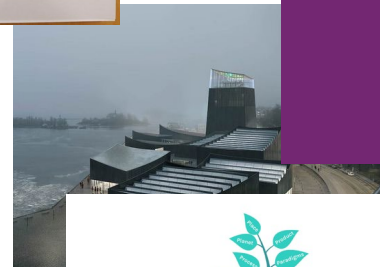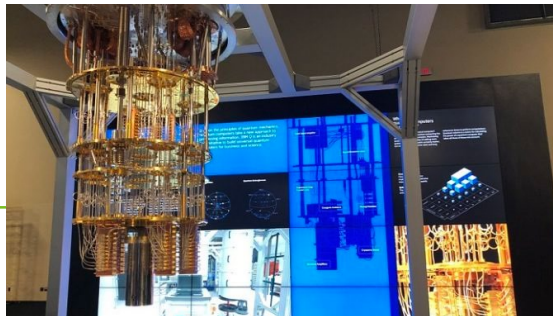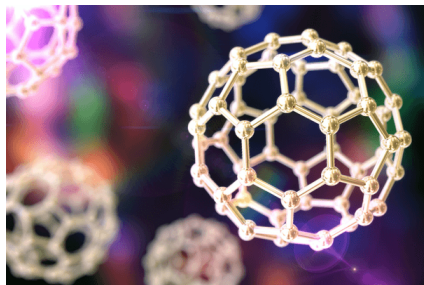# Paper development workshop: Qualitative research

January 15, 2021
Prof. Nina Granqvist

Who am I?

- **Nina Granqvist, Associate Professor of Management**
- **Research addressing the emergence of novelty in market and fields, and tracing the transition of technologies and ideas from margins to mainstream**

Meetings

On Fridays from 9-16 (end time tbc.), on the following days:

Fri 15.1. at 9-12: *Introductions, and characteristics of qualitative empirical research*

Fri 12.2. at 9-16: **Presenting empirical analyses and considering "what is this a case of"?**

Fri 9.4. at 9-16: **Theorizing from the empirical data (CHANGED DATE!)**

Fri 14.5. at 9-16: **Presenting and discussing your full papers**

A?

Aalto University
School of Business

Course work and deliverables

- **Pass/ fail**

- **Presence and active participation in the workshop sessions**

- **Continuous development of the paper and presenting and discussing the next versions**

- **Providing written feedback for others after sessions 2 and 3**

- **After the last workshop session, provide extensive written reviews for full papers**

Aalto University
School of Business

Learning goals

- **Understanding different styles of and approaches to qualitative research**

- **Engaging with the craft and process of writing qualitative papers**

  - Conducting data analyses

  - Theorizing from the data

  - Integrating all the parts into a coherent whole

- **Giving and receiving feedback on papers, and writing reviews**

A?

Aalto University
School of Business

Participants

Joona Ruissalo, information systems science

Carmelita Ginting-Carlström, entrepreneurship

Tatsiana Padhaiskaya, marketing

Anna Leinonen, communication

Aleksi Soini, communication

Henriikka Seittu, marketing

Bernadetta Ginting-Szczesny, entrepreneurship

Joona Koistinen, organization and management

Valentina Arrieta, international business

Sofia Villo, organization and management

Elena Mazurova, information systems science

Karoliina Auvinen, ARTS, design

Ainomaria Parikka, marketing

Sampsa Suvivuo, information systems science

**Course assistant
Tomi Koljonen, O&M**

Introductions

Please, tell <u>very briefly</u> about your empirical paper project, max. 3 minutes (timed)

- What do you study?

- What is your data like?

- Do you have some initial observations based on the data? What are they?

- What literature(s) you might be using?

A?

