

**This is an electronic reprint of the original article.
This reprint *may differ* from the original in pagination and typographic detail.**

Author(s): Auvinen, Tommi

Title: The Ghost Leader: An Empirical Study on Narrative Leadership

Year: 2012

Version:

Please cite the original version:

Auvinen, T. (2012). The Ghost Leader: An Empirical Study on Narrative Leadership. *Electronic Journal of Business Ethics and Organization Studies*, 17 (1), 4-15. Retrieved from http://ejbo.jyu.fi/pdf/ejbo_vol17_no1_pages_4-15.pdf

All material supplied via JYX is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, and duplication or sale of all or part of any of the repository collections is not permitted, except that material may be duplicated by you for your research use or educational purposes in electronic or print form. You must obtain permission for any other use. Electronic or print copies may not be offered, whether for sale or otherwise to anyone who is not an authorised user.

The Ghost Leader: An Empirical Study on Narrative Leadership

Tommi Auvinen

Abstract

Studies on leadership too often focus on the leader rather than on leadership. The starting point for this study is the argument that leadership is not equal to the leader as a "real" person but is at least partly constructed in organisational storytelling. This empirical study dissects the construction of leadership in storytelling in terms of typical organisational events, such as the arrival of a new leader, confronting resistance and a leader leaving an organisation. The data consists of interviews with a leader and his followers in a large high-tech organisation. The findings show that the leader existed in organisational storytelling before his first formal encounter and he remained in the discourse after leaving the organisation. The leader is embellished with stories about accomplishments or failures. Although there may be one leader in the real world, there may be countless leaders in the world of imagination. I propose the metaphor of the ghost leader to illustrate organisational storytelling that casts an ambiguous discursive character over leader(ship). This paper contributes to storytelling leadership, particularly to the discussion of "the story is the leader" using an empirical case.

Keywords

Leadership, narrative approach, organisational storytelling

Introduction

I am thankful for ghosts of Mikhail Bakhtin, Walter Benjamin, Lou Pondy, and Gertrude Stein, for our dialogic conversation in this book. David M. Boje (2008)

Human existence consists of different realms of reality: the material realm, the organic realm and the mental realm (the realm of meaning). Narrative is the form taken by our experiences and memory, a primary form by which human experience is made meaningful (Polkinghorne 1988; Bruner 1991). Stories are also said to be the currency of communication, organisational behaviour and leadership work (Boje 2008; 1991). David M. Boje, a well-known scholar of storytelling leadership and a great storyteller, provides the example of a kind of "ghost leadership" (2008). Although these dead writers no longer exist in the material and organic realms, their characters exist in the realm of meaning. This kind of leadership seems to be in line with most definitions of leadership; it emphasises the interactional and influential nature of leadership (see e.g., Ciulla 2005), even though, in this case, the follower interacts with storied characters.

The main purpose of this paper is to suggest a metaphor for ghost leadership that could benefit leader(ship) theory. It is not about spooky ghost stories but about discursive character, a leader that is constructed in organisational storytelling and exists in the reality of meaning. I follow Parry and Hansen's (2007) proposition that the story can be the leader. I have thought about the idea of ghost leadership for a long time, having been inspired by David Boje's work and influenced by several authors (e.g. Snowden 2003; Denning 2005; Gabriel 1995). Ghost leadership aspires to contribute to the still under-researched field of storytelling/narrative leadership with necessary empirical data¹ (Boje & Rhodes 2006; Boje 1999; 2008; Gabriel 2000) and particularly to discussions such as those by Boje (1991; 1995; 2001), Parry and Hansen (2007) and Sintonen and Auvinen (2009). Theoretical insights from such authors as Michel Foucault, Walter R. Fisher, Donald E. Polking-

horne, Jeromir Bruner and Paul Ricoeur are also utilised.

Nevertheless, it was my four-year-old son who really crystallised the idea of ghost leadership. At the beginning of December he came to me and said: "Daddy! I really can't wait till Christmas. I am tired of being neat, and I do not like Santa's elves anymore. Besides I haven't seen them at all." He expressed three ideas in terms of narrative leadership. First, there is a leader (with material, organic and/or mental origins) that gains leadership power more or less in organisational storytelling.² Second, narrative leadership is a panoptic phenomenon that may not be much more than the conscious awareness of authority monitoring. It may consist of "invisible" technologies (such as Santa using his elves) bringing about self-control that makes the individual effective in the organisation (Foucault [1975] 2005). Third, storytelling has to do with the construction of leadership (the "birth" or emergence as well as the "death" or rejection of the assumed leader). It is a kind of dynamic interaction process between human beings and discourse; the experiences are narrated or, as Ricoeur (1991) says, the stories are lived, and a leader may become "real" (e.g. Boje 1999; Parry & Hansen 2007). In the case of my son and Santa Claus, leadership emerged as tales in children's books, was supported by Santa's visit on Christmas Eve and was contested in storytelling (here, the power of Santa was in danger of being eroded, since being patient and neat requires a lot of effort in the long run). The best stories – or at least the more appealing and seductive stories or those showing some verisimilitude – may require support from the material and organic realms (see e.g. Fisher 1985; Bruner 1991). Even the greatest leadership stories adopted in certain cultures (Auvinen 2008) – and even grand narratives in society, such as economic growth, religion or human rationality (see Auvinen, Mangelola & Sintonen 2010) – can be contested. From this aspect there is hardly any stable, universal and uncontested form of story that would offer a safe haven of leadership for any leader.

In our previous study (see Collin et al 2011) we dissected the interconnected-

ness of power and learning in discursive means. We focused on situations in which formal authority was discursively contested. We also looked at the behaviour of members of the organisation when the person in charge was present and absent. We learned that the physical presence or absence of the person in charge made little difference in terms of the effect of leadership. For instance, we noticed that new members learned the habits of the manager through storytelling, which conveyed information about the manager's characteristic behaviour.

Values and beliefs are expressed through characters in storytelling (Snowden 2003). Without this kind of (narrative) predictability there is no trust or sense of community, or even rational human order (Fisher 1987; see also Auvinen & Sintonen 2009). The stories have a background and history that fit the leader's history and reputation in the organisation, and the stories can represent many areas of leadership (see also Auvinen, Aaltio & Blomqvist). This assumed behaviour creates ghost leadership that is tangible, whether or not the leader is actually present.

Although people tell stories for different reasons, such as to persuade, engage or mislead (Riessman 2008), to shape confusing and formless reality (Ricoeur 1991) or to learn characteristic behaviour (Fisher 1987), our experiences remain ultimately ambiguous. Narrative as a vehicle for making sense is also uncertain and contextual; it is impossible to control all the potential interpretations to predict individual and group behaviour (e.g. Boje 2008; Eisenberg 1984; Weick 2001; Polkinghorne 1988). To sum up, in storytelling we learn the elements of organisational behaviour, such as company culture or the characteristic way a leader behaves; this may create a feeling of causality, but it will remain rather relative and ambiguous.

In this study the metaphor of ghost leader(ship) is illustrated with an empirical case. The context is major change within a large high-tech organisation. The data includes interviews with a manager and four of his colleagues and subordinates. The focus is on the relationship between storytelling and leadership; that is, how leadership (and the character of the leader) is constructed in organisational storytelling. Stories convey information about preferences, values, facts and characteristic behaviour. However, each telling of the story is never the complete story, but each interpretation of events, such as the leader's achievements or failures in the organisation, become a part of the unfolding storyline (Boje 1991). Rather than seeing the leader as a "real" individual with scientific-logical rationality (Fisher 1986), the ghost of the leader is a discursive approach to leader(ship) in the realm of meaning.

Theoretical and conceptual framework

Narrative approach in leadership and organisation studies

Organisations are populated by storytelling animals, homo narrans, that construct their experiences in narrative form and tell stories each other that other animals wouldn't understand (from MacIntyre 2007 [1981]).

