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Learning as a Process of Becoming Within Communities of Practice:  
A Multiple Case Study of Moose Hunters in Northern Ontario

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Learning as a Process of Becoming Within Communities of Practice:

A Multiple Case Study of Moose Hunters in Northern Ontario

by

Léon Larocque

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements

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## ABSTRACT

In the last decade or so, the work of Lave and Wenger (1991) on situated learning has become increasingly popular: “Rather than asking what kinds of cognitive processes and conceptual structures are involved, they ask what kinds of social engagements provide the proper context for learning to take place” (p.14). Wenger (1998) extended his previous work with Lave by elaborating a conceptual framework called Communities of Practice. This framework presents a social theory of learning based on the following assumption: engagement in social practice is the fundamental process by which we learn and so become who we are. Up to now this conceptual framework has been mainly used in workplace and education settings. This research aims to derive from these settings by describing the process through which individuals learn and become moose hunters. The main question that guides our research is: How do individuals become moose hunters?

To answer this main question a qualitative research approach using a multiple case study design was chosen. Data were collected through open-ended and semi-structured interviews. The data were analyzed on an ongoing basis, throughout the process of data collection which took place over three distinct phases. Phase 1 consists of five cases each including an initial participant and a peer. This phase looks at the existence of communities of practice within the context of moose hunting, as well as documents the process of transformation of identity for the five initial participants. For phase 2, five more participants were added, increasing the number of cases to ten. During this phase, the focus was placed on childhood learning as a prerequisite for gaining access to a moose hunting group later on. For phase 3, 20 more participants were interviewed to complement and validate the findings of the previous phases.

The present research confirms the presence and formation of communities of practice in the context of recreational moose hunting. The research also demonstrates the process of transformation of identities as the participants learn from engagement within the context of practice. Moreover, the findings reveal an important period of learning during childhood, prior to engagement in practice. Consequently, the research shows that interest for the activity is developed at a young age and a considerable amount of learning occurs during childhood as children engage in various outdoor activities with parents.

The findings of the research contribute to both the theoretical and the practical levels by highlighting the versatility of Wenger's conceptual framework to study learning across various social contexts and by revealing that the current training strategies for hunters are not efficient and need to be revised.

## INTRODUCTION

In the field of psychology and education, learning has always fascinated researchers. Most of the efforts made to understand learning have focused on identifying the individual process through which learners acquire knowledge. Thus, learning has traditionally been the province of psychological theories of learning. These theories are embedded within the metaphor of acquisition of knowledge (Sfard, 1998), as learning is decontextualized in order to look at it from an individual perspective, isolating the learner from the natural context of learning. Such theories are not suited to examine learning outside of a formal context as the focus has mainly been on examining learning within formal contexts such as schools. According to Sfard, it is important to also consider learning from a participation perspective in everyday activities, which is referred to as a process of becoming.

This thesis examines informal learning in a recreational activity, more specifically how a person learns to hunt and gradually becomes a moose hunter in the sociocultural context of Northern Ontario. As there are no formal courses or training to become a hunter, one must assume that learning in regards to such activity occurs in the field. There is a new line of research emerging that focuses on learning in natural social settings that has been highly influenced by the work of Lave and Wenger (1991). The main element within their work is situated learning; a view which emphasizes that learning is situated within the activity and context in which it is practiced. This is, in fact, a new way to look at the concept of apprenticeship. In order for an apprentice to learn, he or she has to enter the practice as a legitimate peripheral participant. At first, the participant's involvement in the context of practice is very peripheral, yet legitimate, since it is recognized by the main participants. Gradually, the legitimate peripheral

participant learns through his or her participation in the context of practice and moves towards a more central participation. From this perspective, learning is the result of participation and can be seen as a process of becoming.

Lave and Wenger's work on situated learning created a stir in education where several authors debated this line of thinking (e.g., Anderson, Reder, & Simon, 1996; Greeno, 1997; McLellan, 1996; Trip, 1996). Most of the commotion revolved around the applicability of a situated learning approach into the schooling system, shifting the original focus of situated learning from outside the schooling system to a formal schooling system. In order to further his work with Lave on situated learning, Wenger (1998) focused on the concepts of identity and community of practice. He decided to extend their previous work by focusing on the assumption that "engagement in social practice is the fundamental process by which we learn and so become who we are" (preface). As people form groups in order to pursue shared enterprises over time, they learn and form their identities on an on-going basis. According to Wenger, there are three key elements for the existence of a community of practice: (a) mutual engagement, (b) joint enterprise, and (c) shared repertoire.

Wenger's framework is the outcome of an extensive look at everyday learning in the workplace. Consequently, several authors have used it to examine learning in the workplace (e.g., Boud & Middleton, 2003; Driver, 2002; Kuhn, 2002; Somerville & Abrahamson, 2003). Other researchers have started using it in other contexts like in the education system (e.g., Au, 2002; Graven, 2004; Janson, Howard, & Schoenberger-Orgad, 2004), in sports (e.g., Culver, 2004; Galipeau & Trudel, 2004; Trudel & Gilbert, 2004), and even to study witchcraft (Merriam, Courtenay, & Baumgartner, 2003). Such

widespread use of the conceptual framework hints at its versatility and suitability for use across various contexts of research. Nevertheless, it has never been used in the context of a recreational outdoor activity.

### The Context of This Research

Hunting is now a recreational activity, but it has not always been perceived that way. For example, moose hunting is credited for the survival of the Europeans who colonized what is known today as Canada (Jaenen, 1993). According to Jaenen, the first settlers learned the art of hunting from the natives who were hired as guides. Hunting in this new world was quite different than the hunting they had witnessed back in Europe. As opposed to Europe, the new world provided access to wildlife for everyone, not just the 'bourgeoisie'. Also as opposed to Europe, learning to hunt was necessary to assure the subsistence of the settlers. From then on, the activity of hunting for moose and other game has been a very central part of the Canadians lifestyle and has been transmitted from generation to generation. However, the way hunting is practiced and the way people perceive it has changed over time, and will certainly change even more in the future.

In reading some of the literature on hunting, one quickly realizes that approaches to hunting and perceptions of the activity vary considerably, and are highly influenced by the sociocultural context in which it is practiced. The way hunting is practiced in Northern Ontario will be different from hunting in another social environment, like the Southern part of Ontario where deer and waterfowl hunting prevails. In other contexts, the activity can be more structured and require the services of a guide. Consequently, for

those who have mainly experienced structured hunting with a guide, moose hunting without a guide in Northern Ontario could turn out to be quite a challenge, as was the case for Hummel (1994):

This kind of self directed hunting experience requires the hunters to define, create and sustain their own reality of the hunting experience. They must decide what the rules are, how the hunt is to be conducted, how much effort will be invested in the hunting process. If the hunters decide to stay up all night and play cards, or stay in bed until after sunrise, there is no hired guide to frown at these choices. If the hunters find the anticipated conditions are not present, they are likely to redefine the situation and try to extract an altered meaning from the experience. (p. 80)

Hummel's description of moose hunting in Northern Ontario suggests that the way hunters will choose to pursue hunting has to be negotiated and agreed upon by the group. By doing so, the group establishes a joint enterprise - one of the criteria for the creation of a community of practice (Wenger, 1998). As the group engages in the pursuit of the activity over time, they develop a mutual engagement, another criterion for the creation of a community of practice. Finally, the participants who mutually engage in the activity of moose hunting within a joint enterprise will learn similar ways of doing things and develop competencies proper to the activity as well as the group they are becoming a part of. This is referred to as a shared repertoire and is the third criterion for the creation of a community of practice.

There has been very little research on the activity of hunting, and those who have written about hunting have mainly presented personal accounts or stories (Cramond, 1965; Dalrymple, 1974; Elliot, 1969). So far no efforts have been undertaken to understand the way people learn this activity.

### The Purpose of This Research

When people talk about learning it seems to be mostly linked with the formal teaching and learning that takes place in schools -- however it is not limited to that context and can be observed across other contexts as well, such as sports and recreation for example. The literature on hunting tends to lead us to believe that moose hunters mainly engage in the activity in groups. However, other research on groups in the field of sports (Culver, 2004; Trudel & Gilbert, 2004) which demonstrate that the presence of competition in that field prevents the formation of communities of practice have prompted us to be careful in not assuming the mutual engagement of moose hunters into communities of practice. Therefore, based on the work of Wenger and others related to the concept of communities of practice, this research was designed to answer the question: 'How do individuals become moose hunters?' Along with this grand tour question, sub-questions such as the following were posed:

- What kinds of interactions take place between members of a group?
- Do they trust one another and are they trusted?
- Is there a community to engage with?
- How do moose hunters listen to one another?

- What kinds of views are shared between hunters?
- How do moose hunters align their hunting practice with other hunting groups?
- What influences the alignment of the practice of a moose hunter?

In order to better understand and document the process of becoming a moose hunter and provide an in-depth view of such process, I have opted for a qualitative approach. More specifically, for the purpose of exploring the learning experiences of participants, I followed a multiple case study design.

In the field of education, many researchers no longer consider quantitative and qualitative research as two dichotomous poles of research. Rather, they see the two approaches as being complementary and suggest they be placed on a continuum (Karsenti & Demers, 2000). The case study approach is a research method that allows the researcher to position his research anywhere along that continuum, based on the objectives of the research. A qualitative case study is particularly useful for examining social phenomenon, which are set in socio-cultural contexts. For that purpose, the qualitative case study approach is a well suited approach to examine the process through which individuals from Northern Ontario become moose hunters.

### Overview of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is composed of a review of the literature, which includes the genealogy of the conceptual framework communities of practice, a summary of the genealogy of communities of practice, three key texts to deepen our understanding of learning, the conceptual framework,

recent position papers and studies that focus on communities of practice, the literature on hunting. The chapter concludes with the research questions. The second chapter deals with the methodological considerations, including the research paradigm, the research tradition and the data collection process. In the third chapter, the three separate phases of the research are presented. Findings are presented at the end of each phase. Phase one looks at the presence of the community of practice. Phase two examines childhood participation in various outdoor activities, and phase three focuses on complementing and validating the data collected in the two previous phases. The fourth chapter contains a discussion of the findings and their relationship with the literature and the conceptual framework. Finally, the fifth chapter outlines the contributions of this thesis to both theory and practice.

**CHAPTER 1:**  
**REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

This chapter is divided into five sections. In the first section, the origin of our conceptual framework, communities of practice (thereafter referred to as CoP) will be retraced. Then, in the second section, three key texts will be presented to help situate the framework within the literature. In the third section, an analysis of recent position papers as well as studies in which CoP is the main focus will be provided. The fourth section will present a review of the literature on hunting. Finally, the chapter will end with the research questions.

### The Genealogy of Communities of Practice

The task of tracing back the origin of CoP is like mapping its genealogy. This task turned out to be much more complex than anticipated. Contrary to the genealogy of a family in North America, where the origin of an individual is more obvious (the parents, grand parents, great grand parents, etc...), disputes on the origin of new concepts or theories are quite frequent. Cole (1995) provides an example of such disputes:

It is something of an irony that just when North American and Western European psychologists were latching on to Vygotsky as a 'leading Soviet psychologist', his legacy was the subject of a bitter dispute in the USSR. There, students of A.N.

Leont'ev and S.L. Rubinshtein were disputing the origin of, and correct approach to, what they called "activity theory. (p. 188)

Moreover, it is difficult to devise the route taken by every author. As is often the case in the development of fields of research, people who have been working together will sometimes diverge and new lines of research will emerge. For example, after working closely with Vygotsky and his fellow student Luria, Leont'ev "created his own scientific school which later was called the 'activity approach' in psychology or the *psychological theory of activity*" (Zinchenko, 1995, p. 38).

An assertion can also be made that researchers do not work in a vacuum, therefore, their inspiration comes from other researchers. As described by Rogoff, it “involves the appropriation of concepts that I have found useful in the works of others. The use that I make of their ideas undoubtedly involves some transformation from the ideas they offered” (1990, p. 14). The task of identifying the influences is even trickier when the acknowledgements to other authors are limited to a footnote (e.g., Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989) or are not mentioned at all.

The difficulty of identifying a lineage of authors demonstrates that the construction of knowledge should not be conceived only as an acquisition of something where “once acquired, the knowledge, like any other commodity, may now be applied, transferred (to a different context), and shared with others” (Sfard, 1998, p. 5-6). Learning and knowledge development should also be seen as a social participation where people learn by interacting with others (or their work) or in other words by negotiating meaning (Wenger, 1998). Thus, the strategy in sharing the genealogy of CoP as defined by Wenger involves the webbing of the main authors with whom people have worked directly or indirectly through their work.

Figure 1 is an attempt to draw the genealogy of Wenger’s conceptual framework. The figure avoids linking all the references of the authors involved to every possible author. The focus is instead placed on targeting the key writings which the authors negotiated in the construction of their own texts.

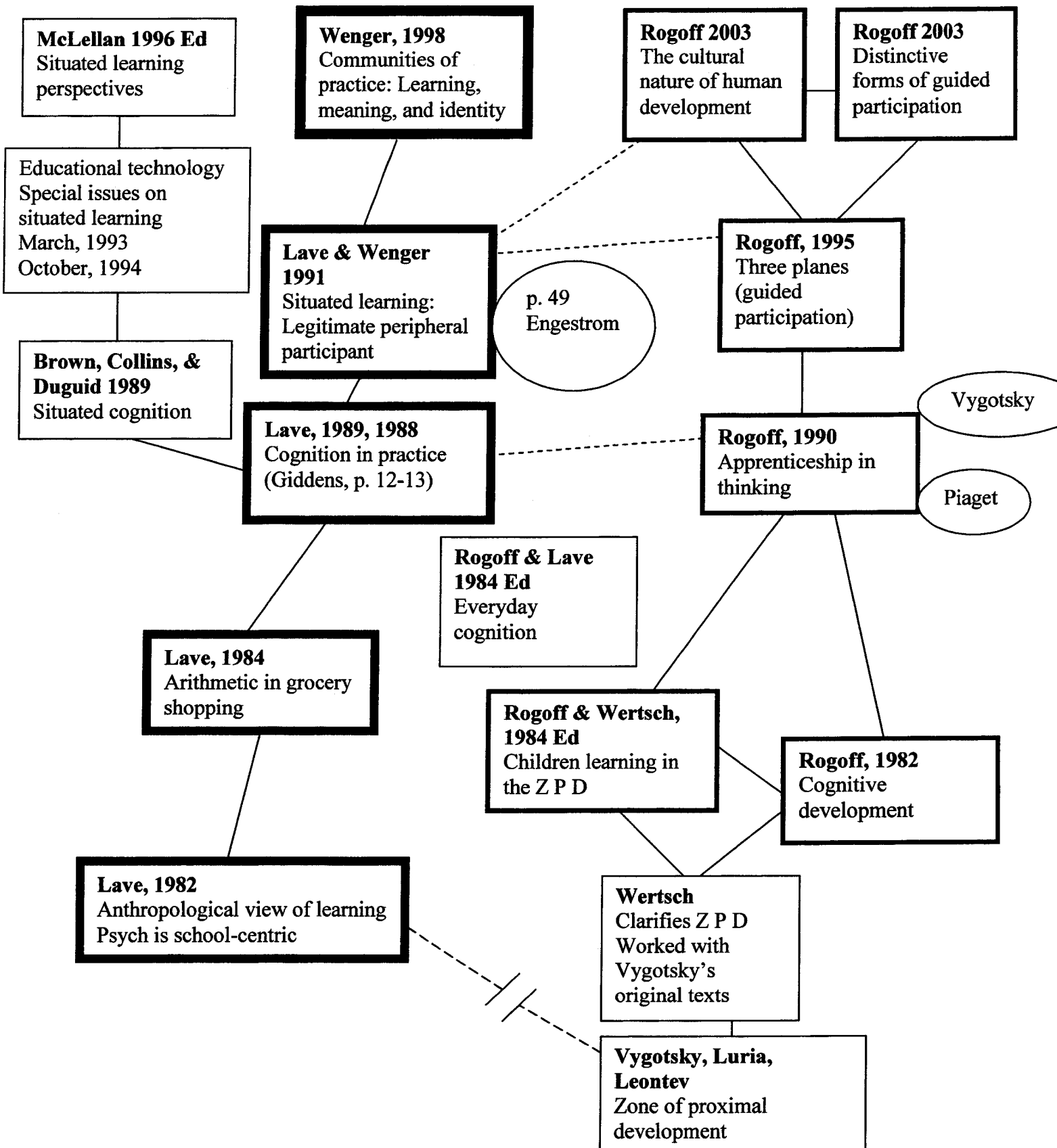


Figure 1. The genealogy of communities of practice

In order to clarify Figure 1, the heavy bolded boxes reflect the direct influence of the work of Lave on the elaboration of the CoP framework by Rogoff. The medium bolded boxes show the progress and evolution of the work of Barbara Rogoff. The solid line between the boxes indicate a solid link and referencing between the work of the authors. The dotted line indicates that Rogoff makes reference to the work of Lave and Lave and Wenger, however the opposite does not occur. Finally, the broken dotted line indicates the lack of connection between the work of Vygotsky and that of Jean Lave.

The figure is comprised of two sides. The left side highlights the work of Jean Lave and shows the evolution of what becomes Wenger's conceptual framework (CoP). The left side also includes a branching to the situated learning approach in the school setting. The right side highlights the work of Barbara Rogoff culminating in a book describing *the cultural nature of human development* (2003). It also showcases the evolution of one of her approaches to describe learning: distinctive forms of guided participation (Rogoff, Paradis, Arauz, Correa-Chavez, & Angelillo, 2003).

Rogoff devotes the vast majority of her texts to childhood learning, and when referring to the learning of adults, she suggests (Rogoff, 1990; 1995) looking at the work of Lave and Wenger as their work is better suited for adult learning. Since our population of focus is adults, I have chosen to use Wenger's framework. However, the process of becoming and the socialization into the practice of hunting starts at a younger age than first anticipated. Therefore the work of Rogoff becomes an essential tool in helping us understand the learning that takes place before individuals actively engage within the CoP in which they become hunters. As with Wenger, the genealogy of Rogoff's work highlights the most influential authors that guided her in the formulation of her work. It is interesting to point out that although Rogoff refers to Lave, and Lave and Wenger, the

opposite does not happen, as Lave and Wenger (1991) focus entirely on the learning experience of adults and do not address issues of learning for children.

The work of Jean Lave is influential in Wenger's elaboration of his conceptual framework. In the acknowledgements section of the book *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity*, Wenger (1998) recognizes Jean Lave's influence on his work by stating, "this book owes Jean its very existence. Even though she should not be held accountable for everything I say, the spirit of our collaboration clearly lives on in these pages" (p. xiii). This book by Wenger is a complement to a book that Lave and Wenger wrote seven years before:

In an earlier book, anthropologist Jean Lave and I tried to distill – from a number of ethnographic studies of apprenticeship – what such studies might contribute to a general theory of learning. Our purpose was to articulate what it was about apprenticeship that seems so compelling as a learning process.... We wanted to broaden the traditional connotations of the concept of apprenticeship – from a master/student or mentor/mentee relationship to one of changing participation and identity transformation in a CoP. The concepts of identity and CoP were thus important to our argument, but they were not given the spotlight and were left largely unanalyzed. In this book I have given these concepts center stage, explored them in detail, and used them as the main entry points into a social theory of learning. (pp. 11-12)

For Lave and Wenger (1991) their book called "Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation" is a radical, important rethinking and reformulation of our traditional conception of learning:

All theories of learning are based on fundamental assumptions about the person, the world, and their relations and we have argued that this monograph

formulates a theory of learning as a dimension of social practice. Indeed, the concept of legitimate peripheral participant provides a framework for bringing together theories of situated activity and theories about the production and reproduction of the social order. These have usually been treated separately, and within distinct theoretical traditions. But there is common ground for exploring their integral, constitutive relations, their entailments, and effects in a framework of social practice theory, in which the production, transformation, and change in the identities of persons, knowledgeable skill in practice, and CoP are realized in the lived-in world of engagement in everyday activity. (p. 47)

The work of Lave and Wenger (1991) builds on previous work of Lave (1982, 1986, 1988, 1989). Lave has been interested in everyday knowledge and cognition for a long time. She spent several years researching the learning environments of tailors, midwives and others in their natural environment. From this experience she developed a keen interest in apprenticeship and on the relationship and the interactions between apprentices and experts or more experienced people within the field. It is almost impossible to trace the genealogy of her work beyond her own field research. In 1982 Lave declared:

Although we have a long tradition of importing psychological and linguistic theory into anthropology, it may not be the (only) appropriate course to pursue today. We are in a position to make a useful contribution to the understanding of learning by pursuing an anthropological approach that emphasizes the socially organized nature of learning. (p. 186)

Although she was familiar with Vygotsky's work, the approach she was suggesting had to be based on something else:

My colleagues also address the question of what we should do next. There are suggestions that we should turn to psychology for the theory that will allow us to study learning activities cross-culturally. Certainly the work of Vygotsky (e.g., 1978) and extension of other context-based developmental theory such as that of Leont'ev are worth pursuing. But it should be noted that most psychologists interested in learning and child development are themselves struggling with the same assumptions criticized earlier in the context of anthropological research on education. (1982, p.186)

Lave has been consistent with her position and rarely made references to any work using a Vygotskian perspective. For example, when Lave and Wenger (1991) addressed the important role played by internalization in learning, they acknowledged Vygotsky's concept of zone of proximal development but used Engeström's (1987) interpretation of the zone of proximal development because it

takes a 'collectivist,' or 'societal' perspective... Under such societal interpretations of the concept of the zone of proximal development researchers tend to concentrate on processes of social transformation. They share our interest in extending the study of learning beyond the context of pedagogical structuring, including the structure of the social world in the analysis, and taking into account in a central way the conflictual nature of social practice. (p. 49)

Lave's work prior to working with Wenger, inspired the publication of a text (*Situated cognition and the culture of learning*) by Brown et al., (1989) in which the authors launched the situated learning model. This text is the focus of a special issue of the Journal of Educational Technology (March 1994), and a book by McLellan (1996).

Brown et al.,'s effort to pioneer this evolving model into the field of education provoked an interesting conversation among some scholars in the field. Anderson, Reder and Simon (1996) present an interesting view of situated learning and the claims this approach harbours. They offer an interesting challenge to the four claims stated by Brown et al., (1989) earlier on, by comparing the situated approach with the cognitive approach. The effect of such a paper quickly fuels more discussion as Greeno (1997) engages in the debate to set the record straight and states that Anderson et al., (1996) are not necessarily addressing the issues at hand from the proper perspective. Greeno argues that the four claims of situated learning debated by Anderson et al., are nothing more than propositions within the situated learning model. In fact the issue at hand needs not be which approach is better than the other, but how we can improve the learning experience by drawing from various perspectives. The discussion between Greeno and Anderson et al., keeps going, as Anderson, Reder, and Simon (1997) reply to Greeno's response to their claims. Anderson et al., claim that Greeno has taken the discussion to a more abstract plane which does not consider the recommendations made by the authors in their paper. The discussion takes a different direction later on as Anderson, Greeno, Reder, and Simon (2000) join together to further the ongoing discussion. This latest discussion reveals four claims in regards to learning: a) individual and social perspectives on activity are both fundamentally important in education, b) learning can be general and abstractions can be efficacious, but they sometimes aren't, c) situative and cognitive approaches can cast light on different aspects of the educational process, and both should be pursued vigorously, and d) educational innovations should be informed by the available scientific knowledge base and should be evaluated and analyzed with rigorous research methods; the advancement of education requires continued research efforts on a large scale.

The situated learning model caters to the matter of ‘understanding in practice’, although there seems to be a clear and popular move to adapt it to education. However it is not necessarily what it has been designed for. Lave’s work has mainly focused on studying adult learning outside of the schooling context, therefore, any attempt to adapt her approach to education will most likely necessitate an extensive debate over the ability of such an approach to replace the existing system already in place. One area that seems much more open to situated learning and situated cognition is the field of adult education. Stein (1998) suggests that

The main elements of situated cognition – context, community and participation – offer intriguing opportunities for instructors to engage with learners in novel and meaningful ways. Situated cognition reminds us that adult learners are a rich and diverse source of stories, data that can transform the classroom from a source for transferring knowledge from instructor to learners to a resource for interpreting, challenging, and creating new knowledge. Interactions among the learners and the environment holds the promise of having learners directly intervene in and change the processes that surround their lives at home, in the community, and at the workplace. (p. 2)

From the perspective of interaction between teacher and learner, it is important to clarify that the adult education context is different from that of the child education context.

Nonetheless, it is interesting to see how some scholars perceive this new view on learning as positive and promising while others are much more critical towards it. This debate is a necessary part of the process of negotiation into which the situated learning model has been engaged.

A book edited by McLellan (1996) also serves as an invitation to a dialogue on situated learning. It is an attempt to stir conversation in order to negotiate meaning and potentially

optimize the design of learning experiences. Some of the material included in this book is a reprint (with permission) of specific writings that were published earlier. The main goal is to group key issues in situated learning in order to open conversations on the topic. The book is quite revealing in that it confronts this radical new line of thinking for learning with the traditional instructional system. Arguments can be found in the book in regards to the potential of this new approach to replace the existing one. On the one hand, some authors try to define the potential of situated learning and how it could be implemented in a school setting (Harley, 1996; McLellan, 1996; Simonson & Maushak, 1996), while others, like Steven Trip (1996) warn against the appeal of the radical new approach by stating that

If a pedagogy based upon ideas about situated cognition is to succeed it must not only be based upon true ideas. Indeed, it is nearly irrelevant whether those ideas are true or false. Situated pedagogy must actually be better than traditional instruction, and not just under ideal conditions. It must survive the wear and tear of everyday use and be better under those conditions especially.

(p. 156)

In fact, Trip is not against the implementation of a new vision in our school system. However he is more careful and realistic about the shift to a new approach. Before a system can be implemented it must prove that it can not only replace the old system, but be better than the old one. The discussion on situated learning needs to continue and more research needs to be done in order to fully understand the potential of such an approach to teaching and learning before it can be used on a larger scale.

