



Siv Saarukka

Understanding School Principals' Leadership





Understanding School Principals' Leadership

Siv Saarukka

Education
Faculty of Education and Welfare Studies
Åbo Akademi University
Vasa, Finland, 2017

ISBN 978-952-12-3568-9 (print)

ISBN 978-952-12-3569-6 (PDF)

Grafisk design Johan Sundman

Painosalama Oy - Turku, Finland 2017

Abstract

This thesis consists of five studies (articles I-V) and a comprehensive summary. The aim is to expand and deepen the interpretation of principalship that takes its point of departure in the principal being a person, working as a professional and occupying a specific position in the education system. The research interest can be specified in the sub-areas: identifying components influencing principals' leadership (study I), investigating principals' leadership through perspectives on person, profession and position (study II), analysing how school principals form their leadership identity (study III), investigating teachers' expectations of principals leadership (study IV), and about developing leadership for tomorrow's Finnish schools (study V). Studies I and V are built on theoretical considerations, and II, III and IV are empirical studies.

This study is conceptual in the sense that it is concerned with issues of ontology and epistemology, and with conceptual clarifications. The study is also humanistic. It is concerned with gathering and theorising from the experiences and biographies of those who are leaders and managers and those who are managed and led. Other leadership models were also given consideration in processing, and the effects of intra- and inter-individual relations in leadership are outlined. The overall theoretical design of leadership is concentrated in categories and integrated components, which assist in recognizing patterns of interpretation in understanding school leadership. An important starting point was to define what kind of knowledge the research should generate, as research is about conceptualizing a field through theoretical and empirical approaches.

The hermeneutic approach was used in integrating the five studies in the research process, and the methodology is represented by abduction. Data were collected through interviews with full-time principals and teachers from comprehensive schools. Narrative analysis was used for the individual interviews, and qualitative content analysis for the data from the focus groups. To receive a deeper and nuanced knowledge about school leadership, selected components had to be used. Assisted by the cooperative approach of categories and components, a relatively detailed understanding of principals' school leadership was obtained and it was possible to identify nuances in self-awareness and self-realization in professional and positional situations.

Keywords: person, profession, position, self-awareness, self-realization, identity,

Abstrakt

Denna avhandling består av fem delstudier (artiklarna I-V) och en omfattande sammanfattning. Syftet har varit att utvidga och fördjupa tolkningen av rektors ledarskap utgående från rektor som person praktiserande en profession och som innehavare av en särskild position inom utbildningssystemet. Forskningsintresset konkretiseras genom de delområden som behandlats i artiklarna: att identifiera komponenter som påverkar rektors ledarskap (studie I), utredning av rektors ledarskap genom perspektiv på person, profession och position (studie 2), analys av hur rektorers ledarskapsidentitet utformas (studie III), Undersökning av lärares förväntningar på rektors ledarskap (studie IV), och hur ledarskap i morgondagens finländska skolor kunde utvecklas (studie V). Studierna I och V bygger på teoretisk orientering och fördjupning medan II, III och IV är empiriska studier.

Denna studie är konceptuell i den meningen att den behandlar ontologiska och epistemologiska frågeställningar med konceptuella förtydliganden. Studien vilar på en humanistisk grund. Den behandlar och teoretiserar erfarenheter av ledare och de ledda genom rektorers berättelser om sig själva och sitt ledarskap samt genom lärares uppfattningar om rektorers ledarskap. Olika ledarskapsmodeller och ledarteorier har uppmärksammats, och effekter av inter- och intra-individuella relationer i ledarskap har klargjorts. Den övergripande teoretiska designen av ledarskap är koncentrerad till kategorier och integrerade komponenter som bidrar till att identifiera tolkningsmönster för att förstå skolledarskap. En angelägen utgångspunkt var att definiera vilken typ av kunskap forskningen skulle generera, eftersom forskning handlar om konceptualisering av ett fält genom teoretiska och empiriska tillvägagångssätt.

Den hermeneutiska metoden tillämpades för att integrera de fem delstudierna i forskningsprocessen, och den metodologiska ansatsen har varit abduktiv. Data insamlades genom intervjuer av tjänsterektorer och lärare från grundläggande utbildning. Narrativ analys användes för de enskilda intervjuerna och kvalitativ innehållsanalys för data från lärargrupperna. För att få en djupare och mera nyanserad kunskap om skolledarskap, användes utvalda analyserande komponenter som redskap. Genom kombinerade analyser där rektors ledarskap undersöktes med hjälp av kategorier och komponenter uppnåddes en relativt detaljerad förståelse av rektorskap och det var möjligt att identifiera nyanser i självmedvetenhet och självförverkligande i professionella och positionella situationer.

Sökord: person, profession, position, identitet, personlighet, självförverkligande.

Acknowledgements

Experience of several years of work with aspiring principals was the background for me when entering the road of doctoral studies. At this moment I am very grateful, when looking back, viewing emerged knowledge, experiences and accomplished achievements. I owe thanks to many persons who, in different ways, have contributed. Support and guidance from former colleagues, family and friends has been important.

Above all, I wish to thank my supervisor, Professor Michael Uljens for inviting me to this research program. Thank you for encouragement and tireless support through the years. Your broad and deep scientific experience has been a valuable asset and inspired to new insights. I am also grateful to my second advisor, Professor Emeritus Sven-Erik Hansén for basic and robust supervision during the first years of my research process.

I would sincerely like to thank my preliminary examiners, Professor Aini-Kristiina Jäppinen at the University of Jyväskylä, and Associate Professor Helene Ärlestig at Umeå University, for their positive and constructive feedback on my thesis. Likewise University Teacher John Shepherd at University of Vaasa for reading and giving valuable feedback regarding the English language.

I would like to thank my former colleagues and friends at the Centre for Life Long Learning at Åbo Akademi University for positive encouragement. Thanks especially to Torbjörn for valuable and supportive discussions. Grateful thoughts go also to all my fellow researchers during this time, with whom I had the privilege of sharing discussions about research and other topics.

Without financial support the collections of data, attendance at important research conferences and seminars, as well as international collaboration would have been impossible. I want to express my gratitude to Åbo Akademi University, (Ledningsgruppen för forskarutbildningen), and Svenska Kulturfonden.

Finally I want to express my gratitude to my family. My mom and dad would have encouraged every step of my research route if they had lived. However, physical absence does not prevent other dimensions of presence. My dear brother Mikki with family has always been entertaining company and good friends.

I also feel very lucky to have wonderful sons and lovely daughters in law, who all have supported me during this adventure. Thank you Kai and Marjo, Johan and Josefin, Oscar and Anna. Most importantly I would like to thank Kalle for always being there, listening and arranging time for me to withdraw from daily family duties, as well as sharing ups and downs with me. Your positive expectations that my research trip will be completed have given me energy both in good times and in bad. You have always been my most important and caring support.

I dedicate this thesis to my grandchildren Alekski and Iida. You are our future!

Nedervetil, June, 2017

Siv Saarukka

Table of Contents

Abstract	3
Abstrakt	4
Acknowledgements	5
List of Original Publications	7
List of Figures	8
List of Tables	9
1 Introduction	11
1.1 Background and aim	12
1.2 Research question and design	17
2 Previous research and theoretical considerations	22
2.1 Educational leadership framing school leadership	22
2.1.1 Models of educational leadership	26
2.1.2 Research on principalship in Finland	31
2.2 School leadership – a multi-faceted research area	34
2.2.1 Principal as a person (an individual)	39
2.2.2 Principalship as a profession	43
2.2.3 Principalship as a position	47
2.2.4 Summary of the integration of components in categories	49
2.2.5 Intra-individual and inter-individual relationality	51
2.3 School culture and school leadership in Finland – policy aspects	55
3 Conducting the study	61
3.1 Methodological approach	61
3.2 Data collection	64
3.3 Analysis of the data	66
3.4 Ethical considerations	68
4 Results	69
4.1 Study I: Components influencing principals’ leadership	70
4.2 Study II: Principal’s leadership through perspectives on person, profession and position	72
4.3 Study III: How principals form their leadership identity	76
4.4 Study IV: Teacher expectations of principals’ leadership	78
4.5 Study V: Developing leadership for tomorrow’s Finnish schools	81
4.6 Summarizing the original studies and their intentions	83
5 Discussion	88
5.1 School leadership as a humanistic interpretative approach	88
5.2 Closing reflections	91
References	98
Appendices	108
Original Publications	111

List of Original Publications

- Study I: Saarukka, S. (2015). Components influencing principals' leadership. In M.Uljens (ed.) Educational leadership – theory, research and school development. Report from the Faculty of Education and Welfare Studies, Åbo Akademi University. No 38, Vasa 2015 (141-162).
- Study II: Saarukka, S. (2013). Principal's Leadership through Perspectives on Person, Profession and Position. In A-L. Østern, K.Smith, T.Ryghaug, T.Krüger & MB Postholm (Eds.) Teacher Education Research between National Identity and Global Trends. NAFOL Year Book 2012. Trondheim: Academica Publishing (215-235).
- Study III: Saarukka, S. (2014). How School Principals Form Their Leadership Identity. In A.Koren, M.Brejc (ed.) Vodenje, Leadership in Education, Special Issue, Volume 12/ 2014. Kranj, Slovenia: National School for Leadership in Education (3-18).
- Study IV: Saarukka, S. (2016). Lärares förväntningar på rektors ledarskap. (Teacher expectations on principal's leadership). In Nordisk Tidskrift för Allmän Didaktik. Vol.2, No.1, November 2016, (33-51).
- Study V: Saarukka, S. (2016). Developing Leadership for Tomorrow's Finnish schools. In T.Hurley & E.O'Connor (Eds.) Leadership for Future Focused Education and Learning for All. Dublin: Drumcondra Education Centre, 2016. (162-181).

List of Figures

Figure 1. Relations between categories and components	18
Figure 2. Categories in principalship.....	36
Figure 3. Integration of components in the categories person, profession and position	37
Figure 4. The various components of the self (Adapted from Branson,)	41
Figure 5. Relational outcomes in principalship through integration of components in the categories of person, profession and position	50
Figure 6. Intra-individual relations in person A and person B (1-4).....	53
Figure 7. Interpersonal relations between person A (subject) and person B (object).....	54
Figure 8. The research process	63

List of Tables

Table 1. Overview of the articles, population, collected data and applied methods.	21
Table 2. Distinctions among the three theories of leadership.....	28
Table 3. ‘Knowledge provinces’ in the field of school leadership, according to Gunter and Ribbins.....	30
Table 4. Examples of questions guiding individual self-reflection	42
Table 5. Examples of questions guiding self-reflection in profession.....	46
Table 6. Examples of questions guiding self-reflection in leadership position	48
Table 7. Interpretation of the integration of components in categories.....	86

1 Introduction

This thesis is titled *Understanding School Principals' Leadership*. The overall ambition is to expand and deepen an interpretation of principalship that takes its point of departure in the principal being a person, working as a professional and occupying a specific position in the educational system. The principal's professional activities are therefore seen as informed by both the principal's personality and the professional position framing the occupation. Focusing on the principal in this light is assumed to contribute to understanding principals' leadership activities. By choosing this title the intention is to turn attention to dimensions essential to how principals conduct their leadership. Although a focus on the principal's professional identity is not a new topic it is still recognized in descriptions of international state of the art research on principals as an under-researched field. Elaborations of this research have repeatedly been considered as welcome (Erikson, 1994; Burke & Sets, 1996; Stryker & Burke, 2000; Joseph, 2004; Crow, Day & Møller, 2016).

Leadership in general, as well as school leadership in particular, is typically defined in terms of activities carried out by individual professionals in formal positions. Leadership is often identified in terms of qualities, traits and behaviours (Horner, 1977; Risku and Kanervio, 2011). Yet such a perspective is also subject to criticism. Several studies stress the complex character of understanding school leadership (Gronn, 1999; Juuti, 2013; Bezzina, 2015). The complexity of principals' work is often regarded as consisting of challenges in balancing between steering, leading and knowledge development, as argued by Møller and Ottesen (2011). Focusing solely on leadership behavior, traits or qualities are also regarded as limited given the context of leadership: in the end, public schools are partly subordinate to political and other steering mechanisms. Governance oriented studies in turn emphasize leadership rather as an aspect or dimension of a political and administrative system or network than a phenomenon that is meaningful to study as disconnected from this system (Moos et al., 2013). A related observation regarding fields of leadership research is that studies oriented on levels higher up in organizational hierarchies often adopt a more impersonal system or governance perspective. In contrast, at lower levels, as in studies on leadership in schools, the leader as an individual with initiatives, activities, values and practical undertakings, is often the main focus.

In the light of the above observations, the work of a school principal proves a theoretically exciting landscape of relational practices and shaping out a space of understanding in which relational and interactional processes are essential. As we can see, the field of research is in a disparate and developing stage with many ideas of how to move forward. Internationally, the field appears to be focused on conceptual developments in different ways.

1.1 Background and aim

The aim of the study supports a view according to which grasping the broader structural and systems perspective is important in understanding leadership. Within such a broad perspective, educational leadership research may focus on either more general mechanisms, governance practices, or distribution of influences and it is also possible and meaningful to pay attention to how individuals, regardless of the administrative level, execute educational leadership as they work as leaders. When stating that it is always single individuals who act as principals, it means in this context that principalship is seen as a three dimensional structure: there is the individual as a person, the individual and her professional activity and competence, and third, the individual's occupational position within the organization. The occupational position is externally defined by collective decision-making and is typically historically developed, parallel to other school developments more generally, but it is, from the individual's perspective, something experienced.

National governance defines the relative degrees of freedom for professional independence. These form the principal's work when carrying out educational tasks, like those given in the curriculum. These degrees of freedom vary between countries. In general, we have seen international movements from an input-centred to an output centred curriculum policy (Gunter et al., 2016).

The professional roles and formal duties of school principals have changed from mainly focusing on management issues to operating more with educational tasks. In many countries principals are increasingly seen as accountable for students' learning results. However, according to Uljens et al. (2016, 52), "in international comparisons, the Finnish tradition demonstrates a culture of trust in professional autonomy and deliberation rather than a culture of mistrust and control". Salo and Sandén (2016) have identified two different kinds of trust according to Finnish schools: institutional and relational. Institutional trust is explained as the expectation of appropriate behavior related to the norms of a school, and relational trust emerges partly because of small school size and stability of the school community.

In addition, institutional trust is expressed in regulations defining how responsibilities and obligations are distributed across the governance system. For example, in Finland it is the right and obligation of municipalities to evaluate the educational performance of schools (Uljens & Nyman, 2013). Less controlled systems may be assumed to provide more freedom for the relative autonomy of professionals. The autonomy connected with principalship can be regarded as an indicator or proof of the extent to which policy is based on trust. This holds true for teachers as well: teachers are offered freedom for professional interpretation within the framework of the national curriculum.

In this study, an interactional and dialogical approach is employed. The main reason for accepting an interactional perspective on all levels is that societal governance in any field in western democracies allows for relative independence in carrying out professional tasks. This relative freedom allows for individual solutions and initiatives according to the prevailing circumstances.

From this brief macro-level outlook the focus in the following will be turned to the micro-level and principalship in its closest context.

In agreement with Sergiovanni (2001), leadership as a phenomenon always includes the personal dimension. For Bezzina (2015, 132), the personal dimension is “normative, reflecting our values, beliefs, and assumptions”. For his part, Sergiovanni sees that the personal dimension comprises three aspects. Metaphorically expressed, they are the heart, the hand and the head. The heart of leadership has to do with personal beliefs, values, and dreams about what one are committed to. This is about the individual’s personal vision, where vision is to be perceived as the person’s subjective world. A vision becomes the foundation of his or her initiatives. The head of leadership has to do with the theories or perceptions of practice that leaders develop over time, as well as with their ability to reflect on the situations they face. Reflection, combined with personal vision and an internal system of values, becomes the basis of leadership strategies and actions. The hand of leadership has to do with the actions we take, our undertakings and the decisions we make as the leadership and management behaviors we apply (Sergiovanni, 1992; Bezzina, 2015). Sergiovanni’s conclusion regarding the interactions between heart, head and hand is stated as follows: “The head of leadership is shaped by the heart and drives the hand; in turn, reflections on decisions and actions affirm or reshape the heart and the head” (2001, 39). As the research interest in the present study concerns principalship as a person, principalship as a profession and the position as principal, the metaphor by Sergiovanni reflects my pre-understanding of how leadership could be characterized. The head, the hand and the heart can be compared with the person, profession and position in adopting Sergiovanni’s metaphor.

The setting for this work is leadership in public, compulsory schools in Finland. The educational aims of the curriculum, formulated at a governance level, are transformed and adapted by and into practices on the local level, naturally in relation to the given local context of the school. As the task of the school as institution is educational, it is natural to assume that the character of the principal’s work is about performing educational leadership, including related managerial and administrative issues. Educational leadership thus refers both to leading the educational tasks and activities of the school, as well

as to leading in a pedagogical way, i.e. supporting professional growth among teachers and learning among pupils. In other words, a principal is in charge of operating the school when it comes to both educational and managerial subjects, and in this respect the principal's pedagogical task is dual. It can also be said to be indirect with respect to students'/pupils' studying and learning.

A major finding from broad research, including school leaders from several European countries, concluded that school leadership is highly contextualized, not only at the system level, but also at the school level (Day & Leithwood, 2007; Höög & Johansson, 2011). The research outcomes indicate that there is no one best cocktail mix of leadership styles for all school leaders. Brauckmann & Pashiardis, (2010) recommend that school leaders look at what the situation in his/her particular school context calls for and then act on it. In agreement with this, Törnsén (2011, 91) argue, "Versatile leadership is successful".

As school leadership is fundamental in efforts to improve student learning, little is known about how school leaders themselves learn at the workplace (van Veelen, Slegers & Endedijk 2017). In order to understand school leaders' informal professional learning, van Veelen, et al. (2017) investigated the joint impact of environmental and personal factors on professional learning, focusing on learning activities that were either individual or social, and focusing either on a current or a future situation. The four learning activities were reflection, career awareness, asking for feedback, and challenging groupthink. The research showed that school leaders' learning activities are embedded within the school environment and driven by personal motivation. These results are consistent with general research findings on learning in the workplace (Moxnes, 1984)

School leaders might experience tensions between the different concepts in practicing leadership: management, administration and educational leadership (Dimmock, 1999). Bush (1998) links leadership to values and purposes and management to implementation or technical issues. In distinguishing educational leadership and management, both cultural and country related aspects need to be taken into account, as well as historical viewpoints. Bush (2003) argues that the development of educational management as a field of study in the United Kingdom came as late as the 1960s. From an international perspective, declared through the OECD-report 'Improving School Leadership' (2008), school leadership is underlined as an education policy priority around the world: "Increased school autonomy and a greater focus on schooling and school results have made it essential to reconsider the role of school leaders" (Pont, Nusche and Moorman, 2008, 3).

From an organizational point of view, the character of leadership in a school is educational despite the many administrative procedures involved (Fullan, 2001/2007; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Aas & Törnsén, 2016). In the literature about school leadership there are numerous examples of descriptions and analyses of what school leaders do (see e.g. Tukiainen, 1999; Svedberg, 2000; Bottery, 2004; Pennanen, 2007; Townsend & Bogotch, 2008; English, 2008; Brude Sundin, 2009; Møller & Ottesen, 2011). In the coming section (2.1.2) a review of previous research about school leadership in Finland is undertaken, aiming at answering how the leader as a person is portrayed, how leadership as a profession at school is highlighted, and what the contents of leadership according to the formal position are. As my ambition is to investigate how principals as individuals experience their leadership, what their leadership comprises, and aspects about development in the profession, the approach in this study is focused on the personhood and relations between the person as an individual, the profession and the role in leadership.

Practices in schools are not stable, but changing over time. Still, in many respects schools are organized in the same way as 100 years ago. However, changes and development can be noted, and the core curriculum (2014) for compulsory education (www.oph.fi/english/curricula) highlights the principles for schools as ‘learning organizations’ emphasizing the school culture, cooperation, communication and versatile working approaches as well as responsibility for sustainable development. The overarching goals as stated in the curriculum are to secure the necessary knowledge and skills as well as to encourage learning.

As leadership is a social phenomenon, it is practiced between people and is in many respects a *shared practice* in terms of the organization of daily tasks. Leadership occurs, exists and is carried out as human interaction. Leadership arises also through one-to-one relations (Ladkin, 2010). Essential features due to relations are interactions and communication. Principals’ communication with their teachers in a Swedish school setting was examined by Ärlestig (2008). A conclusion from the research outcomes was that differences in the communication process were more due to organizational factors like structure and culture than the principals’ individual communication abilities. Frelin (2010, 49-50) investigated teachers’ relational work and emphasized education as communication, with an additional comment: “not as sending and receiving information but as contingent and contextualized meaning making situated in contexts in which the qualities of relationships play an important part”.

Becoming a school principal is a transformative process (Crow & Glascock, 1995). Changing educational careers requires an individual to relinquish the confidence of a known role - being a teacher - and experience the uncertainty

of an unknown role – being a principal (Browne-Ferrigno, 2003). Principalship does not emerge automatically as a result of existing formal descriptions. Principalship as a practice means understanding; acceptance and relation building are important elements in creating school leadership. According to Alvesson and Sveningsson (2009, 328): “asking what, how and when according to leadership is to ask about spatial, bodily and temporal anchoring of leadership - shortly, the context”. School leadership as a specific mission of leadership in general has to deal with several practitioners, specific relations and overall national educational policy.

Aim

The overarching ambition of this study is to contribute to research about understanding school principals’ leadership by investigating how principals as individuals experience their leadership, what their leadership consists of, and how they see their development in the profession. Through individual interviews with principals from compulsory schools grade 7-9 and teachers organized in focus groups, these issues will be in focus. The intention is to investigate if the overall analytical structure of person, profession and position, and topics related to these categories, will prove useful in understanding principals and their professional work. The interest is to recognize awareness of how principals experience their leadership as individuals, what the nature of their self-knowledge is, what perceptions they have of leadership as a profession, and how they experience the leadership position. These ambitions are expressed as purposes through the research questions in the separate original articles.

In accomplishing the research task, this study adopts a hermeneutic methodology. Hermeneutic thinking is based on the overall importance of understanding the phenomenon in such a way that it is possible to understand concretely and as a part of the reality. There are several different outlines of hermeneutics as a core philosophy anchored in classical philosophers such as F. Schleiermacher (1768-1834), W. Dilthey (1833-1911) M. Heidegger (1889-1976) and H-G. Gadamer (1900-2002), (see e.g. Palmer, 1969). Heidegger (1962) developed the concept of the *hermeneutic circle*, further developed and reconceptualised by Gadamer (1975). According to Gadamer (1997, 137) “Understanding is constantly moving between the whole and part and back as a whole. The task is to widen the uniformly understood meaning in concentric circles.” (1975). This study operates with both of the ‘circles’ and the expected outcome conforms to the traditional circular symbol: unity and harmony. Furthermore, the circle as a symbol for hermeneutics has an alternative - the spiral - symbolizing the on going rotating process (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008).

By raising questions about different perspectives focusing on principals' leadership, the interest is to identify how principals themselves understand and perform their leadership in order to reach an understanding as an outsider. As my structure for this thesis is based on separate articles discussing aspects of principals' leadership, the research questions are presented in the overview of the hermeneutic research design and further in each of the articles.

1.2 Research question and design

Above, I directed attention to issues in leadership in respect to the overarching research ambition. In the introduction above a preliminary understanding of leadership was depicted. Leadership was described as being about acknowledging the individual, context, system and policy. Through analyses of individual interviews with principals from compulsory schools grades 7-9 and also teachers organized in focus groups, the intention is to be able to reach gradually deepening insights into initially hidden or unreflected foundations for the activities that make up principals' leadership. The ambition is to be able to develop a nuanced awareness of how principals experience their leadership as individuals, what the nature of their self-knowledge is, what perceptions they have of leadership as a profession, and how they experience the leadership position. These ambitions are expressed as the purposes of the articles and research questions. It is my hope that this study will contribute in developing increased understanding of principalship as a process, and the principal as an individual, being the leader, and further possibly identify new areas for research and development. To recognize structural features in principals' leadership is to attempt to understand what constitutes school leaders' ways of practicing their profession.

A principal operates in the school framed by several organizational prerequisites. The principal's duty is to lead the school with all its functions, such as teaching and learning, arrangements concerning the school as a workplace, and issues related to both organization and culture. The title of this work indicates an interest in understanding how a principal acts and how a principal's personhood and aspects related to the profession are reflected in the leadership position.

Research question

The overall research question guiding this work is:

How can a principal's school leadership be understood?

