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Establishing trust-based relationships between
action research participants:

A case study of teachers' collaboration to facilitate
inclusive educational practices within a school setting

Supervisor:

Doc.PaedDr. Radka Wildová, CSc.

Author:

Samara Savandra

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educational practices within a school setting

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Samara Savandra
New Zealand

Student Number: 07239701

Declaration

I, Samara Savandra declare that I have developed this dissertation independently with the use of the resources listed in the indicative bibliography.

Signature:

Date: |

Abstract

The importance of trust-based relationships for the facilitation of collaboration between educational professionals is well recognised. Action research methodology also relies on collaborative relationships between its participants to achieve its emancipatory goals. This study discusses an understanding of inclusion related to a social model of disability and considers the interplay between action research and the process of inclusion.

The factors that both facilitate and inhibit trust-based relationships between action research participants are examined. Using a qualitative approach the study's aims are to deepen understanding of how trust-based relationships facilitate collaboration and problem solving.

To achieve these aims a case study within the context of a school in the Czech Republic investigates how teachers working as a collaborative team in a school setting effectively develop trust-based relationships. The cultural influences of the larger Czech society on the school culture are also considered. Additional investigation into trust and collaboration between this school and twelve others in the same area, working together as part of an EU interschool project, provides further insights.

The research findings suggest that previous breakdown in trust between the teachers is a key factor inhibiting current trust-based relationships. The teacher participants all regard trusting relationships as necessary for successful collaboration and affirm the importance of facilitatory interaction between trust and collaboration. The rebuilding of trust is strongly influenced by teachers' recognition of their shared concerns for the children they teach. Awareness of their values and the need for trust provides teachers with the will to overcome past hurts and damaged trust and continue collaborating together.

By relating these findings to the principles of action research methodology the study identifies the factors inherent in action research which may facilitate trust-based relationships.

The researcher is a New Zealander actively involved with the development of inclusive educational practices. Implications from the research findings are used to suggest how action research could be utilised in New Zealand schools in overcoming barriers to inclusion. As a result of the study's findings suggestions for further research initiatives are made.

Key words

Trust-based relationships; action research; inclusion; collaboration

Dedication

While I have been working on my study in Europe, on the other side of the globe in my home country, Aotearoa New Zealand, my daughter Tiana and her partner Angus have been lovingly nurturing and growing a new life; my first grandchild.

This work is dedicated to my little mokopuna as well as to every other precious child born into our human family. May it contribute to creating a more united humanity to welcome this little one so she or he can know the support and nurturing we all deserve, to grow and learn to be all that we are.

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Chapter One: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In a recent essay I wrote:

The attitudes and processes of discrimination in themselves contribute to a non-inclusive environment, negatively affecting the wellbeing of all its members. Inherent to our 'beingness' is the realisation of belonging to the same whole; each individual having a unique and integrally valuable contribution of 'difference' to make. As a society of individuals there is a requirement for us to extend our boundaries of who we consider "normal". ... This process requires a new understanding of who 'we' are and a new understanding of those we have decided to exclude.

(Savandra, 2008a p.19)

It is therefore important for all those involved in creating inclusive educational environments to be aware of our attitudes and resultant actions. This calls for an emphasis not only on self reflective practices but also on communication and collaboration so that all members of a school community are continuously working together to build a culture of belonging (Lloyd 2002).

In this dissertation I will examine action research as an emancipatory tool for enabling reflective practice, collaboration and inclusion.

The aims of my research are:

- To develop an understanding of the factors influencing the development of trust-based relationships between participants in an action research project.
- To deepen understanding of how trust-based relationships facilitate collaboration and problem solving in the context of an action research project.

My interest in action research has evolved as a result of reflecting on my own professional and personal experiences. As a Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) I work collaboratively with teachers, parents and school communities. RTLB work within an inclusive and ecological paradigm facilitating

and supporting changes - overcoming barriers to learning for students with moderate learning and behavioural needs in mainstream schools. This service in Aotearoa¹, New Zealand is part of the government's special education initiative which aims to meet the special education needs of all children wherever they attend school (Ministry of Education, 2001).

In my professional practice, action research has become an important tool. My role of assisting teachers and school communities to become more inclusive involves empowering educational professionals to become reflective and self-determining. Changes in beliefs and practice cannot be imposed but need to become inherent to the teacher's practice and supported by the larger school community (Ponte 2003). Feldman in his recent study found that participation in collaborative action research contributed to an increase in teachers' self responsibility (Feldman, 2007). Action research methodology provides a good match for realising my professional aims.

Realising the potential benefits action research could have in my own practice provided impetus to learn more about its successful implementation. Completing this research is an opportunity for learning more about effective action research as well as becoming an effective educational researcher. By generating a deepened understanding about participants' trust-based relationships I expect to increase my own skills and knowledge and to share this learning with others in my work place.

Possibilities for utilising action research have become clearer as I have continued my learning about inclusive education and its implementation, providing additional motivation for conducting this study. I have identified several areas in which action research could benefit the development of inclusive education particularly within the New Zealand contexts in which I work. In this chapter I will describe these different aspects of educational practice and the possible advantages to be gained by employing action research methods. These

¹ Aotearoa (The land of the long white cloud) is the most widely known and accepted Maori name for New Zealand.

ideas will then be related to the concept of trust as a shared facilitating factor present in each of the aspects.

By presenting these ideas I intend to provide an answer to the question 'Why do you want to do this research?' as well as 'What relevance does this research have and what contribution do you think it can make to the betterment of education and the larger society in New Zealand today?'

1.2 *Solving problems of including students at the classroom level*

Reaching successful outcomes when working with teachers to support students with learning or behavioural difficulties requires the teacher to investigate answers to problems that are congruent with her or his own way of working. The teacher takes ownership of creating an inclusive learning environment; professional learning and efficacy are strengthened. The role of the RTLB is to provide support in this process (Ministry of Education 2007).

There is an apparent lack of recognition and understanding of the relevance and importance of action research to the RTLB role. Agreed practices set out for RTLB to employ (Ministry of Education, 2001; 2007) follow collaborative team methods in assisting teachers to implement change that are congruent with an action research methodology. This lack of recognition is evidenced by the new RTLB "Governance and Management Toolkit" (Ministry of Education 2007). The only acknowledgement of action research and its contribution to RTLB practice is the comment, "Some RTLB undertake action research aligned to their professional work. RTLB may choose to offer their research to others" (p.78).

New Zealand RTLB's effectiveness as change agents could be greatly increased if their role included introducing action research skills to teaching practitioners. This opportunity is being lost because of the failure to educate RTLB about research methodology and its relevance to inclusive education.

The need for collaborative skills is recognised by Ponte (2004). She notes the nature of teachers' work has changed and teachers are now required to share responsibility within a "network of professionals" (p. 6). Parents and teacher aides also have much to contribute as participants. Action research provides a structure enabling a group to work collaboratively to identify difficulties and devise a plan of action which can then be implemented and the outcomes evaluated. The action research spiral (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007) is appropriate for this ongoing process supporting the growth of the participants in their task, as well as the student. The teacher works as part of a team, each member contributing their particular skills and knowledge of the student. A consistent approach plus strengthened communication between home, school and community creates greater understanding and maximises the student's support and learning opportunities (Wearmouth, McKinney, & Glynn, T. 2007).

This collaborative team approach is consistent with the social and ecological model of inclusive education rather than a traditional medical model which instead focuses on diagnosis of a student's deficiency (Moore et al 1999). Team members providing a fuller picture facilitate problems being viewed in relation to the student's interactions with the environment. This broader perspective can empower teachers and parents to take responsibility by modifying the environment to support the student's learning.

The practice of professional teams regularly meeting to plan collaboratively and implement individual educational plans (IEP) for students with special needs is well established in New Zealand schools (Ministry of Education 2003). Although it is not generally recognised in schools, this process can fit well within an action research structure.

Benefits of educating teachers in action research methodology, facilitating teachers' metacognition of the IEP process, would include more effective implementation of planning meetings.

Because action research philosophy upholds the equal value of all participants as contributors to knowledge creation (Carr 2006), participation in action

research highlights the values associated with sharing power. Understanding the equal value placed on all team members' experience and contributions may result in the inclusion of parents and teacher aides as equal partners in IEP meetings. Meetings where the educational 'experts' present a report on the child's progress (or lack of) and decide on the next 'educational' goals, often expressed in language unfamiliar to parents, would be prevented by an understanding of practices that support partnership and collaboration.

1.3 Action research: a model for professional development

In her recent study, Zaretsky (2007) recognises the need for collaborative transdisciplinary teaming to fulfil the task of "Redefining professional knowledge in special education" (p. 502). Effective and relevant appraisal, assisted by trust-based relationships and collaborative participation using action research methodology is one method of meeting this need (Piggot-Irvine & Cardno, 2005).

There is a wealth of literature and research which supports the claim that action research provides an effective mechanism for supporting teacher professional development and learning (Glanz 2005; Lloyd 2002; McCotter 2001; Ponte 2005). The benefits of participation in action research have been recognised as contributing towards reformed school communities, ultimately benefiting students and their learning. These outcomes are brought about by the process of developing teachers' reflective practice, increasing collaboration, communication and joint problem solving (Black 2005; Ponte & Smeets 2007; Warrican 2006).

RTLB as well as all educationalists in New Zealand schools are required to be regularly appraised (Ministry of Education 2005; 2007). Having participated in a peer supervisory arrangement with a colleague, in a similar role to mine in special education, I had experienced the benefits of a collaborative process of working; defining and reflecting on each other's problems. During our supervision meetings we discussed our appraisal needs, reflecting on past experiences in which appraisal was often perfunctory, having little professional value. We wanted appraisal to relate directly to the work we were currently involved in, provide us with honest feedback on our strengths, knowledge about how we

could improve our practice, and result in professional goals to work towards (Savandra 2008a; Savandra & Simpson 2007).

In our discussion we identified the necessity for a trusting supportive environment allowing directness and honesty as well as ongoing discussion, reflection and support (Piggot-Irvine 2002). We agreed to set up a peer appraisal system using an action research framework. Critical coaching as part of the action research process was facilitated by our past experiences in peer supervision.

We constructed goals related to our job descriptions and professional standards (Ministry of Education 2007) which were relevant to areas of professional practice requiring improvement. Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) explain how linking goals to these two documents helps ensure the appraisal process fulfils its two main tasks; assisting professional development and providing a measure of accountability.

The appraisal was completed using an action research structure which facilitated each other's reflection. Formal appraisal interviews were conducted and each appraiser completed a written appraisal report. From these reports suggestions for further goals, to be used for the following year's appraisal, were discussed and written.

The benefits to my professional development resulting from this process increased my awareness of the potential advantages in action research being used in a similar way by teachers in school settings. Time requirements are often cited as a barrier to teachers' participating in action research as part of their professional development (Bottery 1997). As an appraisal system is a compulsory activity requiring teachers' time it may be a successful method of introducing action research without creating extra time demands.

Using an action research framework to link appraisal to professional development makes appraisal a more relevant and profitable activity (Piggot-

Irvine & Cardno, 2005) and provides teachers with self reflection skills and increased ability to create more inclusive classrooms.

1.4 *The enabling of Maori students*

In my essay entitled “Attitudes and disablement: An analysis of barriers to inclusion within New Zealand society”, concerns are presented clarifying the need to create school environments in New Zealand that reflect the culture and meet learning needs of Maori² students (Savandra 2008b).

A report which sampled Maori parental attitudes (Hawke, 1996) found Maori parents had clear ideas about education for their children. The report states:

Maori are tangata whenua and as a foundation culture of Aotearoa, parents want to be supported by our education system. There has been a clear call from these parents for a return of their children to Maori cultural values and beliefs in order to provide a base to rebuild self esteem, self image, confidence, pride, an ethnic and personal identity...Parents are clear that there has to be an emphasis on stronger programmes of teaching and learning Maori language, knowledge, traditions, values and beliefs.
(Hawke, 1996 p. 4)

While in New Zealand there are Kura Kaupapa Māori³ and Maori Immersion classes where Maori children are taught in their own language and in Maori cultural settings, the majority of Maori students attend mainstream schools (Statistics New Zealand 2008), which reflect the Eurocentric majority culture and make little attempt to include or create a sense of belonging for Maori students (Bevan-Brown 2006; Hook 2006). Maori Immersion classes can be situated within the context of mainstream schools but often the lack of interaction and collaboration between Maori and pakeha⁴ is very evident. In one such situation I observed, the Maori immersion and mainstream students played together in the same playground but the distance and lack of sharing between Maori medium

²Maori are the indigenous people of New Zealand making up 15% of the population

³Maori language immersion and philosophically based primary school

⁴‘Pakeha’ is used to describe any peoples of non-Maori or non-Polynesian heritage

and mainstream was felt strongly in the staffroom where teachers sat at different tables sharing differing conversations. The valuable opportunity for the mainstream to learn and understand the minority Maori world view and its implications for education was lost.

Len Barton (2008) described the creation of networks of communication as a necessity in overcoming barriers to inclusion. Establishing dialogues between Maori and pakeha is vital for the creation of inclusive schools and communities. Inclusion can be regarded as a process in which dialogue is used to enable community members “to take mutual responsibility by questioning each others views and positions” (Hoffman 2001, p.11). These ideas are expressed in a previous essay where I stated:

The need for promoting collaborative debate and reflective practice at all levels is of major importance; facilitating school communities participation together in building a definition of inclusion relevant to their unique setting as well as enabling contribution to educational policy making.
(Savandra, 2008c p.13)

Action research has been recognised as an effective tool for “introducing teachers and school communities to practical ways of collaborating and problem solving” (Savandra, 2008c p.13). In an earlier essay the contribution of positivistic theoretical ideals in influencing “New Zealand’s failure to reflect the world view of its minority culture in its educational settings by perpetuating belief in one reality” (Savandra 2008d, p.9) was noted. The essay also discussed the capacity for the action research paradigm to provide a structure and value system for use in overcoming the disabling results of exclusionary attitudes.

Action research’s theoretical and epistemological position has also been acknowledged as congruent with a Maori world view (Lehavot 2007) as it supports concepts valued within Maori culture such as:

rangatiratanga – relative autonomy principle (assuming more meaningful control over one’s life);
whānau – extended family structure principle (developing extended family support networks)

kaupapa – collective vision, philosophical principle (ensuring a shared cultural understanding and aspirations among all participants).
kia orite i nga raruraru o te kainga – mediation of socio-economic and home difficulties principle (invoking cultural practices and values to mediate the debilitating impact of socio-economic circumstances)
(Hohepa, Kuni, Mane, Sherman-Godinet & Toi, 2004, p.4).

There is a far-reaching potential for action research to be used at school community level to promote increased understanding between Maori and pakeha community members to begin the building of inclusive education where both cultures belong. My interest in completing this research is to encourage the continuation of this journey.

1.5 Trust: a common component

The importance of the trusting relationship I developed with my colleague, in facilitating our peer appraisal process, was influential in developing the aims of this research. This experience, along with my professional experience of working with teachers, further reinforcement by relevant literature, confirmed the significance of trust as a fundamental prerequisite for successful action research (Costa 2003; Reimer & Bruce 1994).

The development of trust can be seen to be relevant to the three aspects of educational practice I have discussed in relation to the use of action research in New Zealand. Hohepa et al (2004), in their discussion about developing an effective and mutually empowering partnership between Maori and pakeha when working towards desired educational outcomes, explain the importance of “quality relationship building, and the engendering of trust” (p.6). They further discuss this relationship in the light of the Treaty of Waitangi⁵ stating:

One of the significant challenges facing the partnership is the degree of cynicism and mistrust within communities of Crown-sourced initiatives. In education, Māori confidence and commitment has been reduced as a result of layers of negative experiences of government initiatives.
(Hohepa et al, 2004 p.6)

⁵ The Treaty of Waitangi, in which British and Maori formed a partnership to found a nation state and build a government in New Zealand, was signed in 1840.

However Hohepa et al (2004) also see the process of working together collaboratively as a way to rebuild trust: "Alongside the educational kaupapa, there are expectations that the partnership will be one that involves and produces trust, cooperation and mutual benefit" (p.22).

Similarly the process of parents and schools working together to benefit students' inclusion and learning requires trusting relationships, particularly when Maori parents have felt excluded by a differing school culture (McKinley 2000).

McKinley (2000) also discusses the situation regarding Maori students in mainstream schools and emphasises the need for trust to be built between the student and the school community explaining, "Respect and trust need to be evident to Maori students, who are extremely sensitive to any behaviour that singles them out and which associates failure with being Maori" (p. 139).

These comments provide a picture suggesting that where there is exclusion resulting in disablement, there is a requirement to rebuild trust. In considering the teacher who has been disempowered by school marketisation resulting in decreased professionalisation and efficacy (Bottery 1997), trust in her/his own ability as well as in the school as a collaborative and self-determining community may need restoring.

Action research is a methodology which can be used to encourage and support the building of communication networks resulting in increased understanding. It is apparent that trust is inherent to this process (Tschannen-Moran 2001). In studying trust to better understand its facilitation within an action research framework it is my intention to gain insight into how these aspects of educational practice in New Zealand learning communities can be enhanced.

Chapter Two: THE CONCEPT OF TRUST

2.1 Introduction

In the first chapter the aims of this research were stated and a discussion explained their relevance to New Zealand educational contexts, clarifying my motivation for completing this research. As a progression from the study's aims, chapter two begins by stating the research questions and explaining what enquiry will take place to support the aims of increased understanding about trust-based relationships.

