



## UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

### Teaching historical empathy

*Perspective taking in past and present using eyewitnesses*

Bartelds, H.

#### Publication date

2024

[Link to publication](#)

#### Citation for published version (APA):

Bartelds, H. (2024). *Teaching historical empathy: Perspective taking in past and present using eyewitnesses*. [Thesis, externally prepared, Universiteit van Amsterdam].

#### General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

#### Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

# CHAPTER 6

General conclusions  
and discussion

## Chapter 6: General conclusions and discussion

### 6.1 Introduction

In today's society, students are often confronted with multiple perspectives in their daily lives, perspectives that can be far apart, and therefore can lead to polarization. Teachers frequently want to do something about this, by fostering citizenship competencies as 'being able to take the perspective of other people in the present' or 'empathy'. In a globalized world, empathy has been identified as an important competency to be fostered in citizenship education (Barton & Gravis, 2019; Dolby, 2014; Risberg, 2023; UNESCO Global Citizenship Education, 2015). Citizenship competencies have been accorded an important role in education and in the curricula of different countries (e.g., Burgerschap.slo.nl, 2023; Common Core State Standards, 2010; Council of Europe, 2011, 2018; Gelinck et al., 2021; Risberg, 2023; Ten Dam & Volman, 2007; *udir.no* Core curriculum, 2022; Veugelers & Vedder, 2003). Society, curricula and teachers demonstrate the need to work on these citizenship goals. While empathy is considered an important goal of citizenship education, there is little knowledge of how it is taught.

The aim of this dissertation was to provide insights for history teachers to foster empathy using eyewitnesses. The research question was: How can history teachers foster empathy in history lessons using eyewitnesses?

History education, in which students explore perspectives of people from the past, can provide the starting points for practicing empathy. For some time, historical empathy has been integral to history education, not only to achieve subject-specific objectives but also to cultivate citizenship competences (e.g., Barton & Levstik, 2004; Endacott & Brooks, 2013, 2018; Karn, 2023; Seixas, 2012). In this thesis, I defined historical empathy as the process of students' cognitive and affective engagement with historical actors to better understand and contextualize their experiences, decisions, or actions. From my positionality as a teacher, I departed from the idea that students can develop the skill to engage in the process of empathy.

This thesis has contributed to knowledge in the field of educational research on historical empathy in the following three ways. First, I identified students' and teachers' views on historical empathy, its goals and ways of teaching, through interviews. In particular, as little was known about students' views regarding historical empathy, this has provided new academic insights. Second, I developed a pedagogy for teaching empathy in history lessons

based on a set of design principles, and tested it in an intervention study and in a professionalization program. Third, by going through the full cycle of questioning the initial situation of students and teachers, formulating and testing design principles in both an intervention study and a professionalization program, I have arrived at a theoretically better picture of how teaching empathy with eyewitnesses can work in history classes. There are few studies on the use of eyewitnesses in history class that really examined outcomes of that eyewitness approach. Also little was known about how this eyewitness approach relates to students' historical skills. In addition, this thesis provided insights on the differences and similarities between guest speakers in the classroom and in documentaries with eyewitnesses. From different perspectives, I have looked very closely at what teaching empathy in history class entails for teachers and students. From this emerged a set of practicable design principles to foster empathy in history lessons with eyewitnesses, principles which can guide designing, teaching and discussing lessons with teachers.

In this final chapter, I reflect on how history teachers can foster empathy in history lessons using eyewitnesses. First, I summarize the main findings of my studies; second, I reflect on these main findings of this thesis; third, I reflect on my role as teacher researcher; fourth, I discuss the limitations of this thesis and provide suggestions for future research. Finally, I give some implications for practice.

## 6.2 Main findings

### First study

The first study (Chapter 2) was an interview study which addressed the research question: *What beliefs do history teachers and students have about historical empathy, its objectives and strategies for teaching it?*

I started this thesis with an interview study to investigate the preconceptions of Dutch history teachers and students in the field of history education at secondary level. In this study, 10 history teachers and 17 students in secondary school (age 16-17) were interviewed about their beliefs on historical empathy, objectives, and teaching strategies. The main finding was that, for most teachers and students, historical empathy is a skill that can be practiced in history class.

With regard to the skills required to promote historical empathy, teachers and students indicated that attention must be paid to both cognitive and affective aspects of historical empathy. Students and teachers named contextualization, positionality, a personal connection, and historical imagination as the main elements of historical empathy. These partly overlapped with what students and teachers mentioned when asked what is needed to empathize with someone in the present: contextualization, awareness of one's own and others' positionality, multiperspectivity, and a personal connection.

With regard to the objectives for both the teachers and students, the most important goals of historical empathy were often the combination of understanding of the past and citizenship education. Students also noted that historical empathy helped them to understand connections between the past and present and to understand contemporary discussions about, for example, the history of slavery and the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and the impact of that history in the current society. These findings showed that students understand that historical empathy facilitates understanding of the past but also contributes to skills in daily life. Teachers believed citizenship competences are important, but indicated that explicitly integrating and teaching them is a struggle.

With regard to the explicit teaching of historical empathy, the interviews revealed that a minority of the teachers explicitly stated to the students the what, how, and why of historical empathy. Almost half of the students reported that their teacher did use the concept historical empathy, but did not explain what it is and what steps to take. Although almost half of the students and half of the teachers chose inviting eyewitnesses as the ideal way to promote historical empathy, as eyewitnesses make it possible to make a personal connection, both teachers and students explained that this practice is not common. Other learning activities mentioned by the teachers and students were visiting a historic site, watching a documentary, classroom discussions, using written eyewitnesses accounts as diaries or using role plays. For both students and teachers, sources in the textbook and the teacher's stories were not ranked as the most suitable approach.

These findings show that most teachers and students believe that historical empathy is a skill and can contribute to history and citizenship education goals but that it was not often taught explicitly. To do so, teachers need to develop insight into the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are important to engage in historical empathy, and to understand the cognitive and affective processes involved. Guidelines and supportive materials to scaffold students'

empathetic engagement with eyewitnesses can support teachers to teach historical empathy explicitly.

### **Second study**

The aim of the second study (Chapter 3) was to develop and test design principles for promoting empathy by teaching historical empathy using eyewitnesses. I also aimed to gain insight into the differences between using guest speakers and eyewitnesses in a documentary.

The research question was:

*What are the effects of eyewitnesses (guest speakers and eyewitnesses in documentaries) in history class on students' confidence in the ability to empathize, understanding of empathy, attributed importance to empathy and explaining this importance?*

On the basis of the literature and the insights of the interview study, I developed six design principles for promoting empathy in history education: offering historical context, paying attention to awareness of the students' own positionality, paying attention to multiperspectivity, paying attention to a personal connection between students and historical actors, appealing both cognitively and affectively to the students, and giving explicit instruction on what it means to empathize.

