

COMMUNICATIVE ACTION IN COLLABORATIVE GOVERNANCE: STRIVING FOR CONSENSUS TO CREATE KNOWLEDGE AND MAKE COLLECTIVE DECISIONS

Xavier Palomares-Cano

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Doctoral Thesis

**Communicative Action in Collaborative Governance:
Striving for Consensus to Create Knowledge and
Make Collective Decisions**

Xavier Palomares-Cano

2018



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Xavier Palomares-Cano

2018

Supervisor: Dr. Jaume Guia Julve

Doctoral Programme in Tourism

Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD at the University of Girona



Thesis Supervision Certificate

I hereby certify that the thesis “Communicative Action in Collaborative Governance: Striving for Consensus to Create Knowledge and Make Collective Decisions”, presented by Xavier Palomares-Cano to obtain the PhD degree, has been completed under my supervision and meets the requirements to opt for the mention “International Doctorate” from the University of Girona.

Dr. Jaume Guia Julve
University of Girona

Girona, 17.07.2018

Abstract

This thesis adopts Habermas's theory of communicative action to explore how consensus-oriented actions contribute to knowledge creation and collective decision-making in collaborative governance processes. Through studying a case of collaborative governance in the city of Berlin, various analytical generalizations concerning these research topics are developed.

The case study shows that when participants orient their actions towards reaching a consensus, they are capable of sharing and assessing knowledge related to desires and emotions, facts, and norms. Furthermore, they can use this knowledge to collectively define problems and propose solutions that meet the goals of stakeholders as far as possible. Nevertheless, acting communicatively does not guarantee that the proposed solutions are adopted. When interests are opposed, participants often have to renounce certain individual wants in order to make collective decisions. If they are not able to prioritize collective goals over individual ones, collaborative governance undertakings might end without agreements. Taking into consideration the results of the analysis, this dissertation proposes differentiating between two types of consensus: communicative consensus, which is attained when participants reach an understanding on the validity of knowledge; and consensus on decisions, which is achieved when they collectively agree on how to act. This research demonstrates that by using communicative action theory, events and interactions can be analysed from the perspective of participants who employ language and communicative rationality to shape collaborative governance processes.

Resum

Aquesta tesi adopta la teoria de l'acció comunicativa de Habermas per explorar com les accions orientades a obtenir el consens contribueixen a la creació de coneixement i a la presa de decisions col·lectives en processos de governança col·laborativa. L'estudi d'un cas de governança col·laborativa a la ciutat de Berlín permet elaborar diferents generalitzacions analítiques respecte a aquests temes d'investigació.

El resultat de l'estudi indiquen que quan els participants enfoquen les seves accions vers assolir el consens, aquests són capaços de compartir i avaluar el coneixement relacionat amb desitjos i emocions, fets i normes. Així mateix, poden emprar aquest coneixement per definir problemes col·lectivament i proposar solucions que satisfacin els objectius dels diferents actors afectats en la mesura del possible. No obstant això, actuar de forma comunicativa no garanteix que les solucions proposades siguin adoptades. Quan els interessos són oposats, els participants sovint han de renunciar a certs desitjos individuals per poder prendre decisions col·lectives. Si aquests no són capaços d'anteposar els objectius col·lectius als individuals, les iniciatives de governança col·laborativa poden concloure sense que s'estableixin acords. Tenint en compte els resultats de l'anàlisi, aquesta tesi proposa diferenciar dos tipus de consens: el consens comunicatiu, que s'aconsegueix quan els participants arriben a un enteniment sobre la validesa del coneixement; i el consens en les decisions, que s'assoleix quan aquests acorden col·lectivament com actuar. La present investigació demostra que fer ús de la teoria de l'acció comunicativa ajuda a analitzar esdeveniments i interaccions des de la perspectiva dels participants que utilitzen el llenguatge i la racionalitat comunicativa per modelar processos de governança col·laborativa.

Resumen

Esta tesis adopta la teoría de la acción comunicativa de Habermas para explorar cómo las acciones orientadas hacia el consenso contribuyen a la creación de conocimiento y a la toma de decisiones colectivas en procesos de gobernanza colaborativa. El estudio de un caso de gobernanza colaborativa en la ciudad de Berlín permite elaborar distintas generalizaciones analíticas respecto a estos temas de investigación.

Los resultados del estudio indican que cuando los participantes enfocan sus acciones hacia el consenso, estos son capaces de compartir y evaluar el conocimiento relacionado con deseos y emociones, hechos y normas. Asimismo, pueden emplear este conocimiento para definir problemas colectivamente y proponer soluciones que satisfagan los objetivos de los diferentes actores afectados en la medida de lo posible. Sin embargo, actuar de forma comunicativa no garantiza que las soluciones propuestas sean adoptadas. Cuando los intereses son opuestos, los participantes a menudo tienen que renunciar a ciertos deseos individuales para poder tomar decisiones colectivas. Si estos no son capaces de anteponer los objetivos colectivos a los individuales, las iniciativas de gobernanza colaborativa pueden concluir sin que se establezcan acuerdos. Teniendo en cuenta los resultados del análisis, esta tesis propone diferenciar dos tipos de consenso: el consenso comunicativo, que se consigue cuando los participantes llegan a un entendimiento sobre la validez del conocimiento; y el consenso en las decisiones, que se alcanza cuando estos acuerdan colectivamente cómo actuar. Esta investigación demuestra que hacer uso de la teoría de la acción comunicativa ayuda a analizar eventos e interacciones desde la perspectiva de los participantes que emplean el lenguaje y la racionalidad comunicativa para modelar procesos de gobernanza colaborativa.

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Contents

List of Figures	ix
List of Tables	ix
1. Introduction	1
2. Theoretical Foundations	15
2.1. Habermas’s Theory of Communicative Action.....	15
2.2. Characteristics of Collaborative Governance.....	21
2.3. Studying Communicative Action in Collaborative Governance Contexts.....	31
Conclusion.....	35
3. Methodology	37
3.1. Applying a Pragmatist Paradigm.....	38
3.2. Research Methods	42
3.3. Methodological Limitations	51
Conclusion.....	53
4. The Admiralbrücke Case	56
4.1. Urban Environment	60
4.2. History of Events.....	66
4.3. Enabling Collaborative Governance through Mediation.....	78
4.4. Outcomes Mentioned in the Reports and by Participants	87
Conclusion.....	93
5. Data Analysis: Part 1. Reaching Consensus on the Validity of Knowledge	94
5.1. Assessing Desires and Emotions	96
5.2. Assessing Facts.....	101
5.3. Assessing Norms	107
Conclusion.....	115
6. Data Analysis: Part 2. Developing Collective Solutions.....	117
6.1. Defining Problems.....	118

6.2. Making Decisions.....	120
6.3. Overcoming Desires and Emotions.....	128
Conclusion.....	131
7. Discussion: Shaping Collaborative Governance through Communicative Action ..	133
7.1. Differentiating Two Types of Consensus.....	134
7.2. Using Heterogeneity to Enhance the Stock of Knowledge	137
7.3. Coordinating Stakeholders' Goals to Facilitate Collective Decisions	140
7.4. Observing and Participating in Collaborative Governance.....	145
Conclusion.....	156
8. Conclusions	158
Bibliography.....	166
Ethical Considerations.....	177
Appendix: Original Quotations	178

List of Figures

Figure 1: View from the west side of the bridge and iron balustrade covered with graffiti.....	55
Figure 2: View of the bridge from the south side	56
Figure 3: View of the bridge from the north-west shore	57
Figure 4: Guided visit to Admiralbrücke	58
Figure 5: Admiralbrücke at night (one)	58
Figure 6: Admiralbrücke at night (two).....	59
Figure 7: Perimeters of the conservation area Graefestraße.....	65
Figure 8: Bollards, lanes, and pavements in autumn	69
Figure 9: Map of Admiralbrücke and nearby area.....	70

List of Tables

Table 1: List of individual interviews.....	45
Table 2: Dates, participants, and topics discussed in the negotiation rounds	76
Table 3: Stakeholders in the negotiation rounds and frequency of participation	81

1. Introduction

Collaborative governance takes place when governments opt for solving policy problems through the inclusion of the different public and private stakeholders in the policy-making process. Modern societies often have to handle complex problems that affect a varied number of actors who hold the power to influence policy-making (Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Collaborative governance settings gather together all these actors, who often have heterogeneous and even opposing interests, to collectively solve policy problems through a consensus-based decision-making process. Collaborative governance activates communication between affected stakeholders.

A crucial feature of collaborative governance settings is that participants have to try to reach a consensus (see e.g., Ansell & Gash, 2008; Bingham, 2006; Innes, 2004). To analyse the actions of these participants, this dissertation adopts Habermas's theory of communicative action (Habermas, 1989, 2002). The theory is centred on the use of language as a medium to structure and transfer knowledge. Participants who act communicatively embed knowledge in speech acts with the purpose of reaching an understanding with the rest of the participants. This knowledge can be assessed as valid or invalid by other of participants, and if needed, they can provide new arguments until an understanding on the topic of discussion has been reached. Acting communicatively opens a possibility for participants to reach a consensus on the validity of knowledge embedded in speech acts through the use of language and argumentation (Habermas, 1998). Since participants in collaborative governance processes have to aim at reaching a consensus, the theory of communicative action is very suitable for studying the actions of participants in this type of settings. Habermas's theoretical construct helps to examine the meaning of striving for consensus in the practice of collaborative governance.

This thesis explores how communicative action, i.e. an action aimed at reaching a consensus, contributes to two important outcomes of collaborative processes: knowledge creation and collective decisions. Analysing how striving for consensus affects these two outcomes can make visible which results consensus-based processes can achieve and thus provide useful knowledge for participants in collaborative governance settings.

Policy-making yields two types of outcomes: process outcomes, which emerge while developing the policy; and policy outcomes, which result from policy implementation. Collaborative governance settings aspire to achieving success in both outcome types. However, policy outcomes are contingent on environmental factors which do not necessarily depend on the collaborative governance setting. For example, participants might agree on implementing a certain policy, yet this agreement might not guarantee that the policy can be implemented as envisaged, because external factors which are beyond participants' control may affect its implementation. In fact, most of the literature on collaborative policy-making evaluates process outcomes and not policy outcomes (Ansell & Gash, 2008). The present study also focuses on assessing process outcomes. Nonetheless, it also observes policy implementation when necessary in order to analyse the whole policy-making process.

Examining outcomes is emphasized, as assessing the extent to which consensus-based processes produce the expected results can provide reasons for stakeholders to create collaborative governance settings to try to solve policy problems or, on the contrary, choose other policy-making alternatives. Stakeholders usually invest considerable resources (e.g., time and financial and operational resources) in collaborative processes, and assess if the investment will produce meaningful results (Ostrom, 1990). If the process does not achieve specific outcomes, this might disappoint participants (Nanz & Fritsche, 2012). In contrast, if relevant outcomes emerge, this can motivate stakeholders to implement collaborative practices. Furthermore, if acting communicatively in the collaborative setting achieves significant results, this can encourage participants to opt for this kind of action.

The present study centres its interest on communicative action, but also acknowledges that this type of action coexists with other types. Instead of acting communicatively, participants might opt for other actions such as strategical or dramaturgical action, which do not seek to reach an intersubjective understanding, but to fulfil egocentric aims (Habermas, 1989, 2002). The case study shows this interplay of actions and how participants are challenged with the task of maintaining a collaborative dialogue all along the process.

In sum, this dissertation aims to contribute to theory building by situating communicative action theory within the framework of collaborative governance, exploring outcomes of this form of policy-making, and providing knowledge from a real-life situation.

This introductory chapter presents the fundamentals of this study by taking the following parts into account: (A) research questions, (B) aims, (C) methods, and (D) limitations. The final section (E), introduces the structure of contents.

A. Research questions

This thesis examines how communicative action affects knowledge creation and collective decision-making in collaborative governance contexts. First, it explores how acting communicatively facilitates the co-creation of knowledge. Collaborative governance settings present a problem-solving situation in which several participants with heterogeneous backgrounds and interests have to look for solutions to common problems. Through dialogue and argumentation, participants have to share the knowledge that leads them to find solutions. If participants successfully move this dialogue forward, a knowledge emerges which contributes to understanding problems. This outcome is crucial in motivating participation in collaborative governance processes, because learning is what keeps stakeholders at the table (Innes & Booher, 2003a).

This capacity to co-create knowledge is an advantage of collaborative governance processes when comparing them to other forms of policy-making which do not have an inclusive and collaborative nature. Nevertheless, the success of collaborative undertakings is often assessed by looking at the number of explicit agreements produced, although agreements are punctuation marks in a broader deliberative process that also has other outcomes (Innes, 2004). A compromise is not representative of a collaborative advantage. The real advantage lies in the fact that participants undergo learning and transformation processes (Doberstein, 2015). Even if explicit agreements are not made, the collaborative process has the potential to build social capital (Bingham, 2006). Generating knowledge is one of the most important outcomes of collaborative undertakings as it triggers transformation processes in the same actors and in the social structures in which they participate.

This dissertation adopts communicative action theory to explore the relationship between striving for consensus and creating knowledge in collaborative governance settings. Habermas's theory provides useful conceptualizations to investigate how an action aimed at achieving a consensus can contribute to knowledge creation. Participants who act communicatively share knowledge in order to reach an understanding with other participants

on how to define situations. They embed knowledge in speech acts in the form of proposals that other participants can accept or reject. If participants accept the proposal, this knowledge is incorporated in the intersubjective definition of the situation (Habermas, 1998). This new knowledge is added to the total stock of available knowledge that participants have to interpret problems. This theoretical formulation can be put to the test in real contexts where two or more participants interact with the aim of reaching a consensus. Accordingly, it can be used in the context of collaborative governance. Thus, the first question this thesis seeks to answer is:

How does communicative action contribute to knowledge creation in collaborative governance settings?

Second, this dissertation also studies the relationship between striving for consensus and making collective decisions. Participants must make decisions regarding the collaborative governance setting if they want to move the process forward. For example, they must agree which stakeholders will be included, when and where will they meet, and which norms of participation and interaction will be established among other arrangements that affect the collaborative process. Moreover, participants also aim to make decisions concerning the policy problem. They have to try to reach agreements on measures to solve it. Collective decisions are important outcomes because they indicate how to proceed.

The peculiarity of collaborative governance is that decisions must be endorsed by all participants. Decision-making is institutionalized as a collective effort (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Stakeholders are not only consulted. They participate in a process where each and every one has decision-making power.

Making collective decisions is one of the principal challenges for participants because collaborative governance settings usually emerge in situations where stakeholders have opposing interests. Thus, the dialogue is often conflictive (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Fung & Wright, 2001). In fact, the existence of conflict is the very reason why collaborative governance processes are implemented (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Collaborative undertakings attempt to solve conflicts through dialogue. Nonetheless, having conflicting interests can make the task of agreeing on solutions very difficult.

Collaborative dialogue, therefore, requires a set of specific skills and practices. Participants need to be flexible regarding their own needs and those of others. They must

negotiate collective solutions that satisfy all interests as far as possible (Innes & Booher, 2003a). They have to find reasons to accept collective actions, even though they might not entirely approve of all aspects of the action, or find it wholly beneficial. Participants have to provide reasons for other participants to accept the solution, without necessarily having to converge on a consensus of value, strategy, or perspective (Fung & Wright, 2001). Since on many occasions not everyone is going to agree with all the aspects of the resulting policies, participants might engage in a pragmatically-oriented process that reaches at least a partial consensus (Bramwell & Sharman, 1999).

Thus, collaborative governance processes create a scenario where participants have to direct their actions towards consensus as well as try to make collective decisions even if only a partial consensus exists. Undoubtedly, the relationship between these two objectives offers extraordinary research possibilities. This thesis focuses on exploring this relationship in one direction. It looks through the lens of communicative action theory and analyses the effects of striving to achieve a consensus on collective decision-making. The following question guides the research:

How does communicative action contribute to making collective decisions in collaborative governance settings?

To answer this question, the discussion chapter presents a proposal to differentiate between two types of consensus: communicative consensus and consensus on decisions. This helps examine how striving for consensus on the validity of knowledge contributes to reaching a consensus on decisions.

B. Aims

This thesis explores several factors affecting collaborative governance processes in order to develop analytical conceptualizations that might be of use for the study and practice of this type of policy-making. The objectives of this thesis are thus exploratory.

The aim is not to create a prescriptive model, but to conceptualize several aspects of collaborative governance settings. “Policy analysts who would recommend a single prescription for common problems have paid little attention to how diverse institutional arrangements operate in practice” (Ostrom, 1990, pp. 21–22). Models like the life-cycle approach which propose a series of steps and actions, starting with problem definition and

ending with implementation (see e.g., Gray, 1989, 2008), might be applicable to policy-making processes that are designed and controlled by public managers. However, collaborative governance processes are not managed by only one actor. Decisions are made by all participants through a consensus-based process. Therefore, stages cannot always be predefined. For example, whether participants will be able to reach an agreement regarding measures to implement cannot be established. Besides, collaborative governance settings and processes are context-specific. Problems, actors, needs, and characteristics of the setting vary in each case. Therefore, a theoretical framework is more appropriate for describing the complex relationships between variables in collective action than a model would be, because a single model cannot encompass this complexity (Ostrom, 1990). An empirical position that considers collaboration in policy-making as a possible reality seems more appropriate than a prescriptive position (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003). An approach that focuses on conceptualizing aspects of collaboration and lets users formulate their own actions on the basis of their own circumstances and competences already provides support in reducing complexity in specific situations (Hibbert, Huxham, & Ring, 2008). Ultimately, it is the participants who are responsible for moving the process forward; they are in charge of creating a collaborative dialogue, and of making decisions that shape the collaborative setting in one way or another.

This research thus recognizes that participants, as well as researchers, decide how to act with the knowledge they have available. For this reason, it first aims to explore several aspects of collaborative governance and then to develop conceptualizations which can provide useful knowledge for scholars and practitioners. Communicative action theory and a non-prescriptive approach to collaborative governance offer an appropriate theoretical framework to achieve these aims.

C. Methods

This study uses existing theories and empirical data in a way that enables deductive and inductive reasoning to be combined through the whole research process. In accordance with the research aims, instead of introducing a theoretical model or a series of hypothesis to confirm, this thesis opts for presenting several topics to explore (see Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005 for an explanation of the exploratory-confirmatory research objective continuum). The literature review provides the theoretical foundations underpinning the research questions. Next, the analysis of empirical data brings new topics to light, and the same or new literature

is reviewed to test several lines of inquiry. The empirical data is contrasted with existing theories in order to explain the phenomena under study. Thus, the different objects of inquiry take shape throughout the process until several theoretical conceptualizations are developed. This combination of deduction and induction to test new patterns of behaviour is defined by the pragmatist approach as “abductive reasoning” (Morgan, 2007). Abducting reasoning combines facts and theories in order to develop new conceptualizations (Habermas, 1991b).

In addition to the literature on collaborative governance, several theoretical traditions guide this research: communicative action theory, pragmatism, critical theory, and social phenomenology. Firstly, communicative action theory provides a framework for understanding social interactions in which participants strive to reach a consensus on the validity of knowledge (Habermas, 1989, 2002). Furthermore, adopting Habermas’s theory of communicative action also entails embracing a pragmatist approach which is interested in the “validity” of knowledge, meaning “rational acceptability”, rather than “truth”. In this context, argumentation plays an important role, as the acceptance of knowledge depends greatly on both speaker and hearer providing reasons for its validity (Habermas, 1999). Next, critical theory offers a background to study how participants can use communicative rationality to reflect on the norms and procedures that constitute social structures (Habermas, 2002). Finally, social phenomenology complements critical theory as it deepens the understanding of how interactions between individuals shape the social world (see Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Schütz & Luckmann, 1988). These different theoretical approaches complement each other and are useful for exploring how acting communicatively contributes to shaping collaborative governance structures.

The empirical part of this dissertation analyses a case of collaborative governance that took place in a Berlin district in 2010 to solve the problems of coexistence between residents and visitors of “Admiralbrücke”, a bridge located in the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg. In the warm spring and summer evenings, Admiralbrücke attracts many visitors who gather together on the bridge to chat, drink, and listen to the music performed by street musicians. The bridge is traffic calmed and has broad pedestrian areas, which means that people can stay for several hours without being bothered much by the cars and other vehicles that occasionally cross it. Nevertheless, the activities of those gathering on the bridge have an impact on the lives of residents who live in the immediate neighbouring houses. This impact has changed over the years. From 2006 to 2010, the activities on the bridge generated a lot of problems for neighbours, and a worrying conflict arose between residents and visitors. The

collaborative process reduced this conflict, and nowadays the activities on the bridge take place in a regulated way so that neighbours are not disturbed at night.

The first problems between residents and visitors emerged between 2006 and 2007 when late-night parties on the bridge disturbed local residents, exposing them to high levels of noise. A significant amount of litter was also left on the bridge and the surrounding area. In 2008, complaints from the neighbours prompted the district government to call several stakeholders to a round table. This was the first time that several affected stakeholders met in a formal setting. However, meetings failed to find solutions which would satisfy the demands of the participating neighbours, and the process reached the point where several sides were in confrontation.

To try to solve this conflictive situation, a mediation process was implemented between May and December 2010. The objective was to find solutions through an inclusive, formalized, and consensus-based process (Streit Entknoten, 2011). The mediation process aimed to include all stakeholders, in contrast to previous meetings, which had only included some of the affected parties. To answer the research questions posed in the present study, the interactions between participants in the mediation process are analysed.

During the mediation process, participants were able to share knowledge and reach an understanding on the various problems and positions. Nonetheless, they were not able to make collective decisions concerning measures to try to solve the policy problem due to a clash of interests between two groups of neighbours. Despite this lack of agreement, the mediation process had other significant outcomes. For example, it raised awareness among bridge users regarding the impact activities on the bridge were having on neighbours (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Furthermore, the mediation process provided public institutions with knowledge for implementing their own measures, such as prohibiting the gathering of people on the bridge from 10 pm to 6 am if noise levels were high, or installing underground rubbish containers. The mediation process reduced the problems stemming from coexistence considerably.

Using a case study method is appropriate when “(a) ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, (b) the investigator has little control over events and (c) the focus is a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context” (Yin, 2009, p. 2). These characteristics are present in this study, which examines various research topics in depth, in a real-life example. Furthermore, the example selected is a paradigmatic case of collaborative governance, which

is appropriate to observe the effects that communicative action has on knowledge creation and on making collective decisions. The mediation process had all the characteristics of collaborative governance processes: the policy problem affected several stakeholders, various participants acted as convenors, it was inclusive, the institutional framework was formalized, and it was a consensus-based decision-making process.

This study uses qualitative inquiry to gather and analyse empirical data, which allows the case to be investigated in depth. Qualitative inquiry enables both exploring the topics established in the theoretical foundations and discovering new factors that might not have been identified in the theoretical part (Marshall & Rossman, 2011), and which might be necessary to appropriately answer the research questions. This qualitative approach is used to gather and explore data related to the case context and the interactions that took place in the mediation process. The data collection includes official reports from the district parliament, reports from the mediation team, and 13 semi-structured interviews with affected stakeholders carried out between 2011 and 2012, along with other sources and documents consulted. A detail of all data gathered is presented in the chapter dedicated to methodology.

This dissertation results from a research carried out over two different time periods. During the first period (2010–2012), the researcher reviewed the literature and gathered most of the empirical data, before taking a three-year break (2012–2015) from the thesis to dedicate time to family and work. The outcome of this hiatus was positive, as it allowed time to reassess the entire study, and a more appropriate approach was adopted, adding further theoretical foundations and looking at the problems from new perspectives. During the second research period (2015–2018), the researcher has analysed the data, reviewed further literature, developed theoretical conceptualizations, and written the final document. This dissertation presents the outcomes of this learning process.

D. Limitations

This thesis is framed in a specific context that both enables and limits research possibilities. Firstly, using one case study determines the type of research. This dissertation does not aim to understand all cases of collaborative governance. Neither does it intend to provide results reproducible in all cases. Through analysing one case, it seeks to develop several analytical generalizations which might be useful as objects of further inquiry in other cases. Scholars

and practitioners can use the topics developed in this dissertation to further investigate or implement collaborative governance processes.

Secondly, the study is limited to a local level. Policy problems have different geographical scales, from problems in small communities, to problems affecting whole urban areas, regions, states, or the entire world. The spatial dimension of the policy problem creates opportunities and constraints for collaboration. Collaborative governance at regional, national, and international levels differs from governance at a local level. For example, citizens can directly participate in local collaborative settings, whereas at national and international levels citizens' interests must be represented by other stakeholders. This dissertation is limited to local processes of collaborative governance.

Thirdly, the case selected takes place in Berlin, a large urban area which has specific collaborative characteristics and needs. In certain aspects, Berlin has similar characteristics to other large European cities such as Barcelona, Paris, Rome, or London. Although each city has undergone its own individual evolutionary path and presents a specific local context, in general these European cities are socially diverse, attracting people from many different countries and cultural backgrounds. This diversity means that individuals construct the issues in conflict differently (Healey, 1997). Citizens develop a different approach to policy problems depending on their culture, knowledge, and interests. Although social and cultural diversity are among the most important values in cities, residents are aware of extremes. In this context, local governance processes gain in relevance. Local governments need to establish relationships with citizens in order to develop policies (Stren, 2010). Cities create a complex interdependent environment that calls for inter-organizational collaboration (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003). These inter-organizational dependencies, together with the local character of urban policy issues, make cities perfect laboratories for studying collaborative undertakings. The topics explored in this dissertation are framed in this specific urban context.

Finally, this research is limited to processes of collaborative governance. Collaborative governance is a distinctive form of policy-making. It has special characteristics which differ from other forms of policy-making such as oppositional politics or managerial governance (Ansell & Gash, 2008). The spectrum of collaborative practices includes other arrangements such as "multi-stakeholder collaboration" (Everett & Jamal, 2004), "participatory governance" (Fung & Wright, 2001), or "collaborative planning" (Healey, 2003; Innes &

Booher, 2003b). The analytical generalizations resulting from this investigation may be useful for studying all types of policy-making settings with similar characteristics to collaborative governance.

E. Structure of contents

The structure of this dissertation is constructed in accordance with a specific research logic. First, the literature is reviewed to establish a theoretical framework. Then empirical data is gathered and combined with the knowledge acquired from the literature review to present the case study. Next, in the analysis and discussion chapters, empirical data and literature are revised using an iterative method until several conceptualizations take shape and the research questions are answered. This analysis technique has been labelled “explanation building” (Yin, 2009), because rather than presenting an explanation at the beginning, it is developed throughout the study.

After this introductory chapter, the second chapter presents the theoretical foundations. First, the concepts adopted in this dissertation from Habermas’s communicative action theory are introduced. Afterwards, the characteristics of collaborative governance are presented in order to define the type of policy-making processes this dissertation deals with. Finally, literature examining communicative action theory within the context of collaborative policy-making is reviewed with the aim of identifying opportunities and constraints the theory offers to academic inquiry. Thus, this chapter brings together concepts from communicative action theory and collaborative governance literature in order to establish the theoretical framework of the dissertation.

Chapter three details the methodology used, starting with a description of the paradigm adopted. This research follows the pragmatist paradigm in several ways: it develops analytical conceptualizations that can be useful in practice; it combines theoretical and empirical data in both deductive and inductive reasoning processes in order to answer the research questions; it believes that the acquisition of knowledge is both an individual and a collective endeavour; and it considers language to be the medium of knowledge transfer in the study and practice of collaborative governance. Once the main characteristics of the pragmatist approach are presented, the chapter proceeds to explain the methods applied at each stage of the research process, including details on data collection and analysis methods. Finally, the chapter outlines methodological limitations.

Chapter four presents the Admiralbrücke case. In order to fully understand the events and interactions in the mediation process, it is necessary to know the context in which it was implemented. Therefore, urban context and interactions between stakeholders, both before and outside the process, are examined in detail. First, the characteristics of the urban environment are presented according to three geographical levels: city, district, and neighbourhood. The whole policy-making process is then reviewed, beginning with the first problems of coexistence motivating several stakeholders to start interactions, and ending with the mediation process which brought together representatives of a significant number of stakeholders to try to find solutions to the problems occurring on the bridge. A further section evaluates the characteristics of collaborative governance shown in the Admiralbrücke mediation process, such as the inclusion of affected stakeholders, or its consensus-based nature. The chapter concludes with a review of the outcomes obtained through the mediation process.

Chapters five and six present the results of the data analysis. Both chapters explore the events and interactions in the Admiralbrücke negotiation rounds. Analytic explanations are used to organize empirical data and report findings (see Dunleavy, 2003). Instead of presenting data as it was provided by the case study in a descriptive manner, the different objects of inquiry are organized under analytic headings, taking the research questions into consideration.

Chapter five focuses on the first research problem: examining how communicative action affects knowledge creation in collaborative governance settings. Events and interactions in the negotiation rounds are analysed through the lens of communicative action theory. The theory establishes that participants acting communicatively claim validity for their expressions in three different worlds: the subjective world, which is formed by interpretations of desires and emotions; the objective world, which encompasses all objective facts; and the normative world, which embodies moral-practical knowledge (Habermas, 1989, 2002). Taking these categories into consideration, this chapter explores how participants in the Admiralbrücke negotiation rounds assessed knowledge from subjective, objective, and normative worlds. Furthermore, attention is placed on how this assessment influenced reaching a consensus on the validity of knowledge. As the results indicate, the characteristics of each category affected how knowledge was evaluated and how valid knowledge was incorporated in the total stock of knowledge that participants had available to interpret problems.

Chapter six centres on the second research problem: assessing the effects of acting communicatively on making collective decisions in collaborative governance settings. To analyse the connection between these two actions, the process of developing collective solutions is examined, from the stage in which participants in the negotiation rounds had to collectively define problems and elaborate proposals, to the moment when they had to make decisions on which proposals would be implemented. First, an analysis is conducted on how acting communicatively contributed to collectively defining problems. Next, events related to the action of making collective decisions on proposals are explored. Empirical data reveals that individual desires and emotions played the most important part in the decision to endorse or refuse proposals, and therefore this subjective component must be considered when exploring the relationship between acting communicatively and making collective decisions. Accordingly, the final section of this chapter reports how individual desires and emotions influenced endorsing or refusing proposals in the negotiation rounds.

Chapter seven discusses the results. A fresh revision of the literature, including sources not used previously, allows reflecting on the results obtained in order to develop several theoretical conceptualizations. First of all, a proposal is presented to separate two types of consensus in the context of collaborative governance. The first type, which might be called “communicative consensus”, is achieved when participants intersubjectively accept the validity of knowledge embedded in speech acts. The second type, which might be named “consensus on decisions”, is reached when participants collectively endorse proposals. This differentiation helps answer the research questions, which are further discussed in the following two sections of this chapter. The first of these sections considers how acting communicatively can enable knowledge diffusion and creation in settings where participants have highly heterogeneous backgrounds and knowledge. The second section is concerned with how communicative action can contribute to expressing and assessing participants’ goals, and the importance of taking these goals into consideration to elaborate proposals that have the potential to be endorsed by all participants. Furthermore, this section also discusses the issue of having to develop proposals that fulfil all participants’ goals, in a setting that includes a significant number of participants. Finally, this chapter ends with a reflection on the implications that adopting several theoretical constructs (systems theory, network theory, and the lifeworld) can have for studying this type of policy-making.

To conclude, chapter eight reviews the themes set out in this introduction, taking into account the findings in the analysis and discussion parts. This final chapter summarizes key results and makes proposals for further research.

2. Theoretical Foundations

Several societal and political shifts in Western countries since the Second World War have influenced how policy-making is carried out today. Citizens have become more individualized and live more openly and reflectively than previous generations, expecting social cohesion to be achieved through a broader democratization, rather than through top-down state action. Society in general has turned sceptical towards political authority, and at the same time new manifestations of democracy have emerged. This disinterest and disbelief in governments has simultaneously opened up new possibilities for political engagement, which are best exemplified by social movements concerned about important issues such as ecology, animal rights, or the use of nuclear energy. As a result, governments have had to adapt their policies to societal changes, and learn from politically engaged citizens' associations. The role of governments is crucial in order to implement a new form of social democracy that responds to the citizens' demand for greater participation. This way of doing politics should request social involvement while also providing autonomy for citizens' action. It should foster an active civil society that collaborates with the government (Giddens, 2000).

This thesis explores a collaborative and deliberative form of citizens' participation in democracy. The present chapter builds the theoretical foundations of this dissertation, incorporating communicative action with the collaborative governance framework. First, relevant concepts of the theory of communicative action are presented. Then, a review of the literature on collaborative governance allows establishing the characteristics of this policy-making method. Lastly, literature applying communicative action theory to collaborative governance is analysed in order to identify and present limitations and opportunities that the theory offers for the study of this form of policy-making.

2.1. Habermas's Theory of Communicative Action

According to communicative action theory, an actor who wants to carry out an action involving interaction with another actor has two possibilities. The first is to act communicatively with the aim of reaching an understanding. In such a scenario, participants behave cooperatively within the horizon of a shared lifeworld. The second possibility is to opt for strategic action with the aim of achieving egocentric success, which in social

interactions entails exerting influence over another actor. In strategic action, participants do not want to reach an understanding. These imperative acts are oriented towards success and only express power claims rather than validity claims. From the perspective of participants, these two types of actions are mutually exclusive. Trying to reach an understanding is not the same as one side imposing something on the other. Therefore, an action cannot be strategic and communicative at the same time (Habermas, 1992, 1997). Of the two types, Habermas focuses his study on communicative action, and develops a formal-pragmatic theory for action situations in which participants strive for consensus.

Communicative action theory is based on a formal separation of expressions in three differentiated worlds. Participants in communicative action coordinate their actions and search for common definitions to shared problems by raising and assessing claims in these three worlds. Inspired by Weber's view that knowledge is stored in art, science, and morals, Habermas explains that participants in communicative action use knowledge belonging to subjective, objective, and social worlds. Expressions of the three worlds transmit knowledge that can be assessed by participants according to different validity claims. First, the subjective world is formed by the participant's experiences as a whole. Expressions of this world carry interpretations of desires and emotions, and can be judged for truthfulness or sincerity. The knowledge embedded in the speech act is related to the speaker's own subjectivity. Works of art are paradigms of this kind of transmission. Second, the world of objective facts encompasses utterances about all possible objects. Speech acts that embody knowledge about objects can be criticized for being true or untrue within the threshold of rational acceptability. When this empirical knowledge is systematically questioned through cumulative learning processes, this knowledge takes the form of theories. Third, the social world is made up of norms which regulate interpersonal relationships. Expressions of the social world embody moral-practical knowledge, and can be criticized for their rightness, taking existing legal and moral representations into consideration. Participants in communicative action correlate utterance contents to subjective, objective, and normative worlds, and hence claim validity in their expressions by considering their truthfulness, rational acceptability of propositional truths, and normative rightness. In general, validity claims are raised within the speech act implicitly. Only when the speaker asks about the validity of the expression, is the validity claim explicitly raised (Habermas, 1989, 2002).

In an early work, Habermas (1991a) presented a fourfold structure of validity claims. In addition to truthfulness, rational acceptability of propositional truths, and normative

rightness, he added another category: “comprehensibility”. Some authors (see e.g., Forester, 1993; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2007) have used this fourfold structure in their studies. Later, in the theory of communicative action, Habermas sets aside the comprehensibility claim (Forester, 1993), and uses the threefold structure that, from that moment onwards, is present in his subsequent works. Habermas (2002) reflects upon the comprehensibility claim and indicates that, indeed, utterances need to be comprehensible so they can be understood by participants, therefore, a person that wants to come to an understanding has to take care of linguistic rules. However, the comprehensibility claim does not belong to the same formal structure as the other three validity claims. Comprehensibility and well-formedness of language constructs are based on following the norms of language, whereas the separation between subjective, objective, and normative worlds points to the relationship between action and world. Accordingly, grammatical sentences are part of the structure of communicative utterances, but they cannot be analysed in the same way as speech acts.

“Operatively generated structures can, taken by themselves, be judged as more or less correct, in conformity with a rule, or well-formed; but they are not, as are actions, open to criticism from the standpoints of truth, efficacy, rightness, or sincerity, for they acquire relation to the world only as the infrastructure of other actions” (Habermas, 2002, p. 98).

Following linguistic rules makes utterances comprehensible, but it does not explain the actor’s orientation to the world, as following rules of action do (Habermas, 2002).

In the practice of communicative action every speech act is simultaneously assessed according to the three validity claims. Only when participants come to an intersubjective understanding in regard to the truthfulness, rational acceptability, and normative rightness of the speech act is a strong consensus achieved.

“Consensus does not come about when, for example, a hearer accepts the truth of an assertion but at the same time doubts the sincerity of the speaker or the normative appropriateness of his utterance; the same holds for the case in which a speaker accepts the normative validity of a command but suspects the seriousness of the intent thereby expressed or has his doubts about the existential presuppositions of the action commanded [...]” (Habermas, 1989, p. 121).

Reaching a consensus entails intersubjectively accepting the three validity claims (Habermas, 1989).

The function of the formal separation between the three worlds is to overcome subjectivities. Participants must take the perspective of both participant and observer, and they are bound to take the observer’s perspective when they reflect with other participants on subjective desires and emotions, facts, and norms. With the use of validity claims embedded

in speech acts participants can overcome subjective conditions and engage in an intersubjective dialogue (Habermas, 1997, 2002).

Communicative action enables coordination of participants' action plans. Each actor has individual action plans, which coexist with the plans of other individuals in the social world. Behind every participant's action there is a teleological structure. Communicative action also begins with individual action plans; it is purposive. However, with the use of an intersubjective shared language, it then turns into a coordinated action. Thanks to the use of linguistic structures, the first person is bound to reach an understanding with the second about some specific topic. Thus, participants coordinate their action plans with the plans of other participants through verbal understanding and the common definition of situations. Acting communicatively facilitates coordinating the goal-directed actions of the different participants through a process of cooperative interpretation that aims at reaching a consensus (Habermas, 1992, 2002). Habermas elaborates a linguistic paradigm based on communicative action and its function to achieve mutual understanding (Habermas, 1997, 1999).

On the contrary, the use of language in a non-communicate context, whether in strategic action or for plain representation, requires an abstraction that temporarily suspends its relation to intersubjective validity claims. Certainly, not every use of language is communicative, and not every speech act is oriented towards reaching an intersubjective recognition. There are non-communicative speech acts such as monologues or works of art that are plain representations, and there is strategic action, which is oriented toward achieving egocentric aims. It is when plain representations or action plans are questioned by a hearer, that the speaker is expected to justify its monologist representation in a discourse within an open forum (Habermas, 1997, 1999).

Language supports creating intersubjective meaning and at the same time leaves space for individual interpretations. When the speaker carries out a speech act, the hearer needs first to understand the meaning of what is said and then he or she takes a position and accepts or refuses the offer included in the speech act. If the hearer accepts the offer, he or she orients his or her actions according to the obligation settled by the agreement. Of course, the hearer can also partially or totally refuse the offer. In communicative action, the hearer can completely or partially agree or disagree with the expression, taking specific reasons or grounds into consideration. Accordingly, participants use a shared language that is a medium to achieve consensus and that also reveals the differences in individual perspectives.

Communicative action makes able socialization and individualization at the same time (Habermas, 1992, 2002).

Communicative action theory focuses on the pragmatic meaning of language. The validity of an utterance can be judged through semantics and through a pragmatic view. To begin with, an interpreter can understand the “meaning” of a sentence from a semantic approach. When the utterance is analysed using semantics, the knowledge employed in the assessment belongs to the normative framework of language. Within this framework, semantics can evaluate the intention of what is said, that is, what is meant by what is said, and the literal meaning ascribed to the grammatical form of the sentence. In addition, the pragmatic view stresses that the analysis of speech acts must go beyond the function of language as a medium of representation, because language is relevant insofar as it is useful in specific action situations. To understand a speech act is not only to understand what is said, but also the meaning of what is said in a specific action situation. Accordingly, the analysis must encompass the illocutionary aspects of the speech act, that is, the act performed when something is said. Besides, to understand the meaning of a speech act the interpreter needs to have background knowledge. In the context of communicative action, participants employ language to reach an understanding in a pragmatic way. They embed knowledge in language in order to collectively find solutions to problems. In this way, communicative action theory connects pragmatics and action theory (Habermas, 1992, 2002).

The formal-pragmatic conception of the three worlds and the three validity claims creates the structure to achieve communicative rationality. Individuals express themselves rationally when they are capable of justifying their orientation to validity claims. Rational opinions are those that can be held true in a specific context of justification. Of course, a person that expresses opinions that can be proven false is not automatically irrational. Irrational opinions are those that are used dogmatically and are defended, even though the person holding the opinion realizes that it cannot be defended. The rational use of knowledge lies in the capacity to defend validity claims through the use of language (Habermas, 1997).

In addition, in communicative action it is not sufficient to communicate knowledge on the basis of objective rational assumptions. The validity of knowledge is also judged by its capacity to reach an intersubjective understanding. In communicative action, rationality is attained through processes of understanding. The speaker wants the hearer to accept the validity of what is said and hence gives reasons for it. In turn, the hearer can accept or refuse

the validity of what is said (Habermas, 1999). Rationality is to be found “in the general structures of the lifeworld to which acting subjects belong” (Habermas, 2002, p. 328).

Consequently, rational interaction is only possible if participants are capable of learning from experience. The interpretation of an action is not merely descriptive. It is embedded in the rational interpretation of the subject. Individuals must have background knowledge and must also be capable of learning in order to understand actions. Participants act rationally when they are able to learn from their actions, and the actions of other participants, and can improve arguments or correct mistakes when needed (Habermas, 2002).

The theory of communicative action proposes a different paradigm from the one based on the subject-object model used by the philosophy of consciousness. It does this without having to renounce the subject, as other alternative approaches such as logical positivism and behaviourism initially did in an attempt to objectify statements and events. In communicative acts, speaker and hearer try to reach understanding about something in the world and at the same time are influenced by the same act. Linguistic expressions point to the addressers and to the world simultaneously. There is an interaction between the conceptualization of the world and the addressers’ learning processes. This kind of dualism between the objective world and the lifeworld of participants is directly related to an approach that differentiates empirical from transcendental knowledge acquisition and that applies dualism as a methodological approach that differentiates observation from understanding (Habermas, 1989, 1992, 1999, 2002).

