

How to Deal with the Conflicting Views of the World Expressed in Regional Economic Development Policies?

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Some Preliminary Words about T.I.

**Territorial
Intelligence**

**Oct.16-17 2008
Besançon
FRANCE**

- **We understand Territorial Intelligence**
 - as a cooperative system to support decision-making of local authorities
 - for the whole of decision-making process about economic development
 - through a specific type of information systems: the Territorial Intelligence Systems (TIS)

- **An IS can be assimilated to a language, shared by a community**
 - an IS is **NOT** a system reflecting - in an "objective" way - an immanent "reality"
 - but a social construction that expresses a set of **views of the world**
 - theses views of the world (or representations) relate to **paradigmatic or ideological choices**
- **The conception of a TIS should therefore be seen as the creation of a language**
 - that will have to traduce the various views of the world at stake
- **Such a task is a complex one => method**

Outline

- 1. Policy definition and evaluation in French Regional Councils : existing elements**
- 2. First stage: looking for the "invisible structure" of information**
- 3. Second stage: building ontologies**
- 4. Third stage: implementing ontologies into decision support tools**

1. Policy Definition and Evaluation in Regions

- **Regional Plans for Economic Development, expressed at a relatively general level**
 - objectives generally imprecise and non-quantified, no indicators defined
- **Views of the world that can be identified**
 - poorly clarified, sometimes ambiguous, and not formalised enough to provide concrete guidance of action
 - can be divergent from one player to the other
 - greatly influenced by categories (or classification system) produced by the national statistical information systems
- **Global lack of monitoring and evaluation tools at the regional and even national levels**
 - poor clarity of existing indicators, disconnection from the objectives set
 - necessity of an "*a posteriori* reconstruction or reformulation of objectives"

2. Looking for the "Invisible Structure" of Information

- **In order to understand which policy the decision-makers want to implement, we must analyse in deep the RPED texts**

- **A three-level grid**
 - Level of representations
 - views of the world, schools of thought, opinions: **doxas**...
 - Level of methods
 - methods to define typologies, action logics, class definition principles, principles to define indicators...
 - Level of norms
 - procedures, nomenclatures, reference systems, list of indicators...

The Level of Representations

- **The representations (views of the world) may be viewed as**
 - relatively homogenous and coherent schools of thoughts
 - and/or most frequently: partly confuse and poorly structured opinions => **DOXAS**
- **They are**
 - produced by the Regional Council itself
 - and/or most frequently: imported from other organizations
- **Example: concurrent views of the territory**
 - a space defined by borders => fixed (administrative) borders
 - a concentration of players => changing (economic) borders

The Level of Methods and Models

- **Representations are general views which cannot guide action concretely**
- **To allow the implementation of policies, representations must be transposed into models/methods:**
 - information describing the objectives formalised, logics of action, methods to define typologies, principles to determine sets of indicators...
- **Examples:**
 - type of attractiveness selected, principles to classify activities, elementary units considered, method to define indicators...
- **Territory related models**
 - space with borders: classification according to border types, development model focused on physical proximity, elementary unit: firm...
 - concentration of players: classification according to proximity type, development model taking onto account three main proximity types...

The Level of Norms

- **The most operational level of information, produced through application of the previous level's models and methods**
- **The most 'visible" level in IS (data level): codifications which players use concretely when working**
- **Example: to process an enterprise's financial support application a R. Council member should have at his disposal**
 - a list of priority sectors or territories, a set of eligibility criteria, a set of conditionality clauses, *etc*
- **Indicators related to the territory**
 - space with borders: number of new localised firms, of jobs created, input of direct investments... on a delimited territory
 - Concentration of players: intensity of interactions between players, number of collaborative projects involving R&D laboratories and firms...