In this quasi-experimental intervention study, I used a pretest-post-test-follow-up design. The participants were 97 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students (pre-university level, 15/16 years of age) from five classes and two teachers from one urban school in the Netherlands. I investigated whether the students who followed the lesson unit on historical empathy developed according to the design principles showed progress on the dependent variables: confidence in the ability to empathize, understanding empathy, attributed importance of engaging in empathy and explaining the importance. The hypothesis was that students would improve in these areas. In addition, I investigated the differences between two conditions: the use of a live eyewitness (guest speaker), and eyewitnesses in a documentary. We expected that students receiving guest speaker lessons would develop more on confidence and importance than students received documentary lessons, because of the interaction and urgency of the live guest speaker. The data was collected via questionnaires containing closed and open questions. Empathy is difficult to measure, but by examining students' understanding of empathy, we have gained more insight into it.

The results showed that after the lesson unit, students in both conditions were more confident in their ability to empathize, and were better able to explain what empathy means and why it is important. Even after two months, in the follow-up test, progress on these items was still significant. That no significant progress on the importance students assigned to empathy was found may be related to the high scores on the pretest.

With regard to the differences between the two conditions: the use of a guest speaker and eyewitnesses in a documentary, the results showed that students participating in the guest speaker condition made significantly more progress in understanding empathy between pre-measurement and the post-measurement after two months than students in the documentary condition. The confidence and importance of empathy appeared to be fostered to the same extent by the documentary as by the guest speaker. With respect to the understanding of empathy, at all three measurement points, students in both conditions mentioned mostly cognitive and strategic aspects and, to a lesser extent, affective aspects. Several cognitive elements were mentioned, such as contextualization, awareness of their own positionality and multiperspectivity. One explanation for this may be that the explicit instruction on historical empathy emphasized cognitive aspects such as contextualization and positionality, while the affective aspects were covered more during the lessons with the eyewitnesses and so were more implicit. While increasing attention has been paid in recent years to the affective side of historical empathy, the outcomes of the second study suggest that providing explicit instruction is challenging. In the lessons with the guest speakers, there was perhaps more implicit instruction on the affective aspects as the guest speakers modelled empathy. This implicit modeling of empathy by guest speakers and teachers, in addition to explicit instruction of (historical) empathy, may have value. It can be concluded that after a lesson unit based upon design principles for promoting empathy by teaching historical empathy using eyewitnesses, students in both conditions were more confident in their ability to empathize, and were better able to explain what empathy means and why it is important.

### **Third study**

In the third study (Chapter 4), I focused on the teachers in the intervention study described in Chapter 3. The aim was to investigate how teachers implemented the lesson units that were developed using the six design principles for teaching empathy. I hoped to get a better understanding of and how these design principles worked in teaching practice, so that, as

teachers seek to become more proficient in applying these principles, they could be better professionalized. The research questions were:

*How do history teachers implement the six design principles for teaching empathy in history class using eyewitnesses?*

*What considerations and concerns do teachers have in doing this, and what do they consider areas for improvement?*

The participants of this study were the two history teachers who taught the lesson units of the intervention study and their classes (five in total). Both teachers conducted lesson series in both conditions, with the same two guest speakers as well as with the same documentary. Both conducted the lessons in their own classes. The data was collected via video recordings of the lessons for observation of teacher behavior, written observation memos of all lessons and interviews with the two teachers.

With regard to teachers' implementation of the lesson unit, all six design principles were implemented. Contextualizing and discussing multiple perspectives occurred quite naturally, the latter partly due to the documentary chosen and working with two eyewitnesses in the classroom. With regard to the considerations, concerns and areas for improvement, there were concerns that students did not have enough context to be able to contextualize and the teachers had to choose when and how much context to give. That was sometimes difficult because it was time-consuming and teachers had to constantly consider that issue.

The findings showed that three design principles needed particular attention: being aware of positionality, addressing both the cognitive and affective aspect of historical empathy and giving explicit instruction. First, with respect to positionality, both teachers were convinced that students who are aware of the importance of their positionality would empathize more easily. With regard to the guest speakers, teachers indicated that considering whether guest speakers are aware of their own positionality and the extent to which they are open to other perspectives is important. Though several studies have shown that teachers' positionality plays a role in how they teach about a sensitive topic (Cotton, 2006; Kunzman, 2006), the teachers did not consider their positionality and whether they should be neutral to be an issue.

Second, with regard to the addressing of both the cognitive and affective aspects of historical empathy, the balance of the approaches seemed to be important for the teachers. It is an area of consideration for teachers when, how and why to choose a more cognitive or affective approach when empathizing with an eyewitness in history class. Furthermore, with



the affective approach exactly which questions the teacher asked students mattered: asking student how an (historical) actor or eyewitness may have experienced something or that students imagine what feelings they themselves would have if they were in that particular situation. While the latter question can promote personal connection, the former appeals more to general human experiences (Barton & Levstik, 2004).

Third, as far as explicit instruction is concerned, although both teachers considered historical empathy very important, they indicated that they provided less explicit instruction on the skill than they wanted. The question of whether this was due to only a lack of time or whether other aspects also played a role, for example, that the teachers also found it difficult to give explicit instruction on historical empathy, remains. It can also be concluded that little is known about providing explicit instruction on the affective elements of historical empathy and citizenship competencies as ‘taking the perspectives of other people in the present’. We decided to add a seventh design principle: linking historical empathy and empathy by making a connection between taking the perspective of people in the past (subject specific goal) and in the present (citizenship goal). In the eyewitness lessons, however, there was implicit instruction on ‘empathy’ and ‘tolerating others with different perspectives’, for example, by teachers and eyewitnesses demonstrating empathy. It can therefore be concluded that the design principles and eyewitnesses worked well together.

#### **Fourth study**

In the fourth study (Chapter 5), I developed a Professional Learning Community (PLC) with the goal of promoting professional growth of history teachers in teaching historical empathy aiming to promote students to take perspectives in past and present. The aim was to investigate how teachers can be professionalized in teaching historical empathy. The research questions were:

*To what extent and how do teachers, who participate in a PLC focusing on teaching empathy in history lessons, change in their understanding of what (historical) empathy is, of why it is important, and in their confidence to teach it?*

*What resources are important for teachers’ professional growth?*

The participants were eight history teachers from eight different Dutch secondary schools. I used pre- and post-questionnaires and interviews, supplemented with relevant observations

based on the video recordings of the PLC meetings, and analyzed the data using the domains of the Interconnected Model of Professional Growth.

