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by

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## INVESTIGATING TRUST IN A MULTILINGUAL THEATRE PROJECT: POTENTIALITIES FOR A HUMANISING PEDAGOGY

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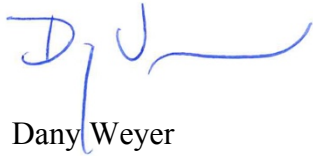
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## Statement

This work has not been previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.



Dany Weyer

December 17, 2018

## Abstract

Education plays a vital role in shaping social realities by promoting dialogue, solidarity, mutual understanding, and positive social interactions. However, some pedagogical approaches are believed to not shoulder the responsibility to counter current social, economic, and political forces in Europe and beyond that present challenges in terms of social cohesion and ways of living together. This study contributes to recent debates concerning a change of dominant school practices by recognising learning and teaching as collaborative processes between teachers and students and trust as a central element in education. Despite the interest in and positive appraisal of trust in education, little attention has been paid to concrete teaching practices and strategies on how to implement trust in learning and teaching. A case study of a multilingual theatre project of a primary school class and a video ethnographic approach allowed to explore details of classroom practices, (inter-)actions, and activities. This research set out to explore four questions: (a) What are “signs of trust” in an educational context?; (b) How and in what ways can a teacher build, maintain, or strengthen trust?; (c) How and in what ways can “signs of trust” shape interactions in the classroom?; (d) How can “signs of trust” be analysed?

As a result of more than 80 hours of video-recorded participant observations and interview data, the results of this investigation show that the classroom teacher continuously and consistently maintained a work environment based on six attributes of trust identified in the literature: vulnerability, benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. Most importantly, she valued and promoted responsibility, autonomy, collaboration, and peer support. The teacher’s verbal and non-verbal trustworthy and trusting behaviour is then interpreted as the driving force behind the pupils’ engagement as active, competent, and reliable partners in all aspects of the theatre project. In fact, the pupils signalled ownership of their learning, proactively and independently engaged with the curriculum, and positively oriented towards each other’s relationships and competences.

Despite the exploratory nature and small sample of participants, the findings of this study highlight that education imbued with trust offers opportunities of growth for both teachers and students. Moreover, the data suggests that the achievement and maintenance of trust can be seen as a collaborative effort involving all members of the classroom community and facilitated by a myriad of meaning-making resources (verbal, non-verbal, with objects, even a simple look in the eye or a smile). If the debate about the value of trust for all learners is to be moved forward, a better understanding of the wider impacts on personal and social lives needs to be gained.

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## Preface

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Excerpt field notes [31.05.2017]

The pupils are nervous, so am I. In the dressing room, everyone is bustling around, breathing out loudly. Rowan puts on his bow tie, Alain adds whiskers to his make-up, Ella stretches out her wings on her back. In the room next door, the princesses' hair is styled. At the same time, Sarah, the classroom teacher, and Stefanie, the theatre pedagogue, try to maintain an overview and get everyone ready for the big show that starts in thirty minutes.



The pupils' dressing room

[31.05.2017]



Last preparations (make-up and hairstyling)

[31.05.2017]

After seven months of planning, writing, and rehearsing, the final performance of the classroom community on May 31, 2017 marked the end of a long journey that this thesis is about. Shortly before the pupils hid behind the stage curtains and made themselves ready for their stage appearance, Sarah reminded them that they have done a lot of work that they should be proud of.

**Sarah:**

*dir hutt souvill geschafft [...] SOUvill (--)* an dir kennt elo stolz sinn ob dat wat dir haut presentéiert

**Pupils** ((several voices)):

*merci Joffer (-) merci:: [...]*

**Sarah:**

you have worked so much [...] SO much (--)

 and you can be proud of what you will present today

**Pupils** ((several voices)):

thank you teacher (-) thank you:: [...]

**Sarah:**

[...] dir hutt sou vill geschafft dir kennt dat sou gutt (-) lo ass et wichteg dass dir Spaass hutt (--)  
wann dir Freed drun hutt wat dir maacht dann huet Publikum och Freed drun

**Sarah:**

[...] you have worked so much you can do it so good (-) now it's important that you have fun (--)  
when you enjoy what you do then the audience will have fun as well

[31.05.2017]

As a last ritual before going on stage, all the pupils formed a circle, joined hands, and screamed “toi toi toi”. Then, Sarah and Stefanie took a seat in the audience where around eighty other spectators – family members, friends, and other supporters – waited for the performance to start.

Excerpt field notes [31.05.2017]

The pupils are doing well. They are concentrated, support each other if needed, improvise, stay in character, smile, dance, and seem to have fun on stage. The end, and success, of the performance is celebrated with a loud and long applause of the audience.



The classroom community on stage at the end of their performance

[31.05.2017]

After the performance, some audience members praise both the pupils and their teacher. For some, it was a “very good”, “beautiful”, “amazing”, “cool”, and “funny” performance. For others, it was a “great and successful achievement” that they would have “a lot of respect for”. For one audience member, it was even the “best theatre play [he] has ever seen”. Many parents stand next to the stage, thank the teacher, hug their children and take pictures of them in their costumes.

Excerpt field notes [31.05.2017]

The moment I enter the dressing room after the performance, I hear Océane telling her fellow pupils: “I am proud of you”. Others add: “Good job everyone!”. [...] I am wondering about the common work that the classroom community has done in the last months. Overall, it has been a learning endeavour that demanded and built on a strong team spirit, supportiveness, motivation, courage, and endurance. How did all this happen? In what ways did the learning experience unfold? And most importantly, what was the successful work based on?

## Chapter 1 › Introduction

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“As a teacher you have a choice: you can either bring light or shadow to your students.” These are the words Judith Rogers from the Educational Leadership Department at Miami University shared with me during a workshop session at a conference on the topic of “creating human bonds” in 2017. It was maybe the metaphorical language Rogers used that made me stop and think about the deeper meaning of her remark. It may also have been the time and place in which this incident unfolded – during a conference on dialogue, human community, and education – that led me to reflect on the words. In some way, her comment has had a substantial influence on this study for three main reasons.

First, Rogers’ phrase highlights the essential role of the person in the role of the teacher, her or his human qualities and professional skills and practices. Second, the sentence underlines the sustained impact a teacher may have on her or his students. Third, and within a broader context, it points out to the responsibility of education in general and the fact that the classroom is among one of the first communities a child belongs to (Christensen & Aldridge 2013). In this respect, the teacher’s choices and pedagogical approaches may deeply affect the students’ learning as well as their present and future academic and also personal life. Therefore, a teacher may, indeed, bring positive or negative effects and sustainable experiences or, in other words, light or shadow. In what ways, then, may a teacher bring light? This is where this study seeks to make a contribution.

I investigate in this study concrete practices of a teacher who built rapport with her pupils and created and maintained a classroom environment in which the community learned about and experienced in interactions the value of trust and trusting relationships. In this context, this thesis is about the potentialities of learning and teaching with trust for both teachers



and pupils. I focus on a so-called humanising approach to education that recognises learning and teaching as reciprocal processes in which teachers and students may engage in an active and participatory way and learn and teach in collaboration. For some scholars, this is a much-needed pedagogical approach in today's educational landscape.

Aden (2014), for example, writes about the vital role of empathy and cooperation in learning and teaching. She claims that “today's education still reflects an industrial, consumption-driven civilization where one must acquire knowledge in order to serve one's own material needs and where cooperation is viewed as cheating” (*ibid.*, p. 1). This observation is in line with scholars across disciplines who advocate for a change of perspective and praxis in learning and teaching. Advocates of critical pedagogy traditionally express their critique of dominant school (and social) practices as they analyse affordances and constraints of contrasting pedagogical approaches. While many scholars caution about attempting to define and categorise critical pedagogy<sup>1</sup>, it most commonly focuses on social injustice, inequities, and power struggles and highlights sets of challenges and possibilities at the same time. Various research publication titles reveal this duality of challenges and opportunities.

Special issues on themes such as *Education in the 21st Century: Conflict, Reconciliation and Reconstruction* (Leach 2005) and *Black Feminisms and Postcolonial Paradigms: Researching Educational Inequalities* (Mirza 2009) as well as publications such as *Critical Pedagogy in the New Dark Ages: Challenges and Possibilities* (Nikolakaki 2012), *Critical Pedagogy in Uncertain Times: Hope and Possibilities* (Macrine 2009), and *Education and Hope in Troubled Times* (Shapiro 2009) convey three main messages. First, we seem to live in times of unrest, struggle, and inequalities. Second, there seems to be hope. Third, education is believed to play a major role in (positively) shaping these times. This proposition can be

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<sup>1</sup> Kirylo *et al.* (2010), for example, argue that this attempt would be counterproductive to the development of radical agency, creating the risk of “limiting its constant evolution and re-invention by numerous communities and collective struggles worldwide” (p. 332).

explained by the fact that schools, as cultural and political spheres<sup>2</sup>, engage in the production of cultural and societal norms, values, knowledge, and language (McLaren & Kincheloe 2007). Indeed, education and society are “intricately interwoven in a way that there is a mutual influence on both” (Romanowski & Amatullah 2016, p. 90). In accordance with this understanding, critical pedagogy challenges structures and relations that operate both in society and in schools (Kirylo, Thirumurthy, Smith, & McLaren 2010). In a nutshell, critical pedagogy “does not only tell us how to teach and learn—much less what to teach and learn; rather, it also implores us to use our teaching and learning to effect positive social change” (Fobes & Kaufman 2008, p. 27) – *light*, as Rogers may say. With an optimistic view into the future, the study at hand builds on and further develops these ideas and proposes to consider trust as essential for learning and teaching and effecting positive change.

The overall structure of this thesis takes the form of eight chapters, including this introduction. After I presented the organisation of my thesis, the **second chapter** will examine literature that presents perspectives on pedagogical challenges and potentialities. First, I give a brief overview of the tenets of critical pedagogy and review scholarly work that critically examines the “traditional” education system in which the teacher could be viewed as an all-knowing depositor and the students as mere depositories (Freire 2017). After that, the second part of the literature review deals with an alternative to the “traditional” pedagogical approach: a humanising approach to education that conceptualises teaching and learning as a collaborative endeavour between teachers and students. I then propose to consider trust as an essential element in a humanising pedagogy and outline its theoretical dimensions. Finally, I refer to scientific accounts to briefly illustrate how theatre in a classroom both requires trust and might provide a

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<sup>2</sup> Monchinski (2008) illustrates the tenet of critical pedagogy that everything in school is political. He argues that “[t]he way desks are arranged in a classroom is a political issue; what a teacher says or doesn’t say when a student says something ‘is gay’ carries political implications; the curriculum is political and the way it is taught is loaded with political import. The dreams, desires, and values our schools instill, uphold, enhance, and quash in us, these are all political.” (*ibid.*, p. 11)

space for dialogue, sociality, and trust. The aim of this thesis is not to primarily highlight the potentialities of theatre education. Nonetheless, theatre plays an important role in the case study under investigation as it may entail promising and exemplary resources for a humanising approach to flourish in an educational context.

The **third chapter** is concerned with the analytical approaches adopted in this study. First, I outline theoretical underpinnings that guide the analysis and discussion of my findings. I present, thereafter, the interdisciplinary approach that I use to answer my research questions. More specifically, I use a critical incident analysis (CIA), a relational signalling approach (RSA), and a multimodal interaction analysis (MIA) to investigate trust in an educational context and answer my four main research questions:

- What are “signs of trust” in an educational context?
- How and in what ways can a teacher build, maintain, or strengthen trust?
- How and in what ways can “signs of trust” shape interactions in the classroom?
- How can “signs of trust” be analysed?

**Chapter four** is concerned with the methodology used for this study. In this chapter, I first explain my approach and the methodological tools that I used to collect my data. I outline the reasons behind using a case study in conjunction with ethnographic research tools and explain my strategy that I pursued to access the field and find a case study: a multilingual theatre project of a primary school class in Luxembourg City. In a next step, I introduce my research participants, fieldwork schedule, and my tools for the collection of authentic, “multi-media, multi-modal and multi-semiotic” data (White 2009): video ethnography, field notes, interviews, and artefacts. Finally, I expand on my ethical commitments and pseudonymisation process.

In the **fifth, sixth, and seventh chapter**, I present the findings of my research. The data analysis is thus divided into three parts that reconstruct the development of the theatre project that I documented during my nine-month fieldwork. With a focus on potential “signs of trust”,

I explore concrete school lessons and interactions to get a sense of the working atmosphere, day-to-day activities, and routines of the pupils and their teacher. In this context, chapter five deals with the teacher and her teaching practice: how she created, maintained, or strengthened trust in her classroom. In chapter six, I put a particular emphasis on the pupils' contributions to the theatre project development and on how their teacher's behaviour may have affected pupil-pupil interactions in the classroom. In chapter seven, I focus on the researcher's perspective and highlight methodological considerations in relation to my proposed interdisciplinary framework and data collection tools.

Finally, I will go on to **chapter eight** to summarise the main findings of this thesis and highlight methodological, theoretical, and practical implications. I will then lay out the limitations of this study and propose suggestions for future research.

The table below recapitulates the structure of this dissertation and the main contents of the eight chapters.

TABLE 1: Structure of the thesis	
Chapters	Main contents
1	<b>Introduction:</b> provision of the context and overview of the dissertation
2	<b>Literature review:</b> examination of the educational context, presentation of the reflections on the “banking” model of education and the “humanising” approach to education, exploration of theoretical dimensions of trust and theatre education
3	<b>Analytical approaches:</b> presentation of perspective on learning, teaching, and trust, disclosure of research questions and the three analytical frameworks
4	<b>Methodological approach:</b> description of methodological steps and tools used to collect and represent data, presentation of ethical considerations
5-7	<b>Data analysis:</b> presentation of data with a focus on (a) the teacher and her teaching practice, (b) the pupils and their learning practice, and (c) the researcher and methodological considerations
8	<b>Conclusion:</b> summary of findings, examination of implications and limitations, and suggestions for future research

## **Chapter 2 › Building rapport in the classroom:**

### **A humanising pedagogy and trust**

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#### **2.1 Where are we? – Perspectives on pedagogical challenges**

2.1.1 Critical pedagogy: Challenging the status quo in education

2.1.2 Problematizing the “banking” model of education

#### **2.2 Where could we go? – Perspectives on pedagogical potentialities**

2.2.1 A humanising pedagogy: Learning and teaching as active and participatory processes

2.2.2 Trust and its impact on how we think, feel, and act

2.2.2.1 What is trust?

2.2.2.2 Why is trust a substantial part of a humanising pedagogy?

2.2.3 Theatre education: Providing a space for dialogue, sociality, and trust

#### **2.3 Summary and outlook**

## 2.1 Where are we?

### – Perspectives on pedagogical challenges

#### 2.1.1 Critical pedagogy: Challenging the status quo in education

Paulo Freire, Brazilian educationalist and educational philosopher, is considered by many scholars the most influential figure in the development of critical pedagogy (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres 2017) and, more generally speaking, of the theory and practice of education worldwide (Carnoy 2016; Giroux 2010; Veugelers 2017). One book in particular is regarded as the most important foundational text of critical pedagogy as we understand it today: *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire 2017). First published in 1968, Freire therein introduces his pedagogy as a “moral project” that emerged from his experiences as an educator in Brazil in the 1960s and after six years of political exile (*ibid.*; Nikolakaki 2012). He contextualises and justifies his pedagogy “of the oppressed” in circumstances of poverty, marginalisation, and struggle – conditions he learned about early on while living around peasants (Kincheloe 2008).<sup>3</sup>

Freire’s pedagogical approach originated in the Brazilian context and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* was published 50 years ago. However, many observations and concerns still hold true today, beyond the Brazilian borders. In fact, the promotion of human rights, justice, democracy as well as the attention to gender, class, race, and ethnicity issues can be considered contemporary educational imperatives. Within a broader perspective, changing patterns of global migration as well as new social and political configurations in Europe and many other places present opportunities but also challenges in terms of social cohesion and ways of living together (Vertovec 2007). Similarly, the landscape of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg – the

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<sup>3</sup> Freire (2017) defines a situation of oppression as any situation “in which ‘A’ objectively exploits ‘B’ or hinders his and her pursuit of self-affirmation as a responsible person” (p. 29). Following this logic, he believes an act of oppression is preventing someone “from being more fully human” (*ibid.*, p. 31).

country where this study has been carried out – is characterised by increasingly complex “contact zones”<sup>4</sup> (Pratt 1991) between people from different linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds. Both in and outside of the classroom, this situation has given new urgency to the question of how to deal productively and creatively with the dynamics of (linguistic and cultural) diversity. Within an educational context and a (revisited) critical pedagogical framework more specifically, questions that arise against this backdrop are varied. For example, what curriculum most likely fosters new ways of belonging to a (multilingual and multicultural) community? How can the voices of all learners be integrated in the classroom? In what ways can educational sites be theoretically conceived and practically experienced as social, empathetic, and collaborative spaces (Aden 2014)?

On the following pages, I first give a brief overview of the critical appraisal of the so-called “banking” model of education in which the teacher is viewed as an all-knowing depositor and the students as mere depositories (Freire 2017). The second part of the literature review deals with a humanising pedagogy as a possible alternative to the “banking” education. Instead of fostering an antagonistic relationship between teachers and their students (Monchinski 2008), a humanising approach to education understands teaching and learning as reciprocal activities and processes that involve both the teacher and the students in an active and participatory way. In this regard, I outline that trust can be considered a central element in a humanising pedagogy and lay out the theoretical dimensions of trust. Finally, I briefly describe how theatre in a classroom context both requires and offers trust and may provide pedagogical resources vital for a humanising approach to education.

I now first of all turn to an approach that is believed to obstruct the passage to a prosocial and collaborative educational experience: the so-called “banking” model of education.

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<sup>4</sup> As “social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power [...]” (Pratt 1991, p. 34).

Freire (2017) describes this learning and teaching approach as follows:

“Education [...] becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiqués and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the ‘banking’ concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits.”

(Freire 2017, p. 45)

According to Freire, teaching based on a banking model – an approach he refers to as the “traditional” education system – starts with a wrong understanding of men and women as *objects*<sup>5</sup>. Educators adopting a banking approach are said to tell the students what to do and what to learn, not giving them the chance to share opinions, feedback, and suggestions (Cammarota & Romero 2006). In this respect, scholars such as Salazar (2013) argue that the banking model promotes passivity, acceptance, and submissiveness, and transforms students into receiving objects “by perpetuating practices such as rote memorization and skill-and-drill that encourage students to receive, file, and store deposits of knowledge transmitted by educators” (pp. 129–130).

### 2.1.2 Problematising the “banking” model of education

Within a critical pedagogy tradition, scholars prominently condemn the banking model approach to education; they not only question the knowledge (assumed to be correct and politically neutral), but also the method of delivery (Wink 2011). As a substantial point of criticism, Freire (2017) denounces the teacher-student relationship that he sees in the banking approach. He presents a list of attitudes and practices that maintain and even stimulate this teacher-student “contradiction”, as he calls it, and “mirror oppressive society as a whole:

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<sup>5</sup> *Objects* referred to as the ones “which are known and acted upon”; *subjects* denoted as “those who know and act” (Freire 2017, translator’s note, p. 10).



- a) the teacher teaches and the students are taught;
- b) the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
- c) the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
- d) the teacher talks and the students listen – meekly;
- e) the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;
- f) the teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;
- g) the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher;
- h) the teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it;
- i) the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority, which she and he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students;
- j) the teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects.”  
(Freire 2017, p. 46)

These attitudes and practices disclose a main point of critique: in the banking approach to education, the teacher is said to approach the student with a deficit model, “that is, the teacher assumes the students to be empty of knowledge and void of life experiences” (Kirylo *et al.* 2010, p. 333). Teachers that engage in this practice are believed to be authoritarian in their instruction and assume to be the only ones in the classroom to dispense “official” knowledge (*ibid.*). With that understanding, the teacher-student relationship holds a narrative character that conceptualises the teacher as narrating subject and the student as listening object (Freire 2017). Against this backdrop, banking education is believed to foster an antagonistic relationship between teachers and their students (Monchinski 2008), as it “pits teacher against student and both against the joys that education can and should bring” (*ibid.*, p. 121). As a potential consequence, pupils might distrust themselves, their knowledge, and competence due to the teacher-student contradiction and the top-down approach (Freire 2017):

“They call themselves ignorant and say the ‘professor’ is the one who has knowledge and to whom they should listen. The criteria of knowledge imposed upon them are the conventional ones. [...] Almost never do they realize that they, too, ‘know things’ they have learned in their relations with the world and with other women and men. Given the circumstances which have produced their duality, it is only natural that they distrust themselves.”

(Freire 2017, p. 37)

It is important to bear in mind the socio-political context and traditions such as Marxism, liberalism, Christian humanism, feminism, and critical race theory that influenced Freire's thinking and acting (Salazar 2013) and led him to publish *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* five decades ago. Some scholars argue, however, that the banking model and associated practices as described by Freire are present in many public schools today (Cammarota & Romero 2006; Kirylo *et al.* 2010; Nwafor & Nwogu 2014). In fact, the approach is often brought in relation to the "marketisation" of education, "where school-aged youngsters are viewed as commodities, school teachers as functionaries, and the emphasis for the purposes of education is to singular equip youngsters to become contributors to the economic development of the community" (Christensen & Aldridge 2013, p. 2). In this context, it is claimed that (standardised) measurement, quantification, and conformity become ever more important in schools and in the general educational discourse (Bartolomé 1994; Christensen & Aldridge 2013; Giroux 2010; Huerta 2011; Kincheloe 2008; Kirylo *et al.* 2010; Nikolakaki 2012; Salazar 2013).

Against this backdrop, many critical pedagogues suggest to direct attention to an alternative educational pathway – one that offers "a path to walk in hope" (Christensen & Aldridge 2013, p. 3). Within a critical pedagogical framework, a humanising pedagogy is considered a promising educational movement dedicated to emancipation, autonomy, individual responsibility, and empowerment. It is this alternative to the banking model of education that I turn to now.

## 2.2 Where could we go?

### – Perspectives on pedagogical potentialities

#### 2.2.1 A humanising pedagogy: Learning and teaching as active and participatory processes

Paulo Freire uses the term “pedagogy” to describe a philosophy or social theory, rather than (merely) a teaching method (Nikolakaki 2012). This understanding highlights the potentiality that attitudes and practices outside of school have an impact inside of school, and *vice versa*; school and society are intricately interwoven as I highlighted earlier (e.g. Romanowski & Amatullah 2016). In this respect, and as part of his theory of antialogical action, Freire refers to authoritarian characteristics<sup>6</sup> that might be present both at home and in school: “The atmosphere of the home is prolonged in the school, where the students soon discover that (as in the home) in order to achieve some satisfaction they must adapt to the precepts which have been set from above. One of these precepts is not to think.” (Freire 2017, p. 128) Eventually, experiencing and internalising this authority and rigid relationship structure leads to a situation where “these young people tend when they become professionals [...] to repeat the rigid patterns in which they were miseducated” (*ibid.*).

The precept “not to think” is characteristic for the teacher-student contradiction that Freire perceives as one of the biggest problems of the “(at best) misguided system” (Freire 2017, p. 45). Accordingly, he argues that education must begin with the solution to this contradiction so as to encounter a (learning and teaching) situation where both are simultaneously teachers *and* students (*ibid.*). However, this solution is unlikely to be found in a banking model of education that often promotes passivity, acceptance, and submissiveness

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<sup>6</sup> Characteristics such as conquest, divide and rule, manipulation, and cultural invasion as instruments of oppression (Freire 2017).

(Salazar 2013). Against this backdrop, Freire and scholars that feel inspired by his work (e.g. Bartolomé 1994; Cammarota & Romero 2006; Christensen & Aldridge 2013; Huerta 2011; Kirylo *et al.* 2010; Monchinski 2008) advocate to leave the banking concept of education – and *antidialogic* attitudes and practices – behind and instead offer an educational experience that is more dialogic and emancipatory. “Humanising” pedagogy is believed to provide such an alternative educational discourse and experience.

As part of his proposed critical pedagogy, and therefore in a context of oppression, struggle, and liberation, Freire refers to a humanising pedagogy as the “only effective instrument” against all arms of domination such as propaganda, management, and manipulation (Freire 2017, p. 42). Salazar (2013) puts Freire’s theory into a broader and contemporary perspective and foregrounds that the overall educational process needs more humanisation. Referring to Freire’s understanding of the term, she understands humanisation as the process of “becoming more fully human”:

“*Humanization* is the process of becoming more fully human as social, historical, thinking, communicating, transformative, creative persons who participate in and with the world [...]”

(Salazar 2013, p. 126; emphasis in original)

In common parlance, “to humanise” can be defined as the action of making “someone or something kinder, gentler, or more agreeable”<sup>7</sup>, “more humane or civilized”<sup>8</sup>, or “rendre quelqu’un accessible à la pitié, lui inspirer de l’intérêt, de la compassion”<sup>9</sup>. First, according to these definitions, the act of “humanising” can be associated with “the human” and, more

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<sup>7</sup> Humanize. (n.d.). In Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/humanize>

<sup>8</sup> Humanise. (n.d.). In Oxford Living Dictionaries. Retrieved from <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/humanize>

<sup>9</sup> Humaniser. (n.d.). In Larousse. Retrieved from <http://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/humaniser/40614?q=humaniser#40521>

specifically, with characteristics and practices that involve kindness, gentleness, pity, and compassion. Second, the definitions indicate that “to humanise” (with an emphasis on the particle ‘to’, conveying an action) is indeed an activity and process, potentially triggered and taught by someone else. This is in line with Nwafor and Nwogu (2014) who explain that the term “humanising” is derived from the adjective “humane” and the noun “human”. To humanise the classroom, then, is understood by them as a process that implies a teacher giving “desirable” and “worthwhile” human qualities, values, attitudes, and interests to the learners (*ibid.*, p. 418).

Their perspective is worth quoting here:

“The derivation from the noun ‘human’, simply implies belonging to or concerning human beings – people (man, woman, child) [...]. On the other hand, the adjective ‘humane’ implies treating people or animals in a way that is not cruel and inflicts like pains and suffering on them. [...] In other words, this evokes the feeling of humaneness, i.e., a feeling tinged with compassion, sympathy, empathy and consideration for others. *Humanization in the classroom context, therefore, is a process of giving human attributes and values such as honour, respect, love, dignity, friendship, etc., to other people: their social status, age, and level of education notwithstanding.* This approach is anchored on the theory of humanism, which is a system of beliefs concerned with the needs of people, and the restoration of the universally acceptable human values.”

(Nwafor & Nwogu 2014, p. 417; emphasis added)

Most importantly, with his notion of “humanisation”, Freire (1998, 2017) envisages the transformation of human beings from objects to subjects (see also Tan 2018). As he explains, “all educational practice requires the existence of ‘subjects,’ who while teaching, learn. And who in learning also teach.” (Freire 1998, p. 67) In the same breath, Freire (1998) advocates for a pedagogical approach that develops the potential of both students *and* teachers. In a humanising pedagogy, then, education should thus not be carried on “by ‘A’ *for* ‘B’ or by ‘A’ *about* ‘B’, but rather by ‘A’ *with* ‘B’” (Freire 2017, p. 66; emphasis in original). In a nutshell, teaching and learning in a humanising pedagogy are understood as reciprocal activities and processes that involve both the teachers and the students (all subjects) in an active and

participatory way. In this respect, Freire (2017) calls for an exchange of roles: from the “depositor, prescriber, domesticator” – typical roles that he sees in teachers adopting a banking model approach to education – to the “student among students”. This educational approach engenders an altered power relationship, both in the classroom and in the broader social canvas (Nikolakaki 2012).<sup>10</sup>

As highlighted above, Freire speaks up for a dialogic approach to education that stands in stark contrast to an approach that favours *antidialogic* attitudes and practice. Cooperation between educators and their students is an exemplary characteristic of dialogical action (Freire 2017) and, in fact, specifically relevant in the context of humanising pedagogy – education carried on by “‘A’ with ‘B’” (Freire 2017, p. 66; emphasis in original). While Freire (2017) considers cooperation as a prerequisite “to transform the world” (p. 140), scholars such as Shor (1992), McLaren and Kincheloe (2007), and Peterson (2017) follow Freire’s line of actions in the context of his proposed critical pedagogy and bring cooperation in relation to empowerment, responsibility, and democracy.

Shor (1992, p. 201) sees teachers and students as “divided at the bottom of the ladder” in the educational system (i.e. the teacher-student contradiction), alienated from each other by a hierarchical structure also reflected in the curriculum. In a democratic classroom, she argues, empowerment requires, however, the cooperation of the teachers *and* the students, as “[t]hey each know things the other must learn” (*ibid.*). In her eyes, this cooperative approach and (positive) relationship commitment can lead to a possible solution to the teacher-student contradiction.

Writing about critical pedagogy in the music classroom, McLaren and Kincheloe (2007) offer interesting insights into situations where children and teachers cooperatively engage in

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<sup>10</sup> The elimination of the contradiction between students and teachers does not imply that teachers no longer teach (Fobes & Kaufman 2008). Instead, as Freire (1998, p. 30) himself argues, “to teach is not *to transfer knowledge* but to create the possibilities for the production or construction of knowledge” (emphasis in original).

group problem solving and construct meaning in creative ways in dialogue through discussion and improvisation. “Children can be seen teaching their teachers in addition to the teachers instructing the children.” (*ibid.*, p. 227) Similarly, Peterson (2017) argues that activities that specifically emphasise on cooperation, respect, and self-awareness can help students to enhance their self-esteem and reduce their anxiety level. As a consequence, he continues, the students can learn to take responsibility for their own learning and become empowered. Peterson offers an example of how a student-teacher collaboration could look like in practice: for class meetings, desks can be pushed to the walls, chairs placed in a circle, and discussions, voting, and class problem solving can form the basis of democratising the classroom.

As a reaction to his work and activism, Freire anticipated a number of criticisms<sup>11</sup> and, indeed, scholars have deplored, amongst others, his lack of practical solutions and clear methodological examples (e.g. Dale & Hyslop-Margison 2010). Others have described Freirean pedagogy as requiring “immeasurable energy” (Fobes & Kaufman 2008, p. 29).<sup>12</sup> While Bartolomé (1994) and Salazar (2013) point out that Freire’s pedagogical approach and concepts cannot be reduced to specific practices, they highlight that there exists a gap between the theory and practice of a humanising pedagogy as well. To counteract this tendency, Rodriguez and Smith (2011), for example, encourage educators to reinvent Freire’s philosophy and pedagogy across contexts. Dale and Hyslop-Margison (2010) likewise argue that even if “there are no precise technical methods emerging from Freire’s pedagogy, its potential application is limited only by our creativity and imagination” (p. 74).

Salazar (2013) and Huerta (2011) are among the scholars that explore pedagogical perspectives and concrete teaching practices in the context of a humanising pedagogy. Salazar

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<sup>11</sup> At the beginning of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (2017) writes that his publication is likely to arouse negative reactions in a number of readers, as the “admittedly tentative work is for radicals” (p. 11).

<sup>12</sup> See Christensen and Aldridge (2013, pp. 11–16) for a good overview of further criticisms of critical theory and critical pedagogy and possible solutions to the main problems that dominate the criticisms.

(2013) synthesises ten principles and practices relevant for the application of a humanising pedagogy in an educational setting. In order to humanise teaching and learning, Salazar (2013) argues, “[t]rusting and caring relationships advance the pursuit of humanization” (p. 138). While the latter element is only one of ten suggested by Salazar<sup>13</sup>, she relates it to specific actions such as: listening to student’s interests, needs, and concern; modelling kindness, patience, and respect; caring about student’s well-being (on an emotional, social, and academic level); and creating a safe learning environment that values risk-taking and active engagement (*ibid.*).

Similarly, Huerta (2011) emphasises that teachers who engage in a humanising approach to education get involved in classroom practices that “reflect genuine care for individual students” (p. 49). In her ethnographic study with a focus on “marginalised students” (due to their race, culture, economic class, or experience), she explores pedagogical perspectives and teaching practices of four elementary school teachers. As concrete “humanizing pedagogy practices”, Huerta (2011, p. 45) considers, amongst others, the implementation of instructional strategies that reflect respect for the students and their knowledge. She furthermore suggests that teachers who engage in a humanising pedagogy critically question the deficit view of the students and recognise them as “‘knowers’ and ‘active’ participants in their individual learning styles” (*ibid.*). These teacher practices are in accordance with Freire’s concern to base learning and teaching on a cooperative teacher-student relationship.

If we believe that what happens inside of classrooms might have an impact on what happens outside of these walls and *vice versa*, the conceptualisation of a humanising pedagogy, its process-orientated perspective, cooperative teacher-student educative model, and related practices can be beneficial to both reflect on and respond to dominant educational paradigms.

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<sup>13</sup> See Salazar (2013, pp. 138–141) for a more in-depth discussion and synthesis of her ten principles and practices of a humanizing pedagogy.



In other words, “implications of the humanised classroom could be felt beyond the classroom itself as its ripples could spread far into the society” (Nwafor & Nwogu 2014, p. 423). Against this backdrop, one concept is considered particularly important for social and educational development: trust.

In the following sections, I explore why trust is considered to be important for society and education, what trust is, and how it has been addressed in the literature in the context of a humanising pedagogy.

### 2.2.2 Trust and its impact on how we think, feel, and act

Trust is considered increasingly important in our contemporary (globalised) society (Da Silva 2009) and fundamental to functioning in a “complex and interdependent society” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000, p. 549). Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003) relate the affordances of trust and trusting relationships to the overall value of trust in social interactions. They state that “[t]he need for trust arises from our *interdependence* with others. We often depend on other people to help us obtain, or at least not to frustrate, the outcomes we value (and they on us). As our interests with others are intertwined, we also must recognize that there is an element of risk involved insofar as we often encounter situations in which we cannot compel the cooperation we seek.” (*ibid.*, para. 3; emphasis in original) This understanding suggests, first, that relationships – our connections to each other – as objects of analysis are of elementary significance in trust situations. Second, it becomes clear that interdependence involves two key elements of trust: risk and vulnerability. Weber and Carter (1998) follow this line of thought, as they explain that people collectively form “this bond we call trust. It is not an innate facet of a pre-ordained personality; it is a product of human social relationships.” (p. 21)

Generally, trust, as a social construct, is believed to be at the heart of relationships (Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy 2001; Lewicki & Bunker 1996; Robinson 1996). Indeed,

in Weber and Carter's (1998) terms, trust can be seen as a "thread that weaves two different people together to form a unified whole, the relationship" (p. 10). Likewise, Kipnis (1996) highlights that research in areas such as marriage, interpersonal relations, and in organisations indicates that trust often entails harmonious social relations and might prevent destructive conflicts. However, trust is not only essential for interpersonal relationships to flourish but crucial for society as a whole to function. "Without trust, society would not be possible, for trust increases order by reducing complexity." (Weber & Carter 1998, p. 7) Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) vividly illustrate how trust is present (while often unnoticed) in daily facets of our lives:

"We count on the people who grow and process our food and medicines to do so properly; we depend on those who build our houses to do so sensibly; we rely on other people with whom we share the roadways to obey traffic laws; we trust those who hold and invest our money to deal with us honestly; we depend on our government to maintain the safety of our infrastructure and to protect us from aggressors. In short, in every facet of our lives, we are dependent on other people to behave in accordance with our expectations. It is imperative that we have confidence that our expectations of other people will be met."

(Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000, p. 549)

On the one hand, scholars overall agree that trust is important for individuals and society at large. On the other hand, authors such as Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) argue that (the American) society is perceived to be increasingly distrustful of both their institutions and leaders. They refer to Barber, who explains this development by the rapid changes in society such as changing values, higher expectations, and an increased awareness of inequalities. Although the observations of Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) focus mainly on the American context, Da Silva (2009) makes similar statements and explores the question whether we live in an "age of distrust" (p. 86). He argues that some people might have less trust in public bodies such as governments, while, nevertheless, nowadays "we need to be able to trust, and actually do trust, many more people than we used to" (*ibid.*). It is unclear to what extent we trust more or less compared to other periods of time. However, it can be emphasised that trust has a profound

impact on motivation, achievement, self-esteem, satisfaction with relationships and situations (Da Silva 2009), and on social interaction in general. Against this backdrop, the study of trust is considered timely, relevant, and meaningful (Savolainen & Häkkinen 2011; Spier 2013).

In summary, trust highly influences the way we think, feel, and act. Trust plays a crucial role in how successful our (romantic, professional, political, or other) relationships are (Da Silva 2009; Lewicki & Bunker 1996). For some, trust is even “the most important component of all relationships” (Covey, as cited in Da Silva 2009, p. 87). Before now exploring why trust can be considered crucial in (humanising) educational practice and research, I first illuminate how the concept of trust is approached and defined in the literature. Then, I refer to six main attributes of trust that are considered to be significant for trust relations in school contexts.

### **2.2.2.1 What is trust?**

In the attempt to conceptualise “trust”, it quickly becomes apparent that this is not a straightforward task. Trust is multifaceted (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000) and has been explored by scholars from a variety of research disciplines (Dirks & Ferrin 2001; Lewicki & Bunker 1996; Mayer, Davis, & Shoorman 1995; Nussli 2002). Therefore, no introduction on trust seems to be complete without referring to both the complexity of the construct and the difficulty to define it.

Hosmer (1995, p. 380) notes that “[t]here appears to be widespread agreement on the importance of trust in human conduct, but unfortunately there also appears to be equally widespread lack of agreement on a suitable definition of the concept.” Questions such as what trust (and distrust) is, why people trust, how trust shapes social relations, and how trust can be captured, received attention across multiple disciplines. Psychologists, sociologists, political scientists, economists, anthropologists, and management theorists have attempted to understand trust and associated variables and developed various methods for exploring the concept

(Hosmer 1995; Lewicki, McAllister, & Bies 1998; for reviews see Mayer *et al.* 1995; Rousseau *et al.* 1998; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000).

While some researchers forgo defining trust (Weber & Carter 1998), others describe it as an “overworked” and ambiguous concept that can mean different things such as confidence, faith, reliance, and expectation (Da Silva 2009). In a similar vein, Mayer *et al.* (1995) and Rousseau *et al.* (1998) refer to the conceptual ambiguity and argue that several constructs have been used synonymously with trust, such as cooperation, confidence, and predictability. It is no surprise, then, that this complexity and ambiguity – often combined with a multidisciplinary research approach – led to a wide variety of definitions and a confusion of terminology (Bachmann 2011; Li 2012; Nuissl 2002). While trust is overall considered a concept difficult to define (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000), there are common aspects and facets of trust that can be highlighted.<sup>14</sup>

Early research on trust focuses on confidence, sincerity, and expectations on others’ intentions and motives. In 1956, Mellinger based a measure on interpersonal trust on answers to questions such as: “To what extent do you have confidence in this person’s intentions and motives? Do you feel he is always sincere in his dealings with others?” (p. 306) Mellinger (1956) sees distrust as “the feeling that another’s intentions and motives are not always what he says they are, that he is insincere or has ulterior motives” (p. 304). In a similar vein, Deutsch (1958) associates trust with the notion of motivational relevance and predictability. He uses the term “trust” to refer to the expectation and confidence that a partner behaves in a certain, unharmful way and considers “mutual trust” to most likely occur when relationship partners are oriented to each other’s welfare. Beneficial and favourable future actions are central in a definition proposed by Robinson (1996) as well, who sees trust “as one’s expectations,

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<sup>14</sup> See Rousseau *et al.* (1998, pp. 394–395) for a further discussion on the scholarly agreement and disagreement on the meaning of trust.

assumptions, or beliefs about the likelihood that another's future actions will be beneficial, favorable, or at least not detrimental to one's interests" (p. 576).

In addition to the positive expectations towards another one's intentions and actions, the acceptance of vulnerability is considered a key element in many definitions of trust. Accordingly, trust is here often described as a psychological state that underlies cognitive processes. Rousseau *et al.* (1998, p. 395), for example, define trust as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another". Whereas Deutsch, back in 1958, related expected benevolent behaviour to trustworthy behaviour, scholars such as Baier (1986) and Mayer *et al.* (1995) add the willingness to be vulnerable to their suggested definitions. Baier (1986, p. 235) sees trust as "accepted vulnerability to another's possible but not expected ill will (or lack of good will) toward one". Similarly, Mayer *et al.* (1995, p. 712) suggest that trust is the "willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party". The last two definitions illustrate a shift in focus: while early research focused mainly on intention, motives, and expectations, scholars have become increasingly interested in actual behaviour (Lewicki *et al.* 1998). In this respect, Weber and Carter (1998, p. 8) explain that "the use of expectations as the basis for trust is too rational for some". Seminal work by Lewis and Weigert (1985) accordingly suggests that "[t]he roots of trust extend to every modality of human experience". Thus, the authors argue that trust involves cognitive, emotional, *and* behavioural dimensions.

Building on the understanding that vulnerability is substantial in situations of trust, risk is considered another key component of trust. The willingness to take risks is described as a necessary element, especially in the early stage of trust (Durnford 2010), and a characteristic common to all trust situations (Johnson-George & Swap 1982). "Making oneself vulnerable is

taking risk. Trust is not taking risk *per se*, but rather it is a *willingness* to take risk.” (Mayer *et al.* 1995, p. 712; emphasis in original) Against this backdrop, Mayer *et al.* (1995) differentiate trust from cooperation, confidence, and predictability. They argue that none of the latter concepts necessarily requires the willingness to take a risk and to be vulnerable: “You can cooperate with someone who you don’t really trust.” (*ibid.*, p. 713) This is in line with Rousseau *et al.* (1998), who criticise that scholars such as Deutsch use trust and cooperation interchangeably. Da Silva (2009), then, argues that trust is actually a “consequence of cooperation” (p. 89) while trust and cooperation are engaged in a mutual interaction.

As noted above, there seems to be no single, universal definition of trust that encompasses all aspects discussed by researchers across disciplines. Overall, however, scholars seem to agree on the general meaning of trust (Rousseau *et al.* 1998). As a result of their multidisciplinary literature review of trust within and between firms, Rousseau *et al.* (1998) found that all definitions of trust reflected in their publication consider following conditions necessary for trust to arise: confident expectations, a willingness to be vulnerable and risk, and accept interdependence. They emphasise, however, that “[t]rust is not a behavior (e.g., cooperation), or a choice (e.g., taking a risk), but an underlying psychological condition that can cause or results from such actions” (*ibid.*, p. 395). As such, the dynamic and evolving character of trust is an important facet that has been stressed on in recent years across disciplinary lenses.

Authors such as Lewicki and Bunker (1996), for example, adapt a definition of trust from Boon and Holmes (as cited in *ibid.*, p. 102), who suggest that trust is “a state involving confident positive expectations about another’s motives with respect to oneself in situations entailing risk”. While Boon and Holmes used their definition mainly to describe romantic relationships, Lewicki and Bunker (1996) adapt it to understand and explore trust development in professional relationships. Lewicki and Bunker explain their decision to choose the definition by Boon and Holmes by the fact that trust is there “viewed as a dynamic phenomenon that takes

on a different character in the early, developing, and ‘mature’ stages of a relationship” (*ibid.*, p. 103). Authors such as Durnford (2010) also underline that trust develops in stages, while others suggest a differentiation between different types of trust: calculus-based trust, knowledge-based trust, and identity-based trust (Lewicki & Bunker 1996) and calculative trust, relational trust, and institutional trust (Rousseau *et al.* 1998). Similarly, Da Silva (2009) distinguishes amongst various forms of trust and proposes a pendulum of trust (adapted from the “Pendulum of Power” developed by Stuart Rees), representing a continuum of trust that encompasses trust and distrust and visually shows the possible movement back and forth.

In sum, trust is a complex and dynamic phenomenon that changes throughout a relationship (Mayer *et al.* 1995; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000; Rousseau *et al.* 1998). It involves positive or at least unharmed expectations, intentions, and (inter)actions. This, as well as the three-dimensionality of trust – its cognitive, emotional, and behavioural dimension – become apparent if we take a look at another definition, that of *distrust*. Govier (as cited in Lewicki, Tomlinson, & Gillespie 2006, p. 998) defines distrust as the “lack of confidence in the other, a concern that the other may act so as to harm one, that he does not care about one’s welfare or intends to act harmfully, or is hostile”. Conversely, this means that trust involves: confidence in the other, the expectation that a relationship partner behaves (verbally and non-verbally; see Frost, Stimpson, & Maughan 1978) in an unharmed way and cares about one’s welfare.

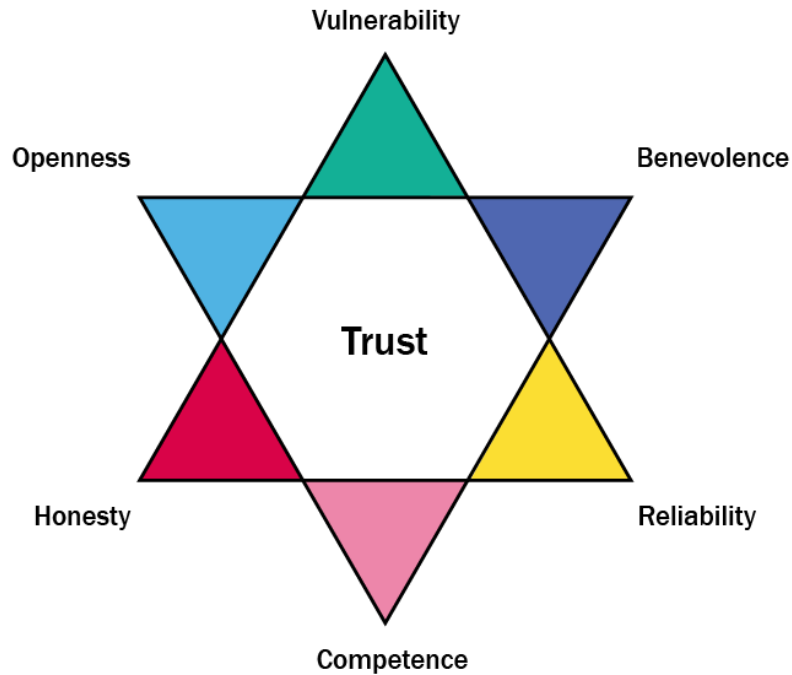
The overall difficulty to define trust lets us anticipate that the investigation of the concept and associated variables might also be difficult. Indeed, due to the complexity, multiplicity, and dynamism of trust, researchers who are interested to capture and measure trust find it challenging to do so (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000). While Lewicki *et al.* (2006, p. 1015) argue that the literature on trust development “suffers from a problem of significant measurement deficiency”, Li (2012) points out that there is no widely accepted measure of trust. In their multidisciplinary review of theoretical and empirical literature on trust, Tschannen-

Moran and Hoy (2000) explain that early measures conceived trust as observable behaviours and focused on capturing and analysing trust reactions such as interactions with strangers. In this context, trust has been measured in laboratory settings (e.g. Deutsch 1958), whereas trusting behaviour has been, for example, correlated with a cooperative move in a mixed-motive game (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000). However, the focus then shifted more towards using questionnaires as main tool of data collection, “usually asking for respondents’ level of agreement with a series of statements” (*ibid.*, p. 564).

A majority of research on trust is thus based on quantitative work, often mainly capturing beliefs and expectations from selected study participants. Within a psychological approach, for example, a Likert-type scale is considered the most widely used method (Lewicki *et al.* 2006). While these studies have helped to understand the phenomena of trust (e.g. Johnson-George & Swap 1982; Rotter 1967; Van Maele & Van Houtte 2011), scholars such as Lewicki *et al.* (2006) criticise the use of such scales in the context of research on trust. More specifically, they highlight two main shortcomings: in their view, (a) the complexity and dynamism of trust cannot be captured on a 5-point scale and (b) the range of responses is limited due to the predefined scale items (*ibid.*). Against this backdrop, Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (1999) as well as Lewicki *et al.* (2006) encourage researchers to (also) use qualitative methods such as interviews, case studies, and communication analysis to capture the rich meaning of trust and add new theoretical and empirical contributions to the field.

Across the broad variety of studies, there exist some common facets of trust that have often been used to both define and measure trust across research disciplines (Durnford 2010; Goddard *et al.* 2001; Mayer *et al.* 1995). Definitions of trust usually include one or more of the following six attributes: vulnerability, benevolence in motivation, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness (Durnford 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000).





**FIGURE 1:** The six attributes of trust (hexagram)

All of these six aspects are considered significantly important for trust relations in school contexts (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000). The following table compiles the main attributes of trust and refers to descriptions taken from several research publications on trust.

TABLE 2: Description of the main attributes of trust	
<b>Vulnerability</b>	The willingness to accept vulnerability in a relationship is often referred to as one of the key aspects of trust and “common across virtually all definitions” (Goddard <i>et al.</i> 2001, p. 7). In this context, interdependence and risk are seen as necessary condition of trust (Lewicki <i>et al.</i> 2006; Rousseau <i>et al.</i> 1998). “Where there is no interdependence, there is no need for trust.” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000, p. 556) Interdependence brings along both vulnerability and an awareness of the potential of betrayal, harm, uncertainty, and risk ( <i>ibid.</i> ). Risk, then, “creates an opportunity for trust, which leads to risk taking” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000, p. 556).
<b>Benevolence</b>	A sense of benevolence, described as the “most common facet of trust” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000, p. 557), is defined as “the confidence that one’s well-being, or something one cares about, will be protected and not harmed by the trusted party” ( <i>ibid.</i> ). Similarly, Mayer <i>et al.</i> (1995, p. 719) refer to benevolence as “the perception of a positive orientation of the trustee toward the trustor”. A positive orientation towards the other and the

	<p>relationship, good intentions, and an attitude of goodwill are thus considered essential in trustful relationships. “Benevolence is our assessment that the trusted individual is concerned enough about our welfare to either advance our interests, or at least not impede them. The other’s perceived intentions or motives of the trustee are most central.” (Lewicki &amp; Tomlinson 2003, para. 10) Therefore, benevolence in motivation is in stark contrast with an egocentric profit motive (Mayer <i>et al.</i> 1995). In fact, in moments of interdependence, “this faith in the altruism of the other is particularly important” (Tschannen-Moran &amp; Hoy 2000, p. 557; see also Frost <i>et al.</i> 1978). While perceived benevolence plays an essential role in the process of assessing trustworthiness (Mayer <i>et al.</i> 1995), Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003) give examples that indicate one’s benevolence: honest and open communication, the delegation of decisions, and sharing control.</p>
<p><b>Reliability</b></p>	<p>Reliability, also referred to as dependability, “combines a sense of predictability with benevolence” (Tschannen-Moran &amp; Hoy 2000, p. 557). In other words, we expect individuals who we trust to behave consistently <i>and</i> positively (Goddard <i>et al.</i> 2001). Thus, reliability, as an important facet of trust, indicates that trust and trusting behaviour occurs over time, as it is “usually not a one-time affair” (<i>ibid.</i>, p. 7). Overall, reliability refers to a sense of confidence that expectations will be met and to behaviours that are consistent – and, hence, predictable – over time (Durnford 2010).</p>
<p><b>Competence</b></p>	<p>Competence, also referred to as expertise, expertness, or ability (Mayer <i>et al.</i> 1995), is seen as the “assessment of the other’s knowledge, skill, or competency” (Lewicki &amp; Tomlinson 2003, para. 8). Good intentions are sometimes not enough, as Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) argue. Therefore, competence is a significant attribute of trust: “the student of a new teacher may feel that the teacher wishes very much to help her learn, but if the teacher is not skillful the student may not feel a great deal of trust” (<i>ibid.</i>, p. 557). In this regard, competence is critical in trust relations as it is directly related to expectations that one wishes to be fulfilled (Lewicki &amp; Tomlinson 2003). Bryk and Schneider (2003) add that instances of negligence or incompetence might even undermine trust among members of a school community.</p>
<p><b>Honesty</b></p>	<p>As a “pivotal facet” of trust (Tschannen-Moran &amp; Hoy 2000), honesty speaks to character, authenticity, and integrity (Durnford 2010; Hoy &amp; Tschannen-Moran 1999). In order to trust, Goddard <i>et al.</i> (2001) specify that partners in a relationship must be able to rely on both the word and action of another. In a similar vein, Durnford (2010) explains that the perception of honesty in another person impacts both “the perception of benevolence and the reliability of the person’s word and actions” (p. 18). Against this backdrop, integrity is an important dimension of honesty – affirmed by correspondence and consistency between someone’s words</p>

	and actions (Bryk & Schneider 2003; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000). In this context, Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003, para. 9) also suggest that the dimension of integrity might lead to trust “based on consistency of past actions, credibility of communication, commitment to standards of fairness, and the congruence of the other’s word and deed”.
Openness	In order for trust to develop, the willingness to disclose sensitive and personal information with others – and, hence, making oneself vulnerable – is regarded important (Lewicki <i>et al.</i> 2006; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000). For Durnford (2010), an honest person is someone who is open about his feelings, personal thoughts, and ideas. “Openness is the willingness to share information and not to hide information, disguise one’s motives, or hide one’s problems.” ( <i>ibid.</i> , p. 18) Thus, openness signals “reciprocal trust, a confidence that neither the information nor the individual will be exploited, and recipients can feel the same confidence in return” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000, p. 558). For Weber and Carter (1998), self-disclosure and the following response form “the core process in the construction of trust, for it is in the revelation of self to the other and of the other to self that people come to know the other to whom they orient” (p. 16). They further argue that reciprocal self-disclosures and its response, then, allow for reciprocal perspective taking. In this context, openness (and honesty) are crucial for the development and maintenance of trust. In brief, it can be emphasised that openness potentially breeds trust, “whereas withholding behavior provokes suspicion and distrust” (Goddard <i>et al.</i> 2001, p. 7).

Even though the table above refers to vulnerability, benevolence in motivation, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness as the main attributes of trust, these attributes should not be seen in isolation. Instead, all these components of trust interact and impact each other (Goddard *et al.* 2001). In fact, Durnford (2010) emphasises that researchers who have attempted to define and understand trust in the teacher-student relationship have done so with an understanding of trust as being shaped singly and together by several attributes of trust. While Mayer *et al.* (1995) focus only on ability, benevolence, and integrity as main characteristics of the trustee that determines trustworthiness, they too highlight the interrelationship of these factors and specify that they “help build the foundation for the development of trust” (p. 717). In a humanising approach to learning and teaching, then, trust, associated attributes and behaviours can be particularly relevant.

### 2.2.2.2 Why is trust a substantial part of a humanising pedagogy?

“What we care about may be things tangible, such as our children or our money, things intangible, such as democracy or norms of respect and tolerance. Schools look after all of these for our society, and consequently the issue of trust is vital in the study of schools.”

(Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000, p. 548)

As I have highlighted throughout this chapter, and as the quote above reminds us of: schools *and* trust play a vital role in and for society. Therefore, understanding trust and trust relationships in the school context is pivotal (Bryk & Schneider 2003; Spier 2013). “Students must trust their teachers in order to learn. School personnel must trust one another in order to cooperate toward accomplishing a common goal. Schools must be trusted by the communities that sponsor and fund them.” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000, p. 551) According to Da Silva (2009), some attention has been paid to the aspect of developing trust in the classroom. However, he criticises that trust has generally not been accepted as an important and integral part of education but is usually regarded “as a means to the end of improving learning of the content of the subject” (*ibid.*, p. 98).

Research has shown that trusting relationships in a school community contribute positively to teacher-student relationships (Dobransky & Frymier 2004; Wentzel 2012), the student’s academic performance and test scores (Bryk & Schneider 2003; Goddard *et al.* 2001; Klem & Connell 2004), student’s academic motivation (Jasmi & Hin 2014), school attendance (Klem & Connell 2004), and school reform efforts (Bryk & Schneider 2003). “Students who perceive that their teachers like them, are fair, and have high expectations of them tend to show high levels of engagement, including paying attention, staying focused, and participating more in class.” (Durnford 2010, p. 29) In their multidisciplinary analysis of the nature, meaning, and measurement of trust, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) also found that trust is seen to be related to a smooth functioning of schools, positive school climate, participative decision

processes, and overall school effectiveness. For schools to function well, they conclude, schools need trust (*ibid.*). In a similar vein, Goddard *et al.* (2001) argue that school communities should build on trust. They report that “[t]he need to build trust is signaled by the strength of the effect of trust on student achievement” (*ibid.*, p. 14).

Trust is often mainly considered a functional instrument to learning (and trusting) pre-defined knowledge and associated with outcomes such as higher test scores, achievements, effectiveness, and productivity of both student and school personal. However, the moral and social dimensions of trust are often ignored. Therefore, this perspective can be related to considerations of a banking model approach of education referred to earlier in this chapter, as this approach neglects individual responsibility and the social dimension in learning and teaching too. Yet, if accepted that trust is a facet of human social relationships (Weber & Carter 1998), trust offers much more than “success” defined and measured by quantifiable academic performances and high grades.

“Trust [...] is vital to human survival, learning, and functioning in a complex society. Trust can keep participants in a community or collective in line. [...] Teachers must trust students and parents in order to cooperate with them in accomplishing common goals. Schools play a special role in society and as such the relationships of trust in schools are vital.”

(Goddard *et al.* 2001, pp. 6–7)

Despite the importance of trust and potential positive forces that scholars have identified so far, research on interpersonal trust in the school context is scarce (Wentzel 2012). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) assert that the scientific interest in trust in education contexts is only at the beginning. While they made this claim nearly two decades ago, it remains, however, valid to date. Four significant exceptions are Curzon-Hobson (2002), Da Silva (2009), Ennis and McCauley (2002), and Hansen (1998). While Curzon-Hobson (2002) and Da Silva (2009) explicitly advocate for a “pedagogy of trust” and discuss notions of trust in pedagogy on a more

theoretical level, Hansen (1998) and Ennis and McCauley (2002) focus their analysis on concrete practices of teachers working mainly in urban secondary schools.

