



“Emerging” theory?

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By: Patricia Bazeley & Lyn Richards

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“Emerging” theory?

In this Part, you will *not* learn how to create a theory from the data in your project! Qualitative theorizing is highly varied. Different methods do it differently and indeed have different meanings for “theory”. And in none of them does theorizing happen in a particular sector of a project, or as a result of particular processes using a particular tool. The theory will not be in this or that part of your project, but in the way you make sense of it.

All methods, however, require analysis—examination of the data in order to understand it as a whole. Getting to that understanding always requires moving beyond description to analytical categories and ways of exploring them, that is, abstraction. This Part is about tools and techniques for abstracting, and ways of handling project data and using NVivo in such a way that you are assisted in theorizing.



What are you aiming for?

You may not see the desired outcome of your project as a “theory” if your goals are pragmatic ones like

evaluating a teaching initiative, or understanding how members of a minority group see their situation. “Theory” may seem too grandiose a term for what you will be offering when you get there. Such studies look very different from, for example Grounded Theory studies, whose explicit goal is new theory, “grounded in” data.

If you are unfamiliar with the goals of qualitative theory—or if you are unsure where you are trying to get to in this project—we urge you to read explanations of what theory is sought and how it is constructed in the literature of your chosen method. This book, on software tools, is in no way a replacement for the books on method and studies using your method.

How will you know if you get there?

Theories appear to “happen” in odd places. Most qualitative researchers have stories of the “Aha” moment when the data made sense or things “fell in place”. (Preliminary analysis of a subsample of these suggests that high mountains and showers are particularly propitious locations!) Getting to a computer in such locations is never easy, but software may be totally irrelevant in these moments. Rather, splendid eruptions of understanding are always the outcome of prior work with the data. The qualitative literature is replete with references to theory “emerging” from data, but in our experience, theory does not “emerge” without the agency of the researcher. You have to “emerge” your theory!

Theory emergence and theory construction

It is here that NVivo can help. In what follows, we will use terms coined by Barry Turner: theory emergence and theory construction. (Turner, B.A., 1981, *Some Practical Aspects of Qualitative Data Analysis*. Quality and Quantity. 15, pp. 225-247). The terms nicely distinguish two processes rather than two recognizable stages. (Most qualitative research processes are not neatly ordered in stages.)

Theory *emergence* refers to the process of generating ways of thinking about the data—categories, concepts and ideas—that come from interpretive reading and reflection. What is appearing at this stage is often very unimpressive, a mess of guesses, questions, notes about surprises or small hunches and mini-explanations about what is going on. In our experience as researchers and supervisors, the challenge is always to recognize in this primeval sludge the elements from which theory can evolve.

In theory *construction*, the researcher is creating bigger ideas from the little first categories and hunches, locating the categories that matter, abstracting from them, exploring their relations and crafting an account of the data that offers not just a description of what was found, but an analysis.

Since these are very varied processes, almost all of the tools in NVivo's kit can contribute at some stage to theory emergence and construction. But some are particularly appropriate for the essential processes of theorizing. Since it is your data, and your understanding, how you use these tools and how you make the project work will be a matter of your judgment. At this point the metaphor of the craft is highly relevant; the

excitement (and sometimes terror) of this sort of research is that no matter how good the tools, the outcome depends on the researcher's crafting of theory. But it does help to know what tools are available!

A theory is not a node (though a node may be reviewed and reframed, creating finer precious categories that will later link in a theory. It is not a memo (though many a memo has turned into a final chapter!) and not a model (though a layered model might first show you there is a theory here). It is not the results of a search (though that may mercilessly dispose of your current theory or blessedly validate it). Your theory is the way your understanding works to make sense of your data.

There are many ways in NVivo of maximizing the chance that you will discover, retain, review and rethink categories, see themes, recognize recurrences, and work with these atoms of theory in such a way that they move the project from description towards analysis. Once categories are gathering and linking, the researcher can more directly embark on processes of theory construction. The software offers other ways to draw connections, play around with patterns and pursue hunches until they arrive at tested and explained conclusions. Those tools are the subject of the rest of this book.

Exploration of categories

In this context, you may wish to revisit and critically evaluate some of the processes that started your project. In Part 2, with the first coding, categories “happened”. In Part 3, as documents were introduced and information about them stored in attributes, the project acquired another way of thinking about the data. Already questions could be asked and models drawn, and surprises uncovered. The techniques of working with data in Part 4 were very obviously techniques of category generation; handling coding and memoing with these tools, you inevitably create nodes, and the software stores these awaiting your discovery of more relevant material, new nuances in an established category, redefining it or rethinking of its significance.

Working in a node

As you work through the text from further documents, you will be constantly challenged to think about the nodes you're making and using. As you scan your list of nodes, ask of each what does it represent? Does it adequately reflect the concept currently being shaped by the data? Are there several concepts there, or several dimensions of one? Is it particular to the document it came from, or does it point you to something more abstract you are interested in?

The first step may be to review the text already coded at that node. Reviewing the text of a node gives a sense of how the node is working by bringing data together into a new context. Thinking about that node in light of new text will help to determine the next step. Should you create a different node for the new text? Or simply modify the existing node title and description to absorb the fresh “twist” in the data? In the process of making these decisions, you are beginning to emerge ideas, and perhaps clarity, as to what your project is about and where your analysis might be going.

The material at a node can be reviewed in two ways—make a report of it or browse it. At this early stage you may wish to print a text report and take it away from the computer to read and scribble ideas. But if you work on paper, ensure that the ideas come back to NVivo (even if they merely record puzzles) and are recorded there. And importantly, recognize that the paper report is only a step to the review that can be conducted in the live Node Browser.

