Learning to 'Read' NVivo Projects: Implications for Teaching Qualitative Research

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As qualitative researchers move more deeply into the regularized use of qualitative research software, they increasingly come to think within the container provided by the parameters of the software, that is, 'the project' as it is termed in NVivo. The project is a collection of texts (whole and in parts such as occurs when they are parsed by coding) and visual products (models and various items linked through external databytes), connected by virtual filaments known as hyper-links. Teachers of qualitative research who are determined to have their students make use of qualitative research software must not only understand how to use the software themselves, but they must develop skill in 'reading' the projects of their students (Bringer, Johnston, & Brackenridge, 2004). Over the past two years I have deepened integration of NVivo into my work with doctoral students (in course work and individual work with dissertations), and in so doing I have become increasingly interested in how I was reading students' NVivo projects, and, more recently, how do I help students to learn to 'read' each others' projects (Davidson, 2004).

In this paper I argue that NVivo projects are a genre (Bakhtin, 1981/1986; Davidson, 1993; Swales, 1990) with strong similarities to the issues of genre raised in discussions of electronic literacy (Bruce, 2003). This discussion of NVivo projects as

genre also has important overlap with discussions of qualitative research or ethnography as genre (Clifford & Marcus, 1986, Geertz, 1988; Jacobsen, 1991; and, Van Maanen, 1988).

The notion of reading as applied to NVivo, provides an important lens through which to access issues of skill and competence in the use of these tools (Davidson, 2003). In this piece I explore the ways I and my students have learned to read an NVivo project and, reflexively, the ways our exploration of this topic has lead us to a more sophisticated understanding of the genre. I present My/our exploration of how to read the genre of the project as a three-tiered process: 1) Out of the Box; 2) Into the box; and 3) Reading the Project. Finally, I will discuss the implications insights gleaned from a genre-based approach to understanding NVivo have for the way we teach students to use this tool.

Reading and Genre—Inter-related perspectives

The act of reading, in the conventional sense of picking up a text and making sense of a mixture of markings that have been created by another human being, is a complex task requiring various kinds of learning and experiences—from knowledge of the silly symbols on the page and their relationship to the concepts of one's language to an understanding of the purpose of the text and the arrangement of its features. This reading that we do with texts is a human activity, deeply embedded within particular cultural, social, and linguistic horizons. The texts that we read are developed within containers called genre.

Fairclough describes genre as "a relatively stable set of conventions that is associated with, and partly enacts, a socially ratified type of activity…A genre implies

not only a particular text type but also particular processes of producing, distributing and consuming texts" (1992, 126).

A now classic definition of genre comes from Swales (1990):

A genre comprises a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. The purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style. Communicative purpose is both a privileged criterion and one that operates to keep the scope of a genre as here conceived narrowly focused on comparable rhetorical action. In addition to purpose, exemplars of a genre exhibit various patterns of similarity in terms of structure, style, content and intended audience. If all high probability expectations are realized, the exemplar will be viewed as prototypical by the parent discourse community. The genre names inherited and produced by the discourse communities and imported by others constitute valuable ethnographic communication, but typically need further validation (58).

Suffice it to say that when we read, the text is presented to us in specialized forms known as genre. These are formed by various processes of production that include author and others. Critically important to the notion of genre, texts are created for specific purposes within communities of readers. These readers come to the act of reading with expectations about structure, style, and distinguishing features of the texts they will encounter. Their expectations are shaped by exemplars that they point to as proof of what a particular genre should contain and look like. Not all readers are equal within a

discourse community, and it is to those senior readers that one should look to for deepest knowledge of, or ratification of, the features of genre.

Genre and Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is not foreign territory for the discussion of genre. Indeed, the issue of genre has figured prominently in the history of this discipline. In Denzin and Lincoln's overview of the history of qualitative research (1994), you could almost say that the history of qualitative research is the story of genre development and change. In describing the present period, they state that "Theories are now read in narrative terms…" (11). Even their selection of period titles emphasize the notion of genre as a defining issue within qualitative research. For instance, the years from 1970 to 1986 they refer to as the stage of "Blurred genres" followed by the period of the mid-1980's titled: "Crisis of Representation" (9), both terms that evoke the narrative perspective. Key titles associated with these eras, themselves, have much to say about genre. These include:

- Tales of the Field: On writing ethnography (VanMaanen, 1988)

- Reading ethnography (Jacobson, 1991)

- Writing culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography (Clifford & Marcus, Ed., 1986)

- Works and lives: The anthropologist as author (Geertz, 1988).

Concerns with genre in qualitative research have, as in other fields, brought attention to the features of the ethnographic texts we read, the production, purposes, and audiences for those texts, and the process of reading. In understanding how to read or write a qualitative research text, the role of exemplars is critical, as is the role of the instructor leading new readers to make sense of these texts.

Enter Electronic Text and Qualitative Research Software

The advent of the computer age has also had important implications for the notion of genre and the conduct of qualitative research.

