THE MANY FACES OF STRIKES

Attitudes towards industrial action by labour, management and human resources

Master's Thesis
in Management and Organization

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1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Research background

Strikes as well as other forms of industrial action have been studied in Finland from many different viewpoints and among many different disciplines. In my bachelors thesis (Launiainen 2011) I mapped how the theme has been researched in masters', licentiate and doctoral theses done at Finnish universities. Most of the studies found focused on either the historical portrayal of individual strikes, the sociological and political features and implications of labour conflicts or the legal analysis of the different parts of labour market related legislation. Among business economics, previous research is limited to analyzing strikes from a purely economical perspective by trying to identify the effects they have on national economy and explain the effects by using various quantifiable models. The conclusion hence was that although statistically there are quite a few theses already done on the subject, none of them focused on organizational or leadership implications for industrial action. Or vice versa. In my view, one does not need to be a seasoned manager or management scientists to understand that a conflict as explicit and comprehensive as a strike must have some connection to the organization it takes place in. A strike should not thus only be considered as a separate or self-contained event but instead it should be viewed as a phenomenon that has also an organizational context. By focusing on this organizational and leadership context this thesis contributes to filling a research gap and bring a fresh view to existing industrial action research.

Another justification as to why it is important to study industrial actions comes from their continuous topicality. Strikes and other forms of industrial action are a visible phenomenon in the Finnish society, with newspapers and news broadcasts constantly reporting about them. Especially large or otherwise significant actions are followed step by step by the press. Although the number of strikes per year varies, not a year has gone by that has not seen at least dozens of them. In 2012 a total of 86 industrial actions were reported which was a clear drop from 2011 with 163 incidents. A vast majority of the incidents were strikes with only a few overtimebans and boycotts. The most strike susceptible area last year was manufacturing with 54 of the 86 incidents occurring on different industry sectors. The second most susceptible area was transportation and warehousing with 13 reported incidents. (Official Statistics of Finland 2012.) Unfortunately the statistics for 2013 will be published at the end of April 2014, only a few days after this thesis is published. We can however predict that in 2013 there will most likely be more industrial action incidents then there were in 2012. During the first half-year there were already 77 incidents reported. The corresponding figure last year was 42. (Confederation of Finnish Industries 2013a.) A news article published on the 7th of April

2014 in Kauppalehti (Herrala 2014) predicts that the total number of industrial actions in 2013 was 120.

When viewing these statistics one needs to remember that the official industrial action statistics published by Central Statistical Office of Finland only accounts for a part of the actual incidents occurred. Not all slowdowns, walkouts and strikes are reported to the authorities, even when companies are strongly recommended to do so by the statistics collecting authority. But nevertheless industrial actions are a part of the environment we live in and in which organizations operate in, and therefore studying them can be considered justified and important.

An important and interesting fact concerning Finnish industrial action history is that traditionally the number of illegal strikes is notably high. The Finnish Collective Agreements Act binds the employer and employee parties to refrain from any hostile action directed against the collective agreement as a whole or any part of it (Collective Agreements Act 8§). This means that all industrial actions that are targeted at an operative collective agreement or that fail to comply with the advance notice time provided by the law are considered illegal. The executing party should give the advance notice in writing to the other party as well as the national conciliator at the latest two weeks beforehand. (Act on Mediation in Labour Disputes 7§; Confederation of Finnish Industries 2013b, 5.) In practice this means that all extempore walkouts, strikes and boycotts that are carried out without prior notice are considered illegal. Most local, organization wide industrial actions that are protest-like in nature and develop quickly are therefore considered illegal as they take place during a valid agreement period. The percentage of illegal industrial actions from all industrial actions in the 21st century has varied between 80 and 100 percent. For example in 2012 99% of strikes executed in Finland were illegal. (Confederation of Finnish Industry 2013b, 5.) The corresponding percentage for 2013 is forecasted to be 90 (Herrala 2014).

As previously stated, there is relatively little recent research done on this area from organizational or leadership point of view. It is however important to notice that labour conflicts and work relations as such should not be regarded as dated, irrelevant or unimportant research topics. A valid example of the topicality is the extensive research on collective agreements as means to protect terms of work, which was published in fall 2013 at Turku University Faculty of Law. In this study Kairinen, Lamminen, Murto, Rikkilä and Uhmavaara (2013) studied how the terms of collective agreements are followed in Finland and found out that according to employee party experts, employers follow the terms either fairly or moderately well. The second main focus of their research was to study how the settlement methods of interpretation disputes and infraction incidents actually work on organizational, union and labour court levels. The result they found was that at all levels, the current methods work also either fairly or moderately well. So according to them there seems to be no clear need for drastic changes to the

present Finnish system. From the point of view of the study at hand however, the most interesting fact Kairinen et al. (2013) presented, was the notably large number of disputes and infractions that occur in the Finnish labour market annually. The employee and employer union experts estimated the number to be somewhere between 10 000 and 15 000 incidents per year. It is, however important to point out that majority of them were so-called interpretive disputes (~65 % according to employee unions and ~90 % according to employer unions) rather than intentional infractions. The two most common subjects in such disputes seemed to be norms concerning either pay or working hours. Further, the organizational causes and background for the occurrence of disputes were deemed to be unfamiliarity with the norms, their general ambiguity and tensions in the workplace atmosphere as well as different changes happening in the organization.

This last finding awakes interest in connection to the selected perspective of the study at hand. If two of the main causes for work conflicts and disputes are in fact directly related to the organization, it is interesting that organizational level research in particular is so scarce. Another important finding Kairinen et al. (2013, 11, 34–35) made, is that according to their research there is a connection between these disputes and industrial actions taking place during the agreement period. Approximately 60 % of all the respondents (N= 32 employee party, N= 23 employer party) said that disputes and infractions have led to threats to carry out industrial action or even concrete actions. Most of the employee party experts regarded norm infractions from employer part as a just cause to break the commitment to labour market harmony during the agreement period. As expected, the view on the employer party was the opposite, with only one respondent out of 19 saw the measures as justified.

This conjectural and in some aspects also verified difference between employee and employer party opinions, experiences and understandings forms the foundation for the masters' thesis in question. Strikes and other industrial actions are conflicts, and at the heart of them is an issue that is perceived controversial and disputable by the parties involved. Whether the issue in question is labour cutbacks, supervisory procedures or pay, it nevertheless causes dissent in the organization. According to Billig (1996) attitudes are exactly evaluations of controversial issues done by individuals. This controversial aspect attached to industrial actions is what leads us to consider attitudes as meaningful subjects to explore when the aim is to study strikes from an organizational point of view.

1.2 Research question and objective

This study is part of a larger research project that is in progress at the department of Management and Organizations at Turku School of Economics. The working title of the project is:

> *Intra-organizational meaning systems constructing work conflict susceptibility*
>
> *– Sustainable HRM as peacekeeper?*

The main goal of the research project is to find out what are the meaning structures that stem from the history of organizations and that shape the culture within them. Also how these structures affect work-conflict susceptibility and how they are legitimated and recreated. The research project also tries to map out what are the factors that keep employee and employer parts from entering into productive dialogue in conflict situations. The role of sustainable human resource management (HRM) practices as possible tools or solutions to enhancing conflict resolution is also a theme present in the research project.

As part of the above-presented research project this current masters' thesis aims to understand, not only portray, the attitudes towards strikes that are to be found inside organizations. The goal is to identify how the experience of strikes differs between the intra-organizational parties involved and what are the real reasons, problems, emotions and attitudes brought forward by interviewees.

The research problem this study sets out to answer is:

> *What kinds of attitudes exist inside organizations towards industrial actions and how attitudes vary between labour, management and human resources?*

The research problem has been formulated before the gathering of research data but it has not been considered unchangeable and permanent. Instead it has been circularly revised and rephrased throughout the process as is typical, if not assumed, in the qualitative research tradition (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 31). The above, final form covers in its entirety what this research sets out to explore, content wise. The three groups, labour, management and human resources, were selected because they represent the parties involved in industrial actions and negotiations concerning them. The overall goal is to find out what attitudes can be identified in the interviewee's speech, what are the themes around which these attitudes arise and how they are expressed. Another matter the research question asks, is if and how these identified attitudes vary based on the organizational position of the interviewee. It can be hypothesized that strongly differing attitudes between conflict parties might influence matters such as conflict negotiations, organizational culture, strike susceptibility or the overall climate in the organization. Although this study does not try to map these possible causalities from start to finish it

is interesting to consider just how many issues and even problems could be linked to conflicting attitudes.

In addition to the research question this study has another goal, or a dimension if you will. The research method chosen for this study is a relatively new one among management research. Therefore this study has been planned with a view to explore how this qualitative attitudinal research, as a method, is suited to studying a phenomenon such as strike. Previous studies done by utilizing this approach have concentrated on themes such as religion, education or information technology. (E.g. Pyy 2000; Matikainen 2002; Järvinen 2004) Business world, organizations and management however are themes or contexts that have not often been touched on. In that case this study intends to bring something new also to the methodological discussion surrounding this fresh approach.

This thesis has been executed following qualitative attitudinal research methods and utilizing a data driven approach, which give the study a slightly out of the ordinary dimension. In data driven or inductive studies the starting point of the research is the data, rather than theory. As Wengraf (2001, 2–3) put it, qualitative research can be divided in to inductivist and deductivist models. When using an inductive approach the researcher first gathers all the relevant data on the subject of interest, and then interprets it to see what theories rise from it. This way the theory framework will be shaped so that it complements the data findings the best way possible. The second option is to begin by forming a comprehensive body of theory and prior research that is then tested through the data. This deductive approach is perhaps more straightforward and structured of the two and it is also perhaps the more traditional way to carry out masters' thesis studies.

This study at hand is not structured the same way masters' theses under management and organizations are customarily constructed. Where usually studies comprise of theoretical framework, execution methods and results, this study in a way combines the first two. The theoretical framework in this case comes from the research method itself. Because the method used is quite new it was regarded interesting and important to examine thoroughly and base the study on it rather than on theories about work conflicts, industrial relations, organization culture or something else. Subsequently this thesis centres more on the methodology and execution of the research then on content-related theories. This report consists of three main chapters that are followed by reflections. Chapter 2 is an introduction to the concepts and issues of work conflicts and industrial action, intended to lay the foundation for the topic at hand. The third chapter represents both the theoretical and methodological aspects of the study while the fourth chapter presents the results. The earlier presented research question as well as the other goals of this study are answered and reflected in chapter 5 together with suggestions for further studies.

2 WORK CONFLICTS AND INDUSTRIAL ACTION

2.1 The nature and definition of conflict

As Edwards (1986, 5) states, the word conflict has many different meanings on a variety of different levels. On one hand conflict can refer to a specific dispute between two parties, such as a strike over recent plans to lay-off personnel, but on the other hand it can also refer to a more general phenomenon in the labour market or inside an organization. As an example of the latter Edwards (1986, 5) gives the fundamental conflict between capital and labour that prevails in organizations. By this he means issues such as the juxtaposition of profit/profitability of the company and the employment of the personnel or other instances where the needs of the company are not necessarily in line with the needs of the labour. The above-mentioned characterization by Edwards, as well as those presented by many others, all considers conflict to be a zero-sum game where there are only winners and losers (Godwyn & Hoffer Gittell 2012, 409). However, not all researchers and practitioners alike share this, rather black-and-white view of what conflicts are or can be. A lot of research has also been done on considering conflict as positive, constructive and even desirable phenomenon in the work environment. De Dreu (2011, 461–462) takes this view into consideration by noting that positive effects of conflicts, such as learning, increased creativity and innovation have gained attention in the last twenty years. One can see these as examples of the factors Edwards (1986, 5) asked for to explain why conflict in the workplace could in fact be seen as necessary and positive. He criticised the research of that time of focusing too much on the statement that conflicts are necessary and not asking why this is. Although De Dreu (2011, 461) takes also the positive side of conflicts into account, he acknowledges that the word conflict itself, has a deeply negative tone. In the work context it is therefore often associated with such things as violence, gossip, bullying, protest and constant strikes. He is though quick to point out that these are in fact only strategies that are used by individuals or groups to react to conflicts in the workplace. They do not give a full picture of all the possible ways conflicts can show in organizations or how they are managed. One can perceive these issues as some of the factors Edwards (1986, 5) demanded, to explain why conflict in the workplace could in fact be seen as necessary and positive. He criticised the research of that time of focusing too much on the statement, that conflicts are necessary and not trying to find out why this is.

Pondy (1967, 428–429) presents another explanation of what conflicts are based on a review of prior literature. He found four possible conceptual definitions for the word conflict. It can thus be used to describe the conditions that precede behaviour, attitudes of individuals, cognitive states or actual behaviour. These possible definitions should

not be considered exclusionary but rather as steps in the development of conflict incidents. As Pondy suggests though, it might be easier to consider conflict as a process rather than just one of the four above-mentioned stages. A conflict is then something that materializes in the relationship between individuals or groups when the prerequisites for it are present.

Edwards (1986, 8, 58) has contributed to the field of conflict research by putting together a theory of industrial conflict, that is to say conflicts that occur in the relationship between employers and employees. The theory should be viewed at three different levels of analysis that each focus on a different meaning of the term conflict. The theory has at its core an idea of structured antagonism that prevails between management and labour or as Edwards puts it "between dominant and subordinate groups". This wording portrays well the basic starting point of Edwards theory that draws its roots from materialist theory of exploitation.

At the first level conflict is seen as a basic phenomenon that exists when there is structured antagonism, or in other words a clear supremacy of management over employees. The second level is the organization of work relations where co-operation and conflict are produced at the same time. As Edwards describes, in capitalist economies (he discusses also the characteristics of feudal and slavery economies but they are beyond the scope of this study and therefore left out) there are many ways how work relations can be organized. They all however share the same need for a balance between exercising power over the labour and inducing cooperation. This is a dilemma for the company management to resolve. The different methods of organizing can then lead to different manifestations of conflict and cooperation. The third and last level of analysis deals with actual behaviour by both parties and the forms of conflict that emerge in specific circumstances. At this level the focus is on finding the connections between certain, often recurrent, actions and the forms of labour relations behind them. (Edwards 1986, 10, 60–61, 69–73, 77)

Edwards (1986, 74–76) notes that there is a constant bargaining going on in organizations over efforts demanded by management and those provided by employees. The effort bargaining process he refers to does not mean only the actual collective bargaining process but also the implicit and informal ways in which input-output ratio is negotiated in daily work. The last level in Edwards theory is perhaps the most relevant one concerning the study at hand, as it argues that the way employers structure the labour process more or less dictates the types of behaviour, both cooperative and conflict, that emerge in the organization. This leads one to ponder that if this were in fact true, leadership method and practices imposed could have an influence on the conflict susceptibility of employees. Edwards (1986, 76) takes also into consideration the historical aspect and states that the relationship between management and labour is shaped by history and so are also the conflicts that emerge within that relationship.

Several different origins for conflict can be identified in the contemporary work environment. Representing the industrial and organizational psychology point of view De Dreu presents three often heard descriptions for conflict:

> *Conflict can and has been seen as the clashing of principles and aspirations, as the perception that another party blocks one's own goal progress, or as the performance of incompatible behaviors. (De Dreu 2011, 462)*

One joint characteristic that De Dreu (2011, 462) finds in these definitions is that they all imply that social conflict arises when individuals or groups are outcome interdependent, that is to say that they deprive one another of resources when they pursue their own interests. One can see that this is the case for example between labour and management, where employees rely on management for compensation for their efforts and at the same time management is depending on employees to contribute their time and know-how to further the company's productivity. Both groups have divergent goals but the means to reach them are shared.

2.2   Conflict types

De Dreu (2011, 463–467) refers to a much-used classification of different types of conflicts in his review article concerning workplace conflict research done in the field on industrial and organizational psychology. The three-fold classification divides conflicts based on their origin and nature into: task, relationship and process conflicts. Task conflicts are caused by real or anticipated deprivation of work related resources such as money or work tasks, whereas relationship conflicts concern non-work-related resources, beliefs and attitudes. The third category, process conflicts, includes situations where the conflict is caused by logistical and delegation issues, such as who does what. There cannot always be a clear distinction or separation between these types and often they occur simultaneously or one after the other.

Another classification has been presented that divides conflicts in organizations into three conceptual models. A bargaining model is best suited to deal with conflicts that arise between interest groups that both want to maximize the amount of scarce resources they receive. A clearest example of this type of conflict can be found between labour and management, who often compete for the available resources through a visible bargaining process. The second conceptual model is called the bureaucratic model, where conflicts develop in the vertical relationships inside organizations. For example a conflict between a manager and his/her subordinate over rules, regulations or orders and the

dissatisfaction towards them is a common cause for a conflict in this category. The juxtaposition between control and autonomy is thus in the heart of these conflicts which has made them an intriguing research subject also from the leadership perspective. Researchers and practitioners alike have tried to minimize these conflicts by focusing on leadership and management styles used in organizations. From this point of view conflicts can be managed and avoided by decreasing subordinates need for autonomy and managers need for control for example via participatory work processes. The third group in this classification consists of conflicts between individuals at the same organization level. These so-called lateral or systemic conflicts are usually about disagreements over coordination, where the first two were about competition and control. (Pondy 1967, 427, 434–437.)

Further defining the look from conflicts in organizational context to conflicts that develop between the company and its employees the term industrial conflict comes forward. Stagner (1956, 291) proposed nearly 60 years ago that conflicts occurring in the industrial context, meaning between labour and management, could fundamentally be seen as conflicts over power. This rather strong sentiment was a conclusion he made after first categorising industrial conflicts into two types. First there are conflicts that rise from disagreements over economic resources while the second croup are conflicts over power, recognition and ego. Stagner suggests that in the American society of that time economic achievements and ego were closely intertwined; the ones who have the money also have a strong ego and aspiration for power. And vice versa, the ones who have the power usually also aspire to economical gains. Though this opinion was expressed in a completely different time and context, can it really be argued that in today's society this is not the case anymore?

Where in these above presented typologies do strikes as conflicts then belong? In De Dreus (2011) classification strikes could be seen as examples of relationship conflicts. As was observed in the research material of this study, strikes are strongly connected to the key-individuals in the organization. This finding could suggest that a strike is often a conflict stemming from interpersonal differences and poor chemistries between individuals. This side of strikes will be further discussed in chapter 4.2.3, dealing with the attitude of personification interpreted in this study. Proceeding to the next typology by Pondy (1967), strikes are somewhat difficult to pace in either the bureaucratic or the systemic categories. Especially the systemic conflicts are not applicable to industrial actions, such as strikes, because they are characteristically rather vertical than lateral and always between labour and management. However, bureaucratic conflicts between a manager and his/her subordinates could be the cause of a strike, but a strike in itself always includes the whole company, not only one manager. So instead, most relevant of these three groups is the first one, bargaining model. Pondy (1967, 434) argues, however, that these interest group conflicts rarely escalate to conflictive behaviour, unless

there is a strategic advantage to be gained by doing so. From this one can come to the conclusion, that a strike to gain public awareness or to raise support for the labour party agenda can be considered a manifestation of bargaining model conflict. In conclusion and with a moderate amount of simplification strikes could then be seen as relationship conflicts where parties seek to maximize their share of scarce resources and that stemming from individuals and groups quest for power.

2.3   Conflict management

Conflict management, as noted by Ma, Lee and Yu (2008, 234–237) is a well-established research field that has received growing attention from academics during the last decades. Although conflict management is a discipline on its' own, it has developed in close connections with other fields such as social and organizational psychology, behavioural sciences and legal sciences. Rahim (2000, 75–76) remarks, that it is important to separate conflict management and conflict resolution from one another even though in everyday use they are often seen synonymous. The term resolution according to Rahim (2000) refers to an assumption that conflicts are always undesired and therefore the aim is to eliminate them. Conflict management, however, does not imply a need to abolish all conflicts but rather an attempt to minimize their harmful effects and enhance their constructive elements.