There are alternative ways of looking at child education. The work of Ann Brown (e.g., 1995, 1997; Brown & Campione, 1994, 1996) offers interesting insight into the concepts of agency, reflection, collaboration, and culture within the field of learning. However, even though her work aims at transforming schools into communities of thinking

and learning, it is taking a different focus than that of this study, which focuses on adult learning in the natural environment. Nonetheless, Brown's work is an indication of the changes that are starting to take place in some institutions as well as the change in mentality surrounding classroom education.

The bottom of Figure 1 is characterized by the presence of Vygotsky, Luria, and Leontev. Although Lave has deliberately decided to dissociate her work from these authors, their works, especially those of Vygotsky have been the starting point of the sociocultural approach. Wertsch (1995), makes the following proposition:

'cultural-historical' and 'sociohistorical' are more appropriate terms when referring to the heritage we recognize from Vygotsky, Leont'ev, Luria and many other Soviet psychologists. However, we believe that 'sociocultural' is a better term when it comes to dealing with how this heritage has been appropriated in contemporary debates in the human sciences, at least in the West. (p. 6)

Without going into detail about Vygotsky's theory it is important to say that Vygotsky's major contributions to the understanding of learning is the emphasis placed on the context within which learning takes place as well as the concept of the zone of proximal development. Vygotsky's concept (zone of proximal development) focuses on the phase of development in which the child has only partially mastered a task but can participate in its execution with the assistance and supervision of an adult or more capable peer. The zone of proximal development is a dynamic region of sensitivity in which cognitive development advances (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky defined the zone of proximal development as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in

collaboration with more capable peers” (1978, p. 86). Vygotsky’s formulation claims that the very structure of individual functioning derives from and reflects the structure of social functioning. Thus, his claim is much stronger than simply that an individual’s mental processes develop in a social milieu. That is, Vygotsky views individuals’ mental processes as having specific organizational properties that reflect those of the social life from which they derive. Hence, Vygotsky’s approach suggests that to understand individual cognitive growth it is fruitful to examine specific patterns of social interaction in which ‘children’ participate.

Griffin and Cole (1984) warn against possible misinterpretation of Vygotsky’s work. According to them, major differences can be found between Vygotsky’s original work and authors who cite Vygotsky’s work, especially Western researchers who may not fully grasp the meaning of key concepts in Vygotsky’s writings. From our perspective, one of the most credible authors to read for an understanding of Vygotsky’s theory is James Wertsch. Over other researchers, Wertsch has had the advantage of being able to work with the original texts, not the translations, and he has also worked with Luria (1981).

Wertsch worked with Rogoff to edit the book *Children’s learning in the zone of proximal development* (Rogoff & Wertsch, 1984) which probably helped her accrue and crystallize her understanding of Vygotsky’s work. In 1990, Rogoff wrote a book titled *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in social context* which, seems to have been very well received by the research community. In the preface of this book Rogoff wrote:

In this book, I examine how individual thinking processes relate to the cultural context and the social interactions of children that provide guidance, support, direction, challenge, and impetus for development. In presenting my concept of guided participation in cultural activity, I draw heavily on the theory of Vygotsky

and refer also to that of Piaget. I focus on literatures in cognitive development, communication and social interaction in infancy and childhood, education, and cultural psychology and anthropology. (p. i)

Rogoff focuses on the influence of an adult in the learning environment of children. She states that her “concept of guided participation is an effort to extend Vygotsky’s notion of the zone of proximal development” (1990, p. 361). By working within the guidelines of the zone of proximal development she focuses mainly on children learning and does not address directly the adult’s cognitive development, but draws a parallel with Lave’s work:

Lave’s account stresses the active role of the apprentice in learning in practice, participating as peripheral and legitimate contributor to production. This account of adult apprenticeship is consistent with my emphasis on children’s guided participation as apprenticeship in thinking – children’s active learning in the context of sociocultural activity, with the guidance of more skilled partners. (Rogoff, 1990, p. 90-91)

In a text published in a book edited by Wertsch, Del Rio, and Alvarez (1995), Rogoff extended her previous work by proposing

a sociocultural approach that involves observation of development in three planes of analysis corresponding to personal, interpersonal, and community process. I refer to developmental processes corresponding with these three planes of analysis as apprenticeship, guided participation and participatory appropriation, in turn. (p. 139)

A short description of each of the three planes is presented here:

- Apprenticeship:

“Newcomers to a community of practice advance their skill and understanding through participation with others in culturally organized activities” (p. 143).

Rogoff presents apprenticeship as a metaphor which “focuses attention on the active roles of newcomers and others in arranging activities and support for developing participation, as well as on the cultural/institutional practices and goals of the activities to which they contribute” (p. 143). This metaphor has been most popular for researchers examining the expert-novice dyad; however, according to Rogoff, it is not limited to this relationship.

- Guided participation:

The concept is not an operational definition that one might use to identify some and not other interactions or arrangements. Rather, it is meant to focus attention on the system of interpersonal engagements and arrangements that are involved in participation in activities (by promoting some sorts of involvement and restricting others), which is managed collaboratively by individuals and their social partners in face-to-face or other interaction, as well as in the adjustment for each others’ and their own activities. (p. 146)

This concept is a reflection of the mentor/mentee relationship as the more experienced member of a community follows and guides the development of a less experienced member within a specific group. This concept is not as rigid as apprenticeship in terms of developing specific knowledge under the watchful eye of a master, but is rather an exchange of wise suggestions between a relative newcomer and a more seasoned member of a community.

- Participatory appropriation:

Used to refer to the process by which individuals transform their understanding of and responsibility for activities through their own participation. This notion is a companion concept to those of apprenticeship and guided participation.

The basic idea of appropriation is that, through participation, people change and in the process become prepared to engage in subsequent similar activities.

By engaging in an activity, participation in its meaning, people necessarily make ongoing contributions (whether in concrete actions or in stretching to understand the actions and ideas of others). Hence, participation is itself the process of appropriation. (p. 150)

The participatory appropriation plane is distinct from the others as it is more a process of becoming rather than a process of acquiring knowledge. This concept is based heavily on the idea of transformation through participation. However, Rogoff does not address the idea of transformation of identity in much detail. This might be a reflection of the fact that she is working with children and does not see the need to address fully the process of transformation but clearly emphasizes that such a process is present.

One of the biggest challenges in using the above framework as described by Rogoff is that it is highly complex and the planes are mutually constituting, therefore the differences between planes can be very subtle and often impossible to identify, especially when trying to use it to analyze data. More recently, Rogoff (2003) and Rogoff et al., (2003) further the work on guided participation by suggesting distinctive forms of guided participation. The authors contrast two ways of organizing children's learning; using the concepts of intent participation and the assembly-line instruction. Intent participation refers to:

Learning through keen observation and listening, in anticipation of participation, [and it] seems to be especially valued and emphasized in communities where children have access to learning from informal community involvement. They observe and listen with intent concentration and initiative, and their collaborative participation is expected when they are ready to help in shared endeavors. (Rogoff et al, 2003, p. 176)

The authors present assembly line instruction as being

based on transmission of information from experts, outside the context of productive, purposive activity. This tradition of organizing learning is common in many US schools and middle-class family interactions, perhaps related to historical change connected with industrialization and child labor laws, which have contributed to compulsory extensive schooling and routine segregation of children from many mature settings. (Rogoff et al, 2003, p. 176)

The context and the culture within which the learning takes place can have a considerable influence on the prevalence of the form of guided participation. According to Rogoff and colleagues:

Within families in communities that emphasize learning in schools, out of the context of shared, productive community endeavors, some features of the factory model can be seen in interactions between young children and their parents. In middle-class European – American families – the primary participants in research on child development – parents often engage with young children in specialized child-focused activities that may help prepare the children for schooling and for their later admission into adult settings. (p. 182)

The development of these so-called schooled cultures has changed the way children learn and develop into adulthood.

Now, instead of routinely helping adults, children are often involved in specialized child-focused exercises to assemble skills for later entry in mature activities from which they are often excluded in childhood. These specialized child-focused situations – especially schooling, but also pre-school lessons and child-focused conversation in families – often employ instructional practices and a concept of learning that were heavily influenced by the organization of

factories, forming a cultural tradition that contrasts with intent participation. (p. 181)

In order to determine the organization of learning for children Rogoff presents six elements: ‘participation structure’, ‘roles of more-experienced people and learners’, ‘motivation and purpose’, ‘learning: observation or lessons’, ‘forms of communication’, and ‘role of assessment’. Table 1 presents two conceptual approaches (intent participation and assembly-line instruction) to organize learning and compares them using these six elements.

Table 1.

Elements to distinguish the organizational structure for learning

|   | Intent participation  | Assembly-line instruction  |
|---|---|--|
| Participation structure                       | Collaborative, horizontal with fluid responsibilities                     | Hierarchical with fixed roles  |
| Roles of more-experienced people and learners | Experienced people guide while participating.<br>Learners take initiative | Experts manage, dividing tasks, not participating.<br>Learners receive info  |
| Motivation and purpose                        | In importance of activity.<br>Relation of steps to purpose understood     | In extrinsic rewards, threats.<br>Relation of steps to purpose often unknown |
| Sources of learning                           | Through observation during participation in shared endeavours             | Through lessons, exercises, outside of purposeful endeavours                 |
| Forms of communication                        | Through joint action and words and gestures about needed information      | Mainly in words; questions to quiz learners                                  |
| Role of assessment                            | During shared endeavours to aid learning                                  | Separate from learning, to test receipt                                      |

For the purpose of examining learning at a younger age within a social setting, the framework presented by Rogoff provides an interesting way to explain how learning is organized by complementing intent participation with assembly line instruction. She also brings another interesting concept as she refers to third party observation. According to

Rogoff and colleagues, “third party observation is especially understudied, although the research on language learning and learning from the media makes it clear that it is powerful” (2003, p. 178). Roughly, third party observation is an event which does not have the purpose of instruction. The learners are simply exposed to an event, and they are able to observe the context of practice through a medium which is not meant to provide them instruction, such as story telling. Considering the propensity of hunters to share hunting stories, it will be interesting to examine the potential presence of such a concept for learning.

#### *Summary of The Genealogy of CoP*

In trying to complete the genealogy of CoP, the work of Rogoff on the right side of Figure 1 is a welcome complement to the conceptual framework of CoP. The work of Rogoff provides a solid approach to examine childhood learning in natural environments while the work of Wenger, heavily influenced by Lave, focuses on adult learning through informal social interactions in the work place. The small branch to the left of the figure simply acknowledges the influence of Lave’s work on researchers focusing on learning within the school setting.

Jean Lave’s work on situated learning proves to be the ground work for a whole new line of thought on learning and those who choose to follow or debate this new approach seem to respect her dissociation from psychology-based theories of learning. However, at one point in our review of literature, I came across some Internet sites on situated learning, which claim “Jean Lave and E. Wenger are among the leading exponents of situated learning, having built their model on thoroughly Vygotskyian foundations” (<http://hale.pepperdine.edu/~bsouza/Talley/lave.htm>). Such a statement created a bit of

confusion in our research group and incited us to look at other sites. I then came across the following:

Situated learning theory is not entirely new. It has ties to John Dewey's famous ideas, which stated that learning developed from experience and social interactions. Lave's theory also has a foundation in Gibson's theory of affordances and Vygotsky's social learning theory.

(<http://hale.pepperdine.edu/~tehiggin/lave.html>)

Another site that grouped Lave with Vygotsky in nearly every reference in the text was found (<http://literacy.kent.edu/~nebraska/curric/ttim1/art4.html>). The relation insinuated by these websites was a surprise to us, as Lave, in our understanding, had clearly distanced herself from the work of Vygotsky along with other psychologists a long time ago.

Therefore, in order to assure that Lave's dissension from Vygotsky's work of 20 years ago is still in place today, I decided to send Jean Lave the following email:

Dear Dr. Lave,

My name is Leon Larocque, I am a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Ottawa, in Ontario Canada. I am part of a research group headed by Dr. Pierre Trudel, who is also my thesis advisor. This research group has, over the past four years, been very interested in your work as well as that of Etienne Wenger on CoP.

In the process of negotiating the meaning of your work as well as that of others in the field in order to complete a sensible review of literature, I have come across some issues that are somewhat problematic to us. I have, in the past few years, come across papers and texts that cite your work as being the "extension" or "pursuing" the work of L.S. Vygotsky. On the other hand, I

found literature placing your work opposite to Vygotsky, (Sfard, 1998) on certain perspectives.

According to our understanding of your work (e.g., situated learning, legitimate peripheral participation) I do not see such a link between your work and that of Vygotsky. I certainly see a link between the work of Barbara Rogoff and Vygotsky. However, based on our interpretation of your writing, I question heavily the often made assumption in the literature that your work is linked to Vygotsky's work.

In an earlier document, you had written that 'the work of Vygotsky and other context-based development theory such as that of Leont'ev are worth pursuing'. However, you also wrote that 'we are in a position to make a useful contribution to the understanding of learning by pursuing an anthropological approach that emphasizes the socially organized nature of learning'. Gathering that Vygotsky places so much emphasis on internalization of knowledge while you on the other hand highlighted the social nature of learning in practice, I do not see your work as an extension of his.

Would you please be so kind as to enlighten us on the influences behind your work and tell us what role if any Vygotsky's work had on your own?

Thank you in advance for your time.

Leon Larocque (personal communication, July 10, 2003)

Dr. Lave answered

Dear Leon Larocque,

Vygotsky's work and social practice theory share seriously Marxist roots of course. Our work ought to be complementary in good part. That said, I have left the relations and extensions of my work to Vygotsky's to others, and tried

to insist that a theory of activity or more specifically learning needs to be part of a theory of practice more broadly.

If you'll tell me a little more about what you're up to, I would be glad to hear about it. Thanks for writing,

Best,

Jean Lave (personal communication, August 14, 2003)

### Three Key Texts to Deepen our Understanding of Learning

My perception and understanding of learning has been influenced over the course of my degree. Among other things, there are three texts that have helped me establish a clearer understanding of the conceptual framework that I used to frame my research. The first text presented here was suggested to me by professor Barbara Graves in order to provide me some insights on the two metaphors for learning as well as the dangers of choosing just one. The second text presented was suggested by professor Raymond Leblanc in order to help me understand the distinctions between the post-Vygotskian and discourse-based versions of social constructivism. The third text presented came out of our research group meetings with my advisor, professor Pierre Trudel. That text provided some clarification to better understand the distinctions between situativity and constructivism. For each of the three texts the focus will be placed on four areas:

1. What is interesting about this text?
2. What is the general focus of the paper?
3. How does the text contribute to the understanding of our genealogy?
4. In what sense does the text contribute to our study?

Sfard, A. (1998). On two metaphors for learning and the dangers of choosing just one. *Educational Researcher*, 27, 4-13.

1. What is interesting about this text is that with the use of two metaphors for learning, Sfard “hopes to get into a position to elicit some of the fundamentals underlying both our theorizing on learning and our practice as students and as teachers” (p. 4). It is our belief that researchers could be included into that statement as well.

2. This text focuses on presenting two “metaphors for learning that guide our work as learners, teachers and researchers” (p. 4). Sfard presents the acquisition metaphor as being “so strongly entrenched into our minds that we would probably never become aware of its existence if another, alternative metaphor did not start to develop” (p. 6). In fact the acquisition metaphor is the way we are used to deal with and understand learning for most of our lives. The metaphor of acquisition relies heavily on concepts and the materialization of knowledge. It presents learning as something that can be acquired, in fact, “the language of knowledge acquisition and concept development makes us think about the human mind as a container to be filled with certain materials and about the learner as becoming an owner of these materials” (p. 5).

The participation metaphor on the other hand “is almost synonymous with ‘taking part’ and ‘being a part of’ and both of these expressions indicate that learning should be viewed as a process of becoming a part of a greater whole” (p. 6). While the acquisition metaphor relies on a terminology of concepts and knowledge, the terminology surrounding the participation metaphor replaces the previous entities “with the noun ‘knowing’ which indicates action. This seemingly minor linguistic modification marks a remarkable foundational shift” (p. 6). According to Sfard, “learning a subject is now conceived of as a process of becoming a member of a certain community. This entails, above all, the ability to communicate in the language of this community and act according to its particular

norms”(p. 6). The mere identification by Sfard of the two metaphors allows for a better understanding of the differences that can be found in theories and conceptual frameworks in regards to learning.

3. The two metaphors as presented by Sfard help us to differentiate between a definition of learning which would be the result of teaching decontextualized concepts and a definition of learning which is a process of becoming a member of a certain community. Her analysis goes a bit further by suggesting that it is not because we consider the social aspect as having an influence on learning that we necessarily fall within the participation metaphor. The acquisition metaphor ranges from the passive reception of knowledge to a never-ending, self regulating process of emergence in a continuing interaction with peers, teachers, and texts. The key element that makes it fit within the acquisition metaphor is “as long as they investigated learning by focusing on the ‘development of concepts’ and on ‘acquisition of knowledge’” (p. 6). In the participation metaphor, “the learner should be viewed as a person interested in participation in certain kinds of activities rather than in accumulating private possessions” (p.6). Sfard refers to legitimate peripheral participation (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and apprenticeship in thinking (Rogoff, 1990) to illustrate the new language at the center of the participation metaphor.

Sfard’s distinction between the acquisition and participation metaphors clarifies some of the distinctions represented on the right and the left side of Figure 1. Vygotsky’s views on learning, especially when seen from the perspective of internalization are more in line with the acquisition metaphor, while Lave’s views of learning fit more within the participation metaphor. It is important to highlight that Rogoff’s choice to focus on intersubjectivity rather than internalization allowed her to gradually shift towards the metaphor of participation.

4. The main contribution of this paper to the current research lies in the suggestion that researchers do not have to pick one metaphor to the detriment of the other. However, for certain research it might be appropriate to lean towards one if it fits the research context more adequately. Since in hunting there are no formal training or courses to learn how to become a hunter as the literature on hunting suggests hunters seem to learn by engaging or taking part in the action. This process reflects more of a process of participation than one of acquisition. Since the main goal of our study is to examine and explain the process of becoming a hunter through engagement or participation in the activity, it makes sense to assume that a conceptual framework that falls within the participation metaphor would be most appropriate to guide our study, while keeping in mind the possibility of the presence of the other metaphor as well.

Stetsenko, A. & Arievitch, I. (1997). Constructing and deconstructing the self: Comparing post-Vygotskian and discourse-based versions of social constructivism. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 4, 159-172.

1. This text compares two theoretical perspectives of social constructivism to study the self and human development. Their analysis presents among other things, how from a methodological point of view these two approaches differ. This text helps clarify and understand the right side of Figure 1 presented earlier.

2. The two perspectives presented are the discourse-based perspective and the post-Vygotskian perspective. The discourse-based perspective “views practically all known psychological phenomena – social attitudes, emotions, self, and the like – as created in social discourse and as having their being only in discourse”(p. 162). In this perspective, discourse supersedes the concept of cognition. Cognition is viewed as an autonomous internal process. The discourse-based perspective (deconstruction) “departs from the

Vygotskian constructivism in how it defines the methodology and ways of studying human development” (p. 162) and adheres to “social constructivism in its discourse-based variant appears to be another form of reductionism because it reduces the reality of human psychological processes to some other, more observable, ‘more real’ reality, such as discursive practices” (p. 164). From this perspective, “the individual is dissolved (or deconstructed) into linguistic patterns and rules of grammar, or social roles and symbolic interchanges” (p. 164).

The post-Vygotskian line of research splits into two distinct lines of research. The first, embraced by the followers and disciples of Vygotsky (i.e. Leont’ev, Luria, Gal’perin, etc...) is internalization. This type of research falls more into the metaphor of acquisition as the knowledge and skills are internalized by the individual. The second line, which reflects more the participation metaphor, is intersubjectivity. According to Stetsenko and Arieivitch, researchers who align their work with internalization are “concerned with the scrutiny of the process of how children acquire knowledge and skills in the processes of specially organized teaching-learning procedures” (p. 166). Evolving and changing teaching-learning procedures are at the forefront of this approach as

the focus of this approach is on developing an alternative type of instructional procedures aimed at constructing mental and personality processes of given qualities. In other words, the main concern here is to clarify the conditions under which the child cooperating with an adult within the zone of proximal development comes to be able to perform a new action or a system of actions mentally and independently [i.e. on the internal plane]. (p. 166)

There is a strong emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and skills as the learner should come to function independently of the teacher after having acquired the adequate skills and knowledge.

The second line of research within the post-Vygotskian framework is intersubjectivity. This line of research “turns to processes of active instruction as a main research method, [and] concentrates on sociocultural models of teaching and learning with an emphasis on shared activity” (Stetsenko & Arievitch, 1997, p. 167). In this type of research, “the focus of analysis ... is on sociocultural practices ‘socially assembled situations’ within which individual’s cognitive development occurs. The concept of co-construction of meaning (shared understanding) is central to such a view”(p. 167). The work of Rogoff certainly fits very nicely within this line of research as she focuses on children’s cognitive development through the process of guided participation in sociocultural settings. It is important to note that “the central idea is that children’s cognitive development is inseparable from their social environment” (p. 167). As cited by Stetsenko and Arievitch, “according to Rogoff, children’s cognitive development occurs in the context of guided participation in social activity with more experienced partners who support and enhance children’s understanding and skills in using cultural tools” (p. 167). This line of research is very much interested in understanding learning in the natural environment, within social settings. What is interesting is that Rogoff

extended the concept of the zone of proximal development by stressing the mutual complementarity of the roles of children and their caregivers and the importance of tacit as well as explicit social interaction in guided participation.

She also stressed the developmental importance of routine activities as the children observe and participate with others in culturally organized practices.

(p. 167-168)

The presence of a more experienced partner in a social setting, instead of a teacher or an expert, is what characterizes Rogoff’s work and makes it so appealing for studying learning in natural contexts. However, her line of work caters mainly to childhood learning.

The two lines of research can be seen as very close to one another as they are both interested in the development of cognitive processes. Even though looking at the two lines of research from this angle makes them seem close to one another, “the two lines of research are quite different in that they concentrate on only one of the two aspects of co-construction – either intrasubjectivity or intersubjectivity” (p. 169). According to Stetsenko and Arieivitch, “Rogoff’s approach clearly is an attempt to avoid the pitfalls of the concept of internalization” (p.169).

3. This text helps clarify and situate the right side of Figure 1, as it provides interesting comments on the work of Rogoff and how her work fits within the earlier work of Vygotsky. The work of Rogoff has its roots in the work of Vygotsky but clearly is one line of research out of other possible ones for looking at learning. However, the fact that Stetsenko and Arieivitch refer to her in explaining one of the lines of post-Vygostkian research is a good indication of the credibility and the value of her work. It also provides interesting insights in regards to internalization; the concept of construction of the self with a focus on internalization seems to fit well within the metaphor of acquisition as described by Sfard (1998). Meanwhile, the concept of intersubjectivity seems to fit more within the metaphor of participation.

What is of particular interest for this study is that Stetsenko & Arieivitch do not make any reference to the work of Lave. It would seem that to them the work of Lave is distinct and not an extension of the work of Vygotsky, as the work of Rogoff is for example.

4. This text contributes to my thesis by helping situate the work of Rogoff within the post-Vygotskian perspective and provides a clear differentiation between Rogoff’s work and that of others who are also an extension to Vygotsky’s. Based on this text it makes sense to say that these lines of research could not be used as the framework for my

thesis, as they (the post-Vygotskian approach) focus mainly on children learning and child development. Moreover:

a psychological inquiry ceases in this case to be merely an exploration, a study of a phenomena : rather, it becomes itself a sort of active enterprise, a human practice, a social process in which co-acting participants strive to achieve common goals. (p. 165)

It becomes important to note that in this research, the first question relates to adults and how they become moose hunters, even though the role of certain activities during childhood may be analyzed. Overall, the goal of the research was not to co-construct the identities of the hunters to better understand the process of self and human-development. This study is merely an exploration of the phenomena of adult learning, to become a hunter, with a brief analysis of the earlier (childhood) experiences using the work of Rogoff to help in our understanding.

Barab, S. A., & Duffy. T. (2000). From practice fields of communities of practice. In D. Jonassen & S. Land (Eds.), *Theoretical Foundation of Learning Environments*. (pp. 25– 55). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

1. This text is quite interesting as it is written by two theorists; a constructivist and a situativity theorist. They struggled with the distinction between situativity and constructivism and the implications in terms of the design of learning contexts. This text helps clarify and understand the left side of Figure 1, which is so central to this research.

2. The text presents two views of the situativity theory; psychological and anthropological, as according to Barab and Duffy, “even within the context of situativity theories I found it necessary to make distinctions, and it was these distinctions (not the distinction between constructivist and situativity views) that best captured the essence of this paper” (p. 25). The psychological view, that a

unit of analysis is the situated activity of the learner – the interaction of the learner, the practices being carried out, the reasons why the learner is carrying out particular practices, the resources being used, and the constraints of the particular task at hand. From an instructional perspective, the goal shifts from the teaching of concepts to engaging the learner in authentic tasks that are likely to require the use of those concepts or skills. As Brown et al. (1989) argued, concepts are seen as tools that can only be understood through use.

(p.30)

For Barab and Duffy this type of approach is more representative of a practice field than a CoP. According to them, “practice fields are separate from the ‘real’ field, but they are contexts in which learners, as opposed to *legitimate participants*, can practice the kinds of activities that they will encounter outside of schools” (p. 33). Even though “every attempt is made to situate these authentic activities within environmental circumstances and surroundings that are present while engaged in these activities” (p. 33), it is important to note that “these contexts are practice fields, and as such, there is clearly a separation in time, setting, and activity from the life for which the activity is preparation” (p. 33). The practices that the learner engages in are still school tasks abstracted from the community, as well, the psychological view is very much interested in integrating a situated approach into the school setting.

The anthropological view is mainly interested in learning within natural settings as individuals participate and engage in everyday practices. It is Lave and Wenger that have “brought the most focused attention to the concept of CoP. This has been done through an anthropological perspective, with an examination of practices in everyday society and not environments intentionally designed to support learning” (p. 35). According to Barab and Duffy, “the anthropological framework further helps to enrich our conceptualization of this

framework for what is meant by ‘situate’” (p. 31). The main goal of participating or engaging in practice within a CoP is to develop a sense of self in relation to society; a society outside of the classroom.

