NO SHINE WITHOUT FRICTION

conflict

Be the change you want to see in others

Community-based action research on the values of transformative mediation in a Dutch ‘learning school’ organisation.

Master thesis for Humanistic studies

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“Learning is deeply personal and inherently social; it connects us not just to knowledge in the abstract, but to each other.”

Peter Senge
Abstract

This study is about the contribution of a transformative approach on conflict in school organisations to the foundation of a learning school. Using a mix of survey questions and semi-structured interviews, a community-based action research was conducted in a Dutch secondary school to 1) investigate the relation between empowerment and conflict in establishing a learning school 2) demonstrate the potential of transformative mediation as organisation development model. The effect of the school’s focus on empowerment to enhance collaboration, independence and diversity among staff members caused an increase of conflicts, because more people were enabled by the school to use their voice. This lead to a conflict avoiding culture in which people felt disconnected from the school’s management and self-absorbed in fear and apathy. Through the double-loop learning effect of this thesis’ research into the organisation’s mental models on conflict, new perspectives were discovered to transform their approach of the learning organisation. Based on these results, it’s concluded that a conflict management system based on the values of transformative mediation is indispensable to successfully implement the concept of a learning organisation.

Key words: conflict management; transformative mediation; learning school; double-loop; empowerment; community-based action research.

Word total: 28,465 (headings, lay-out, summaries, diagrams, literature and appendix not included).
Preface

The statue on the front page is one of the most powerful images that I have ever seen. According to the artist, Alexandr Milov, it represents a conflict between a man and a woman. They face opposite directions, their posture cold and hard like the metal wiring they are made of. But inside the cages of their bodies, two small children are trying to reach each out to other through the grating. They represent the couple’s deepest inner desire as well as that of all human beings: to make peace regardless of personal differences. There's an even deeper meaning behind the statue that shows when the night falls and the children’s bodies start to glow.

“This shining is a symbol of purity and sincerity that brings people together and gives a chance of making up when dark times arrive.”

Alexandr Milov

The sculpture is a beautiful metaphor for our conflicting nature - we cannot shine without friction. The artist’s message: if we allow our inner light to guide us through conflict, we can see the light in the other - a transformation towards shared humanity. I aspire that this thesis will contribute to that message. Conflict is an inevitable part of our nature, but I believe that the tendency to reach out to each other’s humanity and make peace is as well.

I sincerely hope you will enjoy reading it,

Merlinde Zoet
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Reading guide

This report is divided into six parts that are indexed by roman numbers and describe the different stages of the research. At the beginning of each part, you will find an introduction of its content and at the end a brief summary that is recognisable by a distinguishing red box. For a quick read, these are sufficient to understand the general direction, aims and outcomes of the research. Next, a description of each part is given to understand the how this research was conducted.

In part I, the development of the research’s problem, relevance and questions are described with regard to three major topics in social sciences: conflict, mediation and education. The central problem is established: schools are often unaware of the necessity to develop a system that constructively deals with the inevitable existence of conflicts within their organisation. This is problematic because it leads to a conflict avoiding culture that can deeply disrupt people’s (professional) lives, performances and relationships. Researching this is relevant to improve working conditions, expand the scope of those who deal with conflict and provide schools with means to do this constructively and thereby fulfil their duty to provide a foundation for dealing with conflicts in the bigger context of our pluralistic society. During the conduct, the interaction with the cooperating school caused a shift in the research methodology that led to a different purpose, namely to support the school’s reorientation on the existence of conflicts within their organisation.

In part II, this methodological turn is further elaborated. First, it’s original design as a mixed methods research is described, along with reasons for selecting the school. The mixed methods design contained a survey and ten interviews to get a broad and rich scope on the research field, because conflict is such a sensitive topic. The school was selected because of it’s organisational structure and the fact that the school’s culture has been researched by a staff member one year before. After that, it is described how the school’s staff members responded to the research: they realised they never talked about the existence of conflicts in their organisation and had a strong urge to change that. Therefore, the researcher
decided to work on location and engage in interaction with the school’s community of interest. The last section describes how this decision led to a change in methodology, causing the research purpose to shift from gaining general knowledge to a community-based action research about understanding the school’s specific context and analyse how their behaviour caused and extended their conflict problems, in order to help them improve their situation.

In part III, all relevant theory with regard to the research problem is presented in three extensive chapters on conflict, mediation and education. The first chapter explains what conflict entails from the very beginning. More than simply being a battle or an argument, conflict is a process of deteriorating interaction between agents about a situation that at least one of them perceives as an impediment to their rights, needs, wishes and interests. Even though people usually regard conflict as something negative, it’s not a bad phenomenon by definition. When dealt with through a collaborative conflict strategy, conflicts can actually be an impressive engine behind change, innovation, development and learning. In the second chapter, one specific way of dealing with conflict, called transformative mediation, is elaborated. An important distinction is made between two kinds of mediation, referred to as outcome- and process-controlled mediation. Transformative mediation is process-controlled because its primary goal is not to reach a settlement but to restore people’s relationship through empowerment and recognition. The possibilities and limitations of this method are described, after which is concluded that transformative mediation is quite suitable for de-escalating conflicts in school because it explores conflicts by bringing each other’s humanity back on the radar. The third chapter explains why this is especially important to use in education. The rights, needs, wishes and interests of our pluralistic society meet and interact with each other in school and this bears collaboration as well as conflict in its design. Therefore schools continuously have to mediate between the demands of the society, the needs of their pupils and their own views on good education. Transformative mediation can provide them with tools to focus on the empowerment of these perspectives instead of their impediments and thereby allows them to recognise the fundamentally shared goal of education to establish a more just, future society.
In part IV, the methods and theory of part II and III are implemented in the empirical study of the Dutch secondary school Fioretti College Hillegom. This school has been through a merger of three locations, while moving into a new building. This initiated the start of a different approach to their education with focus on personalised learning. Many familiarities got uprooted in this turbulent setting, that resulted in innovation and change but also in anxiety and resentment. However, the warm family culture only allowed for conversation about the positive effects, so the negative effects were left unresolved. The survey held among the staff members brought these negative effects to the surface. The most important result of the survey was not only that the school became aware of the cause of their conflicts; their view on the presence of conflict in their organisation was changed. During the interviews staff members expressed they knew the importance of conflict for learning, but were too weary to use this because they felt unsafe. This revealed a lack of empowerment in the organisation that blocked people’s ability to recognise their common humanity - most work floor staff members blamed the school’s management for pushing through innovations and in turn, the school management reproached people for not taking responsibility. The intervention of this research broke this status quo because it empowered them to address this problem among each other and recognise their shared goals once more. Empowerment and recognition are the pillars of transformative mediation and employing them during this study changed the research from a study about transformative mediation into a transformative mediation in-action, also called action science.

In part V, the first conclusion is that the values of transformative mediation were under a lot of pressure in the school organisation because of a paradox within the school’s empowerment management: their take on empowerment created conflict and thereby disempowered people. After that, it states the possibility to implement transformative mediation into a conflict management system, as was demonstrated by this research. The school took a transformative approach by using the action research to empower themselves to engage in dialogue and congruent interaction about their conflict problems. This created space for organisational development that further established their learning organisation. Finally, it concludes on the statement that a learning school cannot exist without empowerment and recognition being present at the core of its management.
The discussion contains the three biggest achievements of this research, which are: the development of a method to employ transformative mediation in a learning school that is applicable to other schools; the contribution to conflict theory of a form of regressive conflict escalation that is characterised by avoidance and last but not least; the discovery of the moral dimension of transformative mediation by approaching empowerment and recognition as principles of transformative justice.

In part VI, all supporting documents and information are gathered about the events and actions that have taken place during or as part of this research. It’s recommended to read these when they’re mentioned in the main text.

Note
This thesis is written in English because it makes an important contribution to multiple fields of social sciences and it’s therefore better for consistency and scientific usability to use original terms and definitions described in the vast body of English literature on topics related to this research. Two important translational choices need to be explained:

• The Dutch word personeel is consciously translated with ‘staff members’ to enclose all people working in the organisation and thereby circumvent the distinction between employers and employees. This is because the school is part of a foundation, so the school’s administrator is formally not an employer but an employee. General references (by respondents) to the school’s governing organisational levels with the Dutch word bestuur are translated as ‘management’ and/or ‘administrator’.

• The quotations in Part V, chapter 3 contain typically Dutch manners of expressing emotions and opinions that were best conveyed by nonliteral translation. This has been a deliberate decision after reading the article on coping with multilingual settings and data by Filep (2009).
"Welcome those big, complicated problems. In them are your most powerful opportunities."

Ralph Marston
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Introduction part I

This first part gives account of the research problem and the context in which it took shape in this thesis. It describes how the pressure-packed context of schools lead to an increase of conflicts: they try to meet the demands of every pupil, parent and the government and tend forget about their own needs. This leads to a lack of attention for conflict management in school organisations and a culture of conflict avoidance. This problem was researched in the context of a Dutch secondary school, Fioretti College Hillegom, to discover if a collaborative approach to conflict could contribute to a learning school organisation. This first part elaborates how this thesis began by researching a specific style of mediation called transformative mediation to determine it’s contribution to the development of a constructive conflict management system within a learning school organisation, but its intervention in school changed it into an transformation in-action research in which the researcher collaborated with the community of interest within the school to help them understand the conflicts caused by the merger and choice to become a learning school.

About the school

Fioretti College Hillegom is a secondary school that moved into a new building in 2013 after a merger of three locations with different cultures. This created a much diverser and pluralistic context for staff members and pupils, therefore a fairly innovative organisational housing structure was developed: eight small sections for different types of education, managed by one team leader within physically separated parts of the school and a central school administration that provides overhead support and steers the general direction of the organisation’s development. This central governance and decentralised execution enables teams to have personal contact with their pupils and to be more autonomous in their decisions, protocols and educational activities. Team leaders form the connection between the work floor and the general administration and are involved in many aspects of the school’s organisation, including policy-making, planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation. This is visualised in the organigram on the next page.
*The red line indicates the school’s daily management.*
After becoming one school, the location’s management wanted to establish a school profile based on an educational model that would provide in the modern (read: pluralistic) needs of pupils, parents and teachers. At the same time, the school’s umbrella foundation Fioretti Teylingen joined a government program called ‘Scholen aan Zet’ (Schools’ Turn) that supported schools to work on becoming a learning school organisation. The appendix contains an evaluative rapport from ‘Scholen aan Zet’ (thesis, pp. 140-146). Two years later, the school got a new location administrator who continued and intensified the initiated changes based on his own aspirations for the school’s future. This introduced other, new educational developments that are inspired by the Swedish model of personalised learning: Kunskapsskolan Education (KED). This concept approaches education as a path that pupils design for themselves in their own ways and timing, with the help of a (teaching) coach. To facilitate KED, every aspect of the pupil’s education must be arranged as an open and interactive learning environment.

These changes and innovations gave quite a few problems and conflicts in the organisation that were stirred up by this thesis’ research. The school actively participated and helped the researcher to understand and change their conflict avoiding culture, by providing a work place, information, feedback and even research advices. In return, the research questioned their ways of dealing with conflict their perspective on the conflict avoiding culture and through this open inquiry, their behaviour was ultimately transformed. The school organised reflection sessions for staff members, gave explanations on matters that had caused conflicts in the organisation and eventually dedicated themselves to the development of a conflict-management system with attention for empowerment and recognition within their school in 2018. Their active participation, contribution and response to the research caused a shift in the research purpose and it’s consecutive methodology that is described in part II (thesis, p. 32).
1. Problem definition

There’s no such thing as a conflict-free organisation, because everywhere people interact and collaborate there’s bound to be opposition and collision as well. In the past few decades, changes in organised life such as digitalisation and globalisation have brought modern ways of working that put even more pressure on people’s abilities to socialise, communicate and cooperate with each other - creating more opportunity for conflicts to arise (Hanson, 2003). The educational sector is no exception. In the past 25 years, schools have organised themselves in semi-autonomous teams of professionals, who thereby became increasingly dependent on each other’s skills, attitude and performance. This caused an increase of personal accountability and a shift in traditional power relations, two mayor factors that contribute to frequent occurrence of conflicts (Karsten, 2007).

This context urges schools to construct a systematic way of handling their conflicts to prevent resignation or dismissal and to employ opposing opinions and visions to stimulate learning and self-regulation. The problem is that most school organisations don’t deal with conflicts by active management. Instead, it’s left to teams and individuals to deal with conflicts, which in practice comes down to avoiding them (Karsten, 2007). This results in disconnection and miscommunication, causing many social and organisational problems within the school (Dreu, Dierendonck & Dijkstra, 2004).

One way out of this problem is to manage conflict with the use of mediation, an umbrella term for third-party methods that focus on restoring dialogue and personal responsibility in conflicts. A mediator facilitates the mutual understanding of the conflict for everyone involved (Brenninkmeijer, Bonenkamp, Oyen & Prein, 2013). Mediation is well-applicable in education because of its emphasis on people instead of rules. This is reflected by the fast-growing popularity of mediation in schools for pupils and parents leading to an abundance of research and literature on subjects like ‘the peaceable school’ and peer-mediation with pupils. However, schools rarely look into the possibilities of mediation for their staff, so there’s not much information to go on.
In cooperation with the Fioretti College Hillegom, this thesis explores the possibilities of transformative mediation for a Dutch secondary school organisation. Transformative mediation is a specific style that differs from other mediation methods in its focus on empowering people to recognise each other's point of view as humane and thereby helping them to transform their relationship, whereas other methods concentrate on assisting people in finding and analysing options for the resolution of their conflict.

This thesis investigates whether transformative mediation can contribute to the school's ambition to become a learning school, a concept of management thinker Peter Senge (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Timothy, Smith & Dutton, 2012). Senge states that education is the heart and foundation of our society and people need a safe place to learn from others how to deal with continuous novelty, new challenges and settings in life. Because of this, he expresses the need for a learning school: a place where everyone, young and old, experienced and inexperienced, is dedicated to learning, to change and grow in each other's company. In a learning school, people “recognise their common stake in each other's future and the future of their community” (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Timothy, Smith & Dutton, 2012, pp.11-12). The problem is when schools don’t engage in constructive conflict management, this hinders mutual learning processes and diminishes their chances to successfully become a learning school. Consequentially, schools become less equipped in their duty to educate and support people in an increasingly pluralistic society, in which diversity and contrast have become common properties and are expected to be dealt with constructively.
2. Research relevance

Schools are very involved with students and their well-being but often overlook the needs of their own staff. However, work pressure, burn-out, absenteeism and psychosomatic complaints in the field of education are related to the existence of conflicts in schools, either as a cause or a result (Dreu, Dierendonck & Dijkstra, 2004). This thesis offers insight in the experience and management of conflicts within a secondary school organisation so they can pay closer attention to this aspect of care for their staff. Effectively dealing with conflicts can establish a better learning climate and social climate, positively affecting the quality of education and the quality of (professional) lives.

This research is also relevant to the field of mediation. Mediation methods have emerged from the practical need to practice law in a more effective and sustainable way. They have a strong foundation in conflict theory but lack academic and philosophical depth in the field of humanities, to which they are related. This thesis provides a better understanding of this relation, so mediation theorists and practitioners can extent their views on their own practice beyond the confinements of the judicial system.

Lastly, this research makes an important contribution to (the education of) the Dutch society. Schools are an important junction for social interaction between society’s different groups and people, thus they’re unavoidably a place for conflict (thesis, p. 61). Schools struggle to determine their position in this context, for they have an important task in shaping society for future generations. They realise that they ought to provide a foundation for dealing with conflict, but they don’t know how. Often this results in searching schools that try to clear away conflict instead of learning schools that engage in it through collaboration. This research helps schools to become better equipped in dealing with conflict, by which they can lay out the foundation for a more just society for future generations (thesis, p. 53 and p. 126).
3. Research purpose

This thesis will research the problems of conflict management within the setting of Fioretti College Hillegom, a Dutch secondary school (VMBO level) with the ambition to become a learning school. At first, its purpose was to explore the possibilities and limits of a conflict management system in schools based on transformative mediation. This already was an innovative inquiry for social sciences because it brings together three fields of social theory: conflict, mediation and education. However, the conduct of this research had such a great impact on the participating school’s community that it became an intervention that sparked their desire to change their conflict culture.

To be able to support them in improving the conflict culture that they experienced as problematic, the research methodology changed from a conventional empirical research to community-based action research. This allowed the community to actively participate in and give direction to the research: they gave advice on where to look in the organisation, how to understand data and what the results should contribute to. In return, the conventional tools of inquiry became the school’s feedback. First, to understand their conflict culture and how this effected empowerment and learning in school and then to explore possibilities to change their conflict culture in light of their developments as learning organisation. This interaction made it possible to analyse the humanising possibilities and limits of transformative mediation for their specific context. Because of this major change in approach and methodology, the research purpose shifted away from uncovering general knowledge on conflict management in school organisations, towards contributing to the community’s capability to effectively think about and deal with conflicts in school. The results from this action research can be used by the school to create awareness for the systematic review of conflict and provide ideas for effective conflict management.
4. Research questions

This research will answer the following mixed-method question through community-based action research:

To what extent is it desirable to implement transformative mediation into a Dutch secondary school’s conflict management system, to contribute to become a learning school organisation?

4.1 Quantitative research

What is the current conflict culture within secondary school organisation Fioretti College Hillegom?

Sub-questions

1. What type of conflicts occur within the school?
2. What type of conflict strategies do staff members practice?
3. What type of conflict outcomes occur within the school?
4. How far do conflicts escalate on the escalation ladder of Glasl within the school?

Conflict: a process of interaction between agents that starts when at least one of them experiences through ratio, emotion and/or will that the other agent does/doesn’t do or will/won’t do something that hampers the first mentioned to realise his own interests, views, beliefs and/or values. (Dreu, 2008; Glasl, 2001).

Conflict strategy: all kinds of activities that agents employ to deal with their conflict situation (Dreu, 2008).
**Conflict culture**: a set of implicit norms and values that determine how people view conflicts and how they are supposed to manage them. (Dreu, 2008).

**Conflict escalation**: the process of degeneration of morality during conflict (Glasl, 2001).

### 4.2 Qualitative research

*What is the perspective of the staff members of Fioretti College Hillegom on the implementation of a conflict management system using transformative mediation within the concept of a learning school?*

**Sub-questions**

1. How do staff members experience the current conflict culture within school?
2. What are the staff members’ perspectives on the status of the school’s ‘learning school’ ambitions?
3. To what extent do the staff members’ views on the current conflict culture reflect the values of transformative mediation?

**Transformative mediation**: a type of mediation based on humanism, that concentrates on the transformation of the agents’ relationship through the values empowerment and recognition of their mutual humanity (Bush & Folger, 2005).

**Learning school**: a school that facilitates double-loop learning through experiences gained in interaction with others. It’s an attitude that can be achieved with attention for five disciplines: system thinking, personal mastery, personal vision, shared vision, mental models and team learning (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Timothy, Smith & Dutton, 2012).
Summary Part I

• School organisations cannot be conflict-free due to their reliance on cooperation and interaction among staff members. This makes a conflict management system a necessity, but many schools do not realise this.

• This thesis brings together three topics of social sciences - conflict, empowerment and education - to research the implementation of transformative mediation into a Dutch secondary school’s conflict management system to contribute to becoming a learning school organisation.

• The research conduct made the participating school realise they had a conflict culture that was impeding their efforts to establish a learning school organisation. Hence, the methodology was adapted to community-based action research, so they could contribute and guide the inquiry into their school to improve their conflict culture.

• The research uses both quantitative and qualitative tools of inquiry to get a broad and profound understanding of the school’s context.

• The findings will be described in a report written in English because it’s contribution to a broad field of social sciences demands the use of original scientific terminology.
"You must change your believes in order to change your results."

Jim Rohn
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Introduction part II

The first chapter of this part begins by introducing this thesis’ research design and how it’s methodology changed into a community-based action research after the researcher started collecting data in the field. The second chapter opens with an explanation for the choice for Fioretti College Hillegom because of their organisational structure; the earlier research about the school’s culture and their ambition to become a learning organisation. After that, the original plan to use both quantitative and qualitative research methods in an explanatory sequential mixed methods design is motivated by the notion that conflict is a sensitive topic that cannot be grasped by using a single method. This plan employed a closed-end survey, held among the entire staff, to introduce the topic and select respondents for a series of ten semi-structured interviews. However, its introduction into the field caused a great wave in the organisation (or as a staff member said: ‘it was an Aha-Erlebnis!’), so chapter three describes how this influenced the implementation and analysis. The community of interest helped and steered the researcher towards better conduct - for example, a math teacher suggested a method of triangulation to validate the survey data - and understanding - staff members gave feedback on and explanations about the data during several stages of the analysis. The last chapter describes how their participation and contributions were secured in ethical research procedures, including explicit voluntary participation, midterm reviewing of data and anonymous reporting.
1. Research design

1.1 Mixing methods

The purpose of most scientific research is to contribute to the body of knowledge about our (social) reality. This thesis had one major challenge in accomplishing that: conflict is a hard subject to gain knowledge about when researched from a safe distance - people do not open up about their personal quarrels, let alone reflect on their own contributions in them, if the research doesn’t reach a personal level of understanding. To gather reliable and rich data, this thesis started off with a mixed methods design. Mixed methods refers to a research methodology that systematically integrates qualitative and quantitative data in a single inquiry. This ‘mixing’ results in a more rich and complete analysis of the problem (Greene, 2007). The quantitative method chosen in this thesis’ design allowed the research to be more conclusive about the perceived conflict culture of the entire school and not just that of some individuals. This being said, conflicts exist for the better part in people’s inner world, outside the scope of their professional expertise. This was hard to capture in quantitative research, so to do justice to the perception of the staff’s conflict management, the qualitative method was chosen to explored their ‘below the surface’ experience.

However, in the field it became apparent that conflict was underlying the problems that staff members experienced while working in the context of a learning school in process of formation. In response to this, the researcher decided to work on location two days per week to provide support during the collection of data. It became an important bridge-function between the people and the research - staff members started to ponder on the subject and conveyed their views to the researcher in casual ‘coffee corner’ conversations. This provided such rich information that the research methodology was altered to an action research design by which the mixed methods design was able to interact with a community of interest in the school. The narrative and inquiry audit in the appendix give an impression of how this interaction went (thesis, pp. 136-138).
1.2 Community-based action research

“The primary purpose of action research is to provide the means for people to engage in systematic inquiry and investigation to “design” an appropriate way of accomplishing a desired goal and to evaluate its effectiveness.” (Stringer, 2007, p. 6).

Action research is based on the assumption that research in social sciences cannot be standardised to fit every situation or person, rather this should be tailored to fit the particular context, the people involved and the place where they’re applied. Community-based action research is an approach of inquiry that enacts local knowledge and develops theory about specific problems in specific situations (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). This community is not a fixed or appointed selection of people, but involves all those who have a stake in the problem and therefore engage in systematic inquiry. This approach has multiple benefits compared to formal social research (Stringer, 2007).

1. Formal research creates a distance from every day's life and therefore fails to penetrate experienced reality. Community-based action research acknowledges the limitations of the knowledge and understanding of “expert” researchers and appraises the experience and understanding of the people who are involved in the explored problem.

2. It can be expected that something will actually happen as a result of the research activities. Community-based action research can have purely academic outcomes that enrich theories and produce new knowledge, but concurrently provides a tool for solving problems experienced in the very field that is the subject of research: people in their professional, community, or private lives.

3. The process of inquiry is in accordance with an explicit set of social values in accordance with modern democratic social contexts. Community-based action research considers all participants to be stakeholders to the problem’s solution, so participating can liberate them from oppressive and debilitating conditions of their context and enhance their ability to express their full human potential.
2. Data collection

2.1 Choosing the school

Fioretti College Hillegom is a Dutch roman catholic secondary school with 1139 VMBO (Dutch: Voortgezet Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs) pupils and first to third grade HAVO (Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs) pupils (scholenopdekaart.nl, 2017). There are three main reasons this school was chosen as a case study for empirical research.

The first reason is the housing structure of the organisation. The school has been divided (physically and organisationally) into eight educational houses to guarantee short distances between the staff members and pupils. Every house has approximately 100 to 150 pupils who are educated by a team of teachers, managed by a team leader. The benefit of the housing structure for this study is that it’s possible to select respondents who know specific parts of the organisation well and who’s strongest experiences with the school’s conflict culture is brought down to a handful of people, reducing the risks of generalisation and assumption-making.

