

MA Thesis Seminar 2019 Spring

Department of Design / Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture

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Contact Teaching 3: Research design



“I have done it!”: Learning from Graduates

Laura Euro
PSD

Yhdessä tekemisen menetelmät –strateginen yhteissuunnittelu peruskoulussa

Sara Lucía Rueda Mejía
CS

Emotional Nature: A learning experience to explore how materials relate to emotions

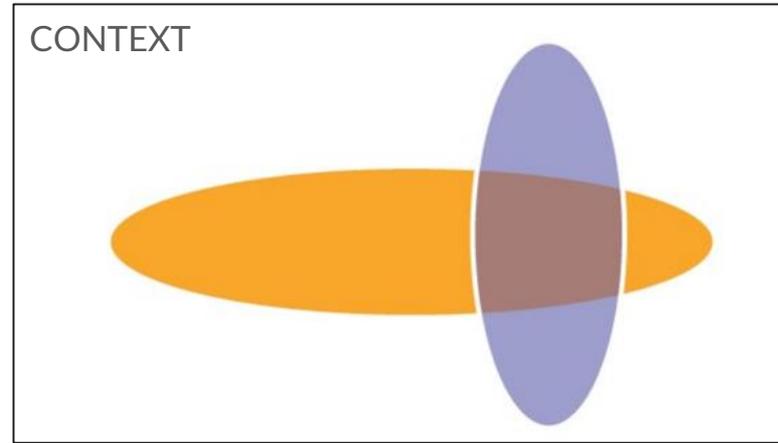


Research Question Design

Representation of your frame:

Context + Scope

- **Context:** The discussion where your thesis makes a contribution
- **Scope:** What is in and what is out





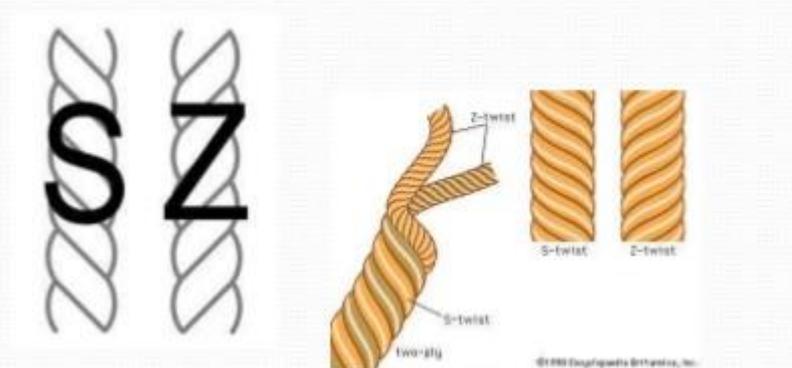
Evolution of Research Question (example of Namkyu)

1. What other things fashion designers can do rather than dressing people?
2. How are fashion designers different from other designers?
3. What do fashion designers actually do?
4. How do fashion designers work/think?
5. What are distinctive features of fashion design?
6. Why is fashion design under-studied?
7. How can the social role of fashion designers be conceptualized?
8. How can the social role of fashion design profession be conceptualized?
9. How can the social role of fashion design profession be conceptualized in the contemporary fashion system?