Computers, with their electronic capacities, make possible new forms of electronic literacy, particularly the creation of hypertext—linkages that connect multiple texts in dynamic fashion. The power of hypertext is that it "creates a very different way of storing and presenting information than earlier forms of writing, even if only within a single user's pages; pieces of texts are connected through associative links rather than included in a single linear document." (Warschauer, 1999, 7).

Qualitative research software makes strong use of these same electronic capacities, allowing a researcher to sort, organize, and link texts in multiple ways, all in service of the interpretation of data and the representation of those interpretations. In NVivo software, these various pieces of text are organized within an umbrella form called "the project". The project, like the genre of the novel, contains many other literary forms—logs, memos, fieldnotes, databites, etc—within it.. While each of these possess their own separate representation within the program, they are drawn together like a single text by the container in which they have been placed—the project. This container allows for portability. You can pick it up (electronically) and share it with another, sending it over the Internet so that others can receive it, open it, and read it.

Over the last several years, as I have become increasingly involved in the integration of NVivo software in the teaching of qualitative research, I have been

growing in my awareness of this thing called "the project". This awareness has been pitifully slow in coming, as I will document below. Cultivating knowledge of the project as genre is critical to making the transition to advanced use of qualitative research software, and reading, then, is an integral part of the acceptance of the project as genre.

Learning how to Read NVivo

The next section is a narrative of the ways that I have gone about trying to understand how one reads a project—a history of how one thing led to another. I am going to be using a form of personal archaeology, taking you back through the stages that define the process by which I have come to grips with the notion of the project. The three eras of awareness I will refer to are titled: 1) Out of the Box; 2) Into the Box; and, 3) Reading the Project.   This will be the background for a discussion of the implications that I feel the notion of genre has for an understanding of the project, and how we read projects.

Out of the Box

My title—Out of the Box—refers to the earliest era of my experience with NVivo, when I literally thought of myself as outside of the container with which NVivo encloses qualitative research materials.

My involvement with NVivo postdates my involvement in the world of reading. My master's degree is in reading education, and I have worked with readers or reading issues for all age levels. In graduate school I morphed from reading specialist to qualitative researcher and my dissertation, a study of reading teachers, reflects that evolution.

Having been socialized in the cut and paste world of qualitative research, I looked back to that time when I was working on my dissertation, trying to imagine how I visualized my research. My images are at the level of fieldnotes, memos, artifacts—not project. Mentally, I imagine these items as separate, not connected. I remember many kinds of systems—notebooks for fieldnotes and memos; a shoebox for index cards. The top level of the project is expressed in papers and a book. There really is no such thing as a project. There is research, a question(s), and fieldwork.

I did my first training in NVivo in the summer of 1999 and have been working since then to integrate this tool into my introductory qualitative research course for doctoral students, most intensely in the last two years. Initially, I saw NVivo (meaning the project) as a storage box. Actually I don't think that I thought of the project as anything real or tangible, rather the real things were the fieldnotes, memos, and other items (because these were the primary genre in my cut-and-paste world of qualitative research). This kind of thinking goes along, I would assume, with a 'code and retrieve' perspective (Richards, 2004).

At that time, I privileged the traditional products of the doctoral class—papers. The first class in which I integrated NVivo into the qualitative research course (summer 1999), I don't think I required students to submit a copy of the project. I think I must have felt overwhelmed with the idea of trying to review this thing called the project. Rather I wanted to see the paper that was the product of that work, and, of course, in the paper the student would describe the use of NVivo and the development of the project. This despite the fact that the course devoted the afternoon hours of our five day course (spread over five weeks) to working in the computer lab on the projects with NVivo.

Even the 2nd summer in which I taught qualitative research with NVivo (Summer 00), I think I requested disks with the projects, but I didn't grade the projects. I used them simply for corroboration of the research described in the papers.

I should also add that at the same time that I was struggling with these summer experiments with NVivo, I also taught a traditional cut and paste qualitative research course during the regular school year. In that class, my syllabus would focus on the semester-long project, and the various data collection activities, which would culminate in a paper and the submission of a notebook that would contain the data and analysis. My syllabus had a linear quality, as did my outlook. If anything could be called 'the project' it was the notebook, but this only came into view at the end of the semester. Moreover, lacking the electronic capacity of hypermedia, each item within the notebook remained relatively discrete.

Into the Box

. It is surprising to me to look back and realize how long it took me to come to the understanding of the project that I now hold. That shift—Into the Box--came about when I shifted into a deeper integration of NVivo into the course structure, which occurred with the Qualitative Research Course of Fall 03. Thanks to QSR's short-term license agreement, every student had a copy of NVivo on a computer for home use, dramatically increasing the amount of time they could devote to working with their projects. For this reason, I chose not to hold class in the computer lab, but instead we met in a classroom with a single computer and LCD projector.

That semester I could not avoid my fate: I would have to learn to make my way through each project, an act I would eventually come to know as 'reading the project'.

The class and I spent a lot of time early in the semester and again around the mid-term talking about how to name the projects and send them…there were a variety of glitches, and there is always that student who can never follow the naming convention.

