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# “Vegans are all useless hippies”

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Arguments against veganism and vegans  
in the Finnish discussion forum

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Tiivistelmä - Referat – Abstract <p>Meat consumption in the world is increasing, which has significant negative effects on the ongoing climate change. There is a need to make people change their diets towards more plant-based. One of the problems is that there is a negative atmosphere around veganism and vegans that prevents the change. In order to get people more plant-based, that negative atmosphere around veganism and vegans should be reduced.</p> <p>The aim of this study is to find out what kind of arguments are used against veganism and vegans, and what rhetorical strategies are used in these arguments. Previous studies have shown that there is still a strong belief that meat is a necessary part of the diet to keep one healthy. Studies also show, that the reason people do not change their diets can be attitudinal, for example that people think they are meant to eat meat, or practical, for example that there is not enough information available.</p> <p>The material for this study is from the Finnish online discussion forum Suomi24 and consists of messages that are against veganism and vegans. The Suomi24 data was retrieved from the KORP interface, where it was possible to search messages related to veganism. There is no information about the people behind the messages, because they are anonymous on the forum. The material was analysed with content analysis and strengthened with rhetorical analysis. Categorization was part of the analysis and categories were coded to the material in the Atlas.ti program.</p> <p>As a result, there were seven main categories and 28 sub-categories under two parent categories. The most common arguments against veganism and vegans were related to health, vegans as individuals and how vegans act. The most commonly used rhetorical strategies were factual argumentation, categorization, extreme expression and taking distance from one's own interests. As a conclusion, to be able to increase plant-based food in people's diets, more available information is needed, and positive encouragement without incrimination to build up an attractive atmosphere around veganism and vegans.</p>		
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Tiivistelmä - Referat – Abstract <p>Lihankulutus kasvaa maailmalla ja sillä on merkittävä vaikutus meneillään olevaan ilmastonmuutokseen. Ihmisten tulisi muuttaa ruokatottumuksiaan kasvipohjaisimmiksi, mutta yhtenä ongelmana on veganismin ja vegaanien huono maine, mikä estää muutoksen tapahtumisen. Jotta ihmiset saataisiin siirtymään kasvipohjaisempaan ruokavalioon, veganismin ja vegaanien mainetta tulisi saada parannettua.</p> <p>Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää, minkälaisia argumentteja käytetään veganismia ja vegaaneja vastaan ja mitä retorisia keinoja kyseisissä argumenteissa käytetään. Aikaisemmat tutkimukset ovat osoittaneet, että ihmiset uskovat lihan olevan yhä välttämätön osa ruokavaliota, jotta voi pysyä terveenä. Tutkimukset ilmaisevat myös, että syyt siihen miksi ihmiset eivät muuta ruokatottumuksiaan voivat olla asenteellisia tai käytännöllisiä. Esimerkiksi ihmiset ajattelevat, että liha on tarkoitettu syötäväksi tai että tarpeeksi tietoa muista vaihtoehdoista ei ole saatavilla.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen materiaali on suomalaiselta Suomi24-keskustelufoorumilta ja käsittää viestit, jotka on kohdistettu veganismia tai vegaaneja vastaan. Data Suomi24:stä saatiin KORP-käyttöliittymästä, joka mahdollisti veganismiin liittyvien viestien etsimisen. Koska kirjoittajat ovat foorumilla anonyymeja, ei heistä ole tietoa saatavilla. Materiaali analysoitiin sisällönanalyysillä käyttäen apuna myös retorista analyysia. Kategorisointi oli osa analyysia ja kategoriat koodattiin materiaaliin Atlas.ti-ohjelmistolla.</p> <p>Tulokseksi saatiin seitsemän pääkategoriaa ja 28 alakategoriaa kahden yläkategorian alle. Eniten käytetyt argumentit veganismia ja vegaaneja vastaan liittyivät terveyteen, vegaaneihin yksilöinä sekä siihen miten vegaanit käyttäytyvät. Eniten käytetyt retoriset keinot olivat faktoihin perustuva argumentaatio, kategorisointi, ääri-ilmaisut ja etäisyyden ottaminen omista intresseistä. Jotta ihmisten ruokavaliioihin voitaisiin lisätä kasvipainotteisia ruokia, tarvitaan lisää tietoa ihmisten saataville ja positiivista kannustamista ilman syyttelyä houkuttelevan ilmapiirin rakentamiseksi veganismin ja vegaanien ympärille.</p>		
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## 1. Introduction

At the moment when there are multiple different diets available almost for everyone at least in the western world and veganism is quite a new hot topic. Veganism means a diet and a lifestyle in which people do not eat and consume any foods or goods from an animal origin. It is quite different compared to omnivorous diet that contains meat and vegetarian diet containing milk and egg products. Some people might be following only a vegan diet but some take it deeper into their lifestyles and pay attention to avoiding also for example, leather clothing. Reasons for being a vegan can be for example health, animal rights, environment, religion or all of those.

Eating less meat saves land area, energy, water and greenhouse gases, which all are connected to the quality of the environment (Sabaté and Soret 2014). Meat production converts more forests into fields and therefore increases the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere since forests are better carbon sinks than fields (Bellassen and Luysaert 2014). Water footprint of meat products can be even 20 times bigger and milk products 1,5 times bigger than plant based products (Mekonnen and Hoekstra 2012). A lot of carbon dioxide is released during the meat production process but also a more severe greenhouse gas methane is released from the livestock's manure and breathing (Steinfeld et al. 2006).

Lately the awareness of the climate change and other ecological issues have increased and the role of meat as a main part of people's diet has gotten attention because of its big environmental footprint. The overall consumption of meat in the world has increased all the time during the years and is still increasing due to increasing world population and better livelihood (Godfray et al. 2018). In Finland, overall long-term consumption of meat and other animal-based products is also increasing. The amount of red meat that has been eaten is slowly decreasing in Finland, but the consumption of poultry, eggs and cheese are increasing (Luke 2019). Current ongoing climate change needs fast actions and eating less meat or becoming vegetarian or vegan is one part of the solution for every individual. Therefore, it is important to understand what barriers there are that are preventing the popularity of veganism to increase.

Social media is nowadays a big mass media with different platforms for every user. In addition to discussion forums, there are also for example blogs, virtual worlds and



video sharing platforms like YouTube. For people, media is no more about just looking and reading, but also participating and creating content themselves (Matikainen 2008). It is relevant to study the material from social media, because as a hot topic there is a lot of discussion about veganism online all the time (Isotalo et al. 2019). To be able to change food habits towards a more sustainable direction, it is important to understand those who are against veganism and vegans. Therefore, discussions on the online discussion forum are a great way for that.

This study focuses on the argumentation against veganism and vegans in a Finnish online discussion forum Suomi24, between years 2012 and 2016. The analysis of discussion forum provides an interesting perspective as the discussions offer straight, uncensored opinions, views and feelings from thousands of everyday people wanting to share their arguments online.

Despite the increasing meat consumption, some people are turning into vegans or vegetarians and new plant-based food alternatives are coming to the markets. Because of the climate crisis, people are advised and encouraged to decrease their meat consumption. For example, in Finland some schools have one vegetarian day per week (Yle 2017) and the Unicafe restaurants at the University of Helsinki decided to take the red meat off the menu (Helsingin Sanomat 2019). However, vegans are still a small minority even there are many indicators that veganism is growing (Jallinoja et al. 2019). It is very difficult to estimate how many vegans there are exactly in Finland, but according to survey by Sitra (2017), one per cent of the respondents said to be vegans.

Even though plant-based food options are becoming more popular, there is a prevalent problem: The ongoing change towards more environmentally friendly food habits is not pleasing everyone. Veganism and vegans are facing a lot of opposition, anger and understatement from the people for whom meat and other animal-based products are still important (Horta 2018). There are a lot of cultural and structural factors that are the reason for this opposition. One being that people are seeing vegans and veganism in a bad light which makes it more difficult to promote plant-based diets and that way to mitigate for example, the climate change. This leads to the **research problem** of this study which is the negative atmosphere around veganism and vegans and the need to understand reasons behind this.

Based on the research problem presented in the previous chapter the research questions are following:



## **What kind of arguments and argumentation people use against vegans and veganism?**

### **What kind of rhetorical tools are used in these arguments?**

The first research question aims to identify the commonly used arguments against vegans and veganism. This is done by qualitative content analysis of the data. Moreover, rhetorical analysis is used to analyse the argumentation style and the rhetorical tools employed in the argumentation, which is the second research question. This way the aim of the study is to understand the ways of and reasons behind opposing veganism. By supporting the creation of dialogue with those people actively opposing veganism, the findings of this research could help vegan diets gain popularity among Finnish people.

The structure of this paper goes as following: after the introduction follows theory background of the topic going through the history of meat consumption and veganism, why the veganism is important and what barriers there are against veganism and vegans. Material and methods show how the material was collected from the Suomi24 online discussion forum and how topic and rhetorical analysis were used. Results show what arguments there were against veganism and vegans and what rhetorical strategies were used. In the discussion section, the results are analysed with the writer's own perception. Lastly, the conclusion how this study succeeded overall and what could be the next steps.

## **2. Theory**

This chapter goes through some theory relevant for this study. First, a short review of the history of veganism and eating meat from the early years of humankind to this day. Second part covers what meanings meat, vegetarianism and veganism have had and have today. After that, there are positive effects of veganism explained in different categories. Lastly, a review what arguments there are against veganism and vegans based on the previous studies depending for example on age and sex.





## 2.1. History of veganism and eating meat

Veganism has existed already for a long time historically. In the long human evolution meat has had an important part, but there are many periods when the meaning of meat has been minor. According to Smil (2002), it is suggested that early humans started to eat meat 1,5 million years ago but with the lack of physical power and effective weapons, it was likely that the human ancestors at that time were more scavengers than hunters. The estimate is that the human started to hunt approximately 700 000 years ago, and when the controlled fire was established about 250 000 years ago the meat consumption increased again. The part of energy that was gotten from meat in preagricultural diets might have been even 80 percent (Smil 2002). It is estimated that the human brain size increased because of the consumption of the protein and fat intensive meat (Mann 2007).

Agriculture and farming started around 10 000 years ago in the Near East (Mann 2007; Smil 2002). The consumption of meat varied a lot within different regions and cultures. Due to increasing population, meat intake decreased and farming animals like horses were needed also for work, not only for food. Consequently, in the late eighteenth century meat was a rare opportunity for middle class and peasants in Europe and was served only on special occasions even in rich countries. In some cultures, for example in India, the meat consumption was low because of the Buddhist culture (Smil 2002).

Modern vegetarianism started to rise with the first Romantic Movement in the late 18th century and the Vegetarian Society was founded in 1847 in England. Vegetarianism has always been a minority, but it has had bigger peaks for example, in the 1880s, 1930s and 1970s, latest associated with the counter culture when it was connected to feminism, anti-selfishness and as a countermove for the fragmented nature of modern consciousness (Twigg 1983). In Finland, vegetarianism started from the 1850<sup>th</sup> century and the popularity increased in 1895, and first vegetarian restaurants were opened in Helsinki (Vornanen 2014).

After the industrialization in the mid-nineteenth century, agricultural productivity increased and people moved to cities, which began the dietary transitions to increased meat consumption, first happening mainly in Europe. This change speeded up after the World War II when agriculture was more and more mechanized. The demand for meat increased, which meant that bigger share of the grain had to be fed for the cattle. In the 1900 century about 10 percent of the overall harvested grain in the world was



fed to the animals whereas in the 21st century the percentage was over 60 in the United States. (Smil 2002)

Finland is a welfare state and has relatively high gender equality and a low life expectancy difference between women and men. Life expectancy difference correlates with the difference of health-related lifestyles between women and men. Finland has moved from a low economy country to a high economy welfare state, which means transformation also in work structures. Nowadays most workplaces are focused in the cities and do not require physical tasks. High education correlates with high consumption of vegetables and usually people with the highest education are concentrated to urban areas (Prattala et al. 2007).