Aalto University
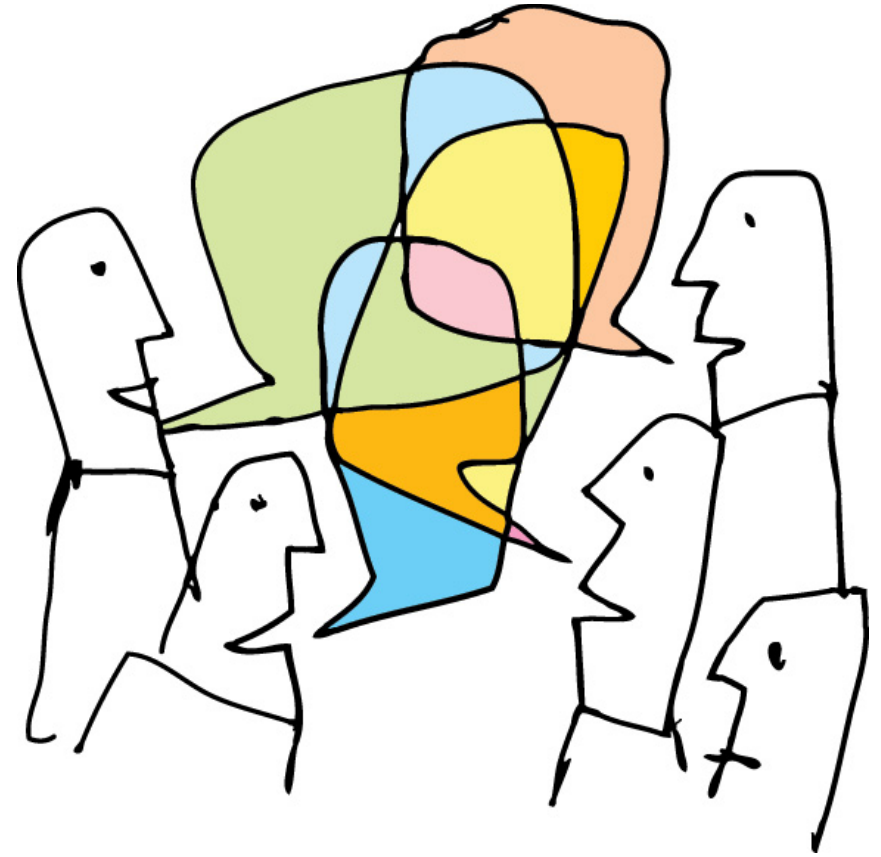**School of Business**

Coffee break

Let's discuss the readings

What are the key characteristics of qualitative empirical papers? Your main takeaways.

Discuss in groups for 20 minutes.

Then let's discuss in further depth some points together.

Aalto University
School of Business

Why qualitative research?

- *"Why test theories when you can provide novel insights and understandings?"*

- **By its nature linked with theorizing as it often involves new conceptualizations and ways of making sense of empirical phenomena**

- **Qualitative work can be very powerful in terms of uncovering underlying processes and mechanisms**
    - Development of new theories, perspectives and insights
    - Important contributions – e.g. visible in best paper awards

Bansal & Corley (2012): What's different about qualitative research?

Build theories inductively (data-driven analyses)

- **A short multipurpose front end ("hook", gap, situated RQs, suitably deep, focused literature review)**

- **A long robust back end (strong discussion)**

- **Comprehensive, personal and transparent methods**

- **Creative data displays (how to show the data)**

- **Two narratives (data and theory) jointly contributing to an overarching story**

- **…all the best laid plans… embrace the process!**

Theory driven design

Existing explanations ("theory")	Existing explanations ("theory")	Existing explanations ("theory")
Theory testing (deduction)	**Theory elaboration (abduction)**	**Theory generation (induction)**
Empirical context	Empirical context	Empirical context

Adapted from Choi & Ketokivi (2014) and Costa et al. (2017)