With regard to the first research question, the findings showed that the understanding of historical empathy by teachers improved, and the aspects mentioned in the post-questionnaires and interviews became more concrete in terms of usefulness in lessons. With regard to empathy (taking the perspective of other people in the present), the number of aspects mentioned increased more between the pre- and post-measurement than for historical empathy. With respect to the link between historical empathy and empathy as a citizenship competency, in the pre-measurement most teachers indicated that they made the link mostly implicitly, while in the post-measurements most teachers indicated that they learned how to make this link more explicitly. With regard to importance, it was already clear in the pre-measurement that teachers considered historical empathy to be so, and had presumably signed up specifically for this PLC because they already valued it. There was, however, a shift in the categories of why they thought it was important, from the more subject specific categories of 'understanding the past' and 'connecting past and present' in pre-measurement, to 'multiperspectivity' and 'foster citizenship competencies' in post-measurements. Teachers' self-efficacy also increased between pre- and post-measurements, particularly with the design principles of multiperspectivity and personal connection. At the same time, most of the teachers mentioned that having an open discussion in classrooms with multiperspectivity about sensitive issues sometimes remained complicated.

With regard to the second research question, on resources for teachers' professional growth, the results showed that professional experimentation (Domain of Practice) was considered by all eight teachers to be the most important. At the same time, this learning through professional experimentation was strongly related to the feedback, cooperation/discussion, theory and examples (External Domain), the changes in the knowledge, beliefs and attitudes regarding historical empathy and general empathy (Personal Domain), and also the Domain of Consequences, because teachers saw the effects their lessons had on their students. The four domains of the IMPG therefore clearly strongly influenced each other and change occurred in recurring cycles through the mediating processes of 'reflection' and 'enaction'. The self-experimentation based on the discussed seven design principles (theory) proved to be particularly powerful. The discussions in which teachers could openly discuss their own struggles with putting the design principles into

practice proved especially helpful and inspiring. The small-scale form of a PLC clearly facilitated the openness of teachers when discussing their challenges, uncertainties and questions, also because they were able to learn a lot from each other's expertise and from the teacher trainer. The importance of exposure to competent teachers with successful experience in conducting practice and learning from this interaction has also been described in several studies (Bandura, 1986; De Jong et al., 2019; Kennedy, 2016; Yoon et al., 2007). That the design principles can be used in these different ways is also useful for people who professionalize teachers.

### 6.3 General discussion

In this section, I reflect on the main findings and what this thesis contributes to the existing literature on teaching empathy in history class with eyewitnesses. I begin by reflecting on what the findings of the four studies mean for the key topics of this dissertation. I concentrate on four themes: first, regarding teachers' beliefs on historical empathy, the balance between the cognitive and affective approaches of historical empathy will be discussed; second, I will explore the extent to which students can develop the skill of empathy and how the subject-specific and citizenship goals can reinforce each other, but also work against each other; third, the design principles will be discussed, in particular the principle of positionality; and fourth what these insights mean for the professionalization of teachers in teaching historical empathy will be discussed.

#### *Conceptualizations of historical empathy: cognitive and affective approaches*

In order to master a skill, teachers first need an understanding of what exactly the skill entails and secondly, why it is important. In order to teach historical empathy, the students' views and initial situation also need to be identified. With the first study (Chapter 2), I contributed to knowledge of the teachers' beliefs and students' grasp of historical empathy. Little was particularly known about students' conceptions of historical empathy. The outcomes showed that, for most students and teachers in this study, historical empathy was a skill that can be practiced in history class, and that historical empathy has both cognitive and affective elements. That historical empathy is regarded as a skill is less common in the literature on historical empathy (e.g. Coltham & Fines, 1971; Lee, 1983). That historical empathy has both

cognitive and affective elements is in line with the recent educational literature on historical empathy, where scholars conceptualize historical empathy as a cognitive-affective process (e.g., Barton & Levstik, 2004; Davison, 2017; Endacott & Brooks, 2013, 2018; Karn, 2023). Teachers in the interview study mentioned that, in teaching practice, they did not pay much explicit attention to the affective aspects of historical empathy. They indicated that while they would like to pay more attention to the affective elements, they did not always know how to integrate the approach into their daily practice.

The cognitive and affective approach is a theme in the literature on promoting empathy in history class. This dissertation assumed that historical empathy has both cognitive and affective components, and has contributed to how both components can be translated into teaching practice. In Study 2 I formulated design principles and designed a lesson unit in which both cognitive and affective aspects of empathy were addressed. Cognitive elements of historical empathy as contextualization and discussing multiple perspectives, and more affective elements such as making a personal connection with, and care for, the eyewitnesses, occurred quite naturally due to the chosen documentary and two eyewitnesses in the classroom. Working with eyewitnesses enabled both cognitive and affective approaches to historical empathy to be addressed. However, providing explicit instruction about the cognitive aspects appeared easier than providing explicit instruction about the affective aspects, which was also reflected in students' answers to the question in the post-test what helps to empathize. Students mainly mentioned cognitive aspects. Researchers in the related literature have emphasized the importance of a personal connection in the affective approach (e.g., Barton & Levstik, 2004; Davison, 2017; Endacott & Brooks, 2013, 2018; Karn, 2023). While the affective elements can promote, they can also hinder empathy and a personal connection, as in the case of eyewitness Moishe in the documentary from Study 3. His radical Jewish Orthodox statements about the role of girls and hateful words about Palestinians prompted considerable disgust among the students, hindering personal connection, and therefore empathy, with him. The question is whether, in the case of Moishe, more cognitive empathy could help students to be able to understand a perspective that clashes with their values. It is clear that many students did not want to make a personal connection with Moishe and that this affective element actually hindered students' empathy. Perhaps through historical contextualization, paying attention to the situation in which Moishe grew up and what he

experienced, it would still be possible for students to empathize with a perspective that clashes with their own.

While the cognitive and affective approaches can complement each other, they can also come into conflict. The literature proposed that students would be less critical of the story of an eyewitness, because the eyewitness is seen as authentic and trustworthy (Bertram et al., 2017). Here the cognitive and affective elements of historical empathy could come into conflict, but could also, on the other hand, provide starting points for teachers to discuss cognitive elements (including the reliability of the source) and affective elements (empathizing and sympathizing with an eyewitness), thus providing students more understanding of empathy in history. Some of these issues were discussed by the teachers who participated in the professional learning community of the fourth study.

My studies showed the importance of alternating cognitive and affective aspects of historical empathy in history class. This is in line with other research on historical empathy (Davison 2017; Karn, 2023, 2024) that highlights the importance of meaningfully addressing the affective and cognitive elements in the lesson. In my third study (Chapter 4), teachers combined a more cognitive approach of contextualization of the situation in Israel-Palestine with a more affective approach, to make a personal connection with the eyewitnesses by asking questions. For example, teacher Lily started the lesson with an affective approach to attune to shared human characteristics of the eyewitness and later continue with a more cognitive teaching strategy to contextualize the eyewitnesses. As seen in the literature, the balance between cognitive and affective is particularly important for sensitive and/or polarized topics because students are more likely to experience strong emotions as anger, resistance, and suffering (Sheppard & Levy, 2019; Wansink et al., 2021). For example, with sensitive topics it might be important, that teachers first pay attention to students' emotions and give emotional support if necessary before they start to contextualize the topic. It is also important that teachers provide enough context information to understand the different perspectives to promote students' critical awareness. Therefore, the question for teachers is not to choose between a cognitive and affective approach, but rather how to combine and alternate them.

