Territorial Development Series

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Facilitative Actors of Territorial Development

A Social Construction-Based Approach

Pablo Costamagna / Miren Larrea

Deusto
University Press

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Gure gurasoei.

A nuestras madres y a nuestros padres.

To our parents.

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Foreword

Facilitative Actors of Territorial Development: A Social Construction-Based Approach, is a book about people committed to creating more decent living conditions in the communities and regions where they live. The authors, Pablo Costamagna and Miren Larrea, attempt to shed their roles as researchers and consultants to take up a position as people with other people, inquiring about that shift which occurs, almost mysteriously, among people and groups that set themselves challenges and support each other in bringing about changes in their reality.

In this regard, the book will be of interest to all professionals who work with people from the perspective of horizontal relationships, mutual respect and the expression of individual and collective creative potential. As the publication shows, facilitators are not endowed with a specific spirit for certain roles, rather they are conceived as emerging from the action of transforming and understanding their world. As a result, the proposed facilitation is not characterised by emotionless neutrality. Facilitation is closely linked to contradiction and conflict, and demands ongoing discernment and position-taking.

Building on the tradition of action research, the theory is developed by the authors together with and drawing on their experience in regional development processes. This first-hand quality has an extremely important educational function for those who already have experience in similar practices or anyone seeking to get their start in this area. For experienced professionals, it is a way to see themselves reflected in the practice of colleagues who bring great maturity to their reflections on how they became facilitators, without concealing difficulties and temptations to take shortcuts in order to —presumably— solve problems. Beginners in turn will find skilled hands willing to help guide them through their first steps on the path to facilitation.

The book contains a wealth of conceptual content, which we can do no more than touch on here, beginning with the very idea of facilitators in relation to classic ideas of experts or trainers. Here, a facilitator is understood to be someone who 'on an individual basis or as part of a team of facilitators, takes on the role of creating the conditions that enable territorial development (TD) actors to reflect, decide and take action'. This is a conception of participation which begins with the co-generation of knowledge and actions. The capabilities built based on this perspective are particularly characterised by their collective connotations.

It is therefore no coincidence that the pedagogical dimension of facilitation in territorial development processes receives special attention, both as a specific strategy (the pedagogical approach to territorial development) and from the perspective of ongoing citizen training. Freirean concepts such as dialogue and praxis are integrated into a multidisciplinary action proposal which seeks to reveal the complexity of real-life situations through specification.

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In short, it will be the learning constructed throughout the process which guarantees the emergence of new facilitators and the training of actors to ensure the continuation of innovative actions.

In addition to its conceptual richness, the book is also very practical in nature. For example, it identifies 'relational leadership' qualities such as the capacity for self-reflection and transparency, demonstrating that the legitimacy of this leadership does not come from a hierarchical position, but from the ability to help find solutions to problems. And in the final chapter, training processes for facilitation capabilities are presented in a highly systematic and creative way.

Nonetheless, everything reflected in the book circles back to the core work of the authors: territorial development. At a time in which living space is undergoing a profound reconfiguration, the authors turn their attention to the territory, as the place where economic and social activities take place; where political, social and cultural life is organised; and where individual and collective identities are constructed. After all, it is the place where the collective self-realisation of life itself occurs, based on which facilitators exist and train as midwives who support the birth of new and better conditions for individual and collective existence.

I am grateful for the privilege of sharing the knowledge I have gained from my reading, and I am confident that it can only proliferate and bear fruit in the actions of many other readers.

Danilo R. Streck

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Introduction

Rationale and focus of the book

This book is the result of a learning process which draws on our experience in different territorial development processes. Our main motivation in writing is to provide a capability-building strategy which can help to overcome structural challenges that we encountered in our work in different territories. These are problems which do not appear to have been explored in depth in either the academic literature or training content for territorial development (hereinafter referred to as TD).

The core focus of this work is on how facilitation is conceptualised. We argue that TD occurs because there are people who facilitate it. However, these facilitators carry out their work without the existence of frameworks, definitions, examples or even a shared language. Such elements could help raise awareness of this facilitation and the mode of action it entails in complex social and political processes. In particular, we maintain that there is significant potential for improvement in TD processes if we systematically tackle the development of facilitation capabilities. This applies to both people currently engaged in this activity and those who will become involved in facilitating TD processes in the future.

With the goal of generating a shared language around facilitation, we consider what aspects we have felt we needed in order to understand our own actions in practice, and so seek out multidisciplinary collaborations which make it possible to continue building the approaches to TD on which we have been working. Specifically, the book is a proposal which has been developed based on the pedagogical approach and action research as capability-building strategies for TD. It represents a step forward in the conceptualisation of facilitation based on these methods.

It is thus a methodological proposal which is in turn a strategy. The book focuses on a specific *how* which we propose for TD, given that we present training and research processes as not merely playing a supporting role for TD, but also as development strategies.

In keeping with the above, one of the definitions of TD which inspires this book is that put forward by Alburquerque, Costamagna and Ferraro (2008): a 'capability-building process whose purpose is to collectively and continuously improve the wellbeing of a community'. Capability-building as a strategy requires that the territory have a community which can be organised around this strategy. This necessitates organisation, interaction and different actions with the aim of achieving management which encompasses the entire society.

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This definition reflects a clear viewpoint on the process, leaving any reference to the goal of the territorial improvement, or the *what* of the strategy, very open, and placing the issue of capabilities at centre stage. When working with this *how*-centred definition of TD, we have frequently found that people lack a clear idea of the *what*: What exactly is it that we want to build? Can capability-building in itself be the goal of a TD strategy? In writing this book, it has been our position that it is difficult to anticipate the *whats* of TD before working with the actors in a given territory. For this reason, we have concentrated on developing an approach to *how* it is possible to develop a *collective shared learning capacity* which will provide territories with the best mechanisms for tackling the challenges they will face in the future. Each future challenge will present a new *what* and territories that have built shared learning capacity will have more options, enabling them to deftly respond to new challenges and their *whats*.

The collective dimension of this learning capacity, which —as we will discuss later— is linked to the capabilities of the people in the territory, derives from empowerment processes and the redistribution of decision-making capabilities, which democratise the TD process. This democratisation, which can also be justified in terms of the efficiency of learning processes, is a particularly important part of our ideological positioning. It informs not only our practice, but is also the focus of this book.

The democratisation of the territory as the goal of TD centres attention on the decision-making processes that involve a range of actors, which define how the different dimensions of development are combined, within the framework of complex processes. The capability-building strategy seeks to integrate knowledge into these decision-making processes in a fairer and more democratic way. This not only has an impact on the *how*, but it also affects the make-up of the *whats* which each territory ultimately prioritises and which are traditionally considered in terms of economic development policies, inclusion, environment, strengthening production processes, innovation, creating decent jobs, etc.

Lastly, a viewpoint based on the complexity of TD such as that which this book hopes to convey must be founded on a multidisciplinary approach. This has represented a challenge for the book's authors, who, despite having followed different career paths, come from an interpretation of TD which is focused on the production process, innovation, value chains, institutionality and politics. Now we find ourselves needing to supplement this perspective with new principles ranging from sociology and political science to psychology, under an idea of democracy with a strong focus on how decisions are made. The challenge has been to draw on the conceptual framework of territorial economic development (industrial development) and take steps to integrate concepts and frameworks from other disciplines which can help us to analyse our experience in facilitating TD processes.

The practice which inspires the book

Although we have been working in TD for years, the book brings together our reflections and the knowledge gained around facilitation from between 2010 and late 2016. The concept which can best aid understanding of the process of writing this book is that of praxis, a continuous shifting back and forth between practice and theory, always seeking the best concepts and frameworks to help us make explicit the facilitation implicit in our mode of action. In turn, these conceptualisations impact on our practice.

A clear understanding of the context of our professional practice is important in order to interpret this praxis, as it helps to delineate the sphere within which our experiences with

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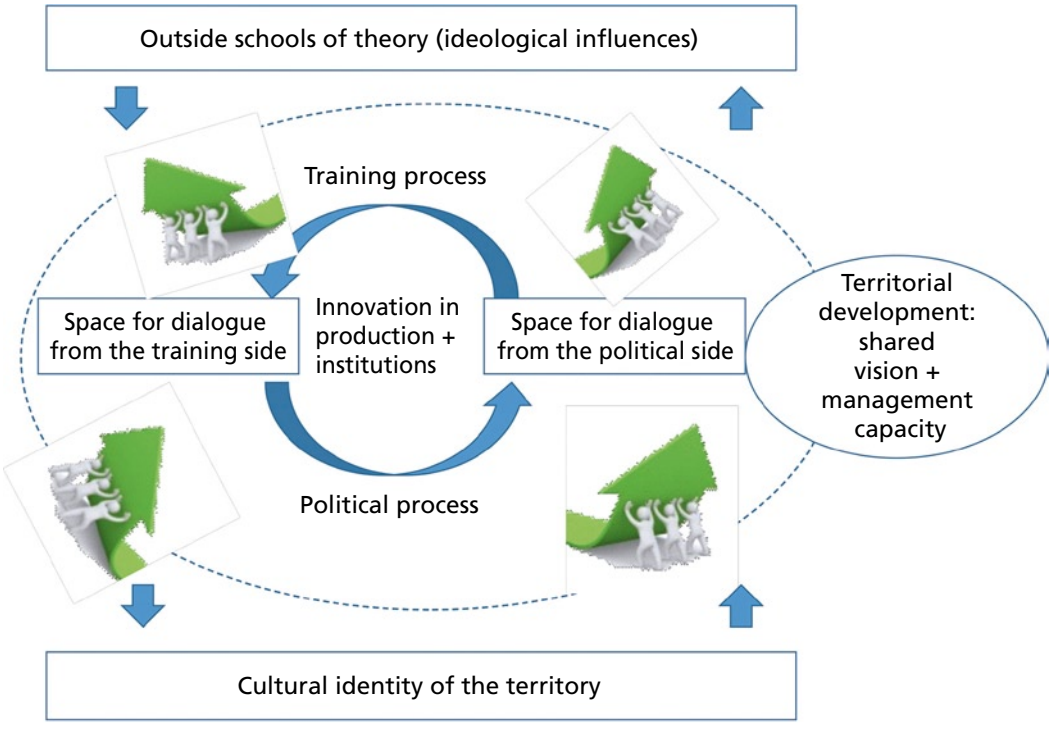
facilitation have taken place. One framework which represents this type of context is that presented in Costamagna (2015) and shown in the following figure.

Figure 1. Analytical framework for the interaction of politics and training in the pedagogical approach



Source: Costamagna (2015).

The figure shows the spaces which, driven by both the political and training sides (universities or other actors in this sphere), establish dialogues between political actors and researchers/trainers who contribute to the development of capabilities for TD, both individual and collective.

Among the experiences which gave rise to the reflections shared here, three projects are most noteworthy: Gipuzkoa Sarean, a project backed by the political side (Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa) in Gipuzkoa (Basque Country), with which Orkestra-Basque Institute of Competitiveness has been involved from the start; the creation of the Praxis Institute (Institute of Technological and Social Research for Territorial Development), backed by the Rafaela Regional Faculty of the National Technological University and closely linked to the Master's in Territorial Development at the same institution, as well as with the third of these projects; and ConectaDEL, Regional Training Program for Local Economic Development with Social Inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean (IDB-MIF), which seeks to use training to strengthen capabilities for decentralisation through work with the political and academic spheres. The authors of this book have been involved in these three projects to different extents.

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Examples from these processes are shared throughout this book in order to link the concepts to practice. However, their influence on this work is much greater than the examples might lead one to believe, as the conceptual proposals have also largely been constructed based on these experiences. In the following paragraphs, we provide an introduction to these cases. This will preclude the need to present them each time they are mentioned in the book.

Gipuzkoa Sarean was started in 2009 with the backing of the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa (government of the province of Gipuzkoa). A team from Orkestra-Basque Institute of Competitiveness has been involved in the project from the start. In the beginning, the project was intended to generate social capital which would have a positive impact on this territory's competitiveness. One of its most notable characteristics was that, despite being led by the provincial government and the town council of San Sebastián (the capital of the province), it was defined as a research project. The reason for this is closely linked to the background of the general councillor's cabinet head, who, having come to politics from academia, created this research space from the political side. From the start, this has made Gipuzkoa Sarean a hybrid political and research space, as illustrated in the analytical framework presented above.

Another characteristic of Gipuzkoa Sarean is that it has remained in place from 2009 down to today, even when the political party in power changed. The fact that the spaces are not exclusively political, but shared with researchers, most likely contributed to the sustainability of the process. Nevertheless, the project has not remained static and has adapted to the goals of each government. The initial aim of generating social capital shifted first to building a new territorial development model for Gipuzkoa, and then to focusing on economic development, while still operating within the framework of territorial development.

The third characteristic of this project is the presence of action research, led by the Orkestra team, throughout the entire process. During the first two years, this approach was combined with other perspectives on research, and in 2013 it became the working methodology for the process. As a result, the process has been supported by an ongoing dialogue among various policy makers from the provincial council and county development agencies[1] in Gipuzkoa, and the institute's research team. This dialogue has made it possible for both researchers and the aforementioned territorial actors to explore their role as facilitators of TD in greater depth. At the time of writing, the principal outcome of this process of dialogue is the formalisation of a long-term cooperation agreement between the provincial government and eleven county development agencies operating in this territory to work collaboratively in the area of economic development.

The other space used as a case study is the training process implemented by the Praxis Institute —part of the Rafaela Regional Faculty of the National Technological University— together with the municipality of Rafaela as part of a joint scheme undertaken by the political, training and research sides.

Praxis was created in 2014 as part of a path embarked on by the Master's in Territorial Development in 2009. In addition to its academic and training aims, it promoted case study and policy analysis, participation in collaborative spaces for strategic reflection, and research to generate changes in TD processes, heavily influenced by the pedagogical approach utilised by ConectaDEL in Latin America, which will be described in more detail later.

[1] Counties (*comarcas* in Spanish) are infraprovincial and supramunicipal territorial units. Gipuzkoa has eleven counties.

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The university's focus was on strengthening the university-territory relationship through the institute, making it much closer. There was also a focus on co-building based on the concept of praxis, which represents a position with regard to the relationship between theory and practice, and the need to work on teaching/learning in the everyday spaces in which actors operate, in their encounters with others, in their dialogues and in their movement around their environment.

Within this framework, the work with the local government further explores various lines of action in which the core focus is to support the implementation of a new management model whose aim is to transform the way in which management of public policy is structured through multidisciplinary spaces and spaces for reflection on the actions themselves, in order to rethink the policy and foster spheres of learning in academia.

In the course of doing this, a space is created in which to train facilitators based on a cogenerative model, with the aim of providing the capabilities to manage complexity and coordination among different areas and with other actors. The process of dialogue established is also allowing both researchers and government staff to further explore their role as facilitators of the organisation and TD. The training also reinforces other work in areas linked to the systematisation of experiences and support based on action research.

The action research carried out in Gipuzkoa Sarean and the pedagogical approach which informs the Latin American cases have provided a shared space in which to put together this book. However, it is also important to point out that the processes on which the book is based take place in very different social and political contexts. We do not have an explicit analysis of how these differences influenced our reflections and it is possible that we are not fully aware of how they have done so. Nonetheless, we hope that these cases will provide the reader with the richness of this diversity of contexts.

Putting together this book

Constructing the praxis presented in the previous section involved continuously questioning ourselves regarding how we and the people with whom we worked operate. Facilitation was something which was intuitive to us, but difficult to explain in practice, because it was scattered and not visible in the territory.

For this reason, the long process which gave rise to this book has been one of understanding ourselves in the act of facilitation. Time and again, we returned to past experiences in order to reinterpret them from this perspective. We realised that the conceptualisation which was taking shape was helping us to improve our understanding of what we had done and why we had done it. Orwell (2014) points out that we communicate around a very restricted number of things because the number of words available to us with which to do so is limited and only allows us to talk about a part of what we are. The process of putting together this book has involved searching for and reinventing the meaning of certain terms in order to be able to impart what we considered to be the essence of our practice over many years. This book enables us to share something which until now we had not been able to communicate, because we did not have the conceptual framework with which to convey it clearly.

Along the way, there have been several occasions when we have had to work through concepts and frameworks with which we had been interpreting reality and which were limiting us in constructing our approach to facilitation. We will mention three of these here, but discuss them in greater depth in later chapters.

One of the first steps on this path was our attempt to delineate the figure of facilitator, in comparison with other more familiar figures such as expert or trainer (Chapter 4). In a

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certain sense, this enabled us to lay claim to this figure and distinguish it from the others, and so begin to construct a separate space for. This was no easy task, as we found different roles which converged in the people who we identified as facilitators. The process of defining a facilitator and interpreting ourselves as such led us to reinterpret previously established work relationships. It helped us to understand these relationships and communicate them so that the people working with us could understand the role we were playing. We believe this also helped the work we were doing to be evaluated in another way. On this path, which was always in transition, we got the sense that the concept and role of facilitator were understood in practice on the TD projects in which we have applied it. But we have yet to establish a connection with academic debate and we hope that this book will be the first step towards achieving this.

Another concept which we had to overcome in reaching a definition of *TD facilitation* was that of *workshop facilitation* (Chapter 5). In our experience, both of us had found that facilitation was primarily conceptualised in formal environments and organised activities delimited in time in which the facilitator's role was to stimulate the participation of territorial actors (seminars, workshops, participatory processes, etc.). Furthermore, our initial training linked facilitation to the techniques which supported this role. Nonetheless, reflecting on our own work in the territory led us to construe that there was something more to it. The closest we came to a definition at the start of the writing process was that in order that things would actually happen, it was necessary to work on what went on between workshops, outside formal meetings. This expanded the field of facilitation from workshops to another space, one which was complex and difficult to delineate. This made it very challenging to theorise or construct analytical frameworks around what exactly a TD facilitator does. In practice, we saw that there were people who moved easily within the blurred boundaries of this ambiguous context. They were people who knew how to create connections and the conditions to make things happen. In short, we started out with the certainty that within this apparent chaos of TD that went beyond organised events, there were individuals who moved the wheel to drive things forward. We termed them 'process facilitators'. Viewing TD as a process, we also spoke of 'TD facilitators'. This book is an attempt to set out concepts and frameworks that will help us to understand this art, technique, intuition (in combination) that makes it possible to move the wheel of TD processes and drive things forward.

A third break with the frameworks under which we had been operating was clarification of the political nature of process facilitators. The manner in which they must influence TD processes clashes with the neutral image of workshop facilitators. This brought up questions around the legitimacy of the TD facilitator to influence the processes and put the fragility of the line between facilitation and manipulation on the table. The attempt to clarify our positions with regard to this aspect gave rise to the conceptualisation of the non-neutrality of the facilitator (Chapter 5).

Writing criteria

Writing this book has presented various challenges, to which we have responded by making decisions which have in turn influenced its form. One of the inspirations which gave us the freedom to explore new formats was Marshall (2008), who proposes that each substance/content we wish to communicate must find its own form, that which makes it possible to better reach our readers.

The first challenge was dealing with the fact that, despite writing in the same language, we come from contexts (the Basque Country and Argentina) in which this language expresses

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itself in very different ways. The Spanish in which this book was originally written takes on very different tones, turns of phrase and implications depending on who is writing. At one point, we did consider incorporating an editing stage in order to attempt to standardise the styles. But then, following Marshall's recommendation, we determined that the language used in this book emerges from our collaboration within an intersectional space and that this mixture must be maintained, as it represents the diversity of not only the language, but also our cultures and personal histories. Therefore, as authors, we have made an effort to write in a manner which would be clear to readers on both sides of the ocean, but we ruled out any sort of standardisation.

A second challenge —one which has not been resolved, but which has allowed us to experiment— is the search for inclusive language, especially in terms of gender. When we began, we had been talking about the concept of 'facilitator' for years. In Spanish, this is a gendered term with a masculine ending (*facilitador*). Following the advice of female colleagues who guided us in this area, we have made an effort to move past this language without making the text difficult to read. We have not found universal criteria which could be applied in all cases, but we have tried to change *facilitador* to *persona facilitadora* (literally, 'facilitative person'). This is our way of reflecting the fact that along the way we have encountered both women and men who have inspired the knowledge shared in this book and it would be unfair to tell this story solely in terms of the male TD facilitator.

Structure of the book

The lessons learnt over the course of these years have been organised in six chapters. In the first, we present the pedagogical approach and action research as the frameworks within which we propose our conceptualisation of TD facilitation. The second chapter explores an element which both of the approaches consider important: the need to understand complexity in order to be able to build the capabilities which will help overcome the problems associated with TD. In this chapter, we present our interpretation of the fact that in TD, processes often do not bear fruit because problems which are in fact complex are dealt with as if they were complicated or simple. The third chapter proposes the use of social construction as the process by means of which complex problems can be managed as such. This is based on practice, but using frameworks put forward in the field of sociology which integrate subjectivity and the construction of intersubjectivity into TD processes. This has quite possibly been one of the greatest challenges in writing this book, as construction at the intersection between different disciplines requires working in spaces which take us outside our comfort zone. Having explored the context in which the facilitator works in the preceding chapters, the fourth chapter presents our definition of facilitator. This is done by considering their relationship with the various territorial actors whose reflection, decision and action processes they facilitate. Chapter 5 focuses on one of the most delicate aspects of facilitation: leadership. Working on the assumption that the facilitator is a leader, this chapter considers debates around the legitimacy of the facilitator to influence TD. Lastly, Chapter 6 tackles the question of whether it is possible to train people to be facilitators. After indicating that we believe not only that this is possible, but also that it is necessary to undertake such a process, we share our preliminary considerations on how to do so, based on our experience in training facilitators. The book concludes with a few final reflections on our own learning process in writing it.

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Chapter 1

The pedagogical approach and action research: origins of a reflection on facilitation

1.1. **Introduction**

The definition of facilitation processes and the figure of TD facilitator which are considered throughout this book have taken shape within the context of discussion around the *what* and the *how*, as well as a conceptual and methodological review of TD. These discussions and reviews have taken place at the intersection between two teams and two approaches which followed parallel paths in Latin America and Europe.

One of these teams and approaches is part of the ConectaDEL programme and the Praxis Institute/Master's in Territorial Development (Rafaela Regional Faculty of the National Technological University, Argentina). This is a Latin American perspective on TD with many influences. Coming from the sphere of economics, the process is sustained by, among other things, the conceptual evolution of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), a number of leading authors (Francisco Alburquerque, José Arocena, Sergio Boisier and Antonio Vázquez Barquero, among others), IDB-MIF support programmes for productive development (firms, networks, chains, territory, etc.), the debates of the Territorial Development Network for Latin America and the Caribbean (RED DETE ALC), and the praxis of a significant number of trainers. In recent years, the idea of working on capability-building has given rise to a method known as the *pedagogical approach to territorial development* (hereinafter, PA).

The second approach was developed at Orkestra-Basque Institute of Competitiveness in collaboration with the University of Agder (Norway). It has been reflected in, among other things, the work of Zubigintza-Action Research Laboratory and its work on the Gipuzkoa Sarean project, developed with the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa. This perspective is based on an interpretation of TD in terms of regional innovation systems, widespread in Europe. Drawing on this concept, it proposes action research for territorial development (hereinafter, ARTD) as a strategy which makes it possible to develop processes of change based on dialogue among territorial actors. Here, the two most obvious influences are one, pragmatism as an approach to action research —with the work of Greenwood and Levin (2007) and Gustavsen (1992) being most noteworthy— and two, the pedagogy of Paulo Freire (1996).

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This chapter presents both approaches and considers an intersectional space between the two which makes it possible to combine them. This intersection is the *capability-building strategy for TD*. This strategy, interpreted as a viewpoint which makes it possible to continue developing both approaches, considers the facilitation process and the role of facilitators to be significant aspects of TD.

Lastly, why these two approaches and not others? Throughout the book, we will consider emergent strategies as a way of thinking about how TD processes occur. The link between the PA and ARTD is not the result of a rational decision based on an extensive study of different approaches and what each perspective has to offer. The link which this book proposes has been forged in an emergent manner as each of the authors took part in the other's projects and they identified shared viewpoints. Therefore, over the years, Miren Larrea's participation on several occasions in ConectaDEL processes, and subsequently Praxis, and Pablo Costamagna's joining the team on the Zubigintza-Gipuzkoa Sarean project have lead to the construction of the intersectional space between PA and ARTD in which the discussion around facilitation is presented.

1.2. **The PA (pedagogical approach) as a framework for facilitation**

1.2.1. *Local economic development (LED) and TD as the genesis of the PA*

The approach to TD presented in this book has various influences. One is the thinking around development in Latin America at ECLAC. This thinking incorporates a strong association with technical and industrial progress, posits the need to concentrate on the real economy, and generally believes that it is the state rather than the market that should take charge of technological development. At ECLAC, stronger talk about local concerns began to emerge in the late 1980s. That decade introduced discussions around the new phase of the restructuring of capitalism at the global level, particularly its profound transformations in the field of technology and production (Riffo, 2013; Gatto, 1989).

Starting in the 1990s, reflection at the territorial level began to be linked to the problems associated with globalisation and competitiveness (Alburquerque, 1997; Silva, 2005). Carlos de Mattos and Sergio Boisier are pioneers in considering how to tackle inequalities in regions. De Mattos (1989) suggests that strategies should favour action organised and driven by and for the actual community to be benefitted.

In the 1990s, the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) and its projects in Latin America worked with instruments such as business networks, chains and clusters, which began providing content for other definitions of LED. Thus, Llisterri (2000, p. 5) states: 'The main actor in local economic development is the collection of firms that form part of the local system of production and which is made up of firms of all sizes.'

Boisier (1999) advances ideas which state that the concept of development must be multidimensional and dynamic, adding that the operation of any economic system, the system of social relationships of production and, particularly, the 'style' of development which the system takes on at a given time and place, produce permanent changes.

Alburquerque (1997) expands this perspective on LED, asserting that it is an action-centred approach and that what is important is progress on strengthening small and micro firms, considering endogenous resources, the new roles of local governments and opening up spaces in order to incorporate innovations into a new territorial environment. Alburquerque (1997, p. 108) defines LED as: 'a process of transforming the local economy and society, focused on overcoming existing difficulties and challenges, which seeks to improve the living conditions of its population through determined and coordinated action

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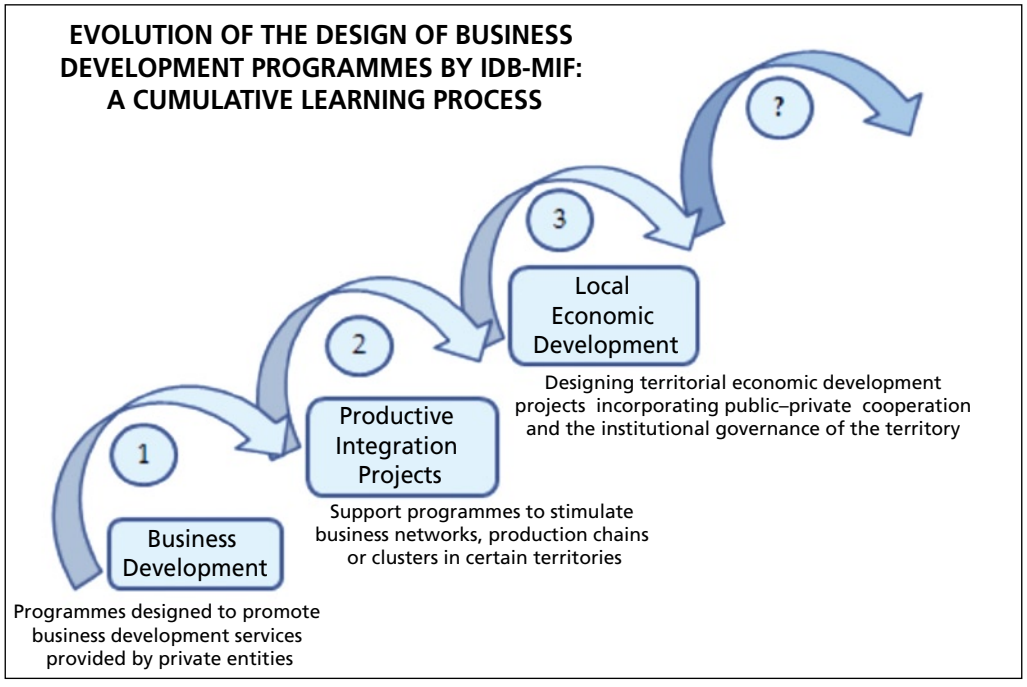
by the various local socioeconomic stakeholders (public and private), in order to make more efficient and sustainable use of existing endogenous resources, by fostering the entrepreneurial capabilities of local business and creating an innovative environment in the territory'. Albuquerque's thinking (Alfaro and Costamagna, 2015) was fundamental for a large number of people working in LED in Latin America. Alburquerque charts this evolution in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Cumulative learning process of LED



Source: Alburquerque and Pérez Rozzi (2014).

