Approaches to Qualitative Data Analysis with ATLAS.ti

Instructors:
Dr. Susanne Friese. ATLAS.ti Scientific Software Development and QUARC (Germany)¹
Dr. Christina Silver. Qualitative Data Analysis Services and CAQDAS Networking Project-University of Surrey (UK)².
Dr. Trena Paulus. University of Georgia (USA)³.
Dr. Nicholas Woolf. Qualitative Data Analysis Services and Woolf Consulting (USA).

Schedule: July 12th, 13th and 14th, each day from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm (lunch break from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm).

Requirements:
- Attendees must bring to class a laptop with ATLAS.ti 8 or Mac installed (full or free-trial version).
- Basic knowledge of qualitative methodology.
- Basic knowledge of ATLAS.ti Windows or Mac.

Participants who have learned to operate ATLAS.ti and use it for basic purposes can learn in this workshop broader and deeper applications of the program. The three days have been designed to build on one another and are intended to be taken in sequence. However there are no prerequisites for taking any of the days individually other than introductory knowledge of the program. All the instructors are long time qualitative researchers and users and trainers of ATLAS.ti.

Outline | Day 1-Using ATLAS.ti across the research process
Instructor: Dr. Trena Paulus (assisted by Dr. Ricardo B. Contreras)

Day 1 will show how ATLAS.ti can serve as both a powerful “knowledge workbench” to support all aspects of the analytic process, as well as a project management tool to make the entire research process more transparent, portable, collaborative, and systematic. Effective use of ATLAS.ti requires going beyond operating the program efficiently, and requires selecting and using software components in a way that will enact the desired analytic strategy. Woolf and Silver’s Five-Level QDA® method will be introduced in Day 1 to show how individual analytic tasks are matched to the underlying components of the software.
Participants will learn to use ATLAS.ti in the following activities:

**Conduct a literature review**

Literature reviews are in essence a qualitative analysis of the research literature. Strategies will be demonstrated for uploading, organizing and analyzing PDFs and importing bibliographic data from reference management software.

**Manage the project and organize data**

ATLAS.ti supports a wide variety of data, media, and geo documents. Field notes, images, and video data can be collected and uploaded with the free ATLAS.ti iPad app. Strategies for making a project portable with a visible audit trail will be shared.

**Work with image, audio, and video data**

ATLAS.ti supports coding of images, audio and video files. Recordings can be transcribed and associated with the recordings to keep the researcher close to the source.

**Do preliminary analysis with searches, auto-coding, and network views.** The automated search and coding tools allow quick searches and labeling of key words. Initial interpretations can be graphically displayed for further exploration.

**Share a project with others and work in teams.** Research teams can work on separate versions of the project file for later merging and comparison. Strategies for effective use of ATLAS.ti 8 in project teams will be shared.

**Write up the findings.** Reflective memos and interpretations, team meeting notes and other important decisions about the study can be documented using the writing tools. All analytic work can be exported into text files or spreadsheets for further work
Outline | Day 2-Harnessing ATLAS.ti powerfully using the FiveLevel QDA® method

Instructors: Dr. Nicholas Woolf and Dr. Christina Silver

Day 2 will introduce the *FiveLevel QDA* method. This method is not a new or different way of doing analysis but a way of unpacking the unconscious processes of expert ATLAS.ti users so that new users can more quickly develop this expertise. This means using the program from start to finish of a project while remaining true to the emergent and iterative nature of qualitative and mixed methods analysis.

Day 2 introduces the principles of the *FiveLevel QDA* method and teaches the core process: how to translate participants' own analytic tasks into software tools, whatever the methodology and analytic strategies. Day 2 combines discussion, demonstration, and hands-on work with ATLAS.ti.

Participants will learn:

- The difference between analytic strategies and software tactics.
- How to transcend the contradictions between analytic strategies and software tactics.
- The difference between software features and software components and the benefits of learning to harness the components.
- The 14 ATLAS.ti components and the actions that can be taken on them.
- The process of translation between strategies and tactics.
- The use of *FiveLevel QDA Analytic Planning Worksheets*.
Day 3 builds on the broader and deeper application of ATLAS.ti presented in the first two days. The focus of Day 3 will be querying data using the more advanced analysis tools that the software provides. However the specific curriculum will be based on participants’ learning needs resulting from their experiences from the prior two days. Susanne will work with the Analytic Planning Worksheets prepared during Day 2 to extend their application to the more advanced analysis tools, and time will be allotted for additional practice of tasks from either Day 1 or Day 2, based on participants’ requests.

Day 3 will take a holistic approach to using these three advanced analysis tools:

- The Query Tool
- The Code Co-occurrence Table, and
- The Code-Document Table.

Retrieving meaningful results from these tools is dependent on building up your project in a way that is on the one hand suitable for your project and methodological needs, but on the other hand dependent on how data can be queried in ATLAS.ti. A holistic approach starts with how you have organized your project data and built up the coding system in order to be able to query your data in depth to gain further insights. This analytic activity goes along with writing up your findings and visualizing the relations you start to see in your data, using the comment and memo functions as well as the networks. Thus, we will practice several ATLAS.ti functionalities to see how they fit together holistically in supporting the analysis of your data.

1 Susanne Friese is the author of *Qualitative Data Analysis with ATLAS.ti* (Sage Publications 2014).

2 Christina Silver is co-author of *Using Software in Qualitative Research* (Sage Publications 2014) and (with Nicholas Woolf) of *Qualitative Analysis Using ATLAS.ti: The Five-Level Method* (Routledge Summer 2017).

3 Trena Paulus is co-author (with Lester and Dempster) of *Digital Tools for Qualitative Research* (Sage Publications 2014).