This study focuses on the concept of 'vulnerability' through hermeneutic research. The idea (concept) of 'wound' stands as a base for an explorative-descriptive approach of the research. The theoretical perspective of this study is built on caring science, which is based on the human science tradition formed at the department of Caring Science at the Åbo Akademi University.

The theoretical perspective of the study presupposes Eriksson's theory formulation and development and is at the same time the core theory the development of knowledge is aiming towards. The Eriksson model of concept determination is the base for the choice of method.

An etymological and semantical analysis of the conception of 'wound' opens up for an understanding of the meaning of 'vulnerability'. The material consists of Swedish dictionaries. The years of publication expands between 1855 - 2009. Quotations that show the concept of 'vulnerability' in a linguistic context are being presented.

The purpose of this study is to clarify the concept of 'vulnerability' by showing traces of its essence from a scientific perspective through a semantic review of the idea of 'wound'. The question is: what is the conceptual meaning of the concept of 'wound' and 'vulnerability'? What are the meaning of these concepts for Caring Science? The study falls in the category of basic research because the search of knowledge is ontological by definition.

Vulnerability is interpreted to be difficult to understand and it has many dimensions. A fourfield that shows dimensions in the essence of vulnerability stands out through interpretation. The concept of 'wound' shows how vulnerability and suffering are linked to human life. The essence of vulnerability can be traced in statements about 'wounds' as a metaphor for the movement a human being endures when she experiences health and suffering.