Narrative is an inherent form of discourse that allows human beings to structure their reality (e.g. Ricoeur 1991; Fisher 1985; Gergern & Gergen 1991). Narratives and life interact; narrative is an interpretation of reality and narrative meaning is the process whereby the realm of meaning functions to organise elements of awareness into meaningful episodes (Polkinghorne 1988; Bruner 1991). We need to invent plots to shape our confused temporal experiences; without these narrative would be formless (Ricoeur 1991). Also, in order to communicate our

experiences to other human beings, we need stories containing characters and sequences of actions organised in intelligible form (Fisher 1985; 1994; Weick 2001). Compared with logical and scientific procedures, only narrative constructions can achieve verisimilitude (Bruner 1991).

Although humans tend to seek coherence, narrative research and its focal concepts, such as story and narrative, remain ambiguous and fragmented (e.g. Polkinghorne 1988; Andrews et al. 2008; Riessman 2008). In organisations, storytelling has much to do with, for example, making sense of organisational reality (e.g. Weick 2001), learning (e.g. Swap et al. 2001), leadership work and organisational behaviour (e.g. Denning 2004; 2005; Boje 1991; 2008). Nowadays, organisations are often seen essentially as stories; such stories teach the fundamental behaviour of organisations and become the currency of communication (see e.g. Czarniawska 1998; Boje 2008; 1999). Narrative leadership – or storytelling leadership (synonymous in this article) – is about discursive influencing of members of the organisations; the type of leadership is constructed in storytelling (e.g. Boje 1991; 1995; Gabriel 1995; Denning 2005; Parry & Hansen 2007; Sintonen & Auvinen 2009).

The breakthrough of the narrative approach in leadership and organisation studies took place roughly two decades ago.³ According to Bruner (1991), "most of our knowledge about human knowledge-getting and reality-constructing is drawn from studies of how people come to know the natural or physical world rather than the human or symbolic world." The application of the idea of constructing human and symbolic reality in David Boje's study on narrative leadership (1991) became a kind of milestone in this field. He studied the dynamics of storytelling in a large office-supply firm and illustrated how people make sense of organisational storytelling. His empirical study indicated the potential of stories for leadership; and since the early 1990s the discussion about storytelling and narrative leadership has meandered and increased greatly.

Boje has contributed to establishing a postmodern strand in organisation and leadership research with numerous empirical and conceptual studies (e.g. Boje 1991; 1995; 2001; 2008; 2011). In his work, organisations are ultimately seen as stories and leaders (amongst the other members of the organisation) are embedded and intertwined within the complex story network. Many scholars (such as Boje 2001; Gabriel 2000; and Snowden 2003) have often emphasised the conceptual difference between story and narrative. Conceptual discussion revolves around issues such as coherence. While a story may be considered as more fragmented, nonlinear and lacking a plot, narrative has a plot with causally related episodes and a more coherent structure (see Boje 2001; Czarniawska 1998). However, story and narrative are often seen as more or less synonymous (e.g. Polkinghorne 1988; Andrews et al. 2008; Auvinen 2008); this is the case in this study.

Storytelling leadership has become more popular in academic texts and particularly in normative texts (Boje 2006) that treat stories often instrumental in inspiring and motivating followers or to manage change (see e.g. Denning 2004; 2005; 2008; Parkin 2004; Brown et al. 2005). It is thus seen as a "managerial tool". They often interpret the leader as one who aspires to construct leadership by telling stories (see also Auvinen, Aaltio & Blomqvist). However, storytelling does not always require a "real" leader (a person) to exercise leadership (Parry & Hansen 2007). Boje and Rhodes (2006) consider fictional leaders such as Ronald McDonald, a character that operates as a narrative transformer at the organisational level in McDonald's.

The constitution of leadership in social interaction

There are different ways to stick in a person's mind, but my way to do it, since I am such a colourless person, is to tell a good story [...] Influencing peoples' minds [...] the important part of constructing a network is to stick in other persons' minds [...] Human beings need images that stories provide, not so much factual data [Adam, A1]

It is said that leadership does not exist in a social vacuum (Osborn et al. 2002; Mole 2004). In fact, most definitions leadership refer to interaction between the leader and the follower (see e.g. Ciulla 1998). Grint (2005) remarks that the role of individual leaders is very limited and the significance of leadership should not be underestimated. Parry & Hansen (2007) also restrict the idea of leader to a real-life and real-time entity or super-human being: "[i]n effect, leadership becomes an operationalization of the organisational story." The leader may evoke leadership in an active way, but he or she can also have a more or less passive role (Fairhurst 2009). The follower's perspective reveals the construction of leadership in the discursive interaction that takes place in organisational storytelling. Interaction between leader and follower does not always take place in a social context, but in discursive interaction between follower and story.

Osborn et al. (2002) argue that leadership is embedded in context; it is socially constructed within a context where patterns must be considered over time and where history matters. Leadership is not only the incremental influence of a boss over subordinates; what is most important is that it is the collective incremental influence of leaders in and around the system. Parry & Hansen (2007) develop the idea from the storytelling standpoint. They see the discursive, interpersonal relationship between leader and follower leading to the idea that the story may possess leadership.

The framework of social constructionism is increasingly being used to understand leadership (Fairhurst 2009) and it is a common theoretical framework in storytelling leadership (e.g. Boyce 1995; 1996). It assumes that reality is constructed within social interaction; social institutions and persons are created through social interaction. Despite the powerful role and objectivity of institutions, the core of social constructionism lies in the fact that this objectivity is constructed and produced through human interaction (Berger and Luckmann 1966; Edley 2001). Attention is often focused on discursive interaction. In terms of social constructionism, storytelling leadership is interested in how organisational reality and leadership are constructed, constituted and contested in storytelling. It looks at how a leader is brought into existence in organisational storytelling (e.g. Parry & Hansen 2007; Boje & Rhodes 2006).

Storytelling leadership is seen as a more interactive and democratic form of leadership (Weick & Browning 1986). This can be understood in terms of social constructionism and narrative theory: everyone may tell stories to one another in order to make sense of unfolding experiences or to share perceptions of reality. However, storytellers are not created equal. According to Boje (2001), "some storytellers by virtue of hierarchical position, personality and experience are able to speak while others live out a narrative existence in silence". Denning (2008) states that all effective communication begins "where the audience is" rather than "where you are" as a communicator: "Unless you know where people come from, and what stories they are living, it's going to be very difficult for you to craft and perform a story that will resonate with them". A leader's story requires social interaction if it is to be heard in organisational storytelling that constructs the leader's narrative existence.

Plurivocality, ambiguity and uncertainty in everyday leadership

It is already known that it is not possible to conceptualise leader(ship) in any single, self-evident mould (e.g. Ciulla 2005); neither can the leader be seen as a "real(istic) entity" representing "real-time thoughts" that are perceived as being in the present moment and giving clear goals. Furthermore, strict commands and goals that are too specific may even have negative consequences in the organisation; ambiguity and uncertainty have even been seen from positive perspective, as a resource for organisational effectiveness (e.g. Eisenberg 1984; Weick & Browning 1986). The question is not whether or not leader(ship) is "real" in terms of material and organic realms. There is certainly something material and unique, and there might be heroic "real life" people that are acknowledged as great leaders in organisations. What is more interesting but still too little studied (see Boje & Rhodes 2006) is the narrative dimension of leadership that provides insights into the plurivocal, ambiguous and uncertain organisational reality in which leaders reside.

In a complex world, complex organisations exist among fantasies, myths and the constant flux of stories (Boje 2008; Gabriel 1995). Members of organisations have to make sense of a fragmented and non-coherent reality, to cope with insufficient information and to create stability and causalities where needed (cf. Fisher 1985) even when, or particularly when, there are no causalities (e.g. Taleb 2007). Leadership can be considered as something that involves "real" leaders as homo sapiens (Grint 2005) but, in this sense, narrative leadership is merely a feature that flows from the nature of human beings as homo narrans (see also MacIntyre 2007 [1981]). The leader may not be a person (as is often thought) blurry discursive character. Undoubtedly, physical interaction has a role to play in the relationship between leader and follower, but it still does not satisfactorily explain the constitution of leadership (see Boje 1995; Fairhurst 2009; Parry & Hansen 2007; see also Sintonen & Auvinen 2009).

