

# Setting the Stage: Designing Effective Professional Development in Improvisational Drama Techniques for Foreign Language Teachers.

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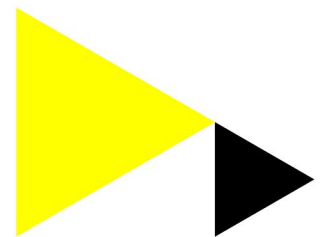
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# Setting the stage: designing effective professional development in improvisational drama techniques for foreign language teachers

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## ABSTRACT

Researchers worldwide have identified affective benefits of improvisational drama techniques (IDTs) on foreign language (FL) learners. Yet the characteristics of professional development programmes (PDPs) that could lead to long-term integration of drama among FL teachers appear largely undiscovered. Through expert interviews, a needs analysis questionnaire and a literature review, this study aimed to determine which design principles a PDP must fulfil to effectively address educational challenges surrounding IDT-implementation. The findings revealed that such training calls for a symbiosis between practical considerations, namely school environment and training conditions, and tapping into a mindset among FL teachers that allows them to (re)discover core beliefs and carry out IDTs with ‘artistry’.


## KEYWORDS

improvisational drama;  
speaking skills; foreign  
language; teacher  
professional development

## Introduction

In the preface to his book of plays, John Patrick Shanley says of his journey as an actor and playwright, ‘All the really important things possible during the course of a lifetime require a little more courage than we currently have. A deep breath and a leap’ (1992, 3). Few would deny that acting requires courage – as does speaking a foreign language (Privas-Bréauté 2019).

Studies with language learners worldwide have, however, revealed that taking on a role during the performative act of communicating with someone in an unfamiliar language can decrease inhibitions in such an interaction. Learners can, after all, hide behind the disguise of a character (e.g. Weber 2019) – and even get swept away in the drama to the point that they lose their anxiety (e.g. Galante 2018). *Improvisational* drama techniques (IDTs) have particular advantages in the foreign language (FL) classroom, namely their resemblance to the spontaneity of real-world communication (e.g. Göksel 2019). An IDT is defined here as an activity in which (a) participants take on roles in a fictitious situation and (b) spontaneous spoken interaction is elicited, thereby

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engaging learners in conversations and creating a rehearsal of sorts for communication beyond the classroom. Belliveau and Kim (2013) found, however, in their research synthesis of 65 studies on drama in FL classrooms that even while teachers show a prevalent interest in drama as an engaging tool to stimulate communication, a lack of widespread implementation persists among these teachers.

The first author discovered a similar discrepancy between belief and practice when training English teachers pursuing their Master's degrees in the Netherlands (Goodnight, van Beuningen, and de Graaff 2021). On the first day of the course Drama in the Curriculum she would inquire if these teachers agreed with the statement, 'Drama activities are an effective way to learn a foreign language.' While students generally responded affirmatively, when they were told they would need to film themselves implementing an IDT in their secondary school classrooms, reluctance generally set in. Yet more than 120 of these student teachers attempted IDTs in their classes, and every one succeeded, reporting back with such examples as a pupil declaring that this was the best lesson she had ever experienced.

This phenomenon gave rise to the hypothesis that training FL teachers in the use of IDTs would galvanise them to integrate these techniques into their regular teaching repertoire, which can in turn engender positive affective reactions (e.g. confidence) towards speaking the FL among their pupils. Yet there persists a dearth of evidence on a viable design for such a professional development programme (PDP) for FL teachers, and even research on PDP characteristics in drama for teachers in *any* field appears to remain scarce (Stanton, Cawthon, and Dawson 2018). In order to test the hypothesis described above, a longitudinal design-based design study was launched to create and test a professional development programme (PDP) in iterative cycles. As an evidence-based PDP of this nature appears not yet to exist, and without such training, the concern is that these potentially beneficial drama techniques (Lee et al. 2015) will not become an integral part of a FL teacher's repertoire. The first step in this project was to answer the question driving this study: *What design principles must a professional development programme fulfil to effectively address educational challenges surrounding the integration of IDTs in the FL classroom?* To answer this question, a literature review was conducted, and in turn three expert interviews were held with researchers to glean their expertise on PDPs with FL teachers or in drama; a questionnaire among secondary school FL teachers in the Netherlands ( $n = 104$ ) was furthermore carried out to discover their needs related to training in IDTs. In turn a set of evidence-based design principles was established to serve as the foundation for the PDP under design.

### Improvisational drama techniques in foreign language learning

Given the struggle many FL learners encounter when attempting to carry on a spontaneous conversation, speaking, more than any other FL skill, can produce debilitating anxiety (Galante 2018; Sağlamel and Kayaoğlu 2013) not unlike stage fright. In the Netherlands, West and Verspoor (2016) observed that pupils rarely interacted with each other in FL classrooms; their findings matched Haijma's (2013) study in which Dutch secondary school pupils indicated that they infrequently speak the FL, one-third of them attributing this to anxiety.

Yet ample evidence from across the globe exists to support the notion that IDTs can break down affective barriers, and in turn stimulate pupils' willingness to interact. This notion of *willingness to communicate* (WtC) refers to an individual's inclination to speak in communicative situations (MacIntyre et al. 1998). WtC is built upon a foundation of affective factors, among them self-confidence and inter-group climate, or the motivational propensity of a learner in relation to belonging to a particular group (MacIntyre et al. 1998).

As verbal communication is performative in nature, drama techniques can be suitable for stimulating pupils' WtC (Stinson and Freebody 2006). Weber's (2019) case study of her German class at an American university, for example, revealed that the figurative character mask inherent to role-play galvanised even her most introverted student to speak, and that this confidence carried over into non-drama interactions. Dramatic storytelling activities also fostered confidence among English language learners, as well as group bonding, at a Zimbabwean primary school (Marunda-Piki 2018). After participating in drama activities in English classes, both French undergraduate business students (Privas-Bréauté 2019) and Brazilian teenagers (Galante 2018) showed decreased speaking anxiety. German learners at an Australian middle school furthermore exhibited confidence and risk-taking through techniques such as a role-play at sea in which they portrayed angry passengers confronting the captain (Rothwell 2012). In addition, at a Canadian elementary school twelve year-old French learners were enthusiastic and engaged in response to improvisational activities and other drama strategies (Göksel 2019), and in Nfor's (2018) work with Japanese university students, he found that use of mime stimulated creativity and enjoyment, as well as engaging them in communication with each other.