The research process has longitudinal and abductive design. The initial perspectives on principals' leadership have been derived from both theoretical and empirical perspectives. Articles I-V were developed during the whole process and were shaped in relation to the pre-understanding of the three categories: person, profession and position. This design assisted in structuring the experiences of principalship with the help of the three categories and to further integrate the components personality dynamic, identity and self-realization with the categories. Hermeneutic epistemology and methodology contributed in discovering an approach to identify how to structure the principal's interpretation of school leadership. By studying the relations between person, profession and position, and how each one of them relates to each component, the question of how a principal performs the leadership role develops some essential answers through this analysis. (Figure 1)

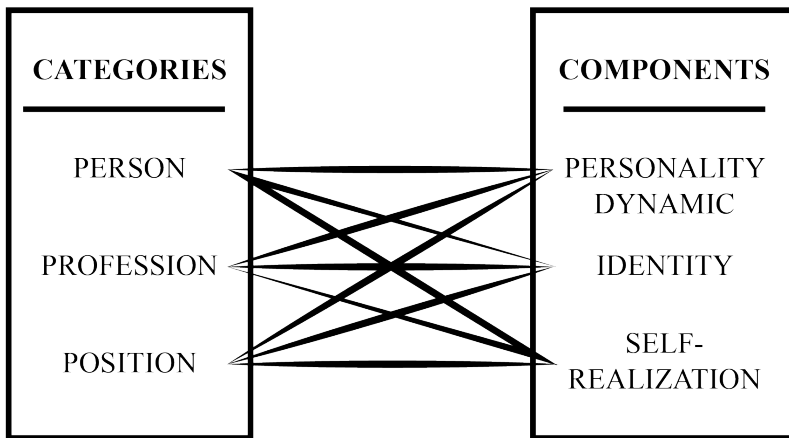


Figure 1. Relations between categories and components

Methodologically, the ambition is to apply a theoretically informed but still exploratory and open approach to leadership, paying attention to the multifaceted situations a principal has to deal with in his/her daily duties and recognize how the principal acts. *Educational leadership* as the object of research is clarified and developed through a stepwise procedure. As the structure of this study is congruent with this exploratory, hermeneutic and abductive research approach, it will be briefly commented upon.

The approach of this study was to start from a preliminary idea constructed on previous experience. Inspired by phenomenology, there was from the very beginning an indication of holding back too strict definitions of how school leadership was to be understood. The hermeneutic concept of ‘pre-understanding’ refers exactly to this: also everyday experience and observations are always theoretical. Without any guiding theories everyday empirical observations would be insignificant. In this study the ‘hermeneutic spiral’ is therefore accepted and applied as an explicit research strategy, i.e. as a kind of dialogue between theoretical concepts, conceptualizations and different types of empirical data collected to highlight the phenomenon under investigation. It should also be observed that previous research and theory are in no way overlooked in this study, but will be especially included in the form of validating the empirical findings.

A hermeneutic research design

In this study a hermeneutic approach is applied. Through the hermeneutic process, an understanding of school leadership is developed through five stages in structuring the research design. This overview includes (a) the purpose of the study, (b) method and approach, and (c) a brief comment about the articles.

In the *first stage*, a pre-understanding of a structure in leadership, identified as person, profession and position, were recognized. The purpose of the study was to describe principles of school management in Finland, and formal rules about leadership, and to analyse the structure of person, profession and position in leadership. The method was built on a theoretical approach viewing aspects in national educational policy and theoretical considerations on leadership. The first article was named ‘*Components influencing principals’ leadership*’, outlining the contents in the preliminary, heuristic theoretical framework for investigations about principalship in Finnish comprehensive schools. The preconception of principalship as organized in categories, named person, profession and position, was outlined and further examined through integrated components.

When proceeding to *stage two* by analysing the empirical material from interviews with principals, the purpose of necessity was to apply more operational expressions about activities in school leadership. The empirical method applied through interviews proved that school leadership in practice was described in terms of being and behaving, relating and supporting, acting and communicating, identifying and deciding. The theoretical

approach from stage one needed to expand and integrate approaches from social psychology, and Ekehammar (2007), Kaufmann and Kaufmann (2005), Giddens (1991), Seagal and Horne (1987/2004), Erikson (1994), and Branson (2010) assisted the empirical approach. In the second article *'Principal's leadership through perspectives on person, profession and position'* I present experiences and interpretations in school leadership grounded on analyses of interviews with principals. The relational outcomes of integration between the different components and person, profession and position were discovered and outlined.

The purpose of the investigation in *study three*, identity, was given a lot of attention in interviews with principals, and therefore also in analysing the empirical material. Analysing the interviews focused especially on the principals' statements on identity and continued the empirical method and approach. The theoretical considerations were concentrated on theories framing identity related to person, the professional identity and identity in the leadership position. The results from theory and empirical analysis appeared in the article framed as a question: *'How do school principals form their leadership identity on the personal, professional and positional levels?'* In processing the study, it became obvious that research related to identity in the specific field of school leadership is limited, although general aspects about identity have been the subject of numerous studies. A study worth noting, conducted by Briggs (2007), examined middle leadership in further education colleges and professional identity from the perspectives of professional values, professional location and professional role.

The purpose of *study four* was to investigate teachers' expectations on school principals' leadership and to reach a contrastive view of principalship. The method used was interviews with focus groups of teachers. The starting point for the theoretical approach was in viewing a broader perspective for the relationship principal-teacher by including aspects on school culture and teachers' professional cooperation. Questions related to these topics were included in the group discussions. This article is written in Swedish and the title in English is *'Teacher expectations on principals' leadership'*.

The purpose of *study five* was to create a future perspective on school leadership by bringing the principal's leadership to the fore in the light of the renewed 2016 curriculum in Finnish comprehensive schools. The method used was a theoretical orientation, approaching 'Tomorrow's leadership' by looking backwards to the theory discussed in article one, integrating present governance activities in school leadership, and connecting the outcomes with the contents of the curriculum. The results are presented in the article 'Developing leadership for tomorrow's Finnish schools.'

Table 1. Overview of the articles, population, collected data and applied methods.

ARTICLES / published	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	METHODS	RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS
Components Influencing Principals' Leadership Published 2015	About - person - profession - position	Theoretical orientation	
Principals' Leadership through Perspectives on Person, Profession, Position Published 2012	About - self-knowledge - perceptions about profession and - experiences of position	Empirical research: Interviews with principals	Seven full-time principals from compulsory education
How School Principals form their Leadership Identity Published 2014	About forming leadership identity	Empirical research: Interviews with principals	Eight full-time principals from compulsory and upper secondary education
Lärares förväntningar på Rektors ledarskap (Teacher Expectations on Principals' Leadership) Published 2016	About teacher expectations according to principals' leadership	Empirical research: Focus-group interviews with teachers	32 teachers from compulsory education
Developing Leadership for Tomorrow's Finnish Schools Published 2016	About developing principalship for tomorrow's schools	Theoretical orientation	

2 Previous research and theoretical considerations

In this chapter theoretical considerations and examples from previous research about educational leadership will be outlined (2.1). Leadership models with approaches of transformative, transformational and transactional leadership (Shields, 2010; Leithwood, 1994; Burns, 1978) as examples will be commented on in section 2.1.1, and furthermore a research paradigm organizing fields of school leadership (Gunter and Ribbins, 2003) and aspects of sustainable leadership (Hargreaves and Fink 2005; Wolff, 2015) will be discussed. In section 2.1.2 recent research about principalship in Finland is presented.

Epistemologically, this study represents a theoretically informed yet understanding-oriented approach to school leadership. For this purpose, I have designed an initial two-step structure of categories and components (2.2) to be able to identify school leadership in its context. The two-step structure consists of (i) the categories of person, profession and position, and (ii) the components of identity, the self expressed as self-realization, and personality dynamic. Through this design, understanding principalship develops through an interpretative process, where the categories are analysed and interpreted by the components and summarized in sections 2.2.1-2.2.4. The interactions between person, profession and position produce a new understanding of intra-individual and inter-individual relationality further discussed in 2.2.5.

In section 2.3 I turn attention to contextual perspectives by outlining aspects on school culture as the environment for principalship, and furthermore attention is directed to issues affecting school leadership in Finland from the viewpoint of national policy.

2.1 Educational leadership framing school leadership

Leadership, according to Gronn (1999), is seen as qualitatively different from management and administration. Law and Glover (2000, 13) use the expression ‘charismatic’ when describing leadership. They see leadership as something ‘special’. It can be identified with one person, for example the principal, but is also exercised by others at different levels in the organization. Yukl (2002, 4-5) argues that “the definition of leadership is arbitrary and very subjective [...] there is no correct definition”. Paukkuri (2015, 23) summarizes some general features of leadership and states: “leadership is always connected to people, situational facts, time and social context which, in turn, formulate the phenomenon.”

Educational leadership as a subject and as a concept is still rather new. What is the past and background of the expression educational leadership? The history of the expression cannot be clarified in detail here, but presumably it has gradually developed as a response regarding school leadership, and reflects developments in principalship as a profession. Uljens and Ylimaki (2016) address a historical aspect related to the expression educational leadership by viewing early findings related to the first textbook in educational studies in Finland, published in 1884, and written by Z. Cleve about how educational leadership is constituted. Cleve identifies four aspects about principals' work: firstly, an idea of the school's task in society; secondly, an interpretation of the curriculum; and thirdly, a theory of teaching/didactics, including an elaborate view of the school's internal social climate; and fourth, an awareness of the state's regulation of the school's activities. Cleve's book was aimed for teacher education. The task of the school is analysed in relation to the family, culture and church, i.e. it develops a theory of the school as a societal institution (Cleve, 1884). From the start of national training for Finnish principals, it was stated that the subject of educational leadership should be included in the schedule (Hämäläinen, 1983).

But how could educational leadership be defined today? Several researchers have suggested definitions (Their, 1995; Moos 2013; Bottery, 2004; Blossing, 2011; Dimmock & Walker, 2005), but a clear and unambiguous definition is difficult to obtain. Bush (2003) states that there is no agreed definition of the concept of educational leadership. He refers to three separate dimensions of leadership that may be identified as basis for a working definition: leadership as an influence, leadership and values, and leadership and visions. Bush then suggests that the contents of educational leadership might be collected from these areas. Another option used in several documentations is to express educational contents as attributes of school leadership and choosing to combine the educational profession with 'leadership', i.e. principal leadership (Day & Leithwood, 2007), or link the guiding educational documents with leadership, i.e. curriculum leadership (Ylimaki, 2011). The expression 'educational leadership' is understood according to different national educational policies and linked to the contextual culture, which might be one reason why it is complicated to find an unambiguous definition. Uljens and Ylimaki (2015, 109) have examined strengths and limitations in educational leadership studies, and argue that a feature of the research is that "leadership studies do not really define education or articulate an underlying educational theory. More often, educational leadership studies use terms like instructional, pedagogic, transformational, or distributed leadership to describe various relationships between leadership and learning."

Further, Uljens and Ylimaki (2015, 111) maintain that educational leadership research is not guided by any theory of education:

“Thus, there is an interest in trying to understand how leadership activities influence and support teaching, as well as how leaders operate in relation to the socio-cultural context of the school. Empirically, the intention to look at the relation between leadership and curriculum/instruction is there but is not necessarily framed by any coherent theory that explicitly considers relationships among leadership interactions within the micro (school) institution and broader social, political, and economic landscape”.

The interest in linking educational leadership with the curriculum leads to different consequences in different countries, given how curriculum and evaluation is organized and distributed. In Finland, the core curriculum is a national policy document drawn up by The Finnish National Board of Education in a complex dialogical process (Uljens & Rajakaltio, 2015). Curriculum set out the key objectives, content and policies of education. Education providers and schools draw up their own local curricula based on national curricula. As the educational frames and learning contents are governmentally stated, the principals’ educational leadership has to communicate with curriculum contents, methods for guiding and motivating teachers in teaching practice, and in interpreting the contents in subject teaching. This twofold content in definition of educational leadership as perceived by Finnish educational researcher and school principal, Martti Hellström (2006), portrays the current image of educational leadership as a mission. Hellström focuses on the content and method: educational leadership is to lead education, and to lead educationally. Schratz (2013) is reflecting on what is needed in educational leadership? Agreeing with Fullan (2005, 11), Schratz quotes that we need leaders “who are theoreticians, but they are practitioners whose theories are lived in action every day. Their ideas are woven into daily interactions that make a difference”.

Differences in school culture and relations to providers are investigated by Nihlfors and Johansson (2010) in an overview named ‘Principal – a strong link in steering the school’, a study reporting outcomes from an investigation about the Swedish context of principalship, and principals’ possibilities to influence stakeholders through their position. According to the results, principals are satisfied with their leadership role, but do not feel they have possibilities to influence the policy groups among providers. Principals show strong commitment to their stakeholders.

Several researchers in a publication about school leadership in Nordic countries use the term ‘educational leadership’ as a synonym for principalship (Johansson & Bredeson, 2011). In this overview of Nordic research about principals, the dilemma about deciding what contents should be at the forefront

when creating the definition of educational leadership is highlighted. Imsen (2004) explores the relationship between school leadership and classroom activities. Her study shows a strong correlation between leadership and the school's orientation towards development and change, and stresses that the principal has a great influence on the school culture. Imsen also found a correlation between the quality of school leadership and the way of organizing teaching and learning activities in schools. The correlation of principalship as a profession with pedagogical responsibilities is noticeable in Imsen's research.

Johansson and Bredeson (2011) have studied national differences according to the principal's engagement according to classroom activities in several international studies. Tendencies indicating changes in traditional leadership roles can be noticed in Scandinavian countries: younger principals are more interested in students' results, while older principals prioritize the management role. An opposite practice can be recognized, e.g. in Australia, the UK and North America, where the principals' responsibility for teacher accomplishments and student results has high priority (Johansson and Bredeson, 2011, 65). Leo (2010) investigated whether any special professional norms exist in regard to principals' leadership as practiced in Swedish schools. According to the research outcomes the results of the principals' characterizations of an ideal democratic principal are formulated as expectations. Most of the expectations are answers to the question 'how' and express norms, values and personality related qualities in the profession.

As the overall traditional role in the principals' profession has focused on management and formal leadership, a change in the contents can be noted during the last few decades. The main change, confirmed through research findings, is there are more nuances according to how to act as an educational leader, and in many countries the responsibility of being a learning expert has been integrated in the principal's profession (Botha, 2004). These broader views can be recognized through definitions of principalship in terms such as 'instructional leadership' and 'curriculum leadership' (Bush, 2003; Ylimaki, 2011). Botha (2004) has identified values and qualities of a principal's leadership and named them cornerstones: reflections, visions, commitment and courage, power and empowerment. According to Botha (2004, 241):

“The role of the school principal has changed over the past years and the emphasis is more on leadership. The qualities of principal leadership that reflect the principal's value have changed. This has a major effect on the new principalship and makes way for what can be described as a 'new professionalism' for school principals.”

The challenging issue when studying principalship is to understand the multifaceted leadership process, patterns of behaviour and relational activities. My pre-understanding of school leadership - the leader as a person, leadership practiced as a profession and leadership as a position, as stated earlier in this section, has initially assisted me in the hermeneutic process of portraying school leadership. In an early stage in the research process, the dimensions of person, profession and position were identified as heuristic concepts. These perspectives were a result of empirical findings and exposed contents in principalship from the leadership literature. As the overarching research object in this study is about educational leadership, the further ambition is to detect and to be able to identify the principals' ways of performing their tasks and thereby to explore what constitutes the individual approach to principalship.

2.1.1 Models of educational leadership

An orientation in the literature on educational leadership generates a number of alternative models. Bush and Glover (2002) presents a typology of leadership models, e.g. managerial, participative, transformational, interpersonal, transactional and instructional, among several others (Bush 2003, 33). In this section, attention will be given to three models: transformational, transactional and transformative leadership. In the frame of educational leadership some leadership theories appear particularly relevant for collegiality (Bush, 2006, 76-77). One of these is transformational leadership, first noticed by Burns (1978). According to Burns (*ibid.*), transforming leadership is a process "in which leaders and followers help each other to advance each other to a higher level of morale and motivation". Transformational leadership involves a committed relationship between the leader and his followers.

Bush (2006) refers to Leithwood (1994) and his conceptualization of transformational leadership as a collegial model in school leadership. From an organizational perspective, transformational leadership underlines the ability to develop a school vision, establish school goals and develop structures to foster participation in school decisions. These issues communicate with the leadership position. From a supportive and guiding perspective, transformational leadership provides intellectual stimulation, offers individualized support, models best practice and important organizational values, and demonstrates high performance expectations. These issues communicate with the leadership profession. Further, creating a productive school culture is an issue linked with transformational leadership, and this issue communicates both with the person, profession and position. According to Coles and Southworth (2005) the transformational model is characterized as a collaborative style with the intention of involving people in organizations in decisions that will increase the organization's capacity to respond to change.

Burns (1978) identified another concept of leadership named transactional leadership. While transformational leaders prioritize commitments from staff members in the organization by helping them to adjust their values to the values of the organization, transactional leaders work for the existing culture.

Miller and Miller (2001, 182) clarify transformational and transactional leadership as phenomena.

“Transactional leadership is leadership in which relationships with teachers are based upon an exchange for some valued resource. To the teacher, interaction between administrators and teachers is usually episodic, short-lived and limited to the exchanged transaction. Transformational leadership is more potent and complex and occurs when one or more teachers engage with others in such a way that administrators and teachers raise one another to higher levels of commitment and dedication, motivation and morality. Through the transforming process, the motives of the leader and follower emerge”.

A third leadership model in this group with a different theoretical intention is developed through the transformative theory. Shields (2010, 572), a representative of transformative leadership, formulate her definition.

“Transformative leadership, recognizes the need to begin with critical reflection and analysis and to move through enlightened understanding to action—action to redress wrongs and to ensure that all members of the organization are provided with as level a playing field as possible—not only with respect to access but also with regard to academic, social, and civic outcomes”.

Shields (2010, 564) argues that “transactional leadership involves a reciprocal transaction; transformational leadership focuses on improving organizational qualities, dimensions, and effectiveness; and transformative educational leadership begins by challenging inappropriate uses of power and privilege that create or perpetuate inequity and injustice.”

Table 2. Distinctions among the three theories of leadership (Shields, 2010, 563)

	Transactional Leadership	Transformational Leadership	Transformative Leadership
Starting Point	A desired agreement or item	Need for the organization to run smoothly and efficiently	Material realities & disparities outside the organization that impinge of the success of individuals, groups, & organization as a whole.
Foundation	An exchange	Meet the needs of complex & diverse systems	Critique & promise
Emphasis	Means	Organization	Deep & equitable change in social conditions
Processes	Immediate cooperation through mutual agreement and benefit	Understanding of organizational culture; setting directions, developing people, redesigning the organization, and managing the instructional program	Deconstruction and reconstruction of social/cultural knowledge frameworks that generate inequity acknowledgement of power, & privilege; dialectic between individual & social
Key values	Honesty, responsibility, fairness, and honoring commitments	Liberty, justice, equality	Liberation, emancipation, democracy, equity, justice
Goal	Agreement; mutual goal advancement	Organizational change; effectiveness	Individual, organizational, & societal transformation
Power	Mostly ignored	Inspirational	Positional, hegemonic, tool for oppression as well as for action
Leader	Ensures smooth and efficient organizational operation through transactions	Looks for motive, develops common purpose, focuses on organizational goals	Lives with tension, & challenge; requires moral courage, activism
Related theories	Bureaucratic leadership, Scientific management	School effectiveness, School reform. School improvement, Instructional leadership	Critical theories (race, gender), Cultural and social reproduction, Leadership for social justice

The transformational leadership model is comprehensive in that it involves a normative approach and emphasizes principally the process by which leaders influence school outcomes rather than the nature of directing those outcomes (Bush, 2003). It is characterized as a collegial model in that it assumes that leaders and staff have shared values and common interests.

Among a number of leadership-theoretic approaches that have a common aspiration to create change and to redefine meaning, charismatic leadership is by some researchers discussed and described as synonymous to transformational leadership (Northouse, 2004). Current theories of charismatic leadership have emphasized primarily the personality and behavior of leaders and their effects on followers, organizations, and society. Neo-charismatic leadership is grounded on Weber's original charismatic theory. Weber defined charismatic leaders as having "supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities" (Weber, 1978, 241). According to Angawi (2012,34) neo-charismatic leadership was one of the leadership models adapted for effective leadership in higher education in UK.

Individuals' personalities can be observed through their attitudes and behaviors and can reflect the lasting qualities that they possess. Personality is an important construct because it affects other crucial concepts in the field of organizational studies and human resource development (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Driskell, Hogan, Salas & Hoskin, 1994). Several attempts have been made to categorize leaders according to their instinctive characteristics and varying styles. Phipps and Prieto (2011) are discussing the influence of personality factors on transformational leadership. They are focusing on the link between personality characteristics and transformational leadership in order to describe how the leader engages and motivates the followers. Transformational leadership has been developed to include four central 'components', namely idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Bass, Avolio, Jung & Berson, 2003; Bass & Riggio, 2006). Personality related elements such as being a role model, encouraging enthusiasm, kindling creativity, and paying attention to individual needs can be recognized as contents in transformational leadership (Phipps and Prieto, 2011).

The transactional leadership model as defined by Bush (2003) is a leadership model aligned with micro-politics. In the definition by Miller and Miller (2001) above, the exchange process is underlined. Exchange is understood as a political strategy in organizations and is expressed through authority, power and rewards. Transactional leadership does not create long-term commitment to the values and visions encouraged by principals (Bush, 2003).

Shields (2010) argue that the term transformative emerged gradually during the 1990s, and that many writers used the terms transformational and transformative for a long time synonymously. A fundamental task of the educational leader in the transformative tradition is to ask questions, e.g. about the purposes of schooling, which ideas should be taught and who is successful (van Oord, 2013). Transformative ideals go back to Freire (1970, 1998), who used the term transformative to describe the changes that may occur as a result of education (Shields, 2010, 566). Further, Shields underlines:

“Transformative leadership, therefore, recognizes the need to begin with critical reflection and analysis and to move through enlightened understanding to action—action to redress wrongs and to ensure that all members of the organization are provided with as level a playing field as possible- not only with respect to access but also with regard to academic, social, and civic outcomes (572)”.

A comparison of transformational and transformative leadership according to Shields (2010) shows that the former has the most potential to work well when the organization and the society in which it is embedded are synchronous, and the latter take account of the ways in which the inequities of the outside world affect the outcomes of what occurs internally in educational organizations.

Gunter and Ribbins (2003) address another distinction according to the field of school leadership that is of interest in viewing theoretical considerations. In their field of research they have recognized so-called ‘knowledge provinces,’ and as their analysis is useful when processing how to understand school leadership, I have decided to include the survey of knowledge provinces in this part of my work (Table 3).

Table 3. ‘Knowledge provinces’ in the field of school leadership, according to Gunter and Ribbins (2003, 133).

Conceptual	Descriptive	Humanistic	Critical	Evaluative	Instrumental
Concerned with issues of ontology and epistemology, and with conceptual clarification.	Concerned with providing a factual report, often in some detail, of one or more aspects of, or factors, relating to leaders, leading and leadership.	Concerned with gathering and theorising from the experiences and biographies of those who are leaders and managers and those who are managed and led.	Concerned to reveal and emancipate practitioners from injustice and oppression of established power structures.	Concerned to measure the impact of leadership and its effectiveness at micro, meso, and macro levels of interaction.	Concerned with providing leaders and others with effective strategies and tactics to deliver organisational and system level goals.

In these ‘provinces’, a cooperation between theory and practice is essential. Differences occur according to the emphasis and the topics. Gunter and Ribbins argue that ‘understanding doing’ is the approach of the provinces on the left, and the approaches on the right investigate ‘types of doing’ (Schaffar, 2015, 49-50).

The complexity of sustainable leadership discussed by Wolff (2015) addresses challenges about ethical and ecological contents in the educational leadership arena. Wolff argues for an analysing structure that consists of human self-relations, mutual relations and ecological dimensions, and broadens the approach of sustainable leadership from Hargreaves and Fink (2005).

As an alternative to the models and theories in the previous orientation, this study is an attempt to take a step in the direction of a humanistic-hermeneutic interpretative theory. I approach leadership from a subject perspective and interpret the subject in relation to the school context and the frame of school culture.

2.1.2 Research on principalship in Finland

The following overview highlights examples of conclusions from academic dissertations in educational studies on the contents of principalship in Finnish comprehensive schools. Research subjects are close to my own research as presented in articles I-V. International comparison research about school leadership is a relatively new academic area in Finland. A noticeable increase of interest in research on school leadership can be observed in the 2000s, but doctoral dissertations on principals were rare in earlier years. Research on principalship in Finland has largely been conducted by persons who either have been or still are working as principals (Risku & Kanervio, 2011).

Risku and Kanervio (2011, 162-181) reviewed doctoral theses in Finland during 2000-2010. They found that these dissertations included a lot of valuable information about Finnish society, the educational system and theories about educational leadership. Change as a topic was in one way or another present in all dissertations studying the context of the principal. The other common foci on principalship were the work and identity of the principal. The method was usually descriptive. Risku and Kanervio (2011, 181) argue: “The dissertations portray principals as leaders who are working according to their contexts, have positive self-images, believe positively in what they do, and want to serve others.”

A general notion about school leadership research in Finland is that, according to major findings, the leadership position with emphasis on managing is prioritized (Alava, Halttunen & Risku, 2012). As national legislation does not define principals' duties in detail, and as local providers have very different contexts, there is substantial variation in the principals' job descriptions and this fact seemingly has been interesting to analyse. A majority of doctoral theses on principals (e.g. Ahonen 2008; Karikoski 2009; Lahtero 2011; Lehkonen 2009; Mustonen 2003; Mäkelä 2007; Pennanen 2006; Pesonen 2009; Raasumaa 2010; Vuohijoki 2006) concentrate on how the autonomy offered by principals' formal status is established in their work in practical terms. The research outcomes outline experiences of principalship as a profession according to management and education, and furthermore autonomous activities in the position.

