

`A Strange Route to Get Here': Metaphors of Leadership Development and Leadership

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to explore leaders' naturally occurring metaphors of leadership development and leadership. It reports a secondary analysis of interview transcripts from a study (Ward and Preece, 2012) of seven leaders who have moved from public to private sector social housing organizations in the UK. The secondary analysis utilises a method based

on metaphor, as described by Tosey (2011). In addition to insights into leaders' metaphors, we offer findings based on a comparison of the content analysis performed by Ward and Preece and this paper's secondary analysis. The paper addresses the conference theme of trends in HRD in public sector organisations. It is envisaged that it will inform both practitioner and research communities, especially as many more public services are facing complete or part removal from local authority management and control.

Background

The 21st century has brought renewed interest in leadership development (LD), together with the identification of particular trends (Bolden, 2007; Mabey and Finch-Lees, 2008). For example, LD has experienced shifts over the years from the deployment of more formal to more informal methods (McGuire and Gubbins, 2009), with more emphasis being placed upon experience (De Rue and Wellman, 2009; McCall, 2004; Yip, 2009).

The UK social housing sector has experienced extensive change and restructuring in recent years, and now faces a number of challenges (Pawson and Mullins, 2010; Preece and Ward, 2012; Ward and Preece, 2010a, 2010c). These changes include more commercially focused organisations and an enhanced prominence in their locales (Oxley *et al.*, 2010); the new 'social landlords' are more innovative than when under local authority ownership/control and display traits of 'social' businesses (Collier (2005). Human resource management (HRM) policies and practices have been mimicked from the private sector in the transition from

public to private sector (Kirkpatrick *et al.*, 2005; Pollitt, 2000; Sprigings, 2002; Walker, 2001).

Utilising the human resource to meet these challenges is under researched within this sector, so it has been appropriate to consider the practice and future of leadership development in the sector (Ward and Preece, 2010b; Ward *et al.*, 2010d). In order to investigate this, an interview-based study was undertaken of seven leaders who have moved from public to private sector social housing organisations in the UK (Ward and Preece, 2012). The study was guided by questions about the experiences of leaders who have made the transition from the public to the private sector, the outcomes of their development activities, and the ways in which LD programmes and activities have contributed to the new organisations and to the leaders themselves.

The present paper extends that original study by undertaking a secondary analysis of the interview transcripts, focusing on naturally occurring metaphors in leaders' accounts. This secondary analysis addresses the need identified by Ward and Preece (2012 p.16) to inform the way that individual leaders can 'plan and prepare for their future learning and development.... and how they might realize their career aspirations in the future'. It develops a more nuanced understanding of individual's conceptions and experiences of leadership development, thereby adding to knowledge and understanding of the ways in which leaders themselves experience these processes.

Literature

Whilst there has been considerable interest in metaphor in the organisation and management literature (for example, Cornelissen *et al.*, 2008; Grant and Oswick, 1996; Morgan, 1986), according to Cassell and Lee (2012, p.248), 'most research focuses on the deductive application of metaphors, rather than on inductive explorations of metaphorical language-in-use'. This applies to metaphor in relation to leadership, where deductive metaphors have been utilised by authors such as Alvesson and Spicer (2010) and Parry (2008). Research is lacking into the naturally-occurring, inductively derived metaphors of leaders themselves.

Inkson (2004) provides us with analysis on the use of metaphor from three perspectives in the conceptualisation of careers. Acknowledging the work of Morgan (1986) and also that every metaphor we use has both strengths and weaknesses, Inkson considers the benefits and use of metaphors, for example as a way of expressing ourselves; to persuade us; to provide opportunities to create innovation; and to provoke interest and meaning. The application of nine career metaphors are discussed to aid our understanding of careers. *Journey* is one of those nine and links to our findings on the individual experiences of the CEO:

The journey metaphor conceptualizes the career as movement, which may take place geographically, between jobs, between occupations, or between organisations. (2003, p.103)

Other authors who have researched the career metaphor include Bowdle and Gentrer (2005) and Mignot (2004). The latter explores career stories and experiences from a metaphorisation

perspective which explores the relationship between metaphor and consciousness and where language, Mignot claims, can only provide a ‘provisional understanding of *reality*’ (2004 p.458).

