

Towards Conceptual History of Management: The Language of the 1950s Textbooks in Finland

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this article is to add to the emerging body of conceptual histories of management by undertaking a reading of three leading Finnish textbooks from the 1950s.

Design: Management concepts are analysed through the linguistic dynamics of a set of historically situated Finnish textbooks. The semantic dimension of analysis is concerned with the conceptual structures behind particular linguistic constructions. The pragmatic dimension, on the other hand, is attuned to the speech act aspects of conceptual formations.

Findings: The analysis shows that the current concept used for “management” in Finnish does not feature as the key word in the 1950s textbook articulations. Instead, concepts such as “business caretaking”, “administration”, “arranging” or “education” are employed to signify the reality of organizational and managerial structures and processes. Furthermore, the texts strove to legitimize management mainly in terms of the moral character of managers and the management process.

Research implications: Conceptual histories of linguistically non-English contexts offer interesting contrasts to the dominant Anglo-American discourses of management and related phenomena. More empirical studies of conceptual history of management are needed.

Originality: This article adds to the limited body of empirical investigations of conceptual history of management, organization and related issues.

Keywords: management history, conceptual history, Finland, textbooks, language.

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W stronę konceptualnej historii zarządzania – język podręczników z lat pięćdziesiątych w Finlandii

Streszczenie

Cel: celem artykułu jest uzupełnienie powstającego zbioru literatury na temat konceptualnej historii zarządzania na przykładzie trzech czołowych fińskich podręczników z lat pięćdziesiątych XX wieku.

Postępowanie badawcze: koncepcje zarządzania przeanalizowano przez pryzmat dynamiki językowej kilku historycznie osadzonych podręczników fińskich. Semantyczny wymiar analizy dotyczy struktur pojęciowych kryjących się za określonymi konstrukcjami językowymi. Natomiast wymiar pragmatyczny jest dostosowany do aspektów aktu mowy związanych z kształtowaniem pojęć.

Wyniki: z analizy wynika, że obecne pojęcie „zarządzania” w języku fińskim nie występuje jako słowo kluczowe w podręcznikach z lat 50. Zamiast niego do określenia realnych struktur i procesów organizacyjnych i zarządczych stosowane są takie pojęcia, jak „dbałość o biznes”, „administracja”, „organizacja” lub „edukacja”. Ponadto w podręcznikach starano się potwierdzić istnienie zarządzania głównie w kategoriach moralności menedżerów i moralnego charakteru procesu zarządzania.

Implikacje badawcze: konceptualne historie nieanglojęzycznych kontekstów językowych prezentują interesujący kontrast wobec dominujących anglo-amerykańskich dyskursów zarządzania i powiązanych zjawisk. Potrzebne są szersze empiryczne badania konceptualnej historii zarządzania.

Oryginalność: artykuł stanowi uzupełnienie niewielu badań empirycznych dotyczących konceptualnej historii zarządzania, organizacji i zagadnień pokrewnych.

Słowa kluczowe: historia zarządzania, historia konceptualna, Finlandia, podręczniki, język.

1. Introduction

Conceptual history is a research programme and approach that investigates historically unfolding discursive struggles within institutional fields of political and social thought (Koeselleck, 2002; Palonen, 2006; Skinner, 1978). Within this perspective, no concept has an essence in itself; instead, the meaning of a focal phenomenon emerges in historically specific processes of concept formation and semiotic (re-)assembling of linguistic signifiers (Palonen, 2002; Hyvärinen et al., 2003b). For management studies, a conceptual history approach involves a bracketing of any pre-conceived definition of “management” and related concepts in the historical study of management ideas (Rennison, 2006). In conceptual history, historically varying formations of the concepts that signify and perform the meaning of management – managing, steering, guiding, organizing, controlling, leading, etc. – become the primary objects of historical research.

Although conceptual history methodology intersects with a related linguistic and poststructuralist (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000; Westwood & Linstead, 2001) research programme in organizational scholarship, conceptual history differs from other linguistically oriented perspectives on organizing by its exclusive focus on the historical contexts of textual struggles (Costea, Crump, & Holm, 2006; O’Connor, 1996). On the other hand, conceptual history has so far been relatively absent in the ongoing developments of

historical and historiographic methods and interrogations in recent management and organization theory (cf. McLaren, Mills, & Weatherbee, 2015; Kipping & Üsdiken, 2014).

Occupying a contested position in the interstices of linguistic and historical inquiries of organizational phenomena, conceptual history has gradually made inroads into management studies (Anderson, 2011). However, there are to date only a few empirical studies in management and organizational scholarship that apply the conceptual history programme of Koselleck, Skinner, Palonen and others (Costea, Crump, & Holm, 2006; Klaus & Sent, 2005; Rennison, 2007). Given the prominence of conceptual history in adjacent scholarly fields, and the paucity of empirical studies of conceptual histories of management, there is a need to undertake new investigations of linguistic formations and discursive struggles in the context of the evolution of management thought.