Another author who has influenced the perspective presented as PA is Arocena (1998), who suggests that in each local society there is a system of power relationships and examines variables that characterise the system of actors: the ruling elites, the relationship with extralocal actors, the capacity to produce distinctive responses and the government/political actor. In addition, he defines local identity, which is a key contribution in terms of economics.

It is also important to recall the perspective offered by Madoery (2005, p. 14), who adds a political interpretation of development: 'The local represents common ground, the sphere in which territorial actors acquire the ability to set the course, to "construct" development. Local development is therefore a territorialised process of social maturation (collective learning for cultural change) and political construction which is deployed in a range of dimensions.'

In addition, in their studies for ECLAC, Ferraro and Costamagna (1999) combine theory with case studies on institutional frameworks in several territories. They maintain that the opportunities available to firms which allow them to tackle the difficulties which arise increase when there is density of links in an institutional framework developed in the territory. This improves their capacity and ability to solve problems and define strategies.

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In the opinion of the authors, one tipping-point in the shift towards a multidisciplinary approach in this crowded summary (which obviously does not include all the viewpoints that should be considered) is the interpretation by Esser, Hillebrand, Messner and Meyer-Stamer (1996) of the concept of systemic competitiveness, which broadens horizons with admirable simplicity. These authors question the classic dimensions of competitiveness. By establishing the link between competitiveness, innovation, knowledge and new technologies, they throw into question low wages, economies of scale, market control and innovation. They propose a different scenario, one in which advances in science and technology and the globalisation process generate new organisational paradigms and patterns.

They posit the existence of a 'complex and dynamic pattern of interaction among the State, firms, intermediate institutions and the organisational capacity of the society' (Esser *et al.*, 1996, p. 39). For their analysis, they introduce four levels which interact with one another: meta, macro, meso and micro. Systemic competitiveness thus indicates that there must be coordination within and among the four levels, and that the willingness of the major groups of social actors to engage in dialogue is key. This understanding of competitive capacity requires a high degree of organisation, interaction and management by actors in order to achieve systemic management that embraces the whole of society.

This approach opens up the possibilities of finding common ground with other strategies and disciplines, while also supporting the transition from the concept of LED to TD. Thus, it is not only based on economic development, but environmental, urban, socio-educational and institutional development also come into play. This is where the concept of governance is reinterpreted, underscoring the importance of working on new forms of government with different relationships and collective actions that call into question historical forms of interaction between government and civil society. It becomes clear that there are different interests at work and that the actors operate within power games, on the basis of which it is necessary to forge agreements and responses.

In some spaces in Latin America, as a result of these reinterpretations, various debates emerged in the first decade of this century which attempted to move TD out of marginal areas of the public agenda. They are based on a common idea in which the territory is conceptualised as a space in which economic and social activities take place and where a role is assigned to social and political organisation, to culture and identity, and to the physical environment. It is in the territory that collective actions take place in order to develop innovation within the framework of learning processes which provide a response to complexity.

This framework, the result of the conceptual path laid out above, is one of our points of departure in this book. From it we take the following as a definition of TD: 'a process of accumulating capabilities whose aim is to collectively and continuously improve the economic wellbeing of a community' (Alburquerque *et al.*, 2008, p. 16). This definition places the accumulation of capabilities in a central position and proposes the challenge of pedagogy for TD which we discuss below.

1.2.2. *Incorporating pedagogy into TD*

In the process of advances and discussion around TD we have described, the first reflections on the PA emerged from criticism of the training which was being provided in the sphere of TD. The initial approach had been a scenario in which the expert had the knowledge and the student listened and learned, establishing a relationship which was

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primarily unidirectional. Over time, ideas emerged which indicated that this form of teaching influenced how we were connected to territorial actors and made it impossible to act according to the dialogue-based approach, new mode of governance and capability-building in TD considered in the previous sections.

With these emergent ideas, in 2011, the ConectaDEL programme organised discussions around the competencies which a trainer in LED should have, along with the strategies and dynamics which they should bring to bear in training processes in formal spaces (courses, diploma programmes, master's degrees, workshops, etc.).[2] In this context, the contribution of pedagogy —especially what are known as the critical pedagogies— enabled us to update our practices as teachers/trainers with new ideas about learning.

This also led us to reconsider Paulo Freire, which brought us to more territory-based reflections associated with social construction processes. The latter was also of concern to the specialists who provided support in different parts of Latin America and who were reviewing the impact of years of work in this region. Even so, the focus was more on the trainer ('educator' in Freire's terms, 1972) than on the subjects ('educated'). According to Freire, the point of reference was how to move away from this 'banking model' perspective on education, in which knowledge was deposited based on mechanical memorisation of content and the only scope of action available to the educated was to 'file' this knowledge.

The construction of knowledge was thus reconsidered, being understood as something collective in which the starting point is recognition of the actors' knowledge and establishing a dialogue between this and the knowledge of the trainer/facilitator, attempting to co-create. Among other variables, this enabled us to incorporate context and the idea of process, thus forging a bridge between criticism of training in the classroom and the need to establish consistency between approach and practice in the territory.

We turned a critical eye on the fact that we often found ourselves repeating 'recipes' without taking into account who we were dealing with and where their experiences occurred. We evaluated the knowledge in place, which enabled us to clearly establish that training transforms more powerfully when it is associated with day-to-day local realities and connects theory to practice.

In addition, together with the ConectaDEL programme network, we began highlighting the importance of bearing in mind that training processes are not neutral, but rather require the person designing, coordinating and facilitating them to take a position. This aspect also formed part of the discussion and helped to strengthen the political dimension, understood as a practice for transformation, action and change.

Another of the elements which takes on crucial importance in the process of creating the approach is the concept of praxis. Once again, the influence of Paulo Freire and his critical or problematising education is clear. It is understood that there is no action without reflection and that there is no reflection without action. This link between the two concepts is what he terms praxis.

An additional change in the process is internalising the idea that training happens not only in the classroom (or in formal spaces), but also in broader educational processes such as our daily practices, in the dialogue among actors, in management disputes or conflicts, in the search for shared viewpoints and in so many other spaces.

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[2] These initial reflections and demands can be situated within the framework of discussions which took place at the regional meeting of LED trainers and instructors held in 2011 and organised as part of the ConectaDEL programme. One of the main aims of this gathering was to create a network of trainers with expertise in LED as a specific requirement for setting up the programme.

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On the path described, which entails adopting a critical viewpoint with regard to our multiple roles as researchers, teachers, facilitators and territory managers, the PA to TD emerges as a capability-building strategy in a broad sense.

1.2.3. *The PA: basic principles*

The PA had its genesis in training processes. However, in the course of our practice, it began to be considered a TD strategy, as it provides action frameworks for working on broader processes linked to the capabilities found in the territory. This was done by transcending the traditional spaces for support developed up to that point (more unidirectional, involving the transfer of knowledge, an absence of dialogue or negation of conflict).

The PA is a way of understanding and taking action in capability-building for change in the territory in a consistent manner, with a social and political structure that engages the participation of territorial actors. It constitutes a way of understanding knowledge, the link between theory and practice, recognition of the other (local knowledge, practices and experiences), dialogue-based connections and conflict resolution supporting democratic institutions (Costamagna, Spinelli and Pérez R., 2013).

To summarise, we list the elements of the PA which emerge from the knowledge gained in the process at ConectaDEL, in order to then provide an analysis of their connections with action research. The elements of the PA have been adapted from Costamagna and Larrea (2015).

- Evolution from traditional training to the concept of praxis.
- Capability-building in TD as a goal.
- Accepting the trainer's lack of neutrality.
- Integrating the cogeneration process.
- Integrating the relationship with the environment surrounding training processes, the importance of context.
- Communication and systematisation of processes.
- Discussion around the people who train, facilitate and have expert knowledge.

1.3. **ARTD (action research for territorial development) as a framework for facilitation**

1.3.1. *The discourse around competitiveness and regional innovation systems as the genesis of action research for TD (ARTD)*

a) Influence of M. Porter's perspective on competitiveness

The development of ARTD has taken place within the context of Orkestra-Basque Institute of Competitiveness. The institute was created in 2007 as part the network established by Harvard University around the MOC (Microeconomics of Competitiveness) course. This course and Porter's ideas (1990, 1998) regarding competitiveness are therefore an important conceptual benchmark for understanding the point of departure for the process. For the institute, the MOC courses were a tool with which to establish closer ties to actors in the territory, both public and private, and to construct a shared language around competitiveness together with them.

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The most influential figure in transferring the vision of M. Porter to the context of the Basque Country was Jon Azúa. His approach to competitiveness, which distanced itself from the relatively prevalent interpretation of this as reducing costs, is reflected in the following paragraph:

> Competitiveness can only be understood as an indivisible whole in which social and economic aims converge. Indeed, beyond the fairness and social justice which would move any government, business owner or individual … a social platform or network of wellbeing is, in itself, a source of competitiveness. (Azúa, 2008: 53-54)

In the sphere of LED, the approach based on M. Porter's contributions provided Orkestra with a tool for conducting competitive analyses (Navarro and Larrea, 2007). Following this strategy, we developed databases of municipal and county indicators which made it possible to introduce this methodology into the reflection processes of county development agencies in the Basque Country. Together with representatives from the agencies, we carried out numerous competitiveness analyses. In many cases, these supported the development of county strategies.

The element most commonly used in these analyses was what is known as 'Porter's diamond', which underscores the importance of the following elements:

- Factor conditions (amount and cost of a territory's available inputs and their specialisation).
- Business strategy, structure and rivalry (competition between firms based on investment and improvement is considered an incentive which spurs the group as a whole to improve).
- Demand conditions (the existence of sophisticated demand drives improvements in the business sector).
- Existence of related industries and support (which takes the form of the existence of clusters rather than isolated firms).

Together with these elements, Porter considered the role of the government and of chance to be elements which influence the competitiveness of a territory. One of the characteristics of the interpretation of this model at Orkestra was that greater emphasis was placed on the role of governments, as it was primarily with regional and municipal governments that we adapted the model of analysis.

One of the challenges of these analyses with county development agencies was finding answers to how we could move forward with processes in order to effectively implement the plans produced as a result of these analyses. The literature which had enabled us to understand the elements for analysis did not go into the same depth regarding *how* to work so that the proposals put together based on the analyses would be transformed into effective change processes. Consequently, at the institute we began to reflect on how to move from *analysis as a product to analysis as a process*. This produced the seed which would later become an action research strategy.

b) Influence of the literature on regional innovation systems

Another of the core themes which marked Orkestra's history and had an impact on the decision to implement action research was regional innovation systems, a concept put forward by Cooke (1992, 1998) which in recent decades has influenced both the literature and policy definition in Europe. This framework proposes a set of factors which promote innovation in a given region (Asheim, Smith and Oughton, 2011). The framework posits

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the existence of three subsystems: production (largely made up of firms), knowledge generation (universities, technology centres and others) and political (governments and their agencies). It also emphasises the importance of interactions among these subsystems (Trippl and Tödtling, 2007). In order to understand how interactions take place within the system, it is necessary to analyse the prevailing shared habits, routines, practices and rules in a specific territory (Johnson, 1992; Gertler, 2004; Edquist, 2005).

When it came to integrating this vision, Orkestra's main point of reference was Navarro (2009), who suggested that in recent years a great deal of work had been done to create the different types of infrastructure that the territory needed to innovate, but that more work needed to be done on interactions. One of the concepts that characterised this assessment was that of system failures, as compared to market failures (Laranja, Uyarra and Flanagan, 2009). The following are excerpts from the *Basque Country Competitiveness Report 2011*, prepared by Orkestra. This biannual report is the principal document used by the institute to present its perspective on competitiveness.

> In order that the regional strategy is able to emerge, there must be collaboration or the creation of spaces in which information and experiences are shared, and existing points of consensus and disagreement are laid out. These spaces for dialogue must have a certain degree of continuity in order to provide the opportunity to explore the diversity of perspectives, experiences, projects and proposals found in the region. These dialogues are what lead actors to go from having their own mission and goals to a situation in which these converge, in a shared regional (system-wide) mission and goals. (Orkestra, 2011, p. 319)

Orkestra took on this challenge and in addition to research and training, defined its activity around a third axis: interaction. This interaction largely centred on stakeholders that the regional innovation system literature signalled as important: different levels of government, universities, technology centres and other actors in the knowledge subsystem. As regards firms, faced with the difficulty of reaching them individually, it was decided to go through intermediaries such as cluster associations and county development agencies. This is how Orkestra's contribution to building interactions took shape.

The challenge of helping to build interactions reinforced the need to further explore the development of new methodological approaches. And this was how we came to decide to explore the potential of action research. This decision, made in 2008, lies at the origin of the approach which is shared in the following sections.

1.3.2. *Constructing ARTD based on RIS (regional innovation systems)*

In order to answer the challenges discussed in the previous section, Orkestra embarked on several lines of action, including the one considered in this book: action research. This approach was developed by Orkestra as part of a collaboration with the University of Agder.

The development of this approach, which is laid out in Karlsen and Larrea (2014b) and further explored in Karlsen and Larrea (2014a, 2016), was a process which combined theoretical contributions and practice-based knowledge from TD processes, primarily from county development agencies in the Basque Country and the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa.

As a result of the collaboration with the University of Agder, the Orkestra approach was clearly influenced by two schools of action research which were characterised by

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pragmatism and developed in Norway. One of them, known as the sociotechnical school, focuses primarily on systemic relations, in the understanding that change processes take place in the interaction among human and technical subsystems (Johnson, Knudsen and Normann, 2014). The main element taken from the sociotechnical school was the cogenerative model (Greenwood and Levin, 2007), which was used systematically with the actors with whom Orkestra implemented action research processes. This model stated the importance of recognising that there are different types of knowledge and that none is superior to any other. It therefore proposed combining academic knowledge with other types of knowledge in the search for solutions to problems in the territory, but not based on the assumption that academic knowledge is a superior brand of knowledge. From this perspective, the researcher was not someone who had the knowledge and presented solutions to others in the form of recommendations. The researcher was just another participant in the knowledge cogeneration process and the solution to problems would have to be forged as a group. The cogenerative model also led to recognition of the importance of creating spaces for dialogue and of considering cyclical reflection and action processes. All of these elements began to contribute to the *how* which was being sought in the sphere of TD.

The second major influence from the perspective of pragmatism was the democratic school, which is clearly influenced by communicative theory and emphasises the construction of shared meanings, placing importance on the roles of language and subjective interpretation (Johnsen, Knudsen and Normann, 2014). This perspective provided two main elements which contributed to building action research as a TD strategy. The first was the concept of dialogue as a critical tool in the development process. Dialogue is not just talking; it also entails making changes. The second element was the process and stages of change. Gustavsen (1992) posits that change in communication patterns is the start of change processes and considers language-building processes to be of central importance. This element characterised many of the processes undertaken by Orkestra with different territorial actors in the search for answers to different aspects of TD. Karlsen and Larrea (2014b) reinterpreted the other phases proposed by Gustavsen for organisations, thus adapting them to TD. And so we defined the following phases: construction of a shared agenda with the what and the how, models of governance and policy change. These provided the conceptual framework for several of the change processes driven by Orkestra in collaboration with various territorial actors.

The third major influence on ARTD is Paulo Freire (1996; 2008a; 2008b). Reading Freire introduced a pedagogical dimension which was less evident or explicit in the approaches of the aforementioned schools. This book explores the complementary nature of research and training in depth. Freire's second clear influence is the assumption of the impossibility of the researcher's neutrality. This led ARTD to incorporate the figure of researcher who is also a territorial actor and has a viewpoint on the society they are seeking to build, which cannot be set aside when conducting research. Consequently, Karlsen and Larrea (2014b) reconsider the cogenerative model put forward by Greenwood and Levin (2007), which asserts that researchers are outsiders to the problem, and propose a model in which researchers are also problem owners and the challenges of TD. There can be no doubt that this aspect clearly characterises the interpretation of the facilitative researcher which will be presented later in this book.

Although we often talk about ARTD as a methodology, in reality, it is a strategy for action, in this case, for TD. It is a strategy based on the regional innovation systems model and asserts that one of the ways to overcome the difficulties faced by the innovation system in building interactions and new modes of governance is to incorporate social researchers into social innovation processes.

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This proposal represents a significant challenge for the social researcher, as it involves not analysing social innovation from the outside, but rather constructing it in interaction with the other territorial actors. This entails engaging with situations involving complexity and conflict. In order to overcome these situations and construct the interactions discussed, ARTD proposes the concept of collective knowing in action. This is a collective capability which can only be constructed through dialogue-based processes linked to action. It never consists of potential or theoretical capabilities, or normative prescriptions. Engaging in these processes therefore requires the researcher to build spaces for dialogue with actors and take on the role of a territorial actor who, like the others, has an ideological positioning on the challenges being dealt with (Karlsen and Larrea, 2014b).

1.3.3. *Basic principles of ARTD*

Drawing on the foundations presented above, the basic principles of ARTD are as follows:

- Connection between action research and TD.
- Pragmatic approach.
- Reclaiming the social researcher as an actor and generator of change.
- Viewing conflict as a natural part of TD.
- Focus on building collective knowing in action.
- Absence of researcher neutrality.
- Interpretation of dialogue as a basic process in TD and the 'agora' as a space for dialogue.

It is this perspective on research as a TD strategy which has strong connections with the PA as presented earlier, in which training plays an important role as a TD strategy. The remaining chapters are constructed at the intersection between these two perspectives, allowing the figure of facilitator to emerge as an essential part of the process.

1.4. **Approaches to complexity in the PA and ARTD**

Chapter 2 of this book takes the concept of complexity as its starting point in working towards the definition of facilitation. It presents a discussion of the complexity which is created at the intersection between the PA and ARTD. To allow us to explore this subject in the next chapter, this section presents the debates around complexity which have emerged in each approach.

1.4.1. *The approach to complexity in the PA*

Reflection on complexity in the PA emerges because the analyses in the previous section forced us to consider the need to supplement the linear thinking previously applied in order to take a position regarding TD. We recognized TD as a myriad of hard-to-manage factors, to which we added a characteristic feature of our times: uncertainty. The basis of this approach to complexity is therefore the myriad of elements to be considered, plus uncertainty.

Complexity within the approach to TD and our practices requires us to combine variables which affect one another, but of which we are not always aware and which we do not always control, and about which we have no certainty as to how and when they

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are going to appear. Processes often evolve beyond our intentions as a result of numerous influences.

Complexity is intrinsic to the idea of territory, however we may grow used to thinking about this territory as broken down into segments with a rationality that cannot be found in practice. It is not our aim here to set out a treatise on the theory of complexity. But we do try to highlight the existence of a myriad of connections in the lives of people, institutions and the territory, characterised by interests, different relationships and ways of thinking. Furthermore, there are no recipes when it comes to these collective processes. We believe that complexity has always been a presence, but that our education has imposed on us the logic of breaking down problems into parts (thus, Cartesian thought). Our habit of considering problems as problems with a simple solution becomes apparent in our dialogues around TD.

In contrast to viewpoints that approach problems by indicating that the most important problem is simply money, an infrastructure, the state or firms, and that this can be resolved by issuing certain directives, we assert that, while it is true that these problems exist, it is possible for the solution to be located at a higher structural level, with factors that affect one another. There have often been attempts to grasp and understand social phenomena based on the same premise of scientific accuracy with which explanations have been sought for natural phenomena. These rather mechanistic ideas led to a separation of the economic, political and social spheres. There have also been attempts to separate out the technical dimension of politics as if this were always possible.

In this book, we seek to move towards viewpoints on the basis of which other subjectivities can be incorporated, given that we live in changing times that push us to move past closed disciplinary truths.

This interpretation of complexity requires us to think about the development of territories by opening up the game to different perspectives of thought, overcoming the conception of development as solely linked to production, and understanding that social reality has different drivers and operates based on different logics, which may be complementary and at the same time constantly in conflict.

1.4.2. *The approach to complexity in the genesis of ARTD*

The approach to complexity which has had the greatest impact on the development of ARTD is presented by Karlsen (2010). Drawing on this work, Karlsen and Larrea (2014a) define the concept of territorial complexity as a context in which a given territory contains a group of autonomous yet interdependent actors. These actors may have different perspectives regarding the main problems facing a territory, as well as the possible solutions. The last element of territorial complexity is that none of the actors has sufficient power to resolve the problems they consider critical by means of 'command and obey'.[3] This means that when dealing with territorial complexity, command and obey does not work and it is necessary to develop other types of mechanisms. It is precisely this process of constructing new mechanisms to which ARTD contributes.

This approach to complexity has several characteristics. Firstly, it proposes a dynamic perspective in which the actors may be in agreement or disagreement at any given time, both regarding the aim of the development process and in relation to the resources for this

[3] 'Command and obey' (*ordeno y mando* in Spanish) is a rarely used expression in Latin America which implies giving an order without providing the opportunity for constructive dialogue.

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process. Based on an analysis of disagreements or conflicts, they begin working to build consensus. Consensus is not defined as a situation in which everyone thinks the same way. This would not be a desirable goal for TD. Consensus is considered to be a situation in which there is sufficient agreement to take action. This means that some actors may not be happy with what is to be done, but they agree not to obstruct the process. Consensus thus translates into minimal agreements so that the process does not come to a halt and it is possible to take the next step. In the dynamic perspective on complexity, when we move on to action, new and different perspectives will emerge regarding what the new problems are and their possible solutions. The process therefore shifts from a situation of consensus to one of conflict, and work begins again on building a new agreement for the next step.

The second element of this approach to complexity is therefore the importance of conflict as a natural part of TD. This entails reinterpreting the concept of collaboration —which has frequently been considered a central process in TD— as a process of managing conflict. The goal is to identify the possibilities for taking action in a context in which there is a group of actors with different interests who will use their power to influence the process so that it moves in the direction they consider desirable.

The approaches to complexity in the PA and ARTD are compatible because neither denies the elements of complexity suggested by the other. But at the same time, they are distinct, because each one emphasises different aspects of this complexity. The PA emphasises the diversity of elements and uncertainty, although it does mention the different interests of the actors and conflict. ARTD focuses on differences in the interests of actors and conflict, whereas the diversity of actors is an element which is considered but does not represent the essence of complexity. Chapter 2 takes as its point of departure a number of considerations around complexity which make it possible to combine the two perspectives.

1.5. **Critical elements at the intersection between the PA and ARTD**

In the previous sections, the PA and ARTD were discussed separately. We mention this because, in reality, this distinction is somewhat artificial, given that the two perspectives have mutual influences. In this book, this allows us to construct an approach to TD facilitation at the intersection between the two.

In order to communicate the main characteristics of this intersection, we return to Costamagna and Larrea (2015), who consider the main influences which each approach has taken from the other.

The connection with ARTD has helped the PA to highlight the idea of process, with the possibility of working on real problems in the medium and long term. Another influence has been the strengthening of dialogue as a broader concept and a substantial part of the spaces for seeking conflict resolution and agreements for action. Although the use of dialogue as something more than 'depositing' ideas was made explicit in the PA, action research lent it even more value, adding the concept of 'agora', defined as the space in which science speaks to the public and the public responds to science.

The discussion around the different ways in which the territorial actors relate to each other represents another influence, as this category includes the social researcher and the relationship between training/research and politics. It establishes a position for the social researcher and how they interact with TD in a scattered space, linked with capability-building for TD. It adds the idea of the reflexive actor and the spaces in which relations between researcher and politician take place.

As regards the influences of the PA on ARTD, the first influence is reflected in the name itself, as it incorporates the concept of TD. As indicated, the literature which serves

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as the point of departure for ARTD discusses regional innovation systems, which talk about regional development. One of the criticisms levelled against this literature is its emphasis on *what* needs to be done (improve interactions among system stakeholders), with few elements to understand *how* this is to be done (process-centred perspective). In moving beyond this either-or attitude regarding *what* and *how*, ARTD took on two definitions closely tied to observations from ConectaDEL. These are local economic development (LED) as a process of accumulating capabilities with the aim of improving the economic wellbeing of a community in a collective and continuous manner (Alburquerque *et al.*, 2008) and TD as the process of mobilising and engaging actors (public and private) in which they discuss and agree on strategies which can guide both individual and collective behaviour (Alburquerque, 2012).

Another influence is that ARTD incorporates the roles of trainer and expert into research. Discussions in the context of ConectaDEL helped to clarify these perspectives.

Lastly, there is one central idea which connects these two perspectives and is the result of their mutual influence. Both can be considered capability-building strategies. The ultimate goal of the PA is explicitly expressed in these terms, while that of ARTD is expressed through the concept of collective knowing in action, presented as a collective capability.

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Chapter 2

The capability-building approach as an emergent strategy for dealing with complexity

2.1. **Introduction**

Having presented the background to our proposal in the previous chapter, we will now discuss the foundations of the capability-building approach/strategy[4] for TD, the context in which our facilitation method takes on meaning.

The reason for using both terms —approach and strategy— is a critical aspect of our method. In Spanish, the term *enfoque*, translated as 'approach', comes from the verb *enfocar*, which means 'to concentrate attention or interest on an issue or a problem based on prior assumptions in order to attempt to resolve it appropriately'. Focusing our attention on capability-building when dealing with TD does not mean that we are not aware of the fact that TD is affected by a myriad of determining factors beyond these capabilities. This multiplicity is an intrinsic part of the systemic viewpoint presented earlier. However, we believe that the approach enables us to thoroughly explore one dimension, capability-building, which has the quality of being able to drive other aspects of TD.

As the definition of *enfocar* indicates, we recognise that this option is related to our prior assumptions. It is a position which forms a link with the frameworks already presented for the pedagogical approach and action research, which appear throughout the book and reflect the belief that developing capabilities is one of the drivers of change processes.

As we have noted, in addition to being an approach, for us, capability-building for TD is also a strategy. This means that we view capability-building not as a complement to TD strategies. Rather, capability-building can be a TD strategy in itself.

This capability-building strategy incorporates elements of both action research and the pedagogical approach to TD. The value it offers is that it is not simply the sum of these two methods, which in practice would most likely be an intellectual exercise of questionable value. As an approach, it builds on the synergies between the previous two methods,

[4] From this point on, we will use the words approach and strategy depending on the dimension we wish to highlight, rather than repeating both terms each time.

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and does so by following a new learning path. The learning shared in this chapter is our interpretation of the capability-building strategy for TD as an emergent strategy. As such, it is built on three axes: learning, negotiation and collaboration.

In order to tackle all of these aspects, the chapter begins with a consideration of complexity, before moving on to a discussion of emergent approaches as a complement to the planning perspective. Following this discussion, we present the components which, in our view, make up the capability-building strategy for TD.