In western societies, vegetarianism and veganism are everyone's own choice and linked with an egalitarian ethic, which differs for example, from medieval times when the meat was forbidden in monasteries (Twigg 1983). In the 1980s main reasons to be vegetarian were health and animal welfare (Twigg 1983), when at the moment there are more reasons: health, animal welfare, environment and religion (Dyett et al. 2013). People are more and more conscious about the environmental effects of the meat consumption.

As a summary, meat consumption has varied a lot during the human life from 1,5 million years ago to this day depending on the circumstances at the time. Early vegetarianism, meaning that it was a choice not a circumstantial forced situation, started in the late 18th century. Meat surely has been an important and necessary part of the diet in the past. However, now people are facing new challenges like overpopulation and climate change that are affecting to the meat consumption. Luckily, nowadays when the food technology has developed there are several different healthy alternatives for meat and being vegan is easier and healthier than ever.

## **2.2. Motivations to start veganism**

Here in this chapter, the point is to compare the rightly selected diverse vegan diet to a normal healthy omnivorous diet to be able to get the overall picture. As already mentioned earlier in the introduction, compared to omnivorous diet, vegan one is more environmentally friendly in many ways. According to a study by Rosi et al. (2017), which was done looking into 153 real diets of Italian adults, all carbon, water and



ecological footprints were significantly smaller in the vegan diet than in the omnivorous diet. Carbon footprint of the omnivorous diet in one day is on average 3959 g CO<sub>2</sub> eq<sup>1</sup>, and the vegan one is 2336 g CO<sub>2</sub> eq which makes it over 40% smaller. The water footprint in vegan diet is over 20% smaller and the ecological footprint is almost 45% smaller than in the omnivorous diet (Rosi et al. 2017).

Vegan food production is more efficient compared to the diet containing meat. Omnivores get some of their energy from animals that have needed a lot of energy for themselves to grow and therefore energy is lost. Vegans get the energy straight from plants and so energy is saved. By not containing animal-based products, vegan diet is also more ethical than omnivorous or vegetarian diet because no animals are hurt or mistreated in the food production process.

Due to the vegan diet containing more fruit and vegetable, which are a good source of fibre, folic acid and antioxidants, vegans have in general lower cholesterol and blood pressure which makes it less probable for vegans to get cardiovascular diseases (Djoussé et al. 2004). It is said that the vegan diet can lower the risk of cancer, again because of the higher intake of fruits and vegetables. Those foods contain nutrients like fibre, vitamin C, carotenoids, flavonoids and phytochemicals, which help to protect the body against various cancers (Craig 2009). Red meat itself can increase the cancer risk from 20% to 60% compared to vegetarians and vegans (Cross et al. 2007).

However, there are some dietary issues that vegans should keep in mind. In general, vegan diet does not contain as much calcium and vitamin D as vegetarian and omnivorous diet which can lead to bone loss. Also, intake of vitamin B-12 and n-3 fatty acids (EPA & DHA) can be insufficient. Although, with the proper diet containing B-12 supplements, also vegans can get all the necessary nutrients that are needed. (Craig 2009)

It cannot be said that meat is in every way a bad thing, nevertheless there are several things pointing that vegan diet is better for health and the environment. It is still good to remember that people's diets are very different and contain different things so even a vegan diet might not always be better than an omnivorous diet. Both diets can be unhealthy and healthy or good or bad to the environment.

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<sup>1</sup> Carbon dioxide equivalent

### 2.3. Barriers against veganism

When looking later into the counter arguments against veganism, it is good to understand what deeper meanings meat, vegetarianism and veganism have had and still might have among many people. Meat, especially bloody red meat, has been thought to be the center of the meal for a long time and vegetables inadequate to form a sufficient meal by themselves. Meat as a strong substance has been related to body building and athletic strength, making men warriors but also as a higher liberty for the higher class. However, for weak people and pregnant women meat was thought to be too strong and to release power that cannot be handled (Twigg 1983).

*Table 1* below by Twigg (1983) shows the hierarchy of three different dietary boundaries: dominant, vegetarian and vegan. On the top the meat of humans, carnivores and uncastrated animals which were seen as a taboo. Raw meat was also considered unacceptable being for monsters or animal likes so the cooking separates humans from animals. The powerfulness of the food decreases gradually from the red meat being most powerful to the fruits and vegetables, which are the least strong and thought to be too weak. (Twigg 1983)

There have been previous studies about what kind of issues there are against veganism. According to Lea et al. (2006), biggest barriers to alter current diet among Australian adults are lack of information about plant-based diet and unwillingness or inability to alter the present diet. Difference between those three reasons is that the lack of information and inability are practical and the unwillingness attitudinal barriers. A practical barrier means that there is willingness but no resources or possibilities to alter the current diet and consequently attitudinal barrier means that even though one would be able to change their own diet, there is no willingness to do it. For young people, barrier could be unwillingness of the family and for old people unwillingness to eat strange food. (Lea et al. 2006)



Taboo	Too strong	human beings carnivores uncastrated animals	uncooked	raw meat
DOMINANT CULTURE'S BOUNDARY				
Meat	Strong blood powerful	red meat	cooking necessar y	roasted joints, stewed meat
	non-blood less powerful	poultry		roasted, boiled
		fish		fried, steamed
VEGETARIAN BOUNDARY				
Animal product	Less strong	eggs		fried, boiled
		cheese		raw, grated
VEGAN BOUNDARY				
Fruit & vegetable	Too weak	fruit leaf vegetable root vegetable cereals		

Table 1: Hierarchy of dietary boundaries (Twigg 1983)

Reasons to keep eating meat are in some way different between men and women. Men are often more against veganism: they think for example that people are meant to eat meat and because it has been eaten always through the human evolution, they also think that plant-based food is not tasty and they enjoy eating meat (Kubberod et al. 2002; Lea et al. 2006). All the reasons above can be seen as attitudinal barriers (Lea et al. 2006). This leads also to hedonism, where meat represents pleasure which can be seen between both women and men. People can be attached to meat; they can feel affinity, entitlement and dependence towards meat consumption, which makes giving up meat more difficult and hinder their personal willingness and intentions to adopt plant-based food. The more attached people are to meat the more



likely they have ideology of human dominance over animals, they are more identified as meat eaters and they eat more likely more meat (Ao Graça et al. 2015).

Usually men need more energy compared to women because they are in general bigger and have more muscular tissue and there are still existing stereotypical ideology that men need more energy. As a masculine food, meat has a strong image and vegetables and fruits are associated as women's healthy food. Nowadays the situation is more that people, also men, need less energy. (Prättälä 2003) However, rightly composed vegan diet gives enough energy even if men, or for example athletes, really need more energy than average (Rogerson 2017).

Women and people with higher education are generally more concerned about their meat consumption or generally consume less meat. The main reasons for avoiding meat are related to ethical and environmental problems of meat, as well as weight management. (Kubberod et al. 2002; Prattala et al. 2007)

Group identification has a big influence on people's behavior because perceived group norms influence intentions and predict attitudes. Those who identify themselves the strongest belonging to some group, are the most affected by group norms. Consequently, behavior control is strongest among those who are not so strongly identified to some group. (Terry and Hogg 1996) This theory is relevant for this study because people against vegans can be seen as a group that is identified strongly against veganism, and vegans are the other group. When people identify themselves strongly as meat eaters or omnivores, they are also affected by the group norms that say, for example, that eating meat is normal and necessary.

Social identity theory by Terry & Hogg (1996) says that in the group people start to think and feel as the group norms and less than individuals. Self-categorization is the way how norms influence people attitudes and behavior. Self-categorization separates people to in-groupers and out-groupers and with self-enhancement people favor in-group things over out-group things. (Terry and Hogg 1996) Meat eaters see vegans as out-groupers and being self-enhanced into opposite group veganism seems wrong.

Group identification and social identity also make it more difficult for individuals to become vegans themselves. When there are social norms that the meat is necessary, it is difficult to think and do otherwise and detach from the ideology that other people are maintaining. Eating can be a very social event with friends or relatives and cooking



receipts are inherited from the previous generations. A lot of willpower is needed to change these old traditions and also courage to be different.

Barriers against veganism can also be changeable. There are not just two types of people, those who are strongly against veganism and those who favor veganism. Some people might be in the middle considering different sides so they have ambivalent feelings, that means that they see both positive and negative sides towards something (Riketta 2000). Ambivalence in attitudes have influence on the behavioral change. When the ambivalence is lower, attitudes predict intentions stronger. The more ambivalent the attitudes are, the more easily changeable they are. (Povey et al. 2001) Ambivalence can lead to reducing meat consumption in the future. Attitudinal ambivalence is a bidimensional construct, meaning that there are not just attitudes for and against something because people might not be able to express their ambivalent feelings (Thompson et al. 1995). If people are ambivalent, they have fewer positive attitudes towards meat and they eat less meat.

### **3. Materials and Methods**

In this chapter, the use of online discussion forum is presented and Suomi24 forum in particular, as research material. Also, data is introduced, as well as the methods of data collection and analysis used in this study.

#### **3.1. Research material**

Data for this study comes from the Suomi24 discussion forum, which is a general online discussion forum where people can discuss any kind of topics that come to mind. Aller Oy owns the forum and data. A platform is special to use in research in many ways. In the normal face-to-face conversation, there are certain rules and manners how people talk to each other and they might not show their most strong opinions because of courtesy for the other person. Usually on the online discussion forums, like Suomi24, people can write their comments anonymously which enables showing more open and bold opinions. This is good when doing this kind of research where the purpose is trying to find strong opinions against veganism and vegans.



Anonymity brings also downsides: people might not show their real opinions and they are in the discussion for the pleasure of writing provocative comments and hassle with other participants. However, this is not a bad issue for this study because even if some people are there just for fun to tease people, they are still showing existing opinions even those that might not be their own. In this study, the focus is in general on any arguments against veganism and vegans, not arguments of specific people.

### **3.1.1. Suomi24 discussion forum**

On the Suomi24 discussion forum, there are 21 different categorized themes like hobbies, food and drinks, travelling and relationships. Those themes have categorized subthemes, for example the theme food and drinks has 33 different subthemes like grilling, desserts and vegan food, where the latter is relevant for this study. Themes and subthemes can change depending on the need for a specific topic. Under the subthemes, there are the actual conversations regarding the subtheme. Anyone can start a conversation and other people can join the conversation. People write their comments under a nickname that they can choose freely, but there cannot be two similar nicknames (Suomi24 2018).

Suomi24 discussion allows people to discuss almost fully freely about anything, but there are still the administration that monitors the conversations, and people can turn in some inappropriate comments that can be removed. The content is against the rules and will be removed if it contains text that is related to racism, stirring for violence, brute pornography or child pornography or is in other ways unethical. If someone violates the rules repeatedly, they can be banned for a certain time depending on the situation, and they cannot publish any content to the platform during that time. Other people can report other users to the moderators if they see inappropriate content. (Suomi24 2018).

The age limit on the Suomi24 discussion forum is in general 16 years and in the sex forum 18 years (Suomi24 2018). There are also themes for young people that are between 16 and 21 years old. However, despite the rules, age regulations cannot be fully controlled, because a person can present to be over 16 years old even if they are not.

Suomi24 forum has a diverse user base, but it cannot be specified more closely. Despite the nicknames, people can be anonymous, which means that they cannot be identified by gender, age, educational level or by anything else. Results of this study



represent arguments and opinions of Finnish people in general but are not a real sample of the Finnish population.