The purpose of this article is to add to the emerging body of conceptual histories of management by undertaking a linguistic reading of three leading Finnish textbooks from the 1950s. Methodologically, a cross-sectional design was adopted in order to concentrate the investigation into a particular, critical period in the elaboration of the discourse of management. The decade of the 1950s was the time when the conceptual space of management began to take a more systematic form in Finland (Seeck & Laakso, 2010; Ainamo & Tienari 2002). The case of Finland is also interesting insofar as the Finnish language differs linguistically from the Anglo-Saxon and Indo-European languages. Concept formation for the nascent discourse of management is further complicated by the necessity to discover and develop Finnish concepts and semantic relations that would resonate with the foreign vocabularies (Hyvärinen et al., 2003b; Gaggiotti & Marre, 2017).

The reading of the conceptual assemblages and moves in the management textbooks highlights the peculiarity of the discourse being articulated in the Finnish context in the 1950s. Notably, the current concept used for “management” in Finnish (*johtaminen*) does not feature as the key word in the textbook articulations. Instead, concepts such as “business caretaking”, “administration”, “arranging” or “education” are employed to signify the reality of organizational structures and processes. Furthermore, despite featuring structural concepts such as “control” or “organization”, the meaning given to the structural terms highlights their relational or processual nature. Finally, the function or intention (Skinner, 1969) of the articulation of the nascent discourse appears to be to present management as moral activity that aims to bring about harmony in organizational contexts.

After the introduction, the article will progress in the following manner: in the second section, the article presents the theoretical and methodological starting points of conceptual history analysis. Then, the article presents a short methodological note, and introduces the publications chosen for the analysis. In the fourth section, the article describes the concepts and

their use in textual constructions appearing in the books. Finally, there is a summary of the results of the analysis, and a short discussion of the relevance and potential of conceptual history in organization studies.

2. Conceptual History as a Perspective on History of Ideas

Conceptual history is an alternative perspective for the historical analysis of ideologies and theoretical constructs (Hyvärinen et al., 2003a; Palonen, 2002; Koselleck 2002; Skinner, 1978). Its purpose is to analyse the birth of the most important concepts of each period, the relationships between the concepts, and the usage of the different concepts. Unlike other traditional approaches in history of ideas, conceptual history does not strive to find out the evolution of ideas in a predetermined conceptual frame of reference; instead, the goal is to show how the historically changing concepts have played their part in shaping and creating phenomena during any given period of time. Hyvärinen et al. (2003b) describe the perspective of conceptual history in the following manner:

“Conceptual history is interested in how concepts have been created, how various meanings have been given to these, and how there have been and continue to be struggles over the ownership and correct usage of concepts. The starting point is that concepts are historic, and at least potentially controversial. In other words, concepts could be defined and used in a radically different manner, but this does not get rid of the luggage of their historic meaning.” (Hyvärinen et al., 2003b, p. 10).

Hence, the approach adopted by conceptual history does not strive to answer what, for example, the assumed objects of “leadership” or “organization” have meant in different times (Rennison, 2007). Instead, the starting point of this approach is the openness and controversy involved in the interpretation or signification of the focal phenomena. The approach does not aim to find predetermined paths of ideational development, which would indicate the curve of the evolution of a phenomenon from its deep roots to the currently prevalent forms (Peltonen, Gaggiotti, & Case, 2018). Instead, conceptual history emphasizes disruptions in the conceptualization and significations of social phenomena. Often, various phenomena have in the past been defined using conceptual structures which are largely unknown in the contemporary corpus of everyday and technical language (Skinner, 1969). Indeed, one of the objectives of conceptual history is to remind us about the historic relativity of the linguistic significations.

There have been comparatively few empirical studies on conceptual history of management. Of these, Klaes and Sent (2005) and Rennison (2007) investigated long historical genealogies of conceptual continuities and discontinuities in management theory and practice, with Klaes and Sent (2005) concentrating on the conceptual development and contestation in scholarly texts leading up to the introduction of “bounded rationality”

by Simon (1947), and Rennison (2007) describing the shifting conceptions of management and the managerial subject in Danish governmental documents. While not explicitly informed by the conceptual history tradition, O'Connor's (1996) textual reading of three foundational volumes of management could be acknowledged as a relevant example of scrutinizing the discursive dynamics and intentions of influential management books. Costea, Crump and Holm (2006), in turn, have offered a focused inquiry into the shifts in conceptual relations between work and play during the recent decades through a reading of three key books. Given the relatively embryonic state of conceptual history in management studies, there is a need for further empirical analyses of conceptual shifts and discursive struggles around "management" and related organizational phenomena. This article aims to partially fill this gap by undertaking a textual reading of a set of Finnish textbooks in the context of the 1950s.

3. Empirical Study: A Reading of Three Historical Management Textbooks

In this article, management concepts in Finland are analysed through the linguistic structure of a set of historically situated classic textbooks. Textbooks and related academically grounded professional publications are a fruitful object of research for conceptual analysis, as they present and delineate the core concepts of the field for the wider public. Previous conceptual histories have examined genealogies of management concepts in academic and professional texts such as academic monographs, journal articles and governmental memos (Rennison, 2007; Klaes & Sent, 2005; cf. O'Connor, 1996; Kilduff, 1993). Management textbooks have a broader reach than the purely scholarly works, but, at the same time they eschew the kind of intellectual populism that is often associated with practitioner-oriented business bestsellers (Strang & Macy, 2001). As McLaren and Helms Mills (2010) note, the management textbook format has reached such high levels of pervasiveness throughout business education that they could be viewed as primary vehicles for the dissemination of dominant management concepts.