With a focus on teaching and learning in higher education, Curzon-Hobson (2002) proposes that (higher) learning should be characterised by a sense of trust between the student and the teacher within a transforming and dialogical learning environment. Combining pedagogy and trust, the author defines a “pedagogy of trust” as “an experience of care and mutual respect, yet also one that demands much of the student” (*ibid.*, p. 268). In this respect, Curzon-Hobson (2002) regards the pedagogy to be linked to notions of freedom, risk, and overcoming.

Similarly, Da Silva (2009) urges to consider trust as a key part of the educational experience. Underpinned by the rationale that education should be based on developing both intelligences *and* relationships, he proposes a pedagogy that is aimed to develop “authentic trust at all levels of education and throughout the complete context in which education is delivered” (Da Silva 2009, p. 97). In this pedagogical project, Da Silva further suggests that the teacher has the main responsibility to present her trustworthiness to the students “and for being authentically trusting of students in the way in which the curriculum is practiced in the classroom” (*ibid.*). Following this line of thought, he adds that the focus on trust in the classroom is, at best, based on both (a) a conscious discussion of trust and (b) an overall process that involves authentic trust among teachers and students. Thus, both the cognitive dimension as well as the moral and social dimensions of trust can be included in actual classroom practices. Eventually, as Da Silva points out, students can learn *about* trust and at the same time *experience* trust in action. As a result, in addition to learning what trust means and what it (theoretically) entails, the actual experience of trust may allow to also (practically) maintain trust-based relationships in educational contexts.

Hansen (1998) reports in his study how Ms. Smith, Mr. Peters, and Ms. Walsh, three teachers working in different settings and subject matters, define teaching as both an intellectual

and moral endeavour. From the analysis of interviews and observations, he concludes that the development of a sense of community and of trust in the classroom is crucial for intellectual and moral life to flourish. According to Hansen (1998), this classroom environment is mainly driven by the personal initiative and commitment from teachers. “It is the person in the role, not the role itself, who brings education to life in the classroom.” (*ibid.*, p. 404)

Ennis and McCauley (2002), then, examine strategies of US urban high school teachers to encourage “hard-to-teach” students to engage in their learning and comply with class rules. As a result of interview and observational data, they found that the teachers created a curriculum of educational trust by encouraging the students to participate in learning, by using strategies of second chances, and by fostering student ownership. Most importantly, Ennis and McCauley (2002) support Hansen’s (1993) findings that trusting environments in an educational context “are best created in classrooms in which students and teachers can work co-operatively over an extended time-period to construct trusting relationships” (p. 152).

While these scholars often focus on higher education and/or marginalised students, they agree that the relationship between the teacher and the students is considered key to learning about and experiencing trust. As Durnford (2010) argues, learning occurs in a relational context. “In elementary schools, students and teachers are together for most of a 6 hour day, 5 days a week. During this time, relationships are developed and a relational atmosphere in the classroom is formed. The relational tenor of the classroom is read and responded to by students and teachers.” (*ibid.*, p. 10) Therefore, it is important to emphasise that “the teacher-student relationship can serve as a positive model for future relationships that include some degree of dependency, behavioral expectations, and some level of trust” (Durnford 2010, p. 40). Thus, cultivating trusting relationships in the classroom can eventually have an impact on (positive) relationships outside the classroom context<sup>15</sup> – an educational objective important in a humanising pedagogy.

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<sup>15</sup> Both a high and low level of teacher trust may have an impact beyond the classroom (Durnford 2010).

According to Durnford (2010), literature on trust in teacher-student relationships has been primarily concerned with examining the degree to which students trust their teachers. Thus, she further argues, most researchers limited their focus “on only one side of the relationship, the students’ level and experience of trust” (*ibid.*, p. 1). Accordingly, in her examination of teacher-student trust in middle school classrooms, Durnford shifted her attention to teachers’ perceptions of trust. More specifically, on the basis of mainly teacher interviews and questionnaires, she explored teachers’ experiences of trust in the school context and focused on how teachers’ trust in students affect their teaching methods and behavioural practices. Her results suggest that teachers can influence the students’ abilities to demonstrate trust by adjusting the classroom environment and using teaching strategies that are based on, for example, working in pairs or small groups, using praise, increasing supportiveness in students, and encouraging students with positive motivations – practices that could be seen as in accordance with a humanising pedagogy.

In line with these findings, Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003) advocate that educators use classroom experiences to practice trust-building. They argue that experiences such as dialogue groups, problem-solving workshops, simulations, role-plays and subsequent debriefing sessions might allow students “to develop their trust building skills in a safe environment that is somewhat detached from more emotionally-charged and less controlled environments where trust may be hard to establish and easy to break” (*ibid.*, para. 39). Overall, these findings point to the reciprocity of relational trust (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000; Weber & Carter 1998), thus indicating that “[t]he act of trusting may increase the chances that a student will act in a trustworthy manner” (Durnford 2010, p. 26).

Literature highlighting the significance of trust in educational contexts often refers to collaboration, learner autonomy, agency, and voice as key to trust development. As the findings from Curzon-Hobson (2002), Da Silva (2009), Durnford (2010), and Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003) – briefly and exemplary – outlined above show, a collaborative approach in teaching



and learning may have a positive impact on a trusting relationship. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) explain this by the fact that cooperative learning and, for example, project-based learning involve higher levels of interdependence and, thus, require higher levels of trust. In this respect, Da Silva (2009) explains that trust is often regarded as a condition on which cooperative learning can be based, while he suggests that trust-building should be considered an important and necessary part of teaching methods that emphasise cooperative learning. For him, learning autonomy or self-directed learning includes that the teacher “needs to be both trusting of, and trustworthy towards students” (*ibid.*, p. 90).

Although there exists no single accepted definition of trust, all scholars agree that trust should be a focus in teaching and learning and incorporated as central element in the curriculum and in day-to-day classroom interactions.<sup>16</sup> In the next section, I explore one strategy and (artistic) educational experience that can be thought to both require and offer trust in a classroom context: theatre education.

### **2.2.3 Theatre education: Providing a space for dialogue, sociality, and trust**

Of all formal educational subjects, arts education is one that is often claimed to concentrate on encouraging openness, interdependence, inquisitiveness, agency, and ownership (Catterall 2002; Goldberg 2011; Jeffers 2009) – characteristics that can be considered fundamental in a humanising pedagogy (e.g. Bartolomé 1994; Freire 2017; Nwafor & Nwogu 2014; Salazar 2013). Research scholars have highlighted some of the long-term benefits of engaging in artistic activities such as classroom music, dance, and theatre projects. In this regard, research demonstrates positive impacts on students’ personal development (Matarasso 1997), their

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<sup>16</sup> It is important to highlight at this point that teacher-student trust is not intrinsically good or bad (Durnford 2010). In fact, trusting too much or trusting too little may give rise to various risks (see Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000).

learning skills and academic performance (Catterall 2002; McCarthy *et al.* 2004), as well as their development of prosocial attitudes and behaviours (McArthur & Law 1996). In addition, researchers have stressed how arts in education and related teaching and learning practices may foster empathy (Aden 2014; Greenwood 2011; Jeffers 2009), and social cohesion and community empowerment (Mills & Brown 2004).

Among the arts disciplines, theatre and drama<sup>17</sup> in particular have been heralded by educators, researchers, and students themselves as providers of a (safe) space wherein participants may actively and collaboratively learn (Byram & Fleming 1998; Giebert 2014; McLauchlan & Winters 2014; McNaughton 2011; Medina & Campano 2006; Singh 2004). Scholars have – if often only briefly – highlighted that theatre and drama need, potentially generate, and even multiply trust in the classroom (e.g. Boudreault 2010; Bundy 2003; DICE Consortium/Cziboly 2010; Moore 2004; Singh 2004). Moore (2004), for example, claims that due to the drama context, children get engaged with each other and may develop social skills. In her eyes, this positive collaborative engagement helps to build trust and strong relationships (*ibid.*). In education, theatre and drama thus seem to offer promising opportunities to humanise the classroom and involve trusting attitudes and behaviour.

Studies that have been conducted on the benefits of theatre in the context of the classroom have approached the subject mostly from educational, cognitive, psychological, and critical pedagogical perspectives. More specifically, research studies have investigated the impact of theatre play most prominently on foreign language learning and teaching (Belliveau & Kim 2013; Even 2008; Fratini 2008; Ryan-Scheutz & Colangelo 2004; Schewe 2007, 2016;

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<sup>17</sup> Authors such as Singh (2004) use the terms theatre and drama interchangeably. Although a distinction between both terms can be made (e.g. Tschurtschenthaler 2013), it is beyond the scope of this study to further and thoroughly discuss the complexity and historicity of drama (in education) versus theatre (in education). Most commonly, drama is claimed to be process-orientated (with a focus on drama exercises and related pedagogical implications), while theatre is said to be more product-oriented (with a focus on a scripted performance acted in front of an audience) (see Tschurtschenthaler 2013, pp. 20–37; DICE Consortium/Cziboly 2010, pp. 16–17, for reviews).

Stinson & Winston 2011; Tschurtschenthaler 2013)<sup>18</sup> and intercultural learning and teaching (Aden 2008; Byram & Fleming 1998; Fleming 2002; Frimberger 2016; Greenwood 2001; Piazzoli 2010). In addition, scholarly interest has been devoted to impacts that theatre and drama can have on personal growth (e.g. improved self-confidence and increased willingness to step outside the comfort zone; see McLauchlan & Winters 2014), motivation for learning, the ability of risk-taking, and the competence of “what it is to be human” (see DICE Consortium/Cziboly 2010; Eriksson *et al.* 2014). Overall, theatre/drama is described as a “powerful teaching tool” (Boudreault 2010), “powerful learning tool” (Moore 2004), “natural activity” (Schewe 2007), “an imitation of real life” (Fleming 2004), and a “social art form” (Fasse 2011; Stinson & Winston 2011) offering a dialogical learning experience (Haun 2004).

Theatre is often based on cooperation, positive interdependence, and agency – the latter referred to as “*knowledge building* through drama and applied theatre employing both making and looking that is student-centred, -led, and -driven” (Wright 2011, p. 114; emphasis in original). Indeed, in classroom projects such as full-scale theatre productions, the student’s voice and cooperation (based on trust) are essential. In a theatre project, the students can assume different responsibilities – as actors, production managers, costume designers, and others (see Giebert 2014). Thereby, they get the opportunity to develop social competences through teamwork and potentially experience and learn (how) to trust. At the same time, the theatre context “provides room for students with different talents to contribute to the overall outcome, which can help to motivate heterogeneous learner groups [...]” (Giebert 2014, para. 21; see also Fasse 2011). Similarly, McNaughton (2011) sees the provision for opportunities for collaborative and cooperative learning essential to the pedagogy of drama education. She argues that the work on a common goal in a drama context allows whole-group trust to be built, “with

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<sup>18</sup> A large online research bibliography administered by the University College Cork (Scenario Editorial Office) demonstrates the ongoing scholarly interest in this topic: <https://www.ucc.ie/en/scenario/scenarioforum/researchbibliography/>

learners responding to and supporting each other's efforts and learning, both in and out of role" (*ibid.*, p. 128). During interviews and class discussions with pupils aged 10–12 years in Scottish primary schools, McNaughton (2011) found that drama helped the learners to discover "another side" of some of their classmates as well as that they all "worked together well" (p. 128).

Many scholars emphasise that theatre education often entails a student-centered classroom (e.g. Chan 2009; Singh 2004; Piazzoli 2010). In this regard, theatre in a classroom context provides a space where the pupils can be acknowledged as partners in the learning processes "with each other and with the teacher" (McNaughton 2011, p. 126) or, as Boudreault (2010, para. 5) puts it, where "every student is a potential teacher for the group". Therefore, within a theatre context, teaching and learning can be conceptualised as democratic processes where the teacher's role "is to offer strategies that facilitate learning rather than imposing it" (McNaughton 2011, p. 129). This educational environment thus involves the potentiality that both the students and the teachers become subjects (Freire 2017) in an active, participatory, and trusting way. In other words, "[t]heatre exercises often create a trusting relationship between the adults and children of the classroom through spaces for sociality" (Singh 2004, p. 72).

Beside the collaborative spirit that is often unlocked in classroom theatre work, many scholars highlight the approach to teaching and learning through whole-body and emotional engagement that is facilitated by the performative nature of theatre. In theatre, learners often use their whole body as a component of meaning-making (Aden 2013; Franks 2015; Yaman Ntelioglou 2011). They learn holistically (Giebert 2014; Haun 2004), with both halves of the brain (Jensen & Hermer 1998), their "head, heart, hands and feet" (Schewe 2016; Stöver-Blahak, Jogschies, & Schewe 2018). For McNaughton (2011), the physical and kinaesthetic aspect of experiences is particular to drama. She argues that learners "often move together, and explore relationships though their physical proximity, posture and gesture. This, the evidence suggests, brings them closer as learners and as human beings [...]" (*ibid.*, p. 129) In a nutshell,

theatre thus promotes “rich, empowering poetic moments in which a wide range of language and other symbolic forms, perspectives, emotions, and interpretations can be purposefully mingled and entertained as students have opportunities to linguistically, aesthetically, and imaginatively engage in active interaction with one another” (Belliveau & Kim 2013, p. 20).<sup>19</sup>

Overall, the premise of theatre as an artform stands in stark contrast to that of a banking model approach to teaching and learning. In theatre practices, students become (creative and active) producers, transformers, and creators of knowledge rather than consumers (Petersen Jensen 2008; Wright 2011). At the same time, the teacher becomes a supporter, facilitator, and learner her or himself (Andersen 2004). Teaching and learning take place in a safe forum (Fleming 2002; O’Connor, O’Connor, & Welsh-Morris 2006), where collaboration, agency, voice, ownership, and empowerment are vital to the success of the classroom project. Theatre thus offers “humanising and liberating potential” (O’Connor 2015, p. 370) where we have a perspective on the student as a human being who can have a voice (Chan 2009; O’Connor *et al.* 2006), touch emotions (Capra 2015), produce creative ideas, and develop positive relationships; “learners listen, speak, read, and write; they discuss and interpret; but they are also physically moving, cooperatively constructing situations, acting in them, and taking full responsibility for joint decisions” (Even 2008, p. 169).

Despite these potentialities, what counts for the principles of a humanising pedagogy and trust in education holds true here too: theatre and drama activities are not widely implemented in classrooms (Andersen 2004; Belliveau & Kim 2013), often overlooked and under-investigated by teachers, researchers, and policy makers (Belliveau & Kim 2013; DICE Consortium/Cziboly 2010).

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<sup>19</sup> Authors such as Belliveau and Kim (2013, p. 17) point out that the implementation of drama- and theatre-based instruction implicates also pedagogical challenges and issues that should not be ignored (e.g. the need for teacher training, scepticism from teachers and students).

## 2.3 Summary and outlook

“Do we want socially regulated workers with the *proper* attitudes for their respective rung on the workplace ladder? Or do we want empowered, learned, highly skilled democratic citizens who have the confidence and the savvy to improve their own lives and to make their communities more vibrant places in which to live, work, and play?”  
(Kincheloe 2008, p. 8; emphasis in original)

Paulo Freire would have certainly chosen the second option in Kincheloe’s rhetorical question. In fact, Freire’s (2017) educational work aimed at “empowering people, [...] furthering humanisation and [...] creating a more just world, one in which all human beings could actively contribute to their community and society in general” (Veugelers 2017, p. 410). Freire’s dedication and that of like-minded contemporaries can be an inspiration and timely contribution to our present-day socio-cultural situation that some refer to as “post-conflict and divided society” (Gill & Niens 2014). Education has always played a major role in – what others call broadly – the “interesting times” (see Žižek 2012), as educational experiences are believed to potentially contribute to solidarity, social cohesion, individual growth, and transformation.

The classroom is one of the first communities a child belongs to (Christensen & Aldridge 2013) and therefore, indeed, an environment where students may learn about and experience on a regular basis and from early on the value of positive and caring relationships, empowerment, and prosocial pursuits. However, some pedagogical approaches around the globe are believed to neglect and undermine these values. In what Freire (2017) terms the “banking” model of education, the teacher is the (only) expert and the student merely a (passive, submissive, accepting) object. Therefore, this educational model is claimed to present challenges to the current educational landscape as it might be counterproductive to the creation of a “just” world as understood by Freire (see Veugelers 2017 above). Against this backdrop, scholars, especially those working in a critical pedagogical framework, suggest a change of perspective and praxis in learning and teaching. More specifically, they advocate for a

humanising educational experience that stands in sharp contrast to a banking approach to education.

In a humanising pedagogy, the student – a “knower” (Huerta 2011) – explores teaching and learning actively and collaboratively with the teacher, in a learning milieu where voices, opinions, autonomy, responsibility, and empowerment are valued and supported. Dale and Hyslop-Margison (2010, p. 71) write that Freire employed the term “humanisation” to refer to “the desired relationship between students and teachers and ultimately between all persons; a relationship constructed on the basis of mutual trust and respect and the prevailing freedom to reason”. As a “product of ongoing interaction and discussion” (Powell 1996, p. 59), trust has the potential to make a pivotal contribution to humanisation practiced in the classroom. In fact, trust takes the spotlight away from a mere focus on *what* to teach and learn (e.g. math, science, foreign languages) and instead places the question on *how* to teach and learn in the forefront (e.g. with trust). In this regard, many scholarly voices insist on the fact that trusting commitment in the classroom may promote the possibility for social action and positive relationships (Farini 2012), learner autonomy, collaboration, and agency. These potentialities are said to be naturally predominating in theatre education, where trust is often an integral and central part of the (learning and teaching) endeavour.

As a method for working in harmony (Boudreault 2010) and a way to explore “who we are and how we live together” (Greenwood 2001, pp. 199–200), theatre and inherent creative processes afford that students and teachers are actively, reciprocally, and dialogically engaged in learning and teaching (i.e. education carried on by ‘A’ *with* ‘B’; see Freire 2017). Therefore, within a theatre context, students are (at best) recognised as being “at promise” rather than “at risk” (Wright 2011), in a safe classroom environment where learner agency, positive interdependence, dialogue, and collaboration are key to the success of the (theatre, learning, and teaching) project.

A humanising pedagogy, trust dynamics, and theatre processes share important parallel dimensions. Despite the implicit and (rarely) explicit link of trust and a humanising pedagogy in the literature, trust is often overlooked in empirical studies in the field of pedagogy (Farini 2012). In fact, more research is needed to explore practical examples of concrete interactions and teaching strategies on how trust and trusting behaviour may shape the classroom environment and classroom interactions (Durnford 2010; Mayer *et al.* 1995). Against this backdrop, questions that arise are: (a) What is trusting behaviour in an educational context?; (b) How and in what ways can a teacher build, maintain, or strengthen trust?; and (c) How and in what ways can trust shape interactions in the classroom?

The next chapter is concerned with how I approach trust in education. More specifically, I outline my combination of three perspectives and tools to propose my own interdisciplinary framework that I consider particularly interesting for the context of this study.



## Chapter 3 › An interdisciplinary approach on trust

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### 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Towards an interdisciplinary perspective on trust

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## 3.1 Introduction

### 3.1.1 Towards an interdisciplinary perspective on trust

“[T]rust is one of the most fascinating and fundamental social phenomena yet at the same time one of the most elusive and challenging concepts one could study.”

(Lyon, Möllering, & Saunders 2011, p. 1)

To explore a phenomenon as complex as trust, theoretical perspectives and analytical tools are required that afford a reflection on and investigation of its many facets and levels (Rousseau *et al.* 1998). Therefore, in my view, an interdisciplinary framework is both needed and desired. For the purpose of this thesis, I make use of and combine knowledge and perspectives from different areas such as educational research, professional development, sociology, psychology, semiotics, and business and communication studies. In this respect, I consider interdisciplinarity here – and, in fact, in general – to offer both theoretical richness and analytical opportunities that stem from a wide spectrum of research that we can learn from, build on, and potentially further develop.

Before I describe in detail concrete analytical approaches adopted in this study, I first outline theoretical underpinnings that build the framework guiding the remainder of this study. More specifically, I describe my humanising perspective on learning and teaching and define trust as an essential component of a humanising pedagogy, as derived from the literature presented earlier. I then clarify the conceptualisation of trust, and *trusting*, that will be used for the subsequent analysis and discussion of my findings. The interdisciplinary approach is seen as offering rich insights into the learning and teaching context under investigation here and, at the same time, as opening up new horizons in trust research.

### 3.1.2 Towards a humanising perspective on learning and teaching

With a focus on educational research, associated practices and perspectives, this study takes a humanising approach on all levels of analysis. This entails two main considerations. **First**, I propose trust as a main component of a humanising pedagogy. While some scholars implicitly assume classroom actions that entail, for example, trustworthy behaviour, respectful interaction, and positive attitudes to be crucial in learning and teaching situations, I consider an explicit attention to the various aspects of trust necessary. In fact, this mirrors the overall conceptualisation and potential ingredients of a humanising pedagogy as understood by scholars such as Freire (2017), Gill and Niens (2014), Huerta (2011), and Salazar (2013), namely the process of giving values such as respect, dignity, and friendship to other people, creating a safe learning environment that values active engagement and the well-being of community members on an emotional, social, and academic level, as well as associated practices that generally reflect care for individual students.

A humanising approach to education, as outlined in the preceding literature review and further developed here, emphasises that learning, teaching, and trust can be seen as forming a valuable unit. Therefore, a core concern of this research is the assumption that learning, teaching, and trust *should* be seen as a unit, both in research and practice. With this premise in mind, I argue that the acts of learning, teaching, and trusting should not be seen in isolation but, in contrast, as in strong relation to each other.

**Second**, addressing a methodological and analytical implication, a humanising approach entails that both the teacher and the students are considered learners. What can be seen as a major divergence between a banking model approach to education, a humanising perspective emphasises the crucial role and responsibilities of the classroom teacher(s) while at the same time highlighting the fact that all learners are important for the overall educational experience and success. Research investigating teacher-student trust has usually focused primarily on only

one side of the relationship: the students' level and experience of trust and therefore the degree to which students trust their teachers (Durnford 2010). I advocate, however, the inclusion of the perspectives of both students *and* teachers, without a limited focus on only one side of the equation. As stated earlier, education, as Freire (2017) argues, must begin with the solution to the teacher-student contradiction, so that a situation emerges where all classroom members are simultaneously teachers *and* students. Against this backdrop, I consider the (positive) relationship between the teacher and the students and their collective role and responsibilities as learners to be crucial for the development and maintenance of trust.

### 3.1.3 Towards trust(ing) as an embodied and visible process

There is no agreement on *one* definition of trust, as repeatedly stated in the review of the literature earlier. Building on (the affordances of) interdisciplinarity, the wide variety of definitions reflects both the complexity and ambiguity of the concept as well as the breadth of research from multiple fields of study. In this context, I do not intend to propose my own additional possible definition of the term “trust” here and thereby further, and unnecessarily, expand the discussion. Instead, for the purpose of this study, I follow Weber and Carter's (1998) conception of trust with a particular interest in interpersonal trust (Six 2007) and relational trust in an educational context (Durnford 2010). I broaden these perspectives by including additional dimensions from scholars such as Kuśmierczyk (2014) and Möllering (2013) to include trust *in action* and *trusting*.

Weber and Carter (1998, p. 10) view trust as “a thread that weaves two different people together to form a unified whole, the relationship”. They further define trust as socially constructed, “not an innate facet of a pre-ordained personality; it is a product of human social relationships [...]” (*ibid.*, p. 21). I adopt this perspective as it enables me to put an emphasis in my analysis on the actual social relationship, its collective nature and responsibility. Moreover,

and building on the assumptions previously outlined, Weber and Carter (1998) claim that reciprocal perspective taking is a crucial facet of trust.

“That each *take* the other’s perspective into account when decision-making such that emergent behaviors do not violate the moral standards of self, other, and relationship, is the crucial underlying dynamic of constructing the trust relationship. That each *believe* that the other is doing so, even outside of the other’s immediate presence, is the hallmark of the trust relationship.”

(Weber & Carter 1998, p. 23–24; emphasis in original)

Weber and Carter’s account of reciprocal perspective taking is in line with the understanding that trust involves positive or at least unharmed expectations, intentions, and (inter-)actions. In my view, this vision is consistent with a humanising approach as it puts a clear emphasis on trusting and caring relationships to advance the pursuit of humanisation. Overall, I thus consider Weber and Carter’s (1998) conceptualisation of trust as particularly relevant for the purpose of this study. First, it involves an (analytical) focus on a social and positive relationship and accompanied (inter-)actions. Second, it embraces the cognitive, moral *and* social dimensions of trust<sup>20</sup> – again, highly relevant in the context of a humanising approach to education, here with a particular focus, however, on the moral and social virtues.

Building on this understanding of the concept of trust, my analysis focuses on specific types of trust. First of all, interpersonal and relational trust are central in this study, limiting the analytical focus to interpersonal interactions between two or more persons that occur in daily (learning and teaching) situations. In Six’s (2007, p. 303) terms, interpersonal trust-building is “an interactive process in which both individuals learn about each other’s trustworthiness in different situations”. While Six focuses on interpersonal trust in dyadic work relations within organisations, I apply it to an educational context and extend the analysis to the level of the

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<sup>20</sup> This fact is also highlighted by Da Silva (2009, p. 86) with reference to Weber and Carter’s (1998) work.

classroom community. Thus, I furthermore adopt Durnford's (2010, p. 13) definition of relational trust as "a type of trust that is found in the classroom where students and teachers see each other and rely on each other on a daily basis". Following these perspectives, I place a particular focus on interaction-based trust that is built on the basis of repeated face-to-face contacts between two or more individuals (Bachmann & Inkpen 2011). This form of trust can be differentiated, for example, to political trust, societal trust, or institutional-based trust, often focusing on macro-level arrangements (Bachmann 2011; Bachmann & Inkpen 2011; Kramer 1999; Lyon *et al.* 2011).

A particular focus on the interpersonal relationship allows to highlight and explore the interactive process and reciprocal character of trust, as an individual is simultaneously trustor and trustee (Six, Nooteboom, & Hoogendoorn 2010). Thus, the concept of reciprocity – trust achieved in and through interaction (Elsy, Monrouxe, & Grant 2014) – is also important for the subsequent data analysis. Taken all together, these focal points fit to Weber and Carter's (1998) definition presented earlier. Against this backdrop, and for the purpose of this study, I conceptualise interpersonal trust building and trust maintenance in an educational context as an interactive process in which two or more individuals learn together about each other's trustworthiness in different learning and teaching situations. The focus on interaction-based trust and, therefore, on actual interactions in a relationship, however, implies a further prioritisation that I consider relevant for the context of this research.

Overall, I focus on trust *in action* as conceptualised by Kuśmierczyk (2014). According to this approach, I consider trust as an "embodied and visible process" (*ibid.*, p. 39). I view this perspective as specifically interesting and relevant as it affords me to acknowledge trust as a visible process, thus documentable by means of (audio-visual) technology and explorable for scientific study. Moreover, the emphasis on the interactional dimension of trust allows to pay special attention to actions and reactions as crucial elements of the process of exchange.

In sum, I focus on interpersonal and interaction-based trust with a particular attention to its visible, embodied, and reciprocal character. With these considerations in mind, and following a distinction made by Möllering (2013), I broaden my overall analytical interest to incorporate *trusting*, as a noun and verb (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran 1999), reflecting the need to study both the activities and potential effects of trusting (*ibid.*, p. 300). In this respect, I recognise the process character of trust, acknowledging “that the ‘product’ of trust is always unfinished and needs to be worked upon continuously” (Möllering 2013, p. 286).

## 3.2 The research questions

As I have pointed out above, Six (2007) construes interpersonal trust-building as an interactive process that involves two or more individuals learning about each other's trustworthiness. Based on this understanding, Six further argues that previous experiences, positive feedbacks, and overall "trusting behaviour" have a strong impact on the development and maintenance of trust. In a similar vein, Haas and Deseran (1981) explain that "[in] social exchange, [...] each partner in a relationship must somehow persuade the other of his or her trustworthiness" (p. 3). Then, what exactly is "trusting behaviour" and in what ways do relationship partners demonstrate trustworthiness? It becomes evident from the literature reviewed earlier that these and related questions are particularly interesting to explore in an educational context and to make processes and practices of a humanising pedagogy subject of the discussion.

Da Silva (2009) is one of the few scholars to explicitly advocate for a "pedagogy of trust". However, he states in his publication that "details of classroom practice and activities is beyond the scope of this paper" (p. 97). In his eyes, practices and activities always depend on the teacher's context and individual style. What was beyond the scope of his work turns out to be the main focus of the present study. In fact, in the framework of this study, I am specifically interested to explore and learn from concrete teaching and learning practices as they naturally occur in classroom situations. Therefore, I ask following questions:

**TABLE 3: The research questions**

1.	<b>What are "signs of trust" in an educational context?</b>
2.	<b>How and in what ways can a teacher build, maintain, or strengthen trust?</b>
3.	<b>How and in what ways can "signs of trust" shape interactions in the classroom?</b>
4.	<b>How can "signs of trust" be analysed?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ What does it bring to look at trust with a critical incident analysis?</li><li>▪ What does it bring to look at trust with a relational signalling approach?</li><li>▪ What does it bring to look at trust with a multimodal interaction analysis?</li></ul>



### 3.3 Analytical framework(s)

To investigate trust in an educational context and answer the research questions outlined in table 3, I propose to use a critical incident analysis (CIA), a relational signalling approach (RSA), and a multimodal interaction analysis (MIA). The variety of reasons why I consider this framework as particularly useful for the purpose of this research as well as its limitations are anticipated in the table below and discussed in greater detail on the following pages.

<p><b>CIA</b> Critical incident analysis</p>	<p>(+) focus on concrete events, human experiences and interactions (“incidents”)            (+) structured but yet flexible and adaptable reflective approach            (+) facilitates an in-depth analysis of qualitative data, “thick descriptions”            (-) time-consuming, limited generalisability of findings, subjectivity of analysis</p>	<p>Main theory: Bott &amp; Tourish (2016); Bruster &amp; Peterson (2013); Copas (1984); Flanagan (1954); Green Lister &amp; Crisp (2007); Hughes (2007); Mohammed (2016); Münscher &amp; Kühlmann (2011); Tripp (1993)</p>
<p><b>RSA</b> Relational signalling approach</p>	<p>(+) analytical focus on behaviour and actions as perceivable (positive) relational signals            (+) suitable to the understanding of trust as socially and interactionally constructed            (-) scarcely applied in research on trust; not probed yet in research on educational matters</p>	<p>Lindenberg (1988, 1998, 2000); Six (2007); Six <i>et al.</i> (2010)</p>
<p><b>MIA</b> Multimodal interaction analysis</p>	<p>(+) permits to (theoretically and analytically) embrace the complexity of social interaction            (+) facilitates an explicit and purposeful integration of the full repertoire of meaning-making resources (linguistic, visual, actional) into analysis and interpretation of data (focus on how trust is “done” by research participants)            (+) original approach, adding a (multimodal) dimension that is long overdue in trust research            (-) allows no direct claims on consciousness, inner feelings and thoughts (as the focus lies on a person’s expressions)</p>	<p>Cazden <i>et al.</i> (1996); Jewitt (2013); Jewitt <i>et al.</i> (2001); Kress (2009, 2013); Kress <i>et al.</i> (2001); Kuśmierczyk (2014); Mondada (2013); Norris (2004, 2011, 2013, 2016); Stivers &amp; Sidnell (2005)</p>

### 3.3.1 Critical incident analysis: Learning from reflective practice

Critical incident analysis (CIA) can be considered both a pedagogical theory and a methodological tool. In an educational context, Tripp (1993) is among the prominent scholars promoting the use of a CIA as an analytical approach to facilitate reflection on teaching situations – “critical incidents” – with the objective of allowing teachers, educators, and other practitioners to develop professional judgments and practices. Used across different contexts, working environments, and (research) disciplines, a CIA has been described as an “empowering and supportive process” (Mohammed 2016, p. 29) and as a “learning and teaching tool [...] adaptable across both professional and social cultures” (Green Lister & Crisp 2007, p. 57). Researchers and practitioners alike highlight that a CIA, as an analytical tool, offers both adaptability and flexibility (e.g. Bott & Tourish 2016; Flanagan 1954; Keatinge 2002; Kempainen 2000).<sup>21</sup>

In the context of teacher education in health and social work, Green Lister and Crisp (2007) qualify a CIA as a “flexible method of promoting critical reflection” (p. 57) and thereby highlight one of the main affordances of the CIA approach: the facilitation of critical (self-) reflection and professional development. Drawing on this understanding, scholars such as Bruster and Peterson (2013), Copas (1984), Mohammed (2016), Sautter and Hanna (1995), and Tripp (1993) show that the analysis of critical incidents can be used to reflect on and, eventually, improve (one’s own) teaching practice.

The theoretical logic behind (the use of) a CIA can be understood with reference to the broader concept referred to as the “critical incident technique” (CIT) introduced by US psychologist John F. Flanagan (1954). With roots in industrial and organisational psychology (Butterfield *et al.* 2005), CIT is characterised as a holistic methodological approach in its original conception suggesting a set of procedures for the collection, analysis, interpretation,

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<sup>21</sup> As Butterfield *et al.* (2005) argue, this flexibility has, however, led to inconsistent terminology used across various studies.

and reporting of data (Copas 1984; Flanagan 1954). With an emphasis on the analysis and assessment of failures of procedures or human error, CIT has first been developed for the documentation and determination of critical job requirements<sup>22</sup> such as in aviation (Flanagan 1954), retail management (Andersson & Nilsson 1964), anaesthesia (Craig & Wilson 1981), nursing (Byrne 2001; Keatinge 2002; Kemppainen 2000), and service management (Gremler 2004; Roos 2002). Ultimately, this type of research elicited data that facilitated the selection, training, classification, and evaluation of performance standards for specific occupational groups (Byrne 2001). In an educational context, Copas (1984), for example, uses the CIT approach to focus on student teachers' perceptions of "effective" and "ineffective" behaviours of supervising teachers. Her research findings then eventually lead to suggestions for critical job requirements for cooperating teachers.

Scholars adopting a traditional CIT approach have often been primarily interested in identifying incidents with a defined negative impact. However, in the contexts of health, education, and social work, the central focus shifted: the emphasis here is "less on examining failure, and more on the development of critical reflection" (Green Lister & Crisp 2007, p. 47). In line with this perspective, my analytical approach adheres to the principles of a CIA as it is proposed and applied by Green Lister and Crisp (2007), Mohammed (2016), and Tripp (1993). More precisely, I consider the necessity *and* facilitation of critical reflection, stemming from following a CIA approach, fruitful for the overall analytical process. Another capacity of a CIA that I find particularly useful is the opportunity to focus the analysis, interpretation, and presentation of my data on actual processes, practices, and (inter-)actions, while at the same time highlighting positive events, possibilities, and challenges (of improvement).

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<sup>22</sup> For Flanagan (1954), using the CIT in the context of the Aviation Psychology Program of the United States Army Air Forces during World War II, these requirements include those that "have been demonstrated to have made the difference between success and failure in carrying out an important part of the job assigned in a significant number of instances" (p. 329).

Studies following the tenets of a CIT or a CIA often primarily use a quantitative approach within a positivist paradigm (Butterfield *et al.* 2005; Chell & Pittaway 1998). A CIT and a CIA are, however, appropriate to be used for exploratory research. Münscher and Kühlmann (2011), who consider the critical incident technique “increasingly important for trust research” (p. 161), argue that it allows the generation of data that can be used qualitatively. They point out that the analysis of critical incidents provides the possibility to evidence behaviours involved in the creation, strengthening, or destruction of trust (*ibid.*). Although Münscher and Kühlmann (2011) focus their methodological reflections on the CIT as a tool to both collect and analyse data, I use CIA, as mentioned earlier, mainly as a tool to enhance my data analysis. As explained in more detail in the methodological section of this study, I used, in fact, video ethnography as a main tool to collect my observational data. Thus, in the context of my qualitative framework, a CIA here allows me to explore the phenomenon and dynamics of trust in the specific context of teaching and learning. In concrete terms, a CIA entails two major and promising analytical approaches that I propose to adapt for the specific purpose of my study.

First, I, as the researcher, choose the “critical incidents” and, hence, decide on the key situations considered for analysis according to pre-defined criteria. If a critical incident analysis is used, a traditional approach has been to ask respondents to select and describe specific incidents, such as situations involving their own or a partner’s behaviour (e.g. that they think has been critical for creating, strengthening, or destroying trust; Münscher & Kühlmann 2011). As briefly mentioned above, the focus of these studies often lies on (the development of) critical *self*-reflection (e.g. Green Lister & Crisp 2007; Tripp 1993).

Focusing on directly observed and (audio-visually) documented interactions from a researcher’s perspective potentially avoids limitations that scholars so often highlight if data is collected (and analysed) on the basis of interviews or questionnaires, namely: hesitation of respondents to disclose critical experiences in relation to trust development, memory distortion,

no account of usable critical incidents, or no willingness to participate at all (Münscher & Kühlmann 2011). Moreover, it is important in this regard, as Münscher and Kühlmann (2011) further argue, to highlight that processes such as trust dynamics often take place unconsciously or without further reflection; it is thus “difficult for respondents to recall detailed and observable aspects of incidents that were critical for trust development” (*ibid.*, p. 168).<sup>23</sup> Against this backdrop, I was committed to observing and documenting critical incidents myself as the researcher, eventually facilitating a rich data analysis and interpretation. However, within this approach, objectivity can be considered a major limitation. Flanagan (1954) himself addresses this criticism, as he makes aware that the analysis of critical incidents stems from specific behaviours, “rather than collecting opinions, hunches, and estimates” (p. 355).

In their review of the evolution of the CIT from 1954 to 2004, Butterfield *et al.* (2005) highlight the fact that early writing often put an emphasis on direct observation (e.g. Flanagan 1954; Oaklief 1976). However, as they illustrate in their review, studies using CIT procedures actually only very rarely draw on data from direct observations.<sup>24</sup> Butterfield *et al.* (2005) name the time-consuming nature of observations and increased resources as possible explanations, a recurrent finding in other studies (e.g. Bott & Tourish 2016; Hughes 2007; Münscher & Kühlmann 2011). However, for the analysis of interpersonal trust *in action* and trusting behaviours in an educational context more specifically, the approach to analyse data emerging from direct observation from a researcher (here: ethnographic observational data) is regarded appropriate and beneficial in contrast to retrospective self-report.<sup>25</sup> The question remains: what is a “critical incident”?

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<sup>23</sup> See Bott and Tourish (2016, pp. 282–283) for an interesting discussion on “the limitations of recall” as a flaw to the critical incident technique and some suggestions to overcome this limitation.

<sup>24</sup> An example (not included in the review of Butterfield *et al.*) is the study of Pescosolido (2002) in which the author combines observation with group CIT interviews to analyse group emotional management.

<sup>25</sup> Münscher and Kühlmann (2011) argue that face-to-face interviews are “the most promising data collection technique” (p. 165) in the context of using the CIT in trust research. I would like to challenge

Flanagan (1954) defines an “incident” as “any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act” (p. 327). For an incident to be “critical”, Flanagan elaborates that the purpose or intent of the act need to be clear to the observer and that its consequences need to be definite (*ibid.*). Traditionally, research analysing critical incidents has been occupied with “extremes of behaviour”. These can be regarded, as Copas (1984) states, “the most readily observable and the ones that make a significant positive or negative contribution to the general aims of the activity” (p. 50). However, in an educational context, Tripp (1993) redefines critical incidents as “very commonplace events that occur in routine professional practice which are critical in the rather different sense that they are indicative of underlying trends, motives and structures” (pp. 24–25). He further explains that these incidents can appear to be “typical” rather than “critical”<sup>26</sup>, as it is, ultimately, the researcher who renders incidents “critical” through analysis:

“[C]ritical incidents are not ‘things’ which exist independently of an observer and are awaiting discovery like gold nuggets or desert island, but like all data, critical incidents are created. Incidents happen, but critical incidents are produced by the way we look at a situation: a critical incident is an interpretation of the significance of an event.”

(Tripp 1993, p. 8)

Green Lister and Crisp (2007) explain that the change of perspective – from something “extreme” to something possibly “typical” – affords to consider both positive *and* negative

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this proposition. However, as I did not adhere to the CIT and associated set of procedures to *collect* my data (adapting here mainly the process suggested by a CIA to *analyse* my data), constructive criticism seems impossible and further methodological suggestions related to data collection unfair and misplaced. Nonetheless, I consider a critical reflection on using direct observations as (additional) data necessary, as this approach might yield, amongst others, a richness of details that interviews might not enable.

<sup>26</sup> As an alternative to the word “critical”, Norman *et al.* (as cited in Keatinge 2002, p. 34) suggest “revelatory” to emphasise the potential everyday incidents that might be the focus of a study. While I regard this suggestion as interesting, I stick to the “critical incident” to not further the process of inconsistent terminology (see Butterfield *et al.* 2005).

encounters: “By proposing that it is the commonplace rather than the dramatic incident which is the material for analysis, it prevents concentration on the minor mishaps or major catastrophes which the term critical incident might suggest.” (p. 48) In a similar vein, Mohammed (2016, p. 25) argues that a “critical incident” does not need to be something dramatic but, especially in a teaching context, can be something “that makes you stop and think” or an event that raises questions. I adopt this understanding in my analytical approach so that I take into consideration potentially commonplace events that occur in everyday teaching contexts, in contrast to solely identifying and highlighting “dramatic” or exceptional incidents.

In this study, I take various teaching objectives as overarching incidents, such as “the development of the play script”. At the same time, I also consider (recurrent) key activities of school lessons, for example the distribution of tasks, group work, moderated group discussions, and feedback sessions. These incidents are then made critical through analysis, as they offer the basis for an exploration of concrete interactions and (trusting) behaviour. The overarching critical incident “the development of the play script” is, for example, subdivided by critical incidents such as the allocation of roles, spontaneous role-playing, and a collaborative writing exercise. Overall, I use for my analysis mainly critical incidents that I directly observed and documented, providing the opportunity for a rich and contextualised description that reflects the real-life experience (Hughes 2007). I complement my own choices, descriptions, and interpretations with views and perspectives from my research participants (see chapter 4.3.3).

Beside the consideration of “critical incidents” and the decision to choose these incidents myself, I adapt a second promising analytical approach that comes with a CIA. In fact, CIA typically provides a set of questions that help to reflect upon, critically analyse, and report findings – to get from an incident to a “critical” incident. Green Lister and Crisp (2007, pp. 49–50) devised a “critical incident analysis framework” that is adapted for the purpose of this study. The authors suggest to present a narrative that includes the description of an event (the incident

selected), reflections, and a critical re-examination of knowledge, skills, and values. They propose headings and corresponding questions that are considered particularly interesting but slightly adapted here, as the angle of perspective and overall purpose of the research differ.

The table below depicts the questions guiding my analysis and report of the incidents. Findings of the study of Green Lister and Crisp (2007) highlight the fact that their framework can be used in a “continuum of ways” (p. 54). Against this backdrop, I reframe or omit some of their suggested questions mainly relevant for their specific research purpose<sup>27</sup>. I add others that are always in relation to the relevance of my overall research questions.

<b>TABLE 5: Critical incident analysis framework</b> (inspired by and adapted from Green Lister & Crisp 2007, pp. 49–50)	
1. Account of the incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What happened, where and when? Who was involved, in what ways?</li> <li>▪ What was the broader context of the incident (e.g. previous involvement of pupils and/or teachers)?</li> <li>▪ What was the purpose of the contact/interaction?</li> </ul>
2. Initial responses to the incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What were my thoughts and feelings at the time of the incident?</li> <li>▪ What were the responses of key individuals to this incident? If not known, what do I think these might have been?</li> </ul>
3. Potentialities, issues, or dilemmas highlighted by this incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are the potentialities, issues and/or practice dilemmas identified as a result of this incident (for teaching and learning)?</li> </ul>
4. Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What have the teachers and/or pupils learned (e.g. about themselves, relationships with others, organisational procedures)?</li> </ul>
5. Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What were the outcomes of this incident for the various participants?</li> <li>▪ Are there ways in which this incident has led (or might lead to) changes in how the teachers and/or pupils think, feel, or act in particular situations?</li> <li>▪ What are my thoughts and feelings now about this incident?</li> </ul>

<sup>27</sup> In their study, Green Lister and Crisp (2007) explore the use of a CIA as an approach to critical reflection for social work students and practitioners. As concrete examples (*ibid.*, pp. 49–50), I do not include questions such as “What are the values and ethical issues which are highlighted by this incident?” and “How might an understanding of the legislative, organisational and policy contexts explain some aspects associated with this incident?” as I do not consider them relevant for my research.



In their study, Green Lister and Crisp (2007) find that social work students and practice teachers appreciated a CIA, amongst others, for providing a structured approach to critical analysis, encouraging reflection, and facilitating the integration of theory and practice. However, unlike its traditional use, a CIA is here not applied as a pure assessment and evaluation tool. For the study at hand, the critical analysis approach is considered particularly beneficial to facilitate and inform a (critical) deconstruction of specific everyday teaching and learning practices; in sum, to explore, analyse, report, and learn from teachers and pupils. Yet, this approach is not enough to explore trust in interaction and associated (signs of) behaviour. Therefore, an additional approach is needed: a relational signalling approach.

### **3.3.2 Relational signalling approach: Behavioural clues signalling trust**

We make the decision to trust someone (or not) based on characteristics and information we have at our disposal. Interpersonal relationship partners receive this information “either directly through interaction with the trustee or indirectly from third parties or from the context within which the interaction takes place [...]. The information comes to us through all the senses: hearing, seeing, smelling, feeling, and so on.” (Six 2007, p. 297) In this study, I adopt a so-called relational signalling approach (RSA) that allows me to capitalise on and explore this information, referred to as “relational signals”. In particular, I draw on the work of Lindenberg (1988, 1998, 2000), who first proposed a relational signalling theory in the context of cognitive sociology, and Six (2007) and Six *et al.* (2010), who apply the theory on interpersonal trust research in the context of governance and organisational studies. First, I provide a definition of a relational signal. Second, I explain the rationale behind a “solidarity frame” and “trust building actions”, two core ideas that I regard as particularly relevant for my study. Third, I provide an overview of the application of the RSA in this study.

Essential to the RSA is the acknowledgment of the existence of “relational signals”. According to Wittek (as cited in Six 2007, p. 289), relational signals are “behavioural clues that allow us to make inferences about other people’s interest in maintaining a mutually rewarding social relationship with us”. More concretely, we can differentiate between positive and negative relational signals:

“A *positive relational signal* is any behaviour by a first individual that contributes to the well-being of the second individual, usually entails a sacrifice from the first individual and is perceived by the second individual as an indication of the stability of the first individual’s solidarity frame. A *negative relational signal* is any behaviour by a first individual that decreases the well-being of the second individual who perceives it as an indication of the absence of the first individual’s solidarity frame.”

(Six *et al.* 2010, p. 291; emphasis added)

This definition of positive and negative relational signals implies two major considerations. First, positive relational signals are believed to contribute to the well-being of a relationship partner while negative relational signals might decrease an individual’s well-being and can be perceived as trust-inhibiting (Six 2007; Six *et al.* 2010). Second, a distinction is made between a so-called self-directed and an other-directed (solidarity) frame.<sup>28</sup> A solidarity frame is believed to suspend opportunistic behaviour and signal trustworthiness (Lindenberg 2000), hence a concept particularly interesting for this study. In other words, a positive relational signal is a signal to a relationship partner that one (as the actor) is in a solidarity (trust-enhancing) frame (Mühlau & Lindenberg 2003; Six 2007; Six *et al.* 2010).<sup>29</sup>

These considerations lead to my initial motivation for using a RSA: the affordance to focus on (positive) signs of behaviour in interactions. In fact, the approach allows me to

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<sup>28</sup> See Lindenberg (2000, pp. 16–21) and Mühlau and Lindenberg (2003, pp. 387–391) for a detailed description of their understanding of a “framing” theory in the context of a relational signalling theory.

<sup>29</sup> While relational signals can be sent, perceived, and interpreted (e.g. for clues for trust or distrust, see Six *et al.* 2010), there is a common perception that a frame cannot be chosen intentionally (Six 2007).

consider behaviour and specific actions as signals, a conceptualisation that fits to the view of trust as “embodied and visible process” (Kuśmierczyk 2014, p. 39). In addition, I view the emphasis on solidarity and on conditions such as well-being as particularly interesting and relevant in the context of trust research and a humanising approach to education more specifically.

Among the major scholarly contributions that use a relational signalling approach and inspired my study are Lindenberg (1998, 2000), Six (2007), and Six *et al.* (2010). In their study in which they explore actions that build interpersonal trust, Six *et al.* (2010, pp. 295–296) differentiate between task-oriented actions (e.g. performing a task in a competent manner, meeting deadlines) and a relationship-oriented set of actions (e.g. giving compliments, clarifying mutual expectations, showing care and concern for the other) that can send positive relational signals and stabilise and trigger solidarity frames in the trustor and trustee. It is the latter set of actions that Six *et al.* (2010) call “trust building actions” – and that this study focuses on in the various critical incidents identified. While Six (2007) and Six *et al.* (2010) focus primarily on interpersonal trust in employment relations within organisations, I propose to consider their approach as both useful and informative for the specific context of educational research.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, they mostly focus on a dyadic level of analysis. I extend my analysis, however, to the level of the whole classroom community, as the teacher and her or his students might have different sorts of relationships with each other.<sup>31</sup> This is in line with Lindenberg’s (2000) understanding that other-directed frames “can best be stabilized in groups, especially through rites and rituals and a common purpose” (p. 23).

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<sup>30</sup> On the one hand, learning and teaching situations involve dynamics that can be associated to professional working relationships and communities (e.g. implicit and explicit power hierarchies, behavioural codes and expectations, collaborative group work). On the other hand, while not a focus in this study, the broader school context could be seen as manifesting similarities to an organisational structure that facilitates or constrains interpersonal trust to develop (e.g. by educational policies).

<sup>31</sup> While in the context of professional work relationships within organisations, Lindenberg (1998, 2000) and Six *et al.* (2010) emphasise the crucial role of group processes (such as common rites, rituals, and building a group identity) for the stabilisation of a solidarity frame. They therefore explicitly encourage researchers to extend the relational signalling theory to the level of broader units than dyads.

As we have seen, actions have the capacity, on the one hand, to develop and maintain interpersonal trust. However, Six (2007) and Six *et al.* (2010) furthermore suggest that actions, on the other hand, can also *trigger* trust: by signalling a trustee that one is in a solidarity frame, relationship partners might be motivated to also adopt and maintain a solidarity frame (Lindenberg 1998, 2000).<sup>32</sup> In this context, individuals are more likely to act from an other-directed frame if the actions of them around are guided by such a frame (Six 2007). With this understanding, the stability of a solidarity frame can be defined as a joint goal:

“The stability of normative [other-directed] frames becomes a joint goal and is likely to be jointly produced within the relationship itself through positive relational signals, as well as within the organization as a whole with the help of flanking arrangements that are part of the organizational context.”

(Six 2007, p. 292)

I perceive the conceptualisation of the solidarity frame as a joint goal consistent with a humanising approach to education, as “humanising the classroom should be seen as a joint venture [...]” (Nwafor *et al.* 2014, p. 424). Thus, in the context of my study, it is interesting to investigate what “positive relational signals” and “flanking arrangements” can look like in an educational context.

For individuals who want to build, maintain, and trigger trust, it is considered important that they “regularly perform actions that can be perceived by others as sending (unambiguously) positive relational signals” (Six *et al.* 2010, p. 291; highlighted in blue in figure 2 below). This proposition is in line with that of Haas and Deseran’s (1981) presented earlier: “[in] social exchange, [...] each partner in a relationship must somehow persuade the other of his or her trustworthiness” (p. 3). Thus, another major motivation for using a RSA stems from the

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<sup>32</sup> Solidarity, and solidary behaviour, can be considered to be in close relation to (dynamics of) trust. While a closer examination of the interrelationship of both concepts is beyond the scope of this study, scholars such as Heise (1998, p. 197), referring to a definition offered by the *American Heritage Dictionary*, view solidarity as “[a] union of interests, purposes, or sympathies among members of a group; fellowship of responsibilities and interests”. Lindenberg (1998, p. 104) defines solidarity in terms of behaviour “that involves a certain sacrifice for the actor” in various situations.

opportunity it offers to prioritise the social and interactional character of trust. On the one hand, this is in line with an understanding of trust as socially and interactionally constructed – a “product of human social relationships” (Weber & Carter 1998, p. 21). On the other hand, this is in stark contrast to the dominant approach to researching trust as a rational choice that has been criticised for focusing too narrowly on cognitive dimensions and (self-interest) calculative risk assessments (Kramer 1999; Weber *et al.* 2005).<sup>33</sup>

**FIGURE 2:** Types of relational signals

		NEGATIVE RELATIONAL CLUE	
		Absent	Present
POSITIVE RELATIONAL CLUE	Absent	Neutral	Unambiguously negative
	Present	Unambiguously positive	Ambiguous

(adopted from Six 2007, p. 294)

Overall, the adoption of a RSA is considered both interesting and original in the context of a study that investigates interpersonal trust and associated day-to-day interactions between a teacher and her pupils. In sum, this approach allows to focus the analysis on the conceptualisation, identification, and exploration of (unambiguously) positive relational signals in concrete teaching and learning situations and, hence, on actions (including common rites and rituals) and behaviour performed by the teacher and her students that signal a solidarity frame. Against this backdrop, I take a relational signalling perspective by highlighting signals in interactions that are perceived to contribute to the well-being of relationship partners (positive

<sup>33</sup> In the context of research in organisational behaviour, Kramer (1999) argues that “trust needs to be conceptualized not only as a calculative orientation toward risk, but also a social orientation toward other people and toward society as a whole” (p. 573).

relational clues), with an emphasis on individuals whose actions are seen to be guided by a solidarity frame (i.e. relationship-preserving behaviour; see Lindenberg 2000) *and* – this is very important here – inspire others to do the same. In an educational context, this approach is considered to be in strong relation to a humanising approach as conceptualised throughout this study.

As a final point, it is important that I clarify what I mean by “positive relational clue”. For the purpose of this research, I associate positive relational clues to the six attributes of trust defined as the main components of trust in the literature review: vulnerability, benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. Then, in my analysis, these attributes mainly serve the purpose as observable characteristics of a person, in the sense of Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003, para. 7) who state that “the more we observe these characteristics in another person, our level of trust in that person is likely to grow”. The RSA then allows me to focus on signs of behaviour such as a commitment to benevolence or honesty. While Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003) make only ability, integrity, and benevolence subject of their discussion, I include all six attributes of trust taken from various literature sources (see table 2).

I consider the analytical consideration given to the six attributes both essential and justifiable. In fact, these six key components of trust have been identified as common facets of trust, often used to understand and measure trust across research disciplines. The attributes are considered significantly important for trust relations in school contexts (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000) and allow “for a dynamic and multi-dimensional exploration of trust in the teacher-student relationship” (Durnford 2010, p. 3). It is important to note that the different components of trust all contribute separately to the level of trust, as Mayer *et al.* (1995), Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003), and Durnford (2010) highlight. However, all scholars agree that the different attributes are always related to and influence one another. This understanding allows me to consider the six attributes analytically as individual, observable and explorable entities, while never in isolation but in constant interrelationship with all other attributes.

Besides a CIA and a RSA, a third approach is needed to reflect the many facets of trust and analyse the complexity inherent in communication and classroom interactions. Therefore, I propose to use a multimodal interaction analysis to extent and complement my framework.

### 3.3.3 Multimodal interaction analysis: Recognising learning, teaching, and trusting as multimodal processes

In their publication *Multimodal teaching and learning: the rhetorics of the science classroom*, Kress *et al.* (2001) vividly illustrate the ways that different modes<sup>34</sup>, such as speech, gesture, image, writing, and action interact in a classroom context to create complex meaning and an effective teaching and learning situation. Along with their criticism of educational research that recognises learning as a primarily linguistic accomplishment, Kress *et al.* (2001, p. 42) argue that “[in] the teaching and learning of science it is common practice for teachers to use demonstration, experiment and images to explain phenomena, and to set tasks which require a visual or actional response [...]”. However, in my view, this practice is by no means exclusive to the science classroom but can be thought of both a prerequisite and consequence of working on a classroom theatre project, the case under study here. Thus, the approach to teaching and learning – and to social interaction in general – that I adopt in this study draws on theoretical and methodological insights from multimodality (e.g. Bourne & Jewitt 2003; Jewitt *et al.* 2001; Kress 2010, 2013; Kress *et al.* 2001).

Generally speaking, multimodality challenges “the long-held and still widely dominant notion that ‘language’ is that resource for making meaning which makes possible the ‘expression’ of all thoughts, experiences, feelings, values, attitudes” (Kress 2013, p. 130). A

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<sup>34</sup> As defined by Kress (2010, p. 79), a mode is a “socially shaped and culturally given semiotic resource for making meaning”. Examples of modes he refers to include: image, writing, layout, gesture, speech, and 3D objects. Norris (2004) cautions us not to think of modes as “distinct entities” but rather as “loosely bounded units” (p. 152).

multimodal perspective on teaching and learning builds on the premise that meanings are made (and distributed, interpreted, and remade; see Jewitt 2013) through various forms and resources. I argue that the theoretical and analytical approaches that I am committed to follow in this study elicit the need for a multimodal perspective on teaching, learning, and trusting. There are three main reasons for making this claim.