As the concept of 'trust' is central to this enquiry, the research questions will lead to a discussion relating to trust and in particular its relevance to action research. A literature review will examine how trust has been defined in relevant literature and will look at research already completed in this field, especially regarding the establishment of trust in school settings. The discussions in this chapter aim to verify the importance of trust-based relationships between participants of action research projects as well as establish the position of this study in relation to other relevant work.

As the concepts of 'action research' and 'inclusive education' are also integral to this research, the literature review will continue by examining these concepts in chapters three and four.

2.2 The research questions

1. How do teachers working as a collaborative team in a school setting effectively develop trust-based relationships?
2. What factors contribute to feelings of trust between participants in an action research group?
3. What factors inhibit feelings of trust between participants in an action research group?

The first question has enabled examination of trust between teachers collaborating in a school setting where an action research framework has not been formally established. The insights provided have been related to action research, facilitating further valuable understanding about the relevance of an action research structure and the ability of its inherent principles to facilitate trust and collaboration.

The relevance of working towards an understanding of trust and its facilitation is given credence by the importance of trust-based relationships in the field of education today (Barlow 2001; Bryk & Schneider 2002; Gordon 2004; Vodicka 2006). This study intends to examine the factors that facilitate the development of trust-based relationships so that action research participants and facilitators can be better equipped to consciously cultivate such relationships and more successfully influence research outcomes.

2.3 *Trust as a foundation for human communication and learning*

The concept of trust is inherently present in all human interaction and relationships. Penny Forsyth recognises that from early infancy the reciprocal interactions occurring between the child and his/her primary caregivers involve 'inter-connectedness of cognitive, social and emotional elements' (Forsyth, No Date). These foundational positive experiences enable the growth of trusting relationships which optimise the child's future development (Zigler, Fin-Stevenson & Hall, 2002). Bottery (2003a) similarly states, "Trust, I suggest, originates at a deep, basic and unthinking primordial level and is critically linked with the evolution of cooperative behaviour" (p.249).

Similarly in the classroom, trust built up between teacher and student facilitates interactive dialogue and is recognised as an essential component of a learning environment (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 1998).

It is evident that reciprocal communication facilitated by trust-based relationships is a basic requirement for the fostering of continuing human development and learning. Khodyakov (2007) further underlines its importance in human

interactions by recognising trust “as a ‘medium’ or ‘glue’ that holds relationships and societies together” (p. 125).

Developing from this premise, relevant literature in this field has also established that trust-based relationships are a requirement for the facilitation of collaboration between educational professionals. Trust appears to have a significant role in supporting emancipatory action and is also an important aspect in facilitating collaborative relationships. This is evidenced by Tschannen-Moran’s study which found a high correlation between collaboration and trust within school settings (Tschannen-Moran 2001). In their earlier article Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998) cited several authors in explaining the significance of trust: “Trust has been called the ‘foundation of school effectiveness’ (Cunningham and Gresso, 1993)” (p. 335). They continue by saying:

Trust allows individuals to focus on the task at hand, and therefore, to work and learn more effectively. Productive relationships build effective schools. Rotter (1967) asserted that being able to trust that others can be believed is an important variable in all human learning. Distrust, on the other hand, causes people to feel uncomfortable and ill at ease, provoking them to expend energy on assessing the actions and potential actions of others (Fuller, 1996).
(Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998, p. 335)

The importance of such collaboration will become clear when the role of action research in today’s schools is examined.

2.4 *Limitations in defining trust*

Although the concept of trust has been extensively discussed in the literature related to sociology, social psychology and philosophy (Jones & Marsh 1997), many authors agree that research on this topic has been hindered by lack of agreement in defining this concept (Costa 2003; Moye, Henkin and Egley 2005; Nyhan 2000).

Lack of clarity has been created by different authors ascribing different functions to varying attributes related to trust. Some consider that trust is created by participants experiencing these attributes in their work partners while others

consider the attributes are inherent in the concept of trust itself (Forsyth et al, 2006). Quantitative research studies have considered trust as a variable and co-dependent on other factors being present to differing degrees.

A number of these empirical studies in school settings have identified key components of trust and examined the determinants necessary for their development. Findings have been similar with Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998) recognising 'openness, collegiality, professionalism, and authenticity' (p.350) as key determinants while Forsyth et al (2005) identified 'competence, reliability, benevolence, honesty and social respect' (p.125). After a review of literature on the topic Vodicka (2006) concluded that trust can be defined in terms of the following components: consistency, compassion, communication, and competency.

Although these quantitative studies in the field of education contribute to our understanding, they fail to account for the complexity of interrelationships between individuals and contexts we need to be aware of so as to facilitate the development of trust between action research participants. The importance of a greater understanding about the complexity of trust is explained by Barlow (2001) who cites Skemp's "distinction between instrumental and relational understanding" (p.6). She says an "instrumental understanding, a set of practical habits, was relatively quick and easy to learn, but had very little problem solving power if the problems were unfamiliar" (p.6). To clarify the complexity Barlow compares trust to love: "Trust is much like love - we know it when we see it, but we are not sure what creates it" (p.7) and questions how a deeper understanding "could provide more guidance as to what it really is, and how it can be created, extended and sustained in service of creating better schools" (p.7).

Studies of relationships in work environments other than educational settings found trust was 'positively related with perceived task performance and with team satisfaction' (Costa 2003 p.68). Nyhan's identification of participation, feedback and empowerment as important factors (Nyhan 2000), suggest participatory action research in facilitating these features may itself encourage the formation of trust between participants.

While the importance of trust has been recognised in educational environments, interest in the concept of trust by today's business world is evidenced by the relatively large number of extensive studies carried out in corporate business contexts (Bottery 2003b).

In Herzog's (2001) article on trust building in corporate collaborative project teams, she illustrates this interest by stating, "trust [is] the single most important ingredient in making ventures work" (p.2). She views trust as a form of social capital and collaboration as "dependent on trust as a form of capital investment for the attainment of goals and objectives" (p.30). Herzog also refers to Fukuyama's (1995) extensive work on trust. He regards mutual trust as essential social capital for providing "the ability to create entirely new associations and enterprises" (p.2).

Trust as social capital may have relevance to educational contexts in that flexibility and creative change can be seen as desirable traits in today's schools. However it would appear that schools, in having a differing end purpose than merely "project success and profitability" (Herzog 2001) and the efficient running of a business, have a different foundation on which to base their understanding of trust. Bottery clarifies this difference by stating, "where trust is viewed as no more than a management tool, its nature and effects are radically misunderstood and underestimated" (p.198).

Khodyakov (2007) equates 'trust as a social capital' with 'trust as a measurable variable' and again highlights the lack of fit when applying this concept of trust to education. The requirement to measure trust carries with it the need for a precise definition. Khodyakov sees that while this provides some clarity "it does not tell us how trustworthy relationships are established and maintained" (p. 125); a concern also shared by the research questions in this study.

While quantitative research has been hindered by difficulties in defining trust this problem is not as relevant to qualitative research methodology. This study's use of a qualitative approach places importance on the research participants

themselves contributing to a definition of trust. However examining research and literature with a more qualitative approach may also provide perceptions of trust more congruent with this study's research questions.

2.5 *Trust: A more qualitative viewpoint*

Sztajn, Hackenberg, White and Allestaht-Snyder's (2007) recent research, being a qualitative study which examines the development of trust between action research participants, initially appears of particular relevance to this study. The authors explain that for teachers involved in group learning, vulnerability is implicated by the need to "admit, as a professional, that further knowledge is needed" (p.973). They continue:

Teachers who are learning and changing their practices are in a potentially delicate position because they are vulnerable to their peers' opinions, the professional developers' perceptions, and their administrators' expectations. Working in communities of learners, teachers need to rely on others within the community to overcome their vulnerability. Thus we contend that trust is a vital element of well-functioning teachers' learning communities and that communities without trust cannot be successful. Furthermore, understanding how to help teachers feel less vulnerable and develop trust is an important issue.

(Sztajn et al 2007, p.973)

While there is agreement by other authors about the critical role trust has to play, in this study the researchers state their initial presumption that the presence of trust is determined by a lack of vulnerability which in turn is created by reciprocal "caring relationships" (p.981). By researching what factors "made teachers feel less vulnerable" (p.981) the study intends to establish how trust can be facilitated. However while other writers have also recognised a correlation between vulnerability and trust (Bryk and Schneider 2003), there appears to be little evidence to support the conclusion that lack of vulnerability can be directly equated with trusting relationships.

Analysis of this study suggests that qualitative research which makes unsupported assumptions about the nature of trust can lead to confusion, rather than deepening knowledge regarding the complexity of this subject.

At variance to Sztajn et al's presumptions, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (1998) refer to a number of authors when pointing out that vulnerability is a commonly agreed prerequisite for trust: 'Where there is no vulnerability there is no need for trust' (p.334). Costa (2003) extends this idea by saying that 'a high level of trust increases the likelihood that one will take a risk' (p. 606) by sharing information and cooperating. Open communication can then be regarded as a particularly important result and construct of trust.

The idea that trust, as a component of relationships, is a dynamic ongoing process has significance to the facilitation of educational action research groups. Khodyakov (2007) discusses this idea relating it to a continuing social practice of ongoing trust-building involving interaction and reciprocal responsibility between two parties. He explains that influences affecting trust are related to past experiences, and an "imagined future participation" also impacted by "dimensions of anticipation and risk" (p.126) as well as individuals' present understanding and knowledge of the other person.

The variable nature of trust, created by different individuals' perceptions and the complex contributions of interrelating factors, are illustrated by Bottery's statement:

Trust is deeply personal in its effects, providing deep senses of existential security or insecurity, predicated upon the nature of the kinds of trust relationships with other people, underpinned by the kinds of trust exhibited by the institutions, and by the wider society, within which people and their relationships exist.
(Bottery 2003b p.198)

Bottery (2003a) relates stages of trust development to requirements of differing tasks or situations. He suggests that deeper levels of trust can be facilitated "by living and working closely together, by sharing in joint products or goals, by

committing to jointly shared values, by (in larger groups) attempting to develop a collective identity” (p. 250).

As well as increasing trust by ‘practice’, Bottery (2003a) recognises the capacity of ‘role trust’ to fast-track trust development. He explains:

Individuals within a group who come together for a short space of time can trust others within it to carry out their role, even though they have neither the time nor opportunity to form strong personal bonds, or develop detailed knowledge of each other. For when these workers all accept the same cultural role and share the same value code, then conditions are put in place which help to short-circuit the normally lengthy time period needed to build satisfactory practice trust (Bottery 2003a p.252).

Bottery’s considerations have clear implications for facilitating trust in action research groups. As well as realising that the growth of trust can vary for different individuals over time, its development could be optimised by both identifying professional values and agreeing on specific goals and shared values related to a task. Advantages can also be gained by the larger school community supporting similar ideals to the research group.

Jones and Marsh (1997) also identified concepts related to trust when designing a software tool to be used in analysing group work. These features appear to be of particular relevance to this qualitative study as instead of identifying trust explicitly they allow further meaning-making to occur. Jones and Marsh’s ideas show similarity to Bottery’s in finding the context of the situation, the people involved and the tasks they are required to perform are important factors to consider. They categorised these factors as ‘contextual trust’ and also identified ‘general trust’ as trust already established between group members and not related to the current group context, and ‘basic trust’; a group member’s general disposition ‘derived from previous experiences’. They consider these factors to be ‘building blocks’ of the ‘social aspects of group work’ (p.37).

2.6 *Trust and action research*

Bottery's (2003a) as well Jones and Marsh's (1997) findings that concepts of trust are continually evolving and relate to the reality of the individual, are congruent with an action research paradigm of ongoing reflective and collaborative meaning making.

Some other authors also infer that trust develops as a result of collaborative practices such as action research (Nyhan 2000). However Moye, Henkin and Egley (2005) citing Tyler state, "Trust is particularly important because it is a key *antecedent* of the willingness to cooperate voluntarily... [and] encourages behaviors that facilitate productive social interaction" (p. 260). (Author's italics). Costa (2003) however considers that the concept of trust *encompasses* the concept of collaboration.

Despite these differences there is widespread agreement that trust is an integral component within the context of collaborative relationships in action research. However it appears that the question of how trust develops in the context of educational action research has not been extensively studied. Tschannen-Moran (1998) also noted, 'studies of trust in schools are scarce' (p.335).

To date, my own experience has affirmed the supposition that the quality of my relationship with teachers, especially in terms of shared trust, is an important factor in determining successful outcomes of collaborative teaming and action research projects. This view is congruent with other reported research findings (Costa 2003; Reimer & Bruce 1994). Anne Hynd's study of collaborative behaviour within an action research project (Hynds 2000) provides another example. She found that the emancipatory outcome of the project was restricted by the lack of trust between the research participants and reasoned that for the participants to act in a way that contravened the social norms of the school, they needed to share a deeper level of trust in each other. It is evident that to help overcome these restrictions on the implementation of successful action research an increased understanding of trust is required.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has aimed to verify the importance of trust-based relationships between participants of action research projects as well as establish the position of this study in relation to other relevant work. It has also helped to clarify the nature of trust within education and the role of further research in this field.

In the course of this discussion several issues have become clear. The first is that trust is a necessary component of learning and collaboration benefiting the creation of inclusive schools environments. While quantitative research has provided valuable insight into the value of trust in education it has also highlighted the complexity and variability of trust. As a consequence, a definition of trust for the purposes of this research study, rather than using static key descriptors, needs to incorporate this complexity, also allowing room for the contribution of the research participants in this task of meaning-making.

Barlow (2001) provides a definition that fits these requirements. She states: "Trust is an outgrowth of growing collaborative competence in an environment that supports and encourages that growth" Barlow (p. 18). This definition allows for the ongoing process and developing nature of trust as well as the interrelating factors present in differing individuals' practice of collaboration and the environment in which it occurs.

The difficulty I had in locating reports of qualitative research into the facilitation of trust in schools is indicative of the timeliness and relevance of this study. This chapter has also identified the differing goals upheld in the educational field in relation to business and commerce contexts. The large body of research on trust within marketing and business contexts can be utilised to some extent by education. However this research and the differing values within the educational field emphasise the relative lack of and the strong need for specific study on trust within educational contexts. It is hoped that this study will make a worthwhile contribution towards fulfilling this need.

Chapter three: ACTION RESEARCH

3.1 Introduction

As this research places action research as a subject of its enquiry, action research as a paradigm and methodology has an important role in this dissertation. Continuing the literature review, this chapter will provide a brief explanation of action research and its processes of reflection, collaboration and emancipation. It will continue with a discussion of action research as a paradigm in relation to qualitative and quantitative research methods. These discussions will help to clarify the role of action research within the context of this study.

This discussion will also provide a perspective for inclusive education, the subject of the following chapter, which will include a consideration of the relationship between action research and inclusive education.

The concluding remarks will provide a summary and evaluation of how the chapter has clarified the understanding of action research in relation to this study.

3.2 Action research: its processes and principles

Reason and Bradbury (2006) provide a helpful working definition of action research. They say:

Action research is a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview ... It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit of practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities.
(Reason & Bradbury 2006 p.2)

Cohen, Manion & Morrison's (2007) account of action research include its spiral or cyclical process which involves "problem identification and diagnosis, planning, implementation, the monitoring and evaluation of effects, resulting in

further planning” (Savandra 2008d p.10). In action research “the researchers are the participants (and vice versa), and their understandings are intersubjectively constructed” (Kemmis, 2005, p.1). The democratic process referred to by Cohen et al (2007) is reflected in the equal value placed on all participants and their contribution to meaning-making (Edwards 2002).

Three broad categories, described as first, second and third person action research are discussed by Reason (2001). The first category involves the individual practitioner using self-reflection to enquire into professional practice. Glanz (2005), Hopkins (1993) and Lloyd (2000) all recognise the importance of teachers’ participation in action research as a means of building reflective practice. As Lloyd (2000) reported in her study of critically reflective action research, teachers were “clearly enabled (in) their development as critically reflective practitioners, actively engaging in the process of understanding, developing and transforming their practice, and in the process, enabling them to empower themselves and, in some cases, their pupils” (p.126).

Reason (2001) regards ‘first person reflection’ as being a basis of all action research. The important aspect of collaboration is included in second person research, inquiring “face-to-face with others into issues of mutual concern” (p.3) and resultantly creating learning communities. Third person research, a wider community of inquiry necessitating a less personal quality also employs reflection and collaboration.

The result of the dialectic approach inherent in the process of participatory collaboration is explained by Carr:

Thus, the outcome of conversation is not an ‘objective’ understanding of a situation, but a ‘fusion of horizons’—an achievement of shared understanding in which the inadequacies and limitations of each participant’s initial understanding become transparent and what is valid and valuable is retained within a more integrated and more comprehensive understanding of the situation under discussion”.
(Carr 2006, p.431)

Both first and second person action research are used as part of the case study in this research. Participants use reflective practice at a personal level, as well as in the process of working collaboratively as part of a group to define and solve a problem. The teachers are not only enabled to take responsibility for their own professional development but to also engage with others to influence change at the micro level of the classroom and at the macro level of the school community.

Because of this ability to empower change, participatory action research in education is regarded as emancipatory (Bottery 1997). While acknowledging the enabling function of action research in facilitating “greater teacher professionalisation” (Bottery 1997, p.290), Bottery also expresses concern about the need for a wider supportive school environment congruent with the purposes of the action research ensuring emancipatory outcomes are not inhibited. In the process of analysing data collected during this study, consideration is given to the contexts of the collaborative relationships and their enabling or disabling impact on processes and outcomes.