Print the text of a node

- In the Node Explorer, highlight the node you want to read, or, have it open in a Node Browser.
- From the Node menu, select Make Coding Report...
- Choose the Document or Document Set to show coding from. Select All Documents, or double click Sets to select a particular set of documents. The latter will limit the node report to segments from just those documents. Check which options you want for your report.

Section and paragraph information are automatically provided at the start of each segment. Selecting section and paragraph numbers will mean they are also shown beside the relevant text. If you choose to show DataLink details as end-notes, the text of internal DataBites will be printed, and cross references will be given to memos and nodes which are linked to specific points in the text.

- From the File menu in the report window, choose to Save As and/or Print the Node Coding Report generated by NVivo. If you choose to save it, make sure you select Rich Text Files (*.RTF) in the Save as type slot at the bottom of the Save As dialogue.

Browse and review the node

An important next step in most theory emergence processes is to start thinking about and working with the category. The Node Browser's tool-kit makes it possible to flick between three ways of thinking of a node, and all contribute to theory emergence.

- Browse the node, and read it as though it were a document.
- Think first about the node as a whole. A useful trick is to look for surprises. You may be surprised to find how much or how little is there, or how inconsistently you have used the node. Are there surprises in the variety or similarity of material coded there? What else is the text at this node coded at, and is this of interest? From the View menu, choose Coding Stripes and reflect on the overlap of this category with others.
- Then secondly, look at the node a different way, reflecting on each coded segment. If its relevance is not evident, drop back to contextualize it, either by viewing the paragraph or section in the browser, or by jumping to browse the source document. This may prompt new discoveries in the source document (annotate it whilst you are there). With the context of the segment displayed, you may wish to widen the spread of text coded at the node.
- Now thirdly, for each of the segments, ask if it is appropriately coded. Should it be here, at this node?

And what of its other coding? For a broad picture, choose Coding Stripes again. For a finer indication of the exact characters coded at different nodes, open the Coder. From the pull-down list at the top of the Coder (Show:), select List of Nodes with Coding. A click on any node will reveal which segments (or parts of segments) are coded at that node. Select a particular segment of text (or part of it) and, in the second slot at the top of the Coder, change the Scope of Coding to Selection. Only those nodes coding that selection will be listed.

Naming and describing

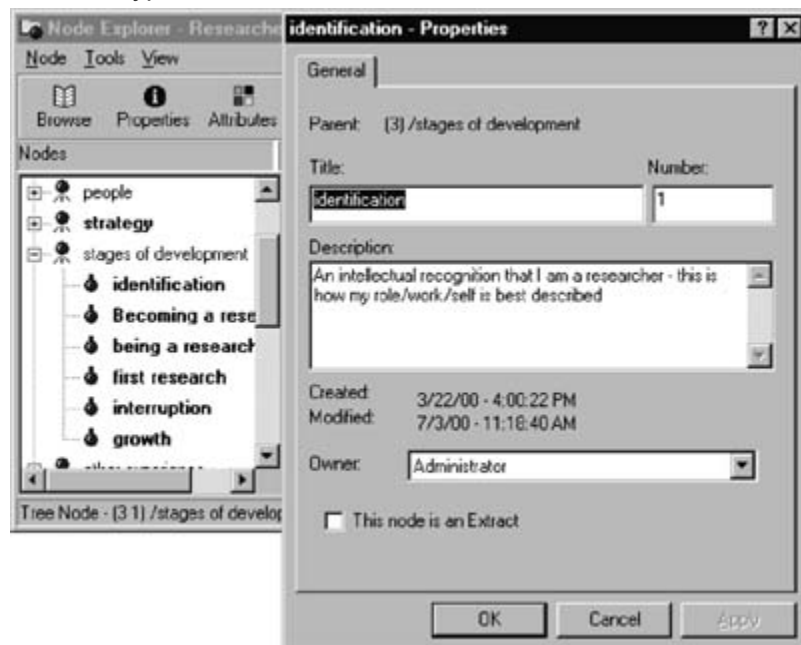
You might now firm up the node. Its properties include its title and description: Have you been using these? Both can be changed very swiftly, and as the category firms in your understanding, altering its title and description will record this firming.

The node title can be edited to reflect more accurately what the node is about. Use the node's description field to record how it is being used now, or to signpost concerns about the way the node is developing so that you remember to check it again after another document or two.

Change the node title



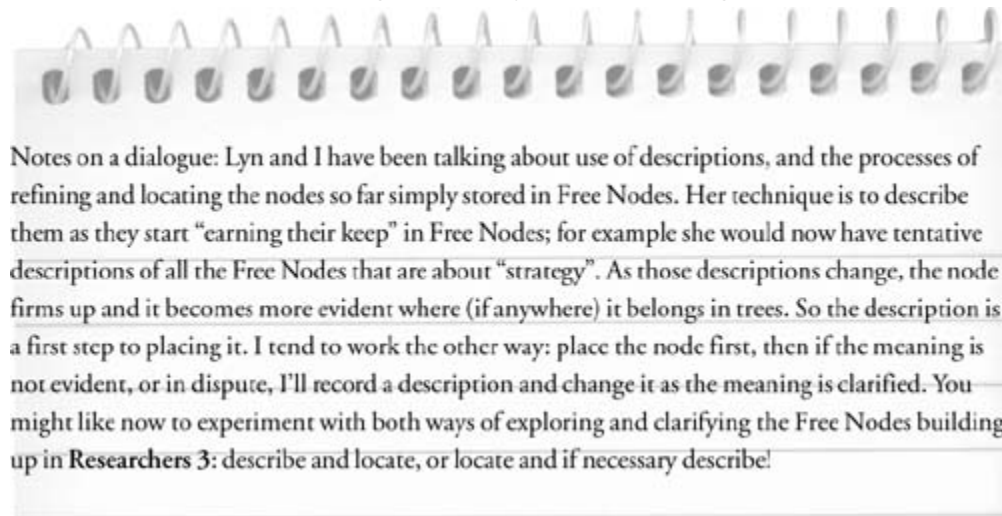
- In either the Node Explorer or Coder, select the node title you wish to change.
- Click on it again, to change the text to edit mode.
- Type the new title.



