

Film analysis in management: a journey through the metaphors of the concept of leadership

Film analysis
in management

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Abstract

Purpose – The use of film language in management is an interesting method to understand the concept of leadership in the internal and external contexts of organizations, by means of metaphors. Thus, the objective of this study was to analyze the metaphors of leadership in a movie.

Design/methodology/approach – This was a qualitative research, which used the strategy of film analysis and content analysis (Bardin, 2016). Data were collected by scene decoupage, registered in an observation protocol. In the field of management, there is a growing interest in film analysis for understanding organizations, from inside and outside, by using dynamic methodologies.

Findings – The use of metaphors in film analysis made it possible to interpret concepts, for a better understanding of organizations. The identified leaders, despite adopting different attitudes at work, reach a common goal, with gains for the community.

Originality/value – This article also contributes to reflect on the teaching–learning process of management research through different methodological dimensions.

Keywords Film analysis, Management, Metaphors, Leadership

Paper type Literature review

Resumo

O uso da linguagem fílmica na administração se apresenta como um método interessante para entender o conceito de liderança nos contextos interno e externo das organizações, por meio das metáforas. Assim, o objetivo deste estudo foi analisar as metáforas de liderança existentes em um filme. Trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa, com uso da estratégia de análise fílmica e análise de conteúdo (Bardin, 2006). Os dados foram coletados por meio da decupagem das cenas, registradas em protocolo de observação. No campo da administração, percebe-se que existe um crescente interesse na análise fílmica para compreender as organizações, de maneira interna e externa, com metodologias dinâmicas. O uso de metáforas na análise do filme possibilitou interpretar conceitos para melhor compreender as organizações. As lideranças identificadas, apesar de adotarem posturas diferentes no processo de trabalho, chegam a um objetivo comum, com ganhos para a coletividade. Esse artigo também contribui para pensar em processo de ensino-aprendizagem da pesquisa na administração em diferentes dimensões metodológicas.

Palabras clave Análise Fílmica, Administração, Metáforas, Liderança

Tipo de papel Trabajo de investigación

Introduction

Management is a mix of science and art; the field is open to innovations by developing new practices and skills, with new dimensions that significantly change the art of learning and



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teaching (Davel, Vergara, & Ghadiri, 2007). A film can be used as a tool for the understanding of organizations, and this didactic resource brings new forms of management education that add deep knowledge to organizational concepts (Barros, Miranda, & Rodríguez, 2017). A film is not a neutral instrument of communication, and film language is an event that takes part in the construction of subjects with management topics, where images facilitate the reflection of playful processes for new discoveries and problem-solving toward self-transformation (Ipiranga, 2005).

Maurice Merleau Ponty, in the 1940s, considered movies a phenomenological art, and film metaphors allow us to broaden concepts and deepen debates that complement an apprentice's learning and teaching (Fleury & Sarsur, 2007). Metaphor is a figure of speech that aims to build other concepts, in a symbolic approach for an abstract comparison in terms of ideas (Vergara, 2015). Metaphor is a possibility of knowledge building that facilitates project development, by guiding interpretation and action (Davel, Calasans, & Moura, 2015).

Leite, Nishimura and Silva (2016) state that observational studies allow the advancement of knowledge on issues related to learning methodologies, and films allow us to extract verbal and nonverbal data from the behavior of characters; the scientific spirit creates the meaning of the problem, and answers result from the dialectically built knowledge that questions, constructs, deconstructs and reconstructs. Concept transfer and the search for analogies and metaphors facilitate the understanding of the teaching and learning elements. The use of artistic and cultural resources enables the exploration, inaccessible through emotions, into concepts, with great learning (Cunha, 2007).

Wood (2007) observes that the practical experience of using films to discuss the concept of leadership, in the discipline Post-industrial Organizations, in graduate courses, was fruitful and stimulating, and students considered positive the use of visual resources, which allowed them to reflect on their ontological and epistemological perspectives, thus enriching the learning process. To the author, this experiment has brought a change to class dynamics, with greater interactions and discussions and a critical content, serving as a resource for watching films with "other eyes," by recognizing signs and meanings previously unconscious.