Methodologically, the study has chosen a focus on a particular societal context, namely Finland. After World War II, Finland developed rapidly into a successful, industrialized economy (Hjerpe et al., 2006; Seeck & Laakso, 2010). The 1950s was an intensive period of theory development and dissemination of management ideas that witnessed the publication of several pioneering textbooks on the topic. The post-war period saw also the turn in management thinking from German to Anglo-Saxon theories and ideas (Näsi & Näsi, 1997). The Finnish academic and professional community followed simultaneously Tayloristic, structural and human relations ideas (Barley & Kunda, 1992) during a period that saw the emergence of the

first systematic attempts to conceptually delineate the field of managerial and organizational phenomena (Seeck & Kuokkanen, 2010).

Finland is an interesting “laboratory” for conceptual history also insofar as it is among the few European countries with a non-Indo-European indigenous language base. Finnish, together with Estonian and Hungarian, belongs to the Finno-Ugric group of languages. Historically, this unique linguistic context has manifested in a peculiar conceptual history, where political and economic concepts have been formed and used differently compared to the rest of the Europe (Hyvärinen et al., 2003a).

Empirical analysis of this paper concentrated on the management textbooks published in the 1950s and intended for educational purposes. The sample of relevant textbooks was collected by identifying the keystone books in the nascent management theory field that have been deemed historically and discursively influential. More specifically, textbooks named as pathbreaking in historical accounts of the evolving disciplinary fields and professional discourses were sought out from the relevant historiographic works (Vartola, 2011; Olkkonen, 1997; Näsi & Näsi, 1997; Kettunen, 2011). Texts that fell outside the specific scope of management textbooks, including academic monographs, popular business books and textbooks not exclusively focused on management and leadership doctrines, were excluded from the compilation of texts to be considered.

The search for textbooks resulted in four volumes, one of which (Raninen, 1960) was later discarded as it covered the broad area of business economics, and was written for lower business college-level students, and was thus conceptually closer to non-academic guidebooks. Of the remaining three, Eino Niini’s (1952) work is an early presentation of the field of industrial engineering and management, compiled primarily for the students at Helsinki University of Technology, while Antero Rautavaara’s (1959) book maps contemporary leadership theory and organizational behaviour from the viewpoint of the needs of industrial supervisor training. Paavo Koli’s (1960) text, in turn, adopts an organizational-sociological approach to the discussions of management, in a format intended for the students of social and administrative sciences (Table 1).

As Hyvärinen et al. (2003b) note, the conceptual history approach is not a simplistic method which can be applied straightforwardly to any material. Conceptual history is a critical and reflexive analysis of the struggle to name a chosen phenomenon in various contingent contexts. Conceptual history scholarship distinguishes two specific aspects of the conceptual dynamics: the semantic and the pragmatic dimensions (Ihalainen, 2006). The semantic dimension is concerned with the conceptual structures behind particular linguistic constructions. It focuses on the latent and manifest meanings produced through the use of selected concepts in their semiotic relations (Koselleck, 2002). The pragmatic dimension, on the other hand, is attuned to the speech act aspects of conceptual formations. Its aim is to uncover

the intentions related to the choice of particular concepts in the social and cultural contexts of situated language use (Skinner, 1970).

The analysis of the textbooks interrogates both of these dimensions of conceptual history. The semantic task of the analysis is to identify the concepts used for the depiction of management, and the relationships between the focal concepts. Particular attention is given to the appearance of the concept of “management” (*johtaminen*), compared to other concepts describing and constituting administrative and organizational phenomena. Nowadays, “management” is a generic concept for the group of phenomena consisting of management, administration, leadership and supervisory work in organizations. The hypothesis of this article is that in the 1950s, the concept of “management” (*johtaminen*) was in use together with other parallel concepts, and that the textbooks of the time reveal something of the composition and definitional struggles during the period that preceded the contemporary dominance of “management”.

The pragmatic dimension is examined by considering the implied intentions behind the use of a historically particular discourse. Previous management research has identified a number of different potential functions of language use, such as the legitimation of managerialism (Costea, Crump, & Holm, 2006), the institutionalization of the profession and discipline of management (O’Connor, 1996), the production of management as a self-creating exercise (Rennison, 2007), as well as the carving out of a new space for scientific advances (Klaes & Sent, 2005). During the course of the reading, we will consider these hypothetical intentions, but also keep in mind the specific socio-cultural context of the 1950s in Finland when reflecting on the possible usages of the concepts as situated speech acts.

Author, title of book	Subject	Year of publication
Eino Niini: Yleinen Teollisuustalous I (General Industrial Engineering I)	Industrial engineering and management	1952
Antero Rautavaara: Työnjohto-oppi (Theory of Supervision)	Supervisory work (leadership, occupational psychology)	1959
Paavo Koli: Organisaatio ja johtajuus (Organization and leadership)	Sociology (organizational sociology)	1960

Tab. 1. Analysed textbooks. Source: Compiled by the author.

