Trusting the Enemy—Towards a Comprehensive Understanding of Trust in Intergroup Conflict

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Intuitively, we have an implicit understanding of trust, yet when trying to describe the concept, it becomes clear that trust is complex and elusive. Although it is widely recognized that a lack of trust propels groups toward conflict and prevents them from reaching a settlement, there is currently no shared understanding of what shapes trust in intergroup conflict. Further, even though scholars widely acknowledge trust's multidimensional nature, there is no shared understanding on which dimensions exactly constitute trust. This work presents 2 qualitative studies detailing a comprehensive set of 7 superordinate dimensions which foster intergroup trust. Through expert interviews, Study 1 finds 20 distinctive, yet related, subthemes and organizes them into 7 superordinate dimensions: competence, integrity, predictability, compassion, compatibility, collaboration, and security. Study 2, a field study of the frozen Transdniestrian conflict, confirms that these 7 dimensions indeed provide a comprehensive set that is able to capture the elusive construct of trust. Thus, this work, the first of its kind, advances our understanding of trust in intergroup conflict by offering a comprehensive breakdown of the trust construct's multidimensional components. It further suggests a possible path for fostering trust and reconciliation.

Keywords: trust, intergroup trust, intergroup conflict, dimension, reconciliation

No Peace Without Trust

Permanent peace cannot be prepared by threats but only by the honest attempt to create mutual trust.

—Albert Einstein

In their pursuit of understanding intergroup conflict, psychologists have addressed the crucial role of trust as a core attribute of intergroup relations (Balliet & Van Lange, 2013; Seppänen, Blomqvist, & Sundqvist, 2007). Peacemaking without at least some degree of trust is impossible, and is summarized by Kelman (2005) as a basic dilemma of intergroup reconciliation: "Parties cannot enter into a peace process without some degree of mutual trust, but they cannot build trust without entering into a peace process" (p. 640).

Interdisciplinary research on intergroup conflict emphasizes that trust, or the lack thereof, influences conflict in two key ways: First, it propels groups into conflict. Honeyman, Goh, and Kelly (2004) identified distrust as one formidable obstacle between two conflict groups. They suggest that conflict leads to the deterioration of accepted moral standards, which damages trust, and leaves soci-

eties without firm ground on which to engage constructively in social tensions. Second, lack of trust can hinder attempts to settle conflicts, as found in various conflict settings, such as the Israel-Palestine (Kelman, 2005) or the Turkish-Kurdish conflict (Çelebi, Verkuyten, Köse, & Maliepaard, 2014). Thus, the ability to build trust is a crucial factor in lasting conflict resolution. For example, in Rwanda, willingness to reconcile was linked to two factors: equity and trust (Heim & Schaal, 2015). Further, in Mali (Storholt, 2001), Northern Ireland, and South Africa (Swart, Turner, Hewstone, & Voci, 2011), trust has proven crucial for conflict resolution.

Despite the shared understanding of trust's crucial role, trust as a construct in intergroup conflict is understudied. Intuitively, we have an implicit understanding of trust. However, when asked to conceptualize it, it becomes apparent that trust is elusive and multidimensional. As Seppänen et al. (2007) point out, no single dimension can properly capture the whole construct but multiple dimensions such as ability, integrity, or benevolence are needed (Butler, 1991; Lewicki, Tomlinson, & Gillespie, 2006). Although the majority of researchers use a multidimensional approach to operationalize trust, there is no shared understanding about which dimensions contribute to trust in conflict.

Researchers tend to adopt two different strategies to deal with multidimensionality. One approach is to neglect its complexity: trust is not explicitly conceptualized, instead shared understanding is assumed (McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011). The other approach is to acknowledge the multidimensionality, without further detailed reflection about the construct or clarification through which dimension trust is measured. While such studies provide valuable insight into why trust is an important component in conflict dynamics, it is difficult to generalize or link results across studies in a way that contributes to a growing body of knowledge. Finding a general conclusion on how trust shapes or is shaped by conflict

dynamics is extremely difficult when it is either operationalized too simplistically, or when only selected dimensions are focused on, neglecting the construct as a whole. Only a comprehensive set of dimensions through which trust is operationalized will allow us to fully understand how trust is affected by conflict but also how it affects the conflict dynamics between groups.

A comprehensive and homogenous conceptualization of trust would also allow the comparison of results across studies. For example, it is often assumed that there is a lack of trust in intergroup conflict (Kelman, 2005). However, if we assess trust through different dimensions, this understanding becomes more nuanced, as the current research shows. Against all odds, some trust dimensions may be well developed between groups.

Thus, the central task of this work is to identify which dimensions comprehensively constitute trust in intergroup conflict. As such, looking at each trust dimension's unique contribution to overall trust should contribute to a more nuanced understanding of this crucial construct.

Trust: A Multidimensional Construct

While there is no comprehensive set of trust dimensions for intergroup conflict, in organizational relations, some attempts were undertaken to conduct reviews on multidimensionality (McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011; Seppänen et al., 2007), revealing the wide range of utilized trust dimensions. For example, McEvily and Tortoriello (2011) found a total of 38 dimensions, such as integrity, receptivity, or surveillance/monitoring, utilized by different researchers to assess relational trust in organizations; Seppänen et al. (2007) found 22 dimensions, such as responsibility, credibility, or frankness. The union of the two research groups' findings increases the total sum to 47 dimensions. The large number illustrates the challenges in finding a comprehensive and yet concise set of trust dimensions.

These sets provide a good starting point for the current research as an orientation for relevant trust dimensions in intergroup conflict. However, there is one important distinction between the organization context and intergroup conflict: Trust in organizational relations is not always conflict-based. Organizational relations can often be cooperation based, while in conflict, by definition, relations tend to be hostile (Kelman, 2005), with a much higher degree of vulnerability between the parties. Thus, "security," as a dimension of trust, can constitute trust in the intergroup context, but not in the organizational context. Consequently, trust is target- and context-specific (Li, 2012), limiting the transferability of dimensions found in other contexts, and complicating attempts to define trust.

