

# **Chapter 4 : Online Application of Process Drama for L2 Teaching**

## **4.1 Introduction**

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 had a significant impact on educational systems globally, resulting in a swift transition towards online teaching-learning methods. As educators faced the difficulties presented by technology integration and remote education, innovative approaches to engage and motivate students in virtual classrooms became imperative. The integration of experiential and immersive learning approaches, such as Drama in Education (DIE), presented a potential opportunity to address the unique demands of online pedagogy.

During this unprecedented period, practitioners of DIE began to explore online platforms as a means of developing resilience, regulating positive emotions, promoting social integration, and engaging with arts and literature. As an active participant in these communities, I immersed myself in the utilization of drama conventions and process drama within digital environments. The hands-on involvement, along with the urgent requirement for creative instructional pedagogy, gave me the assurance to undertake the initial case study in an online format.

This chapter examines the efficacy of DIE for L2 teaching and learning in the context of online learning. The research was initially designed as a conventional offline study conducted in physical classrooms. However, it was adapted in response to the prolonged lockdowns and school closures necessitated by the pandemic. The subsequent shift to virtual instruction

prompted a reassessment of teaching approaches and a reconsideration of how drama-based practices can be applied in an online setting.

The primary objective of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the rationale, design, implementation, and outcomes of an online intervention program centred on DIE. Utilising qualitative research methods, including semi-structured interviews with learners and parents, as well as facilitator observation and field notes, this study attempts to understand perceptions regarding the online application of DIE for L2 learning and assess the adaptability and efficacy of conducting DIE sessions in virtual mode.

To provide a comprehensive analysis, this chapter begins by outlining the contextual background that led to the transition to online learning and the subsequent necessity to develop innovative pedagogical methods. Subsequently, the study's objective and literature review of the previous researches using drama in online mode has been presented. The chapter then elucidates the methodology employed for conducting the intervention program, data collection and analysis. It also consists of a framework for using online platforms such as WhatsApp and Zoom to deliver process drama-based sessions.

## 4.2 Case Study I

Online application of DIE for L2 teaching form the case study one of the thesis. It addresses the following key research questions:

Q1. How did the participants perceive the impact of the drama intervention in an L2 classroom?

Q2. What are the parents' perceptions regarding the online process drama for L2 learning?

Q3. What is the pedagogical potential of conducting online process drama for L2 learning?

Q4. What issues and challenges does the facilitator face while conducting online process drama for L2 learning?

#### 4.2.1 Previous Studies on Drama in Education in Online Mode

Cziboly and Bethlenfalvy (2020) highlight that online platforms offer a versatile means of delving into urgent issues through the medium of drama. This aligns with the researchers' observations that drama serves as a tool for exploring urgent topics and contributes to cultivating a more conducive learning environment in online education. Furthermore, the utilisation of online drama emerges as a facilitator for learners, promoting the enhancement of their imaginative capacities and reflective abilities.

Examining the shift from an offline to an online format for an English as a foreign language course, Puskas (2021) explores the challenges and transformations involved. The study attempts to understand the issues related to implementation and investigates shifts in learners' attitudes and performance by analysing attendance, engagement in activities, and test outcomes. The findings indicate that certain activities, such as mingling and sculpting, posed challenges in the online mode. However, activities like mirroring, miming, teacher narrative, role play, hot-seating, and improvisation seamlessly adapted to the online context, demonstrating effectiveness with participants. Notably, the study observes that the shift to online learning did not result in a significant drop in attendance.

Göksel and Abraham (2022) offer a reflective account of using drama online and seek to advocate for the creative potential and the pressing necessity of incorporating drama into online

teaching. Their argument revolves around the idea that fostering drama in digital spaces plays a vital role in maintaining the relevance of the arts. They contend that this connection between technological advancements and creativity opens up novel and engaging avenues for artistic expression. Additionally, they have also claimed that in some instances, the conduction of drama in online mode proves to be more beneficial than in offline mode, such as giving autonomy to learners to rearrange their own space and allowing participants from different parts of the world to participate.

González Becerra and del Río Alcalá (2022) highlight how adopting a theatre-based activity to an online format fostered competence development in learners. Despite the absence of physical presence, learners enhanced communicative competence through orality practices, genre exploration, and multimodal strategies. Exploring pandemic experiences and cultural representation developed intercultural competence while reframing meaning in the target language honed symbolic competence. Creating a secure online space allowed playful engagement, fostering humour, peer interaction, and role assumption in a shared dramatic fiction. Furthermore, the developments in virtual worlds, artificial intelligence, graphics, and simulation have positively impacted the virtual process drama simulations (El-Nasr et al. 2008).

