

Understanding perceptions on the U.S.-Mexico border



A narrative research into the Paso del Norte northern region's inhabitants' understanding of their region and the influence of cross-border activities

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Cover picture: Author's own.

The picture was taken during the Cinco de mayo festival in Mesilla, Las Cruces. M 54 represents the importance of history in the region and refers to the independence of Mexico in 1854. It shows that the U.S. side of the border region is influenced by Mexico but also that they are celebrating and embracing it.

Preface

Handing in this master's thesis will mark getting my masters at the Radboud University, after also finishing my bachelor here. It took me more than a year to write this thesis and I am proud to present it. Writing this thesis changed my view on the U.S.-Mexico border and I am very thankful for the time I could spend in Las Cruces. Through a lot of conversations, interviews and meeting different people I fell in love with this region. The culture, the people and even the desert are things I would never to like have missed. Nevertheless, I also learned how it is to live in a 'real' border region where a big physical fence can still be found. It is nothing compared to living in the Dutch-German border region like I did all my life.

Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor Martin van der Velde who asked to me if I want to write my thesis about this border and gave me this chance. He motivated me and gave advice during the process of writing this thesis and he also helped me to find the internship at the New Mexico State University. Here, I want to thank Christopher Brown, who explained the region to me and who helped me to feel at home in Las Cruces. He always gave me advice and helped me to find people who I could interview. Also thank you to the other people who worked at the New Mexico State University and who helped me to find my way around. A big thank you to all the people who took the time to answer my questions about the region! Another thank you is to all the people I met in Las Cruces and who became friends. They made it an unforgettable time! It also would have been much more difficult to write this thesis without the support of friends and families who always listened to all the ideas I had and took the time to have a cup of coffee with me!

Last but not least, I enjoyed writing this thesis most of time and I learned a lot of things myself writing this thesis. The U.S.-Mexico border is stereotyped a lot so I hope you enjoy reading this thesis and getting another point of view on the U.S.-Mexico border region, especially the Paso del Norte region!

March 2016

Daria Herchner

Executive Summary

The Paso del Norte region (PdN), at the U.S.- Mexico border, is a shared-functional region where three states (New Mexico, Texas and Chihuahua) in the two countries (United States and Mexico) form one region (PdN). The three states, represented by the cities of Las Cruces, El Paso and Ciudad Juarez, are separated by the border fence which influences the economic and social position of the region. El Paso and Juarez are often referred to as the divided city along the border and Las Cruces belongs to the wider PdN border region. The three cities together have almost 2 million inhabitants. This research focuses on the perception of people living on the northern side, the U.S. side of the border. When Juarez was called the 'murder capital of the world' in 2007 it affected the image formation of how people understand the region. This image has started to change into a more positive image but there is still a lot of potential for the future. Furthermore, the border security measures do also have a big impact in the region. It takes more time for people and goods to cross the border. Besides that, people who live in the region have a different view on the other side and make a distinction between 'them' and 'us'. Nevertheless, there are attempts for cross-border activities such as cross-border cooperation but, the impact of the media or cultural activities belongs also to cross-border activities. Therefore, this thesis has the following research question:

How is the individual actor experience in how he/she understands the Paso del Norte region influenced by cross-border activities?

To answer this research question, different concepts were applied, which can be found in chapter 2. The way people understand the PdN region is influenced by behavior based on cognition and affection. Behavior influenced by cognition includes the concepts of (un)familiarity and novelty which include how people base their decisions on knowledge and beliefs they have. Behavior influenced by affection is influenced by feelings and emotions and includes the concept of difference and dissonance. These two categories are responsible for creating an image and an understanding the people have in the Paso del Norte region. They all can explain parts of the bordering concept which will also be used in this thesis. An explanation was found for why people make a distinction between them and the others. Bordering influences behavior influenced by cognition and affection but these two kinds of behavior also influence bordering of the region.

In chapter 3 the used methodology is explained. This border research was analyzed with a narrative approach where a case study has been done. During this research, in-depth interviews were made with people who live on the U.S. side. They were asked to draw mental maps to see how they understand the region. The information from the interviews was analyzed with the computer program Atlas.ti and the results are presented in chapter 4.

Chapter 4 gives an overview of the uniqueness of the Paso del Norte region. Here, the economical, political, cultural situation will be explained together with the influence of border security in this region. As a concrete example, the topic of education will be elaborated. The future wish of becoming one region is often referred to happen with the next generation. Other factors that play a

role are how politics, economics and culture influence the way people from outside see and understand the region but also how people in the region themselves see the region.

Chapter 5 shows the practical impact of the unique characteristics of the PdN region. The overall understanding of the region is often that the region is violent, dangerous and poor. There are cross-border cooperation attempts, but the fence is still in the middle, physically and mentally. People and companies have to decide to take the step to cross the border which can be time consuming. Nevertheless the international quality of life often convinces people to move and also stay in the region. The international atmosphere with two big cities right across the border and Las Cruces in the border region, gives a lot of potential for the future, which still has to be used. Furthermore, the success of cross-border activities also depends on how people from outside the region understand the PdN region. The goal of the region is to attract more business and create workforce, but therefore the region has to be attractive.

Chapter 6 provides an analysis of the mental maps from inhabitants of Las Cruces and El Paso. Maps drawn by people in Las Cruces show the border region, but often with fewer details on the Mexican side. Inhabitants there have a stronger feeling of 'them' and 'us' which is more than in the other two cities, also because the city is not directly influenced by the border. In El Paso people focus their map on El Paso. They have everything they need (shopping, restaurants, museum etc.) in the city so they do not need to go somewhere else. They cross the border for leisure and cheaper food but it is not necessary for them. They also have enough keep-factors to stay on their side. To summarize this chapter one can say that people seem to be afraid of the border or that they do not see a need to cross the border. Asking them about the border mostly leads to positive words such as opportunity and home. Cross-border activities might have an influence on their understanding of the region. If the region will improve further the effects might be visible in the understanding of the people. Nowadays, they already see and experience some changes but they are not yet strong and visible enough.

To conclude one could say that the region can become one region. Cross-border activities are supporting the understanding of the inhabitants. Things can happen that would have been impossible a few years ago. It is a very sensitive area so one also has to see what the political and economic changes of the future will bring to the region. Nevertheless, one has to keep in mind that there is violence and fear in the region. People have to try to overcome the border mentally to also overcome the border physically. Overcoming the border physically has already happened to some extent. Knowledge exchange takes places but for real cooperation they have to keep working together. Cross-border activities, especially cross-border cooperation have a strong influence on the peoples understanding of the region but it is not visible enough yet. On the other side, media and politics gives the region challenges that they have to overcome.

List of abbreviations

CBP	Customs and Border Protection
CLABS	Center for Latin American and Border studies
COLEF	El Colegio de la Frontera Norte
IBWC	International Boundary and Water Commission
NAFTA	The North American Free Trade Agreement
NMSU	New Mexico State University
PdN	Paso del Norte
PoE	Port of entry
UACJ	Universidad Autonoma Ciudad Juarez
UTEP	University of Texas in El Paso
UP	Union Pacific
UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad
U.S.	United States of America

Map of the Paso del Norte region



Map1: Map of US-Mexico border. Source: <http://www.internationalwaterlaw.org/blog/category/mexico-us-border/>



Map 2: Map of the Paso del Norte region. Source: Hunt Institute, 2015

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Introduction

The border between the U.S. and Mexico is the most frequently traversed border in the world. Over 250 million people transit the border legally and around 10 million people transit the border illegally each year. "The U.S. - Mexico border has been said to be among the most culturally, physically, and socioeconomically contrasting in the world" (Stea, Zech & Gray, 2010, p. 110).

The Paso del Norte region (PdN) contains three big cities: Juarez (Chihuahua, Mexico) has around 1,300,000 inhabitants, El Paso (Texas, U.S.) has around 700,000 inhabitants and Las Cruces (New Mexico, U.S.) has around 100,000 inhabitants. Juarez and El Paso are referred to border cities as they are directly located at the border; together with Las Cruces they form the border region in this thesis. The close geographical location between these cities makes the region unique at the U.S.-Mexico border, and consequently, the region faces its own (social and economic) challenges and opportunities. Nowadays, the PdN region forms an important gateway for the movement of people, goods and services. In the El Paso-Juarez region five Ports of Entries (PoE) can be found where a more than 35,000 vehicles and 22,000 pedestrian crossings take place seen daily (Regional Stakeholders Committee, 2009).

Nevertheless, a common mutual cultural awareness and understanding on the U.S. side of the border has not been homogeneously developed yet. This narrative research will approach these social and economic issues and give an explanation on how inhabitants perceive the border region. Furthermore, it explores whether cross-border influences can be found which have an effect on the inhabitants' understanding and perception.

Framework of the Paso del Norte region

Historically, Mexico and the U.S. repeatedly had conflicts about the belongings of this area. In the 16th century, the area was explored by Spanish conquistadores. In the beginning of the 19th century, it became Mexican territory with the declaration of Mexico's independency. In 1846 hostilities between the U.S. and Mexico erupted which resulted in war won by the U.S. With the end of the war, the border line was changed due to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo on February 2, 1848 as the U.S. claimed almost half of the Mexican territory (Regional Stakeholders Committee, 2009). It took 7 years to re-map the region. The Gadsden Purchase, finalized in 1854, was an agreement where the U.S. paid Mexico 10 million dollars for 29,690 square miles of Mexican ground (which later became Arizona and New Mexico) (Office of the Historian, n.d.)¹.

Nowadays, the federal U.S. government sees the border as a security problem, especially after the fatal events of 9/11. The immigration law and border security measurement standards changed dramatically. The U.S.-Mexico border, as a front-line region, receives an unproportional share of national security attention. Fighting the war on terror leads towards immigration restrictions and intensified efforts to tighten the enforcement of immigration law (Mumme & Brown, 2015, p.2). In consequence, border crossings became more difficult and required more time due to increased safety measurements. The former U.S.- President Bush said in May 2007: "For decades, we have not been

¹ A more detailed historical background of the region can be found in Appendix 1

in complete control of our border” (Danelo, 2008, p. vii). In May 2005, President Bush signed the Real ID Act. One outcome of the Act was “unlimited” border security by improving the reliability and accuracy of state-issued identification documents (Homeland Security, 2015). In fact, it allowed the installation of security infrastructure outside of the existing regime of state and federal state (Mumme & Brown, 2015, p. 1). But how do people in the PdN region experience this situation?

Year	Death tolls
1993-2007	3.538 (0.7 per day)
2007	320 (0.8 per day)
2008	1.623 (4.4 per day)
2009	2.754 (7.5 per day)
2010	3.622 (9.9 per day)
2011	2.086 (5.7 per day)
2012	803 (2.2 per day)
2013	535 (1.4 per day)

Table 1: Death tolls in Ciudad Juarez. Source: Fronteralist, n.d.
<http://fronteralist.org/category/murder-rate/>

The geographical proximity of Juarez and El Paso leads towards challenges in the border region. Juarez has been classified as the most dangerous city in the world in 2010 (Figueroa, 2015) with the highest murder rate in the world (table 1) whereas El Paso is ranked as the safest city in the U.S. (Borunda, 2013). Although today the security in Juarez has improved significantly, the idea of the “divided city”, the safest and the least safest right across the border, still leads to fear and anxiety among its citizens. In 2010, not for the first time, stray bullets from daily shootouts in Juarez flew across the border to El Paso due to an escalating drug war in Juarez

(Borderlandbeat, 2010). This example shows the extreme proximity of the two cities.

These events affect the perception of the border region negatively. The border region is trying to improve its image. With the design of the campaign “Juarez is waiting for you” in April 2015, Juarez invited 250 business people and government officials from El Paso, Las Cruces and other New Mexican cities. Among them, 10 mayors showed that it is safe to cross the border and that Juarez has progressed in their safety development. This step of the mayors would not have been possible several years ago.

On the other hand, there are agreements to strengthen the economic position of the region, respectively the Maquiladora industry and NAFTA. The Maquiladora industry consists of manufacturing plants in which production is made to export products to the United States (Lopez-Millan, De La Vega, Rodriguez, Ayala, 2012). This might be seen as an attempt to improve the cooperation between the two countries. NAFTA came into effect on January 1st, 1994 and is an agreement between the U.S., Mexico and Canada to phase out restrictions on the movement of goods, services and capital between the countries (Coota, 1995, p. 4). The free movement of people is not included in this agreement, just the goods produced in Mexico which are intended for the North American market.

Cultural awareness in the Paso del Norte region

Border security, the border image and cross-border cooperation are just a few examples that exert an influence on people’s perception of their home region. The inhabitants’ behavior is based on two principles: cognition, which focuses mainly on knowledge, and affection, which focuses primary on emotions. Cognition and affection combined form cultural awareness. Furthermore, there is a fundamental difference between local and non-local perception of the PdN.

Behavior influenced by cognition deals with knowledge people have and how this knowledge

affects their decision-making processes. People always want to experience new things but also experience unknown things about which they still have knowledge (Hirschmann, 1980). This belongs to the concept of novelty seeking. In the PdN region the Mexican culture has a large impact on the inhabitant's daily lives; these citizens are also more familiar with a wider spectrum of the Latin American culture. Aspects, people or situations which people are not familiar with belong to the concept of (un)familiarity (Spierings & Van der Velde, 2008).

Behavior influenced by affection includes the concept of dissonance and difference. Dissonance describes the feeling that citizens do not identify to a social group as part of their identity (Cooper, 2007). The concept of difference refers to the feeling that citizens across the border are dealing with the feeling of 'them' and 'us' (Van Houtum & Van Naerssen, 2002). El Paso has a very high percentage of Hispanic people but they might have developed their own Mexican-American culture which is different to the "original Mexican" culture in Juarez. The border creates a mental nearness towards the own nation and a mental exclusion towards the other state. This might be seen as an indifference towards the other side (Van Houtum & Van der Velde, 2004).

Combining the behavior influenced by cognition and affection leads to a process of bordering and othering which can be seen vice versa. Inhabitants might not know the other side well and distinguish themselves from the others also by having prejudices of the others which can be seen as a process of 'Othering'. In this process, similar and opposite norms and values for the American and Mexican side of the border can be found, which tend to include or exclude the other group. Nevertheless, this clash of prejudices, and maybe also no willingness to understand each other, could possibly be solved while working with each other for the same bi-national region. The effects of this cooperation might then be of influence for the rest of the citizens who are not actively involved in the project. The motivation of creating something new together must not be underestimated in this context.

1.2 Aim of this research

As previously described the region faces economic and social opportunities and challenges. The shared, functional and cultural region is home to two countries and three states with a lot of differences in safety, economy and social problems which can cause different problems. A shared cultural region should attract people on both sides of the border to see what is on the other side. Businesses, inhabitants and experts in this bi-national region might be willing to cooperate to increase the economic situation and (border) security/safety situation and make the social situation easier. Cross-border projects might help support this process of strengthening the region. This research is made from a U.S. perspective and how these inhabitants of the U.S. side perceive, experience and understand the border and the border region.

These three issues, economy, culture and (border) security, are forming important aspects in understanding how the Paso del Norte region works. Therefore this thesis will focus on these three main aspects of the border region. These aspects all come together in cross-border activities which include all activities in the region for example, border security, culture, economy but also media (a more detailed explanation can be found in chapter 2).

One way of looking on the cultural impact in the region is by analyzing how the individual sees

and understands the Paso del Norte region. The behavior influenced by cognition and affection, as shortly described in the previous chapter, influences the understanding of the PdN inhabitants. The way they feel and experience things might have an influence on cross-border activities being successful in the PdN region or not. Cross-border activities have to fit into the existing norms and values of a society if they want to have support from the people who live in the region. Nevertheless, one has to keep in mind that the border also creates fear. The 'unknown' generates anxiety and fear because people just hear about the dangerous border, protected at some places by three fences, and they might not have heard other, positive stories about the border.

For the second aspect, economy, one has to look at cross-border cooperation. The American and the Mexican markets are closely linked. 80% of Mexico's' export is meant for the American market. Cross-border cooperation stimulates this and helps to further establish an economical relationship. Several cross-border projects already can be found, for example the Borderplex Alliance, but also the train connection for cargo-products. Nevertheless, there might be more possibilities.

The third aspect, border security and safety, influences the region because it has a huge mental and physical impact in and on the border region. The border fence separates the region but it also defines the region.

A better cross-border economy in the region might make the region more attractive for businesses to settle in the Paso del Norte region. This thesis will have a closer look at economic activities in the region but also how people in the on the U.S. side of the region understand the region. Therefore it will be examined how people understand the region nowadays and what their wish will be for the future. More specially, the question is if economic activities, also in the form of cross-border cooperation, have an influence on how people understand the region. To do so both themes, respectively cross-border cooperation and –activities and the individual perception, will be analyzed separately and in the analysis it will become clear to what extend these two issues are linked.

1.3 Research question

As becomes clear from the project framework and the research goal, this thesis develops an understanding of the role of cross-border activities in the Paso del Norte region and the individual actor experience on how the inhabitants of Las Cruces and El Paso understand their region.

Cross-border activities might strengthen the norms and values of the society because both nations are working on the same goal; respectively improve the regions cultural and economic position. The research question for this thesis is therefore the following:

How is the individual actor experience in how he/she understands the Paso del Norte region influenced by cross-border activities?

The first step in answering this question is to develop an understanding of the PdN region. Developing an understanding of the PdN region provides the basis for this research. It will also become clear to what extent cross-border cooperation is possible. Also different forms of cross-border cooperation will

be examined. After that the state of affairs of cross-border cooperation will be elaborated together with the role cross-border cooperation has in the PdN region. Forms of cross-border cooperation will be examined and analyzed.

Furthermore, the research question will be answered by an empirical study. Cross-border cooperation and –activities need to have some effect for its inhabitants. For this reason it is necessary to know whether people are aware of these cross-border activities or not. Cross-border activities involve more aspects and they also include push- and pull factors, cultural awareness but also what image people have of the other side and how they got it. If they are not aware of cross-border cooperation it also might be that a different understanding of the social and economic situation of the inhabitants can be found. If inhabitants are aware of cross-border activities it might have a positive influence on the understanding of individuals. ‘Knowledge is power’ is a saying which might be applicable here: The better people understand the region the easier it is for them to become actively involved. Therefore, the understanding of individuals will be analyzed which might depend on different factors which will be elaborated in the next chapter. The empirical study leads towards a better understanding on how people from this region, understand the region. Finally, the why question will be answered. Why is there an influence of cross-border activities in the individual understanding of the people in the region?

To summarize and to get an overall answer to the main research question the four following sub question can be identified:

- Which function does the border in the PdN region have for the individual perception?
- Which forms of cross-border activities can be found in this Paso del Norte region and what is their state of affairs?
- What is the individual experience of the Paso del Norte region through behavior influenced by cognition and affection and how can this be understood?
- What is the influence of cross-border activities on the understanding of the people in the Paso del Norte region?

1.4 Relevance

The aim of this thesis is to provide new knowledge and insights. A distinction can be made between a scientific and a societal relevance. In the following paragraph, first the scientific relevance will be elaborated followed by the societal relevance.

Scientific relevance

As described previously, the U.S.-Mexico border is a closed border which attracts people. A physical border can be seen as an opportunity but at the same time also as a disadvantage because it separates people. The goal of this thesis is to gain insights in how people perceive and understand the border and how they deal with living in the PdN region.

The thesis has several concepts which will be applied in the PdN region. Behavior influenced by cognition, which includes the concept of (un)familiarity and novelty, and behavior influenced by

affection, which includes the concept of dissonance and indifference). Combining the concepts and applying them to cross-border cooperation might lead towards a better understanding of how the region works and on how these concepts can be applied at a closed border.

Recent research on the concepts of familiarity, indifference and bordering have a focus on the European context. Familiarity and indifference mostly occur if people get the choice where they want to live. In Europe, the border is open and people and goods can move easily. In here, people get the choice on which side on the border they want to live, go shopping or work (see Van Houtum & van der Velde, 2004; Kristof, 1959; Spierings & van der Velde, 2008; Szytniewski & Spierings, 2014).

The concepts of dissonance and novelty are concepts which are used to explain habits of people and the way people behave. Common characteristics have to be found but it also has to be staying attractive by always providing new possibilities. Applying these concepts to the U.S.- Mexico border provides new insights in how people perceive life at a closed border. Recent research focuses on these concepts if people can make free choices for the way of living and travelling (e.g. for the processes of globalization (Anderson & O'Dowd, 1999)). Applying the concepts at the U.S.-Mexico border, especially in the PdN region, contributes to these debates. Another aspect is that cooperation and cross-border activities at the U.S.-Mexico border are difficult to realize due to the still existing physical border which is highly protected. Nevertheless, attempts have been made to overcome the border and cooperate. This cooperation do not have financial support, such as some European cooperation projects (INTERREG program is here an example support), but the focus lies within knowledge and resources exchange. Applying the concepts to the U.S.-Mexico border forms a scientific contribution to existing theory on cross-border cooperation and the behavior of citizens at a closed border.

Furthermore, scientific insights will be gained in cross-border cooperation at a closed border. Understanding strengths and weaknesses of the region can lead to recommendations for similar cases. Applying the concepts at this specific project can lead towards an outcome of an understanding on how cooperation can occur.

Societal relevance

The PdN region is starting to pay more attention towards cross-border activities. The U.S. and Mexico both have knowledge, resources and technologies which should be shared to use them effectively. An increase in the exchange between these goods can lead towards an even stronger economically position of the region. Even if exchange of these goods is possible, still many obstacles occur if people want to exchange goods etc. Cross-border activities should make the exchange and cooperation easier and should help to overcome social and economical obstacles: it encourages companies to work and cooperate with each other. Aim of this thesis is to develop an understanding on how cross-border activities influence the individual experience and understanding of the people who are living in the Paso del Norte region. This research contributes to the goal of the Paso del Norte region that they want to become more economically diverse by showing that there might be an important relationship between cross-border activities and the individual understanding people who live in the region have.

This research forms a contribution to cross-border activities and cooperation and individual understanding in the PdN region. Furthermore, this research helps to address the (cultural and

economical) problems which are consequences of cooperation. Knowing the region can lead towards a sustainable cooperation between the two countries in the context of cross-border activities and cross-border cooperation. The gained knowledge of the region leads towards research which can stimulate cooperation between the two countries. The impact that cross-border activities has in the region can have many advantages: Stimulating the cross-border cooperation, strengthen the economic position of the PdN region and knowing social developments which play a role are some aspects which can be seen as an advantage. Nevertheless, also negative aspects of cross-border activities can be found. People's opinion is formed by several actions of cross-border activities, such as media, storytelling or (border) security and violence. These negative aspects have to be turned into positive aspects. One has to be aware of these negative impacts and the effect they have on the population itself but also on companies who want to settle in the PdN region.