The studies cited above examined the use of IDTs in primary, secondary and tertiary education, with projects stemming from Africa, Asia, Oceania, Europe and the Americas among learners at a variety of language levels. This diversity lends credence to the notion that the strength of IDTs is bound neither by culture, age nor language proficiency. These studies were, however, primarily short-term projects, and Belliveau and Kim (2013) identified in their research synthesis a need for longitudinal research on drama in FL learning.

Existing studies are furthermore primarily aimed at examining possible benefits improvisational drama can offer learners themselves, rather than on the individuals leading the activities. Greenfader, Brouillette, and Farkas (2015) and Galante (2018) refer briefly to training teachers, but do not discuss the nature of the professional development or its degree of success in inciting teachers to continue implementing drama. Araki-Metcalf (2007) also mentioned that teachers received training in her study, and added that despite witnessing the gains their pupils made by engaging in drama with a guest instructor, the teachers remained reticent to implement IDTs themselves. Dunn and Stinson (2011) moreover found that teachers could not inspire the same positive reactions or gains in language development as guest artists had in a previous study they had conducted (Stinson and Freebody 2006). These incidental examples create the impression that training FL teachers in IDTs is no simple task.

Professional development is perhaps essential, however, to sustaining IDT integration so that teachers can cultivate the affective benefits over the long term. In a meta-analysis chronicling 47 studies on drama-based pedagogy across the curriculum, Lee et al. (2015) found that these activities showed more positive results when they were utilised in more

than five lessons and that teachers in fact were more effective than guest artists. Lee et al. (2015) also recommended that researchers investigate the *type* of PDP that could spur teachers to use drama. In a later related study Stanton, Cawthon, and Dawson (2018) express a further entreaty, stating that 'research that expands teacher trainers' understanding of the characteristics of professional development that will help teachers incorporate this beneficial and meaningful work into their pedagogy is essential' (72). Yet the characteristics of professional development that could lead to effective long-term integration of IDTs among FL teachers appear largely undiscovered.

## Teacher professional development

Teacher PDPs have received extensive attention among researchers, who generally show consensus as to what is effective. In large-scale reviews of empirical research related to teacher PDPs, both Desimone and Garet (2015) and Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) identified features that can determine the effectiveness of PDPs. Myriad other studies on teacher PDPs purport one or more of these (or very similar) features (e.g. Ling and Mackenzie 2015). Bates and Morgan (2018), as well as Merchie et al. (2018) take this notion a step further by purporting that the interplay among the components described below can also be crucial to a PDP's success in helping teachers reach its aims, rather than adopting these components as isolated elements.

One feature Desimone and Garet (2015) identify is *coherence*, which refers to the degree of alignment between the PDP and such factors as school curriculum and goals, teacher beliefs and pupil needs. They found that the success or failure of a PDP can often hinge on the degree to which it aligns with classroom content, which is reiterated by other researchers, including Popova et al. (2022) and Ling and Mackenzie (2015).

Coherence with pupil needs has also been determined to be an essential component of effective PDPs (Desimone and Garet 2015). Jensen et al. (2016), as well as Fischer et al. (2018), furthermore assert that pupil learning should be a central focus of PDPs to maximise their viability in the classroom. In his clowning workshops, Lutzger (2007), for example, discovered that participating FL teachers found it valuable to experience the risk-taking involved in acting in order for them to understand what their pupils undergo in language learning.

Coherence with teacher beliefs as an essential feature of teacher PDPs (Desimone and Garet 2015) is particularly pertinent to drama training, as a discrepancy often exists between teachers' enthusiasm for these techniques and their lack of implementation in the FL classroom (Belliveau and Kim 2013). Borg (2018) contends that should trainers wish to effect change in teacher behaviour the PDP must tap into their beliefs. This focus on core values can translate into such activities as self-reflection, as well as modelling how these beliefs can be put into practice (Borg 2011). Dönszelmann (2019) also addresses *beliefs* as a central point of interest. He noted that the process of teaching the FL in new ways places participants in a vulnerable position, and thus warrants attention in the approach of the PDP. This vulnerability is perhaps even more present among teachers involved in the emotionally transformative learning process of professional development in drama (Cain and Dixon 2013).

In the large-scale reviews conducted both by Desimone and Garet (2015) and Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017), *active learning* was found to be a crucial element in

the effectiveness of teacher PDPs. For drama training, this can include, for example, carrying out practice lessons (Popova et al. 2022) or trying out the IDTs, first during the sessions and in turn with their pupils (Cawthon and Dawson 2011). Dönszelmann (2019) emphasised the indispensability of observing the trainer modelling the techniques and subsequently practicing them during training as a stepping stone to classroom implementation.

Hand in hand with the interactive nature of active learning is a focus on *group dynamics and composition* (Vangrieken et al. 2017). Group composition can include such factors as collective participation of teachers from the same school (Desimone and Garet 2015) or bringing together individuals with a shared sense of purpose (Van Keulen et al. 2015). Cultivating positive group dynamics involves myriad elements, such as reflective dialogues (Schaap and de Bruijn 2018).

Support can furthermore extend beyond the session components themselves. Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) identify coaching from the trainer as a key form of support in the form of lesson observations, feedback and guided reflection. Ag-Ahmad, Mohamed, and Bakar (2022) reiterate the value of mentorship in PD specifically related to FL teachers. Additional support mechanisms can include complementary materials (Popova et al. 2022) and small-scale social media groups (Goodyear, Parker, and Casey 2019).

Desimone and Garet (2015) also identified *sustained duration* as a key feature of successful PDPs. Dönszelmann (2019) and Stanton, Cawthon, and Dawson (2018) found that participants needed an extended period of time and multiple sessions in order to integrate major didactic changes into their classrooms. An analysis of PDPs in high-performing school systems (Jensen et al. 2016) also illuminated the importance of time as a factor – both in terms of time spent on learning during PDP sessions and time to implement newly acquired skills.

### ***Teacher professional development in IDTs***

The body of research oriented toward training teachers to use drama techniques both for FL teachers and in other curricular contexts is modest. Dora To et al. (2011) reflect on a teacher PDP for Hong Kong primary school English teachers, but focus on the positive affective reactions of the pupils rather than on the training characteristics of the training. While they do not discuss teacher PDPs directly, Even (2020) and Hulse and Owens (2019) offer insights on training pre-service FL teachers in drama. Both studies underscore the importance of on-the-job mentoring, as well as positing that the benefits of offering training in integrating drama techniques can cultivate an overall approach to teaching that involves positive risk-taking and creativity.