Suomi24 discussion forum is free to use in research, but there are certain limitations for the use. Other people's text can be referred to, but the nickname cannot be published or connected to the text (Suomi24 2018). Even the nicknames may reveal some information about the person, in general everyone are anonymous because there are not any information of their real identity and even if the nickname looks like a name of someone it does not guarantee that the name really belongs to that person. However, a lot of things can be found out especially from active registered users based on the person's writings, for example their home city. Therefore, research ethics must be kept in mind that no one's identity is not revealed. When people write to the Suomi24 discussion forum they trust their anonymity, which should prevail in the research (Lagus et al. 2016).

### **3.1.2. Description of the debaters**

Because people can be anonymous, they can have multiple identities even in the same discussion. To be able to provoke other people to join the conversation, one person can be in the conversation on both sides or even be the only one who maintains the conversation. It is possible to find out if some people are presenting themselves with more than one nickname, by looking if there are messages that come from the same IP account, but this is not necessary for this study because again, even if there is only a single person who makes the whole conversation, it still shows the existing opinions.

Online discussion can become an intense debate, where people are using strong and provocative arguments. In the argument there are always two sides, in this case people who are against veganism and vegans, and those who support veganism and vegans. Most arguments against veganism and vegans are a result of the comments from the other side, and there would not be as much discussion if the opposition was not in the conversation. However, this study focuses only to those arguments that are targeted against veganism and vegans, even if they highly dependent on supporters' arguments.

Because Suomi24 is a Finnish online conversation forum, mostly the comments are in Finnish or Swedish. This can cause some difficulties when the comments are translated into English in order to be able to use them in this study. Because



languages have different grammar and their own characterized sayings, the translation might not be able to express the exact same expression. Relative to this study, the main purpose is to find general opinions and arguments and not to focus on little details of the sentences. The most important thing in the translations is to bring the same view and attitude to the translation even if the sentence cannot be translated exactly the same.

### 3.2. Data collection

In 2015, the Centre for Consumer Society Research of the University of Helsinki started collaborating with Aller Oy, FIN-CLARIN, the Centre for Research Methods and CSC-IT Centre for Science and opened Suomi24-data for research use, as an open data. It was done as a part of the Citizen Mindscapes research collective, which solves citizen mindscapes using big online materials. The material is meant to be used for non-profitable research purposes. (Lagus et al. 2016)

To help the research, Suomi24 data is saved to The Language Bank of Finland that offers possibility to use the materials with better software for making searches. This study uses interactive *Korp*-interface that is open to any users. Korp has different word searches, where the search can be done for example using complete words, a part of the word or word combinations. Search shows the outcome as concordance, i.e. words with a short context of the sentence and a whole paragraph can be clicked open. Because the Suomi24 discussion forum is still in use, there will be new material all the time, and therefore also Korp is updated depending on the resources. (Lagus et al. 2016) At the moment when the material was collected (6.11.2018), Korp contained discussions from Suomi24 from the time between 1.1.2001-24.9.2016 that included over two and half billion words.



Figure 1 below shows the process of collecting the material. The material was selected from the Korp-interface by making three definitions for the search: search by the basic form of the word *vegan* (vegaani), by the main topic *Food and drink* (Ruoka ja juoma) of the Suomi24 platform and by the time line from 1.1.2012 to 22.9.2016 with each year separated. The search produced separated sentences where the three definitions happened. The result of the search was saved to the text document for further management.

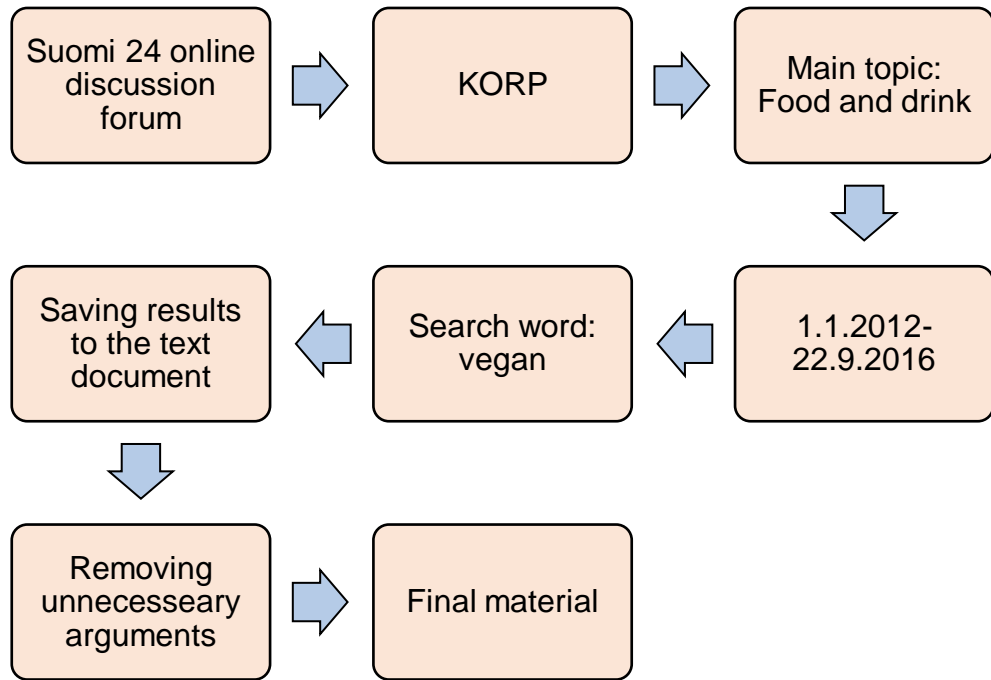


Figure 1: Material collection process

Because the purpose of this study is to examine only arguments that are aimed against vegans and veganism, the raw material contained a lot of extra. Therefore, sentences not directly against vegans or veganism were deleted. These kinds of comments were for example those that were defending veganism and vegans. There were also troll arguments that were clearly made just for fun to provoke others, and because those don't show any relevant opinions, they were deleted as well. The material might still contain troll arguments, but not every one of them can be clearly identified.

The final material covers a total of 37 pages and 355 individual messages. Table 2 below shows the amount of data each year (2012-2016).



Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	In total
Pages	7	13	5	5	7	37
Paragraphs	62	143	58	49	43	355

Table 2: Extent of the material

### 3.3. Data analysis

The main part of the analysis of this study is a qualitative content analysis that is done inductively, meaning that it is based on the material. It is an opposite to the deductive analysis, which is done based on the theory (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2003). The purpose is to analyse what different arguments there are that are used against veganism and vegans. Content analysis aims to get a compressed and clear image of the issue that is researched, and meanings are searched from the text (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2003).

According to Tuomi & Sarajärvi (2003), in the data-driven analysis, analysis units are not decided in advance, and previous findings and information should not influence the analysis. However, the person who does the analysis has always some objectivity to the analysis (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2003).

The qualitative content analysis starts with the reduction of the material. All the excess material irrelevant for the study is cut out. After that, the purpose is to go through the compressed material and find similarities that can be clustered into different categories. Lastly, the material is abstracted into more theoretical concepts, by combining the categories so that some conclusions can be made. Even if the analysis is qualitative, some quantification can also be used. It is quantified how many times the same issue appears in the material and thereby it gives more information, for example on which theme is more common than the other. (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2003)

#### 3.3.1. Content analysis

Figure 2 below shows progress on how the categories were formed. Categorization was started by going through the material carefully and then picking and listing all the different arguments that were found. After that, arguments were categorized into different sub-categories, main categories and parent categories by finding similarities and differences. Categorization and the analysis was done first in Finnish and ready



categories were translated into English. Analysis process continued with Atlas.ti program by coding different categories into the material. Coding was made in two rounds. First, by setting one or more codes for each paragraph using only seven main categories. Secondly, by splitting the main categories into sub-categories and therefore defining paragraphs with more descriptive codes. Categories were formed to describe different reasons people use to argue against vegans and veganism. Main categories describe on a higher level themes where the more descriptive sub-categories belong.

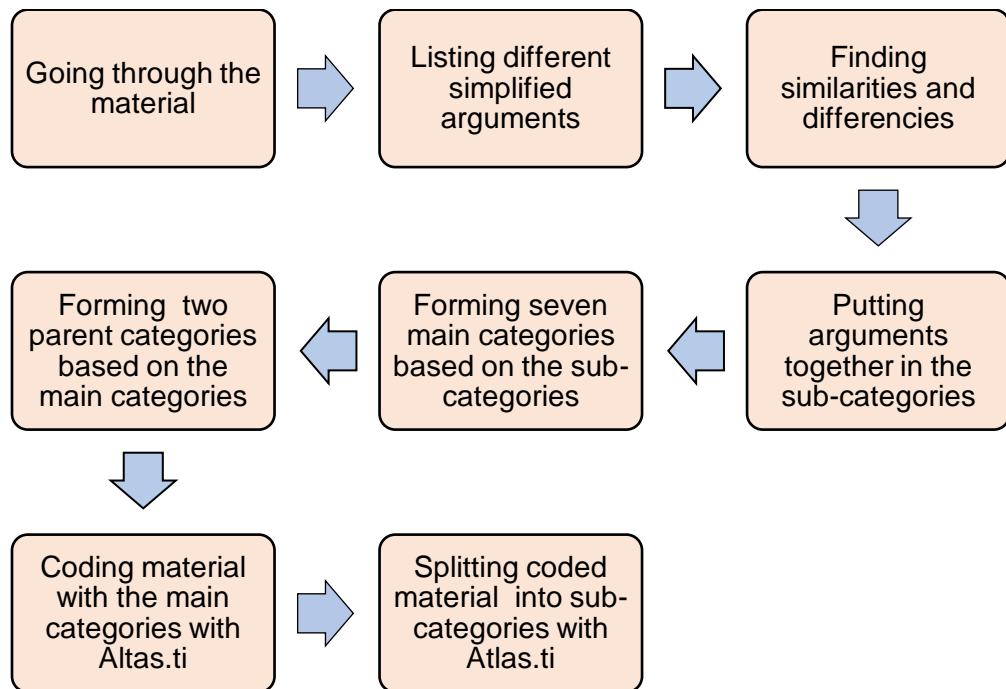


Figure 2: Content analysis process

As general examples for each sub-category, there are one or more original messages from the material translated into English. There are some differences between the original messages and the translated ones with the personal pronouns. The Finnish word for she/he is gender-neutral, and therefore in translations I used the word *they* instead of *she/he*. When doing the analysis, all the material was used and not just the chosen examples. The examples were decided by trying to find simple messages and those preferably not containing so many other categories than the one that they are



an example of. The examples are numbered, and in the appendix, original versions can be found in Finnish according to the number.

Phrases like “people think”, “vegans are seen” etc. are opinions of different people on the discussion forum and not scientifically proven overall opinions of world’s population. Claims like “vegan food is unhealthy” are based on the information that different people on the discussion forum think is true. At this point, the point is to show different argument types and existing claims and not to suggest which of them are correct information and which are not.

### **3.3.2. Rhetorical analysis**

The other part of the analysis of this study is to use rhetorical analysis to find what kind of rhetorical strategies people use against vegans and veganism. The rhetorical analysis studies the used language in speech or in the text and how to get the public engaged (Jokinen 1999; Kakkuri-Knuuttila 1998). Rhetorical analysis does not try to tell attitudes of the writer or some facts, but rather concentrates on the argumentation, and is also interested in the appearance of the text, it examines for example metaphors and comparisons (Kakkuri-Knuuttila 1998).

There are three ways to study the effectiveness of the text or speech: looking and finding the actual argument and its content, looking how the writer expresses their credibility and looking capacity of the public to receive the arguments. (Kakkuri-Knuuttila 1998) However, this study uses only the first two ways and does not look how the public receives the arguments. That is because only the arguments against veganism and vegans were selected, not any counterarguments or responses.