3. This text contributes to the genealogy by presenting two different views of the situativity approach; it brings a clear distinction between learning in natural environments and learning in school settings. Situativity does not mean the same thing when defined from different views. Some authors presented along the branch on the upper left side of Figure 1 have been influenced by the work of Lave. However, they have chosen to work along a more psychological, individualistic approach by focusing on the integration of a psychological view of the situativity theories into the school setting. This certainly dissociates them from Lave who focused on observing learning in a natural setting from an anthropological view of situativity.

4. This text contributes to this research by clarifying the situativity movement and by helping us identify more clearly the contribution of Lave within the framework of CoP. This research focuses on examining the process of becoming a moose hunter in a natural environment. Hunting is not taught in a school setting and the activity is not designed with learning as its focus. It is through engaging in the activity with other experienced members that moose hunters form and shape their identities within that community. I believe that This research fits clearly within the anthropological view of the situativity theories as described by Barab and Duffy.

These three texts help us understand the major lines of research within the field of learning. After reading these texts I have a much better idea of where this research fits within the major lines of research in regards to learning. I know that this research fits in the participation metaphor as described by Sfard (1998), as I am interested in looking at learning as a process of becoming a moose hunter. I also know that this research fits more

within the concept of intersubjectivity as described by Stetsenko and Arieviditch (1997). Last but not least, I know that our research is anthropological in nature as described by Barab and Duffy (2000), as it focuses on the process of becoming a moose hunter within the natural context of the community. Moreover, the practice of the community is not aimed at teaching the practice to newcomers but merely to accomplish a set goal as a joint enterprise by a CoP.

### Conceptual Framework: Communities of Practice

For the purpose of this research, a conceptual framework based on the social theory of learning developed by Wenger (1998) will be used. This social theory of learning is not to be confused with Bandura's (1977) social learning theory which focuses on learning through observing and imitating others. Bandura's work placed an emphasis on the individual's ability to learn from exposure to others. However, his outlook on learning became more cognitive and eventually Bandura addressed this by moving from social learning theory to a social cognitive theory (Bandura, 2001). Wenger's social theory of learning goes beyond Bandura's observational learning. It focuses on engagement as a vehicle for the transformation of identity as a result of learning through the negotiation of meaning between participants.

To provide an overview of Wenger's approach to learning through CoP, I felt I could not find a better way than presenting Wenger's (1998) introduction to his book *Communities of practices: Learning, meaning, and identity*:

'Communities of Practice' presents a theory of learning that starts with this assumption: engagement in social practice is the fundamental process by which we learn and so become who we are. The primary unit of analysis is neither the individual nor the social institutions but rather the informal 'communities of

practice' that people form as they pursue shared enterprises over time. In order to give a social account of learning, the theory explores in a systematic way the intersections of issues of community, social practice, meaning, and identity. The result is a broad conceptual framework for thinking about learning as a process of social participation. This ambitious but thoroughly accessible framework has relevance for the practitioner as well as the theoretician, and is presented with all the breadth, and rigor necessary to address such a complex and yet profoundly human topic (Foreword).

Wenger's social theory of learning is anchored on several theories, some having more influence than others on his work. In relation to existing theories, Wenger views his work as "being located at the intersection of intellectual traditions, along two main axes"(Figure 2). The vertical axis opposes theories that give primacy to institutions, norms and rules (theories of social structure) to theories that give primacy to actions by focusing on the interactive relations between people during activities or conversations (theories of situated experience). The horizontal axis presents two groups of theories that highly impacted on Wenger's definition of CoP. Theories of social practice give primacy to the production and reproduction of specific ways of engaging with the world "with an emphasis on the social systems of shared resources by which groups organize and coordinate their activities, mutual relationships, and interpretations of the word"(Wenger, 1998, p. 13). At the other end of the axis are theories of identity "concerned with the social formation of the person, the cultural interpretation of the body, and the creation and use of markers of membership, such as rites of passage and social categories" (p. 13).

As shown in Figure 2, Wenger presents four other groups of theories that had some influence on his work (theories of collectivity – theories of subjectivity; theories of meaning – theories of power). All these theories have something to contribute to the social

theory of learning whose main focus is on learning as social participation. But for Wenger, participation “refers not just to local events of engagement in certain activities with certain people but a more encompassing process of being active participants in the *practices* of social communities and constructing *identities* in relation to these communities” (p. 4). As the concepts of practice, community of practice, and identity are key concepts in Wenger’s work and will be at the center of our research, they need to be defined.

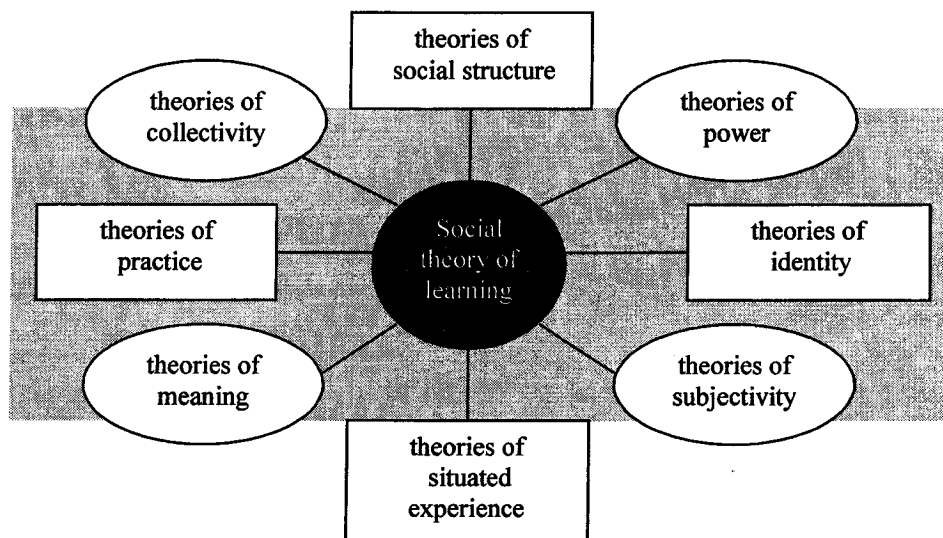


Figure 2. Wenger’s social theory of learning (taken from Wenger, 1998, p. 14)

### *Practice*

A practice is what a group of people has developed over the years and which gives structure and meaning to what they do. To accomplish what they want to do, people interact with each other and with the world; they learn. This collective learning results in practices. Figure 3 presents the main elements used by Wenger to define the concept ‘practice’.

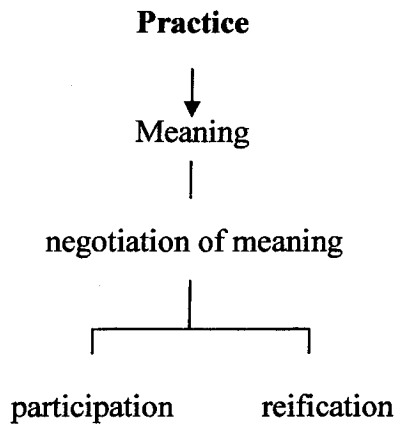


Figure 3. The elements of practice

For Wenger (1998), “practice is about meaning as an experience of everyday life” (p. 52). This meaning is located in a process called ‘negotiation of meaning’ which involves the interaction of two constituents: participation and reification. Participation refers to “the social experience of living in the world in terms of membership in social communities and active involvement in social enterprises... It is a complex process that combines doing, talking, thinking, feeling and belonging” (p. 56). Reification refers to “the process of giving form to our experience by producing objects that congeal this experience into ‘thingness’. In doing so we create points of focus around which the negotiation of meaning becomes organized” (p. 58). The following example will help to understand the links between these different terms. To define the practice of teaching at the university level one can ask a faculty member what it means to be a teacher in his/her institution. Throughout the discussion the teacher might make reference to the collective agreement, the curriculum to cover, the different forms to complete,... (reification) and the numerous meetings he/she has participated in and the numerous informal talks in the hall in which he/she has been engaged (participation), where teachers sometimes agreed quickly and at other times where different points of view were discussed (negotiation of meaning).

### *Community of Practice*

Because the term community can have different meanings such as a residential neighbourhood, Wenger prefers to associate practice and community and then define the concept 'Community of practice' which "is not just an aggregate of people defined by some characteristic. The term is not a synonym for group, team or network" (p. 74). Figure 4 presents the three dimensions of a CoP.

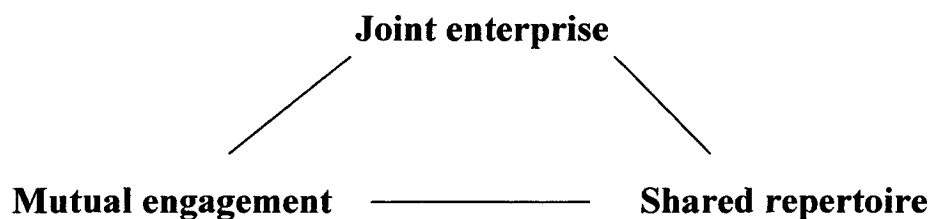


Figure 4. Dimensions of practice as the property of a community (Taken from Wenger, 1998, p. 73)

Mutual engagement means that the people in the CoP will interact on a regular basis to accomplish their work (activities) and "in this sense, a community of practice can become a very tight node of interpersonal relationships" (Wenger, 1998, p. 76). Therefore, having a membership card or being on a webservice list is not enough to pretend that one belongs to a CoP. In a CoP, people will not be engaged at the same level; full participants normally contributing more than the newcomers. Through mutual engagement, people may develop unique and specialized skills proper to their practice, emphasizing that "it is more important to know how to give and receive help than to try to know everything yourself" (p. 76). In brief, mutual engagement can be seen as 'how a CoP functions'.

The second dimension is the joint enterprise, which refers to what the members of a CoP have negotiated and continue to negotiate to determine what their practice is about.

This joint enterprise should not be seen just as a statement of purpose but could include for example “what matters and what does not, what is important and why it is important, what to do and not to do, what to pay attention to and what to ignore, what to talk about and what to leave unsaid,…” (p. 81).

The third dimension is the shared repertoire, which includes routines, vocabulary, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures and so on. The elements of the repertoire reflect a history of mutual engagement, “over time the joint pursuit of an enterprise creates resources for negotiating meaning” (p. 82). The shared repertoire refers to what capability the CoP has produced. Considering these three dimensions, a CoP is defined as a group “of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 4).

The number of members required to form a CoP is not fixed. Rather it varies widely as to the number of people who share a similar interest and mutually engage in pursuing a shared goal. According to Wenger, when the number of participants gets too large, the mutual engagement of all the participants is no longer possible and the joint enterprise may sometimes start to vary. At that point, a CoP no longer exists. However, it is quite possible to have several CoP operating alongside one another in what Wenger describes as constellations of CoP. One person may and usually does belong to more than one CoP, as our everyday lives entail the pursuit of more than one goal. Thus, CoP can be seen as self-organizing systems in the sense that “communities of practice are about content – about learning as a living experience of negotiating meaning – not about form. In this sense, they cannot be legislated into existence or defined by decree” (Wenger, 1998, p. 229). Wenger (2000) also describes CoP as containers of knowledge, as knowing related

to the practice of a CoP is an act of participation in a complex social learning system. The meaning of knowledge is lost or varies once outside the CoP.

### *Identity*

For Wenger (1998), “issues of identity are an integral aspect of a social theory of learning and are thus inseparable from issues of practice, community, and meaning” (p. 145). As explained before, members of a CoP are involved in social interactions to negotiate the meaning of their joint enterprise, which will, over time, generate a shared repertoire. From a social theory of learning perspective, this constitutes a process of becoming, a transformation of one’s identity

because learning transforms who we are and what we can do, it is an experience of identity. It is not just an accumulation of skills and information, but a process of becoming - to become a certain person or, conversely, to avoid becoming a certain person. ( p. 215)

The transformation of identity is a reflection of learning through the participant’s engagement within a CoP. The identity of the participant in a CoP is the combination of competencies and experience as a way of knowing within the context of practice. The identity is also influenced by the proximity or engagement in other CoP. In the process of learning, the individual shapes or reshapes, the ways he/she portrays himself/herself or the roles he/she plays within the CoP. From this perspective, one’s identity is not defined individually. This is so because an individual forms his/her identity in the CoP within which he/she is engaged. One’s identity is not purely social either, as it is influenced by the perception that the individual has of himself/herself and his/her abilities within a CoP.

Wenger (1998) argues that building an identity "consists of negotiating the meanings of our experience of membership in social communities. The concept of identity

serves a pivot between the social and the individual, so that each can be talked about in terms of the other”(p. 145). From such a perspective, “learning is an interplay between social competencies and personal experience (Wenger, 2000, p. 227). Learning takes place whenever tension arises between the two, and one starts pulling the other. The formation of identity is thus the result of belonging or not to social learning systems such as CoP. Belonging can take various forms and levels. To capture and better explain the different forms of participation in a CoP it helps to distinguish between three modes of belonging; engagement, imagination and alignment.

### *Engagement*

The first mode of belonging is engagement and refers to what has been presented earlier regarding the mutual engagement which is one important characteristic of a CoP. Each member of a community develops skills specific to the CoP, by which each member becomes known. Every member within a community plays a specific role in the common pursuit of the community. The roles played by the members inevitably form and transform the identities of the members. This in turn affects the way the individual views and portrays himself inside and outside the community. As each member of the community can belong to several CoP they each have to negotiate and manage the meaning of their individual as well as collective boundaries in order to maintain access to the CoP as well as assuring its distinctive uniqueness. Two groups of members are often compared in a CoP; the newcomers and the old-timers. The old-timers assume a central role in delivering “the past and offer the future, in the form of narratives and participation” (p. 156) while the newcomers “must find a place in relation to the past. In order to participate they must gain some access – vicarious as it may be – to the history they want to contribute to, they must make it part of their own identities” (p. 157).

The type of involvement within an activity can vary widely. The identity of hunters engaged in the practice for social interactions, for instance, will be different from that of hunters who are very serious about filling their bag limit. This does not entail that one type of engagement is better than another. It simply highlights the differences that may be found within the same context of inquiry. These differences will be reflected in the identities of hunters as well as that of the group within which hunters participate.

### *Imagination*

The second mode of belonging that plays an important role in the formation of identity is imagination. Wenger uses the term imagination to “emphasize the creative process of producing new ‘images’ and of generating new relations through time and space that become constitutive of the self”(p. 177). Imagination plays an important role in the formation and transformation of identities as members use their imagination to learn from other people’s experiences as well as their own. It is through imagination that “we conceive of new developments, explore alternatives, and envision possible futures”(p. 178). In brief, it is a mode of belonging that involves the social world to expand the scope of reality and identity.

The context of hunting is a tremendous setting for the use of imagination due to the participants’ propensity to share their experiences with one another by telling stories. Individuals hearing the stories can imagine themselves in the shoes of the person telling the stories. Such a situation creates a favorable context for learning, as the person who narrates the event revisits his/her experience, while the others have a chance to live it through the use of their imagination and learn by listening.

### *Alignment*

The third mode of belonging is alignment, which allows a person to be “part of something big because we do what it takes to play our part. What alignment brings into the picture is a scope of action writ large, or enterprises on a large scale not inherent in engagement or in imagination” (p. 179). Alignment extends outside the actual context of practice by placing it in line or in focus with something bigger than the actual practice itself.

Hunters may decide to align their practice with that of traditional hunter-gatherer, respecting the values and traditions used during that era. The alignment of the practice with something bigger dictates the type of practice that will take place within the community, as well as the identity of the people forming the community. For example, some groups may focus more on respecting the rules and regulations while others may try to work around them. Therefore, it may have an impact on the way the group accepts or rejects certain actions depending on their perception of what is defined as acceptable practice within specific groups.

The distinction between the modes of belonging is useful as each mode contributes a different aspect to the formation of social learning systems and personal identities. Assuming a different level of belonging from one social group to the next, this might provide a foundation for a typology of communities. Also, virtually each mode requires a different social setting. Engagement requires opportunities for joint activities while imagination requires opportunities to distance oneself from the situation (Wenger, 2000). In order to help understand the modes of belonging and the various dimensions that may be found within them, a table prepared by Wenger is presented. In this table the modes of belonging are integrated within the concept of identity as they are referred to as identity

dimensions. As presented in Table 2, there are three dimensions for each mode of belonging, connectedness, expansiveness, and effectiveness.

- *Connectedness.* Where are enduring social relationships through which an identity gains social depth? An identity is not an abstract idea or a label, such as a title, an ethnic category, or a personality trait. It is a lived experience of belonging (or not belonging). A strong identity involves deep connections with others through shared histories and experiences, reciprocity, affection, and mutual commitments.

(Wenger, 2000, p. 239)

Table 2.

Identity dimensions (taken from Wenger, 2000, p. 240)

|             | Connectedness   | Expansiveness  | Effectiveness  |
|-------------|---|--|--|
| Engagement  | Is there a community to engage with? How far back do you go? What kinds of interactions do you have? What do you do together? Do you trust and are you trusted? | Is there enough variety of contexts and identity-forming experiences?  | Do you have opportunities to develop socially recognized competencies by practicing in well-established practices? Are your communities ready to embrace your experience into their practices? |
| Imagination | Do you have good conversations? Do you talk about your deepest aspirations? Do you listen well?   | Can you see yourself as a member of large communities, for instance, a world citizen, the heir of long-lived traditions, the pioneer of a world to come? | Do you understand the big picture well enough to act effectively?  |
| Alignment   | Do you keep your commitments to your communities? Do you uphold their principles? Do you give and receive feedback?   | Do you follow guidelines that align your actions with broader purposes, such as saving energy or recycling for the sake of the planet?                   | Do you know the regime of accountability by which your ideas, actions, and requests will be judged? Can you convince others of the potential of a new idea?                                    |

- *Expansiveness*. What are the breadth and scope of an identity? A healthy identity will not be exclusively locally defined. It will involve multimembership and cross multiple boundaries. It will seek a wide range of experiences and be open to new possibilities. It will identify with broad communities that lie beyond direct participation. (Wenger, 2000, p. 240)
- *Effectiveness*. Does an identity enable action and participation? Identity is a vehicle for participating in the social world, but it can also lead to non-participation. A healthy identity is socially empowering rather than marginalizing. (Wenger, 2000, p. 240)

The questions presented above in Table 2 serve as a guide to help determine the contribution of each mode across the three dimensions.

According to Wenger (2000) there are potential tensions and conflicts between these dimensions, which have an influence on the personal identity of the member within the group. Moreover, the importance of each dimension is subject to change as the newcomer transforms his or her identity within the context of practice. The transformation of identity is mainly the result of a positive or negative personal experience within the social competencies of the social learning system. This study will focus on examining the development and transformation of identity over time through the three modes of belonging.

To close this section on the conceptual framework, I would like to share why it seems so appealing to study the process of becoming a hunter. The nature of the activity of moose hunting promotes hunting in groups. Considering that moose hunting is a recreational activity, participants have no obligation to be part of one group or another. The members of a group come together on a voluntary basis, as they select who they wish to engage within the activity. Finally, since the skills and knowledge to hunt are not taught

formally outside the practice, the only way to learn the intricacies of this activity is to engage in its practice. Therefore, I believe that this conceptual framework is very suitable for the study of learning in such a peculiar setting.

#### Recent Position Papers and Studies that Focus on CoP

In the last few years, position papers and studies that focus on CoP have enriched our understanding of the framework. This in my opinion is a good indication of the importance of the new framework proposed by Wenger. I have decided to present a few of them to help situate this research with that of others. The first paper presented, Raelin (1999), reviews and compares three work-based learning approaches, including CoP. The second study, Somerville and Abrahamson (2003), demonstrates a poor interpretation and use of the CoP framework. Finally, the third study, Ball (2003) looks for the presence of CoP in a complex setting.

Raelin (1999) examined and compared three approaches for work-based learning; action learning, CoP, and action science. Although the focus of interest for our research is on CoP outside the work place, it is quite interesting to look at how the CoP approach fares in comparison to other work based learning approaches. According to Raelin, the two other work-based learning approaches focus on individual learning. Action learning, although much more concerned with context and with learning by doing, is essentially an educational strategy using real-time experiences to help the individuals become more skilled practitioners. Action science, on the other hand, is an intervention strategy designed to increase individual effectiveness in social situations. One of the key principles of action science is reflection on one's action. As Raelin explains; "action learning seeks to contextualize learning, (whereas) action science decontextualizes practice so that learners

can become more critical of their behavior and explore the very premises of their beliefs” (p. 93).

What makes action science and action learning different from CoP is that both learning approaches are staged, either by trying to contextualize problems or by decontextualizing social issues. The CoP approach, on the other hand, is not staged; it evolves freely as individuals regroup in a common real life enterprise, develop a shared history through engagement over time, sharing beliefs, ways of talking, and ways of doing things. Initially, people do not form a CoP to learn but rather to accomplish something together. Nonetheless, the result of their interaction and negotiation of meaning is learning. Raelin refers to the process of apprenticeship in the workplace and how newcomers learn through engagement in actual work settings rather than simulated work environments to illustrate how this approach differs from the others since it relies on the need for the learner to be engaged in actual work in order to learn.

Somerville and Abrahamson (2003) claim to have used the CoP framework to examine the learning of safe work practices in the mining industry. However, in reading their text, one realizes that they have done a poor job of analyzing and defining the framework they used to conduct their study. They seem to associate informal, incidental learning in the workplace to the learning described by Lave and Wenger (1991) in situated learning. They refer to the mining industry as a CoP and stress that newcomers being placed in work settings with old-timers who are paid extra to show them proper work procedures is similar to learning as a legitimate peripheral participant in a CoP. This procedure is a lot more similar to guided participation (Rogoff, 1995) than CoP. It is quite shocking to see that researchers would conduct a study on workplace learning under the term CoP without any reference to Wenger (1998), despite most of their references being from 2000 and up. They emphasize heavily that miners learn safety by doing and that

learning is embedded within the context. They do so by stating “workplace trainers enact ideas derived from their connection to ideas and practices of learning and training” (p. 25). They also state that a lot of learning about safety occurs during meetings in which miners reflect on their own practice and accidents. Both these processes are more in line with action learning and action science (Raelin, 1999) than they are with CoP. This text lacks a solid and well defined conceptual framework that would guide and structure the findings in a linear fashion coherent with the terminology and the philosophies of one framework rather than presenting findings that seem quite incoherent with any approaches other than stating that informal or incidental learning is a very important part of miners safe work practices.

Ball (2003) looked for the presence of CoP in trade union education. However, he often confuses the trade union practice with the trade union education. His text consists of a second analysis of a prior study which looked at the value of trade union education courses. He describes the initial study and tries to incorporate the CoP conceptual framework into his findings. He often states that trade unions are collective ways of employee engagement; therefore it entitles him to consider them as CoP. He also states that “a CoP may be usefully considered as a group of people who engaged in a shared or common activity premised on a shared orientation” ( p. 301). According to Brown and Duguid (2000), the groups described by Ball form a ‘network of practice’ and not necessarily a CoP. Networks of practice regroup “people who work on similar practices” (Brown & Duguid, 2000, p. 141). The common interest of the members of a network of practice is quite different from the mutual engagement, the joint enterprise, and the shared history of doing things found in the framework of CoP. Ball’s adaptation of CoP seems to rest on the principles of membership, while, according to Wenger (1998) engagement in a CoP is much more than simple membership to that community. Ball (2003) stresses that

trade union members learn from their engagement in the context and that most of the learning takes place from making mistakes and doing the work. Such a phenomenon may fit within the framework of situated learning at best, but certainly does not qualify it as a CoP as proposed by Wenger.

Even though the framework of CoP was designed from and for the work place, it can also be used outside the context of work. For instance, Merriam et al., (2003) studied the process of becoming a witch through engagement in informal CoP. These authors do a good job of explaining what a CoP is and they emphasize how the practice of witchcraft is itself a process of becoming. Their findings are regrouped under three major themes that reflect the framework of CoP: the trajectory of participation, learning in practice, and identity development. In the first theme, they address the issue of accessibility to a marginalized group such as witches. For the most part, people are introduced to witchcraft through friends or acquaintances. Gaining access is also restricted by certain gatekeepers, persons of authority who determine whether access will be granted or not. They also state how each and every group is unique and different from one another. Therefore, even if a newcomer has prior experience, it takes a certain amount of time before he/she can become fully engaged in the practice. They explain how the elders within a community ensure continuity of the community by making sure they have people to replace them eventually.

From the second theme, learning in practice, they emphasize the principle of learning while engaged in the practice. One of the participants compared learning about her art to the process of becoming a mother. One of the central elements of learning in this context is how participants negotiate knowledge through a process of give and take, thus emphasizing the concept of negotiation of meaning which is central to the framework of CoP.

From the third theme, identity development, it is quite clear that learning in this context also involves a process of identity transformation. The process of engaging in the practice also implies a natural transformation of identity on the part of the participant. Becoming a witch is certainly a transformation of one's identity, as stated by Merriam et al., (2003). This research clearly indicates that CoP not only exist outside of the work context but also that they offer a very suitable milieu for learning through the process of becoming, by engaging in a given practice, even one as marginalized as witches.

Thus, what I have learned from these position papers is that the CoP framework is a fine conceptual framework to use in order to conduct research. Moreover, I have learned that is important to remain in line with the framework and not try to stretch the meaning and application of the concepts to a point where it no longer fits the meaning awarded by Wenger. Lastly, the fact that the framework was used to examine and document the process of becoming a witch attests to the applicability of the framework outside of the traditional work and education settings for which it is mainly used.

#### Literature on Hunting

An extensive search of the research literature on hunting has revealed that there hasn't been much written on the process of becoming a hunter. However, enough literature was found to provide a brief overview of how the topic has been treated in the past. The few authors I have come across can be divided into two groups. The first group provides anthropological accounts of primitive societies (e.g., Bender & Morris, 1988; Bird-David, 1988; Donald & Mitchell, 1994; Feit, 1994; Hultkrantz & Vorren, 1982; Jones, Hawkes, & Draper, 1994; Woodburn, 1988; Yesner, 1994). These societies rely heavily on hunting for survival; especially for food and shelter. However, the authors did not focus their attention on hunting, but merely stated the importance of the activity for the survival of the societies.