Aalto University
School of Business
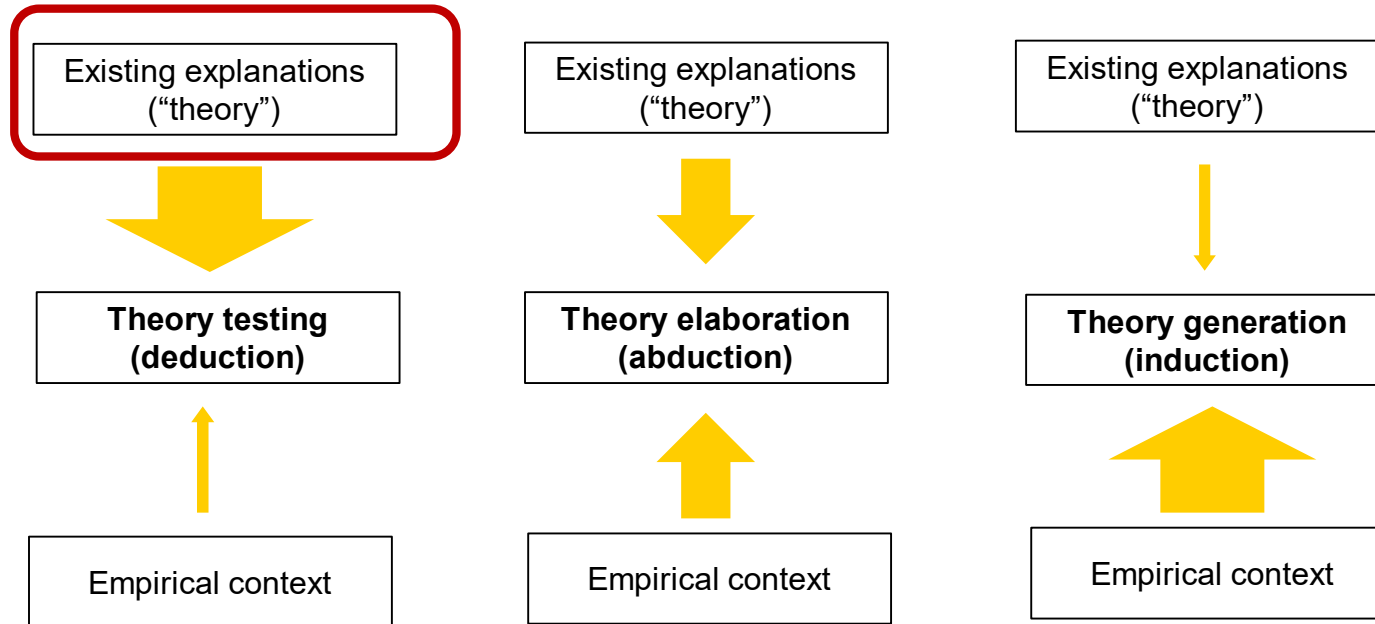
The ideal of induction

"Qualitative research is at its best when it develops explanations from empirical observations."

Existing explanations ("theory")	Existing explanations ("theory")	Existing explanations ("theory")
⬇	⬇	⬇
Theory testing (deduction)	**Theory elaboration (abduction)**	**Theory generation (induction)**
⬆	⬆	⬆
Empirical context	Empirical context	Empirical context