The second reason is that the school’s organisational culture has already been researched by a former employee in light of the fusion of three school locations into a new school building in 2013. Verweij (2016) used the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) developed by Quinn & Cameron. They determine four organisational cultures: the family culture, the adhocratic culture, the hierarchical culture and the market culture. The OCAI test measures both the actual and the desired culture of the organisation. Verweij’s OCAI survey was answered by 61 of the approximately 150 staff members of the school at the time. The results indicated that the school’s family culture is stronger than the other cultures determined by Quinn and Cameron and that this was also the staff’s desired culture. The family culture is a culture that scores high on internal focus and flexibility.
Figure 1 shows the balance in the four cultures. Yellow and green represent the existing culture in the junior (Dutch: onderbouw) and senior (Dutch: bovenbouw) houses and red represents the desired culture. These are the characteristics of an organisational family culture (Verweij, 2016, p. 8, translated by author from Dutch):

- A friendly work environment with mutual connectedness.
- Leaders are mentors and stimulators.
- Loyalty, involvement, morality and tradition hold the organisation together.
- Important is meeting the needs of the customer and taking care of your own people.
- Concepts like teamwork, participation and consensus play a big role.

Verweij’s research is helpful for this empirical study to better understand and explain the results of the research on the school’s current conflict culture and views on its management.

The third and most important reason is the school’s outspoken desire to become a learning school, one of the key concepts of this thesis. The school builds on their learning organisation by implementing education formats for personalised learning. The school’s ambitions make it more likely that staff members are familiar with the concept of the learning school and have perceptions on how this can be realised.
2.2 Choosing a mixed method design

This research used an explanatory sequential methodology (Greene, 2007), which means that it started with a closed-end survey among all staff members (148 people) about the school’s conflict culture, followed by a series of semi-structured interviews with ten staff members that were designed to understand and illustrate the context of the community of interest. The quantitative data served to select respondents for these interviews. Because the data from interviews were difficult to confine (answers are unpredictable), it was important to give the quantitative method rich and broad scope, based on the theoretical framework, to be able to make the most connections between the two data sets.

The survey was designed with the use of two existing questionnaires designed by Jehn (1994) and de Dreu (2008). These both use a Likert-scale (1-5) and have been used by many other studies on organisational conflict, including studies in Dutch secondary schools (Loo & Thiebout, 2005) to determine 1) the different types of conflicts that exist within an organisation and 2) which conflict strategies are employed (Dreu, 2008). Furthermore, it will contain thirty selective response questions about topics from the theoretical framework, including: the concern for self and others; the escalation of conflicts; the four types of mediation and their different values. Demographics were asked to analyse the data on age; gender; educational level and organisational position (thesis, pp. 147-170). At the end of the survey, staff members who wanted to participate in the qualitative study, could voluntarily submit their e-mail address. The survey was offered to staff members via two internal channels for communication: the digital news bulletin ‘Inforetti’ and staff’s e-mail. This means the quantitative research was based on simple random sampling: all members had an equal chance to participate.

The selection of staff members for the interviews was based on voluntary participation and the quantitative analysis. They received an explanation about the interview’s topic and purpose via e-mail. The mixed method approach of this research made it difficult to describe the selection process beforehand. (For explicit selection criteria for respondents: thesis, pp. 78-94 and p. 171.) The interviews were held in school, using a semi-structured
interview model that was based on the quantitative analysis (thesis, pp. 76-92) as well as the research questions (thesis, pp. 21-22). Each interview took 50 minutes, the duration of one lesson. This increased participation because more respondents were able to give interviews in between classes. The conversations were recorded with the use of the transcription software ‘Transcriva’. The interview process interview was explained on record at the start of the interview, guaranteeing anonymity and confidentiality. Every respondent signed an explicit consent form after the interview, retaining their right to withdraw from participation at any given time without statement of the grounds for revocation.

2.3 Choosing the action research design

Because the research was based on the experience and participation of the school’s community, the researcher was be present and accessible for staff members two days per week during the conduct of the research, allowing them to convey their thoughts and views on the topic and the research. By doing this, the researcher actively participated in the research process by presence at inter-vision sessions; meetings; study days and making scientific contributions at their request. Thus, information about the school and the community wasn’t only gathered through formal inquiry but also and perhaps mostly conveyed in informal conversations. Through collaboration with the community, the insights of both the researcher and the staff gave a better understanding of the school’s problem. Staff members were consulted during the process of inquiry on the directions and focus of the research. They have intermittently reflected on the data and gave feedback to provide deeper understanding and support the researcher in integrating research into the staff’s daily business.
3. Data analysis

Because the quantitative data were used to introduce the topic in a safe manner and select respondents, no profound statistical analyses were made. Trends based on percentages were indicated, therefore the survey sample needed to be representative for the entire school. Via an a-selective systematic sampling method of triangulation, suggested by a math teacher from the community, every fifth staff member on an alphabetised personnel list was asked in person whether they answered the survey or not (29 people in total). This direct approach made it difficult for staff members to evade participation, including those who showed no interest in the survey. The response percentage of the survey’s sample had to be approximately the same as the control question’s percentage if the survey is internally valid. Also, the demographics in the survey needed to be similar to that of the complete staff, so that was checked in the analysis as well (thesis, pp. 79-80). Percentages could deviate the chosen scientific alpha standard of 5%.

The qualitative data were transcribed in text only, for reasons of presentation and compression. This was acceptable because the interviews focused on the content of the respondents’ reality and no linguistic analysis were done. The interviews were transcribed in the transcription programma ‘Transcriva’ and the transcripts were deductively analysed in ‘Altas.ti’, using a list of closed-ended codes that were grouped in themes and used to divide the interviews in separate pieces of useful data. Missing topics that were frequently mentioned by the respondents were added by open-ended coding. After coding, quotations about themes were brought together to look for new information and ideas that could be grouped into sub-themes. After that, a narrative was constructed from these themes, sub-themes and codes. Quotes from the interviews were used to support this narrative and the discussions about the interrelations of several themes, allowing other ideas and themes to emerge. This systematic approach was applied the same way in every interview. After both sets of data were analysed a narrative was constructed about the school’s conflict management that contains a mixture of quantitative and qualitative data as well as the researcher’s own experiences.
4. Research ethics

Addressing conflict can put participants at risk, especially in community-based action research that enacts local knowledge and experts. This has to be done with the greatest respect for the respondents’ lives and emotions, especially since a little prying may be required. The following procedures were guaranteed in this research:

• While the research was conducted, all staff members were informed of the aims, purposes, and processes of the study through written messages in the school’s news bulletin.

• All interviews were voluntary and made use of an explicit consent form, guaranteeing participants the promise of anonymity and confidentiality as well as the opportunity to withdraw at any time. Also, data related to their participation was returned to them.

• Because participants could easily be identified by colleagues, their names, functions and team membership were left out of all rapports. Names used in the qualitative analysis are fictional. Any information was stored safely so it couldn’t be viewed by others.

• An important ethical aspect of this research’s methodology was to give all people an equal voice to express their feelings and experiences with regard to this topic, so all participants were engaged in a mutual agreement about the conduct of a study. For this reason the equal participation of all functions, from school board to facility employees was stimulated by requesting all groups separately and in person to contribute.

• It was made explicit in the introduction presentations, the survey’s introduction text and at the start of each interview that this research looked at the positive effects of conflict in the organisation and the possibilities for developing an organisation policy, to steer people’s attention away from a narrowing definition of conflict as clash or fight.
Summary Part II

- Conflict is difficult to research from a safe distance because it’s a sensitive topic. To reach a personal level of understanding and still gather reliable and rich data, this thesis started off with a mixed methods design that systematically integrated qualitative and quantitative data in a single inquiry.

- The school’s attention for conflict was sparked by the research conduct, so the researcher decided to work on location and provide support. This initiated a community-based action research methodology in which the researcher and a community of interest exchanged theoretical and local knowledge to increase their understanding of specific conflict problems.

- The school was chosen for reasons that were related to these specific conflict problems: 1) they have a innovative organisation structure based on educational houses; 2) they organisational culture has recently been researched by an employee and 3) they are consciously working on becoming a learning organisation.

- A closed-end survey was held in school followed by a series of semi-structured interviews with ten staff members. The quantitative data helped orientating on the topics and served to select respondents for the interviews.

- The community of interest participated in all aspects of inquiry: respondent selection, data analysis and more. Vice versa, the researcher contributed to activities that the community engages in, in order to change their conflict culture and consequential problems for their learning organisation.

- Ethical procedures are especially important in community-based action research because it relies contributions of self-inquiry. This is why careful procedures were followed.
“Great spirits of all who lived before, take our hands and lead us.

Fill our hearts and souls with all you know.

The key to understanding is to see through other’s eyes.

Find a way to help us see from all sides.”

Phil Collins
# Index part III

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Introduction part III

The following part presents the most essential ideas on conflict, mediation and education that together amount to the statement that becoming a learning school organisation requires collaboration in conflict. The first chapter starts by exploring what conflict actually is. As it turns out, this social process of escalating interaction encompasses a lot more than just being an ordinary clash of fight. In fact, the existence of conflict is not such a bad thing. Indeed, when conflicts are avoided, they will escalate into more aggressive and inhumane interactions until finally all communication breaks down and people become objects to one another. However, when conflict is dealt with through collaboration, it can be the engine behind change and innovation and protect people and organisations from biased and dogmatic thinking.

This unexpected appreciation of conflict as asset for development is supported in the second chapter on mediation, an umbrella term for resolution methods that deal with conflict through collaboration. The principles of a general mediation process are presented, after which an important distinction is made between outcome control mediation and process control mediation. The first focusses on reaching a solution, the second on improving the relationship. Though they aren’t mutually exclusive, this thesis argues that process-control mediation methods allows for a deeper exploration of the conflict and thereby makes a bigger contribution to a fair and sustainable resolution. Transformative mediation is a process-control method based on humanism that empowers people to engage in the enquiry of their conflict and thereby rediscover their ability to recognise a shared humanity.

The third and last chapter of this part describes the opportunities and limitations of the principles of empowerment and recognition in the context of secondary education in the Netherlands. This context is one of expanding pluralism that brings the democratic society more diversity, but also more contrast. Schools have the difficult task of mediating between all the equal but different rights, needs, wishes and interests. We conclude that, to be able
to do this, schools must renew their approach on education: the act of teaching should be based on the agency of educational professionals to engage in a collaborative learning process (with pupils and each other) to question beliefs and generate new knowledge. This dialogical and reflective educational practice can to restore people’s connection to each other (i.e. recognise their humanity), similar to how a transformative mediator empowers people to restore their connection to others by giving them a sense of their own value and strength and enhancing their agency. This can be done by establishing a learning school organisation that embeds five disciplines in its culture. Of these principles, system thinking and mental models have to strongest connection to transformative mediation because conflicts are the very display of errors in systemic thinking, which is shaped and fuelled by people’s inner convictions. When school engages in conflict through collaboration, it can become a powerful tool for learning that gives educational professionals the agency that’s required to deal with the effects of our pluralistic society and its conflict by design.
1. Understanding conflict

To understand the relation between conflict, mediation and education, we first need a thorough understanding - and perhaps even a shift in thinking about what conflict is. This chapter describes the process of conflict interaction along with the possibilities and challenges to retain agency for those involved. As one of five possible strategies, conflicts are mostly avoided by conflicting agents. This inevitably results in the escalation and regression of their interaction, leading to forms of aggression and instrumentalisation that are impossible to control. This is why conflicts are usually undesired and harmful. However, when conflicts are timely resolved through a collaborative strategy, they can result in a win-win resolution. In fact, collaborating in conflict can be a very powerful tool for learning and development because allows for challenging assumptions, biases and inflexibility. This is a shift towards a positive view on conflict that enables us to reorientate on the topic and consider its possibilities.

1.1 Definition of conflict

Dutch authority on conflict theory psychologist Carsten de Dreu states that everyday definitions of conflict such as ‘battle’, ‘clash’ or ‘collision’ are too vague to use in research because 1) they presume that people always play an active role in their conflict and 2) they’re hard to measure (Dreu, 2008). The definition of conflict should completely leave open what the conflict is about, directing the attention to the process of conflict rather than the content. Therefore, an adapted version of de Dreu’s definition will be used in this thesis, that acknowledges the internal logic of conflict as well as the agency to change this.

Conflict is a process of interaction between agents that starts when at least one of them experiences through ratio, emotion and/or will that the other agent does/doesn’t do or will/won’t do something that hampers the first mentioned to realise his own interests, views, beliefs and/or values.
This definition has a very broad and scientifically usable scope for scientific writing but difficult to use in everyday-communication because most people have a more traditional understanding of what conflict is that makes it difficult to dissociate it from the emotions and problems it stirs up. Because this research is fundamentally based on the experiences of the community of interest, it’s important to speak their language as well as introduce new terms and definitions in order to initiate change. This is why the words friction (frictie in Dutch) and tensions (spanningen) are chosen to support the word ‘conflict’, because in Dutch these words are perceived with less hostility but retain the associative strength of contrasting interests, views, beliefs and values.

1.2 The process of conflict

A conflict process starts when individuals and/or groups detect that their own rights, needs, wishes and interests are contrary to those of someone else. This is the first step in a conflict process, called conflict experience. People appreciate their own views and therefore experience opposition as unpleasant, frustrating or threatening. They want to eliminate these feelings, i.e. handle their conflict, and this leads to all kinds of proceedings and behaviour called conflict management, which evokes a response from the opposing agent, causing an interaction that continues until a conflict outcome is established (Dreu, 2008).

Phase 1: conflict experience

Literature on conflict categorises conflict experience into task-related conflicts about work processes or working conditions and socio-emotional conflicts about personal needs or relationship issues (Curseu, Boros & Oerlemans, 2012). To determine the nature of a conflict, researchers look at the influence of interests and preferences. Conflicts of interests (about the distribution of precious resources like time, money, power, etc.) are task-related in the absence of personal preferences for certain norms, values and interpretations. The more important personal preferences become, the more personal and thus socio-emotional the conflict gets. Glasl (2001) warns that task-related conflicts always turn into socio-emotional conflicts if left unattended.
Phase 2: conflict management

People in conflict have different ways to deal with their situation, resulting in all kinds of conflict management. Morton Deutsch and Karen Horney studied and categorised the various options that conflicting agents choose, based on personality and context (Deutsch & Horney in Dreu, 2008). They identified the five conflict strategies stated in figure 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unilateral action</td>
<td>Action doesn't demand permission or cooperation from the opponent.</td>
<td>1) Forcing, 2) Accommodating, 3) Avoiding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilateral action</td>
<td>Action demands cooperation from the opponent.</td>
<td>4) Compromising/collaborating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsourcing</td>
<td>Action demands (implicit) permission from the opponent</td>
<td>5) Seeking arbitrage/letting fate decide</td>
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Figure 2: Conflict management strategies (Dreu, 2008)

Since these studies, researchers have used these strategies of conflict management (far right column) to study conflict behaviour. Of course each strategy has been extensively studied and specified in itself, but for this thesis a short description is sufficient.

1) **Forcing**: all behaviour that is focussed on letting own interests, views, values and interpretations prevail over those of the opposing agent. This is done by claiming rights or exercising power using position, information, status, allies, etc.

2) **Accommodating**: all behaviour that is focussed on letting the opposing agent's interests, views, values and interpretations prevail over your own. This happens if the opposing agent is right or when you deem your own interests too unimportant to risk damaging the relationship or task at hand.
3) **Avoiding**: avoiding conflict is focussed on 1) taking away the opponent’s lust to actively confront you, for example by overcomplicating matters so much that nobody dares to touch it anymore, or 2) putting as little energy into the conflict as possible by procrastination or cutting off communication. This is the most frequently occurring unilateral strategy in organisational conflict, often not deliberately chosen.

4) **Compromising - collaborating**: this is the only strategy in which agents cooperate with each other. Collaborating is focussed on the principle of ‘give and take’ and collaboration uses the principle of win-win negotiation - finding a solution that everyone can identify with by uniting all agents’ interests, aspirations, values, etc.

5) **Arbitrage - letting fate decide**: Arbitrage gives a third person the full decisive power over the outcome of the conflict. This strategy is often chosen when at least one party is too adamant or in a situation where somebody doesn’t have the possibilities to set up the conflict process at their own discretion because the opposing party is too powerful or indefeasible. Letting fate decide means a random decision like with flipping a coin.

Collaboration often leads to the most sustainable solutions for conflicts because it looks at the underlying rights, needs, wishes and interests of all agents. This also makes it the hardest strategy to successfully employ. If this is the most constructive way to deal with conflict, you would think people would choose this more often than other strategies, but the truth is that many conflicts in organisations are avoided and thus left unresolved, leading to an conflict avoiding culture (Dreu, 2008). De Dreu states that conflict avoidance generates a conflict culture that has negative long-term consequences on people’s well-being and effectiveness, resulting in biased and defective decision-making and thereby causing new conflicts to arise even faster. Ultimately, this cycle gives psychosomatic complaints, feelings of stress and eventually burn-out (Dreu, Dierendonck & Dijkstra, 2004).
Phase 3: conflict outcomes

Conflict theorists ultimately put a firm emphasis on the positive side of conflicts. Early studies by Bacharach & Lawler, Coser and Pfeffer established the idea that conflict enhances adaptation, growth and guards against group thinking and illusions of invincibility (Bacharach & Lawler; Coser; Pfeffer in Putnam, 1994). Putnam explains why this happens by referring to Weick’s theory of polar opposites within organisational systems. Weick studied how organisations thrive on polar opposites such as integration and differentiation; risk taking and risk avoiding; structure and anarchy; dynamics and statics (Weick in Putnam, 1994). Putnam uses Pondy’s notion of the role of conflict in these polar opposites:

“If there were no active conflicts within these pairs, one of the polar extremes would gradually become dominant. In each case, the diversity of behavioural repertoires available to the organisation would diminish, the organisation would lose its capacity for adaptation in the face of environmental change and it would run a high risk of eventual failure. Conflict is not only functional for the organisation, it is essential to its very existence (p.96)” (Pondy in Putnam, 1994, p. 285).

This is a pivotal approach for this thesis and its community of interest, because it essentially makes conflict the engine behind cooperation and growth, two core concepts in education. Educational thinker Hanson (2003) writes: “More and more social scientists are coming to realize -and to demonstrate- that conflict itself is no evil, but rather a phenomenon that can have constructive or destructive effects depending on its management” (Hanson, 2003, p. 252).

1.3 Choosing a strategy

The standard model on conflict strategies is based on two independent motivational factors: the concern for oneself and the concern for the other, hence the name Dual Concern Model (DCM). In figure 3 on the next page you can see how the DCM works: a combination of concern for self and others determines which conflict strategy is preferred
by a conflict agent. A high concern for self combined with a low concern for others leads to forcing, a low concern for self combined with a high concern for other leads to accommodation, etc (Janssen & van der Vliert, 1996; Karsten, 2007).

In their study, they compared the DCM to an older model from Deutsch (1949) - the Cooperation-Competition Model - to determine whether the DCM was also an indication on the escalation of conflicts. The most important conclusion of this study became standard knowledge in later work of van de Vliert and colleagues: cooperative and competitive behaviour respectively determine the strength of de-escalation of escalation and they coincide with the two concerns (Janssen & van der Vliert, 1996). So even though the DCM isn’t about the effects of the five strategies on the (de-)escalation of a conflict, this study confirmed that the strategies of accommodating and collaboration provide more de-escalating and less escalating effects than avoiding and forcing.
1.4 The escalation of conflict

The conflict process described in the above assumes that agents exercise control over their conflict by choosing a strategy to manage them. However, Friedrich Glasl states that the inevitable shift from task-related conflicts to socio-emotional conflicts is a slippery slope that makes it hard to stay in control. He developed an escalation ladder which presents the process of conflict as a psychological process of gradual regression from tolerant to hostile and eventually destructive ways of interacting. Every ‘step’ has unspoken agreements - norms - on what is morally accepted and what is not. If a conflict agent descends to the next step, this cannot be reversed without help. The following information is based on Brenninkmeijer, Bonenkamp, Oyen & Prein (2013) and Glasl (2001).

1. **The rational phase**: the focus of the conflict is on impersonal matters. However, unclear interaction causes growing irritations that harm mutual trust and understanding. This leads to polarisation: agents shield themselves and see more differences and opposition than similarities and connection. This makes them dependent on their own views, confirming their own negative expectations about the other. At the end of this phase, agents aren’t prepared to cooperate, but want to win from the other.

2. **The emotional phase**: the negative stereotypes become a self-fulfilling prophecy and are morally attributed by the other, impeaching their integrity. Agents see themselves as knights (good) fighting a dragon (evil). They will both try to win from the other by forming coalitions that suppress the others position. Suspicion becomes so strong that agents stop caring about winning and only desire the other’s destruction.

3. **The war phase**: the conflict is only about limiting personal damage, because the other is no longer seen as a bearer of human dignity and is reduced to object. Fighting this ‘inhumanity’ legitimises the abandonment of human norms and values, clearing the way to annihilation. In the final stage of this phase total war is waged - by any means necessary. Victory becomes impossible so satisfaction is only achieved by the the downfall of the enemy, even if the own person is destroyed as well.
In this chapter we’ve seen that conflict processes, when dealt with through unilateral strategies such as avoidance, will spiral out of control - no matter the cause. Glasl’s ladder offers only one direction to conflicting agents: down (into the abyss). The only way to reverse this escalation, i.e. ‘clim up’ the ladder, is by the intervention of an outsider who helps them return through the stages of escalation, back to common ground. The next chapter describes how professional mediators go about this difficult task in their practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Rational phase</th>
<th>II. Emotional phase</th>
<th>III. War phase</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: Hardening</td>
<td>2: Debate and polemics</td>
<td>3: Action, not words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impasse</td>
<td>Feelings of superiority</td>
<td>Non-verbal communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No mutual understanding</td>
<td>Matter of prestige</td>
<td>Expanding the conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closing off</td>
<td>Debate style</td>
<td>No recurrence on position</td>
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<tr>
<td>Polarisation</td>
<td>Scoring</td>
<td>Empathy reduces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate style</td>
<td>Evoking irritation</td>
<td>No shared responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative solving problems</td>
<td>Finding peers</td>
<td>Demasking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forming aid</td>
<td>Evoking irritation</td>
<td>Expressing wish death other party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective attention</td>
<td>Getting laughs</td>
<td>Ruling out shared solutions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black-white image</td>
<td>Immoral behaviour</td>
<td>Stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Images and coalitions</td>
<td>Demasking</td>
<td>Panic reactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>5: Loss of face</td>
<td>6: Strategies of threats</td>
<td>7: Limited destructive blows</td>
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<tr>
<td>8: Strategies of threats</td>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>8: Fragmentation of the enemy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9: Together into the abyss</td>
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**Win-win**
- Colleagues
- Mediation
- Arbitrage

**Win-lose**

**Lose-lose**

*Figure 4: The escalation ladder (Glasl, 2001)*
2. Understanding mediation

The practice of mediation has been developed to reverse the damaging effects of conflict escalation. This chapter will discuss the general steps of a mediation session and then makes an important distinction between outcome - and process control mediation. Transformative mediation is a process control method because it focusses on restoring a crisis in interaction by empowering agents to restore their communication and relationship, thereby regaining their ability to recognise the other as human being. This differs from outcome control mediation, such as problem-solving mediators who take charge of the process to come to their instrumental objective: effective conflict resolution. This chapter concludes that transformative mediation allows for deeper exploration of perspectives, resulting in more openness and collaboration. This is also its profound limitation: people must be capable of doing this.

2.1 Mediation process

Mediation is a bilateral conflict strategy in which conflicting agents ask a mediator to help them talk with each other about their conflict without falling back into escalating strategies. The method became institutionalised in the 20th century as an alternative for conflict resolution in America and most European countries. Important for this was the growing knowledge about conflict and how its management influences (de-)escalation (Brenninkmeijer, Bonenkamp, Oyen & Prein, 2013). What makes this method different from other conflict management strategies, is the fact that agents allow a third person to ‘cancel out noises’, so they can work on their interactional crisis. Compliance is usually very high because the result is attained by parties working together, in contrast to agreements enforced by a court. Mediation follows a procedure of nine stages in which the escalation of the conflict is reversed by the use of different communication techniques (Karsten, 2007). This de-escalation process is presented in figure 5 on the next page.
A general mediation process starts when an authorised person (such as a team leader) contacts a mediator to exchange general information about the possibilities and costs, and the size and nature of the conflict. The conflicting agents are informed. They decide if they want to participate to assure voluntary participation. The following principles must be agreed upon before a mediation can start, because it creates a psychological commitment to which the mediator refers when agents fall back into escalating behaviour:

1) **Competence.** All agree that they are authorised by their function or position to participate and make binding decisions in the mediation process.