Participants act according to background convictions present in the horizon of a shared lifeworld. The concepts contained in the lifeworld and the corresponding validity claims implicitly included in this knowledge provide the structure for participants to order problem situations, that is, situations that need an understanding. By acting communicatively, participants negotiate definitions of situations, and with each new accepted definition they establish a new order of the situation. Thus, new definitions are incorporated in the pre-interpreted lifeworld. Each participant has the task of incorporating other participants’ interpretation of the action situation into its own interpretation, to the extent that the different definitions of the action situation can be enough coincident (Habermas, 2002).

World relations are updated insofar as participants orientate themselves towards the three worlds. Participants in communicative action have these three categories as background for their interpretations. They share claims in the three different worlds so that expressions,

and the knowledge they transmit, can be intersubjectively recognized. Participants come to an understanding when they have reached a consensus on the validity of the utterance. Thus, consensus cannot be imposed. The success of a speech act in communicative action is dependent on its intersubjective recognition, that is, on a collective understanding of the speech act. Therefore, consensus is rather ambiguous, unstable, and diffuse. Successful communication is momentarily, and it needs to be continuously revised (Habermas, 1999, 2002).

As it is explained in the discussion chapter, communicative action theory and the concept of the lifeworld (see Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Husserl, 1982) enable analysing actions from the participants' perspective, and thus can complement other approaches that are primarily interested in assessing structural elements of social settings, such as social systems (see e.g., Baggio, Scott, & Cooper, 2010; Luhmann, 1987; Parsons, 1966) and policy network theories (see e.g., Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000; Rhodes, 2007). Observing participants' actions is crucial in forms of policy-making that are based on dialogue.

Habermas's theory of communicative action offers a framework for examining situations in which participants seek consensus, and can thus contribute to studying collaborative modes of governance. Especially in regard to the research questions presented in this dissertation, it provides the foundations to explore actions that aim at reaching a consensus to understand problems and look for solutions in collaborative processes. As it is described in detail in the next section, collaborative governance settings gather stakeholders together in a formalized structure in order to build a shared knowledge base, which participants can use to make collective decisions. This institutional framework offers an excellent opportunity to study communicative action theory in real-life contexts.

2.2. Characteristics of Collaborative Governance

The term "governance" can be employed in manifold contexts, which are not necessarily collaborative. Governance is related to the act of governing, whether in the public or private sector (Emerson, Nabatchi, & Balogh, 2012). Governance has been an object of study in public management and policy-making in general, and also in the management of private corporations. Regarding research on collaboration in corporate governance, this has largely focused on how organizations use ties with other organizations to reduce market complexity and gain competitive advantage (Lotia & Hardy, 2008). On the other hand, in the public

policy-making literature the term governance has had a wide range of usages, making theory building difficult (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Emerson et al., 2012). The term has been used to explore policy-making processes in horizontal and hybridized structures, and also to investigate hierarchical processes where governmental bodies develop and implement public policies (Hill, 2004). The research presented in this dissertation focuses on collaborative governance as a specific form of public policy-making. In this section, the characteristics of this type of governance are portrayed.

In spite of the relevance that collaborative governance has in practice and the existence of important contributions in the literature, the concept is still blurred and intermingled with other concepts. Ansell and Gash (2008) conducted a study of the literature in order to create a model that might gather the characteristics of collaborative governance. The first problem they encountered in the literature was that, although scholars have made important contributions, the language to describe collaborative governance has not been standardized, which makes the labour of establishing a model very challenging. Indeed, many terms are used to label collaborative arrangements in policy-making, for instance, “collective action” (Ostrom, 1990, 2000), “collaborative planning” (Healey, 1997, 2003; Innes & Booher, 2003b), “collaborative public management” (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003; Leach, 2006; M. McGuire, 2006), or “collaborative networks” (Agranoff, 2006).

On the other hand, several characteristics of this collaborative form of policy-making have recurrently been mentioned in literature. Especially relevant are two investigations carried out by two different groups of scholars, both of which create an interpretative framework for collaborative governance. These two studies present two different, but compatible, definitions. First, Emerson et al. (2012) define collaborative governance as:

“The processes and structures of public policy decision making and management that engage people constructively across the boundaries of public agencies, levels of government, and/or the public, private and civic spheres in order to carry out a public purpose that could not otherwise be accomplished” (p. 2).

Second, Ansell and Gash (2008) are even more specific and define it as: “A governing arrangement where one or more public agencies directly engage non-state stakeholders in a collective decision-making process that is formal, consensus-oriented, and deliberative and that aims to make or implement public policy or manage public programs or assets” (p. 544). Moreover, they stress six criteria in this definition. First, public agencies initiate the collaborative governance setting. Second, participants are public and private actors. Third, actors participate in decision-making. Fourth, the setting is formalized and participants meet

face-to-face. Fifth, it is a consensus-based process, although consensus might not be achieved in practice. Sixth, collaboration takes place in order to address a policy problem (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

As it can be seen, the concept of collaborative governance is taking shape in the policy-making literature. It is being established as a specific form of governance with special features that differentiate it from other policy-making forms. In this section, a review on the literature on collaborative governance allows presenting five characteristics which taken together distinguish collaborative governance processes from other types of policy-making: (A) participants deal with policy problems that affect several and heterogeneous stakeholders; (B) a purpose exists to include all relevant stakeholders and interests; (C) several actors perform a convenorship role; (D) norms and procedures are formalized; and (E) participants strive for consensus in order to understand problems and make collective decisions.

A. Public policy problems affecting several heterogeneous stakeholders

Some policy problems cannot be unilaterally solved by governments. They need the participation of citizens. Collaboration is a multi-organizational process that aims at facing and solving multi-faceted and complex policy problems that a single organization cannot solve (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003; Geddes, 2008; Gray, 1989). Collaborative practices take place when controversy is high, goals and interests conflict, and governments cannot act because there is a risk of being unsuccessful (Innes, 2004). Collaborative governance is a mechanism to gather together all the affected stakeholders in order to try to find solutions to the policy problem.

The term “stakeholder” conveys a relationship between the actor and the problem. Stakeholder thinking first originated in the area of business management. In business ethics, “a stakeholder may be defined as any individual or group who affects or is affected by the organization and its processes, activities and functioning” (Carroll & Näsi, 1997, p. 46). Later, the term has been broadly used in both private and public management contexts. In policy-making, the term is used to refer to actors who have a relationship with a policy problem. Transferring the definition used in business ethics to policy-making, a stakeholder might be defined as any individual or organized group that can affect or is affected by a policy problem. In one direction, the policy problem has a certain impact on stakeholders. In

the other direction, stakeholders can affect the policy problem, because they have the resources to aggravate or solve it.

Stakeholders can be classified according to multiple criteria depending on the context of the action. As noted above, an essential difference exists between stakeholders who “affect” a certain action and those who are “affected” by it—the effects in both cases can be positive or negative. Stakeholders can also be differentiated according to the level of involvement in the action between “active” and “passive” stakeholders (Grimble & Wellard, 1997). The Overseas Development Administration (1995) divides stakeholders between “primary” and “secondary” stakeholders. Primary stakeholders are those who are affected by a project and secondary stakeholders are those who can support primary stakeholders to develop the project (e.g. facilitators or external stakeholders who are not directly affected by the problem). Stakeholders can also be classified according to different attributes, such as power, legitimacy, and urgency (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997). Categorizing stakeholders allows analysing their characteristics and relevance in relation to the policy problem.

Stakeholders can be involved in decision-making if demands and relations between each other are understood. Stakeholder analysis allows identification of differences in interests, objectives, and opinions. It plays a relevant role in contexts where a multitude of interests are related to the development of policy. Particularly, in participatory policy-making it can contribute to ensuring that the interests of those stakeholders with less power are assessed and included. Methods to assess stakeholder conflict can enable incorporating the different interests, and thus contribute to policy design and implementation (Grimble & Wellard, 1997). In spite of the relevance of stakeholder analysis, often stakeholders are identified and selected *ad hoc*, thereby running the risk of disregarding some groups (Reed et al., 2009). Stakeholder theory can provide policy-makers with different criteria and methods to identify, assess, and select stakeholders.

Actor analysis includes formulating the policy problem provisionally, identifying actors involved, mapping actor’s perceptions, analysing relationships between actors, and examining relationships between actors and the problem (Klijn, 2008). Identifying relevant stakeholders is crucial at the beginning of interaction. Once identified, they can be encouraged to participate in the collaborative process. Then, as discussions about the problem evolve, new actors can be identified and included or excluded from the collaborative governance setting. Thus, it is relevant to integrate stakeholder analysis in the collaborative

process in order to assure that those who have interests and power to influence the policy are included all along the process (Reed et al., 2009).

Collaborative governance structures need to gather together stakeholders with resources to solve the policy problem. Firstly, collaborative governance processes need tangible resources. Venue meeting, engaging a facilitator, or performing research among other activities have costs. Therefore, actors with economic and other physical resources are needed throughout the process. Secondly, intangible resources such as knowledge, authority, and discourse legitimacy are needed. Stakeholders with knowledge on the policy problem can contribute to its understanding and to finding solutions. Communication between individuals having similar problems increases the knowledge about the problem (Ostrom, 2000). Stakeholders affected by the policy problem as well as experts can contribute with their knowledge to solving the problem. On the contrary, the lack of knowledge is a major source of uncertainty in complex collective undertakings (Ostrom, 1990). Besides, actors with authority to enforce rules and actions must also be identified (Hardy & Phillips, 1998; Purdy, 2012). For example, governmental agencies might be needed in order for agreements to be implemented in reality. Lastly, stakeholders can have discursive legitimacy. An organization has discursive legitimacy when it represents the values or the logic of a society (Purdy, 2012). Participants without tangible resources or authority can be very important in collaborative governance processes if they represent societal values. As Purdy (2012) notices, “in collaborative contexts, the relational and perceptual aspects of power may be as important as the objective ability to command resources” (p. 411). Thus, resources can be manifold and it is important to identify which ones are needed to solve the policy problem and which stakeholders can provide them.

As a consequence, collaborative governance settings include a variety of participants with heterogeneous backgrounds and resources. Government agencies, citizens’ groups, private business, and non-profit sectors are brought together to find solutions to policy problems that concern all of them (Bevir, 2008; Purdy, 2012). Heterogeneity offers many opportunities. The literature coincides in signalling that a diversity of stakeholders is crucial in collaborative processes because it gives access to a variety of skills and knowledge (Innes & Booher, 2003b). Including a varied number of parties and ideas enriches the process content (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006) and assists in problem-solving (Geddes, 2008). The inclusion of different ideas and experiences has a potential for innovation (Geddes, 2008; Nooteboom, 2008). Nonetheless, participants in heterogeneous settings have also to

overcome an important challenge: The cognitive distance between heterogeneous participants might hamper communication and collaboration (Nooteboom, 2008). Actors in collaborative structures often need to integrate heterogeneous perspectives and competing goals if they want to gain collaborative advantage (Gray, 2008). Collaborative enterprises must be aware of the opportunities and challenges of having a range of heterogeneous stakeholders involved in policy-making. Collaborative governance settings have capacity to tackle complex problems provided that participants successfully move the collaborative dialogue forward.

B. Inclusiveness

In collaborative governance, stakeholders are included in the decision-making process. This contrasts with other forms of participatory governance such as stakeholder surveys, focus groups, or other consultative techniques which can be useful for gathering information, but do not permit communication and deliberation between stakeholders (Ansell & Gash, 2008). In collaborative governance stakeholders actively participate throughout the policy process (Bevir, 2008). Representatives of the different stakeholders and interests engage in a face-to-face dialogue with the purpose of developing policies together.

The notion of including all relevant interests is broadly articulated in both theory and practice (Emerson et al., 2012). Authors have related inclusiveness with legitimacy (see e.g., Bevir, 2008; Innes & Booher, 2004; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Leach, 2006) and efficacy (see e.g., Bevir, 2008; Phelps & Tewdwr-Jones, 2000). Including all relevant stakeholders is important because it implies that the resulting policies will suit the local context better, will be more legitimate, and will be better developed than closed policy-making (Bevir, 2008). On the contrary, excluding stakeholders can result in the agreement lacking information, or that it is not legitimated by excluded stakeholders (Innes, 2004; Innes & Booher, 2003a). In such situations, agreements are seriously vulnerable. For example, excluding stakeholders to accelerate consensus-building might limit the legitimacy of the process and might constrain the implementation of agreements (Jamal & Getz, 1995).

On the other hand, inclusiveness is often limited by several factors. First, inclusiveness is conditioned by the number of stakeholders and their spatial diffusion. If a large number of stakeholders are affected or these stakeholders are spatially diffused, some groups might be underrepresented. In the tourism sector, for example, it is difficult, or even impossible, to involve the interests of all tourists. A similar limitation to involve all affected interests occurs

in environmental concerns, where the number of affected stakeholders is large and they are spatially diffused. In these cases, participants need to cope with the complexity of the collaborative structure in order to manage collaboration (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). Depending on the number of stakeholders and types of interactions, participants might decide to establish different working groups. For example, participants might agree on creating supra-structures that supervise the collaborative setting, or sub-structures, such as task forces, that work on specific tasks. Naturally, the combination of members included in the setting determines the collaborative agenda (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). A different combination of stakeholders will result in different collaborative dynamics.

Second, inclusiveness is conditioned by the ability of participants to stand for the interests they are representing. Participants in collaborative structures can be individuals, groups, or organizations (Huxham & Vangen, 2000). When stakeholders are groups or organizations they participate with a representative. In collaborative governance, the term “participant” is commonly used to refer to both the stakeholder represented and the representative of the stakeholder that is interacting with other representatives. However, the individual who represents the interests of a stakeholder is a different entity than the stakeholder itself, although it might be a more or less legitimate part of it. It is when representativeness issues are discussed, that one changes the focus from the stakeholder to the individual representing the interests of that stakeholder. Inappropriate representation takes place when individuals are not capable of representing the interests of their organizations (Huxham & Vangen, 2000), they do not disseminate the information about the collaboration to stakeholders, or they do not consult the represented organizations (Bramwell & Sharman, 1999). Inappropriate representation can be due to a lack of knowledge and skills. Besides, individual interests can sometimes collide with the interest of the organization they are representing (Huxham & Vangen, 2005), and this influences the quality of the representation. Furthermore, representatives must have a certain level of authority to make decisions so that negotiations are not unnecessarily derailed (Gray, 2008).

Third, the notion of inclusiveness is conditioned by other less controllable factors. Inclusion is an emergent process that originates by chance to a certain extent, due to the willingness of actors, or as result of existent relationships between stakeholders. For example, inclusion can be the result of a call for participation, the product of voluntary or obligatory participation, a repetition of a collaborative structure that existed in the past, among many other forms of initiating interactions. Sometimes, convenors decide who represents a certain

stakeholder and not the same stakeholder (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). This can occur, for example, when the stakeholder is a large non-organized group where there is not an official representative.

In addition, it is important to emphasize that a high inclusive process does not necessarily result in a successful collaborative process. A policy problem that only affects a small number of stakeholders and that ensures inclusiveness of all of them must not necessarily have successful outcomes. Equally, a policy problem that affects a large group of stakeholders, which are spatially diffused, must not necessarily have unsuccessful outcomes. Inclusiveness can enhance legitimacy and efficacy. However, inclusiveness per se is not a guarantee of a successful collaborative process. Other factors discussed in this section are necessary in order that the collaborative process moves forward.

C. Convenorship

Collaborative governance requires actors that purposefully search for collaboration. The existence of a leader that is capable of engaging stakeholders and of gathering resources is indispensable to initiate collaborative settings (Emerson et al., 2012). This leadership role is usually attributed to public managers, who strategically pursue collaboration in order to solve policy problems (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003), but other participants from private sectors or civil society can also play this role. Besides, a neutral facilitator or mediator can be appointed to act as convenor, when technical assistance is needed to assure inclusion (Innes & Booher, 2003b). Thus, in collaborative governance one or more actors must play this convenorship role, which brings participants and participants' knowledge together.

Conveners have to act under collaborative premises. They must aim at reaching consensus between participants instead of imposing their will. Certainly, it is sometimes difficult to motivate actors to participate and maintain their participation in collaborative processes (Huxham & Vangen, 2005), and in some contexts a great effort from conveners is required to bring stakeholders and stakeholders' interests to the table. When stakeholders lack incentives to participate, or power is asymmetrically distributed, the collaborative process requires a strong leader from among the stakeholders (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Nonetheless, this leadership position must be understood under the context of collaborative governance. Unfortunately, participants in collaborative settings that assume a leadership role often misunderstand it and act as managers or judges (Schruijer, 2008). Hierarchical leadership is

not compatible with collaborative processes. Therefore, it is very important that conveners appreciate the potential for collaboration (Gray, 2008). Certainly, in some situations it might be necessary that conveners take individual decisions concerning, for example, including or excluding certain stakeholders. However, they must also bear in mind that the process is consensus-based.

The fact that participants in collaborative governance strive for consensus and must take decisions in agreement affects how these collaborative structures are managed. They are in principle managed by the same participants, yet at the same time the setting requires that several actors use their power position to preserve the conditions for consensus-building to take place. Even if collaboration can be highly amicable and organizations might mean they support each other, in practice, collaborating requires a significant effort from the participant's side to bring positions closer. As Agranoff and McGuire (2003) point out, "collaboration does not just happen" (p. 3), it needs to be managed. Managerial approaches indicate that participants with management status can intervene and design collaboration (Gray, 2008; Kickert, Klijn, & Koppenjan, 1997; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Managerial approaches can be compatible with collaborative governance if their aim is to coordinate a consensus-based decision-process. For example, Huxham and Beech (2008) point out that control over one structure must not necessarily be undertaken in order to pursue self-interests, exerting power over collaborative structures where power imbalance exist might prevent one participant to unilaterally take control of it and maintain stability in relationships. Each action situation requires a specify type of action. At times, facilitating participants to work together is necessary. At other times, more pragmatic solutions, that might appear less collaborative, might be needed. There is facilitative management that aims at enhancing collaboration, but also directive management that aims at moving forward the process. Both take place in collaboration, and an overemphasis on one of them might negatively affect collaboration (Huxham & Vangen, 2000). Thus, in practice participants that occupy the position of facilitators must create the conditions for collaboration to take place and at the same time try to move the process forward.

A peculiarity of collaborative governance settings is that decisions taken by conveners and facilitators are monitored and assessed by all participants. In collaborative settings one actor alone does not have absolute authority. Each participant has authority and decisions often have to be made collectively. Collaborative management can be understood as an activity performed by a group of individuals with the aim of defining the direction of an inter-

organizational entity and the allocation and use of resources (Hibbert et al., 2008). It is information that enables or restricts collaboration rather than authority, because there are no subordinate relations in collaborative structures. Therefore, traditional forms of control, such as market or hierarchy, are incompatible with collaboration (Bingham, 2006; Lotia & Hardy, 2008). To a certain extent, all participants in collaborative governance have managerial status insofar as decisions are made in agreement. All participants are accountable for the collaborative process, and they share the responsibility for collaborating.

D. Formalization

In many contemporary cultures, collaboration is a moral imperative for tackling complex societal problems that affect several stakeholders (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). However, the existence of collaborative values is not enough to manage collaborative governance processes. Frequently, collaborative governance is developed in settings where participants have a history of conflict and antagonism (Ansell & Gash, 2008). Therefore, to make the process move forward, participants need to agree on rules and procedures that regulate the actions of individuals (Ostrom, 1990). The collaborative process depends to a certain extent on the capacity of participants to reach agreements regarding the norms and procedures that regulate the collaborative governance setting.

Degrees and types of formalization vary among collaborative settings (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006; Selin & Chavez, 1995). A higher formalization of the collaborative governance setting might be needed to gain structure stability. For example, formal partnerships are created in specific sectors or social groups when collaboration is necessary in order to achieve more successful results than operating in isolation (Geddes, 2008). In other cases, stability might be maintained by participants with a low level of formalization. In any case, regardless of whether collaboration lasts for only one meeting, several days, weeks, months, or years, some degree of formalization is necessary to assure that the collaborative process advances.

E. Consensus-based decision-making

Collaborative governance processes are consensus-oriented, even when participants do not reach a consensus in the end (Ansell & Gash, 2008). This orientation towards consensus influences how participants share and create knowledge and negotiate solutions.

The consensus-building approach in policy-making is generally based on the practice of negotiating proposals that satisfy the interests of participants and not on Habermas's theory of communicative action, although the theory has allowed scholars to explore different conceptualizations related to consensus-building (Innes, 2004). Even if the literature on collaborative governance does not use exactly the same meaning of reaching an understanding between participants as communicative action theory, several scholars point to the contribution that an orientation toward consensus has on understanding positions and creating new knowledge. For example, Innes and Booher (2010) indicate that consensus-building does not only produce agreements and plans, it also enables learning and creating shared meaning. This outcome can be achieved because consensus-building is not positional bargaining, but is aimed at reaching a mutual understanding of interests (Innes, 2004). Collaborative governance settings emerge in situations where stakeholders often have opposing interests. Therefore, participants must understand the interests of other participants and elaborate solutions that satisfy them before decisions can be made. A consensus-building approach can contribute to reaching this mutual understanding.

This dissertation incorporates the meaning of striving for consensus provided by communicative action theory into the collaborative governance framework. Collaborative governance processes emerge in situations where different stakeholders with heterogeneous interests and backgrounds have to share knowledge to try to solve problems. These processes are inclusive, formalized, consensus-based, and count on the tasks of convenors to motivate stakeholders to participate and to gather the necessary resources. From all the characteristics mentioned, the present study focuses on analysing how participants reflect and shape the characteristics of the collaborative governance setting and the policy problem through a collaborative dialogue that is consensus-based. All participants can reflect on inclusion, formalization, convenorship, and other topics related to the collaborative governance setting or the policy problem because they share the responsibility of moving the process forward.

2.3. Studying Communicative Action in Collaborative Governance Contexts

Habermas's theory of communicative action has been criticized for the following reasons: its metatheoretical approach poses more questions than it proposes hypothesis for testing (Forester, 1993); it is an epistemological approach to an ideal type of communication rather

than a theory with practical considerations (Innes, 2004); and it provides few indications for empirical enquiry (Phelps & Tewdwr-Jones, 2000). These critiques coincide in pointing out a lack of empirical references in the theory. However, in the theory of communicative action Habermas actually connects theoretical, methodological, and empirical levels. First, he elaborates a theoretical framework for action theory based on communicative rationality. Next, on a methodological level, he reflects on the relationship between meaning and validity and how it allows for an interpretative understanding. Lastly, on an empirical level, he observes how rationalization processes have influenced the modernization of society (Habermas, 2002). The theory offers all these possibilities. Besides, it can be developed in different directions. In fact, several scholars in the field of collaborative policy-making explore Habermas's ideas in their investigations.

The literature on collaborative policy-making that adopts communicative action theory mainly centres its attention on critical thinking and the concept of communicative rationality (see e.g., Connick & Innes, 2003; Forester, 1993; Healey, 1997; Innes & Booher, 1999). Communicative action is approached from the perspective of deliberative democracy and how it offers a possibility to shape policy-making. Habermas's critical approach to rationalization processes and his proposal of a project of modernity based on intersubjective rationality suit this deliberative governance approach.

For instance, the literature on collaborative planning that has adopted Habermas's theory of communicative action follows this critical approach (see Forester, 1993; Healey, 1997). This literature analyses communicative action within a specific institutional context and supports the idea that institutions must allow reflection upon them. Forester (1993) explains that communicative action theory helps observe the lifeworld of acting participants, and how they build up social relationships within the collaborative setting, even if they follow individual institutional goals. This practical political theory is interested in planning in micropolitics and microsociology rather than institutional politics. Similarly, Healey (1997) presents a framework for collaborative planning that is based on the idea that institutions are socially constructed. She indicates that "the planning tradition itself has generally been 'trapped' inside a modernist instrumental rationalism for many years, and is only now beginning to escape" (p. 7). Healey opposes the tendency towards instrumental rationalism and advocates for a communicative and consensus-based planning process. She adopts an approach that encourages institutions to design policies taking stakeholders into consideration and promoting consensus-based decision-making. Healey explains that the communicative

turn in policy-making “leads away from competitive interest bargaining towards collaborative consensus-building” (p. 30), and that,

“[...] through such consensus-building practices, organising ideas can be developed and shared which have the capacity to endure, co-ordinate actions by different agents, and to transform ways of organising and ways of knowing in significant ways, in other words, to build cultures” (p. 30).

This literature adopts the Habermasian idea that policy-making processes can follow processes of intersubjective rationality and shape institutional contexts.

As Innes and Booher (2015) point out, collaborative planning theory has shown that rational policy-making seldom takes place, as for most policy issues there is a lack of agreement on values and goals among stakeholders. Collaboration can be more effective than rational analysis, because it allows building a shared knowledge base to make decisions. Furthermore, collaborative planning research has demonstrated that communication is a form of collective action, rather than a mere form of conveying facts. This notion is also highlighted in discursive institutionalism (see Schmidt, 2008, 2011), which supports a dynamic, open to criticism, and communicative institutionalism. As Schmidt indicates (2011), the exchange of ideas enables going from individual to collective action, and institutional change is facilitated by communicating ideas in intersubjective rather than rationalized structures. Habermas’s critical thinking and the concept of communicative rationality have provided useful ideas for theory building in collaborative planning and deliberative governance.

Communicative action theory has also been applied in the study of global governance. Risse (2004) explains that in the absence of government structures at international level, global governance can only rely on non-hierarchical modes of steering. Communicative action offers an appropriate framework to understand non-hierarchical policy-making. In this context, the concept of arguing gains special relevance. Arguing allows solving shared problems when it is directed towards reaching an understanding with other participants. Actors that adopt communicative action are bound to argue to reach an understanding. Besides, arguing is important for the establishment of norms and for its compliance because it increases the legitimacy of governance (Risse, 2004).

“Arguing constitutes a learning mechanism by which actors acquire new information, evaluate their interests in light of new empirical and moral knowledge, and—most importantly—can reflexively and collectively assess the validity claims of norms and standards of appropriate behaviour. As a result, arguing and persuasion constitute tools of ‘soft steering’ that might improve both

the legitimacy problems of global governance by providing voice opportunities to various stakeholders and the problem-solving capacity of governance institutions through deliberation” (Risse, 2004, p. 288).

On the other hand, the adoption of communicative action theory as an ideal to collaborative policy-making has been criticized by some scholars. Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger (1998), for example, state that there has not been a real change of paradigm in collaborative planning. Certainly, efforts to involve stakeholders’ voices have been made, but when it comes to materialise stakeholder’s desires, then the regulatory and institutionalized structures are the ones that decide. In addition, Phelps & Tewdwr-Jones (2000) study the application of communicative action theory at the level of local and regional governance to conclude that an understanding about how institutional capacity is built necessarily entails observing different types of social action, not only communicative action. Although collaborative governance should apparently be empowered by communicative action, it is also bound to be distorted by other types of action, such as strategic action. Phelps and Tewdwr-Jones explain that strategic thinking is actually the norm in policy-making. They recognize that the theory of communicative action can help to interpret collaborative and associative governance forms. However, they indicate that the ideal of collaboration must not be naively implemented. It must also take other forms of power-exerting action into consideration (Phelps & Tewdwr-Jones, 2000). Researchers interested in studying communicative action in practice must be aware that this type of action coexists with other types.

This need to adopt a critical approach to collaboration dynamics is also emphasized by Lotia and Hardy (2008). They maintain that scholarly work on collaboration is mainly functional and that it needs to be combined with a critical perspective. The “discourse on collaboration” considers collaboration as something inherently good. Consequently, the literature on collaboration is often centred on establishing how to implement collaboration, assuming that collaboration always brings benefits to all stakeholders. Nonetheless, the reality is that collaboration might be used to benefit some actors to the detriment of others. Actors might use their power to pursue individual interests instead of collective ones. Lotia and Hardy indicate that the critical view can help the functionalist approach notice the failures of certain forms of collaboration.

Naturally, participants in collaborative policy-making have individual interests. As Mansbridge et al. (2010) argue, self-interests are an important part of deliberation. Precisely,

the existence of conflicting interests might be the reason why some collaborative processes do not end in an agreement, but deliberation can still enable clarifying the conflict and structuring the disagreement. Therefore, the exploration of both self-interests and common interests plays a relevant role in deliberation aimed at consensus. Moreover, Mansbridge et al. emphasize that power differentials among stakeholders must not necessarily have negative effects. On the contrary, power can be used to facilitate the deliberative process. For example, mediators can use their power to keep order in the discussions, guarantee that all participants can voice their concerns, or assure that the norms of participation are followed.

The existence of individual interests and power asymmetries is compatible with communicative action because in this type of action the focus is placed on evaluating speech acts. Speech acts are assessed against validity claims and, as a result, the knowledge embedded in the speech act is proven valid or invalid by the same participants. Phelps & Tewdwr-Jones (2000) also recognize that distorting influences can be revealed and corrected through communicative action to a certain extent. In addition to assessing desires and emotions and facts, acting communicatively requires evaluating the rightness of participants' actions and collaborative norms. Communicative action enables the assessment and, if needed, rectification of actions and procedures. Applying communicative action theory already entails adopting a critical approach to collaboration.

Communicative action theory provides ideas for empirical inquiry even if not all aspects of the theory can be applied in practice (Innes, 2004). This thesis adopts communicative action theory to study collaborative governance in a real-life situation, as it offers a framework for exploring the actions of participants who opt for striving for consensus.

Conclusion

Collaborative governance settings gather together participants with heterogeneous backgrounds and knowledge to tackle complex problems that affect several stakeholders in a consensus-based decision-making process. The present research focuses on how striving for consensus influences how participants share knowledge and make collective decisions. Participants acting communicatively aim at reaching an understanding on topics related to the collaborative setting and the policy problem. The objective of reaching a consensus motivates participants to share and assess knowledge on desires and emotions, facts, and norms.

Participants reach a consensus when they assess speech acts, and the knowledge embedded in it, as valid for the same reasons. Striving for consensus thus can contribute to sharing and creating knowledge in collaborative governance settings. Besides, in addition to striving for consensus to create knowledge, participants in collaborative governance processes also expect to reach explicit agreements. In order to be able to reach agreements, they have to negotiate proposals while taking all stakeholders' interests into consideration. Acting communicatively can contribute to moving this dialogue forward.

This dissertation uses communicative action theory in the study of collaborative governance processes. In this chapter, the theoretical foundations of this dissertation have been presented. These foundations include concepts from communicative action theory and from the literature on collaborative governance. In the present research, this theoretical framework has been combined with empirical data to explore the main research problems. A detailed explanation of the methodology followed is explained in the next chapter.

3. Methodology

The research pattern followed in this doctoral thesis begins with a review of the literature and then moves on to a reasoning process that combines empirical data and theory. First, theoretical foundations on communicative action and collaborative governance frame the research topics. From this theoretical framework, two research questions or problems arise: how communicative action contributes to knowledge creation and to making collective decisions in collaborative governance settings. Next, these questions are explored in a case study. The case study provides empirical data to reinterpret and expand the theoretical framework. Accordingly, this data is then compared with the theories presented and new literature is consulted and incorporated in the analysis in order to develop several theoretical conceptualizations. Thus, instead of opting for only one direction of inquiry to answer the research questions, theories and observations are combined in an iterative process.

A single case has been selected to collect empirical data and explore the phenomenon under study in depth. A single case study is recommended when the research questions require an extensive analysis of a research phenomenon. In a single case study, researchers can develop a holistic view of the events occurring in a single unit of analysis (Yin, 2009). Another reason for having opted for a single case study is that the Admiralbrücke mediation process is representative of the phenomenon under study. The case has all the characteristics of collaborative governance processes: the collaborative setting was created to tackle a policy problem that affected several stakeholders; it was an inclusive process; several participants played an important role as convenors; setting and norms of participation and interaction were formalized; and it was a consensus-based process. The Admiralbrücke mediation process can be considered a “typical case”, that is, a prototypical or paradigmatic case within the topic of study (see Gerring, 2009; Yin, 2009). Paradigmatic cases are suitable for gaining scientific knowledge because they are examples of the phenomenon under study. They highlight general characteristics of the societies observed (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Taking into consideration all the features of the case, it offers the appropriate real-life context to explore the main themes of this thesis.

Concerning the capacity of a single case study to generalize results, it is important to keep in mind that a case study is not defended for its representativeness of other cases. The case study is valuable insofar as it is a unique case. Therefore, it is examined in depth in order

to understand the case itself. “We do not study a case primarily to understand other cases. Our first obligation is to understand this one case” (Stake, 1995, p. 4). Accordingly, the results of a case study are generalizable to theoretical concepts but not to specific populations. Analysing a single case study in combination with theoretical foundations allows analytical generalizations to be established (see Yin, 2009). Thus, the case study helps update theoretical foundations. Certainly, the knowledge generated from the case study is highly context-dependent. Yet, in the study of social groups there is only context-dependent knowledge. Universals cannot be applicable to human affairs (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

The selection of a single case study matches the exploratory aims of the present research. Rather than confirming existing theories, the research presented in this dissertation relates these theories to a specific real-life context to present findings and ideas for further inquiry. Therefore, the final explanation is not fully specified at the beginning of the study. It is developed throughout it by combining both theoretical and empirical data. This process is iterative in nature. As the analytical process goes on, literature and empirical data are revised in an iterative form until an explanation is found (Yin, 2009).

The following sections present several concepts relating to the methodology used in this dissertation. First, an account on the paradigm applied is provided. Then, the different research methods employed for collecting and analysing data are presented. Finally, methodological limitations and measures implemented to minimize their effects and to ensure internal and external validity of results are outlined.

3.1. Applying a Pragmatist Paradigm

The pragmatist view supports the argument that the selection of one specific paradigm over another is strongly driven by practical reasons. Often, scholars understand a paradigm as a worldview that establishes fundamental relationships between epistemological, ontological and methodological questions. According to this conception, a paradigm constitutes a basic belief that is accepted by faith, because its ultimate certainty cannot be established. Therefore, debates among competing paradigms cannot be resolved. There is no way to establish the validity of one paradigm over another (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). On the other hand, scholars working with paradigms are who actually agree on establishing boundaries between groups. The boundaries drawn up by proponents of different paradigms are often based on events that take place outside the philosophy of knowledge. Therefore, metaphysical

discussions about paradigms might say little about the practical decisions made by researchers. For example, social researchers that advocate for qualitative research often consider the positivist paradigm outdated. Accordingly, they create and label a set of alternatives such as post-positivism or constructivism. Positivism then becomes an alternative among competing paradigms. As a matter of fact, paradigms are humanly created and overlaps between different paradigms are frequent. Using a certain research paradigm stems from a consensus within a group of researchers. Researchers establish relationships between epistemological, ontological, and methodological issues followed within the paradigm. Consensus, rather than the fundamental epistemological consequences of the paradigm, is what makes researchers defend one paradigm over another. Therefore, the pragmatist approach is in favour of communication between proponents of different paradigms in order to reach an understanding and establish joint lines of action. Proponents of different paradigms can engage in a constructive dialogue in order to understand each other's claims (Morgan, 2007, 2014). For pragmatists, it makes more sense to connect paradigms than to establish boundaries.

The possibility of integrating different paradigms is only one of the consequences of adopting the pragmatist approach. The pragmatist paradigm has other important epistemological, ontological and methodological foundations which have influenced the research presented in this dissertation. First, pragmatism is a specific theory of knowledge. Among the different conceptualizations provided by pragmatism concerning the nature of knowledge and the way it is acquired, there are four essential views that have influenced the present research. First, knowledge creation is the result of a problem-solving process rather than a search for truth (Habermas, 1999). One of the most important proponents of pragmatism explains that:

“the possession of true thoughts means everywhere the possession of invaluable instruments of action, and that our duty to gain truth, so far from being a blank command from out of the blue, or a ‘stunt’ self-imposed by our intellect, can account for itself by excellent practical reasons” (James, 1998, p. 97).

Knowledge embedded in theories needs to be useful in practice. The representation of knowledge is possible because individuals use learning processes to solve problems. They rationalize experience and create conceptual systems with norms that influence their actions. As a consequence, there is not just one way to view the world but many. Therefore, pragmatism is associated with pluralism (Creswell, 2014; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006).

Second, knowledge acquisition is the result of a learning process that requires the combination of theory and facts. Researchers are confronted with the challenge of connecting theories and data in order to solve research problems. Often, selecting a research approach is related to a specific paradigm. For example, constructivism is usually associated with inductive processes that start collecting and analysing data in order to build general themes, whereas post-positivism is linked to a deductive process that aims at testing theories in empirical studies (Creswell, 2014). This distinction between the two ways of connecting theory and data, inductive or deductive, is useful to justify the research process to an audience, but the actual process of connecting theory and data goes in the two directions (Morgan, 2007). The pragmatist paradigm advocates for both the use of theory and empirical evidence, in a research logic that uses both deduction and induction (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). As a result of implementing this method of inquiry, the researcher is immersed in a learning process that requires relating theory to facts and facts to theory as many times as needed in order to solve the research problem.

Third, the acquisition of knowledge is an individual and a collective endeavour at the same time. It is an individual undertaking insofar as there is not a world of objective truths. The stock of knowledge is principally created through the sedimentation of subjective experiences. Besides, it is a collective undertaking because it cannot be separated from history, society, and culture (Schütz & Luckmann, 1988). Therefore, the validity of knowledge does not lie in the method of acquisition, but in the capacity for creating intersubjective consensus in processes of knowledge assessment (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Peirce was the first to notice that the relevant contribution of science is not its capacity to acquire more or less accurate knowledge from reality, but its ability to establish methods that achieve intersubjective consensus (Habermas, 1991b). In research, this social dimension is manifested in the process of peer reviewing, in which research results can be assessed and accepted or refused by other scholars (Morgan, 2014).

Fourth, knowledge is embedded in language. At the epistemological level, the lifeworld in which human beings participate is constructed using language and reason (Habermas, 1999). Language is a system of signs that enables everyday life to be objectified. This objectivation takes the form of knowledge, which is shared in the social world. Thus, individuals participate in a process of externalization and internalization of knowledge. The objective social world is intersubjectively created using language and it is also internalized as

a subjective reality. Therefore, “the sociology of knowledge presupposes a sociology of language” (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, p. 185).

Furthermore, pragmatism presents a specific ontological approach. For pragmatists, the duality between reality and appearance is irrelevant in the process of knowledge acquisition (Habermas, 1999). The discussion between one approach that considers the existence of a world beyond human understanding and one that defends the human conception of the world as being exclusively subjective is not relevant in the process of knowledge acquisition. Berger and Luckmann’s (1967) definition of knowledge “as the certainty that phenomena are real and that they possess specific characteristics” (p. 1) might appear, in their own words, “simplistic”, but it certainly matches how the acquisition of knowledge is understood in pragmatism. For pragmatists, the interpretation that human beings make of their own experiences is what determines their conception of the world. On the other hand, the nature of the world limits individual experiences (Morgan, 2014). At an ontological level, this position assumes a weak naturalism because a reality without speech acts exists, limiting individual experiences (Habermas, 1999).

Concerning methods, pragmatism as a paradigm can integrate different ones. The research method is not conditioned by the paradigm. Researchers have the autonomy to select a research method that is able to answer the research question and accomplish the research objectives (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Pragmatism allows researchers to adopt the most appropriate method to solve the research problem. For example, pragmatism advocates the use of mixed methods when necessary (Creswell, 2014; Morgan, 2007). Researchers can select data and methods as long as they are appropriate to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2014; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Accordingly, “pragmatism can serve as a philosophical program for social research, regardless of whether that research uses qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods” (Morgan, 2014, p. 1045). This reinforces the idea that qualitative research is not the monopoly of certain paradigms. Qualitative research can be applied to any paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

The research presented in this dissertation aims to explore the use of communicative action in collaborative governance settings. Therefore, the contributions made by previous researchers on these two topics are combined with an analysis of the data extracted from a case study. The researcher thus benefits from this collective undertaking in which other researchers and participants in the case study have provided relevant theoretical and empirical

knowledge. This knowledge is combined and analysed in order to develop several conceptualizations related to the two main research problems.

3.2. Research Methods

A case study requires both presenting a context and focusing on a unit of analysis where the research problems can be explored (Yin, 2009). To accomplish the research objectives, the unit of analysis has been limited to the collaborative governance setting. This setting emerged during the negotiation rounds carried out between September and December 2010, in the context of the mediation process. Thus, the unit of analysis comprises the group of participants in the negotiation rounds and the interactions that this group had during this period. Events and interactions taking place outside the unit of analysis are relevant insofar as they are connected with the unit of analysis. It is also important to highlight that the unit of analysis is always the social group constituted in the negotiation rounds, not the individuals, even if data is gathered from individual participants. The knowledge provided by interviewees is relevant as long as it is connected with the interactions that took place in the negotiation rounds.

Researching the events and interactions in the negotiation rounds of the Admiralbrücke mediation process has required implementing a qualitative approach. Qualitative inquiry was chosen for several reasons. First, qualitative research is appropriate when the researcher wants to understand phenomena in depth (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). To explore communicative action, it was necessary to consider a complex network of events and interactions that took place in the negotiation rounds. Knowledge had to be gathered from the participants' perspective, and qualitative research is especially suited to listening to participants in order to develop an understanding on the topic (Creswell, 2014). Furthermore, qualitative research emphasizes the importance of taking the context into consideration (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). The interactions within the negotiation rounds could only be fully understood by looking at other events before the process or outside it. Therefore, data was gathered and analysed in order to interpret and present the whole context of the case study. Lastly, qualitative research enables the researcher to discover variables hitherto unknown (Creswell, 2014). Knowledge gained from the empirical data has added new elements to the analysis and discussion of the research topics. All things considered,

qualitative research has offered suitable methods to explore the research problems in this case study.