Weick (2001, 11–12) mentions Daft & Macintosh (1981) and Daft & Lengel (1986, 557) when referring to equivocality in organisational life: organisations resemble puzzling terrain because they lend themselves to multiple, conflicting interpretations, all of which are plausible. Aristotle suggested that ambiguities should be avoided – "unless, indeed, you definitely desire to be ambiguous, as those do who have nothing to say but are pretending to mean something" (see e.g., The Internet Classics Archive 2011). However, equivocality and ambiguity can be seen as sources that can affect an organisation's performance and ability to innovate. With reference to the idea of strategic ambiguity (Eisenberg 1984), in an ambiguous situation of confusion, people wonder what questions should be asked without even expecting a clear answer. Such ambiguity can be seen as a resource if all members of the organisation do not share the manager's concept of strategy and organisational reality. An organisation's goal that is too fixed could lead to inefficiency in a complex and unpredictable world (Eisenberg 1984).

Weick (2001) favours the idea of individuals sustaining images of a wider reality; this is achieved by seeing patterns of significant meaning in their situation. To sum up, there is not precise "right now" or "right here" for any manager. Furthermore, managers cannot represent themselves as unambiguous "real-time" entities. The author followed may even be rather discursively gestalt; a storied leader who is discursively present (cf. e.g. Boje 2008; Parry & Hansen 2007; see also Collin et al. 2011). The metaphor of the ghost leader questions the leader as a super individual with clear, unequivocal objectives and mean-

ings. Even the most heroic leader has to cope with distortions (such as the resonance of stories in interpretation and retelling) between leader and followers. Leaders interpret patterns of significant meanings in ambiguous reality but, as Eisenberg (1984) pointed out, it is not always a negative issue.

Empirical study – tales from the field

Data and methodology

Research data: Tales from the field

A large high-tech organisation was used as the empirical case in this study. This organisation will be referred to as New House (not its real name). New House is a globally networked research organisation, one of the biggest multi-technological applied research organisations in Europe. It employs 3,000–4,000. Since the organisation's identity is hidden, more detailed information will not be provided. Another related high-tech organisation also appears in the data. Its identity is also hidden but it will be referred to as Old House.

Although the empirical data⁴ is rather limited, it is rich since it takes not only the leader but also the followers into account. Colleagues and subordinates are all seen as followers because the leader represents New House's commercial department, which is set to direct the research department to implement the new strategy. Although two of the colleagues have the same organisational status in New House, they belong to the research department and can thus be seen as followers.

In the empirical data, the focus is on a business development manager (Adam), who has been interviewed five times. Two of his colleagues/subordinates (Ben and Cindy) have been interviewed twice and two subordinates (David and Esther) have been interviewed once. I also organised a joint discussion with Adam and Esther. I interviewed Esther alone, and then Esther, Adam and I had a discussion. The identity of each interviewee is hidden and the names used are pseudonyms. Audio recordings were made of all the interviews; the session with Adam and Esther was recorded on video. A total of nearly seven hours was spent on the interviews. All the data (including the audio and video recording) was later transcribed. This amounted to some 120 pages of single-spaced text. The data is supplemented with field notes written after the interviews. These do not form part of the analysis, but they were considered during the self-reflective research by researcher (see chapter 3.2, "phase 0") carried out before the actual analysis.

The interviews with Adam and with his colleagues/subordinates revolved around the major strategic change in New House, and around the organisation's culture before and after the change. Issues such as leadership in general, Adam's role as leader and the working experiences of the interviewees were also discussed. Followers also raised some topical issues, such as the techniques and research used in New House; however, this part is excluded from the data owing to a secrecy order and to the fact that it is not closely related to leadership issues.

It is worth mentioning that the empirical data provides more or less retrospective information about Adam's arrival as a new leader. The interviews with the followers were performed immediately after Adam started working at New House. Consequently, most of the stories are a retrospective construction of the events, and the "in situ" stories (see Boje 2001) are not only the storied accounts of the original situations in New House but also of the interviews. The empirical data is summarised in a table in Appendix 1.

The method of analysis

This study applies antenarrative theme analysis (Boje 2001). Although "traditional thematic analysis" is a respected and well-established method of qualitative analysis (see e.g., Eskola & Suoranta 1999; Riessman 2008), the approach developed by Boje (2001) is rather a proposal; it is an outline for story data. In thematic analysis, earlier theory serves as a resource for the interpretation of spoken and written narratives (Eskola & Suoranta 1999). It is traditionally seen as a mix of deductive, inductive, etic and emic taxonomical classifications (Boje 2001). The deductive approach is about categorising stories according to the 'etic' (outsider) whereas the inductive approach looks at the 'emic' (insider).

Antenarrative analysis steps outside containment to engage fragmentation, becoming and undoing and the debasement of daily interpersonal exchanges. Story networking is a basic antenarrative theme; beyond the themes is the discovery of the web of "in situ" stories people tell each other in order to make sense of their unfolding experiences (Boje 2001). Instead of constructing coherent themes in the interviews, which is typical of thematic analysis, I aspired to sketch the unfolding experiences of interviewees with a view to making sense of situations and interactions related to leadership (such as the entry of a leader or redeeming or contesting leadership among followers).

In the beginning of the analysis I started to read the interviews in chronological order but it soon transpired that the storied time in the interviews proved to be subjective and relative, and the discourse skipped from one topic to another. However, using antenarrative theme analysis (Boje 2001), I attempted to make sense of the fragmented organisational storytelling. The ambiguous and overlapping discourse was separated into five themes, hereafter referred to as phases.

(1) The pre-existence of the leader focuses on the time when the leader did not officially work in the organisation. It is about the stories that followers knew and told about leader before the leader joined the organisation.

(2) The leader meets the followers is about leader's first encounter with the followers focuses on the leader's first strategy meeting in the organisation.

(3) Everyday leadership is about focusing the construction of leadership; how the followers tell stories about the leader, thus enhancing his position as leader, while resistance focuses on the resistance that emerges in the discourse of both leader and followers (I also saw the emergence of an unexpected author, an informal leader that represents organisational resistance).

(4) Leader changing his behaviour focuses on reflections on the leader's current thoughts and behaviour, and how the followers perceive "the current" leader.

(5) After the leader has departed is about the "post-existence of leadership". The focus is on when the leader has left New House, but the followers remain and continue to tell stories about their former leader.

In the chapter on analysis, extracts from that data – tales from the field – are provided to illustrate each theme and enliven the text. There are also excerpts from field notes gathered during "phase 0" (carried out before the actual analysis although written last). According to Eskola & Suoranta (1999), the objectivity of a qualitative study arises only when the subjectivity of the researcher is recognised. Phase 0 is the pre-story about the researcher entering New House to interview Adam and his followers. The aim is not to contribute to leadership studies, but to reveal the preconceptions of the researcher and the interactional nature of acquiring data.

The analysis: Five phases in narrative leadership illustrated

Phase 0: Pre-story: Reflecting the emerging ghost of the researcher
My first (discursive) encounter with New House and Adam took place many years ago. I had read news reports about New House as an organisation on the threshold of a new era. There was even a dissertation that dealt with the emerging major strategic changes within New House (not referred here since it would reveal the identity of New House). I had also heard some epic stories about Adam from some of my colleagues. I was thus aware of some elements before my actual encounter with the organisation and with the leader. This may be why I unconsciously began to see Adam not only as a manager but also as a leader.

