

# ATLAS.ti Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS): Insights and Perspectives from a Summer Studentship

# INTRODUCTION

This program of research explores the maternity experiences of immigrant women in Alberta through the perspectives of immigrant women, service providers, health policy makers, and social services/immigrant support representatives, to address perceived disparities through service enhancements and development of future interventions.<sup>1</sup>

Our program of research provides the opportunity to impact positively on the future long-term health of immigrant women. The research findings will contribute to knowledge and may be translated at various levels into frameworks of maternal health policy, improvements in maternal health programs and services, and enhancements of maternity care.<sup>1</sup>

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this summer project was to enable master's student Natalia Sanches to develop skills in qualitative data analysis using ATLAS.ti Qualitative Data Analysis software (ATLAS.ti Scientific Development Software, GmbH, Germany).

## BACKGROUND

This project is a component of a large mixed-methodological program of research that is looking to explore and address disparities experienced by immigrant women in accessing and navigating maternity care services in Alberta. Phase two is a qualitative investigation where the student (Natalia Sanches) was able to assign and code qualitative interviews, develop code families and create graphic network views using ATLAS.ti. Subsequently, the student was able to construct a narrative of the findings.

## METHODOLOGY

Interdisciplinary team of nurses, midwives, physicians, and social scientists.

Mixed-methodological research design with four phases.

**Phase 2** - Qualitative investigation employing a focused ethnography using purposive sampling and semi-structured individual and focus group interviews.<sup>1</sup>

→ Qualitative data are being managed, classified and ordered with the aid of ATLAS.ti.

## Study locations

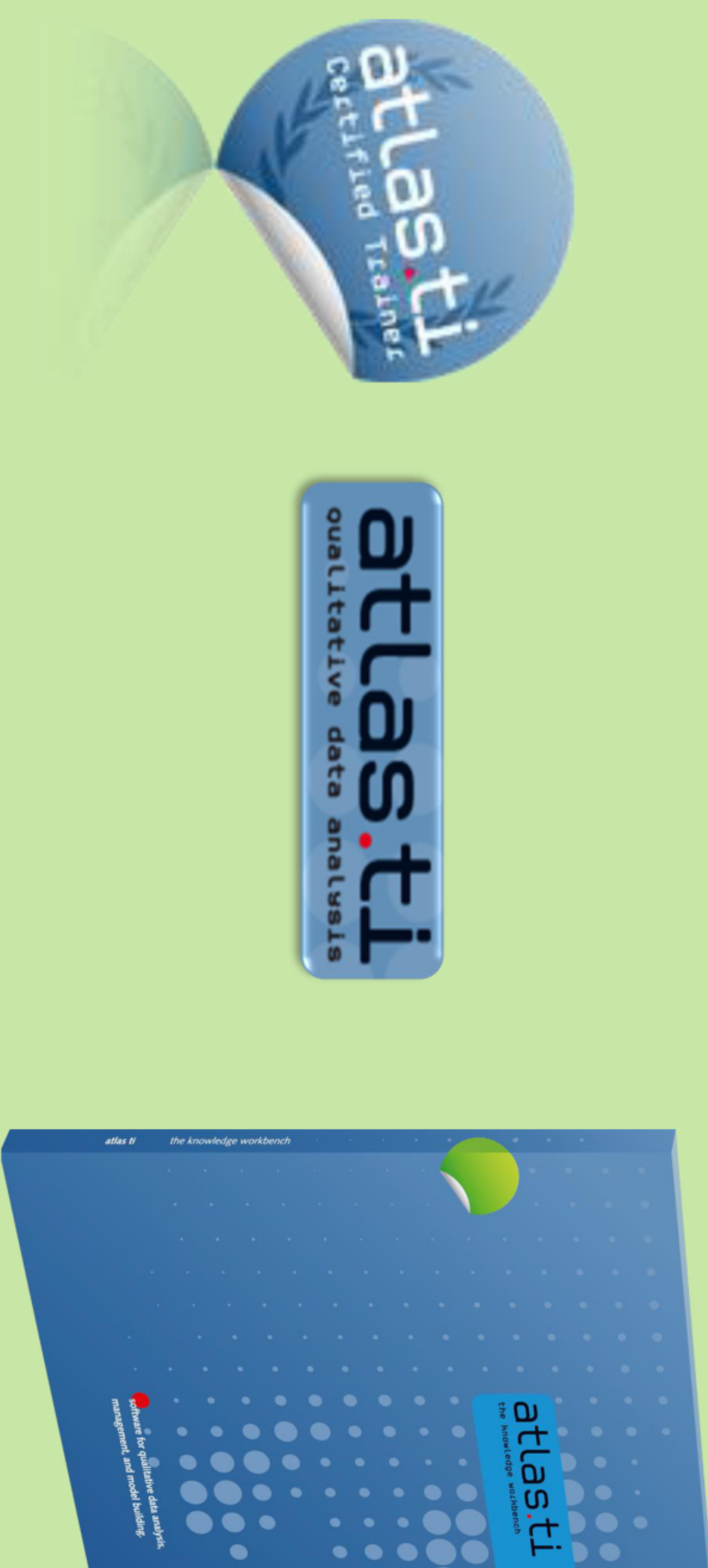
Edmonton (immigrant population 189, 775)<sup>2</sup> and Brooks (1,155 not Canadian citizens) selected to provide insights into immigrant experiences in both urban and rural locations.