In order to assure reliability of results, conventional validity criteria as well as naturalistic criteria were applied in the process of collecting and interpreting data (see Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007). First, internal validity was sought by intensively engaging in the phenomenon under study; using triangulation of different methods, sources, and data; checking interpretations among participants in the mediation process; and assessing rival explanations. Second, external validity was pursued by describing the context of the action in detail and comparing findings with the existing literature, so that the ideas developed in this thesis might be used by other researchers and practitioners in other contexts. Concerning naturalistic criteria, the analysis of data situates the mediation process in a specific social context. Furthermore, the interests, values, and knowledge from the different participants involved in the action are considered. As pointed out by Jamal and Hollinshead (2001), naturalistic inquiry advocates the implementation of a holistic approach that takes multiple realities into consideration, including those of participant and observer. Thus, the data presented in this thesis has an important intersubjective component. Interpretations are developed in an intersubjective social context, in which the researcher actively participates with the aim of empowering the different views of events and interactions occurring in the negotiation rounds. The following subsections describe in detail (A) the data collection and (B) the data analysis methods applied.

A. Data collection

In the data-collection phase validity is generally constructed by using multiple sources and establishing a chain of evidence (Yin, 2009). To establish this chain of evidence, three types of data collection methods were used: gathering written documents, individual interviews, and observing the activities on the bridge.

Regarding written documents, the researcher created a database which included reports, minutes of meetings, and other publications gathered from several sources. One of the most important sources of information regarding the negotiation rounds was the mediation team. Data analysis counts on a total of eight documents issued between 2010 and 2011 by the mediation team, which contain information from the mediation process. These documents include reports, flyers, and minutes of three meetings. They provide information about

participating stakeholders, number of meetings, outcomes, and other important elements of the mediation process. The minutes of the meetings of the Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg District Parliament, in which the problems surrounding Admiralbrücke were discussed, were also gathered. The analysis counts on eight printed documents issued between 2009 and 2012 by the district parliament, which are related to the Admiralbrücke policy-making process. These documents are highly relevant when it comes to understanding how the district parliament monitored the policy problem, and which decisions were taken regarding the competition for ideas, the mediation process, or the noise reduction measures implemented, among other topics discussed. Besides, the analysis includes the minutes of five meetings held between 2009 and 2010 in the Urbanstraße Neighbourhood Centre, where several neighbours discussed the Admiralbrücke problems. Furthermore, to observe the impact of the problems in the media, regional and national newspapers were consulted. From all the articles consulted, five are cited in the present study to provide evidence of the information published in the media. In addition, other publications of district government and senate were gathered to be able to study and describe the urban context. These documents provide information on neighbourhood structure, tourism activity, or normative frameworks, to mention just a few topics. Written documents were essential to both construct the context of the case study and understand events in the negotiation rounds.

To gather data on the interactions between participants in the negotiation rounds, individual interviews were carried out, as the written reports and minutes provided information on elements of the process and results obtained, but not on interactions. Interviewees were selected according to two criteria. First, they had to represent the heterogeneity of stakeholders in the collaborative setting. In order to reflect this heterogeneity in the data gathered, interviewees represented a broad array of stakeholders (neighbours, public institutions, musicians, mediation team, etc.), all with different needs and knowledge. Second, it was important that interviewees had first-hand information, either because they had regularly attended the meetings or because they played a relevant role in the whole process.

As a result, 11 people who had participated in the negotiation rounds were interviewed. Regarding frequency of participation, 8 interviewees had participated regularly and 3 had attended some meetings. The group of interviewees that had regularly participated included one of the two mediators, the social worker from the Urbanstraße Neighbourhood Centre, the Director of the Office for Public Order, the representative of the neighbours living in the

building on the north-west side of the bridge, and four other neighbours who lived in the nearby area but not next to the bridge. Among these four neighbours were a representative of the musicians and the Admiralbruecke.de website administrator. The group of interviewees that had only participated in some meetings included one immediate neighbour and representative of the Admiralkiez Action Group (Admiralkiez Initiative in German), the district deputy mayor, and the owner of the Italian restaurant on the south-east side of the bridge.

In addition to these 11 interviewees, the Head of Water and Emission Protection of the Office for Environment and Nature Protection was interviewed as she had participated in other meetings in the mediation process, outside the negotiation rounds, and had played a crucial role in gathering data on the level of noise on the bridge and in the implementation of noise regulations. Furthermore, the Director of Political Affairs and Strategy, City Development Issues, Tourism for All, and Sports of Visit Berlin was also interviewed. Although he had not participated in the mediation process, his knowledge helped understand the context of the case. This interview provided information on the urban environment, especially the existing links between tourism development and the problems of coexistence between visitors and residents in different parts of Berlin.

These 13 interviews were carried out between 2011 and 2012 during two separate research stays in Berlin. Details on interviewees, frequency of participation in the negotiation rounds, and interview dates are given in table 1. In the cases where interviewees had only participated occasionally in the negotiation rounds, an explanation of the reason why these participants were selected is added.

Table 1: List of individual interviews

Interviewee	Cited as	Frequency of participation in the negotiation rounds	Interview Date
Representative of the mediation team	Mediator	Regular	12.10.2011
Immediate neighbour and representative of residents at Fraenkelufer 26	Neighbour 1	Regular	31.07.2012
Immediate neighbour and representative of the Admiralkiez Action Group	Neighbour 2	Occasional (last negotiation rounds). Played an important role in the whole policy-making process, especially in the discussions undertaken in the last negotiation rounds	19.10.2011

Interviewee	Cited as	Frequency of participation in the negotiation rounds	Interview Date
Neighbour who lived in the nearby area	Neighbour 3	Regular	02.08.2012
Neighbour and representative of musicians who lived in the nearby area	Neighbour 4	Regular	06.08.2012
Neighbour who lived in the nearby area	Neighbour 5	Regular	30.07.2012
Neighbour and administrator of Admiralbruecke.de who lived in the nearby area	Neighbour 6	Regular	15.09.2011
District Deputy Mayor	Public officer 1	Occasional. A leading figure in all the process, however. Even though he did not participate in all negotiation rounds, he appointed officers from his department to participate in all the meetings	05.10.2011
Director of the Office for Public Order	Public officer 2	Regular	26.07.2012
Head of Water and Emission Protection. Office for Environment and Nature Protection	Public officer 3	Did not participate in the negotiation rounds, but participated in the mediation process and attended the first plenary meetings	01.08.2012
Owner of the Italian restaurant on the south-east side of the bridge	Restaurant owner	Occasional. His restaurant was often mentioned in direct relation with some of the problems on the bridge (e.g., disposal of pizza boxes)	24.07.2012
Social worker of the Urbanstraße Neighbourhood Centre	Social worker	Regular	22.09.2011
Director of Political Affairs and Strategy, City Development Issues, Tourism for All, and Sports of Visit Berlin	Berlin's Marketing Organization representative	Did not participate. Was interviewed to collect information on the context of the case	24.07.2012

Relevant participants were identifiable as written documents or interviewees mentioned their names. To begin with, the mediation reports included some participants' names. However, in most cases only the name of the stakeholder was mentioned, and not the name of the representative that participated in the negotiation rounds. The names of most of the relevant participants were given by the interviewees themselves during interviews.

In the process of contacting participants, it was easier to contact the representatives of organized stakeholders such as public institutions, the mediation team, or neighbourhood associations, than neighbours. This was because they held official positions, and thus contact information was available for them—in most of the cases, this information was published on the organization's website. In contrast, less information on neighbours was available, and therefore had to be gathered during the same interviews. As a result of the information given by interviewees, several neighbours were contacted. However, not all of them answered the phone calls or emails. Fortunately, those who answered were very receptive to participating in the research as interviewees. Besides, they represented the heterogeneity of needs and knowledge.

In-depth interviews were carried out so as to understand participants' experience in their own words (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Interviews were conversations rather than structured enquiries. Nonetheless, most of the questions were pre-established according to the study protocol (see Yin, 2009). Several issues needed to be raised in the interview. Therefore, structured topics were prepared beforehand. During the interview, the researcher remained open to the notions presented by the interviewee, rather than bringing preconceived notions into the conversation (Gillham, 2000). It was important for the interview to be open so that the participant's view of the phenomenon could be explained without any bias from the researcher's perspective (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). This resulted in interviewees often creating their own structure of responses. In turn, the researcher took care to listen, check that research topics were covered, and ask appropriate questions in order to motivate interviewees to talk about the research topics.

In practice, the first two or three interviews were, to some degree, pilot tests. They helped the researcher understand, and learn from, the process of conducting individual interviews. In addition, they provided important information on the unit of analysis and the case study as a whole. Piloting allowed the researcher to develop interviewing skills and also analyse the correspondence between initial observations and research problems (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The documents read previously, and the sources consulted had contributed to building a general context. Nevertheless, during the first interviews new facts and subtopics were revealed. Therefore, a flexible approach regarding the questions asked was required. Questions about the main topics that were too narrow might have led to a poor understanding of the whole process. All in all, information provided by participants during the first interviews enabled the researcher to correct or adjust the details of the case study.

As the interviews advanced, questions could be more focused on the main themes of inquiry. At the same time, the researcher's interviewing skills improved. For example, the researcher did not need to ask so many questions, was more open to the structure and contents that interviewees wanted to follow, and was more able to steer the interview in the appropriate direction, helping interviewees to express themselves (see Gillham, 2000). As a result, the last interviews were shorter and more concise.

The interviews were transcribed and partly analysed within the same data collection phase, which meant interviewing methods and contents could be better adjusted to the research objectives. Interviews were tape-recorded with the interviewee's consent, and transcribed immediately afterwards. In this way, the evidence collected could be checked and possible rival explanations explored right away. Reviewing the content of the interviews also helped to identify methodological errors made during the interview, such as occasionally giving a predetermined conception to the interviewee or asking questions that were not really relevant to the main research topics. After having analysed the first round of interviews, the researcher was able to ask more precise questions in the second round to fill any gaps in the data gathered previously. The final two or three interviews did not provide completely new information, but reinforced the evidence collected earlier. Once enough data had been gathered to address the main research topics, the interviewing process came to an end.

The transcriptions were made by the researcher, and occupied a total of 249 pages. The first interviews were longer, several lasting over an hour, and resulting in long transcripts of more than 25 pages each. Longer interviews did not necessarily provide more evidence than shorter ones, and took longer to transcribe. In the second round, a better focus on the research topics resulted in shorter interviews. These interviews lasted less than an hour and the transcripts covered less than 20 pages each.

It must be highlighted that interviewees were highly motivated to participate in the interviews and to communicate their experience. They were eager to discuss various topics in relation to the collaborative process. Interviewees demonstrated how vividly they had participated in the policy-making process and how interested they were in discussing the different topics. They proved to be highly engaged citizens that had contributed with their time and resources to the collaborative governance process, and were kind enough to share their experiences and involve the researcher in the process of assessing events and interactions. Naturally, through the interviewing process, both the interviewee and the

researcher embarked on a learning process. Communicating with interviewees improved the researcher's understanding of the events in the mediation process, and much useful information was gleaned from the interviews which allowed the researcher to analyse the case.

Written documents and interviews were complemented with observations onsite. During the data collection period, the researcher visited Admiralbrücke, observed the activities on the bridge, and took field notes and photographs. These observations were made once the mediation process had finished with the aim of understanding the context of the policy problem.

B. Data analysis

Interviewees' descriptions were analysed and interpreted in order to provide an account of the events occurring in the negotiation rounds. The focus was mainly placed on data provided by interviewees which offered verbal reports that explained behavioural events (Yin, 2009). In the process of interpretation, it was important to centre the attention on statements that communicated participants' actions rather than interviewees' opinions. Opinions were only considered when they affected events in the negotiation rounds. For instance, individual desires and emotions were analysed in order to explore how they influenced the collaborative process. Furthermore, written reports served to corroborate interviewees' statements. Understanding the various actions and events occurring in the negotiation rounds enabled several interpretations and findings related to the main topics of inquiry to be developed and presented in this dissertation (see Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

The data analysis was aimed at presenting the events as explained by the interviewees. The researcher analysed the contents of interviews and selected excerpts to portray actions and events. Facts were explored, and a sample of words representing the interviewee's explanation of a certain topic was selected (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2005). Nvivo qualitative data analysis software was used to code the excerpts. The coding process combined the use of both theory and inductive generated codes. Taking into consideration the theoretical foundations of this thesis, excerpts related to the main theoretical concepts were identified and coded with a predefined code. For example, a series of theory-generated codes, such as "convenorship", "inclusiveness", or "formalization", were used to analyse the characteristics of collaborative governance. These codes are names summarizing the passage analysed, and

can be understood as “descriptive” or “topic” codes (Saldaña, 2013). In addition, a great deal of inductive reasoning was needed to explore the research problem, and a significant number of descriptive codes emerged inductively. These inductive codes were chosen after interpreting the interviewees’ statements. In this regard it is important to clarify that these codes were not “in vivo” codes, such as words or phrases mentioned by participants, that the theoretical framework had not taken into consideration (Saldaña, 2013). The inductive codes resulted from an interpretation process entailing constant comparison between theoretical foundations and findings (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Some examples of these codes are: “background convictions”, “gathering knowledge”, “accepting definitions”, “refusing definitions”, “unfulfilled goals”, or “unregulated interactions”. Furthermore, codes were adapted throughout the process in order to try to reflect interviewees’ descriptions as well as possible. As the coding process advanced, several codes and data changed or grouped together until they crystalized in concepts or ideas that explained actions and events within the specific theoretical framework of this study. Writing down memos helped to organize ideas and identify categories and relationships as the coding process progressed and data was analysed (see Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Finally, a series of attribute codes (see Saldaña, 2013) were used for identifying descriptive information related to the case study context. Some examples of these codes are: “the site”, “outcome”, “participant”, or “stakeholder”. All in all, deductive and inductive as well as descriptive and attribute codes were used to label excerpts. A selection of these excerpts has been used to develop several parts of the chapter presenting the case study and the analysis chapters.

During the process of interpretation it was important to check validity in order to avoid any bias when making generalizations (Miles et al., 2014). In this regard, one of the advantages of the Admiralbrücke case is that data from multiple sources could be collected. The 12 interviewees provided insights into the various topics, and statements often coincided. In other cases, when participants differed in their interpretation, and these differences were relevant for understanding the case, they were included in the analysis. Addressing rival explanations helped select the most reasonable explanation for the events (Miles et al., 2014), as the contrasting perspectives of interviewees frequently reflected why there had been disagreements between several participants in the negotiation rounds. In addition to the information provided by the interviewees, the process was monitored by the mediation team, which issued several written reports. These reports also provided data to corroborate facts.

Using various sources of evidence gave rise to converging lines of inquiry and facts could be corroborated (see Yin, 2009).

Interviews were carried out, transcribed, and analysed in German. Verbatim citations were selected to explain events and actions, and then translated from German to English by the researcher. In addition, the researcher also translated excerpts of written reports. Appointing a person other than the researcher to translate the contents would have complicated the interpretation process. Translating also required interpreting the words of the interviewee. Since the researcher had carried out and transcribed the interviews, he had the advantage that he could interpret the individual situation of the interviewee and the context of the situation when translating. The present manuscript uses the English translation in the main text. The original quotes in German can be found in the Appendix.

To give a voice to participants in the collaborative governance process, the transcriptions were edited as little as possible. Interviews were transcribed as spoken and only the necessary changes were made to enhance readability such as re-punctuation or eliminating “ums” and “ers” and long pauses (see Corden & Sainsbury, 2006). As a result, the verbatim quotations of interviewees’ statements show grammatical errors in order to reflect the words spoken.

Qualitative research methods have facilitated collecting, analysing, and presenting data on the interactions between participants in the negotiation rounds in order to explore how communicative action affects knowledge creation and reaching agreements in collaborative governance. In planning the present research, several methodological limitations were also taken into consideration, as it is detailed in the next section.

3.3. Methodological Limitations

Methodological limitations in this case study stem from three factors. In order to diminish these factors, an effort has been made to use a methodology aimed at ensuring reliability of findings. First, empirical data was gathered when the collaborative process had finished. Although it was still recent and participants had a clear picture of it when the researcher became acquainted with the case, the researcher could not directly observe the events but relied on participants’ explanations. If it had been possible to participate in the negotiation rounds, the events would have been observed first-hand. Participants’ observation could have

added accuracy to the interpretation of the phenomenon, even though this method is not exempt from the risk of bias, because researchers cannot exclusively act as external observers and might advocate for one position or another (Yin, 2009). Since the researcher was acquainted with the existence of the case approximately eight months after the negotiation rounds had finished, data had to be collected following other methods. The limitation of having to gather data once the collaborative process was finished was compensated by implementing collection methods that ensured having enough data available from different sources and analysis methods that took care of checking internal validation. First, as mentioned earlier, all possible documentation on the case was gathered in order to have data available and learn as much as possible about it. Next, the necessary resources were invested to gather data from various sources. Lastly, the collected data was submitted to a validation process that encompassed triangulation of different sources and corroboration. The interviews conducted and documents gathered generated enough content to corroborate data and present findings. Interviews, written reports, and minutes proved to be reliable sources of evidence.

Second, exploring communicative action in practice also presents methodological challenges. Even when a process is collaborative in nature, participants do not act communicatively at all times. As highlighted previously, they might also act strategically in order to achieve individual aims. In a group of more than 20 participants actively discussing a topic in many directions a multitude of speech acts take place. Identifying what type of action is carried out in every speech act is outside the researcher's scope. However, the researcher can select specific participants' actions, which can be used as good examples of a category of action. Thus, several actions can be used as examples of acting communicatively. Furthermore, the outcomes of an action situation can be analysed and interpreted to establish what type of action was more predominant. For example, it can be observed if the definitions of problems made by the group encompass the heterogeneity of needs and knowledge present in the collaborative setting. Consequently, examples of actions and outcomes are used in the data analysis to explain what type of action was prevalent in a certain situation.

Third, the context of the case matters, and hence some of the knowledge generated might only be context-dependent. The Admiralbrücke mediation process had a specific location, thematic, chronology, and succession of interactions between participants. For instance, it took place at a local level, in an urban environment, and the collaborative setting had its own specific characteristics. Participants' actions as well as the research conducted were highly influenced by this context. Therefore, proving external validity has been crucial

to develop analytical generalizations. These generalizations are the result of a combination of examining empirical data and comparing it with theoretical foundations. The outcomes of this study might be applied to other research contexts. Nonetheless, it is difficult to forecast how much of the knowledge generated can be applied in another case. In a new research context, the researcher would have to establish if theoretical generalizations are applicable to a new situation taking a specific research problem into consideration. From a pragmatic point of view, knowledge is not exclusively context-dependent or, on the contrary, completely generalizable. It is the researcher who assesses if knowledge generated previously can be used in a new research context (Morgan, 2007).

In addition, it is relevant to mention that all interpretations and adaptations of concepts adopted from communicative action theory have been made with the sole purpose of advancing scientific discussion. This adoption has entailed applying several concepts of the theory to new contexts of inquiry. Although the researcher has tried to preserve the original meaning of these concepts, their application to explore collaborative governance and to interpret a specific empirical case has moved the discussion into areas not envisaged in the original theory. Should there be any misinterpretation of the original concepts of communicative action theory in the present study, the sole responsibility lies with the researcher.

Conclusion

This dissertation combines theory and empirical data to explore the research problems. This constant relationship between theory and facts exists throughout the study: in the collection of data, in the analysis, and in the discussion of findings. By combining knowledge from different theoretical and empirical sources it has been possible to identify convergent and divergent arguments and develop theoretical generalizations. Thus, the knowledge generated is not only the result of individual research efforts. This study makes use of contributions from scholars who have previously been interested in these research topics and from interviewees who participated in the mediation process.

The research process has similarities with the process that participants in collaborative governance settings undergo when seeking solutions to problems. Participants also have to combine theory and practice. They have background knowledge which influences the decisions they make in specific action situations, and they update this background knowledge

with the knowledge they learn in action. Furthermore, they make a collective effort to reach a consensus on various topics, because they have to understand problems and look for solutions. Besides, they share knowledge through the use of language as a medium of communication. All things considered, both researchers and participants in collaborative governance processes use knowledge in a pragmatic way to solve problems, even though they act in different contexts and have different problems. This approach to problem-solving is not only significant in academic inquiry. It also points to how politics can be done in society. Politics can aim at understanding and solving problems through deliberative processes involving relevant stakeholders.



Figure 1: View from the west side of the bridge and iron balustrade covered with graffiti
(Author, 24.07.2012, 15:48h)

4. The Admiralbrücke Case

The present study explores a real case of collaborative governance, in which several stakeholders participated over nine months in a mediation process in order to solve the existing problems on Admiralbrücke, a bridge located in the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg in Berlin. The problems were caused by the anti-social behaviour displayed by some of the people that gathered to party on the bridge in the spring and summer nights, and which seriously affected neighbours' lives. When the problems and the neighbours' complaints escalated, the district government decided to implement a mediation process, in which local government, neighbours, and other public and private organizations collaborated to try to understand the problems and look for solutions.

Admiralbrücke is a very nice place to be on warm spring and summer days. The bridge is traffic calmed and there is a lot of space for people to meet up and have a drink (see Figure 2). Besides, there is a rich offer of restaurants, cafeterias, and bars nearby.



Figure 2: View of the bridge from the south side
(Author, 25.08.2017, 19:23h)

Admiralbrücke spans the Landwehr Canal, which was built between 1845 and 1850 as a branch of the river Spree, and used as shipping route for construction and combustion

material (Edition Luisenstadt, 2002). Nowadays, it is mainly used by recreational crafts such as sightseeing ships, small boats, and canoes (see Figure 3). The view from the bridge evokes a Mediterranean atmosphere. To the west, the view goes from Urban harbour to Baerwald bridge (Streit Entknoten, 2011), and takes in the sunset. To the east, there is a view of the canal and the chestnut trees lining both sides. Admiralbrücke and its surroundings is a charming place to spend time.



Figure 3: View of the bridge from the north-west shore
(Author, 25.08.2017, 19:47h)

During the day, Admiralbrücke functions as a crossing for vehicles and pedestrians. At times, groups of tourists visit the bridge led by tour guides (Field notes, July 2012; see Figure 3). In the warm spring and summer afternoons and evenings many people, sometimes hundreds, gather on the bridge (see Figures 5 and 6), and are often accompanied by professional and non-professional street musicians, who consider Admiralbrücke an appropriate stage for their music. The atmosphere reflects an open and multicultural city.



Figure 4: Guided visit to Admiralbrücke
(Author, 24.07.2012, 16:11h)



Figure 5: Admiralbrücke at night (one)
Number of people on the bridge: 230 approximately (Author, 25.08.2017, 20:53h)



Figure 6: Admiralbrücke at night (two)
(Author, 25.08.2017, 20:44h)

However, this “party” takes place in the middle of a densely inhabited area. The bridge is surrounded by neighbouring houses which are close to the canal shores. This proximity creates a problem of coexistence between the bridge users, who want to meet, have a drink, or listen to music, and the neighbours, who are affected by the noise produced and the rubbish left by people gathering on the bridge.

The first coexistence problems between residents and bridge users emerged more than a decade ago, and over the years the situation on Admiralbrücke has changed. During the first four years, before the mediation process took place, the problem escalated to an unbearable level for neighbours. The policy-making process started when neighbours got organized and sent their complaints and proposals for solutions to public authorities. Then, public authorities took the lead in the process. Several stakeholders discussed the Admiralbrücke problems for months, but failed to agree on solutions and the process reached the point where several parties were in confrontation. To try to solve the conflict, the district government decided to implement a mediation process, which aimed at including all affected stakeholders

in a consensus-based decision-making process. The mediation was complemented with a competition for ideas that intended to gather proposals for solutions from citizens. In the mediation process, participants were not able to make decisions on measures to solve the problems on the bridge, but the collaborative process changed the situation considerably. For example, with the knowledge acquired public institutions implemented measures that solved the problems to a great extent (Streit Entknoten, 2011). After the mediation process, people continued to gather on the bridge, but in a more regulated way, thereby disturbing neighbours less.

In this chapter, the context of the case under study is presented in order to provide a framework for understanding the events and interactions that took place in the negotiation rounds of the mediation process. First, a description of the urban environment is presented. Next, the history of events related to this policy-making process is chronologically displayed, from the moment when coexistence problems started until the mediation process ended. Afterwards, the collaborative characteristics of the mediation process are analysed. Lastly, the outcomes of the process mentioned by participants and in the final mediation report are reviewed.

4.1. Urban Environment

Conflicts of coexistence have emerged in several Berlin neighbourhoods over the past 15 years. As the representative of the Office for Environment and Nature Protection explained in the interview, “in the beginning it was Simon-Dach-Straße, Admiralbrücke, [...] Spreewaldplatz, and then Wrangelstraße, depending on how the city evolves and also the district evolves” (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹ Each of these cases has its own individual characteristics and sources of problems, yet in all these conflicts there is always a common theme: noise from leisure activities. For example, in the Wrangelstraße neighbourhood there has been an increase in the number of tourists in recent years. The location of the neighbourhood, near the highly visited tourism attraction of East Side Gallery and Wall Museum, and the significant number of restaurants, cafés, and bars in the area attract tourists as well as Berliners from other neighbourhoods. In February 2011, the Green Party invited residents to participate in a meeting to discuss the problems of the Wrangelstraße. The event had the title “Help, tourists come!”, which made for headlines in newspapers (Rabenstein, 2011). Next, in the Simon-

Dach-Straße noise is mainly produced by the high concentration of cafés, bars, and restaurants. Lastly, on Admiralbrücke the number of people gathering on the bridge and the music played by street musicians are the main sources of noise. These leisure activities have an impact on residents' lives and conflicts often emerge. The local government has the challenge of having to manage the impacts resulting from the increase in tourism and leisure activities in the city in recent years.

The Admiralbrücke urban environment is made up of a complex network of elements. This section focuses on those elements related to the problems on Admiralbrücke. Several developments and several characteristics of this urban environment are considered and presented at three levels: (A) city, (B) district, and (C) neighbourhood.

A. The City

After the fall of the wall, Berlin was expected to become a global political and economic centre. The city has succeeded in the first aim and occupies a relevant position in European and international politics. However, Berlin has not fulfilled expectations regarding becoming a global economic pole. In the nineties the city underwent a process of deindustrialization that made many Berliners unemployed. In contrast, other sectors such as the service sector have grown in the last two decades (Krajewski & Schumann, 2006).

Tourism occupies a very important position among the economic activities that have grown after the fall of the wall (Novy & Huning, 2009). Berlin is a success case as far as tourism growth is concerned. The city received approximately 3.2 million visitors in 1996. By 2016 this number had increased to 12.7 million (Senatsverwaltung für Wirtschaft Energie und Betriebe, n.d.). The number of overnight stays has also increased sharply in the past two decades. In 1996 there were 7.5 million overnights (Senatsverwaltung für Wirtschaft Energie und Betriebe, n.d.), and 19 years later Visit Berlin announced that the city had surpassed the 30 million mark for the first time, thereby entering in the league of cities such as New York or Honk Kong (Berlin Tourismus & Kongress GmbH, 2015). Tourism activity is flourishing in the city and the government is proud of it. Tourism is a very important economic source for the city.

In a survey carried out by Visit Berlin, 90% of Berliners claim they are proud that people from all over the world visit the city (Berlin Tourismus & Kongress GmbH, 2015).

However, there is also an anti-tourism sentiment, which increases over the years as tourist numbers grow. As explained by the representative of Visit Berlin, “there are conflicts between users due to the successful commercialization of the city of Berlin. Yes, with increasingly larger numbers of visitors. Berlin becomes ever more attractive internationally” (Berlin’s Marketing Organization representative, individual interview, July 24, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).² The reasons for protest are based on real problems that concern many Berliners. Residents do not only receive the positive economic effects of the tourism activity, they also observe negative effects such as the increase in prices. Besides, they are also affected by the changes that tourism brings to their social and natural environments. Economic imperatives erode the life of residents, and the potential for protest increases. These protests are directed towards a development that a significant number of Berliners consider is jeopardizing their social, economic, and natural environment.

On the other hand, the city is highly diverse and each district has experienced these changes differently. The impact of tourism is evident in the central areas of the city, where the most visited tourism highlights are found. In contrast, districts that lack tourism attractions do not receive the impact of tourism in the same way. Then, several areas in the city, although lacking traditional tourism attractions, have won a reputation as being alternative, bohemian, and creative (Novy & Huning, 2009). These areas attract many young tourists, who are interested in experiencing the Berlin lifestyle. This lifestyle is one of the most appealing attributes of the city. The government uses it, and presents the city as a “cool”, creative metropolis (Senat für Wirtschaft Technologie und Frauen, 2011). These young tourists do not want to just visit tourist attractions; they want to integrate themselves in the Berlin way of life.

The integration of tourists in the street life is also motivated by the fact that many visitors stay at the homes of friends or relatives, who themselves come from abroad (Huning & Novy, 2009). “Couch” tourism is a very important tourism segment of the city (Senat für Wirtschaft Technologie und Frauen, 2011). In this context, the differences between tourists and residents enjoying their leisure time are less apparent in a city where residents are of multicultural origin. Therefore, the impacts of this new urban tourism are difficult to measure (Füller & Michel, 2014). To establish if the impacts come from the tourist activity or from Berliners in their leisure time, each specific area of the city needs to be carefully researched, because Berlin is multicultural, and Berliners and tourists coexist and share spaces.

B. The District

Kreuzberg is a centrally-located, former-West-Berlin, and former-autonomous district which merged with Friedrichshain in the course of Berlin's fusion of districts (Huning & Novy, 2009). In recent years, the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg has also experienced a growth in tourism, with a total of 3.8 million overnight stays in 2015 compared to 2.6 million in 2010 (Amt für Statistik Berlin Brandenburg, n.d.). Within the district, the tourism activity varies depending on the area. Areas with tourism highlights, such as Checkpoint Charlie or East Side Gallery, attract the majority of tourists (Kombi Consult GmbH, 2006), while other areas, such as Wrangelkiez, attract the interest of young tourists. The district government has seen an opportunity in young urban tourists to develop these areas and therefore promotes the district to this segment. At the same time, there are doubts about whether this "low-cost" tourism contributes to economic growth in the district (Huning & Novy, 2009).

Curiously, it is in Kreuzberg, a district that cultivated the myths of ethnical diversity and leftist movements before Germany's reunification, where several protests against tourist activity have originated. In the sixties, this West-Berlin district was already known for being a space for alternative culture, with "bohemians" constructing an alternative to the bourgeois culture (Lang, 1998). Later, in the seventies and eighties the district was famous for its mixed population of Turkish immigrants, squatters, hippies, punks, leftist intellectuals, and conscientious objectors from West Germany (Huning & Novy, 2009). After the fall of the wall, Kreuzberg did not change as rapidly as other districts in the centre of Berlin. Unemployment rates remained high, and it portrayed an image of an economically poor district (Lang, 1998). However, these dynamics have changed in the past two decades, and the district has attracted the attention of a new, wealthier population. In 2002, the unemployment rate in Friedrichshain was 19.5% and in Kreuzberg 29.2% (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2005). By December 2016, this rate had decreased to 9.8% in the joined Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg district (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, n.d.). During the last two decades, Kreuzberg has considerably changed its image of left-wing movement and "ghetto" mix, and has become a trendy district for students, artists, and, in some areas, middle-class families. These changes have led to a rise in rents in an already tightening housing market (Füller & Michel, 2014). Gentrification dynamics starting in the nineties have been triggered in recent years. House owners have seen an opportunity to raise rents by repairing their housing stock, and this increase in rents has augmented the risk of displacement. Although this gentrification process has only been slightly aggravated by the

change of traditional rental flats into holiday apartments, tourism has made a visible change to the district, and this has fed the critique on tourism. Furthermore, a growing “touristification” has also increased competition for the use of scarce resources and services, particularly in the case of Kreuzberg, where tourists interested in experiencing the “authentic” Berlin mingle with Berliners in cafés, bars, and public spaces. Although tourism does not account for the major causes of neighbourhood change, it makes these changes visible. It is in this context that anti-gentrification movements and anti-tourism sentiments emerge (Füller & Michel, 2014). In a district marked by a high number of cultural centres, citizens’ action groups, and community-oriented associations (Huning & Novy, 2009), new issues for the mobilization of citizens have emerged in past few years.

C. The Neighbourhood

Admiralbrücke is located in the northern part of the Graefe-Kiez. “Kiez” is a Berlin word for “neighbourhood”. The Kiez does not necessarily correspond to the city’s administrative divisions, and the geographical limits of the Kiez do not need to be officially established. The name and limits are usually given by its inhabitants. However, several Kieze are so well-established in the minds of citizens that public institutions also use their names. In general, the Kiez is a smaller area within the district, which might be named after a street or a square. Each Kiez has undergone a specific historical development and has its special flair, customs, and values. Berliners like their Kiez because it is identified with a certain lifestyle, which also appeals to visitors.

Graefestraße is the street which gives the name to Graefe-Kiez. As a reference to delimitate the area of the neighbourhood, some sources (Nachbarschaftshaus Urbanstraße e.V., n.d.; TOPOS Stadtforschung, 2013) use the conservation area “Graefestraße” (see Figure 7). Taking these sources into consideration, Graefe-Kiez stretches from north to south from the Landwehr Canal to Hasenheide Park, and from west to east from the Urban Hospital to Kottbusser Damm. Graefe-Kiez is a neighbourhood with old buildings and around 15.000 inhabitants, and has been designated a special conservation area for the protection of residents (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, n.d.). Therefore, since 1995 the district government regularly carries out surveys to gather up-to-date information on social structure and the situation regarding rents in order to analyse changes in the neighbourhood (TOPOS Stadtforschung, 2008, 2013).

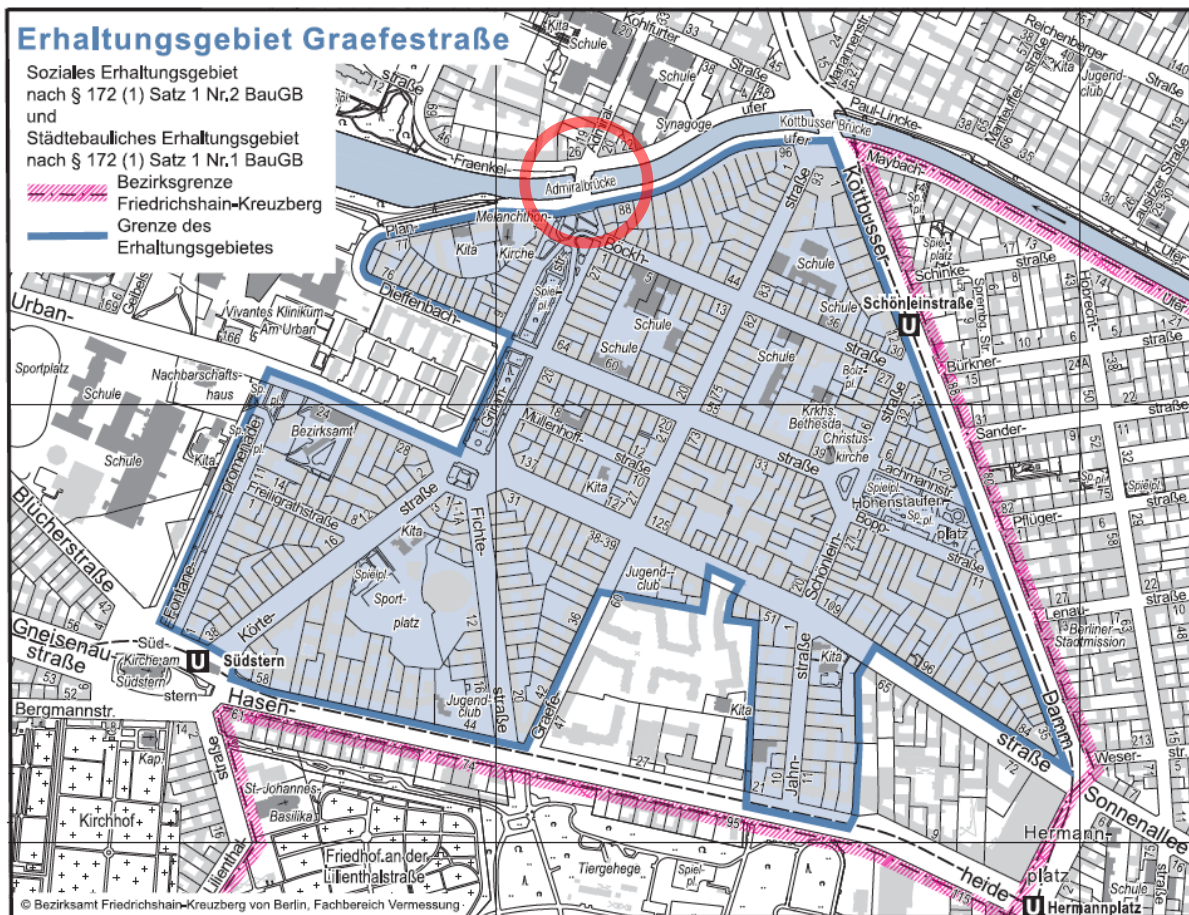


Figure 7: Perimeters of the conservation area Graefestraße.

The circle marks the location of Admiralbrücke.

(Adapted from Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2015. Copyright 2015 Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin. Reprinted with permission)

The last survey carried out in the neighbourhood shows that it is multicultural, and 23.3% of the population are non-German. Turkish residents predominate among the non-Germans. 57.5% of the population is between 27 and 55 years old. The percentage of unemployed population is 8%. Most of the inhabitants in Graefekiez rent their homes. Tenants occupy 91 % of homes and the remaining 9% are inhabited by home owners. Social interaction is high, with 83% of the households stating that they have friends in the neighbourhood, and 27% indicating that they have relatives. 85% percent of the households assess the neighbourhood positively. 81% of the households would like to stay in their current home or in the area, and the remaining 19% express a desire to move out sooner or later. The main reason for wanting to move out is the small size of the flat (27%), the second reason is the high cost of the flat (22%), and the third reason is noise and volume of traffic (11%). Other reasons such as deficiencies in the apartment, litter, or social structure are less important. In spite of these problems, 44% of the households have lived in the neighbourhood

for 10 years or longer, which is a high percentage in comparison with other areas in the inner city. Nevertheless, the increase in rents, and the subsequent risk of displacement, is a cause of concern among neighbours. Other developments directly related to the risk of displacement also worry neighbours such as the increasing numbers of holiday apartments, tourism activity in general, and lack of apartment refurbishment (TOPOS Stadtforschung, 2013).

Graefe-Kiez is an optimal location for indoor and outdoor leisure activities, with a significant number of cafés, bars, and restaurants in the area. The neighbourhood also has low-traffic locations, such as Admiralbrücke, the promenade on the canal shore, and the park located south of Admiralbrücke, which are ideal public spaces. These spaces are used by neighbours and Berliners from other neighbourhoods, with tourists occasionally mingling amongst them.

In short, Admiralbrücke is located in a highly populated neighbourhood characterized by a diversity of origins and cultures, a risk of displacement primarily caused by the increase in rents, public spaces that attract people in their leisure time, and a visibly increasing tourism activity. This diversified environment portrays a situation involving multiple stakeholders, where the potential for conflict is real. One of these conflicts took place around Admiralbrücke and the district government supported the creation of a collaborative governance setting to try to solve the problem.

4.2. History of Events

At first, the bridge was used as a meeting point by residents in the same or nearby neighbourhoods (Nachbarschaftshaus Urbanstraße e.V., 2010). Later, it gained popularity and the number of people gathering on the bridge increased until it became a problem for neighbours. From the moment the first coexistence problems emerged, until the end of the mediation process, the history of events can be divided in four periods: (A) start of the coexistence problems, (B) remodelling plans, (C) competition for ideas, and (D) mediation process.

A. 2006-2008: Start of the coexistence problems

Interviewees' statements and reports of the mediation process (Streit Entknoten, 2011) coincide in establishing 2006 as the year in which the situation on Admiralbrücke started to change. Up until then, the bridge had mainly been a meeting point for neighbours. As

explained by one of the interviewees who had been living in the area for more than twelve years, “[...] people met on the bridge, ate an ice-cream, looked at the sunset” (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).³ The activities of the people meeting on the bridge were not a big problem for residents until 2006.

Several factors contributed to the promotion of Admiralbrücke as a popular meeting point. First, the football World Cup organized in Germany in summer 2006 influenced people gathering in public spaces. As one interviewee explained, “when matches ended around nine or half past nine, they of course did not want to go home because it was summer. And then they still bought a beer in the corner shop or in the kiosk at the corner and sat down on the bridge” (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁴ After the World Cup, the open-air party remained. Newspapers wrote about it. An article in the *Tagesspiegel* described the situation on one of those summer nights:

“Admiralbrücke becomes itself an open-air location. Cyclists stop at the parapet and musingly look at the swans and ships. Two musicians regularly give a concert for free with classic and chamber music. The thick pollards, warmed by the sun, serve as stools and radiate a wonderful heat even at 1 am in the morning. Young people make themselves comfortable on the asphalt - and strangers come into conversation. A relaxed mood as in the football World Cup” (*Tagesspiegel*, 2006).⁵

A second factor that influenced the increase in popularity of Admiralbrücke was the Trees at the Landwehr Canal (*Bäume am Landwehrkanal* in German) action group, which established the bridge as meeting and information point in summer 2007. This action group was set up to protest against the planned cutting down of 200 trees within the context of the canal shore renovation planned by Berlin’s Waterways and Shipping Office (*Bäume am Landwehrkanal e.V.*, n.d.). The political movement’s activities contributed to raising awareness of Admiralbrücke as a meeting place (Streit Entknoten, 2011). A third factor was communication in newspaper articles, social media, and the internet (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2012). Finally, the bridge also gained popularity through “word-of-mouth” recommendations. All these factors contributed to a certain extent to promoting the bridge as a meeting place.

During the years that followed, a significant number of people—hundreds in the warm summer nights—met on Admiralbrücke to talk, drink, and listen to music. These activities seriously impacted neighbours. The two main problems were noise and litter, which were caused by the number of people gathering on the bridge, music, and alcohol and drug consumption (Streit Entknoten, 2011). The most impacting problem was noise, which

affected neighbours' rest at night. Users of the bridge spoke loudly, shouted, or sang, and the party went on until late at night. Some people showed anti-social behaviour, and police intervention was needed several times (Streit Entknoten, 2011). In addition, professional and non-professional musicians played both day and night, some with non-amplified instruments and others with amplified ones. This resulted in a significant number of neighbours being affected by the noise from these activities. As the representative of the Office for Environment and Nature Protection explained, "noise makes sick. People need their sleep. The day after they have to show up fit again at work. Nobody can put up with this long if disturbances take place every night" (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁶ Furthermore, the rubbish from the party (e.g., crown caps, glass fragments, or food packages) littered the bridge the next morning. Moreover, some bridge users relieved themselves in doorways and passages of the neighbouring houses (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Within the first four years, the problems escalated to such an extent that neighbours started to mobilize and protest against the disturbance.