An examination of research specifically related to the characteristics of teacher PDPs in drama revealed both challenges and possible solutions that warrant attention in the design of PDPs to increase the likelihood of IDT-integration. Araki-Metcalf (2007) and Rosler (2014) offered PDPs in drama techniques over a longer period of time in Japan and the United States respectively. Their two projects adhered to similar structures: both worked with primary school teachers who volunteered to have these researchers come to their classrooms to model how to teach drama activities. During the three-year period of her study, Rosler (2014) invited teachers to lead the activities; they



remained, however, reluctant to do so, which she attributed primarily to a fear of taking risks. Araki-Metcalf (2007) also found that after three months, most teachers held fast to the more teacher-centered activities to which they were accustomed. Both researchers remarked on the same phenomenon: while the participating teachers saw that their pupils responded positively to the activities, the teachers were unable to embrace what they had learned from the trainers and remained hesitant to implement drama in their classrooms.

In contrast to Araki-Metcalf (2007) and Rosler (2014), who trained teachers primarily through on-the-job coaching, Dunn and Stinson (2011) and Cawthon and Dawson (2011) provided a series of professional development sessions for at least one school year. In an earlier project through which Stinson (Stinson and Freebody 2006) had given guest drama lessons to secondary school English learners in Singapore, the pupils exhibited significantly higher speaking skills than pupils who had not received these drama lessons. A headmistress from a participating school consequently asked Stinson to train teachers to integrate these techniques themselves (Dunn and Stinson 2011). After five sessions and additional classroom support, Dunn and Stinson (2011) were disappointed to find that the pupils did not show the significant communicative gains evident in the previous project in which more experienced drama trainers conducted the lessons. Their overarching conclusion was that teachers struggled to take on the artistry of drama. The teaching artists would introduce storylines for drama activities that inspired pupils. The language teachers, on the other hand, often chose, less successfully, materials that addressed grammar concepts when implementing drama. Many teachers also held fast to their lesson plans, rather than adapting to the level of engagement in the class or expanding on a moment of inspiration exhibited by a student. Dunn and Stinson (2011) discovered that the ability to approach one's curriculum with the eye of an artist was crucial to motivating pupils to participate, and in turn, develop linguistically.

As noted above by Rosler (2014), Dunn and Stinson (2011) also found that most teachers were disinclined to take risks. Like Rosler (2014), they mused that teachers using drama need to become comfortable with uncertainty. At the same time Dunn and Stinson do not deny the necessity of keeping the linguistic components of the FL curriculum front and centre, and they entreat researchers to consider the 'pedagogical artistry of both domains of language and drama' (2011, 63) when designing training for FL teachers.

Cahnmann-Taylor and McGovern (2021), Lutzer (2022), and Piazzoli (2018) all note the distinction between a wider definition of artistry, in that teaching an FL is an art and can be effectively addressed as such in teacher training, and the more circumscribed notion that teachers can be most successful when working with art forms such as drama or literature by taking an artistic approach. This latter definition most aptly fits the context of this research. Hadjipanteli (2020) describes the teacher's role in this regard as follows: 'The stimulation of learners' aesthetic, positive-energy driven emotions is a primary necessity for their eager and poetical engagement in the dramatic action' (204). Lutzer emphasises in an earlier study (2007) that artistry can be fostered by, for example, showing teachers how to use body language so that they can in turn encourage pupils to do the same. Piazzoli (2018) comments that the notion of artistry can be intimidating, as an artist is erroneously seen as a rebel or a 'talented genius' (11), and that the



true genius lies in listening to one's own instincts and the pupils' responses, which are skills that can be developed in a PDP.

Perhaps the most extensively documented PDP initiative in IDTs is the Drama for Schools (DFS) programme, founded by Cawthron and Dawson (2009). In many respects their approach resembles that of Dunn and Stinson (2011), with both training sessions and support, as well as explicit attention to embedding drama into the curriculum. Yet Cawthron and Dawson (2011) were met with much more positive results, albeit not directly comparable to Dunn and Stinson (2011). A transformation in beliefs appeared to be a crucial element as teachers become proficient in using IDTs (Stanton, Cawthron, and Dawson 2018). These researchers found that 'this shift seems to include a teacher adopting an artistic way of viewing curriculum and instructional goals' (Lee, Cawthron, and Dawson 2013, 87). Cawthron and Dawson (2009) discovered that participating teachers continued to incorporate the strategies, contributing to higher student engagement. As a support mechanism, their programme includes a supplementary website in which descriptions of the drama games can be found.<sup>1</sup>

In a similar vein, the authors of this study conducted a retrospective analysis of former student teacher reflections from the course Drama in the Curriculum, as well as of 101 sources to glean which IDTs had produced positive affective reactions among participants (Goodnight, van Beuningen, and de Graaff 2021). Findings from this study were used to create an evidence-based handbook of IDTs as a support mechanism for the PDP under design here. A list of these activities can be found in the article's appendix.<sup>2</sup>

### ***Translation to design principles***

In sum, from the sources discussed above on teacher PDPs, salient characteristics emerged that can be translated into design principles for training FL teachers to implement IDTs. These salient characteristics can be categorised under three central themes: Training Conditions, School Environment and Teacher Mindset. Under the theme of Training Conditions, *Consideration of time-related factors* (e.g. Stanton, Cawthron, and Dawson 2018) appears to be crucial to a PDP's success; paramount to this is ensuring that the training affords teachers ample time to develop their skills. As far as the training sessions themselves, incorporating opportunities for *active learning* (e.g. Desimone and Garet 2015) is imperative to allowing participants to engage with the material, first through experimentation and discussion within the sessions and in turn in their own classrooms. As experimentation with IDTs in particular involves a degree of vulnerability, *cultivating positive group composition and dynamics* (e.g. Vangrieken et al. 2017) among participants is also critical. Between training sessions, *support mechanisms* (e.g. Ag-Ahmad, Mohamed, and Bakar 2022) can also play a key role, such as encouragement and feedback to empower teachers to further develop their newly learned skills.

Two characteristics are related to teachers' School Environment, namely *curriculum and goals* (e.g. Popova et al. 2022) and *pupil needs* (e.g. Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner 2017). Attention to these factors can increase the likelihood that the PDP is relevant to the teacher's immediate classroom situation, as well as the wider school circumstances, so that opportunities for integrating new ideas into the classroom are feasible.