4. Analysis of the Conceptual Worlds of Textbooks

Eino Niini: Yleinen teollisuustalous I (1952) (General Industrial Engineering I)

Eino M. Niini’s (1952) book is one of the first complete overviews of the subject of industrial engineering and management (called “Indus-

trial Economy” in Finnish). This is a business administration discipline taught at technical universities. At the beginning of the work, Niini positions industrial economy as a specialist field of business administration that focuses on industrial enterprises. Industry is defined as an activity aimed at “the manufacturing of material commodities”, which “is, then, production” (Niini, 1952, p. 1). Like other engineering sciences, industrial engineering as a subject field aims to find solutions and tools to solve production-related problems. In connection with this, Niini formulates that industrial management’s “core parts form a sort of a theory of the business management technique of industrial enterprises” (p. 3). Regardless of the fact that Niini emphasises the special features of industrial engineering particularly in connection with business studies, he nevertheless ends up using the term “business caretaking” (*liikkeenhoito*) when referring to business science. Järvinen (1923, p. 6) had suggested already earlier that business economics (*liiketaloustiede*) primarily denotes a theoretical base which analyses the phenomena of business economics and its management, while “discipline of business care” (*liikkeenhoito-oppi*) represents the business economics know-how applicable to practical needs. Niini does not use words that combine economy and technology directly; instead, he relies on the basic concept of business management, adding the technology qualifier to it as a contrast to the management concept. The concept *liikkeenhoito-tekniikka* (“the technique of business care”) that is offered as a definition is relatively complicated, and refers to the fact that the concept of “care of business” was a normatively prevalent term for the description of corporate management operations at the time this book was written. Comparing different texts in a general manner, it seems that the term *liikkeenhoito* (“care of business”/“business caretaking”) denoted the general management of an entire business organization at that time, while *työnjohto* (“supervision of work”) already became standardized quite early at the beginning of the 20th century to denote supervisory work at a group level; and more generally, the dynamics in a leader-subordinate relationship. It was only later that the term “business management”, *liikkeenjohtaminen*, replaced the concept of *liikkeenhoito* (“business care”), while *työnjohto* (“supervision of work”) remained an expression related to operational-level management and oversight.

Regarding the actual work of a leader, and management processes, Niini primarily uses other concepts than those related to “management” (*johtaminen*). When outlining the content of this field of study, he describes the different functions of corporate management using the headings “operational definitions” (*toiminnan määrittely*), “structural arrangement” (*rakenteellinen järjestely*), “operational steering” (*toiminnan ohjaus*) and “operational monitoring” (*toiminnan valvonta*) (p. 5). These subheadings are closer to the traditional functional areas of administrative management theory (Fayol, 1990), even though Niini refers to “the arrangement

of the collaboration of production factors” (p. 3) instead of management or administrative processes. The word *järjestely* (arrangement) is nearly synonymous with the concept *organisointi* (organization), and indeed, the book discusses “organizational arrangements” (p. 99), and states that “work division and other operational arrangements depend on the organization” (p. 7). Organization as a finished structure, however, is reminiscent of a mechanical system: “the organization of a business can be compared to a machine” (p. 23). At the same time, the author reminds us that “people are the deciding factors in an organization” (p. 23), for whom there are no “simplistic formulae”. It is interesting that Niini states that in addition to structures, “a wider idea, plan or insight, which determines the purpose of the business, and the methods for making the production factors collaborate” is necessary for the creation of an organization (p. 7). He refers to this as an “organizational idea” or “entrepreneurial spirit” (p. 7). In Niini’s structure, this factor referring to the mission or the identity of an organization is the top-level production factor, to which the “technical idea” as well as other basic production factors are subordinated.

Thus, even though organization must be understood in Niini’s text as a system of machine-like operational reliability, organization is at times verbalized as something more psychological or ideological, rather than just a technical system. Niini refers to this entirety based on the social interaction of its actors as a “person organization”, to distinguish it from the structural concept. This is “a group of people who have been gathered together to implement [...] goals, and who are bound to each other with the tasks and responsibilities entrusted to them” (Niini, 1957, p. 84). At the same time, organized activity nevertheless requires objectives to be defined, tasks to be allocated, and authority and responsibility limits to be set. “The creation of these prerequisites is [...] the task of the highest level of authority” (Niini, 1957, p. 85). The highest level of authority is used by “the manager or the management of an organization (Top Management)” (Niini, 1952, p. 85). However, although as a structural consequence of an organization created by its management, certain “supervisor and subordination relationships in the organization’s authority pyramid” are formed, “the preferred emphasis is on the notification right directly to the higher level of authority than [...] on a subordinate relationship” (Niini, 1957, p. 86).

Here, Niini tries to alleviate the power relationship connotations of concepts creating structural or bureaucratic mental images. It seems as if there is another speaker within the text, who is commenting and smoothing out the impressions of an organization’s hierarchic structure created by the mechanistic terminology. The supervisor-subordinate relationships belonging to the “Authority pyramid” are not primarily “subordination relationships”, but more like facilitators of social interaction with the help of which an employee can know whom to turn to in their communication about problems and feedback related to their tasks (notification right). A similar

duality is repeated elsewhere: industrial management is described using technical-structural concepts and outlines, but at the same time, rational and objectivist concept clusters are tempered by mentioning human values and the role of well-being in the whole organization. Niini himself explicitly highlights this indirect division into “structural issues” and “functional relationships” (p. 23) in certain sections of the book.

