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RHYTHMICAL AND BALANCED EDUCATION – A MATTER OF TRUST AND BOUNDARIES.
– a Hermeneutic Phenomenological Study about Pedagogic Practice in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner Schools

by

HELENA SELSFORS

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Authors Declaration

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Doctoral College Quality Sub-Committee.

Work submitted for this research degree at the University of Plymouth has not formed part of any other degree either at the University of Plymouth or at another establishment.

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Abstract

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Title of the study: Rhythmical and Balanced Education – a Matter of Trust and Boundaries; a Hermeneutic Phenomenological Study about Pedagogic Practice in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner Schools.

This study investigates pedagogic practice in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools by using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach. Focus is on lived experiences of rhythms and balance, interpersonal processes, interaction and trust between teachers and students – connected to the mechanisms of power and control. It also investigates the experience of being part of a strong pedagogic tradition.

In this study, cognition and experience are understood as social phenomena, shared by participants in a context. Ideas from theories and research studies are connected to general questions about education, to the Swedish context and specifically to the practice in Waldorf-Steiner schools. Together with the data, this constructs a narrative that helps to better understand certain aspects of Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy in Sweden.

The data has been constructed from written protocols, observations, and semi-structured interviews with 10 Waldorf-Steiner teachers. The analysis was done by using a thematic analysis complemented with concepts from literature, focusing on ideas from Basil Bernstein and relational pedagogy.

This study contributes with new insights about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogic practice in Sweden. It concludes that the practice is permeated by a visible pedagogy with a clear rhythmical structure. Rhythmical and balanced methods are connected to the education and to interaction between teachers and students. During main lesson, classification and framing are strong but can shift to an apparently weaker and interpersonal approach – a condition for this to work is trust between teachers and students.

Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden have been forced to adjust the practice to the Swedish national curriculum. The participating teachers claim that this has made the practice more

transparent and professional although the autonomy has decreased which affects the aesthetical elements in the pedagogy. Despite many compromises, the Waldorf-Steiner pedagogic tradition is still strong, the teachers are keepers of the specific methods, but also challenge the tradition, pointing to areas for development.

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1. Introduction

Through this study, I aim to investigate the everyday practice in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools and focus especially on one concept often used: *Rhythmical and Balanced Education*. In books about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy, in articles, on schools' webpages, this is a concept used frequently but seldom explained explicitly. In the Swedish workplan for Waldorf-Steiner schools *En väg till frihet [A path to freedom]* it is stated: "In Waldorf-pedagogy there is a strive to construct the school schedule in a way that considers rhythms to benefit children's development, learning and health" (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016, p. 12, my translation). Rhythms are to permeate teaching and learning during the lessons, the day, the week, and the year – an idea with its roots in the development psychology from the founder of the pedagogy, Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925).

In Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy, there is an outspoken idea that teachers should strive to build strong and positive relationships to students and lead students to a learning process. Steiner (1932/1981) emphasizes that Waldorf-Steiner teachers must have the ability to establish both emotional and intellectual connections to their students. At the same time, a Waldorf-Steiner teacher is to be experienced as a positive authority by the students, Steiner (1960/1989) claims that when students experience reverence for someone's knowledge, a sense of social justice will arise.

In Waldorf-Steiner schools, subjects are taught in blocks or thematically. The students meet the same subject for 2-4 weeks during the first, often quite long, lesson in the morning, the "main lesson". Traditionally, this lesson is structured in a specific way to create the needed rhythms and the balance between teacher-led and student-active parts. Recognition is one important factor – an aspect of rhythms – when students can predict how the school day is

structured – and hence understand what is expected – it benefits learning and inclusion in schools (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). The concepts *inhale and exhale* are often used as a metaphor to describe how students are to first receive teaching and learning and then process this individually. Every lesson, every day must have a balance of inhaling and exhaling in order to create an as good learning environment as possible (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). "To balance individual work, group-work, lectures, and other activities, and within these activities balance both aesthetic and theoretical work is an important task for Waldorf teachers" (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016, p. 13, my translation).

This study wants to investigate this closer. The quote above indicates that Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy puts itself somewhere in between the different voices in the on-going debate about education, teaching, and learning in Sweden – where teacher-led and student-active education often are discussed as two opposite methods (Holmberg, 2020). The main lesson in Waldorf-Steiner schools is to be built up by *both* teacher-led and student-active parts and is to be "balanced". How do teachers experience to plan and conduct teaching and learning in a way that makes these rhythms and balance possible? What elements need to be in place to succeed with this approach?

Another area for my investigation is how teachers experience being part of an old and strong pedagogic tradition – the tacit and taken for granted assumptions and the traditional ways of doing things. What does the practice in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools tell us about the overarching ideas concerning the view upon knowledge and pedagogic discourse? And how does a strong pedagogic tradition deal with the demands from authorities to change and adjust to the dominating pedagogic discourse in Sweden?

The research questions for this study are:

- *How do Swedish Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe and reflect upon their lived experiences of conducting a "rhythmical and balanced education" during the main*

lesson – and what do they experience as necessary conditions to establish this approach?

- *How do Swedish Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe their lived experience of being part of a pedagogic tradition and at the same time adjusting to the demands from the outside?*

1.1 Rationale and Significance – Contributions of Knowledge and Practice

The rationale for this study is many fold, which I will discuss further in Chapter 2. The debate about education in Sweden is intense and sometimes polarized, and to look at a pedagogic practice that claims to use both teacher-led and student- active processes, where positive relationships are connected to teacher authority, can give new insights. There is a need for academic work about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy which is a worldwide phenomenon with a long and strong tradition.

I suggest that the pedagogic practice in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools needs to be investigated and possible to explain with established academic concepts – many of the studies and articles that try to explain and investigate Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy are dominated by the ideas and theories from Rudolf Steiner – this is not the case with this study. Steiner's ideas are presented when they are relevant, and my focus is to use theories and ideas from the "outside" and hence highlight some aspects of this specific pedagogic approach.

This study makes contributions to the under-researched field of Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy in Sweden, investigating the teachers' lived experiences of their practice – what key elements they highlight and how that can be understood and interpreted. It investigates how the strong tradition affects teachers' daily work and what questions for the future exist among the

participating teachers. I also present meaningful insights about pedagogical questions in general and discuss mechanisms of control and power, teacher-led and student-active processes, interdisciplinary teaching methods, inclusive education, and the importance of trustful and framed relationships in schools.

1.1.1 Methodology and Methods

This study uses a hermeneutic phenomenological approach, trying to catch the lived experience of the participating Waldorf-Steiner teachers. The attempt is to construct interpretive descriptions of some of the aspects of the teachers' lifeworld (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004) and at the same time be aware of that life is always more complicated and complex than any explanation of meaning can reveal (Van Manen, 2016). The empirical data was constructed in three ways, written protocols, observations, and semi-structured interviews. Ten Swedish Waldorf-Steiner teachers participated in the study. The analysis of the data was made by using a thematic analysis as presented by Lindseth and Norberg (2004), using a conceptual framework derived from both literature and the empirical material.

1.1.2 Overview of the Study

This study is divided into 10 Chapters. I will give a short summary of the chapters that follow this introduction.

In Chapter 2, *Overarching Ideas, and my own Position*, I explain the overarching ideas about the influence of our context and discourse. The concept didactic is explained and how it is used in Sweden. I explain why I have chosen my specific research area and discuss positionality.

Chapter 3, *The Context of the Study,* gives information about basic ideas in the Swedish Educational system, as the emphasis on students' influence and inclusion. I describe areas that are/have been debated a lot – the curriculum, teaching methods, free schools, and challenges. I move on to the Waldorf-Steiner context and present historical facts, the pedagogic ideas, and the role of the teacher. I present the specific situation for Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools when it comes to economy, management, and adjusting to national guidelines.

Chapter 4, *Theoretical Perspectives on Education*, starts with a presentation of discourses in education. I present ideas from Basil Bernstein – the focus is first on the concept classification and how it can be used to describe power relations between categories in school. Then focus is on framing, control, connected to teacher led or student active methods, rhythms, routines and rituals and teacher responsibility.

In part 2, ideas from relational pedagogy are presented, the focus is on the concept trust. Trust is connected to meaning-making, inclusion and communication. I describe unpredictability in education, and teaching as an artistic practice.

Through this chapter I start with general ideas and have a specific section for how these issues can be understood in Waldorf-Steiner schools. I end this chapter with a section about the complexity of the teaching practice and describe my conceptual framework.

In Chapter 5, *Methodologies and Methods,* I give the rationale for qualitative research and hermeneutic phenomenology. A description of the setting of the study, the initial plan, and the final plan, is given, and a presentation of the participating teachers.

I describe my data construction, the protocols, the observations, and the interviews.

Chapter 6, *Diving into the data, Analysis and Synthesis,* gives a thorough description of the work with the analysis of the data. I evaluate the data construction and analysis and present the ethical considerations, and I discuss trustworthiness.

Chapter 7, Findings – *Lived Experience of the Teaching Practice,* this chapter is divided into three parts and highlights my first research question: The lived experience of balancing responsibility, The lived experience of shifts and changes, and The lived experience of educational relationship building.

In Chapter 8, Findings – *Pedagogic Traditions – Background Knowledge,* the focus is on my second research question. This chapter is divided into 2 parts: The pedagogic repertoire and Being part of a strong tradition.

The findings are discussed in Chapter 9 – *Where do the Findings Lead?*

I discuss the overarching ideas about responsibility and trust and present the concepts interpersonal classification and framing, followed by a summary with reflections. I continue with the interpersonal perspective in practice.

I discuss creativity and intuition within a given structure, contextualized knowledge, and the sense of a tentative change in the Waldorf-Steiner discourse in Sweden. Again, I summarize this with a reflection.

In the last Chapter 10, *Evaluation, Contributions of Knowledge and Conclusions*, I evaluate this research study and look at limitations. I summarize the contributions of knowledge and conclude that the theories used in this study benefit from being connected. I present the conclusions that this study gives, stating that the practice in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools is possible to describe as a visible pedagogy with a strong classification and framing permeated by an outspoken focus on interpersonal educational relationships. I point to what implications for the future this study gives. As a last section, I do a personal reflection on the PhD journey.

In the up-coming part, I will go more deeply into the overarching ideas in this study and my own interest and position in this research.

2. Overarching Ideas and My own Position

The aim of this study is to broaden the understanding of the teaching practice in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools. In this chapter I will discuss the overarching ideas that characterize this study and my own position in relation to Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy and to the theme and purpose of this study.

In my work, I have as a starting point that knowledge is influenced by the context we belong to. Many thinkers describe that knowledge is bound to social interaction among people – the social context, the culture that we belong to, affects us more than we might be aware of (Adler, 2019, Bernstein, 2000, Vygotsky, 1978). In my project, cognition and perception are looked upon as social and cultural phenomena – I want to highlight the embodied, mediated, and participatory aspects of meaning-making and social understanding (Kozulin, 2003).

The aim is to understand how Waldorf-Steiner teachers in Sweden experience and understand their specific practice and lifeworld – how contemporary ideas about pedagogy and context, combined with the strong tradition, affect how they look upon teaching and learning. Lived experiences cannot be captured as they occur, it is by reflecting on our experiences in retrospect that we can get a notion of how they affected us (Van Manen, 2016). When researching lived experience, one must consider the sociocultural and historical traditions that give meaning to our ways of being in this world (Van Manen, 2016).

In every society we have outspoken ideas from authorities and the public, ideas that create implicit or "taken for granted" assumptions about the world and our place in it. Adler (2019) refers to this as background knowledge – the social structure, both collective and intersubjective, which is distributed in practitioners' disposition and expectations. Social order is a result of interaction and invisible norms and rituals, and we can see how these values permeate regulations and laws, but also, in a more implicit way, in the use of everyday

language, and the debate in media and politics. This background knowledge is how the world makes sense to us – in and through practice – and constructs our ideas about ourselves and others (Adler, 2019). Background knowledge is a social structure, collective and intersubjective – social interaction and individuals intentionality co-evolve together as part of social orders' practice (Adler, 2019).

There are also overarching ideas when it comes to education, learning and the teaching practice – these overarching ideas are what create the pedagogic discourse – the obvious and taken-for-granted ways to think about education and what we consider to be important and legitimate knowledge and skills (Bernstein, 2000). Education, learning, and teaching are affected by structures, changes and ideologies in society, the political climate, and the dominating ideas from authorities – knowledge and values are transformed, recontextualized, into school subjects (Bernstein, 2000).

In all workplaces or communities of different sorts, people tend to develop a sense of "this is how we do it here" – visible in how a practice organizes itself and what is considered to be a common understanding of the community's mission (Wenger, 1999). In schools this becomes an interpretation and reaction, or response, towards the overarching ideas from authorities, and in my project, also from traditions within the Waldorf-Steiner community.

> Individuals and groups act within a dominant interpretive backdrop that sets the terms of interaction, defines a horizon of possibility, and provides the background knowledge of expectations, dispositions, skills, techniques, and rituals that are the basis for the constitution of practice and their boundaries. (Adler, 2019).

The ideas from society and communities affect the lifeworld of teachers (Van Manen, 2016). The requirements, rules, traditions, and the interactions with colleagues and students construct the framework that a teacher must relate to and interpret to create a professional role or position. These demands and expectations play an important part in how teachers interpret and understand their own practice – *what* to do and *how* to do it.

In Waldorf-Steiner schools there are guidelines and both outspoken and unspoken "rules" from the Waldorf-Steiner tradition, this will be described and discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. They are not regulations or laws, but there is a strong culture that schools and teachers must relate to. Tjärnstig (2019) writes in his doctoral thesis about didactics in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools, that many of the actions that Waldorf-Steiner teachers execute in their classrooms are embedded in the traditional ways of doing things; "teachers' thinking attitude and actions are understood from the interpretation of, and as embedded in, a waldorf pedagogical didactic tradition" (Tjärnstig, 2019, p. 86, my translation).

Didactics – How Pedagogic Ideas are Turned into Practice

In this study, I use the word didactics to explain pedagogic practice. Didactic is a concept that describes the relationship between teachers' teaching and the students learning. University of Linköping (2022, my translation) describes that "didactics includes the knowledge development that takes place in the teacher's work practice – how professional skills are created and established". There are three didactic questions: How? What? and Why? that should be asked to 1) the teacher's theoretical starting point, 2) the didactic models from which the teaching can be understood, 3) the concrete teaching that the teacher uses in the classroom (Tjärnstig, 2019). In Sweden, the significance of didactic skills is described by the Agency of Education as an important aspect in teachers' subject-didactic knowledge – to introduce new concepts, contexts and theories in a way that makes it meaningful and promotes students' learning (Skolverket, 2012). There are studies that conclude that subject knowledge is not enough, teachers must also master the skill of transforming his or her own knowledge into something that makes sense for students (Nordenbo et al., 2008, Skolverket, 2012). The Agency of Education draws upon the ideas from Shulman (1986), who introduced the concept "Pedagogic content knowledge", PCK, in the 1980s and claims that the key to

successful teaching lies in the meeting between content and pedagogy, in the teacher's ability to adapt and vary the teaching methods, explanations, and examples to students in the classroom.

When Waldorf-Steiner teachers execute their specific teaching methods – they do it from a personal interpretation of the demands from both outside authorities and their didactic tradition. They must relate to the dominating idea; laws and regulations that restrict and control *what* to teach, and in a sense also to the public debate about education – and to the Waldorf-Steiner tradition – that one could say focus on *how* to do it, the didactic tradition. The didactic tradition in Waldorf-Steiner schools goes back more than a hundred years and includes specific teaching methods which I will discuss further in Chapters 3 and 4.

I have been a part of the Waldorf-Steiner community and tradition for many years, and hence there is a need to clarify my own position and role in this research study.

2.1 My own Starting Point and Position

My own journey into Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy started more or less as a coincidence. I was a newly graduated teacher in music, when a parent approached me and expressed that she was very satisfied that I used a Waldorf-Steiner pedagogic approach to my teaching. I had never heard the word before but got curious – what was that pedagogy that the parent referred to and in what ways did I use it?

This led to that I read a book about the pedagogy and participated in a workshop during a weekend – and my curiosity grew. A few months later, there was an advertisement for employment in the local paper, from a school I had never heard of. The heading of the ad was "Do you have strength and warmth to spare?".

During my first years as a Waldorf-Steiner teacher I took the Waldorf teacher training program but also had the privilege to have a mentor to whom I could turn with questions and worries. This mentor's attitude and approach to Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy has strongly affected my own understanding and interpretation of both the pedagogy and its practice. There was no place for dogmas or "musts", but a strong engagement in children and young people. There was an interest in the work of Steiner, but not without a critical eye, "Let us use Steiner's pedagogical ideas as a working hypothesis", my mentor said.
Alongside my work I have studied at different Universities and developed an academic interest. This has led to questions about how Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy can be looked upon from an academic perspective – in what spectrum of the different educational approaches does the pedagogy belong, and how can it be explained in an academic way?

This study is motivated and derived from several different angles. The first is my own personal interest. When my work with my Master Thesis in pedagogy was concluded in 2017– I found myself with more questions and thoughts about teachers and pedagogy – many of these questions had to do with Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy today, in Sweden. In my Master project, I asked young people in the age span of 19-25 years old to look back and reflect on significant teachers (Selsfors, 2017) – what is it that quality that makes teachers affect students' learning and motivation in a positive way? The participants were former students in both Waldorf-Steiner schools and municipal schools. One of the things that surprised me was that the interviewees strongly emphasized the importance of the teacher as a positive leader or authority – the teacher must be the one who sets the direction – and at the same time, there must be time and space for students to be active and engaged. All the participants also emphasized the importance of positive relationships between teachers and students – a condition they said, if the learning situation is to be engaging (Selsfors, 2017).

A second aspect is the ongoing debate in Sweden, about education, the teaching practice, and how students best learn and become motivated, as I will discuss further in the up-coming chapters. There are many sides to the debate – there are voices who are pro a more teacher-led and authoritative learning situation and those who claim that students should have more influence and control over their learning. There are different opinions when it comes to grades, tests, digitalisation, and how the teacher training program should be designed. This debate has been, and still is, intense, and the changes in the Swedish school system have been many during the last decade (Carlgren, 2015, Carlgren, 2016, Linderoth, 2016).

A third motivation for this study is that there is a lack of academic work on Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy in Sweden. In Sweden there are 36 Waldorf-Steiner schools and that puts Sweden in 6th place in the world-list of schools (Bund die freien Waldorfschulen, 2022) but still, there are few studies or research done on a higher academic level. This is a problem, I claim – if Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden are to keep their place in the educational system, there is a need to explain, critically investigate, and put the pedagogy into a broader and contemporary pedagogic context.

During the work with this research study, I have become most aware of the shortcomings we have in the educational language – it does not cover the complexity of the teaching practice, and this makes a nuanced discussion difficult. To find concepts that are suitable both for theoretical and practical aspects of teaching and learning became an additional goal with this study.

My participation in the Waldorf-Steiner community in Sweden means that I have a pre-understanding and knowledge about both the everyday practice in schools and classrooms, and about the philosophical ideas that it rests upon. This leads us to the question of positionality.

2.1.1 Positionality and Reflexivity

To reflect on positionality as a researcher is necessary (Holmes, 2020). To acknowledge and understand your own part, or influence, of the research makes it possible to identify where this positionality is shining through and hence risking to influence both the design, execution and interpretation of findings (Holmes, 2020). In qualitative research, positionality is about what position the researcher has chosen to adopt within a study (Savin-Baden and Major, 2012). Three areas need to be investigated and reflected upon: The researcher in relation to – 1) the subject, 2) the participants, 3) research process and context (Savin-Baden and Major, 2012).

When it comes to the subject of my study, I have explained in the previous section the rationale and my personal motivation for the subject of this research.

I have been a part of the Waldorf-Steiner community for many years, as a teacher, parent, and principal – the relation between me as a researcher and the chosen process and content is hence strong. This position is referred to as an "emic", or insider position (Holmes, 2020) where the researcher shares an understanding of the culture with the participants. In this project, I am familiar with the culture, the concepts, and the overarching ideas. This familiarity can lead to situations where a researcher is unable to raise provocative questions or is overly sympathetic to the culture (Holmes, 2020). This means that there is a risk that I might not be able to see or experience what an "outsider" would possibly see. On the other hand, even though my position to the Waldorf-Steiner community is emic, my role during my data construction could, to some extent, be described as the opposite, the "etic" – the outsider position – since I did not have knowledge about the teachers' individual daily practice, about their ideas and approach to their teaching or students. To be both an insider and an outsider, and to let these two positions shift and adjust to the situation can be referred to as "role dualism" or "working in `the `third space´ – the liminal space of `in-betweenness´ where

insiderness and outsiderness meet" (Khan, 2016, p. 146). It demands the ability to take a step back and constantly reflect on your choices and actions (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2017). The importance of having a reflexive perspective has coloured my work through all the steps in my research process – I have been most aware of my insider position and hence also of the importance of trying to have a self-critical point of departure. Reflexivity can be understood as "interpretation of interpretation" and it is important as a researcher to constantly think about various basic dimensions behind and in the way we interpret (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2017).

As I stated previously, the starting point for this study is that we all belong in a certain context where we are influenced by culture, traditions norms and values – and this also includes me. Research constitutes a reconstruction of reality where researchers both interact and create their own images that selectively highlight certain aspects of phenomena (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2017). Research in the social and educational field is seldom totally free from values or bias (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2017) , but it is possible to try to be as reflexive and aware as possible about positionality and personal bias.

I will now present the context in which this study was conducted.

3. The Context of the Study

In this chapter I will first present the information needed about the Swedish educational system and the current debate and situation. After that, I will give historical facts and explain some of the specific methods and concepts used in Waldorf-Steiner schools. Since the situation for Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden is different compared to most other countries, I will describe the present situation and the consequences that these differences lead to in daily practice.

3.1 Compulsory Education in Sweden

In Sweden, students start school when they are six years old, in "pre-school class" – described as a bridge between pre-school and compulsory school (Skolverket, 2022b), compulsory school then continues with grade 1-9. Home-schooling is not allowed, this is tied to the Swedish Education Act that states that students have "compulsory schooling" (Education Act, 2010), as opposed to countries that have "compulsory education" – Swedish students are to get their education in a school that is approved by The Swedish School Inspectorate. Compulsory schools are to be accessible for all students and use inclusive teaching methods – to construct set cohorts of students from, for example, a knowledge level perspective is said to be incompatible with the Education Act (Skolinspektionen, 2010), it is not forbidden – but schools that use this method are often criticized by the School Inspectorate. Instead, schools are to use inclusive teaching methods and adjust their teaching to all individual students (Skolinspektionen, 2010). Students with special needs are to get extra support and adjustments within the frames of the ordinary education and the set cohort of students that they belong to – as far as possible (Education Act, 2010). To attend a special school or group

with expert competencies in, for example, SEND[3], is a complicated procedure and instead, schools are to adjust methods and environment (Skolverket, 2022a). Examples of these adjustments can be that a student can use digital tools, reduced school days, and get individual support (Skolverket, 2023a).

Students cannot be forced into wearing school uniforms, if a school has guidelines about appearance or how to dress – they can only be voluntary (Skolinspektionen, 2017). This is connected to that fees of different forms are not allowed in Swedish schools, and to demand that parents must buy specific clothes can be understood as a "hidden fee". The only exception is that a school can deny or forbid a student to wear something that violates Swedish law, such as abusive or discriminating slogans on a t-shirt.

Students and teachers address each other with first names, and the Swedish school system emphasizes an egalitarian and democratic view of education, where the student's independence and participation in decision-making is highly valued (Skolverket, 2022b).

Free school lunch has been legislated since the 1940s (Lundborg et al., 2021) and is to be nutritious and varied, and students with allergies or religious motifs have the right to get special meals.

As I previously described, the debate about education in Sweden has been going on for at least a decade. The changes in the school system have been many – and are ongoing. For schools and teachers, these changes are sometimes difficult and stressful to handle, it takes time and economic resources to implement new methods, new subject content, and demands about, for example, documentation – and it creates frustration when the changes change again (Nyhlen, 2021). In 2010 Sweden got a new Education Act, and in 2011 a new curriculum was

[3] SEND refers to special educational needs and disability. There are four areas of need: 1) Communication and interaction needs, 2) Cognition and learning difficulties, 3) Social, emotional, and mental health difficulties, 4) Sensory and/or physical needs. In Sweden this is referred to as NPF – Neuropsychological disabilities (Neuropsykologiska funktionsnedsättningar).

legislated that all schools must follow – no exceptions are allowed. The control and demands on schools and teachers have increased, and there are challenges when it comes to student results, discipline, and school segregation.

To clarify how the situation for Swedish teachers and schools looks, I will highlight some of the aspects of the debate about education in Sweden. I will start with the curriculum and grading system, issues that have been, and still are, discussed intensively.

3.1.1 Curriculum, Grades and Digitalisation

When the Swedish National Curriculum for compulsory school, pre-school class and School-age educare, [*Läroplan för grundskolan, förskoleklass och fritidshemmet, Lgr11*[4]] (Skolverket, 2019)] was introduced in 2011, it was said to be a curriculum with less possibilities to interpret in a subjective way – the knowledge criteria and the content of each subject were described in more detail, and this should make sure that the assessments of students would become more just (Clear goals and knowledge criteria in Compulsary school, 2011).

The critique against, and the debate about, *Lgr11* has been ongoing since it was legislated, since then, it has been revised several times with minor changes. In 2022 a version with more tangible changes was legislated and presented as *Lgr22*, but the discussion and criticism are still present. The criticism is about the vagueness in language and in the detailed control about what is to be taught and when (Gabrielsson, 2012, Carlgren, 2015). Politicians, journalists, professors in pedagogy and teachers have participated in the debate. One of the problems in *Lgr11* and *Lgr 22* is the so-called "value-laden words" that are to explain what kind of knowledge a student has, and what grade this corresponds to (Gabrielsson, 2012). In a report

[4] During the work with this research project, a revised version of the National Curriculum was introduced in July 2022. The main changes are that the central content for each subject is highlighted more and that the criteria for assessments have been shortened (Skolverket 2022b). There are also new parts in the two introduction chapters where relationships, sexuality and consent are included. In my research, I have used the curriculum *Lgr11* which was revised in 2016 and 2019 as a base, but, when necessary, also looked at the new version from 2022.

from the Agency of Education (Skolverket, 2018c), they conclude that teachers experience the words as vague, relative, and possible to interpret in a subjective way. For example, formulations in the knowledge criteria as "The student is able to make conclusions in a *relatively well* performed way" cause dilemmas.

The grading system is another issue in the debate. Swedish language, mathematics and English language are referred to as "core subjects". These subjects are tested in the national tests and are the ones that students need to pass, if they are to be qualified to apply for a national program at a gymnasium[5] (Gymnasium regulation, 2010). A student can have the highest grade, an A[6], in all other subjects, but if one of these three core subjects is not approved – the student's choices for gymnasium become limited – only "introduction programs ", that in most cases include an extra year, or programs that provide extra support in the unapproved school subject are an option (Gymnasium regulation, 2010).
If a student does not reach the lowest approved level, an E, schools must give extra support or adjustments, investigate the reason why the student does not reach the criteria, and document and evaluate the student's development (Education Act, 2010, Ch. 3).

[5] Gymnasium is comparable with Upper secondary school. In Sweden, compulsory school includes pre-school class and grade 1-9 (6-16 years old). Gymnasium is voluntary and students apply for gymnasium-programs with different specializations – either aimed at further studies at university or to the working market. To get accepted in a study-oriented program , a student needs to have at least an E in Swedish language, Mathematics, English and 9 more subjects. For a work-oriented program , a student needs to have at least an E in Swedish language, Mathematics, English and 5 more subjects. Gymnasium Regulation 2010. SFS 2010:2039, Gymnasieförordningen Stockholm: Utbildningsdepartementet [Department of Education], Education Act 2010. SFS 2010:800, Svensk skollag Stockholm: Utbildningsdepartementet [Department of Education].
[6] The Swedish assessment scale for compulsory school:
A – 20 merit points, B – 17,5 merit points, C – 15 merit points, D – 12,5 merit points, E – 10 merit points, F – 0 merit points (not approved). Gymnasium Regulation 2010. SFS 2010:2039, Gymnasieförordningen Stockholm: Utbildningsdepartementet [Department of Education].

In Sweden, national standardized testing is conducted in grades 3, 6 and 9[7] – all schools must participate in these tests. The tests are extensive, in grades 6 and 9 there are oral, writing, reading and comprehension parts. All schools must use a mandatory assessment material from the Agency of Education in the lower grades, in pre-school classes and in grade one. The purpose is to find students who need extra support as quickly as possible (Education Act, 2010, Read - write – and Count guarantee, 2019).

There is an outspoken vision from the government that states that Sweden is to become world-leading in digitalisation (Regeringskansliet, 2017) and in many schools digital tools, such as computers or tablets, are replacing traditional school books. In a few years, the plan is that the national tests are to be conducted digitally, this is said to "make it easier for schools to administer and manage national tests and to contribute to a more equal assessment for students" (Skolverket, 2023c). All schools need to prepare and make sure that the equipment is in place for this, and that all students have computer skills.
Since 2018, the revised version of the national curriculum states that digital tools are to be used in most subjects from preschool and onwards through compulsory school and gymnasium (Utbildningsdepartementet, 2017).

Another question in the debate is what methods are most effective in education and what position teachers should take when conducting teaching.

3.1.2 Teacher-led or Student-active?

Student-active methods are described as a way to make students get deep knowledge and develop an individual responsibility for their knowledge development (Carlgren, 2015). This

[7] In grade 3, the tests are in Swedish language and Mathematics, In grade 6, in Swedish language, Mathematics and English language. In grade 9 in Mathematics, Swedish language, English language, Natural science, and social science.

model was introduced in Sweden in the 1990s and includes ideas about individual work, students' own choices and a goal-oriented approach. In many schools, this model led to self-regulated learning for students – which means that even students in the lower grades were to plan their work in school, decide what subject to focus on and set a goal for their individual progression (Dalland and Klette, 2016, Österlind, 2005). The traditional teacher behind a desk, addressing all students at the same time, was looked upon as something conservative and ineffective (Linderoth, 2016).

However, the student-active method has been criticized and accused of being the reason for decreasing results (Dalland and Klette, 2016, Linderoth, 2016). Today, the discussion has changed, and teacher-led education is up on the agenda again. In a report from 2020 (Skolforskningsinstitutet, 2020), The Swedish Institute for Educational Research concludes that it is most important that the teacher is an obvious leader in the teaching situation – and if student-active methods are used – they need to be controlled by the teacher. But – there are advocates for both sides and often teacher-led and student-active methods are described as being opposite, impossible to combine.

The search for the right methods to use in schools has been a discussion for a long time, and in *Lgr11* and in the Education Act from 2010, new concepts were introduced to ensure that education rests upon a solid, scientific basis.

Evidence-based, and Proven Experienced-based Knowledge

In Sweden it is stated in the Education Act that all education is to be based upon evidence-based or proven experienced-based knowledge and methods (Education Act, 2010, Ch. 1 § 5). The Agency of Education (Skolverket, 2022d) states that teachers and school leaders need to have a "scientific attitude" – school must be an exploratory culture where the profession itself discusses, uses, and evaluates research findings – based on their experience and the context in

which they are located. This is said to contribute to building systems that continuously learn and improve on all levels of the system, ranging from management to classrooms (Skolverket, 2022d). Evidence-based research often means doing meta-studies, to integrate and weigh together the results of several studies to get a more comprehensive picture of the issue at hand. The Swedish Institute for Educational Research (Skolforskningsinstitutet, 2020) describes that the work with a systematic research compilation means analysing and compiling research within a defined area with the aim of answering a pre-specified question. The result must consist of the best available international research in the field at the time the work is carried out.

The concept of "proven experience-based knowledge" has no exact definition. The Swedish Agency of Education defines the concept as" knowledge that is generated through time and on several occasions, that is documented and quality assured" (Skolverket, 2022d, my translation). They state that proven experience, just as research, must be possible to make common, to generalize and possible to transfer between schools. The agency gives an example of how proven experience can be built: One idea is tested by one person (experience). This idea is then tested by several colleagues, or a group, reflected upon and documented (tested experience). Finally, the same idea is tested by several groups and is documented and made systematic to be possible to transfer further (proven experience) (Skolverket, 2022d).

One key element is the documentation, this is what makes the proven experience valid and possible to investigate. "Applied to the field of education 'proven experience' means that principals and teachers exist in contexts in which they perform documented educational actions in a systematic manner that yields reliable professional knowledge" (Rapp et al., 2017, p. 4).

This focus on evidence-based, or proven experienced-based, methods and documentation, has to do with an increasing focus on control in schools, and this has led to a growing number of state authorities connected to education in Sweden.

3.1.3 Increasing State Control

Sweden has five different state authorities that are to control schools – independence for schools and teachers to influence their situation decreased when the new Education Act and the national curriculum were legislated in 2010 and 2011.

The Agency of Education constructs curriculum and national guidelines, the Swedish School Inspectorate are to make sure that schools follow all laws and regulations by doing inspections and surveys. They can investigate reports from guardians or students concerning lack of extra support and adjustments for students, misconduct by teachers, bullying among students, or other shortcomings in schools. The Swedish Institute for Educational Research is to provide schools with evidence-based research, and the National Agency for Special Needs Education has as a task to ensure that students – regardless of functional ability – have adequate conditions to reach the educational goals. The schoolboard for Sami Schools manages the Sami schools in Sweden.

There are other authorities that are connected to state authorities and the control over Swedish schools and teachers. For example, The Board of Appeal for Education is an independent authority, similar to a court of law, to which students or their guardians can appeal decisions made in schools. The Child and School Representative (Barn- och elevombudsmannen, BEO) is a part of the School Inspectorate and protects the rights of children and school students and investigates reports of bullying and abusive behaviour in schools.

Although state control is increasing in the Swedish school system, there is also a growing number of “free schools” for students and guardians to choose from.

3.1.4 Free-schools in Sweden

In 1992 a reform in the field of education was legislated, the “free-school reform” (Freedom to chose in Schools, 1992). The reform had an intention to create possibilities for more variation in pedagogy and to make the whole educational system more effective. The opportunity for parents to choose schools for their children, not just accept the placement given by authorities, was a strong argument (Freedom to chose in Schools, 1992).

From now on, each student generates a sum of money from the state – that follows the student independent of which school they choose. At the same time – all fees in schools were forbidden.

The consequences of these changes are that today, Sweden has many free schools – in the schoolyear 2022-2023, 16.2 % of students in compulsory school attended a free-school (Öljemark, 2023). There are free schools that build upon specific pedagogical approaches, referred to as “alternative pedagogies”, often organized as non-profit foundations, such as Waldorf-Steiner schools, Montessori schools and Out-door pedagogy schools and more. There are also free-schools organized as nationwide corporations with stockholders that make big profits, owned by risk-capitalists (Billmayer, 2019). The discussion about profit-driven free-schools is a big question in the political debate – Sweden is the only country in the world that allows tax-funded schools to be run by profit-driven companies who share their profit among stockholders (Gavelin-Rydman and Nilsson, 2023).

To have the possibility to actively choose school is a strategy mostly used by parents with strong resources from the middle- and upper class, this leaves students and parents with a weak socio-economic situation left in the “poor” schools and areas – and this is a phenomenon that affects students results negatively (Schwartz, 2013). Ambrose (2016) investigates, in her ethnographic study, what factors affect how parents navigate in the complex field of free-school choice in Sweden, and concludes that parents with a strong

social network and access to different forms of sources for information have a stronger possibility to make a conscious choice of school (Ambrose, 2016). It is obvious that well educated parents opt out schools with a bad reputation and low results (Ambrose, 2016). A consequence of this system is that every school loses money if a student chooses to leave. For small schools, this can be a problem and lead to situations where teachers and school management feel forced to adjust to demands from parents and students, just to make them stay (Olsson, 2022).

As I previously stated, all schools in Sweden, municipal and free schools, must follow the national curriculum and the Education Act, students' rights and influence is a theme in both these legislations.

3.1.5 Students' and Guardians' Influence and Rights

Parents and students have a legislated right to have an influence on planning and methods used in schools. Plans for individual students, as extra support and adjustments, are to be drawn up in cooperation with both students and parents – and can be appealed (Education Act, 2010). If a parent or a student is dissatisfied with something in school – it is possible to report a complaint to the Swedish school Inspectorate, or to appeal a decision to the Board of Appeal for Education.

Schools and teachers in Sweden have limited possibilities to use disciplinary actions. If a student behaves in an inappropriate way, the school needs to investigate the reasons why and take action. It is possible to expel a student from school for one week each term if the student's behaviour affects other students negatively or is a matter of security. Before such a decision, all other options must have been tried and the student and the student's guardians must have the possibility to express their point of view (Education Act, 2010, Ch. 5). The

decision can be appealed to the Board of Appeal for Education – and the student must be compensated for the lost teaching hours (Överklagandenämnden, 2022). A student cannot be totally expelled from school – or forced to change school.
School staff have the right to dispose of disturbing objects from students and to intervene physically in situations where other students or staff are threatened (Law about changes in the Educational Act, 2022).

The fact that the power positions between students and teachers – and guardians – are vague is an issue discussed in, for example, the Teachers Union's magazines and on social media. Many teachers feel that they have no possibilities to make demands about students' behaviour or attitude – one reason why Sweden has a lack of teachers (Lärarförbundet, 2021).
This situation makes teachers and schools more dependent and affected by opinions, demands and ideas from students and parents.

The intense debate, and the recurring changes in guidelines and legislations, could be explained by the fact that there are many challenges in the Swedish educational system.

3.1.6 Challenges in the Swedish Educational System

The situation in Sweden is often described as a "crisis" in terms of results and performance – and in discipline, peace and quiet in classrooms, and motivation (Schwartz, 2013). In 2012, Sweden's results in the PISA-tests[8] decreased drastically and were under the average in Europe, since then – the results have slowly improved for some years – but in the results from 2022 students' performance in mathematics and literacy is back at the same low level as in 2012 (Skolverket, 2023d). To be a teacher is not a high-status job in Sweden. Teacher

[8] PISA (Program for international student assessment) is a test for the ninth grade, constructed by OECD. The PISA-based Test for Schools provides school-level estimates of performance and information about the learning environment and students' attitudes gathered from student questionnaires.

education has among the lowest admission requirements for academic vocational education[9] (Norling, 2017) and few young people choose to become teachers (OECD, 2015)[10]. Sweden is facing a big lack of educated teachers in the upcoming years (Skolverket, 2021a)

School segregation is a growing problem and hard to solve (Skolverket, 2021b). In some areas it is difficult to employ teachers and the working environment for both teachers and students is strained. Segregation is described as a "bad spiral" where there is an increased risk for decreased results, unhealth among students and teachers, school absence and violence – and hence also for less quality in teaching and working environment (Skolverket, 2021b).
In a report from the Teachers Union (Lärarförbundet, 2021), with a focus on preschool class and grades 1-6 (6-12 years old), with the title "Shut up, bitch!" (my translation of "Håll käften kärring!") they conclude that threats and violence are common in many schools. The threats can be both verbal and physical and come from both students and parents. This situation is a big working environment risk. A research project about violence in schools started in January 2022, *Escalating conflicts, threats and violence against teachers, reasons, and measures,* at the University of Gothenburg (Höglund, 2021).

Changes and Turns

As I have discussed and given examples of in this chapter, the changes and turns in the Swedish educational system have been many during the last decade, and the changes keep coming – the educational discourse is unstable and unclear.
As an example, the discussion about digitalisation is a hot topic in the Swedish debate – during the spring of 2023 the Teachers Union published a series of articles about how

[9] To be accepted to a state Teacher Education demands a basic qualification from a study-oriented program in gymnasium.

[10] The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organization that works to build policies and evidence-based standards for social, economic, and environmental issues.

Swedish students' literacy is decreasing – this made the government change their plans for digital testing of students in grade 3 (see section 3.1.1). After several years of preparing for this, the idea was now rejected. The discussion turned and suddenly the emphasis on digital skills became emphasis on basic skills in reading and writing – as a consequence, the Government now instructs the Agency of Education to develop new guidelines where learning is required by analogue activities in an analogue environment and schools can apply for extra funding for traditional school books (Skolverket, 2023b).

These sudden turns from the government and authorities are examples of how the ideas about education keep changing and how public and political opinions affect the educational discourse.

In a school leader conference for the Nordic countries in March 2024, several of the speakers addressed that Sweden needs a more rigorous and coherent school system (Henricsson, 2024). There are gaps in the Swedish system, and once the gaps have begun to open up, they will widen. Learning has become superficial in Sweden, and too often students pass through the system without doing their best (Schleicher quoted by Henricsson, 2024). The turnover of principals in Swedish schools is high and in recent years, many teachers have left the profession, and the dropout rates from teacher training programs have skyrocketed due to dissatisfaction (Henricsson, 2024). The "fast policy" that characterizes the Swedish school system has led to a "quick-fix" approach to teachers' work and students' learning (Hardy et al., 2019). One of the most important factors in coming to a solution is that politicians across party lines can find a common line that is adhered to over time – regardless of who is in power. The constant shifts from one idea to another, where the discussion tends to be polarized, creates insecurity among teachers and school leaders. Another important aspect is to recreate the status of the teaching profession – where teachers are trusted and looked upon as experts in their field (Hardy, et al., 2019).

These areas are some examples of the debate in Sweden, other areas are for example equal assessment of students, the design of teacher education, and unequal conditions and resources for learning depending on which school a student attends.

I will now change my perspective and focus on Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy.

3.2 Waldorf-Steiner Pedagogy and Practice

Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy and schools have been a part of the Swedish educational system for a long time, the advocates claim that the pedagogy makes students creative and independent, that to let all subjects be highlighted in both theoretical and aesthetic/practical ways deepen students' knowledge (Dahlin, 2017, Tjärnstig, 2019). There are Waldorf-Steiner schools all over the world and the pedagogy has existed for more than 100 years.

I will start this presentation of Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy by giving a short historical background.

3.2.1 A Brief Look in the Rare Mirror

The first Waldorf-Steiner school opened in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1919. The initiative came from factory owner Emil Molt, who wanted to start a school for the children of the factory-workers at the Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory. He turned to Rudolf Steiner since he wanted the school to be built up by the ideas from Steiner's philosophy about human development – anthroposophy (Carlgren, 1981). Steiner (1965/1992) claims that education needs to be divided into three phases; in early childhood, children learn by imitating, in the age span of 7-14 years by positive authority and in upper school from personal judgement. These approaches make students develop thought, feeling, and will – three abilities that are necessary in the world (Steiner, 1965/1992). An important idea is that there is always a

"healthy core" in human beings – no matter how problematic the circumstances might be – and education is about to address this core (Steiner, 1922/1995).

The anthroposophical ideas were not to be taught in school, the ideas should work as basic principles or as a conceptual framework for teachers (Steiner, 1932/1981).

Steiner (1959/1987) had some, for his time and context, radical demands; the school should be open for all students, no matter social class, religion, ethnicity, or gender. Boys and girls were to study the same subjects and there should not be any corporal punishment.

> The "Waldorfschool" started in September 1919 and was the very first school in Germany where children from the working class and children from the upper social classes were sitting in the same classroom and getting the same kind of education. (Carlgren, 1981, p. 64, my translation).

The instructions about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy were given by Steiner during the opening of the first school in Stuttgart in 1919. It consisted of lectures and seminars about the development psychology in anthroposophy, teaching methods, and how the curriculum was to be structured. These lectures and seminars are published, based on notes and stenography from participants, and translated into many languages[11] (Steiner, 1932/1981, Steiner, 1934/1986, Steiner, 1959/1987).

The curriculum should be holistic, promoting health and rhythms. There were to be no hierarchical distinctions between teachers, instead management of the school should strive to be a flat organization where all teachers and co-workers dealt with administration, economy, and pedagogy (Dahlin, 2017). During the 1920s, new Waldorf-Steiner schools opened in, for example, Switzerland, Norway, England, and the USA. During the second world war, many schools were banned and closed by the Nazis (Dahlin, 2017).

[11] The published work from Steiner (books, lectures, notes and more) is archived in Goetheanum, Switzerland, the international center for the Anthroposophical society. Every piece of work has an archive number from the complete work edition, in German "Gesamtausgabe", abbreviated GA. Steiner gave more than 800 lectures, and his work is substantial. In the reference list, these original archive numbers are given.

In Sweden, the first Waldorf-Steiner impulses started in 1930. The first school, Kristofferskolan, started in 1949 in Stockholm and is still the biggest Waldorf-Steiner school in Sweden. In the 1960s-70s, schools opened in other cities, often by initiative from parents, and a teacher seminar started to educate Waldorf-Steiner teachers. The schools struggled with both the economy and the government –which did not want to approve "alternative schools" (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2021).

Today there are 36 Waldorf-Steiner schools and 74 Waldorf-Steiner pre-schools in Sweden, with more than 6500 students (Waldorfskolefederationen & RWS, 2022). Each school is independent, but all schools are members of the Swedish Federation for Waldorf-Steiner schools (Waldorfskolefederationen & RWS, 2022). In this study, nine schools are represented, and all of them are situated in what could be described as strong socio-economic areas, this I will discuss further in section 6.3.2. In the world, there are 1270 schools and 1928 pre-schools in 75 different countries (Bund die freien Waldorfschulen, 2022).

3.2.2 Waldorf-Steiner Pedagogy and Anthroposphy

There are many perspectives that could be connected to Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy. Of course, one way is to look at the pedagogy as a part of anthroposophy – the ideas and philosophy from Steiner. Anthroposophy has inspired many branches, such as bio-dynamic agriculture, social-therapy, medicine, and pedagogy, there are also theories about economics, organization-theory and more (De Souza, 2012). The basic idea is about an understanding of human-beings as body, soul, and spirit (De Souza, 2012).

Anthroposophy is a complex philosophy and not possible to try to explain in this study that focuses on the actual practice in Waldorf-Steiner schools – and as I previously stated, Steiner makes it clear that anthroposophy should not be taught or presented to students, "Here in the Waldorf School we do not want to create a parochial school. The Waldorf School will not

propagate a particular point of view by filling the children with anthroposophical dogma" (Steiner, 1932/1996, p. 31).

Is it possible to be a Waldorf-Steiner teacher without being an anthroposophist? This is a question that different people would answer in different ways. There are those who would claim that it is a condition, but my experience says that there are also those who do not consider themselves to be anthroposophists. For many teachers, the ideas from Steiner work as an inspiration – not as an ideology – many teachers' main focus is the pedagogic ideas, not always the underlaying developmental psychology. This is my personal interpretation of the situation, based on my participation in meetings, conferences and communication with Waldorf-Steiner teachers in different Swedish settings – it is also a conclusion in an article by Randoll and Peters (2015) that investigates empirical research about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy in Germany. The authors conclude that younger teachers are more open to reforms and not so connected to anthroposophy and traditions (Randoll and Peters, 2015). In many schools all over the world, there is a generation shift, and in a survey study conducted in Germany among Waldorf-Steiner teachers, the conclusion is that there is a tendency for younger teachers to have a sympathetic, but a bit critical, attitude towards anthroposophy (Randoll, 2013).

But still, as a Waldorf-Steiner teacher you need to relate to the fundamental values and core ideas in the pedagogy: that children are mature for different types of knowledge depending on age, that education is supposed to be creative and broad, that every child is unique, and that there is a spiritual dimension in every human being.

I will now present some of the key ideas in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy.

3.2.3 The Pedagogical Idea – a Short Description

In the literature from Steiner, there is an ocean of didactic examples – lectures about how pedagogy affects students and how children develop and learn (Steiner, 1949/1994), and some of these ideas will be presented in the upcoming sections in this chapter, and connected to established theories in Chapter 4.

The pedagogical ideas from Steiner have their roots in the Bildung tradition, a central idea is that education is a development that transform the inner nature of humans and the relation to the external nature (Dahlin, 2017). Gradually and step by step – children conquer their individuality and independence. For small children, imitation is a way to learn and as the child grows older the importance of always including arts and aesthetic elements in education, alongside with intellectual knowledge, is emphasized (Steiner, 1932/1981). Steiner saw knowledge as something that can only emerge from participation in the world and social activities – as a product of human creativity (Dahlin, 2017). Thinking is an inner activity, but for thinking to become knowledge, other parts of the human need to be involved – such as feelings, and imagination so that it becomes a lived experience (Steiner, 1932/1981). This view ofhow knowledge is gained is the reason why Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy strives to highlight school-subjects from different perspectives and connect aesthetic and practical activities to all school-subjects – so that education becomes meaningful and connected to the world. Steiner (1932/1981) claims that teaching and learning should be holistic for the whole individual, addressed to imagination, feelings, senses and thinking (Dahlin, 2017). The role of the teacher is emphasized, and the goal of education is to make it possible for individuals to develop their fullest potential in knowledge, self-realization and freedom (Steiner, 1932/1981).

“Life has a rhythm in the most comprehensive sense” (Steiner, 1920/2001, p. 85). Rhythms are present in everyday-life, such a small thing as becoming hungry at a specific time is proof of that – we feel better when there are rhythms and routines in our lives. Rhythms are within us, in our breathing, in our heartbeats – and outside of us in the shifts between night and day, in the seasons, in nature. Steiner (1959/1987) claims that the human rhythmical system – the heart, the blood, the lungs – never gets tired, it just keeps working as long as we live. We get tired when we engage in physical activities, we get tired when we think – the only way to try and avoid that students get tired is to make education into something rhythmical, something artistic that is alive and breathing and hence connected to the rhythms within every human (Steiner, 1965/1992).