Another aspect is the participation of groups and individuals in the region. Understanding the PdN region as a researcher and translate the knowledge into an empirical outcome leads towards a practical outcome for citizens (individuals and groups) who live within the bi-national border region. This can lead towards a higher feeling of, for example, familiarity in the region. In short, this starting point contributes, not only to the scientific contribution to the concepts of familiarity, indifference, dissonance and novelty and to the behavior influenced by cognition and affection, but also on the social and practical impact of these concepts and how the people feel in this region.

1.5 Overview

This first chapter gave an overview and introduction to the U.S.-Mexico border and the Paso del Norte region. In here, a framework was provided, followed by the research question and research goal and the societal and scientific relevance of this thesis. The next chapter, chapter 2 is the theory chapter where first a theoretical framework will be given. Based on the theoretical framework, a conceptual model will be developed. Chapter 3 will give an overview on the method which is used to answer the research question of this thesis. Chapter 4 will describe the characteristics of the Paso del Norte and what makes the region unique. An understanding will be developed based on how people see the economic, demography, political, cultural situation of the region. Also a state of affairs of cross-border activities will be given. At the same time, the given facts will be put into context to see which aspects are really important in the PdN region. Chapter 5 will provide the individual understanding of people who are living in the region. In here, the personal opinions will be analyzed and also related to the previous chapter. Chapter 6 includes the conclusion of this thesis where the research question will be analyzed. Last, recommendations for further research will be given together with a reflection on the process of writing this thesis.

Theory

The study area of this master thesis is the Paso del Norte border region and border. People are separated from each other by the border but they could use the border to communicate social-cultural differences by using cultural cross-border activities. The PdN region is considered as a (economically) strong region at the U.S.- Mexico border. In the past, the region was ranked as one of the top 15 economic engines in the U.S. but the challenge is and was to integrate the resources (high-tech capability in New Mexico or the Maquila in Juarez) (Sanchez, 2008).

Cognition and affection are two ways that can influence the behavior and the way individuals understand the PdN region. Behavior influenced by cognition and/or affection, include a total of four categories, respectively, novelty, (un)familiarity, indifference and dissonance. These categories of behavior all leading towards bordering and othering but they are also influenced by bordering and othering. They are a starting point to answer the research question and hypothesis by the developed conceptual model which can be found at the end of this chapter. Also, a table of the most important theoretical aspects and how they will be used in this thesis will be given before the conceptual framework will be introduced.

2.1 The theoretical influence of a border

Scientific literature distinguishes between a frontier and border/ boundary. Ladis Kristof (1959) was one of the first geographers to theorize and clarify borders. A first difference can be made between physical (e.g. non-human, geographical) and political (e.g. moral or legal) borders whereas a physical border refers in the broadest sense to a 'frontier' and a political border to a 'border' (Kristof, 1959). Border and boundary are interchangeable terms but this thesis will use the term border from now on and will neglect the use of the border as a frontier.

Borders can be described as established limits of a given (political) unit and all within the boundary is bound together and it is fastened by an internal bond. It is a concept which is still valid for the current idea of a state (Kristof, 1959, p. 270; Van Houtum, 2005, p.673). Borders bind together people and an area which live under one sovereign government and law and who are integrated, at least, administratively and economically but also by means of a state idea (Kristof, 1959, p. 271). Van Houtum (2005) agrees with Kristof (1959) that there is a difference between natural and non-natural borders. Van Houtum (2005, p. 674) argues further, that in the last decades a shift can be seen from boundaries as political limits of states towards border as socio-territorial constructs.

Further, borders are what we have made of them and they are a product of the human social practices and habits (ibid). Borders can be seen as men-created which means that human beings created a border by bordering their 'unit'. It is also created and maintained by the central government and has no life on its own. The border might be seen as a separating factor for people who live in the border region because it prevents people from moving and crossing easily and without obstacles. There are few natural obstacles (dessert, mountains etc.) which restrict the movement of people of goods but borders do because it separates different 'units' (countries). Natural obstacles, such as mountains or rivers, do not completely restrict the free movement of people, things or even ideas anymore but boundaries do. It separates political units and states from each other which is still the

case in the current globalized world. Even if factors, such as culture and politics, try to overcome the border it always will be a border and an obstacle.

For this reason they are socially and politically constructed and have far more meaning than being a line between two entities (Newman & Paasi, 1998, pp. 187). Integration of two states cannot be stimulated by drawing a line, the frontier, and having an own unit, bounded by a border (Kristof, 1959, p. 273). On the other hand it is argued that the current world seems to be borderless (Paasi, 2009). In Paasi's point of view the international system is less commanding, but in this point he agrees with Kristof, it is powerful. Paasi (2009, p. 213) states that governments are becoming weaker. As a reason he argues that processes of globalization and the upheavals of the international system after the cold war are playing a role. Van Houtum (2000, p. 57) argues that globalization also provided contact possibilities because societies and people became increasingly interlinked. On the other hand van Houtum & van der Velde (2004, p. 104) argue that the social construction of the nation state, inside a border, is still valid. It creates a structure and an embodied sense of place. In here, also a distinction between 'them' and 'us' can be found which reflects on the sense of place. Therefore, national borders still produce a mental nearness towards members of the own nation

To understand how borders work one has to keep in mind that borders can be seen as a mental line. It is a socially constructed place where people bound themselves to one region. Nature does not restrict movements but mentally and juridical constructed border do. Interaction can find place but then 'two units' have to cooperate. Each unit can live on their own but border regions are facing difficulties because they often have to deal with the other 'unit nation'. Due to a globalizing

world sometimes borders disappear but especially at the U.S.- Mexico border the mental border still exists due to different circumstances which will be elaborated further on.

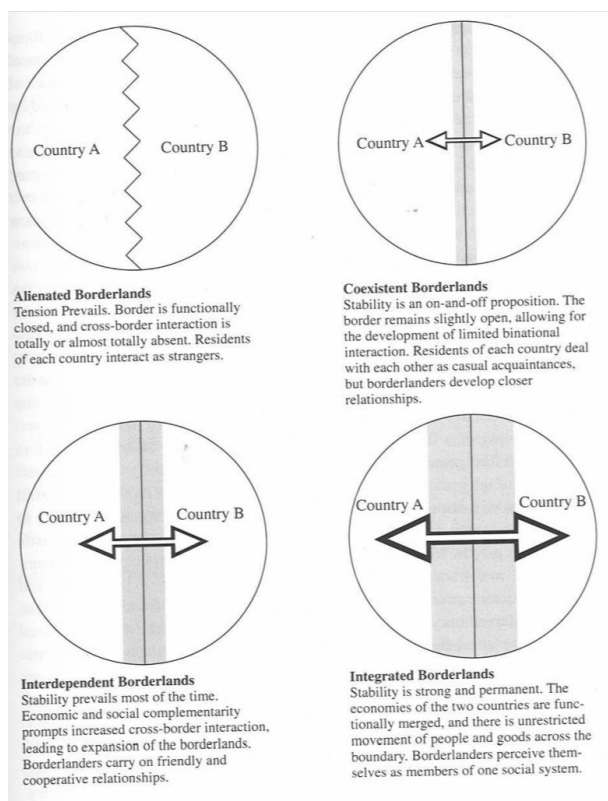


Figure 1: Classification of border people.
Source: Martinez, 1998a, p. 7

Another way of seeing and using border has been made by Oscar Martinez. Oscar Martinez (1998a) developed a model (figure 1) that shows four stages border regions can have. The first stage, the alienated borderlands, exists if a border is practically fully closed and cross-border interactions are totally absent. The coexistent borderlands allows for the development of limited binational interaction. The third model is the interdependent borderlands. When Martinez (1998a, p. 8) wrote the book, he classified the U.S.-Mexico border as

interdependent borderlands. He classifies borderlands interdependent when a border region in one nation is symbiotically linked with border region. Relatively stable international relations and a favorable economic climate on both sides of the line should lead to growth and development projects. The greater the flow of economic and human resources across the border is, the more the two economies are structurally bonded to each other. On the other hand the two countries have to be more or less equal partners. That would be the ideal situation but reality shows that the prevalent pattern in bi-national regions is an asymmetrical interdependence which means that one country is stronger than the other country and dominates it. Economic interdependency creates many opportunities for borderlands to establish social relationships across the boundary as well, allowing significant cultural transfer to take place. The last model is the integrated borderlands. In here the stability is strong and permanent and the two economies are functionally merged with unrestricted movement of people and goods.

2.2 Behavior influenced by cognition and affection

2.2.1 Behavior influenced by cognition

The behavior influenced by cognition includes the knowledge and belief about an attitude. At the U.S.-Mexico border people receive a lot of information through media or stories where they base their opinions on. This knowledge and the belief they develop over time can be important in how he/she understands the region. Two concepts which explain the importance of knowledge are novelty and (un-)familiarity. People develop their own point of view of the region by things they know or believe and this is one aspect in how he/she understands and perceives the region.

The willingness to experience new things and learn new things can be found in the concept of Novelty. Novelty means "The quality of being new, original, or unusual" (Oxford University Press, 2015a). Hirschmann (1980) discusses the concept of novelty seeking. This concept explains that "through some internal drive or motivating force the individual is activated to seek out novel information" (p. 284). Two aspects play a role. The first aspect is seeking new and discrepant information. The second aspect is to which extent individuals vary their choices among known stimuli (for example, purchase of previously sampled brands). If stimuli are known (for example existing knowledge) people rotate their use so that boredom or fatigue might be reduced. People might want to experience the known unknown or the expected unexpected. They then might feel at home mentally when they are not physically. People might aim for new things but they do not want to have a culture shock because their experiences will be too new. The strangeness on the other side may have an inviting and exiting impact on people on the other side of the border because of the 'new' (Spierings & van der Velde, 2008). In the PdN region people would feel more comfortable if they know the known unknown which can include the culture and social activities but also people, the political or the economic situation of the other country.

Another model, developed by Spierings and van der Velde (2004, p.105) introduces the concept of unfamiliarity. This concept was developed for cross-border activities in the EU. Figure 2

shows a model of the bandwidth of familiarity. Across the border citizens are dealing with the feeling of 'them' and 'us'. In a bi-national region the understanding is challenging. It is argued that the other side of the border is more attractive due to different push- and pull factors (Spierings & Van der Velde, 2008). Push factors stimulate the economy because they imply that home places are less attractive than foreign places. Pull factors describe that that foreign places are more appealing than places at home. People feel attracted towards the other side but are not willing or able to cooperate and accept the other. On the other side, when the international differences are too large, they would fall outside the bandwidth of (un)familiarity and the regions would operate with keep- and repel factors. Keep factors stimulate immobility when home places are more attractive than foreign places. Repel factors suppose the opposite in particular that places on the other side are less appealing than places at home.

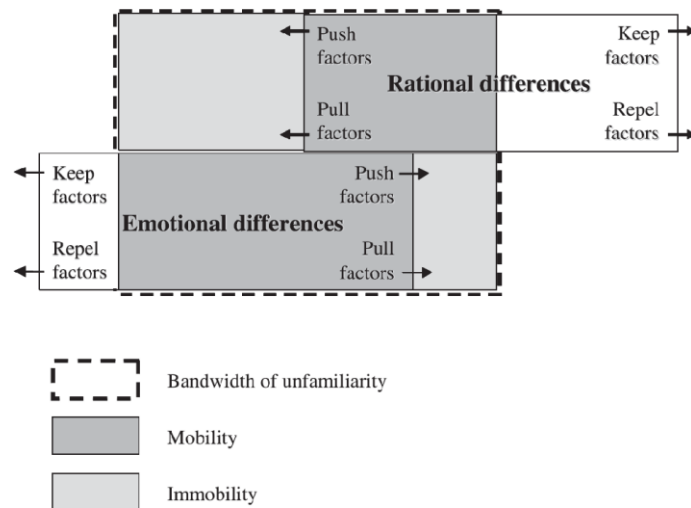


Figure 2: Thresholds of unfamiliarity

Between the factors also a distinction can be made between rational differences and emotional differences. All four factors have to be applied into both categories. Within push- and pull factors a bandwidth of unfamiliarity can occur. If international differences between the two countries are within their bandwidth of familiarity people are curious to visit foreign places which are offering new experiences. Rational and emotional differences might promote the border and might ground the border in the mind into something positive. Nevertheless, if differences are too large no border interaction will take place and people will not be stimulated to cross the border because they might not get a sense of familiarity which can be seen as the field located outside of the grey box in the model. A social network on the other side with friends or family who are familiar with 'the other side' also help facilitate cross-border activities. But all factors are dependent on whether people want to experience differences. All economic or social-cultural developments could change the people's consideration of acceptance but it does not have to. Therefore the bandwidth of familiarity is a dynamic concept. Aspects people are unfamiliar with would become familiar if they would gain some knowledge about it (Spierings & van der Velde, 2008).

The behavior influenced by cognition reveals that knowledge is important for the awareness of the region. Cross-border activities just can be successful if they are accepted by the people but they also just can come into existence if the people are open for it. This dependency in the relationship of the two aspects has several aspects for the cultural awareness of the region. The influence for cross-

border activities will be shown in the conceptual model.

2.2.2 Behavior influenced by affection

The behavior influenced by affection includes feelings and emotions. What is the feeling of people towards the PdN region on both sides of the border from a U.S. perspective? Different explanations may be found for this phenomenon. The concept of indifference and dissonance can give two explanations for these feelings.

Cooper (2007, p.2) describes the effects of dissonance as follows "It [social life of human beings] upsets us and it drives us to action to reduce our inconsistency. The greater the inconsistency we face, the more agitated we will be and the more motivated we will be to reduce it". Reducing inconsistency can be seen as an outcome of reducing dissonance. Dissonance describes the different expectations and experiences people have. Further, it deals with different groups' expectations and the effects of it. This just can happen because people feel that they belong to a specific (social) group. If they do not belong a group they develop a feeling of dissonance. Studies show an individual's conformity to group pressure because they intend to do things which others do as well (Guazzini, Yoneki & Gronchi, 2014). To be influenced by a group several factors can be found which are affecting the social life but also the individual life. Cialdini & Trost (1998, p.151) argue that through these personal and social influences, the process humans generate and manage can change in the real world. It can move people away from negative habits into more positive directions and thereby create new conditions for the society. Interpersonal influence is playing a role in understanding the process of change but also acceptance. Social norms, conformity and compliance form three components of this interpersonal influence. A (social) norm describes and explains human behavior (Cialdini & Trost, 1998, p.151f). These norms are also shaped by the interaction of human behavior. If people want to fulfill the norms they have to follow the group because these norms are commonly accepted. Social norms can be seen as the standards a society has and which guide social behavior. Norms also include rules which forbid unacceptable social behavior. Conformity refers to the application of movement from the own position to a contradictory position. This means that people act differently when they are alone or part of a group. The social pressure might strongly influence the behavior of people. Social approval is wished from the society. For that reason individuals conform and adapt to the current society. When people conform they also conform their self-expectation and self-esteem whereas nonconformity leads towards anxiety or guilt. People would ignore their own vision to agree on what the society wants (Cialdini & Trost, 1998, p. 162). "People are more prone to be influenced in their decision by a group than an individual who belongs to group (the In group) compared to a group of people that an individual neither belongs nor he or she identify with." (Guazzini et al., 2014, p.12). This means that people make easier decisions if they belong to a social group. They form their identity based on the social norms and values of the group.

This paragraph summarizes that people feel the need to belong to a group. They make decision easier when they know that it is socially accepted. Cultural assimilation is also easier if a major migration group can be found such as Mexicans in the PdN region. They feel a sense of belonging which makes it easier to immigrate but maybe not to integrate.

The second concept for behavior influenced by affection is the concept of indifference. If the differences people know about are too large they are less likely to cross the border because they would feel displaced in the other area (Spierings & van der Velde, 2008, p. 501). This might also be the case in the PdN region. People noticed that Juarez is the most dangerous city in the world. Currently that has changed but the image of Juarez as the most dangerous city in the world might still be in people mind. Moreover border control on both sides of the border let the border became a 'thick' border. Van Houtum & van der Velde (2004) used the concept of a space of belonging. This concept refers to the idea that people want to belong somewhere or feel at home at a specific region. This concept also involves the concept of a mental distance between both sides of the border. Van Houtum & Van der Velde (2004) refer to a threshold of indifference model (figure 3). The space of belonging is created on one side of the border but

might have an effect for the other side of the border. Therefore a distinguishing between 'we' here and 'they' over there might take place. In this process a space of indifference is created (van der Velde & van Naerssen, 2010). This space impacts the decision to cross the border. This space also creates a threshold for people to cross the border, known as the mental border threshold. It includes that social networks (such as friends and family) are important in

cross-border movements. If social networks exist on the other side of the border the mental threshold declines and the 'there' might feel as 'here'. In the decision to stay or to go, keep-/repel factors and push-/pull factors are influencing the decision-making process. Further, these factors influence the feeling of indifference inhabitants have.

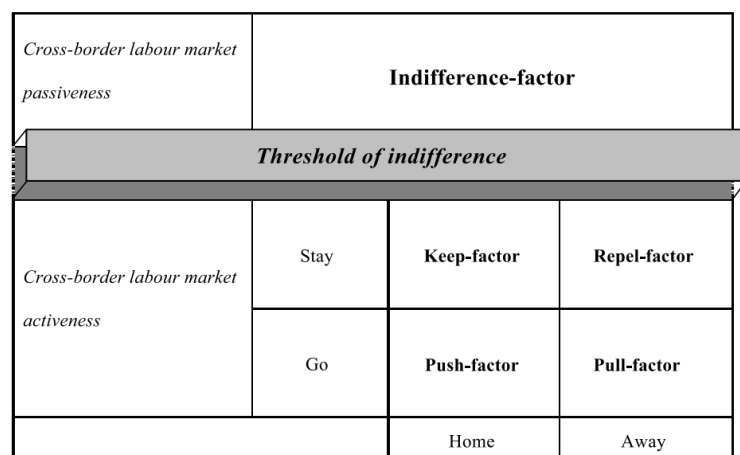


Figure 3: The threshold of indifference. Source: Van Houtum & Van der Velde, 2004 ,p. 105

2.3 Bordering

Both categories influence the behavior and can lead towards bordering. As mentioned in the previous two paragraphs, the concept of bordering also influences the behavior influenced by cognition and affection.

Mostly people can choose where to live. If people can choose they are aware of the contingency and of the alternative (Ernste, 2010). At the U.S.-Mexico border, people are aware of the alternatives but they are not free in choosing on which side on the border they want to live. The regional identity is lived day to day and the pragmatic and routinized orientation does not contribute to cross-border activity (Ernste, 2010). This can also be confirmed by Kristof (1959, p.274). He states that people think their way of life is preferable instead of the life of the citizens on the other side of the border. They are bordering themselves and create a feeling of othering towards the other side of the border.

Nevertheless, the border still can be seen as a meeting place of two socio-political bodies, each with own interests, structure and ideologies. Two neighboring states do not have to be engaged in conflict all the time but they can also live peacefully (Kristof, p. 277). Szytniewski & Spierings (2014, p. 393) argue that differences between two countries can be an important factor for cross border practices. This states that people in their decision-making are not fully economically rational because they have a bounded rationality: they cannot take all information into consideration with the time they have and therefore people often focus more on the economical aspect because it seem to be easier and more visible.

A border region, such as the PdN region, can be described as a socially constructed framework of familiar habitualised locals where possibilities in the other country are of no importance in the decision to be mobile if the other side is a space of indifference and unfamiliarity (Van Houtum & Van der Velde, 2004). Both sides of the border have an influence on each other which means that the Mexican-American culture can be found on both sides of the border. The border does not separate the cultural influence of the region (Spierings & Van der Velde, 2008).

Between the U.S. and Mexico, a history of dependency can be found: The war, the revolution or NAFTA are just a few examples. The narratives of these threats and interventions (might still) dominate the U.S.-Mexico relations. What tends to be forgotten is that there have been positive aspects in the relationship as well, for example providing arms or sheltering the exiled president Benito Juarez who later created the first official free trade zone along the border (O'Neil, 2013, p. 18). With the Gadsen Purchase in 1848 and re-mapping in 1854, Mexican territory became American territory and vice versa.

The preceding paragraphs provided insights in the meaning of what bordering is and how scholars see it. The distinction between 'them' and 'us' is one aspect of bordering. Push- and pull factors, aspects of how bordering takes place, are of importance for the PdN region. Furthermore, the U.S.-Mexico border can be seen as interdependent because the two nations are linked but not in an equal way.

2.4 Conceptual model

After developing a knowledge on two different forms of understanding and behavior, behavior influenced by cognition and affection, and the concepts they are influenced by, (un)familiarity, novelty, dissonance and indifference and of bordering and othering, several factors can be found which will help answering the main research question.

The conceptual model is based on five categories in which the categories are based on the theoretical framework. Each theory contains different aspects. The aspects which are relevant for this thesis have been selected. Based on these parts the categories have been selected: economics, politics, social, sense of belonging and formation of opinion. In the peoples' understanding the social aspect is important in how they perceive the region. Furthermore, the sense of belonging is important. The goal is to understand the citizens' understanding of the PdN region. Therefore, it has to be clear where people feel they belong. In doing that, people have to base their opinion on aspects and knowledge

they develop over time. For this reason, formation of opinion is another factor in understanding the individual perception. Economy and politics are two aspects which define the position of a region. The economic situation is important for cross-border cooperation. The political situation defines the circumstances. Also on the U.S. side of the border, the party defines the political feeling towards the border for example, politics define whether there has to be more border security or not.

In the following table, an overview of the concepts can be seen. In table 2 each concept has factors which can fall into different categories. The categories cannot solely be seen independently but they are all connected with each other. The categories were included in the conceptual model. In figure 4 the conceptual model can be seen. Cross-border activities might influence the awareness and the experience in how people understand the PdN region. Several underlying factors do have an influence in this process, respectively social-, political- and economical factors, Sense of belonging but also knowledge, which will be represented by formation of opinion. Even if the stronger influence might be seen from cross-border activities towards cultural awareness and understanding of the region, also a smaller connection might be experienced the other way.

