Researching Trust: The Ongoing Challenge of Matching Objectives and Methods

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Speakers:

Speaker 1 (S1)   Guido

Speaker 2 (S2)   Mark

Speaker 3 (S3)   Nick (Chair)

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S1   Now, OK, so the kind of motto for the chapter is Horses for Courses and so, Nick, I'm afraid if you were telling our colleagues here that we were going to tell them today how to conceptualise and measure trust and sort of what is the one way of measuring trust that they should use and the one definition of trust that they should use so that everybody can go away and know exactly how to do it, I'm afraid we are not going to do that.

S1   We are going back to this old debate, if you like, that there are so many definitions of trust and so many ways of looking at trust and we want to kind of go -, we don't want to leave it there, we want to go for a few steps together, but the starting point is that we think that the methodological kind of mantra for trust research has to be the Horses for Courses.

S1   And when I'm using this kind of expression outside of Britain or an English speaking world, I have to explain what it means, where it comes from but here of course it's a very familiar saying. And we are emphasising this several times, Mark, and at the beginning we are

noticing that there are others who still complain about the misalignment between theory and measurements and the lack of methodological fit, these two references are from a management or management research literature, but I think the observation holds also for many other areas that there is often, well, a big effort at defining trust in the first part of the paper or a book and then once they go to the method section they start to use certain variables and instruments which don't really match the theory as it was laid out at the beginning of the part.

S1   So this is just bad research you might say but, however, the people doing this are not stupid either, for us it's just evidence that it is actually a bit of a struggle to always make sure that the way you conceptualise in trust is in line with how you're operationalising and measuring and interpreting your data and so on.

S1   So if that is kind of the starting point then, it's not easy, but then we have also I think clearer positioning amongst each other why we are using different methods and why we're using sometimes qualitative, sometimes quantitative work and emphasising different aspects of the multifaceted concept of trust. And I want to talk about those facets and those aspects and how they relate in different ways of doing it.

S1   But just as a -, because this is an informal seminar isn't it, light-hearted way, so why is there this lack of methodological fit? Well there's this story about this policeman at night walking along the street on the beat and he or she sees a man under a lamppost looking for something, the police officers goes to him and says 'like so what are you looking for, can I help you?' and the man says 'well I lost my keys, so can't find them', the police officers says 'where exactly did you lose them?', 'well over there, the other side of the street where it's dark', but no of course I ruined the joke, the officer says 'why aren't you looking over there?', 'well because it's dark and here under the lamppost it's light'.

S1   So it's like we are looking only where there is the light and light meaning where we are familiar and comfortable, where we are under control, we know what we're doing and if the thing that we are really looking for happens to be somewhere in the dark and somewhere where we can't see and what we don't know yet, unfamiliar methods for example then we don't go there and we don't find it and we don't find the key.

S1   So the drunken, probably drunken man doesn't have a chance to really find what he is looking for because he doesn't go away from the light and the lamppost that he's used to. So we need in trust research the same idea that we make sure we don't just look where we're familiar and where we know how to do it. We need to go also in these areas that are not known to us.

S1   Conceptualise, we have various methodological issues now that I want to go through. And here and there, Mark, maybe is going to chip in –

S2   Yeah.

S1   - and say something important that I have forgotten or the thing is I have for every point I have kind of a main message and then there are all kinds of sub questions that we could get into and please also help us a little bit that if you want to address something based on your own research or your own research design that you're still working on please, you know, jump in and ask us and we can maybe discuss some specifics.

S1   So the things I want to address are the role of conceptualisation to start with then the question of whether one should do qualitative or quantitative or both and then a number of more specific challenges including the challenge that is kind of the challenges that are not in the chapter but that we want to include for today, because I know Nick is

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particularly interested in how to work with the idea of willingness to be vulnerable and what does that mean and what are the tricky issues around that and our methods and our methodological approaches.

S1   And the question of levels. Trust at different levels. So in international relations you have the interstate level but also the interpersonal level between the statesmen and all kinds of other levels at which there may be international trust going on and how might we deal with that and in particular, what is the methodological challenge resulting from that.

S1   And maybe we'll do some more advertising and highlight some examples from our handbook of very innovative methods that our colleagues and contributors to the handbook have been using. OK?

S1   So conceptualisation now. What I'm not going to do and I what I don't have time to do now is to do the conceptualisation, to really say OK if we are conceptualising trust we have to talk about antecedence, so what are the antecedence of trust and I'm not going to give you that list now, or the consequences of trust and, I mean, the message here is that everybody who's, well this is simplification of course, but everybody who's studying trust and is thinking about how to conceptualise trust probably will end up with some kind of framework that includes something about antecedence, something about how trust develops, something about whether the context matters and how the context matters for the trust that develops.

S1   Something about a bit narrower how people decide whether they trust or don't trust, at least that is going to be part of the model probably. Then of course in business research people are very much interested in the consequences of trust, particularly whether you can save or make money with it but, in your areas, there are other desirable consequences of trust or outcomes of trust and they are part of any analytical model.

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S1   And then this is the particular -, one of Mark's favourite topics, when we talk about trust we also have to make certain conceptual decisions about how we're going to handle the concept of distrust. Is it just, is it the opposite, is it something completely different, is it zero trust or negative trust? And so that is another challenge in conceptualisation.

S2   Let me -, I can but in now, good!

S1   Now Mark can give you a [] –

S2   And that becomes -, I'm going to stand up as well, Guido, I can't do it sitting down.

S1   Please.

S2   But this idea of distrust, it becomes really mind-numbingly difficult because you could say well we've got a continuum, we've got trust at one end and distrust just the opposite and you could define as the opposite, but that doesn't mean it's caused by the opposite antecedence. So you've now got a whole conceptual thing to try and get your head round.

S2   Does being, defining something as the opposite mean it has exactly the opposite impact and things like that, it becomes really complex.

S1   Yeah.

S2   And then you start to get into literature and the literature says -, and you can look at some great and they say 'oh it's just an opposite, forget it' and you look at another great who say 'no they're completely different' and you think oh my gosh.

S2   So that's where we're started disagreements and contested definitions.

S1   And since we're talking about doing research and character research on trust, we also don't believe that it works like that, that you do a literature review and then you have a perfect model of trust and that's the one you're going to be working with in your empirical work. Rather in your empirical work you are still going to be working on the conceptualisation, because you will find that certain things are not so easy for your specific topic to conceptualise and so it's your job actually to find out what are the relevant antecedence for your contexts, what other possible outcomes for you, so you partly still need to determine that and so that it's not just first step of conceptualisation and then a personalisation, it's all these things are linked. But it also -, yeah, sorry?

S2   It fits it really well though, Guido, it's this issue of context and it's where you're looking at trust and then we get into this other problem of course if you look round here, most people are trusted researchers doing it for a western conceptualisation, so is that even right [10.04]? So we get into even more confusion.

S1   And the point here is that so when you are working on this, sorry this is not very -, I am now -, so these could be elements of a conceptualisation but we can always treat these elements as targets or objectives of our research, so if we have a project that wants to determine or find out rather the antecedence of trust then there may be a certain focus in that project, which means that these others are a little bit less emphasised.

S1   For example, you may deliberately have a more static design to start with just to an idea of what might be the antecedence before you make this whole thing a little bit more dynamic and try to kind of have a

sequence of some kind of temporal order in which antecedence matter when.

S1   Or a lot of studies that are mainly interested in the consequences of trust will treat those relatively lightly and is if they were already established and so your focus, your conceptual focus is going to influence also how you're going to do the research and so that is why some studies of trust are really doing something completely different than others because of what they're interested in studying. Does that make sense?

S3   Yeah, yeah.

S2   I'd like to take that a little bit further. It's also influenced by who you are as a researcher, I mean, if you're a researcher who's come in to a topic and your idea of numbers is that they're the spawn of Satan so you dislike statistics, then the likelihood is the whole way you design your research and the bits of trust you're interested in will take you away from using numerical methods or quantitative methods, so there's bits of you that are going to come in.

S2   And I would argue, though some of my positivist colleagues would disagree, that if you're coming at it from a positivist perspective, that's also influenced in the way that you look at things very strongly.

S1   Yeah. So again point here is, message is that conceptualisation is actually part of the process and not before. And it determines also where your emphasis is.

S1   Now a little bit more the kind of classical debate and the options that we have when we do empirical research. And we just have to flog that horse even more, the horse metaphor. So when we talk about qualitative/quantitative, just to reinforce that again, don't put the cart

before the horse. So the horse is the method, the horse methods are the horses pulling our research to where we want it to be, but the cart is what the research is really about and is really your topic and your empirical puzzle or problem that you want to say something meaningful about.

S1   So we observe this far too often and that's why we have to smile is that people these days, and both sides of the Atlantic and the pacific, are first looking at which journal they want to publish in, then they say that journal accepts only qualitative papers, so I have to do a qualitative study and maybe it has to be a particular kind of study because for example they don't like experiments so don't do one. And then you are, after a long process of finding out which methods you are going to use for tactical reasons, then you think about whether some part of your topic might be suitable for doing such a study.