They did not place any focus on the activity itself and there are no accounts of the process by which children become hunters themselves over a period of time. These writings do not provide much insight for our research except for emphasizing the importance of hunting within certain social groups. These studies are mostly done by people outside the community who spent a certain amount of time observing the social functioning of these societies.

The second group of authors on hunting, which is of more interest to me, provides some narrative accounts of their personal experiences as big-game hunters in North America (e.g., Cramond, 1965; Dalrymple, 1974; Elliot, 1969; Hummel, 1994; Knap, 1973; Ondrack, 1985; Ortega Y Gasset, 1972; Pattillo, 1902; Villenave, 1972). Big-game hunting is a term commonly used to refer to larger animals such as moose, deer, elk, etc... These authors are themselves active participants in the activity of hunting and their writings focus on sharing some of their own personal experiences over the years within the field of hunting. Their stories are mostly tales from the field as each one of them showcases his/her abilities in regards to hunting. Of particular interest to us is that some of them reveal how prior experiences have prepared them for ulterior ones. The literature hints at a process of becoming, as hunters slowly become more experienced and more knowledgeable in regards to their activity over time.

The stories of these hunters are quite interesting as they provide an insight into the activities and the social interactions that are so central to hunting, especially moose hunting. In accordance with the conceptual framework, I looked for elements within the hunters' stories that would reveal the possible existence of a CoP for the practice of hunting. In my opinion, if the stories reveal that hunters have a joint enterprise, a mutual engagement and a shared repertoire, it supports my assumption of the presence of such social interactions in hunting and justifies the use of this framework to conduct this

research. It will be interesting to see if the process of identity formation, so central to Wenger's framework, is addressed in the existing literature on hunting.

### *Joint Enterprise*

The activity of hunting, especially moose hunting, is a very demanding activity, both physically and emotionally. For the hunters who chose to engage in such an activity, they have to share a drive and passion as they embark on a task that requires a certain level of commitment from each member within the group. Hummel (1994) has lots of experience hunting with guides, who for the most part act as decision makers in regards to the level of engagement. However, as experienced by Hummel during a moose hunting trip to Northern Ontario, self-directed moose hunting is entirely different and the engagement within the group must be negotiated among the participants. He highlights his experiences by stating;

this kind of self-directed hunting experience requires the hunters to define, create and sustain their own reality of the hunting experience. They must decide what the rules are, how the hunt is to be conducted, how much effort will be invested in the hunting process. (p. 80)

The hardship and the work load associated with moose hunting seem to be highly present in the mind of hunters. Nevertheless, for some, it is that very hardship that makes the activity appealing. As Elliot states:

We leave the comfort of home to sleep on the ground, warm beside campfires of our own making, and put ourselves through unnecessary hardships – for what reason? We may claim that when we hunt or fish, we are after meat. This is our excuse for being there, but we are searching for something that goes much deeper than belly demands that we can more easily satisfy at the corner

grocery store. Our deep-seated need is to prove that we are still capable of providing for ourselves with a minimum of outside assistance. (1969, p. 103)

The choice to engage in the activity of hunting requires a lot of negotiations and decisions on the part of the participants, as the course of action of any hunting group is not outlined but rather negotiated between the participants. The aim, the goal and the purpose of the group, among other things, have to be negotiated and agreed upon by all the participants within the group for them to willingly engage in the activities of the group.

### *Mutual Engagement*

The concept of mutual engagement is highly pertinent as there are no outside pressures on hunters to engage in the activity together. The selection as well as the structure of a group is not predetermined, therefore, hunters seem free to select or form groups as they see fit. The choice of partners is important as there are numerous factors to be negotiated within the context of practice. Pattillo (1902) describes one of his first hunting experiences and clearly emphasizes the value of groups in order to hunt moose: “The size of the moose and the nature of the activity make it difficult enough for hunters to join their efforts in order to increase their chances of success, as well as to deal with the amount of work associated with killing a moose” (p. 247). Such a process requires everyone in the group to contribute and share responsibilities to a certain degree. Every hunter within a group is not expected to do it all, but rather to play specific roles according to his skills and knowledge of the activity (Hummel, 1994; Ondrack, 1985; Pattillo, 1902). It is the mutual contribution of every member of a group that makes it possible for a group to function and achieve its shared goal.

One of the main reasons why hunters gather in groups to pursue moose is the amount of work such a hunt involves, once an animal has been killed. Ondrack (1985)

points out the amount of work involved: “after four hours of back-breaking toil we drove home” (p. 275). The field dressing, packing, and carrying of such an immense animal is very demanding physically. The four hours stated by Ondrack is a good reference to the amount of work involved. However, it could have taken much longer, as the moose they had killed was no more than one hundred yards from the road and their vehicle. Modern day hunting, more often than not, involves the use of all-terrain vehicles which cut down the work and time required to carry the meat home. However, “when you down a big bull elk or a moose, the dressing is not just a ‘chore’ it is a major, physically demanding undertaking” (Dalrymple, 1974, p. 31). For that reason among others, hunters choose to hunt in groups, rather than alone.

The Ministry of Natural Resources (2002) in Ontario highly recommends that hunters form groups to hunt moose. The Ministry suggests that the activity of moose hunting has historically been a social one. Therefore, the tag allocation system reflects this and is designed to encourage people to hunt in groups by providing a better chance of being awarded an adult moose tag for those who hunt in larger groups. The ministry also warns individuals interested in taking part in this activity “that few moose hunters go out alone, because the prospect of handling a dead moose is daunting at best” (p. 7). More information on the tag allocation process can be found at the following web site:

[http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/pubs/hunting/huntRegs/2005/hr\\_2005\\_moose\\_eng.pdf](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/pubs/hunting/huntRegs/2005/hr_2005_moose_eng.pdf)

Newcomers to the activity seem to be integrated slowly. For example, Ondrack (1985) relates how his older, more experienced brother took him under his wing when the author first engaged in the activity:

On my first moose hunt my brother took the main road to a culvert-sized creek west of Rocky Mountain House... To prevent me getting lost, he sat me down a

few hundred yards from the car. On the other side of the creek was a game trail. He told me to watch the game trail. (p. 275)

At this point, the older brother was not minimizing the newcomer's engagement, but merely placing him in a situation where the tasks assigned to the less experienced hunter would be in accordance with his level of ability and skills to hunt.

### *Shared Repertoire*

Hunters who hunt together for a certain time, or have been exposed to the practice long enough, will have a shared repertoire of knowledge. They will share secrets of the trade that are highly relevant to their group. It is that shared repertoire that makes a CoP unique from all others. Yet, there are certain things that all hunters are expected to know. "The first long step in becoming an expert hunter is the realization that there are common denominators among all game species. The next step is gaining the perception to apply these" (Dalrymple, 1974, p. 15). It seems that every hunter involved in the practice has his own idea of what a hunter is or what it is supposed to be. For Dalrymple (1974); "the deer hunter who must wear electric socks and carry a transistor radio with a light on top so he can find his way home ought to stay home. This type is really not a hunter but a gadgeteer who clutters up the game country" (p. 30). By making such a statement, Dalrymple makes his perception of what or who is not a hunter quite clear.

The Ministry of Natural Resources which is the governing body for hunting in Ontario, plays a key role in providing newcomers to the practice of hunting with a shared repertoire of basic knowledge and safety skills. It will be interesting to see what kind of role if any, the Ministry plays in the learning path of hunters. Data from this study will provide some interesting insights as to the value of any information provided by the Ministry to newcomers to the practice of moose hunting.

In order to legally engage in the practice of moose hunting in Ontario, a person must follow a hunting course and pass a hunter's examination. The primary focus of such a course is to ensure the safety of newcomers to the practice as well as ensuring that newcomers have been educated as to the guidelines and regulations of the activity. The process of educating and testing newcomers on specific skills such as safety ensures that every newcomer to the practice shares a basic repertoire of knowledge in regards to safety. It is commonly assumed that the technical hunting knowledge and skills will be developed within the practice.

### *Identity Formation*

The concept of identity formation and transformation is also very present in the stories as some highlight their process of learning in terms of becoming (Cramond, 1965; Dalrymple, 1974; Hummel, 1994; Knap, 1973; Ortega Y Gasset, 1972). Cramond (1965), for example, explains:

Once, after previously seeing a bear near me while hunting in very thick, jungle-like growth covering old loggish slash, I became so unnerved that I fired my rifle into the trees above me. There was a terrific crashing about ten feet away. The biggest buck I was to see all year took off before I could level my barrel. It served me right for being cowardly – but I was only sixteen and had lots to learn. A grown man should be capable of controlling his emotions. (p. 158)

Mistakes are acceptable in hunting especially when the hunter is still young and has lots to learn to become a proven hunter. Besides, mistakes are an important part of the process of learning. The concept of learning in practice has to include plenty of room for errors as newcomers start to gain experience from their own errors and successes.

Identification with the practice is an important point in the formation of the participant's identity. Dalrymple (1974) highlights the formation of identity as well as the process of becoming through engagement in the activity of hunting:

I was 20 before I even saw my first deer. And though I now have hunted deer across the U.S. practically from border to border and coast to coast, I was well into my thirties before I fired my first shot at one. Yet by then I had become – if you'll forgive the seeming immodesty – a hunter. I remember quite vividly that during my early deer hunting I knew precisely what to do, how to go about it. Oh, I had to learn much about specific deer habits, and gain gradual experience in how they used their senses. But I was already a *hunter*. (p. 13)

What is interesting here is that he considered himself a hunter while being fully aware that he still has lots to learn in terms of specifics to the deer. The formulation of his identity rests on some personal experiences he has gained prior to engaging in big-game hunting. This author emphasizes the importance of graduating from small game hunting to large game hunting, especially when big game is harder to find: "In the absence of deer, I really learned to hunt big game by hunting small game" (p. 12). For Dalrymple it is not the bagging of a big game animal that makes a hunter what he is, "it is not necessarily true that one who bags a mule deer, say, as his very first animal in boyhood is any more expert than the young hunter who grew up outwitting squirrels" (p. 12). Therefore the identification or self-identification of a hunter seems to lie more with the personal feelings of the hunter towards himself than with the bagging of the game. Dalrymple certainly has a word of advice for young hunters, as he states, "experience is obviously the best teacher" (p. 51). It is by engaging in the activity that one can and will learn the intricacies associated with the activity.

Villeneuve (1972) also highlights a process of becoming as he points out that before a hunter can claim to be a long distance shooter; he should simply attempt to be an honest shot first. Such a process of developing a certain expertise or skill enhancement with practice only adds to the concept of becoming, as the new hunter forms and transforms his identity within the practice while becoming more skilled at shooting.

### *The Public Image of Hunting*

The scarcity of literature or the lack of research on hunting may be a result of the negative image associated with hunting:

Reluctance on the part of the establishment of sociology to acknowledge the legitimacy of these topics by excluding their consideration on the pages of the more central publications is likely to persist because of the liberal world view which animates the gatekeepers. (Hummel, 1994, p. 9)

Although hunting is an important part of Canadian history and culture, the traditional practice of hunting is seriously jeopardized. The public opinion in regards to hunting is getting more and more adverse to the practice of the activity (Burgat, 1997). The general public's perception of hunting is highly influenced by the evolution of a general concern for the welfare of animals and wildlife: "A wide variety of organizations profess concern for protecting and preserving the environment and wildlife populations now and into the future" (Hummel, 1994, p. 6). For many organizations, the way to protect wildlife is to lobby against the practice of hunting.

The governing bodies of hunting are trying to restore the image of the activity. The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (O.F.A.H.) state that one of the more important roles that hunters have, comes in the form of wildlife management. Hunters contribute to the welfare of wildlife in two different ways. According to the Ontario Federation of

Anglers and Hunters (O.F.A.H., 2001), “hunters contribute to wildlife management through license fees. Angling and hunting license revenues are earmarked for fish and wildlife management and conservation in Ontario – about \$45 million annually” (p. 4). The second major contribution of hunters to the management of wildlife comes in the form of controlled harvesting. Hunters “help wildlife managers maintain the balance between wildlife numbers and habitat. If deer populations are too high to be healthy, hunting is the tool that ecosystem managers need to restore the balance” (O.F.A.H., 2001, p. 4).

However, regardless of the importance of hunting or of the roles that this activity plays, the future of hunting is in serious jeopardy. According to Kraus (2001), we are currently witnessing a fragmentation of families and communities which has a serious impact on their traditional values. This situation is definitely a cause for concern, considering that the family may very well be the most influential agent in the process of socializing young individuals into outdoor recreation (namely hunting) (Ibrahim & Cordes, 1993). Hughes (1991) found that there is a strong correlation between childhood participation in fishing and hunting and adulthood participation in these same activities.

Looking at some statistics, it is apparent that the activity of hunting is considerably threatened; “participation in hunting is declining (9.8 per cent in 1981; 8.4 per cent in 1987; 7.4 per cent in 1991) and is expected to continue to decline” (Gauthier, 1997). As a result of this decline in participation in hunting, its governing bodies have been forced to be proactive. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (M.N.R.) and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (O.F.A.H.) have joined their efforts to make hunting more accessible to young individuals between the ages of 12 and 15 years of age. These two organizations have put together a program called ‘Hunter Apprenticeship Safety Program’ which aims at providing practical training to future hunters. The goal of the program is to provide “individuals the opportunity to safely develop their hunting skills while under the

direct and immediate supervision of a qualified mentor” (O.F.A.H., 2001, p. 1). The format suggested by the M.N.R and O.F.A.H. to introduce and expose young individuals to the knowledge and skills required to become hunters seems similar to an apprenticeship program, which places an apprentice in contact with a qualified mentor. However, the program is not mandatory for new hunters, and it only applies to those who are between the ages of 12 and 15. For more information on regulations and specifications related to moose hunting visit the following web site:

[http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/pubs/hunting/huntRegs/2005/hr\\_2005\\_moose\\_eng.pdf](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/pubs/hunting/huntRegs/2005/hr_2005_moose_eng.pdf)

Thus, the process of becoming a hunter, whether it is through the apprenticeship program or through the traditional way, needs to be examined and documented in order to provide information in respect to the process of becoming within this activity. I strongly believe that it is crucial for the continuity of this activity, and for our cultural heritage, that the process of becoming a hunter be examined closely and documented in order to broaden our understanding of it.

### *Contextual Information*

The province of Ontario is divided into 95 Wildlife Management Units (WMUs). Moose hunts are held in 57 of them. For management purposes, some WMUs are subdivided, so there are actually more than 57 individual hunts. Depending on the WMU, there are rifle, shotgun, muzzle-loader, and archery hunts. For the purpose of this research the focus will be placed on regular rifle hunts, although some participants may also engage in archery (bow and arrow).

Moose are harvested on a selective-harvest basis. Ontario residents who have a hunting Outdoors Card and purchase a moose license may hunt calf moose, but in order to hunt adult animals, they must enter a computerized lottery draw for either bull or cow

validation tags in specified WMUs. Tags are not transferable to other WMUs. The chance of being awarded a tag varies widely based on the number of hunters as well as the number of tags within each WMU. More recently, the Ministry of Natural Resources has put in place a system which provides better chances to hunters who hunt in groups. The larger the group, the better chance of being awarded an adult validation tag. In some of the more remote WMUs, there is even a guaranteed group size that will award an adult validation tag to any group containing a predetermined number of hunters. (Ontario Out Of Doors, 2001).

### Research Questions

The main question that guided our research is ‘how do individuals become moose hunters’? The literature on hunting tends to suggest the existence of a CoP within the field of hunting, but as Trudel and Gilbert (2004) indicate, appearances can be misleading. In the context of ice hockey, where coaches are constantly in contact with one another, CoP do not form. According to Trudel and Gilbert, the coaches tend to individualize their enterprise for the purpose of winning at all costs. Coaches who face a coaching issue cannot rely on other coaches to help them as the competition between teams prevent coaches from sharing ideas. Therefore, it is impossible to find a CoP of coaches since coaches refrain from sharing their secrets in order to gain an advantage over other teams and win. Similarly, Culver (2004) found that athletics club coaches, even when working closely together, do not form CoP within the context of their work either. The coaches are willing to help other athletes by providing other coaches’ athletes appropriate training. However, even though coaches share a repertoire of skills and knowledge related to their field of coaching, they do not take the time to formulate a joint enterprise together. Even in the teaching context where competition is absent, collaboration among teachers in the same

department is not guaranteed. Stroot, Collier, O'Sullivan, and England (1994) found that within a physical education department some teachers "taught their own classes in their own teaching stations and had virtually no professional interactions with their co-workers" (p. 358).

In my opinion, the warning provided by Trudel and Gilbert (2004), Culver (2004), and Stroot et al.,(1994) not to assume the existence of a CoP warrants the examination of moose hunting as a CoP or not. Therefore, the study starts by determining the presence or absence of the main characteristics required for the existence of a CoP (engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire). In the case that a CoP does not exist, the analysis will focus on examining what factors prevent a CoP from forming in this context and will document the process of becoming a hunter outside a CoP. In the event that a CoP does exist, the analysis will focus on identity formation and will answer the questions related to Wenger's (1998) three modes of belonging.

#### Engagement

- a) What kinds of interactions take place between members of a group? Do you trust and are you trusted? Is there a community to engage with?

#### Imagination

- b) How do moose hunters listen to one another? What kinds of views are shared between hunters?

#### Alignment

- c) How do moose hunters align their hunting practice with other hunting groups? What influences the alignment of the practice of moose hunters?

**CHAPTER 2:**  
**METHODOLOGY**

This chapter identifies the research paradigm as well as the research tradition used in this research. It also contains the methodological overview of the three phases of the research. Finally, it presents the role and the profile of the researcher. A more-specific detailed methodology, including the data collection strategies used and details on the participants will be presented at the beginning of each phase in the next chapter.

### The Research Paradigm

According to Creswell (1994), in the field of scientific research, there seems to exist two main approaches: qualitative and quantitative. While Creswell tries to define these two approaches, the position of Guba and Lincoln (1994) is to reserve these terms for a description of types of methods. From our perspective, both qualitative and quantitative methods may be used appropriately with any research paradigm. Questions of method are secondary to questions of paradigm, which we define as the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in choices of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways. (p. 105)

Guba and Lincoln offer five paradigms that best represent the type of research being; positivism, postpositivism, critical theory, constructivism, and participatory.

The **positivist** paradigm suggests the existence of one reality. The purpose of conducting research is mainly to verify hypotheses and generalize the findings. This paradigm mainly reflects quantitative methodologies.

The **post-positivist** paradigm also suggests the existence of a reality but “to be only imperfectly apprehendable because of basically flawed human intellectual mechanisms and the fundamentally intractable nature of phenomena” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110).

Qualitative methods can be used in research but the criteria of rigor such as internal validity, external validity and objectivity are required.

The **critical theory** paradigm focuses on inequalities, either social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, or gender. This paradigm is used to highlight the marginalization or oppression of specific groups.

In the **participatory** paradigm, the researcher and the participant focus on cocreating a reality. This paradigm is used to conduct research with the participants as opposed to conducting research on the participants (positivist & post-positivist) or about the participants (constructivist). The participants have a more central role in the elaboration of the findings as the reality is constructed in cooperation between the participant and the researcher.

The **constructivist** paradigm, the one used for this research, focuses on helping the participants to reconstruct their reality. The reality constructed is relative to the context in which it has been observed. The researcher's voice "is that of the 'passionate participant actively engaged in facilitating the 'multivoice' reconstruction of his or her own construction as well as those of all other participants"(p. 115). This paradigm requires a rigorous effort on the part of the researcher to establish a sense of authenticity and trustworthiness in relation to the data collected.

Furthermore, Guba and Lincoln suggest that the researcher address and identify four basic beliefs that may influence the research; ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology. The assumptions presented here reflect the constructivist paradigm being used for the research.

The **ontological** assumption that there is not one reality, since the realities may vary in terms of the participant's experience and context of practice. This assumption is in line

with my perception of situated learning. Learning occurs while taking part in the action and contextual settings which vary considerably between groups of hunters.

The **epistemological** assumption that the researcher is not independent from the interaction within the context of practice. Knowledge is constructed through dialogue and negotiation in the context of practice. The findings are subjective as they are created as they are perceived by the researcher with the voice of the participants.

The **methodological** assumption that the inquiry is an inductive process through which categories or designs may emerge. The findings are context-bound and the presentation and analysis of data must provide a sense of authenticity as “the final aim is to distill a consensus construction that is more informed and sophisticated than any of the predecessor constructions (including, of course, the etic construction of the investigator” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). This assumption involves certain flexibility in the analysis of the data in order to leave room for inductive reasoning. The conceptual framework that guided this research provides most of the categories into which the data will be coded, but emerging categories will be allowed to emerge throughout the process of analysis.

The **axiological** assumption that qualitative research may be value-laden and biased. That assumption has been addressed by taking into consideration my biases and values in regards to hunting. Moreover, the researcher’s experience about the context and the research were presented (see introduction) as well as procedures undertaken to establish the accuracy of his account (Creswell, 1998). In this research, the procedures include, member checking, peer debriefing and peer reviewing. In brief, the portrait that is produced at the end of the research is one done with the participant, as conceived by the researcher (Piantanida & Garman, 1999).

### The Qualitative Traditions

In an effort to contrast the main qualitative methods used, Creswell (1998) presents five types of qualitative traditions of inquiry. For Creswell, qualitative research can be seen as “a process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the research in a natural setting” (p. 15). Creswell suggests five distinct traditions to describe the different approaches used within qualitative research: biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. Thus, the structure of this research will reflect the constructivist paradigm as outlined by Guba and Lincoln (2000), as well as the multiple case study approach suggested by Creswell (1998).

A case study, or in this case a multiple case study “is an exploration of a bounded system... this bounded system is bounded by time and place” (Creswell, 1998, p.61). A case study needs to be contextualized: “the context of the case involves situating the case within its setting, which may be a physical setting or the social, historical, and/or economic setting for the case. The socio-cultural context of Northern Ontario represents a distinct setting for this research. Moreover, “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” (Yin, 1994, p. 13). It is a well known fact that moose hunting is a very central part of the daily life of the residents of Northern Ontario during the hunting season. For that matter, it is hard to separate the activity from the context in which it is practiced.

Case studies usually consist of a limited number of participants; therefore, the primary sources of data can be limited. In order to compensate and ensure some validity of

the findings of such inquiry, the researcher can use multiple sources of evidence. In the case of this research, the three phases of data collection represent multiple sources of evidence. Phase 2 was conducted to provide more depth to the findings of the first phase and Phase 3 focused on validating and complementing the findings of the two previous phases. The researcher also consulted documents, websites and literature related to the field of practice, as well as spending a considerable amount of time involved in the context over the course of data collection.

Several efforts were also made to ensure 'rigor' in the data collection and analysis. The first interview conducted with each initial participant was analyzed and a brief report of the interview was then presented to the participant as a form of member checking. The researcher then conducted some sessions of debriefing with his advisor over the analysis of the data. Moreover, in accordance with Stebbins (2001), the data collection was conducted in two distinct stages. The first stage of data collection, phases 1 and 2 were conducted as an exploration stage of the phenomenon of moose hunting. The purpose was to explore and document a phenomenon that had previously never been studied. Finally, the second stage, phase 3, was conducted as a confirmation stage in order to confirm the perceptions developed over the course of the exploration stage.

According to Creswell (1998) when presenting the findings of a multiple case study it is valuable to follow a structure. In order to do so I have provided a detailed description of the case and the setting. Then, I proceeded to analyze the data with a categorical aggregation, allowing for issue-relevant meanings to emerge. I also used direct interpretation to draw meaning from single instances in the data. I looked for patterns in the data and established correspondence between categories. Finally, I developed a naturalistic generalization from analyzing across the multiple cases.

The analysis of the data for phase 1 was conducted in two stages. First the data was scanned in order to look for determinants of the existence of a CoP by moose hunters. Then, the data was subjected to an in depth analysis using Wenger's dimensions of identity (see Table 2) in order to document and explain the process of becoming a moose hunter for the initial participants. Moreover, In accordance with Creswell (1998), in the presentation of the findings of the five cases for this research, in phase 1a, a description of the case at the beginning of each case is presented, followed by a figure providing a brief overview of each participant's learning experience. A chronological presentation of the events experienced by the participant during his or her engagement in a group of moose hunters is then presented. The analysis of the data for phase 2 was conducted by looking for elements to distinguish the organizational structure for the activities in which the participants took part during childhood (See table 1). Similarly to phase 1, a brief description of each case is presented for this phase, followed by the findings of that phase. The data for the third phase were not subjected to an in depth analysis as the data for that phase merely serves to validate and confirm the analysis and perception of the data collected in the two previous phases. The data for phase 3 are not presented as cases; therefore the participants for that phase are not presented and described as individual cases.

#### Methodological Overview of the Three Phases

Upon reflection, the most appropriate way to present how this research was conducted and the different data collection techniques used is to divide it in three phases. Table 3 presents a general overview of the research, while specifying for each phase; the purpose, the number of participants, and the data collection techniques used.

Phase 1 consisted of a series of narrative interviews that focused on determining the existence of CoP within the context of moose hunting and the transformation of identity. The data for that phase come from the narrative interviews (Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Rubin & Rubin, 1995) conducted with the five initial participants as well as one of the peers for each participant, except for one (Allan).

Table 3.

## Methodological overview of each phase

| Purpose                         | Phase 1  |  | Phase 2  | Phase 3  |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
|                                 | 1a   | 1b   |  |  |
| Purpose                         | Answer questions regarding the existence of CoP            | Answer questions regarding the transformation of identity through three modes of belonging | Answer new questions regarding learning prior to engagement in Cop | Complement and validate the findings obtained in the previous phases and add new information |
| Participants                    | 5 initial participants as well as a peer for each.         |  | Data from 5 initial participants, peers, and 5 new participants    | 20 new participants. 2 groups  |
| Data collection techniques used | Narrative interviews, follow-up semi-structured interviews |  | Semi-structured interviews with 5 new participants                 | Semi-structured interviews with 20 new participants. On-site reflections                     |

The findings for the first phase are divided in two, and are presented as phase 1a and phase 1b. For the second phase, the focus of the research was on the childhood learning experiences. To complement the data already collected with the five initial participants, semi-structured interviews were used to collect data on five new participants. The purpose of the third phase of the research was to complement and validate the findings obtained in phase 1 and 2. Therefore, semi-structured interviews with 20 new participants

who had at least 15 years of experience in the field of moose hunting were conducted. As I collected data over two consecutive hunting seasons, I was invited to join two groups of hunters. Some informal reflections were kept in a journal. In discussing with my advisor, the reflections in my journal were judged to be a worthy addition to the research.