2) **Voluntary and commitment.** All parties, the mediator included, agree that they participate in the mediation voluntarily.

3) **Secrecy and confidentiality.** All conversations are secret and the mediator has a legal obligation of confidentiality that remains in effect after the mediation has finished.

4) **Rules of behaviour.** There are three rules agents must agree on: their behaviour will not complicate or hinder the mediation; they will listen to each other and be open to other views and they will not start legal procedures during the mediation process.

During the first mediation session, agents are still polarised and often start with their ‘weapons’ at the ready. The first step is to help them withdraw from battle by letting them relate their side of the story without interruption. They’ll feel emotionally heard and this
establishes a new basis for communication. During the next sessions, the mediator gives
them back what he hears and sees and summarises the most important aspects of their
conflict. Everything is checked as ‘part of the way forward’. By doing this, the conflict is
brought back to a manageable size. After a few sessions, agents are again able think about
their shared future possibilities and pick up their obstructed communication by agreeing on
what really matters. In the last sessions, the mediator pulls back to let the parties
communicate with each other about generating options that open the door to
reconciliation and regret. After this, the results are reviewed in a closing session by the
parties and the mediator, often via a document that both parties sign. The mediation then
ends with a ritual, such as burning the rapports on the conflict (Brenninkmeijer, Bonenkamp,
Oyen & Prein, 2013, pp. 120-126).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediation process</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>De-escalation steps</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: Preparation phase</td>
<td>First contact between mediator and contracter(s) to exchange general information. Agents get time to decide on voluntary participation.</td>
<td>Ceasefire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Opening phase</td>
<td>Mediator explains the four principles of the mediation agreement: competence; commitment; confidentiality; behaviour. agents and mediator sign the agreement.</td>
<td>Truce, withdrawal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Exploration phase</td>
<td>Mediation starts. First, agents can blow off steam one at a time. They need to listen to each other. Through sharing experiences, their true needs are revealed.</td>
<td>Establish communication, share present feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Categorizing phase</td>
<td>Conflict is brought back to the essential needs. Agents’ understanding of each others’ true needs grows and attention is directed towards the future. Inequity is reduced on both sides.</td>
<td>Share future possibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: Negotiation phase</td>
<td>Agents review their options by thinking outside the box, parking blockades and evaluating objective criteria.</td>
<td>Reconciliation and regret</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: Decision phase</td>
<td>Agents come to a final agreement that may be put into writing and signed.</td>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: Closing phase</td>
<td>The future implementation is discussed, after which the mediation is closed with a ritual that confirms the new relationship.</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6: The phases of mediation (Brenninkmeijer, Bonenkamp, Oyen & Prein, 2013)
2.2 Style follows purpose

There’s a classic distinction between mediation methods that focus on means and those that focus on ends that is based on the work of Thibaut and Walker (1975). In their work, they distinguish two kinds of mediators: **outcome control mediators** who are directive and aim for a deal that both agents will accept and **process control mediators** are non-directive facilitators with focus on restoring harmony in relations (Brenninkmeijer, Bonenkamp, Oyen & Prein, 2013). Four styles of mediation were derived from this. They don’t change the phases of mediation (figure 6), but the communication techniques used within those phases can be very different (Brenninkmeijer, Bonenkamp, Oyen & Prein, 2013).

**Outcome control mediation**

1) **Evaluative mediation** equips a strong directive assessment of the content of the conflict and it’s resolution. The mediator actively pressures the actors to accept a certain settlement.

2) **Facilitative problem-solving mediation** (‘the Harvard model’) is the mainstream mediation. It’s not focussed on the content of the conflict, but on its settlement. The mediator has a an instrumental objective and is charge of the process to come to a solution.

**Process control mediation**

3) **Transformative/humanistic mediation** is based on the work of Bush and Folger (2005) who view conflict as a crisis in interaction. The mediator guides the constructive change of this interaction by **empowering** actors to restore their communication and relationship, thereby regaining their ability to **recognise** the other as human being.

4) **Narrative mediation** looks at the construction of reality, i.e. conflict, through the agents stories, which are by definition incomplete and subjective, seeking alternative constructions by narrowing down the dominance of the conflict story.
2.3 Mediation’s possibilities and limitations

Mediation has the potential to reduce the political, economical and moral cost of conflicts because agents sustainably resolve disputes with the least amount of damage and it reduces the costs and delays of going to court. But what are the limits? Before anything, the degree of conflict escalation is the foremost premise for possible use of mediation, which can only contribute to successful conflict resolution if the conflict hasn’t passed the threshold ‘strategies of threats’ on Glasl’s escalation ladder. Furthermore, determining whether a conflict is suitable for mediation depends not so much on the method itself or the situation, but on the attributes of the people involved - the conflicting agents and the mediator.

The agents: mediation is based on confidentiality and voluntary participation, meaning that agents truly have to be willing to collaborate. The more fundamental their differences are, the more difficult this will be, because they need to acknowledge the other’s perspectives. If an agent is not genuinely participating out of his/her own free will, the mediation process is compromised and will lead to false and unfair resolutions. The same happens when people can’t make choices on their own behalf because they represent somebody else’s rights, needs, wishes or interests. Therefore, mediation is best applicable to conflicts that disrupt an otherwise sustainable relationship with shared future possibilities (Sponselee, 2005).

The mediator: if a mediation is conducted properly, the agent’s relationship benefits, because conflicts are explored in collaborative dialogue that restores the disrupted relationship between agents and limits their loss of face because there’s no winner or loser. This creates space to find each other that isn’t restricted by formality, hierarchy or even law. So even when agents don’t reach an agreement, the noise caused by the conflict is reduced when they become aware of the other’s views. However, this demands a lot of the mediator’s skills, focus and personality to guide the process and support the agents without steering or otherwise influencing them in the resolution choices that they make. An essential quality is to gain the agents’ trust and to establish (a degree of) trust between them that confirms everyone’s aforementioned commitment to the process.
Fairness

When legal practitioners discuss mediation’s potential, it’s often called a deficit that it can be perceived as ‘bargaining in the shadows of the law’, so whatever comes out is informal and thus potentially unfair. However, law does not automatically lead to justice, like a painting cannot capture true beauty, only an impression of it (Derrida, 1992). Mediators argue that mediation provides fairness precisely because it’s not bound to strict legislation but inherently relies on the opportunity to present personal views, to be listened to and to be treated respectfully (Seaman, 2016). Seaman verbalises this in an interesting view on mediation and justice:

“If the mediator directs the parties to agree to a resolution of their conflict […] glossing over the parties’ hope for a deeper exploration of the conflict, then justice, on behalf of the parties, would not have been served. We might categorise this type of mediation as ‘controlling’” (Seaman, 2016, p. 69).

He states that the deeper exploration of conflict is the true right of agents and he therefore rejects all outcome control styles of mediation as assets of justice. Bush and Folger (2005) say that transformative mediation provides the best opportunity for individuals and social institutions to organise moral judgement. They consider the mediation-place a space where organisational politics and power imbalances can be shut out to a certain degree, so agents can engage in open dialogue about the crisis in their interaction without the gaze of authorities - such as the hierarchical structures of the organisation or even law itself - that oppress them from making moral judgements about their conflict. This thesis’ discussion continues on this topic (thesis, p. 126).

2.4 Transformative mediation

According to Bush and Folger (2005), what people find most significant about conflict is the fact that it leads or even forces them to behave towards themselves and others in ways they find uncomfortable.
“It alienates them from their own strength and their sense of connection to others, thereby disrupting and undermining the interaction between them as human beings” (Bush & Folger, 2005, p. 40). Bush and Folger believe that dealing with these feelings requires a type of collaboration that’s focused on the transformation of their interaction - from powerlessness and disconnection of their shared humanity to empowerment and recognition of said humanity. **Empowerment** is the restoration to individuals of a sense of their own value and strength and their own capacity to make decisions. This restores people’s (innate) ability to **recognise** individuals’ capability for the acknowledgement of and the understanding and empathy for the situation and views of the other.

### Humanism in transformative mediation

Bush and Folger (2005) state that no mediation practice can be value-free. Therefore, transformative mediation is explicitly based on humanistic values.

> “The critical resource in conflict transformation is the parties’ own basic humanity— their essential strength, decency, and compassion, as human beings. […] The transformative theory of conflict recognizes that conflict tends to escalate as interaction degenerates, because of the susceptibility we have as human beings to experience weakness and self-absorption in the face of sudden challenge. However, the theory also posits […] that human beings have inherent capacities for strength (agency or autonomy) and responsiveness (connection or understanding) and an inherent social or moral impulse that activates these capacities when people are challenged by negative conflict.” (Bush and Folger, 2005, p. 48.)

In its most general description, humanism is regarded as an attitude towards human life, culture and society, in which people and their possibilities have a central position (Vanheste, 2008). Humanism regards people as relatively autonomous beings who are essentially unfinished. All human beings are equal in principle and they must cultivate their mind and potential to reach greater understanding of themselves and the world they live in and to give meaning to their lives and that of others (Humanistische Canon, 2016). Today we live in
a society in which individuals are inherently free to choose their own ideology, beliefs and life-style. The pluralism that follows from this creates conflict by design and gives people a bigger responsibility to acknowledge the rights of others. This can only be done by learning from one another in open dialogue about the views of others. Bush and Folger’s foundation in humanism is motivated by this relational worldview.

“As a matter of basic human consciousness, every person senses that he or she is a separate, autonomous agent, authoring his or her own life, and at the same time senses that he or she is an inherently social being, connected to other people in an essential and not just instrumental fashion. Moreover, in this relational view, awareness of both individual agency and social connection is not just a peripheral characteristic— it is the very essence of human consciousness, the core of our identity as human beings.” (Bush & Folger, 2005, p. 54.)

According to them, mediation can facilitate open dialogue based on the ideas of Habermas about the creation of multiple ‘ideal speech situations’: communication that allows people to evaluate their contentions based on reason and evidence in a space that is free of coercive influences, governed by basic rules based on decency, identity and uniqueness. This contributes to the society as an integration of individual freedoms and relational connections (Bush & Folger, 2005).

Transformative mediation in practice

Umbreit (1997, 2002) has written two articles on the use of a transformative approach of conflict that give an impression of how transformative mediation can be conducted in practice. His view on the practise is the subject of the next three pages.

The role of the mediator

The mediator works via the client-centred approach developed by Carl Rogers (Umbreit, 2002). This essentially means that agents are the experts on their own conflict situation and the mediator joins them in a mutual exploration of their understanding and experience
through dialogue-driven and congruent interaction. This way, the process of interpretation becomes collaborative, allowing the mediator to give importance to the agents’ meanings and create opportunities for space and movement because they do not have to shield, persuade or promote the mediator or each other of their views (Anderson & Goolishian, 1996, p. 30). By this attitude, the mediator can accommodate the following basic principles that guide practice (Umbreit, 1997, p. 3):

• Belief in the connectedness of all things and our common humanity.
• Belief in the importance of the mediator’s presence and connectedness with the involved parties.
• Belief in the healing power of mediation through a process helping each other through the sharing of their feelings (dialogue and mutual aid).
• Belief in the desire of most people to live peacefully.
• Belief in the desire of most people to grow through life experiences.
• Belief in the capacity of all people to draw upon inner reservoirs of strength to overcome adversity, to grow, and to help others in similar circumstances.
• Belief in the inherent dignity and self-determination that arise from embracing conflict directly.

The following page contains Umbreit’s table with descriptions of the mediator’s skills compared to those of an outcome control mediator (Umbreit, 2002, p. 5).
### The mediation sessions

Transformative mediation follows the same principles that are described above for general mediation sessions, as long as they support the values above. Umbreit presents these principles from a transformative viewpoint, using a slightly different structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary focus</th>
<th>Problem-solving mediation</th>
<th>Transformative mediation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Settled driven and problem focussed.</td>
<td>Dialogue driven and relationship focused</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediation has no separate contact with involved actors prior to mediation. Focus is on explaining the process.</td>
<td>Mediation conducts at least one face-to-face meeting with each party prior to joint mediation session. Focus is on listening to their story, building rapport.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directs and guides the communication towards a mutually acceptable settlement of the conflict.</td>
<td>Prepares the actors prior to bringing them together so that they have realistic expectations and feel safe enough to engage in a direct conversation with each other facilitated by the mediator.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active and often very directive, mediator speaks frequently during the mediation session and asks many questions.</td>
<td>Very non-directive. After opening statement, the mediator fades into the background and is reluctant to interrupt. Is not passive and will intervene when actors need help.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low tolerance for expression of feelings and the actors storytelling is related to the history and context of the conflict</td>
<td>Recognizes the intrinsic healing quality of storytelling when speaking and listening from the heart.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few moments of silence.</td>
<td>Many prolonged moments of silence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary goal and most likely outcome of mediation. Agreements focus on clear tangible elements.</td>
<td>Secondary to the primary goals of dialogue and mutual aid. Agreements are often symbolic gestures, grow tasks or affirmation of the renewed relationship.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 7: Differences between problem-solving mediation and transformative mediation (Umbreit, 2002, p. 5).**
Second, he/she initiates a separate \textit{pre-mediation session} with each agent, in which trust and connection are established. To this purpose, the mediator adopts a listening mode and invites the participants to tell how their conflict story affects them.

2. \textbf{The beginnings phase:} all involved participants agree to work together on the shared task of reconnecting to one another's humanity. The mediator explicits two aspects: a clear, uncomplicated statement of purpose for coming together and a description of his/her own role in the process, which is to help the agents “enter in dialogue with each other, in order to experience each other as fellow human beings despite their conflict, to understand and respect their differences, and to arrive at a mutually acceptable way to deal with those differences” (Umbreit, 2002, p. 3).

3. \textbf{The work phase:} the mediator allows the agents to do the work they agreed upon and supports them. This support is always aimed at the reinforcement of agents and this can require the mediator to intervene. This calls for a variety of tasks such as: finding common ground; detecting obstacles; defining the needs and limits of the situation; providing information, perspectives and values and bringing feelings and views to the front. This phase ends when the agents feel that their shared work is accomplished.

4. \textbf{The phase of transitions and endings:} the mediator supports the agents’ transition from engagement to finishing the task they started together, by establishing a sense of accomplishment or closure.

Of course this is only a limited description of a well established practise. For a more thorough understanding, suggested reads are Carl Rogers’ ‘\textit{On becoming a person}’ (2003), Bush and Folger’s ‘\textit{The promise of mediation}’ (2005) and the articles of Umbreit (1997, 2002).
Not the holy grail

The work of Bush and Folger caused quite a stir among mediation theorists. Some consider it as a revelatory approach to a profession that, notwithstanding its humane approach of justice (thesis, p. 53 and p. 126), got trapped in the drift sands of justice systems. Others believe they present mediation as a sentimental and philanthropist practice that contributes little to actual dispute resolution. These debates are summarised by three issues of transformative mediation in the article by Irvine (2006).

The first issue is that problem-solving mediation is presented by Bush and Folger as inevitably directive and therefore impossible to combine with transformative mediation. Williams offers the alternative proposition that incompetent mediators tend to be directive and good problem-solving mediation can help clients to solve their problems without being directive. In fact, if this what clients explicitly ask of a mediator, it would be unethical to force a transformation process onto them instead (Williams as cited in Irvine, 2006). Irvine writes that Bush and Folger’s approach of mediation methods as contradictory sets of premises about the world are reduced by Williams to a practical matter and this merely confirms the pragmatic and anti-theoretical preferences of many mediators that Bush and Folger contest (Irvine, 2006).

The second issue is that Bush and Folger do not refer to a comprehensive theory of human development to back up their claim that transformative mediation can lead to individual moral development. Suel held transformative mediation against the light of a theory of lifespan development to assess whether it can actually establish tangible individual moral development. He concluded that this is unlikely, because this is a complex and gradual process that’s paced and triggered differently in each individual (Suel as cited in Irvine, 2006).

The third issue raised by Gaynier contains some compensation for Suel’s critique, because she suggest that moral growth cannot be the ethical objective of mediation because mediators aren’t responsible for people’s moral growth. To Gaynier, Bush and Folger’s
method simply provides a most genuine method to generate the ‘magic’ of people in dispute becoming more wholly who they are. She therefore states that transformative mediation is a methodology that works, rather than a coherent theory (Gaynier as cited in Irvine, 2006). Irvine comments on Gaynier that it’s difficult to accept a methodology while refusing its underlying premises and this demonstrates Seaman’s (2016) critique that many mediators intuitively adopt a style without reflecting on it’s philosophical pre-disposition.

Irvine’s conclusive thought is on whether it’s better for mediation to have an overarching and universalising theory or to have a set of compelling ideas about the practice, combined with a statement of principles. He suggests that overarching theories apply static deductions to all people everywhere and this doesn’t befit modern views on social conflict theory. Bush and Folger also stand in that static tradition with their over-reaching claim on moral development, but they do formulate some principles that inspire mediators to rethink their approach to the work. Earlier in this framework two factors for successful employment of mediation were mentioned: the agents of conflict and the mediator. Transformative mediation’s contribution is, according to Irvine, creating the most genuine, non-intrusive conditions for mediation by formulating a set of principles, based on theory and practise, that provide the safest and least damaging position for people who intervene in conflicts (Irvine, 2006).
3. Understanding schools

In the previous chapter we learned that transformative mediation uses empowerment to enable people to learn from their conflict situation and recognise each other’s humanity, but as we will see in the following chapter, this empowerment is limited by the pressure-packed context of schools, who have to mediate between the rights, needs, wishes and interests that our increasingly pluralistic society brings in school. At the same time, this reveals the necessity of mediation in schools. This chapter will lead to the discovery that Senge’s approach of the learning school in fact employs transformative tools to unlock new ways to enter into dialogue, consider the wider context of the conflicts schools encounter and find sustainable solutions to contribute to a democratic, pluralistic school. The strength of an transformative approach on education lies in the possibility to focus on the empowerment of visions instead of their impediments. This way, it becomes possible for schools to unearth the fundamentally shared focus on humanity in all and recognise whereto they organise their education, not just how.

Schools in the Netherlands experience great tensions in having to mediate between external developments, public pressure, legislation and the daily care for a healthy working climate for staff and pupils - all of which represent increasing rights, needs, wishes and interests of free and equal individuals and groups that have been given a voice in our democratic pluralistic society. Because this diversity also invokes contrast, we state that pluralism is conflict by design. In education, this results in a pressure-packed context that often brings schools to resort to quick fixes such as: teaching to the test; promoting prescription medicine to help pupils focus and encouraging failing students to drop out so their scores won’t be counted in the school’s performance reports. At the same time, pluralism’s diversity creates a society in which learning is not divided into a place and time to acquire knowledge (school) and a place and time to apply the knowledge acquired (work). This is why educational thinkers, politicians and professionals call for a shift in focus from the instrumentalisation of education towards the humanisation of education (Biesta,
2012), so there’s more attention in schools for interaction with other people to introduce new and different views, cultures and methods that stimulate the celebration of diversity and support dealing with contrasts. Learning should be approached as a life-long process to enhance social inclusion, citizenship, and personal development that takes place throughout life and in all sorts of situations (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Timothy, Smith & Dutton, 2012).

### 3.1 The moral politics of learning

Biesta (2013) agrees to the notion that education needs to change, but finds the development of education as life-long learning problematic because this changes people’s right to learn into a duty: you are individually responsible for getting along in this demanding and ever-changing world by constantly participating in education. Astrid Messerschmidt calls this demand Bildungspflicht (Messerschmidt as cited in Biesta 2013, p. 8). This is a slippery slope because if learning is equal to living, it can easily lead to the claim that any normal human being can learn and therefore should, so there must be something wrong with you if you can’t or won’t. Biesta takes a different approach to life-long learning that starts from the idea that learning is in fact the act of evaluating change in people. “The reason for identifying some of these changes as ‘learning’ and others as ‘just changes’ is because we value these changes either positively – for example, when we are proud that John has learned to ride his bike – or negatively” (Biesta, 2013, p. 9). This inclines there’s a force that claims the power to identify particular changes as learning. This makes education not only a moral activity, but a political one as well: judging what kind of learning is good for our society and governing the distribution of power by defining someone as learner. Therefore, Biesta recommends to approach learning as a social process within a political arena where choices, politics and power are made visible by approaching the learner identity as a pragmatic, time-bound and situation-bound choice and not as a predetermined natural state of being (Biesta, 2013, p. 9). This view is similar to conflict theorists who regards schools as arena’s where differences between social groups are played as an effect of pluralism’s conflict by design (Wilson, 2011).
Education thinkers such as Durkheim and Dewey have convincingly argued that schools are in fact a small scale version of society (Fesmire, 2003). Schools are therefore as pluralistic as the society in which they’re located. The shift towards humanisation increases this pluralism, therefore it becomes necessary for educational institutions to develop a deeper level understanding of the conflict by design that’s hereby introduced.

Biesta says that in order to do this, schools must stimulate emancipation: becoming a subject with ways of doing and being that do not necessarily confirm the existing order. The difficult thing about emancipation, according to Biesta, is that it’s usually understood as an intervention from someone who is not subjected by the power that oppresses the one who needs to be emancipated (Biesta, 2013). Bringing this to the context of schools, this leads to the justification of inequality between teachers and pupils: the teacher’s task is to explain the world and the task of pupils is to become as wise as the teacher. Biesta uses the ideas of Paul Freire to present an different approach in which emancipation is aimed at restoring the connection between human beings and the world. Freire understands oppression as a process of dehumanisation that occurs when people’s ways of connecting to (each) other(s) are disrupted or suppressed, similar to how people feel weak and self-absorbed when they are in conflict according to Bush and Folger (2005). To overcome this disconnection, schools should organise themselves so that people become co-subjects who collaborate to overcome their disconnection and become subjects of their own actions, thereby dealing with conflict by design. The act of teaching in this process is to encourage dialogical and reflective practices that restore people’s connection to the world (i.e. to others), equal to the role of a transformative mediator who empowers people to restore their connection to others by giving them a sense of their own value and strength and enhancing their agency to make decisions. Therefore, Biesta’s approach of emancipation and Bush and Folger’s empowerment are regarded as part of the same endeavour in this thesis. Next, we will look at how this is understood in the context of Dutch (secondary) schools.
3.2 The context of Dutch school organisations

The independent council on Education (Dutch: Onderwijsraad) in the Netherlands has recently published an advisory report on the professional space of people working in the field of education (Onderwijsraad, 2016). This is a space that’s free from the influence of government and the hierarchical relationship with the school’s administration to judge what is needed a specific work situation. In most schools in the Netherlands, this space is anchored in formal policy but impeded by work pressure and a lack of control for professionals. Many teachers complain about the work pressure caused by the gap between school administration and the work floor that brings school leaders to over-regulate and manage the wrong problems. Also, the amount of administration is huge because of pupils with extra care, individual programs and the need to document everything for procedural reasons. Next to this, teachers feel they have limited control over the content and execution of their work causing them to feel estranged from their profession and ideals. In the last few years, the Dutch government has had a strong focus on enhancing professionals’ individual competences to improve this, by investing in teacher education and personal support.

According to the council however, this is a narrow view on professional space that has little attention for the impediments and opportunities that come from the underlying structures and cultures of school organisations. Therefore, they suggest to redefine and broaden the view on professional space by replacing it with the term agency (Dutch: handelingsvermogen). This is described in the context of education by Priestley, Biesta en Robinson in the following way:

“Teachers achieve agency when they are able to choose between different options in any given situation and are able to judge which option is the most desirable, in light of the wider purposes of the practice in and through which they act. Agency is restricted if those options are limited. Agency is not present if there are no options for action, or if the teacher simply follows routinized patterns of habitual behaviour with no consideration of alternatives.” (Priestley, Biesta & Robinson, 2015, p.119.)
This agency is mandatory for establishing the dialogical and reflective practices in schools that Biesta describes in his approach on emancipation (2013). In order to overcome the impediments for this agency, the council’s advice is to create more and better collaboration within teams to stimulate professional development, provide social support and create more horizontal management structures and a culture of shared responsibility that establishes a person’s agency. The council stipulates that this must be supported by frequent contact and trust among teachers. “Depth in interaction can only arise when contact goes beyond the exchange of ideas, anecdotes and giving advice. It’s important that personal and shared views, convictions, norms and values of (supposedly) good teaching are shared and discussed” (Onderwijsraad, 2016, p. 25, translated from Dutch by the author).