S1   And then you have put the cart before the horse. And it happens. Does it happen in Birmingham? I'm not sure.

S2   I would say it happens at every single university in the country at the moment.

S1   So of course very simple message – don't do that! Think about, again, what you are trying to do with your research before you find out, before you then try to find the matching methods. So is your project an exploratory or a confirmatory project? Are you going to confirm a well established theory or hypothesis let's say in a new area or with a new case or with something else. Or are you really starting out with a very new topic, never been done before, not clear which kind of variables and concepts you should actually take into account.

S1   And, yeah, I mean, some people might say the confirmatory work is more amiable to the quantitative testing type of research and the

exploratory could be more qualitative and now Mark is going to tell you it can be exactly the opposite, the other way around.

S2   I was actually just debating whether I come in and say some people tell you the opposite. In general, what Guido says is right, there is this more in effect that one is hypothesis testing and this one is -, and then in effect building theory and testing theory, this one is building theory up out of the findings so it will not be statistical very often, but it will be a theory which can then either go on with propositions to be moved on and tested further qualitatively or with quan-, or of course you can start off with exploratory, build a model of how you think things happen and then it can move into statistical testing afterwards.

S2   I think the crucial thing we've got here, which is really important, is it's beyond description. And we have to -, because there's some really interesting descriptive stuff, I think [16.05] trust monitor which say what's the state of the world in trust, but it just tells us what's going to, it doesn't actually enable us to understand it, it's just a statement of here's the fact now that people trust politicians in the UK even less than they did last year.

S2   That's fact but what's more interesting is what are the processes behind it. And that could be exploratory if we don't know much about it yet or if we think we know more about it, we could actually be testing the hypothesis and doing more confirmatory work, see if our hypotheses are true of course.

S1   So I think that it can actually be the type of more confirmatory quantitative work can come before exploratory, so we can –

S2   Mm, because you find out new things.

S1   - change and it could be for instance that -, because quantitative confirmatory work finds interesting correlations but doesn't find the mechanisms and for the mechanisms you need more exploratory work to work them out and it could be even that you are finding correlations or relationships between variables that you didn't expect and then you have to go back and find out why there could [17.18] related.

S2   If you think of the stuff we were doing on trust and distrust, it started off at the statistical side actually finding out are trust and distrust different or not, we found out that they were which flew in the light of what certain people like Mayor [17.34] were saying, then the next stage was to 'hang on, what the heck's going on, let's do some exploratory work and do some in depth [] to try and understand why we're getting these figures coming out'. So you start the opposite way to which you might think is normal.

S1   Also an interesting question and related but at a slightly different level is whether you're doing deductive, inductive or abductive research and I just want to highlight the abductive here, because is everybody aware of this idea of abductive research perspective or design? The idea of what this could be?

S2   It's probably good if you think of these as ways of reasoning.

S1   Yeah.

M   It may be disruptive.

S1   Yeah, yeah, well this is -, are the concepts of deductive and inductive research approaches are familiar, yeah? So inductive means you're doing all kinds of observations –

S2   Starting with the data –

S1   - and then trying to find, to generalise what you're seeing.

S2   Yeah.

S1   In deductive, you are first determining what it should look like theoretically, I'm not speaking in very formal language I know, but you are trying to say what it should look like based on, you know, established reasoning and theories and then you're going out into the world to try and confirm it and if you can't confirm it you just confirm your theory that you had before and try to have a better one. So -

S2   So you could really talk of that one inductive as theory building, deductive is theory testing.

S1   Yeah.   But the method of abductive is actually quite interesting, because abductive is not -, you know, you might say it's very strong case of inductive is [grounded 19.35] theory, probably heard about that before, but abductive says we don't have to go -, in order to find something interesting and in order to at least develop some theories a little bit further, maybe not completely new theories but do some kind of theory elaboration or theory development, we don't have to -, well first of all we shouldn't because it doesn't really make sense within the paradigm, but also we don't need to do very strongly inductive [grounded] theory, we can do abductive.

S1   And abductive actually means you are starting with a theory, like in deductive research, but when you find something that disconfirms your theory, you don't just say OK hypothesis rejected, back to the drawing board and, you know, start from scratch but you then actually say like hang on, that is really interesting that we are observing something that is not fitting with the theory that we had set up before, now let's try as we would do in inductive research to see if this is a stable observation

that we see again and again so that we can generalise it and kind of build it into the theory that we had before.

S1   So you are -, honestly I'm still struggling why they called it abductive, but you are kind of working a little bit around the problems and you are taking something from the deductive into the inductive and back and maybe that's the abduction!

S2   It's the idea I think it's about moving from induction to deduction and moving backwards and forwards in order to be able to focus on that question you trying to answer. And I think you've described it quite nicely because it's sort of like a moving back from inductive and so in a spiral upwards to get greater understanding.

S1   Yeah and it's back and forth but also taking something from one side into the other –

S2   Into the next.

S1   - and back, yeah.

S2   This idea of a spiral moving onwards and upwards.

S1   And we have one chapter in the handbook about abductive research in the context of high tech alliances where the researchers, [21.43] and [], went and had sort of eight case studies of alliances between high tech firms and they had very diverse cases and some of these cases didn't fit the original theory but allowed them to extend that theory and so they are calling that an abductive research [22.05].

S1   Whereas, you know, please understand in the streets methods, well textbook sense, if you are doing deductive and you are finding something that doesn't confirm your theory you should basically simply

reject your theory and these abductive researchers are saying 'no we are not going to reject our theory, just going to make it better', yeah.

S2   And it actually fits I think with a lot of what we do as researchers in reality anyway.

S3   Yeah.

S2   So it's quite nice because you put a label on yourself and say 'I'm an abductive researcher' and you feel happier, where I'm saying 'well I don't really do as I should do' so it helps.

S1   Exactly, kind of eradicate –

S2   I think, as a big plug for the book though, Guido, it's worth saying that this chapter is not in the first edition.

S1   It's in the second, yes of course.

S2   Only in the second so there's a plug there.

M   It makes research a lot less -

S3   You need to do it in paperback.

S2   It will be coming out in paperback.

S3   Oh it will?

S1/2 Yeah.

S3   Oh OK!

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S1   OK. Another kind of apparently smart thing to do is then if, you know, both qualitative and quantitative research can be justified maybe the best thing is to always do both, just combine it, collect some numbers and do some interviews and then you have both and you can't go wrong.

S3   [Laughs]

S2   I disagree with you on that –

S1   Well first of all there is a big difference between combining and mixing methods and Mark's going to explain you what mixing is.

S2   Let's start off first and say I don't think personally you should always do combined or mixed methods. I think you should use the methods that enable you to answer your question, which goes right back to where you started from, Guido. And so it depends on the question.

S2   Combining methods just means you've got normally they refer to quants and quals, two types of methods, again I could argue against that but I won't today, but it means what you're doing is you're actually using here's my quants bit and here's my quals bit but there's no real interaction between.

S2   When you're mixing methods, one from of method of quants is informing what you do with the quals or vice versa, so a mixing actually necessitates one informing the other rather than having two in effect independent pieces of work which combine into one study.

S1   Yeah. And also it's a bit more planned as well in the sense that you are not just doing something in parallel and, you know, for example having a survey with structured question and open question or closed and open question, that would be, you could say that is already

combining methods isn't it, because you're partly asking people to tick boxes and partly giving them the chance to write something or, you know, and do something a little less structured.

S1 But then in mixed methods there's also this idea that you really have a plan why you are first collecting one type of data and then once you have analysed that, you move to a next stage where you are deliberately using another method to complement what you have found in the first step and then you're planning a third or fourth step really as a research design and a sequence of methods that you are applying, rather than just simply saying oh let's do everything at once and see what comes out, yeah.

S2 Though of course you can use –

S1 So mixed methods is one of the most wrong, abused or wrongly used descriptions of some research designs that are simply combining –

S2 [25.22]

S1 - open and closed question.

S2 Although of course you can do, you talked about sequential, but you can do concurrent mixed methods as well, where you actually are using the two quants and quals type methods at the same time but the key is you've planned it and one is informing the other even in that sequential concurrent use.

S1 Yeah and you know how they should, kind of, yeah, work it, yeah. OK. And finally, well finally, this is simply the question of how much complexity can you handle in your project, how much is it important to have rich data.   It's just something to think about and it's about matching the methods to the topics.

S1   So if you have a topic that is in itself already highly complex, you have to -, and again sometimes when the world is very complex, the best thing to do is to try to force it into a structured framework otherwise you will get completely lost. But at the same time it's of course dangerous because you are creating something, an artefact of your research, that isn't really matching what's out there in the reality unless you have the means to check back and do something like the abductive approach, some adjustments to your kind of forced framework.

S1   Richness, I mean, this is maybe in political science work, if you are talking about a very specific relationship between two countries at a certain period of time then you probably want to have very rich data, you want to be able to tell this story of this relationship in as much detail as possible.