What then advocates conflict management's independence as a discipline, from for example general management studies is that it already has a well-known and acknowledged journal (International Journal of Conflict Management) that is commonly cited by researchers. Ma et al. (2008) conducted a review expanding over ten-years in which they mapped the themes and trends in the field of conflict management. During the ten-year period (1997-2006) they used in their analysis two main research focuses remained the same. Workplace conflicts and conflict management styles as well as cultural differences in conflict management received the most attention from scholars during that time period. At the same time research on conflict resolution practices had diminished, while new areas on conflict management studies developed around child and adolescent development and group conflicts and performance.

De Dreu (2008) suggests that conflicts could be categorized based on how they are managed. In his article he refers to the theory of cooperative and competitive processes developed by Deutsch. In this theory Deutsch (1973, 20–32) introduces two approaches to how individuals or groups regard one another and that then by implication explain how they manage conflicts between them. The two dimensions are cooperation and competition. In a cooperative situation the aims of the participants are linked in a way that for one to succeed the other has to succeed as well. This promotive interdependence

can simply be described so that everyone involved either swims or sinks together. Instead a competitive attitude between parties leads to a situation where in the worst-case, for one to swim the other one has to sink. This contriently interdependent situation, as Deutsch calls it, tells us that the goals of the participants are far apart and thus lead to a negative correlation in between. From conflict management perspective it can be interpreted that solving a conflict between groups, who are positively interdependent is achieved through negotiations and open communication (De Dreu 2008). Whereas a conflict between negatively interdependent groups can lead to a more difficult situation, where the management methods employed are perhaps less constructive. This situation originates from the same thinking then the zero-sum game outlook of conflicts in general.

How can conflicts in the workplace then be managed? Domination and compromise are the two most commonly used and perceived alternatives in conflict management. Mary Parker Follet (2012, 417–418) however has already in 1926 introduced a third possibility – integration. She describes integration as invention, that does not allow conflict parties to restrict themselves to either winning or losing but forces them to think of alternative ways to manage the situation. This sounds idealistic, and as Parker Follet (2012, 419) herself mentioned, perhaps even too ideal and unrealistic to some. Despite being difficult to perceive and somewhat ambiguous, she argues that integration is the most stable solution that has long lasting effects unlike domination or compromise. Integration could thus be seen as something that could help prevent conflict recurrence, which in the light of the present study would be interesting. As Parker Follet (2012, 419) described compromise and domination both leave behind a situation where at least one party is left with a less then desired outcome. This leaves some kind of negativity between the parties that can become the trigger to future conflicts. Rahim (2000, 80–84) extended the above division to a five-piece classification by adding obliging and avoiding as further two, rather self-explanatory types of conflict management. However, like Rahims' division, much of the literature on conflict management styles focuses on interpersonal conflicts, which are conflicts between individuals. One could argue that strikes and other industrial actions are though more closely identified as intergroup conflicts that are nevertheless negotiated and managed by individuals.

2.4 Basic concepts of industrial action

2.4.1 *Industrial action*

Industrial action is a broader concept that stands for industrial conflicts, including strikes. Savola (1968, 9–10) defines industrial action to include all the cooperative actions taken either by labour or employers' organizations that are aimed at pressuring the other party through temporary stoppages, by declining work or by neglecting the obligation to work. Industrial actions, as do strikes have the quintessential feature that they have a preset goal that the people are trying to achieve. Savola adds that also boycotts' where workers do not immediately leave their work place are considered industrial actions. In practice however most common industrial actions are strikes from the employees part and lockouts from the employers' part (Sarkko 1980, 223). Toivonen (1972, 11–12) analyzes conflict situations in a larger scale by citing Kornhausers, Rosses and Dubins (1954, 13–14) classification of its' different manifestations. The classification divides conflicts into two categories, ones that are communal and organized and ones that are individualistic and unorganized. These subsections are further divided into conflicts related to working life and ones that involve the society on a larger scale. In this division, industrial actions such as strikes, lockouts and slowdowns belong to the category of work life related communal conflicts. Toivonen (1972) sees this classification as relevant but points out that it leaves aside such conflict situations as boycotts' and mass resignations.

The above-presented division to organized and unorganized industrial action can be considered parallel to the traditional division of the strike concept into organized and wildcat strikes. These forms of strikes are set apart by the tactic they employ, that is to say, are they implemented following the rules of the trade union or not. Organized strikes are carried out according to the rules contrary to wildcat strikes that are unorthodox. Commonly used synonyms for wildcat strikes are wild strike, non-union strikes and unofficial strikes. These names can however be seen as somewhat misleading and unclear because they lead to unintentionally strict definition of the situation. For example, the unions themselves might actually organize some of the wildcat strikes executed against their own rules. (Hölttä 1999, 97–98; Savola 1968, 16.)

The Finnish law does not give an actual definition to industrial action but in law literature industrial action is defined generally through three prerequisites. (Figure 1)
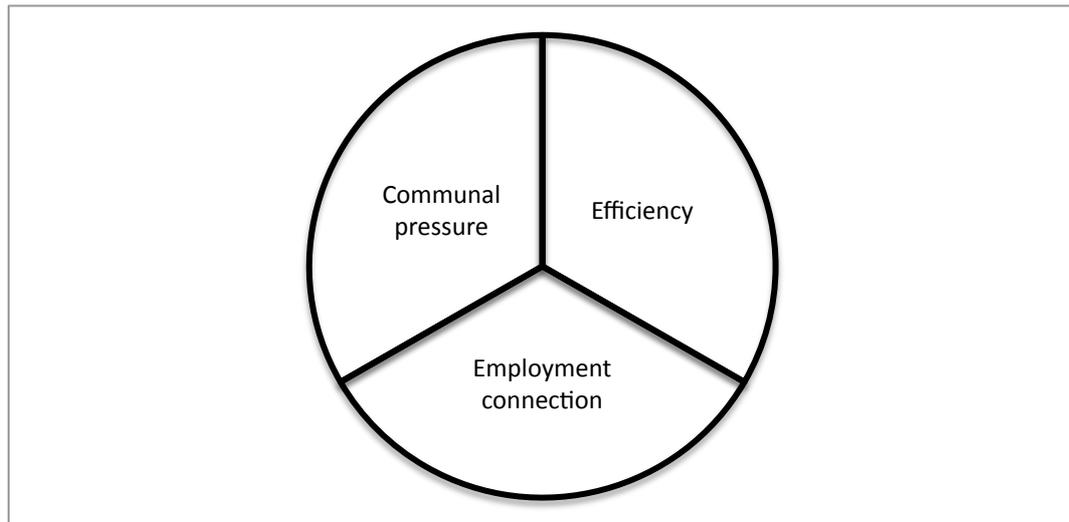
Figure 1   Characteristics of industrial action (Lamminen 2011, 6)

The first prerequisite is the communal nature of the action. This does not mean that there should be a lot of people involved in the action but rather, that the interests and benefits pursued are communal in nature. In this case industrial actions include also such incidents, where one person occupying a key position in the organization temporarily neglects his/her duties with a view to fight for a common cause. (Hölttä 1999, 41–43; Aaltonen 1999, 4; Markkula 1989, 9–11; Sarkko 1980, 223–225.) This description is consistent with previously mentioned definition by Savola (1968). Sarkko (1980) perceives further that the communal nature of industrial action is not usually difficult to discover, unless the incident in question is an unorganized strike. Then it is especially important to consider the simultaneity, similarity of the action and the collective nature of the demands presented.

Second criterion presented in law literature is efficiency. The purpose of this criterion is to rule out such incidents as protest and meaningless threats from the definition of industrial action. However the line in this case is sometimes rather difficult to draw unambiguously. According to orders by the Finnish labour court a threat to carry out industrial action can itself be considered an industrial action provided that the threat has a true intention. Also no unambiguous duration such as maximum or minimum length can be determined for industrial actions. Labour court has ruled that for example a work stoppage lasting only two hours can be considered an independent industrial action. (Hölttä 1999, 43–46; Aaltonen 1999, 4; Markkula 1989, 11–18; Sarkko 1980, 225.) Labour court is special court that solves litigations concerning collective agreements and collective bargaining contracts on civil servant salaries.

The third criterion is that the action has to be in some way connected to employment contracts. To be more precise, from this point of view the action should be connected to activity that is against the terms of the employment contract or aimed at preventing a

contract to be made. Many researchers however are unanimous that this criterion should not be interpreted too narrowly. If done so this would mean that only actions taken by either the employer or the employee representative of the contract of employment would be considered industrial action. It has been stated that such a definition is not necessary. This opinion is supported by a ruling of the labour court, which states that a purchase boycott can also be seen as industrial action provided that it is aimed towards the opposing side of the labour dispute with en intention to pressure the opponent. (Hölttä 1999, 47–48; Aaltonen 1999, 4–5; Markkula 1989, 19–21; Sarkko 1980, 225–226.)

Term industrial action is often used in Finnish research instead of strike because an annual statistical publication on labour disputes by the Central Statistical Office of Finland does not provide a breakdown to different types of industrial action. It includes all temporary intentional interruptions of work that are used as pressure measures either by the employer or employee party against the other to attain an objective. Different manifestations named are strikes, lockouts, blockades/boycotts, refusal to work and slowdown. (Official Statistics of Finland 2013.)

2.4.2   Strike

The definition of strike has remained relatively unchanged for the last one hundred years. As Eduard Bernstein (1907, 1) described strike is a work stoppage that is aimed at achieving goals set outside the immediate work situation. So not all work interruptions are to be considered strikes there needs to be a preset goal for the actions as well. Bernstein (1907, 4–8) continues to point out that strikes are used as leverage to gain better conditions and terms for working and in fact their main purpose is not to harm the employer organization. Savola (1968, 11) on the other hand defines strikes by their three fundamental characteristics. First, a strike is always a temporary stoppage of work when the main aim is not to permanently terminate the employment contract. Second, there is a preset goal the strike is aimed at achieving. The third characteristic that brings a new criteria compared to Bernstein's definition is that strikes are always mass actions. Toivonen (1972, 10) applies Savolas' definition and develops it for his part by further defining the element of goal orientation. He states that although strikes are defined as having a preset goal, the goal itself can change during the process as the situation and circumstances change.

Once the fundamental definition for strikes has been made, one can further identify them by recognizing different types of strikes. The names of various types usually describe the execution strategy of the strike. A general strike is therefore a situation where a large portion of the organized labour force, on different fields of operation takes industrial action. The purpose can be economical, political or even revolutionary. A sit-

down-strike, as the name already suggests, is a form of industrial action where workers in a specific sector or company refuse to continue working but remain at their workstations. A similar kind of situation is when workers do not stop working but deliberately slow down their actions. This is called a go-slow or simply a slowdown; in everyday language it is also called an Italian strike. A slowdown has proven to be an especially effective source of leverage in fields where nit-picking and following each rule word for word can cause an immediate decrease in production. Another type of strike is a spot strike, which is when workers stop their work only for a short period of time, perhaps for a couple of hours or even only for a few minutes. It can be carried out also so that works stop only at certain companies or sites inside the field. Other types of strikes include collective strike, partial strike and an attack strike. (Hölttä 1999, 88–89, 98–103; Savola 1968, 12–15.) A form of strike that clearly stands out from the ones presented above is a sympathy strike. It is started as a show of support to a party, whether from the employee or employer side, that is taking industrial action on some other field. Finnish law states that such an action is only legal if it does not break the commitment to labour market harmony of its participants and if the participants do not have any self-interest involved. In legal sciences a sympathy strike is then defined as genuine and pure. A strike of this type can spread from one country to another in which case it is called an international or cross boarder sympathy strike. In this case the supported action takes place abroad whereas the sympathy actions are taken domestically. This causes challenges when trying to determine which country's legislation is to be applied, for example when determining the lawfulness of the action. (Lamminen 2011, 8; Karhunen 2000, 16; Aaltonen 1999, 5–7, 25–31; Kevätsalo 1981, 49.)

2.4.3 Other important concepts

In the above chapters the different criterion, classifications and types of industrial action have been described and a closer look to strikes has been made. However, the main focus has thus far been on measures used by the employee party. This is natural as the employee party and their unions implement most of the industrial actions in Finland. Most commonly used form of industrial action taken by the employer party is the lockout. During a lockout one or more employers set a temporary ban for a specific group of employees or the whole company to pressure them to accept the proposed terms of work, such as a certain wage level. Employees under lockout get their salary or wage payments interrupted for the duration of the lockout. (Official Statistics of Finland 2013; Koskinen 1992, 69–70; Savola 1968, 17.)

Industrial dispute is a concept broader then strike or industrial action. It originates straight from the Finnish law (Act on Mediation in Labour Disputes), which is why it is

most commonly used in law literature. The term industrial dispute covers basically all points of issue between the employer and the employee that deal with employment, work norms, or in some other way the working conditions influencing the parties. (Sarkko 1980, 305–307.)

Concepts that are meant to describe the frequency of strikes and attitudes towards them include strike propensity, strike susceptibility and strike energy. The two first mentioned concepts, are often transposed and used almost as synonyms. Literature though shows that they can and should in fact be separated from one another. In this case strike susceptibility means the degree of the actual measures taken whereas strike propensity describes merely the intention or willingness to take action. (Martin & Sinclair 2001, 1; Savola 1968, 15.) So strike propensity is thus to be considered more uncertain and sensitive definition because it is easier to say that one is ready to go on strike then in reality act on it as well. Strike energy can be perceived as somewhat similar concept to strike susceptibility. It is most commonly used in historical context to describe the level and quantity of strike incidents occurring at a certain period of time.

Once familiarising with the concepts of industrial actions and work conflicts it is easy to see how they can be considered as conflicting and disputable issues that cause dissent and friction between parties inside an organization. This characteristic makes them interesting and intriguing phenomenon from the viewpoint of attitudinal research that requires a controversial issue in the centre towards which the attitudes are expressed.

3 EXECUTION AND METHODS OF ANALYSIS

3.1 Attitudes as research subjects

Attitudes are perhaps most commonly seen as the focus of attention in studies done under social psychology, behavioural science, education or other social sciences. Taking a brief glance into attitude research done in Finland one quickly notices where the emphasis lies. Under education for example the attitudes of pupils and teachers towards student teachers, religion, recycling, bullying, continuing training, physical education and mathematics, to name a few, have been studied in masters' thesis in the University of Turku alone (e.g. Kolkkala 2000; Ojanperä 1997). Under economic sciences, such as marketing, attitude research often focuses on assessing the attitudes of consumers towards something (e.g. Roponen 2013; Juntumaa 2011). When continuing to narrow down the pool of previous attitude research towards the field of this thesis, searches begin to produce significantly less results. Under management and organization recent studies have covered themes such as employers' attitudes towards development of occupational know-how (Hartikainen 2011) and attitudes towards corporate social responsibility in tourism (Rapo 2006). Furthermore a recent doctoral thesis by Höglund (2011) from Hanken School of Economics studied how employee perceptions of HRM (human resource management) system relate to their attitudes and performance both on an individual as well as collective levels. The study was build upon the concept of psychological contract and executed through quantitative measures. If expanding the investigation beyond Finland the number of studies naturally grows, as do the themes around which attitudes are explored. This narrow sample of Finnish studies nevertheless portrays well how the research in many respects centres on certain areas and contexts.

Continuing to view attitudes as research subjects it is important to note that one should not considered them a new or immature theme to study. In fact attitudes have been researched from a variety of viewpoints under different disciplines for many decades. Social psychology, as noted before, is the discipline that is most widely represented. This is understandable as attitudes by definition are something that, though forming inside our heads, can also be seen influenced by our experiences, surroundings and interaction with other people. This makes it an interesting concept for sociologists and psychologists to study. American psychologist Gordon Allport (1954, 43–45) saw already 60 years ago that attitude was becoming a fundamental building block of contemporary social psychology. According to him some researchers of the time even went as far as saying that social psychology is the study of attitudes.

To understand what exactly is meant when talking about attitudes, a look to its' many definitions is necessary. Starting from the broader and perhaps more abstract definitions, the much referenced Allport saw attitudes as:

> *An attitude is a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response towards all objects and situations with which it is related. (Allport 1954, 45)*

Allports' definition sees attitudes as something inherent we all have and what we express towards everything around us. It also represents the more mainstream approach called dispositional theory that sees attitudes as separate and also somewhat stable traits inside an individual (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 19). Allport (1954, 43) notes that attitudes popularity as a research subject at the time was caused by the convenience and flexible nature of the concept. An attitude can be seen as individual or cultural, influence by heredity or the environment and laying somewhere between discussion and research. Allport predicted however in his well-known article, that this flexible and diverse nature of attitudes could lead to inadequate theoretical development of the concept itself. Räty (1982, 4) pointed out some thirty years ago that his prediction had in deed come true and that the concept of attitude has remained somewhat raw, which in his opinion has caused a lot of frustration and problems for some researchers in the field.

As mentioned by Bartram (2010, 34) Allports' definition presented above, however lacks the evaluative aspect of attitudes that is central in most modern definitions. This evaluative nature comes across for example in the definition presented by Eagly and Chaiken who took a more psychological approach to attitude.

> *Attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour. (Eagly&Chaiken 1993, 1)*

The above quoted definition was selected among hundreds of possibilities and named perhaps the most conventional contemporary definition by Albarracín, Johnson, Zanna and Kumkale (2005, 4). Albarracín et al. (2005, 4–6) continue by further analysing the definition and bringing forward academic discussions that concern some of its' aspects. They note for example that attitudes should be distinguished from affective reactions because the latter does not need to be connected to a specific entity and can in fact often form the base for attitudes. Following Eagly and Chaiken and other scholars, they continue to form their own definition of attitudes. They see attitudes as evaluative tendencies that can on one hand be drawn from beliefs, affect and overt behaviour but also on

the other hand have an influence on them. This means that there is a two-way relationship between attitudes and the three other phenomena mentioned (beliefs, affect and behaviour). Even the most simple of definitions today usually has the evaluative nature embedded in it.

Michael Billig (1996), a professor of social sciences, points out an interesting fact that the word attitude has not always meant what we understand by it today. In fact the current meaning has been formed only some hundred and seventy years ago. Before that the word attitude referred to body positions of figures in art. Billig (1996, 206–208) makes his own contribution to the discussion about the definition of attitudes. He takes a somewhat different approach and sees that there is a wider rhetorical and argumentative side to attitudes that has often been ignored by other researchers. Billig argues that attitudes represent evaluation of controversial issues or characters and that this aspect differentiates attitudes from beliefs, for example. He continues that whether the issue is political, religious, commercial, or as it often is, moral, attitude is something that is presented towards a topic of public debate. That is to say, a person does not have attitudes towards mundane and obvious issues that he/she and the surrounding community sees uncontroversial. According to Billig this means that whenever a person has an attitude towards something he/she is expected to be able to justify that attitude. These justifications as well as other arguments on the object of attitude are essentially where attitudes are presented. Billig also sees that in psychology attitude is seen as a large phenomenon that is not limited to taking a stance towards an object, but also implies to a more general response by the individual. Meaning that an expressed attitude towards something would also imply that the persons' reactions and beliefs would be consistent with the attitude.

All of the definitions mentioned above represent the dispositional take on attitudes, which has long been the predominant paradigm. In its core is a perception that attitudes are separate, hidden traits existing inside individuals. This dispositional theory of attitudes can be divided into behaviouristic and cognitive trends. Behaviourists think attitude is a tendency that can be influenced through conditioning thus a person could in principle be taught a certain attitude. Behaviourists also think that there is a connection between internal attitudes and external behaviour, a point that has intrigued many scholars over the years. The cognitive school on the other hand considers beliefs and knowledge processing to be the cause of attitudes. (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 19–23.)

The dispositional theory and especially the behaviouristic school have had their fare share of criticisms over the years. One point in particular that has raised many questions is the link between attitudes and behaviour. While some researchers see this connection as a given, others think studies and measurements supporting this connection are not entirely valid. (Räty 1982, 4–5.) Another aspect of the dispositional view that has received criticism is its' concentration on the individual. The critics want to move the

concept of attitudes from individual psychology to a social context. (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 22–23.) This opinion that attitudes are in fact socially constructed, not innate traits of individuals is particularly important from the current study's perspective. This view of attitudes as social by nature was strongly influenced by the work of Thomas and Znaniecki (1974). Their theory sees that there is a two-way relationship between attitudes and the social world. On one hand attitudes of individuals affect the social world and on the other the social world surrounding the individuals affects their attitudes. (Thomas & Znaniecki 1974, 21) They define attitude as:

> *By attitude we understand a process of individual consciousness, which determines real or possible activity of the individual in the social world. (Thomas & Znaniecki 1974, 22)*

By taking into account and adding the mention of the social world to their definition they seek to separate attitudes from a psychical state, which is in essence what the dispositional approach adheres to (Thomas & Znaniecki 1974, 22). Continuing to view attitudes as changing and social phenomenon Räty (1983, 26–27) remarks that expression of attitudes should be considered an active and continuous process of phrasing in relation with the persons outer and inner goals and terms. This process should however not be considered to be without tension and contradictions. Instead psychologically examined, attitudes are not expressed logically or coherently but are inherently ambivalent.