Antero Rautavaara: Työnjohto-oppi (1959) (Discipline of Supervision of Work)

Antero Rautavaara’s (1959) *Työnjohto-oppi* (discipline of supervisory work) was a widely used educational resource for management studies and work management studies. The edition I use is from 1959. In the introduction, Rautavaara writes that the book is about leadership (*johtajuus*) (p. 1). He defines leadership as “becoming a leader, acting as a leader, being a leader and “management procedures” (*johtamismenettely*)” (original quotation marks) (p. 2). On the other hand, he adds that “contemporary leadership strives to create a relationship of trust and positive interaction between supervisors and subordinates” (p. 4). Hence, the book analyses contemporary leadership, rather than traditional leadership. In its use, “contemporary” would seem to refer to a freer way of organization, following an era of discipline and coercion. On the other hand, the object of leadership is primarily defined as the quality of the relationships between the supervisor and the subordinates. Thus, leadership as a phenomenon is realized in the interaction between the leader and the employee; that is, when borrowing modern terms, through social relationships.

A consequence of the social and psychological openness of the leadership relationship also results in the fact that a supervisor may not always be able to take on the role that is required for the realization of successful leadership. Using an army example, Rautavaara presents the distinction between the “formal” and “spiritual” or “psychological” (p. 5) leader. A “spiritual” leader is like a “father” or an “older brother” (original quotation marks), whom “men have learned to rely on in all matters” (p. 5). A spiritual leader could also be referred to as a kind of a “comrade leader” (p. 5).

In the text, the objective is for the “formal leader to be accepted as the true leader of a group consisting of subordinates” (p. 6). Spiritual leadership arises primarily from acceptance formed among subordinates. A leader rising to their position through the community’s acceptance is “genuine”, or closer to the true significance of a leader or leadership. In this sense, Rautavaara’s concept of a leader seems to be closer to a leader than a manager in the distinction outlined in conventional Anglo-American discourse.

But how does Rautavaara depict the concepts of organization (*organisaatio*) and administration (*hallinto*)? The first sections of the book state that among other things, a leader “puts every individual and group in their right places, determines the relationships and tasks between them,

while striving for an arrangement (organization) that is as smooth and collaborative as possible” (original parentheses) (p. 6). In other words, an organization denotes the hierarchical definition of structural task positions and the relationships between these, in accordance with a bureaucratic ideal. At the same time, an organization is a “collaborative” composition or “arrangement”, which hints at its processual quality.

In Rautavaara’s work, the concept of *hallinta* (control, mastering) is of central importance. *Hallinta*, however, does not refer specifically to the topic of authority and steering, but more as a subtle reorientation of the employees’ ways and beliefs. *Hallinta* denotes the methods with which “a person in a supervisory role can make their subordinates perform their work and any obligations arising from it” (p. 33). But even though *hallinta* “is sometimes referred to as a management technique” (p. 34), according to Rautavaara’s book, it is not comparable to ensuring an engineering-like functionality using scientific and technical methods. The behaviour of people at their workplaces varies between individuals, groups and situations. A leader can nevertheless “create joint methods of operation, similar ideas, a team spirit and discipline” (p. 36) among the employees. “This happens with the help of education (*kasvatus*)”, Rautavaara states.

What is meant by education here? Education means the channelling of an individual’s tendencies and abilities towards useful and valuable purposes. This interpretation emphasizes the didactic or enlightening effect of “education”, with the help of which employees will become citizens who meet moral requirements, rather than paths of individual learning, or an expanded understanding of the surrounding reality. At times, Rautavaara talks about “educational management” (*kasvattava hallinta*), at times, “management and education” (*hallinta ja kasvattaminen*) (p. 150); in another place that “management must strive towards education” (p. 36). It is partially unclear in the book whether education is a particular form of management, its tool, or perhaps something else. One clarifying conclusion is that a leader’s education work is, in practice, the “foundation and explanation” of the meaningfulness and purpose of the work of the subordinates (p. 38). In the actual substantial subchapters of the book, Rautavaara goes over various forms of management, which include “implementation management” (*toimeenpanon hallinta*), “encouraging management” (*kannustava hallinta*) as well as “extending” (*ojenteleva*), “conciliatory” (*sovitteleva*) and “guiding management” (*opastava hallinta*). The term “management” (*hallinta*) seems to have a general significance, both as a process of leadership and its end result. “Hallinta” in the form of education covers both main types of operating principles: those inspiring the work community, as well as those promoting employee discipline. In a way, “hallinta” is a related concept defining management, which is evident in Rautavaara’s expressions such as “knowing people is necessary for leading and managing them” (p. 47).

All in all, Rautavaara uses concepts related to structural management and a steering use of authority in his descriptions (“*johtaminen, hallinta, organisaatio*”), while at the same time giving these a more collaborative or interactional final meaning. An unjust or inhumane use of managerial power is touched upon in the book as a cautionary example. Rautavaara often reminds the reader about the dangers of a “selfish” or “self-centred” (p. 46) leader type, and emphasizes that good relationships between supervisors and subordinates are based on “spiritual points of contact” (p. 150). A supervisor should be aware that “(s)he is only a human among others” (p. 46). In many places, the vocabulary is decidedly moral, and even religious. On the other hand, the book strives to combine a more formal or more hierarchical leadership with a more psychological and situation-sensitive approach in a certain synthetic leadership. However, it does not seem like Rautavaara is able to create new terminology for this purpose. He separates the concept of management (*johtaminen*) into different meanings (formal and real leadership, technical and educational management), while ending up using traditional terms (leader, management, administration) (*johtaja, johtaminen, hallinta*) as if these also cover the interactivity and subordinate-centred ideas highlighted in various places. At times, the book suggests fresh equivalents in the Finnish language. For example, as a translation for the term “team”, Rautavaara suggests the concept “talkootyö” (“voluntary group work”) (p. 46). The text also contains a multitude of basic organizational behaviour terminology, such as “social organization” which differs from a formal or official organization (p. 32); “field”, which accommodates Lewin’s terminology (p. 6); or “psychological needs”, which refer to the human relations thinking (p. 105). However, the overall impression from the book is that the Finnish language terminology has not accommodated Rautavaara’s ideas successfully to their full extent.