At the mid-term, then, I was faced with about seven NVivo projects to inspect. I had a vague plan of how to go about it. After all, I had developed a rubric. I opened the projects and poked around. I got excited by a number of things. It was very slow going. I spent well over an hour reviewing each one. Luckily, I had asked each student to create a memo, a compound document, in which they described their progress, using NVivo's linking tools to connect me, the reader, to the various parts of their project. I could always go back to this (that is if I could find it, because initially, the naming systems were all idiosyncratic!).

I reported on that experience and the excitement of watching students' developmental progress as NVivo learners at the Fifth International Conference on Strategies in Qualitative Research: Using QSR Nivo and NUD*IST, September 2004, University of Durham, Durham, UK (Grading NVivo: Making the Shift from Training to Teaching with Software for Qualitative Data Analysis). Ironically, while I was aware that their learning process was unfolding developmentally, I was not as aware of the developmental aspects of my learning, particularly in regard to the issue of 'reading the project'.

This experience, taking in the student NVivo projects and reviewing them was a major turning point for me in regard to understanding the project as genre, and coming to understand the act of reviewing the project-- as reading, or conversely the act of developing the project--as composition. Looking back, a sign to me that the transition

was occurring was that I could begin to visualize a project in an NVivo container…as opposed to my earlier visualization at the fieldwork stage of artifacts, or as with my cut and paste classes, as a notebook of everything.

I would be remiss in documenting my change process, if I did not mention the impact of attending the Fifth International Conference on Strategies in Qualitative Research in Britain last August, where there were so many good talks about different aspects of NVivo use. Equally important were the opportunities I have had to talk with Silvana DiGregorio during that visit to England and the chance to participate in two of her master classes. In the master class, I was able to watch an advanced practitioner (Silvana) edit the projects of more novice users. Her questions and running commentary on the changes she was making and how and why she was making them have been some of the most useful material to my thinking about reading the project.

Reading the Project

The next level of understanding took off during the Fall 04 semester, when I taught the qualitative research course once again. Armed with my experience from Fall 03, I gave careful attention to developing a text table for students that described the various contents that would be required in their NVivo project. This NVivo 'Table of Contents' was a new step for me. In retrospect, the table also serves as a marker of the transition from the era of "In the Box" to the era of "Reading the Project". No longer was the project seen as a linear process, but all parts were considered as part of the contents of this container. In addition to the 'Table of Contents' I also included a rubric that described the standards for the individual products as well as the project (See Appendix A for the Mid-term Assignment with Table of Contents and Grading Rubric).

In the Fall 04 semester I shifted from a reactive to a proactive stance in regard to using the course as an opportunity to learn to 'read the project'. This time there were nine mid-term projects submitted, and when I did my grading I committed myself to keeping an ongoing log of the way I read each one. This was a time-consuming task, as my notes on each project were several pages in length.

My journey through the projects began with a swift overview of the major bins: documents, nodes, attributes, models and sets. Then I jumped into the compound document that the student had prepared to lead me through their project—labelled by most as the "START HERE" document. I concluded with a "Reviewing the Whole" section that helped me to summarize for myself the strengths and weaknesses of the project.

By the second project review and beyond, I began to make use of the Report function early in the process, profiling both documents and nodes. The profiles helped me to quickly understand the coding load on documents, the kinds of linkages that the student used, and the pattern of document creation. A profile of the nodes allowed me to see where the 'fat' codes resided.

The more I read, the more experience I gained, and the more authoritatively I felt myself moving through the task. Each project added a new case to my knowledge base. Despite the fact that the students had all been given the same assignment, their products differed considerably, not just in level of achievement, but also in personal choices about the organization and presentation of their material.

What I have described thusfar is about my interaction with student projects, but an important part of my development in learning to read the project was to shift the focus to

student-to-student activities related to reading projects. Before the mid-term, I had devised a new kind of observational assignment, in which students put their observational fieldnotes into an NVivo project and exchanged these with a partner. The partner read and coded the notes, writing about the experience in a compound document that was embedded in the observational mini-project. Students presented these projects to each other, surprised at some of the different perspectives the activity revealed.

Encouraged by the response to the observational project and my experience with the mid-term, about two-thirds of the way through the semester I boldly assigned students to exchange their full NVivo projects, asking them to read their classmate's projects as I had read theirs for the mid-term. Again, each student provided their classmate with a compound document that included their reflections on what they saw, including linkages to the different parts of the project that were discussed in the review. Most relied upon my mid-term rubric as a guide for examining the components of the project and considering it in its entirety. This was a very successful project, but as one student gently suggested to me—it would have been a lot more helpful before the mid-term. Through this reflexive process of composing, reading, reflecting, and recomposing, the community of our classroom created new standards and expectations for the form that a project and its components should take.

Finally, unable to control my enthusiasm for 'reading the project', a term I was now making gleeful use of, I called for a class discussion on the topic of reading NVivo projects (11/30/04). Items students identified as important to the act of reading a project included: audience, purpose, role of compound document, sequence/chronology,

coherence, and they noted the parallels that can be drawn between NVivo projects and hypermedia/web pages.

To recap, summer 1999 I struggled with NVivo from an "Out of the Box" position. Fall 2003 I was able to move "Into the Box" as I deepened my understanding the NVivo project. Finally, in Fall 2004 I was truly able to grasp what it meant to "Read the Project". The table below summarizes the distinctions among these three eras in my experience with NVivo.