Masters (2000) describes three perspectives of action research, namely technical, practical and emancipatory. In moving from technical action research towards emancipatory, Hynds (2000) recognised that greater challenges were presented requiring higher levels of collaboration among participants. Continuing collaboration necessitated correspondingly higher levels of trust. However while it is recognised that the level of trust and collaboration experienced by the participants may influence the degree of emancipation achieved, the action research in this study is regarded as emancipatory.

3.3 *Implications of action research epistemology and methodology*

In Carr’s recent essay (Carr 2006) he explains how action research theory is independent of the epistemological and methodological constructs of both the qualitative and quantitative paradigms. Many researchers, instead of realising the validity of the new action research paradigm, have defined action research methodology using qualitative and quantitative frameworks and used these theoretical paradigms in criticising action research.

Reason and Bradbury (2006) describe action research as having a “systematic development of knowing and knowledge, but based in a rather different form from traditional academic research—it has different purposes, is based in different relationships, it has different ways of conceiving knowledge and its relation to practice. These are fundamental differences in our understanding of the nature of inquiry, not simply methodological niceties”.

The philosophical origins of action research assist in distinguishing its epistemology. Carr (2006) explains its derivation from the Aristotelian tradition of practical philosophy and the ancient Greek concepts of *praxis* and *phronesis*. These two concepts work in tandem, *praxis* being embedded in the concept of *phronesis*. Praxis is “a form of action directed towards the achievement of some end” (p. 426) and includes the idea of realising ‘good’ by way of action. Phronesis “is a mode of ethical reasoning in which the notions of deliberation, reflection and judgement play a central part.” (p. 426). Carr (2006) states, “Such reasoning is reflective because the means are always modified by reflecting on the end just as an understanding of the end is always modified by reflecting on the means.” (p. 426). Reflectively acquired self knowledge is therefore regarded as a valid epistemological category.

Action research is considered as belonging to the critical research model (Carr & Kemmis 2003) in contrast to the interpretivist and positivist models. Bottery sums up the relevance of the three paradigms succinctly in his statement:

If the aim of a positivist model is to describe a reality, and that of an interpretive model is to describe the different perceptions of that reality, the critical model's aim is to enlighten, and to emancipate groups by helping them to recognise their true interests.
(Bottery, 1997, p.281)

The dialectic method employed in creating knowledge is consistent with action research's differing ontological approach (Carr & Kemmis 2003). Discussion is central to the process of shared meaning making (Edwards 2002). Understanding the importance of this sharing and collaboration to the creation of knowledge is a requirement in appreciating the aims and relevance of this study.

The contribution to be made by understanding the concept of trust as a facilitator of collaboration can be clearly seen as assisting the creation of knowledge.

3.4 *Conclusion*

This chapter has given an understanding of action research and how reflection and collaboration contribute to its methodology.

The explanation of action research epistemology has shown the importance of communication and relationships between research participants, highlighted by the creation of meaning using a dialectic process. In studying trust between participants this research is looking at how action research can be more effective in its role of meaning making.

Habermas (1972) explains that whereas positivism and the quantitative paradigm have “prediction and control” as their cognitive interest, “understanding and interpretation” are concepts relating to the qualitative or interpretive paradigm and “emancipation and freedom” that of critical theory. In the introductory chapter the need for self reflective practices as well as collaboration were recognised as necessary in working towards a culture of belonging. Clarifying the way these processes are embedded within action research illustrates its capacity to be used as a tool for emancipation and the growth of inclusive educational practices.

The primary purpose of action research is not to produce academic theories based on action; nor is it to produce theories about action; nor is it to produce theoretical or empirical knowledge that can be applied in action; it is to liberate the human body, mind and spirit in the search for a better, freer world.

(Reason & Bradbury 2006, p.3)

Chapter Four. INCLUSION

4.1 Introduction

The concept of inclusion is the foundational understanding on which this study with its network of diverse ideas and concepts is based.

In this chapter a definition of inclusion as it applies to this study will be rationalised. This understanding of inclusion will be expanded by relating it to a social model of disability and an insight into the interplay between action research and the process of inclusion will be discussed. The chapter will close by bringing together the ideas of democracy and freedom embedded within inclusion and considering the place of trust in their creation.

4.2 Defining inclusion

The inclusive education model used in this study is not about making some inconvenient adjustments to our school systems so that the students we have depreciatingly and ingratiatingly deemed to be 'special' can be 'accommodated' within its 'mainstream' or 'normal' classes. MacKay (2007) states, "The diversity that students bring to schools should be celebrated and not grudgingly tolerated" (p.11). Inclusion, for the purposes of this study, is a state in which the concept of normalcy encompasses a celebration of difference.

The outcome of this understanding of inclusion is explained by the Manitoba government education policy proposal's definition, cited by The MacKay Report (MacKay 2007):

Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that permits individuals to feel accepted, valued and secure. An inclusive community evolves constantly to respond to the needs of its members. An inclusive community concerns itself with improving the well-being of each member. Inclusion goes farther than the idea of physical location, it is a value system based on beliefs that promote participation, belonging and interaction.

(Mackay 2007, p.2)

It has been strongly suggested that an attitude resulting in students being categorised as SEN (Special Education Needs) students is an excluding and disabling one (Bevan-Brown 2006; Oliver 1994). Kearney and Kane (2006) state, "As long as we have a special education system, inclusive education cannot flourish or even exist, because of the exclusionary nature of the knowledge base upon which it is based" (p.211).

It is these SEN students' identified 'differentness' which apparently qualifies them for their 'special' label. If inclusion is a state where difference is celebrated and considered 'normal', it follows that regarding some students as 'special' because of their difference is an exclusionary attitude. In an environment where difference is accepted as reason for labelling a child, thus identifying their difference as an internal deficit (Moore et al 1999; Oliver 1996) can we say inclusiveness is being practised? Can we decide that some difference is to be celebrated while some results in 'othering' (Slee 2001) and still say our schools are inclusive?

The idea that 'inclusion' is not a situation or static state we arrive at, or which can result purely from the implementation of legislated policies, has been discussed by several authors (Kearney & Kane 2006; MacKay 2007; Mutch 2004). In a recent essay I stated, inclusion "...needs to be defined as a continuous process by all who are part of it. How else can it be called inclusive? ... While we can envisage what it may look like, inclusion cannot be realised unless all voices are heard and included in its creation" (Savandra 2008c, p.5).

4.3 *Schools as disablers or enablers*

It becomes apparent that the larger society, being members of the school community, must participate in the creation of an inclusive school (Carrington & Robinson 2006; Nilholm 2006). Viewing inclusive education as an isolated concept related only to schools and schooling is both unrealistic and limits our understanding. To be effective in positively contributing to inclusive community values and in overcoming discrimination prevalent in society, schools need to understand exclusionary processes from within a broader framework. Slee (2001) expresses this need when he states “education is a site of cultural politics” (p.170). He recognises educators’ lack of awareness about the social model of disability and its relevance to inclusive schools stating, “disability is disconnected from education policy in general and from the practices of special educators” (p.168). Unless schools become aware of the disabling attitudes prevalent in the wider society they will continue to perpetuate these same values, recycling attitudes of discrimination and disablement into the next generation (Anderberg 2005; Barton 1997; Savandra 2008b).

This ‘default’ situation, resulting in schools becoming society’s disabling agents, is apparent within the New Zealand context. The repetition of the wider society’s Eurocentric attitude is mirrored in schools which reflect New Zealand’s majority western culture at the expense of the minority indigenous Maori culture (Hook 2006). It is evident that “teachers have not yet equated an inclusive environment with engendering a sense of belonging for students from differing cultures” (Savandra 2008b, p.17).

4.4 *Creating inclusion through action research*

In Reason and Bradbury’s (2006) discussion of a participatory world view they state, “Human persons do not stand separate from the cosmos, we evolved with it and are an expression of its intelligent and creative force” (p.10). This viewpoint can be useful in clarifying the larger framework of social disability within society. They explain this worldview as a holistic perspective: “A participatory worldview

places human persons and communities as part of their world” (p.7). “Our world does not consist of separate things but of relationships which we co-author” (p.7).

This notion is consistent with Rayner’s (2006) view. In his video demonstrating ‘inclusionalty’ he uses a sheet of paper to represent ‘oneness’ which he then folds into two; portraying separate identities. This fold or ‘boundary’ represents a ‘place of integration and communication’ allowing reciprocation between the two identities – one moving interactively with the other. Severing the two identities - tearing the paper in two - removes the possibility of communication and reciprocity leading to a duality in which one identity polarises the other: one being considered ‘wrong’ or ‘unacceptable’ in relation to the other. To overcome this ‘discomfort’ one aspect may be ignored or disregarded completely, a process comparable to Slee’s (2001) “othering” (p.172).

Rayner (2006) concludes by stating, “If we really want to restore the dance then we need some cello tape”, depicting the task of re-establishing the communicative and interactionary relationship between the estranged identities. Reason and Bradbury (2006) in their continuing discussion depict action research as the equivalent means of cello taping together Rayner’s severed identities, continuing the dance between the differences and restoring integration and ‘inclusionalty’. When explaining the use of action research within this worldview Reason and Bradbury state: “one characteristic of a participative worldview is that the individual person is restored to the circle of community and the human community to the context of the wider natural world” (p.7).

Rayner’s (2006) imagery facilitates an understanding of the significance of action research and its integral processes of self-reflection, collaboration and participatory meaning-making to the process of inclusion. Its self reflective practices facilitate the development of awareness necessary to expand an understanding of disability and its barriers, while its collaborative discursive methods uphold the equal value of participants and facilitate relationships, activating reciprocity and meaning-making. In the ongoing process of the creation and re-creation of an educational inclusive environment there is need for

action research to occur at the micro level of the classroom, throughout the structures of the school and at the interface of school and community.

4.5 *Inclusion, trust and democracy*

The “democratic practical ethos of action research” (Reason & Bradbury 2006, p.7), with its inherent participatory method of restoring reciprocity, is congruent with Bernstein’s conditions for effective democracy. He stipulates “that people must feel that they have a stake in society” and they “must enjoy confidence in the political arrangements, believing that these arrangements will enable them to realize their stake” (Bernstein 1996 p. 6). He explains that for individuals to achieve these conditions, their rights to a “critical understanding of the past and new possibilities for the future” (Slee p.175) as well as their inclusion at social, intellectual, cultural and personal levels, must be realised. These rights are demonstrated through interactive participation (Bernstein 1996). Action research can be seen to promote these democratic principles of inclusion for all members of a school community (Ponte 2004).

While democracy is seen to be closely aligned with inclusive practices (Nilholm 2006), Khodyakov (2007) also associates democracy with a high level of trust. Citing Solomon and Flores, he explains how trust provides “freedom to think for oneself and speak up with ones ideas. It includes as its consequence (not its cost) the freedom to be questioned and criticized – and the right to be recognized” (p.117). These participatory attributes of an inclusive environment are also recognised by Fukuyama (1995) as being present in high-trust societies.

The absence of trust is correspondingly associated with a decrease in freedom. Trust is substituted for “formal structures and role descriptions” (Barlow 2001 p.24) or increased legislation and loss of power and participation (Bottery 2003a). The presence of trust in school communities can therefore be directly linked to inclusive learning environments brought about by participatory and democratic processes.

4.6 *Conclusion*

It is clear that this research, in its study of trust within an action research project is directly concerned with investigating the creation of inclusive educational environments. Defining the concept of inclusion used in this research has provided a better understanding of the aims of the research and the vision to which the research will contribute. Reason and Bradbury (2006) asserted, "Given the condition of our times, a primary purpose of human inquiry is not so much to search for truth but to heal, and above all to heal the alienation, the split that characterises modern experience" (p.14). However it is in the process of journeying together within equal collaborative partnerships, sharing the process of reciprocal truth creation, that the alienation is healed and the ongoing dance of inclusion is realised.

Chapter five: METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the methodological approach used to find answers to the research questions. It will clarify why the methodology was chosen and what methods within this framework were utilised. Issues of validity and ethics will also be considered.

At the conclusion of the chapter it will be clear how the methods used were instrumental in meeting the aims of the research.

5.2 Methodological approach

The purpose of the enquiry, to describe factors influencing the formation of trust-based relationships, could be classified as 'explanatory' (Robson, 2002, p.59). It asks questions with the purpose of finding new insights and generating new ideas; it aims to increase understanding in a little-researched area recognised as relevant to today's educational challenges.

A qualitative research approach has been used to achieve these purposes. Because this approach regards knowledge as being interpreted and constructed differently by different researchers or individuals, it gives legitimacy to such a process (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2003).

The epistemological perspective of validating differing individuals' perspectives and realities is particularly appropriate for studying an action research project. An important precept of action research is the equality of all participants. This principle upholds the equal validity of each participant in the construction of meaning; as researcher my responsibility has been to ensure this equality was upheld both in the data collection process and the analysis of that data.

The interpretive or qualitative research approach has also been facilitative of my role as researcher. Data collection included my own reflections on my recorded observations of the context of the study and links to my past experience and knowledge. My relationships with the participants in the process of data collection have been a valuable dynamic used to add to the richness and depth of information. As the epistemological stance of the interpretivist paradigm is value-bound to the values of the researcher as well as the contexts and subjects, this research has been enriched by the knowledge making process of the researcher-participant relationships (Walliman 2005).

The process of data collection and analysis has followed the procedures congruent with a grounded theory approach for generating theory (Fraenkel & Wallen 2008; Robson 2002). Inferences have been drawn from the data using an inductive reasoning process (Bryman 2004) and have influenced further enquiry and data collection. A grounded theory study provided appropriate strategies for this research. Its approach is consistent with interpretive methodology, provides flexibility to account for the large variety of factors influencing the research, and supplies strategies which accommodate the lack of research and resultant paucity of theory regarding trust and action research.

A case study design has also been used as a structure. The case study demands a clear definition of its subject and the limits of the research (Creswell 1998). This study in focusing on an action research project and the study of relationships within a school setting can be further categorised as a 'social group study' (Robson, 2002, p.181).

Action research is a spiralling on-going process often with no clear beginning or end (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2007). Imposing the restrictions of a case study on an action research project can result in artificial limitations impacting on the course of the action research and possibly restricting its outcomes. This situation raises ethical considerations regarding the researcher's prioritising the use of a contrived action research situation for her/his own purpose above the emancipatory outcomes of the research. Concerns regarding the validity of the research therefore also become an issue: would findings differ in a less contrived

situation? In this study such concerns have been overcome by primarily focusing on the ongoing collaborative relationships of teachers within a school, as well as an action research project between schools which had already been operational for over a year. A time frame for the collection of data was set without influencing the ongoing nature or duration of the action research or continuing collaboration.

Qualitative methodology has assisted in resolving previously noted difficulties encountered by empirical studies of trust. It has allowed complexities related to the concept of trust and its relationships with other variants to be more deeply explored so that rich understanding could be achieved. Trust formation involves individual human differences and emotions and is open to influence by diverse factors such as personal relationships, attitudes, beliefs and culture, impacting on differing contextual factors. It is apparent that an interpretive approach is needed to enable the exploration of these interrelated intricacies, the creation of new meaning and the conception of yet more questions to be answered.

5.3 *Method*

The research method employed relates directly to the research aims and questions and follows processes congruent with the methodology as described above.

5.3.1 *The case study*

The case study investigated trust in participants' relationships at two levels. The first level (part A) involved collaborative relationships between teachers within the context of a school environment and the second (part B) between a number of schools within a local area.

Part B of the case study was an action research project carried out by a group of thirteen schools situated within the same area in the Czech Republic. The project was funded by the EU and involved the schools collaborating together to exchange ways of working, with the aim of learning from each other's experience

and improving teaching methods. The project had been running for almost eighteen months and was still operating at the time of the study.

Part A of the case study involved examining the ongoing collaborative relationships between teachers and the school director (who also taught classes part time) situated in one of the schools (school 1) that was also participating in the EU project.

5.3.2 *Research subjects*

Part A: Three teachers and the school director were research participants. When working together the teachers communicated in their first language, Czech, however their English language skills were sufficient that as researcher I was able to communicate with them to discuss the research and collect relevant data in English.

Part B: The research participants were the school director from one school and the director and a teacher from a second school involved in the interschool project. A translator was used to help with any problems resulting from language difficulties when interviewing the school director and teacher from the second school.

The translator who lived in the area and was a parent at the first school was also a research participant. She was able to contribute valuable information regarding both the wider Czech culture and local school culture. This was in the form of informal interviews and was relevant to both part A and part B.

5.3.3 *Researcher role*

As researcher I studied the group processes and collected data related to the action research over an agreed time frame. I also had frequent visits to the school where teachers' collaborative relationships were studied and I spent time observing as well as interacting with members of the staff.

My role involved forming relationships with the teachers and the director. These relationships as well as increasing my understanding of the school culture facilitated verbal communication – the basis of the data collection. It was apparent that the teachers' need to feel safe affected the sharing of their personal feelings and attitudes with me and so my relationships with them were pivotal to successful data collection. Yet as researcher I also needed to maintain enough distance to remain an observer and enable me to interview participants about their relationships.

My own reflections on my experience as researcher also contributed to the data so in that sense I also became a participator in the research experience.

5.3.4 Data collection

The order of events in which data collection proceeded is explained in appendix N. Rich descriptive data in mainly written form was collected. Instruments used were as follows:

Part A

Individual semi structured interviews with the four participants. (Tape recorded and transcribed).

The interviews aimed to answer the following questions:

- What factors contribute to the level of trust in the relationships between teachers working together collaboratively?
- How does the level of trust affect the ability of teachers to collaborate and problem solve?