In order to deepen research on film analysis in the field of management, our research question was "How does the film portray leadership concepts through metaphors?" Hence, the main objective was to analyze the metaphors about leadership present in a film. We chose the movie *Chicken Run* (Park and Lord, 2000), an animated film, which is full of metaphors, with important concepts in the field of management about leadership and teamwork, making it easier to understand internal and external behaviors of organizations. The film was released in Brazil in 2000, inspired by a fable from the 1950s.

We chose a qualitative methodology, the content analysis (Bardin, 2016), divided into three stages: (1) preanalysis, (2) material exploration and (3) treatment of results, inference and interpretation. We determined the selection criteria for using this film by theoretical propositions involving the construct "leadership," as well as film analysis as the locus of the learning process.

We consider that film language represents the context of organizations through the metaphors embedded in the film's speeches and experiences. With the scenes decoupage and recorded in protocol, it was possible to describe, discuss and understand the phenomenon of leadership in organizations. Therefore, the metaphors present in the film facilitate the understanding of internal and external dynamics of organizations, proving to be an interesting and creative way for the teaching-learning process in management.

Theoretical framework

Film analysis and the use of metaphor in management studies

According to Wood (2008), the use of films has aroused the interest of teachers and researchers, and they have become a tool to think about the management of companies.

Management teaching allows communication to provide an internal and external visibility of the firm (Alves & Blikstein, 2010). In this sense, we carried out a search in the SPELL database, between 1998 and 2017, in order to know the field. We found 37 articles on film analysis in management.

Leite and Leite (2007, 2010) published six of the 37 articles found on film analysis. Their articles have in common the film analysis method guiding several areas of the management field, such as dynamic capabilities, communication and people management. Leite and Leite (2007, 2010) are partners in three of the studies, as well as Freitas and Leite (2015) have contributed to two papers in partnership with Leite (2015, 2017).

Addressing film analysis, Ipiranga (2005) and Bizarria et al. (2014); Bizarria et al. (2017) contributed to two papers. Paiva et al. (2008), in partnership, also have contributed to two articles. Finally, Bizarria et al. (2014) also published twice in partnership. The other researchers have contributed to only one paper.

We found that in the field of management, there are a stable number of publications on film analysis, with 2013 and 2014 being the years of the highest volume, which rose again from 2015 to 2017. Journals in the database that most published papers on film analysis were *Revista Interdisciplinar de Gestão Social*, with five articles, *Revista de Administração da UFSM* (3 articles), *Revista de Administração de Empresas* (3), *Revista de Gestão* (3), *Cadernos EBAPE.BR* (2), *Organizações & Sociedade* (2), *REUNA* (2), *Revista de Administração Mackenzie* (2), *Revista Pensamento Contemporâneo em Administração* (2) and *Rosa dos Ventos – Turismo e Hospitalidade* (2). Other magazines published only one article.

After reading and analyzing the articles, we conclude that the discussion of film language in the context of organizations is appropriate. Freitas and Leite (2015) state that the different situations present in a film can also be observed and experienced at the organizational setting, where actors are the professionals who interact daily, by communicating, producing and reproducing speeches.

Inserting the metaphor into the discussion of film language, we highlight Morgan's studies (2007, 2011). The author (2011) defines it as a device to embellish the speech since it implies a sensitive and materialistic way of thinking and looking at the world. The use of metaphor considers organizations as units of analysis, by observing them and their members with different sets of "needs" arising from relationship patterns that allow them to adapt to the environment.

Every belief, from classical to modern management theory, suggests that organizations can or should be rational systems that operate as efficiently as possible; over time, changes in the structure of organizations have always aimed to attain an operation as accurate as possible within authority standards (Morgan, 2011).

Leadership and metaphor

Campos and Davel (2017) observe that through arts, the process of assimilation and learning takes place in a creative way, with the social engagement of the produced knowledge. Appreciation of artistic and literary work allows a new look and arouses senses, thus developing the creativity of students in the area of management (Baêta, 2007). In her experience of using a dynamic resource, based on the book "*The traveler's luggage*," published by Caminhos editor, she managed to evoke childhood's stored issues and her own concerns, seeking to understand what disturbed her and identifying situations revealed between the lines.