One particular article which links the discussion of careers with an aspect of housing is Fopp (2009). He notes the prevalence of two particular metaphors from a number of publications when discussing homelessness, these are *pathways* and *careers*. Carroll (2008), who explores the narratives of identity work of senior managers on a leadership development programme, uncovers the use of a blindfold metaphor as being a focal point to how these managers understood leadership. Buchanan *et al* (2007) scrutinise the use of the metaphor *transmission* used within a public sector context to describe how leadership can be ‘transmitted’ through the healthcare sector, rather like catching a virus or an infection.

In contrast to the deductive approach, a focus on naturally-occurring metaphors in coaching, including leadership coaching, is prevalent in practice; for example through an approach known as ‘Clean Language’ (Sullivan and Rees, 2008). Originated in the 1980s by counselling psychologist David Grove from his work with trauma victims (Grove and Panzer, 1991; Lawley and Tompkins, 2000), ‘Clean Language’ (CL) is a method of questioning that facilitates a person’s exploration of their inner world – their own, naturally occurring ‘metaphor landscape’. A central feature of the practice is that the practitioner’s interventions remain as free as possible from the practitioner’s own metaphors and assumptions; hence the notion that the interviewer’s language needs to be ‘clean’.

The approach that CL takes towards metaphor is congruent with, and has become informed by, the philosophy of embodied mind (Lakoff and Johnson 1999 p.3). Lakoff and Johnson have put forward the philosophical view that our conceptions of the world are fundamentally metaphorical, and that 'metaphorical thought is unavoidable, ubiquitous, and mostly unconscious' (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003, p.272).

A methodology based on CL has been developed and applied in HRD research by Tosey (2011), as both a method of interviewing and as a method of analysis. This paper applies a CL perspective to Ward and Preece's interview transcripts in order to mine the data for naturally occurring metaphors.

Methodology

The initial study (Ward and Preece 2012) had four key research questions:

1. How are leaders identified?
2. What form does the training and development of leaders take?
3. What has influenced this T and D?
4. What future provision is envisaged given forthcoming anticipated sectoral developments?

One aspect that this study was particularly interested in was the experiences of those individuals who had worked in local authority housing departments before transferring to

their current Social Housing Organisation (SHO). Details were revealed about their LD experiences and the practices of the different organizations.

Within the North East 15 Housing organisations had opted out of local authority control to form alternative ‘ownership’ arrangements. In the main they chose either an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) or a Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT). In both instances employees were transferred over on the same work contract conditions for a three year period. There were other changes to social housing organisations resulting from the mergers of traditional housing associations and for the purpose of this study these were excluded from the sample. It was unlikely that these organisations would have ex-local authority housing staff at a senior level (Pawson and Mullins, 2010), thus making any type of comparison between the traditional employers training and development practices and the new impossible. Seven organisations were identified and the CEO’s were sent a personal invite and presentations made to three organisations for their inclusion in the study. The outcome resulted in one organisation where data was drawn from seven interviewees.

This particular SHO is located within the North East geographical boundary of The Chartered Institute for Housing (CIH) region. This covers 18 local authority boundaries and represents the largest CIH area in England. This not-for-profit organisation employed 375 staff and had a specialist Learning and Development section. The sample included senior people who had previously been working at a senior level in LA housing department before the transfer, one of which was the CEO.

The seven senior management team members, five male and two female, were interviewed.

Their positions were as follows:

- CEO
- Director of Corporate Services
- Director of Customers and Communities
- Head of Finance
- Head of Neighbourhood Services
- Head of Customer Services
- Head of Support Services

Data were gathered via semi-structured, one-to-one, recorded interviews (subsequently transcribed verbatim). The face-to-face interviews lasted on average around 60 minutes, and were conducted over a period of five weeks in November and December, 2011. For the original study (Ward and Preece 2012) the interviews were analysed through thematic content analysis.