S1   Another kind of approach may be just coding of historical incidents over the last 700 years and for every kind of little conflict you simply have a scale and you put it on 1 to 7 and that's how you treat this kind of historical incidence. But you can do that if your aim is to test a very general hypothesis that is supposed to hold over hundreds of years and then you are starting to be at the very superficial level just coding some kind of wars or military conflicts or armed conflicts according to some interesting scale that you know of but I don't, ha ha!

S1   And you can do that but of course it's just simply if then somebody says that your data are not very rich and you're going to say 'well that's not what I wanted anyway', yeah? But if you are having an interest in the specifics of your relationship, UK, Iran, you know, our times, if you then just say on a scale from 1 to 7 well this is like a 5 in terms of historical context then people are going to say 'thank you very much, we don't know anything that we didn't know before that we have no idea really why it's a 5 and not a 7 or a 2 on your scale', yeah?

S1   So access, did you want to say something on that Mark or - ?

S2   Well I just wanted to add a bit before we get to that. I think we're really stressing here, it's the question that drives the data. So if you're -, the examples you gave it was very clear the first one was look at a longitudinal study trying to look at overall long term patterns, the second was taking one issue and looking at it in more depth.

S2   So they're consequently very different questions with very different data. Access?

S1   Yeah, access is where –

S2   The bane of our lives isn't it.

S1   - sometimes we can, I mean, we have to give in a little bit and say we can't always get the kind of data we would like to have.

S3   Ha ha, yeah!

S1   And so, and interestingly, sometimes it's harder to get qualitative work, sometimes it's hard to get people to talk to you about trust in an interview for example because it's a very sensitive topic and they don't feel like talking about it and they would probably agree more easily to ticking some boxes on a survey that kind of makes the whole thing a little bit more detached and they can, you know, maybe just go online and participate and they really feel that this is very anonymous and they may agree to do that.

S1   And so collecting structured data, sometimes in terms of access can be easier and sometimes people are not willing to do a survey with you or answer a questionnaire because they feel that just ticking these boxes

is not really going to convey what they want to say. And so you have to make this effort of going to meet them or at least call them on the phone and give them the chance to talk about it and that is really, again, in some kinds of trust research this is what you really have to do, otherwise you will not get meaningful data.

S1   For some other topics like maybe political trust, how much do the citizens trust the government, maybe it's OK to do those standardised surveys and not completely meaningless as such, but of course as soon as you want to understand why certain people are not trusting the government, you probably instead of asking more and more structured questions to them which are going to be more and more detailed and precise, it's better to actually talk to them and let them talk about what they think about the government and then you have the effort of coding it later on and making sense of it later.

S2   You were quite interesting the way you used the words then, it's taught them about what they think about government so, in other words, you've immediately got rid of the word 'trust' there, because as soon as I come and say 'hey I'd like to talk about how much you trust your supervisor or your colleagues at work' then we've immediately sensitised you to this whole idea of trust and so we're going to get very different answers as well.

S3   Yeah.

S2   And I think that was quite interesting the way you put -, there was a thing that struck me as you were talking, Guido, was we've got the access once we're actually interviewing or collecting data from people, it's cognitive access we can talk about, but there's also that first thing of the physical access of actually even getting hold of the person and being allowed to talk to them which, again, is certainly in the areas I work in actually getting into organisations, if I said 'hey, I want to go

and talk to you about how much your staff trust your manager's, I think the expression would be 'no', but if you start saying 'how do people feel about the change in the organisation and the impact it's having on relationships so we can improve them', by gosh they want you to talk then.

S3   Doesn't it pose an ethical problem though, if you don't tell your interviewees that you're researching trust and then, kind of, what's the basis in which -, and then you write about trust afterwards, is that –

S2   I –

S3   Or do you think there's no -, because the problem is –

S2   No I think there is a major ethical issue and I think you have to think it through very carefully. I mean, my argument was I was looking about how people felt in response to organisational change.

S3   Yeah.

S2   And I was equally interested in the fact of whether they were feeling trusting or distrustful and also whether they felt happy and sad. So I was looking at lots of different emotions, so I felt yeah it's alright not actually mentioning the word 'trust'.

S3   Because when I interviewed my interviewees and this is high national security officials I think, looking back on it, I probably revealed too much of my hand and then of course the problem is they immediately offer their kind of, if you want, emotional responses about trust.

S2   Yeah.

S3   And then you're not really getting necessarily what they would say if they didn't actually know that you were researching trust. So I think that bias issue is a real –

S2   It's really –

S3   - problem but there's an ethics issue, if I had done an interview with these people and then written about trust afterwards, would that have been problematic, in terms of not having actually told them because, you know, you know what it's like ethics codes, universities [33.26] –

S1   Mm.

S2   Well I took my one through -, well I had similar issues, I took, the way I did it, through an ethics committee and they agreed it because they said you wouldn't –

S3   Yeah.

S2   - there was also an ethical issue about, as a researcher, trying to not influence what people are going to say and they said 'as soon as you say the word 'trust' you've influenced the outcome you're going to get'.

S3   Yeah.

S2   And that, in effect –

S3   Respondent bias.

S2   - using the cart analogy rather than horses this time, that trumps the –

S3   Yeah, I think it's really difficult.

S2   It was good though, I was able to write a paper on it afterwards so it was good.

S3   Yeah.

S1   Did you have these concerns in your research so far, yeah?

M   Yeah, I will comment. I studied the word reconciliation and I studied in post conflict Bosnia and I came up with exactly the same issues, I mean, there are some organisational people that just hate the word 'reconciliation', so if I go they'd be like 'no just get out of here and leave me alone'. And what I tried to do is, well first of all take a good look at the background of the organisation that I'm working for and try to figure out in the construction of their mission, vision and values and all these sort of organisational musts, where I can kind of place the word 'reconciliation' and frame it in terms of I want to study your mission, I want to study, you know, you're in the business of the truth in Bosnia and what does that mean and then I asked the question, you know, how would this link to a concept of reconciliation or does reconciliation even matter and that way it kind of flows nicely, the interview, and it helps to see where they come from most of the time. But I have to be really careful in doing the background research to really understand what they're all about before I even start [35.04].

S2   I think there's a couple of really good points in there. And the first is this amount of preparation that's needed to be done. I think what is going to be sensible and acceptable to these people, which is also an ethical issue as well because the last thing you want to do is to go in and upset people you're interviewing, because if that's [35.23].

S2   And then I think the other thing was, I think it came across, was the willingness to be flexible as you're going through it and say 'aha now I

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can bring that in that way', so it's the planning as well. Thank you, great example.

S1   Yeah, I think the ethical issue is undeniable though because ultimately ethics are also something we have to resolve within ourselves and so if I know I want to study trust and I've framed the study to the committee as a study on just general business relationships or something like that, I know that I'm kind of deceiving them or deceiving myself, the topic of tomorrow, so I think it doesn't really go away but there are certain ways of maybe handling this issue and making it acceptable.

S1   And for me, ultimately the question of the research ethics is whether there is a risk of hurting your participants and so first thing could be that they are just feeling highly uncomfortable or anxious during the data collection because of the way that you research your topic, or that they may be harmed later on if the data you have collected from them falls into the wrong hands and then we are more used to studying trust in the business context and that is what all the works councils in Germany, who are very powerful, always worry about that, as your employer, if you are [surveying 36.41] employees you may have the best of intentions and you may also guarantee certain kind of restrictions on who's going to access the data but what if, what if somebody kind of breaks that and then the employer gets the data and they're going to, in the worst case, kind of lay off people because they said the wrong thing in the survey.

S1   And that is what they are always very worried about and you need to establish for this part a lot of trust as a researcher and sometimes, yeah. Directly with the respondents, I don't know, it's interesting what you just reported how you did it, but there are also ways of how you ask questions in interviews or in other kind of types of data collection, where you -, what I often do is first of all I treat the people like experts, like 'in your experience, what is important in work relationships' and

then we gradually move from a very general abstract level that they talk about, to examples, yeah?

S1   So if you ask about 'well how do you build trust in teams?' and then I get them to start first of all 'well in my experience, and I've been in like hundreds of teams over the last 25 years, the main thing is this and this and this' and then you ask them 'well can you give me examples' and then they start to talk about a real experience that they've had and then you have them where you want them to be, really close to what is actually going on in reality will, in retrospect of course, discussing it after the effect.

S1   But then you get them to talk about their personal experiences and specific incidents and not just the general but you are kind of not going in right away and say like 'tell me about kind of the worst breach of trust a supervisor has ever done to you', and they go 'arrrhhghh', you go in lightly and more abstract and go deeper.

S1   So the real challenge -, oh and validity, sorry. Cart before the horse. But there are -, you have to be aware of what is expected of you. And this is maybe goes more to the more junior researchers that of course even though you shouldn't put the cart before the horse, you should also still be aware in your methodological choices of what is expected of you, right.

S1   So if I'm kind of now contradicting myself as I said before, I make jokes about people who first look at which journal they want to get into and then they decide how to do their study and there is of course a little bit of that that you cannot avoid, at least knowing the traditions in your field and in your discipline and at least being aware of where you are moving within your field, if you are using certain kinds of methods that may face general validity challenges amongst your colleagues.