From Out of the Box to Reading the Project

Dimensions of Change	Out-of-the-Box	Into-the-Box	Reading the Project
Anchoring	Anchored in Cut-and-Paste	Moving Out of Cut-and-Paste	Recognize Project as a complex genre
Visualization	Many kinds of Fieldwork Documents	Beginning to image the project in electronic format	'See' the project within an electronic container.
Portability	Fieldwork notebook is portable, not the project per se.	Emerging portability.	The project is electronically contained and highly portable.
Notion of QR software	Considers software as tool that contributes to papers, storage, and coding.	Beginning to think within the software.	Cannot separate the pieces or products from the project. The project is completely integrated with the software.
Knowledge of Cases/Projects	Lack of case knowledge of electronic projects.	Case knowledge of electronic projects is partial, incomplete.	Possess broad case knowledge of projects.
Reading Capacity	No ability to read a project. Reading is haphazard.	Beginning to develop standards or procedures for reading. Many aspects are not automatic. Do not have any internalized scripts	Reading is authoritative and efficient. Knows how to read features, as well as use features to support reading.

		for fast processing.	

DISCUSSION: What does it mean to read the project? AND What are the implications of reading the project for the notion of the project as genre?

As the community of qualitative researchers increases its experience with the electronic project, we become increasingly skilled at reading this genre. We know that we are more skilled because we can read faster or more fluently; we have made automatic many actions that were once clumsy; we recognize novice versus proficient projects; and we have mental models of a range of full projects and project parts that can be applied to a variety of cases we might encounter.

Our reading abilities are closely intertwined with our ability to understand and use the project as a genre. Returning to the earlier definitions of genre provided by Fairclough and Swales one can deduce several implications in regard to the project:

- The project will be a central vehicle in the communication of the goals of our discourse community of qualitative researchers.

In my qualitative research course, the project is a communicative vehicle. We can put forward our ideas in specific memos that we leave in the document database for ourselves or others. These compound documents can serve as road maps to the contents of the project.

The project also communicates to the reader by its very structure and contents. The savy reader reviews the different components of the project, making conscious and

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sub-conscious decisions about the project from the meaning they draw from the materials and their ordering.

Indeed all of our thinking about a study is intertwined with the project and its electronic parameters. We come to see the research in the shape of the project pad, document data base, node trees, and attribute charts. The project becomes a visual aid for imagining the research and developing it over time.

In my classes, in stating that we are coming to communicate our ideas through the project, this does not mean to say that the peer-reviewed journal article or academic report is a thing of the past. In the future, however, the project may well come to hold equal status with these other products. Even now, as I review a student's dissertation, I feel the need to ask them for a copy of the project to check against their methodological description.

- The project will contain elements of prototypicality, as well as individual nuances of style and form.

Elements of prototypicality are the result of the design of the software as well as the conventions of the users.

Just as my mental image of a qualitative research project is now equated with the NVivo project pad, so, too have I come to see various NVivo features as invariable. These include the design of the icons, the ways that coding stripes are applied, the form of the attribute tables. These are built-into NVivo and cannot be changed by the individual user. They do change, however, with different versions of the software, through the actions of the software designer.

On the other hand, prototypicality is also a result of criteria developed by the community of users. In our classroom, it became standard practice to name the compound document that you were leaving as a map to your reader as the "START HERE" document. Another standard practice evolved in regard to the model. Stuart Robertson started the trend when he created a memo to accompany his model, leaving the memo icon in a free-floating position within the model. This allowed him to enter the memo at any time that he was working on the model so that he could add more details to his thinking about the model. Stuart's idea caught on and became our accepted standard for building a model.