Definition of Trust

In the context of intergroup conflict, relations are often characterized through a high degree of interdependence, where the lives of the groups are "inextricably intertwined" (Kelman, 2005, p. 641). Hence, the definition of trust has to capture the relationship and interdependence between adversarial groups. The current research builds on Ross and LaCroix's (1996) definition, that trust is "one party's willingness to risk increasing his or her vulnerability to another whose behavior is beyond one's control" (p. 315), but also considers the often hostile history between groups and in-

cludes some dispositional considerations. It defines trust as one group's willingness to become vulnerable to the behavior and actions of an outgroup, where the outgroup's actions are outside of one's control and the outgroup is perceived to be of questionable character.

Goals of the Present Research

Most research on trust neglects to consider or embrace its complexity and assumes a common understanding of the construct. This research highlights the relevance of understanding trust in its complexity by identifying a comprehensive set of trust dimensions for the intergroup context. Such a set is beneficial in three ways: First, it allows for a comparable theoretical approach to research on trust in intergroup conflict, which is currently still missing because the number and content of trust dimensions are still under debate. Second, it also reflects the specific context under which trust is studied. Approaching it through different dimensions offers a more refined and inclusive understanding of how trust appears and is shaped in conflict. Third, it provides a possible path to trust building: Trust exists on a continuum and is not limited to either existing or not existing. Approaching trust through different dimensions also offers a more nuanced understanding, allowing differentiation between dimensions in which trust may be lacking, but also dimensions in which trust exists, and thus offers a resource for intervention on trust building.

This research develops a comprehensive set of seven superordinate dimensions with 17 qualifying subthemes through two studies: the first is a literature review and explorative expert interview study from which a set of 20 subthemes, grouped into seven distinct superordinate dimensions, was inferred. Study 2 investigated the relevance and comprehensiveness of the seven superordinate dimensions and their 20 subthemes in the field study of the intergroup conflict of Moldova–Transdniestrian, thus honoring the context-dependency of trust. Since these studies are first inquiries toward the multidimensionality of trust in intergroup conflict, qualitative methodology was chosen for both studies.

Study 1: Identification of Possible Trust Dimensions

Study 1 identifies, through deductive and inductive approaches, possible dimensions which constitute trust in intergroup conflict. While no systematic work has been conducted addressing the multidimensionality of trust for this context, such reviews have been done for organizational trust. Thus, for the deductive approach, dimensions were mainly extracted from a metareview conducted by Seppänen et al. (2007) and work by Butler (1991).

Butler (1991) identified 10 conditions fostering managerial trust. His work has the advantage that all 10 dimensions are well defined through a questionnaire that measures them. Seppänen et al. (2007) reviewed 15 empirical studies, identifying 22 dimensions constituting interorganizational trust. However, out of the 22 dimensions, only 12 were well described by the original authors, with definitions or examples of measurements, and could be used for the current work. The other 10 dimensions had to be omitted because either (a) no source was provided in the review, (b) the original authors solely named the dimensions without defining them, or (c) dimensions were intraorganization specific or overlap with already mentioned dimensions. Table 1 lists the 10 dimensions with reasons for their omission.

Combining the remaining 12 dimensions found by Seppänen et al. (2007) with the 10 dimensions identified by Butler (1991) provided a total of 13 unique trust dimensions. Table 2 lists the 13 dimensions and specifies if these dimensions were found for interorganizational relationships, managerial relationships, or for both.

Table 2 shows that one important dimension, often used in the context of intergroup conflict, is missing: security. This highlights that trust is context-dependent and that dimensions identified in other contexts cannot be transferred indiscriminately to intergroup conflict. Hence, there is still a need to gather more context specific dimensions. Therefore, Study 1 was extended through an inductive approach. A qualitative expert study was conducted to enrich the list through trust dimensions specific to intergroup conflict.

Method

Participants. From October 2007 to June 2008, eight conflict experts were interviewed about their perception of which dimensions constituted trust. The experts were chosen as experienced practitioners and academics who specialized in conflict resolution and recruited to contribute analytic and applied knowledge. Six experts were academics specialized in conflict resolution with applied experience and two experts were practitioners, working as mediators in intergroup conflicts. Each had worked in their field for more than two decades. The experts had worked in organizational, intercultural, juridical, and identity-based conflicts. Combined, the experts have worked in more than nine countries, including the U.S.A., Germany, Mexico, Columbia, and Israel. Thus, their insight into which dimensions contribute to trust spans across conflict context, cultures, and countries. The mean age of all experts was 60 years (ranged 50–80). Six experts were male; two were female. Six experts were American and two German. The interviewees were recruited through recommendations by the author's professional network or were contacted based on their reputation in the field.

Interviews. The interviews were semistructured.[1] Experts were asked to report incidents they encountered in their work, when trust was actively built or diminished in intergroup conflicts. The answers to these open-ended questions provide the base to identify (further) trust dimensions relevant to building intergroup trust between the groups. Interviews lasted between 60 and 90 min, were conducted by the same interviewer (six in English, two in German), were recorded and subsequently transcribed.

Table 1
Omitted Dimensions

Dimensions	Reason for omission
Frankness	Lack of source
Likeability	Lack of source
Confidence	Lack of definition
Reliability	Lack of definition
Responsibility	Lack of definition
Judgment	Intraorganizational specific
Contract trust	Intraorganizational specific
Dependability	Intraorganizational specific
Habitualization	Intraorganizational specific
Institutionalization	Intraorganizational specific

Table 2
Possible Dimensions Constituting Trust in Intergroup Conflict

Dimensions	Context found in
Ability/competence	Managerial and interorganizational
Access (availability)	Managerial
Benevolence	Interorganizational
Consistency (predictability)	Managerial and interorganizational
Discreetness	Managerial
Fairness	Managerial and interorganizational
Good intention (Goodwill trust/ loyalty)	Managerial and interorganizational
Honesty	Managerial and interorganizational
Knowledge accuracy	Interorganizational
Moral code (integrity)	Interorganizational
Openness with information	Managerial and interorganizational
Promise fulfillment (credibility)	Interorganizational
Receptivity	Interorganizational

Analytic approach. Since the objective of Study 1 is to extend the possible dimensions constituting trust, a grounded theory approach was chosen to analyze the qualitative data. In a grounded theory approach, participants are chosen with particular insight into the studied phenomena and therefore the information gathered from these participants is suited to providing a framework for further research (Creswell, 2007). This framework or theory is developed directly from the text "grounded" in data. While researchers have a specific research question under which they examine the data, the coding scheme for analyzing the data is directly developed on the text. Since the coding scheme influences the developing framework or theory of the studied phenomena, the researcher generates a general theory grounded in the collected data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Coding scheme. Qualitative research differentiates between two kinds of coding procedure: inductive and deductive. Generally speaking for the inductive coding, no predefined coding categories exist. The researcher approaches the text with the research interest, and starts to form coding categories directly from the text.