Although a structure was provided by the requirement to answer the two questions, the interviews tended towards a more "informal and conversational" form (Fraenkel & Wallen 2008, p.447). This form provided enough flexibility to result in richer, more comprehensive data reflecting the participant's individual perspectives and the context of the subject material. This flexibility was also consistent with a grounded theory approach facilitating questioning in response to the progressive nature of the enquiry.

As interviewer I was particularly careful to ensure the discourse maintained a relevancy to the interview questions while also making certain the participant was free to express her/his ideas and feelings. Although keeping the interview within the agreed time limit of forty minutes was another important consideration this time was often exceeded on the request of the participant.

Researcher's journal entries

I recorded my self-reflections using a computer word document over the period from my preparation for the first meeting with the research participants until the data collecting and analysing process was completed.

Video analysis

A short video clip of the participants' interactions during collaborative discussions was made. This was used to analyse participants' non-verbal interactions so recording sound was unnecessary. This analysis followed the methods promoted by the Centre for Video Enhanced Reflection on Communication (2007).

Observations within the school setting

Records of the observations in written form were made during as well as immediately after they occurred. (See appendix A) These observations related mainly to Part A of the case study but did also contribute data to Part B.

Informal interview with school parent

This provided information about the culture of the school. A written record of the interview was made immediately after the interview. Notes were recorded during the interview.

Part B

Semi structured interviews with two participants individually (tape recorded and transcribed).

The interviews aimed to answer the following questions:

- What factors contribute to the level of trust in the relationships between the schools?

- How does the level of trust affect the ability of participants to collaborate and problem solve?

See note for part A above, explaining interview form.

Researcher's journal entries

(As explained above for part A)

5.3.5 Data analysis

Commensurate with a grounded theory study (Cohen et al 2007; Robson 2002), data reduction and analysis occurred as a continuous and partially sequential process throughout the research. My reflective process and ongoing journal writing was central to this process. Outcomes of this progressive procedure influenced further data collection. This allowed for emerging theories to be substantiated or modified and as data was related to the research questions, for gaps in information to be identified and remedied (Silverman 2000). Preliminary analysis of data was completed as soon as possible after collection to help ensure accuracy (Walliman 2005).

"Data reduction" (Walliman, p.312) initially occurred by placing the written data into categories dictated by the research questions. These categories consisted of: 'factors that facilitated trust', 'factors that inhibited trust' and 'trust as a facilitator of collaboration / problem solving'. Coding was further refined by the formation of subcategories. The data from interviews and reflective journals was "displayed" (Walliman 2005, p.310) in 'data coding record sheets' (see example in appendix B). As the data collection and analysis proceeded, coding categories were added to and modified as required.

Cohen et al (2007) discuss the need for "reflexivity" (p.172) to prevent researcher bias, which is particularly applicable to the coding process. As researcher I was aware of theories regarding the formation of trust, both from studying relevant literature and from my own experience. I was mindful not to allow these ideas to determine the codes but to ensure the categories emerged from the data itself.

Coding information in this way facilitated data comparison between participants as well as between data resulting from the differing collection instruments -

reflective journal, observational records, interviews and video recordings. Data from initial interviews and journal entries were also compared with data collected when the research process was further advanced.

The video recordings, providing a record of non-verbal interactions between the participants, were analysed in accordance with methods advocated by VEROOC (2007) and resulted in written data which were coded and compared with other data. The video and my analysis were sent to a university lecturer experienced in video analysis to verify the accuracy and validity of the data. While the analysis provided valuable information in its own right, its main purpose was to provide a comparison to verify the validity of other forms of data.

All these comparisons contributed to the process of relating the categories to each other and to the context of the research in the formation of theoretical concepts; referred to by Robson (2002) as “axial coding” (p.494).

Finally, similar to Robson’s description of “selective coding” (Robson 2002, p.495), the emerging ideas and themes were synthesised in a way that comprehensively reflected the collected data. This final process of meaning-making involved understanding and explaining an all over picture (Robson 2002), encapsulating the richness and complexity of the interrelated concepts the research had generated.

5.4 **Validity**

Several strategies identified by several authors (Fraenkel & Wallen 2008; Robson 2002; Walliman 2005) have been employed to ensure the validity of the research process and its conclusions. These include:

5.4.1 *Data triangulation*

Data collected in various forms were compared to ensure consistency. The video analysis was particularly useful in providing a check on the congruency between non-verbal communication between participants and verbal and written reports.

Participants were also interviewed individually. Data provided by different participants was compared to ensure there were no inconsistencies.

5.4.2 Member checking

To insure against researcher bias participants were requested to read transcripts and analyses of data to ensure they corresponded to the original intention of participant communication.

5.4.3 Use of a translator

To ensure there was clear communication and to reduce misunderstanding between the participants and myself as researcher, a translator with excellent English and Czech language skills was employed. As researcher I met with the translator before the research began to make sure she had a clear understanding of specific terms relating to the research (such as action research, participant, self-reflection) and could express them well in the Czech language. I also provided her with an outline of the research and a brief description of the action research process (see appendices C and D) so that she would have no difficulties in translating these concepts from English to Czech and vice versa.

5.4.4 Interviewing techniques

The participants were asked questions relating to a particular concept in several differing ways or relating to differing contexts. This allowed consistency to be monitored and provided a check on researcher understanding (Fraenkel & Wallen 2008).

When interviewing I was careful not to introduce bias by asking questions which influenced the participants' identification of particular factors in relation to trust. (E.g. 'Did your trusting relationship make it easier for you to take risks?')

5.4.5 *Researcher monitoring and support*

As researcher I have had ongoing communication with a tutor and professional peers which has decreased the likelihood of researcher bias and data misinterpretation as well as ensuring use of reliable methods. As mentioned earlier the accuracy of my analysis of the teachers' nonverbal behaviour recorded on video was verified by a professional person with extensive experience in video analysis.

All data has been kept until the completion and assessment of the research report. A clear record of the research procedure has ensured its reliability and validity is open to scrutiny (Robson 2002; Walliman 2005). Making audio and video tapes as a data source provided a permanent record which facilitated this process.

5.5 **Ethics**

Several ethical considerations of particular relevance to this study are outlined below.

5.5.1 *Providing information*

After discussing with the school directors the possibility of completing this study at both of the schools, the directors were provided with a written overview of the research (see appendix C) and a letter from Charles University clarifying their position in supporting the research. This information ensured the directors had a clear understanding of what the research entailed and were able to make an informed decision when they agreed to the study being carried out. This was particularly important in the school participating in part A of the study as it prevented the teacher participants experiencing any dissonance as a result of their participation and ensured teachers understood the reason for my presence in the school.

To ensure the participants had a good understanding of the research, its aims and methods, a written summary was also given to them. I met with the

participants and explained this research outline and answered any questions or concerns they had. At these meetings the participants were also given a written outline of what their involvement with the project would entail (see appendix E) as well as giving them my contact details so they could express any concerns as they arose during the research.

5.5.2 Issues of confidentiality

The participants in the study were assured of confidentiality. Pseudonyms have been used and recorded data used in the report has been given anonymity. A consent form has been used to clarify and record agreements between research participants and the researcher (see appendix F).

In Bryman's ethical checklist he stipulates, "...you should not divulge information or views to your research participants that other research participants have given you" (Bryman 2004, p.516). I was particularly mindful of this requirement when relating with the participants as well as other members of the school community.

The translator who was used in the research was a freelance professional English teacher as well as a parent of the school community involved in part A of the case study. Her knowledge of the school community was advantageous to the research. Despite the translator's professionalism her parental role however could have had implications for the teachers' confidentiality and their need to feel safe when sharing information. Fortunately translation services were not required by the participants in this school but were used for the interview of the second school's director and teacher.

5.5.3 Reciprocity

The school director of the school in which the majority of the research was conducted, expressed his opinion that the school would benefit from its participation in this research project. We agreed that we both intended this cooperative project to create positive learning for all involved. This reciprocity was evident when during my interview with the director he commented, "I am glad that I can discuss some issues with you because your questions are important for me because I need to hear some questions and find some

answers". The teachers concerned were also keen to participate and expressed gratitude for the way the interviews facilitated their reflection and awareness.

5.6 *Conclusion*

This chapter has explained how utilising a qualitative approach has enabled this research to access the valuable 'real world' experiences, perceptions and reflections of teachers participating in an action research project and participating in collaborative problem solving. It has also shown how this methodology has enabled the researcher's role to include sharing with the participants in contributing to a co-constructed pool of data. Using the tools of a grounded theory method of data analysis, consistent with this interpretive view point, has facilitated the inductive meaning-making required to generate new understandings of trust between action research participants.

An explanation of methods used to ensure the validity of the research and show how ethical concerns have been considered, adds to an understanding of how methodology has been decided on and applied so that the aims of the study could be successfully achieved.

Chapter six: DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Introduction

The data recovered from the investigation has been closely influenced by the way this study has progressed. As the path followed by the research process needed to change from its initially planned course, this chapter begins by describing how the study developed and the reasons for this divergence. Following this explanation, the information recovered from enquiry into the research questions and analysing the resultant data will be presented.

6.2 How the research progressed

The initial intention of this research was to investigate an action research project carried out within the context of a school. The research aims of increasing understanding of trust and the factors affecting it would be realised by studying the participants' relationships. Arrangements were made for the research to be carried out in the Czech Republic; a culture of which I had very little experience or knowledge.

The director of the school providing a context for the research was encouraging and cooperative. As he spoke English well enough to allow clear communication, language barriers were not a problem and the research proposal was able to be discussed. However although an understanding of 'trust-based relationships' and 'collaboration' was agreed on, the school director was not familiar with the term 'action research' in either the Czech or English language.

In talking with my student colleagues about their experiences in other Czech schools as well as with tutors and a well-educated parent from the school, I discovered this was not an unusual situation; action research was not generally practised in Czech schools. Similarly, collaborative methods of working were not routinely used. School management systems were more likely to be hierarchical, teachers being directed what to do and often how to do it. Later, my teacher

interviews also confirmed this finding: “The director would tell you what should you to do, but he doesn't collaborate with you much then after that. So it's rather directive”. Generally, teaching was also relatively formal and aimed towards students achieving well defined academic criteria.

The director in this school valued the practices of reflection, collaboration and joint problem solving and stated that the teachers in the school worked collaboratively on a daily basis to plan and problem solve. It was also apparent that he had a good understanding of the research aims. As a researcher I was warmly welcomed into the school and encouraged to observe teachers working collaboratively.

In further discussions, the director expressed ideals upholding principles and values congruent with action research methodology. I met several teachers and talked with them about problem solving together. It was apparent that the teachers may have been following action research methodology and this school could provide a useful context for the research.

Further data collecting suggested Czech teachers may not readily talk about their feelings or reveal they were having problems getting on well with their colleagues. The important influence of the research context became more evident as illustrated by my reflective journal entry:

I've also realised I started 'collecting data' as soon as, (or even before), I made contact with the school. I'm glad I recorded these impressions. I now realise their importance to my research, i.e. research doesn't occur in a vacuum and being in a different culture than my own I cannot assume anything. Recording my observations (of the school environment) therefore needs to be added to my instruments for data collection.

Further understanding that as researcher, my relationships with the teachers and director were pivotal to the research is shown in this reflective journal excerpt:

The quality/depth of data from the interviews may be influenced by how safe the participants feel when they are interviewed. So

my reflection may also include thinking about the level of trust participants have in the interview situation and what I can do to help facilitate their trust.

Responding to these realisations, I spent time observing in the school and relating informally with the teachers, mostly in the teachers' workroom. Classes kept to different timetables so teachers finished teaching and had breaks at differing times. Teachers came and went frequently, providing time gaps to reflect and record observations.

Conflicting information was provided by these initial observations. Records of these observations explain: "The atmosphere was one of convivial busyness with apparent open friendly communication and cooperation, teacher – teacher and earlier, teacher – children". However I also noted how busy the teachers were and how little time they had for information sharing. There was no room for teachers to sit and meet in a relaxed environment. They mostly lunched at differing times while caring for students in their classrooms. I wrote, "At this school it appears the teachers work cooperatively together harmoniously but don't have time for many planned meetings. So how is it (collaboration) happening?"

These observations and reflections led to the recognition that this school context did not offer the possibility of studying a group of teachers problem solving in the context of an action research project.

I continued recording my reflections and the many questions which arose.

Am I correct in my sensing that there are strong trust-based relationships between the teachers and the director? Is their style of 'spontaneous collaboration on the move' really as effective as it appears? What *does* facilitate these successful collaborative relationships? Do they uphold the principles of action research e.g. equality, value for the individual, participation, discursive problem solving, reflection, the action spiral, but carry out these principles in a less structured almost automatic way? What makes it work successfully? Or does it?

The director also described a collaborative project in which the school was participating. It involved thirteen local schools collaborating to solve the problem of how to improve and update teaching methods in differing subject areas. This was an EU funded programme continuing over eighteen months. Individual schools shared, then discussed with participants, innovative ways of teaching in various subject areas such as “Musical Education”, “ICT as an Adventure” and “Policy and Us”.

The question to be decided was: ‘Can the aims of the research be realised by carrying out a study in this school?’ Answering this question involved my realisation of the need for flexibility as well as for facing the reality of the situation. I wrote in my journal,

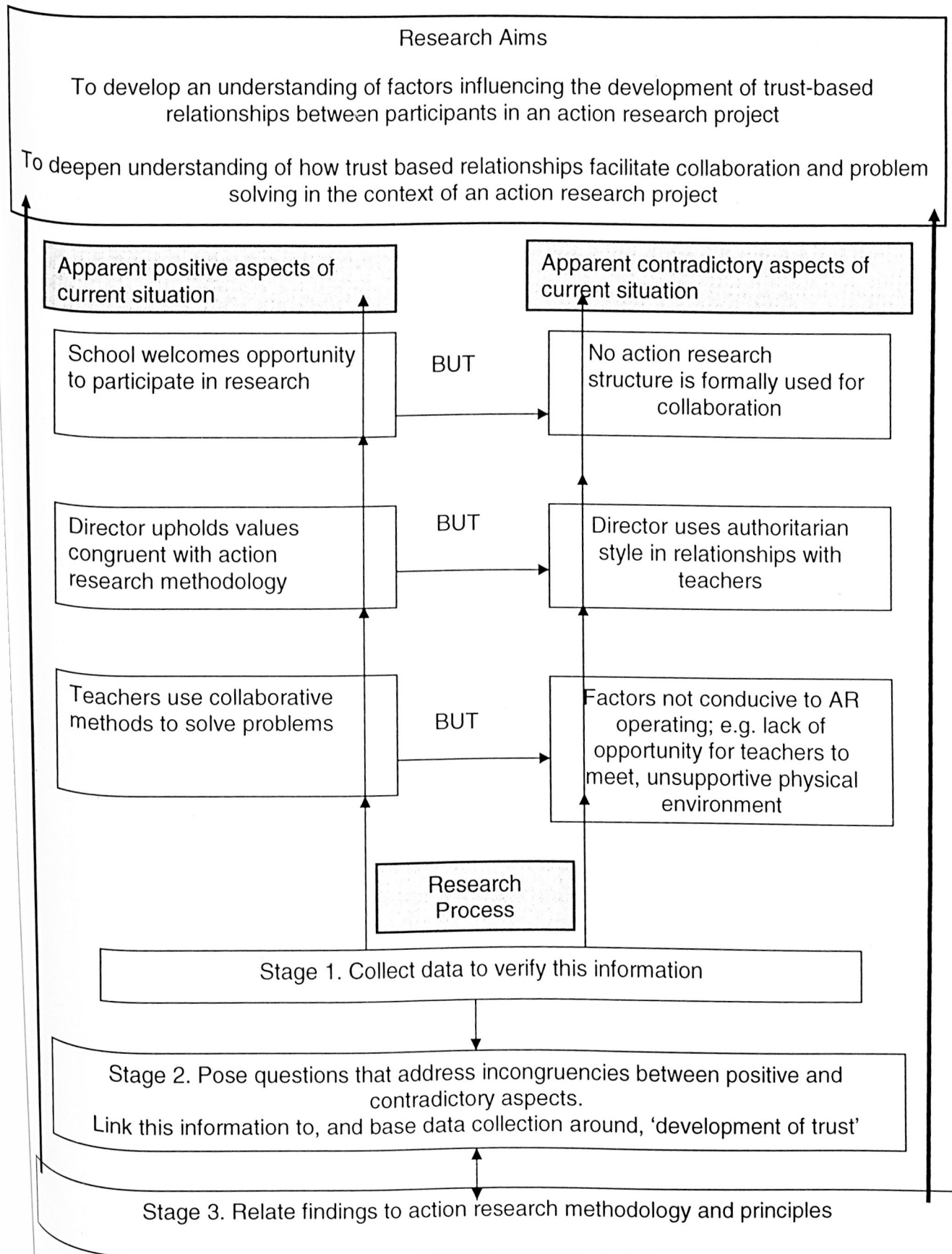
“My research is changing startlingly! I have learnt very quickly that as a researcher I must be flexible. I cannot impose my research ideas on the environment I am studying. The context can’t be changed to fit my ideas. So I have had to ‘get real’ fast!”

The diagram on the following page explains how I resolved this question and decided that the process of my research could enable me to successfully use the context of the school to achieve my research aims.

In my reflective journal (see appendix G), I recorded a series of questions which relate to stages 1 and 2 in the diagram below. Later journal entries evaluated progress towards answering these questions and further verifying relevant data.

In discussion with the school director, Ivan, I affirmed I would investigate trust-based relationships in the context of the EU inter-school project as well as collaborative relationships between the teachers within the context of the school.