Modify the node description

- From either the Node Explorer or the Node Browser, choose to see the Node Properties using the icon in the toolbar, or by selecting Properties from the context menu.
- Type into the Description slot: Indicate how you are using the node, perhaps say that it now “includes xxx,” or flag a concern with a brief query. Click OK and the dialogue will close.
- In the Node Explorer, you will need to refresh the screen before you see any change. The description will appear in the lower right pane of the Explorer.

Note that the Properties dialogue allows you also to change the node title.



A web of ideas

In the process of reviewing a node, you may find you digress from coding to modify the nodes you have already created—to merge nodes, or perhaps to “code-on” to further nodes. As these processes come together, they will give welcome indication that your nodes represent project ideas, not merely atomistic categories particular to one document. Moving from thinking about a document to thinking about a node becomes natural and easy, and with every such move the project is shifted slightly from description of the data to analysis.

Using NodeLinks, you can also link this category to any number of memos, which are full status documents. Use a memo to log the process of development of any node that seems likely to be important in the emergence of your theory.

As these ways of playing with the data become familiar, most researchers use them constantly. It takes only moments to experiment with another subcategory, or explore the dimensions of one created earlier. If this is mere doodling, you may wish not to take time to reflect on it. But as with most theory emergence processes, the best advice is to assume it is never *mere* doodling! When in doubt, take the moment to note in the memo the thought that flitted past!

Reflecting in a memo about a node

As the node is developed, it often requires a memo and as the memo develops, it can hold the story of that category. Depending on your method, this may be very important for validating your theory later. In many qualitative methods, the claims for theory require that the researcher can tell the story (often referred to as an audit trail) of how a category “emerged,” was developed and explored and became part of the theory constructed.

The process of creating and recording reflections in a node memo is symmetrical to making a top-level document memo (as in Part 3). Each involves making a DocLink. But when a node is linked by a DocLink to a memo, there will also be a NodeLink (see below) from the memo back to the node.

You could be in the Node Explorer, reflecting on the relation between this (highlighted) node and others, or in the Node Browser, reviewing text coded at the node.

Link a new memo to a node



- Click on the DocLinks icon  on the toolbar of the Explorer or the Browser. NVivo will make a top-level DocLink—a node memo is linked to the node as a whole, rather than to one specific segment of text coded at the node.
- Choose to Link a New Memo. A blank document named [Node Title] — Memo will open in a Document Browser, ready for you to record your thoughts.

While reviewing the text at the node, you can swap back and forth between the Document Browser displaying the memo and the Node Browser displaying the node as you work through a read-think-record cycle. Click on any exposed part of the Browser you wish to go to (preferably the Title Bar at top or Status Bar at bottom, to avoid changing cursor positions)— NVivo will have arranged them in an overlapping fashion so that you can always see some part of the other Browser. Or minimize the Browser for the memo and bring it up each time you have further thoughts about the node. Or, given that the memo is automatically named for the node, simply identify and select it from the document list. If needed, text can be copied from the Node Browser to the Document Browser.

The node and its memo both “know” they are linked. If you go to either, and click on the link icon for the other on the toolbar (or request using the context menu) the resulting dialogue will show the node(s) or document(s) linked at the top level. For example, to access the linked node while browsing the memo:

- Click on the NodeLink icon in the browser's toolbar or choose NodeLinks from the right mouse button

menu.

- Click on Show top-level NodeLinks.
- Select the linked node, and click on Browse. The text of the node will be opened in a Node Browser window.

Creating node links

Coding and its review can lead to linking data in different ways. Often you want to link not with a document, but with all the data you have on a particular topic. Linking a node to a specific position in your text allows fast access to everything coded at that node, taking you from text you are writing or reviewing directly to nodes being discussed. They can be particularly useful in your Project Journal when you are recording thoughts generated by a review of coding, as you can visit this evidence while you ponder the usefulness of the category.