For grounded theory, statements from the interviews that referred to possible dimensions of trust were marked and then coded. In a second coding step, sentences that refer to the same idea were coded into one category, which were then labeled as a possible trust dimension (see Table 2.) Interviews were coded again using these categories (Creswell, 2007).

Results

Dimension extension. Thirteen coding categories were extracted from the interviews and labeled as trust dimensions. Seven of these had no equivalent in the previously reviewed literature, while six were also mentioned in the organizational context. Including the 13 dimensions extracted from the literature review (see Table 2), Study 1 found a total of 20 dimensions that could constitute trust in intergroup conflict. Table 3 lists the dimensions indicating through which method (deductive or inductive) they were found and a short conceptual description. It also indicates in how many expert interviews the dimensions were mentioned.

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[1] A copy of the material is available upon request.

Table 3

Possible Dimensions Constituting Trust in Intergroup Conflict—Extended Through Expert Interviews

			Method found through		
Dimension	Conceptual description	Experts (N)	Deductive managerial	Deductive interorganizational	Inductive expert interviews
Ability	Others are handling things competently	7	√	√	√
Authenticity	Others are authentic in their self-expressions	4			√
Access	Others are physically available		√	√	
Benevolence	Others are concerned about ingroup's overall welfare	5		√	√
Capability to follow through	Others are able to deliver upon agreements	5			√
Cooperation	Others are cooperative towards ingroup	2			√
Discreetness	Others will treat shared information confidentially		√	√	
Emotional accessibility	One is able to relate to others on a personal level	5			√
Empathy	Others are willing to understand what is important for ingroup	7			√
Fairness	Others treat ingroup fairly and equally	1	√	√	√
Good intention	Others will act with good intention and will not intentionally seek an advantage at ingroup's expense		√	√	
Honesty	Others tell the truth and would not lie		√	√	
Knowledge accuracy	Others know and state facts correctly	7		√	√
Moral code	Others act in accordance with a moral code	4	√	√	√
Openness with information	Others share important information willingly		√	√	
Perceived communality	Others share background, values, beliefs or interests of ingroup	7			√
Predictably	Others display predictable and stable behavior	1	√	√	√
Promise fulfillment	Others will fulfill given promises		√	√	
Receptivity	Others make an effort to understand what ingroup says and take in ingroup ideas		√	√	√
Security	Others will not hurt ingroup physically or emotionally	5			√

Aggregation of dimensions. While the large number of 20 dimensions is justified in order to identify a comprehensive set of trust dimensions for intergroup conflict, it is also overwhelming and difficult to apply. Thus, the final step of Study 1 was the aggregation of the trust dimensions through a three-step procedure: First, based on conceptual insight gained through the literature and expert interviews, the 20 dimensions were organized into seven superordinate dimensions, with the 20 dimensions as qualifying subthemes. For example, in the literature review, *integrity* is often associated with trust. However, when operationalized, integrity is either linked to "honesty" (Butler, 1991), or "good intention" (Seppänen et al., 2007). Being dishonest, acting with bad intention or breaking promises are all behaviors that are not in accordance with a moral code. Thus, the dimensions, honesty, good intention, "promise fulfillment" and "moral code" were aggregated into the superordinate dimension integrity. Similar aggregations were done for all dimensions.

Second, these dimensions were labeled and their names were crosschecked with the definition provided by the Merriam-Webster dictionary. Working groups evaluated if the subthemes still fit these definitions of the superordinate dimensions: competence, integrity, predictability, compassion, compatibility, collaboration, and security (Figure 1).

Third, nine independent judges, who were all members of a social psychological working group, evaluated the suggested structure of the model. Judges filled out a questionnaire which linked the 20 subthemes to one superordinate dimension. They were asked to agree or disagree if a specific subtheme represented a superordinate dimension. Some subthemes were randomly assigned to nonmatching dimensions, thus judges needed to disagree

with some suggestions in order to confirm the model. Judges were not familiar with the structure of the model. The interrater reliably was assessed through intraclass correlations (ICCs), which can assess agreement for more than two judges (Gwet, 2012). Judges showed a very high agreement with the proposed model structure (ICC (2, 9) = .915)

Discussion

Through a deductive and inductive approach, Study 1 identified a total of 20 dimensions that seem to constitute trust in intergroup conflict and can be aggregated into seven superordinate dimensions.