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S1   However, validity is again not something that is measured or decided by just one yardstick that you can have, of course qualitative researchers and quantitative researchers have different ideas of what makes a claim valid and that's again something you need to be aware of because there is still something like good or quantitative research that is done well and is not done well and qualitative research that is done well and not well. And you need to be aware of what the methodological state of the art in your area is.

S1   Because I'm saying this because a little bit because I'm a qualitative researcher most of the time and we often hear that people who can't do research properly do qualitative and the ones who can do it properly do quantitative and I must say that there are a lot of horrible qualitative studies out there where people haven't really paid attention to how they're doing it and are simply writing up a story afterwards and they are easily criticised for how they did it.

S1   And others are doing it, you know, very well and are meeting the validity criteria within the paradigm of qualitative research. So doing qualitative is not an excuse for doing it badly. Also doing it quantitatively doesn't mean that automatically you're going to have valid data or valid findings, you still have to work on that and make -, so Mark is frowning, I wonder what I said wrong?

S2   I'm frowning first of all when you used the example of the story, because there's a perfectly valid research way of doing it which is actually about story telling and actually writing it up as a story in a narrative analysis. But I think I can say you're alright really, Guido, because when you do that, there is a very clear way of writing up a narrative analysis and a whole body of literature on how to do it, so you should be following that literature and if you're not it does then become 'oh me and my mates had a few chats with a few people about trust and they said this, the end'.

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S1   Yeah.

S2   So that was the first point which I started thinking oh I just want to come in there. And I think the other one which was come in which is something which is really bugging me and I started life as a quantitative researcher and I still do a fair bit of it. And that is this horrendous, in my view, desire to do more and more quantification using more and more complex statistics when very simple statistics would have worked just as well and that does seem to be driven by certainly journals.

S1   Mm.

S2   And it doesn't actually, in my view, add anything other than saying 'gosh aren't I clever at pressing a lot of different buttons very quickly and using lots of computers' but then perhaps I'm getting old and cynical. But it does worry me that more and more complex statistics, do they actually add anything to what they understand at the end of the day. That would be a nice paper to write as my last ever paper because I probably wouldn't be able to work anywhere else!

S2   The other one I want to write, which links into the quant-, Guido, is about different scales, are we going to talk about scales later?

S1   Maybe you should do it now!

S2   OK. In trust research, there are, by probably 50 or 60 different scales, so a series of questions in questionnaires, all designed to measure the concept of trust and they're all slightly different and yet when people do most trust research they develop yet another scale or they say 'oh we took this scale and changed it a bit' but nobody ever tells you how they changed it, or very rarely.

S2   So there's a real slapdash laziness of not actually looking at scales that have been developed and saying 'how does this work and what's the issues behind it' and when people are developing new scales, they're not actually explaining how they've been developed, so it makes it almost impossible to compare findings from these quantitative studies.

S2   There's a brilliant paper by Graham [43.53] and [] which actually takes the key scales and explains them and puts them against each other so you can see what it's measuring. But despite that, you'll go along and you'll read these articles and then 'oh we decided to use this scale, well it was Friday, it was five to five, we'll do that one', you know, or Tuesday or Monday, there's no real thing of how does it relate back to the precise stuff in relation to trust you're trying to measure and the context within which you're measuring it.

S1   Yeah, or maybe the message is people should just be clearer themselves whether they are trying to do confirmatory work or exploratory work and if they are claiming exploratory then they have to explain why what they are trying to do is not something that we already tried before.

S1   Time, I'm going to hopefully look at the time. We've already touched on these challenges to some extent. The first one is one of my favourites that trust is a dynamic process and so we need methods that can capture processes and developments over time is just the most -, so having a temporal perspective on trust is maybe just the easiest thing that you can build in, not that it's easy, but it's the easiest of the different challenges.

S1   Much more difficult is to really use process theory and treat basically all of your constructs as fluid and changing all the time, which is of course something that is from a classic longitudinal study you shouldn't do at all if you change to a definition of your variables in every kind of round,

you cannot really work anymore with this kind of data, but in a process philosophy, that is exactly what you should do because you are saying that your concepts are actually evolving and reality you're studying is evolving and so that's something you should reflect. So very tricky one but one of the things to address in the future.

S1   The tacit elements, I think also we touched upon this already a little bit that trust is not something we can directly observe, again a very [46.22] simple statement. So what can we observe that can allow us to make claims about the trust that is in people's minds, in people's relationships, in organisational structures, institutional structures, how do we kind of find this thing that is tacit also in the sense of not being accessible easily for the people who are involved, so that it's very difficult to talk about.

S1   Well, we have some -, about the tacitness, for example just an example of how you can study trust indirectly without asking people how much they trust each other or what they think about trust or how they, you know, what they have to say about it, it's one example from the handbook is the study which, to me, is still a little bit crazy but it's interesting, is the study that Michelle Williams [47.32] did, and they actually studied, hopefully my summary is now accurate, they have studied nurses when they handover from one shift to the next, so in a hospital whenever one nurse finishes her shift, the next nurse is already there, they talk briefly about whatever they need to talk about in those handovers.

S1   And what these researchers have done is that they have recorded these conversations but sort of just put a microphone somewhere and recorded them and then later on they have analysed simply the pitch at which the people were talking and they were making inferences that when these nurses talk to each other and the pitch is high and goes up and down and so is very lively pitch in how they talk to each other, then

you can assume that they trust each other, but if the pitch is quite flat and they talk to each other in a rather monotonous way then there is at least less trust, let's not say distrust, but then there is less trust and of course they did something to validate that and so they analysed some of these conversations in great detail in order to kind of code and confirm that the pitch is representing the level of trust in the relationship.

S1   And, you know, I know there may be problems with how they understand trust and so on but nevertheless, this idea is quite interesting isn't it, that you could kind of, I mean, you could kind of put a microphone in the room and a little red lamp and when the pitch is going too flat, the red lamp goes on and says like 'trust warning, are you not trusting each other, what's going on with you, talk to each other, figure it out why you don't like each other!', something like that, they are trying, so they have developed a method of establishing how much people trust simply by listening to the pitch.

S1   And so I don't know if you can do that in international relations so you don't have to go to Barack Obama and ask him how much he trusts Putin or the other way around, but there could be something else where you, kind of, the equivalent of the pitch where you could say OK the pitch is getting flat, there is an issue, right, so I like at least this idea that sometimes we can figure it out, although it's really tacit, we have ways of figuring out what is going on, yeah.

S1   Mark, you can talk about different cultures as a challenge, you've mentioned something already but –

S2   I think, again, Guido is part of the book on trust across cultures and we start at the very beginning that the way I use the word 'trust' isn't the same as a different culture uses the word 'trust'. The way we measure trust in general in research is being developed from western cultures

and in particular from if you look at the quantitative measures from North America.

S2   Now I always get very worried when something that is being developed in one part of the world will apply everywhere else just as well. We don't know. So I think there's some very important issues to be thinking about that when we work across [50.43] -, we did some, I did some work a couple of years ago with a Turkish and a Chinese colleague on looking at trust between small businesses and their customers.

S2   And we found very different things coming to the fore in terms of trust for different cultures, so different aspects of trust may be different. It may even be that the definition, we were applying the western definition, was totally inappropriate.

S2   So it's parts that we don't even understand yet and it's been left. And then of course we get into the lovely stuff, Scott and I were talking about this this morning, about whose model of cultures do you use? And you can guarantee whichever one you pick somebody's going to get very angry and say 'you should have used that one', so you've then got to think well justification of how you're defining culture, are you using [51.28], are you using a cultural mosaic, a [] type thing, so we get into more and more complexities for understanding this.

S1   Mm. And to me, a concern is that just the observation that trust varies according to culture in which it is built and developed, that that doesn't kind of tear everything apart or, I mean, I'm one of the researchers who does see a universal trust issue, it's just that in different cultures it plays out in different ways and may also be framed in different ways, although I believe that there is a kind of core problem that human beings face actually with each other which is, to me, the universal trust

problem, but how people deal with it, how they talk about it, that is very highly cultural variable. But that is just my position Mark.

S2   It's interesting, I mean, [52.27]'s one of my doctoral students who's, hopefully she'll be here by the end of the month, she's moving over, and we've come to this, exactly the same end point, that there is something which is trust that we can all grasp and understand in a similar way, but different aspects that make that trust if you take [52.45] ability and []'s integrity model, different aspects of that become more important to different cultures.

S1   Mm. And these differences are very important for explaining also why trust is often difficult to build across cultures and certainly in any international research or international politics, this issue, this challenge should be there all the time by definition, although I don't want to emphasise too much the national cultures as a kind of fixed thing in our worlds, but if we accept that there is something like a research on national cultural differences then in international research, all the time cultural variance in how trust is understood and made sense of should be a constant problem that you are facing in your research.

S1   Whereas I could say I make my life easy, I just study a company in Bremen with only people who grew up in the area and then they shouldn't have too many cultural differences or cultural differences in how they understand trust, but ever there you have to be quite careful of course in our times and the cultures are very variable also within a national or local context, yeah.