**First**, teaching and learning can be considered multimodal per se. In fact, many scholars in various research fields such as education, communication, sociolinguistics, and semiotics highlight that the processes of learning and teaching are complex and multimodal (Cazden *et al.* 1996; de Saint-Georges 2013; Jewitt 2013; Kress 2013; Kress *et al.* 2001; Ryan, Scott, & Walsh 2010; Van Leeuwen 2015). In line with this literature, and as highlighted by Kress *et al.* (2001) above, I argue that learning should not be considered a purely linguistic accomplishment. This is even more true in the specific context this study investigates, as it involves interactions during theatrical work in a classroom context. Just as learning and teaching, theatre, as a performing art form, is typically considered multimodal (Aden 2013; Burn, Franks, & Nicholson 2001; Franks 2015; Petersen Jensen 2008; Toivanen, Mikkola, & Ruismäki 2012; Varelas *et al.* 2010; Yaman Ntelioglou 2011). Indeed, theatre usually involves and builds upon various meaning-making systems – and the “bodyliness of humans” as Kress (2010, p. 83) would call it.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, I suggest that theatre naturally brings multimodality to a classroom context.

**Second**, I posit that trust, as conceptualised in this study, can – and *should* – be considered multimodal as well. The emphasis on the dynamic, interactional, and reciprocal characteristics of (the attributes of) trust as well as the analytical focus on interpersonal, face-to-face encounters put a multimodal approach naturally in the foreground. Kuśmierczyk (2014)

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<sup>35</sup> “I particularly enjoyed working with my feet, my mouth, with our body, and our heart”, a pupil and research participant replied to my question what he thinks he has learned in respect to the theatre performance. While anticipating a finding that will be further discussed in the analysis section of this thesis, this statement makes obvious the multimodal nature involved in the various learning situations under observation in this study.



is one of the rare voices in trust research who explicitly acknowledges the multimodality of trust. In her analysis of job interview data in New Zealand, she highlights that “speech is only one of many resources available to the [interview] participants – modes such as gesture, gaze, as well as written text all intersect with speech in meaning-making, and thus are also fundamental in establishing trust in face-to-face interactions” (*ibid.*, p. 11).

**Third**, the relational signalling approach adopted here to explore behavioural clues and signals in interaction demands a multimodal understanding of communication. This has been anticipated in the introduction of the RSA, where I referred to the fact that the decision to trust (or not) depends on information that we receive “through all the senses: hearing, seeing, smelling, feeling, and so on” (Six 2007, p. 297).

In reference to all of these three considerations, I view a multimodal approach necessary and fruitful to explore the dynamics of trusting in the educational context under investigation here. Moreover, I regard a research attention to multimodality a much-needed addition and change of perspective, as research on trust, I argue, has too often neglected multimodality as an essential theoretical aspect in the analysis and interpretation of findings.

An underlying theory of multimodality in teaching and learning contexts was developed by the New London Group, a group of educators who met in September 1994 in New London in the United States to reflect on the state and future of literacy pedagogy (Cazden *et al.* 1996). In a context of “increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in the world” (*ibid.*, p. 60) and as a development away from traditional language-based literacy (Marchetti & Cullen 2015), they promote in their seminal article-long manifesto what they term a “pedagogy of multiliteracies” – focusing on “modes of representation much broader than language alone” (Cazden *et al.* 1996, p. 64).<sup>36</sup> With this background, studies in educational research have adopted a multimodal

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<sup>36</sup> In 2009, Cope and Kalantzis published an updated and revised statement of their agenda. While their publication includes some refinements and reformulations, they specify that the core concepts developed and published ten years earlier “stood the test of time” (*ibid.*, p. 191).

perspective to examine, for example, how teachers orchestrate various modal resources such as gesture, gaze, position, body posture, action with objects, and talk in their everyday activities and interactions in the classroom (Bourne & Jewitt 2003; Jewitt 2013; Kress *et al.* 2001). Moreover, a multimodal approach has given rise to research publications that explore the ways teachers (can) operate in a multimodal text world (Ryan *et al.* 2010) and how student identities, curricula, and school knowledge are mediated through multimodal communication (see Jewitt 2013).

Most important for the context of this study is the acknowledgment that face-to-face interaction, a focus here, is multimodal by definition (Stivers & Sidnell 2005).<sup>37</sup> In line with this position, it becomes evident that the body is an integral part and “partner” of language and communication (Müller 2013), thus a modality in its own right. “Whenever we speak with each other it is not only through words; bodily movements are always involved and they are so closely intertwined with language that they sometimes become part and parts of language or even become language themselves – as is the case in sign languages all around the world.” (*ibid.*, p. 1) This understanding is reflected in work by Norris (2004), who explains that communication and interaction can be generally thought of involving an interplay of multiple modalities.

“Imagine, for example, a simple two-person interaction, a conversation with a friend. During this interaction, you are aware of your friend’s spoken language, so that you hear the verbal choices, the content, the prosody, and the pitch. You are also aware of the way that your friend is standing or sitting, the way that your friend is nodding or leaning back or forward; you are aware of your friend’s facial expression, and clothing, just as you are aware of the environment in which this interaction takes place. If there is music playing in the background, even though you are not focusing on the music, you are aware of it. All of these elements play a part in this conversation.”

(Norris 2004, p. 1)

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<sup>37</sup> For the purpose of this study, I adopt Norris’ (2004) definition of face-to-face interactions as “the interactions that people engage in when they are within clear line of sight of each other” (p. 112).

We can learn from this illustration that various modes such as spoken language, body posture, facial expressions, and the wider environment can be crucial elements in interactions. While this understanding is not revolutionary, as scholars such as Jewitt (2013) and Marchetti and Cullen (2015) point out, I suggest, nonetheless, that a multimodal perspective is specifically interesting in the context of trust development and maintenance. As Kuśmierczyk (2014) shows, it could help us to refrain from focusing too narrowly on only linguistic resources in trust processes – a dominant approach in trust research to date that I wish to challenge. If we take a look at the six attributes of trust that I focus on, scholars often suggest – while usually only implicitly – that elements such as body posture, gaze, and facial expression can be relevant in addition to spoken language (consider, for example, perceived open or benevolent behaviour).

One approach that allows to explicitly and purposefully integrate the full repertoire of meaning-making resources into the analysis of (multimodal) data is a multimodal interaction analysis (MIA). Among many other influences, MIA is theoretically grounded in mediated discourse analysis (Scollon & de Saint-Georges 2012), interactional sociolinguistics (Gumperz 1982), and social semiotics (Kress 2013). Norris (2013) defines MIA as follows:

“Multimodal (inter)action analysis is an interdisciplinary methodology that integrates verbal and non-verbal actions (i.e.: spoken language and gesture, posture, or gaze) as well as objects in the material world (i.e.: computers, cell phones, toys or pieces of furniture) and the environment itself (i.e.: layout of a room, a city or a park). With this methodology, we also integrate psychological notions such as feelings and levels of attention/awareness as they reveal themselves phenomenologically in (inter)action. Feelings may be displayed phenomenologically in a social actor’s facial expression, and attention/awareness may be analysed through the modal intensity and/or complexity of an action that is performed.”

(Norris 2013, p. 276)

One of many things we learn from this definition is that we can distinguish between different sorts of modalities, as we have already noted earlier. Enfield (2005), for example, differentiates between (a) *the vocal/aural modality* that involves spoken language and prosody (e.g. lexico-

syntactic channels, intonation) and (b) *the visuospatial modality*, including gesture, gaze, and body postures (e.g. body orientation, facial expression, or accompanying manual gestures). Another terminology is proposed by Norris (2004, p. x), who uses the terms “embodied modes” to refer to modes such as language, gesture, and gaze, and “disembodied modes” for modes such as music, print, and layout.<sup>38</sup>

While it is beyond the scope of this study to proceed with a micro (conversational) analysis and a further discussion of terminology, it suffices here to acknowledge that the different modalities are important components of (multimodal) communication and will thus be valued and taken into consideration in my analysis. However, it is important to note that no modality is necessarily more important than another. In fact, while all modes make meanings differently, all modalities offer interactional resources and work together in cooperation (Kress *et al.* 2001). In other words, “the communicative work that is performed by one modality may be supported or extended by the work of another modality” (Stivers & Sidnell 2005, p. 6). I like to compare this to the understanding that the six attributes of trust should not be seen in isolation but, in contrast, as interacting with each other.

MIA evolved from discourse analysis (Norris 2011).<sup>39</sup> In contrast to other discursive approaches such as social semiotic multimodal analysis and (multimodal) discourse analysis, MIA attaches high importance to the notion of context and situated (co-constructed) interaction taken by a social actor (Jewitt 2009; see also Norris 2016).<sup>40</sup> Most important for the purpose of this research, a multimodal approach affords me to *recognise*, in Kress’ (2013) terms<sup>41</sup>, the full

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<sup>38</sup> Thereby, Norris (2004) wants to avoid the term “nonverbal modes of communication”, as “*nonverbal* conveys that these are appendages to the verbal mode” (p. x; emphasis in original). However, as she continues, these modes can be of equal or even superordinate value to the mode of language.

<sup>39</sup> See Norris (2011, pp. 4–22) for an outline of the development from discourse analysis to multimodal (inter)action analysis.

<sup>40</sup> See Jewitt (2009, pp. 28–39) for a comparison of the historical influences and the theoretical emphasis of the three perspectives.

<sup>41</sup> Kress (2013) describes *recognition* as “making visible (what is otherwise not visible) [...], and accessible for (e)valuation” (p. 129). I adopt this understanding here so as to make visible and accessible

repertoire of meaning-making resources that both students and teachers bring to the classroom (actional, visual, and linguistic), while, at the same time, “getting beyond separations in abstractions such as mind and body, affect and cognition” (Kress 2009, p. 57). It is, however, important to stress that MIA does only allow to analyse a person’s expressions, while no conclusive statements can be made about someone’s thoughts and feelings such as in cognitive psychological approaches (Jewitt 2009; Norris 2004). Therefore, I gain some of these insights amongst others through interview data (see chapter 4.3.3).

Overall, I adopt a multimodal approach to the analysis and transcription of my data to consider verbal and non-verbal utterances and actions as well as their potential interrelation. In particular, I focus on gestures, gaze, body postures, body movements, talk, and writing as well as on material resources that are mobilised by my research participants (e.g. Mondada 2013). Thus, MIA allows me to analyse social interactions, while necessarily considering texts, subject-object interactions, and different classroom activities that call upon various meaning-making systems. In my opinion, MIA thus complements the relational signalling approach that I presented earlier and adopt in this study. In fact, some scholarly contributions using a RSA (e.g. van Veen & Wittek 2016; Ward & Broniarczyk 2016) apply the approach to consider an item as a relational signal.<sup>42</sup> In this respect, MIA also affords me to analyse (tangible and intangible) objects and associated interactions that may play an important role in learning, teaching, and trusting processes.

In summary, I acknowledge and value the complexity of communication and classroom interaction. Following the theoretical perspectives presented in the previous chapters, I

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(by documenting, transcribing, and presenting) the “array of communicative modes” (Norris 2004, p. 148) in the teaching and learning situations under study.

<sup>42</sup> Ward and Broniarczyk (2016) apply the RSA in consumer research to analyse to what extend the exchange of a gift between close friends signals relational closeness in a relationship. Van Veen and Wittek (2016) analyse a compensation package as part of a dyadic gift exchange relationship between a board and a CEO.

understand trusting and hence the demonstration and triggering of a solidarity frame as interactional, multimodal work. Thus, incidents turn into *critical* incidents as I look, amongst others, at exemplary interactions from a multimodal perspective, exploring the ways different modalities play a role in the trusting process. In the transcriptions of these interactions (see appendix 1), I take into account gesture, gaze, body posture, body movement, talk, writing, image, as well as the (classroom) environment and material resources, not shying away, in Norris' (2013, p. 284) words, “from a minute and detailed micro analysis of lower-level actions that social actors perform, nor shying away from connecting these micro analyses to the various layers of discourse from micro to macro” (*ibid.*, p. 284). Against this backdrop, a multimodal approach to teaching, learning, and trusting is seen as both promising and original, adding a dimension that is long overdue to a research endeavour on the phenomena of trust.

## Chapter 4 › Ethnographic encounters

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### 4.1 Introduction

### 4.2 Entering “the field”

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## 4.1 Introduction

The conceptualisation of trust that I adopt in this study demands an analysis of trust as a phenomenon that unfolds and manifests itself in (inter-)actions. In contrast to other research on trust, I base my analysis on observations of actual (inter-)actions and classroom practices in a natural yet formal school setting instead of observing behaviour in simulated interactions and games under laboratory conditions in arranged scientific settings. Additionally, similar to learning definable as distributed, ongoing social process (Jordan & Henderson 1995), trust can also be seen as a “product of ongoing interaction and discussion” (Powell 1996, p. 59). However, most of the empirical research captured trust at a single point in time (Lewicki & Tomlinson 2006). To counteract this “static, snapshot” approach (*ibid.*), a case study in conjunction with ethnographic research tools allowed me to focus on interpersonal and interaction-based trust, connect with a classroom community, and immerse myself in the process of learning, teaching, and (theatre) creation over an extended time period.

The collection of authentic, “multi-media, multi-modal and multi-semiotic” data (White 2009) afforded me attention to details of classroom interactions and consideration of the interactional, visible, embodied, and reciprocal character of trust. A single case study approach proved to be particularly useful to observe, participate in, document, and render critical one concrete theatre education initiative of a primary school class in Luxembourg City. In more than 80 hours of participant observation conducted in classrooms, hallways, theatre spaces, and meetings rooms, I accompanied my research participants on their journey of developing their theatre play, explored the activities and potential effects of trusting, and captured, as nicely formulated by Bagley (2009, p. 252), the “sensuous array of sights, sounds, and smells [...]”. Consistent with a qualitative research paradigm, I was concerned primarily with the exploration of and learning about trust a social phenomenon (Gillham 2000; Leavy 2017). While qualitative



research in general and (single) case studies more specifically are often criticized for the lack of external and internal validity and generalisability (Gustafsson 2017; Verschuren 2003; Zittoun 2017)<sup>43</sup>, an ethnographic case study afforded me to put a considerable amount of time and energy in the in-depth and multi-faceted investigation and description of the complexities and potentials of trust in a real-life setting (Flyvbjerg 2006; Yin 2014). In this context, it had not been my intention to compare similarities or differences among cases (which would have encouraged me to use multiple case studies and a comparative approach) nor do I attempt to generalise my findings on a broader statistical level or for an entire population (which would have encouraged me to use large random samples and/or questionnaire surveys and a related quantitative analysis; see Flyvbjerg 2006). Instead, I chose a single case approach to deconstruct the various dimensions of trust in an educational setting and focus on interactions as they occurred. Thereby, I capitalised on the potentials of this method to explore (best) practices and new theoretical relationships (Dyer & Wilkins 1991)<sup>44</sup>, illuminate experiences from various perspectives, and gather rich, concrete, and context-dependent knowledge and descriptions (Flyvbjerg 2006; Yin 2014) that are sometimes missing in other accounts of trust research.

In accordance with my research objective, I drew on ethnographic techniques to collect my data. This approach allowed me to define the classroom as “social unit” (Erickson 1984) and my research endeavour as “a deliberate inquiry process” (*ibid.*). Most importantly, ethnographic field work offered me the potential to submit myself “to the fire of action *in situ*” (Wacquant 2004, p. viii; emphasis in original) – to observe, portray, and understand the live in the classroom, relationships, and processes via participant observations (e.g. Hammersley 2018;

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<sup>43</sup> For a reflection on validity in qualitative research see, for example, Maxwell (2002). Flyvbjerg (2006), Verschuren (2003), Yin (2014, pp. 19–22), and Zittoun (2017) examine the criticism and misunderstandings about case-study research. In this regard, Flyvbjerg (2006, p. 228) argues that “formal generalization is overvalued as a source of scientific development, whereas ‘the force of example’ is underestimated”.

<sup>44</sup> Especially in relation with a critical incident analysis (e.g. Bott & Tourish 2016).

O'Reilly 2009b; Schmid 1992). While ethnographic methods have received limited use in trust research (Lyon *et al.* 2011), they gave me the opportunity in this study to illuminate and experience first-hand the processes of teaching, learning, and eventually trusting in a particular classroom context.

It might be relevant to acknowledge that the origins of ethnography as a research practice lie in anthropology (Hammersley 2006; Marcus 1995). Referring to the word “ethnography” and its roots from the Greek word “ethos”<sup>45</sup>, Parker-Jenkins (2018) points out that the name alone may reveal the traditional role of ethnography in research, as “a way to represent in writing the culture of a group or community” (p. 19). Broadly, ethnography entails “a family of methods involving direct and sustained social contact with agents, and of richly writing up the encounter, respecting, recording, representing at least partly *in its own terms*, the irreducibility of human experience” (Willis & Trondman 2000, p. 5; emphasis in original). Three major considerations emerge from this account: ethnography involves (a) methods for data collection, (b) direct and prolonged time in “the field” and contact with research participants, and (c) the rigorous documentation of experiences, observations, and potential “patterns and systems of everyday life” (Parker-Jenkins 2018, p. 19). In this chapter, I address these points and describe how I conducted my ethnographic fieldwork. However, let me first explain the title of this chapter.

The title “ethnographic encounters” is the result of two main reflections that I shortly address before proceeding with the detailed account of my fieldwork and data collection tools. **First**, I acknowledge the criticism of many scholars who highlight the overuse of the term “ethnography” (e.g. Ingold 2014; Parker-Jenkins 2018; Walford 2009). For the purpose of this study, I focus particularly on encounters between the research participants themselves (e.g. teacher-pupils, pupils-pupils). Moreover, I collect my data mainly via immediate encounters

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<sup>45</sup> “Folk, people, nation” (Parker-Jenkins 2018, p. 19).

with these people. Therefore, if I write about ethnography, I use the term in Hammersley's (2006) sense to refer to educational research that studies "*at first hand* what people do and say in particular contexts" (p. 4; emphasis in original). Thus, my research commitment qualifies as "ethnographic" mainly due to my participant observations in the settings of my research participants (i.e. their classroom and other spaces).

**Second**, my work might not qualify entirely as traditional ethnography due to the limited time spent in the field. I visited the classroom community only one or two hours per week, sometimes more, sometimes less (see fieldwork schedule in chapter 4.3.2). This highlights a major limitation of my study.<sup>46</sup> Yet, I assisted to and documented the entire work process directly related to the development of the theatre project. Anticipating my recommendations for future research, I advise other scholars to assist, for example, also to school hours outside the immediate case study context to get a better first-hand impression of the wider (school) context and possibly thicken descriptions.

In this thesis, I describe not only what I discovered but also how I discovered it. In fact, transparency and reflexivity entail the potential to enhance the trustworthiness of my study (Etherington 2007; Lahman *et al.* 2011). In this methodological chapter, I first explain my strategy that I pursued to access the field before I present the retained case study: a multilingual theatre project of a primary school class in Luxembourg City. In a next step, I introduce my research participants, fieldwork schedule, and my tools for the data collection. Finally, I expand on my ethical commitments and pseudonymisation process.

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<sup>46</sup> For Hammersley (2006), my limited time spent in the field might merely be an indication of a more recent form of ethnographic fieldwork "in which we study only parts of people's lives over relatively short time periods" (p. 6). Similarly, Parker-Jenkins (2018) points out that in educational ethnography, immersion in the field for a long period of time might not always be required nor appropriate. Jeffrey and Troman (2004), referring to the intensification of academic life and related pressures, even posit that "a sustained 12 month minimum research period [is] a luxury" (p. 537).

## 4.2 Entering “the field”

### 4.2.1 A collaborative approach

Gaining access to research sites and participants is unique to each individual study (Wanat 2008). Overall, getting access to “the field” and entering the setting in qualitative field research is often associated with a tedious and challenging process. In this regard, the negotiation of access to educational settings is no exception. “Getting in is getting harder”, Troman (1996, p. 85) asserted more than twenty years ago after being denied entry to several schools. Among the main instances that Troman (1996) bases his reasoning are: the intensification of teacher’s work, the fear of surveillance from external experts, and the teachers’ perceptions of educational researchers. With this background knowledge, I decided to first attend theatre workshops and advanced training programmes for teachers as well as meetings organised by the Luxembourg Ministry of Culture instead of approaching school administrators directly to negotiate entry in various school settings and find potential study participants. From that starting position, this approach allowed me to explore the multiplicity of theatre initiatives for formal classroom settings and find potential sites of study.

Throughout the study, cultural practitioners, theatre pedagogues, teachers, and decision-makers in the cultural and educational sector provided me a valuable overview of past, current, and planned theatre education initiatives in Luxembourg. Most importantly, I conducted semi-structured interviews to (a) learn about past, current and planned theatre initiatives in educational contexts in Luxembourg, acquiring an overview of my field of study, and (b) identify a potential collaboration partner for my study. Eventually, the *Rotondes* has been identified as a major player in the industry and a reliable partner for the study at hand.

The *Rotondes* is a cultural centre in Luxembourg City that offers a platform for national and international performing arts production, concerts, arts exhibitions, participatory projects,

workshops, and conferences. The centre is located in two abandoned railway roundhouses and is especially committed to hosting and producing initiatives targeted at children and young people (as both audience members and active participants). The *Rotondes* designates itself as “incubator for new ideas” that strengthens the link between culture and education, and as a platform that tackles important social issues (CarréRotondes 2017, p. 9).

Most important for this study, the *Rotondes* engages in classroom theatre activities and regularly cooperates on a project basis with different school classes in Luxembourg. Therefore, they can be defined as an “intermediate gatekeeper” (Wanat 2008): they had a certain authority and power in the overall setting and could either grant or deny entry to this setting to me as the researcher. While an official approval to conduct research at a specific site of study does not guarantee the research participants’ cooperation (Wanat 2008), I considered the *Rotondes* and their formal authority helpful to influence potential school communities to facilitate access *and* cooperation in the framework of my study.

Research collaborations across institutions, disciplines, and communities offer some key advantages. For this study, the potential benefit to positively influence the entry process was only one of several opportunities that led to a formal collaboration with the *Rotondes*. Other advantages included the potentials to:

- **Gain sustainable access to the field:** The *Rotondes* have a well-established network of cultural and educational actors they work closely with on a regular basis. These relationships allowed me to become acquainted with potential research participants such as primary school teachers and theatre pedagogues.
- **Learn from experienced professionals:** Throughout the study, I have profited from the wealth of experience and interdisciplinary feedback given by staff members of the *Rotondes*. As a platform of exchange, the collaboration provided intellectually nourishing discussions with experts in arts education and theatre practices.
- **Disseminate research findings.** The cooperation with the *Rotondes* offered opportunities to exchange and share impressions and observations from my field work with practitioners, who, in turn, opened up new perspectives with their feedback.

While gatekeepers' cooperation may be influenced by potential (perceived) benefits or threats to participation (Wanat 2008), I acknowledge that staff members of the *Rotondes* might have had various personal and professional interests in and expectations of my research and our cooperation. However, they never tried to influence my research (results), nor did they explicitly mention any concrete aims or ambitions.

The partnership with the *Rotondes* was formalised with a letter of commitment on April 20, 2016. This letter (see appendix 2) includes amongst others following sentences:

“The Rotondes will support Mr Weyer, doctoral student at the University of Luxembourg, to find a classroom theatre project serving as main case study. [...] Furthermore, we will provide support to facilitate the establishment of contact between Mr Weyer and the participants of the selected project.” (signed by the Head of the performing arts programme)

While official approval to collect data at a school in Luxembourg needs to be given from multiple gatekeepers (Ministry of Education, school inspector, mayor), the official collaboration and support from the *Rotondes* might have helped to underline the credibility and significance of the research project.

#### 4.2.2 “Bühn fräi”: A public call for theatre project proposals

In the framework of their so-called “Bühn fräi” programme<sup>47</sup>, the *Rotondes* offer teachers in Luxembourg the support to realise a performing arts project for a public audience. Under the premise that they provide ongoing assistance to the teachers and pupils, staff members of the *Rotondes* specify that they supply information, help, and rehearsal space to advance the development of a project such as a full-scale theatre production. In particular, the classroom

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<sup>47</sup> The verbatim translation from “Bühn fräi” in Luxembourgish to English is “stage free”. It bears the meaning of “clear the stage” and “the stage is yours”.

community gets access to professional and pedagogical support such as training in theatre pedagogy, practical guidance in project management, and technical consultancy.

“Le projet *Bühn fräi!* offre à une classe la possibilité de réaliser son propre projet et d’être accompagnée par l’équipe des Rotondes au niveau de la gestion de projet, de la technique, de la communication et, bien sûr, de la conception d’un spectacle. Les participants découvrent ainsi les différents aspects de la mise en œuvre d’un spectacle et de l’organisation d’une représentation publique. La représentation finale aura lieu aux Rotondes [...]”

(CarréRotondes 2016, p. 146; emphasis in original)

Over the period of usually one academic year, the pupils and their teachers get offered the opportunity to actively discover art forms such as theatre and dance. According to the *Rotondes*, the introduction of and familiarisation with performing arts in a school context are among the main objectives of the “Bühn fräi” programme. As they indicate in their competitive call for proposals (CarréRotondes 2016, p. 146; see following page), specific activities are an integral part of this learning process such as exploring what it means to be an actor, playing an active part in the planning and development of an artistic project, attending a professional theatre play, and experiencing a guided tour of the premises of the *Rotondes*.

The call for proposals is administered each year by the *Rotondes* and seeks project proposals from school classes in Luxembourg. For the school year 2016/2017, a specific call was published in the season brochure and on the website of the cultural centre in June 2016. It included following specifications that have been agreed on between the *Rotondes* and me:

- a) Only theatre project proposals were allowed<sup>48</sup>;
- b) Primary school classes were given priority<sup>49</sup>;

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<sup>48</sup> In previous years, the *Rotondes* also accepted project proposals involving dance, music, or other performing arts disciplines. Due to the focus of this study, theatre projects had priority.

<sup>49</sup> Studies in trust research similar to this often focus on older, “hard-to-teach” students (e.g. Ennis & McCauley 2002). With this thesis, I wished to expand current research by focusing on mainstream primary school settings and pupils.

- c) Applicants were made aware of the fact that the selected project would be accompanied by a researcher. This note included the information that the teachers and pupils would be in regular contact with the researcher throughout the project.<sup>50</sup>

Out of two eligible project proposals, one submission was retained by staff members of the *Rotondes*. This decision was made without my interference and was officialised by the *Rotondes* on October 24, 2016, based on criteria such as feasibility, objectives, and originality of the project.

**FIGURE 3:** Official call for proposals “Bühn fräi” 2016/2017  
(CarréRotondes 2016, p. 146)

appel à projet aux écoles fondamentales / Projektausschreibung für Grundschulen

# BÜHN FRÄI!

**Rotondes**

**FR** Le projet *Bühn fräi!* offre à une classe la possibilité de réaliser son propre projet et d'être accompagnée par l'équipe des Rotondes au niveau de la gestion de projet, de la technique, de la communication et, bien sûr, de la conception d'un spectacle. Les participants découvrent ainsi les différents aspects de la mise en œuvre d'un spectacle et de l'organisation d'une représentation publique. La représentation finale aura lieu aux Rotondes dans le cadre du *Mois des Labos*.

Le projet sélectionné pour la saison 16/17 sera accompagné d'une étude de cas dans le cadre d'une thèse de doctorat réalisée à l'Université du Luxembourg. Celle-ci porte sur les enjeux de la pratique du théâtre dans le cadre scolaire. Pendant les différentes phases du projet, les élèves et leurs enseignants seront en contact avec un doctorant de l'Université, dont le travail d'observation pourra à son tour offrir au projet une dimension nouvelle.

**DE** Das Projekt *Bühn fräi!* bietet einer Klasse die Möglichkeit, ihr eigenes Projekt zu realisieren und dabei vom Team der Rotondes in Sachen Projektmanagement, Technik, PR und natürlich Ausarbeitung einer Bühnenproduktion unterstützt zu werden. Diese wird am Ende der Saison im Rahmen des *Mois des Labos* in den Rotondes präsentiert werden. Das für die Saison 16/17 ausgewählte Projekt wird im Rahmen einer Doktorarbeit an der Universität Luxemburg spezifisch begleitet werden. Diese beschäftigt sich mit der Wirkung von Theaterarbeit im schulischen Bereich.

☉ écoles fondamentales  
(cycles 3 + 4)

☉ infos et soumission du dossier: +352 [redacted] / [redacted]@rotondes.lu / rotondes.lu/scolaires  
délai de soumission du projet: **Ven 30.09.16**  
sélection du projet retenu: **Ven 07.10.16**

**répétitions finales et représentations aux Rotondes dans le cadre du Mois des Labos: Lun 29 - Mer 31.05.17**



■ 146

<sup>50</sup> While this note might have prevented some teachers to apply, the risk that the participants of the selected project would disagree with my involvement and cooperation was considered unlikely.



### 4.2.3 A fairy tale parody: The retained project of a primary school class

A project proposal submitted by a primary school teacher of a learning cycle 3 in Luxembourg City has been retained by the *Rotondes* for their “Bühn fräi” framework in October 2016.<sup>51</sup> In the teacher’s application documents, she indicated her willingness to stage together with her fourteen pupils a play based on a story written by Rosalinde Bonnet: “Où sont passés les princes charmants?”<sup>52</sup>. In a nutshell, this book tells the story of three princesses searching for their princes who disappeared mysteriously.

The table below provides an overview of the statements that the teacher made in her application documents. I copied this information from the original document and translated it into English. Most importantly, the teacher specified the project idea, indicated main pedagogical purposes (e.g. development of oral language skills, performative approach to learning, cooperative project), and described her intended rehearsal schedule.

**TABLE 6:** The theatre project: project idea, pedagogical intentions, and planning (as indicated by applicant and translated into English by author)

1. General description of project idea	
Type of performance	▪ Theatre play inspired by the story “Où sont passés les princes charmants?” written by Rosalinde Bonnet
Subject	▪ Fairy tale parody: three princesses from popular fairy tales (Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, and Snow White) search for their princes charming who disappeared mysteriously. In this tale, a big wolf and an overexcited witch play the role of the “evils”.

<sup>51</sup> Elementary school in Luxembourg is organised in four learning cycles. Cycle 1, preschool education, is for pupils from three to five years of age. Cycles 2, 3, and 4 form primary education for pupils aged six to eleven years. Primary school classes have a teacher for all subjects who can choose her or his own teaching methods (Eurydice 2011).

<sup>52</sup> “Where are the charming princes?”

2. Pedagogical intentions	
Motivation to participate in the “Bühn fräi” framework and main objectives sought	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promoting the oral expression in the various languages studied in class (Luxembourgish, French, German)<sup>53</sup></li> <li>▪ Encouraging each pupil to assume a role in a theatre play</li> <li>▪ Fostering the expression with artistic creativity</li> <li>▪ Realisation of a common project (after four years of supervision)</li> </ul>
School subjects and disciplines (non-exhaustive list)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reading comprehension in French (understand the story of Rosalinde Bonnet)</li> <li>▪ Oral expression in Luxembourgish, French, and German</li> <li>▪ Written production (writing, rewriting, translating, inventing dialogue, writing invitations)</li> <li>▪ Arts education (e.g. to play a role, discover the hidden side of a performance such as the soundscape, learn about what it means “to do theatre”)</li> <li>▪ Craft classes (e.g. designing the decoration)</li> </ul>
3. Description of the process of creation and project planning	
Involvement of the pupils in the process of creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Writing, rewriting, translating, inventing dialogue</li> <li>▪ Development of the invitations</li> <li>▪ Creation of set design elements and props during arts education and craft classes</li> </ul>
Rehearsal schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Rehearsals as part of the regular class schedule:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ two hours per week for the project “Bühn fräi” (reading the story, writing and learning the dialogue, identification with the roles to be performed)</li> <li>○ two hours per week for manual labour classes</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Outside of regular school hours:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ possibility to foresee rehearsals on Tuesdays and/or Thursday afternoons</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Potential external collaborators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teachers of arts education and craft classes</li> <li>▪ Educators from after-school care centres</li> <li>▪ Parents, specifically in the context of the design and production of costumes and accessories</li> </ul>

<sup>53</sup> The school system in Luxembourg assigns a particular significance to language teaching (Ministère de l'Éducation nationale 2018). In fundamental education, all pupils learn Luxembourgish, German, and French. While the language(s) of instruction depend on the level of education, the exposure to Luxembourgish is central in early childhood education and during the two years of compulsory pre-school education. Pupils learn to read and write in German in the first year of primary school and French is introduced in the following year.

## 4.3 The fieldwork

### 4.3.1 The classroom community

This study relied on the support of staff members from the *Rotondes* and the classroom community that planned and carried out the actual theatre project. The smooth conduct of my data collection had only been possible due to their willingness to continuously cooperate with each other and with me. With their respective role, power, and interest, the teacher (Sarah)<sup>54</sup>, her pupils, and a professional theatre pedagogue from the *Rotondes* (Stefanie) form the core of the classroom community and granted me access, time, and space throughout my research.

“The classroom as an environment for educational activities comprises, among others, the teacher and the learner. This category of persons constitute [*sic*] the human elements in the classroom. No matter how magnificent the school building may be, even with the most ambitious curriculum, and the most sophisticated material equipment, it would remain meaningless if it is not given a human touch by a cream of well-educated and devoted teachers, and a crop of ambitious and knowledge-hungry students.”

(Nwafor & Nwogu 2014, p. 420)

Nwafor and Nwogu (2014) remind us of the pivotal role that the teacher(s) and the students occupy within the classroom. Therefore, it is necessary to briefly introduce the “human elements” of my case study. In fact, these people, their relationships, and interactions are key to the further analysis, discussion, and overall understanding of my data. While the disclosure of some background information of the research participants allows to get a sense of the community that I researched, it is important to bear in mind that this information might reveal the identity of the participants (van den Hoonaard 2003). Against this backdrop, only characteristics will be reported that (a) allow to get a meaningful overview of the community, (b) are relevant to the

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<sup>54</sup> All names are pseudonyms. I explain my decisions in relation to the pseudonymisation process in chapter 4.4.2.

understanding and analysis of the data in the following chapters, and (c) do not reveal any sensitive information. I address further considerations on ethical concerns in chapter 4.4.

**TABLE 7: Overview of the school setting**

(as indicated by applicant and translated into English by author)

Type of school and school location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public primary school in Luxembourg City</li> </ul>
Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 14 pupils in total (eight girls, six boys)</li> <li>▪ Average age: ten years</li> </ul>
Class teacher	<p>Sarah (main class teacher for four years at the time of application)</p>

### The pupils

At the beginning of the theatre project, the class was composed of a total of fourteen pupils. The then ten-year old children attended a learning cycle 3 in Luxembourg City.<sup>55</sup> Eight pupils are female, six are male. During the course of the school year, two pupils (Gabriel and Arnaud) changed the school. This led to a new class size of twelve pupils towards the end of the theatre project in 2017. As Gabriel and Arnaud were an integral part of the classroom community, contributed significantly to the development of the theatre project, and play a relevant role in my data, they remain part of the presented community and, hence, subsequent data analysis.

### Sarah, the class teacher

Sarah has a long-standing expertise as a primary school teacher in Luxembourg, including many years of experience in upper positions within the education system. At the time of application in 2016, she had been the class teacher of the above-mentioned pupils for four years. She indicated in her application documents that she had no experience at all in preparing a theatre project.

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<sup>55</sup> Elementary school in Luxembourg is organised in four learning cycles. Cycles 2, 3, and 4 form primary education for pupils aged six to eleven years.

### Stefanie, the theatre pedagogue

As a professional theatre pedagogue and staff member of the *Rotondes*, Stefanie was mainly responsible for the artistic mentorship of the “Bühn fräi” participants. Stefanie explained me in an interview on March 22, 2017 that the overall artistic and pedagogical support for the pupils and their teacher was among her main duties. Once Sarah and her pupils finished a first draft of their script in February 2017, Stefanie visited the classroom community on a regular basis to help them prepare and further develop their final performance.

### Dany, the researcher

I include a short autobiographical note to point out that my individual trajectory most probably influenced the way I saw and wrote with my own background throughout the research process (Denzin & Lincoln 2003; Jones *et al.* 2010; White 2009). While I cannot describe nor am I aware of all educational beliefs and cultural values that might have affected both the collection and analysis of my data, it is important to acknowledge subjectivity (Bresler 1996) and stress that I – as the researcher – also acted as a research instrument, responsible to find, identify, and collect the data (Punch 1994; Troman 1996). In this regard, I had to make decisions about where and whom to observe and when and in what ways to record my data (Goodwin, Pope, Mort, & Smith 2003).

Born and raised in Luxembourg, I spent most of my working life in the so-called creative and cultural sector where I found particular interest in artistic and cultural activities in educational contexts (e.g. music, dance, and theatre initiatives). As a former substitute teacher, I might have seen my field visits through the lens of previous classroom experiences (McLauchlan & Winters 2014). At the time of writing, I am 29 years old and work as a doctoral researcher at the University of Luxembourg. I have an educational background in communication design, multilingualism, and multiculturalism, and consider myself an interdisciplinary learner, explorer, and researcher.

To put a face on these names, I give a visual (while mostly blurred due to anonymity reasons) overview of the classroom community of my case study in table 8 below.

**TABLE 8:** The classroom community

Fourteen pupils, a teacher, theatre pedagogue, and researcher

The pupils and their teacher



- |   |                                  |    |  |
|---|----------------------------------|----|--|
| 1 | Mia                              | 9  | Ella   |
| 2 | Mariette                         | 10 | Michèle  |
| 3 | Océane                           | 11 | Lily   |
| 4 | Gabriel (changed school in 2017) | 12 | Laurence   |
| 5 | Benoît                           | 13 | Irina  |
| 6 | Alain                            | 14 | Arnaud (changed school in 2017,<br>missing on the picture) |
| 7 | Rowan                            | 15 | Sarah (teacher)  |
| 8 | Manuel                           |    |  |

Stefanie



Dany



### 4.3.2 Nine months of school visits, interviews, excursions, and meetings

Writing about ethnography, Desmond (2014) draws attention to the importance of building rapport with the research participants one seeks to “know better”:

“Ethnography is what you do when you try to understand people by allowing their lives to mold your own as fully and genuinely as possible. This is accomplished by building rapport with the people you want to know better and following them over a long stretch of time, observing and experiencing what they do, living and working and playing where they do, and recording as much action and interaction as you can until you begin to move like they move, talk like they talk, think like they think, and feel something like they feel.”

(Desmond 2014, p. 561)

My fieldwork might not have adhered to traditional anthropological principles of ethnography – a consideration I discussed earlier. In this respect, I might not to have moved, talked, or thought the way my research participants have. Some field notes suggest, however, that I have felt *with* them. After a last theatre rehearsal before the final performance, I wrote in my field notes that I felt pride. At the same time, I struggled with my role and position in the field.

Excerpt field notes [30.05.2017]

The rehearsal went really well. I am proud. I am part of this group for seven months now. I met people that became dear to my heart. Will I have tears in my eyes tomorrow? Is this good? Or bad? Should I distance myself more? [...] I struggle with my roles as researcher, co-teacher, maybe even as supporter. And other roles? Am I allowed to feel emotions such as pride for my research participants? Does it mean that I am an active part of the group and established some sort of relationship with them? Isn't this what ethnographic research is all about?

Besides offering a concrete example of using field notes as a data collection tool (that I further explain below), these notes highlight that I was by no means a passive researcher and classroom *observer*. Instead, my (often simultaneous) roles developed naturally over the period of nine months of fieldwork: from an observer, to a participant, co-teacher, supporter, reviewer,



audience member, and sometimes trusted advisor. As Erickson (1984) puts it: “Really *being there* means experiencing strong relationships with whomever else is there (one’s informants) [...] one does participant observation [...] it is not involvement with a site at arm’s length.” (pp. 60–61; emphasis in original).<sup>56</sup> While a detailed analysis of my positions in the field is beyond the scope of this study, the field notes above highlight an important aspect that I want to turn to now: in nine months, I invested time and energy to build rapport with Sarah, the pupils, and Stefanie. Overall, I obtained a comprehensive picture of their work on the theatre project, underlying processes, and corresponding interactions. In fact, I observed and documented the development of the theatre project during the entire course of the school year. More precisely, I accompanied the unfolding of the project from November 2016 to July 2017 – from a first meeting with Sarah on November 11, 2016 to a feedback discussion with the pupils one month after the final curtain call on May 31, 2017.

Over the period of nine months, I captured different moments and stages in the rehearsal process that reflect various aspects and (inter-)actions. I attended:

- a first meeting with Sarah in November 2016 to exchange about the collaborative partnership, general motivation, and further planning;
- twenty-five rehearsal sessions in the main school building, the theatre hall at *Rotondes*, and at a youth hostel in the North of Luxembourg, documenting the development process from creative writing sessions, spontaneous role-playing, to all rehearsals and two final performances;
- a professional theatre production organised by *Rotondes* and attended by all pupils;
- a backstage tour of the premises of the *Rotondes*.

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<sup>56</sup> Within the ethnographic process, the role(s) and positionality of the researcher are methodological challenges in its own right (e.g. Bresler 1996; Parker-Jenkins 2018). Particularly in the context of researching trust, questions and challenges may arise such as on the extent to which trust can and/or should be established between researcher and the researcher (Lyon *et al.* 2011). This is a topic worthy of exploration in future studies. Scholars that have looked into the subjects of researcher positionality and reflexivity are, for example, da Silva and Webster (2018) and Giampapa and Lamoureux (2011).



Sarah specified in her application documents that one of her main pedagogical intentions behind the multilingual theatre project had been the promotion of the oral expression in the various languages studied in class. Against this backdrop, the classroom community usually worked on the theatre project during language classes. Generally, I visited the class at the beginning of the project mainly on Tuesday mornings between 10am and 12pm. The closer the final performances came in May 2017, the more rehearsals and school visits had been planned during the regular school hours. In addition, I attended all official meetings between Sarah and staff members of the *Rotondes* and conducted formal and informal interviews with Sarah, Stefanie, and the pupils throughout the development of the play and after the final performances. Overall, I visited the school class whenever they officially worked on their theatre project.

Sarah sometimes spontaneously rearranged her school timetable to include some short exercises and activities related to the theatre project. She did not always consider it relevant enough or did not remember to notify me about these short-term changes. I argue, however, that these missing bits and pieces do not significantly affect the overall picture of the rehearsal process that I draw in the following data analysis. In fact, I only missed a small number of interactions within the overall context of the development process. Moreover, Sarah usually reported on the work she did with the pupils in retrospect, offering at least one perspective of the activities the school class did without my immediate presence.

In the table below, I offer an overview of my nine-month fieldwork and outline the date, time, description, site, and participants of each field visit.

TABLE 9: Fieldwork record				
Date	Time	Description	Site	Participants
14/11/2016	14:00–16:00	First meeting Sarah	Main school building ( <b>MSB</b> )	Sarah ( <b>SA</b> ), Dany ( <b>DA</b> )
16/11/2016	10:00–11:00	First meeting pupils	MSB	Pupils ( <b>PU</b> ), SA, DA
22/11/2016	10:50–13:20	Inventing dialogue	MSB	PU, SA, DA

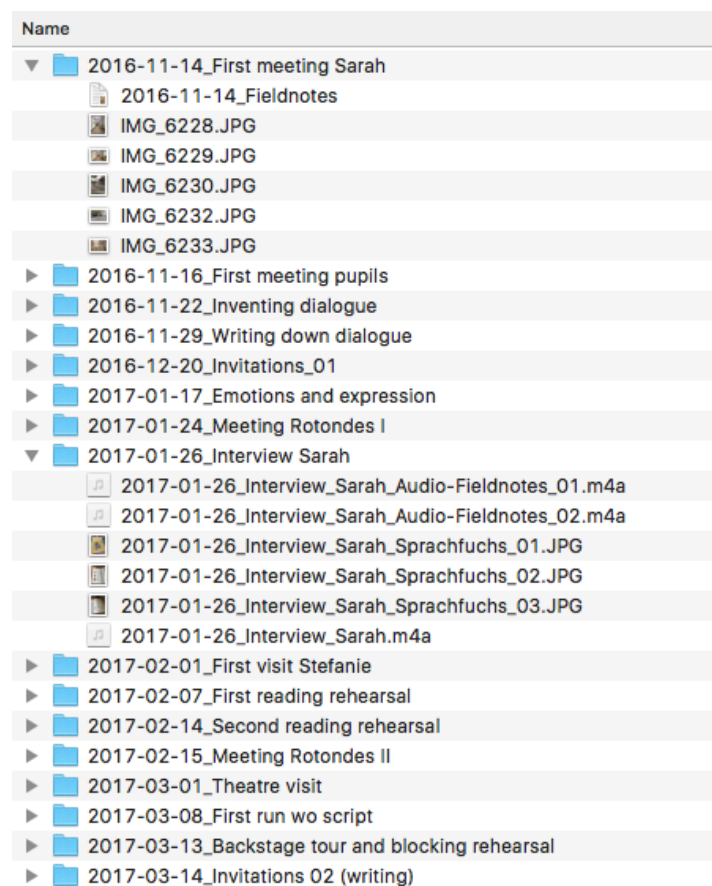
Continuation of TABLE 9

29/11/2016	10:50–13:00	Writing down dialogue	MSB	PU, SA, DA
20/12/2016	10:50–13:00	Invitations 1 (translating)	MSB	PU, SA, DA
17/01/2017	10:50–13:00	Emotions and expression	MSB	PU, SA, DA
24/01/2017	14:00–16:00	Meeting Rotondes 1	Rotondes	SA, Stefanie ( <b>ST</b> ), DA, 3 staff members Rotondes
26/01/2017	15:00–17:00	Interview Sarah 1	MSB	SA, DA
01/02/2017	10:50–12:30	First visit Stefanie	MSB	PU, SA
07/02/2017	10:50–13:00	First rehearsal	MSB	PU, SA, DA
14/02/2017	10:00–11:45	Second rehearsal	MSB	PU, SA, ST, DA
15/02/2017	14:00–15:15	Meeting Rotondes 2	Rotondes	SA, ST, DA, 2 staff member Rotondes
01/03/2017	14:50–15:30	Theatre visit	Rotondes	PU, ST, DA
08/03/2017	09:00–11:15	First run without script	MSB	PU, SA, ST, DA
13/03/2017	09:00–11:45	Backstage tour and blocking rehearsal	Rotondes	PU, SA, ST, DA, technician Rotondes
14/03/2017	10:00–12:10	Invitations 2 (writing)	MSB	PU, SA, DA
21/03/2017	11:00–12:45	Invitations 3 (painting)	MSB	PU, SA, DA
22/03/2017	09:00–11:15	Second run without script	MSB	PU, SA, ST, DA
22/03/2017	11:15–12:00	Interview Stefanie	MSB	ST, DA
29/03/2017	09:00–11:15	Third run alone with Stefanie	MSB	PU, substitute teacher, ST, DA
04/04/2017	10:00–11:15	Run and feedback round with Dany	MSB	PU, substitute teacher, DA
27/04/2017	08:00–09:45	Run with first scenic elements	MSB	PU, SA, ST, DA
03/05/2017	09:00–10:15	Presentation scenic elements and costumes	MSB	PU, SA, DA
05/05/2017	11:00–12:30	How to write a letter	MSB	PU, SA, DA
05/05/2017	14:00–16:10	First run with first costumes and scenic elements	MSB	PU, SA, DA
09/05/2017	09:00–11:45	Second run with first costumes and scenic elements	Rotondes	PU, SA, ST, DA
18/05/2017	08:00–10:00	First dress rehearsal	MSB	PU, SA, DA
22/05/2017	14:00–16:00	Second dress rehearsal (excursion)	Youth hostel	PU, SA, DA
29/05/2017	09:00–12:00	Final rehearsals 1	Rotondes	PU, SA, ST, DA, technician Rotondes
30/05/2017	09:00–11:45	Final rehearsals 2	Rotondes	PU, SA, ST, DA, technician Rotondes

31/05/2017	08:00–20:00	Final performances	Rotondes	PU, SA, ST, DA, staff members Rotondes, family, friends
29/06/2017	10:00–10:20	Focus group interviews 1 (rescheduled)	MSB	PU, SA, DA
04/07/2017	10:00–11:50	Focus group interviews 2	MSB	PU, SA, DA
07/07/2017	09:00–10:30	Interview Sarah 2	MSB	SA, DA

The fieldwork schedule has defined the chronological structuring of my data on my computer. To also achieve transparency on that level, I illustrate in the screenshot below how I organised the variety of data on my digital device.

**FIGURE 4:** Data organisation on computer



I now turn to the tools for my data collection that I used throughout the field visits enumerated in table 9 above.

### 4.3.3 Tools for data collection

Ethnographic tools of inquiry such as interviews and audio and video recordings as well as the collection of documents such as artefacts produced by the pupils and their teacher allowed me to collect authentic, “multi-media, multi-modal and multi-semiotic” data (White 2009). The selection of these tools stems from the affordances to allow a triangulation of my data and avoid a tunnel vision (Maxwell 2013). In fact, each method can be said to reveal “its own aspects and parts of social reality” (Verschuren 2003, p. 131).

Before I turn to the explanations of the tools of inquiry that I used throughout my nine-month fieldwork, I present an overview of the main methods, participants, data types, and purposes for the data collection. While the methods are presented as separate entities in the table below for a better overview, they should be seen as complementary and often overlapping tools.

Method	Participants	Type of data	Purpose for collection
<b>Observations</b> (video ethnography)	Whole classroom community	± 80 hours of classroom observations resulting in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>± 40 hours of audio-visual recordings</li> <li>34 sets of field notes</li> <li>the collection of various artefacts (e.g. notes, scribbles, drawings)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to capture rich, detailed, and real-time data</li> <li>to get visual access to concrete activities and (multimodal) practices</li> <li>to facilitate the practice and reporting of research</li> </ul>
<b>Interviews</b> (formal and informal)	Sarah and Stefanie	3 semi-structured interviews resulting in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>± 5 hours of audio recordings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to acknowledge the research participants’ voices and understandings</li> <li>to inform, complement, and triangulate my observational data</li> </ul>
	All pupils	5 focus group interviews resulting in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>± 80 minutes of audio-visual recordings</li> </ul>	

## Video ethnography

After visiting the school class at the beginning of the project twice with only pen and paper, I introduced two cameras as my primary tool for the data collection in the subsequent school lessons that I attended. I recorded the first videos on November 29, 2016, after I took my first visits as an occasion to familiarise myself with the classroom community and its space and reflect on my possible camera settings. On average, my visits resulted in one hour of video recordings each. In order to get visual access to the classroom community's activities and in line with my multimodal approach, my work draws on video ethnography (Pink 2013). In this respect, the main purpose of video recordings was to capture rich, detailed, and real-time data (Cowan 2014; Elsey *et al.* 2014; Fitzgerald, Hackling, & Dawson 2013; Jordan & Henderson 1995): concrete practices and (inter-)actions, non-auditory information such as gestures, manipulation of objects, and naturally occurring and complex multimodal communication in general (Fitzgerald *et al.* 2013; Müller 2013; Norris 2011; Pink 2013; White 2009).

Videos as a research tool started to be used in the 1980s mainly due to technological advancements in areas such as anthropology and cultural studies (Pink 2013). The collection and use of video recordings can be considered an "important innovation" (Fitzgerald *et al.* 2013). Yet, video ethnography is uncommon in trust research. I propose, however, that this approach may be promising as trust can be deemed to be "publicly available and accessible within interaction" (Elsey *et al.* 2014, p. 50). Using audio-visual recordings to collect my data offered me the opportunity to capture the complex interactions during the teaching and learning processes and the work on the theatre play more specifically. Additionally, the video footage allowed me to view and listen to specific activities and interactions over and over again, even in slow or accelerated motion (Jordan & Henderson 1995). This contributed significantly to making my data analysis and description more detailed and (visually) comprehensible. Therefore, video ethnography can be said to have potential benefits for both the researcher and the reader.

From November 2016 to July 2017, I used two cameras to document the unfolding of the theatre project and related (multimodal) interactions. The “fixed” camcorder had usually been mounted on a tripod and mainly used to record wide angles – capturing what happened at the front of the classroom or on stage (e.g. during rehearsals). Simultaneously, I used the “mobile” camera, held by hand, usually to record both wide angles and close-ups – capturing what happened all around the classroom or the reactions and activities in the audience area during rehearsals. The mobile camera allowed me to be flexible while recording, move around freely, and follow the people under study more easily. This proved to be relevant in the classroom setting, where both the pupils and the teacher rarely sat still. The use of two cameras had thus been both necessary and beneficial as it offered the opportunity to often simultaneously capture two perspectives with only one researcher present in the field. At the same time, this setting afforded to document the unfolding of multimodally organised interactions (Arend *et al.* 2014).

It is important to keep in mind that no video record can ever be considered a complete document of what actually happened, even when filmed continuously (Fitzgerald *et al.* 2013). In fact, the – often very spontaneous – choices I had to make in regard to whom, what, where, and when to record can be considered a major limitation of this research tool (White 2009). To counter this, the use of two cameras and additional data collection tools had been helpful.

In regard to my data analysis, it is also important to stress at this point that my video recordings formed a crucial part in my overall and ongoing process of inspecting my data and exploring how trust may have unfolded in (inter-)actions. With an inductive approach to the data analysis, I created content logs in order to provide a quick overview of my data corpus (Jordan & Henderson 1995) immediately after each field visit. Together with additional data sets that I present below (field notes, interviews, and artefacts), these protocols included first annotations and possible “critical incidents” for further reflection. In fact, I listened to and watched all recordings several times immediately after each field visit and repeatedly

throughout my overall research process. In conjunction with main components of my literature and the six attributes of trust more specifically, I then tried to identify critical moments that my findings in this study are based on.

**TABLE 11:** Video ethnography: camera setups

**Camera “F”**

- Brand: Sony HDR-CX240E
- Mainly used as “**fixed**” camera, usually mounted on a tripod
- Positioned either in the back or front of the classroom or theatre hall to capture a preferably wide angle
- Usually used for long shots (up to 45 minutes) to record scenes such as an entire rehearsal, a group work exercise, or group discussions such as a feedback round (“episode orientated digital video”; White 2009) and focus group interviews (i.e. “interview focussed digital video”; *ibid.*)



**Setup camera “F”** (example 1): group discussion (08.03.2017)



**Setup camera “F”** (example 2): rehearsal at *Rotondes* (29.05.2017)



## Camera “M”

- Brand: Apple iPhone 7
- Mainly used as “mobile” camera, usually held by hand
- Positioned wherever appropriate to capture a wide angle or close-ups
- Usually used for short shots (up to ten minutes) to record parts of rehearsals such as close-ups of audience reactions or during group work when the pupils or teacher moved freely in the classroom



Setup camera “M” (example 1): close-up of group discussion (27.04.2017)



Setup camera “M” (example 2): rehearsing a waltz (08.03.2017)

One advantage of using video ethnography that I have already highlighted above holds true for this study as well that follows a multimodal interactional approach: the fact that the video footage can be used both to practice and report research (Fitzgerald *et al.* 2013). Ironically, as White (2009) rightly points out, print as a medium may not be effective in the communication of both content and process of the ethnographic experience. In line with White’s (2009) approach,



I include multimodal texts in this thesis “to counter the representation of a single implicit point of view that does not do justice to the complexity of the experience” (*ibid.*, p. 389).<sup>57</sup>

### Field notes

“[B]eing human, I cannot observe, participate in meaningful conversations, write notes, notice a full range of ambience in the environment, and reflect upon it – all at the same time. I am not only referring to my personal mood that day which makes me responsive or not responsive, but, moreover, I am referring to what I am capable of doing well at any given moment in time.”

(Goldman Segall 1990, p. 234)

I pointed out earlier that research that draws on ethnographic techniques is adequate to capture the high level of complexity of social relations and interactions. Goldman Segall’s (1990) statement above illustrates that ethnographic work itself can be highly complex and methodologically challenging. In addition to continuously adapting the camera angle of my fixed camera, following several pupils with my mobile camera, listening to the exercise instructions given by the teacher, and answering some questions from pupils in my role as co-teacher, I kept busy with another essential part of the ethnographic process (Jeffrey 2018): writing field notes. During the school lessons, I was mainly occupied with taking care of the recordings with my video cameras. However, in irregular intervals and whenever possible and appropriate, I noted down short keywords and sentences in a notebook. Overall, I took field notes to record personal observations, questions, emotional reflections, and general comments that I considered both interesting and relevant in the context of my overall research.

As written reports usually include polished field notes and comprehensible texts (Maharaj 2016), I further elaborated these notes immediately and repeatedly after each field visit on my computer. Moreover, the fact that I wrote my field notes in one or more languages

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<sup>57</sup> See my transcription conventions in the appendices (appendix 1).

(Luxembourgish, French, German, and English)<sup>58</sup> made it necessary to translate sentences and paragraphs for the later public report. Occasionally, I also audio-recorded field notes with my mobile phone after my visits in the school, usually on the way back to my office. These recorded comments helped me to capture additional observations and questions. The transcribed notes have subsequently been integrated into the other field notes of the same observation session. Hence, using my mobile phone as a research journal helped me to describe thoughts, events, and general observations in great detail in a quick and easy way, just as doctors may use audio recordings for an autopsy and detectives may use them for their investigations.

