



Aalto University
School of Business

Bachelor's Thesis Seminar Spring 2019 (57C99902)

3rd Introductory lecture

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UPDATED

Timetable from now on

- Research plan and research profiling assignment, due 31.1.2019, submission via MyCourses/Assignments
- Group meetings on 5.2.2019
 - you will be informed about your group before this
 - Detailed schedule for presentations decided then
- Work on thesis during the spring
- Presentations around weeks 16-20 (April 16th-May 21st)
- Deadline for final thesis 23.5.2019
- If you need support, do contact supervisors via e.g. email

Contents of today's lecture

- **Reading source literature**
- **Theoretical framework**
- **Writing your report**
- **Referring to sources**
- **List of references**
- **The structure of the final report**
 - **Introduction**
 - **Content chapters**
 - **Conclusions**
- **Seminar sessions**



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Reading your source literature

Reading sources 1(2)



- **Background literature vs. Research literature**
 - Especially, in the beginning there might be a lot of background literature you can scan through (“food for thought”)
 - When your topic becomes more focused, you should turn to more intense reading (even 2-3 times the key articles)
- **You don’t have to read in the same way as for exams!**
 - Read intro and conclusions; other sections if needed
 - Look more closely at interesting issues and questions
- **Make notes while reading**
 - Walking through your notes helps you to observe possible conflicts and similarities between different sources → makes you think and helps you find new interesting research aspects
- **Do not only summarize the sources but be critical**
 - Practice being critical: look for conclusions and how they are justified

(Kangasharju ja Majapuro 1999, 19)

Reading sources 2(2)



- 1. phase – formulating the research problem
 - What information is available?
 - Gaps in the literature?
 - What kind of frameworks have been used? What kind of data? What kind of methods? What are the conclusions?
 - Is it worth continuing with the topic?
- 2. phase – your research problem as “a net”
 - Put boundaries on the literature (that you want to read) on the basis of your research problem
 - Build a theoretical framework (factors to be examined and the relationships between these factors)

(Kangasharju ja Majapuro 1999, 12-18)





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Theoretical framework

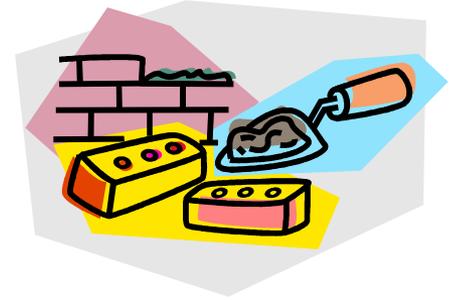
Theoretical framework 1(2)



- Theoretical background / a base for thoughts / a point of support
 - A tool that offers one point of view to look at the object and provides the concepts and terminology to analyze it
 - Models are sometimes used to support theory building
 - (Past) information based on scientific discussion
 - Can also be a target for new theory

(Kangasharju ja Majapuro 1999, 51-52)
- Thus, a theoretical framework
 - Structures the research problem
 - Provides concepts to examine the problem
 - Models the problem at a general level
 - Links the study into the previous scientific research

Theoretical framework 2(2)



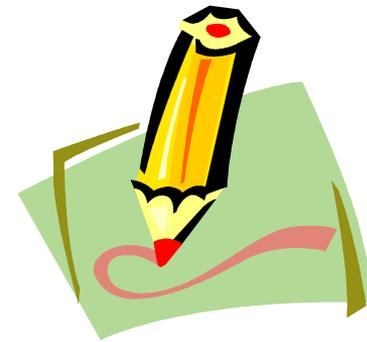
- There is no such thing as the one and only theory or framework!
 - Depends on the angle or viewpoint
 - Should be an applicable, reasoned choice
- The selected point of view on the research problem, encouraged by the literature, delimits and gives a realistic shape for your thesis
- In bachelor's and master's theses the theoretical framework is often based on a broad literature review



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Writing your report

Writing your report 1(3)