Once the many definitions of attitudes have been reviewed it is perhaps interesting to ask, what then influences the way our attitudes are constructed? Albarracín et al. (2005, 6) point out that psychologically assessing attitudes can be constructed in two ways, either from prior memory or as they say online. The first way is that attitudes are based on individuals' conscious memory. The second possibility is that attitudes are based on temporary evaluations that the individual is not necessarily even aware of making. Fabrigar, MacDonald and Wegner (2005, 80–81) continue with the same division when explaining the structure of attitudes. They say that the idea according which attitudes are stored in our memories and only brought forward when encouraged for example through a stimuli, is the more widespread and predominant one among social psychologists. Fabrigar et al. (2005, 81) continue by pointing out that there are several arguments for and against both of these views. Nevertheless in their view these possible ways attitudes can be constructed should be seen as exclusionary but perhaps just representing attitudes that have different structural elements. This division presented above portrays well the dual nature of attitudes as stable yet temporary.

By now, the complexity and diversity of attitudes as research subjects has been brought forward by introducing its' many definitions and viewing the theoretical discus-

sions around it. So perhaps now it would be sensible to ask what are the measures and methods used in studying this complex concept. Throughout its history attitudes have been studied mainly quantitatively. This is a fact that quickly becomes clear when beginning to acquaint oneself with the field of study. Perhaps the most widely spread type of attitudinal research the one we all have encountered sometime is the attitude survey. As Krosnick, Judd and Wittenbrink (2005, 21) say companies, governments and why not also universities, measure our attitudes towards them and their product and service portfolios constantly. From a quantitative perspective attitude is seen as a hypothetical and latent variable that cannot be explicitly observed. It does not refer to any single or specific act either but is a collection of many of them. (Green 1954, 335.) This means that an attitude cannot be interpreted from only one comment or statement but is derived from several acts and responses that all project the same thing, an attitude towards something. Krosnick et al. (2005, 21–23) note, that the first attitude researchers like Rensis Likert thought attitudes could only be detected by using large, multi-question surveys. Today however most studies are done using relatively simple questions and structures. What has also changed is the analysis procedure that has gone from one elaborate method to a vast selection of possible methods to apply. One might wonder, if one of the reasons why measurement methods in the past were so heavy, was the fact that the definition of attitude was at the time also extremely broad. Krosnick et al. (2005) agree with this and continue to point out that demand for measurability was one of the key drivers that led to a more precise definition of attitude.

As presented in this chapter so far, there are several different definitions for attitude as there are viewpoints from which it can be looked at. The viewpoint this current study takes is that attitudes are not considered unchangeable or stable characteristics or tendencies of individuals. Instead attitudes are seen as socially constructed and can change according to the current social environment, situation and the role the individual takes. (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 15–19.) This fluctuating nature of attitudes is easy to demonstrate by thinking about an individual who can present two different, even opposite attitudes towards a point of contention depending on the role he or she takes. For example, a buss driver can present a different attitude towards road pricing depending on the role he/she takes either as a buss driver or a private motorist. Vesala and Rantanen (2007, 37, 39) presented a similar example that during a discussion a person can express their discontent to their own salary compared to that of their peers but at the same time be content with it when compared to the salary he/she would get from the competitor. When put into context with the study at hand it means that an interviewee does not necessarily express only one attitude towards the strike phenomenon but can, during the interview, present even opposing attitudes. For example a respondent could express a positive attitude when talking about the decreasing number of strikes annually but later portray negativity when talking about lack of fairness when it comes to strike penalties.

The issue in the centre remains the same, a strike, but the attitude towards it changes depending on the viewpoint that is taken. The above-clarified definition adopted in this thesis represents the view of qualitative attitudinal research, which as the method of choice will be further explored next.

3.2   Qualitative attitudinal research

Qualitative attitudinal research is a methodological approach in social psychology where attitudes of individuals and groups are the main focus of interest (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 7). It has been developed during the last 15 or so years by Finnish researchers Kari Mikko Vesala from the University of Helsinki and Teemu Rantanen from Laurea University of Applied Sciences. At the heart of it lies an assumption linked to rhetoric social psychology, that attitude is a phenomenon that can be identified in argumentation. What is also important is to recognize that both the actor and presenter of the attitude and the object are needed to form an attitude. A statement about valuing something cannot be alone considered an attitude, but it needs the communicative context around it. (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 26, 29.) Krosnick et al. (2005, 23), albeit representing the quantitative approach to attitudinal research, brought forward the same issue. They recounted that during the development of attitude research academics eventually acknowledged the fact that expressions and manifestations of attitudes are not attitudes themselves. This might sound self-evident but in their view, when talking about such an abstract and latent concept as attitude, it is easy to make assumptions and perhaps even over simplify things in an attempt to get results.

When talking about qualitative attitudinal research one cannot fully disregard its connection to the much more widely used research approach, discourse analysis. It focuses on analysing how actors, that is to say people, make things and issues understandable through use of language. A single issue can be expressed and made understandable in many different ways, which leads to a belief that there is not only one unified truth that is portrayed through speech. Discourse analysis is not only interested in what is said but rather how something is said and what meanings are produced in this communication. Furthermore, in addition to verbal, also nonverbal signals such as brakes, breathing and other sounds are interpreted when conducting discourse analysis. The word discourse itself refers to relatively cohesive unities of meaning relationships or meaning dimensions that construct reality in a certain way. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 227–230; Suoninen 1999, 17–19, 21.) In other words, a discourse is a way something (an object, issue, person, phenomenon, etc.), is talked about. Jokinen and Juhila (1999, 54–55) have a more visual take on describing discourse analysis as a triangle where the tips together form the core of the research approach. The three tips, meaning, communica-

tiveness and culturality are inseparably intertwined and should all be considered when interpreting discourses.

Both qualitative attitudinal research and discourse analysis are thus interested in analysing argumentation and interpreting it in the context it is presented. What then differentiates the two methodological approaches is often the way the research material is produced and analysed. Qualitative attitudinal research has its own empirical methodology where the material is usually gathered in semi-structured interviews that focus on selected, specific topics that are the subject and source of argument. (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 11.) In discourse analysis, however, the material can be collected in many different ways, ranging from newspaper cuttings to in-depth interviews, basically any written or verbal communication. This directs our focus on the specific interview methods and ways to analyse the material that form the core for qualitative attitudinal research.

When conducting qualitative attitudinal studies the data used does not necessarily need to be produced specifically for that purpose. However, it is important that in the material there is a clear point of focus, an object that has been discussed and commented. If interviews are, nonetheless, decided to carry out they are usually semi-structured by form, as was the case in this study. During the interview the interviewer presents an impulse such as a provocative statement or a picture to encourage commentary from the interviewee. This stimulant deals with the overall object of interest, the controversial issue that the researcher is studying. In other words, in the context of the study at hand, the stimulants used during interviews dealt with conflicts and strikes. It is important for the interviewer to remember to give the respondent the opportunity to freely discuss the topic and not to force him/her to select from predetermined alternatives. If there are several interviews to be conducted the stimulant should also be standardized (the same picture or the same phrasing) so that the answers can be more easily compared and analysed. To be as informative and useful as possible, the interview data should be outlined into categories that include comments, accounts and reasoning from similar subjects (people) that value same kind of objects, in the same kind of way. The factors that can be taken into account at this point could include for example the strength and tone, phrasing, negativity/positivity or the directness/indirectness of the comments. The categories created by finding similarities and differences can then be called attitudes. During this whole categorizing and analysing stage it is important to stay open to the variations in the material and not to form too strict and rigid groupings. (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 33–34, 39–40.) It should also be kept in mind that the attitudes formed through this process are not all encompassing and do not represent the whole data at the researchers disposal (Vesala & Peura 2007, 128). But then again neither are all comments and accounts by interviewees to be considered attitudes, but rather manifestations of attitudes (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 38).

In qualitative attitudinal studies like in qualitative studies in general, the interviewer has a significant role in the interview situation. His/her duties during the interview can be seen as twofold: first he/she collects the comments and accounts presented by the interviewees and second he/she has to take part in the conversation during the interview. The second task separates attitudinal research from some other interview situations where it is often preferred that the interviewer does not take part. (Ehrling 2007, 139–141.) In this study these tasks of the interviewer were fulfilled to good effect. The first one was covered via recording the interviews and taking notes about non-verbal observations, while the second one was fulfilled by actively participating in discussion with the interviewee. During the interviews discussion flowed freely and the pre-designed structure was followed roughly, allowing occasional digressions. Overall the interview situations resembled in many respects discussions instead of simple question-answer interaction. Hence considering Silverman's' (2001, 86–87, 95–97) division of interview types, qualitative attitudinal interviewing would belong to the third, constructionist approach. In it the interviewer is more involved in the interview situation then in the other two (positivist and emotionalist) approaches, and becomes more like a discussion partner rather than passive questioner. This involvement and activity of the interviewer does not however mean that he/she should take a stance on the issue at hand, in fact this should be avoided. In order to get the interviewees relaxed and willing to present their attitudes and opinions, often on relatively sensitive matters, the interview situation should be kept unstructured and informal if applicable to the situation. Predetermined question patterns or a set order for questions does not necessarily produce best possible outcomes. Also the interviewer should not systematically settle for the first answer from the interviewee, which often is "yes" or "no". Instead he/she should tactfully press on and encourage the interviewee to present reasons, motives and other elaborations behind the answer. (Ehrling 2007, 139–141.)

Important questions to ask, when interpreting attitudes are: what is valued, how and by whom. The object of attitudes can be almost anything from simple artefacts to complex ideologies while the nature of the attitude can be for example positive, negative or indifferent. The presenter of the attitude has his/her own context, social environment and characteristics that all influence his/her attitudes. Also one person does not necessarily have only one attitude towards a controversial issue, instead he/she can have and also express many even opposite attitudes depending on the surrounding context. In addition to the three questions, what, how and by whom, it might be interesting to ask why something is said and what kind of resources and mediums are needed for the valuations to be expressed. These questions help when mapping out the overall context of the attitudes. (Vesala & Rantanen 2007 38–39, 50–51.)

Qualitative attitudinal research, due to its young age has not yet been extensively used in management studies. Nurmilaukas (2011) used it in his masters' thesis when

mapping what kind of attitudes knowledge workers have towards sharing information. He utilized the method in a similar way to this current study, by conducting interviews using standardized statements and afterwards analysing the material in two steps. Other qualitative attitudinal studies have dealt with issues such as religion, entrepreneurship and information technology. Vesala and Rantanen (2007) have collected all the studies and articles referred to above to their book "Argumentation and interpretation, the approach of qualitative attitudinal research". (A free translation of the Finnish title) The book appears to be the most extensive and in fact probably also the only published source book about qualitative attitudinal research so far.

3.3 Research design

3.3.1 Subject organizations and their selection

The data for this study was collected by conducting interviews with human resource managers, business managers and employer representatives at four organizations. The organizations approached with interview requests were selected based on the industry they represent and the industrial conflict history they have. When the aim is to study attitudes towards a phenomenon such as strikes it was decided that most interesting interview targets would be ones that have fairly recent experiences of such phenomenon. The more recent the conflict the easier it presumably is for the interviewees to remember the circumstances and perhaps the better their attitudes come across in their answers. The initial selection of organizations is important, as it will create a base for the whole research.

Manufacturing and processing industries experience a great number of industrial action every year. As said before in 2012, from the total 86 reported industrial action incidents 54 took place in manufacturing organizations, majority of them (13) in metals industry. The number of working days lost due to the incidents was 11 211. The second interesting field of operation in relation to industrial action susceptibility is the transport and warehousing industry that experienced 13 industrial actions with 3 902 working days lost in 2012. (Official Statistics of Finland 2012.) The corresponding figures from the past few years were 81/163 in 2011 and 122/191 in 2010 for manufacturing and processing industries and 25/163 and 31/191 for transport and warehousing. (Official Statistics of Finland 2011; Official Statistics of Finland 2010). The same trend continues with some exceptions throughout recent history. Figures for 2013 are not yet available but in a press release published by the Confederation of Finnish Industries at the end of March 2014 informed that among their member companies 60% of industrial actions

occurred in industrial organizations while 30% took place in transport industry (Confederation of Finnish Industries 2014).

It is difficult if not impossible to get accurate and unambiguous information about industrial actions of individual organizations. The data published by Central Statistical Office of Finland is, only provided on the level of standard industrial classifications (SIC), which does not extend to the organizational level. The statistics they provide are based on information given to them by employers' organizations. Organizations themselves do not perhaps want to emphasise this delicate matter by publicly viewing their strike history or providing strike statistics. This leaves two possible sources of information, labour organizations and the media, both of which were utilized in the selection of the organizations for the study at hand. Media archives of for example Helsingin Sanomat-newspaper were searched to find out about large strikes taken place during the past few years. Then the press release archives of labour organizations were studied to gather information about smaller incidents that had not necessarily been considered newsworthy by the press. The selected labour organizations represent employees in the most strike susceptible fields of operation. Also the court decisions of the Finnish industrial tribunal were studied to find out the nature of some incidents and the parties involved.

After determining the desired characteristics for target organizations a list of approximately 10 organizations was made. These organizations were contacted by sending an email to the HR manager or director explaining the purpose, nature, topic and scope of the study. The email was followed by phone calls to the recipient in an attempt to get into contact with them personally. This proved to be a somewhat difficult task as direct phone numbers were not always available and people were difficult or even impossible to reach through telephone switchboard. Lack of personal contacts, the rather sensitive topic of the study and the relatively volatile situation in some industries were perhaps reasons why some people could not be contacted and why some organizations declined to participate. From the initial list of ten or so organizations two agreed to participate in the study and first interviews were quickly organized. After these interviews the participants were asked if they had any suggestions for other interesting organizations that could be contacted. Through these suggestions and contacts two more organizations agreed to take part.

The people inside the organization interviewed represented the parties that are involved in any labour conflict: employees, management and human resources. HR management was selected as a third group, as they are normally present whenever there is a conflict in the organization that demands attention. They are also usually present at all stages of the cooperation procedure that is often linked to conflicts.

The employee representatives interviewed were chief shop stewards and therefore elected by the employees to represent them. Shop stewards also, due to their responsibilities, have perhaps a broader understanding and knowledge about conflict situations

and the processes and issues related to industrial actions. They are the ones that are present in any labour-management negotiations. The business management view was gained by interviewing members of top management that are closely involved in industrial action situations. The actual job descriptions and titles of the management and HR representatives interviewed varied between organizations.

Three of the four organizations operate in heavy industry, while the fourth one comes from transport and warehousing industry. The organizations employ from one thousand to well over ten thousand people and have several points of business across Finland and around the world. In order to guarantee the interviewees' total anonymity and the organizations they represent absolute confidentiality neither people nor the companies will be detailed further then this. From this point forward the individuals will be identified with the abbreviation HR (Human resources), MG (Management) or ST (Shop stewards). From this study's point of view it was deemed irrelevant to specify the organizations the individuals represent in connection with their comments. Therefore no reference to the organization will be added to the citations. This method of coding has been selected so that individuals and organizations cannot be directly connected which gives the individuals involved more anonymity.

3.3.2   *Interviews*

Conflicts in general can be anticipated to be a sensitive and challenging topic to study. The sensitivity will most likely be emphasised further the smaller the level of analysis gets. This way when talking about conflicts at organizational level it could be assumed that this characteristic will be emphasised even more then on national or operational field level of analysis. It was anticipated beforehand that this study could be a somewhat sensitive matter for the organizations involved and the individuals interviewed. For example the management might hesitate to take part in this study perceiving it uncomfortable to talk to an outsider about such delicate and negative issues. Labour representatives on the other hand might doubt the impartiality of the researcher and fear that their comments and opinions will in some way be passed forward to the company. So the theme of the study by itself sets a challenge for the researcher firstly how to get organizations interested and willing to take part and secondly how to create a trusting, confidential and open atmosphere during the interview and lastly how to convince and ensure the participants of the confidentiality and impartiality of the study. All of these challenges were given considerable attention in preparation for the interviews.

Exploring the wide arena of conflicts, conflict management and industrial relations started the preparation for the interviews. At this stage literature of such disciplines as psychology, organizational and industrial psychology, behavioural science, social sci-

ences, legal science and management was gathered and reviewed. Based on the literature review the focus of the research was selected as well as themes for the interviews. Even though the research approach is not theory based it is important that some kind of literature review is done prior to the interviews. This way the interviewer can ask the right questions, try to guide the discussion to the most interesting topics and participate in the discussion with meaningful contributions.

All in all ten individual interviews were conducted for this study: 4 with human resources, 3 with management and 3 with shop stewards. All interviewees were male, which is why in this report when interpreting the results the personal pronoun "he" will be used alone instead of "he/she". From one organization only the HR-person was interviewed. Although the setup regarding this organization varied from others, there being only one side of the issue heard, the interview questions used were the same and thus the answers are considered relevant and comparable.

Each interviewee was asked to prepare for a one-hour interview where the intention was to have open and free discussion about conflicts and industrial action. They were not given any questions beforehand, which did not prove to be a problem or a concern for anyone. The anticipated duration of the interviews turned out to be relatively accurate, with the interviews lasting on average 55 minutes ranging from 30 to 80 minutes. All interviews took place in separate conference rooms provided by the companies for this purpose.

The interviews were designed as semi-structured with a view to induce and encourage open discussion between the interviewer and the interviewee. This selection follows the qualitative attitudinal research tradition referred to previously. In a semi-structured interview some questions are prepared in advance without an intention to strictly follow the list but to keep it only as an outline for the discussion. Though often used as a method of choice, semi-structured interviews should not be considered overly easy just because there need not be as many questions prepared beforehand. In fact as Wengraf (2001, 5) and Mason (2002, 62–67) both comment, they can actually demand more from the interviewer then fully structured ones. This is because he/she needs to be well informed about the topic at hand and moreover he/she needs to be able to engage in dialogue with the interviewee and improvise on the run. It is not enough to follow the pre-decided list of questions, instead the interviewer has to be able to modify the questions, come up with new ones and skip old ones as the interview goes on. On the positive side, as Wengraf (2001, 5) points out, a semi-structured interview method can produce much more information then a fully structured one, given that the interviewer is well prepared and is able to create an open atmosphere during the interview.

Each interview done for this study consisted of three consecutive parts; background questions, statements and pictures. Background questions (appendix 1) were designed to open the interview situation and start the discussion. As Hirsjärvi and Hurme (2000,

107) suggest starting an interview with relatively easy questions helps in gaining trust and form a pleasant atmosphere for the entire interview.

The phrasing of the background questions was adjusted to fit the respondents' role in the organization so human resource and management representatives as well as shop stewards could each best relate and react to the questions. In all interviews the discussion quickly began to flow as desired during the first part and interviewees produced opinions, concerns, arguments and accounts regarding the main topic at hand. They also raised many concepts and issues on their own initiative that indicates them being active, inspired and interested in the discussion itself. This first section of the interviews was perhaps more flexible and more discussion-like by nature then the next section. In retrospect, this part of the interview also provided a lot of useful and interesting material for the analysis, although it was initially meant to mostly encourage discussion and set the mood for the second part.