According to Botelho (2004), experiencing and overcoming conflicts allows to symbolically rebuild memories at the level of consciousness, and the memory is activated by flashes. In the book "*The cherries*," the metaphor used was that of a scorpion trapped in a circle of fire. For the author, this metaphor represents the steps the girl has to take to reach

maturity, related to the tests she has to undergo, and the symbolic death represents a metaphor for the core of the initiation process.

Rosa (2007) says that the cartoon metaphor came to be part of the whole, of the cycle of death and rebirth, where characters change but the soul and spirit remain enchanted by fairy godmothers. Silva and Gomes (2009) report that animated films use metaphors to convey subjectivities, where the drawings bring information and old sensations that are forgotten when we become adults.

Davel *et al.* (2015) used the metaphor to investigate leadership in the field of management, focusing on a gardener. In this approach, the authors describe leadership metaphors about the gardener's practices. Self-development and self-knowledge are critical in leadership and require interpretation and human understanding. The human being is unique, but the story takes place in the collective sphere, where interpretation precedes comprehension, and comprehension is the ability to put oneself in the place of the other (Minayo, 2012).

The gardener metaphor on leadership comprises six steps, where the leader (1) seeks self-knowledge and internal harmonization; (2) prepares the ground for projects in which people develop themselves; (3) avoids sloppy pruning at the wrong time, measure and place and directs them to reach the goal; (4) provides training and creates forms of interaction and knowledge exchange by awakening entrepreneurial engagement; (5) handles the collective situations where people are invited to perform activities in the organization and makes the decision in a mature and constructive way and (6) reaps the result of the work developed collectively during the trajectory; if not, he/she analyzes the problem cause, in order to learn from it (Davel *et al.*, 2015).

Reviews of research on leadership (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009; Bergamini, 1994a, 1994b; Hernandez, Eberly, Avolio, & Johnson, 2011; Kilburg & Donohue 2011; Uhl-Bien, 2006) show how complex this concept is. Kilburg and Donohue (2011) developed a table with the main approaches to leadership theory: ethics and morality theory, effectiveness and result theory, network theory, situation theory, competence theory, style theory, ecological systems theory and personality traits theory. Avolio *et al.* (2009) examined the theoretical and empirical developments in leadership literature and highlighted the authentic, transformational, cognitive, transactional, shared, comparative, transcultural, global and servant leadership.

According to the APS Leadership Development Strategy (2011), transformational leaders seek to increase followers' awareness on issues of consequence and then turn followers into leaders of themselves. The leader changes and inspires followers to go beyond expectations, while exceeding their own interest for the sake of the organization (Avolio *et al.*, 2009).

On the other hand, bureaucratic leadership proposes a monocratically organized categorization of functions, where leadership is purely a technical superiority above any other form of organization. The impersonal character of bureaucratic work, with the separation between the private sphere and the official sphere of the position, promotes the integration of the employee into the objective functional conditions, always given by the order-based mechanism (Weber, 1982).

Therefore, leadership is a relevant topic in management. The use of metaphors to interpret management concepts creatively can arouse interest and produce insights in order to better understand organizations. Films have an interesting methodology for the comprehension of the meanings and signs in qualitative analyses because they are not neutral instruments and can bring significant results.

Methods

To examine leadership through metaphors, by using the movie *Chicken Run* (Park *et al.*, 2000), we chose content analysis. Given the terminological diversification, we decided to use the

three stages of the technique recommended by Bardin (2006): (1) preanalysis, (2) material exploration and (3) treatment of results, inference and interpretation.

In phase 1, the preanalysis, we began by watching the movie, which is 1-h and 24-min long, thoroughly, as many times as necessary, to look for scenes that represented leadership and, at the same time, were pertinent to the content and purpose of the investigation, in order to classify each scene as unique in each of the categories. We divided the time used in these sessions into three steps: first, for the general understanding of the narrative, when we watched the film without interruption; second, to find out leading personalities, in order to decide if they really fitted into the theoretical expectation that we were seeking; and third, which fits into Bardin's second phase, for material exploration, regarding the scenes' decoupage. This required about 25 hours of work.