The metaphor “inhale and exhale” is often used to describe how students are first to take in new impressions, teaching and phenomena by listening or observing – and then process this in an individual way by writing a text, drawing a picture or something else that requires a more active action from the student (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016).

Easton (1997), who interviewed more than 50 Waldorf-Steiner students, describes that there are six distinguishing keys in Waldorf-Steiner education:

1. A theory of child development – a holistic perspective that integrates knowledge from thinking, feeling, and doing.
2. A theory of teacher development – since class teachers follow their class for many years, the teacher needs to develop an ability to keep pace with the changing needs of students.
3. A core curriculum that integrates artistic and academic work – the curriculum in each level builds on past experiences and works as a foundation for schoolwork in later years so that the knowledge deepens and transforms into understanding.

4. A method of teaching as an art that pays careful attention to synchronizing teaching methods with the rhythms of a child's unfolding capacities.
5. Integration of teaching and administration – a flat organization without an obvious hierarchy.
6. Building the school and the greater Steiner community as networks of support for students, teachers and parents. (Easton, 1997).

Even though her study took place more than 25 years ago, the conclusions that Easton (1997) draws can be connected to how contemporary research and literature describe the intentions of Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy (Binetti, 2020, Rawson, 2021, Tjärnstig, 2019).

3.2.4 To be a Waldorf-Steiner Teacher

Teachers in Waldorf-Steiner schools are to be experienced as positive authorities – Steiner (1932/1981) stresses the importance of authority being built up by trust and confidence – not by disciplinary or authoritarian methods. To get a sense of true authority, based on respect for another person's knowledge and attitude towards the world, and to be addressed in an individual way, will create a sense of individual freedom and equality (Steiner, 1960/1989). Steiner (1960/1989) claims that teachers should meet students with a sense of awe – he puts a lot of responsibility on teachers, claiming that teaching is all about how much energy and motivation the teacher brings to the pedagogic situation, not so much about the students' motivation (Dahlin, 2017). Steiner emphasizes that teachers need to be able to relate to their students and build relationships – an opinion that was a bit unheard of in his time.

Waldorf-Steiner teachers are to structure their lessons in a way that makes knowledge a process, using a phenomenological approach, focusing on both the group and the individual (Rawson, 2021). One of the primary tasks is to create an atmosphere of trust – to make it possible for all students to participate to their fullest extent and not be held

back by insecurity or fear of making mistakes (Rawson, 2021). The teachers in the study by Tjärnstig (2019) discussed the "pedagogic contract" between teacher and students, a metaphor to describe that education will lead to an experience of meaning. Teachers need to know about their students strengths and weaknesses so that they can adjust their teaching to the right level where students are both confirmed and challenged (Tjärnstig, 2019).

In Waldorf-Steiner schools, the professional title *Class teacher* means that you are the responsible teacher for a set cohort of students. There is an outspoken intention that the class-teacher leads a class for many years so that a strong relationship can be developed between teacher and students (Dahlin, 2017, Rawson, 2021). In Sweden, it is common for the class-teacher to teach most subjects in grade 1-6, and subject teachers come into the class only in specific subjects, for example eurythmy[12], handicraft and foreign languages. Of course, this can differ in different schools depending on what competence the class-teacher has. In the upper grades, 7-9, there is still one responsible class-teacher, but subject-teachers are now entering the classroom more frequently. You can work as a class-teacher for one class and as a subject-teacher in another.

It is common that each set cohort of students in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools has their own "home-classroom". This means that they usually have all their lessons in the same classroom, with exceptions for subjects where a special equipment is needed, for example woodwork or gymnastics[13]. This gives possibilities for students and class teacher to create a

[12] Eurythmy is a school-subject in Waldorf-Steiner schools, a movement and art subject. In Sweden, schools are allowed to have one subject as a free choice for 600 hours during compulsory school. Eurythmy, as a school choice, is accepted by the Agency of Education in Sweden.
[13] This is conclusion drawn from visits in 26 of the 38 Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden.

personal touch in the classroom, decorating with, for example, drawings done by the students on the walls.

One of the key ideas in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy is the main lesson, where teachers are to plan and structure both theoretical and aesthetical content in their teaching.

3.2.5 The Main Lesson

The main lesson is looked upon as a corner stone in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy. Subjects like history, geography, chemistry, and more are taught in blocks for 2-4 weeks during the first lesson every day. In primary- and middle school subjects are often integrated and taught thematically in an interdisciplinary way as “The year of the farmer” or “Local geography” which includes both social- and natural science and handicraft. (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016).

The main lesson is often built up by different parts – depending on the age of the students and the subject taught (De Souza, 2012, Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016).

- A start of the day with reading a morning verse, and informal conversations about practical things.
- A rhythmical part – in the lower grades this part can be 20-30 minutes and includes music, verses, rhymes, and games – often connected to the theme of the lesson. The older the students get the shorter this part becomes, for example, a short clapping game or juggling. The idea is to make the students “wake up” and use their bodies – so that they will be able to concentrate during the lesson.
- A recollection of what was discussed and learned yesterday – teacher and students talk and reflect on what has already been learned. What is important to remember, what was difficult and how do we come further?

- Storytelling or lecturing by the teacher where the students listen – students in middle- and upper school take notes.
- Student active part where the students create texts, illustrations or else depending on the subject.

During the main lesson, students often create their own compendium, which in Sweden is referred to as “the Main lesson book”. Students construct texts, illustrations, charts or maps and the main lesson book becomes a summary of the theme that they have been working with. In the lower grades, ready-made schoolbooks are rare but in middle school and in the upper grades they are used more frequently in subjects like for example mathematics and language (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). Teachers can have a personal approach to how to structure and design the main lesson – based on the Waldorf-Steiner curriculum – and in Sweden, they must also relate to the national curriculum.

Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy celebrated its 100 anniversary in 2019 – but still, it is not very visible in the debate about education in Sweden.

3.2.6 Waldorf-Steiner Pedagogy in the Academic Field

As mentioned before, there is not much research done on a higher academic level about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy in Sweden.

During 2003-2007 an evaluative study was conducted at the University of Karlstad, *Waldorfschools – a school for human development? Final report from the project Waldorfschools in Sweden* (Dahlin et al., 2006, my translation). 11 Waldorf-Steiner schools participated and the study includes six reports with a focus on higher education among former students, questions about democracy and solidarity, education for students with special needs, teacher training, and results in school subjects (Dahlin et al., 2006).

In 2012, Sara Frödén presented her doctoral thesis at the University of Örebro, *In changeable, enclosed pink rooms, an ethnographic study about gender, age and spirituality in a Swedish waldorf pre-school* (Frödén, 2012). And, in 2019 Leif Tjärnstig's doctoral thesis was presented at Åbo Akademi University in Finland, *Didactic practice in Waldorfschools* (Tjärnstig, 2019, my translation).

In other countries, such as Germany and the USA, the situation is different, even though there are those who claim that research on Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy is relatively scarce, considering the fact that there are more than a thousand schools in the world and the pedagogy has existed for more than a hundred years (Dahlin, 2017, Schieren, 2009, Tjärnstig, 2019).

On the webpage RoSE, Research on Steiner Education, there are peer-reviewed academic articles that focus on a variety of issues. This web-based journal publishes both empirical and theoretical articles and is a co-operation between the Rudolf Steiner University College in Norway and Alanus University of Arts and Science in Germany (RoSE – Research on Steiner Education, 2022).

I will now highlight some of the differences in conditions for Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden compared to other countries.

3.3 The Unique Swedish Situation

Waldorf-Steiner schools have been a part of the Swedish educational system for a long time and are the only alternative schools that have exceptions in the Education Act – the right to give grades in grade 9 only, and the right to employ teachers without state education. The schools are given economic funding from the state and The Swedish Federation for Waldorf schools and the Waldorf teacher training college, Waldorflärarhögskolan (WLH), are active

agents in political questions concerning education – they sometimes work as consultation bodies.

For good or bad, Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools have a very different situation compared to most other countries. To understand the context that the participating teachers in this study belong to – an explanation of some of these differences is necessary.

I will start with economy, maybe the most different condition.

3.3.1 Economy in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner Schools

For a long time, up until the 1960s, Waldorf-Steiner schools were the only schools with an alternative pedagogy in Sweden. Some Waldorf-Steiner schools got small economic funding from the state for costs related to premises or rents, and parents paid their fees according to their salaries. Parents were often involved in helping the schools, doing the cleaning, baking bread, or doing renovations or gardening. It was not unusual that Waldorf-Steiner teachers worked without being paid, or with a very low salary – most schools struggled to survive economically. To be a Waldorf-Steiner teacher was in many ways "a calling"[14].

For Waldorf-Steiner schools, the reform in 1992 (see section 3.1.4) changed the economic situation in a positive way. Today Waldorf-Steiner schools, and other free- or alternative schools, are all funded by the state. Education in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools is completely tuition-free and free lunch is legislated, making it possible for all students to apply – not only those who can afford it.

This is a big difference compared to Waldorf-Steiner schools in other countries. For example, a quick search on school's webpages shows that to attend a Waldorf-Steiner school in the UK or Germany costs at least 8 - 10,000 pounds per year, and in Norway 3 – 4,000. In some countries, parents pay all the costs, in others, Waldorf-Steiner schools get parts of their

[14] This information is based on conversations with Waldorf-Steiner teachers who were active in the early years in Sweden.

funding covered by the state. In most schools, you can apply for reduced fees if you have a low income.

A second difference has to do with education for Waldorf-Steiner teachers – which is also tuition-free in Sweden.

3.3.2 Waldorf-Steiner Teacher Education in Sweden

To become a state-certificated teacher, you need to study at university for five years, at the state teachers training programme. All university education is tuition-free in Sweden if you are a citizen of a Nordic country, an EU/EEA[15] country or Switzerland, or if you have a permanent residence permit or a temporary residence permit (Univeristets och Högskolerådet, 2023). Municipal schools can only give permanent employment to those who have this certification and in municipal schools, only certificated teachers are allowed to give grades.

When the new Education Act was pending, the Swedish Federation for Waldorf schools managed to negotiate an exception – the right for Waldorf-Steiner schools to employ teachers who are not state-educated (Education Act, 2010, Ch. 2 § 17). This gives Waldorf-Steiner schools the possibility to employ teachers who took, or will take, their training at the Waldorf teaching training college, WLH.

WLH is since 2012 under state supervision, and since 2014 has had public funding – just like all other universities and colleges in Sweden. If you want to become a Waldorf-Steiner teacher, the education is free, and you can apply for a student-loan from the Swedish Board on Student Finance. But the education does not give students university points – WLH is striving to be accepted as a university or college.

[15] EU – The European Union consists of the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden.
EEA – The European Economic Area includes EU countries and also Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway.

Just like municipal schools, Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools are facing an increasing lack of educated teachers. This leads to a situation where schools sometimes employ teachers with non, or just partial, knowledge or interest in the pedagogy. This causes tension in colleges, the balance of power is challenged, and suddenly the "obvious way of doing things" is not obvious to everybody (Selsfors, 2019).

These two areas, funding of schools and teacher education, have been positive for Waldorf-Steiner schools, but there are legislations that reduce the autonomy of Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools.

3.3.3 Management of Swedish Waldorf-Steiner Schools

Traditionally, Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden, and in other countries, are organized as non-profit foundations. For a long time, it was the teachers' college that shared the management issues – an organization-form with both positive and negative aspects (Bento, 2015). There was an outspoken idea to be non-hierarchal and democratic – but formal and legal issues were not always treated in a professional way.

In 2010, the new Swedish Education Act stated that all schools must have a principal, with a compulsory state education for principals – it was no longer possible to have a management group or to share the responsibility among, for example, a Waldorf-Steiner college (Education Act, 2010). The flat hierarchy that Waldorf-Steiner schools claim to strive for was no longer possible in Sweden.

Since 2018, all schools must have a head of administration who are to assist the schoolboard and the principal and ensure that all formal demands are followed. Since 2019, there have been formal demands on the members in a school board, they must be able to show to the Swedish school Inspectorate that they have knowledge about the Education Act, about

regulations and guidelines and of the national curriculum, and be able to show that there are economic conditions to run the school in a qualitative way (Skolinspektionen, 2022b).

Traditionally, the teachers' college meets every week in the "teachers conference" and both practical and pedagogic questions are discussed. Often time is used for joint studies or artistic practice. In some schools, the teachers conference is open for all staff in school, while in others, only teachers participate.

The teachers' college in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools still has a strong and important position in everyday school life (Selsfors, 2019), but formally and legally it no longer has any real power or responsibility.

This is of course a big change, but the biggest loss for Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools is most certainly the requirement to adapt to the national curriculum.

3.3.4 Curriculum and Syllabus

When the national curriculum was legislated in 2011 – this was a backlash for Waldorf-Steiner schools. One of the key ideas in the pedagogy is that *what is taught*, and *how it is taught*, must be appropriate to the age of students (Easton, 1997, Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). The Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy's view on developmental psychology means that you work with an idea about progression or subject- development both when it comes to content and how to work with the chosen theme, in order to support students' development and learning (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). In praxis, this means that certain themes have traditionally been taught in a certain grade, for example, history about the ancient Greek in the 5th grade, sustainability, and ecology in the 9th grade. The abstract and intellectual level in all subjects increases as the students get older.

The new national curriculum and syllabus forced the Swedish Federation for Waldorf schools to rewrite the working plan *A path to freedom* (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016) and find a

way to compromise. The work with the revision of the work plan took a lot of time and effort, it started soon after the introduction of the national curriculum in 2011 but was not finished until 2016. The workplan was discussed in many of the Federations meetings and there were different opinions about how it should be formulated, how much it could differ from *Lgr11* and which ideas about the practice should be emphasized or left out[16]. The Waldorf-Steiner work plan is a complement to *Lgr22*, not considered by authorities to be valid as a separate curriculum.

Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools also need to follow the national syllabus. Since 2018 the guaranteed hours of education in each school subject during compulsory school are divided into three parts: Grade 1-3, 4-6 and 7-9 (see appendix 12.13). There are to be no more than 10 % deviations from the syllabus. This has affected the traditional way of teaching in Waldorf-Steiner schools that emphasize the importance of aesthetical and practical subjects, the number of hours given in the syllabus focuses on theoretical subjects.

Laws and regulations have forced Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools to give up many of the traditional features in the pedagogy – the discussion about how to keep the pedagogy's core values and ideas is difficult. On the other hand, this has led to an internal debate about what Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy should be today (Tjärnstig, 2019, Tyson, 2021). Many teachers express a frustration about not having time to let the aesthetic perspectives permeate the teaching anymore, but often also state that the professionalism within Waldorf-Steiner schools has increased.

In 2022 a research project was initiated by the Swedish Federation for Waldorf schools to investigate the core qualities and hence identify what has happened during the years of

[16] This information is from my personal participation in these meetings.

compromises[17]. How can Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools adjust to the demands from authorities without losing their uniqueness – what features are possible to let go of, change or modernize and what should be kept?

The demands to follow the national curriculum means that Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools must also participate in national testing, use the grading scale, and adapt to the Swedish Government's digitalisation vision.

3.3.5 Tests, Grades and Digital Tools

For a long time, Waldorf-Steiner schools were "grade-free" – instead of a number or points, students got a personal judgement each schoolyear that focused on individual development in subjects and social skills. In 2010, the Swedish Federation for Waldorf schools succeeded in letting Waldorf-Steiner schools have an exception in the Education Act; the right to give grades only in the 9th grade or when a course is concluded (School Regulation, 2011, Ch. 6 § 8). In the earlier years, students still get a personal judgement, but today it must focus more on students' performance in relation to the knowledge criteria from *Lgr22*, not on individual or social development (Education Act, 2010).

Since Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools follow the national curriculum, students from Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools are certificated to apply to gymnasium – they have read the same subjects and participated in the national tests, they have final grades from the ninth schoolyear that conclude their results from compulsory school. Statistic shows that students from Waldorf-Steiner schools have slightly above average merit points compared to students in municipal schools (Skolverket, 2022c).

[17] This information comes from my personal participation in meetings and conferences about the research project.

Traditionally, Waldorf-Steiner schools have always been restrictive when it comes to the use of digital tools, especially in the lower grades (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). In some countries, there are Waldorf-Steiner schools that are completely "tech-free", two of the most famous examples are the Waldorf School of Peninsula in Silicon Valley (Waldorfschool of Peninsula, 2022) and Sacramento Waldorf School in California (Sacramento Waldorf School, 2023) . The fact that many high-tech parents chose tech-free schools created attention in the media some years ago (CNBC, 2019, CNN, 2012).

In Sweden, computers have been used in the upper grades (grade 7-9) in most Waldorf-Steiner schools for quite some time, but in a limited way. Digital tools have become part of the education in Waldorf-Steiner schools, even if most schools only do what is absolutely necessary in the lower grades – in order to fulfil the demands in *Lgr22*. Waldorf-Steiner schools agree with the opinion that small children should not use digital tools extensively – a fact that the School Inspectorate has criticized during inspections before the turn in the debate (Skolinspektionen, 2022a). The Government's new guidelines about promoting basic skills instead of the use of digital tools (see section 3.1.6) are in many ways in favour of Waldorf-Steiner schools.

During its existence, Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy has received both praise and criticism from different perspectives. The critics say that it is vague, non-academic, and cult-like – in Sweden, the critics claim that it is a "hippie" influenced pedagogy that focuses too much on play and aesthetic activities, not emphasizing academic or intellectual skills (Frisk, 2014, Petersson, 2021), while the advocates claim that the methods used make students enjoy learning (Schleicher, 2017). There have also been questions about if and how the ideas from Steiner, anthroposophy, affect the education conducted in Waldorf-Steiner schools (Skolinspektionen, 2022a).

3.4 Summary, Context of the Study

In this chapter, I have presented some of the issues that are being debated and discussed in Sweden, and information about curriculum, state control and challenges. I have described some key elements in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy and the specific situation for Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools.

In short, the differences in Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden compared to most other countries are:

1. No tuition fees, Waldorf-Steiner schools are funded by the state.
2. No tuition fees at the Waldorf-Steiner teacher training programme, WLH is funded by the state.
3. Grades are given in grade 9 according to the Swedish grading system and students participate in the national tests. Students leaving grade nine have the same possibilities to apply to gymnasium as students from other schools.
4. Waldorf-Steiner schools are led by a principal, there are demands on what competencies a schoolboard must have.
5. The Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools follow both the national curriculum and syllabus – and their own work plan *A path to freedom.*

Schools have been forced to let go of many ideas and ideals – to adjust Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy to the national curriculum has not been easy.

The schools in Sweden have a stronger economic situation than schools in other countries – students in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools come from different kinds of backgrounds and social classes and many schools are multi-cultural – a fact that fit well together with the original ideas from Emil Molt and Rudolf Steiner in 1919.

4. Theoretical Perspectives on Teaching and Learning

In this chapter, I will first discuss, and give examples of, how we can understand different discourses in pedagogy. I will then present some of the ideas and theories from Basil Bernstein – and in the second part, I will present ideas from relational pedagogy. I will connect these ideas with general issues concerning education and give brief examples of how some methods and approaches in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy can be highlighted by these theories.

4.1 Discourses in Education

The overarching idea in my work is that we are all affected by the context that we belong to – a specific way of thinking and acting – based on what we consider to be common sense. Different discourses appear in society and make us adapt to what is socially accepted as "the way it is" (Johansson, 2009b). Discursive practice is often about how texts are produced, distributed, and consumed – how language is used to emphasize and highlight what is seen as important (Johansson, 2009b). Discourse can also be about social practice – and if we choose to look at discourses not just as text interpretation, discourses contribute to the construction of social structures with their values and customs (Haglund, 2009). They become a practice that describes, shapes and constitutes our ideas about the world, ourselves and our relations in an unconscious way (Hyslop-Margison, 2000).

> People learn to name the world with descriptive signs, symbols, frames of reference, and entire discourses that they themselves did not create. As they learn and employ a pre-existing discourse, the accompanying values, ideas, and assumptions it embodies are also acquired. Discourse, then, is the process by which biological life becomes sociocultural life. It influences thoughts, constructs identities, binds and divides communities of action, and shapes world views. (Hyslop-Margison, 2000, p. 103).

Discourses surround us, in a way that we seldom reflect upon, to recognize your own role in a discourse is not always possible.

From a historical perspective, education has always been about making the up-growing generation equipped to take part in society, to understand and pass on traditions and culture (Egidius, 2001). Discourses in knowledge traditions change over time, they are questioned, discussed, and debated and used as tools or arguments in the political debate (Whitty and Furlong, 2017). Bernstein (2000) describes how discourses in education shape consciousness and generate what we consider to be legitimate knowledge.

We find different pedagogic discourses in different countries and cultures, and different pedagogic approaches. I will briefly give a presentation of contemporary discourses in education that are visible in the Swedish context, as an example of how "common sense" can be explained and understood in different ways.

4.1.1 The Dominating Agenda

In Europe, we have a situation where several countries face difficulties and challenges in the area of education – the lack of teachers, combined with decreasing results in ranking lists such as PISA or TIMSSs[18], have led to that many countries actively strive to change the view and discourse about education (De Lissovoy, 2013, Whitty and Furlong, 2017).

The neo-liberal perspective emphasizes the importance of making yourself employable, effective and useful for society – education is looked upon as a "human capital" – skills and abilities that you need as a part of the productive workforce (Connell, 2013, p. 104). This

[18] PISA (Program for international student assessment) is a test for the ninth grade, constructed by OECD. The PISA-based Test for Schools provides school-level estimates of performance and information about the learning environment and students' attitudes gathered from student questionnaires. TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) is a test in mathematics and natural science, organized by the research organization IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement), the tests are conducted in grade 4 and 8.

perspective has attracted the interest of many governments – how can the quality of education become more possible to examine? The answer that several countries found was the implementation of different systematic accountability systems. The background for this focus can be found in a stronger demand from society and the labour market to be able to perform in individual work, to be creative and solution-oriented and to be a part of lifelong learning in a fast-changing society (Egidius, 2001, Ellström et al., 1996).

The neo-liberal perspective on education has led to the development of a stronger national regulatory framework (Connell, 2013). National tests and assessment criteria regulate teachers' influence on their teaching in a stronger way than before (Carlgren, 2015, De Lissovoy, 2013). This is said to ensure that all students get the right support, regardless of socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender or else, and that schools and teachers use the policies from governments and authorities in a correct manner. Teachers are to be effective and use the best proven evidence, or experience, in their teaching (De Lissovoy, 2013). Accountability systems are used as a tool to make sure that schools take actions when students do not reach the predetermined goals of the education – if they do not, schools can risk sanctions (De Lissovoy, 2013).

One, often mentioned critique towards accountability in education is that it focuses on succeeding on tests – not on students' abilities in a "real" situation or on *how* and *if* they can use the learning that they have received. This focus puts pressure on teachers to focus their teaching on what is being tested (Connell, 2013, p. 107). Hyslop-Margison (2000) goes even further and claims that the neo-liberal perspective threatens public education and society, reducing students to objects instead of individuals.

> Unfortunately, this perspective threatens traditional public education, and society, in a variety of ways. One obvious criticism of this approach is that it creates a rather disturbing image of students being objectified as human capital and prepared for the inevitable impact of economic globalization. (Hyslop-Margison, 2000, p. 205)

There is a risk that the means become the goal – the strive for increased effectivity ignores the "soft" areas in schools, such as democracy and overarching values, and the view about what knowledge really is has become more narrow – a focus on what is measurable (Biesta, 2018, Carlgren, 2015). Another critical perspective is the idea that there is one ready-made solution to use in pedagogic situations (Carlgren, 2015, Levinsson, 2013). Biesta (2018) claims that the advocates for evidence-based methods and accountability systems believe that there are pre-determined methods that always work, but that idea is problematic, practically undoable, and undemocratic. There is a need to ask *what* this effectivity is about, and *who* it is effective for (Biesta, 2018).

The neo-liberal perspective has a strong voice in the debate about education, but there are other voices, even though they do not have the same impact on questions related to political decisions about educational practice.

4.1.2 Reform-Pedagogy and The Bildung Tradition

The idea that an individual should strive for personal development, more knowledge and understanding is a thought that goes all the way back to Aristotle and Socrates. An important person is Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) whose novel about *Emile* describes an individual without academic schooling, but with a strong identity and abilities to cope with life (Rousseau, 2007). In his criticism of the teachers and teaching of his time, Rousseau takes a clear stand against authoritarian, verbal, and theoretical teaching – his book was burned on bonfires and banned, and Rousseau was forced into exile (Korsström, 1985).

In the beginning – life-long learning was seen as an individual progress in knowledge and social skills – a way of liberating yourself (Ellström et al., 1996). It had very little to do with the interpretation that dominates today – as a part of a strategy for economic and technology development.

Many of the alternative pedagogical movements have their roots in the idea that education is something personal – an inner growth and process – a development of intellectual and moral powers (Deng, 2018). The pedagogic ideas from Steiner, Montessori, Freinet, Dewey and Freire are all considered to belong to reform pedagogy (Lindblom, 2018).

The concept of Bildung is used in the German-speaking world as well as in the Nordic countries and emphasizes education as something that makes individuals grow both intellectually and emotionally. Tyson (2016, p. 360), explains Bildung as the formation of, or making-an-image-of, something that expands one's horizons and shapes one's character. One basic idea in the Bildung-tradition and reform-pedagogy is that knowledge should not only be gained to solve a certain problem – but to develop the individual and his abilities (Tyson, 2016). It is about a process of wholeness that does not have an ending, to be able to reflect and think in a critical way – learning and knowledge that starts as something subjective and personal and grows into a way of relating to the world (Ellström et al., 1996).
The criticism against reform-pedagogy claims that it is a vague approach that focuses too much on inner development instead of intellectual knowledge and that it is more suitable for young children than students in middle or upper school (Ellström et al., 1996). The idea that knowledge is a broad concept makes it difficult to assess subject specific knowledge and hence evaluation of students' performance can become subjective.

In Sweden, these two discourses are visible both in the debate and in policies from authorities.

4.1.3 Educational Discourses in Sweden

Reform pedagogy and bildung had a renaissance in Sweden during the 1970s where focus was on both development in knowledge and social skills – and in many ways, this perspective is still present (Egidius, 2001). There was, and still is, a strong focus on equality in Swedish

schools – all students should get the possibility to develop both intellectually and socially based on their individual conditions (Egidius, 2001, Reimers, 2014, Skolverket, 2022b).

At the beginning of the 2000s, the evidence-based research by Hattie (2014), *Visible learning,* had a big impact on curriculum and guidelines from authorities in Sweden. In his meta study, Hattie (2014), presents different factors of impact that affect students' performance. To develop effective teaching strategies, a lot of joint planning and discussions between teachers are required, an optimization of the students' learning from each other and, in addition, explicit learning goals and criteria for goal fulfilment (Hattie, 2014).

The Swedish Agency of Education published articles about Hattie's research and in their publication *What affects the results in Swedish compulsory school* (Skolverket, 2009, my translation), they referred to his meta study more than 30 times. Many of the "factors of impact" from Hattie's study were included in guidelines and advice for schools.

Hattie (2014) argues that evidence-based methods offer a neutral structure and the central thing in the method is intervention – to intervene in an individual's life or behaviour in a way that leads to an effective result – such as improved school results (Hattie, 2014, p. 342). Another claim is that one of the most important features of successful pedagogy is to communicate about the goal and the purpose of the teaching – to make sure that both students and teachers are familiar with the assessment criteria is said to be a way to succeed. Teachers are to give formative feedback to students about what can be improved and how (Hattie, 2014). In Sweden, this led to an increased focus on measurable knowledge, grades, and tests – the burden of documentation for teachers became heavy. Today, Hattie's methods are being questioned and the Agency of Education now states that perhaps the meta-studies are not as reliable as they thought (Skolverket, 2018a), a research project to investigate and asses Hattie's work, and its influence on guidelines in Sweden, is on-going at Linnaeus University

in Sweden (Linnaeus University, 2021). But still, the ideas are visible in guidelines for schools in Sweden.

Reimers (2014) uses a critical discourse analysis in her research about how issues connected to education are represented in television programs, and concludes that in Sweden, the neo-liberal discourse has changed the previous emphasis on equal education for everyone to the importance of "free-choice" in schools (Reimers, 2014). The idea is that competition and differences between schools will generate better school results. But the free-school reform from 1992 (see section 3.1.4) has led to declined results – and the social background and context of individual students have become more significant (Reimers, 2014). But still, the neo-liberal discourse is used in the political debate and affirmed by the media, even though the equal education discourse is also present, this creates a kind of "light neo-liberalism". The discourse of equality emphasizes *the right for all students to receive an education with high quality*, regardless of socio-economic background or individual school choice – while the neo-liberal discourse in Sweden emphasizes *the right to make informed educational choices*, assuming that all parents have the same prerequisites to make the best educational choices for their children. According to Reimers (2014), this neglect of differing prerequisites has increased segregation and social differentiation in Swedish schools.
In Sweden, the neo-liberal perspective is competing with the equality perspective, and they intertwine and affect each other.

> Thus, the neoliberal educational discourse comes to harbor and includes the notion of equal education, and the discourse of equal education comes to harbor and includes the notion of learning in terms of measurable 'facts', and the significance of comparing test results from different countries. (Reimers, p. 549)

We can conclude, from these examples, that different perspectives and discourses in education exist side by side. The debate about how education is supposed to be designed

and conducted has its roots in the different views and opinions about learning, teaching, and knowledge – as for now, the "light" version of the neo-liberal perspective is dominating in Sweden. At the same time, Sweden has many schools with an alternative pedagogic approach, such as Waldorf-Steiner schools, which are struggling to keep their pedagogic uniqueness.

I will now move on and look closer at some of the ideas and concepts concerning education from Basil Bernstein and connect them to both education in general and to Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy.

4.2 How do we Construct Pedagogy?

In my research, one of my choices is to focus on power and control – two concepts that might provoke and feel uncomfortable to admit to in a pedagogic situation, at least in Sweden that emphasizes students influence and rights. In everyday language it is easy to mistake the execution of control and power as something negative, something used in a conscious way to control others. But most of us would agree that it is not a positive experience to feel powerless or to lose control – we need to have a sense that we have the power and control to affect and influence our lives and what happens to us. Usually, we do not reflect on power hierarchies and structures, they are just there, and we accept that as a way to organize our societies and communities – it is when someone abuses their power that we recognise the presence of it.

Bernstein (2000) refers to power and control as classification and framing, he states that these elements are always present in school settings. The concepts explain differences in communication styles and educational achievements between different socio-economic groups. Bernstein (2003) explains how the education system creates and maintains social classes – pedagogic practice can be understood as a cultural relay, a device for both the

reproduction and production of culture – and hence there is a risk that schools reproduce and reinforce existing social inequalities. Bernstein highlights the importance of creating a more equitable and inclusive school environment to reduce social gaps and increase opportunities for students from all socio-economic backgrounds (Bernstein 2003).

In my work, social class is not the focus – instead, I have chosen to work with the concepts of classification and framing which make it possible to investigate the sources and the consequences of the open or hidden form that power and control take and help us understand the ways in which knowledge systems become part of consciousness.(Bernstein, 1983a).

Before I go deeper into the two concepts classification and framing, I will give an overview of some of the other concepts from Bernstein, to make it easier to come to an understanding of the following literature review, and to show how the concepts in his framework are connected.

Bernstein (2000) describes different codes, rules and models as the principles that regulate what we consider to be meaningful, and how what is meaningful should be expressed.

Collection- and Integrated Codes

Depending on whether classification and framing mechanisms are strong or weak inside an institution, as a compulsory school, we get different forms of education. Clear and strict boundaries between people and categories create a collection code (Bernstein, 2000, p. 11). The collection code gives a visible pedagogy that is dependent on explicit rules for content, timeframes, order in the classroom, and the teacher in control over the communication. The collection code is visible in upper schools and universities where students study fewer subjects with specialized language and concepts (Bernstein, 1983b), but is also present in compulsory schools with strict boundaries between school subjects, between students of different ages and between teachers and students (Bernstein, 1983b). Visible pedagogy is easy

to understand since the rules about both teaching content and behaviour are made clear (Diehl, 2017).

If boundaries between people and categories are vaguer, the classification and framing are weak – we get an integrated code. An integrated code creates an invisible pedagogy with implicit rules where students appear to have more influence (Bernstein, 2000). In the integrated code there are possibilities to work with peers or in teams, to change the conditions in time and turn order. In preschools and the early school years, the integrated code is common with a weak classification between subjects and the use of everyday language (Bernstein, 1983a). Invisible pedagogy with an integrated code can give conditions for a more equal education since it builds upon interaction between teachers and students (Bernstein, 1983b).

But, just as with many of the concepts from Bernstein, it is never this easy – the codes can change – and they can exist in parallel (see Table 1 below). There are "at least" four different combinations (Bernstein, 1983a, p. 28, my translation).

Table 1, Combination of codes

	Combination of Codes		
1.	Strong classification	Strong framing	Collection code
2.	Strong classification	Weak framing	Collection code
3.	Weak classification	Weak framing	Integrated code
4.	Weak classification	Strong framing	Integrated code

According to Bernstein (1983a), it is the principle of framing that can be either strong or weak in both codes, for example: if there is a strong classification between teachers and students – there can still be possibilities for students to make choices, to control selections and organisation of time – weak framing. If there is a weak classification between students and

teachers, or between subjects, framing can still be strong and limit students' choices of methods, time, and space (Bernstein, 1983a).

Recognition and Realisation Rules

Power relations, classificatory principles, indicate how one context differs from another, and to understand and recognise these differences give us possibilities to act in a "correct manner". The recognition rules are societal, they determine whether a particular language or behaviour is appropriate in a given context, as a classroom – the rules are linked to cultural norms and values (Bernstein, 2000). As an example, in classrooms students are supposed to communicate without slang or swearwords, but in casual conversations with friends, the norms are probably different and hence the use of language becomes different – students are able to recognize the power relations that they are involved in and their positions in them. Realisation rules have to do with our ability to acquire the accepted ways of language and behaviour and use that ability in a context – to construct meaning and make that public. "Simply, recognition rules regulate what meanings are relevant, and realisation rules regulate how the meanings are to be put together to create the legitimate text" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 18).

Performance- and Competence Models

There are models in education that have to do with performance and competencies (Bernstein, 2000). In the performance model, there is an emphasis on the specific outcome, on what kind of knowledge the student is supposed to construct and show, and on what skills are needed to do that (Bernstein, 2000). There is a specialisation of subjects and skills and the rules for recognition and realisation are explicit – the collection code is dominating. Classification is strong – the teacher is the one in control of selection and pace (Bernstein, 2000).

In the competence model, the boundaries between subjects and people are weaker, and students appear to have more control – framing and classification are weak, and the integrated

code is dominating. Teaching is based on the competencies that the students already have, or appear to have, and the focus is on processes and creativity (Bernstein, 2000).

These two models are expressions of different forms of knowledge and depending on how much time and space the different models get in curriculum, and in different classrooms, they affect the identities of teachers and students and create a specific approach to pedagogy and assessment (Diehl, 2017). The Swedish curriculum *Lgr22* could be described as a mixture of these two models – the performance model is dominating but there are elements of the competence model in the two introduction chapters, for example; "School is responsible for ensuring that each student, after completing compulsory school is able to: solve problems and put ideas into action in a creative and responsible way" (Skolverket, 2019, p. 13, my translation).

I will now focus on classification and framing and give examples of how these mechanisms are present in everyday school life.

4.3 Classification and Framing

Classification and framing are closely connected and influence each other, it can be difficult to see where the limits between them go – what situations are about power, and which are about control? When talking about power, control is always in "the background" and vice versa (Bernstein, 1983a). Power decides the principle for relations *between* categories, and control decides the realisation *within* these relations (Bernstein, 1983a). To make these two concepts understandable and possible to recognize in a school setting, I will present them separately by connecting them to different aspects of teaching and learning.

4.3.1 The Principles of Classification

Classification is the underlying principles that control the different power-relations between different categories in the educational system (Bernstein, 2000). Classification can be used to describe the distribution of power between school-leaders, among teachers and among students – or to analyse how school subjects and people are separated and related to each other (Bernstein, 2000). A strong classification means that categories have a unique identity and specialized rules for communication (Bernstein, 1983a). When the limits between categories are vague, the classification is weak. But – be it strong or weak, classification always includes a power relation (Bernstein, 1983a).

Every school creates a specific structure or a specific pattern of meaning (Bernstein, 1983a) – teachers and students relate to each other within a context and there are rules for how the communication is to be done, rules that give criteria and norms. These rules can be both outspoken and unspoken "taken-for-granted assumptions". The rules regulate people's actions, and the communication between them is valued, compared, and classified. There must be some sort of power that maintains and recreates the relations between the categories, to make sure that "students act like students, and teachers as teachers" (Bernstein, 1983a, p. 24, my translation). This becomes specific principles for relations, voices, and hierarchies – a school culture that sets the frames for how meaning-making, interaction, and communication are to be recognized and understood (Bernstein, 1983a).

I will now give some examples of how principles of classification can be identified – between subjects, students, and teachers.

4.3.2 Boundaries and Connections Between School-subjects

One example of strong classification is an ordinary school schedule, where the subjects are divided into different lessons with different kinds of concepts and language – while theme

days or projects where several subjects are involved often have a weaker classification (Granlund, 2013).

In all schools in Sweden, education must be based upon the national curriculum that strictly divides subjects and gives explicit instructions about content and knowledge criteria for every subject (Skolverket, 2019, Skolverket, 2022b). There are also possibilities to work in an interdisciplinary way, a weaker classification. The Agency of Education and the National School Inspectorate both promote and complicate interdisciplinary teaching methods. In a report about the subjects within the discipline of social studies[19] they conclude that students in grades 7-9 must get the opportunity to get both subject-specific knowledge and interdisciplinary knowledge (Skolinspektionen, 2013).

Christidis (2020) conducted a research project about interdisciplinary teaching methods in Swedish gymnasium, using both case studies and interviews. She claims that students learn more and in a deeper way when subjects are integrated. In her study, interdisciplinary teaching is explained as a collaboration between subjects towards a common point of contact that relates to students' future. This approach enables students to establish the societal motive for learning the type of knowledge relevant to their future profession (Christidis, 2020). Christidis' findings correspond with Morais (2002) studies about pedagogic practice and micro-processes in the classroom. Morais (2002) leans on Bernstein's conceptual framework and concludes that there needs to be a strong classification on the macro level, between teacher and students, but a weak classification on the micro level, among students and between subjects – intradisciplinary methods will lead students to a deeper understanding.

> For example, when the process of transmission-acquisition is characterized by a weak classification between the various scientific contents to be learned, that is, in a condition of intradisciplinarity, children are conducted to higher levels of

[19] In Sweden, there are four school subjects that are referred to as being part of social studies: History, Religion, Geography and Civics.

> abstraction and, therefore, to a more meaningful science understanding, while also being given more time to learn because they are constantly turning back to concepts previously learned. (Morais, 2002, p. 4)

To combine aesthetical and theoretical subjects can be a way for students to develop another form of knowledge than just controllable facts (Öhman-Gullberg, 2006). In a subject- integrated project in grade 6, students used video-filming, which normally is a theme in art-lessons, as a tool to investigate rules and democratic processes in a referendum in Sweden. Öhman-Gullberg (2006) interviewed students and teachers and concludes that students got the possibility to develop their communicative skills and to use them in a meaningful context.

One problem with weak classification between school subjects and interdisciplinary education is that it can create a vagueness about assessment, it can become a complicated situation for teachers and students to sort out where the limits between subjects go (Olovsson, 2020). The positive aspects are that it makes it possible to work with the interdisciplinary themes in the introduction chapters in the curriculum – such as democracy, equality, and solidarity. The possibilities for collaboration among different groups of teachers is another perspective that teachers put forward (Christidis, 2020, Öhman-Gullberg, 2006).

As I previously described, inclusion in education is an overarching idea in the Swedish Educational system – and classification can be used to describe and investigate inclusion in schools.

4.3.3 Inclusion and Division among Students

In schools, children are usually divided into groups depending on their age only – a strong classification (Bernstein, 2000). Curricula and syllabus describe when and how students are to meet specific knowledge and themes. How the mechanism of classification is working in a

classroom with students of the same age has to do with school culture, norms and both visible and invisible codes about behaviour and interaction (Bernstein, 1983a). There might be open or hidden forms of classification of students done by teachers, excluding or including students depending on, for example, gender, performance or ideas about which students are considered to be "talented" or not (Bernstein, 1983a). Classification between students can also be done among the students, where group belonging can define what is seen as high-status or not, this kind of classification between students might, or might not be, connected to performance in schools.

As I described earlier (see section 3.1), to divide students based on their knowledge level is not considered to be in line with the Education Act in Sweden (Skolinspektionen, 2010) – the concept of "Inclusive education" is a key term. The concept could be understood both in a narrow and a broad sense. The narrow perspective is about including specific groups of students, as students with learning difficulties, into the ordinary learning situation. A broader perspective focuses on how education should consider differences in students' conditions in a school for all students, the idea of equality, in education (Kotte, 2017). Teachers often find themselves in complicated situations where students with different conditions and abilities are to reach the same goal at the same time. The variations in study-pace and need for support demand an attitude from the teacher on *equal terms* but not the *same terms* (Kotte, 2017). This is of course not unproblematic, the teachers interviewed in Kotte's study express that the concept of inclusion is difficult to really grasp and put into practice. Teachers seldom have the time, or resources, to accommodate the needs of all students (Kotte, 2017).

A condition for inclusion to work for students in need of extra support is that teachers can build close relationships with both students and parents (Gustafson and Hjörne, 2015). In their

narrative study that took place in a school with an outspoken idea about inclusion for students in need of extra support, Gustafson and Hjörne (2015) describe how the participating teachers repeatedly return to the importance of trustful relationships. The strategy is to create a sense of community between all agents in the school – students, teachers, and management – and the fact that the school is relatively small makes this strategy possible. Clear and explicit instructions are other important aspects, the teachers collaborate to formulate tasks and instructions for students, something that the authors refer to as being " necessary for some but good for everyone" (Gustafson and Hjörne, 2015, p. 12, my translation).

Classification between and among students can be done both in a conscious and unconscious way – and the same goes for teachers and staff in schools.

4.3.4 Boundaries and Connections between Teachers

In an organization or institution where teachers are specialized and work in their own area, the classification is strong and the collection code is dominating – teachers relate to each other not as teachers – but in relation to the subject they teach (Bernstein, 2000) This can lead to situations where general discussions and challenges are limited – a culture with closed doors (Diehl et al., 2015). The opposite way of organizing an institution, where the classification is weak, and the integrated code is dominating, leads to that teachers are parts of, and dependent on, strong networks and are more likely to discuss and establish a shared approach based on their views on knowledge (Diehl et al., 2015).

In Swedish schools, teachers are encouraged to work in teams, and collegial work and learning are recommended (Larsson, 2018). But despite this, the OECD concludes that many Swedish teachers work alone and do not participate in collaboration or teamwork (OECD, 2015). The reason for this can be an imbalance in power between teachers working at different levels in compulsory school, differences in status between school subjects or

because of individuals taking different positions (Lindberg, 2020). To work in teacher teams and participate in collegial learning is a relatively new idea and there has been a strong opposition against this model (Lindberg, 2020). Teachers tend to claim ownership of their classroom and be hesitant towards collaboration and open classroom doors.

Collegial learning and practice have both benefits and risks (Langelotz, 2017). There are possibilities to learn from each other and to develop a common language about teaching and learning, but Langelotz (2017) found, in her action study, that when teachers are to investigate and evaluate each other's practice there is also a risk of imbalance between colleagues. To receive critique from a colleague can be experienced as being disciplined – it takes a sense of tact and respect to address critical feedback in a teacher college. Langelotz (2017) describes how power is in play and creates assumptions about "skilled and unskilled" teachers – there must be guidelines and strategies for how to handle complicated situations between teachers that can occur in the process of collegial learning.

To work with projects or themes in schools can be a way to make classification and boundaries weaker between teachers. Edberg (2019) uses the concepts from Bernstein to describe how a musical project in two upper secondary schools in Sweden changed the hierarchy – since the projects included different teacher categories – the boundaries between teachers, and different groups of students, became weaker. One of the schools used a stronger focus on upholding the ordinary boundaries between categories during the project – a collection code – where only specific students and teachers participated, while the other school strived for an integrated code and collaborated with a youth centre. Edberg interviewed both teachers and students and concludes that the projects created a sense of community since

everybody was dependent on each other, but the school where teachers worked with weaker classification succeeded more in changing the hierarchy among teachers (Edberg, 2019).

In the previous sections, I have looked closer at classification among students and among teachers, the most important "categories" in a school. Now, I will look at how we can investigate classification, mechanisms of power, between these two categories.

4.3.5 Teachers as Educators and Students as Learners

There is always some sort of power that makes sure that the roles are clear and obvious in school (Bernstein, 1983a). Teachers and students are involved in a relationship that has to do with transmitting and acquiring, sometimes this goes one way only, and sometimes it is a mutual engagement.

Traditionally, there is a clear and obvious division of labour in classrooms, the teacher is the one who teaches, and the students are to learn and reproduce the decided themes and subjects and the knowledge they contain (Bernstein, 2000).

In classrooms, teachers and students are involved in an "influencing process" – the intentions from teachers, about the purpose of the education and how this is to be realised, can change in the meeting with students (Olsson, 2016). Teaching involves many complex situations and demands the ability to be flexible and still stay in a professional role (Gustafson, 2010). In Sweden, the emphasis on students' rights to influence their situation, creates a situation where teachers need to find a way to uphold a balance in power relations between students and themselves without being too authoritative or strict (Granath, 2008, Gustafson, 2010).

This leads to that in Sweden, teachers seldom give orders to students, instead they negotiate (Granath, 2008, Gustafson, 2010, Lilja, 2013, Ljungblad, 2016). Granath (2008) concludes, in her ethnographic study, that discipline techniques are understood by teachers, students and

guardians to be mild and "pastoral". Granath (2008) explains the concept of "pastoral powers" as a mild, pluralistic, mobile, and fluent way to work with discipline. As soon as an institution has a task from society, it must enact power, but the conduct of power in Swedish schools has changed during the last decades (Granath, 2008, Gustafson, 2010).

In Granath's study (2008) it became evident that discipline is conditioned by communication and dialogue, and the most obvious way to affect students is the use of intimate relations. In these intimate relationships, teachers coax and encourage, they persuade and try again. This "intimization" is not about vague roles between teachers and students, but a method related to pastoral powers. Teachers have obligations that must be fulfilled, but instead of giving orders, the intimate relationship makes it possible for teachers and students to negotiate (Granath, 2008). This pastoral power is not less determined than the outspoken and visible power – but the risk is that the power balance becomes vague, in that sense that it sounds "nicer", and students might have problems to distinguish the hidden message. Granath (2008) argues that the emotional aspects of the intimate relationships and pastoral power support students to be able to cope with individual responsibility for their school performance – the teacher appears as supportive, caring and listening, but also has the power to be demanding about behaviour and performance (Granath, 2008).

In the upcoming section, I will describe how the issues that I have highlighted about classification can be understood in a Waldorf-Steiner context.

4.3.6 How Can We Understand Classification in Waldorf-Steiner Schools?

The areas that I have described in the previous sections, classification among subjects, students, and teachers are all possible to connect to the ideas in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy – there are both similarities and differences compared to the dominating discourse in Sweden.

Teaching Methods in Waldorf-Steiner Schools

Waldorf-Steiner schools claim to give all subjects the same status (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). Many themes in the Waldorf-Steiner curriculum build upon the idea that subjects are to be integrated, history combined with art, chemistry with nutrition knowledge, a drama project in grade 8, and more – the main lesson often includes aesthetic elements, theory and different forms of interaction connected to the theme of the lesson (De Souza, 2012, Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). This could be understood as a weak classification between subjects, since in the Waldorf-Steiner curriculum, the subjects within the themes are described as woven together – especially in the lower grades. On the other hand, the content of the main lessons is often strongly classified and framed with different parts with specific features, as described in section 3.2.5. The Waldorf-Steiner curriculum is specific about *when* a certain theme is to be introduced to the students and, also *what* it should contain (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). This approach could be described as working with mixed classification between school subjects – there is a focus on connecting school subjects and hence coming to a deeper understanding – a method that can help students come to a sense of meaning (Morais, 2002). Today in Sweden, Waldorf-Steiner schools need to follow the national syllabus and a consequence of this is that the number of hours in the aesthetic and practical school subjects are less than the theoretical subjects (see appendix 12.13), more emphasis and time must be focused on subjects like Swedish language, Mathematics and English language.

Weak Classification Among Students in Waldorf-Steiner Schools

Waldorf-Steiner schools claim to strive for a weak classification between students of the same age – this was a basic idea from Steiner (1959/1987) when the first Waldorf-Steiner school started. The curriculum is said to fit both theoretical and practical-oriented students and there is an outspoken strive to make students come together as a community in the classroom

(Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). Rawson (2021) claims that it is possible to compare a Waldorf-Steiner set cohort of students with a learning community with many shared experiences – since it is common that classes are held together for many years during compulsory school. And just as in municipal schools in Sweden, extra support and adjustments must be given to students with special needs.