The second part of the interview consisted of 12 statements (appendix 2) that were identical for all participants. On three occasions a statement was skipped by accident by the interviewer, although the aim was to systematically state all of them in an effort to standardize the stimuli. The statements were expressed only verbally and not shown in writing as has been done in some qualitative attitudinal studies. (E.g. Vesala & Peura 2007.) This section was intended to be the main focus of the interview and anticipated to produce the most relevant and interesting material for analysis. The statements were formed partly based on prior knowledge of the interviewer on the subject and partly on a wide array of literature dealing with workplace conflicts, industrial action, social psychology and conflict management. The statements were relatively non-specific by phrasing so that all interviewees would be able to relate to them in some way. Perhaps here it should be acknowledged that according to Billig (1996, 211) some researchers, doing quantitative studies see, that when studying attitudes the statements should be made as specific as possible. They argue that this would improve the accuracy of measurement and turn the focus from general attitudes to specific actions. This fact was taken into consideration in this study as well, but it was not deemed especially crucial because of the qualitative research approach. As Billig (1996) agrees, and what fits well with the qualitative perception of things is that it should not be only about trying to find the most accurate and bulletproof method of predicting attitudes and actions. Instead what is interesting is the fact that there are differences between them, for example a person might express a general negative attitude towards strikes but when asked would he/she take part if a strike broke out the attitude would turn to positive.

The third and final part of the interview was intended as a brief ending for the interview situation that would engage the participants in another way to the issue. In this part the interviewees were shown three individual pictures (appendix 3) and asked to choose the one that they felt best describes strikes. As explained to the participants, the pictures

were taken from news coverage dealing with strikes and industrial actions. The pictures in question were chosen because they were thought to represent different characteristics of strikes. The dimensions or characteristics the pictures represented were (in order from one to three) negotiations, protest and winning, but they were not explained to the interviewees beforehand. This reasoning and the interpretations of the pictures were purely subjective and made by the researcher based on the same background information then the statements. The interpretations made by the interviewees regarding the pictures were interestingly similar to the ones intended by the interviewer. Many even used the same 'names' or characterizations for the pictures that were intended by the interviewer.

Another purpose for using pictures was to test how the participants would in general receive the usage of pictures and would this alternative method induce different or similar argumentation and comments then the statements and questions presented before them. Pictures are not considered very typical form of gathering data or a target of study itself among organizational and management research. However, Broussine (2008, 1–2) predicts that use of creative methods such as pictures and drawings will become more common in the future. A precedent of the usage of pictures can, however, be already found among qualitative attitudinal research. In her study Pajari (2007) analysed speech produced in connection to an art photograph that was presented to nine high school students. In this instance the pictures worked, nevertheless, more as a summary or recapitulation at the end of the interview and were well received by the participants. Many found the pictures to be slightly amusing and some even recognized familiar people from one of the pictures.

The data gathered for this study, including the interview recordings and the transcriptions will be stored by the researcher. Because this study is connected to a larger research project further utilization of the material is not ruled out. However, only giving a ready coded material for other researchers to utilize ensures the anonymity and confidentiality of the people and organizations involved. As Kuula and Tiitinen (2010, 451) state such details as the time and place of the interview and the position and demographics of the interviewee can be included in the coded data. If a need or a desire presents to further analyse the interview recordings permission for this will be asked from the participants, as it was not asked during the interviews. Further development of the primary material by the researcher can however be left open without a need for further permissions.

3.4 Analysis of the data

3.4.1 Background questions and statements

The main goal in qualitative attitudinal studies is to find out how and what people value when they comment on a specific subject but also on what terms and through which roles this valuing is done. At this point it is important to emphasize how attitudes are understood according to the qualitative attitudinal approach. Because the social and relativistic nature of attitudes not all accounts and comments made by interviewees should be interpreted as attitudes but rather manifestations of them. If this point were to be discarded it would lead to an inaccurate interpretation of attitude as well as to an exhaustible number of attitudes to analyse. Instead the attitudes the individuals bring forward in the research material can be found through structuring the accounts and comments into categories based on differences and similarities in them. (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 38.)

The first step after the interviews were finished was to transcribe the interview recordings. All interviews were naturally transcribed in Finnish; only the excerpts used later in this report were translated into English. The translation of research material is not a completely trouble-free phase during the analysis. It entails what is called double interpretation or double translation, which means that the material is first interpreted from speech into text and then further translated from text into another language (Nikander 2007, 435). To enhance the reliability of this study in this respect, each citation from the interviews can be found in appendix 4 in Finnish. This makes it possible for readers, at least the ones who are proficient in Finnish, to judge for themselves the validity of the interpretations and the translations made by the researcher. This limitation and challenge presented by the two languages in this study will be discussed further in chapter 5.

In the beginning the interview material was transcribed in more detail, distinguishing each brake length, each sigh and each repetition of a word. Soon it became, however, clear that this attention to detail would be unnecessary for this study's purposes and so only cause more trouble then benefit. Nevertheless while simplifying the detail of transcribing it was still considered important to mark pauses, reaction time length and other significant verbal material from the recordings. Also other observations such as notes about the tone or stress of the comment were written down together with the interviewers comments and recollections of the situation. Instead repetitive words and length of each pause were left out. This level of detail was deemed well suited for the qualitative attitudinal research purposes. As Ruusuvuori (2010, 424) though acknowledges, when the interest lies in how something is said, a relatively detailed transcription is necessary.

The phenomenon of interest, however, in this case is not very restricted so an extremely close attention to detail in transcribing would have increased the amount of material and made it more difficult to read. An important aspect to acknowledge at this point is, as Ruusuvuori (2010, 427–428) and Nikander (2010,433) point out, that a transcript of an interview recording already includes interpretation and analysis by the researcher and should not be considered an all-inclusive description of the event. Instead it should be perceived more as the researchers interpretation of what is relevant and what is not in regard of the research theme and scope. All in all, approximately 170 pages of transcribed material was produced and analysed for this study.

After the transcription phase the way the material in qualitative attitudinal studies is analysed can be described as following two steps, or two levels if you will. These steps, categorical and interpretive, represent two consecutive levels of analysis. The categorizing analysis is done by identifying, grouping and coding the data findings so that similarities and differences between findings can be seen. At this level the findings need to be literally visible from the interview data. (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 11–12.) In essence what is done at this level is relatively straightforward. One simply identifies what has been said, how the interviewee has answered each question and how the answers vary between respondents. From the current study's point of view this level of analysis did not generate large problems but it demanded a lot of time. It was carried out by highlighting comments by interviewees and grouping them to Excel sheets based on dividers such as the question or statement they were connected to or the organizational position of the respondent. Once all of the transcribed interview material was gone through and the literal comments categorized, all in all 28 different themes were formed. These themes or categories represented the issues that were talked about the most. At this stage it was noticed that the organization the respondent represented did not seem to play a significant role in regard to the themes and issues that were talked about. Much for this reason the organization as an explanatory factor was left out and the focus directed to the organizational position of the respondent and the roles taken in the discourse.

The second level of data analysis is a bit more complicated or diverse. At this level the researcher has to start interpreting how something has been said and not only rely on what has been said literally. This calls for an analytical approach, abstraction and a more deep understanding of the data. (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 11.) At this level the interest was shifted towards interpreting the roles and perspectives that were taken by the interviewees when talking about a certain issue. The 28 categories formed at the previous level were now further analysed and through grouping, elimination and interpretation five attitudes were formed. At this point comments and categories that were perceived to value something other then strikes were left out. Although interesting, they would have shifted the focus and obscured the definition of the research. The criterion

that proved to be most relevant and incisive at this stage was the nature of the comment or account. This way, after re-grouping and combining the initial categories negative, indifferent and positive attitudes were found, each of them reflecting a different side of strikes. The three negative attitudes found were the attitude of unfairness, attitude of failure and attitude of personification. The attitude of unfairness was combined from such initial categories as: strike penalties, traditions and organization culture, frustration and arbitrariness, suspiciousness towards the opponent, power and illegality/legality. The attitude of failure was instead comprised of categories: losing, time perspective and surrendering, while the attitude of personification portrays the initial categories of: the role of the shop steward, individuals awareness and personification. From these the attitude of unfairness was perhaps the strongest and most negative, while the attitude of personification lay closer to the attitude of ordinariness, which was categorized as indifferent by nature. The attitude of ordinariness was for its part formed from categories: strikes as supervision of interest, emotions v. issues and strikes as means to balance pressures. The positive attitude of change was also quite strong and was observable in nearly all interviews. It was comprised of categories: trust, the nature of strikes, communication, understanding the opponent, negotiation culture, change and respect. At this point it is important to keep in mind, as acknowledged in qualitative attitudinal research, an individual may posses and therefore also portray several attitudes towards a phenomenon, in this case strikes and industrial action (Vesala & Rantanen 2007, 39). This proved to be the case also in this research, for in many instances an individual respondent expressed both negative and positive attitudes towards the focus of interest, strikes.

When set against the perhaps more commonly used classification of different levels of reading the interview data; literal, interpretive and reflexive, the categorizing analysis would correspond to the first one. As Mason (2002, 148–149) explains, the literal reading or analysing of interview material is relevant when the content of the interview or the actual words and language used are the target of interest. In this study the analysis does not, however, remain at this level, but continues towards the interpretive and reflexive levels. According to Mason (2002) the interpretive reading of data includes, as obvious, interpretations and views of the researcher of what the data represents. This level moves the focus from what has explicitly been said to what can be read in a sense beyond the words and what are the interviewees understandings of things. The reflexive level adds yet another layer to the analysis by turning the focus also to the interviewer as part of the data generating process and therefore data itself. The last two levels can be seen representing the interpretive level of qualitative attitudinal analysis.

During the analysis phase of the study some techniques and customs were tried out, especially in the categorical phase, which did not prove to be especially useful. For example the immediate responses to the twelve statements presented to the interviewees

were categorized separately into an Excel sheet. While this added to the researchers understanding and overall-view of the research material, it did not provide anything relevant in connection to the research method of choice. For example it could have been reported here that 9 out of 10 respondents answered in the affirmative to the last statement: From everyone's perspective it would be better if there were fewer strikes. But it would not conform to what is tried to achieve by qualitatively interpreting and analysing attitudes from argumentation.

3.4.2 Pictures as part of data collection

The pictures used at the end of the interviews make for another, somewhat separate set of material to be analysed. As Wengraf (2001, 205) puts it, interview can be stressful and tiresome situations for all involved. This is why he highlights the importance of ending the interview well. Partly for these purposes the pictures used as impulses were left to the end of the interview. With a view that they might bring a welcome change in the atmosphere and structure of the interview, perhaps even lighten the mood towards the end of the meeting that has dealt with rather hefty and serious issues.

Like with the other parts of the interview also the talk and reactions to the pictures presented were transcribed word for word. After this the comments expressed in connection to them were treated as any other part of the interview, categorized and analysed when applicable. At this point the pictures were treated merely as another stimuli, similar to the statements, which were meant to provoke discussion. After the analysis of the material was finished and the attitudes were found, it was though noticed that the pictures did not induce same kind of commentary as the statements. Perhaps it was due to their place at the end of the interview or the fact that one of them was a cartoon drawing, but the overall tone and sense they were discussed in was more humorous and open then the rest of the interview. As such this characteristic should not be understood as a negative finding, on the contrary. An open and relaxed atmosphere was nevertheless one of the goals during the interview. However, in many interviews the pictures directed the discussion to fairly irrelevant subjects that moved towards small talk. This was understandable largely because of their place at the end of a one-hour interview.

Once the analysis of the whole material was done the pictures and their role in the material were re-examined. During this stage it was decided that the pictures would work as a point of comparison for the rest of the interview material in a sense that it would be analysed whether or not they encouraged similar or dissimilar comments and accounts as were previously expressed. Mason (2002, 108, 118) briefly referred to this verification and contextualisation purpose of pictures alongside other methods in interviews. She also points out that pictures can in fact cause strong reactions from inter-

viewees when used to encourage commentary; much like was done in this study. In this case, however, the pictures used were neutral in a sense that they did not portray anyone or anything personal to any of the interviewees or the organizations they were part of. The results of the picture-rest of the interview-comparison will be detailed at the end of the next chapter, after the description of the attitudes discovered.

4 ATTITUDES TOWARDS STRIKES

4.1 Overview of the results

The phenomenon of interest in this study is the strike itself. Strike is here used as a unified form of expression to mean all possible forms of industrial action. Both by labour side as well as the actions organized by the employer side. As explained earlier strikes are the most common form of industrial action in Finland, which is the case also in the organizations studied here. Therefore it can justly be used as a general term without a need to further specify or classify the form, the initiator nor the nature of the action. Also the Finnish word for strike (lakko) is often used in everyday talk to describe industrial action without specification. Because this study is done in Finland, and the interviews are conducted in Finnish, this simplification appears natural and unproblematic. This matter was also discussed before the interviews so that the respondents knew that they did not have to classify different conflict situations but could talk freely under the general term strike. From the readers' point of view though, this is relevant to acknowledge so that the whole phenomenon of labour-management conflicts is considered when exploring the results and not only the ones that are legally and theoretically defined as strikes.

Taking an overall look at the categorized and interpreted research material the predominant nature of attitudes was negative, when selecting from alternatives: negative, positive and indifferent. The issues, themes, incidents and problems that were used to bring forward the negativity were diverse. Nevertheless some form of fundamental negativity, even pessimism, shone through. No unambiguous separation could be done based on the organizational position of the respondent, the organization he represented, nor the industry the organization was part of. Naturally, however, there were variations in the depth and scale of attitudinal arguments and also in the strength and stress they were given. Some respondents expressed their opinions more straightforward and argued their case with vivid portrayals of past incidents or hypothetical examples. Others remained on a more neutral level with their responses that were at times very implicit and left more room for interpretation. Also, some respondents were more cautious and at times clearly pondered whether they should say something or not while others talked perhaps more freely and relaxed with fewer signs of self-censorship.

While reporting the findings from the research material the term role is used to describe the so to say spectacles through which the person is expressing the attitude or making the argument. For example a human resource (HR) manager could take roles like 'part of the management', 'himself' or ' mediator'. As for the shop steward, he could be seen having roles such as 'member of the union', 'individual', 'one of the em-

ployees' etc. A role is then something even subconscious that can change many times during the interview. The position of the respondent, however, refers to the actual organizational post the person has. So a person interviewed for this research can have only one position from which he talks but several roles that he can take.

The way the results of this research are constructed below is based on the nature of the attitudes that were found. All in all three negative attitudes were found together with one indifferent and one that was positive by nature. Below in figure 2 the relationship and weigh of these attitudes is illustrated. The intention of the picture is to form an overall view of the results. Each of the five attitudes balancing on the axis is detailed further in the following chapters.
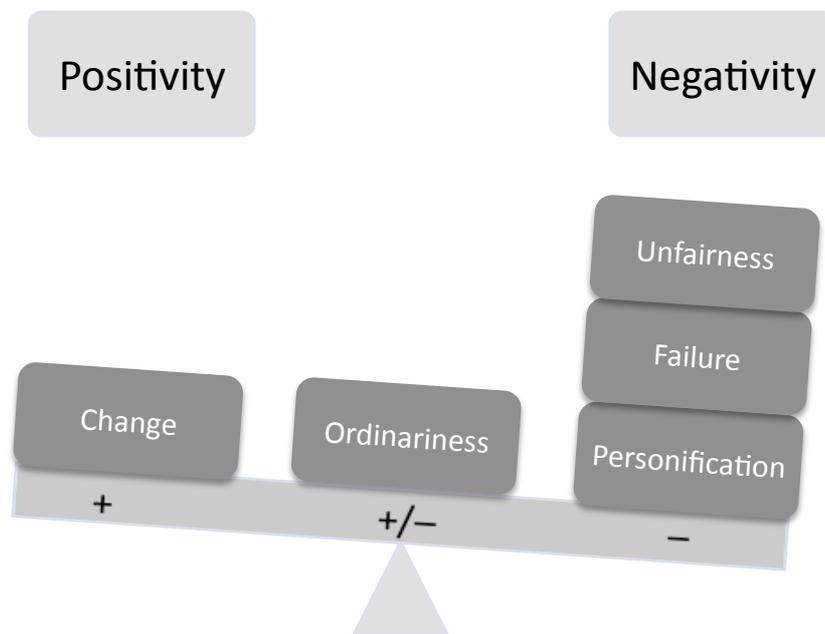
Figure 2   The balance of strike attitudes

The figure above (figure 2) portrays where the emphasis lies in the results of this study. Although positive and indifferent attitudes were also interpreted the main focus in the material was on attitudes that were negative by nature. Following the style used by Matikainen (2007) each of the five attitudes is also expressed in the form of attitude sentences. Matikainen (2007) uses a term attitude statement to describe these phrases but for the sake of clarity and to separate these findings from the statements used during interviews, the term attitude sentence is used here instead. The words and phrasing of the sentences was drawn from the interviews in an attempt to form as authentic image of their characteristics as possible.

Attitude sentences:
- Strikes are unfair. (-)
- In strikes there are only losers. (-)
- In strikes everything personifies. (-)
- Strikes are a part of the job. (+/-)
- Strikes have changed for the better compared to the past. (+)

Negativity towards strikes came across, as said, in many different ways. Despite the diversity and incoherence of themes three interlocking discourses that strongly reflected the negativity were identified. These were unfairness, perception of failure and losing, and personification. The first two discourses were clearly identified as negative while the third one, personification, was more subdued with both negative and positive nuances, without being neutral. These discourses were identified through the interpretive analysis of the material and are from now on called attitudes. In the following chapters these attitudes will be further explored with translated quotations from the interviews.

4.2 Negativity

4.2.1 Attitude of unfairness: Strikes are unfair

Throughout the interview material a general experience of unfairness, despair, arbitrariness, uncontrollability, extremity and even anger could be sensed. The object used in this discourse as the target of unfairness and extremity was at times the opposing side of a conflict situation, the legislation, overall culture or a strike. Nevertheless, the phenomenon on the background in all arguments was the strike itself. Individual level comments, where the feeling would have been projected towards some named person were, however, altogether absent from the material. From the above-mentioned sensations unfairness seemed to be the most apparent and most widely shared, hence this attitude will be named after it. This negative discourse forms a picture of strikes as the unavoidable evil. Both human resources and management respondents from different organizations shared this experience. What might be considered a bit unexpected is that there are also references to this in shop stewards speech, albeit they were not as strong or apparent. Shop stewards, though using argument signalling frustration and despair, look at strikes as necessities rather than something that should be avoided by all means possible. The viewpoint is therefore completely different between management and employee representatives. The aforementioned sees strikes, and the way they are organized, as unfair while the latter sees unfairness as one initiatory element in strikes. So in

essence the attitude of unfairness is targeted towards different times and phases in the strike process.

The attitude of unfairness can so be seen in two ways, depending on the position of the respondent. The employee side sees unfairness as something of a root cause to dis-contentment and negativity in the organization and therefore one of the main contribu-tors to strikes. This is portrayed for example through comments about the company de-manding more and more production with less and less resources, a dilemma that even-tually falls upon the personnel to carry out. This constant need for profitability im-provements is seen as an indicator of a never-ending greediness of the management, company, and in the end the shareholders.

> *Like I said there earlier, the companies should have patience to get rich that err, that way these would be best avoided. (ST)*

The above citation demonstrates the opinion that greed and unjust demands are the main reason employees go to strikes. In the argumentation unfairness was not clearly projected towards the local management but rather the top management, head office or the company as a whole. At two organizations it was even stated explicitly by the shop stewards that strikes nowadays are aimed at the general management policies, rather than local issues or local management. Local colour and tone was, however, detected in some comments that also portrayed unfairness as a cause for conflicts. This type of dis-course concerning strikes depicts them much like conflicts arising between interest groups. This characteristic resembles the bargaining model of conflicts presented by Pondy (1967) that was referenced to before in chapter 2.2. The above citation could be interpreted so that a strike is a bargaining process between the company and its employ-ees where both try to get as much resources as possible. Whether the resources in ques-tion are money, jobs, time or something else. What Pondy (1967), however, claimed is that bargaining conflicts rarely escalate into conflictive behaviour, unless some strategic advantage can be gained through it. In this light, do strikes as intrinsically conflictive behaviours and manifestations of conflict always have a strategic edge in them?