Ideal starting point

Aalto University
School of Business
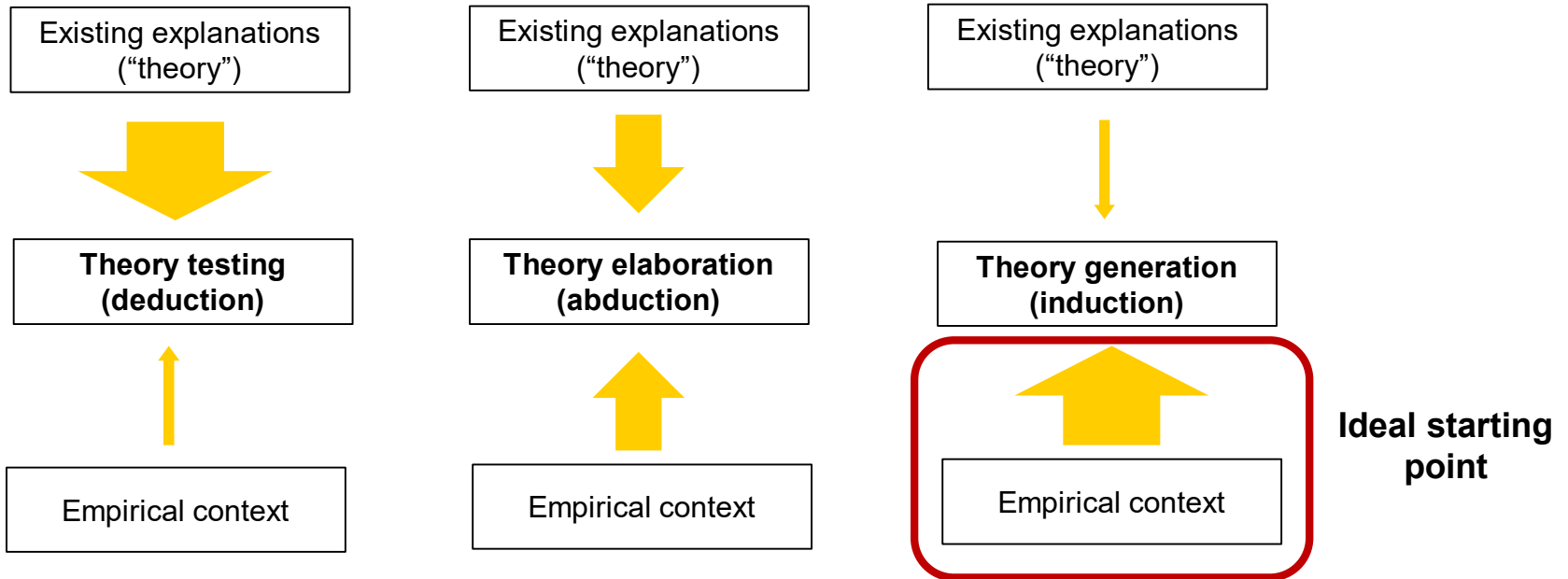
In practice: Iteration between the literature and the empirics

Existing explanations ("theory")	Existing explanations ("theory")	Existing explanations ("theory")
↓	↓	↓
Theory testing (deduction)	**Theory elaboration (abduction)**	**Theory generation (induction)**
↑	↑	↑
Empirical context	Empirical context	Empirical context

Adapted from Ketokivi & Choi (2014) and Costa et al. (2017)
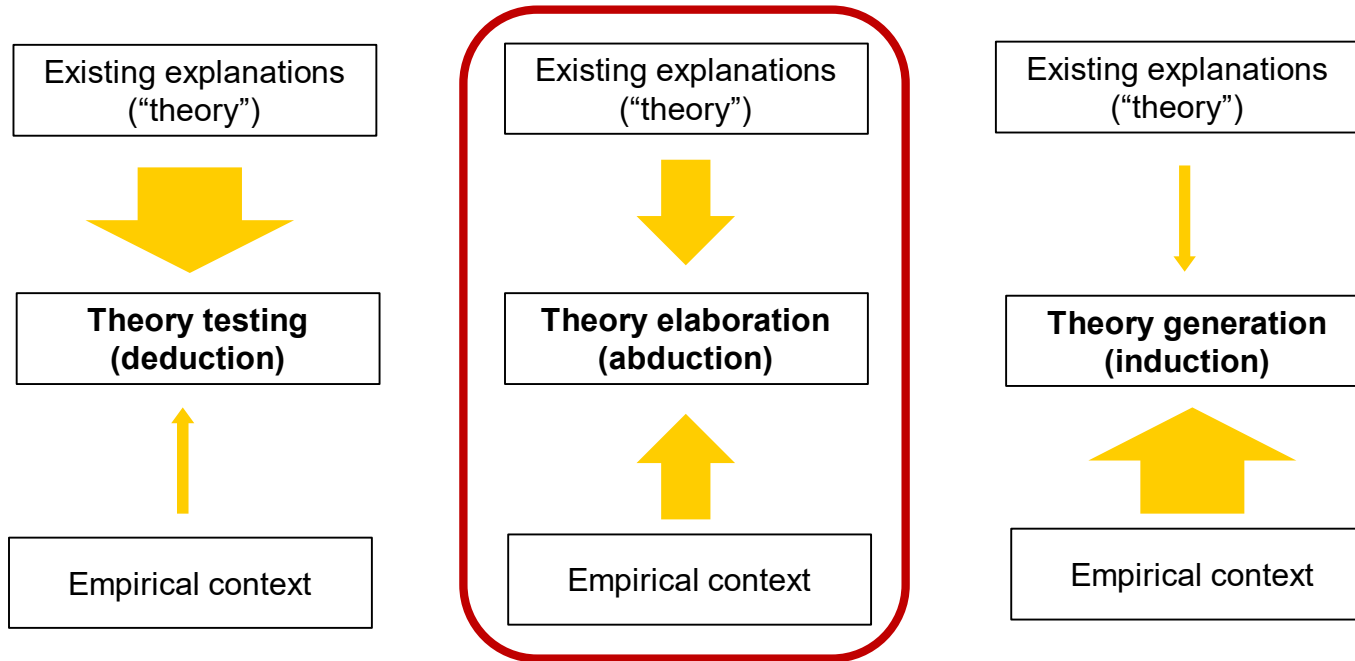
Eisenhardt, Graebner & Sonenshein (2016) Grand challenges with inductive methods