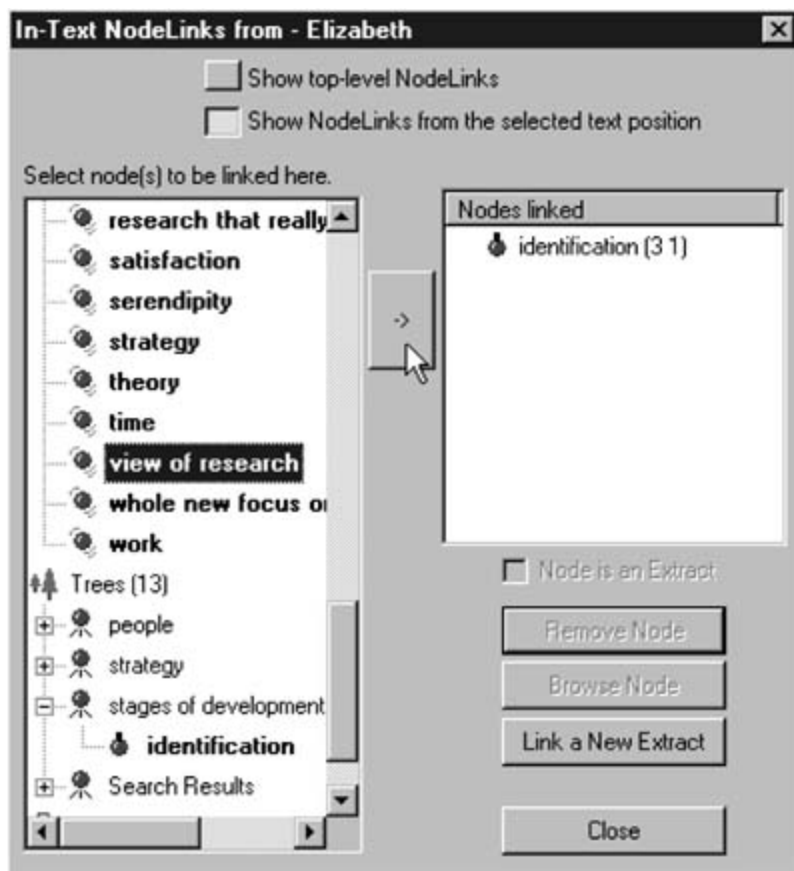
The node link allows you to jump not only from a specific comment to all the text coded on that issue or topic, but also to the context of that text. So linking with a node provides a direct path to everything on a topic, and an indirect path to other related documents, and from there to the nodes that code them. Using such links, you can build up a web of evidence and growing understanding about a topic or issue for your analysis.

Link document text to a node

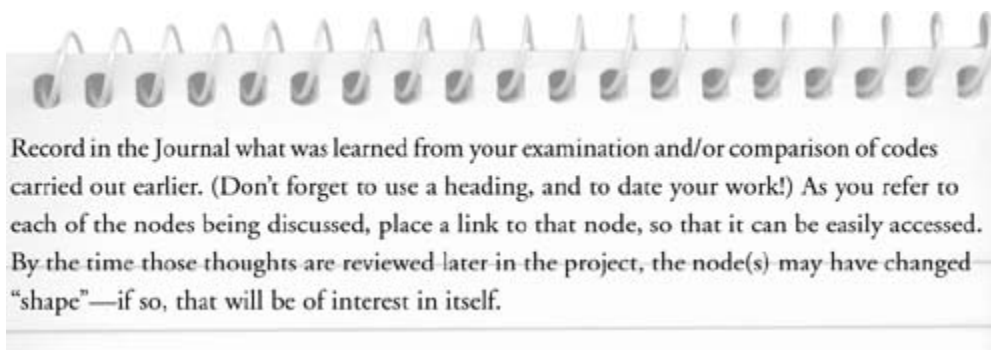


- In the Document Browser, click at the text to be linked so that your cursor is showing as an insertion point.
- Click on the NodeLinks icon in the toolbar at the top of the Document Browser.
- In the NodeLinks dialogue, double-click on Free or Trees to expand the list. Highlight the node you want to link, then click on the arrow to move that node to the right pane, under Nodes linked. Note you could link more than one node here, if you wished.
- Choose to Browse Node at this point if you wish, or simply Close the dialogue.
- The NodeLink symbol will appear in your text to indicate a node link exists. Click on the node link symbol, right mouse click, and from the context menu immediately access the linked node and review its text.





Note that this link, like any other data link, will persist in coded text. If you code that passage and meet it in a Node Browser, you will still be taken to that node. If you move the node, NVivo will adjust and maintain the link.



Extract Nodes

Extract Nodes are a special kind of NodeLink. They link to just the segment or quotation you want to jump to, rather than to a whole document or all the text coded at a node. Extract nodes provide an alternative to cutting

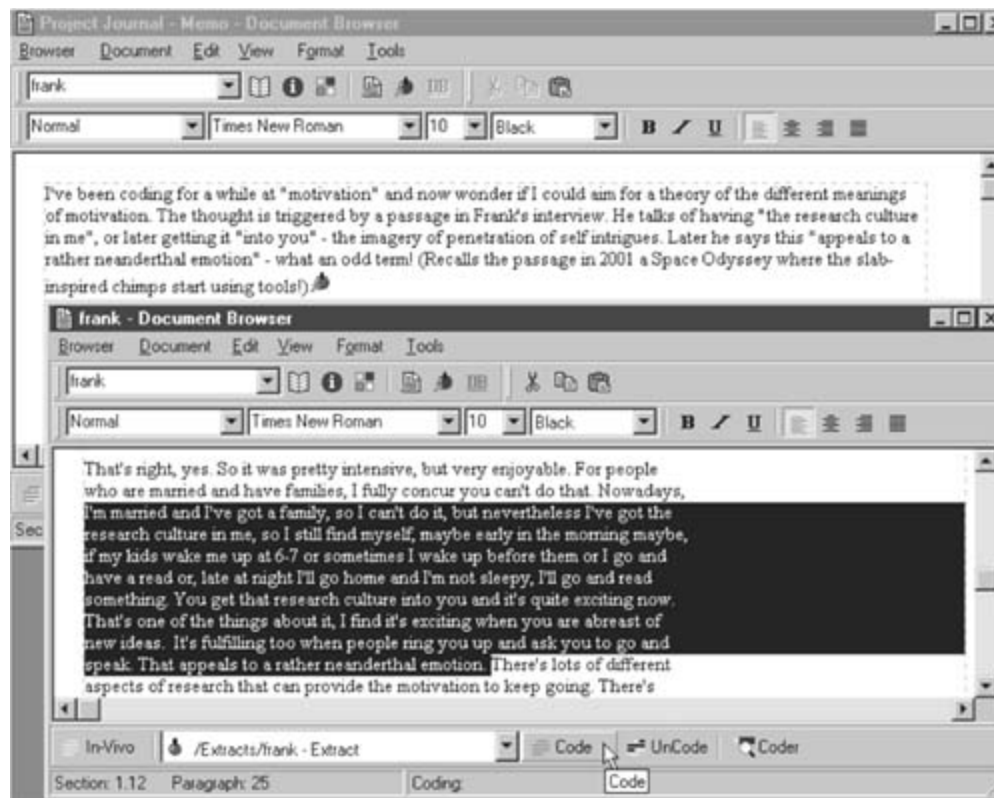
and pasting text from the document or node you are writing about. Create the hyperlink, then record your reflections on that text. A click of the mouse will then retrieve the segment when you review earlier thoughts. Extracts are particularly useful in writing memos or recording a Project Journal, when you wish to keep close to the data.