	Concept	Factors	Explanation
BEHAVIOR INFLUENCED BY COGNITION	Border	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>Political unit</i> ❖ Culture ❖ Social construction ❖ Mental line 	El Paso and Juarez belong to the border directly whereas Las Cruces, El Paso and Juarez belong to the border region. It belongs mostly to the social category except the aspect of being a political unit
	Bordering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Othering ❖ <i>Regional identity</i> ❖ <u>Lower costs</u> 	Bordering combines all concepts and factors and vice versa. All concept form the concept of bordering but bordering also defines the other concepts.
	Novelty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Information ❖ How people deal with their knowledge ❖ <i>Strangeness</i> ❖ <u>Economic attractiveness</u> 	Novelty mostly belongs mostly to the concept of formation of opinion because it concerns knowledge (which can be from media or school/education) and how people deal with it. Nevertheless, with the knowledge and new aspects the sense of belonging also will be defined.
BEHAVIOR INFLUENCED BY AFFECTION	(Un)familiarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>"Them" & "Us"</i> ❖ <u>Push- and pull factors</u> ❖ <i>Being familiar</i> ❖ Social network ❖ Knowledge 	(Un)familiarity includes 3 from the 5 categories. Sense of belonging, economy but also social are aspect which create a feeling of being familiar with the region.
	Dissonance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Expectations & experience ❖ Group expectations & effects ❖ <i>Social norms</i> ❖ <i>Social group</i> 	Dissonance includes two categories, respectively social and sense of belonging. How people behave in a group and seen/ will be seen in a group belong in these two groups
	Difference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ (cultural) differences ❖ <i>Sense of belonging</i> ❖ <i>"We" & "They"</i> 	Difference refers to sense of belonging. The difference between groups and countries can also refer to social differences.

Table 2: Operationalization

Legend of categories

Social

Economy

Political

Sense of belonging

Formation of opinion

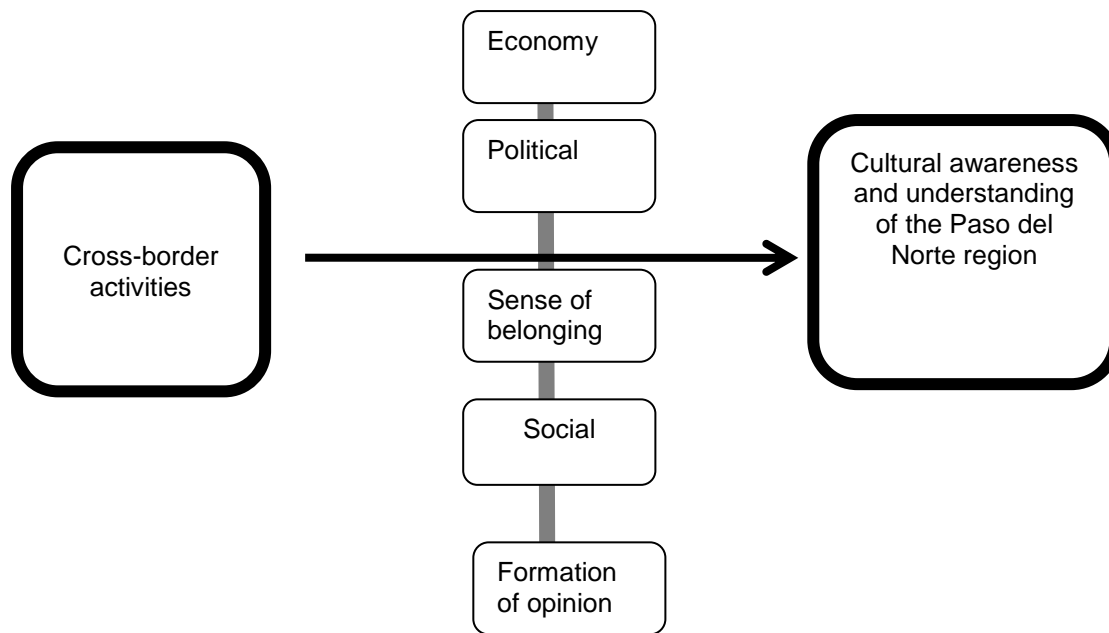


Figure 4: conceptual model

As can be seen, the hypothesis of this thesis is that cross-border activities do influence the cultural awareness and the understanding of the PdN region. In here, five categories do influence this process. It will be analyzed to what extend these five categories do have an influence and how meaningful this influence is.

Methodology

This chapter will outline the methods which are used in this research. First, the research strategy will be described. Among other aspects, it will be argued why a choice has been made for qualitative research. Narrative approach will be used to determine characteristics which are lying at the U.S.-Mexico border. Second, the research strategy will be elaborated and the case selection will be explained. Third, the data collection will be described and how the data has been analyzed.

3.1 Research strategy

In this research a choice has been made for qualitative research. From the research goal and research question it became clear that the research focuses on cross-border activity and the influence it has for the PdN region. As the aim is to obtain detailed results, interviews, observations and a literature study have been made. Complex problems and more in-depth research will be examined within qualitative research where the aim also is to ask ‘How’ and ‘Why’ specific phenomenon occur. In the first phase of this research, a literature study has been the most important step of gathering information. Literature on the U.S.-Mexico border as well as on behavior based on cognition ((un)familiarity and novelty) and behavior based on affection (indifference and dissonance) and bordering has been studied. Furthermore, an understanding of borders in general and specially the U.S.-Mexico situation has been collected. After studying the literature, a better understanding of which factors play a role has been developed.

After that, an empirical study was done during the internship at the New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. Interviews were held and observation/ pictures were taken in order to analyze cross-border activities together with the mental maps of the respondents. Each respondent was asked to draw a mental map with important places or places he regularly visit in the region. These maps do form the most important part of the empirical research of this thesis. Furthermore, literature has been studied to deepen the knowledge about the PdN region. The empirical data, the mental map including an explanation of the map and the perception of the respondent, was collected by semi-structured interviews with the respondents (see chapter 3.3). Besides that an observation on the interaction of people and the influence of cross-border activities has been made. All these methods lead towards new data and knowledge.

In this research a case study has been done. For some authors a case study is not seen as a methodology rather than choice of what to be studied (Stake, as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 97). On the other side it is seen as strategy of inquiry and a methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Yin 2003, as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 97). In here, the researcher tries to explore a bounded system over time through in-depth data collection with multiply sources (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). This will also be applied within this thesis. According to Yin (2003) a case study allows a holistic and meaningful investigation of real-life events. Further, Yin states that “a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”; a case study still has a strongly descriptive function.

To put the data from the case study into a framework, a narrative research has been done to determine processes which play a role in the PdN. Narrative research focuses on the individual lived experience. It started with experiences in lived and told stories of individuals. This experience can also be analyzed in a written way which can be analyzed with the literature which forms the starting point of this research (Creswell, 2013, p. 70). Another aspect of a narrative approach is that it will tell a story of individuals and compare these told stories on how they see themselves. The understanding and perception from individuals will be the main focus in this thesis. Even if the number of respondents is limited, the selected respondents all have a different point of view on the region with individual perceptions. Even if the main sources are interviews and mental maps, the observation, pictures which are collected, will also have an important part in the narrative research. Nevertheless, the outcome and results of this thesis will not be fully generalized to the U.S.- Mexico border in general but it is focused on the PdN region.

3.2 Case selection

The Paso del Norte consists of the three states on New Mexico, Texas and Chihuahua. In this region the focus lies on three counties which are located at the border: Doña Ana County, El Paso County and the Municipality of Juarez (map 3). Each county is represented by the county seat, which are El Paso, Las Cruces and Ciudad Juarez (which also will be referred to as Juarez). During this research interviews have been held with people from Las Cruces and El Paso to develop an U.S. perspective on the border. Luna County, NM and Hudspeth County, TX have been left out of this research because they are not directly involved in the three-county border region. The region is unique for the reason that 3 counties from 3 states in the 2 nations



Map 3: Map of the counties in the Paso del Norte region. Source: Twoshouldknow, 2015

with a little over 2 million inhabitants in the three cities, are all within one region. This thesis will refer to El Paso and Ciudad Juarez as the border cities and to El Paso, Las Cruces and Ciudad Juarez as the border region.

3.3 Research material and data collection

Hawkins (in Gould & White, 1974, p.15) says that “We link together our various perceptual spaces whose contents vary from person to person and from time to time, as parts of one public spacio-temporal order”. This quote refers to the way of how people understand space and place. Every

person has a different understanding of space. Even if all experiences are considered to be unique, common characteristics might be found when mental maps are analyzed (ibid). This narrative research involves mental maps which were drawn by the respondents. The differences between 'here' and 'there' describe the differences between places that generate movements of goods, people or information. The patterns which arise with these differences can be analyzed with mental maps (Gould & White, 1974, p. 15). Mental maps try to examine the daily living and patterns of people in the region and how they understand their place. Mental mapping considers these aspects by letting people draw the environment in their own unique way and show their own image of the region. The perception of space is one aspect which has to be considered if we want to understand the patterns of people (Gould & White, 1974, p. 45). Cross-border activities just might have an effect on people's behavior in the PdN region if it is known which portion of the environment is actually perceived (Gould & White, 1974, p. 48). Areas which are not perceived can also not change the peoples understanding of the region. It is also assumed by Gould and White in the mid 1970s that the more homogenous a (cultural) group is the more common patterns the mental maps have.

This thesis makes a difference between two kind of respondents. First, people who have knowledge about cross-border cooperation or did research about the border or who are working at a cross-border company. Several of these 'experts' were also asked to draw mental maps. When they drew the mental maps however they were considered as citizens, the same way non-experts were, because they also live as citizens in the region. Hence, the opinion and knowledge of the experts were used in chapter 4. Second, people who are not directly involved with cross-border cooperation. Non-experts are people who live in the region but mostly do not have regular contact with cross-border cooperation. Some people also did not consider themselves as experts on the region, which is why they were also put into the non-expert category. Besides that, a distinction has been made between people who crossed the border before and people who do not have crossed before or not on a regular basis. Nevertheless, some of their knowledge also was used in chapter 4. Both groups refer to the category of respondents in the following.

All interviews were semi-structured. Semi-structured interviews gave the possibility to led the respondent tell their own story but also lead the interview to some extent. The respondents were found by an opportunistic sample and a snowball effect (the interview guide can be found in Appendix 2).

First, the respondents were asked about their personal background and also about their social network. Experts were also asked about their field of expertise. This was done with semi-structured interviews. With non-experts the focus was put on their personal life. In the second part of the interview the respondents were asked why they drew this mental map alongside with questions. They were also asked to say the first words that come into their mind when the respondents think of the border. Not from all respondents a map was made due to limited time during the interview. Regarding the interviews all interviews were recorded to transcribe them and for validation.

Table 3 and 4 show the respondents divided by each city, separated into experts and non-experts and with their function.

	Name	Function
Expert	Jim Peach	Regents Prof. Department of Economics and International Business/ Las Cruces
Non-experts	Hugo Roja	PhD/Las Cruces
	Molly Molloy	Librarian NMSU/Las Cruces
	Susan DeMar	Administrative assistant NMSU/Las Cruces
	Inigio Garcia Bryce	President CLAB NMSU/ Las Cruces

Table 3: Respondents in Las Cruces

	Name	Function
Expert	Lydia Nesbitt-Arronte	Vice President of Education & Workforce Development at Borderplex Alliance/EI Paso
	Kathleen Staudt	Prof. Political Sciences UTEP/EI Paso
	Irasema Coronado	CEC Executive Director/former professor at UTEP
	Josiah Heyman	President CLAB UTEP/ EI Paso
	Cesar Fuentes	Director Regional Northeast COLEF/Juarez
	Sergio Pena	Professor/researcher COLEF/Juarez
Non-experts	Jason Sargen	Student Sociology UTEP/ EI Paso
	Erik Kleppner	Student Sociology UTEP/ EI Paso

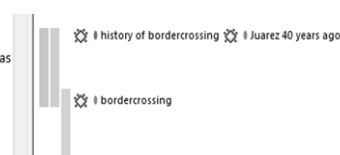
Table 4: Respondents in El Paso

3.4 Data analysis

After collecting data and conducting the interviews, the data will be analyzed in the following chapters. The interviews, but also the literature, will be put into the theoretical framework. All interviews of the respondents were transcribed. After that the program Atlas.ti was used to code and analyze the interviews. Each interview was coded with unique codes but also with codes, such as border crossing

experience which was used more than once. Figure 5 shows

A: 40 years ago. You can see the city on a central urban development with a central downtown place, you'll see some business, really family businesses and there was not a lot of industry, there were not a lot of comers, it was mostly a border region that was interacting between both nations and, as long as I can recall it, in the past it didn't need a lot of paperwork to cross over. People would move freely in the border, 50 years ago, it was not that tight, you know because it was a normal thing to see people crossing from the river from one side to the other



an example on how the codes were coded. For the same paragraph also different codes could have been used to describe and analyze all aspect of this part. This has been done for the transcript of all

Figure 5: Example of coding. Source: Author's own with Atlas.ti

14 respondents. After that, the codes have been inductively put into families. The categories for the families are based on the theoretical framework and important aspect which came forward from them. Figure 6 show the family categories. The example gives the family 'culture'. In there, all codes from all transcripts who belong towards the family cultures. Appendix 4 provides the codebook of this thesis to show which code has been put into which family. Putting the codes into families was done by the authors opinion on where aspects belong based on the operationalization.

Putting the codes into families was done for each family. After putting them into families, they were analyzed, which can be seen in the chapter 4 and chapter 5. The output for each family was used to structure this thesis. The families were analyzed based on the conceptual model. The five themes from the model provided the structure for the analysis. In here, the codes were analyzed based on the model and the research question. Chapter 6 provides the results of the mental maps. The used codes together

with the mental maps and the first words the respondents thought of will be analyzed. In here, the storyline of the analysis is based on what the respondents had to say about the border, the border region and their mental map.

Name	Size	Author	Created	Modified
bordercrossing	34	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...
Borderregion	20	Super	29-10-20...	29-10-20...
bordersecurity	12	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...
Challenges in th...	15	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...
cooperation	27	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...
Culture	59	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...
dependency at t...	16	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...
Economy	34	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...
Education	20	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...
first five words	3	Super	26-10-20...	26-10-20...
Juarez/El Paso/...	17	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...
media	12	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...
Mental maps	3	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...
Politics	6	Super	29-10-20...	29-10-20...
push/pull factors	23	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...
Quote	1	Super	29-10-20...	29-10-20...
violence	16	Super	26-10-20...	29-10-20...

Codes in family (59):	Codes not in family (256):
bi-cultural El Paso (1-0)	{0-0}
bi-linugalism in El Paso (2-0)	4 biggest challenges in Mexico/ as huma
border serperates people culturally not t	9/11 on border (2-0)
border use and global justice? (1-0)	age (2-0)
connection economy and culture (1-0)	age Erik (1-0)
cultural cooperation and influence in the	Age Jason (1-0)
cultural differences (1-0)	agegroup (1-0)
cultural differences over time (1-0)	agreements to study on the other side (1
cultural relationship (2-0)	Asymmetries at the border labor cost (1-0
culture (1-0)	biggest challenge 1:hunger (1-0)
history (1-0)	biggest challenge 1:hunger /solution (1-0

Figure 6: Example for families. Source: Author's own with Atlas.ti

The uniqueness of the Paso del Norte region

This chapter provides an overview on the uniqueness of the PdN region. The PdN region distinguishes itself from other regions at the U.S.- Mexico border in several aspects. To develop an understanding of the role of cross-border activities and –cooperation it is essential to get to know the characteristics of the region and why processes can occur here but not in another region.

4.1 Economy

This chapter will outline the state of affairs of the economical situation in the PdN region. Therefore, first a demographic overview will be given. After that the economic situation will be explained.

A demographic overview

The PdN region consists of 3 states in 2 countries: New Mexico and Texas on the U.S. side and Chihuahua on the Mexican side of the border. The location at the border has a strong influence on both sides (the historical background can be found in appendix 1). To develop an understanding on the composition of population of the U.S. side of the border, a demographic overview can be seen in table 5.

	El Paso	Texas	Las Cruces	New Mexico	USA
Population, 2014 estimate	679,036	26,956,958	101,408	2,085,572	318,857,056
Population 2010	649,133	25,146,104	97,636	2,059,192	308,745,538
Persons under 18 years	29.1%	27.3%	24.3%	25.2%	23.3%
Persons 65 years and older	11.2%	10.3%	13.6%	13.2%	14.1%
Hispanic or Latino, percent, 2010	80,7%	37,6%	56,8%	46,3%	17.1%
Language other than English spoken at home, age 5+, 2009-2013	71,2%	34,7%	39,8%	36,1%	20.7%
Hispanic-owned firms, percent, 2007	59,8%	20,7%	31,7%	23,6%	8,3%
Median household income 2009-2013	\$41.406	\$51.900	\$40.040	\$44.927	\$53.046
Persons below poverty level, 2009-2013	21.5%	17.6%	23.1%	20.4%	15.4%

Table 5: Demographic overview of Hispanic population in New Mexico, Texas & USA. Source: United States Census Bureau, 2015

Texas and New Mexico have a much higher percentage of Hispanics as the rest of the country. In Texas the difference of the State Texas and El Paso is more than 40 %. This distinguishes the border

region from the rest of Texas. In the next paragraphs it will also become clear that this causes its own problems and challenges but also provides opportunities. Even if the differences are not as high as in Las Cruces, also here opportunities and challenges can be found. The population decline causes its own problems for the region. One can also see that there are more young people living compared to the rest of the states. Peach (2012, p.18) argues that age is an important factor for income and wealth, because young people mostly do not enter a job a high position and therefore most people also do not

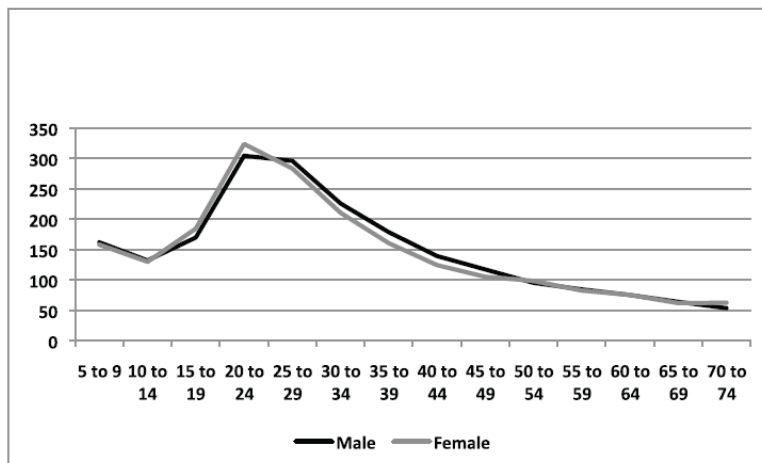


Figure 7: Migration flow to US border states. Peach, 2012, p. 20

have a lot of savings. Historically, the border region had a younger population than the rest of the nation (Peach, 2012, p. 33).

Another problem is the social security aspect because different facilities' are needed for peoples' needs and wishes which the government needs to provide. Marriage, divorce, children are all factors that change rapidly at a younger generation. These are all aspects that need to be taken

into consideration in a region where it is not sure how the U.S. and Mexico will economically develop in the future (Peach, 2012, p.17). Figure 7 confirms that especially people between 20-30 migrate to the U.S. In the future people are aging and less people might migrate and smaller workforce might be found in the region. The composition of the population is also responsible for the infrastructural needs and wishes of a country because these are age-related. This affects not only El Paso and Juarez as border cities but also Las Cruces and the rest of the cities in the border region. The border region is the first stop for people who migrate towards the U.S. which leads towards a responsibility of taking care of them.

Economic situation

"The economy of the North American Borderplex Region that runs along the north-central, western Texas and south-central New Mexico borders, suffered significant decline during the years of the global recession" (Angelouecomics,2015). That is the first sentence of the Strategic Plan 2015-2020 from the Borderplex Alliance and shows that there is a need for economic development in the region. The Borderplex Alliance will be introduced in more detail in the next chapter. The region needs to be more attractive to attract new businesses and create a new economy. The geographical position can be an advantage for the region because one has on the one side the U.S. as a strong economic partner and on the other side Mexico with knowledge and cheaper labor costs. The city of El Paso tries to profile their city as "Can-Do Capital" (Figure 8) and "Best city for job growth" (Figure 9) on public busses.



Figure 8: Bus advertisement on El Paso city busses. Source: Author's own



Figure 9: Bus advertisement on El Paso city busses. Source: Author's own

El Paso and the PdN region have to compete with other strong economic regions like Chicago or New York in their goal to attract businesses. Therefore they need to take advantage of their geographical situation but also of their bi-cultural/bi-lingual background.

Another economic issue in the PdN region is income distribution. The income level in the border region is different compared to the rest of both countries. Figure 10 shows the Real GDP per capita in the U.S. and in Mexico. Generally, one can see that Mexico has a lower GDP than the United States. Taking a closer look at Mexico one can see that the border states have a higher GDP than the other non-border states have. This implies that the Mexican border states have better economy. One reason that the economy is not as bad as one would think, it is also due to the Maquila industry. Nevertheless, Josiah Heyman (personal communication, 25 June 2015) says there might not be a direct connection between economic success and quality of life. Juarez has a good economy but still a lower level of quality of life. Not everybody is sharing this opinion. Jim Peach (personal communication, 3 June 2015) argues that income differences condition everything and quality of life is related to the economic situation of a state. However, Kathy Staudt (personal communication, 17 June 2015) argues that both cities are below the poverty line, even if there is some economic activity in the region. Texas and New Mexico are doing better because the U.S. generally is more prosperous than Mexico. In Juarez the

North America : Real GDP per capita

Canada, United States, Mexico - 2008

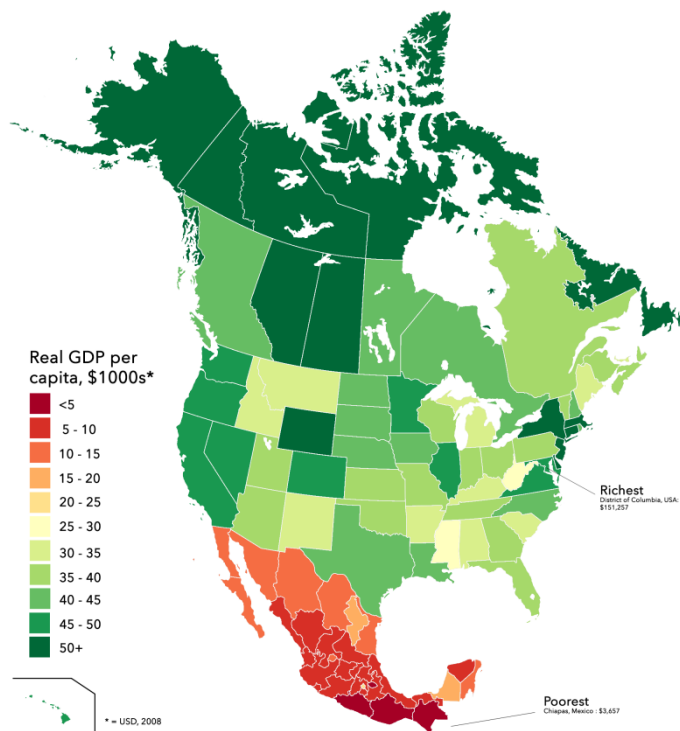


Figure 10: Real GDP in the US and Mexico

Source: blog.expertmarket.com

to New Mexico. One explanation could be that Texas is such a big state where, as mentioned in the political overview, the border region has a unique position in the state. New Mexico has a relatively low GDP.