## References

1. Haggblombottom GMA, O'Brien B, Munnazz Z, Vozani S, Chan Y, Okaka-Jellicoe P, Amadi E, Paton P, Main R, Balas AS (2019) International migration and maternity perspectives from interdisciplinary qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methodology* 10(4): 537.
2. Statistics Canada (2010). Downloaded from [http://www.statcan.ca/d10/mcfr/trend/06/eng/06\\_000.htm](http://www.statcan.ca/d10/mcfr/trend/06/eng/06_000.htm).

# ATLAS.ti

*"A software for storing, classifying, handling, retrieving and managing qualitative data. ATLAS.ti is a tightly integrated suite of tools that support your analysis of written texts, audio, video, and graphic data. The integration of its tools is designed to perfectly support the work flow of the qualitative researcher. ATLAS.ti brings to the job highly sophisticated tools to manage, extract, compare, explore, and reassemble meaningful segments of large amounts of data in flexible and creative, yet systematic ways".<sup>3</sup>*

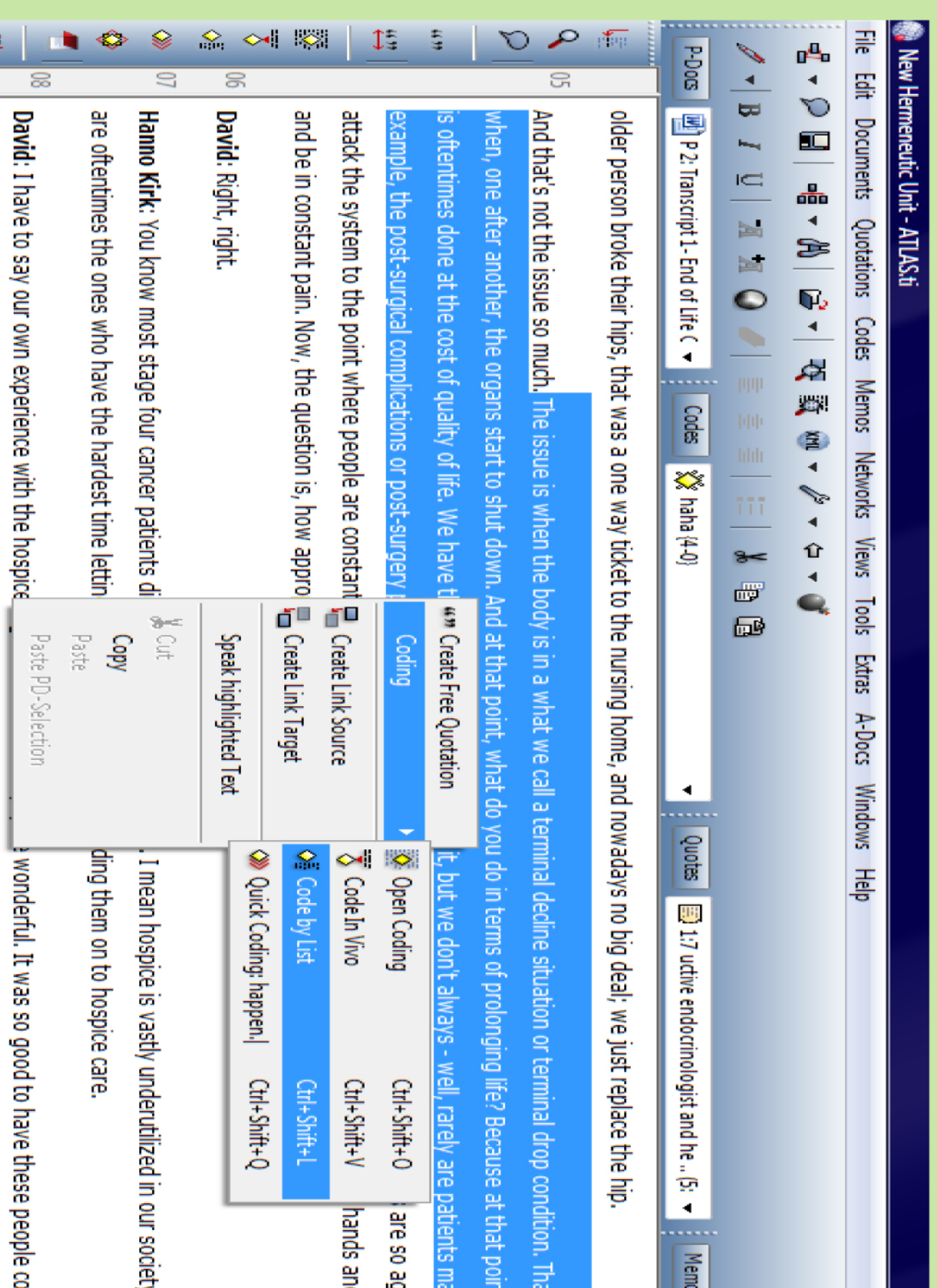


## USING ATLAS.ti

The *hermeneutic unit (HU)* is the container that holds the sources of information and all of the related analytical work.<sup>4</sup> The following are all objects of the HU.