Although the affective side of historical empathy has been increasingly recognized in recent years as an element of historical empathy (e.g., Endacott & Brooks, 2018), my third and fourth studies (Chapters 4 and 5) showed that for teachers to provide explicit instruction

on the affective elements of historical empathy can be challenging. For example, in the lessons with the guest speakers there was no explicit instruction on the affective aspects, but it was more implicitly addressed through the demonstration of empathy by the guest speakers. Teachers in our fourth study asked explicitly for more professionalization in the explicit instruction of the affective aspects of historical empathy. The fourth study showed that teachers were sometimes afraid to pay explicit attention to affective aspects of empathy because they thought that discussing emotions was too obvious or too vulnerable. However, there were also teachers who invited their students to engage affectively with the eyewitnesses. They asked the students questions such as, "Why do you think the eyewitness becomes so emotional?, What feelings would play a role in this?" These teachers indicated that sometimes a teacher has considerably more context knowledge from an eyewitness than students. It is therefore important to check this context knowledge with students, including the background and emotions of the eyewitnesses.

In summary, the findings from the interview study showed that teachers were unsure about how to pay attention to the affective elements of historical empathy. Studies 2, 3 and 4 showed that the combination of using eyewitnesses and the design principles was valuable in addressing both cognitive and affective aspects of historical empathy. Even so, a number of difficulties remain. First, the affective elements can both promote and hinder empathy. The latter can happen, for example, when the values of students and eyewitnesses clash strongly. This remains a key point for teachers: to create awareness about this among students, for example by discussing positionality. This is discussed in more detail later in this conclusion. Second, as Study 4 shows, teachers continue to find explicit attention and instruction for the affective elements difficult. More research is needed on this because, for teachers to do this well, including the choice and guidance of eyewitnesses, requires considerable attention and precision.

#### *Developing the ability to empathize: domain specific and citizenship goals*

I next discuss the development of the ability to empathize and how subject-specific goals and citizenship goals can work together. The General Introduction (Chapter 1) noted that citizenship competencies have gained an important role in education and that this is reflected in the curricula of different countries. In the Netherlands, these goals are not linked to a specific school subject, but can be worked on in all subjects. My study provided indications

for practice for achieving this in the subject of history, by integrating attention to empathy in history classes. Teachers could make connections between historical empathy, which relates to perspective taking in the past, and empathy, which relates to perspective taking in the present.

Our interview study (Chapter 2) made clear that, for teachers, the most important goal of historical empathy was the combination of subject-specific (understanding the past) and citizenship goals. History teachers and students saw a connection between historical empathy (taking perspective of people in the past) and empathy as a citizenship goal (taking perspectives of people in the present). They believed historical empathy could provide an entry point for practicing this citizenship competency. Teachers mentioned the importance of contributing to citizenship competencies, but also the difficulty of making the link between subject-specific and citizenship skills explicit in history classroom practice.

Study 2 (Chapter 3) showed that students who followed a lesson unit making use of eyewitnesses and designed on six pedagogical principles to teach historical empathy gained more confidence in the ability to empathize. In addition, their understanding of empathy was promoted, and they improved on the ability to explain why empathy is important. This study considers historical empathy as a skill in which students can become better. However, it is difficult to measure development in this skill. Also, it is unlikely that one lesson unit will result in visible improvement in empathy. Instruments have been developed for cognitive aspects, such as for historical perspective taking (see Hartmann & Hasselhorn, 2008; Huijgen et al., 2014), but the intertwining with affective aspects makes measurement more difficult. We used an instrument that measures confidence in the ability to empathize, and we used an instrument that measures the extent to which students can explain what empathy means and why it is important. Research by Van der Eem et al., (2023) showed that for the historical skill ‘evaluating the trustworthiness of historical sources’, procedural knowledge of this skill and the value students attach to learning this skill were significant predictors of students' task performance. Study 2 showed that understanding of empathy can be measured and that, after instruction, this understanding also improved. When asked about the importance of empathy in history class, students mentioned both subject-specific and citizenship goals. Students indicated that, in the first place, empathy was especially important to better understand the other person or the other context, and secondly, they mentioned the importance of empathy for prosocial behavior, both between individuals and for society as a whole. In the second category, this answer was common: “Because then you can help that person”, which is

consistent with Barton and Levstik's (2004) theory of care. In the third place, students mentioned the goals of learning about new perspectives. These findings are consistent with the literature on empathy, which argues that empathy allows us to be more tolerant and accept others (Bartal et al., 2011; Seller & Craig, 2016).

My intervention study (Chapters 3 and 4) showed that the combination of the design principles and eyewitnesses provided teachers with opportunities to combine, discuss and link subject-specific and citizenship goals of historical empathy. The connection or integration of subject-specific goals and citizenship goals can be facilitated precisely with eyewitnesses. Eyewitnesses show that they are shaped by their context, such as their past, and that this also affects their perspective and positionality in the present. Students can thereby make connections between subject-specific skills, such as historical contextualization, but also citizenship goals such as empathizing with a perspective other than one's own and understanding that each perspective is shaped by that person's context.

Although the six design principles helped teachers fostering citizenship goals, teachers who implemented the lesson unit based upon the principles (Chapter 4) mentioned that making a more explicit connection between historical empathy and empathy was sometimes necessary. I therefore added a seventh design principle in the fourth study: linking historical empathy and empathy by making a connection between taking the perspective of people in the past (subject specific goal) and in the present (citizenship goal). In the pre-measurement of Study 4, most teachers who participated in the PLC indicated that they mostly made the link implicitly, while in the post-measurements, most teachers who participated in the professional learning community indicated that they had learned how to make this link more explicitly.

Teachers in Studies 1 and 4 considered class discussion as a mean to address subject-specific and citizenship goals at the same time. That class discussion may help with both subject-specific and citizenship goals has also been demonstrated by other authors (Hess, 2002; Le Coultre, 2023). Study 4 showed that design principles can be helpful in this regard, as they can give direction for issues to discuss such as contextualization, positionality and multiperspectivity. For example, teachers could discuss that empathizing with another person could be easier when more information about someone's context and positionality is known. In addition, the principle of multiperspectivity allows teachers to discuss the existence of multiple perspectives on an issue, rather than polarizing it. A safe classroom situation, with explicit attention to multiperspectivity, can offer opportunities to introduce students to



perspectives different than their own (Hess, 2002; Le Coultre, 2023; McCully, 2017; Sheppard & Levy, 2019).