#### 4.2.2 Methodology

The study has been conducted using qualitative research methods. For the data collection procedure, we employed semi-structured interviews with the participants. Moreover, facilitator-cum-researcher recorded observation and field notes to understand the pedagogical

potential of conducting online Drama in Education for L2 teaching and challenges associated with it.

### **Participants and Context of the Study**

The intervention program was conducted in September 2020 when the pandemic was ongoing and schools were being shifted to online mode. We circulated a Google Form through WhatsApp and Facebook with a brief text about the workshop. From 38 entries, we selected six participants that belonged to the target grades. Demographic details of the participants are given in Table 4.1.

*Table 4.1: Demographic Details of the Participants*

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Class</b>	<b>Location</b>
Learner 1 (LR1)	M	VI	Kerala
Learner 2 (LR2)	F	VII	Delhi
Learner 3 (LR3)	M	VII	Kerala
Learner 4 (LR4)	F	VI	Kerala
Learner 5 (LR5)	F	VII	Uttar Pradesh
Learner 6 (LR6)	F	VI	Kerala

In this study, we collected feedback from the parents of participating students. Recognising that the learning sessions occurred in a virtual setting from the students' homes, we felt it essential to capture the parent's viewpoint post the workshop. Table 4.2 presents the demographic details of the parents.

*Table 4.2: Demographic Details of the Participants' Parents*

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Educational Background</b>	<b>Location</b>
Parent 1 (PT1)	F	Pursuing PhD in Hindi	Kerala
Parent 2 (PT2)	F	Homemaker (Graduate)	Delhi
Parent 3 (PT3)	F	Homemaker (Graduate)	Kerala
Parent 4 (PT4)	F	Pursuing PhD in Sociology	Kerala
Parent 5 (PT5)	F	Government Employee in Academics	Uttar Pradesh
Parent 6 (PT6)	F	Government Employee in Administration	Kerala

### **Procedure of the Study**

The intervention program commenced with an introductory session, prioritising student interaction and familiarity with the pedagogical approach and terminologies associated with

DIE sessions. Subsequently, from the second day onward, our focus shifted to the primary objective of language teaching. Medium of instruction in the intervention program was English. I, as researcher cum facilitator, kept recording the observation and field notes each day in my research diary. Upon the completion of the workshop, we gathered feedback from students through semi-structured interviews. The study also attempts to examine the perception towards DIE for L2 learning. Therefore, we also collected feedback from the parents. We conducted both feedback sessions through Zoom video calls. The semi-structured interview schedule employed for data collection is given below.

### *Question for Students*

1. How was your overall experience of the workshop?
2. What did you like the most in the workshop?

### *Question for Parents*

1. How was your experience observing your child taking part in the workshop?
2. Our main focus was to teach a second language, including grammar skills. Did you see any language growth in your child?
3. What do you want to say about our teaching style?

It is noteworthy to mention that the active participants in the workshop were exclusively students. Parents were allowed to observe their child's learning process, however, their active participation during the intervention sessions was precluded. This strategy was designed to get the views of parents acting solely as observers. Subsequently, the collection of feedback from