> *Say the sort of old fashioned way to lead with fear, that seems to be also the modern way nowadays, but like this leads in the long run probably to some sort of conflicts. I have on a personal level an opinion of things that if people are not treated as human beings in the workplace it immediately leads to conflicts at our company. (ST)*

The respondent indicates that blatantly poor management or even actual malpractice by supervisors and management can and will cause conflicts. He continued the discus-

sion after the above comment by further stressing that whenever incidents of intimidation or demeaning behaviour towards employees reach his ears it would result in immediate strike. The respondent takes a role as something of a protector of the weak, which in essence defines his position as a shop steward.

Both of the citations showed above emerged in connection to the statement number 7 (appendix 2): The number of strikes could be reduced with better HRM (human resource management). From this perspective it looks like the experience of unfairness is connected to management and leadership. These comments reflect a strong sense of unfairness and again it is seen as the cause for conflicts. Both respondents delegate the responsibility for strikes to the management and, by implication, to the company. It is the company that could, by changing its' actions, avoid strikes. Because local management practices were hardly at all criticized, on the contrary, it suggests that unfairness is seen coming from somewhere else. The first quote points to a larger context, the company, while the latter speaks of the issue in a smaller scale. So in essence, the ones that are perceived and portrayed as the villains in this discourse are local supervisors and top management at the company headquarters. Strike is a protest against their unfair actions or unjust and unreasonable demands.

Perhaps even more apparent was the attitude of unfairness in the management and human resources discourse. Looking at strikes and the overall situation from these organizational positions, it is the employee side that is seen causing strikes with its' unreasonable demands. Also employees are seen as acting unfairly and unexpectedly, sometimes even just out of spite, without any understanding or regard to the impact their demands and actions have.

> *It's not like, in a way rational action that it would be objectively examined clearly predictable. Guessed maybe, but so are horoscopes. (HR)*

> *"We demand", this kind of thesis is quite strong and if you ask what is it based on it's not based on anything, but "We demand". Then when you say "But we can't give you what you demand because you demand the impossible". Then, "We don't care about that". (HR)*

> *Sometimes it feels like (3sec) ((pondering)) that it's even done deliberately so that it causes as much damage to the employer as possible, which of course at the end of the day is a pretty stupid idea when you think that the employees will also suffer from it in some time period. (HR)*

The first comment above indicates there is something random and uncontrollable when it comes to strikes. The argument emerged when discussed how successful nego-

tiations differ from the ones that unsuccessfully escalate into a strikes. The general consensus throughout the employer side interviews was that there is not really any way for them to predict or even recognize when the situation is about to escalate. This randomness and unpredictability was found frustrating and caused experiences of insufficiency.

The second remark by another HR-manager illustrates the experience of arbitrariness and unfairness perhaps even more strongly then the first comment. It talks about unreasonable demands that the other party makes in a conflict situation. It is interesting here to notice that both sides describe almost identical experiences of unjust demands presented by their counterpart. While employees see that the company demands too much the management sees the situation completely other way around. The discourse they used was nevertheless remarkably similar and the phenomenon behind it was the same, regardless of the organizational position of the respondent. The second citation above also includes the same sense of disregard that the same interviewee portrayed in the third citation above. Disregard by the employee side for the state of the company and for the future implications of a strike. The comments above all also point to the other party, in this case the employee side, as the one to blame for the randomness and unpredictability. The company, or the respondent himself, does not seem to have any role in the scenario except for the one that suffers. The other sides actions are seen as unfair and unreasonable, showing no consideration for the impact they will have on the company and its' results. In some instances in the material it feels almost as if the respondent is waving a white flag in the air as a sign of giving up. No matter what we do we cannot predict or control these strikes that every time inevitably wreak havoc in the company. One can wonder how negative feelings mentioned above affect the persons overall mentality and behaviour. If a strike is a sudden, unexpected and unmanageable in outline, do HR and management just have to accept this? Or is there something they could do? From the employees' side, does a strike have to be sudden to be effective?

> *And sometimes it happens that even if we have dealt with and agreed the issue with the shop steward they then have this (..), don't know if it's true or falls, but then they say that they couldn't, however, get their people to settle down but they marched out as if regardless of them. (HR)*

> *These so-called spontaneous walkouts, where for some strange reason Hämeensanomat –newspaper is outside the gates and the shop steward explains to them with bright eyes that he/she goes above and beyond to stop these from walking out but they just walk over me. Right. ((Sneer))*
> *It's like that if they often come totally out of the blue, how are you supposed to influence that beforehand, you can't. (HR)*

HR-representatives see the spontaneity of strikes as one important cause for their experiences of unfairness. Though strike as a means to influence is not simply perceived unfair the way they are usually organized, or in fact not organized, is seen unfair. Strikes are today for the most part local spontaneous walk-outs, that leave the employer nearly no time to react or for example inform its' clients. This lack of predictability and the seeming spontaneity rose in one way or another as a cause of negative attitudes in most HR and management interviews. The themes around which the attitude was expressed varied. For example the first comment above was made during general discussion about strikes while the second was made when discussing about the predictability of success or failure in conflict negotiations. Both comments present strikes as arbitrary things that are executed in an unfair manner. What also connects the two citations is the hint of suspicion they reflect towards the shop steward and his role in the strike situation. In this respect this attitude has a connection to the attitude of personification that will be discussed later in this chapter.

Another manifestation of the attitude of unfairness came up in discussions about the Finnish strike culture. As stated previously in this study the majority of strikes in Finland are illegal. This issue proved to be truly provocative as it stirred up a lot of discussion with strong emotions and explicit opinions. Below are three examples of this discourse by different respondents.

> *And dammit, the ink on the signatures hasn't even dried when already somewhere there is an illegal strike and from the employers perspective it is all the same whether it's illegal or legal when the strike comes into effect. (HR)*

> *It irritates me a bit in this Finnish society, I don't know how much or whether this comes across in your questions but, I think these strike penalties are too small. I feel that the threshold in a way for the walkout, for the ILLEGAL walkout is far too low. (MG)*

> *On the whole I believe that (.) it is too easy a way this illegal strike to express ones opinion. It is too easy a way. And why it's too easy is because the sanctions in relation to the damage are just ridiculous. (MG)*

Above one can see that the issue of illegality is sensitive and causes quite strong reactions against it. It is closely connected to the issue of strike penalties, which are perceived as utterly unfair and out or proportion. As a matter of fact, the disproportion between penalties for illegal strikes and the financial damages they cause for the company were mentioned by each and every HR and management representative at some point.

One does not need to read that many news about strikes either to come to the same conclusion that this is indeed a national and societal hot potato.

The society level comes also across in the above three comments in the way they are phrased. In all of them the phrasing is very general and the respondents are not necessarily talking about their company or even industry but rather the issue on a national level. Because of the scale of the themes, around which the attitude of unfairness was here expressed, the target of the attitude is not perhaps as much the local, organization level strike but rather strikes in Finland on the whole. This sees the respondents move away from their roles inside the organization and take on roles as observers of the society and more precisely the labour market. By distancing the issue from the local context the respondents perhaps express the fact that the problem they see is not simply local. Albeit the decision to start a protest-type strike is usually local the issue of penalties is legislative and therefore out of their hands.

One HR-manager used notably different phrasing in the way he expressed his also negative attitude towards illegal strikes. His comment below has a much calmer tone although the message is more or less the same, that there should be more respect for the law.

> *Well there I need to say that I don't personally understand (..) why a certain part of this society can act in a way that doesn't respect the law. It just is so that (.) not that striking should be forbidden or something, by no means, of course it's their way to influence and they have the right for it, but the agreed rules according to which they are managed and how these means are used, it should be managed according to those rules agreed. (HR)*

The last four citations presented above and on the previous page that deal with the illegality of strikes, describe a situation that the respondents feel is unacceptable and unfair. They depict strikes in their current form as manifestations of the harmful culture that prevails in Finland. A culture that is enabled by inadequate legislation and that on the other hand also indicates labour sides lack of respect for the law and agreements. Culture and legislation are such large forces to change that in front of them an individual manager or organization cannot help but to feel helpless.

The employee side doesn't altogether refrain from commenting the issue of illegality; their perspective is though understandably very different.

> *When there are these so called illegal or strikes sentenced illegal, in a way I accept that people don't really have any other possibility to vent*

> *out their own resentment or signal the feelings that arise for example from these big lay-offs. (ST)*

In the above excerpt the respondent indicates clearly that he has some reservations regarding the topic of illegality. He does not deny the fact offhand but shows that he does not agree with the current state of affairs either. The respondent sets himself somehow apart from the employees and their action. He takes a role of an outsider, valuing and understanding the feelings and actions of the members he represents. The comment portrays strikes as something inevitable and necessary that are caused by the actions of the company. The disassociation present in the above comment can be heard also more generally in shop stewards talk. One could generalize and say that the more sensitive the issue, the more distance the respondents seem to put between themselves and the blame. Perhaps one needs to wonder if this overt discourse is deliberate and conscious or simply subconscious. The anonymity and the abstractness of the actor 'people', in the above citation, might be a way the respondent is trying to disassociate himself from the strike to make it easier for him to negotiate with the opposing side. What is interesting in this respect is that this differentiating speech the shop stewards tended to produce was identified and brought up also by HR and management sides. They expressed their clear disbelief towards it and saw it merely as a publicity stunt with no actual ground.

When viewing all of the discourse where the attitude of unfairness came through there is a strong sense of polarization between them and us. It seems that the themes observed above, around which the attitude was expressed, were the ones that most encouraged this kind of adversarial speech. The 'us versus them'-stance was at times adopted by all interviewees and in places also named as one force behind strikes. What, for one, supports this interpretation is that in this discourse HR-managers positioned themselves clearly as representatives of the company. In many other situations and in connection to other themes, such as communication culture, history and trust, they saw themselves more in the middle between management and labour. Perhaps this is because this attitude of unfairness has a definite economic context that surrounds much of the discussion. Whether it was the labour legislation, amount of strike penalties, strike culture or some other theme that provoked the argumentation reflecting the attitude, they all had either a direct or an indirect link to money and economics.

Another notion that arose from this argumentation was that strike seems to, in a way, contradict employers' lawful right to supervise work and the more unofficial right to control what happens inside the organization. One could say that it is the only phenomenon inside the organization they do not have any control over. Albeit the employee side representatives rejected this claim, could it be the reason employer side representatives express such strong sensations of unfairness and frustration towards strikes?

4.2.2 *Attitude of failure and losing: In strikes there are only losers*

Another attitude towards strikes that was found in the material portrays strikes as a lose-lose game. It was brought forward by nearly all interviewees in one way or another and was by nature strongly negative. The position of the respondent seemed to correlate with the strength in which the attitude was expressed. Among human resource managers the attitude of failure was the strongest while shop stewards expressed this attitude with milder argumentation. Management representatives situated somewhere in the middle with their commentary. Despite the differences in the power and stress of the arguments the underlining attitude was more or less the same: strikes have no winners and they only create losses. Next it will be discussed in more detail how the attitude of failure and losing emerged, the themes around which it was expressed and the roles that were taken in this speech. The examination here is divided based on the organizational position of the respondent, as the attitude argumentation varied significantly depending on it.

All four HR-representatives expressed in some way that they perceive strikes as failure, mistake or simply a loss. One of them straight out stated that he feels he has personally failed if a strike brakes out.

> *Well, personally I feel always that it's a failure, like I have failed at my job. (HR)*

The argument was made, at the beginning of the interview, when asked how the interviewee in general experiences strikes. It was followed by an explanation that this applies especially to local strikes, not necessarily nationwide strikes that are not negotiated at the organization. As an opening argument it is rather bold and perhaps even somewhat unexpected. The attitude is here expressed as an individual. It includes a sense of self-criticism, even humility as he sees it is his job to prevent conflicts through negotiations. It leads one to wonder if the respondent takes perhaps even too much responsibility for the strike, because do not negotiations and conflicts always involve two parties? The respondent later withdraws somewhat from his initial argument, as he points out that some strikes are actually so arbitrary that nothing he does would make any difference.

> *But then these local, illegal industrial actions (..) it always feels like you have slightly failed when one materializes, but then again some of them are so strongly arbitrary that one couldn't have prevented them even if one could have intervened so. (HR)*

Here the HR-manager continues to picture himself as the one that fails, but at the same time acknowledges that even he cannot control all of them. The aspect of arbitrariness here resonates with the previously presented attitude of unfairness. Especially as the respondent continues his reply by pointing out, how frustrated he feels about strikes, because they create unpredictable damages for the company. The role the respondent seems to take here is a role of negotiator or even mediator. From this point a strike is result of a failure in negotiations in a situation, where negotiating is difficult if not impossible due to the arbitrary and unfair actions of the other side.

Two other HR-managers used slightly more neutral and general discourse when addressing this issue of losing and winning in strikes. Unlike the first HR-manager these two took the role of an outsider, even some sort of neutral party inside the organization and settled to contemplate the issue from a far.

> *So yes it is usually a compromise, but a compromise is usually found before a strike, if at all. After they are on a strike then we don't usually talk about compromise anymore, at that point one or the other always burns its' wings. So it's always kind of lose-lose situation when we have a strike. (HR)*

> *Everyone is a loser. There are no winners, that's clear. In industrial actions and in strikes no one wins. (HR)*

Both of these arguments were made in the discussion following statement number 4 (appendix 2): Strikes are always resolved with a compromise that is good for both parties. This statement is based on the conflict resolution possibilities, domination, compromise and integration, presented previously in chapter 2.3. The aim was to find out how compromise is perceived by conflict parties, is it regarded as the optimal end result or not? The comments above are very clear and convey an opinion that strikes are negative, unwelcomed incidents that only lead to losses. The fact that everyone loses in strikes is portrayed as a self-evident truth. Especially the second argument portrays how strongly the respondent feels about this issue. He stresses the importance by repeating his opinion three times. These comments could also be seen as an argument against compromises being the ideal solution to strikes. If everyone looses can it be the desired result?

Despite the power of the arguments the tone of the comments can be seen as almost passive. Perhaps this is because the role from which the arguments are made is vague and difficult to interpret. In these comments no concrete examples of what is lost in a strike are given nor is the loss or failure personified to anyone in particular. The loss is merely pictured as something abstract, complete even overwhelming that is inevitably

connected to strikes. One could interpret that these interviewees describe strikes more through losing rather than failure, as did the respondent in the first example. Quickly after these comments the discussion in both interviews turned to the next statement.

The fourth HR-manager distanced himself even more from the theme when he said that few actually win in strikes.

> *Like I mentioned in the beginning, all in all few actually win in them at the end of the day. At least if you think of it from the company's perspective then each strike, in my opinion is in a way unnecessary. (HR)*

The above comment was made towards the end of the interview as a response to the last statement (attachment 2): From everyone's point of view it would be better if there were fewer strikes. The respondent is talking about the company rather than himself or the HR-function when he expresses his opinion. He does not view strike as his personal failure or even a failure in negotiations as did the other three HR-representatives. The attitude is instead characterised more through losing then failure. The interviewee does not go as far either as his counterparts and say that no one wins, instead he gives a more vague definition 'a few'.

When thinking about the attitude of failure/losing as a whole from the human resources perspective, it is interesting to ask why is this attitude so strongly and explicitly expressed by them? The arguments exhibiting this attitude were unprovoked in that regard that no direct question was made to interviewees asking do they think there are winners in strikes or who they think wins or loses. The discourse of winning and losing was often attached to discussion about negotiations, compromise or past strikes. Could one explanation be that HR-managers position in the organization makes them exposed to this side of strikes and in the process causes them to experience failure, even on a personal level. A finding that might support this speculation was that although management interviewees also represent the employer, the attitude did not come across as strongly in their discourse. The discourse of winning and losing was present but the way it was expressed reflected more hesitation and refraining compared to HR-representatives.

> *Well, I think strikes are a bit awkward in a sense that, umh, usually if we have ended up in strike or industrial action it is already, we are already in a situation that (.) we are how should I say it… Umh, what would be the right word for it… At that moment we are already in a conflict and no winners will come out of it anymore. (MG)*

> *Because I don't know is it in a sense in anyone's interest, like the ones on strike of course lose something in a short-run, what they gain out of strikes, but usually there are only losers (MG)*

The above excerpts show that there is a hint of hesitation in the way the respondents form their arguments. It could be caused by the organizational position of the interviewee, while technically on the same side of the negotiation table with HR –managers, their position is yet significantly different. Top management might not be present in all conflict negotiations, as was explained by the respondents, which gives them perhaps more distance. They are also more clearly the representatives of the company compared to HR-people who often considered themselves having a position somewhere in between labour and management. One management interviewee told that he wants to keep himself out of the conflict negotiations as long as possible. This allows him to act as sort of an outside mediator or even judge if the negotiations between labour and HR hit a dead end. Maybe an approach like this allows the top management to avoid the feelings of failure more so then the HR-managers or shop stewards for that matter.

Second theme where management representatives attached their argument and discourse of losing was the economical side and effects of strikes.

> *You know the loss and after that future losses fall upon the, or the possible future losses fall upon how the customers react. Do they believe in us or do they go next door to get the same service. (MG)*

> *But then one knows how to react in a way that there is no emotions at stake, so that it rather stays rational. So what's causing this, why someone did that and don't they see what kind of damage this causes, like "haven't you thought at all that while our business stands still our neighbour continues at full speed next to us, our customers will soon be next door." (MG)*

> *Like I said a strike is always the thing where one or the other loses... Then it's about who has (..) well the more stamina they can then wait longer and think. At some point it comes down to, the employer estimating more or less what is the company's reputation, how does it operate, how the accepted promises to customers can be fulfilled and respectively employees estimate what their economical situation is. (MG)*

Management interviewees put much more emphasis on the economical impact strikes have on everyone involved. It was expressed that strikes pose a risk to the company,

because resulting from the production stoppage customers might take their business elsewhere. This indicates that management addresses losing from a different point of view then HR and labour representatives. They focus on what the company loses in a strike: money, customers, market share, all of which are concrete things. This is well in line with the findings of Ruopsa (2013), who studied how different quality discourses battle with each other at construction sites. Ruopsa (2013, 211) found that top management tend to emphasise the economical side of things and seek control over every aspect of the organization. A strike challenges this pursuit because it cannot be controlled. Ruopsa's (2013, 211–213) findings and conclusions regarding top management shouldn't however as a whole be considered comparable to the findings of the study at hand. For example his study suggests that top management consider themselves incomparable and significantly above the rest of the personnel who in their view need to be controlled and guarded. The findings of this current study tell an almost opposite story, perhaps partly due to the different nature of the subject and partly because of the different proportions of the two studies. Nevertheless discourses of hierarchy, incomparability or sovereignty were not widely present in the material, even implicit reference to them were scarce.

The group among which the discourse of failure and losing was perhaps the most surprising were the shop stewards as labour representatives. One might assume that they as the ones usually initiating a strike would not maybe consider it as a failure.

Well, my premise has always been that it's a failure if we end up in industrial action or strike. It is so. Then we haven't been able to deal with things, now without taking a stand on who or where the guilty sits or is, but it is in a way an error-cost. It is an error-cost. (ST)

Well no, it's a bit difficult to say if it's good or bad, in principle everyone always loses in one way or another when you think of strikes. Like it is as a loss of earnings for the employees and loss of production for the employer. (ST)

The above arguments are both very composed with a relatively neutral tone, almost like the failure or loss is not seen as a bad thing more like the inevitable. The comments also display an understanding towards the other party, which adds to the neutral undertone by alleviating the juxtaposition between parties. In the first comment the respondent talks about strikes from the role of a negotiator, a role that was also taken by the HR-representative in the second citation of this chapter. The shop steward does not, however, see himself as a mediator but only as one of the two parties negotiating conflicts. The guilt on the failure is not targeted towards anything in particular but is left

vaguely open. Despite the neutrality in the way all shop stewards discussed failure and the negative impacts strikes have, the fact that they did nevertheless show up the discourse proposes that the two parties are not as far apart as they perhaps think they are.