Management thinker Peter Senge argues that school communities have to learn how to build their own agency through their capacity to learn, because real improvement only occurs if the people who are responsible for implementation, design the changes themselves. This is why he pleads for the adoption of a learning orientation for schools, a theory to organise an attitude of continued learning we will explain below (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Timothy, Smith & Dutton, 2012).

### 3.3 Creating a learning school

There are many assumptions about learning and the nature and purpose of schools that reflect deeply embedded cultural beliefs that must be considered and directly confronted if schools want to develop a learning orientation. Senge says these ‘industrial age’ assumptions start with the notion that “children are deficient and schools should fix them” (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Timothy, Smith & Dutton, 2012, p. 35). This leads to views like: learning is strictly an intellectual activity; everyone learns the same; classroom learning is decidedly different from activities outside of school and some children are smart and others are dumb.
To change these assumptions and clear the path towards learning, Senge thinks of education not as an isolated entity but as an interconnected set of processes and practices that should foster dialogue and public engagement that makes perspectives and underlying assumption clear. At the heart of the learning orientation he proposes are five disciplines that need to be fostered by school communities: developing personal mastery; creating shared mental models; establishing a shared vision; engaging in team learning and systematic thinking. These interrelated principles (described below) offer a way of thinking about the complexities and turbulences in- and outside school organisations. If members of the community develop the capacity to act out each of these disciplines with skill, they will have become competent in learning itself (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Timothy, Smith & Dutton, 2012).

1. **Personal mastery**: self-knowledge and awareness of the impact of your behaviour on others in order to manage change relationships sensitively and be open for others to challenge your beliefs and values. This ensures that change interactions and behaviours are genuine, congruent and moral.

2. **Mental models**: beliefs, values, mind-sets and assumptions that determine how people think and act, and which must be surfaced in order to build shared understanding. This means getting in touch with different perspectives, challenging or clarifying assumptions and encouraging people to reframe their understanding.

3. **Shared vision**: common understandings and commitments that support the community’s aspirations and hopes and unbury reservations and resistances in order to create a shared vision. This leads to mutual agreement on what the learning targets, improvement strategies and challenge-goals of the organisation should be.

4. **Team learning**: sharing experience, insights, knowledge and skills with each other about how to do things better in order to develop reflection, inquiry and discussion skills to have better conversations about the shared vision and direction of the organisation.
5. **Systems thinking**: awareness and recognition of the interconnections of complex situations and interactions within the organisation in order to unravel the hidden influences, leverage points and unintended consequences of plans and analyse situations, events, problems and possible courses of action to find better and often not obvious options.

The patterns of behaviour that are encompassed by personal mastery, shared vision and team learning are supported by a systemic structure and the shared beliefs, expectations and values and norms of conduct that is form the informal organisation’s culture. Therefore, this thesis will further investigate the two most fundamental disciplines *system thinking* and *mental models*.

### 1. System thinking

Schools are systems with many interrelated components - from the building's infrastructure to policies and procedures - that affect each other in ways that are often not immediately visible. The problems schools deal with mostly have long timeframes and there’s little consensus about the best solution because knowledge is spread out over a great amount of people: parents, teachers, administration and pupils all hold a piece of the puzzle and not one perspective is likely to be complete. This means that problems change, depending on the forces and voices at play. This is why Ron Heiferz describes them as *adaptive problems* (Heiferz in Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Timothy, Smith & Dutton, 2012, p. 148). This complexity and uncertain diagnoses of school problems disqualify the use of purely technical solutions. System thinking is recognising and managing the complexity of the environment by seeing ‘the big picture’ of interrelationships and patterns of power that have developed over time, often as a result of routinised problem-solving. Senge argues that a community of interest can generate feedback on the systemic structures that underlie these problems and forces. This feedback enables the organisation to review the whole of interrelationships and form a catalyst through which the system can improve itself. Senge calls the involvement of everyone in the process of learning *generative learning* (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Timothy, Smith & Dutton, 2012, p. 93).
Senge’s thoughts on generative and adapted learning are based on the single-loop and double-loop learning theory of Argyris, used in action research and organisational learning (Arghris, 1977; Argyris, Putnam & McLain Smith, 1985).

**Singe-loop and double-loop learning**

Argyris’ ideas are based on how people design their espoused theories (intentions) and action theories (behaviour) on understanding reality (Argyris, Putnam & McLain Smith, 1985). When individuals engage in learning, this is often done by trial and error. No matter the difficulty of the task, people have a mental map that indicates how to put their governing variables - personal values, plans and intentions - to work out some sort of action strategy for learning. If this strategy does not work, it causes a mismatch between strategy and result and this usually leads to an adaptation of behaviour in the next attempt. However, the strategy’s underlying governing variables remains unchanged. Argyris describes this as single-loop learning (Argyris, Putnam & McLain Smith, 1985). When people are prepared to get out of their comfort zone and change their mental map, they’ll engage in double-loop learning: the questioning of their governing valuables to determine whether these lead to the result that they want to achieve. In doing this, they generate new knowledge about their reality. A relevant example:

“If the agent wants to suppress conflict (governing variable) and to this end avoids saying anything that might be controversial (action strategy), but others raise threatening issues anyway (mismatch), the agent may try the strategy of talking volubly about issues on which everyone is likely to agree. In such a case, when new action strategies are used in the service of the same governing variables, we speak of single-loop learning. We do so because there is a change in action but not in the governing variables. Another possibility is to change the governing variables themselves. For example, rather than suppress conflict, the agent might choose to emphasize open inquiry. The associated action strategy might be to initiate discussion of conflictual issues. In such cases we speak of double-loop learning.” (Argyris, Putnam and McLain Smith, 1985, p. 86.)
This questioning creates awareness of what Argyris (1977) calls defensive routines: the policies people design to protect people’s underlying governing variables to threat or exposure by others - preventing them to engage in double-loop learning. This only happens when people detect errors in their defensive routines and correct them in ways that involve the modification of underlying norms, policies and objectives. Conflicts are the very display of errors in defensive routines: contrasting governing variables that cause a mismatch. When systematic inquiry via double-loop learning is avoided this leads to escalation, but when conflicts are addressed in organisations they can become a very powerful form of double-loop learning on the organisation system as a whole, thereby expanding the school’s possibilities to establish the agency that is required to deal with the effects of our pluralistic society and its conflict by design.

2. Mental models

Systemic structures in schools are build on the institution’s governing variables - the values, attitudes and beliefs of the community and the way they are established by espoused theories and action theories. Together, they are what Senge calls mental models: convincing ideas that influence the interactions of and within the system and create assumptions about the way the school works (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Timothy, Smith & Dutton, 2012). Hanson (2003) describes how the relation between systemic structures and mental models becomes visible in the organisation’s culture of shared beliefs, expectations and values and norms of conduct, i.e. ‘the way we do things around here’. A school culture’s governing variables results in action strategies that have worked for people in previous situations and is therefore taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think about or act in relation to problems - et voilà, a mental model is created. Most school cultures are shaped as a collection of coalitions. This is a structure of groups of people, united by common interests, that work together but have conflicting demands and priorities (Hanson, 2003). Senge describes the problematic mental model of this culture and brings together all topics from this theoretic framework to provide a different view on development, presented by his quotation on the existence of conflict in schools on the next page.
“Many administrators [of schools, author], as successful and well-educated people, have learned the power of advocacy but are not skilled in inquiry. They tend to hold the mental model that, when faced with a conflict, they can win by arguing more avidly and debating most fervently. In this way, they perpetuate the cycle of misunderstandings between themselves and teachers or parents. Now consider the problem [conflict, author] that you have been charting. Behind each element of the systemic structure [system thinking, author] is a set of attitudes and beliefs [mental models, author], some of which have been unchallenged [single-loop learning, author], even though they are misleading and counterproductive [escalation, author], because they are unseen [avoidance, author]. Can you safely bring them to the surface and inquire about them [double-loop learning, author]? Only by surfacing these beliefs and assumptions can the system be transformed [transformative mediation, author].” (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Timothy, Smith & Dutton, 2012, p. 154.)

Of course the possibilities of transformative mediation are limited in schools the same way they’re limited in any other context: its succes relies on people’s abilities to comprehend and adequately employ it in their work. Therefore it’s very difficult to bring these methods successfully into practice by establishing a learning school. In part VI, it’s opportunities and limitations are brought to live in the context of a Dutch secondary school that used this research to become more empowered and engage in a learning process to change their conflict culture and contribute to a learning organisation.
Summary Part III

• Conflict is a process of interaction between agents that starts when at least one of them experiences through ratio, emotion and/or will that the other agent does/doesn’t do or will/won’t do something that hampers the first mentioned to realise his own interests, views, beliefs and/or values. This process contains unilateral and bilateral strategies to deal with conflict: forcing; accommodating; avoiding; compromise; collaborating. The last strategy is the best chance to find a win-win solution. Effectively dealing with conflict by compromise and collaboration is considered an essential asset to innovation, development and growth in relationships and organisations: no shine without friction. Ineffectively dealing with conflict by avoidance, force of accommodation leads to conflict escalation. This happens in stages of moral deterioration that cause a loss of humanity.

• Mediation is a bilateral conflict strategy of collaboration in which escalation is reversed by a mediator who helps people talk with each other about their conflict without falling back into escalating strategies. There are two types of mediation: outcome-control and process-control mediation. Outcome-control mediation concentrates on reaching a win-win solution and process-control mediation concentrates on improving the relationship. A method that considers the (re-)orientation on people’s rights, needs, wishes and interests to increase fairness as the right of people in conflict is transformative mediation. This method works on the transformation of people’s interaction - from powerlessness and disconnection of their shared humanity to empowerment and recognition of said humanity. Transformative mediation is not the holy grail - it’s merely a tool to inquire conflict interaction. It’s success depends on the quality of the mediator and the conflict agents’ willingness and ability to engage in voluntarily mediation and in trustful confidentiality.

• Schools experience pressure in mediating between external developments, public pressure, legislation and the daily care for a healthy working climate for staff and pupils. Therefore they call for a shift in focus from the instrumentalisation of education towards the humanisation of education, but this increases pluralism’s conflict by design. (Item continues on next page.)
Summary Part III

• (Continuing from previous page) Educational institutions therefore need to stimulate emancipation and agency in school: teaching dialogical and reflective practices that restore people's connection to the world. Senge's learning approach for schools provides tools to stimulate double-loop learning: give feedback on the organisation's system and break through assumptions and habits that prohibit dialogical and reflective practices in school to deal with pluralism's conflict by design.

• Transformative mediation is a structured method for schools to organise double loop learning by collaborating in conflict and pluck the fruits of the organisational development that this can result in. This is limited by people's ability to comprehend and employ this method successfully in their organisation.
"The stronger I become, the more open I am to you. The more open I am to you, the stronger you feel, the more open you become to me and the stronger I feel."

Joseph Folger
# Index part IV

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4.1 Double-loop learning in the field  
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When we look at the choices and activities of Fioretti College Hillegom with knowledge from the theoretic framework, it appears that this school essentially endeavours to establish a culture of double-loop learning within their organisation and education (thesis, p. 68). Their housing structure stimulates professional collaboration in development, support and responsibility - elements that contribute to the agency of their staff (Onderwijsraad, 2016). This agency is required for Biesta’s (2013) emancipation in schools (thesis, p. 63). The implementation of the KED model for personalised learning (thesis, p. 16) is also meant to effectuate this emancipation, because this model changes the pupil’s task to become as wise as the teacher into becoming a subject of their own actions. Their view on teaching in this model is that teachers offer dialogical and reflective lessons that coach pupils through their personal learning process of connecting to others and the community around them.

These changes and innovations caused a variety of problems, including conflicts between mental models of the various cultures that were brought together by the merger, creating a community of conflict. Paradoxically, the organisation needed to engage in a double-loop learning process to change the impediments in becoming a learning organisation - like a diamond requires a diamond to be polished. This is a difficult task, as is demonstrated in the following chapter. The first part describes how this thesis’ inquiry disclosed the disparity between the school’s mental models on conflict and their ambitions to become a learning organisation. The data analyses further reveal that participation in this inquiry also changed respondents’ views on conflict, turning this inquiry into an intervention study. In the second part, three layers of paradoxical conflict behaviour are discovered in the interview data: individual dissatisfaction about conflict keeps them from addressing conflicts thereby letting conflict perpetuate; the staff is aware that conflicts are needed for a wanted change, but they avoid conflicts because they can’t handle the change it causes; school wants to establish a learning attitude but does not practice what it preaches, thereby creating an impasse of avoided engagement that hampers a learning attitude. This paradox generates a different form of conflict escalation called regressive escalation.
After these analyses, the last chapter of this part investigates the role and meaning of the values of transformative mediation, recognition and empowerment, in the interview data. Because recognition ensues from empowerment, we first look at the manifestation of empowerment within the school. As it turns out, the school management’ approach of empowerment is faulted in two ways. First, they have enforced empowerment by mandate, so it’s no longer a choice but a leash that can be pulled when people drift off into a different direction than where the administration wants to go. Second, they approach empowerment as a psychological variable that has to be ‘installed’ in people’s belief system, which results in a lot of effort to convince people they are empowered while true power remains unchanged.

The lack of empowerment caused by the wrong approach of empowerment in the organisation gave rise to a conflict between the work floor and the administration that regressively escalated into apathy and fake communication. As a result, the work floor had trouble empathising with the school management and vice versa. Part IV closes with ideas to turn empowerment into recognition for better collaboration in their joined venture to become a learning school. This transformative approach of empowerment essentially signifies that recognition requires the de-empowerment of the self to generate attention for the other. The suggestions made by respondents to improve their context are predisposed to this: acknowledging pluralism among staff members instead of empowering everyone the same way; exploring frictions to systematically reflect on the contribution of elements other than their own efforts and last but not least: restoring recognition of the other by looking at the root of the problem, their professional relationships, instead of the branches - possibly with help of a (professional) mediator. This leads to the final conclusion that this school needs conflict to recognise change and they need an outsider to recognise conflict.
2. Quantitative findings

The quantitative findings presented in this chapter were used to discover the views on conflict of the school community. Its biggest contributions to this thesis were: discovering the most compelling topics and features for selecting respondents to participate in the interviews and, unintended, letting respondents’ reflect on their conflict culture and thereby contributing to change. The analyses of the quantitative data result in two lists of criteria: one for respondent selection and one for interview topics. Criteria discovered in answering the sub-questions are given at the end of each paragraph.

The survey was held among 148 staff members who worked full- or parttime on the school’s location in Hillegom in the period of October until December 2016. The response rate was 89% and the completion rate was 66% (out of 131 responses, 98 were completed). The completion rate gives a margin of error of 5,77% at a reliability level of 95%. This means that if the entire staff had been questioned, there’s a 95% certainty that their responses would maximally deviate 5,77% from the responses of the sample group, a slightly higher margin than the ideal 5%. Only the completed surveys were included in the analysis. To verify the internal validity, every fifth staff member on an alphabetised staff members list was asked afterwards in person whether they answered the survey or not (29 people in total). This method of triangulation was designed with the help of a math teacher from the community to check wether the spread of the respondents was representative. It shows that the survey is internally valid because the response percentage of the survey's sample was approximately the same as the control question’s percentage [diagram 1A-B].
2.1 Representativity

To see whether the data are representative for the opinion of the entire staff, it was analysed on three demographics: function [2A-B], team [2C-D] and gender [2E-3F]. These demographics were chosen because they are the most relevant to the school and give the easiest indications for the selection of respondents and determining the interview topics.
This information lead to the following selection criteria of respondents and topics for the semi-structured interviews:

Selection of respondents

- Respondents from each team as well as the administration and facility staff, because this gives an impression of the organisation instead of its education alone.
- A respondent who did finish the survey while not having had a conflict during their employment, because he/she can say something about the topic without having had a conflict.
- A respondent who is both a teacher and part of the school’s administration, because he/she may have an impression of the view on conflict in both groups.
- Both male and female respondents, because more women have responded than men and the survey does not provide an answer for why this is.
- A respondent from team MOK, because of the higher participation percentage.
- A respondent from team VRE, because of the lower participation percentage.
- A respondent who did not complete the survey, because he/she might have a different discourse that could not be reflected in the survey’s answering options.

Selection of topics

- Motivation for voluntary participation in the survey and interviews.

The following paragraphs (2.2 to 2.6) contain results based on four sub-questions that were formulated in the research design (thesis, p. 21). These questions contain the following topics: perception of conflict; use of conflict strategies; outcomes of conflicts and conflict escalation. The survey data was used to add one other topic: the orientation on mediation.
2.2 Perception

The first sub-question of the quantitative research was: **what type of conflicts occur within the school?** The survey was based on the questionnaire of Jehn (1994) about task-process [3A] task-content [3B] and emotional conflicts [3C].
A control question about the role of impersonal and personal matters in conflict was asked to see respondents answered in the same trend as in Jehn's (1994) questionnaire [4A].

**4A: How large is the role of impersonal matters in the occurrence of conflicts, compared to personal matters? (N=98)**

- Greater: 41%
- Equal: 25%
- Smaller: 25%
- Don't know: 9%

To orientate on topics for the interviews the respondents were asked where and among whom conflicts occur. This gave an impression of the hierarchy and location of and the attention for conflict within the organisation [5A-C].

**5A: Where do most conflicts occur in this organisation? (N=98)**

- Individuals: 67%
- Teams: 17%
- Subject sections: 15%

**5B With whom have you had the biggest conflict this year? (N=98)**

- Nobody: 40%
- Formally equal: 28%
- Formally higher: 25%
- Formally lower: 8%
It becomes clear from these diagrams that there’s not one type of conflict that is explicitly dominant within the organisation. Opinions are divided on how often certain types of conflicts occur, but on a continuum ranging from cold and distant conflicts to boiling, emotional ones, the respondents incline towards individual conflicts about work content that are equally or more often influenced by personal matters. These conflicts are mostly solved within teams, even though they don’t start there.

This information lead to the following selection criteria of respondents and topics for the semi-structured interviews:

### Selection of respondents

- A respondent who has had a conflict with someone in a formally higher position and;
- A respondent who has had a conflict with someone in a formally lower position, because they have different experiences with regard to the influence of hierarchy in conflict.
- A respondent from the school’s administration, because there’s the least attention for conflict there according to the respondents.

### Selection of topics

- Attention for conflict among the school’s administration compared to other groups.
- No attention for conflict at all.
- (Differences in) conflict management within each team.
- Conflicts about power struggles.
- Conflicts about the best approach of work or tasks.
- Conflicts caused by clashing personalities.
2.3 Strategies

The second sub-question was: **what type of conflict strategies do staff members practice?** Respondents were asked to point out how hard it was for them to concern themselves with 1) their own needs and 2) needs of the other party during a conflict, on a scale ranging from very hard (0) to very easy (50) [6A]. With the use of the Dual Concern Model, this indicates what respondents incline to choose as their strategy.

The respondents’ strong inclination for avoiding conflicts according to the DCM didn’t match the results [7A-7E, next page] of the questionnaire by de Dreu (2008), which was directly copied into this survey. Respondents had to rate descriptions of conflict situations on a Likert-scale ranging from rarely (1) to (almost) always (5).
7A: Avoiding strategy (N=98)

- Making contradictions seem less sharp
- Avoiding confrontation about contradictions
- Avoiding disagreements whenever possible
- Avoiding confrontation with other

7B: Forcing strategy (N=98)

- 1) Fighting for own good outcome (S15)
- 2) Pushing through own views (S5)
- 3) Trying to win (S10)
- 4) Doing everything to win (S20)

7C: Accomodation strategy (N=98)

- 1) Admitting to other’s wishes (S1)
- 2) Adapting to other’s interests (S16)
- 3) Meet other’s demands (S11)
- 4) Vindicating the other (S6)
First, these diagrams show that respondents have different preferences, even within one strategy: they were the least divided about the occurrence of accommodation, but ‘meeting the other’s demands’ happens more than the other situations and ‘adding water to the wine’ while compromising happens less frequent than the other situations. This gives some strategies, such as forcing, quite ambiguous results. Also, the respondents were quite positive about the occurrence of the collaboration strategy, which contradicts the results of the DCM [6A]. The different perceptions on ‘working out ideas’ and ‘working out solutions’ is surprising. The latter happens much less, which indicates that staff members do collaborate on generating ideas, but this doesn’t always lead to collaborated solutions.
After the Dreu’s questionnaire, respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the school’s current conflict management. This could indicate if they had a conscious view on what they required in dealing with conflicts and if these requirements were met. The results indicate that most respondents don’t have a conscious view on proper conflict management and those that do, were mostly unsatisfied [8A].

8A: Does the organisation have a proper conflict management system right now? (N=98)

This information lead to the following selection criteria of respondents and topics for the semi-structured interviews:

Selection of respondents

- A respondent who’s function requires dealing with conflicts within the organisation.
- A respondent who answered that the conflict management within the organisation is currently inadequate.

Selection of topics

- Unwritten rules of conflict.
- Desired vs. actual culture culture.
- Requirements of conflict management.
- Collaborating about ideas vs. collaborating about solutions.
2.4 Outcomes

The third sub-question was: what type of conflict outcomes occur within the school? Respondents could choose three domains in which conflicts had the biggest impact. They could indicate if this impact was negative or positive. The diagrams below show how often each topic was chosen [9A-B]. Comparing the two diagrams, it becomes visible which areas benefit more from conflict than they suffer from it: self-knowledge; distribution of tasks; distribution of means and ideas all improve in some way from conflict. The influence of conflict on communication works both ways and is experienced slightly more negative, similar to other areas. Conflict has the biggest negative impact on the relationship of respondents, it got 9.4% more votes for negative outcome.

9A: Negative outcomes (N=98)

9B: Positive outcomes (N=98)
The second part of the survey on outcomes was about ongoing conflicts [10A-D].

**10A: Did you have an unresolved conflict in the past/current year? (N=98)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had no conflict</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most remarkable aspect of this question and of this survey [10A], is the fact that 8% less respondents say they had no conflict than in the beginning of the survey [compare 10A with 5B]. This happens again further down the survey [compare 5B with 11A]. This shows very well how the survey changed the respondents’ perception of the topic and expanded its definition. It also demonstrates how this action research engaged the community in a double-loop learning process (thesis, p. 68).

Respondents who answered they had an unresolved conflict [10A] were directed to an extra set of questions about this situation. The next diagrams contain the answers of 22 respondents who had an unresolved conflict [10B-D].

**10B: What type of unresolved conflict do you have? (N=22)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Task-related conflict</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-emotional conflict</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**10C: How do you deal with this unresolved conflict? (N=22)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forcing</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outsourcing</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diagram 10A seems consistent with the impression from Jehn’s (1994) questionnaire [compare 3A-C with 10B]. Diagrams 10C-D, compliment the results from the DCM [compare 10-C-D with 6A]. Both show a strong preference for the avoiding strategy.

This information lead to the following selection criteria of respondents and topics for the semi-structured interviews:

**Selection of respondents**
- A respondent who said he/she resolved a conflict by ignoring it.
- A respondent who is currently avoiding a conflict.
- A respondent who chose ideas as a positive outcome of conflict.

**Selection of topics**
- View on conflict avoidance as a way to resolve conflicts.
- The influence of communication on conflict outcomes.
2.5 Escalation

The last sub-question was: **how far do conflicts escalate on the escalation ladder of Glasl within the school?** In the survey, respondents had to answer this question for four types of conflicts: task-process, task-content, social and social-emotional, based on their worse conflict experience during this school term. Glasl’s ladder should show a steady downward trend and the data confirm this [11A]: their conflicts do not pass the level of debate, thus don’t pass the threshold of the second escalation phase. This coincides with the general preference for *collaboration* and *compromise* among staff members seen in de Dreu’s questionnaire, which is only possible up to the *action, not words*-phase. Though there’s still a fair share of conflicts that do go beyond this threshold, up to *the loss of face*. These conflicts can only be de-escalated by interference of a mediator.