- The first version is only a draft
 - The first draft is allowed to be imprecise and to contain errors; you can also ask for comments
 - Text will be edited and rewritten several times!
- How to get started? Examples:
 - Free writing: Just write down your thoughts without being too critical.
 - Listing: List key words and ideas for 5-10 min > then underline interesting ones and delete the irrelevant ones > group
 - Cubing a topic: Describe, compare, combine to near concepts, analyze, clarify, criticize – each 2 minutes
 - Moonshining: Free writing > select main idea > free writing on that > select again main idea > free writing on that, etc.
 - Mind map: write down your ideas quickly in a visual way on a large paper (no sentences)

(Kangasharju ja Majapuro 1999, 36-43)

Writing your report 2(3)



- Review your text critically!
- If it is your first version, **the content matters** (not the formatting details)
 - Is everything that is necessary covered?
 - Is there something redundant?
 - Have you justified your claims?
 - Is the structure of your report logical? Can the reader follow the storyline?
 - Do the concepts need definitions? Are all acronyms explained?
 - Do you need to add any illustrative examples?
 - Do you understand what you have written?

(Kangasharju ja Majapuro 1999, 33-34, 44)

Writing your report 3(3)

- After the contents are acceptable, edit your text
 - Check the order of your items
 - Construct figures, tables, lists, and other means to illustrate your text
 - Create and number the headings (short and descriptive)
 - Check the language (clarity and consistency)
 - Harmonize the style
- Editing your text clarifies the contents
 - Presumed audience for your report are the equals (other students working on with their bachelor's theses)
(Kangasharju ja Majapuro 1999, 45-46)
- Finishing
 - Typography (line spacing 1,5; left and right margins: 2,5 cm; page number in the middle), spelling, layout
 - Note: Refer to your sources in your text from the beginning!



Referring to your sources 1(3)



- The main point of using references is to show what is your own thinking and what is borrowed or even literally cited
- Aim at referring the original source if it is available: the list of references should contain only the sources that you have actually read
- Common facts in the discipline need no references
- Use quotation marks (or indented text in small fonts or italics) if you cite word-by-word
- Do not use another person's text without mentioning your source – plagiarism!

Referring to your sources 2(3)



- In social sciences, the references are normally within the text (Kangasharju and Majapuro 1999, 107). No footnotes or endnotes are used as references.
- One reference covers usually one paragraph at most; in these cases, the reference will be in the end of the paragraph after the dot. Otherwise, the reference will be in the sentence before the dot. (Kangasharju and Majapuro 1999, 107)
- Notation = the last name of the author (OR the beginning of the name of the publication..., if there is no author) + year of publication (+ page(s))
 - “The board decided to...” 2007, 2 (if no author is mentioned)
 - Kivijärvi and Saarinen 2002, 10
 - Korhonen et al. 2000, 15-18 (if 3 or more authors)
- If you refer consecutively more than once to the same source, you can use *ibid.* + page(s)

Referring to your sources 3(3)

- Mention references also for figures and tables
 - If you refer to electronic documents
 - The name of author and the year when the document has been written (or downloaded). Note! In the list of references, you should also mention the URL-address, and date when the page was last accessed.
 - IF there is no author,
 - A few words from the title of the document (Note! In the list of references you should use the whole title), the URL-address, the date when the document was last accessed).
 - If you refer to interviews
 - The name of interviewee, the date, an interview; e.g. (Dahlberg 5.10.2006, an interview)
 - According to guidelines, you can not build a sub-chapter on one source only!
 - More examples in Brunnsberg et al. (2005, 10-15)
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List of references



- You should build separate lists for literature and interviews
- In alphabetical order, according to the author. If there is no author, the name of the publication or the common abbreviation of it, e.g. EU – The European Union (2008)
- If you have several sources written by a same author(s), list the oldest first; if these are from the same year, distinguish them with alphabets: 1993a, 1993b etc.
- If you refer to articles, write the name of the *journal* or *conference proceedings* in *italics*; if you refer to a book, write the *name of the book* in *italics*.
- Be consistent in your notations! See more examples in Brunnsberg et al. (2005, 16-20)
- The list should contain only the sources that you have referred to in your text