Paavo Koli: Organisaatio ja johtajuus (1960) (Organization and Leadership)

Paavo Koli’s (1960) book is primarily an overview of the international organization theory of its time. The subheading of the book is descriptive: “Johdatus hallinnon sosiologiaan” (“An introduction to the sociology of administration”). The book is made more valuable by the fact that Koli was the Rector of the University of Tampere in the 1960s and contributed considerably to the formation of administrative sciences in the Finnish academia (Vartola, 2011). During the compilation of his book, Koli had to translate and interpret the theoretical terms of organizational sociology into the Finnish language. In the opening section of the book, Koli highlights the concept of “the organization and management of a community” (p. 1), with which he strives to cover the organizations in the public and in the private sectors in a similar general way. Koli’s social theory approach relies heavily on structural functionalism, which had been developed by Mayo, Rothlisberger, Barnard, Merton, Gouldner, Selznick and other organiza-

tional theorists leaning towards a more cultural system theory during the preceding decades (Casey, 2002; Peltonen, 2016). The division between a “formal” and a “social” organization is of great importance. A formal organization is “the apparent structure of an organization” (p. 5), which often leans on the structure referred to as “bureaucracy”. However, next to this lies a “hidden structure” (p. 17), or an “informal organization” (p. 17), which is rooted in the “informal organization” highlighted by the Human Relations School (Rothlisberger & Dickson, 1939). The dynamic ensemble formed by both of these together is known as a “social organization” in Koli’s terminology, representing the operational modes and phenomena of the organizational level forming in the interaction between the formal and the informal organization. “A formal organisation is [...] a subordinate concept of a social organization” (p. 11), Koli states.

Both the formal and the informal organizations seem to be unsuitable for Finnish terminology, as far as this book is concerned. For example, Koli states that the “hidden structure” as a concept is simpler and more descriptive than the informal organization (p. 50). A similar challenge applies to the concept of “formal”, as well. One of the synonyms of a formal organization is “administrative organization” (*hallinto-organisaatio*) (p. 2) or “management principles” (*hallintoperiaatteet*) (p. 6). However, Koli has to resort to attaching certain adjectives to these concepts that describe their characteristics; he refers to “rigid” administrative organizations (p. 2) and “mechanical” (p. 6) management principles. The reason for these additional expressions may lie in the fact that the *hallinto* concept is also used in another sense in the book, referring to phenomena related to the management and administration of organizations in a more general sense. Accordingly, Koli uses the following titles for the theoretical chapters of the second part of the book, for example: “equality perspectives of management research” (p. 137) and “the approaches of the sociology of management” (p. 183) without specifying the meaning of the word “management” with an additional concept. Thus, two different uses for the concept “management” (*hallinto*) arise from the text: management as the administrative mentality of a formal organization (the formal “hallinta” or “government”), and on the other hand, *hallinto* as the name for the general field of organizational research and as a synonym for organization (“the management of social life”). It remains unexplained why Koli does not use the term “hallinta” to describe the first meaning. As in Rautavaara’s book, in Koli’s work as well, “hallinta” seems to be connected more to the control and training of individuals and groups, rather than a direct use of power. On the other hand, this is closer to the original etymology of the concept “hallita”, which refers to handling or grasping something (Häkkinen, 2006) rather than the political-administrative interpretation developed for the modernized use (Pekonen, 2003).

The concept of “leadership” (*johtajuus*), which is present in the title of the Koli book, does not have a particularly prominent position in the text itself. Although Koli uses the concept of “management” (*johtaminen*) to mainly depict “management methods” which arise from a “machine-theoretical” way of thinking (p. 6), he does not, however, reserve the concept of leadership exclusively for influencing informal relationships and any subordinate communities. He does summarise – articulating in a slightly unclear manner – that (according to Selznick) “an informal structure is the mechanism of leadership and in that case particularly communication and persuasion” (p. 28). On the other hand, Koli admits elsewhere that in a functionalist analysis, “leadership refers to those processes with which the management of an operational system is implemented” (p. 17). Hence, leadership is a wide umbrella term for all the different methods resulting in manageability. This general interpretation of leadership is explicitly evident when Koli states that “in this book [...] management and leadership are used synonymously” (p. 17).

However, an interesting dualism can be observed in regard to the concepts depicting organization as a process. Koli seems to use the term “organization (of something)” (*organisoinen*) in connection to conscious management, as in the expressions “the organization and management of a community” (p. 1). At the same time, “organization” acquires an independent meaning as spontaneous or informal organization: Koli talks directly about the “organization of informal relationships” (p. 49), i.e. the “formation” and stabilization of informal relationships and beliefs (p. 50). Regardless of the fact that the leadership-type of management is, according to Koli, the primary form of managerial influence, with the help of which it is possible to steer the entire social system, the difference between the meaning of spontaneous organizing (*organisoinen*), and the purposeful pursuit of order (*organisointuminen*) becomes clearer as an expressive means shaping the conceptual field of the book, like a contrast between the words management (*johtaminen*) and leadership (*johtajuus*). Management and leadership had not yet achieved their modern-day meanings, where they are signified as each other’s opposites.