Create an extract node



- In a document (e.g. your Project Journal) find a place where the text would be strengthened by a hyperlink to an extract from a document you are writing about. Place your cursor there.
- Click on the NodeLink icon in the Browser's toolbar. The NodeLinks dialogue appears. Choose to Link a New Extract.
- From the Choose Document box, select the document you wish to code the extract from. It will now open in a Document Browser with the new Extract Node created and showing in the Speed Coding slot.
- Highlight the passage you wish to have as a linked extract, and click Code. The passage is now coded at the new Extract Node.
- Close the Browser. In the NodeLinks dialogue, the Extract Node now appears under Nodes linked. Click Close to return to the original document (your memo or Journal), and see the NodeLink icon now showing in the text.

To view the extract, click on the NodeLink symbol, right mouse click, and from the context menu immediately access the linked node and browse its text. The extract appears in a normal Node Browser, so as with any coded text you can show wider context, recode, or jump to the extract in the original document.



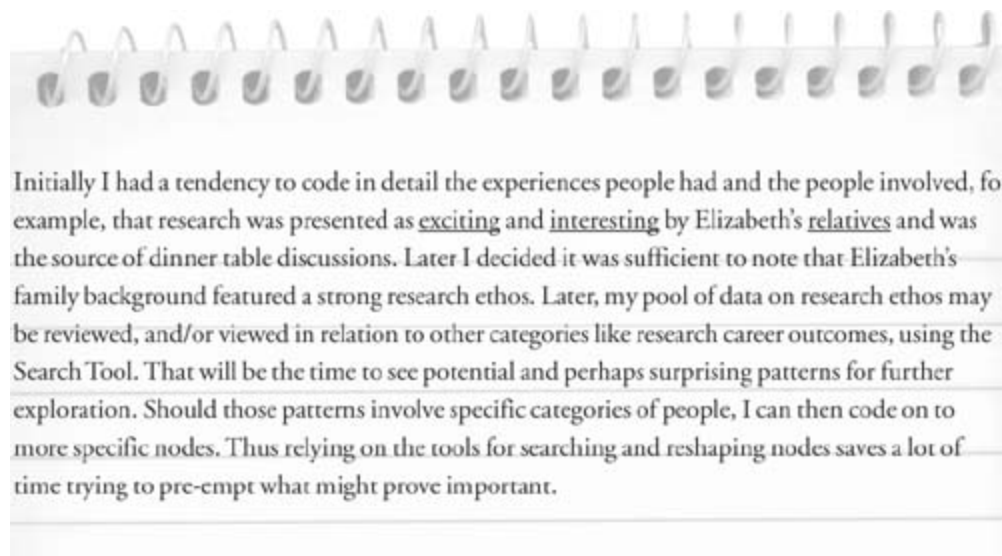
These features make Extracts valuable in preliminary exploration, memoing and reporting. The data on which your observations depend, or the vivid illustration that makes your point, can be immediately accessible via the NodeLink. Note that this link, like any other data link, will persist in coded text. If you meet it in a Node Browser, you will still be taken to that node.

Category development—focusing and extending

Many researchers, when they start working with their data, feel lost in the rich detail of it. As they try to capture that richness, “wallowing” in multiple codes, they may wonder how they're ever going to sort it all out. (It's perhaps a particular problem for those of us with a quantitative background, where we feel that every detail has to be “nailed down” or it will be lost forever.) It may be time to refocus on what the research question is—for the sanity of the researcher as well as for theory emergence!

If this is your problem, there are questions you need to be asking as you approach coding a passage that will assist you. What are the real issues here? With which people, or time periods, or sites, am I really concerned at the moment, out of all those that are mentioned in the segment of text that is in front of me? How is coding that detail going to help me understand the issues I'm concerned about, the questions I want to answer?

The tools for reshaping nodes, for discriminating and combining categories, used in conjunction perhaps with the search tool, allow the researcher to keep focused in the confidence that should something be “lurking,” it can be revealed in due course. If new patterns are revealed, then the text can be recoded to reflect this (or may indeed be recategorized for you as the result of using the search tool).



Discriminating and combining categories

As a node is developed, it is often appropriate to relocate or reshape it, in the light of the new meanings, or new material coded there. In these processes you move “outside” the one node, to reflect on and revise its relations with other categories.