The two remaining characteristics pertain to (transformation of) the Teacher Mindset. For the learnings of the PDP to take hold, they must tap into, rekindle or awaken participating *teachers' beliefs* (e.g. Borg 2018) related to their approach to FL education. Specific to drama training is the need to *cultivate artistry* (e.g. Cahnmann-Taylor and McGovern 2021) among teachers in order for the creativity in IDTs to come to life and inspire pupils to participate fully.

## Method

To assess and complement the design principles that emerged from the literature review, this study examined the needs and experiences of stakeholders in education. Three interviews with researchers with expertise on teacher PDPs, and a needs analysis questionnaire among secondary school FL teachers in the Netherlands ( $n = 104$ ) were carried out. Expert interviews were chosen as a suitable method for this exploratory phase as they can offer an orientation into an under-researched field (Bogner, Littig, and Menz 2018); the interview format furthermore afforded an interactive opportunity to home in on the training characteristics specifically in relation to the context of this study. The questionnaire provided an efficient means of gleaning perceptions from the target population (Dörnyei 2003) for the PDP under design. As the methodology differs between the data collection instruments, this section presents the design and analysis for each instrument separately.

### Expert interviews

Three interviews were conducted based on the experts' longitudinal research on professional development for teachers in FL or drama education. Sebastiaan Dönszelmann had recently completed his doctoral study (2019) through which he created a PDP to train French teachers in the Netherlands to use the FL as an effective learning tool. Dönszelmann was selected based on key parallels between his research and the current project – with respect to both his design-based approach to professional development and his target population, namely Dutch secondary school FL teachers. Training teachers to communicate in the target language more effectively furthermore can require a level of vulnerability and improvisational play among participants similar to learning to lead IDTs. The 45-minute interview with Dönszelmann was conducted in Dutch at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam on May 17, 2019.

The other experts interviewed focused on training teachers to incorporate drama techniques across the curriculum. Kathryn Dawson and Lara Dossett manage the DFS programme. Dawson founded the DFS programme together with Stephanie Cawthon ten years earlier (Cawthon and Dawson 2009). Within the DFS programme, teachers in both primary and secondary education receive long-term training to incorporate drama techniques across the curriculum with the goal of increasing pupil engagement. Lara Dossett, who develops curricular content as well as training Master's students in drama to conduct the PDP participated in a joint interview with Dawson. This 35-minute group interview was conducted in English via Zoom on April 25, 2019.

Drama trainer and researcher Brenda Rosler provided professional development in process drama to primary school teachers over a three-year period by teaching model lessons in participants' classrooms. Process drama refers to improvisational activities in

which the teacher and pupils portray roles, as opposed to working toward the product of a play performance (Rosler 2014). Rosler's 20-minute telephone interview was conducted in English on March 29, 2019.

Questions for these semi-structured interviews were developed to address themes that emerged from literature in regard to effective PDP design. Additional questions specific to each interview were developed through iterative analyses of the experts' published works. In order to establish context, these experts were furthermore asked to share their impetus for designing and conducting their PDPs.

The importance of uncovering and possibly transforming teacher beliefs during training emerged from the literature on teacher PDPs (e.g. Borg 2018), as well as the related notion of pedagogical concept change (Stanton, Cawthon, and Dawson 2018). These notions were addressed during the interviews in terms of how the experts incorporated them into their PDPs.

Desimone and Garet (2015) also identified sustained duration as a key feature of successful PDPs. The length of the training was discussed during the interviews, as well as related logistical factors, such as intervals between sessions. Another key feature cited by multiple researchers (e.g. Cawthon and Dawson 2009) was the alignment of the PDP with school curriculum and policies; this was addressed explicitly in the two interviews with the drama trainers, as their programmes were embedded in more specific school contexts.

The content of the PDP sessions themselves was also discussed at length. The degree to which experts incorporated active learning (Desimone and Garet 2015) was addressed, as well as concepts such as coaching and reflection (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner 2017). Dawson and Dossett were also queried as to which specific IDTs they would recommend for language learners based on their experience with teachers across the curriculum. Rosler's drama PDP did not include training sessions, but she was nonetheless asked to share her opinions on possible activities as well. Dönszelmann (2019) had also mentioned that their training included theory discussions on target language use, and during the interview he was asked to elaborate on the degree to which participants found this component useful.

Due to their expertise in drama, Dawson and Dossett, as well Rosler were presented with examples of possible PDP training components that matched items from the needs analysis questionnaire as described below. These examples included both activities that could be carried out during the sessions themselves (e.g. practicing leading the IDTs), as well as mechanisms to support participating teachers in between sessions (e.g. periodic e-mails from the trainer). The drama experts were given an opportunity to share their opinions on the value of these components.

In iterative examinations of the transcripts, parallels and discrepancies between interviewees and PDP literature and teacher responses to the questionnaire were analysed. The transcriptions and subsequently the article manuscript were submitted to the experts for review. The manuscript was in turn edited to incorporate their feedback. The revised manuscript was again shared with experts at which time they gave explicit consent to the use of their full names in this article. Experts and questionnaire respondents were informed as to how their data would be stored and utilised in this study, and both groups provided active consent for participation. Both aspects of this study were approved by the Ethical Testing Committee at Utrecht University (reference number 3914860-01-2019).

Given the small number of interviews, a coding system was not used; in the iterative examination of the transcripts, however, parallels and discrepancies among interviewees were identified and analysed on such topics as their approach to the training sessions and possible challenges to integration of concepts learned. This constituted a process of inductive theory formulation (Bogner, Littig, and Menz 2018) of design principles for the PDP under design – in combination with the findings from literature and the needs analysis questionnaire.

### ***Needs analysis questionnaire***

An online questionnaire was conducted in order to glean opinions from the population of teachers for which the PDP is intended on educational challenges they face surrounding the integration of IDTs in the FL classroom, and how to address these challenges effectively.

The questionnaire for this study contained three sections. In the first section, teachers were asked to share brief demographic information (e.g. years teaching the FL). As it could furthermore not be presumed that teachers would recognise the value of IDTs as a pedagogical tool nor that they would wish to incorporate IDTs themselves, the following two statements were included, to which teachers could respond from 1 ('completely disagree') to 5 ('completely agree'):

- Drama techniques have added value in motivating pupils to speak the target language.
- I would like to incorporate drama techniques more often in my FL lessons.

The statements above regarding teacher beliefs about the relevance of drama were developed from the phenomenon Belliveau and Kim (2013) found that teachers see the relevance of drama techniques in the language classroom, but do not implement them widely. The statements below reflect opinions that Drama in the Curriculum student teachers regularly expressed when they were told that they would need to film themselves teaching an IDT, concerns that were in most cases assuaged after they had received training and had subsequently integrated IDTs into their own teaching practices.