The seven superordinate dimensions cover a spectrum ranging from abilities ascribed to the outgroup (competence), to dispositional attribution, such as values associated with the outgroup (integrity) and the predictability over time and situation of the outgroup's behavior (predictability). In addition, the dimensions also depict the perceived relationship to the other side, such as how much compassion the outgroup has toward one's own group (compassion) or how compatible to the ingroup it is perceived to be (compatibility*).* The dimensions are able to capture specific characteristics of the interactions, such as the reciprocity of the outgroup's interactions (collaboration). The final dimension captures how threatening the outgroup is perceived to be (security). The range of the dimensions is in sync with the definition of trust by reflecting on the assigned characteristics of the outgroup, while honoring the interdependence between groups and including the issue of security.
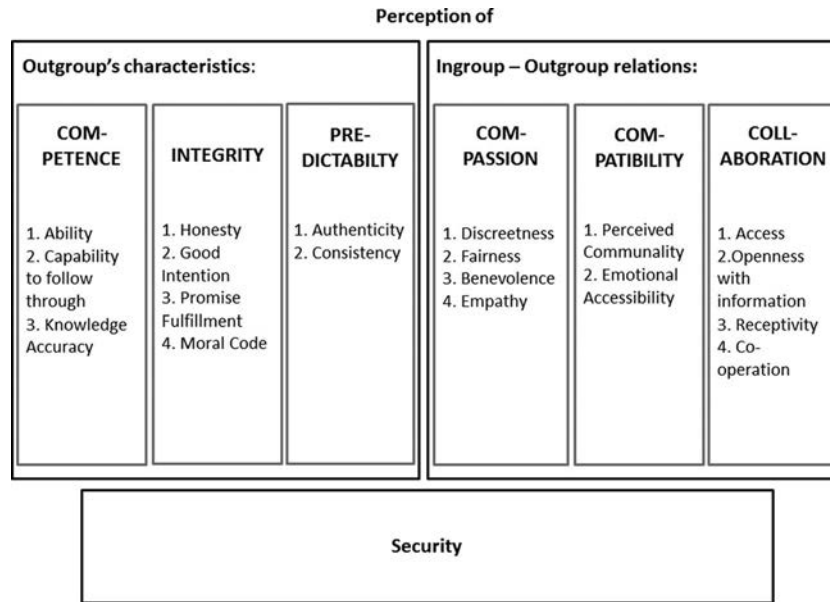
Figure 1. The seven trust dimensions, covering the perception from outgroup's characteristics of ingroup-outgroup relations.

Study 2: Confirmative Field Study: Moldova-Transdniestria

Since trust is context-dependent, as affirmed by Study 1, the question arises as to whether these seven superordinate dimensions really provide a comprehensive set to capture trust in intergroup conflict. Therefore, a qualitative field study of Moldova-Transdniestria, the site of a former secessionist war, tested the relevance and comprehensiveness of the seven superordinate dimensions and their subthemes.

During the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 90s, a secessionist war broke out between Moldova and its Eastern region, Transdniestria. In the subsequent months, tension intensified into a military conflict. The conflict was ended through an intervention by the Russian army on behalf of Transdniestria. Today, Transdniestria is a de facto state with its own currency and government, but is unrecognized by the international community. There are multiple tensions between the two sides on a political and civil level. The Transdniestrian conflict was only selected as a field study *after* the conclusion of Study 1. Crucially, no experts interviewed in Study 1 had worked in this specific conflict so the set of trust dimensions does not include an obvious bias toward it. Confirmation of the trust dimensions and their subthemes in this conflict would point toward their generalizability.

Method

Participants. From September 9th, 2009 to October 20th, 2009, a total of 33 interviews were conducted with 17 representatives from Moldovan and 16 from Transdniestrian civil society.

All interviewees fulfilled the following three inclusion criteria: First, interviewees came from a wide range of sectors within civil society, such as academia, politics, and economics. Second, interviewees had to have an influential professional position that gave

them a nuanced insight into how the conflict affected their sector. Third, interviewees had to cover different opinions and positions equally within Moldovan and Transdniestrian society to capture a comprehensive perception of trust between the two sides.

The mean age of all interviewees was 39 years (range 25–60). Eleven of the Moldovan and nine of the Transdniestrian interviewees were male; six of the Moldovan and seven of the Transdniestrian interviewees were female. Interviewees were either directly approached by the local project coordinator, or recommended by other international researchers and practitioners working in the region, or the interviewees themselves.

Interviews. The interviews were semistructured (see footnote 1) and covered how members of conflict groups perceived their specific trust relationship with the outgroup. Interviewees were asked to identify which dimensions help them to build trust, or which diminished trust, and which were currently missing in the trust relationship to the outgroup. Only responses in relation to these specific questions were analyzed. Interviews lasted, on average, 2 hr. Seven interviews were conducted in English, and 25 in Romanian or Russian with the help of translators. Interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed.

Analytic approach. Since the objective of Study 2 is to test the relevance and comprehensiveness of the seven superordinate dimensions and their subthemes, the interviews were analyzed through a qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2000). Qualitative data analysis allows the validation of existing theories (Berg, 2008). Unlike the grounded theory approach, the data are analyzed through a predefined coding scheme. Since this coding scheme reflects the tested theory, the previously identified 20 subdimensions served as coding categories in the current study. However, qualitative content analysis also allows for inductive coding. It can test if the predefined categories are indeed a comprehensive set. Thus the interviews are, in addition, examined as to whether new

categories evolve for trust dimensions which are not covered through the existing coding scheme.

Coding scheme. First, to test if the field study reveals new trust dimensions, which were not revealed through Study 1, four independent raters analyzed a spread of interviews, creating their own coding scheme. These coding schemes were compared and merged to the preexisting coding scheme, which used the predefined trust categories of Study 1. A code booklet with concrete definitions, decision rules and prime examples for each coding category was written (see Footnote 1). Data reliability was further enhanced through an explicit coding protocol, specified through the code booklet and the assessment of intercoder reliability. The data was analyzed with the research tool MaxQDA 2007.

Intercoder reliability (ICR). Four interviews (10%) were used to calculate the ICR between two previously trained coders. The add-on program developed by Lenz (2008) was used to calculate the ICR. Fifty quotations per interview were randomly selected to assess the ICR. The quotations were derived from every aspect of the interviews and were not limited to the explicit trust responses. Raters showed very good intercoder agreement ($r = .82$).

Parsing rules. Qualitative content analysis also includes some frequency measures (Mayring, 2000). To allow this step, the coding process has to follow explicit rules about what is coded as one unit of analysis. For the current study, every response of four sentences or less was coded as one unit. If the response continued with more sentences, it was coded as a second unit.

Results

Frequency analysis. In the course of the 33 interviews, a total of 278 responses were given in relation to the specific trust questions. From the 20 subthemes, 19 were explicitly mentioned to constitute trust. It is noteworthy that no new dimensions were derived. Thus, Study 2 suggests that the seven dimensions and their subthemes indeed represent a comprehensive set to capture the multidimensionality of trust in intergroup conflict. Figure 2 displays the cumulative frequency of the dimensions and their subthemes.