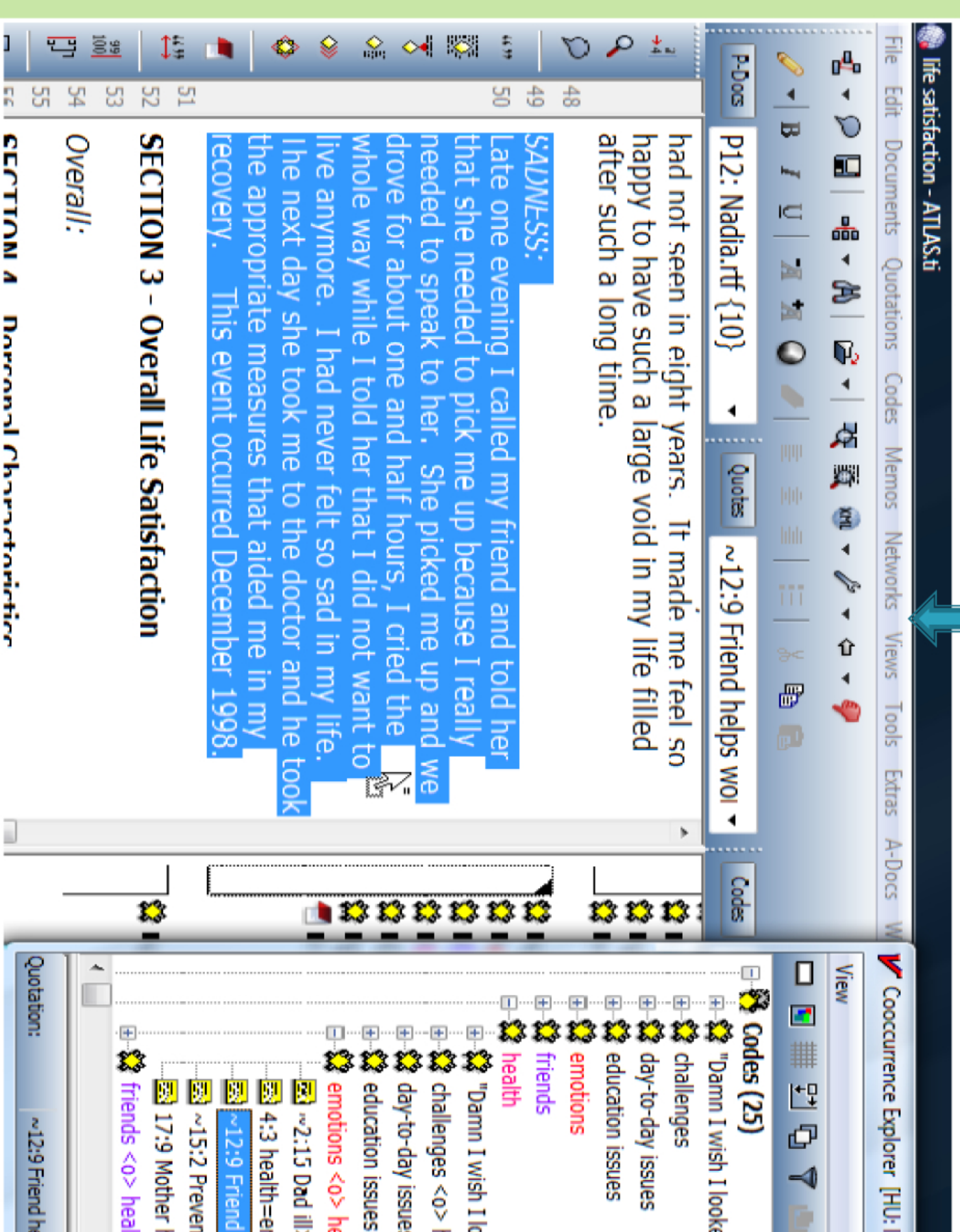
## Primary Documents

Information sources to be analyzed. ATLAS.ti allows you to archive and organize different methods of data collection (interviews, field notes, videos, literature reviews, pictures) in various formats all in one location.<sup>4</sup>