M   Sorry to interrupt, there's another issue which is the language for me is particular, I'm Columbian, I work in a British university and I research in Bosnia, the culture issue and the language issue, it's interesting but can be a nightmare. I'll give one quick example of this, which goes back to my key word 'reconciliation'. In Bosnia, the word

'reconciliation', if you Google translate or if you talk to people they translate it as [*speaks in Bosnian*] and I started using that in certain contexts and, you know, [54.39] reconciliation, according to certain interpretations, reconciliation for a Bosnian can mean making friends. And when I'm talking about victims and perpetrators and I bring up that word, it creates a whole load of problems. And for me in Spanish it's very similar to English, you know, this element of language becomes very crucial.

S1   Yeah.

S2   There's some fun things in the book, I think of Miriam [55.07]'s chapter where she actually has the same statement in three different languages, it's like a triangular prism to actually address the very prominent how people may misinterpret so that they can, if they're say bilingual they can be in different languages.

S1   But there are translation issues from difference between trust and confidence and then in some languages you have the more common word is close to confidence but does it mean confidence or does it mean trust and you have a lot of that of course.

S2   I mean, we even have problems if we've just working in English between distrust and mistrust.

S1   Yeah.

S3   Yes.

S1   OK. Now for researcher reflexivity.

S2   We've talked a bit about that.

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S1   We talked a bit about that. Sometimes we would maybe like to see that a little bit more in the studies that people are presenting, that they are at least aware or make it more explicit which kind of issues they have become aware of in the way they have influenced the research and researcher reflexivity also goes back to this idea that in order to collect data about trust, you need to build trust with your informants or participants.

S1   And so if you're not able to do that then your data will be different compared to when you are able to do that. So the issue of researcher influencing the research process or having an influence on the findings, because of the involvement in the research process, very direct involvement, that is in many areas, many types of empirical research is very strong when you study trust and so we have several examples also in the handbook where people are talking about they needed to build trust [56.56] himself in his work in Ghana, he was studying, he was basically interested in how markets work in Ghana, how these kind of village markets work and how people trade and decide whom to trade with and not. And also what the role of trust would be then.

S1   But he first had to kind of build trust with these people in the markets before they were willing to take to him or [57.18] in Tanzania who invested quite a bit of time first of all learning an African language and living in a village for several months before she actually started to systematically collect data, because she was aware that she wouldn't be able to do that just, you know, stepping off the plane and arriving in that village as a stranger and going around asking people who were starting businesses in that area how they trust their business partners.

S1   So sometimes this reflexivity also means that you're aware of the investment that is necessary in order to be able to collect the kind of data that you want to collect. Because [58.00] could have gone into the village, hand out some surveys, collect them, go home, work a little

bit on SPSS or R and write a paper but, I mean, that's not what you want to do.

S1   Research ethics, we have touched on. It's reinforced or the ethics are maybe a little bit more prominent in trust research because it's a sensitive topic. Usually trust is a highly sensitive topic and especially when people admit to difficulties in trusting others, they feel that this kind of information that they are giving could be used against them and so you have to be really careful there. And also careful in whether people are actually telling you want they think and are not just making claims about trust for relationships that are not actually very much, they don't have very much substance.

S2   But that then links into the method issue of not actually saying you're working on trust and actually the points you were making earlier about actually getting scenarios and then interpreting the way they talk about is this a trusting scenario or not.

S1   Now Nick's favourite topics!

S3   [Laughs]

S1   What about the willingness to be vulnerable as a concept that is hard to maybe operationalise and also trust between different levels. So, Nick –

S3   Yeah.

S1   - maybe you can explain the question and then I try to give a very rough answer. Why are you kind of haunted by this problem –

S3   [Laughs]

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S1   - that some of our most used definitions of trust have this willingness to be vulnerable as an element of the definition and what kind of problems does that cause?

S3   I think for me the problem is still trying to disentangle whether willingness to be vulnerable means that I have a belief that I'm willing to be vulnerable as against actually making myself vulnerable. And then so it could be that I have a belief that I can trust someone, I think they're trustworthy and I'd be willing to make myself vulnerable to that person. But that doesn't actually mean that I've actually made myself vulnerable to that person.

S2   I think you've hit an issue which I get really uptight about which is the difference between a propensity to trust, which is the willingness to become vulnerable perhaps if it happens –

S3   Right.

S2   - versus the actual act of trusting.

S3   Right.

S2   And for me, it's a bit scary to look at people's willingness to be vulnerable or propensity to trust. What really matters is when it comes down to it, are you trusting or not, do you trust that person or not in that particular situation –

S3   And is trusting for you an action in that sense?

S2   I like to research trust as an action.

S3   Yeah.

S2   And actually have something concrete because, otherwise, anybody can say 'oh yeah I'm dead trusting, I'm willing to lay myself open to you', but until it actually happens you don't know.

S3   Because the way I would want to explain it is that there's a difference between this propensity to trust –

S2   Yeah.

S3   - and then this act of trusting –

S2   Exactly.

S3   - and the moment that I actually engage in the act of trusting, then I think you form a relationship with another party. Because the trusting relationship is then asymmetrical until that part then acts as well. Because –

S2   No, you can still act and trust somebody and not form a relationship. You may think you've got a relationship but it doesn't really matter whether they, from the other side of it.

S3   But what's the definition of a trusting relationship then as against trust? Because that's something that a number of people in the room are playing with.

S2   It becomes a trusting relationship when it becomes a dyad doesn't it or –

S3   Well that's my question, does it only become a trusting relationship when it's a dyad?

S1   You can have highly asymmetric trust.

S2   You can have that, yeah. But is that a relationship or is it just you trust something. I think we're not looking at the definition of trust, I think we're looking at the definition of relationship.

S1   Yeah.

S2   Sorry, you wanted to - ?

F   I think it's a very interesting, very complicated debate which will probably unfortunately not be able to resolve, but just to put some pointers in there. So we're talking about effective components of trust, we're talking about cognitive components of trust, there is a motivational element I want and a behavioural element. And it's very interesting to see the links between those but also the barriers between all these four. Because you have basically a 4x4 where you're looking at interactions between the effective and the cognitive components, motivational component, which is similar to what Nick's saying, and then the behaviour, the actual acts, manifestations of trust.

S1   Mm. Yeah, so we have just -, so we have the willingness to be vulnerable and the actual acceptance of vulnerability, either by making yourself more vulnerable or by actively accepting or accepting that you are vulnerable, right?

S3   Mm.

S1   So you may already be vulnerable and then when you accept that then you are trusting, right, so you're not necessarily increasing your vulnerability in that moment but you are agreeing or accepting that it's there. Now with what has to happen at the other side of the relationship that also has been very interesting and actually the level, partly the levels one, partly something else.

S1   For example, what if your, well, what about my trust in Angela Merkel, yeah? You might say that it's actually meaningless to talk about it because –

S2   Would you have a relationship with her?

S1   - because I don't have a relationship with her.

S2   Sorry, that was too good to ask!

S1   Yeah, so far!

[Laughter]

S1   So one thing to say that's actually meaningless, yeah, you're imagining some vulnerability to her and actually [64.00]. But I would counter and say just for the sake, that well but she is aware that there are millions of people like me who will maybe be affected, who may be affected by her decisions, OK? So I expect her to behave in a way that the generalised citizen like me should be happy to accept her decisions, right?

S1   So I could say 'well I don't have a direct relationship, a very personal, but I have a kind of impersonal generalised relationship' and, well, then you may still say that this is rubbish, but at the level of the person who feels like that and thinks like that it is actually a complete trust relationship because they will say 'well even though I'm only one of a lot of people who have this kind of trust in her, I expect that she knows that we exist and that she feels a responsibility and that is enough for me to say that is a relationship'.

S2   You could take your and look at it with the migrant crisis and Angela Merkel saying 'Germany is open to these people' and they trusted her and they went.

S1   Yeah, well you can say that, a refugee might have a –

S2   And they believed there was a –

S1   Yeah and so each refugee might think, might imagine that he or she can trust our chancellor –

S2   Yeah, exactly.

S1   - even though they know that the chancellor doesn't know them personally, but they think she knows that we exist, all of us.

S3   But that's a different type of trust, right, that's the trust that you had today when you got on the plane, right? You don't know the pilot personally or the airline –

S1   Yeah, yeah.

S3   - but you trust that they're going to bring you here safely.

S1   Yeah.

S3   But that's a different -, for me, that's not a trusting relationship. But when you talk about trusting relationships I'm thinking about interpersonal relationships so, you know, in my book I developed the concept of interpersonal trust at the international level and argue that trusting relationships are what form potentially and that's a different type of trust to what you're talking about Merkel and the refugee isn't it.

S1   Yeah.

S2   Mm.

S3   But what would you call the trust that the refugee has in Merkel?   I mean, it's not interpersonal trust.

S1   It's –

F   Constitutional trust?

S1   It's a more political trust, yeah.

F   [66.19]

S1   Institutional or political trust but it could have a person –

M   []

S1   Yeah.

S3   And then Alan asked if that's confidence?

S1   I mean, it can be an institutional trust if the trust relationship is not with Angela Merkel as a person but as a office holder.

S3   Yeah.