When reviewed, as a whole, the discourse of failure dealt for the most part with negotiations and how strikes are the result of failed negotiations between conflict parties. It was said that before the conflict escalates into a strike it is possible to reach a compromise, where both sides need to give something to gain peace. However once industrial action is taken the possibility of negotiations and compromise that would please both sides is lost. From a strike no one comes out a winner. The examples of loss used by the respondents included the loss of wage for the employees and loss of revenue and customers for the company. Management and HR-representatives also brought forward a strong concern for long-term losses that a strike can cause. A strike that causes the company to lose revenue, orders and customers leads to restrictions in production that then can then eventually result in personnel lay-offs. This snowball effect of strikes was considered extremely harmful and the way it was discussed reflected frustration and disappointment. This leads one to conclude that there is a connection between the attitude of failure and the attitude of unfairness. Because strikes are seen as producing only losers, and causing only losses on different levels, a connection to experiences of unfairness can easily be understood.

The above arguments and this attitude altogether raise questions; what is actually perceived as winning in conflict situations and why such great deal of importance is attached to it? Is the winner the one that has to give up less to reach a settlement or is the winner the one that is able to prevent conflicts in the first place. This whole discourse of failure and winning or losing is consistent with the black and white understanding of what conflicts are. As referenced before in chapter 3.1, this view of conflicts is shared by many academics. From this perspective conflicts, such as strikes, are considered a zero-sum game where there are only winners and losers. Does the situation in the target organizations then resemble rather the competitive than cooperative take, where the goals of conflict parties are negatively correlated? All of these arguments about winning and losing, paint a picture of strikes as almost a game or even a battle, a battle where the shared consensus is that no one actually wins. One does not need to wonder how this composition for its' part creates frustration, hopelessness and even defeatisms among the ones involved.

4.2.3   *Attitude of personification: In strikes everything personifies*

Laying somewhere between negative and indifferent is the attitude of personification. It was brought forward, both implicitly and explicitly, by interviewees from all organiza-

tions and from all positions. This attitude did not, however, manifest itself as strongly and comprehensively as the other two negative attitudes presented earlier. It did not seem to have as many layers or point of views either. The attitude of personification can in many ways be linked to unfairness of failure or even the other two attitudes found in this study that are yet to be identified. This shows that by nature the discourse of personification was at times negative, positive or indifferent. The themes around which it most often emerged were negotiations, communication culture, power and the role of chief shop steward. Statement number 10: Strikes result from poor personal chemistries (appendix 2) induced some of the argumentation but some of it emerged also in connection to other questions or statements. Next this attitude will be examined in two parts, first in connection to the role of the shop steward and then through comments that depict the attitude in a different light. In this case the organizational position of the respondent did not become as clear a separator as it was in previous attitudes. Instead there seemed to be two main discourses that dominated the discussion, one about the role of the trade union and shop steward and one about the personal chemistry in general.

The general view that came across in this discourse was that every aspect of the conflict situation, in one way or another, personifies. Meaning that whether it is the negotiations, the strike situation itself, strike culture in the organization or how strikes show themselves to the outside world, everything stems from an individual or individuals. This could be called the individual human agency in strike discourse. Most vivid and strong human agency was that of the chief shop steward.

> *The shop steward explains with bright eyes how he did all he could to keep people at work but they just marched out over him. Total bullshit as everyone knows. (HR)*

> *75 % of the people just are the way that they go with the flow and if someone tells them something they will do it and they don't actually even know why. (HR)*

> *Especially among "workers" (a title replaced by "workers" due to confidentiality reasons) the authority of the chief shop steward is extremely strong. It's hard to believe they would do decisions against his/her opinion. (HR)*

The above comments by HR-managers construct a picture of a powerful, unchallenged, even unfair chief shop steward that has much influence inside the organization. The un-challenged and indisputable characteristics of the position of the shop

steward were frequently mentioned by almost all interviewees representing the employer side. Strong negative connotations were attached to this issue, as can be observed from the above selected citations. The first two comments portray shop stewards as leaders, who have almost all the power in their hands when it comes to strikes. Most intense comments saw their role nearly as puppet masters, having undisputed authority over the employees, who follow him/her without a question. The second citation above is an example of this kind of speech. It is, however, important to point out that the role of employees as followers or sheep, a term used by one shop steward, has changed during the past few decades. The importance of an individual employee in a strike situation has increased according to some respondents, though sings of blind trust towards the chief shop steward are still present. This leadership status and influence the shop stewards enjoy aroused feelings of frustration, unfairness and extremity, all things that were included in the attitude of unfairness. What on the other hand differentiates this attitude of personification from the first two negative attitudes is that the discourse around it had also significant positive tones. Although the position or power of the chief shop steward was not seen diminishing the way the current shop stewards operate drew many positive comments. The positive aspects of this attitude highlighted the communication capabilities, personal attributes and differences in attitudes of the current shop stewards compared to their predecessors. It was even explicitly stated that the change in shop stewards had been a key factor in shaping the present, more communicative negotiation culture inside organizations which has had reducing effect on strike susceptibility.

How shop stewards then themselves discussed their position and personification as a whole? Naturally comments reflecting worry or frustration about their position or authority were not found. However, in many instances the shop stewards, who were all as a matter of fact chief shop stewards, acknowledged their own position and the amount of power they possess. As comes across in the citation below, there was also a sense of quiet admission that in essence and in reality shop stewards are the ones inducing strikes.

> *Hmm, fewer but on what terms. Or lets say it like this that if the situation was, which I don't believe in, that there weren't any reasons to strike say in ten years, then I believe it would be time to change people on our side as well. (ST)*

When comparing the above comment to the message trade unions and shop stewards themselves officially put forward the impression is somewhat different. When officially shop stewards are supposed to be the ones who try to negotiate conflicts away the above citation claims that in essence a shop steward has failed if there are no reasons to strikes. Does the shop steward in question perceive that it is his duty to find, raise or

even create issues that the employees feel are worth striking for and if he fails to do so in ten years he should be replaced by someone more capable. Is thus a propensity for conflict a trait required of successful chief shop stewards?

> *Labour movement is all in all a beautiful idea. It's good when you think about the society we were brought up in it's a beautiful and good idea, but where it goes down the drain is that there an individual (-) an individual in a decision-making position has disproportionate, umh, like opportunities to influence things negatively, without any responsibility. (MG)*

The above comment is an example of how the individual human actor of the chief shop steward was connected to the overall labour market. It focuses clearly on the position of the shop steward leaving the personal level and personal characters out of scrutiny. Whereas the comment below tackles the issue in a smaller scale drilling down to courses of action and agendas of shop stewards as persons.

> *Always these well, when they want to show power in certain situations, there might be an election on the way or something else, and they want the visibility one might invent an issue that can then be made into a problem and pushed forward. (MG)*

The discussion about the role of the chief shop steward or the labour union in general was understandably more negative among HR and management interviewees then among shop stewards themselves. Also the topic was brought forward more often by the employer side.

Another aspect of the attitude of personification that was observed dealt with personal chemistries between individuals in the organization and how they affect negotiations, conflicts and climate. Interviewees from all organizational positions touched on this theme, with comments again varying from strong to less strong. The statement number ten stated at the beginning of this chapter was what induced much of the commentary related to this.

> *But like I said, it depends very much on the issue and also on the negotiation parties that who is on the other side and is he/she how.. both parties probably need to be somewhat flexible but it depends also of course very much on personalities. (HR)*

Some are caused by it as well. I argue that at least it counts if the main representatives have bad personal chemistry between them. That will more easily fuel strikes. (ST)

Maybe even so that when you have had good personal relationships with certain people at the employer side it has affected so that some industrial actions have not materialized. (ST)

The personal chemistry between people in decision-making positions was one of the issues that were seen having improved the most inside the organizations. In that regard this aspect of the attitude of personification is closely connected to the positive attitude of change that will be explored later. In the above comments it is explicitly expressed that personal chemistry and personal traits of the people negotiating in labour-management conflicts influence the conflict at hand. Perhaps this is a self-evident truth but nevertheless all interviewees brought it forward, nearly unanimously. Remarks on the issue varied from neutral and general comments like the first citation above to more detailed and personal comments like the last one. Despite the positive tone and experiences of change in this regard personification was nonetheless perceived mostly negative. There were also other themes and discourses in the interview material that were in some way connected to the negative attitudes described in this section. These themes included for example the lack of trust, time pressure and span, suspiciousness of the other party, strike as pressure valve and power-responsibility symmetry. All in all this attitude of personification paints a picture of strikes that resembles one of the conflict types presented previously in chapter 2.2. As it was explained previously in this three-fold classification presented by De Dreu (2011), relationship conflicts are the ones that are linked to differences between people rather than tasks. This goes together with this attitude illustrated above, that is also strongly attached to the people involved in the conflict situation, in this case a strike.

4.3 Indifference

4.3.1 Attitude of ordinariness: Strikes are part of the job

Strikes were, though perceived clearly negative, also discussed mundanely as part of the job. This indifferent or neutral nature of this attitude towards strikes came across for example in the way strikes were often attached to everyday business subjects such as clients, productivity, communications and business management. It is of course under-

standable to connect strikes to these issues because strikes, when materializing, have an undeniable impact on the organization and its' business as a whole.

The way in which especially management interviewees talked about strikes was at times even neutral. Perhaps the sensation of neutrality was partly caused by the often relatively passive and diplomatic phrasing that especially the management representatives used. People in managerial positions may also more instinctively steer away from powerful and black-and-white expressions and refrain from showing too much emotion in their speech.

It's a thing that you get used to but never approve. (MG)

The citation above portrays well how strikes were at times seen as the inevitable, near natural part of everyday operations in the organization and more broadly in Finland. The comment above was said in connection to Statement number 8: Strikes are a natural part of our field (appendix 2) that tackled the default nature of strikes. The themes of discussion this statement mostly prompted dealt with tradition, history and practises relating to strikes. These themes formed a picture of strikes as something that has and will be around always. This begs the question, are strikes therefore something the management has to endlessly fight against, a never-ending effort to tilt at windmills?

If management then see strikes as the necessary evil, do shop stewards share this view or how they constructed the attitude of ordinariness? One way the mundane and necessary nature of strikes came across in shop stewards speech dealt with strike as a form of leverage. Strikes were seen as the only effective and thus possible way to supervise employees' interest, which is in essence what shop stewards are elected to do. They were not pictured as something on the agenda daily or weekly but clearly something that they cannot succeed entirely without.

No, I don't believe in a situation where our people's interest would be met with such fluent coexistence, I argue so. It's not in our people's interest that we have strikes every damn week, sure it isn't. And we don't have to strike just out of principle, unnecessarily, but I argue that interests of our people aren't being pushed forward if we don't at some point run afoul. It just goes so. (ST)

I have sometimes playfully said at some courses that at least once a year we have to organize a strike, then this thing, and then this sort of sensitivity and willingness to negotiate remains. (ST)

Some shop stewards even went as far as saying that they would have failed as the employee representatives if there were not any strikes in, say ten years. This comment clearly shows an attitude that strikes are in fact a core means of supervision of employees' interest. The same opinion was expressed by saying that strikes should be a natural part of all operations, as it is the only actual measure employees can use to signal that things are not the way they want. While strikes were considered the most extreme measure it was recognised that in reality it is the only measure powerful enough. This argument was used to justify its' use. There seemed to be even an assumption from the personnel that there should be strikes, because it's the natural and traditional way to go about things.

Well there come those, some ask why don't we already walk out. (ST)

The comment above points out the fact, that strikes stand firm in the traditions and culture of organizations like they do on the minds of people. In this case the shop steward appears to be well aware that the employees perceive strikes as something that can be expected. The shop steward in question was fairly new at his position and along with his election the strike culture and conventions of the organization were radically changed. This context helps to explain the citation above and what it means. Are the employees waiting for a strike to make certain that the elected shop steward is capable of fulfilling his duties? The comment in this case can also be seen as proof that old habits, well and truly, die-hard. All of the above comments and accounts by chief shop stewards reflect an attitude of strikes as normal, expected and integral part of industrial relations. The role they take when expressing this attitude is the role of supervisor of the interests of labour. They do not speak as themselves on a personal level but rather from their organizational position. This goes together with the connection this particular attitude has to everyday work.

They are not between individuals and one needs to remember about strikes that 80%, at least 80% of participants in a strike don't even know why they are on strike. (HR)

The above comment by a human resources representative indicates that the attitude towards strikes among the employees is perceived as indifferent or undisputed. If only 20% of individuals taking part in a strike know what they are protesting against do the rest 80% think they do not even need to know? If the participants of strikes feel it is not important for them to know why they are protesting or what benefit they are seeking has strike then become a mundane part of everyday work life? Another human resources

interviewee reflected the neutral attitude of strikes as part of the job by portraying them as a means to balance out the pressure in the organization.

> *I would almost say that once the bad feeling has been released it's gone and we continue forward again. (HR)*

> *Some sort of pressure valve, that when it is able to leak over then the mood is good for a while. ((Sneer)) (HR)*

The above comments form a vision of a strike as a natural and exhaustive medium to vent out negativity and bad feelings after which work continues as usual. Strikes are thus temporary interruptions of everyday work, but at the same time considered not that special or out of the ordinary. This type of discourse was most common among human resource representatives but the impulses that induced these comments varied. Therefore one particular interview question or statement or even a theme of discussion for that matter cannot be pointed out as the one stirring up manifestations of this attitude. In its entirety the attitude of ordinariness was perhaps brought forward with rather mild phrasings. Also the detection of this attitude was found somewhat challenging, mainly because the themes around which it rose were so manifold. However a notion of neutrality flowing under much of the discussion was sensed while analysing the material, which encouraged trying to find out how it was articulated in speech.

4.4   Positivity

4.4.1   *Attitude of change: Strikes have changed for the better compared to the past*

Previously in this chapter we have discussed the negative and neutral attitudes that appeared from the interview material. The overall picture was not however as grim as those results alone would suggest. In fact, what was perhaps somewhat surprising was that there was a positive nuance and positive narrative present, in one way or another, in each individual interview. The themes around which the positivity mostly showed were personal chemistry, trust, personal relationships, understanding/sympathy, and communication climate. What connected these themes was a general perception of change for the better that had happened. So change itself was not seen as negative but rather a welcome phenomenon. In essence the positivity in the material was for most parts constructed around the phenomenon of change, therefore this attitude will be called the attitude of change. Perhaps the most important issue, or the issue that received most atten-

tion, was the overall cultural change that had occurred in organizations. Change was discussed on many different levels that varied from individual to national. From these, change at the organizational level received perhaps the most attention. This came through for example in comments and accounts about the negotiation practices and overall communication culture and capabilities, which were seen significantly improved.

Change was perceived as something that had already happened. No need for change at the moment was expressed or at least it was not apparent. In some interviews the actual time when the change had started or the incident that it was attached to were explicitly brought forward.

> *Understanding and this sort of like powerful vision that at the end of the day we are all here for the common good, this is mutually more strongly present today. (MG)*

> *Then from First of May began this lockout and then seven weeks on it ended and that in some way probably changed, or definitely changed, peoples' stance to strikes and strike behaviour so that after that it's been so to say more peaceful. (ST)*

The above comments both include a sense of overall change that has led to a better situation then before. In the first sentence a management representative uses a rather strong metaphor to illustrate the feeling of shared understanding and through that the reflecting the attitude of change. He sees that it is in everyone's best interest if employees and management all have a shared and accepted vision, towards which they aspire. The comment demands a collective take on what is aspired to and how. Through talk of change in many levels these comments portray an attitude that values strikes positively, attaching positive experiences of change to it.

The second comment from a shop steward differs from the previous because it has a more concrete issue around which the attitude of change is expressed. The respondent has a clear opinion about what has been the cause of change. Despite the overall positive tone in the comment there is also some sort of underlining contradiction or hesitation to it. Does the respondent as a matter of fact portray the shared view that the change has been positive rather than his own personal view? One might wonder what his hesitation to call the current state of affairs 'peaceful' tells us, or what he is trying to signal with it. Could it be for example that he feels the situation is not actually peaceful yet or that peace in this context is not maybe even desired?

What all interviews in this study had in common was a clear consensus that the strike culture in their organization, in their fields of operation and nationally in Finland as well

has changed for the better. This shared perception was perhaps a bit unexpected or at least the intensity and extent of it was something that was not foretold. The interviewees saw that strike susceptibility has declined at the same time as the nature of strikes has changed.

> *This strike susceptibility that people talk about quite a lot, today it's maybe more of a myth. (ST)*

Nowadays strikes are considered to be shorter and more principled and the reasons behind them to be deeper then before. Though this might sound like a bad thing the deepness can also be seen as a positive sign that strikes today are initiated with more consideration then before. Also the pure number of strikes has gone down, a fact that can be confirmed based on statistics by the Central Statistical Office of Finland.

> *So, the old days they went on a strike from very small things, someone might have felt bad or someone didn't have enough gloves or whatever reason there was, people marched out very easily. (MG)*

The above comment almost ridicules strikes in the past as being fabricated and executed on a whim. The same outlook was presented also by the HR-representative from the same organization. He used different wordings but the tone was the same, picturing past strikes as irrational and ridiculous. The positivity comes across in this case in the way strikes of today are compared to strikes in the past. The above excerpt includes a notion that strikes today are something perhaps more professional, better justified and organized. It paints a picture of strikes as something that can be better accepted as part of the organizational life by the management representatives. The attitude of change was not expressed entirely the same way by the shop stewards. While the management interviewees focused the change in their argumentation to the shop stewards they themselves used employees as the location of the change. In the shop stewards speech a trace of positive valuing was noticeable in connection to how they perceived employees' sentiments towards striking today. The present willingness and eagerness on use strikes to fight a case has changed compared to the past. Nowadays the shop stewards argue that not just them but also the employees they represent have begun to view strikes more as the last resort. This perhaps more constructive and moderate manner in which strikes are utilized emphasises the goal that is pursued through them, rather than the strike itself. The change in this sense was perceived positive.

Perhaps one background this positive attitude can be observed against, is that because strikes have been mainly thought of as negative, a change that has caused them to decrease moves the overall stance towards the positive. If a strike is experienced, more

or less by all parties, as frustrating, unfair and as a failure it is not difficult to understand why change in this sense induces positive speech. The situation is not as bad, according to the interviewees, as it has been previously. Rather the issues and factors that inevitably influence strikes and strike susceptibility have improved. This positivity does not, however, mean that the stance towards individual strike incidents would be any more positive now then before. A strike is not seen as producing something positive or being a particularly welcome event. Instead the positivity in the interviews should be seen linked to strikes in more general terms.

4.5 Pictures confirming the attitudes

As explained in chapter 3.4.2, the pictures used at the end of each interview were initially included mainly with the intention to see how they would work as part of the interview and how they would be received. Eventually over the analysis phase of the research it was decided that it would be also interesting to see how the argumentation, comments and expressions of attitude connected to the pictures would compare to the ones made in connection to the beginning part of the interview. It has been already noted that the pictures themselves positively influenced the over all atmosphere of the interview situation by adding humour and laughter to an otherwise rather serious occasion. The lighter tone was encouraged by the interviewer through usage of such terms as rebus or picture-riddle to lay the ground for the presentation of the pictures.

To describe the pictures briefly, the first one is an image of a negotiation situation over by the conciliator generals' office in Helsinki, which portrays strikes as a negotiation. The second is a picture of a teachers strike in USA, with people baring signs and one shouting to a megaphone. This picture was intended to portray strikes as protests. The third picture is a cartoon image of a boxing match where the referee is declaring one as the winner and the other as loser. The last picture quite clearly illustrates the game aspect of strikes, with winning and losing. The actual pictures can be seen in appendix 2. The reaction to the pictures was without exception positive. Comments like: "Some sort of ink stain test" or "Oh I should be a psychologist so I would know what you are looking for with these" said smilingly portray well the way the pictures were received. Much because the pictures were placed at the end of the interview the discussion around them did not last that long. Many of the respondents took some time when considering the alternatives but then often by method of elimination, they settled on a picture and briefly explained their choice. After which, on several occasions, the discussion quickly turned to some rather irrelevant issues and finally to ending phrases by the interviewer.

How then did the commentary initiated by the pictures correspond to what had been said by the interviewees earlier in the interview? The pictures were presented to the interviewees on separate papers and they were asked to choose the one they felt best represented strikes. May it be added as a general observation, that the pictures did not induce discussion on any unaddressed area or aspect of conflicts, strikes or organizational life in general. What the interviewees said more or less supported what they had said before, albeit the tone of the discussion was perhaps more relaxed. Six out of ten interviewees chose picture number two (appendix 3) as the one that they felt represented strikes the best. This coheres well with the attitudes presented previously.