- I have the necessary skills/training to implement drama techniques.
- I think that my pupils would want to do them.
- I think that drama techniques would cause classroom management problems.
- I currently have enough preparation time to plan lessons with drama techniques.
- There is ample room in my curriculum to incorporate drama techniques.

The final two survey sections related directly to the PDP to be designed. Respondents were first asked to rate possible components of the training sessions for the PDP on a Likert scale of 1–5 from 'unimportant' to 'extremely important.' These components included, for example, trying-out IDTs and exchanging ideas with fellow participants. Finally, teachers were given a series of possible mechanisms that could further support them in integrating IDTs – both between sessions and upon completion of the PDP, such as a collection of ready-made lesson ideas available on a website and periodic e-mails from the trainer with new ideas/encouragement. In each of the three sections

described above respondents could also provide additional ideas through open-ended questions.

After the first pilot among a small cohort of Master-level English teacher training students ( $n = 32$ ), the questionnaire was revised for clarity, translated into Dutch for use among other FL teachers and in turn back-translated into English independently to ensure the reliability of the translation (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 2011). A second pilot was in turn conducted among a larger population of language teacher trainees ( $n = 197$ ). The current questionnaire was revised to include more specific items related to the possible content of the PDP. A Likert scale furthermore replaced multiple-item response questions ('check all that apply') in the previous version in order to capture more nuance in respondents' opinions.

With the aim of reaching a broad cross-section of the Dutch secondary school FL teaching population a variety of channels were utilised to contact possible respondents. The questionnaire was disseminated among teachers through a list generated from the Dutch Board of Education of secondary school e-mail addresses and a mailing list for *Levende Talen* ('Living Languages'), the foremost Dutch professional association for language teachers, a network generated by the first author during an exploratory study, and additional teachers in the authors' networks. Social media platforms were also used, for example, with a link to the questionnaire placed specifically in professional communities of teachers of specific languages. As teachers tend to be inundated with online survey requests, it was a high priority to keep projected completion time under ten minutes to increase likelihood of response (McKenney and Reeves 2019).

Questionnaire results were entered into SPSS. After the data set was cleaned to remove respondents who were not secondary school teachers, quantitative responses were analysed for frequency. The mean, mode, median and standard deviation were calculated to discover the consistency among teachers' opinions as to which beliefs and needs for the proposed PDP appeared most salient. A qualitative content analysis of responses to open-ended questions was also conducted (Kuckartz 2019) in order to detect patterns among them as well as to uncover additional challenges or suggestions that were not already put forth as options in the questionnaire. Comments were coded inductively and grouped together by theme, such as 'connect drama to learning goals.'

## Results

The aim of this study was to determine which design principles a PDP must fulfil to effectively address educational challenges surrounding IDT-implementation. Creating a PDP in IDT integration evidently requires careful and systematic consideration of the multiple factors that can influence a PDP's success. In context of the overarching longitudinal design study, 'success' can be defined as long-term integration of IDTs among secondary school FL teachers in the Netherlands to stimulate positive affective factors related to spoken interaction among their pupils.

### *Expert interviews*

When discussing his initial reasons for embarking on his design-based research aimed at developing a PDP, Sebastiaan Dönszelmann described a discrepancy between beliefs and

practice similar to what often occurs with IDT use. While teachers generally agree as to the importance of speaking the target language in class, they shy away from doing so, give up after a few weeks, or they simply do not know how to implement the FL effectively (Dönszelmann 2019).

The training Dönszelmann designed is built upon the foundation of Ericsson's deliberate practice theory (2019). An essential aspect of this, he mentioned, was modelling the techniques for participants. He described the training as a matter of taking participants step-by-step through the process until they could autonomously integrate the target language pedagogy into their classrooms. He stressed that such a didactic sea change takes time – both in terms of the hours spent in training, as well as the amount of time in between sessions. He noted that participants would come to him and say, 'It's not working,' and he would reply with a bit of humour, 'Of course it's not working; we have only just begun practicing.' When asked about the degree to which trainees valued the integration of theory he responded that they generally preferred to be led by the hand. They appreciated the discussion of theory but, with some exceptions, were unlikely to read articles outside of the sessions.

While the long-term results of Dönszelmann's study were not discussed during the interview, a look at his dissertation revealed that one year after completing training, his participants continued to use the target language pedagogy (2019). Participating teachers did, however, report feeling discouraged when colleagues responded with apathy to what they had learned; consequently Dönszelmann identified school involvement as an important subject for future research (2019).

Kathryn Dawson and Lara Dossett, like Dönszelmann, commented on the profound shift participants undergo as they learn to take on a new pedagogy. The American public school system in which these teachers operate is heavily focused on high-stakes testing, which dictates teachers' approach to their work. Incidentally, this test-oriented culture also dominates FL education in the Netherlands (Rouffet 2019). The DFS training, Dawson noted, requires teachers to fundamentally reexamine their beliefs as to why they initially chose the profession.

Dawson and Dossett discussed the key components of the PDP. Building autonomy is central to the DFS programme. Dossett cited a phenomenon similar to one Dönszelmann mentioned, 'Okay I tried this stuff. It was really hard at first but I kept going and it has been transformative in my classroom.' While the training schedule has varied over the 10-year period since its inception, in one recent version teachers took part in a multi-day summer school course followed by sessions throughout the year. In the sessions themselves, as with Dönszelmann, modelling is an essential component. Dossett and Dawson also stressed the importance of community-building among participants.

They emphasised that their goal with the DFS programme is sustainability – it is 'not a service model;' the goal was not to bring a guest artist into classrooms to lead drama activities with pupils but rather train teachers to utilise the techniques themselves. The DFS programme was created as a partnership with a specific Austin school district, and has since expanded to include collaborations including Australia, Bosnia–Herzegovina and Poland. Another essential component is helping PDP participants develop a workshop they in turn give to their colleagues, as well as addressing the issue of how to advocate to parents and administrators, operating under the philosophy that there must be buy-in at every level.

Notwithstanding the far-reaching scope of their programme, Dawson and Dossett stressed that they did not wish to put forth a 'master narrative' on how to use drama. As mentioned above, they have created a DFS website with a wide array of drama techniques, and they underscored that the techniques should be simple and accessible, regardless of teachers' expertise in theatre. They also recognise that there is no one-size-fits-all solution with their strategies.