In the past the border states in Mexico had lower taxes than the rest of the country to stimulate the economy and take advantage of the geographical location and this also causes political struggles (A. Granados, personal communication, 5 June 2015).

Further, Granados says that the geographical position also causes troubles. In Mexico people earn around 4-6\$ a day for an 8-hour working day with the U.S. right on the other side. The U.S. has a really strong economy and might pressure the Mexican economy in order to get economically the most out of it. Nevertheless, both economies are closely linked with each other where the U.S. is the biggest trader of Mexico with an export of 80%. Therefore, Mexico depends a lot on the economy of the U.S. which is not a positive thing (C. Fuentes, personal communication, 17 June 2015). Mexico tries to trade with other countries in Europe or Asia but the proximity to the U.S. market has too many advantages.

To improve the situation of the region one has to improve the economic situation. Human right organization, cultural organizations etc. could change the situation but it is very difficult because they do not have the resources to bring communities and businesses together (I. Coronado, personal communication, 1 June 2015). Besides that Coronado said that inhabitants and companies have to use the El Paso- Ciudad Juarez market because they both have around one million people living in each city. One needs to re-emphasize that and take advantage of this (economical and geographical)

Maquila industry supports the border region economically but the industrialization process started just 40 or 50 years ago in Mexico. On the U.S. border side the process started around the same time but they have a strong country behind them. The nation the states are part of, are important for the economic development, so even if there would be the same economy in the region one cannot forget to take a look at the bigger picture. This shows that the close geographical position of the Mexican border states to the United States are an economic advantage.

On the other hand the border states in the United States do not have the highest GDP of the country (except California). Texas still belongs to the U.S. states with a higher GDP, compared

situation. Another aspect is that it is important to use the other side of the border, even just so that more people can spend money into the local economy (J. Peach, personal communication, 3 June 2015). Kathy Staudt (personal communication, 17 June 2015) says that both sides of the border are not very industrialized. The advantage for the U.S. border cities is that they have a much more prosperous nation where they belong than the Mexican border states.

The Caricature in figure 11 visualize that the U.S. has a lot of power but they also have a lot of demands. Mexico's close connection with U.S. is also shown and also that they have a much better relationship with the U.S. than other Latin American countries. Nevertheless, what also becomes clear is that it is not an equal relationship. The dependency could create a feeling of othering in the U.S. population because of stereotypes and pressuring. Right now, it seems that the U.S. is standing above everything and that they do not respect other states (in the caricature Uncle Sam does not look satisfied). On the other hand Mexico does not seem to really want to be independent of the U.S. because they cannot loosen the ties they have (Johnson, 1980, p. 231).



Figure 11: Caricature about US-Latin American relationship
Source: Johnson, 1980, p.231

Drug economy

Another branch of the economy is the drug economy. Drug smuggling brings a lot of money with it but it is an underground movement and it affects the region negatively. The supply and demand seems to be characteristics for the U.S.- Mexico border. People have been using drugs since the beginning of time in one form or another (A. Granados, personal communication, 5 June 2015). In recent year's people made an important economy out of it, which not only include the use of drugs but also bringing it across the border. Mexico has recently (begin November 2015) legalized the private use of Marijuana and other soft drugs. With this recent change, one cannot predict how it will change the region and the relationship in the future. Also in most U.S. states soft drugs are legal or legal under certain circumstances, for example for medical use.

Even if drugs are now legal in different states, drugs still have an important role. People use the border to bring drugs to their biggest consumer, respectively citizens of the U.S. and therefore the crime rate at the border is automatically higher because they have higher criminal activities for people who use the border (A. Granados, personal communication, 5 June 2015). Especially cocaine is mostly produced in the south American context and then gangs bring it to the border cities and store the drugs and smuggle them. For this reason a lot of corruption takes place because narcotraffickers corrupt the police and the government. Ciudad Juarez and other border cities are the ones to suffer

from these activities (C. Fuentes, personal communication, 17 June 2015). People who live at the border and in the border region experience the violence outcome from these gangs.

Nevertheless, drugs bind the two countries together because it is 'their' economy where the U.S. and Mexico seem to have a 'supply and demand' relationship (J. Heyman, personal communication, 17 June 2015). Everything seems to be about drugs and money at the border. The bad thing about it is that smuggling is illegal. Legalizing it would also not change the situation because people would always find new illegal things (K. Staudt, personal communication, 17 June 2015).

This close drug supply demand relationship is also important in how people see the region. The biggest economy in the region which ties people together is also the most dangerous, not just because of the drugs but because of the contrabands that come with them, but also the most important economy of the region.

4.2 Culture

"Border identity in the U.S.- Mexico border region is complex because it is influenced by so many factors: culture, communication (including language), ethnicity, trade, history and economics" (Stea et al., 2010, p. 108). The PdN region is a bi-cultural and bi-lingual region in different aspects.

The region has several push- and pull factors, as well as keep-and repel factors, which are related to the cultural background of the region. Culture and economy are closely linked together. For that reason economic opportunities also can be seen as a cultural thing; People from El Paso, or even Las Cruces, are going to Mexico for the good, cheap food and drinks. Another factor are work opportunities. These are economic advantages but it also can be seen as an aspect of the culture in the region because inhabitants have to earn money to afford (cultural) activities. Another aspect is that a lot of people from the U.S. visit the dentist in Mexico because it is cheaper and they also often got a degree from the U.S. Another push factor for several people has been nature and the national parks on the U.S. side of the border. A second aspect is language together with the culture of the region which is important as well. A lot of people in the region are bi-lingual. Culturally, some high-school teaches about the culture in the region. On the U.S. side some schools also teach about the black legend. This already gave a negative image on the Mexicans. This image is often strengthening by the media. People who lived in El Paso and work in Juarez between 2007-2012 were often asked how and why they are still crossing the border because they could not understand it (C. Fuentes, personal communication, 17 June 2015). Nevertheless, there are also positive cultural things that are celebrated for example the Cinco de Mayo festival (picture cover page) which celebrates the Mexican independence and they also celebrate it on the U.S. side.

Another aspect is legal and illegal migration. In the U.S. there is an anti-migration sentiment because U.S.-Americans think it is bad for their economy. According to a professor at UACJ (A. Granados, personal communication, 5 June 2015) the opposite is the case because immigrants can do a lot of things and work, which other people do not want to do. If they migrate legally they can help the economy. Illegal migration often comes from people migrate to the U.S. from other South American countries where a low quality of life can be found as well. On the other side, the region needs tourism, and people are not just critical about migrants but they also often to not see a

difference between them and tourists of the region. Due to this fact inhabitants are often not comfortable with the region, if they are not familiar with this unique cultural situation. Nevertheless, for people who are living in the region a longer time, this is a normal situation and they accepted the situation.

Culture in this region is very much affected by the circumstances of the region. The population dynamics but also (economic) push- and pull factors influence the culture in this region. People try to get the best of all situations and take the cultural and economic advantage because (mostly) they are free in their decision if they have a valid passport.

Black Legend, Spanish Leyenda Negra, term indicating an unfavourable image of Spain and Spaniards, accusing them of cruelty and intolerance, formerly prevalent in the works of many non-Spanish, and especially Protestant, historians. The Black Legend remained particularly strong in the United States throughout the 19th century. It was kept alive by the Mexican War of 1846 and the subsequent need to deal with a Spanish-speaking but mixed-race population within its borders.

(Source: Britannica)

4.3 Politics

“There is an old saying in the border region that Washington DC and Mexico DF make the rules and we figure out how to get around those” (J. Peach, personal communication, 3 June 2015). The two capital cities are quite far away from the border which also makes it difficult for Washington DC and Mexico City to exactly know what is going on at the border. People at the border feel more connected to the border and the border region then to Washington DC or Mexico City if they live there for a longer time and got familiar with the region. Washington DC and Mexico city are geographically far away and inhabitants of the northern PdN region seem to be unfamiliar with these cities and the cultural difference is too big. This could be a visa versa situation because border people have a closer connection and relationships with New Mexico or Texas than with the national capital cities and the people in the capital also have a bigger connection with their own region. The border region is far away from the two capital cities of those two big countries and the border region does not have first priority on other issues then border security, which will be explained in the next paragraph. This feeling of belonging in the border regions and the two capital regions makes it harder to understand, accept and cooperate with each other.

Tony Payan (2006, p. 16) calls this a democratic deficit. Washington DC can be seen as disturbing factor to border residents because as already mentioned, politicians perceive the border as a dangerous place which poses a threat to national security, especially after 9/11. Therefore decisions for the border come from above and not from below, where they have the strongest effect. He also argues that if new policies are made, people who will be affected by these policies will never be consulted. Their right to self-government is denied. This can be seen especially in Texas where also their own state government is afraid of the border. Texas itself is a political controversy state

concerning the border region. It is a republican state, with a democratic border region. Dealing with this political system makes it difficult for the border region to cooperate with Mexico due to existing binding policies.

4.4 Border security

“The U.S.-Mexican border es una herida abierta [is an open wound] where the Third world grates against the first and bleeds” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p.4). The border between the two states has always been difficult to deal with. 9/11, the declared war on terror, the Real ID act and the war on drugs are just a few examples that affect and affected border security. The clash between two, very different kinds of world causes troubles. The U.S. also has the mission to protect the border in order to protect their own people. On the other hand also trade has to be stimulated because almost 80% of the Mexican export is going to the United States. NAFTA deals with the trade and the economic situation across the border, but at the same time one should not forget that there is a big fence protecting the U.S. from illegal immigrants.

Beginning of 2015 the Texas House and Senate allocated a total of \$800 million to border security which is criticized from people at the border region. The democrats at the border were outraged that the government decided to go over the original budget and spend even more money on border security. Thanks to the fact that border security will be strengthened, a lot of new jobs for Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will be created for troops and suppliers for border security equipment.

Figure 12 shows that the border checkpoints are not just on the border but also around 75 miles north and south of the border. They form an additional checkpoint to people to see if they are allowed to enter the ‘whole’ U.S. or if they have to stay in the border region area. Nevertheless these secondary checkpoints allow people to move more free in this area if they have a special license plate. This stimulates cross-border activities in the region. Besides that, the goal of protecting the border, and spend more and more money on border security is to control money-, arms-, drugs and people

flows. This just can happen if evaluations take place on the implementation of border security; What is the use of border security and how does it affect the people who are living there (C. Fuentes, personal communication, 17 June 2015)? Evaluation, and a clear beforehand definition, is important to improve

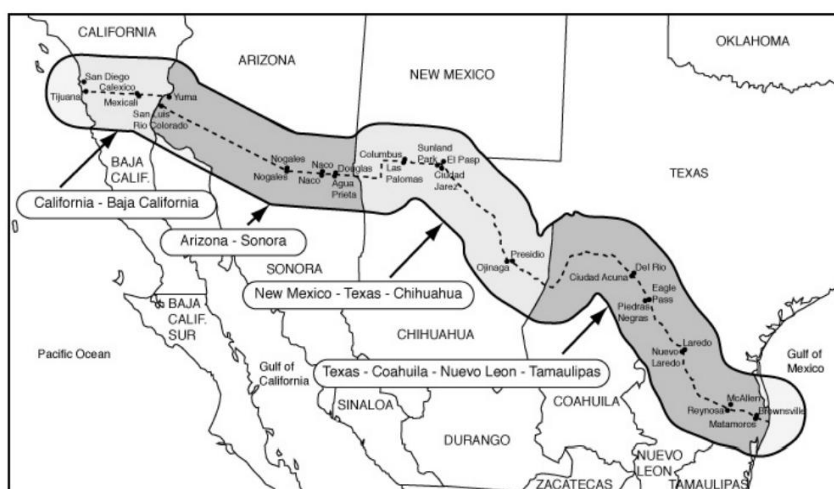


Figure 12: U.S. Border and Security patrol. Source: AAMVA (2012). Best Practices Guide

border security rather than just creating fear. The state government spends the money but they do not even know what exactly where the money went and this has to change (Schladen, 2015).

So did border security succeed? A lot of illegal activities are still happening at the border, the war on terror is still being fought (even if it might be under a different name) and drugs are still passing the border. On the other hand, people who want to go to the other side, visiting family members or go shopping, have to wait in line a long time to enter the U.S., which makes it less attractive for them to cross unless they have to. Furthermore, there is a need for carrying passports and other legal documents which some people on the Mexican side do not have so they are not allowed to cross or see family members on the U.S. side. On the other hand people who are frequent traveler can apply for a document which allows them to use the fast line and reduce waiting enormously but this involves a lot of paperwork.

4.5 Education as a pillar for the future

The current situation has to be changed and the hope for change lies within the next generation. The current generation might have more difficulties to accept the transforming region, where they are starting to cooperate and listen to each other. At the end of this chapter, education will be elaborated based on an example.

One problem of the region is education. Even if all three cities have their own university, a lot of people did not finish their degree or if they have they move away from the region to get more possibilities. Right now many children in Mexico do not have the opportunity to finish school (C. Fuentes, personal communication, 17 June 2015). Therefore the government needs to invest more in education to improve quality of life and the quality of the labor force. Education is an important issue to improve the economic situation and attract higher quality businesses.

Most teachers on both sides of the border are not well paid in the border region (J. Peach, personal communication, 3 June 2015). Therefore, most highly-educated, motivated teachers are going to other regions to earn more money. Education is one aspect that creates workforce for and in the future. The Borderplex Alliance is a bi-national economic alliance who is helping to facilitate cross-border activities. They are working on this project, they try to improve and equalize the education system in the three 3 states, so that when students have their degrees it is easier for them to work together. A better education also leads to higher educated people but also to a diversification of workforces. In the future this would also lead towards a better economy in the region if they would have more higher educated people (Jim Peach, personal communication, 3 June 2015). The advantage a lot of students have in the region, is that a lot of people are bi-lingual and bi-cultural and one has to take advantage of this situation.

Cross-border activities

5.1 Border crossing

Josiah Heyman (personal communication, 25 June 2015) says “Well, I think that people are attracted to the border in both countries they are attracted to the border because it is a place of both economic opportunity but also personal, cultural growth and expression.” This shows that people could take more advantage of crossing the border more frequently. Nevertheless, there are several obstacles to overcome when crossing the border for example time and documentation.

In the past people did not need a lot of paperwork to cross the border. The feeling of ‘them’ and ‘us’ could have been less present at this time because they could cross whenever they wanted and they knew both sides of the border. 40 years ago the two cities had a downtown plaza, some family businesses but not a lot of industry. It was a normal thing for people to cross without taking a lot of effort to do so. People could decide where they wanted to live, which leads to split of families after the border got closed, because one member decided to live in Texas or New Mexico and the other one decided to live in Chihuahua (A. Granados, personal communication, 5 June 2015). Going back to the 1930, when there were alcohol restrictions in the U.S., people went to Juarez to have some drinks, without controls or problems. Using the border for their own comfort created a feeling of familiarity and no differences. This border crossing habit did not change in the following years and it has been a habit of people to cross the border, just like going to another city. This freedom of crossing the border was socially important. People made use of the international environment and were not afraid to cross because they knew what they could expect at the other side of the border. This past also forms the base for a (cultural) tight border region. The close downtowns and the freedom of the past, led towards a close connection between the U.S. and Mexico.

When crossing the border one has to enter through one of the three Point of Entry (PoE) which consist of three bridges in El Paso/Juarez. It causes up to three hours of waiting to enter the U.S. (especially at the Downtown bridge). The waiting time has a very negative impact on peoples’ crossing behavior, even if some have a Fast line card and can cross faster (C. Fuentes, personal communication, 17 June 2015). People can apply for a Fast line card which can take several months. If the application is approved, people can cross the border faster and with less control. However, the procedure takes a lot of time and border security do not always approve it, which does not make it a useful tool for people who cross on an irregular basis. Businesses have more troubles to cooperate when for example the many Korean company workers work in Juarez and live in El Paso or when students go to high school or University at the other side of the border. Crossing the border takes time and people have to consider if it is worth the effort. For bi-lingual workers it is economical better to work in El Paso and live in Juarez because the living conditions are cheaper in Mexico but crossing every day to work takes a lot of time.

5.2 Cross border projects

This paragraph focuses on four different kinds of cross-border projects, the Borderplex Alliance, Union Pacific, the International Water and Boundary commission and Union Ganadera Regional de Chihuahua. These four projects have been chosen to represent some existing cross-border projects in the PdN region and to give an overview on the range of existing projects.

Borderplex Alliance

The Borderplex Alliance tries to improve the four Q's in the region: Quality of Life, Quality of Place, Quality of Workforce and Quality of Industry (Borderplex Alliance, n.d). Quality of life is understood as Art & Culture, education, sports, parks & recreation or costs of living. Quality of Place refers to transportation, real estate, the government, climate, housing or security. Quality of Workforce refers to the way in how the region can recruit workforce through academics and workforce development (through employer relations, policies and training). The Borderplex Alliance is a non-profit organization and their biggest asset is their communication tool and that they are supported by businesses in the PdN-region. Economic development of the region is in here their biggest goal and challenge for the region (Borderplex Alliance, n.d). For the reason that they are a non-profit organization their legal tools are limited. They have to achieve their goal by mediating between partners and by attracting new businesses to the region at the same time.

According to the Vice-president of education & workforce development, Lydia Nesbitt-Arronte (personal communication, 22 June 2015), the aspects that helps facilitate cross-border cooperation are economics. In her opinion, what drives economic relationships is that people can make money because they can sell their products to people on the other side. Most of the time, people who promote cross-border cooperation have an economic interest because they own industrial parks or have a business that wants to capture the U.S./ Mexico market. These organizations have the resources to promote cross-border cooperation. Nevertheless, the business owner needs to know which aspects are playing an important role in the region and what the people's needs and wishes are. Irasema Coronado (personal communication, 1 June 2015) says that a business owner who wants to promote cross-border cooperation can have a MBA from Harvard but if they do not understand the people in the region and how they live, they have much more difficulties to succeed. In order to solve the problems the region has (drugs, violence, and poverty) everybody needs to develop an understanding of the situation and then they can solve the problems and the Borderplex Alliance is helping with this process. Even if their goal is to improve the economic position, the improvement might also lead to a better understanding. Inhabitants need to become familiar with the region and accept the differences the region has and embrace their social and economic situation. The Borderplex Alliance helps to promote this understanding. Addressing the common issues together and communicate them to the different stakeholders seems to be the only way to solve the problems. The problems are connected with each other and to solve them one has to solve them together. If people see them as independent problems they will not be successful in solving them (J. Peach, personal communication, 3 June 2015).

Union Pacific

A strong economic partner who benefits from better cross-border cooperation is Union Pacific (UP). They moved their company from El Paso to Santa Teresa, New Mexico. There, they improved their economic position. Figure 13 shows two pictures of the new facility in New Mexico where they move to from El Paso.



Figure 13: Fueling machine & size of Union Pacific facility in Santa Teresa. Source: Author's own

Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) is the only company who serves all six major Mexico gateways, which makes them an active partner in cross-border cooperation. Furthermore, UP expects that they have a \$500 million impact for the New Mexico economy and that it will create 3.000 jobs during construction and 600 permanent jobs after they finished the new facility (Union Pacific Railroad, n.d. b). They will position themselves and the region as a strategic focal point for goods movement in southwestern U.S. and towards Mexico. UP's goal to is to achieve a better economic position in the region. The cultural aspect of cross-border cooperation is in here less of importance for them. They take their advantage from the U.S.-Mexico border by using the international atmosphere but also the cheaper production processes Mexico can offer. Nevertheless, their company might has a bigger impact for the region because they create jobs for the people in the region which might connect the region by working for the same company and attract people to their region.

The international Water and Boundary Commission



Figure 14: Border sign at the El Paso Paso del Norte Port of Entry. Source: Author's own

The International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) has responsibilities alongside the whole U.S.-Mexico border. The Rio Grande forms the border in this region. For the reason that water conflicts can be found most of the time the IBWC is also a necessary cross-border agency in this region to mediate between

the states. On the IBWC website it says (n.d) “Our mission is to provide bi-national solutions to issues that arise during the application of United States - Mexico treaties regarding boundary demarcation, national ownership of waters, sanitation, water quality, and flood control in the border region”. It applies the water treaties from Mexico and the U.S. and settles differences that may arise in their application. This federal government agency helps to deal with the water shortage the region is facing. The IBWC is helping to improve the water and boundary situation. They can do that because they are a bi-national governmental organization, established to apply water and boundary treaties and agreements between the U.S. and Mexico.

Union Ganadera Regional de Chihuahua

Another field of cooperation which has a practical impact and sets a good example is the livestock crossings in Santa Teresa. People need a passport to cross the border. To make it easier for trade, cattle need just a physical inspection and then they can run right across the border. In 1991 this facility opened and is the most modern on the U.S.-Mexico border with a capacity to process 5.000 livestock per day. The New Mexico Border Authority (n.d.) says that this is a big practical and economic advantage over other border crossings because Livestock is penned and processed at the border, then they are walking into the U.S. which saves time and transportation costs and minimizing weight loss. On other places this is not the case which increases the costs and adding extra stress to the animals. Doing that, both sides of the border have to work together. A union was founded, the Union Ganadera Regional de Chihuahua, who operates on both sides of the border.

To conclude one can say that there are attempts for cooperation and people are willing to cooperate. In a lot of cases they just do not know how. The above shown that there are four projects which are all economic driven but they have different strategies and tools to reach their vision: The Borderplex Alliance which is focusing on connecting and communicating between the three states, UP which is a business who is working in the region and taking advantage of the geographical location, the IBWC which is a governmental agency helping to apply treaties on both sides of the border and the Ganadera Regional de Chihuahua who sets an example for livestock crossing. All these four projects help facilitate cross-border cooperation and –activities.

5.3 An overview on cross-border cooperation

The region is starting to cooperate. Jim Peach (personal communication, 3 June 2015) says that he thinks that the three cities, for the first since the violent period, recognize that their future is a future that is linked to each other. Things happen now that would not have been possible a couple of years ago.

5.3.1 Economy

Even if the Maquila industry is located on the Mexican side of the border, it affects the U.S. side as well because it influences the whole border region. The position of the Maquila industry in the border region influences the economic position of the PdN region.

The Maquila industry attracts many people and businesses which lead towards fast growing

Mexican border cities. The idea of the Maquila industry was established so that U.S. companies could profit from the low wages in Mexico. An effect of this economic position was the creation of many jobs, especially for lower qualified people with low wages. These people need to find housing or land and this causes an unstructured infrastructural grow. Infrastructure and housing needed to be build fast causing unplanned and unstructured constructions (C. Fuentes, personal communication, 17 June 2015).