2.2. **Complexity as a point of departure for the capability-building approach**

2.2.1. *Different views of complexity*

In the previous chapter, we presented the approach to complexity in the PA and ARTD. In the PA, territorial complexity is interpreted in terms of the existence of various factors, of persons acting, of flows, uncertainty and the assumption that in a system, the whole is more than the sum of its parts. ARTD underscores the existence of territorial complexity when there are actors in the territory that are autonomous yet interdependent, and that may have different views on the main problems facing a territory and their possible solutions, without there being a mechanism that enables one of the actors to instruct the others regarding what they must do. Resolving these situations of complexity requires adopting methods other than 'command and obey'.

A number of theoretical contributions have been made on the topic of complexity which have significant connections with action research. These have become grouped around the concept of complexity theory (Phelps, 2014). The contributions are linked to evolution and change in non-linear systems and the inability to fully understand the whole through an understanding of its parts, meaning that the behaviour of the system is unpredictable. This approach has some elements in common with the interpretation of complexity in the pedagogical approach and ARTD, for example, the interpretation of change as an emergent and self-organising process of adaptation and the importance of interaction. However, this chapter is not devoted to presenting a theoretical discussion of complexity theory. What we do in the following sections is draw on discussions of complexity in the TD contexts in which we have worked in order to build our argument based on these discussions.

2.2.2. *The argument for complexity in the capability-building approach*

This book addresses complexity based on our own experiences in training and research processes, on which we have drawn in framing our approach. More specifically, the arguments have been constructed based on discussions which took place at the Master's in Territorial Development in Rafaela and the Gipuzkoa Sarean project in the Basque Country. These discussions were based on the work of Snowden and Boone (2007) in the context of the literature on organisations, which we now reinterpret in the context of TD.

Snowden and Boone (2007) assert that in the context of organisations, it is possible to identify four types of cause and effect relationships: simple, complicated, complex and chaotic. In cases where it is not possible to determine what the cause and effect relationship is, the situation is described as disorder.

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Simple relationships are characterised by stability and clear cause and effect relationships which are easily discernible by all. The right answer to problems is obvious and there is no dispute about it. Given that both managers and employees have access to the information necessary to deal with the situation, the style that works best is command and obey (issuing orders which are followed without question).

Complicated relationships are characterised by the existence of several right answer to each question. However, not everyone is necessarily able to see them. In contrast to the ability to categorise that is needed in simple situations, complicated situations require the capacity for analysis. Leaders frequently rely on experts, but they must be capable of viewing these experts with a critical eye, as the latter have invested in building up a particular type of knowledge and will tend to interpret the problem from this perspective, even when the problem changes.

Whereas in a complicated situation, there is at least one right answer, in a complex situation, it is not possible to ferret out one right answer. These situations are characterised by a whole that is more than the sum of its parts, and things are fluid and unpredictable. As a result, it is only possible to deduce why things happened in retrospect. In such cases, rather than attempting to impose a course of action, leaders must wait patiently for the way forward to reveal itself. The leader must probe, sense and respond. This last definition put forward by Snowden and Boone (2007), regarding what leaders should do, will be examined more critically at a later point.

Lastly, in a chaotic situation it makes no sense to look for the right answer, as the relationship between cause and effect is impossible to determine and constantly changing. There is no manageable pattern, only confusion. In such cases, a leader must use command and obey to shift the situation from chaos to complexity.

Our central argument is that TD processes frequently do not produce the expected outcomes because they attempt to resolve complex problems as if they were complicated. Facilitation only makes sense as a process for resolving complex problems when they are treated as such.

2.3. **Complexity in practice**

Between 2002 and 2007, one of the authors of this book managed a public-private collaboration network backed by a county development agency. This network included town councils; a county development agency; training facilities, including a vocational education centre; and firms from the county. The aim was to boost the competitiveness of firms in order to improve the quality of life of the county's inhabitants. In the following paragraphs, we present one of the processes experienced by this group, so that we may then integrate this experience into our argument regarding complexity.

The role of vocational education in the development of the county was one of the key items on the group's agenda from the start. The challenge primarily focused on supporting the local vocational education centre so that it would play a strategic role in this development process.

One of the first tasks undertaken as manager of the network was preparing a document in late 2002 which would serve as the basis for a possible strategy for strengthening vocational education. To this end, visits were made to four leading facilities considered to be successful in this area. The different cases seemed to indicate that the success of the process had been possible because strong ties had been established with firms, although each one had utilised different types of links and relationships.

Aside from this process, which was particularly focused on industry, another niche was analysed which appeared to present an opportunity for vocational education, senior care.

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The decision to tackle these lines of action within the group led to the preparation of a training design presented under the title 'Análisis ocupacional y contenidos formativos en el ámbito laboral de atención a las personas mayores' ('Occupational analysis and training content in the field of care for the elderly'). This was produced together with a consulting firm specialising in this field in mid-2003.

Vocational qualifications for the wood furniture industry had been the strong point of the vocational education centre, but they were becoming less important. In relation to this problem, a collaboration was sought with a foundation that had been created to strengthen this type of training in 1995, but it was not currently active. Taking advantage of the opportunity, a master's thesis was prepared and presented in early 2004.

At that time, the foundation approved an action plan to support vocational education qualifications in the county, driven primarily by town councils and the county development agency. Firms and the training facility received information, but they did not take on a leadership role in the process. In the second half of 2004, a coordination proposal between the foundation and the development agency was approved.

In 2004 and 2005, the agency hired a research centre to conduct a social capital analysis among the development agency, part of the public-private collaboration network, wood furniture manufacturing firms in the county and the training facility. In mid-2005, when the research centre presented its conclusions, it proposed the creation of a 'panel to coordinate in-service training', which would include the foundation, as well as the development agency, the vocational education centre, and the wood furniture manufacturers' association, located in the county.

Additionally, in late 2004, the decision was made to channel an assessment of the internal positioning and culture of the main vocational education centre in the county through the foundation. This was carried out over the course of 2005 with the support of a different consulting firm from those mentioned above.

After this succession of assessments, analyses and action plans, which took place between 2002 and 2005, the situation remained similar to what it had been in the beginning. Furthermore, in 2012, a decade after the first initiatives described, another process was implemented to strengthen vocational education in the county, driven by the development agency. Vocational education was still considered a weak link in the county's development process and a commitment which was important to undertake. We have collected some of the contributions which made up this process, which were shared by the technician at the agency that facilitated it.

Contributions of representatives from training facilities:

> There is an awareness that the vocational education centre should collaborate more closely with firms in the county.

Contributions of representatives of town councils and the county development agency:

> It is considered important to have good leadership when implementing this project. The process should be led by top firms (with new guidance) that drive teaching or it should be led by the [training] facility.

Contributions of representatives from firms:

> The training centres which have been *successful* appear to have done so with the help of PRIVATE management (partnering with firms that have driven the creation process).

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As the first step in our argument, we posit that this process and many other similar ones are complex, due to the diversity of actors involved (perspective found in the PA) and because there are different interpretations of the problem and its possible solutions (perspective found in ARTD). According to Snowden and Boone (2007), in complex problems, there is no theoretically right answer which can be ferreted out or discovered. For this reason, we suggest that, while expert consultants or researchers can support processes during certain stages, the solution is not to rely on them to *discover what the solution is*. In the case under consideration, relying on good practices to *discover the solutions* in the experiences of those who were successful did not work either.

2.4. **Why are we unable to solve complex problems?: biases in planning**

In the world of TD, we are accustomed to sharing cases, as a sort of good practice, in which expert reports are used to propose solutions. However, in our experience, processes such as the one we have described are more common than success cases.

As a central argument of this chapter, we posit that many times these repeated attempts to solve the same problem implicitly entail treating the problem as complicated. There is an understanding that what is required is the ability to analyse, and leaders frequently rely on experts. In a complicated situation, there is at least one right answer and an effort is made to discover it through analysis. Many of the exercises in analysis presented in the example considered a series of possible alternatives to achieve the aim of strengthening vocational education. One key fact which stands out is that the proposals which resulted from analysis of the situation are very similar at the beginning and at the end of the process, even though a decade had passed and a significant number of experts with a range of methodologies had taken part. However, the process demonstrates that discovering these potential solutions does not automatically result in success.

The assessment we propose is that these processes are not complicated, but complex. In complex relationships, there is no one right answer which can be ferreted out. Proposals are made in the context of a process where things happen without us being fully in control and issues emerge which were not on the agenda. Nonetheless, even if we take their proposed definition of complexity, there is one thing we would like to put forward differently from Snowden and Boone (2007). These authors indicate that in such cases, rather than attempting to impose a course of action, leaders must wait patiently for the way forward to reveal itself. We believe that, rather than needing to wait for things to happen, the way forward can be constructed. However, this is not done in the form of implementing a solution deriving from expert analysis, but instead as a social construction process with a range of interests, actors and times.

This leads us to suggest the need to supplement certain traditional methods in TD processes, such as strategic plans, with others that are more suited to social construction processes. Today, the majority of the processes based on strategic planning propose ongoing procedures for review and adaptation of the plan, but they are presented within the framework of the design, implementation and evaluation stages. We believe that these processes will only work if the problems dealt with are complicated rather than complex. In situations of complexity, the background changes, as it is not possible to 'discover' the solutions to the problems at the initial design stage. Projects can be proposed, but in the absence of predetermined solutions, their development cannot be interpreted in terms of the implementation of plans.

If we shift this observation to the previous case, we can say that the approaches which the repeated reports, plans and projects put on the table following analysis by experts and

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the participation of some of the actors involved, while reasonable, did not possess the qualities that would enable them to solve complex problems. They needed to be supported by a social construction process.

Social construction processes will be discussed in depth in the following chapter. However, to continue our introduction to this perspective, we will use another case, which is presented in the following section. One of the keys to interpreting it is the idea that uncertainty is a constituent aspect of complexity (Snowden and Boone, 2007) and the assertion that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. The aim is to overcome one of the biases in planning we have defined in this section, the belief that solutions from experts and good practices can be *implemented* directly.

2.5. **Emergent strategies in situations of territorial complexity**

In order to develop this argument, we return to an observation already presented in Aranguren and Larrea (2015) and Costamagna, Aranguren and Larrea (2015) regarding how the planning school, which has been the most influential in defining TD strategies, can be complemented by other schools more closely tied to social construction processes. What these other schools share is their interpretation of strategy as an emergent process. We consider emergent processes as those which are not proposed as the implementation of a plan, but as actions which occur as an unpredictable outcome of a series of reflection and decision processes by a myriad of actors who interact with one another. Just as we stated earlier that the only alternative when faced with complex processes is not to observe what happens, but to implement social construction processes, we now argue that emergent strategies are not implemented, but they can be facilitated.

The case which enables us to expound on this observation is Gipuzkoa Sarean. This project was begun in 2009 and is still in place at the time of writing. It consists of an action research process in which the government of the province of Gipuzkoa has worked with researchers on a long-term process of change. The case which we will be using to develop the argument for the need to complement the planning method with other approaches to the strategy in a process of reflection and decision took place in 2013. It followed the publication of an opinion piece which stated that the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa lacked a territorial strategy.

The article was the subject of debate in the space shared by politicians and researchers within the project, and it was openly discussed whether Gipuzkoa Sarean, which was viewed as one of the government's most exemplary projects at that time, did or did not have a strategy. Reflection on the process led the group to maintain that Gipuzkoa Sarean did not have a strategic plan, but it did have a strategy. It was decided to work on this idea in order to communicate it appropriately. The project did not have a plan because the government believed that establishing a plan before having engaged in reflection with territorial actors was inconsistent with the philosophy of the project. For this reason, it was necessary to first create spaces for dialogue, from which the plan would emerge.

While this decision was being made, one politician proposed putting together a strategic plan which would reduce the pressure (particularly in the media) being placed on the government due to the belief that it had no strategy. The final decision was to maintain the principles that had inspired the project and continue working without a strategic plan. The argument given by the politician who tilted the scales in favour of ruling out the use of a strategic plan as a work tool in the process was 'if we truly believe in another way of doing things, we must be consistent with it'.

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The search for arguments to support maintaining this position led us to choose the work of Mintzberg, Ahlstrand and Lampel (1998) for reflection, adapting their contribution to the business literature to the sphere of TD. In this work, the authors state that there are a range of schools or methods for strategy building, but that to date the most widespread has been the planning school. In the face of this, they propose another nine and indicate that the strength of a strategy derives from its ability to integrate different schools and their complementary aspects, including the planning school. Three of these schools were selected as central elements of the Gipuzkoa Sarean strategy. As we stated earlier, one characteristic of these schools is that they are emergent and not deliberate like the planning school.

The learning school asserts that strategies emerge when people, acting individually and more often collectively, learn about a situation and about their organisation's capacity to deal with it. Over time, people converge in patterns of behaviour that work (Mintzberg *et al.*, 1998). The principles of the learning school are that more than anything else, a strategy must take the form of a learning process which leads to a dynamic in which it is not possible to distinguish between formulation and implementation.

As regards the power school, Mintzberg *et al.* (1998) characterise strategy building as an open process of mutual influence, emphasising the use of power and politics to negotiate strategies which benefit particular interests. They assert that this school has raised awareness of the fact that organisations (to which we add territories) are made up of people with dreams, hopes, jealousy, interests and fears. From this perspective, a strategy is a process of negotiation and engagement among individuals and groups in conflict.

Regarding the cultural school, they state that culture represents the life force of the organisation, the soul of its physical body, and that it exists beyond consciousness. They use the word ideology to describe a rich culture in an organisation, defining it as a set of beliefs, passionately shared by its members, which distinguish one organisation from others. From this perspective, strategy formation is a process of interaction, based on beliefs and interpretations shared by the members of an organisation.

Through discussion of these elements, a method was proposed in Gipuzkoa Sarean which incorporated the government's proposal for a new TD model for the province. This method stated that Gipuzkoa Sarean did not have a strategic plan, but it did have a strategy founded on three axes and managed within the project. These elements were based on the three schools mentioned above and were learning, negotiation and collaboration.

If we now turn to the earlier process of strengthening vocational education, we can assert that the majority of the attempts were undertaken from the perspective proposed by the planning school, and that they were unable to move from design to implementation. If we were to observe the learning processes, our conclusion would be that significant learning did take place, but that frequently the most intensive part of the learning was done by consultants and researchers, rather than members of the training facility, which was the main actor expected by the others to later implement the proposed ideas. From the perspective of the power school, the solutions were proposed from a theoretical point of view, but were not negotiated in practice. As regards ideological positioning (beliefs passionately shared by territorial actors), our interpretation is that the actual planning process is frequently delegated to outside parties (consultants, researchers, etc.). As a result, what is expressed in the documents is the politically correct discourse of the organisations, rather than the deeper ideological positioning, of which participants are frequently unaware, as indicated earlier.

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2.6. **The capability-building strategy for TD as a response to complexity**

The learning presented in the previous sections has been incorporated into the development of our proposal for a *capability-building strategy for TD*. The proposed strategy is emergent in nature, with learning processes playing a very strong central role, and it incorporates negotiation and collaboration.

With this, we now begin to argue that the TD process facilitator who works with this approach must have the capabilities to facilitate not only deliberate processes such as strategic planning, but also emergent processes such as those considered in terms of learning, negotiation and culture/collaboration.

In the next chapter, we will argue that the capability-building strategy is a social construction strategy. But before we do so, we will now present the basic principles to support this. Of them, the first four clearly derive from contributions to both the pedagogical approach and ARTD. We will therefore discuss those only briefly. There are another two which, although tacitly included in the previous approaches, we propose to explain in detail in order to more clearly integrate them into the capability-building approach. It is for this reason that the last two subsections of this section are longer than the first four.

2.6.1. *The inseparability of the development process and the training process*

The approach considers training processes to be the basic central element for improving the territory. However, these processes do not take place in isolation from TD or as a complement; the learning takes place in the act of TD. This is why from this perspective, capability-building does not contribute to or help TD, but rather is an integral part of it. This is no nuance, but an important principle, as it rules out linear methods which seek to first build knowledge or generate capabilities, and then apply them in action. The method is based on the concept of praxis, in which we reflect by doing and do by reflecting. This interpretation of the role of training is one of the main influences we have taken from the pedagogical approach to TD.

2.6.2. *The assumption of conflict as a natural part of TD*

Conflict has frequently been interpreted as something negative which we must avoid. Avoiding it often means creating situations in which the development process stalls. The capability-building approach involves clearly setting out the conflicts in the territory in order to tackle agreements with the aim of moving forward. This element is taken from ARTD.

2.6.3. *Dialogue as a critical process*

Unlike the previous elements, each of which came from one of the two lines of action that converge in this book, use of the dialogue method as a path to capability-building is probably the greatest bridge between the two, and what makes it possible to construct this new approach instead of method at their intersection. It is through dialogue that the learning which enables us to construct shared visions for action takes place. Including power and culture in the dialogue makes it a process of negotiation and collaboration, as well as learning.

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2.6.4. *The agora as a space for dialogue*

From ARTD we take the concept of agora, as the space in which the dialogue between science (research, academic knowledge, etc.) and society (TD actors) takes place. From the tradition of the pedagogical approach, we incorporate the idea that the agora is not exclusively made up of formal spaces, but that there are also a myriad of informal spaces which are frequently overlooked. Nonetheless, they are crucial to the functioning of the agora. From this point on, we will use the term 'spaces for dialogue' to represent the agora. However, it is necessary to point out that the spaces for dialogue to which we refer are related to this definition, and therefore normally include researchers and trainers.

2.6.5. *People as the driver of the process*

Talking about people, sometimes classified as the human factor, is not new in TD, although many of the conceptual frameworks developed leave this element at the implicit level. Nevertheless, our experience tells us that TD facilitators who tackle the processes and work with people rediscover the person as a much more influential element than the conceptual frameworks may lead us to think. In response to this, they feel that they lack the frameworks and concepts to help them understand the situations and act on them.

We therefore underscore the significance of people as the centre of territorial complexity. We do this not as a theoretical questioning of the conceptual frameworks of TD, but based on the need suggested by our practice and that of other facilitators. This challenge identified in practice leads us to assert the need for the multidisciplinary approach that is now so much in demand. Beyond the traditional approaches to TD from the political, economic, economic geography or business spheres, we see increasingly more clearly the advisability of integrating knowledge from psychology, anthropology and sociology.

One thing we have learned in practice when we have applied economic models to TD is that the people who make the decisions which affect TD do so based on rationalities that others do not expect, do not understand, or simply consider irrational. What lies behind this observation?

This question, to which we offer no response, does lead us to set ourselves two aims. The first is to integrate the existence of multiple rationalities into the approach. The second is to integrate emotions into it.

a) Integrating multiple rationalities

In our case, having studied economics and business, the point of departure for interpreting TD is a decision-making logic dominated by a very strong maximising rationality. This ideology defends reason as the tool for accessing the world and exercising control over it, and is deeply rooted in the positivist tradition. This means that TD is interpreted as an objectively existing reality, regardless of the interpretation we each make of the process. As a prelude to the chapter on social construction, we must now question this idea, in the understanding that there exists no one unequivocal way of interpreting reality, but rather various readings which are made from different frames of reference. There are different rationalities, interests, emotions and ideological positionings which converge in a TD process, in which it is necessary to understand the micro processes, and within the micro processes, the people.

In this aspect, some paradigms have issued significant critiques of positivism, such as interpretive or socio-critical paradigms, which place emphasis on the myriad of

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interpretations and factors that dominate practice when it comes to making decisions. Among these factors, some are subjective, social, historical and political in nature. The desire to integrate this dimension into our approach instead of method has led us to evolve from frameworks inspired by positivist methods to positions put forward by constructivism, particularly in relation to the social construction of reality, which will be the basis of the next chapter. One consequence of this choice is the inclusion of the concepts of subjectivity and intersubjectivity as basic elements of the TD process throughout the entire book.

Our approach to multiple rationalities is reflected in an opinion piece by a student on the Master's in Territorial Development, in Rafaela, titled 'Agentes de desarrollo territorial: De cómo un grupo de alumnos vivimos en el mismo territorio y a veces en mundos distintos. El desafío de nuestras sociedades' ('Agents of territorial development: How we as a group of students live in the same territory and sometimes in different worlds. The challenge of our societies'):

> Differences between the way 'the social' is seen by the 'non-social', economics by non-economists; how business owners view politicians and politicians see business owners; how knowledge generators see both (business owners and politicians) and vice versa. And this gives rise to new scenarios. And we begin to experience the building of a TD which considers economics, politics, institutions, culture, cities, sectors with violated rights, laws, levels of government (municipal, provincial and national), Latin America and the world. And is it possible to agree? How much? On everything? How do we build democratic mechanisms for conflict resolution?

b) Integrating emotions

The second aim is related to the role of emotions in TD processes. We therefore suggest that the relationship between the rational and the emotional is another element which must define the capability-building approach, although we still have a long way to go in achieving this. Most of the models with which we work present processes as rational processes. When the actors and the facilitator in particular tackle a TD process using this schema, they realise that many of the things which should be happening in a perfectly rational framework do not happen, and they discover emotional factors which impact on the process, leading it down paths which are difficult to anticipate with the frameworks used.

The majority of TD frameworks leave out the decisions that are made as a result of feelings and passions, revenge, for example. These decisions are considered errors or anomalies. We need to move towards approaches that help us understand not only that there are different rationalities, but also that these are affected by emotions and that these interactions are not anomalies, but rather the natural way in which TD is constructed.

2.6.6. *The tension between the individual and the collective*

When discussing capabilities, both the pedagogical approach and ARTD emphasise their collective dimension. Both also consider the need to work on building the collective based on the individual and vice versa. This relationship between the individual and the collective is often blurred.

The TD facilitator working in spaces for dialogue with other territorial actors is working with people who represent organisations and do so with the aim of improving the territory. Both organisations and the territory are collective levels, but the combination of the individual and the collective is not easy to precisely specify.

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The way in which each person experiences participation and decision-making as an individual or as a representative of a collective or organisation is always an important and difficult topic. This aspect leads us to try to understand the motivations of actors in TD processes, and with this, the existence of motivations such as a call to serve or union, political and religious militancy, which have been identified in previous studies as important for TD, but which are rarely explicitly dealt with in the frameworks available to us.

There is no individual without the collective and no collective without the individual. Each one of us acts according to our interpretation of the organisation, the project, the municipality, the country and the world of which we are part. The relationship between individual and society encompasses a complexity which emerges as irreducible to the categories of the whole and parts (Castoriadis, 1997). No organisation is the mere sum of its individuals, nor is the territory the mere sum of individuals and organisations. Likewise, the collective capabilities of the territory on which our proposal centres go beyond the sum of the capabilities of the individuals or the organisations.

Society forms individuals who embody and alter society, and vice versa. In this back and forth, there are communicating vessels between organisations and the people working to change the reality and who are generally involved in the organisations. There may be individuals who do not want to change things or do not feel engaged in the process of change, who may even make their decisions without thinking about the collective. However, the decisions they make alter the processes.

It is in these scenarios that the facilitator will need to highlight such interests and ways of thinking by the individual, as well as by the collective, showing the influence and exercise of power of the institutional over the individual. These are not linear processes. The collective exerts a great deal of influence through the indoctrination of individuals. But this has its limit, where the individual follows their own path. This balance is also related to the fact that societies always have defence mechanisms against anything which may threaten the stability of their institutional structure and traditions.

We conclude this section with an observation shared by another student on the Master's in Territorial Development in Rafaela, a psychologist by trade, with whom we discussed an early draft of this section. Her perspective largely coincides with our method of explicitly setting out points of conflict in spaces for dialogue, but her viewpoint considers a relationship between the individual and the collective that is linked to mental health, something absent in the approaches deriving from the economic and business spheres from which we come. This is another example of the different rationalities which co-exist within TD:

> As Alicia Stolkiner (1988) points out, this task entails facilitating processes in which conflicts emerge and are outlined with the aim of transforming situations that generate discomfort. The participation with the aim of producing expression and transformation which is fostered in some territories represents an active, transformative position, in contrast to situations which reinforce their pathologising nature as they are experienced in an individual and passive manner. In this regard, *this participation can in itself be thought of as a fact of mental health* insofar as it enables individuals and populations to emerge from a place of subjugation in order to become actors who transform reality.

2.7. **An example of complex problem-solving: capability-building in practice**

We conclude this chapter devoted to complex problems in TD and capability-building as a strategy for resolving them by considering a case in which the principles of this strategy can be seen in practice. This was a conflict around the old market in Rafaela. The source of

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this case study is the work done by Alfaro (2014), which is presented in this chapter with the author's permission.

The case begins with the Strategic Plan for Rafaela (1997), in which the need to move the coach terminal is proposed. This in itself generated a great many opinions. Our aim in this section is to highlight how the discussion was managed regarding the use of this major building/public space, which was left vacant as a result of the move. According to Alfaro (2014), this was an extremely conflict-ridden process, one which gave rise to significant debate and negotiation, with a wide range of actors and interests that vehemently called public management of the issue into question. We thus believe it to be a good case study for reflecting on complexity and the construction of emergent strategies through learning, negotiation and collaboration, in other words, to present a discussion around the potential of the capability-building approach.

In order to understand the case, we will take as our point of departure a plan by a private investor who undertook to create a shopping centre in October 2009. The plan made provision for rebuilding cultural facilities which the municipality had attached to the coach terminal by means of a legal instrument, which among other things, allowed for the submission of private initiatives to provide a public service.

There was a backlash and segments of the cultural and business spheres began taking action against the private project. Merchants maintained that this project affected the interests of the sector in the city centre, as the building is located just a few metres from the main avenue, which is their commercial thoroughfare. Actors associated with the cultural sphere asserted that the market was being forced on one of the centres of local cultural action.

Our interpretation is that the problem was complex due to the existence of various actors with different perspectives and interests. The reactions of each of the actors were difficult to predict, considering that there was a combination of different rationalities, subjective interpretations and emotions. The process described below was an emergent process of learning, negotiation and collaboration.

Following debate driven by the sectors mentioned and the local media, with positions for and against the project, the mayor decided to begin an informal process of dialogue with the various actors, as the city had no established mechanisms beyond the municipal council for formal debate on a case of these characteristics. This did not promise to be a simple discussion and the state attempted to create a participatory process, with the aim of both deciding how the building was to be used and lowering the volume of the conflict. Faced with a situation of conflict, the proposed solution was to construct spaces for dialogue. The end goal was to build a new consensus on the use of the old market building and the old terminal.

In September 2010, the municipal government (more precisely, a team from the Secretariat for Management and Participation) organised a discussion process which allowed the various interested parties to present ideas and proposals regarding what was to be done with the property. This involved utilising a series of formal and informal meetings to listen to the sectors that had definite and conflicting positions. There were members of the government who devoted time to managing these dialogues, which were not always visible and in which work was done to seek out common viewpoints.

The space for dialogue in which the learning that laid the foundations for the negotiation and collaboration took place was the Consultative Council of Civil Society (CCS).[5] This is a

[5] The CCS was created in 2001, in the context of the economic and social crisis in Argentina, for the purpose of implementing the social plans of the national government. When it completed this task, its function was re-evaluated and it was framed as an institutional space for dialogue in order to more directly involve the city's institutions.

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space that brings together various city institutions for the purpose of engaging in dialogue and sharing positions regarding local problems. Support and assistance was provided by other institutions with direct connections to the issue, such as the Rafaela District Architects' Association.

A submission period was established for proposals which would take part in a seminar titled 'The Old Terminal in Debate', devised for the purpose of reflecting on other national and international experiences with similar problems and gathering input with which to define the central elements of future action involving the building. In an interview, the actor who played a leadership role for the municipality told us:

> We knew that with this formula, there were going to be few supporters of the more commercial option, that only a few sectors were prepared to provide an answer and that the debate was not taking place among the population as a whole, but even so, it was a step forward.