A rhetorical situation can be any kind of communication situation (Kakkuri-Knuuttila 1998). In this study, it is communication via internet on the online discussion forum. Billing (1991) says that rhetorical context is an important part of the analysis, because it determines the argumentation, for example to whom the text is addressed (Billig 1991). In this study, as the writer and the public are anonymous, the rhetorical situation is quite unclear and therefore there are not any information about the relationship between the writer and the public either. However, even if the personal meanings are unknown, there are still bigger cultural meanings that can tell about the communication situation (Kakkuri-Knuuttila 1998).

The assertiveness of the argument can be seen just after the reception (Jokinen 1999). On the online discussion forum, the public is usually so diverse that the same



argument can have very different receptions. Some people can be very convinced but some not. In the analysis, it is important to separate the thought about if the fact is true or not, and instead look at the resources that the facts are based on (Jokinen 1999). Overall, it is important for the analyzer to stay neutral to the material and be careful not to take sides and decide what is real and what is not.

Several different rhetorical strategies shown in *Table 3* below can be used to increase the credibility of the arguments. Rhetorical arguments can be offensive so that they try to harm the counterargument or defensive in a way that they try to strengthen argument's own situation (Potter 1996). The defensive argumentation is more common and offensive argumentation is usually used just for assistance (Jokinen 1999). However, because of the special nature of the online discussion forum, offensive argumentation could be even more dominant. Rhetorical strategies focus usually either to the presenter of the argument or to the presented argument, the first means that if the presenter is reliable it is easier to trust the argument and the latter that the presented argument is tried to get strengthened (Jokinen 1999).

Focus to the presenter of the arguments	Focus to the presented arguments	Offensive rhetorical strategies
Distance from own interests	Justifying the arguments with facts – factual argumentation	Irony
Justifying with the speaker category	Convincing with the details and narratives	Quantification
Controlling the personal distance to the argument	Quantification	Extreme expressions
Strengthening with the consensus or expert opinion	Metaphors	Metaphors
	Using extreme expressions	
	Using contrasts	
	Repetition and tautology	
	Anticipate to the possible counterargument	

Table 3: Rhetorical strategies (Jokinen 1999)

Messages are organized under main categories and both main and sub-categories are explained shortly with examples. After the examples, the rhetorical strategies are analyzed. In this study, the rhetorical analysis part applies only for the messages that were picked up as examples. The whole material would have contained more rhetorical strategies and in different ratio, but the point here was to concentrate to the content analysis and only pick up some rhetorical strategies from the examples to get deeper sight about the material.

## 4. Results

This chapter presents the results that were obtained from the material with the content analysis and examples, what kind of rhetorical strategies people used in their arguments. First, all the formed categories and found rhetorical strategies are introduced. Then, categories and rhetorical strategies are arranged based on how much they appeared in the material.

As an outcome, there are 7 main categories and they have three to seven sub-categories, 28 in total, that are shown in the *Figure 3* below. In addition, main categories are divided under two parent categories: vegans and veganism. The first one describes arguments aimed against vegan people and the latter describes arguments aimed against veganism and not people behind it.

Main and subcategories

Vegans				Veganism		
GROUP	ACTION	INCOMPETENCE	INDIVIDUALS	ETHICALITY	UNFUNCTIONAL	HEALTH
ideology	imitation	thoughtlessness	aggression	imported food	unnaturalness	unhealthy
separate group phenomenon	conversion	unawareness	mental health	treatment of animals	normality of meat	insufficient
	moralization	ununderstanding	appearance	unethical	price	unsuitable
	brawling		smugness		minority	
	complaining		intolerance			
			hypocrisy			

Figure 3: Categories and sub-categories





The qualitative content analysis led to seven categories, with 3 to 7 subcategories in each. Altogether 28 subcategories were identified in the analysis (see Figure 3). The first four categories are group, action, incompetence and individual and they describe all the arguments that are used against vegans who follow a vegan lifestyle. Latter three categories are ethicality, unfunctional and health and they describe arguments against veganism as a way of life. There is some overlapping and not every argument can be pointed to belong to just one group. In the material, arguments are mostly against a vegan diet but there are also arguments against the vegan lifestyle like not using leather shoes and using vegan cosmetic. Below all categories and subcategories are specified and explained.

#### 4.1. Description of the categories and rhetorical strategies

Arguments belong to the GROUP-category when they are pointed against some group that vegans have formed. In the **ideology** subcategory veganism is seen as an ideology often referred as a religious kind of thought that vegans are following, like being part of something spiritual. *“A vegan person does not eat meat for religious reasons. They risk their health blithely because blind faith is more important.”* (1) In this message, the writer first justifies the argument with a fact and categorizes veganism as a religion. The second sentence is more offensive using triggering words like “risks” and “blithely”. *“It seems like some of the vegans feel to be the only real believers and feel all the others to be heretic, and reactions then correspond to the extreme thinking.”* (2) In this message the writer controls the personal distance to the argument using the phrase “seems like” and also categorizes veganism as a religion.

The **separate group** sub-category means that if people do not think veganism is involved with any ideology, they can see vegans just so different from the group they are representing themselves, that they cannot identify themselves to it. *“Vegans are their own race.”* (3) The writer categorizes vegans as their own race, which makes vegans sound very different than “normal” people. *“Vegans are all useless hippies.”* (4) With the categorization to hippies, the argument makes vegans seem like useless and someone not to take seriously, and at the same time it estranges vegans from other people.

Vegans being a part of the **phenomenon** of veganism is seen to last just a certain amount of time and being only a temporary phase for vegans when compared to an



ideology that is more dominant. *“I do not know any elderly who would be vegan, it is raving of this generation.”* (5) The writer uses an extreme expression “any” and combines it with the quantification. The writer also categorizes vegans as young people being her/himself older and “wiser”, which is meant to justify the writer’s argument. *“When you prepare school food for a living like me these vegans start to arise, they are about at 8<sup>th</sup> grade and older. It is read from social media that it is cool and somehow, I connect this to fashion ideals, dieting and puberty. It has nothing to do with reality, before that mashed potatoes and meatballs were okay. Only a media circus.”* (6) First, the writer uses the speaker category that she knows the situation by being on school kitchen staff, meaning also that they see this a lot which is a quantification. In the second sentence, the writer uses facts that they know where these habits come from and why. In the third sentence, there is an extreme expression “any” to emphasize the argument.

To the ACTION-category belong the arguments that are aimed against actions of vegans when they are interacting with other people. Action-category describes what kind of actions vegans make that annoys people. Sub-categories belonging to this category are imitation, conversion, moralization, brawling and complaining.

In the **imitation** subcategory, vegans are thought to be annoying when making vegan versions of, for example meat or milk products. There should not be products like vegan yoghurt made of soy or a meat alternative that tries to copy the taste and the form of meat. *“There is enough taste in vegetables as such, so why imitate meat dishes or are vegans weak in their flesh and belief.”* (7) The writer justifies their argument with facts and again vegans are categorized as religious people and their “faith” is questioned. *“You vegans did not then figure out any other word, soy sausage, vegan bacon, vegan mayonnaise... Oh you jealous and stupid poor things. The most ridiculous was once that karelian stew that was tried to be made “authentic”. Some random cubes had to be seasoned and canola oil added. If you are eating vegan crap then eat, why do you have to develop a meat substitute, milk substitute, egg substitute etc. for it. I just cannot understand you idiots. Mayonnaise is that what has egg. E-g-g. Cheese is what has m-i-l-k. Meat is not soy. Does it get through better when spelled? I would say it is a dip sauce the one that does not contain egg yolk.”* (8) The writer uses two times the “list of three” because the regularity supports the argument. They also use repetition and the whole message is very offensive against vegans. The writer also identifies her-/himself as a “wise” non-vegan, which should bring some speaker category justification.



In the **conversion** subcategory, people are frustrated of the way vegans bring out their veganism and how they try to convert other people to veganism as well. *“Well not probably everyone need to become fully vegan or even vegetarian. It is true that usually people should eat more vegetarian food and eat less meat. Just like it should be done in everything else, so there is no reason for a personal persecution. Is it necessary to have to go to anyone’s skin when doing converting work.”* (9) The writer uses an extreme expression “fully” oppositely to soften the other argument. In the second sentence, they take distance from their own interest by defending vegetarianism that they do not appear to be going after self-interests. The writer also categorizes vegans belonging to some religion type of group, who practice conversion. *“I do not hate vegans, but I do not like that anyone’s eating is being intervened.”* (10) The writer takes distance from their own interest by showing not having anything against vegans and then tells their opinion. *“There is not anything particularly wrong about vegans per se, but it is annoying if a vegan starts advertising their own diet and insulting meat eaters.”* (11) Here again the writer takes distance from their own interest by saying that they do not have anything against vegans, and this way the actual argument does not sound so harsh.

**Moralization** subcategory means that if not trying to convert people to veganism, vegans moralize and judge other people’s lifestyle, mostly their eating habits. *“Anger against vegans comes from the reason that vegans judge other’s lifestyle and are terrible fanatics with their blaming.”* (12) The writer categorizes vegans as fanatics, which has a negative connotation because vegans interfere with other’s lifestyles and question their choices. *“Always the same scheme. A vegan brings up their own opinion. Then the huge majority is being insulted when they do not share the same view with the tiny minority.”* (13) The writer starts with an extreme expression “always” to emphasize how things always go the same way. They also use the contrast and extreme expression together to show that vegans are just a small minority, which makes their opinions sound less important.

In the **brawling** sub-category, vegan’s actions are seen as irritating when they act unpredictably and yell angry. *“What is the vegan flowerhataunt wailing there? Your message is very funny. It is so that vegetarians come to open up and fume about meat eating when nervous. You are just hungry and you are tempted to ham, now you take it out on us meat eaters.”* (14) The writer categorizes the vegan to whom they reply as a “flowerhataunt”, which means in Finland a (female) person who tries to advice other people and moralise them. Then the writer makes contrast between hungry vegans and “normal” meat eaters.



In the **complaining** subcategory vegans are seen to complain if the food is not good or if there are not any vegan food available. *“You are wrong. At least when I have offered food to my guests, it is the vegan who has started the conversation and only then when the food is on the table she announces about her vegetarian diet and tells that the food is inedible. There are sure also those who have eaten just the vegetarian foods and had a normal conversation.”* (15) The writer uses a narrative of what has happened to them when cooking food for guests. After that, they take distance from their own interest by telling that there has also been an opposite “good” situation.

INCOMPETENCE-category describes the arguments that doubt a vegan’s intelligence and ability of thinking. Incompetence-category shows people’s opinions that vegans have some lacks in their understanding. Vegans are seen **thoughtlessness** of the downsides of their lifestyle, that they do not take some important issues into account. *“There are enough those vegans who during their fanaticism forget to find out anything at all and then faint with their anaemia and get themselves a deficiency of B12-vitamin and so on nice things starting from stomach dystrophy. At the same time, they forgot also to think the issue at all from the perspective of the farm owner even if the compromises with the different ideologies would be the only sensible solution.”* (16) The writer categorizes vegans as fanatics, which makes them sound more distracted. In the end, the writer also justifies the argument by using the fact that the compromises are the only solution.

**Unawareness** describes vegan’s lack of information, often assimilated to young people who do not have enough life experience to understand things. *“I do not care what you vegans are saying. Luckily I am also smart enough and sensible that I do not believe just everything. By no means I am not prejudiced, and I know also more about food than you.”* (17) Writer justifies their saying with the speaker category that they are just wiser than vegans. *“I cannot say anything else than that vegans are so stupid because they do not know history.”* (18) The writer strengthens the argument with consensus that there just is not any other thing to say.

In addition to thoughtlessness and unawareness, vegans are also seen as **ununderstanding** people who do not have enough mental capacity to understand how things should be really done right. *“Apparently vegans lose even the last sense by vegetarian diet. Feeling bad for you poor things.”* (19) In the second sentence, the writer categorizes vegans as pitiful people making vegans sound like disabled.