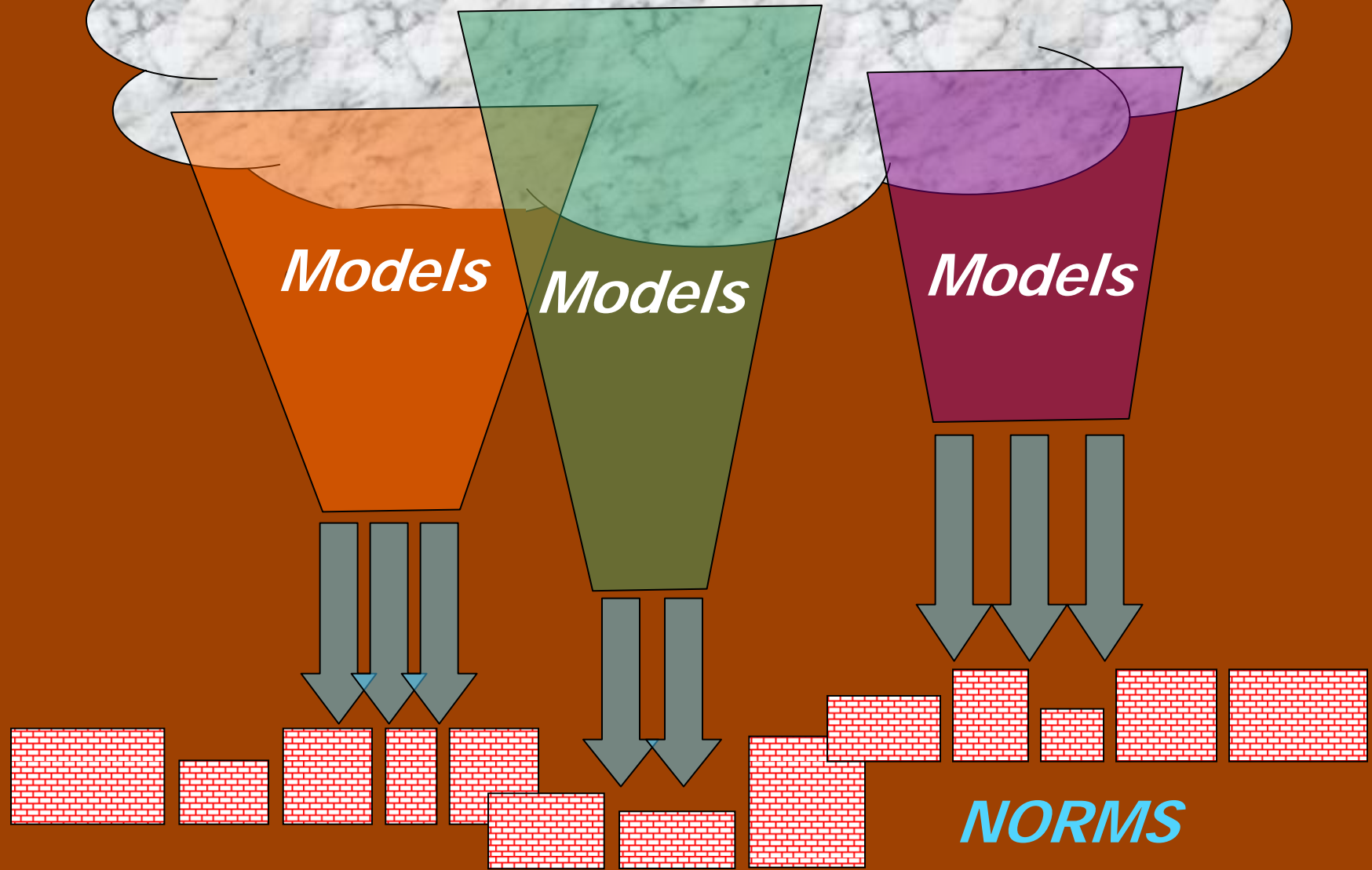
Representations (doxas)