In the Maquila industry 75% of the workers are production workers with a low income and low education and skill and the rest are technicians or administrative employees (C. Fuentes, personal communication, 17 June 2015). Because of this polarization, people on the U.S. side or people with higher jobs might not feel familiar with these people. For the reason that the Maquila industry is and was popular in the region the differences between the two border sides might have become bigger. Raising the level of income for high skilled workers would change the economic situation in the region. Nevertheless, the Maquila industry has an advantage in the border region. It created a lot of jobs in the past and the employment rate grew really fast with low paid workers. This seemed positive in the beginning but the workers do not have enough income to pay houses which again leads to infrastructural problems for cheap housing and infrastructure. To change that so people get higher wages, the education system needs to be changed to have more people with a higher level of education that get more salary and could buy their own houses. Higher educated people would attract other businesses to increase the economic position of the region.

Another aspect of the Maquila industry is that they can produce with cheap labor costs. One aspect of globalization is that countries trade with countries who produce with the lowest costs. The U.S. and Mexico can use this as an advantage in their dependent relationship. Mexico is producing cheap products for the U.S., right across the border, and they import the goods with low import costs. For that reason, Mexico can compete with other developed countries and take advantage of its geographical location. Nevertheless, this also leads towards a great dependency from Mexico to the U.S. which makes it more difficult for Mexico to develop. Inhabitants might again see the differences in the region and do less identify themselves with the region because of these differences and that they are not familiar with the people. For the region, the Maquila industry is not a new phenomenon. People got used to it and also remember the impact it had in the past. One example of this economic dependency was when the U.S. was in the recession crisis, Mexico felt the negative impact of it. Therefore, Mexico has to try to develop more trade with other countries to stabilize their own economy, also the Maquila industry (C. Fuentes, personal communication, 17 June 2015).

5.3.2 Culture

One important aspect of culture in this region is language. 80% of the population in El Paso has a Hispanic background. Therefore a lot of people are bi-lingual which also can be seen in Las Cruces but then with a lower percentage. In El Paso and Las Cruces, almost all signs are bi-lingual: in public transport, shops and also some direction signs are in English and in Spanish (figure 15). Speaking Spanish is a social and economic advantage in the region. This also forms one part of the identity of the region. In the region they also developed their own language, spanglish, to communicate with

each other in an easier way.

The sociologist professor Josiah Heyman (personal communication, 25 June 2015) argues that it is never an advantage to just speak Spanish in the region. To find a lower, middle class job that

involve interaction with the public it is an advantage to be bi-lingual. Just speaking Spanish is associated with low skilled working jobs. Bi-lingual's are getting middle class jobs and just English-speaking people are still dominating the high-skilled jobs in many cases. Nevertheless, fluent bi-lingual's will be more valued in the region.

There are always prejudices on both sides of the border (the U.S. wants to dominate the world or that Mexicans are just lazy people). The PdN inhabitants mostly accepted their bi-cultural situation. People get culturally familiar with the region and they also accept it easier. History is still playing a role to some extend but this will change in the future and the positive cultural aspects, like food, are already part of the whole region.



Figure 15: Bi-lingualism in El Paso. Source: Author's own

5.3.3 Politics

Looking at just Texas, one already can see troubles and challenges in the political situation if it comes to political decisions concerning cross-border activities and -cooperation. Figure 16 shows that most voters in Texas vote republican except the border region (in this case El Paso) who votes democrat. Republicans are often more afraid of the border than democrats are. For this reason the border is more protected and seen from the state government as a security problem. The current governor is a republican which leads to a political gap between the border region and the rest of the state. It seems that the republican party has written off the border region because they know that they will not get enough votes for them because of other ideologist values (K. Staudt, personal communication, 17 June 2015). This does not built political trust in the border region. Important issues, such as immigration and border security at the border, are seen different by at the Texan Government and inhabitants of the border region. This might be seen as a vicious circle because the voter turnout rate from people at the border is relatively low because they do not have the feeling that they are heard at the government. The state government might think that they cannot please people at the border region and therefore pay less attention at the border region at all which refers to the sense of belonging again. For this reason they have some kind of a discourse of creating fear of the border and the illegal activities.

New Mexico has mostly democratic voters (figure 17). For this reason there might be fewer struggles than in Texas and also the border region feels connected towards the border and heard by

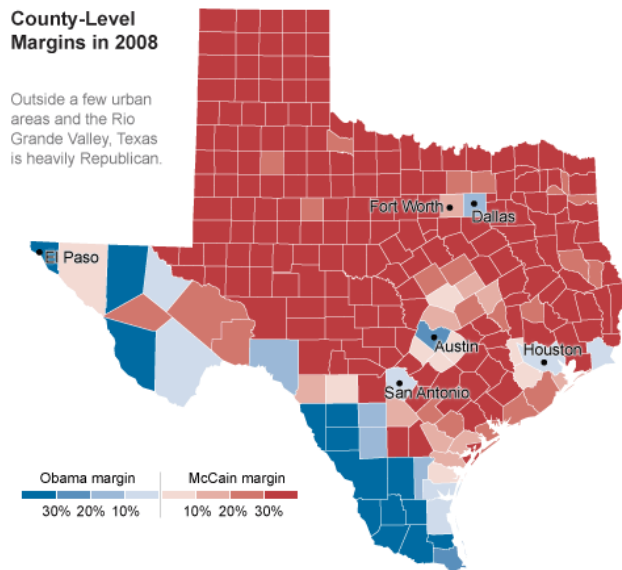


Figure 16: Voters in Texas by county for 2008 election
Source: Uselectionatlas.org, 2012

the governor. On the other side this sense of belonging could also give an explanation why the region feels less connected to the border. They might have their identity in their state and less with other states. It also could be that people in New Mexico feel familiar with their state compared to Texas where the rest of the state differs a lot from the border region.

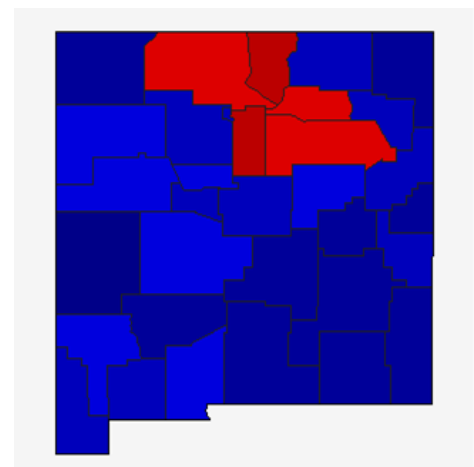


Figure 17: Voters in NM by county for 2010 election
Source: Uselectionatlas.org, 2012

5.3.4 Border security

After 9/11 the border security changed instantly. Alfredo Granados (personal communication, 5 June 2015) experienced the orange alarm system which means that people were not allowed to cross the border anymore, for almost a month. The U.S. shut down the border right after the attack because they were afraid that more Taliban were coming from the south. People who were in Mexico at that moment and wanted to go back to the U.S. had troubles to do so. Besides that, using the border in a useful way rather would have an impact on people but also the economy. Currently, border security is used to create fear but still a lot of drugs, money and arms are passing border control checkpoints both ways. 70% of firearms (legal in the U.S., illegal in Mexico) passed the border and almost 90% of cocaine in the U.S. comes from Mexico who is also the main supplier of marijuana and methamphetamines in the U.S. which leads to an annual sale between \$19 and \$29 Billion (CNN Library, 2015).

Jim Peach (personal communication, 3 June 2015) adds that before 9/11 there was a fair amount of cooperation and interaction at the border and border crossing was pretty easy. People went there and come back very easily to go shopping, see family and friends without passing a (physical) border with a border fence. There was also hope that Mexico and the U.S. would agree on immigration issues if 9/11 would not have taken place before a decision could have been made. Before 9/11 there

was a flow of people and goods and interaction at the border, economically and socially and there had been plans for the future.

Crossing the border now is often experienced as time-consuming and annoying. People have to wait a long time if they want to cross by car which might lead towards a more detailed decision-making process. Pedestrian crossing is less time consuming but then people are less flexible and mobile on the other side of the border because then they have to take public transportation to get somewhere or they have to stay in this area. This might also lead to bigger differences in the region. Crossing became more difficult and if people have not cross before they might be afraid to cross. This might leads towards bordering and othering because they are less familiar with the other side of the border. Especially the younger generation or people who moved towards the region might experience anxiety because they do not know how it has been before with an open border. The new and unknown thing on the other side of the border is something people might be afraid of due to stories they have heard.

5.3.5 Education

Without workforce development and education, which is based on the future generation, it will be hard to attract new businesses to the region. Just 16% of the students in El Paso finished their 4 year high-school degree (L. Nesbitt-Arronte, personal communication, 22 June 2015). This is something they have to change to create more and higher-educated workforce.

The major tool of the Borderplex Alliance is to facilitate the communication between the three cities to achieve workforce development and educated students. Therefore, the three cities have set up an education council each (The Bridge of Southern New Mexico in Las Cruces, Creeed (Council for Regional Economic Expansion and Educational Development) in El Paso and Conredes in Ciudad Juarez). To cope with the three councils the Borderplex Alliance is addressing four aspects: First, Curricula, second through internships, third through visits to manufacturing sites and fourth through research and development. Even if the systems are different they, are connected to some extent and have to be brought onto the same level.

Bringing the councils on the same level has to be realized with a communication tool. The communication works in a way that all three councils are aware of the situation. The Borderplex Alliance functions as a sort mediator between the three cities. They listen to the councils, bring them together around the table and give them advice. They do not have a direct influence in how the three cities have to implement workforce development but they inform and advise the councils what state of affair the other two cities have. Experience showed that the three councils are willing to listen to each other and they are picking up the aspects and run with them. This way they are learning from each other and the Borderplex Alliance is putting the information into a strategic plan so also the national governments are aware of the situation.

Another outcome of this cooperation might be that the next generation lives in an environment where people know more about each other. They might be more aware of the situation on the other side of the border. If they have got their degree they already could have learn different things about

the other side of the border and living in a globalized world. The next generation might have a different perception of the region. Companies, but also the students themselves, should use this knowledge and this open-. mind to further develop this region. Improving and connecting the education system of the three cities might be a first step for the future where they not just improve the economic situation and the workforce development, but also the social perception and where the next generation is aware of their situation but also their possibilities.

Cross-border activities do not seem to have an influence on his understanding because he is familiar with the region and there is less of a (cultural) difference, even if he does not like Las Cruces as a city. He then goes to El Paso for shopping but not for entertainment or food because it is cheaper in Mexico, which again are especially economic pull factors. Nevertheless, he says he feels more secure in the United States border cities (El Paso and Las Cruces) because the taxes go where they are supposed to go in his opinion. This leads to growth and development and not to corruption. Nevertheless, he thinks that the U.S. is less free than Mexico because in the U.S. everything is, or can be, watched by the government.

For the reason that he sees more pull factors in Mexico and that he still has a huge social network in Mexico he crosses the border quite often which leads to being familiar with the situation of crossing the border. When he crosses the border he feels annoyed because he has to wait a long time. A solution for him would be not to open more PoE's but to invest into more employees so that more lines can be open and people could cross faster. For him, the border is more of an obstacle that you have to overcome if you want to go to your friends rather than an obstacle where people should be afraid of. For him the border belongs to the regional identity and people have to accept or even embrace the opportunities on both sides of the border. Cross-border cooperation and – activities do not have an influence in his crossing behavior but his social network has.

His words that first came into his mind were

[*Ciudad Juarez – El Paso, big City, divided, annoying, traffic drugs, industry, maquiladora, dry, hot, dust*]

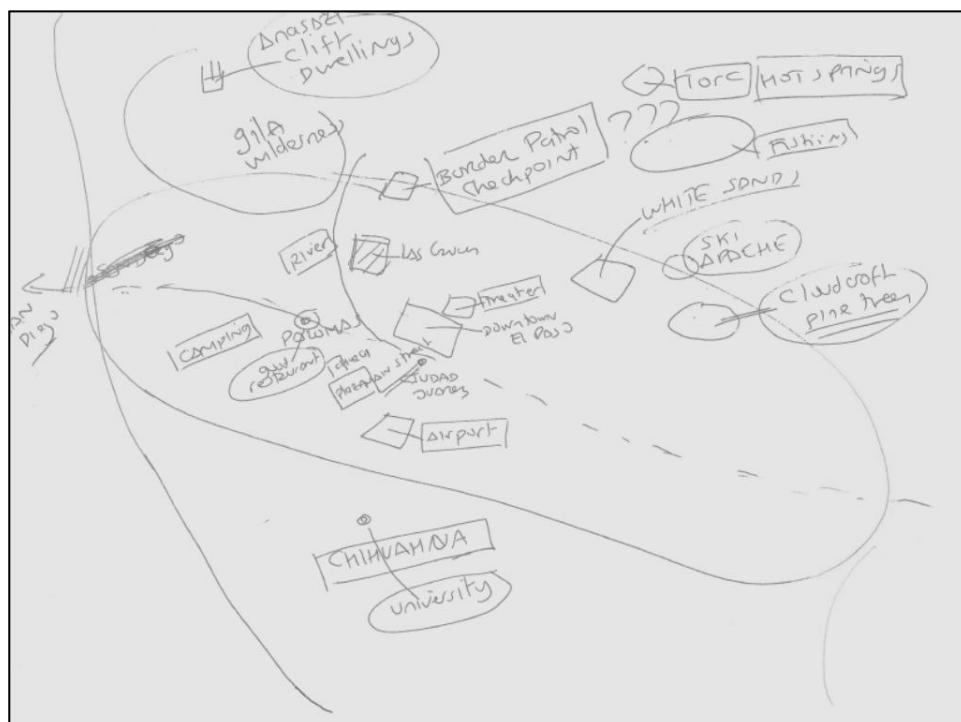
Most words are connected to the border and not the border region. They represent El Paso and Juarez and the effects of a border crossing which reflects his familiarity with both sides of the border, even if he prefers the Mexican side. Besides that, he links the border to drugs trafficking and the Maquiladora. Nothing refers to the border region except the climate. He is bordering the region by just thinking of the border cities but not of the wider border region. There are no words which reflect any form of cooperation which shows that it is not as important for him as the border itself.

Taking a closer look at his mental map one can see that he barely draws places in his current place of living but just places in El Paso and Juarez. In here, Juarez is also much more detailed than El Paso which indicates his sense of belonging towards the “other side” of the border which also can be seen in his detailed (graphical) understanding of the city. He does not have a strong connection towards Las Cruces. For him there are not a lot of interesting activities in Las Cruces, instead push-factors can be found to go to other cities. He has a feeling of “them” and “us” not across the border but within the region because of push- and pull factors of Las Cruces and El Paso/Juarez. When he thinks of the PdN region he thinks more of the border than of the region. When he talks about the region, there is no form of othering of the region even if he is bordering the region. For him, Ciudad Juarez has more to offer, food and activities, than U.S. cities even if he lives in the U.S. El Paso has more pull factors because of the big malls they have but he also sees these two cities as one big city which is divided by a big fence. In his point of view there are not a lot of positive things about Las Cruces, even

if he just has to live there temporary. The Mexican food and even Chinese food is better and cheaper in Ciudad Juarez. Food and low cost are pull factors for him to be on the Mexican side of the border, which are economic reasons in the first place but also a cultural (food) aspect in the second place. Las Cruces there is just nothing interesting to him, except his job. He also says that he thinks the people in Las Cruces are less connected to the border and are not interested to cross the border and that they are boring in not doing so, but they seem happy with it. For him, it seems that people in Las Cruces are less interested in expanding their knowledge by exploring something new. Novelty seems to be something people have less interest in, according to him. Being familiar with the way things are, seems more applicable for people in Las Cruces.

He draws the border quite detailed which shows that there still is a distinction for him of the border. Nevertheless, because he also drew the streets of Ciudad Juarez very detailed it shows that he knows the region very well and he just sees the border as another street, which is what he said when he described the border as annoying but not as a visible line. For these reasons he feels home on both sides of the border and sees the border as another street but not as a dangerous or violent obstacle. Bordering does not find place here but he judges the region and the city with the possibilities they offer, which is his way of bordering. Cross-border activities do not seem to affect his decision making and the way he understands the PdN region.

The second mental map is from Inigio. He is a history professor at NMSU and has lived in Las Cruces since 1999. He has a strong connection towards Latin America, also because his origins are in Peru and part of his family still lives there. His immediate family lives in Las Cruces and his friends are in Las Cruces and from other parts of the world but not in Juarez. His social network is related to this region and because he has been living in this region so long he seems to be familiar with the region and he has a sense of belonging towards the PdN region.



Mental map 2:
History
professor in Las
Cruces

He used to cross the border and he was familiar with crossing the border but when Ciudad Juarez became the 'murder capital' he stopped crossing, also because of the negative information he heard about Juarez. His formation of opinion influenced the decision of not crossing the border anymore in the past. He did not experienced the violence personally but from stories people told him and from the media. The novelty aspect, the unknown and strangeness and the difference of the other side, stopped him from crossing. Besides that, the media created a very violent picture, a bad picture but from people he talked to he knew that most of the stories where true, because he knew people who knew people who got killed. The way media dealt with the knowledge and information created a feeling of difference, unfamiliarity and strangeness in the region. When he crossed the border the first time after the violence he felt strange because of the stories and his image he had about Juarez. He became unfamiliar with the other side and still had to overcome the difference between "we" and "they" during that first time he crossed the border. Nowadays, when he flies to Peru, he flies from the airport in Ciudad Juarez because it is easier and cheaper and his image of Juarez has improved. For him cross-border activities seem to have an influence in his understanding of the region. When he thought it was not safe anymore to cross, he did not cross because he felt unfamiliar. Nowadays, he believes it could be safe to cross again, due to the taken measures and a better image he got about the region. The only reason he does not cross regularly again is because he lost the habit to do that. His sense of belonging is in the region, but unfamiliarity and dissonance stopped him from crossing in the past and now he has to get familiar again.

His mental map looks different than Hugo's map. In his mental map the second border patrol checkpoints (45 miles range) in the region seem to be central. It seems, in the map that the border patrol checkpoints are a circle around the region and define the region. Everything in the region seems to be "one region" for him. The border is illustrated with a broken line and not very accurate. When he started drawing the map he started to draw the Plaza in Juarez, not Las Cruces where he lives. For him Las Cruces seems to be empty with not a lot of people on the street and the same goes for El Paso which are push-factors of the region. He drew Las Cruces and El Paso just with the names because for him there are so many things to do and doing that he sees the city with a general point of view and not just special activities. This refers towards a sense of belonging towards the region because he sees the cities as places of home and opportunities. Further, he drew special activities in the region, like White Sands or Ski Apache. This shows that he sees the region as a whole, even when he does not go to Juarez. For him it seems that this was just a violent place in the region rather than a violent city in another country.

His first words that came into his mind were

[*Line, fence, poverty, art, crossing*]

These are rather negative words, even if he described the region as one region and it seems that he has a sense of belonging towards the region. Also all words are reflections on the border and not on the region. Realizing this he said this should not be the words that first come into his mind when thinking of the region. For this reason he said other words after thinking of the region again.

Desert, geography, energy, dynamism, dynamic region, opportunity, connection

These words seem to be more positive and they see the region as a dynamic place, with opportunities and a unique geography. Now, the words are reflecting more on the border region.

For him there is no bordering in the case of countries or people but a bordering of cities and activities. He borders himself from Juarez in the past because it was too violent, even if he does not want to that (anymore). For him, in the future they should open up instead of closing down the border. Everything in the world becomes connected so why closing? The region has opportunities and New Mexico is already opening up towards Mexico, where Texas has to follow if they want to create cross-border cooperation. The openness they have for trade should also be seen in some way for the people who live in the region. His first idea of the region is just the border itself but when he thinks more about the region, he experiences the region as dynamic region. Cross-border cooperation and other cross-border activities do affect his understanding of the region.

The third mental map is from Jim. He lives in Las Cruces since the 1980 and works at NMSU as a professor of economics since then. Living in the region so long also leads to a social network in the region which he has and creating a sense of belonging and familiarity towards Las Cruces, but also the PdN region and living in this border area. Before the violent period he used to cross the border frequently. After the violent period he lost the habit of crossing the border and go to restaurants or bars in Juarez. When he was younger he went to Mexico really often and spent there some time on his own. It felt safe to him, at least not more unsafe than any city in the U.S., probably even safer. An explanation for him is that Mexico has a long history in welcoming strangers as a part of their culture.



Mental map 3:
Professor of
economic in Las
Cruces

His mental map shows the whole U.S.-Mexico border where the states can be seen, geographically very detailed. For him there are no specific places where he goes to instead there are important cities to him along the whole border. His sense of belonging does not only refer to the region but to the whole U.S.-Mexico border. One explanation is that he travelled along the whole border several times and he also crossed the border in many different places. He sees the whole region and entering back to the United States always felt strange for him in the past. Showing passport and papers when he wants to enter his own country makes him feel like a stranger in his own country. In his opinion, this is one outcome of cross-border activities which did not help to connect the region. One advantage of the region for him is that the cultures and the two countries are so close together. Further, the international attitude and the independency of border people are aspects that fascinated him. On the other side he also noticed that the poverty rises from west to east along the border for no particular reason. For him that is one aspect of the region that he likes to change, but which is really difficult.

His first words of the region were

Rapid population growth, poverty, environmental issues, air pollution, water pollution, the importance of history, lack of understanding of the central governments

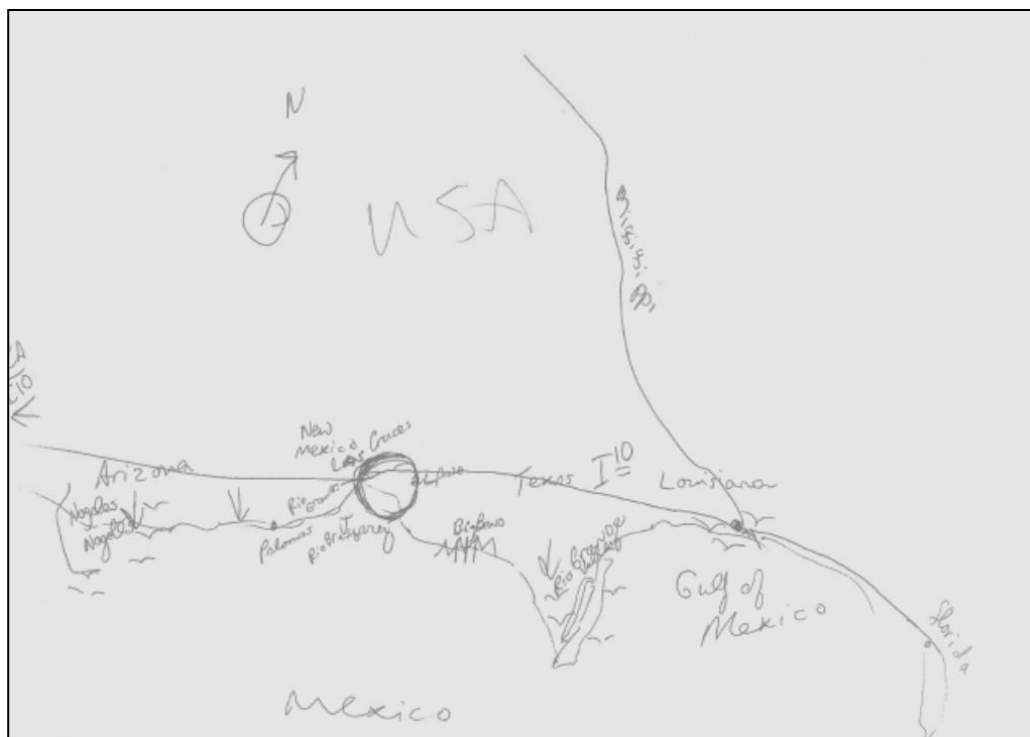
The first four words are nor positive nor negative but a state of affairs of the region and facts where he did research on. The last word is a description of his opinion of the region. What these words also have in common is that they are applicable to both sides of the region.