Screen shot of Stuart's original model
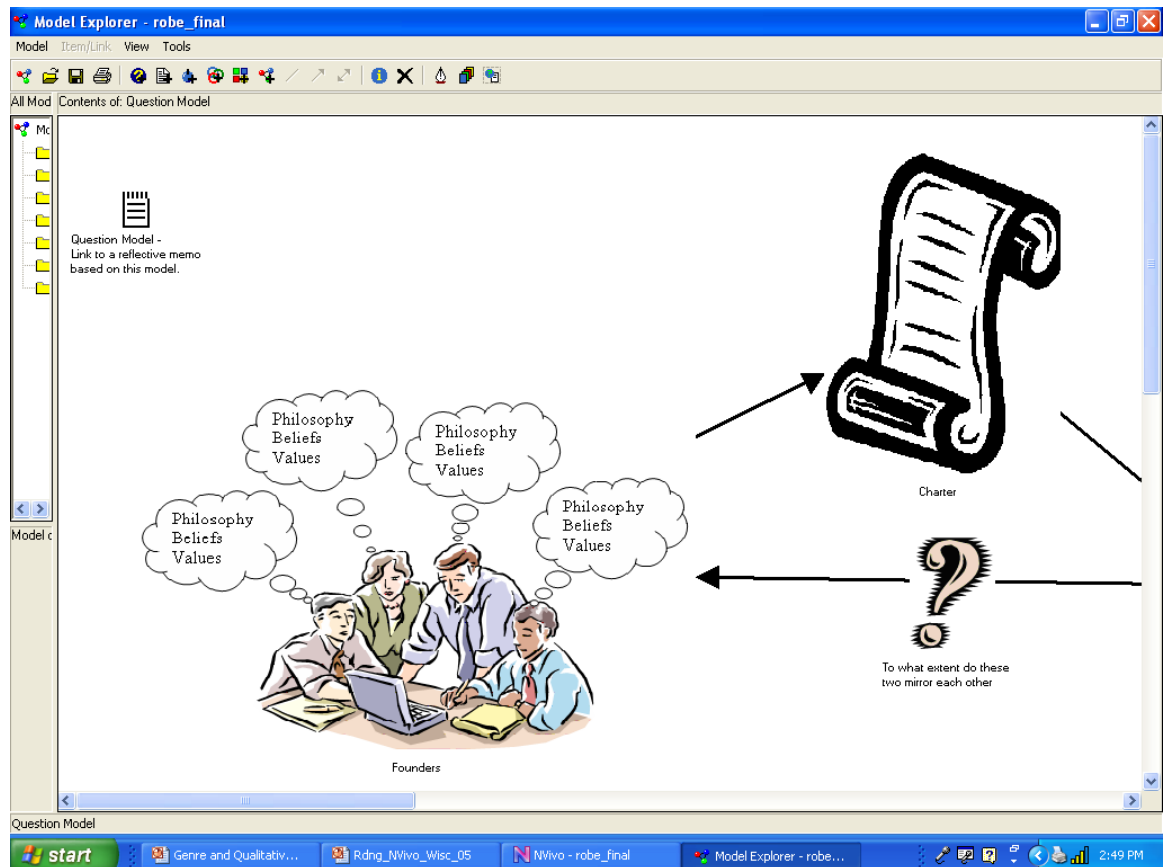
The reverse of prototypicality would be the demonstration of individual or unique style. There were numerous examples of this in my qualitative research class. For instance, in organizing the document data base, students would elect to use alphabetical, numerical or