

# Atlas.ti Orientation

## 1. About Atlas

- a. Atlas is a program that is designed to help speed up the coding process with the use of a PC instead of a pencil and paper
- b. Atlas does not “drive” the analysis in that it does not automate the process of coding. This needs to be done by the user.

## 2. Getting Started

- a. When you click on the Atlas.ti icon the program opens and asks you to log on. This makes sure that the program can track who does what work and when as there will be multiple users contributing to the coding and analyses.

- i. Login Names:

User Name	Password

- b. Select *File* → *Open* and select the file *f:Data Analysis/Atlasti\_DATA/YOURNAME*. Each person will work on their own editor and they will be merged once the initial coding is complete. Their file is titled by their name. The program runs from the p: drive so that it can be used commonly but we do not have access to this drive in terms of saving rights. As such, all work is to be kept on the f: drive. If you do not work off of this drive and your file, the work you do will likely be lost or there will be redundant files that will lead to error upon merger of the files.
      - c. You should now be in what is called the Editor and ready to work.

## 3. Major Components

### a. Hermeneutic Unit

- i. This is the body of data that you are working with, analogous to a file in Microsoft Word.

### b. Primary Documents

- i. The primary documents are the original texts that need to be coded. These are the transcribed interviews that are designated by their participant number. These are not stored with the editor but are accessed by it every time this program is accessed.

### c. Quotations

- i. Quotations are simply selections of text.

### d. Codes

- i. Codes are the associations attached to quotations. They can be created or applied from a pick list. Each code can have a description attached to it that describes what the code entails.

### e. Memo

- i. Memos are notes and comments made by the authors as the coding

progresses. Anything that occurs to you or questions you have should be saved in a memo format. These can be stand alone or attached to quotations, codes, or other memos.

#### 4. **Specific Functions: Coding**

##### a. Coding By List

- i. The eleven themes that have already been developed are already programmed into Atlas. To use this list, highlight the text that you want to code, right click on the mouse and select *Coding* → *Code By List* → Pick the code that applies. If you are going to be coding one code throughout the transcript, select the code at the top of the window and follow the process above. However, in this case, the selections are: right click → *Coding* → *Quick Coding: Code Name*.

- (1) To modify a selection of text associated with a code, click on the bracket in the right hand margin so the coded quotation is highlighted, click on the check mark icon on the left hand side of the editor (see left), hold the shift key and click where you would like coded quotation to stop.
- (2) To decode a section, click on the bracket in the right hand margin so the coded quotation is highlighted then right click and select *Delete*.

##### b. Creating New Codes

- i. Once the initial coding of the nine general themes is completed we will need to draw out the information within each general theme. All of the quotations will be grouped together according to themes and then the work of coding begins. This involves identifying and marking relevant information. For example, all of the different barriers to communication cited under the theme of Communication Barriers must be coded.
- ii. Since we do not know what the “sub”codes are going to be we will have to create codes for them as we go along. To do so, first highlight the text to be coded as would be done above and right click. Select *Coding* → *Open Coding* and then enter the name of code. Following this, (1) select the code list icon at the top of the screen next to the code list (see left), (2) highlight the new code, (3) write a description of what this code entails in the yellow space below the code list, (4) close code list window, and (5) save the changes.

#### 5. **Specific Functions: Memos**

##### a. Creating a Memo

- i. To create a free standing memo not attached to any quotation of code: (1) click on the memo icon on the left hand side of the editor (see left), (2) name the memo, (3) open the memo list icon next to the memo list, (4) write a description of what this memo entails in the yellow space below the code list, (5) close code list window, and (6) save the changes.
- ii. To create a memo linked to a coded quotation code the quotation as normal then click on the memo icon and follow the process above.
- iii. To create a memo linked to a code in general (1) click on the memo icon, (2) name the memo, (3) open the memo list by pressing the memo list icon, (4) write a description of what this memo entails in the yellow space below the code list, (5) select the new memo, (6) right click and choose *Link Memo To* → *Codes*, and (7) select the code from the pick list.