### The Researcher's Role and Profile

Qualitative research is subject to the interpretation of the researcher (Creswell, 1994). Therefore, it is recommended that the researcher provide a description of himself (Piantanida & Garman, 1999; Stake, 1995). The description provided below serves to highlight the role and profile, of the researcher.

The researcher has been exposed to hunting since early childhood, and has been an active participant in the activity for over 20 years. Moreover, the researcher was born and raised in Northern Ontario, the area where the data collection took place. Not only did the experience of the researcher provide an easier access to participants, but it also proved very beneficial in understanding the local jargon used during engagement in the context of practice, as well as the speech genre used during the interview process.

The researcher has considerable experience in conducting qualitative research, having conducted and analyzed well over 50 interviews for his master's thesis, as well as being part of a qualitative research group for nearly ten years. Moreover, the researcher also has developed expertise in the use of the qualitative data analysis software, Nvivo. The researcher has been using Nvivo for nearly 6 years and has been teaching other students and professors how to use it for 4 years.

**CHAPTER 3:**  
**THE THREE PHASES OF THE RESEARCH**

The following chapter is divided in three phases. Phase 1 is composed of two parts, one focusing on identifying the presence of a CoP in the context of moose hunting, and the other focusing on presenting the participants' identity transformation through the three modes of belonging. Phase 2 looks at the activities the participants took part in during their childhood as well as the participation structure within these activities. Lastly, phase 3 focuses on validating and complementing the data from the first two phases.

## PHASE 1: THE PRACTICE OF MOOSE HUNTING

### Participants

During the first phase, the method used for the collection of data was a multiple case study approach. A purposeful sampling approach was used to select the participants (Creswell, 1998). The main criterion of selection for the initial participants (IP) was years of participation within the field of hunting. The number of participants recruited for this phase is five IPs and four peers of the initial participants (PIP). All of the participants came from Northern Ontario, and all of the participants for phase 1 were men except for one woman who was one of the initial participants. The participants were informed of the purpose of this research and asked to sign the consent form (appendix A). The consent form was made available in both French and English to all participants.

The activity of hunting has been subjected to some important changes during the last 10 to 15 years: specifically concerning laws regarding the practice, registration of firearms, and negative social influences, to name a few. Therefore, the practice of hunting itself has probably changed to reflect these laws and influences. For that reason, I assumed that newcomers involved in the process of becoming a hunter today will be faced with a

relatively different process than those who became hunters some 20 years ago or more. In order to reflect the current changes and to gain some understanding of becoming a hunter today, the IPs for this research had between 5 and 12 years of experience in the practice of hunting. This made it easier for them to remember their initiation into the practice, while having sufficient experience within the field to provide insightful information on their process of becoming a hunter.

As the focus of this research is on the individual as well as the social perspective (Wenger, 1998), PIPs were also interviewed. There was no selection process per se for the PIPs, as these participants are the hunting partners of the IPs. Anyone identified during the interview with the IP as having had a strong influence on the learning experience of the IP was asked to take part in the study. Each IP provided the name of at least one peer. In the case of one IP, the person who had been the major influence for him was his father. Unfortunately, his father died before the IP engaged in the activity of moose hunting. There were no other peers clearly identified by this participant throughout the process of data collection, therefore it was decided that his case would not include a peer.

The recruitment for participants was quite simple, as most participants either knew me or knew someone I knew. I was also known to be a member of the hunting community for a number of years and I was also known as being a native to the area where the data collection took place; Northern Ontario. Most of the contacts with participants occurred through informal discussions about my research interest, a good number of individuals had already indicated that they would be interested and willing to take part in this study. Only one of the participants contacted refused to take part in the data collection process due to time constraints.

## Interviews

For the first phase, interviews were conducted with IPs, followed by interviews with the PIPs. The IPs took part in two interviews of approximately one hour each. The first interview with the IPs (Appendix B) was a life history narrative. During that interview, the IP was invited to reflect on his/her personal process of becoming a hunter. The IPs were asked to share stories and identify critical situations, elements or influences that may have played a role in their learning experience. The IPs were encouraged to consult photographs or other memorabilia which could help them remember and identify key elements or important persons that have had significant influences on their learning, thus, their identity as a hunter. The researcher showed the IP a chart (Appendix C) that was used to help to reconstruct the learning path of the IP as a hunter. The researcher informed the IP to imagine that the chart is a book in which each year of participation in the context of hunting constitutes a chapter. For example, the researcher wrote down key events or elements as the IP presented them. The IP was then encouraged to reflect on these elements and provide a title for each chapter (each year of hunting). The same procedure was repeated for each year until the IP reached the present year of participation in hunting.

The researcher then analyzed and prepared a summary report (see Appendix C, *the evolution chart becomes the summary report once it is filled by the researcher*) of the interview according to a diachronic or chronological ordering of events. This summary report was presented to the IP within one week of the first interview. The IP was asked to read the summary report and provide some feedback to the researcher in order to confirm the analysis done by the researcher. The IP was encouraged to add or clarify any elements that he/she thought could improve or add to the summary report. Specific questions were asked at that time by the researcher in order to gain better understanding of specific events,

help clarify misunderstandings or highlight the importance of certain events or elements mentioned by the participant during the first interview. Two of the IPs who are brother and sister took part in a third interview to provide more in-depth information in order to highlight some of the differences in their learning experience even if they were more or less from the same social entourage. It is important to note that most interviews were conducted in French while a few were conducted in English. Furthermore, the language and terminology used during the interviews varied from the actual interview guide in order to best suit the conversation skills of each participants.

Following the interviews with the IPs, a semi-structured interview was conducted with PIPs. The researcher used an interview guide (appendix D) to structure the discussion during this round of interviews. The interviews with the PIPs lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes. The focus was placed on the role played by the PIP in the learning experience of the IP. The PIPs were also asked to comment on the importance of having new members join the group as well as the roles played by more experienced members to facilitate the learning path of newcomers.

#### Findings of Phase 1a: The Existence of a CoP

The first goal of phase 1 was to determine the existence of a CoP in the practice of moose hunting. As described in the conceptual framework, there are specific dimensions required for the existence of a CoP. This section will therefore focus on identifying the presence of these dimensions within the interviews conducted with the five IPs and the PIPs. The dimensions: “mutual engagement”, “joint enterprise” and “shared repertoire” along with elements that operationally define them are presented in Table 4.

Table 4.

Elements within the dimensions of a CoP.

| Case #<br>IP<br>(PIP)         | Mutual engagement |        |          | Joint<br>enterprise | Shared repertoire |         | Basic<br>knowledge |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|--------|----------|---------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------------|
|                               | LPP               | Full P | Meetings |                     | History           | Routine |                    |
| Case 1<br>Allan               | X                 | X      | X        | X                   | X                 | X       | X                  |
| Case 2<br>Heather<br>(father) | X                 | X      |          | X                   | X                 |         | X                  |
| Case 3<br>Bob<br>(father)     |                   | X      | X        | X                   | X                 | X       | X                  |
| Case 4<br>George<br>(brother) | X                 | X      |          | X                   | X                 | X       | X                  |
| Case 5<br>Philip<br>(father)  |                   | X      | X        | X                   | X                 | X       | X                  |

The three main elements for the dimension of mutual engagement are legitimate peripheral participant (LPP), full participant (Full P), and implications in meetings to prepare hunting adventure (Meetings). As described by Wenger (1998) engagement in a CoP can be peripheral or more central. Both types of engagement are acceptable in the context of a CoP as the purpose of most LPP is to eventually become a Full P. The element of meetings relates to efforts made by members of a CoP to engage together outside the hunting season in order to prepare and organize whatever is needed for their next hunting season.

The dimension of joint enterprise reflects the collective process of a negotiation to make moose hunting real and livable. This dimension of the practice is defined by the participants within the pursuit of the practice. For the context of moose hunting, the joint enterprise is more than just killing a moose. The very meaning of hunting moose is defined and constantly negotiated among the group. It is the joint enterprise as defined by the

group that defines the type of practice that the members within the group will cooperate to achieve. There are most likely as many different joint enterprises as there are hunting groups.

The dimension of shared repertoire constitutes a dimension best explained by two elements: history and routine. The shared repertoire reflects the presence of mutual engagement over time, as this becomes part of the history of the group. In the course of building a history for the group, its members share stories of their practice. The stories become very central to the practice since they demonstrate the mutual engagement over time as members share them on an ongoing basis. In certain instances, the ways of doing certain things or the preparation in order to do certain things becomes somewhat repetitive over the years and becomes part of a routine for a particular group of people. A fourth column was added to the table as all IPs reported a form of basic knowledge before they ever engaged in the practice of moose hunting. The basic knowledge will be examined more closely in the second phase of the research. In order to demonstrate the presence of each dimension, quotations from the interviews with the IPs and the PIPs will be presented for each dimension.

#### *Case 1 (Allan)*

At the moment the study was conducted, Allan was 28 years old and had been involved in the activity of hunting ever since he was old enough to receive his hunting licence (around 16 years old). The main influence which fuelled his interest for hunting was his father. Unfortunately, when Allan was around 10 years old, his father passed away.

*Mutual Engagement*

For Allan, the absence of a family member such as his father or an older brother to more or less take him under their wings prevented him from gaining access to a CoP for the first two or three years after he got his hunting license: "I hunted alone, I did not have anyone to go with, and since my dad was not there anymore, I had no choice." In being asked how his learning could have been improved, Allan states: "If I would have had an experienced hunter to hunt with during the first three years, instead of being on my own, that would have helped me a lot, I think."

*Legitimate peripheral participant.*

When Allan was about 20 years old he finally joined a group. "The group would tell me where to go, I would check for tracks, and later on, we would go back, two guys, and check it out." He was included in the group's main activities of covering large areas of terrain, but he was very much on the periphery as he would report tracks to the group rather than pursue them by himself.

*Full participant.*

After being involved in the group for three or four years, Allan noticed, "The group has changed a bit, the older guys in our group come along to relax more than anything now, they leave the hunting to us" (the younger guys in the group). Allan is now involved in the decisions related to the group's hunting practice. He is without a doubt one of the full participants within his hunting group.

*Meetings.*

His sustained involvement in the group is also quite evident: “The group bought some land, and we moved our hunting camp onto it. We also worked together and built a 40 foot bridge to cross a small river.” Their mutual engagement extends beyond the actual period during which they hunt together. The meetings to prepare the grounds and improve their camp take place well outside the hunting season. His presence during these events is a good indication of his involvement within the CoP as well as his willingness to maintain the CoP over time.

*Joint Enterprise*

Allan has been hunting with the same group for nine years. Over these years, the group has always remained the same. The group has a distinct approach to hunting and evidently the members feel comfortable in their joint enterprise. As an indication of this, Allan states: “The group I hunt with has decided to buy a large piece of land for us to hunt on. We park our bus there and we go there to hunt every year.”

*Shared Repertoire**History / stories.*

The fact that the group has been together long enough to have a history of practice is a good indication that the members within the group share stories of their engagement with one another, as well as people outside their group. As Allan recalls, in relation to his adventure of being chased up a tree by a cow moose, “I think about it quite often and I tell it to people often also. It makes people laugh so hard. Now, it has gotten to a point where

people say that I stayed in the tree for three hours. I only stayed up there for a minute at the most, but as the story goes around, I stay in the tree longer and longer.”

#### *Routine.*

According to Allan, his group has developed a routine since they “Always go hunting on the second or third week of hunting. Our group prefers to hunt later in the season.” Another routine the group has developed is “Every night we get together in our old bus and we discuss our experience of that day while having a few beers.” The development of a routine is a good indication of the collective engagement of the group over time.

#### *Basic Knowledge*

Allan spent a considerable amount of time in the forest as he was growing up. Moreover, during the first three years after he received his hunting license, he devoted most of his time to small game hunting: “I would shoot every partridge I saw.” By the time Allan joined his moose hunting group he had already developed a considerable amount of skills related to the outdoors and small game hunting. Some of the more technical aspects of hunting such as safety and firearms handling and shooting were developed long before he engaged in moose hunting with his group.

#### *Case 2 (Heather)*

At the time the study was conducted, Heather was 24 years old and had her hunting license for eight years, but she has only hunted moose for the last three or four years. She had a hard time gaining access to a group of hunters. Her husband was already part of a

group, but the group was not open to having a woman. Her father was also part of a group, but he was hunting out West. Both her husband and her father would take her out hunting on weekends, but it was not really serious. She eventually gained access to her husband's group for one year. Her access to the group was lost when they got divorced. Finally, her mother decided to start moose hunting, and she has now formed a group with her mother and her father. Even though the process through which she became a moose hunter turned out to be a long one, she eventually made it through.

### *Mutual Engagement*

#### *Legitimate peripheral participant.*

Heather recalls how peripheral her engagement was when she first started hunting moose: "The first time I went with my father, we each had a gun and we went for a ride on the weekend. It was more an opportunity to teach me a few things than anything else. I was there, but I was mostly watching and learning." Heather was legitimately involved in the activity, as she carried her own gun. However, she felt like she had a long way to go before she could engage fully in the activity. Controlling a newcomer's involvement within the context of moose hunting fits in line with Heather's father: "You have to give newcomers a technique and a place to watch. If they listen to you, eventually they will be successful. You can't expect them to kill a moose the first year, and you don't let them go just about anywhere on their own." Heather's father is quite clear on his main reason for having Heather engage as a LPP; he is worried about her safety and that of anyone else around them. Hunting can be a "Dangerous activity and the last thing you want is for anyone to get hurt".

*Full participant.*

More recently, Heather formed a group with her father and her mother. Her mother was a newcomer to the activity. Having a newcomer in the group allowed Heather to progressively move from the status of newcomer towards a status of full participant: “My dad spends most of his time with my mom. She needs supervision, she keeps tripping over everything and she won’t stop talking all the time.” Since her dad was so busy with her mom, Heather was spending whole days hunting on her own. However, she was still getting advice from her father: “If I were you, I would try that area, and would check out that swamp, things like that. It was more advice than telling what to do.” As a moose hunter with very little experience as of yet, the knowledge associated with many years of experience was welcomed by Heather. Her father’s statement certainly corroborates what Heather states in regards to the respect she has for her father’s advice: “Heather will listen to me, and she will follow my directions if I give her some advice. It makes it more interesting to hunt with someone who has, I would say, respect for your knowledge.” The advice given by Heather’s father is not meant as orders, it is meant as an overall plan of action and Heather is the one who has to make the final decision once she gets into the context of practice: “My father was running the show, yet, I was pretty much doing whatever I wanted on my own.” With a bit more experience, Heather will soon become a full participant.

*Meetings.*

As Heather was hunting with her parents, there was not an official meeting to plan the hunt. Most of the decisions were made while “Packing and preparing for the trip as well as on our arrival to the cabin, at that point we more or less decided what we would do

and where we would hunt.” There was no need for them to convene a meeting in order to prepare for the moose hunt, as they all lived in the same house.

### *Joint Enterprise*

For Heather and her group, the aspects of love and respect for nature are a very integral part of their hunting. As Heather recalls in describing her last hunting trip with her parents, “Just the fact that I got to spend the week in the forest and I got to observe the nature, I find that incredible.” Her father certainly thinks along those same lines, as he states, “To be a good hunter you first need to have respect for nature.”

In comparing today’s hunting with that of his grandfather, Heather’s father alludes to a considerable difference in the meaning of moose hunting: “Back then they were hunting for the meat, to feed the family. For us, it has become more of a sport for pleasure, we don’t really need it. It is still interesting to do, you still want to accomplish your goal, but it doesn’t have the same meaning that it did years ago.” Seeing hunting as a sport for pleasure alludes to a considerable difference than when feeding the family rests on the success of the hunt.

### *Shared Repertoire*

#### *History / stories.*

Heather has not belonged to a group long enough to have developed a history of engagement with one group. However she does share a history of outdoor activities with her father. She can also appreciate and relate to the history of other hunting groups as she regularly shares hunting stories with coworkers: “We often sit down and talk about what we have done over the weekend, what we have seen and stuff like that.”

*Routine.*

The group has not had much time to develop actual routines of its own just yet. However, the fact that Heather is hunting with her parents entails that as a family they share a lot of routines, perhaps not in relation to their engagement in moose hunting as of yet. But it is easy to assume that it is only a matter of time before certain aspects of their hunting approach become routines.

*Basic Knowledge*

Heather was exposed to hunting and the outdoors since she was around five or six years old, and had developed quite a few skills from her experience in the outdoors. However, she did claim that the hunting course she took to get her license provided her “Knowledge in terms of safety. You don’t learn much about hunting, but it does make you a much safer hunter.”

*Case 3 (Bob)*

At the time this study was conducted, Bob was 26 years old. He is the older brother of Heather (case #2). Bob has been highly active in small game hunting since he was around 12 or 13 years old. He would follow his father around all the time. He spent a considerable amount of time fishing, camping and hunting as his parents used to own a cabin while he was growing up. He was 12 when he got his first pellet gun. His father showed him how to use it safely and then he was allowed to practice shooting in his parents’ backyard.

*Mutual Engagement**Legitimate peripheral participant.*

By the time Bob officially started hunting moose, he already had considerable experience in small game hunting and the outdoors, as well as having accompanied his father numerous times. When Bob turned 16, he got his hunting license and immediately formed a group with his best friend to hunt moose. His best friend was the same age, however, he had no experience whatsoever in hunting. It should be noted that Bob's father was hunting with his group several hundred miles away from where they lived. The absence of his father during the hunting season and the large distance separating them forced Bob to pursue moose hunting on his own. Consequently, there is no evidence of Bob even engaging in moose hunting as a LPP. Eventually, his father started hunting close to home again and Bob was invited to form a new group with his father and his father's best friend.

*Full participant.*

The very first year Bob went hunting, he formed a group with one of his friend. The two of them had just passed their hunting license examination. As he recalls: "We did not really look for a group, my best friend and I simply decided to hunt together." The decision to hunt together may have been mutual, but as Bob remembers: "I had quite a bit of experience from following my father. My friend on the other hand had no experience at all." The context within which Bob initially engaged in moose hunting forced him to act as a full participant, even as a mentor to his friend who had no previous experience. Bob never really participated as most newcomers do; he was catapulted into full participation based on his own experience and his partner's lack of it. After three years of hunting

moose with a rifle, Bob formed a new group with his father and his father's friend.

Together, they engaged in hunting moose with bow and arrow. As the three of them were all newcomers to this type of hunting, they all engaged as full participants.

### *Meetings.*

During the first three years he hunted, Bob never really had meetings to prepare. But after joining his new group they had several meetings in order to prepare appropriately. He remembers: "A couple of weeks before the start of the season we had gone to prepare our tree stands. We also met regularly to plan the hunt, as well as what we were bringing, like food and stuff. Overall, we were a lot more organized." They also met regularly over the summer as they were training in order to become more apt at getting a moose with the bow and arrow. Bob tells: "I had more experience than them in regards to the bow, so when we met, which was more or less every weekend to train, they would ask me all kinds of things knowing that I was reading a lot and practicing much more than they were." Overall, they ended up meeting almost weekly over a period of six months in order to prepare for the Fall hunt.

### *Joint Enterprise*

The dimension of joint enterprise is quite evident when Bob joined his new group with his father and his father's friend. The mutual decision to switch from hunting moose with a rifle to hunting it with a bow and arrow entailed that the group had to modify their goal and approach to hunting. According to Bob's father, the new challenge that the group had given themselves rests in the conditions which hunters are faced with:

I think that today, because of the laws, there is a lot of stress on hunters, and it's not a good thing. That is mostly why I started hunting with the bow and arrow. I find there is a lot less stress, we are much more at peace in the forest. It is a really good way to hunt. It is possibly one of the reasons why I still hunt today. In hunting with a rifle, there are too many hunters, and there is a lack of respect for each others hunting areas. You end up all over each other, that is not good you know.

### *Shared Repertoire*

#### *History / stories.*

The history or stories that hunters share with one another are often based on successful hunts. Yet, even if Bob has never been successful in his quest to capture a moose, he did share some interesting stories with the members of his group: "I (Bob) once watched two young bulls fight one another, it was quite amazing to watch. When I shared my experience with my father and his friend, they told me I was very lucky, as they had never, in over 30 years of hunting, had the chance to observe what I had seen." They also shared several stories in which the other members of the group were successful or had some memorable experiences.

#### *Routine.*

Ever since they switched from hunting with firearms to hunting with bow and arrow, the group had developed a routine: "Every year, about two weeks before the hunt would start, we would go in and prepare our tree stands." The way they prepared for the hunt every year, is more or less a ritual or a routine.

*Basic Knowledge*

By the time Bob formally engaged in moose hunting he already had substantial skills and knowledge from following his father: “My father would take me hunting with him every year and he made it a point to teach me something new every year.” Like most sons who aim to follow in the footsteps of their father, Bob only needed to pass the hunter certification to legally become a hunter. However, as he recalls, “The hunter certification course did not provide me much that I did not already know from experience, but it made me a safer hunter. I did learn a bit about safety.” Other than safety, the hunter certification course did not provide much to Bob in terms of skills and knowledge to become a hunter.

*Case 4 (George)*

At the time that the study was conducted, George was 30 years old. He had been hunting moose since he was 16 years old. George never had any problems finding a group to hunt with. The first year he was invited to join a group in which his older brother was a member. However, the type of hunting and the joint enterprise of the group did not fit well with George and he never really became part of the group even though he was invited to join them in the first place. Following such a negative experience, George and his brother decided to form a new group with their sister and her husband. After being hired as a millwright in a mine, he became friends with a guy who was a bow and arrow hunter. George was very enthusiastic in regards to the increased challenges offered by the bow and arrow. His brother eventually converted to bow and arrow and the two of them have been hunting together ever since.

*Mutual Engagement**Legitimate peripheral participant.*

George's first experience with moose hunting was not very pleasant, he was pushed so far in the periphery that he almost felt excluded from his group: "It was basically, you go there, and you don't move a foot unless we tell you to." What is interesting is that George was invited to join the group, yet, he was only allowed to participate in the far periphery of the main activities of the group. He remembers vividly: "Whenever we walked, the guy in front would make as much noise as I did, but as soon as I would move, he would turn around and say, shush. It was quite interesting, to say the least." It could be argued that George was within that group, but since he felt so excluded from the group, I can say that George was a peripheral participant, but not legitimate, since he did not fit in with the goals and approaches of the group. After his first year, George formed a new group with his brother, his sister and her husband. Within this group, George was allowed to engage as a LPP: "It was more like a gang; it was still do as we tell you but it was not as bad as the year before." By forming a group with members of his family, George now felt as though he was a legitimate participant of the group.

*Full participant.*

In the second year with his new group, George was becoming more of a full participant in the decision making process: "Depending on the temperature and the wind, we would decide where to go, and then we would go off on our own. We always keep in mind where the others are and try to help one another if we can." He was now being treated more or less as an equal member of the group.

*Meetings.*

Since forming a moose hunting group with his brother, sister and her husband, the group has not found any need to hold meetings outside of the hunting season to get ready for the season. Most of the meetings George refer to would take place during the hunting season, the night before they were to go hunting. They would meet and discuss a few plans of actions: "We were sleeping in campers in the forest, so at night, after dinner, we would meet and decide what we would do the next day."

*Joint Enterprise*

The group which invited George to join them the first year had a joint enterprise to which George did not abide: "These guys they see hunting as a job, the day that I start to take hunting as a job is the day that I stop hunting." The way that group defined and engaged in the practice of hunting did not go along with George's own perception of what hunting is or should be. Later on, by forming a group with members of his family, the group's joint enterprise was more in line with his own perception of hunting and he was willing to engage with the group's way of hunting moose. However, during the sixth year a problem with regards to the sharing of the meat within the group created a considerable chaos within the group. Following that, the next year, George once again formed a new group with his brother at which point, "It was more happy go lucky. We would wake up in the morning and we would decide where to go. We went for joy rides and then we would stop and go on foot. The approach had changed totally; we were a lot more relaxed." A year later, George decided to switch to hunting with a bow and arrow: "It seemed really interesting, and it was a good way to separate myself from all the problems I had while hunting with a rifle." To George's surprise, his brother (Ron) bought himself a bow and

arrow and joined him in that practice. Ron states “Personally I prefer hunting in small groups of two or three. More than that, it gets complicated; it’s much easier in a small group.” Ron also says that the main reason why he likes to hunt with George is “mostly because he is the kind of guy who is easy to get along with. You know hunting is not a place to have arguments when everyone is carrying weapons.” It seems that George and Ron share a similar philosophy in regards to hunting which translated into a joint enterprise to which they are both willing to contribute.

### *Shared Repertoire*

#### *History / stories.*

Ever since he started moose hunting, George has gotten engaged in three different groups. However, his older brother also joined him in all three groups. He certainly shares a history of moose hunting with his brother as they have been hunting together since George first started. Interestingly, when asked to tell me about an interesting story in regards to their hunting experience, they both referred to the same one. When George tells the story, it is from neutral perspective, generally descriptive of the situation: “That night it must have fell three feet of snow, and the moose we got, we got it right in the middle of that storm. So I can tell you how much fun we had getting it out.” But when his brother tells the story, he places the emphasis on George’s role in the event: “The year that we got the moose in the snowstorm is quite interesting. George almost worked himself to exhaustion that day; he could barely stand on his legs when we finally got the moose out.”