![11A: Conflict escalation per type (N=98)](image)

- **Hardening**
- **Debate**
- **Action, not words**
- **Coalitions**
- **Loss of face**
- **Threats**
- **Destructive blows**
- **Fragmentation**
- **Abyss**
- **No conflict**

- Task-process conflicts
- Task-content conflicts
- Social conflicts
- Social-emotional conflicts
There is a remarkable deviation in the results: 25% of the respondents say that coalitions are formed in social conflicts, a much higher percentage than any other type of conflict has in this escalation phase [11B].

This information lead to the following selection criteria of respondents and topics for the semi-structured interviews:

**Selection of respondents**

- A respondent who answered that a conflict has escalated to the point of fragmentation.
- A respondent who answered that a conflict has escalated to the point of the emergence of coalitions, because he/she can say something about the forming of coalitions in the organisation.

**Selection of topics**

- Ownership of conflict
- Presence of coalitions in social conflicts
2.6 Orientation on mediation

To help the community orientate on the topics of qualitative research in advance, several characteristics, attitudes and skills of each type of mediation were put into an additional sequence of questions in which respondents had to choose which type of mediation they preferred. This gave a global impression on how people perceive mediation without being educated in the subject, and whether they prefer mediation based on the values of transformative mediation. The results are illustrated in the last set of diagrams [12A-C]. The first two diagrams [12A-B] indicate that the respondents prefer a transparent mediator who is focused on the problem but wants to repair the relationship, which is contradicting according to the theory.

12A: Attitude of outcome control mediation (N=98)

- Neutral: 47%
- Leading: 50%
- Solving: 28%
- Focus on problem: 58%

12B: Attitude of process control mediation (N=98)

- Transparent: 53%
- Following: 50%
- Repairing: 72%
- Relation: 42%
According to diagram 12C, pluralism is the least important aspect for respondents in dealing with conflict by mediation, while theory states it’s an important source of conflict and an prominent aspect of the context of schools (thesis, pp. 61-46). Respondents also didn’t choose the values of transformative mediation as important qualities for a mediator. This is an important result, because it demonstrates that their single loop mental models on conflict are reflected in their preferences for a single loop type mediation. However, there’s an interesting contradiction in their answers: they prefer a mediator who is qualified in finding solutions instead of improving the relationship [12C, the five qualities with highest percentages belong to either facilitative or problem-solving mediators] but at the same time they want a mediator who’s attitude is repairing - not solving [12A-B]. This is interesting, because the latter is not possible without a double loop type of mediation such as narrative or transformative mediation.

In the interview data analysed in the next chapter, we discover how this contradiction appears in the respondents’ experienced reality and how it affects the school’s conflict culture and endeavours to establish a learning school.
3. Qualitative findings

In this chapter, the school’s much discussed ambitions, problems and developments are illustrated by the words and examples of ten respondents. The analyses of their stories uncovers a complex web of mental models on conflict that work counterproductive to their ambitions and needs. At the heart of this, we discover a multilayered paradox in their conflict behaviour that invokes regressive escalation. The role of transformative mediation’s values empowerment and recognition in this paradox are analysed, leading to the conclusion that they are under much pressure because empowerment is approached as a mandate and psychological variable. This can be restored by a transformative approach on empowerment: de-empowering the self to generate recognition for the other. To this account, the school must acknowledge they need conflict to see change and they need an outsider to recognise conflict.

Note

Ten respondents were selected from a poule of 26 staff members who volunteered to participate in the qualitative research, based on criteria from the analysis of the quantitative data and additional recommendations from the community. (For an overview of which respondent meets which criteria: thesis, p. 170; for the semi-structured interview model: thesis pp. 172-173.) All respondents have been given fictional names and their quotations were translated from Dutch by the author with as much respect for the original message as possible. Apart from these official respondents, staff members throughout the entire organisation had informal chats with the researcher, who was invited to several meetings with the school’s administration and a series of reflection meetings with staff members that were initiated as a cause of this research (for narrative and inquiry audit: thesis, pp. 136-139; for minutes: thesis, p. 180). Most of these people did not sign up for voluntary participation, nor have these conversations have been recorded and therefore they will not be quoted in this analysis. However, their views on this research and personal stories were indispensable for understanding their context and thus contribute in a major way to the findings that are described on the following pages.
3.1 A threatened family culture

The first sub-question was: what is the staff members’ view on the conflict culture that currently exists within the school? Conflict culture was defined as a set of implicit norms and values, established by the organisation’s character, that determines how people view conflicts and how they are supposed to deal with them. To understand the staff’s view on their conflict culture, it’s necessary to describe the broader organisational culture where conflict is a part of. This has been done by Verweij (2016), who concluded that the school’s culture was mostly a family culture, meaning that people are flexible in their work and have an internal focus. The characteristics of a family culture are described in the methodology (thesis, p. 30). The qualitative data and researcher’s experiences with the school confirm the existence of these characteristics in the school’s culture. Jane and Linda both worked in commercial companies before coming to this school. They described the staff as warm, gentle-hearted people who are easily upset and hurt on a personal level.

“When you address someone’s behaviour the first reaction is always negative, but that’s never my intention. […] I’ve had a colleague once, who immediately started crying. Well, I never experienced that before. People take things really personally, that’s the downside of such a warm, empathic and social climate.”

Jane

The researcher’s presence in the organisation for nearly an entire year has left the same impression of the school’s informal, open and sometimes sensitive atmosphere. All members of the community of interest were enthusiastic, empathic and helpful, with passion for their work. Problems were solved through social interaction and the willingness to ‘go the extra mile’ for each other and the pupils. Many respondents described this atmosphere by practical examples:

“When within my team we expect support from each other, and help. For example with tidying the classrooms. These are unspoken expectations that everyone just lives up to. Or when someone calls in sick, he or she expects: ‘will you take over my classes?’ Yes, of course we will! No problem! That makes this team really great to work with…”

Miranda
The characteristics of the family culture are the school’s governing variables (Argyris, 1977; thesis, p. 68). Their perception of conflict is also affected by these variables and this is where their problems begin. Staff members voice powerful concerns that the governing variables of their family culture are losing ground and they all point to the school’s fast-paced change and innovation as the cause of this deterioration. Staff members experience this as friction between the school’s administration and the work floor.

“…But there are so many of those kind of things that just aren’t open for discussion in the rest of the organisation, from high to low I mean.”

From high to low?

“Yes, from the school’s management down to the staff. If the administration expects something in a certain way, it just has to be so. There’s no room for conflict about that, that’s my impression. […] Like with the [example, author] they asked me to make. They expect you to do that in a day, along with six other things and it’s like: ‘oh, Miranda will do that.’ There’s no communication. And it’s not really a problem to do, I do it with love, but everything has to be done yesterday. Their expectations are really more a demand in disguise, while the expectations in my house are just… they just happen. If I break my leg tomorrow I know it’ll be fine.”

Miranda

The appendix contain a table of quotations about threats to the family culture’s governing variables (thesis, p. 178) mentioned in the research of Verweij (thesis, pp. 29-30). One example is the threat to the school’s friendly work environment:

“People don’t dare to be vulnerable in this school. I came here through my internship, so I took on everything they gave me. I never said that it was too much, because then you’re being vulnerable.”

Miranda

Their governing variables are numerous and deeply hidden within the structures of the organisation so there are probably many more to find, however this example and the ones in the appendix are sufficient to give an impression of the mismatch between their governing variables and the action strategies (Argyris, 1977) to which we turn now.
Do as I say, not as I do

The theoretical framework describes how governing variables are 1) reaffirmed by the organisation’s action strategies and 2) protected from exposure to change by their defensive routines (thesis, p. 68). Governing variables and their related action strategies are what Senge calls mental models: beliefs, values, mind-sets and assumptions that determine how people think and act. These need to be inquired to establish a double-loop learning attitude (thesis, pp. 68-73).

The table [1] on the following page contains the strongest mental models on conflict that were retrieved from the qualitative data. The quotations show that respondents are unaware of the underlying mental models in their answers. This unawareness is a sign that conflicts are avoided instead of inquired, thus there can be no double-loop learning attitude. Also, most respondents preferred to tell the researcher how it should be in their view (intentions) rather than how it actually was (behaviour). Susan’s quotation demonstrates this best: in her example about the conflict of a colleague, she implicitly says that conflicts remain undiscussed until the urgency has become so strong that they can no longer be ignored. This is an obvious action strategy, but instead of investigating her colleague’s underlying mental model on conflicts, she simply overrules it by suggesting a conversational approach. By doing this, she employs a defensive routine that inadvertently hampers a learning attitude and contributes to the conflict avoiding culture; the contrary effect of what she wants to accomplish. Most interviews were like this: people expressed their dissatisfaction with conflicts in their organisation by describing their desired conflict culture, thereby avoiding confrontation with their actual conflict avoiding culture - giving way to more conflict. This the first, individual layer of the self-confirming paradox that has been most adamant and complicated to unravel in the data.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action strategy</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t bother each other with it</td>
<td>“People have this vague, unspoken rule that’s like: ‘don’t bother me about it and I won’t bother you’. But if you ask me for a principle in communication, and I think conflicts are communication too, it would be that we should seek a lot more clarity than we generally do.”</td>
<td>Tom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweep it under the carpet</td>
<td>I think 90% sticks with gossip. That’s an outlet, but there’s no follow-up. I never heard about a conflict that was solved by really talking about it. Generally, people get a sneer and it’s swept under the carpet and then we go on. That’s it.</td>
<td>John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t ask for help</td>
<td>In my house we ask for help all the time, but I see people around me who can’t solve their conflicts, but they’re afraid to ask for help. The other day, I was talking to somebody who just started crying. He/she didn’t dare to say he/she was in need of help because the team that he/she’s in doesn’t talk about those kind of things. Then I wonder how I would feel if that was me.”</td>
<td>Miranda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t engage in immediate conversation</td>
<td>“We continue our work, the lessons and the pupils, not matter what. That has to continue, even if there’s a little friction going on. We agree to talk about it later.”</td>
<td>Rachell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t mention it until it’s no longer possible to ignore</td>
<td>“The way I see it, is when you engage in conversation about something you struggle with, you have to ask questions first to get an impression of where it’s coming from.”</td>
<td>Susan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complain to each other but don’t take action</td>
<td>“Well, mostly people complain among each other when something’s going on. But that’s all they do and then it gets stuck in moping. Sometimes they bring their complaints to the team leader, but only when they can’t be held accountable themselves.”</td>
<td>Michelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shift off the blame or solution</td>
<td>“To my surprise, I noticed that a lot is shifted off when things happen. They never talk it over, but put the blame on someone to keep it away from themselves. It’s not about finding a solution, but getting rid of the problem.”</td>
<td>Linda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let it fester</td>
<td>“They don’t talk about it, they just let it go on and on. There aren’t any clear limits, I think education is a little too soft in that. That makes it really hard to tackle things. So I think: come on people, toughen up a little!”</td>
<td>Jane</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 A searching school

The second sub-question was: what are the staff members’ perspectives on the status of the school’s ‘learning school’ ambitions? Respondents experienced a mismatch between the governing variables of their family culture and the direction that the school is heading. Therefore, it doesn’t come as a surprise that none of the respondents described their school as a learning organisation:

“I find that hard to say because lately I don’t see it anymore. You know, there’s a huge amount of activity in this school, but to me it seems like nobody is really learning from it. Everywhere pilot balloons are launched and ‘pop!’; they crash again. The best example of the learning school is in House X. They are working on educational innovations, analysing, pressing on, talking with each other. They are in that cycle of learning so to say. But the learning organisation, I still don’t see that. I see a searching school but we pick up too little from it.”

John

“I like this school because things are being tested, like with the pilots. That way you can find out what works well. You know, there’s development. But like I said before, at a certain moment we’ve got to make a choice in what we’ll stand for as a school. What shape will it get, so we can get our unity back. And also, I haven’t seen yet how this school deals with … well not mistakes, but when things don’t seem to work.”

You don’t see people in this organisation learning from things that don’t work?

“Well for example, I had a conversation about frequent absence with someone, and he/she had an impression like: ‘I’m being reprimanded for it’, while that wasn’t my angle at all. I think it’s important to investigate what we can do about the situation together to maintain a healthy organisation for everyone.”

You see that as a learning attitude?

“Yes I do. It’s the same with other types of reviews in the organisation. They are viewed very black-and-white, like: ‘reviews are to give people a reprimande for their failures’. But it would be really strange if you have regular contact and all of the sudden you would get punished in the review. This attitude should not exist in a learning school. There’s an underlying reckoning culture there that has really surprised when I came in.”

Susan
Respondents easily pointed out aspects of behaviour that are counterproductive for the learning attitude in school. There were three major impediments that almost everyone mentioned: focusing on negative experiences; a lack of reflection skills and somewhat surprising: not engaging in conflicts.

"What I noticed myself, is that experiences in the past give you certain convictions. For example that it's pointless to engage in conversation, because that hasn't led to any results in the past either. It's very difficult not to end up thinking like that. It takes energy and effort. And courage too for some, to address things. If you don't feel safe, if you don't know what the consequences will be."

Eva

"I think that especially teachers are very capable of phrasing their thoughts, so that's not the issue. The issue is a self-critical view on things. Of course that difficult for everyone, but you need to have self-reflection. If you don't, things can get ugly in your professional life and in your private life. I do too, I always look at my own contributions to the situation. If you can't, you get into a conflict zone much faster, that's how people work."

Jane

"Removing all conflicts is impossible to do, and it's not necessary either. You can learn so much from conflicts, but only if you do something with it. Look, if we act like 'a conflict is just a conflict' and we're angry and we go our separate ways, it will continue to simmer. Yes, then you don't learn from it."

Michelle

These impediments reveal the second, staff layer of the paradox within the staff's attitude on learning and conflict: they know they should engage in conflict in order change things in school, but in reality they avoid conflicts because they can't handle the change it causes. Why do they behave in ways that they know are counterproductive for their goals? The answer lies in the common factor of all these impediments: fear.

"What I see all the time, is that people are afraid. Look, every human being has fears: fear for their safety, fear for novelties, fear for the unknown, etc. And very often, people's behaviour is dictated by their own fears. If you don't talk about that, and people don't because it's considered a weakness - not just here but everywhere-, then it remains unspoken. Then fear rules, because the other person doesn't know that you respond out of fear. They will think you're being lazy or whatever. This causes so much stagnation and misunderstanding. Yes, the energy leaks away."
Stagnation in which area?

“The development of the school and of its people. I immediately think of a situation in which this person was talking to a supervisor with fear all over his/her face, like: ‘will my answer be right? What will he think of me and will this influence by assessment?’ Well, that way you won’t get very far in learning. It only reduces the quality of your development, the very thing that a supervisor wants you to demonstrate. But in the end, I think the problem is that people don’t dare to acknowledge their own incompetences and confront them.”

Tom

Tom’s position in school makes his analysis very plausible. Considering the discoveries so far, it seems as if the fear that he describes is an existential fear caused by a lose of identity due the school’s history and changing climate: people indicate they no longer know what the foundation of the school’s existence is and what their place in it is, while they also realise that they themselves ought to be that foundation. In that sense, they have lost themselves and are truly a searching school instead of a learning school.

3.3 Be the conflict you want to see in others

The third sub-question was: to what extent do the staff members’ views on their current conflict culture reflect the values of transformative mediation? The existence of an conflict avoiding culture in the school is related to their activities to establish a learning organisation. This creates the third, school layer of the same paradox described in the previous paragraphs: the organisation wants pupils and teachers to engage in (i.e. stop avoiding) learning. Involving everyone in a learning process is what Senge calls generative learning (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Timothy, Smith & Dutton, 2012; thesis, p. 67).

However, instead of being the engagement they want to see in others, they hope that these others pick up the gauntlet, but that other does exactly the same because they’re all afraid to admit they are lost and don’t have the right answers. So instead, they talk endlessly about how things should be. This creates an impasse of avoided engagement that hampers the learning attitude they want to establish and gives rise to conflict that further disrupts the balance and safety in the organisation. In fact, it uncovers a form of conflict escalation that differs from Glasl’s (2001) theory.
Glasl (2001) speaks of escalation in an aggressive form: animosity and violence that result in the instrumentalisation of the other(s) (thesis, p. 46). The form of escalation we have uncovered in these analyses is regressive: distancing, avoidance and shifting off responsibilities that lead to false communication that’s equally instrumentalising. Also in regressive escalation, people don’t engage in battle but their personal and/or professional learning comes to a standstill. It’s paradoxical how the school’s approach on a learning organisation effectuates this kind of escalation. To understand this in relation to their conflict culture, it’s analysed how the underlying values of their learning approach reflect the values of transformative mediation. These values are empowerment and recognition. Empowerment is the restoration to individuals of a sense of their own value and strength and their own capacity to make decisions. This restores people’s (innate) ability for the recognition of individuals’ capability for acknowledgement, understanding or empathy for the situation and views of the other (Bush and Folger, 2005; thesis, p. 54).

**Empowerment**

The school’s organisational changes are focussed on promoting agency. Also, the executive administrator expressed in several conversations that he believes establishing a learning attitude within the organisation requires staff members to become empowered. To understand the effects of this, it was necessary to read some additional literature on the possibilities and risks of empower-management.

Russ Forrester has written an article to evaluate the attempts of organisations to establish empowerment, which he defines as “the liberty and possibility to decide and participate and not only to suggest and be part of a decision process” (Forrester, 2000, p. 32). Empowerment is about the power of freedom (and equality), and the possibilities to exercise this. However, according to Forrester power is not something you can simply transfer from the powered to the unpowered. Many organisations have tried and failed because not every person wants power or knows how to handle it. This is why Argyris has called the concept of empower-management a losing organisation strategy (Argyris, 1998). Forrester himself is more optimistic. He writes that many managers are very good at
appreciating and extending individual employees’ capacities and their sense of responsibility in such ways that they are in balance with their increased possibilities, but it becomes a lot more difficult if they want to accomplish this in a systematic way throughout the entire organisation. Two out of three failing approaches to empowerment that Forrester describes are applicable to this school. He also explains how the errors in these approaches are corrected, to which we will return after it has been established where things go wrong.

1: Empowerment as mandate

Even when the decision to change the power balance in an organisation is well-considered, as is the case in this school, the implementation can go too fast. The school went through a major and sudden ‘paradigm shift’ with the merger into one building and this generate more pluralism, which was organised in an innovative structure. In this structure decision processes were brought to a lower level within the organisation to give staff members more autonomy. Many of the complex and diverse choices now landed on the shoulders of the newly shaped teams of each house - but these shoulders were already bearing much weight: we established in the theoretic framework that education is one of the professional fields with the biggest work pressure in the Netherlands (thesis, pp. 64-65). Suddenly, this new, empowered context expanded their work with time-consuming activities such as decision-making, coordination and the additional administration. This seems to hamper their possibility to deal with conflicts constructively.

What do you think this school needs to deal with conflicts?

“Calmness. In hectic times, people don’t listen. They just give an impulsive ‘no’ as response. Maybe they change their minds later, but people who are less assertive are already upset by then. If there’s calmness then there’s room for attention and you don’t get the reaction of: I have to think about things that I really don’t have the time for. If you’re under such work pressure and you don’t even have the time to even talk about your next series of lessons, how can you expect there’s any room for all the other stuff?”

Rachell
Because of all this extra pressure, there’s no time to prepare and educate the empowered people in these activities, nor give them any attention when they fail.

“Perhaps that’s just it: in a learning organisation there’s room for mistakes. I don’t think people here are open and tolerant about that. I notice it with new colleagues: they get supervision, but not really because there’s no time. So there’s no one that they can rely on when things go wrong. No one to talk to because of that culture of ‘you don’t talk about your mistakes’.”

Miranda

As a result, staff members cling to matters they can control and complain that the promised power is a facade without making attempts to claim it for themselves.

“Everyone says ‘oh Xa is just an idiot in meetings’. I do talk to him one on one and he still has great ideas, he’s a real education man. He’s just disappointed in all those years and not very strong in communicating that. And Xb is the type of team leader who just tells him off when he acts out. Now everyone thinks that all he can do is complain and Xb already explodes when Xa starts talking. Of course that’s idiotic in an organisation.”

John

This empowerment is designed as a mandate that actually decreases the power of everyone involved, because they don’t have a choice. The power that was withheld from the lower levels of the organisation in the old situation is now thrust upon them and if they can’t or won’t achieve what they’re expected to achieve with their empowerment, it can be taken away. This is not empowerment, but an extendable leash that can be blocked any moment people run off too far or in the wrong direction. The irony is that this is exactly the situation everyone wanted to change - and there’s it is again: paradox.

“Really listen to all their ideas, even if they are different from your own [management, author]. Then people stay motivated to continue. They’re often the creative ones and you need them. I recently heard again from older colleagues that they are completely worn down because they’ve been put back in their bench to often. ‘I’m not doing it again’, I personally think that’s such a waste.”

Rachell
2: Empowerment as psychological variable

The school’s focus therefore shifted from mandating empowerment to convincing people they have power and this is where Argyris’ scepticism with regard to empowerment begins (Argyris, 1998). The idea behind empowerment as psychological variable is: when people don’t behave empowered when they’re given power, this must be because they can’t see their new liberties and opportunities - their own perception of power is what’s keeping them unempowered. The school uses exemplary staff members or teams to change people’s ideas about their power; enhance their feelings of decisiveness and stimulate intrinsic motivation. They have to be convinced that the best learning is accomplished with energy from within, instead of clear steering leadership.

“I really hate that. When X gives a speech he always starts talking about our house, like “Yes, in house Y this and this has shown fantastic results!” Then I think: oh X, don’t do that. Everyone already looks at us because things run smoothly. That’s really tiring. Not everything goes well in our house, but that’s always left out. We also fall on our faces but nobody talks about that, we don’t think that’s fair.”

Miranda

While it’s true that intrinsic motivation and decisiveness are important, they don’t encompass people’s full dedication to their work. This comes from a huge range of deeply personal psychological factors that is impossible to cover. When the organisation dedicates itself to the enormous task of influencing all these factors, it’s insurmountable that they will overlook some and cause people to feel misjudged.

“If you bent the knee too often to things you don’t approve of, it will eventually break you. You get further and further away from who you are and what you stand for. This often happens to the most dedicated people, who’s heart is in teaching. Great colleagues who completely go for it and I count myself to be one of them. I find it very painful to see these people getting destroyed.”

“Because there is no attention for it?”

“Yes. You don’t feel recognised. Not seen, not heard, not taken seriously.”

Eva
This approach of empowerment becomes a mind-game that usually appears like an endless flow of encouragements and invitations: ‘doors are always open and staff members have something to say here!’ But in reality, these words over-shout the fact that real power hasn’t changed. It’s really quite simple: if it’s necessary for a manager to tell staff members they have power, then they probable don’t. The result is cynicism and reduced energy, aspects of regressive conflict escalation. True power is further diminished and again, this is the opposite of what everyone wants.

“It’s funny when the administrator gives a speech in which he says ‘I invite everyone to come in and talk with me’. Well, that’s the same as a police officer telling you that you are obligated to know the law and continues to write you a ticket. What I mean is: saying your door’s always open is misleading if you use the invitation to hide behind and blame people for not coming.”

Why is that undeserved? If he opens the door, why wouldn’t you go in?

“The experience that nothing is done with what you bring to light. I don’t want to be working under the false pretence of dialogue when it always turns out the be a top-down decision in the end.”

Steve

Recognition

As said before, empowerment is the restoration to individuals of a sense of their own value and strength and their own capacity to make decisions. This restores people’s (innate) ability to recognise individuals’ capability for the acknowledgement of and the understanding and empathy for the situation and views of the other (Bush and Folger, 2005, thesis, p. 54).

Seeing how the school fails to establish empowerment, it becomes apparent why staff members are unable to recognise their management’s capability to acknowledge and have empathy for their situation and views.

“Yes, they [management, author] polish the tip of the iceberg but they forget everything below the surface. It’s really business-like and maybe that’s their job but so much happens below and they just don’t intervene. It would be better if they took action earlier, because now people leave damaged. [Example of colleague failing to get teaching licence within time, author] It’s business before humanity and I think that’s really serious because they let people fall on their faces and some of them will be bothered by that the rest of their lives.”