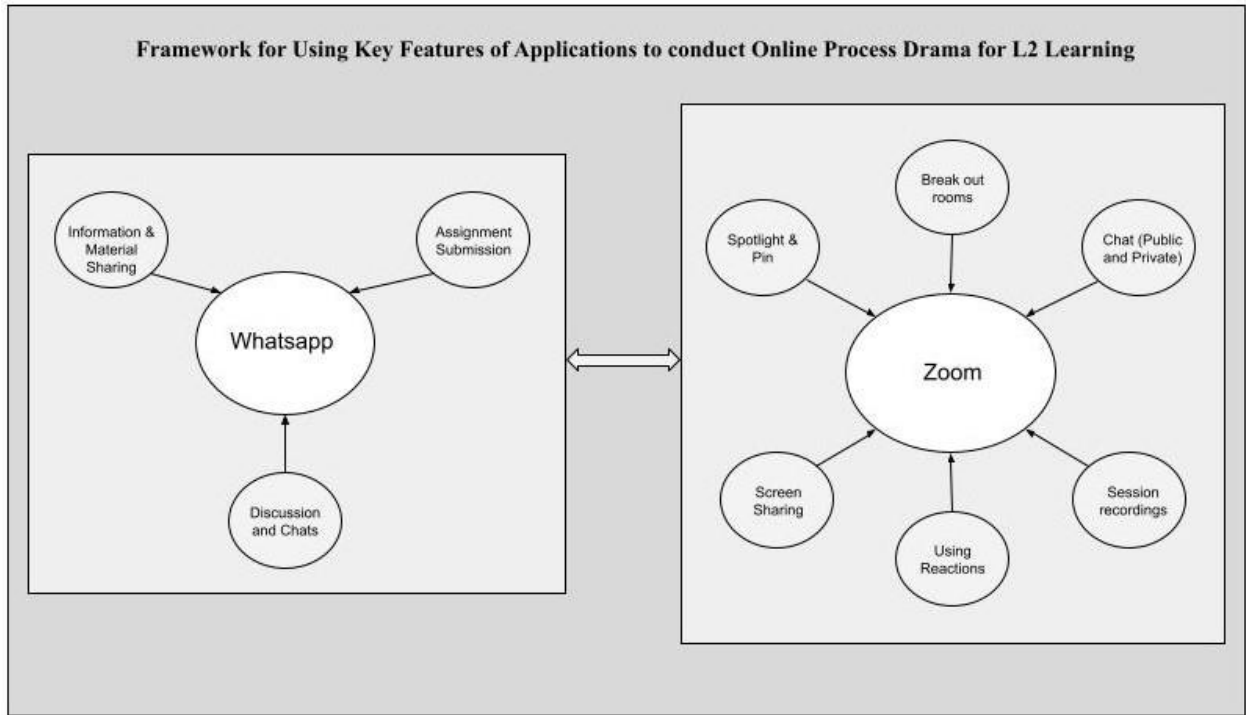
parents, framed within the context of their role as observers, became a crucial part of the research design.

The decision to forbid parents from actively participating in the intervention sessions was made with the intention of keeping the emphasis on the children's hands-on involvement in the workshop exercises. This role-drawing made it evident how the experiences of the parents, who played the role of observers, and the students, who were fully engaged in the learning process, differed.

### **Framework for Using WhatsApp and Zoom to Conduct Online DIE for L2 Learning**

We developed the framework to make online process drama possible. I had prior experience of working in an online mode, with the software like Zoom, Google Meet and Team. After careful consideration, we decided to develop a framework integrating WhatsApp and Zoom applications for conducting the classes. Synchronous online teaching, facilitated by video conferencing systems like Zoom, has emerged as a prevalent method of remote instruction in an L2 classroom (Cheung, 2021). Göksel and Abraham (2022) have also used Zoom as a platform for conducting DIE sessions and claim Zoom to be the most dynamic among other online platforms for their use. Cziboly and Bethlenfalvy (2020) have also used Zoom to successfully conduct process drama in online mode. Additionally, the use of WhatsApp in online teaching has emerged as a valuable tool especially in an L2 classroom. There are various researchers who have used WhatsApp and found it useful in online learning (Binti Mistar & Embi, 2016; Haron et al., 2021; Tragant et al., 2022). WhatsApp was mainly used for assignment submission, discussions and chats, and information and material sharing, whereas Zoom was used primarily for conducting the session activities. Generally, Zoom is used during

a session and WhatsApp is used pre and post-session. However, sometimes WhatsApp can be used during the Zoom session as well (refer to figure 4.1).



*Figure 4.1:* Framework for Using WhatsApp and Zoom to Conduct Online DIE for L2 Learning

### **Workshop Schedule**

The intervention program was conducted in fifteen days. We allotted 90 minutes for each session. Each day we explored a new topic with a new learning objective. Table 4.3 exhibits the workshop schedule with topic, learning objectives and key drama techniques used in every session.