In terms of the subject-specific and citizenship goals of historical empathy, it can be concluded that teachers can simultaneously work on both developing historical empathy and empathy. In Study 4, for example, Helen used the seventh design principle in her lesson units, to link the experiences of soldiers of World War I and those in the current Russia-Ukraine war, in which young soldiers also must fight. By making analogies between past and present, teachers could promote the relevance of the past and make history valuable for the present (van Straaten et al., 2016). At the same time, as Endacott and Brooks (2013) have also pointed out, it is important that teachers emphasize that the situation of a soldier in the past differs from one in the present. Subject-specific and citizenship goals of historical empathy can be brought together through discussing historical skills and concepts such as trustworthiness of sources, presentism, anachronism and value transfer with students. Making a personal connection and establishing relationships with the present, can hinder the understanding of the past and historical thinking. This may be, for example, because the reliability of sources is in question or because there are always differences between past and present. The teacher might discuss in class that there are obviously differences between a war situation in the present and the past, discussing concepts such as presentism, anachronism and value transfer. At the same time, there are human emotions that were similar in the present and the past. Allowing students to empathize with people who are in a war situation now, such as by showing eyewitnesses from the news, could spark conversations about how people from the past and present might have experienced war. What was it like for a family that had to have a son go to the war front? And what is it like now? In this way, explicit instruction can also be given on what historical empathy means and why it is important. Recent literature on historical empathy also makes similar recommendations (Davison, 2017; Karn, 2023; Miles & Gibson, 2022). In summary, the combination of the design principles and eyewitnesses provided teachers with opportunities to combine, discuss and link subject-specific and citizenship goals of historical empathy.

#### *Design principles for teaching empathy in history lessons*

Despite much having been written about empathy in history education, concrete guidelines for teaching and practical examples of lessons were scarce. This thesis contributed to such

guidelines and teaching examples for teachers who aim to foster empathy in history lessons with eyewitness. Study 1 clearly showed that teachers did not often explicitly address historical empathy. Therefore, this thesis formulated design principles to support teachers in their teaching practice and in the design of lessons and learning activities. The seven design principles were: offering historical context, paying attention to awareness of the students' own positionality, paying attention to multiperspectivity, paying attention to a personal connection between students and historical actors, appealing both cognitively and affectively to the students, giving explicit instruction on what it means to empathize and linking historical empathy and general empathy by connecting taking the perspective of people in the past and in the present.

In addition to the principle addressing the cognitive and affective elements discussed earlier, the findings show that the design principle of positionality deserves more attention for teachers and teacher educators, especially with sensitive topics, as in our intervention study on Israel-Palestine. I next discuss the positionality of both students, eyewitnesses and teachers.

With regard to the positionality of the students, it is important for the teacher to pay attention to positionality so that a student can gain insight into his or her own positionality and that of the eyewitnesses. As mentioned earlier, the affective elements of empathy, such as making a personal connection with the eyewitness, can both promote and hinder empathy. The latter can happen, for example, when religions or cultures of students and eyewitnesses clash, as in my research with the example of the Jewish and Palestine identities and religion. The identity of the students is important in, for example, the case of conflicting values. Research has shown that students' positionality can influence their willingness to take perspectives other than their own, especially on sensitive topics. Trauma, social identity and moral values can cause emotional responses in the classroom and can hinder students' ability to empathize with another perspective than their own (Jikeli, 2013; Savenije et al., 2022; Savenije & Goldberg, 2019; Wansink et al., 2021).

With regard to the positionality of the eyewitnesses, when telling their personal stories, the guest speakers in our intervention study talked about their positionality, thus introducing the students to that. There had been given instructions to talk about their positionality. In an assignment, students were asked to focus specifically on the positionality and context of the eyewitnesses. This was discussed in the fourth lesson of the lesson unit. The guest speakers

were also open to other perspectives, the researcher had deliberately selected them for that. In addition, students were able to ask questions directly to these guest speakers, and the understanding of the guest speakers' perspectives sometimes grew in the interaction, despite the sometimes different values of guest speaker and student. This was different with the eyewitnesses in the documentary, with whom students could not interact. In addition, some of the eyewitnesses in the documentary were less open to perspectives other than their own. The Jewish and Palestinian eyewitnesses in the documentary did not seem very aware of their positionality themselves, but the narrative and framing of the documentary made very clear what determined the positionality of these seven protagonists: their upbringing, the violent events they had experienced in Israel-Palestine, and the context which they had to cope with on a daily basis. However, it can be concluded that interaction can be helpful in being able to understand more about people's different perspectives. Research has showed that, particularly when eyewitnesses are present live in the classroom, there is more relevance, urgency and identification, allowing a personal connection with someone from another perspective or culture to take place (Hülsken et al., 2022; Llewellyn & Ng-A-Fook, 2017; Martin et al., 2021).

With regard to the positionality of the teacher, study 1 showed that students and teachers consider awareness of positionality as important for empathy. While attention was paid to the positionality of the eyewitnesses, the positionality of the teachers themselves was not addressed in the intervention study. The teachers in Study 3 did not consciously deal with and discuss their own positionality. If students and teachers consider positionality so important for empathy, as the literature has also mentioned (Cotton, 2006; Kunzman, 2006), the fact that the teachers in the intervention study paid no attention to their positionality, despite it being a design principle and included in the teaching materials, suggests that discussing positionality is complex and needs more explicit attention. The PLC study confirmed this, as those teachers had many questions about positionality and the extent to which, as a teacher, they need to be open about it to their students. Two of the participating teachers were not only aware of their positionality, but also discussed it openly with their students. There were even teachers who asked their students to be alert to the teachers' positionality and to be alert that the teacher left room for different perspectives because they did not want their perspective as teachers to become the norm in the classroom. This is important because research has shown that teachers often unconsciously and consciously

transfer their own thinking to their students (e.g., Le Coultre, 2023). The fact that the teachers in the PLC did pay explicit attention to the principle of positionality after the professionalization on this point, and also said that they now knew better how to approach it, indicates the importance of such professionalization on promoting empathy in history class.

Explaining that positionality is very much linked to the design principle of multiperspectivity can help teachers to foster empathy in the classroom. The participating teachers in our third and fourth study all mentioned the importance of an open discussion with different perspectives in their classroom in which their students could express their opinions and explore different points of view. The participating teachers promoted an open discussion, but also struggled with accepting all perspectives in the classroom. How far a teacher should go in tolerating multiperspectivity and extreme perspectives in the classroom remained a point of discussion. The teachers in our fourth study indicated that there should be limits to freedom of expression and that the limits of discrimination and insult must be taken into account. Other research has shown that dealing with different (divergent) perspectives in a classroom requires a lot of pedagogical tact and classroom management skills from teachers (Savenije & Goldberg, 2019). At the same time, research has mentioned that school should be a normative environment where students should learn how to disagree in a way that allows for respect and moral decency toward each other (Journell, 2011). Teachers in our fourth study sometimes also struggled with this. Some teachers mentioned that before the PLC they were regularly irritated by the polarized opinions of their students, but that the PLC had given them tools to discuss this with students more constructively, through the design principles of contextualization, positionality and multiperspectivity. By paying more attention to the context and positionality of students, eyewitnesses and teachers themselves, there was also more understanding of each other's perspectives and how these perspectives arose. The personal connection and interaction with other students and teachers in a class discussion also allowed more insight into the different perspectives to emerge and, with that, more understanding of the different perspectives. It can be concluded, therefore, that the seven design principles together provided teachers with concrete guidelines to also discuss the different elements of taking perspective of people in the past and present and so contributed to both historical and citizenship skills. The discussion of the design principle of positionality can be useful both for students and teachers in the classroom, and for teachers in professional development and teacher training.