I followed the advice given by Jones *et al.* (2010, p. 484) to use the present tense for my field notes, as it “conjures a sense of direct transmission between the eye, the action being observed and the written observation of the account”. The reader may thus share the immediacy of the account in my data analysis chapters. The general approach I used to write my field notes can be associated to a combination of two strategies suggested by Wolfinger (2002, pp. 89ff): the “salience hierarchy” and the “comprehensive note-taking”. In the former strategy, the researcher writes something down because it stands out, while “[o]bservations often stand out because they are deviant, either when compared to others or with respect to a researcher’s existing knowledge and beliefs” (Wolfinger 2002, p. 90). I relate this writing strategy to the critical incident approach I referred to in my interdisciplinary framework in which I also focus on events that made me “stop and think” (Mohammed 2016). In the latter strategy, the “comprehensive note-taking”, the researcher “systematically and comprehensively describe[s] everything that happened during a particular period of time” (Wolfinger 2002, p. 90). Depending on the situation, timing, and other circumstances, my field notes included specific sequences that I considered noteworthy because they struck me while others were organised

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<sup>58</sup> Depending on which language(s) I felt most comfortable to write (fast) in that particular moment.

temporally, describing everything that happened in chronological order (e.g. the regularity of a “typical” rehearsal session).

Altogether, I am aware that my field notes inevitably include and reflect my personal experiences, expectations, assumptions, background knowledge, and tacit beliefs (Maharaj 2016; Wolfinger 2002). Despite the fact that field notes may be flawed in terms of selectivity and bias, they can illuminate the process of the observation, collection, and analysis of the data (O’Reilly 2009a) – especially in combination with interview data that I turn to now.

## Interviews

Beside video data and field notes, I conducted formal and informal interviews with the pupils, the class teacher, and the theatre pedagogue involved in the theatre project. In fact, in an ethnographic endeavour, the accounts of participants’ perspectives and understandings are particularly important (Bresler 1996; Hammersley 2006, 2018; Parker-Jenkins 2018). Therefore, I used interviews as an additional research tool throughout my study to listen to and collect voices and experiences and illuminate the meanings my research participants gave to various actions and issues. In this regard, qualitative interviews can be useful, as a “flexible and powerful tool to capture the voices and the ways people make meaning of their experiences” (Rabionet 2009, p. 203). While some scholars point out that interviews can be used to make sense of what people do (e.g. Hockey & Forsey 2012) and may provide “interpretative validity” (Maxwell 2002), I acknowledge the danger of simplifying and idealising both the interview situation and the data produced by interviewees (Qu & Dumay 2011). I am, however, convinced that the interviews I conducted with all research participants provided opportunities to learn about their perspectives. Particularly in addition to my observational data, insights from interviews have informed, complemented, and triangulated my own conceptions (Hammersley 2006).

Throughout the development of the theatre project, informal as well as formal conversations offered the possibility to discuss issues as they arose, ask for clarifications, and maintain an ongoing relationship with all research participants. One of the main benefits of a research interview, and a conversation in general I would argue, is the opportunity “to uncover the private and sometimes incommunicable social world of the interviewee, to gain insights into alternative assumptions and ways of seeing” (Qu & Dumay 2011, p. 255). My regular conversations with the pupils, Sarah, and Stefanie allowed me to learn about their attitudes, observations, opinions, and their “ways of seeing”. In total, I had three types of conversations with the classroom community.

**First**, I had many informal conversations that naturally occurred during my fieldwork. On the one hand, I had extensive discussions during the breaks and after each observation session with the class teacher. During these usually unplanned conversations, Sarah often openly shared her overall planning, her thoughts about specific pupils, feelings in regard to her work, and other honest words about her daily classroom and private life. On the other hand, I followed Kvale’s (2007) advice and posed questions in informal contexts to the pupils as well, such as during drawing or playing activities. In these situations, the pupils often explained me what they had been doing or openly shared their perspective and attitudes about a specific matter.

**Second**, I conducted three semi-structured formal interviews with Sarah and one with Stefanie. While I had extensive discussions during the breaks and after each observation session with the class teacher, the busy school routine did often not allow spare time for elaborated responses and in-depth conversations with Sarah and Stefanie. Therefore, I planned time for a formal conversation with Sarah once at the beginning, middle, and end of the theatre project:

- at the beginning of the theatre project on November 14, 2016;
- two months later on January 26, 2017;
- one month after the final performances on July 7, 2017.

I interviewed Stefanie on March 22, 2017 after a rehearsal. These conversations offered me time to systematically ask prepared questions and cover specific areas and topics (Kvale 2007; Qu & Dumay 2011) without interruption in the hectic pace of classroom life. Moreover, they provided my interviewees time and space to develop their stories (Rabionet 2009). Most importantly, these interviews made it possible for Sarah and Stefanie to reflect on their perspectives and views while I could refer to some data and first interpretations that I made.

**Third**, I conducted five focus group interviews with the pupils. In addition to the formal one-to-one interviews with Sarah and Stefanie, these conversations provided me the opportunity to listen to and acknowledge the voices of the pupils in a group setting. As this study focuses on interactions and relationships (of trust), the consideration of all relationship partners is particularly important. The often lively, collective, and interactive character of the focus group setting (Kvale 2007) may have facilitated a variety of viewpoints and “more spontaneous expressive and emotional views than in individual, often more cognitive interviews” (*ibid.*, p. 72). Moreover, focus group interviews can facilitate interactions between all participants (Qu & Dumay 2011) which might have brought remarks and comments to light that would not have emerged in a more formal one-to-one setting. Overall, I initiated two focus group sessions during which I also asked the pupils if they would have any questions about me and my research project.

- **On April 4, 2017**, one month prior to the final performance, a spontaneous focus group session evolved in the form of a feedback discussion. After a theatre rehearsal, I profited from the fact that some time was left to listen to the pupils’ general thoughts and opinions on the theatre project and related learning and teaching processes. Questions included: “After four months working on the project, is there anything you particularly like or dislike about the school lessons related to the theatre project?”; “How would you describe your role in the project?”; “I heard that in theatre one can learn languages – what do you think about this? Do you learn anything else?”.

- **On July 4, 2017**, after the final performance, I (highlighted in the blue circles below) planned focus group interviews in smaller groups to elicit a conversation about the theatre project, the pupils' reflection on the overall process, and their self-assessed performance and learning achievements. I recorded these discussions of three groups of four participants each in both audio and video. This allowed me to review the discussions for a subsequent analysis. Questions included: "Is there a moment that you particularly remember in relation to the theatre project?"; "Was the work on your theatre performance different from what you do in other school lessons? If not, why? If yes, in what ways?"; "What have you learned?".



**Focus group interview on 04.04.2017**  
(spontaneous feedback session)



**Focus group interview on 04.07.2017**  
(using self-confrontation method)

I used a self-confrontation method (Boubée 2010; Moussay & Flavier 2014) for the focus group discussions on July 4, 2017. This method afforded to bring back memories and stimulate a first reflection and exchange of views from the pupils' perspective. To be specific, I introduced each discussion by showing a picture and three short video recordings that I made during the development of the theatre project. I invited the pupils to comment on what they saw. The picture I presented showed some pupils inventing first ideas for the theatre script. The first video showed a spontaneous role-playing activity that emerged during a writing session at the beginning of the project. In the second video, the pupils prepared for their public performance. The last short video showed the applause at the end of their first performance. This multimedia presentation at the beginning of the focus group interviews may have entailed that the pupils relived and re-experienced some key moments of the theatre project (Boubée 2010).

In the words of Hockey and Forsey (2012, p. 75), I considered each interview “a moment of engagement, a site of participation in the life of the person we meet and talk with. While I occasionally built the analysis and interpretation of the data into the interview situations themselves to allow the later analysis to become easier, more amenable, and solid (Kvale 2007; e.g. by asking clarifying questions), a content analysis of the audio-recordings enabled me to identify patterns and ideas relevant to my research questions and my other data sets.

With a self-critical view on my own research, I would recommend to purposefully include more of these “moments of engagements” (Hockey & Forsey 2012) in future research. My limited number of interviews offered me interesting insights from various viewpoints. However, in the context of trust research, a greater number of informal and formal interviews might be fruitful, particularly in combination with the use of a self-confrontation method on a more regular basis. This practice would also do justice to an ethnographic framework as it would give considerable weight to the research participants’ own voices and perspectives.

### Artefacts

Throughout the planning and development of the theatre project, the teacher created several drafts of the theatre script and used instructional and teaching materials for individual and group exercises. The pupils produced written notes, scribbles, invitations, and drawings related to the theatre play. Thus, in addition to my video documentation, field notes, and interviews, I collected the original artefacts from Sarah and her pupils or made copies that I kept for a later analysis. These “objects of ethnography” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998) – ethnographic artefacts defined, detached, and carried away by ethnographers (*ibid.*) – initially mainly served as complementary documents to the video recordings and field notes. However, some artefacts such as the theatre script carried important meaning as I discuss in my analysis.

## 4.4 Ethical considerations

### 4.4.1 Procedural ethics and ethics in practice

On the one hand, ethics can describe a prerequisite condition for research to be carried out such as in the case of an institutional review board that has to grant approval. On the other hand, they can delineate an ongoing reflection on concerns and dilemmas during a research process. Lahman *et al.* (2011, p. 1398) refer to Israel and Hay who suggest six reasons why researchers should care about ethics: “(a) protecting participants, (b) increasing researchers’ ability to do good, (c) assuring trust so research can continue, (d) enhancing integrity, (e) complying with professional expectations, and (f) providing researchers with a mechanism to cope with new ethical developments”. In this section, I make explicit the choices I made in relation to both procedural ethics and “ethics in practice”, a distinction made by Guillemin and Gillam (2004). While the former implies the reflections made prior to undertaking research in the context of an application for an institutional review board, the latter is concerned with the actual, day-to-day issues that are encountered in the fieldwork and “that arise in the *doing* of research” (*ibid.*, p. 264; emphasis added). Before I elaborate on these points, I first reflect on the role of institutional review boards (IRBs).

Many researchers are nowadays often required approval by a research ethics committee before undertaking research, usually in cases where the data has not been previously collected or archived (Lincoln & Tierney 2004). The primary function of IRBs is to assure both the rights and welfare of all research participants (Keith-Spiegel & Koocher 2005).<sup>59</sup> However, many scholars report that the process of completing an application dossier as well as the overall

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<sup>59</sup> The Ethics Review Panel (ERP) of the University of Luxembourg officially states that it provides “ethics reviews of research proposals and publications involving human participants, human biological material, animals, or potentially harmful and/or irreversible changes to the environment” (retrieved from [https://www.uni.lu/research/chercheurs\\_recherche/standards\\_policies](https://www.uni.lu/research/chercheurs_recherche/standards_policies)).



involvement of IRBs would often be related to an unpleasant experience and annoying obligation: “a hurdle to surmount” (Guillemin & Gillam 2004, p. 263), a “source of much frustration” (de Vries, DeBruin, & Goodgame 2004, p. 352), “obstructionist, irrational, inconsistent, foolish, and even malicious” (Oakes 2002, p. 446). Overall, many scientists complain about the large amount of time, energy, and resources needed “in attempting to prevent a growing list of imagined harms, minor harms, or highly unlikely harms” (White 2007, p. 547). Against this backdrop, some scholars suggest that the regulations can in some instances even heighten the risk to research participants (Wax, as cited in de Vries *et al.* 2004), facilitate irresponsible science (Keith-Spiegel & Koocher 2005), and eventually cause IRB avoidance (White 2007). In this regard, Oakes (2002) suggests that the feelings of upset expressed by some researchers are increasing due to two main reasons: first, the regulations adapted by IRB’s were often written for and by biomedical researchers but now applied to various disciplines and, second, IRB’s are getting more and more strict. In this climate of frustration, conflict, and disbelief, authors such as Bosk and de Vries (2004) and Spellman (2001) even published pieces of advice on how to reduce the frustration and ease “the IRB burden” (*ibid.*).

I acknowledge these concerns. However, I agree with the argument put forward by Guillemin and Gillam (2004) that ethics committees play an important role in the research process as they (a) protect the basic rights and safety of research participants – and, as I would add, of the researcher her or himself –, (b) offer researchers a “checklist” for appropriate ethical considerations, and (c) grant institutional credibility for the research. Similarly, Oakes (2002) highlights that the IRB system did not appear to frustrate researchers nor to create excessive bureaucracy. In fact, the situation today can be seen as “a direct consequence of many documented violations of very basic ethical standards. That many of these occurred in biomedical investigations only means that social scientists need to ensure such harms never befall their subjects.” (*ibid.*, p. 468) Against this backdrop, research ethics committees are

important for securing a balance between protecting participants on the one side and promoting research on the other side (de Vries *et al.* 2004). Apart from that, the preparation of my application documents required by the IRB contributed meaningfully to my reflective practice. In fact, the process of securing ethical approval forces researchers to think about their overall research approach, objectives, and potential harms, and clarify their methodological standpoints and decisions (Crow *et al.* 2006; Guillemin & Gillam 2004).

In my study, particular ethical issues were concerned with the collection of interactional data through audio and video recordings. As a precondition of ethnographic research, data can only be collected through collaboration and interpersonal contact between the researcher and (voluntary and informed) study participants. At the level of procedural ethics, this study followed the code of conduct outlined by the Department of Linguistics at McGill University (n.d.) as it offers helpful advice on procedures and principles for ethical conduct of research on human subjects (see ethics approval: appendix 3).

First, **informed consent**: In my study, all the research participants needed to give their consent to participate in the research project (see appendices 5 and 6). While research has paid much attention to the content of consent forms, only little attention has been given to ascertaining to what extent research participants understand the content of the document (Etherington 2007; Grundner 1978). In this regard, scholars highlight for example the high readability level of consent forms that may impact its comprehensibility (e.g. Oakes 2002; Ogloff & Otto 1991). This might cause problems especially for children. Therefore, I clarified all details together with the pupils and obtained informed consent of both the children and their parents or legal guardians.<sup>60</sup>

On my first visit at class, I distributed an information letter to the pupils that contained my contact details and information on my school visits and pseudonymisation (see appendix

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<sup>60</sup> I did not do any readability tests for my consent forms. However, I suggest for future research to consider a readability analysis (e.g. Ogloff & Otto 1991, pp. 243–244) to control and/or improve comprehension of the information contained in consent forms.

4). Together with the teacher, I read this letter with the pupils in class while plenty of room was provided to discuss the specifics of the project and answer their questions. Every effort was made to ensure that the pupils understood what their participation in the research process involved. After I asked the children orally for their consent, I distributed a consent form intended for their parents or legal guardians (see appendix 5).<sup>61</sup> This written agreement included the working title of the research project, information on confidentiality, access, and the voluntary basis of participation. In addition to the consent given by the children and their guardians, I ensured that the school where the research took place, represented by its director, the inspectorate, municipal decision makers, and teachers directly involved, have also given formal approval to undertake the investigation. I kept a copy of the signed consent forms on file. The description of the research and the contact information in case of questions were left with the participants.

Another potential issue of consent forms deals with the fact that participants are often asked to give consent prior to knowing exactly what their participation implies (Etherington 2007). Therefore, and following recommendations from various scholars (e.g. Bresler 1996; Guillemin & Gillam 2004; Kaiser 2009; Lahman *et al.* 2011), I understood the process of consent as an iterative, ongoing, and interpersonal process.<sup>62</sup> In this regard, I repeatedly informed all research participants that they are entitled to withdraw their consent at any time without giving reasons and without any negative consequences.

As a main characteristic of ethnographic research, a lot of data was gathered informally and casually, often in unplanned and spontaneous ways. Therefore, I also paid particular attention to third party data such as audio and video files that involved people that accidentally

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<sup>61</sup> I made available the information letter and consent form in Luxembourgish, French, German, and English (or any other language if requested) to prevent a potential language barrier and, hence, intelligibility problems.

<sup>62</sup> See also my commitments in relation to ethics in practice below.

or unknowingly became part of my data collection, such as teachers, pupils from other classes, or parents that entered the classroom. In such cases, I informed all third parties about the research and their right to ask me to switch off the recording device and to delete specific passages immediately. With a reference to guidelines of the European Commission (Iphofen n.d., p. 31), I occasionally considered oral consent sufficient as “[t]he giving of oral consent in a face-to-face situation does appear more natural and consequently more consistent with the ethos of qualitative enquiry [...]”.

Second, the **right to withdraw**: I made every research participant aware of the fact that participation in the study was completely voluntary. In fact, participants were granted the opportunity to withdraw from the study throughout the whole research process. As the data collection involved audio and video recordings, recorders were switched off or passages were deleted if this wish was expressed by any of the participants at any time.

Third, **confidentiality**: In order to maintain respondent confidentiality, I followed the advice given by Kaiser (2009) to address confidentiality issues throughout the research process and in close and ongoing contact with the research participants.<sup>63</sup> I provided my personal contact information to all participants and periodically and openly discussed individual potential issues of confidentiality. Thereby, I ensured that each participant was given the opportunity to ask questions regarding confidentiality and access at any time.

The dissemination of qualitative research findings involves a major dilemma for researchers that concerns “the conflict between conveying detailed, accurate accounts of the social world while simultaneously protecting the identities of the individuals who live in that particular social world” (Kaiser 2009, p. 1639). Taking into consideration both external and internal confidentiality issues (Tolich 2004), I decided to keep out of the study any potentially

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<sup>63</sup> Kaiser (2009, p. 1640) presents an example of a “postinterview confidentiality form” that I suggest to consider for future studies in order to give respondents a range of confidentiality options.

harmful confidential and sensitive information disclosed by study participants. The criteria guiding my decisions were based on an ethical guideline suggested by Johnson and summarised by Bresler (1996, p. 141): if we assume as researcher that both the identities of the locations and those of the individual research participants will be discovered, “[w]hat would be the consequences of this discovery to the community? To the individuals? Is the importance of what is revealed in the publication great enough to warrant these consequences? Could you, yourself, live with these consequences should they occur?”. In this regard, and in relation to the communication of results discussed below, I changed not only the names of all research participants but additionally decided to anonymise and blur their faces in all still shots presented in this thesis using Adobe Photoshop. I further explain my decisions in relation to the pseudonymisation process below.

Fourth, the **communication of results**: I informed the participants about their right to receive information on the research outcomes once these have been available.

It is important to note that the role of IRBs and procedural ethics in general is limited. In fact, there is no direct or necessary relationship between the approval of an ethics committee and the actual (ethical) conduct of research (Guillemin & Gillam 2004). Indeed, “ethics committees cannot help when you are in the field and difficult, unexpected situations arise, when you are forced to make immediate decisions about ethical concerns, or when information is revealed that suggests you or your participants are at risk” (*ibid.*, p. 273). Overall, regular exchanges with the class teacher and all pupils may have prevented potential conflict situations and may have ensured a climate of ethical integrity and a feeling of safety in relation to my research participants’ participation in the study. In this regard, I aspired to the ethical stance of “culturally responsive relational reflexive ethics” proposed by Lahman *et al.* (2011). At the level of ethics in practice, I was thus committed to be a responsive, relational, and reflexive researcher. More specifically, I strived to conduct:

- **responsive research**, by providing information as it became available throughout my study, also in cases where it required “the use of appropriate and judicious research self-disclosure” (Etherington 2007, p. 614) and by using process consent, “a continuous process of integrity, rather than [*sic*] the more typical one-time discussion of consent [...]” (Lahman *et al.* 2011, p. 1402);
- **relational research**, by considering and maintaining interpersonal trust as an important, relational notion (Molyneux, Peshu, & Marsh 2005) throughout my research and balancing my own needs as a researcher with those of my research participants (Etherington 2007);
- **reflexive research**, by respecting the participants’ dignity, safety, privacy, and autonomy (Lahman *et al.* 2011) and being aware of patriarchal and hierarchical power relations in my relationships with all study participants (Etherington 2007).

#### 4.4.2 Pseudonymisation

“Some readers may wonder, so what is all the fuss about changing a name?”  
(Lahman *et al.* 2015, p. 448)

Decisions about naming are rarely overtly discussed by authors in research publications and if, it is often only a short comment tackling the issue in a footnote (Guenther 2009). For Guenther (2009), this lack of conversation is disheartening “because the decision to name or not to name is rife with overlapping ethical, political, methodological, and personal dilemmas” (*ibid.*, p. 412). Against this backdrop, I render visible some of my dilemmas and decisions in relation to pseudonymisation.

The orthonym, a person’s real name, can be turned into a pseudonym, a fake name. Thus, a researcher can change a real name for example to a number (e.g. 1) or an acronym (e.g. DW). However, it is important to note that the act of naming can be seen as an act of power (Guenther 2009). “Parents naming children, conquerors naming new lands, and organizations naming themselves all involve the assertion of authority and control.” (*ibid.*, p. 412) In this

regard, Lahman *et al.* (2015, pp. 450–451) suggest three major considerations (relational, developmental, and economical) that should be considered when discussing with a research participant whether to use a real name or a pseudonym:

- **relationally**: when real names are used, persons connected to the research participant can be identified too, such as people with the same family name or people the participant refers to;
- **developmentally**: participants that initially consented to the use of their real names might change this wish at a later point in time;
- **economically**: using a real name might have an unanticipated impact on a research participant's current or future work, such as if a participant runs for political office or a future employer searching online for references related to the prospective employee.

Several scholars highlight that anonymity may be a difficult, sometimes even unachievable goal in ethnographic research (e.g. Lahman *et al.* 2015; van den Hoonaard 2003).<sup>64</sup> Confidentiality also entails some challenges. On the one hand, it can be protective if it restricts readers access to sensitive information. On the other hand, however, confidentiality can also be disempowering and silencing (Guenther 2009), as some research participants do not want their identity to be separated from their story (Lahman *et al.* 2015).

I acknowledge the implications of choosing pseudonyms for all research participants instead of real names. My decision to use fake names implied a dilemma also described by Wiles *et al.* (2008): while I wanted to provide some choices to my research participants about how their data and voices are used and represented, I also felt obliged to protect them. In this regard, one major reason that encouraged me to use pseudonyms is a question raised for

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<sup>64</sup> For example, van den Hoonaard (2003) points out that the use of signed consent forms may be problematic to maintain anonymity due to the signature of the participants on these forms. In fact, each signature is “a permanent non-anonymized record of the people involved in the study” (*ibid.*, p. 143). In this context, van den Hoonaard (2013) reports that research participants occasionally use pseudonyms to sign their consent form.

consideration by Lahman *et al.* (2015): did my research participants, especially the children, fully understand potential consequences linked to the disclosure of their real names? In fact, published research can easily and often permanently be found in (online) directories. Therefore, I discussed with the pupils and other participants the decision to pseudonymise the data. Following another suggestion by Lahman *et al.* (2015), I wanted to construct the pseudonyms together with my participants. As the pupils repeatedly proposed names of fictional characters such as “James Bond”, “Batman”, or “Princess Snow White”, I decided to choose the pseudonyms myself.

As proposed by Kaiser (2009), I removed personal identifiers such as names and other contextual information that could identify my participants from my transcriptions. Thus, at the level of individuals, I changed all names apart from mine (Dany). In addition, I disguised original names and locations at the level of organisations and places apart from the *Rotondes*, as a public space and the official collaboration partner of this study. Overall, I just report the information relevant and necessary to understand the arguments put forward in this study. In this respect, I decided to (a) not create new characters by changing key characteristics, (b) report transcriptions in original language to keep the original voices of the participants, and (c) add an additional translation in English for the fluidity and better understanding for the readers (see transcription conventions: appendix 1).

Before I now turn to the findings of my research, I will first explain the organisation of my three data analysis chapters and the respective focus of each chapter.



## 4.5 Telling the ethnographic story: The “Hero’s journey” as a three-act structure

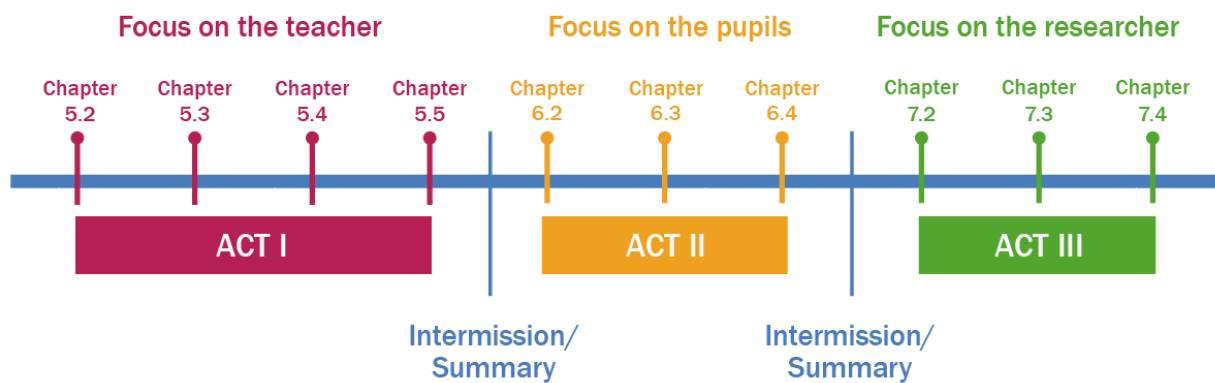
In my data analysis chapters, I reconstruct the development of the theatre project that the classroom community worked on from November 2016 to May 2017. With a focus on the overall work process that I documented during my nine-month fieldwork, I describe samples of school lessons that are representative of the over thirty field trips that I conducted for this study. More specifically, and in line with a critical incident framework, I analyse concrete classroom practices and interactions (“critical incidents”) that were crucial for the design and development of the theatre performance and that are relevant to my overall research questions:

1. What are “signs of trust” in an educational context?
2. How and in what ways can a teacher build, maintain, or strengthen trust?
3. How and in what ways can “signs of trust” shape interactions in the classroom?
4. How can “signs of trust” be analysed?

In order to present the work process, I frame the analysis within a three-act structure similar to a possible structure of a theatrical performance. Instead of using this structure to focus on a beginning, middle, and end as imagined for example by Aristoteles (see Kinateder 2012), I consider it here merely a flexible and guiding framework to organise and give a form to my data and reflections on trust in an educational context. In my view, the chronological order as well as the narrative structure allow me to retrace the complex work on the theatre project and present and explore the overall process in context. Against this backdrop, and with a focus on potential “signs of trust”, I explore specific school lessons, situations, and interactions to get a sense of the working atmosphere, day-to-day activities, and routines. Overall, I focus on the journey of mutual inquiry and discovery from various perspectives.

In the first act (chapter 5), I focus particularly on the teacher and her teaching practice and on how she may have created, maintained, or strengthened trust in her classroom. In the second act (chapter 6), I put a particular emphasis on the pupils' contributions to the theatre project development and on how they have signalled trust. In the third act (chapter 7), I will shortly focus on the researcher and point out methodological reflections in relation to the findings from acts I and II.

**FIGURE 5:** Timeline and analytical focus of the data analysis chapters (act I, II, III)



In addition to an overarching three-act structure, I adopt a narrative pattern proposed by mythologist and writer Joseph Campbell and further developed by Christopher Vogler (see Kinateder 2012): the “Hero’s journey”. Thereby, I further frame the actual teaching experience and learning journey that my research participants embarked on.

**First**, in a simplified version<sup>65</sup>, I adopt the metaphor of a “journey” as both “an act of traveling from one place to another”<sup>66</sup> and “a long and often difficult process of personal change

<sup>65</sup> Similar to my approach to the three-act structure, I consider the “Hero’s journey” a flexible and guiding framework – a lens “through which [the] stories can be given structure” (Lambert 2014, p. 36). In this respect, I do not adhere to all archetypes and (twelve) stages of the Hero’s journey as proposed by Campell and Vogler (see Gilligan & Dilts 2009; Kinateder 2012; Randles 2012).

<sup>66</sup> Journey. (n.d.). In *Oxford Dictionaries Online*. Retrieved from <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/journey>

and development”<sup>67</sup>. Campbell himself recognises the journey as “a metaphor for the transformational experience that everyone goes through towards becoming a whole and contributing member of society” (see Robledo & Batle 2017, p. 1736). I consider the metaphor of a journey to be in line with a humanising approach to education – recognising the educational experience as a potentially transformative experience (Freire 2017; see also Lambert 2014; Randles 2012).

**Second**, I use the metaphor of a “hero” to describe “a person who goes out and achieves great deed” (Robledo & Batle 2017, p. 1736). In this respect, the “heroes” (in plural) are the protagonists in this study: the pupils and their teacher – on their quest to learn about, collaboratively develop, and eventually perform a play after months of “travel”.

**Third**, I adopt selected overarching themes that come with the narrative model of the “Hero’s journey”. In a nutshell, and following Campbell’s and Vogler’s roadmap (see Gilligan & Dilts 2009; Kinatader 2012; Randles 2012), the protagonists are first presented in their familiar surroundings, followed by a “call for adventure” and motivational incentive by a mentor who encourages the heroes to embark on the adventure and leave the familiar behind. After the journey, the protagonists metaphorically or literally return to the familiar surroundings, potentially “stronger, wiser, more evolved than at the beginning” (Monteiro & Mustaro 2012, p. 2233).

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<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*

# **Chapter 5 › Act I – The teacher’s orientation towards a we-relationship**

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**5.1 Introduction: Focus on the teacher**

**5.2 Signalling care and concern in a space of mutual support**

**5.3 Signalling recognition and appreciation in a space of mutual learning**

**5.4 Sharing the learning and teaching processes with the pupils**

**5.5 Showing awareness of and confidence in the pupils’ abilities**

**5.6 Intermission: Time for reflection on discoveries**

## 5.1 Introduction: Focus on the teacher

At the beginning of their journey, the pupils and the teacher are presented in their familiar surroundings or, in other words, in their “everyday world” (Robledo & Batle 2017): the classroom. A “call for adventure” is initiated by the teacher as a crucial starting point for the journey.

“Often the call to action [i.e. the “call for adventure”] comes from a challenge, a crisis, a vision, or somebody in need. Something has been lost and needs to be regained; some power in the world has decayed and needs to be renewed; some core part of life has been wounded and needs to be healed; some great challenge has arisen and needs to be met.”

(Gilligan & Dilts 2009, p. 30)

In the first act, I will focus primarily on the teacher’s role – Sarah – who set a challenge to develop and stage a theatre performance. This was a new experience for both herself and all the pupils. I explore the very beginning of their journey and render critical how and in what ways Sarah and her pupils left the familiar as they engaged in school lessons that were – in their own words – “different than regular school lessons”: they meditated, elaborated the theatre script, worked on the invitations, and prepared everything needed to rehearse their play on stage (the focus in act II).

For analytical purposes, I focus in this act particularly on the teacher’s role and how she may have signalled trust. However, the pupils’ (inter-)actions are equally important. Therefore, the pupils are the main focus in act II. The research questions that I focus on in act I are:

- **What are “signs of trust” in an educational context?**
- **How and in what ways can a teacher build, maintain, or strengthen trust?**

## 5.2 Signalling care and concern in a space of mutual support

For Sarah and her pupils, November 22, 2016 was the point of departure for months of preparatory work for their final theatre performances – six months to go until May 31, 2017. The pupils took cushions, sat down in a circle in the back of their classroom, and waited for Sarah to insert the CD from the book *Calme et attentif comme une grenouille* written by Eline Snel.

Excerpt field notes [22.11.2016 | I.001]

Some pupils have their eyes closed, as suggested by the narrator. [...] Many pupils move their body backwards and forwards as if they would feel uneasy to sit down quietly and listen calmly. [...] A voice coming from a CD player continues to talk, very softly and slowly, in French: “Dans cet exercice, je vais t’apprendre à rester aussi tranquille qu’une grenouille. [...] Même les grenouilles trouvent que c’est difficile, au début, de rester tranquille comme ça. Les bras veulent bouger, les jambes aussi, tout le temps. Et plus tu feras cet exercice, mieux ça marchera. Et alors? Alors cela devient agréable de ne rien avoir à faire. De ne rien faire d’autre que rester tranquille – aussi tranquille qu’une grenouille.”<sup>68</sup>

Sarah explained to me that the “meditation and relaxation exercise”, as she called it, served as a transition between a “regular” school lesson and a “theatre lesson”. Her explanation indicates that she considered the school lessons directly connected to the theatre project not “regular” lessons but rather school lessons that played a special role in the everyday teaching and overall curriculum. This is a distinction repeatedly made by the pupils throughout the following months as well. In fact, both Sarah and the pupils often qualified and described the “theatre lessons” as “different than regular school (lessons)”. In this respect, the consideration and actual implementation of an entry opportunity to a classroom activity other than, for example, a mere theoretical briefing, illustrates here that Sarah saw both the need and chance of a (special)

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<sup>68</sup> “In this exercise, I will teach you to stay as calm as a frog. [...] Even the frogs think that it’s difficult, at the beginning, to stay calm like this. The arms want to move, the legs as well, all the time. The more you do this exercise, the better it works. And then? Then it will be comfortable to not have anything to do. To not do anything other than staying calm – as calm as a frog.” (translation by author)

transition from one school activity to another activity. Sarah's thought process and the resulting pedagogical activity evidence the special role that the theatre project played for her. In this regard, the first critical incidents I want to look at are directly related to these "meditation and relaxation exercises".

The meditation had a double function for Sarah: first, to calm the pupils down and, second, to help focus their minds and release energy required to work on the theatre project. Against this backdrop, these potential outcomes might have brought positive consequences on both a cognitive and emotional level for the pupils, as the (work on the) theatre lesson potentially built on pupils who are calm, focused, and emotionally balanced. Thus, the meditation exercise can be considered a learning exercise (how to calm down) that includes a cognitive function as well – a "mental exercise" in the educational endeavour of the pupils. In this regard, Sarah here demonstrated that she understands education as "much more than just the transmission of knowledge" (Fobes & Kaufman 2008, p. 26). In fact, Sarah's sequence of actions – from choosing a meditation exercise as entry to the theatre subject, to searching for and eventually buying an audio guide, and playing the CD regularly in class – demonstrates her benevolence in motivation. Her behaviour to allocate time for the pupils to be able to (learn to) calm down with their mind and body can be perceived as an evidence – a positive relational signal – that she cared about the pupils' well-being on an emotional level. In a broader view, then, Sarah signalled that she recognises the school children as emotional *subjects* and conscious beings (see Freire 2017).

During the very first meditation exercise in the context of the theatre project, I noted in my field notes that many pupils moved a lot, "as if they would feel uneasy to sit down quietly and listen calmly" (see excerpt field notes I.001 above). One month later, all the pupils sat again in a circle at the back of the classroom, listened to the narrator's voice, guiding, and instructions. Most of the pupils had their eyes closed, their hands placed on their belly (as recommended by

the narrator), their face pointing downwards. Throughout the ten minutes of the meditation, the pupils sat (mostly) quietly and listened carefully to the narrator’s words and their respiration. Their body posture and breathing respiratory rhythm signalled a calm and relaxed state of mind – a major objective for Sarah’s exercise. In other words, the meditation may have triggered a physical and emotional reaction (i.e. a calm state of mind and body). In this respect, I argue that the pupils may have learned to calm down and take advantage of the meditation practice and introductory ritual that their teacher chose for them. More specifically, and relating it to a method that Leveté (2001, p. 22) terms “following the breath”, the pupils learned to concentrate on the present moment, to breathe deeply, and “to calm and focus the mind quickly, and to stabilize the body” (*ibid.*).



Meditation (“following the breath”)

[20.12.2016 | I.002]



Meditation (“following the breath”)

[20.12.2016 | I.003]

**Narrator** ((from meditation CD, in slow and quiet voice)):

*la grenouille est calme (--) quand elle respire (-) son ventre gonfle (-) puis dégonfle doucement [...] les jambes et les bras sont détendus (-) le ventre est détendu (--) le dos (-) la nuque et la tête sont détendus [...] pour cet exercice (-) on ne te demande pas de ne plus bouger (-) on te demande de voir s’il y a encore quelque chose qui bouge (-) et ce que c’est [...] si tu fais souvent cet exercice (-) tu remarqueras que tu observes beaucoup mieux*

**Narrator** ((from meditation CD, in slow and quiet voice)):

*the frog is calm (--) when it breathes (-) its belly inflates (-) then deflates [...] the feet and arms are relaxed (-) the belly is relaxed (--) the back (-) the neck and the head are relaxed [...] for this exercise (-) one does not ask you to not move (-) one asks you to see whether there is something that still moves (-) and what it is [...] if you do this exercise frequently (-) you will notice that you see much better<sup>69</sup>*

<sup>69</sup> See transcription conventions: appendix 1.





Meditation (“following the breath”)

[20.12.2016 | I.004]



Meditation (“following the breath”)

[20.12.2016 | I.005]

Huerta (2011) states that teachers who engage in a humanising pedagogy value classroom practices that “reflect genuine care for individual students” (p. 49). In line with this understanding, Sarah initiated the overall theatre project development from the very beginning on with a pedagogical practice that can be thought of reflecting a humanising perspective on teaching and learning. From the very outset, she created a learning environment that built on and triggered a climate of care, (emotional) well-being, and support. In fact, Sarah created the conditions “to not do anything other than staying calm”. I argue that this practice and the time she granted it to unfold during an official school lesson allowed the pupils to get used to it and, at the same time, reconsider the role of a teacher and, maybe, of school in general. More specifically, the pupils experienced that the competence and responsibility of a teacher can include the provision of opportunities (and time) to learn about and experience moments of calmness, care, and mindfulness.

**Narrator** ((from meditation CD, in slow and quiet voice)):

*quand tu es ainsi tranquille (-) tu remarques peut-être qu’il y a toujours quelque chose qui bouge en toi (-- ) peut-être les yeux (-) ou un doigt (-) ou tes cuisses [...] sens bien cette respiration calme [...] faire attention à sa respiration c’est très utile lorsqu’on s’est fait mal ou lorsqu’on est fâché*

**Narrator** ((from meditation CD, in slow and quiet voice)):

when you are so calm (-) you will see maybe that there is always something moving in you (-- ) maybe the eyes (-) or a finger (-) or your thighs [...] feel this calm breathing [...] keeping an eye on one’s respiration is very useful when one hurts oneself or when one is angry

[...] *demain peut-être qu'en as-tu encore envie de t'exercer à être tranquille comme une grenouille*

[...] maybe you feel like rehearsing to stay calm like a frog tomorrow

[17.01.2017 | I.006]

A primary concern of meditation, as can be deduced from the transcription above, involves the practice of “focusing on the inner self and quieting the mind, body, and emotions” (Slaviero 2017, p. 11). Thus, in situations of anxiousness, anger, or pain – feelings that the narrator refers to in her guided meditation and that Sarah openly talked about in the classroom – meditation can “foster an open and accepting awareness of one’s thoughts and feelings” (Creswell 2017, p. 499). In this context, the incentive to rehearse “to stay calm like a frog tomorrow” (see transcription above) can be seen as an encouragement to practice meditation in other situations, such as outside the classroom and without the direct assistance from a CD and the teacher. Thus, via the tool of meditation, Sarah taught the pupils to take care of themselves as she provided them a possibility to do so independently. She made available a lesson, knowledge, and practice that the pupils may use not only in a school context but also outside of the school building, potentially preparing them for various (difficult) situations in life. In other words, she gave her pupils a simple tool and technique (to breathe in and out deeply a few times) that “can be applied at any time, especially at times of stress” (Levete 2001, p. 22) – both in and outside of the classroom. Within the framework of the “Hero’s journey”, Sarah can here be perceived as a (caring) mentor, someone who “teaches and protects the Hero and gives them gifts” (García-Ortega *et al.* 2016, p. 612; e.g. the “gift” of learning how to meditate on their own).

As I discussed earlier, the more often the meditation was practiced in the classroom (as a process of learning), the more relaxed and steady the position of (some of) the pupils’ bodies got. This reaction can be interpreted as a learning result: the pupils (as meditation practitioners)

may have learned to appreciate moments of calmness, concentration, and mindfulness<sup>70</sup> with their associated benefits. In fact, studies on guided mindfulness-meditation techniques show a positive impact on psychological well-being (Slaviero 2017), stress management (Erricker, Erricker, & Leveté 2001), and happiness (Campos *et al.* 2016). Crescentini and his colleagues highlight that “mindful awareness [...] can be effectively developed through meditation practice, allows individuals to stay in the here and now and to experience present-moment reality with an open and accepting attitude” (Crescentini *et al.* 2016, p. 2). They further argue that in educational settings, meditation practices have the potential to improve the pupils’ cognitive, emotional, and social abilities. In a similar vein, Erricker *et al.* (2001, p. ix) state that meditation “is a way to help develop the positive potential of the mind and heart”.

While Sarah might not be aware of all the potential advantages of meditation, her decision to include a guided meditation in her teaching unit signalled that she cared about the pupils’ well-being (particularly on an emotional level) and possesses an attitude of goodwill – essential signals in trustful relationships (e.g. Lewicki & Tomlinson 2003; Mayer *et al.* 1995). In this respect, Sarah (re-)defined the classroom as a space of support and emotional balance in which the pupils got the chance to focus and calm down their minds and hearts (see Erricker *et al.* 2001) and, thereby, possibly achieve a mental, emotional, and physical state of well-being. This learning experience can be considered useful both inside the classroom and outside the walls of the school building. Thus, as an immediate result of the meditation exercise, (school) stress, peer pressure, and performance appraisal – elements that might be foregrounded in other school contexts – were placed in the background, at least for that particular moment.

While the “meditation and relaxation exercise” was a mere “transition” (in Sarah’s words) from one school lesson to another, it can be seen as an integral part of a (humanising) learning

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<sup>70</sup> Mindfulness as “a process of openly attending, with awareness, to one’s present moment experience” (Creswell 2017, p. 493).

experience. Due to the fact that Sarah embedded the theatre project in the official course of instructions with associated learning objectives related to the overarching curriculum, she recognised the meditation exercise as a part of an official school lesson as well. In this context, the theatre project afforded Sarah and the pupils to consider moments of awareness and (re-)vitalisation as integral and official part of school. Most importantly, then, Sarah’s practice – to allocate time to breathe calmly and deeply, close one’s eyes, and take a moment to emotionally, mentally, and physically balance at the beginning of a school lesson and within the formal school lesson – soon became a habit that set the tone for all succeeding actions. In fact, this tone had been maintained and strengthened in various teaching practices and concrete interactions throughout the theatre lessons. Indeed, Sarah further built on and created the conditions for a climate of care and support, for example, by initiating a feedback and discussion round.

Near the end of a theatre lesson – often after approximately one hour of group work – Sarah usually asked all the pupils to sit together in a circle to talk about the preceding activity and overall school lesson. After the pupils started the theatre session meditating in a circle, the pupils and their teacher now positioned themselves again in a setting and bodily state that can be said to create the conditions for a space of reciprocal support, in which student-teacher exchange of feelings, concerns, and emotional and cognitive experiences can happen. After the pupils worked for the first time on their script and character development on November 22, 2016, Sarah asked, for example, how the pupils liked the overall activity that she planned for the classroom community.

<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>wei sidd dir mat äre Rollen eens ginn? [...] wei huet iech d’Aktivitéit gefall?</i></p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>how did you get on with your roles? [...] how did you like the activity?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[22.11.2016   I.007]</p>
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Sarah's allocation of time for feedback as well as the formulation of her questions on how the pupils get on with their roles and how they liked the lesson, demonstrate that she seeks to create an opportunity for open and honest dialogue. Thereby, Sarah signalled care and concern about the pupils' (learning) experience and their inner thoughts. Moreover, the mere action of initiating a feedback discussion can be interpreted as a positive relational signal. In fact, Sarah hereby created a platform for a discussion on mutual expectations, self-disclosures, and "the revelation of self to the other and of the other to self" (see Weber & Carter 1998, p. 16).

Indeed, in the "concluding round", as Sarah defined the lesson closure activity, the pupils got offered space and time to share their opinions on the overall learning session and on how they should further proceed: what they liked, what they did not like, how they felt about their learning experience and their teacher, what they found easy and difficult, and what they wished to change in a following lesson related to the development of the theatre project. In one of the first concluding rounds, Sarah made explicit the rules and her expectations of this activity.

<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>mir maachen elo eng Ofschlossronn wou mir erëm (-) ebe <u>jiddereen d'Geleeënheet huet</u> ze soe wat huet en haut gutt fonnt wat huet en haut net gutt fonnt (-) wat war einfach wat war net einfach (-) dat heescht jiddereen seet een zwee kleng Sätz zu deem haitege Moien (-) dir kennt och gäre soe wat dir iech villäicht fir déi NÄCHST Woch wënscht eh wi zum Beispill dass et e bësse méi roueg ass [...] a wann deen ee schwätzt [...] <u>lauschtere mir no</u></i></p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>we now do a concluding round where <u>everybody gets the opportunity</u> to say what he liked today or what he did not like (-) what was easy what was not easy (-) that means everyone says one or two short sentences about today's morning (-) you can also say what you would wish for NEXT week eh like for example that it should be a little bit quieter [...] and when someone talks [...] <u>we listen</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">[29.11.2016   I.008]</p>
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In her statement, Sarah described the basic principles and rules of a concluding round as she understood it. The fact that she gave introductory explanations indicates, amongst others, that this was not a regular activity, as otherwise it would not have needed further explanations but a mere repetition of its main rules. Thus, in accordance to Sarah's view, the theatre lesson here

again brought with it “non-regular” elements into the classroom context. In a broader perspective, the explanation of what a concluding round is and what it might involve can be considered a teaching and learning experience in itself. First, the pupils may have learned general rules on how to give feedback (e.g. speak openly and honestly), how to react to feedback (e.g. listen to each other), and what feedback comments might include in an educational context (e.g. “what was easy what was not easy?”, “what do you wish for next week?”). Second, they may learn and experience that their honesty will be protected and not harmed. Third, the pupils may learn and value that a teacher and fellow pupils (should) care about one’s personal thoughts, feeling, and opinions.

As a community, the pupils together with their teacher collectively reflected on their (inter-)actions and behaviours and made explicit what happened during the theatre lesson and with which emotional associations. These reflections and considerations about a school lesson that Sarah repeatedly triggered throughout the theatre project can go beyond the subsequent immediate discussion, as the pupils might (have learned to) ask, or at least think about, these and similar questions in other situations as well. Against this backdrop, Sarah created a learning environment that values action and (critical) reflection – “praxis” as Freire (2017) would call it. In this context, “[t]he students – no longer docile listeners – are now critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher” (Freire 2017, p. 54), an affordance that I will further discuss in the following chapters.

It is important to highlight that Sarah emphasised in her explanations that “everybody gets the opportunity” to say something and to actively contribute to the group discussion round; in other words: all the voices and concerns count. At the same time, she underlined that when someone shares her or his opinions and thoughts, “we listen”. Thereby, I argue, Sarah facilitated an approach that potentially triggered a solidarity framework. On the one hand, she created the conditions for a sharing platform where her pupils, their feelings, individual ideas, and concerns

are valued. On the other hand, she promoted a climate of reciprocal care and respect as she encouraged everyone to pay attention and acknowledge each other's comments – to *listen* to what everyone had to say. Sarah made this intention clear on several occasions during the feedback rounds as she repeatedly encouraged the pupils to share their thoughts and impressions with the whole classroom community (instead of focusing on, gazing at, and talking solely to her in the role of the teacher).

Instead of mainly “reporting” to the classroom teacher, Sarah established a learning context in which both care and concerns can be shared within the entire community. In this respect, Sarah motivated the pupils to be honest and open towards the whole group; they *together* became responsible for creating the conditions for a safe and caring environment. Sarah's approach becomes evident, for example, in a situation when Manuel shared his thoughts and, more specifically, his language preference during an exercise. As I describe below, Sarah asked Manuel to speak and position himself not only to her but to the whole classroom community.

### Manuel



After some people shared their thoughts on today's lesson, Sarah now gives the floor to Manuel and asks him first which language he found the easiest one.

**Sarah:** then Manuel (-) please

**Manuel:** e::h (for me) Luxembourgish

Feedback round as a group activity

[17.01.2017 | I.009]



Manuel shows both with his body posture turned towards Sarah and his gaze that he talks to and focuses mainly his teacher. As a reaction to his non-verbal behaviour, Sarah asks him to involve everyone in his response. She underlines her request with a gesture pointing to the whole group sitting in front and around Manuel.

Feedback round as a group activity

[17.01.2017 | I.010]

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**Sarah:** so e:h talk to the group if you want (-) okay?

**Manuel** ((turns his body around to position himself towards the group))

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Feedback round as a group activity

[17.01.2017 | I.011]

As an initial response to Sarah's prompt, Manuel turns around and positions himself towards all group members. He then repeats his thoughts.

**Sarah:** so your favourite language was?

**Manuel:** Luxembourgish

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Sarah's request to Manuel and other pupils (in similar situations) to both verbally and bodily orient themselves towards the whole group made them aware that the feedback round is a group activity; they all had thoughts, concerns, and ideas that were relevant to and should be considered by everyone. In line with an interpretation of a similar finding reported by Hansen (1998), Sarah may have encouraged the pupils to interact with each other intellectually. Thus, Manuel and all other pupils potentially learned that their feedback is intended (and heard by) every member of the classroom community. Thereby, Sarah encouraged openness towards the teacher and fellow pupils and, at the same time, highlighted the responsibility and potential solidarity of everyone involved. Against this backdrop, I argue, Sarah may have triggered trusting behaviour based on shared understanding, responsibility, honesty, and openness. In fact, she usually ended a theatre lesson the way she initiated it: with an intention to create a common (safe and fair) learning and teaching experience.

The acts of listening to the pupils' interests, needs, and concerns, and considering their perspectives are concrete practices to humanise the classroom (Da Silva 2009; Salazar 2013). Sarah often encouraged everyone to express themselves, including the pupils, herself, and me, and to listen to each other. Thus, she promoted a respectful exchange, defined by Bryk and



Schneider (2003, p. 42) as “marked by genuinely listening to what each person has to say and by taking these views into account in subsequent actions”.<sup>71</sup> Interestingly, the pupils built on these expectations and further exercised Sarah’s dialogic approach as I will explore in act II.

Overall, Sarah facilitated mutual understanding and cultivated an environment where reciprocal trust could unfold; she encouraged and taught the pupils to listen to each other, pay attention, and consider the various viewpoints, to be open, honest, and to take care not to harm someone’s feelings but, rather, respect different perspectives. “When teachers demonstrate their trust in their students by listening and responding to them, encouraging them to express themselves, and adjusting the environment to increase their success, the students learn to trust that their teacher will treat them fairly and will assist and guide them respectfully.” (Durnford 2010, p. 27) In line with Durnford’s (2010) understanding, Sarah’s teaching practices and pedagogical activities evidence her intention to develop, maintain, and strengthen a common (fair and trusting) space from the very beginning on that affords caring teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil interactions.

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<sup>71</sup> Interestingly, while not subject of analysis here, Sarah repeatedly gave me a voice and an open invitation to speak to the whole group as well. In fact, she asked me in different concluding rounds: “Dany, would you like to add something too, also in relation to me as a teacher?” Thereby, she provided me the opportunity to feel as a member of the community and share my perspective as well. Sarah thus made explicit her approach to actively seek feedback, while her behaviour can be seen as signalling her willingness to listen to and learn from both the pupils and from me.

### 5.3 Signalling recognition and appreciation in a space of mutual learning

One of the first assignments in the context of the theatre project was the elaboration of the script as the written text of the dramatic play<sup>72</sup> – the starting point and fundamental basis of the community’s theatre performance. In the first theatre lessons, the pupils invented dialogue and developed lines that later became an integral part of the script. As a preparation, Sarah and the pupils first allocated the roles and then read the story that their very own play was based on: “Où sont passés les princes charmants?” written by Rosalinde Bonnet. To achieve the set goal to develop the script, Sarah encouraged the pupils first to invent additional dialogue using Bonnet’s book as a starting point and “source of inspiration”<sup>73</sup> and then to write down the sentences they invented.

While Bonnet’s story involves only three princesses from popular fairy tales (Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, and Snow White), more than three pupils of the classroom community expressed the wish to play the role of a princess, as Sarah explained me. As a consequence, the pupils themselves came up with the idea to invent a new role and created the character of the daughter of the witch. After the first lesson that I visited in November 2016, Sarah repeatedly referred to the invention of the additional role as “the idea of the pupils” in our one-to-one follow-up discussions. Her words reflect her honesty towards me (not taking credit for the pupils’ independent thinking) and, most importantly, her recognition and acknowledgment of the pupils’ *own* thinking and decision-making process that included their intention to accommodate everyone’s wishes. Sarah’s narrative evidences, amongst others, her willingness to delegate control and acknowledge and value her pupils’ voices. Her overall teaching approach is reflected

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<sup>72</sup> Adair-Lynch, T. (n.d.). The basic elements of theatre: “Script/Text, Scenario, Plan” [Def. 1]. Retrieved December 16, 2018, from [http://homepage.smc.edu/adair-lynch\\_terrinn/ta%205/elements.htm](http://homepage.smc.edu/adair-lynch_terrinn/ta%205/elements.htm)

<sup>73</sup> Sarah argued that “the text from the original book does not offer enough material for the stage afterwards” and thereby offered an explanation and incentive for the task to invent additional dialogue.

in the role distribution process itself, as Sarah further illustrated with the example of the three princesses (Michèle, Mariette, and Laurence, who eventually decided to play these roles).

<b>Sarah:</b> <i>ech hunn déi dräi Prinzessinne virun der Dir gewäerde gelooss vir zesammen ze diskutéieren (--) wéi eng Roll se wëllen (-) wei sie et géife maachen</i>	<b>Sarah:</b> I <u>let the three princesses discuss among themselves</u> outside in front of the door (--) which role they want (-) how <u>they</u> would do it  [22.11.2016   I.012]
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According to Durnford (2010, p. 35), a teacher who “willingly relinquishes some of her control over the classroom in order to share control with her students [... authorises] student perspective and authority”. Here, indeed, as Sarah explained herself, she offered the pupils the opportunity to independently decide on their roles and to assume the responsibility for their own choice and that of other pupils involved. As a reaction to Sarah’s incentive, Michèle, Mariette, and Laurence openly discussed and shared their concerns and wishes among themselves and, at the same time, may have learned to acknowledge and appreciate the opinions, worries, and ideas of their fellow pupils.

In a theatre project, the role distribution can be considered of significant importance in the overall production; it is likely to affect the individual (learning) experience, general development, and success of the play. In theatre productions, the decisions of who is casted and which role(s) the actors play are usually taken by a casting director, a theatrical producer, or, in some cases, a stage director. Here, Sarah thus first demonstrated her willingness to share control and authorise the pupils’ perspective (“how *they* would do it”) – she recognised the pupils as competent decision-makers. Second, and as a consequence of her recognition of the pupils’ agency, she assigned the role of a director/producer and associated power to the pupils. Thereby, Sarah valued and encouraged the pupils’ own judgment (“to let the three princesses discuss among themselves”). Overall, in a crucial moment that might have had consequences for the

overall theatre project, Sarah accepted the risk to lose some control over the project as she might have envisioned it.

Sarah's behaviour and associated practices (e.g. to leave the pupils space and time for self-directed negotiations), exemplified in the role distribution process, demonstrate that she valued the opinions of the pupils and their right to ownership. In fact, she did not enforce top-down choices that the students had to comply to – a practice that would have been in line with a banking approach to education. In other words, Sarah started the journey off with a learning environment that envisioned the pupils as “competent and able individuals” (Bartolomé 1994, p. 179). Therefore, Sarah's attitude and practice can be brought in relation to an overall positive orientation towards the pupils and a trusting pupil-teacher relationship (especially with regard to the findings presented earlier where I explored how Sarah signalled care and concern and established a space of mutual support).

Shortly after the pupils negotiated and decided among themselves who plays which role, all the pupils started to work on one of the first tasks in the context of the theatre project: reading Bonnet's story and inventing new dialogue for the script. The princesses read the story together and closely examined the corresponding illustrations next to the text.

Excerpt field notes [22.11.2016 | I.013]

The pupils show each other where dialogue is, help each other to remind and understand the exercise instructions. “The dialogue is indicated by a line or where the quotation marks are, you know?” One pupil points to an illustration depicting a princess in the book, smiles and says: “Look here, it's me!”. Another pupil points to another illustration: “Look, you are here too!” [...] The group of the princes comes into the classroom. While they head towards Sarah's desk to ask a question, one of the princesses looks at Rowan and asks: “Whose prince are you?”

By dividing the pupils into groups for various assignments, Sarah conferred responsibility for the task and its development to the pupils. As a potential consequence of this setting, the pupils jointly explored, for example, the story that they based their play on. Sarah's willingness to

encourage group activities and shared ownership throughout the development of the theatre project shows her belief and trust that her pupils are capable to construct their own learning (Dangel, Guyton, & McIntyre 2004; Durnford 2010); she recognised them as “knowers” (Huerta 2011).

At first sight, the interactions described in the field notes above (I.013) illustrate that some pupils understood that direct speech is the exact words spoken, indicated by a line and/or quotation marks. The comprehension of this principle was one of Sarah’s main objectives for that particular exercise. Equally important here is the fact that the pupils started to identify themselves with the roles they play. McNaughton (2011) explains that the building of fictional communities in the context of theatre lessons “allows the whole class to participate in the creation and development of the fictional context” (p. 128). In this respect, one of the affordances of working on and performing a theatre play in the classroom is the development of new (fictional and real) bonds in a situation of interdependence. Due to the various roles and responsibilities “backstage” and, eventually, “on stage”, the pupils together with their teacher create new alliances, relations, and mutual interdependencies as exemplified here (at a very early stage) in the case of the princesses and their princes who started to recognise themselves and others in their respective roles.