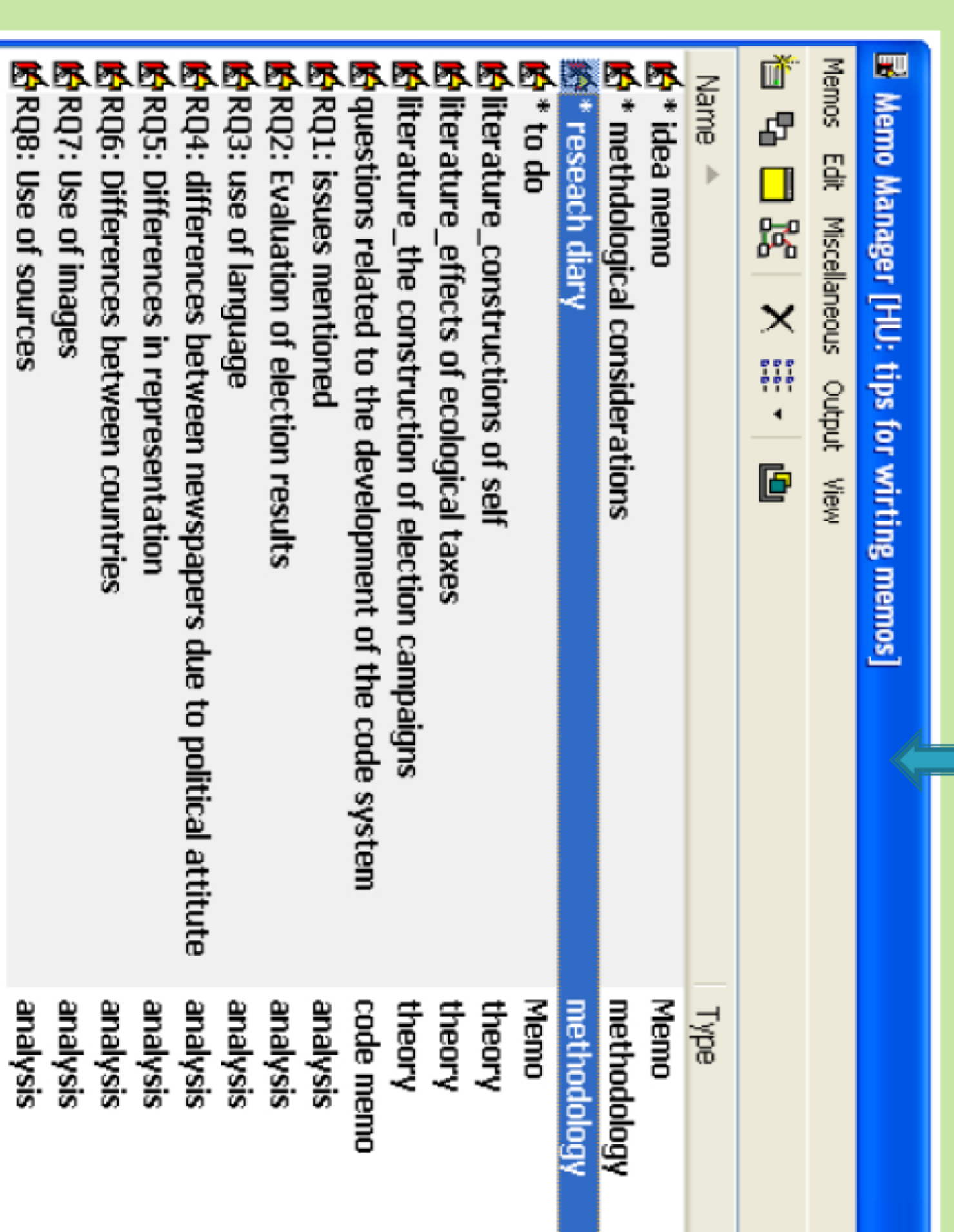
## Codes

Concepts either emerging from the data or based on an external framework of reference (e.g. specific research questions). By using comments one can create operational definitions for each code which are easily organized in the code manager.<sup>4</sup>