Arguments that are faced on a personal level against individuals belong to the INDIVIDUAL-category. There the arguments describe vegans’ features that the



argumentators see as negative, excluding what they do with other people because it is separated to the action-category. Individual-category describes what features of the vegan as a person are not right. **Aggressive** sub-category means that in addition to the brawling behaviour mentioned above, vegans are seen also as aggressive people in their minds and to have angry attitude. *“No need to yell. It can be noticed that vegans and vegetarians have a lot of aggression, fanaticism, anger et cetera. Everyone can see that a weak diet has something to do with it. Very good that there is free choice, otherwise one would become a crazy nutcase.”* (20) The writer uses the list of three to emphasize how angry people vegans are. In the second sentence, the writer strengthens the argument with the consensus that “everyone can see”, which makes the argument sound inevitable. In the end, it seems that the writer categorizes vegans as crazy people when estimating what would happen without having free choice.

Partly a same category as ununderstanding is **mental health**, that describes people’s doubts if vegans have some problems with their mind and why they follow veganism. *“Veganism gives a cranky head without drugs that mix the head. An alcoholic can be healthy in the mind as sober, but alcohol mixes the head. So vegan mess also when being sober.”* (21) The writer uses comparison and examples comparing vegans to be worse than alcoholics. *“Vegans’ mental health is probably in a quite unsteady state. That is what the veganism shows in many cases.”* (22) The writer controls their personal distance to the argument using the word “probably”, which indicates that the writer has heard this from somewhere and now is just forwarding the message.

Vegans are seen to have unpleasant **appearance**, either because of the vegan diet that makes them look bad or because of the vegan lifestyle that makes them automatically ugly. *“Also for me vegans are insignificant. Only thing that irritates is their outside habitus. They are already at young age so old looking.”* (23) Writer takes distance from their own interest by stating that they do not really care about vegans.

In the **smugness** sub-category vegans get negative arguments against them because of their smugness. They are seen to be thinking that they are better than others because of their vegan lifestyle. *“This is a model example what is wrong with vegans. Oh that amount of smugness! Apparently it is a teenage girl suffering world-weariness.”* (24) The writer categorizes the said vegan to be a teenage girl, which has negative features like smugness and unawareness. *“As much as possible foreign language letters- owo-lagto-pesco vegan is a general expression for all the people who emphasizes themselves.”* (25) The writer uses the list of three to highlight the



argument and categorizes vegans as self-emphasizing people, which has a negative connotation.

Vegans are seen as having **intolerance** to any other option than their own veganism. *“At least all the vegans that I know are so narrow-minded that in their opinion just dropping off meat is not enough. Only vegans are good people.”* (26) The writer uses irony when saying that “only vegans are good people” but really does not mean that. *“Nobody hates a vegan because of their diet. Often vegans are just... how I would say it... very strict with their opinions. According to them other people’s opinions are full of s\*it and only vegetarian food is key to happiness.”* (27) In the first sentence, the writer uses an extreme expression “nobody” to justify the argument, and at the same time takes some distance from their own interests by stating that the diet is not the problem.

**Hypocrisy** sub-category means that if vegans are not perfect in every part of their lifestyle they are seen as hypocrites because they tell others that they are good vegans, but at the same time, for example use leather or eat non-vegan candies. *“Indeed whatever what each one eats. Disgusting in the matter are the unsupported justifications as the latest vegan had that I met. They were vegan because of ethical reasons. To be strict this kind of person could not eat even vegetables. They have been living creatures as much as animals. For food there are only water unless one wants to eat stones.”* (28) The writer starts by taking distance from their own interests, saying that they do not care what other people eat. In the end, they use irony as an offensive way to justify their own argument. *“Pure-blooded vegan as you of course are, how can you generally work at the shop where meat products are also served?”* (29) The writer gets strength to their argument by categorizing the vegan who they are replying to as pure-blooded, which refers to a person who is authentic and should be “perfect”.

In the **strictness** sub-category, opposite of the previous, vegans are seen in a negative way because they are so strict to follow veganism, that there are no exceptions that they could make, like to eat meat even once a year. *“I do not have any problem to make food for my vegetarian friend, such that suits to them. But: Why do omnivorous always need to bend with their diet? How many times vegetarian/vegan makes meat dish for their omnivorous friend?”* (30) The writer takes distance from their own interest by saying that there is no problem to cook vegetarian food. They also use an extreme expression “always”, to emphasize their own argument. *“The real enlightened vegan is not satisfied with the current demands. They*



*have to make sure their every bite. Not even one bite should contain anything living. Not even bacteria. After all, they also have a right to exist.” (31)* The writer uses irony in the whole message. They also use an extreme expression “not even one” to emphasize their argument.

Arguments belong to the ETHICALITY-category when they are pointed to show what ethical problems a vegan lifestyle has. In the **treatment of animals** sub-category veganism is thought to have ethical problems even if it is usually seen to support ethical issues. Critics of veganism say that veganism mistreats animals, for example that vegans give to their cats also vegan food even if they are not omnivorous but carnivorous. *“To take the pet away and to assign a definitive ban on keeping animals if have to even make the pet vegan, vegetarian. It is also cruelty to animals if unsuitable food is feeded to the pet. It is understandable that the human is vegan.” (32)* The writer controls the personal distance to the argument by using a passive form. They also take distance from their own interests by saying it is okay for humans to be vegans. *“Also, the life of animals that are raised for meat is valuable, this right vegans want to take away from the animals.” (33)* The writer uses factual argumentation to justify their argument.

Another topic is that vegan diet often contains a lot of **imported food** that might be questionable like soy and tropical fruits that have a big carbon footprint when being transported from the other side of the globe. *“And what comes to meat production compared to plant production so look vegans in the mirror because yes there are a lot of such production which carbon footprint is quite a lot at the plant production, but this truth a vegan’s head cannot handle, it is so that you cannot piss in one’s own nest.” (34)* The writer justifies their argument with facts and uses offensive language. *“Not probably any vegan imagine that giving up meat production, multiple population on earth could be provided with grain. Ecologically unsustainable imagination because large areas on the earth are suitable only for the growing of meat for livestock and therefore only to produce meat and milk products. Probably we want to keep Finland populated also above Jyväskylä.” (35)* The writer uses an extreme expression “not any” to emphasize their argument. After that, they use factual argumentation to justify the argument.

The sub-category **unethical** means that there are also some random arguments that veganism is overall less ethical than normal diet, for example because wasting usable land where food crops could not be grown but food animals could pasture. *“Do you vegans know that cultivation of soy destroys rainforests and at the same time their*



*unique diverse life?” (36) The writer justifies their argument with facts. “If you are a vegan you are pretty ok, AS LONG AS you eat domestic berries and root vegetables. Fruits that are dragged here from abroad are a huge logistical burden and dragging of them thousands of kilometres for your happiness pollutes the globe enormously.” (37) The writer uses an extreme expression “as long as”, giving terms how vegans are okay. They also use factual argumentation to justify their argument.*

In the UNFUNCTIONAL-category vegan lifestyle is seen unfunctional in the dominant system on the globe. **Normality of meat** sub-category means that veganism is seen as a non-functioning way of life. People are so used to eating meat that some just cannot think their diet without it. *“There is nothing wrong to eat meat, most people happen to like meat and do not feel any kind of guilt for it. Vegans do not have any right to jump on the faces of meat-eating people.” (38) The writer uses three times the extreme expressions “nothing”, “any kind of” and “any right” to strengthen their argument. This can be seen also as tautology to make the point clearer. “This maiden would not in any cost become vegan unless there would be actual coercion. I am a carnivore and going to stay like that.” (39) The writer justifies their argument by using the speaker category being her/himself a meat eater.*

Veganism is seen as **unnatural**. Meat is and has always been a natural part of the diet from the very beginning that it should be there in the future too. *“People’s brains are developed to their current form because of the protein that develop only when the meat is being cooked. From the current brain have got under way such follies as vegetarian diet and thoughts of the starter of this topic so vegans can be grateful of meat for their own trend.” (40) The writer justifies their arguments with facts. “Still to continue that we have still relics of carnassial teeth in the mouth. So, go vegans in front of the mirror and open your mouth... there in the upper corner you can perceive from the shape of the corner teeth that they are not shaped for killing the root vegetables.” (41) The writer uses factual argumentation to justify their argument. “And oh yeah why vegans do not have multiple rumens when proper chewers of vegetables have ones? Has something gone missing in your evolution.” (42) The writer justifies their arguments with facts.*

The **price** sub-category means that vegan food is seen as a more expensive alternative compared to meat, eggs and dairy products, that people do not want to spend more money on their food. *“Try to have a vegan life for example for a month with my income. You are not able to do it. Required, various vegetarian food costs*





*very much.*" (43) The writer justifies their arguments with speaker category, being a person with low income. After that they also use facts to strengthen the point.

Because vegans are only a **minority** in the population, veganism should not be supported. "*Because vegans do not have any remarkable commercial relevance as well as vegetarians. They are too small consumer group.*" (44) The writer uses factual argumentation to justify their argument. After that they use also the extreme expression "too" to validate the argument. "*There are only 2 per cent of vegans in the population, so it would be reasonable to have two vegetarian days over 100 meal days.*" (45) The writer uses a fact to justify why there should be only two vegetarian days out of 100.

HEALTH-category describes arguments where people think vegan lifestyle, mainly vegan diet, causes health problems. Compared to omnivorous diet, veganism is thought to have problems when it comes to health. Vegan food is seen to be **unhealthy** because it is more processed and for example soy is gene manipulated. "*Vegans get from the food so much e-codes that it is horrifying. Probably they do not decompose even in the grave. Myself I eat only organic and local food. I do not hate vegans nonetheless even they falsely predicted death for me.*" (46) The writer uses factual argumentation to justify why veganism is actually unhealthy. They also take distance from their own interest by saying that they do not hate vegans. "*I have understood that a vegan does not care how the product has been processed as long as it does not contain anything of animal origin. This can be an illusion but that kind of perception I have sadly gotten.*" (47) The writer controls their personal distance to the argument by saying that they have gotten the information from somewhere, which makes the effect that they are just delivering the argument.

If not directly unhealthy, vegan food is seen **insufficient**, for example containing less calories and protein than meat and therefore causing health problems. "*A vegan means a person who does not accept eating anything living, not even milk. With that diet one would die even today unless eating synthetically produced vitamins in addition.*" (48) The writer uses an extreme expression "anything" to emphasize how strict vegans are. After that they also use factual argumentation to justify their argument. "*Vegans do not seem to want to live to older than 50 years olds for ethical reasons and until that age they can have already very brittle bones, hair, muscle and skin with the wrongly assembled vegetarian diet.*" (49) The writer uses at the same time facts and a list of three to justify and highlight their argument of how insufficient vegan diet is.



Vegan food is also seen to be **unsuitable** to some people especially if the person has some food limitations like allergies and therefore there are not enough options left to have a healthy diet with vegan food. “Consider again should you live as quite a vegan because you have so many matters at the side of vegetables and grains to avoid.” (50) The writer uses facts to justify their argument that it is not a good idea to be vegan as a person in question.

## 4.2. Summary of the categories and rhetorical strategies

In *Figure 4*, all main categories are listed based on the amount of arguments that were selected from the raw material. As can be seen, the top three categories are the individual with 111 arguments, health with 107 arguments and action with 84 arguments. The rest four categories vary quit evenly from 38 to 49 arguments having about half the amount of arguments compared to the top three categories. The top three categories show that the negative issues from vegans and veganism arise mostly from individual vegans, how they behave and what health concerns there are.