Table 4.3: Workshop Schedule

<b>Session No.</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Learning objectives</b>	<b>Key drama techniques</b>
1	Introduction	To make students familiar with the teaching-learning practice of process drama, to make them acquainted with each other and to set the clear expectation from the workshop	Narration, mime and roleplay
2	Conversation	To make them adapt to communicating and doing group and individual exercises in online set-up	Role on the wall, mime, and improvisation
3	Speaking	To understand the utility of DIE in developing speaking skills	Unfinished material, roleplay, and mantle of the expert
4	Listening	To understand the utility of DIE in developing listening skills	Announcement, teacher in role, improvisation, and soliloquy
5	Reading	To understand the utility of DIE in developing reading skills	Narration, storytelling, and tongue twister games
6	Writing	To understand the utility of DIE in developing writing skills	Teacher in role, roleplay, and writing in role
7	Vocabulary	To understand the utility of DIE in developing vocabulary	Video-stimulated brainstorming, teacher in role, and mantle of the expert

8	Accuracy	To understand the utility of DIE in developing accuracy	Audio-narration, imitation, teacher in role, and monologue
9	Parts of speech	To introduce students with different concepts of Parts of Speech	Auto-image, sculpting, and roleplay
10	Parts of speech	To make students understand the different functions on Noun and Pronoun	Role in the bag, teacher in role, improvisation, and single dialogue
11	Parts of speech	To make students understand the different functions on Verb and Adverb	Circle of life, drawing, and mantle of the expert
12	Tense	To introduce students with the concept and role of tense	Meeting, still image, teacher in role, and improvisation
13	Tense	To introduce students with the concepts of present tense, past tense and future tense	Sculpting, monologue, and roleplay
14	Tense	To introduce students to different types of present tense, past tense and future tense	Role on the wall, narration, improvisation, and mantle of the expert
15	Revision	To recapitulate the key learnings from the workshop	Single dialogue with action, alter ego, and improvisation

## **Data Analysis Procedure**

We analysed the interview data using QDA Miner Lite. Individually, we labelled sentences with different codes. Subsequently, we discussed and reached a mutual understanding to finalise common codings. First-order codes revealed common themes, and we established these themes through mutual agreement. Charmaz (2006) emphasises the importance of researchers in the coding process, stressing its iterative and reflective nature. Creswell and Creswell (2017) stress the involvement of researchers in coding as part of the qualitative research process.

Regarding the data obtained through observation and field notes, the facilitator cum researcher employed the reflection and interpretation technique of analysis. In qualitative research, reflection and interpretation play a vital role because they offer depth, context, and theoretical frameworks that facilitate the comprehension of subjectivity, complexity and creating rich, legitimate, and practically applicable insights (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Van Manen, 2023). Another researcher conducted member checking on the facilitator cum researchers' reflection and interpretation. Member checking as a means of validation becomes important in qualitative studies to analyse the observation and field notes because it ensures trustworthiness (Shenton, 2004; Birt et al. 2016). These data analysis procedures provided a comprehensive analysis, shaping the content presented in the results and analysis section.

### **4.2.3 Results and Analysis**

#### **Analysis of the Learners' Feedback**

The Drama in Education, grounded in pedagogy for experiential learning, immerses learners in diverse situations, facilitating their comprehension of the language inherent in these

scenarios. Consequently, it becomes essential to understand their perspectives on the intervention program. The insights obtained from learners' feedback data provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of online Drama in Education. The subsequent subsections systematically present and analyse the viewpoints of the learners.

### ***Learners' Experience with Pedagogy***

The learners exhibited a favourable disposition toward the pedagogical approach, with five out of six participants expressing a positive attitude. Engaging in various activities as part of the language learning tasks likely fostered a sense of active participation among the students. Below is what the learners had to say about this.

*"...in this workshop, we used to move and do some exercise and drama. It was kind of refreshing for me."* (LR6, Female, Class VI, Kerala)

*"In school, the English teacher only taught things like Adjectives and Prepositions but, you teacher, teach us through activities. I wish we get a chance to have classes like this in our school."* (LR2, Female, Class VI, Delhi)

Both feedbacks highlight that learning through activities fosters increased enthusiasm among students, maximising their opportunities to enhance language skills. Notably, one participant articulated a sense of ownership within the class.

*"I felt that I am contributing to the activities. It was a nice feeling for me."* (LR5, Female, Class VII, Uttar Pradesh)

Three learners conveyed a sense of joy in their language learning experiences with L2 through drama techniques. Feedback such as, “...*I didn't feel that how sixteen days has passed*”, offers insights into how students perceived the joyful aspect of language learning facilitated by the Drama in Education.