One way of moving outside is to “dimensionalize” a category, seeking and establishing new layers of meaning within it; perhaps as you see that it takes different shades or forms in different contexts. Or if it was created originally in what we have called “broad brush coding,” you may now be seeing finer categories this data can be properly allocated to, or associated concepts that need to be tagged and further explored. What is happening now is that finer categories are “emerging” not from the data document but from the broader category.

The flip-side of this process is the recognition that fine categories you originally created actually mean the same thing. Early in the project you may have coded very finely until you were assured you weren't overlooking distinctions or dimensions that may later matter. Now the dust is settling and your confidence is building, you may wish to remove these picky distinctions. NVivo allows merging of nodes, without wasting any of the coding or memos they carry.

Code-on to finer categories



In Part 5 we introduced the important idea of coding-on. If, while reviewing the text at a node, you see that you have coded several different things at the one node, you can work from the Node Browser to code-on to finer categories (or indeed, totally different categories)—without needing to return to the Document Browser(s).

- Browse the text at the node. Decide on a way of splitting this into two (or more) subtly (or unsubtly!) different categories.
- Select a coded segment, or part of a segment that would fit better in a new or other existing category. Create the new node either by In-Vivo coding or typing the new title into the Speed Coding slot or the Coder.
- Code the selected text on to this new node.
- Then, if appropriate, remove the original coding by selecting the original node in the Speed Coding slot and clicking on Uncode while the text is still highlighted.

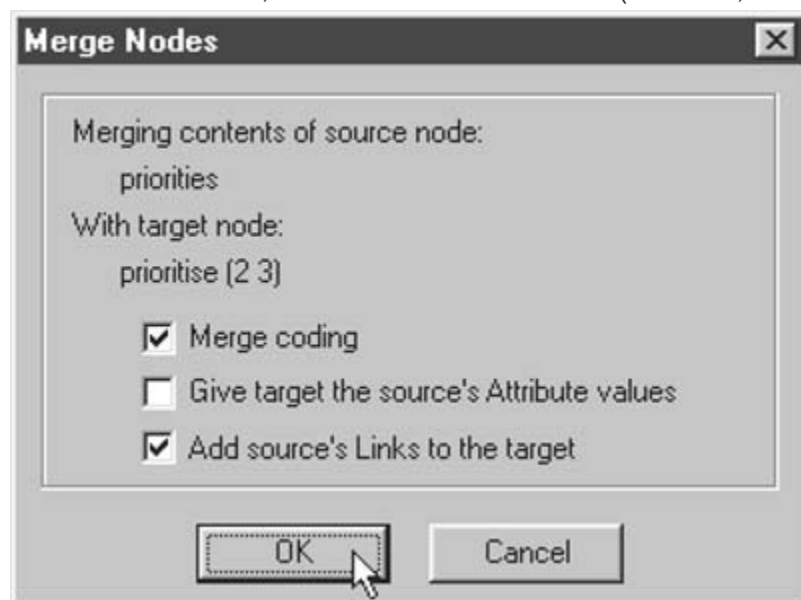


If the new categories are clearly subcategories of the original node, then it is best if the original node is moved to the Trees area, so the subcategories can be placed under it.

Merge two nodes into one

Merging nodes is carried out in the Node Explorer, as described in Part 5. Now that you have done more coding and established links at the nodes, you may need to consider your choices more carefully:

- Highlight the node you wish to move (the “source node”). From the context menu, select Cut.
- Highlight the node you wish to merge into (the “target node”). From the context menu, select Merge Node.
- Check the nodes and the selections in the resulting dialogue, before clicking OK. Your selections will reflect your reasons for doing this. If you leave coding selected, for example, the text now coded at the new combined node will retain coding at any other nodes it was already coded at. Do you want that? If you leave links selected, the text whose coding was merged will bring with it any links to annotations, documents or other nodes. (If unsure, retain all those links; they can be deleted later.)



Reviewing categories and seeking associations

Do you have a hunch that two categories might be associated in some way, for example, that particular conditions or experiences are associated with each other or perhaps with certain outcomes? A Union search will place all the text for each category together for each document, while a Proximity search will show you the text from each category, providing both are present within a specified range of text (e.g. within the same document). Finding the Difference between the Union search results and the Proximity search results will then show where just one of the two categories was present. Examination of the text found by these different searches may not only provide information about the extent of the relationship between the experiences reported, but also give further clues about the nature of each of those experiences and whether they take on different meanings depending on whether the other is present or not.

Beginning with a Union search



- From the Project Pad, choose Search Project Database to open the Search Tool.
Run this search operation...
- Click on the search icon next to Boolean Search. A second dialogue will open.
- From the drop-down list next to Operator:, select Union (Or).
- Click on Choose Nodes to open the Choose Nodes dialogue. If you used this tool earlier, click on Remove All to clear the currently listed nodes.
- In the Choose Nodes dialogue select the first node you want to include in the search (say, a particular condition or experience). Click on Node in the centre panel to Add the node to the pane on the right of the dialogue. Repeat the process for the second node in your “query” (say, the possible outcome, or a possibly related experience). Click OK.
- The nodes you have selected will now show in the Boolean Search dialogue. Click OK.
in this scope...
- Click on Custom scope. Choose to Edit the list of Documents.
- In the Document Set Editor, choose All non-memo documents, or a particular set of data documents you wish to use for this search.
and handle results this way...
- Allow NVivo to save the results of the search at a new node, as a child of Search Results under Trees (that is, leave Use Custom Handling unchecked).
- Click Run Search.

- Choose to Browse Node. All text coded at either of the selected nodes will be shown.