Outside in the corridor, the group of the princes cooperatively invented new dialogue. Gabriel, Rowan, and Arnaud exchanged about *what* to write and *how* to write: they developed new sentences together by using the original story as a starting point, corrected each other’s grammatical mistakes, always double-checked what the others noted down, discussed the corrections, and sometimes asked the teacher or me for help or clarifications if needed. Similarly, inside the classroom, another group read the text “Où sont passés les princes charmants?” that Sarah distributed at the beginning of their first theatre lesson on November 22, 2016. During the reading activity, Irina asked the group if they can read the text “as in the theatre”.

**Irina:**

*wei mir et am Theater géife maachen  
(-) d'Hex ass streng (-) d'Kand ass  
léif (--) a sou weider*

**Irina:**

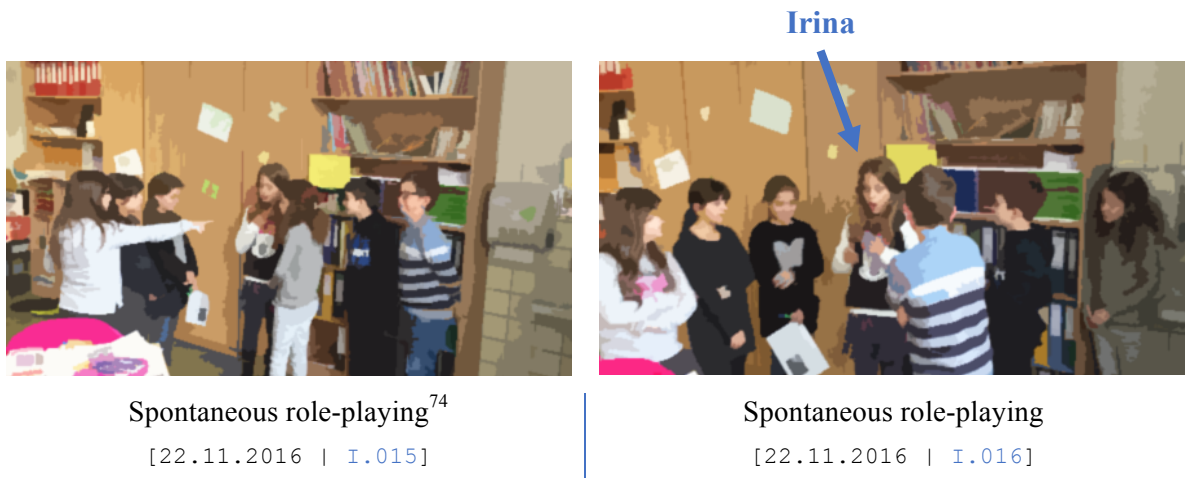
as we would do it in the theatre (-)  
the witch is terrifying (-) the  
child is friendly (--) and so on

[22.11.2016 | I.014]

On the one hand, Irina's suggestion demonstrates that she was aware of the fact that the spectacle of (realistic) dialogue in a theatre context involves performative dimensions such as emotional expression – acting skills that the pupils discussed and learned in forthcoming sessions. On the other hand, and important to highlight here, Irina's spontaneous proposal evidences that she thought one step further than Sarah's original request; she did not only want to *read* the text but intended to *perform* it. Irina assumed co-ownership and, thereby, made obvious and rendered possible the connection between the task and overall objective: preparing text and dialogue to be performed for a theatre play.

While Irina's input might have emanated from Sarah's practice to recognise the pupils' agency, competence, and voice, and entrust control (e.g. by letting them work independently in groups), Irina's behaviour stimulated threads of (re-)actions on its own. As an initial response to Irina's suggestion, all members of the group stood up and some pupils laid aside their copies of the text. The collective change of their body posture from sitting to standing can be perceived as an acknowledgment of Irina's request to try out a performance “as in the theatre” and to invent new dialogue for the script by performing (instead of merely sitting and reading). Driven by Irina's incentive, the pupils altogether initiated a conversation in the fictional setting. They used some sentences from Bonnet's book as a source of inspiration but soon started adding (their own) new words and complete sentences. At the same time, they collaboratively developed the course of (imagined) events and negotiated by gaze, body posture, and verbal communication when to enter the imagined scene, when to talk, and whom to talk to.

During their first group performance – a spontaneous role-playing activity –, the pupils stayed in character and built a short but logic storyline telling the first encounter between the princesses, the witch, and the wolf. They interpreted the text in their respective roles and performed it with spontaneously associated verbal and non-verbal characteristics. Irina, for example, used a high and shrill pitch to imitate the “terrifying witch”. Ella looked down at the ground and, at first, did not say anything to express the character’s shyness and fear of the witch. In their play, they looked each other into the eyes, pointed at each other, and collaboratively generated a question-answer dialogue. Interestingly, as the pupils continued their role-playing, their story more and more deviated from the original story that they read earlier in the group. Thus, they developed their very *own* story in a process of creative co-creation. This process can be thought of originating from Sarah’s initial trust in and appreciation of the pupils’ abilities and Irina’s response to the trust received.



Sarah’s learning and teaching approach described so far evidences a clear distinction from a banking model approach to education that considers pupils as passive objects (Freire 2017). In fact, the understanding of pupils as passive (controllable) recipients of their education can be an indication of a low level of trust in one’s pupils (Durnford 2010; Ennis & McCauley 2002;

<sup>74</sup> I created these screenshots from the video recording made available by Sarah.

Goddard *et al.* 2001). Instead, Sarah's behaviour and her pedagogical practices represent a different understanding of education that can be related to a humanising perspective; her pupils demonstrated (e.g. during the role-playing) that they felt encouraged to bring in their own voices (and bodies) and become active in their own learning.

Sarah was working with another group during that same activity. However, she then took notice of the spontaneous role-playing activity at the back of the classroom. She might have heard Irina's high pitch or became aware of the group's moving around, came over to the group, and immediately asked the pupils to play their scene again. She explained that she wants to record their improvisation with her mobile phone. This would allow her, as she further argues, to use the video recording as a resource to transcribe the pupils' spontaneously created dialogue and, subsequently, include the new sentences into the script for their play. Sarah's sequence of actions – to come over to the group, ask the pupils to repeat their performance, and use an audio-visual recording device – can be perceived as demonstrating both her interest in and positive valuation of the pupils' engaged active learning process and their interpretations. More specifically, her behaviour may demonstrate her acknowledgment and positive appreciation of the pupils' initiative to spontaneously perform in their roles. In fact, by openly declaring her intention to record the role-playing to use it as a basis for the (transcription of the) script, Sarah explicitly recognised the pupils' work and the usefulness of its outcome for the broader project context.

On November 22, 2016 – the first official school lesson dedicated to the development of the theatre project –, Sarah might have initially expected to work step by step towards a first (attempt of) performance in several weeks. However, the pupils proactively accelerated the process as they combined the activities of reading, writing, and performing. Thus, the pupils reacted to Sarah's teaching approach with a creative co-construction of knowledge and learning input, here in the form of, amongst others, a spontaneous role-playing performance.



Sarah's behaviour, especially her reaction to quickly take her mobile phone and start recording the pupils' improvised interactions, signalled her recognition and willingness to learn from her pupils. In fact, her practice to encourage and value the pupils' input may demonstrate teacher trust (see Ennis & McCauley 2002; Hansen 1998). More specifically, Sarah appreciated the pupils' input by considering, recording, and, eventually, transcribing the dialogue that was invented by the pupils as actors-creators. At the same time, she acquired ideas of how to develop a theatre script, what to include in the storyline, and in what ways dialogue can be developed in a classroom context. Thus, both the pupils and their teacher learned from each other, a situation that exemplifies the conceptualisation of education as "a process in which teacher and students mutually participate in the intellectually exciting undertaking we call learning" (Bartolomé 1994, p. 183). This attitude and practice further unfolded in the concluding round that followed the group work and spontaneous role-playing activity on November 22, 2016. At the beginning of the discussion, Sarah was particularly interested in the pupils' ideas on how to proceed.

<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>soll ech är Notizen elo oftippen?</i></p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>should I typewrite your notes now?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[22.11.2016   I.017]</p>
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In the banking model of education, teachers tell the students what to do and what to learn, without giving them the opportunity to share opinions, personal thoughts, and suggestions (Cammarota & Romero 2006). Thus, the banking model is believed to promote passivity, acceptance, and submissiveness (Salazar 2013). Sarah here charted a different path and encouraged reciprocal self-disclosures and, potentially, reciprocal trust (see Weber & Carter 1998). In fact, her question if she should typewrite the notes now ("should I typewrite your notes now?") shows that she wanted to know what would be most helpful for the pupils, how she could drive the (learning and script development) process forward, and with what concrete actions she might be able to help the pupils to move on. Thereby, Sarah entrusted the pupils

some control and decision-power that might have affected future teaching and learning situations.<sup>75</sup> Thus, her behaviour indicates both a willingness of benevolence and an (intended) high level of interdependence.

As a response to Sarah's question, some pupils indicated that it would indeed be helpful if she could write down their notes. This interaction can be brought in relation to the distribution of homework assignments. Instead of the teacher distributing tasks and allocating responsibilities, the teacher was here the receiver of (home-)work. In fact, Sarah initiated the process by asking the pupils how to proceed. As a consequence, she had been the one left with a homework assignment as requested by the pupils. In this context, she herself accepted the role of a learner (Andersen 2004; Freire 2017), as she listened to the pupils, complied with their request, and entrusted the pupils a responsibility that is usually carried by a teacher (thinking of learning material and deciding on future actions).

Sarah made evident the situation of a common learning experience and mutual dependency, as she repeatedly asked the pupils for feedback and created the conditions for a space of mutual learning during the concluding round.

<b>Sarah:</b> <i>well nach een eppes soen? (-) hu <u>mir</u> eppes vergiess? (-) musse <u>mir</u> nach un eppes aneshters denken?</i>	<b>Sarah:</b> does anybody want to add something? (-) did <u>we</u> forget something? (-) do <u>we</u> have to think about something else?  [22.11.2016   I.018]
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Sarah's questions "did we forget something?" and "do we have to think about something else?" draw attention to the fact that she considered the teaching and learning process as a common project between her (the teacher) and the pupils. When objects become subjects in a humanising

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<sup>75</sup> As I noted above, the script is the fundamental basis of the community's theatre project.

approach to education<sup>76</sup>, pupils can work together to co-construct knowledge (Salazar 2013). As a consequence, by generating dialogue and a sense of ownership, the teacher makes the pupils “feel they are knowledgeable Subjects that guide the educational process” (Cammarota & Romero 2006, p. 20). The simple use of the first-person plural “we” highlights this collaborative (teaching and learning) approach followed by Sarah throughout her lessons and her appreciation of the pupils’ voices and knowledge. Her questions during the different feedback rounds as well as the way she formulated and (appreciatively and reliably) reacted to them, paved the way for honest contributions and feedback and, again, express her willingness and intention to share competence and control.

After the first group work on the theatre project that I just described, Sarah, indeed, typewrote at home the dialogue that the pupils invented and performed. Thus, she met the pupils’ demand and used their contributions to create a first version of the play script. As a preparation for the theatre lesson on November 29, 2016, Sarah printed and distributed this first version of the script. She specified that the sentences coloured in black had been copied from the original book from Rosalinde Bonnet while the text passages in blue were the ones that had been invented by the pupils the week before and then transcribed by her at home.<sup>77</sup>

Excerpt field notes [29.11.2016 | I.019]

I take a first and quick look at the script. I flick through the five pages and see a lot of blue-coloured sentences.

The pages two and five shown as examples below illustrate that Sarah included all the pupils’ ideas, in this case the dialogue performed and the sentences written by them during their group

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<sup>76</sup> *Objects* as the ones “which are known and acted upon” and *subjects* as “those who know and act” (Freire 2017, translator’s note, p. 10).

<sup>77</sup> The pupils did not have enough time yet to work on and develop all different parts of the story. Sarah therefore copied some sentences from Bonnet’s book to the script so as to keep the overall structure of the original storyline.

work. By labelling the pupils' sentences in the colour blue, Sarah visually highlighted their work and thereby both acknowledged and valued the pupils' input. In this respect, Sarah's action of typewriting as well as the product of that action – the script – can be considered an appreciation of and reliance on the pupils' knowledge and, therefore, a signal of her trust in their knowledge (and the way it was produced). Thereby, Sarah built on the collaborative and autonomous spirit that the pupils showed, for example, during the spontaneous role-playing. Against this backdrop, the document that is referred to as the “script” included contributions from several sources. Sarah's role in the production of this document can be understood as the assembler, who collects and brings together different pieces of a puzzle. In this context, I consider the script itself as revealing a productive and trusting pupil-teacher collaboration.

		princes ont disparu.
A l'auberge	l'aubergiste	Bonjour, vous êtes de jolies filles. Vous allez chez la sorcière Carabosse ? Je peux vous dire un truc ? Mais c'est drôlement dangereux ! Carabosse va vous transformer en cochon.
	Blanche-Neige	Nous le savons bien, mais nous devons parler au Loup.
	l'aubergiste	Ah, ça tombe bien ! Je devais maintenant aller chez elle pour apporter la commande du loup. J'ai justement une livraison pour lui. Si vous pouviez tout lui apporter, ça m'arrangerait.
	Cendrillon	Non, Carabosse est là ! J'ai trop peur. Moi je ne viens pas avec vous.
Au château de Carabosse	Carabosse	Quelle chance ! Trois princesses d'un coup ! Vous êtes bien imprudentes de vous aventurer chez la plus célèbre des sorcières ! Tiens, tu t'es réveillée toi !
	Blanche-Neige	Attendez, nous apportons un paquet pour le Loup !
	Carabosse	Quo ! Encore ! Wollef, Wollef, komm dirket hei hin !
	le Loup	Comme c'est sympathique ! Quelle délicate attention de me faire livrer par des princesses ! Ouvrez-les vite, Cara !
	le Loup	Oh, merci, merci ! ça a l'air délicieux, je vais me régaler. Vous boirez bien quelque chose, vous avez l'air très fatiguées.
	Blanche-Neige Cendrillon	Avec plaisir !
	Carabosse	Non mais faites comme si je n'étais pas là ! Faudrait pas abuser quand même !
	le Loup	Calme-toi, Cara, ça nous fait un peu de compagnie.
	Carabosse	Wat maacht dir ierwerhaapt hei ?
	Princesse	Mir sichen Prénzen
	Carabosse	Déi sinn net hei !
	Princesse	Je crois que tu les as capturés et ne le nie pas ! Tu es très très méchante !
	Carabosse	Da fro main Kand. Kand, Kand ?!
	Apprentie-sorcière	Jo ?
	Carabosse	Ne, d'Prénzen sinn net hei ?
	Apprentie-sorcière	Nee si sinn net hei.
	Carabosse	Gesider, ech humm iech et jo gesot.
	Princesse	Vleicht sinn se am Bauch vum Wollef

First version of the script (page 2)

[29.11.2016 | I.020]

les princesses et leurs princes	le prince de Blanche-Neige	Désolé, mais, au fond de cette caverne, il n'y a pas l'heure et ...
	Blanche-Neige	Certes, mais j'avais quand même un bout de pomme empoisonnée coincé au fond de la gorge ; sans l'intervention de votre cheval, je serais encore au fond de mon cerceuil.
	le prince de Blanche-Neige	Désolé, les trolls ont dit que si je ne faisais pas ce qu'ils demandaient, le sorcier me transforme en chapeau.
	Blanche-Neige	Ben, tu n'es pas très courageux comme prince !
	le prince de Blanche-Neige	Die anderen Prinzen haben mich gefragt, ob ich ihnen helfen könnte. Und wenn ich nicht helfen würde, dann würden wir alle in Frösche verzaubert.
	la Belle au Bois dormant	Et moi, il n'y avait qu'un vieux rat pour m'accueillir à mon réveil !
	le prince de la Belle au Bois dormant	Désolé, mais les trolls m'ont demandé d'aider le troll amoureux. Et puis, ici on était bien.
	Belle au Bois dormant	Et moi, moi j'étais toute seule !
	le prince de la Belle au Bois dormant	Je voulais te chercher mais ils ne m'ont pas laissé partir. Et le troll amoureux était triste, alors je voulais l'aider. Tu es une princesse, tu dois savoir que j'aide tout le monde. Je suis un gentil prince.
	Cendrillon	Et moi, j'ai râté mon premier bal.
	le prince de Cendrillon	Entschuldigung, ich hatte einen Vertrag ein zu halten.
	Cendrillon	Und ich ! Ist dein Vertrag wichtiger als ich ?
	le prince de Cendrillon	Nein meine Liebe. Du bist wichtiger als der Vertrag aber ich hatte Angst, dass die Hexe mich in einen Frosch verzaubert.

First version of the script (page 5)

[29.11.2016 | I.021]

Sarah's action of typewriting the sentences that the pupils invented can also be perceived as an indication of her reliability and as a combination of a sense of predictability and benevolence (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000). On the one hand, Sarah showed with the notes she brought to the classroom that she kept her promise and personal commitment of supporting the overall process – she did her homework (i.e. to typewrite the pupils' notes). The pupils may have learned from this behaviour that they can rely on their teacher's words and deeds. On the other hand, she also demonstrated a positive orientation towards her pupils as she took their efforts, personal input, and individual ideas seriously and used the outcomes produced by the pupils as a basis to create the script.

In sum, the written document that Sarah prepared, printed out, and then used as a starting point for various assignments and the overall project can be regarded as a manifestation of a humanising approach to teaching and learning, as it honours the pupil's voices and had been the result of a cooperation between the teacher and her pupils. Furthermore, Sarah's act of transforming the notes created by the pupils to an official document – the script –, that then became the (fundamental) basis for the whole play and (teaching and learning) journey, was in itself a validation and recognition of the knowledge produced by the pupils. In other words, and contextualising it in a humanising perspective, Sarah trusted the pupils and respected them as active partners in the co-construction of official knowledge (Bartolomé 1994; Salazar 2013).

As I highlighted above, Sarah applied a standard in her classroom that can be seen as standing in stark contrast to a banking model approach to education: she, as the teacher, recognised that her pupils have valuable knowledge. It is, however, important to emphasise that she moreover created the conditions for the pupils to demonstrate their knowledge and pass it on. At the beginning of a theatre lesson (November 29, 2016), Sarah asked Océane, who played the narrator, as well as other pupils that did not make a definite decision on which role(s) they want to play yet, to help their fellow pupils and provide them with feedback.

**Sarah:**

déi ((déi nach keng Roll hunn)) ginn an een anere Grupp wou se kennen Iddie ginn (-) wou sie da soen (-) oh bass du sécher dat do fannen ech awer elo net sou flott wann s du dat géifs soen (-) kanns du dat dann net aneschtens soen (-) dat heescht déi déi vir de Moment hier Roll elo nach NET hunn déi ginn deenen aneren hier Meenung [...] ok? (-) dat ass deenen hier Roll haut

**Sarah:**

those ((that do not have a role yet)) join another group where they can give ideas (-) where they say (-) oh are you sure I don't really like this if you would say this (-) can't you say it differently (-) that means that those that have NOT decided on their role yet share their opinion with the others [...] ok? (-) that is their role today

[29.11.2016 | I.022]

I consider Sarah's assignment and her explanation transcribed above as the (critical) incident that made me "stop and think" (Mohammed 2016). More specifically, Sarah here not only distributed a task – to join a group and give feedback to other pupils – but recognised the pupils as co-teachers and trusted their good will and competence ("they *can* give ideas"). Sarah allocated responsibilities: to track progress, evaluate the fellow pupils' ideas, and eventually help them to improve their (collective) outcome. These responsibilities are usually among the main job responsibilities of a teacher. Here, however, the pupils got offered the opportunity to contribute to the production and success of others, evaluate their work, give support, and influence the outcomes – become helpers, advisors, and teachers. Océane, as only one example, thus assumed a role that a class teacher usually occupies ("that is *their* role today"), especially in the banking model of education.

Sarah's behaviour, I argue, signalled that she is in a solidarity (trust-enhancing) frame (see Mühlau & Lindenberg 2003; Six 2007; Six *et al.* 2010). More specifically, with her verbal utterances (e.g. "they can give ideas [... and] share their opinion with the others") and her non-verbal behaviour (e.g. to point to and select some pupils and allocate responsibilities), she qualified some pupils openly and officially as competent, reliable, and credible.

Baier (1986) defines trust as a reliance on another's good will, on her or his competence, "and willingness to look after, rather than harm, things one cares about which are entrusted to

their care” (p. 259). In line with this definition, I argue that Sarah signalled her trust in the pupils and sent an unambiguously positive relational signal in the form of an activity that enabled an equalised teacher-pupil power relation. More specifically, she demonstrated her willingness to share her responsibilities and delegate control, while at the same time valuing the pupils’ full potential – their competence, knowledge, ideas, and good will. Thereby, she made herself dependent on her pupils and their competence. Overall, Sarah created again both an activity and environment that facilitated mutual supportiveness and interdependence. As a result, she may have triggered a solidarity framework as she inspired some pupils to be honest, benevolent, and reliable, and actively contribute to an overall collaborative and trusting working environment.

Shortly after Sarah’s allocation of roles and responsibilities, Mariette, Michèle, and Laurence, who played the roles of the three princesses, started translating several text passages from the script.<sup>78</sup> The group was joined by Océane. As I describe above, she was asked by Sarah to help a group by giving them feedback.

Excerpt field notes [29.11.2016 | I.023]

The four pupils stand around their school desks that are covered with papers and pens. Michèle has decided to play her character in French and is thus now translating her dialogue in the French language. “J’ai vraiment besoin de mon prince. Il me manque beaucoup.” She first says out loudly what she wants to put on paper, then starts writing. She hesitates, however, and is unsure about how to structure her sentence in French and how to write some words. Before she continues writing, she discusses with her group how to rephrase the sentence. Océane in particular gives suggestions on the sentence structure, then takes Michèle’s pen and continues writing for a while until Michèle takes the lead in writing again. [...] They all help each other to do the exercise, solve translation issues, and develop the theatre script.

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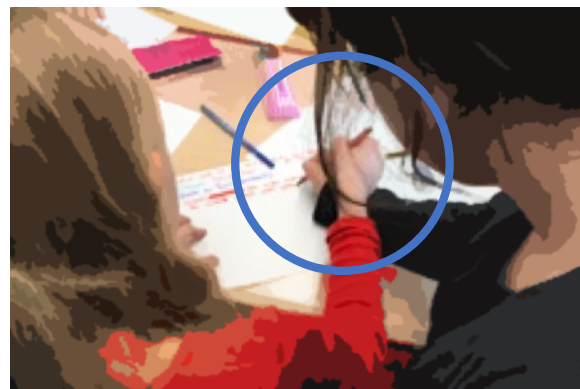
<sup>78</sup> As I explain in my methodology chapter, the theatre project is based on a trilingual (Luxembourgish, French, and German) play. Sarah made explicit in her application documents that one major pedagogical motivation behind working on a theatre project is the promotion of the oral and written expression in the various languages studied in class (see chapter 4.2.3). While the original story is in French, the pupils had to translate various passages in different languages.

As I noted down in my ethnographic field notes above and as can be seen in the screenshots below (I.024–I.027), Océane together with Mariette, Michèle, and Laurence collaboratively worked on their assignment to translate various text passages for the script. It is clearly visible that Océane accepted the role that Sarah offered her: she shared her ideas, gave immediate feedback, and shared her expertise to help the group succeed in their task. Throughout the group work, Océane assumed the role and responsibilities of a supervisor: she gave immediate feedback on the other pupil’s work, answered questions, and resolved issues related to translation, spelling, and grammar, and eventually initiated improvements. More specifically, she drew on her competence in French – her mother tongue and “favourite language”<sup>79</sup> – to provide advice and support to her three group members. All three pupils repeatedly referred to Océane’s expertise, as they asked her several times to help them with specific translation and spelling issues. In other words, they *trusted* her competence and benevolence in motivation.



Collaborative writing (princesses)

[29.11.2016 | I.024]



Collaborative writing (princesses)

[29.11.2016 | I.025]

<sup>79</sup> In an exercise that Sarah did to discover the pupils’ linguistic repertoire (amongst others so-called “language portraits” introduced by Krumm [2003] and applied, for example, by Galling [2011]), Océane indicated that French is the “language that she prefers to speak”. While a language qualified as one’s “favourite language” does not necessarily indicate a specific linguistic competence, it may here signal at least a positive orientation towards (the use of) that language.





Collaborative writing (princesses)

[29.11.2016 | I.026]



Collaborative writing (princesses)

[29.11.2016 | I.027]

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**Océane**

As illustrated in the screenshot I.025, occasionally, Océane also physically intervened as she took, for example, Michèle’s pen to write the word “venu” (turned up) with the intention to help Michèle with the spelling of the word. The other screenshots point out how Océane non-verbally embodied the role of a supervisor, as she monitored and overlooked the whole table and the pupils’ writing process and helped out in case she saw a need or when someone directly asked her for support. All group members immediately accepted Océane’s feedback and concrete suggestions. This can be interpreted as a signal of trust, as the pupils relied on Océane’s knowledge and positive motivational force. This behaviour can be understood as a consequence of Sarah’s actions to recognise Océane’s abilities, set the conditions for her to share her competence, and assign responsibility to her at the first place – a decision that Mariette, Michèle, and Laurence were willing to accept. Overall, Sarah’s positive orientation towards the pupils’ expertise, her recognition of their responsibility, and openness to delegate authority, in turn, promoted positive, supportive, and productive interactions among pupils (that I will focus on in act II).

While I pay particular attention to Océane’s role here and the practices that resulted out of this role, it is important to stress that all pupils in the different groups gave feedback and co-constructed knowledge.

While some pupils occasionally but rarely ask Sarah and me for help to double-check some vocabulary, most of the groups negotiate and discuss between themselves: “how can I do this?”, “how should I write this?”, “does anybody know how I can translate this word?”. They always ask among their group members first, before seeking help from the “official” teacher or me. [...] They help each other.

It is not necessarily surprising that the work described so far, and group work in a classroom context more generally, involves collaborative interactions. In a “humanised classroom” (Nwafor & Nwogu 2014), however, a change in the balance of pupil-teacher control may lead to a promotion of reciprocal trusting relationships (Durnford 2010). In this context, Sarah’s teaching practice can be related to principles that are promoted in a learner-centered education (Weimer 2013). In fact, Sarah created a classroom that is “facilitated rather than directed by the teacher in which students regularly communicate, collaborate, self-reflect, problem solve, and peer-evaluate about their learning” (Hansen & Imse 2016, p. 20). As she delegated and shared control and drew on the pupils’ talents, capacities, and knowledge, her approach bore fruits: the pupils helped each other, learned from each other, and collaboratively built on each other’s (linguistic) expertise.

While the pupils have had a (long) history of their relationships with each other that I cannot represent in (nor am I aware of) its entirety here, Sarah’s teaching style encouraged recognition and appreciation, such as during collaborative writing exercises. During various group assignments, Sarah did not often control what all groups (and their “supervisors”) were doing. While she might have expected from me, in my (unofficial) role as co-teacher, to intervene if necessary and keep an eye on all groups, she trusted the individual pupils and group members to work on their – the pupils’ *and* the teacher’s – overarching *common* goal. The pupils’ response was to accept the responsibility: as I have shown more than once above, they helped each other and capitalised on each other’s competences and positive relationships. Sarah repeatedly built on the pupils’ competences and besides designating “feedback givers” also, occasionally, appointed group leaders (who should “manage” the group). Thus, Sarah generally

enabled that the pupils recognised the various competences in the classroom too as she facilitated supportive pupil-pupil interactions.

During a group work on December 20, 2016, for example, the pupils were supposed to develop an invitation for their theatre performance in May 2017. Sarah divided the pupils in three language groups. In the “Luxembourgish group”, Mia expressed her uncertainty on how to spell the word “e-mail”. While Sarah sat next to Mia and could have immediately given the correct answer, she decided to hand over the pencil to Océane instead (see screenshot I.030 below). As a reaction, Océane wrote down (correctly) “e-mail” on a piece of paper and handed it over to Mia. Sarah’s small gesture of handing over her pencil can here be considered a signal of recognition, competency, and benevolence (three main attributes of trust). In fact, and with a focus on trusting behaviour and associated interactions, Sarah’s action cannot be seen as only giving a writing tool (the pen) to one of her pupils, but as handing over responsibility and acknowledging the pupil’s competence. Thereby, Sarah encouraged Océane to share her knowledge and gave her the opportunity to become and prove herself as a “knower” (Huerta 2011).



Handing over the pencil (and competence)

[20.12.2016 | I.029]



Handing over the pencil (and competence)

[20.12.2016 | I.030]

At the same time in another group, Mariette, Ella, Lily, Michèle, and Rowan collaboratively developed an invitation for their theatre performance in French. At some point, they were stuck as they did not know how to spell the month “May” in French. I observed throughout my

fieldwork that Sarah often encouraged the pupils in similar situations to consult the dictionary.

However, Rowan immediately asked Océane for help.



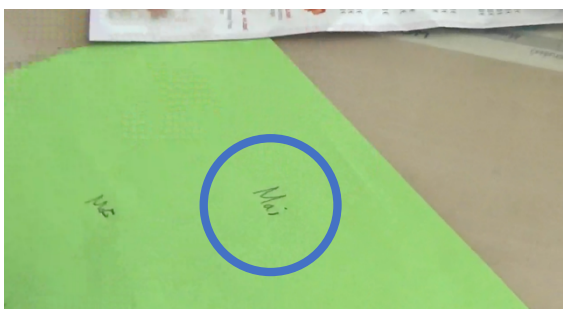
Océane as the “French expert”

[20.12.2016 | I.031]



Océane as the “French expert”

[20.12.2016 | I.032]



Océane as the “French expert”

[20.12.2016 | I.033]

Rowan goes to Océane (who is a member of another group) to ask her how “May” is spelled in French.

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After he received Océane’s feedback, Rowan goes immediately back to his group, points to Océane (as the trusted source and competent helper) and shares his acquired knowledge:

**Rowan:** she said (-) this is how you spell (-) M (-) A (-) I

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Rowan takes the pen and writes down “Mai”, the answer and correct spelling he received from Océane.

Sarah’s usual request to search for a translation and spelling in the dictionary can be interpreted as a prompt to (learn to) act independently, without dependence on the teacher giving the correct answer. However, Rowan may here have acknowledged Océane’s competence as he asked her for support. His action to shortly leave his group to go and see Océane (who is a member of

another group) can be perceived as laziness (i.e. not willing to search himself for the answer) or as a signal of trust from Rowan in Océane’s competence. In fact, Océane had previously proven her expertise in French in various exercises (e.g. as supervisor/helper/advisor who helped to translate text passages for the script). As Sarah built on Océane’s (French) expertise and entrusted her the competence to help the group in previous assignments, Rowan used the resource here as well and profited from Océane’s knowledge. In a nutshell: instead of looking up the word “May” in the dictionary – a trusted source –, Rowan favoured to trust Océane. He made clear that it is Océane who helped him to find the correct answer.<sup>80</sup>

<p><b>Dany:</b></p> <p><i>wei hues du dat dann elo ouni</i>  <i>Dictionnaire erausfonnt?</i></p> <p><b>Rowan:</b></p> <p><i>mat Océane</i></p>	<p><b>Dany:</b></p> <p>how did you figure this out without a dictionary?</p> <p><b>Rowan:</b></p> <p>with Océane</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[20.12.2016   I.034]</p>
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Johnson and Johnson (in Goddard *et al.* 2001, p. 6) state that “collaborative learning may reduce students’ alienation by giving them a greater voice in their lives at school, but the change to more active styles of learning implicitly requires teachers to trust that students will participate in meaningful ways”. With this background, I argue that Sarah evidenced her trust throughout the various theatre lessons, amongst others by giving the pupils an official voice both during the group work and, for example, during the concluding rounds; she recognised and appreciated the pupils’ knowledge and efforts and maintained conditions for others to do the same. Thereby, she created a learning environment that can be associated to that of a humanising pedagogy

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<sup>80</sup> While Océane helped Rowan and his group, Sarah, at the same time, helped other pupils with spelling issues and translations. Against this backdrop, they both performed typical teaching practices here.

where all pupils can demonstrate their knowledge and expertise and where “they are then able to see themselves, and be seen by others, as capable and competent” (Bartolomé 1994, p. 178).

Throughout the theatre project, the pupils made evident that they enjoyed working in this space of supportiveness and mutual dependency that Sarah maintained. In a concluding round discussion on November 29, 2016, Océane and Manuel (who were both asked by Sarah to help and give feedback during a group assignment) indicated that they particularly liked the lesson because they helped other pupils.

<b>Manuel :</b> <i>mir huet et haut gutt gefall [...] dass ech sie gehollef hunn</i>	<b>Manuel :</b> I liked it today [...] that I helped them
<b>Océane :</b> <i>dat war gutt well ech hunn hinnen gehollef</i>	<b>Océane :</b> it was good because I helped them

[29.11.2016 | I.035]

While not described in further detail, Manuel adopted a similar role in a group than that of Océane, earlier defined as “supervisor”, “helper”, and “advisor”. Both pupils then stated that they enjoyed that particular learning session. They related their positive evaluation to the fact that they helped other pupils. Against this background, Sarah created a positive learning *and* teaching experience for Océane and Manuel, as she built on their competence and willingness to help (and teach) others. In return, these pupils shared their positive appraisal of the recognition, responsibility, and trust that they received, signalling Sarah and the other pupils that the action of helping others is in itself beneficial, good, and joyful. Similarly, while at the end of another theatre lesson (December 20, 2016), Gabriel (as a group leader) also positively evaluated the theatre lesson and, in this context, called attention to his leadership role with a smile, signalling joy and/or pride.

**Gabriel:**

*ech si frou dass mir a Gruppe  
geschafft hunn (-) ech war de Chef  
(*laacht*) (-) a mir hu vill Iddie kritt*

**Gabriel:**

I am happy that we have worked in  
groups (-) I was the boss (*smiles*)  
(-) and we have got many new ideas

[20.12.2016 | I.036]

This and similar feedback allowed Sarah to draw the conclusion that the classroom practice of pupils helping other pupils had the potential to contribute to a school lesson that is perceived as “good” (in the words of Océane). Moreover, she learned that it may have a positive effect on the well-being on an emotional, social, and academic level of these pupils, as the pupils might feel valuable, respected, competent – and “happy” (in the words of Gabriel).

Coming back to the concluding round on November 29, 2016, Mariette and Laurence specified that they found it difficult to work with the script that was prepared and designed by Sarah (see excerpts of the first version of the script on page 144). They explained that the visual representation of the dialogue and overall layout of the document made it difficult for them to figure out who is speaking when and which sentences are allocated to which role. Sarah asserted that this set of problems is due to the overall complexity of theatre (“this is theatre”). Additionally, she related it to the fact that she had never worked on a theatre project before. Sarah then made explicit that she is open for and dependent on the pupil’s feedback and comments.

**Sarah:**

*ech hunn Iech jo gesot ech hunn och  
nach ni Theater gemaach (-) dat  
heescht ech maan et sou wei ech  
denken (--) mee heiandsdo setzen ech  
och do an ech soe mer m::h fannen ech  
mech elo erëm oder fanne sie sech  
erëm (-) dat heescht (-) sot mir dat  
roueg gell (-) wann dir sot nee ech  
hätt gären d’Format esou vir dass ech  
da Platz hunn nach niewendrun ze  
schreiwen da kenne mir dat och*

**Sarah:**

I told you already that I have never  
done theatre either (-) that means  
that I do it the way I think (--)  
but sometimes I sit there too and  
think m::h do I find my way or do  
they find their way (-) that means  
(-) do tell me that okay? (-) if you  
say that no I want the format to be  
like this so that I have space to  
write something next to it then we  
can do that too okay? (-) I am

*maachen ne? (-) ech sinn do och ob Är  
Remarken ugewisen (-) dann (-) kann  
ech mech dann och verlossen*

*dependent on your comments (-) then  
(-) I can rely on that*

[29.11.2016 | I.037]

Sarah here openly shared that she lacked experience with (the preparation of) theatre projects, as well as that she needed help from the pupils (“do tell me that okay?”). Thus, firstly, she demonstrated her honesty, as she had been open about her feelings, personal thoughts, and ideas (Durnford 2010). While Sarah encouraged the pupils to be honest with each other too and share their opinion about the lesson in the feedback session, Sarah herself also never hid her problems and thoughts as she made explicit that she *needed* the pupils and their support. Thereby, secondly, she made obvious a situation of interdependence; they all relied on each other. As a consequence, I argue, Sarah considered herself here again a learner: as someone who needs and seeks support and advice from the pupils (“I am dependent on your comments”; “I can rely on that”) who, in turn, can potentially help her (competence) to improve. The classroom community thus discovered theatre (as an art form and educational experience) together. In other words, the theatre project entailed a (new) teaching and learning experience that the pupils and their teacher shared and developed together.

Following her statement on her reliance on the pupils and their contributions, Sarah declared that she was “positively astonished” about how fast they all progressed. At the end of the second theatre lesson on November 29, 2016, she recapitulated what *they* had done within only one week: they read the original story, distributed the roles, decided on the individual languages, and worked already on their dialogue and the script. Sarah particularly praised the motivation displayed by the pupils to work together as a team.

**Sarah:**

*ech fannen dat och super well ECH elo  
net alles muss eleng doheem maachen  
an da soen hei eh Michèle du kriss*

**Sarah:**

I find it great that I don't have  
to do everything on my own at home  
and that I say eh Michèle you get



dat doten elo ze léieren (-) well dat  
wär nämlech net flott vir mech an och  
net flott fir iech (-) an ech fannen  
dat richteg gutt dass dir do eh  
motivéiert sidd vir mat ze maachen  
[...] an ech hoffen dass mir dat dann  
och bis zum Schluss packen

this to learn (-) because that  
wouldn't be nice for me and also not  
for you (-) and I find it really  
good that you are eh motivated to  
participate [...] and I hope we can  
manage to do this until the end

[29.11.2016 | I.038]

In her comment, Sarah made clear that she did not consider it beneficial to prepare everything on her own at home and to impose her ideas and decisions on the pupils. Instead, she made explicit that it would be “nice” for both the pupils and her to work on the project together as a team (“I hope *we* can manage to do this”). Sarah’s emphasis and positive evaluation of the theatre project as a joint venture in her comments and its evidence in her overall teaching practice are in accordance with an approach to learning and teaching that Freire (2017, p. 53) opposes to a banking model approach and its vertical patterns: “The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach.” Against this backdrop, and as a preliminary conclusion, the pupils and their teacher became “jointly responsible for a process in which all grow” (*ibid.*).

## 5.4 Sharing the learning and teaching processes with the pupils

As I highlighted earlier, Sarah made explicit in her application document that for her, a major pedagogical motivation behind working on a theatre project was the promotion of the oral and written expression of the three official school languages in primary schools in Luxembourg: Luxembourgish, French, and German. With this end in view, Sarah specified at the very beginning and repeatedly throughout the project that the pupils were allowed to use those three languages not only for the actual theatre performance but also (if not otherwise specified) for the various exercises. Many pupils expressed their delight at the fact that they received some freedom to choose among the three languages. As a reaction to Sarah's statement, they smiled and loudly informed everyone about their choice which language they wanted to pick.

Excerpt field notes [22.11.2016 | I.039]

Immediately after Sarah mentions that the language choice is free (among the three official school languages), many pupils open their eyes and mouths and shout "yeeeeaaaass". Some pupils seem to be delighted about the choice they have as I hear voices saying "so I can do in French" and "I can do German".

Sarah made use of a full range of opportunities and the flexibility offered by the theatre context (as a "non-regular" school lesson) and chose to not strictly separate the three school languages (as often in other school exercises and official exams). In this respect, Sarah broke up a potential prevailing (learning and teaching) structure by allowing and encouraging the simultaneous use of the three school languages in one (theatre) lesson.<sup>81</sup> While this approach might have been nothing out of the ordinary for both the teacher and her pupils, Sarah went one step further and

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<sup>81</sup> While I could argue that Sarah limited the decision power given to the pupils as she did not allow them, for example, to use home languages other than the three official school languages, I relate her choice to her competence and (top-down) requirements as a teacher working in the Luxembourgish school system. Sarah explained to me that she herself considered her responsibility as the classroom teacher of a learning cycle 3 in Luxembourg to be, amongst others, the teaching of the three official school languages.

shared control with the pupils: they were the ones who had the final say on which language(s) they wanted to do their assignments in.

The pupils' reaction to Sarah's statement can be perceived as a positive feedback to Sarah's willingness to hand over (decision-making) power. In this respect, the pupils may have related the freedom that they received to the opportunity to choose a language that they liked and/or felt competent in. Thus, they might have anticipated fun and, maybe, an overall less stressful learning experience compared to, for example, other assessment-based learning situations without any elements of learner autonomy and responsibility.

Sarah's practice can be seen to be in accordance with her approach during the role distribution process described earlier: she created space and time for the pupils' voices and choices. Thereby, as a basis (and consequence) for trust to develop and maintain, she potentially achieved "a balance of teacher-student control that allows students to enact some choice and control over their learning, to improve school climate, and to increase student achievement" (Durnford 2010, p. 17). So far, Sarah's teaching approach was thus guided by a positive orientation towards the pupils' well-being, their interests, and competence, and was reflected in her willingness to share and delegate decisions, responsibility, and control (an attitude and practice that I described in the previous chapter as well).

In contrast to a banking model approach to education – recognisable by the teacher's practice to make a choice that the students have to comply to (Freire 2017) –, Sarah did not enforce specific choices. Instead, she established some framework conditions under which individual responsibility and autonomy had the potential to arise – freedom, in Freire's (2017) sense.<sup>82</sup> Against this backdrop, Sarah's teaching approach offered preconditions for the collaborative elaboration of the theatre project that are in line with various principles of a

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<sup>82</sup> In the context of his proposed "critical pedagogy" and the associated process of liberation, Freire (2017) states that to obtain freedom one requires autonomy and responsibility.

humanising pedagogy. It is important to highlight that her approach also entailed risks that Sarah might or might not have been aware of, such as the pupils exploiting her benevolence and openness. However, as I have and will further demonstrate, Sarah's trust towards her pupils had been based on reciprocity and was built and triggered interactionally in the collective journey.

Beside the possibility to choose among the three school languages during various assignments, Sarah also allocated the task and (fundamental) responsibility to the pupils to decide on their language choice for the actual theatre performance. This is important to highlight, as Sarah's openness to share control might have had sustainable consequences for both the overall theatre play and the individual learning experiences. More specifically, the language choice did not only affect the individual work inside the classroom for several months but also the (public) performance on stage (outside the immediate classroom).

After Sarah distributed the printed first version of the script on November 29, 2016, she repeated that everyone would be free to choose among the three official school languages. She specified, however, that each princess-prince couple should choose the same language. While she did not openly justify this step, she emphasised that the pupils had to make the decision for themselves. Thus, Sarah's approach called attention to the fact that she considered the pupils as decision-makers with their own voice, competence, and responsibility.

<b>Sarah:</b> <i>dir musst déi selwecht Sprooche wielen [...] do <u>musst DIR Iech lo scho mol</u> <u>festleeë</u> wien wéi eng Sprooch schwätzt</i>	<b>Sarah:</b> you have to choose the same languages [...] <u>YOU have to decide on</u> who is talking in which language  [29.11.2016   I.040]
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Rowan, however, did not understand Sarah's instruction and asked how they should proceed in relation to the language choice.

**Rowan :**

*musse mir déi ((d'Sproochen)) elo mat  
(hinnen) ((wéist ob d'Grupp vun de  
Prinzessinnen)) decidéieren?*

**Sarah:**

*ech hätt lo mol gären dass dir dat  
mol eng Kéier lo ënnert IECH maacht  
(-) dass ech lo net mat deem Dengem  
als Léierin mam Bengel du mëss lo dat  
an du mëss dat an du mëss dat ((Kanner  
laachen)) (--) dat ass net  
ëmmer flott net vir Iech an och net  
vir mech an ech denken dass dir lo  
schonn am véierte Schouljoer sidd (-)  
an dass dir vläicht och mol [...] vir  
dann och mol tëscht Iech ze  
diskutéiere wien wei wat mëscht*

**Rowan :**

do we have to choose them ((the  
languages)) with (them) ((pointing  
to the group of the princesses))?

**Sarah:**

I now want that you do this now for  
once among YOU (-) so that now it is  
not like I am the teacher with the  
stick you do this and you do this and  
you do this ((pupils laugh)) (--)  
that is not always nice not for you  
and also not for me and I think you  
are in the fourth grade now (-) and  
that you should maybe [...] so to  
discuss among yourselves who is doing  
what and how

[29.11.2016 | I.041]

Rowan's question shows that he either did not understand the instruction clearly or that he was unsure about with whom he should share the decision power received by his teacher. Sarah's emphasis on "you" in the two instances described above ("YOU have to decide"; "for once among YOU") can be interpreted as a signal of a willingness to share control. At the same time, the supplement "now for once" suggests that this situation was rather uncommon and might not have occurred regularly in the daily classroom context. In this respect, the theatre project might have facilitated new and extraordinary conditions and experiences.

Then, Sarah's response to Rowan's question was a further clarification of her request to the pupils to discuss the language choice among themselves. She set her approach in contrast to that of a "teacher with the stick", an approach that can be associated with a top-down decision-making process and a banking model approach more specifically. In the latter, the teacher usually takes decisions that the students have to comply to – the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined (Freire 2017). Thus, Sarah took the theatre project and associated tasks as an opportunity to hand over responsibilities without the need of disciplinary actions

(i.e. the use of a stick). Indeed, Sarah’s clarification of the assignment described above – to decide on the language choice – reveals that she did not only distribute tasks but also allocated (shared) responsibilities at the same time. Her formulation “YOU have to decide on” makes the pupils aware of the teacher’s readiness to delegate decisions and control to *them*.

Sarah emphasised that the pupils should choose a language that they wanted to get better in, instead of their “strongest” language among the three official school languages. She justified this request by the fact that the theatre project would provide the pupils an opportunity to dare to speak in their “weaker” language. To give a concrete example, Sarah referred to Benoît and stated that she would be happy if he would choose German for one of his roles (which he eventually did), as this would be, in her words, the school language he was “not so good in”.

<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>probéiert villäicht also (--)</i> ech wär frou wann dir géift déi Sprooch wielen déi dir lo NET esou gutt kennt (-) well eben den Theater villäicht d’Geleeënheet ass iech emol an <u>där Sprooch iech mol e bëssen ze trauen [...]</u> weis du Benoît (-) du bass ganz gutt am Franséische mee du bass net sou gutt am Däitschen (-) da géif ech et zum Beispill flott fanne wann s du géifs Däitsch maan</p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>maybe try out (--)</p> <p>I would be happy if you would choose the language that you are NOT so good in (-) because the theatre is maybe the <u>opportunity for you to dare to use this language</u> [...] like you Benoît (-) you are very good in French but you are not so good in German (-) so I would find it for example nice if you would do German</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[29.11.2016   I.042]</p>
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Sarah’s distribution of the tasks, her explanatory approach, as well as the tasks themselves constitute critical incidents in the context of establishing a shared classroom space. More specifically, beside the encouragement to take a risk, the theatre can here be seen as a motivational incentive to promote independence; the pupils became responsible *subjects*.

Sarah’s teaching practice and behaviour that I put an emphasis on here can be interpreted as sending a positive relational signal – evidencing Sarah’s benevolence (Lewicki & Tomlinson 2003) and granting the pupils responsibility for their own learning. Moreover, Sarah’s request

to the pupils to independently make a language choice signalled her reliability and vulnerability<sup>83</sup> – she expressed a “wish” and not a strict demand to choose a language that they wanted to become better in. Additionally, her request involved another important set of assumptions: the willingness and explicit encouragement to (collaboratively) learn and take risks. As I have shown above, Sarah wanted that each princess-prince couple chooses the same language for their performance. This demand made obvious that the pupils should not only decide for themselves – potentially think and act egoistically – but take into consideration (and discuss about) the opinion and wishes of their role partner(s) as well. Thus, the pupils first needed a motivation to learn (a language) before they could make a choice that they then should discuss with their role partner(s). Against this backdrop, Sarah here promoted a shared learning experience based on a dyadic trusting relationship and interdependence, as each prince and princess might have had different levels of competence in the language they chose together to perform in as a group. The decision-process thus involved and valued reciprocal perspective taking – a learning experience crucial for the development and maintenance of relational trust.

In a humanising pedagogy, teaching and learning are perceived as reciprocal activities and processes that involve both the teacher and her pupils in an active and participatory way. Durnford (2010, p. 15) argues that “[t]he balance of teacher-student control in the classroom may be a reflection of the teacher’s level of trust in her students and her perceptions of their behaviors and underlying motivations”. In this respect, and as a brief interim conclusion, I suggest that Sarah demonstrated trust by creating and maintaining the classroom as a *shared* (learning and teaching) environment; she shared and delegated control and competence in the classroom as she left a certain level of freedom of choice to the pupils even in relation to their individual learning experiences and the overall (outcome of) the public theatre performance. For example, as she left the language choice for the theatre performance to the pupils, she

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<sup>83</sup> As the awareness of the potential of betrayal and uncertainty (see Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000).

warranted (co-)ownership of the theatre project to them as well. Interestingly, throughout the theatre project, Sarah further strengthened her stance of being willing to accept the classroom as a democratic environment and the pupils as competent decision-makers, as she more than once signalled this (reliable) willingness verbally and non-verbally.

At the end of the lesson on November 29, 2016, Sarah asked all the pupils to come to the back of the classroom and sit down in a circle – a setting that can promote student-teacher collaboration and form the basis of democratising the classroom (Peterson 2017). She then wanted to know from her pupils which language(s) they chose for their theatre performance.

Excerpt field notes [29.11.2016 | I.043]

After each response that Sarah receives from her pupils, she takes her pen and marks “French”, “German”, or “Luxembourgish” down in her notepad. Other than sometimes nodding her head or saying “ok”, she does not comment much on each individual decision, suggesting that she acknowledges each and everyone’s choice and accepts the pupils’ decisions.



Sarah notes down the pupils’ language choice

[29.11.2016 | I.044]

Sarah’s initial action – to leave the final language choice to the pupils – was complemented by her subsequent actions of asking the pupils for their preference, listening to, noting down their decision, and, eventually, officialising their choice by including it as a side note in the script.



While my field notes above include only a preliminary interpretation of Sarah’s behaviour, her action of noting down can, indeed, be considered a confirmation of her reliability – behaving consistently and positively (Goddard *et al.* 2001). In sum, the pupils chose and the teacher complied (in accordance to the conditions and limitations she set and discussed before).

Sarah’s understanding and facilitation of the classroom as a democratic site continuously unfolded in various other practices and school exercises. At the beginning of the theatre lesson on December 20, 2016, Sarah asked the pupils to start thinking about and working on the invitation for the families, friends, and public. Sarah prompted the pupils to work in three groups and in three different languages to develop first ideas for the invitations. Thereby, she wanted to further build on her pedagogical objective to teach the three school languages within the context of the theatre project.

<b>Sarah:</b>  <i>eist Stéck ass jo an dräi Sproochen (-) dat heescht mir maachen eis Invitatiounen (-) eis Plakater och an dräi Sproochen (-) all Grupp kritt dann eng Sprooch an entwéckelt ee Plakat oder eng Invitatioun</i>	<b>Sarah:</b>  our play is in three languages (-) this means that we do our invitations (-) our posters also in three languages (-) every group then gets one language and develops a poster or an invitation  [20.12.2016   I.045]
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Before the three groups were formed, Sarah openly shared her pedagogical intention as she reminded the pupils that they are “here [in school, in the classroom] to learn languages”. Therefore, she continued, the pupils should choose a group that did not work in the language they were (already) “good” in.

<b>Sarah:</b>  <i>sou dann hätt ech elo wann ech gelift gären dräi Gruppen</i>	<b>Sarah:</b>  so now please I want three groups  [20.12.2016   I.046]
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After Sarah's first incentive to form three groups, she specified that the languages (i.e. the groups) that the pupils should choose did not necessarily had to be the languages that they wanted to use during their theatre performance. Then, she added that the pupils can "for once" form the groups themselves.

<b>Sarah:</b> <i>ech loossen Iech elo <u>mol eng</u> Kéier fräi wéi eng Gruppen dass dir maacht</i>	<b>Sarah:</b> I now leave it <u>for once</u> up to you to form the groups  [20.12.2016   I.047]
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Sarah made clear again her wish and expectation of the students' responsibility and independence; she encouraged them not to choose the (potentially) easy way but, instead, independently make a choice to join a group that worked in a language the pupils felt not so "good" in. In this respect, Sarah was willing to signal her confidence in the pupils' decision-making process, to create individual learning experiences for her pupils, and to become dependent on their ambition, honesty, and learner autonomy. Her words, and in particular her utterance "I now leave it [...] up to you", indicate her intention to share and delegate control. According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000), this behaviour could be interpreted as a demonstration of trust. While, in her role as the classroom teacher, Sarah might have had always the final say in accordance to her overarching learning objectives, her behaviour can be perceived as signalling her confidence in the pupils – that they will not exploit the responsibility received but, instead, behave in an expected and acceptable way. In this context, I argue, Sarah here created a situation of potential betrayal and, therefore, an opportunity for trust.

After Sarah's incentive to leave the group distribution to the pupils, they immediately got up and started forming the groups. The pupils discussed and negotiated between each other who should join either the Luxembourgish, French, or German group. During their negotiation process, Sarah remained silent and observed the happening outside of the immediate discussion

round (see screenshots I.048–I.051 below). Her verbal and bodily withdrawal can be interpreted as intentionally giving the pupils both voice and space for their (autonomous) decisions to unfold. In other words, she signalled that *they* should act on their own.

After some minutes of discussions and debate, the pupils divided in three groups and signalled that they had come to a final decision by standing still and gazing at Sarah – anticipating her assessment and approval of their decision and acknowledging her authority and final say.



Group distribution process  
*Sarah discloses her expectations*  
 [20.12.2016 | I.048]



Group distribution process  
*The pupils discuss among themselves which groups to join*  
 [20.12.2016 | I.049]



Group distribution process  
*Sarah observes the pupils' discussion*  
 [20.12.2016 | I.050]



Group distribution process  
*The pupils wait for Sarah's assessment and approval*  
 [20.12.2016 | I.051]

As I have referred to earlier, in a humanising pedagogy, teaching and learning are understood as reciprocal processes that involve both teachers and pupils in an active and participatory way. The development of the script that I have discussed in a previous section and, particularly, the document itself, show examples and results of such a collaborative approach. The group distribution process and the directional arrows that I added in the screenshots above also

symbolise the reciprocity of the teacher-pupil exchange and their relationship as well as the cooperative endeavour to form the groups as a basis for the subsequent work. First, the teacher gave an incentive to negotiate and cooperate. She then observed the pupils. Her expectation both demanded and potentially triggered honest and reliable behaviour, as the action of choosing a group revealed an adherence to the teacher’s lesson plan (and authority) – and can be interpreted as trustworthy behaviour. Then, the pupils got back to Sarah after their negotiation and decision making, engaging her again in the process.

As an initial response to the pupils’ halt and their look of expectancy toward their teacher, Sarah expressed her satisfaction. As an example, she pointed to Irina, Mia, Océane, and Gabriel – the “German group” – and stated that she would be “very happy” about the group allocation. She emphasised that she found it “really nice” that the pupils who were “not that strong in German” formed the group and thereby demonstrated their willingness to create invitations for their theatre performance in German.

<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>ech fannen dat super dassé sie ((weist ob d’Irina, Mia, Océane an Gabriel)) sech vir dat Däitsch gemellt hunn well dat si genau déi véier déi lo am Däitschen (-) lo net grad sou wei soll ech soen (-) lo net sou staark sinn</i></p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>I find it really nice that they ((pointing to Irina, Mia, Océane and Gabriel)) have decided to join the German group because they are exactly the four that are in German not really (-) how should I say (-) not that strong</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[20.12.2016   I.052]</p>
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Sarah’s feeling of satisfaction can be interpreted as stemming from the fact that the pupils did not abuse the trust placed in them but autonomously chose a language they wanted to improve in. Thereby, they signalled that they valued both the independence and interdependence, as they demonstrated their willingness to learn, cooperate, and positively orient towards the teacher-pupil relationship. In other words, Irina, Mia, Océane, and Gabriel behaved in a trustworthy manner as they made good-faith efforts to keep their commitment acceptable to their teacher

(as the trustor), negotiated honestly, and avoided taking excessive advantage of the freedom received by their teacher – three dimensions found to indicate trustworthy behaviour (e.g. Cummings & Bromiley 1996; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000). Thus, Sarah’s wish was respected: she did not need to be “the teacher with the stick” as the shared learning and teaching environment was based on mutual respect and comprehension.

As I argued before, Sarah’s decision to leave the group discussion and overall membership process to the pupils can be considered a sign of confidence and benevolence (i.e. with good intentions). The pupils’ reaction to assume their responsibility and to individually choose the group can be interpreted as a manifestation of confidence and benevolence as well, since all the pupils decided to not disappoint Sarah and bar the way to learning. In other words, they interactionally constructed (or maintained) trust. More specifically, I argue, the pupils sent a positive relational signal – a signal to Sarah that they were in a trust-enhancing frame too (Mühlau & Lindenberg 2003; Six 2007; Six *et al.* 2010). In this respect, trust can here be understood as a consequence of cooperation (Da Silva 2009) between both the teacher and her pupils, and the pupils between each other.

Thus far, Sarah did not only establish a democratic site of learning based on a sharing culture (e.g. sharing of control, decisions, responsibility, and knowledge), but created the conditions for a friendly classroom climate as well, “a situation that in turn engenders mutual understanding and cooperation” (Nwafor & Nwogu 2014, p. 423). Nwafor and Nwogu (*ibid.*) argue that “this healthy atmosphere, unquestionably facilitates all educational activities in the classroom, and equally ensures that the dignity of the learner is respected, while the integrity of the teacher is honoured, and at times appreciated and rewarded”. Against this backdrop, the group distribution process – as critical incident – highlights the reciprocity of relational trust: the act of trusting from the teacher here potentially increased the chance that the pupils also acted in a trustworthy manner.