*Teachers' professionalization on historical empathy*

To date there has been little research on the professionalization of teachers in teaching historical empathy (Cunningham, 2007, 2009). The fourth study aimed to fill this gap by advancing the teaching practice of historical empathy through teacher professionalization on teaching of empathy in history lessons using eyewitnesses and the seven design principles. Our professionalization had positive effects on teachers' understanding, and the self-efficacy of teaching historical empathy. Important features of this professionalization were the seven design principles to teach historical empathy.

Since design principles based on research are powerful if they are also experimented with, in the fourth study, teachers both self-designed and self-conducted their lessons. Discussing the lesson design and design principles, where teachers could openly discuss their own struggles with putting these design principles into practice, proved especially helpful and inspiring. It is therefore important in teacher professionalization to also elicit those conversations by consciously asking questions. The power of the design principles can be used in these different ways, as an entry point to discuss the theory of historical empathy, as a basis for developing one's own lessons, as discussion points to reflect and exchange on those lessons. This research has shown that tested design principles are useful for teacher professionalization. That design principles could be an important resource for changing teaching practices, was also found in other studies (e.g. Bakker, 2018; Holdinga et al., 2023).

With regard to the four components of teachers' professional growth of the IMPG, the combination proved successful for the participating teachers. The combination of professional experimentation (Domain of Practice), the feedback, discussion, theory and examples of other teachers and the teacher trainer (External Domain), the changes in the Personal Domain and also in the Domain of Consequences together helped the teachers. Self-experimentation based on the discussed seven design principles (theory) proved to be powerful. The importance of exposure to competent teachers and teacher trainers (External Domain) with successful experience in conducting practice and learning from this interaction has also been described in several studies (Bandura, 1986; De Jong et al., 2019; Kennedy, 2016; Yoon et al., 2007). A PLC can be a powerful collaboration between teachers in the field of education, researchers at the university with expertise on teaching historical skills and empathy, and the teacher training programs.

The Interconnected Model of Professional Growth of Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) is primarily designed to examine teacher growth. A disadvantage is that this model is more difficult to use to consider the social aspects that play a role, whereas teachers in a PLC particularly learn in interaction with others. The feedback, discussion, theory and examples of other teachers and the teacher trainer belong to the external domain, as do information sources such as domain specific literature. The model does not fully reflect how teachers learn in interaction with each other and a teacher trainer. Recent research on professional learning communities has highlighted the importance of reflective dialogue between teachers who collaborate and a focus on student learning (De Jong et al., 2022; Lefstein et al., 2020). Further exploring how other models of professional development than the IMPG can be used to investigate teachers' professionalization in historical empathy (Borko & Putnam, 1996; Kennedy, 2016) is also of interest. Especially in a PLC that is about empathy in history class, it is important to also consider the interaction between the teachers.

#### **6.4 Reflections on my role as teacher researcher**

Being aware of and transparent about one's own positionality plays a role both in general educational research (e.g., Bourke, 2014), and in this thesis. Being aware and discussing one's own positionality as a teacher is one of the design principles of the designed lesson units in teaching historical empathy. In the Dutch curriculum, with regard to positionality, considering the time, place and cultural context of the (historical) actor and yourself is required. Consequently, I next discuss the time, place and cultural context of the research and the researcher.

It is worth noting that the topic of our lesson units, Israel-Palestine, presented at the outset of this thesis in 2018, was in a different context compared to at the time of the writing of this, in 2024. While the current conflict in Israel-Palestine may further underscore the significance of this thesis, the outcomes of the research might be different if we were conducting the study now, because these outcomes are also partly shaped by the political situation during implementation. For example, asking Jewish and Palestinian guest speakers to come in the classrooms and tell their personal stories would probably be more difficult, sensitive and complex now than in November and December 2019, when the lesson units with the Jewish and Palestine guest speakers were conducted. Because of the current situation in

Israel-Palestine, students, guest speakers and teachers might have taken more of a position on this war and might have had more intense emotions, which would have made taking a perspective other than their own more difficult.

Reflecting on positionality in terms of culture and place is also important. With regard to the theme of the lesson series, there was less cultural and emotional connection to Jewish and/or Palestinian identity with me as a researcher (a white and Christian woman). Had this study been conducted by a Jewish or Palestinian researcher, the results might have been different, when more personal emotions were involved. This might have been also the case if the involved teachers who conducted the lesson units had a stronger cultural connection with the Jewish or Palestine identity.

I now discuss my different identities that may have influenced my research: my identity as a history teacher, my identity as a mother of a multicultural family, and my identity as a coach in the Virtues project. First, my identity as a history teacher - that influenced the design of my research. Precisely because of my positionality as a teacher, I am particularly focused on teaching practice. This is evident, for example, in my focus on design principles. I wanted to start and end with students and teachers in teaching practice. Therefore, I first identified the views and initial situation of students and history teachers to find out where the challenges were in teaching historical empathy. In the intervention study, I also intended to really focus on students (Study 2) and on teachers in practice (Study 3), and included teacher professionalization in my research design, so that teachers could actually use it themselves. Precisely because I am a teacher myself, I aimed to make both theoretical and practical contributions by empirically designing and testing principles that can be used in practice. My teacher's perspective may have influenced my focus, mainly on the teaching practice. This may have meant that I was less focused on deeply understanding how and why teaching and learning in the various studies was structured a certain way, and more on what this meant in teaching practice for teachers themselves. Nevertheless, to be as objective as possible about the teaching situation, and to reach a deeper understanding, we always discussed all findings in the research group and conducted inter-rater reliability analyses.

Second, the fact that my positionality as a teacher partially overlapped with the positionality of the participating teachers of my study may have influenced the results, which may have been both an advantage and a disadvantage. The advantage was that I myself knew, from practice, how complex discussing sensitive topics in class is, and how complicated it is

to ask students to take perspectives other than their own. My own experience as a teacher might have played a role in the interviews in the first study and the last two studies. For example, it might have influenced the way I questioned students and teachers and what questions I asked. Since, as an experienced teacher, I know the issues that teachers and students may encounter with historical empathy, I may have inquired further and more specifically about the answers teachers and students gave than someone who does not have 25 years of teaching experience. The disadvantage may have been that I am less able to look at education from a distance than a researcher from outside education.