We selected registration units in phase 2 (material exploration), when we cut, counted, listed and chose categories for classification and aggregation of each type of leader. Thus, we watched the movie several times and created tables to encode the manifest content of the characters' speeches and tables to identify figures of speech in the signs' messages and between the lines.

At last, phase 3 comprised treatment of results, inference and interpretation.

Minayo (2008) observes that there is no opposition between quantitative and qualitative data and that they can complement each other to allow for a better understanding of the empirical reality. Metaphors are used as a figure of speech, and content analysis is a technique for data processing that aims to identify what is being said about a given topic (Vergara, 2015).

The researcher must analyze both manifest and latent content (Triviños, 2011). Gomes Campos (2004) state that content analysis studies both manifest and objective contents, as well as figures of speech, such as suspension points, messages between the lines and subjective contents; thus, it emphasizes the importance of semantics for the content of a communication on what is not apparent in the message. Minayo, Deslandes, Cruz Neto and Gomes (1994) observe that the path of thought and the practice should walk together.

Hence, we proceeded with the analysis and interpretation of the scenes, in order to attain Bardin's (2006) stages 2 and 3, which defined the workflows.

Presentation and analysis of results

The movie *Chicken Run* was released in 2000, based on a fable from the 1950s, and was also inspired by the movie *Escaping from Hell*, with Charles Bronson and Steve McQueen, set in a concentration camp for war prisoners. Directed by Peter Lord and Nick Park and produced by Nick Park, Peter Lord and David Sproxton, *Chicken Run* was produced and distributed by Aardman Animations and DreamWorks Pictures Pathé (Park *et al.*, 2000).

The film tells the characters' quest for freedom by means of metaphors. Resilience was identified in the character Ginger, who faced difficulties to "escape the siege." Ginger manages to get out of the siege on her own but goes back to help the others and then is trapped in confinement several times. Ginger leaves the confinement and, together with the others, plans and executes the exit of all. At the end of the film, through teamwork coordinated by several leadership styles, the characters find freedom, their sanctuary away from the farm, and follow their journey.

Table I describes the film characters according to the analysis category of the leader's style, his/hers attributes and metaphors.

The phrases of the film that were used for content analysis, with the meaning units for the transformational leadership styles, are given in the following section of the article.

The following are the film sentences by the character Ginger with styles' meaning unit of the category "transformational leadership."

Table I.
Characters, styles,
attributes and
metaphors

Characters	Categories	Attributes	Metaphor
Ginger	Transformational leadership	Trapped in the siege since childhood, manages to escape the siege, but returns to take them all together, ends up trapped several times and stays in confinement	Resilience gardener
Mac	Transformational leadership	Rational, redoes all statistical calculations to check the problems, and finds out the lack of impulse	Gardener
Bunty	Transformational leadership	High egg production, tests the exercises, takes into account personal and collective goals, active role in transformation	Gardener
Rocky	Transformational leadership	Uses reason and emotion to help characters to escape the siege, takes into account individual and collective goals	Gardener
Fowler	Bureaucratic leadership	Follows the orders, does not question right or wrong, and does not like innovation	Trapped in the siege
Babs	Follower	Does not know she is imprisoned, follows orders without questioning	Trapped in the siege
Mrs. Tweedy	Authoritarianism in organizations	Management by coercion and fear	Trapped in the siege
Mr. Tweedy	Authoritarianism in organizations	Obeys orders for fear of questioning, imposes fear on others	Trapped in the siege

I was not on vacation, I was in solitary confinement

Flower returns to her place

And the eggs counting

Bunty, why didn't you give her one of yours?

We have to get out of here

Of course we will get out of here

Meeting tonight at cabin 17

It is for our plan, we want these things, can you get them?

Eggs? Eggs are very valuable

I'm asking for order, please, please

Thanks

I Know that our last attempt was a failure, but Mac and I came up with a brand new plan show it Mac, Mac

All of you think, think, what haven't we tried yet?

How many empty nests will still have to wait?

So, to lay eggs your whole life, and then be grabbed, beheaded and baked, is it good for you?