For the purposes of the present paper a secondary analysis was undertaken of transcripts of the same seven interviews. There are no new ethical issues arising from this further use of the data, which is covered by the permissions granted for the original study. A researcher trained in the practice of Clean Language (CL) reviewed the transcripts. Metaphors (as understood in CL, i.e. as defined by Lakoff and Johnson, 2003) were underlined. These included metaphorical concepts (e.g. journey) and embodied, sensory metaphors (e.g. concerning movement, vision, hearing and more). Naturally occurring entailments of, and inter-

relationships between, metaphors were identified. For example, a *journey* typically and logically entails movement (e.g *progress*) towards a destination (e.g *where we want be*). The researcher distinguished clearly between those entailments that appeared in the transcript and those that were inferred from the interviewees' accounts.

One problem to note is that the interviews were conducted without knowledge of CL, and without any intention to elicit metaphors. It is possible, according to Tosey (2011) for an interviewer's own metaphors to be introduced inadvertently through the interviewer's questions and comments. The transcripts were therefore checked in order to screen for interviewer metaphors that might have influenced the interviewees' responses.

From this analysis the researcher (second author) produced a summary profile for each leader, indicating clearly the interviewee's own language. The summaries were checked for authenticity and faithfulness to the original transcripts. Finally, the results from the metaphor analysis were then compared with those from the original content analysis (Ward and Preece, 2012).

Findings

The first set of findings comprises seven metaphor-based profiles, commenting on similarities and differences across leaders, and on implications for leadership development and leadership. The seven profiles are summarized in Table 1. In the profiles, words in italics are the interviewee's own words, as in the transcript.

Leader	Metaphor
A	Leadership is inferred to be like a journey. Leader A thinks ahead to where the organisation needs to get to, anticipates changes in the environment, and leads people through difficult times.
B	Leadership is about being <i>forward looking</i> and <i>knowing where the organisation needs to go</i> . B isn't someone who can see ahead herself – she contributes mainly by dealing with management tasks
C	C emphasizes beliefs such as: <i>You can't force people to be leaders... it's people who want to be leaders.... It comes down to what you are as a person</i>
D	Leadership is about communication. It involves transmitting direction outwards from the centre of the organisation and translating it into action (operations) at the front line.
E	Leadership is inferred to be a vehicle. It involves <i>drivers for change</i> , being <i>geared up</i> , <i>setting off</i> , <i>a fast track route</i> , <i>an upward drive</i> , <i>gradual development</i> and where you <i>end up</i> .
F	F emphasises breadth and extent: e.g. <i>spanning</i> , <i>extending influence</i> , <i>a wide breadth</i> , <i>right across the organisation</i> , <i>broad themes</i> .
G	G values <i>clarity</i> . Ideally there should be a <i>steady flow</i> of information, but because the organisation has been <i>chasing accreditations</i> things are <i>up in the air</i> .

Table 1: Summary of key metaphors in the seven leaders' profiles

Interviewee A

For A, leadership is concerned to *get us where we want to be; get to a position*. His role involves *thinking ahead; where do we need to go soon/next?* It's about *stepping back*, thinking of the *foreseeable future*. Know what *changes are coming* from an environment that is sometime *hostile; and seeking to make sure that has a smooth arrival*.

The organisation *progresses* by going *through* events (such as restructuring and inspection). EG *take a particular issue up and a particular piece of work forward*. He leads the organisation *through a difficult time*. *Leadership is gonna be difficult but more important to lead people through this next few months*. Situations can be *tough*, something to *get out of*.

Leadership is dynamic: *if leadership was a static type of leadership it would pretty quickly be out of kilter with the needs of the organisation*. It's about *progressing as fast as we expect; always one step ahead; on the front foot not the back foot all the time*. Something going wrong is *a really huge backwards step*.

Based on the transcript, A's primary sensory mode is overwhelmingly kinaesthetic, i.e. to do with feeling, physicality and movement. For example: *take (a particular issue) up, take (a piece of work) forward, moving from, moving out, comfortable existence, out of kilter*. A also *goes out there and talks to people; he is not remote*. He has *discussion*. It *develops from dialogue with people*. He seeks to *reduce that gap* in the organisation and *instill* (e.g. a

positive culture; an open door policy). He is concerned that things are *focussed; tailored to the individual or person specific or bespoke; to do things very specific to us*.