Table 4 ranks the seven trust dimensions according to how often their subthemes were mentioned to constitute trust in the Moldovan-Transdniestrian relations (Number units of analysis). The table also indicates the percentage accumulated by units in relation to all explicitly mentioned units (%). The final column reports the accumulated percentage of the dimension. To ensure that a subtheme and dimension was not disproportionately mentioned in one interview, the column "Interview" reports how many interviewees mentioned them.

The analysis of the dimensions shows that Collaboration, Integrity, and Competence are the most frequently presented dimensions, accounting for more than 60% of the units referring to trust. The dimensions Compassion and Compatibility account for 25% of all data. Thus, five of the seven dimensions are able to capture around 85% of explicit references to trust. If each dimension were to be evenly presented, each dimension would account for ~14% of all data. For the five dimensions Collaboration and Integrity (each 21%), Competence (~19%), Compassion (~14%), and Compatibility (~11%), equal contribution is roughly achieved. Only the dimensions Predictability and Security are slightly underrepresented at 6%. However, Security does not have any subthemes. With 18 nominations on the theme of security, it is fairly well represented for a subtheme (max = 29 "knowledge accu-
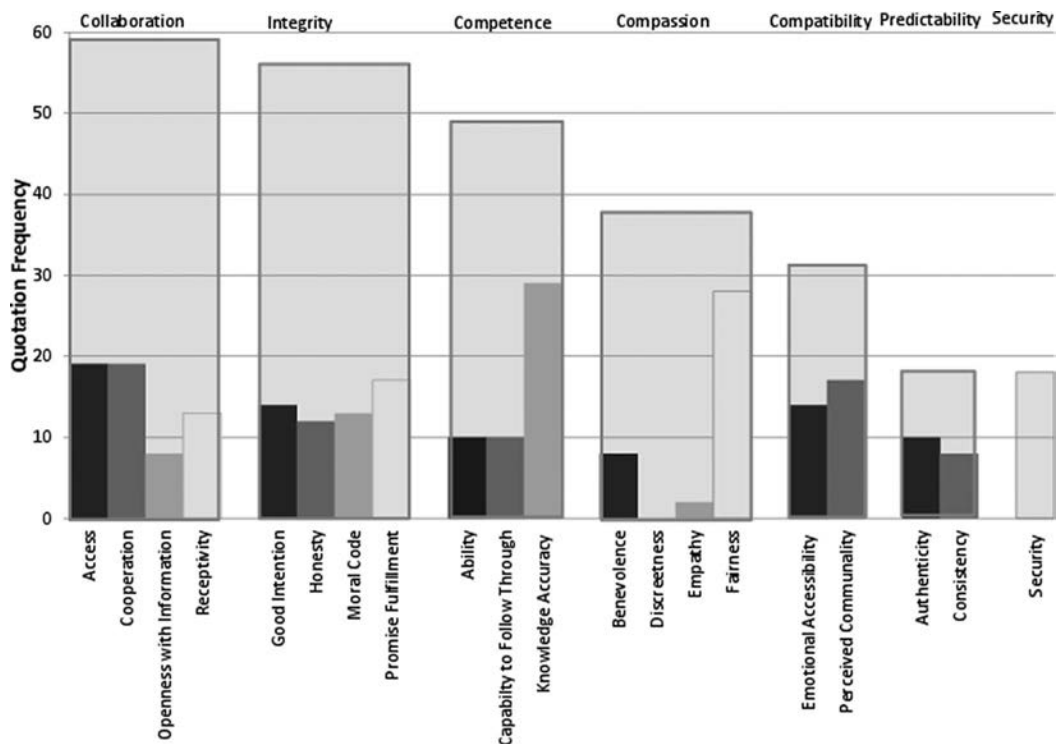

Figure 2. Cumulative frequency of the dimensions and their subthemes.

Table 4

Subthemes Explicitly Mentioned to Constitute Intergroup Trust—Aggregated to the Superordinated Dimensions

Dimension	Subtheme	Description	Number of interviews	Number of units	% of units	Accum. % units
Collaboration	Access	Others are physically available	11	19	6.67	
	Cooperation	Others are cooperative towards ingroup	9	19	7.04	
	Openness with information	Others share important information willingly	5	8	2.62	
	Receptivity	Others make an effort to understand what ingroup says and take in ingroup's ideas	9	13	4.81	
Total Collaboration			19	59	21.14	21.14
Integrity	Good intention	Others will act with good intention and will not intentionally seek an advantage at ingroup's expense	9	14	5.19	
	Honesty	Others tell the truth and would not lie	9	12	4.44	
	Moral code	Others act in accordance with a moral code	8	13	4.81	
	Promise fulfillment	Others will fulfill given promises	6	17	6.67	
Total Integrity			17	56	21.11	42.25
Competence	Ability	Others are handling things competently	7	10	3.7	
	Capability to follow through	Others are able to deliver upon agreements	6	10	4.07	
	Knowledge accuracy	Others know and state facts correctly	14	29	10.74	
Total Competence			18	49	18.52	60.76
Compassion	Benevolence	Others are concerned about ingroup's overall welfare	5	8	2.96	
	Discreetness	Others will treat shared information confidentially	0	0	.00	
	Empathy	Others are willing to understand what is important for ingroup	2	2	.74	
	Fairness	Others treat ingroup fairly and equally	14	28	10.37	
Total Compassion			14	38	14.07	74.84
Compatibility	Emotional accessibility	One is able to relate to others on a personal level	8	14	5.19	
	Perceived communality	Others share background, values, beliefs or interests of ingroup	9	17	6.30	
Total Compatibility			11	31	11.49	86.33
Predictability	Authenticity	Others are authentic in their self-expressions	6	10	3.7	
	Consistency	Others display predictable and stable behavior	7	8	2.96	
Total Predictability			12	18	6.66	92.99
Security	Security	Others will not hurt ingroup physically or emotionally	9	18	6.66	
Total Security			9	18	6.66	100
Total			33	278	100	

racy"; min = 0 "discreetness'), speaking to its relevance for the trust construct in intergroup conflict.