> *Well that is what it will at the end in. That one relates to the beginning or the state afterwards (picture 1), that is a strike itself (picture 2). I don't see that as a whole there are winners (picture 3). (ST)*

> *[That one, never] (picture 3). Hmm… that's a negotiation situation it's not a strike. (picture 1). A strike is always, in one way or another a chaos and in that sense tha is a strike. (picture 2) (HR)*

The above examples reflect the attitude of unfairness and the attitude of failure in the way that they portray strikes as uncontrollable and on the other hand a situation where there are only losers. This uniformity in the argumentation confirms and strengthens the attitudes and their interpretations. Picture number three, chosen by only one respondent, can be instead seen presenting strikes as a win-lose situation. As the attitude of failure, however indicates the shared attitude among the interviewees is that, if anything, there are two losing sides in a strike, not a winner and a loser. The one interviewee reasoned his choice by noting that the first picture represents the labour market system in general while the second one was incompatible with the Finnish reality.

> *Why this happens is because the leverage used at the time of the first picture have been so powerful that they haven't been able but to gulp so it has been considered that a moments loss (.) momentary losses– losses of the moment are so large that it is preferable to take the long-term costs and see how it is possible to live with them, rather than try to negotiate while the pressure action of picture two is on. (MG)*

The above comment portrays a situation where the respondent feels that the side he represents in a conflict has to surrender and take on losses in order to minimize the damage. This comment and the fact that he chose the third picture as the one representing strikes the best, are in some way in contradiction to what he had said during the first

two parts of the interview. In other contexts he agreed with the general view that there are only losers in strikes and thus supported the attitude of failure through his argumentation. Here he, however, seems to be taking a different role, perhaps the role of a negotiator who perceives strikes through the costs they inflict on the company. Before he took a more public role, interpreting strikes as a universal phenomenon rather than a phenomenon from their company's perspective.

Three people chose picture number one reasoning their selection mainly by ruling out the other two possibilities.

> *Well, usually if you are there then there is a mutiny going on. (Sneers)*
> *(ST)*

The above remark, by a shop steward, refers to the place where the picture was taken, at the offices of the conciliator general. The comment projects amusement and a view that strikes are well and truly conflicts. Use of the word mutiny perhaps echoes to strikes and industrial actions of the past and is in some way in contradiction to the picture it was linked to. The picture itself, with people sitting around a table wearing ties, does not immediately resemble a mutiny or perhaps not even a conflict. Additionally, does the respondent here actually perceive strike as the mutiny and the situation in the picture only as some type of unavoidable or mandatory matter?

All in all it can be concluded that the pictures worked well as stimulants of reactions and encouraged discussion remarkably well. It would be interesting to see how the interview situation, the discussion and eventually the results would change if pictures were the main means of data gathering. Perhaps this would be one useful place for further studies among qualitative attitudinal research.

5   REFLECTIONS

5.1   Reflections on the results

The attitudes found in this study embody an element of juxtaposition of employees and the company, which was expected. It comes across in the attitudes that are negative by nature: unfairness, failure and personification. The negativity was thus attached to strikes through these attitudes that one way or another picture a reality where the financial interest of the company often do not meet with labours need for benefits, improvements or just their need and desire to maintain the status quo. This comprehensiveness supports the definition of conflict presented by Edwards (1986, 5), which states that a conflict can be seen as a general phenomenon, not only as action or an incident. In this regard the conflict between capital and labour, as was introduced by Edwards, can be seen also in the data gathered for this study. Edwards (1986) suggested, as was described in chapter 2.1, that different levels of conflicts exist inside an organization. In connection to this it was pondered whether the way the employer structures work and the labour process could cause or prevent conflicts. Perhaps this possible causality should not be completely ruled out, but references to it were not especially clearly present in the research. However the strong and extensive discussion over the illegality and legality aspect of strikes can be seen as a sign of some discontentment on the employers part towards the structure of the labour process, or perhaps more precisely the labour market of today.

Continuing to reflect on the nature of strikes in the light of the research results the juxtapositions of power-powerlessness and profitability-employment are interesting to contemplate. As Stagner already in 1956 (291–292) said, industrial conflicts are fundamentally conflicts about power. The findings of this study support this view. The experiences of power and more so the experiences of powerlessness can be found in all three negative attitudes. The feeling that nearly everyone, from an individual shop steward or a manager to the company and labour market as a whole, are opportunists trying to maximize their own goals prevails throughout the data. According to the division by Deutsh (1973), presented in chapter 2.3, the organizational parties in this case operate in a contriently interdependent relationship with each other. This assertion might sound a bit aggravated but it is supported by the interview data. For example in connection to the attitude of unfairness one shop steward demanded patience from the company in their pursuit of profits. Meanwhile in connection to the attitude of personification one human resources representative mentions how overwhelmingly strong is the power possessed by the chief shop steward. Could it be that this contriently interdependent relationship is caused by the natural inability of individuals to simultaneously commit to

two social systems, for example the union and the employer. Angle and Perry (1986) introduced this viewpoint in their study of municipal buss companies. They found out that employee's ability to commit was increased when the cooperation between the social systems in question was increased. Could this mean that by improving cooperation between the company and the trade unions, employees would be more strongly committed to the employer organization and thus perhaps strikes would decrease on the side. These aspects of the results raise some questions: Are strikes fundamentally about winning and losing? What would it take in conflict susceptible organizations to shift the relationship between labour and management towards the more productive and constructive, promotive interdependence introduced by Deutsh (1973). What could be done to decrease the feeling of powerlessness and create a more balanced division of power inside organizations? Perhaps human resource management could become a tool and enabler in this endeavour, an issue that is explored in the research project this thesis is also a part of. These questions fall partly beyond the scope of this study, but create intriguing fields for further research.

The three attitudes presented above shifted the balance of the strike phenomenon, the discourse during the interviews as well as the focus of this study clearly towards negativity. (See figure 2) The one positive and one indifferent attitude found were not enough to counterbalance them, but their importance should not nevertheless be trivialized. If the negativity concerning strikes and conflicts was something that was expected, the positivity came more as a surprise. Or perhaps as a matter of fact, the strength and scale of it was most surprising. The positivity did not demand a lot of interpretation to be discovered because it shone through already in the interview situations. This positive valuing of strikes was attached to them through a discourse of change. The finding of positivity brings out a question when talking about strikes as a form of organizational conflict: Can they ever be perceived as positive and desired, and if so, by both parties or only by the labour party? It might sound a bit far-fetched that the employer would see strike as a positive and constructive action, but then again perhaps the possibility for this should not be completely ruled out. If one considers the impact a large strike might have on the third party, a strike might, at some point actually look a bit more attractive in the eyes of the employer. The third party is defined to include individuals, communities or societies that are not directly involved in the situation or phenomenon in question but are considered outsiders (Kolmas mies – lakkojen uhri 1986.) Because a strike is always an action initiated by the labour side they could be perceived as the villains if a strike significantly complicates the lives of third parties. Media attention, which was referenced to by some interviewees, in that case would maybe work for the employers' advantage and through that the company might gain some leverage against the labour union. This in turn could turn the feelings towards the strike positive amongst managers

and employers´ association representatives. For a strike to be considered constructive would however still be something completely different.

Perhaps this positivity connected to strikes can be seen as something new this research brings to the table. Before, positivity in regard of conflicts has been attached to the end results of conflicts and what is gained through them. Also in the existing strike research, at least the ones done under economic sciences, the focus has often been on the negative impacts and factors of strikes. This current study though proves that there is in fact also positivity present in the organizations when discussing strikes. While the positivity was not always expressed explicitly, nor was it said for example that the end result of a strike is positive, it was nevertheless clearly observable in the research data. In this sense this current study contributes something new to the existing strike research while it could for its part also encourage future researchers to consider the positive issues attached to strikes when pondering the direction and focus of their studies.

At the beginning of the research process it was anticipated that the theme of the research, strikes and conflicts, would be an unpleasant issue for the interviewees to discuss. It was assumed that organizations and people would be difficult to get involved with the study, which partly proved to be the case. What however did not come true was the reluctance or hesitation of the interviewees to discuss the theme, once they had agreed to take part in the research. On the contrary, without exceptions the discussion flowed well during the interviews. It could be sensed, which some respondents also expressed directly, that they perceived it important and meaningful to study strikes. Especially the organizational context selected for this study was considered a welcome change. These comments and the general perception can be seen as arguments supporting the place for this kind of research in both the academic and business environment.

How could this research then be further developed and what implications for further research on the theme it awakes? The attitudes found and presented in this study could benefit from an even further and deeper analysis. A further analysis and a more extensive report would make it possible to consider and contemplate the contexts and backgrounds of the interviewees and how they reflected on their answers. Also the meaning and significance of the organizational position, organization and even the industry for that matter could lift new findings from the data and extend the ones already found. One possible way the interview material could also be further utilized would be to study it discourse analytically or by utilizing discussion analysis as was done by Ehrling (2007). These approaches could enhance the understanding of the data and that way even more attention could be given to how individuals present their attitude. For example is it unproblematic or difficult for them or do they reflect reservations and hesitation in the way they comment on issues. Also through discussion analysis the different ways the interviewer has affected the interview situation could be further studied.

It is intriguing to consider how multifaceted and diverse an issue a strike is from the organizational point of view. It is not as unambiguous or as simple as the general opinion is and what the media portrays. The current study awakes further interest to study different detailed aspects of strikes, such as the illegality-legality –aspect of strikes in Finland, the role of compromise in negotiations or the negotiation practices and communication inside organizations in a dawn of strike. It might be for example interesting to consider the current Finnish bargaining system from strike susceptibility's' and recurrences' perspective. The bargaining system is by definition a forum for reaching a compromise on dispute questions, such as pay, working hours or plans to lay-off personnel. If a compromise always represents something of a defeat for both parties should it be so eagerly pursued? As Parker Follet (2012) already in 1926 described, compromise requires sides to give up at least part of their objectives, which then contributes to the recurrence of further conflicts where the remainder of the objectives are pursued. In this respect, the recurrence of strikes and other labour conflicts could be seen as a built-in problem in the Finnish conciliation procedure. One can ask should the real goal of collective bargaining then in fact be something completely different then bargaining and compromise? What could be the ways to 'integrate' the desires of both parties? If integration is innovation as Parker Follet (2012) suggested, it could bring unexpected end results. Is collective bargaining actually only seeking short-term resolution to conflicts and thus lacking a long-term perspective? By looking further into the future as well as the past could the true reason behind the recurrent conflicts be found or is it too unrealistic an idea to even bother? These are really difficult and big questions to ask, but perhaps they still should be asked.

There are also many aspects in strikes that make it an interesting topic to study from a management perspective. One could be the role of human resources as a middleman, a mediator between the company and its' employees. This aspect was initially intended to be a part of this study but it was left out in an attempt to gain more definition and focus. In this sense it would be interesting to further analyse the data of this study to see how the attitudes of human resources representatives and management representatives vary compared to one another. Are the managers more negative and human resources more understanding? Or are human resources more sceptical towards the opposing party while the management stays more neutral? Other interesting points relate to compromise and how both parties experience the negotiation result. Do the people feel that it was a compromise and if so, do they consider it a negative or a positive thing?

5.2   Reflections on the execution and method

The subject of strikes as workplace conflicts reaches many different disciplines, research areas and levels of analysis. It is therefore rather difficult to predict what areas and theories would best compliment and support the issues rising, or been raised from the data and to what previous academic discussion they would best relate to. Also a very solid and rigorous theory base could cause the interviewer to make presumptions on the answers and the attitudes behind them and miss out on something interesting because it does not fit the theory base. A pre set theory structure or model could also result in forced or otherwise deceptive data interpretations. This bipolar element is probably not a challenge unique to this study but nevertheless it had to be managed in some way. The solution that was settled on was to adopt a data driven approach, although it is more commonly used, and perhaps also better suited to more extensive researches such as doctoral theses. Looking back at this decision it did prove to be somewhat problematic. The point where the challenges caused by it were highlighted was the analysis phase of the study. Going through the material it became clear quite early on that the number of statements and the variety of themes they covered was perhaps too excessive for this study's purposes. With 12 statements, 8 background questions as well as the pictures, the quantity of material was somewhat overwhelming and the focus of the discussions scattered slightly. With hindsight it would have perhaps been better if more deliberation and more attention were given to the statements and their formulation. Though the fundamental issue in the statements remained the same, a lot more could have been done if they would have been more focused. Maybe a closer focus during the interviews could have also enabled an even deeper and meaningful material to be analysed. Also some of the statements had been unwittingly formulated with the word 'always' in them. This naturally changed the way some respondents viewed them, which came across in their hesitation to make an argument including such a comprehensive tone. This flaw was noticed during the interview process but a decision was made not to change the statements. Although it would have been better to avoid such wordings it was perceived more important to keep the statements standardized for all participants.

Another important issue to point out in relation to the material is that the role of the statements should have been greater. As Vesala and Rantanen (2007, 40) noted if the standardized statements, that were intended to provoke commentary are the focus of the interview, it is easier to piece together and observe the attitudes from the material. If, and as was the case here, the interview flows more freely shifting from one issue to another, it is more difficult in the analysis phase to interpret and recognize the attitudes. In retrospect, though the background questions aroused a lot of discussion their number could have been reduced to only a few. In this case the statements would have formed a

more notable part of the interview, albeit their number should not have been increased either. At the moment the emphasis was at times almost the opposite.

Continuing to reflect on a personal level how the interviews themselves went, one further point can be made. As an interviewer it was at times difficult to balance between the urge to show understanding of the situation or the respondents opinion and on the other hand the need to stay neutral. Although it should be noted, that a neutral position is not necessarily a fundamental goal of an interviewer conducting a qualitative interview (Ruusuvuori & Tiittula 2005, 42, 51). As Ruusuvuori and Tiittula (2005, 42, 51) state, the involvement of the researcher in the discussion should be perceived as a show of empathy, rather than a sign of poor judgment. When you furthermore take into account the expectation in qualitative attitudinal research for open and unreserved interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee, at times it presented quite a challenge to evaluate on the spot whether to comment something or not.

How was the qualitative attitudinal research approach then suited to studying strikes? On a general level no such incompatibilities or restrictions were encountered that would somehow suggest that studying attitudes towards strikes by way of qualitative attitudinal research would be useless or impossible – quite the contrary. Certainly there were challenges during the research process, which were often caused by the rather ambitious combination of the issue explored and the method chosen but the challenges did not tell of any systematic or fundamental contradiction between the two that could not have been solved. Qualitative attitudinal research includes many aspects that were deemed interesting and useful. First of all the approach offers something for both qualitatively and quantitatively oriented researchers. The categorical level of material analysis provides a sound and systematic base for the second, more creative and abstract phase of analysis. It can also be considered an easy and understandable start for the analysis that in qualitative studies can sometimes feel like a daunting task to start.

When considering the relationship between qualitative and quantitative approaches a division by Krosnick et al. (2005, 24, 31) could be contemplated. Talking about quantitative attitudinal research they separate two data measurement approaches. The direct and indirect approaches could perhaps with some reservations also be applied to qualitative attitudinal research. In the direct so called self-report measurement procedure respondents are directly asked to describe their attitudes, either verbally or in writing. Whereas with the indirect measurement procedures individuals are not directly asked about their attitudes but the discovery of attitudes is left to the researcher. One might think that the latter suits better to qualitative studies, it is however the technique used at the moment, but does it need to be so? Could it be that respondents could be asked point-blank about their attitudes towards certain objects and then their answers would be analysed qualitatively. The focus could then be for example on the way the respond-

ents formed their answer and whether there were inconsistencies between what they said and how they said it, to name a few.

All in all the research can be deemed successful both from the methodological aspect and content wise. It confirms that adopting a fresh and less used method to analyse a somewhat familiar subject can bring interesting, perhaps even unexpected results.

5.3   Evaluation of the trustworthiness of the research

Credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability are concepts constructing trustworthiness of qualitative research. The often-used concepts of validity and reliability are poorly suited for evaluating research where the basic axiom forms around relativism and subjectivism. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 294.) Some academics, such as Silverman (2001) though argue that reliability and validity are valid terms to use in qualitative research once they have been defined in a novel way. In this study, however, the first viewpoint is adopted and the evaluation of the goodness is done by analysing the research in the light of the four concepts mentioned above.

Credibility in this case should be evaluated by estimating the sufficiency of the data, the links between observations and the categories, the familiarity of the researcher to the topic and the validity of the interpretations based on the material (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 294). The material gathered for this study was designed so that it would encompass all the parties involved with conflicts inside an organization. This diversity makes it possible to form a comprehensive understanding of the views and attitudes of people from different organizations and different organizational positions. Also the positions of the interviewees corresponded well with one another. All of the ten interviews conducted have been analysed consistently and all of them are also utilized in the citations visualizing the research findings in this report. The use of citations, in both languages, can be seen as enhancing the confirmability of the study. It describes how the interpretations done by the researcher have been linked to the material to enable the readers to make their own judgements on the value and quality of the interpretations (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 294). One practical consideration should, however, be made when talking about the over all credibility of this study. In one of the organizations only the human resource manager was interviewed. This was the first interview done for the study and it was considered in a way as a test interview. The reason why employee and management representatives were not interviewed at this organization was that there had not been any strike incidents over the last ten or so years. It was therefore assessed, together with the human resource manager that the material gathered would perhaps not be very valuable, considering that the people in those positions had also changed over time.

To judge the researchers familiarity with the subject it is useful to mention that the exploration of strikes and conflict research was in essence began already in 2011, during the bachelors' theses process. This and the fact that this study in question was conducted patiently over nearly year an a half, with a great deal of reflexivity, the extent of material familiarized with in the course of time can be considered comprehensive. However the methodological part of the research was a completely new field, with unfamiliar concepts and novel methods to be acquainted with. The research at hand therefore has presumably some limitations when it comes to the extent and depth of material analysis. Also the understanding and utilization of concepts relating to attitudes has perhaps not been as thorough as it would have been had the researcher been already familiar with sociological and psychological concepts and constructs. In this regard a researcher that possesses a stronger knowledge on these areas could probably gain an even better understanding of the attitudes in the material.

Dependability could be described also as the transparency of the research. The degree of dependability can be evaluated by viewing how the research process has been opened up and is the reasoning logical and justified (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 294). Mäkelä (1990, 53, 57) states that this aspect of the research can be enhanced by precisely illuminating the analysis and interpretation process to the reader and by cataloguing the material as specifically as possible. The use of citations and the presentation of the original statement in Finnish (appendix 4) can be seen improving the dependability of this study. Also the different stages of material gathering and analysis have been explained in detail in an attempt to further the transparency. In connection to the desire to visualize the cataloguing of the findings and the material there are, however, some limitations in this research. Mainly due to the extent of the material gathered it was not possible to detail or present all the individual units or findings that contributed to the formation of the attitudes. In retrospect it would have been sensible to limit the number of questions and statements used or alternatively reduce the number of interviews conducted. The extent of the material leaves considerable possibilities for further utilization. For example a more detailed study of limited number of the statements and the discussion around them could enable a deeper analysis and lead to even further interpretations and findings.

Transferability is a concept somewhat difficult to estimate in connection to this study. It is used to estimate the similarity of the research compared to other studies on the topic and in a way place the research into a larger context. (Eriksson & Kovalainen 2008, 294.) In reference to this study entirely similar studies, comprising of similar elements were not found. However comparing to other attitudinal researches, other conflict studies and other qualitative studies similarities can be established. As explained before the use of thought-provoking statements and pictures during the interviews were methods adopted from prior attitudinal studies (see Pajari 2007; Vesala & Peura 2007.)

One added consideration relating to the subject organizations should be perhaps still made. From the four organizations the first two were contacted without any references or linkages while the latter two were obtained with the help of one interviewee from the first organizations. Perhaps it is hypercritical to assume that this would have played some role in for example what kind of organizations or people ended up as part of the research, especially as only one of the contacts received was interviewed in person. Nevertheless, while this is deemed a rather irrelevant and insignificant detail it does not hurt to mention is so that the readers can form their own judgement on the matter.