In terms of his own role, he took *a strange route to get here and end up* heading up a Housing Management Organisation. He *went up through that Housing Strategy route into a Directors role and then here*.

Summary: The underlying metaphor in A's account is that of leadership as a journey. A thinks ahead to where the organisation needs to get to, anticipates changes in the environment, and leads people through difficult times.

Interviewee B

For B, leadership is about being *forward looking* and doing the *forward thinking* about *where we want to get to and how we are getting there*. Leaders *drive the business forward and have the sort of vision to know where we want to go*. Whilst B therefore emphasises the role of leaders as moving forward into the future, she refers to others doing this rather than herself. For example, *they are sort of the forethinkers almost and then we are tasked with trying to get there*.

In other words, B identifies herself as one of the people *tasked with trying to get there*. Her involvement seems to be operational rather than strategic. Whilst B has *a foot in both camps*- i.e. *has some leadership qualities*, her emphasis is on *dealing with* (i.e. in relation to *change management, people from the council and other organisations*), *embarking on and doing*.

Whilst B refers to leaders having *vision* and being *forward looking*, she talks mostly in kinaesthetic terms (e.g. *dealing with, moving in that direction, better feel for, touched upon, falls out, slip back, step up, come through the other side, tangible*). In other words, B does not talk about having that vision herself.

A management development programme has given B *a better feel* for the organisation and it *touched on* things like change management. It was a sort of *step up*. B acknowledges the need for *higher understanding* (of change management), but talks of it being easy to *slip back into old habits*, and to *lose sight* of the training.

B also refers to *a lot of change* that is going on and a *massive* restructuring. Change is something *occurring in the environment*. B's approach to change seems to be reactive. For example, it's *unlikely that we will know what the change is* - you have to be *equipped to deal with anything that falls out of what happens*.

A minor but potentially interesting metaphor (i.e. one that might be explored further) is the way that B refers to some people or agencies as fauna; thus heads of service are *a fairly new beast*; the *Public Sector animal is different to the Private Sector one*; (the) Housing Association is *a little bit of a different animal again*.

Summary: B acknowledges that leadership is about being forward looking and knowing where the organisation needs to go. But B isn't someone who can see ahead herself – she contributes mainly to the 'getting there' by dealing with management tasks.

Interviewee C

Amongst C's stated beliefs are that *You can't force people to be leaders... it's people who want to be leaders.... It comes down to what you are as a person.... You have to want to do it.*

There is little indication from the transcript that C wants this for himself. For example, *I would aspire to be a Chief Executive one day*, and (at the end of the interview) *I would like to have a go at it one day*. The conditional 'would' in both instances suggests, perhaps, at most a tentative desire.

C refers to being a Chief Executive as a *jump*, to a leadership development programme as a *big sort of step change that is trying to get them to the next level*, and to people who are *ready to make the next jump up*. Training and development for that purpose are *bespoke and tailored*. The inference we might take is that C perceives there to be qualitative differences between leaders and others, both in their desire to be leaders and in the level at which they need to operate.

Other beliefs relating to leadership mentioned by C include:

- *I find I get a lot more out of people if they do what they want to do.*
- *It's treating people how you would expect people to treat you.*
- *Communication I think is key,,, it is how you communicate to people.*
- *There is nothing that I don't ask one of my members of staff to do that I wouldn't have done or could do myself.*

- (I share) *some of the things that have happened to me... to try and give them some sort of guidance.*
- *It is the looking forward into the distance rather than just looking at your current environment.*
- *It's about living those values... the bizarre example was free tea and coffee... it is the little things which are important to people.*
- C also refers to *openness, transparency and leading by example.*