Models

Models

Models

NORMS



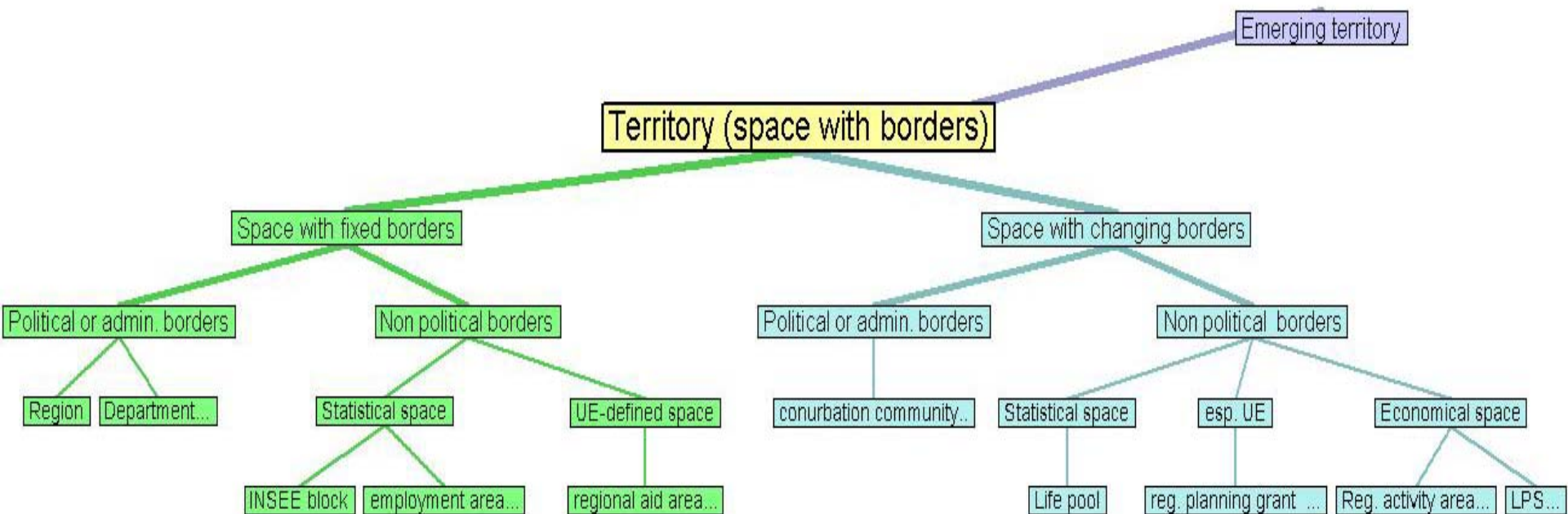
First Stage Outputs

- **The first stage permits to identify various *doxas* (views of the world) conveyed in texts and speeches**
 - gives rise to a list of relevant "objects" or "concepts"
 - each of them completed, when available, by a description