Scan the text to see if there are occasions when the two nodes co-occur, and if so, whether there appears to be any significance in that, or how the text on those occasions differs from when they don't co-occur. You will find it helpful to create a Node Set for the nodes in the search, so you can view Selected Coding Stripes.

Using a Proximity search

- Open the Search Tool, and click on the icon next to Proximity Search.
- Choose to run a Co-occurrence (Near) search.
- Under Find where the text referenced by: Click on Choose Nodes and select the first of the nodes used in the Union search.
- Under ... is pairwise near text referenced by: click on Choose Nodes and select the second of the nodes used in the Union search.
- ...within this distance... Under Scope Documents, select in the same section level. Below that, identify the Section level as 0. (This means the search will locate the nodes if they co-occur anywhere in the same document.)
- ...and retrieve... Check Finds for the first item and Finds for the second item.
- Click OK to return to the Search Tool.
- Set the Custom Scope to All non-memo documents (or your preferred set of data, as used in the Union search).
- Click on Run Search, then on OK in the Search Completed dialogue.

View the resulting text using selected coding stripes.

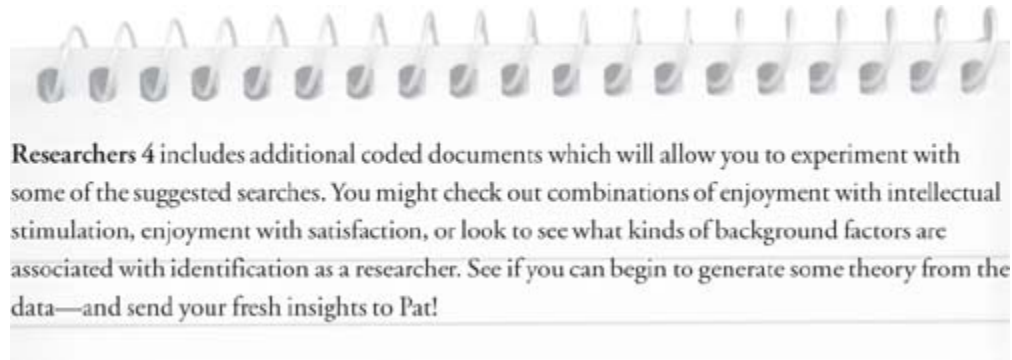
Finding the difference

- In the Search Tool, choose Boolean Search, then Difference (Less) as the Operator.
- Under Find text referenced by any of these items... click on Choose Nodes and select the node resulting from the Union search (you will find this located under Search Results in the Trees area).
- Under ...but by none of these items select the node resulting from the Proximity search (/ Search Results/Co-occurrence).
- Click OK to return to the Search Tool, then click on Run Search.
- Again, view the resulting text using selected coding stripes.

And evaluate

It is now up to you to determine if there was any meaningful association between the categories you included in your search, and also whether either seemed to be expressed differently in documents where the other was absent.

There are many ways in which the results of using the Search Tool may assist in reconceptualization of your categories, or in contributing to emerging theory about the relationship between categories. If the answer to any of these questions was “yes,” then there may be further work to be done either in coding-on, or in undertaking more searches—or perhaps you will hold on that until you have more data and re-check the patterns then. If so, a note in your Journal reminding you to do so is warranted. Indeed, a note is warranted in any case to record what was done and its outcome—even if there was no apparent result, to say just that!



Modeling relationships

Theory emergence requires not only discovering and developing categories, but starting to locate them and explore their relationships. At this stage, researchers usually find they are starting to *construct* theory. NVivo provides for many different ways of establishing category relationships. How are categories occurring in the data? To answer this, the patterns of coding have to be searched, viewed and discussed. What relation do categories seem to have to each other, and how does this explain the data? To explore this, the researcher can write memos and draw and layer models. And how are categories logically related? To establish and investigate the logical ways categories belong together, nodes can be ordered in trees and shifted as their logical relations change. We conclude this Part with ideas for ways of mapping relationships in models, while in Part 7, we will focus on ways of establishing and cataloging categories in a logical index system.

Modeling offers a quite different way of seeing ideas from searching coding or creating a tree of nodes. Searches shows how codes are falling in patterns. A node tree shows the logical relations of nodes. A model provides an opportunity to sketch and think about *any* current, possible or potential relation of categories. In a model you may explore any ideas visually—they may be ideas about patterns that are emerging, ideas about logical relations, or ideas that are so far not showing in coding or logic.