In 2008, several neighbours started discussing the Admiralbrücke problems in Graefe-Kiez association meetings. They also constituted a working team within this association which was in charge of clarifying and conceptualizing ideas around Admiralbrücke (Nachbarschaftshaus Urbanstraße e.V., 2009b). In addition, several affected neighbours contacted the district government to inform it about the situation on the bridge (Streit Entknoten, 2011). This was when a policy-making process began, involving several public institutions and a group of affected neighbours. The idea of remodelling the deck of the bridge to make it less attractive as a meeting place was prominent among these neighbours (Nachbarschaftshaus Urbanstraße e.V., 2009b). Therefore, Berlin's Civil Engineering Office and the District Office for Construction led the contact with residents at the beginning of the policy-making process (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2009; Nachbarschaftshaus Urbanstraße e.V., 2009b).

B. 2008-2009: Remodelling plans

Admiralbrücke was constructed by the architect Georg Pinkenburg between 1880 and 1882. It is the oldest wrought-iron bridge over the Landwehr Canal and is under a preservation order (Edition Luisenstadt, 2002). The bridge is approximately 21 meters-wide and 32 meters-long (Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Wohnen, n.d.; see Figure 9), and has pavements on both sides, each around 5 meters wide (Edition Luisenstadt, 2002). Cars

and other automobiles of less than 2.8 tones can circulate in both directions through two 2.75-meter-wide lanes. These two lanes are separated by a central pedestrian space approximately 5.50 meters wide (Field notes, 25.08.2017; see Figure 8) which was built in the nineties in the context of renovating the bridge to calm the traffic, as the bridge's bearings are damaged and it cannot carry normal traffic (Streit Entknoten, 2011). The central reservation is surrounded by 36 round stone bollards, which have a diameter of 48 cm and a height of 49 cm, and that are used as stools by bridge users (Field notes, 25.08.2017). The pedestrian areas on the bridge together with the four pavements located north and south offer visitors a space of approximately 1.451 m² (Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Wohnen, n.d.).



Figure 8: Bollards, lanes, and pavements in autumn
(Author, 10.12.2016, 13:13h)

Note: The bridge has the same architectonic characteristics as in 2009, 2010, and 2011 when the conflict emerged and the mediation process took place

Several immediate neighbours were in favour of redesigning the pedestrian areas and lanes in order to worsen the conditions for staying on the bridge, and at first, public institutions listened to them. In July 2008, a meeting took place between affected neighbours and several representatives of public institutions: the director of the Civil Engineering Office; the Councillor for Construction; the Councillor for Economy, Citizens' Services and Public order; a police representative; a representative of the Waste Management Service; and a representative of the Green Areas Office. In this meeting the problems related to noise and litter on the Admiralbrücke were debated, as well as several ideas for remodelling the

pedestrian areas and lanes. Some of the neighbour's ideas involved substituting the concrete bollards for metal ones, adding two bicycle paths, or transforming the central pedestrian reservation into a green area with low metal fences (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2011a). Since the representatives of public institutions were open to discussing these ideas, the group of neighbours continued making plans for remodelling the bridge deck. A working group within the Graefe-Kiez neighbours' association even developed a proposal, which was sent to the office of civil engineering (Nachbarschaftshaus Urbanstraße e.V., 2009a).

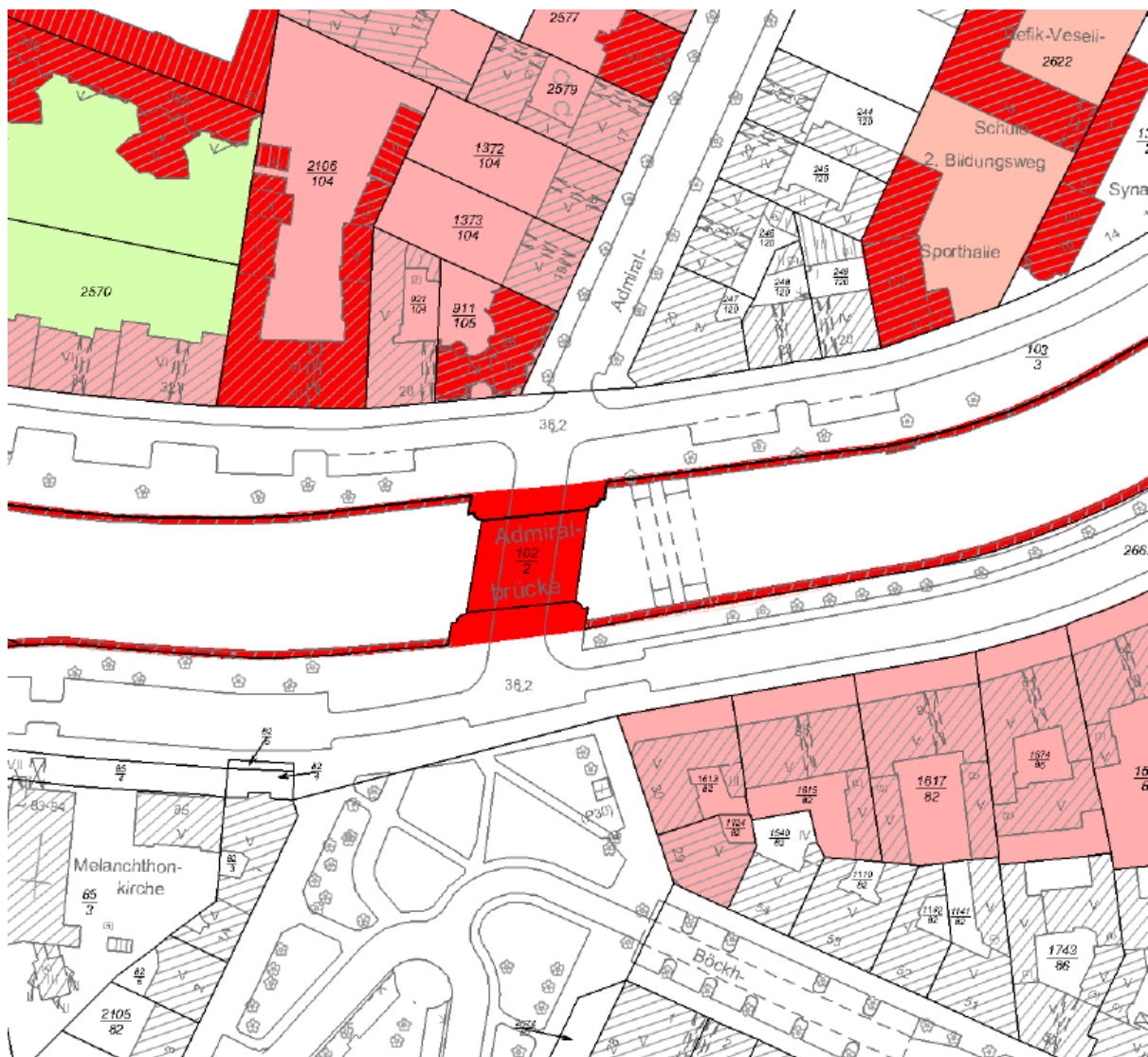


Figure 9: Map of Admiralbrücke and nearby area

(From Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Wohnen, n.d. In the public domain)

Note: Buildings of historical importance are marked in red and gardens of historical importance in green

However, the remodelling proposal of this group of residents was received with opposition from several fronts. First, it was not welcomed by other residents. As explained by the social worker at the neighbourhood centre, the proposal had been made by a group of affected neighbours which exerted a kind of “lobby” in the political sphere but did not represent everyone in the neighbourhood (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011). For the Graefe-Kiez association, it was evident that other neighbours were not in favour of the remodelling proposal (Nachbarschaftshaus Urbanstraße e.V., 2009a). As the plans were made public and appeared in newspapers, the proposal was opposed by more neighbours. Especially relevant at this time was the creation of the website *Admiralbruecke.de*. This website was created by a resident who was against the remodelling plans. When interviewed, the resident explained why he had created the website: “I heard [...] that there is a residents’ action group that wants the bridge to be remodelled. [...] And well, I thought I have to do something and so I created my website” (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁷ The problem was aired to a broad public through the website, which asked everyone to give their opinion on the Admiralbrücke problems and the remodelling plans if they wished to do so. This action was successful, “in a relatively short time, I have then received over one hundred emails, and all from people who shared my opinion, that is, who did not want the bridge to be remodelled either” (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁸ The role played by this neighbour of representing who wanted to maintain the lifestyle and culture on the bridge became so important that he was later invited to participate in the mediation process.

The remodelling proposal was also met with opposition in the district parliament. On June 24, 2009, the district council discussed this topic and decided that it was not necessary to redesign the bridge deck. As explained by one of the public officers, “[...] the parliamentary groups said, ‘it is completely unacceptable that one uses public money first to make a place nice, and then uses public money once more to make this nice place ugly again, so that as few people as possible stay’” (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁹ The council emphasized in its report that the problems on Admiralbrücke were not caused by the increasing popularity of the bridge as a meeting place, but because users were also gathering at night, which increased the noise level and affected neighbours. People meeting on the bridge during day was wanted explicitly, and the noise level after 10 pm was the problem that needed to be solved. Following this argument, the

council emphasized that remodelling measures would only diminish the number of people meeting on the bridge, not prevent nightly disturbances. Accordingly, it was decided that the problem should not be solved by redesigning the layout of the bridge deck, but by applying regulatory measures (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2011c).

The rejection of the remodelling proposal was a successful result for the neighbours that wanted to keep allowing people to gather on the bridge. However, for the group of neighbours who had supported the proposal, the district council's rejection was a strong defeat, as several interviewees indicated. As previously stated, representatives of public institutions had discussed the remodelling plans with the affected neighbours, and some of them had real hopes that the plans could be implemented. For these neighbours the rejection of these plans meant that the problems on the bridge continued to exist. Therefore, they continued requesting a remodelling of the bridge deck after the rejection. As explained by one public officer, "the group of complaining neighbours wanted to remodel at any cost, and they could not understand that our BVV [Bezirksverordnetenversammlung], that is our district council, [...] that they have decided against it. Of course, I have to adhere to the resolutions of the BVV. I cannot act against the resolutions of the BVV" (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁰ In 2009, during one of the neighbourhood meetings following the rejection by the district council, some affected neighbours decided to establish the Admiralkiez Action Group. As confirmed by the social worker who participated in these meetings, "[...] there was then the idea that not each individual, but rather an action group had to be established in order to exert pressure as an organization, as a group of several people, and request political support and do not give up" (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹¹

At the end of this period, the number of stakeholders involved in the policy-making process had increased. On the other hand, the noise and litter problems continued to exist, and gathering on Admiralbrücke could not be forbidden, because article 26 of the Berlin constitution states that all men and women have the right to assembly (Senatskanzlei, n.d.). As one of the public officers clarified, "[...] the fundamental right to freedom of assembly is higher. And if noise is originated there, one should identify the source of noise. With two or three hundred people talking to each other, one cannot do it. Thus, the police had a big problem" (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹² At that time, there was a lack of ideas about how to solve the problems. From this moment onwards, the District Deputy Mayor and Head of the Department for Economy,

Citizens Services and Public Order took the lead in the policy-making process to solve the problems on Admiralbrücke. The Deputy Mayor, and the department he managed, played a central role in leading the further stages of the policy-making process.

C. 2009-2010: Competition for ideas

The neighbour who had launched the website Admiralbruecke.de suggested implementing a competition for ideas on how to solve the problems on the bridge. This proposal was approved by the district council in 2009. At the beginning of 2010, a working team was established to prepare and launch the competition. This team was made up of neighbours' representatives, Admiralkiez Action Group, Grafe-Kiez association, bridge users, office of the district deputy major, and the administrator of the website Admiralbruecke.de. Besides, the group was moderated by the social worker from the Urbanstraße neighbourhood association. These participants established the contents of the flyer used to inform citizens about the competition, the evaluation criteria for ideas, the period of time that the call should be open, and where the flyers should be distributed. Later, when the mediation process started, the office of the district deputy major assigned the coordination to the mediation team. In this way, the competition for ideas was integrated in the mediation process (Streit Entknoten, 2011).

The competition intended to motivate and award the engagement of citizens in the development of ideas that could help to solve the problem on the long term. The district government assigned 500 euros to award the winning ideas (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2010). Participants' ideas had to focus on the following three conflict issues: litter and cleanliness; disturbing the peace, especially at night; and reinforcing responsible behaviour in the public space (Streit Entknoten, 2010d). The call was open from June to August 2010, and a total of 29 ideas were submitted (Streit Entknoten, 2011). The jury, formed by stakeholders' representatives, selected five ideas, each to be awarded with 100 euros (Streit Entknoten, n.d.-a). In the assessment, the jury took into consideration that the ideas were economically and operationally implementable, that they took the interests of all affected stakeholders into account, and that they had long-term effects. The awards were presented in an event on November 18, 2010 (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2011b). Awards were given for the following ideas: installing a noise level meter that emits an acoustic signal when a decibel threshold is crossed; hiring humorous night watchmen that ring a bell shortly before 10 pm to remind users to be quiet; improving the

quality of stay on the bridge and the green area located in the south by providing seating, litter bins, and flower boxes, in order to evoke more respect for the public space as well as attract users from other segments; regulating music by awarding licences to play on the bridge; and transforming the Urban harbour basin into an alternative meeting place some distance away from the neighbouring houses (Buse, 2011). With the aim that some of the ideas could be implemented, not only the ideas awarded but all the ideas submitted were made available to the participants in the negotiation rounds (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2011b). However, none of the ideas were finally implemented because participants failed to reach an agreement.

D. 2010-2011: Mediation process

The idea of implementing a mediation process came from one of the members of the Admiralkiez Action Group, the same group that had unsuccessfully petitioned the remodelling of the bridge deck. The idea of a mediation process was welcomed by the Senate's Office for Urban Development, which assigned 18.000 euros to cover the costs of the process (Streit Entknoten, 2011). The office of the district deputy major was in charge of administrating these funds and leading the process. For the deputy major the mediation process was an opportunity to try to solve a conflict of interests among neighbours and between neighbours and users which had not been solved with the policy-making methods implemented so far. He explained in the interview why the mediation process was an appropriate mechanism to try to solve the problems on Admiralbrücke:

“[...] remodelling of the bridge does not work, police does not work, the Public Order Office is in service only until 10 pm. Well, what shall I then do? And then I have thought, then it is maybe quite clever to gather everyone again with the mediation and to try that regulations are developed, that the mediators are on the bridge, that they talk with the users there, that they are there also evenings, even nights partly, and that they are assisted by police, Public Order Office and neighbours” (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹³

The district government played a leading role, making important decisions during the process. For example, it appointed Streit Entknoten mediation team to organize and coordinate the mediation (Streit Entknoten, 2011).

From May to December 2010 two mediators coordinated and implemented several activities. They had separate meetings with stakeholders, established an info point on the bridge, organized two initial plenary meetings where all stakeholders were invited, acted as

facilitators in eight negotiation rounds, carried out a survey on the use of the bridge, and coordinated the competition for ideas. At the beginning of the process the mediation team contacted stakeholders to gather information on the different points of view and interests, to get acquainted with the different stakeholders' structures, and to motivate as many citizens affected as possible to participate in the two plenary meetings. Regarding the info point on the bridge, the mediation team was present on the bridge 35 days in total from May to September 2010. They set up a table two or three times per week, depending on the week, and informed users of Admiralbrücke about the policy problem and the mediation process. They also had flyers written in German, English, and Spanish with information about the mediation process (Streit Entknoten, 2011).

After having clarified the problem situation, the mediation team organized two plenary meetings in which everybody affected by the problems on Admiralbrücke was invited to participate. The aim of these meetings was to make visible the concerns and interests of all parties. Around 75 people participated in the first meeting organized on June 24, 2010. Participants were neighbours, bridge users, private business managers, and representatives of various public administration offices and public services. In this meeting, the various conflict points were formulated: disturbance of the night's peace, noise during the day and at night, litter, alcohol consumption, and urinating in doorways and gardens. Furthermore, participants agreed on organizing a second meeting where other relevant representatives of public institutions were invited. Approximately 100 people participated in the second meeting organized on August 12, 2010. In this meeting public offices and services presented their ideas for solving the problems: Berlin's Waste Management Service proposed measures for reducing litter and maintaining the bridge and its surrounding clean; the Office for Environment and Nature Protection presented the results of a noise measurement on the bridge; and Public Order Office and police proposed measures for maintaining night's rest. Furthermore, the mediation team presented a collaborative framework for the negotiation rounds, which was accepted by stakeholders (Streit Entknoten, 2011).

A total of eight negotiation meetings took place between September and December 2010 in a frequency of two times per month. Participants were a reduced group of designated representatives of the different stakeholders. The dates of the meetings, number of participants, stakeholders represented, and topics discussed are presented in Table 2. The initial plan forecasted six negotiation rounds. However, during the meetings new controversies and problems emerged which led to the mediation team to decide to extend the

negotiations until the end of December 2010, without charging any additional costs for their extra work (Streit Entknoten, 2011).

Table 2: Dates, participants, and topics discussed in the negotiation rounds

Date	Nr. of participants	Stakeholders represented	Topics discussed
08.09.2011	25	Neighbours, users, musicians, private businesses, Public Order Office, police, Waste Management Service, Admiralkiez Action Group, Graefe-Kiez association, Working Group (WG) competition for ideas, District Office, and Urbanstraße neighbourhood association	Presentation of participants, establishment of objectives, agreement on framework conditions, planning of meetings, presentation of provisional survey results, assessment of topics mentioned in the first two plenary meetings, and working on solutions for the topic "cleanliness and litter"
29.09.2011	23	Neighbours, users, musicians, private businesses, Public Order Office, police, Waste Management Service, Admiralkiez Action Group, Graefe-Kiez association, WG competition for ideas, and District Office	Composition of the negotiation rounds, completion of working agreements, working on solutions for the topic "cleanliness and litter", and development of ideas for the problem "noise"
14.10.2010	20	Neighbours, users, musicians, Public Order Office, police, Admiralkiez Action Group, Graefe-Kiez association, WG competition for ideas, District Office, and Urbanstraße neighbourhood association	Bins with underground containers, noise, and litter on the canal bank
28.10.2010	24	Neighbours, users, musicians, Public Order Office, police, Admiralkiez Action Group, Graefe-Kiez association, WG competition for ideas, District Office, Office for Environment and Nature Protection, and Waterways and Shipping Office	Litter on the Urban harbour and on the canal bank, composition of the negotiation rounds, and definition of objectives for the topic "noise"
11.11.2010	27	Neighbours, users, musicians, Public Order Office, police, Admiralkiez Action Group, Graefe-Kiez association, WG competition for ideas, and District Office	Subsequent meetings and definition of objectives for the topic "noise"
24.11.2010	27	Neighbours, musicians, police, Admiralkiez Action Group, Graefe-Kiez association, WG competition for ideas, District Office, Urbanstraße neighbourhood association, and a tourist guide	Continuation of the mediation process, tourism in Kreuzberg, and noise

Date	Nr. of participants	Stakeholders represented	Topics discussed
08.12.2010	28	Neighbours, musicians, Public Order Office, police, Admiralkiez Action Group, Graefe-Kiez association, WG competition for ideas, GSW real-state company, District Office, and Urbanstraße neighbourhood association	Information on the competition for ideas, inputs from the district deputy major, and further procedure
16.12.2010	24	Neighbours, Public Order Office, police, Admiralkiez Action Group, Graefe-Kiez association, WG competition for ideas, District Office, and Urbanstraße neighbourhood association	Information in general, discussion of the question: “Do the wishes of neighbours have a high priority?”, proposals for the solution of problems, and outlook

(Data collected from Streit Entknoten, n.d.-c, 2011)

The negotiation rounds had the aim of gathering knowledge from several stakeholders to understand problems and look for solutions. The meetings had regular participants. In addition, depending on the topic planned for discussion, experts were invited to participate and contribute with their specialized knowledge. Furthermore, in August 2010, before the negotiation rounds started, the mediation team carried out a survey to gather information about the composition of bridge users. Nonetheless, the survey had several methodological problems that affected the usefulness of results. The final report of the mediation process confirmed that the survey did not guarantee representativeness (Streit Entknoten, 2011).

In spite of the number of negotiation rounds organized, participants could not develop a collective concept to solve the problems on Admiralbrücke. Participants found themselves at an impasse, in which a significant amount of knowledge and ideas were available but none of these ideas could find agreement among participants. As explained by one of the mediators, “in the mediation there were also a lot of blockades, that is, a lot of blockades when it was about dealing with solutions. [...] We had to fight with a lot of opposition, and this was an obstacle for maybe still better achievements in this process” (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁴ As discussions in the negotiation rounds advanced, neighbours build two separated groups with different interests and opinions. One group was against any gathering of people on the bridge. The other group was in favour of keeping a certain amount of culture and activities on the bridge. At the end of the negotiation rounds, these two groups could not make collective decisions regarding how to solve the Admiralbrücke problems.

The mediation team recommended continuing the participatory process in order to work on the emergent conflict points, and several participants agreed to organize meetings after the negotiation rounds to further develop ideas related to Admiralbrücke. Therefore, a ninth meeting took place in which the mediation team transferred the responsibility to other participants to follow up the collaborative process, until it was clarified if the district government would establish a new official negotiation framework (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Nonetheless, there was no continuation of the process. With this ninth meeting and the final report, the collaborative process officially ended. Since the district government saw there was little possibility of finding an agreed solution between the two groups of neighbours, it did not strive for a continuation of the mediation process (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2011a).

The mediation process awoke the interest of many public and private actors. In addition to interest from the media, the District Office received many requests, not only from Berlin but also from other cities in Germany, from actors that were interested in the mediation process and that praised the fact that these new methods of conflict solving in public spaces were being tested (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2010).

4.3. Enabling Collaborative Governance through Mediation

In addition to private mediation processes (e.g., in families or schools), mediation can be employed to solve conflicts in the public sphere. It can be implemented, for example, at a local level to solve problems related to waste management, environmental impacts, or traffic regulation among other municipal problems. Over recent years, mediation has actually established itself as a method for solving conflicts at neighbourhood level (Nanz & Fritsche, 2012). Mediation is especially appropriate for tackling public policy problems in local contexts where affected stakeholders are within reach and can be approached and invited to engage in discussions. In the Admiralbrücke case, District government, Berlin's Senate, and neighbours agreed on implementing a mediation process as a method to try to solve the problems on the bridge. Mediation techniques allowed affected stakeholders to be included in a consensus-based decision-making process.

Mediation processes are typically implemented to find solutions in conflict situations. Conflicting parties negotiate in order to find a compromise. The principal characteristics of mediation are the following: voluntary participation of, ideally, all affected parties;

transparency of the process and free access to all relevant information; obligation to maintain confidentiality; neutrality of the moderators; and consensus-oriented negotiation (Nanz & Fritsche, 2012). The means and objectives of mediation make it particularly suitable to try to solve public policy problems when several parts are confronted. In the public sphere, mediation emerges as a form of collaborative governance in practice.

The mediation implemented in the Admiralbrücke case had all the characteristics of collaborative governance described in the theoretical foundations of this thesis. The process (A) dealt with a policy problem that affected several stakeholders, (B) aimed at including all affected actors, (C) counted on several participants to act as convenors, (D) was formalized, and (E) had the objective of making decisions in consensus.

A. A policy problem affecting several heterogeneous stakeholders

As previously outlined in the theoretical framework with reference to stakeholder classification, actors can be divided between primary and secondary stakeholders (Overseas Development Administration, 1995). In the case of Admiralbrücke, the following were primary stakeholders: neighbours who lived near the bridge, and who were mainly represented by the Admiralkiez Action Group and the residents at Fraenkelufer 26; district government and public offices or services (Public Order Office, police, Waste Management Service, etc.); and regular bridge users (street performers, Berlin residents, etc.). These stakeholders were directly affected by the activities on the bridge. Less affected or not at all affected were a range of secondary stakeholders, who could provide support to solve the problem: mediation team, who acted as facilitator in the interactions all along the collaborative process; Urbanstraße neighbourhood association and Graefe-Kiez association, which included mostly neighbours that did not live on the “frontline” of the bridge, but they had the duty to defend the interests of both types of neighbours, whether affected or not; businesses located some distance from the bridge; other government departments or public-private partnerships, like Visit Berlin, who only had a marginal interest; and tourists who visited the bridge only once.

In addition to classifying stakeholders according to the degree to which they were affected by the policy-problem, analysing stakeholder attributes in the policy-making process can provide a picture of the power differentials between actors. Mitchel, Agle, and Wood (1997) assess the relevance of stakeholders according to three attributes: power, legitimacy,

and urgency. Power is defined as a relationship in which one actor can get another actor to do something; legitimacy is a perception that the actions of a stakeholder are desirable within a specific social setting; and urgency is the extent to which stakeholder demands require consideration. While their list of attributes is related to business management, it can also be adapted to analyse stakeholders in the public sphere. In the case of Admiralbrücke, neighbours who lived near the bridge and were mostly affected by the activities exhibited all three categories: They had power to influence other actors, especially other neighbours and policy-makers; their demands were legitimated; and they wanted the problem to be solved urgently. In contrast, residents who lived two or three blocks away from the bridge had power and legitimacy to influence policy-making, but their requests were not as urgent as those of the neighbours living on the frontline. District government and public offices or services also possessed the three attributes, as they had power and legitimacy to enforce actions and their demands required urgent attention from other stakeholders. Regarding bridge users, they had less power than neighbours and public offices to influence the policy-making process, and their requests were also less urgent, yet their actions were legitimated and desired, because, as noted previously, many stakeholders wanted the cultural activities taking place on the bridge to remain. In addition, the mediation team was incorporated as a relevant actor during the collaborative process, which had power to influence other actors, legitimacy of actions, and demands that required urgent consideration. Taking the three attributes into consideration, the stakeholders mentioned previously were the most relevant. There were other less relevant stakeholders such as real-state companies, gastronomic establishments, or the tourism destination management organization which exhibited less power, legitimacy, and urgency in relation to the policy-making process than other actors. These power, legitimacy, and urgency differentials came to light during the mediation process. In short, the Admiralbrücke policy problem presented a heterogeneous constellation of affected stakeholders, with a diversity of attributes and needs, which needed to be included in the collaborative process in order to look for collective solutions.

B. Inclusiveness

The mediation process aimed to include all actors related to the policy problem. As specified in the final mediation report, it was important to include the interests and ideas of those involved to use all available resources, try to understand the problem, and look for solutions (Streit Entknoten, 2011). In practice, however, the degree of inclusion depended on the

format of meetings, the attributes and predisposition of stakeholders, and the tasks performed by stakeholder representatives. First, the type of meetings conditioned how many participants could be included. In the plenary meetings a significant number of citizens could participate and communicate their concerns and ideas. In the first meeting there were 75 attendees and 100 in the second one. After these two meetings, the number of participants was reduced in order to be able to work on specific proposals. Thus, a limited number of designated representatives of stakeholders participated in the subsequent eight meetings. Table 3 presents the list of stakeholders who participated in the negotiation rounds and the frequency of participation.

Table 3: Stakeholders in the negotiation rounds and frequency of participation

Stakeholder	Frequency of participation
Mediation team	Regular
District Office	Regular
Police	Regular
Public Order Office	Regular
Urbanstraße neighbourhood association	Regular
Working Group “Competition for Ideas”	Regular
Graefe-Kiez association	Regular
Admiralkiez Action Group	Regular
Residents at Fraenkelufer 26	Regular
Other neighbours	Regular
Musicians	Regular
Bridge users from the same neighbourhood	Regular
Office for Environment and Nature Protection	Occasional
Waterways and Shipping Office	Occasional
Bridge users from other neighbourhoods	Occasional
Waste Management Service	Occasional
GSW real-state company	Occasional
Gastronomic establishments	Occasional
Tobacconist and off-licence	Occasional
Tourist guide	Occasional

(Data collected from Streit Entknoten, n.d.-c, 2011, and from interviewees’ statements)

Second, inclusiveness also depended to a great extent on the attributes and predisposition of stakeholders. Certain stakeholders were motivated and had resources to participate: “From authorities, from responsible people, and from neighbours, this was not difficult” (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁵ Representatives of public institutions and neighbours could be easily included in the negotiation rounds. Other stakeholders were more difficult to engage: “Difficult was, of course, people that only stay there temporarily, that is, tourists or young people that live in Berlin” (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁶

In the mediation process, bridge users were divided into three categories: users from the same neighbourhood, users from other neighbourhoods, and tourists. Reports and interviewees mentioned that two of these groups had not been directly represented in the negotiation rounds: Berliners from other neighbourhoods only participated occasionally, and tourists did not participate. At least three factors influenced the underrepresentation of these users. First, the negotiation rounds started in September, when the number of people gathering on the bridge began to decrease, and, accordingly, there were fewer users available to participate in the meetings. Second, these users were not organized in formal groups (Streit Entknoten, 2011), as was also the case for street performers, but in this instance, the mediation team was able to invite one musician to participate regularly in the rounds. And third, with regard to tourists, it was difficult to involve them because tourists only stay in Berlin for a few days and the negotiation rounds lasted four months. Therefore, the interests of these users were represented by other stakeholders. For example, mediators gathered the interests of these groups by talking to them on the bridge: “We were on the bridge ourselves, and we have spoken with a lot of people” (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁷ The destination marketing organization Visit Berlin could have represented the interests of the tourism sector, but it was not invited to participate because it is mainly dedicated to market the city to tourists. As explained by the officer of Visit Berlin, “the people in the city, the district offices, and those who are players here, as I say, they do not take us into account, not very strongly yet, because we had never taken care of these things before” (Berlin’s Marketing Organization representative, individual interview, July 24, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁸ Nonetheless, a tourist guide was invited to participate in one of the meetings to provide this specialized knowledge. In addition, neighbours who were also users represented the interests of users in general.

Concerning private companies, the ones more affected by the activities on the bridge were two Italian restaurants, one café, one tobacconist and off-licence, and one ice cream shop located on the south side of the bridge (Streit Entknoten, 2011). According to the information published on the website of the mediation team, these private businesses only participated in the first two negotiation rounds (Streit Entknoten, n.d.-c). Interviewees explained that these participants were the owner of the Italian restaurant located on the south-east side of the bridge and one member of the family who owned the tobacconist and off-licence business.

Furthermore, the real estate company, GSW, which owned the building located at Fraenkelufer, 26, directly facing the north side of the bridge, was also affected, but it only participated in the seventh negotiation round. This case helps illustrate how stakeholder attributes affected the predisposition to participate. In addition to noise, this building had the problem of people relieving themselves in the underpass and on the inner yard. While the tenants living in this building wanted the problems to be solved urgently and regularly participated in the negotiation rounds with a representative, GSW only participated in one meeting.

In spite of the absence of private companies, interviewees and final mediation report did not highlight a lack of participation of these stakeholders. Even if private companies were affected by the problem, they did not play the same role in the discussions as neighbours, users, or public institutions. As outlined in the previous section, these stakeholders exhibited less power, legitimacy, and urgency than other actors concerning the policy problem on the Admiralbrücke, and this influenced their predisposition to participate. As interviewees and reports indicate, discussions in the negotiation rounds focused on the topics of reducing noise and litter on Admiralbrücke. Thus, the main topics were connected to the regulation of a public space. The public nature of the problem meant that private business had little presence in the negotiation rounds. Nonetheless, during the rounds several problems affecting private business were detected. For example, it was mentioned that bars, cafés, and restaurants had to close their terraces at 10 pm. Besides, the tobacconist and off-licence had to close on Sundays. Discussing these issues made possible correcting several problems of gastronomic establishments. However, solving these problems was not the responsibility of participants; it was a matter of applying current regulations. Therefore, participants did not have to take decisions regarding the problems of private companies.

Lastly, the tasks performed by stakeholder representatives also influenced the inclusion of knowledge and interests in the negotiation rounds. Representatives had to update the organizations they were representing on the contents of meetings and bring into the negotiation rounds the remarks and concerns of these organizations (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Their tasks as intermediaries and decision-makers in the negotiation rounds were crucial to correctly include knowledge and interests. This representation also varied depending on if the stakeholder was an organization or not. Representatives of organized stakeholders (e.g., government, associations, or citizens' action groups) were directly linked with their organization. In contrast, representatives of non-organized stakeholders, such as musicians and other bridge users, did not have the same ties with the stakeholder they were representing. They had to speak for this stakeholder without getting any feedback from the broader population forming the stakeholder. Thus, the way interests were represented in the setting conditioned the degree of inclusion. All things considered, participants represented the interests of the groups directly affected by the policy problem to a large extent.

C. Convenorship

To bring together affected stakeholders and other actors with resources to implement the collaborative process, participants had to perform convenorship tasks. All participants could act as convenors to a certain degree, since everyone could identify and motivate other stakeholders to participate. However, among all participants, three actors formally carried out convenorship activities at different stages. First, the social worker in the Urbanstraße neighbourhood association played a convenor's role in the meetings that took place before the mediation process. As a result, she had a lot of knowledge of local structures and could help identify people and involve them in the mediation process (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011). Second, the office of the District Deputy Mayor also played an important role as convenor. In addition to assigning a mediation team to moderate the process, the Deputy Mayor also linked the different public offices together and asked them to participate. Third, the mediation team led the process and played the most important role as convenors during the mediation. At the beginning, they organized meetings with stakeholders to explain the mediation concept and invite them to participate. Besides, they added a section to their website to provide information about the mediation to the general public, were present on the bridge with an information table, distributed flyers in German, English, and Spanish, and gave interviews and responded to the press (Streit Entknoten, 2011). The

mediation team promoted the collaborative process in order to assure the highest possible participation.

The mediation team identified stakeholders by interviewing affected participants and gathering information in the first two plenary meetings. To a large extent the same affected stakeholders named other relevant stakeholders, taking into consideration the relationship of the stakeholder with the policy problem. As explained by the mediator, “[...] you speak with the involved and affected, and then they say, ‘yes, noise is involved here, we want someone from the public order and the environmental office, because they are responsible for noise’” (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁹

After having identified stakeholders, convenors had to invite representatives of these stakeholders. Decisions were made about which representative participated in the negotiation rounds according to different criteria, depending on the stakeholder. Public institutions and other organized stakeholders decided who was going to represent them in the negotiation rounds. Regarding non-organized stakeholders, such as users, musicians, and individual neighbours, it was the mediation team who was active in the different structures and gathered proposals. As clarified by the mediator, “and then we have again contacted the so to speak ‘suggested people’ and have motivated them to participate” (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁰ For example, this was the case of the invited musician, “I was then asked, if I would step in as representative of the musicians for the mediation round. I said, ‘I gladly do this as representative of the musicians’” (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²¹ Additionally, experts were invited to participate in some rounds when the topic of discussion required it (Streit Entknoten, 2011).

Furthermore, material resources had to be gathered to implement the mediation process. This was also the task of convenors. As mentioned previously, Berlin’s Senate for Urban Development financed the mediation process with 18.000 euros, and the district government assigned 500 euros to award the selected proposals of the competition for ideas. A venue for the meetings was also needed, and this was provided by the Christ church, located in the Graefe-Kiez neighbourhood. The first two plenary meetings as well as the negotiation rounds took place in the church’s community hall (Streit Entknoten, n.d.-b, 2010a, 2010b, 2010c). Having these material resources available meant it was possible to implement the collaborative process.

D. Formalization

The District Government and the mediation team followed several practices to assure a high degree of formalization. The District Government officially supported and monitored the mediation process and reported steps taken and results to the District Parliament. Mediators coordinated the structure of the collaborative setting and facilitated the establishment of a formalized framework, which included norms of participation and interaction. Several of these norms were agreed between participants. For example, participants agreed that interim results of the negotiation rounds should not be communicated to the press and that minutes had to be confidentially treated in order for the negotiation rounds to take place in a quiet and protected framework (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Furthermore, the mediation team recorded the contents of the meetings in minutes, wrote reports, and issued further documentation with information on the process. Taking care of formalization helped organize the collaborative process as well as provide participants and the wider public with information.

E. Consensus-based decision-making

The typical steps of a mediation process are: preparation, implementation, collective decision-making, and application and monitoring of solutions (Nanz & Fritsche, 2012). These steps could not be followed in the Admiralbrücke. As noted earlier, decisions on measures were made by public institutions, because positions among participants were opposed and they could not find a compromise. Nonetheless, the process was consensus-based, even if collective decisions were not made in the end.

In the negotiation rounds, consensus was mainly understood as reaching an agreement between participants. As one of the mediators indicated,

“[...] in mediation there is the principle of consensus, that is, reaching an agreement on something, which, I may say, in such a big mediation process, where a lot of people participate, it is not hundred percent possible. This means one picks the best possible compromises [...]” (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X).²²

On the other hand, participants did not only negotiate proposals, with their knowledge they contributed to understanding problems. The negotiation rounds served to share knowledge of different problems and identify fields of action (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Even though participants were not able to make collective decisions on the policy problem, other outcomes were achieved which were positively valued in the mediation reports and by interviewees.

4.4. Outcomes Mentioned in the Reports and by Participants

“At 9:36 pm a police van stops on the south side of Admiralbrücke. It is already dark, but the lamps on the bridge illuminate very well the area—this brightness favours gathering on the bridge. At 10 pm the police van is still there. I approach the policemen to ask about their procedures concerning Admiralbrücke. They tell me that today is quiet. There are not many people on the bridge. Then, they receive a phone call and have to report what the situation is. The policeman on the phone informs me that it is quiet on the bridge and that, in contrast, it is loud at the Italian restaurant, but they are already starting to close the terrace. When the call ends, they tell me that they can only clear the bridge when the noise is loud” (Field notes, 30.07.2012).

The above passage was recorded on a July evening approximately one and a half years after the end of the mediation process. The policy-making process had had several effects on the activities on the bridge. The most obvious one was the presence of police during the evening and at night, which resulted in a reduction of noise and of other disturbances for neighbours, but other measures were also implemented to reduce the amount of litter left on the bridge. Public authorities took the decision to implement these measures according to the knowledge they had gathered during the policy-making process.

The only decision collectively made by participants was to establish that the bridge and the green area located on the south were not places to organize events. This decision was taken with a vote, and all participants agreed with the exception of four who abstained from voting. This agreement did not affect playing music on the bridge, because street music is not an event according to the law (Streit Entknoten, 2011), or people gathering together. It only referred to organized events. Consequently, it did not have any relevance for tackling the main problems on Admiralbrücke, which were noise and litter created by musicians playing and people partying on the bridge.

Since participants were not able to make collective decisions regarding how to solve the main problems on Admiralbrücke, stakeholders acknowledged that this objective had not been accomplished. For example, the District Government recognized and lamented that, in spite of the number of negotiation rounds, participants were unable to develop a concept to diminish the conflicts on Admiralbrücke (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2011a). Participants in the negotiation rounds also acknowledged that this objective had not been achieved. For example, one of the participating neighbours regretted that this attempt to implement “[...] new democratic forms of self-determination” had not been successful (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²³

Participants welcomed how the problems of litter and cleanliness were solved by public institutions. Nevertheless, the most debated problem, the noise created by the number of people on the bridge, was not solved as many participants in the negotiation rounds would have wished. Participants would have liked to find solutions other than police action. As stated previously, most participants would have liked to agree on measures that were more in line with the city's culture, and which would educate certain bridge users on more responsible behaviour. In contrast, the citizens' action group would have liked to find a solution that impeded people from gathering during day and at night. Opposing ideas on how to solve the problems made it impossible to develop collective solutions.

Aside from the negative impression that the lack of agreements in the negotiation rounds created, many positive outcomes achieved throughout the process were also mentioned in interviews and mediation reports. In this section, these outcomes are grouped in four categories, taking into consideration the statements of interviewees and the contents of the mediation reports: (A) understanding of the measures applied by public institutions, (B) awareness raising among citizens, (C) community building, and (D) learning.

A. Understanding of the measures implemented by public institutions

To solve the noise problem during the night, public institutions decided to apply the Emission Control Act and measure the noise level produced on the bridge. The Emission Control Act of the State establishes that between 10 pm and 6 am making noise that could disturb night's peace is prohibited (Senatsverwaltung für Umwelt Verkehr und Klimaschutz, 2010). Since the activities on Admiralbrücke created a high level of noise, in summer 2010 police and district government decided to station two police officers nearby as of 6 pm and on the bridge as of 9 pm. Then, at 10 pm, if officers considered that the noise level was high, they asked users to leave the bridge. Police handled the situation with care and in a polite way, informing bridge users that nights should be peaceful and quiet in order to not disturb neighbours. Police officers monitored the bridge all night, coming to see the activity on the bridge periodically in order to avoid disturbances later (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2011a; Streit Entknoten, 2011). In addition, in August 2010 the Office for Environment and Nature Protection measured the noise from a house located near Admiralbrücke, on an evening when approximately 250 people were on the bridge. As reference value, the Office for Environment and Nature Protection used the emission threshold permitted for bars and restaurants. The measurement results showed that the noise

on the bridge exceeded this threshold (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Consequently, the measurement scientifically justified the fact that noise was high and that it was legitimate to apply the Emission Control Act. Most interviewees mentioned that a police presence was not the best measure, but it was viewed as the only solution that found a certain degree of acceptance among neighbours. In the absence of collective solutions, this measure was considered the most legitimate one.

Regarding maintaining the bridge clean, Berlin's Waste Management Service changed the cleaning category of Admiralbrücke to a higher one, and the bridge was cleaned on a daily basis. Besides, two litter bins with underground containers were installed, each of them with a capacity of 650 litres. Furthermore, the Green Areas Office was instructed to make sure the green areas near the bridge were kept clean (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2011a; Streit Entknoten, 2011).