Michelle
This situation suggests that the staff and their management are in conflict. The values of transformative mediation are reflected in this conflict: it evokes a sense of weakness, caused by a lack of control over the situation and feelings of doubt and indecisiveness. At the same time, people protect themselves and develop methods of fake communication towards other(s). This is also what John concludes.

“I think people here are really egocentric in conflicts, they can’t put themselves in the other’s position [recognition, author]. Resolving conflicts is often like reaching a sort of compromise: ‘I see your point and you see mine, okay this is where we can continue with together.’ But the way the organisation is right now, people aren’t capable of doing that. I think that’s mostly due to what I said earlier: people are fighting for their own space, for what they’ve got [lack of empowerment, author].”

John

3.4 Turning empowerment into recognition

The discoveries we did in the above lead to the notion that empowerment is not the school’s solution, but its problem. This confirms Argyris (1998) sceptis: empowering one always leads to the disempowerment of the other, in the school’s case the staff members on the work floor. Also, these staff members have been empowered in exercising their defensive routines instead of reevaluating them. Without this, empowerment leads in the wrong direction. Transformative mediation can offer a strategy for breaking with defensive routines and developing new mental models. This is exactly what Forrester also suggests as a solution to correct the mistakes of empower-management (Forrester, 2000; following page). Transformative mediation accomplishes this by using a reversing approach on empowerment: the emphasis is not on empowering the self, but empowering the other. This way, true empowerment means de-empowerment of the self to generate recognition for the other.

This is also what respondents intuitively suggest as solution to their problems. Staff members have been subjected to the weakening powers of their conflict, so respondents expressed an explicit desire to get back in touch with each other and move forward. This
resulted in an array of suggestions that match the reversing approach on empowerment in transformative mediation and the suggestions of Forrester (2000). This last part first condenses Forrester’s ideas and second the respondents’ to deal with conflict in a transformative way to contribute to a truly empowering learning organisation.

1: Reversing empowerment through the ‘mental models’ discipline

The point of departure on empowerment as the development of new mental models, is that staff members are people with different needs, interests, abilities and characters. If empowerment is approached as uniformity, then all these individual differences are ignored and pluralism’s conflict by design is too. This is the very opposite of the transformative approach on conflict in which differences shape people’s humanity and capability to be fair to others. In order to establish true empowerment, the school needs to acknowledge pluralism among staff members instead of trying to empower everyone the same way by making general changes in the whole organisation. Forrester (2000) writes it’s more efficient to anchor the spread of power as a mental model and to break with the existing mental models that hamper this. Some practical suggestions to do this are illustrated by quotations.

1) **Know what you want:** does the school genuinely want to empower her people?

Organisations say ‘yes’ to this question fairly easily, but when managers consider empowerment, they sometimes secretly think of it as a method to get the results they consider beneficial to the organisation. However, to increase staff members’ power, they must get the agency to organise themselves to get the results they see as beneficial to the organisation (Forrester, 2000).

>“Perhaps that the school [management, author] does weight everyone’s input and options, but they don’t show this process. Then, when the results are not resemble what is common property of the people around you or whom you’ve worked with, it just feels wrong. I don’t understand why it must be so hard to substantiate the choice you’ve made.”

_ Eva_
2) **Grant more power:** what people see is what they believe, ergo: nothing contributes more to a sense of power than the actual experience of power. Experienced reality determines mental models so in order to change these, people have to see change. The school can generate this by investing in the development of knowledge, skills and expertise of staff members to effectively use power. Coinciding with their development, the organisation can expand their access to and control over the organisation's means such as funds, time, space, people, etc. and stick with the choices that they make based on their agency (Forrester, 2000).

“I think that if we ask something of people - and we must -, for example to develop a learning school, then you have to give them the means to effectuate what they come up with. Don’t just ask, but offer as well. If you don’t give them tools, it’s doomed to fail.”

**Tom**

3) **Give way to natural power:** the most constrained way of empowerment is by forcing people who are able put their weight into the organisation and give it swing, to ‘pass on the sugar’ to less empowered people and sit on their hands. This way empowerment is a mental model that binds and silences the best strengths in school. Instead, break with the assumption that empowerment is the transfer of power from the empowered to the unempowered. Some people have more ‘natural’ power in school than others, despite the formal power structures, because they are experienced, exceptionally talented or otherwise appreciated - let them move freely through the organisation and organise opportunities for other staff members to get into contact and collaborate with them (Forrester 2000).

“So I think: do you really see all the experience we already have in school? I don’t think so. There are quite a few teachers who already have worked with competence-based learning [aspect of the KED-model, author]. I’ve been working with that for 4,5 years in another school and it was only by the grace of my colleagues that this was acknowledged. If they would look for these kinds of overlap, they can use the experienced people to make a connection to what we’re doing right now. Even if someone else ends up executing it. But this is just a waste.”

**Michelle**
4) **Reduce fear for mistakes:** the school can encourage staff members to take risks and accept mistakes as a way to do business, but this is futile when the mental model on mistakes is unchanged. Practice what you preach is the adagium here. If the school management wants staff members to be open, vulnerable and indulgent, then they must do the same (Forrester, 2000).

“Just be honest when things go wrong, because people don’t lump that. Then you hear them [management, author] say: ‘it’s not a straight A right now, but it’s still a fair B’. But that’s just plain covering up and people know it. Just say it, you know. Just say it sucks. The timetable sucks, I never should’ve chosen Zermelo [time table software, author], I’m sorry. But you don’t hear that and with that kind of honesty you win people for your cause.”

John

2: Reversing empowerment through the ‘systems thinking’ discipline

The point of departure in this second view is that you can’t change one thing within a system. Without constant pressure of change, every aspect will be mended by the community’s defensive routines and brought back to its original state because it causes friction with other elements in the system. And there it is again: friction indicates that change is in motion, but isn’t evenly spread throughout the organisation. Systematic empowerment means all elements of the system in which people function must be valued in their effect on the whole. This can only be done by acknowledging the contributions of others. Some practical suggestions to do this are illustrated by quotations.

1) **Build a system of rewards:** staff members ask for acknowledgement for the results that they helped to accomplish. A clear and fair reward system that indicates in advance what staff members are expected to receive for which results, increases power because it enables staff members to attain what they want on their own merits (Forrester, 2000). Experiences of respondents lead to the addition that this reward only has effect when it’s congruent and distinctive, meaning that it’s genuine purpose is to appreciate personal value and talent and makes the receiver feel acknowledged in his uniqueness.
“Well, I think it’s concerning that colleagues don’t feel motivated enough to celebrate their accomplishments. When we have a drink, or a staff activity people stay away or use the time to get some extra work done because they’re overloaded. And yes, there’s the plume reward, but people just pass that on to someone they like. It’s not as if they did an outstanding job or something like that. Anyone with social skills can get it, and that seems quite random for a reward.”

Linda

2) **Focus on effect instead of power:** the wish to empower can be so strong that it undermines empowerment. Therefore, it works better to focus on the effects of empowerment by establishing a very clear image of the desired effects of the whole organisation. This frames the endeavour of empowerment because it confines agency to a specific purpose and situation, given to predetermined groups, means and processes. In other words: they delineate the finish line that everyone wants to cross. The more explicit the end game is, the more obvious the actions will be to get there and the more willing people will be to get in action. This releases new energy and stops existing energy from slipping away (Forrester, 2000).

“I think it’s important to determine the framework and uphold that. We want to become a learning organisation, so it’s good for colleagues to know what is expected of them to get there. And when there’s an agreement, we stick to that.”

I understand that’s not the case?

“No, not at all. They just paper over the cracks without talking about it. Things that don’t go well don’t have any consequences for colleagues. In corporate life it’s a lot easier to say: ‘listen, we agreed on this and you didn’t do it, so here’s what going to happen now.’ And I know that sounds tough, but I’ve learned it can better be tough and honest than to sugarcoat things because in the end, twisting reality will hurt people even more.”

Jane

3: **Restoring recognition by transformative mediation methods**

The point where the qualitative analysis arrives at in this last view is: you need conflict to recognise change and you need an outsider to recognise conflict. A school that develops and learns will inevitably come across dilemmas and frictions because old systems are disrupted. Facing these can test the strength of the organisation and contribute to its foundation. Every respondents came to this conclusion at the end of their interview, but
they also recognised how hard this is to embed in an organisational structure because a reflective and open attitude is the first thing to get constricted by conflict. Therefore, respondents were asked what is required of the school organisation in order to effectively employ conflict as a learning tool. Their views are described below and illustrated by quotations.

1) **Focus on relationship:** respondents concluded that problems will always take different shapes. So, if you only look at the problem, then you’re looking at the branches instead of at the root: the relationship. When people look at the relationship, they will become aware of their sense of self and sense of the other, leading to much more fundamental questions such as: ‘how do we work together and who are we?’ These questions come from within and conflict has the power to tap into that deeper level of understanding and bring people back to their foundation. This knowledge contradicts the quantitative data, because respondents realised this through the interview questions.

“Of course the problem takes up the most attention, but when you look at the relation that’s much more sustainable. I think most people in this organisation only have the skills to solve problems - they have to because as a teacher you’re used to solving at least twenty problems every day. If they would learn to look at the relationship then they would start to recognise where things are coming from, below the surface. I don’t think that’s easy, I think that most people need help with that.”

*John*

2) **Ask an outsider to mediate:** Staff members don’t recognise their own conflict situation because of the self-absorption that steers them into protecting themselves from the conflict they don’t want to have. Colleagues often do recognise this and they can help them reflect on their situation. This is especially needed in (this) school(s), because people have a great sense of responsibility and often go on to bear their burden alone. All respondents mentioned the importance of a confidential person who’s only interest is to reconnect people and bring new perspectives to light. The other reason for respondents to get a third person involved is that many find it difficult to put words to their inner world. With the help of person who is sensible for this, it becomes easier to explore this world.
What should conflict management look like in this school?

“People should be trained in coaching skills so they can support each other, like we learned in our coaching training. A good coach can quickly recognize patterns of behaviour because he can listen, observe and reflect on an equal level. It’s not even required for a coach to know the organisation because he needs to see the person. That’s the most important.”

How can coaching achieve that?

“By not offering help and not offering solutions. He only needs to guide your personal inquiry - the same way we will guide pupils on their own path in school in the KED model - in what works for you and what gives you confidence. And people need to be able to try that out in a safe environment, because they’re are going to do something that’s outside their comfort zone and if it wasn’t, they probably would’ve done it already. A coach really has to leave the ownership of the conflict in their hands so they can explore it.”

Eva

3) **Focus on ownership:** in all contact with the community it was apparent that team leaders are expected to solve everyone’s problems. One respondent also saw team leaders taking up the role of mediator. She had valid arguments for this: ‘it’s their job to give everyone a voice in his or her team and they’re able to prevent an ‘all against one’ situation’. However, it demonstrates how empowering one disempowers the other: by letting team leaders solve their problems, they show little belief in their own capabilities to voice needs or listen to others and little awareness that it’s impossible to transfer the responsibility for your own conflict onto someone else. Vice versa, the team leaders lose power when their team members are empowered. When all staff members focus on the ownership of conflicts, by asking what prevents them from taking responsibility for solving conflicts, this will expose their mental models on conflict (table 1: thesis, p. 99) and engage them in double-loop learning to develop new mental models.

“I notice it’s really easy to drop problems on the plate of the school board and only when they do something about it, it’s solved. Or in houses where the team leader is blamed for not running a smooth operation. That’s not right because everyone’s responsible for that.

Can that shared responsibility be a guideline for conflict management?

(Quotation continues on the following page.)
“Well, I think that if there wouldn’t be a team leader, people would be more pro-active, but it would also be same ones every time. That causes irritations as well. But yes, there should be a shared responsibility for conflicts. When people come to me I always ask: ‘what can you do yourself and how can I support you in that?’ I had to learn that though, to empower instead of taking over but it really results in a better sense of doing it together.”

Susan
4. Mixed analysis

The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods in action research has been the most enriching attribute of this research, because it enabled participants to investigate their own assumptions on the topic within their context and thereby engage into a double-loop learning process that became the wind underneath their wings. They would not have been able to explore this with such intensity if only one of the two methods had been provided.

4.1 Double-loop learning in the field

The survey’s strength was that it reached the entire school, so all staff members had the opportunity to participate - and so many of them did. They struggled with the questions and the topic. They went to their team leader asking: ‘what does she mean with ‘conflict management?’’ Eva said at the end of her interview:

“But now that we’ve talked, it actually makes much more sense. I just couldn’t see it as a contribution and I certainly never realised that it’s also an aspect of coaching. That really makes it relevant for me.”

Eva

Of course the survey data was static and therefore in a strict sense hard to use as solid information in context that appeared so very fluent. However, it provided a fantastic way to indicate the starting position of the community. The data show how people were searching to determine how they experience conflicts, carefully admitting near the end of the survey that perhaps they did have a conflict while at first they said they hadn’t (thesis, p. 89).

The overwhelming number of participants for the qualitative part made obvious that the survey had sparked a lot of people’s interest and as a immediate effect on the qualitative method, they signed up because they wanted to explore the topic further in an interview. During these, it was possible to mix the two research methods by using questions based on
the quantitative data as well as responsive follow-up questions to inquire their believes and assumptions on conflict even further. For some participants it probably was confusing: many searched for ways to rhyme the research’s approach of the school context with their own views. Of course it’s impossible to ask of people who are shifting their perspectives to reflect on these changes simultaneously. Therefore, the qualitative date contained quite a few ambiguous answers. Several interviews showed the following inconsistency: respondents said how important they thought it was for the school to develop and set up innovative teaching models, then continued to say this situation had destroyed their inspiration and made them draw back into their classroom and just minutes later they answered that is was important for the people the engage in conflict in order to create a learning organisation and not stick their heads in the sand. (For an example: thesis, p. 181).

The two phases of inquiry gave the research more reliability and validity and gave the community a sense of seriousness that urged them to do something with the results. There were other research activities going on at the same time, but this was the only one that became part of the school’s own activities: the school board cleared their weekly agenda to discuss the topic, inviting the researcher to present the midterm results and discuss the interpretation in preparation for the interviews; after the interviews were done, one member started a reflection group that narrowed down the community of interest to those who wanted to play an active role in dealing with their problem; this reflection group held three meetings after which they presented their concerns, analyses and recommendations to the whole staff. In reaction to these recommendations, the school board organised an afternoon in which some of the confusing aspects of the school’s innovations were clarified. The topic was also put on the agenda’s of the team meetings in each house.

Future actions will be the presentation of the research results, after which the report will be made available to write a plan to implement recommendations. One of the options already discussed is to train several staff members in mediating conflicts and let them set up a system of conflict management for the school. The researcher will be consulted in this process to imbed the values of transformative mediation in this system. This can turn the action research into tangible change, fulfilling its ultimate purpose.
Summary Part IV

- Fioretti College Hillegom essentially tries to establish a culture of double-loop learning within their organisation and education. Their housing structure and implementation of the KED model both demonstrate this. The initiated changes and innovations caused a variety of problems, including conflicts between the mental models of conflict and the various school cultures from before the merger, creating a ‘community of conflict’.

- The research started with a broad quantitative survey to select respondents and topics from the school’s community of interest. The results were representative for the school and revealed inconsistencies that indicated most respondents didn’t have a conscious view on conflict and their management. The awareness of the presence of conflict in the organisation was increased by answering the survey questions. With regard to mediation, their answers demonstrated that their singe-loop view on conflicts resulted in single-loop preferences for mediation methods. It was interesting to notice that they also wanted a mediator with a ‘repairing’ attitude, which is only possible in double-loop mediation methods.

- Many respondents signed up for the qualitative research via interviews that followed the survey. Ten people from different parts of the school were selected. In their interviews, staff members voiced their concerns about the existence of conflicts caused by the loss of family culture in the new building and organisation. It piled up their exhaustion and dissatisfaction, but instead of addressing this, respondents only described what they wanted to change, or rather see it changed by somebody else. This revealed a three-layered paradox in their conflict behaviour: they want to change their education and organisation, and are aware of what is needed to do to accomplish this. However, they don’t do what is needed because they’re afraid these changes will disrupt their world.

- The analyses demonstrated a great lack of empowerment, while the school board worked on establishing precisely that: empowering staff members to become more autonomous and work together to set up double-learning education methods. However, bringing autonomy and collaboration together creates conflict by design. Staff members weren’t equipped to deal with this, so they became powerless and self-absorbed. *(This item continues on the next page.)*
Summary Part IV

• (Continuing from previous page) Their reaction was to withdraw and protect what they had: closing the door to their classroom, defending traditional views, reminiscing about the old days at the individual locations, resisting fast changes, etc. This behaviour displayed the presence of what we call regressive escalation in school.

• These discoveries displayed that empowerment is not the school’s solution but its problem: empowering one always leads to the disempowerment of the other. Transformative mediation offers a reversing approach on empowerment: the emphasis is not on empowering the self, but empowering the other. This way, true empowerment means de-empowerment of the self to generate recognition for the other. Respondents intuitively understood this, as can be seen in their suggestions to improve the situation: acknowledging pluralism among staff members instead of empowering everyone the same way; acknowledging the contributions of others and making the ‘finish line’ explicit; looking at the relationship instead of the problems. Conflict has to ability to tap into a deeper level of understanding people’s foundation and make them aware of their sense of self and of the other, leading to much more fundamental insights.

• The mixing of two research methods made it possible to reach deeper levels of understanding what was going on in the field of research and where it was coming from. The interaction with the community changed the inquiry into a community-based action research: the researcher handed the quantitative data to members of the community for examination and analysis and worked on location to let them guide the researcher’s attention and show their conflict culture from an insider’s perspective. In return, the researcher provided theoretical knowledge about conflict and empowerment. Due to this, staff members couldn’t uphold their passive aggressive stance and had to reflect on the contribution of conflict in their change processes. Similar to the contradiction found in the survey, all were able to describe how engaging in conflict is an essential part of learning, though they didn’t do this in their own situation.
"Minds are like parachutes; they function best when they are open."

Robert Dewar
# Index part V

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After the extensive research described in the previous chapters, this part will describe the most important results: pluralism’s conflict by design; implementing transformative mediation into a conflict management system; for which the values of empowerment and recognition are indispensable - and contributions: discovering a method of transformative mediation in-action; discovering regressive conflict escalation and the moral dimension of transformative mediation. This last discovery has only been mentioned briefly in the second chapter of part III on mediation (thesis, p. 54). This will be presented in the discussion as a theory on transformative justice that needs further elaboration in extended research.
1. Conclusions

This research has been initiated to answer the question: to what extent is it desirable to implement transformative mediation into a Dutch secondary school’s conflict management system, to contribute to becoming a learning school organisation? For this purpose a community-based action research was conducted among staff members of a Dutch secondary school with the ambition to become a learning organisation. Their views on the organisation’s conflict culture were related to their approach of the learning school through the values of transformative mediation: empowerment and recognition. The research results have shown that their approach of the learning school through empowerment as mandate and psychological variable in fact reduces people’s ability to effectively deal with conflicts - thereby causing powerlessness and disconnection from each other as human beings.

The school wants to bring pupils in connection with our increasingly democratic and pluralistic society, in which people respect each other’s beliefs even when they don’t match their own. This requires the capability to orientate on and develop personal views and preferences in collaboration with others. To this purpose, the school’s management developed empowering management strategies, based on central governance and decentralised implementation of innovations and change, to establish a learning organisation that stimulates reflective dialogue and engagement within the learning community. The school’s management assumed that this would lead to diversity, independence and collaboration among staff members. However, they got the opposite result: people’s increased power to voice their rights, needs, wishes and interests inevitably generated more explicit contrast between individuals and this resulted in a conflict between the work floor and the school’s management that caused powerlessness and disconnection among the entire staff - the very thing they wanted to change. This leads to the first conclusion: pluralism’s variety of values and views create conflict by design and the school experienced this through their conflict caused by empowerment as mandate.
The paradox within their empowerment management demonstrated a mismatch between the school’s aspirations and their actual behaviour. The analysis showed that in order to solve this mismatch, it was necessary for the school to investigate their underlying beliefs on empowerment and conflict, to transform their approach on organisational development. Coincidently, the analysis also showed that the school’s participation in this action research had initiated this double-loop learning inquiry within the community of interest. Through the survey and the interviews they slowly began to see the positive connection between conflict and a learning organisation, namely that conflicts make pluralism in organisations visible because it uncovers the deficits and trials the organisation needs to overcome with development. In itself this is not a new insight, but what makes it radically different is that the community really lived this insight through their own conflict in the organisation, making this an immediate catalyst to improve themselves with a series of actions to address the frictions within the organisation. This leads to the second conclusion, which this research itself has demonstrated: it’s possible to implement transformative mediation into a conflict management system.

The school unconsciously took a transformative approach of their conflict because the values of empowerment and recognition were under pressure. By using action research, the community remained the experts of their own problem and they were able to empower themselves through dialogue and congruent interaction with the research that gave primary importance to the community’s meanings. Because of the client-centred effect of this research, they had no need to protect or promote their views. This created space for movement - in this school: the organisational development that further established their learning organisation. The ultimate contribution of this research is therefore the approach of transformative mediation as a model for educational organisation development. The school demonstrated their intrinsic desire to implement the values of transformative mediation in their conflict management by their participation to this research to the extent that they are now looking into possibilities to set up a conscious system for conflict management in school that has institutes empowerment and recognition. This leads to the third and final conclusion that the values of empowerment and recognition are indispensable to successfully implement the concept of a learning organisation in this organisation.
2. Discussion

This study has unlocked the potential of transformative mediation for organisational development in a Dutch secondary school, but that is only the beginning of investigating its power and reach on different scales and in other contexts. This thesis generated attention for conscious conflict management in one school and demonstrated how far conflicts reach and influence their educational organisation. However, understanding the potential of conflict in organising education requires much more extensive research into all the topics that have been touched upon, like empowerment as conflict by design; conflict management by double-loop learning; school culture’s contribution to conflict avoidance; etc.

This research differs from other designs that require active participation, such as an anthropological study, for two related reasons: first, its methodology is unorthodox because a daring change was made in the researcher’s role during conduct. Second, the research purpose was changed by this choice into helping the community improve its own practice rather than to produce general knowledge. This limits the results to their specific context. Nonetheless, three important discoveries inspire using similar action research in other organisations and contexts to further investigate the possibilities and limitations of using transformative mediation in conflict management and organisational development.

First, this research gained unique knowledge about a complex and socially sensitive topic by gradually discovering a method of transformative mediation in-action that’s applicable in other schools. This method is to perform action-research in school, i.e. generating attention for empowerment and recognition in the community, by questioning mental models and system thinking on conflict. By discovering transformative mediation in-action as a model for organisational development, this research contributes to the development of schools as learning organisations. Additional research could look into developing more practical tools for this model by looking at hands-on experiences with systematic conflict management in other fields such as the aviation sector (Pearson Education Limited, 2012).
Second, the wish to understand and contribute to conflict management in this school has lead to the discovery of a different type of conflict escalation that’s regressive, meaning that escalation leads to instrumentalisation through fake communication, avoidance and apathy, instead of hostility and battle. In regressive escalation, people don’t clash in confrontation but their personal and/or professional learning comes to a standstill. This notion is an important contribution to conflict management theory because it reveals that there are other ways for conflict to appear within organisations that are even less noticeable on the surface.

The third and most intriguing discovery in this research is the notion of pluralism as conflict by design related to the moral dimension of transformative mediation. In short: pluralism creates a multitude of views and opinions that create more diversity in society, but also increases discord that leads to the transgression of rights. Transformative mediation can turn conflict into an asset of justice by expanding the freedom of equal individuals to explore conflict in dialogue that acknowledges the diversity and equality of their rights, wishes, needs and interests. However, this was only briefly mentioned in the thesis’ theoretic framework (thesis, p. 53) because it’s related to a much broader philosophical discours on justice. Directions to investigate this discourse in transformative mediation are outlined below.

This thesis’ ideas about the moral dimension of transformative mediation are based on Rawls’ theory of justice theory (1997). In his view, modern societies exist of free and equal individuals who have different views and philosophies on life. Also, they often have different and sometimes contrasting interests and chances in this life. This was described in this thesis by the notion of democratic pluralism that considers all philosophies on life as fundamentally equal and not to be imposed on others. As a consequence, rights, wishes, needs and interests of individuals can come into conflict. We therefore concluded that pluralism is conflict by design (thesis, p. 61).