### ***Growth in Learners' Linguistic Skills***

Two out of six learners mentioned that they were able to learn language, specifically grammar concepts through the workshop. It is worth noting that while the workshop focused on second language acquisition, the feedback related to language growth appears relatively limited. Considering that students were likely encountering DIE for the first time, their feedback predominantly centered around the teaching style rather than explicit language learning. Additionally, there was no explicit test to measure language growth.

### ***Growth in Learners' Skill Related to Affective Domain***

In a conventional classroom setting, students typically engage in individual tasks with limited opportunities for interaction during these tasks. Their interactions are generally motivated by personal comfort, leading them to communicate only with peers they find familiar. This problem gets even worse when the classes are conducted online. However, in the online DIE class, observations suggest that students quickly integrated and started expressing their opinions as the workshop unfolded.

“*When we first came, I was a little bit shy. Now there is no problem.*” (LR1, Male, Class VI, Kerala)

*“First, I was hesitant to speak. I could only speak if anybody asked me. Then after 2-3 days, I started speaking well in the activities.”* (LR5, Female, Class VII, Uttar Pradesh)

Their feedback suggests that DIE helped students enhance their confidence in the L2 classroom. They mentioned experiencing a sense of ownership, which led them to actively contribute to the progress of the lesson. Moreover, their motivation to participate in the activities increased as the workshop progressed.

### **Analysis of the Parents’ Feedback**

Learners participated in the workshop from their home, therefore the parents had the opportunity to observe their child engaging in meaningful activities. Parents reported that learners discussed the activities performed during the workshop with them. Therefore insights derived from parents’ feedback provide valuable perspective. The following subsections thematically present parents’ perception on the applicability and efficacy of the practice in an online space.

#### ***Parents Perception on Pedagogy***

The parents exhibited a positive attitude towards pedagogy, regarding the dynamic nature of DIE for L2 teaching as effective and desirable. Additionally, they perceived the practice compatible with the learners’ behaviour.

*“She gained so much. Earlier I had sent her to some spoken class and in some other classes too but she just learnt grammar and nothing else. In this class, on this platform it was done in a way that you don’t teach Grammar but through activities, stories and rhymes. Whatever was*

*taught she understood everything and whatever conversation was happening it was very useful for her.” (PT2, New Delhi)*

While comparing with the regular method followed in her child’s school, the parent highlights the utility of DIE in teaching second language effectively, specifically putting emphasis on use of the task-oriented activities. In another feedback, one parent shares her perspective taking the pandemic situation into the account:

*“And about teaching methods, yeah...it’s interesting. Different. Good. I will recommend this workshop to other kids too. Because it is interesting as well as it is good for them. In this period often they don’t get the opportunity to speak. They don’t see their friends. They are taking only lessons and one-way method of teaching is going on. So it is better they get something like this in between.” (PT1, Kerala)*

In this context, the parent underscores the static nature of the traditional pedagogy when translated into an online mode. She stresses the use of drama strategies over the traditional method particularly due to its dynamic nature. Due to the lockdown caused by the pandemic, the interaction between the students was reduced. In the aforementioned feedback, the parents highlight the efficacy of the drama strategies in creating opportunities for interaction in the adverse times.

### ***Skills Related to Affective Domain***

In this context, parents primarily addressed the improvement in their children’s motivation and confidence. Researchers widely discuss the importance of these two in the improvement of

language, thereby making them essential elements in second language classrooms. Noticeably, five out of six cases reported a noticeable enhancement in motivation.

*“He is very interested, especially at 4 o’ clock. Amma, now the time starts. Haha... Today he was playing and he came back. Amma, time is 4 o’ clock.”* (PT3, Kerala)

The provided feedback highlights the parents’ observation on the motivation levels of learners attending the second language class through drama pedagogy. During this feedback, the parents share a light-hearted moment, laughing a bit, as they find it amusing to witness the significant change in their child. Noticeably, there was a pleasant satisfaction expressed by the parent who observes her child’s self-motivation to attend the class.

*“She keeps on talking about the activities even after the session is over. Also, she was talking about language. Usually she does not talk about language, even though she is good at English. This was new for me to have a conversation with her about language.”* (PT6, Kerala)

At certain instances, parents reported the enhancement in confidence of the learners. A parent from Uttar Pradesh mentions about the instrumental role of drama, stating, *“The workshop has given her the confidence to speak up.”* Another parent from Kerala expresses, *“Now he is comfortable talking in English with other people and he is very comfortable speaking with other people”*. This feedback demonstrates the utility of the practice in developing confidence among L2 learners.