Summary: C's beliefs about leaders and leadership are more prominent than any core metaphor. C refers to being *fascinated* with leadership, and there is a sense from the transcript that C is fascinated about leadership as a subject more than very personally engaged in its practice. It may be significant that C refers to him/herself and a colleague as *us finance people who prefer numbers and spreadsheets, which are much more in our comfort zone*; and (referring to the current organisational structure) *it's the neat symmetry that I like.*

Interviewee D

According to D, *the man at the top would drive the vision and values* of the organisation. The role of heads of service (of which D is one) is that of *champions who translate it and take it out further – right to the front line so that nobody is untouched by it and we are living and breathing the delivery.*

While D's metaphor does involve action, it is a result of the outward movement and translation of the direction from the centre – as distinct, say, from progress on a journey. The

emphasis is on the organisation as something with spatial dimensions (e.g. change and development need to be *right across the organisation*); the organisation has *pockets*.

The organisation is implied to be three dimensional because communication also goes up and down levels. The need for *translation* is connected with D's view that there is *a different kind of leadership at each of the different levels of management*. People need to be *on the same level of understanding*, and leaders need to be *on message* about how to *take this forward*. This involves *a top down and a down up* as well; *a two way communication that allows for people to be motivated and inspired and to deliver on the objectives of the whole organisation*. At one point she refers to her job as being *to go out and sort of generate interest*.

Having *different types of leadership* means that *people can respond to and relate to* leaders. Leadership can be *subtle* and sometimes people don't *pick that up*. Leadership development is something that people are *going through*. D comments on the *key messages* that are *coming out*. D also uses several auditory terms (i.e. to do with the sense of hearing), such as *we will tell you what we want, we are saying*. Leadership also involves understanding *what is driving that person* and *what makes people tick*. If people are feeling undervalued D tries to *switch it round*.

The change in culture is *a very big move across*. It is *a little bit like a tanker, not a flexible bendy bus*. Leadership involves *seeing them through that process and supporting them through that process*. A related management development programme aimed *to put them in a stronger position to deal with what was coming*.

One of the problems the organisation has had is *passing up the line*. People stayed in their *comfort zone*. What D wants is for people to *talk about* an issue with their team, *come up with options... and by the time it gets to me, what I want is for you to say these are the options – this is the one I am recommending to you*. In sensory terms this is a process that involves, and seems to alternate between, auditory (i.e. talking, saying) and kinaesthetic (i.e. come up with, gets to me) elements resulting in movement within the organisation. Other examples of this type of sequence are *talk to me* (auditory) and *I will support you through that* (kinaesthetic); and *what I am going to pull from this is – this is some of the things it is telling me – so actually perhaps what I felt was an issue for a manager I have now got in evidence which gives me that ability to talk to them constructively about...*

There are also some visual elements in D's account. These include *we have seen*, the need *to be more focussed about what we do*, and the need to *have clarity*. Past and future direction for the organisation are also mentioned in visual terms, for example *we can now see where we are going again*. She also refers to a need to *go back and look at that again*. What is most noticeable about these elements is that they refer to 'we' rather than 'I'. In other words, the visual mode is used collectively rather than by D as an individual.

Summary: the underlying metaphor in D's transcript appears to be that of communication. Leadership involves transmitting direction outwards from the centre of the organisation and translating it into action (operations) at the front line. However, D appears to be more comfortable with communication within that organisational space than with being able to look or move ahead into the future.

Interviewee E

While the implied organising metaphor of a vehicle is prominent in the middle portion of the interview it is not pervasive. When asked to describe the organisation and its leadership E refers to its structure, with a *top* and *sides*. They have been *dividing the company up* into different areas. There are people *heading up* services, and people working *under* others.

E himself *fell into housing*. He was *sent away* to get a housing management qualification. Leadership in housing needs *a more focussed approach*. He has *stayed here* and still managed to *progress*. He acknowledges that other people acquire knowledge and *move round very quickly*. *Different things suit different people – there is not one route to developing someone to be a leader*.

People who E perceives to be good in their role have *successes behind them* and a *'can do'* attitude. In becoming leaders they *enlarge* their roles. E doubts the extent to which leadership is *transferable*. He perceives it to be *almost unique* to housing, in which a *political dimension* is important.