When viewing the contents from dissertations about principals from the last fifteen years, and relating to my research questions, several answers or related outcomes can be noticed. Pennanen (2006) views leadership in comprehensive schools in its context, and the dissertation is named 'From modern towards trans-modern leading in basic education'. According to the researcher, leadership in basic education is societal as well as interactive, and social interpersonal action extends from the micro to the macro level. The content in my study II and research question 'What perceptions do principals have about leadership as a profession?' touches on this work.

'What principals really do' is the title of Mäkelä's (2007) dissertation. The study is an ethnographic case study clarifying the principal's task in 21st century comprehensive schools. Results from the research show that changes in the social environment have affected the principals' tasks, and developing relationships between the principal's school and partner schools in the surrounding society has been important. According to Mäkelä, principals are facing new domains in their work. Both theory and results in this dissertation address my questions about how professional leadership is performed (study I), and future challenges in principalship (study V).

Mustonen (2003) asks: 'Why do we need a principal?' His intention is to clarify the importance and realization of principals' duties, with a correlated viewpoint of school management in Holland and Germany. The results indicate that the administrative culture and the management of the schools are changing. Some of the principals have assimilated the role of a modern human-oriented director, whilst others continue to practice their work as usual through concentrated administrative duties in their offices. The teachers wish to have more support, changing opportunities and communication, not so much control and advice. Mustonen's conclusion is that: "on the one hand, the results are

expressing the variability of the principal's work, and on the other hand they express the contradictions between the daily work duties and expectations". My research (study IV) about teacher expectations of principals' leadership touches on similar topics to Mustonen's work.

Sandén's (2007) dissertation is named 'Desire and disillusion in school leadership: Head teachers and their work at a time of change'. This study captures the determinants and circumstances that increase and decrease a head teacher's incentive to lead and produce the desired results. Sandén stresses: "the emerging results support the view that self-efficacy is a useful tool for understanding leadership and that motivation is individually perceived." Despite the focus on the head teacher's (principal's) work, the personhood is touched in the discussion concerning incentive and self-efficacy. Sandén (2007, 6) states: "self-efficacy is a useful tool for understanding leadership." As essential topics here are focusing on the individual as the subject, relations to outcome discussed in my study II, and related research questions about self-knowledge, leadership profession and position touches on Sandén's work.

Raasumaa's dissertation (2010) is named 'Knowledge management functions of a principal in basic education' and focuses on the relation between the principal of a school and the teachers in basic education. Raasumaa's conclusion is that: "Principals in basic education should adopt an active knowledge management approach with respect to the teachers, directing their knowledge and learning in the spirit of broad-based pedagogical leadership (p. 3)." Analysing Raasumaa's research in the light of person, profession and position, the main emphasis is on the principal's profession and leadership conducted through pedagogical goals. Raasumaa broadens the leadership duties by raising the issue of responsibility for teachers' professional development as a topic for principals.

Paukkuri (2015) conducted a case study in four European schools in her dissertation 'How is the phenomenon of shared leadership understood in the theory and practice of school leadership?' The main aim of the research was to gain an understanding of the phenomenon of shared leadership in culturally different school contexts. Another aim was to find out how school leaders understand their part in sharing leadership. The most important finding of the research was that although a culture sets restrictions on implementing new models of leadership, new meanings of shared leadership could be reflected on and learned in collaboration with other schools. The attribute 'shared' communicates organizational issues, and comes close to position and profession in organizing schoolwork both from the point of view of pedagogy and management in order to involve teachers in school activities apart from just teaching classes. Paukkuri's work indicates options for future international

cooperation among school leaders, including challenges for both teachers and schools as whole organizations. The dissertation highlights principalship from the perspectives of the three categories: person, profession and position, and touches on the contents of my study V.

Two dissertations about leadership in various educational institutions in Finland, including vocational and adult education institutions, are worth mentioning. Ahonen (2008) investigated “Leadership and leader identity as narrated by headmasters”. Her conclusions are that engaging personnel in leadership discourse builds a collective view of leadership quality and encourages commitment to mutually set goals. Hänninen (2009) investigated “The elements of good in the field of vocational education and in principals’ work”. Hänninen (2009, 145-147) argues: “The main categories of leadership – responsibility and power – are a natural part of principals’ work, but they will form elements of good by choosing ethical and human manners to the actions inside the elements.” Both Ahonen (2008) and Hänninen (2009) report research outcomes that integrate aspects of the principal as an individual, being a person and identifying personality-related issues more distinctly than other Finnish researchers.

In analysing the results from the dissertations presented above in relation to the leadership components of person, profession and position, it is obvious that leadership activities according to position have the highest priority for principals (70%) and leading people occupies one third of the time. Very few comments focus on the principal as a person, but the expression human dignity (Mäkelä, 2007) is noteworthy.

2.2 School leadership – a multi-faceted research area

As shown by the overview in the previous section, the field of research about school leadership is difficult to perceive clearly or understand and explain precisely. Due to the multi-faceted approach, it is challenging and demanding to take part in developing the field. An important starting point would be to define what kind of knowledge the research should generate, as research is about conceptualizing a field through theoretical and empirical approaches.

In this regard I have accepted the definition that principals’ work is embedded in the knowledge provinces that Gunter and Ribbins (2003, 133) outline in table 3 above in section 2.1.1. I am clarifying the definition for my approach by adapting the overview of Gunter and Ribbins (2003) using negations of those areas that do not fall within the scope of this study, and acceptance of the two that define the study.

This study is not descriptive in the sense of being concerned with providing a factual report of one or more aspects of, or factors, relating to leaders, leading and leadership. This study is not instrumental, which means that it is not concerned with providing leaders and others with effective strategies and tactics to deliver organisational and system level goals. This study is not critical; it is not concerned with revealing and emancipating practitioners from injustice and the oppression of established power structures. Nor is this study evaluative: it is not concerned with measuring the impact of leadership and its effectiveness on the micro, meso and macro levels of interaction.

This study is *conceptual*; it is concerned with issues of ontology and epistemology, and with conceptual clarifications. This study is also humanistic. It is concerned with gathering and theorising from the experiences and biographies of those who are leaders and managers and those who are managed and led. In my research I identify the phenomena of person, profession and position, and how these express the person as an individual in his/her context. My perspective is in trying to understand the individual also from a professional perspective and how the individual interprets the context. As school leadership is a social mission, the professional perspective needs to be broadened to include the position.

In respect of research on school leadership, Salovaara (2011) argues for a redefinition of leadership. He aims to identify leadership as a social and organizational quality and not as the accomplishment of a single person. His research 'From leader-centricity to leadership', shows the importance of widening the methodological means for studying leadership. Ärlestig (2014) discusses whether research on school leadership should focus on the leader or the process. She presents a definition: "Leadership is a social process in which someone deliberately influences others in order to structure activities and circumstances in a group or organization" (my translation). In directing attention to this definition, one question is who is 'someone' and another is what are the nature of 'activities and circumstances' In analyzing this definition by Ärlestig (2014) in order to clarify 'someone' and 'activities and circumstances', the identified phenomena above assist understanding. Someone can be defined as the person, and activities and circumstances can be defined as belonging to the position.

Categories and Components

Further in this section I outline a two-step structure of three *categories* in principalship and the three assisting components with instrumental functions, and I discuss how they offer alternatives in interpreting various qualitative aspects in school leadership. With the assistance of these phenomena,

understanding principalship in its context can be outlined. As earlier leadership research to a large extent offers descriptions of what school leaders do, the perspectives I am introducing are closer to the principal as an individual person in the leadership position, practising his/her professionalism in an institutionalized setting.

The categories of person, profession and position are revealed as the contents in principalship, and they are clarified in this section. The structure of the categories is visually organized as three integrated circles (Figure 2). Each category is assumed to contain the three components, and through integrated processes assist in interpreting nuances in leadership outcomes (Figure 3).

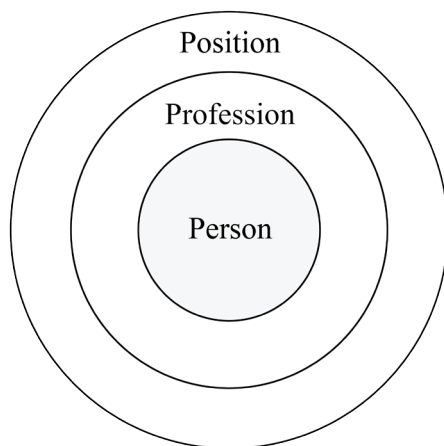


Figure 2. Categories in principalship

The phenomenological approach assisted in structuring the experiences of principalship in the dimensions of person, profession and position which were more explicitly investigated and addressed in articles I and II. Hermeneutic theory contributed in discovering an approach to identify how to structure the principals' interpretation of school leadership. From the point of view of experiences conducting a principal's way of being, behaving and developing leadership, the phenomenological approach opened perspectives about the leader as a person, leadership as a profession and leadership as a position. The categories are united, with person at the centre, supporting the intention that a principal as a person is the significant factor in school leadership. The three categories have to be included, as they represent principalship as a whole. The focus is on the school leader as a person, being the leader, and profession and position work as operative functions, operating the leadership.

When working with the empirical data from the research interviews, the need to find more instrumental expressions about the activities and details of school leadership as a process became obvious. The findings from social psychology (Ekehammar, 2007; Kaufmann and Kaufmann, 1996; Giddens, 1991; Seagal and Horne, 1987) were helpful to some extent in searching for concepts that would portray the underlying processes of school leadership in practice according to the categories.

The challenge was to be able to explain the details when searching for deeper knowledge about the person, profession and position. I had to choose a common expression illustrating the discoveries, and experienced that the term 'component' was the most descriptive in identifying these qualitative characteristics. The components were of three different kinds: identity, personality dynamic and self-realization, and the assumption were that each of the components might affect the person, profession and position in different ways. In order to organize the connections between categories (person, profession and position) and components (identity, the self expressed as self-realization, and personality dynamics), a structure (Figure 3) was created, and a description of the contents outlined.

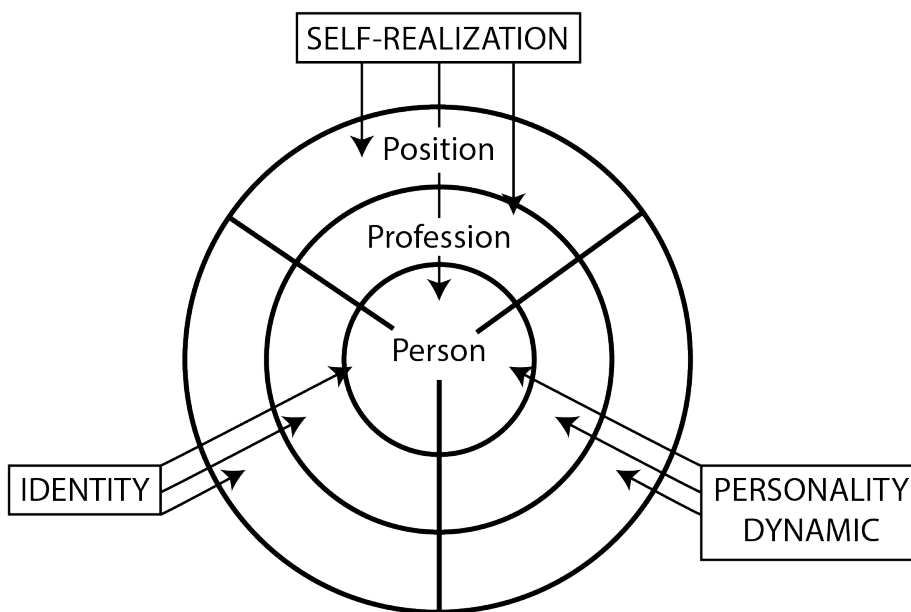


Figure 3. Integration of components in the categories person, profession and position

The contents in outcomes when integrating the components in categories are as follows:

In structuring processes according to ‘person’

- (a) Personality-related aspects appear as self-awareness
- (b) Self-realization appears as self-knowledge about how to behave
- (c) Identity appears as individual identity through personal identification

In structuring processes according to ‘profession’

- (a) Personality-related aspects appear as awareness about others
- (b) Self-realization appears as professional behavior
- (c) Identity appears as professional identity

In structuring processes according to ‘position’

- (a) Personality related aspects appear as awareness about interaction
- (b) Self-realization appears as fulfilling what is expected
- (c) Identity appears as identity in the position

To sum up

From an overall orientation of educational leadership, and a presentation of Finnish principal research, I have located this study in the area of conceptual-humanistic knowledge. As stated in the beginning of this section, the research field on school leadership is broad and multi-faceted in terms of leadership theories, including both educational and managerial issues. With the intention of being able to locate the principal in the contextual organisation and find out how the leadership mission is perceived, I have introduced the contents of principalship operationalized through *categories* (person, profession and position) and *components* (identity, personality dynamic and self-realization).

The connections among them are clarified in Figure 3. The ambition in the following sections is to introduce the theory of each category and emphasize the effects of the components as integrated in the categories.

2.2.1 Principal as a person (an individual)

The first category introduced is person. I am discussing person in the light of the three components (a) personality dynamic (b) self-realization and (c) identity.

The interest in analysing *personality dynamics* is derived from a curiosity to understand personal capacities in individuals, and how personality related attributes and relational interactions support principalship. This motive has been in the foreground in article II. In order to understand a person we need understanding about the personality as inner dynamics. Kaufmann and Kaufmann (2005, 116) refer to Norwegian researcher Schjelderup's definition of personality: "With personality we mean the more or less solid organized whole of an individual's characteristic way of reacting intellectually, emotionally and through external behaviour." How are personality-related attributes and relational interactions visible in principalship? As principalship is always assumed as relational in nature, understanding of human characteristics and the effects of dynamic interactions are important for principals to be aware of (Brüde Sundin, 2009). Relational interactions are "bricks" in all daily activities in schools, and these processes turn to be challenging situations for principals. In social processes, self-realization is affected by interaction with individuals and groups, and building up self-identity is part of the self-development process. From this point of view, communication appears as an essential dimension of and tool in principals' self-realization (Ärlestig, 2008; Hämäläinen & Sava, 1989). In every organization several group-processes and relational structures affecting the leader's self-development and self-realization can be identified, e.g. as structures in work procedures, in communication and interaction, according to power, and in norms and attitudes (Charpentier, 1979).

We can raise the following questions: Who is the individual behind the leadership role? What characteristics express desirable leadership qualities? How can self-development according to leadership be identified? Self-development as a research area is wide. In this study self-development refers to the individual development considered essential in school leadership. Fundamental subjects in processes concerning a principal's self-development consist of factors such as inner dynamics, personality traits and human relations (Tomlinson, 2004; Hollander, 1978; Parikh, 1991; Seagal & Horne, 1987/2004). Self-development is connected to the ability to understand oneself as an individual and improves the capacity to recognize the needs for development. Awareness of the need for self-development increases if the individual is able to identify specific development areas (Parikh, 1991).

Tomlinson (2004, 11) underlines that “Managing self-development starts with knowledge and in-depth insights into the five elements of your own inner dynamics, your body, mind, emotions, neurosensory system and states of consciousness.”

Hwang, Lundberg and Smedler (2012, 274-278) state that ‘The Self’ consists of at least three characteristics: (1) reflexive awareness, (2) interpersonal aspects, and (3) an executive function. Reflexive awareness means that a person is aware of and can reflect on him/herself. The self cannot be pointed out as a phenomenon, but can be recognized through solutions of own behavior. Interpersonal aspects mean strong or close associations between two or more people, and interpersonal relationships are formed and develop in social and cultural contexts. Executive functions help in managing daily life through ‘command and control’ functions, and they are important in order to achieve different goals. In this work, attention is given to how self-realization is communicated through behaviour.

According to Ekehammar (2012), a person as an individual wants to seek knowledge about him/herself for at least three reasons: out of curiosity, to confirm the self-image, and in seeking positive information about the self in order to strengthen it. Self-esteem is the most common expression according to the self. It is about an individual’s positive evaluation of him/herself. Self-esteem is the evaluative aspect of the reflexive self-awareness (Branson, 2010, 53)

How can self-development and self-realization according to principalship be recognized and developed? As behavior is the most obvious and visible part of the self, we make judgments about our self from the insight on how we behave – our physical capabilities (Branson 2010). The connection between self-concept as the most inner part of the self and behavior as the most visible part consists of a structured inner system of behavior-governing mechanisms of the self. The structure is graded from more invisible to visible elements: self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs, emotions, and behavior.

A diagrammatical structure of ‘The Self’ designed by Christopher Branson (2010) is introduced in this section, in Figure 4. The figure also supports further discussions about the self, integrated in profession and position, as discussed under separate headlines in the following sections. It is to be noticed that Branson uses the expression ‘components’ when presenting the constituents of the self. These ‘behaviour governing’ components should not be mixed with the integrated components discussed in general in this work. Personal development takes place as soon as one of the behavior-governing components is influenced. These motives and contents are discussed in

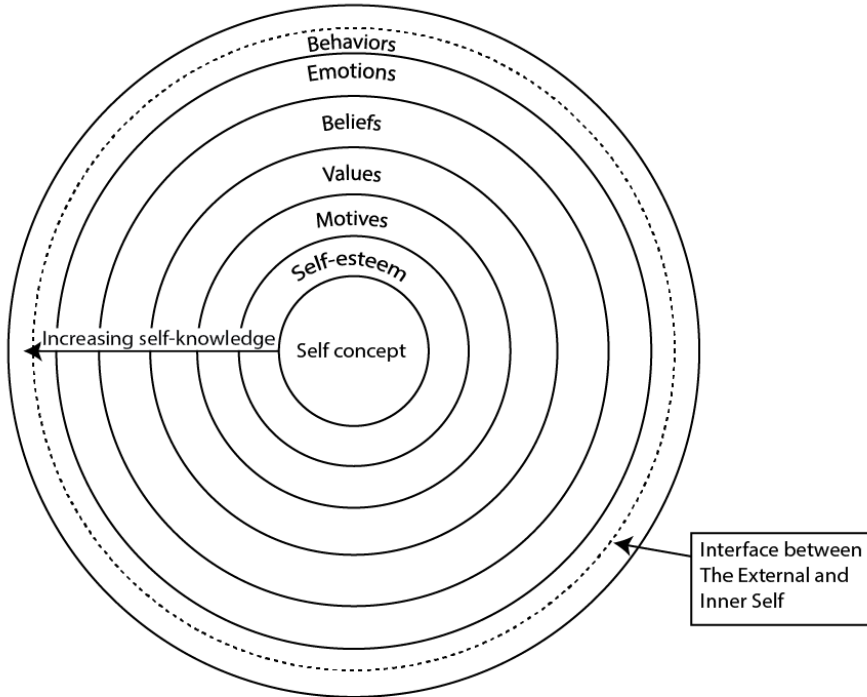


Figure 4. The various components of the self
 (Adapted from Branson, 2010, 51)

article I. As ‘the self’ is a very broad and deep phenomenon and can be interpreted differently from at least the psychological, physical, linguistical and philosophical perspectives, I have chosen to adapt the theory designed by Branson in analysis of the self in relation to the three categories, and concentrate the analysis on behavior as an outcome of self-realization. Thus, self-realization, identity and personality dynamics should be recognized

as supplementing each other in order to interpret nuances in leadership. To support understanding of self-realization, tables expressing questions for self-reflection according to person, profession and position are collected, starting with self-reflection for person, in Table 4.

Table 4. Examples of questions guiding individual self-reflection
(Branson, 2010, 60-61)

THE SELF	QUESTIONS FOR SELF-REFLECTION FOR PERSON
Self-Concept	What are my true feelings about this outcome?
Self-Esteem	Will this influence my thinking appropriately?
Motives	What is my primary motive in resolving this issue?
Values	Do I personally benefit in any way from a particular outcome?
Beliefs	What personal biases do I bring to this issue?
Emotions	What are my desires, hopes, or dreams about this issue? Are they realistic or idealistic? Why?
Behaviors	How have I dealt with similar issues in the past? What could I have done better?

Gronn (1999, 69) states that there is a developmental, biographical sense of ourselves as constantly becoming and as memory of having been. Reflection on how perceptions of ourselves correspond with our memories of ourselves is the foundation for how we create our *identities* as individuals – we identify us. With reference to Giddens (1991), identity as a phenomenon is not something given and constant, but a process operating on a holistic level as well as on underlying levels. Self-identity is constantly produced and reproduced and integrated in individual’s activities. Self-perception is considered to consist of personal and social identity (Lord, Brown & Freiberg, 1999). Personal identity is the way an individual identifies herself in relation to other individuals. In other words, identity is partly established by reflecting on how one’s memory of oneself corresponds to one’s perception of oneself. Yet, the perception of oneself is partly established by other people’s experiences of us as individuals. As a result, we can reflect on how our own self-perception relates to how other people perceive us. Memory also gives us access to remembering how other people perceived us before. The interpretation depends on how unique a person experiences herself to be. Social identity is about how a human defines herself when in interaction with others. Through social identity, self-perception is anchored in a wider reference (Ruohotie, 2005). An individual’s belief in his/her own personal capability and possibilities guides her goal setting and work performance. A principal’s identity is connected to the ability to recognize leadership as a personal issue, integrated in ‘myself as a person’.

Investigating the category ‘person’ according to the school principal as an individual actualizes character related factors. Being a principal affects personality linked activities of practicing leadership, and behavior is the expression of self-realization in different leadership situations. Being aware of contents and duties in leadership are outcomes of identity as a leader. According to Senge et al. (2004), being a leader means being human. The first step taken in principalship is to touch the level of self-understanding.

2.2.2 Principalship as a profession

The second category introduced is profession. I start with an overall orientation about profession as a sociological concept and ‘professionalism’ as a statement of competence and qualifications, and further discussion will be about the contents in the principal’s profession according to the three components (a) personality dynamics, (b) self-realization and (c) identity.

Definitions of *profession* are not all the time clearly revealed in research findings. It may be because it is easy to confuse profession and professionalism. What is a profession? With reference to Siegrist, (2002) and Torstendahl (1990), Brante (2013, 4) states a definition: “Profession is a knowledge-based occupation, where knowledge is abstract, systematic, and often esoteric” Sullivan (2000, 673) stresses that “the professions have never been more important to the well-being of society. Professional knowledge and expertise are at the core of contemporary society”. Wermke (2013) studied teachers’ professional development. He argues for a broader definition of profession than Brante (2009), who in his early study addressed teachers as semi-professionals. Wermke refers to Evetts’ (2003, 397) argument about professions:

“Professions are essentially the knowledge based category of occupations which usually follow a period of tertiary education and vocational training and experience. A different way of categorizing these occupations is to see professions as the structural, occupational and institutional arrangements for dealing with work associated with the uncertainties of modern lives in risk societies. Professionals are extensively engaged in dealing with risk, with risk assessment and, through the use of expert knowledge, enabling customers and clients to deal with uncertainty”.

In this study, ‘profession’ is referred to as a sociological concept. Important elements in a profession are the ability to handle relationships and to use communication as a leadership tool. According to Brante (2013, 4),

“Professions are science based and the term science based signifies that practices are built upon and adhere to scientifically established principles and findings.” A profession has to include activities based on scientific research and members of a profession share a feeling of identity, common values and have a common language (Brante, 2011). Ekholm (2004) states that one approach for analysing the grade of professionalism in a profession could be to look at the phenomenon through sociological lenses. Ekholm points out five factors relevant for identifying professionalism: basic knowledge of the profession, responsibility for developing the profession, agreements on professional ethics, control over rights to practice the profession, and the level of autonomy in practicing the profession (2004). According to Englund (2004), autonomy is the most important criterion when searching for definitions about professionalism. Principals as well as teachers experience their professionalism more strongly the more autonomously they are allowed to practice their work. Related to previous research about professions, a definition of the phenomenon could be operationalized as follows: profession includes activities based on scientific research, aspects of ethics and autonomy, and responsibility to develop the profession. As related to educational leadership, professionalism is identified as relational and communicative, and demands the ability to handle complex situations (Brante, 2009). Brante’s statement can be seen as universal and applying to all professions.

Brante (2013, 2) argues that a “Professional landscape, a macro-sociological concept, purports to capture the professional layer in its entirety and place it in a larger societal context”. Applying this metaphoric statement on education, we might look at a school as a professional landscape capturing professional layers, i.e. teachers and principal, and identify them as educational professionals in a societal context.

When investigating capacities in terms of *personality dynamic* according to principalship as a profession, a profound orientation in personal abilities will further our understanding. These issues are presented in article I. The nature of personality dynamics and knowledge about how the three universal principles - mental, physical and emotional – operate, provides useful knowledge according to the principals’ profession. The following summary of personality dynamics and outcomes according to their capacities as adapted to principalship (Seagal & Horne, 1997/2004, 45-55) is also listed in article I. A certain personality dynamic is developed through interplay between two of the principles and their capacities can be outlined as follows:

“The mental-physical dynamic has capacities to determine and maintain long-range vision for self, others and groups, to perceive and articulate guiding values and principles to create structures to be objective and detached while maintaining qualitative relationships with others.