The fences do not only surround the farms, they are here in your heads

There is a better place outside, a place beyond the hill, open spaces, trees, grass, can you imagine that?

There is no farm, there is no farmer... He is nowhere, don't you understand? There is no egg count, there are no dogs or chicken houses, or locks, and there are no fences hence, there is a chance

what am I doing, I can't release this... may heaven help us...

That's how we are going to get out of here, what's in the poster, let's fly

I Knew it was possible, I knew the answer would come, we are all going to fly over that fence you can teach us

it's not difficult to take one or even two chickens out of here, mas this involves all of us I think where there's a will there's a way

Then teach us

that's what we want, freedom

Teach us how to fly

I feel that we're spinning in circles

You can...yes, yes, yes

there's something wrong, they will kill us all

Because here the rule is 'speak always the truth'

I worry about them

Concern that I don't expect a free adventurer to have

I Owe you excuses, I thought that you didn't care about us, but after all of this, it seems that I was wrong we would be able to build this, let's fly out of here

Fowler gave us the solution

let's build a plane

We all got it

The following are the film sentences by the character Mac with styles' meaning unit of the category "transformational leadership."

Welcome

Got a new plan?

Let's try under?

It is above. Right

Ginger? Are we still escaping?

We tried to go under the fence and it didn't work, thus the plan is to go over

We sit here, wind, and there we go

Scotland

I Hate to be pessimistic, but I did and redid all calculations and saw that we were not made to fly yes, yes, I believe you, but if we could see with our own eyes we would have some answers impulse, according to the calculations, I just finished doing and redoing, and we lack impulse they take off because they've got impulse

The following are the film sentences by the character Bunty with styles' meaning unit of the category "transformational leadership."

Calm down, you silly old man, they just want to tell us

I laid 5 eggs this morning, I am happy with that

I would give, but she didn't tell me

She didn't tell anyone

The farmer is coming

We did not try, not try to escape

Maybe it wouldn't be empty if she spent more time laying than escaping in all my life I've never heard something so fantastic and so liar face the facts, the chances of leaving here are one in a million

It's evident, it's a professional flying rooster, if flies from farm to farm making demonstrations for sure

Yes, it is pulsing, that's cool

I'm already in the mood

Shut up and dance

No panic

Pedal with all your strength

The following are the film sentences by the character Rocky with styles' meaning unit of the category "transformational leadership."

Freedom

Thanks, ladies and gentlemen, it is a wonderful audience

Rocky the flying rooster

Who are you, where am I, what happened to my wing?

Calm, grandpa, cockfight is illegal in my land

Land of freedom and home of the brave

America

what animal bit grandpa?

My name is Rocky, a Rhode Island Red, or just Rhodes

You know, I am a traveler by nature, I have already lived in a backyard for some time, but I couldn't get used to it

The road is more my kind, just put a backpack on and head to where the wind blows they call me in my land the free and lonely adventurer

It's the road calling my name, I was born to answer this call, bye it's a cruel world, you should already be used to it

I Already have my problems to worry about, and it should not be so difficult to escape, look at me all of you?

listen, my little sister, I won't go back to that life

I Am a free adventurer, with emphasis on free

don't worry, I will teach you all that I know

So, you want to fly, isn't it? This will not be easy, and won't happen overnight flying requires 3 things: Hard work, perseverance and hard work

The most important thing is that we have to work as a team

Attention, everyone to work

Relax, we are making progress

And now, girls, let's flap wings

Go, go, go, go

Good work, girls, feeling pain is a good sign, pain is your friend, OK, it is positive keep confidence, you'll get there

This is part of the process, girls, don't worry

Continue with flight thoughts

Everything OK, dear? Good, this is a little help to push you. Impulse exercises

Don't exaggerate, she didn't talk seriously

Listen, I have seen hard eggs in my life, but you boiled them for more than 20 minutes

Take it easy, know that in America we have a rule, if you want to motivate someone, don't talk about death hey, we worked too much, time to relax

This is rhythm, little sister, feel it pulsing inside your body feel the rhythm, follow the crowd

The following are the film sentences with styles' meaning unit of the category "Bureaucratic manager."