My first meeting with Adam took place in 2006, when I interviewed him at his home. My first encounter with New House took place in 2008, when I visited the company's local headquarters, a large modern building with glass ceilings and the company logo everywhere. The following is an extract from the field notes taken at that time:

The façade instils a feeling of awe; this really is a building for a high-tech company. I entered a meeting room, where I met a leader and one of his subordinates, both aged around 35. One wore a business suit; the other was dressed more casually. It was clear that the suited one was the manager. The stereotypical image of a manager working in a high-tech research commercial department in a large company seemed to match. ;) We shook hands. I am now about to start interviewing the subordinate. (Field notes.)

In light of Polkinghorne (1988), all realms were interacting during the researcher's first encounter with New House and the interviewees. The glamorous stories I had heard about New House had an influence on the experience. However, during later meetings I was not so in awe. Little by little, New House became a part of my everyday life. Furthermore, during this reflection I learned that the positive image I have adopted of New House and Adam can be seen in the actual analysis.

My discursive predisposition as a researcher obviously had a lot to do with the forthcoming interviews in terms of gaining access to the organisation and interacting with the interviewees (one rarely experiences a *tabula rasa* in organisational studies). During the first meeting, the interviewees kept asking me about my research and so we were all mutually wearing a kind of narrative mask and had some kind of characteristic expectations (e.g. "leader" or "researcher/interviewer"). I was not aware of any stories that the interviewees may have heard about me. However, these stories had to do with our immediate interaction while we tried to make sense of the situation and each other.

I also confronted more personal questions, which gave me the feeling that the interviewees were trying to make sense of the researcher as a human being. Some interviewees were reserved, perhaps thinking that I was a spy for the management. Others were more willing to meet me. However, the ghost of the researcher certainly helped me to gain entry to the organisation and everyone was willing to take part in the interviews (which may not be the case with every salesman). Here is another extract from the field notes:

During the interviews I had a physical contact with the interviewees three times. We shook hands at the beginning and the end of the meeting. Adam, Esther and I patted each other's shoulder intimately and laughed after the tape recorder had been turned off. This seemed to bring an end to the formal part of the meeting, even though the video recorder was still on.

I am happy that I managed to capture the meeting on video, and I took many pictures of the company's building and the interviewees. Clearly, Adam and Esther communicated with each in many ways (not just verbally). At least once I noticed that Esther did not continue telling her story until she had received an approving glance from Adam. It seemed that Adam was discursively present even before he entered to the room. In fact, the atmosphere changed to cozy only after he had come in. (Field notes.)

As stated before, I had to exclude the material and organic realms from this study and so the focus is on discursive reality. However, it can be concluded that my pre-existence as a researcher and our first physical meeting in the material and organic realms had a positive outcome in terms of the reality of meaning. In this case, the researcher's pre-existence might have helped to open doors to the organisation and during the physical meeting trust could have been gained (or lost), but it was a mutual decision (between researcher and interviewees) to continue to co-operate.

I will conclude this reflection with some cursory questions recorded in the field notes. These questions had emerged while acquiring the data and they ultimately led to the decision to focus on the reality of meaning and to exclude the material realm (such as the physical infrastructure of New House). Where, when and how does leadership exist? What role does the physical environment play in leadership (besides storytelling)? How do interaction and the relationship between the researcher and the subjects of the research influence the researcher's concept of a leader? It can be seen that analysis began while the data was being acquired, maybe even before. Since storytelling turned out to provide a challenging and complex, but rich enough, approach, excluding the physical reality in this study seems to make sense.

Phase 1: The pre-existence of the leader

This phase covers the time before Adam officially joined New House in 2007. The focus is on two issues: (1) Adam's relationship with New House; (2) Adam's pre-existence as a leader in the stories shared by his future followers.

Adam was familiar with New House before he began working there as a business development manager, albeit as an outsider. There was some cooperation between Old House (his former employer) and New House. Adam described his preceding knowledge about New House in the following way:

Everyone certainly knew my background, although I had not met most of them. Old House was New House's biggest client. At the end of 2006, New House developed a strategy for how the organisation would invest on this field of technology; consequently, an even larger group of researchers joined in this area of development. At the same time, this major client, where I used to work [as a sales manager], was running down its operations. This led to questions about why I chose to come to New House, and about whether I believe in this market area. (A1)

Adam was aware that his background would influence his forthcoming job, and there stories about him and Old House would be told in New House. He was somewhat concerned that his background in Old House (which had failed because of disagreements business owners) would encumber his forthcoming job as a leader in New House. Adam was thus preparing to explain not only his own background but also the fate of Old House to his new followers; he wanted to tell his version of events in a positive way.

In his first interview he also talked about the disharmony that resulted from the major strategic change he needed to imple-

ment in New House. He reflected on the situation in the following way:

There were a few background factors, such as this story. New House has been going through major organisational change, and many people are unfamiliar with the new organisation. They have just launched a new motto [hidden here], which traditional researchers would consider odd. Maybe partly because of this organisational change, they are not completely satisfied with the new organisation; that is, the old New House does not sit well with the new New House. (A1)

As Adam suspected, his followers were already familiar with him, through stories. David and Adam knew each other personally, as David had worked for a long time in a project funded by Old House. Ben had never met Adam and did not know him, but he was familiar with Old House:

The company where he worked [Old House] toppled over, or ceased all activity. We had a kind of strategic development, such as Innovative Manufacturing [the name of the project is disguised]. (B1)

Cindy had not met Adam either, but she knew something about Old House and had heard stories about Adam too:

I had heard loads of stories of him. He was familiar with us as we had co-operated with Old House. In that sense we knew Adam. He really has experienced a lot in the business world. He knows it really well and has, you know, rubbed elbows with really big boys. (C1)

Esther came to New House after Adam and had not met him before either. However, she had also heard stories about Adam. She recalls her impression of Adam at our initial meeting:

Oh yeah, I knew you [Adam], since I had heard a tales about you in my job at Another House [identity disguised]. I thought, well, if that kind of guy believes in this thing, why don't I. (AE1)

In terms of the reality of meaning (Polkinghorne 1988), Adam already existed among his future followers, albeit not yet as a formal leader. Stories such as Ben's obviously supported Adam's status as leader. Adam even had a rather positive pre-existence, even though his former employer, Old House, had collapsed. This pre-existence (and the forthcoming interaction with followers) can also be considered from the antenarrative perspective (Boje 2001; 2008; 2011): the concept of Adam as a leader begins to take shape in tenuous, fragmented and even absurd stories that may be no more than speculation about this character. Antenarrative has to do with the prospect of making sense (ibid.) through the stories circulating among the followers. Even (or particularly) the followers who had not met Adam before had to make sense of him through these stories.

This kind of storytelling has to do with making sense of someone's characteristic behaviour (Fisher 1987; Weick 2001). The stories teach what this person is like (hero or villain) and so on. Also, the position of manager creates a framework for the new role-holder, with its official duties, office space, organisational charts and so on. Stories told about former managers have their own unique discursive characters interacting with cultural narrative archetypes. Snowden (2003) suggests Dilbert as an example of this kind of narrative archetype, which is recognised throughout western society. In this data, for example, the desire to go back to "the old days" is a type of discourse that a new leader (such as Adam) has to confront. In fact, none of the followers said anything negative about Adam himself, although his leadership was challenged indirectly in criticisms about New House:

Oh yeah, in the old days, everything was much better. We had much less bureaucracy. (D1)

Well, what do I dare to say! In this new culture of New House, well, I can just say it pisses me off! (C1)

To sum up, Adam's personal history and the personal histories of his future followers were antecedents related to Adam's pre-existence, which also had to do with Adam's emerging leadership. Next, we will consider Adam's first official encounter, where his pre-existence interacts with his new role in his first public presentation.