The emotional-mental dynamic has capacities to move events forward, to sense the emergent directions and new possibilities in events, individuals, and groups, to participate in helping to build new forms with others, to deeply understand that nothing of real value can be created and sustained without collaborative effort.

The emotional-physical dynamic has capacities to create and maintain harmonious connections (relationships) with others, to intuitively understand others' specific needs, to personally feel the joy and pain of others, to live the full range from personal empathy to detachment.

The physical-emotional dynamic has capacities to experience that everything is at once a part-within a-whole and also itself a whole, to respect, understand and utilize the laws of nature, to detach from the material world and gain perspective on one's collected data. This perspective results in the creation of realizable vision.

The physical-mental dynamic has capacities to perceive patterns in the complex interplay of events, to create and implement strategic and systemic models, to link the objective data of things with the subjective data of people.”

As capacities according to personality dynamics are identified and expressed by researchers connected to the psychological tradition, a comparative outlook to the field of management might enrich the knowledge of leadership as profession. Kouzes and Posner (2007, 28-30) conducted research and asked an open-ended question: “What values, personal traits, or characteristics do you look for and admire in a leader?” The majority of constituents stated that the leader must be honest, forward-looking, inspiring and competent. Kouzes and Posner (2007, 35) found that three of these characteristics could be identified as ‘source credibility’ according to communications experts. When investigating admired leadership qualities, “credibility arises as the foundation of leadership” (36).

The effects of personality related characteristics could be viewed from several perspectives, e.g. values, norms, school as a community, and socially located dimensions, among several others (Crow, Day & Møller, 2016). Leo (2010) investigated whether any special professional norms exist with regard to principals' leadership as practiced in Swedish schools. Most of the research outcomes answered the question ‘how should principals practice the profession’ and expressed norms, values and personality related qualities in the profession.

According to Branson (2010), a self-reflection process is practiced through a series of questions asked of oneself related to a particular context. Self-reflection according to profession might use questions as created in Table 5:

Table 5. Examples of questions guiding self-reflection in profession. (Branson, 2010, 60-61)

THE SELF	QUESTIONS FOR SELF-REFLECTION IN PROFESSION
Self-Concept	What outcome is the most worrying for me? Why?
Self-Esteem	What strengths or previous knowledge do I bring to this issue?
Motives	Are my actions reflecting a commitment to self-control?
Values	Which values or principles do I want to guide my decisions?
Beliefs	What is my regular outlook towards those who will benefit most or be adversely affected by each possible outcome?
Emotions	Am I aware of my emotions in relation to this issue? What does this tell about my involvement in this issue?
Behaviors	How can the outcome be implemented in the most ethical, respectful and empathic way?

Principalship as a profession consists of several dimensions according to influences of *identity* in practical circumstances. Crow, Day and Møller (2016) suggest that the connection of identity with practice has both individual and collective dimensions. Researchers are interested in discovering how principals themselves construct their identities and how they interpret experiences and make their meanings explicit. Identity can be categorized from several starting points. Stryker and Burke (2000) outline three types of identity, namely role identity, social identity and person identity. Role identity is expressed in social categories, e.g. principal-teacher, woman-man, etc. Social identity is about the connections to different social groups, e.g. a principal is also an employee according to the educational provider. Individual identity is expressed in character traits, e.g. being stubborn, having a lively temper, being kind, etc. Burke and Stets (2009) also identify role identity that they define as ‘the internalized meanings of a role that individuals apply to themselves’ (p. 114).

What elements or circumstances affect a principal’s professional identity? The educational context on a macro level is framed by educational policy. On the micro level the school as a community and social interactions among all humans involved in the environment affect a principal’s immediate engagement. A principal’s professional identity exists and emerges through multi-faceted dynamic interactions in the educational environment (Burke & Stets, 2009; Crow, Day & Møller, 2016).

2.2.3 Principalship as a position

The third category introduced is the position of school principal. In this section I will follow the established structure of (a) personality dynamics, (b) self-realization and (c) identity, as lenses for discussing principalship in relation to the position. According to the position as principal, the personality is expressed through the ability to recognize capacity and develop energy among staff; the self is being aware of and being able to fulfil responsibilities related to pedagogy and management in the school, and through identity in the position, the principal acts as leader in the organizational culture.

Starting with the personality of principals as related to their position, we ask: are there essential leadership abilities according to *personality dynamic* in the position? A main aspect is that this interaction is about relations and communication. Although these issues are integrated in all interactions among the dimensions and components, ‘personality’ in the position is profoundly in need of outcomes relayed through relations and communication.

Ladkin (2010, 56) poses the question: what is going on in the relationship between ‘leaders’ and ‘followers’? As a basis for the analysis she chooses two contemporary theories: leader-member exchange (Gerstner and Day; 1997; Graen et al., 1982; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) and leadership as relationship (Uhl-Bien, 2006). The research question according to the leadership-relationship is ‘How might it be possible to perceive invisible space operating between leaders and followers’? In the next section (2.2.5) attention will be paid to relations named intra-individual and inter-individual relational processes.

The relational aspect is present in most of the activities of principals. Encountering processes are countless during a working day in a leadership position. With reference to the question addressed by Ladkin (2010) above, the relationship between principal and staff members, principal and students, and principal and people outside the school can be characterized as inter-individual relations. A principal operates leadership through interaction and communication. Awareness of the importance of communication will assist in dialogues and discussions, but furthermore, communication can be addressed as the most important leadership instrument because interaction among human beings is the tool for doing, acting and learning.

A principal operates the leadership role through the legal position in interaction with, e.g. stakeholders, supervisors, colleagues, parents, teachers and students. Awareness of personality dynamics in the principal’s position is

visible and obvious. From a relational point of view, aspects of principalship are social constructions created by colleagues, students and other individuals interacting with the school (Juuti, 2013).

As showed in Figure 4 (above) *self-realization* consists of various elements describing the internal qualities of an individual. According to Branson (2010), the qualities can be organized stepwise, increasing from hidden qualities to visible actions, starting from self-concept and ending up in self-realization expressed through behavior. Knowledge about the various elements embedded in self-realization might strengthen the principal and develop confidence when working with leadership topics.

In principalship the structure of identity according to the position is about being able to identify with the role of a leader. Burke and Stets (2009) argue that identities referring to groups or roles have cognitive, behavioral and emotional outcomes. Identity in a leadership position can be observed from two aspects. One aspect is through identification with an organization by being in a position there, e.g. being a school leader. The other aspect is through acting as member of a social category, e.g. being part of a group of educational professionals (Burke & Stets, 2009). Awareness of identity in an occupation supports the motivation to take on a certain position, and in the position identity emerges. Self-reflection according to position might use questions as created in Table 6:

Table 6. Examples of questions guiding self-reflection in leadership position (Branson, 2010, 60-61)

THE SELF	QUESTIONS FOR SELF-REFLECTION IN POSITION
Self-Concept	What is the source of these feelings?
Self-Esteem	What weaknesses or lack of knowledge do I bring to this issue?
Motives	What outcome do I prefer or dislike? Why?
Values	Is my thinking and acting free from self-interest, self-deception and impulsiveness?
Beliefs	Is my thinking and acting more influenced by personal beliefs rather than unbiased assessment of the knowledge gained from each of the other ethical perspectives?
Emotions	What does my body language tell me about my true convictions?
Behaviors	Will the implementation of the intended outcome reflect all of the values and principles that I want guiding my decision process?

Ahonen (2008) investigated the leadership identity of principals as told by headmasters. She claims that leadership identity among principals in Finland might remain underdeveloped due to the double roles that principals have to fulfil, both as principals and teachers. The formation of identity is a process where a person integrates personal identification, genetic ability and social role (Erikson, 1994).

From the perspective of position as a principal the question of how to balance managerial and educational leadership when practicing school leadership can be recalled. The twofold position of being a manager and an educational leader affects identity and might even cause conflicts in identity, e.g. when a principal in the manager role has to be strict with the budget, but in the role of an educational leader has ambitions to initiate educational projects. The leadership position offers the holder the power of solutions according to the school organization grounded on legality. Being the “owner” (being appointed to a position) of a profession such as principalship will strengthen and develop the leadership identity. If an organization is stable and exists in a solid society, the position will be good enough as the context for leadership. On the other hand, in a changing and unpredictable society controlled by certain aims, legality is not enough and the leadership position needs to be completed by personal credibility or legitimacy (Stålhammar 1991).

2.2.4 Summary of the integration of components in categories

When synthesizing the contents in the three categories of person, profession and position, it can be concluded that each category consists of a variety of functions, as each of them is multifaceted and comprises several perspectives characterized by the personality dynamic, self-realization as identification of the leadership role and how to realize it.

Applying the three components as integrated in the categories of leadership develops expressions illuminating principals’ abilities, actions and awareness in different situations. In one respect, the focus is on the leader as an individual; on the other hand, the outcomes are visible as relations between leaders and followers, and in that sense this specific sense of leadership is in this study characterized as relational. Uhl-Bien (2006, 671) suggests understanding leadership as relationship. She argues that “we need to pay attention to the space between leaders and followers”, and focuses our attention on the invisible ‘place’ where leadership actually occurs (Ladkin, 2010, 56-57).

Analysing school leadership through phenomenological lenses as addressed by Ladkin (2010) offered a concept that proved to be useful in discovering some of the fields of leadership. Through the integrated operative process between categories and components in school leadership it becomes possible to extend knowledge about understanding principals and school leadership. Through progress in awareness of the dynamic interactions in individuals and outcomes from everyday activities and pedagogical meetings between leaders and followers, an increased understanding can be achieved. Another, and more visible, effect is related to the relation between the school leader and staff members and students in the school. It is possible in this sense to establish the ‘relational dynamic’, as stated by Uhl-Bien (2006), through communication, interaction and a culture of confidence. Relational approaches are thereby identified through two functions: (1) relations among inner human capacities, as intra-relational processes, and (2) relations among individuals as inter-relational processes. Conclusions of relational outcomes in principalship through integration of components in the categories of person, profession and position are illustrated in Figure 5.

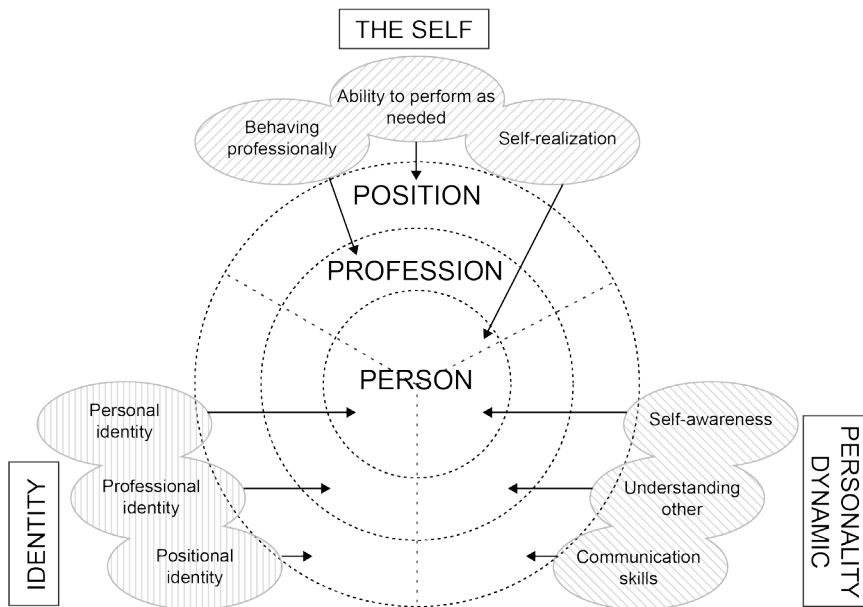


Figure 5. Relational outcomes in principalship through integration of components in the categories of person, profession and position

2.2.5 Intra-individual and inter-individual relationality

Several researchers have discussed aspects about the so-called relational dimensions of leadership. Among a number of other researchers, Hollander (1979), Uhl-Bien (2006) and Branson (2010) have argued about relational processes between leaders and followers. The definition of ‘relational’ is different among researchers: social, educational, individual, and organizational levels are among those affected by relational activities. The challenge in creating a unified definition is articulated by Uhl-Bien (2006, 667). She argues that it is to discover “the most fundamental, but least understood aspects of leadership: the relational dynamics of leadership and organizing”. She explains relationships as “interpersonal relationships and outcomes of or as contexts for interaction” and relational dynamics as “social interactions and social constructions.”

Uhl-Bien highlights different perspectives to clarify relational leadership, but underlines that she is not articulating a theory, but “an overarching framework for a variety of methods, approaches, and even ontologies that explore the relational dynamics of leadership and organizing” (2006, 670). Uhl-Bien (2006, 665) argues that the framework aims at rethinking the social influence process in leadership, and she argues that ‘relational leadership’ is a relatively new term in the leadership literature, and because of this, its meaning is open to interpretation. In order to clarify what a relational perspective is, we can look at what it is not. Uhl-Bien (2006, 665) differentiates between two perspectives of leadership:

An entity perspective that focuses on identifying attributes of individuals as they engage in interpersonal relationships, and a relational perspective that views leadership as a process of social construction through which certain understandings of leadership come about and are given privileged ontology. A block quotation like this would not need quotation marks

The ‘entity’ view focuses on individuals and their perceptions, intentions, behaviors, personalities, expectations and evaluations relative to their relationships with one another (e.g. Hollander, 1978; Lord et al., 1999). Meindl (1995) draws attention to the present “over-reliance on ideals of individualistic leadership models” and argues that it is flawed. He argues: “We need to examine the relationships involved to fully appreciate the leadership dynamic.”

Hosking (2006) claims that a ‘relational’ orientation starts with processes, and views persons, leadership and other relational realities as made in processes. Furthermore, Hosking, arguing against an entity perspective, addresses that a relational orientation does not focus on identifying the attributes of individuals involved in leadership behaviors or exchanges, but rather on the social construction processes by which certain understandings of leadership come about and are given privileged ontology. Hosking (2006) identifies relations as social processes by which certain understandings of leadership come about.

To understand the purpose of relations in an educational context, awareness of societal, social and intrapersonal conditions need to be considered (Aspelin & Persson, 2011). Societal settings are institutions, systems and organizations; social environments are groups, roles and meetings; and intrapersonal attributes are thoughts, feelings, motives and intentions. The focal points in education and in school leadership are relations between people in different meeting situations. Further, Aspelin (2010) discusses teachers’ relational competences, and underlines that they include different kinds of relationships, but primarily are about teachers’ relationships with individual students. Relational competence also has a personal dimension: it is about understanding oneself in relation to the student. Adapting Aspelin’s thoughts about relational competences to the relation between principal and teachers, it could be argued that the principal has to understand him/herself in relation to the teacher.

How ‘relational’ is defined in this study

As pointed out above, Uhl-Bien (2006) argues for two perspectives on leadership: an entity perspective and a relational perspective. In this work, a combination of these is made. The help of two concepts reflecting an intra-individual and an inter-individual perspective further defines relationality.

The intra-individual perspective: Entity refers here to person, profession and position. The intra-individual perspective refers to the individual’s self-reflection on the entities and the relations between these, i.e. reflection about one’s position, person and professionalism and how these are interrelated in one’s own life (person A and person B in Figure 3). For example, an individual can discover his/her self-concept and self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs and emotions through intra-relational processes between I and Me (1). Further, the intra-relational processes consist of relations between the person and profession (2), person and position (3) and person, profession and position (4).

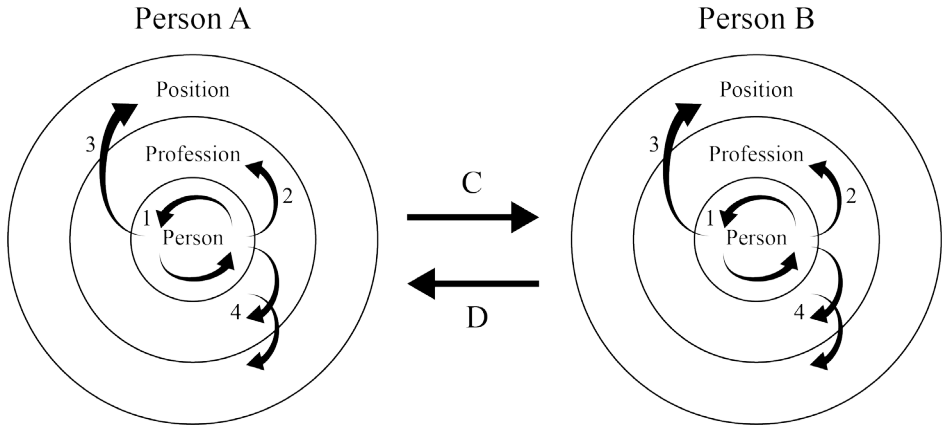


Figure 6. Intra-individual relations in person A and person B (1-4).
 C = Inter-individual relations between A (subject) and B (object)
 D = Inter-individual relations between B (subject) and A (object)

The interpersonal perspective is about relations between two or more individuals, and they consist of activities related to person, profession and position; all included, two at a time, or one at a time. The person (A or B) as subject might develop inter-individual relations with another object individual as a person, to the object person's profession, or related to the object person's position. The inter-individual relational process according to the object person might also include two of the categories, or all three, and relations between person profession and position. We cannot be sure of how active the intra-individual relational processes are in person A or person B when they act as subject.

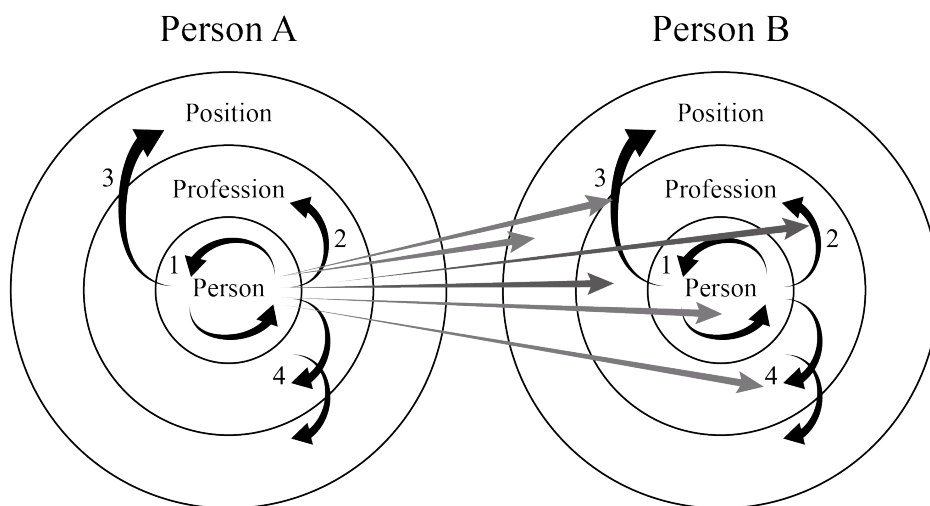


Figure 7. Interpersonal relations between person A (subject) and person B (object)
 Person A focuses on person B's person, profession, and position separately and on relations between them
 Converse relations occur when B is the subject and A is the object

The interest from my perspective as a researcher is to recognize relational issues according to the categories of person, profession and position as assisting in understanding leadership in the school organization. In the school context, a part of professionalism is about educational relationships. Educational leadership can be identified as outcomes of positional and professional relations. In a school organization the principal's leadership position is relational. External demands and expectations from providers and internal expectations from colleagues create internal and external relations according to the position. The leadership mandate is outlined through the institutional mission, and social influences develop through relations and interactions. The principal's practice in leading the school from the positional perspective contains a number of interpersonal relational duties and issues affecting both individuals and groups. Whatever the principal does, he/she is immediately involved in interpersonal relationships. At the same time, intra-individual relational processes operate in each individual. To be aware of these processes is about developing relational competence and being able to promote pedagogically rewarding relationships.

2.3 School culture and school leadership in Finland – policy aspects

To understand principalship is a challenging process and requires the ability to identify the principal as a leader, recognize leadership as a profession and contextual contents. By viewing the contextual frames for principalship, namely school culture and targets in educational policy, the outer ‘landscape’ for practicing school leadership can be outlined. Cultural influences derived from the community evolve in response to social trends and manifest themselves as expectations for school leaders. Begley (2006, 31-32) has portrayed the social circumstances in school leadership in terms of multiple arenas of leadership practice and the relationships between these arenas as an onion figure, with the self in the middle framed by circles consisting of group, profession, organization, culture and transcendental notions, i.e. God, faith, spirituality and extra-sensory perception. Begley (2006, 32) argues: “ These arenas can be thought of as the school leader’s source of personal, professional and social values, as well as a source of many of the conflicts encountered in a professional role.”

School culture has been compared to a screen or a lens mirroring the framework for school activities. Each school has a different reality or mind-set of school life, often captured in the simple phrase “the way we do things around here” (Stoll, 1998, 9). The expression school culture is broad and contextual. It is a frequently used notion describing the complexity in the school as an institution. Social scientists have identified some elements common to all kinds of cultures. These elements include language, knowledge, technology and arts (Bjorkquist, 2005). Paukkuri (2015) maintains that school cultures are mixed combinations of historical and cultural aspects intertwined with individual solutions. As discussed in articles I, II and IV, relational aspects affect leadership and are visible in school culture.

School culture as a phenomenon has profound roots. According to Jerald (2006), sociologists recognized the importance of school culture as early as the 1930s, but it was not until the late 1970s that educational researchers began to draw direct links between the quality of a school’s climate and its educational outcomes. Berg (1995) made visible how the school culture in compulsory schools was designed by invisible habits and unnamed agreements. School culture is frequently used as a collective expression to describe the values, norms and rules agreed on by members in the school organization.

A school is a complex organization, and inside processes in schools are intertwined by structures, culture and human interactions. The organizational culture in schools is an elusive expression (Berg, 2011). Researchers have tried to find a relevant definition of this phenomenon (Hofstede, 2001; Das, 2008). School culture can be outlined as the guiding beliefs and values evident in the way a school operates (Fullan, 2007).

Schein (2010, 9) considers the basic essence of an organization's culture:

“ If we understand culture better, we will understand ourselves better and recognize some of the forces acting within us that define who we are. We will then understand that our personality and character reflect the groups that socialized us and the groups with which we identify and to which we want to belong. Culture is not only all around us but within us as well. ”

Ekholm (2004) discusses the spirit of the school; Lortie (1975) uses the word ethos; Sarason (1971) describes school culture as different regularities, and Arfwedson and Lundman (1984) use the expression school codes. Micro-politics in schools (Hoyle, 1986; Ball, 1987; Salo, 2002) is a phenomenon connected to norms in the school culture.

The concept of school culture has lately taken on a more organized and visible approach for compulsory schools in Finland. The Core Curriculum, 2016 stresses that the school has to practice principles connected to learning organization theory (as a synonym the curriculum also uses the expression 'learning community'). Outcomes of the learning organization are to be practiced as cooperation, communication, future orientation, and responsibility, comfort, developing identity, interaction and multi-working methods. School culture perceived as hidden areas is challenged to develop more visible activities and to verbalize norms, values and basic assumptions. To put the learning organization principles into practice is a new challenge in principalship, and accompanying guidance can be discovered from developed theories about 'the learning organization' (Albinsson, 1998; Senge, 1998).

Hermeneutic research emphasizes that meaning is partly established by defining the relation between a "text" and its context. Results from empirical research may be supported by interpreting these in relation to the cultural and historical context from which they stem or what they represent to be able to understand both parts and the whole context. For these reasons, I will in the following provide an orientation about the context regarding the milestones in national educational policy in Finland, These policy decisions have historically influenced the principal's position and profession, and are connected to a period of time when governance resolutions have entered into force by transfer processes from central governing institutions to municipalities and schools.

The school culture deserves attention because it offers such a challenging atmosphere of rules, pedagogics, communication, values and beliefs, and the principal as the leader has constantly to deal with the culture. I will also note the contents in principalship operationalized through categories and components because they are the core focus in modelling principals' leadership.

How the role and position of school leader has developed during recent decades is influenced by the general development in educational policy. To find the roots of Finnish national school history and organizational development, we have to go back centuries in time. Notions about leading a school under the title 'rector' can be found already back in the Middle Ages and in the first Cathedral Schools, founded in Sweden (Finland included) under pressure from the Catholic establishment in Rome (Ullman, 1997). The title of the person in charge of different types of schools from the 1500s to the 1900s varies from 'head' and 'rector' to 'director', and dilemmas related to gender about how to name a school leader can be found during over time (Ullman, 1997).

From the beginning of the 19th century the social development in society needed restructuring measures according to school systems in different countries. Establishing grammar schools was one step in order to raise the educational level of the human population. To lead the educational reform work, schools needed managerial leaders more than academic ones. The title 'rector' in Swedish and Finnish grammar schools became established, and in the public elementary school (folkskola) the title 'school leader' was more common. After compulsory school reform in Finland in the 1970s the term 'principal' (in Finnish rehtori/in Swedish rektor) as the title of the head of the school was established, both from the government and academic (teachers and principals) union. As Ullman (1997, 298) underlines, "there is a symbolic value and a social distinction" in the usage of the title 'rector' in both Finnish and Swedish languages today. We can note that the title is in use for heads on every school level.