- **Inductive methods: generating theory from data**
  - E.g. cases, interpretivist studies, ethnography
  - All require deep immersion to focal phenomenon through rich data
  - Data-driven analyses ("grounded analysis"
- **Novel ideas (openness + discipline)**
- **Explaining processes (<u>how</u> stuff happens..)**
- **Configurations, emergence and equifinality ("messiness")**
- **Hard-to-measure constructs**
- **Extreme cases (opportunity to observe something occurring in particularly "rich depth")**

Eisenhardt, Graebner & Sonenshein (2016) Grand challenges with inductive methods

Evaluating rigor and quality:

- **Is the emergent theory internally coherent and parsimonious?**

- **Are the constructs or themes convincingly grounded in compelling data?**

- **Does the research provide rich and unexpected insights?**

Aalto University
School of Business

Bansal, Smith and Vaara (2017)
# New ways of seeing through qualitative data

Genres of qualitative work:

- **Variance-based case studies**
- **Process studies**
- **Engaged scholarship**
- **Historical studies**
- **Discourse studies**

Publishing across genres:

- P #1: Know your **epistemology**

- P #2: Ensure that the research questions, data, and analysis are **consistent**

- P #3: Be authentic, detailed, and clear in **argumentation and style** of writing

- P #4: Use **exemplary papers**, but **do not force fit** your scholarship with existing templates