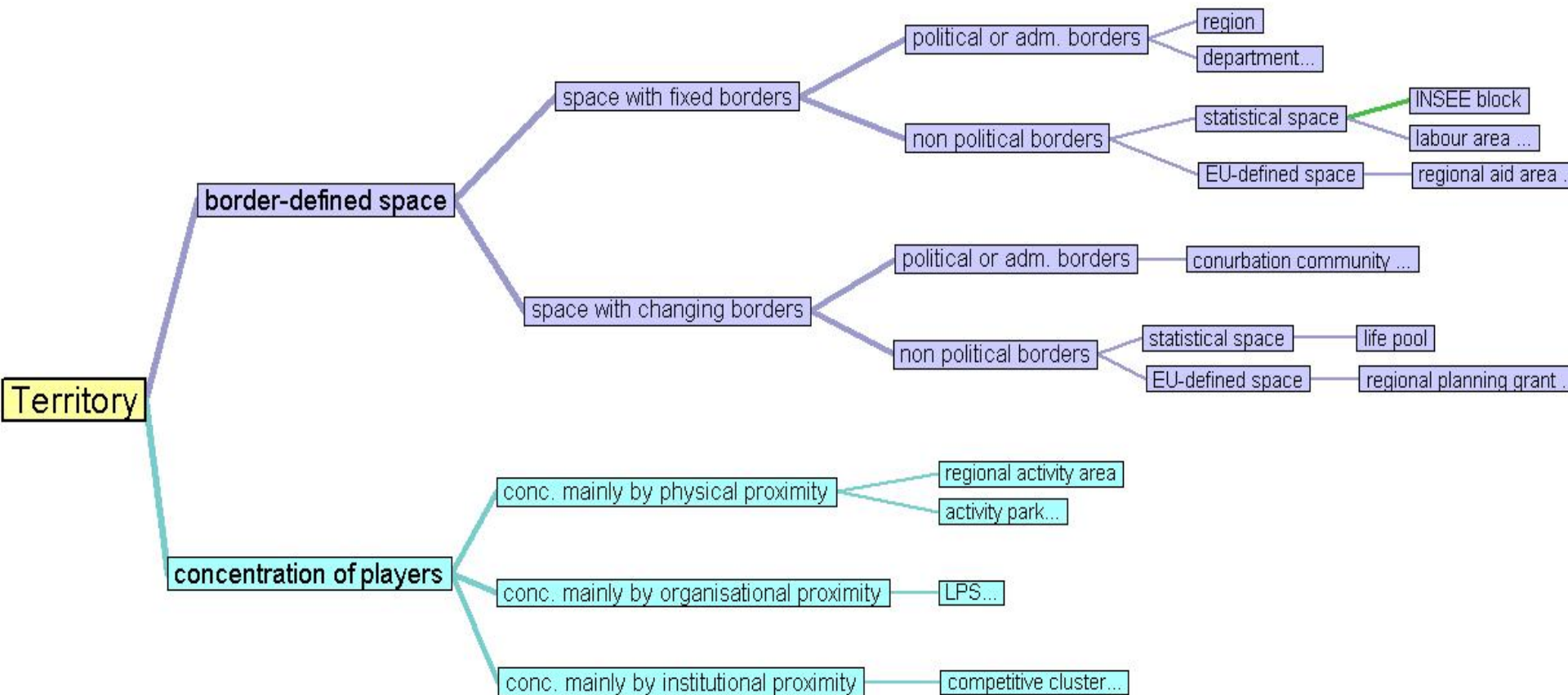
3. Second Stage: Building Ontologies

- **Not our purpose to judge the value of the different doxas**
 - be it in terms of their coherence, their effectiveness, or their capacity to denote the "reality"
- **The goal here is to make as clear as possible the concepts used**
 - in order to raise the regional players' awareness of the range of potential alternatives
- **The second stage aim is to identify the hierarchical organisation of these objects**
 - from the most abstract concepts to the very concrete "objects"
 - thus building some (light) **ontologies**
- **Polydoxical ontology, which respects the plural nature of the players' representations, models and norms**
 - work done with the aid of Archonte methodology

First View of Territory: a Space with Borders



2nd View of Territory: a Concentration of Players



Consequences of each Doxa on Economic Development Policy

	Doxa 1	Doxa 2
Proximity type taken into account	Physical proximity only	Three types of proximity (physical, organisational, institutional)
Elementary unit considered	Firm	Inter-relation between players
Policy type	Firm policy, aiming at promoting basic spatial agglomeration of firms	Networking policy, aiming at favouring cooperation among firms
Type of competitiveness addressed	Territory competitiveness = competitiveness of the firms established into the territory	Territory competitiveness = systemic competitiveness
Response to economy mutation	Adaptation (to exogenous shocks or mutations) Ex. : globalization seen as exogenous	Participation

3rd Stage: Implementing Ontologies

- **In the third and last stage, ontologies are used to produce decision support tools**
 - that will be proposed to the various concerned players
- **Ontology use main goal: help to clarification of economic policy expression at the three levels**
 - paradigmatic choices: on territory, technology...; general strategy (territorial competitiveness, attractiveness or both ?)
 - clarification and quantification of objectives and method to achieve them
 - impact/result indicators definition
- **In the frame of CAVALA project**
 - tables about effort indicators
 - with concurrent breakdown structures => matching the concurrent doxas

Conclusion

- **TIS should take these various views of the world into consideration**
 - to preserve diversity insofar as it is a source of adaptability
- **Consequently, our choice was to build concurrent (polydoxical) ontologies**
 - and not to seek a consensus at all costs
- **Two risks in defining evaluation indicators that would not consider the underlying doxas and linked models**
 - to embed in norms (indicators) a set of policies partially or totally inconsistent
 - due to conflicting doxas and/or to a lack of formalisation at the level of models
 - to reflect (through chosen indicators) only one of these doxas, which would thus be regarded as the unique "reality"
 - this could jeopardise the various players' necessary coordination, and impede the emergence of innovative views
- **TIS design: decisive contribution of knowledge engineering**