In conclusion, the contribution of the frequency analysis indicates that the seven previously identified superordinate dimensions appear suitable for capturing the multidimensionality of trust. This finding is strengthened by the fact that each dimension was mentioned across at least nine interviews (see Table 4).

Qualitative content analysis. The following content analysis further determines the relevance of the dimensions, in forming a comprehensive set to capture trust in intergroup conflict. The dimensions are presented in concurrence with the perception of the outgroup's characteristics to ingroup-outgroup relations.

Dimension: Competence. Competence comprises three subthemes: (a) ability (how things are done), (b) capability to follow through (if a group can deliver upon an agreement), and (c)

knowledge accuracy (the depth of an outgroup's knowledge regarding specific facts about the conflict and the ingroup).

The most elaborated subtheme is the theme of knowledge accuracy. When one believes that the outgroup does not possess correct or unbiased information, the trust in this group will be diminished, as this Moldovan journalist expresses: "[The news in Transdniestria] was awful . . . they kept saying over and over again that Chisinau [Capital of Moldova] is the enemy. Most of the news is invented,"

The content analysis also demonstrates that competence is not just limited to the perception of how well the outgoup performs a task (ability), but also includes the power of decision making (capability to follow through). In their relations, the Moldovans often believe that the Transdniestrians do not have the authority to make any independent decision, thus limiting trust. The following Moldovan quotation refers to an interaction between two mayors

whose districts border each other but are divided by the unofficial border: "He [the Transdniestrian mayor] cannot do anything. Russia gives orders to the president of Transdniestria, and the president gives orders to the mayor."

To conclude, the content analysis of competence-based trust expands our understanding twofold: In addition to ability, how things are handled, competence-based trust in conflict is associated with capability to follow through and with knowledge accuracy, the latter of which is often perceived as low, due to the impact of propaganda.

Dimension: Integrity. Integrity comprises four subthemes: (a) honesty (how honest the outgroup is perceived to be), (b) good intention (the perception that the outgroup acts with or holds good intentions), (c) promise fulfillment (the perception that the outgroup *will* fulfill given promises), and (d) moral code (the perception that the behavior of the outgroup is based on a moral code). Integrity is a challenging dimension, since its subthemes are partly interrelated. The first three subthemes include acting in accordance with a moral code. However, analyzing the data showed that many of the statements linked to moral code violation could not have been coded by any of the three other subthemes. For example, Moldovan trust in the Transdniestrians is inhibited by the Moldovans believing that the Transdniestrians are violating human rights regulations and thus are not acting in accordance with a moral code:

> In Transdniestria there are also Russians, Ukrainians and Romanians [. . .]. The problem is that they want to close all the Romanian speaking schools and to leave only the Russian speaking schools. And this is a violation of human rights . . . the violation of the right to speak your own language.

This quotation does not overlap with any other subthemes in the trust dimension integrity, as it does not indicate any violation of good intention, honesty, or promise fulfillment.

The next quotation, however, illustrates that violation of a moral code is also linked to the perception that the outgroup acts based on self-interest, the lack of good intention, as a Transdniestrian politician expresses: "[The Moldovans'] methods of harassing Transdniestrians were absolutely unacceptable. They tried to take what is ours. And what would happen if we joined them: It may be even worse."

This quotation shows that trust diminishment through harassment by the Moldovans, a violation of the moral code, can be further qualified by their perceived maliciousness toward Transdniestrians, taking what belongs to them.

Another contextual overlap exists between the subthemes honesty and promise fulfillment. While each subtheme can stand alone, some trust violations are due to a combined lack of honesty and promise fulfillment: "I am being honest with them all the time but they are never honest with me. I trust them only 10%. [. . .] I need to be 100% sure that they will keep their promises."

To conclude, the content analysis of integrity-based trust illustrates the challenge of identifying distinct subthemes. It also emphasizes that, while some contextual overlaps are not avoidable, none of the subthemes can be substituted for each other without losing a deeper understanding of the specific trust dimensions, thus supporting the concept that the trust dimension Integrity indeed consists of the qualifying subthemes of good intention, honesty, moral code, and promise fulfillment.

Dimension: Predictability. Predictability comprises two subthemes: (a) consistency (the perception that the outgroup appears stable over time), and (b) authenticity (the perception that the outgroup's behavior is persistent in different situations).

While both subthemes are mentioned almost equally as often (see Table 4), the subtheme of consistency is more elaborated. All quotations from both groups indicate that trust in the outgroup is inhibited by the perception that their behavior appears to be unstable over time. Transdniestrians' trust in the Moldovans is also diminished by the perception that they too easily change their political affiliation: "I really hope that Chisinau will not run any more from Brussels to Moscow."

While consistency is linked to consistent and predictable political behavior, "authenticity" is more ambiguous. It is often referred to as a consistency between action and behavior or, if lacking, an ominous feeling that the outgroup has a hidden agenda. It is not easily distinguished from lack of good intention, a subtheme of integrity: "I am suspicious about their personal interest that they are not speaking about." Authenticity is also associated with trust, when the outgroup is not seen as open or sharing: "The biggest problem is the regime over there [Transdniestria] because people are scared [. . .] that is why they are so closed in themselves." In this sense, authenticity overlaps with two subthemes from the dimension of collaboration: "openness with information" (the perception that the outgroup shares critical information) and "cooperation" (the perception that the outgroup is cooperative toward the ingroup). While the theme of authenticity was frequently mentioned, the content analysis reveals that it lacks a consistent nucleus. Its different aspects could be captured through other subthemes. Therefore, the theme of authenticity is not seen as a distinct subtheme of trust.

To conclude, the content analysis of predictability reduces the dimensions to the subtheme consistency. Predictability can therefore be described as the ability to predict the behavior of the outgroup over time and in different situations.