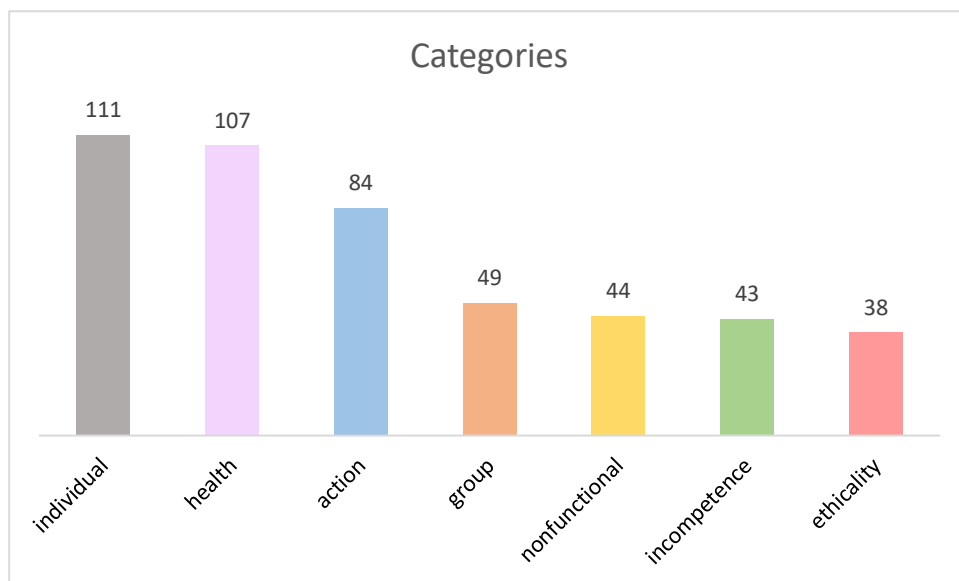


Figure 4: Amount of comments in each category

The number of arguments in each sub-category is shown in *Figure 5*. The three subcategories with most arguments (insufficient, conversion and hypocrisy) belong to the above-mentioned top three categories (health, action and individual). Of these subcategories, **insufficient** was the most common with 75 arguments, followed by 45 arguments in **conversion** and 34 arguments in **hypocrisy**.



The other most common categories with more than 20 arguments include **ideology** (32 arguments), **strictness** (29), **unhealthy** (28), **unnaturalness** (26), **understanding** (23), **imported food** (20) and **moralization** (20).

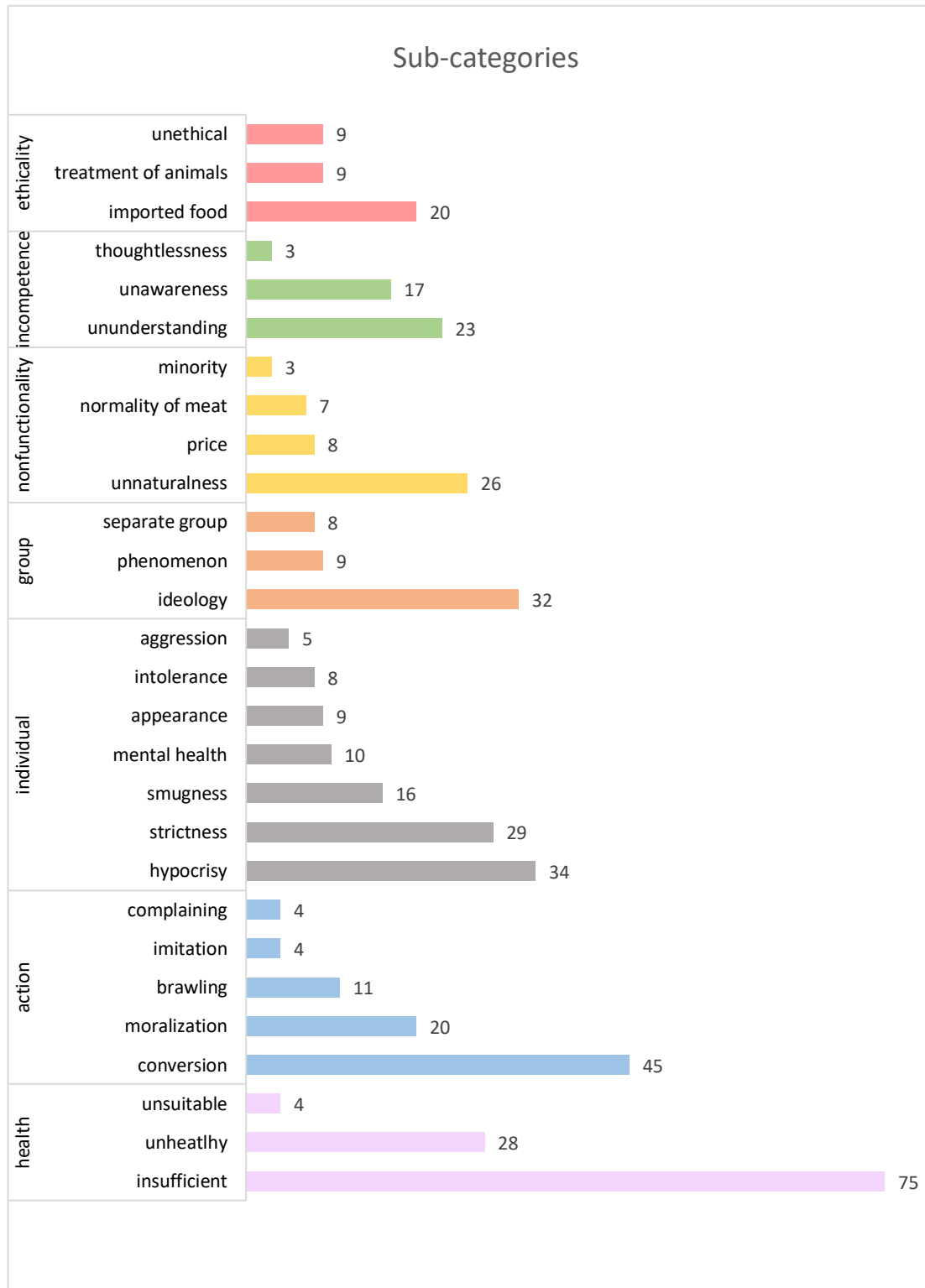


Figure 5: Amount of comments in each sub-category

Figure 6 below shows how much each rhetorical strategy was used in the example comments. The most common rhetorical strategies that were used were factual argumentation, categorization, extreme expression and taking distance from own interests, which each appeared 10 to 19 times out of 80. Metaphors and anticipating to the possible counter argument were not used in this case. Other strategies were used from one to five times.

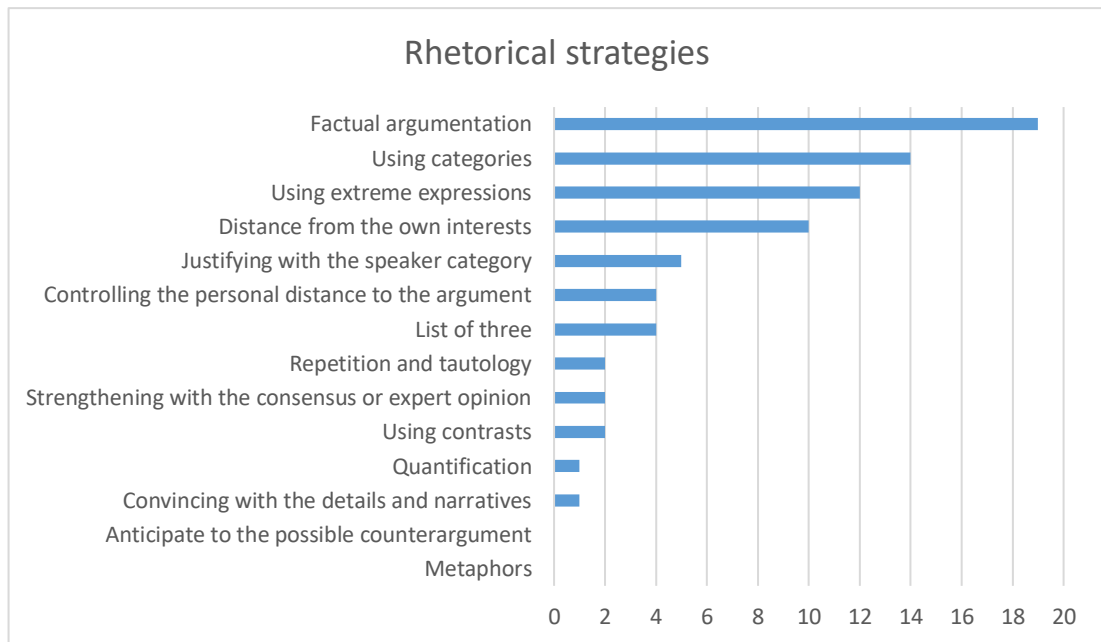


Figure 6: Amount of rhetorical strategies found

## 5. Discussion

In this chapter, there is a discussion about results of the analysis together with writer's own reflection.

One central argument raising from the analysis is seeing veganism as something strict and total, and something that should be followed carefully without any slipping. Vegans were seen as their own, restricted group in which people being only partly vegan were not tolerated. Moreover, this meant that veganism was limiting, and being a vegan meant compromising your rights and freedom to choose. Based on the arguments analyzed, this kind of absoluteness was distancing and off-putting. This is in line with the findings of Niva and Jallinoja (2018), according to whom veganism was



seen as the least favoured form of political food consumption among all consumer groups in Finland because it was so difficult.

At the same time, many of the arguments focused on vegans being hypocrite and not being able to follow their own rules, although they nevertheless considered themselves better than the others, and made a great fuss about it by “forcing” their vegan agenda to people around them. This was considered to easily lead to other people seeing themselves as “worse” than the vegans, leading to a situation where vegans and non-vegans were constantly highlighting the imperfectness of each other.

An interesting contrast was seen in the material, that at the same time people are against vegans because of their strictness to the veganism, but also because of their hypocrisy. Veganism is seen as an oppressive habit that has to be followed carefully without any slipping. People might be scared that being vegan means no freedom to choose what to eat and restricting free will. At the same time people blaming vegans that they do not behave good enough to be able to call themselves vegans, might be the result of feeling less of a good person compared to vegans and therefore highlighting some imperfectness among vegans makes them feel better about themselves.

The imitation sub-category goes to the same theme with hypocrisy. People are wondering and criticizing why vegans want to imitate non-vegan foods like milks and meats or want to use same words for their alternatives. For example, for some people cheese can be called cheese only if it is made traditionally from milk, and soy or other plant-based products are used to make food items that try to imitate meat. Usually, people do not become vegans because they do not like the taste of meat, but because of other reasons like ethical or environmental and that is one reason why vegan food tries to imitate meat et cetera. Also, when people are turning into vegans or decreasing the amount of meat that they are consuming, vegan foods that are similar to meat and other animal-based foods make it easier to make the change when the new diet is not so different compared to the previous one. The opposition on this matter might be because non-vegans are concerned about their right to eat meat when different meat-alternatives are coming to the market. Meat has become from a luxury to a necessity and it is difficult to give up necessities even if they would not be such real necessities.

As discussed in the theory section, meat is seen as a strong and powerful substance and vegetables are the opposite, insufficient (Twigg 1983). Therefore, there is a confrontation when vegetables are used to make meat-like foods because the old



perception is that vegetables are weak and cannot possibly be as good as meat. Many people still might think that vegan food means just a salad and do not understand that nowadays it can be as sufficient as omnivorous diet. Some perceptions are possibly also going on under insufficient sub-category. Even if the study by Twigg (1983) is nearly 40 years old, it is still partly really accurate, and the same atmosphere can be sensed still today. One reason might be that people with higher age still have their opinions from the 1980s but there are still also younger people with the same attitude.

As mentioned in the analysis, health concerns were one of the biggest issues that were worrying people. This goes along with the findings of Lea et al. (2006), who said that one of the biggest barriers not to alter a current diet was lack of information about plant-based diet (Lea et al. 2006). However, there are studies like (Craig 2009), which proves that vegan diet is a completely safe and sufficient diet compared to omnivorous one and it has also many positive effects to persons health. But the real issue is still how to spread this information and how to get people to believe it. In the case of health concerns the problem is more practical rather than attitudinal and might be easier to solve by putting more information available.