color strategies to order their documents for efficient visual use. Here are two examples, the first from Carolyn Siccama and the second from Gerry Rigby.
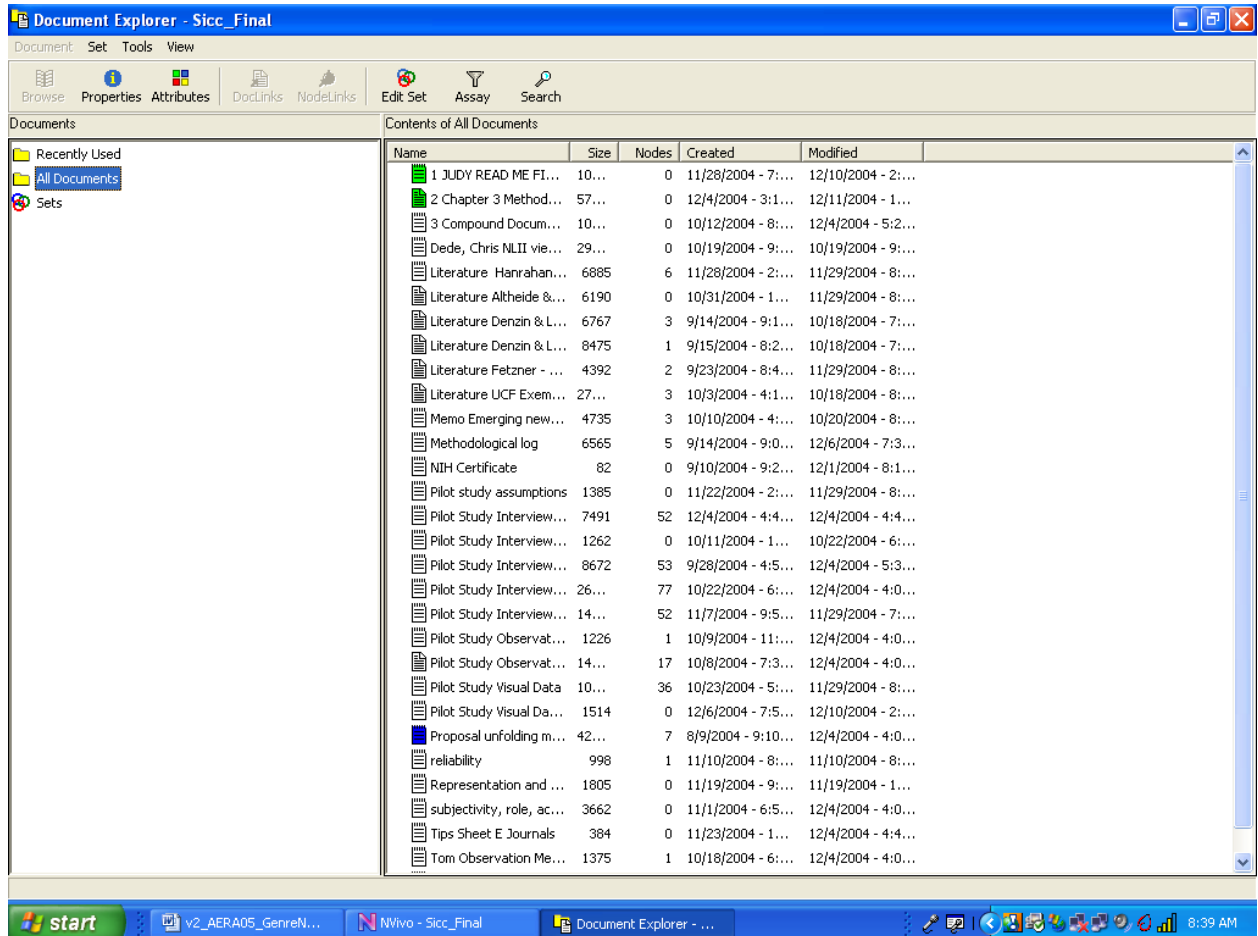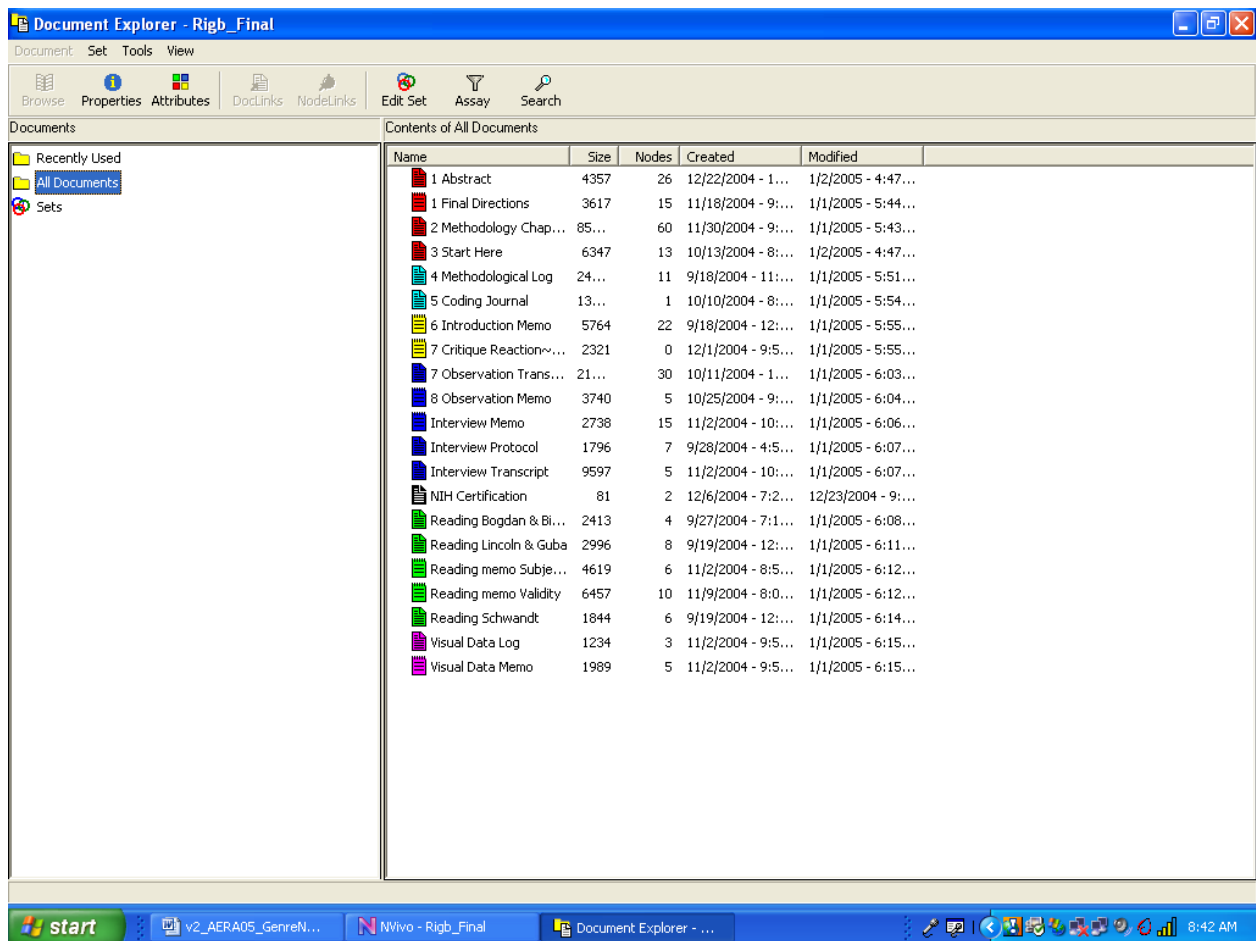
- Advanced users will be at the heart of defining prototypical use and the naming of genre styles and conventions