Phase 2: The leader meets the followers: the first rendezvous

Adam gave his first official presentation at New House in a strategic meeting. Most of the unit's current employees were present. His aim is to understand his followers and his supervisor's expectations. Based on his supervisor's preceding speech Adam decided to spontaneously introduce himself and to crystallise his aim as a brand new leader. Adam described the situation in the following way:

This was the very first meeting where I was participating as a part of New House's personnel. There were about 33 people present, if I remember right. Most of these people were meeting me for the very first time and my supervisor introduced me to the staff. He explained that I was the new business development manager, who had worked at Old House. And, in a way, his introduction pretty much created the foundation for what I feel they expected from me in the situation. I began to introduce myself, but I hadn't prepared at all. I did not have any story in mind, but I started to narrate off-the-cuff following these guidelines. My first words were that we will have succeeded in this development in our organisation if less than 50% of those present in this room no longer worked for New House after five years. (A2)

Although Adam had never met most of these people, he believed that they all knew him before because of his history with Old House. This guided him towards the "hard" and even radical statement ("less than 50% of you"), the result of a misevaluation of the situation (as Adam describes later). He thought he could communicate his ideas about marketing in a way that people would find inspirational and appealing. However, the opposite happened, as Adam recalls:

After this a hush descended over the audience. People looked down at their toes, wondering what the hell this guy was trying to say. That was the beginning of the story. (A2)

Adam thought that he had made a serious miscalculation, owing to his history and his knowledge about the personnel in New House. Adam believed that his message had been completely misinterpreted, that after his speech everyone would think that their jobs are threatened. What he meant was that New House would support each researcher to commercialise their innovations. New House was not about to dismiss personnel but would be willing to start spin-off enterprises that researchers could lead. The "50% of you" was merely a goal, an ideal proportion of employees who would hopefully have commercialised their innovations during the following five years. Adam's job was to inspire and support the researchers to start new businesses with New House's support, not to fire anyone.

Everyone remembered Adam's speech differently. Ben interpreted the message in the way that Adam had feared, while Cindy perceived it the way he had intended. David said he understood what Adam meant, but he thought that Adam had communicated his message in a complicated way. It is also interesting to note that the followers perceived the reaction of their co-listeners quite differently. According to Ben:

He then told about his background and his work. At the end

of his speech he said that he has failed if more than half of this gang still works for Company X in 5 years, you know. Well, that invoked sneering. Anyhow, most of them were around 50. We had the idea that we would create new business and, well, new companies. But this age group just sneered, thinking that at the age of 50 you could become technological managers of spin-off companies. (B1)

While Ben perceived that Adam's presentation and message had more or less failed, Cindy felt the reactions of listeners were positive. Cindy did not think there was any sneering, but that reactions were rather neutral. Indeed, Adam's message was what they had expected:

Yeah, it was like this new Artificial Intelligence [name disguised] programme was just about to begin, and New House was being renewed, and everything was so unclear and ambiguous. This was, in a way, a first joint effort, this strategic programme. It kind of fitted well to the beginning [of Adam's presentation], the fact that we are dealing with new issues. It was a kind of new opening for everyone at New House. I feel that he [Adam] is kind of a new person, with new thoughts, and that many of us in this renewed environment are still thinking about it all.

Although Adam was concerned because of his history at Old House, the followers did not mention it when reflecting on the message of the first strategy meeting. They mentioned Old House when wondering what kind of leader Adam would be, and were even a bit concerned because of the fate of Old House. It is interesting to note that they did not blame Adam or even associate his past experience at Old House with his presentation in the strategy meeting, even though Old House reminded many of the spin-off companies that Adam was hired to create with his followers in New House. In fact, Cindy highlighted that Adam's experience in Old House gave him credibility as a new leader. In this sense, Adam's "body blow" with Old House is another story that did not seem to resonate in a negative way with those in New House.

To sum up, Phase 2 illustrated that the first meeting between leader and followers (the pre-existing characters) had much to do with the "present" interaction. Adam's expectations also had antenarrative function in that he tried to construct coherence in the prevailing confusion and chaos by narrating his goal, but that in fact remained ambiguous.

Phase 3: Everyday leadership: Constructing leadership and resistance
This section will focus on storytelling that relates to two typical, even everyday, events in leadership: constructing leadership with credibility and authority, and constructing resistance in organisational storytelling. We will start with the aforementioned, focusing on the stories that relate to achieving the status of leader; we will then move on to the organisational resistance the leader confronts.

The interviews with Ben and Cindy reveal that Adam's leadership is supported by his earlier experience and by the beginning of his career in New House. Cindy appreciated the breadth of experience Adam had gained while working with numerous diverse companies. Ben told about Adam being praised by an important Japanese CEO from a large international company. Another interview supported Adam's authority:

We had one Japanese firm here, and Adam was presenting XXX [the new technology]. The Japanese CEO said that this is how things should be. He kind of admitted that Adam was right. This CEO really was a kingpin. (B1)

Positive stories such as these may circulate in the organisa-

tion, thus giving the leader credibility and authority. Cindy also highlighted Adam's strong communication skills, which he had shown in a few meetings with Cindy and other followers:

Let's say that it is very easy [to interact with Adam]. You can call him anytime, and he always will call you back and. He understands his business kind of knows, particularly within the marketing and commercial arenas. Well, I would say that it is easy to communicate with Adam. Usually, when you communicate with him, it just comes across as being really worthwhile. (C1)

Adam seems to have earned his position as a leader because of his earlier experience and merit; first impressions therefore seem to be accurate. Although his competence and social skills have been praised, he still faces resistance in New House. According to Adam, he seldom encountered direct resistance, such as disagreements in meetings, but indirect resistance appears to be strong. Adam's first experience of resistance was the immediate reaction to his speech at the first strategy meeting (see Phase 1):

When I had told about my vision, the crowd looked at their shoes and seemed ill-at-easy, but no one said anything. (A2)

As was discovered in Phase 1, interpretations of his speech varied. In fact, only Ben agreed with that negative view, while Cindy saw reactions as neutral. However, the later displays of resistance were indirect. The most revealing took place after a few weeks, when Adam found out that the personnel in another unit had turned his message upside down:

I meant [in the first strategy meeting] to encourage people to throw themselves into their research, and commercialise it. However, in XXX [another unit in another city] such an exercise brought a negative response. They wondered what they would do if they got a notice of dismissal in five years. They were unsure about whether they would still be working with this technology and research; and if they were, what would they do with this technology? (A2)

According to Adam, this was the "strongest" example of misunderstanding that caused resistance. He was not too concerned about this, though, because it appeared to be one of a kind and easy to put right. He found the "quiet" resistance he confronted everyday to be more challenging. Adam describes the next meetings with researchers in the following way:

They never disagreed, but they referred back to the old researchers, who do not accept this. (A2)

He accused some of these old researchers of being obstructive. It is interesting to note that although the followers expressed their support for Adam and his goals, they all mentioned "the old researchers" who resisted Adam and the new strategic orientation in New House. Adam and his followers saw "clear" origins for resistance, but the agent (old researcher) remains ambiguous:

[W]e got a new organisation and new courses of action, and the beginnings of a new strategy [...] but we had many people who had lived in that old world. (B1)

[T]hese researchers were not too commercially oriented; they were merely safety oriented. (E1)

[T]hose oldtimers don't easily come along; because of that, it has been so safe here. (C1)

It was never empirically proven whether those old researchers existed in the material and organic realms (which was not the aim of the analysis anyway) and it remained a mystery. However, it is interesting from the perspective of the ghost leader. In fact, I made a few attempts to locate the old researchers and asked Adam (in two interviews) to point out at least one

who was resisting the new strategy. In the first interview Adam told me that there were a few of them (“senior, authoritative researchers who are against”). During the second interview he told me that there were two; he called me later and told me that “we have made some progress”. I asked to name one, but Adam said: “There is only one more left, and he is likely to retire soon. It has to do with alcohol, so there is no point in interviewing him”. According to Polkinghorne (1988), resistance exists in the mental realm, in the reality of meaning. In terms of narrative leadership, the main “culprit” in terms of resistance, the old researcher (or the ghost of the old researcher), remains in organisational storytelling.

The old researcher taught Adam something about influencing a leader’s behaviour. The ghost of the old researcher illustrates the idea that Parry & Hansen (2007) put forward about the story as leader (even influencing the formal leader). Adam softened his approach once the “old researchers” made him aware of their worldview and values, and how they should be treated. The next section will focus on the leader changing his behaviour and how this is perceived by his followers.

