asked a few culture questions based on the game. You will also be quizzed on their dance vocabulary and their memory of lyrics, songs, and artists. You will be given a score at the end of the game. Your score will be based on how you responded to the final culture questions and your responses throughout the game on the commands.

The setting of the game will be a dance floor. The game will be hosted on my Spanish portfolio website and will be advertised through social media. The game levels will be created in Adobe Captivate.

The game will address the following learning objectives:

- Correctly understand multiple commands
- Correctly use multiple commands
- Become familiar with Salsa music artists, songs, and lyrics
- Learn basic vocabulary to follow dance instructions

This game addresses these objectives in the following ways:

- Students will be prompted to respond in conversations with the commands and they will also be prompted to select a dance move to show that they've understood the commands.
- The questions and conversations in the game will refer to Salsa music artists, songs, and lyrics.
- Students will be given a brief lesson on dance instructions.

Students take courses about linguistics and literature. There are few course options, especially at the lower level of Spanish, which cover culture topics. Online learning is fairly new to Spanish courses. Game based learning is very new to learning Spanish. Because this game is not tied to a Spanish course, it is more likely to have participants because it is a game. The game environment enables students to practice without damaging their grade. Since it is a game, the students are still likely to play the game, even if the game doesn't affect their GPA.

This game is unique because it not only focuses on Spanish culture; the game covers the use of commands in relation to a real life setting. Students will learn about Salsa dancing and Salsa music. The dance partners will converse similar to real life characters, also giving the students the ability to see Spanish culture.

# Market Analysis

## **Audience profile**

The audience targeted for this game will be first year Spanish students in a university setting. The students are most likely between the ages of 20 and 30, although they may be older or younger. Most of the students live at home rather than live on campus. Students do not need any prior Spanish in order to participate in the game, but if they do, it is helpful.

An instructor needs to know how to support students in an online setting, mainly, be able to explain how to access the game, how to participate, and how to get the results of their quiz. Instructors will need to help prepare students and determine if the student is ready for the game. They should summarize the results of the students who played the game and talk about the results with the students. Instructors need to be able to explain any corrections in the use of commands if students need further examples than those provided in the game.

## **Distribution**

I will advertise this game through social media, but also by visiting classes in the fall semester. All students from all Spanish courses, regardless of their level, will be invited to play the game. The game will help students perfect their Spanish for their courses in a fun way.

The game will reside in a Canvas course and linked on my Spanish portfolio website. The game is a way to quiz students in my thesis study that I plan to conduct. The study will have YouTube lessons on how to use and understand commands. I will also share information about important events, guest speakers, registration deadlines, and Salsa dance and music topics. Students will be encouraged to play the game to what they are learning. Students will be tested before and after the study to see if there is student improvement. I am hoping that the game will attract students to participate in the study.

# Detailed Game Description

## **The Core Idea**

Commands are necessary to learn. In this game, the player will give a command to their dance partner if they select the male role and they will have to select the correct command request based on the action they see if they play the female role. At the end of the game, you will be asked a few culture questions about Salsa music and dance.

## **Background Story**

It's a warm summer night and the air is filled with Salsa beats. The breeze brings music and the smell of coconut and rum. The energy is bouncing in the room. There you are, surrounded by the Salsa beats, ready to dance. The game begins. You are about to dance. Tell your partner what steps to do or follow your partner.

## **Game Objective**

In order to win, you need to select the correct commands and the correct directions for your partner. You also need to respond correctly to the culture questions at the end about Salsa music and dance. You will learn about Salsa music and dance and you will also learn to perfect your use of commands.

## **Game world**

The game is hosted on my Spanish portfolio website: [www.noemiwahls.weebly.com](http://www.noemiwahls.weebly.com). The game will include videos, but it is not 3D. You will view videos and then be prompted to select an option. I would like to Adobe Captivate for the game levels and post them in Canvas. Any videos I create will be hosted in YouTube.

## **Game Play**

The player will first watch a video narration that sets up the game and describes the setting. Then the player will see the dance partners. The dance partners will be described. The player will select which partner they would like to dance with and for which song. Another video will take place with the song and the dance partners dancing. The player will give a command to their dance partner if they select the male role and they will have to select the correct command request based on the action they see if they play the female role. Once they pass the game portion with one partner, they will then be given the chance to play another role with the other partner. The player controls their character's dance moves and therefore they can choose the outcome of the dance. The female role is more drill based, but I think I can enable the player to be more expressive as a male role because the male decides the moves so the player can make the dance become the way they want the player to move. The female will have some opportunities for some expressive moves, but the player will have to follow the commands. There is some flexibility in the moves though. Either way, the player will have to play both roles to win.

## **Set up**

In order to play, students need a computer, internet, and the ability to watch videos. The student needs no background with Spanish. Students will simply go to the portfolio website, enter the Canvas course, and start the game. The game will open within the same window in the Canvas course.

## **Rule/Mechanics**

The initial level would explore the commands. The middle level/s would focus on commands and on understanding a small number of them. The higher level would be when the student correctly uses the commands. 3-5 levels would be ideal.

## **Winning**

Students will win the game by passing with a 85% or better.

**Assessing outcomes**

The section on commands might show increased proficiency. This game is connected with the study and the game is the practice activity. There is a pretest and posttest on Spanish commands and culture. I plan to compare the test results for the study.

**Other aspects**

The game will include video narration at first to set the stage and it will also include 1 other video for each dance partner with a song that is selected so that the player can hear their song. On the screen, they will be provided information about the song below the video. Only 3 song options will be provided.

There will be 3 dance partners to choose from. Level 1 – the partner will be an excellent dancer, but less educated. Level 2 – the dance partner will be a good dance partner and currently be in college. Level 3 - the third dance partner will be a college graduate and is ok at dancing. You select the level of the game based on which dance partner you select.

Dancing is a big part of the Hispanic culture. I've selected Salsa dancing because that is the most common dance that Americans are attracted to within the Hispanic dance culture. In order to understand the latin culture, students needs to be exposed to a dance culture.

# Prototype/Playtest

The game is still in the discuss stage and I hope to have a prototype up this spring.

**Prototype #1: Winter**

**Prototype #2: Spring**

**Playsession #1: August**