How can the aims of my research be realised by carrying out my study in the context of this school?



6.3 *The research findings*

The research findings uncovered a complex matrix of factors influencing the question of how teachers, as members working as a collaborative team in the chosen school setting, effectively develop trust-based relationships.

6.3.1 *How the data were inter-related to answer the research questions*

The main body of data providing answers to the research questions was recovered from the interviews with the four teachers, including the director. This information was influenced and enriched by my record of observations in the school, discussions with a school parent, Eileen, the video analysis of non-verbal communication during a meeting, and my reflective journal. These data sources provided a lens through which the teachers' realities could be viewed in the process of sense-making. My reflective journal was also the main medium used to navigate the path of the investigation during the intertwined process of analysing and collecting the data.

Further insights into trust and collaboration were brought together by examining the schools' involvement with the interschool EU programme. These were related to the question of how trust-based relationships are developed. The resultant findings were further analysed to explore the contribution they made to discovering factors inhibiting and contributing to trust between action research participants.

The stated methods of data analysis resulted in the following findings:

6.3.2 *Open coding*

Data from interviews was related to the following categories:

i) Understanding of collaboration

The interview data was first coded under this category to ascertain teachers shared a common understanding of this concept.

Similar understandings of collaboration were shared including the concepts of working together, “we can plan some projects together”, using discursive methods “We can discuss problems which we have”, sharing of ideas, “We can get some ideas from somebody” and problem solving, “the aim is that you would find some solution that both sides would be satisfied with”.

The integral concepts of respect and equal value for participants were also expressed; “... if you collaborate with someone you have to respect him but in the same time you have to keep your own importantness”.

ii) Factors facilitating and hindering trust (see appendix H)

It is evident there was a high incidence of shared opinions between teachers regarding trust. The factors in bold text are opinions expressed by more than one participant.

iii) Trust as facilitator of collaboration / problem solving (see appendix I)

It can be seen that all participants valued trust very highly as a facilitator of collaboration and most stated strongly that without trust collaboration was impossible. Again there was a high incidence of shared opinions between teachers.

6.3.3 Axial coding

A coding paradigm was developed which identified a central phenomenon relating to the data (Robson 2002, p.194). As the interviewing progressed it became clear a single incident, described in most detail by the teacher Isabel, was a major factor relating to all the participants' responses.

Because we had here - I don't know if you know it - another headmaster (director) and so this is a new headmaster. He has been here one year. And this change of the headmaster was a very painful thing. And some colleagues were on the side of the old headmaster, some colleagues were against she, against her. So this is a very painful thing. And I think it needs a long time when it will be ok. You know. Many colleagues came out (left) from this school afterwards.

You know there were two sides against each other. And one side had felt that the other side is doing things against the old headmaster and

that the other teachers wanted to leave her out and it's not good for the school. And it's very painful thing.

The effects of the divide caused by this strong disagreement continued when the director left and the current director was appointed. Some of the older staff who sided with the previous director maintained a friendship with her and were in opposition to Ivan, the current director. Ivan explains the ongoing repercussions on his relationships:

...some colleagues are try(ing) to avoid so private contact with me. When they have the problem I have to say they not prefer to solve the problem with me. Only some people of the school will come and tell me about the problem. It's natural, it's their own decision. My doors are open for every teacher for every colleague. I think: I'm sure they know this. But some people do (come), some people not.

Q: So would the amount of trust affect that do you think?

A: Yes. I think maybe it's my problem or it's an issue for me. To build the trust every day because you know many of the teachers here at the school have a very close relationships with the last director before me. They are friends. And maybe this is a complication for our relationships. Maybe, maybe not. But I think so. And on the other side I have very good relationship with some colleagues.

For all the participants this incident involved hurt and a breakdown in trust as is evident in Isabel's and Ivan's comments above.

When Ivan became director, teachers with whom he had long-term close professional and personal friendships also joined the school staff. This further intensified the situation.

All the participants used this incident and its repercussions on relationships in the school, as a central pivot to which they related their thinking about trust and collaboration. Their responses strongly reflected the position they held in relation to the incident and its continuing influence.

It became evident that several groups existed within the staff. These had formed as teachers' responses to the situation:

- a) Those who supported Ivan, some of whom were his long term friends and had trust-based collaborative relationships with him.
- b) Those who did not have close working relationships with Ivan. Within this group was a smaller group of older teachers who maintained relationships with the previous director.

Low support towards Ivan as director by the second group and dissention between the two groups of teachers are affirmed by the data provided from my video analysis of non-verbal interactions during a meeting attended by Ivan as director and teachers (see appendix J). The video and its analysis were completed before I carried out any interviews (see appendix N).

To deepen my understanding of how the past breakdown of trust influenced current trust-based relationships and collaboration within in the school, I looked at each of the participant's interview data in relation to their response to the past disagreement. It became clear that previous damage to trust within all the teachers' relationships, including the director, was the major factor encompassing all other identified factors which hindered current trust development and collaboration.

To analyse individual teacher's responses to the trust-damaging incident I examined the teachers' current levels of collaboration, their awareness of problems regarding trust and collaboration in the school, and their attitude and responses to the situation (see appendix K).

6.3.4 *Selective coding*

Categories in the axial coding model (Robson 2002) were integrated by this final process of data analysis.

To improve collaboration, rebuilding of trust was necessary. Teachers' ability to do this could be seen as dependant on their recognition of the need for trust rebuilding and their motivation or will to do so.

I found that teachers who were purposely collaborating with the broadest range of their colleagues had a greater awareness of the need to re-establish trust and involve all teachers in collaborative decision making. I also found that these

teachers stated more strongly, feelings of caring for the children in the school and their belief in the ability of teachers, by sharing their concern for the children, to overcome their hurt and divisiveness. These ideas are expressed by Isabel:

There is just this sad experience in us. And when there is something like this in our heart it is difficult you know to trust again.

And sometimes you have to say, "Ok I will try to trust you again. This was not good. This was bad. This disappointed me. This was painful for me. But I will try to trust you again."

We have to know that we want to do the best for the children. And this is a thing which collects us. But sometimes I think we don't say that this is the thing which puts us together. "The reason why we are here doing this is because...."

Yes, we could think this will be the one thing we are thinking about: The good for the children which are here. Yes this could help. But in fact I think we all have this idea. We all love the children that are here and want for them just good. But I think some of us are not thinking of this. That it is more important than their troubles and so on.

Caring about the children's best interests provided the motivation and the will to actively collaborate with their colleagues and rebuild trust.

6.3.5 *Inter-school collaboration*

My interview with two teachers from school 2 and an interview with Ivan, school 1's director, provided data about the collaborative relationships between the schools participating in the EU project. This data was also analysed using open coding, axial and selective coding

i) Open coding

The data were initially coded using the categories of 'factors seen to be facilitating and inhibiting trust between the schools' and 'the perceived outcomes of collaboration'. This allowed for comparison between the two schools. It was clear there were major differences between how the interviewees viewed the experience of inter-school collaboration. Of note was the large number of positive outcomes expressed by school 1's director compared to school 2 and the comparatively large number of factors seen to be inhibiting trust between the schools by the school 2 interviewees.

i) Axial coding

As a result of the findings gained by analysing the data on teachers' trust and collaboration within school one, I then looked at the two schools' past experiences with inter-school collaboration and their motivation to continue this collaboration (see appendix L).

School 2 was a 'special' school in the sense that it followed a distinct philosophy which it valued highly and differentiated it from the usual state schools. Similar to the situation effecting trust-based relationships between teachers in school 1, this school had experienced a breakdown in trust and discontinued collaboration in the past after it had tried cooperating with another 'non-special' school. School 2 had organised for a combined 'nature lesson' with two classes from the differing schools. The teacher explained, "And the teacher couldn't take it. Half way through the programme she said, 'This is not organised enough. There is no homework; there are no things to be done.' And they left". Again it is evident that the experience of past disagreements leading to breakdown in trust was an overriding factor influencing the perception of other factors, both inhibiting and facilitating trust.

ii) Selective coding

Applying the propositions that were used in part 1 of the research, the ability to facilitate trust and collaboration in respect to the inter-school relationships could be seen as dependant on the two schools' recognition of the need for trust rebuilding and their motivation or will to do so.

School 2 appeared to have a lack of values or concerns it shared with other schools resulting in little motivation to rebuild trust. Even after participating in the EU schools project the school had decided there was little advantage to its continued collaboration with any 'non-special' school. It preferred to collaborate with other schools sharing the same philosophy, with whom it had already built trusting relationships.

Conversely, the school 1's director, with no experience of broken trust and a past history of successful collaboration, perceived future collaboration between schools in a positive light and bringing many advantages. However he also made the comment, "Of course it is necessary to have the basic level of trust among schools and among directors. But I think trust among school, parents, pupils...is more important". This opinion was echoed by a teacher in school 1 who considered that inter-school collaboration took too much time; whereas time was not an issue when it came to 'the necessity' of collaborating with colleagues. Possibly she was implying the advantages of inter-school collaboration cannot be given priority over the advantages to the children produced by teachers working harmoniously together in a climate of trust.

6.3.6 A summary of the findings: Their relationship to action research

This study, in looking at collaboration and trust between teachers, has found that the effects of past incidents, in causing hurt and a breakdown in trust, were a powerful factor inhibiting further trust between teachers.

It also found that trust-based relationships between the teachers were a necessary component of successful collaboration. As Lucy's explanation illustrates, the teachers' awareness of the requirement for trust in collaborative relationships and problem solving appeared to increase as a result of the earlier trust breakdown:

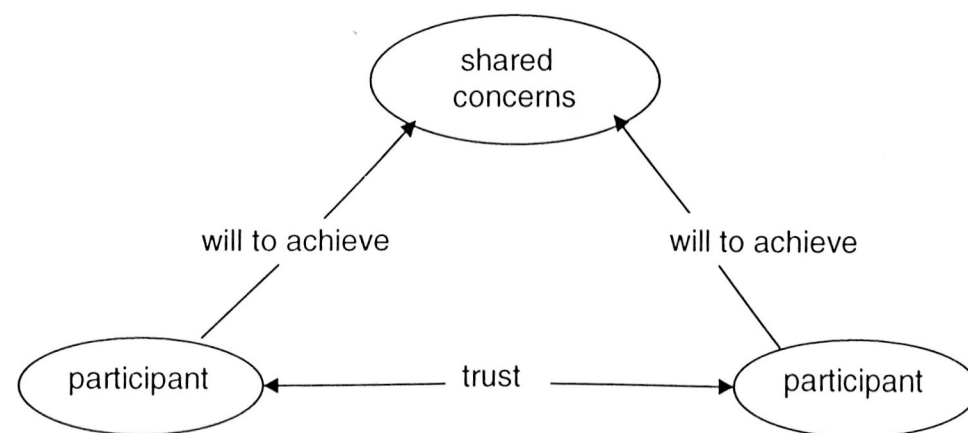
So there was one class and the relationship between the pupils was very not good and it was a problem. And we tried to do something with it. But the opinions were different. And ... it was not easy.

Q: So how did the teachers' relationships effect solving that problem?

A: Because maybe they don't trust... if someone, or anybody, doesn't trust anybody he doesn't believe his or her opinions so much.

The reestablishment of trust was facilitated by the participants' awareness of the need for collaboration and trust as well as the will to re-build trust-based relationships. This 'will' was strongly influenced by the strength of caring by the teachers for the children with whom they were working. When the well-being of the children was a priority the result was a greater awareness of the need to re-

establish trust and a stronger will to actively overcome past hurts and disagreements. These relationships are further illustrated in the diagram below.



The context of an action research project differs from the more open school context in which this study was situated by providing accepted methodological values and structure which influence participants' relationships. These structures and values, by providing a 'safer' environment, may possibly not only lessen the likelihood of a breakdown in trust but also facilitate its reestablishment. To ascertain the contribution the research findings can make to deepening understanding of trust-based relationships within action research projects these issues will be explored in more detail in the following chapter.

Chapter seven: EVALUATION

7.1 Introduction

The initial aim of this chapter is to explore the relevance of the research findings to action research and the contexts created by its methodological precepts. This will provide an evaluation of how this study's process of investigating trust and collaborative relationships between teachers in a school setting has contributed to the aims of the research.

This evaluation will include a discussion of how the research findings relate to the principles and methods of action research as they are described in chapter three.

A further discussion will consider the concept of trust, as discussed in chapter two, and examine how the conclusions arrived at as a result of this study relate and contribute to these ideas. A similar process will be followed with respect to the concept of inclusion. The questions will be asked, "How do the findings of this study relate to chapter four's discussion? What are the implications for inclusive education?".

7.2 The study's findings and an action research context

The findings of this study are relevant to action research carried out within a school setting in that there are features in common to both the context of this research and the context of an educational action research project. Collaborative relationships between teachers, the development of trust and the educational environment are common features. The attributes created by following an action research methodology may not be common; they may not have been present in the context of the study. Examining the research and its findings in the light of these attributes may help to clarify the contribution this study has to deepening understanding of trust-based relationships between participants in action research.

7.2.1 Equality and trust

Because of the methodological principles on which action research is based, collaboration operates in an environment where not only are participants as individuals valued equally but also their contributions towards the task of meaning making (Cohen et al 2007).

In Lucy's interview she relates her experience of how lack of trust between teachers resulted in them being less likely to accept the differing opinions of their colleagues, making problem solving more difficult. The teachers' differing opinions created dissention rather than enriching meaning. Valuing others' opinions is necessary for the "fusion of horizons" and the "more integrated and more comprehensive understanding of the situation" (Carr 2006, p.431) discussed in chapter three. The action research requirement for equal valuing of participants' contributions does not allow for non-trusting attitudes to prevail. Isabel's attitude, expressed in her interview, that she has no choice but to collaborate with her colleagues, supports the idea that teachers can consciously decide to value each other's contributions. Action research methodology also makes a requirement for this attitude and in so doing creates an environment which discourages distrust from inhibiting collaboration.

7.2.2 Problem definition

Not only does the process of creating shared meaning, as described by Carr (2006), relate to the equal value of contributions, it also has importance in the process of problem definition within an action research project. The first task of participants involved in an action research project is to engage in discursive collaboration to define the problem they jointly wish to investigate and resolve (Cohen et al 2007), ensuring participants are aware of their shared concerns. The relevance of this process and its role in facilitating trust is upheld by this study's outcomes.

The value of this discursive activity was also illustrated by Lucy's comment when

I thanked her for sharing her ideas. She responded, "Thankyou for talking to me. It was very interesting to realise some things. I wouldn't think about it (otherwise)". By this sharing, her understanding of the situation increased.

The study concluded that participants' awareness of their shared concerns and values played an important role in overcoming distrust and creating the will to collaborate (see diagram 6.3.6). These findings emphasise the value of initiating an action research project by defining the problem. By participating in this task using a collaborative discursive method, the will to collaborate is reinforced and trust between the participants strengthened.

7.2.3 Reflective practice

In recognising the value of teachers' awareness as a factor facilitating trust and collaborative practice, this study also brings attention to the importance of participants' reflection. Lucy identified awareness as a requirement when asked how trust could be improved explaining, "It's hard to say because it depends on the people. They must be conscious of it (the need for trust). But at first the people must realise it."

The practice of meaning-making, resulting in action research participants' increased awareness, incorporates self-reflection as a vital component (Lloyd 2000; Reason 2001). Chapter three explains how reflection is a basic element of action research, operating at all of its three levels (see 3.2). The study's findings clarify that the nature of action research, by having reflective practice integrated into its methodology, contributes to participants' self awareness and the facilitation of trust in their relationships.

7.2.4 Emancipatory action research

Bottery (1997) expresses the view that by being aligned to the critical model, the aims of action research are emancipatory (see 3.2). He explains this relationship by stating, "The critical model's aim is to enlighten, and to emancipate groups by

helping them to recognise their true interests” (p.281). By recognising the positive consequences of participants’ awareness of their ‘true interests’ the study adds value to the emancipatory aspect of action research. The research found that trust and awareness go hand in hand. By linking emancipatory action to participant awareness Bottery creates a trio of trust, awareness and emancipation, working to positively influencing each other.

Bottery’s (1997) assertion that the emancipatory function of action research is to empower change (see 3.2) and that such emancipatory action is coexistent with trust was evidenced in the study. In exploring the results of the breakdown of trust between the teachers it was clear that low levels of trust between the teachers themselves and in their relationships with the director, Ivan, resulted in the teachers’ disempowerment. Although it was Ivan’s intention to involve the teachers in shared decision making, the lack of trust and collaboration between them meant that his ideals were not implemented. Instead he retained a more traditional directive style of leadership.

Lucy explained how she regarded this authoritative style of leadership as an example of a traditional method of school management. She saw it as inhibiting trust and collaboration. “Well there are some formal collaboration. But they are not used to informal trust and collaboration.....The traditional way of doing things effects trust and collaboration as well. Yes I think it does”.

She described how younger teachers with innovative ideas were affected:

But it often happens that younger teachers come to the school and they had some big ideas of what they could do. And after one or two or three years they are very disappointed and they leave the school and do some different job. That happens very often. Because there is very... well the tradition is very strong and they have not so much enthusiasm to break the tradition.

Ivan’s traditional methods of school management did not by themselves prevent empowerment and emancipation. The lack of his trusting relationships with all but a small group teachers resulted in Ivan’s perception that he was unable to collaborate with all the teachers. This perception further disempowered him from

carrying out his emancipatory ideals. He was caught in a downward spiral which perpetuated a low trust environment. This contrasts with the ongoing upward moving spiral of building trust-based collaborative relationships supported by the principles and values of action research methodology.