Phase 4: Leader changing his behaviour: do the followers follow?

In his second interview, Adam stated that he would stick to what he said in the first strategy meeting (“I will not soften my message”). However, within a year, he had started to doubt whether his “hard” way was the best:

I had to soften my message, but the message remains the same. (A3)

A few months later, Adam seems to have changed his mind. He realised that the nature of the researcher is more orientated towards security than marketing and risk-taking (which emerged early interviews with followers, as mentioned in Phases 2 and 3). Adam therefore needs to find another way to influence his followers. It was the resistance he faced (from the old researchers) that made him to reconsider his approach:

I really need to find new ways to deliver my message. I have developed another strategy, with a view to influencing those old researchers. (A4)

Although Adam changed his behaviour, his followers still seemed to support his original approach. In their interviews, they did not indicate any awareness of changes in Adam’s mind-set and behaviour. In this sense, there is a gap between his and their current perception of the prevailing leader(ship). In fact, in the beginning, Cindy even said that there was nothing wrong with “Adam’s way”:

Oh Adam is such a brilliant communicator. Personnel need to be shaken at times. Even in his first speech, I don’t think anybody was insulted. (C1)

A year later, Esther still agrees with Cindy but is the only one who finds Adam’s approach difficult:

He [Adam] is just awesome with his stories. Well, maybe some people find him odd because of his marketing background, but his way of communicating is brilliant even if it is difficult. (E1)

However, Esther’s interview had taken place after Adam had softened his approach. Adam feels he has proven his new (softer) way to the organisation in his interactions and in public presentations, but his followers still see him as a leader he used to be. This makes the metaphor of the ghost of leadership apt: from Esther’s point of view, Adam represents himself as rather the leader he was a year ago. There is thus no “real-time” and “real” unambiguous leader with renewed conceptions. This also highlights the interactional nature of leadership: followers may stick with the leader’s old mind set (how they have perceived it)

even if the leader has changed.

To sum up, in terms of ghost leader(ship), there is both resonance and a gap between the realities of leader and followers. The flux of stories (Boje 2008) in the organisation shapes the reality continuously, but not axiomatically. Reality remains unpredictable and complex and there is latency in the concepts. Sometimes stories “penetrate” the public discourse, sometimes they dominate; some stories will not be heard. In this case, Adam’s leadership remained, but he and his followers perceived it differently. Finally, we will briefly consider the post-existence of the leader.

Phase 5: After the leader has departed

Adam left New House in summer 2011. Interviews with two followers, Ben and David (who were interviewed two months after Adam left), revealed that Adam still exists in organisational storytelling. Ben started the interview with his understanding of why Adam left:

Adam just got fed up. He was just all alone, with no resources from topmost management. He was headhunted by another organisation. (B2)

David’s opinion was somewhat different:

Well, I don’t see anything dramatic. In this kind of organisation many people move within the industry, particularly if you’re involved with commercial and marketing activities. It’s kind of natural rotation. (D2)

Ben said that he was involved with a spin-off enterprise that is based on innovation in research that Adam had supported for commercialisation:

In fact, we also had that...a year ago we tried to spin off an enterprise [with Adam]. It didn’t take off, but we will try again next year. (B2)

There are several research projects in New House that Adam has supported with a view to commercialising and developing as spin-off enterprises. According to Ben and David, 10 enterprises are now being developed. Only two years ago Adam was concerned that there were no spin-off enterprises under development during the first two years. In this sense, Adam’s leadership – or its consequences – remains, since Ben and many other researchers carry on with commercialising their research. Adam as an initiator has left and, despite of the change in the organisational culture he had brought about, there now seems to be a “leadership gap”. Ben describes the situation in the following way:

But I think he did a great job. We have advanced; the culture has changed. Within the level of top management...I have heard...they have been talking about it...that he really is about to leave. And it was a big dent. Since the beginning of this summer, we have been wondering who the hell is going to run the show now. (B2)

Earlier, Adam blamed the culture of New House (safety and research-oriented) and the manifestation of that culture (the old researchers) for blocking the implementation of a new strategy. However, Adam, Ben and David now believe that there are no old researchers in the unit, and that advances (in terms of new strategy) have been made. Surprisingly, the resistance that appeared to have disappeared more than a year ago emerged in Esther’s interview:

Well, you know, it is still a problem. We just have too many of those oldtimers, old researchers. But I will continue to co-operate with him [Adam]. (D2)

Resistance remains; even the “culprit” stays almost the same, but in a changed way. According to early interviews, resistance

came from inside the unit. David says that nowadays there are still some old researchers who continue to resist but now they come from outside the unit. Due to extended cooperation between different units in New House, there are other safety oriented researchers in those units. According to the interviewees, Adam's (now former) unit has overcome the "original" resistance, but then found some new resistance. Consequently, the ghosts of leadership (Adam and the old researchers) still exist in New House.

Discussion

The Negotiated leadership and resistance

This study reveals the resonance of stories circulating between the leader and the followers. It also illustrates that leadership is not solely the domain of the leader but a negotiated relationship between the leader and the followers (and even potential followers). Storytelling has to do with constructing the narrative existence of leadership in the organisation. Furthermore, there also is narrative existence with limited discursive power, even narrative silence (such as Adam's changed behaviour). The findings also raise the question: Can leadership be discursive and be transferred from one organisation to another? In this case the leader had already earned leadership status with Old House before joining New House. The stories convey leadership in the way that Parry and Hansen (2007) highlighted with such examples as Jesus Christ and Gandhi, and the stories may even precede the character related to the emerging leadership.

Sometimes, managers may promote themselves as great leaders (through the media, for instance) but having a following is what actually conveys leadership. Adam was promoted as a leader in the organisational storytelling among his followers. However, in this case too, it is not possible to determine precisely whether the leader is the "real" Adam or the version in the stories about him. Nevertheless, the narrative approach reveals the organisational processes whereby authority and leadership are negotiated and made sense of.

In terms of organisational resistance, storytelling may promote "great antagonists" as well as leaders. We can deconstruct this resistance by considering an old researcher who always seems to be physically absent but who is present whenever discursive resistance emerges, or who is always physically present but is not esteemed or quoted (discursive present) in any interaction (such as strategy meetings). This kind of old researcher would not possess much power in the organisation but would live in narrative silence. The situation is same with the leader who is present in the discourse, whether that is in the publicly expressed discourse (for example, in meetings) or in everyday routines/work. This kind of leader – existing in the reality of meaning, whether or not the leader holds a formal managerial position – can influence organisational behaviour.

Resisting old researchers obviously influenced Adam. However, from Adam's perspective, there are many possible explanations for his behaviour (such as dealing with resistance from them, or keeping me away from them). It is possible that he did not want a researcher to meet an employee who might be overly critical about the leader and the organisation (perhaps revealing something unfavourable). This is unlikely as there are some 100 supportive followers in Adam's unit; one or two critical members would have little influence. In terms of leadership, it may not only be the personnel but also the leader who jointly constructed this kind of organisational member; an old researcher, who is hard to empirically verify but who is discursively present.

For the leader, the "old researcher" provides concrete evidence for the resistance. It is easier to blame one old timer than the whole organisation; this archetype of the old researcher, although experienced and competent but safety oriented, can encumber a leader's efforts even though most followers seem to publicly support leader. This juxtaposition protects the leader from losing face while offering a soft way for collective resistance, a way to negotiate power while resisting change.

However, all the storied leaders and antagonists highlight the ambiguous nature of leader(ship). Gardner et al. (2005) asked, "Can you see the real me?". In the same way, followers could be asked, "Can you see the real leader?" or, conversely, "Can the leader see the real followers?" The findings show that discursive encounters and speculation in organisational storytelling may have an influence on discursive characters. Even in Phase 2, where the possibility of coherence and clarity is the greatest, the leader's statement (and particularly its meaning) remains ambiguous. The terse statement made by the leader in the strategy meeting was interpreted in a great variety of ways. Even the exact content and structure of the discourse were remembered and interpreted differently.