In contrast to Swedish municipal schools, which often are divided into primary-, secondary- and upper secondary schools – located separately, many Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden have both pre-school, compulsory preschool class and compulsory school in the same buildings or area, some also have gymnasium (Waldorfskolefederationen & RWS, 2022). There are often annual festivities and activities where the young and the older students are mixed.

At the same time, in many countries, it is not possible for students who come from a weak socio-economic situation to attend a Waldorf-Steiner school because of high tuition fees. Even in Sweden, where education in Waldorf-Steiner schools is tuition-free, a majority of the students come from middle-class families where parents have attended higher education (Dahlin, 2017). This is a trend in all free schools in Sweden, parents from a privileged socio-economic background tend to use the system with free school choice more often (Ambrose, 2016).

Waldorf-Steiner schools are not exempt from incidents of bullying or conflicts among students. Reports from The Swedish School Inspectorate show that, just as in other schools, this is a problematic area (Skolinspektionen, 2022a). All schools in Sweden have a responsibility to prevent bullying or harassment from happening (Barn & Elevombudsmannen, 2022), but this phenomenon is increasing, especially harassment on social media, and is a difficult situation for all schools to handle .

Teacher Hierarchy and Collegial Work in Waldorf-Steiner Schools

For a long time, Waldorf-Steiner schools were organized as flat organizations where decisions were taken by consensus building (see section 3.3.3), – an idea that still permeates how management questions are dealt with (Bento, 2015). The aim is to make all participants feel involved and engaged – a weak classification and an integrated code among teachers and staff. But at the same time, Waldorf-Steiner communities are not exceptions when it comes to social relationships. To enter any community means that you need to accept and understand the underlying patterns of negotiation and the social order within the community (Wenger, 1999). Many of the negotiated rules and codes in Waldorf-Steiner schools are based upon an oral tradition and have their roots in the ideas from Steiner – and then passed on in the Waldorf-Steiner teaching training, and maintained in the school communities – hence it can be difficult for newcomers to fully understand how to act or what is considered to be "the right way of doing things" (Selsfors, 2019).

Bento's (2015) narrative study was conducted in Norway and addresses the question of decision-making and school management in Waldorf-Steiner schools – the participating teachers describe how the ideas from Steiner, combined with the school culture and teacher training, create taken-for-granted assumptions and tacit codes about what is "Waldorf" or not. Relations of power, different positions and informal structures create a social environment where some positions are more privileged than others – even if Waldorf-Steiner schools claim to strive for a flat organisation (Bento, 2015), what Bernstein would refer to as weak classification among school staff

Weak classification among teachers creates a need for an overarching idea – which serves to guide what kinds of knowledge should be included in a community (Bernstein, 2000). Granlund (2013), who compared a public teacher education and a Waldorf-Steiner teacher education by using the concepts of classification and framing from Bernstein, concludes in

her doctoral thesis that the ideas from reform pedagogy, where the focus is put on active, critical and knowledge seeking students, can serve as such an overarching idea. The teachers using weak classification and an integrated code, where boundaries between subjects and people are weak, need to share some overarching ideas about learning and teaching – as the overarching ideas from Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy – while a collection code, with a stricter division between categories, allows teachers to have different ideologies (Granlund, 2013).

Collegial work among teachers in Waldorf-Steiner schools plays an important part in everyday school life and identity (Selsfors, 2019). But, it often lacks a structured plan and can become more of a place for practical questions than a place for developmental work (Rawson, 2014, Selsfors, 2019). There is often a lack of documentation of collegial work which makes it difficult to evaluate progression (Rawson, 2014). Schieren (2009) claims that there is a need to develop the language – to explain the theoretical stance of the pedagogy and tie it to contemporary concepts. The oral tradition creates a situation where many things are looked upon as "the obvious way" – an outspoken and negotiated idea within the college – but not always possible for new-comers or people on the outside to understand, and not investigated or researched enough to be looked upon as established pedagogical methods (Rawson, 2014, Schieren, 2009).

Students and Teachers in Waldorf-Steiner Schools

In Waldorf-Steiner schools, there is an outspoken idea that the teacher is to be a positive authority (Rawson, 2021, Steiner, 1932/1981), if we use the concepts from Bernstein (2000), classification between teacher and students is to be strong. This positive authority is to be based upon a sense of tact and respect for the child or youth – and the teacher's authority depends upon pedagogic skills to offer knowledge and engagement in the world (Steiner, 1934/1986). Tjärnstig (2019) concludes that the Waldorf-Steiner teachers who participated in his study all look upon their profession as educators as a

very personal and far-going commitment. Waldorf-Steiner teachers place a great personal responsibility on themselves for the quality of the teaching they conduct (Tjärnstig, 2019).

The system with one responsible class teacher has benefits and challenges, as well as risks (Randoll and Peters, 2015). On the positive side are the possibilities to build strong relationships between teacher and students.

> Further on, student-teacher relationships are more cherished in Waldorf Schools, from students' and teacher perspective as well, which is due to the absence of grades, the variety of social activities (theatre projects, class trips and monthly presentations) and, last not least, probably also to the teachers' professional ethos. As consequence it is not surprising that Waldorf students show a higher identification with their Schools than students from other public Schools. (Randoll and Peters, 2015, p. 38)

Students experience continuity and emotional security in Waldorf-Steiner schools, but there is a risk of problems (Randoll and Peters, 2015). Students in the upper grades need more expertise in their teaching and the relationships can get too close. Students can feel that teachers become "overprotective", not giving enough challenges and possibilities to do individual work or peer-work. And if the personal matching between students and the teacher is not free from conflicts, there can be problems, for the individual student, the group, and the teacher (Randoll and Peters, 2015).

* * *

The examples that I have presented provide an image of how we can understand some aspects of classification in a school context. Classification can be explained by a short quote from Bernstein: "Where we have a strong classification, the rule is: things must be kept apart. Where we have a weak classification, the rule is: things must be brought together" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 11).

I will now change my focus to the concept framing – described by Bernstein as explaining the mechanisms of control – I will connect this to different teaching methods, to rhythms and predictability, and to teacher responsibility.

4.3.7 The Principles of Framing

If we were to wake up to a new world every morning, without knowing how things work, or what culture prevails, our existence would be chaotic and unbearable, we need a sense of control in our lives (Persson, 2014) – the rules in society and the content in our lives need to be visible and understandable. In schools, there are frames of an obvious nature, such as classrooms, curricula, regulations, and laws, but also implicit ones which we need to develop an understanding of – as accepted ways to interact and communicate (Persson, 2015). This is a way to construct "common rules for the game", in society and schools. In an interview in the Swedish teacher union magazine, Swedish professor in sociology Anders Persson explains that the word "framing" has its roots in the ancient Nordic word "fremja", which means to emphasize or make something visible and clear (Person, interviewed by Lumholdt, 2012).

"Framing is about *who* controls *what*" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 12). It is the principal that regulates relations within a context, and the communication within a pedagogical practice (Bernstein, 2000). Framing contains two discourses – an instructional discourse and a regulative discourse – the instructional discourse determines the "what", the selection and order of the subject content, tempo, and criteria for evaluation. The regulative discourse contains rules about "when, where, how and by whom", the social order and interaction in the teaching practice – hence, framing is what communicates to students, what to do, how to do it and whether it is correctly done (Bernstein, 2000, p. 12).

Bernstein (2000) states that the regulative discourse is always dominant and embedded in the instructional discourse since teaching always is dependent on the social relationships between

students and between teachers and students. It is not possible to divide the transmission and receiving of knowledge from the transmitting and receiving of values – you cannot have education about values separated from education in competencies, they are tied together (Bernstein, 2000).

Framing can, just as classification, vary in strength. When the teacher is in control of what is being communicated, the framing is strong – the rules for teaching and social interaction are clear and visible and students process and reproduce predetermined knowledge in a well-known and established way (Bernstein, 2000). When students appear to control the pedagogical situation, framing is weak – and this creates a more invisible pedagogy where it can be difficult for students to understand what is important (Bernstein, 2000). But weak framing can also create new, unpredictable conditions, allowing students to come up with their own, maybe new, solutions to a problem (Diehl et al., 2015).

In the upcoming sections, I will give some examples of how strong and weak framing can be understood in schools.

4.3.8 Weak Framing – Student Active Learning Processes

Student-active learning methods, a weak framing, have been dominating in Sweden for a long time (Giota, 2013). Teaching in compulsory school, from the 1990s and onward, is characterized by a weaker framing than before, with fewer teacher led lessons and more focus on student-active working methods, what Bernstein would refer to as an invisible pedagogy (Henning-Loeb and Lumsden-Wass, 2014).

Student active learning processes can be described as problem-based learning, often with an open question connected to a real-life problem (Scherp, 2013). The teacher is to expose students to challenges and then shift into a role of coaching – with focus on actively helping

students to combine the challenge with their own experiences and questions, and to help them solve problems so that they get a deeper understanding of the subject (Scherp, 2013). Students are to work individually or in groups and develop abilities to see patterns, context and to choose and problematize information (Österlind, 2005).

In Sweden there has been an outspoken idea that students are to take a personal responsibility for their learning and progress. In a research overview of individualized education, Vinterek (2006) investigates regulations, curricula, and research, and concludes that students, to an increasing extent, are to take responsibility for choices about what they want to study and when (Vinterek, 2006). High-achieving students often succeed in taking personal responsibility for their learning, but for weak students it can create problems to understand the task, get started and finish an individual project (Pedersen-Dalland, 2014). Pedersen-Dalland's empirical study, about student active working methods in a secondary school, shows that there is a risk that too much responsibility is put on students. Her research concludes that weak students often choose ineffective strategies and that it can be difficult for teachers to give enough support to each student (Pedersen-Dalland, 2014). In her study, low-performing boys were the losers in this working model and that conclusion agrees with Vinterek (2006) who claims that students with weak resources risk ending up in vulnerable positions.

Student active teaching methods put teachers in a position as coaches, focus is on students' learning – not on the teacher's teaching – a method that can be useful when students are to interact, discuss and collaborate about their learning experiences (Biesta, 2018). In other situations, the student active approach can cause problems, as when students need to focus and concentrate on learning complex skills – then the situation needs to be more about the teacher teaching how to solve a specific problem (Biesta, 2018).

4.3.9 Strong Framing – Teacher-led Education

Leadership competence is a skill that teachers need to master, according to a study conducted in Norway (Nordenbo et al., 2008), that investigates published research about education between 1980 -2007. The authors conclude that teachers must be obvious leaders in the classroom and create rules and encourage students to take a personal responsibility to make sure that rules are followed. The level of learning increases when teachers take on a clear and explicit leadership no matter what subject they teach (Nordenbo et al., 2008). If we use the concepts from Bernstein (2000) – teachers are to make the instructional rules visible, which benefits the students learning. Other issues are the social climate in the classroom, behaviours, the use of language and ways to communicate – the regulative rules – that also need to be framed – teachers are to make sure that students feel secure and safe in Swedish classrooms, bullying is never accepted and it is an obligation for teachers to react strongly when tendencies of bullying appear (Skolverket, 2018b, Skolverket, 2019). This outspoken leadership should also include the elements of positive relationships, teachers need to show care and be interested in their students as individuals (Håkansson and Sundberg, 2020, Lilja, 2013, Nordenbo et al., 2008).

Schwartz (2013) conducted an ethnographic study, leaning on the concepts from Bernstein, that focuses on the regulation of social interaction in a multicultural suburban school in Sweden that uses an outspoken practice with strong teacher leadership. She interviewed both teachers and young teenagers and concludes that teacher leadership can be complicated – it gives clear and visible frames to students, but a too strong visible pedagogy and teacher control can become an obstacle – it can deprive teachers and students of the opportunity to meet in a more dialogical and dynamic learning with a stance in the students' own experiences – which can hinder a good performance in school (Schwartz, 2013).

Olsson (2016) investigates teacher leadership in the light of inclusion for students with learning difficulties and special needs in Sweden – using participatory action research. One of the difficulties that the interviewed teachers express is leadership aimed both at the group and at the same time at students as individuals. Often, students with different forms of difficulties need a special focus and leadership from their teachers – but this possibility is limited since the focus must also be on the group. No matter how the teachers choose to act, some students get more attention than others. The participating teachers describe a tension in their leadership between focus and attention to the group – and to the individual student (Olsson, 2016).

Teacher-dominated interaction-patterns do not only consist of structured- and teacher-led lessons. There is also extensive communication between teacher and students, where the students are active, and teachers interact with students in different ways – both socially and dependent on the context of the subject (Henning-Loeb and Lumsden-Wass, 2014). Henning-Loeb's and Lumsden-Wass' study uses classroom observations and audio recordings from classrooms, analysed with a conceptual framework from Bernstein and Dewey, and took place at introduction programs in a Swedish gymnasium. In introduction programmes students are generally weak in theoretical subjects – they do not have enough merit points to be accepted in an ordinary programme (see section 3.1.1). Students who do not fully master the codes in school benefit from a visible pedagogy where the teacher is in control, where the content of the theme is clear and students conduct limited tasks and get feedback from their teacher (Henning-Loeb and Lumsden-Wass, 2014). The authors conclude that learning is conditioned by relational actions from teachers, they describe the visible pedagogy as a net, consisting of a positive attitude, and confirming and supportive actions from teachers (Henning-Loeb and Lumsden-Wass, 2014). To be successful with a visible pedagogic approach, it must be incorporated with other, for the learning process very central, activities that include

communication and participation – visible pedagogy refers to participation in activities that offer, or create, meaning (Henning-Loeb and Lumsden-Wass, 2014). In their study, they could see that teachers' attitude and support is connected both to the students as individuals and to the teaching content of the situation (Henning-Loeb and Lumsden-Wass, 2014).

The conclusion from Henning-Loeb and Lumsden-Wass (2014) agrees with the ideas of Lilja (2013), who conducted a phenomenological study about trustful relationships in schools, using observations and interviews with teachers from five different schools in Sweden. Lilja (2013) concludes that positive pedagogic authority builds upon three aspects – a didactic aspect that concerns the development of students' skills and ability, a pedagogic aspect that contains relationship building, with and among students, the third aspect is about upholding values, discipline and order in the classroom (Lilja, 2013). There is a difference between pedagogic authority and an authoritarian way of using power and control, a difference that could be described as positive or negative pedagogic authority (Lilja, 2013). Positive pedagogic authority builds upon relationships and trust between people, while negative authority – authoritarian methods from a teacher – shames students and makes them feel invisible.

In the debate in Sweden, student-active processes and teacher-led education are often described as two opposite methods. Holmberg (2020) argues that it is *how* a teacher chooses to use a method that is crucial, not the method in itself. There is a risk that the method becomes more important than the teacher's work. The teachers approach and ability to make students engaged is always more important than the method, those who actively lobby for a specific method seldom take into account the individual teacher's bias towards different methods, or to the teacher's individual skills and competencies (Holmberg, 2020).

I will now discuss framing as a mechanism that can shift and change – I suggest that variations in framing create rhythms in education.

4.3.10 Shifts and Changes – Rhythms in Education

Rhythm is vital for learning – it creates a predictable and safe structure for students and teachers. By following a rhythm and structure in school, students learn to manage their time, follow rules, and have discipline. These are important skills that are useful not only in school but also in future work and everyday life (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017).

Bernstein (2000) talks about space within the pedagogic practice, something that can be compared to rhythms. Space is organized and reorganized to make visible shifts from one activity to another, as from one subject – as history, to another – as music. Teaching is always, at least partly, a rhythmical practice (Jacklin, 2004). There are repetitive elements, such as a school schedule and recurring activities – and teachers often create rhythms for themselves and students by arranging routines for lessons, homework and collegial work (Jacklin, 2004). Alhadeff-Jones (2017) investigates European and North American theories of time and rhythm in education and claims that education is shaped by temporalities that rhythm the activity and the life of learners, educators, and society – and even knowledge. Education determines the way we learn to relate to time and the rhythms of existence (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017). Change is a necessary condition for defining time, and to relate changes with each other, we need multiple changes that occur not too far from each other – so that there is an entity. “Thus, a person can experience a form of temporality by connecting in thought the qualitative or quantitative aspects of changes that are perceived as real because they are felt, perceived or reconstructed” (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017, p. 38).

Ljungblad (2016) discovered that teachers use shifts in pace while interacting with students. In her micro-ethnographic study about incalculable tact, she investigates opportunities and obstacles for students to participate in democratic relationships and concludes that teachers

need to tactfully balance each situation to maintain a positive teacher-student relationship (Ljungblad, 2016). The teachers in her study change their pace in verbal communication and in body language, facial expression, and eye-contact to establish contact with students – a tacit knowledge about interaction with students. These changes in pace create a change in the atmosphere – tension and dilemmas that occur in the classroom are dealt with by improvised changes in pace and rhythms.

A way to work with predictable rhythms and variation in education is to include routines and rituals in the everyday practice – it becomes as a help to feel assured about both order and structure.

4.3.11 Routines, Rituals and Traditions

To use routines and rituals in the classroom is a way to use framing – they become part of the rhythms – the things we do without questioning. Routines and rituals work as signs that tell us, in an implicit but still clear way, what is expected from us and how we are supposed to behave and interact, they create a sense of order that students can relate to, hence, to use routines and rituals is to make the recognition- and realisation rules clear for students. (Schwartz, 2013).

Routines can be compared to stability, actions and patterns that are well-known and predictable (Diehl and McFarland, 2012). Stability makes it possible for teachers and students to focus on the task at hand rather than insecurity about how to communicate and interact – it is about an agreement about the rules for what is allowed or not (Diehl and McFarland, 2012). The different activities in a classroom, such as individual work, group work and lectures cue different participant statuses and this leads to different expectations, experiences and obligations for stability and concord (Diehl and McFarland, 2012).

Rituals are actions that give the framework of meaning to a specific situation, they contain meanings which are condensed, and are not verbally explicit – they work as a form of restricted code (Bernstein et al., 1966). Consensual rituals tie the members of a community together and give a school its identity, their shared values, and recreate the past in the present and project it into the future (Bernstein et al., 1966, p. 429).

Vygotsky (1934/2001) highlights the importance of understanding, and getting access to, cultural tools. Signs and symbols are cultural tools that help us understand our context and how to orient in it (Vygotsky, 1934/2001). Examples of understanding cultural tools in a school setting, obvious "school signs", can be that the bell rings and all the students know that it is time for a break, a student raises her hand, and we know what it means – the signs have become cultural tools that we all understand.

In many ways, rituals and routines work as cultural tools, giving us a hint about what is to come and how to react to that. Many activities in schools are about reproducing, and this according to Vygotsky (1978), is linked to memory. It means that we repeat previously developed and mastered behavioural patterns and resurrect impressions from before, and cultural tools, such as rituals and routines, can help our memory (Vygotsky, 1978).

The teachers in Olsson's study (2016), about teachers' leadership, claim that routines can be a way to prevent that students end up in difficulties, and that it can help students with special needs to participate in activities. The recognition factor is a help to come to a situation where learning is possible, and routines can be adapted to the needs of individual students (Olsson, 2016).

Rituals and routines "facilitate the transmission and internalization of the expressive culture of the school, create consensus, revivify the social order within the individual, deepen respect for and impersonalize authority relations" (Bernstein et al., 1966, p. 436).

I will now look at how the ideas about framing can be connected to the practice in Waldorf-Steiner schools.

4.3.12 How Can We Understand Framing in Waldorf-Steiner Schools?

Just as with classification, it is possible to distinguish both similarities and differences when it comes to ideas about framing in Waldorf-Steiner schools compared to other school settings. Many of the ideas about framing are outspoken in the pedagogy, such as teacher-led education and the work with rhythms and routines.

Teacher-led or Student-active in Waldorf-Steiner Schools?

In Waldorf-Steiner schools most of the education is teacher-led (Dahlin, 2017, Rawson, 2021). If we use the concepts from Bernstein, framing is outspoken and strong during the main lesson. The teacher lectures or tells a story, controlling in a strong sense what is to be learned and processed by the students (Rawson, 2021, De Souza, 2012). The students are then to process the theme, and in this phase, there are opportunities for individual creativity and student activity, the framing becomes weaker – but the freedom of the students' choices is within the given theme (Rawson, 2021). Teaching is directed to the whole class, of course, there are group- and peer-work and individual work, but the idea is that "the classroom is taken as a paradigm of society" (Dahlin, 2017, p. 91) where all students should feel included, and work with more or less the same thing.

Teachers and school staff in Waldorf-Steiner schools are held together by a specific way of understanding knowledge, teaching, and learning and an idea about how pedagogy should be conducted in the classroom – something that also affects the teacher training programme. According to Granlund (2013), the internal framing, which is placed on the Waldorf-Steiner teacher-students both in terms of subject content, learning theory, didactics, and methods, is

stronger in the Waldorf-Steiner setting, compared to state education. “Their education ideals are described as similar to those of a classical musician: you need an internalized standard repertoire before you can improvise” (Granlund, 2013, p. 3). The didactics and methods that teacher-students will learn are decided and framed in a strong way by the educators.

Rhythms in Waldorf-Steiner Schools

The concept of rhythmical education that Waldorf-Steiner schools claim to conduct, could be understood as changes, and shifts in framing. “Different principles for framing control the students’ experiences which are made real in the pedagogical relation. Hence – different principles for framing, different forms of experience” (Bernstein, 1983a, p. 24, my translation). The structure of the main lesson allows framing to change – there are parts with a clear and strong framing, as the lecturing part – and possibilities to use a weaker framing during the rhythmical part or when students are working individually (see section 3.2.5). Rawson (2021) summarizes the steps of learning in Waldorf-Steiner schools as first a process of taking in, experiencing, observing and encountering. Then – recalling, characterizing, and recording, which leads to a process of analysing, abstracting, and constructing concepts. In a Waldorf-Steiner class, there is often a long-term participation which includes a shared experience of rituals, rhythms, ways of being together and shared activities (Rawson, 2021). Binetti (2020), who conducted an ethnographic study in a Waldorf-Steiner school in the UK, claims that rhythm has elements of the past in it. Rhythm repeats something that has already happened, but rhythms can also be connected to the future since the previous structure is always possible to change or refine. Education can be understood in a similar way – there are elements and ideas that are repeated, but new ideas and innovative thoughts are integrated in a balanced way – and it is the teachers’ responsibility to find this balance between the past and the future (Binetti, 2020).

Tjärnstig (2019) describes that one of the basic models that the Waldorf-Steiner teachers in his study use, is a shifting rhythm with concentration and listening that turns into activity, dialogue, and independent work. A rhythmical and varied teaching does not make students tired and bored, the teachers claim. Teachers need to "read" the students and adjust lecturing, interaction, and student activity to make sure that there is dynamic, flow and movement in the lesson (Tjärnstig, 2019).

There is always a risk that repetitive rhythms become controlling or empty (Frödén, 2012), and that the focus is on the structures and the rhythms instead of the content in them. Waldorf-Steiner teachers need to be aware of this risk and make sure that the recurring rhythms also include elements of change and refinement, so that the well-known is experienced as something engaging by students (Frödén, 2012).

Routines and Rituals in Waldorf-Steiner Schools

In Waldorf-Steiner schools, routines and rituals are part of the school day and the school year. To greet each student with a handshake and a look into the eyes of the student is a common tradition. To read a morning verse at the start of the day is a marker that says that "now it is time for teaching and learning" and is done in Waldorf-Steiner schools all over the world (Von Winterfeldt, 2020). In the lower grades, it is common to have a special rhyme or song at the start of, for example, the art lesson or the handicraft lesson, and to say a verse at the end of the school day. The rhythmical part of the main lesson, the structure of the lesson, the schedule for the week, and the working methods build upon familiar routines and traditions – well-known for both students and teachers (De Souza, 2012). There are also annual festivities with their own rituals and routines, such as celebrating St. Michael's or St. Lucia's day in Sweden, and specific local traditions in most schools when the school year starts and ends.

The shift from one activity to another, to make education rhythmical and to insert routines and rituals as a help for students to predict what is to come, is a teacher's responsibility in all schools – and I suggest that teacher responsibility is connected to the mechanisms of framing.

4.3.13 Teacher Responsibility – a Many Folded Task

Framing is possible to connect to responsibility in that sense that it has to do with taking control, or not, of a situation – to create frames and boundaries for what is to be done and how.

Teacher responsibility could be said to be both legal and moral (Colnerud, 1997b), and this raises the question of ethics in teaching. Teachers need to reflect on their responsibility and actions since in the practice, there are power relations and there must be trust in teachers from society, since children and youths are obliged to be in school (Colnerud, 1997b). Henriksson (2004) found, in her empirical study about students' failure in schools, that students express frustration when teachers do not take on responsibility but instead try to create some kind of friendship.

> But students did not want teachers to be their friends, but they did want them to be friendly; students did not want teachers to take care of every aspect of their lives, but they did want them to be caring; students did not expect teachers to understand everything, but they did want them to be understanding. (Henriksson, 2004, p. 11)

This asymmetric relationship is something that the students in her study are most aware of and appreciate (Henriksson, 2004). Teachers need to find a way to balance this relationship, to create a climate that is socially safe for both students and teachers (Henriksson, 2004, Samuelsson and Colnerud, 2015).

The ethical responsibility is both an assumption that teachers should think, act, and embody morally sound values, and that it is teachers who are to instil equally sound

values in their students (Samuelsson and Colnerud, 2015). We do not have a language to talk about this embodied and taken for granted responsibility (Samuelsson and Colnerud, 2015), the language used in both curriculum and guidelines from authorities is vague and possible to understand and interpret in many ways. In Samuelsson's and Colnerud's study (2015), which focuses on students in teacher training programs, a dilemma model is used to develop ethical leadership strategies. Working with dilemmas and reflections gives students more confidence, compared with ready-made methods.

> […] it appears that a contemporary teacher education programme should contribute by providing a language and a terminology for analysing a broad repertoire of dilemmas, rather than with methods that convey an *imaginary security* with regard to leadership in the classroom. (Samuelsson and Colnerud, 2015, p. 319)

Teacher responsibility is an unclear area, there are no definitions concerning where the responsibility starts and ends and this can lead to stress among teachers (Colnerud, 2015). In her empirical study about teachers' ethical conflicts, Colnerud (1997b) found several areas connected to responsibility that causes ethical dilemmas. For example, to evaluate and assess students work, especially underachieving students, can make teachers feel that they harm students, and there can be dilemmas when it comes to setting boundaries in relation to the family's responsibility. Colnerud (1997b) concludes that institutional proximity makes teachers bond with their students, and this creates a moral responsibility – and always, there is the responsibility and ethical aspects to the content of the teaching.

Teachers are responsible for students' intellectual development – a fact that is visible in most curricula – and of course it is possible to learn about this responsibility. But Henriksson (2012) claims that to learn and know about responsibility is not the same thing as exercising responsibility or *living* it. The ability to exercise and live responsibility is an embodied skill. "[…] teachers know that being in a classroom with

students cannot be reduced to technical or intellectual endeavour. It involves an intuitive sense of the world, a state of mind and a way of feeling and acting" (Henriksson, 2012, p. 2). This lived responsibility in teachers should make each child under the teacher's care experience respect and recognition (Henriksson, 2012).

Bernstein does not go into the area of teachers' responsibility. He states that teachers and students are involved in a relationship that is occupied with transmission and acquisition, sometimes one-sided and sometimes a mutual engagement (Bernstein, 1983a). The pedagogic practice is what constitutes the power relations, how framing and classification mechanisms are executed in the classroom – and this could be interpreted as teachers taking responsibility, or not, for both how power relations between different categories are constructed – and for control, or not, of situations that occur.

If we look at the concepts and ideas from Bernstein that I have presented, they build two different approaches to education and pedagogy. Framing and classification are what makes the pedagogy visible or invisible.

4.4 Visible and Invisible Pedagogy

The basic difference between visible and invisible pedagogy is how criteria are transmitted (Bernstein, 1983b). "The more implicit the mode of transmission is and the more vague the criteria, the more invisible the pedagogy becomes" (Bernstein, 1983b, p. 48, my translation) Strong framing and classification create visible pedagogy – the focus is on students' performance and on their results. The visible pedagogy is understandable for parents and students, it conveys basic skills such as reading and writing in a proper and structured way that seem meaningful. It gives an objective scale for evaluation which makes it possible for students to know what they need to improve (Bernstein, 1983b).

An outspoken invisible pedagogy does not focus on measurable performances but on the inner development of each student. Teachers are to create a pedagogical context that gives conditions for individual learning by shared competencies (Bernstein, 2000). There are no rules for abilities and skills at a certain age, students' accomplishments are not compared, and the control of the teacher is not outspoken. Students are not aware of their own position in relation to demands from others, from assessment criteria or grades (Bernstein, 2000). Invisible pedagogy allows more interaction and collaboration between students, and among teachers.

We can understand visible and invisible pedagogy by placing the different concepts in the two categories (see Table 2):

Table 2, Visible and Invisible Pedagogy

Invisible Pedagogy	Visible pedagogy
Weak classification: Boundaries between subjects, teachers, and students, and between colleagues are vague. Criteria for assessment are implicit.	**Strong classification:** Subject specific knowledge, hierarchy between teachers and students, and between colleagues. Clear criteria for assessment.
Weak framing: The teachers' control is implicit, not outspoken. The students appear to have a freedom to choose.	**Strong framing:** The teacher is in control. Limited possibilities for the students to choose.
Focus on the competence model: Unspoken criteria and focus on individual development. A hidden curriculum where learning is invisible.	**Focus on the performance model:** Outspoken criteria and specialization in subjects. Performance is objectified with grades and learning is visible, possible to measure.
Focus on the regulative discourse: Relationships, social skills, and interaction are emphasized.	**Focus on the instructional discourse:** Measurable knowledge and performance are emphasized.

It is important to remember that in a classroom, things are never this strictly divided. Bernstein describes how all the different codes and rules can exist at the same time, and that they can change. Bernstein's theories build upon structures and discourses, a kind of predetermined set for how things can be understood, but he also recognizes the mixtures and the unpredictability in pedagogic situations (Bernstein, 1983a) although he does not go into this area – which means that something is missing if we are to acknowledge the complexity of the teaching practice.

4.4.1 What is Missing?

Bernstein has been criticized for focusing too strongly on rules, structures, and scheduled events with a predetermined outcome. His ideas have been accused of being inflexible and not taking into account the complexity of the classroom situation (Harker and May, 1993). There are studies done that conclude that it is not possible to strictly divide classroom practice into either strong or weak classification and framing, or to either an integrated or collection code – and that these mixed codes can be positive for students (Diehl, 2017, Diehl et al., 2015, Schwartz, 2013).

Jacklin (2004) claims that there are areas underdeveloped in Bernstein's work, such as cultures in schools and how contextualized patterns affect teachers and students and the pedagogical situation. A practising teacher is both a transmitter and an acquirer whose practice is strongly or weakly externally framed (Jacklin, 2004). The practice of any individual teacher is always developed in relation to the school culture, and this is something that must be taken into consideration (Jacklin, 2004).

Even though the theory from Bernstein gives us tools to understand many aspects of education, I suggest that there is something missing when trying to explain how pedagogical

situations can be understood. There are tacit activities taking place that have to do with interaction and relationships – activities that we take for granted, and not easy to explain or formulate.

Teachers must master a "theory of reading", to look at the child or student as a text and try to understand the signs – since learning is a tacit, invisible act (Bernstein, 2003), but Bernstein does not address how relationships *between* and *among* actual people in a school setting can be described, instead he focuses on the underlying rules that shapes pedagogic discourse.

"I have made a deliberate choice to focus sharply on the underlying rules shaping the social construction of pedagogic discourse and its various practice" (Bernstein, 2000, p. 3).

On the other hand, Bernstein (2000) acknowledges that education is about more than just learning measurable skills. People must feel that they have a stake in society, and that there are possibilities to both "receiving and giving" and this is also relevant in schools (Bernstein, 2000, p. xx). There are three rights that school needs to fulfil for students, the first one is individual enhancement, which is the right to the means of understanding and possibilities, that according to Bernstein (2000) will lead to a sense of confidence. The second right is to be included in a personal, social, intellectual, and cultural sense – or to choose to be separated. The third right is the right to participate in the construction of order. These rights are a "condition for effective democracy" (Bernstein, 2000, p. xx), – a statement that I suggest can be connected to teacher responsibility, to the importance of meaningful education and relationships in schools.

Therefore, I argue that the concepts from Bernstein benefit from being connected to the ideas in relational pedagogy.

4.5 The Crucial Ingredient – Trustful Relationships

In this second part of my literature review, I will change my perspective and present ideas and theories that investigate teacher-student relationships, interaction, and communication – and how these factors affect teaching and learning.

The importance of relationship-building in education has been researched and investigated from many perspectives. The fact that a relational pedagogic attitude promotes learning is shown in many studies (Ljungblad, 2016, Nordenbo et al., 2008, Platz, 2021). Teachers need to develop skills to enter a relationship with students, both as individuals and as groups and be respectful, empathetic and interested in their students (Nordenbo et al., 2008). Schools are multi-purposed institutions, and according to Noddings (2005), the guiding goal should be to make sure that there is a climate of care and continuity. Schools ought to be places where students are cared for and encouraged to care deeply for themselves (Noddings, 2005). The current situation, where the focus is on measurable knowledge, makes Biesta ask if only the measurable elements are important: "Are we measuring what we value, or are we valuing what we can measure? And hence, in the end, will we just value the measurable?" (Biesta, 2018, p. 22, my translation). Noddings (2005) suggests changes in the school system, schools should not only be accountable for knowledge development, but also for care and responsiveness, the main aim of education should be to help children become caring, loving, and competent human beings so that they are able to participate in the world with confidence and care for others.

4.5.1 Relational Pedagogy

Relational pedagogy is a growing research field in Sweden and other countries (Aspelin and Johansson, 2017) and there is not yet an obvious consensus about which key concepts are

useful to describe this specific approach – relational pedagogy is a multi-dimensional concept and includes different ways of understanding relations (Aspelin and Johansson, 2017). The term "relational" is used in many disciplines as psychology, sociology and aesthetics and what unites the different perspectives is the view of human beings – relations are a condition for human existence (Aspelin and Johansson, 2017). In a Nordic conference in 2016, relational pedagogy was defined as a) based on the notion of humans as relational beings, b) education is about relationship processes (Aspelin and Johansson, 2017).

To use a relational perspective in education means that *relationships*, rather than individual or collective relations, are in focus. In a theme-volume of the journal *Pedagogisk forskning i Sverige* [Pedagogic research in Sweden] from 2017, different authors describe relational pedagogy from different perspectives, and it is visible how words like dialogue, meetings, and trustful relationships reappear in the articles (Aspelin and Johansson, 2017).

Relational pedagogy is a reaction towards two discourses in education (Aspelin and Persson, 2011), where the first one is the neo-liberal perspective (see also section 4.1.1) with its emphasis on measurable performance – a perspective that has a main focus on producing "competitive, high performing, independent and rational individuals" (Aspelin and Persson, 2011, p. 16, my translation). This discourse could be described as "knowledge effective" and leads to a focus on performance and measurable qualifications (Aspelin and Persson, 2011). The second discourse is the socially oriented school where the focus is on the collective, democratic processes, and social skills. Here, there is a risk that students as active and responsible subjects are erased, and instead, students and teachers transform into roles, agents or types, anonymous parts of a collective – there is a focus on socialization (Aspelin and Persson, 2011).

Relational pedagogy wants to be a complement to these two discourses and has its roots in the idea that human beings share a social context with others, are born into relationships and share a living space with other human beings (Aspelin and Persson, 2011, Ljungblad, 2021). The focal point in relational pedagogy is the relationship between individuals, actual people, who meet and relate to each other in a school setting (Aspelin and Persson, 2011).

The relational perspective is sometimes accused of putting academic and intellectual competencies in second place, but this is a misunderstanding (Aspelin and Johansson, 2017). The opposite pole to relational pedagogy is rather an instrumental perspective where there is an assumption that a specific action will automatically lead to a specific outcome. Relational pedagogy rests upon the notion that good education contains meaningful content – and to separate the development of knowledge from the development of trustful and meaningful relationships would be a false dichotomy (Aspelin and Johansson, 2017).
The ontological perspective in relational pedagogy is close to the sociocultural approach – social interaction, collaboration and relationships within pedagogy are highlighted – learning and knowledge development processes are not just individual but also socially and relationally constructed (Säljö, 2011). Relationships occur before knowledge, and development in knowledge takes place through and within processes of relationships (Aspelin and Johansson, 2017). Learning is about appropriating functional ways of dealing with the world and we learn that by participating in a context (Säljö, 2011).

I suggest that the most important concept in relational pedagogy is *trust*. Therefore, I will start with an investigation of this concept – I will then look at how trust is connected to meaning-making, belonging, and interaction.

4.5.2 The Importance of Trust

Trust – means that there are positive expectations about how a person will act and behave and a sense of confidence that the other person wants what is best for me (Aspelin and Johansson, 2017, Ljungblad, 2016, Platz, 2021). It takes engagement and presence from teachers to establish trust, in schools, trust can be understood as predictability gained by interaction over time (Sørhaug, 2007). To trust someone is to let that person have power and influence, hence trust can be seen as a form of power in and of itself – when we trust someone, we are essentially giving them power over us – we are vulnerable to their actions (Granath, 2008). A trustful relationship has a past and a future that the participants share and it evolves over time (Platz, 2021).

Platz (2021) draws upon findings from developmental psychology and makes a distinction between trust and reliance – she claims that trust is always relationship-dependent while reliance is not. Reliance is often practical in nature and can be based on past experiences or evidence of competence. Trust is a more complex and emotional concept – it involves not only relying on someone but also having a belief or confidence in their reliability, integrity, and honesty. Trust is more subjective than reliance and can be based on factors such as personal values, intuition, and social expectations (Platz, 2021). In education, it is a condition that the relationship between teacher and student is trustful, only then can a student open up and admit weaknesses and needs for support (Platz, 2021). Students can never know for sure if a teacher will teach them what they need, or if a teacher will grade their work in a just way – students must rely on the trust that they have, or lack, for their teacher's actions (Platz, 2021). This specific relationship means that when students trust their teacher they do not only rely on certain aspects of the teacher's personality – they trust the teacher as a person (Platz,

2021). Trusting someone is a process that includes subjectivity, specific situations and social structures and norms.

The results from Ljungblad's study (2016) agree with the ideas from Platz – that students trust their teacher is essential in the unpredictable teaching situation. Teachers who can show that they care about their students do not have to position their authority to gain students' interest and trust. The students interviewed in Ljungblad's study (2016) describe that in a positive relationship, the teacher can be both kind and strict, but a negative relationship with teachers means that the teacher is uninterested, unwilling to listen and does not meet students as individuals (Ljungblad, 2016).

In school, students are required to learn and develop, to participate in activities that might make them feel insecure and vulnerable. Education is not only about the development of specific capacities but also about developing inner character through challenges and personal encounters – and teachers have a dual responsibility, to confirm both who the student *is* and *can become* (Aspelin, 2021). Therefore –a bond between teacher and student is needed – this bond is established when students feel that they are cared for and that they can trust their teacher – and when teachers trust them back, both their abilities and who they are (Aspelin, 2021, Ljungblad, 2016, Platz, 2021). Trust can go beyond education-related questions or interactions, and this makes the trust relationship between teacher and students broad – containing more personal and subjective aspects (Granath, 2008, Platz, 2021).

Lilja (2013) concludes that trustful relationships can be divided into those that deepen and confirm trust, and those that test and challenge the teachers trust. In her study, it was obvious that students trust that teachers will give frames to students who challenge boundaries – to not correct or react to a situation where students disobey rules about behaviour or language would be a betrayal of the other students (Lilja, 2013). A teacher who does not set up limits, who is too restricted or slips away from responsibility, will most probably lose trust of students

(Lilja, 2013). Trustful relationships affect students results and performance in school in a positive way, the emphasis is on how teachers and students meet in an interpersonal way in relationships that are deepened and/or tested – a trustful relationship will endure challenges (Lilja, 2013).

The Interpersonal Approach

Interpersonal communication and interaction are described in Swedish dictionaries as "The reciprocal interaction of two or more people more or less confidential, frequent, cooperative, open-hearted, tense, rejecting and so on". Interpersonal relationships refer to the social dynamic and communication that appear between individuals in different contexts, such as in workplaces, families, and schools. In relational pedagogy a key element in interpersonal encounters is *interest* in students as individuals, their motifs and who they are, and to include students in the ongoing communication (Aspelin interviewed by Cervin and Svensén, 2017). There is not much research done that analyses the meaning of interpersonal relationships – researchers who are interested in relations seldom differ meaning in different forms of relationships (Aspelin and Persson, 2011). In an interview in the Teachers Union magazine, Aspelin explains:

> I would like to call it [the interpersonal perspective] a situational perspective. If a student occasionally gets an interpersonal encounter with you, and experiences that `this is a teacher who wants what is good for me, regardless of my performance´, then you have achieved a lot. (Cervin and Svensén, 2017, para 7, my translation).

The teachers in Lilja's (2013) study often meet students with an attempt to reach a consensus about how to solve disagreements. To do this, teachers and students need to establish a "we-relation", instead of a "you and me against each other attitude" (Lilja, 2013, p. 176, my translation). This takes time and can be difficult, but is necessary (Lilja, 2013, Ljungblad, 2016).

Lewicki et al. (2006) explore the concept of trust by investigating research studies from two different perspectives, the behavioural tradition, and the psychological tradition, and conclude that trust is a concept that can be understood and interpreted in different ways depending on the perspective or discipline a researcher chooses. But still, in their overview of studies about interpersonal trust, they found convergence of the central features of trust – a confident expectation about another party and a willingness to accept vulnerability in the relationship (Lewicki et al., 2006).

Trust can be established when students feel that education makes sense, when it is meaningful to learn in a school community (Göransson and Nilholm, 2019, Tyson, 2019) and when interaction and communication are permeated by an interpersonal attitude (Aspelin and Johansson, 2017). I will now move on to these concepts and look at how they are connected to trust.

4.5.3 Meaning and Belonging

Teaching and learning can be looked upon as an ongoing negotiation of meaning (Biesta, 2016). As teachers, we are always enacting power, but we do not know if this will return as accepted power and authority from the students (Biesta, 2016). A teacher can never force a student to learn something and never fully control what kind of impact they have on their students (Biesta, 2016). This negotiation of meaning has to do with what kinds of patterns for communication permeate the regulative discourse in school – patterns that reveal, not just the outspoken communication, but also attitudes towards others and to oneself (Bernstein, 2000). If a teacher succeeds in creating a trusting climate in the classroom, where students feel that they have a say, this negotiation becomes effortless and without conflicts, if not – there is a risk that students protest or actively break the rules (Granath, 2008).

Understanding is a condition for meaningfulness, to understand why things are happening and how they are connected – otherwise there will be stress and a lack of motivation (Tyson, 2019). Teaching should make it possible for students to experience "Aha! -moments" – be experience-oriented and present direct and concrete experiences of the world (Tyson, 2019). A central point for teachers is to try to make students willing to develop a relationship to the school subject by establishing an emotional connection (Tyson, 2019). If too much focus is on succeeding on tests, and not connected to life itself – there is a risk that the sense of meaningfulness is lost (Tyson, 2019). In the teaching situation, students do not only learn things and interact with others – they also recognize themselves, who and what they are (Van Manen, 2015). From this perspective, learning is to develop the whole individual – pedagogy should aim to make children grow into a life of meaningfulness and a sense of responsibility – being a teacher has to do with the interest in freedom for other human beings (Biesta, 2017, Van Manen, 2015).

The importance of meaning-making is not only about learning about subject content and how that is connected to life, but also about feeling included and to belong in a certain context (Tyson, 2019). That students have a sense of belonging and feel included in a school community is a responsibility for all schools and teachers in Sweden. The sense of community in a classroom means that there are trustful relationships between students, and between the teacher and students. The goal is to make students feel as if they belong and identify as a "we" in the classroom and with the school as a whole (Göransson and Nilholm, 2019). To make this work, there must be possibilities for students to participate in common activities, to discuss and communicate in different ways, in small groups, as peers or in a whole-class situation. To use democratic processes in this way, where students are listened to

and can affect their situation, is a way to create a sense of belonging and inclusion (Göransson and Nilholm, 2019, Tyson, 2019).

Creating a good atmosphere in the classroom requires teachers to have good communication skills and the ability to interact with students in a trusting manner.

4.5.4 Communication and Interaction

In any pedagogic relationship, the transmitter – the teacher – needs to learn how to become a transmitter, and the acquirer – the student – must learn how to become an acquirer (Bernstein, 2000). This addresses the fact that the regulative rules must be visible and understandable for students, and for teachers – this process will entail rules for social order and manner (Bernstein, 2000). How students will react to these rules has to do with the adults who guide them and serve as role models, and how the communication between them is characterized. Noddings (2005) claims that there ought to be time for sustained communication and mutual exploration with reliable adults in every child's life. The relationship between teachers and students is always unequal, but teachers need to take an interest in students' lives to create and maintain a trusting relationship (Noddings, 2005).

Teachers are in constant negotiation in different interactions during a school day and participate in both planned and unpredictable situations. Gustafson (2010) describes how the teaching practice in Sweden has become as much a social work, with emphasis on relationships and students' sense of safety, as a knowledge-transmitting work – the task from society and authorities is broad and teachers themselves have difficulties with setting the limits. The participating teachers in Gustafsson's (2010) interactive research, about teacher-identities in a new era, describe themselves as being experts, observers and entertainers combined with being detectives and therapists, and all this during just one school-day (Gustafson, 2010). Gustafsson refers to this as flexible power- and authority identities and

uses the concept of "chameleon-identities" to describe how teachers constantly shift their negotiation and interaction with students depending on the situation. In the meeting with individual students, the teachers shift between three different power positions in their communication and interaction: superior, balanced, and inferior (Gustafson, 2010). Sometimes it is very clear that the teacher is superior, "the boss", and then, the teachers change this position into almost being inferior – the one who is to serve the student, to get the book or to fix something. The teachers also use a more humanistic attitude where the power relations are more in balance – as when asking students about their worries. The teachers negotiate flexible power positions in their interaction with students, and both students and teachers are active in this negotiation (Gustafson, 2010). If we use the concepts from Bernstein (2000), Gustafsson's study describes how both classification and framing shift and the teachers need to have both weak and strong approaches in their teaching methods, what Morais (2002) refers to as mixed practices. Most of the time, the teachers are aware of, and have control over, which position they choose to take, but there are also situations in problematic groups of students that make the teachers feel as if they are in a position of disadvantage, with no power to act or control the situation and this awakes a sense of insufficiency (Gustafson, 2010).

Many of the researchers who have studied teacher-student relationships conclude that many times, we lack a vocabulary for the conflicting challenges embedded in teachers work – as unpredictability and dilemmas – situations that need to be dealt with in almost an instinctive way (Colnerud, 1997b, Frelin, 2010, Lilja, 2013, Ljungblad, 2016).

4.5.5 Unpredictability and Dilemmas

Teachers can never be in full control; they can never know if their students' achievements are a result of their teaching. Students' response to teaching, or the outcome, is not predictable –

teaching can be both engaging, boring, and challenging in students' experience (Kelchtermans, 2009). The desire to make education secure, risk-free, and predictable is in a way to wish this reality away (Biesta, 2016). Teaching is an act of giving, but teachers can never know if students will be willing to receive the gift – but it is a risk that teachers must take (Biesta, 2016).

Even though actions from teachers are governed by intentionality, many actions are also improvised and decided in the spur of the moment (Ljungblad, 2016, Van Manen, 2015). Ljungblad (2016) concludes that in the meeting between teachers and students, there is an incalculable tact that emerges that cannot be planned. She describes this as a pedagogical artform and a creative process in teaching that makes it possible to create a space for the student's self. The interviewed teachers in her study describe how they feel responsible for both education and relationships with students, a kind of double responsibility that is necessary in the pedagogic situation (Ljungblad, 2016). This skill is something that teachers develop over time, in the meeting with students, and is something difficult to formulate. Ljungblad (2016) relates this difficulty to the underdeveloped language for relational questions in the teaching practice. Van Manen (2015) shares this idea and describes teaching as the practice of pedagogical tact – tact is a kind of "pedagogical fitness" that allows teachers to act in the right way in unexpected situations.

Colnerud (1997a) rejects the idea that tact is something that develops spontaneously in social interaction. If this was the case, then all teachers would develop this – but not all do, even though they take part in the same practice (Colnerud, 1997a). To list a set of intuitive competencies that teachers are to develop is to simplify the good teaching practice (Colnerud, 1997a). This approach does not take into consideration that there is a power asymmetry, or that care sometimes can be conflicted by the teacher's power. Teachers need to balance

between their given task from society, to evaluate and assess students, and at the same time fulfil the task from students – to see the individuals needs and emotions (Colnerud, 1997a). To entrust important choices and actions to our intuition only is a big risk – we need to acknowledge the contradictory tasks in the teaching practice. Teachers are forced to conduct tasks that inevitably raise questions about justice and power – and this makes Colnerud (1997a) ask if it is "care" to give critique or a bad grade when you know that a student has done her best? Is it possible for a teacher to distribute care in a reasonable way to a group of students? Teachers are sometimes forced into a more distanced attitude towards students, where the needs of a student become subordinate to other questions (Colnerud, 2006). Colnerud concludes that even though there are different discourses in education – many of them unite in the fact that they repress the conflicting tasks in the teaching practice.