*Routine.*

Even if George has been with three different groups, he has developed a routine with his brother and his family members, whenever he hunts with them: “Every night after dinner, we would meet and have a few beers..... we would only decide in the morning where we would hunt..... we always tried to position ourselves based on the wind direction.” This group has developed a routine that they seem to follow year in, year out. Another part of their routine is “we always tried to come out for lunch around 11:00 or so.” After a while, such a behavior becomes part of the routine and everyone seems to abide by it, without it being restated by anyone.

*Basic Knowledge*

George had already been quite active in outdoor activities such as camping, fishing and small game hunting by the time he started moose hunting. The hunter certification course did not provide him much in terms of hunting knowledge, as he states: “I learned mostly about guns and safety, it was basically a course on safety. It did talk about ducks, but I never had much interest in hunting ducks.” The exposure to various outdoor activities during his childhood had provided George with a lot of the skills he eventually needed to become a hunter.

*Case 5 (Philip)*

At the time this study was conducted, Philip was 29 years old. Philip has been exposed to several outdoor activities, from camping to fishing to small game hunting and even moose hunting for as long as he can remember: “My dad always took me along with

him, for as long as I can remember. I don't remember not going hunting with my dad, that's how long I have been going."

### *Mutual Engagement*

#### *Legitimate peripheral participant.*

There is no evidence that Philip ever engaged in the periphery of the practice of moose hunting once he acquired his moose hunting license and started moose hunting with his father. What is exceptional with Philip is that his father would take him along when he went moose hunting. Philip's father states: "He has always been very quiet and he would listen exactly to what I told him to do. It was easy for me to bring him along, find him a spot to sit and wait and he would stay there for hours." Philip's father has always hunted on his own, up until the laws changed in the early 80's when two tags were needed for each moose: "When the laws changed to two tags per moose, I was really anxious for Philip to get old enough to get his hunting license so we could hunt together." The two of them have been hunting together ever since.

#### *Full participant.*

Considering that Philip and his father use an approach that mostly keeps them separate from one another during the process of hunting, the two of them have to be equally involved in the activity: "I have a small tree stand, I go there and I call. I also walk around a bit, but mainly we both hunt in tree stands using the call." Philip's participation in his group with his father is equal to that of his father.

*Meetings.*

From time to time, they meet during the summer to restore or maintain the camp: “My dad usually goes over with his canoe and does most of the maintenance, but every now and then if we need to do something more important we both go.” Philip’s father is retired and spends most of his time in the area of the small camp, either fishing or boating up and the down the river, so he takes it upon himself to maintain the small hunting camp: “I just love going out on the river on my own, going out to maintain the camp just gives me an extra excuse to go out there.”

*Joint Enterprise*

By having been exposed to his father’s way and approach to hunting, Philip seems to have developed a perception of hunting which is highly similar to that of his father. His father states: “Depending on your approach, moose hunting can be either very enjoyable or it can be very miserable. Personally, I like to take an easy going approach. Hunting is not a competition or a contest it is up to you to make it enjoyable. I think we do a pretty good job at that.” Philip comments in a similar fashion: “We each have our tree stands. Personally, I spend most of my time up there, and whenever I go for walks, I make sure I stay away from big holes and stuff like that. I try to stay away from trouble.”

*Shared Repertoire*

*History / stories.*

Philip shares an interesting history with his father, since he has been accompanying him for such a long time: “We are still hunting the area that my dad was hunting when I was 5 years old. We have always hunted the same spot all those years.” By spending so

many years together they also share interesting stories in regards to their practice. In fact stories are an important aspect of their practice: “The Friday before the moose hunting season would open, we would go to the cabin and we would spend the whole night telling stories about the previous seasons. It is always the same stories, year after year that we keep telling each other.”

*Routine.*

Hunting the same area since he can remember is not the only part of Philip’s hunting practice that seems to be a routine, “We always go and sleep at our camp during the first weekend, and then we don’t sleep there afterwards. Usually, our moose is down by the first weekend.” The other routine that they have is in the type of hunt they practice; they are quite faithful to their tree stands and moose calling approach.

*Basic Knowledge*

Hunting skills and knowledge is something Philip was far from short on by the time he took the hunter certification course. As he recalls, “Someone who has been exposed to hunting as long as I have has learned more than what a course can teach you.” Nevertheless, “The course is more helpful in teaching the rules and the safety aspect, making sure you are not a dangerous hunter.” As is the case with all the other participants, Philip had already developed some of the skills and knowledge to hunt, long before he ever became a hunter through the acquisition of a hunting license.

### *Conclusion of Phase 1a*

To conclude the first part of this phase on the existence of CoP, it can be said that for each case presented above, I have been able to identify the presence of most of the elements that make up the dimensions of a CoP. I have certainly found enough information within each dimension to state that the biggest part of the participant's engagement in the activity of moose hunting is done within a bound system that can be defined as a CoP. This assertion answers the question as to whether people who learn to hunt moose do so within the context of a CoP.

### Findings of Phase 1b: Identity Transformation

Now that the presence of the CoP has been established, I will focus on examining the formation and transformation of identity within the CoP through the three modes of belonging. In order to capture the essence of the process of becoming, I will present each case separately, more or less documenting the transformation of the hunters' identities. The presentation of each case will begin with a figure that will provide a general overview of the IP's learning experience within his or her hunting group. The figure will be commented and then a table will be presented in order to focus on the three modes of belonging as well as the three dimensions found within each mode. The content of the table will address the questions presented earlier in the review of the literature in regards to the dimensions within the modes of belonging.

In order to document the process of becoming of each participant, the researcher asked them to relate to each year of involvement in moose hunting as a chapter in a book. Then, the participant was asked to provide a title for each chapter (each year of

participation in the context). The titles for each year will be presented in brackets beside each year of participation in the context of practice.

*Case 1 (Allan, the go-getter)*

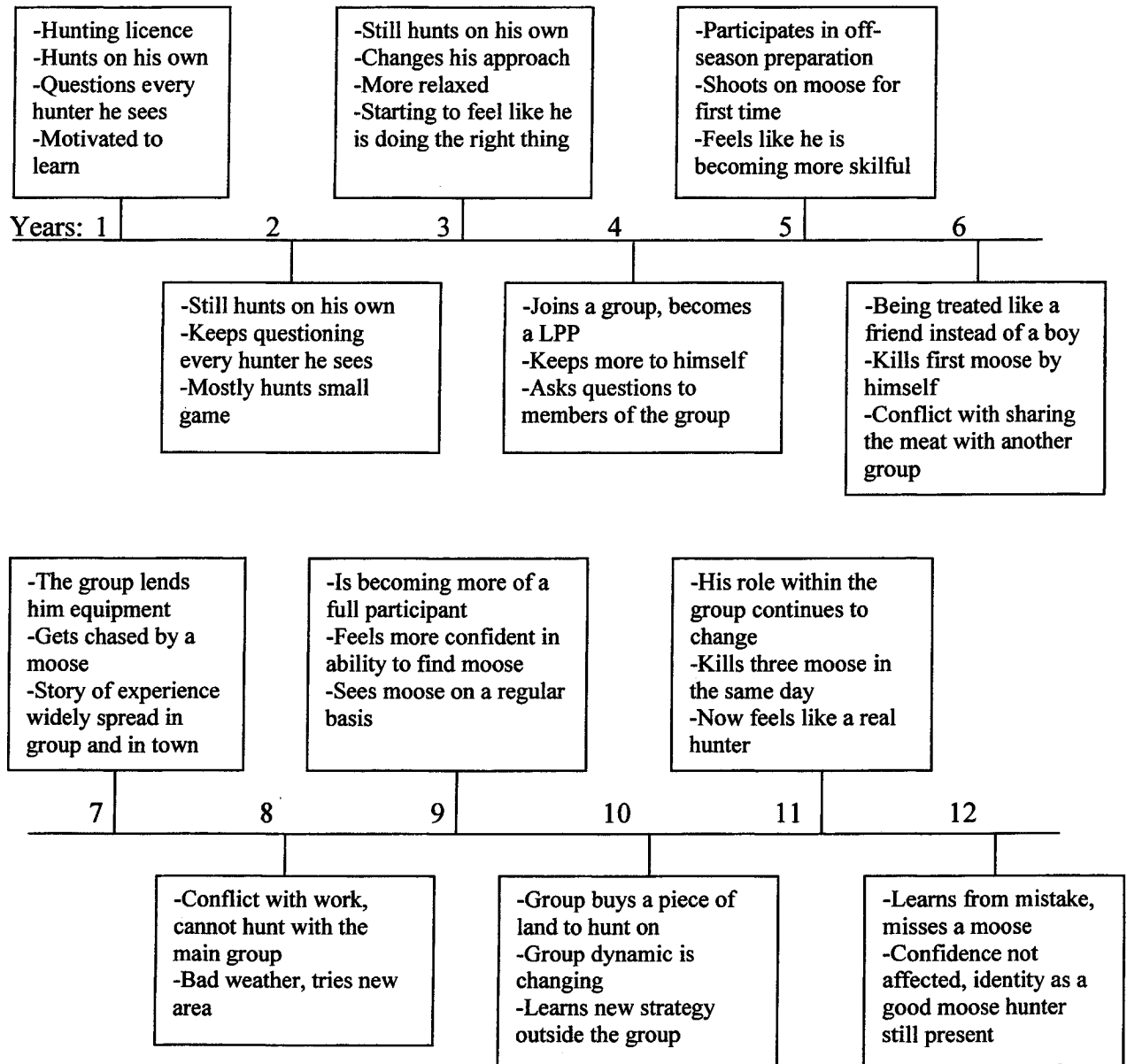


Figure 5. Allan's process of becoming

As indicated in phase 1, even if Allan's father passed away when Allan was still fairly young, his father had a strong influence on his eventual engagement in hunting and moose hunting. Allan remembers telling himself "When I grow up, I will go hunting like my dad and I will have my own moose meat." For Allan, becoming a hunter was simply a matter of waiting to be old enough.

*Year 1 (Good small game hunter, apprentice moose hunter)*

The first year Allan engaged in the activity of hunting, he started by following a hunter certification course and taking an exam in order to be awarded his hunting license. The course "Was pretty cool I learned a lot in terms of safety." As Allan recalls: "The course covered a lot of stuff that did not interest me, like all the different species of ducks and stuff like that. But in regards to safety I learned a lot of stuff, especially in regards to the types of firearms and how they work." The course did not provide him much in terms of hunting skills and techniques, but it certainly made him a safer hunter.

The main issue for Allan at first was trying to find experienced hunters to help and guide him in his quest to learn how to hunt moose. He was not successful in finding someone to participate in the activity of moose hunting with him. Nevertheless, he was highly motivated to learn: "I did not really have anyone to go with, since my dad was dead, I did not really have a choice. I was really motivated to learn, so I went on my own." Even though he could not find anyone to hunt with, Allan was very determined to keep trying to learn. However, he was not very successful, as he recalls: "I was hunting very close to the city and I was shooting every partridge in sight. I did not see a moose, not even tracks."

Being quite curious and motivated to learn, Allan started looking for ways to learn: "Every hunter I knew, when I would meet them in town, I would ask them a load of

questions. Sometimes, I think I asked too many.” By asking questions, Allan was able to tap into the knowledge of the more experienced hunters. It gave him a sense of what to do and what not to do, if he wanted to see a moose. Nevertheless, after the first season, Allan felt more like a small game hunter who knew very little about moose hunting.

*Year 2 (Developing the instinct)*

The second year, “Was not much different, I was still hunting close to the city. However, I was starting to notice more. I would also venture out a bit more, and when I found tracks, I would follow them. I thought I was going to catch up to it or something.” Even though the second year was similar to the first in terms of Allan hunting on his own, the advice provided by the more experienced hunters helped him become more aware while he was hunting. He also realized, after several trials, that he would not catch up to a moose by following its tracks. The one thing that did not change was Allan’s thirst to learn: “I would ask myself tons of questions and I would ask everyone who hunts how they got around to catching up to a moose after seeing the tracks. Let me tell you, I sure made a lot of people laugh.” The laughing and the lack of straight answers from the hunters he asked did not discourage him at all. In fact, the advice provided by the more experienced hunters proved quite helpful: “They would mostly tell me what not to do, mostly small details like to watch for the direction of the wind and stuff like that.”

*Year 3 (Still looking for my first moose)*

For his third year, Allan was still hunting by himself. However: “I was starting to know what to do. I had found some nice quiet spots and I was trying to be more relaxed. Before, I used to run all over and I would fall and hurt myself all the time. I realized that

was not the right way to hunt moose.” Most of his reflections on his practice came from the feedback he was getting from the more experienced hunters when he would ask them for advice. As he recalls: “They told me that I would never get a moose the way I was hunting. They told me I had to try and go around them instead of trying to follow their tracks. Some told me to find a nice spot and to wait, to be quiet and to face the wind. That would at least give me a chance to have one come my way.” Based on the comments and the feedback he was getting from the more experienced hunters he questioned, Allan ended up “Changing the way I used to hunt.” There was a constant process of reflection for Allan to determine what needed to be changed in his approach. The changes to his approach did not bring him any success, but at least he “Had the impression that (he) was doing the right thing and that (he) was going in the right direction. (He) was no longer running all over without any reason.” After 3 seasons of hunting moose on his own and literally fishing for feedback from other hunters, Allan was now starting to feel like he was giving himself a better chance at seeing a moose.

#### *Year 4 (Integration to a new group)*

The fourth year provided an interesting opportunity for Allan. One of his friends asked him to come and join his father’s group. For the first time in 4 years, Allan would have a chance to be part of a hunting group. Nevertheless, Allan’s participation within his new group was very peripheral. As he recalls, “They would give me lots of advice, as to where to hunt, and what areas to concentrate on, stuff like that. Whenever I would see something interesting, we would go back later on at night to check it out.” The others in the group were mainly guiding him in terms of areas to hunt. His integration into the group was slowed down as “I was pretty shy, most of the guys in the group were much older, the

only one close to my age was my friend, so I would stay back more than anything else.”

The main benefit of being part of a group for Allan, was the easy access to experienced hunters. Occasionally, “I would come close to seeing one, or I would hear one call. At that point I did not know much what to do, so at lunch or something, I would come back to camp and ask the others what I should have done.” The context for asking advice was now different as he now had easy access to the members within his own group. The advice given was more pertinent as these guys knew the terrain and they had a better understanding of the context behind the questioning. On top of having access to members of his group, Allan also had access to another group who camped beside his group. In that other group, “There was an older guy, in his 70’s, he would tell us moose hunting stories all the time. He had been hunting forever and it was great to sit and listen to his many stories.”

*Year 5 (Shooting on a moose for the first time)*

With one season under his belt with his new group, Allan was starting to feel as though he was part of the group: “I would apply with them as a group for a tag, I would contribute money like the others, and I would often provide a helping hand. If I remember correctly, we had cleaned a few trails that year.” By playing a role in the preparation of the group, Allan was slowly finding his spot within his new group. So far, Allan’s learning had been influenced by near misses and lots of advice from more experienced hunters. However in his fifth year Allan got his first chance to see and shoot at a moose. Allan and another member of the group who was his age saw a cow and a calf while hunting on the river. The experience proved to be quite something for Allan: “When my friend said, ‘look two moose’, I got really nervous and my knees were shaking. When the time came to

shoot, the waves rocked the boat back and forth and I could not see the moose in my scope. Nevertheless, between the two of us we ended up getting the calf.” The cow moose got away as Allan did not have time to take a shot at it before it ran out of sight. As Allan recalls “I was so discouraged at myself for being so nervous. It was the first time I was shooting on a moose and I got so nervous my knees were all weak and shaking. But after a little while I got over it and I was quite happy that we got the calf.” The guys in the group played a good role in helping Allan cope with his emotions, “They all told me I needed to relax and take a deep breath before shooting on a moose. They all gave me good advice.”

Allan seems to have gone through a process of reflection during which he relived his experience and he did not feel too good about the way he reacted. Nevertheless, the positive result and the encouragement of his group helped him and he was finally able to enjoy his successful hunt. As Allan recalls, “After I started seeing moose, it was really encouraging for me.” Nevertheless, seeing moose pales in comparison to actually shooting one. When asked at what point he started feeling like a hunter, Allan replied: “When my friend and I shot the calf that year. Actually it’s more than just becoming a hunter; I was feeling like I was becoming much more skillful all around than when I was younger.”

During that year, a great opportunity for learning was provided to Allan. There was another group hunting near the same area as Allan’s group. As Allan recalls, “My friend and I were going by the other group’s camp when an old man told my friend to position himself at the top of a small hill. Within a few minutes, a nice big bull walked right towards him. My friend quickly killed it.” The old man who had been telling Allan some moose hunting stories saw this as an opportunity to teach the younger hunters a few things in field dressing; “The old man explained how to remove the knees without using a saw or anything like that. It was the first year that I got my hands inside a moose and I was

enjoying it and learning so much. I made sure I remembered everything I learned that day. From that point on, I was able to do it on my own.” Some of the skills and knowledge required in hunting can only be learned when and if the group encounters specific situations. It wasn’t until his fifth year of moose hunting that Allan got to experience the field dressing of a moose. This proved to be a very important experience for him in terms of learning.

*Year 6 (My first moose)*

Allan’s situation within the group was starting to evolve, “I was becoming more a part of the group. They were treating me more like a friend: “They were no longer treating me like a little boy.” Based on the way others were treating him inside the group, Allan was slowly transforming his identity within the group; he was becoming a young man with some hunting experience.

The level of confidence as well as the identity of the hunter within a group is directly affected by his/her level of success. That year, Allan’s confidence got a huge boost as he finally shot his first moose by himself: “I was so happy and proud; it was my first moose, I was so happy to have done it by myself. I kept the little horn.” The horn that Allan kept was certainly not a trophy in any regards for other hunters, as it was quite small. However, for Allan, this little horn was his trophy; it was his proof and reminder of his own accomplishment. Allan had killed a moose before, but it was in cooperation with his friend. This was the first time he killed one on his own.

The moose that Allan shot that year ended up being split between two groups, as the other group is the one who had the tag. In a situation like this one, the meat is normally split in two and shared between the two groups. However, “They had shared the meat as

though we were just one group, and they had included their wives as well, so we only ended up with a small amount of meat. Personally, I did not care too much, but the others in my group were not too happy.” In order to try and appease the frustration, Allan took upon himself to divide some of his share of the meat among the members of his group. Allan felt as though he should have objected to the other group’s procedure for sharing the meat. He was well aware of the frustration caused by the situation and the last thing he wanted was to cause any problems within his own group. He tried to do what he thought would be sensible for the members of his groups. This event also proved to be a learning opportunity: “Now I would know better. Next time, it will not be the same, I can tell you that much.” There are a certain number of unwritten rules in hunting, and the meat sharing element is definitely one of them. In Allan’s case, he had to learn it the hard way.

*Year 7 (Confrontation with a raging moose)*

Every season, Allan felt like he was becoming more and more a part of the group. That year the group had worked a lot in preparation for the hunting season. They had built some bridges in order to facilitate access to more remote areas. As a token that he was becoming more a part of the group. “My 3 wheeler had broken and the group lent me one of theirs, an old 3 wheeler with no lights on it.” The condition of the bike is not as important as the fact that they went as far as lending him one of their bikes in order for him to hunt with them. He was definitely becoming an important part of their group.

Allan’s experience that year provided a great event to share with the group. Some hunting stories are more interesting than others and this one ranks quite high in terms of being interesting and funny. Allan ended up shooting a calf who was with its mother. But as he tells:

When I got close to finish off the calf, the cow was really not happy. So as I tried to get closer, the cow had hair standing straight up on her neck, she was hitting the ground with her front legs and she was making weird noises with her mouth. I wasn't too sure at first, but finally I thought, bah, it's nothing. But as I got closer, the cow started running after me. I was right in the middle of the slash; there was not a tree in sight except for an old dead tree with not even one branch on it. I started running and I climbed up that dead tree. I certainly did not want to shoot the cow, as I was scared that the older guys I was with would give me shit for killing a cow when we don't have a tag for it.

Eventually, Allan had to walk back for help and the story of him climbing a tree has really become part of the group's history. This story is good to make people laugh: "I think about it a lot and I tell it all the time. People find it really funny. Some people now say that I was up in the tree for 20 minutes. I was actually up there a minute maybe." The event has certainly become a trademark for Allan within his group and the community.

#### *Year 8 (Hard work pays off)*

This season provided an entirely different challenge. Although the group remained the same Allan and the other member of the group who was the same age as him were not able to get off work during the same week as the rest of the group. As Allan recalls, "By the time we got to hunting where we normally hunt, we wouldn't see a thing, we did not even come across any fresh tracks, even if we covered lots of terrain." This situation called for a serious decision on behalf of Allan and his friend: "Halfway through the week, we decided to go try somewhere else." His role in the group has now evolved to a point where he can now take it upon himself to make key decisions such as deciding to go hunt an

entirely new area. Interestingly, his decision paid off as he and his friend got a moose the very first morning they went to the new area.

*Year 9 (Confident hunter)*

Allan has now been hunting with the same group for quite a while now. He has established himself in the group and can now take a more central role, such as making decisions. His identity as a hunter has slowly crystallized as he develops more skills and knowledge with every year he engages in hunting. This year was no different. After seeing seven moose in one day, "I now felt like I knew much more what type of terrain moose like to hide in. I was feeling more like a hunter. I did not kill one each year, but at least I was seeing some." The events of this season provided Allan with an amazing boost of confidence. He was definitely becoming more confident in his hunting abilities.

*Year 10 (Tough year, more pictures than meat)*

The same group has been together for so long, that they decided to buy a piece of land in order to place their hunting camp on it. The members of the group all invested the same amount of money, including Allan. They also spent more money, in order to build a 40 foot bridge, to cross a small river. A strong effort was put in place by the members in order to assure the continuity of the existence of the group.

The interactions within the group are now starting to change considerably: "The dynamic started to change, some of the older guys in the group are now retired and although they still love hunting, they want to relax and enjoy themselves more now." The older members of the group are slowly moving out of the more important roles in the group and letting the younger members, like Allan, establish themselves as more important

members within the group. The progression is slow. “It changes slowly, a little bit of change every year. It is more us, the younger guys, who are taking charge now.” The older members are not pulling out of the group. They are simply moving aside and letting the younger members play a more central role in the group.

Without a tag and forced to hunt for a calf, Allan’s frustration built up as he was only seeing bulls or cows with no calves. Faced with a problem to which he could not find an answer within his group, he went back to asking other hunters in town for advice. Once again, a more experienced hunter provided him with useful information: “One of the guys told me that cows with calves have a tendency to hang around water, you know swamps, creeks and rivers. I definitely made a mental note of that. The next time I hunt for a calf, I have to look near a stream.”

Earlier in his hunting career, experienced hunters tended to tell him what not to do in order to help him become a better hunter. But with several years of experience as a hunter himself, Allan is now getting straight advice from the other hunters. His identity as a hunter is not only established within his group, but is clearly well established within the community where he lives as well.

*Year 11 (A true hunter)*

Allan’s role within the group continues to change and evolve. This year he was dragging around a newcomer to the group: “My friend brought his younger brother along. It was fun to have a new guy in the group.” He was now at the stage where he felt confident enough to have someone with less or even no experience tag along with him. Allan’s confidence level seems to be increasing every time he is successful in killing a moose. This year is no different, except it provided him with a bigger boost. “How can I

say this, I was now feeling like I was a real hunter. After killing three moose on the same day, I was really feeling like I was a real hunter now.” The ability to find and see moose on a regular basis had brought Allan a lot of confidence in the last few years, but his identity as a true hunter took a big boost from this success story.

### *Year 12 (Learn from your mistakes)*

Allan has had a lot of success in his hunting career which has helped increase his level of confidence and transform his identity into one of a real hunter. However, in this last year, after shooting and missing a moose, he recalls: “I had hit my telescope without knowing, and I was shooting 8 inches off. We were a bit discouraged as we were afraid that the calf might not survive by itself through the winter. Fortunately, another group was able to get it.”

Interestingly, Allan’s concern after his missed shot was not on his inability to get the moose, but rather on the chances of survival of the animal over a harsh winter without its mother. At this point in his hunting career, his identity as a hunter was now stable enough for him not to question his ability as a hunter. A similar event earlier in his career may have had a much different impact on the development of his identity.

### *Dimensions of Allan’s Identity*

In Table 5 below, I document some of the dimensions of Allan’s identity. This exercise reveals the predominance of engagement as the most influential mode of belonging for the development of Allan’s identity within his context of practice. In terms of connectedness, Allan’s continued commitment to his group is a good indicator of how well connected he is to his group. In terms of expansiveness, Allan has always maintained a good level of conversation with other hunters outside his own group. His group also

collaborated on occasions with other groups in the context of practice. In terms of effectiveness, Allan has progressively developed into a well respected hunter, largely for his ability to find moose year after year.

For the mode of imagination, only two dimensions were found within the data collected, as there was no evidence of the presence of the dimension of expansiveness for the imagination mode of belonging. In terms of connectedness, Allan is quite voluble and constantly shares information with the members of his group. He likes to listen to others' stories as much as he likes to share his own. In terms of effectiveness, once Allan got used to his group's approach to hunting, he was able to understand the concept of acting together as a group, constantly helping one another.

As for the mode of alignment, all three dimensions were found to be present in the data, but the influence of this mode was much less apparent than engagement and slightly less than imagination. In terms of connectedness within the mode of alignment, Allan rarely had to worry about the principles of the group, except when faced with specific problematic situations. In terms of expansiveness, Allan and his group seemed keen on following the rules and regulations emitted by the governing body that regulates moose hunting. In terms of effectiveness, Allan is well aware of the regime of accountability by which he is evaluated. His group now has enough faith in his moose finding abilities to let Allan guide them outside their usual hunting area.

Overall, the context of practice in which Allan learned and became a moose hunter is one of engagement. The context of moose hunting is one that provides a lot of opportunities for joint activities, while not allowing the participants many opportunities to distance themselves from the practice, except maybe when sharing stories.

Table 5.