Rawls (1997) investigates which obligations individuals have in a modern democratic justice state under the conditions of reasonable pluralism, and how to organise contrasting
interests and unequal chances in a fair way. He therefore did a thought-experiment about Hobbes’ social contract. In this experiment, Rawls considers the social contract as the result of a virtual negotiation between free and equal individuals in which the principles of a just society are laid down. For the outcome to be fair and be acknowledge by all, the individuals negotiate under a veil of ignorance, meaning that they don’t know their social position in life, nor whether they keep this position. This way, their position in life doesn’t influence their negotiation and they’re able to minimally acknowledge each other as equal and free subjects. In this thesis, we understand this as a radius of justice that can be imagined as a circle that individuals can expand to discern each other that appears in it as someone that justice needs to serve. Democratic pluralism brings individuals and groups into the radius of justice by giving them a voice. But the more voices there are, the harder it gets to hear (i.e. do justice) to them all. When we relate this to our topic: when people are in conflict, they find it difficult to see each other as fundamentally free and equal human beings because they’re fighting for their own rights, needs, wishes and interests and thereby disregard (thus transgress) those of others.

However, this thesis also concluded that conflict can be of value when it’s dealt with through collaboration (thesis, p. 44). The question that this rises is whether collaboration in society’s conflict by design can be an asset of justice. This results of this research indicate that it can - when conflict is dealt with through transformative mediation. We believe that transformative mediation organises moral judgement and do justice to the agents by approaching empowerment and recognition as principles of transformative justice: de-empowering the self and make space for recognising the other. This way, it expands the space for negotiation between free and equal individuals by letting them enter in dialogue over their different rights, needs, wishes and interests. This makes justice visible and tangible for agents on the scale of their conflict situation.

This discovery should be further researched by a (literary) study that can truly encompass the complexity and implications of the ideas and theories described here. Other aspects of transformative mediation that have been described in this thesis may also benefit from a more profound exploration of its philosophical implications.
Epilogue

"Frome here
I shall return
to the ordinary life
of every day,
no longer ordinary
after all that I have experienced
and as richness
stored in the way
that I am."

Ricky Rieter

Writing this thesis has been a beautiful, tiring, inspiring and confusing journey. On the way, I met so many different people who, for some reason, decided that they would trust me with their stories, wisdom and even tears. Although we knew our connection was only formed by a temporary mutual direction, we helped each other through the challenge of continuing with the weight of our experiences and aspirations on our backs. Not because it made us feel better about ourselves but because we understood everyone had a vision of what is was like to arrive at our destination and see the reason for starting the journey become reality. As the road continued, one step at a time, we got closer to the end and closer to understanding what that reason really was: the learning itself. With this thesis, I built a cathedral and thereby reached my destination, but my road will continue - to the end of the world. I thank my traveling companion in life, Mark, my family and Ruud for talking me through the blisters but letting me walk all the way on my own feet.

Buen Camino!

Merlinde Zoet
Literature


PART VI
APPENDIX

“Details matter. It’s worth waiting to get it right”

Steve Jobs
# Index part VI

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1. Narrative on action research

I approached Fioretti College Hillegom because it felt familiar: I myself went to the HAVO-VWO location in Lisse during my secondary education and I still knew some teachers who had switched over to the new location in Hillegom. This made my introduction easier because I could contact someone inside to arrange an appointment, even though I didn’t know the new location administrator in Hillegom. After I had my first meeting with him, it was apparent that he was enthusiastic about the topic because it was related to the concept of the learning school and this matched well with the changes going in his school. There had been several conflicts related to these changes in the past, so he did have some concerns about the staff’s wellbeing. He advised me to visit a team meeting in each house to tell about the research in person. This way, he expected they would understand it better and be less suspicious. I heartedly took on his advice and asked if it was possible to get a school e-mail address so I could quickly get in touch with people and receive information on the team meetings and other relevant activities. This was arranged just a few weeks later.

As we shook hands on our cooperation, I remember he asked how I could keep myself at distance to conduct research while I was also needed to become somewhat familiar with the school and some of its employees. In the following weeks I did my best to convince him and staff members I was going to conduct a valid scientific research that was thorough but not invasive, without letting my personal connection to the school become a bias. I set up my research proposal and presentation for the teams. The first challenge in doing this was to balance out safe participation and solid results. This shaped some of the biggest choices in my methodology: I used a description on conflict that didn’t feel too sharp when presenting it to the school, but still remained scientifically solid; I chose to do both a survey and interviews because a survey is anonymous and safe and interviews are up close and rich in experiences; my story was not to dig into specific conflicts, but wanting to understand the school through the staff’s eyes. Therefore, I invited not only teachers to come and talk to me, but staff members everywhere in school. The other challenge was to make sure my
understanding wouldn’t get biased. Aside from the supervision by my university, I also decided to present the midterm results and outcomes in the school.

After this careful preparation, I went to eight team meetings in two days time. What happened during these presentations genuinely surprised me. I expected the research to be considered as nothing special, but when I told the teams my ideas and approach, many people perked up from their chairs and asked me all kinds of questions about what was going to happen with the results and how I was going to select respondents. Quite a few staff members approached me afterwards to tell me: they had never thought about the topic; that they used the rest of the meeting to talk about it; that I came at the right time because there were conflicts in this group and that section in school. This gave me the impression that I had ‘woken a dragon’, so I wanted to take responsibility for potential consequences. It also made me realise I would fail to grasp the actual reality of this topic if I couldn’t have these kind of conversations about the research. So I asked the administrator if they had a flex work space for me to write my thesis in school. It was a great way to get an insider’s view without being an insider and helped me to work diligently on my thesis.

Every Tuesday and Friday I had a workspace in a room next to the administrator, although I often went to the staff room to sit with a random group of teachers or facility staff members. I usually asked them about their daily activities, often things that didn’t even seem related to the research. They told me about all the little things in school: the time table, excursions, pupils, parents, classes, etc. I was (later played) ignorant of how everything worked so I could bluntly ask them why things didn’t work; why the old administrator left; why the time table was such a hot potato, etc. Often the most innocent and simple questions led the conversation to problems they were facing. Because I was there to do my research, I could listen to their stories without having some kind of agenda. The funny thing was that they felt like they were helping me, while it actually was the other way around.

After a short period of listening to their stories, they started asking me what I thought was going on in school. I told them what I thought I saw and then asked them if they thought that was the correct way to understand it. This way, people started helping me to interpret
the observations and information I was collecting. I often asked them for their advice and I received some great tips, such as the triangulation method, as well as obvious signals that people weren’t able to transcend and reflect their context and behaviour, even though they intuitively felt that my research was changing something in their minds. This included the school board as well. After the survey closed, I presented the results to the team leaders and administrator who discussed it among each other in my presence. After they agreed on the right way to understand the results, the team leaders discussed them in their teams for feedback, which was then handed back to me. It was difficult for me to use this for solid analysis, because that would not hold up scientific scrutiny. However, it did help me to read the diagrams with a specific focus on certain selection criteria that I knew were more relevant to the school than others.

I held interviews with people of whom I knew they met the quantitative selection criteria and were capable of adequately describing and reflecting on their context. All ten interviews were planned and held within two weeks, because I could check their agenda’s via my e-mail address and send them an invitation for a time I knew they were available. I already was receiving quite a few cc’d e-mails on topics staff members thought relevant to my research, but after the interviews I got an invitation to contribute to a reflection meeting on the school’s current problems with knowledge from the research. I replied that I would happily comply to their request and explain some theory, but I would not contribute to the content of their conversation, nor participate in any action. That belonged to them and they understood that. Three meetings were organised in which members of every part of the school engaged in constructive conversation and reflection and constructed a plan to address this further in school. After the second meeting, I decided my presence had been enough. Coincidentally, I had planned my journey to Santiago de Compostela in that period, so I could naturally bring my presence to an end and let them continue their learning process alone. After my return, I sent them the context in which their translated quotes were used, to check if they agreed with the way their voice was presented. This lead to some surprised reactions of people who didn’t fully realise the reality of what they had said, until they read it in my work. None of the respondents asked for a revision or withdrew their consent. In september 2017 I will return one more time for the final presentation.
2. Inquiry audit

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3. Report from ‘Scholen aan zet’

Het ontwikkelmodel ‘Lerende Schoolorganisatie’

Met behulp van het ontwikkelmodel ‘Lerende Schoolorganisatie’ kan de school inzicht krijgen in hoe zij er voor staat als ‘lerende schoolorganisatie’. Het model biedt daarmee concrete handbijstukken voor verder ontwikkeling. Het model bestaat uit vijf ‘ontwikkeldimensies’ die elk een ander aspect van de lerende schoolorganisatie belichten. De dimensies zijn goede leers, goede start, goede feedback, goede ontwikkeling en goede differentiatie.

Uw school heeft via School aan Zet een zelfevaluatie uitgevoerd. De resultaten daarvan leidden tot een bepaalde score binnen het ontwikkelmodel. Dit rapport toont de resultaten van de zelfevaluatie en verdere cijferering. Het rapport is bedoeld ter ondersteuning van de gesprekken tussen de school en de SaZexpert.

Klik [link] om een overzicht van het ontwikkelmodel te downloaden als PDF-bestand.

Deze rapportage afdrukken

(Controleer voor u gaat afdrukken of de hele pagina is geënit. Dit kan enkele minuten duren. Vind de afdruckfunctie van uw browser kunt u in de meeste gevallen ook aanzienlijk de rapportage als PDF-bestand ophalen).

Overzicht resultaat zelfevaluatie

Uitgang zelfevaluatie voor SAZ-2612551

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ontwikkeldimensie</th>
<th>Niveau 1</th>
<th>Niveau 2</th>
<th>Niveau 3</th>
<th>Niveau 4</th>
<th>Niveau 5</th>
<th>Gem.</th>
<th>Spreiding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goede leers</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goede start</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goede feedback</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goede ontwikkeling</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goede differentiatie</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spreiding: [ ]
Respondenten: [ ]

SaZ / Dialogo
Goede koers

De ontwikkeldimensie 'goede koers' bestaat uit de volgende onderdelen:

- Ambities: De mate waarin de schoolleiding doeltreffend onderwijskundig en personeelsbeleid op een niveau lager dan het schoolniveau (bijv. secundair niveau) heeft gecorrigeerd

- Belanghebbenden: De mate waarin interne (leraren, CIOP, ouders, leerlingen) en externe (PO, Hoger Onderwijs, Bedrijfsleven) belanghebbenden hierbij betrokken zijn geweest en deze doelen begrijpen en onderschrijven

Gedetailleerde uitslag voor ontwikkeldimensie 'Goede koers'

Uitslag zelfevaluatie voor SAZ-2012851; details voor onderdeel Goede koers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Niveau</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Gem.</th>
<th>Spreading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambities</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belanghebbenden</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drijvers voor 'goede koers'

Overzicht drijvers voor ontwikkeldimensie(s) Goede koers
Zelfevaluatie van SAZ-2012851

- In het algemeen is er voldoende communicatie tussen de schoolleiding en leraren
- Ik weet hoe ik een bijdrage kan leveren aan de doelstellingen van onze school
- Ik heb een goed begrip van de visie van onze school
- Ik geloof in, en word geïnspireerd door, wat onze school probeert te bereiken

Aantal respondenten

---

https://dashboarddrn7membed/CGfN2TpyMDt5ZWYzWFRlanticZnY2Y2U1YXRpZV9yXGhwb3J0C3NhjezowC3Nhlie92Y2h2Wm5GRf0NMfMkMjU1MSU...
**Goede start**

De ontwikkeldimension 'goede start' bestaat uit de volgende onderdelen:

- De mate waarin de school personeel (schoolleiding, leraren, OOP) selecteerde op basis van competenties en de schoolvisie
- De mate waarin de school nieuw personeel introduceert en begeleidt
- De mate waarin de school instrumenten voor inhoudelijke (bijv. sociobuddy, toetsanalyses) en persoonlijke coaching (bijv. schoolbuddy, peermolec) inzet voor nieuwe personeelsleden

**Gedetailleerde uitslag voor ontwikkeldimension 'Goede start'**

Uitslag zelfevaluatie voor SAZ-2012551: details voor onderdeel Goede start

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrumenten</th>
<th>Niveau 1</th>
<th>Niveau 2</th>
<th>Niveau 3</th>
<th>Niveau 4</th>
<th>Niveau 5</th>
<th>Gem.</th>
<th>Spreiding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Werving</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Drijvers voor 'goede start'**

Overzicht drijvers voor ontwikkeldimension(s) Goede start

Zelfevaluatie van SAZ-2012551

Onze school heeft mij goed voorbereid op mijn rol in deze school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drijver</th>
<th>Aantal respondenten</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vollig ontevreden</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moe ontevreden</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutraal</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moe eens</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vollig moe eens</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vollig tevreden</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://diashareboard.nl/embed/0F9tZSyMD9ZWyIVRk8xmWhZrVY/WoxYX9PzV9Y/IXSuk0J003NhlejswCO9he9t9h12wM8sRTQUeMj4AMSU...
Goede feedback

De ontwikkeldimensie 'goede feedback' bestaat uit de volgende onderdelen:
- De mate waarin personeel meerde bronnen voor feedback en ontwikkeling gebruikt (leerlingen/ouders/bestuur/leraar enquête/ diagnostiek/ interviews, peer review, co-coaching, intensieven)
- De mate waarin personeel feedback met elkaar analyseert en interventies bepaalt

Gedetailleerde uitslag voor ontwikkeldimensie 'Goede feedback'

Uitslag zelfevaluatie voor SAZ-2012351: details voor onderdeel Goede feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Niveau</th>
<th>Niveau 1</th>
<th>Niveau 2</th>
<th>Niveau 3</th>
<th>Niveau 4</th>
<th>Niveau 5</th>
<th>Gem.</th>
<th>Spreiding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acties</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>44%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronnen</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spreiding • Respondenten

SAZ / Dialogic
Goede ontwikkeling

De ontwikkelingsmatrix ‘goede ontwikkeling’ bestaat uit de volgende onderdelen:

- De mate waarin de school persoonlijke ontwikkelingsplannen (POP) voor leraren en schoolleiding gebruikt; o.v.t. feedback en schoolambities
- De mate waarin de school leraren en schoolleiding ondersteunt om optimaal tegemoet te komen aan hun leerbehoeften door middel van inzet van instrumenten (bijv. trainings, eigen academie, docentontwikkelingsteam)

https://alladashboard.nl/verembedGFru2LeyMDi6ZVR86f4n46k5ZmZnWbfYXqZ9yYX0mb3U003Nt7ijjsw03Nhe97y2mb2wMORTOjV0MrAVJdU1MSU...
Gedetailleerde uitslag voor ontwikkeldimensie 'Goede ontwikkeling'

Uitslag zeefevaluatie voor SAZ-2012551: details voor onderdeel Goede ontwikkeling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ontwikkelcomponent</th>
<th>Niveau 1</th>
<th>Niveau 2</th>
<th>Niveau 3</th>
<th>Niveau 4</th>
<th>Niveau 5</th>
<th>Gem.</th>
<th>Spreading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instrumenten</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POP</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drijvers voor 'goede ontwikkeling'

Overzicht drijvers voor ontwikkeldimensies Goede ontwikkeling

Zelfevaluatie van SAZ-2012551

- Mijn collega's op school hebben de juiste mix van kennis en vaardigheden voor hun functie
- Ik krijg de mogelijkheid te leren en te groeien
- Ik heb binnen ons school een goede mentor
- Een slecht individueel resultaat van een docent wordt op onze school niet gelden neer
- Collega's die goed presteren krijgen op onze school speciale ontwikkelingsklassen

Goede differentiatie

De ontwikkeldimensie 'goede differentiatie' bestaat uit de volgende onderdelen:
- De mate waarin de school een ambitie per groep van leerlingen de nieuw, bijzinnend en daarop effectieve toetsen bepaalt (bijv. het aanbieden van extra uren en klassen)
- De mate waarin leraren de leeropbrengsten van leerlingen meten, analyseren (bijv. met landelijke voortgangstoetsen, analyse van toetsvragen) en daarop het leerproces aanpassen

https://dadaashboard.nl/embdedgGFnZTeMID5WZwZVFtsfIwZfY2WxIYXvZV5yY2b3JOC3NhjwG3Nht1zT29vb9ofTGRVntMjxAkJjU13U...
Gedetailleerde uitslag voor ontwikkeldimensie 'Goede differentiatie'

Uitslag zelfevaluatie voor SAG: 20138551; details voor onderdeel Goede start

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Niveau 1</th>
<th>Niveau 2</th>
<th>Niveau 3</th>
<th>Niveau 4</th>
<th>Niveau 5</th>
<th>Gem.</th>
<th>Spreading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambities</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyse</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drijvers voor 'goede differentiatie'

Oversicht drijvers voor ontwikkeldimensie(s) Goede differentiatie
Zelfevaluatie van SAG: 20138551

1. Op onze school leidt het analyseren van resultaten en bepalen van interventies voor leerlingen tot hogere bereikingsstijlen
2. Onze school stimuleert leerlingen om leerbehoeften te definiëren en heeft een duidelijk beeld van deze behoeften
3. Daar leerlingen bij zijn in de vormgeving van hun onderricht, de analyse van de prestaties van de leerlingen

Aantal respondenten

Voldoende mee eens | Mee eens | Neutraal | Onmee eens | Voldoende onmee eens

https://example.com/...
4. Survey

1. Welkom: zonder wrijving geen glans

Organisaties kunnen niet zonder samenwerking, maar eigenlijk nog minder zonder conflicten. Ze voorkomen namelijk dat beperkte opvattingen over wat een goede organisatie is te overheersend kunnen worden. Een goede omgang met conflicten zorgt voor diversiteit en balans in de machtsverhoudingen, versterkt de flexibiliteit en het aanpassingsvermogen van de organisatie en voorkomt stijlstand van nieuwe ontwikkelingen. Kortom: zonder wrijving geen glans!

In deze enquête wordt u gevraagd om op basis van persoonlijk ervaringen aan te geven hoe u met conflicten tussen uzelf en uw collega’s omgaat. Let op! Het gaat dus niet over conflicten met leerlingen en ouders/verzorgers. Het doel hiervan is om in kaart te brengen waar ruimte is voor verbetering in de omgang met conflicten binnen de schoolorganisatie en hoe hier invulling aan gegeven kan worden.

Het invullen van de enquête duurt gemiddeld 15 minuten. Uw antwoorden worden anoniem verwerkt. Aan het einde van de enquête wordt gevraagd of u mee wilt werken aan het deel 2 van het onderzoek. Het is niet de bedoeling om actuele conflicten boven water te halen. Ook de informatie uit deze gesprekken wordt anoniem verwerkt. Als u hier een bijdrage aan wilt leveren, kunt u daarvoor aan het einde van de enquête uw e-mailadres achterlaten.

Hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking!
2. Algemene vragen

* 1. Wat is uw (belangrijkste) functie op het Fioretti College Hillegom?


* 2. In welk team bent u (het meest) werkzaam?


* 3. In welke vaksectie bent u (het meest) werkzaam?
3. Conflicten algemeen

In dit onderzoek wordt 'conflict' ruimer gezien dan alleen ruzie. Onder 'conflict' kan ook een lopend meningsverschil of discussie verstaan worden. Houd hier rekening mee tijdens het beantwoorden van de vragen.

* 4. Welke omschrijving is het meest toepasselijk voor uw schoolorganisatie?
Een conflict binnen de schoolorganisatie is een verstoring die wordt veroorzaakt doordat mensen...

- ...zich niet in elkaar kunnen verplaatsen.
- ...hun probleem verschillend beschrijven.
- ...verschillende belangen, wensen en/of waarden hebben.
- ...niet van hun standpunt willen wijken.

* 5. Hoeveel personen zijn er (naar uw idee) gemiddeld betrokken bij een conflict binnen de schoolorganisatie?

- [ ]

* 6. Waar ontstaan volgens u de meeste conflicten binnen de schoolorganisatie?

- [ ] Tussen individuen
- [ ] Binnen de vaksecties
- [ ] Binnen de teams
- [ ] Anders...

* 7. Met wie heeft u in het afgelopen en/of huidige schooljaar het sterkste conflict gehad binnen de schoolorganisatie?

- [ ] Met iemand op een formeel gelijke positie.
- [ ] Met iemand op een formeel hogere positie.
- [ ] Met iemand op een formeel lagere positie.
- [ ] Ik heb geen conflicten gehad.
8. Waar heeft men de meeste aandacht voor conflicten binnen de schoolorganisatie?

- Onderling
- Vakgroep
- Team (huis)
- Management
- Directie
- Nergens
4. Conflict type

In dit onderzoek wordt 'conflict' ruimer gezien dan alleen ruzie. Onder 'conflict' kan ook een lopend meningsverschil of discussie verstaan worden. Houd hier rekening mee tijdens het beantwoorden van de vragen.

* 9. Hoe groot ziet u de rol van onpersoonlijke zaken (denk aan tijd, geld, materialen, ruimten) in het ontstaan van conflicten binnen de schoolorganisatie?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thema</th>
<th>Zelden</th>
<th>Soms</th>
<th>Regelmatig</th>
<th>Vaak</th>
<th>Zeer Vaak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...staat ter discussie wie welke verantwoordelijkheden op zich neemt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...is sprake van een ' strijd om de macht'.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...is onduidelijk wie welke status heeft; dit staat ter discussie.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...is het de vraag wie opdraait voor zaken die misgaan.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...verschillen we van mening over hoe we werk het beste kunnen aanpakken.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...debatteren we over welke manier van werken optimaal is.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...stellen we onze manier van werken ter discussie.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...discussiëren we over task-inhoudelijke zaken.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...zijn er persoonlijke ficties en wrijvingen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...is er sprake van botsende persoonlijkheden.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...wordt de sfeer gekenmerkt door onderlinge initiaties en boosheid.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...zijn er emotionele conflicten.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>...zijn persoonlijke normen en waarden aanleiding voor onderlinge initiaties en frustratie.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Conflictthandtering

In dit onderzoek wordt 'conflict' ruimer gezien dan alleen ruzie. Onder 'conflict' kan ook een lopend meningsverschil of discussie verstaan worden. Houd hier rekening mee tijdens het beantwoorden van de vragen.

* 11. Hoe vindt u het om rekening te houden met **uweigen** belangen tijdens een conflict binnen de schoolorganisatie?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 (makkelijk)</th>
<th>10 (moeilijk)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 12. Hoe vindt u het om rekening te houden de **belangen van de ander** tijdens een conflict binnen de schoolorganisatie?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 (makkelijk)</th>
<th>10 (moeilijk)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 13. Wat bepaalt uw houding in uw conflicten binnen de schoolorganisatie het sterkste? (*Meerdere antwoorden mogelijk.*)

- [ ] Aanzien
- [ ] Steun uit de omgeving
- [ ] Veel verantwoordelijkheid
- [ ] Weinig verantwoordelijkheid
- [ ] De geschiedenis van de relatie
- [ ] De toekomst van de relatie

* 14. Wanneer u een conflict heeft binnen de schoolorganisatie, doet u het volgende...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nooit</th>
<th>zelden</th>
<th>soms</th>
<th>regelmatig</th>
<th>(bijna) altijd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ik geef toe aan de wensen van de andere partij:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nooit</th>
<th>zelden</th>
<th>soms</th>
<th>regelmatig</th>
<th>(bijna) altijd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ik onderzoek de kwestie net zolang tot ik een oplossing vind waar de ander en ik beide echt tevreden mee zijn.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nooit</th>
<th>zelden</th>
<th>soms</th>
<th>regelmatig</th>
<th>(bijna) altijd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ik probeer er een compromis uit te slepen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nooit</th>
<th>zelden</th>
<th>soms</th>
<th>regelmatig</th>
<th>(bijna) altijd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nooit</td>
<td>zelden</td>
<td>soms</td>
<td>regelmatig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik vermijd een confrontatie over onze tegenstellingen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik dwu mijn eigen standpunt door.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik geef de ander gelijk.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik kom op voor mijn eigen én voor iandermans doelen en belangen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik benadruk dat we een tussenweg moeten zien te vinden.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik omzeil de meningsverschillen waar mogelijk.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik probeer winst te boeken.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik probeer de ander tegemoet te komen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik onderzoek ideeën om een voor ons beide optimale oplossing te bedenken.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik sta erop dat we allebei water bij de wijn doen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik probeer tegenstellingen minder scherp te doen lijken.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik vecht voor een goede uitkomst voor mijzelf.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik pas me aan iandermans doelen en belangen aan.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik werk een oplossing uit die zowel mijn eigen, als de belangen van de ander zo goed mogelijk dienen.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik streef daar waar mogelijk naar een compromis.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nooit</td>
<td>zelden</td>
<td>soms</td>
<td>regelmatig</td>
<td>(bijna) altijd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Checkbox" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Checkbox" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Checkbox" /></td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Checkbox" /></td>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Checkbox" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ik probeer een confrontatie met de ander te voorkomen.

