

THESIS' TITLE

eingereichte
DIPLOMARBEIT
von

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Zwischenbericht:	xx.xx.201x
Abgabe:	xx.xx.201x

In your final hardback copy, replace this page with the signed exercise sheet.

Abstract

A short (1–3 paragraphs) summary of the work. Should state the problem, major assumptions, basic idea of solution, results. Avoid non–standard terms and acronyms. The abstract must be able to be read completely on its own, detached from any other work (e.g., in collections of paper abstracts). Don't use references in an abstract.

Zusammenfassung

Hier die deutschsprachige Zusammenfassung

Contents

Chapter 1

Working with this Template

Make sure your thesis is well structured, that each major section does what it is supposed to do, and that the whole thing hangs together. The basic structure is often as given in this template (but other structures are possible). In particular, don't think you need to have exactly as many major sections or chapters as the list implies; sometimes it makes sense to merge things, sometimes it makes sense to move things (e.g., the literature review is in many papers deferred until after the results), sometimes it makes sense to split a logical part into several individual sections. Just use some common sense.

Hand in your thesis at minimum **one week** before the deadline for correction. You will receive feedback for the final version and very likely have to do minor or major revisions of your writing. Plan your writing schedule to allow for these adjustments, which can have quite some impact on your grade!

1.1 Style and Expressions

Before handing in your thesis, even for an intermediate review, please perform a spellcheck and correct grammar mistakes. The report is not meant to be a narrative text. Please stick to neutral and technical style and avoid subjective or biased expressions or adjectives/adverbs such as *obviously*, *always*, *very*, *especially well*, *actually*, *so-called etc.* Scientific writing is about precision and you should underpin your statements factually, not soften them with unnecessary qualifiers.

1.1.1 Subsection

Use chapters, sections and subsections to structure your document

Subsubsection

Subsubsections can be used to further structure information within a subsection. They don't show up in your list of contents.

Paragraphs are sometimes more useful than subsubsections to structure text without breaking the flow.

1.2 Compiling

Linux: do the following in a Shell:

```
latex myfile
dvips myfile
ps2pdf -sPAPERSIZE=a4 myfile.ps
```

Make sure to use the A4 option, when you print the pdf!

1.3 Equations

Equations are written like that x^2 . Or like that:

$$x^2 \tag{1.1}$$

You can use (??) to reference an equation in the text. Equations without reference number:

$$x^2$$

Please type all numbers in mathematics mode. Mathematical equations which are not part of the text should be centred. A parameter or variable must not be used at the beginning of a sentence. Type physical units as normal text, e.g. s, not s ! Formulas must not jut out over the text margin, so take care to stay within the margins and eventually break the equation into several lines. Explain the variables you use. For each newly introduced variable, at least a short description of it should follow the equation in the style of *... with x being the position of the cart and u the control input*. In columns, align equations with the arithmetic operator ($=, <, \dots$). Mathematical units must be consistently labeled with only one variable. Do not use a variable for more than one mathematical unit.

1.4 Figures

For pictures, it is convenient, if they are .eps.

Figure 1.1: Long Description: The subtitles of tables and illustrations should be self-explanatory.

Every illustration must be described and referenced in the text, cf. Fig. ?? . There is no such thing as a decorative figure! If the figure is not mentioned in the text and therefore lacks an explanatory function, leave it. Lines in plots need to be clearly distinguishable, also in black-and-white print. The subtitles and axis labels must be clearly legible (i.e. big enough) and include a scaling. If the illustration is copied from another person's work, you need to mention the source with `\cite{}`.

1.5 Citations

For bibliography, edit `mybib.bib` and list all references in a special style, e.g. for a book:

```
@book{literaturstelle1,
  author    = {S. Sastry},
  title     = {Nonlinear Systems - Analysis, Stability, and Control},
  publisher = {Springer},
  year      = 1999
}
```

Cite references in the text by `[?]`.

In order to have your references shown in your PDF, compile by:

```
latex myfile
bibtex myfile
latex myfile
latex myfile
dvips myfile
ps2pdf -sPAPERSIZE=a4 myfile.ps
```

Whether to use numeric or alphabetic references isn't all that important (unless prescribed by a conference or journal), but alphabetic tends to be more readable. Independent of citation style, the following rules should be followed:

- Use the `LATEX` `cite` package. It doesn't give you additional commands, but it fixes a few quirks in `LATEX`. Among others it automatically sorts multiple citations, and it correctly spaces the angular brackets (if you use the `\cite` command without leading white space).
- Citing several papers at one point should be done with a single `\cite` command. For example, use `gives good results\cite{Bloe_99, Jay_87}`, resulting in `gives good results [?, ?]`.