Other teaching strategies highlight anew Sarah’s recognition and appreciation of her pupils and their abilities as well as her willingness to share the learning and teaching processes and various responsibilities with them. For example, after the groups were formed, Sarah designated a leader in each group: Laurence in the Luxembourgish group, Rowan in the French group, and Gabriel in the German group.<sup>84</sup> While Sarah did not explain in great detail what the role and exact responsibilities of the group leaders entail, she stated that they “manage” the group. She then asked the pupils to work on their invitations in the respective language of the groups.

Without much direct guidance nor control from Sarah, the pupils discussed, wrote, and drew among themselves to produce first ideas for the advertising flyers and invitation letters. For example, the members of the “French group” worked together to create a draft of an invitation. They discussed about what to include in the text and how to spell words. As repeatedly emphasised by Sarah, they understood this task as a common work process, just as the overall theatre project. This perception is evidenced, amongst others, by the body postures of the group members that indicate the collective in-group solidarity and cooperative endeavour. During the process of brainstorming and writing, they put their heads together (I.053) and shared one single pen (I.054) to write down sentences that they altogether agreed on before.



Collaborative thinking and writing process

[20.12.2016 | I.053]



Collaborative thinking and writing process

[20.12.2016 | I.054]

<sup>84</sup> Some pupils suggested that the group leaders change each time, a proposition that Sarah accepted. The pupils’ suggestion demonstrates, amongst others, that they explicitly and voluntarily sought to receive the responsibility (and maybe Sarah’s trust) linked to the role of a “group leader”.



The moment Rowan took the pen from Mariette, he performed his movement accompanied with the words “and now it is me who writes”. Thereby, he made clear that the one who had the pen received the power and right to write. Interestingly, throughout the group work, the pen went back and forth between all group members – a symbol of interaction, cooperation, and shared power on its own (similar to when Sarah gave the pen to Océane to write “e-mail”; see page 151). The pen can here thus not only be considered a tool for writing, but a tool that facilitated and signalled shared control, competence, and even trust, as becomes evident from the following interaction.



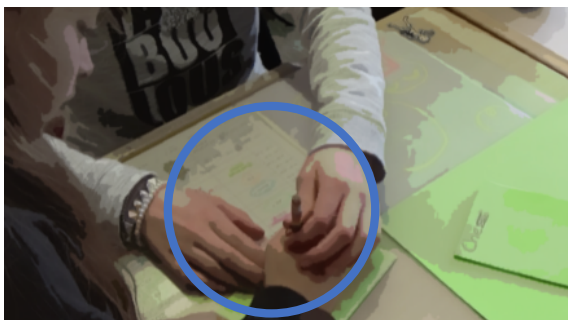
Collaborative writing process

[20.12.2016 | I.055]



Collaborative writing process

[20.12.2016 | I.056]



Collaborative writing process

[20.12.2016 | I.057]

As part of their introductory paragraph of their invitation letter, the pupils decide to write “chers messieurs” (dear sirs). Mariette takes the pen and writes the words down. Thereby, she officialises the collective decision made by all group members.

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Following the words “chers messieurs”, they now want to add “chères mesdames” (dear madams). Ella realises, however, that Mariette does not know how to spell “chères mesdames”, states “aaaah I know”, and takes the pen.

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For a short time, Ella takes over the writing, before three pupils “fight” (move their hands frantically back and forth) to receive the pen to write down “chères”. At the same time, and throughout the group exercise, all group members continuously give input and share their ideas on how to write specific words or complete sentences.

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Collaborative writing process

[20.12.2016 | I.058]

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A little bit later in the discussion, the pupils have agreed on some elements that are still missing on their invitation. Ella suggests that everyone in the group should write one element so that they all get the opportunity to receive the pen. Ella, who does not include herself in her enumeration, suggests who writes what.<sup>85</sup> She hands the pen to her fellow pupils, and with it, I argue, the trust in their ability and benevolence (to pass the pen and trust on).

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The examples of interactions between Mariette, Ella, Lily, Michèle, and Rowan (the “French group”) that I describe above highlight, amongst others, the collaborative spirit of a learning experience that can be considered to have unfolded thanks to Sarah’s teaching approach and her encouragement to work together. Throughout their group work, the pupils co-constructed meaning, shared knowledge, and built on each other’s expertise. In my view, it is interesting that the “French group”, as shown above, used only one pen to produce the written version of their invitation, as if it would be the only tool available. Instead of deciding, for example, that each pupil should work on an individual invitation, their actions as well as body postures signalled a collaborative spirit. While they agreed that one of the group members writes with the (only) pen provided, everyone is actively involved in the creative and collaborative process of decision-making. In this respect, the group work exemplifies that the pupils are evaluating, correcting, discussing, negotiating, giving suggestions – teaching and learning – all at the same time in one exercise.

Ennis and McCauley (2002, p. 156) found that teachers create “webs of trust by engaging students in a range of meaningful and relevant curricular activities central to opening

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<sup>85</sup> In fact, Ella is made aware by Rowan that she had already written a lot. Ella’s suggestion that everyone should get the pen and (the right to) write one element thus highlights not only her sense of fairness and benevolence but an attitude that was often exemplified by Sarah: the acknowledgement that every voice counts.



up the ‘oyster shells’, and inviting students to share in a sense of community in their classrooms”. The process and associated actions during the working on, elaboration, and final production of the invitation material are characteristic and represent Sarah’s willingness to define the theatre project and learning experience as a common enterprise. In fact, she established a teaching and learning culture that facilitated engaged inquiries and shared leadership in teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil interactions. Thus, the theatre project built on and generated positive and productive relationships, as the classroom is understood, used by, and appreciated (as indicated during the feedback round) as a collaborative and trusting community space between the teacher and her pupils.

Taken together, the findings in this section indicate that co-learning and co-teaching emerged amongst others due to Sarah’s willingness to share the learning and teaching processes with her pupils and allocate important responsibilities accordingly. In this regard, the “oyster shells” of both the pupils *and* the teacher may have opened up, as they became responsible for the overall development of the theatre project and may have learned from each other. Thus, the theatre context indeed provided a space where the pupils were acknowledged as partners in the (shared) learning processes, “with each other and with the teacher” (McNaughton 2011, p. 126).

## 5.5 Showing awareness of and confidence in the pupils' abilities

The findings in the previous sections show that Sarah created a learning environment that valued active engagement, autonomy, and collective and individual responsibility. In this context, she demonstrated repeatedly that she recognised and appreciated the pupils, their knowledge, and their various skills. Particularly important in the context of trust development and maintenance, Sarah moreover created conditions for the emergence of a belief in one's own abilities and potentials. She did this, first and foremost, by establishing a culture that encouraged and valued risk-taking.

From the very beginning on, risk was a pillar on which the theatre project was based on. This is evidenced, amongst others, by the fact that Sarah had never done theatre before, a circumstance she made explicit during a concluding round (see chapter 5.3).<sup>86</sup> Yet, she was eager to engage in the development of a full-scale theatre production and, thereby, proved her willingness to take a risk and make herself vulnerable at the first place.

As I highlighted before, and what I will focus on now, Sarah demanded from the pupils to choose and perform publicly in a language that the pupils themselves assessed as their “weaker” (school) language (i.e. that they are *not* so good at yet). Thereby, I argue, she provided an opportunity to further develop the pupils' potentials. At the same time, this encouragement was a strong impetus to take a risk, just as if the step alone to go on stage and publicly perform for and expose oneself to an audience (e.g. in a language the pupils feel “strong” in) would not have been enough for the pupils. Sarah related her approach to the (affordances) of theatre as an art form, learning vehicle, and door-opener to new learning experiences. More specifically, she argued that theatre would allow the pupils to try out something without fearing (the

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<sup>86</sup> A feeling of risk and uncertainty became also evident in situations where Sarah pointed out to me that she felt stuck and did not know exactly how and with what exercises to continue with the project. Both the pupils and Stefanie, the theatre pedagogue, helped her to overcome these difficulties.

consequences of) potential mistakes, an encouragement she emphasised, for example, on November 29, 2016.

<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>den Theater ass flott well een do mol <u>Saachen ausprobéiere kann déi een NET esou gutt kann</u> (--) a wann een dann do mol su Feeler mëscht (-) dat ass net esou schlëmm (-) <u>do spillt ee jo</u> (-) an eh dat fällt dann och net su direkt op</i></p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>theatre is nice because there <u>you can try out things that you are NOT so good at</u> (--) and when you do some mistakes (-) that's not a big deal (-) <u>there you play</u> (-) and eh then it doesn't really stand out</p> <p>[29.11.2016   I.059]</p>
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Sarah here disclosed her understanding of theatre as a tool that would allow the pupils to “try out things” they are not so good at (yet) and, hence, to learn new skills. On the one hand, her explanation implied the encouragement of accepting a risk and vulnerability: voluntarily choosing a language that one is “not so good at” and that one accepts to perform publicly on a stage in front of an audience. On the other hand, Sarah demanded the pupils to trust her to create a safe environment where mistakes actually “do not really stand out” and where the pupils did not need to fear disciplinary measures, bad marks, or other immediate and long-term consequences in cases of mistakes. Thus, I argue, Sarah signalled a collective willingness to take a risk (i.e. they are in this *together*) and a willingness to maintain a safe and friendly environment that did not focus on punishment and discipline.

Interestingly, the theatre, with its performative and playful practice, seemed to have facilitated Sarah’s approach. Sarah herself related theatre to the action of playing (“there you play”) in an official educational context. Her words thus implied (again) a difference between a “regular” school lesson and a theatre lesson. This affordance of theatre is evidenced, for example, in one of Ella’s reactions after a lesson on November 22, 2016 during which she engaged in the spontaneous role-playing group activity described in chapter 5.3. She pointed out that the classroom community did not do any French during that lesson. “French” should

have been the lesson planned for on a regular Tuesday morning according to the official school timetable she referred to. Sarah made her aware that she used the French language throughout the lesson: she was reading in French, wrote, and even improvised (speaking) in French.

<p><b>Ella:</b></p> <p><i>Joffer (-) mir hu guer kee Franséisch haut gemaach</i></p>	<p><b>Ella:</b></p> <p>teacher (-) we did not do any French today</p>
<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>wat mungs du? (-) du hues dach elo de ganzen Zäiten Franséisch geschwat</i></p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>what do you mean? (-) you spoke French the whole time now</p>
<p><b>Ella:</b></p> <p><i>ajo</i></p>	<p><b>Ella:</b></p> <p>ah yes</p>

[29.11.2016 | I.060]

Ella’s comment, while only briefly object of analysis here, can be related to the playfulness of theatre. Her feedback comment shows that she either thought not having learned much (in French) during the preceding lesson or that she did not qualify and experience the theatre lesson as a “regular” school lesson. In this respect, the theatre context might have helped to “hide” the official and formal learning objective (e.g. to use written and spoken French) due to, amongst others, its playful disposition (Hadley 2002) – “a quality that the pressures of curriculum, literacy and testing regimes may have dulled” (Dunn 2011, p. 32). Against this backdrop, the theatre context and the safe and enjoyable environment that Sarah maintained might have facilitated the willingness to take a risk.

With her recurrent encouragement to (voluntarily) learn and perform in a “weaker” language, Sarah tried to motivate the pupils to try out something they had never done before (“you can try out”) or something they themselves feel they might not be good (enough) yet (“that you are NOT so good at”). With her addition that mistakes would be permitted or would

at least not be sanctioned, she motivated the pupils even more to dare choosing their “weaker” language. Overall, Sarah thus created a classroom culture in which her pupils were given opportunities to learn to redefine what they can do and eventually believe (more) in themselves and their skills – two qualities that are crucial in empowerment theories (e.g. Chamberlin 1997; Duhon-Haynes 1996; Kirk *et al.* 2017; Rowlands 1995)<sup>87</sup> and a humanising pedagogy.

From an early stage, some pupils demonstrated that they understood and accepted Sarah’s principle and encouragement that mistakes would not (always) be penalised. As a reaction to Sarah’s comment that one can try out things in theatre, one pupil mentioned that the audience would anyway not notice mistakes as they would not know the original script. Another pupil added that “it’s okay to make mistakes” as they would always have had the possibility to improvise during their performance. This understanding is repeated by Manuel who came to me after a theatre lesson and told me that he might want to play one role in French and his second character in German: “even if I do mistakes, that’s okay”. Manuel seemed to acknowledge Sarah’s approach to focus on ideas and not mistakes at the early stage of the theatre development, as she mentioned in a preceding briefing.<sup>88</sup> As a consequence, Manuel here signalled his willingness to accept risk and vulnerability – a readiness that may had been triggered by Sarah; he was aware of the potential to make mistakes while he expected not to be punished for these mistakes. Thus, he also interpreted and acknowledged the classroom space as an environment of encouragement and positive reinforcement instead of a space of fear governed by a teacher “with the stick”.

Throughout the early development of the theatre performance, Sarah maintained an environment in which situations of risk could be rehearsed and a sense of security and

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<sup>87</sup> As Duhon-Haynes (1996, p. 6) puts it: “Empowerment releases the bonds of failure and frees children to go on learning.”

<sup>88</sup> Sarah also pointed out in a concluding round that she identified some orthographic and grammatical mistakes in the pupils’ notes but would ignore these mistakes for now as, in her words, “the main point for today has been to collect ideas” (November 22, 2016).

empowerment could be gained. In a theatre lesson on January 17, 2017, for example, Sarah wanted to explore together with the pupils how they could read a (theatre) text and, at the same time, convey an emotion. She made clear in her introduction that they would need to jump to a next step in the theatre project at this stage: bringing the script “to life”.<sup>89</sup> In this context, Sarah explained her pupils that emotions, and more specifically the act of *expressing* emotions, would be crucial to credibly perform their characters on stage. After the classroom community distributed the roles and collaboratively developed the script, they thus engaged more and more in the elaboration of their actual performance after two months of work.

<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>déi Übung déi mir herno elo maachen (-) déi maache mir awer an deenen dräi Sproochen an do wäert Iech opfalen dass eng vun deenen dräi méi einfach geet wei déi aner</i></p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>the exercise that we will do later today (-) we will do it in the three languages ((Luxembourg, French, and German)) and there you will notice that one language is easier for you than the other ones</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[17.01.2017   I.061]</p>
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Sarah highlighted that some pupils might find some languages “easier” than others. In this respect, she moreover emphasised the natural interconnection between languages and emotions and clarified that emotional expressions would be very important for a “good” theatre performance. Therefore, the pupils did not only have to perform (i.e. take a risk) in a foreign language but were also asked to expose themselves in emotional terms. Sarah mentioned as examples the “nervous” witch and the “scared or happy” princess. She then took a pen and papers and asked the pupils to spontaneously list some emotions that could be useful for concrete scenes and the overall theatre performance. The pupils answered promptly and gathered ideas: “being angry”, “evil”, “friendly”, “surprised”, “cheerful”, “feeling sad”, “afraid”,

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<sup>89</sup> Irina had already motivated her group to do this at an earlier stage when she asked to perform the text “as in the theatre” (see chapter 5.3).

and “disgusted”. Sarah noted down all the responses from the pupils. After they collected numerous emotions and feelings, Sarah invited the pupils to come up with some random sentences that later provided the basis for the exercise to rehearse these emotions.



Co-creation of group exercise

[17.01.2017 | I.062]



Co-creation of group exercise

[17.01.2017 | I.063]

As a reaction to Sarah’s open invitation to all her pupils to share their ideas in relation to emotions and sentences, many pupils immediately show their interest and motivation to actively contribute by raising their index finger. In different languages, they propose sentences such as:

**Alain:** emmène moi en vacances

**Ella:** wie heißt du?

**Benôit:** je peux avoir de l’eau?

**Océane:** geff mir deng Suen

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In total, the pupils collect six sentences in each language (French, German, and Luxembourgish). Sarah always listens to the pupils’ suggestions before she writes – without any further comment other than, occasionally, a “thank you” – the suggestions down on her papers.

In accordance with Bartolomé (1994), a humanising pedagogy recognises students as actively engaged in the co-construction of knowledge. In line with this proposition, Sarah’s decision to sit down together with the pupils and ask them to share their ideas of emotions and sentences demonstrates her intention to include the pupils in the co-creation of the exercise.

Sarah’s behaviour and her action to note down the pupils’ ideas can be considered signals of recognition and trust. In fact, Cook-Sather (2002) relates the ability to authorise student perspective, share power, and engage in a constructivist approach<sup>90</sup> to a “move toward

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<sup>90</sup> As an approach that believes “that students actively construct their own understandings” (Cook-Sather 2002, p. 5; see also Krahenbuhl 2016).

trust, dialogue, and change in education” (p. 12). In this respect, Sarah’s behaviour makes clear that she accepted the emotions and sentences as proposed by the pupils and, therefore, acknowledged the pupils’ direct involvement in and contribution to the main activity and group exercise. Against this backdrop, Paulo Freire would be delighted to discover Sarah’s approach to carry out education *with* the pupils instead of *for* them (see Freire 2017), making the pupils active contributors in their classroom and, eventually, facilitating learning. Thus, Sarah’s practice further built on a collaborative learning and teaching approach that I explored in the previous sections.

After the classroom community collected various emotions and sentences for the assignment, Sarah explained that they should now divide into three language groups.



Group exercise: conveying emotions

[17.01.2017 | I.064]

Sarah explains that in each group, the group members take turn to draw one green card and one white card. On the green cards, Sarah wrote the emotions listed by the pupils. On the white cards, she noted down the sentences proposed earlier by her pupils. The pupil who draws the cards has to perform the sentence in the emotion picked, while the other group members have to guess which emotion the pupil wants to convey.



Group exercise: conveying emotions

[17.01.2017 | I.065]

As an example, Océane here draws the sentence “Are you a girl or a boy?” (shown on the white paper) in Luxembourgish. The green card shows the emotion in which she has to say the sentence (here: “sad”).



The output of the discussion and of the – what I term – “collective exercise making” (i.e. the green and white cards), first, symbolises Sarah’s reliability. In fact, she kept her word and used all the pupils’ suggestions as integral (and only) components of today’s group work; the pupils did the exercise with *their* emotions and *their* sentences. Within these framework conditions, Sarah again signalled a positive orientation towards the pupils, their voices, and knowledge. Second, the exercise itself involved a further level of trust *in action*. In fact, the pupils *and* their teacher (who joined the groups as active member) collaboratively co-constructed meaning as they together, in a collective learning situation, discovered and discussed different emotional expressions, (multimodal) self-disclosures, and performative practices and possibilities available on stage. Sarah and her pupils jointly learned from each other as they shared both positive and negative emotions, listened to each other, and observed the (verbal and non-verbal) behaviour and actions of others.

Within a fictional context<sup>91</sup>, the exercise might thus have contributed to a pivotal facet of (reciprocal) trust: openness. During the exercise, the pupils disclosed personal information and potentially learned to be open about their feelings in a trustworthy (classroom) environment or even outside of that particular educational space. In fact, during the group assignment, Sarah made Benoît aware that he would often have problems in expressing his emotions. In this context, she further argued, the exercise would help him to overcome this uncertainty and fear. Thus, Sarah highlighted an important principle: what happens inside the classroom might have a (positive) impact on what one is capable of doing outside the classroom space. Thereby, I argue, Sarah created the conditions for her pupils to reach a higher level of awareness and self-confidence in an environment of fun, safety, and care.

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<sup>91</sup> As the emotions that the pupils picked might not have been the ones that they felt in that particular moment of the exercise.

Overall, the acts of creating the exercise together and performing it as a community of learners can be related to acts of (reciprocal) trusting. Interestingly, the learners also became actors and observers – a typical role distribution that emerged due to the theatre context, and that I will further explore in act II (with a focus on the actual rehearsal process on and off stage).

After the pupils changed groups twice and, thus, performed the task in each of the three languages (i.e. guessed emotions in German, Luxembourgish, and French), Sarah highlighted the complexity of the exercise and their common accomplishment: “we have now just done an exercise in three different languages”. While this statement could be regarded an acknowledgment of the pupils’ competence and appraisal of the joint multilingual learning process (“we have done”), Sarah added that she would be particularly happy about and proud of the collaborative aspect of the learning situation that unfolded throughout that theatre lesson. She qualified the assignment and overall learning session as a “success” that had only been possible thanks to the active involvement of the pupils, as she explained.

Sarah’s openness, honesty, and benevolence are reflected in her words; she explicitly associated shared success to a shared responsibility. Thus, her utterances highlight important elements of a humanising approach that potentially contributed to her trustworthiness: she based her teaching and learning approach on collaboration, participation, and shared effort as well as on praise and positive motivations. In addition to creating and maintaining a safe environment, Sarah thus created a space that was based on positive encouragement. These conditions can be thought of furthering a willingness to take a risk in the forthcoming rehearsals and performances.

Following her initial praise, Sarah asked the pupils in a concluding round to share which language and emotion they found the easiest and, respectively, most difficult ones during the preceding exercise. During the feedback discussion, the classroom community learned that each pupil had ease or difficulties with the expression of different emotions. The variety of opinions and learning experiences was also reflected in respect to the language use and preference;

different people picked a different language that they described, for example, as their “favourite language”, “best language”, or “easiest one”.

While the pupils got the opportunity to share their opinions, interests, likes, and dislikes, Sarah herself took advantage of the situation to reflect on her discoveries and learning experience and openly shared them with the rest of the group. After Alain and Irina both declared that they liked German the most during the assignment, Sarah lifted her eyebrows, looked astonished, and shared her positive surprise.

<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>dat hat ech awer elo doudsécher net geroden [...] wou een da mierkt awer sou e::h dass dir och an deenen anere Sproochen ((wei Däitsch)) da bemol awer a verschiddeenen Aktivitéiten dann awer och Spaass drun hutt (-- dat fannen ech richteg flott (-) well dat weist Iech jo awer dass dir och an deene Sproochen Saache kennt (-) och wann dir emol vläicht een Übungsblat kritt wou vill Feeler dra sinn (-) mee ob deeër anerer Säit kennt dir awer Saachen an deeer Sprooch och super gutt (-) an ech fannen dat wierklech super flott dat elo hei ze héieren</i></p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>I would have dead certainly never guessed this [...] one can see that e::h you are also good in other languages ((than German)) in other activities where you have fun (-- I find that really nice (-) because that shows you that <u>you can do things in that language too</u> (-) also if you get maybe an exercise sheet where you may do many mistakes (-) but on the other side you can do things in that language very well (-) and I find that really nice to hear this now here</p> <p>[17.01.2017   I.066]</p>
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While Alain and Irina sometimes chose French as their preferred language (e.g. during other exercises such as the “language portraits”<sup>92</sup>), they here both showed a positive orientation towards German. Sarah reacted with both happiness – to have received unexpected and honest answers from the pupils – and encouragement.<sup>93</sup> With her utterance “you can do things in that

<sup>92</sup> An exercise introduced by Krumm (2003) that Sarah did to discover the pupils’ linguistic repertoire (see also Galling 2011).

<sup>93</sup> One of Sarah’s learning objectives in the context of the theatre project was the development of language skills in the three school languages. She made the pupils aware that different languages might be linked to different feelings and preferences. Sarah’s happiness about Alain’s and Irina’s response can thus also be explained by the confirmation of her assumption. Overall, the pupils not only learned

language too”, she highlighted the pupils’ competences and associated them with “activities where you have fun” (e.g. bringing the script “to live”; overall theatre performance). Thus, this theatre lesson contributed to a motivational incentive that Sarah promoted in other theatre lessons as well: theatre allows to try out something without having to fear (the consequences) of potential mistakes. With her comment, Sarah might thus have further *encouraged* her pupils to continue with their commitment. In other words, she gave them support, confidence, and, indeed, *courage*. Thus, the pupils may have learned that they can do more than they might have thought.

Sarah then expanded on her praise, as she evaluated the overall lesson and explained that she also learned “many things”.

<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>ech hunn et och eng ganz flott Aktivitéit fonnt well ech emol Zäit hat vun engem Grupp bei deen aneren ze goen (-) ech hunn dat richtig flott fonnt (-) einfach emol beim Grupp ze stoen an Iech kennen nozelauschteren (-) an och emol ze gesi wien et do méi einfach huet an wien eben net (-) also vir mech war deen heiten Dag hunn ech fonnt eng richtig flott Aktivitéit (-) an <u>ech si ganz vill Saachen och iwwert Iech gewuer ginn</u></i></p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>I also found it a really nice activity because I also had the time to go from one group to another (-) I found this really nice (-) to just stand next to one group and to be able to listen to you (-) and to see who has difficulties and who doesn't (-) for me this day was a really good activity (-) and <u>I learned many things about you too</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">[17.01.2017   I.067]</p>
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What can be seen as a result of Sarah’s initial incentive to take a risk (e.g. to plan and play theatre with her pupils), Sarah learned something *from* and *about* the pupils and shared openly that she was particularly pleased about the opportunity to stand next to the pupils and *listen* to them. Thereby, she explicitly valued the pupils as narrating, knowledgeable subjects (see Freire 2017) and herself as a learner. Her willingness to listen to and learn from the pupils as well as her positive appraisal of various classroom experiences that built on a joint learning and

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languages but they also learned *about* languages and their usage (in contexts of fun) – another manifestation that might have caused Sarah’s positive emotion and reaction.

teaching endeavour can be interpreted as positive relational signals: she encouraged all learners to listen to and respect each other, openly share their individual opinions, work together as a team, and, eventually, trust their teacher and themselves. Together, these findings provide evidence that Sarah established a (safe and caring) learning environment where her pupils got the opportunity to feel empowered<sup>94</sup>.

Over the course of two months, the whole classroom community formed a basis to embark on the next step of their journey that was built, so far, on collaboration, encouragement, empowerment, and a shared purpose: the work on the theatre rehearsals and final performances that I will turn to in act II.

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<sup>94</sup> On a personal level, empowerment can be related to the development of “a sense of self and individual confidence and capacity” (Rowlands 1995, p. 103). The concept of empowerment can thus be associated to the concept of “conscientisation” (critical consciousness) from Freire (2017), an analogy worth exploring in another venue.

## 5.6 Intermission: Time for reflection on discoveries

“If we look at Aristotelian thoughts about the act structure, one can discover a principle of travel, of movement. The spectators also embark on a journey and wander from act to act.”  
(Schäfer 2014, p. 51; translation by author)

“The return to reality invites the spectators, like it or not, to think about what they have just seen, to judge the work, to put together their impressions in a structured way. The intermission signals an awakening of the critical faculties [...]”  
(Pavis 1998, p. 187)

In the first act, I have presented and given access to (a part of) the “everyday world” (Robledo & Batle 2017) of Sarah and her pupils. With my focus on the analysis of four school lessons so far, I have by no means given a complete picture of the classroom community life, nor am I aware of all interactions, behaviours, and journeys that occurred outside of my field visits and (camera) sight. Yet, the findings that I have examined in act I draw particular attention to crucial trusting behaviour and concrete (inter-)actions that emerged during the early stage of the work on the theatre project. These observations and critical explorations allow to highlight some potentialities for other educational journeys – the bigger context. In fact, the critical incidents in the first act depict an educational model that is based, most importantly, on teamwork, peer support, cooperation, shared commitment, and a sustained community spirit. Against this backdrop, I argue that Sarah engaged in and facilitated right from the beginning of the theatre project a humanising pedagogy that is reflected in concrete practices, interactions, and, eventually, routines that both demanded and triggered trust. In this context, she created a classroom that can be qualified as an “empowering setting” where “youth are valued as assets not just recipients, structures are modified to allow positive relationships, and decision-making power is shared between youth and adults” (Kirk *et al.* 2017, p. 830).

I state in the introduction of act I that the beginning of a “Hero’s journey” involves a so-called “call for adventure” that encourages or obligates the protagonist(s) to do something

risky, new, adventurous (Gilligan & Dilts 2009; Kinateder 2012; Randles 2012). In the context of this study, I suggest that this call came from Sarah and entailed the decision and encouragement to stage (and *dare* to do<sup>95</sup>) a theatre performance. Indeed, the theatre project qualifies as an “adventure” for both Sarah *and* her pupils on several levels. In fact, it was a new experience for the entire classroom community, as none of them ever engaged in the planning and execution of a (classroom) theatre project before. At the same time, it can be considered risky. On the one hand, Sarah demonstrated her willingness to take a risk with the action alone to apply for the opportunity to *publicly* present a theatre performance on an official theatre stage. On the other hand, she also motivated her pupils to assume risk and vulnerability. As I have highlighted, she encouraged them to choose and perform in a language that they themselves did not feel “strong” in (and, eventually, use this language *publicly* in front of an audience). Thus, the “call for adventure” itself brought with it a situation that can be defined as courageous and adventurous, and entails a willingness to dare and share risk and vulnerability – substantial in situations of trust (e.g. Durnford 2010; Johnson-George & Swap 1982; Mayer *et al.* 1995).

One of the most significant findings to emerge from the data presented so far is that Sarah considered, assessed, and praised the (work on the) theatre project as a *common* journey. Altogether, she repeatedly encouraged the pupils to participate. In my view, this pedagogical rational can be seen as a substantial sign of trust in its own right. This proposition is in line with Weber and Carter (1998), who suggest that “the orientation of the we-relationship is the orientation of trust” (p. 13). In fact, “teaching has historically been a rather individualistic enterprise, greater cooperation and trust emerge when situational conditions emphasize communication and collaboration” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000, p. 574). From the very

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<sup>95</sup> The Oxford Dictionaries defines an “adventure” as an “unusual and exciting or daring experience”. (Adventure. [n.d.]. In *Oxford Dictionaries Online*. Retrieved from <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/adventure>)

beginning on, Sarah emphasised the joint (“we”) venture. She made evident both implicitly and explicitly the cooperative orientation inherent in the teaching and learning practices and the need to build on interdependence and mutual supportiveness. Thereby, she created situations “where the interests of one party cannot be achieved without reliance upon another” (Rousseau *et al.* 1998, p. 395). In this context, she also invited the pupils to pay attention to one another. These situations of mutual dependence, reliance, and support might have emanated from the theatre context in which both the teacher and the pupils usually share common goals (McNaughton 2011).

Throughout my field work, Sarah made clear that she considered the “theatre lessons” to be “different than normal lessons”. This is evidenced in her teaching, amongst others by the fact that she included otherwise not common practices (e.g. inclusion of trilingual group assignments and meditation exercises). What I highlighted above can be repeated here: both the pupils and their teacher engaged in something entirely new. Thus, the theatre project and the art form itself allowed and demanded the whole classroom community to learn something *with* and *from* each other, demonstrating both a readiness and outcome of the *we*-relationship. Sarah used concrete teaching practices that built on a collaborative spirit and allowed a humanising approach to flourish. More specifically, she offered her pupils repeatedly both time and space for embedding, encouraging, and further strengthening trusting behaviour. Within these learning and teaching processes based on communication, collaboration, and dialogue, “the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers” (Freire 2017, p. 53). Trusting behaviour in an educational context might thus originate from interactions that build on co-teaching, co-construction (e.g. of meaning and knowledge), and co-ownership.

In this first act, the work process on the script as well as the document itself (as a result of the joint development work) can be considered symbolic for the common learning and



teaching experience and the teacher-pupil reliance. On the one hand, the script formed the basis of the theatre play and had been crucial for the further development of the theatre performance. On the other hand, the work on the script established a basis for the following work. In fact, it was based on all six attributes of trust. Thus, the script itself can be interpreted as a result of trust: it represents the collaborative work and input from the pupils and their teacher, it is a document of pupil-teacher collaboration, and a symbol of trust *in action*.

Moreover, the findings indicate that Sarah defined the classroom as a safe, caring, respectful, fair, and fun place. Within this common space, she promoted both empowerment and encouragement – she gave both *power* and *courage* – and created conditions in which the pupils may have developed a confidence to leave their comfort zone. From the beginning (e.g. meditation and relaxation exercise) to the end of each theatre lesson (e.g. concluding and feedback round), Sarah set up routines based on benevolence, openness, and honesty. In this learning environment, she presented herself verbally and non-verbally as trustworthy and potentially triggered similar behaviour by treating the pupils as active, knowledgeable, emotional, and social *subjects*. Indeed, as I have pointed out in various critical incidents and (group) activities, Sarah acknowledged and encouraged the pupils' input and ownership (e.g. during the spontaneous role-playing activity, “collective exercise making”, by designating group leaders), built on and triggered their collaborative and autonomous spirit and responsibility (e.g. role and group allocation processes), and let them be decision-makers (e.g. “you have to decide on who is talking in which language”).

In retrospect, the first act indicates that a teacher's trusting behaviour – her vulnerability, benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness – might be noticeable and effective before the actual beginning of a lesson (e.g. by adopting and planning a project-based approach based on mutual interests and benefits) and does not necessarily end at the end of a lesson or school day (e.g. by building on the pupils' input for following learning situations). Moreover,

trusting behaviour in an educational context can be shown and triggered by often (at first sight) inconspicuous signs, such as by spoken and written language (e.g. Sarah's utterance "I now want that you do this [choose languages] for once among YOU"). However, actions may have often been just as (or even more) important, such as the non-verbal actions of noting down and officialising the pupils' input to create a group exercise. Furthermore, important meaning in the context of trust can be attached to objects in the material world as well (e.g. written documents representing and honouring pupils' voices). In this respect, Sarah created a culture of cooperation, care, and concern, in which positive and trusting relationships are valued and promoted. Thus, Sarah stabilised a solidarity framework by engaging in a process of building a group identity (see Lindenberg 1998) and a relationship-oriented culture (see Six 2007). As a result, the teacher and her pupils all helped and supported each other, openly shared feelings and emotions, and built on each other's competences, benevolence, and positive orientation towards each other.

In sum, the results in this chapter indicate that the pupils and their teacher became together responsible for their *common* journey and departure mainly due to Sarah's pedagogical principles and practices. This result is in line with scholars who highlight that the tone and climate of the classroom depend on the exemplary role and actions of the teacher (e.g. Ennis & McCauley 2002; Hansen 1998; Nwafor & Nwogu 2014; Salazar 2013). In fact, the teacher is said to also play a vital role "in establishing this environment of trust through the nature of her own discourse with the students" (Oughton 2014, p. 77). Against this backdrop, I now move on to discuss in the next chapter how the pupils reacted to Sarah's (trusting) practice and in what ways her behaviour shaped interactions in the classroom.

## **Chapter 6 › Act II – The pupils as active, supportive, and responsible partners**

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**6.1 Introduction: Focus on the pupils**

**6.2 Embracing partnership and group problem solving**

**6.3 Engaging in (routines of) verbal and non-verbal support**

**6.4 Working independently and responsibly and assuming (co-)ownership**

**6.5 Intermission: Time for reflection on discoveries**

## 6.1 Introduction: Focus on the pupils

After the initial “call for adventure” in act I, the pupils and their teacher left their “ordinary world” (Fowler III & Droms 2010). They committed time and energy in something they had never done before and eventually engaged in rehearsals of their play. In this context, the pupils became both actors and audience members as they collaboratively elaborated their joint project both on and off stage.

After I investigated how and in what ways the teacher may have built, maintained, or strengthened trust in her classroom, I pay in act II particular attention to the pupils’ behaviour and their practices within the trusting environment that had been established by Sarah. In this chapter, I focus mainly on the rehearsal process from February to May 2017 and illuminate how the pupils proactively engaged in the learning process as active, supportive, and responsible co-investigators. In act II, I explore the following research question:

- **How and in what ways can “signs of trust” shape interactions in the classroom?**

## 6.2 Embracing partnership and group problem solving

Excerpt field notes [07.02.2017 | II.001]

The moment I enter the classroom, Sarah greets me, then tells the pupils that they can take a short break now before they start together with the theatre lesson. [...] I walk through the classroom and see most of the pupils working on the theatre project. Further back in the room, for example, one group enthusiastically rehearses their dialogue: they read out loud the script, use their entire body to physically engage in their performance, and explore as a group both verbally and non-verbally how to elaborate their acting.

The interactions that I noted down on February 7, 2017 reoccurred throughout my field visits: the pupils regularly “took a break” by spontaneously, voluntarily, and devotedly working on their theatre performance. Even outside and in addition to the so-called “theatre lessons”, the pupils engaged in the project development with the aim to improve their individual and collective outcome.

Excerpt field notes [07.02.2017 | II.002]

The theatre project seems to be something that the pupils like to do, something that they do voluntarily – during school lessons, in school breaks, and outside of school. In fact, some pupils told me that they “really enjoy” working on the project at home and want to learn their text.

On the one hand, the pupils’ commitment and active engagement with study matters (i.e. the theatre project) can be attributed to the project-based and fun aspect of theatre and its affordance to experiment and play (Greenwood 2001). The pupils showed their willingness to further engage in this pleasant activity, allowing learning to occur (Boudreault 2010; Moore 2004). On the other hand, their motivation and engagement, that I will further discuss in this chapter, can be associated to the collaborative learning effort that stemmed both from the theatre context and, most importantly, Sarah’s approach to learning and teaching exemplified in preceding interactions throughout the initial phase of the project. From the very beginning on, Sarah continuously demonstrated her very own commitment and, at the same time, created a shared

sense of commitment. As I have highlighted in act I, the pupils thus learned that their responsibility, commitment, and voices are important. They experienced that they had been actively involved in the (trusting) teaching and learning process. From February 2017 onwards, the pupils together with their teacher then more and more delved into the theatre context and its performative requirements and potentialities.

After the classroom community developed their script, started exploring emotional expressions, and created invitations for their family, friends, and the wider public (see act I), Sarah and her pupils engaged in first “readthroughs”. In theatre terminology, this type of rehearsal usually takes place at the beginning of the overall rehearsal process and serves mainly as a first initiative to “help everyone get a feel for the flow of the play” (Vaux 2017). On February 7, 2017, and after a first visit of Stefanie (the professional theatre pedagogue<sup>96</sup>) one week earlier, Sarah asked the pupils to first read some passages of the script in different groups before coming together as a group again to perform a “readthrough”. As a motivational incentive, Sarah framed the overall rehearsal process with a comparison: “it is like working on a puzzle”. She further explained that one has to find and work on bits and pieces individually and as a community to eventually have a nice picture at the end. In line with her metaphor, Sarah then encouraged the pupils to embrace the challenging work on smaller sections of the overall play and the individual efforts, without losing sight of the (common) goal (i.e. the final performance).

Immediately after Sarah invited the pupils to work in groups, they divided into three groups according to their roles and affiliations in the various scenes, sat down, and started to read out loud passages from the script that their characters are involved in. Instead of merely reading, the pupils soon demonstrated their willingness to explore the text beyond its written

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<sup>96</sup> After Sarah and her pupils worked three months mainly on the elaboration of the script, Stefanie joined the community to support their rehearsal process and go “from page to stage”. As a professional theatre pedagogue, her task had been to help Sarah and the pupils to prepare their final performance. Stefanie can thus be considered a mentor for both the pupils *and* their teacher – as someone who teaches and gives gifts (García-Ortega *et al.*, p. 612; e.g. the “gift” of learning how to act and perform on stage).

form; they engaged in verbal and non-verbal behaviour and tried out various forms of expression to bring the text “to life”. Michèle, Laurence, and Mariette, for example, first read their text but quickly decided to perform it. During their acts of reading and performing, they further developed their performance and co-constructed meaning valuable for their collective theatre performance. In other words, they collaboratively committed to working on one piece of the puzzle.



From collective reading to collaborative playing

[07.02.2017 | II.003]



From collective reading to collaborative playing

[07.02.2017 | II.004]



From collective reading to collaborative playing

[07.02.2017 | II.005]

Michèle, Laurence, and Mariette sit down and start reading the passages that they are involved in as princesses. They use the script as a guide and indicator, as they have marked in colours the lines that they have to say. As a group, they make their way through the various passages as their teacher asked them to do.

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After they have read their lines once, Mariette points to the back of the classroom and gives the incentive to stand up, get more space, and “play” what they have just been reading.

**Mariette** ((pointing with the script in her right hand to the back of the classroom)):  
and now we play

**Laurence:** yee::::s::

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The princesses stand up and engage in a first performance of their dialogue. They recite passages from the script (in three different languages) and engage verbally and non-verbally. They smile, speak out loud, shout (see screenshot), look each other into the eyes, move in the (imagined) stage, and help each other in cases of uncertainty or wrong lines.

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From collective reading to collaborative playing

[07.02.2017 | II.006]

After a first run, Michèle, Laurence, and Mariette show each other the text that they have learned already (and are able to perform) by heart. They smile and share pride in their learning process.

**Michèle** ((pointing to one of her lines in the script)):

I know my text up to here

**Laurence** ((pointing to one of her lines in the script)):

and me to here



From collective reading to collaborative playing

[07.02.2017 | II.007]

The group members then rehearse their passages a second time after Laurence motivated Michèle and Mariette.

**Laurence** ((smiling, with her eyes wide open)): aga::i:n?



From collective reading to collaborative playing

[07.02.2017 | II.008]

Laurence then puts her script aside – a sign of both self-confidence and a readiness to accept the potential risk and need to improvise. As a consequence, she now adds other (non-verbal) expressions and movements to her spoken words and inspires her group members to do the same.

In this critical incident that included reading, performing, and collective progress (inter-)actions, Mariette, Michèle, and Laurence pursued their teacher's wish to first read their passages out loud so as to prepare for the common "readthrough". Then, Mariette initiated a first performance and motivated her group to go one step further than the mere reading of parts of the script. As a result, they performed their dialogue twice and highlighted their individual



competence and commitment (e.g. how much text they knew already by heart). Laurence then improvised and tried to give her words more (multimodal) expression, for example, by stretching her body after she woke up in her role as Sleeping Beauty (see screenshot II.008 above). At the same time, all three pupils collaboratively worked on and developed their performances, as they explored how to further enhance their acting such as by adding non-verbal expressions (as Laurence did). Within their group, the pupils discussed Laurence's behaviour and talked about other potential ways to improve their individual performances. Within their real and fictional relationships (as princesses), the pupils thus proactively built on each other's ideas, competence, and creativity to develop their character and the overall project.

Similarly, in another group, Océane, Manuel, Rowan, and Arnaud first started to read their text before Manuel – maybe inspired by the actions of Mariette, Michèle, and Laurence standing next to them – suggested to also go over to the next step and perform their scenes.

**Manuel :**

*et maintenant on fait (-- ) théâtre?*  
 ((all pupils stand up))



From collective reading to collaborative playing

[07.02.2017 | II.010]

**Manuel :**

and now we do (-- ) theatre?  
 ((all pupils stand up))

[07.02.2017 | II.009]



From collective reading to collaborative playing

[07.02.2017 | II.011]

**Arnaud :**

dat gëtt schwéier

**Arnaud :**

that will be difficult

[07.02.2017 | II.012]

After Arnaud stood up and pointed out that playing theatre “will be difficult”, he immediately suggested to consider an imagined stage and, accordingly, a space for the actors that are not supposed to be on stage yet.



From collective reading to collaborative playing

[07.02.2017 | II.013]



From collective reading to collaborative playing

[07.02.2017 | II.014]



From collective reading to collaborative playing

[07.02.2017 | II.015]

**Arnaud** ((pointing to the back of the classroom, speaking to Manuel)):  
we have to be in a corner I think

**Manuel** :  
a::h yes (--) because we are not on stage yet

---

Rowan and Océane then start with their part. They try their best to perform without the need to look at their script and help each other in case some of them forgot a line.

---

Once the pupils stood up and started performing their parts, they added body language to their verbal communication (the focus during their reading). Arnaud, for example, reaches out his hand to express affection.

---

From sitting on the floor and *reading*, the pupils in these two groups stood up and started *performing*. Their (change of) body postures can be related to the transition from reading to performing and, thereby, also bodily inhabiting their characters on the imagined stage. This

process from collective reading to collaborative playing emerged during pupil-pupil interactions and, thus, could be seen as a learning and teaching experience that was co-constructed and encouraged among the pupils themselves with no further assistance nor guidance by their teacher. While only a first glimpse into the preparation of the actual rehearsal process, I want to highlight that the pupils demonstrated active engagement in the development process and learning material. They further built on and valued each other's initiatives and input and facilitated opportunities for collaborative learning (e.g. by initiating a performance and inspiring fellow pupils to enhance their acting).

In theatre, the class of learners (including the teacher) usually shares common goals, both in their "real" and their fictional communities (McNaughton 2011). "For the class, there is the goal of developing and maintaining the fictional context. For the fictional community, there is the goal of enhancing or sustaining an aspect of the environment in which they live." (*ibid.*, p. 128) As I have described in the preceding chapters, the teacher set up framework conditions for the work on the theatre project and achieved a common (learning) purpose and understanding. In a nutshell, she was responsible for what could be considered a humanisation of the classroom and a maintenance of a trusting classroom environment. The critical incidents described above – if only examples – demonstrate how the pupils proactively engaged in their common goal. More precisely, within the different groups, the pupils supported mutual efforts to learn their text by heart, try out physical engagement, and already think about the actual setting on and off stage. Despite the challenge that Arnaud highlighted ("that will be difficult"), he and all other pupils demonstrated their readiness to engage in the learning activity. In fact, they thereby further promoted a mutual learning process both in their real communities (e.g. Arnaud and Manuel as pupils) and fictional communities (e.g. Arnaud and Océane as actors), and encouraged each other to strive for continuous improvement.

Maybe driven by the pupils' spontaneous and active engagement during the theatre lesson on February 7, 2017<sup>97</sup>, Sarah signalled her willingness to collectively take the next step – that is, engaging in a first common rehearsal and “readthrough”. After the pupils had already tried out first performances within their groups, Sarah asked the pupils to rearrange the room setting to have a space, in her words, “as in a theatre”. More specifically, she suggested to structure the back of the classroom into two parts: one for the audience and one for the actors. Thereby, the classroom space was transformed into an official theatre space for the first time that, on the one side, included space for the audience members (sitting on chairs and watching the performance) and, on the other side, the stage as the main space for the visible actors. This setting indicates, amongst others, that the pupils were encouraged to be both actors and observers, a common duality in theatre contexts (Andersen 2004; Fleming 2002, 2004).

By initiating a theatre project, Sarah created a situation of interdependence. Thereby, she also created a need for trust (Bryk & Schneider 2003; Rousseau *et al.* 1998) as they were all made responsible for the unfolding of events in front of an audience. In fact, also during the rehearsal process, the pupils continued to participate in all stages of the project and work in a community together with their teacher. This can be seen as an evidence (and maintenance) of a humanised learning environment (Nwafor & Nwogu 2014) as it also represents a high level of interdependence where both the teacher and the pupils “must take the risk that the other will perform adequately and will be motivated appropriately” (Durnford 2010, p. 27). Interestingly, Sarah continuously maintained the high level of interdependence and reliability, which is further evidenced, for example, by the fact that Sarah sat down in the audience space and thereby positioned herself as an audience member, co-investigator, and learner as well. I argue that the theatre space is thus co-created by the whole classroom community and acts as a visual

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<sup>97</sup> Sarah emphasised in several concluding rounds and in individual conversations with me that she had been continuously encouraged by the pupils' motivation to follow their interests and ideas.

representation of a situation of interdependence and shared commitment: all pupils together with their teacher sat together and made themselves ready to further engage in a mutual enquiry on how to improve *their* project: to listen, observe, learn, teach, and cooperate.



The regular classroom setting

[29.11.2016 | II.016]

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Audience's space

Actors' stage



The theatre space

[07.02.2017 | II.017]

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In their first “readthrough” on February 7, 2017, the pupils staged their ideas in front of the whole classroom community and built on their preceding group work. Laurence, for example,

in her role as Sleeping Beauty, laid down on the ground, imitated a yawning, and stretched her body. Thereby, she spontaneously elaborated her performance. In fact, in the group work with Michèle and Mariette earlier, she introduced her idea to stretch her body, a performance she further developed by laying down on the ground and improvising another expression of tiredness (i.e. opening her mouth and yawning).

**Laurence** ((performing in her role as Sleeping Beauty)):

wou ass mäi Pränz? (-) hie misst  
amfong hei sinn

**Laurence** ((performing in her role as Sleeping Beauty)):

where is my prince? (-) he should be  
here



Laurence engaging in improvisation

[07.02.2017 | II.018]



Laurence engaging in improvisation

[07.02.2017 | II.019]

After each scene had been performed once, Sarah asked the pupils to make a short break and openly and honestly discuss about the performance. Thereby, she further encouraged a shared commitment to the development of their play as the pupils (both those on stage and the audience members) started sharing ideas on where to stand, what to do, how to move, and how to speak.

To support Laurence's performance and the overall play to become more convincing, Alain left his audience member position, went on stage, and laid down on the floor next to Laurence. As an initial response to the performance he had just seen, Alain engaged in a physical suggestion, showing Laurence and all other pupils an idea on how a different body position could even better get across Laurence's character and words.





Alain's physical engagement

[07.02.2017 | II.020]



Alain's physical engagement

[07.02.2017 | II.021]

Alain's physical engagement shows, amongst others, that he took his role as audience member, observer, and potential idea provider seriously, as he willingly – and bodily – shared his suggestion. In this respect, I argue, his action can be interpreted as benevolent behaviour: he positively oriented himself towards his fellow pupil-actor (Laurence) with the intention to help her.

I observed similar benevolent behaviour and pupil-pupil interactions throughout the theatre rehearsals. For example, during another “readthrough” on February 14, 2017, the pupils further rehearsed their performances and regularly took breaks to talk about potential improvements. After a performance of the fairy (Ella) and one of the trolls (Benoît), many pupils wanted to give suggestions and some pointed out, for example, that the two actors should speak slower and add more emotional expressions. Rowan then went on stage (screenshot II.024 below) to show his idea on how Ella should change her body position to also non-verbally communicate her arrogance<sup>98</sup>. After he demonstrated his idea, Ella and Benoît performed their scene again and changed it accordingly (e.g. Ella did not look at Benoît and turned her back to him; see screenshot II.025 below).

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<sup>98</sup> That she is, according to the storyline, a beautiful fairy and wants to marry a prince rather than a troll.



Co-construction of a performance

[14.02.2017 | II.022]



Co-construction of a performance

[14.02.2017 | II.023]



Co-construction of a performance

[14.02.2017 | II.024]



Co-construction of a performance

[14.02.2017 | II.025]

Throughout the first rehearsals, the pupils actively participated in the co-construction of their performance. Thereby, they not only helped their fellow pupils but furthermore made evident their willingness to accept the co-responsibility of the outcome. Thus, the feedback comments and overall engagement might have encouraged peer-learning as the pupils learned to take responsibility for their own learning and that of the whole group (see Giebert 2014). In fact, they often proactively engaged in discussions and suggested ideas for improvements without much (need of) concrete instructions from their teacher.<sup>99</sup> When someone had not known her or his lines by heart yet, struggled with their text, or was unsure about the sequence of events on stage, the pupils often managed to collaboratively support each other's performances both on and off stage. Thus, the pupils shared the role of a theatre director together with their teacher

<sup>99</sup> After each suggestion coming from the pupils, Sarah emphasised that it would always be up to the actors (to whom the feedback was directed) to accept the suggestions and, eventually, adapt their performance. She thus made clear that the pupils themselves had to acknowledge the comments.



who also gave advice and shared suggestions. Taken together, the whole classroom community engaged in and orchestrated the happening on stage and the overall learning situation.

While Sarah's role had always been essential (e.g. as a role model and facilitator), the pupils repeatedly self-regulated their engagement and overall learning. They monitored each other's progress and, as mentioned and shown above, tried to support each other. Thereby, they shared control and competence and established a culture of mutual responsibility for the individual and common good. This behaviour can be explained, amongst others, by Sarah's practice to only intervene if she considered it absolutely necessary, such as in cases when pupils did not know at all how to continue and gazed at her to signal that they need help. However, in many cases, Sarah let the pupils manage among themselves first, a behaviour that can be interpreted both as a willingness to promote independence and a signal of trust (e.g. of the pupils' agency and their competence). Thereby, she continued to grant them responsibility and gave them time and space to further self-regulate their learning.



The pupils' self-management

[08.03.2017 | II.026]



The pupils' self-management

[08.03.2017 | II.027]

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**Alain** ((in role, to princesses, in Luxembourgish)):

do you want to drink something? (-)  
you look tired

**Laurence** ((in Luxembourgish)):

yes with pleasure

**Michèle** ((in French)):

with pleasure

---

((long pause, no one says anything))

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The pupils' self-management

[08.03.2017 | II.028]



The pupils' self-management

[08.03.2017 | II.029]

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((Arnaud sneaks a peek at the script))

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((at the same time, Sarah follows the script and the happening on stage, but stays silent))

((Mariette then remembers her line and, thereby, saves the situation and the proceeding of the overall performance))

**Mariette** ((in German)):

Foxi (-) didn't you see a princess some time ago by any chance?

---

As I have shown, Sarah demonstrated her trust in the pupils by valuing and building on their competences and autonomy (e.g. to learn and teach) from the beginning of the theatre project on. In this context, trust can be viewed as both a prerequisite (afforded by the theatre context) and a result, as the pupils benevolently and reliably cooperated with Sarah, her expectations and those of their fellow pupils: they inspired group members to improvise, gave feedback and suggestions for improvement, and demonstrated a willingness to rely on these comments as they changed their performance accordingly. Without the teacher “with the stick”, the pupils thus co-constructed meaning and individually and collectively worked on their dialogue and overall performance. Both as members of the audience and as actors on stage, they may have, moreover, co-constructed trust by repeatedly helping each other to go on with their acting. The reoccurrence of signs of trust in the form of verbal and non-verbal support may have helped to accomplish one scene after another, just as the example I turn to now.



Mutual engagement (off stage)

[22.03.2017 | II.030]

**Michèle** ((on stage, in her role as Cinderella, in French)):

I miss him (-) and the prince of Snow White disappeared as well  
(----)

**Lily** ((notices that the actors on stage hesitate, looks up))



Mutual engagement (off stage)

[22.03.2017 | II.031]

**Lily** ((stretches out her hand))



Mutual engagement (off stage)

[22.03.2017 | II.032]

**Lily** ((pointing to Mariette, looks then at her script and whispers, in German)):

this is very (--)



Mutual engagement (off stage)

[22.03.2017 | II.033]

**Michèle** ((on stage, in her role as Snow White, in German)):

this is very worrying (-) come on  
(-) we leave all three together and search for our princes

After Lily noticed the actors' long pause on stage and thereby recognised their hesitation, she immediately interrupted her activity of reading the script, looked up, showed her hand to attract attention, pointed to Mariette to make her aware that she is the next one to talk, and whispered the beginning of Mariette's line from the script. Lily's series of actions demonstrate her willingness to help Mariette and all other actors on stage to continue with their performance and to accept her responsibility as a member of the team.

The pupils also gave advice and suggestions on stage during a performance. In the first example below (screenshot II.034), Océane looked first at Arnaud and then pointed to his princess (Michèle), indicating that he should position himself closer to her to make more evident their romantic relationship. In the second example (screenshot II.035), Ella, in her role as a fairy, is supposed to fly on stage. As she did not physically engage in a flying movement, some pupils fluttered with their arms so as to remind and encourage her to do the same.



Mutual engagement (on stage)

[08.03.2017 | II.034]



Mutual engagement (on stage)

[08.03.2017 | II.035]

In the previous chapters, the findings demonstrate that Sarah's teaching was imbued with a profound trust in her pupils and their creative power (Freire 2017). In conjunction with the findings presented above, one outcome and potentiality of various teacher-pupil and pupil-teacher interactions is that the pupils became (trusted) partners and co-investigators in pupil-pupil interactions too. In fact, the interactions among the pupils shown so far indicate that the pupils valued and accepted their roles as knowledgeable and valuable *subjects*; they presented

themselves as motivated, empowered, and creatively engaged pupils. Taken together, the pupils' behaviour, their supportiveness and benevolent deeds that I have highlighted so far can be related to an evidence of cooperative learning – a situation that might have emerged due to Sarah's (humanising) pedagogy; the pupils both individually and as a collective strived for progress and maintained the conditions for their common journey.

The pupils demonstrated their continuous interest and motivation throughout all theatre rehearsals. While some pupils performed on stage, the others watched the performance in the space arranged for the audience members and waited for their turn to go on stage.

Excerpt field notes [08.03.2017 | II.036]

Full of energy and motivation, the pupils interpret their characters. They sometimes forget their lines but then immediately get cues from other pupils. If they need further assistance, Sarah is there to help. [...] Everyone is concentrated. The audience members watch the performance, observe, follow the script, listen carefully. [...] It feels like a complex choreography where everyone plays their part and assumes responsibility.



Rehearsal engagement (on stage)

[08.03.2017 | II.037]



Rehearsal engagement (off stage)

[08.03.2017 | II.038]

Both on and off stage, in their real and fictional communities, the pupils maintained a supportive environment as they engaged cognitively and physically with each other (e.g. in a dance scene; see screenshot II.037 above) and within different relationships. What can be considered a result of this continuous (learning) efforts, the pupils managed to perform a first rehearsal without a break in March 2017.

It is important to highlight that the pupils not only demonstrated their engagement during actual rehearsals but throughout the various school lessons dedicated to the theatre project. For example, in a concluding round on February 7, 2017, the pupils critically reflected on what they had done and what they could do better next time. Many pupils here evidenced their willingness to know and learn more. While Alain had given valuable suggestions during rehearsals and, thereby, helped other actors and the overall community to improve their play, he was unsatisfied with his own performance. He openly shared his opinion.