As noted earlier, during the mediation process public offices communicated the details of the different measures and gathered feedback from participants. The collaborative process enabled knowledge to be shared, which helped public institutions to implement measures and citizens to understand why these measures were implemented. As explained by one participant,

“[...] in the end, the negotiation round served as legitimating basis for politicians to make decisions. Without this mediation process and the negotiation round, police would not be there now. [...] The big rubbish containers could have been installed. But, politicians always need a kind of reassurance from the population, and they had it through the negotiation rounds” (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁴

The Admiralbrücke case demonstrates that collaborative governance processes have a significant advantage compared to other forms of policy-making which do not have an inclusive and collaborative nature. In participative processes, governments can make better decisions because they have knowledge about the different positions, and decisions that take the different positions into consideration have a higher potential to be accepted by citizens (Nanz & Fritsche, 2012).

B. Awareness raising

The activities of the mediation team played an important role in raising citizens' awareness of problems. Mediators were often present on Admiralbrücke and informed users about the negative effects the activities on the bridge had on neighbours. They spoke directly to

musicians and other users and asked them to cooperate and not to make noise after 10 pm. They also distributed flyers and contacted affected stakeholders. Thus, mediators acted as intermediaries between stakeholders. Their presence on the bridge contributed to a de-escalation of the problem. As a result, the mediation team observed a raised awareness and acceptance of the measures implemented among musicians and other bridge users (Streit Entknoten, 2011).

Furthermore, newspapers informed citizens about the problems and the mediation process. With headlines such as “With the Info-Table to the Party” (Schmidl, 2010b) or “Conflict Mediators Have First Results” (Martens, 2010) newspapers communicated the process to a wide public. These Berlin newspapers have supra-regional outreach and online editions. Accordingly, this news not only reached Berliners, but also readers outside Berlin.

In general, raising users’ awareness had positive effects, which were shown in the readiness of users to leave the bridge when they were requested to by mediators or police (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2010). As a result of the information users received, problems diminished after the mediation process.

C. Community development

As explained by one of the participants, the collaborative process “[...] brought the people who participated from the neighbourhood more together” (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁵ Neighbours’ level of participation during the mediation process was high (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2011a). A lot of neighbours and other stakeholders were mobilized through the mediation process (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Residents were highly involved and participated in different events and activities. Public institutions were also willing to help and participate in the negotiation rounds. As a result, residents and public offices had the opportunity to work and develop policies together. This collaboration was something new for many participants. For example, one participant stated: “I have never exerted so much influence and have noticed that I can move things as with this story with Admiralbrücke” (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁶ The process brought together a significant number of citizens, many unknown to each other before the mediation, to work on policy problems that affected their environment. Despite the differences in opinions, participants worked together for the interests of the neighbourhood.

The initiatives created during and after the mediation process confirm that it contributed to community development. At the end of the mediation, residents voiced a wish to maintain their engagement, not only regarding the Admiralbrücke problems but also other issues concerning the neighbourhood (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2011a). As several interviewees explained, the accumulated experience was used in other citizens' initiatives. For example, several participants detected a need to reduce noise in bars and restaurants in the neighbourhood. As explained by one public officer, a group of participants "[...] discovered additional problems, where there is a need for change, for example, gastronomy, not at all Admiralbrücke, but in the Graefe neighbourhood" (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁷ After the Admiralbrücke mediation process, another collaborative process was implemented to tackle the problem of noise in bars and restaurants in the whole neighbourhood. This collaborative process was financed and supported by the district government and coordinated by the same mediation team that had been in charge of the Admiralbrücke mediation process. Nonetheless, this second collaborative process had a different format. It consisted of organizing several meetings between 2011 and 2012 that included representatives of public institutions, gastronomic establishments, and neighbourhood associations. In these rounds, regulatory issues related to gastronomic activities and noise were discussed, and representatives of gastronomic establishments found a compromise for regulating closing times of front gardens (Streit Entknoten, 2012). Another example of citizens' engagement that started once the mediation process finished was the "Kiez:Bürger" action group, which aimed at raising awareness regarding citizens' rights and needs in the neighbourhood (Kiezbürger AnwohnerInnen-Initiative, n.d.). All in all, the Admiralbrücke collaborative process created a precedent for citizens' participation in public policy-making affecting the neighbourhood and the district.

D. Learning

Participants in the negotiation rounds stated that they had acquired a lot of knowledge on both policy problem and collaborative process. Concerning the policy problem, they learned which stakeholders were affected and why and developed an understanding on different aspects of the problem. They also acquired knowledge on regulations and procedures, as shown in the following statement:

"All have concentrated themselves more intensively on this whole subject, and namely with all possible aspects. Thus, I have also learnt a lot about legal issues,

who is allowed to do something and when, for how long, under what conditions. I have learnt a lot about our district government, how the administration works, who is responsible for what, such stories; the different public offices, the Water and Shipping Office, the role it plays in the protection of historical monuments; and other topics, which I had scarcely looked at before” (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁸

For example, during the collaborative process it was made clear that music before 10 pm could not be prohibited according to the law. As long as the volume did not substantially disturb others, music could be played on the bridge (Bezirksamt Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg von Berlin, 2011a). Through the negotiation rounds, similar regulations and procedures were explained by the representatives of public offices. Participants welcomed the predisposition of experts working in public offices to explain to neighbours the different aspects of the problem. “One has to learn to understand all these small problems. And it was very good that the mediators gathered all these people together, so that we had at least a basis” (Neighbour 1, individual interview, July 31, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁹ In turn, public institutions had the occasion to listen to citizens’ needs and could incorporate these needs in their policies. All in all, the collaborative process contributed to understanding the policy problem in all its facets.

Regarding the mediation process, participants were involved in establishing agreed norms on participation and interaction. Moreover, they could exercise listening to the different opinions and take the interests of other stakeholders into consideration. Participants in the negotiation rounds had the opportunity to learn from a collaborative process which included conflicting parties and other relevant stakeholders in decision-making, as the following statement indicates: “[...] it was also for me a very interesting learning process to participate in all these mediation meetings, just to see how difficult democracy can be” (Neighbour 1, individual interview, July 31, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).³⁰ As Nanz and Fritsche indicate (2012), through participatory processes citizens have the opportunity to train and develop “democratic skills”. Contrary to direct democracy, which works on majority principles, deliberative democracy specifically includes the participation of minorities in decision-making processes (Callon, Lascoumes, & Barthe, 2009). Participants in the Admiralbrücke mediation process learned how collaborative governance can be implemented in practice.

Participants might not be able to reach agreements on solutions to policy problems. However, collaborative governance processes achieve other outcomes that are as relevant as

agreements, or even more relevant. As the case under study shows, outcomes such as developing an understanding of the measures implemented by public institutions, raising citizens' awareness, creating a sense of community, together with learning emerge from sharing knowledge between participants. Collaborative governance triggers processes of knowledge creation, which directly affect individuals and the social structures in which they are part.

Conclusion

Large cities like Berlin present an urban context where a diversity of people and cultures coexist. This heterogeneity in the population calls for collaborative governance processes to take place. Through collaborative processes, citizens' interests can be included in the development of policies. As the Admiralbrücke case demonstrates, collaborative governance can be applied at the neighbourhood level, where affected stakeholders are within reach and can be identified and involved in the decision-making process. The case study also indicates that a realistic view of collaborative governance processes must contemplate the possibility that participants might not be able to make collective decisions regarding the policy problem when participants' positions are opposed. Nevertheless, other relevant outcomes can be achieved, which are directly related to the intersubjective creation of knowledge occurring in this deliberative form of policy-making. Participants in the mediation process were able to acquire knowledge on collaborative practices and the policy problem. Besides, this intersubjective creation of knowledge generated transformation processes in their social world. Achieving these results already justifies investing resources in implementing collaborative governance processes to solve policy problems that affect a heterogeneity of actors with different interests and knowledge.

The next two chapters focus the analysis on two important outcomes: knowledge creation and making collective decisions. The negotiation rounds that took place during the mediation process offer an appropriate unit of analysis to explore how striving for consensus contributes to achieving these two outcomes in collaborative governance settings.

5. Data Analysis: Part 1. Reaching Consensus on the Validity of Knowledge

“A knowledge has emerged, so to say, that was previously not there, about each other and the respective roles, and for the whole thing, why it is actually so, how it is, and why it has emerged in that way. And this knowledge, this is something new. And from my point of view, this is also an indispensable part for future developments in conflict situations in a civic-composed society” (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹

The negotiation rounds had to gather together all the necessary knowledge to understand problems and look for solutions. Therefore, representatives of different stakeholders were invited to participate. Knowledge was also gathered from external sources and several studies were carried out. All this knowledge was made available to participants in the collaborative governance setting. Throughout the negotiation rounds, participants discussed several topics and assessed the validity of the knowledge communicated. When knowledge was assessed as being valid, it was incorporated in the total stock of knowledge that participants had available to interpret problems.

Information in the mediation reports and interviewees’ statements indicate that intersubjective consensus on the validity of knowledge was often momentary and ambiguous. Participants could reach an understanding on the validity of knowledge on many occasions. However, this consensus was not necessarily long lasting. Discussions required a lot of effort on the part of participants to achieve or maintain a consensus on the validity of knowledge. When it existed, this consensus was actually revised with every new speech act, and consequently the stock of knowledge was always susceptible to change.

On the other hand, even if consensus was momentary and ambiguous, reaching a consensus on the validity of knowledge had effects on the stock of knowledge participants had available to interpret problems and make decisions about how to act. This guiding function of knowledge was especially observable in the case of knowledge related to norms. For example, norms concerning the policy problem conditioned the types of solutions that could be developed. As explained by one participant, “when we do negotiation rounds here, then this does not mean we are absolutely free to negotiate things, but we have a corset, in which we move ourselves. And, inside this corset, we have a playground, in which we are

allowed to negotiate things” (Public officer 2, individual interview, July 26, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).² In the same way, the stock of knowledge that referred to individual desires also played a guiding function. For example, participants looked for solutions that would satisfy the desire to ensure night-time rest. Finally, knowledge related to facts also guided participants’ actions. For example, participants accepted the knowledge provided by the noise measurement, which established that the noise level was high, and this acceptance influenced looking for solutions that would reduce noise. Striving for consensus contributed to intersubjectively assessing and selecting knowledge, which crystalized in the total stock of knowledge that guided participants’ actions.

This chapter presents an analysis on knowledge communication and assessment in the negotiation rounds. The analysis is divided into three categories, which correspond with the three worlds proposed by the theory of communicative action (Habermas, 1989, 2002): subjective, objective, and normative. As outlined previously with reference to this threefold structure, each of the worlds contains a different type of knowledge, each one assessed with a specific validity claim: Expressions of the subjective world communicate knowledge relating to desires and emotions, and are assessed for their truthfulness or sincerity; representations of facts in the objective world contain knowledge relating to all possible objects, and are evaluated for their rational acceptability; and articulations of the normative world transfer moral-practical knowledge, and are assessed for their normative rightness. Every expression communicated by participants is simultaneously assessed in the three worlds for its truthfulness, its rational acceptability, and its normative rightness. For example, the sincerity of expressions is evaluated regardless whether individual desires and emotions are explicitly communicated in the utterance or not, because participants can assess if the expression uttered is in accordance with the participant’s intentions. With every expression participants raise a claim in the three worlds and other participants can assess the utterance according to the three validity claims. On the other hand, the three worlds are different, and the analysis of empirical data obtained in the case study indicates that the differences between the three worlds affect the process of reaching consensus on the validity of knowledge. In each of the three worlds participants raise a different validity claim and this affects how this knowledge is intersubjectively assessed. The empirical data provides evidence for establishing this differentiation in three categories. The results of this analysis present several conceptualizations concerning how each category influences the process of reaching a consensus on the validity of knowledge.

This chapter presents data gathered from interviews and mediation reports regarding several events and interactions occurring in the negotiation rounds, which are related to the process of reaching a consensus on the validity of knowledge. The first section of this chapter provides evidence related to communicating desires and emotions, and analyses the extent to which participants could reach a consensus on the validity of knowledge belonging to the subjective world. In the second section, the analysis focuses on the objective world and how participants used knowledge to claim rational acceptability of facts. Lastly, the third section examines participants' capacity to reflect on normative frameworks and to apply these normative frameworks in specific situations. As highlighted earlier, the knowledge shared was mainly related to two different objects: the policy problem and the collaborative governance setting. Therefore, the contents of the analysis are grounded on examples of topics which participants discussed in the negotiation rounds in relation to one object or the other.

5.1. Assessing Desires and Emotions

“All ideas were on the table, and the people's desires, and even the anger and the sentimentality, everything was there” (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).³

Specific desires and emotions motivated stakeholders to participate in the negotiation rounds and make proposals to try to solve the Admiralbrücke problems. Participants had individual desires and emotions in relation to both the policy problem and the collaborative governance setting. First, the group expressed heterogeneous and opposing desires regarding the policy problem as the following statement shows:

“From people that say, ‘I do not want to have anybody on the bridge in the evenings’—they have obviously said that, because they were angry; of course, this is unrealistic—, to people that have said, ‘exactly, I live here, I also do not find it ok that it is that loud at night, but I want people to be here, I want music to be played’. [...] ‘Ah! The opinions are so different’”. (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁴

Every participant had his or her own individual desires and emotions which coincided or differed from those of other participants. These desires and emotions were conditioned to a great extent by the experience and knowledge acquired in the past. For instance, neighbours who lived near the bridge had different experiences from neighbours who lived two or three streets farther away. As one of the neighbours affected by noise explained,

“[...] I woke up at night because someone outside was shouting loudly or simply because a lot of people sat together, talking. It went so far that I was in bed and could really overhear the conversations that took place here below at the shore” (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁵

This experience was completely different from the experience of another participant, who lived one street away from the street facing the canal and around eighty meters from the bridge:

“Well, I have lived here already for more than 20 years and, therefore, I have of course witnessed it from the beginning. However, I do not live directly at Admiralbrücke. Hence, I have, so to say, so much distance that noise or something like that actually disturbs me very little” (Neighbour 3, individual interview, August 2, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁶

This heterogeneity was even present within groups. For example, neighbours that lived close to the bridge also had different experiences and were differently affected by the Admiralbrücke problems. Some were not much affected by the noise on the bridge, yet other neighbours were so affected that, in addition to have sleeping problems, also had problems with the noise during the day. There were different individual perceptions, as explained by one of the interviewees, “[...] it is always the subjective feeling, with which we basically judge things, and also the magnitude and the intensity” (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁷ Several of the participants had specific problems that differed from those of other participants. For example, as mentioned earlier, the residents at Fraenkelufer 26 had the problem of people relieving themselves in the yard, in the underpass, and in the doorway (Neighbour 1, individual interview, July 31, 2012). In short, each participant had accumulated different experiences, made their own individual interpretation regarding noise, litter, music, or gathering on the bridge, and had their own interests in the problem. This was also true for other participants who were not neighbours, such as public officers or mediators.

Second, participants also had desires and emotions concerning the collaborative governance setting. As described earlier, before the mediation several stakeholders had already been involved in a policy-making process to try to find solutions to the problems. Previous experiences had shaped participants’ individual desires and emotions regarding the mediation process. For example, the member of the Admiralkiez Action Group suggested the mediation process to authorities because she saw a new opportunity in it to solve the problem (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011). For most of the participating residents

it was an opportunity to take part in the development of policy measures affecting their lives and environment. The following statement exemplifies this desire:

“My motivation was to shape my living environment, not to inactively see how others, who clearly find other living plans attractive, change my living environment in such a manner, that I now experience negative changes, and I have only witnessed it inactively. This would be a bit strange” (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁸

Participants knew that stakeholders had heterogeneous interests, and they wanted their individual interests to be included when developing measures. The collaborative process brought together a diversity of knowledge related to desires and emotions.

To understand participants’ various experiences and wants, this knowledge had to be communicated in the collaborative setting. Public institutions were particularly interested in gathering knowledge related to the experiences and desires of affected stakeholders. As explained by one resident, “[...] institutions wanted to know, what we citizens want” (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁹ Therefore, the mediation team made it possible for neighbours to voice their problems and needs directly to the representatives of the competent authorities, so that problems were heard and fields of action identified (Streit Entknoten, 2011). As interviewees confirmed, participants in the negotiation rounds used this opportunity to communicate their desires and emotions.

Often participants could accept other participants’ expressions of the subjective world as being truthful and rational, but did not share the same desires and emotions. For example, interviewees explained that they developed a deep understanding of the desires and emotions of the affected neighbours. Participants who wanted to maintain a certain amount of cultural activity on the bridge could understand that several neighbours were highly affected. Nevertheless, as noted earlier, they did not share the same desire to implement measures that would completely stop people from gathering on the bridge. Similarly, the neighbours affected could understand the proposals of participants who wanted to find a solution that kept both a certain amount of activities on the bridge and night-time rest, but could not share their wants. In short, participants were able to reach an understanding on the validity of certain desires and emotions, but they did not feel or wish the same. Communicative action theory can contribute to explaining why participants might assess the desires and emotions of other participants as being truthful and rational, but not necessarily share the same desires and emotions.

Participants' expressions of desires and emotions can be assessed according to their truthfulness if they are linked to subjective experiences (Habermas, 2002). For example, expressions of wants such as "the want of reducing noise during the night" can be assessed as truthful as long as it is connected to a need, in this case, the need for sleep. The relationship between the want and the need that compels it is what opens the expression to criticism regarding its sincerity. Therefore, expressions about desires and emotions are defended differently to expressions about facts or norms. As pointed out by Habermas (2002),

"the claim to sincerity connected with expressive utterances is not such that it could be directly redeemed through argument as can truth or rightness claims. At most the speaker can show in the consistency of his actions whether he really meant what he said. The sincerity of expressions cannot be "grounded" but only "shown"; insincerity can be revealed by the lack of consistency between an utterance and the past or future action internally connected with it" (p. 41).

Expressions of subjective desires and emotions do not claim universality as facts or norms do. Therefore, arguments related to subjective evaluative expressions are regarded as less conclusive than arguments about facts or norms (Habermas, 2002). Participants might assess an expression of desires and emotions as sincere and rational and this expression will still remain in the domain of subjective experiences.

On the other hand, even if desires and emotions belong to the individual, to a large extent, they are created through social interactions. Only self-reflection can be attributed to the individual. In communicative action an important part of self-consciousness is created through linguistic interaction with a partner. Each individual has their own desires and emotions, and it is through dialogue with other individuals that these desires and emotions take shape. The individual stops his or her spontaneous experience and reflects upon him or herself. Self-representations are presented as objects in the dialogue. Thus, participants access the subjective reality of other participants by the objectivation that they make of that reality. In communicative action the individual becomes the object on which participants want to reach an understanding (Habermas, 1992, 2002). Thus, the communicative process has effects beyond the individual. Communicating subjective experiences directly affects the intersubjective creation of knowledge related to desires and emotions.

When subjective desires and emotions are articulated, they refer to the individual as an entity and, accordingly, the expression carrying out these desires and emotions can also be judged for its rational acceptability, that is, the proposition can be assessed as true or false. Facts can be grounded on individual experiences as the interactions in the negotiation rounds

indicate. For example, participants accepted the fact that neighbours were very affected by noise, because they assessed the expressions of these neighbours as sincere. This fact was grounded on the subjective experiences of several participants.

It is certainly not easy to assess the sincerity of expressions in all cases. Participants might state something while hiding their true desires and emotions. Such an action would not be directed towards reaching an understanding, but to fulfil individual aims. Communicative action theory establishes that participants who want to reach an understanding in matters of the subjective world have to be sincere. If instead of being sincere, they were presenting themselves in a certain way to a specific audience, they would not be performing communicative action but dramaturgical action (Habermas, 2002). Dramaturgical action can adopt strategic features insofar as it can be oriented towards influencing others:

“In many situations an actor has good reason to conceal his experiences from others or to mislead someone with whom he is interacting about his ‘true’ experiences. In such cases he is not raising a claim to truthfulness but at most simulating one while behaving strategically. Expressions of this kind cannot be objectively criticized because of their insincerity; they are to be judged rather according to their intended results as more or less effective. Expressive manifestations can be appraised on the basis of their sincerity only in the context of communication aimed at reaching understanding” (Habermas, 2002, p. 21).

Communicating subjective experiences can be associated with many psychological components. Nonetheless, in the theory of communicative action Habermas does not try to perform a social psychological task. Instead, he proposes that the social sciences and philosophy cooperate in order to work on a theory of rationality. Communicative rationality involves overcoming subjective views and entering into argumentation with the aim of assuring the intersubjectivity of the lifeworld (Habermas, 1989). This conceptualization is very relevant for collaborative governance undertakings where participants strive to reach an understanding of the knowledge belonging to participants’ subjective world.

As the events and interactions in the negotiation rounds show, participants in collaborative settings can communicate subjective experiences in order to try to reach a consensus on the validity of knowledge related to desires and emotions. Communicating subjective experiences enhances the stock of knowledge that participants have to interpret problems and look for solutions. Acting communicatively can make the different positions visible. Participants might not share the same goals, but they can take into account the existence of different valid goals, and then use this knowledge to find solutions to the policy problem and to manage the collaborative governance setting. As a consequence of

objectifying and communicating subjective experiences, participants simultaneously shape their individual desires and emotions and the social world in which they participate.

5.2. Assessing Facts

“One cannot contradict a qualified measurement, because it is a fact” (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁰

To understand the policy problem in all its complexity and try to find solutions, participants gathered knowledge related to facts. They prioritized collecting knowledge relating to the most relevant and urgent topics. These topics were as follows: securing night-time rest, noise day and night, and waste management (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Participants used different methods to obtain knowledge relating to these topics. First, they communicated their individual observations regarding the activities on the bridge. Next, during summer 2010 mediators were present on the bridge two or three times per week, interacting with users and gathering data. Then, they reported their observations in the negotiation rounds. In addition to this, the mediation team conducted a survey in order to collect more information about the composition of bridge users and frequency of use (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Furthermore, the Office for Environment and Nature Protection carried out a noise measurement, and contrasted the results obtained with the thresholds established by current regulations. All these methods gathered factual information.

When the facts were presented in the negotiation rounds, participants assessed their validity. In this section, two examples of topics have been selected to analyse how participants intersubjectively assessed the validity of knowledge related to facts: (A) noise and (B) characteristics of bridge users. Participants in the negotiation rounds tried to reach a consensus on the validity of knowledge related to these two topics.

A. Noise

As mentioned previously, residents had different perceptions of the noise level. For some participants the noise level on Admiralbrücke was very high, for others it was not so high. Consequently, some residents were more affected than others. For instance, regarding noise at night one immediate neighbour explained that it did not affect his night's sleep much, but his wife was more affected: “When I am tired, I am tired, I sleep, finish, end. For my wife, it's different. She wakens more easily. Well. This psychological burden shall of course not be

disregarded” (Neighbour 1, individual interview, July 31, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹¹ Even when the noise levels were badly affecting a significant number neighbours, many participants in the negotiation rounds considered it a subjective perception. The Office for Environment and Nature Protection measured the noise “[...] in order to look if it is a subjective perception or it can also be established on facts” (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹² The noise measurement brought new knowledge to the discussions. This scientific knowledge gave participants enough reasons to intersubjectively accept that it was loud, independent of subjective perceptions.

Measuring the noise level aimed to corroborate a fact that could also have been confirmed through individual observations. Berlin’s Emission Control Act establishes that between 10 pm and 6 am it is prohibited to make noise that can disturb somebody’s night rest (Senatsverwaltung für Umwelt Verkehr und Klimaschutz, 2010). In the Admiralbrücke case police could already assess if it was too loud, apply the control act, and request that people leave the bridge. According to the representative of the Office for Environment and Nature Protection responsible for the noise measurement, several activities on Admiralbrücke made noise, for example,

“speaking on the bridge, laughing, or dropping a bottle, as well as partying, singing, shouting. [...] these are noises that one can easily assess if they make a disturbance. In case of behaviour-conditioned noise emissions, every reasonable, not especially noise-sensitive person can ascertain it” (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹³

Therefore, in such cases

“[...] a noise level measurement is normally not required because a measurement is not representative in the case of behaviour-conditioned [noise]. I may say, on one day you have a silent tourist group on Admiralbrücke and you measure, and on the next day someone comes with his drums or sings some song there just without instrumental support, so that there are always peaks, where we have said, in that case we do not need to measure” (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁴

Nevertheless, the noise measurement was carried out on an August day between 10:30 pm and 12:15 am, when around 250 people were on the bridge (Streit Entknoten, 2010c), and it was quantified that it was too loud, which “[...] was, in principle, already known beforehand, because in case of behaviour-conditioned noises, according to state regulations, it is sufficient to subjectively evaluate if a person feels itself disturbed or not” (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁵ However, in the discussions

regarding if it was loud or not, scientific knowledge combined with current regulations provided enough reasons to reach a consensus on the fact that it was loud on the bridge.

Participants could have questioned the measuring methods or the application of a normative framework which was not for regulating noise in public spaces. The noise measurement was carried out on one sole day. On other days the noise level might have been lower or higher depending on the number of people and activities on the bridge. Besides, since there were not any guidelines available regarding noise level on public spaces, the Office for Environment and Nature Protection decided to apply the regulations for gastronomic establishments:

“It is in a public space. For Admiralbrücke there are no prescribed measurement provisions, no prescribed measurement analysis guidelines, as well as no emission reference values. And we have said to ourselves, ‘Ok, we can just establish a magnitude’, and as reference we have decided to say, ‘we are dealing with a bar. We use the criteria for a bar as reference’” (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁶

The result obtained was higher than the threshold established in the norm, which justified the implementation of several measures: “For a gastronomic establishment here in Germany, in Berlin, 40 decibels is the reference value at night-time. We have measured 64, so that, indeed, an administrative intervention was absolutely justified, and not only the subjective assessment specified by the law” (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁷ Methods to collect data and regulations were accepted.

Gathering scientific and moral-practical knowledge added more factual information to a problem that had already been observed by neighbours, police, and other stakeholders. The knowledge from the noise measurement had the advantage that it provided subject-independent motives to intersubjectively accept that it was loud on Admiralbrücke. Participants assessed this knowledge as being rationally acceptable and it was incorporated in the total stock of knowledge that participants had to understand the problem.

B. Characteristics of bridge users

Outside the negotiation rounds there was a tendency to identify visitors to Admiralbrücke as “tourists”. For example, before the negotiation rounds started, one newspaper explained which stakeholders were expected to participate:

“All parts that are somehow related to Admiralbrücke will take a seat in it. That is, residents, district politicians, restaurateurs, police, office for public order, and visitors. Nonetheless, it will be difficult with the latter because young backpacker

tourists, who are in Berlin only for a short time and party heavily on Admiralbrücke, will hardly be addressable for residents' problems" (Schmidl, 2010a).¹⁸

Interviewees also confirmed that the label "tourist" was often used to refer to visitors on the bridge: "We have often heard, 'tourists, tourists, tourists'. Well, I do not know if all are tourists. Berlin is a multicultural city. Not every Spanish speaker, Italian speaker, or English speaker is a tourist, many also live here" (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁹ Several actors heard other languages, saw different nationalities, and jumped to the conclusion that the majority of visitors were tourists. In fact, this was wrong, as seen later in the negotiation rounds only part of the facts had been considered. Nevertheless, this opinion was accepted and outside the negotiation rounds visitors became known as tourists.

As a result of this perception, tourists were targeted by some stakeholders as being the main source of the problems. Tourists were certainly one of the groups of bridge users. Admiralbrücke appeared as "Insider-Tip" in some tourist guides and on-line forums (Streit Entknoten, 2011). In addition, some Berlin tourist guides included the bridge on their tours. Nevertheless, there was no evidence to corroborate that tourists were the main source of the problems. The number of tourists among visitors to Admiralbrücke was unknown, and this created a knowledge gap in the mediation process.

Knowing that information on composition of users, reasons of use, and frequency of use was needed in order to understand the problems and look for solutions, the mediation team carried out a survey between August 15 and 31, 2010 (Streit Entknoten, 2010e). Nevertheless, the survey had methodological limitations, which affected the validity of results. Three types of population were surveyed: neighbours, neighbours who also visited the bridge, and visitors. Questionnaires were distributed on the bridge and also in the houses nearby. Of the 278 questionnaires gathered, only 71 were completed by visitors to the bridge, and accordingly, the representativeness of results could not be guaranteed (Streit Entknoten, 2010e). The results obtained were not consistent enough to provide participants with scientific knowledge regarding the composition of users.

In the absence of statistical data, participants made individual observations regarding the composition of visitors. In the course of the negotiation rounds, participants discussed this topic, and it became clear that generalizing that all visitors are tourists was not in accordance with the facts. For example, the mediation team observed that "[...] there were more people

onsite who are not from other countries—something that was presumed at the beginning—, but there were many more people who were Kreuzbergers or Berliners” (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁰ Many users were Berliners, from the same or other districts. Certainly, Admiralbrücke also caught the attention of young tourists, who mingled with Berliners on the bridge. However, targeting tourism as the main source of problems on Admiralbrücke was inaccurate, because it was only a part of the whole problem. Therefore, the word “visitors” rather than “tourists” was established in the negotiation rounds to refer to users of the bridge who were not neighbours. As explained by one of the participants, “we do not necessarily speak of ‘tourists’ in this context but of ‘guests’ or, rather, ‘visitors’. These can also be visitors from other districts, from the neighbouring district” (Public officer 2, individual interview, July 26, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²¹ Through new observations and dialogue participants found a solution that was more in accordance with facts. If the percentage of tourists was not known, and could even be quite low, including them in the visitors’ group was accepted. Despite lacking statistical data on visitor profile, participants were able to reach an intersubjective understanding on the validity of individual interpretations.

Several observations can be made regarding the two example topics: noise and characteristics of bridge users. First, in both cases participants reached a consensus on the validity of facts when they found actor-independent motives. Participants in the negotiation rounds had different desires and emotions concerning the problems on the bridge, and this affected reaching a consensus on the validity of knowledge. Therefore, several participants gathered new knowledge that provided the collaborative setting with actor-independent motives to assess facts. In the case of discussions related to noise, as noted earlier, the gathering of scientific and moral-practical knowledge gave participants motives for intersubjectively assessing the noise level as high. This knowledge was more actor-independent than subjective perceptions, as the following statement shows: “Noise, for instance, is a very good example for this. We have noise; we have objective directives where one says, ‘Hold on! So many decibels are harmful to health’” (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²² Similarly, participants also searched for this kind of knowledge in the discussion about the composition of bridge users. The survey undertaken would have served this purpose were it not for methodological problems. To compensate for the lack of statistical data, participants searched for other reasons that supported facts related to the amount of tourist activity on the bridge. Individual

observations and the knowledge that a significant number of Berliners are of different origins and speak different languages provided participants with reasons to affirm that only a part of the visitors were tourists. Observations and communication between participants provided actor-independent motives to intersubjectively accept that tourists were only a part of the visitors, and most probably a small part as the following statement exemplifies:

“It is really a problem that the public space is used by many people. And that there are also tourists, because word of such a place spreads, and as a small attraction or so, this maybe intensifies the situation a little bit” (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²³

This analysis coincides with the notion provided by communicative action theory that to reach a consensus on the validity of facts, participants need to find coinciding reasons which allow them to intersubjectively accept the truth of a statement. Since participants in communicative action aim to reach an understanding, the meeting of intersubjective validity claims is suspended until actor-independent motives are found that make the claim to truth of a conflictive statement accepted rationally by all participants. Habermas stresses that the key term in the pragmatic theory of meaning is not “truth” but “validity” in the sense of “rational acceptability” (Habermas, 1997).

Second, when scientific knowledge is gathered according to contrasted methodologies it has a great capacity to explain facts. This capacity of scientific knowledge to provide reasons for ascertaining facts can be observed in the discussion on the noise level. In this case, the methodology used was accepted by participants, and scientific knowledge provided the necessary reasons to establish facts. Certainly, in addition to facts, scientific knowledge also includes subjective as well as moral-practical knowledge, but the scientific method presents knowledge as “objective”, thereby giving this type of knowledge independency from actor-related motives. On the other hand, regarding the characteristics of bridge users, consistent statistics were not available, and this prompted a knowledge gap which had to be filled with other types of knowledge.

Third, and most important, for the discussions on both topics participants in the negotiation rounds had a significant amount of knowledge available from different sources, and they pragmatically used it to solve problems. Whether it was scientific and moral-practical knowledge, or individual observations, participants conceptualized these two topics with the knowledge they had at hand. In certain discussions, scientific knowledge and norms had a greater capacity to ground “true” assertions than individual perceptions, but on other occasions participants could also ground facts with reasons belonging to subjective

experiences. These facts were then true as long as subjective interpretations found consensus between participants. As Berger and Luckmann appropriately point out, subjective meanings become objective facts in societies (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). In communicative action, knowledge is valid as long as it is accepted intersubjectively (Habermas, 1989, 2002). Participants were able to intersubjectively recognize the validity of knowledge on several topics and accordingly develop conceptualizations on these topics. This pragmatic approach observed in the negotiation rounds coincides with the idea that individuals use the knowledge they think will make them successfully cope with the present action situation (Schütz & Luckmann, 1988).

5.3. Assessing Norms

“At the beginning it worked quite well, and we had these rules. But, to what use are good written-down rules if one does not follow them afterwards?” (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁴

Participants in the negotiation rounds discussed norms and procedures related to both the collaborative governance setting and the policy problem. First, they had to establish norms of collaboration. In the first meeting the mediation team suggested a normative and procedural framework to regulate participation and interaction in the negotiation rounds, and participants agreed on it (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Second, participants gathered knowledge on norms and procedures related to the policy problem. These norms included public space regulations, institutional norms and procedures of public institutions as well as other social norms concerning the policy problem. For example, as noted earlier, representatives of the public offices provided information on noise pollution regulations, behaviour on the streets, or business opening hours; Berlin’s Waste Management Service presented a procedure for keeping Admiralbrücke, nearby streets, and green areas clean; and police and public order office presented their approaches to solving the problem, taking current regulations into consideration (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Participants reflected on various normative frameworks depending on the problem they were dealing with.

Participants had different positions regarding certain norms and procedures and this affected discussions in the negotiation rounds. Reaching a consensus on the normative rightness of actions and norms was difficult. Three examples of challenged norms and procedures illustrate the process of reaching an understanding on the validity of moral-

practical knowledge: (A) norms of participation, (B) norms of interaction, and (C) police action on the bridge. The first two examples are related to the collaborative setting and the third to the policy problem.

A. Norms of participation: appointed representatives

The negotiation rounds had to include a small number of participants. The reference given by the mediation team was 20 participants. To form this small group, each organized stakeholder had to appoint representatives (Streit Entknoten, 2011). The Admiralkiez Action Group disregarded this norm. At the beginning, they appointed two members. However, after several negotiation rounds the two appointed representatives did not achieve the results that other members of this stakeholder wanted. So these other members also decided to go to the negotiations rounds rather than finding a solution that would not affect the collaborative process too much, for example, changing the appointed representatives. The following statement of one of the members who started to participate in the meetings later demonstrates that they were aware that they challenged the norms of participation: “At some point I blew my top and said, ‘I don’t give a damn. [...] I’ll go now to the negotiation rounds’” (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁵ From the 5th or 6th negotiation round, more members of the Action Group started to participate.

There are no records in the mediation reports about the exact number of participants from the Admiralkiez Action Group. Some interviewees stated that in some negotiation rounds there were around six representatives in total, other interviewees mentioned an even larger number. Regardless of the exact number, the fact was that having many members of the same stakeholder created an unbalance between participants, as the following statement shows: “The process failed in the end for this reason, that the round was not closed later on, but it was permitted that the, so to say, somewhat stubborn proponents of absolute silence permanently acquired reinforcements, so that the participation ratios were distorted every time” (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁶ The presence of new participants and the large number of Admiralkiez Action Group members compared to the number of representatives of other stakeholders seriously affected the negotiation rounds.

According to the interviewees, the first two Admiralkiez Action Group representatives were ready to look for a compromise, whereas the participants that came later were less able

to accept the proposals made by other stakeholders. As one participant explained, “[...] they said, ‘I want to be there before decisions are taken which I do not support’. And then, we had these two Action Group representatives and then still many other Action Group people, that were there and said, ‘No, I do not want this’” (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁷ All of a sudden, participants were presented with a new setting with new participants that had other aims and knowledge.

Participants had moved discussions forward and, unexpectedly, new participants who wanted to discuss issues that had already been decided in previous rounds started coming to the meetings. For example, one of the members of this action group who started to participate in the 5th or 6th negotiation round explained that she asked the following:

“‘How is it that we now talk about what times music can be played? I do not want music to be played here, and the citizens’ action group does not want it either, and so many members back us, and I want us to discuss it again’” (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁸

As stated by another participant, “[...] with each negotiation round we had the feeling that we were thrown back to a point which we thought we had already passed” (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁹ New participants with new desires and emotions and new knowledge invalidated past discussions. Breaking this participation norm affected the organization of the collaborative setting, especially the communication between participants.

For some participants it was clear that participation was limited to appointed representatives, whereas for others this norm did not have the same validity and, accordingly, their actions did not follow the same norm. As stated by one participant, the mediators “[...] have not foreseen that then, suddenly, others come and that instead of two then, suddenly, four or six people sit there. They have simply not foreseen that, otherwise they would have certainly had to establish clear regulations beforehand and say, ‘well, there are only these two representatives from the beginning until the end’, or, ‘If one is sick then someone may substitute him’, but not somehow changing personnel [...]” (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).³⁰

On the other hand, several interviewees recognized the validity of this participation norm and mentioned that the mediation team should have made participants comply with it. The mediation team was very flexible regarding this norm of participation. As indicated by one mediator, the core group was formed by the selected representatives, “[...] but it was not

the case that it was prohibited, when a resident, or a restaurateur, or a musician said, ‘tonight I want to participate’. It was always like this, that a couple of people, who were not members of the negotiation round, could participate” (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).³¹ Especially in the meetings where more Admiralkiez Action Group members started to participate, the number of participants was significantly higher than the 20 recommended at the beginning. In the 5th and 6th negotiation rounds the group had 27 participants and in the 7th negotiation round 28 participants. Obviously, there was no clear understanding between participants about the validity of this rule. Therefore, the Admiralkiez Action Group used the opportunity to participate with more members, and the rest of the participants, including the mediation team, were not able to stop a high number of members from this stakeholder from participating.

B. Norms of interaction: acting communicatively

In the first negotiation meeting, the mediation team proposed a series of interaction norms, and participants agreed on them. The norms were:

“Listen and let others finish speaking; seriousness; empathy for the situation of those affected; fairness and valued interaction with each other; constructive contributions and non-violent communication; no judgements and no recriminations; open and specific negotiation with each other (be brief); mutual support; focus on facts, not guesses; the result of this round must be presented to the government as being collective“ (Streit Entknoten, 2010a, pp. 1–2, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).³²

Norms were pinned on the wall and were included in the minutes of the first meeting. However, interviewees explained that, as negotiation rounds advanced, several participants did not respect these rules.

Most participants wanted to develop proposals through a consensus-based dialogue, yet some participants hampered the development of ideas by not acting communicatively. As stated by one interviewee, they engaged in the negotiation rounds “[...] to find a solution and not to mock and treat every solution that is different from the own opinion disrespectfully” (Neighbour 1, individual interview, July 31, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).³³ At some points, the tone of negotiations reached a level that it could hardly be established as communicative. The owner of a nearby restaurant, who only participated in some negotiation rounds, explained:

“I ceased to go because several groups emerged. [...] And, they simply quarrelled. That is, they did not talk, they simply quarrelled. I had no enthusiasm

left for such a thing. I just did not go there anymore.” (Restaurant owner, individual interview, July 24, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).³⁴

Certainly, strong discussions were expected in a conflict that seriously affected the life of residents. As one of the mediators explained, “mediation is also for that purpose, that we also argue a little bit” (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).³⁵ However, many arguments did not follow the rules of interaction established at the beginning and this seriously affected participants being able to reach an understanding. Clearly, not all participants understood how to comply with the norms of interaction, or they purposely broke the norms as part of an individual strategy. In this regard, it must be said that the Admiralkiez Action Group members were not the only ones responsible for breaking norms of interaction. Interviewees also give examples of speech acts of other participants who cannot be classified as communicative. In several discussions, the norms established at the beginning lost validity for some participants, thereby affecting the communicative process.

C. Police action

The implementation of police action was considerably debated in the negotiation rounds. In the first negotiation meeting, participants positively assessed that night-time sleep had been assured, but they wished that it could be assured without having to resort to police action (Streit Entknoten, 2010a). As mentioned earlier, participants in the negotiation rounds accepted the rationality behind justifying police action with a norm (the Emission Control Act), but not all of them assessed the action as right when taking a broader normative framework into consideration. Participants did not question the validity of the law. They questioned the validity of the application of this particular law to solve the Admiralbrücke problems. For example, several interviewees affirmed that such an action did not match Berlin’s culture.

There is a difference between referring to the normative world as an entity and assessing the normative rightness of a norm or an action. A proposition that makes reference to the normative world as an external entity such as “having police presence on the bridge from 10 pm fulfils the norm because night-time rest must be guaranteed” can be assessed as true taking the law into consideration. It is true that there is a law that justifies an action. In that case, participants can assess if it is true or false that the action conforms the norm. This assessment primarily focuses on the objective world. On the other hand, participants can also

reflect on the normative rightness of the norm in a particular action situation. It is through this type of assessment that participants in the negotiation rounds did not find police action normatively correct. For several participants implementing police action in this specific case was not right, because other social norms existed that favoured looking for more tolerant solutions.

Several conclusions can be drawn regarding reaching a consensus on the validity of moral-practical knowledge using the information provided by the three examples presented, together with several concepts included in the theoretical foundations of this thesis. First, strategic action hampers the process of reaching an understanding on the validity of normative frameworks. As the examples show, when dissent on the validity of norms exists, participants can opt to act communicatively or to take strategic action. If participants opt for strategic action they are not interested in reaching a consensus with regard to norms. As noted earlier, in strategic action knowledge is set in motion to achieve own individual goals. Therefore, the attitude towards shared norms is completely different. The actor only makes decisions according to self-preferences and, in doing so, steps out of the shared lifeworld (Habermas, 1992). Participants acting unilaterally, without trying to reach an intersubjective understanding, jeopardize the collaborative process as the events in the negotiation rounds show.