Do not use `gives good results\cite{Bloe_99}\cite{Jay_87}` which produces the ugly `gives good results [?][?]`. Also, note that there is no space between the `\cite` command and the preceding word, `LATEX` (with the `cite` package) does the spacing correctly.

- Avoid citations of the kind: [?] thinks that $x > y$ is valid, but [?] argues that this is invalid in case of $z \geq 5$. This works a bit better if using alphanumeric citation labels. Better, though, use the author's names: Bloe and Joe [1] think that $x > y$ is valid, but O'Neill et al. [?] argues that this is invalid in case of $z \geq 5$.
- BibTeX is a great tool, but you need to know how to use it. A regular trap is to forget that TeX knows more about typesetting than you do. So, for example, it changes the case of words in the title. If your title contains acronyms and proper names (most do), they tend to get down-cased. Any such words which should not have their case changed should be put into braces, e.g., `{The {Mungi} {OS} and its Use in Merry-Go-Round Seat Allocation}`.
- In citations don't abuse the category technical report. People tend to cite just about anything that hasn't been published in a journal or conferences as a TR. This is outright wrong. The concept of a TR is actually fairly well defined: A TR is published in some sort. This is generally as part of a formal TR series of some institution, in hardcopy or on the web or both. (They aren't always called "technical report", other common names are "research report", "technical memorandum", <institution> "report" etc.) The publication (i.e. availability outside) is essential, otherwise it's at best an internal report. A TR has a number (absolutely!), an institution (publisher), a date (month and year at least) and a publisher's address (besides all the other stuff bibentries have). If your document doesn't have these features, it's not a TR. It's probably better categorized as a working paper. Even then it has a date and an institution address.
- Citing web pages is often unavoidable (but also often a sign of laziness). When citing web pages be aware that they may only be short-lived. Consider whether the reference will be of any use to the reader at all if the link is broken. Or whether your whole document only has a use-by date a few months past writing.

Any cited document, whatever it may be, has a few **mandatory** features:

- Date. Absolutely.
- Author/organization/creator/person responsible for contents.
- Whatever information the reader needs to find that document. In most BibTeX entry types these are clearly identified as mandatory fields. Mandatory means that they aren't optional. Don't pretend they are. For a working paper these might be the contact details of the author.

Chapter 2

Introduction

Your first chapter in the document. Introduce the problem (gently!). Try to give the reader an appreciation of the difficulty, and an idea of how you will go about it. It's like the overture of an opera: it plays on all the relevant themes.

Make sure you clearly state the vision/aims of your work, what problem you are trying to solve, and why it is important. While the introduction is the part that is read first (ignoring title and abstract) it is usually best written last (when you actually know what you have really achieved). Remember, it's the first thing that is being read, and will have a major influence on the how the reader approaches your work. If you bore them now, you've most likely lost them already. If you make outrageous claims pretend to solve the world's problems, etc, you're likely fighting an uphill battle later on. Also, make sure you pick up any threads spun in the introduction later on, to ensure that the reader thinks they get what they have been promised. Don't create an expectation that you'll deliver more than you actually do. Remember, the reader may be your marker (of a thesis) or referee (of a paper), and you don't want to annoy them.

2.1 Problem Statement

You can either state the problem you are trying to solve in the general introduction, providing the transition from the overall picture to your specific approach, or state it in a separate section. Even if you don't use the separate section, writing down in a few sentences why the problem you are trying to solve is actually hard and hasn't been solved before can give you a better idea of how to approach the topic. This can be also merged with the related work part.

2.2 Related Work

From Kevin Elphinstone's *A Small Guide to Writing Your Thesis*[?]:

"The related work section (sometimes called literature review) is just that, a review of work related to the problem you are attempting to solve. It should identify and evaluate past approaches to the problem. It should also identify similar solutions to yours that have been applied to other problems not necessarily directly related to the one your solving. Reviewing the successes or limitations of your proposed solution in other contexts provides important understanding that should result in avoiding past mistakes, taking advantage of previous successes, and most importantly, potentially improving your solution or the technique in general when applied in your context and others.

In addition to the obvious purpose indicated, the related work section also can serve to:

- justify that the problem exists by example and argument
- motivate interest in your work by demonstrating relevance and importance
- identify the important issues
- provide background to your solution

Any remaining doubts over the existence, justification, motivation, or relevance of your thesis topic or problem at the end of the introduction should be gone by the end of related work section.