The context for this study is compulsory education. Notable about full time principals' eligibility requirements are that they must have a Master's Degree and teacher qualification. Additional studies in educational leadership and management are also mandatory. The principal's position as the school leader is indisputable. The legality of the position is secured through the Legislation Act that states that 'The principal is in charge in leading the school' (628/1998). The Legislation Act does not, however, give any directions about how to lead. The open statement indicates free choices, but as all educational activities in the school are guided by the curriculum, it also has to be the guiding document for the principal. The national educational philosophy

indicates trust and autonomy as approaches related to the leadership position. Principals can act as autonomous leaders, and the authorities trust their decisions and activities. Thus, the question of trust has a dual character according to internal and external aspects. The position does not, however, automatically generate internal trust from members in the staff. A position in itself does not create trust and credibility, but offers opportunities to build a platform where sustainable elements lend credibility (Stålhammar, 1991).

According to compulsory education (grade 1-9) in Finland, some milestones affecting school leadership should be given attention since several changes in educational policy at the school level during recent decades are affecting the principals' work. The first milestone in this overview relates to compulsory schooling as a nine-year education provided for the whole age group that started in the mid-1970s. In 1978 a big step in leadership professionalization was taken when changes in administration concerning school leaders' employment was made: the providers transferred the employment relationship of school leaders in large compulsory schools and in upper secondary schools to full time professional principals. This process marks the following milestone and changed the legitimacy in leadership profession from leading by trust to leading by legality (Isosomppi 1996; Mustonen, 2003; Pennanen, 2006). A principal's position and core duties have varied during the decades depending on structures, resources and prevailing ideologies in society. The school law from the year 1983 confirmed the changes in principalship and emphasized pedagogical leadership (Uljens & Nyman, 2013). Full time principals could be recruited to larger comprehensive and upper secondary schools from 1978 and deregulation processes relating to school administration started in the same year, giving principals more management duties. Several duties related to administration conducted by central governance were delegated to the local level (Hansén, 1997). The national movement from management by objectives and rules to the professionalization and academization of leadership and teaching continued for several years starting from the 1980s.

Transformations in school leadership decrees during the years 1970 – 1991 about details in leadership (Act 443/1970; 290/1978; 718/1984; 171/1991) to the present general statement (Act 628/ 1998) are obvious. The former catalogue (e.g. from 1978) of principals' duties was long and detailed, consisting of seventeen themes. The duties were both educational and managerial in character, but it is notable that the specific expression 'educational leadership' was not used. The main recognized areas in leadership were management and supervising, and on the other hand in ensuring that daily issues concerning staff, students and the physical environment were in order. A summary of contents according to educational aspects as signed in the Decree (718/1984) about school leadership in compulsory education stated:

The school head's duty is to lead, supervise and oversee teaching, fostering and other activities in the school, to observe and supervise teachers' classroom work, and to participate in training programs arranged for school leaders.

When discussing and analysing educational leadership, issues about the leader are also worth bearing in mind, as national steering documents and regulation about how to become a principal differ. Furthermore, differences according to educational providers cause different challenges for school principals. Whereas in Finland every principal has to have a Master's degree plus teacher competence and an academic leadership qualification before applying for the job, in Sweden, principals are expected to have educational experience and participate in the national leadership-training program after being elected to a principals' position. These realities lead to basic differences, e.g. when it comes to contents in training programs for principals. School leadership training programs as practiced in Sweden and Norway, address five "focal points" in the heuristic tool that shows particular contents in effective leadership learning. The focal points in the principal's training program, according to Aas & Törnsén (2016), are: pedagogy, people, place, system and self. These topics seem to be quite general, but are used to identify which knowledge themes and issues are seen as most relevant for school leaders. As Finnish principals through their basic education already have a broad background in management and education, their further education is focusing on wider and extensive items in developing quality in leadership (Alava, Halttunen & Risku, 2012).

Position-related duties within the leadership consisted of preparing the year plan for school activities, including teachers' weekly teaching lessons for the board of trustees to decide and approve. This annual activity plan is still in use, and the principal, in cooperation with teachers, prepares it as an important educational guide, but furthermore as the document on the basis of which teacher salaries are paid. Several other listed responsibilities related to the school buildings, cleaning and heating, students' holidays, school inventory and material were mentioned in the decree from 1984.

Through recent decades the contents in school leadership have undergone changes from job descriptions and centralized required duties to open statements. The official status of school leadership is stipulated for each municipality and education provider by codes and ordinances. In the National Legislation Act (628/1998) a principal's tasks are described very broadly with a general statement that each school shall have a principal who is responsible for operating the school. In practice, this undefined statement has caused several new contents in school leadership. As the head, the principal is overall

responsible for operating the school, which involves managing both education and administration. The position of the curriculum for Finnish principals is integrated in the pedagogy in practice. As the curriculum is a national decree, the principals' responsibility is to develop a good orientation towards the contents in the curriculum, and to assist teachers in the interpretation of general goals and support their subject teaching. Ahonen (2001) argues that school leadership in practice has to consider changes in society and future oriented challenges, not only operating from the viewpoint of one's own school. Confidence as a phenomenon related to policy and administration is a core ideology in the Finnish educational policy of today, and brought into actual visible practice in the curriculum reform process that has gone on in recent years from 2012-2016 (Uljens, Wolff & Frontini, 2016).

International educational reform strategies are noticed, but not applied by Finnish educators. Sahlberg (2011, xv) cites international change advisor Michael Fullan (2010) who underlines that reforms built on measures, systems of competitive rewards and badly flawed models of management will end in failure. Fullan claims that strategies that pay little or no attention to developing the capacity of leaders and teachers to improve together or as a system are based on a failed theory. Finland has managed to follow its own reform line and not follow global trends (Hargreaves, 2011; Sahlberg, 2011). Sahlberg (2011) argues that some of the explanations why Finland has managed to stay on its own chosen course is the large amount of autonomy that schools enjoy: little interference by the central education administration in schools' everyday lives, systematic methods for addressing problems in the lives of students, and targeted professional help for those in need.

3 Conducting the study

In this chapter the methodological considerations and the processes applied in the thesis will be outlined. I will describe how the data collections and analysis of empirical data have been realized in connection with the five original studies I-V and reflect on ethical considerations and trustworthiness.

3.1 Methodological approach

Understanding is a fundamental condition in research about human life and existence. Investigating the human reality will open up possibilities to understand experiences, emotions, meanings and relationships that occur between them (Rauhala, 1983). My view of principals as individuals and principalship as a profession constitutes the ontology.

For the researcher, it is important to be able to understand the experiences addressed by the informants, and how to interpret the meanings of their experiences. In being oriented towards the informant's experiences, this study demonstrates a phenomenological research focus. It is the respondents' experienced practices that are the object of analysis. Applying interpretational methods identify these experiences.

Hermeneutics is understood in two different ways in this study: firstly as a method for interpreting the interviews, and secondly as an approach according to which understanding is about seeing the received results in relation to a wider cultural, professional and organizational context.

Hermeneutic thinking is based on the overall importance of understanding the phenomenon in such a way that it possible to understand the phenomenon concretely and as a part of the reality. As there are several different outlining of hermeneutics as a core philosophy, Alvesson and Sköldberg (2008) argue that the very root of hermeneutics is a circularity addressed through the objectifying expressed as whole part and the alethic expressed as preconceptions of understanding. This study operates with both of the 'circles', and the expected outcome conforms to the traditional circular symbol. Further, the circle as a symbol for hermeneutics has an alternative, the spiral, symbolizing the on going rotating process. The historical starting point in hermeneutics, visualized through the circle, is that the meaning can only be understood in relation to the whole, and the whole only through the parts (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008).

The background for my point of departure was generated through several years of experience from conducting an academic study program for aspiring

principals. From a practitioner's point of view and assisted preconceptions, the academic research program offered an opportunity through a theory testing approach to generate an explorative concept in order to discover and understand more about activities in school leadership from a personhood perspective. The research method, practiced through interactions and movement between preconception, theory and empirical data, developing understanding of the research problem step by step, has led this work to the principles of abduction. The conclusions from the research are qualitative and the outcome of empirical analysis something that was impossible to observe directly from the outside.

Early in the research process I investigated and analysed my own preconception of school leadership. Knowledge related to leadership theories together with a fascination for principalship supported the interest. The motivation to deepen knowledge of leadership theory emerged during the time of testing and developing the dimensions according to the ideas that formed my preconception. To adopt a problematizing and developmental approach together in relation with respect to one's preconception is an accepted method in the hermeneutic tradition. The approach was conducted through the pre-understanding that principals' professional actions can be understood from the view of how a principal as an individual performs them and profession and position as framing the leadership activities. To put oneself as a researcher in such a position is challenging, but also exciting.

The overall research interest emerged in the aim 'understanding school principals' leadership'. Several related approaches were identified and articulated in the original articles: theories were outlined (I and V) and empirical results analysed (II, III, IV). Research questions such as 'What is the nature of a principal's self-knowledge?' and 'What perceptions do principals have about leadership as a profession?' were investigated in one of the empirical studies (article II). In another study the main question was formulated as: 'How do school principals form their leadership identity on personal, professional and positional levels?' (article III).

By raising questions about different perspectives focusing on how principals act in leading the school and why a certain activity is performed, the purpose is to achieve a broad understanding of principalship. As my structure for this thesis is based on separate articles reviewing aspects of principals' leadership, the research questions are presented in the overview of the hermeneutic research design in section 2.3 and further in each of the articles.

The research process has been a journey between preconceptions, theory and empiricism, and the statements from the informants have been organized in relation to the basic structure of categories in leadership. The overall analytic process can be characterised as abductive because of the movement between inductive and deductive principles in analysing the empirical material (Johansson, 2000). Although the process of organizing was lightly coded according to the three dimensions of person, profession and position, the overall theory for the analytic process can be attributed to abductive theory. New ideas and clues have emerged in analysing the statements from principals and from the focus groups. The ideas have led the process of understanding step by step (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008). According to Eriksson and Lindström (1997, 198) “Abduction involves a dialectic process that moves between theory-laden empiricism and empirically laden theory.” It can be noticed that abduction involves both inductive, empirically grounded knowledge and deductive, theoretically grounded knowledge. As understanding successively emerges in abductive reasoning, it is in a sense more powerful than inductive and deductive reasoning alone. Peirce (1958/1990) states: “Accordingly, when we stretch an induction quite beyond the limits of our observation, the inference partakes of the nature of hypothesis [abduction].” Wiedersheim-Paul and Eriksson (1991; 1997) argue: “When a researcher is moving between theory and empiricism and is open for a growing understanding, the analytic process can be named abductive.”

In processing preconceptions with earlier research findings, analysing leadership theories and outlining the articles, the developed knowledge about the subject in focus has increased. The research proceedings progressed stepwise by alternating immersion in theory, collecting empirical data, performing analysis, drawing conclusions, and presenting documentation in the articles as presented in Figure 8.

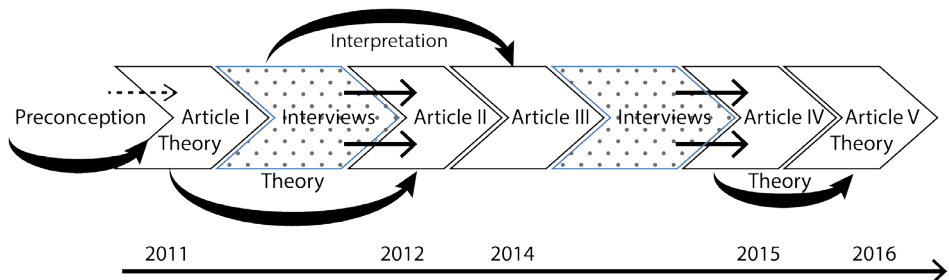


Figure 8. The research process

3.2 Data collection

The present research belongs to the qualitative research tradition. As the interest was to reach a more structured understanding of school leadership as experienced by principals, interviews were chosen as the method for data collection. The approach was to apply semi-structured life-world interviews as defined by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009). According to Bengtsson (1991), investigating human experiences relates to the phenomenological tradition. The research aim was through interviews to collect experiences from principals about themselves and their leadership approaches. (The list of interview questions is presented in the appendix) It is not enough to consider phenomena and describe them; there must also be a structure of understanding. Phenomenology in qualitative research focuses on understanding social phenomena (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009) but also on learning and pedagogical thinking.

The interviews

The outlined dimensions of person, profession and position worked as guiding frames in the individual interviews. The opening question was 'Describe your personal characteristics'. By turning the lens of investigation on the respondent's experiences of her/himself, her/his profession and how she/he understood the position, the interviews started in a flow of confidence. When paying attention to characteristics in the personality as expressed by the informant, the following items discussed were commented on through self-awareness and personality related conclusions.

Through the interviews it became obvious that responding to the interview questions offered an opportunity for the informants to reflect, identify and express their experiences, but furthermore their subjective interpretation completed their descriptions of school leadership. Through interviews the dimensions in leadership were explored by discussing topics that were brought up by the principals themselves.

Phenomenological empirical research directs attention to describing how individuals experience the world as a social, political, historical, and cultural environment. The focus is on the individual's so-called life-world, the world as experienced, and to understand and obtain a structure of it is included in the hermeneutic approach. Semi-structured life-world interviews can be defined as including perspectives from both phenomenology and hermeneutics (Bengtsson, 1991; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). From a hermeneutic point of view, human life may be perceived as a process of narrative interpretations.

The interviewee articulates his or her experience into words and the researcher tries to make trustworthy interpretations of the experience narrated by the informants.

Empirical data were collected at two stages. The first one, interviews with principals, was conducted in the early stage of the process. In the interview procedure I followed the structure of a qualitative interview as designed by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009). The second process, consisting of focus group interviews with teachers, was conducted later in the research process. The data collection procedures did not depend on each other, and the interval between them was only due to practical reasons.

A) Interviews with principals

The interview group consisted of Swedish speaking principals in Finland. The criteria for collecting the group were:

Work experience as a full time principal for a minimum of 3 years

In the present situation working on regular basis

Working in compulsory education

The representatives were from different geographical areas of the Swedish speaking part of Finland. As the whole Swedish-speaking population in Finland is slightly under 300,000 inhabitants, the maximum number of available informants, full-time principals in compulsory education, was 47. The number of informants chosen for the interviews was 8 principals.

Prearrangements consisted of (a) creating a questionnaire with open-ended questions as a guideline for my interviews, (b) reviewing municipalities providing Swedish education in basic schools, and choosing the informants, males and females, from different geographical areas, (c) contacting the principals by e-mail with a questionnaire attached, and asking for participation, and (d) after receiving acceptance, agreeing on a time for the meeting.

Each interview took place in the school where the principal was working. The time used for each interview was 2-3 hours. The interview was taped and a transcript written 1-2 days afterwards. The text in the Swedish language was sent back to each principal with a note to comment and correct it if some misunderstanding had occurred, and finally the principals were asked to give their agreement for using the narratives for research reasons. Each individual participant was also given a pseudonym.

B) Focus-group discussions

The second interview target was five groups of teachers from compulsory education, participating in discussions focusing on expectations about principals' leadership. The teachers were from different schools than the interviewed principals. In conjunction with discussions about leadership, the school as a social working environment was also commented on through statements about 1) cooperation among staff members, and 2) visible and non-visible elements in school culture.

Prearrangements for the focus groups were creating a questionnaire in order to obtain a basis for the group interviews, and inviting teachers to the interview. A total of 32 teachers attended, 54% female and 46% male, and they were divided into five groups. I myself conducted the group interviews as the researcher, and validity was secured through a protocol from the interviews made by an assisting colleague. After every group session the protocol was read aloud to the group, and each group member had the opportunity to correct and clear up the given statements. The final text in Swedish (language) was read to the group, and approved.

In the following sections I present an analysis of the data (3.3), and an analysis of ethical considerations (3.4).

3.3 Analysis of the data

In this section I will describe how the data from interviews with the principals and focus groups were analysed.

The analysis of interview data consisted of the following phases:

Preparation: Transcription of the interviews

Organizing: All data were equally important, and analysed using narrative analysis where statements were grouped in relation to the categories of person, profession and position. Both intra and inter perspectives were recognized with the assistance of the components.

Reporting: Reporting the outcome of the analyses in the form of two articles in English (articles II and III), and synthesis in the comprehensive summary (thesis).

The analysis of the focus groups interviews consisted of the following phases:

Preparation: Coding of the data from the focus group interviews

Organizing: All data were equally important, and analysed through content analysis where statements of expectations were categorized in relation to person, profession and position, opinions about the work environment and school culture, and opinions about cooperation and collegiality

Reporting: Reporting the outcome of the analyses in the form of one article in Swedish (article IV) and synthesis in the comprehensive summary (thesis).

Interpretation of the meaning in interviews with principals

Kvale and Brinkmann (2008, 226) explain a guiding principle in interpretation according to the hermeneutic approach, as follows.

“The main process is moving backward and forward between the parts and the whole following the hermeneutic circle. Despite an often vague and intuitive perception of a text or collected statements, the separate parts are being interpreted, and from these interpretations the parts will be related to the whole. This on-going circulation is considered as a good circle, more like a spiral, supporting how to discover a deeper understanding of the meaning. Another guiding principle in hermeneutic tradition is that the interpretation can be finished when a good conformation has been reached as an inner context without logical opposites.”

In the research process, proceeding as described through the phases above of developing knowledge about general understanding, as well as intra and inner perspectives of school leadership, I followed the hermeneutic tradition as addressed by Kvale and Brinkmann as cited above. When collecting details according to behaviors as expressed by the informants, a holistic shape of contents in school leadership can be discovered. In Chapter 4 the original studies are summarized, but added as original publications in Part Two of this dissertation. In the original studies the principals' voices about themselves can be recognized and the validity of the findings ensured.

Analysis of focus group interviews

In analysing statements from the focus groups, I searched for a method assisting in categorizing the transcript material. The method of content analysis (Cavanagh, 1997) allowing the researcher to test theoretical issues to enhance understanding of the data seemed interesting and suitable. Through content analysis it is possible to distil words into fewer, content-related categories. It is assumed that when classified into the same categories, words, phrases and the like share the same meaning (Cavanagh, 1997).

I decided to apply qualitative content analysis to the focus group material. The process consisted of open coding of data, categorization and condensing broad descriptions of phenomena, and it was conducted manually. To start with the code: each statement was coded with tentative names close to the empirical findings and grouped under higher order headings. Through categorization the amount of data was reduced, and the pieces of data compared for similarities or differences and classified through interpretation to belong to different categories.

Dey (1993) states that creating categories is not simply summarizing observations that are similar or related. Furthermore, data are classified as 'belonging' to a particular group, and this implies that the researcher has made a comparison between these data and other observations that do not belong to the same category. The purpose of creating categories is to provide a means of describing the phenomenon, to increase understanding and to generate knowledge (Cavanagh, 1997). When formulating categories by qualitative content analysis, the researcher comes to a decision, through interpretation, as to which things to put in the same category (Dey 1993).

Content analysis turned out to be a well-suited method for analysing the multifaceted outcomes of the focus group interviews. Also, sensitive phenomena such as characteristics of the school culture were possible to objectify as well as opinions about professional cooperation among teachers. In article IV the outcomes of teacher expectations of the principal's leadership are presented. For practical reasons most of the abstractions are presented verbally in the article.

3.4 Ethical considerations

Some of the ethical considerations of relevance have already been briefly addressed and argued elsewhere, but I will add some further information here.

Taking part in the research project was entirely voluntary for both principals and teachers. Participation in the research discussions and procedures in both written and oral form was conducted confidentially and with common agreement. All written protocols and transcribed texts were available to the participants for comments or adjustments. The participants confirmed the conclusions from the interviews. No direct identifiers such as details of names, or indirect ones such as naming of workplaces, place of residence or family groups were employed. The individual participants were given pseudonyms. Individual transcriptions of interviews were sent for acceptance and returned with acceptance. It was important for me as a researcher to keep an objective

balance between the informants and the data. I carried out the transcriptions myself without external assistance. Neither the informants nor their schools were identified in the final text.

With the two articles where the research findings from individual interviews are in English, it was a challenge to translate the written transcriptions from Swedish into English. The task from an ethical perspective was to be able to translate statements so that nuances in the origin meaning remained clear and concise according to the mother tongue of the informants. The article where material from the focus groups is reviewed is written in Swedish, so that ethical perspectives according to translation did not need to be considered.

4 Results

This chapter consists of summaries of each of the five articles. The summaries are organized under some informal headlines (*italics, no numbers*), but since articles I and V are built on theoretical considerations, and II, III and IV present empirical results, the informal headlines vary.

4.1 Study I. Components influencing principals' leadership: a theoretical discussion on how principals' leadership is constituted through perspectives on person, profession and position.

4.2 Study II. Principals' leadership through perspectives on person, profession and position: an empirical study.

4.3 Study III. How school principals form their leadership identity: an empirical study.

4.4 Study IV. Teachers' expectations of principals' leadership: an empirical study.

4.5 Study V. Developing leadership for tomorrow's Finnish schools.

4.6 Analysis of results and leadership models

4.1 Study I: Components influencing principals' leadership

Aim

The ambition of the first study was twofold: firstly, to describe the principles of school management in Finland and formal rules about leadership, and secondly, to analyse principalship from a perspective where the experienced structure was designed in three categories: person, profession and position. This article contains a theoretical background on principals' leadership and an orientation about the principal as a person, and leadership according to profession and position. Further, a need for tools assisting a deeper analysis of school leadership emerged as an outcome of the theoretical orientation. The article outlines realities concerning principalship and issues in leading a school according to governing instructions. Principalship contains several fields of importance, e.g. administration, management, pedagogical leadership, cooperation with homes, as well as the objectives of pupil and student welfare services and teaching classes. In leadership practice, the focus is on school leader as a person, and profession and position work as operative functions.

Educational policy as context for principals

The article pays attention to formal rules about leadership in Finnish schools. Governing regulations about school principals' duties leave a lot of possibilities to fulfil the profession, individual ambitions and visions. National educational policy permits principals to interpret the contents in leadership and management. The trust endowed in governing philosophy underlines the broad space of educational freedom and autonomy in school leadership, as independence and autonomy are essential signs in Finnish educational policy when it comes to school leadership. These realities turn interest towards areas of significance constituting leadership and motivate a deeper analysis of the contents in principalship.

Theoretical approach emerging

When investigating research-based contents in school leadership experiences, three main areas of significance were identified: person, profession and position. With the assistance of the metaphor 'area', a structure of principalship was established. Leadership seemed to occur as an integrated process in which the principal as an individual (person) practiced activities through his or her profession and position.

In order to increase and interpret a more profound understanding of principalship, there was a need for more refined conceptual tools assisting analysis on a deeper level. Concepts like identity, self-realization in behavior and inner dynamics conducting reactions in personality were identified as complementary instruments for explaining nuances of leadership. I introduced these concepts under the expression 'components' because of their instrumental function. They offered opportunities to identify deeper nuances in principalship. As the empirical process, as well as accompanying theory emerged stepwise, inspiration to apply the components was related to the process of discovering how applicable and functional they were. Introducing components in the first study was in a way a tentative approach. They were noticed as contributing to an enriched explanation of nuances in principalship.

Results

In this study the starting-point in analysing principalship was to look for definitions of the principal as a person (an individual). Investigation of theories according to 'person' opened up several perspectives of interest anchored in psychological, sociological, linguistic, professional and work related aspects. To avoid an excessively fragmented structure, the components as three perspectives of interest were chosen and motivated as 'lenses' in analysing the 'person':

Identity was supported through theories from, e.g. Erikson, 1994; Mahoney, 1990; Giddens, 1991.

The self (focusing on self-realization) relied on theories from, e.g. Bruner, 1990; Hodgkinson, 1991; Begley, 2008; Branson, 2005/2010.

Personality dynamic was supported through theories named 'human dynamics' developed by Seagal & Horne 1997/2004.

This article emanated from the preconception of person, profession and position being essential when analysing principalship. Analysis of factors vital for principals' awareness in leadership and conditions for leadership in school as an organization were its focus. The three areas structuring school leadership attained important nuances and more detailed patterns through the integrated components. The assisting components were found to be successful tools in structuring the essential elements and developing experience and consciousness supporting understanding of the school as an organization, school culture and principals' leadership.

Discussion

Identifying the significant areas of person, profession and position as phenomena and their interpreted contents as notions offered a basic structure for further operational analysis in this study. Each area is multifaceted and complex, but when analysed through the outcomes of each of the three components of identity, self-realization and personality dynamic, then essences in the outcomes of principalship can be discovered as different ‘sides’ or ‘aspects’ in leadership. The integrated components have an instrumental function in assisting detailed analysis of what being a principal means, and further in supporting an analysis of both school culture and school as an organization. The developed structure was noticed to offer assistance in further empirical processes. I sum up a conclusion by an excerpt from the article:

“In the lack of detailed formal instructions about school leadership, professional literature regarding the consciousness of how to be, what to do, and what to know as an educational leader will be of essential interest. As a principal in a Finnish comprehensive school, there are wide possibilities to lead the organization to successful outcomes. In the leadership role the principal has to be aware of his or her capacities as a person and in the profession of leadership.”