He is open-minded towards other cultures and he also travelled a lot in the past which creates a familiarity and a sense of belonging. He is curious about Mexico but he lost the habit to cross the border because of the violence and he wants to keep himself safe and not because it is a city in Mexico but a general safety issue. He also would avoid U.S. cities if they were murder cities and develop a feeling of indifference. This behavior influenced by affection seems to be temporary because during time, his behavior influenced by affection has changed and seems to be dependent on the feeling of being safe. Cross-border cooperation of the region would help him to make a habit again of crossing the border and change his behavior influenced by affection.

The fourth map is from Molly. Molly lived in Las Cruces for 23 years. She studied Anthropology and did go to grad school in Latin American Studies but she did not receive her degree there. Instead she got a degree in library and information science. In recent years she coordinates the Fronteralist mailing list which provides news on how the situation is in Mexico and she works in the library at NMSU. Her interest in Latin America developed with several journeys to Latin America. She seems to have enough knowledge of the region and the situation the region is facing to form her opinion of the cultural and economic situation of the PdN region.

She crosses the border regularly for business and for leisure. Most of the time when she crosses the border, somebody picks her up at the other side. She is familiar with crossing the border but being there on her own still leaves her with a feeling of strangeness. She also has good friends in

Juarez. Her social network is on both sides of the border and not just in Las Cruces. In her opinion people do not know what is going on in Juarez if they do not talk to the people there. In her opinion there are also a lot of dangerous places in the U.S. where people do not want to go to. It seems that her sense of belonging is in the region because she has her social network in the region and she has enough knowledge.



Mental map 4: NMSU librarian

When drawing the mental map she first draws the border line. This might be an indication that in her mind the border has a big influence even if she has friends in Mexico and her sense of belonging is in the region. The border line is a really important aspect in the regional identity. It seems that the border for her has more of a physical impact than a mental impact. She also draws the I10 Highway because she sees this highway as the northern border of the regional identity which separates the region from the rest of the United States. She always lived south of the I10 all her life which makes it a special border to her.

Furthermore, she really likes the nature in New Mexico and Texas, the birds and the Rio Grande Valley and especially the Big Bent. For her Juarez is just too big and urban and she feels that these are keep-factors. She loves nature and in Juarez and El Paso there is not a lot of nature because these are such big cities. She does not make a difference of the region based on the countries but based on the geographical location. In her opinion, border police and their activities disturbing the nature of this area. According to her geography really defines the region and her sense of belonging and in Juarez, and maybe El Paso, there are just too many people whereas in Las Cruces less people live which is why she prefers living in Las Cruces. She is familiar with nature and Las Cruces. Also cross-border cooperation and –activities could not change that because they only would destroy the natural attractiveness of the region.

The first words that come into her mind are

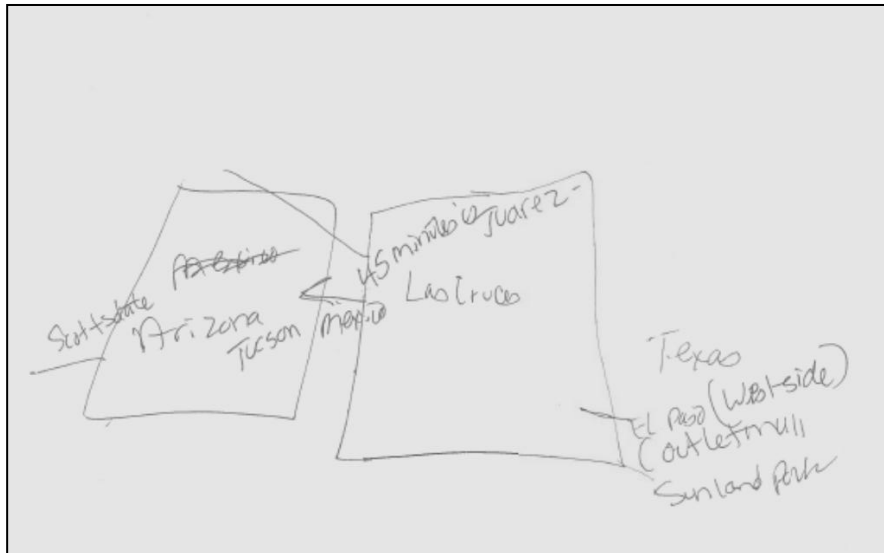
Summer, heat, dust, mountain, sky, security, poverty

The first five words are all related to nature. This shows that nature is a pull factor of the region to her and that this comes also in importance before the last two words, security and poverty, which seem to be the push factors of the region. Mexico has fewer national parks than the U.S. has at the border. Because these aspects are important to her she defines the region by nature and people she knows but less by country.

The last mental map is different compared to the first four maps. The fifth mental map is from Susan, who is 57, she moved to Las Cruces 11 years ago and works as an administrative assistant at NMSU. Before she lived Syracuse, New York where it is green is what she said immediately. This already shows that the “brown” of the PdN region creates unfamiliarity, no sense of belonging and strangeness of the region and that green is a pull-factor for her. Two of her children live in Arizona and she lives in Las Cruces with her husband. For personal reasons they had to move to a warmer and drier climate and they chose Las Cruces. She still has friends in New York but she also made friends in Las Cruces about 5 years ago. Her social network is split up over the places she lived in or where her family now lives. She does not know anybody in Juarez or El Paso but she also does not want to. She heard stories about the other side and therefore it does not seem interesting to her to get to know somebody over there and the same goes for El Paso. She borders the other side of the border and makes a strong distinction between “them” and “us”. Every few month she goes to the malls in El Paso or to the airport but she never went to Downtown El Paso. The mall or the airport are the only pull-factors of El Paso but she still has a feeling of strangeness going there.

For her, El Paso and Juarez form one big dangerous city. In the time she lived here, it also just became more dangerous and violent in her point of view. There is nothing of interest in the ‘big city’. Everything she finds are just repel factors such as crime and more brown and dirt, which she already has in Las Cruces. For her, the aspect that El Paso should be the safest medium sized city in the U.S. seems silly to her and she does not believe it because it is so close to Juarez. Cross-border activities and the fact that El Paso should be safe are aspect she does not believe and they also would probably not change her point of view on the region.

Las Cruces is a poor city with no real economy and just a few economic pull factors in her opinion. Besides that the culture is not diverse enough in the region, with just the Mexican influence. Las Cruces is not open for new people and the social norm seems that they do not want to change in any direction. Further, she thinks that Las Cruces is a depressing town with not a lot of activities. It is a town for old retired people and not for young people even if they have NMSU. Young people study here and then go away again. The feeling of being a minority as an Anglosaxon is not a pretty feeling for her.



Mental map 5: Administrative assistant NMSU

Her mental map does not include a border line. She draws the Westside of El Paso with the Outlet mall and Juarez which is 'just 45 minutes' away. Also Las Cruces is one big square for her instead of a place with different activities. She also drew Arizona, together with Scottsdale and Tucson, in another square. She likes that Arizona is denser populated and there are more different cultures and where Americans are not a minority group. Her map is not very detailed which also shows that she cannot identify herself with the region nor the border because nothing seems of importance to her. In her opinion, the situation could change if more economy would be attracted to Las Cruces even if she does not believe in cooperation.

The first five words that come into her mind are

Mexicans, snake, brown, dirt, poverty

Already in the beginning she described beautiful New York and that she loved back east which reflects the regional identity she has towards the east coast. She never travelled to other countries, except Canada. She is unfamiliar with Mexico, and also El Paso and the whole border region. In her opinion also New Mexico has nothing 'New' and it is just like Mexico which confirms that her sense of belonging is not in the PdN region. She has a social network in the region but still a stronger connection towards the east coast or Arizona. Nature is for her an aspect that really is bad in the region, compared to Molly's opinion. One explanation could be that she grew up in New York where it is really green and where she lived a long time and became familiar with this region. Molly always lived in the PdN region and just knows this region and appreciates this region. Susan does not appreciate the pull-factors of the region and has a strong feeling of othering towards the PdN region but especially towards Mexico and El Paso.

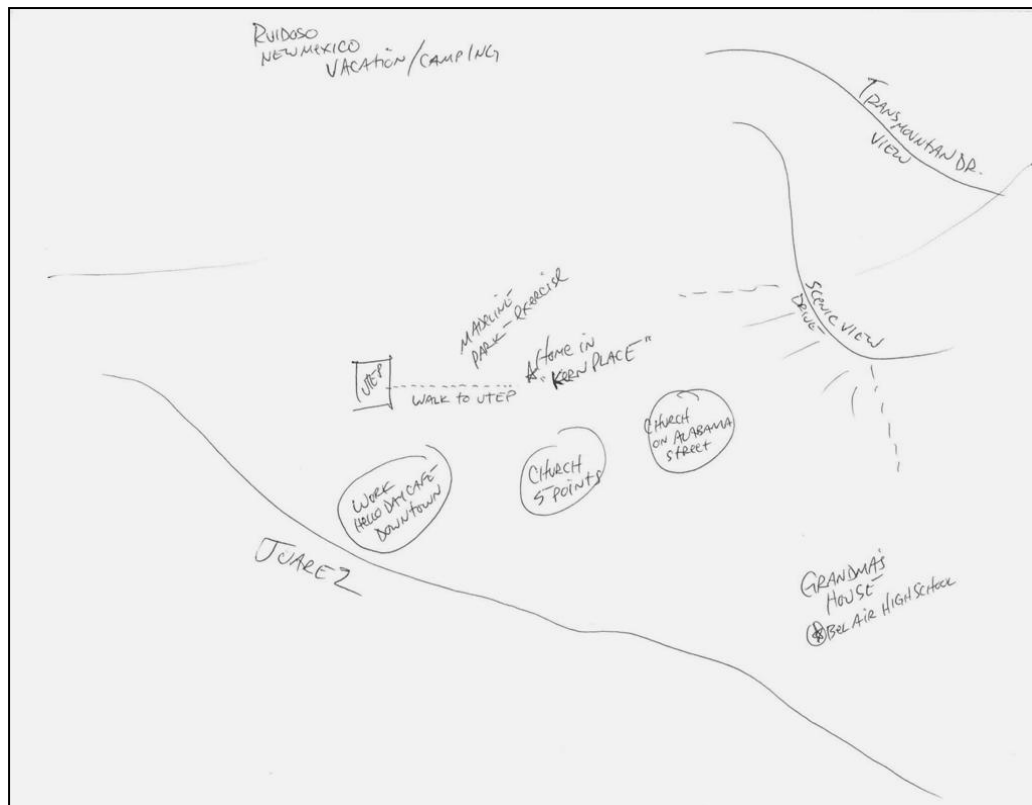
So how do people in Las Cruces see their region? One can say that they all have all three cities on the map, in one way or another. Most people who have travelled before are not bordering or othering the

region. They are bordering Juarez just because it was really dangerous and violent a few years ago and they have been unfamiliar with the city during that violent time. Now Juarez is opening up again, but most people from Las Cruces lost the habit to cross the border. The person who never travelled to a non-western country before also bordered Juarez, and even El Paso. Knowledge also seems to be a factor. Because Las Cruces is around 80 kilometers away from the border, people experience the influence of the cities directly at the border, but still there is some distance which makes them not directly affected by the effects the border has. When people in Las Cruces want to go north, for example 40 kilometers to White Sands, they have to go again through border control. Living in Las Cruces is 'annoying' because one live far away from the border which provides pull-factors and opportunities of crossing but still close enough to be in a border control radius and feel controlled all the time which can be seen as a repel-factor of the region.

6.1.2 How people see the region in El Paso

The first mental map is from Jason who is 39 and lives in El Paso. He grew up in El Paso but when he was 22 he moved to Austin, Texas where he lived for 17 years and he just came back to the region recently. His immediate family always lived in El Paso therefore he concludes that his ties to El Paso are deep and that he is familiar with the region and has a sense of belonging towards the region. Because he lived a long time in Austin, he has many friends over there, but he also still has good friends in El Paso from before he left. His social network is in the region; he has a strong family connection and they always lived in El Paso. On the other side he was also open to live in a new place for a long time which shows that he is open to new experiences and he had friends in other places which shows that his social network is a little bit divided. For the reason, he did not live in the region during the peak of the violence, he has a different point of view and understanding of the region.

When he lived in El Paso in the past he used to cross the border really often to go to bars etc. and he became familiar with crossing the border and with the other side of the border. Now, since the year that he lives in El Paso he did not have many pull-factors to cross the border. During the violent time in Juarez he knew people who were still crossing the border regularly because they have family on the other side of the border. This provided a feeling of familiarity and information on the situation he could trust. For him this period has to be seen in relation with the facts. He has everything in El Paso that he needs so there are no pull-factors for him to cross now or visit other cities in the border region. He does not plan to move away again anytime soon so he says there is still plenty of time to cross. The fact that El Paso does not always follows the newest trends is a blessing for him because therefore everything is more relaxed in the region which gives him a 'nice kind of breath'. For him this is part of the culture of this region. This laid back community for him is what makes the region unique. The intertwining cultures and where people are doing their things but they also develop a community and friendliness in the region with a line in between is a keep-factor for him.



Mental map 6: Sociologist student at UTEP

In his mental map of the region he first wanted to draw a regional map but then decided to draw it on a smaller scale. His map shows El Paso, a line, Juarez and Ruidoso, which is a city just outside the PdN region, and not Las Cruces or other parts of the region. He draws important places to him in El Paso without defining El Paso with a line. Also Ruidoso as a vacation place close to the region is on the map. Already when he was a child, he spent many summers in Ruidoso and therefore this place belongs to the region to him. Further, the Transmountain drive is on the map where he has a nice view on the city of El Paso and on Ciudad Juarez. He is familiar with El Paso and there are no pull-factors why he has to go to Juarez or Las Cruces.

The first five words that come into his mind are

[*Family, hospitality, culture, (Mexican) food, diversity*]

The words that first come into his mind are all positive for the region and not just the border, even if it seemed that his sense of belonging is just towards El Paso. Family as a first word shows that his social network in the region is quite important to him. Hospitality shows that he appreciates living in a bi-cultural environment of the region but also of the border. This also goes together with culture, food and diversity of the region. One explanation could be that he did not live in the region for a long time since he came back. He heard stories of the 'murder capital' but he did not experience this time by himself. When he was younger he was free to go to Juarez whenever he wanted to and now he can also do that because it is safe again. Missing the violent time and have good memories of the region

lead towards no bordering or othering of the region.

The second mental map is from Erik, who is 26-year old and is doing his masters in sociology while living in El Paso his whole life. He grew up in the region and he never left the region and because of this his social network is in El Paso. Some family members of him are living in Juarez but they cannot cross the border because they do not have a passport. He is not close to this side of the family even if he wishes to be. Some friends he has at UTEP are from Juarez and cross the border everyday to come to UTEP and he thinks that is a very common thing for people to do. Even if he has family on both sides of the border, his social network is on the U.S. side of the border. When he was younger he used to cross the border to do children activities or go to the dentist. He always went there with his parents, so he used to be familiar with the other side. During the violent period his parents decided to not cross the border anymore and he also did not cross the border again since he was a child and now he seems to be unfamiliar with the region because he does not know anything there and there seems to be no need for him to cross. His mom is afraid now to cross the border and she also would like that her children do not cross the border because anything could happen to them.



Mental map 7: Sociologist student at UTEP

His mental map shows some lines but not a concrete border line. When he thinks of the region he just draw El Paso and things he can do in El Paso. There is no Juarez or Las Cruces. His idea of the region focuses on El Paso. He has everything he needs in El Paso: work, family, malls, cinemas and restaurants so there seems to be no need to go somewhere else. He sees New Mexico, especially Ruidoso as a place for Holiday but not for anything else.

The first words that come into his mind are

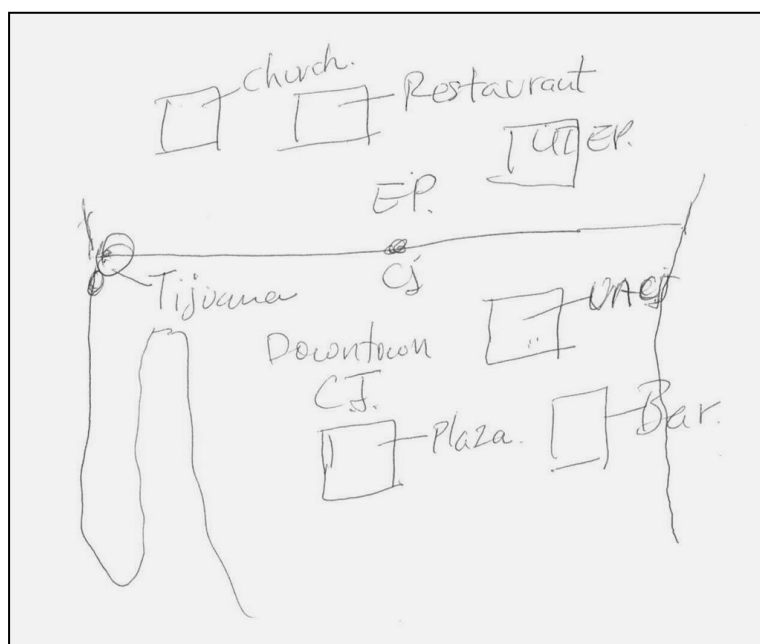
Culture, barrier that divides two cities, violence, corruption, family

His words are a mix of positive and negative words. He says that the border is a barrier that divided the two cities but he did not refer to the border region. Taking a look at his map, he did not draw Juarez so this barrier has to be really strong and he feels unfamiliar with this side of the border. Stories from family members and friends and media do not give him a secure feeling to cross the border and he differs himself from the border and the way he dealt with the information is to not cross the border. He does not see the people on the other side as 'them' but he is bordering the border and does not think of the region as one region. Juarez, and the Mexican side of the border, is a place he rather does not want to go to because of stories he heard and the feeling of strangeness he developed for this reason. If there would be more visible cross-border cooperation this might change his point of view. He seems to be interested in the other side of the border, not to the rest of the border region yet, but there is still too much fear and unfamiliarity with other cities than El Paso.

The third mental map is from Josiah who lives in the El Paso since 2002. Before he lived at other parts of the border in Arizona. When he was a child, his parents moved around a lot so he was used to live in different places. His immediate family is living in El Paso and his friends are mostly Mexicans who are living in El Paso. Living so long in the region, one can say that his social network is in El Paso, less in the border region in general. He crosses the border occasionally in the year, mostly for academic reasons. Between 2007 and 2012 he did not cross the border because it was too violent in the first place but also because he did not had much to do in Juarez so he did not have to cross. In the past he also lived in Mexico to do some academic work but now his work is more related towards the U.S. side.

His mental map involves both sides of the border, but the border is not a clear line, it just seems to be another street in his map which shows a sense of belonging towards the city because he accepts the region as it is. Nevertheless, he drew all the bridges where people can cross to enter Juarez and coming back to El Paso which shows that the border belongs to the regional identity. In his map he drew El Paso with all the places he goes to, downtown, the bordernetwork, friends, bookstore, doctor and other places. Everything he needs to do takes place in El Paso. NMSU, UACJ and COLEF are also on the map because he interacts with these places academically. His personal interest in this city and the border region seems less important.

the border and that he is familiar with both sides of the region. He is crossing the border every day. During the most violent period he tried to stay away from most parts of the city and just went from the crossing points straight to his office to avoid risky and dangerous situations. During this period he also develops a feeling of strangeness because of the violence. Going from home to work takes him 20 minutes which is shorter than most people have to travel to work who work and live in the same city. This is a pull factor for him to live and work on both sides of the border. He can do that because he can use the fast commuter line. Culturally he does not see a big difference in the region because of the demography the region has. Working and living on different sides of the border is not too common yet, but with more cross-border cooperation this could be the case in the future. It seems that he is already ahead of the cross-border development. If cross-border activities would improve, this might also improve his situation and people would see it as a more common thing to do.



Mental map 9:
inhabitant who
lives in EL Paso
and works in
Juarez

His mental map shows the geography of Mexico but a less detailed geography of the U.S. side. Because the COLEF main office is located in Tijuana, he also puts this place on the map because it is an important place to him at the border. In Juarez and El Paso he put the same amount of places he goes to (work, restaurants and church/plaza). He never goes to Las Cruces, even if he said before that Las Cruces belongs to the region. In having activities on both sides of the border he described himself with a transnational identity, which he said is not the most common thing, but he is proud of this identity.

The first words that come into his mind when he thinks of the border region are

Violence, economic opportunities, very long commute lanes, lanes to cross the border, immigrants

For him the first word that came into his mind was violence. He experienced the whole violent period himself and not from stories or the media. Therefore he could develop his own opinion on the situation.

For him the media are creating a wrong picture of what is happening in Mexico by using negative perceptions of the region because they are less familiar with the region. He says that the perception of the Mexican media about the U.S. is also not always good because they say that the U.S. is part of their problem. In the case of drugs the U.S. are the consumers so they are seen as the problem. As a second aspect he said economic opportunities. Almost 2 million people are living in the region which gives a lot of (economic) opportunities of the region. In here, he refers to the border region but also more towards the border itself. These economic opportunities could be used in a better way than they are used now also with an improvement in cross-border cooperation. For the reason that he sees himself as a transnational person there is no form of othering from him. He is also not distinguishing between them and us, also because he lives and works in both countries. For him, cross-border activities are part of this daily life. Nevertheless, he experiences difficulties in crossing but also that people still think that it is a not good thing to do and it seems to be less socially accepted.