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APPENDIX 1   BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

Human resources:

1. How would you describe your company's and on the other hand your fields strike history?

2. In your opinion has there been changes in strike susceptibility?
    a. In your organization, field and in Finland in general?

3. If we think about workplace conflicts in a broader sense, not only strikes: in your opinion what is the role and position of HR in these conflicts inside the organization?
    a. For example conflicts between individuals or supervisor-employee conflicts?
    b. In these situations is HR more of an outsider or clearly a representative of the management?
    c. Does HR operate as a mediator, deals with practicalities or advises the supervisors?

4. How do you experience industrial actions/strikes from human resource departments (HR) and human resources managements (HRM) perspective?

5. In your opinion can a company in some way influence strikes and their recurrence?
    a. What about is influencing sensible?

6. In what way do successful conflict management measures or negotiations differ from situations where the conflict escalates into a strike?

7. What do you think overall about the illegal/protest strikes that are typical in Finland?
    a. In your opinion are they justified?

Management:

1. Could you briefly describe what your job in the organization entails?

2. How would you describe your company's and on the other hand your fields strike history?

3. In your opinion has there been changes in strike susceptibility?
   a. In your organization, field and in Finland in general?

4. How do you experience strikes relative to your job?
   a. How do strikes in practice show in your work?

5. If we think about workplace conflicts in a broader sense, not only strikes: in your opinion what is the role of the top management in a conflict situation?
   a. For example conflicts between individuals or supervisor-employee conflicts?
   b. Are immediate supervisors or human resources department rather responsible for conflict management?

6. In your opinion can a company in some way influence strikes and their recurrence?
   a. What about is influencing sensible?

7. In what way do successful conflict management measures or negotiations differ from situations where the conflict escalates into a strike?

8. What do you think overall about the illegal/protest strikes that are typical in Finland?
   a. In your opinion are they justified?

Shop stewards:

1. How would you describe your company's and on the other hand your fields strike history?

2. What is the role of the shop steward like in the organization?
     a. In relation to the management
     b. In relation to the personnel

3. In your opinion what sort of conflicts exist in your workplace?

4. What is your role as a shop steward in a conflict situation?

5. How do you experience strikes from the employees' perspective?
     a. In your opinion is strike a conflict?
     b. Good or bad?

6. In your opinion can a company in some way influence strikes and their recurrence?
     a. What about is influencing sensible?

7. In what way do successful conflict management measures or negotiations differ from situations where the conflict escalates into a strike?

8. What do you think overall about the illegal/protest strikes that are typical in Finland?
     b. In your opinion are they justified?

APPENDIX 2　　　STATEMENTS

1. Our work community is susceptible to strike

2. Industrial actions in our organization are by nature always the same

3. A strike is a sign for lack of confidence between labour and management

4. Strikes are always resolved with a compromise that is good for both parties

5. Strikes remain alive in the organization and they are discussed long after they have ended

6. A new strike always arises from the ashes of the previous strike

7. The number of strikes could be reduced with better HRM (human resources management)

8. Strikes are a natural part of our field

9. A strike can be a positive and constructive thing

10. Strikes result from poor personal chemistries
    a. From weak organizational culture
    b. From belligerent trade union
    c. From bad management
    d. From unjustly dissatisfied employees

11. The organization needs more knowledge in conflict management so that strikes could be prevented

12. From everyone's perspective it would be better if there were fewer strikes

APPENDIX 3   PICTURES

1)

Source: (Yle, 1. 11.2011 Teknologiateollisuuden lakko alkoi.
http://yle.fi/uutiset/teknologiateollisuuden_lakko_alkoi/5446200, retrieved 7.10.2013.)

2)

Source: (Yle, 17.9.2012, Chicagon opettajat yllättivät –lakko venyy.
http://yle.fi/uutiset/chicagon_opettajat_yllattivat_-_lakko_venyy/6297062, retrieved 7.10.2013.)

3)

Source: And the transit strike winner is…
(Governing, 29.12.2005, http://www.governing.com/blogs/view/And-the-Transit-Strike.html, retrieved 16.10.2013.)

APPENDIX 4   CITATIONS IN FINNISH

LM = Luottamusmies (ST shop steward)
HR = Henkilöstöjohdon edustaja (HR human resources representative)
JO = Johdon edustaja (MG management representative)

Attitude of unfairness

Page 42: ("Mie niinku sanoin tos aikasemmin ni tota (.) pitäis niinku malttaa rikastuu näitten yritysten et sillä tuota sillä tuota näitä niinku vältettäis kaikkein eniten." (LM))

Page 42: ("Sanotaan että ehkä semmonen vanhanaikanen tapa johtaa pelolla mikä on nyt taitaa olla uudenaikanenkin tapa nykyään mut että tämmönen niin kun johtaa sitte pitkän päälle varmaan jonkin sortin konflikteihin, et mul on ihan niinkun henkilökohtasella tasolla sellanen mielipide asioista et jos ihmisii ei kohdella ihmisinä työpaikoilla ni se johtaa meillä konfliktiin välittömästi."(LM))

Page 43: ("Ei oo sellasta ei oo sillä tavalla rationaalista toimintaa et se olis objektiivisesti tarkasteltuna selkeesti ennustettavissa. Arvattavissa ehkä mut niin on horoskoopitkin." (HR))

Page 43: ("Me vaadimme, tämmönen teesi on aika vahva ja sit jos kysyt et mihin se perustuu ni ei se perustu mihinkään, mut "me vaadimme". Sit kun sanoo et "mutkun me ei voida antaa teille sitä mitä te vaaditte ku te vaaditte ihan mahottomii". Ni "me ei välitetä siitä"." (HR))

Page 43: ("Et joskus tuntuu et (3 sek) ((miettii)) et tehdään vielä se harkitusti niin et siitä saadaan aiheutettua mahdollisimman paljon vahinkoa sille työnantajalle, joka tietysti loppupeleissä on sit vähän tyhmä ajatus kun aatellaan et kuitenkin ne työntekijät jossakin aikavälissä kärsii sit." (HR))

Page 44: ("Ja sit välillä käy niinki et vaikka luottamusmiesten kanssa asia on niinku saatu käsiteltyä, sovittua ni sit heillä on tällänen (..) tiedä et totta vai tarua mut sit he sanoo et he eivät kuitenkaan saaneet sitä omaa porukkaansa rauhotettua vaan ne käveli ikäänkun heistä huolimatta pihalle." (HR))

Page 44: ("Et nää niin sanotut lainausmerkeissä spontaanit ulosmarssit, jostain kummast syystä Hämeensanomat on portin takana ja luottamus-mies selittää siinä silmät kirkkaina kuinka tässä kädet levällään yritän estää näitä marssimasta täältä ulos mutta ne kävelee miun yli. Aha. ((hymähdys))
Niin se on jos niinkun ne tulee usein ihan täysistä puskasta niin miten sel-laseen pystyt etukäteen vaikuttamaan, et mitenkään." (HR))

Page 45: ("Ja ei oo perhana niitten allekirjottaneitten nimet ees niinku muste kuivunu ku jossakinpäin on jo niinku laiton lakko ja sen työnanta-jan näkövinkkelistä se on aivan yks ja sama onks se laiton vai laillinen kun se lakko astuu voimaan." (HR))

Page 45: ("Se mua vähän harmittaa tässä suomalaisessa yhteiskunnassa, en tiedä miten paljoa vai miten tuleeko sulla tuossa kysymyksissä esiin mutta niin, mun mielestä nää lakkosakot on liian pieniä. Mä koen sen että se kynnys tavallaan siihen ulosmarssiin, LAITTOMAAN ulosmarssiin on aivan liian matala." (JO))

Page 45: ("Sit ylipäätänsä mie oon sitä mieltä että (.) se on liian helppo tapa tää laiton lakko ilmasta mielipidettä. Se on liian helppo tapa. Ja se miks se on liian helppo on se et kun ne sanktiot on suhteessa vahinkoon ihan naurettavii."(JO))

Page 46: ("No siitä täytyy sanoo että mie en henkilökohtasesti ymmärrä että (..) minkätakia joku tietty osa tässä yhteiskunnassa voi menetellä niin ettei kunnioita lakia. Se on vaan näin että, (.) ei sinällään että lakkoilu pitäis mitenkään kieltää tai muuta ei missään nimessä tottakai se on heidän vaikutustoimintamahollisuus ja heillä on oikeus siihen, mutta ne sovitut pelisäännöt millä niitä hoidetaan ja käytetään näitä keinoja niin ne pitäis hoitaa niitten sovittujen pelisääntöjen mukaan." (HR))

Page 47: ("Kun on tälläsiä niin sanottuja laittomia tai laittomiks tuomit-tuja työtaisteluja niin tietyllä tavalla hyväksyn senkin et ihmisillä ei oo oikeestan mitään muuta mahollisuutta purkaa sitä omaa pahaaoloo tai tuota niinku viestii sitä tunnetta mikä esimerkiks tälläsissä isoissa ir-tisanomistilanteissa syntyy" (LM))

Attitude of failure

Page 48: ("No henkilökohtasesti mä koen aina et se on epäonnistuminen niinku mä olen epäonnistunut sillon työssäni." (HR))

Page 48: ("Mut sitte tämmöset paikalliset, laittomat työtaistelut ni (..) ainahan se niinku tuntuu että on vähän epäonnistunut siinä et se on päässy syntymään mut toisaalta osa niist on semmosii, niin vahvasti mielivaltasii et niit ei ois pystyny estämään vaik ois päässy väliinkin et." (HR))

Page 49: ("Et kyl se kompromissi yleensä on, mut kompromissi löytyy yleensä ennen lakkoo jos se on löytyäkseen. Sen jälkeen kun ollaan lakossa ni sit ei sen jälkeen yleensä ei puhuta enää kompromisseista sit on jompikumpi osapuoli ottaa aina siipeensä. Eli se on aina sellanen lose-lose-situation kun ollaan menty lakon puolelle." (HR))

Page 49: ("Kaikki on häviäjiä. Ei voittajia oo, se on ihan selvää että siinä– työtaistelutilanteessa ja lakkotilanteessa ei kukaan voita." (HR))

Page 50: ("Niinku mä tossa alussa totesin niin ei niissä kaiken kaikkiaan, niin harva niissä sit loppujen lopuks voittaa kokonaisuutena. Ainakaan jos ajatellaan yrityksen kannalta asiaa niin jokainen lakko on tavallaan turha lakko mun mielestä." (HR))

Page 50: ("Noo, mä koen ne vähän kiusallisiks siinä mielessä että, ää yleensä semmoseen jos on ajauduttu lakkoon tai työtaisteluun ylipäänsä ni se on jo, ollaan jo semmosessa tilanteessa että (.) ollaan niinkun, miten mä sanosin.... Ää... Mikähän ois oikee sana siihen tai oikee kuva että ...
Sillon ollaan jo niinku konfliktissa ja siitä ei oikeestaan niinku voittajia enää tule." (JO))

Page 51: ("Koska tie onks se sit sillälailla tavallaan kenenkään etu, et niinku lakkoilevat menettää jotain niinku tietyst lyhyellä aikajänteellä mitä se tietyst sit lakol saavuttaa mutta yleensä siin on vaan häviäjiä" (JO))

Page 51: ("Tietää sen menetyksen ja sit sen jälkeen on seuraavat menetykset kohdistuu siihen tota, tai ne mahdolliset menetykset kohdistuu si-

ihen että miten asiakkaat reagoi. Uskooks ne meihin vai meneeks ne naapuriin hakemaan saman palvelun." (JO))

Page 51: ("Mut siis siihen osaa suhtautuu siis sillä tavalla et siin ei oo tunnetta pelissä vaan et se säilyy ennemmin niinku rationaalisena et mistäs tää nyt johtuu ja minkätakii joku teki nyt ton ja eiks ne nää että mikä vahinko tästä syntyy et ettekst te oo yhtään miettiny että kun meillä homma seisoo naapuri nakuttaa täysillä vieressä ni kyl ne asiakkaat on koht siel naapurissa." (JO))

Page 51: ("Niinku mä sanoin niin lakko on aina se et jompikumpi osapuoli häviää... et kummalla on (..) on tuota, parkkiintuneemmat istumalihakset niin se pystyy tuota sitte niinku kauemman aikaa odottaan ja miettiin. Jossain vaiheessa se tulee sitte, työnantaja kattoo enemmänkin sitä että mikä on yhtiön maine, kuinka yhtiö toimii, kuinka asiakaslupaukset jotka on otettu vastaan pystytään täyttämään ja taas vastaavasti työntekijät kattoo sen missä heidän taloudelliset rahkeet on." (JO))

Page 52: ("No miun lähtökohta on ollu aina se että ollaan epäonnistuttu asioissa jos ajaudutaan työtaisteluun tai lakkoon. Se on tota, se on niin. Sillon ei oo onnistuttu tota hoitamaan asioita niin, ottamatta nyt kantaa siihen kumpi tai missä se syyllinen istuu tai on, mut tota kyl se on tietyl taval virhekustannus, se on virhekustannus." (LM))

Page 52: ("Ei se, vähän vaikee sanoo onks se hyvä tai huono, ei se.. ainahan siinä häviää periaatteessa varmaan kaikki jollain tavalla kun aatellaan niinku lakossa. Et kyllähän se sitten on niinkun ansionmenetyksenä on työntekijöille ja työnantajalle sit taas tuotannollisesti." (LM))

Attitude of personification

Page 54: ("Luottamusmies selittää silmät kirkkaina kuinka hän teki kaikkensa pitääkseen ihmiset töissä mut ne vaan marssi hänen yli tuolta pihalle. Totaalista bull shittiä, niinku jokainen tietää." (HR))

Page 54: ("75 prosenttia porukasta on vaan semmosia jotka menee massan mukana ja jos joku sanoo niille jotain ni kyl ne sit tekee tai ei tee eikä ne oikeestaan ees tiedä minkä takii." (HR))

Page 54: ("Varsinkin "työntekijöillä" (ammattinimike korvattu sanalla "työntekijä" luottamuksellisuuden säilyttämiseksi) pääluottamusmiehen valta on tosi vahva. Vaikee uskoo et ne tekis päätöksiä pääluottamusmiehen mielipidettä vastaan." (HR))

Page 55: ("Hmm, nii vähemmän, millä ehdoilla. Tai sanotaanko näin et jos olis, en kyl usko siihenkään et jos olis sellanen tilanne et ei oo mitään syytä lakkoilla vaikka kymmeneen vuoteen nin sit olen sitä mieltä et sit on syytä vaihtaa jo näit meijänkin puolen edustajii täältä." (LM))

Page 56: ("Ammattiyhdistysliike kaiken kaikkiaan on kaunis idea. Siis sehän on hyvä siis kun ajatellaan sitä yhteiskuntaa johonka meijät on kasvatettu sehän on kaunis ja hyvä idea, mut se missä se menee mettään on se et siel yksilöllä on suht– päättävässä asemassa olevalla yksilöllä on suhteettoman suuri aa tota mahdollisuus vaikuttaa asioihin negatiivisesti ilman mitään vastuuta." (JO))

Page 56: ("Aina tämmöset tuota jos halutaan näyttää voimaa tietyissä tilanteissa voi olla et on tulossa joku vaali tai joku muu vastaava ja halutaan saada näkyvyyttä niin saatetaan keksiä joku aihe josta pystytään sitte tehdä juttu ja viedä sitä eteenpäin." (JO))

Page 56: ("Mut et niinku mä sanoin ni se riippuu niin paljon siitä asiasta ja toki sit myös niistä neuvotteluosapuolista et kuka on siellä vastapuolella ja onko se kuin tuota.. kumpienkin tarvii varmaan olla jonkinverran joustava mut persoonista se riippuu myös tietyst hyvin paljon." (HR))

Page 57: ("Osa varmaan on siitäkin. Kyl mä väitä että siihen vaikuttaa ainakin et jos on huonot henkilökemiat sanotaan niitten pääedustajien välillä ni kyllä se ruokkii helpommin lakkoja." (LM))

Page 57: ("Ehkä jopa niinkin et on ollu henkilökohtaset hyvät suhteet niinku tonne työnantajapuolelle tiettyihin ihmisiin ni niil on ollu vaikutusta siihen että joku työtaistelu on jääny syntymättä." (LM))

Attitude of ordinariness
Page 58: ("Se on asia, johon tottuu mut jota ei koskaan hyväksy." (MG))

Page 58: ("Et ei, en usko semmoseen tilanteeseen, että niin sujuvalla rinnakkaiselolla ajettais meijän ihmisten etuja, näin väitän, et se ei se ei o meijän ihmisten etu et meil on lakkoja joka hiton viikko, ei varmaan ole. Eikä lakkoilla tarvi niinkun periaatteessa turhanpäiten, mut sekään ei, väitän että meijän ihmisten etuja ei oo ajettu jos ei jossain kohtaa ajauduta kahnauksiin. Se vaan on niin." (LM))

Page 58: ("Molen joskus leikkisästi sanonu että, jossain kursseilla että, pitää se vähintään niinku kerran vuodessa järjestää lakko niin sillon tää asia, sillon on semmonen herkkyys ja neuvotteluhalukkuus olemassa että." (LM))

Page 59: ("Kyllähän sieltä sitte tulee, osa kysyy et eiks me jo kävellä ulos tyyliin et." (LM))

Page 59: ("Ne ei oo yksilöiden välisiä ja lakoissa pitää aina muistaa et 80%, vähintään 80% lakkoon osallistuvista ei ees tiedä miks ne on lakossa." (HR))

Page 60: ("Melkeen sanoisin et ku se paha mieli on purettu ni se on purettu ja sit lähetään taas etteenpäin." (HR))

Page 60: ("Jonkin näkönen tuota ylipaineventtiili ku pääsee vuotamaan niin sitten taas niinkun on hyvä mieli hetken aikaa." ((hymähtää)) (HR))

Attitude of change

Page 61: ("Ymmärrys ja tämmönen niinkun voimakas näkemys siitä että täällä kuitenkin loppujen lopuks ollana yhteisen hyvän takia niin se on molemmilla osapuolilla voimakkaammin esillä tänä päivänä." (JO))

Page 61: ("Sitte vapultahan alko tää työsulku ja sitte seittemän viikon päästä ni tietyst loppu ja tota se jollain tavalla varmaan muutti tai muuttikin tätä ihmisten asennoitumista tähän lakkoon ja lakkokäyttäytymiseen että sithän on ollu niin sanotusti rauhallisempaa että." (LM))

Page 62: ("Tää meijän lakkoherkkyys mistä puhutaan aika paljon niin se on tänä päivänä se on ehkä enemmänkin myytti." (LM))

Page 62: ("Et tota, ennen aikaan mentiin hyvinkin pienistä asioista lakkoon, joltain saattoi tuntua pahalta tai jollain ei ollu hanskoja tarpeeks, tai ihan mikä tahansa syy ni helpost lähettiin tai porukka marssi pihalle." (JO))

Pictures confirming the attitudes

Page 64: ("Niin siis tohonhan se sit periaatteessa johtaa kuitenkin. Toi liittyy siihen alustukseen tai siihen jälkeen olevaan asiaan (kuva 1) toi on itte lakkoa oleva (kuva2). En mä nää et siinä voittajaa kokonaisuudessaan on niinku (kuva3)." (LM))

Page 64: ("[Toi ei koskaan] koska lakosta ei oo voittajia (kuva 3). Mm… toi on neuvottelutilanne toi ei oo lakko (kuva 1). Lakko on aina tavalla tai toisella kaaos ja toi on siinä kohtaa lakko." (HR))

Page 64: ("Miks näin käy, niin tota se johtuu siitä että painostustoimet tossa ykköskuvan kohdalla ovat olleet niin voimakkaat et siel ei oo voitu ku nieleskellä eli on katottu et hetken tappio (.) hetkelliset tai sen hetken tappiot– sen hetkiset menetykset ovat niin suuret et kannattaa ottaa niinkun mieluummin ne pitkän aikavälinkustannukset syliin ja kattoo et miten niiden kanssa voidaan elää kun se että yritetään neuvotella jossa painostustoimet elikkä toi kuva kaks on päällä." (JO))

Page 65: ("No, yleensä ku tuol ollaan ni sillon on kapina päällä." (hymähtää) (LM))