5. Conclusions

The close reading of the selected textbooks results in a number of observations regarding the appearance and use of various management terms. As a summary, results are next reflected against the two questions set for the analysis: 1) what are the main concepts and relations between the focal concepts constituting management phenomena; 2) what circumstances are authors intending to create with the use of these concepts?

What are the main concepts and concept relationships constituting management phenomena in these books?

Generally speaking, the entire group of books is similar regarding the modest role of the concept of “johtaminen” (“management”) in the linguistic presentation of the phenomena. Instead of *johtaminen*, the texts primarily refer to *hoitaminen* (“caretaking”), *hallinta* (“control”) or *järjestäminen* (“arranging, ordering”), which refer to the management and organization of the operations of an organization. Neither offers the contemporary distinction between management and leadership used extensively for describing the administrative and guiding phenomena of an organization. It would seem that *johtaminen* (“management”) and *johtajuus* (“leadership”) are close in meaning, and even in the 1950s, the difference between these was not particularly useful for expressing the different characteristics of management systems and social relations. The distinction between managing things and people was presented as a distinction of “structural” or “formal” and “collaborative” or “relationship-related” dimensions of organizations. The term *johto* (“leadership, directorate”) often appeared synonymously with *johtaminen* (“management”) or *johtajuus* (“leadership”).

Instead of *johtaminen*, the authors used the term *hallinta* (“control”) or *hallinto* (“administration”) when discussing matters related to controlling things. In the books, *hallinto* (“administration”) referred to management procedures and management tasks as a whole, or the dynamics and management of an organization’s operational system to a larger extent. For Koli, for example, (1960) “*hallinnon sosiologia*” (sociology of administration) means a holistic analysis of a social organization, as opposed to the traditional technical-rationalist structural theory. The same concept of “*hallinta*” (“control, mastering”) was, first and foremost, applied to the understanding of cultural guidance and psychological management, as happens in Rautavaara’s (1959) book. In both uses, the political background of the *hallinta* concept referring to governance and authority has mostly faded in today’s discourse. At the same time, the meaning of *hallinta* emphasizes the earlier etymology of the concept, which refers to keeping actions and groups of people in their place (comp. Swedish “*hålla*”) (Meri, 1985/2002). In this type of significance, “*hallinta*” comes close to the original understanding of “management” (from “*maneggiare*”), referring to the handling and training of animals.

Another popular concept is “*järjesteleminen*” (“arranging, ordering”). Several writers use the terms *järjesteleminen* or *järjestely* to describe the organization’s activities, and the process of becoming organized. *Organisaatio* (“organization”) was often defined as the pursuit of order and harmony. For example, Niini (1952) uses *järjestäminen* instead of *organisointi* (“organizing”) or *johtaminen* (“managing”) when describing the theoretical background of industrial economy. *Organisaatio* or *organisoituminen*

(“organizing” as an active process) do not seem to be used as stand-alone words. In these cases, it is noteworthy that the term *järjestys* (“order”) often appears in its verb form. Hence, even though the objective is to achieve an “ordered entity”, *järjestynyt kokonaisuus*, the authors also stress the role of the process of *järjestäminen* (“ordering”), which creates an impression of an organization’s structural unity as a continuous production and reshaping of order (*järjestys*).

The picture of the conceptual world of the 1950s comes into focus when briefly compared to modern-day conceptual constructions. Several interpretations differ from modern-day meanings. For example, placing organizational order and unity first differs from the contemporary discourse, where market-like dynamics and “a creative chaos” are pursuable or normal states. Concepts characterizing a harmonious organized entity, such as *sopusointu* (“harmony”), *yhtenäisyys* (“unity”) and *yhteistoiminta* (“collaboration”) were characteristic to the period under scrutiny.

The abundant independent use of the concepts *hallinto* (“administration”) and *hallinta* (“control”) is rarer nowadays because more clearly negative connotations like power and bureaucracy are attached to these terms. Any terms and meanings that refer to influencing management or authority in contemporary management terminology generally influence through their absence. For example, in people management terminologies, words positively describing cult-like movements, such as charisma, inspiration or spirit, are now in use. However, in the 1950s, the controlled use of authority was considered to be a part of a leader’s moral obligations in their work.

On the other hand, this analysis also reveals surprising continuations in the concepts. Despite the emphasis on order and unity, organization was verbalized in many places with the help of verb forms (e.g. *järjestellä*, *organisoida*), an interpretation that has been advertised as a recent theoretical innovation in international scholarly discourse (e.g. Hernes, 2008). Another observation relates to the understanding of leadership as a social relationship. In many books, in addition to a hierarchical vision, the authors emphasize the definition of a leader’s options for action through expectations among subordinates of the use of power and the special characteristics of the work community. Leadership comprises the interaction between the leader and the subordinates, not just the behaviour of a supervisor in a pre-determined position of authority. Contemporary ideas about a “relational” leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006) were thus already becoming apparent in Finnish texts in the 1950s. In the same context, it must be stated that concepts that describe the leader as the subject are nowadays more sensitive to the gender dimension of leadership; and they do not automatically assume the leader to be masculine. For example, the “gentleman”-leader presented by Rautavaara (1959) is positioned to the past as far as contemporary discourse is concerned (Mangham, 2003).

