Approaches to Qualitative Data Analysis with ATLAS.ti

Instructors:
Dr. Susanne Friese. ATLAS.ti Scientific Software Development and QUARC (Germany)
Dr. Christina Silver. Qualitative Data Analysis Services and CAQDAS Networking Project-University of Surrey (UK)
Dr. Trena Paulus. University of Georgia (USA)
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-Strategies and Tactics for Using ATLAS.ti, Illustrated with Project Examples
Instructors: Drs. Christina Silver and Nicholas Woolf

Day 1 will illustrate the use of ATLAS.ti in real-world project examples using the Five-Level QDA method, and combines discussion, demonstration and hands-on work with ATLAS.ti.

The day starts with an introduction to the principles of the Five-Level QDA method, a pedagogy that involves using the program from start to finish while remaining true to the emergent and iterative nature of qualitative and mixed methods analysis. The core principle is the distinction between analytic strategies – what you plan to do – and software tactics – how you plan to do it – and the importance of ensuring that strategies drive tactics.

We then illustrate the principles of the Five-Level QDA method using three project illustrations.
- Strategies and tactics for undertaking an in-depth literature review using ATLAS.ti.
• Implementing grounded theory coding strategies in ATLAS.ti.
• Analyzing visual narratives in a participatory project using ATLAS.ti.

For each illustration the project context is described, selected analytic tasks and their purposes are outlined, and how they were undertaken in ATLAS.ti are illustrated and discussed.

Outline | Day 2 - 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 3-Coding and beyond – Querying data, seeing relations and how it all fits together
Instructor: Dr. Susanne Friese

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. 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).