## Dimensions of Allan's identity

| Allan (case 1) | Connectedness   | Expansiveness   | Effectiveness  |
|----------------|---|---|--|
| Engagement     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Once he gained access to a group, he has been part of that same group for almost 10 years.</li> <li>-At first Allan felt like an outsider to the group and kept mostly to himself.</li> <li>-He was very eager to help and be available for the group.</li> <li>-He has developed some strong bonds with the other members of the group.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Before engaging with his group, Allan used to talk to just about every older hunter he would come across.</li> <li>-Even after joining the group, he was still asking questions to other hunters.</li> <li>-Allan's group cooperated with another group to kill a moose.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Allan has developed an ability to find moose. He has also developed a reputation within his group as a good hunter.</li> <li>-One year, when the other members did not have any luck at getting a moose, the guys started to say that the moose must be waiting for Allan. It is a good sign of how well the group has accepted him into their practice and is willing to embrace his skills.</li> </ul> |
| Imagination    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Allan is always asking a lot of questions. He likes to ask other people their opinion and then he likes to make up his own from the others.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-There is no evidence of the presence of this dimension in the data collected.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-It took Allan some time to get used to his group's way of doing things, but once he did, he understood well the concept of acting together as a group, constantly helping one another.</li> </ul>  |
| Alignment      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-In the face of a problematic situation, Allan was worried about the reactions of the group.</li> <li>-By sharing stories with other members of his group, Allan provides as well as seeks feedback from the others in the group.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The main guideline that seems to be present is related with the rules and regulations of hunting. They only hunt the animals they have a tag for and the group seems to respect the general rules of moose hunting.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Allan has developed a good sense for finding moose. He is able to command respect from the members of his group for his abilities to find moose.</li> </ul>  |

Case 2 (Heather, the black sheep)

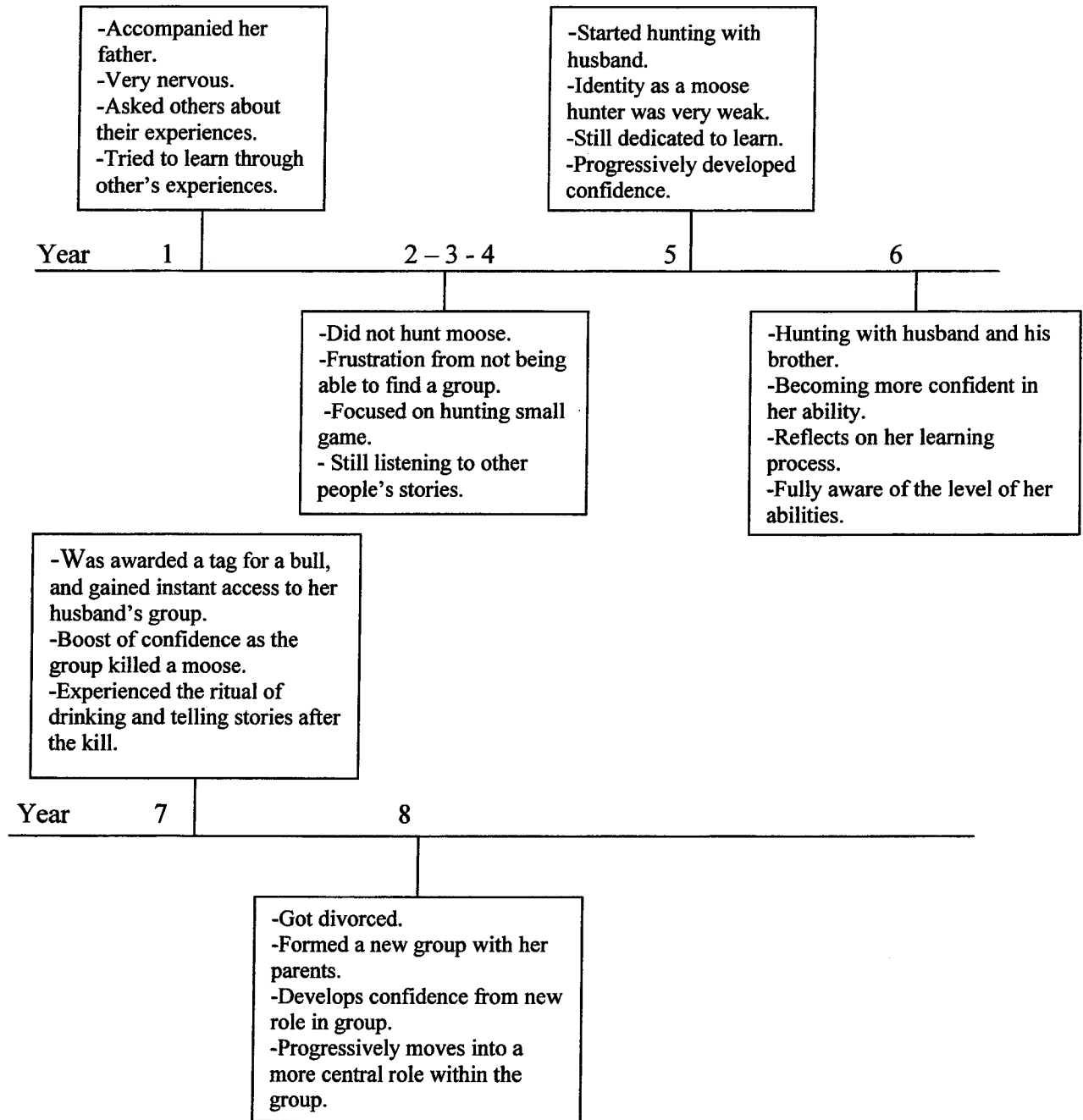


Figure 6. Heather's process of becoming

Heather is a woman in her mid twenties. Even though female hunters are not predominant in moose hunting, they are becoming more and more present within the practice. The process described here is not intended as a means to highlight gender differences between men and women hunters, but merely to highlight the process through which one young woman has become a moose hunter. It should also be noted that Heather is the younger sister of Bob, whose process of becoming a moose hunter will be documented immediately after.

Heather's process to become a hunter has been an interesting challenge for her. Her biggest challenge was to find a group to hunt with:

I realized that when you are a girl, sometimes it is not easy to do certain things, especially when it comes to moose hunting. Like if you are married or something like that, it does not mean that your husband's group will be willing to have you join their group. And then, if you try and form a group, your husband is not really keen on seeing you go with others for a week or so.

For Heather, it is not merely the fact that she is a woman, but mostly the fact that her social status as a wife is preventing her from joining a group other than her husband's.

### *Year 1 (Silence)*

Heather's very first participation in moose hunting came in the form of a truck ride with her father: "We only went for a ride on the road to our camp. We each had a rifle, but it wasn't, huh, like he was mostly teaching me how to prepare for a call. He was pouring water in the lake. It was more to learn than anything else." Heather remembers: "I think my dad did it mostly just to please me." There is no evidence of a joint enterprise as the

whole exercise was mostly one where Heather's father was teaching and guiding his daughter into the basic skills of the activity.

She was well aware that this outing had nothing in common with her dad's normal hunting trips: she recalls how much emphasis her father placed on safety: "When we got there, there were fresh tracks. Before leaving me alone, my dad told me to make sure that even if I heard some noise, it could be him, so I had to be careful." Heather was not really prepared to face the challenges within the context of the activity of moose hunting. As she recalls, "I certainly did not have any confidence whatsoever. I had no idea what to do really. I was hoping that if the moose came out it would be closer to my dad than me, you know." She certainly was not prepared to square off face to face with a moose on her first outing.

While she did not get much experience from her first moose hunting trip, she certainly wanted to learn more about the activity. The one way she knew she could learn new tricks and ideas, was to talk to other hunters: "I have always had friends who hunted, so when they did go, I would ask them to tell me about their experience. Also, during that time my dad was hunting in Northwestern Ontario, so we would talk a lot about his experiences when he came back." Short of being able to develop her skill through engagement in the practice of the activity of moose hunting, Heather was trying to make the most of her social entourage in order to get a better feel for the activity she was trying to become a part of.

*Years 2, 3, 4*

Heather did not take part in moose hunting for three years. The frustration of not being able to join an existing group influenced her in focusing her efforts on small game

hunting. Small game hunting is much more accessible and is easily done on an individual basis. The rate of success in small game hunting is also much higher, therefore much more interesting and rewarding, especially for newcomers. As Heather recalls, “I did not worry too much about moose hunting, like if someone would have asked me to join them I certainly would have done so, but I did not make a fuss about it.” She was quite happy to keep in touch with the activity of hunting by engaging in small game hunting. She was also very much into listening to other hunters’ stories during those years of waiting to engage in the practice of moose hunting.

*Year 5 (A close encounter)*

In an attempt to come back to the practice of moose hunting, Heather started to hunt with her husband, but her identity as a moose hunter was still pretty weak: “My husband was pretty much the leader. He would tell me what to do and where to go. He would leave me alone from time to time, and I was taking a bit more initiatives. But there was always a lot of guidance from him.” Her interest for the activity had not diminished even if she stayed away from it for three years. Heather and her husband could not be considered a CoP as Heather’s husband was mostly guiding and teaching her rather than forming a joint enterprise with her. However, her dedication to learn and become a moose hunter was still strong.

The fact that she was now hunting with her husband was a challenge in itself: “I had to adapt to his ways of hunting. I was really used to doing things the way my dad used to do, I had to learn and adapt to hunting the way my husband does.” She was certainly taking advantage of her chance to engage in the activity, however, she was not taking part in the really serious hunting. Her husband would still hunt with his usual group during the

predetermined week or so and the rest of the time he would go hunting with Heather, mostly to please her and to give her a chance to get back into practicing the activity she loved.

Her reintroduction to the activity gave Heather a small boost of confidence, however small: “I ended up going a few times on my own, like I did not know much in regards what I was supposed to do, but I went for walks in the forest and was prepared for whatever could have happened.” She had finally developed enough confidence to give it a try on her own. She was definitely determined to learn, whatever way she could. She knew very well that for her husband, the more serious hunting was with his regular group, and she was not part of that group.

On one occasion, while hunting with her husband: “My husband had just been calling and then I heard a noise. I whispered to him if he had heard it and then we heard it again. It must have been really close as we could hear the water splash as it walked across the beaver dam.” Experiences like that help a newcomer develop a keen interest in the activity. When asked what was going through her mind at that time, Heather replied: “I could only think about all the stuff my dad used to tell me.” She had been exposed to her dad’s way of hunting for much longer than she had to her husband’s way. Therefore, in a situation like that, she could only think of her dad’s way of doing things.

*Year 6 (No stress)*

Heather was still hunting only on weekends but she was making encouraging progress in her quest to join a group. She was now hunting with her husband and his brother, who was the leader of the group her husband belongs to. In her first experience at hunting with a group, Heather got to spend some weekends at the camp where her

husband's group normally hunts. Heather felt that it would have been hard for her to join a group before that year: "Like at first, I did not know much and I used to tell myself that I could not go alone and if someone was to bring me they would literally have to drag me along, you know. Like if someone offered to bring me I would have surely said yes, but I could see that I would have been more trouble than anything else so I did not want that." Heather is a very independent person and she "did not want to be a tag along. I always needed someone to tell me what to do. I did not know enough to be able to pull my own weight." She was well aware of her capacities as well as what she could bring to a group if she would have joined one before. Fortunately, her confidence and her identity as a hunter were slowly starting to build.

*Year 7(The bull is down)*

Heather's effort to join a group was suddenly rewarded, but not necessarily for the reason she was hoping for: "That year I was awarded a tag for a bull in the tag draw. Suddenly everyone wanted me in their group. Miraculously, I was now a member of my husband's group." The tag draw produces a limited number of adult moose tags; those tags are highly valued within the hunting community. An adult tag holder becomes a great commodity within a hunting group. For Heather it proved to be enough to grant her full access to an existing group which had been reticent at allowing her in before.

The group Heather joined was considerably active in terms of preparation. The whole group went to the shooting range and according to Heather it played in her favor: "My husband's brother had more confidence in me than in some of the guys, as some of them had had buck fever in the past. That vote of confidence from him really boosted my own confidence." Being awarded a vote of confidence is certainly beneficial for an

individual's confidence, but in this case, the fact that it was the group leader that displayed confidence in Heather really provided her with an additional boost that she greatly needed.

When asked to describe her experience, she had a hard time finding the words, apparently still very excited about her experience. As she states, "It was extraordinary, I learned so much. I had a really great time, plus we got one on top of it all." Her experience was definitely fulfilling as she got to experience a full week of hunting with the boys. The fact that the group got a moose was like icing on her cake; it made her experience even more worthwhile as she got to watch the field dressing and everything that killing a moose entails.

She got to watch the whole thing. "My husband's brother is the one who shot it then he came to camp to get me as he wanted me to be able to watch while he eviscerated it. He did not want me to miss it. He made sure I was there and watched while he explained the whole process." The process of field dressing is a very important part of being a hunter. A hunter needs to be able to care for the meat. For a newcomer, having the chance to watch this process is very educative to say the least. For Heather, having her husband's brother take her through it step by step really gave her a chance to understand and learn how to do this in the future.

One of the elements that Heather missed out on is the actual killing. However, events like the killing of a moose usually become part of a group's discussion as the story is told many times over: "The same night we killed the moose, a whole bunch of people came to the camp and we all started drinking. It was quite funny to hear the same story over and over again as almost every one in the group wanted to contribute something to it. Everyone was saying how far they were from it and what they were doing and stuff like that." An event like the killing of a moose becomes a big part of a group's history. The

whole group shares the story over and over again and everyone in the group feels like the story belongs to the group as a whole.

*Year 8 (Confident and on my own)*

For Heather, the process of joining a hunting group had been a long and arduous one. Unfortunately, it got even harder for her. She was divorced from her husband, and at the same time, she understandably lost her hunting group. Nevertheless, she was able to find a new group. Her mother decided to go through her hunter certification process, and along with Heather and her father, they formed a new group. Her father's main hunting group was still with his son, but he also became part of this new group in order to accommodate his wife and his daughter.

It is quite interesting to listen to Heather talk about her mother who is a newcomer: "This was my mom's first year and she did not know very much. She would not stop talking and she would trip over everything all the time." The fact that her father was mostly tied up with her mother gave Heather a lot of freedom: "I was doing pretty much my own thing most of the time. My dad had drawn some maps to help me find directions, but other than that I was on my own." Being by herself and being free to do where to go and what to do helped Heather develop a stronger sense of identity in regards to hunting: "I felt like I was much more independent and I definitely knew a lot more than what I used to. I was quite proud of that." Heather was obviously developing a stronger sense of confidence: "I felt like I was ready to go on my own, I was comfortable enough now to go by myself. I was definitely feeling more confident in my abilities as well as my identity as a hunter." The increase in confidence she got in her last two years solidified her identity as a moose hunter.

When Heather reflects on her process of becoming a hunter, she realises she has come a long way: “Especially in terms of knowledge, like I did not know much about hunting at first. But you know what it is my whole personality that has been affected. Now I spend so much time in the forest. That is all I do. On my days off I go snowshoeing or I go to the camp alone for the weekend. It has really become a big part of my life.”

When it comes to describing the most important moments in her development, she immediately talks about “The year that we killed, with my husband’s brother. That is when I learned the most because I really got to see what it was all about. I really tried to do everything the guys would do, like when the time came to carry the moose, I said I want to try it too. I think if I had to do it alone now, I might have a hard time, but I would be able to do it because I had the chance to watch it done before.” She truly values the experience she had with her group. She acknowledges that her experience with that group played a big role in the development of her identity as a hunter, as it provided her with much needed knowledge and skills to be able to feel confident in her abilities later on.

According to Heather, the people around her also see her differently now: “Well I know, like my father and the people that saw me when I first started, they see me now and they see that I have a lot more confidence and that I am at ease in the forest. They see that I know much more than I did before.” She is quite aware that her identity as a hunter and as an outdoors person is well known to people around her. It is a big part of her life.

### *Dimensions of Heather’s Identity*

In Table 6 below, I document some of the dimensions of Heather’s identity. This exercise reveals the predominance of imagination as the most influential mode of belonging for the development of Heather’s identity within her context of practice. This

phenomenon can be explained by the fact that Heather had a really hard time finding a group to hunt with. Therefore, most of her contact with the context of moose hunting came through discussions and sharing stories with coworkers and friends.

For Heather's engagement, in terms of connectedness, Heather's inability to find a group to hunt with, kept her from building a strong connection with a group. In terms of expansiveness, Heather was able to experience some level of engagement in two different groups. Moreover, she maintains a good level of communication with friends and coworkers who are hunters also. In terms of effectiveness, Heather is still slowly building up her confidence level.

For the mode of imagination, although only two dimensions were found within the data collected, it is quite clear that this mode is the predominant one of the modes of belonging. In terms of connectedness, Heather has a well established social network of friends, coworkers and family with whom she discusses and shares information on moose hunting on a regular basis. She is constantly seeking hunting stories as a way to learn and develop new skills. There is no evidence of the presence of the dimension of expansiveness in the data collected with Heather. In terms of effectiveness, Heather is only starting to understand the big picture. Most of what she knows comes from listening to other people's stories and her father's advice.

As for the mode of alignment, all three dimensions were found to be present in the data, but the influence of this mode was much less apparent than imagination and slightly less than engagement. In terms of connectedness, several factors have prevented Heather from having the opportunity to commit to a group over an extended period of time. However, she seems quite dedicated to the new group she formed with her parents. In terms of expansiveness, Heather and her group seem to be keen on following the rules and

regulations emitted by the governing body that regulates moose hunting. In terms of effectiveness, Heather is well aware of what her parents expect from her. She is quite appreciative of the autonomy she has progressively gained in her new group.

Overall, the context in which Heather learned and became a moose hunter is one of imagination. Heather did not have many opportunities to engage in the activity within a joint enterprise. However, she did have a lot of opportunities to distance herself from the practice and define her perception of the practice through her imagination.

Table 6.

## Dimensions of Heather's identity

| Heather (case 2) | Connectedness  | Expansiveness  | Effectiveness  |
|------------------|--|--|--|
| Engagement       | <p>-Heather had a hard time finding a group to hunt with. Her allocation of an adult tag in the draw proved to be influential in her gaining access to her first group.</p> <p>-She eventually formed a new group with her mother and father. In the new group she is awarded more trust and responsibility. The arrival of her mother is helping her move towards a more central role within the group.</p> | <p>-Heather has been part of two different groups. With her first group she was lucky enough to experience a successful hunt. She admits that she has learned a lot from her experience with that group.</p> <p>-As for hunting with her parents, Heather is being exposed to new experiences as well as dealing with making decisions in the field.</p> | <p>-The first group she engaged with was a very prominent one. Her father is also a well respected hunter.</p> <p>-She does not have much experience yet, but she is slowly building up her confidence and her identity.</p>   |
| Imagination      | <p>-Heather has always had good communications with her father in regards to nature, and hunting.</p> <p>-She is constantly seeking hunting stories in her social interactions with friends and coworkers.</p> <p>-She is constantly sharing her interest for the activity of moose hunting with anyone in her surroundings.</p>   | <p>-There is no evidence of the presence of this dimension in the data collected.</p>  | <p>-Heather has not had the opportunity to engage a lot in the activity of moose hunting. Therefore she is only starting to understand the bigger picture.</p> <p>-She is still in the process of learning about the impact of her presence on the moose behaviour within the context of practice.</p> |
| Alignment        | <p>-There are several factors that prevented Heather from joining a moose hunting group. However, there is no indication of Heather's lack of willingness to commit to a group.</p> <p>-She is now committed to hunting with her parents and she interacts a lot with her father in terms of giving and receiving feedback on her own practice.</p>  | <p>-The group seems to have aligned its practice within the social boundaries set by the rules and regulations.</p>  | <p>-Heather is well aware that her parents do not expect her to do things outside of her own abilities.</p> <p>-She has convinced her parents that she can be trusted and completely autonomous.</p>   |

*Case 3 (Bob, the motivated learner)*

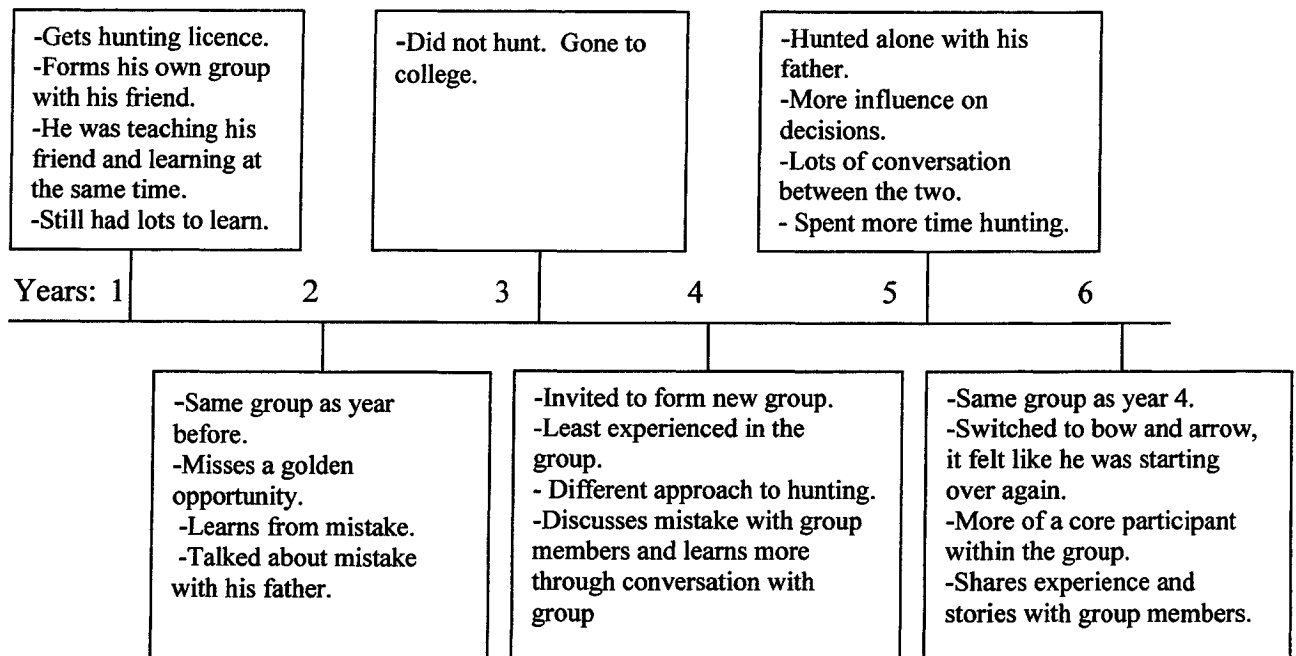


Figure 7. Bob's process of becoming

Outdoor activities including hunting were always a big part of Bob's life. It was very important for his father to make sure his children would be exposed to various outdoor activities: "if there is one thing I want to pass on to them it is the passion for the outdoors, it has been such a huge part of my life and of this family" (Joe). Joe definitely wanted to provide his children with opportunities to develop a passion for the outdoors that is so important to him.

*Year 1 (Young and learning)*

The first year he obtained his hunting license, Bob did not attempt to join an existing hunting group. Instead, he formed a group with one of his best friends who had also just gotten his license. In this situation, Bob states: "I was learning and teaching at

the same time. My friend had never hunted, so we had to rely on whatever experience I had back then.” Even though Bob had been exposed to the activity for a long time and he had developed considerable skills in regards to moose hunting, he still had a lot to learn. Hunting with a less experienced hunter was much different than following his dad on a small game hunt.

On the very first day out with his friend:

We came across some small game and after we had shot it with the smaller rifle, we heard a moose call. I immediately called back to it. But since it did not seem to be coming, we decided to bring our stuff to the cottage and come back later. When we got back to the spot, we were pretty disappointed to see the fresh tracks right where we had been standing earlier. I guess we learned our first lesson that day; when there is a moose coming, stay where you are (Bob).

After a few events like that one, Bob realized: “We were really just two young hunters who had a lot to learn.” Bob’s identity as a hunter still had a long way to go.

### *Year 2 (Silence at all time)*

During his second season of moose hunting, Bob hunted with the same friend as the previous year. Their approach was mostly the same except for the fact that his friend was awarded a bull (adult male) tag in the draw. Even though Bob had much more experience than his friend, his lack of experience caused him to miss a golden opportunity. Bob heard a branch nearby and thought it was his friend coming to join him, so he let out a gentle call to let him know he was there. But, “First thing I knew, there was a moose running full speed towards me. Before I had time to realize what was happening and get my gun ready, the moose had disappeared back in the forest.” Events like this provide a good dose of

frustration to the hunter, but in the end, “It turned out to be another experience to learn from.” When the circumstances do not provide positive learning experiences from which the individual could learn from doing something right, it nevertheless provides an opportunity to learn from realizing what went wrong. Bob remembers “I talked about it with my dad; I really felt like I should have been ready.” Situations like these provide meaningful events for discussion with more experienced hunters.

*Year 3*

Bob did not hunt that year as he was away attending college.

*Year 4 (Don't underestimate the wind)*

After being away to college for a year, Bob was invited to form a new group with his father and his father's friend. His father and the friend had been hunting together since they started to hunt some 35 years before. They had decided to hunt closer to home and invited Bob to join them. This was a new experience for Bob as he had much less experience than his new partners: “I was learning a lot, they had a lot more experience than I did. Whenever we had to make a decision, they would use their experience to justify and explain their points of view.” The social relations within the group were definitely very different than when Bob was hunting with his friend.

The preparation leading to the hunt was also different:

A few weeks before the season opened, we went to our hunting area and prepared some tree stands and we took a good look at the area. Then, about two weeks before the season, we had a meeting and we prepared a hunting plan based on our observation of the area and our tree stand location. We also

talked about food and stuff, it was a lot more organized than what I was used to (Bob).

The experience of hunting with more experienced partners taught him about the proper way to prepare, but he also benefited from having more experienced hunters around him to discuss events as they occurred during the hunt. As he recalls,

I was walking in one of my trails and I saw tracks that were not there the day before, so I decided to let out a few calls. As soon as I did that, I heard some noise and the moose came out running. I was wondering why it was not running towards me, it was heading sideways. I was really wondering why. Then all of a sudden it stopped and started coming towards me, yet I had not made another call. Later on while talking about it with my dad and his friend, I realized why it did not come all the way out. It positioned itself to have its nose in the wind, before coming towards me. That way, as soon as it picked up my scent, it turned away and ran back in the forest.