The seminar brought together around 200 participants, and 12 proposals which had been submitted in the appropriate matter were presented. But the seminar was useful not only for nominating proposals, but as a time of learning. The foundations for negotiation and collaboration also emerged. For example, the majority agreed that the building should be publicly managed, but that it was necessary to consider participatory mechanisms to include the stakeholders who would be using and occupying the space.

With all the input from the seminar, the CCS worked on reaching a consensus regarding the key elements in order to thus put together the platform that would guide the action. The primary use of the Cultural Complex and Convention and Exhibition Centre would be cultural, with complementary and compatible activities involving museums, the city archives and art, among others. The process gave rise to the Old Market Municipal Complex. The building was officially opened in October 2014.

Having provided this example to illustrate capability-building as a strategy for tackling complex problems in TD, we will now move on the following chapter, in which we consider capability-building processes as social construction processes.

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Chapter 3

Capability-building for TD as a social construction process

3.1. **Introduction**

In the previous chapter, we argued that building capabilities for TD entails working in complex contexts and that processes frequently stall when it is not known how to respond to this situation. We believe that there are problems which stall because, although they are complex, they are interpreted and dealt with as if they were complicated, seeking solutions based on expert knowledge and good practices. In this chapter, we continue to build our central argument, asserting that, when faced with complex problems, the solution does not come exclusively from expert knowledge. Instead, it is necessary to integrate this knowledge into social construction processes. The solution cannot be *found* outside, but must be *constructed* from the inside.

This is one of the major challenges we have encountered in writing this book. Research and TD training processes have not openly engaged in the methodological debate which this entails. For their part, as fields of knowledge, action research and pedagogy have tackled the subject of social construction, but ARTD and the PA have left this dimension implicit rather than developing it. In order to overcome this, in this chapter we introduce constructivism, critical constructivism and social constructionism as three approaches which can help set out this methodological debate within the scope of the PA and ARTD. Drawing on this, the capability-building strategy is defined as a way to respond to complex problems.

We do not wish to frame this chapter as a theoretical debate. Therefore, the content focuses on the specific experience of having shared one of the most influential works of social constructionism, by Berger and Luckmann (1991), with a group of facilitators in Gipuzkoa Sarean (GS). This work approaches real-life social construction processes by drawing on bases of knowledge from daily life and deals with the interpretation of society in both its objective and subjective dimensions.

We are aware of the fact that the discussion presented may seem outside the scope of facilitators who, like us, come to TD from economic and business-based approaches. For this reason, in this introduction we would like to share a statement which expresses why we decided to include it. These are the words which one of the facilitators in GS with whom we shared this content used to evaluate the session: 'It seemed a little abstract, but I think that this stage is necessary' (evaluation of the Gipuzkoa Sarean workshop held on 7 June 2016).

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The chapter has been organised to include an initial section in which we propose that constructivism should be explicitly incorporated into TD through the PA and ARTD. After this, we provide a brief introduction to the work of Berger and Luckmann (1991), drawing from it two elements on which we then reflect in terms of their use in practice. These elements are the construction of language and conceptual frameworks.

3.2. **Incorporating constructivism into TD through the PA and ARTD**

There is a short essay by Orwell (2014) titled *Palabras nuevas* ('New words') which allows us to connect this section with our aim in the chapter. The author states: 'What I want to propose next is that it would be quite feasible to invent a vocabulary, perhaps several thousand words, which encompasses parts of our experience that are now practically impossible for language to grasp' (Orwell, 2014, p. 20). He also adds that the method of inventing words consists of using analogies based on shared and unambiguous knowledge (2014, p. 49). And he adds, following on from Samuel Butler, that at the present time, the most perfect transference of thoughts must be 'lived' from one person to another (2014, p. 59).

As in Orwell's experience, we have frequently lacked the words to share our view of what facilitation is. In this case, we have not so much opted to invent a new vocabulary, but rather to take from other fields of knowledge words that encompass parts of our experience that until now were practically impossible for our language to grasp. Linking action research and pedagogy with constructivism, critical constructivism and social constructionism opens the doors and enables us to provide ourselves with the concepts we need.

But this step in the development of the capability-building approach was not easy. Explicitly utilising these frameworks entails critically reviewing the educational and research methodologies we have been using thus far in our fields of TD (in both TD in Latin America and the sphere of regional development in Europe). Framing these differences as constructive criticism of what we were already doing in order to incorporate new elements into our past history has required some gestation time.

The following paragraphs present some of the contributions of three approaches which are linked to each other: constructivism, critical constructivism and social constructionism. The aim is to set out the framework in order to then explore certain elements of social constructionism in depth.

The social sciences literature most closely linked to action research (AR) defines *constructivism* as a paradigm which views humans as beings that actively construct knowledge, within their own subjective and intersubjective realities and in contextually specific ways (Hershberg, 2014). Guba and Lincoln (2005) note that constructivism posits that reality can only be known through multiple mental constructions, which are based on experience and socialisation, and which are local and specific in nature. And so it is their interpretation that, for example, what researchers may come to know about the reality and subjects they study is created through their interactions with the phenomenon studied, the study participants and other aspects of the context of the research. All of this means that knowledge is *created* through the research process, as opposed to a viewpoint which sees knowledge as being *discovered*. This perspective is what allows us in this and later chapters to maintain that complex problems require social construction processes to create their solutions, as given the definition of complexity adopted, these solutions cannot be discovered.

Critical constructivism focuses on challenging the world's authoritarian accounts, questioning the power structures that influence these accounts (Hershberg, 2014). It also deals

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with the multiple ways in which research and pedagogy are connected, assigns importance to the role which power plays in the construction and validation of research, and accepts that research is constructed when academic knowledge (formal) connects with lived knowledge (informal) (Steinberg, 2014). The banking and problematising education concepts proposed by Paulo Freire form part of this perspective, establishing strong links to the PA to TD.

The third framework which helps us to share our experiences in facilitation in the context of complex problems is social constructionism. Shotter (2014) describes social constructionism as a turn which challenges the positivist assumption that humans live in an established reality of which we are simply ignorant. The way to understand what happens to us is to 'discover' this reality. In contrast to this, social constructionism proposes putting the focus on the continuous, active and living interrelationships among people and how these construct reality. Therefore, it posits that rather than *discovering* reality, we *construct* reality. What we consider to be *facts* are, from this perspective, the result of a process of creation which takes place through interrelationships among people.

The first book to use the term 'social construction' was published by Berger and Luckmann in 1966, the 1991 version of which we use throughout this chapter. This does not reflect a theoretical debate regarding which of the approaches considered is most suitable for our purposes. The selection comes out of our practice, as it is this work and no other which we used in Gipuzkoa Sarean to introduce these concepts into the everyday practice of capability-building processes with facilitators. The following sections are therefore based on our practical experience of sharing these frameworks in ARTD and PA processes.

3.3. **TD as a social construction of reality**

The conceptual framework of Berger and Luckmann (1991) is presented in this section as part of a specific ARTD process involving technicians from county development agencies and politicians and government officials from the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa as part of the Gipuzkoa Sarean project (see description in the introduction to this book). More specifically, this section is built on the experience at a workshop presented in June 2016 with this group, in which we worked directly with the conceptual framework of the aforementioned authors.

The problem we were dealing with was how to improve the policies which were being used by both the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa and the agencies to target small firms in the territory. This was framed within the process of constructing a new mode of governance, in other words, a new relationship model for the council and the agencies.

At a previous workshop, we had discussed and shared the assessment that these challenges, the new mode of governance and policies for small businesses, were complex problems, rather than simple or complicated. On the understanding that no expert would provide us with answers from outside, we proposed to the group that we should construct the solutions to this problem and that this construction process was a social construction process. But what was a social construction process?

Following on from Berger and Luckmann (1991), the first discussion was around *institutions*. For this, it was important to first distinguish between the common use which the majority of us assigned to this term (public or private organisations that are created to perform a function within the sphere of culture, politics or society) and the meaning it has for Berger and Luckmann. Therefore, we defined institutions as restrictions constructed by people which structure political, economic and social interactions. These may be formal (constitutions, laws, property rights, etc.) or informal (sanctions, taboos, habits and customs, traditions, codes of conduct, etc.) (North, 1991). In order to be able to reflect on specific examples, we presented a number of statements which they had made in a previous exercise

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on the complex nature of the problems they encountered on a day-to-day basis. We used these statements to identify what institutions were important to our TD process. One of these statements, which later emerged as controversial, was: 'The agencies belong to the town councils.' In the Basque Country, county development agencies have different legal statuses, but it is always the town councils that have formal ownership of the agency.

According to Berger and Luckmann (1991), it is the institutions which indicate what type of actor performs what type of activity in society. Therefore, we may interpret the assumption that the agencies belong to the town councils, which was implicit in the mode of action of those of us participating in the process, as influencing our interpretation of the roles of each actor in TD. For example, accepting 'the agencies belong to the town councils' as a given largely meant that the town councils were responsible for their funding and sustainability.

We then discussed the debate on how institutions are constructed. Following on from the concept of historicity in Berger and Luckmann, we shared the idea that institutions cannot be created instantaneously, but rather they are constructed in the course of a history shared by various actors. In order that this can happen, there must be an ongoing social situation in which the daily actions of two or more individuals are intertwined, also producing a communication process among them. In a simplified case in which this ongoing social situation involves two actors, the institutionalisation process would move to a new stage with the appearance of a third actor, to whom the first two must relate something which for them had previously been ad hoc. Things that had become habit without necessarily being clearly laid out would be stated in terms of 'this is how we do things here'. At this moment, the knowledge shared by the first two individuals becomes historical institutions and, by taking on this historicity, these formations add another characteristic, the quality of objectivity. From this point forward, the institutions are experienced as possessing their own reality, a reality which confronts the individual as an external and coercive fact, as for the third person, this way of doing things 'is a given'. Not having taken part in their formation, the third individual receives these rules of the game as an objective reality which is presented to them and whose origin they do not always know or understand.

Returning to the example of the statement 'the agencies belong to the town councils', we could attempt to visualise the beginnings of the first agencies, which were established in the late 1980s as a response to the unemployment problem created by the crisis. There may have been a moment during the process which gave rise to the establishment of the first agency, in which a group of people interacted with each other in order to deal with the crisis, without anyone clearly stating to them that the agencies belonged to the town councils. However, at that workshop in June 2016, none of the participants had any direct experience of that time and we had accepted this assertion as a given, a rule of the game that had been characterising relations with the agencies for more than thirty years.

At that session, we then brought up the assertion by Berger and Luckmann (1991, p. 78) that the objectivity of the institutional world is a human product; it is an objectivity constructed through objectivation. The result was that, just as those present were influenced —we might even say limited— in our search for new solutions by the institutions constructed over many years, we could also work to change them. In doing so, we would have to remain aware of the fact that changing institutions is a difficult and long-term effort.

In relation to the above statement, the question was: Did the fact of accepting that the agencies belonged to the town councils limit us in the search for solutions? Could a change in this institution, standard, habit or custom open up possibilities for solutions linked to governance which at that time were not viewed as feasible? This situation emerged anecdotally during the discussion and has been used as an illustrative example. However, we

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believe that systematic reflection on the institutions which limit TD processes is part of the capability-building process for this development.

Following this discussion, at the workshop we returned to Berger and Luckmann (1991), who proposed three stages in the relationship between people and the institutions which make up the social world: externalisation, objectivation and internalisation. Externalisation is a process in which individuals express their subjective experience and objectivation is the moment in which this reality is presented to another as a given rule of the game, something which is defined for them from outside, without their having participated in its construction. In internalisation, this objectivated reality is again transformed into subjective from the perspective of the person internalising it. In doing so, the person doing the internalising better understands the subjective process of the person who externalised it and also understands the world in which the other lives, and this world becomes their own. But this does not take place in an instant. So that it can happen, the individuals must connect on an ongoing basis. Thus, people who interact not only understand each other's definitions of shared situations, but they also define them reciprocally (1991, p. 150). This is how intersubjectivity is constructed. This is another of the concepts which we consider important to understanding the capability-building approach for TD.

At this point in the workshop, we stopped in order to allow time for people to react to what had been presented. One of the participants, who came from a county development agency, indicated that she did not agree with what had been discussed. For her, that the agencies belonged to the town councils was a fact and not a constructed institution. We then shared the position of other facilitators who, at a previous workshop, had informally presented the issue in a different way. They had noted the existence of a case in which the town councils covered approximately 25% of the agency's total budget, while the rest of the funding came from other types of organisations. In these circumstances, could it be said that the agency belonged to the town councils? The example showed different subjective interpretations of the objectivated fact that the agencies belonged to the town councils.

The discussion also made it possible to put on the table other issues which had been identified as implicit conflicts in the process of constructing governance. The agencies had clearly stated their desire for the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa to contribute in some way to their financial stability. One of the elements which was hindering the construction of solutions in this regard was that neither the development agencies nor the provincial council itself felt that the agencies belonged to the provincial council —not even in a figurative, or functional, sense, although they were not from a legal or formal point of view. The commitment requested from the provincial council was difficult to support in the absence of a process to construct a shared 'we' among the provincial council and the agencies which could overcome the institution framed as 'the agency belongs to the town councils'.

The concepts proposed by Berger and Luckmann (1991) had thus helped us to formulate that there are institutions which limit us in the search for new solutions. Becoming aware of this is the first step in changing these institutions. We were still faced with the task of building the capabilities to be able to work on this type of change process.

3.4. **Construction of language as part of building capabilities**

3.4.1. *Conceptual framework for the construction of language*

Berger and Luckmann (1991) assign an essential role to language in the processes of the social construction of reality. Language has its origin in face-to-face situations, but can easily be separated from these. In face-to-face situations, language possesses an inherent quality

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of reciprocity. Furthermore, through language, we hear ourselves when we speak and this gives us access to our own subjective, objective and continuously available meaning, making this more real to us (1991, p. 52).

Language also allows us to typify experiences, helping to integrate them into broader categories which have meaning not only for the person expressing them, but also for those around them. By typifying experiences, we make them anonymous (1991, p. 53). With a view to building capabilities for TD, this makes it possible to work based on the experience of participants, but framing the discussions in such a way that it is not necessary to precisely specify the experiences, which participants sometimes do not wish to share.

Another concept linked to language in Berger and Luckmann is that of conversation. Ongoing conversation maintains the reality, while in turn continuously altering it. By talking about it, we maintain the social reality of which we are speaking, and when we discard and add elements in the conversation, we weaken some aspects of this reality and reinforce others. The subjective reality of something about which we never speak becomes unstable. In order to maintain subjective reality, the conversation must be ongoing and consistent (1991, pp. 173-174). In our work, we do not use the concept of conversation, but of dialogue, but we interpret the characteristics attributed to conversation by these authors as also corresponding to the concept of dialogue which we propose in both the PA and ARTD.

3.4.2. *Construction of language based on experience*

This section is structured around an example which helps us to share our view of dialogue and the construction of language as part of the social construction of TD. This is the case of how language was constructed around the *what* and the *how* in Gipuzkoa Sarean.

In May 2011, there were elections in Gipuzkoa which resulted in a change of governing party in the provincial council (government of the province). This entailed redefining the project in order to steer it towards construction of a new TD model for Gipuzkoa.

The dialogue among politicians and researchers moved forward in this direction and in September 2012, during the design phase of the new model, they tackled the following question: 'How is a new model of governance constructed?' The researchers proposed an analytical framework, an adaptation of the conceptual framework presented by Gustavsen (1992) for processes of change.[6] This author asserted that change takes place in four stages which are not linear but repeat in a cyclical fashion: (1) change in communication patterns, (2) change in the issues chosen for development and the modes of operation chosen for development, (3) change in territorial governance and (4) change in the choice and form of policies.

This discussion of the model was the first time we began to talk about the *what* and the *how* in Gipuzkoa Sarean. We researchers recorded this discussion as follows:

> The second … is the stage at which the 'aspects defined as the object of development' emerge from the dialogue. In Gipuzkoa Sarean, this has been summarised as the 'what' of the development and 'the way in which the work of development takes place', interpreted as the 'how' of the development. The way in which the what and the how respond to each other during the process leads to shaping a new model for relations among the actors. (Document titled 'Gipuzkoa Sarean: Estrategia de Intervención', 14 September 2012)

[6] This framework has already been introduced in Chapter 1, in the section which presents the definition of ARTD based on the literature on regional innovation systems.

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In the following excerpt from the same document, it is possible to see how quickly the new terms what and how not only were defined, but made it possible to deal with lines of argument which had previously been tacit aspects of the process. The new terms with their new meaning made it possible to clearly identify the challenges of the process in terms of what was called 'the paradigm shift dilemma'. The following excerpt considers how this dilemma was defined in the action strategy document for the project.

> Discussion of the model has led to proposing a dilemma within the project which seems to require a new process for the construction of language and shared meanings in order to have a clear message when dealing with county stakeholders.
>
> The dilemma can be stated in the following terms. As a result of the process of dialogue and the change in communication patterns, the framework proposes the emergence of an agenda for the 'what' and the 'how' of the TD. One of the characteristics of GS is … a very significant bias towards the change in the 'how', but no clear shared meaning has been developed with regard to the change in the 'what'.
>
> According to an observation by one of the politicians, this bias can be translated in the following terms: 'GS aspires to have an impact on specific changes, but with the end goal of a change of paradigm, and must at all times include this questioning/ reflection regarding the paradigm in the process. If we have a framework for a change of paradigm in the 'how' but we apply it to the established 'what', the one from the previous paradigm, are we really moving towards a change of paradigm? In other words, if we have a novel participatory approach, but we apply it to the established innovation policies, what type of change are we moving towards?' […]
>
> Some of the reflections regarding the dilemma which have been proposed by the research team are:
>
> a) The long-term change which is generated based on a change in the 'how' may go very deep and impact on the 'what' in the medium/long term, as the 'what' defined collectively is not very likely to be the same as the 'what' defined exclusively by the provincial council or another level of government.
> b) The changes in the modes of governance and the way of making TD policy can be interpreted as a 'what'. Therefore, to a certain extent, in GS the 'how' would also be the 'what'. (Document titled 'Gipuzkoa Sarean: Estrategia de Intervención', 14 September 2012)

Our argument is that this construction of language is part of the TD process interpreted as a social construction process. In the case of Gipuzkoa Sarean, the discussion around the what and the how transcended this space for dialogue among politicians from the provincial council and researchers, becoming integrated into the various spaces for reflection and action. Years after this initial construction stage, we find that the language has been integrated into many of the process's other spaces. We will now present some examples.

When in March 2015, the government, represented by its ministers, evaluated the four years of the process, one of the ministers, who had not taken part in that discussion of the dilemma or in the initial construction of the new language, observed:

> There have been results, but they have been in the how. This represents an exercise in generosity by the government, as there are no immediate results and their opportunity cost is high. We are talking about ways of doing things that challenge the prevailing paradigm and this takes time because there are many forces in opposition. As a result, progress has been made, but there are no tangible results. (Helena Franco, Gipuzkoa Sarean meeting minutes, 5 March 2015)

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Another minister added:

> The time has come to place more emphasis on the what. So that our approach may be integrated with the processes of other centres of power and enable our positions to be understood as well. I know that it will be necessary to emphasise and work on the how, but now, for the next legislature, we must work on our what, put it on the table. (Iñaki Errazkin, Gipuzkoa Sarean meeting minutes, 5 March 2015)

But this new language was not only constructed among politicians and researchers. When Gipuzkoa Sarean was opened up to working with county actors, the process of constructing a shared language moved into this space. In 2014, two of the agency technicians who had taken part in the process as county facilitators were asked to evaluate Gipuzkoa Sarean. Among other things, this is what they said:

> I think that the most novel contribution made by Gipuzkoa Sarean has been consideration of the process. In every process there is a what and a how, and in my opinion, it is essential to focus importance on the how. This is what Gipuzkoa Sarean teaches us to do. (Borja Urretabizkaia, interview for the book *Gipuzkoa Sarean*, 2015)
>
> The most important thing we have learned on this journey, in my opinion, is what the development model should be. We have learned that how the development is done is more important that what is done in the development. A development process should entail mobilising the stakeholders, rather than setting them a specific goal. (Andoni Egia, interview for the book *Gipuzkoa Sarean*, 2015)

To conclude this section and show that the change not only took place in the language of the government and agency actors, but was also integrated into the language of the researchers, we cite Karlsen and Larrea (2014b), describing TD in one of their books, in which they devoted two chapters to GS.

> How does action research contribute to TD and innovation? Most researchers analyse these fields from the outside, developing a theoretical understanding of what should be done, but not of how to do it.

The content of the reflections by the different actors indicate that beyond a theoretical discourse, the process of constructing a language has affected the participants' interpretations of the problems dealt with in the project, and consequently, their actions to resolve these problems.

3.4.3. *Learning for the capability-building strategy*

We have already defined social construction processes, among which we include TD, as processes in which objectivation (when a recounted experience becomes 'the way things are done' and is therefore transformed into a reality that is a given for the listener) and internalisation (when the listener constructs their subjective interpretation of the objectivated thing) alternate with each other.

In Gipuzkoa Sarean the what and the how initially allowed the government to express its viewpoint on the project. When the government shared this project with technicians from the county development agencies, for the latter, the emphasis on the how was an objectivated reality, something given. In the various workshops, each of them constructed their subjective interpretation of what the what and the how meant, and when they talked

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about the project at a later point —for example, in the statements presented in the previous section— they once again objectivated the interpretation of the what and the how, which was transformed into part of the given reality for the listeners.

Thus, the construction of language and its ongoing questioning and enrichment make it possible to view TD as a process in which those who interact construct a viewpoint which, when it is shared, is perceived by the recipient as an objectivated reality. The next step is the process in which this reality is internalised by the recipients. By doing this, they contribute to the construction of language, attributing new meanings to the terms already known. Our experience in TD leads us to posit that this ongoing process of the construction of language results in a shared vision, which is a key element for solving complex problems. This perspective on TD is rarely included in manuals on this subject.

Seeing these processes as one of the core aspects of TD requires us to consider certain activities which should be taken into account:

- Ongoing consideration of concepts which make it possible to understand the challenges at any given time and guide the process to action. With the case of the what and the how, it is important not to convey the idea that all of the concepts considered were accepted and integrated into the process. The majority were used for discussions of interest one day, during a workshop or meeting. But were not able to establish themselves as part of the shared language. The concepts which did achieve this, such as the what and the how of the example, did so because they connected with perceived problems which had been intuited up to that point, but which it had not been possible to clearly and adequately identify. One of the challenges of the capability-building approach is therefore to find the concepts and frameworks which can help TD actors to clearly identify those problems or challenges they intuit but which have not yet been expressed.
- Systematising the process of constructing a new language. Following the initial discussion of each one of the concepts and frameworks, there normally emerged elements of consensus and of conflict about which not everyone was in agreement. In the case presented, when this happened, the concept was reinterpreted in a way that impacted on the course of the project. Systematically collecting these contributions and summarising them so that they can be returned to the actors for reformulation is another activity within the capability-building strategy. Although systematisation is a topic dealt with in TD, we still have a long way to go in constructing a methodology for the return and ongoing construction of new concepts with territorial actors.
- Lastly, the new concepts and frameworks which have been objectivated must be communicated to other groups and spaces in the TD process, in order to be again questioned and reformulated in a cyclical process of reconstructing the shared language which is spreading in the territory. This process differs from the *implementation* perspective which has frequently been used in TD strategies. It is one of the main characteristics of the capability-building strategy and reflects its nature as an emergent strategy.

In the GS case used as an example, the terms what and how enabled the government to express its commitment to the how and its challenges in finding a what which would fit a new how. This commitment, implicit in the government's speech at the start of the process, could be clearly stated in a specific proposal thanks to the construction of the new language.

But this case also shows that it was not enough to give a speech proposing a concept. A long process of dialogue was necessary, involving all of the actors in GS, in which reflection and action were repeated in a cyclical manner, always integrating the same terminology, so that the terms would end up taking on the shared meaning from each actor's practice.

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3.5. **Conceptual frameworks**

The second contribution from Berger and Luckmann (1991) which we have incorporated is what they present as conceptual machineries and we term conceptual frameworks.

3.5.1. *Conceptual machineries*

According to Berger and Luckmann, after institutions are created, conceptual machineries are constructed in order to maintain them. These machineries are operated by specific individuals and groups of individuals who define this reality. The success of a conceptual machinery is related to the power held by those who operate them (1991, p. 134).

The authors argue that sometimes conceptual machineries constructed by experts in a field of knowledge may be divorced from day-to-day practices. This separation can lead to a theoretical construction that is disassociated from practice, thus reducing its potential to question and change existing institutions (p. 135).

In this context, Berger and Luckmann note the possibility that two types of conflict may emerge. The first is that which arises between experts and practitioners (in the case of TD, those who engage in the practice of TD). The latter may resent what they consider the grandiose pretensions of the experts and the social privileges that accompany them. According to Berger and Luckmann, what can be particularly irritating is when experts assert that they know the end meaning of the practitioners' activity better than they themselves do (p. 136). This situation, which may seem extreme, is nonetheless very common in the contexts in which we have attempted to implement the PA and ARTD. Overcoming it is one of the first challenges in implementing the capability-building approach.

Another potential conflict is that which occurs between rival categories of experts. According to Berger and Luckmann, it is sometimes possible to test theories in practice in order to decide which is better. But often it is not possible to test them and they are integrated into the society based on the power possessed by the group proposing each theory. Ideas are thus tested by the societal support they receive, rather than empirically (p. 137).

What this means for the capability-building strategy is that, construction of a new language and conceptual frameworks is accompanied by power games. The balances of power between researchers/trainers and practitioners as well as among researchers/trainers are determining factors.

3.5.2. *Conceptual frameworks from the experience of Gipuzkoa Sarean*

3.5.2.1. A NEW APPROACH TO TD

We return to the moment in Gipuzkoa Sarean when a new government assumed the project in 2011. During the first two years, the project was focused on a knowledge cogeneration process involving members of the government and the research team. The tangible result of this work was a ten-page document titled 'Propuesta de una nueva aproximación al DT en Gipuzkoa' ('Proposal for a new approach to TD in Gipuzkoa'). It was not a theoretical document presented by the researchers, but a document based on ongoing cycles of reflection and action among researchers and politicians. The action had primarily taken the form of creating the framework and conditions for the change which the government wanted to make and culminated in a significant decision: to create a

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new Directorate of Territorial Development with the mandate to put the proposal into practice.

Our argument in this section is that the government constructed a relationship model (governance) for TD which entailed changing the institutionalised model. In order to do this, the first stage, which lasted two years, was primarily focused on constructing the conceptual framework which legitimised the new model.

This conceptual framework, contained in the document 'Gipuzkoa Sarean: Propuesta de una nueva aproximación al desarrollo territorial' ('Gipuzkoa Sarean: Proposal for a new approach to TD') (2013), can be summarised by stating that the new approach to TD:

- Was based on the definition of TD as a process of mobilising and engaging different actors (public and private) in which they discuss and agree on strategies that can guide individual and collective actions (Alburquerque, 2012).
- Drew on the belief that they were working within a situation of regional complexity (Karlsen, 2010).
- Had a strategy not based exclusively on the planning school, but also on the learning, power and cultural schools (Mintzberg, Ahlstrand and Lampel, 1998).
- Promoted social innovation in terms of innovation in the manner in which territorial actors related to one another (Moulaert and Nussbaumer, 2005).
- Was similar to the change framed in terms of four non-sequential stages proposed by Gustavsen (1992).[7]
- Aimed to continuously reformulate the TD model, following the cogenerative model of action research proposed by Greenwood and Levin (2007).

Although each idea connects with an academic contribution to the subject, one of the characteristics of this process was that those of us researchers working with the government did not exclusively take on the role of experts. Some of us were involved in this process basically as facilitators and our function was not only to present some of these conceptual frameworks, but also to support the process of dialogue which allowed some members of the government to internalise these concepts and then later restate them, now as their proposal for the territory. In our eyes, this function was so important that the remaining chapters of this book are devoted to the role of facilitation in the capability-building strategy for TD.