Dimension: Compatibility. Compatibility comprises two subthemes: (a) perceived communality (the perception that the outgroup shares values, background, and so forth), and (b) emotional accessibility (the perception that the groups can relate on an emotional level). "Perceived communality" through shared traditions is a common theme in the relations between Moldovans and Transdniestrians: "No matter what kind of holiday we have, we would remember the traditions. For example, if it is a Moldovan holiday, we would prepare Moldovan food, we would sing Moldovan songs." Compatibility-based trust can also be fostered through the perception of "emotional accessibility." A Transdniestrian explains: "We communicate with people from the other side, we have friends there, we have relatives there and people from Moldova come to us, and we go there, so we understand each other." Both subthemes foster trust through familiarity, comparability, and reducing the feeling of being estranged from each other.

The understanding that sharing the same background and/or being able to emotionally relate to each other is not explicitly mentioned in the trust literature. Identification of the dimension of compatibility is one of the new insights of the current study. In the case of the Moldova-Transdniestria conflict, this dimension is well developed, thus providing a possible entry point for intervention. If not assessed as part of the trust measures, this resource for improving intergroup relations could be easily overlooked.

Dimension: Compassion. Compassion comprises four sub-themes: (a) fairness (how fair and equally the outgroup treats one's group), (b) Benevolence (the outgroup's concern for one's overall welfare), (c) empathy (whether the outgroup is able to "put themselves in someone else's shoes"), and (d) discreetness (the outgroup's propensity to keep shared secrets).

The most pronounced subtheme of this dimension is "fairness" (see Table 4). In Moldovan-Transdniestrian relations, trust is often diminished by the perception that the outgroup considers themselves superior to the ingroup. For example, the mainly Romanian-speaking Moldovans resent the fact that the majority of Russian-speaking Transdniestrians look down on the use of the Romanian language[2]: "In Transdniestria people who speak in Romanian are considered to be inferior [. . .]. They have a word, when you say 'Moldovan' it means you are stupid or you are a peasant."

The second well pronounced subtheme in the dimension of compassion is "benevolence." Trust is diminished when one's group does not believe that the outgroup is concerned about its welfare. This was especially pronounced for the Transdniestrians: "So in one day the president proposes all these attractive steps for Transdniestria and on the other day he adopts this law which is not advantageous for us. [. . .] So there is no trust . . ."

It was surprising that "empathy" was only mentioned twice at an abstract level, without concrete examples of how it manifests in conflict. There are two possible reasons for this: Despite the results of the expert study, empathy does not constitute trust. Alternatively, empathy could require better relations to be in place than in the current Moldovan-Transdniestrian relations. Further research has to determine the role of empathy in trust. For now, it appears that it can be captured through benevolence, to which empathy is closely related. Further research is also needed to determine the role of discreetness. This subtheme was not mentioned at all in the interviews and therefore is not considered as a subtheme.

To conclude, the content analysis confirmed the two subthemes fairness and benevolence as vital themes of the trust dimension of compassion, while discreetness and empathy were not found.

Dimension: Collaboration. Collaboration comprises four sub-themes: (a) Access (the other group is physically available), (b) receptivity (contributions of the ingroup are heard and considered by the outgroup), (c) openness with information (the outgroup willingly shares crucial information with the ingroup), and (d) cooperation (the outgroup has a cooperative attitude within the interaction).

Collaboration-based trust is fostered through "access," physical contact between groups: "Trust was developed because there is a constant exchange between the people from Moldova [and] Transdniestria." But contact alone does not build trust. The quality of interaction also impacts the trust relationship. If contact is not shaped by receptivity, the willingness to listen to each other, then the trust relationship is negatively impacted: "Maybe [distrust] can be related to their own view about Transdniestria. For example, we are speaking about industry but they are speaking about corruption or about smuggling." The trust of this Transdniestrian is diminished by her perception that even though there is contact with the Moldovans, they do not listen to her and their perceptions are clouded by existing stereotypes of Transdniestria.

Content analysis confirms that all four subthemes shape trust. It also reveals that cooperation-based trust differs conceptually from the previous five dimensions: while the other dimensions tend to

be abstract and more malleable toward the context they appear in, collaboration is much more concrete, focusing specifically on interaction and the condition under which this interaction takes place.

Dimension: Security. The perception that the outgroup is not a threat to the physical safety or the identity of the ingroup is integral to trust. Especially in the context of violent large-group conflict, it is apparent that security plays a crucial role. Transdniestrians would often stress how important the presence of the Russian army is to secure them against possible aggression of Moldova:

Everyone from here agreed with all those steps [toward improved relations], except one step: to take away the Russian army from Transdniestria [. . .]. This speaks about the fact that people in Transdniestria feel more comfortable if this army is present on our territory and it also speaks about the fact that they do not trust fully the other part.

Security includes not only the physical, but also extends to the psychological. The following Transdniestrian quotation refers to the fear that was evoked when the Moldovan changed the state language from Moldovan, which is written in Cyrillic, to Romanian, which is written in the Latin alphabet. She is afraid that, as a consequence, her Moldovan identity will be taken away: "But one thing is really suspicious; and I am concerned about the Moldovan language becoming Romanian. [. . .] Why should it not be called the Moldovan language; why shouldn't we remain Moldovans?"

Security is unique in that it reaches across the different dimensions, capturing different themes and is thus compatible with or even underlies the different dimensions. For example, not having a good understanding of what the other group will do next (from the dimension of predictability) plays into the theme of security: "We are living with fear because as it was unpredictable back in 1992, it [the violent encounters] can happen now again. We are living and being afraid every day." The quotation refers to unpredictability manifesting in an overall feeling of insecurity.

To conclude, the content analysis suggests that generalized security can be an overarching factor which underlies and reaches across the other six dimensions. However, further research has to determine its relation to the other dimensions.

Discussion

Understanding trust through all its dimensions advances a more nuanced comprehension of this elusive, yet crucial, construct. In the first study, 20 subthemes, organized into seven superordinate dimensions, were identified to constitute trust. Two new subthemes were found, "perceived communality" and "knowledge accuracy," to constitute trust, dimensions which tend to be overlooked in the current trust literature and research agendas.