Third, my position as a teacher affects my participants. Because I am a teacher myself, other teachers and students are likely to see me differently than if I had only been an academic researcher. As I am also familiar with the educational context, I am better able to contextualize the reasoning of teachers and students, because I can place it in my daily teaching practice. The risk may be that I then also explain it on the basis of those own teaching experiences, and may sometimes be less able to see that it may be differently structured for other teachers.

Fourth, my perspective as a teacher also influenced how I consider historical empathy, namely as a skill, because as a teacher I believe that a student can get better at something by practicing it. From my idealistic perspective as a teacher, I also believed at the start of my research that competencies as ‘taking perspectives other than your own’ or ‘empathy’ can be promoted. That probably influenced why, when I explored the theory of historical empathy, I chose not to conceptualize historical empathy only as a process or something you achieve in a particular situation (as some scholars do), but as something you can get better at.

Another perception that may have played a role, is my perception that differences in culture, religion and time can be bridged if people are willing to try harder to empathize with a perspective other than their own. This perception is influenced by my identity as a mother in a multicultural family. In addition, my work as a coach in the Virtues project also has influenced my perspective as a researcher. I do not believe that empathy is a character trait, but consider it a virtue and skill that can be practiced. Consequently, both my research design, for example in Study 2, which examined understanding, confidence and importance of empathy, and the lens through which I assessed them, may have been influenced by this. The studies conducted for this thesis have shown that students and teachers can at least improve their understanding of what empathy entails and that students also gain more confidence in



their ability to empathize. They also provide evidence that teachers can improve their teaching. However, as there is only limited research on this, I have to be cautious about drawing definitive conclusions.

### **6.5 Limitations and suggestions for future research**

Next, I discuss the limitations with regard to the generalizability of this study, the conceptual issues and methodological issues, and the choice for eyewitnesses. In terms of the generalizability, there are several limitations. With respect to the students, Studies 1, 2 and 3 focused on secondary school students who were 15 years or older and were in the two highest levels that are preparatory for college and university. This selection by age and level of education was made because it was important that the students could talk about empathy in a more abstract sense. Given the detailed and sometimes abstract answers we received, this indeed proved to be true. Fortunately, in the last study (Chapter 5) younger students and students in all levels of high school also followed the lessons designed on historical empathy. However, this fourth study did not directly examine students' outcomes, so more research is needed on the effects on such younger students (under 15), and on students in all levels of secondary school. In terms of the number of the participating teachers, there were ten in the interview study, two in the intervention study and eight in the professionalization study. Consequently, the results are not generalizable and more research is needed. Another limitation in our fourth study was the particular group of teachers who participated in the professionalization. Since this group was relatively enthusiastic about the subject of this PLC they were not representative of all history teachers. Including more teachers with different backgrounds and student teachers will be useful to examine similarities and differences in professional growth compared to our sample. Another limitation was that the second and third studies were limited to one topic, Israel-Palestine, so their results are not generalizable to other historical topics. Research on other topics would show the extent to which the theme influenced generalizability or the extent to which the choice of this theme influenced the research results. More research with other topics would help in this regard. However, in the fourth study, teachers also designed lessons about other topics, which indicates that the design principles are applicable to a variety of historical topics. Further research on different topics

could shed light on how much the topic of the lessons, and the sensitivity of the topic, have influenced the findings.

As for the conceptual issues, I have sometimes struggled with the terms ‘historical empathy’, ‘perspective taking of people in the past’, ‘empathy’ and ‘perspective taking of people in the present’. On the one hand, these constructs are close, for example, I consider ‘historical empathy’ and ‘taking perspectives of people in the past’ both as cognitive and affective skills that are almost similar. However, from the perspectives of the different scientific disciplines, ‘empathy’ and ‘taking perspectives of people in the past’ are also defined in a different way. The difficulties have partly to do with the translation from Dutch (*historisch inleven* and *inleven*) to English (*historical empathy* and *empathy*) and partly with the different definitions of these concepts in the different scientific disciplines, for example, social psychology or the philosophical science of history.

These conceptual issues also had consequences for the measurements and methodological issues. The fact that students can develop historical empathy as a skill does not mean that historical empathy is also easy to measure and assessable. For example, in our intervention study (Chapter 3), I chose to measure students’ understanding of ‘empathy’. I found that students can become better at understanding empathy though, at the same time, the evidence for this is still limited. While students are better able to explain why empathy is important and what one can do to better empathize through explicit teaching of historical empathy, and indicate through self-reporting that they can better empathize, this study has not provided insight into students’ actual ability to empathize in specific situations. I did not examine the extent to which students can empathize in other situations (more or less related to the topic), nor have I developed an instrument on the basis of which one can indicate whether or not the student is empathizing well. I chose to measure confidence, understanding and importance attached to empathy, because it is difficult and questionable whether you can measure progress on such a broad skill as empathy, which is developing so much in students of this age, and also within a lesson unit of only four lessons. In addition, the difficulty of measuring the affective aspects of (historical) empathy also led to this choice. Even so, it can be concluded that students were more confident about being able to apply the skill of empathy, that they understood better what is needed to empathize, what can hinder it, and these are relevant elements for developing a skill. In this study, while teacher instruction and exercises for the students focused on historical empathy, the measurements focused on the

understanding of empathy in general. Whether the ability for historical empathy increased as a result of the lesson unit, and to what extent performance on that kind of assignment is related to a more general understanding of what is needed to empathize is also a relevant question. Research into this would have required a different focus, which is why I decided to exclude it from my research. Exploring these aspects in follow-up research would be interesting.

With regard to the topic of the lesson unit, I did not test students' prior knowledge and views of the conflict. More prior knowledge about or context of a topic could facilitate contextualization and thus affect students' empathy. It is known that one needs knowledge of (historical) context to contextualize people's thinking and actions (Huijgen et al., 2017). However, it is not known how that knowledge helps shape other aspects of empathy, such as making a personal connection or understanding one's own positionality. Future research could investigate the role of content knowledge on students' understanding of empathy. Although in the first and second study I focused on students' understanding of empathy and the effects of using eyewitnesses in a documentary or as guest speakers in the classroom on students' understanding of empathy, in the fourth study, we limited our analysis to teacher outcomes. The data in that study were only from observations during the PLC and questionnaires and interviews on only the teachers' perspectives, it did not examine how the teachers performed the lessons in the classroom, or the students' perspectives and outcomes. Future research could include a follow-up lesson observation of the teachers to explore how teachers implement the teaching of empathy in their daily practice and how this is received by students.

Another limitation is that this research involved short interventions. The intervention of Studies 2 and 3 involved four lessons and also the fourth study often involved up to four lessons taught by teachers. I did not conduct a longitudinal study with either students or teachers. Since historical empathy is a complex skill for students, follow-up research would be useful to investigate the effects at multiple points in a year. The follow-up measurements after two months did show lasting effects for students. For teachers, historical empathy is also a complex skill to teach. In this regard, follow-up research could focus on the effects of longer term training, or how students develop when this is practiced in the long term.