### ***Growth in Social Skills***

Drama offers various advantages in the classroom, with the development of social skills being one of its key benefits. Scholars have extensively studied the acquisition of social skills in

language classrooms. In two out of six cases, feedback indicates that learners were able to develop their socialisation skill through the incorporation of drama in L2 classroom.

*“The best thing is...he was a very shy type. Now he is feeling comfortable talking to other people.”* (PT3, Kerala)

This feedback exhibits how drama served as a positive force, empowering a shy learner to feel at ease while interacting with other learners. This underscores the utility of drama in accommodating learners with diverse behavioural traits. Similarly, feedback from a parent of a child who was curious in his behaviour also aligns with this observation.

*“Also I think she was interested to interact with the children from the other states. It was my first time interacting with children from other states.”* (PT4, Kerala)

Based on feedback from her parents, it appears that LR4, a naturally interested kid, benefitted from drama techniques in the L2 classroom. Drama allowed her inquisitive nature to be accommodated and made it easier for her to interact socially with other students.

### ***Growth in Linguistic Skills***

Given the limited exposure of students to this instructional method and the brief 15-day workshop duration, parents did not explicitly mention the growth in their English language proficiency in the feedback. However, the parents did highlight that the students had the opportunity to learn and practice their language lessons.

*“I don’t find any improvement in him in his English like that. It is not possible to do, umm, better English in fifteen days. But even he is trying to speak in English with you people. He is*

*trying to speak. He is not using his mother tongue at least for these two hours. That's good."*

(PT1, Kerala)

Here, the parents seem to be happy about the fact that he got the opportunity to speak in English, and he is motivated to speak, which is ultimately beneficial for his language growth. In another case, we observe a parent mentioning the prospect of growth due to the opportunities she got to speak English.

*"Actually for 1.5 hour-2 hours it was fully in English, so I think it would help to improve her language and also she started to interact in English and also it has improved the listening capacity also."* (PT4, Kerala)

In this instance, the parent highlights how drama can help children develop their vocal abilities and improve their listening comprehension. Additionally, the parents communicated that continued use of this approach may result in gains in language skills.

### 4.3 Teachers' Observation on Conducting Process Drama in Online Mode for L2 Teaching

#### **Drama and Language Exercises Using Zoom**

The participants demonstrated a profound engagement with the process drama, which blurred the distinction between online and offline DIE sessions for the facilitator.

The screen-sharing feature within Zoom emerged as a valuable tool for facilitators, fostering creative participation among attendees. Using screen-sharing and a whiteboard feature, we showed the words and sentences students articulated in the session by overtly writing them on

board. Based on those sentences, we explained the concepts and the function of those concepts. One important thing which was observed was that students understood and articulated the function of the linguistic concepts even if they did not articulate the concept. Zoom proved to be a versatile platform supporting various elements of the process, such as pre-recorded audio narration, audio-visual narration, music integration, role on the wall, and report writing. The software's highlight feature strategically directed attention to individual participants, which contributed to a focused and dynamic learning environment. Within separate Zoom rooms, they skillfully executed group improvisations, capitalizing on the private chat feature for tactful communication during pair work, which improved subsequent performances.

The dynamic utilisation of Zoom sustained students' interest and provided a flexible platform for diverse activities, including recording sessions. This recording feature served as a valuable resource for facilitators, facilitating post-session reflection and assessment, which enhanced the overall effectiveness of the instructional approach.

### ***Nature of Teacher-Student Interaction***

Teacher-student interaction in the online setting occurred through diverse methods. The breakout room feature facilitated one-to-one engagement, enabling private conversations between the teacher and individual students. Additionally, the teacher could communicate with all group members in the regular mode. The online DIE classroom presented distinct dynamics in teacher-student conversations compared to traditional DIE classrooms. Challenges such as network connectivity issues and suboptimal audio quality from students' devices prompted an increase in written communication. Additionally, the facilitator had to adjust the speech pace for effective communication with students.

### *Nature of Student-Student Interaction*

Despite the absence of physical presence, students had diverse communication channels. The private chat feature allowed careful conversations between students, ensuring privacy. Additionally, interactions flowed smoothly during rehearsals for in-role activities and out-of-role discussions. Expressive reactions such as raising hands, applause and using emojis like claps and hearts facilitated organised and engaging discussions. Students' interaction remained focused and energetic throughout the intervention program.