The process of constructing the new approach to TD

The account of how the concept of TD was constructed in Gipuzkoa Sarean has been published in several places (Karlsen and Larrea 2014a, 2014b). This account has primarily concentrated on the role of the experts and their relationship with the actors, specifically with the government of the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa. In this chapter, we analyse this process, reflecting especially on the role of the facilitators, thus providing the context for us to propose a definition in the next chapter.

The most visible milestone in the process of dialogue among researchers and the government for the development of a new conceptual framework for TD was a seminar in November 2011. The seminar was an important milestone in redefining the previous framework because the foundations were laid for leaving behind the concepts of competitiveness and social capital that had guided the process with the previous

[7] This has already been discussed in Chapter 1 and in the previous section of this chapter.

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government, and taking the concepts of TD and *building bridges* as guidelines for the new process.

If the seminar itself were analysed, one might reach the conclusion that the genesis of the reformulation of the project and the government's decision was related to the dialogue among experts and politicians, and that the former, through their presentations of concepts and frameworks, connected with the needs of the latter.

However, there is a prior process which has been little discussed. Between the time the new government entered the provincial council and the aforementioned seminar, there were sixteen formal meetings between the research team and members of the council. In all meeting minutes, the names that are repeated are that of a civil servant of the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa (DFG) who facilitated the process from the political side, and those of two members of the research team who facilitated it from the research side. From this point forward, we will refer to them as the process facilitation team.

In analysing the agendas for these meetings, we find that the first six were used to establish contact. Following these, there were ten which can be considered to pave the way for the seminar, laying the foundations for the new government's re-evaluation of the project. This section reconstructs the process based on documents from these meetings. During this process, there were also a significant number of informal instances of contact, but as these are not systematically recorded, they have not been included in these considerations.

Each meeting was identified at the time by a title that summarised its aim. After the new government took power, the facilitation team met three times over a month and half, with the following agenda:

— Follow-up, closure of the first stage.
— Closure of the first stage and preparation for the next.
— Follow-up: where we are and where we should be.

None of the facilitators on this team (from either the government or the research team) held a hierarchical position that would allow them to make any decisions regarding the course which the project might take in the future. However, these meetings laid the foundations for the dialogue with the new government.

Two months after the new government assumed power, the first meeting took place between this facilitation team and the new political head of the project. The politician's response was that the government had to reflect before making a decision on the matter. Thinking about the best way to resume the dialogue with the political head, the facilitation team invited an expert into the process, bringing this person up-to-date on the background and accompanying him to the meeting with the politician.

Following the meeting with the expert, the facilitation team began considering the idea of a seminar which would bring together as many experts from the previous stage as possible with the new government team. The proposal was accepted and there was a succession of five meetings between politicians from the government who had just taken up their posts and the facilitation team, resulting in the seminar.

After the seminar in November, the government clearly and specifically stated its intention to continue with the project, reformulating it. Construction of the conceptual framework —re-evaluating the concepts of competitiveness and social capital in terms of TD and building bridges— which was tackled at the seminar, was one of the bases of this reformulation.

When this process has been presented in scholarly papers, the November seminar has been framed as the start of the process, the moment when the researchers and the government began their journey. When the participants who were involved in this period

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share that experience, there are two moments which are especially mentioned in the account: the visit from the expert and the seminar.

However, on a trip to work on the project two years later, this expert expressed his perspective on the facilitation, and in relation to the role of one of the facilitative researchers in the process stated:

> Each scenario requires prior reflection on who we are dealing with. She facilitates things so that when they appear, the concepts are seen as valid. She makes sure that [the members of the government] are going to interpret them from their position. In this situation, the one sending the signals is as important as the expert. The expert must have a clear understanding that they need this prior connection with someone who lays the groundwork. That someone is involved [with the expert] to a certain extent. Whether or not there is a possibility of doing well depends on them. (Francisco Alburquerque, interview conducted on 23 September 2013)

At another point in the process, following a working session with members of the government, he stated:

> I shared a concept and now it has become a guideline for action. (Francisco Alburquerque, seminar on land use in Gipuzkoa Sarean, 23 November 2013)

3.5.3. *Learning for the capability-building strategy*

The role of facilitation, to which the rest of the book is devoted, is one of the core elements on which the capability-building approach for TD is constructed. The role of facilitation is not defined exclusively in relation to the territorial actors, although this is the principal relationship which is analysed in the following chapters, but also in relation to the experts involved in both the training processes and research for TD.

The facilitator is a figure who can contribute to overcoming the different types of conflict which we have considered in the conceptual framework based on Berger and Luckmann: one, conflict between experts and actors, and two, conflict between rival categories of experts. However, we would like to stress that the figure of facilitator is much less recognisable in research and training in TD than that of the expert. If the roles are not managed in a conscious manner, it is relatively common for the facilitator not to receive the attention which, in our opinion, they deserve. Aside from the personal implications, this means that the process loses the ability to continue to overcome the types of conflicts indicated above. Our belief regarding this point is that it is not possible to understand TD as a social construction process which enables the strategy to emerge without grasping the role of the facilitators.

The reflections presented in this chapter have made it possible to consider dimensions of TD linked to social construction processes which, in our opinion, have been underestimated in both the conceptualisation and the practice of TD. This has contributed to a situation in which the role of facilitation goes unnoticed. We hope that the approach presented in this chapter will help provide an understanding of the context in which we propose the role of facilitation and the figure of facilitator, the central focus of the remaining chapters of this book.

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Chapter 4

Facilitation of processes to build capabilities for TD

4.1. **Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to present our perspective on facilitation as a central element of capability-building processes for TD. The facilitation in this chapter is proposed as a conceptual framework which seeks to explore an idea: that TD as an emergent social construction process (see Chapter 3) in complex contexts (see Chapter 2) does not occur spontaneously and that it is possible to actively work on creating the conditions which enable this process to emerge constructively.

The capability-building strategy requires cycles of reflection, decision and action. Experience has shown us that there are people who act as catalysts for these cycles, by creating the conditions for these processes to happen. When there is nobody who acts in this way, the conditions for forward progress are not created and the processes are weakened. In ordinary language, we then begin to talk about processes that are stressed, that stagnate, that are creaky, that are empty or that have no life. The process of creating the conditions that enable actors to reflect, decide and take action is what in this and the remaining chapters we term *facilitation*, and the people who take on this role are the facilitators.

The motivation for bringing this figure out of the shadows is our conviction that a focus on training and empowering facilitators can improve TD processes. We therefore frame this training and empowerment as part of the capability-building strategy for TD. However, this focus does require us to first overcome two challenges: raising awareness of the existence of facilitators and constructing a language that will help make them recognisable. These are the aims of this chapter and the next.

Additionally, considering the importance of facilitation does not mean failing to discuss the importance of leadership in capability-building processes for TD. Facilitation complements leadership. As we will explore in the next chapter, the line separating leadership and facilitation is not clear-cut, and we will also talk about the facilitator as a leader, although they exercise a specific type of leadership.

This chapter and the next have been structured around a set of facilitator characteristics which we presented at a workshop for technicians at county development agencies in Gipuzkoa, in the context of Gipuzkoa Sarean, and then repeated in a training process

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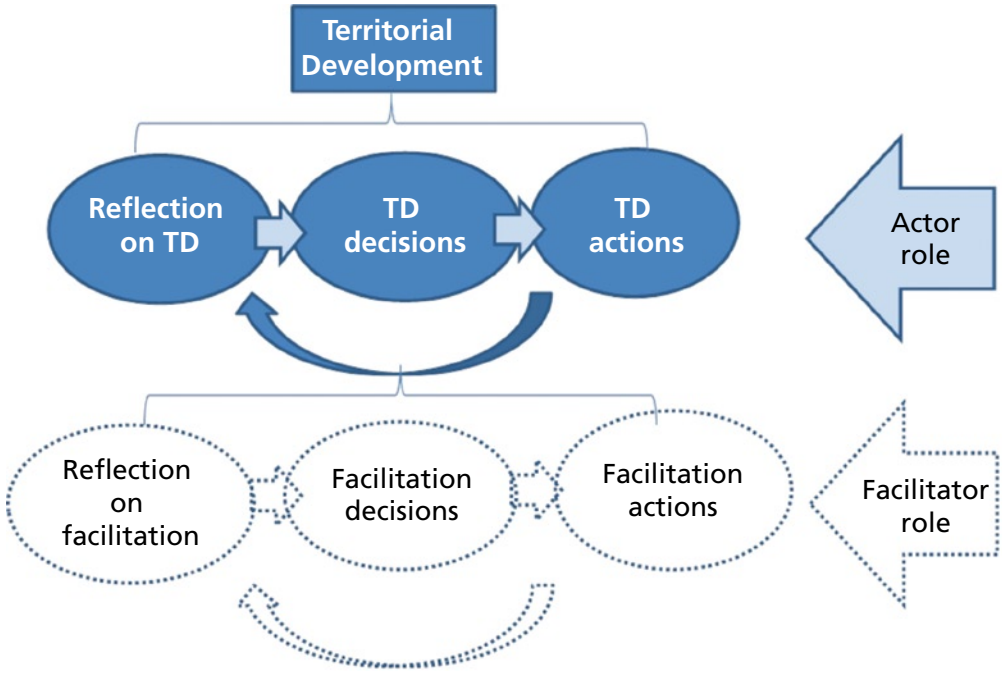
in Rafaela, Argentina. The aim was to share what it meant to be facilitator based on our praxis. We subsequently discussed this subject in a range of environments and added content to the proposal we made at the workshop, until it took on its present shape. Therefore, this is not a closed debate, but an exploratory consideration of this figure, one which we hope to continue strengthening in upcoming years, in both conceptual and practical terms.

We begin the chapter with our definition of facilitation and a review of the precedents to this approach, in both the pedagogical approach and action research. We then present a discussion of the term facilitative as an adjective which accompanies a noun (actor). We will focus on the figure of facilitative actor, in contrast to approaches in which the term facilitator is used as a noun to designate someone who is not an actor and remains neutral. We then discuss what it means to facilitate an emergent process and how these processes are normally facilitated by a team rather than individually. This chapter concludes by considering the role of the facilitator as translator, interpreter and constructor of accounts.

4.2. **Definition of facilitation**

In this book, a TD facilitator is defined as follows: someone who on an individual basis or as part of a team of facilitators, takes on the role of creating the conditions that enable territorial development (TD) actors to reflect, decide and take action. Following this process in a cyclical manner produces collective capabilities in the territory.

Figure 3. Conceptual framework of TD facilitation



Source: compiled by authors.

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One of the challenges in reaching this definition was the work required to delineate the facilitator and the actor as conceptual categories. Territorial actors are those who reflect, decide and take action in a territory. In action research, they are described as problem owners (Greenwood and Levin, 2007). Resolving TD problems depends on their actions and this resolution takes place through processes of reflection, decision and action which sometimes occur at an individual level and often collectively. We will refer to these reflections, decisions and actions by the actors as TD reflections, decisions and actions.

The facilitator is someone who, at a specific moment in the TD process, takes on the role of creating the conditions that will enable the actors to reflect, decide and take action. The facilitator shares the reflections on TD with the actors, but does not make the decisions or carry out the TD actions. Does this mean that the facilitator does not decide or take action? Obviously not. This is why in the process of writing this book, it has been important to clarify and refine two aspects based on our experiences.

The first is that the facilitators, in their facilitation process, make the facilitation decisions and carries out the facilitation actions. It is important to understand that these decisions and actions are subordinate in the context of TD to decisions and actions of TD, in other words, to those of the actors. Figure 3 illustrates this relationship. This means that the facilitator is defined as such only in relation to a specific TD process and in relation to specific decisions and actions which the actors seek to carry out. These decisions and actions are not always clear from the start and it is also part of the facilitator's job to help in constructing the aims. In short, the facilitator is defined as such in relation to the actors in a process. It is not easy to assimilate this definition in theoretical form, and so throughout the chapter it will be analysed based on practice, in the context of complex TD processes.

Furthermore, the facilitator rarely performs only this role. They are normally also a territorial actor from the sphere of politics, academia, the production sector, civil society or some other, who takes on the task of facilitating the process. For this reason, in the definition we say that the facilitator is a person who takes on the role of facilitation, but the most common situation is one in which the same person is taking on other roles as a territorial actor in the TD process. This is one of the distinctive features of our approach as compared to other definitions of facilitation which we will present. Not only do we accept that the facilitator can at the same time be a territorial actor in the TD process, but we also argue that this is a very common occurrence. Additionally, far from being something which detracts from the participatory processes, as it is sometimes interpreted, these situations strengthen the TD processes.

4.3. **Precedents in the pedagogical approach and action research**

The term *facilitator* has frequently been used to designate a specific professional profile. For example, on its website, the IAF (International Association of Facilitators) defines the facilitator as a person who helps a group of people achieve their objectives.

Another definition which represents this perspective is, for example, that given by Schwarz (2002, p. 5), who proposes the following definition: 'Group facilitation is a process in which a person whose selection is acceptable to all members of the group, is substantively neutral, and has no substantive decision-making authority diagnoses and intervenes to help a group improve how it identifies and solves problems and makes decisions, to increase the group's effectiveness.'

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This chapter has been built on our own experience as facilitators, which leads us to propose a definition that is substantially different from those presented in the preceding paragraphs. But theoretical influences have also pervaded our experience. For this reason, we devote the following section to sharing these perspectives, which frame the subsequent discussions based on practice.

4.3.1. *The debate on the TD agent*

One background element which has characterised the pedagogical approach —and through it, this book— is the debate around the delineation of the concepts of the actor and the agent in the Latin American literature. This is a debate which did not explicitly touch on the term facilitator, but rather the term *agent*. It is a theoretical viewpoint which, by observing the practice, maintains that there are people who perform tasks in TD which we must begin to reclaim.

What this section shows is a number of discussions which present the figures of actor and agent differently, but also with only a blurred line delineating them. Thus, according to Pírez (1995, p. 3): 'Local actors are persons (individuals or collectives) whose behaviour is determined based on a local logic and/or whose behaviour determines local processes.' In a definition later used extensively, Arocena (1995) makes a distinction between actor —related to a system of representation— and agent —related to action, who expresses their intentions regarding local society through their attitudes and behaviours and is a bearer of strategy—. Although the issue later becomes more complex, Barreiro (1988) asserts that the actor is defined by the stage on which they act, by their location on the social stage. The agent is tied to the meaning of action, based on certain aims.

Alburquerque (1999) suggests that a local development agent must be an independent and qualified person, with the ability to identify problems, examine them, recommend appropriate measures and help put their recommendations in motion. Consequently, the qualities necessary to perform their function are related to their tenacity and ability to make themselves worthy of the trust of the local community. This author also emphasises that what is important is not only what the local development agent does, but also how they do it and the attitude they adopt in relation to their work and others: they must be available, dynamic, sociable, adaptable and have a talent for establishing contact with local actors and for teamwork. At a seminar we shared in Buenos Aires in 2014 as part of the ConectaDEL programme, Alburquerque drew together these ideas, asserting that TD agents must have different competencies related to knowledge, being and expertise.

Pérez Rozzi (2014) associates the idea of agent with the capacity for transformation, returning to an idea from Silva (2005) which states that agents are those people who have the capacity and vocation for transformation, and in turn, possess 'the knowledge and power' to carry them out, are assertive and have the capacity for resilience.

Looking ahead to the later discussion of the roles and neutrality of the facilitator, we glean from some of these authors the idea that it is important for the agent of development to maintain a certain degree of independence from the actors in order to effectively perform their function. Their mission is to coordinate with the different actors, without replacing them and without appearing to be a messenger of any one. The other significant idea is the prevalence of the link between the agent and action, emphasising their capacity to bring about processes and strategies. This is connected with the agent's commitment and their attitudinal dimension, in addition to requiring certain skills and bonds of trust.

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4.3.2. *Facilitation in the literature around action research*

Just as the literature that has influenced the pedagogical approach centres the figure of agent on the local development agent, understood as a professional engaged in these processes for both public and private organisations, the influences from action research lead us to highlight the figure of facilitative researcher, and in some cases, facilitative consultant. The figure of practitioner facilitator appears much less often.

4.3.2.1. Historical overview

In the literature on the figure of facilitator, the work that best fits with the aims of this book is by Groot (2002). And so, we will now present the account which she offers of how the concept has evolved in practice since the beginning of the last century.

Groot believes that the figure of facilitator appeared in the context of projects to reduce poverty and support rural development, and presents its genesis in terms of the action research carried out in the 1930s and 1940s. According to this author, action research emerged when certain social researchers and community development agents came to the conclusion that traditional social science was not helping to solve social problems. From the 1950s and 1960s, Groot (2002) stresses the rise of participatory approaches in rural development. This rise has its origins in the concept of community development. During this period, social researchers took on the role of paving the way for peasant perspectives to be taken into consideration, in contrast to the priority given to the knowledge of technology experts (Uphoff, Cohen and Goldsmith, 1979). Later, in the mid-1970s and early 1980s, the concept of popular participation was reinforced (Cornwall, 2001). In the 1980s, an alternative viewpoint regarding participation and practice gained strength, inspired by Paulo Freire (1996), who is one of the points of reference for both the AP and the ARTD on which this book is founded. This viewpoint was focused on participation for personal transformation as a point of departure for social change. Participatory action research emerged in this context. The development professional became a political activist who urged the people towards critical learning.

For the 1990s, Groot (2002) highlights a growing consensus regarding the importance of participation, which took on new meanings in contexts of economic liberalisation and decentralisation. The concept of participation evolved from the local level to contexts of governance and policy. It was transformed into a means of involving civil society and bringing about decentralisation as a motor for democratic transformation (Cornwall, 2001). In this context, the development professional (our facilitator) takes part on both the side of the State and the side of the citizenry, bridging the gap between them. There has been an evolution from the debate around whether or not participation is beneficial to the debate around how to do it and on what scale. The facilitator began to be talked about as 'the outsider, who encourages rural communities to analyse and share their knowledge about their own situation, to generate, negotiate and design options for improvement, and reflect critically on the process and outcome' (Groot, 2002 p. 29). This definition of the facilitator as an outsider is one of the most important differences between our approach and the majority of the definitions of this figure.

4.3.2.2. Figure, roles and capabilities of the facilitator

Chambers (1993) was one of the first to talk explicitly about the facilitator and their values, knowledge, attitude and behaviour. The facilitator began to be discussed as a new

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professional who, according to Chambers (1993), Pretty (1995) and Groot (2002), had the following characteristics:

- Acknowledges that realities are socially constructed and therefore, the object of participatory methodologies is to relate these multiples perspectives to each other.
- Puts people first (and women before men) instead of things first.
- Considers the knowledge and ideas of local persons to be important to innovation processes.
- Accepts local complexity and diversity.
- Fosters peer evaluation for quality control.

The competencies which this new professional would require are defined as follows:

- Clearly laying out the underlying values, including their own values.
- Enabling open (collective) learning processes for more effective decision-making and action.
- Facilitating individual and collective processes of change, rather than teaching and transferring technology.
- Involving a large number of social and cultural institutions and movements at all levels.
- Empowering and transforming persons and institutions.
- Listening and researching.
- Applying visualisation methods.
- Working in multidisciplinary teams.

These definitions presented in the 1990s are a good framework for discussing the figure of TD facilitator which we propose in this book. However, we would like to supplement this with another more up-to-date viewpoint which we found to be of interest, that of Raelin (2006), who talks about the *facilitator in praxis*. The concept of praxis is one of the main links between the pedagogical approach and action research. Incorporating the perspective of praxis into facilitation entails, in this author's words, considering not only what one does, but also how one thinks about what one and others do. Raelin also suggests that facilitation is more an art than a skill, because interventions are based as much on what one feels as on pre-planned rational thought. The author proposes the following advanced facilitator capabilities:

- The skill of being. In being, facilitators try to experience and describe situations, including their own involvement in the experience, without imputing meaning to them or evaluating them.
- The skill of speaking. The facilitator articulates a collective voice.
- The skill of disclosing. This is the ability to stay within oneself and, at the same time, share doubts or voice passion.
- The skill of testing. The facilitator promotes a process of collective inquiry that questions prejudices and underlying assumptions.
- The skill of probing. The facilitator probes the participants, normally one-on-one, to discover the facts, reasons, assumptions, inferences and possible consequences of a suggestion or action.

Lastly, before beginning our discussion of the figure of facilitator, we share a definition suggested by Arce (2016) in the context of a transition in the view of facilitation from an initial group-oriented perspective, which is now evolving towards a systemic viewpoint which stresses the value of context. Thus, we shift from the original role of the facilitator as a group leader to the role of host, which reduces their significance in favour of the group. This author presents facilitation as:

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> Processes and functions which make it possible to interact with the paradigms, thoughts, feelings, emotions and expressions (discourses, attitudes and practices) of persons and collectives within a systemic and contextual framework, to the effect that it is possible to tackle complexity by deploying their set of capabilities, faculties and potentialities aimed at achieving dynamic balances to establish relationships, bonds, understandings or agreements which may possibly become aims that result in transformative actions in accord with nature and the cosmos. (Arce, 2016, p. 202)

4.4. **Facilitation as a noun and facilitative as an adjective: professional facilitators or facilitative actors?**

Our experience in TD processes leads us to propose a less clear-cut and more complex view of who the facilitator is than that contained in some of the literature cited above.

We have been involved in processes in which there were facilitators who went by this name or others —such as coordinators, network managers and trainers— and who performed facilitation work that was relatively clear-cut. But we have also worked with many other people who, without ever having considered what it means to facilitate and without having been explicitly assigned this role, facilitated TD processes. The majority of these people were territorial actors, they had decision-making power and the authority to take action in some spheres of the TD process, and they combined this with facilitation in terms of creating the conditions that enabled others to reflect, decide and take action.

This distinction between the facilitator who is formally recognised as holding that position —indeed, they are frequently hired to perform it— and the facilitative territorial actor who has their own spaces for decision-making and implementation, while also facilitating the processes of others, leads us to propose a distinction between facilitation as a noun and facilitative as an adjective.

Thus, in our interpretation of the term in this book, the person who is a facilitator as a noun is someone who, without being an actor in the territory in which they operate, works as a facilitator, thus taking on a role which they have been explicitly assigned. They make facilitation decisions, but do not participate in TD decisions. In our practice, the majority of those who are facilitators as a noun have been consultants, particularly those with experience and methodologies for conducting participatory processes. The existence of the International Association of Facilitators (IAF), where professional facilitators come together, is an example of what we have termed facilitators as a noun. For this reason, from this point forward, we refer to these people as professional facilitators.

Facilitative as an adjective designates a territorial actor who has an explicit function as an actor —for example, a politician, researcher or agency, association or network manager— and according to this role, reflects, decides and takes action within their sphere of influence. However, in complex situations which require social construction processes, as described in previous chapters, these territorial actors become aware that it is not enough for them to engage in their own reflections and make their own decisions. What is needed are shared collective reflections and decisions, or at least, those which involve recognition of other reflection and decision-making processes. These processes do not occur spontaneously. For this reason, these actors also take on the role of creating the conditions that enable others to reflect, decide and take action in situations where they interact with different actors. It is in this context that we define facilitative actors, who create the conditions so that others can make decisions and take

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action without relinquishing their own role as territorial actor. This means that they are simultaneously a facilitator and a decision-maker in the process. This distinguishes them from the professional facilitator, who is not an actor. They are a facilitative politician, a facilitative trainer, a facilitative researcher or a facilitative manager, and in these cases we say that the term facilitator being an adjective it designates a quality, a way of performing their noun role, which is as an actor. Thus, this person is characterised by making not only the decisions which we have termed TD decisions, but also those relating to facilitation.

Without claiming to set out an exhaustive typology of facilitative territorial actors, we would like to sketch a simple outline which presents the main profiles we have encountered in our careers in association with social construction processes. We are aware that observations based on other experiences would have resulted in a different outline. We therefore do not consider this to be a generalisable typology.

— The facilitative politician.
— The facilitative trainer/researcher.
— The facilitative manager.

Figure 4 summarises some of the characteristics of these profiles, together with those of the professional facilitator. Furthermore, we must not forget that, as discussed in an earlier section, facilitation is a team effort and teams are frequently made up of people with several of the profiles listed above.

Figure 4. Facilitators in TD processes

	Characteristics
Professional facilitator (facilitative as a noun)	Person (team), frequently a consultant or researcher, who is hired to facilitate a process and whose position does not include decision-making power.
Facilitative politician (facilitative as an adjective)	Politician who interprets their position as one which entails, in addition to making their own decisions regarding policies, constructing processes of dialogue with the other territorial actors, in which they can co-generate solutions to the territory's problems.
Facilitative researcher/ trainer (facilitative as an adjective)	Researcher/trainer who, in addition to making their own decisions associated with the methodology and content of their research and training processes as a territorial actor, uses their research and training work to create the conditions that enable other TD actors to reflect, decide and take action.
Facilitative manager (facilitative as an adjective)	Manager at an organisation in the territory (managers from civil society, business owners, government officials at different levels, managers from agencies, associations or training and research centres) which counts territorial development among the organisation's aims, and creates the conditions that enable this and other organisations in the territory to reflect, decide and take action.

Source: compiled by authors.

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The figure of professional facilitator corresponds to a definition that is widely found in the literature and the practice of facilitation, which advocates a neutral facilitator (see the definition from Schwarz, 2002, in this chapter). This book's contribution is not founded on that figure, but on asserting the existence, alongside this facilitator, of facilitative actors, whose facilitation has been much less studied in the literature and is little recognised in practice. Bringing visibility to these facilitators through the conceptualisation of their work is the main aim of this book.

4.5. **The facilitative researcher: reclaiming their role as a TD actor**

As discussed in detail in Chapter 1, in this book the conceptual framework for facilitation is the intersection between the PA and ARTD. One of the frameworks that have inspired our approach to facilitation has already been laid out in Karlsen and Larrea (2014b). The reflections in the previous section lead us to further explore this framework and propose what we have termed the action researcher's dilemma as problem owner.

Our proposed dilemma is framed within our argument in support of the figure of action researcher as a TD facilitative actor. This approach, which combines the roles of actor and facilitator, differs from others in which the researcher is considered to be either exclusively an actor or exclusively a facilitator.

The role in which it is easiest to see the researcher exclusively as a territorial actor is that of an expert who takes charge of the construction and dissemination of knowledge, making decisions that influence that process, and not facilitating a process by means of which that knowledge is integrated into the reflection, decision and action of the other actors. At the other extreme, the researcher can be considered a professional facilitator in the context of projects in which their services are required exclusively to help other actors to reflect, decide and take action. In this role, they are required to exercise neutrality, omitting the researcher's positioning with regard to the TD.

The figure we seek to reclaim within the framework of ARTD is that of an action researcher who is a facilitator actor in capability-building strategies for TD. In this position, the action researcher's role is sometimes dependent on the reflection, decision and action processes of the other actors. But at other times, they are acknowledged to have the legitimacy to influence the process as an actor with their own positioning. The challenge lies in having a framework which is as clear as possible regarding when the action researcher has the legitimacy to perform one role or the other.

To share our interpretation of how this perspective may be developed, we return to the cogenerative model in Karlsen and Larrea (2014b), which posits two parts of the cyclical process of ARTD. The first part (indicated by descending arrows in the diagram) deals with solving the problem agreed upon at the start of the process. The second phase (shown in the diagram with ascending arrows) symbolises the process of constructing new academic knowledge drawing on the previous process and using this knowledge to re-evaluate the problem.