The studies have shown that combining affective and cognitive approaches to empathy in the history classroom, in order to work on both subject-specific and citizenship goals, can be powerful. In terms of the design principles, one limitation may be that I tested them in

combination so I cannot say as much about the individual design principles and what exactly they do independently in teaching empathy in history class. Further research could investigate this.

With regard to the choice for eyewitnesses to promote historical empathy, there are differences between eyewitnesses in a documentary and live guest speakers. With documentaries with eyewitnesses, narrative and framing need to be taken into account. At the same time, live guest speakers have the disadvantage of being scarce and for teachers to get suitable eyewitnesses into their classroom at the right time can be time-consuming. With sensitive issues, in particular, such as the Israel/Palestine theme, getting suitable eyewitnesses into the classroom could be even more difficult. Further research could explore how, for example, Virtual Reality (VR) could contribute to enhancing historical empathy when eyewitnesses are difficult to invite in the classroom, as there are opportunities today for students to interact with personal stories of others through VR, while also being virtually present in the same room as the storyteller. Shin (2018) has shown that, in a virtual environment, viewers who are close to characters and sharing the same space, may feel their emotions or situations more strongly and that absorbing oneself in VR can promote empathy. Further research could investigate the extent to which VR is an alternative to guest speakers in the classroom.

## 6.6 Implications for practice

This research has provided insights for teachers, teachers educators and curriculum developers, showing that history teachers can foster empathy in history lessons using eyewitnesses, and that a lesson unit designed by design principles for promoting historical empathy enables teachers to work on history and citizenship goals at the same time. With regard to practicing historical empathy with eyewitnesses, this thesis also showed that teachers can use the advantages of a documentary (for example, greater practicality, multiperspectivity and greater availability), and the advantages of a guest speaker (for example, the personal connection and possibilities of interaction) side by side. Both methods can help teachers to foster empathy in history lessons using eyewitnesses. With regard to the implications for practice, several recommendations can be made.

First, I can recommend the seven tested design principles, which provide clear guidance and tools for designing, teaching and discussing historical empathy with students and fellow teachers. The combination of working with eyewitnesses and the design principles provides teachers with concrete tools to promote empathy in history class, allowing teachers to add emphases and make choices depending on their own preferences in teaching and their goals. The use of eyewitnesses in fostering empathy in history class facilitates applying the design principles of personal connection and addressing the affective elements of empathy. The other design principles are also easy to use in other ways and with other learning activities. The affective and personal elements, the important and sometimes complex elements of empathy, are clearly reinforced by an eyewitness.

Second, it is important that teachers consider their own lesson goals, and check whether they are more in line with the subject-specific goals, citizenship goals or both. There are different ways in which subject-specific and citizenship goals of historical empathy can work together. For example, when discussing the perspectives of soldiers in a war, if they want their students to compare the positions of soldiers in the past and present, teachers can use the design principles of the personal connection or linking between empathizing with someone in the past or present. When doing so, it is important that teachers also address other historical skills and concepts such as trustworthiness of sources, presentism, anachronism, value transfer and the cognitive and affective elements of historical empathy. Despite the fact that some sources might represent only one specific perspective, they can be used to make a personal connection and/ or to make a link with the present. To add sources with other perspectives or different kind of information one can consider subject-specific skills as multiperspectivity and the trustworthiness of sources. What applies to the historical skill of empathy could perhaps also apply to other historical skills, such as 'identifying aspects of change and continuity'. This could also involve working simultaneously on historical understanding and citizenship goals. For example, by discussing a sensitive topic through time, students may see that sensitivity can change over time, which may put a sensitive contemporary topic into perspective, as well as contribute to historical reasoning and the acquisition of historical understanding.

Third, as a teacher, it is important to think about balancing the cognitive and affective aspects of empathy in history class. The design principle 'properly address both the cognitive and affective aspect of historical empathy' appeared to be a valuable principle to reflect on

with teachers. Topics that could be discussed are preference for a more cognitive or affective approach of teachers, the dynamics of the classroom, and the subject matter that helps determine whether one or the other receive more attention. Inter-referencing and alternating cognitive or affective approaches during the lesson should be considered, rather than treating them as different approaches.

Fourth, it is important for teachers to carefully consider the positionality of the students in a class, of the eyewitnesses, and especially their own positionality and whether and how they want to include this in the lessons. As teacher, it is essential to approach a sensitive topic with care to create an environment in which students feel safe. Before discussing the topic, particularly in a classroom discussion, it is crucial that teachers first reflect on their own positionality. This can be achieved by asking questions such as: What perspectives and experiences have influenced my positionality on this issue? What emotions and thoughts arise when I engage in discussions about this topic, and what factors contribute to these reactions? How might my emotional responses differ from those of my students? Teachers should be encouraged to examine their own beliefs, as well as their political and emotional responses, in relation to the sensitive topic. In doing so, teachers could model awareness of positionality for their students and model the difficulties of the process of taking different perspectives than your own. The self-awareness of the positionality as a teacher could influence the engagement with a sensitive topic in the classroom and the extent to which there is safety in the classroom to explore sensitive issues.

Fifth, in order to give explicit instruction, it is important that teachers gain a good understanding of the constructs historical empathy, empathy, and taking perspectives in the past and present (as formulated in the citizenship goals). These are complex constructs, but regular practice with the design principles make them more concrete for teachers. History teachers could discuss the design principles in their history department or consciously pay attention to them through professionalization.

Sixth, with regard to eyewitnesses, in practice, hosting a live guest speaker in the classroom is unfortunately sometimes difficult to organize due to practical concerns such as the scarcity of suitable guest speakers or financial considerations. It is important that teachers take time to find suitable guest speakers and prepare the visit properly, so the guest speaker can also model empathy live in the classroom. With regard to eyewitnesses in a documentary, teachers should consider the documentary's narrative and aim. In our intervention, those were

to increase understanding of all the different perspectives in Israel-Palestine and to show how little the different children knew about each other. Just meeting and talking to each other, at the end of the documentary, opens the door for more understanding of each other's perspective. In this way, the eyewitnesses in the documentary also model the importance of being aware and being open to different perspectives. That teachers carefully select their eyewitnesses (in a documentary or live guest speakers) for their willingness to take other perspectives than their own is important.

Seventh, in teacher training and professionalization, the design principles proved to be a tool for the facilitators because they can provide content for training or professionalization meetings. Related to the design principles, facilitators can ask concrete questions that promote meaningful exchange and discussion with (prospective) history teachers. A professionalization program around historical empathy can clearly contribute to more understanding of the concepts and goals and to more self-efficacy in teaching historical empathy. All of this gives history teachers more opportunities to work on a skill that is important to understand the past and the present society.