Teachers must make personal choices in their practice and interaction with students, and there is a tacit component in these actions (Jacklin, 2004). Experienced teachers teach from a "personal interpretative framework" to create a sense of meaning in their work (Kelchtermans, 2009, p. 260). This framework is developed by experiences in daily practice and functions as a guide to know what, and how, to do in pedagogic situations. It is affected by outside regulations but also by students' attitudes and school culture – this kind of tacit knowledge cannot be codified, it is transmitted between people in a cultural context (Raveaud, 2016). This cultural knowledge is acquired in an unconscious way by participation in social activities with others inside the culture. Classroom practises are situated and can be difficult to explain to someone outside the culture, the tacit and implicit knowledge that teachers possess are "culturally embedded" (Raveaud, 2016, p. 247).

Many of the authors and researchers who investigate the tacit components of teaching compare this quality with creativity and pedagogy as an artistic practice where teachers and students collaborate and create meaning (Ljungblad, 2016, Lupton, 2013, Tyson, 2019).

4.5.6 Teaching as an Artistic Practice

The teaching practice is comparable to that of a creative craftsman. If you are to succeed, you must master the craft – the material and how it works – and then there are possibilities to add aesthetic parts in a creative way (Tyson, 2019). To have an artistic attitude means that the outcome is seldom given beforehand – the discussion, the project or whatever is in focus can develop in its own process – a contrast to standardized teaching methods (Tyson, 2019). Teachers need to be creative and innovative when planning their lessons and to be able to imagine how their planning can work in the classroom (Håkansson and Sundberg, 2020). Education is a kind of art where teachers make adjustments to the situation, just like a musician or an artist, it is not possible to rationally plan everything in a teaching context – if we would try to, that kind of mechanistic teaching would not be engaging or give effect (Håkansson and Sundberg, 2020). We do not need to choose between the artistic approach or the scientific approach – "Education is an artform with a scientific base" (Håkansson and Sundberg, 2020, p. 15, my translation).

To have the ability to act in a creative and solution-oriented way is a winning concept when it comes to meaning-making for students – it means that teachers succeed in picking up on the ideas from students and do not always strictly follow the lesson plan (Ljungblad, 2016) – the element of personal freedom for teachers is needed if teaching is to become creative and artistic (Lupton, 2013). From an artistic attitude, teaching acknowledges the role of the teacher and students as co-creators – but the teacher is placed in the centre (Lupton, 2013). Artistic teaching means that the function of teaching is transformative, that the teachers skills are on a high level and that there is room for improvisation and a certain degree of freedom,

and that both teachers and students have the possibility to express themselves in an individual way (Lupton, 2013).

Rawson (2021, p. 116) describes teaching as a combination of art, craft, and science, and the craft of teaching as "skilled artistry". The skilled practice or artistry of teaching demands a knowing of the students and didactic skills (Rawson, 2021). It involves qualities of judgement and care and is something learned as trained actions in pedagogic situations. Artistic teaching is almost invisible, and the lesson appears to have "a flow" where activities seem to be natural and effortless (Rawson, 2021).

I will now describe how the ideas from relational theory can be connected to the practice conducted in Waldorf-Steiner schools.

4.5.7 Trust and Meaning-making in Waldorf-Steiner Schools

The importance of positive relationships between teachers and students is emphasized in the Waldorf-Steiner schools' curriculum and in the books from Steiner (Steiner, 1932/1981, Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). Waldorf-Steiner schools have an outspoken goal to not just focus on students reaching predetermined skills and competencies, but on helping students to develop as individuals with a sense of freedom (Dahlin, 2017).

The Strive for Trust in Waldorf-Steiner Schools

Easton (1997) describes how researchers from "the outside" experienced the life inside the Waldorf-Steiner school in Milwaukee as relationally warm, and students speak of their school as a caring and trustful community. Binetti (2020) concludes that Waldorf-Steiner teachers emphasize the importance of care – not just for the academic, but for the physical and psychological needs of students. The teachers in his study agree that care and positive relationships will have a positive impact on education and students engagement (Binetti,

2020). The students conclude that their school feels “homely” and that teachers are welcoming in their attitude towards students. The trusting environment in the Waldorf-Steiner school enables students to speak freely and address personal issues to their teachers (Binetti, 2020).

The Swedish teachers interviewed in Tjärnstig’s study (2019) claim that a basic condition for teaching always is to gain trust from students that the teaching will lead to a sense of meaning (Tjärnstig, 2019). There must be a strive to have positive relationships with all students, but also to the subject – if the teacher is not engaged and motivated, the sense of meaning for students will not occur (Tjärnstig, 2019).

As I explained earlier, there are few studies about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy on a higher academic level in Sweden (see section 3.2.6), and I have not found any research study that focuses on teacher-student relationships in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools. Yearly statistics from the National School Inspectorate (Skolverket, 2023e) show that a majority of students and guardians in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools experience a positive attitude from teachers and among students, that there is study-peace in the classrooms and that students feel safe and enjoy school.

At the same time, there are Inspection reports from the Swedish School Inspectorate that show that the strive for trust is not always successful, problematic situations can occur, such as misconduct by teachers and shortcomings in the safety-promoting work and in establishing and maintaining explicit and clear rules of conduct in some Waldorf-Steiner schools (Skolinspektionen, 2022a).

Meaning-making and Togetherness in Waldorf-Steiner Schools

The interdisciplinary methods used in Waldorf-Steiner schools, where subjects are woven together as themes, is an intention to create meaning for students (Waldorfskolefederationen,

2016). Often, students do not only read or hear lectures about a specific subject, but they also get the opportunities to put their knowledge into practice. An example of this is that students in grade 3 conduct a building project where their knowledge about mathematics, the metric system, is put into a practical area of use (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). Many Waldorf-Steiner schools around the world participate in a world-wide project, "Waldorf one World" to support schools in poor and developing countries and this becomes a part of the subjects in social science (Freunde der Erziehungskunst Rudolf Steiner, 2023). Questions of democracy and solidarity, the understanding of societal structures and changes, become more comprehensible and meaningful when they are connected to an actual place and to actual people (Öhman-Gullberg, 2006, Tyson, 2019).

Waldorf-Steiner students tend to have a strong connection to their school (Dahlin et al., 2006, Randoll and Peters, 2015). This might be because of the variety of activities in Waldorf-Steiner schools, such as drama-projects, class-trips, and festivities. Since it is common that class-teachers stay with a particular class for many years, there are many chances to develop deep relationships with students. The fact that many parents are involved in Waldorf-Steiner schools also contributes to a stronger connection. In the report from the University of Karlstad (Dahlin et al., 2006), Waldorf-Steiner schools were compared to municipal schools concerning questions about study-results, how many students continued to higher education, and questions about democracy, such as solidarity, segregation, and equality. 870 former Waldorf-Steiner students participated in a survey and stated that they have a positive picture of their school work and that learning was meaningful (Dahlin et al., 2006). The Waldorf-Steiner students more often experience that their teachers stressed the importance of everybody's equal human dignity, and to a greater extent that teachers promoted collaboration (Dahlin et al., 2006). One of the biggest empirical studies done about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy was conducted in Germany in 2009-2011 (Barz et al., 2012), it included 800

students using questionaries and more than 50 deep interviews with parents and students. A majority of the students experience that their teachers care about them in an individual way and that they are allowed to speak their mind (Barz et al., 2012). The students claim that their schools are welcoming and have an atmosphere of kindness.

But as I previously have described, Waldorf schools are not always without problems, there are examples where teachers abuse their power, where schools do not live up to what they claim and situations when the trust from both students and parents has been damaged.

Interaction in Waldorf-Steiner Schools

As described earlier, during the main lesson, the interaction between students and teacher can be both formal and informal – the main lesson contains parts that build upon collaboration and communication. Binetti (2020) describes how this approach let students become active agents in their learning process – participating in discussions and processing subject content in an individual way by constructing texts and illustrations in their main lesson books.

Rhythms prevail in almost all aspects of Waldorf-Steiner education and are connected to interaction and communication (Mathisen, 2015). Mathisen claims that relations and communication between students and teachers have a longitudinal rhythm where it is possible to go back in time, looking at what was done in earlier tasks in relation to a present-day subject matter. Teachers and students share memories and experiences and this creates a rhythmical bond between them (Mathisen, 2015). Teachers are not only conveyors of learning content, but should also be fellow humans, the presence of rhythms in classrooms can help bring a social breathing and create a positive ambience – which give conditions for trustful communication (Mathisen, 2015).

The teachers in the study by Tjärnstig (2019) describe how interaction is used to persuade students, to elicit motivation and engagement, without influencing the student too strongly. There is a boundary, they state, for how a teacher can demand a student to execute a specific

task or participate in an activity. It becomes a question of ethics and balance between persuading a student to become engaged or letting the student find his or her own motivation. The reflections from the teachers show how they interpret different situations and adapt their interaction with students accordingly – they shift in the way they address students and in what actions they choose to take (Tjärnstig, 2019).

Teaching as an Artform in Waldorf-Steiner Schools

In Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy, teaching is looked upon as an art – there must be a creative perspective when both planning and conducting teaching (Dahlin, 2017, Steiner, 1932/1981). The pedagogy is both a systematic and an intuitive approach to teaching – teaching must be planned and thought through, but teachers need to relate to – and participate in – living situations together with students (Dahlin, 2017). There needs to be a rhythm and contrast where activities are changed and modified without breaking the flow. Waldorf-Steiner teachers are to choose methods and tasks that suit students and make sure that their teaching never becomes instrumental or fixed (Rawson, 2021). Since teachers in Waldorf-Steiner schools are to lecture or use storytelling instead of just using schoolbooks, teaching becomes more personal and possible to adjust to specific students or circumstances – as connecting the subject content to a current event or to something relevant to a specific group of students. This approach can have its problems – if teacher autonomy gets too big, there is a risk that teachers have an own agenda or present subjects and themes in a too personal, or subjective, way. There is also a risk that teachers with a preference for personal autonomy and artistic freedom resist regulations, both from state authorities and from the national associations of Waldorf-Steiner schools (Rawson, 2011).

In all subjects, Waldorf-Steiner teachers are to strive to incorporate aesthetic and practical elements, such as illustrations and drawings in the main lesson book (Easton, 1997). For

example, geometry can be used to construct artistic patterns and figures, such as mandalas – a way to learn the multiplication table can be to add music and dance, and baking can be a way to create understanding for weight and units of volume (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). But, if teachers focus too much on students' creativity and individuality, it can lead to resistance to be demanding or to assess students' performance in an accurately, or to fail to challenge students and give critical feedback (Dahlin, 2017), there must be a balance in the artistic teaching methods so that it contains both playfulness and intellectual knowledge demands.

An artistic lesson could be compared with a performing art, in which all participants, teacher and students, take part "It has both a choreography and script and also allows for improvisation" (Rawson, 2021, p. 119).

* * *

As I stated earlier, I believe that there is something missing in the conceptual framework from Bernstein who focuses strictly on structures – but there is also something missing in the framework of relational pedagogy. The qualities that teachers are to develop are described vaguely and thereby risk becoming empty and shallow. If we do not investigate what we mean by relationship building in schools – there is a risk that we neglect the boundaries that need to be in place in teacher-student relationships.

4.5.8 The Complexity in the Teaching Practise

To formulate the concepts of trust, relationships and meaning-making and how a teacher can develop these qualities is difficult and hence there is a risk that the perspectives in relational pedagogy paint a harmonic "ideal picture" (Colnerud, 1997a). The ability to develop trustful relationships is often referred to as a part of a teacher's personality (Frelin, 2010), a personal

characteristic instead of a skill that teachers have developed through practice – essential parts of teachers' professionalism, and the conditions under which teachers work, are hence made invisible (Frelin, 2010). The qualities a teacher should strive for are described as moral ideals and as almost therapeutic – teachers are to interpret implicit signs about the needs and emotions of students (Colnerud, 1997a). The dual mandate from society and from students, where teachers are expected to be objective assessors as well as empathetic fellow human beings, creates a complexity that is often forgotten in the relational perspective (Colnerud, 1997a).

The teachers in the interview study by Frelin (2010), about teachers' professionality, compare relational competence with competencies in negotiation – teachers negotiate about authority between teacher and students, and about equality among students. This competence is something that teachers develop over time, and it becomes a part of teachers' professional tacit knowledge (Frelin, 2010).

The strong focus on positive relationships between teachers and students in Swedish schools has led to a situation where positive relationships have become like a taken-for-granted "thing" – that teachers must have (Partanen, 2022). As a result, it becomes difficult to translate the concept into practical insights about how we can work to achieve what we mean with this specific relationship (Frelin, 2010). The claim that close and intimate relationships between teachers and students are necessary needs to be nuanced – we need to add elements of distance and separation (Aspelin, 2016). There is a risk that we confuse the teacher-student relationship with other forms of relations, such as friendship, parent-child relationships, or therapeutic relations and that teacher-student relationships thereby lose their progressive powers – we must separate teachers from students and not fall into an "over-socialized trap" (Aspelin, 2016, p. 11, my translation). Teachers need to communicate where the boundaries

go and develop well-differentiated relationships between students and themselves, since a teacher -student relationship aims to influence, change and develop the student, a fact that assumes that the educator does not unreservedly accept the student's current performance (Aspelin, 2016).

Another risk is that the concept relationship, which at first reception is appealing, lacks pertinence on closer application (Partanen, 2022) – when investigating or conducting relational pedagogy we must take into account the learning context and the positionality that teachers and students have – otherwise, there is a risk that the concept become an empty signifier (Hickey and Riddle, 2023). Since the concepts in relational pedagogy are not defined in a clear way by policy makers or authorities in Sweden or other countries, teachers are often left without guidelines and rules about where the limits go (Bernstein-Yamashiro and Noam, 2013). Should teachers give students their phone numbers? Or have students as “friends” on social media? As schools get more personalized, teachers face many dilemmas in both keeping their connections to students and creating clear boundaries for the relationship (Bernstein-Yamashiro and Noam, 2013) – especially if there are no outspoken and agreed-upon guidelines.

In their study, Hickey and Riddle (2023) describe how the participating teachers and school management in an upper secondary school actively worked with collegial discussions to define relationality. They conclude that self-reflection and peer dialogue among the teachers provide a solid base for clarifying accounts of pedagogical relationships relevant to their school (Hickey and Riddle, 2023). Concepts like relationality and relational pedagogy must be defined in a school context – not stand on their own with the possibilities to be interpreted in various personal ways (Hickey and Riddle, 2023).

* * *

In this Chapter, I have connected the ideas from Bernstein and relational theory to general questions about education. I have presented literature and theories relevant to my study and included studies that are informed by the theories or exemplify some of the issues discussed. I have given examples of how the theories and conclusions from other studies can be connected to Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy and Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden.

To make it possible to investigate and come to an answer to my research questions, the chosen theories and ideas create a frame for this investigation.

4.6 Conceptual Framework

I have chosen to focus on the two concepts of classification and framing – the often invisible and unconscious mechanisms of power and control in school settings, and on concepts from relational theory, such as trust, meaning-making. and interaction in schools.

My research questions are formulated:

- *How do Swedish Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe and reflect upon their lived experiences of conducting a "rhythmical and balanced education" during the main lesson – and what do they experience as necessary conditions to establish this approach?*
- *How do Swedish Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe their lived experience of being part of a pedagogic tradition and at the same time adjusting to the demands from the outside?*

Since Bernstein's focus is on a theoretical and abstract level, it was necessary to include the ideas from relational pedagogy where the focus is on positive relationships between students and teachers and how that is a condition for learning and teaching. Mechanisms of control and power are necessary in schools and to feel confirmed and safe is essential if we are to learn.

Although these two different perspectives on education could be seen as contradictory, or at least difficult to combine – I will show that combined with the data constructed for this study – the theories can enrichen each other and help develop broader concepts that tell us more about the complexity in the teaching practice. These two theories can be looked upon as highlighting “two sides of the same coin”.

In the upcoming Chapters 5 and 6, I will describe the methodologies and methods used in this study and how I constructed and analysed my data.

5. Methodology and Methods – Constructing my Data

In this chapter I will discuss the chosen methods for this research project – and describe how I have constructed my data.

The purpose of this study is to investigate Waldorf-Steiner teachers' lived experience of their practice while conducting main-lessons – a practice that is supposed to let students experience a sense of pedagogical rhythm and balance. I am also interested in how the teachers experience being parts of a pedagogic tradition with both out- and unspoken ideals about how to conduct teaching (Selsfors, 2019, Tjärnstig, 2019, Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016).

5.1 Rationale for Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative research is described as social research that tries to investigate and explain peoples' sense-making of the world, their experiences and ideas in a certain context and time (Savin-Baden and Major, 2012). The intent of qualitative research is to give a holistic understanding of a phenomenon – to highlight the complexity and the nuances in social interaction (Alvehus, 2019, Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012).

In qualitative research, the researcher needs to be able to argue for, and explain, the reason for different choices and the conclusions drawn (Savin-Baden and Major, 2012). Every choice has consequences for the research and the outcome – and must be carefully considered and logical – based on the research questions of the study. Qualitative research is an interpretative research with the goal to contribute to the understanding of phenomena and the meaning making of personal experiences (Savin-Baden and Major, 2012) – to develop our way of describing the world and nuance our understanding of it (Alvehus, 2019). The nature of phenomena in social research often resides in the experience of them, therefore a method that

aims to uncover phenomena "by bringing them into the light of reconstructed experience" is suitable for this study (Nielsen, 2000, p. 10).

5.1.1 Rationale for the Chosen Method – Hermeneutic Phenomenology

I have chosen a hermeneutic phenomenological approach – to try to interpret the teachers' descriptions of their lived experiences and formulate this into understandable theories and concepts. When choosing a specific method to use when performing a research project, there must be some kind of harmony between the research question and the method (Van Manen, 2016). Since my goal is to contribute to the debate about teachers' practice, I need to understand their "lifeworld". Lived experience, or lifeworld, is both the conscious and the unconscious, the way we experience our daily lives in a subjective personal way (Van Manen, 2016). Lifeworld includes tacit knowledge and embodied experiences. Tacit knowledge could be explained as an "implicit understanding" of a situation and can vary in its form – depending on the degree of accessibility and explicability (Adloff et al., 2015). When the implicit understanding is weak, we can to some extent put words to our experience, when it is strong, we cannot – the experience is explicated in our body and bodily acts. The tacit knowledge can take the form of embodied experiences and at the same time be socially shared (Adloff et al., 2015). It is socially acquired and culturally specific, something collective and co-determined by social structures (Loenhoff, 2015).

To use hermeneutic phenomenology is an attempt to come to a comprehensive understanding of the meaning of an experience – which in turn can disclose new insights. In my work, the hermeneutic phenomenological approach means that the descriptions of lived experiences are interpreted as they are manifested in language.

Hermeneutic Phenomenology – two Combined Methods

"Phenomenological research is descriptive and focuses on the structure of experience, the organizing principles that give form and meaning to the lifeworld" (Laverty, 2003, p. 27), – it attempts to uncover what several participants who experience a phenomenon have in common and tries to formulate this into something that can be understood in a broader sense and what is invariable in all the variations of an experience (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004, Savin-Baden and Major, 2012). The strive is to come to an understanding about the experience – instead of an explanation of the purpose of an action or a behaviour (Johansson, 2009a). If the nature of an experience is adequately described in language, it will reawaken the significance of the experience in a deep manner (Van Manen, 2016). Phenomenological research is a search for what it means to be human, and as we research the structures of our lived experiences, we come to an understanding of both ourselves and the world around us (Van Manen, 2016).

Hermeneutics is the art of interpretation – used to try to create understanding about meaning and values in texts, actions, or decisions. Hermeneutics has its roots in the interpretation of the bible, but today it is also used in, for example, linguistic and philosophical theory (Kakkori, 2020). Hermeneutics considers the context and the background where what is being interpreted has its roots and there must be a commute between understanding and explaining, a process where different ideas can melt together (Savin-Baden and Major, 2012). The idea is that in the points of inter-section – something new will be visible and make the text "open up" for the reader or interpreter (Claesson et al., 2011).

When phenomenology and hermeneutics are combined, we get a method that wishes to meet human beings where they are naturally engaged in their world (Van Manen, 2016). Lived experiences and meaning are expressed in our actions, through language and narratives, and in our reflections about life. We cannot always put words to all the aspects of our experiences,

they need to be interpreted. When we research lived experience, it must be condensed into texts, and texts need interpretation (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004).

Hermeneutic phenomenology has been criticized, to connect two different disciplines – with different concepts, history and orientation – can cause tension and misunderstandings (Kakkori, 2020). Phenomenology is concerned with finding the essence of things, and hermeneutics claims that everything has its being in language and interpretation. The two methods have a lot to offer each other but researchers need to be aware of this possible tension (Kakkori, 2020).

The findings in hermeneutic phenomenology are the result of different processes of interpretation – and hence there is a question about the possibility to reinterpret or understand the findings in different ways (Johansson, 2009a). Another question is whether it is possible for a researcher to know when, and if, you have succeeded in categorizing, and made sure that you have seen what is essential and of value in your data (Johansson, 2009a). A reader can never know what perspectives have been taken away by the researcher, or fully understand why some categories of meaning are held higher than others, the influence of the researcher is always present (Alvehus, 2019, Johansson, 2009a).

In my project, I am aware of this tension and the difficulties, but since social phenomena often are about an immaterial way of knowing – rather than facts and measurable factors – I argue that hermeneutic phenomenology is a way to come closer to the ineffable. In social research we often work with dimensions that might be difficult to categorize as factual or non-factual (Nielsen, 2000)**,** the purpose is to reveal the significance of a phenomenon as a whole. My intention is to catch dimensions in the teaching practice that do not only subscribe to intellectual thinking, but also to the, sometimes hidden, meaning of a unique experience (Nielsen, 2000, Van Manen, 2016). Tacit knowledge and embodied experiences are taken

seriously in hermeneutic phenomenology and could be described as the "missing link" between theory and practice, it allows researchers to see the unique individual (Henriksson, 2012, Lindseth and Norberg, 2004).

Hermeneutic phenomenology does not only affirm the tacit knowledge among researchers and practitioners, but it also challenges the taken for granted attitudes. As I stated in the introduction chapter, the overarching ideas in my work are that the context that we belong to influences and affects us in a strong way, there are always values, norms, and opinions that we see as obvious and natural (Adler, 2019). Hermeneutic phenomenology calls us to look closer at these taken-for-granted values and assumptions, to ask: What if it is the other way around? – To look at something familiar and try to take the taken for granted attitude away – to look at the phenomenon in a way that makes it appear to our minds more like a question without any given answers (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004).

To do hermeneutic phenomenology is in a way a mission impossible – lived life is always much more complex than its interpretative description (Van Manen, 2016). On the other hand, when hermeneutic phenomenological descriptions are done in a good manner, they can create understandable meaning. Well-written hermeneutic phenomenological texts allow us to learn and understand by example (Henriksson, 2012). Descriptions and interpretations of lived experience give a sense of recognition but at the same time, they do not "prove" anything but rather give us a hint and point to something.

> […] hermeneutic phenomenology has the potential of being a "freezer of waterfalls" It can silence the rush and roar in our everyday environment and allow us to suddenly see our students and ourselves with new eyes, or perhaps just see and start to question what we take for granted. (Henriksson, 2012, p. 19)

5.2 The Setting of the Study

I will now move on and present the setting of this study, the initial and final plan for the design of the study and give a presentation of the participating teachers.

5.2.1 The Chosen Setting – The Main Lesson

I have chosen to focus on the main lesson in Waldorf-Steiner schools. The reasons behind this choice are that the main lesson is looked upon as a corner stone in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy – and during this lesson, teachers are supposed to interact and communicate with students in different ways (Rawson, 2021, Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). As I described in Chapter 3 (section 3.2.5), the structure of the main lesson is often made up of different parts, and hence the teacher needs to have a set of skills and abilities to be both in focus and to back away, to have both an informal and a formal attitude, and to insert both theoretical and aesthetic/practical perspectives. The main lesson is therefore a situation where several aspects of the teaching practice become visible.

5.2.2 The Initial Plan

In August 2020 I constructed a plan for how I wanted to conduct the different steps in my project. My idea was to construct as rich data as possible from each participating teacher. I wanted them to individually reflect on their experience of a main lesson in a written protocol ahead of our meeting, I wanted to participate in their ordinary teaching situation, and I wanted to conduct an informal semi-structured interview. My idea of this three-folded way of constructing my data was that it would highlight ideas and reflections of the teaching practice during the main lesson from slightly different angles, and hence give me an understanding of the teachers lived experiences. To try to gain as deep an understanding as possible gives me, as a researcher, a chance to interpret the data in an accurate way.

I contacted principals at different schools and asked them to suggest teachers who fitted with my criteria, and I did a post in a Waldorf- Steiner pedagogical forum on Facebook, presenting my study and encouraging Waldorf-Steiner teachers to contact me. My criteria were that the participants should be certified Waldorf-Steiner teachers and have a working experience of at least five years. I was looking for solid experiences of being a practising teacher and participant in a school tradition and culture. I also wanted a variety when it came to gender, big or small schools, to schools in big cities or on the countryside. This is referred to as a "partial strategic selection" of participants (Alvehus, 2019) – I did not ask for specific individuals, but for specific experience and knowledge, which I argue is necessary for my research.

I constructed an interview guide, instructions for the written protocol and an observation scheme. My idea was to focus on one participating teacher at a time – reading the protocol, doing an observation and then doing the interview and transcribing. I set up a timetable after having telephone calls with 12 teachers where the idea was to schedule time for two or three teachers each month (see Appendix 12.7).

5.3 The final Design of the Study – an Affect of the Pandemic

I started to contact the interested teachers when my project proposal was accepted, and the project was given ethical approval by the University of Plymouth in August 2020.

I had a telephone conversation with each one, giving more information and explanations, and invited the teachers to ask questions. After that, I sent an information sheet and instructions via e-mail (see Appendix 12.1, 12.2 and 12.3, 12.4).

Ahead of my data construction, I did a test observation and interview with a colleague, to try out my interview guide and get a sense of how I could avoid drawing attention to myself during observations. To perform some kind of test of your methods can be of use to find the

weak spots in your ideas (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012). This made me change a few things in my interview guide – I re-formulated two questions about how teachers experience that they are affected by a pedagogic tradition. I initially formulated these questions using the term "traditional Waldorf-Steiner culture" but decided to change that into "traditional practice in your school" so that it was up to the interviewee, not to me, to refer to traditional Waldorf-Steiner approaches or not.

It was difficult to schedule the observations and interviews, many of them were re-scheduled and postponed – because of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. The initial idea, to have a clear structure where I could focus on one teacher at a time, reading their protocol, doing the observation and interview, became impossible – and I had to adjust to the situation and make the best of it. This slowed me down and made the whole situation a bit complicated.
Sweden never had a "lock-down" during the pandemic, and this caused a heavy workload for teachers – to conduct both ordinary and on-line education and to substitute for colleagues who were absent. Initially, 12 teachers were willing to participate, but because of the Covid-19 pandemic, four of the teachers decided to withdraw from the project. Unfortunately, this meant that two teachers who work at schools with a more varied student composition when it comes to social class, nationality, and religion, could not participate.
I conducted three observations and interviews in September- October 2020, but on the 19th of October 2020, there were new restrictions from the Public Health Agency in Sweden – it was not possible to travel and visit different schools – I could not go on with my plan with observations and face to face interviews.
Since the observations felt important to understand different forms of interaction during the main lesson, this was a real loss. After some thinking and feedback from my supervisors, I decided to involve two teachers in the school where I work – when these teachers heard of my

problems, they themselves suggested that I could include them. This was not an ideal situation – I was afraid that my presence would influence and affect both the students and the teachers more in my own school, since I am the principal, and in that sense could be looked upon as an authority (Mercer, 2007). I was concerned that the students would behave differently and that the teachers would feel uncomfortable, I will discuss this further in section 6.3.2. This was an ethical question to consider during the observations, and in the analysis.

I decided to conduct five of the interviews online without doing observations beforehand – the pandemic made it impossible to stick to the original plan.

Even though it was complicated to get a flow in the data construction – all the observations and interviews were conducted during the autumn of 2020 (see Appendix 12.8).

5.3.1 The Participating Waldorf-Steiner Teachers

I have constructed data from ten Waldorf-Steiner teachers who work at nine different schools. The teachers who participated and concluded all the steps are in an age-span of 32-58 years old and have all worked as teachers for 10 years or more. All of them are licensed Waldorf-Steiner teachers. They have been given a fictitious name in alphabetical order (see Table 3 below).

Table 3, Presentation of the Participating Teachers

Fictitious name	Class/Subject-teacher	Experience as a teacher (years)	Number of schools in which the teacher has worked	Teacher in student age-group	Former Waldorf-Steiner student	Big/small school
Andy	Subject-teacher	20	1	12-16	Yes	Middle-sized (100-200 students)
Beatrice	Class-teacher	20	2	7-12	Yes	Middle-sized (100-200 students)
Chris	Class- and subject-teacher	10	2	12-16	Yes	Big (+ 200 students)
Diana	Class-teacher	19	1	7-12	No	Middle-sized (100-200 students)
Erica	Class-teacher	15	4	7-12	Yes	Small (- 100 students)
Fiona	Class-teacher	22	4	11-16	No	Big (+ 200 students)
Gloria	Class- and subject teacher	22	2	7-12	Yes	Middle-sized (100-200 students)
Heather	Class- and subject-teacher	14	2	7-16	Yes	Middle-sized (100-200 students)
Iris	Subject-teacher	21	2	7-16	No	Small (- 100 students)
Janice	Class-teacher	11	3	7-12	No	Middle-sized (100-200 students)

The teachers were asked to write a protocol of the main lesson, five of them let me observe a main lesson, and they all participated in a semi-structured interview.

5.4 Data Construction

In hermeneutic phenomenology, one must be aware that the "data" never can be identical to lived life itself (Van Manen, 2016). It is not possible to go out and collect "hard facts" about individual experiences since the experience is recollected and transformed into language (Van Manen, 2016). To ask the participating teachers to write a protocol, to conduct observations and semi-structured interviews was an attempt to highlight the lived experiences from different angles and perspectives, and hence get a deeper understanding.

5.4.1 The Written Protocols

Protocol writing is to describe an event or an experience from the inside without trying to explain or interpret what happened (Van Manen, 2016). It includes feelings and emotions, how it felt and why this event feels important or stand out. To write about your experiences means that you are forced into a more reflective attitude towards what happened (Van Manen, 2016). It gives the participating teachers the possibility to focus on the events and feelings that feel important to them – not to the researcher (Van Manen, 2016). But of course, as a researcher you can never know if a written protocol is a correct recollection of an experience – but the important thing is the experience of the participant and how he or she reflects on the phenomenon in retrospect.

> It is important to realize that it is not of a great concern whether a certain experience actually happened in exactly that way. We are less concerned with the factual accuracy of an account than with the plausibility of an account – whether it is true to our living sense of it. (Van Manen, 2016, p. 65)

All teachers sent me their protocol of a main lesson before the scheduled observations and interviews. I had sent them an instruction about the protocols beforehand, based on the ideas

from Van Manen (2016), (see appendix 12.3 and 12.4). Before I met with the teachers, I read their protocols several times, trying to find – a "naïve understanding" of the text (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004).

The protocols were quite different, both when it came to content and length. Eight of the protocols were detailed with descriptions of the activities in the classroom and the teachers' thoughts, feelings, and reflections. It was possible for me to get a sense of their experiences and to ask questions to the texts. Two protocols were short and did not contain much information about the teachers' own experience – instead focus was on the structure of the main lesson and activities in the classroom. This made it difficult to come to a pre-understanding of the teachers' lived experiences – these two protocols gave information about practical things.

5.4.2 The Observations

To conduct observations can be explained as an attempt by the researcher to enter the lifeworld of those who are participating in a hermeneutic phenomenological research project (Van Manen, 2016). While doing observations, the idea is to discover anecdotes. An anecdote is a narrative that takes place and that has a certain point to it (Van Manen, 2016). This does not mean that it must be something extra-ordinary – but rather something that makes us aware of someone else's experience. This point is what needs to be highlighted and closely looked upon. The researcher is trying to grasp the meaning, the lived experience, while it is happening (Van Manen, 2016).

An example of an anecdote that occurred during the observations was during a history lesson in grade 4. The teacher had been telling the Egypt myth about Anubis feather – the students wanted to hear it twice – and after that, they all started to work individually with texts and illustrations. After a few minutes of silence and concentration among the students, a student raised her hand and asked "Could you please tell it again, the part about the feather of truth

and the scale? Please, once again!". It was obvious that the myth about how Anubis weigh hearts against a feather, to sort out who could enter the realm of the dead, raised questions and reflections in this student. The teacher smiled at the student, looked at the other students and asked; "Do you really want to hear it again?". All the students nodded, and the teacher laughed and then began to tell the myth again with a big smile on her face.

Observations are also a way to get an understanding of the physical environment, how people interrelate and how the cultural parameters look (Savin-Baden and Major, 2012). To step into another person's everyday life, gives a hint about the lifeworld of the other person (Van Manen, 2016). But at the same time, one must be aware that an observation is just like a snapshot in time, it gives information about this specific day and atmosphere, but it is not possible to know if it will be the same the next day.

My participation in the teachers' every-day situation was a way to get closer to the teachers' own experience – the purpose of the observations was to investigate – see, hear or experience – what the teachers described in the protocols – as it was happening in real time. Or, perhaps, find an engagement or interaction that the teachers did not describe. The observations were a way for me to take part in, and get a pre-understanding of, the teachers' lifeworld and hence be able to connect this to the interviews – could the anecdotes that I noticed be understood and explained by the teachers own experiences?

The observations that I conducted were different when it came to subjects and age of the students (see Table 5 below), all the observations lasted for 100-110 minutes each during the Main lesson.

Table 4, Presentation of the Observations

Grade	Subject	Number of students present	Teacher
9 (15-year-olds)	Geography – sustainability	15	Class-teacher
7 (13-year-olds	Chemistry	14	Subject-teacher
5 (11-year-olds)	Mathematics – geometry	14	Class-teacher
5 (11-year-olds)	History – ancient Egypt	15	Class-teacher
4 (10-year-olds)	Mathematic – fraction counting	15	Class-teacher

At each observation, the teacher presented me as a guest and let me explain what I was doing in their classroom – an overt observation where the students were aware of my presence (Alvehus, 2019). After that I sat down in the back of the room – hoping to become as invisible as possible and not affect or disturb the lesson – my observations were passive, and non-participative (Savin-Baden and Major, 2012). During the observations, my focus was set on the interaction and on what kind of approach the teacher took in these interactions. At the same time, I was making field notes about activities and my reflections and questions – using both an observation protocol (see appendix 12.9) and free notes. My experience during the observations was that the students were a bit interested in me for a few minutes – but since I did not say or do anything interesting – it was as if they forgot that I was present.
During the observations, there was no obvious hierarchy among students in the classrooms, but that situation could of course be different during breaks and in spare time. In all observations, there were students absent because of the pandemic.

5.4.3 The Interviews

To conduct interviews is the most common way to gather information about peoples experiences (Alvehus, 2019). Kvale and Brinkman (2014) use a metaphor about the researcher in qualitative research as a traveller who sets out on an educational journey where

the interviewer and the interviewee create insights together. The traveller has a goal, but the road is not pre-determined or decided.

Interviews in hermeneutic phenomenological research serve two purposes; to explore and gather narratives that can develop a deeper understanding of a human phenomenon, and to create a conversational relationship with the interviewee about the meaning of an experience (Van Manen, 2016). For both purposes, it is important to stay close to the research question – to the lived experience.

For all the interviews I used an interview-guide with open questions. The guide was divided into five parts (see Appendix 12.5 and 12.6):

1. Information and presentation.
2. Reflections on the written protocols.
3. Reflections on the observation.
4. General questions about conducting teaching during the main lesson with a focus on pedagogical rhythms and balance.
5. General questions about being a teacher in a strong pedagogic tradition.

In the online interviews, the part about the observations was taken away.

The purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to try to create a situation where the participating teachers felt at ease and comfortable to speak freely. This meant that I could also come up with spontaneous questions or reflections on their ideas (Kvale et al., 2014). There was a very good "flow" where we reflected together on the issue at hand. The open questions in a semi-structured interview enable the interviewee to give deep answers and get the opportunity to try and paint a colourful picture of an experience or a phenomenon (Kvale et al., 2014)

Face-to-Face Interviews

I conducted the face-to face interviews the same day as I did the observations and all interviews lasted for about one hour and were tape-recorded. I made notes about facial expressions and body-language where the participants used that in a strong way, and if there was something specific that I wanted to remember. All interviews started with some initial questions and explanations.

The second part of the interviews focused on the teachers' written protocol. For each interview, I had prepared reflections and questions that I wanted to know more about. As an example, Heather wrote: *This particular morning, there were two students in the class that didn't seem to be focused, but I started anyway. I didn't want to miss the moment, that point where silence and calmness emerge.* I wanted to know more about this "moment", how she experienced that and how she knew that this was the right time to start.

In the third part, we discussed the observations that I had conducted. I wanted to know more about why the teacher acted in a certain way, or if he or she was aware of a specific phenomenon that I had noticed. This part became the longest one in each of the face-to-face interviews. The observations made it possible for me to ask explicit questions about the interaction in the classroom, about anecdotes and situations that occurred. As an example, during the observation in a grade five, there was one student whom Diana approached in a more caring manner, compared to how she interacted with other students – checking that he was okay and on track – she did that without him having to ask for more help. I wanted to know more about her thoughts about different types of interaction with different students.

In the fourth and fifth part, my questions were of a more general nature. I wanted to know the teachers' experiences about pedagogical rhythms and balance during the main lesson and their reflections about being part of a context, how traditions and culture, and guidelines from authorities, affect their daily work.

It became very clear to me that teachers like to talk about their pedagogical intentions, about their teaching and their students. It was much more difficult to put words to their own experiences and feelings. During these face-to-face interviews, many times I had to gently steer the interview back to the questions about the teachers own experience. The teachers often turned their focus to things that happened in the classroom, what students had said or done.

I conducted face-to-face interviews with Andy, Beatrice, Heather, Diana, and Gloria (see Table 3, Presentation of the Participating Teachers).

Online Interviews

The online interviews were conducted via Teams, and all started just as the face-to-face interviews with some initial questions. The online interviews followed the same design as the face-to-face interviews, but the part about the observation was taken away. All the interviews were tape-recorded and I also made notes. The teachers all accepted the letter of consent verbally before the interviews started, this was tape-recorded.

Online interviews are considered a valid substitute for face-to-face interviews (Saarijärvi and Bratt, 2021), but my personal experience is that something is missing. There is a distance which is difficult to avoid, a more formal situation than when being present in the same room. To establish trust is a matter of concern in online interviews, the communication does not become as personal, the informal “chit chat” is not possible and that can make it more difficult for the interviewee to feel comfortable (Sedysheva, 2020). My experience was that there was a good flow and a sense of positive atmosphere – but not quite in the same way as in the face-to-face interviews.

Another aspect was that I had not been able to conduct the observations beforehand which meant that we did not have a shared experience. I had to pay more attention to the written

protocols and ask questions about more general interaction in the classrooms – I could not point to something that I had experienced during observations.

I conducted online interviews with Chris, Erica, Fiona, Iris, and Janice (see Table 3, Presentation of the Participating Teachers).

In the next chapter, I will describe the process of analysing the empirical material and how the conceptual framework was derived. I will discuss questions of ethical considerations and trustworthiness.

6. Diving into the data –Analysis & Synthesis

In this chapter I will present how I worked with the data, trying to construct interpretations of the lived experiences of the participating Waldorf-Steiner teachers. I will go through all the steps in the analysing and coding process, I will discuss ethical considerations and dilemmas that occurred, and I will look at issues of trustworthiness.

6.1 Analysis and Coding

I have been analysing my data by using a thematic analysis as described by Lindseth and Norberg (2004). Their method was developed to understand and investigate ethics and dilemmas in caring activities and institutions where it is not possible to state a common definition of what we actually mean by care. Instead the authors "draw upon a shared familiarity with the world in which caring takes place" (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004, p. 147). They provide a structured process to work with data constructed during text collection. I was intrigued by their way of describing this "familiarity" about issues that are difficult to express and put into words – something that I, and other researchers, argue often is the case in the teaching practice (Colnerud, 1997a, Lilja, 2013, Ljungblad, 2016). I was also interested in their description of the naïve understanding of a text as something that must guide the structural analysis (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004). Pedagogic discourse, just like healthcare, is a field of change and tacit knowledge, and hence this method is useful.

> Nevertheless, discourses, such as the discourse of healthcare, are continuously changing and we also take part in this process of change. For these reasons reflection on lived meaning and its essential traits is important. Without such reflection on lived meaning it is difficult to become aware of unfortunate practices we are part of. (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004, p. 148)

Thematic analysis is to move from a naive understanding to a structured one – where units of meaning are condensed and abstracted to form main themes and/or sub-themes. A theme is "a

thread of meaning that penetrates text parts" and conveys and describes the meaning of the lived experience (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004, p. 149). Themes are not generalizations or metaphors but more like "knots", the parts in a text that make us stop and reflect on its meaning (Van Manen, 2016). An example of such a knot was in the transcribed interview with Chris – he referred to the classroom situation as a kind of "role-play" between teacher and students, and this comment felt both important and a bit difficult to understand – it needed reflection and understanding.

The researcher then moves to the structural analysis and compares the themes with the naive understanding and ends up with an understanding of the interpreted wholeness. Parts of meaning that connect to each other are brought together into units (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004). The themes are summarized and reflected upon in relation to the research question and the context of the study – to come to a comprehensive understanding. The advantage of this method is that there is a dialectic movement between understanding and explanation (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004). Henriksson (2012, p. 18) describes that hermeneutic phenomenology analysis can be looked upon as a "reality check" and has the potential to give us a sense of recognition.

> […] Hermeneutic phenomenological methodology urges us to suspend our taken-for-granted attitudes and ask ourselves: "What if it is the other way around?" […] So, shifting from a natural attitude to a phenomenological attitude implies a change of mental state; we shift from one way of seeing reality to another. (Henriksson, 2012, p. 5)

The thematic analysis meant that I looked for units that were connected to my research questions and to concepts from literature, but also that I was open to new ideas and concepts from the empirical material. This is often referred to as an abductive approach, a shift between empirical and theoretical reflection, where you look at your data in the light of your chosen theory and literature, and vice versa (Alvehus, 2019, Lindseth and Norberg, 2004).

Neither the data nor the theory is set in stone, it is like two dimensions that communicate and re-shape each other (Alvehus, 2019).

Since I have constructed my data in three ways, using written protocols, observations, and interviews, it was necessary to both look at each part of the data construction and to put them together as a whole. This is done by formulating the themes using an everyday language, in order to come as close as possible to the lived experience (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004).

6.1.1 Naïve Understanding and Initial Coding of the Written Protocols

In my naïve understanding of the written protocols, I realized that all of them contained expressions and formulations about the teachers' pedagogical intentions, interaction and about the teachers acting in the moment – an intuitive, or embodied, way to react (Henriksson, 2012). This naïve understanding was developed ahead of the interviews. When I had conducted the interviews and the observations, I moved on to a more structured coding of the protocols – the reason for this was that the protocols were more understandable in light of what had been discussed in the interviews.

I used different colours to highlight the areas found in the naïve understanding and began to look for themes and units of meaning. I constructed charts to see if I could find patterns.

As data, the protocols highlighted the structure of the main lesson, and the routines and rituals that were embedded. Eight of them also included reflections, emotions, and thoughts from the teachers about their teaching and interaction with students.

As tools for pre-understanding, the protocols gave me an insight in the teachers' daily work – practical questions such as how many students in each class, a sense of the culture and some ideas about their personal approach to the main lesson.

In Appendix 12.11 I give a brief example of the initial coding of the written protocols.

6.1.2 Naïve Understanding and Initial Coding of the Observations

Just as the protocols, the fieldnotes and observation protocols from the observations were used both as data and as tools for pre-understanding – I read my notes ahead of the interview, but I did not analyse them until afterwards. As I previously described, during the observations, my focus was set on interaction and activity, but some questions emerged that I later discussed with the teachers during the interviews – as the reason behind the use of specific routines.

When analysing the fieldnotes and protocols from the observations, I started with the naïve understanding and then looked for themes and units of meaning and investigated if my notes were possible to connect to my naïve understanding of the written protocols and the interviews. Again, I constructed charts with different themes.

In Appendix 12.9, I give examples of observation protocols, in Appendix 12.10 I give some examples of fieldnotes from the observations, and in Appendix 12.11, I give a brief example of the initial coding of the observations.

6.1.3 Transcribing the Interviews

To transcribe is in a way to start the analysing process of an interview, spoken words are converted into written text and many things of course get lost, such as body-language, gestures and intonation (Alvehus, 2019), the transcribed text can be described as "fixated speech" (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004, p. 148).

I transcribed quite soon after the interviews – I took away certain parts of spoken language, such as repetitions of words or sounds that we make while talking to each other, "uh, ahh, hmm.", to make the text more reader friendly and possible to analyse in a good manner (Alvehus, 2019). I tried to recall some of the gestures and facial expressions that my interviewees did, using my notes, and inserted that in brackets. Where the teachers said something with an emphasis, I used bold text. I also inserted pauses and laughter in brackets.

All the interviewees were offered to read the transcribed interview – one of them said yes to this and I sent the transcribed interview by e-mail, the teacher had no objections.

6.1.4 Naïve Understanding and Coding of the Interviews

I listened and read each of the ten interviews many times – the naïve understanding gave me a sense of the teachers' experiences and how that was connected to their intentions regarding teaching and interacting with students. For example, my naïve understanding of the interview with Andy was that his pedagogic intention strongly influences his approach to students – and he can quickly change that approach so that his intention can be realised. I started coding, to do comments and questions to the text, with the ideas from my naïve understanding – the teachers' experience and intentions – in the back of my head. Initially, six themes seemed to emerge from the interviews, and they were somehow connected. I started to construct different charts with headings:

- Rhythms and balance in the knowledge process – all the teachers talk about the importance of finding a rhythmical balance in your teaching.
- Rhythms and balance in interaction and relationships – the teachers widen the concept of rhythmical and balanced education to include interaction.
- Focus on individuals/group – Inclusion – inclusion is emphasized, the teachers describe how you must be able to shift from focus on individuals to focus on the group.
- Rhythms and balance in roles, shifts, and position – as a teacher, you must feel secure in your role and find a balance in how you use that position.
- Intuition, experience, and education – these three areas complement each other and create tacit knowledge.
- Intentions, planning, and preparing – your intention must be made clear both for yourself and for students, and planning is a way to make that intention visible.

I also made charts with headings from my concepts from the literature that I had chosen so far to widen my horizon and let the chosen literature highlight the interview text – and interview text illuminate the chosen literature.

- Power and control – what does "positive authority" really mean? How do the teachers describe this?
- Positive relationships – what does this mean? How do the teachers interact with students?
- Being part of a pedagogic tradition – advantages, disadvantages, and challenges

I started to fill these charts with quotes from the teachers and began to organize the units of meaning, trying to see what kind of themes and sub-themes they created. I also translated the quotes and units of meaning from Swedish to English – I wanted to do this early in the process so that I could check that my translation was as accurate and nuanced as possible. In Appendix 12.11, I give some examples of the initial coding of the interviews.

6.1.5 Putting it all Together

After this work with a naïve understanding of all the empirical material and initial coding, I went back to do it all again, looking at my data as a whole. As I described earlier (section 5.3), the data construction was not possible to conduct in the structured way that I planned – so I needed to go back to my data several times to create that structure. I compared, coded, and asked questions to the data – trying to connect the different charts and units of meaning. In total, my data consisted of 226 pages with texts and charts. At this point I knew my data well and could work in a fluent way, going back and forth between the protocols, the observations, and the interviews. I used a whiteboard to organize my ideas and thoughts and to find connections. For example, in my naïve understanding, the links between experience – intention – activity felt important, so I started to fill the board with keywords from the data

that were connected to these concepts and the six themes. I continuously took photos of the whiteboard so that I would remember my ideas after erasing them on the board. After doing this several times with slightly different approaches, I started to write, what Van Manen (2016, p. 130) refers to: "Writing shows that we can now see something, and at the same time, it shows the limits or boundaries of our sightedness". This process was initially a process of sorting, reducing and arguing, trying to make out if, and how, the themes and categories were connected (Alvehus, 2019). I constructed different flow-charts where I inserted key expressions and ideas, both from the empiric material and my own ideas about their relevance and meaning.

I began to see some links and common patterns and unspoken assumptions. Lindseth and Norberg (2004) write that it is not only the interpreter that interprets the text – the text also interprets the interpreter. When we try to interpret, we get new insights, and this can help to see new perspectives on ideas, both about ourselves and others. The taken-for-granted assumptions might be challenged and make us see phenomena in a new way (Lindseth and Norberg, 2004).

I realized that the teachers talked about rhythms and balance as something that has to do with both activities in the classroom, and interaction with students – but this was somehow connected to the strong sense of *being responsible,* a theme that in many ways permeated everything that the teachers talked and wrote about, that it was something connected to many layers and situations during a school day. This sense of being responsible was connected to how they experience themselves and interpret their practice and their profession.