It has become apparent that had this study been conducted within the contexts of an action research project it is likely many of the difficulties in the collaborative relationships and the breakdown in trust between the teachers may not have occurred. I had reflected in my journal, "Is this going to help me understand AR (action research) better? It must! Even if it's what AR is not, or needs to overcome" (see appendix G). By investigating a situation where action research principles have not been operational, the study's findings can be seen to provide greater understanding of the trust-facilitating aspects of action research methodology. The outcomes have added to a deeper appreciation of how action research in itself may facilitate trust by providing an environment in which trust and collaboration is facilitated.

It was noted in chapter two (see 2.6) that participating in collaboration is *in itself* a facilitator of trust (Nyhan 2000; Costa 2003; Moyer et al 2005). However the study's outcomes contribute further to this idea by identifying more explicitly how features of action research may enable the facilitation of trust-based relationships. Because these aspects may also be operative in the process of collaboration the study's conclusions may therefore help provide some answers to the question, 'How does collaboration foster trust?'

While action research may prevent breakdown in trust it may also have an important role in rebuilding trust in situations where trust has been damaged. The implications of this idea will be discussed in the following chapter.

7.3 How the research findings relate to concepts of trust

The study's conclusions have provided me with a strong vantage point from which to return to the many implied questions and uncertainties raised by my

examination of trust in chapter two. A consideration of the main issues discussed in chapter two in the light of the investigation will follow.

7.3.1 *The importance of foundational trust*

The teachers' strong agreement that trust was a requirement for collaboration between their colleagues is consistent with the literature's assertion of the fundamental role trust plays in human interaction and learning and the subsequent high importance of trust-based relationships in education (see 2.3).

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's (1998) contention that the existence of trust facilitates teachers to more effectively focus on tasks is reinforced by Isabel's comments illustrating the reverse situation, where a reported lack of trust produced less effective task completion.

Yes that breaks trust, I must say. If you have to go and to say, "Is it doing? Is it finished?" "No it isn't". It disappoints you....

Q: So you were left to do it by yourself?

A: Yes. Of course. It takes your time and nobody else will help you... you will be disappointed.

Likewise the discomfort and doubt created by a climate of distrust was also confirmed by Lucy's comment, "Its not official punishment but the way some teachers talk about them make them to feel uncomfortable"; as well as Isabel's: "And it's not good if you are talking to someone and you (think) that he or she (could) say it to the headmaster or somebody else".

These comments were indicative of the practical effects distrust had on the teacher's experiences.

The divisive effects of the breakdown of trust between teachers in the school also continued to work against collaboration occurring unitarily between teachers and the director. This is congruent with Costa's as well as Nyhan's idea that team work, participation and empowerment are positively related to trust (Costa 2003; Nyhan 2000). Isabel expressed the need to work as a team, stating: "You need to know that we all colleagues, with the headmaster and so on, are all on one side.

Very important". Conversely the consideration (see 2.4) that the participatory attributes of action research could provide a uniting influence has been strengthened by this study.

7.3.2 Risk-taking, vulnerability and trust

The research also provided some insights into the role of vulnerability and risk taking and its relationship to trust (see 2.5). Some authors contend that risk is a coexistent component of trust; increased trust means greater vulnerability (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy 1998; Costa 2003). Others assert that reducing vulnerability and risk increases trust (Sztajn et al 2007).

In this study I noted that teachers' *awareness* of their vulnerability appeared to increase when the level of trust decreased. For example the 'special school' teacher, whose trust with other local schools had been broken, saw little advantage in furthering collaboration. She regarded risk taking as an important facilitator of trust:

Q: Do you find it's an advantage for you to be working with the other schools?

A: (laughed) I don't think so. They have different ideas on how the things should be.

Q: What is necessary for you to collaborate with them?

A: We always have to be brave.

However when teachers had a desire to collaborate so they could achieve their ideals (i.e. care for the children), their sense of vulnerability and perceived risk-taking was minimalised. The greater clarity about their shared values appeared to lessen the awareness of their vulnerability. The risk they were taking by placing trust in others, diminished in importance.

These ideas suggest that reducing vulnerability does not necessarily increase trust; however they confer with Costa's statement that "a high level of trust increases the likelihood that one will take a risk" (Costa 2003, p.606). What may

be more important is that by strengthening teachers' values, shared concerns and their will to collaborate, vulnerability may be less of a deterrent to cooperate.

7.3.3 Defining trust

The complexity of the relationship between trust and risk-taking is illustrative of the difficulty faced in providing an adequate and useful definition of trust as a concept in education. This complexity reiterated by Barlow (2001) was also experienced in this study's investigations.

None of the stated key components of trust provided by a range of quantitative studies have been refuted by the study's findings. However in accordance with Barlow's opinion (Barlow 2001) these attributes of trust added little in terms of providing a deeper understanding of the 'how' or 'why' associated with investigating trust-based relationships.

The study's outcomes have a further contribution to make to the situation discussed (see 2.4) regarding the relevance of studies on trust in the commercial and business sectors to educational contexts. Recognition of educational and commercial contexts as having different foundational values is not necessarily a reason for presuming studies on trust in this context cannot be applied to education. This study has shown the powerful influence shared goals and values concerning students can have in motivating educationalists to collaborate and build trust. In the same way, the business sector may regard commercial productivity as a shared goal, similarly facilitating trust and collaboration. Realising our values and goals as educators and holding them paramount, provides the freedom to investigate successful methods of trust facilitation from research in other sectors and apply them in a way that upholds as well as facilitates our differing values.

The method followed in this research provides an illustration of this process. A strong understanding of the values contained in action research methodology

and theory of inclusion provided a lens from which trust and collaboration could be studied in a less than ideal context. Without the foundation of established values this study would not have been possible.

These foundational values facilitate the task of defining trust within an educational context. Because of their experiences of a breakdown in trust, the teachers who were striving to fulfil their values within the school were more aware of the importance of trust and its relationship to collaborative practice. They were unhesitant in regarding successful collaboration as a measure of trust. In a similar way the extent to which a school community is able to work together to express its values could be considered a measure of successful collaboration.

Barlow's explanation of trust (see 2.7) is close to expressing these concepts. Her 'supportive environment' would be one that upholds agreed values and shared concerns. The following definition, resulting from the meaning-making which has occurred in the process of this research, considers that a supportive environment is an outgrowth of shared values and collaborative competence.

Trust is an interrelational experience evidenced by the expression of shared values resulting from individuals' growing collaborative competence.

7.4 *The research findings and inclusion*

The definition of trust stated above has implications for the creation of an inclusive educational environment. It strengthens the contention stated in chapter four (see 4.4) that action research has an important role to play in the creation of inclusive schools and communities. In the light of the study's findings the creation of shared values takes on a greater importance in the task of becoming inclusive. The process of creating and implementing these shared values using an action research methodology, itself facilitates the formation of trust between all those who participate. As MacKay states, "Inclusion ... is a value system based on

beliefs that promote participation, belonging and interaction” (Mackay 2007, p.2) (see 4.2).

The importance of the interrelationship of the school community with the larger community was also discussed in chapter four (see 4.3). The influence of the larger society’s cultural values and attitudes on the teachers’ relationships became apparent in this study. It was Lucy who explained the parallel distrust between teachers and the distrust she experienced as a member of the Czech society.

But it's very common in our society. It's also in, well it's not just here in the school. It's also in the other schools and in some offices. I have a friend who works in an office and what she says to me is very similar to that situation. So it happens very often in our society.

She continued to link her past experiences under the communist regime with the situation regarding trust in the school:

I think it is the problem of trust. Because it is not so far away communism was here. In the time nobody trust nobody. I was eighteen when it was ended. I remember it was just horrible. You never knew who is confidante, who is some agent. You didn't know the person you talked with could be agent.

Yes it was a very big problem: A very big problem. It was just, it was very hopeless. I remember it was very hopeless. It was... you didn't know what happens next. So it was very hopeless. So people closed in their own world: If you know what I mean. And they didn't communicate much. They had some close group and people didn't trust much someone who they didn't know. So maybe it can be - it's not so strong here. But maybe the situation here has the roots in that past.

Lucy’s awareness of this situation prompted my reflection on my experiences and observations since I had arrived in the Czech Republic and their relevance to this research (see appendix M). These reflections reaffirmed the significance of the discussion in chapter four concerning the ability of schools to influence students’ inclusive attitudes by themselves creating inclusive environments. I saw Lucy’s understanding of and concern about the school’s situation as a valuable contribution towards inclusion.

Chapter four's discussion on inclusion also considers the relevance of a participatory world view (see 4.4) Integral to this view is the understanding and creation of an inclusive environment by which each individual is "restored to the circle of community and the human community to the context of the wider natural world" (Reason and Bradbury 2006, p.7). Progressing in this direction involves each individual, as well as the community, sharing an awareness of who "we" are - our relationships to each other and sense of belonging to this 'whole'. Using action research as a means to facilitate trust-based relationships we can learn to celebrate our differences and establish our identity as an inclusive community.

Chapter eight: CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

This final chapter will look at the questions 'How successful was this research?' and 'What are the implications of its findings?'

In chapter one the motivating factors for carrying out the research were explained as well as the relevance it may have and the contribution I envisioned it could make 'to the betterment of education and the larger society in New Zealand today' (see 1.1). To answer the two questions posed above these ideas will be revisited in the light of the study's findings.

In completing this research I wanted personally to learn more about the successful implementation of action research for use in my own professional practice (see 1.1). The achievement of this goal plus that of learning to become an 'effective educational researcher' will be assessed.

The chapter will conclude by looking at how the findings of the research point the way to possibilities for further investigation.

8.2 Application to the New Zealand situation

As this research followed a qualitative methodology and used a case study framework to examine trust and collaboration, the intention was not for the research findings to be generalised, especially into very differing contexts. Additionally, because the research did not involve directly studying an action research project, I am not able to say, 'these are the observed effects of action research on trust facilitation'. My research results rely on gaining in-depth knowledge of what was happening in one situation and theoretically applying already established knowledge of action research attributes to that context. Instead, the research can suggest: 'In this context trust was influenced by these

factors or attributes. We know that action research upholds these attributes therefore action research may be helpful in facilitating trust in this situation’.

The rich understanding provided by the research can be used to suggest helpful ways of viewing other contexts, and possibilities for the beneficial utilisation of action research.

8.2.1 *RTLB and action research*

The research conclusion that action research has many inherent attributes that facilitate the building of trust between its participants, endorses its use by New Zealand’s Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB).

This study’s finding, also supported by other writers, that trust is necessary for successful collaboration is further support for RTLB to become proficient in using action research as a tool. This may be particularly important considering that RTLB rely on their relationships with teachers to initiate emancipatory change in teachers’ attitudes towards inclusive practices and to implement resultant changes at the classroom level.

The study found that trust has a significant link to self-awareness and emancipatory change (see 7.2.4). Creating trust between the teacher and the RTLB may be facilitated by spending time establishing shared values and ensuring both parties are aware that each wants to work towards the same outcomes. As the study suggested that such shared values influence motivation to collaborate, establishing this agreement may foster teachers taking active responsibility for implementing change, rather than expecting the RTLB to ‘fix’ the situation.

The advantages created by collaborating to reach shared understanding of values are also relevant for a team involving professionals and parents working together. The importance of parents’ participation in discussion to determine shared values and group goals could be paramount in establishing trust and cooperation between the school and the parents. Engendering the child’s trust

and willing engagement, could also be facilitated by ensuring he or she is involved in this process at an appropriate level.

For similar reasons, as well as those already suggested (see 1.2), the research findings also reinforce the idea that facilitating these processes in successful IEP meetings could be assisted by using an action research framework for their implementation.

8.2.2 Professional development

This research is able to offer suggestions to supplement current knowledge regarding teachers' use of action research as a professional development tool contributes towards reforming school communities - benefiting students and their learning (see 1.3). It is accepted that teachers' use of reflective practice facilitates the recognition of their values and goals for achievement (Lloyd 2000). This research, in its finding that teachers with a clear understanding of their values were better motivated to collaborate with others, adds further value to teachers' self reflection.

Teachers' use of first person action research (Reason 2001), (see 3.2) may enable them to collaborate more effectively with others in the school community. Having a clearer understanding of their personal values may assist in the collaborative creation of shared values with others, facilitating larger circles of trust-based relationships and a more harmonious and unified school community working towards common goals.

Reflecting on my own experience of peer appraisal within an action research framework (see 1.3) this research has given me new insight into the factors that facilitated my effective trust-based relationship with my peer. It is also an example of how shared values and resultant trust may facilitate further collaboration on an extended scale.

Having worked together as colleagues over several years, we knew and shared many of each others values, providing foundations for our work. In setting up our appraisal system we first discussed and agreed to the reasons for doing this

project (see 1.3) including the importance of supporting each other, what we wanted to achieve and why. These shared understandings strengthened the trust in our relationship. The project resulted in an agreement to share our successful peer appraisal experiences with others (Savandra & Simpson 2007).

8.2.3 *Recreating trust between cultures*

The need for creating schools in New Zealand that reflect and include the differing Maori and European cultural values is a major issue in New Zealand becoming an inclusive society (Savandra, 2008b). Studying trust facilitation in a climate where the breakdown in trust was recognised as a major factor hindering trust and collaboration was particularly helpful, providing insights which may be relevant to New Zealand's situation.

This research suggests that to facilitate trust there first needs to be recognition that trust has been damaged and needs rebuilding. This may be a major factor effecting the facilitation of collaboration between Maori and pakeha. It is apparent that the Eurocentric attitude of New Zealand society is reflected in our schools' cultures. Such attitudes may engender a lack of conscious awareness not only of the need to create schools that are inclusive of Maori families but also of the break down in trust between members of the two cultures. The resultant greater need for collaboration and will to re-establish trust may also be unrecognised.

The suggestion that schools purposefully collaborate with the Maori members of their communities to create a shared understanding of cultural values may be a step towards building an awareness of the problem. Until we are aware of how our schools are excluding Maori students the need for change will not be apparent. Without such understanding, our ability and motivation to work together to create inclusion is obstructed and the rebuilding of trust inhibited.

Maori community members cannot be expected to share their truth unless they can be assured their cultural treasures are respected and valued. The benefits of an action research framework to assist in this process have also been highlighted by the research. In a society where the minority Maori culture has been

devalued, the equality afforded to all participants and the expression of their truths (see 7.2.1) is particularly relevant.

Although the implications of this research for these three areas have been considered separately, it can be seen that they contain many overlapping and interrelating aspects. Making changes in one area of a school community cannot help but influence others.

This research has aimed to facilitate inclusive educational practices by increasing understanding of trust-based relationships and effective collaboration in relation to action research. The measure of its success will be evidenced by increased recognition of action research as a valuable tool assisting all members of New Zealand school communities to become active participants in creating effective inclusive educational environments.

8.3 *A personal learning experience*

From the perspective of my personal learning the completion of this research has been a resounding success!

Studying collaboration between teachers in a school environment which is very different from New Zealand schools has taught me many lessons. Because of these differences I have had the opportunity to look with fresh eyes. Many issues that I had grown to assume or take for granted were challenged, giving my observation and reflection skills a good shake-up as well as reaffirming their importance.

I have a great respect for the director and teachers of the school where my research was based. Despite the difficulties they have encountered and continue to face, the school remains committed to building a community that puts into daily practice the values they uphold. The warm, friendly atmosphere, the caring relationships between the teachers and children, as well as content, lively children are evidence of the teachers' care, dedication and tenacity.

My initial concern about being unable to study an action research project has been replaced by a realisation of the extent of my learning about action research and its relevance to the creation of inclusive cultures. I am looking forward to putting this learning into practice and cementing its value in the workplace.

As this has been my first attempt at research my learning in this area has also been extensive. The necessity of marrying the research context with my research aims led to making changes in my research plan. In attempting this task and the subsequent requirements of the research process, I learnt to value reflective thinking more highly (see appendix G).

I learnt a greater understanding and appreciation of qualitative research methodology, especially in its method of truth seeking. I appreciated the extent to which this approach enabled me to account for the diversity and complexity intrinsic to the concept of trust and human relationships.

As researcher I relished the opportunity to appreciate and learn from the experiences, opinions and feelings of the research participants, recognising that they too were benefiting from the sense-making inherent to the reflective process of being interviewed. Congruent with my research findings I realised the value I shared with the participants – the value we both placed on the recounting of their experiences and thoughts – established a trust between us, facilitating more open communication.

The limitations of qualitative research became clear when I realised how dependant the research outcomes were on my ability to make deductions from the data, as well as the interdependence between my views as researcher and the data collected. Had someone else been conducting this research with differing understandings, experience and outlook the results would have differed but not necessarily have been more or less valid or useful. This understanding led to the realisation of my responsibility as researcher. The deeper understandings gained are specific to this situation and what I as researcher can bring to the research.

I also realised that this is just the beginning – ‘trying out’ this study’s conclusions in other contexts is a necessary continuation: a very appropriate spiral approach for a study of action research.

8.4 *Possibilities for further research*

This study was conducted in a school where trust between teachers had been damaged as the result of past disagreement. This previous breakdown in trust was found to be the major factor inhibiting the current trust-based relationships between the teachers. Several of the teachers considered that this situation was not unusual. They considered that divisiveness and lack of trust in schools and work places due to past disagreements was a common occurrence in the Czech Republic.