S1   So then it's institutional trust.

S3   Yeah.

S1   It's the trust that if a German chancellor says something like that then it's going to be kind of upheld or something like that –

S3   It doesn't matter –

S1   - whereas the other element is, and it is not completely outside of this topic, is that they make a judgement of her as a person and whether she would be the kind of person who in that powerful position would be, you know, making negligent statements or easy promise or difficult promises and so on. About, so your point was is it enough to be willing to be vulnerable –

S3   Mm.

S1   - or necessary to also be actually actively making yourself vulnerable –

S3   Or accepting, yeah.

S1   - or accepting. But I think there's also a notion of what people actually think and know about their own vulnerability, so what if for example somebody is objectively vulnerable but they don't know it, they don't notice it, they're making themselves vulnerable without being aware of it and then would you say that is trust? Probably not because you would say they have to at least be -, but –

S3   But is that the paradox, right, because this is what [67.58] were arguing in their piece in the review of international studies and in your journal, is they're saying that vulnerability is not a good indicator of a trusting relationship because actors who are in a genuine trusting relationship don't experience the vulnerability as troubling –

S1   Exactly, yeah.

S3   - so in that sense, subjective vulnerability, you might want to say 'well you're really putting yourself at risk, Nick, trusting that person', but I might feel completely safe with that person and be prepared to accept a very high level of vulnerability. So is vulnerability then a good indicator of a trusting relationship?

S1   Yeah and I wanted to highlight –

S2   But you've only got half of it haven't you because the other half is in the expectation that harm will not occur.

S3   Yeah.

S2   And so in effect, what somebody else may look at and say this is really vulnerable, you've said 'hang on, I've done my whatever process in the brain, my expectation is it's not going to occur', so what looks very vulnerable to one person has gone the other way.

S3   But then it only becomes a trusting relationships if the actors themselves own it as such then, is that what you're saying, that they have to be willing to say that actually although you might say I'm vulnerable, the way I feel, I don't feel vulnerable, but we could only say it was a trusting relationship if the actors actually said that. And at the international level, getting them to say that kind of thing is extremely difficult.

S1   And really just as an observation from -, or some observations and making this a methodological rather than conceptual or definitional issue is that it's really tricky to talk about vulnerability and get people to talk about vulnerability because, well you may have these cases like this picture, this is not politically correct maybe, but this woman is vulnerable, making herself vulnerable and but the first thing that is

always important is that willingness to be vulnerable or acceptance of vulnerability does not mean that you're, you know, masochist, right?

S3   Mm.

S1   It's really willingness to be vulnerable is different from willingness to be hurt because when you are trusting, you are willing to be vulnerable but you are sure that you won't be hurt, but that really messes it all up, well another thing that messes it all up is that the sense of vulnerability may actually be quite vague –

S3   Mm.

S1   - it's not like risk management where you know that OK the chances of going wrong are like this and then you lose £2m and then the chances of going right are like that and then we win £5m and so we take the risk, right? So often when we talk about trust relationships there is a very general sense of vulnerability or the very general sense that somebody might be able to hurt you but you don't even know how, partly because we are not just talking about one moment in time, but about the future, OK?

S1   So if you're for instance if you're getting married, right, you cannot even imagine all the ways in which you could be hurt later on, yeah? Because there are too many of them! And so going in you're like, kind of, dealing with a very general sense of there aren't many -, there may be different ways in which I might be hurt but I'm comfortable nevertheless, yeah?

F   Just I think I missed something in the logic there so could you rewind a little bit and justify the willing to be vulnerable but not willing to be hurt, where's that coming from?

S2   It comes from –

S1   It's come from my book!

[Laughter]

S1   I'm just always saying that we shouldn't misunderstand it that if –

S3   Yeah.

S1   - when people trust and are willing to be vulnerable and if then the trust is broken and they are actually hurt, they cannot say 'well but you were willing to be vulnerable so you knew that this could happen', because they exactly didn't expect that to happen. So the knife thrower, this woman absolutely expects that no knife will hit her otherwise she will not take part, if a knife hits her or even close she will stop it and be very angry.

S3   So she's not consciously experiencing vulnerability in that situation, or at least that's the question, right? Is she consciously experiencing vulnerability?

S1   That is the problem that if you talk to people, if you would talk to her she would probably say 'I don't feel vulnerable' –

S3   Yeah, because she trusts.

S1   - because it's not going to go wrong. But that is the essence of her trust that she is so sure that it will not go wrong that she even doesn't feel vulnerable anymore but completely comfortable. And usually feeling vulnerable is not comfortable but when you're trusting it's a kind of, yeah, you've resolved it in a positive way.

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S1 And this is very interesting, I've had it just last week again in class, I asked students to make some lists of people that they trust and I gave them a few kind of criteria and dimensions and so on and it was the same thing again, that people said they would completely trust their friends and not feel vulnerable to them and you have to kind of tear it apart and say 'well but there are ways that they would hurt you aren't there' and 'but it doesn't matter because they won't'.

S1 You hear this so often and the expect-, the point being that when trust is working, when you have nicely established trust, it is difficult because we are talking about methods, it's difficult for people to actually take apart these conceptual elements that we use about how much vulnerability is there and how much is there a leap of faith and these kinds of things are very hard for trusting people to disentangle themselves and so if they can't do it, we also have a problem as researchers to really find out, you know, how much vulnerability there actually is –

S3 Just before you answer the gentleman's question at the back, we've kind of moved into a sort of an open format and that's great –

S1 Yeah and we only have five minutes –

S3 - well I want to encourage everybody who wants to continue the conversation to continue the conversation but please if you feel you need to go at 5.30 then please don't feel embarrassed in any way if you have to leave, because we've kind of got into a different sort of format. But, yeah, pick up the question at the back.

M   I was just going to ask [inaudible 74.25]

S1 You mean without being actually hurt or - ?

M   No, after they've been hurt there's still a component of trust that there's something that you can take back in a sense.

S1   Yeah, I mean –

S3   Can you articulate the question, I didn't quite hear that?

S1   - the partner in this kind of circus number, whatever, can stop collaborating for sure.

S3   Yeah.

S1   And maybe not even only if she actually gets hit by a knife but if she starts to sense that the knife thrower is not paying attention anymore enough then she may already say like 'I no longer want to be part of this'. And so, yeah, then she is no longer willing to be vulnerable but by not going up there she actually is no longer vulnerable.

S3   But if he hits her with a knife –

S1   So this is the old definition of Deutche, that you know you have to increase your vulnerability, so she kind of avoids the vulnerability and avoids the whole relationship and that makes her objectively less vulnerable because now, you know, if you're selling life insurance to her and she decides that she's not going to participate in knife throwing anymore then her actual vulnerability and insurance premium's going to be a little bit lower instead compared to somebody who's doing this kind of thing.

S1   But of course, I mean, by the way this is of course less dramatic than it looks and the knives are not as sharp and so on but there can be accidents and there can be, so the example is actually really trusting someone.

S3   But if he hit her with the knife, obviously unintentionally, it wouldn't mean that there wasn't a trusting relationship between them.

S1   No.

S3   It would just mean that his -, because I think the problem at the moment is that we're only looking at trust in terms of, coming back to your point about [Maia Davis and Schermer 76.32], we're only looking at trust here in terms of integrity and benevolence whereas of course there's the other dimension of trust, which is trust as capacity or competence –

S1   Oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

S3   - and so she's, if he hits her, it's completely accidental, so it doesn't mean that she's not in a trusting relationship with him, she may still trust him if he hits her in terms of his integrity but she might not trust him in future in terms of his competence or capacity. And in our field that's a massive one because, you know, Obama -, sorry, turn it round, the Iranian leader might believe that Obama is trustworthy in terms of integrity, but he might not believe that Obama can carry the United States congress to deliver a deal.

S2   So he hasn't got the ability.

S3   So he hasn't got the ability. So that and what I do in my book is distinguish between what I call subjective vulnerability and objective vulnerability and there's the objective vulnerability that in the end you can't be sure that the promises and commitments will be carried through. Does that resonate?

S1   [Hesitates] Yes, but to me, well I'm not sure if I would then call it objective and subjective because, yeah –

S3   Well in the sense that –

S1   I don't really know where to draw the line but I think that there's distinction between competence or ability as an element of trustworthiness and benevolence that has served us well to some degree and yes, I mean, Mark and I could do the trick now and it would probably –

S2   I'd be ducking!

S1   - believe that I will try everything possible not to hit him but he would know that I've not done this before and couldn't collaborate and then the question is how do we get to do it anyway, so let's say if we wanted to impress you and next time we want to show you the trick, so we would have to practise with something that isn't, you know, anyway, so we will have to somehow get there competence wise as well as knowing how far we could go together but –

S3   I guess by using 'objective' I'm getting at the idea that you can't control or the possibility that the person can't always deliver on their promises and commitments.

S1   And I think, yes –

S3   That's using the word 'objective'.

S1   But this is kind of something that is outside of the trust relationship almost.

S3   Yes.

S1   And that is important of course –

S3   It's outside of the interface [contrast 78.44] relationship, yeah, what would you call that then?