Lea et al. (2006) found unwillingness to be a big barrier to alter one's diet (Lea et al. 2006). Unwillingness in this study can be found to be related to several different categories. Because vegans themselves as individuals and as part of the group are seen unpleasant, because for example their religious kind of attitude to veganism, there is unwillingness not to become the same kind of person. Also, the thought of unnaturalness might not be easy to change with information because the apprehension that veganism is unnatural is so strong.

Vegans were referred many times as young and misunderstanding, even stupid people. People against them might be in older generation that is afraid of change and have such a strong comprehension that what was right 20 years ago still apply today. The same kind of thing is when people state how back in the day vegans could not have survived and the meat was a necessity. People do not see and understand the development during the years until this day, how for example agriculture and technology have developed so it is a whole other thing to be a vegan now than decades ago. However, meat has normalized so much that at the same time people do not know or remember that there have been times in the past when people have eaten meat just on rare occasions. It is different from the situation today because the reasons not to eat meat were financial and diets apparently were not so nutritious. Still, people survived without meat and nowadays it is healthy to be vegan.



How vegans act to other people, especially with conversion and moralization talk, got a lot of comments. Some admitted that veganism is a good thing and people should eat less meat but that the vegans were the problem. No one feels good when someone tries to push them to change their habits especially with moralization. Free will and individualism are important rights in the society in this day. People acknowledge their own weaknesses, and feel threatened and uncomfortable when someone highlights the bad side of them. The shaming might get someone to change their habits, but this material clearly shows that it does not work. When vegans have a bad reputation, no one wants to be like them. Even if the veganism might sound interesting, people do not want to be vegans because then they would get the bad image on themselves. Veganism should be a nice and good thing that people want to achieve. Of course, there should be a discussion about veganism between vegans and omnivores but there is a big difference in conversion and a fair conversation.

As the group category shows, vegans are seen to belong to an apparent ideological, phenomenal or just a very different group compared to omnivores. Group identification by Terry & Hogg (1996) that was mentioned earlier in the theory section can be seen in the material. The strong group identification is among both vegans and the people against them. Therefore, people against vegans and veganism are just so strongly identified to the opposite, affected by their group norms and seeing vegans as out-groupers. That is one reason why it is so difficult for meat-eaters to change habits towards a more plant-based diet.

Vegan and veganism themselves are categories and have their own connotations, but using other categories the person can express specific associations from the used category to apply now also to vegans and veganism. Groups like religious people have already their own old connotations and in these cases those groups are used to make a negative impression, for example that vegans are so faithful to veganism as a religion that they are blind to see the reality. This could be used in the same way in the "real" religious context. Categorization can also separate the writer from the target to express how different the writer is and how different they want to be from vegans.

Factual argumentation was used a lot especially in the sub-categories ethicality, non-functionality and health. There is a lot of different kind of information related to all of those three categories and people have their own side which is true. For example, in the health category veganism was seen as an unhealthy diet because it contains a lot of e-codes. This can be true but not the case with every vegan person. People have presumptions and they might be just partly related to the facts. Those presumptions



have formed from their own experiences with vegans and what they have heard from other people and then it is generalized to apply to every vegan and thought to be the whole truth. As discussed in the theory, one of the biggest reasons not to decrease meat consumption is the lack of information (Lea et al. 2006). To get people more knowledgeable about vegan diet, the answer is to not only add the information, because it is difficult to get the information to the non-vegan people. Another difficulty is to get those people open and receptive to vegan friendly information.

One of the reasons to be vegan is that in general it is more ethical compared to a omnivorous diet and as discussed in the theory section there are also studies that prove that (look e.g. Rosi et al., 2017; Sabaté & Soret, 2014). However, the analysis of this study showed that there are a lot of arguments against veganism saying that veganism is unethical. One of the most popular arguments worth to mention was to attack to vegans' soybean consumption. Soy is said to come from far away and to be gene manipulated and therefore harmful to eat. In real life, 85 % of the imported soy is fed to the animals in Finland (Rönkkö 2013). Nowadays many soybean products like tofu and yogurts consumed in Finland get their soy from the European region and therefore are not either gene manipulated. Feeding for example poultry can consist of a lot of soy so omnivores consume also soy but indirectly. In the theory section it was mentioned how people have distanced themselves from the origin of their food (Hamilton et al. 2016), which is seen here when people do not understand what different steps and resources are behind the steak that is on their plate.

Arguments against the ethicality of veganism have some good points as well, for example fruits that vegans consume are brought to Europe from far away and avocado cultivation uses a lot of water. It is difficult to know what and how much people actually eat, but in general vegan diets do not consist of only fruits and avocados. Omnivores are big consumers of those food items as well, sometimes people against vegans forget that they eat also vegan food every day. Even if the vegan diet would contain more of those kind of foods, when looking at the whole picture veganism is still more ethical compared to diet with meat. Vegans justifying their diet with ethical reasons make critics to come up with the opposite arguments trying to prove that actually veganism would not be that ethical. It is common to attack and question those very reasons why someone is doing something and make the person to doubt their doings. The same tone is also used when the reason to be vegan is the unethicality of meat production. Then people judge veganism, for example because if there were no animals for meat, animals would not have their lives at all.





In real life increasing veganism does not mean that meat animals will disappear from the world and meat consumption would end.

On the Suomi 24 online discussion forum it is hard or impossible to find out the gender of the writer. However, some information about the gender to whom the argument is addressed can be dragged out and that way process the sex-linked conversations. As discussed in the theory section, there are some differences between men and women what they think about veganism and in general men are more against veganism and vegans (Kubberod et al. 2002; Lea et al. 2006). This can also be seen in this study indirectly. People describe vegans almost merely as young teenage girls and women and when there is a talk about men it is said that vegan diet does not suit for them. This is seen in several different categories like in group, health and individual categories. Also, the quality and variety of vegan foods have increased which makes it as nutritious as meals with meat. Still despite the change the overall atmosphere is that meat is needed for men as it was needed for their great grandfathers. This means again that more information and education is needed to be able to bring veganism forward.

## 6. Conclusion

This study started with the introduction of the topic, research problem and research questions. Followed by introduction, the theoretical framework was built based on the history of veganism and eating meat, what motivations there are to start veganism and what barriers there are against veganism. Materials and methods went through were the Suomi24 research material and both analysis methods: inductive content analysis and rhetorical analysis. As a result, there were the different arguments that were used against veganism and vegans and rhetorical strategies used in those arguments. Discussion outlined results and theory together with the writer's own reflection. This chapter encloses this study altogether. The aim is to look how well the research questions were answered and to evaluate the whole process. Also, it is discussed what research could be done next.

The first research question of this study was: **What kind of arguments and argumentation people use against vegans and veganism?** The answer for this is



wide because there are as many those who are against vegans as many as there are also different arguments. However, arguments were divided into categories based on their themes and there were a couple of themes that stood out from the others. The most common theme for the arguments was that vegan food is an insufficient diet and therefore not healthy and was therefore addressed against veganism. Other common themes were addressed more against vegans as persons. Vegans trying to convert people, vegans being hypocritical and vegans as a group with their ideology.

The second research question was: **What kind of rhetorical tools are used in these arguments?** The most common rhetorical strategies that were used were factual argumentation, categorization, extreme expression and taking distance from one's own interests.

The possible reasons behind negative arguments against veganism and vegans could be lack of information and feeling insecure. Issues can have many different sides depending on the gained information. Not everything has a clear side what is right and what is wrong, for example it cannot be said that the orange tastes good because for some people it does not. However, there are also facts based on the science that can allege to have the right or wrong answer. What people have learned and what has thought to be true can be difficult to change even if there is more correct information available. Therefore, it is important to get the right information available as soon as possible. In relation to this study for example, education about plant-based diet could be included to schools' curriculums. At the moment, that would have still some challenges because many parents may be against veganism and vegans and therefore there is a chance that they would oppose such changes to the curriculum. It is possible that during the next generation of parents, the situation is already better.

What vegans do or say often makes non-vegans feel uncomfortable. Even if it is not a good thing that people feel themselves insecure, the conclusion can be drawn out that there is some sense in people when they notice that they are not doing the right thing with their current habits. The challenge is to address that arising sense of openness to veganism and not to the even bigger opposition of veganism. It is important to increase the dialog between vegans and the people against them. To be able to support sustainable diets it is significant to understand what kind of arguments are used against vegans.

When looking at this research as a process there are some things that could have been done differently. First of all, the material is from the years between 2012 and 2016, which makes it over three years old now in 2019-2020 when the study was



made. The popularity of veganism is clearly increased particularly in the past three years so also overall opinions might have changed as well. However, it was only possible to have the newest material from the year 2016 because the database is not updated in real time. Also, even if there are now more vegans than over three years ago, there are still a lot of those arguments against them and veganism.

Methods used in this study were qualitative content analysis and rhetorical analysis. A better combination of these methods would have improved the analysis, instead of being used one after another. Moreover, using the rhetorical analysis to analyse a larger number of arguments, instead of a small selection of exemplary arguments, would have made the analysis stronger

It would be interesting to continue this study further to research more deeply how the negative atmosphere around veganism and vegans could be decreased. For example, what would be the best ways to increase information and knowledge among people. Another thing that could need more research is the opposite theme: how vegans comment and think negatively about omnivores. It could also give material to continue this study when getting to know what vegans think and say exactly. In this study, the material contains information from non-vegans on how vegans act and what they say, which can be biased. Also, it would be interesting to conduct a wide survey of this same theme on how people feel about vegans. The answers could be a bit different compared to the material in this study from the online discussion forum.

Increasing popularity of veganism can be seen with one's own eyes. For example, in the supermarkets and restaurants they increase their plant-based options and more studies are made from the topic et cetera. However, in this world where the meat consumption is still increasing there is a need to make more people change their diet to containing more plant-based foods and less foods from animal origins. In order to accomplish that target, the negative atmosphere around veganism and vegans should be reduced. More information is needed and positive encouragement without incrimination to build up an attractive atmosphere around veganism and vegans.