Note that a literature review is just that, a review. It is not a list of papers and a description of their contents! A literature review should critique, categorize, evaluate, and summarize work related to your thesis. Related work is also not a brain dump of everything you know in the field. You are not writing a textbook; only include information directly related to your topic, problem, or solution."

Note: Do the literature review at an early stage of your project to build on the knowledge of others, not reinvent the wheel over and over again! There is nothing more frustrating after weeks or months of hard work to find that your great solution has been published 5 years ago and is considered old news or that there is a method known that produces superior results.

Chapter 3

Main Part

3.1 Design of your solution

Having explained the problem, and what others have done in similar situations, now explain your approach. Again, give a general overview of your design first, and then go into detail. The important part here is the concept of your work, not the actual implementation! Make sure that the document (particularly a thesis) is self-contained: It should be possible for a reader familiar with the general area to understand your design. Again, be forthright about the limitations of your design. Also, make sure you justify any shortcuts/limitations convincingly.

3.2 Implementation

In many (not all cases) there is a clear difference between the general approach (design) and its implementation in your particular circumstances. The design may be more general than what you can do given time and resources. Or you have developed a general design, and are now implementing a prototype on particular hardware. Give all required details. It should be possible to understand all this without referring to the source code.

This will, in general, include extracts of actual algorithms and hardware components used. Don't list pages of C code, an electronic copy of the source will accompany the submission and should be available to the marker, so there's no point in killing extra trees to put it into the report. Source code, if included at all, goes into the appendix and not the main document.

Make sure you describe your implementation in enough detail. Someone who has nothing else but your thesis report to go by should be able to repeat your work, and arrive at essentially the same implementation. Reproducibility is an important component of scientific work. Also, clearly state the limitations of your implementation, and justify them.

3.3 Experimental Results

A thesis almost always has an experimental part, typically some comparison to other approaches. Benchmarking takes time, for running the experiments, but also for thinking them up in the first place, and for analysing the results. Plan accordingly to spend enough time here!

Think about what makes sense to measure, what you want to learn from your measurements. Think about what is really the relevant contribution of your thesis, and how you can prove that you have achieved your goals. Think about what you can measure in order to get a good insight into the performance of various aspects of your design, how you can distinguish between systematic and accidental effects, how you can convince yourself that your results are right. If you get surprising results, don't just say "surprise, surprise, performance isn't as good as hoped". Find out why. Surprises without explanation indicate either that you are clueless about what's going on, or that you have made a mistake. Unconvincing results, therefore, tend to imply unconvincing marks.

Statistics: Measurements always have statistical (sampling) errors. Owing to the deterministic nature of simulations these are sometimes very small, as disturbing factors can be designed. However, the reader should be given an indication of how statistically significant the results are. This is done by providing at least a standard deviation in addition to averages. Whenever the results of several runs are averaged, a standard deviation can (and must) be supplied. After all, you average to reduce statistical errors.

The reproducibility argument applies here just as much as for the implementation. Give enough detail on what you measure, and how you measure it, so that someone who has your implementation (but not your test code) or has re-done your implementation independently, should be able to repeat your measurements and arrive at essentially the same results. In some cases, results seem outright wrong in a thesis. In those cases, not enough detail is provided to allow the supervisor/reader to pinpoint the likely source of the error. Often the cause is systematic errors resulting from an incorrect measurement technique. If it seems wrong, and the text doesn't convince the reader that it is not wrong, the reader will assume that it is wrong.

3.4 Discussion

Discuss and explain your results. Show how they support your thesis (or, if they don't, give a convincing explanation). It is important to separate objective facts clearly from their discussion (which is bound to contain subjective opinion). If the reader doesn't understand your results, reconsider if you have managed to extract the core information and explain it in a straightforward way.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

Don't leave it at the discussion: discuss what you/the reader can learn from the results. Draw some real conclusions. Separate discussion/interpretation of the results clearly from the conclusions you draw from them. (So-called "conclusion creep" tends to upset reviewers. It means surrendering your scientific objectivity.) Identify all shortcomings/limitations of your work, and discuss how they could be fixed ("future work"). It is not a sign of weakness of your work, if you clearly analyse and state the limitations. Informed readers will notice them anyway and draw their own conclusions, if not addressed properly.

Recap: don't stick to this structure at all cost. Also, remember that the thesis must be:

- honest, stating clearly all limitations;
- self-contained, don't write just for the locals, don't assume that the reader has read the same literature as you, don't let the reader work out the details for themselves.

This chapter is followed by the list of figures and the bibliography. If you are using acronyms, listing them (with the expanded full name) before the bibliography is also a good idea. The acronyms package helps with consistency and an automatic listing.

List of Figures

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