S1   [Hesitates] Don't know.

S3   OK.

S1   It's something, but it's a good explanation for why some cooperation may not happen.

S3   Yeah.

S1   It's the relationship is such it's in good shape but the context is not in good shape for that. But I wanted to say one more thing about –

S3   And just to cue back to our seminar, that's where the future uncertainty comes in.

S1   I want to say one more thing about competence and benevolence. I think benevolence for us as trust researchers should also trump competence, because if I'm in a trusting relationship I trust that Mark should trust me that I'm not even going to suggest that I would throw knives around him. He should trust me that I know that I'm not competent in this and I should not go there, right? And so Obama should not make promises to some other politician –

S2   But –

S1   - if he can see that he will not be able, he will not be competent, sorry, to make that happen. So I think, to me, benevolence is actually –

S2   You say that but the work that we've been doing on small businesses and ethnic minorities, we found that there's some ethnic minority groups and their relationships with their customers, they're normally from co-ethnic customers, benevolence is strong but when you get different ethnic minority groups in particular an ethnic coming into the UK working with, if you want, a naturalised British long term residence, ability trumps everything.

S3   Competence?

S2   Ability, yeah competence trumps benevolence. Which I think's quite fascinating the cultural differences, there's still a bit of benevolence –

S1   Yeah, no, but I can, hm, but are you talking about the situations where I might go and have my car fixed by somebody who I think knows how to fix cars but I'm not quite sure how interested he is in giving me a good deal or a cheap deal –

S2   Yeah.

S1   - I may end up having the car repaired by this person but I don't trust, I don't have a lot of trust in that person then, so I would say if I'm trusting –

S2   May not have a lot of trust but you'd much prefer to get your car working –

S3   Than Mark –

S2   - and be competent than you would and say 'oh lovely they really think the world of me but oh blow it they haven't put the right fluid in the brakes'

S1   So no, no, they have to be –

S3   You need both surely –

S2   You need both but –

S1   - in order to –

S2   The issue is that you said benevolence always trumps and what we're finding is that certain groups, if it was certain groups benevolence, say from co-ethnic groups, benevolence is more important, you know, the fact that you're benevolent is more important than the fact you may not know quite what you're doing on the electrics on my car.

S3   Yeah.

S1   No, no, no –

S2   But that's what's coming through from the data.

S1   Oh I'm sorry, so that's a misunderstanding. So if I have to decide between five car mechanics, am I going to go for the one, and none of them is high on benevolence and high on competence, who am I going to go for and that's a different –

S3   Competence.

S1   Yeah so you're going for competence, OK. Now –

S3   Well unless it's somebody –

S1   - I would go, just for the sake of argument, I would go for benevolence because the benevolent mechanic in my understanding would know, I realise that there's a kind of paradox here, where his competence ends. And so I –

S2/3 [Laugh]

S1   - have taken my car to a car mechanic recently who then said 'I'm sorry, I have looked at it and you have to go to somebody else with this problem that you have', instead of first of all trying to do something and taking a lot of money from me and then say 'oh I wasn't able to fix it but you have to pay the bill anyway', so this mechanic to me is trustworthy because they know that when they cannot fix something they just have to admit that and tell me to go somewhere else. So that, to me, is a trustworthy mechanic and although I'm aware now that there is a limited range of problems that this person can fix, OK.

S1   Interesting discussion we're having. What do you think about it?

S3   Teresa?

F   Just on the backside of this in terms of confidence and in trust, studies that we've done in [83.07] show [] behaviour [] experimental work shows that confidence trumps trust when it comes to electoral decisions to vote. So when they are faced with polling for a candidate that is confident versus one that is trustworthy and ten things go belly up because of a scandal or an event, the candidate that survives, the candidate that gets more higher support in electoral outcomes is the one whose confidence is higher, not the one whose trust is higher. So maybe with the mechanic you have a choice but with the electoral system where you vote this or that, you go for the one that will get the job done. And maybe that's kind of [83.48] I mean, all of that is related

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somehow but I think we should be very cautious about what trumps what.

S1   Yeah, there was a bit of a mix up here because we have these two questions of how people decide who they collaborate with and so on and the question of within the conceptualisation of trust, which elements are the crucial or really the trust elements and which ones are not. And so I would still repeat that if I'm working with somebody maybe on the basis of their competence but ignoring their benevolence or lack of benevolence, then I will not really call it a trust relationship, you know, so that is again a different thing.

F   [84.32] experiment?

S1   That is really a different thing.

S3   Yeah.

S1   But I acknowledge the distinction between collaboration that is based on trust in the sense of benevolence and collaboration that is based on a different kind of assessment of the other and that maybe in terms of competence and if you just get them to do it.

S3   I'm going to gather two or three questions up and then you can work between them, is that OK? We'll run another ten minutes or so and then we'll stop. OK, Anna first?

F   OK, thank you very much for the presentation [85.02] –

S1   [Chuckles]

S2   Wait til it comes out in paperback it'll be a lot cheaper.

S3   Yeah, don't do what I did! [Laughs]

S1   Actually I have fliers by the way!

S2   Do you have the discount code as well?

S1   Yes.

S3   Yeah I used that.

F   So I see that trust is usually discussed and [85.25] either have how one part affects, one how, one perception of one part affects the other's trust, but what about [] environment because in international relations usually [] members, member States saying like, you know, this part doesn't trust the other part, can you actually talk about trust between [] parties instead of just having bilateral relationships and looking at how those bilaterals impact on []?

S3   Can you hold that one?

S1   Yeah.

S2   Mm.

S3   So that kind of links to a conversation with Scott this morning about Assian.

S2   Yeah it does, yeah.

S3   And then lady at the back please.

F   Yeah, it might be a slightly [86.11] one but I was just reminded with the question around competence and trust and the discussion around that,

to also think about trust in relation to reputation thinking about competence reputation, so what I'm really interested to learn is your take, everyone really, in relation to trust and its relationship with reputation.

S3   That's a great question. Yeah?

M   Yeah, thank you. I'm really interested in hearing your views about trust between different levels and I'm going to throw a specific problem that I have to see your views on it. As I said, I study reconciliation in Bosnia and when I look at the literature reconciliation, a lot of definitions of reconciliation are really into trust building exercises and they talk about trust building at the national level where [86.57] and the state or ethnic communities talk and deal with the past and they build trust to create reconciliation or local and community level reconciliation where on the ground individuals are saying these communities talk to one another and do the same process. But my concern is the connection between the two levels, some people talk about a magical trickle down effect that if you look at reconciliation at the national level, everybody in society is going to be like 'yeah, we follow reconciliation', other people question and say 'actually what you need to do is to take from the ground and keep moving it up so that the issues that come from the ground, the conflict issues, move up and they become like national [87.40]', but I find that that magic isn't actually there in Bosnia and that magic isn't in any of the societies that [] how do these levels connect, how does that trickle down for bottom up process actually occur []?

S3   Thanks. So we've got a question from Anna about multi-party, we've got the reputation question and then the levels and then you wanted to say something about levels as well didn't you?

S1   Can I have a go, Mark, you let me try?

S2   Yeah, have a go, yeah.

S1   OK, so –

S3   And then I might have a question about levels afterwards as well.

S1   - I will try to connect them into what I wanted to say anyway. So this is already got a group here, so just imagine four individuals, yeah? But then we're with your question what if there are multiple trust relationships or just trust relationships and how do they influence each other. And so I think that it has been a problem that most studies have talked about dyads or are generally maybe thinking about dyads and we need more research on trust in multi-party or multilateral or networks and network analysis type of trust has started but we need a lot more of that.

S1   But we do know a few things about third parties and that is of course then also the link to reputation. We know that trust can be sort of borrowed from a third party or a third party can act as a guarantee, so these two might trust each other only because they both trust another -, let's just imagine the word individual here, and so they are willing to start trusting each other because they both trust the third party and, yeah, all I can say is that yes please study this and try to make it work, because getting the network data is so meaning getting the data that is already hard to collect between two individuals now for multiple individuals, that is of course necessary but also tough.

S1   Reputation is I think the reputation mechanism is active or can be active once there are more than the two parties involved and once those -, once in the dyad people can refer to some kind of notion of how the other party is seen by third and fourth and fifth parties. And I think that this is really the meaning of reputation, is that kind of the

standing or the trustworthiness that is attributed to a person outside of the dyad.

S1   Otherwise we are just talking about an interpersonal assessment maybe based on experience so if, you know, just you and I have had positive interactions over the past and I can simply say I have good experience with her, then I wouldn't say she has a good reputation, reputation already triggers this idea that there are others who think the same and who will reinforce that. So I think that is connected.

S1   And with the levels too, I mean, once we start to see these networks of interrelated actors, we also have the problem of emergence or of trust at a higher level within the social system, so if we talk about, like one of my PhD students, we are studying trust in teams and one of the things we try to get at all the time but it's not actually really very easy, is to distinguish the interpersonal trust between every single team member and the general level of trust that the team has managed to establish which should also still stay roughly the same if a team member is exchanged, you know, so if you're talking about a network of team members, you have this question like what is going to happen when one member of the network is exchanged, does it, at the team level, all have to start from scratch again because, you know, the constellation is now new with one new member, or are there processes and practices that are stable at the team level and then at the organisational level and at the societal level, or maybe global level.