A?
Aalto University
School of Business

Publishing qualitative empirical papers
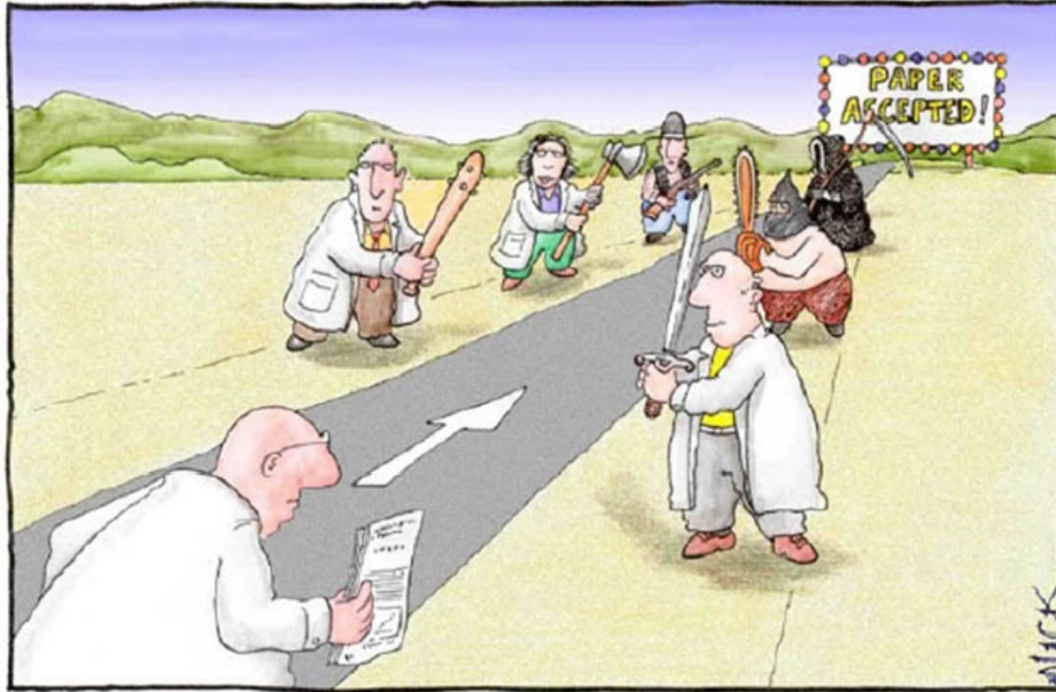
Example of top American journals: Acceptance rates in AMJ

1. Desk rejects: about 35-40%

2. Revise and resubmit: about 25-30% after review

3. 1st revision: about 50% chance of acceptance

4. 2nd revision: about 80% chance of acceptance

- At AMJ about 20 % of submissions ar qualitative papers and about the same percent of the publications as well
- Acceptance rates are similar for qualitative and quantitative papers

Examples: Host of other great journals in management

- **Administrative Science Quarterly**

- **Strategic Management Journal**

- **Organization Studies**

- **Organization Science**

- **Journal of Management Studies**

- **Journal of Management**

- **Organization**

- **Human Relations**

- **Journal of Business Ethics**

- **Scandinavian Journal of Management**

- **Etc..**

What are the key journals in your discipline?

Aalto University
School of Business

Next time(s): Data analyses and "What is this a case of"?

- Deep dive into the data

- Initial theorizing from the data

- What is the phenomenon that I observe? How can I position and theorize it in terms of the existing literature(s)?

- Also considering the explanations that have not yet been (exhaustively) presented

Aalto University
School of Business

Example: Temporal institutional work (Granqvist & Gustafsson, 2016, AMJ)

- **After some analyses …. an empirical observation: The change process proceeded more rapidly than anyone could have assumed and took all by surprise!**

- **What is this theoretically a case of, <u>how to explain theoretically what I observe in the data</u> – can be many things!! (E.g. Kotter's steps to manage change processes … too obvious!)**

- **What does the data tell? A lot of data on temporality of the process across different informants..**

- **This is about temporal institutional work! That is, constructing binding and normative understandings about time. E.g. constructing windows of opportunity, inevitability, etc.**

- **The paper developed a new approach to "institutional work"**

A?
Aalto University
School of Business

Fri 12.2. Presenting empirical analyses and considering "what is this a case of"?

- **Read <u>as soon as possible</u> Gehman et al. (2018): Finding Theory-Method Fit (in MyCourses)**
- **Focus on writing the empirical analyses and consider what your analytical approach is; What is going on that need explaining? What are the possible explanations in the literature? What is less known? What does your data tell or show?**
- **[Note, sometimes to follow the hunch you need to collect more data]**
- **Deliverable:**
  - Next version of your analysis section. You do not need to have a "ready" and full **<u>analysis</u>** – but **<u>make focused progress</u>** on this. Your paper can also have other parts as you like (e.g. theory).
  - You can consider your approach for empirical analyses as per Gehman et al. (2018) and the materials for today, or other materials
- **Submit your paper by Monday 8.2. in the Dropbox (link provided later)**
- **Guidelines for presenting your ideas and providing feedback follow**

A?
Aalto University
School of Business

Questions, issues to discuss?