Qualitative researchers constitute a community of practice, within which those qualitative researchers who make use of qualitative research software constitute a member community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In this community of practice, members with the most experience and knowledge will most likely be those most actively engaged in the process of defining prototypical use and the naming of genre styles and conventions. The participants in this conference are probably some of the most advanced members of the practice community of qualitative research software users, and, not

surprisingly, these conferences and others like it are venues for these definitional activities.

Likewise because of the limited number of instructors who have deeply integrated qualitative research software into doctoral instruction, courses where this has occurred are also important venues for the activity of defining prototypicality, genre styles, and conventions.

Interestingly, while there are textbooks describing the use of NVivo. There are, as yet, no standards for the project genre, such as one finds in stylebooks like the American Psychological Association Handbook (APA; reference). Nor, do we have an agreed upon style for the discussion of qualitative research software in dissertation proposals or in the final product—the dissertation itself (Bringer, Johnston & Brackenridge, 2004).

In making sense of prototypicality and style, it will be important for qualitative researchers to think about what is it that advanced users know and are able to do that novice users do not know and are not able to do.   Understanding the developmental process by which one moves from one level to the next in the use of qualitative research software could provide helpful information for describing genre issues.

- To understand the project in its fullest sense will require knowledge of the processes of its production and consumption.

The production of a project, like that of many other kinds of documents, emerges through a process of addition, revision, and reformulation. The history of its evolution can be logged, or equally informative, the entire project can be saved at different points in its chronological development. In our class discussion of reading the NVivo project,

Alex Ballantyne compared the saving of multiple copies of an NVivo project over time to the popular series "The Lord of the Ring". Speaking of the series, Alex explained that "…they follow one another sequentially, but they are distinct in their own right. When we put together projects—do we want to keep the projects separate as we go through the process of evolution. If we don't we would lose track of where we have been and where we want to go." (11/30/05).

The dynamic quality of project development is captured in this statement by Gerry Rigby from the same discussion.

I noticed this semester that there was so much reflecting about the decision-making so at the end I have very different views of the project than I did at the beginning. It's kind of like as you were building and then saying—Wow! I'd like a window over there. There is an emergent piece in NVivo that is important in documentation of the process. (11/30/05).

The portability of the project is critical to the understanding of genre, and the use of the project as a communicative tool. As more and more qualitative researchers gain skill with such software, they will become increasingly game at sharing projects back and forth among each other. Moreover, new developments in the software may well aid the researcher in expanding the horizons of portability. This provides for new possibilities for consumption that must be taken into account.

<div align="center">Conclusions</div>

Having made the argument that the project is a genre, I can't help but compare it to other genre, seeking to draw parallels, and, thus, to have new ways to understand the

issue of reading the project. The two possible comparisons that come to mind are: 1) the novel or 2) hypermedia, such as web pages.

Like a novel, the project is a comprehensive form, that contains multiple forms—short stories, letters, multiple characters each with their own distinct voices—all these are woven together across the chapters of the book. The traditional novel, however, has its roots in a pre-electronic era, and consequently follows a more linear mode than the project.

On the other hand, NVivo is a form of hypermedia in which diverse documents, text segments, and other items are electronically linked into one comprehensive whole. Returning to Warschauer's comment on hypertext,"…the pieces of texts are connected through associative links rather than included in a single linear document." (1999, 7).

Both the novel and hypermedia have been the recipient of scrutiny in regard to the issue of reading and genre (Bakhtin, 1981/1986; Bruce,2003). If the project, as it is found within Nvivo and other qualitative research software, has relevant similarities to the novel and hypermedia, it may be that further comparison to the literature on these topics could also be of value.

The notions of reading and genre and inextricably linked together. In coming to understand NVivo, I have become increasingly aware that the act of using the software, that is, of building projects and reviewing the projects of others are literacy acts centered on a new hypermedia genre—the project. By drawing upon the rich theoretical and practical resources available to us regarding these linked notions (reading and genre), we have access to important tools for improving instruction of software supported qualitative research and building rigorous standards for excellence in the products of such work.

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Appendix A
Mid-Term Assignment: Fall04

Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: 07.704/201
J. Davidson

Mid-term Project Review

As we approach the half-way mark of the semester, I will be conducting the mid-term project review. For this review, your project will be submitted to me in electronic form as an email attachment.

In addition, I am also asking that you submit a copy of your mini-observational project conducted with data from your class colleague.

The following table shows which materials should be completed and included in the project that you send to me.

Materials that will be organized within your NVivo project (items shaded in gray should be completed by the time of the Mid-term Project Review).

Initial Materials *-1 memo* -1 model	
Methodological Log Time stamped entries that provide an ongoing record of the decisions you make in the project in regard to methodology and substance.	
Literature Review Notes -Lincoln & Guba -Schwandt -Altheide and Johnson -one other theory article (TBA)	
Interview Assignment -protocol -interview draft -finished interview *-memo re: interview assignment*	
Observation Assignment -observation draft -finished observation *-memo re: observation assignment*	*Observational Mini-project.*