The fifth mental map is from Sergio who, the same as Cesar, lives in El Paso but is working in Juarez. He has the same family/ friend network position as Cesar. When he crosses the border he just said that it is really easy because he can use the fast line and does not has to wait a long time to cross the border. He is familiar with crossing because he does not see an obstacle in it. For him, Juarez is safer than most people think, not all parts but most parts of Juarez. The media, but also politicians are creating this bad picture with a wrong perception what is going on in Mexico and Juarez which creates a feeling of different norms and expectations if people visit the city. For him the media are creating a violent picture but this does not support the regional identity.



Mental map 10:
inhabitant who
lives in EL Paso
and works in
Juarez

HIS mental

map shows very detailed where the border, the Rio Grande river, the bridges and where the PoE's are

located, all parts he thinks form the regional identity. He also wrote down where the fence is but also where his home is which reflects his sense of belonging; the fence, the border and his cross-border activities refer to his sense of belonging. It seems that the fence and the border itself belong to his home. For the rest there are not many places on the map. When he thinks of the region, he just draws El Paso and Juarez because he lives and works there. The border region does not include Las Cruces on the map. For the reason that he does cross the border, he supports cross-border activities at the border but for him activities in the border region are of less importance to him. On the Mexican side of the border he also draws some mountain and nature where he goes to. Nevertheless, this map shows clear that the border has a central function in the region.

When he thinks of the border region the first words that come into his mind are

Jobs, opportunities, dynamic place, home, access to best of both worlds

These words are all positive and there is no word of line or crossing which seems to be central in his map. The border is defining the physical regional identity of the region but the sense of belonging also refers to the pull-factors and keep-factors the region has to offer. The words are connected to the border but they are also valid for the border region. He might connect the region with the fence as a push- and a pull-factor at the same time. On the one side he sees the fence as something that gives access to best of both worlds but on the other hand it also divides the regional identity. The two cities are separated but for that reason they can complement each other and they can provide more opportunities. Bordering and othering does, as in Cesar case, not take place because he lives and works on both sides of the border and bases his sense of belonging on this situation. Furthermore, he takes advantage of living and working on both sides of the border and appreciates this situation. Cross-border activities influence his life at the border because he crosses daily but that does not seem to influence his activities in the PdN region.

To conclude the five mental maps from respondents living in El Paso, one can say that all five maps have a strong focus on El Paso and Juarez and their regional identity and sense of belonging is located at the border. They do not focus on the Paso del Norte region but they focus on El Paso. El Paso has enough pull-factors for work and leisure activities. There is no need for them to go to Las Cruces. They experience the Mexican culture in El Paso and inhabitants could cross every day but not everybody is doing that on a regular basis. On the other side, it is common to work and live on both sides of the border and use the advantage of the international atmosphere by crossing every day. This also goes together with what people said in Las Cruces that there are more push-factors in El Paso. El Paso is a much bigger city with all advantages of a big city but still with the Mexican 'laid back' attitude. Cross-border cooperation seems of less importance to people in El Paso. It just would change something in their understanding if Las Cruces would be more included in the region and become more familiar with Las Cruces and the northern part of the region.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, perception means “The ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses” (Oxford University Press, 2015b). As became clear during the analysis, people all have their own opinion and perception of the region but they are often not aware of the situation. This chapter will analyze to what extent the individual perception is influenced by cross-border cooperation and –activities. Figure 18 summarizes the first ideas about the region the respondents had where the size of the word represents the frequency of mentioning.



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responsible for novelty seeking and for the behavior influenced by cognition. Nevertheless, for several people in the northern PdN region the known stimuli already fall outside their bandwidth of familiarity, which is mentioned by Spierings & Van der Velde (2008). If the differences are too big and keep- and repel factors are stronger than the push- and pull factors, people rather decide to stay at home and not cross the border. The known stimuli and keep- and repel factors of the Mexican side are often still unfamiliar, unless people experienced them on their own. Van Houtum (2005) argues that borders are social-territorial constructs. In the PdN it seems that Las Cruces and El Paso both construct their own socio-territorial unit. It seems hard for people to connect these units. Nevertheless, some people see the opportunities the region has economically, because the three cities are so close together and they could take advantage of each other, especially with the location close to Mexico where labor is still cheap. The geographical location should support cross-border cooperation but it does not do that yet. In El Paso the situation seems to be different. The location is so close to Juarez (15 minutes walking to Juarez, but around 45 minutes walking coming back to El Paso due to border patrol) that it seems to be more in their mind economically. Several people are working and living on both sides of the border.

Push- and pull factor can be seen within economy on both sides. El Paso is trying to position themselves as a “Can-do-capital” and “Best-city-for-job-growth”. The same is valid for Juarez. Juarez has a stable, good own economy but they are also dependent on the U.S. This awareness of this situation is present for the citizens of Juarez and might create a feeling of them and us and we and they. They sometimes have the feeling that they are under pressure from the U.S because 80% of their export is going to the U.S. The bandwidth of familiarity concept developed by Spierings & Van der Velde (2008) does not put enough emphasis on the economic situation of a region but sees it as one of the factors. In the PdN region, economy seems to be an important push- or pull factor within the bandwidth of familiarity. Another aspect of the economic situation is that the differences between them and us might decrease. Further, if inhabitants of Las Cruces and El Paso get more familiar with Juarez the cultural differences will decrease. In El Paso, a lot of people already go to Juarez to visit their families or go shopping and because it is more diverse. Diversity as part of novelty seeking is not mentioned by Hirschmann (1980) but it seems to be an important factor in the PdN region. If Las Cruces would have more to offer and not just push-factors they also could go there for leisure activities but this is not the case yet. Another aspect is that if more (diverse) companies could be found in region, the economic position of the region would be stronger and, according to several people, the quality of life will improve which increases the pull factors of the region which would reduce the differences between the two sides.

Cross-border cooperation has a big influence in the inhabitants' understanding of the PdN region. Working together on one project is too difficult if there are different expectations and if people are not familiar with processes, culture and people on the other side. One aspect of cross-border cooperation takes place on an academic level. UACJ, UTEP and NMSU do have a knowledge exchange which could create a lower degree of dissonance in the future because the same norms and value can be taught. Cialdini & Trost (1998) argue that norms are shaped by human behavior. This behavior has to be influenced by cognition and affection in order to achieve successful cross-border cooperation. As a starting point, students and professors have to get familiar with the other side by go and visit/teach at

another university in the region. They can learn from an early stage onwards how it is to cooperate and be familiar with the bi-national situation. In here, the Borderplex Alliance is facilitating cross-border cooperation. One goal they have is to help the future generation to work together. The individual perception is easier to change in a new generation because they are more open to new experiences. Currently the Borderplex Alliance is working on bringing the three education systems to a level where they can work together and were they also accept the degrees but also develop an understanding on how they are working and become familiar with their system. According to Spierings & Van der Velde (2008) familiarity is a dynamic concept and knowledge could change the bandwidth of familiarity people have. Juarez just became a 'safe' city, El Paso is promoting them as a 'Can-do' city and Las Cruces also wants to improve the economic position. Until now it is not visible for inhabitants how the Borderplex Alliance and other businesses want to that and what the other city is doing to achieve integration of the region. To reach their goals they need time to realize all their wishes and needs, decrease the feeling of we/them and they/us which seems to be the biggest social challenge, mostly due to stereotyping and the violent past of Juarez. In the past, people were afraid to cross and they exclude Juarez from the regional identity. Ernste (2010) argues that people just can chose where they want to live when they are aware of the alternatives. This can also reflect the crossing behavior. If people know what they can expect, they are more likely to cross. If they are not aware of the situation, they feel unfamiliar because they do not have sufficient knowledge of the situation. Nevertheless, at one point they also have to trust other peoples' opinion in order to cross if they are not aware of the situation. Most region's inhabitants' experienced the violence first-hand, knew people who got killed or people who knew people. The new generation also knew people but they know that they could change the future of the region. If they already experienced cross-border cooperation and they know about existing cross-border projects, they can also go a step further in cooperating. In 2015, also the state government decided that they need to work together and also to show that Juarez is safe. Several U.S. mayors went to Juarez to show the population that it is safe to cross (Figueroa, 2015). Few years ago they never would have done that and the hope is that more of these actions take place in the future. A shift took place in the understanding of the region and the states try to reduce the bordering and othering of the inhabitants. Nevertheless, people do not always believe the stories told by the media. Especially in Las Cruces they are more concerned about the situation in Juarez and still more hesitated to cross. Also in here, it needs time until people believe that actually something has changed. The Borderplex Alliance already reached that the countries and states are communicating and listening to each other. For the future the hope is that this will increase and they are also working on different projects together (not just academically, but also with innovations etc.).

Another aspect of understanding perceptions influenced by cross-border activities is the inhabitants' sense of belonging of the PdN region. People could have a sense of belonging to the PdN region but still not accept the regional identity. Especially in Las Cruces inhabitants still could not feel that they are part of the border region because there location is not directly at the border. People in El Paso and Juarez often see the city as a divided city but they still stay on their side of the border unless they have to cross. Most people have their social network in the region but mostly just in their own city. People from Juarez and El Paso often have family members on the other side of the border which is why they

cross the border more often and also be more familiar doing that. Van Houtum & Van der Velde (2004) argue that people need a space of belonging. In the PdN region this space of belonging is also defined by the social network and activities that have to take place within the bandwidth of familiarity. If that is the case, they cross to see their family or friends but not to visit the city. Therefore, the space of belonging has less of a physical impact rather and a mental impact. The distinction between them and us is not in peoples' minds because of their social network but they still can be unfamiliar with the people outside their social network. In here, the idea of the divided city is playing a role again. It seems that people have a sense of belonging to their own city and if they have to decide they belong to the El Paso/Juarez region or Las Cruces, but not to the PdN region. There is some sense of bordering which goes together with sense of belonging.

El Paso and Juarez have enough pull-factors so that people can stay in their own city and have everything provided they need. People from Las Cruces see it differently and they appreciate the pull-factors of El Paso but not of Juarez. Juarez is just a step further outside their bandwidth of familiarity. There are a lot of prejudices of Juarez which make it harder for people to be open for new things. This aspect might go together with the different push- en pull factors. If there would be more possibilities people also might to decide to go somewhere else and be familiar with the whole region and not just their city but right now, companies and the cities need to develop more common pull-factors of the region.

The social factor is about culture but also social networks and the mental line in peoples' head. Push- and pull factors as well as keep- and repel factors are important factors concerning the cultural awareness. These factors can be a visible output of cross-border activities.

Another aspect that influences the way people understand the region is the cultural experience they have developed over time. If people actually know people in the other cities or on the other side of the border they are more likely to be more familiar with the region and also with the people on the other side of the border. During the empirical study it came forward that people who have never crossed the border on their own (without parents or a group/class) or have not cross the border at all were more likely to be even more afraid on what is on the other side. Novelty seeking explained by Spierings & Van der Velde (2008) refers to the aim of people to experience new things but they cannot be too new or too unexpected. Then they are unfamiliar and they mentally bordering themselves. Stereotypes are part of the culture which creates a feeling of difference and strangeness in the region. People who crossed the border before and are familiar with the region, are also people who have been outside the U.S./Mexico for example they travelled to Asia/Europe and Africa or they would like to do that. They seem to be more open to known stimuli, as argued by Hirschmann (1980). This also shows that they are more open and interested in other cultures and might identify themselves faster with other cultures. The peoples' cultural experience plays a big role in the cultural awareness and perception of the region. If they are not open to new cultures, especially the Mexican culture, it is harder for them to see the region as one region rather than just their own city. They differ themselves from the other side as well. The known stimuli in the concept from Hirschmann (1980) is not always valid for the decision-making. People can know the culture but they are still afraid to cross because of the knowledge they have. People who are not able to embrace the international

atmosphere (with its advantages and disadvantages) are more negative about the region, less familiar and think a lot needs to be addressed and changed, which also seems to be impossible with cross-border cooperation according to them. People who know the region and accept the international atmosphere (which in this case includes the border security, violence and poverty) are more likely to see the region as one region and they feel home in the region.

The last factor in understanding perceptions is the formation of opinion. How do people form their opinion? They can talk to people, what also a lot of people do because they know people in different cities or on the other side of the border, but they also read and see the news. But what if people make a difference between them and us and do not want to talk to people on the other side because they are unfamiliar? The big newspapers, like the New York Times or Washington Post, are also read by people in the border region. The seeking for new information influences the way people are thinking and experience things in the region because they also want to get to know the something unknown. The 'Bad news are good news' sentiment society has nowadays, does not make it easier for the region to become one region and create pull-factors. In here also politics are playing an important role. The national government, especially the U.S. government does not see the U.S.-Mexico border as an advantage. When they declared the 'war on terror' they were afraid of this border. They try to protect their country and their national security by invest a lot of money in the border fence and –security. The bandwidth of familiarity model by Van Houtum & Van der Velde (2004) argues that people are making the decision. Outside factors, such as the political system, are less included. In the PdN, the national sentiment is playing a role in how people perceive the region. This negative political attitude from the U.S. makes it difficult for the region to develop and improve cross-border activities. The behavior influenced by affection influences the way people think about the region. People who recently moved to the region, often already have a negative image of the region and it is hard to change that perception, even if the model is dynamic. Nevertheless, there are cross-border attempts that provide more knowledge about each other on both sides of the border. The news in U.S. had a very bad campaign during the 'Murder-capital' time, which in this case was the truth and the Mexican media did the same. Seeing the current U.S. news they still state that Juarez is too dangerous to go to which create certain (negative) expectations if people want to go there. Norms and values are unfamiliar and there are not just shaped by human behavior (Cialdini & Trost, 1998) but also by the media and other objective and subjective factors. On the other side, the media also support the news that Juarez is trying to attract more tourists. This article is in the news but it seems that people do not really see it because they have the 'bad' articles in mind. Maybe this will change in the next couple of years but now this image is still in the head of most people. If people would be more in contact with other people they would see that a lot of things are not as bad as they seem in the media. Knowledge and developing knowledge has an important role in facilitating cross-border activities. Especially people who are not as interested in the situation rely on the news. People who are interested in the region and now other people they could develop their own opinion. These people are also the people who are not the most negative on the region. The people who do not know people on the other side and just rely on the news and the stories they hear, they are hard to convince and they are less familiar with the region. When they moved from other states to the region or still live in other states, there is no

desire for them to get to know the people in the PdN region. This might weaken the economic and social position and situation of the PdN region and people become unfamiliar with the other side of the region and make a difference between them and us.

In the beginning of this chapter a word cloud was provided showing the first words that came into the respondents' mind from Las Cruces and El Paso. Figure 19 shows a see-saw on the positive and negative words of the region.

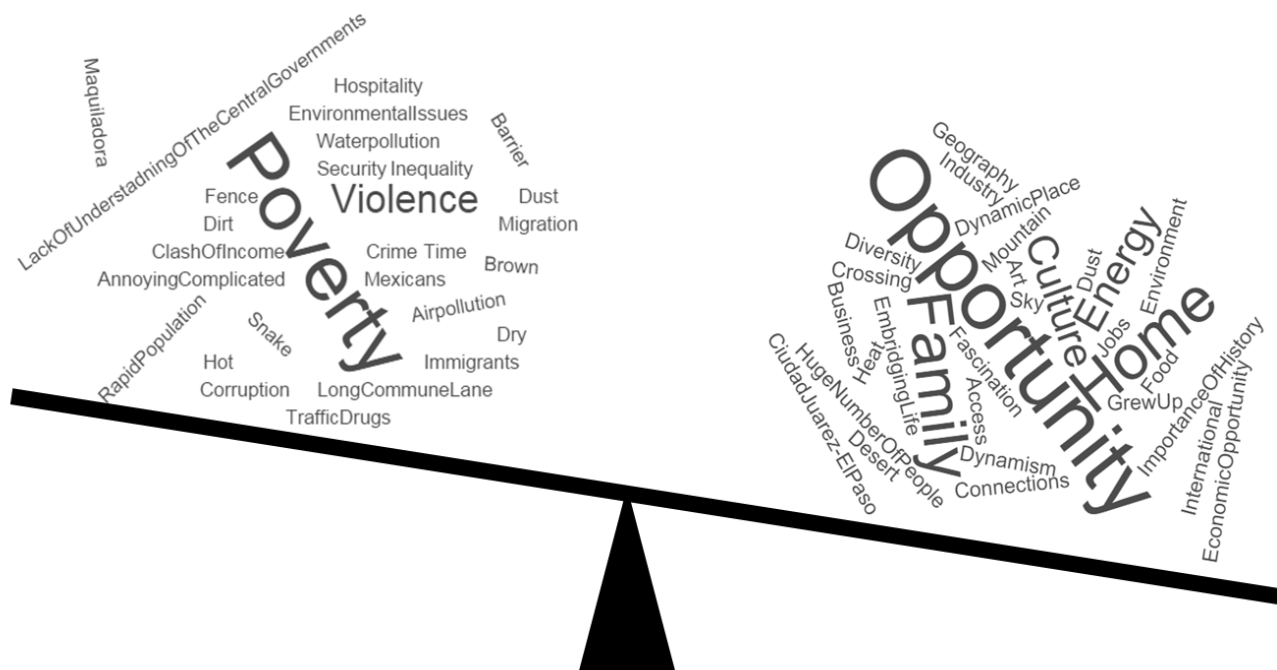


Figure 19: See-saw on how people see the region. Source: Author's own

The figure shows, that even if it sometimes seem to be different, the positive things are 'heavier' than the negative association people have when thinking of the PdN region. Also in this figure the size of the words represents the frequency of mentioning. Nevertheless, the positive words are not overruling the negative aspects of the region, which is why they are not completely reaching the ground. Several people saw the opportunities the region has to offer, but a lot of people also thought of family and home when they think of the region. This shows that there is an interest in cross-border activities and people think they can actually happen. Nevertheless, poverty and violence are two issues that are playing an important role in the region. These issues can be improved by cross-border cooperation. What is also remarkable is that most of the positive aspects are feelings about the region that are not visible whereas the negative words of the region, like poverty and violence are aspects which are visible and to have a direct impact on the region.

Conclusion and Reflection

7.1. Conclusion

This research made a contribution to a better understanding of the Paso del Norte region at the U.S.-Mexico border. Little research has been done so far on how people understand the border region they live in and what the influences of cross-border activities are. It has not been investigated to what extent people could identify them with a region which is separated by a border fence and located in three different states. Cross-border activities are difficult to realize but in a globalized world, businesses and people are already connected in one way or another. People can base their opinion on the behavior influenced by cognition and affection. The concept of bordering, othering, familiarity, novelty, dissonance and indifference were applied to analyze to what extent cross-border activities have an influence on the point of view on how inhabitants perceive the PdN region. This thesis generated additional knowledge on this aspect of border studies with a narrative approach. During this study, mental maps were drawn by several inhabitants in the three states to determine what their understanding of the PdN region is and which influence cross-border activities have from their point of view. The main research question of this thesis was therefore:

How is the individual actor experience in how he/she understands the Paso del Norte region influenced by cross-border activities?

To begin with, the PdN region is a shared cultural-functional region. Forming this kind of region, the border can have two functions. Firstly, it can be seen as a physical barrier that stops flows, people and interactions across the border. Secondly, the border can have a shared, culturally driven function that connects people. The border at the Paso del Norte region has both functions. It is a barrier for people and goods. For people it is sometimes hard to cross the border and it takes a long time. Waiting in line to enter the U.S. can sometimes take up to several hours. Entering Mexico requires no waiting time, here one just has to cross the bridge and enter through one of the five PoE's the region offers. A lot of families in this region have to cross the border on a regular basis because they have families on both sides of the border or they work and live on different sides of the border. People accept the consequences caused by the border but they often feel annoyed by it. Since Juarez was called the 'murder capital' between 2007 and 2012, people experienced the border region as a place of violence, danger and not as a familiar place, even at the U.S. side of the border. During this time the border was seen as a barrier. Nowadays authorities are opening up the border economically and socially, to allow some sort of interaction across the border fence. On the other hand the border region has a shared history which still connects people. Furthermore, the downtowns of El Paso and Ciudad Juarez are geographically very close and for that reason often seen as the "divided city". Las Cruces belongs to the border region but seems to be separated from El Paso and Ciudad Juarez because of the distance.

Secondly, current cross-border cooperation has some influence in the region but not to the extent it could have in the future. The Borderplex Alliance has a focus on the communication tool, UP

as a business that takes advantage of the location, the IBWC is a governmental agency and helps applying water and boundary treaties on both sides of the border and as a last project the Union Ganadera Regional de Chihuahua for cattle crossing with less paperwork. A mixture of these forms of cooperation and projects is necessary to improve the situation of the region which could be possible if companies work together. Other cross-border activities can be found in the region but they still seem to have a smaller effect. A lot of interaction in this region concerns water because both sides of the border are suffering from a water shortage.

Regarding this issue, cooperation takes place, especially on an academic level. On a university level the universities and the Borderplex Alliance also encourage students to take part in an exchange with another university of the region. The Borderplex Alliance's goal is to encourage cross-border cooperation. This increases the inhabitants' perception of their region because of the effort of the Borderplex Alliance. Notwithstanding, they are a newer institution (established in 2012), they already have effects on the region but they are not completely visible yet for the citizens. Besides that, cooperation takes place on an educative level. Nowadays, many students in the region do not have a degree or they did not finish their school/college. Furthermore, all three states have a different education system which is hard to be combined with each other which is necessary if the states want to create workforce. Creating a border transcending workforce of and for the region and help people become familiar if they might understand the situation better. One goal is to create a highly-skilled workforce within the next generation to improve the economic situation in the region. Becoming one region also demand a good economic situation with a high quality of life. In the meantime, facilitating cross-border activities between the three states to create communication and acceptance is important. Another important cooperation partner is Union Pacific which distributed goods between Mexico and the U.S. and who is located in Santa Teresa, New Mexico. The company encourages other corporations to take advantage of the close proximity to Mexico. Another important cross-border aspect is the media which has an enormous impact a people's formation of opinion. People believe what the media says but they are not always portraying a joyful image of the region. People who recently moved to the region, but also businesses know these stories and have a negative point of view on the region instead of also seeing the opportunities it has to offer. Furthermore, if people have not experienced the other side themselves, they tend to think in stereotypes and do not believe the positive reports they hear because they are unfamiliar with them. Cross-border cooperation could change the way people see the region because they could become more familiar with the region. If new developments happen in the region, people are excited about it in the beginning to experience the new things, but just if these new events are within their bandwidth of familiarity. Nevertheless, novelty has to be translated into something known, something familiar with the region at some point.

Thirdly, the way people understand the PdN region depends on several factors. If inhabitants are unfamiliar with the region, they experience the PdN region in a more negative way because they might get scared during the violent period and this perception has not changed yet. They distinguish themselves from the other side of the region, mostly because they are unfamiliar with the other side. Being unfamiliar and unknown with the region also leads towards a negative behavior influenced by affection. People believe in stereotypes and bad things they hear from other people or the media and stereotype the situation and the region ("everything is just so dangerous in Mexico" or "It is just

dangerous and violent because the U.S. is the biggest demander of drugs"). People also tend to make a difference between them and us. On the other side if people feel at home in the region and are familiar with the region, their experiences of the region are different.