4.2 Study II: Principal’s leadership through perspectives on person, profession and position

Aim and research questions

The second study presents findings from research on leadership and management of a group of full-time principals from comprehensive schools in the Swedish speaking area in Finland. The aim was to investigate (1) what the principals’ experiences of the leadership position are, (2) what perceptions principals have about leadership as a profession, and (3) the nature of the principals’ self-knowledge.

This article is built on the theory outlined in article one. The empirical data were collected through interviews with seven full-time principals. The semi-structured interview questions communicated with the structure person, profession and position.

Results from the analysis of person, profession and position

The results indicate that implications concerning principals' awareness about significant topics in their leadership were established. These were found to be a) confidence as individuals (persons) with a developed self-awareness, b) specific professional activities in their leadership profession, and c) recognized progression in the position when comparing their first years as principals with the present time.

a) Person related topics

The findings from analyses of the principals' narratives provide evidence of self-awareness regarding personal abilities and strengths. Principals are able to identify different traits in their personality to some extent, and they are convenient in portraying leadership actions on a general level. Self-awareness is experienced as essential, and they are able to identify independence in the leadership mandate. The findings support the necessity of being aware of personal traits and capacities when dealing with challenges according to relational subjects in school leadership. On the other hand, awareness about individual traits and needs related to communication was not clearly articulated through the principals' narratives.

The nature of self-awareness was expressed in terms familiar with the theory (presented in article I) about emotional, mental and physical principles and their attributes (Seagal & Horne, 1997/2004) as the principals' natural way of portraying themselves. None of the principals had any difficulties in expressing personal issues or qualities. One of the principals commented: "when describing oneself through a personality related identification, one gets new aspects and discovers different traits about oneself".

b) Profession related topics

The complexity of school leadership in light of a lack of detailed governing guidelines, providers' rights to assert directives for principals, and the overall pedagogical responsibility and mission, are demanding for principals. The conclusions from the interviews highlighted progression in educational development and career as they had achieved the principal's position from working first as teachers. Principalship was experienced as a motivating and challenging step in their career. Awareness of the complexity of the profession was identified by the participating principals and expressed as challenging. Similar outcomes were found in Ahonen's study (2008) as a result of the twofold approach in Finnish school leadership: to be the head of the school

with the duty of teaching classes. Recognized essential elements in principals' professional development were, e.g. more confidence in decision-making, increasing the professional leadership identity and operating with objectivity in relational positions among the staff.

c) Position related topics

The process of progression in developing principalship and creating leadership activities arose in visible structures as a result of the analysed interviews. As all principals were experienced in leadership after a number of years in the position, they were also confident in looking backwards and remembering the first year of leadership. The overview below is structured with the assistance of the components identity, self-realization and personality dynamic.

As a newly elected principal, the first focus was on how to get through daily routines, and how to be aware of what had to be done in order to keep the regular processes in the school going on. In the beginning of the leadership career the personal identity as head of the school were weak, awareness of professional identity low and knowledge about the contents in principalship vague. The new principal had to deal with management proceedings, staff meetings and decisions about finances, student assistance and several stakeholders connected to the school.

Results from integration of identity, self-realization and personality dynamic

In principalship the component self, expressed as self-realization, could be recognized through statements concerning leadership behavior. A growing awareness of how to act in the leadership role was identifiable in the principals' remarks. Even if the professional behavior was still undeveloped, the position as a leader attracted the new principal. Contents in leadership such as responsibility, problem solving, innovation, autonomy and power are challenging, and demand a new principal to overcome them and take control over management and educational issues in the school.

Progression in behavior as an approach to the self was discovered in all categories. Self-realization and behavior are genuine and reflect an inner maturity. Experienced principals had the courage to act with honesty, and individual values were essential in leadership practice. Competence was visible in activities, decision-making situations, collaborative processes and interactions in public situations. In the leadership position the progression was obvious, both as strategic ability and the courage to adapt to challenging issues and acting with balance in pedagogical and managerial claims.

Personality development in the early days of a leadership career depended on how confident the principal was as an individual. The nature of confidence was mostly expressed in the ways communication was practiced. When the new role was still in the process of development in establishing substance in the profession, principals expressed the importance of the ability to deal with human relations in the school organization. Progression according to communication should be noted, as people's distinctly different communication processes are one of the most significant matters in human interactions. When people are aware of their own needs in interpersonal communication, they can guide others most effectively. When they are aware of other people's communication needs, they can adjust their own ways of interaction. Principals participating in my research group identified these outcomes. The communicative process practiced by an experienced leader lies in confidence and self-awareness. The progression in school leadership comes through the principals' ways of using communication as a professional device, as well as developing communicative abilities to support successful principalship.

Identity in leadership was considered to be about continuing development and growing during the years of being the head of school. Confidence in the professional role was experienced as a sign of progression from undeveloped to well-developed professionalism. Developed clarity as a character of positional subjects was experienced as a sign of maturity in the leadership position, confirming a developed identity. Development in leadership identity according to the principals' position was stated as being evident in everyday activities in the school culture.

Discussion

All the interviewed principals had been in the leadership profession for at least ten years. They identified themselves as experienced in leadership and confident in their mission. In the present position they were able to make plans as to what, when and why different school activities should take place. They were able to select among different challenging issues, lead the staff through visions, and they had the courage to select new tasks for the school. Their perception of leadership as a profession had developed in the sense of strategic awareness. Expressing the present situation, they were also able to look backwards and reflect on their first years as school leaders, as well as indicate visions and future oriented challenges. Experience supported development through practice and the ability to express received knowledge. The outcome from the interviews highlighted developed awareness about individual abilities, confirmed professional outcomes and confidence in handling the leadership position.

Personal comments from principals are reproduced in article II, which is included as an appendix to this thesis.

The empirical findings construct a connection between the preconception and theoretical background. The process can now be identified as hermeneutic; for the researcher the aim is to understand the experiences noticed from the empirical findings.

4.3 Study III: How principals form their leadership identity

Aim and contents

The aim of the third article was to bring into focus how school principals form their leadership identity on personal, professional and positional levels, and through the outcomes of the empirical study contribute to the understanding of identity as a fundamental element in creating professional school leadership.

The article consists of an orientation about identity theory, conclusions from analysis of the interviews with principals, notions about struggling situations in leadership practice affecting leadership identity, and leadership identity according to social interactions. Personal comments from principals are reproduced in article III, which is included as an appendix to this thesis.

The research approach and collection of data

The empirical data were collected through interviews with eight principals. The interviews were structured to be able to identify statements about school leadership according to the leader as an individual, the leadership profession and the principal's position. Findings from the research clarify awareness of leadership identity on different levels, and I categorized the findings according to 1) person, 2) profession, and 3) position. Furthermore, examples of struggling situations according to identity could be detected in the principal's stories.

Results: Findings in the principals' narratives

Leadership identity according to person was stated as (a) formed through the profession and confirmation from colleagues, (b) developed through identified subjective qualities, (c) expressed as awareness of necessary knowledge for the competence, and (d) grounded on individual ambitions to fulfil expectations on leadership.

Leadership identity according to profession develops in practice moments when the principal has to activate his or her ability to perform with clarity, strategic thinking and acting, democratic decision-making and collaborative activities. Further, the school as an organization with its existing culture and public position affects the professional identity. When unawareness develops into consciousness, the principal can recognize that professional identity has emerged. Recognition of the developed identity might not occur in the immediate moment, but arise afterwards.

The area of human resource management was important in affecting professional leadership identity. Interactions and face-to-face situations both strengthened and weakened the professional identity. The principals argued about abilities to develop professional skills expressed as credibility: that is, reliability between the principal's 'being' and 'doing', confidence expressed as trust between the principal and the staff, and responsiveness: that is, the ability to identify nonverbal communication as well as listen to verbal communication. These examples of issues in developing professional identity were stated as important.

Leadership identity related to position was stated as created by trust and respect from the staff and providers, as well as from pupils, parents and politicians. A principal's developed ability in acting independently and autonomously in educational and managerial activities and performing in everyday decision-making situations develops identity. Furthermore, acting according to instructions from the providers and frames in the curriculum, and responding to the public position as representative of a public school are examples of positional duties affecting and developing identity. Responsibility, awareness of power and autonomy are important factors in developing identity as an educational authority.

A school principal's identity is reflected in each of the three categories of person, profession and position. If identity in any of these areas is failing, it affects principalship as a whole, conflicting situations might occur and the leadership authority declines. According to the principals' narratives, signs of failing leadership were connected to early years in principalship and low status in the leadership position. A principal will overcome this stage of failing through development of individual strategies and developed awareness of the outcomes of self-realization.

Discussion

The process of creating and developing leadership identity was addressed on a number of levels: organizational, professional, social and individual. The findings from this research indicated the ability of principals to communicate about specific progress in forming leadership identity. Individuals seem constantly to strive to shape their personal identity (Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2010; Møller, 2004). The reciprocal process of awareness of contents in leadership and confirmation from colleagues was stated as essential in creating leadership identity. To be a school principal is a complex profession, as expressed in several interviews, but developing professional identity in different leadership areas: personal, professional and positional, was noticed as being supportive in creating structures in the profession and supporting a broader understanding of the mission. In developing the capability to recognize individual, professional and positional identities, the complexity of leadership in a school can be explained and understood.

4.4 Study IV: Teacher expectations of principals' leadership

Aim and participants

In order to obtain a comprehensive picture of school leadership, the fourth study focused on teacher expectations of the principals' leadership. Besides the main theme, topics concerning membership in the school staff and cooperation amongst colleagues as well as activities in school culture were discussed and recognized as essential elements in learning communities. The results presented in study IV are derived from teacher interviews in focus groups consisting of 5-6 teachers in each group. The groups were collected through voluntary participation by indicating interest through an open invitation.

The theoretical approach and empirical process

The theoretical approach focused on teachers' expectations of school leadership. School culture and school as a learning community emerged as sub-topics. The empirical process consisted of interviews with teacher groups in order to collect opinions and locate expectations about principalship and contextual issues in schools. Framed by theoretical topics, the organizational culture in schools was outlined, addressing aspects about leadership in general and leadership in schools specifically. In the empirical process the outcomes from the teacher interviews were structured in the areas of expectations, cooperation among colleagues and the working culture in the school.

Results

What, then, are key elements in leading a school? What other issues concerning the social working environment and school culture affect the school as an educational institution? The outcomes of the group interviews are structured in two topics:

(a) Teachers' expectations according to the principal's leadership. This topic was highlighted on two levels: the general and the individual. Common subjects on both levels were the relational perspective in school leadership and the implications of trust.

(b) The school as a social working environment was analysed through expressions about 1) cooperation among staff members, and 2) visible and non-visible features in school culture.

A. Relations and trust in school leadership

The general view of school leadership was related to expectations on trust according to the principals' work-based activities: trust according to general leadership duties, pedagogical decisions and staff administration. The teachers' expressions according to expectations of the principals' leadership regarding relational issues was structured with the assistance of the three categories of person, profession and position.

Expectations of the principal as a person (an individual) were related to ethics and values. Teachers expect to be able to have trust and confidence in the leader. The principal's personal behaviour was expected to remain objective, equal, and command respect. In conversation the principal was expected to be goal-oriented, factual, honest and informed.

Included expectations of the principal's profession were activities related to both pedagogy and management. Expected leadership skills are, e.g. the ability to design clear goals in mind and in practice and the ability to communicate professionally. Teachers do not expect principals to interfere in subjects or classroom work, but to guide and support in educational topics as a supervisor. Furthermore, principals are expected to possess efficient knowledge about the regulations concerning school and educational policy and to communicate clearly and objectively. Professional behaviour is related to the legitimacy in leadership (Berg, 2011).

Expectations related to school leadership as a position include abilities in planning, structuring and organizing schoolwork. On the practical level,

expectations are focusing on human resource management such as leading staff meetings, managing public events and dealing through mutual interactions with parents and political representatives. Principals are expected to act as representatives for the school, in the presence of politicians and providers. Positional behaviour is related to legality in leadership (Berg, 2011).

B. The school as a social working environment

Staff membership was identified as interactions and relations from the point of view of three membership groupings: (a) teacher to teacher, (b) teachers as a group in relation to the principal, and (c) teachers as individuals in relation to the principal. Identified common elements in staff membership were loyalty, respect, responsibility and solidarity. The main focus was on expressions about relations between “me” and “others.”

The teachers’ imaginations about school culture were structured in sections related to the score of visibility: behaviour and attitudes (Lennér-Axelsson & Thylefors, 2005), Aspects related to ethics and morals were most invisible. Behavior and attitudes related to common values, respect, safety and social atmosphere were identifiable, and in some situations obvious. Identified elements in school culture affecting attitudes were expressed in terms close to the physical environment, leadership, staff skills, attributes and procedures according to daily activities.

Conclusion

As a conclusion from study IV it can be stated that teachers’ expectations of principals’ leadership are deeply related to relations. This study confirms the importance of trusting relationships between teachers and the principal, and the effects of relations on thoughts, feelings and ambitions. Expectations from teachers according to their attitudes, emotions and behaviors are in this sense related to the leadership theory identified as authentic leadership (Barnett, 2007; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

An integration of the teachers’ expectations of principalship with the working culture in a school was recognizable on three levels:

First (most invisible): Ethics and morals

Second (partly visible): Social atmosphere, respect, confidence, and common values

Third (most visible): Leadership activities, competences, quality, routines, physical environment and interactions.

4.5 Study V: Developing leadership for tomorrow's Finnish schools

Aim and method

This article interprets a principal's leadership in the light of a number of recent policy documents for education in Finland. Given the phenomenological-hermeneutic approach in this study, this article is aimed as a kind of a re-contextualization of the results. It is assumed that such a contextual interpretation may contribute both to understanding of the principals' own way of understanding their professional work but also to help understand the current policy documents and initiatives in a different light. The analytic discussion features a forward-looking orientation especially given the current steering documents for schools and leadership.

The policy documents. The Finnish National Board of Education (NBE) highlighted in the years 2013 and 2015 its visions for the future leadership of schools (NBE, 2013; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015). Several educational management topics were given attention. These were: organizing the school administration, responsibility for finances and establishing cooperation among schools in networks. The authorities stated that as the national educational policy in Finland is built on trust and confidence, authorities, school providers and principals should allocate time for developing initiatives. The principals' educational leadership was emphasized as a most important task, and educational authorities were responsible for managing strategies and educational development.

Visions guiding future oriented development concerning school leadership were also included in the National Development program 'Tomorrow's Schools', published by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2015). Considerations about renewing the contents of academic study programs for principals are taken into account. Two initiatives were presented: extensive leadership as the most interesting and important way of creating sustainable educational leadership, and shared leadership, as a concept of involving members of staff in shared responsibilities, initiatives and decisions.

As **the curriculum** is the guiding instrument for education, it is also a guiding document for principals' leadership. According to the most recent curriculum in Finland (www.oph.fi/en), each school is expected to work with fundamental values guiding school practice, especially with the uniqueness of each individual child in mind. Schools are encouraged to discuss and agree on common values that support and strengthen the identity and development of students and educational staff. Besides internal leadership duties, it is challenging for principals additionally to develop relationships between

school and society. The connection with society must be considered through a more detailed description of the task, including both teaching and educating (nurturing). Statements about curricula from the National Board of Education provide positions according to the governing guidelines:

“The national-level core curricula and qualification requirements in Finland are norms enacted by the Finnish National Board of Education. These define the objectives and core contents as well as the basic principles of cooperation with homes as well as the objectives of pupil and student welfare services. In addition, education providers draw up local curricula and qualification requirements, which are based on the national core curricula and requirements. In these the providers outline how the objectives set nationally will be reached.” (http://www.oph.fi/english/curricula_and_qualifications)

The policy documents in relation to the results of this study

The article includes an analysis of possible contents in what is called “extended leadership”. The expression ‘extended’ itself responds to the large scale of principalship duties already recognized in what the principal has to do. On the other hand, the term extensive responds to aspects of depth, namely attitudes, qualities and maturity according to the principal as an individual: in other words, in being a principal. Through the analysis of qualities in extensive leadership, the three components of identity, self-realization and personality dynamic and their values integrated to person, profession and position guided in developing understanding of the expression. The following overview is an excerpt from the article in condensed version:

Components according to person: The principal identifies a clear individual identity as holding leadership qualities; self-realization is expressed through behaviour, and self-knowledge is confirmed, e.g. in the comment ‘I know myself’.

Components according to profession: The principal can identify a professional leadership identity, has developed the ability to behave professionally and can show and express understanding for others.

Components according to position: The principal can identify what is assumed in the leadership position, has the ability to perform as needed in situations according to the position, and has the ability to communicate with those with whom professional interaction is needed.

Discussion

The questions about developing school leadership are mostly about managerial, social or individual motives. According to the identified issues about ‘person’, not only does a broader view need to be discovered and developed, but furthermore the courage to take into account aspects of depth

and intra-individual processes. Insights deepening the quality in principalship do not demand materialistic resources but awareness of how to develop inner qualities and relational processes in the daily school practice. The same educational strategies can be applied when it comes to 'profession' and 'position'. Key aims for daily school activities are in developing the school as a learning community and to emphasize the joy of learning and a collaborative atmosphere. In order to meet the challenges of the future, the curriculum underlines work across school subjects. These aims create challenges for the principal in terms of both leading educationally according to the position as well as leading educationally according to the profession (Hellström, 2006).

The notion in the curriculum of the school as a learning community will be an interesting challenge for principals. Theories related to this topic demand several relational aspects (Senge, 1995; Albinsson, 1998) in developing a professional culture among members on different levels in the organization.

4.6 Summarizing the original studies and their intentions

In this section, it is my ambition to bring the results together and to summarize the findings from the articles and related theories. The overall research question guiding this work was: *How can a principal's school leadership be understood?* This question forms a comprehensive framework for all the sub-issues that have been the targets of the original studies.

The contents can be summarized in two main areas: (i) A summary of the original studies, and (ii) Categories and components as structures in school leadership.

(i) A summary of the original studies and their intentions.

In this section, it is my ambition to summarize the studies in light of the intentions and research questions. Studies V and I consist of theoretical considerations, and II, III and IV of theoretical orientations and empirical findings.

Study I. The first intention was to describe the principles of school management in Finland and formal rules about leadership, and secondly to analyse three areas of principalship: personality, profession and position. The principles of management and leadership in Finnish schools were discussed in the previous section discussing national educational policy.

Preparing article I, the research process was in the beginning. The topics

of person, profession and position were named as ‘areas of significance.’ The focus was on the principal as a person and the professional leader was theoretically investigated and described.

The leadership approach in this study was understanding-oriented. The ambition was to search for deeper understanding of person through orientation in personality dynamic, of professionalism and leadership as a position. My intentions at this stage were not well defined. I was exploring the phenomenon ‘educational principalship’, intending that the ‘areas of significance’, namely person, profession and position might offer the answers to what I was looking for as a structure in understanding school leadership.

Study II. This study presents an investigation about principals’ awareness about leadership opportunities according to the mandates for school leadership. The research questions were formulated in a described way: What is the nature of principals’ self-knowledge? What perceptions do principals have about leadership as a profession? What is the experience of principals of the leadership position?

This study was built on empirical findings from principals’ narratives. The interpretative approach contributed in analysing principals’ awareness about leadership opportunities according to the national mandate for school leadership.

Study III. The aim of study III was to discuss how school principals form their leadership identity on personal, professional and positional levels in leadership practice. The topic emerged from analysing principals’ narratives, as stated in study II. The common denominators conceptualizing leadership according to person, profession and position were identified in terms of communication and relationships. These were interpreted as essential elements when creating and developing identity. The findings in the narratives indicated how principals were able to express and correspondence between identified progress in developing identity according to work situations.

The subject in this study was the component ‘identity’, and it was empirically analysed according to individual identity, professional and positional identity. The approach to understanding was here interpreted in relation to theories about identity, and the context of educational policy.

Study IV. In study IV the focus was still on school leadership, but from the view of teachers’ expectations of principals’ leadership. In analysing the empirical outcomes from the interviews of focus groups, it was possible to group the answers according to person, profession and position. As sub-themes, opinions about collegiality and cooperation among the staff were expressed, as well as concern about developing a positive school culture. The research approach was an open-ended one because it was not possible to

predict which follow-up questions might emerge during the interviews. By organizing the answers and comments concerning expectations of principals' leadership into groups of person, profession and position, it was possible to collect and interpret conclusions. The expectations focused on relations, trust and confidence. The approach in this study was understanding-oriented, with some inputs of descriptive research.

Study V has a prescriptive approach as the study is addressing future-oriented challenges for 'tomorrow's school'. The research question was: "How is principalship to be developed in order to respond to challenges in the curriculum?" Future school leadership is not identified as a 'problem space' but as a challenging space.

The implication of the research question above is what solutions or ideas for 'tomorrow's school' should be accomplished. This study reflects back to the theory in study I and in that sense continues the approach of understanding-orientation.

In this section the original studies have been summarized from the view of research approaches and research questions. The summary is following the stages in hermeneutic research design as outlined in section 1.2. The main approach is interpretative and understanding-oriented, but some elements belonging to descriptive, explorative and prescriptive research was noticed in separate studies. Concluding with the overall research question: *How can a principal's school leadership be understood?* the overarching research approach in this work has a conceptual-hermeneutic orientation.

(ii) Categories and components as structures in school leadership

The purpose of this dissertation has been to explore an interpretation of principalship that takes its starting point in the principal being a person, working as a professional and occupying a specific position in the education system. Through a hermeneutic process the ambition 'to understand' has moved the interpretation towards an immersed level with the assistance of the structure of person, profession and position. At this point the question of what occurs in the interactions between these three can be raised, and further, what happens in the interactions between the leader and followers. These questions can be answered by turning back to the intrapersonal relations and interpersonal relations that were clarified according to person, profession and position. As figures 6 and 7 in section 2.2.5 illustrate, the relational processes are multidimensional when analysing relations between person, profession and position in one individual (intrapersonal processes). In interpersonal processes one-way relations between the subject person and object person may affect six

different focuses (Figure 7 in Section 2.2.5). The efforts thus far describing school principal’s leadership have resulted in two interrelated dimensions, namely categories and components. The three categories and the components that have followed throughout the research process have at this stage been analysed from both relational and functional perspectives. All processes are dynamic activities and contextually conducted.

(1) Analysing leadership given the categories of person, profession and position, and relating these three to intrapersonal and interpersonal processes, generate multidimensional outcomes.

(2) Analysing leadership processes given the three categories of person, profession and position integrated by the components personality dynamic, self-realization and identity offers a possibility to identify and understand the leadership by communicating the outcomes (Table 7).

Table 7. Interpretation of the integration of components in categories

<i>Categories</i> <i>Components</i>	PERSON	PROFESSION	POSITION
Personality dynamic	Understanding oneself and individual capacities	Understanding others, interacting and managing as professional	Ability to communicate, make decisions and take responsibility
Self-realization	Increasing self-knowledge	Acting with professional manners in practicing leadership	To be aware of and being able to fulfil responsibilities as a principal
Identity	Awareness of personal identity and ability to develop it	Identity develops through the profession, internal and external confirmation and professional skills	Identity develops through trust and respect in fulfilling the mission

In this work, the structure for understanding school leadership is made up of three categories and three components. The basics are the three categories of person, profession and position. When integrating the components personality dynamic, self-realization and identity in each of the categories, a developed and nuanced understanding of the outcomes of leadership processes can be reached.

In the following, some guiding comments on Table 7 are presented. The table should be read horizontally from left to right as there is a progression in the outcomes: the person is given as an individual, the profession is to be understood contextually (the school, the organization), and in terms of position the activities are conducted by duties in respect of the mission.

The *personality dynamic* in respect of person is a tool in understanding oneself and individual capacities, strengths and weaknesses. Regarding profession, the personality dynamic assists in understanding others, and in interacting and managing as a professional. The outcomes of personality dynamic in the position support the ability to communicate, make decisions and take responsibility.

Self-realization in respect of the person is about increasing self-knowledge. Regarding profession, the outcome of self-realization is in acting with professional manners in practicing leadership. Through self-realization, the outcome in the position is to be aware of and fulfil responsibilities as a principal.

Identity in respect of person is about being aware of personal identity and being able to develop it. Regarding profession, identity emerges from the profession and professional activities, confirmation from others and identification of professional skills. Identity in position is developed through trust and respect from others, and the public mission.

Table 7 elaborates the outcomes illuminated in Figure 5 (Section 2.2.4)

5 Discussion

The overall ambition for this thesis has been to expand and deepen an interpretation of principalship from the perspective of the principal being a person, working as a professional and occupying a specific position in the education system. The study concentrated on principals' experiences related to their professional activities. Contents in principalship were seen as framed by the school organization and interpretation of the leadership by principals in the professional position framing the occupation.

As the subject in school leadership research usually is about the contents in the principals' activities (doing), in this study the overarching aim has been to investigate the principals' personhood (being) and the professional position framing this occupation.