Direction of Twist

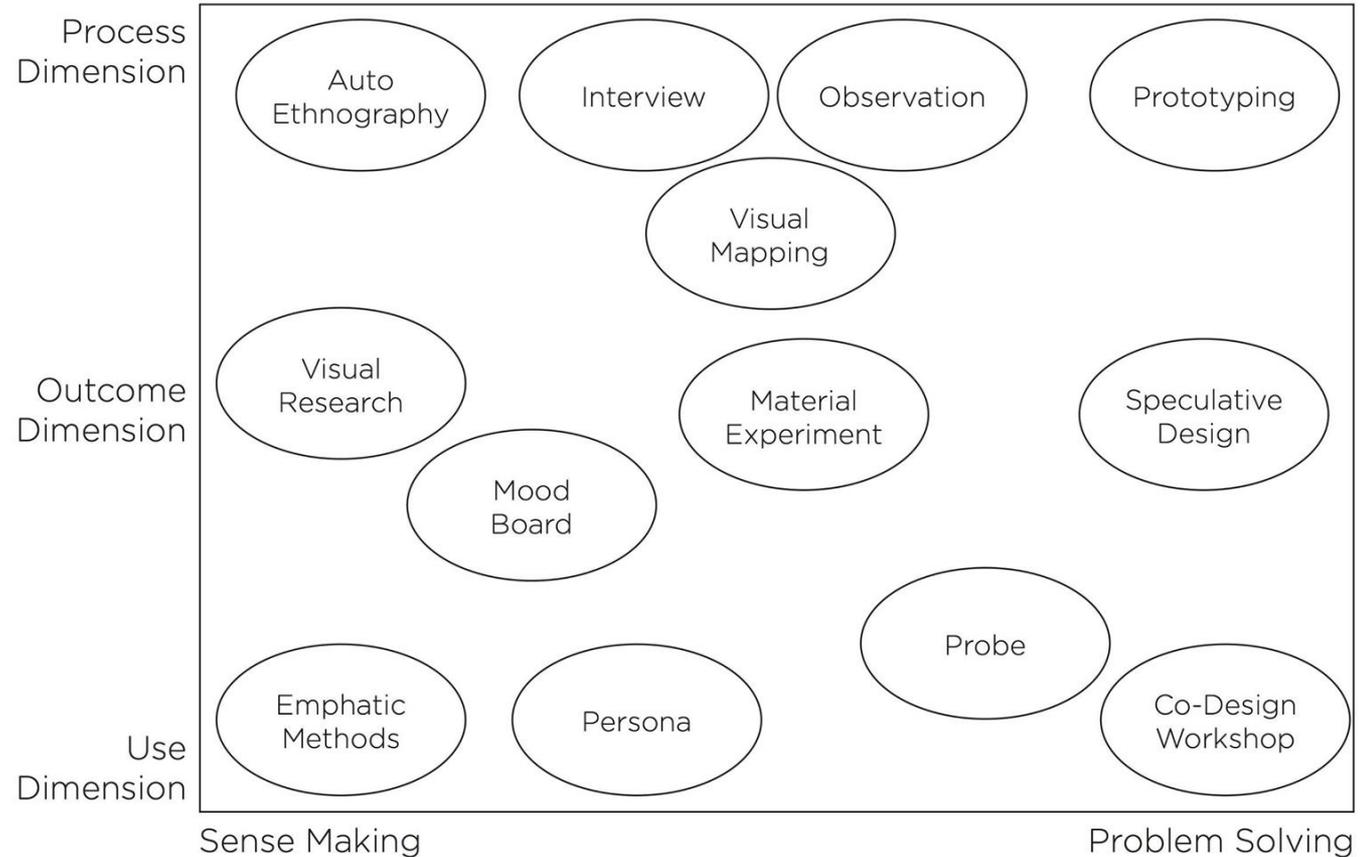
Twist is defined as the spiral arrangement of the fibres around the axis of the fibre. the direction of twist is described as s twist and z twist. A yarn has s twist ,if when held in vertical position, the spirals conform to the direction of slope of the central portion of the letter “s”.

It is called z-twist if the direction of the spirals conforms to the slope of the central portion of the letter “z”. Z twist is standard twist used for weaving yarns.





Design (Research) Methods





Design Research..? Research Design!

- Each method yields its own type of data.
- The research material in a thesis can be literature, interview transcriptions, notes, other documents, numerical data, photographs, plans, drawings, maps, audio and video recordings, tangible artefacts...
- You can collect your own primary data or use existing data, or both.
- Assess your data and other research material critically (reliability, representativeness, possible biases)
- Remember confidentiality and ethical considerations when handling data.