Second, communicative action has limitations to regulate non-communicative types of actions. Participants acting communicatively can only control or mitigate strategic action by rising claims in the three worlds, particularly by assessing the actions of participants against the normative framework. If participants in the collaborative process cannot compensate or, to some degree, mitigate strategic action, the collaborative process runs the risk of losing its collaborative nature, as the events that took place from the 5th negotiation round demonstrate. When participants break norms and do not act communicatively, then communicative action might not be sufficient to make participants comply with norms. One way of controlling strategic action in extreme cases might be to apply coercive measures. Participants can agree on consequences when norms are broken. For example, participants in the negotiation rounds could have agreed on penalizing those who recurrently disregarded norms of participation and interaction with having to abandon the collaborative setting. On the other hand, in a process where decisions have to be made in consensus, and all participants have the right to decide, applying coercive action against one or several participants might be difficult, and even go against the nature of the process. Such a situation presents a problem for participants,

who have to choose between acting communicatively and carrying out another type of action that assures norm compliance.

Third, the two examples presented regarding the collaborative governance setting indicate that norms of interaction and participation need to be formalized and revised when they start losing validity. Participants in the negotiation rounds were able to agree on a set of norms at the beginning of the process. Nonetheless, several of these norms lost validity for certain participants who opted for acting strategically by bringing more members to the meetings or breaking the norms of interaction. When other participants realized that the attitude of some participants was seriously affecting negotiations, there was not enough time to redress the situation. The district government and the mediation team had planned meetings from the beginning of September to the end of November. The most important conflicts emerged in the 5th and 6th negotiation rounds, which took place on November 11 and 24 respectively. Although mediators organized three more negotiation meetings during December and January, voluntarily and without costs for the district government (Streit Entknoten, 2011), there was no time to bring positions closer. Participants had only time to gather results and finish as best they could. Taking into consideration that collaborative processes are limited in time and that participants must use the time available to try to develop collective solutions, it is crucial that the normative framework is clear and accepted by all participants. An implicit consensus on the normative rightness of an action, or of a norm, might not be sufficient. Even when participants act communicatively, they might assess the normative framework differently. Habermas explains that the self-realization impulse cannot be taken away from individuals, because the individual always communicates “in the first person”. Due to the structure of linguistic intersubjectivity, the individual always remains himself, also when he conforms to norms. Therefore, the normative framework has the challenge of binding subject-related action plans and attitudes (Habermas, 1992, 1997). Participants can reflect on norms when they start losing validity and revise if they encompass collective interests. If norms do not reflect collective interests, the normative framework might need to be updated. The normative framework is a formalized instrument that can be updated by participants to assure that it is intersubjectively recognized.

Fourth, the three examples above also demonstrate that participants’ capacity to reflect and change the normative framework varies depending on the type of norm. In the case of the normative framework that regulated the collaborative governance setting, participants could intersubjectively assess norms and also change them. On the other hand, participants did not

have the same influence on regulations concerning the policy problem. For example, they did not have influence on changing the Emission Control Act or police procedures. They could reflect on the rightness of applying these norms to solve the problems on Admiralbrücke, but they could not change them.

All in all, this analysis supports the notion presented in communicative action theory that participants who act communicatively can reflect on the rightness of normative frameworks. Communicative action is thus different from normative-directed action. In normative-directed action participants principally orient their actions towards fulfilment or non-fulfilment of the norm, whereas in communicative action they are also able to reflect on the norm in order to try to reach an intersubjective understanding (Habermas, 2002). Thus, the social world can be evaluated in two directions:

“In one direction the question is whether the motives and actions of an agent are in accord with existing norms or deviate from these. In the other direction the question is whether the existing norms themselves embody values that, in a particular problem situation, give expression to generalizable interests of those affected and thus deserve the assent of those to whom they are addressed” (Habermas, 2002, p. 89).

In one direction, the social world guides and constrains actions. Norms impose obligations and provide information to decide what to do. As a result, the normative context is the point of departure for the fulfilment of normative regulated expectations. Participants must know the normative context, because it explains why a participant is authorized, has the obligation, or is expected to perform a certain action. In this direction, participants act rationally when they are able to justify actions in relation to normative contexts. In the other direction, norms can be intersubjectively assessed as valid or invalid. Participants engage in moral argumentation because they presuppose that consensus among participants can be achieved and that the normative framework can be generally recognized. When it is intersubjectively recognized, this shared normative framework is legitimized and can function in the direction of assessing participant's actions. Thus, claims to rightness have a similar function in the normative world as claims to truth do in the objective world. Normative claims can also be discursively expressed, and speech acts can be oriented towards normative understanding (Habermas, 1995, 1997, 2002). In that case, actions and norms are the topics of discussion. Participants can intersubjectively assess if an action is normatively right and if a norm is valid for implementation in a specific action situation.

Regulating social interactions in a group can take time and a significant dedication from participants. Participants in collaborative governance settings must be aware of several challenges. Often collaborative processes are time and budget constrained as the Admiralbrücke collaborative process has demonstrated. Besides, participants have the challenge to have to come to an understanding on a normative framework that embodies heterogeneous and sometimes opposing individual values. Furthermore, they have to apply this normative framework to specific problem situations, which might result in having to reassess and redevelop norms. Lastly, and most importantly, they must know that they are not participating in a process regulated by only a few appointed participants, such as mediators. All participants bear the responsibility for monitoring the collaborative process. In such a context, reflecting on normative frameworks is often necessary in order to move the collaborative process forward collectively.

Conclusion

The data analysis indicates that the characteristics of each type of knowledge influence the process of reaching a consensus differently. First, concerning the subjective world, participants cannot make the desires and emotions of other participants their own because this knowledge belongs to the domain of subjective experiences. Nonetheless, acting communicatively can contribute to reaching an understanding on the validity of knowledge related to subjective desires and emotions. Second, regarding the objective world, participants in collaborative governance processes might need to gather actor-independent motives to be able to reach an understanding on facts. For example, they can apply the scientific-method or carry out individual observations to gather knowledge relating to different topics. On the other hand, the analysis of data has also demonstrated that even when knowledge gaps exist, participants are able to use the available knowledge to cope with the present problem situation. Results show that the validity of knowledge related to facts, whether obtained through objective methods or subjective experiences, depends on its degree of acceptance among participants. Finally, with regard to the normative world, participants that act communicatively can reflect on actions and norms and try to reach a consensus on their validity. The results of the analysis indicate that in collaborative governance processes it is crucial that participants reflect on the norms that regulate the collaborative governance setting and the policy problem, and that they try to adapt normative frameworks to specific action situations. All in all, separating knowledge into the three worlds has allowed developing

several analytical conceptualizations regarding how participants gather, share, and assess knowledge.

The data analysis has also shown that when participants opt for strategic action, they put the collaborative nature of the process at risk, because actions that aim to achieve egocentric objectives do not seek to reach an intersubjective understanding. Therefore, strategic action must be controlled or mitigated to a certain extent if participants want to preserve the nature of the collaborative process. On the other hand, participants in collaborative governance settings can opt for acting communicatively in order to reach a consensus. In such a case, their actions are in accordance with the consensus-based nature of the process. When participants strive for consensus, they can share and intersubjectively assess knowledge embedded in subjective, objective, and normative worlds. As a result, participants incorporate valid knowledge in the total stock of knowledge they have available to try to solve problems collectively.

6. Data Analysis: Part 2. Developing Collective Solutions

“I always think that the psychological part is actually the most important. When blockades exist, so to say, then it does not work. [...] it seemed that the immediate neighbours agreed to a compromise solution, and in the end moved away from it because they feared maybe that it was too disadvantageous for them” (Neighbour 3, individual interview, August 2, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹

Participants in the negotiation rounds were involved in a problem-solving situation, in which they had to collectively define problems and make decisions concerning proposals for solutions. They defined problems collectively by gathering knowledge from various sources and assessing and incorporating this knowledge into the whole definition of the action situation. Even when positions were opposed, the heterogeneity of positions was included in the definition of problems. Besides, they also brought together several proposals to try to solve the problems. Nonetheless, as mentioned previously, participants did not collectively endorse the proposals developed because they had opposing desires and emotions and were not able to find a compromise. The only collective decision they could make was establishing that Admiralbrücke was not a place to organize events, which, as noted earlier, was irrelevant to solving the main problems. They could not make any decision that allowed them to tackle the real problems on the bridge. The collaborative process needed participants to overcome individual desires and emotions in favour of developing collective solutions, and not all participants were ready to do so.

This chapter explores the various processes and actions that affected the development of collective solutions in the negotiation rounds. First, empirical data is used to analyse how participants collectively defined problems. Next, situations in which participants had to make decisions on proposals are examined. Lastly, the influence that individual desires and emotion had on endorsing or rejecting proposals is analysed. Events occurring in the negotiation rounds shed light on the opportunities and constraints that communicative action applied in collaborative governance settings offers for developing collective solutions to policy problems.

6.1. Defining Problems

“[...] there is nothing more beautiful than debates between people, but there is also nothing more difficult” (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²

Collectively defining problems was a first step in the solution developing process. In order to collectively define problems, participants listened to the different interpretations. As explained previously, the negotiation rounds revealed participants' different positions. For example, interviewees and mediation reports confirm that the burden that some neighbours had carried during the last years was discussed in detail in the negotiation rounds. During the process, neighbours could exchange knowledge on sub-problems, and so get a deeper understanding of the different positions grew during the process (Streit Entknoten, 2011). As a result, the definitions of problems included the different interpretations.

The minutes of every meeting are a proof of participants' commitment to collectively defining problems. These minutes were kept, and written up by the mediation team. Afterwards, they were sent to participants for their perusal, and in the following meeting they were discussed until participants reached an agreement on the contents. Corrections often had to be made. As one interviewee explained, “it was just that things were also wrongly written in the minutes, and we were always busy, definitely half an hour, to, in principle, correct it” (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).³ Thus, participants spent time writing down collective definitions of problems. The minutes included definitions related to both the policy problem and the collaborative setting. When participants' definitions were divergent, this was written down in the minutes, and so they were a summary of collectively made definitions of problems. As stated by one participant, “The minutes were there. Whoever read them knew the state of affairs” (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁴

Rational statements were included in the whole definition of problems. Participants could assess statements and the knowledge embedded in them as rational, even if participants' motives for claiming that the statement was rational were different. Thus, participants agreed that specific definitions were part of the whole problem. Consequently, the whole definition of the action situation included several specific definitions that, although not agreed on by all participants for the same motives, could be rationally accepted and understood. Even refused proposals for solutions could be included in the whole definition of

the problem. Participants learned that there were different ways of interpreting the Admiralbrücke problems and that all these different interpretations were part of the whole definition of the problem. The resulting intersubjective understanding of the whole action situation existed regardless of whether participants agreed with other participants' views or not. Thus, agreements as well as disagreements were incorporated in the whole definition of the action situation.

The tasks performed by participants to collectively define problems are an example of communication action in practice. Participants who act communicatively can accept the rationality of a statement without having to reach a consensus on the validity of the statement for the same reasons. In such a case, there is no consensus, because reaching consensus requires the speaker and hearer to accept a validity claim for the same motives, yet, an understanding has been reached. An understanding can be reached once the hearer sees that the speaker's reasons or grounds are sound. The hearer can accept the reasons given by the speaker for being rational, without making them his or her own reasons (Habermas, 1997). In communicative action participants have the task of incorporating other participants' interpretations into their own to the extent that definitions of the action situation are coincident enough (Habermas, 1989, 2002).

Participants in the negotiation rounds had to spend time explaining the reasons why they hold certain positions and interpreted problems in a certain way. Since positions and interpretations regarding the policy problem often differed in the negotiation rounds, participants had to discuss and elaborate on the different topics in detail until they could be understood by all participants and the resulting collective interpretation could be incorporated in the whole definition of the action situation. These events coincide with the notion provided by communicative action theory that to understand a speech act, it is necessary to know the reasons that make the speaker claim validity for what is said (Habermas, 1997). "Know that" is related to "know why" (Habermas, 1999). By adding content to the proposition the hearer can share this knowledge with the speaker (Habermas, 1991a). As interviewees' statements and reports indicate, when participants in the negotiation rounds acted communicatively, they were able to reach an understanding on how to define problems. In contrast, when participants did not act communicatively, disturbances in the collaborative process emerged. As mentioned earlier, when some participants broke the norms of participation and interaction, they had more difficulties communicating and reaching an understanding.

Participants in the negotiation rounds achieved a first stage in the process of developing collective solutions: They could define problems collectively. These results show that communicative action contributes to creating the stock of knowledge that allows participants to collectively define action situations. At first glance, developing collective definitions of problems might not appear to be the best outcome of an investment in collaborative governance. A more desired result would be for participants to be able to make decisions and produce tangible agreements. Nevertheless, taking into consideration that several participants in the negotiation rounds were not ready to reach a compromise, collectively defining the problems can already be interpreted as a successful outcome of the process, because, as identified previously, the conflict was reduced, and public institutions could use the knowledge generated to implement their own conceived measures.

6.2. Making Decisions

“In these negotiation rounds we had to essentially decide things that were supported by all participants, hence, no majority principle or so. Therefore, nobody could be outvoted, but a consensus among everybody should be obtained. But, of course, the problem of this process is also, precisely, that a single person suffices to block decisions. If one says, ‘no, I do not want this’, then it does not work. Of course, this can completely thwart a process like this because it somehow comes to nothing. And this is precisely what happened in this process—the immediate neighbours were finally not ready for compromises [...]” (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X).⁵

All things considered, public institutions opted for collaborative governance in order to include citizens in the policy-making process. As explained earlier, public institutions used resources to support the implementation of a mediation process and to provide a space for citizens to hold discussions and make decisions on the policy problem and the collaborative setting. Including relevant stakeholders in the policy-making process could give the necessary legitimacy to authorities for implementing agreed solutions. As long as decisions were made in agreement and were compatible with current normative frameworks, these decisions would be accepted by public institutions. If agreements were not met, then the district government would have to decide what to do, as the following statement shows:

“[...] I have it so understood, that in all these rounds, where there is consensus, that is good, they can do it. Where there is no consensus, I have to see how I handle it. Or, we, in the District Office, then have to consider, does this have to happen? Does it make sense? Does it not make sense? Do we have to decide

against some of the interests, particular ones?” (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁶

As stated previously, during the negotiation rounds participants could reach agreements regarding the collaborative setting, but they disagreed on the measures to solve the main policy problem: noise during the day and at night.

Public institutions played a crucial role in gathering proposals. As explained by the representative of the district office,

“[...] the authorities were rather the sector that, so to speak, provided service and information. For example, Berlin’s Waste Management Service gave information about how city cleaning works and what they can do to reduce waste. There were then underground containers installed, which were relevant for waste disposal; the economic sector, or my sector, clarified what business can do, for instance, how we can better come together with them; then, the office for green areas said what we can do to keep the green areas in the surroundings clean; and the civil engineering office, and then the public order office, and then the environmental office with the noise measurement. In this way we must imagine it. And then, police said, what we can do. Everybody came together, without someone saying now, ‘wait, this is now the direction, I order this now’” (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁷

The representatives of public offices presented several concepts for solving the problems around Admiralbrücke and also listened and included the interests of neighbours in these concepts (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Furthermore, public institutions also had to provide their services and make norms comply during the time participants were trying to find agreed solutions. Therefore, they started implementing measures, even if these measures were not collectively decided in the negotiation rounds. District government and police acted pragmatically with the knowledge they had available. As noted earlier, these measures focused on solving the two main problems: litter and preserving night’s rest after 10 pm.

The measures had a different degree of acceptance among participants. In regard to litter and cleanliness, it was evident that all stakeholders wanted the bridge and its surroundings to be clean. As explained by the representative of the district government, “there was always an agreement which said, ‘we want to have less litter there. Something must happen there’” (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁸ The measures of the Waste Management Service, such as the increase in the cleaning frequency or the installation of waste bins with underground containers, were appropriate to solve the problem, and therefore were implemented without having to be approved through explicit agreements between participants. These proposals did not create controversy. On the other hand, the problem and the measures conceived regarding how to

preserve night's rest did create controversy and, therefore, participants had to try to find alternative solutions that could be endorsed by all participants. It was regarding the problem of noise that participants had to perform the collective task of deciding what measures had to be implemented.

In the meanwhile, as mentioned previously with reference to the discussion on public offices and services applying their own measures, police and district government agreed on implementing police action on Admiralbrücke until participants found another solution to solve the noise problem. Police presence had several positive effects. Thanks to the intervention of police, neighbours could have more peaceful nights. Besides, it reduced the conflict between neighbours and people gathering on the bridge because police action was not violently exerted, on the contrary, policemen requested visitors to leave the bridge in a friendly way and this was in general accepted by the people gathering on the bridge. Police documented only one case during the summer of 2010 in which a group of people opposed resistance and more officers had to be sent to the bridge. On the whole, police positively evaluated the reaction of the people gathering on the bridge (Streit Entknoten, 2010c). Most of the people gathering on the bridge were peaceful people which only wanted to enjoy the warm evenings and the atmosphere of this public space.

Nevertheless, in the negotiation rounds it was made clear that taking police action was a temporary solution. The police themselves stated that this measure was temporary and hoped that a long term solution would be found (Streit Entknoten, 2010c). The district government had the same understanding. As the representative of this institution explained, the capacity of police was limited, and having a police car at the bridge every night from 10 pm to 2 am was a privilege. Moreover, this measure was against the interests of the neighbourhood centre, whose representative explained: "in district work, we hold the stance that people look for solutions together in meetings, in negotiation processes, and that they do not simply call for police and law and order in the first place, but that they design neighbourhoods" (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).⁹ Furthermore, police action did not completely solve the noise problem in the neighbourhood, because when people were asked to leave the bridge, they sometimes moved to the nearby streets and continued partying (Streit Entknoten, 2010a). This solution did not even completely fulfil the expectations of the Admiralkiez Action Group, which, as mentioned previously, wanted silence, not only at night, but also during the day, and advocated remodelling the bridge deck to avoid people gathering there. All things considered, although

police action solved the noise problems at night substantially, it did not satisfy the expectations of the majority of participants.

For different motives, all stakeholders wanted to find alternative solutions. Therefore, the noise problem became the most important topic of discussion in the negotiation rounds. Participants invested a lot of time in finding alternatives to police action that could eradicate noise disturbance and, at the same time, maintain a certain amount of cultural activity on the bridge. As the interviewees explained, several participants in the negotiation rounds were in favour of finding creative solutions in order to avoid having to resort to police action. For example, one participant explained: “[...] these are intelligent people who sit on the bridge. If one conveys the right thing with funny signboards or, like I said, with a kind of international display, or [...] that in the end a tune is played that everyone recognizes and knows, ‘Aha! When we hear the tune, we step down from the bridge’” (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁰ As described previously, the contest for ideas was also organized with the purpose of gathering further proposals that could be approved and developed in the negotiation rounds. All these ideas from within the collaborative governance setting and from external actors were brought to the negotiation rounds to try to find alternatives to police action. Nonetheless, neither the alternatives proposed by stakeholders, nor the ideas gathered in the contest found the agreement of participants.

Most of the interviewees stated that participants could not reach an agreement because Admiralkiez Initiative members did not allow it. Interviewees explained that these participants blocked negotiations regarding solutions that were not in line with their predefined ones. In the first negotiation round, participants agreed that the process would have the following aims: to review previous proposals, specify ideas, and develop approaches to find solutions (Streit Entknoten, 2010a). The mediation team recorded this agreement in the minutes, and these were then assessed and approved by all participants. Nevertheless, the members of the Admiralkiez Action Group who had started participating later in the negotiation rounds were completely against listening to alternative solutions. According to interviewees, every idea to solve the problem was blocked and highly criticized before it could be discussed or developed. As stated by one participant, the Action Group members “[...] basically hampered the mediation process through their truly offensive attitude. We did not negotiate anymore” (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹¹ Several interviewees interpreted this behaviour as a strategy for achieving individual aims. For example, one participant explained:

“When they probably had to recognize, or maybe already knew, that their viewpoints and perceptions had actually no chances of a majority in a democratic vote in the neighbourhood, then, the tactic was probably subconsciously, or actually consciously more probably, better a failed process than a consensus which is too far away from the relative one-side position supported” (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹²

Many actions of these participants did not aim at reaching a consensus, but at achieving individual aims. Therefore, their actions were highly criticized by most of the interviewees.

Almost all participants understood that the negotiation rounds had the purpose of looking for collective solutions and would have liked that all participants to pursue this objective. As stated by one participant, “in the process one should have recognized [...] that people who do not want to reach a consensus could not participate in perpetuity at all” (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹³ On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, the collaborative process aimed to include all relevant stakeholders. The Admiralkiez Action Group members could also legitimately participate in the decision-making process, and they could not be forced to endorse a collective decision. Measures could not be imposed over these participants. Not even mediators could force participants to decide, as explained by one interviewee,

“the mediators, absolutely pragmatically speaking, behaviouristic, have above all the task of intermediating and establishing what works. If tension arises, if it does not work after all, what else shall they? What shall they do? [...] They cannot say, ‘You must decide now’. If they realize that it does not work, then they have to end it” (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁴

Naturally, each group believed that their solutions were the most rational ones, but they could not impose them over the other participants. Neither the group against people gathering on the bridge could impose their ideas, nor could the group in favour of developing creative solutions impose theirs.

Most of the neighbours interviewed affirmed that the collaborative process had not worked with regard to making collective decisions on the policy problem. As stated by one neighbour, “I also think that the result actually shows that it did not work, because it is now solved by police and not through an agreement between parties” (Neighbour 3, individual interview, August 2, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁵ This result was interpreted by several participants as a failure, because they had invested a lot of time and resources and a compromise solution was not found. At the end of the process, some neighbours even distanced themselves from the results achieved in the negotiation rounds. They signed a letter

explaining that they had wanted to find alternatives to police action but it had not been possible because some of the affected neighbours did not want to, as explained by one of the neighbours:

“With ten to eleven people we have namely stepped out from the whole thing in the end because the purpose of the mediation could not be carried out, according to our opinion, just because the affected neighbours did not appreciate the opportunity to solve the whole thing through creative proposals in another way than currently with the police” (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁶

Nevertheless, even if participants were not able to reach an agreement, most of them were satisfied with having had the opportunity to participate in the mediation process. The following statement exemplifies this satisfaction: “Well, I would at any time participate again in a mediation process, whether now on the bridge, or somewhere else” (Neighbour 1, individual interview, July 31, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁷ Other interviewees made similar statements. For example, another interviewee stated: “Had there been a second mediation, I would have stepped in, definitely.” (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).¹⁸ More proof that participants valued the mediation was that they kept up their motivation to participate throughout the process and regularly attended the negotiation rounds (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Several interviewees praised other outcomes such as being able to share knowledge and create ties between stakeholders. They positively evaluated the mediation process as a method for solving the problems in the neighbourhood. Even if collective solutions were not agreed, participants had the opportunity to understand problems and elaborate proposals. They acquired a significant amount of knowledge and this outcome was valued by all interviewees.

From the data analysis, several conclusions can be drawn regarding making collective decisions. First, participants do not need to make collective decisions about all possible actions, whether these actions are related to the collaborative governance setting or to the policy problem. Proposals that had a high degree of acceptance, such as inviting experts to the negotiation rounds or increasing the frequency of cleaning, did not need to be explicitly agreed between participants, it was sufficient that nobody disagreed when the action was presented. On the other hand, when participants had differing and opposing wants and proposals where controversial, they were asked to find a compromise endorsed by everyone. The case study shows that participants select which actions need to be decided collectively and which do not.

Second, the obligation to collectively decide how to act is different when the object is the collaborative governance setting than if it is the policy problem. As the analysis demonstrates, participants need to make explicit agreements regarding the setting if they want to move the collaborative process forward. For example, they have to collectively establish objectives and norms of participation and interaction. In contrast, participants have no obligation to make collective decisions regarding the policy problem. Participants might disagree on topics related to the policy problem and, in spite of there being disagreements, the collaborative governance process might continue, because participants value other outcomes of the process or hope that agreements might emerge in the future. Thus, whereas making collective decisions regarding the policy problem is not indispensable for the collaborative process to move forward, certain collective decisions related to the setting are necessary.

Third, and most important for answering the research questions of this study, communicative action in collaborative governance offers an opportunity to enhance the stock of knowledge that participants have available to make decisions, but there is no guarantee that collective decisions are made. Participants in the negotiation rounds gathered knowledge from various sources and incorporated it in the total stock of knowledge available to interpret problems and make decisions. In spite of this, participants could not find a compromise solution. A similar result was also found in a case study of collaborative governance between the Netherlands and Flanders. One of the conclusions of this research was that while including knowledge from different actors can deliver a joint knowledge base, it cannot be assured that participants reach a consensus about how to act to solve the policy problem. Sharing knowledge facilitates negotiation between participants, but it does not guarantee a successful outcome of this negotiation (Buuren, 2009).

Combining the concepts of “incrementalism” (Lindblom, 1959, 1979) and “satisficing” (Simon, 1956, 1972) in governance, as suggested by Sofield (2009), can cast further light on the opportunities and limitations of collaborative decision-making in the public sphere. First, Lindblom (1959) indicates that policy-makers have two methods for policy development: the first entails applying the rational method in order to develop the policy that maximizes the outcome; the second involves relying on past experiences, acquiring empirical knowledge, and introducing small changes incrementally. Lindblom observes that the second is the most used in practice. Incrementalism advocates solving complex problems by degrees, which does not necessarily mean proceeding slowly—small changes can also be introduced at a fast

pace—or in a conservative way, but rather developing policies in a way that can be comprehensible and accepted by those affected. Thus, incrementalism can provide additional insights to study consensus-building processes where several participants gradually move the dialogue forward until an intersubjective understanding is achieved. As noted earlier, the outcomes of this consensus-based dialogue, which necessarily proceeds incrementally, are highly valuable. As Lindblom (1979) notices, “social problems can often be attacked [...] by ‘resultants’ of interaction rather than ‘decisions’ arising out of anyone’s understanding of the problem at hand” (p. 524). These resultants of interactions were very relevant for solving the problems in the case of Admiralbrücke. As outlined previously with reference to the outcomes of the mediation process, public offices implemented certain measures with the knowledge acquired in the interactions with stakeholders. The Admiralbrücke case shows that adopting an incrementalist approach is especially suitable for tackling complex social problems, in which stakeholders have different and opposing values and goals. As indicated earlier, all stakeholders participating in the negotiation rounds wanted to solve the noise problems, but they disagreed on sub-goals. Even if these sub-goals were communicated, there was room for disagreement. Therefore, the district government opted for implementing incremental changes rather than applying a radical solution that would have satisfied some stakeholders but displeased others. As Lindblom (1959) observes, in situations of disagreement, the policy-maker has to choose the policy that has the potential to be more comprehensible and accepted. This can be achieved by involving stakeholders in the policy-making process and applying incremental steps that solve problems gradually.

Second, Simon (1956, 1972) proves that decision-making processes are framed in “bounded rationality”, and thus, in practice, decisions are made to “satisfice” rather than “optimize” the outcome. For Simon, rational choice, as presented in the models of rational behaviour, is an unrealistic expectation, because the capacity of individuals to process information is limited. In fact, individuals choose the solution that best satisfies needs, as it is suggested in learning theories. Especially, when the choice has to be made among multiple goals, the degree of complexity increases, and individuals have to choose the alternative that has a higher potential to satisfy the needs of those involved in a specific problem situation. This invariably implies that individuals cannot realistically elaborate mechanisms for choosing between different needs, as each new problem situation presents a new setting and needs. The satisficing approach looks for a satisfactory solution in a given real-world situation rather than for the optimal solution. This approach enables decision-making to be

interpreted from a pragmatic perspective. Since the optimal solution, i.e. the solution that maximizes value, cannot be found in realistic circumstances, participants have to look for a solution that reaches the greatest degree of consensus. This is what policy-makers in the Admiralbrücke case did. As explained previously, in view of a situation of disagreement, they assessed the different needs and presented proposals that could satisfy them to a certain extent.

The case study evidences that while collaborative governance processes aim to develop collective solutions, this outcome might not be achieved. Opting for collaborative governance entails gathering knowledge from various sources in order to understand problems and elaborate proposals. Acting communicatively contributes to intersubjectively creating the stock of knowledge available to develop proposals. Nevertheless, there is no guarantee that participants endorse proposals. They can always reject them on individual grounds. As seen in the Admiralbrücke case, it can be very difficult, or even impossible, for participants to accept proposals that do not satisfy their individual desires and emotions. When desires and emotions are opposed, making collective decisions about how to act can be a very challenging task for participants. Participants in collaborative governance settings must be aware that the optimal solution that satisfies all interests might not exist, and that they might have to opt for an incremental solution that at least partly satisfies the needs of a majority of stakeholders.

6.3. Overcoming Desires and Emotions

“The share of neighbours in favour of an acceptable amount of neighbourhood-culture on the bridge speaks for taking over the responsibility by neighbours and local actors. The other part fears that through the active endorsement of people as well as neighbourhood-life on the bridge the attractiveness of the bridge will increase, thereby jeopardizing quietness both night and day. Action and control by neighbours and actors were not supported by them”¹⁹ (Streit Entknoten, 2011).

Participants had nine negotiation meetings within four months to find agreed solutions for regulating the activities on the bridge in such a way that the desires of all stakeholders could be satisfied to a certain extent. If proposals could not completely satisfy the interests of all stakeholders, participants expected at least to reach a compromise solution. During the negotiation rounds, participants were able to develop proposals. However, as mentioned

previously, they could not collectively endorse any of them. Some participants could not overcome individual desires and emotions and compromise solutions were not found.

Several stakeholders acted as facilitators and tried that participants came together to develop collective solutions. First, representatives of public institutions assisted neighbours in evaluating what was possible to implement in order to solve the Admiralbrücke problems. They used their authority and responsibility to evaluate if specific actions could be implemented taking current normative frameworks into consideration. Then, the mediation team created the conditions for participants to interact. As one of the mediators explained:

“As mediators, we are responsible for structures and framework conditions. [...] We just say how much time we can envisage. We first plan how people sit, who moderates, who writes the minutes. Well, we do all this. And what is also important [...] for the togetherness” (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁰

Mediators guided participants in the negotiation rounds and played a neutral role in decision-making regarding the policy problem. In addition, several neighbours also tried to combine the different interests in order to develop proposals that could be accepted by all participants. These participants contributed to developing proposals that included the interests of all stakeholders to a certain extent, but opposing desires and emotions made it impossible to reach a collective decision.

As indicated previously, residents maintained two completely different positions during the negotiation rounds. One group wanted to keep a certain amount of activity and reduce noise at night through measures proposed and managed by neighbours. These neighbours wanted to keep the life on the bridge during the day, because it was part of the neighbourhood culture (Streit Entknoten, 2011). As stated by one participant,

“there were thus many here, including me, who are not directly affected, but actually said, ‘we want a regulated form of life on the bridge’. That is, something ought to take place, well, also culturally. This is actually nice and desirable, yet in a form that it is also tolerable for the immediate neighbours. And among other things, that was searched for in that mediation negotiation” (Neighbour 3, individual interview, August 2, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²¹

These participants wanted to find a solution that matched Berlin’s and the neighbourhood’s culture, some measure that could satisfy the interests of both users and neighbours. As a matter of fact, these participants wanted to find solutions that were in the interest of all affected stakeholders to some degree.

In contrast, as noted earlier, the other group of neighbours did not want any people gathering on the bridge. As one interviewee explained, the Action Group members “[...] only said, ‘we want everything to stop’, they actually wanted nothing at all to take place there, so to say” (Neighbour 3, individual interview, August 2, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²² The Admiralkiez Action Group wanted the same thing throughout the process: the bridge to be used as a route for pedestrians, cyclists, and cars so that people could not gather there (Streit Entknoten, 2011). Even if it was clear that the current conditions made it impossible to remodel the deck of the bridge, they refused to change their request during the process.

Most interviewees explained that the representatives of the Admiralkiez Action Group were not ready to find compromise solutions which could satisfy the interests of all participants to some extent. Although the suggestion to implement a mediation process came from this group of neighbours, their actions during the negotiation rounds demonstrated that they were not ready to accept proposals for solutions that deviated from their preconceptions. For the members of the Action Group the same collaborative process became a problem because the interests of other stakeholders, which were completely different from their own, were presented in the negotiation rounds, and had to be taken into consideration when developing policies. The representative of one of the public offices commented:

“[...] the radical immediate neighbours noticed, ‘my goodness, the interests of the tourists, the interests of the street musicians, the interests of those, who want to party there, this was seriously taken here, this will also be listened to here, this eventually leads to it, that they might be even [...] given the right and the possibility to establish themselves here forever and ever’. And this still led to a stronger radicalization of these group of neighbours” (Public officer 2, individual interview, July 26, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²³

Participants in the negotiation rounds ostensibly tackled the problems of the neighbours affected. Nonetheless, participants approached these problems by taking the interests of all stakeholders into consideration, and this was precisely what the Admiralkiez Action Group could not accept. Consequently, the mediation process could not satisfy the aims of the Action Group, which, as it turned out, wanted to solve the policy problem in a very specific way without including the interests of all stakeholders.

Interviewees mentioned that discussions in the negotiation rounds brought to light the reason why the members of the Admiralkiez Action Group could not overcome individual desires and emotions and accept compromise solutions. As explained by one interviewee,

“they were just ideas, but the neighbours’ action group, representatives from it, had such a fear that these ideas, that were black and white, were also

implemented. And because they could not discuss it and negotiate it anymore, they blocked everything. This means, fear, fear played a really big role” (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁴

Similarly, another participant indicated that, “maybe people’s sensitivity and subjective experiences were too strongly affected [...]” (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁵ As earlier indicated, this group of immediate neighbours had suffered noise disturbance for years. Their life had been negatively affected all these years by the noise that the people gathering on the bridge created. As stated by one of the affected neighbours,

“this is simply a problem in that really extreme needs collide here, and also lives are threatened with it. For instance, from our side I know many people that were in the citizens’ action group that then moved away because they could simply not bear it anymore” (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011, transl. Palomares-Cano, X.).²⁶

The personal lives of these neighbours were affected to such an extent that they could not agree on measures that would go against their predefined ones. In order to be able to develop collective solutions, these affected neighbours would have had to overcome individual desires and emotions to a certain extent. Nonetheless, since desires and emotions were deeply rooted and strongly opposed among participants, they were not able to find a compromise.

In general, participants in the negotiation rounds could develop a profound understanding for the desires and emotions of other participants. They could also elaborate proposals that included these desires to a certain extent. Nevertheless, they were not able to collectively endorse the developed proposals. When desires and emotions are opposed, participants are required to find compromises. They have to overcome certain individual desires and emotions in favour of finding a collective solution. This collective endeavour might be difficult to undertake for some participants, as events in the negotiation rounds demonstrate.

Conclusion

The case study evidences that as long as participants in collaborative governance processes are capable of both defending their convictions on reasonable grounds and of learning to understand the actions of other participants, communicative action contributes to the intersubjective definition of problems. The problems originated by the activities on the bridge were complex enough to have to bring stakeholders together. Neighbours for and against the

activities on the bridge, experts from several public institutions, and a mediation team participated in a process which aimed to understand problems and look for solutions. Including different representatives in the negotiation rounds prompted similarities and differences among participants to emerge. When participants acted communicatively, they could reach an understanding on the different positions and collectively define problems.

On the other hand, stakeholders do not only participate in collaborative governance processes to define problems collectively. They also have to make collective decisions regarding measures to solve the policy problem. Nevertheless, the analysis shows that while it is rational to ask participants to try to reach a compromise and develop collective solutions, this outcome cannot be guaranteed, because collaborative governance processes are non-coercive, and proposals can be refused if they do not satisfy participants' wants. When participants act communicatively, they have an opportunity to develop collective definitions of problems that include the heterogeneity of knowledge available, but they cannot be forced to endorse proposals. Participants can at most be invited to keep the dialogue in order to try to find a compromise, which necessarily entails investing time and other resources, without any guarantee that an agreement will be found in the end. Developing collective solutions in collaborative governance settings, where interests are opposed, depends on the participants' ability to overcome individual desires and emotions.

These results bring to light the two types of outcomes explored in this dissertation. First, the possibility that communicative action offers for participants in collaborative governance settings to create knowledge and understand problems in all their complexity. Second, the opportunity that acting communicatively provides to develop proposals that include the wants of different participants. When participants act communicatively and strive for consensus, they can move forward in the collective definition of problems and use the knowledge created to develop proposals. However, acting communicatively does not guarantee that all participants endorse the proposals developed. Reaching an understanding on the fact that there is disagreement among participants is also a possible outcome in collaborative governance processes.

7. Discussion: Shaping Collaborative Governance through Communicative Action

The data analysis has provided evidence to establish that communicative action contributes to the intersubjective creation of knowledge, which can be used to collectively define problems and develop proposals for solutions. Moreover, the results have also shown that collective decision-making in situations where stakeholders have opposing interests depends on the participants' ability to negotiate solutions and make concessions.

This chapter connects these findings with other relevant concepts provided by the literature on collaborative governance and communicative action in order to broaden the discussion on how communicative action can shape collaborative governance processes. The chapter examines several topics related to the two main research questions. First, the results indicate that there is one type of consensus which creates valid knowledge and another type that produces collective decisions. Accordingly, the first section of this chapter presents a proposal to differentiate between two types of consensus: “communicative consensus” and “consensus on decisions”. This differentiation facilitates the discussion on how communicative action contributes to creating knowledge and making collective decisions. The second section focuses on how communicative action can facilitate the diffusion of knowledge in highly heterogeneous structures such as collaborative governance settings, where participants with different backgrounds might find communicating with each other a challenge but also show a high potential for knowledge creation. The third section addresses the problem of how stakeholders' goals affect making collective decisions. Instead of focusing on the subjective desires and emotions of participants, the discussion is centred on the stakeholders' goals in relation to the policy problem and the collaborative governance process. This section also discusses how communicative action can contribute to gathering knowledge on goals to elaborate proposals that are compatible with them. Having provided several analytical conceptualizations related to the two research questions, the chapter ends with a reflection on the opportunities and constraints that communicative action offers to both participants in collaborative governance settings and scholars interested in studying collaborative governance processes. This last section reviews various theoretical frameworks for studying collaborative governance and discusses the possibilities that communicative action theory offers for the study and practice of this policy-making method.

7.1. Differentiating Two Types of Consensus

As the case study has shown, participants in collaborative governance processes pursue two objectives: reaching an understanding on problems and making collective decisions on how to solve them. Regarding the second objective, a consensus-based decision-making process requires negotiating solutions that satisfy participants' interests. However, if the focus is only placed on reaching agreements about solutions, then participants might select the strategy that achieves this aim best, and which may not necessarily involve acting communicatively. Participants act communicatively because they want to reach an understanding on the validity of the knowledge they use to understand and solve problems. In this type of consensus, as previously mentioned, knowledge is assessed for its sincerity, rationality, and normative rightness, and not for its capacity to satisfy individual interests, although, naturally, individual interests are embedded in the actions of participants and can also be selected as a topic of discussion. In this context, it is convenient to differentiate between two types of consensus.

The literature reviewed on collaborative governance uses the term "consensus" to refer to both reaching an understanding and making collective decisions. In general, these two meanings are not explicitly differentiated and an analytical exercise must be made in order to discern what type of consensus is being dealt with. Frequently, the literature relates consensus-based processes to the concept of reaching an understanding on positions. Even scholars that do not explicitly look through the lens of communicative action theory, emphasize this objective. For example, Buuren (2009) indicates that a consensus-based process has the objective of reaching an understanding on problems and solutions, and Emerson et al. (2012) highlight that even if participants do not share interests and positions, in a consensus-based process they aim at understanding each other, which entails respecting the positions and interests of other participants, so that a mutual understanding can be achieved. In addition to this meaning, the literature also uses the term consensus to define the outcome achieved when decisions are made in agreement (see e.g., Bentrup, 2001; Buuren, 2009; Doberstein, 2015). After deliberation, decisions are made by consensus (Doberstein, 2015). Since both meanings are important for studying collaborative governance, it is relevant to differentiate them.

This can be done by separating the two types of consensus into two categories, each one belonging to a specific theoretical framework. The meaning of the first type of consensus

corresponds to the concept provided by communicative action theory, which in this dissertation has often been called “communicative consensus”. The second type of consensus appears in the collaborative governance literature when emphasis is placed on making collective decisions. This second type of consensus can be called “consensus on decisions”.

First, as mentioned previously, in communicative action theory consensus entails reaching an intersubjective understanding on the speech act. The object assessed is the speech act, including the knowledge embedded in it. Therefore, participants can only reach a communicative consensus on speech acts. Consensus exists when participants intersubjectively assess a speech act as being sincere, true, and right for the same motives (Habermas, 1989, 2002). In other words, the speech act has certain qualities, and consensus exists because these qualities are assessed equally by all participants.

The scope of communicative consensus is limited to the action situation in which the speech act takes place. Consensus lasts while the speech act is performed and all participants reach an intersubjective understanding of it. Communicative consensus is rather momentary. Knowledge that was collectively assessed as valid is tested again when it is used in a new action situation. In this way, striving for communicative consensus contributes to intersubjectively updating the validity of knowledge. It allows knowledge to be adapted to specific action situations. Furthermore, this type of consensus must not be made explicit. The acceptance of valid knowledge is demonstrated by incorporating this knowledge to the total stock of knowledge that participants use to act.

When this theoretical construct is put into practice it has the limitation that neither participants nor observers can prove if communicative consensus has been reached or not. In the Admiralbrücke negotiation rounds, for example, it could not be completely guaranteed that all participants accepted knowledge as valid for the same motives. In a collaborative governance process with more than twenty participants it cannot be known with certainty if communicative consensus is achieved. Consensus on the validity of knowledge is tested with every speech act, and discussions include both consensus and dissent. As Habermas (Habermas, 1999, 2002) points out, consensus is ambiguous, unstable, and diffuse. Thus, in collaborative governance settings participants with heterogeneous knowledge and backgrounds engage in a communicative process without any guarantee that consensus will be reached, and when it seems to have been reached, it might not be long lasting. Nevertheless, the most important outcome of acting communicatively is not to assure

communicative consensus, but for participants to create knowledge and shape their social world through striving for consensus. For example, as outlined previously with reference to the definition of problems, participants in the negotiation rounds were often able to define action situations collectively, and this triggered transformation processes in the same individuals and in the structures in which they participated.