5.1 School leadership as a humanistic interpretative approach

An overarching challenge working with this thesis has been to gather a definition of leadership theory outlined through the structure of categories and components and their integrated outcomes as contents in school leadership. In the previous summary I addressed a headline "The understanding-oriented, interpretative approach of school leadership" as a conclusion of findings from the original studies.

In section 2.1.1 outlining models of educational leadership, the structure of 'knowledge provinces' (Gunter and Ribbins, 2003) was introduced (Table 3). When investigating the 'provinces', the conceptual and the humanistic province were discovered as important findings for my approach. As the humanistic approach through its broad philosophical and ethical ground emphasizes, the human perspective provides a comprehensive interpretation of this study.

At this stage in the research process a definition of the leadership theory outlined in this work will be addressed, namely 'a humanistic interpretative leadership approach,' as a step in the direction of developing aspects in leadership research.

An observation driving this study was initially to move the focus from the many descriptive studies on principals' 'doings'. There was, e.g. an identified lack of studies focusing on questions like identity, personhood and professionalism regarding principalship. In this study these topics were

perceived as relevant perspectives. In addition, to act as a principal always occurs in an institutional context, making the principal's 'position' relevant. Might these perspectives be brought together in one study? The solution was to approach the field empirically by interviewing principals themselves as well as teachers with regard to these three preliminary categories. In order to delimit the viewpoint, a phenomenological perspective was adopted. This meant asking for the principals' own experiences. As a result, the point of departure for my research process was an own understanding of principalship structured in three categories: person, profession and position. Certainly, such a perspective was neither new nor innovative. Already one of the early professors of education in Finland, Fredric Cleve, identified, at least indirectly, these three dimensions of teachers' work: taking on a teacher's role, but not being present in it as a person, was deemed to have no success. Similarly, not letting the professional role regulate one's persona in acting as a teacher ran the risk of becoming too personal in schoolwork. The task was to find a balance between the two.

Thus, my intention from the beginning was to illuminate the specificities in principalship assisted by these three categories, and to single out how they were perceived by principals in everyday working situations. I was interested in the principals' personal knowledge about themselves as actors in the profession, and how they, from a personal perspective, emphasized and interpreted their leadership. During the interviews I discovered that principals both described and explained their practice. Throughout the analysis of the interviews I recognized how principals emphasized some issues and explained some others. This discovery made me realize that the three categories were relevant in studying principalship in general, but not sufficiently nuanced to interpret leadership on a detailed level.

Through the process of analysis some patterns were revealed. Principals emphasized and explained their personal reactions to relations, their leadership roles, their ambitions, successes and failures. They were able to recognize their behavior and challenges according to performance as a public leader. Further, they could interpret how to act as a pedagogical leader and as responsible for management issues.

By returning to earlier documentation (article I), theories about human personality and structures assisting in understanding an individual were taken to trial in order to examine if the principals' statements about themselves as persons could be clarified. Orientation in literature from the field of educational psychology (Kaufmann, & Kaufmann, 2005; Hwang, Lundberg & Smedler, 2012; Seagal & Horne, 1997/2007) assisted in the interpretation of activities in human personality as expressed in profession and position.

The principals' narratives contained several statements that touched on identity. They expressed, e.g. emerging identity both in profession and position, especially when recognizing development in principalship. These statements brought me to search for theories about identity, and in addition how, or if, it was possible to discover identity according to person, profession and position. Findings from Erikson (1994), Joseph (2004), and Møller (2004) guided in deepening the knowledge about identity and in the interpretation of identity as a component in person, profession and position.

The most challenging issue was to identify theories explaining leadership behavior and professional activities as told by the principals. Being a leader, acting as a leader and doing what is expected of a leader covers a wide range of topics in leadership. The situation is paradoxical: on the one hand the research is voluminous, but on the other hand not that many theories exist regarding the motives governing principals' activity. Numerous examples from the literature touch on these subjects, but on the other hand only a few capture the depth of values, beliefs and emotions governing the behavior. Research findings by Branson (2010) help in recognizing how to explain depth in leadership by structuring the overarching expression 'the self' and how different levels of depth may be perceived through increasing self-knowledge (Figure 4).

I decided to apply the contents to follow theories about how to identify human personality, the self focusing on self-realization, and identity as 'tools' in structuring and interpreting the outcomes of interviews with the principals in order to deepen understanding of leadership. These three assisting tools I named components (article I). As all three components are related to their own theories and also overlap with other essential theories, balancing interpretation of outcomes was challenging. However, regardless of possible complications, this strategy was still chosen and applied in this work because of other benefits.

A further attributed finding added to the previous one has to be mentioned. An outcome from the conducted interviews both with principals and teachers was comments about relations and interactions among individuals. Relations were addressed as outcomes of interactions between principal and individuals (adults and students) in the school. In deepening the theoretical analysis of intrapersonal relations and interpersonal relational processes, the complexity indicated problems in obtaining objectivity in communication between individuals. Relational aspects from a theoretical point of view are commented on in Chapter 2. Relations occur wherever people work together. Relational aspects in this sense belong in the micro-level of understanding principalship, but are brought into force in order to deepen understanding of school leadership.

In schools, as in other organizations, the structures are usually built on hierarchies to some extent. When there is a leader, there are also followers or employees, among whom relationality appears. In relationality it is important and vital to consider ethical dimensions. The leader acting as manager has to use power in a number of situations. Depending on the culture in the organization, an unethical climate might emerge. Uhl-Bien and Carsten (2007, 187; 192) argue: “Ethical climates are defined as those in which established ethical standards and norms are consistently and pervasively communicated and maintained by organizational leaders and employees.”

To prevent an unethical climate, a culture of command and control should be avoided and an atmosphere where ethical standards and norms are communicated should be developed. By promoting a climate of responsibility rather than hierarchy, values supporting a positive ethical climate can be developed (Uhl-Bien & Carsten, 2007).

5.2 Closing reflections

The approach adopted in this dissertation, i.e. considering the principals’ professional identity in relation to their role in the organization and their personal identity, offers a particular perspective on how professional development may be understood. The results and the approach support the idea of viewing leadership in these different fashions as complementary. Firstly, this indicates that principals’ development can occur simultaneously in all categories. In the interviews, I asked the principals to reflect backwards and identify issues about their leadership role during the first year as principal compared with the present situation. This example of role-making research has taken a longitudinal view to be able to understand and document the principals’ developmental processes and progression over time. The principals came to their organizational positions as newcomers to both designated tasks and relationships, even if the school context was familiar. Over time they were transformed by the daily work into established leaders, and they transformed their designated positions into personalized roles. During this progression, they changed from insecure actors to competent and confident performers, and their tasks changed from a set of ‘must-do’ duties and responsibilities to sets of professional behaviors and ‘can-do’ challenging activities. Similarly, the relationships changed from a stranger to acquaintances, and in some cases developed into even more mature relationships. The principals’ process of progression is a real and visible example of developing understanding for the profession and practicing experiential learning in leadership (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991; Møller, 2011).

Progression in the school leadership role is part of developmental change in the school organization as a whole. According to Fenton and Pettigrew (2000), integration and interdependence are fundamentals in the core activities of an organization, and these processes demand flexibility and relational trust among all actors in the working community. Developing structures in an organization is a multifaceted process since organizations are both formal structures and informal institutions consisting of social processes (Engeström, 2004). Reaching a level of being able to identify and attend to the 'free space' (Berg, 2011) according to administration and educational proceedings, and develop the school through reorganizing pedagogy and structures are proof of progression in the principals' leadership.

The analysis of principals' leadership in theory and in practice leads to the conclusion that a point of departure for understanding is to realize and accept multidimensionality in terms of principalship as a mission. As the intention has been to recognize personality related outcomes in order to understand school principals' leadership, i.e. more focus on 'being' than 'doing', elements of neo-charismatic leadership might support the understanding of leadership conclusions. Salovaara (2011) argued for the importance of widening the methodological means for studying leadership. He claimed for a redefinition of leadership, and aimed to identify leadership as a social and organizational quality and not as the accomplishment of a single person.

A step on the road to developing understanding is to improve awareness of the three categories in leadership and be able to identify them. A further step to developed understanding goes through the components and the ability to recognize the effects of components integrated in the categories. As it is possible to identify and describe the outcome of this integration (Table 7), the patterns of interpretation can be understood and even further developed as knowledge of the integration emerges.

With regard to aspects of relations, interactions among individuals create a number of relationships accompanied by different purposes. As the relations are complicated due to subjective interests, it is challenging to reach objectivity in relationally conducted interactions. Hence, it is important to be aware of the influence of relationally conducted influences in an organization, and between the leader and the followers. Meckes Conner (2011) explored the relationship between principals and teachers as they engaged in conversations, and what impact these conversations had on leading and learning. The results from the research indicated that the participants perceived conversations between principals and teachers as useful, important and, in some cases, transforming. A further investigation of relational aspects on the outcomes of categories integrated with components could be a subject in future research about understanding school principals' leadership.

When mirroring the relational outcomes in principalship through integration of components in the categories of person, profession and position as illuminated in Figure 5 (Section 2.2.4) with transformational leadership and the elements including in the four transformational leadership components (TFL) a high grade of consistency can be recognized.

According to Bass & Reggio (2006c) as viewed by Phipps and Prieto (2011, 433) ‘Idealized Influence’ is in TFL described as “being a role model that is highly regarded, valued, trusted, and deserving of emulation.”

‘Inspirational Motivation’ is explained as “encouraging enthusiasm in others through challenge and instilling a sense of significance while promoting cohesion, harmony, and confidence.”

‘Intellectual Stimulation’ is about “kindling creativity and inventiveness by encouraging novel ideas, questioning, and thinking outside the box.”

‘Individualized Consideration’ is about “paying particular attention to the individual needs of each follower.”

The outcome of developed personality characteristics, e.g. self-awareness, understanding others, communication skills as well as personal and professional identity and ability to perform, are needed both in the profession and position. Personality characteristics, as expressed in Figure 5, can easily be compared to effects of transformational leadership.

Considering the relational outcomes in principalship through integration of person, profession and position with personality dynamic, identity and the self as expressed in self-realization, and as presented in previous studies, it seems sensible to address a conclusion: Distinctions in individual personalities influence leadership behaviours in general and transformational leadership in particular. Although personality does influence leadership, it is not the only antecedent, and other qualities and circumstances may interact and cause different leadership style to emerge. In Table 7 components connected to profession and position are articulating leadership activities on a general perspective where dynamics on different levels in school leadership need to be activated.

As a final reflection, I can emphasize that the deeper the researcher can go into investigating different models of educational leadership, the more common denominators can be detected. By bridging traditions in leadership research, a fruitful organizational culture can be developed that supports leadership for change.

National educational policy

A topic given space in section 2.3 and in articles I, II and V concerns the principles of school management and educational policy in Finland. In this respect, it is therefore appropriate to comment on this topic. During the past 40 years in educational policy the areas of main changes have, on the one hand focused on governance and steering, and on the other hand on evaluation of education. The 1972 curriculum directed schools through laws, inspection and curricula. Teachers were responsible for the evaluation of students' learning achievement, and central tests were recommended already from the 1960s.

A movement away from an administration-centred to a more qualification-oriented and decentralised governance started in the late 1970s. The stepwise process of the academization of the teacher's vocation occurred as a parallel process to the decentralisation and reduced the state control of schools and teaching (Uljens and Nyman, 2013). Finnish teacher education has gone through only smaller reforms in the last 30 years, which from a Nordic and European perspective is unique. School reform in Finland is a slow business requiring persistence: small changes are more important than large words.

Decentralisation meant also a redefinition of the principal's tasks: from principalship as management to pedagogical leadership, also stated in the school law of 1983. The need for increased training for principals emerged during late 1980s and 1990s, and contents in the formal qualification program for principals were set out in 1998.

The job descriptions of school principals today are rather open: the principal is in charge of the school (Decree 628/1998, §37). Additionally, the local authorities are allowed to delegate power to the schools and decide about the contents of the principal's job.

Decentralisation continued throughout the 1990s, and the national core curriculum was given an approach as a framework for local school-based or municipality-based curricula. In practice, every municipality as a local authority for compulsory education was allowed to include supplements in the curriculum, giving attention to local contents both in general instructions and in subjects.

Salo and Sandén (2016, 103) argue that "A unifying characteristic for most reforms implemented after 1970 is that trust and confidence are strong building elements. Instead of control and inspections [...] the system has relied on its professionals: not only teachers and principals, but also the municipalities." Since the 1980s a basis for educational culture has been the cultivation of trust between education authorities and schools (Sahlberg, 2010).

Awareness of autonomy in school leadership was clearly recognized among the principals participating in my research. Flexibility and loose standards facilitate creativity among the actors, and professionalism within education emerges as it is based on trust and allows teachers and principals to make professional decisions (Sahlberg 2007; Salo & Sandén, 2016). The principals expressed satisfaction with the policy of trust and confidence shown by educational providers on both the national and local levels.

Critical reflections

After a long journey towards the goal, a critical reflection about the whole process is appropriate. The subject for this research, 'Understanding school principals' leadership' raises a number of pre-understanding associations about schools, principals and leadership. All these topics have been investigated from different views and different countries and cultures over a long time period. Investigating attributes describing the specific context in a school and adding it to leadership has led to a large number of expressions being developed with the purpose of illuminating a certain new or actual approach in leadership. A great amount of these expressions are in connection with areas other than educational. My ambition by choosing the open expression 'understanding' was to avoid past traditional determinations of school leadership, and focus attention on categories in school leadership, familiar but not regularly communicated.

The principal as an individual and his/her personal abilities was the approach when stating the topic for this work. The preconception was that personality-related abilities are essential in practicing school leadership. Parts of these individual strengths a person is born with, others are the result of training. The professionalism is a result of maturity, and of course studies in relevant topics. The leadership position has been gained through applying for a job, and the work has to be practiced framed by governing issues. Focusing on the one hand on the principal as a person and on the other hand on the school leadership as an occupation left an un-defined sphere about what occurs in the relation between the principal as a school leader and leadership as it should be practiced. These thoughts emerged in formulating the topic with focus on 'understanding.'

In terms of strengths and limitations according to my categories and components as tools managing a way to understanding, the categories contribute with the structure of leadership. I classify them as strengths both as instruments of analysis in leadership and according to how they can be recognized through practice. The components assist in discovering nuances and depth through integration in leadership categories. Components enrich

each category through the attributed characteristics and contribute to a stronger awareness of the functions of categories in principalship. In this sense they are valuable. As all three components are related to their own theoretical backgrounds, and also have overlaps with other essential theories, I am aware of complications of interpretations that might arise according to the narrow instrumental interpretation applied in this work. I classify the components as useful tools when deepening understanding of leadership, but I point out that the approach of imagining them as weaknesses in understanding school leadership is narrow, not because of how I have worked with them but because they have roots in other major theories that are outside this work.

At one step in the process, I was attempted to give more attention to relationality in leadership. The reason behind these intentions was related to several statements from the principals during the interviews about relational outcomes and interactions among individuals in the school. Going through theoretical frameworks about relationality and the concepts of several researchers, I came to realize that topics according to relations and relationality have too deep 'roots' and need to be given a broader and deeper attention than I was able to do in this work. However, relationality and relations are important subjects in leadership and have received attention, even if to a somewhat limited extent.

The implications for further research on understanding school leadership from the point of view of developed awareness of human capacities are manifold. Developing professionalism is a learning process, as stated above in discussing leadership progression. Managing the leader position also depends on knowledge about building a public position. These categories have the potential to develop through experiences and awareness of individual capacities and deserve attention in future research. The human aspect requires maturity and awareness of relations and interactions in developing leadership abilities. As my critical reflection according to relationality and relations signals, an important subject for future research on school principals' leadership could be the outcome of intrapersonal and interpersonal relations in understanding school principals' leadership.

References

- Aas, M. & Törnsén, M. (2016). Educational leadership in Nordic countries. *Nordic Studies in Education*, 36(2), 81-85. DOI: 10.1826/issn.1891-5949-2016-0201
- Ahonen, H. (2008). *Rehtoreiden kertoma johtajuus ja johtajaidenteetti*. Jyväskylä Studies in Education, Psychology and Social Research, 352. Jyväskylä: Jyväskylä University Print.
- Ahonen, J. (2001) *Ammattina rehtori*. Helsinki: Kirjapaja.
- Alava, J., Halttunen, L. & Risku, M. (2012). *Muuttuva oppilaitosjohtaminen*. Muistio 2012:3. Helsinki: Opetushallitus.
- Alvesson, M. & Sveningsson, S. (2009). Ledarskap – Hjälpemyter och inflytandeprocesser. In M. Alvesson & S. Sveningsson (Eds.) *Organisationer, ledning och processer* (pp.303-331). Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Alvesson, M. & Sköldböck, K. (2008). *Tolkning och reflektion. Vetenskapsfilosofi och kvalitativ metod*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Albinsson, P. (1998). *Den lärande organisationen – från vision till verklighet*. Falun: Brain Books.
- Angawi, G.T. (2012). Neo-charismatic Leadership: A new theory for effective leadership in Higher Education. *Educate*, 12(2), 34-47.
- Arfwedson, G. & Lundman, L. (1984). *Skolpersonal och skolkoder. Om arbetsplatser i förändring*. Stockholm: Liber.
- Aspelin, J. (2010). What really matters is 'between' - Understanding the focal point of education from an inter-human perspective. *Education Inquiry*, 1(2), pp.127-136.
- Aspelin, J. & Persson, S. (2011). *Om relationell pedagogik*. Falkenberg: Gleerups.
- Ball, S.J. (1987). *The Micro-politics of Schools*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Barnett, R. (2007). *A will to learn: Being a student in an age of uncertainty*. New York: Open University Press.
- Barrick, M. R., & Mount, M. K. (2005). Yes, personality matters: Moving on to more important matters. *Human Performance*, 18(4), 359-372.
- Bass, B.M., Avolio, B.J., Jung, D.I., & Berson, Y. (2003). Predicting unit performance by assessing transformational and transactional leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88(2), 207-218.
- Bass, B. M. & Reggio, R. E. (2006c). Transformational leadership and performance. Transformational leadership (pp. 47-56). New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Begley, P.T. (2006). Self-knowledge, capacity and sensitivity. Prerequisites to authentic leadership by school principals. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 44(6), 570-589.
- Begley, P.T. (2008). The nature and specialized purposes of educational leadership. In J. Lumby, G. Crow & P. Pashiardis (Eds.) *International Handbook on the Preparation and Development of School Leaders*. (pp.21-42). New York: Routledge.
- Bengtsson, J. (1991). *Den fenomenologiska rörelsen i Sverige. Mottagande och inflytande 1900-1968*. Göteborg: Daidalos.
- Berg, G. (1995). *Skolkultur – nyckeln till skolans utveckling*. Göteborg: Förlagshuset Gothia.
- Berg, G. (2011). *Skolledarskap och skolans frirum*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

- Bezzina, C. (2015). Leadership for the twenty-first century: Exploring the human dimension. In M. Uljens (Ed.) *Educational leadership - theory, research and school development*. (pp.129-140). Report Nr 38/2015. Vasa: Åbo Akademi.
- Bjorkquist, B. (2005). *Interpersonal and Group Dynamics*. Toronto: Emond Montgomery Publications Limited.
- Blossing, U. (Ed.) (2011). *Skolledaren i fokus – kunskap, värden och verktyg*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Botha, R. J. (2004). Excellence in leadership: Demands on the professional school principal. In *South African Journal of Education*, 24(3) 239-243.
- Bottery, M. (2004). *The Challenges of Educational Leadership*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Branson, C. M. (2005). Exploring the concept of values-led principalship. *Leading & Managing*, 11(1), 14-31.
- Branson, C. M. (2010). *Leading Educational Change Wisely*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Brante, T. (2009). Vad är en profession? Teoretiska ansatser och definitioner. In L. Maria (Ed.), *Vetenskap för profession*. (pp. 15-34). Högskolan i Borås.
- Brante, T. (2013). The professional landscape: The historical development of professions in Sweden. *Professions and Professionalism*, 3(2), <http://dx.doi.org/10.7577/pp.558>
- Brauckmann, S. & Pashiardis, P. (2010). The clash of evaluations: in search of the missing link between school accountability and school improvement - experiences from Cyprus. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 24(4), 330-350.
- Briggs, A.R.J. (2007). Exploring professional identities: middle leadership in further education colleges, *School Leadership & Management: Formerly School Organisation*, 27(5), 471-485, DOI: 10.1081/13632430701606152
- Browne-Ferrigno, T. (2003). Becoming a principal: Role conception, initial socialization, role-identity transformation, purposeful engagement. In *Education Administration Quarterly*, 39(4), 468-503. DOI: 10.1177/0013161X03255561
- Bruner, J. S. (1990). *Acts of Meaning*. New York: Harvard University Press.
- Brüde Sundin, J. (2009). *Vad gör rektorerna hela dagarna?* Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Bryk, A. & Schneider, B. (2002). *New trust in schools: A core source for improvement*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Bush, T. (1998). The National Professional Qualification for Headship: the key to effective school leadership? *School Leadership and Management*, 18(3), 321-34.
- Bush, T. & Glover, D. (2002). *School Leadership: Concepts and Evidence*. Nottingham: NCSL.
- Bush, T. (2003/2006). *Theories of Educational Leadership and Management*. London: Sage Publications.
- Burke, P. J., & Stets, J. E. (2009). *Identity Theory*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Carpentier, P. (1979). *Ryhmätyön perusteet*. Kuusamo: Ihmissuhdeopisto.
- Cavanagh, S. (1997). Content analysis: Concepts, methods and applications. *Nurse Researcher*, 4, 5–16.
- Cleve, F. (1884). *Grunddrag till skolpedagogik*. Helsingfors: G.W. Edlunds Förlag.
- Coles, M. J. & Southworth, G. (2005). *Developing leadership – creating the schools of tomorrow*. Glasgow: Open University Press.

- Crow, G. M., & Glascock, C. (1995). *Socialization to a new conception of the principalship*. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 33(1), 22-43.
- Crow, G., Day, C. & Møller, J. (2016). Framing research on school principals' identity. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, DOI: 10.1080/13603124.2015.1123299
- Das, S. (2008). What is School Culture? In T. Townsend & I. Bogotch (Eds.) *The elusive what and the problematic how. The essential leadership questions for school leaders and educational researchers*. (pp. 33-55). Rotterdam: Sense.
- Dey, I. (1993). *Qualitative Data Analysis. A User-Friendly Guide for Social Scientists*. London: Routledge.
- Day, C. (2007). What being a successful principal really means: An international perspective. *Educational Leadership and Administration*, Volume 19 (pp. 13-24).
- Day, C. & Leithwood, K. (Eds.) (2007). *Successful Principal leadership in times of change: An international perspective*. Dordrecht: Springer-Kluwer.
- Dimmock, C. (1999). Principals and school restructuring: Conceptualizing challenges as dilemmas. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 37(5), 441-62.
- Dimmock, C. & Walker, A. (2005). *Educational Leadership – Culture and Diversity*. London: Sage.
- Driskell, J.E., Hogan, J., Salas, E., & Hoskin, B. (1994). Cognitive and personality predictors of training performance. *Military Psychology*, 6(1), 31- 46.
- Ekehammar, B. (2012). Socialpsykologi. In P. Hwang, I. Lundberg, & A. Smedler, *Grunderna i vår tids psykologi* (pp.273-278). Stockholm: Natur och Kultur.
- Ekholm, M. (2004). Lärare, professionalitet och yrkeskvalitet. In C. Romlinson (Ed.) *Lärarprofessionalism – om professionella lärare* (pp.7-13). Stockholm: Lärarförbundet.
- Engeström, Y. (2004). *Ekspansiivinen oppiminen ja yhteiskehittely työssä*. Tampere: Vastapaino.
- English, F.W. (2008). *The Art of Educational Leadership. Balancing Performance and Accountability*. London: Sage.
- Englund, T. (2004). Professionella lärare? In C. Romlinson (Ed.) *Lärarprofessionalism – om professionella lärare*. (pp. 44-54). Stockholm: Lärarförbundet.
- Erikson, E. H. (1994). *Identity and the Life Cycle*. New York: Norton.
- Eriksson, K. & Lindström, U. (1997). Abduction – A way to deeper understanding of the world of caring. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Science*, 11, 195-198.
- Evetts, J. (2003). The sociological analysis of professionalism: Occupational change in the modern world. *International Sociology*, 18(2), 395–415.
- Fenton, A. M. & Pettigrew, E. M. (2000). *Theoretical Perspectives on New Forms of Organizing*. New York: Sage.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Herder & Herder.
- Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Frelin, A. (2010). *Teachers' relational practices and professionalism*. Department of Curriculum Studies, Uppsala Universitet. Västerås: Edita.
- Fullan, M. (2005). *Leadership Sustainability*. London: Corwin/ Sage.