This insight corresponded with my naïve understanding and made me look at my data in a new way. Many of the things that the teachers talked and wrote about made more sense and fell into place when connected to this sense of responsibility. The teachers' experience was possible to tie to an intention or an underlying idea – which in turn seemed to lead to a

conscious or unconscious activity in the classroom. I could formulate five big ideas or categories with themes and sub-themes that responded to my research question and my chosen literature. Three of these ideas were connected to the teaching practice, the situation in the classroom and interaction with students – two concerned the more overarching ideas and traditions that affect the teachers' view upon knowledge, teaching, and learning. In Table 5 below, I give some examples of how the ideas about the teachers' experience and intentions led to the formulation of the themes (see Table 5 below).

Table 5, Example of formulating the themes.

Naïve Understanding	Units of Meaning	Thematic Analysis	Theme
Teachers' Experience – *responsibility* (for learning, relationships, safety, atmosphere) **Teachers' Intention** – creating stability, trust. **Question:** Responsibility ≈ framing?	*"Open up" for students.* *Learning and interaction are connected.* *A "red thread" in your teaching.* *Create Aha! Moments.* *It must be like a pendulum.* *High demands and expectations.* *Never a sense of failure.*	**Intention** – create *meaning.* **Activity** – creating a *positive atmosphere.* **Intention** – create an *engaging learning process.* **Activity** – Focus on both *teaching and interacting*. **Condition:** Trust, clear roles	***Balancing Responsibility*** ***Sub-themes*** - *Come into a process.* - *Create time and space.*
Naïve Understanding	**Units of Meaning**	**Thematic Analysis**	**Theme**
Teachers' Experience – Positive relationships are a condition for learning. **Teachers' Intention** – create a sense of a "we". **Question:** Positive relationships ≈ strong but "nice" framing?	*Trust is a key.* *Trust is a "fresh product".* *Follow my lead.* *I'm the captain of this ship.* *It's you and me, and I see you.* *Micro moments of connection.* *It's a fine line.* *Balance your attention.* *Boundaries to the relationship*	**Intention** – create possibilities for *relationship building.* **Interaction** – formal and informal. **Intention** – *create trust,* see each student. Create a positive climate with and among students. **Interaction** –individually, inviting. Group activities, "we"-sense. **Condition:** Trust, personal – never private.	***Educational Relationship Building*** ***Sub-theme*** - *Focus on the individual.* - *Focus on the group*
Naïve Understanding	**Units of Meaning**	**Thematic Analysis**	**Theme**
Experience – Education and experience create tacit knowledge. **Intention** – to conduct *artistic teaching* within the given frames. **Question:** Is the tradition limiting?	*A consensus about how to do.* *Teachers have the same approach.* *You need a standard repertoire.* *Freedom, creativity* *Things are stuck in the walls.* *Unspoken and taken-for-granted ideas.*	**Underlying idea** – The tradition creates *structures and out- and unspoken rules*. **Underlying idea –** *Freedom and frames* create possibilities to be creative.	***The Pedagogic Repertoire*** ***Sub-themes*** - *Contextualized knowledge* - *Intuition, acting in the moment*

6.1.6 Conceptual Framework – Limiting my Study

To construct a conceptual framework for a research study is a way to narrow down the ideas and aspects needed to investigate the research questions. The categories and themes should be connected to the questions and the purpose of the study (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012).

My first research question, about how Waldorf-Steiner teachers experience their practice as something rhythmical and balanced was left without much theorizing beforehand – the findings had to guide the direction. The conceptual framework concerning the second research question, about being part of a context, has its roots in literature and theory but was adjusted and influenced by the findings.

To make sure that the categories and themes that I interpreted as important, really were the ones that were discussed in depth and with emphasis, I went back to the data to try and control this. I constructed a scale and investigated my data again. I looked at in what way the categories and/or themes had been described and discussed in the protocols and in the interviews – how much time was spent and how the teachers emphasized different issues. I used a scale from 1-5 – where 5 meant that the issue was discussed in depth to make sure that the areas that I had chosen got a high score (see Appendix 12.12). I also cross-checked if there was data that contradicted my analysis. I wanted to make sure that my own experience and knowledge about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy did not make me interpret the data in a specific way (Mercer, 2007).

This investigation of my themes and categories made me go back to literature and theory again, to see if I was able to connect the findings with established ideas and theories, and hence get a deeper understanding of what the participating teachers were describing. I decided to go deeper into the theory of Basil Bernstein whose concepts about power and control, visible and invisible pedagogy, seemed interesting to add as analytical complements to my framework. To use these abstract and complex theoretical ideas to investigate Waldorf-Steiner

pedagogy, which has been accused of being vague and focusing too much on play and aesthetic activities, felt as a challenge and something that could highlight areas and overarching ideas and assumptions in an interesting way. I also chose to focus on some of the theories from relational pedagogy that emphasize the importance of teacher-student interactions and respect – since these areas were highlighted by the participating teachers. The five themes that emerged from the data and hence create the frames for my study are:

- Balancing Responsibility – The teachers experience themselves as responsible for learning, relationships, and students' well-being. The intention is to create stability and trust.
- Shifts and Changes – The teachers experience that rhythms and changes are necessary in the teaching situation. The intention is to create predictability and flow in the lesson so that students become engaged.
- Educational Relationship Building – The teachers experience positive relationships as a condition for learning, and it is a teacher's responsibility to create these conditions. The intention is to create bonds with students, and a positive atmosphere.
- The Pedagogic Repertoire – The teachers experience that they have developed a tacit knowledge with the help of education and experience and from being part of a strong pedagogic tradition.
- Being part of a Strong Tradition The teachers experience themselves as parts of something bigger, a shared way of thinking about pedagogy where many things are taken for granted. The tradition creates pedagogical freedom in a framed way.

6.2 Evaluation of Data Construction and Analysis

The reason to use written protocols, observations and interviews was to get as rich data as possible – a way to make my research into something that invites to dialogue between myself

and the participants (Van Manen, 2016). The written protocols gave me a hint about the teachers' daily work – used as a tool to discern new aspects (Alvehus, 2019, Johansson, 2009a). The observations became as an extension of this pre-knowledge and made it easy to come into a flow during the face-to-face interviews. Pre-understanding can help sort out and decide what is important to investigate closer (Johansson, 2009a)

Van Manen (2016) describes that as a researcher, one needs to be oriented to one's research question in a strong manner, so that one does not get easily distracted by interviews that go everywhere and nowhere. The tendency to get off track was more present in the face-to face interviews than in the online ones. I believe it had to do with the fact that in the online interviews, we did not have a shared experience to look at as an example, but also that we were not physically present in the same room. The situation does not get as intimate and personal when you are seeing each other on a screen – there is a sort of barrier that makes the situation more formal. Even though we were together in time, we were not synchronized in space – even though cyberspace could be considered to be some kind of virtual "place" (Saarijärvi and Bratt, 2021).

I am happy with the online interviews, there was a good flow and the teachers were engaged and willing to share their experiences – but I would have preferred to do all the interviews in a face-to-face situation, as it gives a richer and deeper understanding and a better flow in communication – even though it is also easier to get off track (Sedysheva, 2020).

I believe the methods to construct my data gave me what I was looking for; thick descriptions from the Swedish Waldorf-Steiner teachers' lived experiences of their practice and participation in a pedagogic tradition – even though the data construction became more complicated than I had planned.

I am satisfied with the choice to use a thematic analysis – it made it possible to have a dialectal approach, to let the naïve understanding work as a base for a more structured coding

and analysis of the data, and this approach was useful and possible to connect to both my research questions and the methods used to construct my data.

To have an abductive approach, to let the empiric material and the chosen literature and theories enrich each other, is also something that I believe has made it possible to get rich and colourful data.

The choices that I have made have affected the outcome of this research project – other methods for data construction and analysis might have led to other results and findings. But, for me, I believe that my choices can be connected to the initial idea for my research – to come to an understanding of the everyday practice in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools.

6.3 Ethical Considerations

To reflect on the ethical aspects of a research project is something that must be on-going from start to end (Alvehus, 2019). Ethical issues can emerge in all phases of the project since qualitative research involves human subjects. It is an obligation, as a researcher, to minimize potential harm to those involved in a study (Savin-Baden and Major, 2012).

The participants in my study all contributed voluntarily, they were all given information about the project beforehand, and they all signed, or verbally approved, the letter of consent.

Initially, 12 teachers were interested in participating in this study, but four of them decided to withdraw ahead of the data construction – because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The ten teachers who concluded all the steps in the data construction were all offered to read the transcribed interviews. All the participating teachers were also informed about the possibility to withdraw from the project at any time, and about the possibility to withdraw their consent to use data up to two weeks after the protocols were sent or the interviews taped-record – none of them exercised this right to withdraw.

I have been meticulous when it comes to confidentiality. All the participating teachers have been given a fictitious name, using an alphabetic order. No details about the teachers or where they work are given, and information that might jeopardize their identity has been taken away or changed.

I conducted observations in five classrooms, I had permission from the schools' management. Even though my focus was not aimed towards the students, there were some considerations to reflect upon since all the students were minors. What if a situation would occur that could violate the students' integrity, like a conflict or an emotional reaction to something? During the observations I had an agreement with the teachers – if they wanted me to leave the room, they would just give me a signal, a small gesture. This turned out not to be necessary, there were no conflicts or visible sensitive situations, and according to the teachers, it had been a "normal" main lesson.

All the data have been stored on a secure server which demands three levels of security. It is not possible to get access to this encrypted server without the password for 1) My personal computer, 2) Password to the server, 3) Password to my files.

6.3.1 The Effect of the Researcher

It is not possible to claim that my presence during the five observations, or the interview situation with teachers, be it face-to face or online, can be looked upon as "natural situations". An interview situation is constructed, planned before hand and not a situation where people act or speak freely (Alvehus, 2019). People can feel nervous about giving the "wrong answer" or not being able to give a good explanation. It is my experience that the interviews had a positive atmosphere, and the teachers seemed at ease and comfortable – there was laughter and a good flow.

The aim with an observation is to try and observe "natural situations as they occur" (Alvehus, 2019, p. 98, my translation). But, since being observed is not a usual situation – there is

always an “observer-effect”, no matter how much the researcher tries to be invisible (Alvehus, 2019). An overt observation, as I did, is easier to handle than a hidden one – from an ethical perspective – since the teachers and students were aware of my presence – but still the effect of the observer must be considered. It is not possible to be sure that my presence did not make students or teachers act or speak differently than usual (Alvehus, 2019).

6.3.2 Issues to Reflect Upon

When conducting a research project, there will most certainly be things to deal with that one has to consider – things that you know beforehand, but also situations that occur along the way. During the work with my project, of course some difficulties and dilemmas occurred.

Positionality

As I described in Chapter 2 (section 2.1), my position in my research could in many ways be described as mostly emic – I have a shared experience of the culture in Waldorf-Steiner schools with the participants in this study. Since I am a part of the Waldorf-Steiner community and its background knowledge, there is no other way to deal with this than to be honest and clear. There are also elements of a more etic perspective, especially in the online interviews where I did not have a shared experience with the teachers interviewed.

The participants in my study come from different Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden, and my personal relationship to them differs. I know the two teachers from my own school in a personal way, I know one of the others a little bit from before and two I have met briefly at different conferences and courses during the years. Five of them I had never spoke to or met face to face before. The fact that I included two teachers from the school where I work can be described as a dilemma. After the observations and interviews, I asked the two teachers if they had noticed any effect of me observing, and they both said no. The teachers assured me

that it had been a “normal” main lesson, and that my presence did not affect them or the students, at least not in a way that they could recognize. They both said that they felt comfortable both with the interviews and the observations, but it is still possible that some unconscious awareness of the power hierarchy between us was present – there is a bigger risk that I influenced the situation. There are also risks when it comes to confidentiality – an issue that I discussed with the teachers – but that was not something that worried them.
In retrospect, I can conclude that these two observations and interviews did not differ from the others since they followed my constructed plan for observations and interview guide.

My participation in the Waldorf-Steiner community creates an assumption of shared beliefs and ideas. I have had the role of lecturer in conferences and in teacher education – hence some of the participants might have known *of* me ahead of this study. This fact can create a sense of familiarity but also a risk for power relations which needs to be considered in all the steps of the research process (Holmes, 2020, Savin-Baden and Major, 2012). As a researcher in this position, you need to be both reflective and reflexive, evaluating your own thoughts and beliefs and considering your own position in the broader context that shape your perspective and actions.
I have been a solo interpreter and constructor of the data, of issues to discuss and conclusions drawn. This is a fact that I have been most aware of during the whole process and the reason why I have continuously returned to my data to make sure that the conclusions drawn rest upon well-analysed, logical, and thought- through interpretations, possible to argue for and make a reader understand.

Since I am a part of the Waldorf-Steiner community and its background knowledge, there is no other way to deal with the emic, inside position, than to be open and transparent. I have tried to reflect on every step that I have taken, every conclusion that I draw or assumptions

that I make, and to make sure that I present my choices and strategies in a transparent manner (Holmes, 2020).

Language

My native language is Swedish, and I am very much aware of the fact that there is a problem with writing in a language where you do not fully, or automatically, understand or see through all the nuances and details. As "a foreigner" you do not have access to the obviousness of the language – it is not always easy to find the right words or formulations. The risk is that a word for word translation from Swedish to English changes the underlaying meaning. This is something that I have discussed with my supervisors and other researchers, and I have turned to literature to see how other Swedish researcher translates different concepts and sayings. I struggled to formulate the right concepts for my findings, which I will discuss further in the discussion chapter (section 9.1.1). Even though it is possible to find a straightforward translation for a word in dictionaries or in other research, often words also have implicit nuances and in-woven qualities that can be difficult to really capture in another language. The big advantage of being able to use more than one language is of course the fact that I have access to, and the possibility to read and understand, literature, studies and theories presented in other languages than English – as Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, and to some extent German.

The Covid-19 Pandemic

As I have described in section 5.3, my initial plan had to be changed because of the on-going pandemic. To visit different schools and teachers all over Sweden was not possible. Two teachers who work in multicultural schools decided to withdraw, and this might affect the findings of this study. Teachers working in schools with a more complex student base, such as

different cultures and languages, could have provided important perspectives on how socio-economic background affects the learning situation.

This was a big loss for me, especially the fact that I could not conduct more than five observations. It also affected the structure and the timeline of the data construction – interviews were postponed and re-scheduled, and observations were cancelled. The fact that my data construction lost the structure that I initially planned was a bit distracting but something that I could compensate for by constantly going back to the empirical material during the whole process of my project. I believe that I succeeded with that and that my data has been worked through and analysed in a deep and trustworthy way.

6.3.3 Issues of Trustworthiness

Qualitative studies try to highlight social phenomena in a valid and clear manner (Kvale et al., 2014). The reader must be able to feel convinced that the study is trustworthy. In qualitative research the researcher can be seen as a kind of instrument for measuring and interpreting and the knowledge gained from the data must always be understood from that perspective (Kvale et al., 2014)

To make my project trustworthy, all the steps I have taken are presented in a clear and coherent manner. I have described in a thorough manner how data was constructed and analysed. My goal is to be as detailed as possible so that a reader can be convinced that my analysis and conclusions are trustworthy. When presenting the findings, I have chosen to include many quotes, translated from Swedish to English, from the protocols and interviews. Criteria such as credibility, dependability and transferability can be used to create trustworthiness in qualitative research (see Table 5 below).

Table 6, Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness (As described by Alvehus, 2019, Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012)	**Credibility** – are the experiences, thoughts and ideas of the participants portrayed in a truthful way?	Three different methods of data construction were used. Many quotes from the interviews are given word for word. Parts of protocols are inserted. Dilemmas and bias are discussed, as the "insider" position.
	Dependability – Is it possible to track the processes and procedures used to construct and interpret the data?	Every step of the data construction and analysing methods is described in detail. Examples of the coding process are given in the appendices.
	Transferability – Can a reader decide whether similar processes, as in this study, can be at work in other settings?	10 teachers from 9 different schools participated. Information needed to inform the study about context, background and current situation for Swedish Waldorf-Steiner teachers is given in Chapter 2.

6.4 Summary of the Chosen Design, Methodologies and Methods

In Chapters 5 and 6, I have presented the different steps that I have taken to construct and analyse my data. I have provided a detailed description of this study's research methodology. A hermeneutic phenomenological approach was chosen to highlight the lived experience of the participating teachers. The participant sample was made up of 10 Waldorf-Steiner teachers from nine different schools in Sweden. Data was constructed by using written protocols, observations, and semi-structured interviews and analysed by using a thematic analysis in the light of relevant literature.

Questions of ethics and trustworthiness have been discussed in this chapter, and some issues and dilemmas that occurred during the process.

In the upcoming chapters, I will present the findings – the five big ideas that emerged from the data. I will then discuss and problematize areas that are connected to my research questions in Chapter 9 and give the conclusions drawn from this research project in Chapter 10.

7. The Lived Experience of the Teaching Practice

In this first findings chapter, I will present the ten participating Waldorf-Steiner teachers' descriptions of their lived experiences of their daily practice. My first research question is formulated:

- *How do Swedish Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe and reflect upon their lived experiences of conducting a "rhythmical and balanced education" during the main lesson – and what do they experience as necessary conditions to establish this approach?*

I have divided this first part with findings into three themes that emerged in the analysis: Balanced Responsibility – Shifts and Changes, and Educational Relationship Building. What became evident in the analysis is that all these areas are connected – it is not possible to reproduce the teachers' lived experience of learning as a process without touching on relationship building, or to describe their reflections about inclusion without mentioning trust and responsibility – it is all connected and woven together.

7.1 The Lived Experience of Balancing Responsibility

When the teachers talk about rhythms and balance, it becomes obvious that this is something they experience as a much broader and multifaceted concept than I initially understood – it is not just to plan different forms of activities and working methods in the classroom. The teachers connect rhythm and balance to varied methods in the classroom, to different aspects of teaching and learning, but also to different forms of interaction, communication and relationship building with students.

It's easy to confuse `rhythmical teaching´ with music or clapping hands or

> something…but that is not how I see it. This rhythm we talk about in Waldorf schools, and the balance, is a much more invisible thing, it's about how you present your subject of course, but also how you engage with students. It's difficult to explain, but when it works, it is as if you are in this flow. (Erica)

This idea about rhythms and balance is strongly connected to how the teachers describe their lived experience of being responsible. The sense of being responsible is permeating much of what all the teachers express. They describe this responsibility as something that must be obvious and guaranteed to students – if shifts between different ways of creating a positive learning process and different types of interaction – both formal and informal – are to be realised, this must be in place. They describe how they need to balance responsibility in the interaction with students and how they strive to come to a rhythmical flow in the classroom. This responsibility means that you must create and maintain both a structure for your teaching and for your interactions with students.

7.1.1 To Come into a Process of Knowledge

It is the first day after the autumn break, I feel full of expectations. I prepared during the break, did play-dough and found good material for this first meeting with fraction counting. In my head I have already started this theme, I have had the students for my inner sight and imagined what questions they will have or what comments might occur. When I go to get the dough, I meet one of my students, a big smile, and a stumbling story about something that happened during the autumn break. I get all warm inside and feel a bit moved – a reminder about why I work as a teacher. The bell rings. I meet the students in the doorway, I catch their eyes during our new Japanese, corona-friendly, greeting. A happy chit-chat gets quiet and together we read the morning verse. We sing an old song, and we can't really remember the lyrics. Giggles and laughter. I am eager! I want to get started! (From Diana's protocol of a main lesson in grade four).

The above text from Diana's protocol is an example of how the teachers describe how they plan and conduct their teaching. They all describe how they strive for making the learning and teaching situation into a rhythmical process where students get the opportunity to really sense that they have gained something new, something meaningful that they can add to their own bank of knowledge.

> It is important that students understand *why* they are learning different things. Sometimes students experience different themes or subjects as challenging or difficult to understand, and then they can be most unwilling to engage. You must try to make your teaching into something that they can relate to, their lives and interests, not just something that you must know to get passed on a test. This is why interdisciplinary methods are so important – it makes it possible to make a theme relevant. (Iris).

The strive for meaningfulness is something that all the teachers agree upon, teaching and learning must be a process, something that students can engage in. The teachers describe how they plan and prepare for a specific subject or theme during the main lesson, but they also plan for social processes, for interaction and communication connected to the subject. They describe how they try to pre-assume what questions might occur, what parts will be difficult and which students will need extra help or attention.

In Waldorf-Steiner schools, the key idea is that the teacher is the one who mediates and conveys learning and knowledge, Erica says, "It is my job to turn all the facts and theories into something meaningful for the students". Making sure that students are in a process and that your teaching is rhythmical and on the right level, is something that must be done continuously during the lesson. "You must make sure that the students are on the right track and that you do not lose any of them – and this is a responsibility that teachers must take" (Heather).

> It is always my responsibility; I am the one to make sure that they [the students] come into a process of knowledge – it is never their responsibility. I never leave

> them alone, they are teenagers, and they can't deal with that. They need like kinds of checkpoints, you need to gather them, ´okay, where are we? Are all of you with me? ´. You need to change pace, speed, and your attention several times during the main lesson. (Heather)

What Heather describes is that you must always be attentive to the situation. All the teachers state that you can never really relax during the main lesson, you must be alert and available for the students and be sensitive to what they need and ask for. Students must trust that the learning process will be possible and positive "We are going to climb this mountain and we will do it together – and it will be alright" (Heather).

Heather emphasizes that it is her job to make sure that every student senses that it will be possible to reach the goal. If she fails, she knows that some of the students will lose their motivation and it will be difficult to make them enthusiastic again. This is an idea that she shares with the other teachers – all students need to feel that it will be possible to reach the goals and develop. The teachers talk about how this has to do with planning and preparing – to make sure that you insert different perspectives, different tasks and ways of learning is a way to make it possible for the students to sense that "at least some parts of the lesson were interesting for *me*" (Andy). When students feel that they have failed, there is something wrong with the planning and the teaching, the teachers claim. If you let your students leave the classroom with a sense of failure, it means that the teacher has placed the bar too high, or that the teacher needs to change something in the teaching – to make sure that both practically and theoretically oriented students get what they need, that students in need of extra support get more help or adjusted tasks. "If you think of rhythm and balance as something that goes on both in the classroom as a whole, and inside the students and the teacher, then you can predict when a change is needed" Beatrice explains. "To change the rhythm, to slow down or speed up, can make it possible for students to see a new perspective, a solution maybe".

Iris describes this process as a dialogue, something that goes on between and among teacher and students. "There must always be some kind of connection, between all the parts, the

specific subject, me, the students, the material and so on, it must be connected somehow". Beatrice, Fiona, and Andy express the same thing, the importance of teacher and students being in a mutual conversation about what is taught and learned, to never let teaching be a monologue from the teacher is essential if students are to be motivated.

> This is also why most of the education is teacher led, and one reason why Waldorfschools avoid computers in the early school years. A computer can never replace a teacher, a real human being. This dialogue needs to be present in the classroom. (Beatrice)

But this must not be confused with ideas of the teacher letting the education be controlled or too influenced by the ideas from students, Chris states, "Students want their teacher to be in control of the situation and the one who set the rules and the limits". Beatrice and Iris also make this clear, the teacher is the one who set the direction – "the challenge is to do that in a way that makes students want to follow, to find perspectives and motifs in your subject that students can relate to" (Beatrice).

7.1.2 To Create Time and Space

During the main-lesson there is to be time for both teacher-led and student-processing parts. This possibility, to have the time to do different things, also makes it possible for the teacher to vary and adapt the teaching.

> So, in my planning and when using my intuition, it is really to adapt the teaching to the students in the classroom – they are not all the same. To make sure that my teaching works for all the students means that I constantly must vary my teaching, to make sure it responds to the strength of different students. Oral tasks, written ones, working alone or in a group – teaching should never be static. (Heather)

According to the teachers, the structure of the main lesson, and the fact that it is a long lesson, makes it possible to create these variations in a way that can be both planned and improvised. For the teachers, and for the students, the structure of the main lesson is a way to find time and avoid being stressed out. You know that you can come back to the theme the next day and

pick up where you left it, both Chris and Andy state. They describe how it is possible to do different things during the main lesson, how they sometimes can just leave things and continue the next day – maybe the students reacted strongly to something, and you need to spend extra time on that specific issue or idea. Gloria agrees and says that if something goes wrong, or you must deal with something that happens among the students, you do not have to worry, you can be a bit free in how you plan the weeks and leave some space for unforeseen things.

"The structure of the main lesson is a very good thing for me as a teacher. I really prefer to work with main lessons compared to the shorter ones" (Andy).

> You have the time to do four or five different elements. I have the time to tell a bit about theory and show some experiments, then the students can do some individual work before we do some kind of end of the lesson. And then, the next day, we can just continue where we ended. Of course, I plan my lessons, but I also have a lot with me, and I can adjust very fast when it doesn't work. The best thing about the main lesson is that I have these three weeks, I don't need to feel stressed out, if we don't have time today, we can do it tomorrow. (Andy)

The importance of structuring the main lesson with different forms of tasks that demands different forms of activity from the students, like listening, communicating, and processing, and doing that in a way that makes learning and teaching come into a rhythmical flow reduces stress and impatience, Iris claims. The long main lesson makes it easier to come into this flow – compared to shorter lessons. It also makes interdisciplinary teaching possible; you can insert elements of an aesthetic or practical nature in most subjects.

> You know, in life things are not really separated in the way a curriculum is. You need to be able to use basic maths if you are a baker, you need to be able to cook dinner if you are an accountant and so on, we need to show students how things are connected, and that almost everything has a theoretical and a practical side. (Andy)

To support your students in the learning situation is important – to have a positive attitude and believe in their abilities, even when something is complicated or a bit tricky. This is also a way to take responsibility, Janice claims. “We all need someone who believes in our ability”. Janice describes in her written protocol how she introduced a quite complicated task to her class with four-graders (10-year-olds) before Christmas, to construct decorations – paper-stars – from geometrical figures. When we talked about this during the interview, I asked her about her intention behind this and how she handles all the practical issues that occur when doing something practical and complicated with young students, and how she looks upon the rhythmical idea during this lesson.

> I wanted to do something special before Christmas, to break all the normal routines and create a sense of advent – to focus more on the rhythm of the year than of the lesson. When you do those kinds of things, you must always try to go through the difficulties beforehand so that you don’t let the students fail. You must be calm, and explain everything very thoroughly, and also be open about that this might be difficult and take some time to learn. You know, they all want to succeed, they want to get it right. You can’t let them leave the lesson with stars that look bad or whatever it is, then the whole thing would be for nothing. (Janice)

Janice explains that since the students are so familiar with the ordinary structure of the main lesson, it can be a good thing to sometimes turn everything “upside down” so that you do not just follow predetermined paths.

The teachers agree that all students really want to succeed with tasks and activities in school, even if they sometimes have an attitude as if they do not care. “It is about creating conditions that make it possible for all the students, despite difficulties, to somehow feel good about themselves” (Andy).

> Students get tired too, they must try to stay focused, there are lots of impressions and they want to do a good job. They are ambitious, I would say, from their own individual conditions, you can see that. If something goes wrong or doesn’t work, you must be there and sort of save the situation so that they can still leave the classroom with a good experience. (Andy)

And again, Andy continues, this is a responsibility for the teacher, to motivate and engage students in the learning process, an idea that all the teachers agree upon. To create this time and space, "you need to really be interested in your students, to be their supportive companion" (Iris).

7.1.3 Joy, Worries and Dilemmas

> Even though I am completely exhausted after a school day, it's very difficult to not give a hundred percent. I have tried, you know, to think that `now I will just do what is necessary´, but then I lose the joy in my work. And it's the joy that gives me the strength, I get so much back from the students. It takes a lot, but that is also the reason you get so much back. (Heather)

The sense of a strong responsibility is a shared experience among the participating teachers. This is not something that they question or problematize, it seems to be a fact for them. But of course, it has both positive aspects and negative ones. The teachers all describe that it takes a lot of effort, you need to be very present through the whole main lesson, you must be responsive and try to be a little bit ahead of the students so that you can adapt your teaching, the activities and focus.

It is not difficult to find joy in your work as a teacher – that became clear in the analysis. All the teachers talk about how they experience feelings of joy, gratitude, and care in the meeting with the students. Iris refers to this as a special kind of relationship and care, almost like some kind of love. "Love is a strong word, it is not `love´ as in *love,* if you know what I mean, it's a special kind of care and a sense of warmth", Iris explains. Heather talks about the importance of always being sensitive to how the social climate in the classroom changes and develops.

> I must find this, this thing, to work with social processes by showing my care for them – so that they can show that care for each other – even though they are all different and sometimes get annoyed with each other. This is the basic daily work to create a positive atmosphere. (Heather)

All the teachers talk or write about the joy you experience as a teacher when you succeed in making students develop and come further. To share that feeling, when a student suddenly understands something and gets an "aha! moment" is very special and rewarding, Diana states, and that is something that all the teachers agree upon.

"You know, when you see how a student suddenly starts to smile during a task or when someone just goes `Yes, I get it! ´ That's a really good feeling" (Beatrice).

> These moments –when you can suddenly feel that everything is just working. The students are happy, they are working and it's like a special kind of energy starts to spread in the classroom. It's almost visible, you can almost touch it. Those moments, even though they don't occur every day, that is when you are reminded of why you want to work as a teacher. (Beatrice)

It is a blessing, Beatrice says, to share such moments with students, and it creates a kind of humility, or gratitude and reminds you of your responsibility as a teacher.

Diana's written protocol is about a main lesson in grade four where she introduces fraction counting for the first time. She had prepared playdough for the students to work with. In her text, she wrote: *The pieces of dough had awoken many questions, there is anticipation in the air. I hold my breath, will they understand? A whole, to be divided in two…they look a bit confused. But then! Hands up in the air, they got it! We start to work and time flies, suddenly it is time for break. The students want to keep on working and ask; please, please, can we continue after the break! I feel that a big smile is growing on my face, and I feel all warm inside.*

In the interview, Diana returns to this experience, saying that this is why she still enjoys teaching, to have the possibility to share that moment when learning happens with her students. "Those moments make it worthwhile, then you forget how much energy it actually takes to be a teacher" (Diana).

The teachers describe that after the main lesson, they feel quite exhausted. Heather says, “It’s like being on a live stream on radio or TV, I have to stay in my profession, be professional and at the same time be personal, and I am very tired after the lesson”. Fiona describes the main lesson as “being on a stage and always delivering with your heart”.

Erica says that it is quite demanding during the phase when the students are to process and work individually – it takes much from her. The students are at different levels, some need much help and others work independently. While moving around in the classroom it means that she must change her perspective very quickly, from basic questions about how to spell a word, to advanced ideas about something. This must happen every time she engages with an individual student; her focus must always be directed to the student in front of her. “This is in a way the most `unrhythmical´ part, at least for me, I sometimes feel that I am all over the place with no solid ground” (Erica).

Fiona wrote in her protocol; *I lecture about Iceland and Icelandic horses, there are hands waving in the air all the time, everybody wants to tell about something. I try to explain that the questions have to wait until the lecture is ended, it so easily gets fragmented otherwise* [...] *there is some kind of tension among the students, and I must decide if am going to be very strict or not.*

During the interview, Fiona explains that she must be very strict during the lessons since the students easily get unfocused and “wild”. This sometimes makes her feel uncomfortable – it is difficult to come into a good rhythm or flow.

> I must make rules about so many things, about how to act and when it is okay to ask questions or make a comment. Otherwise, it can become chaos, everything is a bit vague or unclear for this class, it’s quite demanding to teach and find ways to deal with this, to come into some kind of rhythm, but sometimes it’s just not possible. (Fiona)

The lack of flow and rhythms affects both the students and Fiona, it becomes draining and the energy drops. Fiona started as class teacher for her present set cohort of students about a year

ago, and she has worked a lot with activities to make the class function as a group, the students have had several teacher changes and a lack of continuity, and this has had a negative effect on both learning and the social climate. Fiona decided that they would take a short walk every morning just to make them come together. “It becomes a more informal way of being together, and I can check up on them both as a group and as individuals without them noticing”. Fiona laughs and says that it is not about “spying on the students”, but to find ways of understanding them, to sort of sense in an intuitive way who they are as individuals and how they function as a group. “They have not created this sense of being a group and it is as if they don’t really trust that I will be there tomorrow, they have been let down you could say”.

> We must find a way to build our relationship, we must make the rules, create routines and structure and they must accept that I am the captain in command of this ship, I must prove that they can trust me. I work on this all the time, and I must do it in a new way. We have been taking these walks since August, every day to create continuity and at the same time we use the walks for out-door teaching about botanics. We all see the same things during the walks, it becomes a shared experience. (Fiona)

Fiona describes how the lack of rhythm, and recurring and stable elements, have made the set cohort of students impatient, restless and a bit anxious. Now, she must work intensively to create this stability and rhythm.

To make sure that students experience teaching and learning as something positive is always a concern, as a teacher you can never really know if you have succeeded. This is always a worry, that you cannot control, “You just have to wait and see, many times the things that teachers in compulsory school do, will not `pay off´ until gymnasium, and that can sometimes be a bit stressful” (Iris). Teaching can be so unpredictable, Iris continues, “Sometimes you see the `result´ of your teaching right away, but many times you need to be patient and have faith”.

None of the teachers talk much about disciplinary problems or challenging students.

Andy describes that sometimes there are students who can be a bit provoking, but it seldom becomes a big problem. To try and talk to the student, and perhaps with the parents, usually makes it possible to come to a solution.

> Maybe, if you know why the student is rebelling, you can change your own attitude, or your teaching, so that the student feel that you are not `the enemy´. I would say that in nine out of ten situations, the solution is to improve the relationship. And that is my job, not the student's, I know I keep coming back to this, but to be the adult, to be the one who takes responsibility – both for the education and for the relationship is so important. If you don't show students that you can take on this responsibility – well it's not strange that they challenge or provoke you. (Andy)

But of course, Andy adds, if a situation gets really complicated, the school must use the disciplinary actions stated in the Education Act, then it is not just the individual teacher's responsibility, but also a question for the school management and the students' health team.

Diana, Erica, and Heather mention that there are students in their classes with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia or diagnoses connected to SEND. Beatrice, who has worked periodically as a special teacher – giving extra support and individual teaching to students with difficulties, explains that the pedagogic practice in Waldorf-Steiner schools sometimes makes it easier for these students. "There is both a very clear structure and predictability, and an idea that there must be changes and activity– and for some students, this is just what they need". The fact that most of the teaching is teacher-led can also help these students, but then, there are also students who must have an individual situation with adjustments that can be quite different from the traditional ways.

> I think that the fact that most Waldorf-Steiner schools are quite small helps these students. It makes it possible to build closer relationships and that is almost always needed for students with difficulties – they often have a stronger need to really connect to their teacher in a personal way. (Beatrice).

Positive relationships are highlighted in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy, but there are also risks that come with a close connection to students.

> It is a bit scary, if I say `jump´, they will jump. That can make me a bit afraid, what am I saying, what am I infusing them with? I sort of have them in my hand. What if I say or do something wrong? I sometimes feel that my students have put me on a pedestal, they think I know everything. (Gloria)

Gloria talks about the underlying power that you have as a teacher, that you must be aware of that and be careful, you need to look at yourself in a critical way and find ways to "get off that pedestal", she says. The strong bond that can occur between a class-teacher and students is a good thing, but sometimes it can also feel like a too big responsibility to carry.

> It's a fine line, you know. They ask me what I think, should I colour in green or blue? Do they ask that because they are afraid of making mistakes? That I would disapprove? Does my opinion weigh that heavily? And sometimes, you know they act like the dogs of Pavlov. If I start to read to them, it gets quiet in a second, no matter what I read, I could read the daily newspaper. (Gloria)

Gloria continues and explains that as a teacher, you must be careful and not damage the trust that students give you. Trust between teacher and students is not something unconditional – if the teacher misbehaves, or betrays the students trust in some way, it can be difficult to repair that damage. You always earn your trust, Gloria says, and that means that you need to prove that you are trustworthy, every day and during every lesson, "It's a `fresh product´, this trust – you can never take it for granted" (Gloria).

To be a teacher means that you do not only present knowledge, facts, and different theories to your students – you also present yourself and who you are. "I give the students my own relationship to the subject or phenomenon, that is a key, to have a strong relationship to the subject, to feel comfortable yourself" (Janice). This is of course not unproblematic, it means

that teachers' own engagement in the area of knowledge will affect students, and this is something that you must be very conscious about.

> What I give them is in a way my own relation to what we are doing. And that relation, if it is strong for what I am doing, then the students' relation will also be strong, in different ways. But that is also a key I think, in the teaching practice, to try to have this strong relation and engagement for the things I am teaching – and that I do it in a way that I feel comfortable with. Because if I feel that this will work, the students will feel that to. And it also works the opposite way, you must understand that as a teacher. If you are not engaged in your teaching – well, the students won't be either. (Janice)

To be a "domain of knowledge" is not unproblematic, there is a risk that you overdo it and end up being too strong, Fiona describes this as "to act out your Waldorf-ego". She explains that in municipal schools, the focus is on the schoolbook, or on the teaching material – it is the book, the video or the map that is the expert. But in Waldorf-Steiner schools, the teacher is supposed to be this expert and that gives you "opportunities to be the `prima donna´, totally in the focal point" (Fiona).

> If you always put yourself in the centre, it will become suffocating for the students. If you come from a municipal school and are used to having the teaching material in focus, or if your ego has grown too big, maybe you don't know how to balance this. It can be something really nice, that you give from your personality, but you must be careful. (Fiona)

Fiona claims that students want their teachers to be individuals, not just a person to listen to and learn from, students want to meet another interesting human being – and that must go both ways – the teacher must show that interest back.

I will now move on to the second theme, how the participating teachers describe their experiences when it comes to shifts and changes during the main lesson – but as I stated in the introduction to this chapter, it is not possible to strictly divide their experiences into specific areas – the themes are connected and woven together.

7.2 The Lived Experience of Shifts and Changes

In this second part of the chapter, I will present how the participating Waldorf-Steiner teachers reflect on the changes between teacher-led and student-active processes, and how they describe that shifts and changes create a positive learning environment for students. Being a Waldorf-Steiner teacher and conducting the traditional main lesson, means that you must be able to change the way you position yourself in the classroom. Traditionally, there are parts where the teacher is the obvious focal point, the leader, who has the attention – in other parts, the focus is to be on the task or between peers. There are also situations when the teacher is to be more of a facilitator of learning, and situations when it is all about collaboration.

> I try to shift, to sort of change the energy in the room, and that makes the students a bit `What? What is she up to now? ´ They kind of wake up a bit and want to follow because they feel like `that looks exciting or interesting, something is happening over there! ´. It must be like a kind of pendulum, swinging back and forth, that's a winning concept with teenagers. (Heather)

The shifts and changes during the main lesson are about changing and shifting the pace, the rhythm, and the atmosphere in the classroom so that the whole teaching situation becomes rhythmical. Teaching and learning must be in motion and give time for "inhaling and exhaling". Gloria explains that the changes and shifts are also connected to trust – students know that the main lesson has different parts with different types of activities and interaction – but at the same time they must feel assure that the changes are understandable and logical. "If you just shift and change everything all the time, students would be stressed and confused. So, you must be able to shift in a way that is predictable, and not start acting in a completely unforeseen way" (Gloria).

The shifts and changes are more or less something unreflected among the participating teachers. It is a kind of tacit knowledge – when to change or shift your focus. This is a taken-

for-granted way to prepare and conduct your main lesson – an idea with its roots in the Waldorf-Steiner pedagogical way of doing things – where rhythm is supposed to permeate teaching and learning.

> It becomes a very clear path for both students and me after a while, you kind of decide together how the rhythms are to be in motion and how the different parts follow a certain pattern. Of course, it is always me who decides in the end and kind of sets the limits and the rules, but I can't do that alone, I need to involve the students and make them understand and follow my lead. (Andy).

7.2.1 To Inhale and Exhale

> I once had an experience when my teaching was not very rhythmic at all. I was teaching biology in a grade nine and I was so excited. I had prepared a lot and I just exploded with information and facts, I just lectured and lectured and told the students about all these interesting things, I went on and on. And then, suddenly, I noticed that two students in the back of the room had fallen asleep! And that was like a shock. I put so much prestige and focus on having all the students with me, I lower my voice, I raise it, I move in the classroom to keep their attention. But that time, I really failed. (Heather)

Heather laughs when she talks about this lesson. "That was really a situation with `one-way communication´, not at all how I want it to be".

The main lesson is to give the students possibilities to listen, communicate, watch, and experience with their senses and to process the subject content both in intellectual and aesthetic ways. It is about coming into a process of knowledge, Heather says. The idea is that this way of constructing a main lesson is "healthy", students can concentrate more if there are changes and rhythms in activities, they do not get tired or bored, and both theoretically oriented and more practical students can succeed.

The concept of inhale and exhale in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy could be understood as a metaphor for a rhythm where students should get the opportunity to "take in" – inhale – knowledge and learning and then process this in an individual way by constructing, for example, texts and illustrations – exhale. Heather explains that this long lesson needs to be

structured in a way that gives this rhythm, otherwise the students will not manage to stay focused and alert. “It’s about understanding the pedagogical repertoire in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy, if you play your cards right and really use rhythms in a conscious way, this long lesson can be made of gold” (Heather).

Gloria claims that you of course must plan this rhythm during the main lesson, but that you also must be attentive to your students.

> You can clearly see when it’s becoming too much for them, I can see that they turn all grey (laughter) and then I must make them exhale a bit, to create a moment of rest or movement. It can be both planned and unplanned, it sometimes just occurs, I can see that it is needed and then I pull something out from my repertoire of experience. (Gloria)

If you are sensitive towards the whole atmosphere in the classroom, this is an ability that you develop, it is a kind of tacit knowledge that really helps, Gloria explains. If you have the courage to just include pauses or moments of rest, it increases students’ ability to be concentrated.

Chris says that the idea of the structure of the main lesson is something that you, as a Waldorf-Steiner teacher, always need to have in the back of your head when you do your planning. He explains how he interprets the concept of inhale and exhale.

> I see it like – the picture I get when I think about to exhale, it is also about relaxing your muscles, quite literally really. When you inhale, it is more of a tension, something that demands an effort. And you can’t be in that tension too long, you must let go and relax in yourself, in your body. (Chris)

To try to conduct rhythmical education is not all about the main lesson, Fiona states. The schedule in a Waldorf-Steiner school must strive for a kind of rhythm during the day, the week, and the year, she explains. “Sometimes, we focus a lot on the rhythm during the main lesson but forget about the rest of the day”. Chris also reflects upon this and claims that it is

all about finding a pace in your own work, to establish a working method in the classroom that both teacher and students can use as a tool.

> You must be aware of the rhythms, the rhythm of the week and the year, and how the different themes during main lessons fit together. If you spend some time during the first weeks of the schoolyear to really think about this and to establish some kind of basic way to work – it will pay off and make things easier. (Chris)

This is connected to the work with routines and predictability, Chris explains, and this helps both teachers and students to relax a bit during the school day. Just like Gloria, Chris connects the work with rhythms, shifts and changes to trust between teacher and students. “It’s safe, it’s predictable, they [the students] know that after this specific activity and ways of interacting, there will be another part with a slightly different approach”.

7.2.2 Being in Focus and Letting Go

Another way of working with rhythms and balance is to “change direction or focus for the students”, Andy says. During the observations, it was obvious how the teachers shifted their positions many times during the lesson. When Andy wanted the students to focus on him, he placed himself behind his desk or in the middle of the room, looking out over the class, moving so that they all could see him. When he wanted the students to process and work for themselves, he backed away. The same phenomenon was visible in Heather’s classroom. She describes in the interview that she feels as if she “straightens her back” when she is addressing the whole class, a kind of gesture that changes when she interacts with just one or two students – then it becomes more “inviting”.

When I visited Gloria’s classroom, the shifts between focus on her and letting go was obvious. She did not need to raise her voice to make the students focus on her, it was something else going on.

> I think maybe it has to do with intonation, the way I use my voice or something. You could say that I, in a way, take a sort of run, I put myself in focus in a more conscious way, I sort of *claim* that place. I look around, on all of them, and they sense that. This is something that you need to balance, you can't expect students to be able to focus on *you* all the time, you need to shift, to change. (Gloria)

For Andy, who teaches chemistry, the importance of being in focus also has to do with security. During the observation it was very clear how he very strongly put himself in focus, raised his voice a bit and gave very explicit instructions about how to conduct the experiments, then – he let go and the students worked in groups.

> For me, it is as if I have my radar on, my role gets divided, partly it is about teaching and the students learning different things, but there is always an aspect of security. I must always be alert to that – because things can happen. I need to be very present in the moment and be prepared to save the situation, I must walk in and out of the focus. (Andy)

In the written protocol from Chris, he describes the different parts of a main lesson in biology in a grade nine. He writes that during the lecture, he is in total focus and gives explicit instructions to the students about when to take notes, how to construct their texts and what he expects from them. Then, it is time for the students to process on their own or in pairs and Chris changes his position, becoming more of a guide – he walks among the students, makes sure they know what to do and that they have the things that they need. In the interview he says that this day was one of those where he actually succeeded in creating a good rhythm during the main lesson.

> In a way, it's like a utopia to succeed every day. You can plan ever so thoroughly but then something happens. You must choose, you could say, more or less make a choice every day, about what parts you want to do in a very structured way and where there is room for more space and improvisation. Sometimes the rhythm is there, almost by itself, and other days – no matter how much you search for it – you can't find it! (Chris)

The sense of being in focus and letting go is not something that the teachers always were aware of. For example, in my field notes from the observation in grade 7, a chemistry lesson,

I made a comment, that when Andy left the room for just a few seconds to fetch material for the experiments he was showing to the students, there was a murmur emerging among the students. But when he entered the room again it stopped without him having said anything about it. This occurred every time he went to get something, and during the interview, I wanted to know his thoughts about this. Andy laughed and said that he was not aware of this, since they stop when he comes back. “But when I have my lab-coat on, I can feel that the students are very focused on me, because they know that something is about to happen”.

7.2.3 Predictability – a Way to Feel Secure

In all the observations, it was quite obvious that many activities were very familiar to the students. They knew exactly what to do at a certain point. The written protocols from all the teachers made it clear that they all work with routines and rituals to create rhythms during the main lesson. “The routines and the rituals work as markers for what is to come”, Beatrice says, “it makes the students know beforehand what is expected from them, what the rules are, and it makes them feel safe”.

In Gloria’s classroom, the class said the morning-verse, they looked at the calendar and the lunch menu and checked who was absent and how the schedule of the day looked. After that, Gloria made a vague gesture and said “Okay, Flute!”. All the students immediately opened their desks and got their flutes, Gloria again made a gesture and then they all started to play the EU-hymn[20]. After that, they started to sing it, in German, without any new instruction from Gloria. In the interview, she explains that a few years ago she had a student with a very strong need for routines and predictability. She noticed that all the students benefitted from that – so she started to work with this in a more conscious way.

> They know, now it is time for this, and now my teacher will do that, and it makes them feel as if they have it all under control, it is safe. The routines help to create an understandable rhythm. It is a very conscious choice from me, I

[20] Ode an die Freude, Ludwig van Beethoven, symphony nr.9 in D-minor, op.125. Lyrics by Fredric Schiller.

> always do this. When I start a new theme during the main lesson, if it is Swedish language for example, I always start by reading a novel for ten minutes, and then I do that every day during that theme. Then, when it's another subject, of course I change the routines, but they will look the same as long as the theme lasts. Then some routines, as the morning verse, playing the flute or singing, and looking at todays' schedule – this we do every day, no matter what. (Gloria)

Fiona shares this idea and says that for some students, it is very important to really know that "today we will have mathematics and English language because it is on the schedule, it is planned, it won't just happen by accident". Routines can be to say the morning verse, to look at the calendar, or to always start a specific lesson with the same activity. It can also be that the structure with the different parts with movement, lecture and students' own work is planned in a specific order. Janice explains that this is also a way of learning every-day things, and doing it in a way that becomes natural, there is no prestige or competition when you do something every day.

> Often it is not just routines, it is also about learning *how* to read a schedule, a calendar, or a menu, so you practice practical everyday things in an uncomplicated way. Most students like to recognize things, familiar things, to know what will come, what is expected of them. (Janice)

"The routines become well-known for the students, surprises are nice, but it's also a very nice feeling to be able to predict what will come, it creates a sense of security for the students, and for me" (Diana). Andy refers to the routines as different signals with different meanings and content. The different parts of the main lesson have their own routines and after a while the students get familiar with how different teachers structure their lessons – how the routines will look – and this helps students to feel prepared and ready for what is to come. "They all know that it is alright to interact with each other during the rhythmical exercise, they can giggle and laugh, but when I start to take out equipment for an experiment, they need to pay attention" (Andy).

Diana who has followed many cohorts of students from grade one to six, explains that in the first school year, it is all about "learning how to do when you go to school". It is essential, she

claims, to make the students understand and see through how a school day looks. To insert recurring rituals and routines helps the young students to find a rhythm and make sense of how things are supposed to be done.

> You can use these small things. To always light a candle when you read, to always start the English lesson with a specific song or a rhyme, things that you do every day and every week – it creates a recognition factor, and the students feel both anticipation and control. (Diana)

Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy relies much on traditions, Fiona concludes, and adds that it can be both a positive and a negative thing. “I think that students appreciate to recognize the structure and the working methods, but it is important to also be innovative so that you don’t end up using stagnant methods day in and day out”. Fiona describes the importance of once in a while letting things change and “break the routines” – then it feels good to come back to the well-known after a while.