Next, “consensus on decisions” is reached when decisions are made collectively. Compared to other forms of decision-making which do not require consensus, such as voting, in collaborative governance all participants must endorse the decision. Consensus on a decision is thus reached when proposals about how to act are unanimously and explicitly accepted or rejected. The “quest for consensus” is a quest to reach agreements between participants (Buuren, 2009). Collective decisions crystalize in the form of an obligation that guides participants’ acts. As social obligations, collective decisions about how to act might affect the collaborative setting, as it is the case with explicit agreements regarding norms of participation and interaction, or social structures outside the collaborative setting, when agreements entail implementing a certain public policy. This type of consensus can only be sought after participants have explored problems and interests, because proposals have to satisfy participants’ interests to some degree (Connick & Innes, 2003; Innes, 2004).

Striving for communicative consensus contributes to creating the knowledge that participants use to reach a consensus on decisions or to refrain from it. This positive relationship has also been highlighted in the literature. For example, Innes & Booher (1999) indicate that agreements resulting from a consensus-building process are of a higher quality than agreements reached by other means such as litigation or voting because participants are able to gather all the information. In collaborative processes it is important to find a common ground to make decisions because the resulting agreement about how to proceed, if it exists, will impact those affected (Winer & Ray, 1994). Striving for consensus can contribute to understanding the different and usually opposing positions, which in turn affects participants’ decisions. Consensus-building provides a specific framework for decision-making (Karl, Susskind, & Wallace, 2007). As Kemmis and McTaggart (2007) indicate, the process of assessing validity claims is not only an abstract concept, it is also related to practical decision-making. The knowledge collected and assessed as valid during the collaborative process is used as reference by participants to make practical decisions.

Sharing the different positions makes both convergences and divergences between participants emerge. With this knowledge participants can opt to make collective decisions or refrain from it. One possible outcome is that participants find solutions that meet the interests of participants, and another possibility is that they discover different and opposing interests which provide them with information about the unfeasibility to reach an agreement. As Innes indicates, “what successful consensus building achieves is not harmony but rather a social order within which differences can be discussed and addressed and joint action can be taken” (Innes, 2004, p. 14). Sometimes, agreeing on the fact that a disagreement exists and that finding a collective solution is impossible might be the most suitable outcome for participants.

To sum up, striving for communicative consensus allows participants to intersubjectively assess the validity of knowledge. This type of consensus is momentary and unstable. It cannot be long-lasting because the validity of knowledge is always susceptible to change with every new speech act. In this way, striving for consensus facilitates knowledge revision and adaptation to specific action situations. With regard to making collective decisions, striving for communicative consensus contributes to intersubjectively creating the stock of available knowledge that participants can use to endorse or reject proposals. Distinguishing what type of consensus is being dealt with, whether communicative consensus or consensus on decisions, can help to differentiate between two types of processes and outcomes which are equally important in collaborative governance processes.

7.2. Using Heterogeneity to Enhance the Stock of Knowledge

Collaborative governance settings present a structure in which participants with different interests and resources try to find a solution to a policy problem. Each actor has certain resources that other actors need in order to solve the problem, which creates interdependence between actors and compels them to collaborate (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003; Emerson et al., 2012; Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Ostrom, 1990). This particularly applies to knowledge transfer. As indicated by Ansell and Gash (2008), “as knowledge becomes increasingly specialized and distributed and as institutional infrastructures become more complex and interdependent, the demand for collaboration increases” (p. 544). Sharing and creating knowledge enhances the capacity for joint action that collaborative governance settings have (Emerson et al., 2012). Citizens, representatives of public offices, researchers, business

managers, and facilitators, among other actors, have specialized knowledge, and combining knowledge enables problems to be understood and solutions sought. As noted earlier, participants must have access to knowledge on collaborative governance practices in order to be able to manage the setting. For example, they need knowledge on stakeholder identification or on interaction and participation norms. Then, participants must have knowledge on the policy problem in order to be able to find adequate solutions. By collaborating and acting communicatively all this knowledge distributed among different actors can be gathered together.

The analysis of the events occurring in the Admiralbrücke negotiation rounds has provided evidence about the effects that heterogeneity has on knowledge creation, the development of ties between participants, and communication. Regarding to knowledge creation, heterogeneity increased the capacity to understand problems and develop solutions. As identified previously, citizens, representatives of public institutions, and mediators engaged in a collaborative governance process that allowed them to combine their specialized knowledge and, in this way, enhance the total stock of knowledge available to interpret problems and make decisions. Next, concerning ties between participants, heterogeneity affected how participants built relationships within the collaborative setting. In the course of the negotiation rounds ties between participants developed according to their similitudes and differences. For example, while neighbours were scattered in several groups at the beginning, they gradually grouped in two different fractions, the ones against any type of gathering of people and the ones in favour of keeping a certain degree of cultural life on the bridge. As they discovered commonalities with other participants, the ties with these participants who shared similar interests and backgrounds grew stronger, whereas the connections with neighbours that had other interests and backgrounds remained weak. Lastly, in respect of communicative capacity, these two groups of neighbours often had problems to debate and share knowledge relating to several topics, as they had different personal backgrounds and interests. The fact that these different backgrounds existed created a barrier to knowledge transfer between participants. To enhance the stock of knowledge, participants had to overcome this communicative limitation and incorporate the different interpretations in the whole definition of problems. Heterogeneity influenced group dynamics and knowledge transfer.

These observations coincide with the theory developed by Rogers (1983) which establishes that communication and knowledge diffusion are influenced by the degree of

group homogeneity or heterogeneity. Communication is likely to be more effective in groups that share similar backgrounds, knowledge, and cultural language. In contrast, individuals with different backgrounds and knowledge find it more difficult to communicate effectively, but they have a special informational potential (Rogers, 1983). Heterogeneous groups have heterogeneous knowledge to combine, and this may enhance the quality and quantity of the total stock of knowledge available to solve problems, provided that participants are able to successfully transfer this knowledge.

Furthermore, the interactions in the negotiation rounds also prove that connections between groups with weak ties have a high potential for the diffusion of new ideas (Grannovetter, 1973). The negotiation rounds created ties between representatives of public offices and neighbours, two stakeholders that seldom interacted outside the collaborative governance setting. As a result, a lot of knowledge was transferred between these two stakeholders. These results confirm Grannovetter's observations regarding the diffusion of knowledge through weak ties, that is, the ties that exist between individuals, and groups of individuals, that have little relationship and a low frequency of interaction. At a macro sociological level, the diffusion of knowledge through weak ties can reach a greater number of people than if knowledge remains in groups with strong ties, because weak ties connect different groups, and bridges between groups allow diffusion of ideas (Grannovetter, 1973). Creating heterogeneous structures, such as collaborative governance settings, supports the diffusion of knowledge between groups which usually have weak ties.

As the case study has shown, communicative action can contribute to knowledge creation in heterogeneous groups because it focuses on using language as a medium for reaching an understanding between participants and on selecting knowledge collectively in order to interpret problems. As mentioned previously, participants communicate knowledge on desires and emotions, facts, and norms to other participants through speech acts. In the speech act, participants objectify knowledge pertaining to the three worlds and also assess the validity of this knowledge according to three validity claims. The use of knowledge in speaking and acting allows participants to share, adopt, reinterpret, and redefine background knowledge. Language is the medium that participants have to interpret reality. In communicative action, this interpretation of reality occurs intersubjectively due to using language and the speech act (Habermas, 1999).

Acting communicatively is a pragmatic way to approach problem-solving situations in heterogeneous groups. Each social interaction that is not based on authoritarian force can be understood as collectively looking for solutions to a certain problem (Habermas, 1998). As noted earlier, when participants act communicatively, they make proposals that other participants can assess as being valid or invalid. By providing reasons for the validity of knowledge, participants select the argument that best defines a specific action situation. They can pragmatically select the knowledge that is useful to collectively interpret problems. This pragmatic approach is especially relevant for collaborative governance undertakings. In collaborative processes, participants have to apply heuristics in order to cope with a problem-solving situation (Innes & Booher, 2003a; Ostrom, 2005; Straus, 2002). Participants make guesses, judge, establish facts, and learn different techniques throughout the process. Since participants are dealing with a complex problem, they need to listen to all interpretations (Forester, 1993). Furthermore, when necessary, they also adopt scientific methods to gather knowledge, as it was the case in the Admiralbrücke mediation process. All this gathered knowledge is made available to participants for their perusal. Acting communicatively is an appropriate form of interaction when participants strive to solve problems collectively. Striving for consensus can address communication problems in heterogeneous groups because participants focus on sharing and assessing the knowledge that is useful to understand problems.

7.3. Coordinating Stakeholders' Goals to Facilitate Collective Decisions

As the case study shows, stakeholders have different and often opposing goals regarding the policy problem. Therefore, the only way to be able to make a collective decision on how to try to solve the policy problem is to find a compromise, which might not entirely achieve stakeholders' goals. On the other hand, in collaborative governance processes there is no obligation to achieve a compromise. As previously stated, it is a non-coercive process and participants can always refrain from reaching an agreement.

Whereas in previous sections the focus has been mostly placed on desires and emotions embedded in knowledge communicated by participants, this section deals with the concept of stakeholders' goals in relation to how to solve a certain problem. Focusing on specific goals rather than on all the desires and emotions of individual participants can simplify the process of developing collective solutions. While communicating individual desires and emotions

might be crucial to understanding problems in all their complexity, it is equally important to be able to identify and pick out from all the desires the specific goals stakeholders want to achieve and which collective proposals must satisfy as far as they can.

From the results obtained in the data analysis, several topics are open for discussion concerning the relationship between stakeholders' goals and making collective decisions: the aim of participants to achieve certain goals; the need to share the goal of finding collective solutions so that the collaborative process can move forward; the contribution of communicative action to coordinating stakeholders' goals and developing proposals that match these goals as far as possible; and the possibility of disagreeing on a proposal if it does not fulfil participants' goals.

First, the Admiralbrücke case demonstrates that participants orient their actions towards achieving certain goals. As mentioned in the case study, stakeholders had opposing goals regarding the policy problem, and they also wanted to achieve different goals through the collaborative governance process (e.g., reducing conflict, elaborating collective solutions, learning, etc.). These goals between stakeholders sometimes coincided and sometimes they did not, but what all stakeholders had in common was that they participated in the collaborative governance process because they expected to be able to achieve their goals.

As other studies on collaborative governance also highlight, fulfilling stakeholders' goals is fundamental in collaborative governance processes as it directly affects participants' motivation (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006; Gray, 2008). Participants usually assess if their goals will be fulfilled before engaging in collaboration. When stakeholders perceive that they need each other, incentives to collaborate are high. On the contrary, when stakeholders perceive that they can achieve their goals unilaterally, incentives to collaborate are low (Ansell & Gash, 2008). If they decide to collaborate, participants can continuously assess if their interests are met during the process. For example, actors favourably assess collaboration if they perceive that the collaborative process is obtaining significant intermediate and final outcomes (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006). On the contrary, incentives decrease if they observe that collaboration is not yielding significant results (Gray, 2008). Consequently, the collaborative governance process must fulfil participants' expectations to a certain extent so that stakeholders are motivated to participate.

Action theory has also discussed the fact that participants' actions are guided by motivations related to actor's goals. In social structures all participants expect to achieve

certain goals, and interaction is the basis for finding conformity between actions and expectations among participants. In this context, the selection or rejection of proposals is directly related to the actors' orientation towards achieving certain goals (Parsons et al., 1962). Participants direct their actions towards achieving certain goals and at the same time are immersed in a collaborative process aimed at making collective decisions. Therefore, participants must coordinate their goals with the goals of other participants in order to be able to act collectively.

Second, the collaborative governance process can only move forward if participants share the goal of jointly looking for solutions. A priori, this should be the reason why stakeholders participate in collaborative governance settings. Participants might have opposing goals regarding the policy problem, but they should participate in the collaborative governance setting because they want to find collective solutions. Nonetheless, the analysis of the empirical data indicates that whereas this goal might exist at the beginning, it is possible that it loses relevance as the process moves forward. The goal of finding solutions together is related to other participants' goals. When participants observe that discussions do not favour achieving their own goals related to the policy problem, they might lose interest in finding solutions together, which might considerably hamper the collaborative process. On the other hand, as the case study has shown, participants who do not want to look for collective solutions might still want to participate in the collaborative governance setting in order to avoid other stakeholders making decisions that might go against their interests. Since the process is non-coercive, these participants cannot be expelled from the group, even if there is proof that they are not acting according to the goals set at the beginning or are acting against the agreed collaborative framework. In this situation the process becomes deadlocked, and blockades do not allow participants to take decisions.

Other scholars also mention this tendency to lose faith in the goal of finding solutions together as discussions go on. For example, Gray (2008) indicates that participants are usually very motivated to collaborate in the early stages of the process, but this motivation decreases as the process advances because participants start looking at problems through different lenses and agreements are difficult to find. To solve this deadlock situation, participants can try to elaborate proposals that fulfil participants' goals and that again motivate them to jointly look for solutions. However, if positions are too opposed and proposals do not match goals, participants can also opt for dissolving the collaborative setting.

This is exactly what happened in the Admiralbrücke negotiation rounds: a collective purpose was strong at the beginning, but, as negotiations advanced and opposing positions crystalized, some participants did not want to find collective solutions anymore. When representatives of the Admiralkiez Action Group saw that the dialogue was not going in the direction they wanted and measures proposed by other participants were contrary to their goals, they decided not to look for collective solutions. They still participated in the negotiation rounds, but, as noted earlier, they broke several norms of participation and interaction, thereby hampering the process. Knowing that participants can opt for pursuing individual goals reinforces the idea that collaborative governance settings need to develop and maintain a shared purpose throughout the process. As soon as participants lose faith in this collective goal, the collaborative process is hampered and this affects the development of collective solutions to the policy problem, as the case study has demonstrated.

Third, the results of the case study indicate that communicative action helps to coordinate stakeholders' goals, including when it entails discovering that they are opposed. As the Admiralbrücke case has demonstrated, if participants do not communicate their goals, for example, the goals they want to achieve in the collaborative setting, then working on collective proposals is hampered. In contrast, when they are aware of all participants' goals, they can work on proposals that at least partially achieve them. Thus, for the policy problem as well as for the collaborative governance setting communicating goals contributes to bringing both shared and opposing goals to light, which facilitates developing proposals that take these goals into consideration.

This need to explore the different interests and goals is also highlighted by several scholars. Gray (1989) and Koppenjan and Klijn (2004) indicate that participants need to establish what they want to achieve collectively in order to successfully engage in collaboration. And Innes (2004) and Booher (2004) highlight that a consensus-based decision-making process entails exploring the interests of all participants and making an effort to satisfy these concerns. Participants must negotiate collective solutions that satisfy all interests as far as possible (Innes & Booher, 2003a). Therefore, each participant must know what all participants want to achieve.

In contrast, a non-prescriptive approach indicates that the need for communicating goals depends on the action situation. In some collaborative settings, explicit statements from the stakeholders might be needed, whereas in other settings collaboration might be feasible

with only the minimum communication of goals to achieve agreements (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). This non-prescriptive approach to collaborative governance recognizes that participants are the ones who decide to which degree they want to communicate goals. However, the case study has demonstrated that goal communication contributes to acknowledging convergences and divergences between participants in situations where conflicting goals exist. Therefore, participants should consider this possibility when they are developing collective solutions.

Furthermore, participants must also be aware that goals can change during the process, as participants acquire new knowledge. In the negotiation rounds, participants that were against and participants in favour of the activities on Admiralbrücke both felt goals changed as negotiations went on. For example, residents in favour of a certain amount of cultural life on the bridge tried to adapt their goals in order to develop solutions that would also satisfy the interests of the affected neighbours to a certain extent. In contrast, the members of the Admiralkiez Action Group ceased to pursue the goal of developing collective solutions in the middle of the negotiation rounds. Innes and Booher (2003b) also indicate that goals cannot always be predefined. They emerge and change throughout the problem-solving process. Consequently, participants need to update information on goals.

Fourth, the results also reveal that participants can always disagree with a proposal if it does not fulfil their goals. The case study has shown that developing proposals that are compatible with the goals of all stakeholders can be a difficult or impossible task. Therefore, participants are asked to refrain from achieving certain individual goals in favour of looking for collective solutions, and they might not be prepared to do it, especially if they are afraid that an agreement might seriously affect their lives in a negative way, as the case study has shown. The aspiration to fulfil their aims cannot be removed from participants. As indicated previously, in a non-coercive process participants cannot be forced to adopt collective decisions. On the other hand, the case study confirms that even when participants are not able to endorse the proposal, they might accept it as rationally valid.

These results allow reflection on the purpose of acting communicatively in collaborative governance settings. Communicative action is a mean to achieve the goal of reaching an intersubjective understanding. This goal motivates participants to share and acquire knowledge. Nevertheless, communicative action per se does not give the content about how to act (Habermas, 1998). For example, it does not give indications about how to

act regarding the collaborative governance setting or the policy problem. Participants are the ones who decide how to act, taking into consideration the knowledge they have available and what they want to achieve. In short, communicative action is a mean to intersubjectively create knowledge relating to desires and emotions, facts, and norms, but it cannot guarantee that participants find the knowledge about how to act collectively that fulfils stakeholders' goals.

The case study has revealed the opportunities and limitations of acting communicatively in collaborative decision-making. Communicative action enables participants to make and evaluate proposals within the limits of communicative rationality. This collaborative approach can support policy-making, even if participants do not reach agreements, as the knowledge generated can be used by policy-makers to develop policies that are comprehensible and accepted by affected stakeholders.

7.4. Observing and Participating in Collaborative Governance

The Admiralbrücke case study has demonstrated that it is crucial to observe structural elements. Actors, as well as interactions, must be analysed in order to establish who is affected or not affected or who exhibits power, legitimacy, and urgency. It has also been emphasized that it is necessary to formalize collaboration, by establishing rules of participation and interaction. On the other hand, it has also been shown that it is participants who decide which stakeholders are involved and which rules are established. Therefore, emphasis has also been placed on taking the perspective of participants who reflect on structural elements in order to find a consensus that allows them to move the process forward. As noted previously, it is the search for consensus that enables participants to shape the collaborative structure. Therefore, to understand the whole action situation, both structural elements and communication between participants must be examined. The Admiralbrücke case has revealed the intricacies of observing and participating in collaborative settings. Taking the results of the study into consideration, this section presents additional theoretical constructs to discuss the complexities of studying collaborative governance.

Social systems and social network approaches are often adopted to study collaborative modes of governance (see e.g., Baggio et al., 2010; Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006; Innes & Booher, 1999; Keast, Mandell, Brown, & Woolcock, 2004; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004; Provan & Kenis, 2008). These studies are especially concerned with analysing structural elements of

the system or network, for example, the existence of interdependency between participants (Keast et al., 2004), the degree of inclusiveness (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006), or relational characteristics such as the degree of cohesion or the intensity of contacts (Baggio et al., 2010). In addition to measuring structural elements, these studies frequently incorporate an analysis of participants' actions. For example, Innes and Booher (1999) combine the theory of complex adaptive systems with a consensus-building approach which focuses on participants' interactions, and Edelenbos and Klijn (2006) include topics related to process management in the network approach. Creating a dialogue between structural elements and individual actions means collaborative governance settings can be explored in specific action situations.

From the observer's point of view, analysing structure and action separately has a clear advantage: Structural elements can be fixed for a certain period of time in order to explore action situations that take place within specific structural conditions (Ostrom, 2000). By identifying these structural elements, it is possible to observe how they influence participants' actions. One can zoom in and study in detail the smallest elements of social structures such as specific norms, relationships, or actors, and one can zoom out and study the structure as a whole or the relationships with other structures. Thus, what is regarded as a whole for specific analytical purposes might in turn be analysed as a part of other structures. Beyond the single individual there are other structures formed by groups of individuals such as families, firms, industries, or nations, among other units, and the latter have themselves many parts, which in turn, might be part of other structures (Ostrom, 2005). Analysing structures as objects certainly offers many research possibilities.

On the other hand, adopting this research approach carries the risk of reifying social structures. Reification of institutions gives them ontological existence, independent from human activity. The social world is then perceived as something external to human activity. It becomes de-humanized, although it is in fact a human creation (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Therefore, to explore the elements of the social world it is often necessary to also observe individual actions.

Action and structure are embedded in a continuous matching process. Individuals create institutions through their interactions in the social world. "Institutions are the prescriptions that humans use to organize all forms of repetitive and structured interactions including those within families, neighbourhoods, markets, firms, sports leagues, churches, private

associations, and governments at all scales” (Ostrom, 2005, p. 3). The structural prescriptions of institutions are rules created by participants to direct their actions in a predefined way. Participants know that there are certain rules to follow and expect other participants to comply with these rules. From the participants’ point of view, institutionalized rules constrain actions and, at the same time, provide security against the actions of other participants (Berger & Luckmann, 1967).

In this section three different approaches to studying collaborative governance processes are discussed: (A) social systems, (B) policy networks, and (C) the lifeworld. The first two theoretical frameworks are structure-based, but can incorporate the analysis of actions when necessary. In contrast, the lifeworld approach facilitates studying collaborative governance processes from the perspective of both observer and participant without having to be tied to a specific structural model.

A. Social systems

The Admiralbrücke mediation process can be conceived as a system of interactions, with a specific institutional context, separated from other structures. This institutional context was created by the same participants: Stakeholders had certain goals in relation to the policy problem, and these goals moved them to interact with other stakeholders and shape the policy-making process until a collaborative setting was established with its specific norms and participants. This setting evolved as participants searched for a solution together, and then, in the end, it was dissolved when collaborating was no longer useful for several participants. As an institutionalized structure, the setting displayed systemic features while it existed. Nonetheless, the systems’ approach is not merely interested in institutional characteristics or how participants create, change, or dissolve institutions; it attributes existence to systems, thereby running the risk of separating institutions from the people that create them.

The social system approach originates from the idea that participants’ actions crystalize in institutional patterns, thereby creating a network of interactive relationships. It takes action theory as a point of departure to explore institutionalization processes. For Parsons (1966), the origin of a social system is the individual instrumental orientation towards certain goals which require interaction with others. When this instrumental orientation is shared with several individuals, it constitutes a system of interactions. This system is differentiated from

other systems, because it is instrumentally oriented towards the achievement of common goals and regulated by specific values and norms. Actions taking place in a certain system become institutionalized in specific patterns that differentiate that system from other systems. This approach points specifically towards communication as the action allowing participants to share values and norms (Parsons, 1966). Also Luhmann (1987) stresses that social structures emerge from communication. The constituting unit of social systems is communication, because through it the system selects the elements that create meaning. This search for meaning is what maintains the system and makes it evolve, as meaning is ever changing.

In spite of the interest social systems theory has in action theory and communication, it opts for adopting a method that tends to reify social structures. There are three relevant concepts in the theory of social systems that point towards this reification. First, social systems are functional. The theory of social systems interprets the process of modernization from the perspective of functional systems that differentiate themselves from other systems, for example, political systems, economic systems, or bureaucratic systems of public administration (Habermas, 1992). Society is an entire system constituted by partial systems (Parsons, 1966). Luhmann (1987) elaborates on this idea, and constructs a theory of the social world that is based on functionally differentiated systems. The aim of the differentiation between systems is to reduce the complexity in the social world. In fact, the idea that functional systems permeate society has been so broadly adopted that the existence of systems is often taken for granted. In many cases, the word “system” is used to refer to an institution (e.g. university system) or a group of institutions (e.g. educational system). As a consequence, the term “system” is also often used in the policy-making literature, without necessarily referring to systems theory (see e.g., Hall, 2011; Imperial, 2005).

Second, social systems have a self-maintaining attribute that is based on system-environment differences. As Parsons (2007) states, true systems have real boundaries. In a group of individuals, the boundary establishes who is a member of the system and who is not, and establishing the boundary depends on the action situation. For example, within the market system there are groups of individuals who interact and build other subsystems (Parsons & Shils, 1962). For Luhmann (1987), each social interaction is a system. He proposes to change the paradigm of the whole and its parts for the paradigm of system-environment differencing. Everything is part of one or more systems and, at the same time, environment of other systems. The environment facilitates the existence of the system. It

allows the system to be different from other systems. Thus, system-environment differences secure self-maintaining properties of the system and the boundary between system and environment. It is not identity but difference that constitutes systems. Maintaining the social system means maintaining the system-environment difference. On the other hand, systems are open and interact with other systems in the environment. Therefore, the structure of a system can change as a consequence of interaction with other systems in the environment (Parsons, 2007). The existence of demarcations between systems is a necessary feature of social systems theory. Systems are institutionalized and, therefore, need an environment outside the institution (Habermas, 1989).

Third, a strand of the theory confers biological existence to social systems (see e.g., Baggio et al., 2010; Luhmann, 1987). Luhmann (1987) uses the concept of “autopoiesis”, which has its origin in biology, to explain how social systems are formed. He claims that a system is self-referential, that is, the system reproduces itself and establishes boundaries. Each communication within the system can preserve or modify the system boundary. Furthermore, systems are autonomous, but also sensitive to the environment. Therefore, systems interact with other systems. This biological approach can also be observed in complexity theory. Baggio, Scott, and Cooper (2010) apply complexity theory to study governance in tourism destinations. Complexity theory can be used to study destination governance as a system that maintains its own dynamic and continuously interacts with the environment. Qualitative and quantitative methods for analysing complex systems can be used to discover the specific laws that govern the system. In this way, complexity can be measured and modelled.

From the researcher’s perspective, society can be conceived as a system, where each action has the function of maintaining the system. However, the risk of using this method lies in treating systems as external entities, separated from the subjects that create them. When social systems are reified, they impose constraints over the same actors who have created them. In Habermas’s words, social systems “colonialize” the lifeworld of participants. Consequently, the potential for social protest increases because system imperatives erode the lifeworld (Habermas, 1989). For example, some production systems continue following a dynamic that consumes non-renewable resources, although it is largely recognized in the rational lifeworld that a shift is needed in the way natural resources are used. This colonization of the lifeworld of participants seems to be something natural and inevitable for system theoreticians. For example, Parsons (1966) explains:

“It is indeed a very general phenomenon that social forces are directly responsible for injury or destruction of some individuals and some of the wants or needs of all individuals, and though this may be reduced it is highly probable that it cannot be eliminated under realistic conditions. To cite a very simple case, a war cannot be won without casualties, and acceptance of war is sometimes a condition of survival of a social system as a distinctive system” (p. 28).

Paradoxically, this kind of abstraction is made by participants in the lifeworld and, at the same time, erodes it because system imperatives impose constraints over participants.

This approach to modernization focuses on explaining an uncontrolled growth of complexity without noticing that it goes against the communicative content of generally reasoned lifeworlds (Habermas, 1989). Habermas (1992) indicates that the core concept of systems that develop self-referentially in a world where processes take place in the domain of system-environment differences could justifiably absorb the philosophy of the subject if it were not for the fact that this naturalist approach, with its reference to itself and the environment, resembles the dual position of the conscious subject too much. For Habermas (1989), the world cannot be solely made up of system-environment differences that create contingent situations. He upholds the concepts of learning and knowledge creation, thus restoring to the subject its role as interpreter and actor in an intersubjective lifeworld that is historically and symbolically constituted.

As shown in the case of Admiralbrücke, the intricacies of collaborative governance settings are difficult to grasp in their totality, as a significant number of heterogeneous stakeholders interact in multiple action situations. The system approach can reduce this complexity by typifying the collaborative structure as a system of interactions that coexists with other systems (see e.g., Connick & Innes, 2003; Emerson et al., 2012; Innes & Booher, 1999). One can consider that the external social system influences the collaborative governance system, and vice versa, in a way that opportunities and constraints are created within and outside the system (Emerson et al., 2012). In this way, boundaries between structures can be drawn and systemic characteristics described. However, as the analysis of interactions in the Admiralbrücke negotiation rounds has demonstrated, taking structural properties into consideration is not sufficient to understand the whole action situation. Participants’ reflection on subjective desires and emotions, facts, and norms has major effects on the evolution of the collaborative setting. Therefore, taking the perspective of participants who try to reach a consensus on several topics, in addition to observing institutional

properties, can help scholars analyse and understand the complexities of collaborative modes of governance.

B. Policy networks

The Admiralbrücke mediation process can also be understood as a network of interactions between stakeholders able to influence policy-making. As indicated with reference to stakeholder relevance, the Admiralbrücke policy network was constituted by stakeholders with different characteristics (e.g. public and private, affected and non-affected, passive and active, etc.), and by the type of relationships established between these stakeholders, both within the mediation process and outside it. The network approach enables all these structural characteristics to be examined. Furthermore, it can combine the study of structural properties with the analysis of actions in order to identify, for example, which goals participants pursue or how the network is managed.

Nevertheless, using the term “network” does not necessarily imply adopting network theory. The term is used in many theoretical frameworks. As noted by Agranoff (2006), “networking” has become a buzz-word that is used in many policy-making contexts. For example, authors refer to “policy networks” (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000; Rhodes, 2007), “network governance” (Hendriks, 2008; Provan & Kenis, 2008; Stoker, 2006), or simply “networks” (Keast et al., 2004; O’Toole, 1997) in different contexts. Furthermore, the word “network” is often used as a synonym of other terms like “structure”, “setting”, or “partnership”, without referring to any specific theoretical framework. This section focuses on policy networks in order to limit the scope of discussion to policy-making.

The concept “policy network” encompasses manifold forms of collaboration between public agencies and other actors (Ansell & Gash, 2008). In general, the policy-network literature focuses on exploring interactions between stakeholders in decision-making process that require sharing resources in order to achieve common goals. The policy network approach looks at society as a complex net where resources are divided among stakeholders, and where stakeholders need to collaborate to achieve their objectives (Klijn, 2008). The growing interest in networks in the policy-making literature goes in parallel with an increasing decentralization of decision-making processes and the development of public policies in horizontal structures (Rhodes, 1997). Thus, in contrast to systems theory, the

network approach is more interested in the existing connections between different structures than in drawing boundaries.

Critics have pointed out that the policy network approach began as a metaphor of the policy-making process and that it constitutes a theoretical framework insofar as it uses social network analysis (see Dowding, 1995). Indeed, scholars use social network analysis to study policy networks (see e.g., Baggio et al., 2010; Imperial, 2005; O'Toole, 1997; Provan & Kenis, 2008). Social network analysis has developed a significant number of measures that can be used to characterize different types of networks and network structures (Kenis & Oerlemans, 2008), thus enabling scholars to quantitatively measure existing links between actors in the network and the type and amount of resources exchanged (see e.g., Agranoff & McGuire, 2003). In an effort to grasp the complexity of interactions in the network, social network analysis can calculate them and offer a picture of the network structure with its existing relations or absence of relations, power balances or unbalances, and similarities and differences among participants. However, mapping the network only offers a picture of the interactions at a certain moment in time. Therefore, network practitioners need to read official texts and conduct interviews with participants to be able to identify formal and informal rules followed in the network (Klijn, 2008). When the researcher needs to explore participants' actions, social network analysis must be complemented with additional research approaches.

For example, several scholars have highlighted that it is crucial to take network management into consideration in addition to institutional characteristics and interactions between participants, and accordingly have centred their attention in the governance of policy networks (see e.g., Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006; Kickert et al., 1997; Klijn, 2008; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Governance of policy networks means solving societal problems through deliberation processes in horizontal governance structures in which the public administration plays a central role (Klijn, 2008). This approach postulates that management is essential for the evolution of decision-making processes (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006; Kickert et al., 1997; Klijn, 2008; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Governing networks in the public sphere is laden with complexity and uncertainty because networks have become more horizontal and stakeholders outside the government have substantial resources and power. To cope with this complexity and uncertainty, policy networks need network managers who can activate and facilitate interactions (Klijn, 2008; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2004). Managers must create the appropriate conditions for actors to participate in concerted action. Their main objective is to

achieve satisfactory outcomes and, therefore, implement a series of strategies or tasks to achieve these outcomes. This role is often played by public officials, because they already occupy a central position in the network, but it can also be occupied by other stakeholders, as long as they maintain some distance from their own interests (Klijn, 2008). This managerial approach points to the importance of facilitators' actions in coordinating interactions in the policy network.

The Admiralbrücke case study has also shown how relevant the task of convenors (e.g. public officers, mediation team, social workers, etc.) is for gathering all stakeholders and resources together. Furthermore, the analysis of interactions has revealed that participants do not necessarily act communicatively at all times, and can even break the norms of participation and interaction. In addition to enabling network analysis, network management theory can provide facilitators with mechanisms to manage collaborative modes of governance, including situations in which the collaborative framework is challenged.

C. The lifeworld

This thesis has considered both structural elements of the collaborative setting and participants' actions. Structural elements have been analysed to portray the Admiralbrücke case in detail. Once the entire context of the action, including participants' characteristics, has been presented, the research has focused on the interactions and events in the negotiation rounds, particularly, on how participants used knowledge and intersubjectively shaped the collaborative process. Thus, the analysis has taken the perspective of participants, who have different goals and backgrounds and who participate in a consensus-based decision-making process.

The lifeworld approach can facilitate studying collaborative governance processes from the participants' perspective. It is well suited to exploring interactions in collaborative governance settings where participants with different interests try to reach an understanding and find agreed solutions to a policy problem. It also helps in understanding why individuals objectivize social structures because it takes the rational subject as well as an intersubjective social world into consideration.

The term "lifeworld" was first mentioned by Husserl in *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften und die transzendente Phänomenologie* (1982, in English: *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology*). In this manuscript Husserl

distances himself from his former Cartesian path and turns his attention to reason, history, and the lifeworld. Husserl explains that through their experiences individuals construct a series of images, theories, concepts, or sentences that give structure to the lifeworld. Furthermore, the lifeworld is historically constructed because knowledge is passed and developed from generation to generation. In this way, Husserl sets his phenomenological framework in a historical context. The transcendental subject acquires knowledge through experience and evolves over time and in society. It is through subjectivity and intersubjectivity that meaning is sedimented and transcendence won. Nevertheless, as Elisabeth Ströker (Husserl, 1982, Introduction) explains in the introduction to the second edition of this major work, Husserl does little more than provide the term lifeworld, whereas the peculiarities and methodology remain obscure. He concentrates much more on exploring the historical construction of knowledge and the relevance of reason in scientific development. Later, the concept of the lifeworld has been adopted by other scholars who have further developed it.

For example, the lifeworld concept is used by Berger and Luckmann (1967) and Schütz and Luckmann (1988) to study how social structures are created. These authors explain that the everyday lifeworld is the reality in which individuals find themselves. Individuals are aware of the lifeworld, which presents itself as both a subjective and an intersubjective experience. It is a subjective experience in which objects are present in different layers of reality in human consciousness, and it is also an intersubjective experience insofar as individuals share the world with others. Thus, the production of the social world occurs in the dialectical relationship between externalization and internalization. The self internalizes the world of others, that is, it has an understanding of that world to such an extent that that world becomes its own, and it also participates in the objectivation of the shared lifeworld. Self and other both understand and define shared situations at the same time. Shared experiences with other individuals become sedimented intersubjectively and form part of the social stock of knowledge (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Social structures are thus formed by conceptualizations in subjective and intersubjective domains and the interaction patterns established by these conceptualizations. As a consequence, the largest part of the stock of knowledge individuals use to act is generated by elements of the societal stock of knowledge encountered. The stock of knowledge is gained through and limited by the social world in which individuals participate. The lifeworld is changed with actions and actions are constrained by the lifeworld (Schütz & Luckmann, 1988).

Habermas also explores the concept of the lifeworld. Following Peirce's semiotics, Habermas (1992) states: "Our lifeworld, which is semiotically constructed from bottom up, forms a network of implicit meaning structures that are sedimented in signs that, although non-linguistic, are nonetheless accessible to interpretation" (p. 107). The structure of the lifeworld can be interpreted using knowledge embedded in language (Habermas, 2002). It is through language that experiences are interpreted and transmitted in society (Habermas, 1989). Therefore, the role of intersubjective interpretations is crucial. Life histories are not only the result of individual experiences, but are constructed in the intersubjective domain of communication. With the help of a common language, individuals' life experiences are constructed in communication with other individuals (Habermas, 1991b). The intersubjective lifeworld replaces the transcendental subject, as individual life experiences are the product of an intersubjective lifeworld (Habermas, 1999). From the perspective of the subject, the lifeworld of a social group is formed by mechanisms of action coordination. It is "the horizon-forming context of an action situation" (Habermas, 1989, p. 137). For participants in an action situation, it opens an interpretative horizon for everything that is experienced (Habermas, 1997). In short, the lifeworld is the background to a reasoning process that takes place intersubjectively.

Whether network theory, systems theory, or a combination of different theories is the most appropriate approach to understanding collaborative governance is a matter of methodological choice. Undoubtedly, approaches that study system dynamics or map the network acquire important information from the observer's perspective. However, as mentioned earlier, researchers should be aware of the consequences that separating social structures from the people that create them might entail. An emancipated society needs to rationalize the lifeworld, but it is utopian to think that there is a form of superior structure of possible forms of life (Habermas, 2002). The concept of the lifeworld enables an understanding of collaborative governance from the perspective of participants who interpret knowledge and act in specific action situations, thereby intersubjectively creating their social world. Conceptualizations of social structures emerge within this shared world. Therefore, this section stresses the need to analyse participants' actions in order to gain a greater understanding of the collaborative process. Scholars can combine theories interested in structural components and dynamics with action theory, managerial approaches, or other theories that enable the exploration of collaboration from the participants' perspective.

This dissertation has chosen to approach the main research problems from the perspective of communicative rationality. The analysis has focused on exploring how participants in the Admiralbrücke negotiation rounds intersubjectively shaped the collaborative governance process through the use of language and communication in specific action situations. Structural conditions have been taken into consideration with the aim of presenting the characteristics of the collaborative setting, and attention has been placed on the fact that it is the participants who decide which elements and norms constitute the setting, because in real-life situations the lifeworld of participants is open enough to permit all kinds of intersubjective objectifications.

Conclusion

Communicative action facilitates reflecting on both collaborative governance processes and policy problems. In a setting where participants have heterogeneous backgrounds and interests, striving for communicative consensus facilitates knowledge diffusion. As a result, the stock of knowledge that participants have available for interpreting action situations and take action is enhanced. Acting communicatively contributes to the intersubjective creation of knowledge in collaborative settings.

In addition to striving for communicative consensus, participants also intend to reach a consensus on decisions. In order that the process can move forward, they have to make decisions, at least regarding the collaborative setting. Besides, they also have to try to make collective decisions concerning how to solve the policy problem. Communicative action can contribute to gathering knowledge on stakeholder goals, so that proposals for solutions take these goals into consideration. However, when goals are opposed, proposals might not be able to completely fulfil all participants' goals. Then, reaching an agreement on a compromise solution might depend on the ability of participants to make concessions. Communicative action does not substitute negotiating proposals, and as the case study has shown, participants might not always be prepared to make concessions in favour of finding a collective solution. To make concessions, participants must be able to prioritize collective goals over individual goals.

All things considered, communicative action contributes to creating knowledge on both individuals and social groups. It facilitates the diffusion and development of individual views, even if it entails making opposing positions visible. Besides, it enables the creation of the

stock of knowledge that participants use to interpret social interactions. Striving for consensus allows participants to intersubjectively create the social world in which they participate.

8. Conclusions

Governments routinely implement existing institutional norms and procedures to solve problems. Certainly, institutional norms and procedures are needed to organize social structures. Nevertheless, in order to solve certain policy problems, reflecting on norms and procedures is required, and governments alone might not be able to develop a solution that fulfils the goals of affected stakeholders. Complex policy problems that affect several stakeholders require gathering together all the actors to try to understand the problem in all its complexity and elaborate proposals that satisfy participants' interests. In this context, collaborative governance structures emerge where participants are allowed to create and shape the collaborative setting and the public policy.

Nowadays, collaborative governance has become a reality in policy-making. In many European cities, for example, collaborative governance structures regularly emerge to tackle complex problems at local level. These collaborative governance settings are mostly created thanks to the support of public institutions. They play a crucial role in facilitating collaborative governance. However, there is still uncertainty as to whether collaborative governance processes achieve the desired outcomes or not.

Collaborative governance has been a research subject for approximately three decades, but gathering more evidence on the outcomes of this form of policy-making is still needed. In order to achieve that governments opt for arrangements that include other stakeholders in policy development, it is important to develop knowledge on collaborative governance processes. With this knowledge, governments and other stakeholders can assess if it is appropriate to implement collaborative governance practices to solve a certain policy problem. Scientific evidence, which combines theory with real-life examples, can contribute to reducing the uncertainty associated with opting for this kind of policy-making form and to improve collaborative initiatives in practice. This thesis has taken a step in this direction.

Collaborative governance settings have a specific institutional framework that both guides and constraints participants' actions. The present study has identified the following characteristics of collaborative governance: it is appropriate to tackle problems that affect different stakeholders who have heterogeneous interests; it is inclusive; the setting is formalized; several actors have to play a convenor's role; and it is a consensus-based

decision-making process. While participants can adapt these characteristics to the needs of each specific case, these basic features influence participants' actions.

This dissertation has focused on the consensus-based nature of collaborative governance practices. Communicative action theory has provided the theoretical framework for assessing the actions of participants who strive for consensus. This dissertation has specifically analysed how communicative action, i.e. an action that aims at reaching a consensus, can contribute to attaining two outcomes: knowledge creation and collective decisions. The first outcome is less tangible than the second, and is achieved when participants create the knowledge that allows them to interpret problems. The second is attained when participants reach agreements on decisions about how to act. Providing evidence on the effects of acting communicatively is crucial to have reasons for opting for this type of action in collaborative governance settings.

To explore these different topics of inquiry, theoretical and empirical data has been brought together. First, a theoretical framework has been established that includes concepts selected from communicative action theory and the collaborative governance literature. Next, data from a real collaborative governance case has been gathered, analysed, and presented. Lastly, the results of the analysis have been compared with the literature to further discuss the main research problems. This research design has allowed developing several analytical generalizations. These findings have been presented throughout the analysis and discussion chapters.

This final chapter provides a summary of the findings related to the two research problems set at the beginning: (A) how communicative action contributes to knowledge creation and (B) how it affects making collective decisions. Furthermore, it also (C) gives an account of the practical implications of the findings and (D) proposes several directions for further research.