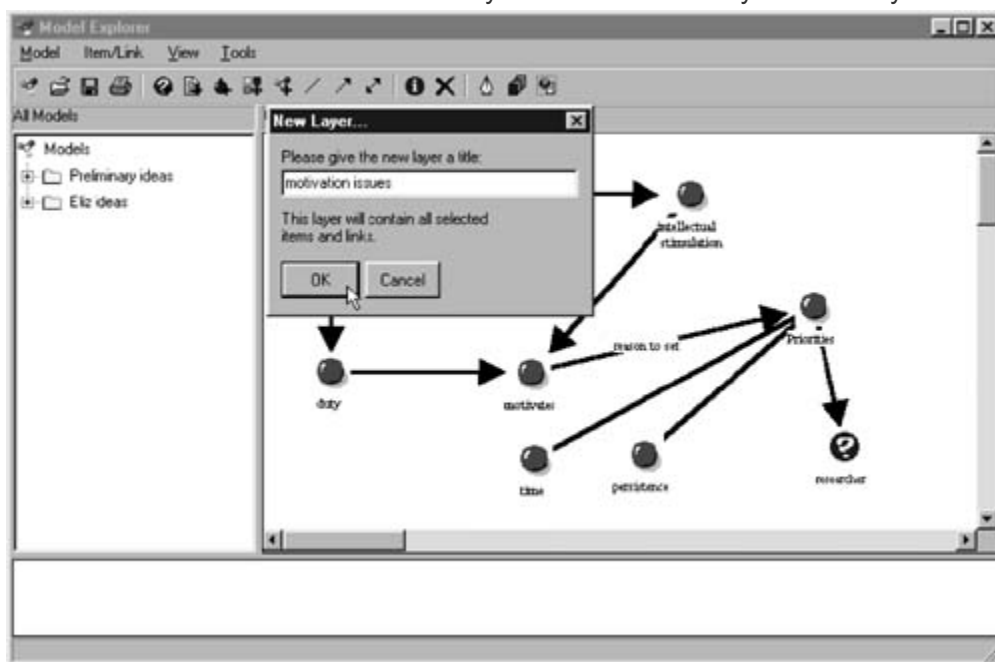
NVivo's modeler is designed to be used to see how your picture changes when you move, hide or group ideas, without impacting on the project database. Models can be built up in layers to explore or demonstrate the impact of added items or item groups.

At this point you can simply add new items to your previous model, you can create a new model, or you can develop layers in your model. Use models to “toy” with particular relationships you are thinking about in the data, or try building a model which shows general trends from across the data so far considered.

Building layers in a model



- Identify a concept, node or document to show in your model, and bring it on to the screen. Select that item.
- From the right mouse button (context) menu, select Layer, and choose New.
- You will be asked: Please give the new layer a title. Type your title in the slot provided. Click OK.
- From the View menu, select Layer Palette. The Layer Palette will show on the left of your screen.
- Click the checkbox for the new layer, rather than All. Anything you now add to your model will be added only to this layer (unless you later direct otherwise). Click on All while you add further nodes, and these will not show when you check to see only the new layer.



Working in the layer

Now “play” in the model with the various concepts, nodes and documents you have created, to convey the story you have found so far.

- Click on icons in the Modeler's toolbar to give you easy access to nodes or documents you wish to include in your model.
- Add in new concepts as necessary, using the New Item icon from the toolbar. Double click to label them, or label and change their appearance via Properties.
- Provide links to show relationships. Use the context menu to access Properties, so that you can name the selected link, or change its style.

- If you are unsure whether or not to include an item, check its contents: you can retrieve the text in a Browser by highlighting an item and selecting Browse/Code Node (or Document) from the context menu.

Build another layer

- Highlight an item (or multiple items) you wish to show in a new layer. Choose Layers, then New, from the context menu.
- Provide a name for the new layer. Note that it will contain all currently selected items.
- Click the checkbox for the new layer in the Layer Palette, and de-select any other or All layers. The new layer containing just the selected items will show on the right pane of the Modeler.
- Add further items to your new layer.

To use an item that already exists in the first layer, first extend the list of items in the model in the left pane of the Model Explorer (click on the + next to the name of the model). Select the item you want to add to your new layer. From the context menu, choose Layer, then the name of your new layer (so that it is ticked). The item will now show in your new layer. If you move its position, it will be moved (and links adjusted) in both layers of your model.



At any time you can elect to see any or all layers of your model together. This provides an alternative opportunity for copying the same item into a second layer (From the context menu, select Layer, and check against the desired layer). You can add any links between the two layers while All layers are showing.

You might not find it useful to create a layered model at this early stage. You can always create a series of separate models, on the way through. Any model can be added to another model. Browse the item to open it. These are tools to be used as best suits you and what you want to achieve. As ideas change, recall the ability to layer a model, viewing and reflecting on the growth of your theory through visual interpretations, or just disconnected views of the data. They may suddenly connect when you view all layers!

Pasting your model into a report in Word

When you are satisfied with your new model:

- From the Model menu, choose Export Diagram to Clipboard.
- Open a document in Word.
- Paste your diagram then save the document.

Note that you could choose to paste the diagram into Powerpoint or any other program capable of displaying a picture.



If your purpose in pasting the model is to link it to your Journal, then save the Word document in the specially provided folder for your Project—C:\QSR Projects\[your project]\All Users\External DataBites); this helps keep track of the location of the DataBites when you move a project.

Linking a model to a document

A final task is appropriate after this excursion in theory emergence. Much of what has happened during this Part should doubtless be recorded in the Project Journal. The model should go there too!

Perhaps you wish to write about the ways you have discovered, explored and developed categories, and the ways you examined patterns of coding. If a model you have just drawn is pertinent to this account, it is easy to include a link to the model from any document in NVivo. This can be done by placing an External DataBite.

Use an External DataBite to link to a model

- Open your Project Journal to record thoughts that developed while creating your model.
- Use a DataBite to link those comments to the Word document with the diagram you exported from the Modeler.

Taking Stock

One of the most exciting discoveries of qualitative research is that theory does emerge if the researcher actively seeks it in working with the data and the categories. At the end of this Part, our hope is that most readers will have no problem finding and developing categories, and seeing ways to start exploring their relationships. The most likely problem is that the emergence of categories is becoming somewhat alarming! Anselm Strauss remarked cheerfully to one of us years ago, “We generate categories like God creates raindrops!” To do that without control will mean you just get wet. So at this stage the management of categories is likely to become a high priority, if the researcher is to retain the ability to hold and explore all the ideas emerging and to use them consistently and efficiently. Happily, and not entirely by coincidence, managing categories is also a high priority for theory construction. It is to that task that we turn now.

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