Call time, come closer, don't be late for the search

Accelerating, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2... let's go...faster... Discipline, order... In my time...

when a superior called for a combat we jumped and went fighting, this is the example

In my time...

How do you dare to speak like this with a superior officer... In my time...

Will be scolded for this, will be punished

Attention

Silence, let's put some discipline in the troop, in my time we didn't waste time with unnecessary chatter I don't like his appearance, the eyes are too close, and he is a Yankee

Big deal, pretentious Yankees always arriving late at all wars, overpaid, super-males and super-boring absolutely outrageous, a superior having to share his lodging, and with a not commissioned Yankee, in my time...

Your side of the bunk, the bunk is all mine, it's my side of the bunk absolutely outrageous

How silly, arrogant Yankees think they know everything

That Yankee is not reliable

But what is this, I don't remember having authorized any ball but what are you waiting, boy, fly there, save her

The speeches of the characters, who are in a management position, with the units of meaning, are given in the following section. These characters do not have a legitimate leadership; they have the style of authoritarianism in organizations by coercion.

The following are the film sentences by the character Mrs. Tweedy with styles' meaning unit of the category "Authoritarianism in organizations."

Mr Tweedy, what is the chicken doing outside the fence?

what the hell, stupid and worthless animals, I'm tired of getting minuscule profits quiet, I'm seeing something

I Said quiet

what are you thinking of, a ridiculous idea of chicken escape it's only on your head Mr. Tweedy, repeat it

Now, continue to repeat this... Because I don't want to hear any word on the subject was I clear?

They are stupid chickens, except for you. They are the dumbest creatures on the planet they don't think, don't plot, and are not organized read the manual

The following are the film sentences by the character Mr. Tweedy with styles' meaning unit of the category "Authoritarianism in organizations."

I'll teach you to not make a fool of me

And should this be a lesson for all of you. . . No chicken escapes from the Tweedy's farm

These chickens are plotting

They are organized, I know that

Only in your head, only in your head, only in your head, only in your head

In [Table II](#), we did a decoupage of the scenes and read between the lines of the symbolic messages in the scenes, colors, songs and metaphors used in the film. We made a description, along with the time of the scenes in the movie.

In the "transformational leadership" category ([Avolio et al., 2009](#); [Bergamini, 1994a, 1994b](#); [Sant'Anna, Campos, & Lotfi, 2012](#)), the leader and the follower play an active role in organizational transformation, where gains are collective. We notice these attributes in the characters Ginger, Mac, Bunty and Rocky, who, as leaders, exemplified with their actions the motivational model of interpersonal relationships ([Table I](#)), know the needs of their followers to infer, propose inference in two directions and establish a climate of respect for him/her and for the other.

The transformational leader takes into account individual and organizational goals, by encouraging his followers and peers to develop themselves and exceed expectations ([Bergamini, 1994a, 1994b](#)). Transformational leadership is based on sensitivity to one's own needs and expectations of others, where there is an exchange between leader and follower ([Sant'Anna et al., 2012](#)).

According to [Davel et al. \(2015\)](#), the experience of a leader occurs as a process of facilitating the development of projects, organizations and people, of himself/herself and of