I will now move on to how the teachers describe how they try to make sure that students feel confirmed by their teachers, and how they use different strategies to make all students feel included. The idea of inclusion and building educational relationships was a third theme that was visible in my data.

7.3 The Lived Experience of Educational Relationship Building

In this third part of this chapter, I will focus on how the Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe how they try to connect to students both as a group and as individuals. As I previously stated, the teachers connect rhythms and balance not only to variations in teaching methods, but also to interaction and communication with students.

> My students came and asked me if we could go back to having a Monday walk every week, just as we did when they were younger. And I thought that could be a good idea – it can be a way to talk about things in a freer way. It’s an important thing, you know, to find the time to meet them in a more personal way. (Erica)

Here, Erica is referring to a tradition in many Waldorf-Steiner schools – it is common in the lower grades to start the week with an outdoor lesson. The class takes a walk to a decided place, observes the changes in nature and learn about plants and animals. Often, the students also get time for play and physical activities in nature. Erica explains that she interpreted this wish from the students as if they were longing for more informal ways of interacting both with each other and with her. Students want to know who you are as a person, not just as a teacher, she explains, "They want to be sure that you are worth relying on and that you are interested in them for real, not just pretending to be".

In all the interviews, the teachers put a strong focus on the importance of creating positive relationships both to the individual student and to the group, they also talk about building relationships among the students, to help them recognize and see each other. This is something that happens in spontaneous ways during the lesson and the school day – but all teachers describe how they plan and conduct activities with an outspoken purpose to strengthen the sense of togetherness in the classroom – and the long main lesson can make this possible. Several of the teachers connect this "relationship building" with balance, saying that if there is an imbalance in the social climate, that would affect teaching and learning in a negative way. "You can't separate the social interplay from the learning experience, they are connected, they must be, they are woven together" Beatrice states, "It is about finding a way to balance the relationships – not too close and not too distanced, sometimes formal and sometimes informal".

Both Diana and Fiona describe how important it is to focus on the social climate at the beginning of the school year, or when you start with a new set cohort of students." To build relationships takes time, and in that situation, when everything is new, it is really important to show that you are reliable and trustworthy" Fiona claims.

The teachers describe how the traditional rituals and the rhythmical part inserted in the main lesson can help them focus on each student. Chris, who works with teenagers, often starts the day by sharing something, an idea or something that happened, and he invites the students to come with their own thoughts. “It becomes as a thermometer”, he says.

> I can see how the class and the students are feeling today, you know, okay, so three of them put their heads down on the desk before we even got started, not a good sign…and she looks worried and pale and some of them are very unfocused. Maybe there is some kind of tension among them, did something happen yesterday that I don’t know about? (Chris)

Chris emphasizes that it is important to make the students notice and see each other, to just talk about things that can open up for the students to share their thoughts and experiences. When working with teenagers, you must strive for a relationship with the students that builds upon mutual respect and interest, he claims, the relationship must be personal, “but you must be careful so that it doesn’t become private and that can be a delicate thing to balance” (Chris). This idea is shared by the other teachers. Sometimes students want to be more private and friendly, asking for your phone number or sharing thoughts that might not be appropriate, but “As a teacher you must make sure that you don’t cross that fine line, the boundary in the relationship” (Iris).

Chris describes how the start of the day is characterized by informal conversations with students, where it is possible to come to an interesting dialogue.

> Sometimes it’s just a joke or something like that. Or maybe I tell them about a friend who is worried about the Corona pandemic and maybe that can open up for the students who also feel a bit worried. I think that…you know it is about building relationships between me and the students. My intention, you could say, is that the students can recognize each other, that they understand that we are not only a group of people playing this role-play – about teacher and students – we are also in this classroom together, as humans. (Chris)

For Chris, this way of starting the day makes it possible to create connections and bonds with students, and at the same time get a sense of the social climate in the group.

Andy usually does a short rhythmical exercise to start the lesson. He describes that it makes it possible for him to move around and really look at each student. “I sort of tune in, where are they this morning, how do they feel”. Heather explains that if a student is in bad shape, it will affect other students, and the teaching and learning. “So, if I can meet that student in the right way, right from the start – it will be positive for the whole class”.

To see each student every day, and pay attention to how they seem to feel, is an outspoken endeavour in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy. Before the Corona-pandemic, the traditional way to start the day has always been that teachers meet their students in the doorway, shake their hands and look the student in the eyes while saying good morning to each student. All the teachers describe this short meeting with individual students as something important, a way to connect and check up on everyone. “A greeting tradition, yes sure”, Chris says, “but also a way to sense if the student is alright”.

7.3.1 Focus on the Individual Student

During the third observation that I did in Heather’s classroom, I realized that during the part when students were working individually or in pairs, there was something going on that I could not really grasp. I watched the teacher move among the students, talking to them individually and in groups – there was something happening in the interaction that I could not put words to. Heather walked around in the classroom, from one student to another, focusing very strongly on the student she was interacting with. I realized, that when Heather was interacting with one student in an individual way, it was as if she managed to create as an invisible “bubble” around her and that student. Once I had realized this, I also noticed that it was as if the other students also experienced that. They did not try to interrupt or disturb, they waited until Heather invited them in. I noticed the same phenomenon when I visited Gloria’s lesson – during the time when the students worked individually with their texts and illustrations, Gloria moved from student to student – talking explicitly to them individually

and creating this invisible bubble around them. The other students patiently waited, one student came and stood next to Gloria and another student, waiting for an invitation without saying anything. Gloria kept her focus on the student she was interacting with and then, she turned to the one who was waiting, smiled at her, and said "Okay, tell me!". In the interviews, I brought this up and wanted to know how the teachers experience this, did they notice these "bubbles" or was this just something that I made up? Heather and Gloria describe this as a thread – a special bond that exists between them and each student. "It is about trust" Heather says.

> Trust is a key, it is all about building relationships, otherwise teaching and learning would not be possible. It is something that you must work with all the time. And if you do that, even with a tired teenager you can just encourage them to take part in the interaction, to have a relationship. You just like show them `come here´. And when they sense that I see them, they also want me to see, they are used to my gesture, my invitation and then they take it seriously. That's my interpretation, these bubbles, or rooms, they are the effect of that. (Heather)

Gloria agrees with this and describes how she tries to make sure that all the students get her attention during the main lesson, even the ones who do not ask for it. Some of the students do not take much place, she says, and some take a lot – "You need to find a balance so that all the students get space, and no one feels forgotten or left behind". During the observation it was visible how Gloria works consciously with this, moving around, maybe asking the students a question, or just looking at their work, putting a hand on their shoulder, or just give them a smile while passing their desks. Gloria claims that this special relationship, that you get with your students as a class-teacher, is something that goes both ways.

> The students help, you know. If I have a bad day or things don't work as I planned, they will help. When I can't give that much, they will help out. It's like these accumulating vessels, I give just a little and they fill it up and vice versa. They are very forgiving if I do something wrong or forget something. (Gloria)

Gloria describes this as micro-moments of connection, just a second of eye contact, or a quick smile that can affect the situation in a positive way. It is a way to confirm that you "see your students as individuals, not just as a group of anonymous children in a classroom" (Gloria).

> It's a thread that you must nurture all the time. Now, it's just you and me, and I see you. To build these relationships and to make them last, means that you must work on it all the time, put in some extra effort. So that they know that I will be there if they need me. (Gloria)

These micro-moments of attention can be of great importance for individual students. The variety between students can be a challenge, all children are unique and have their own favourite subjects and ways to deal with difficulties and schoolwork. Some students keep their teacher busy while others do not want any attention at all – this is about finding a balance in your attention.

> I need to balance my attention and time towards students so that I at least try to be there for all of them. I might not succeed every day, but to make sure that I address those who are a bit `invisible´ is important. (Diana)

All the teachers highlight this idea of making all students feel that they are part of a classroom community, and that they, as teachers, need to find ways to make everyone feel seen and met in a personal way. "The Agency of Education talks a lot about inclusive education, as if that is some kind of `new´ idea. I would argue, that in Waldorf-Steiner schools, we have worked with this idea for a long time", Fiona says.

In Diana's classroom, it was obvious that one student needed her attention more than others, Diana checked up on this student more often, talked a bit or just made eye contact and made sure he was on track. When doing this, none of the other students interfered or asked for her help. Diana explains this as the students have learned to take turns with her attention, they have worked a lot with respect, to show consideration to your peers. "All the other students know that X needs more, and they all respect and understand that" (Diana).

Both Gloria and Diana describe how this also can be connected to rhythms – to use your attention in a rhythmical way and let it shift between focus on the individual student and focus on the group. “You can’t have you attention aimed at everything all the time; you need to find a way to focus it where it is needed” (Diana).

This special teacher-student relationship must be both personal and professional, the teachers claim. There must be a balance between being caring and understanding and being the one responsible who also demands good performance and manners. Students must be assured that the relationship is safe and that it does not become too close or intimate.

> They [the students] do not want me to be their mother or their best friend, they want me to be something else or different. It is hard to explain, some kind of mixture between being the one who *demands* them to develop and at the same time being there to *help and support* them to develop knowledge and social skills”. Like a two-folded relationship, you could say. (Iris)

This idea is shared among the teachers, the importance of creating relationships with students is emphasized, but they all state that this is a specific kind of relationship where you, as a teacher, also must construct boundaries. “If you get too emotionally involved with your students, allowing the relationship to become too close, then there will be problems”, Chris states. He explains that there must be a clear and outspoken approach from the teacher that this relationship is about education and has limits.

> You must sort of signal `I care for you, and I will do my best to support and help you, but I will also keep a distance, for your sake and mine ´. If you let students into your private zone, or if you try to get into theirs, then I would say that you are neglecting the ethics in the teaching practice. (Chris)

7.3.2 Focus on the Group

The main lesson gives many possibilities to work with the whole class and make them “come together as a group” as Janice puts it. In the lower grades, the rhythmical part makes it possible to conduct activities that are tied to the theme of the main lesson, but at the same

time are more playful and social. When I was observing Diana's main lesson with a grade four, Diana gathered all the students in a circle, and they started to throw soft balls in a complicated geometric pattern – an activity that demanded that the students were concentrated and helpful towards each other. The students, 10-year-olds, threw several balls among each other at the same time, in silence, and managed to keep the balls moving for several minutes. Diana describes that this is really to work with relationships.

> It's amazing when it starts to get into a flow, when the group suddenly acts as one unit or how to say. It's possible to sense, to feel when it starts to work, when they all sort of forget about themselves and just focus on this thing that we are doing together. In a way, this is much more effective than *talking* about the importance of collaboration and being friendly and helpful. (Diana)

Diana explains that these kinds of exercises work as visible, hands-on group work where every student is important. "It becomes a way to help the students experience that we are all important, everyone has a place in the group – and at the same time we are actually working with geometry".

Janice agrees with this – the rhythmical part in the lower grades is a help to work with social processes and relationships.

> If a song, a game, or a physical activity is to work, you must co-operate, the students learn how to see each other, how to help and support each other so that the activity will work. You can work with the sense of being in a group, you work with the social interaction, how to be towards each other, all of that to make the class come together. (Janice)

To create and build relationships with the students is a key, Heather says, it would be impossible to teach if the relationships are not in place, at least with young students in compulsory school. The knowledge process is not only about teaching and learning, but about relationships, there must be a connection, a balanced rhythm between them. Heather

emphasizes the importance of sharing an experience and how that is connected to positive relationships in the classroom.

> We share something. I come to them, and I have planned my lesson, read about the theme and so on, and I want to share it with my students. So even though of course, it is about learning things and me teaching things – if we didn't have a relationship, they would not be so willing to share, to participate in the process. (Heather)

These shared experiences can also be a way to make students connect to each other. To help students to build relationships with each other is an important task for schools, and it is a responsibility that grown-ups must take. Sometimes there are groups or classes who constantly end up in conflicts and trouble and it is not enough to just talk about it.

> Children and teenagers know that they are supposed to be nice towards each other, they all know that. And they will give you all the right answers when you ask them about how to treat each other. The problem is that five minutes later, they do exactly the opposite. So, you know, this is something that you must work with as a teacher, as a planned and well thought-through idea, just as you plan your lessons in math, you must consider this. (Iris)

If there are many conflicts between students, this will affect the learning situation in a negative way, Iris, and Diana claim. It will make students feel insecure and unsafe, and as a teacher, you need to find ways to deal with this. To counteract and prevent bullying and conflicts among students is a legislated demand from authorities in Sweden, and this is fundamental, Iris says, if a student does not feel safe in school – there will be difficulties with learning.

There can also be difficulties with focusing on the group as a whole. "There are always students who just switch off when they are not addressed individually", Diana says. Several of the teachers describe that they need to first address the whole group, but then also give individual, explicit instructions to some of the students. Some of the students who need this individual help have some kind of learning difficulty, but some "just have difficulties to

receive an instruction given to all, especially young students, you need to be able to shift your focus constantly, from the group to the individual and back again" (Diana).

7.4 Summary of the Chapter

In this chapter, I have presented how the ten participating teachers reflect on their lived experience of conducting an education that is supposed to be rhythmical and balanced, how they experience their own role and how they try to create a positive learning situation for their students. The Chapter is divided into three themes; Balancing responsibility, Shifts and Changes and Educational relationship building.

As I stated earlier, the teachers' experiences and reflections on rhythms and balance in education are very broad, but also detailed, in a way that I was not expecting. They connect it to teaching and learning – to vary your teaching methods and shift your position. But what surprised me was that they also connect rhythms and balance to relationships with students – balancing your attention to individuals and the group and shifting between being formal and informal when interacting with students.

The sense of being responsible is a red thread through all the empirical material, and this sense concerns both the measurable knowledge development, and areas such as relationships and well-being. This sense of responsibility has a lot to do with the fact that a teacher in a Waldorf-Steiner school is looked upon as a "domain of knowledge" – instead of only using schoolbooks the teacher is to be lecturing or storytelling, and emphasis is put on the fact that learning has to do with the interpersonal meeting with another human being. All the teachers talk about the importance of trying to know your students, of seeing them as individuals and to have a special connection to each one – and at the same time create boundaries for this specific relationship.

To plan and conduct your teaching in a rhythmical way, is something that all the teachers see as something very natural – a method that they find constructive and useful. They describe that it can be quite demanding to shift between different roles or positions but at the same time they believe that this is how you must work if you are to keep the students' attention and focus – and if you want learning to become something more than just "knowing something". They all use routines and rituals to create a sense of predictability, both for the students and for themselves. The routines work as a kind of roadmap for the main lesson and its content and structure. They see teaching and learning as something that must be in motion and not become static or instrumental – it must be a rhythmical process, they claim.

I will now move further and present the findings connected to my second research question.

8. Pedagogic Traditions – Background Knowledge

In this chapter with findings, my second research question will be highlighted.

> *How do Swedish Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe their lived experience of being part of a pedagogic tradition and at the same time adjusting to the demands from the outside?*

In Chapter 2, I explained the underlying assumptions for this study – the idea that we are all affected by the context that we belong to – perhaps in a stronger way than we are aware of. When we act on our intuition or when we improvise, we do it within the given frames from the discourse or the background knowledge that permeates our time and context.
The analysis of the data shows that two of the five big ideas have to do with pedagogic discourse – the ideas we have about pedagogy and education in a more unconscious way – in this study this is connected to the old and strong traditions in Waldorf-Steiner schools.

This Chapter presents two themes: The Pedagogic Repertoire and Being part of a strong tradition. Both these themes are connected to traditions, background knowledge, and tacit knowledge in a context. The teachers in this study interpret and explain this as a combination of experience and intuition – something that they have developed over time through their participation in a specific context with specific traditions.

8.1 The Pedagogic Repertoire

When doing the naïve understanding of the protocols, I was intrigued by the fact that all the teachers express that they *sense* or *feel* how to act or what to do next in the classroom. “When I sensed that they [the students] were calm, I started to read the morning verse, I didn’t want

to miss the moment", Heather wrote, and Beatrice stated: "I realized that they were not really following me, so I quickly inserted a more explicit example".

In the interviews, this was something that I draw their attention to, and all the teachers reacted in similar ways – they could not really describe or explain how this feeling or sensing is done. Chris understands embodied knowledge as something that he has developed with the help of education and practice. He says that there are always conclusions to draw when something does not work and that he has used his mentor to discuss different things over the years.

> When I find myself in a situation that is hard to handle, a dilemma maybe, or when I have not been able to reach the students at the right level, I often turned to my colleagues to get advice. And now, after some years, I can feel that I have a set of choices in my repertoire. (Chris)

The teachers all talk a lot about how they use their tacit knowledge to solve unpredictable situations and to sense when it is time to change the pace or activity in the classroom. To know what to do is almost like a bodily knowledge without thinking, Andy says. He describes that sometimes it just doesn't work, the things he planned just do not fit with the group of students and he must find a new way. He connects this ability to experience, a knowledge that has a place somewhere inside him – that he can use to make the right choices.

> It's like this tacit or embodied knowledge that you possess. Some kind of mix between experience and intuition. It's just there and you know how to do, even if it means that you must change or skip your planning. Nowadays, these feelings or whatever you should call them, they are almost always correct, I can trust them. (Andy)

Iris expresses that the concept of tacit or embodied knowledge is a bit misleading, this kind of knowledge is visible in many practices.

> It almost sounds like it's some kind of magic gift that you have or don't have. But you know, I think all professions develop this, not just teachers. A gardener can just know where to put the plants, or even professions that are more about working with things, like wood or even papers, you develop a practice, a sense for what is right or wrong. In the teaching profession, it's about understanding people, to be able to read others. (Iris)

This ability is perhaps not something that all people have, Iris continues, but if you have chosen to become a teacher, that means that you have an interest in other people, and that indicates that you could develop this important skill.

8.1.1 Embodied Knowledge – an Art and a Craftmanship

Heather describes that the sense of knowing what to do is something that she has developed over time, and that of course, it also has to do with some kind of basic personality or talent – to have the ability to work with people. "Not everybody can become a good teacher, but you can always improve your professional skills". She suggests that there must always be space for pedagogic and artistic freedom for a teacher – especially in a Waldorf-Steiner school – which claims that teaching is an artistic profession.

> Teaching is an artistic activity, especially in a Waldorf-school where there is a focus on that. I believe that you can always refine and learn. I think a lot about how I can find a way to formulate my techniques so that I can pass it on to others, to the young teachers that I supervise. How can I convey this, how can I give them tasks and assignments so that they can develop and sharpen their skills? (Heather)

"Pedagogy is explained as the science of up-bringing and teaching or the *art* of up-bringing and teaching in the Swedish academy word list", Fiona states, "You must always do a kind of search for mistakes, just as a painter or a musician".

> Why doesn't it sound right? Should I change the key or the rhythm? It is about understanding and knowing both how the colours and paintbrushes work, or the piano or guitar. In schools, that means how people function and how you can present things in a way that will make others interested and willing to follow. You must awaken that interest, that longing for knowledge and understanding. It's both like a craftmanship and as an art, a mixture, I would say. (Fiona)

Heather describes how she uses her intuition and experience to try to create a positive and creative atmosphere in the classroom. She uses the metaphor of the class as an orchestra and herself as a musician or conductor.

> For me, it is a bit like music. We have the rhythms, we have the notes, we have a feeling and then I can sense that, no, now it's becoming a bit out of tune, we must tighten this up, we must increase the violins a bit…it's like a movement that goes from me, through the students and back again, it bounces all the time. The better I can handle my instrument, the more I can improvise and understand. As a teacher you must fine-tune your instrument. I have spent a lot of time trying to improve this. You know, I can hear how beautiful it sounds when I succeed, when I have the right timing and succeed in engaging the students, it lifts up in the whole classroom. (Heather)

All the teachers refer to the teaching practice as something artistic and creative. A teacher can never just hand out templates or tasks and leave the students on their own – there must be a flow, some kind of movement, or rhythm – otherwise, it is not teaching, the teachers all agree. It is a "now" profession, Janice claims, "it happens in the moment, and you can never know where it will take you."

8.1.2 To Act in the Moment – To Predict and Pre-assume

Andy talks about "being on his toes", he describes how he can change direction in a blink of an eye when he feels that the students are not following or understanding what he has prepared. He refers to this as a kind of intuition that he has developed – an experienced-based intuition. "I have the curriculum both in my head and in my heart, and that is a real luxury. I plan all my lessons, but then I also can change when I sense that it is not working".
Janice, Chris, and Diana talk about "the pedagogical repertoire", how they have developed strategies and tools to use in the classroom. Diana describes that now, as an experienced teacher, she feels that if she just waits for a second in a problematic situation or when a dilemma occurs, the answer about how to do or act will come to her.

> This might sound a bit strange, but in teaching situations or dilemmas, it is as if I just shut down for just a second, then something will just come, as if I get some help. Maybe from my subconscious, I don't know…not to panic but instead relax. If you just allow yourself to relax and feel confident, that bank of experience can help you, you can pick something up from it intuitively". (Diana)

Chris refers to this as the "sixth sense in the teaching practice" – to be able to read the situation and act in the right way. When he was new as a substitute teacher, he just did what his colleagues told him to do, but now he has his own "palette of colours" that he can use in an intuitive way.

All the teachers agree that there is always some kind of unpredictability in the teaching practice. You can never know what might happen or how your students will act this day. Beatrice says that this fact is something that can be stimulating but also very frustrating. She describes how the ideas you have as a teacher can change in the meeting with the students. School is a place for so many things, it is not just about learning and teaching about subjects, it is also a place where both students and teachers spend a lot of time.

> It is one of the biggest `workplaces´ we have, of course it is not possible to predict everything that might happen. We are not a factory that produces something given before-hand from a given template. If you are unable to be flexible as a teacher, you will end up totally burned out in the end. You can never know for sure how your workday will look like. (Beatrice)

If you have a good relationship with your students, and your subject, you will have a better chance to succeed in your teaching. This is something that all the teachers agree upon. They all express how the relationship they have with their students is something that they take into consideration when they plan their lessons.

"You could say that I have this pre-knowledge about how things *should* work, how they *ought to be done* in a certain group of kids" (Andy).

> …when I do things in a certain way, then I expect the students to react or behave in a certain way. It has to do with experience and some kind of sense what will work. This is also about Waldorf-pedagogy, you could say. Since we do things in a specific way and all the themes in the main lesson are things that come back, more or less in the same way. We don't change things all the time and that gives me an experience that I can lean on. I know how natural science is to work in a grade eight, because I do that all the time. (Andy)

In the analysis, it was visible that all the teachers talk about how things are supposed or meant to work, but they had difficulties with explaining why. As an example, Andy wrote in his

protocol that he sensed that everything is working during the main lesson. When I ask how he could sense that, and what that means, he answers:

> Well, I guess it's because I have this pre-assumption about how it should be, how the students should react and how I can build upon that. Since our pedagogy is really clear, we do not change it all the time, which gives me a kind of ability to recognize when the students are in fact learning – or if I am on the wrong track. (Andy)

The teachers describe how they sometimes do something different than the traditional way but none of them go into depth about the traditions, their advantages, or disadvantages. The teachers all express that the traditional ways of doing things, maybe with some minor adjustments or changes, still work, and create a positive learning experience for students. The rhythmical way of planning the main lesson is something that gives more chances for the students to be focused and concentrated. "You can't expect kids or teenagers to be focused if there is nothing that changes or demands your attention. It's the same with adults, it's just not possible" Chris claims.

To have a given structure, a teaching method, and didactic strategies, is not unique for Waldorf-Steiner schools, Iris says, it is something that goes on in many of the alternative schools.

> I think it's a strength when you have the same attitude to how teaching and learning should be done, when you share some kind of basic approach. Then you are all going in the same direction, and I think that is a good thing for students – that teachers conduct their teaching in a similar way. To have that sense of being a part of something can be a real strength. When you feel as if the teachers' college is like a unit, that makes it possible both to be honest and to develop both as an individual and as a group. (Iris)

Iris, Janice, and Heather talk about how rhythms and structures are something that we all need, not just students. Fiona also reflects upon this as something that has been affected by the Covid 19 pandemic. Many schools have had online teaching periodically, and this made the students fall out of the structure and rhythms. "It's a really difficult thing for them, many

of them can't really cope with that, they lose their balance, their direction you could say" (Fiona).

I explained in Chapter 3 (section 3.3.4) that the Waldorf-Steiner curriculum/workplan is built upon that a certain theme is presented in a certain age group, and this makes it possible for the teacher to refine his or her teaching methods.

> Since you know the theme of the main lesson and maybe you taught this theme before, you can sort of build a bank of knowledge about that theme. You can never do exactly the same things or in the same way, because the students are not the same, but you have your own connection to the subject and that makes it possible to foresee the problems and have an idea about how to solve that. (Heather)

Andy, Chris, Gloria, and Heather sometimes have main lessons in classes where they are subject teachers. This is a completely different situation than having a main lesson in your own class as a class teacher.

> In my own class, I can sort of lean on the fact that we have this bond, this togetherness. But when I teach other classes I must be much more alert, I can't really rely on that tacit knowledge that I have with my own class – all the things that I just know work. I must be much more prepared when I teach in another class, because when I don't really know the group, at least I know my material. But then, of course, I also know, or maybe not know, but sort of know, that some things work with all students. I almost always have something that I can use. (Gloria)

Heather describes that she gets stricter when she teaches in other classes. It feels safer, she says, when she does not know all the students, to be a bit more structured.

> To teach is always, as I said before, about relationships. And when you don't have that – in that strong sense that you have with your own class, everything is a bit more fragile. You must be even more sensitive, even more alert to how the students react, you do not have this `pre-knowledge´ that you share with your own students. (Heather)

Diana wrote in her protocol that she tries to discover the difficulties and problems when introducing something new. This can sometimes be difficult, but it is important to try and figure out where and when difficulties may occur.

> Even if they are quite young, some of them have already developed strategies to hide their lack of understanding. I must see through that, to predict what parts they will have problems with, because they will not say or show me. I must find their weak spots so that I can give them the right help. Now, with most of them, I know, more or less exactly, where the problems will be, but I also have some new students and I am right in that process to try and see and understand where the help is needed. (Diana)

To have this knowledge about your students is a big advantage as a teacher, and a security for students, to trust that the teacher will anticipate their possible difficulties.

Experience is something that you always can use. Andy tells about how the sense of "knowing" is something that is useful in many situations.

> I can suddenly remember that two years ago I had the same situation in a grade nine and did this! And it worked! You can always predict that certain problems or situations will occur with teenagers, that's just how it is. They are tired and sometimes unwilling. But, you know, there is always something that you can find in your pocket, some unexpected thing to use. And suddenly, you have the students' attention. (Laughter) Of, course, it is a bit easier for me, I can always make something go `boom or bang´! (Andy)

8.2 Being Part of a Strong Tradition

The Waldorf- Steiner teachers in this study clearly see themselves as practitioners of a pedagogical tradition, and in one way as keepers of this tradition. But they also talk about the need to change, to not hang on to old truths but rather develop and find new ways of interpreting how Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy can be at pace with its time. This means that they are also challengers to this tradition.

In this second part of this chapter, I will present some ideas from the teachers about being part of a community with both outspoken and unspoken traditions and practices, and how this is also affected by outside factors.

8.2.1 Being Part of a School Community

Traditionally, the teachers' college, or conference, in a Waldorf-Steiner school is a forum for both pedagogical, practical, and formal questions. In most Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools, the teachers' college plays an important role – even though there must be a formal management. The participating teachers describe how time is spent on learning from each other.

> We try to find the time to invite each other, one colleague talks about his or her subject or class. `This is how I do´, and then you sort of share your knowledge, you get inspiration from each other. Last week we talked about how to use the blackboard and that is a very good example of how you can learn, not so much about drawing on the blackboard, but about why, what are the intentions behind all this. And it became a very good discussion. (Andy)

The oral tradition to learn from each other is a real strength in the Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy, Fiona says. "To learn from each other has always been a tradition in Waldorf-schools, long before they created that `first teacher thing´ in municipal schools[21]". In the Waldorf-Steiner schools where she has worked there has always been an exchange of ideas between teachers in a spontaneous way, and more formal parts in the teachers' conference where teachers show and talk about what they are teaching and what the intention and underlying idea is.
Iris claims that the teachers' conference is more important than most teachers understand. There is a tradition in Waldorf-schools to learn from each other, but the teachers conference is about much more.

> Yes, of course, you have this agenda with studies, and practical things and all that. But the thing is to get together, to remind ourselves who we are, what we are and so on. To share things and come together. The conference is like a class of students, we must work with our relationships and interaction, just as we work with that in our classes. (Iris)

[21] Here Fiona refers to a system that was presented 2013 in the Swedish educational system. A certified teacher with at least 4 years of practice can be appointed by the headmaster as "first teacher". This means that the teacher has more responsibilities when it comes to documentation, to mentor new teachers, and sometimes some sort of developmental work. Schools can apply for grants from the Agency of Education for first teachers who have a higher salary than their colleagues.

Many Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden are quite small, only a few have more than 300 students, and this makes it possible to have a culture with focus on familiarity. “It creates a feeling of `we´, when everybody knows each other’s names, when you say good morning to everyone each day. The younger students play with the teenagers and there is a lot of trust” (Heather).

To be part of a community with a strong tradition has both its advantages and its disadvantages. Beatrice hints that it is not always easy to address a different opinion.

> There are outspoken guidelines about how things are to be done, guidelines that you can lean upon and use as a frame for your work. But there are also many things that are unspoken and taken for granted, things that are stuck in the walls that you cannot question – or shouldn’t anyway. (Beatrice)

Her experience is shared by Chris, who says that there are always different roles or positions to take in the teachers’ college. Some people are considered to be more “waldorf” than others and that can be hard to question.

> There are always those who have more status than others, and they sometimes get away with things – just because of their position – no one questions them or their ways of doing things. Everybody knows that but no one says anything. Maybe we get a bit self-confirming, `Ooh! everything is so nice and good here´ and that makes it hard to discuss the problems that we also have. (Chris)

Waldorf-Steiner schools are no exceptions when it comes to hierarchies or people taking different positions, “Just like in most communities there are those who place themselves in the middle, and those who prefer to be in the periphery” (Chris).

In most Waldorf-Steiner schools there are annual traditions and events. To celebrate different holidays, and to have special activities before summer- and winter break is done in most Waldorf-Steiner schools around the world in different ways. In some schools the ways of doing things are very strict, Fiona explains. “You really can’t change it, the parents would go

crazy, many of them used to be students here and they want things to be done in that exact way".

Janice, who has worked at both big and smaller Waldorf-Steiner schools claims that these traditions and taken-for-granted assumptions are more common, and more stuck, in the schools that have existed for a long time.

> You know, the big and old Waldorf schools they are a bit like big tankers, it takes time to change the course, to think in new ways. But the smaller ones, who must adapt to survive, they are more like little sailing boats, able to change direction very quickly. And then sometimes, there are a lot of lifeboats out sailing as well, trying to save it all (laughter). (Janice)

8.2.2 Practitioners and Keepers of a Tradition

In the written protocols from the teachers, they describe how a random main lesson is structured and they also talk about this in the interviews – all of them use more or less the same design of the main lesson. None of them question that this way of planning your teaching, and students' learning, is a strong tradition in Waldorf-Steiner schools. On the contrary, they express that this structure gives time and possibilities to deepen knowledge, to vary your teaching and use different pedagogical approaches and activities. The teachers describe that the given tradition works as a framework to relate to as a teacher.

> Waldorf-pedagogy is, overall, for me, very much like a frame and then you know that certain things are to be inside that frame. But then, you are also quite free to fill that frame with your own approach, as long as you build it up with the given things. It is almost like pieces of LEGO; you have all these pieces, and you are supposed to construct a certain thing. And then you can choose among the pieces as long as they all fit together in the end. (Gloria)

Chris says that the given structure makes it possible to improvise, and that is something that makes his teaching, and students' learning, something that happens in the moment, something alive and in motion. It becomes logical, "some parts of the main lesson can be a bit loose and open for improvisation, student activity and discussion, but other parts, as my lecture, must be

stricter and more prepared" (Chris). The students are aware of the traditional structure, and it helps both them and him. Chris works mostly with teenagers, and the rhythmical part of the main lesson is often quite short with a physical exercise or a clapping game. This traditional rhythmical part as a start of the main lesson is something that Chris feels a bit uncomfortable with – but the students know how it is supposed to be done.

> I find it quite hard, and because of that, I feel a strong gratitude to the former class teachers, because that makes it possible to, well not sing because that is something that I *really* feel insecure about, but you know, clapping-games, throwing balls or read a poem. Personally, I don't have an aesthetic education, apart from my own experience as a student in a Waldorf-school. But you know, I can just say to the students that now, we are going to do this – and they just grab their paintbrushes and start to…they have so much technical knowledge about how to do, because of all the things they did in primary school. It wouldn't be possible to do aesthetic activities if it weren't for their former class teachers. (Chris)

Andy claims that the traditional structure of the main lesson is a success factor for the students. The learning experience goes deeper when you try to highlight a subject from different perspectives and with different activities.

> When you teach in a phenomenological way – learning becomes deeper. Even if it is me who does the experiment, I want the students to take part, so that they almost feel as if it where them who conducted it. It is about showing a phenomenon and then, afterwards, giving the context and the theories. It creates a kind of curiosity in the students, and they can't wait to do it themselves. (Andy)

Many Waldorf-Steiner schools accept students from other schools during the school year. These students are not used to this way of learning both Andy and Fiona explain. They are used to working with books and ready-made teaching materials and not so much to listening to a lecture and taking notes. "It is more like the book, or a film is the lecturer, not so much the teacher" Andy says, "but usually, it just takes a few weeks and then they get it". Fiona, who has worked in municipal schools, talks about this difference when problematizing about control and power as a Waldorf-Steiner teacher. One of the reasons that made her go back to

teach in a Waldorf-Steiner school was the lack of pedagogical discussions and engagement that she experienced in the municipal schools where she worked.

> I felt as if it was a bit vague how you were supposed to work, in a pedagogical way, no obvious method or didactic, that was a non-question. It was very little talk about teaching and much more about just working, to just managing things, to ticking the boxes in your checklists. Then, of course there were things that Waldorf-Steiner schools could learn from as well. Municipal schools are a bit more effective in some areas, they have better ways of giving extra support to students than Waldorf-Steiner schools usually have, they can collaborate with other schools and build a strong organisation, but we seldom can. (Fiona)

Fiona explains that of course, her experience might not be very representative, engagement and pedagogical discussions can vary in different schools, both in Waldorf-Steiner schools and in municipal schools, but for her, this was the main reason for choosing to go back to Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy.

8.2.3 Challengers of a Tradition

Although all the teachers practice and keep the traditional Waldorf-Steiner pedagogical ideas alive, at the same time they express thoughts and ideas that one could claim are a bit critical or challenging. All of them talk of the risk of falling into the traps of dogmas, and the danger of paying too much attention to the structure or framework so that you forget about the fact that it is *the content inside the framework* that is important.

> I believe there are things that become a culture, or a way to be and do, in all schools – in a way that can be difficult to let go of, or change. Maybe even more when you work with a specific kind of pedagogy and there are strong traditions and strong people with strong ideas. Certain things get stuck in a really hard way – and you can't always see them because it is just the way it is, you get blind. You need new and fresh eyes once in a while to discover both the good things and the things you need to change. It is mostly a good thing, I think, to be part of a bigger movement, but there is always a risk that you don't see the weaknesses. (Janice)

Heather describes a situation where a new colleague in her school was told that she had to learn all the songs and the poems for the rhythmical part by heart, it was not good enough to

read from a book or a paper – one of the teachers in the college said. This made the colleague afraid to do it "the wrong way", so instead she skipped the singing and music during this part.

> That is an example of absolutely *no* pedagogical intention from the teacher who said that, just a given form, a fixed idea and it becomes a disaster for both teachers and students. Unfortunately, this is not a unique situation, I have experienced it myself, even though I think that these dogmas are slowly fading away. It is so important that you understand the underlying pedagogical ideas, because if you don't, it can look very `waldorf´ from the outside, `oh how nice and creative´, but there is nothing in there, nothing, it's just empty. (Heather)

Heather and Janice have roles as mentors for new or inexperienced teachers and that makes it possible for them to both find and discuss these ideas that easily can become rules or dogmas.

> It is an advantage that today, we [the school where Janice works] have young teachers, they are taking the Waldorf-Steiner teachers training programme and I get to supervise them a little bit, so that we don't get trapped in an empty structure. Because we always have to, we have to meet…what kind of young people are they, the students that we meet here in our school? What do they need? (Janice)

The oral tradition in Waldorf-Steiner schools is both a strength and a weakness, several of the teachers express. Even though new teachers attend the Waldorf-Steiner teacher training, many things in everyday practice are not formulated in a clear way. There is a need to put the pedagogical practice into words so that it becomes possible for new teachers to lean on something.

When I ask Andy if they, at his school, had ever sat down and made like a manual for new teachers, he answers that they have talked about it, but not formulated it into a structured plan to follow.

> I'm sure we put words to it, but it's an oral tradition, unfortunately, as many other things in our community and tradition. We talk about it, but we don't put it in writing. And, you know, that works until that moment when a certain individual is not there anymore, when someone quit. And that means that you might lose a lot of knowledge and good practice. Many things are stuck in the walls, unspoken, and just implied. And it's hard to describe if no one asks you about it, why you do in a specific way. (Andy)

The oral tradition is something that also makes things more complicated than they need to be, Erica claims. If a lot of knowledge and practice just disappear because a teacher leaves the school, there is a problem.

> I mean, how many times have we invented the wheel? Over, and over again at every school! And I'm just like, come on! This is really bad, why haven't someone just written down how this is supposed to be done and why? It's a paradox you know, some things are really fixed and cannot be changed ever, while some things are all vague and possible to interpret in lots of ways…but the thing is, that there might be rules and dogmas even about these things, they are just not spoken out loud! (Erica)

Erica describes how difficult it can be for new teachers to understand and get the proper introduction to the practice. "We are not very good at describing how things work, and also *why* we do things in a certain way, this is a big question for the future, we need to get this right".

Even though the teachers emphasize the importance of formulating the practice, they all also make it clear that you cannot just imitate someone else, you must find your own way of being a teacher. "You must find your own teaching style, you can't just copy someone else because that won't work. The students will see right through that" (Andy).

8.2.4 Finding New Ways

To adapt your teaching and methods to the students that you meet, is something that Andy, Erica and Fiona emphasize. Fiona, whose class is "weak" both when it comes to knowledge and social interaction, explains that she works a lot on building trust and predictability since the students do not have a sense of structure or form. For some years, things have just "happened", and different teachers have come and gone, given different rules and ways to teach. This means that she must make the students feel assured that she is in control, and that she will not disappear, and this makes her think in new ways and insert new elements in her teaching.

> Traditionally, when the teacher lectures or tells a story, the students are just supposed to listen, to inhale, and the story should just stand on its own. That is not possible with this class, they think everything is a discussion – I must find new ways of doing things. Now, I make mind-maps that they can follow when I lecture, or pictures to place in the right order. One cannot be rigid, you must make it interesting for the students, not for yourself. I can't have the same expectations on this class as I had on the one before – but we will get there. (Fiona)

The fact that there are books, articles and people who claim that you, as a Waldorf-Steiner teacher, should or must do this or that in a certain age group of students is something that Erica reacts strongly upon, she thinks that it is a very narrow way of thinking.

> To state in a book about Waldorf pedagogy that you *must* sew a doll in grade six or `in this grade all students do this´. You know all this, `you must´ or `you should´, `the students are supposed to sew cross-stitches in grade four´, to `learn all the names of the trees when you study botanic in grade six´. But you know, there are places where there are no trees! It all depends on what circumstances you have, and what conditions. It is much more about the *how to do* as I see it, to understand the underlying quality. (Erica)

Again, to adjust your teaching to the students you meet, and to the time you live in, is something that the participating teachers all agree upon. "If you just do things `the way we have always done it´, you are not a good teacher, and it is not fair to the students" Erica claims.

> I sense that children today have a stronger hunger to really learn things. Of course, there is a lot to learn, maybe too much in the lower grades, it can become stressful. But today, children have the possibility to learn in so many other places than in school – and that's why they are more eager. And then, if I would just do as I did ten years ago, taking it slow, that would be to destroy that wish to learn more. (Erica)

In all the interviews, the teachers talk about the importance of finding a way to talk about the pedagogy, to find the right concepts and to go from being an oral tradition to becoming clearer and more explicit about the overarching ideas. This is something that every school needs to work with and develop.

> It is so important to really think about why, why should the main lesson be

> rhythmical? Why do we do certain things? We need to think about what we are saying, what do we mean by all these concepts and expressions? (Erica)

In a situation where it is quite usual that Waldorf-Steiner schools employ teachers with non, or very little, experience or education in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy, the schools face a big challenge. This means that there are teachers who do not fully understand the reason why things are done in a specific way.

> It's a very troublesome thing that we have this lack of educated Waldorf-Steiner teachers. It means that we have teachers with no experience or understanding of the underlying ideas. You know, if you are to conduct a lesson that is about 90 or maybe even 100 minutes long, you need to understand why, otherwise it makes no sense, it just becomes a tiresome framework that you must fill with something, but you don't know what. (Fiona)

In the interviews, several of the teachers talk about the importance of having someone to turn to with your questions and troubles. At some of the schools, mentorship is an outspoken way to introduce new teachers, at some, this is not a structured method, but something that takes place spontaneously among the teachers.

> When I worked in another Waldorf-Steiner school, I got a mentor right from the start. Someone who helps you with all the practical stuff that you need to know, and we had meetings every week. It was a really good thing to get the opportunity to talk about the worries you had and to get advice, and sometimes some sympathy when nothing worked (laughter). At this school, it is not so clear, I mean of course you can ask your colleagues, but it can become difficult and vague. Maybe smaller schools have more problems with this, in the bigger ones you just must have a system for it. (Erica)

8.2.5 Demands from the Outside

As described in Chapter 3, Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools had to adjust to the national curriculum and syllabus in 2011. Although this change was discussed as a big problem within the Swedish Waldorf-Steiner community at the time, the teachers in this study see more positive effects than negative.

"If you feel sure about what you are doing, if we are secure in our pedagogical identity, this is not a problem", Andy says.

> I think it is quite alright that authorities, and society, have insight and control on what we are doing. Waldorf-schools are part of society and need to be able to present themselves and the pedagogy. There's nothing strange with that, we have nothing to hide. (Andy)

Heather claims that if you really study the national curriculum, you can see that it is all about skills – and this, she suggests, is not a problem for Waldorf-Steiner schools. "We work with skills and abilities all the time, and if we look at the curriculum that way, it will not collide with our pedagogy". She talks about the importance of really understanding the curriculum, both *Lgr11* and *A path towards freedom* – when you can do that, you can relate to the demands in the curriculum in a freer way.

> You must understand the basic ideas, then you can create a path, a way to go, that is possible without compromising too much. We always have to relate to our time, to be up to date. I think that these frames from the outside in a way help us. If we were just left to ourselves, maybe we would just wander around a bit lost. The demands become a reason to be updated, to stay in pace with society. But at the same time, we must cherish the basic values in our pedagogy, it's a tricky thing to find that balance. (Heather)

Gloria says that for her, the national curriculum has been a help to become clearer and more structured in her teaching. It has also given her a sense of being more professional.

> Before, it was vaguer, you know, you asked a colleague about what to do in grade four, you did not think or talk about what the students were supposed to learn or know. Now, I feel sure about what it is that I am supposed to do, what the students are supposed to get and learn. I have the frame and I can fill it with my own colours, I can weave in these pieces. You know, before, I could let myself go and just go on and on about the things that I found fascinating – but now I know the frames, and it helps me. (Gloria)

Even though the teachers see many positive things with the increased control from the outside, there are also areas that collide with the Waldorf-Steiner pedagogic ideas. The possibilities to have a specific pedagogic approach are less than before and the national

curriculum and the syllabus set up very strict limits for how and when different subjects and themes are to be taught.

> I think the biggest loss for us is in the lower grades. The national curriculum puts stress on younger children. Instead of letting the early years be characterized by a joy of learning, now there are much more demands and pressure, and the children are affected negatively by all this. (Diana)

Both Beatrice and Gloria agree with this, the pressure from authorities to adapt your teaching into something that you do not really believe in is a contradicting task. Beatrice explains that the connection that you need to have to your subject is not possible to find when you are forced to conduct teaching or to carry out activities, that feel "wrong".

> You can take this `digitalisation hysteria´ from the Government. It is as if all problems in schools will disappear if we just hand out computers to the students. First graders who can't read yet are to work with computers – is that really a good idea? Shouldn't we focus on basic skills first? I wonder if this experiment will turn out well, I really have my doubts". (Beatrice)

The syllabus, which decides the number of hours for each subject, has forced Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools to compromise, or let go of, some of the basic ideas, as the aesthetical elements in all subjects. "The view upon knowledge has become narrower, today education must be possible to always measure, weigh, or make statistic of", Chris claims. Fiona and Heather express that the risk is that Sweden ends up in a situation where it is not possible to choose an alternative pedagogy. The demands from authorities to make education into something "ready-made, a product set beforehand" are increasing all the time, Fiona explains.

> This is not just us, Waldorf schools, but all the other alternative pedagogy schools as well. We are all disadvantaged I would claim, almost bullied. It's like they are saying `You can choose a profit driven free school – that's fine! Oh! Do you want a specific pedagogic approach? That's trickier, we can't allow that, schools must all be the same! ´ The possibilities for parents and teachers to choose a pedagogy that they believe in is diminishing day by day. (Fiona)

The situation in Sweden, where results are decreasing and the challenges in the educational system are many, is something that raises questions about how we should think about education, both Chris and Fiona express.

> I really wonder, I really do…if this is the right way to go with education. I see more and more students who are stressed out, who do not enjoy schoolwork, who are depressed and anxious. In Waldorf schools we really try to keep the quality of aesthetics, arts, and practical subjects alive, but it is not easy – it is like a struggle against Goliath – but we must try. I really believe in the idea that education must be something more than just these weight- and measurable facts – something aimed to make students grow individually and help them understand both themselves and the world around us. (Chris)

8.3 Summary of the Chapter

This Chapter focuses on two themes: The Pedagogic repertoire and Being part of a context. The traditional pedagogic approach in Waldorf-Steiner schools can be related to the teachers' aim to develop relationships with their students, to the fact that many teachers follow their class for many years, and that many schools have a culture of familiarity and community. The teachers claim that there are things that work with all students and classes, to use routines and rituals, to be engaged and to be able to be both professional and personal in the meeting with your students. They all lean on the notion that some things are the right things to do at a certain age or in a certain situation, and they all claim that it works.

They describe the teaching practice as something artistic and creative where it is possible to use your intuition to predict what is needed. They refer to this as their "repertoire" or "sixth sense" – a combination of intuition and experience that they have developed over time.

The sense of being a "we" is obvious. The Waldorf-Steiner teachers clearly see themselves, and their schools, as parts of something bigger. They do not go into depth about this, but they all assume that there are ways of doing and thinking that permeate Waldorf-Steiner schools and teachers – things that "we" all agree upon and that we do not really have to explain or

investigate further. They are, in many ways, keepers and practitioners of a strong pedagogical tradition and there are many things that they just understand as being the “right” way to do it. At the same time, they point to areas that would benefit from changes or development. The lack of documentation about didactics and practice is one of these areas where they all agree that something is missing. They emphasize that the pedagogy, and the didactic practice, must be up to date, you cannot lean on ideas and thoughts that come from a completely different time and context – it must be possible to adapt the core ideas about learning and teaching to our time.

Despite the fact that Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden have less pedagogical freedom than in some other countries, all the teachers express that the changes demanded by authorities also have had a positive effect. They claim that this has made both them and the school where they work more professional and secure in their roles. They all also express that the increasing control has negative sides – the possibility to let aesthetic elements be included in teaching has become more difficult and this makes the education in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools more static and forced to adapt to the dominating agenda.

In the next chapter, these findings will be investigated, problematized, and discussed in connection with theory and literature.

9. Discussion– Where do the Findings Lead?

In this chapter I will discuss the findings from Chapters 6 and 7 that focus on the Waldorf-Steiner teachers' lived experience of their daily practice, what they see as key elements and how they interpret their own roles as educators as parts of a community. I will connect the findings and issues discussed to the theories and studies presented in the previous chapters.

To come to an understanding of the rhythmical and balanced education that the Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe, there is a need to first go deeper into the concepts of trust and responsibility. As described in the findings chapters, the sense of being responsible is a lived experience that permeates the data, and this responsibility is connected to students' trust and to making the learning situation meaningful. These overarching ideas colour all the other aspects that the teachers talk about – rhythms and balance, interaction, and inclusion – none of this would be feasible without the teacher taking responsibility for establishing trust – and I suggest that, in education, responsibility is connected to classification and framing. Therefore, I will first discuss how we can use the concepts classification and framing from Bernstein – connected to the ideas from relational pedagogy – to get a broader and deeper understanding of the participating teachers' lived experience of trust and responsibility – as basic conditions to make education rhythmical and balanced. To conclude that teaching always includes various forms of mechanisms of control and power, or that positive relationships between teacher and students are important, is not meaningful if we do not look at *how* these elements are included.

I will work my way down from the teachers' overarching ideas about trust and responsibility to the actual practice in the classroom – how these ideas are what make rhythmical and

balanced education possible – and how this promotes educational relationship building, meaning-making, and inclusive education.