Rosler's long-term PDP was quite different from Dönszelmann's and the DFS programme. Rather than offering a series of training sessions, she repeatedly visited participating teachers' classrooms to model how to teach IDTs. She had been working as a primary school teacher in schools that she described as being run in almost a military fashion, and her experience through the drama training was akin to what Dawson described as feeling 'remade.'

Rosler later decided to provide professional development to primary school teachers from various schools. She first conducted an initial workshop where she offered to work individually with teachers to help them integrate process drama. Rosler then established working relationships with a small core of teachers in whose classrooms she worked over a period of three years (2014). These teachers primarily observed from the back of the classroom. Yet she repeatedly faced the same phenomenon – marked success with pupils in terms of engagement, but no buy-in on the teachers' part. They remained reluctant to lead drama activities themselves and follow-up e-mail contact yielded no reports from the teachers of incorporating IDTs into their lessons.

Rosler noted that these participants were mired in a school culture dictated by assessment, therefore facing challenges quite similar to those that Dawson described. Rosler mused, 'I think they were beaten down by the problems of public education ... they lacked the energy to try something new.' These teachers did not undergo the transformation Rosler herself or the teachers in the DFS programme had experienced. Despite her efforts to align drama with state standards, they continued to view IDTs as a something extra rather than a tool to weave into their core practice.

### ***Teacher questionnaire***

A needs analysis questionnaire was disseminated among FL secondary school teachers in the Netherlands in the spring of 2019 ( $n = 104$ ). This questionnaire provided input on the educational challenges to be addressed in the design of a PDP to galvanise teachers to implement IDTs (more) regularly, as well as which design principles the PDP must fulfil. The first items were intended to reveal the demographic context of respondents and to discover the current state of affairs regarding current use of and beliefs about IDTs. [Table 1](#) offers an overview of this information.

Teachers responded to a series of statements regarding possible challenges to integrating IDTs. The query as to whether teachers already felt they possessed the skills/training necessary to implement IDTs yielded a rather neutral response ( $M = 2.75$ ;  $SD = 1.22$ ). Responses revealed a only moderate concern that IDTs could cause classroom management problems ( $M = 2.24$ ;  $SD = 1.07$ ), and they were somewhat positive in their belief that pupils would want to do these activities ( $M = 3.55$ ;  $SD = 0.91$ ). Time seemed to be a barrier to IDT-use, yet there was substantial variation among respondents both in terms of preparation time and room in the curriculum:



**Table 1.** Context of respondents' teaching practice & beliefs on IDTs.

Questionnaire Item	Responses
1. Number of years teaching FL	$M = 14.8$
2. Languages taught	English: 39.4% French: 26% German: 25% Spanish: 2.9% Latin/Ancient Greek: 1.9% Combination of languages: 4.8%
3. Levels taught*	Lower & Upper Form: 51.9% Exclusively Lower Form: 32.9% Exclusively Upper Form: 13.5% Not stated: 1.9%
4. Frequency of IDT implementation.	Never: 14.4% Seldom (once a year): 23.1% Sometimes (3–4 times per year): 42.3% Often (about once a month): 12.1% Very Often: 6.7%
5a. IDTs have value in motivating pupils to speak the target language.*	$M = 4.15$ ( $SD = 0.91$ )
5b. I would like to implement IDTs more frequently.*	$M = 4.2$ ( $SD = 0.97$ )

\*In the Netherlands pupils are tracked into three different levels that prepare them for higher education at the vocational schools, applied science institutes or universities. As far as which languages are taught, English is required in each year of the Dutch secondary school curriculum. Most pupils take at least two years of French and German as well (Michel et al. 2021).

\*\*On a Likert scale of 1–5 (1 = completely disagree; 5 = completely agree).

- I currently have enough time to plan lessons with IDTs ( $M = 2.49$ ;  $SD = 1.13$ ).
- There is ample room in my curriculum to incorporate IDTs ( $M = 2.88$ ;  $SD = 1.22$ ).

Regarding their opinions on the content of the proposed PDP, teachers were given a list of possible components of the PDP sessions to rate. Respondents revealed that they most highly valued the components that involved active preparation to implement IDTs in their classrooms: trying out IDTs ( $M = 4.13$ ;  $SD = 0.99$ ); practicing leading IDTs ( $M = 4.22$ ,  $SD = 1$ ); exchanging ideas with fellow participants ( $M = 3.96$ ;  $SD = 0.95$ ); and adapting IDTs to own curriculum ( $M = 3.78$ ;  $SD = 1.19$ ). Also favourably viewed, but to a lesser degree, were components related to learning by example: discussing theory ( $M = 3.63$ ;  $SD = 1.1$ ) and observing video material ( $M = 3.69$ ;  $SD = 1.07$ ). This was the case as well for receiving feedback on their own IDT-implementation ( $M = 3.62$ ;  $SD = 1.18$ ).

Teachers were subsequently asked to rate a series of mechanisms that could further support them in integrating IDTs. Surpassing the other items in popularity was 'a collection of ready-made lesson ideas available on website' ( $M = 4.4$ ;  $SD = 0.86$ ); followed by 'a workshop at school for FL colleagues' ( $M = 3.54$ ;  $SD = 1.08$ ). The remaining 4 items scored relatively equally, namely 'periodic e-mails from the trainer with new ideas/encouragement' ( $M = 3.85$ ;  $SD = 1.09$ ); 'a social network with other participants' ( $M = 3.54$ ;  $SD = 1.08$ ); 'a refresher course several months after the PDP has ended' ( $M = 3.51$ ;  $SD = 1.2$ ); and 'on-the-job coaching from the trainer' ( $M = 3.42$ ;  $SD = 1.18$ ).

Teachers could also optionally provide responses to open questions with further recommendations for the PDP or other comments. Sixteen teachers commented on possible PDP content, seven expressed enthusiasm for the training and five posed questions. The dominant theme that emerged was a plea to link training content to the teaching practice. Multiple respondents mentioned the need for IDTs to relate to the curriculum, while some offered suggestions of connecting drama to grammar, literature or cross-curricular-

projects. A pragmatic approach also showed priority through comments such as ‘keep the realistic situation in mind, not the ideal.’ Taking pupil needs and characteristics into account also appeared to be a crucial consideration to some respondents, including age and behavioural issues. A voice of enthusiasm for IDTs furthermore emanated from the responses. Some teachers expressed clear interest in the PDP: ‘My goal is to teach Spanish through drama activities. I am very happy with this research’ or ‘When can I begin?’

