Writing process and completing the thesis

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UniOGS
First version of the dissertation

- Use Acta template
- Start from the list of content of this lecture
- Sketch the content for each sub-chapter
- Maximise the use of existing materials
  - Articles, research reports, etc.
- Copy substance from your materials (rephrase)
- Write missing bits from scratch
Scientific newness

Continent of existing knowledge

Ocean of the unknown

Capes of new knowledge
What is a compilation dissertation

• 4-5 articles + compilation
  – Requirements for the number of articles varies by discipline
  – Journal articles vs. conference articles vs. manuscripts

• Compilation must be readable independently
• Best and most fitting bits from the articles
  – Contemplating the **whole** created by the articles
Alternative structures

Title
Abstract
Acknowledgements
Abbreviations and definitions
(List of original publications)

Table of contents

1 Introduction
   1.2 Objectives and scope
   1.3 Research process

2 Theoretical foundation

3 Results

4 Discussion

Title
Abstract
Acknowledgements
Abbreviations and definition
(List of original publications)

Table of contents

1 Introduction
2 Literature review
3 Aims of the study
4 Materials and methods
5 Results
6 Discussion
Compilation dissertation structure

1 Introduction
  1.1 Background and research environment
  1.2 Objectives and scope
  1.3 Research process and dissertation structure

2 Theoretical foundation
  (2.1 Background)
  2.2 Theoretical sub-area 1
  2.3 Theoretical sub-area 2
  2.4 Theoretical sub-area 3
  2.5 Theoretical sub-area n
  (2.6 Theory synthesis)

3 Results
  3.1 Research question 1 results
  3.2 RQ 2 results
  3.3 RQ 3 results
  3.4 RQ 4 results
  (3.5 Results summary)

4 Discussion
  4.1 Theoretical implications
  4.2 Practical implications
  4.3 Reliability and validity
  4.4 Recommendations for further research
Monograph dissertation structure

1 Introduction
   1.1 Background and research environment
   1.2 Objectives and scope
   1.3 Research process and dissertation structure

2 Theoretical foundation
   (2.1 Background)
   2.2 Theoretical sub-area 1
   2.3 Theoretical sub-area 2
   2.4 Theoretical sub-area 3
   2.5 Theoretical sub-area n
   (2.6 Theory synthesis)

3 Research contribution
   3.1 Results of sub-area 1
   3.2 Results of sub-area 2
   3.3 Results of sub-area 3
   (3.5 Results summary)

4 Discussion
   4.1 Answering research questions
   4.2 Theoretical implications
   4.3 Practical implications
   4.4 Reliability and validity
   4.5 Recommendations for further research
Abstract

• Short paragraph for each of the following
  – total length 1 page

• What is the bigger picture (introduction)?
• Dissertation purpose
• Research method
• Key results
• Practical implications
1.1 Background and research environment

• Research background and research gap
  – Identifying a gap in research using literature

• What have others studied relating to the topic?
  – what is known & what is not known about the topic and closely related issues

• Write using the ”funnel principle”
1.2 Objectives and scope

• Divide the **research problem** into research questions / hypotheses

• Describe **the logic** how the research questions are interconnected.
  – use an illustration

• Aims of the dissertation and exclusions
  – must be in-line with the results – allow the results to guide the final version

• Compilation dissertation
  – Simplest solution if each research question is answered by one article
## Complicated structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research question</th>
<th>Article I</th>
<th>Article II</th>
<th>Article III</th>
<th>Article IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RQ1</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RQ3</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RQ4</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 Results

Present core results
- Compilation: RQ-by-RQ
- Monograph: in stages

Monograph:
3 Research contribution
3.1 Results of sub-area 1
3.2 Results of sub-area 2
3.3 Results of sub-area 3
(3.4 Results summary)

4 Discussion
4.1 Answering the research questions
4.2 Scientific implications

- implications to scientific community

- supports/contradicts previous research results, or creates something completely new?
  
  - reflect against literature presented in your theoretical part
4 Discussion

4.3 Practical implications
   – Who benefits from your results and how
   – implications to society, companies, organisations, etc.

4.4 Reliability and validity
   – Discuss reliability and validity of your research
   – Take a position on
     • limitations of your research
     • generaliseability of results
Writing order

• PowerPoint presentation
• What is the bigger whole created by your articles
• Research questions and related answers

• **Writing of results**
  – Result analyses and conclusions

• Research methods
• Theory (Literature review)
• Introduction
• Discussion
• Abstract
• Title

• Finalising
  Iterations when necessary
Other tips for writing

• Write and **finalise** one sub-chapter at a time → ready to publish text

• Co-operate with your colleagues
  – to give & get feedback
  – to realise the purpose of each sub-chapter

• Once the Results chapter is written, ask supervisor for feedback before proceeding further
Introductory sentences

• Pay special attention to the beginnings of chapters and paragraphs

• Write introductory sentences
  – Enables reader to understand what is being discussed

• Present figures, tables, etc. in the text
  – *Figure 1 illustrates, Table 2 summarises*
  – More detailed text after the illustration
Finalisation

• Check that results and research questions match
  – fine-tune research questions if necessary

• Check that Theory, Introduction, and Materials & methods are in line with the results

• Check and follow format requirements
Other points

• Language check either before pre-examination, simultaneously, or after

• Article publishers
  – ask permissions to use in your dissertation early
  – ask permission to use your figures
Further questions

• A good possibility to get your dissertation-related questioned answered

• In the end of lecture

Writing the compiling part of a compilation dissertation

Friday 21.4.2017 at 08.15-12, lecture hall IT 105, Linnanmaa campus