S1   And so we have this problem of the levels that from individual level we can go to the group level and to all kinds of other higher levels and I think also to get at your point, the one thing that helps me is to first of all change the words here and talk about actors and systems and that can already trigger a lot of interesting questions and putting it in this way reinforces the fact that there is a difference between systems and

actors, meaning systems are not actors, so you are really talking about a different kind of trust relationship.

S1   However, for trust to be really a meaningful word, the system has to have some kind of attributes of an actor and has to be able to act in some way and now this is where it's really getting difficult because we can also simply talk about agents and so then connectives and institutions can also be agents and have certain kind of agentic attributes and we then simply say OK we simply have agents at different levels, but when we go there the things are just starting to become more difficult because then you have to kind of show that and you have to show that the state is really acting as a state and not as a kind of just, you know, a bundle of actions by certain people and how do you show that.

S1   I mean, to conceptually it is much easier to say the state is an actor or a business, a company is an actor above and beyond just the individuals that make up this business or this state. But then to get the data that really you can use as evidence for the actions and for the let's say the breaches of trust or not breaches of trust committed by this higher level agent, I mean, that is really then the methodological nightmare or paradise when it can go there and just say what kind of data can we take as evidence for the higher level agents' decisions to trust or not to trust.

S1   And just one example really from a non-political scientist, if the German parliament, the Bundestag has a vote on whether there should be military intervention or not then, to me, this vote is evidence of at least the parliament acting and not which is more than just the voting itself and the parliamentarians voting in favour or against, so I think with these kinds of processes, we can really take as evidence of a higher level actor taking decisions, taking action and not just individual

politicians saying what they believe or voting which way they want to vote.

S1   So I think we have the more methodological problem that we need to find data that can stand for, represent higher level action, higher level evidence of honouring or not honouring trust of another maybe equally abstract entity.

S2   I want to take -, I'm going to take two methodological problems in the word go. And I think I'd go one stage further but I think it's very difficult to be clear once you move between what you would term a dyadic relationship between a trustor and trustee as to who the referent is for trusting. And I think we haven't been -, I don't think we find it easy to conceptualise when we say I trust an organisation or I trust the state, how is the trustee, sorry the trustor, actually conceptualising that. We haven't got our heads round exactly how that's conceptualising.

S2   And that then makes your concept, because you've got different levels of trustee at different levels and how do you actually conceptualise those and we need to do the work to actually get inside people's brains as to how they are conceptualising when they say oh I trust the organisation, I trust the state. And to get beneath that, we haven't done that yet. So it's at the most fundamental level, we don't really know people talk about when they use the words.

S3   Can I throw a curveball in the ring?

S1/2 Yeah.

S3   The proposition I want to put forward is that the only actor that's capable of trusting at all levels of human interaction are individuals. And individuals can trust banks, they can trust aeroplanes, they can trust states, they can trust governments, they can parliaments, they

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can trust chancellors. And those individuals can form interpersonal trusting relationships. And those trusting relationships can lead to amazing things happening, you know, I argue, and have many times as you know, [97.03] Gorbachev developed a trusting relationship that was transformational for the end of the Cold War.

S3   And those trusting relationships though can't form between collectivises so my university and the university you left, they don't form a trusting relationship –

S2   No.

S3   - but my vice chancellor and your vice chancellor may well have a very good trusting relationship with the vice chancellor where you came from, yeah.

S2   Wherever, yeah.

S1   Well [97.28] –

S3   Yeah, so I've moved from four years ago, so higher level action and the idea that these higher level entities can honour and break trust, it seems to me that that's not getting at where we need to be but, now this is the rub, what I think can form is cultures of trust and distrust.

S2   Yeah.

S3   So those cultures then become aggregations, if you want, of all the individual decisions to trust and not trust. So between the United States and Iran today, there is a culture of distrust, no question. The two countries are locked into a culture of distrust as the US and the Soviet Union were in the early 1980s.

S3   But between Obama and Rahami, and certainly between Kerry and Zarif I would venture, there was the beginnings of relationships of trust. And those relationships of trust have actually been catalytic for producing this deal. Now how would you respond to that?

S2   That then links into the gentleman there's point of are we looking at the top down or bottom up or, sorry, looking at the effectiveness as being top down, there's loads of literature in management on top down/bottom up processes for instigating change and is really what you're looking at is if the situations can a top level trusting relationship influence downwards and build it or does it have to be built from the bottom up or is it in at the middle?

S3   But do you think collectivises can trust one another, do you think it's a meaningful thing, like Guido's clearly [98.53] –

S1   Well –

S3   - higher level entities can trust one another. And I'm asking whether that's meaningful because that's –

S2   You see I think that was in my point about the referent, I mean, do I trust an aeroplane to work, no, I trust the safety systems, then you can trace that back and eventually you'll get back to a human being won't you, every single time.

S1   Yeah.

S3   But I think it's meaningful to talk about, you know, I trust my bank, First Direct, but I have no personal relationships with anybody at the bank, apart from the people I talk to on the telephone.

S2   So you're not trusting the bank at all. You're trusting the systems that the bank set up and the legislation that the government set up to rule the banks.

S3   Yeah, that's probably a good way of putting it. But you are investing trust in an institution.

S2   You're investing trust in something but I think what's happened in the bank example is that your trust, you say it may be the trust, but what you're trusting in is that the regulatory authorities will stop the bank from doing things which will take away your money.

S3   But is that trust then, wouldn't that be confidence, because then it's about monitoring and performance and all that?

S2   No but you're trusting the system.

S3   OK, yeah.

S1   OK, I'll try, so I will tell you differently, when you talked about cultures of trust, that was a mean trick, you're kind of making it difficult now to get in there! But the examples I wanted to bring up here are maybe something that you can call institutionalised trust or institutionalised trusting even. And that to me, an example for example is whether or not an organisation has a security guard at the front door or not, right? And if you compare two organisations and one has a guard and the other one is a very similar type of organisation doesn't, then you could say one organisation is more trusting towards the public than the other.

S1   Now you would say one of them has a culture of trust, the other one doesn't, but I think if it's institutionalised in a certain sense, I would want to try to have trusting relationships at that level where certain established practices are effectively trusting or distrusting so I think –

S2   But, Guido, you [101.11] culture –

S1   - my interviews for example in supplier relationships, sometimes in supplier relationships in business, the people, either the buyer at the one side and all the sales rep at the other and get exchanged quite often, depending on the industry. In some industries the people are working together forever, in some industries sales positions are especially junior positions, so these people never stay in the job for longer than one or two years because they move up and the new [101.39] come in and have to do the sales job and so on.

S1   So there, I have had both. There were some supplier relationships where the buyers would say whoever they send we will initially at least trust this person, because they are coming from that organisation and, over the years, we are having a good relationship with that organisation and whoever they send we believe will be -, and then they may be, you know, with their individual behaviour they may actually go against that or disprove that, but initially they have this big benefit that they believe they are trustworthy.

S1   But you have other examples where they say no, I mean, we always have to see who's there, so but these are also cultures, these are ways of doing business. In some industries it's still very much a personal business relationship, in others it's very institutionalised ways of dealing with each other. Nevertheless, I mean, for instance there is institutionalised trust, there is trust that is independent of the individual, at least initial, it can be not in every country in the world but trust in police officers is an example of highly institutionalised trust, because just as long as they have the uniform you start off with a trust, again, not in every country and not in every city, but this is again an example that just because they are wearing a uniform, they enjoy more trust than if they didn't and it's only if they don't match the role that they

have and they are misbehaving, if you like, when we are recognising oh actually there is a kind of person inside the uniform that still makes decisions.

S1   But I think, so instead of cultures of trust, which I would say has something to do when I hear the word 'culture' I think of values and I think of this idea that trust, as such, can be important and something that people want to uphold. I probably prefer to speak of institutionalised trust. Institutionalised meaning to some degree detached from the specific individuals that are interacting. And maybe that is for you just a predisposition that is kind of shaped by the system and is still dependent on individuals enacting it. And I will go along with that kind of interpretation of institution as well but, nevertheless, the interesting thing is or also an aim, an organisational aim, or an international aim –

S2   But there is something in the culture.

S1   - could be to have institutionalised trust that you don't have to start from scratch again just because a new person got elected or, you know, a new government was formed, you wanted to have institutionalised international trust so that, you know, these changes of these specific actors don't have such a big influence.

S3   Would you agree with that?

S2   I need to think more. I'm not –

S3   OK –

S1   We're running out of steam after two hours!

S3   - I'm going to call time. We've had a fantastic couple of hours. We've got a podcast here which with Mark and Guido's permission we'll put up on the website and people can kind of listen to it again if you want to. But for now, would you join with me in thanking Guido and Mark for an absolutely amazing discussion and presentation.

[applause]

S3   And thank you for your patience. I hope you don't mind the way I chaired it but I thought it was really interesting to kind of just keep free flowing.

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