Scenes/music	Time	Symbolic metaphors
The moon, the fence, the night	0:50	The sieges, the fences, the cold, the dark
Check if the lock is securely attached	1:14	Slavery/prisoners
Ginger put the foot outside	1:29	Concern about the unknown
Ginger escapes from under the fence, through the ground	2:06	The quest for freedom
Ginger calls her friends	2:12	Collaboration
Characters are afraid of leaving the siege	2:25	Excitement but fear
Bunty is stuck between the fence and the ground, Ginger comes back to help	2:34	Collaboration of all, freedom as a collective goal
Bunty... the friends help		
Ginger defends herself with the "breaking of one of the 7 dwarfs"	3:08	The defense for escaping, the breaking as a process
Mrs. Tweedy threatens with arched hands	3:33	Management through coercion and fear
Mr. Tweedy gets his voice stuck	3:35	The fear
Mr. Tweedy bent with fear of Mrs. Tweedy	3:38	Obeys the orders and arrests Ginger Mr Tweedy gets angry and discounts on Ginger, imposing fear on her
Mr. Tweedy gets his voice stuck	3:35	The fear
Chickens in siege observe	3:37	Coercion
Mr. Tweedy throws Ginger in the solitary cell	3:52, 5:48, 6:32, 7:03, 7:06	Ginger's resilience
Mr. Tweedy cries and points the finger to the other characters, and threatens "let this be a lesson"	4:00	Punishment by example, builds fear
Chickens "sleep" and get up	4:29	Mr. Tweedy collects all the eggs
Ginger was bent and Mr. Tweedy kicks Ginger into the fence	5:03	Ginger lifts her head and goes to cabin 17
In cabin 17 they make a plan	5:07, 6:36	Planning for freedom, teamwork
Ginger escapes from the fence and her friends fumble to get out	5:46	Ginger returns to the solitary cell
Mrs. Tweedy takes note on the graph of the drop in eggs collection	5:55	Productivity drop
Ginger presents a new planning	6:02	Freedom as a collective goal, teamwork
Ginger tries to escape underground	6:12	Night, dogs find Ginger
Characters try to escape as scarecrows	6:51	Return to the fence when discovered, and Ginger goes to confinement
Characters that were discovered trying to escape were afraid	6:57	Returned to the siege
Petz keeps knitting, doesn't bother to be in the siege and doesn't understand that she is trapped	7:22	Unconsciousness
Roost fowler threatens the chickens	8:15	Bureaucracy, does not accept innovation, leaves all characters dizzy by his running
Funeral music and heavy steps	8:23, 9:26	Coercion, to build fear
Mr. Tweedy stretches his gloves and release them to make a big noise	8:37	Coercion, to build fear
The chickens widen her eyes and go inside	8:40	Fear was built
Mrs. Tweedy checks the board "egg production record"	9:09	Unsatisfied with the collection
Petz understands nothing and thinks that Edwina is leaving on vacation	9:39	Unconsciousness
The axe's sound, Edwina's death	10:11	The sigh and sadness of the characters that leave bent

(continued)

Table II.
Decoupage of scenes of
the category symbolic
metaphors

Table II.

Scenes/music	Time	Symbolic metaphors
Sound of birds flying	10:27	The sound of freedom
Birds flying	10:28	The hope of freedom
Birds flying as a V	10:29	Freedom as a collective goal, teamwork e
At the sound of a music Mrs. Tweedy calculates the production of eggs, the owl attached to the table	12:49	Unsatisfied with minuscule profits
Mrs. Tweedy hits the table and says screaming	13:47	Built fear in Mr. Tweedy
New planning	14:27	Planning and teamwork
Mr. Tweedy checks if the chickens are at place	16:00	Characters pretend to be sleeping
Ginger points to their heads	17:06	The mind fences
Ginger describes the paradise to her friends and shows a picture	17:43	They get stunned with the place but then do not believe
Ginger weeps and becomes furious	18:26	Sadness for being trapped and unable to take the others
Rocky's flight	19:21	The hope to escape flying
Rocky's speech that wins through his charm	21:46	Characters are enchanted with Rocky
Rocky wants to teach Ginger to escape, but she wants to take everyone	23:28	Freedom as a collective goal
In cabin 17 Rocky gives instructions on how to fly	27:20	Rocky defines goals and teaches them to work as a team
Characters do exercises	28:15	Hard work, effort
Rocky wasn't even paying attention to his instructions	28:53	They spin but don't move
Characters are exhausted from so many exercises	31:25	Rocky encourages them to not give up, says that this is part of the process
Mac redid all the calculations and finds out that they are not meant to fly	34:22	Only believes seeing
Rocky made a fuss, told jokes and amused the characters	35:23	They had fun and became motivated again
Mrs. Tweedy walks with heavy steps and stretches the rope with a loud noise to cause fear	40:45	Coercion, to build fear
The melancholic music, characters are sad and curved	43:23	Lack of hope
Rocky turns on music and dances to cheer them up	44:40	Time to relax, characters cheer up
Chickens come in, pies come out	50:10	"They come out bent"
Suspense music, passage through "fire"	52:27	Passage through "fire"
Airplane building	1:03	Teamwork
Celebrate teamwork	1:11	Collective freedom achieved

others involved. The leader as a facilitator, through the gardening metaphor, creates conditions for planting ideas, drives project development, sows by believing in potentials, handles the process, finds solutions and celebrates results as a harvest. This was identified in the transformational leadership of Ginger, Mac, Bunty and Rocky.