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## Appendix

### Suomi24 example comments in Finnish

1. *Vegaani sen sijaan ei syö eloperäistä uskonnollisista syistä. Hän vaarantaa terveytensä surutta, koska sokea usko on tärkeämpää.*
2. *Vaikuttaa kuin osa vegaaneista kokisi olevansa niitä ainoita oikeita uskovia ja kokisi kaikkien muiden olevan vääräuskoisia ja rekiot sitten vastaavat extremistiajattelua.*
3. *Vegaanit taas ovat oma rotunsa.*
4. *Jonninjoutavia hippejä koko vegaani sakkii.*
5. *En kyllä tiedä / tunne yhtään vanhusta joka olisi vegaani, se on tämän ikäpolven höyrötystä.*
6. *Ymmärrän RvaÄityli. Kun kouluruokaa tekee työkseen kuten minä alkaa ilmaantua näitä vegaaneja, ovat jotain yläaste 8 ja siitä ylöspäi. Somesta luettu että se on jotain cool ja jotenkin yhdistän tämän muoti ihanteisiin, laihduttamiseen ja murrosikää. Ei sillä mitään tekemistä ole todellisuuden kanssa, sitä ennen on muussi ja lihapullat maistuneet. Pelkkää mediahörhöä.*
7. *Kasviksissa on jo ihan itsessään riittävästi hyvää makua sellaisenaan, joten miksi jäljitellä liharuokia vai ovatko vegaanit heikkoja lihassaan ja uskossaan?*
8. *Ette vekkkaanit taas sitten muuta sanaa keksineet. soiija nakko, vegaani pekoni, vegaani majoneesi... voi teitä kateellisia ja tyhmiä raukkaparkoja. Kaikista naurettavin oli joskus se karjalanpasiti , josta koitettiin saada " aidon tuntuinen " . Jotai ihme kuutioita piti maustaa ja lisätä rypsiöljyä. Ei hyvää päivää. Jos syö vokesössöö niin sitten syö, miksi sille pitää kehitellä lihankorvike, maidonkorvike , munankorvike jne En vaan tajua teitä idiootteja . Majoneesi on sitä mihin tule kananmunaa. Ka-nan\_mu-na. Juustoon tulee mai-to-aLi-ha ei ole soi-jaMeneekö perille paremmin tavuviivillaDippikastikkeeksi sanosin tuota mihin ei tule kananmunan keltuaista.*
9. *No ei kai kenenkään tarvitse kokonaan vegaaniksi tai edes kasvissyöjäksi ryhtyä. Se kyllä on totta, että noin yleensä ottaen ihmisten pitäisi lisätä kasvissyöntiä ja vähentää lihansyöntiä. Ihan niin kuin pitäisi kaikkea muutakin, eli ei syytä millekään henkilökohtaiselle vainolle. Tarviiko sitä käännytystyössä kenenkään iholle mennä?*



10. *En vihaa vegaaneja, mutta en pidä siitä että kenenkään syömisiin puututaan.*

11. *Vegaaneissa ei sinänsä ole mitään pahaa, mutta se ärsyttää jos vegaani alkaa mainostamaan ruokavaliotaan ja haukkumaan lihansyöntiä*

12. *Viha vegaaneja kohtaan tulee siitä, että vegaanit tuomitsee muiden elämän tavat ja ovat hirveitä kiihkoilijoita syyttelyineen.*

13. *Aina sama kaava. Vegaani nostaa mielipiteensä tiedoksi. Sitten valtava enemmistö haukutaan, kun eivät jaa samaa näkemystä pienen pienen vähemmistön kanssa.*

14. *Mitäs vegaani kukkahattu siellä piipertää? viestisi on todella huvittava. Kyllä se on niin että kasvissyöjät tulee hermostuneena avautumaan ja kiukkuamaan lihansyönnistä. Teillä on vaan nälkä ja tekee kinkkua kauheasti mieli, nyt puratte sitä meihin lihansyöjiin.*

15. *Olet väärässä. Ainakin mitä minä olen ruokaa vierailleni tarjonnut, niin keskustelun on aloittanut vegaani ja vasta sitten kun ruoka on pöydässä hän ilmoittaa kasvissyönnistään ja ilmoittaa että ruoka on syömäkeltontonta. On toki sellaisiakin käynyt jotka ovat syöneet pelkät kasviruuat ja keskustelleet normaalisti.*

16. *Kyllähän niitä vegaaneja riittää, jotka kiihkoilun lomassa unohtavat ottaa selvää yhtään mistään ja sitten pyörtyilevät anemioissaan, hankkivat itselleen B12-vitamiinin puutoksen ynnä muuta mukavaa vatsalaukun rappeutumasta lähtien. Siinä sivussa unohtavat myös miettiä asiaa millään lailla tilallisen kannalta, vaikka kompromissit eri aatteiden suhteen olisi ainut järkevä ratkaisu.*

17. *Eipä kiinnosta teidän vegaanien ja kasvissyöjien sanomiset yhtään. Onneksi myös olen sen verran fiksu ja järkevä, etten myöskään usko ihan kaikkeen. En suinkaan ole ennakkoluuloinen ja tiedän myöskin enemmän ruokavaliosta kuin sä.*

18. *Ei voi muuta sanoa, kuin että vegaanit on tosi tyhmiä kun eivät tunne historiaa.*

19. *Näköjään vegaaneilta lähtee se vähäinenkin järjen hiven kasvisruokavalion myötä. Sääliksi käy teitä reppanoita.*

20. *Ei tarvitse huutaa. Huomaa selvästi että vegaaneilla ja kasvissyöjillä on paljon aggressiivisuutta, kiihkomielisyyttä, vihantunteita jne. Jokainen voi todeta että kehnolla ruokavaliollakin on osuutta asiaan. Erinomaisen hyvä että valinta on vapaa, muuten sitä tulisi hulluksi sekopääksi.*





21. *Veganismista saa vinksahtaneen pään ilman päätä sekoittavia aineita. Alkoholisti voi olla terve päästään selvänä mutta alkoholi sekoittaa pään. Vegaani sekoilee siis selvinpäinkin!*
22. *Vegaaneilla kait se mielenterveys on aika epävakaalla pohjalla. Siitähän se vegaanisuus monissa tapauksissa kielii.*
23. *Minullekin vegaanit ovat yhdentekeviä. Ainoa mikä heissä harmittaa on ulkoinen habitus. Ovat nuorena jo niin kovin vanhan näköisiä. :(*
24. *Tässä oli malliesimerkki mikä vegaaneissa mättää. Voi tuota omahyväisyyden määrää! Ilmeisesti kysessä maailmantuskaa poteva teinityttö*
25. *Mahollisimman paljon vieraskielisiä girjaimia- owo-lagto-pesco pasga vegaani on yleisnimitys kaikille itsensäkorostajille.*
26. *Ainakin tuntemani vegaanit ovat niin ahdasmielisiä, että heidän mielestään pelkkä lihan pois jättäminen ei kelpaa. Vain vegaanit ovat hyviä ihmisiä.*
27. *Ei kukaan vegaania hänen ruokavalionsa takia vikaa. Monesti vegaanit vain ovat ... miten sen nyt sanoisi ... hyvin jyrkkiä mielipiteissään. Heidän mukaansa toisten mielipiteet ovat täyttä p\*skaa ja vain kasvissyönti on avain onneen.*
28. *Tosiaan ihan sama mitä itsekukin syö. Ällöä asiassa on pitämättömät perustelut kuten viimeisimmällä tapaamallani vegaanilla. Hän oli vegaani eettisistä syistä. Tiukasti ottaen tällainen ihminen ei voisi syödä kasviksiakaan. Nekin ovat olleet eläviä olentoja siinä kuin eläimetkin. Muonaksi jää pelkkä vesi ellei halua kiviä pureksia.*
29. *Puhdasverinen vegaani kun tottakait olet ja miten voit ylipäättään olla kaupassa töissä, jossa on tarjolla myös lihatuotteita?*
30. *Minulla ei ole mitään vaikeuksia laittaa ruokaa vegetaristiystävilleni, siis sellaista mikä heillekin kelpaa. Mutta: Miksi aina sekasyöjät joutuvat joustamaan ruoka-asioissa? Moniko vegetaristi / vegaani tekee sekasyöjävierailleen liharuokaa*
31. *Todellinen valaistunut vegaani ei tyydy nykyisiin vaatimuksiin. Hänen on varmistettava jokainen suupala. Yhdessäkään suupalassa ei saa olla mitään elollista. Ei edes bakteeria. Onhan niilläkin olemassaolon oikeus.*
32. *Ottaa lemmikki pois ja määrätä lopulliseen eläimenpito kieltoon jos pitää vielä lemmikistäänkin tehdä vegaani, kasvissyöjä. Sekin on eläinrääkkäystä jos syötetään epäsovivaa ravintoa lemmikille. Sen nyt ymmärtää että ihminen on vegaani,*



33. *Myös lihaksi kasvatetun eläimen elämä on arvokas, tämän oikeuden vegaanit haluavat eläimiltä viedä.*

34. *Ja mitä tulee lihatuotantoon versus kasvistuotanto niin kattokaa vegaanit peiliin koska kyllä siellä kasvistuotannossa on paljon sellaista tuotantoa jonka hiilijalanjälki on aika kovaa luokkaa, mutta tätä totuutta ei vegaanin pää kestä, eihän sitä voi omaan pesään kusea :D*

35. *Ei kai kukaan vegaani oikeasti kuvittele, että luopumalla lihantuotannosta, voitaisiin elättää viljalla moninkertainen väestö maapallolla. Ekologisesti kestävämpiä kuvittelua koska suuret maapallon alueet soveltuvat vain karjan rehun kasvatukseen ja siten siis vain lihan ja matotuotteiden tuottamiseen. Kai haluamme pitää suomessakin Jyväskylän yläpuolen asuttuna.*

36. *Tiedättekö te vegaanit että soijan viljely tuhoaa sademetsiä, ja samalla niiden ainutlaatuista, monimuotoista elämää?*

37. *Jos olet vegaani niin olet ihan ok, KUNHAN syöt kotimaisia marjoja sekä juureksia. Ulkomailta tänne raahatut hedelmät ovat valtava logistinen taakka ja niiden roudaus tuhansien kilometrien päähän sinun iloksesi saastuttaa maapalloa valtavasti.*

38. *Lihansyönnissä ei ole mitään vikaa, useimmat ihmiset sattuvat pitämään lihasta eivätkä tunne minkäänlaista syyllisyyttä siitä. Vegaaneilla ei ole mitään oikeutta hyppiä lihaa syövien ihmisten naamalle.*

39. *Tämä neito ei millään ilveellä alkaisi vegaaniksi ellei olisi suoranainen pakko. Olen lihansyöjä ja sellaisena pysyn.*

40. *Ihmisen aivot ovat kehittyneet nykyiseen muotoonsa proteiinin vuoksi jota syntyy ainoastaan kun lihaa kypsennetään. Nykyisistä aivoista ovat lähteneet sellaiset hullutukset liikenteeseen kuin kasvis syönti ja tämän palstan aloittajan aivoitukset joten vegaanit saavat olla lihalle kiitollisia omasta suuntaumuksestaan.*

41. *Vielä jatkaakseni niin meillähän on raateluhamppaiden jäänteet vielä suussa. Menkääs vegaanit peilin ääreen ja avatkaapa suu. Siellä yläkulmissa voinee havaita kulmahampaan mallista ettei ole juureksen tappamiseen muotoiltu.*

42. *Ai niin miksei vegaaneilla ole montaa pötsiä, kun kunnon kasvisten pureskeilijoilla on sellaiset? Onko evoluutioissanne jotakin jäänyt väliin.*

43. *Kokeilkaapa minun tuloillani täydellisen vegaanin elämää esim. kuukausi. Ette pysty siihen. Vaadittava, monipuolinen kasvisravinto maksaa aivan sairaasti.*



44. Koska vegaaneilla ei ole mitään huomattavaa kaupallista merkitystä, samoin kuin ei täyskasvissyöjilläkään. Ne ovat liian pieni kuluttajaryhmä.
45. Vegaaneja on pari prosenttia väestöstä, joten kohtuullista olisi viettää kaksi kasvisruokapäivää / 100 ruokailupäivää kohden.
46. Vegaanit saavat ruuassa niin paljon E-koodeja, että hirvittää. Eivät varmaan kyllä lahoa haudassakaan. Itse syön vain luomu- ja lähiruokaa. En minä silti vegaaneja vihaa, vaikka ne minulle kuolemaa perättömästi ennustaisivatkin.
47. Olen ymmärtänyt, että vegaani ei välitä siitä, miten tuote on prosessoitu, kunhan se vain ei sisällä mitään eläinperäistä. Tämä voi kyllä olla harhaluulo, mutta sellaisen käsityksen olen ikävä kyllä saanut.
48. Väärä todistus. Vegaani tarkoittaa henkilöä, joka ei suostu syömään yhtään mitään eloperäistä, ei edes maitoa. Sillä ruokavaliolla kuolisi tänäkin päivänä ellei söisi synteettisesti valmistetuja vitamiineja lisäkkeeksi
49. Vegaanithan ei liene haluakaan elää eettisistä syistä kuin 50-vuotiaaksi ja tuohon ikään mennessä heillä voi olla väärin koostetulla kasvisruokavaliolla jo hyvin haperot luut, hiukset, lihakset ja iho.
50. Harkitse uudelleen, kannattaako sinun ihan vegaanina elellä, koska sinulla niin paljon kasvisten ja viljojen puolella on vältettäviä aineita.