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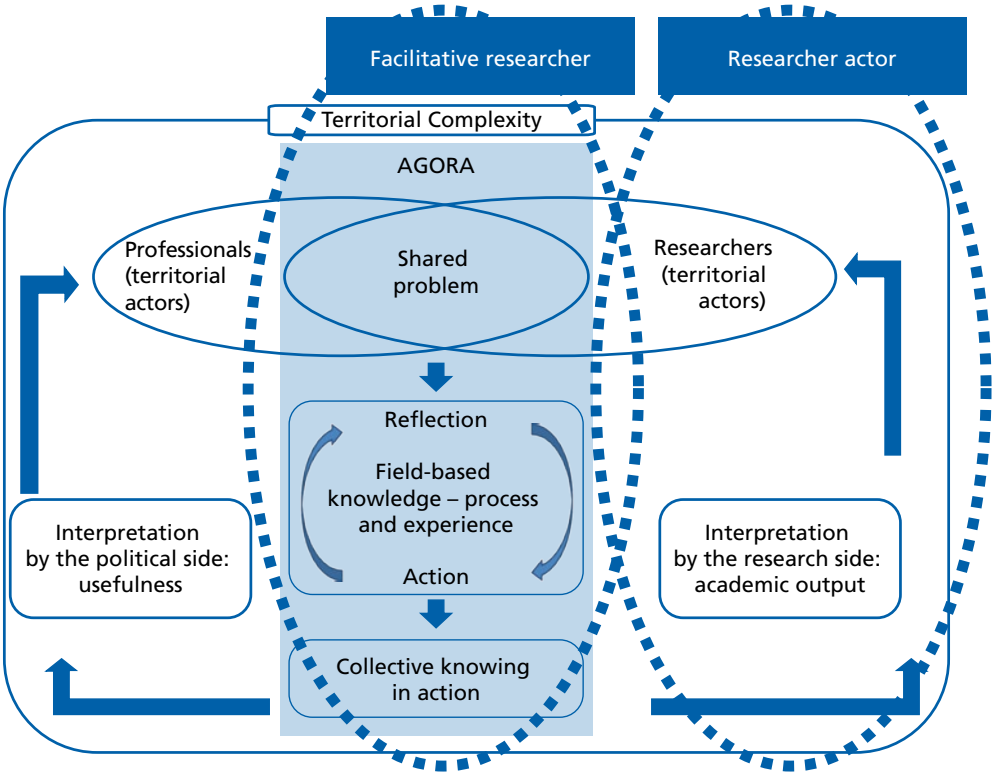
Figure 5. Cogenerative model adapted to the roles of the researcher



Source: adapted by the authors based on Karlsen and Larrea (2014b).

This framework incorporates the role of researcher actor, who as a territorial actor is also a TD problem owner. But when it is used in practice, the research team often faces a dilemma.

This dilemma arises because, while it is true that researchers are TD problem owners in the territory, it is also true that, in the context of specific action research projects, there are actors that fund the project and want a neutral facilitator rather than an actor with their own voice and positioning. Thus the dilemma of the facilitative researcher, who, being a problem owner in the territory, loses this quality in specific TD projects.

Our proposal is to strengthen the idea of a dual role for researchers in the cogenerative process of ARTD. The researcher takes on the role of facilitator particularly in the downward section of the diagram focused on solving the problem, but it is important for them to be able to perform their role as territorial actor through a critical interpretation of the TD process and the corresponding construction of academic knowledge (upward section of the figure).

Therefore, in order that the cycles follow on from each other in a balanced fashion and to maximise capability-building for TD, the researcher must not only contribute to empowering actors through facilitation, they must also empower themselves as a territorial actor by means of their analytical, conceptual and theoretical production, which they will use in an ongoing re-evaluation of the TD problems.

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4.6. **Facilitation of the capability-building strategy for territorial development**

There are two characteristics which distinguish our proposal from the majority of other work on facilitation which we have found in the literature: its contextualisation within emergent processes in the territory —which are therefore difficult to delineate exclusively in terms of projects— and the assumption of the non-neutrality of the facilitator (the most widely cited literature proposes a neutral positioning: Raelin, 2006; Schwarz, 2002).

Non-neutrality will be discussed in the following chapter. In this section, the central focus will be on the emergent nature of facilitation, supplemented by another two characteristics inspired by our experiences: the importance of teams and the function of constructing narratives.

4.6.1. *TD facilitation as an emergent process*

One of the characteristics commonly attributed to facilitation is the interpretation that facilitation is carried out by means of a series of meetings. For example, Heft (2014) talks about an *arc* of meetings. Meetings are part of the process, but the literature sometimes pushes the rest of the process into the background in order to focus on the facilitation methods at these meetings and workshops. Some instruments which are described in this context include focused conversation, inquiry circles, focus groups, World Café, etc. In addition, the framework in which this arc of meetings normally takes place is made up of specific projects with planned stages and start and end dates.

Though both projects and meetings are essential elements of our approach, the aim of this book is to open up this focus and highlight facilitation of emergent processes in complex situations. This entails attempting to trace a slightly broader —and undoubtedly less clear-cut— framework for the context in which facilitation takes place.

Projects are relatively easy to identify and define, but the emergent strategy method requires identifying not just projects, but also social construction processes. These processes normally include projects, but they go beyond specific projects in terms of time and as regards the actors involved and management of the network of relationships among them.

It is our experience that TD as a social construction process does not happen exclusively within the context of projects defined as such, but in the emergent combination of a myriad of specific projects and actions. Facilitation is distributed amongst the different territorial actors in a scattered manner and can be identified based on practice, as it is not likely to appear in plans and assignments in advance. Furthermore, most TD facilitators have not explicitly reflected on their quality as such. Additionally, these people change over time. Such processes function like a relay race, in which different people create the conditions for action at different times.

In this context, the chapter deals with the challenge of defining the facilitator in conceptual or analytical terms, with an end to presenting concepts which will help people who perform this role in practice to become aware of themselves, and especially, to improve their performance. We suggest that the role of facilitation is scattered throughout the territory, based on the definition of facilitative as an adjective, and venture our view that TD is largely driven by these facilitative actors, who are much more difficult to identify than professional facilitators.

Our preliminary observations have helped us to realise that this book is written for a group of facilitators who may not be aware that this is what they are. The following considerations are intended for the reader who is at this moment asking themselves whether or not they are a TD facilitator. Facilitation is more an attitude than an assigned duty. A

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person does not become a facilitator because they have been assigned that function. Nor does someone stop being a facilitator due to the fact that their contribution is not formally recognised. This is why we believe that training for facilitators and reflection on facilitation must be directed at all TD actors, without any need to know in advance whether or not we are facilitative actors. In sharing our reflections on facilitation, experience has shown us that some people immediately identify with this title, while others do not, and that it helps some to understand their own conduct but not others. Sometimes, this initial contact with the concept begins to give rise to an awareness of being a facilitator. The aim of this chapter and the next is to seek out these connections and enable those people who are facilitative as an adjective —that is, facilitative actors— to become aware of and proactively manage this dimension of their life.

Lastly, under the assumption that it is impossible to know in absolute terms and at any given time who are the facilitators in the emergent TD process, what is important for the capability-building strategy is not having a theoretical definition of what a facilitator is, or empirical confirmation of who is a facilitator. What is important is generating a long-term process of awareness-raising and improvements in working methods which can gradually be joined by more and more facilitators. The result is a collective capability of the territory to make TD processes work. This is the collective knowing in action already presented in the framework of ARTD.

4.6.2. *TD facilitation as a team*

The assertion that facilitation is a team effort has different connotations depending on whether it is interpreted from the point of view of the professional facilitator or the facilitative actor. The work of the professional facilitator has been analysed more frequently and the importance of teamwork has been linked to both the complementary nature of the capabilities of the different facilitators and the difficulty of operating alone in facilitation processes which have an element of conflict and negotiation.

The concept of team we propose in this section is particularly related to the facilitative actor and is again a practice-based proposal. The biggest challenge we have identified is creating TD facilitation teams made up of actors from different organisations who, despite this, understand that in these processes *they are on the same team*.

We share this approach to teamwork through our account of how the figure of facilitator could be developed beyond its current interpretation in Gipuzkoa Sarean. Today, the term facilitator has been established as describing a group of technicians from county development agencies. Although there has been some reflection on the facilitative role of other actors, and there are facilitative politicians who are discussed in these terms, there is no established practice for a significant number of other actors. Our proposal would be to move forward in two directions. First, spread this concept in order to make other actors aware that they also perform (or could perform) a facilitative role. Two, work on the need for facilitation in interorganisational teams and thus develop the sense of belonging to the same team.

To this end, reflection on facilitation must take place in at least two interorganisational spaces:

- The steering group, where the facilitative politicians, facilitative managers (government officials) and facilitative researchers meet weekly.
- The intercounty table, where the facilitative politicians and facilitative managers, at both the provincial and municipal/county level, and facilitative researchers meet every two months.

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We have one final observation regarding team facilitation, and it is related to how facilitation spreads throughout the territory. We are still reflecting on the practical example of Gipuzkoa Sarean. After working in the interorganisational spaces described, each facilitator could create, in the TD space they represent, the conditions to enable the other actors to reflect, decide and take action. Part of this reflection could be on facilitation, so that an increasing number of actors become aware of their own role as facilitators. This is a cascade process, which taken to the extreme would present a scenario in which at some point, all territorial actors would have the context to reflect on their facilitation role.

For the time being, this account is no more than a vision of how we would like the process to develop. We have used it to share a theoretical reflection on how teams of facilitators could reach more and more facilitators and increase collective knowing in action.

4.6.3. *The territorial development facilitator as translator, interpreter and constructor of narratives*

Through the PA and ARTD, we have incorporated dialogue as an important process in TD. Consequently, constructing spaces for dialogue and facilitating dialogue are roles performed by the facilitator.

Our experience tells us that frequently, when we talk about dialogue among actors, we are thinking of the moment when the territorial actors sit around a table or in workshops of various sizes and interact directly. However, in reflecting here, we want to highlight not only what happens at these meetings or workshops, but also what happens between meetings and between one workshop and the next. This leads us to also consider informal processes, in which it is important to know how to detect signals of a different communicative nature or dialogues that do not take place face-to-face, but for example, via media. It is in this diversity of spaces, and frequently in several at the same time, that the facilitator becomes a translator, interpreter and constructor of narratives.

In order to foster dialogue, it is important for the facilitator to be able to talk to each actor in their own language. But they must also work to ensure that the different actors make the language of the others their own. For this reason, they may sometimes talk to an actor in a language which is not entirely theirs. The TD facilitator must therefore frequently talk to companies in their language, understanding their priorities in terms of products, processes and markets. This language is not always the language of politics, with its own logic of communication with citizens, and the need to validate positions at the polls. And none of the preceding actors coincide with the academic, whose value is difficult to translate when the territorial actors say that they *do not want theories, but solutions*. Through the process of constructing the narratives utilising all of these languages, the facilitator must help actors who speak different languages to understand each other.

Before the formal encounters take place, the facilitator tries to understand the positioning of all the actors involved and visualise possible ways to bring them together. To do so, they talk to the actors, sometimes one-on-one and in informal spaces. At these meetings, conveying the positioning of the others is unavoidable. Given that these actors sometimes speak different languages, the facilitator becomes a translator. This process must be carried out with the greatest transparency, but accepting the impossibility of neutrality. In their translation efforts, the facilitator cannot take action free of their own positioning or their own interpretation of the situation, which also makes them an interpreter.

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One of the main products of these dialogues with the actors is the narrative of the process. In the dialogue with each actor and among actors, the facilitator constructs an emergent narrative. This narrative includes both commonalities and disagreements among actors, pointing to potential agreements and conflicts. And so a shared vision is created, the 'we' as the subject of collective action. This narrative must help each actor to see themselves as part of something bigger, and in turn, acknowledge the presence of a space for their individual positioning.

Therefore, the shared vision is not a homogeneous interpretation of reality, but a deep understanding of the differences (sometimes irreconcilable) and points of common ground (which open the way to joint, or at least synergistic, action).

In our experience we have seen that sometimes, following a few months or even years of work on constructing a shared narrative, the facilitator becomes a sort of spokesperson for the collective voice, and they begin to be repeatedly asked to share the narrative in order to provide a framework for new action. And so, at each new step, the facilitator shares the narrative and takes in the actors' reactions to this account, integrating them and modifying the account which will be shared the next time. This ability of the facilitator to integrate the different voices into the narrative they construct is what we have termed the permeability of the facilitator. The permeable facilitator, although they never stop having their own interpretation of the process from their own positions, has a great ability to integrate the debates, nuances and opinions that emerge during the process. This permeability is what enables them to construct the collective narrative, which goes beyond their own individual interpretation of the process.

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Chapter 5

The leadership of the facilitative actors and their dilemmas in the absence of neutrality

5.1. **Introduction**

Leadership is one of the elements which we have found to be the most controversial when we have shared our perspective on facilitators. Perhaps because the figure of neutral professional facilitator is so prevalent, the idea that TD needs facilitative actors to lead processes has met with doubts. To open this chapter, we attempt to condense these doubts into a single question: Does the facilitative actor have the legitimacy to lead TD and influence it?

In order to provide an answer, we set aside the figure of professional facilitator, who operates under different rules of the game, to focus on facilitative actors (facilitator as an adjective) in TD. Our response to the question is that, although it is not always the case, facilitative actors can have the legitimacy to lead TD and influence it. And not only do they have this legitimacy, we believe that it is impossible to facilitate TD processes without it.

We have decided to further explore the subject of leadership because on more than one occasion we have felt questioned when the people around us —frequently colleagues— realising that we were taking on positions of leadership, raised doubts about our authority to do so. We approach this debate fully aware of the fact that there is a line which the facilitative actor must not cross, because doing so would mean that they are using their facilitation role to manipulate the process. This line requires not supplanting the actors in their decisions. As we asserted in presenting the analytical model of facilitation, the work of facilitators is subordinate to the reflections, decisions and actions of the actors, and it is very important to respect the actor in their decision-making space. But within the space demarcated by this line, we want to argue that provided that their facilitation function has been explicitly recognised, the facilitative actor has the legitimacy to influence the process and lead it, not from any hierarchical position, but from the relational dimension which facilitation entails. We believe that recognition of this relational space of facilitator influence and leadership provides the potential to construct more democratic, and in turn efficient, TD processes.

This chapter presents the thread of an argument constructed around a number of linked assertions. The first assertion is that, although their work is subordinate to the reflection, decision and action process of the TD actors, the facilitator actor is a leader. The

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second is that, in practice, this leadership is not always viewed as legitimate. We believe that part of the reason for this absence of legitimacy is the lack of adequate concepts with which to frame the leadership of the facilitative actor. This leads us to a third assertion, that it is important to reconceptualise leadership in TD. We therefore include in this chapter the contributions of authors who have spent more than a decade attempting to do so. The chapter continues with a fourth assertion, which is that the TD facilitator actor has the legitimacy to lead when they represent not their own voice as TD actor, but the collective voice that is being constructed in the process. We continue with another assertion, the fifth, that the relational leadership which gains legitimacy through the use of the collective voice poses dilemmas when we accept that the facilitative actor is not neutral. This leads us to ask: Can someone who is not neutral take on the collective voice? Our answer is yes, provided that the facilitative actor is not hiding their position as a TD actor behind the collective voice and manipulating the process for their own interests. Our sixth assertion is that, given their non-neutrality, the facilitative actor must be transparent, and in doing so, earn the trust of the other actors in order to facilitate the process. The next assertion is that in order to be transparent, the facilitative actor needs to have the capacity for self-reflection. And the eighth and last is that, although the facilitative actor must be transparent, they should not become invisible, if the aim is to propose a sustainable TD process.

The chapter is structured around these eight assertions, which are developed in separate sections, following the thread of the argument. At the end, we have added another section constructed around practical examples.

5.2. **The facilitative actor as leader: Building the legitimacy to lead**

The commonly understood meaning of the term leader is a person who directs or guides a group, which recognises their authority. However, there is no one meaning of authority. If we take the interpretation of authority as government power or exercising command, the facilitative actor is not a leader in relation to TD decisions. However, authority can also be interpreted as the prestige and trust which a person or institution is recognised as having due to their legitimacy or their quality and competence in a given area. If we use this interpretation, we can say that, one, *recognition by TD actors of the legitimacy* of the facilitative actor to influence TD, and two, *recognition of their quality and competence* in facilitation, open up the door to considering their leadership.

As we have repeatedly stated, this book draws on our experience as facilitators. In this experience, in the vast majority of contexts in which we have worked, we have felt that our *quality and competence* in facilitation have been recognised without problem. Nonetheless, our *legitimacy* to influence TD has been more problematic. This has been due to resistance by some actors to accepting it, as well as our own doubts in this regard.

There is no question that, following on from the belief that conflict is a natural part of TD, the leadership of the facilitative actor creates conflicts in relation to other TD leaders. This may be one of the reasons why there is resistance to leadership by facilitative actors. However, without undervaluing the importance of this dimension, the chapter concentrates on the legitimacy of the facilitative actor's leadership through their relational positioning and their taking on the collective voice.

One of the elements which helps give an understanding of the centrality of legitimacy to our arguments is the practical experience of having worked in situations in which this legitimacy did not exist. We have classified these situations into two extremes in order to facilitate reflection. The first type of situation involves those processes in which the facilitative

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actor is perceived to have an influence, and as their legitimacy to influence is not recognised, this gives rise to an account of the facilitative actor as the hidden hand of the TD, shielding themselves behind the legitimacy of others because they do not have their own legitimacy. Thus, when their own legitimacy is not recognised, facilitative actors can be perceived as manipulators. And although sometimes the actors who directly interact with them do not feel this way, from the outside, it may seem that the facilitative actor is weakening the other TD actors, as if they did not have their own position or listening and decision-making capacity.

The second type of situation on which we have reflected involves processes in which, in contrast, the task of facilitation and the influence of the facilitative actor have been played down to such an extent that the person and their work have been trivialised. For example, in contexts in which the majority of TD actors believe in strong hierarchical leadership, the figure of facilitative actor is not considered a 'strong' participant in the process. This trivialisation, which in turn leads to denial of the legitimacy to influence, weakens both the possibilities for personal development and the capability-development strategy for TD.

In order to prevent these types of situations, it is important to have open dialogue regarding the leadership of the facilitative actor, which requires suitable concepts and conceptual frameworks.

5.3. **Reconceptualisation of leadership in TD**

As we argued based on Orwell (2014), we sometimes need to invent new words in order to be able to talk about something. The concepts which we bring up below are not new, as there are a number of authors who have spent more than a decade proposing a reconceptualisation of leadership in TD. But it is our belief that this reconceptualisation has not been tackled in depth in the two spheres of TD which inspire this book: the debate around TD in Latin America and the discussion around regional development in Europe (although the latter is the context in which the majority of the contributions to the aforementioned reconceptualisation have emerged).

Following on from Sotarauta, Horlings and Liddle (2012), we consider TD contexts to be spaces where there are interinstitutional overlaps, distributed power and many aims and policies which may be mutually supporting or conflicting. In these contexts, leaders must lead not only within their own organisations and communities, where their authority is recognised. They also need to work consciously to influence organisations other than their own, where their actions and words may have an influence, although they have no formal authority (Sotarauta, 2005a).

We build on this argument that TD requires impacting on the decisions of various bodies and that nonetheless, territorial actors who have hierarchical positions within their own organisations lack them in the territory's other organisations. This leads us to maintain that no actor can make decisions for another, and therefore, the most viable strategy for leading a TD process is to facilitate it, to create the conditions that enable the other actors to reflect, decide and take action. This reinforces facilitation as a strategy for situations of complexity and facilitative actors as leaders in this strategy. All of this can be summarised in the opinion of Horlings (2010) that leadership becomes an activity whose aim is to create the capacity to take action.

The word 'influence' used by Sotarauta *et al.* (2012) is another of the keys to our argument regarding the leadership of the facilitative actor. The facilitative actor does not make TD decisions but, by creating the conditions that enable TD actors to make them,

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they influence the decisions made. We are aware that the term influence has not always received good press and is frequently assigned a negative meaning, as if this influence reflected only individual and sector-specific interests without respecting the collective. We propose an interpretation of the term influence as *helping to successfully achieve the aims of TD*.

Another element which is considered in the discussion around the reconceptualisation of leadership in TD is that this leadership is a process with many nuances and requires the ability to interpret new situations, processes, people and policy changes. Leaders encourage actors to engage; bring together economic, social, environmental and ethical considerations; and innovatively transform external stimuli into internal answers (Sotarauta *et al.*, 2012; Gibney, 2011; Bennett and Krebs, 1994). Our interpretation of these contributions leads us to see a link with the arguments presented earlier, that the facilitative actor manages complexity and must do so using a multidisciplinary approach.

We also see a link with the position of these authors (Sotarauta *et al.*, 2012; Gibney, 2011; Bennett and Krebs, 1994) that the aim of the leader in TD is to influence the manner in which collective interpretations emerge and take shape. This brings us directly to the social construction processes presented in Chapter 3 and the need to facilitate them.

TD leaders must be able to 'develop imaginative and innovative scenarios, and adapt and harmonize a myriad of processes, structures, institutions, partnerships and agencies within dynamic global, national and local regulatory frameworks' (Liddle, 2010, pp. 4-5). They must be capable of drawing together multiple contradictory forces and responding to situations from a long-term perspective. In order to do so, leaders must recognise diversity and handle dilemmas; they must manage competing voices and agendas (Sotarauta, 2012). The roles of the TD leader proposed by these authors in their reconceptualisation process largely coincide with the roles of the facilitative actor which we presented in Chapter 4. They also maintain that from this perspective, leadership is not exclusively individual, but rather a collaborative process, just as we have argued with regard to facilitation.

All of these contributions aimed at a reconceptualisation of leadership in TD lead to an interpretation of leadership which coincides with the essence of our definition of facilitative actor. However, there is one element which we see them as attributing to their leader and which we have thus far not explicitly attributed to our facilitative actor: the will to produce change. We thus maintain that the facilitative actor has their own will to produce change in TD.

Lastly, the links between these authors and our perspective can be summarised in the words of Hambleton (2003, p. 7), who argues: 'Out goes the old hierarchical model of the city "boss" determining policy for city council services and imposing it on the bureaucracy, and in comes the facilitative leader reaching out to other stakeholders in efforts to influence decisions in other agencies that affect the local quality of life.' We thus believe that these contributions provide a theoretical foundation for the approach to the leadership of the facilitative actor which we have set out based on our practice. They refer to the facilitative leader while we talk about the leadership of the facilitator.

5.4. **The relational leadership of facilitative actors**

In Chapter 3 we considered the importance of the construction of language in TD processes. In this section, we propose the term *relational leadership* as that which reflects our approach to the leadership of the facilitative actor. It is our understanding that this leadership possesses the characteristics put forward in the previous section based on authors working on the reconceptualisation of leadership in TD: their leadership does not derive from a hierarchical position, but from their ability to help to successfully

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achieve the aims of TD (influence); they lead in complexity; they normally belong to an organisation in the territory but influence others; they require a multidisciplinary approach; they contribute to constructing collective interpretations in TD; and they have the will to produce change.

We have taken the term from Brugué (2005), who describes the relational leader as someone who recognises that they do not know everything and has the ability to bring about relationships and points of common ground. They are someone who seems weak, as they have to listen, be patient, spend time and be ready to accept suggestions from others, but they can be very influential. They are not at the top, but in the middle. They do not say what must be done, but rather structure and drive the processes to make these decisions. They are not a leader as executor, but they play an essential part in mediation and development.

In our proposed capability-building strategy for TD, the work of the facilitative actor who is a relational leader is frequently aimed at collective decision-making. The collective project cannot be considered in terms of the simple sum of individual projects. For this reason, when the facilitative actor creates the conditions that enable the actors to decide, they rarely facilitate a process in which the actors are able to maintain their individual positions. This means that the facilitative actor must create the conditions that enable various decision-makers to shift their initial position on an issue toward positions of agreement or alignment with others.

Therefore, the facilitative actor, in their effort to create the conditions for decision and action, puts pressure on the decision-makers. This pressure is created in relation to the shared narrative which represents what is being collectively constructed.

Following our approach to emergent strategies, in order to be able to construct a collective narrative which generates pressure for change in a certain direction, the facilitative actor can work along the three axes discussed in Chapter 2 as aspects of these emergent processes:

- They can get involved in learning processes which help the participants to construct a new view of the challenges which will contribute to understanding the collective benefit over the sum of the individual benefits.
- They can get involved in negotiation processes in which the different interests are contrasted and solutions that are acceptable to the different parties are sought, giving priority to the collective over the individual.
- They can seek out connections in the most deeply rooted values and frameworks for interpreting reality of each one of the participating actors, making the latter willing to collaborate because they 'believe' in the project.

In the context of these learning, negotiation and collaboration processes, a shared narrative of the process is produced. This narrative presents not only what has already been collectively constructed, but also what they seek to construct. The facilitative actor takes up this narrative as their position in the process and leads based on a relational approach, putting pressure on all of the actors to adjust their reflections, decisions and actions to fit what has been agreed on in the shared process. The voice of the facilitator as relational leader gives voice to this shared account. It is a collective voice.

At this point, we return to the discussion of the legitimacy of the facilitative actor to influence the process. We maintain that this legitimacy derives from positioning themselves in the shared account and giving it voice. It is in order to exercise this voice (and not the actor's own voice) that the facilitative actor is assigned legitimacy in their facet as facilitator. And this is why social construction processes are an important part of TD, as the shared narrative is a social construction.

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But this assertion brings us to a dilemma. We have noted that, compared to the professional facilitator, who is positioned as neutral, the facilitative actor is not. Can a person who is not neutral have the legitimacy to give voice to the shared narrative?

5.5. **The dilemma of the non-neutrality of the facilitative actor**

There is one author who has helped us to think about the concerns raised by the non-neutrality of the facilitative actor: Paulo Freire. For this reason, in the introduction to this section, we cannot fail to include the following quote, which has been with us in many of our reflections on this subject.

> A moment comes when it is not possible to *exist* without being subject to the radical and deep tension between good and bad, between dignity and indignity, between decency and shamelessness, between the beauty and ugliness of the world. This means that it is not possible to *exist* without educators *assuming* their right or duty to choose, to decide, to fight, to do politics. (Freire, 2008b, p. 51)

In the act of weaving together the collective voice from the voices of the participants, drawing on their relational positioning, it is inevitable that facilitative actors will at all times assess what is happening and whether they find some things to be fair or unfair, good or bad, suitable or unsuitable.

The facilitative actor is not neutral. This is true of them as an actor and as a facilitator. Nevertheless, we believe that this is not a problem and that TD actors easily accept non-neutral facilitation, provided that the facilitative actor is not hiding their interests as an actor behind their position as facilitator. In other words, provided that they do not impose their individual interests as an actor on the collective interests which they are understood to take on when they facilitate. Therefore, the problem is not the non-neutrality of the facilitative actor, but use of the facilitation role to achieve the individual aims which they inevitably have as an actor.

Leading the construction of the collective narrative in a relational manner is not incompatible with taking on the right or duty to choose, to decide, to fight and to do politics proposed by Freire.[8] As we have already said, the figure of facilitative actor we are seeking to reclaim is capable of putting construction of the collective voice ahead of exercising their individual voice when they facilitate. However, this does not imply the neutrality claimed for professional facilitators. Facilitation is imbued with politics and the very fact of prioritising construction of the collective voice at certain moments reflects a political option. The facilitative actor is someone whose ideological positioning entails putting the collective voice ahead of their own voice as an actor at some points in the TD process. This does not mean they are neutral, but that this is in fact their manner of exercising their right or duty to choose, to decide, to fight and to do politics.

It is important to remember that by being a facilitator, the facilitative actor does not stop being an actor. They also retain their own voice. Therefore, one of the voices which the facilitative actor incorporates into the collective process may be their own. What is required in these cases is a clear definition of roles, discussed and constructed with the actors and internalised by everyone. This becomes even more important if we consider that normally,

[8] The definition of political that we have used in this chapter is from the Spanish Royal Academy (RAE): 'citizen activity in which they engage in public affairs with their opinion, with their vote or in any other way'.