Ik doe alles om te winnen.
6. Conflict escalatie

In dit onderzoek wordt 'conflict' ruimer gezien dan alleen ruzie. Onder 'conflict' kan ook een lopend meningsverschil of discussie verstaan worden. Houd hier rekening mee tijdens het beantwoorden van de vragen.

* 15. Hoe sterk verergeren de onderstaande soorten conflicten binnen de schoolorganisatie volgens u?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>discussie</th>
<th>meningsverschil</th>
<th>niet meer met elkaar</th>
<th>praten</th>
<th>groepsvorming</th>
<th>vuil spel</th>
<th>bedreiging</th>
<th>geweld</th>
<th>oorlog</th>
<th>samen de afgrond in</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zeelijke conflicten over de verdeling van middelen als geld en tijd en functies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeelijke conflicten over wie goed is in welke taken.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persoonlijke conflicten over wie welke positie binnen de groep wordt gegund?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persoonlijke conflicten over het schenden van iemands normen en waarden.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Hoe ver is uw ergste conflict in het afgelopen en/of huidige schooljaar bij u geëscaleerd?

- discussie
- meningsverschil
- niet meer met elkaar praten
- groepsvorming
- vuil spel
- bedreiging
- geweld
- oorlog
- samen de afgrond in
- Ik heb geen conflict gehad
7. Conflict uitkomsten

In dit onderzoek wordt 'conflict' ruimer gezien dan alleen ruzie. Onder 'conflict' kan ook een lopend meningsverschil of discussie verstaan worden. Houd hier rekening mee tijdens het beantwoorden van de vragen.

* 17. Op welk gebied leveren conflicten binnen de schoolorganisatie u iets positiefs op? (Meerdere antwoorden mogelijk.)

- Grotere zelfkennis
- Betere communicatie
- Betere relatie met andere(n)
- Sterker groepsgevoel
- Meer creativiteit
- Betere ideeën
- Betere verdeling van middelen (tijd, geld, ruimten, energie)
- Betere taakverdeling
- Betere positie t.o.v. andere(n)
- Veiligheid

Anders...
* 18. Op welk gebied leverenconflicten binnen de schoolorganisatieu iets negatiefs op? (Meerdere antwoorden mogelijk.)

☐ Persoonlijke blokkades
☐ Verslechterde communicatie
☐ Verslechterde relatie met andere(n)
☐ Verzwakt groepsgevoel
☐ Minder creativiteit
☐ Gebrek aan ideeën
☐ Slechtere verdeling van middelen (tijd, geld, ruimten, energie)
☐ Slechtere taakverdeling
☐ Slechtere positie t.o.v. andere(n)
☐ Onveiligheid

Anders...

* 19. Is er in het afgelopen en/of huidige schooljaar een conflict binnen de schoolorganisatie bij u onopgelost gebleven?

☐ Ja
☐ Nee
☐ Ik heb geen conflict gehad.
8. Conflict ongelost

In dit onderzoek wordt 'conflict' ruimer gezien dan alleen ruzie. Onder 'conflict' kan ook een lopend meningsverschil of discussie verstaan worden. Houd hier rekening mee tijdens het beantwoorden van de vragen.

20. Een conflict is bij u ongelost gebleven. Wat voor een conflict is dit?
   - Een conflict met iemand in een formee gelijk positie.
   - Een conflict met iemand in een formee hogere positie.
   - Een conflict met iemand in een formee lagere positie.

21. Een conflict is bij u ongelost gebleven. Wat voor een conflict is dit?
   - Een sociaal-emotioneel conflict.
   - Een taak-gerelateerd conflict.

22. Een conflict is bij u ongelost gebleven. Hoe gaat u om met dit conflict?
   - Forceren
   - Toegeven
   - Vermijden
   - Bemiddelen
   - Beslachten

23. Een conflict is bij u ongelost gebleven. Hoe gaat de tegenpartij om met dit conflict?
   - Forceren
   - Toegeven
   - Vermijden
   - Bemiddelen
   - Beslachten
24. Hoe ver is uw onopgeloste conflict bij u geëscaleerd?

- discussie
- meningsverschil
- niet meer met elkaar praten
- groepsvorming
- vlij spel
- bedreiging
- geweld
- oorlog
- samen de afgrond in
9. Conflict opgelost

In dit onderzoek wordt 'conflict' ruimer gezien dan alleen ruzie. Onder 'conflict' kan ook een lopend meningsverschil of discussie verstaan worden. Houd hier rekening mee tijdens het beantwoorden van de vragen.

25. U heeft een conflict binnen uw schoolorganisatie gehad en opgelost. Hoe ver was het conflict bij u geëscalceerd?

- discussie
- meningsverschil
- niet meer met elkaar praten
- groepsvorming
- vuil spel
- bedreiging
- geweld
- oorlog
- samen de afgrond in


- Ik kreeg gelijk en de ander(en) niet.
- De ander(en) kreeg gelijk en ik niet.
- We zijn er op eigen kracht uitgekomen.
- We zijn er met hulp van iemand anders uitgekomen.
- We hebben het conflict naast ons neergelegd.
- De knoop is door iemand anders doorgehakt.
27. Hoe is de omgang met de ander(en) ten opzichte van voorafgaand aan het conflict?

- De omgang is beter dan voor het conflict.
- De omgang is slechter dan voor het conflict.
- De omgang is hetzelfde als voor het conflict.
- De omgang is voor mij beter, maar voor de ander(en) slechter dan voor het conflict.
- De omgang is voor de ander(en) beter, maar voor mij slechter dan voor het conflict.
- Anders...


10. Conflict bemiddelen

In dit onderzoek wordt 'conflict' ruimer gezien dan alleen ruzie. Onder 'conflict' kan ook een lopend meningsverschil of discussie verstaan worden. Houd hier rekening mee tijdens het beantwoorden van de vragen.

* 28. Kies uit onderstaande lijst 5 kwaliteiten die u het belangrijkste vindt wanneer u geholpen zou worden door een bemiddelaar bij een conflict binnen de schoolorganisatie. (Meerdere antwoorden mogelijk.)

- Besluitvaardigheid
- Deskundigheid
- Feltelijkheid
- Efficiëntie
- Gelijkwaardigheid
- Betrokkenheid
- Creativiteit
- Grondigheid
- Ruimdenkendheid
- Meerstemmigheid
- Empowerment
- Herkenning in elkaar
- Autonomie
- Vredelievendheid
- Zorgzaamheid

* 29. Wat vindt u de belangrijkste eigenschap voor een bemiddelaar?

- Analyseren
- Neutraliseren
- Aandacht voor taalgebruik
- Luisteren
* 30. Wat vindt u de belangrijkste eigenschap voor een bemiddelaar?
   - Beoordelen
   - Selecteren
   - Aandacht voor het verhaal
   - Zelf laten bepalen

* 31. Wat vindt u de belangrijkste eigenschap voor een bemiddelaar?
   - Kiezen
   - Reflecteren
   - Reconstrueren
   - Verbinden

* 32. Wat vindt u de belangrijkste eigenschap voor een bemiddelaar?
   - Sturen
   - Onderzoeken
   - Andere realiteit laten zien
   - Empoweren

* 33. Wat vindt u de belangrijkste eigenschap voor een bemiddelaar?
   - Besluiten
   - Oplossen
   - Herformuleren
   - Op de achtergrond blijven

* 34. Welke houding van de bemiddelaar vindt u het beste?

* 35. Welke houding van de bemiddelaar vindt u het beste?

* 36. Welke houding van de bemiddelaar vindt u het beste?
37. Welke **houding** van de bemiddelaar vindt u het beste?

38. Heeft u tijdens uw baan op het Fioretti College Hillegom wel eens gebruik gemaakt van conflictbemiddeling?

- Nee
- Ja, een collega was bemiddelaar
- Ja, een leidinggevende was bemiddelaar
- Ja, een professionele mediator was bemiddelaar
11. Ervaring professionele mediation

In dit onderzoek wordt 'conflict' ruimer gezien dan alleen ruzie. Onder 'conflict' kan ook een lopend meningsverschil of discussie verstaan worden. Houd hier rekening mee tijdens het beantwoorden van de vragen.

39. U heeft gebruik gemaakt van professionele mediation. Hoe was uw ervaring met deze vorm van conflictbemiddeling?

- Positief
- Negatief

40. Voelde u zich begrepen door de mediator?

- Ja
- Nee

41. Wat was de houding van de mediator?

- Neutraal
- Objectief
- Transparant
- Subjectief

42. Wat was de houding van de mediator?

- Gericht op het probleem
- Gericht op de relatie

43. Wat was de houding van de mediator?

- Sturend
- Niet-sturend

44. Wat was de houding van de mediator?

- Oplossen
- Herstellen
45. Vanuit welke persoon kwam het verzoek om gebruik te maken van professionele mediation?

46. Vergroot volgens u de mogelijkheid om te leren van conflicten door het gebruik van professionele mediation?
   ○ Ja
   ○ Nee

47. Zou u deze vorm van conflictbemiddeling aanbevelen aan anderen in conflict binnen de schoolorganisatie?
   ○ Ja
   ○ Nee
   ○ Anders...


12. Lerende organisatie

* 48. Bent u van mening dat er op dit moment sprake is van een goed conflictmanagement binnen uw schoolorganisatie?
   ○ Ja
   ○ Nee
   ○ Weet ik niet.

* 49. Bent u van mening dat goed conflictmanagement kan bijdragen aan een lerende schoolorganisatie?
   ○ Ja
   ○ Nee
   ○ Weet ik niet.
13. Demografische gegevens

* 50. Wat is uw leeftijd?  

* 51. Wat is uw geslacht?  

* 52. Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?  
   - mbo 3  
   - mbo 4  
   - hbo (of wo bachelor)  
   - wo
14. Bedankt voor uw deelname

Hartelijk dank voor deelname aan deel 1 van dit onderzoek. Dit is heel belangrijk om een goed beeld van de school te krijgen. De uitslagen zullen worden gepresenteerd nadat deel 2 van het onderzoek is afgerond.

In dit tweede gedeelte wil ik een aantal mensen (verspreid door de organisatie) spreken over hun kijk op conflicten binnen de schoolorganisatie. Centraal staat de vraag: wat voor een soort conflictmanagement kan er volgens u voor zorgen dat conflicten een leerproces (lerende school) kunnen zijn in plaats van een blokkade?

Wilt u ook bijdragen aan dit gesprek? Laat dan hieronder uwe-mailladres achter. Dit is niet verplicht, maar wordt zeer gewaardeerd!

Bedankt voor uw bijdrage!

53. Ik wil bijdragen aan het gesprek over conflictmanagement. Mijn e-mailadres is...
5. Selection of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent #</th>
<th>Selection criteria derived from the quantitative analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ● ● Susan    | • Has a good view on the approach that the organisation has on (educational) work.  
              | • Has a good view on the power relations within the organisation.  
              | • Function requires dealing with conflicts within the organisation.  
              | • Chose ideas as a positive outcome of conflict. |
| ● ● John     | • Has had a conflict with someone in a formally higher position.  
              | • Has a good view on the approach that the organisation has on (educational) work.  
              | • Has a good view on the power relations within the organisation. |
| ● Eva        | • Answered that conflict management within the organisation is currently inadequate.  
              | • Chose ideas as a positive outcome of conflict. |
| ● ● Peter    | • Function requires dealing with conflicts within the organisation.  
              | • Has an escalated conflict to the point of the emergence of coalitions.  
              | • Is currently avoiding a conflict. |
| ● Miranda    | • Has had a conflict with someone in a formally higher position.  
              | • Chose ideas as a positive outcome of conflict. |
| ● Jane       | • Has had a conflict with someone in a formally lower position.  
              | • Answered that conflict management within the organisation is currently inadequate. |
| ● ● Rachell  | • Function requires dealing with conflicts within the organisation.  
              | • Resolved a conflict by ignoring it. |
| ● Michelle   | • Has had a conflict with someone in a formally higher position.  
              | • Function requires dealing with conflicts within the organisation.  
              | • Answered that conflict management within the organisation is currently inadequate.  
              | • Chose ideas as a positive outcome of conflict. |
| ● Linda      | • Did not complete the survey. |
| ● Tom        | • Has a good view on the approach that the organisation has on (educational) work.  
              | • Has a good view on the power relations within the organisation.  
              | • Function requires dealing with conflicts within the organisation. |

*The respondents’ functions have been colour-coded without legenda for reasons of anonymity, so it only shows the variation and spread of the selected respondents.
6. Semi-structured interview model

Leer mij, door jouw ogen, deze school kennen.

Opening: aantal onderwerpen aflopen.
- Met welke motivatie ben je ingegaan op de uitnodiging om in gesprek te gaan over conflict?

Conflict
- Wat zijn op school de ongeschreven regels bij conflicten?
- Plaatje met uitleg: ijsberg - what you see/what you get. Begrippen - wat denk jij dat van toepassing is op deze school? Hoe ervaar jij dit op school?

Conflictmanagement: richtlijnen geven voor hoe men dient te gaan met conflicten en de juiste omstandigheden scheppen om deze richtlijnen aan te kunnen houden.
- Stel deze school gaat beleid maken op conflictmanagement, hoe gaat dat volgens jou uitzien? Wat is er nodig?

Mediation: de beste manier om met conflicten om te gaan omdat mensen wel zelf tot een oplossing kunnen komen, maar geholpen worden om niet in escalerende communicatie (terug) te vallen.
- Hebben mensen in deze school voldoende kennis/vaardigheden om hun eigen conflicten op te lossen?
- Wat kunnen mensen nog leren om hun eigen conflicten op te kunnen lossen?
- Diagram met escalatieladder Fioretti. Een deel van de conflicten in deze school zitten in de zone waarin mensen niet langer zelf de oplossingen kunnen vinden, daar is een vorm van bemiddeling bij nodig. Hebben mensen/jij in de gaten wanneer ze een conflict niet langer zelfstandig op kunnen lossen?
- Is het in jouw ogen mogelijk om hulp te krijgen bij conflicten en toch zelf eigenaar te blijven van het conflict? Wat is daarvoor nodig?

Lerende school: een school die een voortdurende leerhouding stimuleert d.m.v. interactie.
- Waarin is deze school wel/geen lerende school?
- Wat is volgens jou het verband tussen conflicten en een lerende school?
- Survey: school kan leren van conflicten - ja. Op welk vlak en op welke manier?

Afsluiting
- Zijn er nog dingen die ik niet aan bod heb laten gekomen met mijn vragen maar die je nog wel wilt noemen?
- Is jouw perspectief op conflicten veranderd n.a.v. jouw deelname dit onderzoek?
7. Interview iceberg picture

What is conflict

CONFlict

What You SEE... THE EVENT

What You GET...

PERCEPTIONS
ATTITUDES VALUES
Culture INTERESTS Gender
COMMUNICATION STYLE Feelings
Needs MOOD Expectations
ASSUMPTIONS SUSPICIONS
8. List of closed interview codes

ATLAS.ti Report
Afstudeeronderzoek UvH - Conflictmanagement Codes
Report created by Merlinde Zoet on 26 jun. 2017

○ Accommodation
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Avoidance
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Bildungspflicht
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Boredom (-)
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Change (+)
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Coalitions
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Collaboration
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Communication
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Context
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Creativity (+)
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Culture of coalitions
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ De-escalation
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Dissatisfaction (-)
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Distributive justice
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Emotional
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Empowerment (ownership)
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Escalation
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Establish communication
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Evaluative mediation
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Exemplary function
  Created: 13-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 13-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet

○ Exhaustion (-)
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Expectations
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Facilitary mediation
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Fatigue (-/)
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Feel attacked
  Created: 09-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 09-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Forcing
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Frustration (-/)
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Future of relationship
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• History of relationship
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Horizontal
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Housing structure
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Illness (-/)
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Implementation
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Inspiration
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Interactional justice
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Irrational problem solving (-/)
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Knowledge
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Lack of clear direction from school board
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Lack of control over students/teachers/school
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Lack of direction from school board
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Lack of sufficient resources
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Lack of support
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Laws
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Learning attitude
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Little influence
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Loss of face
  Created: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merlinde Zoet
• Low self-esteem (-/)
○ Satisfaction (+)
Created: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet
○ Share future possibilities
Created: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet
○ Share present feelings
Created: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet
○ Shared vision
Created: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet
○ Skills
Created: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet
○ Social
Created: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet
○ Subject sections
Created: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet
○ Supporters
Created: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet
○ System thinking
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○ Task content
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○ Task process
Created: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet, Modified: 08-02-17 by Merline Zoet
○ Team learning
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○ Threats
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○ Top-down management
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○ Transformative mediation
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○ Trust
Created: 13-02-17 by Merline Zoet, Modified: 13-02-17 by Merline Zoet
○ Vertical
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9. Threats to the family culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governing variable</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
<th>Respondent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A friendly work environment</td>
<td>“People don’t dare to be vulnerable in this school. I came here through my internship, so I took on everything they gave me. I never said that it was too much, because then you’re vulnerable.”</td>
<td>Miranda</td>
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<td>Mutual connectedness</td>
<td>“I think it’s sad that the contact between junior and senior houses has lessened because of the different time tables and locations in the building; that you don’t hear about pupils whom you’ve taught for two years and that there’s polarising view on how they enter their senior years. The feeling towards each other - by the fact that you work together to get a pupil through school - that’s gone. I think that’s really sad.”</td>
<td>Eva</td>
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<td>Leaders are mentors and stimulators</td>
<td>“It’s funny when the administrator gives a speech in which he says ‘I invite everyone to come in and talk with me’. Well, that’s the same as a police officer telling you that you are obligated to know the law and continues to write you a ticket. What I mean is: saying your door’s always open is misleading if you use the invitation to hide behind and blame people for not coming.”</td>
<td>Steve</td>
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<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>“Like with the problems we’ve had with the time table. Everyone said: fuck it, I’ll just take care of my shit and I don’t care about everything else anymore. That will go wrong of course. Like with X, who said that was going to quit if it continues like this.”</td>
<td>John</td>
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<td>Involvement</td>
<td>“I think people are real selfish in conflicts here. They can hardly empathise with someone else. Solving conflicts is often reaching a compromise, like: I see your point and you see mine, okay we can move on from there. Like the organisation is now, a part of our staff is not capable of doing that. I think it’s mostly because people are fighting for their own space.”</td>
<td>John</td>
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<td>Morality</td>
<td>“Yes, they [management, author] polish the tip of the iceberg but they forget everything below the surface. It’s really business-like and maybe that’s their job but so much happens below and they just don’t intervene. It would be better if they took action earlier, because now people leave damaged. [Example of colleague failing to get teaching licence.] It’s business before humanity and I think that’s really serious because they let people fall on their faces and some of them will be bothered by that the rest of their lives.”</td>
<td>Michelle</td>
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<td>Tradition</td>
<td>“Change needs time, but we just get stuck in old ideas. Maybe they are still the traditions of the old locations… That’s part of a slumbering conflict in which I haven’t seen any change in seven years.”</td>
<td>Rachell</td>
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<td>Meeting the needs of pupils</td>
<td>“I would say: if we agreed on terms and people don’t keep them, then there should be consequences. That’s completely missing right now and I find that very concerning. Especially in the care for pupils. If we notice a problem with a pupil’s absent registration and nothing is done with, that concerning because it’s necessary to guarantee the quality of our care. It’s not about pointing fingers, it’s about the reason behind it.”</td>
<td>Jane</td>
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<td>Taking care of your own people</td>
<td>“So I think we need an independent intermediary who can see all interests, really like we approach things with pupils. For them we’ve got a care coordinator, a behaviour specialist and all that. All those people want what is best for the child. So why don’t we have that for teachers? Because they’re ultimately the ones who have to carry out that care. That’s important right? And I get it, those pupils are your customers so you have to draw them in. But if the ones who carry it out are doing well, then everyone profits.”</td>
<td>Michelle</td>
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<td>Team work</td>
<td>“I see it in my subject section, when we address things -for the fifth time- and people just don’t take action. Even if you take it to the next level, so to say. That makes me doubt if it’s just me or if that person just can’t work together. [example about colleague’s procrastination to write a test] and because we’re equal, we can’t force him. So you end up doing it yourself. That causes a lot of friction because next time you think: ‘piss off’. That way, people stop doing things for each other. If you want to change that, you have to look at how we treat each other rather than solving issues. Because the following week, the issue’s changed but not the person.”</td>
<td>Miranda</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>“Some people have had such bad experiences in the past that they have stopped participating in innovation. It costs so much time and energy and it’s also a bit frightening because you have to make it your own. It’s an investment that you do in yourself, but if you can’t use it in practise or if it’s not appreciated then… well, then you think thrice before doing it.”</td>
<td>Eva</td>
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<td>Consensus</td>
<td>“It’s possible to engage in conflict without ending up being in war, but you do need a way to do that. For example by acknowledging that you’re fighting instead of trying to find agreement. I see people can’t do that anymore. They’re searching and losing themselves in reproach. There’s something to gain there.”</td>
<td>Tom</td>
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</tbody>
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10. Minutes from reflection meeting

Zorgen

• **Onrust** binnen de organisatie. Gebeuren teveel dingen langs elkaar? Focus ligt op zoveel zaken... *tijd en ruimte* zijn groot obstakel! (oplossing?)

• **Negativiteit → plezier in werk neemt af??...** (oplossing? Enquete?/in kaart brengen via teams?)

• Veel *verloop* personeel. Waar komt dit vandaan?... (oplossing? In kaart brengen?)

• De *basis* moet eerst goed zijn. Roosters, lokalen, materiaal.

• **Communicatie.** Omdat er ZOVEEL gebeurt, is het moeilijk om alles te volgen. Geen duidelijk beeld van wat de huizen doen en wat ze bezig houdt. (*inforetti/mail/directie-overleg – notule?)

• **Waardering** personeel (ervaar ik zelf als goed, maar hoor anderen erover)

• Geen *grip/invloed* op veranderingen. Uiteindelijk doet directie toch wat ze zelf wil.

• Het gevoel als je niet meedoet sta je stil en doe je werk niet goed.

• **Gedragsproblematiek** leerlingen – sfeer binnen school, positie van de leraar

• **Zorgteam en hulp.**

Wat gaat wel goed?

• Deur staat open

• **Dynamiek / Experimenteren / Ontwikkeling**

• Draagvlak

• Hard gewerkt

• Verantwoordelijkheid aan de teams
11. Example of generative learning

Most respondents contradicted themselves in their answers but did not recognise these inconsistencies. The following selection of answers throughout the interview with Steve demonstrates this.

00:23:18.40
"We are an educational organisation and that requires a different approach than a commercial or technical organisation. Schools need different tools to keep the organisation alive."

00:24:08.31
Do you believe that dealing with conflicts could be such a tool?

00:24:25.22
"Yes. People with inspiration are underground, but they are here. By dealing with frictions they can start to bloom. I notice that myself. When I deal with conflicts I get connected, a 'wow' without losing the other. I get a feeling like: it's great that you just do this. It can offer a different perspective, absolutely."

[...]

00:36:28.27
How do you solve your own conflicts?

00:37:19.64
"I look for inspiration in a different place. My team is doing great, we have good results and inspiring colleagues. But as I look further to my influence, it becomes… less."

00:38:07.92
So, you avoid it?

00:38:08.68
"Then I avoid it, yes. I don't feel any connection and that eats away my energy. So I limit my activities to where I can be of meaning and nothing beyond that."

[...]

00:51:26.25
Would you say that conflicts are an intricate part of a learning attitude?

00:52:25.41
"Definitely. We have to engage in conflicts and not put our heads in the sand like an ostrich."

Steve