One ability that E highlights is his customer focus; *How will I feel if I was in their shoes; thinking things through from their perspective; nothing beats being able to put yourself in the shoes of the customer; if you spent time going out visiting some of them you get a much better feel of this*.

The biggest challenge in *setting up* the company is that there is *an awful lot of change to bring in*. They have to *get them* (i.e. services) *from a one star level to a three star level*. This involves a *change of focus* and doing things *a lot more quickly*. The needs are *top down* but there is *an upward driver* as well; it will *go both ways*. The future is also *a little bit out of our hands* because the Council is *embarking on* a review. There is also a need for *a different type of leadership* now. The organisation currently is *at arms length* to the Council, if *not entirely separate*. It is *a bit more stand alone* and cannot rely on subsidy to *prop us up*.

Summary: An organising metaphor that may be inferred from E's account is that of a vehicle. E refers not only to the standard notion of *drivers for change*, but also talks of being *geared up*, *setting off*, *a fast track route*, *an upward drive*, *gradual development* and where you *end up*. These metaphors refer both to his own and others' careers, and to the organisation's present position. He also refers to an increasing pace in the organisation – decisions are being *made quicker* and the programme of change is *much more rapid*. E refers to the way he has made progress (which appears to be gradual) by staying in the same place; figuratively, he has been moved along by the vehicle that he 'fell into'.

Interviewee F

Summary: F's views on leadership appear to be straightforward and concise. He emphasises values as well as competencies (*I've always been interested in people's values as well as their competencies*), refers to being *customer focused*, and emphasises *consistency (and the leaders in that organisation demonstrate that in all of their activity behaviour dealings)*. The most noticeable metaphors in F's account are to do with breadth and extent: e.g. *breadth*,

spanning, extending its influence, extensive, a wide breadth, right across the organisation, broad themes. He also refers to *growing the organisation* and *grow your employees*. We might infer from this that F is interested in widening and growing his own influence. Whether his account is deliberately guarded, or he naturally uses more 'corporate', abstract language (among other possibilities) is something we can't tell from the transcript alone.

Interviewee G

G seems particularly orientated to time. Although asked the same questions as other interviewees, G seems to use the past as a reference point to a much greater degree than others. For example; *looking at it at that time; we have been in the past; we are not in the same world that we were in a year ago; these guys had been around for an awful long time; in terms of development – I don't think there was much in the way of evolution; coming back into the public sector environment a few years ago – it is infinitely better than it used to be; the world is different to.. 15 years ago when I was there; previously when we were awash with money.* G also refers to respect for the chief exec from people *who have been here throughout a lot of years*, and have known the chief exec *from his time working on the shop floor.*

While G's references to the past extend over several years, those to the future involve a much shorter, immediate timescale. He mentions that he has *only just joined the gang recently*. In terms of leadership development, *we have only just started*. Regarding his own coaching sessions, *I could tell you better after tomorrow* how they are going.

A final characteristic to note in G's transcript is that he often uses negatively-phrased statements such as *I wouldn't have said; I don't imagine; I could not see it being anything near like...; I was not acutely aware of it; I don't think that; we are in a period of not decline but...; it doesn't feel like it is a planned transition*. At the same time, he comments on the organisation *just reacting to what is happening in the world rather than making a decision to do it*; and also (with regard to the struggle with communicating), *you can only say 'I don't know' so many times without losing credibility*. It seems possible that G could be projecting personal traits (such as past-orientated, reactive, and leading with 'not') onto the organisation.

Summary: G's account suggests that he values *clarity*. Ideally there should be a *steady flow* of information, but because the organisation has been *chasing* accreditations things are *up in the air*. There is a *follow me mentality*, such that *the leadership is driving the business rather than asking the business which direction it feels it needs to go in*. The organisation *struggles* sometimes to communicate *where we are going* to staff.

Discussion

By focusing on metaphor, our secondary analysis has developed a more nuanced understanding of individual's conceptions and experiences of leadership development, thereby adding to knowledge and understanding of the ways in which leaders themselves experience these processes.