Furthermore, as perceived in Phase 4, the leader does not represent himself as a real-time entity with current ideas and values. There is a time lag in interpretations by the followers (and sometimes the ideas do not even penetrate their consciousness). Their perception of their leader is simultaneously a retrospective and a prospective interpretation: it is speculation. Even without trying to separate a leader's discursive existence from physical reality, we may ask which counts more: what the leader "really" is or what the followers think. This ambiguity may even be positive for leadership in terms of strategic ambiguity (Eisenberg 1984). For instance, when an organisation faces an unexpected situation, the followers may "negotiate" their behaviour with the discursive leader in an innovative way; in this context, an unambiguous leader exercising sovereign power and clear expectations would not succeed.

Concluding the Ghost of Leadership – and what next?

Stories about Adam circulated even before he arrived at New House and they cast a lingering shadow after he had gone. The stories resonated, and every follower had a unique concept of Adam as a leader. Even Adam's self-image as a leader varied over time. The ghost leader creates a metaphor for the fragmented, unpredictable, ambiguous and dynamic character(s) representing leader(ship) in the organisation. This ghost leader may emerge as an antenarrative, a glimpse that can gain enough coherence to construct leadership, even creating narrative patterns that are widely recognised in organisations (see Snowden 2003). This ghost leader relates both to fictional leaders (such as Santa Claus) and to "real life" leaders such as Adam. It does not provide much information about material reality, but materializes the fragmented, discursive texture of a leader in a visible and observable form.

Storytelling and narrative leadership require further research. This may mean taking alternative approaches such as theoretical and conceptual openings but it also means carrying out more empirical studies. Theoretical and alternative approaches could be derived for the benefit of more seminal work of authors in different disciplines, using their concepts and frameworks. For example, Gabriel (e.g. 1995; 2000) has used the concepts of imagination, fantasy and fiction in the context of organisational storytelling. Gabriel's approach could benefit from the approach that Paul Ricoeur (1991) takes to imagination when

establishing a framework that steps further in storytelling reality in terms of organisational imagination. Also, combining the concepts of narrative leadership and authentic leadership (see Gardner et al. 2005), which overlap in many ways, could benefit each of these approaches. Authenticity has to do with transformational leadership, as has storytelling. For example, considering leadership storytelling as an authentic process with a focus on the followers' interpretations would provide the dynamics of both leadership and followership.

¹ Acknowledgements: The empirical data was collected partly in cooperation with adjunct professor Teppo Sintonen. I want to express my gratitude for permission to use the data in my own paper.

² We may follow the story even more than with a "real" leader (cf. Parry & Hansen 2007). It is reasonable to assume that a four-year-old child believes in the leadership that Santa Claus represents, just as it is reasonable to assume that a 35-year-old employee in the

Nokia Corporation believes in the leadership represented by the CEO. However, a 35-year-old rarely believes in Santa, and Nokia's CEO would have little leadership effect on my four-year-old son. This kind of "rationality" in behaviour can be understood in terms of narrative rationality (Fisher 1985; 1994) and the ability for critical interpretation that relates to, for example, age, education and culture (see e.g., Järvinen & Knuutila 1982).

³ See more about preceding linguistic (Rorty 1992; Fisher 1985) and narrative turn in human and social sciences (e.g. Fisher 1987; Andrews et al 2008) and in organisation and leadership studies (e.g. Parry & Hansen 2007; Auvinen et al. 2010). In fact, Boje (2008) has suggested a story turn, which is currently emerging in leadership and organisation studies.

⁴ The data is selected from a larger set of data that was collected during my dissertation project (2006–11). Purposeful sampling (Coyne 1997) is used to select information-rich cases for in-depth study.

References

- Andrews, M., Squire, C. & Tamboukou, M. (Eds.) (2008), *Doing Narrative Research*, Sage, London.
- Auvinen, T. (2008), *Narratiivinen näkökulma johtajuuteen. Tulkitseva tutkimus tarinajohtamisesta suomalaisen esimiestyön kontekstissa*. Licentiate thesis. Jyväskylä University School of Economics and Business, Jyväskylä, Finland.
- Auvinen, T., Mangeloja, E. & Sintonen, T. (2010) "Is Narrative a Content of Economics and Business Administration? An Essay about why Homo Economicus is actually Homo Narrans: From Realistic to Narrative Paradigm", *Annual Review of Management & Organisational Inquiry*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 1–13.
- Auvinen, T. & Sintonen, T. (2009), *Storiosis in Finnish High-tech Company*. In *Standing Conference for Critical Organisation and Management Inquiry 2009 conference proceedings*, pp. 1–13, SCMOI, USA.
- Berger, P. & Luckmann, T. ([1966] 1998), *Todellisuuden sosiaalinen rakentuminen [The Social construction of reality]*, Kirjapaino Oy Like, Helsinki.
- Boje, D. (1991) "The Storytelling Organisation: A Study of Story Performance in an Office-Supply Firm", *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 36 No. 1, pp. 106–126.
- Boje, D. (1995) "Stories of the Storytelling Organisation: A Postmodern Analysis of Disney as 'Tamara-Land'", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 38 No. 4, pp. 997–1035.
- Boje, D. (1999), "Storytelling leaders". Available <http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/leaders.html> [cited 15.3. 2008].
- Boje, D. (2008), *Storytelling Organisations*, Sage Publishers, London.
- Boje, D. (2011), *Storytelling and the Future of Organisations*, Routledge, New York.
- Boje, D. & Rhodes, C. (2006) "The Leadership of Ronald McDonald: Double Narration and Stylistic Lines of Transformation", *The Leadership Quarterly*, Vol. 17, pp. 94–103.
- Boyce, M. (1995) "Collective Centring and Collective Sense-making in the Stories and Storytelling of One Organisation", *Organisation Studies*, Vol. 16 No. 1, pp. 107–137.
- Boyce, M. (1996) "Organisational Story and Storytelling: A Critical review", *Journal of Organisational Change*, Vol. 9 No. 5, pp. 5–26.
- Brown, S.J., Denning, S., Groh, K. & Prusak, L. (2005), *Storytelling in Organisations: Why Storytelling is Transforming 21st Century Organisations and Management*, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann Burlington, USA.
- Bruner, J. (1991) "The Narrative Construction of Reality", *Critical Inquiry*, 18 (Autumn), pp. 1–21.
- Ciulla, J.B. (1998), "Leadership Ethics: Mapping the Territory", in Joanne B. Ciulla (Ed.), *Ethics. The Heart of Leadership*, Praeger, Westport, pp. 1-25.
- Ciulla, J.B. (2005). "The State of Leadership Ethics and the Work that Lies Before Us", *Business Ethics: A European Review*, 14, pp. 323–335.
- Collin, K., Sintonen, T., Paloniemi, S. & Auvinen, T. (2011), *Work, Power and Learning in a Risk Filled Occupation*, *Management Learning*, 42 (2).
- Coyne, I.T. (1997) "Sampling in Qualitative Research. Purposeful and Theoretical Sampling; Merging or Clear Boundaries?" *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, Vol. 26, pp. 623–630.
- Czarniawska, B. (1998), *A Narrative Approach to Organisational Studies*, Sage, London.
- Denning, S. (2004) "Telling tales", *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 82 No. 5), pp. 122–129.
- Denning, S. (2005), *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, USA.
- Denning, S. (2008) "Stories in the Workplace. Capture Employees' Attention During Change – or When They Need a Change in Mind-Set", *HR-Magazine*, September 2008, pp. 129–132.
- Eidley, N. (2001) "Unravelling Social Constructionism", *Theory and Psychology*, Vol. 11 No. 3, pp. 433–441.
- Eisenberg (1984), *Ambiguity as Strategy in Organisational Communication*, *Communication Monographs*, 51, ss. 227–242.
- Eskola, J. & Suoranta, J. (1999), *Johdatus laadulliseen tutkimukseen [Introduction to Qualitative Research]*, Vastapaino, Tampere, Finland.
- Fairhurst, G. (2009) *Considering context in discursive leadership research*. *Human Relations*, Vol. 62 No. 11, pp. 1607-1633.
- Fayol H. (1984) [1916], *General and Industrial Management*, The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Inc., New York, USA.
- Fisher, W.R. (1984) "Narration as a Human Communication Paradigm: The Case of Public Moral Argument", *Communication Monographs*, Vol. 51, pp. 1–22.
- Fisher, W.R. (1985) "The Narrative Paradigm: In the Beginning", *Journal of Communication*, Vol. 35, pp. 74-89.
- Fisher, W.R. (1987), *Human communication as a narration: Toward a philosophy of reason, value, and action*, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, SC.
- Fisher, W.R. (1994) "Narrative Rationality and the Logic of Scientific Discourse", *Argumentation*, Vol. 8, pp. 21–32.
- Foucault, M. 2005 [1975]. *Tarkkailla ja rangaista [Surveiller et punir]*. Helsinki: Otava.