On the other hand, the category of "bureaucratic leader" has "accuracy, speed, clarity, knowledge of archives, continuity, discretion, unity, strict subordination, reduction of friction and of material and personal costs" (Weber, 1982, p. 230). However, this older leadership follows orders, does not question right or wrong and does not like innovation. The character Fowler was identified as bureaucratic, follows orders, does not question, does not like

innovation; he is trapped in the siege by his unconsciousness, lack of knowledge of himself and his potentialities.

Babs was identified in the category “follower,” also trapped in the siege by unconsciousness, and follows orders without questioning.

Mrs. Tweedy and Mr. Tweedy were identified in the category “authoritarianism in organizations,” where they manage by coercion and fear. The difference between leadership and management was explicit in the movie, distinguishing the one that only occupies a temporary management position from the leader who, even without the hierarchical function, is a catalyst that favors his own development and that of groups and projects.

Creative metaphors cross the whole film, such as the breaking of the “dwarves” to defend oneself, used in the process. [Morgan \(2011\)](#) revealed the logic of change in organizations as instruments of domination, making us look at the company where we work in a different way, leading to a reflection on the goals and objectives of the organization and noting that work may not be routine and repetitive. The metaphor used for “chickens come in” and “pies come out” demonstrates the form of coercion and fear of “bending,” much used by ancient power institutions to keep control, “don’t think” and “don’t question.”

The image of the organization as flow and transformation. Certainly, the closest representation of the current organizational scene, this image is focused on interactions, circles, contradiction and crisis ([Morgan, 2011](#)). The old schools of scientific management emerged from models that emphasized coercive control systems. Today, the hierarchical position of authoritarianism in organizations in a coercive way no longer works and does not guarantee permanence.

Final remarks

This study aimed to analyze the metaphors about leadership in a film. In recent years, there is a growing interest in film analyses in the field of management. These dynamic methodologies help to understand organizations in their internal and external environments; therefore, leadership is a relevant topic in management, and the use of metaphors in film analysis made it possible to interpret concepts in order to better understand organizations.

The film is not a neutral instrument, sounds are the results of vibrations, such as colors and some frequencies, the capacity of vibrations depends on the sensitive apparatus and synesthesia changes the ability of perceptions ([Monteiro, 1985](#)). Management shows a dynamics in the metaphors and analogies used in film language, awakening reflections and new dynamics.

The concepts of freedom, teamwork, resilience and leadership styles are presented in the film in a creative way, through the “sieges” metaphors. The signs, the signals, the meanings through communication, the choice of songs, gestures, attitudes, colors, numbers and verbal and nonverbal expressions of the characters are identified between the lines, giving meaning to metaphors.

Leadership reflects different concepts for different people. The term leadership has been studied in the last centuries, but the concern with leadership comes from ancient times, and the metaphors that can be used to define leadership are several. The leaders identified in the film, despite adopting different attitudes in the work process, achieve the final goal, which was the exit from the siege toward freedom, which provided collective gains.

The leader who uses the metaphor of gardening practices favors his development and that of groups and projects. The leader, as a facilitator of development, makes way for the group through his own movement. The dimensions of time and space, with possibilities of metaphors, explore different paths by innovating in knowledge building in the field of leadership ([Davel et al., 2015](#)).

As a contribution, this study presents the film as an instrument for the teaching and learning process and expands the field of management studies with methodological creativity, which can touch individuals and arouse engagement from knowledge acquired in a

transformational way. In addition, this article also contributes to address the teaching-learning process in management research, through different methodological dimensions, and can help to identify and analyze the internal and external contexts of organizations. Future studies can broaden film analysis, by approaching other types of leaders, as well as other management concepts. We also suggest searching empirical evidence with students and universities that use this method.

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