<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>wei hutt DIR dat heiten elo empfonnt? [...] Alain a wat mengs du dass du gutt gemaach hues?</i></p> <p><b>Alain:</b></p> <p><i>näischt</i></p> <p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>näischt? (-- ) ok</i></p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>how have YOU felt about this now? [...] Alain what do you think you have done well?</p> <p><b>Alain:</b></p> <p>nothing</p> <p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>nothing? (-- ) ok<sup>100</sup></p> <p style="text-align: right;">[07.02.2017   II.039]</p>
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Alain related his dissatisfaction to the fact that he had not known his text by heart yet. His critical self-assessment can be associated to his individual responsibility and accountability and a willingness to further invest his effort and learning for the common good.<sup>101</sup>

In the same concluding round, other pupils pointed out that they can do better and improve *their* play. Then, Rowan, Lily, Mia, and Ella asked to receive more text so that they can perform more. Their request can be seen as a demonstration of joy and pleasure in the

<sup>100</sup> Sarah emphasised afterwards that Alain’s opinion is “*his* right” and “*his* feeling”, pointing out that she valued and respected his voice and accepted the way he saw his own performance. Thus, Sarah decided to acknowledge Alain’s *own* perspective. She listened to him, considered and respected his perspective – acts that, in an educational context, can help to build and maintain trust (Da Silva 2009).

<sup>101</sup> Alain further evidenced this willingness some days later after his comment when he told me that he had already learned much more from his text by heart.



activity (i.e. playing theatre), a willingness to (self-confidently) take a risk (i.e. be even more on stage), as well as a readiness to learn more (i.e. performing in a foreign language). Moreover, I argue that their wish to get more text can also be interpreted as an appreciation of the overall (trusting) work process that accompanied the project and its development.

<b>Rowan :</b>  <i>ech hunn net souvill vir ze léieren (-) an ech wollt e bëssen méi [Text]</i>	<b>Rowan :</b>  I don't have so much to learn (-) I want a little bit more [text]  [07.02.2017   II.040]
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On the one hand, Rowan's comment and request shows that he considered the theatre project as a "learning experience", as he made aware that he related "more text" to "more learning". On the other hand, he showed that he is indeed willing to learn more, demonstrating a readiness to further engage in the learning process. Sarah positively reacted to these requests and specified that she would be happy to give them more text or even an additional role if possible.

These incidents tell us many things about the pupils, their commitment, and learning experience as well as about Sarah and her willingness to create individual learning possibilities. In particular, I want to highlight that the pupils not only behaved in expected and acceptable ways (e.g. focused and engaged) but occasionally even surpassed what was required. In an educational context, these are two essential requirements for relational trust to increase (Bryk & Schneider 2003; Durnford 2010). In a nutshell, the pupils demonstrated their motivation, engagement, and concentration before, during, and after the rehearsals, and thus behaved – as pupils – in acceptable ways. Additionally, the pupils not only actively and self-determinedly engaged in the rehearsal process but also self-critically assessed their work and proactively sought to do more (e.g. become better, be more on stage) – making the learning situation even more challenging for themselves. Sarah also referred to the pupils' willingness to accept vulnerability, their openness, motivation, and courage in one of her positive appraisals.

**Sarah:**

*ech fannen dass dir immens vill  
Courage hat [...] äerch VRUN déi  
aner ze stellen an och déi ze froen  
(-) wat kenne mir bäimaache wat  
kenne mir änneren eh wat ass eis  
opgefall gell (-) ech fannen dat  
wierklech ganz flott dass dir do  
oppe sidd dass dir do dann och net  
rosen a beleidegt sidd (--) an ech  
fannen dat ganz wichteg an ech  
freeë mech wierklech dass dat och  
esou gutt klappt (-) an dass dir  
wierklech och sou MOTIVEIERT nach  
ëmmer sidd*

**Sarah:**

I find that you had a lot of courage  
[...] to position yourself in FRONT of  
the others and to also ask them (-)  
what can we add what can we change  
eh what did we notice (-) I find that  
really nice that you are so open that  
you do not feel angry and offended  
(--) and I find this really  
important and I am really happy that  
it works so good like that (-) and  
that you are still so MOTIVATED

[07.02.2017 | II.041]

Sarah pointed out that she appreciated the pupils' commitment. She specified that she would be "really happy" and that it would work "so good like that". With her words, Sarah appreciated and further encouraged the pupils' honest and active engagement, praised them for giving and accepting feedback, and thereby also accepting situations of vulnerability. In other words, and rephrasing it with reference to Sarah's puzzle metaphor, she positively evaluated the pupils' work on assembling the puzzle.

For Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003), trust building is a "bilateral process that requires mutual commitment and effort" (para. 33). Within the humanised classroom established by Sarah and the advanced rehearsal process that I put a particular focus on here, the pupils demonstrated their commitment and effort in a twofold way. On the one hand, they proactively and critically engaged in the mutual learning and teaching process. As I have noted above, they reflected on their own and others' actions and strived individually and collectively for improvements and (more) challenging work. On the other hand, I argue that the pupils engaged in trust-enhancing practices. In a situation of vulnerability (e.g. performing in front of others), the pupils repeatedly reacted with benevolence, supportiveness, and openness. As a group, they thus maintained mutually rewarding social (and fictional) relationships with each other and



created a positive and productive group dynamic. Both Sarah and Stefanie praised the pupils for their efficiency and success.

After the pupils managed to perform their play for the very first time without any longer pauses, both Sarah and Stefanie were “very impressed” and “astonished” about the pupils’ progress and their common effort.

<p><b>Stefanie:</b></p> <p><i>also ech muss soen ech sinn <u>IMMENS beandrockt</u> (-) wei laang ass et hier dass ech hei war? (-- ) zwou oder dräi Wochen? (-) zu deem wat dir haut scho presentéiert hutt (-) dat fannen ech ENORM (-) also (-- ) WOW</i></p>	<p><b>Stefanie:</b></p> <p>so I have to say I am <u>VERY impressed</u> (-) how long has it been since I was here the last time? (-- ) two or three weeks? (-) compared to what you presented today (-) I find that ENORMOUS (-) so (-- ) WOW</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[08.03.2017   II.042]</p>
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Similar to Stefanie’s comment, Sarah also praised the pupils for their overall performance and good teamwork. She made the pupils aware of the fact that they performed the play from the beginning to the end (“you really did it from the beginning to the end”) and highlighted that she was astonished that she did not have to intervene a lot during the rehearsal. Sarah then particularly emphasised that they “worked VERY well together as a group”.

<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>ech sinn erstaunt ech hätt lo net (-- ) ech hätt elo gemengt ech misst lo villäicht deen een oder aneren ustoussen a soen hei d’ass un dengem Tour (-) an ech muss soen ech si wierklech erstaunt <u>dir hutt dat wierklech vun Ufank bis zum Enn gemaach</u> [...] dir wusst genau elo ass et u mengem Tour lo muss ech ob Scene [...]</i></p> <p><i>et huet ee gesinn dass dir <u>als Grupp IMMENS gutt zesummegeschafft hutt</u> an dass dir allequerten immens konzentriert waart (-) dat huet ee ganz gutt gesinn</i></p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>I am astonished I did not (-- ) I thought that I have to tell one or the other hey it’s your turn (-) and I have to say I am really astonished <u>you really did it from the beginning to the end</u> [...] you knew exactly it’s my turn now I have to go on stage</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>one saw that <u>you worked VERY well together as a group</u> and that you were all very concentrated (-) that was very obvious</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[08.03.2017   II.043]</p>
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As a reaction to this positive assessment, and after Stefanie's statement that they would most probably still improve their performance, the pupils exchanged ideas on what they still need to work on to make their overall performance better. They retained to learn (a) their texts and how to say the lines (e.g. take more time, speak out loudly), (b) how and where to stand on stage, (c) when and how to bring objects and other scenery elements on and off stage, and (d) to involve more feelings and emotions into their performance. Thus, the pupils engaged again in a critical reflection of their acting and evidenced their willingness to further engage in the learning process.

Taken together, both Sarah and Stefanie positively evaluated the pupils' individual learning efforts and their group commitment as a learning and theatre community. Their praise can be interpreted as a willingness to further rely on and trust the pupils and their competences, as the trust put in them was not exploited. Sarah's continuous trust she put in her pupils may explain the pupils' motivation and their performance as active "knowers" on stage.

Besides the pupils' willingness to embrace partnership and group problem solving, they also evidenced verbal and non-verbal engagement in supportive communication and behaviour. Thereby, they even further developed the theatre play – as I will demonstrate in the next chapter.

### 6.3 Engaging in (routines of) verbal and non-verbal support

In a short contribution from 1976, Dutton equates a humanising pedagogy to making pupils “feel ten feet tall” (p. 79). In her eyes, signs and symbols such as a “genuinely friendly smile” or a “word of realistic encouragement” can be means to make the pupils feel worthwhile (*ibid.*). In line with this proposition, I argue that a smile, encouraging words, and positive reinforcement can be interpreted as positive relational signals as well, with the potential to contribute both to a humanising pedagogy and the well-being of a relationship partner. However, I argue that in an educational context, these and similar positive incentives do not (only) have to occur in teacher-pupil interactions. In fact, they may be crucially important in pupil-pupil interactions as well – the focus here in act II.



Smiling as signalling benevolence

*Lily smiling to Ella on stage*  
[07.02.2017 | II.044]



Smiling as signalling benevolence

*Sarah initiating a concluding round*  
[07.02.2017 | II.045]



Smiling as signalling benevolence

*Laurence dancing with and smiling to Manuel*  
[08.03.2017 | II.046]



Smiling as signalling benevolence

*Alain sending a “bolt of energy” to Arnaud*  
[22.03.2017 | II.047]

The smiles exemplary shown in the screenshots above cannot be fully interpreted without knowledge of the inner thoughts of the respective actors. However, the contexts where they appeared support the interpretation that they demonstrate a benevolent attitude and could reference to a positive relational signal. Pupils shared a smile during group warm-up exercises, rehearsals, and feedback sessions. Especially in situations of potential vulnerability (e.g. while going on stage, sharing honest and open feedback, engaging in physical contact during a dancing performance), a smile from one pupil to another pupil may not only signal joy but also support, encouragement, and motivational force.

While a detailed and multimodal analysis of a smile in the context of trust research is beyond the scope of this study, it may still play a relevant role in the overall context of benevolent practices that I observed in pupil-pupil interactions. In fact, the pupils repeatedly engaged in positive verbal and non-verbal encouragement among themselves. This behaviour can be related to a demonstration of their willingness to give each other energy, positive approval, and recognition throughout the theatre rehearsals. It can be seen as a result of the theatre context but also as proactive behavioural patterns that I will turn to now.

At Stefanie's first visit at school on February 1, 2017, she introduced several warm-up exercises for the pupils' bodies and voices. One exercise – “Zip Zap Zop” – served the purpose to give each other energy and work together as a team. As a typical theatre exercise, it usually builds on the premise of mutual encouragement and positive interdependence: the pupils were invited to stand in a circle<sup>102</sup> and send an imagined “bolt of energy” to someone else in the circle. Most importantly, the pupils had to use their hands, body, eyes, and voice so as to signal contact across the circle and pass on the energy (Rohd n.d.). Then, Stefanie demonstrated the hand movement (to pass on the energy) and emphasised that eye contact would be very important.

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<sup>102</sup> They thus even spatially oriented towards a we-relationship (Weber & Carter 1998).



Warm-up exercise: “Zip Zap Zop”

*Stefanie passing on energy to Irina*

[01.02.2017 | II.048]



Warm-up exercise: “Zip Zap Zop”

*The pupils performing the warm-up game*

[14.02.2017 | II.049]

From February 1, 2017 onwards, the pupils did this exercise usually at the beginning of their theatre lesson. Mia, however, transferred its meaning and performative practice to another context. In fact, she picked up what she had learned in the warm-up exercise and applied it during a rehearsal. On February 14, for example, immediately after Laurence went on stage to perform her scene, Mia (sitting in the audience) gazed at Laurence on stage, then smiled, clapped, and pointed her hands in direction of Laurence.



Mia passing on energy

[14.02.2017 | II.050]



Mia passing on energy

[14.02.2017 | II.051]

Mia sent a “bolt of energy” with the intention to give her fellow pupil energy and encouragement to perform on stage. I argue that Mia’s autonomous practice (to smile and clap) can be seen as a positive relational signal and a clear evidence of her benevolent attitude. In fact, she physically engaged in a motivational practice that can be interpreted as a sign of support and care. Moreover, this critical incident shows that Mia may have understood the

project and learning situation as a *shared* experience: she, as an audience member, acknowledged her co-responsibility for what happened on and off stage and offered her encouragement to one of her fellow pupils in a situation of potential vulnerability.

On other occasions, the pupils engaged in verbal and non-verbal encouragement and appraisal as well. Many pupils openly acknowledged the ideas of their fellow pupils, their acting on stage, and overall performance. For example, in a feedback session after Rowan evaluated his prior performance as not good, Alain disagreed and indicated that he liked Rowan's performance.



Alain's positive appraisal

[07.02.2017 | II.052]

**Sarah:** and what do you think you have done well today?

**Rowan:** nothing

**Alain:** I liked it what you did

While Sarah usually asked the pupils to only talk one after another in the feedback sessions and respect each other's opinions and self-assessments, Alain broke this rule here and decided to make clear his different, more positive opinion about Rowan's performance. He shared his words of encouragement in front of all other pupils and thereby maybe helped Rowan to believe more in himself and make him "feel ten feet tall" (Dutton 1976, p. 79).

Similarly, during a group exercise on March 14, 2017, Arnaud saw Irina's draft of her invitation for her family and friends. As an initial response, he smiled, then gazed at Irina and praised her work as "a good idea".





Arnaud's positive appraisal

[14.03.2017 | II.053]

**Arnaud** ((smiles, then gazes at Irina and her draft of an invitation))



Arnaud's positive appraisal

[14.03.2017 | II.054]

**Arnaud:** that is a good idea Irina to do it ((the invitation)) like this

On March 22, 2017, then, after Ella performed a scene on stage and came back to sit in the audience, Irina looked at her, smiled, and assessed her performance as “really good”.



Irina's positive appraisal

[22.03.2017 | II.055]

**Irina** ((gazing at Ella who just performed on stage)):  
you have done this really good today Ella

While these examples constitute only short episodes, they highlight that benevolence, as one of the most common facets of trust (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000), has the potential to emanate from and be further strengthened in pupil-pupil interactions. Mia, who passed on energy,

signalled moral support; she physically wanted to give strength and energy. Alain, Arnaud, and Irina, then, acknowledged their fellow pupils' and co-actors' work and signalled a positive orientation towards their individual work and performance. Thus, the pupils might have changed another one's attitude from insecurity to belief, from self-doubt to self-confidence – even if only for a short time. Just as a smile, these (often small) verbal and non-verbal signs might have had a considerable impact on the pupils' positive relationships and their trusting collaboration.

In theatre education, the work on a common goal allows whole-group trust to be built, as learners may respond to and support each other's efforts and learning (McNaughton 2011). Throughout the theatre lessons of the case study, I put a particular focus on the pupils that signalled a willingness to show care and concern and, indeed, supported each other's ideas, acting, and creativity. Against this backdrop, I argue, the pupils maintained a space of mutual support that had been modelled by their teacher (see act I). In fact, with her very own behaviour and practices, Sarah may have encouraged and inspired the pupils to behave in similar (trusting) ways and show, amongst others, benevolence for other members of the community. Throughout the theatre rehearsals, the pupils often listened to each other, acknowledged each other's efforts, positively influenced their peers, and offered motivating support. As they upheld the positive and supportive learning environment, the pupils also accepted their role as *co*-learners, *co*-teachers, and as someone who assumes the responsibility to encourage and empower – make feel worthwhile (Dutton 1976).

Beside individual, smaller, and sometimes maybe not so apparent signs, the pupils also encouraged, appreciated, and gave recognition to fellow pupils in collective practices. At the beginning of the community's first rehearsal (February 7, 2017), Sarah asked Ella and Benoît to go on stage as the first actors. Lily, sitting at that moment in the audience, gently tapped on Ella's back. Then, after Ella's and Benoît's performance, Sarah encouraged everyone to applaud.





The first rehearsal

*Ella and Benoît make the first step: act on stage*

[07.02.2017 | II.056]



The first rehearsal

*Ella and Benoît make the first step: act on stage*

[07.02.2017 | II.057]



The first rehearsal

*Ella and Benoît make the first step: act on stage*

[07.02.2017 | II.058]

Ella's and Benoît's characters have the first lines in the script. Therefore, they need to be the first pupil-actors on stage. After Sarah asked them to go on stage, Ella immediately places the script in front of her head to hide. Both Ella and Benoît then gaze downwards and hesitantly stand up.

The moment Ella passes Lily on her way on stage, Lily gazes at Ella, smiles, and taps her on her back with a slight push forward.

According to the script, the first line of the play that Benoît (in his role of a troll) is supposed to say to Ella (playing a fairy) is:

“Ma belle fée, ma bien aimée. Veux-tu m'épouser?”<sup>103</sup>

In front of the audience and fellow pupils, Benoît first hesitates to get on his knees (for his marriage proposal in role), looks down, and ignores Ella's eyes. However, he then dares to verbally and physically engage in his character, gets on his knees, and says his line.

<sup>103</sup> “My beautiful fairy, my loved one. Do you want to marry me?”



The first rehearsal

*All pupils make the second step: give feedback*

[07.02.2017 | II.059]

After Benoît and Ella performed their scene, Benoît indicates, first, that he does not like to say “ma bien aimée” (“my loved one”). He then, however, accepts to keep the line as it is written in the script.



The first rehearsal

*The community applauds the actors' performance*

[07.02.2017 | II.060]

After some pupils in the audience shared their feedback, Sarah encourages the audience members to applaud Ella and Benoît for their performance. All pupils then clap, many smile and add “bravooooo”.

When Ella and Benoît went on stage – as the first pupils during the first theatre rehearsal –, they clearly put themselves in a situation of potential vulnerability: to go on stage, act in front of others, and expose themselves verbally and non-verbally to their teacher and fellow pupils in a language they are “not so good in”. In fact, Ella’s and Benoît’s non-verbal behaviour demonstrated that they felt uncomfortable to, literally, make the first step on stage: they gazed downwards and did not want to stand up immediately. In this context, Lily’s hand movement – her tap on Ella’s back and slight push forward – can be interpreted as a signal of encouragement. In other words, Lily motivated Ella to take the risk and go on stage. She gave her energy and signalled her benevolent and supportive stance.

While previous exercises often focused on the written aspect of the theatre experience (e.g. group works described in act I), this critical incident highlights the more “adventurous”, unfamiliar character of the journey. In previous theatre lessons, Sarah repeatedly referred to the

ability of theatre to try out something new, an affordance that I propose to associate with risk-taking. The pupils here experienced this potentiality and relied on the benevolence and honesty of all observers. Benoît signalled his readiness to trust his community members by assuming his role, getting on his knees, and making a proposal – an act that is by no means easy to perform in front of others, as he also mentioned after the rehearsal during the concluding round. Moreover, and important to highlight, he indicated that he did not like the words “ma bien aimée” (feeling ashamed and shy), but then agreed to keep it in the script.<sup>104</sup> Benoît’s decision can be interpreted as a further willingness to accept vulnerability and trust his fellow pupils and the later (public) audience (e.g. to no laugh at him).

In this situation of vulnerability and obvious discomfort, Sarah and all audience members applauded Ella’s and Benoît’s performance to express “thank you” and “well done”. Thereby, they engaged in a spontaneous verbal (i.e. saying “bravo”) and non-verbal (i.e. clapping) practice that demonstrated positive appraisal and a willingness to behave benevolently – not to harm or negatively affect the actors and learning partners on stage. From this first rehearsal on, the applause reoccurred after each individual scene or complete performance. In fact, the practice of applauding was used both at the beginning of a rehearsal and at the end. Moreover, it was sometimes used during other activities related to the theatre project such as after a group assignment to work on the invitations for their final theatre performances (March 21, 2017).



Applause for common achievement

[21.03.2017 | II.061]

**Sarah:**

we now applaud all of us for all  
the nice drawings you have made (-)  
you have done this really well

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<sup>104</sup> Even if Sarah agreed that he is free to either completely omit these words or choose other ones.

The applause was complemented by another activity I term “collective thanksgiving” – as an act of saying or showing that one is grateful<sup>105</sup>. This activity was initiated by Stefanie at one of her first visits in February 2017 whilst later applied in all rehearsals even if she was not present in the classroom.



Collective thanksgiving

[08.03.2017 | II.062]



Collective thanksgiving

[08.03.2017 | II.063]



Collective thanksgiving

[08.03.2017 | II.064]

**Stefanie:**

what do we do when we have done something well? (-) we take our hand

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**Stefanie:**

tap ourselves on the shoulder

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**Stefanie:**

other hand other shoulder

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<sup>105</sup> Thanksgiving. (n.d.). In *Cambridge Dictionary* (Cambridge University Press). Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/thanksgiving>



Collective thanksgiving

[08.03.2017 | II.065]



Collective thanksgiving

[08.03.2017 | II.066]

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**Stefanie:**

other hand (-) tap your neighbour  
on the shoulder (--) [and say] well  
done

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**Stefanie:**

one has to be happy about what one  
has done

---

Stefanie explicitly related the hand gestures to having done “something well” and happiness (“one has to be happy about what one has done”). Just like the applause, the practice of taping themselves and their neighbours on the shoulders combined with the words “well done” can signal competence and benevolence, acknowledging one’s own and others’ efforts and verbally and non-verbally demonstrating a positive orientation towards the other and the relationship. Thus, both the applause and the “collective thanksgiving” may have contributed to a feeling of self-confidence as well as a confidence in the other. In this respect, I argue that these practices functioned as unambiguously positive relational signals (Six *et al.* 2010), as both the verbal and non-verbal behaviour aimed at contributing to the well-being and of their peers.

In fact, the combination of the expression “well done” and the body posture, gaze, and hand movements can be considered to visually represent what a humanising pedagogy can be like: a collective spirit, motivated by common appraisal and honest feedback, and the sharing of a learning experience on the basis of a positive relationship. Thus, the pupils here learned



both a behaviour and tool to show their gratitude, care, and trust (into each other and themselves), as they physically engaged and demonstrated their benevolence and group spirit.

While initially introduced by Sarah and Stefanie, the pupils repeatedly initiated these acts of positive encouragement and mutual support themselves. In other words, they applied the “tool” that they had learned for their own purposes. For example, in a theatre rehearsal on March 22, 2017, Ella and Benoît were again the first ones to go on stage. Irina immediately clapped in her hands, an act that constituted an incentive for others to clap as well.



Irina initiating the clapping  
[22.03.2017 | II.067]



Irina initiating the clapping  
[22.03.2017 | II.068]

As a reaction to Irina’s initiative, Stefanie praised her for her proactive behaviour.

**Stefanie:**

*gutt dass du drun geduecht hues*

**Stefanie:**

good that you thought about it

[22.03.2017 | II.069]

Soon after its first introduction, the practices that Sarah and Stefanie initiated thus turned into routines that were picked up, encouraged, and kept alive by the pupils. From the first stage of a rehearsal (e.g. when the first actors go on stage) to the end of each performance, the pupils engaged in well intentioned behaviour, mainly to encourage, empower, and thank each other.



Cheering each other up  
[13.03.2017 | II.070]



Cheering each other up  
[04.04.2017 | II.071]

For scholars such as Reardon (2001, p. 69), the “relationships between students and teachers and the relationships teachers encourage among students are the most significant of all the factors involved in education for the formation of humane persons”. In act I, I have pointed out how Sarah treated the pupils with respect and dignity and potentially encouraged trusting teacher-pupil and pupil-teacher relationships. In fact, she often presented herself as friendly, supportive, and benevolent teacher. With the pupils’ verbal and non-verbal benevolent behaviour and routines, they here might have built on Sarah’s teaching approach, as they encouraged and empowered each other both on and off stage.

In pupil-pupil interactions, the pupils maintained a learning environment that built on mutual support and positive encouragement – being happy and proud of what one has done individually and as a team. They engaged both in talk and action in positive behaviour and thus created the conditions for positive and benevolent relationships to unfold. Thereby, they also further strengthened a feeling of “we” rather than “me” (Lewicki & Tomlinson 2003) as they signalled mutual support, confidence, and capacity (see Rowlands 1995). The pupils actively embraced their positive interdependence both independently and responsibly in relation to mutual encouragement such as by initiating a clapping routine or positive appraisal. Additionally, they more and more assumed ownership of their very own play, something I will turn to now.

## 6.4 Working independently and responsibly and assuming co-ownership

Beside introducing the classroom community to some warm-up exercises on her first official visit in February 2017, Stefanie presented Sarah and her pupils main theoretical and practical underpinnings of theatre as an art form. As one of the key lessons Stefanie put forward, she emphasised that the work on a theatre performance is always based on the premise that it is a *common* enterprise. The findings presented so far evidence that this insight was probably not new to Sarah and her pupils, as Sarah initiated the theatre project as a joint venture and always encouraged a collaborative approach towards the development of the play. I have shown so far that the pupils maintained an environment where they actively and benevolently participated in. Overall, I argue, both the teacher and the pupils thus contributed to the development of the theatre project and maintained a situation of positive interdependence.

During the work on the theatre rehearsals and after the classroom community together elaborated their script, Sarah made very clear her readiness again to share responsibility and further encourage ownership. On February 7, 2017, with reference to the script and more specifically the emotional expressions the pupils chose for their characters, Sarah pointed out that the pupils can “of course change them [emotional expressions] again”.

**Sarah:**

*dir kennt déi natierlech awer nach  
erëm änneren (-) wann dir elo sot  
oh dat ass awer elo net dat Gefill  
wat ech lo am Ufank gemengt hunn [...]  
da kennt dir dat mam Bläistëft nach  
änneren (-) beim Text och*

**Sarah:**

you can of course change them again  
(-) if you say now oh that is not the  
feeling I meant at the beginning [...]  
then you can change it with a pencil  
(-) the same counts for the text

[07.02.2017 | II.072]

While only briefly object of analysis here, Sarah’s statement signalled her reliability: she considered it self-evident that the pupils had *and* keep their (co-)ownership of the script. For



her, the pupils themselves could “of course” change fundamental components of the script and, therefore, the performance (“you can change it with a pencil”). Thus, Sarah again openly shared control with her students and thereby authorised student perspective and authority (see Durnford 2010).

Interestingly, the pupils’ responsibility and accountability became increasingly apparent as both Sarah and Stefanie explicitly encouraged the pupils to assume ownership of their play. After the pupils rehearsed individual scenes as “readthroughs”, Sarah suggested on March 8, 2017 that the pupils should rehearse their performance “from A to Z” – from the beginning to the end. Thus, with reference to Sarah’s words that the overall rehearsal process would be “like working on a puzzle”, Sarah motivated the pupils to begin completing the puzzle so as to prepare for their final performance in front of a public audience. She then underlined that the pupils should act on their own now: “we [Sarah and Stefanie] leave the play to you now”.

<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p><i>mir sinn net do [...] mir iwwerloossen Iech elo d’Stéck [...] an dir musst kucken dass dir lo mol eng Kéier ënnert Iech eens gitt fir dat vum Ufank bis zum Enn ze maachen</i></p>	<p><b>Sarah:</b></p> <p>we are not here [...] <u>we leave the play to you now</u> [...] and you have to <u>see that you manage among each other to do this now</u> from the beginning to the end</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[08.03.2017   II.073]</p>
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If needed, Sarah helped the pupils during rehearsals for example by giving directions or whispering text. She made clear that the pupils should, however, (learn to) “manage among each other to do this now”. Thereby, she enabled independent problem-solving and encouraged the pupils to engage in pupil-pupil support. Thus, for the duration of their performance, the pupils should work both on and off stage independently from their teacher and Stefanie. In a nutshell, Sarah set the conditions for both interdependence and independence to unfold. Sarah then specified that she intended to not interfere at all in the pupils’ performance and, instead,

only watch the rehearsal as an audience member and take notes in case she would have suggestions or remarks.

Sarah's words can be interpreted as signalling trust and competence: she was willing to leave the play to the pupils and showed confidence in their ability to manage among themselves – dealing with eventual problems that might come with stage fright, for example. Her behaviour might have originated from the theatre context: indeed, the pupils needed to learn to act on their own without much assistance from other people off stage. Sarah acknowledged this necessity and underlined the pupils' responsibility. In other words, she entrusted the performance and its success to them (e.g. to play it “from A to Z”) and demonstrated her willingness to explicitly hand over power and control to her pupils.

If we consider the theatre project as a teacher-pupil collaboration and, thus, a common project, it is important to highlight that both Sarah and her pupils here engaged in a situation of vulnerability. In fact, the teacher-pupil relationship transformed into a pupil-pupil reliance on stage without much control from the teacher. The space was dedicated to the performance while the main focus of the audience – the stage – became the pupils' very own space. This indicates a promotion of a sense of (co-)ownership, as both the classroom and the stage were defined as a space where the pupils had the right and opportunity to participate in and construct classroom dialogue (Belliveau & Kim 2013).

Similar to Sarah's statement, Stefanie emphasised the pupils' responsibility as well. She pointed out that it is *their* play (“it is YOUR play”) and made explicit both the pupils' ownership of the performance and the consequences that follow (e.g. “you have to know when it is your turn”).

<b>Stefanie:</b> et ass ÄERT Theaterstéck (-) an dir musst wesse wéini dir drun sidd	<b>Stefanie:</b> <u>it is YOUR play</u> (-) and you have to know when it is your turn  [08.03.2017   II.074]
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With a supplementary comment, Stefanie explained that the pupils would need to learn the text from the other actors in joint scenes. First, this would allow them to keep an overview of the overall performance and know when it is their turn – highlighting a situation of individual accountability. Second, it would enable the pupils to help each other on stage in case someone needs help – highlighting a situation of positive interdependence. Thus, Stefanie’s comment can be seen as in line with Sarah’s remark above and a further encouragement to leave the play and its unfolding to the pupils.

Within a formal learning context (i.e. a school lesson in a public primary school class in Luxembourg), the teachers verbally reinforced the pupils’ right and duty to assume ownership of (a part of) their learning process and stimulated pupil engagement. While the mere act of publicly performing on stage can already be thought of an act of power and agency in itself for the pupils – publicly and independently presenting themselves in front of an audience without their teacher in the spotlight – the pupils’ responsibility and accountability was made explicit during the rehearsal process. Thus, the pupils became official agents of their own learning: they are the ones on stage, they need to prepare themselves to act without assistance from their teacher and be ready to help their fellow pupils on stage.

With their words, both Sarah and Stefanie thus set the conditions for the pupils to create a sense of ownership over their acting and learning. Consistent with findings reported by Ennis and McCauley (2002) about teachers who made efforts to build trusting relationships, Sarah and Stefanie here encouraged the pupils “to participate and engage, trusting them with valued responsibilities and interacting positively” (*ibid.*, p. 156).

What can be interpreted as an initial response to Sarah’s and Stefanie’s encouragement or just a demonstration of impatience, Ella demonstrated her readiness to start the theatre rehearsal on March 8, 2017.

**Ella:**

*wéini kënne mir ufänken?*

**Ella:**

when can we start?

[08.03.2017 | II.075]

With her question “when can we start?” during the briefing, Ella suggested to move on to the actual rehearsal – to go from “talking/discussing” to “doing/playing”. Thereby, she assumed (co-)ownership of the classroom events (Fobes & Kaufman 2008; McLauchlan & Winters 2014). As a reaction to Ella’s comment, Sarah accepted Ella’s voice so that the community indeed started with the rehearsal.

Interestingly, and turning to the end of that rehearsal, Sarah made clear again her willingness to depend on the pupils and their input. After she praised the pupils for their individual engagement and teamwork, Sarah told me that she would feel “much better now” after she had seen the progress that the pupils made. She reacted with a positive attitude and relief to my question how she would feel after the pupils performed the play “from A to Z”.

**Sarah**

*ou::: d ass wierklech vill besser  
elo*

**Sarah:**

ou::: it is really better now

[08.03.2017 | II.076]

Thereby, Sarah appreciated the pupils’ responsibility and highlighted that the pupils’ efforts had an effect on her own well-being. Her comment thus signalled, amongst others, that her trust in the pupils and “leaving the play to them” was done justice to. In fact, the pupils met the expectations to perform independently on stage without much assistance from their teacher. As a consequence, Sarah made evident that this affected her emotional condition (from feelings of stress and worry to “feeling better”).

After today's rehearsal, Sarah feels much better. She was stressed and did not feel very well in the last couple of days, as she told me. In fact, she did not know in which direction the theatre project would develop and what her main responsibilities should include. [...] Sarah considers the rehearsal today as "successful". In her eyes, the pupils demonstrated that they are well prepared and motivated to perform on stage, capable of critically evaluating their own performance, and willing to continuously improve their work. [...] I have the feeling that this brings hope, energy, and motivation to both Sarah, the teacher, *and* the actors, the pupils.

My field notes in conjunction with Sarah's comment demonstrate that the classroom theatre experience and its outcome(s) are not only in the teacher's hands. Instead, both pupils and their teacher share the responsibility; it is, indeed, a *shared* learning endeavour. While Sarah had officially been accountable for the theatre project as the main classroom teacher, the pupils became more and more aware of their own responsibility for the common good. Thus, the rehearsal on March 8, 2017 made evident that the pupils had to make own efforts to guarantee success for both the teacher *and* themselves. The rehearsal process can therefore be thought of a classroom teamwork experience *per se*, as an activity where both the teacher and the pupils need each other to reach a common goal and experience a condition of well-being.

With a focus on trust and its attributes, Sarah's statement and feelings also highlight a situation of vulnerability. The situation that she did not know in which direction the theatre project would develop involved an awareness of uncertainty and risk. Thus, the pupils' engagement and self-management during various theatre rehearsals might have contributed to a trusting teacher-pupil relationship as the pupils performed well, met some expectations (e.g. good teamwork), and thereby created an opportunity for trust (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000). As a consequence, Sarah did not only feel better but also praised the pupils for their work. She thus further promoted the teacher-pupil interdependence and the pupils' independence. Overall, this critical incident highlights the reciprocal character of trust, as attributes such as vulnerability, competence, and reliability are at stake. This finding reflects that of Durnford

(2010), who found that trust in a classroom context can be considered both a result of teacher-pupil interactions and an influence on the behaviours of the teacher and the pupils. She further argues that the teacher's and the pupils' classroom behaviour is interrelated and circular: "[t]he behavior of the teacher both influences and is influenced by the behavior of the students" (*ibid.*, p. 26). Contextualising this perspective here, Sarah's emotional transition from stress to "feeling much better" was facilitated by the pupils' engagement and led to further praise and confidence in the pupils from Sarah's side.

In subsequent theatre rehearsals, the pupils continued to work reliably and highly motivated on their performance as I have shown in preceding sections. In particular, a rehearsal on April 4, 2017 supports evidence from previous observations that they assumed their responsibility and signalled a readiness to independently develop their play. On that school day, Sarah was on sick leave.<sup>106</sup> While the substitute teacher was willing to plan some time for the theatre project, the pupils soon took initiatives to drive forward the rehearsal process.

Excerpt field notes [08.03.2017 | II.078]

Immediately after the school break, some pupils go to the substitute teacher and tell her that they would go downstairs to a room now that offers more space and flexibility for their work. [...] They make clear where the next learning sessions should take place and explain her what this session includes.

Once arrived downstairs in the classroom, the pupils immediately started changing the setting: they set the benches and chairs aside as they had usually done together with Sarah in other rehearsals, divided the room in an audience- and stage part, and draw the curtains. While I was busy setting up my camera, the pupils told the substitute teacher where to sit down in the

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<sup>106</sup> The substitute teacher had agreed with me on April 3, 2017 via a phone call to schedule time to work on the theatre project. She accepted that I join the classroom community with my video camera.

audience to not stand in the way for the actors.<sup>107</sup> Once the classroom was transformed into a theatre space and everyone sat down in the audience, Irina looked up and gave the incentive to start with the rehearsal.

<b>Irina</b> ((looking at Ella and Benoît)): Ella:: Benoît::t dir sidd dei éischt sur scène	<b>Irina</b> ((looking at Ella and Benoît)): Ella:: Benoît::t you are the first ones on stage
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Irina's starting signal  
[04.04.2017 | II.079]

Before Ella and Benoît went on stage, all the pupils first clapped in their hands. Thus, they applied a ritual that was developed in interaction with Sarah and Stefanie to encourage each other and cheer each other on. Here again, this non-verbal practice can be seen as a signal of common benevolence to give energy, and demonstrate mutual supportiveness and good intentions. The fact that the pupils cheered each other up without a teacher giving them an impulse to do so may indicate that they understood each other in pupil-pupil interactions as partners as well; they assumed the responsibility to clap and signalled readiness for their individual commitment (e.g. to focus on the rehearsal now) and cooperation (e.g. to work and support each other as a team).

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<sup>107</sup> During the rehearsal, she sat in the back of the room and silently observed the pupils' performance. While not formally addressed, she might also have conferred some responsibility and control to me, as someone who had assisted to other theatre rehearsals before.



Cheering each other up

[04.04.2017 | II.080]

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Throughout the rehearsal, the pupils' behaviour and attitudes showed similarities between what I observed in other situations. From the very beginning on, the pupils helped each other to perform the play from the beginning to the end without the need of any abrupt breaks, longer discussions, or assistance of a teacher.

Excerpt field notes [04.04.2017 | II.081]

The pupils perform and rehearse for themselves. Everyone is playing her or his role, some sit and wait in the audience, others are getting ready to go on stage, while again others perform and even improvise on stage in their respective role. They all help and encourage each other. [...] All this happens without Sarah nor Stefanie being present in the classroom.

As I have written down in my field notes and confirming findings that I have reported in previous sections, the pupils helped each other to achieve individual and common goals, as they managed to perform their own parts and successfully completed the overall performance. For example, in several sequences, the pupils made fellow actors aware that they should not turn their back to the audience. In preceding rehearsals, it had often been Sarah or Stefanie who made the pupils aware of these details and body postures. The pupils now assumed the responsibilities of a teacher and director as they helped each other to co-construct and improve the theatre performance; they became student-teachers (Freire 2017).



During one of the first scenes, Michèle, for example, reminded Laurence to adapt her body position. She touched Laurence's shoulders, turned them slightly towards the audience members, and, thereby, allowed Laurence to be more visible for the audience.



Pupil-pupil instructions and guidance

*Michèle adapting Laurence's body position*

[04.04.2017 | II.082]



Pupil-pupil instructions and guidance

*Michèle adapting Laurence's body position*

[04.04.2017 | II.083]



Pupil-pupil instructions and guidance

*Michèle adapting Laurence's body position*

[04.04.2017 | II.084]



Pupil-pupil instructions and guidance

*Michèle adapting Laurence's body position*

[04.04.2017 | II.085]

Some minutes later, Laurence, who had been made aware herself of her (improvable) body position, called Arnaud's attention to not show his back to the audience. During his performance, she gazed at him and showed him with hand movements to change his body position. Arnaud then moved his body accordingly.



Pupil-pupil instructions and guidance

*Laurence adapting Arnaud's body position*

[04.04.2017 | II.086]



Pupil-pupil instructions and guidance

*Laurence adapting Arnaud's body position*

[04.04.2017 | II.087]



Pupil-pupil instructions and guidance

*Laurence adapting Arnaud's body position*

[04.04.2017 | II.088]



Pupil-pupil instructions and guidance

*Laurence adapting Arnaud's body position*

[04.04.2017 | II.089]

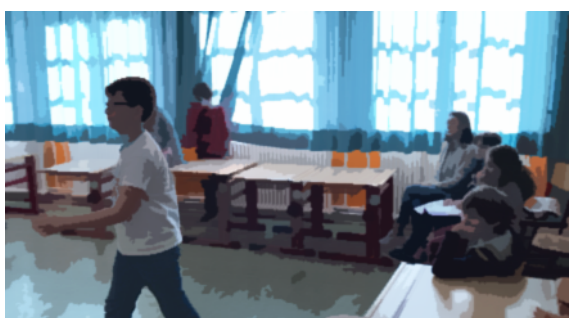
In another scene, Alain missed his cue to make himself ready to go on stage. Mariette noticed this and immediately and non-verbally prompted him to prepare for his stage appearance. As a reaction, Alain immediately stood up from his chair in the audience, appeared on stage shortly after, and allowed the overall performance to remain in line with the script.



Pupil-pupil instructions and guidance

*Mariette prompting Alain to go on stage*

[04.04.2017 | II.090]



Pupil-pupil instructions and guidance

*Alain going on stage*

[04.04.2017 | II.091]

Without immediate assistance from Sarah nor Stefanie, the pupils independently rehearsed their very own theatre performance. Their commitment signalled both competence and reliability: even without their main class teacher, they did not only independently continue to work on the group project but also engaged in behaviour that triggered further elaborations and improvements of their performance. These observations suggest that the pupils felt committed to learning and motivated to working on and developing the theatre project. In this respect, I argue, the pupils helped each other and their teacher (as the one who made herself dependent on the pupils' input). While the substitute teacher and I were present in the room, the school lesson that I put a particular focus on here was led and driven by the pupils' active and mutual engagement. Thus, the pupils built on the reliance and trust received in previous teacher-pupil interactions and demonstrated their willingness to accept the theatre project as involving activities that are student-centred, -led, and -driven (Wright 2011).



Mutual management and support

[04.04.2017 | II.092]



Mutual management and support

[04.04.2017 | II.093]

In some situations, the actors on stage forget their line(s). When this happens, they gaze at the fellow pupils who sit in the audience and follow the script. For example, Mariette cannot remember her next line here.

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Mariette is stuck and seeks help by gazing at Océane, who assumes the role of a prompter and whispers the text.

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Mutual management and support

[04.04.2017 | II.094]



Mutual management and support

[04.04.2017 | II.095]



Mutual management and support

[04.04.2017 | II.096]

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Some minutes later, Irina cannot remember where to position herself on stage. She hesitates behind the (imagined) scenes and is then prompted by Mariette and her hand gesture to go on stage. Thereby, Mariette indicates the place where Irina is supposed to stand for the next scene.

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Similarly, Rowan gets lost at some point during the rehearsal. He gazes at Manuel who recognises that Rowan needs help and shows him where to position himself.

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Both on stage and off stage, the pupils demonstrate that they are focused on the rehearsal process, ready to help fellow pupils and support the overall learning process.

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The incidents above demonstrate that the pupils supported each other in various ways throughout the theatre rehearsal: they made each other aware of mistakes, suggested improvements, whispered text, and refined their acting for a performance in front of an audience. These behavioural clues can be interpreted as demonstrations of a verbal and non-verbal competence to support each other and feel responsible for each other, also in situations of uncertainty and confusion.



The pupils listen to each other, respond to comments, and encourage each other. It feels like the pupils are giving each other power and motivation to continue the performance. They all help each other, whisper the text to each other, show where to stand, how to stand, give cues. They are concentrated, work seriously, repeat things if something does not work. They all work on a common goal. [...] The project lies in their own hands, in their own minds – and even in their own bodies one could say.

Within the formal school lesson, the pupils all played an active role as co-learners and co-teachers and sometimes assumed responsibilities usually carried by Sarah. Océane, for example, whispered a part of Mariette's dialogue and thus assumed the task and responsibility of a prompter – a person usually hidden from the audience who reminds the actors on stage of their lines if they have forgotten them or are unsure (Queensland Performing Arts Trust n.d.). In previous rehearsals, this role had usually been occupied by Sarah. Océane took over this important and supportive role, helped Mariette and others to continue with the performance without long interruptions, and signalled to be ready for further help if needed.

Beside the mutual supportiveness and collective engagement that the pupils displayed, it is interesting to note that they also proactively participated in the development of the play in their individual capacities. Alain, for example, in his role of the wolf, often struggled with his text during previous rehearsals and even evaluated his overall performance negatively in one of the feedback sessions (see page 210). On April 4, 2017, Alain knew most of his lines by heart and only occasionally needed help from fellow pupils. This fact alone can be seen as a demonstration of his willingness to learn, meet the expectations of his teacher and fellow pupils, and thereby help the overall play to successfully develop. During the performance he then spontaneously used props that he found in his surroundings in the classroom such as pillows (as objects to represent sausages he eats-as-if). In other words: he improvised.



Alain's improvisation  
[04.04.2017 | II.098]



Alain's improvisation  
[04.04.2017 | II.099]

Alain's improvisation can be seen as a motivation to further develop his own and the overall performance. Thereby, he creatively and independently explored additional forms of expression in the fictional world as he incorporated own and spontaneous ideas. In other words, he became a decision-maker and expert as he "interpreted the words and did not simply turn the pages" (Wolf 1998, p. 410). Thus, his act of improvisation can also be considered a demonstration of his competence to perform more than demanded (i.e. than written in the script). Both interpretations highlight Alain's willingness to take a risk at that particular moment: to take advantage of the fictional context, be not afraid of potential mistakes, and accept to affect the behaviour of his fellow actors on stage. This is in line with Even (2008), who brings the fictional settings of drama situations in relation to freedom, joy, and co-creation. She emphasises that learners are usually "committed to the characteristics of the personae and places they have collaboratively invented, and they have to take the consequences for their own actions within these worlds" (p. 163). Similarly, Dunn (2011) highlights that improvisation requires both complex structuring and collaboration skills. In this respect, Alain may have created a need for collaboration and simultaneously a situation of mutual risk, as his actions involved consequences on stage for himself and others. Moreover, his improvisation (and that of others<sup>108</sup>) can be considered both a learning experience and potential outcome of the safe space maintained by the pupils.

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<sup>108</sup> Several pupils improvised to develop the script, during rehearsals, and even during the final performances.

As a reaction to Alain’s practice, Irina, Michèle, Lily, Mariette, and Laurence adapted to Alain’s improvised behaviour on stage and also improvised a little bit. Thus, similar to trust, improvisation can be considered to be a reciprocal process as well; it requires all actors on stage to observe, listen to, and react to each other to maintain the fictional context and further co-construct the common performance.



Alain’s improvisation

[04.04.2017 | II.100]



Alain’s improvisation

[04.04.2017 | II.101]

The willingness to accept risk and vulnerability became obvious in another scene as well. At the end of the play and according to the script, one of the princes (Rowan) confessed his love to his princess (Mariette). While fictional, this romantic and intimate moment alone can be seen as not easy to play for Rowan in front of his friends, fellow pupils, and a public audience. In fact, he made clear in previous rehearsals that he had some difficulties with this scene, as he is a rather shy and reserved character in real life according to Sarah. Similar to Benoît’s act to kneel down and propose to his fairy (Ella) at the very beginning of the play (see chapter 6.2), Rowan had to kneel down in front of Mariette, look her into the eyes, and say, amongst others, the sentence: “In the future, I will always be there for you, my darling”. While he did not dare (yet) to look Mariette into her eyes and turned around shortly to signal hesitation, he eventually managed to kneel down and say his lines.<sup>109</sup> Thereby, he accepted his situation of vulnerability,

<sup>109</sup> Before Rowan knelt down, he shortly looked into one of my cameras standing at the back of the room. This can be seen as an acknowledgment of its presence, a circumstance that might have put even more pressure on him (as someone additional watching and even recording what he did).

as he was committed to the characteristics of his role as a prince (Even 2008).



Rowan's love confession in role

[04.04.2017 | II.102]



Rowan's love confession in role

[04.04.2017 | II.103]



Rowan's love confession in role

[04.04.2017 | II.104]



Rowan's love confession in role

[04.04.2017 | II.105]

Rowan was willing to bring himself into a situation of vulnerability and discomfort, both with his verbal action (e.g. saying “my darling”) and non-verbal action (e.g. kneeling down) on stage. While he might have feared, as he stated in previous rehearsals, that others laugh at him, he performed his role and duty. Similar to Alain, he thereby signalled self-confidence but also trust in his fellow actors. In fact, he accepted his assumption that (hopefully) no one will laugh at him or exploit his situation of vulnerability. Instead of laughing, then, all pupils stayed in character, continued with their performance, and thus reassured Rowan that his performance was good and contributed to the continuation of the play.

According to Durnford (2010, p. 15), whenever pupils “are required to learn something new or to demonstrate what they know, there is an aspect of risk”. Alain and Rowan both demonstrated what they know and exposed themselves in situations of vulnerability and risk.



However, it is important to stress that they *voluntarily* embraced vulnerability. Alain did not have to improvise and Rowan had been offered the opportunity to change his role of performance in previous rehearsals. Beside the intention to meet requirements vis-à-vis their fellow actors and teacher, a possible explanation for their behaviour is a sense of well-being and trust maintained in the classroom. While Sarah established this climate of care, concern, and benevolence in various interactions, the pupils maintained and further strengthened this environment of mutual support even without their teacher's immediate presence. As I have shown above, they encouraged each other both in their in-role performances and from the audience rows. Thus, they might have maintained a collective net of safety in pupil-pupil interactions and allowed, for example, improvisations and love confessions on stage to emerge. It could be argued that the pupils' behaviour was due to Sarah's trusting commitment and her expectations that she openly and explicitly communicated in different theatre lessons.

Ennis and McCauley (2002, p. 169) have found that when "students were trusted to have a 'voice' and to use their voice to further curricular goals valued by all, the authoritative power that traditionally resided in the role of the teacher was distributed and shared, encouraging students to reap the benefits of academic and contextual ownership". From the beginning of the theatre project on, the pupils had been invited to actively engage in the joint learning endeavour. This allowed them amongst others to create their own interpretations and self-expression both on and off stage. As partners and co-investigators, the pupils then elaborated their performance and tried to improve their verbal and non-verbal actions on stage among each other. Thereby, they positioned themselves as *subjects*, as "those who know and act" (Freire 2017, translator's note, p. 10). More specifically, they engaged in individual and mutual inquiry, demonstrated proactive behaviour, and engaged in verbal and non-verbal support and (routines of) positive encouragement.

Overall, the pupils maintained and further co-constructed a collective learning space and strengthened their we-orientation (Weber & Carter 1998). It can be suggested that they may have gained trust in themselves, such as an increased awareness of their capabilities in acting and independent thinking. At the same time, the pupils also created the conditions to gain or, at least, maintain trust in others as they actively and creatively solved problems together and managed to perform their play from the beginning to the end on April 4, 2017. In line with the narrative pattern of the “Hero’s journey” (Kinateder 2012; Robledo & Batle 2017), I propose that the pupils took on the journey without their mentor. In other words, they assumed co-ownership of the classroom and made the theatre performance their very *own* play.

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## 6.5 Intermission: Time for reflection on discoveries

From the outset of the theatre project, the classroom teacher established a working environment based on all six attributes of trust. As I highlighted in act I, the learning and working conditions on the project included in particular, but not exclusively, benevolence, reliability, honesty, and openness. Sarah promoted personal and collective empowerment (Rowlands 1995), as she integrated her pupils often in various decision-making processes. Moreover, she trusted, supported, and cared about her pupils. Most importantly, she actively involved her fourteen pupils in the teaching-learning process by encouraging them to assume ownership, control, and responsibility. Taken together, the findings suggest that Sarah applied a humanising approach to learning and teaching as understood, for example, by Dale and Hyslop-Margison (2010): she created a learning milieu that included “a broad-based respect for students, for their preexisting knowledge, and for their agency” (*ibid.*, p. 73).

In act II, and with a particular focus on the rehearsal process, the findings indicate that Sarah further built on the foundation of demonstrating confidence in the pupils, their competence, and contributions – a teaching approach that required her to trust the pupils (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000). Quite symbolically, both Sarah and Stefanie entrusted the pupils with a significant responsibility for their learning process. In explicit terms, they left the play to the pupils and made it *their* play. Thus, Sarah’s collaborative pedagogical approach went beyond the preparation phase and the work on the theatre script. In fact, she continuously welcomed the pupils’ input, recognised them as “knowers” (Huerta 2011), and openly underlined her reliance on the pupils’ motivation and commitment. In line with a proposition by Curzon-Hobson (2002, p. 269), the pupils may thus have felt “stronger trust to exercise their will to potentiality within and beyond the learning environment as they recognise that the teacher has similar endeavours, and needs and wants their contribution”. In this respect, and together with evidence from previous observations, Sarah created situations of positive

interdependence in teacher-pupil, pupil-teacher, and pupil-pupil interactions. These findings support the idea that Sarah continuously built a classroom community oriented towards a we-relationship (Weber & Carter 1998).

In a classroom, teachers can be understood as the ones “which all teaching and learning processes rotate” (Nwafor & Nwogu 2014, p. 423) or, in other terms, as “transformative intellectuals who combine scholarly reflection and practice in the service of educating students to be thoughtful, active citizens” (Giroux 1988, p. 122). Against this backdrop, Sarah’s reflection and teaching practice may have formed a fundamental basis for the interactions that occurred in the classroom – one of the main research objectives of this second act. In fact, the pupils demonstrated both on and off stage, in in-role and out-of-role performances, that they assumed the responsibility received from their teacher. Before, during, and after the theatre rehearsals, they often independently and proactively developed their play and thereby signalled ownership of their learning. Reflecting findings from Ennis and McCauley (2002), this ownership could here be considered the result of teacher trust. The pupils continuously demonstrated their willingness to engage with the curriculum. In a nutshell, they demonstrated that they learned their text, generally concentrated on their work, respected and valued each other’s competences, helped each other, and thereby also signalled a positive orientation towards each other’s engagement and relationships. In this environment, some pupils produced spontaneous ideas and felt empowered, competent, and safe enough to improvise. Others, such as Benoît and Rowan, were willing to step out of their comfort zone. They confessed, within the fictional world, their love to their role partner.

Overall, the findings suggest that the pupils fully engaged in their (own) work as they pushed themselves cognitively, physically, and emotionally beyond boundaries. Thereby, they spent energy and time to further co-construct the course content; they faced vulnerability and risk, acted, directed, and managed to perform their play “from A to Z” even without their

teacher's immediate presence. In this context, it could be argued that the pupils' behaviour can be understood as both a reaction and continuation of Sarah's teaching approach. In fact, the pupils maintained a learning environment that built upon and valued behaviour that could be defined as trusting behaviour: they oriented themselves positively towards each other, consistently relied upon each other, and demonstrated readiness to learn from and support each other. Interestingly, and as a potential consequence of their conduct, they even achieved a milestone together: a successful rehearsal "from A to Z". While these findings may be somewhat limited due to the small number of lessons and interactions I focused on, they broadly indicate that the climate of safety, benevolence, efficiency, and trust was maintained and driven by the pupils' active engagement, even in a classroom situation where Sarah was not present.

The classroom community further built on and maybe even strengthened positive relationships among each other. In this environment that could be defined as a trusting (work) environment, the pupils continued to jointly explore opportunities and potentialities as partners and co-investigators. At the same time, they sent verbal and non-verbal signals that could be seen as positive relational signals: for example, they made eye contact and smiled, sent imaginary "bolts of energy", openly praised someone for her or his efforts, applauded, and tapped on each other's shoulders to signal appreciation, thankfulness, and confidence. These observations support two suggestions.

**First**, the pupils' behaviour indicates that even small courtesies and non-verbal signs such as making eye contact and smiling could be considered as positive relational signals that potentially contribute to the development or maintenance of interpersonal trust within a classroom context. Thus, with these signs and symbols, not only Sarah might have made the pupils feel "ten feet tall" (Dutton 1976, p. 79) but the pupils themselves may have revealed pearls of commitment, voice, and self-worth (Ennis & McCauley 2002) in their fellow pupils in an autonomous and self-reliant manner. This leads to the **second** proposition: pupils should

be recognised as co-responsible for a trusting classroom environment to emerge. In fact, the pupils in my case study might not only have copied behaviour from their teacher (and sometimes from Stefanie) but occasionally adapted it for their own purposes in other situations, such as Mia who passed on energy during a rehearsal (instead of applying the non-verbal practice in a warm-up exercise only) and Alain supporting Rowans' efforts during a feedback round ("I liked it what you did"). This proposition could be seen as an addition to Dobransky and Frymier's (2004, p. 211) statement that both parties in a teacher-student relationship "depend on each other to maintain the relationship [... and] should be considered comparably important". In fact, all relationships in a classroom should be considered important, both between the teacher and the pupils and the pupils themselves to co-create and maintain a place where everyone can feel at ease.

Sarah's teaching approach (see act I) and the pupils' continuation and adaptation of classroom practices and routines (act II) may (partly) explain the successful and cooperative unfolding of the pupils' theatre lesson on April 4, 2017 – one that was initiated, worked on, and creatively co-constructed by the pupils themselves. During this lesson, the pupils assumed the role and responsibilities of a (theatre) director as they were "in control" of all aspects of the performance. In fact, they self-regulated their learning and proactively engaged with the curriculum. Along with other aspects highlighted in various interactions, it is possible to hypothesise that the pupils not only co-created this learning session but, at the same time, also a trustworthy and humanised learning environment modelled by Sarah's behavioural patterns.

The pupils demonstrated that they not only trusted their teacher and behaved according to some expectations, they also set the conditions to show trust and put confidence in their fellow pupils. Thus, similar to findings highlighted by Lewicki and Tomlinson (2003), the pupils might have initiated or occasionally strengthened the trust building process by responding to each other's efforts. Therefore, in accordance with Sarah's commitment, the

pupils supported the development and maintenance of whole-group trust. With their engagement, they facilitated learning to happen and the project to develop and also felt the right and motivation to assume ownership of *their* learning and teaching. In this context, and reflecting a finding by Nwafor and Nwogu (2014), Sarah and the pupils might have – and this is important to stress – *both* contributed to a humanised learning environment, as the pupils were actively involved in all stages of the teaching and learning process and worked in “unison with the teacher” (*ibid.*, p. 423).