Utilizing RefWorks, EndNote or other reference management software

- If you wish, you may use e.g. the **RefWorks** reference manager provided at the library pages to manage the references and citations. Not compulsory - requires self-studying!
 - see information at <http://libguides.aalto.fi/content.php?pid=638113&sid=5293369>
- Another option is to use **Mendeley.com** that can be downloaded free from www.mendeley.com
 - "A reference manager for the web 2.0 era"
 - <http://www.mendeley.com/features/>
 - <https://www.mendeley.com/guides>

The structure of the final report

- Cover sheet (available in Mycourses, under Materials)
 - Abstract
 - Table of Contents (important for first impression!)
 - List of Figures, List of Tables, (List of Abbreviations)
 - 1. Introduction
 - 2. Content chapters 2, 3, ... n
 - N. Summary and conclusions
 - References (**NOT** a numbered heading!)
 - Appendices (**NOT** a numbered heading!)
- } *Numbered headings*
- See more in Brunnsberg et al. (2005, 25-28)
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Report: Introduction

- Raise the interest of the reader and give preliminary information on your report, i.e. "sell" your report to the reader in the introduction
- Introduction usually has the following six components in this order: (cf. research plan!)
 - Introduction to the topic and why it is worth studying
 - Research problem / question and how it is connected with the previous research
 - The objectives and justification for the research
 - Methodology used
 - (Main results, i.e. an answer to the research question)
 - How the report is structured (chapter by chapter).
- Introduction usually gets its final form in the very end!

Report: Content chapters

- Use chapters to build a logical structure
 - All chapters should belong coherently together – no disconnected parts!
 - Consistent hierarchy; e.g. equivalent details should fall in sub-chapters of the same level
 - If you use sub-chapters, there should be at least two sub-chapters at the same level (e.g. 1 Heading, 1.1 Sub-heading, 1.2 Sub-heading)
 - Write at least two text paragraphs in one (sub-)chapter
- Examples of the structure
 - Chronological order (e.g. previously – now – in the future)
 - Geographical order (e.g. from local to global)
 - List outline (from important to trivial, from general to specific)
 - Thematic structure (views the theme from various angles)
 - From known to unknown or from simple to complicated
 - Comparative outline (opposite angles, contrasts)
 - Cause – consequence outline or phenomenon – cause outline
 - Problem – solution outline (Hirsjärvi et al. 2001, 35)

Report: Summary and conclusions

- Summary of your thesis: what are your key findings
- What conclusions can be drawn?
- How have you succeeded in answering in the research question(s)
- Limitations of your research
- What questions remained open / topics for further study?
- What new questions or viewpoints came up?
- How the results are connected with scientific or current discussions
- How applicable the references used were?

(Kemppainen and Latomaa, 1999, 32)

- Practical hint: Write down your conclusions at the same time with your introduction in the end. In this way, you can avoid overlaps. Choose different phrasing in the introduction and conclusions. Remember to be analytic!



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Seminar sessions

Seminar sessions

In seminar sessions,

- You learn judging and defending scientific essays; that is, you practice scientific argumentation
- You get useful feedback for improving your thesis, and for your possible Master's thesis
- A presentation (max. 10 minutes), the opponent acts as a chairman of the meeting, the supervisor sums up
- The duration of one session with one presentation is 45 minutes (x 2)
- Everyone should read the reports beforehand and participate in the discussion (70% attendance requirement, separate grade of 0-5 given from the seminar, see grading details in the syllabus!)
- The reports should be delivered for pre-reading around one week before the presentation. Please contact and be in touch with your supervisor even before that!