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relational leadership in the territory takes place as a sort of relay race in which different actors assume leadership of the process at different stages of the TD.

On each leg of this relay, in order to be able to exercise their leadership, facilitative actors need the other actors to trust that, when the time comes to influence, the facilitators will know how to put the shared narrative ahead of their own voice as actors. This means that the leadership of the facilitative actor will take place to the extent which they are capable of creating trust and maintaining it over time. The next step in our argument is that in order to create and maintain this trust in the other actors, the facilitative actor must be transparent with regard to the facilitation, as well as in terms of their aims as an actor.

5.6. **The transparency of the facilitative actor**

We understand transparency to mean the process by which the facilitative actor clearly states their ideological positioning, which enables the TD actors participating in the process to interpret the facilitator's facilitation and make their own decisions.

We are aware that using the term ideology may seem severe in many of the contexts in which we work. In fact, Diesing (2012) asserts that its use has negative emotional connotations, and to avoid these, replaces the term ideology with standpoint and perspective. He argues that researchers or schools of science occupy a place in society and see the society which extends around that place. This is their standpoint. Perspective is the angle of view and the way in which the world is seen from this standpoint. Each standpoint places some things in the foreground and leaves others in the background or hidden. If we interpret the PA and ARTD from this perspective, we can state that both approaches represent an ideological positioning for the trainers and facilitative researchers which we adopt as ours.

In order to be able to expand the focus of this ideological positioning from trainers and researchers to other type of actors, we return to Mintzberg, Ahlstrand and Lampel (1998), who approach the definition of ideology from a collective point of view and use the term to describe a rich culture in an organisation. They define ideology as a solid set of beliefs, passionately shared by its members, which distinguish one organisation from others. The members of an organisation can only partially describe the beliefs that underpin their culture, and strategy is therefore rooted in collective intentions which are not necessarily explicit. From this perspective, a facilitative actor who is part of a territory participates in a set of collective intentions which are not necessarily made explicit and of which they may only be partially aware. Consequently, how can a facilitative actor be transparent regarding their ideological positioning if they are not always aware of it?

5.7. **Self-reflection as the basis for the transparency of the facilitative actor**

Self-reflection can help the facilitative actor to connect with their own positioning. One of the variants of action research which most resembles self-reflection processes is first person action research. Reason and Bradbury (2001, pp. v-vi) describe this as the skills and methods that make up the researcher's ability to foster an inquiring approach to their own life, to act with awareness, and to assess the effects of their action in the world around them. Coghlan (2013) advances that, in first person practice, we notice how we think, process data, come to understanding, form judgements, make decisions and take action.

First person action research is one of many methods which can help the facilitative actor to remain continuously open to the self-reflection process. There are two tools which have

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accompanied first person reflection in our career. We do not aim to present them as the only or the best tools for self-reflection, but we share them here as examples of habits which help the facilitative actor to become aware of themselves in the process.

The first tool is keeping a journal, a sort of log of the process, in which it may be useful to reflect on three different levels. One, it is important to include *what* happened. Keep a record of the events that link together to form the process. Two, it is crucial to try to understand *how* and *why* things happened. In other words, to try to understand the relationship between the different events and put down in writing the reflections of the facilitative actor on the cause and effect relationships, and on the stimuli and reactions that occurred. Lastly, it is important to write about the personal positioning, interpretations, hypotheses, emotions, doubts and certainties which the process elicits in the facilitative actor. The journal is always private and honesty with oneself is one of the principles of self-reflection and learning.

The other tool which has helped us in our self-reflection is referred to as debriefing. This is an exercise in which, following a meeting or process with actors, the team of facilitators answers four questions: What happened? How did I feel? How do I think the others felt? What would I change for the next time? Continually answering these questions after each interaction makes it possible to build the habit of associating events with emotions, those of both the facilitators and the actors, and provides a continuous improvement exercise based not only on the rational part of the process, but also on the emotional. One of the outcomes of this exercise is a clearer perception of how the facilitative actor influences the process through their actions.

5.8. **The facilitative actor must be transparent, but not invisible**

Our next argument is that in this relational leadership space where the facilitative actor must be transparent, it is important for them not to become invisible. We view the visibility of the facilitative actor in terms of appropriation of the process.

The TD process is a process cogenerated by the territorial actors and facilitators. However, this process is defined in terms of the path which the decision-maker actor needs to follow to achieve their aims. The facilitative actor plays the part of a companion on the path which is identified primarily with the TD actor.

We have observed that these facilitation processes can frequently be divided into two stages. There is a first stage in which the TD actors cannot clearly see the elements of the path to be followed. It is precisely for this reason that there is often a facilitative actor involved in the process. During the first stage, in which the facilitative actor helps them see the path, perception of the cogenerative nature of the process is very strong and becomes visible to the participants, and sometimes outside this relationship. There is a clear awareness of the cogenerated, shared process. We could say that 'ownership' of the process is held by both the facilitative actors and rest of the TD actors. However, as the learning process moves forward, it becomes internalised. When this works, the actors integrate the new concepts, frameworks and ways of doing things into their routine, and they assimilate them. As a result, the facilitative actors are no longer necessary, the process stops being seen as something shared and the TD actors take on 'ownership' of the process. The result is that some processes which are initially clearly viewed as cogenerated by the facilitative actors and the TD actors, end up being seen as only belonging to the TD actors. In terms of facilitation, being left out of the process for this reason can be considered a success by the facilitative actor. However, on a personal level, when someone is excluded from a process after having devoted so much time to it, this may create a difficult situation.

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We believe that the answer to this dilemma is to consider the facilitative actor, not just as a facilitator, but also as an actor. Part of our contribution in this book is an analytical framewowork which, based on theory, establishes a separation between the reflections, decisions and actions of the actors on one side, and those of the facilitators on the other. The aim is to understand each role separately. But we believe that it is also important to understand the whole facilitative actor, being familiar with each of their roles separately, as well as how these roles interact and influence each other. During the part of their life in which a person takes on the facilitation role, their actor facet becomes subordinate to this facilitation. So that the actors are able maintain their motivation to facilitate and the TD processes are sustainable, it is important for the facilitative actors to also develop themselves as TD actors in this process, approppriating some of the results of the process.

In terms of the sustainability of TD processes, it is important that the facilitative actor be transparent and not manipulate the process by putting their own individual interests ahead of the collective aim. But it is equally important not to render the facilitative actor invisible in their actor facet, reducing them exclusively to a facilitation role.

5.9. **Practice-based reflections on leadership, legitimacy, non-neutrality, transparency and invisibility**

The eight previous sections have focused on presenting our arguments regarding the leadership of the facilitative actor, developing one idea per section. These considerations are based on our practice, but without sharing this, they may be perceived as an abstract argument. For that reason, in this section we will revisit these concepts drawing on our experiences.

5.9.1. *A facilitation dilemma in Gipuzkoa Sarean*

In May 2013, there were a number of meetings in GS to define the future spaces for dialogue between the government of the provincial council and the county actors. It had already been decided that the county development agencies were going to be actors and represent the county in this dialogue. But who at the agency would take on this role as representative?

The dialogue was taking place between the politicians, who were the decision-makers in the process, and the researchers, who facilitated these decision-making processes. There were two types of agency representatives about whom there was immediate agreement. One, the chairpersons, who were the mayors of some of the municipalities which supported the agency, were to take on the role of political representatives of the county. Two, in relation to the day-to-day management of the agencies, their directors would have to be involved. They held the highest technical position in the hierarchy of these organisations.

One of the facilitative researchers suggested including the agency technicians in the process. In the language of the agencies, the staff members involved in implementing the projects or offering specific services are referred to as technicians. The provincial council representatives did not at first view this proposal as appropriate. They pointed out that the technical side was already being represented by the directors, and furthermore, these might feel uncomfortable due to the fact that there were spaces in which their teams would engage in direct dialogue with representatives of the provincial council.

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Over several meetings, the facilitative researcher stuck to her position, arguing that the technicians worked with territorial actors on a daily basis and might have information and knowledge of the territory which the directors, due to their more generalised viewpoint, might not have. In addition, if the goal was to propose a new TD model for Gipuzkoa through the work of these agencies, the directors were going to need people who were qualified to implement this model in their organisations. Finally, the decision was made to include the agency technicians in the process by means of training workshops.

What was the source of the facilitator's position? What was her legitimacy to defend it? The collective narrative of the process indicated that the aim was to democratise the policy through participatory processes. As the protector of this collectively agreed upon voice, the facilitator proposed opening participation up to more actors. In this regard, the legitimacy of her position was founded on the shared narrative. Furthermore, the decision regarding who participates in the process and what type of knowledge they contribute is part of the facilitation decisions.

These two arguments were enough to allow her to present the proposal the first time. In order to successfully maintain her position over time, a third element was important: the politicians in the project had to have enough trust in the facilitative researcher that she was seeking the collective interest and not some other kind of private interest.

At the centre of this, there was one element which was presented during the debate in a transparent manner: The facilitator had worked at a county development agency for six years as a technician. Although at that point she was not, the facilitator had been an agency technician actor.

5.9.2. *Humility as learning based on self-reflection and transparency*

In the following paragraph, we present a first person reflection by the facilitator described in the third person in the previous section (author of this book). The reflection relates to the position on inviting technicians from county development agencies which she maintained in dealing with the actors.

> During the process of dialogue to define who at the agencies should participate, I surprised myself by taking a firm position on the participation of the technicians. I occasionally had doubts, as I had the feeling that my position in favour of the technicians participating in Gipuzkoa Sarean was prior to the methodological reflection that I had proposed in the dialogue. On thinking about my own position, I was aware that I had been a technician at a county development agency and had experienced situations in which I had noted my inability to have my own voice in certain spaces in which the agency was represented by people in other hierarchical positions. I could not help but ask myself if my position in May 2013 reflected the interest of the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa (main actor in the project at that time) or if it was the result of my past as a technician and I wanted to give voice to those in whose place I had previously been. I spoke with a colleague on the research team. This dialogue helped me put the dilemma I felt in these circumstances into words. The second step was to make it clear to the politicians that I had been a technician at one of those agencies and that my position might be influenced, perhaps biased, by that experience. After this, I maintained my opinion that it was beneficial to the process to include the technicians. Reflecting on this experience has helped me to see that the boundary between our positions as actors and as facilitators are blurred, and that I wanted to use this example to counteract the clear-cut way in which we separated the roles. (Miren Larrea, December 2015)

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What our practice shows us is that TD decisions (those of the actors) and facilitation decisions (those of the facilitative actors) are so interwoven as to make it difficult to distinguish between them. This makes the legitimacy of the facilitative actor even more complex, as they have the legitimacy to make facilitation decisions, but not to supplant the actors in their decisions. The solution is to understand that between the decisions of the actors and those of the facilitators, there is an overlapping space in which it is necessary to negotiate. And the legitimacy of the facilitative actor also includes the legitimacy to negotiate when there are conflicting positions between the actors and the facilitative actors.

The answer to these dilemmas requires the facilitative actor to possess a quality which we have not previous discussed, but which we can expound on based on this case: humility. On some occasions, the facilitative actor has a different viewpoint on the processes than that considered by the actors. In the same way that they sometimes need firmness in order to maintain their positions if they understand that they are founded on the shared narrative, at other times they must be humble in order to integrate viewpoints which they do not share into this narrative and make the result their own voice. We return to Freire (2004, p. 60), who states: 'Humility, which here by no means carries the connotation of a lack of self-respect, or resignation, or of cowardice. On the contrary, humility requires courage, self-confidence, self-respect, and respect for others. Humility helps us to understand this obvious truth: No one knows it all; no one is ignorant of everything. We all know something; we are all ignorant of something.'

5.9.3. *Practice-based reflections on invisibility*

In this section, we share two practical examples which have helped us to reflect on visibility and appropriation of the process.

a) Recognition of the facilitative actor's space as a territorial actor

The first reflection arose in Gipuzkoa Sarean while this book was being prepared. When a new government took charge of the process in 2015, it reviewed the project in terms of both the facilitation being done by the researchers in the process (our role as facilitative researchers) and academic production as regards books, articles and training sessions on GS (our role as territorial actors). When planning was undertaken for the first year of the new legislature, 2016, the politicians prioritised our facilitation work over our academic production when allocating funds. Our response was that this put the sustainability of the process at risk, which started a negotiation that led to us being able to fund a certain amount of time to be used for academic production (this book, for example).

We have previous asserted that one way to make TD processes sustainable is to allow the facilitative actor to appropriate of the process as an actor, while at the same time gradually withdrawing from it as a facilitator as the actors appropriate. In this case, supporting the academic production of the facilitative researchers is, in our opinion, a constructive way of allowing them to appropriate of the process in a manner that is not detrimental to the political actors, except in terms of the resulting competition for funds.

Therefore, the new mode of governance, constructed in a cogenerative manner by political actors and facilitative researchers, belongs to the political actors. They are the 'owners' of the direct results of the TD process. But the process also has another outcome, the academic production, of which the researchers appropriate. The consequence of this is that, despite the fact that the facilitative researchers in the process are expected to gradually withdraw as the actors are empowered, the researchers are strengthened as territorial

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actors. This creates better conditions so that in the future they can again perform the role of facilitative actors in other TD processes, which in our opinion, makes these processes sustainable in the long term.

b) Communicating facilitation

Another experience which led us to reflect on the subject of invisibility took place when facilitative technicians from the county development agency Iraurgi Berritzen (development agency for the Urola Medio county of Gipuzkoa) shared a video with us on a process which they had facilitated. It involved five small firms in the machining industry that had created a common brand in order to jointly gain access to markets, offering a more comprehensive range of products and more flexibility in meeting their customers' needs. The video showed the representatives of the firms, and the discourse was heavily focused on the market, in which they talked about the advantages of working together. However, they did not mention the development agency that had created the conditions for the process, nor did the facilitative technician appear. From the point of view of the companies taking over the process, the message was positive. From the point of view of valuing the work of the agencies or future funding for facilitation in TD processes, the facilitative technician had been rendered invisible. In our opinion, this was another example of how rendering the facilitation invisible endangered the sustainability of future TD processes.

We shared this observation with the facilitative technicians and decided to make a new video[9] related to another project in which the aforementioned firms had participated. Space was allocated to the facilitative agency technicians, facilitative government officials and facilitative researchers. This was our experiment to give these people visibility, not as TD actors, but in their capacity as facilitative actors who had created the conditions to enable the firms to reflect, decide and take action. We wanted to convey the idea that collaborative processes in TD do not occur spontaneously and that it is necessary to first invest in building facilitation capabilities in order to then be able to carry out these processes efficiently. We believe that this is a key idea for the sustainability of TD.

5.10. **Closing reflection**

Both this chapter and the preceding one present the facilitative actor as a complex figure faced with many dilemmas. The delicate balance between the role of actor and the role of facilitation, leadership, non-neutrality, transparency and visibility are aspects which have led us (and those with whom we have spoken) to consider questions such as the following: What capabilities does a facilitative actor need? Are facilitative actors born or are they made? Is it possible to train facilitative actors?

The point of departure for this reflection is our conviction that the capabilities which the facilitative actor requires are not the same as those of a professional facilitator, although there is significant overlap. Training facilitative actors therefore becomes terrain to be explored, in which we still have more questions than answers. Despite this, in the next and final chapter of this book, we share our reflections and learning in this area.

[9] At the time of writing, the videos mentioned above can be viewed online at the following URLs: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lM9CsJeq60U and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iTs83UiQmBc

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Chapter 6

Training for facilitation

6.1. **Introduction**

Taking as our point of departure the observation set out at the end of the previous chapter, the initial idea behind putting together this book was to provide our own materials to be used for training facilitators. In this chapter, having presented the capability-building strategy and our interpretation of the facilitator in previous chapters, we come to the debate around whether or not it is possible to train for facilitation. And given that our answer is affirmative, we propose a method for doing so.

As seen in the previous chapter, we have asked ourselves whether our experience makes it possible to generalise about the figure of facilitator or if we should restrict ourselves to setting out our observations regarding the facilitative actor. In Chapter 5, the clear difference between facilitative actors and professional facilitators as regards the claim of neutrality led us to focus our discussion exclusively on the facilitative actor. By contrast, in this chapter we want to place greater importance on the idea that, even with their differences, both facilitative actors and professional facilitators share the same TD processes. We will therefore return to talking more generically about facilitators, while acknowledging that the cases which inspire this chapter are particularly centred on training facilitative actors.

The previous chapters have aimed to help the reader to reflect on their connection to facilitation and potentially become aware that they are a facilitator and that they are surrounded by others who are facilitators as well. Following this reflection, the question which gives rise to this chapter is: What happens when someone becomes aware that they are a facilitator? Most of us feel the need or desire to obtain training and develop our capabilities. Furthermore, on other occasions, it is during the training process when facilitators become aware that this is in fact what they are. In order to strengthen these awareness-raising and training processes, we will devote this final chapter to training for facilitation.

In this chapter, we will use the term training as a synonym for capability-building. The definition of capabilities we will use is from Lusthaus, Anderssen and Murphy (1995), who state that capabilities are the ability which individuals, groups, institutions and systems have to identify and solve their problems and to develop and implement strategies that enable them to achieve their aims. This ability is intended to meet the needs and responsibilities of development in a sustainable way. Javidan (1998) and Sotarauta (2005b) have similar

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definitions, considering capabilities to be the skills to act in specific situations, using the resources available, creating new resources and increasing the region's capacity for innovation.

Drawing on these definitions, our aim in this final chapter is to share how we have been working on capability-building processes for facilitation. Although we believe that there are personal qualities that help in facilitation, particularly those related to the ability to forge ties, seek out dialogue, consensus, etc., these can be improved. Additionally, an awareness of needing to manage the complexity of territorial development has made the task of facilitation more sophisticated. New formats are needed to build new capabilities, at both the individual and collective levels.

In order to tackle this goal, we first consider the link between individual and collective capabilities and the importance of thinking about the development of both levels within the same strategy. We then consider what facilitation capabilities are required for TD, starting with the roles which the facilitator must play and then discussing the individual and collective capabilities required for these. We then ask whether it is possible to provide training in order to generate these capabilities and after responding that there are numerous dimensions of the capabilities that can in fact be dealt with through training processes, we then go on to describe these processes. The descriptions are based on two experiences with training facilitators, one in Gipuzkoa, Basque Country, and the other in Rafaela, Santa Fe, Argentina.

6.2. **The link between individual and collective capabilities for TD facilitation**

Training for facilitation has two dimensions. The first is the individual dimension, which relates to how each person develops new capabilities. However, interpreting TD as a social construction process leads us to collective capabilities, which are those that take shape in collective action. The boundaries between these two types of capabilities are blurred. In the territory, facilitation depends as much on the skills of the facilitators as it does on the rules of the game which the different groups, organisations or networks establish for their interactions. These are part of the collective capabilities.

Consequently, there are capability-building processes based on the individual and the collective which are very closely linked. At the collective level, some rules of the game are considered givens because they have been taken on board during previous socialisation processes, while others are acquired in the course of each new process.

Figure 6. Focus of capability-building processes: individual learning and social construction

Capabilities for facilitation	Individual	Collective
Pre-existing	Innate plus learned	Institutionalised
To be developed	Learning processes	Social construction processes

Our experience in PA and ARTD processes indicates that it is important to work on individual and collective capabilities at the same time, as these interact on an ongoing basis and it is knowledge which is taken in as a whole that obtains the best results. Individual training processes can be conducted in the context of collective processes and it is not

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possible to develop collective capabilities without these in turn affecting individual ones. Paying attention to these interactions strengthens the whole. Therefore, building capabilities is a two-way process between the individual and the collective levels, and it is important to understand that organisations and the territory are constantly 'educating', although these processes are not always labelled as training.

As we indicated earlier, the experiences on which this chapter is built are experiences in training facilitative actors (not professional facilitators). For building or strengthening facilitation capabilities, there is an extensive literature on training techniques for professional facilitators. However, there is a considerable lack of literature regarding training spaces for facilitative actors, in other words, those actors whose legitimacy to facilitate a process has been recognised by a group, but they are not facilitators hired exclusively to perform this function. The reflections in this chapter concentrate on proposing how to build the capabilities of actors who, while still territorial actors, also facilitate emergent social construction processes in complex TD situations.

Returning to the foundations of the PA and ARTD shared in Chapter 1 of this book, it should be noted that training processes, both individual and collective, take on meaning when presented as praxis. For this reason, we do not recommend theoretical learning processes, but rather processes in which theory is continuously tested in action, validating it or setting it aside in order to move forward in the search for new solutions. Building capabilities therefore takes place in spaces which are fed by a continuous process of reflection and action, in which this combination generates change in people and communities.

6.3. **Facilitation capabilities for TD**

This section presents our considerations regarding the capabilities required by the facilitator, allowing us to then focus on how to develop them. It is our belief that this definition of capabilities will evolve in upcoming years, as we delve further into training for facilitators. We present it as a proposal for debate rather than a closed classification.

Before setting out the capabilities to be developed, in the first subsection we present the roles of the facilitator, then move on to considering the individual capabilities required to perform these roles, and end with a reflection on the collective capabilities linked to facilitation.

The facilitator's roles are described in terms of a series of things which this person does. It is important to remember that, although we are concentrating on the figure of facilitator as a category for analysis, facilitation is carried out in teams and the roles presented below correspond to this team, rather than to one person in particular. Under no circumstances do we wish this section to convey the idea that the facilitator must be a sort of superwoman or superman who can perform all of these functions at the same time.

6.3.1. *Facilitator roles in territorial development*

The roles presented below were defined for the first time in Costamagna and Larrea (2015) as roles shared by both the AP and ARTD. In this section we take a further step forward in developing them. All of these roles are framed within TD processes understood as complex processes in which the solutions require emergent social construction strategies. These are the roles of the facilitator in the capability-building strategy for TD.

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a) Creating spaces for dialogue

Dialogue is one of the essential core elements of our approach to TD. Dialogue is not merely talk, it is closely linked to processes of change. It is not possible to be part of a true process of dialogue without changing or producing change in others. The TD facilitator creates these spaces. This entails not only accompanying the decisions regarding who should participate, but also, what role each person should play, what are the aims of the space and what are the rules of the game. Furthermore, in practice, the facilitator encourages, attracts and motivates these actors so that they will be part of these spaces for dialogue.

b) Constructing a shared vision

A shared vision is the result of dialogue and enables territorial actors to take action, although not necessarily together. A shared vision does not mean that everyone in the territory thinks alike, but rather that they are familiar with the positions of the other actors and make an effort to understand them. In order to be able to construct this shared vision, the facilitator engages in the social construction processes considered in Chapter 3. Together with the participants in the process, they construct a shared language which enables them to understand one another and produce a narrative of the future that they want for the territory. In order to do this, the facilitator not only puts into play what the participants interpret as a given or objective reality, but also works with the subjective perceptions of the participants and, by connecting them, helps to construct an intersubjective view of the process.

c) Managing situations of conflict

Conflict management is closely tied to the process of dialogue. It is a hallmark of ARTD and also important in the PA. One of the main challenges facilitators encounter is that territorial actors frequently keep their conflicts on the tacit level. The main reason for this is that clearly stating the conflict has a price. From an individual point of view, it may be easier not to take on this cost and to maintain a level of conflict which makes it possible to continue moving forward, although things may not be ideal. In these situations, the facilitator identifies the conflicts that are slowing down the TD processes. Once these have been identified, they determine whether engaging in a process of explicitly stating and resolving the conflict could be beneficial, or whether in contrast, doing so would have more costs than benefits. If the elements are there to resolve the conflict in a constructive way, the facilitator helps the actors to clearly lay out the conflict in order to work towards a solution.

d) Forging relationships of trust

Together with developing spaces for dialogue and constructing a shared vision, forging relationships of trust is a basic role of the facilitator. Trust is something which must be built in the medium and long term. Often the strategy for building trust involves moving rapidly from discussion to small actions in the territory, which serve to generate trust much more than discourse. In order to do this, the facilitator continuously establishes a link between reflection and action, responding to the expectations generated in the dialogue with the results of the action.

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e) Constructing shared agendas

Shared agendas are a tool for moving from reflection to action. We believe that a shared agenda does not necessarily require formal documents or detailed action plans. A shared agenda is in place when enough agreement is built among the actors to take action. And this agreement can be informal. In constructing these agendas, what is important is to reach a consensus regarding not only *what* is to be done, but also *how* work will be done to achieve this. Dealing with the how is an important challenge facing the facilitator, as ideas are frequently presented based on *implementing* solutions. This may be valid in simple or complicated situations, but in complex situations, as we have discussed throughout this book, it is necessary to undertake social construction processes. Given that the facilitator does not normally participate in all of the actions on the shared agenda, not only do they facilitate social construction processes, but they also empower the actors to create shared agendas so that they can develop social construction processes.

f) Connecting the territory with outside schools of thought and debate

Although we frequently simplify things by saying that the facilitator fosters dialogue among territorial actors, it is important to open up this dialogue to outside influences. These sometimes come in the form of schools of thought, the observations of specific authors, political approaches, etc. The facilitator attempts to integrate these influences into the process of dialogue in a critical manner, whether through the participation of people who can share these perspectives with territorial actors, or by presenting them as debates. In order to be able to do this, the facilitator participates in networks with actors from outside the territory, frequently on the international level, in order to keep up-to-date on emergent debates which have the potential to constructively impact on the development of the territory.

g) Linking theory and practice, reflection and action to build collective capabilities in the territory

To some degree, this role brings together all of the others, but we believe it is important to underscore that the facilitator creates the conditions for praxis. They keep alive reflection on what is being done and continuously promote action based on these reflections. If we had to choose one image of the facilitator, we would say that it is the person who constantly moves the wheel that shifts from reflection to action and from action to reflection.

6.3.2. *The individual capabilities of the facilitator*

In practice, it is difficult to precisely identify the dividing line between the individual capabilities of a facilitator and the collective capabilities of an organisation or the community in which the facilitation takes place. In this section, we consider a number of capabilities which help the facilitator perform the roles presented in the previous section. We propose them as analytical categories in order to reflect on the individual dimension. However, we are aware that they take shape within collective processes, and therefore, in practice it is not possible to distinguish individual and collective capabilities in as clear-cut a manner as we present here.

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In addition, following the same argument as with the roles, this set of capabilities must take shape within a group, and we cannot expect to find them concentrated in a single facilitator.

a) The capability of rallying others

In a situation of territorial complexity in which hierarchies are blurred and leadership is defined in terms of the capacity of leaders to influence organisations other than their own, the capability of rallying territorial development actors, of uniting them around a process, is a crucial one. It is only by doing so that it becomes possible to embark on action-oriented dialogue.

The capability of rallying others has a strong organisational and community dimension. However, we also wanted to present it in this section devoted to individual capabilities in order to point out that, as a result of their past relationships with territorial actors, facilitators may have an asset which enables them to construct spaces for dialogue because they are capable of rallying the actors. This capability is normally built up through a long contextual learning process, in which the facilitator not only is familiar with the problems of the different actors and their history in trying to solve them, but also has gained their trust in order to deal with the issue.

b) The capability of reading the process

The capability of reading the process entails being able to visualise, by observing what happens, the links between what might appear to be isolated events. This is not a matter of simply listening to what is said, but also of knowing how to interpret the presence or absence of actors, the things they say and those they do not say, the actions that take place and those that do not. Reading the process means understanding the relationships among all of these. All of this entails being able to work with the objectivated reality and the explicit rules of the game, as well as the subjective interpretations of the participants.