It should be noted that there are limitations to the secondary analysis due to the fact that the original interviews did not specifically seek metaphors, nor did they use the method of Clean Language that is designed to elicit metaphors. This has resulted in some unevenness in the metaphorical material in the transcripts, and in the extent to which each leader's metaphors can be described.

We offer the following observations:

First, the secondary analysis shows that each leader has a distinctive way of describing of leadership (see Table 1 for the variety). Only one leader (A) uses metaphors that imply an organising metaphor of leadership as a journey, which was identified as a prominent theme in the original study. Leaders' metaphors may indicate preferences and limitations in their leadership style. For example, for B leadership is about being *forward looking* and *knowing where the organisation needs to go*. Yet in the transcript B doesn't refer to herself as someone who can see ahead; she describes herself as contributing mainly by dealing with management tasks

Second, each leader's metaphors can be interpreted in such a way as to yield implications for their leadership development needs and direction. These implications are summarized in Table 2. It is important to emphasise that Table 2 represents the researcher's interpretations and is inevitably speculative.

Third, leaders' metaphors can indicate how they're likely to work as a team. Again, based on a secondary analysis of the transcripts alone such indications can only be speculative. For example, A appears to be an obvious choice as leader; B, D and E (mostly) have metaphors that seem very compatible with A's; C appears very much a finance specialist; F is something of an unknown quantity; and G's metaphors are in some ways the opposite to A's, in that they are past rather than future focused, and reactive rather than proactive.

Turning to a comparison between the findings of the initial thematic content analysis, and the secondary metaphor analysis, we note that while the content analysis identified a range of issues relating to leadership development and leadership in the sector, the CL approach revealed more about leaders' inner worlds. The initial study revealed a variety of details about leadership *styles*. Interviewees were able to articulate the behavior and actions of these different styles as well as indicating the competencies required for effective leadership within the organisation. Another theme was the explicit mention of leadership occurring at different levels *within* the organisation as well as *outside* from the *housing community*. Restructuring and change along with culture change and the impact from the public to the private were evident from the narratives. The latter is particularly helpful when understanding LD and its effectiveness.

Leader	Possible implications for leadership development
A	A appears to be an accomplished leader already, who can combine vision with action. Support to sustain and deepen his existing approach to leadership is probably the main developmental need.
B	It is possible that B will be content to concentrate on this more managerial function. For further development as a leader, the obvious and key challenge would be for her to develop a more strategic approach, and particularly to enhance her vision and ability to be forward looking; at the moment she finds it easy to 'lose sight'.
C	C appears to have no particular desire to develop his capacity for leadership beyond that which he exercises as a financial specialist. Unless he became truly motivated to attempt the 'jump' to being a Chief Executive, further leadership development may not be relevant to him.
D	D's transcript is long but some of the material appears repetitive; she tends to restate her views several times with slight variations. Her main leadership development need <i>could</i> be (though this is somewhat speculative) to develop the confidence to look ahead, step out, and move forward without wondering if her past decisions were correct. In other words, the existing organisational 'space' might have become something of a comfort zone.
E	One possibility is that E would develop most as a leader by changing vehicles and gaining experience as the driver – which could mean a new role, a new organisation, a new environment, or a combination of these.
F	More data would be needed in order to offer a view on F's developmental needs.
G	A possible implication for leadership development is that G could benefit from becoming more future-orientated, pro-active and positive.

Table 2: Possible implications for leadership development

Conclusion

This paper has reported a secondary analysis of interview transcripts from a study (Ward and Preece, 2012) of seven leaders who have moved from public to private sector social housing organizations in the UK. The secondary analysis utilised a method based on metaphor, as described by Tosey (2011).

Key findings from the secondary analysis are that leaders have individual metaphors. The metaphorical content of the interviews may indicate preferences and limitations in leadership style; considerations regarding how the leaders are likely to work together; and needs and directions for their future leadership development.

The dual analysis has the potential to enrich and add to our understanding of leaders as well as leadership development. Further research could utilize Clean Language as a method in order to elicit leaders' metaphors systematically, which would enable a more detailed analysis and more strongly evidence-based observations.

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