What is being performed with the help of concepts?

The second task of conceptual history is to address the situated discourse as a rhetorical accomplishment performing or legitimating a certain state of affairs (Skinner, 1978; Ihalainen, 2006). These books do not particularly strive to rationalize the professionalization of the field of management, or the need for separate professional training and shaping identity (O'Connor, 1996; Rennison, 2007). Instead, leadership (*johtajuus*) is presented as an ever-developing set of characteristics, so that no standardized know-how can be attributed to the management thereof. Rautavaara (1959, p. 150) remarks, despite his educator background, that “leadership is a development event”, where “everyone helps themselves”. Management cannot be taught in a classroom.

Neither does the understanding of management and administration as a field of science (Shenhav, 1995; Khurana, 2007; Mintzberg, 2004) arise clearly in the discourse of the books. The principles of Taylorism viewed in connection with scientific business management are justified primarily by their rationality, instead of providing an impression of the scientific exactness and objectivity of managerial methods. Niini (1952, p. 2), for example, emphasizes that the task of industrial economy is “to clarify [...] the relationships and influences between things”, but at the same time notes that “this kind of clarity has not been reached at all in the field of economy”. He clarifies his statement by adding that “in an organization, the deciding factor is the person, for whom there are no simplistic formulae” (Niini, 1952, p. 23). Rautavaara (1959, p. 1) takes things a step further and articulates that the “unknown factors” are always a part of leadership (*johtajuus*), and hence, management (*johtaminen*) “can rather be compared to art, than to technical skills or handicraft”.

Instead of professional or scientific arguments, the analysed books strive to legitimize the position of leadership primarily through the moral nature of managerial work (Suchman, 1995). The texts have several references to good or morally sustainable management. For example, the term *liikkeenhoito* (“business care”) leads to the reflection about care, responsibility and ethical principles related to management. Rautavaara devotes a large section of his book to a description of the characteristic features of a good leader, several of which are related to the strength of the moral nature of the supervisor. As far as Rautavaara (1959) is concerned, a good leader is not only strong-minded, but also someone who “inspires respect as a citizen and as a person”, who “does not misuse their position”, who “maintains a just, balanced and consistent discipline” (p. 14) and who seeks confidence in their subordinates in a “manly (sic) and pure manner” (p. 43). For Koli and Niini, however, the central moral objective is the leader’s ability to organize things and people in such a way that they form a genuine whole. “*Järjestäminen*” or “*järjestely*” (“arranging”, “organizing”) is made valuable

by the fact that this creates the prerequisites for “the creation of a strong social consciousness or solidity” (Koli, 1960, p. 2). Organization leads to *järjestys* (order) and to a genuine whole – “a perfect harmony”. Note the shared etymological root of both “arranging” (*järjestely*) and “order” (*järjestys*) in Finnish.

Considering the cultural context of the time, the use of concepts emphasizing order and focusing on moral action is not surprising. For example, Finnish cultural sociologist Pertti Alasuutari (1996) has described the discursive space that shaped 1950s Finnish society as a “moral economy”, wherein the ethical principles were deemed valuable, and where the joint responsibility based on the traditional sense of community was highlighted. The conceptual and ideological environment of a moral economy is also visible in the management textbooks analysed in this article, even though these had to shape their expressions in the midst of the conflicting demands of the global spread of the emerging management discourses (Barley & Kunda, 1992; Guillén, 1994) and the Finnish language terminology (Hyvärinen et al., 2003a).

A moral stance is formed in such a way that the main goal of leading an organization is to achieve a harmonious whole, where various factors dividing individuals and groups have been overcome. At the same time, leaders are also considered to be a part of this whole in such a way that they perform the task reserved for them in the system. A leader must not consider their own advantage, but instead, should focus on creating a balanced *harmony*. A leader should be responsible and careful when using formal power and the hierarchical methods related to it. All kinds of bargaining and empty promises to subordinates are condemned in the analysed books. The concept of management emerging from these descriptions is different to the contemporary discourse of “visionary leadership”, “emotional intelligence” and “coaching”, wherein a leader is seen as more of an exemplary change agent, and someone to inspire subordinates (e.g. Bass & Riggio, 2006), rather than someone carrying the responsibility and adhering to ethical principles.

Generally speaking, the reading of 1950s textbooks reveals that the conceptual universe was largely different from that of the contemporary discourse. Unlike the present discursive context, where “management” dominates the positivities and negativities of organizational vocabulary (Parker, 2002), the earlier epoch (of the 1950s) was characterized by a multitude of conceptual meanings for organizing and managing. This observation is reminiscent of the historical relativity of the conceptual constructions in the development of management thought. Conceptual history adds a critical, linguistic element to the historiographic investigations of the genealogies of management ideas and theories. However, given the embryonic state of conceptual history scholarship in management studies, further empirical excavations of conceptual struggles in different periods and contexts are

needed to advance our understanding of the multifaceted discontinuities and continuities in linguistic constructions of “management” and related organizational phenomena.

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