## Discussion

The expert interviews and teacher questionnaire jointly sought an answer to the question: *What design principles must a professional development programme fulfil to effectively address educational challenges surrounding the integration of IDTs in the FL classroom?* The combination of the two data collection methods complemented insights from the literature review by offering (1) the perspective of trainers and researchers who, by conducting and studying (long-term) professional development, influenced the transformation of their participants by addressing educational challenges teachers face; and (2) the perspective of the teachers who provided opinions on challenges and how to address them from within the daily realities of the secondary school FL classroom.

The existing body of literature, expert interviews, and questionnaire respondents provide a collective foundation for a set of design principles, which can be classified under the themes Training Conditions, Teacher Mindset and School Environment. These principles will in turn be translated into prototype design criteria for a PDP for FL secondary school teachers in implementing IDTs to stimulate positive affective reactions and willingness to communicate among their pupils. [Table 2](#) indicates the theoretical underpinnings of these principles from literature, as well as their relationship with the interview and questionnaire results. Proposed characteristics for the PDP under design are stipulated in column two.

The current study showed that developing an effective teacher PDP requires careful design, as training teachers to implement drama appears to be a challenging matter. Both Rosler (2014) and Araki-Metcalf (2007) found that despite receiving training, reluctance persisted among their participating teachers. They aimed to galvanise participants to incorporate IDTs by having them observe the researchers lead guest lessons; yet even after extended periods of time, these teachers by and large remained unwilling to take the risk of integrating the techniques themselves. It may be that facilitating transformation among teachers requires time away from the classroom where they can build up a repertoire of IDTs they can implement into their existing curricula, as well as practicing with leading them in a low-pressure setting.

In relation to Training Conditions, a low-pressure setting could prove critical to the effectiveness of a PDP, as another challenge that emerged from this study was teachers’ perceived lack of ability to implement IDTs. This is likely a complex interplay of factors, including the need for: acquisition of new skills, confidence and a change of mindset. The degree to which these opinions reflect these various factors requires further inquiry. In his interview, Dönszelmann also commented on his participants’ initial lack of self-efficacy, necessitating longer-term training through which teachers could increasingly build autonomy. DFS programme leaders likewise heavily focused on **active**

**Table 2.** PDP design principles by theme.

Theme 1: Training Conditions		
Design Principle	Proposed Characteristics of PDP	Source
Focus on Active Learning	Trying out IDTs Practicing leading IDTs Incorporating IDTs into teaching practice	Questionnaire; Interviews (D, D&D, R <sup>a</sup> ); Bates and Morgan (2018); Borg (2018, 2011); Cain and Dixon (2013); Cawthon and Dawson (2009); Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017); Desimone and Garet (2015); Dönszelmann (2019); Dunn and Stinson (2011); Lee, Cawthon, and Dawson (2013); Ling and Mackenzie (2015); Lutzer (2022, 2007); Merchie et al. (2018); Popova et al. (2022); Rosler (2014)
Incorporation of Support Mechanisms	Engaging in social network with participants Receiving periodic e-mails from trainer Receiving complementary materials Participating in booster workshops	Questionnaire; Interview (D, D&D, R); Ag-Ahmad, Mohamed & Bakar (2022); Cawthon and Dawson (2009); Cawthon, Dawson, and Ihorn (2011); Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017); Desimone and Garet (2015); Dönszelmann et al. (2016); Dunn and Stinson (2011); Even (2020); Goodyear, Parker, and Casey (2019); Lee, Cawthon, and Dawson (2013); Hulse and Owens (2019); Popova et al. (2018)
Consideration Time-Related Factors	Long-term training with multiple meetings incorporated PDP tailored to limited planning/class time Considering timing of pupil exposure to IDTs	Questionnaire Interview (D, D&D); Bates and Morgan (2018); Cawthon and Dawson (2009); Cawthon, Dawson, and Ihorn (2011); Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017); Desimone and Garet (2015); Dönszelmann (2019); Dunn and Stinson (2011); Ling and Mackenzie (2015); Merchie et al. (2018); Rosler (2014); Stanton, Cawthon, and Dawson (2018)
Cultivation of Positive Group Composition & Dynamics	Engaging in coaching/co-teaching with trainer/participants Exchanging experiences	Borg (2011); Cawthon and Dawson (2009); Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017); Desimone and Garet (2015); Dönszelmann (2019); Dunn and Stinson (2011); Ling and Mackenzie (2015); Lutzer (2007); Merchie et al. (2018); Schaap and de Bruijn (2018); Vangrieken et al. (2017); Van Keulen et al. (2015)
<b>Theme 2: School Environment</b>		
Design Principle	Examples of Manifestations in PDP	Source
Coherence with Pupil Needs	Focusing on learning goals Adapting IDTs to pupils needs Discussing classroom management	Questionnaire Interviews (D, D&D, R); Cawthon, Dawson, and Ihorn (2011); Desimone and Garet (2015); Dunn and Stinson (2011); Fischer et al. (2018); Jensen et al. (2016); Lutzer (2007); Rosler (2014)
Coherence with School Curriculum & Goals	Adapting IDTs to curriculum Incorporating IDTs into teaching practice Giving workshops/fostering collaborations at school	Questionnaire; Interviews (D&D, R); Desimone and Garet (2015); Cawthon, Dawson, and Ihorn (2011); Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017); Dönszelmann (2019); Lee, Cawthon, and Dawson (2013); Ling and Mackenzie (2015); Lutzer (2007); Merchie et al. (2018); Popova et al. (2022); Rosler (2014); Schaap and de Bruijn (2018); Vangrieken et al. (2017); Van Keulen et al. (2015)
<b>Theme 3: Teacher Mindset</b>		
Design Principle	Examples of Manifestations in PDP	Source
Coherence with Teacher Beliefs	Reflecting individually (and creatively) & during sessions Discussing beliefs & creating links to theory	Questionnaire; Interview (D&D, D, R); Araki-Metcalf (2007); Borg (2018, 2011); Cain and Dixon (2013); Desimone and Garet (2015); Dönszelmann (2019); Lee, Cawthon, and Dawson (2013); Ling and Mackenzie (2015); Lutzer (2007); Rosler (2014)
Cultivation of Artistry	Discussing choice of materials Element of play encouraged	Interview (D&D, R); Cahnmann-Taylor and McGovern (2021); Cain and Dixon (2013); Dunn and Stinson

(Continued)

Table 2. Continued.

Theme 1: Training Conditions		
Design Principle	Proposed Characteristics of PDP	Source
	Use of body language encouraged	(2011); Even (2020); Hadjipanteli (2020); Hulse and Owens (2019); Lee, Cawthon, and Dawson (2013); Ling and Mackenzie (2015); Lutzer (2022, 2007); Piazzoli (2018); Rosler (2014)

<sup>a</sup>D refers to Dönszelmann; D&D refers to Dawson & Dossett; R refers to Rosler.