In the second part of this chapter, I will look at the teachers' experiences of being part of an old and strong tradition and how that can be connected to tacit knowledge, both as an individual skill and as something shared – a contextual phenomenon. I will discuss how the teachers both keep the tradition and challenge some of the ideas in the pedagogic practice – and what questions for the future the teachers reflect upon. In my data, the reflections from the teachers reveal that there is a tentative tendency towards change in the Swedish Waldorf-Steiner pedagogic discourse, and this is a consequence of both inside and outside factors.

9.1 Overarching Ideas – Trust and Responsibility

The way the participating teachers describe their lived experience of their practice is possible to connect to, and understand as, ideas highlighted in relational pedagogy, as described by for example Aspelin and Persson (2011), Ljungblad (2016), and Van Manen (2015). To focus on relationships and a positive atmosphere is something that the teachers describe as a condition for learning – an embodied and tacit ability that they have developed over the years. This focus should not be confused with weak classification or framing, blurry roles between teachers and students, or lack of rules – on the contrary, this focus is effective and similar to what Granath (2008) refers to as a pastoral and gentle exercise of power. The intimacy between students and teachers that the teachers describe, becomes a tool for upholding discipline and a positive social climate in the classroom.

The Waldorf-Steiner teachers are conducting a visible pedagogy where framing can change from being strong and obvious to a more invisible approach – and this is a way to make education rhythmical and balanced. Just as the teachers in the study by Henning-Loeb and

Lumsden-Wass (2014) the Waldorf-Steiner teachers are finding ways to interact, and build educational relationships with students, and these actions create trust and meaning. Trust and meaning, in turn, affect classification and framing – the teachers can lean on the trust from students when conducting teaching and upholding discipline – students seem to trust that their teachers will execute control and power in a way that benefit their learning and social situation.

This implies that the concepts framing and classification, as described by Bernstein, would benefit from being supplemented with a humanistic perspective where we do not only look at how teachers and students relate to one another as different categories, but also how relationships *between* them can be understood. Bernstein developed his conceptual framework almost 40 years ago, and much has happened since then. Bernstein does not address the questions about relationships or trust in education, he focuses on structures and discourses, and relations between categories and roles – not between actual people. This makes his concepts somewhat square and difficult to fully adapt to today's way of understanding teaching and learning. The teaching profession is always, among a lot of different things, about being in control and in power in various ways, but not in the same way as 40 years ago, at least not in Sweden. As I discussed in Chapter 3 (section 3.1.5), it is no longer a matter of course that students and guardians accept that teachers have an outspoken position of power, authoritarian methods are not accepted. This situation makes teachers' work more dependent on trustful relationships with both students and guardians. In Sweden, the importance of student influence, good relationships and the teacher as a supportive companion has been emphasized for a long time (Giota, 2013). Many authors and thinkers highlight that a trustful relationship between teacher and student is the very foundation of good education (Biesta, 2016, Ljungblad, 2016, Noddings, 2005, Platz, 2021) but the concepts from relational

pedagogy risk becoming too vague and thereby empty – hence there is a need to broaden and nuance the concepts from both Bernstein and relational pedagogy.

9.1.1 The Search for the Right Concepts

Even though it is possible to state that mechanisms of framing and classification appear to be strong in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools, which contributes to the rhythmical and balanced education, and to upholding discipline, that conclusion does not fully explain the visible practice. The practice demands a broader perspective on the concepts from Bernstein and a clarification of what we mean by concepts like trust, belonging, and teacher responsibility.

If I had written this thesis in Swedish, I would have used the word “mellanmänsklig” to describe how the mechanisms of power and control are present in Waldorf-Steiner classrooms. The word could be understood as “between humans” and has an embedded positive undertone – in Swedish-English dictionaries the closest translation would be `interpersonal´, connected to different forms of relationships between people (see also section 4.5.2).

To have interpersonal skills means that you can “read” situations of interaction and respond in a way that creates possibilities to come further, to solve conflicts, to decrease tension or increase motivation and engagement (Lilja, 2013, Ljungblad, 2016). The interpersonal meeting is about creating a sense of “we” and allowing a personal encounter. It demands an openness and willingness to see the other individual. As I described in section 4.5.2, there is not much research done that analyses the meaning of interpersonal relationships in education, but Aspelin (interviewed by Cervin and Svensén, 2017) claims that there is a situational perspective present, it is about teachers’ approach in daily meetings, to be interested in students as individuals and create social bonds.

If we add the interpersonal ideas from relational pedagogy to the two concepts classification and framing from Bernstein, I suggest that we get a more updated understanding of how control and power mechanisms can be understood in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools today – and most certainly also in other schools in Sweden. And – to add Bernstein's concept to relational pedagogy makes it possible to distinguish educational relationships from other forms of relations. The connected concepts describe a pedagogy that is conducted with clear rules and role distribution and the teacher as responsible for both the teaching content and relationships with students – strong classification and framing combined with a focus on, and a strive for, positive educational relationships and interpersonal meetings – it is an attitude that includes emotional, social, and affective aspects.

I have chosen to refer to this approach as *Interpersonal framing and classification.*

In the upcoming sections, I will discuss:

- How we can understand classification and framing from an interpersonal perspective, and how this approach can work as a foundation for trust to emerge.
- How teacher responsibility is connected to both classification and framing, and strategies from relational pedagogy – an interpersonal approach is favourable for both teacher and student.

9.1.2 Framing and Classification from an Interpersonal Perspective

To address questions of control and power in a school setting can be sensitive and provoking and can be interpreted as something negative – close to an authoritarian way of conducting teaching (Kelchtermans, 2009). But control and power is about making something visible and predictable for both students and teachers, it is about constructing frames for our everyday lives and interactions with others (Persson, 2014). Power and control are underlying mechanisms, we accept that people in specific positions, as teachers, have more power than others, as students – even though this power might be unspoken and often even unconscious

– the challenge for teachers is to recognize this power and *how* to handle this given position (Colnerud, 1997b, Persson, 2014).

In my data, there are numerous examples of how the teachers describe their approach and interactions with students with an obvious attitude of leadership combined with an interpersonal engagement in their students. The teachers do not hesitate to take the position of leader, the one who decides what to do and how to do it – and they do not hesitate to have both formal and informal interactions with students. The shifts between these positions help to create rhythms both in interactions and in activities. The teachers argue that it would not be possible to come into what they describe as "a process of knowledge" – where students are engaged and active – if there is no trust. This trust has to do with students' willingness to follow the teacher's leadership and participate in the process. The visible pedagogy that the teachers conduct, using a strong classification with clear roles, and a strong framing which sometimes turns into a more subtle and "soft" form , makes it possible to organize the learning situation so that students' needs, and abilities are met, and there is a constant interaction going on between teachers and students. Henning-Loeb and Lumsden-Wass (2014, p. 88) call this a "stable and incorporated net of actions" that has been connected and developed over time, including supportive actions and the possibility for students to influence the situation. Granath (2008) describes how students want their teachers to be supportive and caring, and if so, students will be willing to accept the limits that the teacher constructs, both when it comes to schoolwork and social interaction – conclusions that agree with how the teachers in this study describe their experiences, and how Bernstein (2000) describes the regulative discourse in education as dominant.

As teachers, we are always enacting power (Biesta, 2016), students are obliged to go to school and teachers are the ones to decide what students are to produce in the classroom, and whether a student has succeeded or not – it is a demand from society to uphold discipline and create conditions for learning (Skolverket, 2022b). Even though interaction and communication in a classroom have an atmosphere of good relationships and informality, the power balance is never equal (Colnerud, 1997b). To execute power in a way that students accept and appreciate is only possible if the teacher can show that certain things matter, that something is worth learning and paying attention to (Nome, 2021) – a fact that the teachers in this study emphasize. To lead students to a sense of meaning, where the subject at hand makes sense and seems to be something that has to do with life and the world around us, creates engagement and motivation, the teachers claim, and this agrees with other studies (Aspelin, 2021, Ljungblad, 2016, Nome, 2021, Partanen and Skolverket, 2019).

The teachers' experiences reveal how they strive to gain trust from students, what they describe could be understood as *trust as a condition for the mechanisms of framing and classification to work,* they *need* to have a relationship and bonds to their students. Students want to feel assured that teachers have control over the situation and that they have the skills and abilities to help them with both problems on an intellectual level – as well as relational issues such as conflicts with friends or dilemmas – an idea that was also discussed by teachers and students in the studies by Lilja (2013) and Schwartz (2013).

Fiona expresses that she needs to *prove* that the students can trust her. This means that she has to create rules for everything, which Bernstein (2000) would refer to as a very strong framing, where the rules about interaction and communication are strict and non-negotiable. Fiona also describes the morning walks that she uses to create informal relationships with students.

This idea about being both an obvious leader and at the same time using different methods to build interpersonal relationships to students is something that all the teachers describe in different ways. If teachers respond to students' reactions in a trustworthy way, then hopefully, trust can be confirmed (Lilja, 2013).

The teachers all emphasize that they need to find a way to teach that students find meaningful and to create a climate in the classroom where students feel included and cared for. Students need to experience that there is some kind of control and predictability both in the structure of the teaching and in the actions of teachers, they state. This points to that stability, both when it comes to the instructional and the regulative discourse, is of importance for students. Without stability it is not possible to develop trust (Sørhaug, 2007), and without trust, I claim, classification and framing – the power balance – can either be turned into something even more unbalanced or into something unclear. If neither students nor teachers can lean on mutual trust, we get a situation where there is a risk for either students rebelling, or teachers turning to authoritarian methods or simply giving up the idea of leadership (Lilja, 2013). The Waldorf-Steiner teachers who also work as subject teachers address this, stating that when you have a new group of students, and trust is not yet established, you must find ways to show that you are worth relying on when it comes to knowledge and ability to teach. Just as Platz (2021) suggests, the teachers describe reliance and trust as two different qualities – where trust is something more personal that develops over time.

Stability, as a basic condition for trust, can be established by strong interpersonal classification and framing – a clear structure, and the possibility to predict what is to come.

9.1.3 Predictability as a Method to Create Trust

The way the teachers in this study use routines and rituals creates predictable rhythms during the main lesson – the students can rest assure that there is order, some kind of predictability,

and that teachers know what they are doing. Routines and rituals help students to understand the regulative and the instructional rules, and the recognition and realisation rules – what is expected from them – and this gives students a sense of control.

The changes in communication, sequence, pace, and interaction are described by the teachers as being both something planned and a tacit and embodied ability – but are made clear for students by using routines and rituals as markers, or signs. The morning verse work as a signal that the school day begins, the changes in movement in the classrooms – where the teachers change from moving around among students to positioning themselves in focus – signals that it is time for a new part with new forms of interaction and communication.

The messages in rituals are highly predictable, and the meanings in them are indirect (Bernstein et al., 1966). To light a candle, as Diana describes, to signal that students are to listen, or to do a certain gesture, as Gloria, does not automatically mean that students understand what is to come – but when it is done continuously in a specific context as an introduction to an activity – it becomes a shared, cultural tool with embedded rules and expectations (Vygotsky, 1934/2001). Recurring routines help students in the SEND spectrum and hence promote inclusion and stability in the classroom (Olsson, 2016, Gustafson and Hjörne, 2015).

Instead of just "giving orders" to students, these actions from the teachers work as markers to recognize the rules – a way to work with strong framing in an unspoken and implicit way – what Schwartz (2013) refers to as a sense of order for students.

The lived experiences of the teachers, and how they describe their practice as being conditioned by trust from students, built up by interpersonal relationships and predictability, lead us back to teacher responsibility – a vague and in many ways limitless area.

9.1.4 Teacher Responsibility – a Complex Concept

Teacher responsibility is two-sided, there are legal aspects that concern the given task from society, and moral aspects concerning the students you meet in the classroom (Colnerud, 1997b). The Waldorf-Steiner teachers experience themselves as responsible for the whole situation in the classroom, for teaching and learning, and for relationships and interaction. They all give examples of how they see themselves as the ones who are to create a situation where students feel confirmed. Chris starts each morning with an attempt to "open up" for students to share their thoughts and both Gloria and Diana emphasize that all students need to be seen, not just those who seek the teacher's attention.

For the teachers it appears to be obvious that *interpersonal framing and classification are conditioned by trustful relationships*. But according to Van Manen (2016, p. 112) "Nothing is so silent as that which is taken-for granted or self-evident", hermeneutic phenomenology urges us to ask, "What if it is the other way around?" (Henriksson, 2012, Van Manen, 2016). The interpretation would then be that *trustful relationships are conditioned by interpersonal framing and classification.*

How can this be understood? I argue that it is connected to the concept of responsibility – and how the teachers in this study all emphasize this as an overarching theme, permeating their lived experience of their practice. A key issue for teachers is to find a balance between the roles of strong leaders and builders of safe educational relationships.

The way the participating teachers express themselves is consistent with what Lilja (2013) describes as positive authority; teacher responsibility is to uphold a situation where the mechanisms of power and control are executed in a way that makes students feel secure and safe, where the students have a saying and feel that they have possibilities to be taken

seriously. Granath (2008) states that power cannot be owned by anyone, it must be negotiated and is expressed in social relationships and positions – an idea that agrees with the experiences of the teachers in this study. If students rest assured that teachers act with their best interest in focus, that teachers will not suddenly act in unpredictable ways – but take responsibility for the boundaries in the relationship – then the negotiation of power positions and leadership in the classroom is built upon respect and interest from both sides – and trust can be established.

Gloria describes that if you lose students trust, it can be difficult to repair – trust is a "fresh product", she states, that needs to be continuously updated – and this, according to the Waldorf-Steiner teachers, is a responsibility for teachers, during every lesson and every day. Trust, as the teachers describe it, is something that you earn by being responsible and trustworthy – not something you can demand.

9.1.5 Reflections

The teacher-student relationship cannot be unconditional, and it cannot become private – the roles need to be made clear for both students and teachers, and this is a responsibility teachers must take control of – this is an outspoken idea from the participating teachers and confirmed by several studies (Henriksson, 2004, Lilja, 2013, Schwartz, 2013). The teachers describe relationships with students as something both personal and professional, but never as something private. There are boundaries in the relationship that should not be crossed, they claim – teachers need to be aware of the ethical dilemmas that can occur in the tension between close relationships and a professional role (Colnerud, 1997b). The ideas from the teachers agree with what Aspelin (2016) refers to as a balance between closeness and distance, and this is a condition for an educational relationship.

The concepts used in relational pedagogy to describe what it is that teachers need to do or develop – as create trust and bonds, to read the students' needs and to be interested in every

student as an individual – highlight the importance of these abilities, but do not really explain this specific kind of relationship or how it can be constructed. There is a risk that we confuse the educational relationship with friendship – which could imply unclear roles and too much engagement. There is a risk that the emphasis on positive relationships in schools becomes a hollow and empty concept, something we use in an unreflected way without clarifying what we mean. Iris states that the educational relationship is not only an emotional relationship but always two-folded, there must be both support and demands.

The concepts classification and framing allow deeper insights into the lived experience of teachers' interaction with students, and they help us clarify some of the, sometimes a bit unclear, ideas from relational pedagogy. The teachers' descriptions of their practice show that mechanisms of classification and framing can be explained as an attitude, or a position, used to take on responsibility – sometimes in a conscious and obvious way and sometimes in an intuitive and instinctive way – to be the one who creates the "rules for the game" as Persson describes (Persson, interviewed by Lumholdt, 2012). Teachers have a responsibility to find ways to build framed relationships with students that include boundaries, rules, and predictability – so that it becomes an educational relationship.

The concepts from relational pedagogy in turn, make Bernstein's concept more humanistic and appropriate to describe how we look at education in Sweden. Adding concepts like trust, meaning-making, and inclusion to Bernstein's conceptual framework helps us to understand classification and framing as something that takes place between actual people in real situations.

The teachers in this study describe interaction with students as conditioned and controlled relationships – a strong but at the same time mild and intimate classification and framing – where the focus is on an interpersonal encounter and educational relationship building. Their

descriptions suggest that interpersonal classification and framing can be interpreted as more of an attitude than a method – it demands leadership qualities and a willingness to engage with students in a trustworthy manner.

I will now move further and discuss how this interpersonal classification and framing is expressed – how these mechanisms are transformed into pedagogic practice in the classroom.

9.2 The Interpersonal Perspective in Practice

In the introduction to this chapter, I explained how the overarching ideas about trust and responsibility colour all the aspects of the teachers' lived experience of their practice. It is a theme that the teachers repeatedly return to. Without these elements, rhythms, and balance, meaning-making and inclusion, would not be possible. As I previously stated – classified and framed teacher-student relationships are essential – and this means that roles must be clear and obvious for both parties.

9.2.1 Teachers and Students –Balancing Roles

Teachers must show that they are trustworthy and reliable if they are to succeed with their teaching, this is made clear by the data – if teachers succeed in achieving this, they have a better chance of gaining students' trust – and thereby being allowed to exercise interpersonal power and control. This trust was visible in the observations, for example the situations in Gloria's and Heather's classrooms when they were interacting with students individually, creating these invisible bubbles, the other students patiently waited, confident that the teacher would soon give them attention. Diana explains how she must balance her attention towards students, so that they can trust that she will be there for them. The teachers describe how they claim focus and control during lectures and storytelling, and how they can change the form of that control so that it becomes less noticeable. They change the rhythm – by stepping out of

focus, but at the same time stay in a position where they can make their control clear if necessary

The idea of the Waldorf-Steiner teacher as a positive authority in the classroom is emphasized by Steiner (1932/1981) and in contemporary literature and studies about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy (Binetti, 2020, Rawson, 2021, Tjärnstig, 2019). This positive leadership was visible during the observations, the students accepted the guidelines from the teacher, but not in a passive way – they were active and engaged. The classificatory principle creates recognition for the rules of the context (Bernstein, 2000) and it was obvious that the rules were known and accepted – in none of the observations did students question or challenge the teacher's position – instead there was an atmosphere of a mutual agreement about how to communicate and interact, a sense of a "we", where teacher and students collaborated to maintain the agreed upon frames. This "we-sense" makes it easier to come to consensus about rules and ways of communicating (Lilja, 2013).

During the observations, students approached their teachers with questions and comments in a relaxed and informal way. Gloria says that this relationship is something that goes both ways – both parties are interested in the well-being of the other. This is something that you need to nourish all the time, Gloria claims, making sure that all students get attention and feel recognized. She talks about micro-moments, a smile or a second of eye contact can be a way to confirm your students. This comment relates to what I previously stated, the teachers describe trust as a quality that needs to be constantly updated, an idea that agrees with other studies (Lilja, 2013, Ljungblad, 2016).

The data shows that during the interaction between students and teacher, the focus is on experiencing an interpersonal meeting – where the roles are still clear but open for the uniqueness of the other as an interesting human being – "Now, it's just you and me, and I see you", Gloria states. This attention to students as individuals must be balanced, the teachers

describe how they shift from the individual to the group – and from being personal to being professional.

Just as the teachers in Gustafson's study (2010), the teachers describe how they negotiate apparent flexible power positions with students, and this also affects the rhythm of the interaction. When the teachers change their framing, by shifting from formal to informal ways of communicating, it creates space for students to have more influence, and the students seem to trust, and the teachers implicitly state, that they will make their position of control more apparent if it is needed – they must be prepared to "save the situation" as Andy puts it. Gustafson (2010) describes how teachers shift their identity many times during a school day, having the ability to sense what approach is needed and still be in control of the situation. The Waldorf-Steiner teachers in this study all describe this ability as something necessary and important, although they also connect this ability to the work of creating rhythms, both as something planned and as a reaction to the situation at hand.

The data in this study shows that roles between teachers and students are clear and obvious – classification between students and teachers is strong but often informal and interpersonal. The teachers sometimes change their framing, by making the situation more inviting and playful, and this is possible since students trust their teachers. This trust makes it possible to let the education be in motion, to change framing in activities and interactions – the mechanisms of interpersonal framing help to construct rhythms in education and interaction.

9.2.2 Rhythms and Shifts – Changes in Framing

Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy claims to be a holistic pedagogy that uses rhythms to make students experience variety in their learning (Waldorfskolefederationen, 2016). The teachers in this study make the concept even broader and more detailed, claiming that rhythm is also about how you interact, communicate, and position yourself as a teacher. Andy describes this as changing the direction or focus, claiming – or letting go – of students' attention.

The rhythmical education during the main lesson can be understood as changes in interpersonal framing – and this makes it possible to interact and communicate in both formal and informal ways – and to shift activities. The teachers describe how they use both an outspoken and visible control of the situation and how they let go and change into an apparent more student-influenced situation where the control is less obvious – leaning on the educational relationships and trust from students.

When Diana conducted the game with her students, where they threw balls between each other, she entered the situation, taking an active part in the activity (see section 7.3.2). The game was strongly framed with detailed rules, but Diana was not just the teacher in this situation, she was also a group member, participating in the game and interacting with the students in a playful way – apparently letting go of control. A few minutes later she was lecturing about fraction counting – changing her interaction with the students, the pace, and the rhythm in an obvious way– and making her position of control clear and visible . Both Diana and the students were able to let the interpersonal framing, and hence the rhythm, change – accepting that some parts of the main lesson allow an invisible framing while other parts need to be in an outspoken control of the teacher.

Gloria describes how she can notice that she has to change pace or activity, the students lose focus, and she needs to create a moment of rest or movement – an example of how teachers read their students and change accordingly. These changes in interpersonal framing – where the teachers walk in and out of different forms of power and control positions, where the interaction changes and subjects intertwine – demand a sense of security about roles and positions as I previously stated. As a class teacher you have the possibility to develop relationships to all the students and to create a specific culture in the classroom which makes changes in framing possible and uncomplicated. Both Gloria and Heather describe that this

has to do with the bonds that you create with your own set cohort of students – students know you as a teacher, what your expectations are and how you act in different situations.
The secret in making the changes in rhythms work seems to be that both students and teachers rely on their understanding of how "it is supposed to work", they have an agreement for how communication and interaction, the regulative discourse, should take place in each part of the main lesson.

The Main Lesson – a Mixture of Strategies

The structure of the main lesson – with different parts with different characteristics – as described in section 3.2.5, gives the main lesson a predictable rhythm and clear rules both when it comes to the instructional and the regulative discourse – what to do and how to behave. Bernstein (2000) states that these two discourses operate in education and that the regulative discourse always is dominant – the social rules are always affecting how we interact and communicate, and hence how teaching and learning are made possible.
Andy describes how the students are allowed to interact with each other during the rhythmical part and how they then change their focus to him when it is time for the teacher-led part. Changes in activities and interaction, moments of "inhaling and exhaling" allow the rhythm and framing to change – there is a strong framing with clear rules during lectures and instructions, but a less obvious one when students and teacher interact in informal and friendly ways, as in the rhythmical part. The content, working methods, pace, and communication within the different parts are obvious both for students and teachers and hence give a strong framing.
Classification between subjects is generally weak in the lower grades in Waldorf-Steiner schools, as in Gloria's history lesson which contained elements of history and geography as well as arts. Intertwining and connecting different school subjects can be a way to create a sense of meaning for students – and this meaning-making is highlighted by all the teachers as

a method to get students engaged and active, ideas that other studies also conclude (Christidis, 2020, Morais, 2002, Öhman-Gullberg, 2006). To highlight many aspects of a school subject and using different working methods gives students with different strengths a chance to succeed which in turn promotes inclusion.

The teachers describe how they adjust and change when they sense that their teaching is not working, but they all stay within the structure – following the traditional rules for classification between the different parts in the main lesson – but changing their interpersonal framing according to the activity at hand. To have this ability is connected to rhythms, something that the teachers describe as self-evident – education must be in motion, something in process – this is how they have worked for many years, and they describe the method as being successful.

I will now shift my focus and discuss how interpersonal classification and framing, can be understood as both conscious and unconscious strategies for educational relationship building and inclusive education – where there is a sense of a "we" in the classroom and teachers work in a conscious way to make students feel included in a class community – a theme that emerged from my data.

9.2.3 To Create a Sense of Meaning and Belonging – Inclusive Education

In a classroom there is always a variety of students, those who like school and those who do not, those who find schoolwork easy and interesting and those who struggle. To make all students feel included and comfortable, even when something is difficult or when students feel challenged, is an important task for teachers (Ljungblad, 2016). Bernstein (2000, p. xx) claims that it is a condition for effective democracy, schools must strive to ensure that students are included socially, individually, and culturally.

The Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe how they try to find activities that promote inclusion and a sense of togetherness, they all emphasize the regulative discourse in education. The goal

is that students get an individual sense of learning and gaining new experiences as well as feeling included. This could be referred to the pedagogic contract that the teachers in Tjärnstig's study (2019) discussed, a metaphor to explain that the teacher will act in the student's best interest, and that education will lead to something meaningful. To fulfil that promise is not always possible, but it must be the goal, as described by for example Diana, Fiona, and Heather.

Janice claims that the rhythmical part of the main lesson can be a way to make students experience the strength of cooperation and Diana expresses the same idea. When a group activity really works – it helps students realize the importance of being part of a group – to feel included in a classroom community, a weak classification among students. This is also what Chris describes in his comment about experiencing each other as fellow human beings – as parts of something bigger than oneself.

The teachers emphasize the importance of making sure that students feel good about themselves, no student should leave the classroom with a sense of failure. This attitude relates to how Noddings (2005) describes the guiding goal for schools – to make sure that students feel cared for and confirmed by their teachers. Iris states that to try to help students come to an understanding about *why* they are learning different things, things that sometimes can be hard to understand both intellectually and emotionally, is a way to increase both engagement and motivation.

To try to make students feel that they have some kind of control over the situation and that the teachers are there to help and support them, not just to assess their performance, is essential (Partanen and Skolverket, 2019). Diana describes how she tries to predict what problems and difficulties different students will have when she introduces something new. She needs to see through that in advance so that she can give the support needed. Diana's ideas agree with how

Kotte (2017) describes the work with equality in schools – to plan in a way that considers the students' different abilities promotes equality.

The teacher-led practice, the strong interpersonal classification between teacher and students alongside weak classification among students, and strong framing with a clear structure, is a way to work with inclusion. It helps students to understand what is expected and how the rules work, this is especially important for weak students or students in the SEND spectrum (Olsson, 2016, Vinterek, 2006). As I explained in section 3.1, in most Swedish classrooms there are students with different forms of challenges, and teachers need to adjust their teaching accordingly. The idea of weak classification among students of the same age, that Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy builds upon, promotes inclusion among students, and alongside the strong emphasis on positive relationships and teacher-led education it corresponds with the conclusions from the study by Gustafson and Hjörne (2015) – clear instructions combined with strategies to build relationships create a positive learning environment for all students.

9.2.4 Reflections

We can see from this discussion, that the Waldorf-Steiner teachers' lived experience of rhythmical and balanced education includes much more than just changes in activities. It can be explained as mechanisms of interpersonal classification and framing that alter and allow different forms of activities, communication, and interaction where a strive for positive relationships with students is in focus – a teacher responsibility. Together these elements create a web that allows motion, changes, and rhythms, in a predictable way, and that creates conditions for trust to emerge so that educational relationships can be established.

All the teachers who participated in this study are well-experienced teachers – teachers and students have a well-established relationship, and a consensus about classroom culture that includes both outspoken and unspoken rules about communication and interaction. This of

course affects how the teachers describe their lived experiences – they are secure in their roles and have developed their own approach to both their practice and to their students. When they describe their practice, they talk about how they actually work and what they strive for. They do not claim that the Waldorf-Steiner practice always works – all the teachers mention that it is not possible to succeed with your rhythmical teaching or interaction with students every day. They give examples of troubles and worries, both when it comes to their teaching, and to relationships and interaction with students.

The participating Waldorf-Steiner teachers do not reflect much upon their power and control position – Gloria and Fiona are the only ones who briefly address this question – the framework from Bernstein is hence useful to shed light on these issues in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogic practice. The interpersonal way of balancing power and control makes these elements a bit invisible and sometimes difficult to distinguish, at the same time as the teacher's role and control in the teaching situation is evident.

Both strong leadership qualities and relationship building are elements that the teachers talk about as something necessary in the teaching practice, ideas highlighted by Steiner (1932/1981), and in contemporary research and studies (Aspelin, 2021, Biesta, 2016, Lilja, 2013, Ljungblad, 2016, Schwartz, 2013).

I suggest that classification and framing is strong in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools, but since the element of an interpersonal attitude is most present – it includes an approach from the teachers that is easily mistaken for what Bernstein describes as weak classification and framing. For example, the demarcation between groups or individuals is not always clear – which implies weak classification – interaction between teachers and students is informal and "easy-going" – power positions are not always obvious. Sometimes framing *appears* to be weak – where it is possible to change the conditions and students have an influence and possibilities to affect teaching and learning. The teachers use both planned, improvised, and

tacit strategies where they appear to let go of control and let students influence the situation. These examples could be understood as working with mixed pedagogic practices (Morais, 2002) – but I interpret this apparently weakened framing as in fact strong – roles are well established, the teachers are obvious leaders in the classroom – even when they appear to let go of their control and let students have a saying – their position is still clear. It is the *form* of the framing that changes, not framing in itself, it takes a more invisible and subtle form, but is still most present – a fact that both teacher and students seem to be aware of. Relationships between teachers and students are framed in an interpersonal way – with negotiated rules about how to interact and communicate and about what students are supposed to work with and learn. The interpersonal approach to the mechanisms of classification and framing enables the teachers to be both someone who construct rules about performance and conduct, and a supportive companion – it is an attitude towards students that allows personal encounters in a framed way.

I will now move further to my second research question and discuss the teachers' lived experience of being part of a strong tradition and at the same time adjusting to demands from outside authorities and debates.

9.3 The Shared and Individual Repertoire

The teaching practice is always limited and framed by regulations and guidelines from authorities, society must rest assured that teachers do not have an "own agenda" or misbehave. In addition to that, teachers in Waldorf-Steiner schools need to relate to the pedagogic traditions in their community. The traditions create a kind of limited freedom where the teachers can be creative and make their teaching personalized – within the given rules in the tradition. The teachers in this study describe this as something positive – it makes

it possible for them to lean on solid ground and plan, prepare and conduct teaching during the main lesson with their own approach to the theme or subject.

In the upcoming sections, I will look closer at:

- How the strong tradition in Waldorf-Steiner schools creates both limitations and creativity.
- How the Waldorf-Steiner teachers' tacit knowledge is connected to context.
- How a tentative sense of movement is visible in the Waldorf-Steiner pedagogic practice and discourse.

9.3.1 Being Creative Within the Given Structure

The participating Waldorf-Steiner teachers trust and feel confident about the traditional Waldorf-Steiner pedagogic ways of conducting teaching. They stay within the structures of the pedagogic tradition, none of them look upon this as controlling or limiting their individual practice. The choices they take, the actions and the practice that they conduct, are affected by overarching ideas, and in that sense, there is a strong internal framing from the tradition and community for Waldorf-Steiner teachers. They are, just as most of us, unaware of the influence of the context and the discourse (Adler, 2019). At the same time, the teachers challenge some of the ideas and state that it is impossible to just cling on to old ways of doing things.

The practice that the Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe gives us clues about the overarching ideas, the background knowledge in their context and community – the discourse – with its taken-for-granted assumptions and obvious ways of thinking and doing (Adler, 2019). The Waldorf-Steiner teachers do not question the teacher-led and teacher-controlled education, or the given structure – on the contrary, they claim that it creates a situation where students get rich experiences and a broad knowledge, and that it gives creative freedom for them as teachers. Their reflections correspond with how Granlund (2013) describes that the teacher

training for Waldorf-Steiner teachers is strongly framed by the educators. I suggest that the internal framing within the Waldorf-Steiner pedagogic practice is strong, not only in the teacher education, but also in the daily practice. Today in Sweden, the national curriculum adds other frames than the Waldorf-Steiner pedagogic tradition and work plan, but since it does not go into *how* the central content in each school subject should be taught there are still possibilities to use the traditional methods.

The taken-for-granted assumption in the teachers' lived experience is that *the structure of the main lesson gives both a predictable set of routines and rules – and a possibility for individual, creative freedom for teachers.* But this assumption is also possible to turn upside down and understand as a consequence of being part of a context with strong traditions and guidelines. The teachers' willingness to stay within the given frames means that *the creative freedom is framed and is what maintains the structure and the predictability in the traditional practice.*

The teachers are framing their pedagogic freedom, or perhaps adjusting to the context, in both a conscious and an unconscious way to keep the structure and the traditions. They stay inside the framed practice and adapt their creativity and freedom to out- and unspoken rules within their community, and this affects their intuitive, and improvised actions.

9.3.2 Intuition and Improvisation – A Contextualized Skill

All the teachers talk about tacit and embodied knowledge as a combination of experience and intuition. They describe how they sometimes need to be able to act in the moment and that they have developed strategies to deal with the unpredictable.

Ljungblad (2016) writes that many actions in the pedagogic situation are improvised – but I suggest that there are limitations to that improvisation – not just in Waldorf-Steiner schools but in all school settings. Intuition and improvisation are coloured by the context that we belong to, we act in the spur of the moment in a way that is accepted and seen as appropriate

(Adler, 2019). To know, or sense, what is a correct response to a situation is a contextualized skill – social order and knowledge are bound to interaction among people, and together we create the norms and values that colour our actions (Adler, 2019). Andy refers to this, saying that he has a notion about how it *should be*, Heather and Fiona both compare teaching to being a musician – fine-tuning your instrument so that it sounds "right". Lupton (2013) describes how this metaphor – the teacher as a conductor of an orchestra – often is used by researchers who investigate artistic teaching and how the elements of improvisation and intuition create an aesthetic experience. Teaching as an art demands a degree of freedom, not total freedom, there are rules about subject content and established techniques and methods to use – and these form a point of departure for how artistic teachers conduct teaching in their classrooms (Lupton, 2013). This can be connected to Glorias comment about the pedagogy as pieces of LEGO, Waldorf-Steiner teachers have the possibility to be creative and improvisational – but the teachers frame their practice based on the given framework from the tradition and context.

The Waldorf-Steiner teachers claim that pedagogic intuition is something that you develop over time, even though it also demands some kind of specific personality. This is not something unique for Waldorf-Steiner teachers, many researchers conclude that intuition is a key in education and that the ability to improvise in the moment is crucial (Jacklin, 2004, Ljungblad, 2016, Van Manen, 2015). In the interviews, the teachers talk about this in a metaphoric way. They use phrases like "my sixth sense" and "my palette of colours" to explain the tacit knowledge that they have developed during their years as teachers.

When the teachers describe how they use their intuition, they lean on the knowledge that they have accepted and adapted through their participation in a strong tradition – a knowledge that gives both freedom and limitations for their actions. Vygotsky (1978) claims that this adaption means that we appropriate the knowledge that we get from our context and make it

part of ourselves in an unconscious way – and that description fits well with how the teachers express themselves. They do not see the internal framing within their community as limiting, instead it creates stability and a pedagogic direction.

The possibilities to discuss dilemmas and problems with colleagues can be a way to get access to the important tacit knowledge in a community (Samuelsson and Colnerud, 2015). The teachers all say that it can be of big help to discuss, and put words to, your dilemmas and get input from colleagues, both as structured mentorship and as informal conversations. This is how the shared repertoire, the taken-for-granted assumptions and unconscious ways of thinking about pedagogy, is developed, and maintained in the community. The teachers turn to the "well-known", their background knowledge is confirmed and strengthened by colleagues and mentors. This means that the individual repertoire of tacit and embodied knowledge in the practice is closely connected to the shared one in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools – it is a contextual intuition and experience.

9.3.3 Contextualized Knowledge

The tacit knowledge that the teachers in this study refer to, has its roots in the Waldorf-Steiner pedagogic discourse, with its strong internal framing, in an obvious way. The teachers have all worked in Waldorf-Steiner schools for many years and adapted to the "this is how *we* do it" ideas that permeate the Waldorf-Steiner community and the local culture in different schools. The teachers use a framework that has been developed over the years in a specific context, something that Kelchtermans (2009) refers to as a guide that is affected by outside regulations and students' attitudes. How to handle everyday situations or a problematic situation is bound to the context and the rules and ideas from the pedagogic tradition and discourse. For example, using teaching time for a walk into nature as a method to create a sense of "we", or to do a clapping game as a start of the day are ideas with roots in the traditional ways of doing things in Waldorf-Steiner schools – not from the dominating

discourse in Sweden. Adler (2019, p. 112) refers to this as "[…] a shared practice that embodies the knowledge the community develops, shares, and maintains". Tjärnstig (2019) concludes that the didactic practice in Waldorf-Steiner schools could be described as situated, rational, and based on knowledge and experience about how to conduct teaching based on specific ideals and didactic models of acting.

It is not surprising that the rules, be it outspoken or unspoken ones, from the pedagogic tradition in Waldorf-Steiner schools have a strong impact and influence on the participating Waldorf-Steiner teachers in this study – it agrees with the conclusions in the studies by Tjärnstig (2019) and Binetti (2020), and with the theories about how we are influenced by our context (Adler, 2019, Jacklin, 2004, Raveaud, 2016). To enter and participate in any community makes us adapt to, and appropriate, the ideas and ways of doing things that are looked upon as obvious ways to interact and communicate (Adler, 2019, Wenger, 1999). The Waldorf-Steiner teachers lived experience is that the traditional ways and the contextualized knowledge benefit students' learning – they work as a framework or a starting point – when planning and conducting teaching – although the teachers also challenge some of the ideas.

9.3.4 Towards Something New?

The Waldorf-Steiner tradition and community provide ideas and inspiration to teachers, making it possible to be creative and artistic in the classroom, but it is obvious that it can also contain elements that are limiting or dogmatic. Erica was really upset about formulations like "teachers must", "students should" in books about the pedagogy, it makes the practice controlled by traditions and leaves no space for the individual teacher or student. Janice claims that it is a strength to be a part of a bigger community but that there is also a risk that you become blind to the weaknesses. There are sometimes individuals with a high status that set the agenda about what is a correct "Waldorf-way" of doing things.

Fixed ideas upon how the pedagogic practice should be conducted, both when it comes to *what* to teach and *how* to teach it, is something that all the teachers in this study question – at the same time as they describe how they, themselves, in many ways keep the traditional way of doing things alive by framing their own practice. The teachers talk about the importance of understanding the underlying pedagogical ideas and not just focusing on a given structure. They emphasize that the pedagogy needs to be up to date – but they are keepers of the tradition – they all stay within the given structure, and they use the traditional methods – even though there might be elements of new technology and subject content to make sure that the demands in the national curriculum are fulfilled.

A pedagogic idea from a hundred years ago needs to be renewed and constantly updated to the needs and conditions of its time – but as the teachers in this study describe it – this has not always been the case. Many of the changes that have been done in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools come from demands from the outside, as the Agency of Education and the Swedish School Inspectorate – not from developmental work within the community. Even though authors and thinkers inside the Waldorf-Steiner community, as Dahlin (2017), Rawson (2014), and Schieren (2009), have encouraged modernization and a need to connect the pedagogic ideas to established methods and theory – the teachers describe how some ideas are still stuck in the walls and hard to change and that there can be areas that some view as non-negotiable.

9.3.5 Movement and Change in the Discourse

None of the participating teacher mention anthroposophy and the references to Steiner are rare in the interviews, instead the teachers talk about the overarching ideas, such as the age-appropriate teaching, subject integration, and rhythms, as a *practice*, not as a philosophy or an ideology. This could be interpreted as if they assume that I am aware of the overarching ideas

from Steiner, but also as if they have a quite free relation to the philosophical ideas and are more concerned and interested in the daily practice. This, according to Randoll (2013) is a tendency in Germany, a more critical approach to anthroposophy and openness for change and modernization of the pedagogy.

The teachers question the lack of documentation and describe that the resistance to formulate the pedagogy – in a way that makes it possible for "outsiders" to understand – creates problems on many levels. There are problems with introducing new teachers and the tendency to lean on "old ways of thinking" does not work, you must adapt to your own time and to your students and not hold on to fixed ideas, they conclude. The Waldorf-Steiner pedagogic practice needs to be strengthened, documented, and formulated, the teachers claim. The lack of educated Waldorf-Steiner teachers affects the pedagogic practice and there is a risk that the pedagogic uniqueness gets lost if you do not have the ability to make it clear and visible. This idea was something that the interviewed teachers in the study by Binetti (2020) also discussed – there is a need for improvement and development of the pedagogy.

There is a subtle sense of change in how the teachers reflect upon the out- and unspoken rules from the traditional Waldorf-Steiner practice. The teachers challenge some of the ideas in the tradition and call for modernization and new ways of doing and thinking about the daily practice. They put forward the risk of too much focus on structure and the risk of falling into the trap of dogmas – there is a need to find and change the weaknesses in the practice.

The teachers in this study express that the pedagogy in many ways is an oral tradition – a kind of background knowledge to agree upon and take for granted. This is problematic and makes it difficult to show how Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy works, and it can create difficulties when trying to make changes. There is a need to find a way to include the demands from the national curriculum and to do that in a way that corresponds with the Waldorf-Steiner

pedagogic ideas. As I explained in section 3.3.4, this is an on-going process in Sweden and not easy to solve.

This sense of a tentative movement in the Waldorf-Steiner discourse, as implicitly formulated by the participating teachers, could be seen as an attempt from teachers to liberate themselves from the elements of fixed ideas and dogmas and a call for a way to create a domain of knowledge, a proven experience-based practice, possible to document and formulate – but also as a consequence of the demands from the outside. The mandatory legislations that limit the possibilities for alternative pedagogic approaches in Sweden are affecting the daily practice for teachers and schools.

This premonition of a tentative shift in practice also affects the discourse. Conditions for Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden have changed and this has caused changes within the practice. Activities that were unthinkable 20 years ago are now part of the practice, as the use of digital tools, giving grades and using assessment criteria and adapting the workplan to the national curriculum, the organisation and management have gone from a flat organisation to a more hierarchic one. These changes in practice create changes in the educational discourse – the way to think about teaching and learning.

This is possible to understand as the classification, the boundaries between Waldorf-Steiner schools, and other alternative approaches, and municipal schools, are weakening.

Bernstein writes that:

> (…) as the classification becomes weaker, we must have an understanding of the recontextualizing principles which construct the new discourses and the ideological bias that underlies any such recontextualising. Every time a discourse moves, there is a space for ideology to play. (Bernstein, 2000, p. 9).

The Education Act and the national curriculum decrease the possibilities for alternative pedagogies and schools in Sweden – schools' autonomy and pedagogic freedom is limited.

This is a problem, not only for Waldorf-Steiner schools, but for all alternative schools in Sweden – the dominating agenda is slowly but surely forcing schools to adapt to the ideas close to the neo-liberal approach to education as discussed in Chapter 4 (section 4.1.1). The fact that Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools are funded by the state, and hence in a position of dependency, makes it difficult to resist or protest the demands from authorities. Instead, Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools are forced to compromise and accept guidelines and regulations with a quite different view upon knowledge. The possibility for students and guardians to actively choose school placement is legislated in the Education Act – but the possibility to choose a specific pedagogic approach is decreasing – alternative pedagogies are all being steered towards the dominating discourse.

9.3.6 Reflections

The embodied and tacit knowledge that the Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe is both individual and shared – it is a contextualized tacit knowledge, influenced by the overarching ideas, the discourse, within the Waldorf-Steiner community. This contextualized tacit knowledge is developed and maintained within the community – the teachers lean on their understanding of the discourse when using their intuition – acting in ways that correspond with the overarching ideas. Even though they keep the tradition, they are not totally controlled by it – they reflect on weaknesses and areas for development, they are both keepers and challengers of the practice and tradition.

The strong tradition can be looked upon as a specific discourse of pedagogy with its own rules and ideas about both pedagogic practice and legitimate knowledge. The Waldorf-Steiner discourse is subordinate to the legislations given by authorities, accepting the stronger discourse in some parts but taking its own approach to others. Waldorf-Steiner schools can still work with interdisciplinary teaching and use both theoretical and practical working methods – using their specific structure and phenomenological approach to teaching and

learning – but they must make sure, and be able to show, that they fulfil the demands from the national curriculum. Alternative schools in Sweden are being forced into compromising and giving up pedagogic uniqueness This is a problematic and complex balancing act – to adjust to both external and internal framing.

In the next chapter, I will evaluate this research study and summarize the conclusions from this discussion so that my research questions can be answered. I will point to areas that could benefit to be investigated further.

10. Evaluation, Contributions of Knowledge and Conclusions

In this last chapter, I will evaluate the process of this study. I will look at some of the areas that I see as limitations and highlight the contributions that this study gives when it comes to methodological, empirical, and theoretical questions. I will present the conclusions drawn and what implications for the future these conclusions point to.

10.1.1 Quality Evaluation

The trustworthiness of this study is achieved by taking several steps to address credibility, dependability, and transferability. I have explained the rationale for this study and given arguments for its theme; the debate in Sweden, the lack of academic research about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy and my own interest in investigating the pedagogic practice in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools. I present a thorough review of literature and theory and connect theories and concepts from Basil Bernstein, relational pedagogy and other important authors and studies to education in general and to Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools and practice. In the two methods chapters I thoroughly describe the different measures that I have taken to make my study trustworthy. As an example, in section 6.1.6, I describe how I constructed a scale to make sure that the areas that I coded as important got a high score – that these areas were discussed in depth and emphasized in the interviews – to make sure that my analysis was not coloured by my own pre-assumptions. I give detailed information of all the steps in both data construction and data analysis. In the findings chapters I describe the reflections from the participating teachers with many examples and quotes – this makes it possible for a reader to understand the discussion in Chapter 9, and the conclusions that I present in this part. In the discussion part I show, and give arguments for, that the practice in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools can be understood as a visible pedagogy with an emphasis on trustful relationships –

which makes it possible to describe Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy with contemporary and established concepts from Basil Bernstein and from relational pedagogy.

When it comes to the questions of ethics, I have followed the guidelines from Plymouth University, and taken particular notice of issues concerning the identity of the participating teachers. All the teachers were offered to read through the transcribed interviews, one of them wanted to do this but had no objections. I believe that the measures taken have made sure that none of the participants have risked endangering and made sure that the data have stayed valid.

Overall, based on what I believe is a successful generation of data, of protection of the participating Waldorf-Steiner teachers, and acquisition of knowledge, I find this study successful. At the same time, there are always some limitations that need to be addressed.

10.1.2 Limitations

My study involves 10 teachers from nine different schools and the setting is the Swedish educational system. As I described earlier (see section 3.1.4), the tendency in Sweden is that a majority of students who attend a free school come from middle – or upper-class families, although there are Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden that are more multicultural and diverse. Due to the pandemic, the teachers in my study all work at schools in strong socio-economic areas – this might affect the findings and conclusions in this study. This fact makes it hard to claim that the findings and the conclusions drawn can be used as a general picture of Waldorf-Steiner schools and their practice – the situation for Waldorf-Steiner schools in Sweden is different compared to other countries. This affects how teachers in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools plan and conduct their teaching, and how they interpret their profession and their practice in a way that might not be transferable to another context. This study gives a hint about the pedagogic practice but cannot claim to be representative of all Waldorf-Steiner schools.

Another limitation is that I have worked as a solo researcher. I was the only one who coded and analysed the empirical material. Therefore, there is always a possibility that some sort of bias has found its way into the research – in an unconscious way and without intent. My data is rich, more than 200 pages, and it took a lot of time and effort to analyse. It also required a high degree of familiarity, connecting the different protocols to field notes and interviews. I believe that I have done my best to stay free from bias or subjectiveness. I have followed the guidelines from, for example, Van Manen (2016), Lindseth and Norberg (2004), and Henriksson (2012) and stayed close to the data through the whole process.

A third limitation is the fact that I have been a part of the Swedish Waldorf-Steiner community for a long time. This can be looked upon both as an advantage and disadvantage. A researcher with no previous contact or "inside information" about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy might have come to different conclusions.

The delimitation of this study is that the focus is set on the main lesson, although more general questions also were discussed during the interviews. A school-day is much more than one lesson, but to make it possible to narrow down the scope, this is a conscious choice. The main lesson is referred to as a cornerstone in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy and therefore, it is logical to choose this particular focus,

Another delimitation is that my study is concerned with the lived experience of Waldorf-Steiner teachers – it does not include reflections from students.

10.2 Scholarly Contributions

This study contributes broadly to the existing body of literature about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy, but from an intriguing angle since it leans on theories that, to my knowledge, have not been used previously. This study highlights methods and ideas used in Waldorf-Steiner

pedagogy and hence makes some aspects visible. It gives new perspectives on the theories from Bernstein and relational pedagogy, and makes specific and original methodological, empirical, and theoretical contributions. I will give an overview of the academic contributions of this study.

10.2.1 Methodology and Methods Contribution

This study was affected by the Covid 19 pandemic, my initial plans for the data construction had to be changed. It was a big loss at the time, but when looking back I can see that it also had some advantages. To be forced to change direction and use the methods possible, created a situation where I as a researcher had to think in new ways, be flexible and open minded, and not be limited by the initial idea. Using online interviews was a new experience for me and it shows that today, with modern techniques, it is possible to find solutions.