It is possible the problem of past disagreements in school communities resulting in trust breakdown and impaired collaboration is a commonly occurring problem. The distrust and division that existed between the teachers in this study was not immediately obvious. It also took time before the previous disagreement resulting in the trust breakdown was disclosed. This suggests that the existence of broken trust between teachers may not be readily recognised. Considering the accepted importance of collaboration in schools and the apparent damage such disagreements can cause to trust-based relationships, further research on the prevalence of past disagreements effecting school communities may have important implications for inclusive education.

The research also pointed to the important role action research may have in establishing trust between teachers as well as between members of the wider school community. The reestablishment of broken trust is an obvious concern. Further research is needed to not only establish action research methodology and practice as a facilitator of trust but also as a tool for the *reestablishment* of trust. Such research could ask ‘In what way does participation in an action research project to establish inclusive educational practice in a school community where trust has been broken, re-establish trusting relationships between its participants?’

Conducting my research within the school required developing relationships with the teachers and director to enable data collection and support understanding of factors influencing trust-based relationships. Had I been intending to facilitate an action research project within the school, the relationships and understanding of the school culture I had developed may have been beneficial to this process. This led me to consider the question, 'What is the most useful circumstance in which to facilitate an action research project within a school community?' It appeared that to resolve the issues in the school using action research, advantages could be provided by having a facilitator who had some distance from the problem but who also had an in-depth understanding of the situation being addressed. Research into this area may provide valuable information in the successful implementation of action research projects at the school community level.

The research outcomes also suggested that an action research project, by directing attention to a positive outcome, could find solutions that would enable trust to be rebuilt. For example, asking the question 'How can we use collaboration between teachers to improve students' learning?' could provide better outcomes than asking, 'How can we resolve past disagreements between teachers?' Focussing on a shared value (expressed by improving students learning), brings the possibility of re-establishing trust without needing to rekindle past hurts. As trust and collaboration operate in tandem, strengthening collaborative relationships may at the same time re-establish trust. Research that investigates the effectiveness of re-establishing trust in this way, may further our understanding of trust and the trust-facilitating aspects of action research methodology.

8.5 **Conclusion**

In my reflective journal I recently wrote:

In my investigatory task of meaning making there are many interweaving threads; the particular attributes of each one requiring understanding both in its own right and in its relationship to the threads it intersects. The task requires a continuous mindfulness of

the bigger picture; an awareness of each thread's contribution to the emerging rich tapestry it is part of; the tapestry finally to be understood in its complexity as well as its entirety.

Reading this excerpt again I realise that what I described could also be seen as a metaphor for an inclusive community. Each unique individual has an important contribution – pull one thread out of a piece of cloth and the whole fabric is marred. As every thread is interrelated so every other strand is affected by its loss. When even one child is excluded by our schools the richness of the community is depreciated and the final picture incomplete.

The metaphor also illustrates the necessity for collaboration and the importance of each 'thread's' mindfulness of the bigger picture being created. Awareness of the tapestry to which all are contributing becomes the motivation to participate, to 'intersect' and collaborate; to trust and value each other's contribution; to create the envisioned work of art.

Originally I wrote these words to help me comprehend my role as researcher – but maybe this is also a picture of how the realisation of inclusion and its construction are 'one and the same thing'. We are all researchers and as participants all involved in this creation. Action research methodology provides the loom, the structure and framework for the creation; the carrying out of action research is itself the weaving process.

Reason and Bradbury (2006) when discussing action research, state: "Given the condition of our times, a primary purpose of human inquiry is not so much to search for truth but to heal, and above all to heal the alienation, the split that characterises modern experience" (p.14). This research has suggested that the alienation caused by past hurts and broken trust is a major factor influencing trust based relationships in our schools. My hope is that this study also contributes to the effective use of action research, for the healing of alienation and the creation of a more inclusive society.

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Appendix A: Interview Notes and Observations

Date: 15 May 2008 Interview Notes and Observations

Interview: Ivan, Director, XXXXX Skola

Background information / Observations

Ivan was very welcoming and communicated clearly that he wanted to help me carry out my research as much as he could. He regarded nothing as a problem that could not be overcome.

In our earlier interactions he had communicated the importance to him and the school in setting up and maintaining interactions between people, especially with different experiences and cultures. He saw that cooperating to help me carry out my research was beneficial for both of us; he hoped we could continue learning from each other's cultural differences after the research was completed.

He left me to observe interactions between teachers in the school staffroom.

The staffroom operated more as a workplace for teachers. There were about ten desks placed together on which books and files were untidily stacked. Chairs were pushed into and around the tables. Several teachers came into the room during the teachers' break or interval between classes. They did not stop to drink tea or coffee but were busy finding books and talking to each other informally in Czech.

I had met all of them earlier - they knew I was there because of my research. They greeted me warmly in English. I chatted to the English teacher and asked whether they were particularly busy today. She replied that 'yes they were' however they usually were busy and did not have time to have coffee together during intervals. Today two teachers were away sick. No, they didn't have relieving teachers to replace them. The classes might be split and the students join other classes or the teachers may have turns checking on and giving work to the teacher-less classes. It meant the remaining teachers would take on extra responsibility.

Several children came into the room and talked with the teachers in a friendly relaxed manner, with respect but also very at ease. One needed material photocopied, one, accompanied by friends, with a wound needing bandaging. The teachers calmly and efficiently dealt to these needs, commenting to each other about the children then closing the staffroom door so that it could not be opened from the outside without a key. The atmosphere was one of convivial busyness with apparent open friendly communication and cooperation, teacher – teacher and earlier, teacher – children.

It appeared that my presence made little difference to the teachers' activities and conversation. They knew I did not understand or speak Czech. I felt comfortable in the room, observing – made to feel welcome and yet unobtrusive.

When the teachers had gone, Ivan came to talk with me, taking me to his office which appeared also to be a very busy and well-worn utilitarian work place. A desk was rather untidily covered with papers, computer, phone; utilitarian office chairs and a larger table butted up against his desk to provide extra working space.

He enquired whether my observation time would be helpful for my research. I replied 'yes it was' and realised that the interaction I had observed in the staffroom he considered to be an example of teachers collaborating together. He had earlier explained to me that the teachers regularly problem-solved collaboratively together on a day to day basis.

To his question 'So how can I help you more?' I explained again how I needed to study teachers working together in an organised meeting. He repeated his understanding that I was studying the relationships, especially trust, of teachers working together collaboratively to solve a problem. He looked a little worried; it seemed because he wasn't sure how he could comply with my request. Then after pondering, told me he I could attend a staff meeting during a twenty minute staff break to discuss an EU programme the staff had been working on together. He agreed I could video during the meeting and also that the teachers would talk together in Czech.

At my request he explained more about the programme the school was working with (see information below). As he had another meeting with a school visitor I returned to the staffroom, recorded notes and reflected on how I could best utilise the situation for my research.

Another teacher with very good English, whom I had previously talked with, came into the room and I asked if she had a few minutes to talk. She looked at her watch and agreed with a smile. I asked her about the EU programme: Had the teachers met together to discuss what they had learnt? 'Yes' she explained "We had meetings where the schools all met together. All the teachers from this school were involved in that meeting" "And will you have more meetings?" I asked. "Hopefully not" she replied laughing. "It is very interesting but it takes too much time".

I continued my reflecting and note taking and Ivan returned again to talk. He mentioned that Isabel had told him she had talked with me and we agreed on how friendly and helpful a person she was.

On his request I explained to Ivan that I would like to interview him about two specific areas. The first; how he worked together with the other schools in the area with the EU programme and especially about the trust between him and the other school participants. He thought about my request then enthusiastically agreed. Secondly; about trust between himself and teachers in the school – and how trust facilitated their collaboration. Ivan was familiar with my research aims and questions. He agreed to this aspect of the interview too and we made a time to meet.

He also agreed to me interviewing Lucy about aspects of 'trust' and the teachers working together collaboratively. He made a time for me to interview her – although as he said her timetable was very full.

I was concerned that he did not consult her when he made this arrangement and asked whether he thought she would be happy to talk with me. He assured me that she would and he seemed very sincere in this belief.

Ivan explained how fortunate he was in having such good dedicated staff to work with. 'They cooperate together very well'. He explained there were many differences between them but that differences were good and usually any problems were overcome – he had a strong belief in their professional attitude. I commented (sincerely) on the harmonious feeling within the school.

He again said I was very welcome to spend time at the school. In trying to understand *when* the teachers would have time to cooperate together I asked if the teachers had lunch together. No, different classes usually had lunch at different times and teachers usually spent their lunchtimes overseeing their children eating lunch in their classrooms. Sometimes two or three teachers might have time to eat together but not regularly. So now I understood a little better why there was no room in the staffroom to sit and relax! Teachers didn't do that.

(On an earlier visit the school was celebrating the birthday of one of the teachers. Ivan didn't invite me into his office but stood outside the doorway and talked to me. He explained the teachers were meeting at the staff break to celebrate the birthday and through the doorway I could see food set out on the work table in Ivan's office. I wondered then why his relatively small office was being used in this way rather than a staffroom)

I suggested I could look at collaborative relationships and trust at two levels – between teachers working together to solve problems within the school and between schools in the area working together through the EU programme. Ivan agreed this would be a good idea but suggested there were two more levels: the relationship between the school and the 'authorities' and between the school and the parents and wider community. He enthusiastically explained how he regarded the school's role and its relationships with families as very important. He related how the school related to the identities of xxxxx and xxxxx as two village communities. The school helped maintain these village identities despite the spreading developing metropolis. It was important for the school to know the children and their families from when the children were small until after they left the school. Being an active part of the community helped children leaving school to have a sense of identity within the community and facilitated their transition eventually into the work force. The reserves and green areas were also important for the village's identity and the attitude of the school towards protecting and using these areas was another community –school link.

The EU School Project:

Ivan explained this is a project involving thirteen schools in the Praha 5 area. It is funded by the EU and involves the schools collaborating together to exchange ways of working with the aim of improving teaching methods.

A variety of topics have been the focus of this sharing, such as:

- ICT as an adventure
- Working with clay in the xxxx School
- Drug prevention
- Policy and us
- I'm helping and I'm learning as well (educational project in the elementary school grade one)

This project has been running for 18 months.

The meeting Ivan was to convene for his staff is to discuss ways these outcomes of this programme can be implemented in the school.

Interview: 22 May Ivan: **Factors Facilitating Trust**

History of working together	Making good decisions	Joint plan making/ collaboration	Shared concerns	Communication	Personal attributes (patience, open mindedness)
<p>Yes. This trust between us is the issue of the last 5 years. But it's very important that I know Jana so long time.</p> <hr/> <p>of course these two people know me for many years and they look and they know, "Ahh you have a problem."</p>	<p>I think the best help with this issue are my good decisions. And I make as few errors as possible.</p> <hr/> <p>I want to have the good relationships I cannot make some decisions that are good only for some colleagues. I have to make the decisions fair. I have to make the decisions fair for all of the people in the school</p>	<p>We are able to find the, I think, best solution in the work in the school. It means it will be the solution, this solution maybe is not best for me personally but I have trust, I believe, that our common solution is best for the work in the school</p>	<p>we have very close points of view and when I am speaking about the most important point of life we are very close in our points of view.</p> <p>Q: So with the school you would agree on the important things for the school.</p> <p>A: Yes.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>And we have same interest when we have the great meetings for assessment pupils</p> <hr/> <p>I think it is very important to introduce and to understand the mission of the school and the issue for all of the people in the school. And I think not only the people in the school but for parents as well, for public around the school as well.</p>	<p>I tell it everyday, most important point of this cooperation is communication. And when I am able to communicate I have only half of problems</p> <hr/> <p>And every parent can choose the right way of communicating with the school. All parents have direct contact to me and to every teacher in the school. And it is very important.</p> <hr/> <p>And very important to be able to listen to problems, listen to ideas, listen to people.</p>	<p>I think it is necessary to be patient in some moments. When people are open minded they have an advantage in trust and collaboration.</p> <hr/> <p>I think that the very important to be open minded</p> <hr/> <p>A very important moment is that I have to stop my personal problems and it's not possible to bring my personal problems into school. I have to have a filter and my personal problems cannot be problem for my colleagues</p>

Appendix C

RESEARCH PROPOSAL SUMMARY

NAME: Samara Savandra

TOPIC

Establishing trust-based relationships between action research participants:

A case study of teachers' collaboration to facilitate inclusive educational practices within a school setting

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

In my work in New Zealand I use action research as a tool to help teachers in mainstream classes problem solve ways to include students with special educational needs more effectively. I have found that the more trusting the relationships between myself and other action research participants, the more successful the outcomes of the action research in creating positive change. I have noted in my studies that action research is also effectively used to influence changes towards inclusive education.

Educational literature recognises trust-based relationships as being fundamental to successful collaboration within school settings. However there appears to be very little research in the field of education regarding the facilitation of trust in relationships between action research participants.

My research aims are:

- To develop an understanding of the factors influencing the development of trust-based relationships between participants in an action research project
- To deepen understanding of how trust-based relationships facilitate collaboration and problem solving in the context of an action research project.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do teachers working as a collaborative team in a school setting effectively develop trust-based relationships?
2. What factors contribute to feelings of trust between participants in an action research group?
3. What factors inhibit feelings of trust between participants in an action research group?

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative methodology will be used to complete a case study of teachers' collaboration within a school setting. This will allow data collection giving in-depth insight into individual participants' experiences, thoughts and feelings and reflections. The researcher's experiences and reflections can add to the data and contribute to the study's findings.

Utilising a case study format will require clear definition of the extent of the research and the subjects being studied.

METHODS

As researcher I will complete a study of teachers' collaborative relationships in a school community over a stated period of time. The group of three or four participants will include teachers and the school director. The participants will work collaboratively to solve problems related to improving inclusion within a mainstream school or classroom.

I will also study the relationships between schools collaborating together as part of an EU interschool project. Two schools, including the school involved in the first part of the research, will be participants in this part of the study.

Data collection:

Rich descriptive data in written form and a short video will be collected.

Semi structured interviews with participants (tape recorded)

What factors contributed to the level of trust in the participants' relationships?
How did the level of trust effect the ability of participants to collaborate and problem solve?

The researcher's reflections will also be used as a data source.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The participants in this study will be assured of confidentiality. Pseudonyms will be used and recorded data used in the report will be given anonymity. If any other person is referred to in the course of the research they will be unidentifiable.

A consent form will be used to clarify and record agreements between research participants and the researcher.

Ethical issues arising during the research will be immediately discussed between the researcher and her tutor (Prof Radka Wildova) and the well being of research participants will be given priority. All data collected will be destroyed once the research is completed and assessed.

Appendix D Explanation of action research for participants

What is Action Research? A brief explanation

Action research is a way for people to work together to solve problems, improve situations and increase their learning.

It involves **participants** working in a group **collaboratively**. Group members meet and talk together.

A democratic process is used. All members of the group are valued equally even though they may have different abilities, knowledge and experience. Each person has an equal right to contribute and express opinions. The group works by sharing and discussing ideas and making decisions together.

A person in the group, the **facilitator**, may be responsible for organising the group –arranging meetings, making sure everyone is heard, keeping records of decisions or meetings.

Action research follows a spiral or cycle.

1. What is the problem? Discuss and agree on what the problem is.
2. What could we do to improve the situation? Decide on a plan of action
3. Evaluate the outcome. Has our plan helped? What else could we do?
4. Decide on the problem...etc

Other people could also be involved in helping to identify or solve the problem

*Action research uses **reflection**.*

Participants think about, **reflect**, individually on their past experience, to help them learn and make changes. These reflections can be shared with the group and discussed together. The group can reflect together on what has already happened and what could be useful in the future.

Appendix E

Information for Research Participants

Thankyou very much for your interest in my research. I am very appreciative of your cooperation and I hope this experience will benefit you as well as me!

My name: Samara Savandra

Email: savandra@hotmail.com

Phone: (+420) 251 080 111

Please contact me if you have any questions, comments or concerns

What I need to do with you:

- Take a short video of your group meeting together
- Interview four teachers individually. I will make an audio recording of the interviews. An interview will take less than 45 minutes.

I will not use your name in my research or the name of the school. The information you give me will not be linked to you - I will make sure you remain anonymous. If you would like to you can read my research report or see what I have written at any time. Please ask me.

Appendix F Consent Form

CONSENT FORM: Action research project participant

RESEARCH PROJECT: Establishing trust-based relationships between action research participants: A case study of teachers' collaboration to facilitate inclusive educational practices within a school setting

RESEARCHER: Samara Savandra

I have read and understood a description of this research project. I have had opportunity to ask questions regarding any aspects of this research and have them answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that I can withdraw from my involvement with this research at any time without explanation or fear of penalty. My withdrawal can include any information I have provided.

I understand any information I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and the person who acts as translator or transcribes the tape recordings of our interviews. The published results will not use my name and identification will not be possible. The tape recording of interviews, email messages to and from the researcher will be destroyed or electronically wiped when the research report has been assessed. Data will be stored securely in the researcher's room.

I understand I will have ongoing opportunities to read, check and comment on the manuscripts of interviews and emerging research themes before publication.

I understand that the data I provide will not be used for any other purpose than the research project. If I undertake to publish the research results from this investigation I agree to obtain written consent from the researcher.