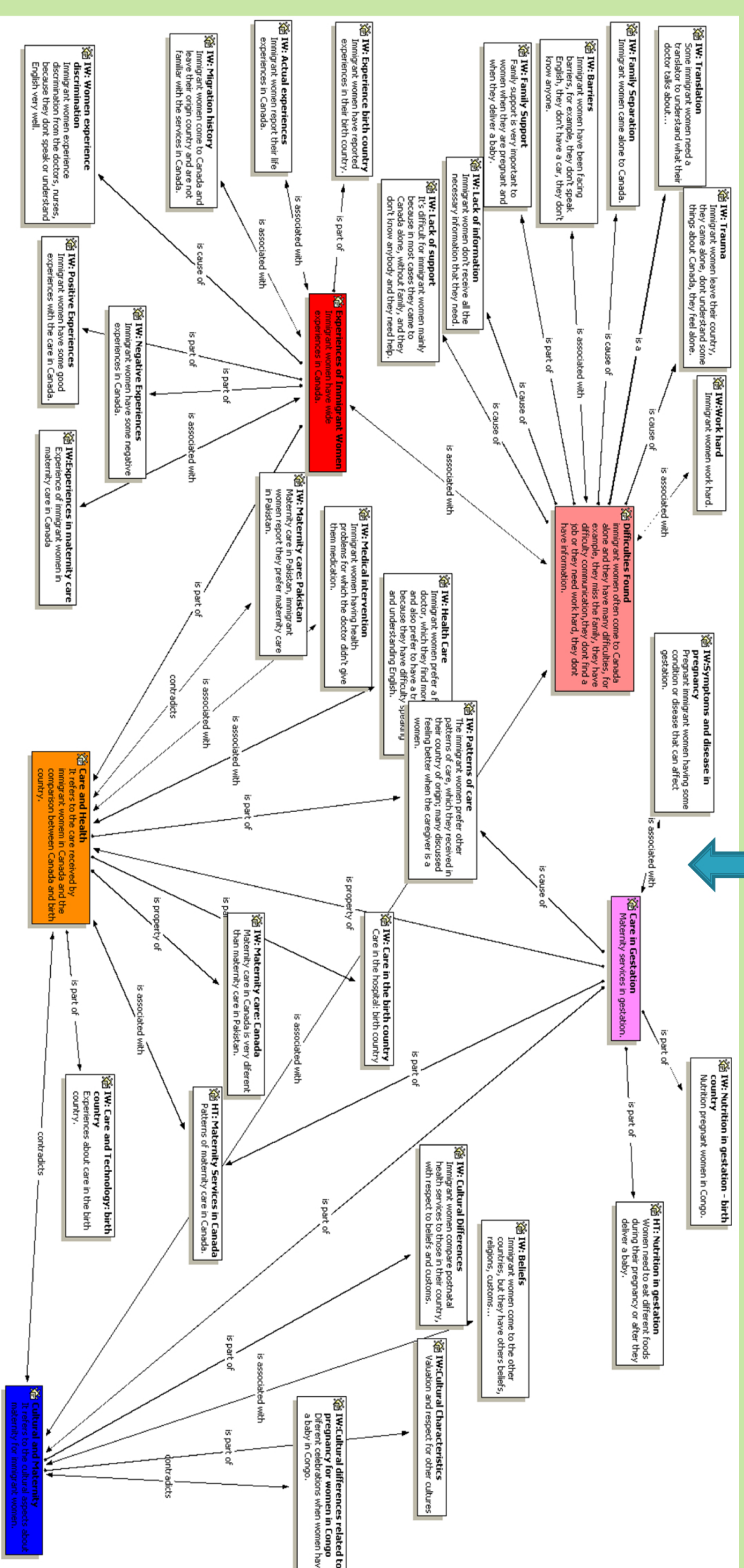
# Memos

Created as a reflection, discovery, description, or impression of any part of your work. Memos can be linked to codes, quotations, and other memos. They are helpful during the analytical process and can become the basis of the research report.<sup>4</sup>



# Families

Group together primary documents, codes, and memos according to shared conceptual characteristics (i.e. represent a specific search objective or a given hypothesis).<sup>4</sup>



## Networks

Graphic representations of the data that show linkages between objects and concepts within the HU.<sup>4</sup>

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

The student learned invaluable analytical skills with ATLAS.ti including:

- Coding up an RNC
- Assigning primary documents
- Creating a codebook using in vivo coding, quick coding, and code-by-list
- Integrating memos into the analysis process
- Producing data outputs
- Creating memos

Insights were gained around the necessity to understand what the participant is saying and to interpret the verbatim comments. Moreover, qualitative data analysis is subjective and acknowledges the existence of multiple social realities.