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Exploring Identity and Investment using Qualitative Research Software

Lidia's dissertation explores the impact students' language experiences have on their daily lives, specifically how they affect their identity and their investment in the heritage language. Researchers have pointed out that in some sense, decisions about whether or not to use a minority language come down to a series of everyday choices, both conscious and unconscious (Valdés 2015, Velázquez 2018). A crucial development in contemporary social theory is the recognition that identity is not something that a person "has," but rather something that we "do," i.e. that we create our identity through our actions, or our "performances of self" (Kroskrity, 2000). Additionally, the construct of investment (Norton, 1995) provides a framework that fosters a meaningful connection between learners' use of the target language and their changing identities.

Lidia will be showing us how she uses the qualitative analysis software Atlas.ti to manage, code, and analyze her data. Atlas.ti is available to UIC students, and consolidates large volumes of documents while keeping track of all notes, annotations, codes and memos of unstructured data such as interviews, open-ended questionnaires, images, videos, and even tweets. She will present the key concepts and take us through the main features of this software using her dissertation data as practical example.