Reading the process is not done solely in retrospect, it is also constructed with an eye to the future. The facilitator requires this skill in order to discern possible paths and propose those they consider most feasible based on their reading of the process.

c) The capability of inducing others to reflect on the process

The facilitator must create the conditions that enable the other actors to reflect, decide and take action. In order to do this, it is not enough for them to have the ability to read the process or look into the future. Years of facilitation teach the facilitator to understand that it does little good to 'relate' to the actors what the facilitator sees. This can be the first step in a much more complex process, which is that the actors follow their own path of reflection, which leads to their own conscious reading of the process.

What the actors read in the process may coincide with what the facilitator reads. And the facilitation undoubtedly has an influence on the path that the TD actors see going forward. However, the actors' reading of the process is different from that of the facilitator. In such situations, it is important for the facilitator to bear in mind that the aim is not to lead the actors through the process that he or she visualises. The aim is to utilise the narrative of this path as an element of reflection and cause the actors to construct their own reading of the process, on which to build their own decisions and actions.

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In short, this is the capability of inducing the actors to reflect through their own reading of the process, guiding the action towards the actor's vision and not that of the facilitator.

d) The capability of supporting the reflection-action-reflection transition

At no time can the facilitator make any commitment for the actor or make the decisions which are the latter's responsibility. And of course, they cannot take action for the actor. However, what they can do is, over the course of the TD process, put pressure on the actors who do the reflecting to make commitments, decide and take action, and put pressure on the actors who take action to reflect before doing so again.

The capability of supporting the transformation from reflection to action sometimes requires drawing actors' attention to situations which have become oversaturated with reflection. In these situations, more reflection will not improve the construction of answers to the problem posed. The way to continue moving forward in these cases is to take action based on the existing level of reflection and then advance to a new stage at which it is possible to reflect and decide on the action. Other times, what is required of the facilitator is to reduce the pressure on the actors to take action, and invite them to reflect more patiently before deciding.

It is not easy to develop this capability because there is no exact measure of when a reflection process has reached its saturation point or when a decision requires deeper reflection. There is no recipe for knowing when to move from reflection to action or from action to reflection. Nor is there any measure of how much pressure the actors can take from the facilitator. Our experience shows that sometimes, if not enough pressure is placed on the actors, the process stalls; and if there is too much pressure, it can break down.

In short, this capability of the facilitator is related to creating a balance, which is often delicate, that makes it possible to transition from reflection to action and from action to reflection.

6.3.3. *Collective capabilities in the capability-building strategy for TD*

Facilitation capabilities, which are the focus of this chapter, are part of the capabilities for TD. In the capability-building strategy, collective capabilities for TD are both the middle and the end of the process. They are the middle in the sense that they make it possible to tackle the reflection and action processes in order to resolve the current problems in the territory with greater assurance. They are the end because TD consists of not only solving the specific problems of today, but also building capabilities which will enable the territory to collectively solve problems that arise in the future. As we indicated in Chapter 3, these capabilities are the result of social construction processes.

Collective capabilities take shape in interactions within the territory which are not homogeneous. Normally there are denser connections between some actors and it is in these spaces of high relational density where collective capabilities develop. However, there are also elements which are highly integrated into the culture of the territory and cause some capabilities to be internalised by larger groups of actors. The following is our tentative proposal for collective capabilities linked to TD facilitation:

a) The capability of self-visualisation as subject-territory

This capability is related to the sense of identity as a territory, together with the capability of understanding the territory in a systemic manner, based on complex interactions among

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the actors. This combination of a sense of belonging and a systemic viewpoint translates into the ability to manage the territory as a collective subject who can make decisions regarding its future and have an impact on it. Without this ability to see oneself collectively as a subject, it is difficult to include territorial logic in the reflections and actions of the process. This logic is not unique or homogeneous, but it is important for it to exist alongside other individual, organisational, sectorial and multilevel logics, among others.

b) The capability of territorial dialogue

Different collectives or communities have different capabilities for dialogue. Considering that dialogue is the central process of the capability-building strategy, we could say that the collective capability to face the problems and challenges of the territory through dialogue is what makes TD sustainable. But, as we have already asserted, dialogue is not just talking. We stress that engaging in dialogue is a process of mutual influence among the participants, which only occurs when there is a change in their different positionings. The collective capability of dialogue is therefore the ability to change as a result of interaction with the other territorial actors.

c) The capability of praxis

In presenting the PA and ARTD, we pointed out that praxis entails a certain relationship between theory and practice, in which the theory is validated through its practical utility. In other words, a theory is valid if it helps to solve a problem or tackle a challenge. From this perspective, we present the collective capability of praxis as the capability of a collective to continuously test its theoretical frameworks (normally found in discourse) in practice and adapt them to the extent which their validity for solving problems is demonstrated or not. It could also be interpreted as the ability to continuously reduce the dissociation between discourse and practice in TD processes, the ability to seek consistency between what is said and what is done, understanding that this is never a perfect fit.

d) The capability of collective action

This is the ability to ensure that the dialogue in the territory does not exclusively emphasise change in individual behaviours, but that it also entails shared actions to solve the territory's problems and tackle its challenges. We could say that this is the ability to put the capability of self-visualisation as subject-territory into action, so that beyond synergies —which involve a mutually beneficial relationship between a 'you' and an 'I'— it is possible to build an 'us' in action and not just in reflection.

6.4. **Is it possible to train someone in facilitation?**

Considering that facilitation occurs in the complex intersection between the individual capabilities of facilitators and the collective capabilities of the community participating in the process, the question arises: Is it possible to train facilitators to perform this role?

Our answer is that not only is it possible, but it is necessary to provide training for facilitators. However, although some of these activities can be done in a classroom, it important for this to be supplemented by new training formats in the context of TD processes, as these processes make up the environment in which the individual and collective dimensions are constructed in an interconnected fashion.

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Consequently, the materials and methodologies that are to be prepared with the aim of training facilitators must be included in TD processes, and in this space of interconnection between the individual and collective dimensions. This represents a break with a linear conception of training as something prior to TD, instead presenting it as an integral part of the process. It is not possible to fully train facilitators for TD outside the TD process itself.

In order to develop this argument properly, we propose a distinction between the concept of training facilitators on one hand, and building the capabilities of facilitators on the other. We will use the term training to refer to a series of activities explicitly aimed at building facilitation capabilities for TD processes which are designed by trainers (frequently from universities or other organisations dedicated to training) and take the form of classes or workshops in a classroom environment. We will use the term building capabilities with a broader meaning, which includes training activities as well as the daily activities of TD, which have meeting spaces, frequently led by actors from the political or production sides. These spaces often do not have building capabilities as their explicit aim. However, they constitute the main context in which the collective dimension of facilitation capabilities is developed. The challenge of building facilitation capabilities is connecting the training spaces and the TD spaces not designed as training spaces, but which we define as capability-building spaces, so that they feed each other.

Our discussion in the rest of the chapter is based on several experiences with building facilitation capabilities, especially one in Gipuzkoa, Basque Country, and another in Rafaela, Santa Fe, Argentina. The first, GS, involves a perspective on constructing a new multilevel mode of governance by a regional government and follows the methodology of ARTD. The framework for the second, carried out in Rafaela under the name facilitator training, is an organisational transformation within the municipal government and follows the PA methodology. Both processes share the conceptualisation of facilitation found in this book.

Returning to an observation made in the introduction to the book, it is also important to point out that these experiences of capability-building took place in very different political and social contexts. Therefore, the experiences of the participants contain nuances which illustrate that each territory builds capabilities suited to its context which in their diversity and richness, go far beyond the typology we propose.

Drawing on these experiences, we would like to begin by reflecting on some of the important stages in capability-building for facilitation. This is a preliminary consideration, still very closely linked to our specific experiences, the development of which presents us with a challenge for the future. The stages on which we reflect are: construction of hybrid spaces between politics and research/training, analysis of the situation of the TD, awareness of the role of facilitation and training processes. The stages selected reflect our experiences. We therefore propose them as observations based on practice and not as a closed categorisation.

6.5. **Capability-building for facilitation of territorial development: description of stages**

6.5.1. *Construction of hybrid spaces between politics and research/training*

We have maintained that TD processes are the context in which facilitation capabilities can be developed most efficiently. The majority of the TD processes on which we have worked to build facilitation capabilities have been government led, with other actors being included to participate in the process (primarily from the knowledge system and the production system and increasingly more from civil society). Thus, universities and other

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actors from the knowledge system whose mission includes training are invited to take part in processes led by the political side. This has been the case in the two experiences analysed. This leads us to ask how knowledge actors can be integrated into a process initially headed by the political side in a way that constructively tackles the development of facilitation capabilities.

In seeking an answer, we turn to Costamagna (2015), who posits the need for the political side to create spaces which incorporate training, and the training side to create spaces which incorporate politics. It is in these hybrid spaces where there is the greatest potential for the emergence of training processes incorporated into TD processes. Without the existence of these spaces, the most likely scenario would be TD processes that do not include capability-building as an integral part of the process or training processes that are disconnected from TD processes. In either of these cases, the potential for tackling the individual and collective dimensions of capabilities for TD at the same time would be lost.

The creation of Gipuzkoa Sarean was driven by the political side, the result of the political decision to generate social capital in the territory in order to foster competitiveness. But one of its specific qualities was that it was proposed as a research process in which politicians and researchers collaborated from the start. In the case of the municipality of Rafaela, the mayor, together with the team for his second term (2015-2019), began to design and put into practice a new management model for the government. In order to do so, he engaged in a dialogue with Praxis Research Institute (Rafaela Regional Faculty of the National Technological University) to define new spaces in which to carry out this process. In both cases, the spaces were political, research and training hybrids. As a result, they overcame the separation between training spaces and TD decision-making spaces, and produced the connections between training and broader capability-building processes discussed above.

6.5.2. *Analysis of the situation*

All TD processes involve a number of tacit or explicit analyses of the situation. There are documents (assessments, plans, etc.) which set down in writing the problems identified and the processes designed to solve them. But there are also interpretations of the problems and potential solutions which each actor retains without sharing them openly with the others (or they share them informally in small groups).

Reflection on the analysis stage of the two experiences has led us to the two dimensions which we present below. We have termed the first the *what* and the *how* axis of the analysis, and the second the praxis axis of the analysis.

a) The *what* and *how* axis of situation analysis

Our experience suggests that the way in which the analysis of the situation is carried out influences whether or not the need for facilitators explicitly emerges. In order to simplify the different types of analysis, we return to the difference between the *what* and the *how* of TD discussed earlier.

During the 2009-2011 period, GS conducted an extremely exhaustive analysis of the social capital of Gipuzkoa, using various methodological approaches. One of the common characteristics of these analyses was that they concentrated on what we define as the *what* of social capital. The analyses attempted to measure the social capital in its different interpretations and pointed to *what* had to be changed. During the 2011-2013 period, the project tackled the debate regarding *how* change was going to be generated. This was now

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presented not in terms of social capital, but of a new TD model. The critical elements of this *how* that emerged were the concepts of participation (which came primarily from the government's policy plan) and dialogue (which came from the researchers' methodological approach). The main analysis concentrated on understanding how the actors in the TD processes related to each other. Defining the *whats* of the TD that were to be tackled was postponed until the new mode of governance which would make it possible to define them in a participatory manner was in place. In this discussion of the *how*, the need for people to create the conditions for the specified participatory process to occur emerged organically.

The main learning that came out of these processes was that the need to train facilitators is unlikely to emerge strongly from a process of analysis that is focused on *what* must be changed and measuring what is to be changed. However, it emerges relatively organically when the analysis is aimed at understanding *how* to tackle TD processes.

b) The praxis axis of analysis

The process in Rafaela reinforces the above assessment, underscoring another aspect: that of praxis. In Rafaela, the coordinating body for the process (a group made up of politicians from the municipality and researchers) began with an analysis which from the beginning included the need to strengthen networks and spaces for dialogue in order to improve the organisational model of the municipality. They had conducted an analysis based on the *how* and set goals for the process linked to this: adding more committed people, working on relationships and teamwork, building capabilities, and managing coordination and dialogue among secretariats and in cross-cutting departments. However, it was not until attaining these goals posed problems in practice (communication among groups, participation of the ministers, etc.) that an analysis of the *how* was linked to real daily practice.

Our assessment in this case is that a valid analysis must be proposed based on *how* problems in practice, not in theory. It does no good to apply a sort of universal recipe which states that what must be done from the perspective of the process is to strengthen networks and build dialogue as an analysis of the *how*. An analysis of the *how* must be based on real problems experienced by the participants in their effort to change processes. This link between theory and practice is what we have framed as praxis throughout this book.

As a result of this learning, we maintain that it is important to conduct initial TD analyses which take a balanced approach to dealing with both the what and the how of the process. This allows the need for facilitators to emerge at the start of the process, and not, as frequently occurs, because it stalls. However, the importance of an early analysis of the how should not lead us to incorporate a generic analysis derived from theory into the process. Rather, it should be sought in the interaction between this theory and practice. Thus, the process of analysis requires moving along two axes: one, the *what* and *how* axis, and the other, the reflection and action axis. Developing these axes helps to build capabilities, both individual, by the process facilitators, and collective, among all territorial actors (including facilitative actors).

6.5.3. *Awareness of the role of facilitation*

In our careers, we have come across few projects which began with a clear awareness on the part of the actors that they needed facilitation or facilitators. Reflection on the role of facilitation has normally arisen in contexts where the process is blocked.

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We return to our experiences to share how this awareness is built. During the 2011-2013 period, the only type of facilitator that had been explicitly mentioned in GS was the facilitative researcher, inspired by the action research literature. At a certain point in the process, one of the politicians pointed out a problem: the project spaces that did not include researchers were not working. Dialogue between politicians and researchers led to the conclusion that they were not working because they were not being facilitated. This posed the question of who could facilitate the project's political spaces where it was not feasible to include researchers. The need to begin discussing the role of facilitative politician became self-evident. This was defined as politicians who needed to create the conditions to ensure that dialogue on the project remained alive in those political decision-making spaces to which the researchers had no access. Thus, based on the distinction between facilitative researcher and facilitative politician, and agreement among politicians and researchers that they all had to facilitate, the concept of facilitator as an adjective (the facilitative actor) which we have discussed in previous chapters began to evolve. This assessment was also what gave rise to the first training process for facilitators in GS.

In the case of Rafaela, the reflection process to create awareness of the need for facilitators was more organised and took place at a series of workshops aimed at producing reflection on the need for facilitation, and therefore, making potential facilitators aware of their own role in the process.

One of the results of a collective becoming aware of the need for facilitation is that a contextual and shared definition of what facilitation means is constructed within the process. Below we provide the definition of facilitation proposed by one of the participants, which forms part of the contextual meaning attributed to the term by this group:

> [Facilitation] is making things happen more easily. Removing obstacles. Looking at internal processes. [The facilitator] is the person who can help dissolve stiffness in compact spaces.

In this awareness-raising process, there emerged two debates which illustrate how the people brought into the process as facilitators constructed the meaning of this term through their learning process. One was the debate around the *responsibility* of the group (of the facilitators) with regard to change. At the start of the workshop, there was a tendency to locate responsibility in the other actors, as they did not see themselves as part of the problem or the solution. As they began to view themselves as facilitators, an awareness of responsibility within the process emerged. In the second debate, the need to construct a shared interpretation of complex problems began gathering strength. The facilitators started off with the feeling that the organisation did not accept complexity, but as they moved forward, they began to consider the shared assessment that it was facilitators, not just the bosses, who were partially responsible for this.

Increased awareness of the part facilitators play in TD thus has two dimensions. First, the actors in the process must become aware that the most suitable way to move forward is for certain people to facilitate the process, with this space and this function being recognised. Second, it is essential for potential facilitators to become aware of their own role and agree to perform it. This second dimension entails realising that they can influence the process, and therefore, that part of the responsibility for ensuring that the processes work is held by them. This stage of awareness is seldom included in regular 'training' formats, but it is an essential element of processes intended to build capabilities for TD facilitation.

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6.5.4. *The explicit training process*

When dealing with classroom processes that complement capability-building in other TD spaces, what the experiences analysed indicate is the importance of working with the concept of praxis through ongoing reflection and action, and consideration of the problems experienced. This moves us away from exclusively theoretical reflection, as well as the purely practical, in which things are done without any reflection on why, to what end and how they are done.

The format of classroom processes varies. We could draw a continuum with one end being decision-making spaces that incorporate reflection, frequently through the participation of researchers or trainers. This would transform the actors' everyday spaces into virtual classrooms in which time is devoted to gaining distance from daily practice and incorporating theory as an additional tool for reflection. At the other end would be training spaces designed as such and frequently implemented at universities or other training facilities, where work is done on problems which the participants bring in for reflection. In the middle we would find different definitions of spaces that are a hybrid of reflection and practice, training and policy, which make it possible to work on solving the problems posed with varying levels of intensity.

The need to adapt to each context makes it difficult to propose a standard design for facilitator training. In each training space there is a different link between the change to be carried out, the degree to which the participants are convinced of the need for facilitation, their level of awareness with regard to being responsible for this facilitation, and their predisposition to devote time to training. With these ingredients, the trainer is transformed into a facilitator of the training process and must create the conditions to enable the participants to train themselves, taking into account that this is a complex process and that training is a social construction process.

As a specific example of reflection, we present some questions which were used in the training process at Rafaela to help the participants reflect on their facilitation:

- How did you construct spaces for dialogue in response to this problem?
- Did you construct a shared vision? What was the role of the facilitators in constructing the shared vision?
- How did you manage conflict?
- How did you forge relationships of trust?
- How did you construct shared agendas?
- How did you create a connection between your case and theoretical reflections?
- Do you reflect in order to learn from the processes on which you are working?

Some of the reflections which came out in response to these questions were:

- The existence of different perceptions is something we deal with every day.… What happens when the other party does not see things the same way?
- The perception of the problem defines how we work and the viewpoint on the problem is related to where we end up. How do we involve the other person?
- It seems like the other person's problem is simpler.
- What can we do so that the actor … identifies the role of the facilitator?
- A complex problem can have facilitators and not be solved.
- The complexity lies in the actors and not in the problem. The actors make problems complex.

With these questions, our aim is to propose that these training processes are open processes in which we frequently have more questions than answers, but which make it

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possible to outline the figure of facilitator and their function in TD. In our interpretation of TD, defining facilitation is part of the social construction process, and training spaces for facilitators are the most favourable space we have found in which to deal with it openly. The key to ensuring that these training processes contribute to building capabilities is their connection with the other TD processes, among which we have highlighted three stages: construction of hybrid spaces, analysis of the situation and awareness of facilitation.

We conclude the chapter by noting that the two cases analysed are still operating, and in both processes we continue working and tackling the challenge of supporting the construction of individual and collective capabilities. The learning shared in this chapter represents an initial consideration, which we hope to supplement through the experience of future learning.

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Final reflections

Having reached this point, we would like to share with the reader of this book our reflections on the writing process and the learning we have gleaned along the way. On these pages we have presented our proposed capability-building approach for TD. And the essence of this approach is paying attention to the learning obtained from each process. The process of writing this book was not one of recounting what we already knew, but a process of discovery and learning. At the start of this journey, we did not yet know what we have shared in chapter after chapter.

When we began the journey, we felt that we were facilitators, but we would have found it difficult to offer a clear definition of facilitation. We were inspired by reading Paulo Freire, who talks about learning we carry in the body which is relearned through writing. We carried the experience of years of facilitation in the body, but we had to relearn in order to be able to structure and communicate it.

And so in these final reflections we return to four subjects shared in the previous pages which for us have represented turning points in how we understand TD facilitation. They are our learning process.

Complexity and emergent strategies as a framework for facilitation

When we began the process of writing the book, we started from the viewpoint of the figure of facilitator within the framework of TD. However, there are different ways to approach TD and those we present —the PA and ARTD— are little known. We were aware that the most widespread ways of understanding TD do not lead to reflection on the need for facilitation, and that if we wanted this figure to be understood, we would have to consider not only facilitation, but also an entire TD framework into which the figure of facilitator might fit.

The main concepts which helped us to construct the framework we have termed the *capability-building approach for TD* were complexity and emergent strategies. As a result, the first two chapters emerged from our need to clearly lay out why we believed that facilitation is necessary in TD and how to construct a narrative of something which had previously been essentially a very strong intuition based on our own experience. The process of constructing this narrative led us to posit that TD processes take place in complex contexts. We thus became aware that until now we had been trying to solve complex problems as if they were simple or complicated. All of this led us to question the planning perspective as we had been replicating it, coming to understand it as a useful

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tool when faced with simple or complicated problems, but one that must be supplemented by emergent approaches in order to deal with complex problems. And so, following the thread of our own arguments, we defined a facilitator as someone who, in the context of complex problems, creates the conditions to enable the strategy to emerge in the most fluid manner possible, thus creating the conditions that enable the actors, step by step, to reflect, decide and take action.

Setting out a constructionist approach to TD

In response to the arguments around complexity and emergent strategies discussed above, we asked ourselves: What does a facilitator do to create these conditions? Our answer was that they employ social construction processes. This is possibly the biggest leap we made in the book in terms of our own learning path, as the answer comes not from the literature on TD, in which we were trained, but from the literature and frameworks of constructionism.

The reason for this leap cannot be understood solely within the framework of this book and its authors, as it occurred in the context of a process shared by a team of researchers with whom we have spent years reflecting on the contributions of the PA and AR for TD.

From this perspective, the book is a step forward along a path established by, among other things, a previous book titled *Desarrollo territorial e investigación acción* (*Territorial Development and Action Research*) (Karlsen y Larrea, 2014b). The following is an excerpt from a review of that book:

> Although the book raises the phenomenon of power … the authors stop short of exploring the implications for their practice of this phenomenon. One possible reason for this —one which they hint at in their analysis of their professional location within a university context— is that of the opposition to alternative research methodologies within the academy and mainstream research communities. As a consequence, they fail to locate action research in a constructionist research paradigm. (Dovey, 2014, pp. 405-408)

To some extent, this critique of our earlier processes set us the challenge of openly recognising the importance of constructionism to our practice and also integrating it into our conceptual frameworks and academic contributions.

This journey included a discussion on the philosophy of science which we have chosen to omit from Chapter 3 in order to stick to the common thread of the capability-building approach. However, in these final reflections, in which we share our learning process in writing the book, it seems appropriate to present it. In order to do so, we turn to an excerpt from one of our previous publications:[10]

> Opting for action research has meant pulling out ontological and epistemological assumptions that underlie our approach to research by the roots.
>
> Ontological assumptions point to the nature of social reality and what types of phenomena exist or can exist, the conditions for their existence and how they relate to each other. Our ontological assumptions have evolved from a realist perspective, in which we accepted that reality exists independently of us, to a more

[10] Miren Larrea, blog post, Orkestra-Basque Institute of Competitiveness, 20 May 2015.

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idealist position, in which we understand that social reality is made up of shared interpretations which social actors, including researchers, produce and reproduce. In doing so, we became aware that

> *Nobody can be there 'just checking'. We cannot study the world without engagement as if suddenly, mysteriously, we had nothing to do with it. (Paulo Freire)*

Epistemological assumptions indicate what types of knowledge are possible, how we can know about things and when this knowledge is suitable and legitimate. Our journey has taken us from an empiricist perspective to constructionism. The first caused us to see ourselves as observers trained to analyse reality without distorting it and so arrive at reliable knowledge. Today, our work is based on the importance of day-to-day knowledge derived from the effort made by people to find meaning in their encounters with both the physical world and other people. As a result of this recognition, we accepted that social scientific knowledge is the result of the reinterpretation of this everyday knowledge by social researchers, translating it into technical language. Lastly, we accepted that this reinterpretation reflects our point of view as researchers and all observation is marked by our theoretical assumptions.

Chapter 3 can be interpreted as part of this movement towards setting out a constructionist approach to TD and on writing it, we had doubts as to how we should communicate this. Putting together the chapter required adopting a multidisciplinary approach and we were not used to the language of sociology that fills the chapter. We are also aware, through feedback from those who have read the chapter, that it is the one which our TD colleagues found most challenging to read. It is our belief that beyond any difficulties which we ourselves may have had in expressing our message clearly, the difficulty our research community encountered in integrating this language is due to the fact that it requires an effort to strengthen our prior frameworks with others that are different. This requires an effort, but at the same time, opens the door to new paths. We believe that these new paths can expand our capacity as a community of TD trainers and researchers to solve complex problems.

Clarification of the concepts of facilitation and facilitator

As we have indicated, the journey of writing this book began with a very strong intuition that we performed a role (facilitation in TD) which was rarely discussed as we experienced it in practice. The process of writing the book has involved teasing out and clearly stating things that we took for granted and that were not easy to explain. The work may bear some similarities to that of a sculptor, who with each stroke causes a figure to emerge from the stone. Each reflection, each debate and discussion clarified our positioning with regard to facilitation, and so we have constructed our arguments along the way. One of these arguments is the distinction between facilitator as a noun and facilitative as an adjective. This distinction now allows us to propose arguments which were previously unavailable to us, as we lacked the concepts that have helped us to do so.

We have also progressively outlined our arguments on common meanings assigned to facilitation which we did not share. We have overcome the dichotomy between leader and facilitator, arguing that the facilitator is a leader, although they exercise a specific type of leadership. And so we arrived at one of the relationships which we found most challenging to clarify, that of facilitator and actor. Our interpretation that the figure we really wanted to see emerge was that of facilitative actor —who in TD processes sometimes plays the part

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of actor, sometimes facilitator— took shape during the final stages of the writing process. The relationship between the actor and the facilitator has been a dilemma which has accompanied us along most of the journey of writing this book.

Lastly, this process of conceptual clarification has been important not just with an eye to writing the book, but also in the training processes we describe in Chapter 6, which have been exceptional laboratories in which to construct our perspective.

Defining elements for building facilitation capabilities

Another idea present from the start which did not take on its final form until the end of the writing process is the approach to training facilitators. We knew from the beginning that we wanted to write a book that would help facilitators to develop the capabilities required to perform this role in TD. We also knew that we were both engaged in training processes for facilitators. As a result, we hoped to be able to bring new practice-based learning to this book format. However, it was not until the end of the process that we fashioned our argument regarding the centrality of the axis that connects the individual and the collective. This led us to make explicit something that was implicit in our practice: that the best training in facilitation is that which takes place as part of the TD process.

Closing reflection

We set off on this journey planning to put together material which would be useful to other facilitators to develop their capabilities. At the end of the road, in retrospect, we hope that our main contribution will be creating the conditions for two types of recognition. The first is recognition by the TD community of the importance of the figure of facilitator. If the reader is a TD actor with decision-making power over these processes, we hope that reading this book will help them to make facilitation visible in their future decisions. The second recognition is related to first-hand reflection by the reader. If the reader of this book is a facilitator, we hope that our experiences and reflections have helped you to (re)discover yourself as such, and especially, have spurred your enthusiasm for continuing along the path of TD facilitation.

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List of abbreviations

AR	Action research
ARTD	Action research for territorial development
DFG	Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
GS	Gipuzkoa Sarean
IAF	International Association of Facilitators
LED	Local economic development
MIF	Multilateral Investment Fund
PA	Pedagogical approach to territorial development
RED DETE ALC	Territorial Development Network for Latin America and Caribbean
TD	Territorial development

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Facilitative actors in territorial development are people who 'on an individual basis or as part of a team of facilitators, take on the role of creating the conditions that enable other territorial development actors to reflect, decide and take action'. However, these facilitators carry out their work without frameworks, definitions, examples or a shared language. Such elements could help raise awareness of this facilitation and the mode of action it entails in complex social and political processes.

In this book, the authors focus on a capability-building approach for territorial development which incorporates training facilitative actors within a collective strategy that does not occur spontaneously, but is produced by strengthening democratic processes based on praxis.

'The book will be of interest to all professionals who work with people from the perspective of horizontal relationships, mutual respect and the expression of individual and collective creative potential.'

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