Study 2 showed that the seven most frequent subthemes associated with trust are evenly derived from six of the seven superordinate dimensions. Eighteen out of 20 subthemes were confirmed through the frequency analysis, only the subthemes

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[2] I refer to the official language of Moldova as Romanian, since that is how the majority of interviewees of the presented study and international publications refer to the language. This decision was made without any political intention.

discreetness and empathy were not found since they were not at all or rarely mentioned. Nevertheless, this finding strongly indicates that the superordinate dimensions are able to capture trust comprehensively.

The content analysis of the field study (Study 2) confirmed that from the remaining 18 subthemes, 17 are indeed associated with trust. Only the subtheme authenticity could not be confirmed, as it does not capture a distinct pattern of trust. The superordinate dimension of authenticity, predictability, now consists of only one subtheme, 'consistency. Across contexts, predictability is an inherent part of trust construction and is found in most trust definitions. It stands to reason that predictability, as a dimension, is comparable to security, since both of them lack multiple subthemes, but appear to cut across dimensions. Figure 3 displays the seven trust dimensions and their revised subthemes.

A newly identified subtheme is knowledge accuracy, qualifying the superordinate dimension of competence. Especially in the Moldova-Transniestrian relations, trust was diminished by the belief that both sides are victims to propaganda, leading to a lack of knowledge accuracy. This influence on trust is often not captured through existing research.

The final contribution of the field study is that it indicates that the previously poorly defined dimension of compatibility with its two subthemes, perceived communality and emotional accessibility, is indeed associated with trust in intergroup conflict. Compatibility was deduced from the expert study (Study 1), and confirmed through the field study. This finding is backed by work on diversity that often links diversity to a higher degree of distrust (Ferguson & Peterson, 2015). However, compatibility is often not recognized when measuring trust. Thus the current research broadened and intensified the current understanding of trust.

Compatibility is especially of importance as it is a well-developed trust dimension and in this case trust between Moldova and Transdniestria is salient when their compatibility is highlighted. This finding indicates that the often applied either/or

approach to trust, that is, either trust exists or is missing, cannot be upheld, but needs a more sophisticated understanding. That is, trust can indeed exist on some dimensions, even though it is missing from others.

There are two limitations to the current research. First, the data do not allow differentiation between trust in groups and trust in prominent members of the group, who are treated as stereotypical representatives of the outgroup. Interviewees did not distinguish, in their references of trust in the outgroup, between the interpersonal and collective level. This is consistent with findings from the overattribution error that indicates that explicitly in the conflict context, attributes of a typical representative are extended to the whole group (Yzerbyt, Rogier, & Fiske, 1998). Since the identified dimensions are aimed toward the collective level, further research should aim to disentangle these layers.

Second, even though the seven dimensions should be generally applicable, it is to be expected that there will be some cultural and contextual adaption as to *how* the subthemes of the dimensions are expressed. For example, what represents "acting with a moral code" may differ culturally and contextually. However, that the a priori identified dimensions were found in the randomly chosen conflict context of Moldova and Transdniestria suggests that the concept of the seven dimensions is indeed generally applicable. Further research has to be conducted to support this claim.

Concluding Comments

Trust is a highly complex multidimensional construct, which plays a crucial role in the dynamics of intergroup conflict. Dealing with such a complex and elusive construct as trust requires that researchers have a model simple enough to be operational, but sophisticated enough to give justice to trust's inherent complexity. The unique contribution of this research is its presentation of a comprehensive set of seven superordinate trust dimensions through which trust can be measured in intergroup conflict. While
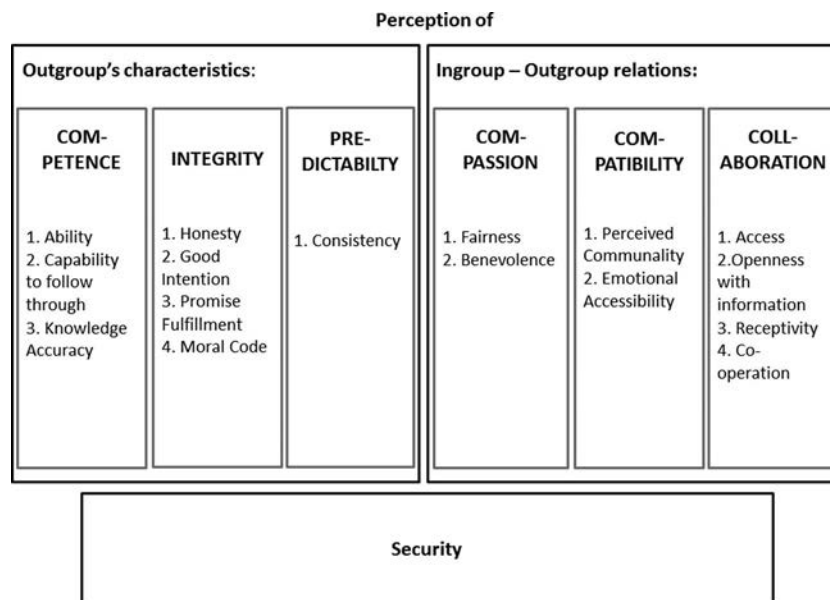

Figure 3. The seven trust dimensions and their revised subthemes.

the structure of the seven dimensions is broad enough to give justice to the complexity of trust, it is also stringent enough to be used to measure trust in a concise manner.

Furthermore, the findings of the research contribute to the theory building on trust. The current research supports the conceptualizing of trust as a multidimensional construct and could provide a framework that allows measuring trust in a unified manner and thus improves the ability to link and integrate results across studies, which will, hence, create a systematic growing body of knowledge toward trust. Thus, the framework could provide guidance on how to unify these definitions. The seven dimensions stem directly from research conducted on trust and have been used by other researchers to operationalize trust across different contexts. Thus, they are consistent and compatible with the existing research and can serve as a base for a unified definition on trust in intergroup conflict.

However, this paper should be seen as the first step toward a stringent empirical endeavor. These explorative findings guided the design of subsequent quantitative studies. In conclusion, it can be said that the seven dimensions provide a first attempt at a comprehensive measurement of the elusive trust construct, which is crucial to drawing conclusions across studies conducted on trust in intergroup conflict.

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