A. Acting communicatively and knowledge creation

Collaborative governance creates action situations where several participants with heterogeneous backgrounds have to strive for consensus in order to understand problems and look for solutions. This heterogeneity of backgrounds can be a challenge for knowledge diffusion between participants. Government representatives, citizens, and mediators, among other participants, can easily have non-coincident backgrounds and knowledge and this might

affect knowledge transfer. However, if they are capable of combining this heterogeneous knowledge, the outcome can be highly innovative. The research presented in this dissertation has proven that communicative action can facilitate knowledge diffusion and thereby enhance the capacity to create new knowledge and develop innovative proposals to solve problems. The case study has shown that when participants in collaborative governance settings act communicatively, they are able to share and intersubjectively assess knowledge. Participants adopt, reinterpret, and redefine background knowledge through speech acts in order to reach an understanding with other participants.

Communicative action theory has provided the framework to separate the knowledge embedded in speech acts in three categories: desires and emotions, facts, and norms (Habermas, 1989, 2002). Then, the data analysis has established that the characteristics of each category influence how knowledge is assessed and incorporated in the total stock of knowledge that participants have available to interpret action situations.

First, concerning subjective desires and emotions, participants communicate these to try to understand the different positions. They can assess these expressions as being sincere or insincere, and add this knowledge to the total stock of knowledge. The results of the data analysis have demonstrated that participants do not need to have the same desires and emotions as other participants to be able to assess them as sincere and rational. Participants are capable of assessing the subjective desires and emotions of other participants without having to adopt them as their own. In fact, participants' individuality cannot be removed, especially when they try to reach an understanding on the different positions.

Second, regarding knowledge from the objective world, the case study has shown that when knowledge on facts is controversial, participants need to gather actor-independent motives that allow them to reach an understanding on the validity of knowledge. Applying a scientific method, or making individual observations, can contribute to gathering actor-independent knowledge. Nevertheless, the most important determinant when considering if knowledge is valid is not the method of acquisition, but that all participants accept that knowledge. The validity of knowledge about facts depends on the intersubjective acceptance of participants. They are the ones who pragmatically assess the rationality of knowledge related to facts in order to cope with the present action situation.

Third, the analysis has indicated that it is fundamental that participants in collaborative governance structures assess the normative rightness of actions and norms. In regard to the

collaborative governance setting, they must be able to create and monitor the norms that regulate their participation and interaction. Concerning the policy problem, participants have to evaluate normative frameworks to be able to develop solutions that match them or even to propose a change in the norms. Communicative action can contribute to reflecting on actions and norms and to adapting normative frameworks to specific action situations.

The case under study has provided a real-life example on how participants assess knowledge on these three categories and how this assessment affects knowledge creation. The results have demonstrated that when participants have the objective of reaching an understanding, they are capable of intersubjectively selecting the knowledge that allows them to define problems. Participants who act communicatively can share and combine knowledge on desires and emotions, facts, and norms, and incorporate valid knowledge in the total stock of knowledge they have available to interpret problems and make decisions. All in all, the results convey that as long as participants orient their actions towards reaching a consensus and they are capable of learning, collaborative governance settings offer an appropriate institutional framework to understand policy problems in all their complexity.

B. Acting communicatively and making collective decisions

In addition to creating knowledge for understanding policy problems, participants also intend to make collective decisions on measures to try to solve these problems. The case study has demonstrated that this second objective cannot be always accomplished. Making collective decisions is not always possible in collaborative governance arrangements, even if participants act communicatively. Striving for consensus helps to gather knowledge to develop proposals that try to satisfy stakeholders' goals, but it does not guarantee that participants endorse the proposals. To make collective decisions in collaborative governance settings, the endorsement of all participants is necessary, and they always have the possibility of refraining from accepting a proposal on individual grounds.

Collaborative governance settings usually emerge in conflicting situations where several parties are confronted. When stakeholders' interests are opposed, reaching a consensus on decisions does not depend so much on communicative action as on the capacity of participants to make concessions. Communicative action can contribute to sharing and understanding stakeholders' goals and to taking them into consideration when developing proposals. However, when goals are opposed, proposals might not be able to fully fulfil the

goals of all participants. Therefore, participants have to negotiate compromise solutions. Making collective decisions often requires participants to renounce to certain individual wants in favour of achieving collective goals.

This thesis has not analysed the quality of agreements concerning the policy problem because participants in the Admiralbrücke negotiation rounds did not make collective decisions on measures to implement. Nonetheless, the data analysis has provided information regarding agreements to regulate the collaborative framework. Firstly, it has demonstrated that these agreements are useful for guiding participants' actions. Secondly, the case study has shown that it is necessary to establish a normative framework at the beginning of the collaborative process, and that this institutional framework needs continuous revision. For example, norms of participation and interaction must be reviewed when they lose validity for some participants. Decisions concerning the setting must be reassessed when necessary so that they encompass participants' values.

Considering the results of the case study, it can be affirmed that whereas participants must reach a minimum of agreements concerning the collaborative setting, there is no obligation to produce agreements on the policy problem. In relation to the setting, participants must make certain decisions on norms and procedures of participation and interaction to be able to implement the collaboration. Nonetheless, they must not necessarily make decisions on measures to solve the policy problem. Even if they do not reach agreements on measures, the consensus-based process can produce important outcomes such as knowledge acquisition, conflict reduction, or community building. Furthermore, if participants do not make collective decisions, public institutions can implement their own measures with the knowledge acquired during the process.

All in all, the results indicate that agreements as well as disagreements are important outcomes of collaborative governance processes. Sometimes an agreement that there is disagreement is the solution that best satisfies the needs of participants. Communicative action contributes to gathering the necessary knowledge for accepting or refusing proposals. It provides the knowledge on which collective decisions are grounded, even if the decision made means ending the collaborative governance process without making any collective decision on the policy problem.

In addition to providing answers to the two research questions, the empirical data analysis, together with a review of the literature, has opened up the possibility of presenting

two different types of consensus in collaborative governance contexts: communicative consensus and consensus on decisions. The meaning of communicative consensus comes from communicative action theory. This type of consensus is reached when participants consider a speech act, and the knowledge embedded in it, valid for the same reasons. Communicative consensus is uncertain, yet the orientation towards consensus is very valuable, because participants can intersubjectively select knowledge to interpret problems. On the other hand, the meaning of achieving a consensus on decisions originates in the collaborative governance literature. This second type of consensus is attained when all participants endorse a decision. Both types of consensus are pursued in collaborative processes.

C. Practical implications of the findings

The present study has several relevant implications for theory and practice. First, the focus has been placed on examining how participants reflect and decide how to shape their social world. Instead of elaborating a model that prescribes how to achieve successful outcomes in collaborative governance, this thesis has explored how participants learn from their own experiences and select knowledge in order to cope with specific problems. This dissertation advocates studying social structures from the point of view of communicative rationality. This position acknowledges that it is participants who reflect and create the lifeworld and the social structures in which they take part. From the perspective of the researcher, making this methodological choice entails exploring participants' actions, especially how they try to reach an understanding on the knowledge they use to act and to create social structures. For participants in collaborative governance processes, acting communicatively opens up the possibility to coordinate individual action plans, to understand problems, and to reflect on institutional norms. For researchers, the communicative action approach offers a theoretical foundation that assigns to rational human beings the main role in the social world. Taking a non-prescriptive approach in collaborative governance research can thus provide useful knowledge for participants and, at the same time, let them choose their own actions on the basis of particular contexts and needs.

Second, the findings have also revealed the opportunities and limitations of applying communicative action theory to collaborative governance settings. The theory offers a framework for exploring communicative consensus, but when it comes to examining consensus on decisions, it needs to be complemented with additional theories on

collaboration and negotiation. Separating the intersubjective process of knowledge creation from the process of making collective decisions can contribute to the understanding of communicative action in real-life contexts. Further research might take this path of inquiry to approach consensus-based decision-making processes.

Third, the results may be particularly useful for studying or implementing local collaborative governance processes. The findings presented in this dissertation may be of special interest to policy-makers in urban environments who have to tackle problems occurring in contexts similar to the Admiralbrücke policy problem. The urban environment in the case studied has similarities with other cities such as London, Paris, or Barcelona, where a diversity of people and cultures coexist. These urban environments call for collaborative governance settings to emerge and include the heterogeneous interests of citizens in local policies. Besides, some topics developed might also be of use for studying governance at national and international levels. However, national and international collaborative governance settings are different from local collaborative structures. Therefore, an examination of each specific case might be required before deciding whether the conceptualizations presented in this dissertation can be used in these other contexts.

D. Directions for further research

The analytical generalizations presented in this thesis might be further explored in several directions. First, the present study has focused on examining communicative action and knowledge creation within the collaborative structure. Future research could explore how the transfer of knowledge between the collaborative structure and stakeholders takes place. Dealing with this research problem would require paying attention to the actions of participants as representatives of the stakeholders. Participants' actions play a crucial role in the transfer of knowledge between stakeholders and the collaborative setting. Representatives must be capable of standing for the interests of the stakeholder and also of transferring relevant knowledge into the setting. Furthermore, when the stakeholder is an organization, representatives must provide their organization with information on developments within the setting. This creates a scenario where different interests, facts, and normative frameworks intermingle, and representatives have to be able to reach an understanding in both places: in the collaborative structure and within the organization they are representing. This line of research would directly tackle one of the problems of including stakeholders' interests and knowledge in collaborative governance structures.

Next, there is a need to continue investigating communicative action in collaborative governance settings, especially with regard to creating the conditions for communicative action to take place. This thesis has focused its attention on communicative action, but, as the case under study has demonstrated, participants do not always act communicatively. They also perform other types of actions (e.g., dramaturgical or strategic action). Certainly, participants cannot be expected to act communicatively at all times. For the sustainability of the setting, different types of actions might even need to coexist to a certain extent. However, the collaborative nature of the process can be put at risk if participants repeatedly opt for a type of action that only aims at achieving egocentric goals. This risk increases if participants unilaterally break agreements on norms of participation and interaction. The case study has shown that while participants can mitigate strategic action to a certain extent by acting communicatively, they cannot completely control it. They can try to reflect on desires and emotions, facts, and norms, and try to reach an understanding. However, when participants break norms of interaction, communicative action might not be sufficient to assure norm compliance. Furthermore, in a collaborative context, applying coercive measures is limited because decisions need the agreement of all participants. Accordingly, it seems necessary to explore the possibilities for creating the conditions for participants to act communicatively and follow agreed norms. More research is needed regarding how norms of participation and interaction can facilitate communicative action, and how communicative action can be used to reassess and update normative frameworks when they no longer reflect participants' values. This type of research might also include an analysis on the extent to which applying coercive measures to assure compliance of agreed norms is compatible with communicative action.

Lastly, the conceptualizations presented in this dissertation have also opened a path for further research on the topic of consensus on decisions. As introduced in the discussion chapter, when the focus is placed on endorsing proposals, then the question of goal fulfilment becomes crucial. To reach a consensus on decisions, participants negotiate proposals, taking the goals they want to achieve into consideration. In this context, negotiating plays a relevant role. Accordingly, more research must be carried out on the compatibility between negotiation of interests and communicative action, especially on how negotiation of interests can be incorporated in a collaborative governance context where participants act communicatively.

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Ethical Considerations

Based on the instructions provided by Creswell (2014) and Yin (2009), the following ethical considerations were taken into account in the collection and presentation of empirical data:

- All interviewees were informed about the purpose of the study and voluntarily participated in the interviews.
- Recording of the interview was authorized by all participants.
- Any harmful or intimate information that might affect interviewees has been avoided. Furthermore, the anonymity of participants has been respected through the use of names that describe the role of the participant such as “neighbour” or “public officer” instead of the real name.
- The case study was selected for its appropriateness to explore the central research topics. The researcher does not have any conflict of interest related to the Admiralbrücke policy-making process.

Appendix: Original Quotations

Chapter 4

¹ „Es war anfänglich einmal die Simon-Dach-Straße, es ist die Admiralbrücke, [...] Spreewaldplatz, und dann es ist Mal die Wrangelstraße, je nach dem, wie sich die Stadt entwickelt und auch der Bezirk entwickelt“ (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012).

² „Es gibt Nutzerkonflikte durch die erfolgreiche Vermarktung der Stadt Berlin. Ja, mit zunehmenden größeren Besucherzahlen. Berlin wird international immer attraktiver“ (Berlin's Marketing Organization representative, individual interview, July 24, 2012).

³ „[...] Leute sich auf der Brücke getroffen haben, Eis gegessen haben, Sonnenuntergang geguckt haben“ (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011).

⁴ „Wenn dann halt so Spiele um neun Uhr, um halb Zehn fertig waren, wollten natürlich noch nicht nach Hause gehen, weil es war ja schon Sommer. Und dann haben sie sich halt irgendwo im Spätkauf oder am Kiosk um die Ecke noch ein Bier gekauft und haben sich auf die Brücke gesetzt“ (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011).

⁵ „So wird selbst die Admiralbrücke zur Open-Air-Location. Radfahrer stoppen an der Brüstung und schauen sinnierend zu Schwänen und Schiffen. Zwei Musiker geben regelmäßig ein Gratis-Konzert mit Klassik und Kammermusik. Die von der Sonne aufgeheizten dicken Poller dienen als Hocker und strahlen selbst nachts um eins noch wunderbare Wärme ab. Jugendliche machen es sich einfach auf dem Asphalt gemütlich – und Wildfremde kommen miteinander ins Gespräch. Eine entspannte Stimmung wie bei der Fußball-Weltmeisterschaft“ (Tagesspiegel, 2006).

⁶ „Lärm macht krank. Die Menschen brauchen ihren Schlaf. Sie müssen nächsten Tag wieder fit auf der Arbeit erscheinen. Das hält keiner lange aus, wenn jede Nacht Störungen auftreten“ (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012).

⁷ „Da habe erfahren, [...] dass es da eine Anwohnerinitiative gibt, die möchte, dass die Brücke umgebaut wird. [...] Und ja, ich dachte mir, ich muss irgendwas tun und habe dann meine Webseite ins Leben gerufen“ (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011).

⁸ „Ich habe dann also innerhalb relativ kurzer Zeit über hundert E-Mails bekommen, und alles von Leuten, die auch meiner Meinung waren, also die auch nicht wollten, dass die Brücke umgebaut wird“ (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011).

⁹ „[...] haben die Fraktionen gesagt, ‚das kann ja wohl nicht sein, dass man erst öffentliches Geld in die Hand nimmt, um einen schönen Ort zu machen, und dann wieder öffentliches Geld in die Hand nimmt, um diesen schönen Ort wieder hässlich zu machen, damit sich möglichst wenig Menschen aufhalten‘“ (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011).

¹⁰ „Der Teil der beschwerdeführenden Anwohner, die wollten unbedingt den Umbau und die könnten nicht begreifen, dass unsere BVV, also unsere Bezirksverordnetenversammlung, [...], dass die sich dagegen entschieden haben. Nur, ich muss mich natürlich an die Beschlüsse der BVV halten. Ich kann ja nicht gegen die Beschlüsse der BVV handeln“ (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011).

¹¹ „[...] stand dann die Idee, nicht jeder Einzelner, sondern dass man eine Initiative gründen muss, um als eine Organisation, als mehrere Personen einer Gruppe Druck ausüben zu können und doch politische Forderungen zu stellen, und nicht aufzugeben“ (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011).

¹² „[...] das Grundrecht der Versammlungsfreiheit sei höher. Und wenn denn dort jetzt Lärm ausgeht, müsste man ja den Lärmverursacher identifizieren können. Bei zweihundert oder dreihundert Menschen, die sich untereinander unterhalten, können Sie das aber gar nicht. Also die Polizei hatte ein großes Problem“ (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011).

¹³ „[...] Umbau der Brücke geht nicht, Polizei geht nicht, Ordnungsamt hat nur bis 22 Uhr Dienst. Ja, was soll ich denn dann tun? Und dann habe ich mir gedacht, dann ist es vielleicht ganz klug, mit der Mediation alle wieder zusammenzuholen und versuchen, dass man Regeln erarbeitet, dass die Mediatorinnen auf der Brücke sind, dass die dort mit den Nutzern der Brücke sprechen, dass sie auch abends, nachts teilweise sogar da sind, und von Polizei, Ordnungsamt und Anwohnern unterstützt werden“ (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011).

¹⁴ „In der Mediation gab es dann auch viele dann Blockaden. Also viele Blockaden, als es um Lösungen ging. [...] Wir haben dann viel mit Widerständen kämpfen müssen. Und das war auch ein Hindernis für vielleicht noch bessere Erfolge in diesem Verfahren“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

¹⁵ „von Behörden, von Verantwortlichen und von Bewohnern, das war nicht schwierig“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

¹⁶ „Schwierig war natürlich Menschen, die nur vorübergehend sich da aufhalten, also Touristen ,oder junge Menschen, die in Berlin wohnen“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

¹⁷ „Wir waren selber auf der Brücke, und wir haben mit vielen Leuten gesprochen“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

¹⁸ „Die Leute in der Stadt, die Bezirksämter und die, die hier so die Player sind, wie ich sage, die haben uns nicht auf der Rechnung, noch nicht so stark, weil wir früher uns um diese Dinge nie gekümmert haben“ (Berlin's Marketing Organization representative, individual interview, July 24, 2012).

¹⁹ “[...] man mit den Beteiligten und den Betroffenen redet und dann sagen sie, ,ja, hier es geht um Lärm, wir wollen jemanden vom Ordnungs- von Umweltamt haben, weil die sind zuständig für Lärm“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

²⁰ „Und dann haben wir sozusagen die Leute, die vorgeschlagen waren, noch mal kontaktiert und motiviert teilzunehmen“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

²¹ „Und dann wurde ich gefragt für die Mediationsrunde, ob ich als Vertreter der Musiker da einsteige. Ich habe gesagt, ,ich mache das gerne als Vertreter der Musiker“ (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012).

²² „Dann gibt es in der Mediation das Prinzip Konsens, also sich auf eine Sache einigen, was in so, ich sage einfach mal, in so großen Mediationsverfahren, wo viele Leute beteiligt sind, nicht Hundertprozent möglich ist. Das heißt, man nimmt die bestmöglichen Kompromisse [...]“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

²³ „[...] diese neuen demokratischen Selbstbestimmungsformen“ (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012).

²⁴ „[...] letztendlich diene ja auch diese Aushandlungsrunde der Politik als Legitimationsgrundlage, um Entscheidungen zu treffen. Ohne diesen Mediationsprozess und die Aushandlungsrunde würde da jetzt die Polizei nicht stehen. [...] Die großen Müllbehälter hätte man so hin machen können, aber die Politik braucht immer so eine Art Rückversicherung aus der Bevölkerung heraus, und hatten sie durch die Aushandlungsrunden“ (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011).

²⁵ „[...] es hat die Menschen im Kiez, die beteiligt waren, mehr zusammengebracht“ (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012).

²⁶ „Ich habe noch nie so viel Einfluss genommen und habe gemerkt, dass ich Sachen bewegen kann, wie mit dieser Geschichte mit der Admiralbrücke“ (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011).

²⁷ „[...] weitere Probleme entdeckt haben, wo Veränderungsbedarf sind. Zum Beispiel die Gastronomie, gar nicht Admiralbrücke, sondern in den Graefe-Kiez hinein“ (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011).

²⁸ „Es haben sich ja alle intensiver mit dieser ganzen Thematik beschäftigt und zwar mit allen möglichen Aspekten. Also ich habe auch viel über rechtliche Sachen gelernt, wer darf was, wann, wie lange, unter welchen Bedingungen. Ich habe viel über unser Bezirksamt gelernt, wie funktioniert die Verwaltung, wer ist wofür zuständig, solche Geschichten; die einzelnen Ämter, das Wasser- und Schifffahrtsamt, was spielt das für eine Rolle der Denkmalschutz; und lauter Themen, um die ich vorher, wenn überhaupt am Rande mal gekümmert habe“ (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011).

²⁹ „Alle diese kleinen Problematiken muss man erstmal verstehen lernen. Und das war sehr gut, dass die Mediatoren diese Leute alle zusammengebracht haben, sodass wir da zumindest mal einen Ansatz hatten“ (Neighbour 1, individual interview, July 31, 2012).

³⁰ „[...] war es auch für mich ein sehr interessanter Lernprozess, an diesen ganzen Mediationsveranstaltungen teilzunehmen, einfach um zu sehen, wie schwierig Demokratie sein kann“ (Neighbour 1, individual interview, July 31, 2012).

Chapter 5

¹ „Es ist sozusagen ein Wissen entstanden, dass vorher nicht da war, um einander, und die jeweiligen Rollen und für das ganze, warum es eigentlich so ist, wie es ist, und warum ist, so entstanden ist. Und dieses Wissen, das ist etwas neues. Und das ist aus meiner Sicht auch ein unverzichtbarer Bestandteil für zukünftige Entwicklungen in Konfliktsituationen in einer bürgerschaftlich verfassten Gesellschaft“ (Public officer 1, interview, October 5, 2011).

² „Wenn wir hier Aushandlungsrunden machen, dann heißt das nicht, wir sind vollkommen frei Dinge auszuhandeln. Sondern wir haben ein Korsett, in dem wir uns bewegen. Und innerhalb dieses Korsetts haben wir einen Spielraum, in dem wir Dinge aushandeln können und dürfen“ (Public officer 2, interview, July 26, 2012).

³ „Alle Ideen lagen auf dem Tisch und die Wünsche der Leute und doch der Ärger und auch die Sentimentalität, alles war da“ (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012).

⁴ „Von Menschen, die sagen, ‚ich möchte Niemanden auf der Brücke abends haben‘—das haben sie natürlich gesagt, weil die sauer waren; das ist ja natürlich unrealistisch—bis Menschen, die gesagt haben, ‚genau, also ich wohne hier, ich finde auch nicht ok, dass Nachts so laut ist, aber ich

möchte, dass die Menschen hier sind, ich möchte, dass Musik gemacht wird'. [...] Ah! So unterschiedlich sind die Meinungen“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

⁵ „[...] ich bin nachts wach geworden, weil draußen irgendjemand gemeint hat, tierisch laut herumbrüllen zu müssen, oder eben ganz viele Leute zusammen saßen, sich unterhalten haben. Das kam wirklich so weit, dass ich im Bett lag und ich könnte die Gespräche, die hier unten am Ufer stattgefunden haben, könnte ich im Bett regelrecht mitsoufflieren“ (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011).

⁶ „Na, ich wohne hier schon seit über 20 Jahren und deswegen habe ich das natürlich von Anfang an miterlebt. Allerdings wohne ich ja auch nicht direkt an der Admiralbrücke. Also, ich habe, so zu sagen, so viel Abstand, dass mich jetzt Lärm oder so was da eigentlich wenig stört“ (Neighbour 3, individual interview, August 2, 2012).

⁷ „Das heißt, es ist immer das subjektive Empfinden, womit wir im Grunde Dinge beurteilen, und auch das Ausmaß und die Intensität“ (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011).

⁸ „Meine Motivation war, mein Lebensumfeld mitzuprägen, nicht tatenlos zusehen, wie vielleicht Andere, die deutlich andere Lebensentwürfe attraktiv finden, mein Lebensumfeld so verändern, dass ich jetzt negative Veränderungen erlebe, und dann tatenlos nur das miterlebt zu haben. Das wäre etwas merkwürdig“ (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012).

⁹ „[...] die Institutionen wollten wissen, was wir Bürger wünschen“ (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012).

¹⁰ „Man kann ja auch einer qualifizierten Messung nicht widersprechen, es ist ein Faktum“ (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012).

¹¹ „Wenn ich müde bin, bin ich müde, penne ich, ende, aus. Also meine Frau ist da wieder anders. Die wird schneller mal wach. So. Diese psychische Belastung darf man natürlich nicht außer Acht lassen“ (Neighbour 1, individual interview, July 31, 2012).

¹² „[...] um zu schauen, ob es wirklich eine subjektive Wahrnehmung ist, oder kann das auch an Fakten feststellen“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

¹³ „Sprechen auf der Brücke, das Lachen, oder das Fallenlassen einer Flasche, so wie aber auch das Feiern, Singen, Grölen [...] das eigentlich Geräusche, die man sehr schnell einschätzen kann, ob eine Ruhestörung vorliegt. Kann bei verhaltensbedingten Geräuschimmissionen jeder Verständige, nicht besonders geräuschempfindliche Mensch feststellen“ (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012).

¹⁴ „[...] eine Schallpegelmessung ist in der Regel nicht erforderlich, weil eine Messung ist auch bei Verhaltensbedingten so weit nicht repräsentativ. Ich sage mal, auf dem einen Tag haben Sie eine leise Touristengruppe auf der Admiralbrücke und messen, und nächsten Tag kommt da jemand mit seinem Schlagzeug an oder sie singt dort irgendwelche Lieder einfach ohne instrumentale Begleitung, sodass es immer Spitzen gibt, wo man gesagt hat, da brauchen wir nicht messen“ (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012).

¹⁵ „[...] war im Prinzip im Vorfeld auch schon bekannt, weil bei verhaltensbedingten Geräuschen nach den Landesvorschriften reicht es, subjektiv zu bewerten, ob ein Mensch sich gestört fühlt oder nicht“ (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012).

¹⁶ „[...] ist es im öffentlichen Raum. Es gibt für die Admiralbrückethematik keine vorgegebenen Messvorschriften, keine vorgegebenen Messauswertevorgaben, so wie aber auch keine Immissionsrichtwerte. Und wir uns dann gesagt haben, ‚Ok, wir können einfach nur eine

Größenordnung ermitteln‘, und als Hilfsmittel haben wir uns entschieden zu sagen, ‚es handelt sich um eine Schankwirtschaft. Wir nehmen als Hilfsmittel die Kriterien für eine Schankwirtschaft‘“ (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012).

¹⁷ „Für eine Gastronomie gilt der Richtwert hier in Deutschland, in Berlin, zur Nachtzeit 40 Dezibel. Wir haben 64 gemessen, sodass tatsächlich auch ein ordnungsbehördliches Einschreiten absolut begründbar ist, und nicht nur wie das Gesetz es vorgibt, die subjektive Beurteilung“ (Public officer 3, individual interview, August 1, 2012).

¹⁸ „Daran sollen sämtliche Parteien, die irgendwie mit der Admiralbrücke zu tun haben, Platz nehmen. Also Anwohner, Bezirkspolitik, Gastronomen, Polizei, Ordnungsamt – und Besucher. Wobei es bei letzteren schwierig wird. Denn jugendliche Backpacker-Touristen, die nur für kurze Zeit in Berlin sind und auf der Admiralbrücke kräftig feiern, werden kaum ansprechbar sein für Anwohner-Probleme“ (Schmidl, 2010a).

¹⁹ „Man hat oft gehört, ‘Touristen, Touristen, Touristen’. Ich weiß es nicht also, ob es wirklich alles Touristen sind. Berlin ist eine multikulturelle Stadt. Nicht jeder spanisch Sprechende oder italienisch Sprechende, englisch Sprechende ist ein Tourist, sondern er lebt auch hier“ (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011).

²⁰ „[...] dass es viel mehr Menschen da vor Ort waren, die nicht aus dem Ausland sind—was vermutet war am Anfang—, sondern es waren viel mehr Menschen, die auch Kreuzberger sind oder Berliner sind“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

²¹ „Wir sprechen auch in dem Zusammenhang gar nicht unbedingt von ‚Touristen‘ sondern von ‚Gästen‘ beziehungsweise ‚Besuchern‘. Es können ja auch Besucher aus anderen Bezirken sein, aus dem Nachbarbezirksein“ (Public officer 2, individual interview, July 26, 2012).

²² „Also Lärm ist zum Beispiel ein sehr gutes Beispiel dafür. Man hat Lärm; man hat objektive Richtlinien, wo man sagt, ‚Halt! So und so viel Dezibel sind gesundheitsschädlich‘“ (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011).

²³ „Es ist wirklich ein Problem, dass öffentlicher Raum von vielen Leuten einfach genutzt wird. Und dass da sich auch Touristen dann bei sind, weil sich so einen Ort darum spricht, und als kleine Attraktion oder so, das kommt dann noch vielleicht ein bisschen verstärkt hinzu“ (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011).

²⁴ „Am Anfang lief es noch ganz gut, und dann hatte man diese Regeln. Nur, was nutzen gut aufgeschriebene Regeln, wenn sich nachher doch nicht daran hält?“ (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012).

²⁵ „Es ist mir irgendwann der Kragen geplatzt und habe gesagt, ‚Mir ist es so scheißegal. [...] Ich gehe jetzt in die Aushandlungsrunden‘“ (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011).

²⁶ „Darauf scheiterte es auch letztendlich das Verfahren, dass dann später die Runde gar nicht mehr geschlossen war, sondern man einfach zuließ, dass, sagen wir mal, die etwas hartnäckigen absolute-Stille-Bevorzugenden ständig neuen quasi Nachschub heranschaffen, so dass die Mehrheitsverhältnisse sich ja jedes Mal weiter verschlechtern mussten“ (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012).

²⁷ „[...] sie haben gesagt, nicht? ‚Ich will da mit dabei sein, bevor Entscheidungen getroffen werden, die ich nicht befürworte‘. Und dann hat man diese zwei Initiativevertreter gehabt und dann noch ganz viele andere Initiativeleute, die dort waren und gesagt haben, ‚Nein, das will ich nicht!‘“ (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011).

²⁸ „Wie kommt es zu der Entscheidung, dass wir jetzt darüber reden, zu welchen Uhrzeiten hier Musik gemacht werden darf? Ich möchte nicht, dass hier Musik gemacht wird und die Bürgerinitiative möchte das auch nicht. Und bei uns stehen so und so viele Mitglieder hintendran. Und ich möchte, dass darüber nochmal diskutiert wird“ (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011).

²⁹ „[...] mit jeder neuen Aushandlungsrunde haben wir das Gefühl gehabt, wir wurden zurückgeworfen zu dem Punkt wo wir gedacht haben, darüber wären wir hinweg“ (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011).

³⁰ „[...] haben nicht vorhergesehen, dass dann plötzlich andere kommen und dass dann statt zwei plötzlich vier oder sechs Leute da sitzen. Das haben sie einfach nicht vorher gesehen, sonst hätten sie natürlich vorher klarere Regelungen treffen müssen und sagen, ‚also es gibt nur diese zwei Vertreter vom Anfang bis Ende‘, oder, ‚Wenn einer krank wird, dann darf einer den ersetzen‘, aber nicht irgendwie wechselndes Personal [...]“ (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011).

³¹ „[...] aber es war nicht so, wenn ein Anwohner, oder ein Gastronom, oder ein Musiker, der sagte, ‚Ich will heute Abend teilnehmen‘, dass es verboten war. Also es war immer so, ein Paar Leute, die nicht Mitglieder der Aushandlungsrunde waren, aber die konnten teilnehmen“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

³² „Zuhören und Ausreden lassen; Ernsthaftigkeit; Einfühlung in die Situation der Betroffenen; Fairness und wertschätzender Umgang miteinander; Konstruktive Beiträge und gewaltfreie Kommunikation; keine Bewertungen und keine Schuldzuweisungen; Offen und konkret miteinander verhandeln, sich kurz fassen; gegenseitige Unterstützung; Orientierung an Fakten, nicht an Mutmaßungen; das Ergebnis muss von dieser Runde als Kollektiv der Politik gegenüber vertreten werden“ (Streit Entknoten, 2010).

³³ „[...] um eine Lösung zu finden und nicht um grundsätzlich jede Lösung, die anders ist als die eigene Meinung, zu verspotten und respektlos zu behandeln“ (Neighbour 1, individual interview, July 31, 2012).

³⁴ „Ich habe aufgehört hinzugehen, weil ja die haben sie sich mehrere Gruppen gebildet. [...] Und die haben sich einfach gestritten. Also haben sie sich nicht mehr unterhalten, haben sie sich gestritten. Auf so was habe ich keine Lust mehr gehabt. Ich bin einfach nicht mehr hingegangen“ (Restaurant owner, individual interview, July 24, 2012).

³⁵ „Mediation ist ja auch dafür, dass man sich streitet, auch ein bisschen“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

Chapter 6

¹ „Also ich denke ja immer, dass so die psychische Seite eigentlich die wichtigste ist. Also, so zu sagen, wenn da Blockaden sind, dann funktioniert das nicht. [...] dass schien so, dass die Anwohner eher erst zugestimmt haben so einer Kompromisslösung und dann am Ende doch wieder davon abgerückt sind, Weil sie vielleicht doch Angst hatten, dass es für sie zu nachteilig ist“ (Neighbour 3, individual interview, August 2, 2012).

² „[...] es gibt nichts Schöneres wie die Auseinandersetzung mit Menschen, aber es gibt auch nichts Schwierigeres“ (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011).

³ „Es ist so gewesen, dass eben Sachen auch falsch im Protokoll aufgeschrieben wurden, und wir bestimmt eine halbe Stunde immer erst damit zu tun hatten, im Prinzip das zu korrigieren“ (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011).

⁴ „Die Protokolle waren da. Wer sie gelesen hat, wusste wie der Stand der Dinge ist“ (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012).

⁵ „In diesen Aushandlungsrunden sollten dann quasi konkrete Sachen beschlossen werden, die von allen getragen werden, die da beteiligt sind, also kein Mehrheitsprinzip oder so. Also es konnte niemand überstimmt werden. Sondern es sollte einen Konsens zwischen allen erzielt werden. Aber das Problem dieses Verfahrens ist natürlich auch genau das, dass ein Einzelner reicht, um Entscheidungen zu blockieren. Wenn einer sagt, ‚nein, ich will nicht‘, dann geht es nicht. Das kann natürlich so ein Verfahren auch komplett ausbremsen, weil man irgendwie zu nichts kommt. Und genau das ist in diesem Verfahren dann so passiert, also dass die Anwohner letztlich dann überhaupt nicht kompromissbereit waren“ (Neighbour 6, individual interview, September 15, 2011).

⁶ „[...] Ich habe das so begriffen eben, dass in diesen ganzen Runden, das, was Konsens ist, das ist gut, das sollen sie machen. Da, wo es keinen Konsens gibt, da muss ich sehen, wie ich damit umgehe. Oder wir im Bezirksamt dann müssen uns überlegen, muss das sein? Macht es Sinn? Macht es kein Sinn? Muss man dann auch vielleicht entscheiden gegen Teil der Interessen, partikular Interessen?“ (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011).

⁷ „[...] die Behörde war eher so der Bereich, der quasi Service geleistet hat und Informationen gegeben hat. Zum Beispiel die Berliner Stadtreinigung hat eine Information darüber gegeben, wie das mit der Stadtreinigung funktioniert und was sie auch leisten können, damit der Müll verringert wird. Da wurden dann Niederflurcontainer eingesetzt, die dann für die Müllentsorgung zuständig waren; Der Wirtschaftsbereich, oder mein Bereich, hat dann geklärt, was können die Gewerbetreibenden tun, beispielsweise, wie kann man mit denen besser zusammenkommen; Das Grünflächenamt hat dann gesagt, was kann man machen, um die Grünflächen im Umfeld sauber zu halten; Und das Tiefbauamt, und dann das Ordnungsamt, und dann das Umweltamt mit Lärmmessung. Also so muss man sich das vorstellen. Und die Polizei hat dann gesagt, was können wir tun. Also alle sind sozusagen zusammengekommen, ohne jetzt dass einer gesagt hat, ‚Halt, das ist jetzt die Richtung, das ordne ich jetzt an“ (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011).

⁸ „Es gab immer eine Vereinbarung, die gesagt hat, ‚Wir wollen dort weniger Müll haben. Da muss was passieren“ (Public officer 1, individual interview, October 5, 2011).

⁹ „In der Stadtteilarbeit haben wir die Haltung, dass Menschen miteinander in Gesprächen, in Verhandlungsprozessen Lösungen suchen und dass man eben nicht als erstes Polizei und Ordnung ruft, sondern Nachbarschaften gestaltet“ (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011).

¹⁰ „Weil es sind ja alles kluge Leute, die da auf der Brücke herum sitzen. Wenn man denen das richtig vermittelt mit lustiggemachten Schildern, oder wie gesagt so eine Art Internationaldisplay, oder [...] dass am Ende eine Melodie kommt, die dann alle kennen und wissen, aha!, wenn die Melodie kommt, geht man von der Brücke herunter“ (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012).

¹¹ „[...] haben im Grunde durch ihre doch sehr offensive Haltung den Mediationsprozess behindert. Es wurde ja gar nicht mehr ausgehandelt“ (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011).

¹² „Als sie wahrscheinlich erkennen mussten oder vielleicht schon vorher wussten, dass eigentlich ihre Sichtweise und ihre Einschätzungen im Wohnumfeld, bei einer demokratischen Abstimmung keinerlei Mehrheitschancen hätten, dann war wahrscheinlich unterbewusst oder bewusst eigentlich mehr wahrscheinlich, die Taktik, dass lieber ein gescheitertes Verfahren als einen Konsens, der zu weit weg ist von der relativ einseitig Position, die man vertrat“ (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012).

¹³ „Nur hätte man irgendwann dann an dem Verfahren erkennen müssen, [...] dass Leute, die nicht willens sind, einen Konsens zu erzielen, gar nicht auf Dauer teilnehmen können“ (Neighbour 5, individual interview, July 30, 2012).

¹⁴ „Die Mediatoren, ganz pragmatisch gesprochen, behaviouristisch, haben ja vor allem die Aufgabe zu vermitteln und herzustellen das was funktioniert. Wenn da Spannung entsteht, wenn es dann doch nicht funktioniert, was sollen sie sonst? Was sollen sie dann machen? [...] Sie können nicht sagen, ‚Ihr müsst jetzt entscheiden‘. Wenn sie merken, die Sache funktioniert nicht, dann müssen sie es halt beenden“ (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012).

¹⁵ „Ich denke auch, das Ergebnis zeigte eigentlich, dass es nicht funktioniert hat, weil es jetzt ja über Polizei gelöst wird und nicht durch eine Einigung zwischen den Parteien“ (Neighbour 3, individual interview, August 2, 2012).

¹⁶ „Wir sind nämlich mit zehn bis elf Leuten am Ende aus der ganzen Sache ausgestiegen, weil der Sinn der Mediation nicht durchgeführt werden konnte, unserer Meinung nach, weil eben die betroffenen Anwohner die Chance nicht wahrgenommen haben, über kreative Vorschläge das Ganze anders zu lösen, als jetzt mit der Polizei“ (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012).

¹⁷ „Also ich würde auch jederzeit wieder an einem Mediationsverfahren, ob jetzt auf der Brücke oder woanders, teilnehmen“ (Neighbour 1, individual interview, July 31, 2012).

¹⁸ „Es hätte eine zweite Mediation gegeben, wäre ich wieder eingestiegen, auf jeden Fall“ (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012).

¹⁹ „Der Teil der Anwohner/innen, die ein tragbares Maß an Kiezkultur auf der Brücke befürwortet, spricht sich für eine Übernahme von Verantwortung durch die Anwohner/innen und lokalen Akteure aus. Der andere Teil befürchtet, dass durch die aktive Befürwortung von Menschen sowie Kiezleben auf der Brücke die Attraktivität der Brücke gesteigert und hierdurch sowohl die Nachtruhe als auch die Ruhe am Tage stark gefährdet werde. Ein Handeln von und eine Kontrolle durch die Anwohner/innen und Akteure wurden von ihnen nicht befürwortet“ (Streit Entknoten, 2011).

²⁰ „Wir sind als Mediatoren für Strukturen und Rahmenbedingung verantwortlich. [...] Wir sagen einfach, wie viel Zeit können wir uns vorstellen. Dass wir erstmals planen, wie sitzen die Leute, wer moderiert, wer schreibt das Protokoll. Also das machen wir alles. Und was ist auch wichtig [...] für das Miteinander“ (Mediator, individual interview, October 12, 2011).

²¹ „Sind also viele hier dabei gewesen, die gar nicht direkt betroffen sind, die aber inklusive mir eigentlich gesagt haben, ‚wir wollen gerne so eine geregelte Form von Leben auf der Brücke‘. Also es heißt, es soll schon etwas stattfinden, also auch so kulturell. Das ist ja eigentlich schön und wünschenswert, nur in einer Form, dass es auch für die Anwohner verträglich ist. Und danach wurde unter anderem auch gesucht in dieser Mediationsverhandlung“ (Neighbour 3, individual interview, August 2, 2012).

²² „[...] die direkten Bewohner, die eigentlich nur gesagt haben, ‚Wir wollen, dass Alles aufhört‘. Die wollten eigentlich, so zu sagen, dass überhaupt nichts mehr da passiert“ (Neighbour 3, individual interview, August 2, 2012).

²³ „[...] dass die radikalen Anwohnern gemerkt haben, ‚Meine Güte, das Interesse der Touristen, das Interesse der Straßenmusikanten, das Interesse derer, die feiern wollen dort, das wurde hier ernst genommen, das wird hier auch angehört. Das führt eventuell dazu, dass die vielleicht sogar [...] Recht bekommen und die Möglichkeit bekommen, sich hier auf immer und ewig anzusiedeln‘. Und das hat

noch zu einer stärkeren Radikalisierung dieser Anwohnergruppe geführt“ (Public officer 2, individual interview, July 26, 2012).

²⁴ „Es waren ja erst Ideen, aber die Anwohnerinitiative, Vertreter von deren, hatten so eine Angst, dass diese Ideen, die dort stehen schwarz auf weiß, auch wirklich umgesetzt werden. Und dass sie nicht mehr darüber diskutieren und aushandeln können, haben sie alles blockiert. Das heißt, die Angst, Angst spielte eine ganz große Rolle“ (Social worker, individual interview, September 22, 2011).

²⁵ „Aber vielleicht waren die Empfindlichkeiten und die subjektiven Autobiografien der Leute zu stark betroffen [...]“ (Neighbour 4, individual interview, August 6, 2012).

²⁶ „Das ist einfach ein Problem, dass hier wirklich ganz extreme Bedürfnisse aufeinander stoßen, und damit auch Existenzen bedroht sind. Also jetzt mal von unsere Seite her, ich kenne ganz viele Leute, die in der Bürgerinitiative waren, die dann weggezogen sind, weil sie es einfach nicht mehr ausgehalten haben“ (Neighbour 2, individual interview, October 19, 2011).