Visual Data Assignment -visual data log (with external data bites connecting to scanned in photos) *-memo discussing three emergent findings*	
Compound documents -mid-term document describing work to date, organization of project, and emergent findings -final document describing work completed since the mid-term document -the proposal will be a compound document developed within NVivo	.
Subjectivity/role/access/ethics -proxy document: representing Human Subjects certification acquired *-memo on an subjectivity/role/access/ethics*	
Coding: All materials must be coded, at least a portion of the nodes must be organized in coherent tree node structures *-memo on material at one selected node*	
Models: -1st model (see initial materials) -model depicting data collected -one model related to coding	
Attributes: -attributes will be applied in some form to the data	
Linking Devices -data bites (internal and external) -doclinks -nodelinks These should be used in appropriate ways to link texts.	*(By using doclinks and nodelinks, you will be able to link your mid-term compound document to various parts of your project. Letting me navigate efficiently through your work.)*
Searches and Reports **(To be determined)**	
Other (Items that we specify in class or items that are unique to your project.)	-understand how to use the 'save as' function -understand how to use 'back-up' and

	'restore' -can use memory stick (or other devices) to transport project
Overall Organization of the Project -do you make use of pertinent organizational features to allow the reader most efficient access to your materials and ideas.	

The tool by which you will help me to understand the parts of the project and the role of the software will be a compound document, created within NVivo. This document may be either a textual or a graphic memo. NVivo developers define a compound document as one that has "data links" to other documents or nodes.

The Compound Document is a memo developed within NVivo that should provide a reviewer with the following information:

- A succinct description of the project: question, methodology, and chronology
- It should discuss the various forms of data gathered thus far, and the process of collection and improvement--providing links to the pertinent locations.
- It should provide a discussion of the development of the project within NVivo. How was the project conceived and developed within NVivo? How did the various NVivo components come into being? What significant decisions were made in the shaping of the project? What significant things have you learned about the software as a tool for organizing and analyzing qualitative research data? Again, point the reviewer to links as is appropriate.
- In conclusion, you will want to give a brief discussion of your next steps, that is, what remains to be done to complete the project.

The compound document should be something like a technical report, succinct and clear. The compound document is a road map. It provides us with an understanding of the places we will go, but then we get to stop off and really see the place on the map (the data, code, etc.)

Through the use of this document, I should be able to gain a good understanding of: 1) the course of the project up to now; 2) the data that has been collected for this project; 3) the ways in which this data has been organized and analyzed; and, 4) the role that the software—NVivo has played in this process.

Criteria for Evaluation

The following criteria will be considered in the evaluation of the project.

Organization of Project -Overall, the organization of documents, nodes, and other components of the project is sensible and easy to grasp -Overall NVivo features are used to their best advantage to support an outsider's understanding of what is here and demonstrate the insider's understanding of the importance of organization and management of data. -the researcher makes effective use of a methodological log to keep track of methodological changes in NVivo and in project process	
Compound Document **-**meets standards of completeness defined in the assignment -provides a clear understanding the research has taken -provides a roadmap to the organization of the research within the NVivo project -makes appropriate use of data linking features to support reader/user. -meets professional standards as a document to benchmark progress -subjectivity is acknowledged appropriately and serves as a resource not a barrier to the strength of the work.	
Data Components/Document System -The pieces are easily locatable. All data required for the research assignment are included. -The document system is organized in an understandable fashion that makes sense to the user/reader. -The researcher understands how to use section headings to organize documents for more efficient use. -The researcher makes appropriate use of memos as secondary documents to fix findings and aid interpretation. -The researcher understands how to create internal and proxy documents.	
<u>Observations</u> -data collected meet standards of excellence for data of this form -the format lends itself to readability and interpretation	I will also ask you to send me your mini-project conducted with the observational data from your group member, to help me to make sense of this category.

-the researcher makes good use of NVivo components to explore and support interpretations	
## Interview -data collected meet standards of excellence for data of this form -the format lends itself to readability and interpretation -the researcher makes good use of NVivo components to explore and support interpretations	[Only the interview protocol is required at this point.]
## Node System and Coding -the researcher knows how to create nodes -the hierarchy of the tree nodes demonstrates a reasoned understanding of the relationship between the parts -nodes created build appropriately from the data -the researcher understands how to use section headings as a coding device -the researcher has understanding of how to code proxy documents (particularly literature related to the project) -nodes reflect emerging interpretive understanding (they are not just descriptive labels)	
## Data Links -the researcher knows how to create databytes, doclinks and nodelinks -the researcher uses these features appropriately to support understanding and the building of interpretation -the use of data links supports rather than distracts from making sense of the data	
## Modeler -the researcher knows how to use the modeler -the researcher uses the Modeler to 'fix' new understandings and to build new interpretation	
## Attributes -the researcher knows how to use the attribute feature appropriately	

The two NVivo Projects (Your project and your mini-observational project) should be **submitted to me as an email attachment by NOON on Tuesday October 19, 2004.**

In submitting your project you should use this convention for labeling the BACK-UP copies you send to me:

1. For the full project: first four letters of your last name, underscore, then the number 1, then F (for Fall) 04.

   So if I were sending a project, it would be labeled: Davi_1_F04

2. For the mini-observational project: first four letters of your last name, underscore, obs_F04

   So if I were sending this project, it would be labeled: Davi_obs_F04

Following these conventions will help me to make quick sense of your material when I get it. Thank you, in advance, for your assistance with this organizational detail.