BOOK REVIEW

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'Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo'

Pat Bazeley, Sage Publications Limited, 2007. 217 pages
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by

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Context

*Qualitative Data Analysis with Nvivo*¹ is written for users of NVivo Version 7 or later, and supersedes the popular *NVivo Qualitative Project Book*² written for earlier versions of this software. This book bears a striking resemblance to its predecessor, in that it invites you to learn how to use this next generation software in the context of 'doing' your own qualitative research project. NVivo is a widely-used computerised software package that enables researchers to manage and analyse qualitative data. In essence, rather than crunch numbers like SPSS, NVivo manages vast quantities of qualitative data and enables researchers to bring order to the traditionally messy nature of this approach. Coding data, connecting ideas, recording early hunches and memo writing, all help researchers analyse the data to achieve the project's goals in a computer assisted manner. This latest book is written for three types of learners: those who prefer to learn by doing; those who want to learn new tools for data management and analysis on a need-to-know basis; and, those who want to explore the software to see what it can do for them.

The strength of this book lies in Bazeley's 15-year experience in computer-assisted analysis of qualitative and mixed mode data. Her long involvement with the developers of NVivo 2 and its previous generation (NUDIST Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorising), and now this radically rewritten and updated version, allows her to draw on her experience to guide students and researchers alike through their first NVivo 7 project.

The appeal of this book for me is the way Bazeley avoids assumptions about the level of computer knowledge her readers have and instead takes her readers through a step-by-step process from setting-up a computer for installing the software, to using the more advanced tools. She introduces the software tools to the beginner in a practical hands-on, sequential approach while encouraging experienced NVivo users to dabble as they see fit.

Structure of the book

Author(s): Caroline Spencer

This 208-page book comprises 8 chapters:

- Chapter 1 Perspectives: Qualitative computing and NVivo
- Chapter 2 Starting a project
- Chapter 3 Making data records
- Chapter 4 Working with data
- Chapter 5 Connecting ideas
- Chapter 6 Managing data
- Chapter 7 The 'pit stop'
- Chapter 8 Going further

Beginning with an introduction to using CAQDAS, and the intellectual history of how the NVivo software came into existence, Bazeley puts to rest the dissonance and misperception about using computers in the qualitative research approach.

A brief excursion through the NVivo workspace familiarises you with the NVivo tools. Easy access to three different stages of the *Researchers* project (available from her website at <http://www.researchsupport.com.au/> are stored as self-extracting zip files) helps new users see how a project grows and develops from an embryonic beginning through to a more advance version which uses the powerful and flexible NVivo tools. She takes the reader through the research process from starting a new project, to making data records, working with data, connecting ideas, managing data, to a 'pit stop' to reflectively review that data, and finally to the last chapter 'going further' which focuses on strategies for using NVivo tools to creatively and systematically draw out the evidence needed to enlighten and convince others about the importance and veracity of research findings.

Evaluation

This book should be required for anyone interested in using CAQDAS, and more particularly NVivo. Students and researchers will find value in *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo* either before or after a training session. Familiarisation before a training session would help kick-start your training, while after a session, it would act as a memory aid to help contextualise all the new and what may seem confusing ideas. The true value of Bazeley's latest offering will be experienced when users engage with the software and book in unison. Like all good guideline books, it establishes a basis from which the cook can start to create a new and exciting signature dish and then begin to add their own nuanced flavours and zest to achieve unexpected and scintillating outcomes.

References

1. Bazeley P. *Qualitative Data Analysis with NVivo*. London: Sage Publications, Ltd 2007.
2. Bazeley P, Richards L. *The NVivo Qualitative Project Book*. London: Sage Publications, Limited 2000.

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