Given these points one can say that during the peak of violence the perception of the region changed on both sides of the border. It was dangerous to cross into Juarez, and if it was not necessary, people from the U.S. side did not cross. During that time period, many people lost the habit to cross and are still not back to their old behavior. The negative feelings/experiences/ideas of this period stayed in the peoples' minds, even if one already sees a change in the way people perceive and experience the region, also due to cross-border cooperation and –activities. They are crossing again, becoming familiar with the region and are reducing the distinction between them/us or us/them. Besides that, people from El Paso experience the border region more as just their cities and do not include Las Cruces in their perception of the region. In Las Cruces, more people base their opinion on stories of hearsay than developing their own understanding of the region.

Fourthly, cross-border cooperation and –activities should support the way in which people of the PdN region understand their region. Without any attempt for cross-border cooperation the perception of the region would be much more difficult and negative than it is now. Even if cross-border cooperation does not seem to be visible enough yet, the region made a starting point in cooperating and becoming one region. Several years ago it would have been impossible and people experienced the region negative mainly because of the violence. Then, people thought it would have been impossible to cross the border safely again. Companies, businesses and the cities have to show inhabitants that it is a safe region to live in, but first these companies and businesses have to be attracted to the region. Without a better understanding from the people living in the PdN region, cross-border cooperation might be less successful. The goal to create more high-skilled workforces will be difficult to realize if people do not want to stay in the region which might be the vicious circle of the PdN region. But they also will not stay in the region, if there is no strong and stable economy in the region.

For the reasons mentioned above, cross-border activities and the way people understand and experience the region, are closely linked to each other. In the past people did not feel safe in the region, because of the violence and they were unfamiliar with the region and the people on the other side of the border. Nowadays, it seems that the three cities do not form a unity yet. El Paso and Juarez are located within walking distance but their economies are not closely linked and everything they need for life can be found in their own city so there is no need to cross. Nevertheless, citizens accept that they live so close to the border. They seem to be more familiar with each other, because most of them have friends or family on the other side or have been there for leisure activities. In their opinion, cross-border cooperation is something that is the wish for the future but also a logical step. They can learn things from each other but the danger is that they become to interdependent from each other.

To conclude, the behavior influenced by cognition seems to have a stronger influence in the decision-making and understanding of the region than behavior influenced by affection. Familiarity and novelty are concepts which are more important than dissonance and difference in understanding the region. In

the PdN region, people make a difference between them and us, but if they become more familiar with the region, this might change. It seems that they first have to overcome the unfamiliarity and learn how to deal with the information they receive before they can develop a sense of belonging and take a first step to create the same norms and values. Some influence of cross-border activities can be found within the behavior influenced by cognition and affection. The activities influence the knowledge but also the emotions citizens have towards this region. Cross-border cooperation specifically has a smaller effect on the perception the citizens have. It influences their living (for example with border security), but they accept that. Other forms of cross-border cooperation do not (yet) influence the perception of the region.

7.2 Reflection and recommendations

“Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning” is said by Albert Einstein. There are several things that can be learned from this thesis but there is also a need for further research. New insights were gained on the current situation of the PdN region. This situation can, and certainly will, change in the unpredictable future.

The reflection of this thesis includes several aspects. Firstly, the choice of respondents. During the stay in Las Cruces from April till August, most of the people had summer vacation, which just gave me a limited, yet sufficient, number of respondents. In the first 2 month I also needed to get to know the region myself because it was different than I expected. I would have loved to talk to more students at NMSU, UTEP and UACJ but after trying my best, I was not able to find respondents there. Further research could include a different, wider group of respondents. Nevertheless, I am satisfied with the information I got from my respondents. Secondly, a decision has been made to combine cross-border cooperation with general cross-border activities. The aim of this thesis has been reached. Nevertheless, this research just provided a more 'global' point of view of the state of affairs on cross-border cooperation because of this connection with cross-border activities. Each aspects of this thesis of border security, culture, economics and politics could have a thesis on its own. Also the work of the different cross-border companies could be a research on its own. Thirdly, it would be useful to do the same research with a narrative approach over 5, 10 or 15 years to see how the mental maps and the understanding of the region have changed. Another issue are the upcoming election in the United States. The fear that is created with the war on drugs and the violent border could change, if a new government decided to handle the border in a different way. Therefore it would be interesting to see what will happen to the border in 10, 20 or 30 years from now on with a new government, also a new Mexican government. They are having many reforms and with a new government they are addressing different issues. The effects of these reforms are not clear yet and they will never be clear for the future. Besides that, the violence peak has been three to nine years ago and you can already see several changes in how people see each other and understand the region. The conclusion and chapter 4 and 5 show that there are already changes and plans for the future concerning the economy, attracting business and getting the habit again to cross the border on a regular basis. The Borderplex Alliance is further developing and they will have more influence in the region and to

businesses, together with other companies. This change needs to be analyzed in the future. Doing that with narrative research could be based on this research to see direct differences.

Several recommendations for the region can be made. Cross-border cooperation and – activities nowadays would have not been possible several years ago. To stimulate this cooperation would be a first step to take. The campaign from Mexico 'Juarez is waiting for you', to just give one example should be more promoted. Mayors from Texas and New Mexico went to Juarez to show that it is safe. Nevertheless skeptical people still do not believe it. For them it just seems to be a media event and that it is still totally unsafe to cross. Stimulate border crossing by these kinds of activities and changing the stories people hear about the region would lead towards a better understanding. Therefore the results of this thesis provide a better understanding in how people understand the region. If both sides get familiar with each other and everybody become more familiar with the region, this can be seen as a starting point. If they want to compete with other economically strong regions, they need to be socially stronger than the other regions. The PdN region is still influenced by the border, the violence and drugs which form the common opinion of the rest of the country about the region. For this reason they have a lot of opportunities due to the international atmosphere but they also face more struggles because of this.

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Appendix 1: A historical framework

“We didn’t cross the border, the border crossed us’



Figure 20: North American Territories claimed by England, Spain and France (Spain and France are in the blue colored region). 16th and 17th century.
Source: Martinez (1998b)

with other changed citizenships. Even if it seemed, like during the 16th and 17th century that the border is seemed to be in place, Americans wanted to claim more space and areas of Texas (Martinez, 1998b, p. 11).

After the establishment of the 1819 boundary, many Anglo Americans immigrated to Texas, which then have been a province ruled by Spain until 1921 when Mexico gained independence. Conflict occurred between the Mexican government and the Anglo Americans. In 1836 some Anglo Americans and some local Hispanics declared themselves citizens of the ‘ Republic of Texas’ (Figure 22) until 1845 where

Texas became part of the U.S. again through annexation, but Mexico did not accepted that (Martinez, 1998b ,p. 14). Also the new Republic attempted to incorporate large tracts of Mexican land. Figure 22 shows the borders which are recognized by Mexico and the republic of Texas. After the annexation of Texas by the United States, the tension between the U.S. and Mexico above the Texan territory

This paragraph will examine the historical background of the U.S.-Mexico border region. The main, and most currently occurred major, historical background occurred after the U.S.-Mexico war in 1848. Besides that the history before this event will be shortly mapped to summarize why this situation could occur. When Christopher Columbus explored the region in the 1490 and 1500s, the first exploration and colonization of North American began in its earliest which can be seen in figure 20 (Martinez, 1998b). This might show a starting point in the cultural historical diversity the region is facing. After reshaping and remapping the borders again, figure 21 shows the remapped and situation in 1819, only 30 years before the U.S.-Mexico war started. Spanish cities, like Santa Fe or San Antonio, had suddenly become American cities, along



Figure 21: Border established by Adams-Onís Treaty, 1819.
Source: Martinez (1998b)

escalated in war between the two nations. The U.S. was already a world power, whereas Mexico was considered as a weak and fragmented society. Therefore, the U.S. had better military power and during the negotiations for peace, Mexico recognized the loss of Texas.



Figure 22: Border disputed arising from claims of republic of Texas. Source: Martinez (1998b)



Figure 24: Mexican boundary proposals during the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo boundary negotiations, 1847. Source: Martinez (1998b)

After accepting that Mexico lost the war, Mexico wanted to preserve and remain as much national domain as possible. Figure 24 shows 3 possible borderlines. In February 1848 the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed and the Rio Grande was marked as the eastern border between the U.S. and Mexico. A line above Paso del Norte became the western border.

Still, some people think that the border crossed them instead of the other way around even if this has happened more than 150 years ago.

After the U.S. won the war, and the borderline was defined the remapping of the border took place. The Borderline, defined in the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, was clear to the treaty negotiators but very vague to everyone else (Werne, 2007). The re-mapping of the border took 7 years and was under direction of William H. Emory who was the chief topographical engineer. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo required the production of boundary maps which needed to be certified by Mexico and the U.S. (Rebert, 2001, p. 41). In the Treaty the map making processes never got defined and also the government changed its methods over years. The maps were drawn by artist, engineers or other engravers who had a topographical background. A total of 108 general maps have been drawn, by artist how Paula Rebert (2001) calls them: 54 U.S. maps,

five U.S. island maps and four index sheets from the U.S. artist and 54 Mexican maps, four index maps and no island maps of the Rio Grande. It is also assumed that some Mexican maps were copied from U.S.-maps. There is no evidence that a direct communication took place between the mapmakers but many similarities can be seen which shows that conferences had taken place (Rebert, 20001, p. 55). Nevertheless, many differences can be seen for example that most U.S.-maps contain a scale and Mexican do not contain one. Also all the maps have to be drawn twice: One copy for the U.S. and one copy for Mexico. In figure 4 the blue line is the first Mexican proposed boundary, the red line is the second proposed boundary and the yellow line is the third proposed boundary by Mexico.

After the U.S. and Mexico agreed on the border, some 100,000 Mexicans in the newly acquired territories had one year to 'elect' their citizenship. If they were not willing to do it, they became U.S.-citizens (Griswold del Castillo, 1990, p.62). People who stayed in the U.S. got land and 25 pesos (if they are 14 years or older) but commissioners from Mexico got 1 peso for each settler they could convince to move (Griswold del Castillo, 1990, p.64). Therefore people had the choice whether they want to live on the U.S. side or on the Mexican side. Nevertheless, it might be that people feel attached to their city where they have grown up and raised and it might be that they wanted to stay in their city. So they stayed there and therefore the border might have crossed them instead of that they have crossed the border.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

Basic information: Common

1. Name of interviewee: (Anonymous, if requested)
2. Gender: male.....female.....
3. Age: O <21 O 22-25 O 25-30 O 30-40 O 40-50 O 50-60 O 60-70
4. Where do you live?
5. How long do you live in your current town?
 - a. Did you lived here between 2008-2012?
6. What are you doing for your living?
7. Do you speak Spanish?

Work experience

Ask them about their work experience and what their (academic) opinion is about the U.S.-Mexico border and the Paso del Norte region

Personal experience

1. Can you tell me a bit about your family?

Where does your family lives?

How long do they live there?

How do they influence you in your way of thinking? Do they support you in what you are doing?

How do you keep in contact with your family?

2. Where are your majority friends from?

How long do you know your friends?

How often do you meet them?

If they are not from the other side of the border would you be interested in interacting with people in Mexico

4. How often do you cross the border?

If yes, how do you feel about it?

Safe/unsafe

What is the reason for crossing?

If you are not crossing the border, why?

5. Do you want to live in this region your whole live or do you want to move away? Why?

6. Have you travelled before?

a. if yes, to what places?

b. If no, would you like to?

Mental Map exercise

1. Can you draw a rough map for me, an imaginary map which comes in to your mind when you think of the border region It does not have to be perfect. Could you reflect on the **important places** that are

meaningful to you in the region (you can also think of places on the other side of the border)?

Starting **from the city** you are living in now (you can use your own house as a starting point), could you mark all the **important, regular paths/streets, the important landmarks or buildings, work, restaurants or shopping places** or other places you identify while thinking of the PdN region? What are some of the **important neighborhoods, centers/markets, and 'limits'/references** along these routes which are important to you in the region.

Can you roughly explain the steps and ways you draw in your mental map?

2. What are the first five things that come into your mind when I say "the U.S.-Mexico border"?

What are the most important things when you think of the border?

Has your idea of the border changed since you live here?

How do you see Las Cruces/El Paso/ Juarez?

Appendix 3: List of respondents

Name	Function/place	Date	Mental map
Irasema Coronado	CEC Executive Director/former professor at UTEP	1 June 2015	n/a
Kathleen Staudt	Prof. Political Sciences UTEP/EI Paso	17 June 2015	n/a
Lydia Nesbitt-Arronte	Vice President of Education & Workforce Development at Borderplex Alliance/EI Paso	22 June 2015	n/a
Alfredo Grandados	Professor Agricultural science UACJ/ Juarez	5 June 2015	n/a
Hugo Roja	PhD/Las Cruces	24 June 2015	No.1
Inigio Garcia Bryce	President CLAB NMSU/ Las Cruces	24 June 2015	No. 2
Molly Molloy	Librarian NMSU/Las Cruces	2 June 2015	No. 3
Jim Peach	Regents Prof. Department of Economics and International Business/ Las Cruces	3 June 2015	No. 4
Susan DeMar	Administrative assistant NMSU/Las Cruces	24 June 2015	No.5
Jason Sargen	Student Sociology UTEP/ EI Paso	25 June 2015	No. 6
Erik Kleppner	Student Sociology UTEP/ EI Paso	25 June 2015	No. 7
Josiah Heyman	President CLAB UTEP/ EI Paso	25 June 2015	No. 8
Cesar Fuentes	Director Regional Northeast COLEF/Juarez	17 June 2015	No. 9
Sergio Pena	Professor/researcher COLEF/Juarez	17 June 2015	No. 10

Appendix 4: Code Families

Code Family: bordercrossing

[border as a barrier of visiting other country] [border fence evaluation] [border serperates people culturally not but economically] [bordercrossing] [bordercrossing 40 years ago] [Bordercrossing experience] [bordercrossing in the past] [crossing points] [crossing the border] [El Paso/Juarez] [fast line at the border/ DCL] [fence symbol] [future of bordercontrol] [history of bordercrossing] [history of bordercrossing] [impact of border] [impact of bordercrossing] [paperwork when crossing with University] [PE: bordercrossing] [PE: bordercrossing Erik] [PE: bordercrossing experience] [PE: bordercrossing habit] [PE: bordercrossing Jason] [PE: borderlife] [PE: travel experience] [PE: travel experience Erik] [PE: travel experience Jason] [PE: travel time] [PE: why crossing border every day] [PE: bordercrossing] [PE: bordercrossing feelings] [ports of entry] [river as a physical barrier of the border] [students in borderregion]

Code Family: Borderregion

[characteristics of borderregion] [demographic Mexico] [demographic overview PdN region] [future of the borderregion] [global city hierarchy at the border] [global problem] [globalisation impact on city] [globalisation impact on citz] [income borderregion] [influence of distance to the border] [kinds of borderpeople] [PE: experience of growing up in border region] [PE: experience of the region] [PE: experience of the region change] [PE: future of the border] [position Mexico] [possible predicated future] [situation US] [situation US and poverty] [students in borderregion]

Code Family: bordersecurity

[9/11 on border] [border fence evaluation] [bordercontrol people] [bordercontrol technique] [borderpatrol] [bordersecurity] [bordersecurity gets extra money] [changes after 9/11] [cooperation change 9/11] [effects 9/11] [fence symbol] [future of bordercontrol]

Code Family: Challenges in the region

[4 biggest challenges in Mexico/ as human beings] [biggest challenge 1: hunger] [biggest challenge 1: hunger /solution] [biggest challenge 2: housing] [biggest challenge 2: housing/ solution] [biggest challenge 3: energy/ solution] [biggest challenge 4: human health] [border as a barrier of visiting other country] [border use and global justice?] [borderregion problem and attention] [challenges of fast growing region mexic] [challenges two cities are close but have POE in between] [concentrated places] [history of challenges] [solving 4 biggest challenges]

Code Family: cooperation

[agreements to study on the other side] [Borderplex] [connection economy and culture] [cooperation change 9/11] [cooperation needs to slow down] [coordination education through council] [cultural cooperation and influence in the region] [El Paso/Juarez/Las Cruces cooperation] [El Paso/Juarez/Las Cruces cooperation - need viewpoint majors] [finding agreements concerning environment] [future plans of cooperation] [grant for project] [hard to find agreements] [impact of Maquiladoras] [last agreement Vrasero for workers WWII] [law enforcement immigration] [learning from each other works] [need of cooperation Borderplex] [need of cooperation Borderplex] [need of cooperation for economic and social issues] [problems of workforce in the region] [regional strategic plan goals] [relationship universities/institutions] [The Bordernetwork] [transborder network] [transition of Juarez] [trends in stragetice plan]

Code Family: Culture

[bi-cultural El Paso] [bi-linugalism in El Paso] [border serperates people culturally not but economically] [border use and global justice?] [connection economy and culture] [cultural cooperation and influence in the region] [cultural differences] [cultural differences over time] [cultural relationship] [culture] [history] [image of war on drugs] [immigration sentiment] [language] [learning from each other works] [mexicans in the US] [mexico needs tourism] [migration] [migration area] [migrationp] [othering of Mexico] [othering of Mexico change over years] [paperwork when crossing with University] [PE: being familiar] [PE: better place Arizona] [PE: bi-cultural region] [PE: bi-lingual school] [PE: borderlife] [PE: changing idea of the border Erik] [PE: changing idea of the border Jason] [PE: changing idea of the region] [PE: cultural differences in the region] [PE: cultural influence in the region] [PE: feelings about Mexico] [PE: growing up in a bi-cultural environment] [PE: immigration] [PE: international experience] [PE: keeping contact] [PE: liking other places] [PE: migration at the border] [PE: prejudices of other people] [PE: requirement of speaking spanish] [PE: social/cultural experience] [PE: Spanish speaking Erik] [PE: Spanish speaking Jason] [PE: speaking spanish] [PE: transnational identity] [PE: travel experience] [PE: travel experience Erik] [PE: travel experience Jason] [PE: why crossing border every day] [PE: why to stay in the region Erik] [PE: why to stay in the region Jason] [prejudices] [rural/urban areas vs anyomous/easy integrating] [spanish language knowlegde] [stereotypes] [the black legend] [way of seeing each other]

Code Family: dependency at the border

[Asymmetries at the border labor cost] [controversy of dependency and economic situation] [cultural relationship] [dependency at the border] [history and relationship] [history and relationship/ memory] [history and relationship/ students don't know about it] [inequality Mexico due to no investments] [interdependency at the border] [interdependency at the border / aymmetry] [political relationship] [relationship US and Mexico] [social

relationship US and Mexico] [spending state money politically] [US influence in Mexico] [ways of improving relationship US and Mexico]

Code Family: Economy

[agegroup] [drug and money economy] [drugconnection between EP and CJ] [drugeconomy] [drugeconomy legalise?] [drugeconomy legalise=] [drugmoney in El Paso] [economic connection to culture] [economic cooperation in comparison with Canada] [economic relationship] [economic situation Mexico] [economic strategy to attract businesses to the region] [economy El Paso] [economy Mexico] [environmental issues in Juarez] [focus areas] [income distribution] [income of the region] [inequality Mexico due to no investments] [job] [legal drugeconomy influence] [low skill workers in Mexico] [maquiladora industry] [maquiladora industrz] [mexico needs tourism] [nacro traffic at the border] [PE: econmic situtation needs improvement] [problem of income distribution] [problems maquiladoras] [rising war on drugs] [rural/urban areas vs anyomous/easy integrating] [sexy vs unsexy globalisation] [UK and US pattern and Mexico pattern] [UK and US pattern and Mexico pattern-development]

Code Family: Education

[agreements to study on the other side] [communication works between 3 councils] [coordination education through council] [council Mexico] [Council Mexico focus on Workforce] [council New Mexico] [council New Mexico focus] [council NM and Texas focus next generation] [council Texas] [Council Texas focus] [creating workforce] [educationsystem problem Mexico] [education in the region] [educationcouncil] [educationsystem] [grant for project] [ownership of councils] [probelems with education system in Mexico] [problems of workforce in the region] [students do not finish college -problem]

Quotation(s): 22

Code Family: first five words

[PE: first five words that come into your mind] [PE: first five words that come into your mind Erik] [PE: first five words that come into your mind Jason]

Quotation(s): 14

Code Family: Juearez/El Paso/ Las Cruces

[El Paso] [EL Paso economic situation] [El Paso/ Las Cruces culture] [El Paso/Juarez] [El Paso/Juarez/Las Cruces] [El Paso/Juarez/Las Cruces cooperation] [El Paso/Juarez/Las Cruces cooperation - need viewpoint majors] [Juarez] [Juarez 40 years ago] [Juarez is not more dangerous than other american cities] [Juarez location] [PE: El Paso] [PE: El Paso/ Juarez] [PE: El Paso/ Juarez/ las Cruces] [PE: Juarez] [PE:Juarez] [police in Mexico and corruption]

Quotation(s): 32

Code Family: media

[change in media] [image of New Mexico] [media] [media influence on creating opinions] [Media mexico]

[media/fronteralist] [PE: influence of media] [PE: media] [PE: media influence] [PE: media transporting knowlegde erik] [role of technology] [role of technology/media] Quotation(s): 29

Code Family: Mental maps

[PE:mental map explanation] [PE:mental map explanation erik] [PE:mental map explanation Jason]

Quotation(s): 12

Code Family: Politics

[neglected role of Washington] [political relationship] [political situation is important] [political situation Texas] [political view from Washington] [poltical system MEXico] Quotation(s): 9

Code Family: push/pull factors

[fast line at the border/ DCL] [moving to US during violence] [PE: better place Arizona] [PE: liking other places] [PE: living in the region] [PE: living in the region Erik] [PE: living in the region Jason] [PE: nature] [PE: push factors] [PE: requirement of speaking spanisch] [PE: social/cultural experience] [PE: transnational identity] [PE: why crossing border every day] [PE: why to stay in the region Erik] [PE: why to stay in the region Jason] [push factor towards mexico] [push factor towards US] [push factors] [push factors at the border] [push factors in the past] [push factors towards Mexico] [push/pull factors] [workers are going away Mexico]

Quotation(s): 39

Code Family: violence

[9/11 on border] [fear of Mexicans] [fence symbol] [homicides Juarey] [illegal in the US] [Juarez is not more dangerous than other american cities] [Juarez period 2007-2012] [PE: El Paso/ Juarez/ las Cruces] [PE: experience the violence] [violence against woman] [violence against woman in drugwar] [violence in Juarez now and then] [violence in Mexico] [violence in other places] [violent parts of Juarez] [violent picture of Mexico]

Quotation(s): 21