Using several ways of constructing data highlights different aspects of the question at hand. To ask the participants to write protocols as a starting point for both observations and interviews, was a way to get a pre-understanding about the teachers' daily work and their experience and reflections. To go into an observation or an interview situation with this pre-knowledge is an advantage and makes it possible to come into a creative dialogue right from the start. Assuring the participants in a qualitative research project that their voices are interesting, that it is not about "interrogating" them about their ideas, but coming to an understanding is of great importance. Perhaps it is possible to connect the positive dialogue that arose in the interviews with the importance of trust, a quality that is not only important between teachers and students, but also between researchers and informants. Striving to create a climate of trust provides the conditions to arrive at an interview situation where the informants feel that their experiences are taken seriously and that they have interesting and important insights to share.

To use a hermeneutic phenomenological approach as an initial way of interpreting and understanding the data – and then adding established concepts from Bernstein and relational pedagogy – provides a multifaceted perspective with the possibility to use both an abstract-theoretical approach and a humanistic lens.

I have constantly gone back to my data throughout the whole process of this study – revised, re-investigated, and checked the lived experiences of the participating teachers. The understanding and analysis of the data has been a work in progress, alive and in motion.

10.2.2 Empirical Contribution

There is a lack of academic work about Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy in Sweden. This study will be a useful addition to empirical literature about the pedagogic practice and it sheds light on some of the unspoken and taken-for-granted assumptions within the tradition. It also shows how the classroom practice in Waldorf-Steiner schools looks in a setting where many compromises, changes and modernizations have been done. This study focuses both on practice and on pedagogic discourse and provides thick descriptions from practising teachers in Sweden today.

This study will be useful both for people within the Waldorf-Steiner community, hopefully awakening both inspiration and questions among teachers, and for those who are not familiar with the pedagogy. Since the study focuses on the practice, not on the philosophical ideas from Steiner, it is oriented towards pedagogic questions that have been on the agenda in Sweden for a long time. Questions about teacher-led or student-active methods, teacher authority and interdisciplinary methods alongside the importance of positive relationships, trust and meaning, are in this study aimed at Waldorf-Steiner schools, but the questions are relevant for any pedagogical approach. In Sweden, we need to nuance the language we use when speaking about education, we need to distinguish the educational relationship from

other forms of relationships. In the educational relationship, teachers are leaders and supportive companions, but the relationship is framed –with clear roles and boundaries.

As I stated in Chapter 3 (see section 3.1.6) the pedagogic discourse in Sweden is unstable and unpredictable and this has led to a situation with decreasing results, a lack of teachers, and recurring changes in laws and guidelines. School authorities need to stop jumping from one idea to another – and realize that there are no "quick fixes" in the complex conduct of teaching.

The fact that Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy leans on a strong and old tradition may have both strengths and weaknesses – my research shows that one of the strengths is that pedagogical consensus creates stability for both teachers and students. This is something to consider in a wider sense in Sweden – how can politicians and policymakers make the pedagogic discourse more stable and possible for teachers to lean on, and hence turn the negative development? A long-term perspective is needed where complex questions are taken seriously and discussed by politicians in collaboration with the experts in the field – teachers and school leaders.

10.2.3 Theoretical Contribution

In this study, I have chosen to use two very different ways of understanding education and pedagogic practice. There is no contradiction letting different theories enrich each other – it is a way to go deeper and further. The theory from Bernstein focuses on abstract structures while relational pedagogy is occupied with areas often described as tacit and embodied. When we connect them, they complement each other and give new perspectives and ideas about education and pedagogy.

An example of this is that I could formulate the concepts interpersonal framing and classification which I argue are concepts that can explain and highlight pedagogic practice, not just in Waldorf-Steiner schools, but in settings where teaching and learning are looked

upon as something that must be controlled by teachers but done with an attitude of trust and care. There is often a gap between educational theories and teachers' everyday practice and this study becomes an attempt to make that gap smaller. The combined concepts make it possible for practising teachers to recognize themselves and their practice.

This study shows that Waldorf-Steiner education in Sweden can be connected to the chosen theories – and by doing that – some aspects of Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy have become more visible and transparent and possible to discuss and problematize.

10.3 Conclusions

In this study I have presented how 10 Swedish Waldorf-Steiner teachers reflect on their lived experiences of their practice. I have analysed their protocols, observations, and the interviews by using a hermeneutic phenomenological approach and a thematic analysis, and by using a conceptual framework drawn up with concepts from both literature and empirical material.

I have been searching for answers to my research questions:

- *How do Swedish Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe and reflect upon their lived experiences of conducting a "rhythmical and balanced education" during main lesson – and what do they experience as necessary conditions to establish this approach?*
- *How do Swedish Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe their lived experience of being part of a pedagogic tradition and at the same time adjusting to the demands from the outside?*

There were five big ideas that shone through the constructed data:

1. Balancing responsibility.
2. Shifts and changes.
3. Inclusive education.
4. The pedagogic repertoire.

5. Being part of a strong tradition.

These five themes are not insulated from each other, on the contrary, they intertwine and create a web of ideas that are connected to each other.

The idea about the teacher as a positive authority and the focus on teacher-led education in Waldorf-Steiner schools can be connected to Bernstein's framework and the basic ideas from relational pedagogy are visible in the teachers' emphasis on trying to know their students, to build strong and trustful relationships.

I have introduced the concepts *interpersonal framing and classification* as an interpretation of how the participating teachers describe their lived experiences of teaching, interaction, and communication with students. In Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools, the teacher is the one in control and power who sets the agenda – but this is conditioned by trustful, framed, and classified educational relationships with students.

This study suggests that when we connect the ideas from Bernstein with relational pedagogy, we get a clearer picture of the pedagogic practice in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools. The combination of the two theories makes it possible to explain Swedish Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy as a practice that strives for a visible pedagogy – permeated by a clear structure, rhythms, and balance in both education and in interactions – by changes and shifts in a strong interpersonal classification and framing, and a focus on interpersonal meetings and educational relationship building.

I will now present the conclusions drawn from this research project and give a short summary and argument for each conclusion so that my research questions are answered.

- In education, trust is closely connected to the mechanisms of power and control – to teacher responsibility. The key issue for teachers is to find a balance between the roles of strong leaders and builders of safe educational relationships – if students are to trust their teachers, this needs to be in place. The experience of responsibility and trust are

overarching themes in how the participating teachers describe their practice – a condition if education is to be rhythmical and balanced, inclusive, and motivating.

The way the Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe their lived experience of their practice suggests that interpersonal classification and framing can be understood as taking on responsibility. The teachers interpret teacher responsibility not only as taking responsibility for the teaching content, but as building trustful relationships with students that include clear boundaries and obvious roles from both parties. In order to become an educational relationship – both classification and framing need to be strong, but interpersonal. Teacher-student relationships must be both professional and personal – but never private – students need to have an experience that teachers are trustworthy and able to take on this responsibility.

The teachers describe how they actively work to make students experience that they are part of a class community – classification among students at the same age is weak. The teachers express that they strive to make all students feel that they can succeed, and to include varied activities and elements in your teaching is a way to do that. Teachers are obvious leaders in the classroom and the structure creates a sense of order for both students and teachers and this approach promotes inclusion.

- Rhythm and balance are interpreted in a broad sense and related to both the knowledge process, to activities in the classroom and to interaction with students.

The shifts and changes in activities and working methods, and the changes between formal and informal interactions during the main lesson can be explained as changes in strong interpersonal framing – and this is a way to construct rhythm and balance. The changes are dependent on the negotiation with students to accept the teacher as a trustworthy leader. Teachers and students have developed a mutual agreement and understanding for interaction

and communication – based on the strong tradition and culture in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools.

- The given structure of the main lesson in Waldorf-Steiner schools creates predictability and possibilities for teachers to be creative – but it also frames their creativity and freedom. The teachers maintain the given structure by their willingness to hold on to the tradition.

The teachers in this study all claim that the tradition in Waldorf-Steiner practice is a strength and that there are possibilities to be creative and artistic within the given frames. The traditional methods create stability in both the practice and in the discourse – as opposed to the constant changes in guidelines and regulations for schools in Sweden. They all also question some of the traditional ways of doing things – stating that the practice must be up to date. At the same time, it is visible that they contribute to the perpetuation of the strong traditions – they do not question the structure of the main lesson or use activities too far away from the original ideals. The overarching ideas and discourse about knowledge, teaching and learning from the Waldorf-Steiner tradition are visible and noticeable in how they describe their lived experience of their practice.

- The tacit and embodied knowledge in the Waldorf-Steiner community is both individual and shared – and there is a tentative tendency of movement in the discourse.

The tacit and embodied knowledge that the participating teachers refer to rests on the strong tradition in Waldorf-Steiner practice. The teachers describe their embodied knowledge as a combination of intuition and experience from their teaching in Waldorf-Steiner schools. The tacit knowledge is shared and bound to the social interactions between teachers at each school, and between Waldorf-Steiner schools as a national and worldwide community. The tacit knowledge is shared, maintained, and developed primarily as an oral tradition, based on

the overarching ideas about pedagogy from Rudolf Steiner without much reflection on the taken-for-granted assumptions.

But still, there is a sense of movement, changes, in both the practice and in how the teachers reflect upon some of the taken-for-granted ways of conducting teaching and thinking about the pedagogy – the discourse. The teachers in this study have been forced by the demands from the outside to focus more on the measurable elements in education – the positive side of this is that it has increased the teachers' professionalism. On the negative side are the demands to let go of, or compromise with, some of the key ideas in the pedagogy. The lack of educated Waldorf-Steiner teachers creates changes from the inside – consensus is not always possible anymore. The teachers recognize areas that need to be developed and modernized if the pedagogy is to have a place in the Swedish educational system.

These conclusions give a hint about areas that would benefit from further investigation and discussions within the Waldorf-Steiner community, among teachers, school management and policymakers.

10.4 Implications for Future Research

This study is just a small attempt to look closer at Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy and practice – there are many areas that this study does not go into. I have identified four areas that I suggest need clarification, development, investigation, and further research.

The Question about Control and Power

As shown in this study, teachers in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools conduct strong control and power in their classrooms. When this is done with a sense of respect, care, and interest for students it will create a visible pedagogy which benefits students. But, since the teachers seem to be unaware of this fact, there is always a risk that the positive leadership turns into

something negative where students are simply to obey. The system with class teachers who are responsible for a set cohort of students for a long time and teaches in many subjects increases this risk – if the personal matching between teacher and student is complicated it can lead to situations where students end up in vulnerable positions.

As I have stated in this study, it can be a sensitive topic to address questions of control and power in schools, there is a tendency in Sweden to interpret this as something negative and authoritarian. Formulating what teacher authority and strong interpersonal framing and classification mean in a Waldorf-Steiner setting, or in municipal schools, is an area for further investigation, for individual teachers, school leaders and management. I suggest that recognizing, discussing and problematizing the conduct of control and power should be part of the Waldorf-Steiner teacher training program (WLH) and state teacher training programmes. The Swedish Federation for Waldorfschools, as well as the Agency of Education, need to formulate guidelines that help teachers establish a culture in classrooms where this power and control are conducted with care and self-awareness.

Waldorf- Steiner Pedagogy for the Future

The participating teachers in this study all claim that the practice in the classrooms is working – and that students get deep knowledge, a sense of meaning and belonging. Statistic show that students and guardians are satisfied with the education in Waldorf-Steiner schools and that students' merit points are in line with municipal schools. The teachers also agree that there are weaknesses in the pedagogic tradition that need to be addressed and developed. Many of the pedagogic ideas are part of an oral tradition, difficult for new teachers or outsiders to fully understand. In the reflections from the teachers, there are hints of elements of dogma in the community and they state that there are people reluctant to changes and modernization of the practice. The lack of documented developmental work, critical evaluations and established research methods makes the pedagogy vague and invisible in the debate about education – as

I described earlier, the changes in the pedagogic practice have been done mainly due to demands from the outside – not from developmental work within the community. Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy in Sweden does not have a strong voice since it cannot provide authorities or media with a proven experience-based explanation, or adequate research, on how the pedagogic methods benefit students. This is a big and important area to develop and something that the Swedish Federation for Waldorfschools need to prioritize if Waldorf-Steiner schools are to survive in a time where pedagogic alternatives are forced to adjust to the dominating perspective on education.

The Student Perspective

This study focuses on the voices of teachers, but the areas discussed and investigated all affect students. Students spend many hours in schools and their lives are influenced and affected by the teachers that they meet. To investigate the student perspective in Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools when it comes to teacher-led or student-active working methods, how they experience mechanisms of power and control, and relationship building would give new insights and knowledge. Studying education from a student perspective would provide insights into how students experience and understand their schooling, make it possible to develop more relevant and effective teaching and support methods, and to identify specific educational needs that involves factors such as learning, well-being, motivation, and socio-emotional development. This is an area that can be investigated by teachers and school management as well as by researchers.

The Vocabulary of the Teaching Practice

This thesis is a small attempt to highlight some aspects of power and control and relationships in education, but this is a field that would benefit from further research. Several times I have concluded that many authors and researchers claim that the language we use when we speak about education is insufficient, and I agree. Many qualities in the teaching practice are taken

for granted and formulated in curricula and legislations in a way that makes it difficult to really grasp the meaning of them. Positive relationships are emphasized in Swedish guidelines about education – but there is a need to formulate this more thoroughly, it is not just about positive relationships in general between teacher and students – it is about an *educational relationship* – framed and classified with clear boundaries. This is an area that needs to be discussed among teachers and school management. Policymakers need to make sure that relationships in education are defined and presented in guidelines and regulations in a way that is useful and meaningful in everyday school practice – so that the concept does not become an empty mantra – the complexity in the teaching practice needs to be acknowledged.

10.5 Personal Reflections on the PhD Adventure

When I concluded my master's degree in pedagogy in 2017, I had a strong wish to somehow continue this academic adventure. The insights and inspiration that I had gained felt both challenging and exciting. But to be able to do research at a PhD level in Sweden means that you must get employment at a university, and it is not possible to be a part-time student. The chances for me, a middle-aged woman with an interest in Waldorf-Steiner pedagogy, to be accepted were more or less non-existent. I therefore started to look abroad and when I was accepted at Plymouth University in 2019, it was almost like a sense of euphoria. During the process, this euphoria sometimes transformed into confusion, to stress and a sense of chaos. But still, the joy of being able to go deep into a research project has permeated the years as a PhD student. The sense of learning and understanding new ideas and thoughts has been inspiring and given me both confidence and an urge to keep learning.

Things do not always turn out the way we plan, and for me, the Covid 19 pandemic has affected the whole situation. It affected my research in a practical way but also on a personal and emotional level. It meant that I could not visit campus in the way I would have wanted to,

the sense of being lonely with my thoughts and ideas has sometimes been hard to handle. On the other hand, the situation where social life was restricted made me look upon my studies and research project as a companion to turn to during evenings and weekends. It made it easier to endure this two-year long, strange situation in society.

The knowledge and insights that I have gained during the work with my research are many. The fact that I have tried to place myself on the outside of a pedagogic community that I have been a part of for many years, and tried to create a distance, looking at the practice in a new and different way, has led to many aha! moments. Many things that I previously did not reflect upon have become more visible and hence also possible to question or confirm. It has sharpened my own gaze and left me with more questions and hopefully a more self-critic approach that might be of use, not just for me, but for the future development of Swedish Waldorf-Steiner schools and its practice.

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12. Appendices

12.1 Information and Medgivande (Swedish)

Information och Medgivande
Du har blivit ombedd att delta i ett kvalitativt forskningsprojekt. Projektets titel är just nu formulerat som; *Rytmisk undervisning: Lärarledda och elevinitierade processer i Waldorfskolan – vad innebär det för en lärare? En hermeneutisk fenomenologisk studie baserad på Waldorflärares levda upplevelser.*
Information om projektet
Mitt PhD projekt har som syfte att bidra med ny kunskap till såväl Waldorfrörelsen som till den allmänna diskussionen om lärande och undervisning i Sverige. Forskningsprojektets syfte är att svara på tre forskningsfrågor som i nuläget är formulerade;

- *Hur beskriver, upplever och förstår Waldorflärare sig själva när de arbetar med rytmisk lärarledd undervisning under morgonperioden?*
- *Hur beskriver de skiftet mellan en lärarledd och en elevaktiv process?*
- *Hur kan analysen av Waldorflärares upplevda erfarenheter bidra till förståelsen av den tysta, eller kroppsliga kunskapen och traditionen av rytmisk undervisning i Waldorfskolor?*

Fokus kommer att ligga på morgonperioden – ett koncept som används inom Waldorfpedagogiken för den första, ofta långa, lektionen på morgonen. Morgonperioden innehåller olika moment såsom lärarledd undervisning, elevaktiva processer och tid sätts av för dialog och interaktion. Detta forskningsprojekt genomförs som en del av Doktorsprogrammet vid fakulteten för utbildning vid Universitetet i Plymouth. Projektet kommer att genomföras utifrån de etiska riktlinjerna från Universitetet i Plymouth och följa regelverket från GDPR.
Att delta är helt frivilligt, men jag hoppas att du är villig att delta eftersom erfarenheter från praktiserande lärare är nödvändigt.

Efter tillåtelse från din skolas ledning kommer du att bli ombedd att:

- Reflektera skriftligt (eller om du föredrar det kan du spela in dig själv) kring morgonperioden en vanlig skoldag.
- Låta mig göra en observation under morgonperioden.
- Delta i en intervju kring dina erfarenheter som lärare. Intervjun kommer att spelas in. Intervjun kommer att fokusera på det du reflekterat över i ditt skriftliga protokoll, dina tankar kring mina anteckningar från observationen och också frågor kring hur du interagerar med elever och dina tankar kring begreppet rytmisk undervisning. Jag kommer också att ställa frågor kring hur du ser på hur du påverkas av myndigheter, traditioner och kulturen på din skola. Intervjun kommer att vara i 45–60 minuter.

Jag, som forskare, kommer att, i så stor utsträckning som det är möjligt, se till att alla deltagare är anonyma. All information om dig kommer att bli behandlad som konfidentiell. Jag kommer inte att fråga efter personliga detaljer eftersom det inte är relevant för mitt forskningsprojekt.
Inga detaljer, som namn, e-mail adresser eller liknande kommer att finnas tillgängliga för någon annan. I samband med publicering kommer enbart anonyma data att vara synlig.

Alla texter, inspelningar och fältanteckningar kommer att anonymiseras på en lösenordskyddad dator. Data kommer också att lagras online via Plymouth University och delas med mina handledare. All data från projektet kommer att förvaras i 10 år i University of Plymouths system, efter 10 år förstörs all data.
Du, som deltagare, kan dra tillbaka ditt medgivande i projektet när som helst. Du kan dra tillbaka ditt medgivande till att text och inspelningar får användas upp till 2 veckor efter att texten skickats eller intervjun spelades in. Om du väljer att göra det så kommer all data att raderas.
Om du har några frågor eller klagomål, eller om du vill dra tillbaka ditt medgivande, så kan du kontakta mig, forskare Helena Selsfors via mail: xxx
Director of Studies and Project Advisor: Peter Kelly, via mail; xxx
Om du har klagomål på hur forskningen genomförs kan du kontakta Plymouth University via mail; xxx eller administratören vid fakultetens etiska kommitté; xxx
Medgivande
Genom att läsa och signera detta medgivande så accepterar du att jag, Helena Selsfors i egenskap av forskare kommer att

- Läsa och analysera din skrivna (eller inspelade) text och använda citat från den i en PhD avhandling som kommer att finnas tillgänglig på nätet. Citat kan även komma att användas i akademiska artiklar eller akademiska projekt.
- Spela in och analysera en intervju och använda citat av dig i en PhD avhandling som kommer att finnas tillgänglig på nätet. Citat kan även komma att användas i akademiska artiklar eller akademiska projekt.

Du kommer att få möjlighet att kommentera eventuella faktafel i det transkriberade materialet eller lägga till en kommentar. Du kan inte ändra eller ta bort något från intervjuerna.

Jag har läst och förstått innehållet i detta medgivande. Mitt deltagande i detta projekt är helt frivilligt.

Deltagarens signatur Ort, datum

Jag kommer att följa de givna riktlinjerna i detta medgivande.

Forskarens signatur Ort, datum

12.2 Information and Letter of Consent (English)

You have been asked to participate in a qualitative research study. The name of the study is, at this point: *Rhythmical education; Teacher-led and Pupil-initiated Processes in Waldorf-Steiner schools – What does it Mean for a Teacher?*
A Hermeneutic Phenomenological Study based on lived experiences from Waldorf-Steiner Teachers in Sweden.
Information about the project
My PhD project wants to contribute with new knowledge to both the Waldorf-Steiner community and to the general discussion about teaching and education in Sweden. The project aims to answer three research questions that for now are formulated as:

- *How do Waldorf-Steiner teachers describe, experience, and understand themselves during main lesson, when conducting teacher mediated education that is supposed to be rhythmical?*
- *How do they describe the shifts between a teacher-led and a pupil-initiated process?*
- *How can the analysis of the teachers' lived experience contribute to the understanding of the tacit, or embedded, knowledge and tradition of rhythmical education in Waldorf-Steiner schools?*

Focus will be set at the main lesson – in Waldorf-Steiner schools this is a concept to describe the first, often quite long, lesson each morning. The Main lesson often consists of different parts, teacher-led activities, student-active processes and time is given for dialogue and interaction within the frames of the given theme. This research project is conducted as a part of the PhD programme, faculty of Education, at Plymouth University. The project will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines from Plymouth University and follow the rules of GDPR. To participate is voluntarily, but I hope that you will be willing to participate since information from practising teachers is necessary.

With permission from your school management, you will be asked to

- Reflect, in writing (or, if you prefer, you can record yourself speaking), on the main lesson in an ordinary school day.
- Let me participate as an observer during one main lesson.
- Participate in an interview about your experiences as a teacher. The interview will be tape-recorded. The Interview will focus on your protocol, your reflections on the fieldnotes from my observations, and questions about your engagement with pupils during main lesson and how you reflect on the concept rhythmical education. I will also ask general questions about being a teacher and how you are affected by authorities, traditions, and culture at your school. The interview will last 45-60 minutes.

I, as a researcher will, as far as it is possible, make sure that all participants are anonymous. All information about you will be treated as confidential. The researcher will not ask for any personal details since that is of no relevance for the project.
No details, such as names, e-mail address or similar will be available for others. In connection with publishing there will only be anonymous data visible. All the texts, tape- recordings and field notes will be made anonymous and saved on a secure computer. Data will also be stored in a University of Plymouth online repository that will be shared with the supervisory team. All data from the project will be stored for 10 years on the University of Plymouth system. Data will be destroyed at the end of the 10- year period.

You, as participant, can withdraw from the project at any time. You can withdraw your consent to use text/interview data up to two weeks after the text was sent or the interview recorded. If you chose to do so – all the data will be deleted.

If you have any queries or complaint, or if you wish to withdraw, you can contact me, Researcher Helena Selsfors at: xxx
or
Director of Studies and Project Advisor: Peter Kelly, at xxx
If you have any complaint about the conduct of the research, you can contact the University of Plymouth via mail: xxx or the Faculty Research Ethics Administrator xxx

Consent
By reading and signing this letter of consent, you accept that I, Helena Selsfors, as a researcher will:

- read and analyse your written (or spoken) text and use quotes from it in a PhD dissertation available on the internet, and possibly in future articles or academic projects.
- Record and analyse interview(s) and use quotes from you in a PhD dissertation available on the internet and possibly in future articles or academic projects.

You will have the opportunity to comment on any factual errors in the transcribed material, or to add a comment, but not to change or delete the content in the interviews.

I have read and understood the content of this letter of consent. My participation in this research project is completely voluntary.
Signature of the participant Place, date

I will follow the given terms of this letter of consent.

Signature of the researcher Place, date

12.3 Instruktion for skrivet protokoll (Swedish)

Du väljer själv om du vill göra ditt protokoll skriftligt eller om du föredrar att spela in dig själv med hjälp av ljudupptagning eller video. Du kan välja om du vill skriva för hand eller på dator. Du behöver inte bry dig om grammatik eller semantik det viktiga för mig är du sätter ord på din upplevelse.
Jag vill att du väljer en vanlig dag i skolan – välj bara en dag utan att tänka för mycket – men se till att du hart tid att skriva ner eller spela in din beskrivning och dina reflektioner. Du behöver inte förklara eller beskriva varför visa saker hände eller varför du kände som du gjorde. Jag vill att du beskriver och reflekterar över morgonperioden och de olika delarna i den. Du kan skriva om dina val, vad du gjorde – och också dina intentioner med de aktiviteter som pågick. Eller, så väljer du att fokusera på någon särskild händelse denna dag. Du kan välja om du bara vill beskriva, eller att skriva en liten berättelse, eller kanske vill du göra en tankekarta eller skriva en dikt.
Det som intresserar mig är din upplevelse av morgonperioden, hur du kände, hur du tänkte – hur du upplevde atmosfären och stämningen i klassrummet. Beskriv morgonperioden "från insidan" så som du upplevde den – utan att analysera eller förklara varför.

Om du har några frågor eller funderingar, kontakta mig
via telefon; xxx
eller via mail; xxx

Helena Selsfors

12.4 Instructions for protocol writing, (English)

You can choose if you want to do your protocol in writing or by recording yourself on tape or on video.
If you choose to write, you can write by hand or on a computer.
You do not have to be concerned with grammar or semantics – the important thing is that you put words to your own experience.
I want you to choose a random school day, preferably – you just look in your calendar and pick a date without too much thinking – maybe just make sure that you will have the time to write down or record your description and reflections about the main lesson. You do not need to give any explanations or tell me why certain things happened.
I want you to describe and reflect upon the main lesson and its different parts. You can write about your actions and choices – your intention with the activities that took place. Or you can focus on a specific event that happened. You can choose to just describe, or you can write your protocol as a short story, you can do a mind-map or write a poem.
I am interested in your experience, how you felt, what you were thinking, how you experienced the atmosphere in the classroom – describe the main lesson "from the inside" as you experienced it without trying to analyse it.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me.
by phone; xxx
or by mail; xxx

Helena Selsfors

12.5 Intervjuguide (Swedish)

Innan intervjuerna kommer alla deltagande lärare att få ta del av information om syftet och målet med mitt forskningsprojekt. De kommer att skriva under ett medgivande och de kommer att få möjlighet att ställa mer detaljerade frågor om projektet.
Intervjuerna kommer att spelas in och transkriberas. Alla deltagande lärare kommer att kunna ta del av de transkriberade texterna.

Del 1, Information och presentation

- Har du några frågor om projektet?
- Har du frågor eller tankar kring den här intervjun?

- Några frågor om bakgrund, exempelvis
  - Hur länge har du arbetat som Waldorflärare?
  - Har du arbetat i mer än en Waldorfskola?
  - Vilka årskurser undervisar du?
  - Vilket ämne undervisar du i?

Del 2, Reflektioner kring det skrivna protokollet

- Det scenario som du beskriver, kan du berätta mer?
- Hur fick den här situationen dig att känna, kan du beskriva mer?
- Vilka omständigheter fanns runt situationen och vad gjorde du?
- När du tänker tillbaka på den här morgonperioden, vilka minnen, tankar och känslor får du då?
- Är det här en typisk dag, eller var det något som var annorlunda?

Del 3, Reflektioner kring observationen

Jag kommer att låta läraren ta del av mina anteckningar och reflektioner. Jag kommer att be läraren att reflektera och återupptäcka den här situation, för att hjälpa mig förstå de olika anekdoterna som utspelade sig. Denna del kommer att vara mer som ett samtal.

Del 4, generella frågor om läraryrket

Morgonperioden

- När du tar emot eleverna på morgonen, hur upplever du det mötet och ditt engagemang? Kan du beskriva hur den situationen upplevs?
- När lektionen börjar, hur skulle du beskriva den interaktion som pågår, precis innan själva lektionen startar?
- Hur skulle du beskriva situationen när du berättar eller föreläser, när du själv är i fokus och undervisningen är lärarledd? Kan du beskriva hur du startar en lektion?
- Vad händer när det är dags för eleverna att börja processa dagens moment, när de ska konstruera sin egen kunskap och förståelse – hur görs detta och hur påverkar det här skiftet dig, ditt engagemang, intentioner och handlingar i klassrummet?
- Hur skulle du beskriva skillnaden mellan morgonperiodens olika delar – och hur ditt engagemang förändras och påverkas av förändringarna?
- Kan du berätta om hur du förstår och tolkar att begreppet rytmisk undervisning – inandning och utandning, egentligen ska gå till? Hur planerar och förbereder du för detta? Kan du ge mig ett exempel?

Att vara lärare i en specifik kontext

- Kan du beskriva hur ditt beteende och val påverkas av den traditionella praktiken i din skola? Finns det uttalade eller outtalade sätt som man är en bra lärare på?

- Hur diskuterar du detta med dina kollegor? Använder ni mentorskap för att överföra kunskap från erfarna lärare till nya lärare?
- Kan du berätta om hur du upplever att du påverkas av riktlinjer och bestämmelser från myndigheter? Har detta någon betydelse för ditt dagliga arbete? Kan du ge ett exempel?
- Kan du berätta om hur du påverkas av debatten om läraryrket som pågår i media och i politiken, av krav och förväntningar från föräldrar och elever. Påverkar detta ditt dagliga arbete?

12.6 Interview guide (English)

Before the interviews, the participating teachers will receive information about the aim and purpose with my research project. They will sign a letter of consent and they will have the possibilities to ask for more details concerning the project.
The interviews will be tape recorded and transcribed. All the participating teachers will have the opportunity to read the transcribed texts.

Part 1, Information, and presentation

- Do you want any more information about the project?
- Are there any other questions or concerns about this interview?

- A few questions about background, for example
  - How long have you been working as a Waldorf-Steiner teacher?
  - Have you worked in just one, or in more Waldorf-Steiner schools?
  - What grades do you teach?
  - What is your main subject?

Part 2, Reflections on the written protocols

- The scenario that you described in your protocol – can you tell me more?
- How did the situation make you feel, can you describe?
- What was the circumstances and what did you do?
- When looking at this day reflectively – what kind of memories, thoughts and feelings arise in you?
- Is this day "an ordinary day" or was there something that stood out?

Part 3, Reflections about the observations

I will share my notes and thoughts from the observation. I will ask the teacher to reflect and rediscover the situation, to help me better understand the different anecdotes that took place. This part will be more like a conversation about that main lesson that I visited.

Part 4, general questions about being a teacher.

The Main Lesson

- When you greet the pupils in the morning, how do you experience that meeting and engagement? Can you describe how this situation make you feel?
- When the lesson starts, how would you describe the interaction that goes on in this specific situation, just before the teaching starts?
- How would you describe the situation when you lecture, tell a story, or present a phenomenon, when you are in focus and the education is teacher-led? Can you give me an example of how you start the lesson?
- What happens when it is time for the pupils to start processing the teaching, when they are supposed to construct their own understanding and knowledge about the theme of the day – how is it done and how does this shift affect you, your intentions, and actions in the classroom?
- How would you describe the difference between these parts in the main lesson – and how the differences affect your engagement with the pupils?

- Can you describe how you understand and interpret how rhythmical education, this inhale – exhale method, is to be conducted? How do you plan and prepare for this? Can you give me an example?

Being a teacher in a certain context

- Can you describe how your actions and choices are affected by the traditional practice in your school? Is there an outspoken, or unspoken, way to be a good teacher?
- How do you discuss this with your colleagues? Do you use mentorship in your school in order to mediate knowledge from more experienced teachers to new teachers?
- Can you describe how you are affected by the guidelines and policies from authorities? Does this have any significance for your daily work? Can you give me an example?
- Can you describe how you are affected by the discussion and debate about teaching and learning in media and politics? By demands and expectations from parents and students? Does this have any significance for your daily work?

12.7 Initial Plan for Data Construction

Table 6 below shows the initial schedule and planned dates for when to a) receive the written protocol and b) conducting observations and interviews.

Table 7, Initial Plan for Data Construction

Teacher	Date for written protocol	Date for observation	Date for interview
Pilot observation and interview		9th September	9th September
Iris	Weak 37	16th September	16th September
Andy	Weak 38	25th September	25th September
Erica	Weak 38	30th September	30th September
Heather	Weak 39	2nd October	2nd October
Teacher A	Weak 42	20th October	20th October
Teacher B	Weak 44	23rd October	23rd October
Chris	Weak 44	4th November	4th November
Teacher C	Weak 45	12th November	12th November
Fiona	Weak 46	16th November	16th November
Janice	Weak 47	23rd November	23rd November
Teacher D	Weak 48	3rd December	3rd December
Beatrice	Weak 49	11th December	11th December

12.8 Final Timetable for Data Constructing

Table 7 below shows how the plan for data construction changed and was executed.

Table 8, Final Timetable for Data Construction

Date	Activity
August 2020	Mail to principals at 15 Waldorf-Steiner schools within a reasonable travelling distance. A post on Facebook in the group "Waldorf-forum"
2nd September	Mail to recommended teachers and to two teachers who replied on Facebook.
9th September	Pilot observation and interview.
14th September	Written protocol from Erica (interview and observation postponed).
17th September	Written protocol from Andy.
25th September	Observation and interview with Andy.
27th September	Written protocol from Heather.
29th September	Written protocol from Beatrice.
2nd October	Observation and interview with Heather.
5th October	Teacher D withdrew from the project.
14th October	Observation and interview with Beatrice.
15th October	Teacher A withdrew from the project.
17th October	Written protocol from Chris (interview postponed, observation cancelled).
18th October	Teacher C withdrew from the project.
19th October	***New Recommendations and guidelines from the Public Health Agency of Sweden.***
3rd November	Digital interview with Erica (Observation cancelled).
3rd November	Teacher B withdrew from the project.
6th November	Written protocol from Diana.
10th November	Observation and interview with Diana.
17th November	Written protocol from Gloria.
18th November	Digital interview with Chris (Observation cancelled).
20th November	Observation and Interview with Gloria.
21st November	Written protocol from Iris.
26th November	Digital interview with Iris (Observation cancelled).
6th December	Written protocol from Janice and Fiona.
8th December	Digital interview with Janice (Observation cancelled).
11th December	Digital interview with Fiona (Observation cancelled).

12.9 Examples of Observation Protocol

School: XXX	Teacher: Beatrice	
Grade: 5	Number of students: 14	Subject: Mathematics/Geometry
Activity 1: 1)Morning verse 2) a song, and a clapping game. calendar, menu	Length of time: 10 min	Type of interaction: 1) Quite formal 2) Informal, dialogue. Students ask questions or comment freely.
Activity 2: Beatrice reading aloud, students are drawing.	Length of time: 10 min	Type of interaction: Relaxed, students are silence.
Activity 3: 1) Recollection of important concepts (square, diameter, radius) 2) Presentation of the geometric figure	Length of timer: 40 min	Type of interaction: 1) Informal, students help each other to remember. 2) Beatrice is lecturing, students listening – formal. 2) Students ask questions – raise their hands – formal.
Activity 4: Short break	Length of time: 5 min	Type of interaction: Some students go and drink water, others stay in the classroom and talk to each other. Beatrice is standing by her desk.
Activity 5: Student active part	Length of time: 30 min	Type of interaction: Beatrice is moving around the students, helping them individually – informal. At one point she stands by the blackboard, raises her voice, and draws their attention to one very tricky part of the figure – formal.
Activity 6: Beatrice makes a summary of the lesson. Gives information about what is to come tomorrow.	Length of time: 5 min	Type of interaction: Informal, a bit messy. Students ask questions, some are still working while others want to go on break.
Notes:		

School: XXX	Teacher: Andy	
Grade: 7	Number of students: 14	Subject: Chemistry
Activity 1: (All students wash their hands before entering the classroom) 1)Morning verse 2) Clapping game – the multiplication table	Length of time: 5 min	Type of interaction: 1) Quite formal 2) Informal, Students giggle, Andy moves around.
Activity 2: Test of homework	Length of time: 10 min	Type of interaction: Formal, Andy is asking questions – then informal, helping the students.
Activity 3: 1) Recollection of yesterday 2) Presentation of new facts 3) Experiment	Length of time: 20 min	Type of interaction: 1) Informal, 2) Andy is lecturing, writing on the blackboard. Students take notes – formal. 2) Students observe and listen – formal (murmur when A go into the utility room).
Activity 4: Short break	Length of time: 5 min	Type of interaction: Some students go outside. Andy goes to the laboratory classroom.
Activity 5: All students put on safety glasses and lab-coats. 1) Instructions from Andy 2) Student active part	Length of time: 40 min	Type of interaction: 1) Andy gives strict instructions – formal. 2) Students work in groups. Andy interacts with every group – mixture, both formal and informal.
Activity 6: 1) Students put things together 2) Andy gives instructions about homework	Length of time: 10 min	Type of interaction: 1) Informal, Andy helps out, laughter. Students comment, “That’s so cool”, “Wow, amazing”. 2) Formal, strict
Notes:		

12.10 Example of Excerpts from Free Fieldnotes of the Observations

Fieldnotes from the observations was written during the observations and then re-written afterwards with more details from my recollection of the observations and the interview. The fieldnotes were written in Swedish, and this presentation is a translated version.

- **Grade 9 (15-year-olds)**
  – geography, 15 students present. Heather is the class-teacher since grade 4. Choir for a bout 15 minutes with students from grad 8 and 7 in the music-room. Very positive atmosphere, students and teachers are interacting in informal ways, laughter, and chit chat. Back in their classroom: morning-verse. Heather informs them about todays' lesson and what they are supposed to work with, very informal, students ask questions and make comments. The lesson is about sustainability, this is in the end of this theme, on-going group work and independent work and preparing for a test. Heather moves around in the classroom, giving the students support and ideas, interacting with students individually and in peers.
  Question – there is something going on, bubbles? Creating individual rooms?
  End of the lesson: Formal, Heather reminds them of the test, explicit instructions.
- **Grade 5 (11-year-olds)**
  - History, ancient Egypt, a class with 15 students present. Gloria is the class-teacher, the class had been working with this theme for a week. They read the morning verse, sing a song, and play flute (EU-hymn in German). Obvious routines, Gloria doesn't have to say much or give them instructions. They look at the schedule, the menu, informal interactions, one student is not happy with the menu, laughter. They recollect yesterday's lesson, leading questions from Gloria. New facts about the ancient gods, the myth of Anubis feather. Drawings of four gods on the blackboard. Gloria gives instructions, the students start to work with texts and illustrations. Concentration, silence – Gloria is moving around them, when no one needs her attention, she puts together material for the students who are home sick. Twice during this phase, Gloria draws upon their attention and adds some facts about the gods. Interesting; One student breaks the silence and want to hear the myth about Anubis feather on more time. Gloria laughs and tells it again.

- **Grade 4 (10-year-olds)**
  – Mathematics, 13 students present. Diana is their class-teacher. This lesson starts with the morning verse and daily rituals with the calendar, is anyone missing and how does this day look. Students work in pairs with the multiplication table – 10 minutes. Diana gathers the students in a circle and threw soft balls – complicated. Soft balls are thrown between them. They end the game by doing a "brain-gym" exercise with their eyes closed in total silence. Diana then turns out the light, light two candles. She starts to read (Goodnight Mr Tom*)*. Students do different things, drawing, sewing, and others listening – 10 minutes. They start to work with fraction counting – Diana explains and hands out playdough. Students are engaged. First, they work together, then Diana gives explicit instructions, the students work individually, creating different fractions. Diana moves around in the classroom, giving individual support and instructions. Students are very eager; they want to continue when the bell rings. Interesting; The student in the corner gets more attention.

12.11 Examples of Coding

Written protocols:

Table 9, Examples of Coding the Written Protocols

	Intention	Interaction	Intuition
Andy	I want to give the students both theory, **and experience and also skills** during this lesson.	**We** start by trying to find out what chemistry is in our everyday life. **I try to help them.**	**I feel** that I must give them a short break.
Heather	I want to give the students a **sense of pre-understanding** of the subject before I start my lecture.	We sorted out some of their questions by a discussion **together**	**I felt** as if I pushed them a bit, as I was putting pressure on them, but in the end, we managed to get it right.
Erica	To find the time to do all the things **I have planned**; I have written a short text about the facts.	I let them do some exercises that we used to do when they were younger. There is **laughter** and it **becomes more fun** to continue to work.	**When I sense** that we have talked about the most important things from yesterday, I start to tell them about ants.

The observations

Table 10, Examples of Coding the Observations

Teacher activity	Interaction	My own reflection/question
He puts on his lab-coat while talking to some of the students	He **invites them**; do you remember? What do you think?	**The students' focus is shifting**. From their friends to the teacher the minute he put on his coat!
She moves around in the classroom, going from student to student, giving comments and feedback.	Her **focus is directed to each student individually**. She **invites them, look them in the eyes**	It's like **she is creating small rooms** with the individual student, it's almost visible!
She has instructed the students to **work individually**. A student breaks the silence and ask G to tell the myth again.	She laughs "Do you really want to hear it again**?" Smiling at the student.**	The student had some kind of **inner experience** of the myth while she was writing her text.
She gives instruction to the whole group of students, and then approach **one student individually.**	She **sits down** so that she can **look the student in the eyes**. Explaining with a **low voice** what he is supposed to do.	**Different needs** – different approach from the teacher.
She just says "**okay" and makes a vague gesture**. The students open their desk and take out their flutes.	She just waits until all the students have their flute, then she just looks at them and they start playing.	The **routines are so well known**, all of them know what to do.

Interviews

Table 11, Examples of Coding the Interviews

Balancing Relationships	Balancing Pedagogy	To know your students	Expectations	Imagination/ pre-assumptions
My idea or intention is to **create an atmosphere** of kindness, thoughtfulness.	To work with a subject so that it is connected in the different classes, so that it becomes as a bridge, **a red thread.**	I must try and **predict** what parts will be difficult for the students so that I am prepared and able to help them	I have **high expectations** on my students, I want to have that, I place the bar quite high.	I try to go through the lesson in my head to **try and see what might be difficult** or problematic so that there will be no hang-ups in the middle.
My intention is **to open up**, to tell something more personal so that the students feel that it is okay	Now, I really want them to **really say, really think** about what we are doing, what will happen now.	I need to be **much more prepared when I teach in a new class,** a lot more, that is my experience, because since I don't know the group – at least I have my material.	The method is to have **high demands and expectations** in a **positive way**.	I try to **put myself in the situation before hand**, how the day and lesson will be, almost doing all the things from A to B. A kind of idea about okay, I start like this, then this situation might occur.
I need to make them **willing to follow my lead, to trust me**. I must get **some kind of bond** to each of them.	I need to somehow find a way to **balance my attention** both to individual students and to the group.	**I could see,** right from the start, that this was not a good day for him. **How can I make that change,** make things a bit better	**I know where to put the bar**, what they can do individually and what we need to go through together.	I spend a **lot of time with my planning**, making sure that I can be clear and explicit so that the students have a chance to succeed.
Trust is a key, it is all about building relationships, otherwise teaching and learning would not be possible				

Traditions	**Routines & Rituals**	Tacit knowledge	Needs	Problems
There is a kind of **consensus** about what and how to do	The routines help to create **an understandable rhythm**. It is a very conscious choice from me	This sense, that way of knowing, is something that I have **developed during the years**.	The **pedagogy must be up to date,** we must be able to change the ways we do it and still **keeping the core qualities**	There can be **power relations** that make changes and development of the pedagogy difficult.
Many things are **stuck in the walls, or implicitly implied**, it can be difficult to understand if no one tells you.	surprises are nice, but it's also a very nice feeling to be able to predict what will come, it **creates a sense of security for the students, and for me**	I must **balance my attention**; I can't have my focus everywhere	We need to be able to show that our pedagogy works! **Why are we so afraid of doing evaluations or research?**	It's a very troublesome thing that we have this **lack of educated Waldorf-Steiner teachers**
It´s a strength when teachers have the same approach. It makes it easier for the students.	the students feel both **anticipation and control**	It's like a musician, **you need a standard repertoire, and then you can improvise**	**sometimes I think that we don't understand them either**.	**unspoken and taken for granted**, things that are stuck in the walls that **you cannot question**

Control & Power	**Relational pedagogy**	**Being part of a context**
It is a bit scary, **if I say `jump´, they will jump**. That can make me a bit afraid, what am I saying, what am I infusing them with	You always **earn your trust, it is a fresh product**"	To **learn from each other** has always been a **tradition** in Waldorf-schools
I **put myself in focus** in a more conscious way, I sort of ***claim* that place**	they want to be sure that you are **worth relying on and that you are interested in them for real**, not just pretending to be	When you feel as if the **teachers' college is like a unit,** that makes it possible both to be honest and to develop both as an individual and as a group
he is in **total focus** and gives **explicit instructions** to the students	You can't separate the social interplay from the learning experience, **they are connected**, they must be, they are woven together	I believe there are things that become **a culture, or a way to be and do**

Putting it all together

Table 12, Examples of Coding the Data as a Whole

Teaching practice			Pedagogic discourse	
Balancing Responsibility	**Shifts & Changes**	**Building relationships**	**The pedagogical repertoire**	**Being part of a context**
A process of knowledge - to create time and space - to save the situation	***Rhythms – inhale &exhale*** - setting the pace - a given structure	***Checking up on your students*** -focus on individual - focus on the group -	***Embedded knowledge in your practice*** - an art and craftmanship	***Keepers and practitioners of a tradition*** - the obvious way to do
Joy, worries, dilemmas - Sharing experiences - a demanding profession - unpredictability - power	***Being in focus and letting go*** - rhythms as permeating idea	***Inclusion*** classroom community "we"	***Intuition and experience*** - to act in the moment	***Challengers of a tradition*** - New ways - Problems and needs
To create time and space - The main lesson is less stressful - Connecting subjects and themes - Students with different conditions get a chance to succeed	***Predictability*** - Routines and rituals - Structure	***Boundaries*** - Personal but never private - create limits - demands and support	***Pre-assumptions & Pre-knowledge*** - How it "ought to be"	***Being part of something bigger*** - A school community - Demands from the outside

12.12 Checking the data

Findings chart:
1 – not mentioned 2 – mentioned but not discussed
3 – discussed 4 – discussed in depth
5 – discussed in depth and emphasized
Themes with a score lower than 30 were left out (marked with darker colour).

Table 13, Checking the Data, Interpretation of the Teaching Profession.

	Interpretation of the profession			
	Process of knowledge – responsibility	Relationships – responsibility	Building trust	Experience Of Self (joy, worries, power)
Andy	4	3	4	3
Beatrice	4	4	4	3
Chris	4	4	5	4
Diana	5	4	5	5
Erica	4	5	4	3
Fiona	5	4	5	3
Gloria	4	5	5	5
Heather	5	5	5	4
Iris	4	4	4	4
Janice	4	4	4	3
	43	42	45	37

Table 14, Checking the Data – Rhythms

	Rhythms			
	Inhale & Exhale	Shifts	Routines	Motion
Andy	3	4	3	3
Beatrice	3	3	4	3
Chris	4	5	4	4
Diana	3	3	4	2
Erica	4	3	3	2
Fiona	4	5	3	2
Gloria	5	5	5	3
Heather	5	5	4	2
Iris	4	4	3	3
Janice	3	3	4	2
	38	40	37	26

Table 15, Checking the Data – the Pedagogic repertoire.

	The Pedagogic Repertoire				
	Embedded knowledge	Intuition & Experience	Pre-assumptions	Teacher Education	Collegial Work
Andy	4	5	4	1	4
Beatrice	4	4	2	1	2
Chris	5	5	3	3	2
Diana	5	5	5	2	1
Erica	4	4	4	1	2
Fiona	4	5	4	3	2
Gloria	5	5	4	2	2
Heather	5	5	5	3	2
Iris	4	4	3	2	2
Janice	4	4	4	3	2
	44	46	38	21	21

Table 16, Checking the Data – Being part of a Context.

	Being part of a context						
	Practitioners and keepers	Challengers	Something bigger	Anthroposophy /Steiner	Demands Authorities	The paper-load	Debate in media
Andy	4	5	3	0	4	0	2
Beatrice	4	4	3	2	3	0	1
Chris	4	4	3	1	3	1	2
Diana	3	3	3	1	5	1	2
Erica	4	5	4	2	3	2	2
Fiona	5	5	4	2	3	1	3
Gloria	4	4	3	1	4	0	2
Heather	4	4	4	2	4	0	1
Iris	4	4	4	1	3	1	1
Janice	4	3	4	1	3	0	1
	40	41	35	13	35	6	17

12.13 Syllabus for Swedish Compulsory schools

Table 17, Syllabus of Swedish Compulsory school

Subject	Number of hours, Grade 1-3	Number of hours, Grade 4 -6	Number of hours, Grade 7-9	Total
Art	50	80	100	230
Crafts	50	140	140	330
English	60	220	200	480
Home and Consumer studies		36[22] Grade 1- 6	82	118
Mathematics	420	410	400	1230
Modern Languages		48	272	320
Music	70	80	80	230
Physical education and Health	140	180	280	600
Science studies[23]	143	193	264	600
- **Biology**		55	75	
- **Chemistry**		55	75	
- **Physics**		55	75	
Social subject studies[24]	200	333	352	885
- **Geography**		70	75	
- **History**		70	75	
- **Religion**		70	75	
- **Civics**		70	75	
Student's choice				177
Swedish	680	520	290	1490
Technology	47	65	88	200
Total	**1860**	**2269**	**2548**	**6890**

[22] 36 hours are to be done from grade 1-6.
[23] In the lower grades, science studies are counted as a block, in grade 4-6 and 7-9, the number of hours must be *at least* the number stated for each subject.
[24] In the lower grades, social subject studies are counted as a block, in grade 4-6 and 7-9, the number of hours must be *at least* the number stated for each subject.