- Fullan, M. (2001/2007). *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. New York and London: Teachers College Press.
- Fullan, M. (2010). *All systems go: The change imperative for whole system reform*. (Seminar series 204). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Gadamer, H-G. (1997). *Sanning och metod i urval*. Göteborg: Daidalos.
- Gerstner, C. R. & Day, D. V. (1997). Meta-analytic review of leader-member exchange theory: *Correlates and construct issues*. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82(86), 827-844.
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernitet och självvidentitet. Självet och samhället i den senmoderna epoken*. Göteborg: Daidalos.
- Graen, G. B., Novak, M. A. & Sommerkamp, P. (1982). The effects of leader-member exchange and job design on productivity and satisfaction: Testing a dual attachment model, *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 30(1), 109-131.
- Graen, G. B. & Uhl-Bien, M. (1991). The transformation of professionals into self-managing and partially self-designing contributors: Toward a theory of leadership-making. *Journal of Management Systems*, 3(3) pp. 49-54.
- Graen, G. B. & Uhl-Bien, M. (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. *Management Department Faculty Publications*. Paper 57. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/managementfacpub/57>
- Gronn, P. (1999). *The Making of Educational Leaders*. London and New York: Cassell.
- Gunter, H. & Ribbins, P. (2003). Challenging orthodoxy in school leadership studies: knowers, knowing and knowledge? *School Leadership & Management*, 23(2), 129-147.
- Gunter, H. M. & Grimaldi, E. & Hall, D. & Serpieri, R. (Eds.). (2016). *New public management and the reform of education. European lessons for policy and practice*. London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Hansén, S-E. (1997). ”Jag är proffs på dethär” *Om lärares arbete i en tid av förändring*. Rapport Nr 16/1997 från Pedagogiska fakulteten. Vasa: Åbo Akademi.
- Hargreaves, A. (2011). Foreword: UnFinnished Business. Foreword to P. Sahlberg, *Finnish Lessons. What can the world learn from educational change in Finland?* New York and London: Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Hargreaves, A. & Fink, D. (2005). *Sustainable Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Hargreaves, A. & Shirley, D. (2009). *The fourth way. The inspiring future of educational change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Heidegger, M. (1962) *Being and Time*. New York: Harper & Row
- Hellström, M. (2006). *Pedagoginen johtaminen- mitä se on?* <https://martifi.wordpress.com/2006/06/12/pedagoginen-johtaminen-mita-se-on/> Downloaded 15.2.2015 at 20.01.
- Hodgkinson, C. (1991). *Educational leadership: The moral Art*. Albany NY: State University of New York Press.
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's Consequences: comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Hollander, E.P. (1978). *Leadership dynamics. A practical guide to effective relationships*. London: Collier Macmillan Publishers.
- Hollander, E. P. (1979). The impact of Ralph M. Stogdill and the Ohio State leadership studies on a transactional approach to leadership, *Journal of Management*, 5(2), pp. 157-165.

- Horner, M. (1997). *Leadership theory: past, present and future*, 3(4), 270-287. MCB University Press, 1352-7592.
- Hosking, D. M. (2006). Not leaders, not followers: A post-modern discourse of leadership processes. In B. Shamir, R. Pillai, M. Bligh & M. Uhl-Bien (Eds.), *follower-centered perspectives on leadership: A tribute to the memory of James R. Meindl*. Greenwich,
- Hoyle, E. (1986). *The politics of school management*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.
- Hwang, P., Lundberg, I. & Smedler, A-C. (Eds.) (2012). *Grunderna i vår tids psykologi*. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur.
- Hämäläinen, K. (1983) *Skolans föreståndare i den nya skolan*. Tammerfors: Satapaino.
- Hämäläinen, K. & Sava, I. (1989). *De mänskliga relationerna i skolan*. Helsingfors: Finlands Kommunförbund.
- Hänninen, R. (2009). *Hyvän elementit ammatillisen koulutuksen johtajuudessa ja rehtorin työssä*. Keuruu: Otava.
- Höög, J. & Johansson, O. (Eds.) (2011). *Struktur, kultur, ledarskap – förutsättningar för framgångsrika skolor*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Imsen, G. (2004). Skolens ledelse, skolens kultur og praksis i klasserommet: Er det noen sammenheng? In G. Imsen (Ed.) *Det ustyrilige klasserommet. Om styring, samarbeid og læringsmiljø I grunnskolen* (pp. 144-164). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Isosomppi, L. (1996). *Johtaja vai juoksupoika. Acta Universitatis Tamperensis*, (ser. A, vol. 514). Tampere: Tampereen Yliopisto.
- Jerald, C. D. (2006). *School culture: 'The hidden curriculum'*. Washington, DC: Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement Web site: <http://www.centerforsri.org>
- Johansson, R. (2000). Om abduktion, intuition och syntes. *Nordisk Arkitekturforskning* 2000:3, s 13-19.
- Johansson, O. & Bredeson, P.V. (2011). Research on principals: Future perspectives and what's missing? In O. Johansson (Ed.) *Rektor-en forskningsöversikt 2000-2010* (pp.295-308). Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet.
- Joseph, J.E. (2004). *Language and Identity: National, Ethnic, Religious*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Juuti, P. (2013). *Jaetun johtajuuden taito*. Jyväskylä: PK-Kustannus.
- Karikoski, A. (2009). *Aika hyvä rehtoriksi. Selviääkö koulun johtamisesta hengissä?* Tutkimuksia 297. Helsinki: Helsingin Yliopisto.
- Kaufmann, G. & Kaufmann, A. (2005). *Psykologi i organisation och ledning*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Kouzes, J. M. & Posner, B. Z. (2007). *The Leadership Challenge*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Den kvalitativa forskningsintervjun*. Lund: Studentlitteratur
- Ladkin, D. (2010). *Rethinking leadership – A new look at old leadership questions*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.
- Lahtero, T. (2011). *Yhtenäiskoulun johtamiskulttuuri – symbolis-tulkinnallinen näkökulma*. Jyväskylä: Jyväskylä Studies in Education, Psychology and Social Research.
- Law, S. & Glover, D. (2000). *Educational Leadership and Learning: Practice, Policy and Research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Lehkonen, H. (2009). *Mikä tekee rehtorista selviytyjän? Perusopetuksen rehtoreiden käsityksiä työssä selviytymisestäään*. Tampere: Acta Universitatis Tamperensis

- 1454.
- Lennér-Axelsson, B. & Thylefors, I. (2005). *Arbetsgruppens psykologi*. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur.
- Leo, U. (2010). *Rektorer bör och rektorer gör*. Lund: Lund Studies in Sociology of Law 34.
- Leithwood, K. (1994). Leadership for school restructuring. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 30(4), 498-518.
- Lord, R. G., Brown, D. J. & Freiberg, S. J. (1999). Understanding the dynamics of leadership. The role of follower self-concepts in the leader/follower relationship. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 78(3), 167-203.
- Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher. A Sociological Study*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Macmillan (2011). *English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*. London: Macmillan Publishers Limited.
- Mahoney, M.J. (1991). *Human change processes: The Scientific Foundations of Psychotherapy*. New York: Basic Books.
- Meckes Conner, M. K. (2011). *A change of heart: A phenomenographic study of conversation*. UNLV Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers, and Capstones. 990. <http://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/thesisdissertations/990>
- Meindl, J. R. (1995). The romance of leadership as a follower-centric theory: a social-constructionist approach. *Leadership Quarterly*, 6(3), 329-41.
- Miller, T.W. & Miller, J.M. (2001). Educational leadership in the new millennium: a vision for 2020. *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 4(2), 181-9.
- Ministry of Education and Culture (2015). *Tomorrow's schools*. Report 2015:8 Helsinki: Opetus - ja kulttuuriministeriö.
- Moos, L. (Ed.) (2013). *Transnational influences on values and practices in Nordic educational leadership*. London: Springer.
- Moxnes, P. (1984). *Att lära och utvecklas i arbetsmiljön*. Borås: Natur och Kultur.
- Mustonen, K. (2003). *Mihin rehtoria tarvitaan? Rehtorin tehtävät ja niiden toteutuminen Pohjois-Savon yleissivistävissä kouluissa*. Kasvatustieteiden tiedekunta. Oulu: Oulun Yliopisto: Kajaanin opettajakoulutusyksikkö.
- Mäkelä, A. (2007). *Mitä rehtorit todella tekevät – Etnograafinen tapaustutkimus johtamisesta ja rehtorin tehtävästä peruskoulussa*. Jyväskylä Studies in Education, Psychology and Research 316. Jyväskylä: Jyväskylä University.
- Møller, J. (2004). *Ledaridentiteter i skolan*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Møller, J. (2011). *Research on principals in Norway*. In O. Johansson (Ed.) *Rektor – en forskningsöversikt 2000-2010* (pp.112-133). Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet.
- Møller, J. & Ottesen, E. (2011). Styrning, ledelse og kunnskapsutvikling i skolen. In J. Møller & E. Ottesen (Ed.) *Rektor som leder og sjef*. (pp.15-26). Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- National Board of Education (2014). *Grunderna för Läroplanen för den grundläggande utbildningen*. The National Core Curricula (in Swedish). Helsingfors: Utbildningsstyrelsen.
- National board of Education (2014) http://www.oph.fi/english/curricula_and_qualifications
- Nihlfors, E. & Johansson, O. (2010). *Rektor – en stark länk i styrningen av skolan*. Stockholm: SNS Förlag.
- Northouse, P. G. (2004). *Leadership: Theory and Practice*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

- van Oord, L. (2013). Towards transformative leadership in education. In *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, 16(4), p.419-434.
- Palmer, R. E. (1969). *Hermeneutics: Interpretation theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Parikh, J. (1991). *Managing Your Self: Management by Detached Involvement*. London: Basil Blackwell.
- Paukkuri, E. (2015). *How is the phenomenon of shared leadership understood in the theory and practice of school leadership? A case study conducted in four European schools*. Academic dissertation, University of Tampere. Tampere: Acta Universitatis Tamperensis.
- Peirce, C. S. (1990). *Pragmatism och kosmologi*. Göteborg: Daidalos.
- Pennanen, A. (2006). *Peruskoulun johtaminen*. Acta Universitas Ouluensis, 82. Oulu: Oulun yliopiston kasvatustieteiden tiedekunta.
- Pennanen, A. (Ed.) (2007). *Peruskoulun johtamisen avaimia*. Jyväskylä: PS-Kustannus.
- Pesonen, J. (2009). *Peruskoulun johtaminen – aikansa ilmiö*. Publications in Education N:o 132. Joensuu: University of Joensuu.
- Peterson, C. & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). Strengths of character and well-being. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 23(5), 603-619.
- Phipps, S.T.A., & Prieto, L.C. (2011). The influence of personality factors on transformational leadership: Exploring the moderating role of political skill. *International Journal of Leadership Studies*, 6(3), 430-444.
- Pont, B., Nusche, D. & Moorman, H. (2008). *Improving School Leadership*. Volume 1: Policy and practice. Paris: OECD www.sourceoecd.org/education/9789264044678
- Raasumaa, V. (2010). *Knowledge management functions of a principal in basic education*. Jyväskylä studies in education, psychology and social research 383. Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän Yliopisto.
- Rauhala, L. (1983). *Ihmiskäsitys ihmistyössä*. Oy Gaudeamus Ab. Jyväskylä: K. J. Gummerus.
- Risku, M. & Kanervio, P. (2011). Research on principals in Finland. In O. Johansson, (Ed.) *Rektor – en forskningsöversikt* (pp.161-186). Stockholm: Vetenskapsrådet.
- Ruohotie, P. (2005). *Oppiminen ja ammatillinen kasvu*. Helsinki: Werner Söderström.
- Sahlberg, P. (2007). Education policies for raising student learning: The Finnish approach. *Journal of Education Policy*, 22(2), 147-171.
- Sahlberg, P. (2010b). Educational change in Finland. In A. Hargreaves, A Lieberman, M.Fullan & D.Hopkins (Eds.) *Second international handbook of educational change* (pp.323-348). New York: Springer.
- Sahlberg, P. (2011). *Finnish lessons. What can the world learn from educational change in Finland?* New York and London: Teachers College Press.
- Salo, P. (2002). *Skolan som mikropolitisk organisation. En studie i det som skolan är*. Åbo: Åbo Akademis Förlag – Åbo Akademi University Press.
- Salo, P. & Sandén, T. (2016). Finland: Trust under pressure. In D. Fink (Ed.) *Trust and verify: The real keys to school improvement* (pp. 101-130). London: UCL Institute of Education Press, University College.
- Salovaara, P. (2011). *From leader-centricity towards leadership – a hermeneutic narrative approach*. Academic dissertation, University of Tampere. Tampere: Juvenes Print.

- Sandén, T. (2007). *Lust att leda i lust och leda. Om rektorers arbete under en tid av förändring*. Åbo: Åbo Akademi University Press.
- Sarason, S. B. (1971). *The Culture of School and the Problem of Change*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Schaffar, B. (2015). Paradigm i pedagogisk ledarskapsforskning – en vetenskapsfilosofisk analys. In M. Uljens (Ed.) *Educational Leadership – theory, research and school development* (pp. 41-58). Report from the Faculty of Education and Welfare Studies, Åbo Akademi University.
- Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Schratz, M. (2013). *Educational leadership: From best practice to next practice*. ISATT Conference, Ghent, July 1-5, 2013. Downloaded 30.12.2016.
- Seagal, S. & Horne, D. (1997/2004). *Human Dynamics. A new framework for understanding people and realizing the potential for our organizations*. Los Angeles: Human Dynamics International.
- Senge, P. M. (1990/1993/1998). *The fifth discipline. The art and practice of the learning organization*. London: Century Business.
- Senge, P., Scharmer, C. O., Jaworski, J. & Flowers, B. S. (2004). *Presence*. New York: Society for Organizational learning.
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (1992). *Moral Leadership - Getting to the heart of school improvement*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (2001). *Leadership - What's in it for schools?* London and New York: Routledge/Falmer.
- Shields, C. M. (2010). Transformative leadership: Working for equity in diverse contexts. *Educational administration quarterly*. 2010 46: 558 DOI:
- Siegrist, H. (2002). Professionalization/professions in history. *International encyclopedia of the social and behavioral sciences*. Amsterdam: Elsevier Science.
- Stoll, L. (1999). School culture. *School Improvement Network's Bulletin, No. 9*, Institute of Education, University of London.
- Stryker, S. & Burke, P. (2000). The past, present, and future of an identity theory. *Social psychology quarterly*. 63(4), 284-297. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2695840>
- Stålhammar, B. (1991) *Målstyrt ledarskap i skolan*. Göteborg: Förlagshuset Gothia.
- Svedberg, L. (2000). *Rektorsrollen. Om skolledarskapets gestaltning*. Stockholm: HLS förlag.
- Sullivan, W. (2000). Medicine under threat: Professionalism and professional identity. *Canadian medical association journal*, 162(5).
- Their, S. (1994). *Det pedagogiska ledarskapet*. Mariehamn: Mermerus.
- Tomlinson, H. (2004). *Educational leadership. Personal growth for professional development*. London: Sage.
- Torstendahl, R. (1990). Essential properties, strategic aims and historical development: three approaches to theories of professionalism. In M. Burrage & R. Torstendahl, *Professions in theory and history*. London: Sage.
- Townsend, T. & Bogotch, I. (Eds.) (2008). *The elusive what and the problematic how. The essential leadership questions for school leaders and educational researchers*. Rotterdam: Sense.
- Tukiainen, K. (1999). *Peruskoulun rehtorin toimintaprofilii*. Tutkimuksia 206. Academic dissertation, University of Helsinki. Helsinki: Helsingin yliopisto.

- Törnsén, M. (2011). Har framgångsrika skolor framgångsrika rektorer? In J.Höög & O. Johansson (Eds.) *Struktur, kultur, ledarskap- förutsättningar för framgångsrika skolor* (pp.75-96). Lund: Studentlitteratur.
- Uhl-Bien, M., Marion, R. & McKelvey, B. (2004). *Complexity leadership theory: Shifting leadership from the industrial age to the knowledge era*. Paper presented at the National Academy of Management Meeting, New Orleans, LA (2004).
- Uhl-Bien, M. (2006). Relational leadership theory: Exploring the social processes of leadership and organizing. In *The Leadership Quarterly*, 17(6): The Leadership Quarterly Yearly Review of Leadership; doi 10.1016/j.leaqua.2006.10.007
- Uhl-Bien, M. & Carsten, M.K. (2007). *Being ethical when the boss is not*. Available from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228846710_Being_Ethical_When_the_Boss_is_Not [accessed Feb 13, 2017].
- Uljens, M. & Nyman, C. (2013). Educational leadership in Finland or building a nation with bildung. In L. Moos (Ed.) *Transnational influences on values and practices in Nordic educational leadership. Is there a Nordic Model?* (pp. 31-48). Dordrecht: Springer.
- Uljens, M. & Rajakaltio, H. (2015) National Curriculum Development in Finland as Distributed and Non-Affirmative Educational Leadership. In M. Uljens (Ed.) *Educational Leadership – theory, research and school development* (pp. 208-234). Report from the Faculty of Education and Welfare Studies, Åbo Akademi University.
- Uljens, M., Wolff, L-A. & Frontini, S. (2016). Finland: NPM resistance or towards European neo-welfarism in education? In H. M. Gunter, E. Grimaldi, D. Hall, & R. Serpieri (Eds.) *New public management and the reform of education. European lessons for policy and practice* (pp.39-52). London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
- Uljens, M. & Ylimaki, R. (2015). Theory of educational leadership, didaktik and curriculum studies – A non-affirmative and discursive approach. In M. Uljens (Ed.) *Educational Leadership – theory, research and school development* (pp.103-128). Report from the Faculty of Education and Welfare Studies, Åbo Akademi University.
- Uljens, M. & Ylimaki, R. (2017). Non-Affirmative Theory of Education as a Foundation for Curriculum Studies, Didaktik and Educational Leadership (in press). In: M. Uljens & R. Ylimaki (Eds.), *Bridging Educational Leadership. Curriculum Studies and Didaktik*. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Ullman, A. (1997). *Rektorn- En studie av en titel och dess bärare*. Akademisk avhandling. Lärarhögskolan i Stockholm. Studies in Education and Sciences 11. Stockholm: HLS Förlag.
- van Veelen, R. & Slegers, P.J.C. & Endedijk, M.D. (2017). Professional learning among school leaders in secondary education: The impact of personal and work context factors. *Educational administration quarterly* 01/25/2017, p.0013161X1668912
- Weber, Max (1978). *Economy and Society*. CA: Berkeley, University of California Press.
- Wiedersheim-Paul, F. & Eriksson, L-T. (1991;1997). *Att utreda, forska och rapportera*. Malmö: Liber ekonomi/ Almqvist & Wiksell.
- Wermke, W. (2013). *Development and Autonomy. Conceptualising teachers' continuing professional development in different national contexts*. Stockholms universitet: Institutionen för pedagogik och didaktik 16. <http://www.edu.su.se/>
- Wolff, L. (2015). Det hållbara ledarskapets komplexitet: en etisk utmaning för utbildningssektorn. In M.Uljens (Ed.) *Educational leadership - theory, research and school development* (pp.77-102). Report Nr 38/2015. Vasa: Åbo Akademi.

Vuohijoki, T. (2006). *Pitää vain selviytyä. Tutkimus rehtorin työstä ja työssä jaksamisesta sukupuolen ja virka- aseman suhteen tarkasteltuna*. Turku: Turun yliopiston julkaisuja. Sarja C, Scripta lingua Fennica edita, osa 250.

Ylimäki, R. M. (2011). *Critical curriculum leadership. A framework for progressive education*. New York and London: Routledge.

Yukl, G. A. (2002). *Leadership in Organizations*. New York: Prentice-Hall.

Ärlestig, H. (2008). *Communication between principals and teachers in successful schools (academic dissertation)*. Umeå: Pedagogiska institutionen. Nr 89. Umeå Universitet.

Ärlestig, H. (2014). *Den svenska rektorn i ett internationellt perspektiv*. PPT-presentation http://www.snabber.se/files/rektorsprogram/helene_arlestig.pdf

www.finlex.fi Act 443/1970; 290/1978; 718/1984; 171/1991; 628/1998.

www.finlex.fi Act 968/1998; 865/2005

www.oph.fi/english/curricula

www.oph.fi/ OPS 2016 / LP 2016

Appendices

Appendix 1. Invitation to principals

Bästa Rektor!

Hösten 2009 påbörjade jag forskarstudier i den s k Forskarskolan vars forskningsområde är Pedagogiskt ledarskap och mångkulturell utbildning. Programmet administreras gemensamt av Helsingfors Universitet/prof Gunilla Holm och Åbo Akademi/ prof Michael Uljens.

Mitt forskningsintresse är att söka förståelse för Rektors ledarskap samt personliga och professionella utveckling och forskningen är en kvalitativ studie, dvs i den skall ingå bl a intervjuer med rektorer. Slutlig titel på den kommande avhandlingen är tillsvidare öppen. Rektorssysslan finns ju i alla skolformer, men jag avser att avgränsa mina informanter till kategorin tjänsterektorer inom grundundervisning vilket minskar skaran avsevärt; det finns endast ett fåtal tjänsterektorer i åk 1-6, däremot många i åk 7-9 samt på andra stadiet. Universitet och YHS är utanför mitt forskningsområde.

Jag skulle mycket gärna inkludera Dig som en informant i min forskning.

Den planerade arbetsordningen för min empiriska forskning är följande:

* Efter positivt svar från kontaktade rektorer träffas vi för en intervju. Jag sänder enligt överenskommelse intervjufrågor som disposition för intervjun i förväg.

* Efter intervjun skriver jag ut innehållet som en s k narrativ berättelse (kallas också för "life story"). Informanten benämns anonymt med pseudonym, t ex
-Rektor Axel leder en grundskola....

* Berättelsen sänds till rektorn/informanten som godkänner den.

Ur berättelsen lyfter jag sedan i min analys och diskussion fram synpunkter på olika fenomen/ frågeställningar som belyser forskningsområdet.

Bästa Rektor!

Vänligen respondera på min fråga om du ställer upp för intervju! Om du svarar ja, hoppas jag vi hittar en gemensam lämplig tid för intervju inom de närmaste veckorna.

Uppskattad tid ca 1-2 h.

Efter att jag fått respons från Dig sänder jag några öppna intervjufrågor till Dig som en förberedelse.

Nedervetil den 5.10.2011

Siv Saarukka

Appendix 2. Questions to principals

Intervjuer med rektorer

- 1) Vem är du? Beskriv dina personliga egenskaper
- 2) Berätta om din formella behörighet
- 3) Hur länge har du verkat som rektor
- 4) Berätta om din väg till rektorsjobbet
- 5) Hurudant är ditt behov av kompetensutveckling idag

- 6) Hur vill du definiera ”ledaridentitet”
- 7) Vilka värderingar är viktiga för dig i din position
- 8) Hur kommer dina värderingar till uttryck i ditt ledarskap
- 9) Vad består ditt ledarskap av
- 10) Vad upplever du att du har lyckats med i ditt ledarskap
- 11) Vilka faktorer påverkar din position som rektor; arbetsgivarrelationer?

- 12) Beskriv gemensamma mål och värderingar i er miljö
- 13) Hur kommer de gemensamma värderingarna till uttryck i er skola
- 14) Vilka element vill du lägga i begreppet ”hållbart ledarskap”
- 15) Hur ser du på skolan som sociokulturell miljö i dagens samhälle
- 16) Vilka förmågor hos dig kommer särskilt väl tillpass i ditt ledarskap
- 17) Vad borde du utveckla? Hur kunde det ske?

- 18) Din bild av rektorsrollen när du sökte jobbet
- 19) Din bild av rektorsrollen nu
- 20) Dina mål som ledare under din första tid som rektor och nu; jämför!
- 21) Vilka utmaningar för ledarskapet tycker du att skolan som organisation ställer

Appendix 3. Subjects for discussions with teachers in focus-groups

Temat för fokus-grupper

Frivilligt deltagande, anmälan enligt överenskommen information.

Om arbetsmiljön

Hur vill ni sammanfatta och utvärdera läsåret hittills?

Hur fungerar samarbetet mellan olika grupper och skolans ledning?

Vad är du/ni särskilt nöjda med i skolmiljön? Utvecklingspotential?

Hur vill ni karakterisera samtalsstilen inom kollegiet? Mellan rektor och kollegiet?

Om mötesrutiner

Hur fungerar mötesrutinerna? Tider/ beredning/ protokoll/ beslut/

Rektors, biträdande rektors, och ledningsgruppens uppgifter och ansvar – synpunkter?

Delegering och samarbete – finns intresse för ökat ansvar bland lärare?

Samarbete och engagemang från den kommunala skolledningen och förtroendevalda – synpunkter, utvecklingsförslag?

Om förväntningar

Era förväntningar på rektors ledarskap? Preciserat administration, pedagogik, elevhälsa, kontakter till kommunens skolledning, initiativ till utveckling, skolprojekt

Hur fungerar den formella (och informella) kommunikationen mellan rektor och lärare, i skolan överlag, mellan vårdnadshavare och skolan?

Utvecklingssamtal mellan rektor-lärare; mellan vårdnadshavare-lärare-elev? Hur vill ni definiera professionell kommunikation? Önskemål, synpunkter?

Om skolans verksamhetskultur

Synpunkter på läsårets tidtabellsärenden, läsordningar, planering, information, till undervisningsarrangemang hörande ärenden, elevhälsa, skolrutiner, mm.

Nedervetil i januari 2014

Med vänlig hälsning

Siv Saarukka



9 789521 235689 >

ISBN 978-952-12-3568-9