### *Online Process Drama Can Become Truly Intercultural*

The online platform offers opportunities for collaboration with learners globally. In the intervention, participants hailed from diverse regions in India including Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, and Kerala, each with distinct cultural backgrounds. Engaging in interactions and co-creating activities provided a platform for understanding and appreciating each other's cultures. This approach can be extended to attract learners worldwide, enabling the creation of studies that support cross-cultural learning opportunities.

## 4.4 Issues and Challenges

### **Lack of Physical Presence Made the Make-Believe Process More Challenging**

In a physical drama session, participants experience fewer barriers to interaction in comparison to online sessions. However, in the intervention program, where communication and activities were conducted virtually, the potential for misunderstanding and misinterpretation increased. As a result, the make-believe process became increasingly challenging. Nevertheless, facilitator's effective communication encouraged student engagement in activities, which

made it easier for them to immerse themselves in the make-believe process. Conversely, students capitalised on the advantage of being at home, using available artefacts and materials resourcefully to enhance the believability of the pretend scenarios.

### **Network Connectivity Breaks the Flow**

A significant challenge emerged from disparities in participants' network connections, leading to inconsistent audio experiences characterised by delayed voices. Additionally, network connectivity issues necessitated joining and rejoining the Zoom meeting. Moreover, internet speed variations among participants further resulted in mismatches during synchronous activities, such as those involving rhythm, clapping, and sound harmony. Given the smaller number of students in the workshop, the impact was manageable, but scalability might present more difficulties with more participants.

### **Facilitator's Adaptability Was Challenged**

The facilitator, accustomed to working with students physically, encountered challenges adapting or creating new drama activities suitable for online education. A trial-and-error method was required to achieve the intended results. Students occasionally improvised in the virtual environment, changing how activities were supposed to be carried out. Therefore, providing instructions in a virtual setting presented difficulties and raised the possibility of misunderstandings. As a result, the facilitator's plans frequently needed to be modified, requiring a delicate balance between intervention to move the conversation in the right direction and adaptability to account for last-minute changes.

## **Students' Lack of Virtual Resource Was the Biggest Hurdle**

Since all the students could not have the same level of technical resources, the process became difficult to implement effectively. For instance, differences in devices with some students using smartphones, impacted the activities' effectiveness. Users of mobile phones could only see four people at a time, while users of computers could see a larger group. Even with efforts to modify exercises for smaller groups, some required the entire group to be significantly effective. There were also audio connectivity issues, especially when students moved away from their computers during an activity. Due to this movement, voice quality and volume were reduced. Some students could manage this through wireless headsets, but the researchers could not guarantee that every participant had one.

## **4.5 Conclusion**

In this study, we explored the possibility of conducting DIE in online mode, especially for L2 teaching and learning. To achieve this goal, we developed a framework to use online platforms such as WhatsApp and Zoom to conduct DIE classes. We also employed the process drama-based framework presented in Chapter III to execute the sessions. By analysing the feedback received by the learners and their parents, as well as through observation and field notes, we found that DIE positively impacted students' linguistic, social and affective skills. The practice of process drama in online space helped learners enhance their language competence, motivation and confidence. Additionally, it helped learners develop healthier relationships with each other and with the facilitator. This investigation augments the extant literature on language learning through drama-based methods, reaffirming prior findings regarding the

efficacy of DIE in advancing language skills. Furthermore, the study sheds light on integrating technology-mediated performative teaching practices.

While the online case study presented in this chapter remained at an exploratory level, it served as a foundational stepping stone for the subsequent offline studies conducted once the lockdown measures were revoked. Despite the inherent challenges posed by the virtual setting, the online case studies provided invaluable practical experience and insights that proved instrumental in shaping the design and execution of the subsequent offline studies. The adaptability and creativity demonstrated in navigating the limitations of online learning environments laid the groundwork for the successful implementation of DIE interventions in physical classrooms.

Overall, this study highlights the potential of employing DIE in virtual spaces as a practical and effective approach to L2 instruction. Incorporating online DIE into language education enables educators to establish immersive and interactive learning environments, developing enhanced language proficiency and social and affective skills among students. Additionally, while the online case studies served as a preliminary exploration of Drama in Education in virtual settings, their findings and experiences laid a solid foundation for the subsequent offline studies which are discussed in the subsequent chapter.