Interpretation: From Data to Conclusion

- Analysis essentially means making sense of your data in a systematic and consistent way.
- Cyclical process where you go through the material and reflect it with theory and earlier findings.
- Usually based on a systematic process of reading, coding and categorization of the material.
- Theory-based analysis (theory guides what you look for)
vs. Content-based analysis (findings arise from the data).
- Inductive reasoning (top-down logic)
vs. Deductive reasoning (bottom-up logic)
vs. Abductive reasoning.



Reporting the Findings

- **Rich Picture:** Opening up the phenomenon you are studying in its variety.
- **Synthesis:** Distillation of key findings / characteristics regarding your topic.
- **Evidence:** Showing how your data supports (or not) the research hypothesis.
- **Argumentation:** Convincing others and transmitting your message to them.
- **Transparency:** Recording / showing the process that led you to the results for others to evaluate.



Expected Outcomes: Possible Formats

VISUAL

- Diagram
- Process description
- Drawings
- Images, photographs
- Scenarios
- Collage, mood boards
- Design concepts
- Detailed plans and drawings

TEXTUAL

- Descriptive academic text
- Discussion with your references/literature
- Quotes from the data
- Own insights and reflections
- Lists, guidelines, specifications



What Next: Action Blueprint

- Identify tasks, deliverables and milestones
 - Be specific. If you plan to interview people, consider how many interviews you'd need, what kind of information you'd be looking for, how to recruit the interviewees. If you plan to design a collection, be realistic but bold enough about conceptualizing, materials, studiotime, photographing.
 - Don't just list all possible tasks but seriously study your heart: What would be the most rewarding and informative thing to do?
- Create a timeline with them or a collection of logical steps. Sort them out with your advisor.
- Consider your life/work situation
- Be realistic and also prepare for 'Plan B'
- Make it visual!

>> Assignment: Submit your blueprint on MyCourses by the end of 22 April.



Thesis Plan Evaluation Sheet

Know the evaluation criteria!

Evaluation form for Thesis Plan presentations

Please note that your evaluation should be based on the written Thesis Plan provided by the student and not only on the oral presentation. The evaluation points below are based on the MA thesis guidelines. This form is the basis upon which the student revises their thesis plan, whether the plan is accepted or not after their presentation. Use this evaluation form to carefully describe the strengths and weaknesses of the student's Thesis Plan and to give clear and constructive advice on how the student can improve their plan. If possible, give suggestions on possible advisors. Please fill in the blanks/boxes for these evaluation points on a scale from 1 – 10:

1 RELEVANCE AND SCOPE OF RESEARCH TOPIC WITHIN ART, DESIGN OR CRAFT

- Is the topic relevant to the field? Yes No
Is the project demanding enough (less than 30 credits)? Yes No
Is the project too large for 30 credits? Yes No

2 RESEARCH QUESTION(S)

- Are the research questions clear? 1-10
Are they relevant to art, design or craft research? 1-10

3 SUITABILITY / FEASIBILITY OF CONTEXT AND THEORETICAL FRAMING

- Is the context of the research clear and suitable? 1-10
Is the student familiar with existing design-related discussions in the context? 1-10
Does the student have suitable resources for conducting the research? 1-10

4 VIABLE METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

- Is the methodology viable / likely to help the student answer the research questions? 1-10
Are the planned methods for dealing with data, sites and materials clear? 1-10

5 WORKPLAN

- Is the timetable feasible? (considering the unavailability of resources during holidays.) 1-10
Does the plan include time for making prototypes, reflecting, and other obligations? 1-10

- This thesis plan is accepted Tick the box
This thesis plan is accepted, but needs revisions Tick the box
This thesis plan is not accepted but needs to be re-evaluated after revisions Tick the box

PROFESSORS / TEACHERS suggestions for revisions

SUGGESTION FOR POSSIBLE ADVISOR/S _____

Course Feedback Survey