Opponents' role

- You act as chairmen in the session and are responsible for an interesting and fruitful discussion
- You need to be critical, do not be afraid to criticize as there is always room for improvements in the thesis draft
- The opponents are not presenting monologues, it is in the interest of all the group that everyone is taking part – naturally everybody is expected to read the thesis drafts before coming to the session

Agenda for the opponents (1/2)

- Evaluate and comment
 - the work as a whole
 - does the title correspond to the contents
 - do the contents correspond to the research questions, objectives and the scope defined
 - structure of the thesis - is the text proceeding in a logical way

Agenda for the opponents (2/2)

- Having dealt with issues dealing with the thesis as a whole entity you may
 - comment the different sections
 - comment the conclusions from the point of view of the research questions defined in the Introduction
 - comment the quality and quantity of references
 - comment how informative and descriptive the tables and figures are
 - Only at the end (if there is time) you may comment some typos but these can be omitted owing to lack of time.
 - Last the opponents summarize their views and the discussion.
 - The supervisor presents his/her comments to conclude the discussion.
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Opponent's notes

- Every time you act as opponent you need to submit beforehand (by 11 o'clock) your opponent notes, which are 1-2 pages long. Please make them easily understandable for the reader.
- The notes are submitted via MyCourses

References and additional readings

- Brunnsberg, M., Koskimies, R. ja Leino, T. (2007), Tutkielmantekijän käytännön opas/ Practical Guide to Thesis Writers, TuKKK, 6. ed.
- Ekholm, K. Ja Heinisuo, R. (2002), Tee gradu! : verkkoajan tutkielmantekijän opas, H:ki, BTJ Kirjastopalvelu.
- Galliers, R. Ed.(1992), Information systems research. Issues, methods and practical guidelines, Alfred Waller, Henley-On-Thames
- Hakala, J. T. (1999), Graduopas: melkein maisterin niksikirja, H:ki, Gaudeamus
- Hirsjärvi, S., Remes, P. ja Sajavaara, P. (2001), Tutki ja kirjoita, Jyväskylä, Kirjayhtymä.
- Hirsjärvi, S. ja Hurme, H. (2000), Tutkimushaastattelu. Teemahaastattelun teoria ja käytäntö, H:ki, Yliopistopaino
- AISnet, www.aisnet.org and http://istheory.byu.edu/wiki/Main_Page – information on research topics, theories and methodologies
- Järvinen, P. ja Järvinen A. (2000), Tutkimustyön metodeista, Tampere, Opinpajan kirja
- Kangasharju, H. ja Majapuro, M. (1999), Tutkimusraportin kirjoittaminen, HKKK

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- Kemppainen, T. ja Latomaa, T. (1999), Ensi askelia tieteen tiellä. Johdatus tiedonhakuun ja tieteelliseen kirjoittamiseen. Oulun yliopisto, 2. painos (2002) available at: <http://herkules oulu.fi/isbn9514272471>
- Khazanchi, D. And Munkvold, B. E. (2000), Is Information Systems a Science?”, Data Base, Vol. 31, No. 3, 24-42.
- Lee, Y. Lee, Z. and Gosain, S. (2004), The Evolving Intellectual Diversity of the IS Discipline: Evidence from Referent Theoretical Frameworks, Communications of the AIS, Vol. 1436, pp. 546-579.
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- Sidorova et al. (2008) ”Uncovering the Intellectual Core of the IS Discipline”, MIS Quarterly, 32(3), 467-482.
- Uusitalo, H. (1991), Tiede, tutkimus ja tutkielma – Johdatus tutkielman maailmaan. Juva, WSOY.
- Vessey, I., Ramesh, V. ja Glass, R. (2002), Research in IS, Journal of Management Information Systems, 19(2), 129-174
- Yin, R. K. (1989), Case study research: Design and methods.
- Information on electronic references: <http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html>

References and additional readings

- Brunnsberg, M., Koskimies, R. and Leino, T. (2005), A Practical Guide for Thesis Writers / Tutkielmantekijän käytännön opas, TuKKK, 6. pain.
- Hirsjärvi, S., Remes, P. ja Sajavaara, P. (2001), Tutki ja kirjoita, Jyväskylä, Kirjayhtymä.
- Kangasharju, H. ja Majapuro, M. (1999), Tutkimusraportin kirjoittaminen, HSE.
- Kemppainen, T. ja Latomaa, T. (1999), Ensi askelia tieteen tiellä. Johdatus tiedonhakuun ja tieteelliseen kirjoittamiseen, University of Oulu, 2. ed. (2002) available at:
<http://herkules oulu.fi/isbn9514272471>