Iagree to take part in this research.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

Appendix G Reflective journal entry

19 May 2008	<p>This situation is becoming even more puzzling. Today I videoed the teachers and Ivan having a “meeting” to “discuss” the EU interschool project and how learning resulting from it would be implemented in the school. The meeting was held in the “staffroom” that isn’t a staffroom (as I conceptualise a staffroom!). Some of the teachers didn’t even sit down –they leant against the wall for over 15 mins. Actually it was the more senior teachers who remained standing (they stood up to him?!) and they were the most vocal. I’m glad I videoed almost the whole meeting. And Ivan stood too – the majority of the meeting was him telling or talking to the teachers about the subject. There was very little discussion. Some of the teachers made comments or asked Ivan questions. Of course I was unable to understand what was said as it was in CZ. It will be interesting analysing the non-verbal behaviour. Will get the CD of the tape tomorrow.</p> <p>So the questions: <i>(These questions will definitely influence my interview questions)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. After several discussions with Ivan I understood from him that he considers that the teachers in the school collaborate together. Does Ivan consider this meeting to be an example of collaboration? What is Ivan’s understanding of collaboration? I need to clarify this.2. Ivan clearly explained to me the importance of collaboration between the school, parents and the community. He talked about this almost passionately. Does the school actually collaborate or interact with the community? If so how? Although I do not intend to examine school-community-parent collaboration in this research, finding the answer to this question may help me find out whether Ivan expresses opinions contrary to what he actually does. I.e. whether his ideals do not measure up to the reality.3. If Ivan’s ideals differ greatly from the reality –what is actually happening – why is this so? Is it because the traditional way or culturally accepted way of behaving is very different from his ideals? Change would take a lot of effort. Or is he unaware that his ideals differ from what is happening, what he is actually doing?4. Ivan clearly has a dictatorial style of leadership. Do the teachers have a trusting relationship with him? Or do they just accept what he tells them to do because it’s his role?5. Is there trust and collaboration between the teachers? (From my observations it appears and ‘feels’ as if there is) How does this collaboration work? What does it achieve and how? Do the teachers
----------------	--

include Ivan in this collaboration? Does he include them? (It appears not – at this stage of my investigations).

6. Does Ivan collaborate at the interschool level but dictate at the inter teacher level? Is there collaboration at the inter-school level? How does it work? What does it achieve? How does trust relate to this relationship?

A lot needs clarifying. No wonder I feel confused and perplexed. Is this going to help me understand AR better? It must! Even if it's what AR is not, or needs to overcome. I feel like re-titling this research: "*How to study AR in a culture where there is none*". Thank God for reflection –or I would have totally given up by now. At least I can try to talk myself through this maze.

Appendix H Factors inhibiting and facilitating trust

Trust Facilitators

Trust inhibitors

<p><u>Ivan</u></p> <p>History of working together</p> <p>Shared concerns for school</p> <p>Joint plan making/ collaboration</p> <p>Making good decisions</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Personal attributes (patience, open mindedness)</p>	<p>Sharing personal problems</p> <p>Past problems disagreements</p> <p>Attitude of other participant</p> <p>Difficulty finding a shared language</p> <p>Lack of communication</p> <p>Own beliefs e.g. not possible to collaborate</p>
<p><u>Isabel</u></p> <p>Collaboration and problem solving</p> <p>Openness and sharing</p> <p>Reliability</p> <p>Shared vision, beliefs, concern for children</p> <p>United – on one side</p> <p>Time for healing</p>	<p>Lack of confidentiality</p> <p>Problems left unresolved</p> <p>Favouritism by director</p> <p>Past hurt –broken trust</p> <p>Lack of unity</p> <p>Lack of support –betrayal</p>
<p><u>Lucy</u></p> <p>Leaving personal matters out of school</p> <p>Out-of-school relationships with colleagues</p> <p>Shared concerns for children</p>	<p>Lack of confidentiality</p> <p>Favouritism by director</p> <p>Inability to talk openly</p> <p>Attributing blame to others</p> <p>Lack of time causing stress</p> <p>Past societal culture of distrust –communist regime</p> <p>Traditional methods</p> <p>Dictatorial leadership</p>
<p><u>Sarah</u></p> <p>Reliability</p> <p>History of working together</p> <p>Out-of-school relationships with colleagues</p> <p>Shared concerns for children</p>	<p>Inability to talk openly</p> <p>(Considers there are no factors currently inhibiting collaboration in the school).</p>

Appendix I Trust as facilitator of collaboration / problem solving

<p><u>Ivan</u></p> <p><i>Facilitates by:</i></p> <p>Allowing people with differing opinions to work together</p> <p>Facilitating joint decision making and participation</p> <p>Providing support</p>	<p><u>Isabel</u></p> <p>Trust is a necessity for collaboration</p>
<p><u>Lucy</u></p> <p>Trust is a necessity for collaboration</p> <p>Trust is the <i>greatest</i> facilitator of collaboration</p> <p><i>Facilitates by:</i></p> <p>Promoting belief in/acceptance of others' opinions</p> <p>Creating more openness</p>	<p><u>Sarah</u></p> <p>Trust is a necessity for collaboration</p> <p><i>Facilitates by</i></p> <p>Creating open communication</p>

Appendix J Video analysis of meeting between teachers and director

Description	Interpretation
Teachers (T) (seven)	
Teachers seated or standing at the perimeters of the room. Almost as far away from D as is possible.	There is not closeness or shared intimacy between Ts and D. Their relationships in the meeting appear distant.
Three Ts standing together in a row against a wall away from other teachers.	These three Ts share a relationship as a group evidenced by ongoing non-verbal communication exclusively between them
The middle T in this group comments to the D. The Ts on either side immediately nod their heads emphatically and repeat what she says.	There is distance between them and other teachers.
Teachers share eye contact in response to D's comments. Look towards T in centre who briefly looks 'skyward', rolling eyes.	The middle T is respected in this trio. Her two colleagues show allegiance by endorsing her comments. The comments and endorsement seem to be in opposition to what the D is expressing
One teacher sitting at her work desk beside another teacher. This T 'arranging' work materials/files while apparently listening to D	Expressing shared cynicism and disagreement towards D's comments T showing higher priority to her work activity than the D's communication.
All Ts (except one 'working' with files) give attention to D.	T appear to be listening intently to D. Acceptance of his role of D 'delivering' information/directives
Facial expression of all Ts: very serious, and unresponsive. Ts look spasmodically in D's direction but have very little eye contact with him.	Very little agreement or encouragement shown by smiling or nodding. Facial expressions verge on defiance. Show concern. Looking for reason to disagree? 'What is he imposing on us now?'
T fiddling with room key Two Ts standing with arms folded Several Ts: finger against lips, finger up to face.	Impatience – wants to get going Closed off from communication Thinking of response to D but feel restricted in expressing it
T moves out of range of camera	Expressing resistance to being videoed – opposition to D (D talked to Ts about videoing meeting at my request after giving me permission to video. Did he <i>tell</i> them or <i>ask</i> them for consent?)
Several times turns back on D	Opposition to what is being said or him as a

	person
Ts laughing in response to D comments	Some cynicism towards content of D's message –but creating shared link of humour with him
Director (D)	Interpretation
D standing behind table and presenting a monologue	Presenting information to rather than sharing or expecting response from Ts. Table acts as barrier distancing him from Ts
Moved lower right arm up and down	Giving emphasis to his words
Speaking firmly evenly unemotionally. Almost no facial expression.	I state how it is. I am not open to negotiation. The situation is just like this, feeling isn't necessary
Leaning forward, supporting himself on table looking at notes and to Ts	Wanting to make contact – get his message across to Ts.
Left hand in pocket while moving right arm	Lack of full involvement and belief in his message or its acceptance. Reticence

Appendix K Teachers' responses to the trust-damaging incident

		Current level of collaboration	Awareness of problems regarding trust and collaboration	Attitude and responses to the situation
Ivan	Group A Replaced Previous director.	Collaborates with select group of teachers whom he relies on for support. Appoints trusted colleagues with whom he can collaborate extending divide Uses authoritarian stance in relationships with other teachers	Values collaboration as an ideal. Aware of need to re-establish trust and involve all teachers in collaborative decision making. Regards this as his responsibility	Makes himself available but doesn't actively encourage collaboration with all teachers –sees this as impossible Discrepancy between stated ideals and reality.
Isabel	Group B Stayed in teaching position since before previous director	Collaborates with all teachers as much as possible. States collaboration is more successful when level of trust is higher	Aware of broken trust and its effect on collaboration. Sees past hurt as continuing to impact on levels of trust between teachers	Recognises shared love and concern for children as reason to keep collaborating and repair trust. Healing may take time. Can learn from experience Willingness needed to trust again – important to keep working together
Lucy	No group. Stayed in present position over transition of directors Teachers English in many classes. Doesn't have own class	Collaborates with all teachers as much as possible across all groups	Aware how continued division is continuing to damage trust. Considers I...s traditional directive attitude stifles trust and collaboration. Sees that exclusive group membership hinders trust. Recognises effect of communist regime on trust in society – also effects school culture	If care for the children is strong enough it can bring teachers together. Sees awareness of damage to trust as requirement for healing Ensures she doesn't belong to an exclusive group

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Sarah	Group A Left teaching position because of conflict with previous director. Returned at Igor's request	Collaborates with small group of teachers including Igor.	Does not think any changes are necessary. Does not recognise any problems with trust or collaboration between teachers	Experienced trust breakdown in relationship with colleague recently. Did not try to repair relationship. The colleague left Considers leaving as easiest solution. Relationship with children important but not important enough to motivate her to repair trust.
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Appendix L Inter-school trust and collaboration

	School 1	School 2
Past experience with inter-school collaboration. Motivation to collaborate	Values exchange in ideas both for himself as director and for teachers in the school. Both required to be up to date with required changes Already had close cooperative relationship with other school directors. Meet regularly	No advantage to us in collaborating. Prefer to collaborate with schools with same philosophy Trust broken by past negative experience in collaborating with another state school
Factors facilitating trust	Shared problem solving	Risk taking
Factors hindering trust	Inter school competition, rivalry (Perceives school 2 does not want to share their 'special' ideas. Will lose its 'specialness' – its advantage in competitive situation)	Inter school competition, rivalry Lack of sharing, openness Negative past experiences Prejudice and intolerance No perceived gain in collaborating Lack of shared philosophy Too short period of time to effect change in attitude in other schools
Outcomes of collaboration	Sharing of new ideas Closer cooperation between directors Joint communication with education authority, and community Teachers cooperation between schools EU funding for new school library	Our increased understanding of other schools Increased interest in new ideas

Appendix M Reflective journal entry

30 May 2008

This morning I realise I need to write about my feelings, thoughts and experiences about the people in the CZ Republic. This is important to my research. But I need to do it in précis form – there's so much I could explore and write. I am seeing this little skola as a picture – a microcosm – of the bigger picture / wider situation in Prague/CZ. I question my 'right' or ability to make this comparison -but then I go back to the principle of valuing the individual's experience. So I will explore what I 'feel' or maybe 'sense' describes it better.

Initially I was startled at the cold rudeness of many CZ strangers towards me – for no apparent reason on my part. The metro was a good place to observe and 'sense' these people. The sad tired faces, the cold hard stares. Sitting glumly motionless and expressionless until the doors slid open for the next exchange of bodies. The disapproving looks at my friends and me when we chatted and laughed together. After my friend's bag was slit and robbed we were advised not to draw attention to ourselves by talking in English and especially laughing together. "No way" I said "I am not going to be robbed of who I am too. We need to support and encourage each other. I'll just be *more* careful with my bag." 'Why do you *keep on* saying 'dobry den' Samara?' my student friend asked me. (referring to me greeting people on our walks) Because I need to understand, I thought. And sometimes I glimpsed the fear behind the shunning. And because I need to acknowledge people; because they didn't was not a reason not to. I am part of this society while I am here – we are all 'part of', all human. I discovered 'we don't want you to know' or even perhaps 'we don't want to know ourselves' and 'we *don't know* that we are like this'. I guess it's just 'normal' to be how they are in this society. "Please tell us about how it was under the communist regime; what is and has been the effect on schools and society?" I asked our language and culture tutor. "Sure" she said –but it didn't happen.

And then there was the joy of unexpected smiles and nods of recognition. The *friendly* lady in the shop. And the wonderful exuberance of the children! Wow. Joy... joy and hope –like the brilliant green spring leaves against the dour dark imposing buildings in my photos. And the young teenagers in the schools – did they have any idea of what a contrast their bright enthusiasm was? I don't think so – it was all 'normal' to them. And then the rarity and excitement of finding a Cz friend who wanted to talk – 'What are you doing here? That's sooo interesting! I lived in USA for 3 years... You must come and have coffee....' But later some reserve ... we met in the park ... "I live down there". People here are *so* kind and generous – they just want to help you. Such a strange disparity.

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The metro seemed to express what I felt was happening in these people. This fast efficient powerful machine-beast where you become just another faceless body 'assisted' in carrying out the motions of daily life. 'It feels like they have vice grips attached to their hearts', I emailed a friend. 'The people have their freedom back but now they have no time. It's been replaced by capitalist commercialism where you are forced to work long hours to compete for a living'. This was the explanation of a wonderful CZ woman who Kate 'found' on the metro and brought back to our apartment. She was well educated and worked teaching German in a private grammar school and she spoke English fairly well. Her family stayed non-communist during the communist regime and she cried when recalling how her grandparents had been sent to a uranium mine -a concentration camp: Their family farm and home were confiscated. She was 18 at the time of the Velvet Divorce. She talked of the older people today still holding on to and threateningly 'displaying' their power in many organisations. Her stories were full of tales of corruption operating in society – just under the observable surface – or sometimes, if need be, blatantly. The sphere of education was definitely not left out. There were instances of very intelligent, young, "too well educated" people being unable to secure a job. Why? Because they are too much of a threat to the power structure. I was reminded of our shock and dislike of being told to buy a gift for the residential police who was processing our CZ entry permit. But we did –and after nearly four hours of waiting the previous day our needs were miraculously met in a few minutes.

It has become clear that nearly twenty years is a relatively short time for pain to be forgotten and old practices and beliefs to change. Habit alone is a powerful influence against change. Ivan told me one day, he'd been up since 4am. He didn't have a reason why. Yodi told me "everybody" had to start work at 6am during communist times, and some people still did, simply because that was what they were used to. Many children today begin school at 8am – relatively late!

And Lucy (teacher – see interview transcript) told me the lack of trust between teachers and the small groups of teachers 'against' one another is a common scenario within organisations in CZ society. The situation is not uncommon in schools, she thinks. In the time of communism you only talked with people you knew very well –members of your 'group' and even then you were distrusting and fearful. She later discovered her Uncle had been a government spy and the family had never suspected. You never knew what would happen next – there was little predictability. I can imagine why people would want to hang on to as much power as they could in such a de-powering environment – fear became stronger than ethical considerations for most – and obviously for many people still is.

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So here I am very appropriately studying trust in a society where it appears to be a big societal and individual issue. Do people suddenly become 'free' because they are 'given' their freedom? (I'm glad I made the link between freedom and trust in my readings. I'm beginning to understand that relationship better).

Does trust suddenly reappear after years of fear and uncertainty? What helps this process? I think that is what this research is about – well more realistically it is about realising that developing trust is hugely influenced by break down in trust – recovering from past hurts. And as Isabel said (I think it was her, or maybe Lucy too) in our interview 'you have to be aware there is a problem first'. I think that's why I felt so confused at the beginning – there were so many conflicting messages –partly because the teachers and especially Ivan didn't recognise there was a problem with trust. I can understand how it could be easier to leave your job than resolve difficulties in such an environment (as many of the teachers did -and are still doing)

And that's why the video analysis was such an effective reality check – analysing non verbal behaviour is a powerful tool in revealing what *is* going on. It helped me ask the questions that needed answering. It amuses/astounded me that this meeting was later referred to by teachers as 'formal' collaboration as opposed to 'informal collaboration'. (i.e. formal collaboration is another term for listening-to-being-told-what-to-do) I remember my dismay when I realised that Ivan considered the meeting an example of collaboration I could observe for my study.

Interesting that there were instances when it seemed too difficult to carry on – and I doubted my ability to 'read' the situation, ask the questions, make any sense of it all. I think I've probably learnt far more than if I'd found the perfect AR project to study. (I could probably have done that better in NZ!) Hope now I can just put all those learnings down on paper. Not easy!

Appendix N Data collection timeline

Date	Event	Purpose
21.04.08	Meeting with Ivan, director school 1	Introduce research proposal
12.05.08	Meeting with Eileen, translator, school 1 parent	Discuss research; agreement re translation services
13.05.08	Meeting at school 1 with teachers and director	Introduce and discuss research with teachers. Make agreement.
	Observation at school 1	Observe teachers interactions, school environment
14.05.08	Observation at school 1	Observe teachers interactions, school environment
	Meeting with Ivan	Discussion re collaboration in the school, EU interschool project
15.05.08	Observation at school 1	Observe teachers interactions, school environment
	Meeting with Ivan	Discussion re research requirements and data collection
16.05.08	Meeting with English teacher at school 2	Made arrangements for interview re schools involvement with EU interschool project
19.05.08	Observed teachers meeting with director at school 1	Made video of non-verbal communication during meeting
20.05.08	Interview with teacher and director at school 2	Data re collaborative and trust-based relationships between local schools
21.05.08	Informal interview with Eileen, school parent, school 1	Data re information about the school culture (school 1)
22.05.08	Interview with Ivan, director, school 1.	Data re collaborative and trust-based relationships between local schools

22.05.08	Interview with Ivan, director, school 1	Data re collaboration and trust-based relationships between teachers
23.05.08	Interview with Isabel, teacher, school 1	Data re collaboration and trust-based relationships between teachers
26.05.08	Interview with Lucy, teacher, school 1	Data re collaboration and trust-based relationships between teachers
27.05.08	Interview with Sarah, teacher, school 1	Data re collaboration and trust-based relationships between teachers
24.06.08	Informal meeting with teachers and director, school 1	Thank school for their support and cooperation.