**learning** and a multiple-session training over an extended period of time, which they found led to autonomy among participants, a strategy well-supported by other studies related to teacher PDPs (e.g. Bates and Morgan 2018).

Also in terms of time-related factors, questionnaire respondents gave an unequivocal impression that they, in fact, *lack time* – both in planning activities and carrying them out. Dawson and Dossett, as well as Rosler, mentioned similar barriers. Yet literature and interviews collectively support PDPs that require a significant time commitment from teachers – to participate in the sessions themselves (e.g. Merchie et al. 2018) and to plan and implement activities learned during the training (e.g. Popova et al. 2022). This seeming conundrum calls for teachers who are ready to invest the time to create change, and for PDPs that are directly relevant to their teaching practice, with corresponding practical assistance with planning and support mechanisms outside of training sessions (e.g. Hulse and Owens 2019), including on-the-job mentoring and complementary materials.

A notable finding from literature was the importance of cultivating positive group composition and dynamics among participants. Multiple researchers focused on aspects of this principle, asserting that a PDP should foster openness and such opportunities as co-planning, exchanging classroom experiences, and collectively developing new ideas (e.g. Ling and Mackenzie 2015).

Regarding School Environment, teachers surveyed only showed moderate concern about their pupils’ needs, regarding whether their pupils would want to do the activities and the possibility of classroom management problems. These challenges were even less apparent in literature or interviews. While the importance of addressing pupil needs in PDPs was present in the literature (e.g. Jensen et al. 2016), as well as Rosler’s interview, the focus on pupils was largely related to drama as positive force to engage them rather than seen as a challenge (Cawthon and Dawson 2011).

One factor that emerged as universal in all three components of this study was the vital importance of creating coherence with the realities participating teachers face. Desimone and Garet (2015) found that PDPs were more likely to fail if not directly tied to the teaching practice, both as far as its relevance to the teacher’s individual classroom circumstances and school-wide curriculum and goals.

Dunn and Stinson (2011) nonetheless offer the caveat that responding to practical concerns is not sufficient. As mentioned above, Teacher Mindset must also be addressed. Dunn and Stinson (2011) mused that while incorporating curricular learning goals, for example, is essential, teachers must also discover how to do service to the dramatic tool they are wielding. This could be the renaissance of sorts to which Dawson referred during the interview – that teachers she trained sometimes felt ‘remade.’ Training cannot be a matter of simply teaching skills or imparting knowledge but also must be one of uncovering and possibly transforming teacher beliefs in relation to the content

of the PDP (e.g. Borg 2018). This is perhaps even more the case for a drama-related PDP in which teachers are asked to engage their imagination in the artistry of integrating drama as they experiment with IDTs (e.g. Cahnmann-Taylor and McGovern 2021), taking on roles from an astronaut to an angry flight attendant, and thereby exposing a more playful side of themselves.

When considering the impact of this study, limitations in the data collection methods must be acknowledged. The interviewees were carefully selected due to their relevance, with the American researcher/trainers representing differing approaches to drama training, and Dönszelmann's unique pre-eminence as an expert in FL teacher PD in the Netherlands. At the time this study was conducted these researchers emerged as key figures from the literature review who had conducted longitudinal studies on the characteristics of long-term professional development in language or drama. Yet interviews with additional experts in these fields could further enhance the collective understanding of how to address challenges when designing PDPs, particularly as an interview allows for a dialogue not afforded through an examination of their publications alone.

The questionnaire format also has inherent drawbacks in providing valid answers to the queries put forth by this study, and the sample size reflected in its results restricts the generalizability. This instrument, while efficient to complete and easy to disseminate widely, does not allow for further questioning from a researcher through which respondents could expand on challenges related to IDT-use, and how to address these challenges in a PDP. Interviews with teachers who provided their contact information can serve as a subsequent step in developing the PDP-prototype. Although efforts were made to reach a large cross-section of FL teachers throughout The Netherlands, this convenience sample nonetheless reflects only the opinions of teachers who showed sufficient interest in drama in the FL classroom to complete the questionnaire. While an online questionnaire facilitates efficient access to a wide geographic population, it remains an impersonal instrument, which may decrease interest in responding, or it may provide a skewed perspective, as those with an interest in drama might be more likely to respond than a more general cross-section of teachers. The reliability of the needs analysis could be augmented through a larger sample of FL teachers attained through, for example, random sampling (Dörnyei 2003) of teachers at Dutch secondary schools and beyond. Stakeholders, including teachers, researchers and school administrators from diverse geographical contexts, could furthermore be asked to evaluate the taxonomy of design principles developed during this study.

## Conclusion

Despite the limitations described above, the themes that emerged from questionnaire results reflect those found among experts interviewed and in existing literature. These combined findings provide ample evidence for a set of design principles upon which to build a prototype PDP in IDT training for FL teachers, a blueprint which appears not yet to exist in this field. This PDP will be tested in two iterative cycles in the Netherlands, and can be improved upon and adapted to diverse contexts. As studies from across the globe have revealed that drama techniques are universal in engendering positive affective reactions among students of all ages, an evidence-based PDP for teachers can facilitate successful implementation of such techniques in FL classrooms.

Teachers on a wide scale, after all, appear to believe that improvisational drama can benefit their FL learners; while training could serve as the catalyst for teachers to integrate IDTs into their repertoire, this study has shown that designing an effective PDP of this nature appears to be no simple matter. An effective PDP evidently calls for a symbiosis between practical considerations, namely the school environment and optimal training conditions, and the capacity to tap into a mindset among teachers that allows them to (re)discover core beliefs and carry out IDTs with artistry. The ultimate hope is that such teachers can inspire their pupils to take the 'deep breath and the leap' that Shanley (1992, 3) describes – whereby they become swept up in the drama and can communicate without inhibition in a foreign language. Perhaps on a later visit to a Parisian bakery such a pupil will be able to invoke the improvisation skills developed during high school French class, and not only be able to order *petit dejeuner* but even ask the shopkeeper, 'Voulez-vous dîner avec moi ce soir?'

## Notes

1. [https://dbp.theatredance.utexas.edu/teaching\\_strategies](https://dbp.theatredance.utexas.edu/teaching_strategies)
2. <https://journals.ucc.ie/index.php/scenario/article/view/scenario-15-1-1>.

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