Starting to Write
Making a Narrative Skeleton With Keynote[*]

Eventually, all of the preliminary work toward developing a scenario narrative will be completed. All that is left at that point is for the narrative team to actually write the narratives.

It is best if the team does not simply leap into writing. Scenario narratives of any length are somewhat complex, and this is especially true for integrated scenario studies, in which a diverse range of issues and actors must be taken into account. The structure of such studies is generally multi-dimensional. For example, parts of the narrative can be distinguished along thematic and regional axes, as well as differentiating between the scenarios themselves. What is needed is a way to record parts of the narrative that lets a narrative writer classify and categorize the different parts of their story in an easy way.

Fortunately, a software tool called **Keynote** already exists that gives narrative writers this freedom. What is more, it is free. It can be downloaded from the author's web site, http://www.tranglos.com/free/keynote_download.html.

A screenshot of Keynote is shown in Illustration 1. As can be seen in the illustration, different parts of the text can be distinguished by a *tab* and by a *tree*. This offers narrative writers flexibility in laying out the scenario document.
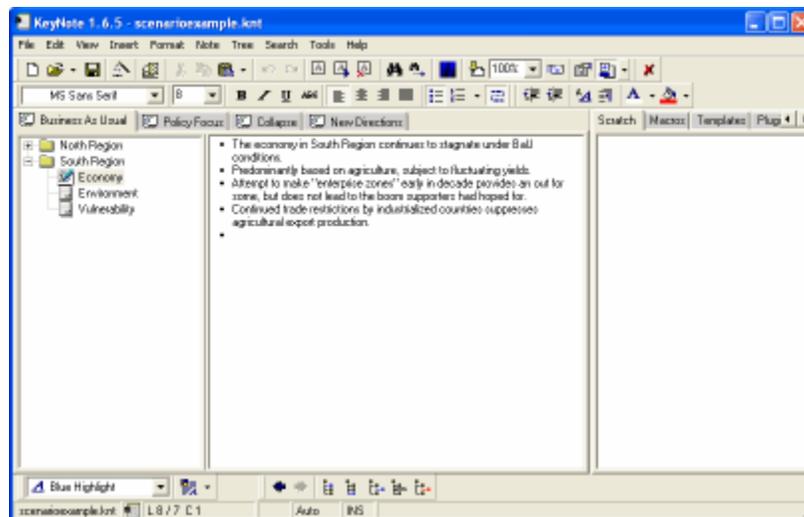

Illustration 1. Keynote screenshot

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The Activity

In this activity, a narrative team develops a skeleton for the scenario narratives in an interactive workshop session using the Keynote editor. The skeleton can then be used after the workshop to continue developing the narratives.

If the team is relatively large, then it should break into groups that will focus on some aspect of the narratives – for example, each group is assigned a scenario or theme.

Materials

- One computer and projector for each breakout group, with the Keynote software installed on each computer.

Procedure

Before breaking into groups, do the following.

1. Decide on how the groups (if any) are assigned – e.g., by scenario or theme. (This will determine what goes in the *tab* in the Keynote editor.)

2. Decide on the structure for the notes each group will record. (This will determine the structure of the *tree* in the Keynote editor.) For example, parts of the story might be distinguished by region, year, theme, driving force, etc.

Break into groups, and follow these steps in each group.

1. Identify a rapporteur, who will sit at the computer and record the group's comments.

2. Enter the group's focus (e.g., the name of the scenario or theme) in the tab on the Keynote editor.

3. Create the tree structure as decided in plenary.

4. Begin making comments on how different aspects of the scenario might evolve. The rapporteur should record these comments in the appropriate place in the tree.

Once groups have finished (for example, by reaching a time limit), they should report back to plenary and supply their Keynote files to the facilitator.

Wrap-Up

Use Keynote's "merge notes" feature to bring all the files together. Supply a copy of the combined notes to all participants. If desired, the notes can be exported to an RTF document (a file format supported by many programs) for wider dissemination.

Responsibility for future development of each section of the narratives should be assigned before the end of the workshop.