- Gabriel, Y. (1995) "The Unmanaged Organisation: Stories, Fantasies and Subjectivity", *Organisation Studies*, Vol. 16 No. 3, pp. 477–501.
- Gabriel, Y. (2000), *Storytelling in Organisations: Facts, Fiction and Fantasies*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Gardner, W.L., Avolio, B.J., Luthans, F., May, D.R. & Walumbwa, F. (2005) "Can you see the real me?" A self-based model of authentic leader and follower development, *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16, pp. 343–372.
- Gergen, M. & Gergen, K. (2006) "Narratives in Action", *Narrative Inquiry* Vol. 16 No. 1, pp. 112–121.
- Grint, K. (2005), *Leadership Limits and Possibilities*, Palgrave Macmillian, Great Britain.
- Jameson, D. (2001) "Narrative Discourse and Management Action", *The Journal of Business Communication*, Vol. 38 No. 4, pp. 476–511.
- Juuti, P. (2001), *Johtamispuhe (The Managerial Discourse)*, PS-Kustannus, Juva, Finland.
- Järvinen, I-R. & Knuuttila, S. (toim.) (1982), *Kertomusperinne: Kirjoituksia proosaperinteeseen lajeista ja tutkimuksesta*, Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura, Helsinki.
- Lauerma, H. (2006), *Usko, toivo ja huijaus. Rohkaisusta johdattelun kautta psykoterroriin*, Gummerus Kirjapaino Oy, Jyväskylä.
- MacIntyre, A. 2007. [1981] *Hyveiden jäljillä. (After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory)*. Helsinki, Finland: Gaudeamus Helsinki University Press.
- Mole, G. (2004), "Can Leadership be Taught?", in Teoksessa Storey, J. (Ed.), *Leadership in Organisations: Current Issues and Key Trends*, Routledge, London, pp. 125–137.
- Northouse, P.G. (2007), *Leadership Theory and Practice*, Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Osborn, R., Hunt, J. & Jauch L. (2002) "Toward a contextual theory of leadership", *The Leadership Quarterly*, Vol. 13 No. 6, pp. 797–837.
- Parkin, M. (2004), *Using Storytelling to Develop People and Organisations*, Kogan Page Limited, London, UK and Sterling, USA.
- Parry, K. and Hansen, H. (2007) "Organisational Story as Leadership", *Leadership*, Vol. 3 No. 3, pp. 281–300.
- Polkinghorne, D.E. (1988), *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*, State University of New York Press, Albany, USA.
- Ricoeur, P. (1991), *From Text to Action. Essays in Hermeneutics, II*, Northwestern University Press, Illinois, USA.
- Riessman, C.K. (2008), *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, Sage Publications Inc., USA.
- Rorty, R.M. (1992), *The Linguistic Turn: Essays in Philosophical Method [1st edition 1967]*, The University of Chicago Press, USA.
- Schipper, F. (2009) "Excess of Rationality? Rationality, Emotion and Creativity. A Contribution to the Philosophy of Management and Organisation", *Tamara Journal* Vol. 8 (3–4), pp. 160–175.
- Sintonen, T. and Auvinen, T. (2009) "Who is Leading, Leader or Story?" *Tamara Journal*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 95–109.
- Snowden, D.J. (2003), *Narrative Patterns: The perils and possibilities of using story in organisations*, Oxford University Press, UK.
- Sole, D. & Wilson G. (2002), "Storytelling in Organisations: The Power and Traps of Using Stories to Share Knowledge in Organisations", *Harvard Graduate School of Education*. Available http://lila.pz.harvard.edu/_upload/lib/ACF14F3.pdf [cited 11.11.2005].
- Taleb, N. (2007), *The Black Swan: The impact of the highly improbable* (translated by Kimmo Pietiläinen), Terra Cognita, Helsinki.
- The Internet Classics Archive (2011), *Rhetoric By Aristotle* (translated by W. Rhys Roberts). Available <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/rhetoric.mb.txt> [cited 15.11.2011].
- Weick, K.E. (2001), *Making Sense of the Organisation*, Blackwell, Oxford.
- Weick, K.E. & Browning L.D. (1986) "Argument and Narration in Organisational Communication", *Yearly Review of Management of the Journal of Management*, Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 243–259.

Appendix 1: Summary of the empirical data

Date	Main themes in the interview	Interviewee & code in the text	Durat.	Documentation, pages*	How the data was used in the analysis
9.6.2006	Background, self image as a leader, stories about experiences while working as a manager	Adam (A1)	45 min	7 page transcript, 2 pages fieldnotes, 2 pages notes (organization charts) by the interviewee	Phase 1 (Pre-existence) Fieldnotes used in Phase 0.
15.5.2008	The first meeting in the organization in which Adam gave his first speech.	Adam (A2)	45 min	10 page transcript, 10 pages organizational documents	Phase 1 & Phase 2
10.6.2008	The first meeting in the organization in which Adam gave his first speech.	Ben (B1)	45 min	12 page transcript, 1 page fieldnotes	Phase 1 & Phase 2
10.6.2008	The first meeting in the organization in which Adam gave his first speech.	Cindy (C1)	45 min	15 page transcript, illustration (about the technologies) by the interviewee	Phase 1 & Phase 2
10.6.2008	The first meeting in the organization in which Adam gave his first speech.	David (D1)	35 min	13 page transcript 3 pages fieldnotes	Phase 1 & Phase 2
15.1.2009	Interval reflection	Adam (A3)	30 min	3 page transcript	Phase 3 & 4
30.4.2009	Interval reflection	Adam (A4)	30 min	11 page transcript	Phase 3 & 4
15.10.2009	Working in New Company and discussion about Adam	Esther (E1)	45 min	12 page transcript	Phase 3 & 4
15.10.2009	Joint discussion about Working in New Company	Adam & Esther (AE1)	30 min	10 page transcript	Phase 3 & 4
17.8.2010	Interval reflection	Adam (A5)	15 min	2 page transcript 1 page fieldnotes	Phase 4 & 5
2.9.2011	The leaving of Adam	Ben (B2)	25 min	8 page transcript	Phase 5
2.9.2011	The leaving of Adam	Cindy (C2)	10 min	4 page transcript	Phase 5
12 interviews			7 hrs	128 pages	
Adam =	Business Development Manager				
Ben =	Researcher, team leader and an expert in a special area of technology.				
Cindy =	Researcher, an expert in a special area of technology.				
David =	Researcher, an expert in a special area of technology and in charge of development work.				
Esther =	Business Development Expert				
* MS Word documents with single spacing.					

Author

Tommi Auvinen (LSc) is currently finalizing his dissertation on narrative approach to leadership. His areas of interest are especially: narrative leadership and storytelling in leadership, e-mail: tommi.p.auvinen@econ.jyu.fi