Taken together, the findings reveal the reciprocal nature of interpersonal trust-building, as emphasised for example by Six (2007), Six *et al.* 2010, and Weber and Carter (1998). Throughout their lessons, the pupils animated an environment of safety and benevolence. Together with Sarah, they facilitated risk-taking behaviour, interacted productively and positively, and mutually reinforced one another’s efforts. Interestingly, the pupils thereby even changed Sarah’s emotional state from stress to relief and satisfaction. Thus, interpersonal trust-building indeed might be “a reciprocal process in which both parties are involved interactively in building trust” (Six 2007, p. 290). In this respect, the educational setting under study here also highlights the potential of a humanising pedagogy to develop and maintain teacher-pupil, pupil-teacher, and pupil-pupil trust. On the one hand, Sarah continued to explicitly value the pupils’ input and made obvious her interdependence. Consequently, teacher-pupil and pupil-teacher trust might have emerged due to the pupils’ commitment in association with their proactive, reliable, and sustained engagement. On the other hand, the pupils repeatedly signalled in pupil-pupil interactions that they were in a solidarity framework: they did not laugh but smiled at each other, strived for mutual learning, and engaged in verbal and non-verbal support and positive encouragement. As a result, pupil-pupil trust may have been strengthened. Within a shared sense of commitment, both the pupils and the teacher might have been responsible for the co-creation of trust and a humanised (multilingual) learning and teaching environment.

## **Chapter 7 › Act III – The researcher’s reflexive journey: Methodological insights**

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**7.1** Introduction: Focus on the researcher

**7.2** Being, doing, and knowing in the field: A continuous commitment

**7.3** Exploring trust as a multimodal phenomenon

**7.4** Researching trust as a relational incentive in concrete interactions



## 7.1 Introduction: Focus on the researcher

The third act within the “hero’s journey” storyline is most commonly associated with a “return” (Kinateder 2012). More specifically, the journey ends with the return to the “ordinary world”, usually with new knowledge and understandings (Fowler III & Droms 2010). After the pupils and the teacher, our “hero’s”, successfully finished their theatre project with their final performance on May 31, 2017, they too could be said to have returned to their “ordinary world” and their everyday school life without regular theatre work. Moreover, they indeed might have acquired new skills, knowledge, and wisdom and may have experienced, most importantly, trust within their classroom community. Similarly, I, as a researcher, gained experiences that provoked food for thought. Thus, this act is dedicated to a short reflection on the interdisciplinary framework and methodology that I applied during the entire journey.

Instead of only offering a brief summary of main methodological considerations in the final conclusion of a thesis – as is often the case –, I propose to consider this third act as an integral part of the overall journey in this study. In fact, the three following sections allow to take a look back and a look ahead. More specifically, I address the third set of research questions in relation to the methodological level and suggest how and in what ways my proposed framework may be applicable and useful for other journeys and research contexts:

- **How can “signs of trust” be analysed?**
  - What does it bring to look at trust with a critical incident analysis?
  - What does it bring to look at trust with a multimodal interaction analysis?
  - What does it bring to look at trust with a relational signalling approach?

In each section, I shortly discuss the benefits and limitations of my interdisciplinary framework and outline the main affordances of each of the three analytical approaches (CIA, MIA, RSA).

## 7.2 Being, doing, and knowing in the field: A continuous commitment <sup>110</sup>

In this thesis, I use a case study approach in conjunction with ethnographic tools of inquiry that allowed me to immerse myself in concrete learning and teaching processes (see chapter 4). Indeed, the (video) ethnographic approach has given me the opportunity to illuminate and explore first-hand a myriad of complex teaching, learning, and trusting interactions over a period of nine months. I actively participated in the preparations of the classroom theatre project and documented various individual and collective efforts. Therefore, before I further discuss the affordances of a MIA and a RSA, I want to first of all point out the benefits of using a CIA in the context of research on trust in educational contexts. In a nutshell, together with an ethnographic approach, a CIA allows to counteract the “static, snapshot” research design common in trust research (Lewicki & Tomlinson 2006).

In the literature, time is recognised as crucially important for the development of trusting relationships between pupils and pupils and teachers (e.g. Ennis & McCauley 2002). My findings reflect this proposition in a twofold way. On the one hand, Sarah manifested potential trust-enhancing behaviour on a continuous basis. Consistent with a finding from Goddard *et al.* (2001), trust was never a one-time affair but developed and potentially reinforced over time throughout the theatre project. On the other hand, and also with respect to teacher-pupil trust, Sarah literally granted the pupils time (e.g. for meditation, discussions, self-directed negotiations). Thus, the practice of granting time might have contributed to the unfolding of trust in the classroom. Interestingly, Sarah herself made evident the time factor in relation to the theatre project as she highlighted the pupils’ sustained work commitment.

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<sup>110</sup> With reference to Kanafani and Sawaf (2017), who use this expression in relation to reflections on ethnographic practice and the interplay between being in the field, doing fieldwork, and what one comes to know in this process.

After the final performance on May 31, 2017, Sarah explained the audience that mainly the pupils were responsible for the success of the theatre project.

<p><b>Sarah</b> ((to the audience)):</p> <p><i>mir hunn d'Geschicht gelies [...] an dunn hunn SI ((weist ob d'Schüler)) hier eh dat wat dir haut den Owend héieren hutt hunn si geschriwwen ne (-) an och iwwersat (-) an dunn hunn si d'Rolle verdeelt a wei den Text bis fäerdeg war hunn si zwou Woche gebraucht vir dat auswenneg ze kennen (-) an dunn ass dat mat der Bühn lass gaangen a ganz zum Schluss eh d'Kostümer (--) also d'ass schonn eng Saach déi ganz laang gedauert huet</i></p>	<p><b>Sarah</b> ((to the audience)):</p> <p>we have read the story [...] and then THEY ((pointing to the pupils)) have eh what you have heard tonight they have written this (-) and also translated (-) and then they have assigned the parts and when the text had been written they needed two weeks to learn it by heart (-) and then it started with the stage and at the very end eh the costumes (--) so it is something that lasted really long</p> <p>[31.05.2017   III.001]</p>
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Sarah's comment illustrates, first, her honesty, benevolence, and reliability as she emphasised publicly in front of family members and friends the pupils' commitment and their independent and responsible method of working. This official praise on stage may have contributed to further strengthen pupil-teacher trust as Sarah consistently and continuously positively evaluated the pupils' active involvement and their contributions. Second, Sarah's comment highlights the continuity of reciprocal learning and teaching practices throughout the entire work process. In this regard, an ethnographic approach and my field visits more specifically afforded to directly observe and document all of the work phases that Sarah referred to in her comment and explore inherent trusting practices.

In fact, just as the classroom picture below could be said to be absorbed by the theatre context, the whole classroom was, metaphorically speaking, occupied by various trusting practices. While mostly symbolically, the classroom below highlights two major methodological considerations in this respect that I turn to now.



The classroom as a symbolic representation of a long-term trusting commitment

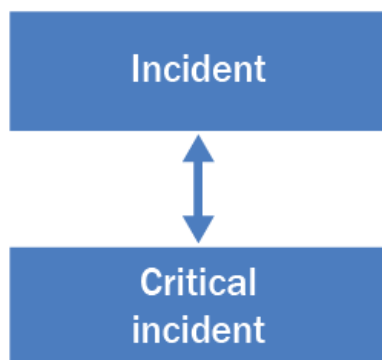
[18.05.2018 | III.002]

**First**, the ethnographic encounters have proven to be particularly useful in the context of interpersonal trust research. Besides many other advantages, an ethnographic approach allowed me to regularly collect data during various field visits over a longer period of time in direct contact with my research participants. Just as time is important for trust to unfold, so is time important for the researcher to see and document the unfolding of trust in actual interactions. In fact, some of the findings that I have presented in this study might not have been available if I would have focused, for example, on questionnaires asking for short and pre-defined answers in a very limited time frame.

The room setting in the picture above as well as related theatre equipment (e.g. costumes that lie on the benches, parts of scenery elements that stand in the back of the room) indicate: this had all been a result of a long-term (learning) process and a time-consuming commitment by both the teacher and the pupils. Similarly, trust-enhancing behaviour and trusting practices occurred over time, as both Sarah and the pupils manifested their commitment repeatedly and

in various contexts. Therefore, what counts for the teacher to develop and maintain trust may be fruitful for the researcher to gain a worthwhile outcome: a long-term commitment. In this regard, only with the documentation and consideration of preceding actions, Sarah’s praise on stage that I transcribed above (III.001) can then be seen as evidencing her honesty, benevolence, and reliability (e.g. by highlighting again the common work and giving the pupils officially credit for what they have done). As a researcher, the investment in sometimes time-consuming field research, if possible, thus affords to recognise and focus on the emergence and unfolding of events, such as a shoulder tap that was initiated by the teacher but later independently applied in pupil-pupil interactions. Against this backdrop, actions can be interpreted as *reactions*, which brings me to another methodological consideration and affordances of a CIA more specifically.

**Second**, a CIA has proven to meaningfully supplement the ethnographic approach in this study. In particular, it allows to consider in the analysis both the time factor and process character of trust as it encourages the researcher to critically reflect on (parts of) “the bigger picture”. The questions of a CIA have enabled me to explore interactions and inherent behavioural cues from various perspectives and time frames: What happened? Where and when? With what responses? What are the potentials for teaching and learning in relation to this incident? In this regard, I propose to consider the classroom picture above again as illustrative example.



At first sight, the screenshot III.002 represents only a snapshot on May 18, 2017 where chairs and tables were pushed aside for no reasons that are immediately visible. Within a broader perspective – and a first step in rendering the incident into a more “critical” incident –, however, the picture refers to past actions and future potentialities. In this

regard, it reveals amongst others the long-term engagement and outcome of various pupil-pupil, pupil-teacher, and teacher-pupil interactions. In fact, the classroom space might thus not only

have been the result of a long-term engagement within a theatre context but it might even have facilitated trust and trusting behaviour.

A descriptive judgment using a CIA may thus allow to see the classroom as depicted above as a consequence of interactions between pupil-pupils and teacher-pupils. A focus on the potentialities then allows to consider the room as potentially facilitating trusting over time. Thus, one of the main affordances of a CIA is the acknowledgment of the historicity of an event as well as the critical reconsideration of concrete moments and their documentation (e.g. through video ethnography) that can be particularly useful for the analysis of trust in (inter-)action.

Möllering (2013, p. 286) posits “that the ‘product’ of trust is always unfinished and needs to be worked upon continuously”. In this context, and as a summary, an ethnographic approach and related tools of inquiry such as participant observations allow the researcher to continuously collect data that may represent (parts of) entire events. A CIA may then help to increase an awareness of concrete and critical moments in relation to the research question(s). In this regard, the classroom picture above could also be thought of symbolically referring to the continuous process and reciprocity of trust and the (nature of the) relationships valued in this room and the outcomes that were produced in interactions: such as the classroom setting itself and objects in the environment that were jointly created by the teacher and the pupils. The tree in the background, for example, was interactionally co-constructed and highlights affordances of both a MIA and a RSA that I will turn to now.



### 7.3 Exploring trust as a multimodal phenomenon

Beside my proposition that interpersonal trust should be researched over a longer period of time to fully capture the actions and potential reactions of trusting behaviour, my findings moreover suggest that a multimodal approach is both promising and effective for the development of theoretical and practical underpinnings of trust. In fact, my observations in act I and act II support evidence from previous observations (e.g. Kuśmierczyk 2014) that trust, characterised by its six attributes, can be conceptualised as a multimodal phenomenon in interpersonal encounters. Therefore, I argue that this theoretical premise needs to be reflected in the analytical approach as it enables to consider the full complexity of trust.

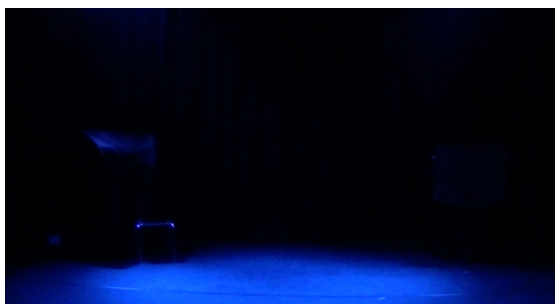
I use the final scene of Benoît's love confession in his role as a troll as both a symbolic and exemplary incident to further discuss my claim and also highlight again the benefit of adopting a CIA. In fact, in the context of the whole theatre project and bigger picture, the screenshot below could be seen as embodied trust in action.



Benoît's love confession in role

[30.05.2018 | III.003]

A CIA allows first and foremost to consider the dress rehearsal and unfolding of events on May 30, 2017 an overarching incident, subdivided by smaller incidents, thus human activities that are “sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act” (Flanagan 1954, p. 327). The very first scene on stage and official start of the performance is an incident that was crucial for the community. Benoît and Ella were the first pupil-actors to go on stage and initiate further actions. Moreover, I chose this incident as it made me “stop and think”, both in the immediate context as it was a critical moment for the community’s performance as well as in my subsequent data analysis and the broader context as it included also a critical moment for Benoît in relation to previous observations that I made. To render an incident “critical”, a description and de-construction of, for example, the unfolding of Benoît’s behaviour patterns affords to explore the significance of the incident in relation to the focus on trust.



Benoît’s stage appearance and first act

*The room lights are turned off*

[30.05.2017 | III.004]



Benoît’s stage appearance and first act

*Benoît and Ella enter the stage*

[30.05.2017 | III.005]



Benoît’s stage appearance and first act

*Benoît kneels down*

[30.05.2017 | III.006]



Benoît’s stage appearance and first act

*Benoît looks Ella in her eyes and says his line*

[30.05.2017 | III.007]



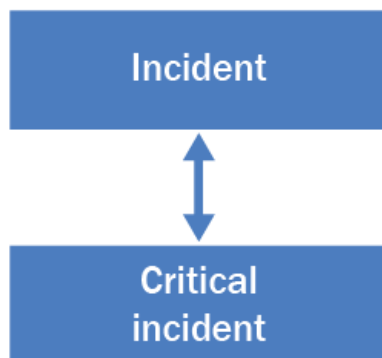
A descriptive analysis and deconstruction of the incident allows, first, an explanation and meaning within the immediate context (Tripp 1993), such as that Benoît and Ella followed the script and the expectations of their teacher and director to go on stage and initiate the overall performance with their acting. A multimodal perspective then affords to consider Benoît's kneeling down as a core element of this incident in respect to potential trusting behaviour. In fact, the kneeling down highlights a situation of potential trust between Benoît and Ella or even between Benoît, his teacher, and/or the audience.

During the theatre rehearsals, Benoît repeatedly pointed out his unease with respect to his role and to the performance at the beginning of the play. Together with Ella and according to the script, he needed to be the first actor on stage, kneel down, look his fairy into the eyes, and say: "My beautiful fairy, my loved one, do you want to marry me?". While he had always been free and remained the one in power to change both his body posture and the text in the script, he was willing to leave the scene and his acting as it was. Despite his discomfort that he himself made explicit, the screenshot above symbolically demonstrates amongst others a willingness to accept a certain vulnerability. Step by step, and with the consideration of the immediate context and preceding actions and behaviour patterns, Benoît's practice on May 30, 2017 involved potential "signs of trust" that I was able to capture due to a video ethnographic approach and able to render "critical" due to a CIA and a MIA.

Within a broader perspective, Benoît's sequence of actions during the final performance on May 31, 2017 and, in fact, his body position alone can be seen as "performative achievements" (Kuśmierczyk 2014). His actions can also be seen as *reactions* to months of collaborative work within a classroom environment that continuously valued and triggered a sense of community and relationships of mutual trust. More precisely, he revealed himself on stage immediately after the spotlight went on, kneeled down, gazed at Ella, smiled, and asked his "loved one" without hesitation if she would marry him. Thus, as a potential result of Sarah's

teaching approach, Benoît tried out something new and courageous: he dared to bodily assume his role, publicly spoke in a language he does not feel “so good in”, trusted his fellow pupils and audience members to not laugh at him, and eventually felt ten feet tall (Dutton 1976). On stage, Benoît presented himself as confident and competent subject, as someone who knows and (literally) acts (Freire 2017).

In a nutshell, the screenshot above and Benoît’s body position symbolically highlight a potentiality of Sarah’s engagement: Benoît overcame his shyness, left his comfort zone, excelled himself, presented, believed in, and maybe even developed his competence such as to publicly speak in a language he himself evaluated as one of his weaker languages. Thus, the process from initial hesitation to a public although fictional disclosure during the final performance could be interpreted as a demonstration of the multimodal and multifaceted character of trust.



Within the analytical process, the move from an incident to a critical incident allowed to move from a description of the immediate context to a more general meaning and significance of the incident (Tripp 1993). A MIA thereby affords to acknowledge Benoît’s entering on stage, kneeling down, and speech as potentially signalling trust.

Overall, my findings suggest that the teacher and the pupils signalled *multimodally* both the activity and potential effects of trusting. In this regard, a video ethnographic approach has proven to be particularly useful to conclude that signs of trust can be verbal (e.g. talk) and non-verbal (e.g. gesture, gaze, body posture) in classroom activities and concrete interactions, just as I have shown with Benoît’s example above. Interestingly, a MIA supported my proposition that objects in the material world such as the theatre script may also demonstrate and further trigger trusting behaviour (e.g. due to its evidence of teacher reliability and benevolence). Even

the classroom environment itself might indicate and engender trusting, as I have argued in the preceding section. For example, the room arrangement into audience and stage parts might have facilitated actions of listening to, observing each other, and giving each other constructive feedback – and thereby promoting, for example, honesty and openness.

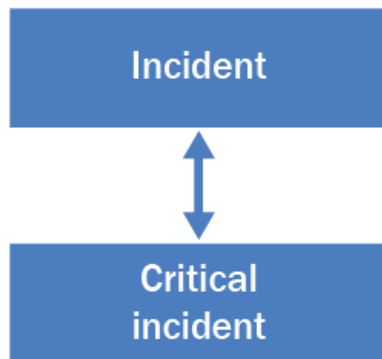
I now turn to two additional examples to demonstrate in what ways verbal communication in combination with an object that became a part of the classroom environment might have signalled attributes of trust. In these examples, I focus in particular on the teacher’s reliability and benevolence: Sarah’s indication that she behaved consistently and positively in interactions (Goddard *et al.* 2001).

In the last stage of their theatre project, Sarah and the pupils crafted scenery elements and costumes for the final performance. To assist the pupils, Sarah built a tree out of cardboard at home as one of the main stage elements. After she presented her bricolage to the pupils, most of them stated that they did not like the design of the tree. Some mentioned that the tree trunk would look too big. Instead of taking the criticism personally, Sarah further valued the pupils’ opinion: she acknowledged their voice, entrusted them control, and asked them how they would like her to change it.

<p><b>Sarah</b> ((to all pupils during a feedback discussion)):</p> <p><i>et ass Äert Stéck an DÄR spillt et (-) ech stinn net ob der Bühn [...] dir hutt vir de Moment bal alles mat decidéiert also sinn ech der Meenung dass dir dat doten och mat entscheed ((weist ob de Bam)) et ass mir wichteg fir iech ze froen</i></p>	<p><b>Sarah</b> ((to all pupils during a feedback discussion)):</p> <p><i>it is your play and YOU play it (-) I am not on stage [...] you always decided with me so in my opinion you should also decide here ((shows to the tree)) it is important for me to ask you</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">[27.04.2017   III.008]</p>
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Sarah offered the pupils here – again – the opportunity to express what they like and what they did not like. She made evident that this is important for her (“it is important for me”), making this moment and her intention also critical for my analysis with consideration to the significance

she attributes to it. Sarah then sat down with the pupils, took the time to initiate a feedback discussion, and asked the pupils for their opinion about the scenery element that she crafted at home.

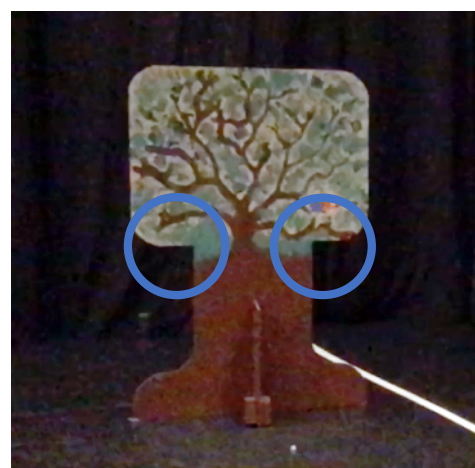


A CIA then allows to situate the general description of this event to the trust literature and relate it to a broader meaning. In fact, Sarah made verbally explicit her reliability (“you *always* decided [...] so you should also decide here”) and, at the same time, the pupils’ competence and responsibility (“it is your play”; “I am not on stage”).

These findings suggest that Sarah signalled her positive and confident orientation towards the pupils’ opinion (e.g. “I am dependent on your comments”, see chapter 5.3) and that she acknowledged their ownership and expertise. As a consequence, Sarah indeed changed the design of the tree and presented the pupils her changes according to their feedback. Several individual incidents thus turned into a bigger “critical” incident.



The tree **before** the pupils’ suggestions for improvement  
[27.04.2017 | III.009]



The tree **after** the pupils’ suggestions for improvement  
[29.05.2017 | III.010]

I argue that a CIA in combination with a MIA allows to see the tree as an outcome of previous interactions (and preceding incidents) and as a symbol of Sarah’s reliability and honesty: the pupils visually recognised that Sarah’s words had been followed by deeds (i.e. Sarah actually tailored the edges of the scenery element). Despite this proposition, the question remains if verbal signs of trust (e.g. “you always decided”) that are complemented by non-verbal and/or visible potential trust-enhancing signs (e.g. the tree as evidence of reliability) both contribute equally to a reinforcement of interpersonal trust. This is one of many questions that needs to be addressed in future research. However, for both practitioners and researchers, this finding points out that trust can be both evidenced and triggered multimodally in classroom contexts.

An additional yet short example further highlights the multimodal nature of trusting. During the co-creation of the costumes, Sarah pointed out that the princesses and princes have an overall comparably high number of costume elements: crown, diadems, very colourful suits and skirts. Therefore, she suggested to craft more stars for the costumes of the trolls. Sarah related this decision explicitly to fairness; she wanted to visually represent that all actors are treated similarly. A multimodal approach in conjunction with a RSA – that I will focus on in the following section – then facilitate an interpretation of Sarah’s verbal explanation and the stars as positive relational signals and potential trust-enhancing objects.



No stars on the costumes yet

[22.05.2017 | III.011]



Stars signalling fairness and benevolence

[30.05.2017 | III.012]

Overall, and in line with Kuśmierczyk (2014), trust can be believed to have emerged throughout the theatre project as a process “in which spoken and written language, the social actors’ bodies, space and objects made relevant in the interaction [... became] resources for making claims, requesting and signalling involvement [...]” (pp. 39–40). Against this backdrop, a MIA has proven to be useful and beneficial to the analysis of classroom interactions and concrete practices in the context of trust research. Vulnerability, benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, as well as openness may all be shown and evidenced beyond language. A mere focus on spoken language and the use of, for example, only interviews and discourse analysis would ignore the complexity, dynamism, and potentialities of trust. In fact, as Hansen (1998) found in his study on how teachers craft a classroom community of trust, the teacher here also rarely said things such as “trust me”, “I trust you”, or “I care about you”. Instead, Sarah’s actions and interactional practices may have expressed these messages with a myriad of meaning-making resources – all potential “partners” of language and communication (Müller 2013). In this regard, I consider a RSA an additional important analytical tool for the trust researcher as it facilitates a focus on reciprocal actions and effects. I will illustrate this proposition in the next section.

## 7.4 Researching trust as a relational incentive in concrete interactions

Interpersonal trust is a continuous commitment. Therefore, I have argued so far that a long-term engagement by the researcher her or himself is required to potentially observe, capture, and analyse trusting practices on various occasions and over an extended period of time instead of only shortly and statically. Video ethnography and a CIA are methodological tools that allow to capture and explore the unfolding of potential trusting behaviour over time. Moreover, I have illustrated the potential benefits of recognising the full repertoire of meaning-making resources (linguistic, visual, actional) in trust research instead of focusing merely on how trust is evidenced verbally. Building on these methodological considerations, I further argue that the focus on actual interactions is of crucial importance in the context of interpersonal trust. In fact, teachers and pupils make the decision to trust or not mainly based on information that they receive in interaction with each other (Six 2007). In conjunction with a CIA and, most particularly a MIA, a RSA allows to focus on, first and foremost, the social and interactional character of trust. A third screenshot from the final phase of the theatre project on the next page brings me to the affordances of this approach.

After their final and successful theatre performance in May 2017, the pupils all gathered on stage, took a bow, and then pointed to their teacher sitting in the audience. This action could be considered part of a regular formality of many theatre performances: after a performance, the actors on stage usually point to their director, stage manager, sound and light technicians, or other helpers off stage to show and make official their efforts. A descriptive account of this incident that I chose due to its significance in the overall theatre context (as the happy ending of the pupils' performance) and its explanatory power (as it involves a wide array of potential meaning-making resources) would outline that the pupils, indeed, pointed to their teacher who

assumed the role of the director. However, to label the pupils' behaviour as mere formality fails to acknowledge its potential deeper meaning within the "bigger picture".



The pupils signalling their we-relationship

[31.05.2018 | III.013]

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With the consideration of the unfolding of the event on stage, this incident can be interpreted as a symbolic series of moments that highlight the potentials of a CIA, MIA, and RSA.



Signalling the collaborative effort and praise

[31.05.2017 | III.014]

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In the final scene of the play, the pupils dance and smile. Pupils such as Lily improvise: she widely opens her arms and dances zestfully in the spotlight to the waltz music.





Signalling the collaborative effort and praise

[31.05.2017 | III.015]



Signalling the collaborative effort and praise

[31.05.2017 | III.016]



Signalling the collaborative effort and praise

[31.05.2017 | III.017]

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Immediately after the lights were switched off and the final curtain fell, the pupils take each other by the hand, smile, and take a bow three times.

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Then, the pupils applaud, stretch out their hands, and point to Sarah who is sitting in the audience.

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As a response to the pupils' behaviour, Sarah comes on stage. She gazes at all the pupils and applauds them.

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After the final curtain fell, the pupils smiled, took a bow, and presented themselves as a community by physically forming an entity. Thereby, they signalled the collective effort and group dynamism that made possible the performance that the audience just saw. Shortly after the pupils took a third bow, they pointed to their teacher. While Stefanie asked the pupils during a rehearsal that they should invite Sarah on stage at the end, the pupils here acknowledged their teacher with their gaze, body posture, and hand movement – all potential meaningful “signals”.



In combination with their smile, the pupils' behaviour could be seen as a collective positive signal and a relationship-oriented behaviour: the pupils thanked their teacher, officialised her contribution, and called the attention to the collaborative approach of the overall project that enabled the pupils' accomplishment on stage.

In other words, the pupils oriented positively with their bodies towards their teacher and signalled non-verbally their we-relationship. As a reaction, and as I highlight in a preceding section, Sarah came on stage and officially thanked the pupils for their contributions. Thereby, she verbally signalled her positive orientation towards the pupils in turn. Individually and collectively, the classroom community thus made explicit their successful partnership – a potentially crucial moment for the strengthening of pupil-teacher, teacher-pupil, and pupil-pupil trust in an educational context and a critical incident for the overall community and their successful teamwork.

Quite symbolically, the picture above highlights that interpersonal trust is a “product of human social relationships” (Weber & Carter 1998, p. 21) and thus, as the word suggests, happens *between* and in interaction with people. A RSA affords to consider each movement, behaviour, practice, word, or even object as meaningful in a relational context. In this study, it allowed to put an analytical focus on actual interactions between two or more persons (pupil-teacher, teacher-pupil, pupil-pupil). Especially in relation to Durnford's (2010) suggestion that relationships in the classroom should not be considered a one-directional experience, the RSA can play a considerable role to decipher and explore the circular and dynamic process of interpersonal trust “in which both the teacher and the student assess and judge the trustworthiness of each other” (*ibid.*, p. 1).

A relational approach then also allowed me to focus on concrete multimodal signs. Especially in combination with video ethnography and a MIA, this approach enables to observe, document, and interpret concrete behavioural patterns and actions that may turn into objects of analysis within a critical incident framework. Take, for example, the applause, shoulder taps, or the word “well done”: only with consideration of the actual interaction and its context, these signs may be interpreted as evidencing benevolence with respect to its signaller and receiver (e.g. who was involved, in what ways, what where the responses?). Thus, these examples illustrate in what ways a RSA can take into account the two-way interactional and reciprocal achievements inherent in various potential trusting processes in teaching and learning. In a nutshell, the relational dimension of trust has proven to be particularly important in interpersonal trust research. I turn to another example of a sequence of incidents to further illustrate the main affordances of a (multimodal) RSA.

As I have explained earlier, on April 27, 2017, Sarah indicated that the pupils should help her to work on the costumes and scenery elements for their final performance. She suggested to assist and help the pupils but encouraged them at the same time to do some parts on their own.

<b>Sarah:</b> <i>well dat kennt dir selwer maachen</i>	<b>Sarah:</b> you can do that on your own  [27.04.2017   III.018]
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Within a broader and long-term perspective, Sarah signalled with her comment both her benevolence and reliability: she acknowledged the pupils’ competence (“you *can* do that”), demonstrated her confidence in their independent ability to work (“on your own”), and continued to leave control and decision-making power to the pupils. The pupils may have considered this a “behavioural clue” (Wittek as cited in Six 2007) – a signal that their teacher

positively oriented towards them, their relationship, and competence. As a reaction, the pupils presented first ideas for their costumes and scenery elements and crafted first objects one week later. In turn, their behaviour could be seen as signalling competence, reliability, and benevolence towards their teacher: they demonstrated that they are willing to not exploit the confidence received from Sarah and that they can, indeed, “do that on their own”.



Pupils working on costumes  
[03.05.2017 | III.019]



Pupils working on scenery elements  
[03.05.2017 | III.020]

Sarah also presented her work and handed over the crowns and diadems that she crafted at home for the pupils playing the roles of the princesses and princes. In combination with a MIA, both the movements of the delivering process (handing over the object) as well as the self-made objects themselves could be considered as signals of Sarah’s reliability and benevolence. In fact, her intention to help the pupils was evidenced in action: she invested time, money, and energy to advance the pupils’ motivation on stage and further complement their performance and learning experience. As Bryk and Schneider (2003, p. 43) argue, “[t]rust grows through exchanges in which actions validate [...] expectations”. The objects themselves could then be considered clues that allowed the pupils to make inferences about their teacher’s interest in maintaining a reliable and mutually rewarding relationship (see Wittek as cited in Six 2007). While only a short episode in time, Sarah’s words, actions, and objects might have signalled her sense of obligation towards her pupils in a concrete interaction.



A crown as positive relational signal

[05.05.2017 | III.021]



A diadem as a positive relational signal

[05.05.2017 | III.022]

One of the major limitations of this thesis that would need further consideration such as in a follow-up study is the contemplation of the significance and potential meanings from the senders' and receivers' perspectives. While I have complemented my own interpretations with video and interview data, more detailed insights from the actors themselves might offer a further important triangulation of the data.

Nonetheless, and most importantly, my findings suggest that both Sarah and the pupils were responsible for the co-construction of the learning achievements as well as for their positive relationships and trusting work environment. Taken together, even small multimodal signs in day-to-day teaching as well as short interactions may have contributed significantly to the overall learning and the reciprocal and social trusting process. Especially in conjunction with a CIA and MIA, a RSA allowed me to highlight and reflect on both potential signs and the relational context: what the signal might be, what it might mean, and how it might affect other people in (present and future) interactions.

This thesis has raised important questions about the nature of interpersonal trust in educational contexts. The three methodological implications are that trust needs to be researched (a) temporally, (b) multimodally, (c) and relationally. In this regard, the findings of my study support the proposition that ethnographic tools of inquiry such as participant observations and video recordings are particularly beneficial in combination with a CIA, MIA, and CIA.

## Chapter 8 › Conclusion

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In this thesis, I have told the story of a classroom community that developed and successfully staged a theatre play after a seven-month collaborative learning process. Now, at the very end of this journey, I open my concluding remarks the way I started this study – with the words from Judith Rogers: “As a teacher you have a choice: you can either bring light or shadow to your students”. The teacher that I accompanied during my nine-month fieldwork could be said to have literally brought light: she enabled her pupils to shine in the spotlight while she remained hidden for the audience. In fact, she assumed the role of a prompter during the final performance and was only revealed as a director and supporter at the very end of the play. With this role, she created a net of safety and support as she was always ready to help and whisper text excerpts in case of need. Thereby, she was co-responsible for the overall success of the pupils’ performance.

The division of roles – the pupils in the spotlight and the teacher as a prompter – may illustrate how a humanising pedagogy and trust in education can look like in practice. Within a broader perspective, it tells the story of a teaching approach where power, responsibility, and trust were granted to all pupils. In this chapter, I will further expand on this proposition. First, I will review and summarise the major findings of my study. I will then (a) highlight methodological, theoretical, and practical implications that emerge from my results, (b) point out the limitations of my study, and (c) suggest ideas for future research.

The aim of this study was to respond to a call for research on practical examples of a humanising pedagogy and trusting behaviours in classroom interactions (e.g. Da Silva 2009; Durnford 2010). Accordingly, I examined details of teaching strategies and learning practices that involved trust and may have contributed to a humanising approach to education. The context of this research is situated within an educational landscape that is often said to promote

a teacher-student contradiction (Freire 2017). With reference to similar research endeavours (e.g. Curzon-Hobson 2002; Da Silva 2009; Durnford 2010; Ennis & McCauley 2002; Hansen 1998), I proposed to consider interpersonal trust a central element in the school experience and essential component of a pedagogy that seeks to counteract a “banking” approach to education. I then used a critical incident analysis (CIA), a relational signalling approach (RSA), and a multimodal interaction analysis (MIA) to investigate trust and its six attributes (vulnerability, benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness) to answer my research questions:

- What are “signs of trust” in an educational context?
- How and in what ways can a teacher build, maintain, or strengthen trust?
- How and in what ways can “signs of trust” shape interactions in the classroom?
- How can “signs of trust” be analysed?

In contrast to other research that captured trust often at a single point in time or used mainly interview or questionnaire data, my methodological approach afforded me to investigate, describe, and interpret the complexities and potentials of interpersonal trust in a real-life setting (Flyvbjerg 2006; Yin 2014). As a result of the audio-visual documentation and investigation of over 80 hours of classroom visits and various interviews, this study has identified that trust may be evidenced and have a positive impact on the teacher and the pupils.

On the level of the teacher’s commitment, I demonstrated in my data analysis that Sarah may have built, maintained, or strengthened trust in her classroom by sharing, caring, daring, and learning. More specifically, my findings suggest that Sarah was willing to:

- **Share** her teaching practice with her pupils. From the outset, Sarah continuously and consistently planned, structured, and facilitated the work on the theatre project as a joint process. In line with a humanising approach, she defined learning and teaching as reciprocal activities and encouraged all her pupils to actively and creatively participate in

all aspects of the class project. In this regard, I have argued that her orientation towards a we-relationship (Weber & Carter 1998) can be seen as a sign of trust as she made evident her willingness to share competence, control, responsibility, and mutual accountability.

- **Care** for her pupils. Overall, Sarah presented herself as a caring, benevolent, and honest human-being. She listened to and respected her pupils and their ideas, treated them fairly, and gave them every opportunity to feel safe in the learning environment. Moreover, both verbally and non-verbally, she treated her pupils as active, knowledgeable, reliable, emotional, and social subjects. Thereby, Sarah also defined her classroom as a caring, fair, and safe place. In this regard, exercises and rituals such as a meditation practice and a feedback round may have contributed to the pupils' well-being.
- **Dare** to do something new and risky. In fact, the decision alone to apply for and plan a classroom theatre project implied a willingness to accept vulnerability: neither Sarah nor her pupils had ever worked on or performed a (public) theatre play. Despite this inexperience, Sarah was willing to undertake the effort together with her pupils without knowing exactly what they were getting into. Besides her own readiness to assume risk, Sarah also motivated her pupils to accept risk and vulnerability and try out something new. Taken together, Sarah was thus willing to dare *and* share risk and vulnerability – substantial in situations of trust (Durnford 2010; Johnson-George & Swap 1982; Mayer *et al.* 1995). This attitude brought with it a fourth characteristic, namely the willingness to:
- **Learn** *with* and *from* the pupils. Sarah included new activities in her teaching (e.g. theatre exercises, trilingual group assignments, meditation practice) and demonstrated her willingness to position herself as a “teacher-student with students-teachers” (Freire 2017, p. 53). In a classroom climate of communication, collaboration, and dialogue, her decision to acknowledge and encourage the pupils' input and ownership led to situations of co-teaching, co-authorship, and co-ownership.



On the whole, Sarah valued and always encouraged cooperation, shared commitment, and supportiveness in teacher-pupil, pupil-teacher, and pupil-pupil interactions. In recapitulation, she evidenced all six attributes of trust in her teaching and may have strengthened them by showing various signs of trust repeatedly and within different contexts:

- **vulnerability** (e.g. accepting uncertainty and interdependence; encouraging honest feedback about own teaching approach; facilitating risk-taking in individual and group assignments);
- **benevolence** (e.g. showing care and concern for all pupils; planning time and space for discussions; listening to each voice; sharing control and decision-making in important matters; granting responsibility for own learning and shared success);
- **reliability** (e.g. behaving positively both consistently and repeatedly in various contexts; complying to pupils' wishes and aligning to concrete feedback; using pupils' input);
- **competence** (e.g. fulfilling expectations, taking serious academic achievement and personal growth; appreciating and relying on pupils' competences);
- **honesty** (e.g. communicating openly without hidden agenda; praising individual and collective efforts; not hiding problems and concerns);
- **openness** (e.g. willingly learning something new; sharing and respecting other's feelings; delegating authority).

Anticipating a practical implication, the results of my investigation have shown that Sarah included and demonstrated trust at all levels of her teaching practice. As differentiated by Toivanen *et al.* (2012), she evidenced her trustworthy and trusting persona in pre-pedagogical interactions (e.g. in the overall planning and structure of her teaching lessons), pedagogical interactions (e.g. in instructions and directions), and post-pedagogical interactions (e.g. during feedback and reflection). In this context, one of the most obvious findings to emerge from this study is that Sarah promoted a classroom climate in which the pupils were offered time and

space to feel empowered and “at promise” (Wright 2011). Thereby, she maintained both moral and intellectual relations with her pupils (Hansen 1998) as she also encouraged them to engage with the course material.

While theatre and associated performative practices were not the main focus of this study, the requirements and affordances of the art form are informative for other educational contexts within a humanising perspective. Most importantly, theatre starts with an understanding that “everybody is important”, a premise that the theatre pedagogue made clear at her very first visit in class and that is worth highlighting here.

<p><b>Stefanie:</b></p> <p><i>stitt dir eleng ob der Bühn? [...] dir braucht déi aner Schauspiller [...] d'Trolle brauche mer genau esou wei d'Hex (-) de Wollef ass genau sou wichteg wei d'Prinzessin (-) mir brauche jiddereen ob der Bühn [...] <u>jiddereen ass wichteg</u></i></p>	<p><b>Stefanie:</b></p> <p>are you alone on stage? [...] you need the other actors [...] we need the trolls as we need the witch (-) the wolf is as important as the princess (-) we need everyone on stage [...] <u>everybody is important</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">[01.02.2017]</p>
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While teachers do not necessarily need to engage in a full-scale theatre production or otherwise provide experiences that involve a stage, applause, or drama exercises, both teachers and pupils may profit from experiences that value all classroom members as partners. In this regard, my findings are in line with Ennis and McCauley (2002, p. 152) who found that “[t]rusting environments are best created in classrooms in which students and teachers can work cooperatively over an extended time-period to construct trusting relationships”. In this respect, more work will need to be done to determine in what ways the social, interactional, and joyful character of theatre contributes to the development and maintenance of trust and how the space of sociality, dialogue, and trust may be cherished in other school contexts that do not involve a theatre experience.

As a potential result of Sarah’s teaching commitment and nurturing of trust, the present research has found that the pupils supported each other, openly shared their feelings, and

positively oriented towards each other's relationships and competences. Thus, after the focus on the teacher's behaviour, the results of my investigation on the level of the pupils' commitments show that the pupils also shared, cared, dared, and learned. From the beginning of the project until the end of their final performance on stage, they demonstrated individually and collectively in interactions that they assumed the responsibility received from their teacher, worked proactively and productively, mutually supported each other, and reinforced one another's efforts. Overall, they presented themselves as self-confident pupils who engaged cognitively, physically, and emotionally in the learning process. In this respect, I have argued that the pupils' behaviour and their practices can be understood as both a reaction and continuation of Sarah's trusting teaching approach. In a nutshell, they maintained and further facilitated a safe and fair classroom environment that built upon and valued all six attributes of trust.

Taken together, the findings of this research provide insights for educational researchers and practitioners. Although the current study is based on a small sample of participants, my data highlights the potentialities of trust in pedagogical practice. First of all, the results support the idea that learning and teaching with all six attributes of trust may offer potentials for teachers *and* students. In particular, the facilitation and maintenance of a classroom climate of collaboration and care may lead to the development and strengthening of positive relationships and successful (personal and academic) outputs. In this respect, the findings of this study complement those of earlier studies (e.g. Curzon-Hobson 2002; Da Silva 2009; Durnford 2010; Ennis & McCauley 2002; Hansen 1998) that argue to focus in educational research and pedagogical practice not primarily on *what* to teach but equally consider the relevance of *how* to teach (e.g. with trust). In other words, teachers may not concentrate predominantly on a task-orientation to relationships but orient towards a focus on the relationship itself (Six *et al.* 2010).

Additionally, this study has raised important questions about the nature of trust and how it may be developed or strengthened in interactions. As a major practical implication, my

findings suggest, first, that trust needs time and space in all stages of teaching. Second, it can be signalled using a myriad of meaning-making resources (verbal, non-verbal, objects, even a simple look in the eye or a smile). In this context, a major finding was that trust can be evidenced and achieved multimodally. In line with data from Kuśmierczyk (2014), all six attributes of trust have often emerged in interactions using the full range of meaning-making signs. Therefore, on a theoretical level, interpersonal trust should be explicitly recognised as a multimodal phenomenon. On a methodological level, then, multimodality should be adequately addressed in the collection, interpretation, and dissemination of the findings. In this regard, a video ethnographic approach and a multimodal interaction analysis have proven to be particularly useful to capture and analyse the multimodal and multifaceted nature of trust in interactions.

In relation to the reciprocal character of interpersonal trust, my findings confirm prior research (e.g. Elsey *et al.* 2014, Six *et al.* 2010, Weber & Carter 1998). Just as a humanising pedagogy could be seen as a joint and co-constructed process involving both teachers and students (Freire 2017), trust in educational contexts can, indeed, also be considered a reciprocal commitment that is actively shaped by all actors of a classroom community. In fact, the unfolding and maintenance of trust has been proposed as both an individual and collective achievement. Therefore, and in contrast to other scientific contributions in this area, I argue that the data collection and data analysis need to consider the various kinds of relationships in a classroom as I have done in this thesis. More specifically, teacher-pupil, pupil-teacher, and pupil-pupil interactions seem relevant for analysis and enable a fuller picture of the co-construction of trust in educational settings.

Despite several contributions to the current literature, it is important to talk about some limitations of this study, in addition to those that I have already called attention to in other parts of this thesis. The exploratory nature and ethnographic case study approach of my thesis allowed a detailed investigation of concrete interactions and various “signs of trust”. However,

no generalisation of my findings nor a transferability to other school contexts or communities can be made. Moreover, it is important to point out that I focus in this study mainly on the maintenance, strengthening, and appraisal of trust in day-to-day teaching and learning activities. However, I cannot make any inferences about how trust developed as I did not consider the individual biographies nor the relationship history and prior experiences of my research participants that might have affected various levels of trust throughout the theatre project (Durnford 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 2000).

While I highly encourage other educational and trust researchers to also adopt a (video) ethnographic approach to collect rich data, the consideration of multiple case studies and various (international) school environments may give an even deeper understanding of how trust in pedagogical practice and intercultural settings may look like. In this respect, I also acknowledge the project-based learning character that I put a particular focus on in my case study. In fact, the theatre project brought with it new and unusual situations and activities to the classroom. Under these circumstances, I might have found “signs of trust” that I might not have discovered in other more “regular” school lessons. Therefore, it may have been beneficial to look at school lessons and environments outside of the immediate theatre context to explore (trust) dynamics in other educational, maybe more formal activities.

Overall, I paid in this study particular attention to the micro-level (e.g. individual interactions in classroom settings) and meso-level (e.g. the school class as a community and theatre group). While I consider the macro-level (e.g. societal context) relevant within a humanising perspective, the detailed consideration of this level of analysis was beyond the scope of this thesis. I argue, however, that this level is of great interest for further studies in a similar context than the one analysed here. In fact, if the debate about the value of trust in education is to be moved forward, a better understanding of the broader school culture needs to be developed in this context. Therefore, I encourage researchers to push the boundary beyond

the immediate classroom walls and consider, for example, teacher-teacher, teacher-parent, and teacher-principal relationships and interactions that may also contribute to humanising the classroom (Nwafor & Nwogu 2014) and trust to unfold.

The picture that I draw here is that of a collaborative and often positive and supportive work climate. This is, indeed, what I experienced while being in the field. However, it is important to acknowledge that this is often a difficult and complex task for both teachers and pupils that may involve situations of distrust, frustration, and conflicts. While I did not focus on these situations nor am I aware of everything that happened in the classroom, moments of distrust might have occurred in situations when I was not in the classroom. This brings me to an additional limitation of this study: the lack of information from the participants' perspective. Although the results of my thesis are amongst others based on interview data, I suggest to include even more voices and experiences from the research participants' points of view to complement those of the researcher.

In fact, students can be considered “experts on their own perceptions and experiences as learners” (Oldfather 1995, p. 131). Therefore, their views allow a better interpretation and triangulation of data such as their interpretations of the meaning and effects of relational signals. In this regard, the use of a self-confrontation method (e.g. Boubée 2010; Moussay & Flavier 2014) has proven to be very promising. Another approach that it worth exploring in this context is the use of “ethnography 2.0” as understood by White (2009): a collaborative methodology that uses digital video to experience and understand educational processes *with* the research participants. To further enhance data validity and also address ethical considerations (e.g. a continuous consent process), I further recommend to include post-fieldwork consultations such as proposed by Crow *et al.* (2006).

An ethnographic project is never finished, as Jeffrey and Troman (2004) rightly attest. This research has provided me with many insights on how research is conducted. Just as my

research participants could be said to have embarked on a journey, so did I repeatedly leave my comfort zone and acquired new capabilities and understandings in relation to research and life in academia in general. Learning and teaching in the specific case under consideration here could be defined as reciprocal processes “of enrichment and astonishment” (Jensen & Hermer 1998, p. 191) due to the new and risky paths that Sarah forged with the theatre project and her teaching approach. Similarly, my research both enriched and astonished me and, thereby, also yielded many questions in need of further investigation, some of them that I have highlighted already above.

For example, in what ways can trust affect personal and academic outcomes beyond the classroom? How can a humanising pedagogy and trusting commitments look like in the various levels of education (e.g. from early childhood education to adult and lifelong learning)? Educational policies that classroom communities have to adapt to may complicit in limiting educators from exploring a humanistic approach (Huerta 2011; Salazar 2013). While beyond the scope of this thesis, this is also a topic in its own right that should be investigated and discussed more extensively in scientific publications. How can future teachers then learn about and experience trust in action in teacher education? On a methodological level, then, what are the potentials of trust in the ethnographic process? How and with what consequences can the researcher her or himself use signs of trust in research endeavours?

At the very end of this thesis, I emphasise again the promising potentials of trust for researchers and practitioners and, most importantly, all learners. Schools can be “aimed to awaken possibility” (Erricker *et al.*, p. x). A trusting commitment on all levels in schools may provide an awakening of curiosity, compassion, and positive feelings. These virtues may be confirmed or negated by education (see Nikolakaki 2012, p. 358). I hope that the insights gained from this study may help to consider and further explore trust at all levels in education to improve personal, academic, and maybe even social development – and eventually bring light.

“You finish a painting and send it out into the world. To me it’s like pushing a boat out into the sea. It’s on its own from now. A thing in the world. Present. It must do the best it can by itself. Which is to offer an experience, offer a possibility.”

Bridget Riley

(as seen in the Christchurch Arts Gallery, 2017)



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# Appendices

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## Appendix 1

### Transcription conventions

The transcription conventions in this study are based on guidelines provided by the “Gesprächsanalytisches Transkriptionssystem 2” (GAT 2; Selting *et al.* 2009) and further inspired by insights from Cowan (2014), Kvale (2007), and Norris (2004). For the purpose of this thesis, I use a simplified version of GAT 2 that is in accordance with my analytical methods and allows a comprehensible representation of my data. While I acknowledge that every transcription is an interpretative construction (Cowan 2014; Kvale 2007), I occasionally transcribe both what was said and how interaction unfolded. Therefore, I often supplement the orthographic transcriptions (Cowan 2014) with images and further descriptions to value and present the multimodality and complexity of communication and classroom interactions more specifically.

Transcription conventions	
(-) / (--) / (---)	short / medium / long interval between utterances
?	rising intonation
:	prolongation of immediately prior sound
IN CAPITALS	emphasis in the original or louder speech
...	incomprehensible or inaudible words
( )	approximate transcription, estimate of what is being said
(( ))	transcriber’s descriptions and comments, paralinguistic features
[...]	utterance not relevant in data set
<i>in italic</i>	original utterance/language
<u>underlined</u>	emphasis added, words or sentences directly referred to in my text/analysis

Most of the data presented in this study (e.g. from participant observations and interviews) are originally in Luxembourgish, French, and/or German. To value the participants’ own voices and maintain the authenticity, most of the data is presented in the original language alongside a translation in English.

## Appendix 2

### Letter of commitment (Rotondes)

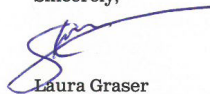
20<sup>th</sup> April 2016

#### **Letter of commitment to Dany Weyer and COLLABOR**

I am writing to express support of Dany Weyer's doctoral research project entitled "Collaborative art in the multilingual and multicultural classroom: appraising the role of theatre for developing multilingual skills and global competencies" (COLLABOR). The Rotondes will support Mr Weyer, doctoral student at the University of Luxembourg, to find a classroom theatre project serving as main case study for COLLABOR. Furthermore, we will provide support to facilitate the establishment of contact between Mr Weyer and the participants of the selected project.

This relationship is valuable to the continuing effort that the Rotondes is making to support and encourage art-in-education initiatives and related research. I am very pleased to establish a relationship that will be beneficial to us, Dany Weyer and the wider research community.

Sincerely,



Laura Graser  
Head of the performing arts program

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## Appendix 3

### Ethics approval

Professor Ingrid de Saint Georges  
Université du Luxembourg  
Maison des Sciences Humaines  
11, Porte des Sciences  
L-4366 Esch-sur-Alzette

Luxembourg, 25 May 2016  
ERP -16-016 COLLABOR CV/vg



**Research project: COLLABOR (ERP-16-016)**

Dear Professor De Saint Georges,

The Ethics Review Panel of the University of Luxembourg has received your request on April 20, 2016 and a revise version on May 24, 2016 concerning the ethics approval of your project: **Collaborative art in the multilingual and multicultural classroom: appraising the role of theatre for developing multilingual skills and global competencies (PhD project working title). (COLLABOR)**

Your request included:

- The application form,
- Information letter for adult participants, legal guardians and other involved parties
- Information letter for students/minors involved in study 3
- Consent form for participants, legal guardians and other involved parties
- Interview guideline (preliminary outline)
- Questionnaire guideline (preliminary outline)
- CNPD application
- Letter of commitment from Ms Laura Graser (Rotondes)
- Call for proposals "Bühn fräi" (sample from 2015)

After examining all documents, the Ethics Review Panel has decided to approve the amended project description and the related documents, in the form provided to the Ethics Review Panel.

Please note that the ERP has to be informed of any changes to the study that affect the parts that were subject to ethics approval.

Sincerely yours  
Best regards,

Prof. Dr Claus VÖGELE  
*Chair of the Ethics Review Panel*  
**Ethics Review Panel of the University of Luxembourg**  
Address for correspondence:  
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Établissement public  
Loi du 12 août 2003  
Mémorial A149 du 6  
N° R.C.S.L. –  
Luxembourg J20  
TVA Intracom LU 19805732



## Appendix 4

### Information letter for pupils (English version)

**Hello!**

Dear *[first name of the pupil/minor]*,

My name is Dany and I am a researcher at the University of Luxembourg. I would like to ask you to participate in my research. I am interested in how the theatre project that you are going to do in your class this year develops, what you learn and how you like it.



I will be visiting your class regularly during the next months. I will sometimes ask questions and video-record lessons during which you prepare your theatre play. I work closely together with your teacher and we will both make sure that my visits will not affect your daily work and performance at school.



Your participation is completely voluntary. You can ask questions and withdraw from my study at any time without any consequences. In my study, your real name will be replaced by a fake name and, if you wish, your face will be made unrecognisable (blurred using a computer). All data collected will thus be anonymous and strictly confidential.

If you agree to participate in my study, please ask your parents to sign the letter that accompanies this letter.

If you or your parents want to talk to me, please contact me:

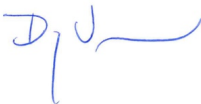
**Name:** Dany Weyer

**Tel.:** 46 [REDACTED]

**E-mail:** dany.weyer@uni.lu

Thank you very much for your time and your support!

Sincerely



Dany Weyer





## Appendix 5

### Consent form for parents (French version<sup>111</sup>)



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LUXEMBOURG

UNIVERSITÉ DU LUXEMBOURG  
Faculté des Lettres, des Sciences Humaines,  
des Arts et des Sciences de l'Éducation

Mesdames et Messieurs, chers parents,

Je m'appelle Dany Weyer et je suis chercheur en formation doctorale à l'Université du Luxembourg. Dans le cadre de mon travail de recherche, j'examine le rôle du théâtre dans l'enseignement fondamentale au Luxembourg. Dans ce contexte, je vais accompagner le développement du projet de théâtre dans la classe de Madame [REDACTED] en collaboration avec les *Rotondes*. Concrètement, je vais étudier si, et dans quelle mesure la participation à des activités théâtrales en classe a des effets sur le développement des compétences linguistiques et interculturelles des élèves.

Afin de documenter le développement du projet de théâtre et le travail des enfants, il est prévu d'enregistrer quelques leçons auxquelles j'assisterai à l'aide d'une caméra. Je vous demande de bien vouloir me donner votre accord pour la documentation du travail de votre enfant, tout en vous assurant que le matériel sera traité de manière strictement confidentielle et utilisé uniquement à des fins de recherche scientifiques.

Je vous serais très reconnaissant si vous remplissez le présent formulaire et le faites parvenir à Madame [REDACTED] dans les meilleurs délais. Dans l'espoir de vous voir contribuer à la réalisation de mon travail de recherche, je vous remercie beaucoup de votre collaboration.

Si vous désirez de plus amples informations, veuillez me contacter:

<b>Nom:</b> Dany Weyer	<b>Tel.:</b> (+352) [REDACTED]
<b>Position:</b> Chercheur en formation doctorale	<b>E-mail:</b> dany.weyer@uni.lu

Veuillez agréer, Madame, Monsieur, l'expression de mes cordiales salutations.

Dany Weyer

✂ -----

Je soussigné(e) \_\_\_\_\_

autorise,

n'autorise pas,

l'enregistrement par vidéo des activités scolaires de mon fils / de ma fille \_\_\_\_\_,  
l'archivage de ces documents dans un espace sécurisé interne de l'Université du Luxembourg avec un accès strictement limité et l'utilisation dans le cadre restreint de conférences et/ou cours scientifiques.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date et signature

<sup>111</sup> The version I primarily used.

## Appendix 6

### Consent forms for research participants (English version)



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UNIVERSITE DU LUXEMBOURG  
Faculté des Lettres, des Sciences Humaines,  
des Arts et des Sciences de l'Éducation

#### RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**Title of the research project:** Collaborative art in the multilingual and multicultural classroom: appraising the role of theatre for developing multilingual skills and global competencies

I, the undersigned, have been informed by Dany Weyer on the nature as well as the potential consequences and risks of the study within the scope of the above-mentioned project, and I had sufficient opportunity to clarify any questions. I have been informed that I am entitled to withdraw my consent at any time without giving reasons and without negative consequences to myself. I know that I can object to a further processing of my data and samples, as well as request these to be deleted.

Furthermore, I understand the following:

- that this study entails interviews that are tape-recorded and transcribed by Dany Weyer;
- that I may participate under a pseudonym, will then not be asked my name during the interview and that no record will be kept of my name if I wish to remain anonymous;
- that all data collected within the scope of the study is used for scientific purposes only, treated strictly confidential according to the regulations of the Data Protection Act;
- that portions of my interview may be played in classes or conference presentations, or transcribed in written reports, for demonstration purposes only;
- that additional copies of my interview tapes may be made for back-up purposes;
- that the original tapes and all copies of it will be kept confidential, stored in a secured and dedicated directory that is only accessible to Dany Weyer and his supervisor;
- that I may contact Dany Weyer at [dany.weyer@uni.lu](mailto:dany.weyer@uni.lu) or (+352) [REDACTED] if I have any questions or concerns relating to this project or to my participation in it.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date and signature