Having access to more experienced hunters to discuss and reflect on events like the one above increased Bob's opportunities to learn about the behavior of the moose. In discussion and reflecting on this event, Bob "Learned to watch for the wind direction a bit more carefully."

*Year 5 (Having a tag means nothing if you don't see a moose)*

During his fifth season, Bob hunted alone with his father. His father's friend did not join them that year. Therefore the relations within the group were a bit different, "My dad lets me make a lot of the decisions that year." The fact that there was no one else with them influenced Bob's father to allow his son to play a more central role in regards to

decisions within the group. It was a good opportunity for his dad to test the decision making skills of his son within the context of practice. For Bob, that year was quite exciting as it was the first time he was awarded an adult tag through the tag draw. As he recalls, "Because I had a tag I made sure I went hunting every chance I had. Every weekend and every day off I had or took, I spent it hunting."

*Year 6 (A memorable experience)*

As is the case with most contexts and activities we engage in, the activity of moose hunting has changed. These changes have an impact on the way hunters perceive and engage in the practice of the activity. According to Bob's father the activity of moose hunting is changing drastically: "Hunting is no longer what it used to be. Today, with all the laws, there is a lot of stress on hunters. That is one of the reasons why I switched to hunting with a bow and arrow." Bob did not hesitate to follow his father's lead and switch his hunting practice to bow and arrow as well. Nevertheless, it was a big change. According to Bob "it's almost like I started over a second time. Hunting with a bow and arrow is so different that it feels like you have to learn almost everything all over again.

The process of switching from one way of practicing hunting to a new way had a considerable impact on the social interactions within the group. As Bob states, "our practice changed a lot. In terms of moose hunting they still had more experience than I did. But when it came to the technical aspects of bow and arrows, I knew more than they did." It had a repercussion on the group's behaviour as a whole. In previous years, whenever Bob had been exposed to an event, mostly failures, his partners would provide him with feedback in regards to his practice. However, after switching to bow and arrow, the level

of experience in relation to the use of the new equipment prevented the partners from providing Bob with feedback following the event.

The practice of moose hunting with a bow and arrow requires the hunter to get very close to the moose, or the moose to get coaxed into coming very close to the hunter. In one of Bob's first experiences with bow and arrow, he recalls:

The very first morning, I started calling after I got to my stand. About 10 minutes later, two young bulls came out, about 85 yards from my stand and they started fighting one another. It was something really amazing to watch. It was also very frustrating as they were too far for me to shoot. I kept thinking that with a rifle it would have been so easy.

The whole event lasted roughly 10 to 15 minutes. During this whole time, Bob states: "I was wondering to myself, should I get down from my stand and go after them, or should I try to call again and lure them closer to me. I ended up waiting to see what they would do next." The experience left Bob with several questions in relation to what he could or should have done. Later on, he was eager to discuss it with his partners. However, their reaction was not what he had anticipated: "They were in awe that I had the chance to watch the bulls fight. Neither one of them had ever seen it happen. But when I asked them about what I could have done, they did not know. They told me it was hard for them to say as they had never been in a similar situation and the challenges imposed by the bow and arrow added to the novelty of the event. They simply said they thought whatever I ended up doing was most likely the best thing to do in that situation." The trust displayed by his partners in regards to his reaction to the event had a considerable impact on Bob's identity as a hunter: "Even though they had more experience than I did, I now felt like I was

playing a more important role in the group. My voice had more impact when it came time to make a decision and stuff like that.”

What is very interesting in regards to Bob’s development as a hunter is that he is still looking for his first moose. Nevertheless, he feels like he has become a good moose hunter and that people around him see him as a good moose hunter as well. As he states, “The guys at work have a lot of respect for me as a hunter because they know I get as many chances as they do when they are hunting with a rifle, but the hunt with the bow and arrow is much harder. I think they have a lot of respect for that.” Bob’s identity as a hunter is certainly very strong and he feels very good about his chances of getting a moose in the future.

In trying to explain how he became a hunter, Bob does not know how to put it into words: “It is like growing up, you cannot point to anything in specific that made you learn, it is just an accumulation of experience year after year.” When it comes to discussing the issue of learning, Bob admits: “I have learned quite a bit from all the mistakes I have made.” He also relates to the various specialized magazines he reads regularly. As well, “Personally, I like listening to other’s experiences. I truly enjoy listening to hunting stories. Sometimes, when you have a good story, you can learn a lot from listening to the other person’s experience.” When asked in what way he was able to learn from a story, he states:

Well, I try to see myself in the person’s shoes and I try to live the story with him. The story is really fresh in your head and you can learn from that.

Personally, that is how I have learned a lot of stuff, from listening to other people’s experiences. You can really see yourself in the same situation, as if you were standing in his shoes.

By imagining himself in someone else's shoes, Bob has become a more knowledgeable hunter.

*Dimensions of Bob's Identity*

In Table 7 below, I document some of the dimensions of Bob's identity. This exercise reveals the predominance of engagement as the most influential mode of belonging for the development of Bob's identity within his context of practice. In terms of connectedness, on his return from college, Bob has demonstrated a strong commitment to his group even when the group decided to switch their approach from firearm to bow and arrow for the moose hunt. In terms of expansiveness, Bob is not talkative by nature. However, he has experienced hunting in two different groups as well as a switch to an entirely new approach. In terms of effectiveness, Bob is part of a group of more experienced hunters; however, he is the go to guy when it comes to technical knowledge about the bow and arrow.

For the mode of imagination, only two dimensions were found within the data collected, as there was no evidence of the presence of the dimension of expansiveness for the imagination mode of belonging. It could be argued that switching from firearm to bow and arrow is a dimension of expansiveness in the mode of imagination. However, in this case, it is Bob's father who initiated the group into the switch of approaches and Bob indicated that he mainly followed his father's lead on this issue. In terms of connectedness, Bob's skills at calling moose allow him to experience interesting events which he shares with the members of his group. He likes to listen to others stories as much as he likes to share his own. In terms of effectiveness, Bob has proven time and again how efficient he

can be at calling moose. He is well aware of the limits of hunting moose with a bow and arrow.

As for the mode of alignment, all three dimensions were found to be present in the data collected. However, the influence of this mode was much less apparent than engagement and slightly less than imagination. In terms of connectedness within the mode of alignment, Bob shares the love for nature and the respect for wildlife that his father has. In terms of expansiveness, Bob and his group seem to have aligned their practice well within the limits of hunting with a bow and arrow, as well as within the rules and regulations for this activity. In terms of effectiveness, Bob is well aware of the regime of accountability by which he is evaluated. His group is well aware of his abilities and skills even if he has yet to kill his first moose.

Overall, the context of practice in which Bob learned and became a moose hunter is one of engagement. Bob's experience with the field of moose hunting is one of engagement and joint activities. His approach to the practice does not allow him to distance himself from the practice in order to imagine or reflect as much as he engages in the activity.

Table 7.

## Dimensions of Bob's identity

| Bob (Case 3) | Connectedness   | Expansiveness   | Effectiveness  |
|--------------|---|---|--|
| Engagement   | <p>-He formed his own group for the first two years.</p> <p>-Later on he formed a group with his father and his father's friend. The group eventually moved on to hunt moose with bow and arrow.</p> <p>-Bob's father highlighted that Bob is a good hunting partner because he likes to please the rest of the group, and he can be trusted.</p> | <p>-The nature of the activity of hunting provides an ample variety of contexts.</p> <p>-By learning from his mistakes Bob is progressively building his identity as a hunter.</p>              | <p>-Bob is well respected by the members of his group with his father.</p> <p>-He has not been successful in killing a moose, but he was able to observe two bulls engage in battle, something the others in the group had never seen.</p> <p>-When the group decided to switch to bow and arrow, Bob became the 'go to guy' in regards to technical knowledge for the use of the bow and arrow.</p> |
| Imagination  | <p>-After witnessing two bulls engage in battle in front of him, Bob was looking forward to sharing his experience with the members of his group.</p> <p>-The group wanted to get away from the stress on hunters by switching to bow and arrow.</p>  | <p>-There is no clear evidence of the presence of this dimension in the data collected.</p>   | <p>-Bob has been effective enough to be able to observe several moose. However the circumstances have always prevented him from killing the moose.</p> <p>-He is well aware of the limits of hunting with a bow and arrow.</p>   |
| Alignment    | <p>-The love for nature and the respect for wildlife is a value that is shared by Bob and his father.</p> <p>-The group is very keen on helping one another learn, especially since they have switched to the bow and arrow to hunt moose.</p>  | <p>-The group seems to have aligned its practice within the social boundaries set by the rules and regulations. There does not seem to be more in terms of alignment with broader entities.</p> | <p>-Bob has yet to be successful in his quest to kill a moose. However, he is able to have a lot of respect from the members of his group for his skills and abilities, especially to call moose.</p>  |

Case 4 (George, Mister conviction)

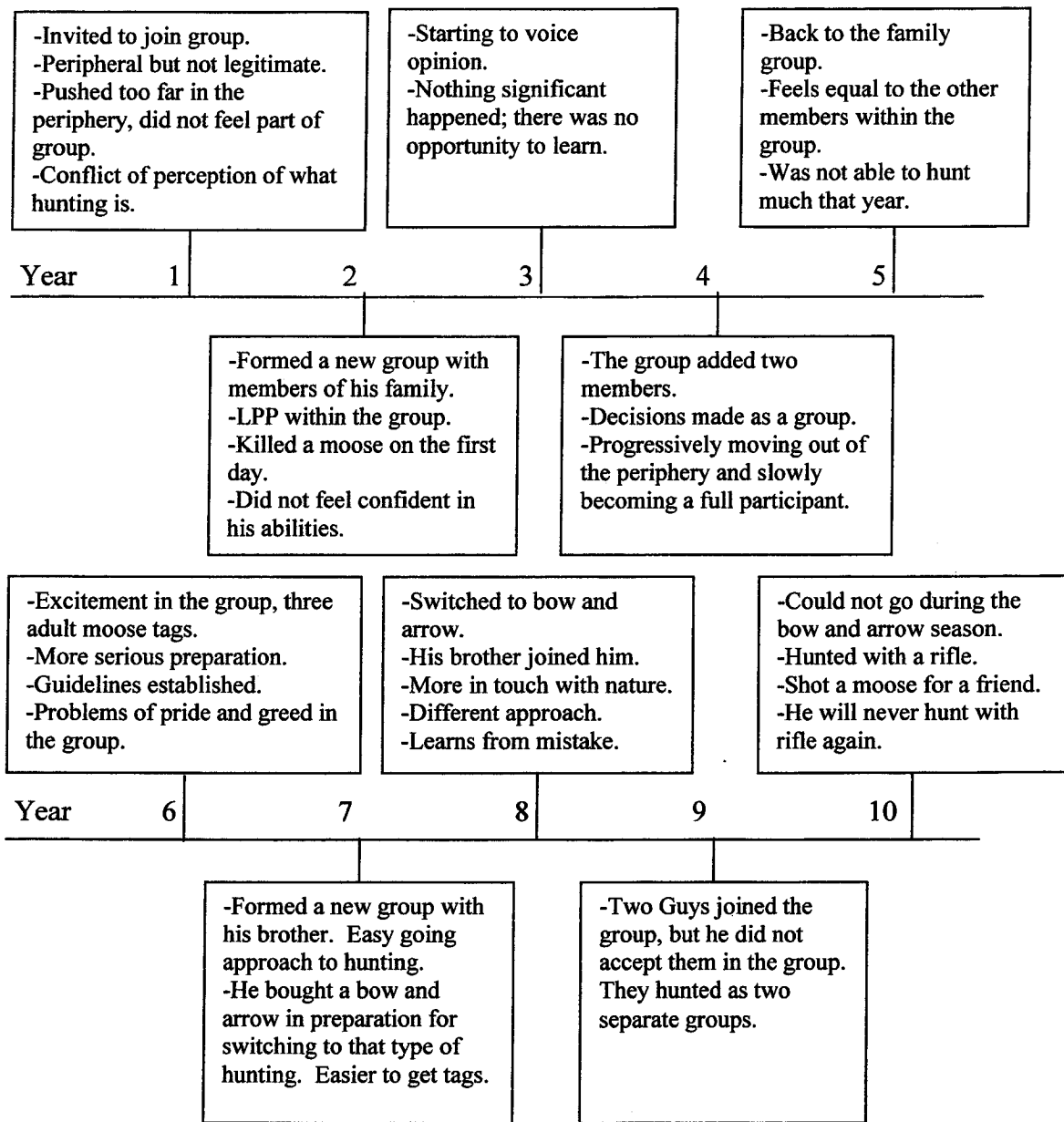


Figure 8. George's process of becoming

Contrary to the other participants, George's father never engaged in moose hunting. For George, the big influence that got him interested in the activity of moose hunting is his older brother Ron, who recognizes the importance of joining a group: "If you have the

chance to get into a group of hunters and they take you along and teach you tricks and allow you in their group, you will learn much more quickly.” Ron is convinced that the way to learn to hunt moose is to engage in the activity of moose hunting with more experienced partners. Therefore, he takes upon himself to help George become an accomplished moose hunter.

*Year 1 (The initiation)*

In most cases, George would be considered very lucky to have been invited to join an existing group the very first year he started hunting. However, the group he joined ended up pushing him so far into the periphery that he did not really become part of the group: “It was basically you go there and you stay there. You do exactly as we tell you and if we don’t tell you to take a step forward, don’t. That is basically how the whole thing went.” The group must have felt as though George’s knowledge and skill level were quite low and did not want to take any risks.

There is another indication that George’s safety was important for the group, as “They would always make sure I knew where I was and knew how to get out. They would go over where all the roads were and stuff like that.” The precautions and guidance provided to George were not well viewed by the newcomer. George did not feel welcome within the group, saying: “Whenever I would walk behind someone, the other guy was making as much noise as I did, but as soon as I would take one step he would turn around and say ‘shhhhhh’. So it was quite interesting to say the least.” For George, the main problem with this group is the way they practice and perceive hunting: “These guys I would say, they see hunting as a job. The day that I start seeing hunting as seriously as a job, that is the day I will stop hunting.” There are various ways and approaches to hunting,

some of which will definitely be unacceptable to certain individuals. The way this group practiced hunting was not something George was comfortable with. According to him, "I already had a pretty good idea of what I was doing." He did not need to be pushed so far into the periphery of the group. He had "Talked and heard enough on moose and I had read magazines and watched many documentaries on moose, I had a really good idea of what to do." George had also been exposed to the outdoors for a long time during which he had practiced small game hunting. He was not willing to be part of a group that would push him aside and not allow him to take part in the meaningful tasks of the group.

### *Year 2 (Plain luck)*

The group which invited George to join them the first year was definitely not a good match for him. Therefore, his brother Ron, along with his sister and her husband formed a new group into which George would feel more at ease. According to Ron, George was a good candidate to join his group because, "Well to start with, he is my brother, he is young, in good shape, he is not afraid of walking or running, and he has lots of energy." Then Ron goes on to add "He is also a guy who is very easy to get along with. You know it's not a good place to have serious disagreements when you are in the forest and everyone is armed." As easy as George could be to get along with, that does not mean that he can adapt and fit in just any hunting group. The group he joined the first year is a good example of that. The group's philosophy has to fit within a newcomer's perception of what hunting is or should be. The newcomer's identity is based on the type of practice he/she engages in. If he/she does not share the same philosophy as the rest of the group, he/she will not be able to develop a sense of belonging to the group or even an identity as a hunter with a philosophy to which he/she does not abide.

For George the integration into a new group meant that “It was more a gang, we were more like a group together. But it was still pretty much them telling me what to do, but it was not as bad as the first year.” The assignment of specific tasks to George certainly fit well within Ron’s philosophy in regards to newcomers: “You want someone who is serious enough to listen and do what you ask him to do. The biggest focus is always safety. If the guy misses a shot it is not a serious issue, the most important thing is that nobody gets hurt.” In order to ensure the safety of the newcomer as well as the others within the group, Ron believes that a newcomer must not be allowed to do too much. He should stay within the limits of his capacity while still being involved in the group’s meaningful tasks. The skills and the knowledge will develop slowly during the course of practice of the activity, and so will the identity of the newcomer as he/she slowly comes to grips with the tasks at hand.

George’s experience with the group turned out to be quite brief that year, as he recalls, “That year I ended up hunting maybe one weekend. I had a tag for a bull and we shot it on the very first day.” Interestingly, the fact that George was awarded a tag in the annual tag draw was not a big event for him. It just provided a tag for the group to use, as he was already a member of the group. It did not change anything for him, as opposed to Heather.

The other element that is interesting is that George’s perception of his ability was not influenced by the fact he had killed his first moose. When asked how he felt about it, he answered: “Lucky, it was just plain luck, we were driving and the buck was standing on the side of the road. It was nothing more than pure luck.” The fact he had been successful did not influence how he perceived himself or his ability as a hunter. He was very realistic in regards to this event. In fact, when asked to tell about the event, he stated, “My brother

and I shot at the same time. We both hit it, but it is most likely my brother's shot that downed it." When asked why he felt that his brother had taken a better shot he replied, "Well, you know these things happen really fast and lets say that I did not take the time to position and rest myself appropriately, it was the first moose I had ever shot on." The event certainly provided him an opportunity to reflect and learn from his own behavior, but it did not have much influence on his identity.

### *Year 3 (Uneventful season)*

In his third season of moose hunting, George remained engaged with the same group. The only difference was that he was slowly making room for himself within the group: "That year we were sleeping in the forest. We had campers in the forest, so at night, after supper, we would take a couple of beers and we would draft a plan for the next day." The fact that they were sleeping in campers in the forest kept the group close together and favored social interactions among the group. As for making the decisions, George remembers: "It was mostly the older guys. But one way or the other, I made sure I pointed out where I wanted to go and stuff like that." The fact that he had been engaging with the same group as the previous year, on top of the fact that the group members were all family, influenced George in taking more charge and making sure his voice was heard during the decision making process within the group. He was slowly developing enough confidence to state not so much what he wanted to do, but at least have an influence on the area that he wanted to cover.

There were no major events that year, for George. Whenever he was asked to describe the events during a specific season, he would always emphasize on the major events when something happened. He would describe an unsuccessful season by saying

“Nothing significant happened, there is nothing much to talk about for that year.” He always seems to place a high emphasis on successful events and his description of a season would focus on these events. When asked if he had learned anything that year, he would respond the same way: “Nothing significant happened, so there was not any opportunity to learn much.” He seemed to have the perception that learning was triggered by successful events such as the killing of a moose.

*Year 4 (Buried in snow)*

The group which George had formed with members of his family changed slightly for the first time in three years. They added 2 other hunters to their group. Their hunting practice remained the same as they still used campers and camped in the forest. The major difference came from the decision making process within the group. That year, “It was more a group thing. At night in the camper, we would decide as a group. The ideas would be coming from anyone and from there we would go for whatever made more sense. That is pretty much how we made the decisions that year.” George had now become more involved in the group. His identity had now evolved to a point where he saw himself as more or less equal to the others within the group. His involvement within the process of decision making is a clear indication of how the group itself is evolving to allow George to become a more central participant as he develops a stronger sense of identity as a moose hunter.

*Year 5 (Nothing special)*

For the fifth year, there was a mutual understanding that the two hunters that joined them the previous year would go back to their original group. As George points out, “It

was basically two groups that merged together for one year. After that year, everyone wanted to go back to the way it was before. So the others left our group.”

That fifth season was very quiet for George as he did not go hunting a lot that year: “For one reason or another, I can’t really remember. I only went two or three times.” During those two or three times that George did go, there were no events of any importance.

Therefore he did not have much to share for that year. The only thing he remembers is that his role within the group was now literally equal to that of the other members of the group.

Interestingly, in the interview with Ron, George’s brother, Ron states “Based on my personal experience of becoming a hunter as well as watching others learning how to hunt, I would say it takes a good four to five years for a newcomer to become a real hunter.”

Based on the line of thinking within the group, it only makes sense that in his fifth year George finally feels like he is now an equal member of the group. He was now considered by the group as a regular moose hunter, and he also viewed himself that way.

#### *Year 6 (Greedy hunters)*

In contrast to the fifth season, the sixth season was quite eventful. The group remained the same as the previous year. As George recalls, there was a lot of excitement in regards to that season as the group had three adult moose tags. The excitement influenced the group in meeting before the season started in order to set the rules for the season.

It was decided by the group, that if a moose was killed while you were not there, you were not getting your share of meat. That was fine with me. The first weekend I was working and could not be there, they ended up killing one during that time. Then, in the second week, we killed two. That is when the whole thing got pretty messy. The guy who shot the two moose did so in one

of the other guy's usual hunting spot. That created quite a stir within the group. It was all a matter of pride as the guy who usually hunts that spot is supposedly the best hunter in the group, so it made him mad that someone killed two moose in his spot. Also, when the time came to split the meat after the season, everything got really complicated. One guy who was not there when the two moose were killed ended up taking his share anyways. At that point, I just wanted out.

That season proved to be one of frustration even though the group was quite successful in its effort to kill moose. As it turned out, the frustration within the group, fuelled by the pride of some and the greed of others ended up being enough for the group to fall apart.

*Year 7 (Happy go lucky)*

Following the break-up of the group with which he was hunting the year before, George formed a new group with his brother Ron. According to George, "Everything had changed; we adopted a more happy-go-lucky type of approach. We would get up in the morning and we would decide together where we would go for the day. We would go for joy rides mostly. We would drive to an area and we would split up and go for walks in the same area." For George, the change in their approach made hunting fun again.

Nevertheless, he was still haunted by his bad experiences of hunting in bigger groups. In an effort to distance himself from the possibility of getting caught in another bad situation like he had experienced in the past, George bought himself a bow and arrow. He was also working with a guy who was quite keen on bow and arrow hunting. His coworker brought him video tapes and information about this new type of hunting. The two of them would constantly talk about bows and arrows and George developed a very high interest for this

type of hunting. Consequently George decided to switch from hunting moose with a rifle to hunting with a bow and arrow. As he recalls, "It was very interesting. It is a lot more challenging and much more relaxed. It was easier to get an adult moose tag and it was also a good way to get away from all the problems I had before within my previous groups."

*Year 8 (A new experience)*

To George's surprise, his brother Ron entered the draw for bow and arrow hunting with him, "It was a shock to me as he did not even have a bow and arrow at that point." By the time the hunting season arrived, his brother had bought himself a bow and arrow and as George points out, "He literally invited himself to join me. I never asked him and he never asked me, he just bought the equipment and took for granted we would hunt together, which we ended up doing." According to George, hunting with a bow and arrow is an entirely different type of hunting:

You feel much more in touch with nature. The challenge is like 10 times more than with a rifle. You really have to take it slow and you feel so much closer to nature, you actually get to enjoy nature a lot more than when you hunt with a rifle.

The switch from hunting with a rifle to hunting with a bow and arrow requires a lot of adjustment in your approach to moose hunting:

When you hunt with a bow and arrow, a 100 foot shot is a long shot, as opposed to a rifle, you don't even try to get a shot that close. The first year I hunted with the bow and arrow I lost a moose by my fault. I moved in too quickly and it picked up my scent. You really have to be on top of everything when you hunt with that (George).

*Year 9 (Outsiders not welcome)*

In their second year of hunting with a bow and arrow, George and his brother Ron were joined by two of Ron's friends. George was quite reluctant to have other people join them, "I had already had enough negative experiences with bigger groups. I was not really interested in having them join us. We ended up sharing the camper, but we mostly hunted as two separate groups." It seemed that George's reluctance to having other people join them to hunt highly influenced the dynamics within the group. "I never really felt as though they were part of our group. It was more like, they were a group and we were a group." They were willing to cooperate and share the hunting area, but they never really formed a group into which all four of them combined their efforts to kill a moose together.

*Year 10 (No more hunting with a rifle)*

For various reasons, possibly work, George did not engage much in moose hunting during the bow and arrow season. Instead, "One of my friends really wanted me to go with him for the rifle season. As I had not been able to go much during the bow and arrow season, I decided to go along with him. The fact that he had a tag for an adult female also helped convince me." The experience proved to be quite a revelation for George: "The moose I ended up shooting was so far you could barely see it with your eyes. I had all the time in the world to aim. I was able to see it perfectly in the telescope. I took the shot and the moose fell right there. To be honest with you, it made me sick; it was so easy it literally disgusted me. For me, the main reason why I go hunting is for the challenge and the opportunity to be outdoors, if I get meat on top of that, I view it as a bonus." Following his last experience of hunting moose with a rifle, George is convinced that he will most likely never return to hunting moose with a rifle. There seems to be considerable

differences between hunting moose with a rifle and hunting moose with a bow and arrow. For George, the bow and arrow seems to be better suited to his perception of what moose hunting should be.

George does not want to adapt his perception of moose hunting to anything other than how he perceives it. When asked if he intends to keep hunting for much longer, he hurriedly states:

As long as I can do it on my terms I will most likely keep on doing it for a long time. Basically, I will keep on doing it until I change the way I look at hunting. Like I said earlier, the day that I start looking at hunting as a job, that is the day that I will stop hunting.

#### *Dimensions of George's Identity*

In Table 8 below, I document some of the dimensions of George's identity. This exercise reveals somewhat of a balance between the three modes of belonging for the development of George's identity within his context of practice. The mode of engagement seems to be slightly predominant; however, the difference between this mode and the other two is not as remarkable as for the other participants.

For the mode of engagement, in terms of connectedness, George has never established a sustained connection with any groups. His only connection seems to be with his brother Ron. In terms of expansiveness, George has had the opportunity to engage with three different groups through his years of engagement within the context of moose hunting. In terms of effectiveness, George has not been associated long enough with any groups to really establish any sense of effectiveness with them. However, his continued

involvement with his brother may indicate some level of effectiveness of the part of George.

For the mode of imagination, this case is the only one in which data was found for all three dimensions of this mode of belonging. In terms of connectedness, George is not very talkative by nature. However, he did participate in the social conversations the groups had after a day of hunting. He often engaged in conversations with a co-worker in regards to the use of bows and arrows for hunting. In terms of expansiveness, George is the only participant who fantasized about the possibilities of getting closer to nature by switching from hunting with a rifle to bow and arrow. In terms of effectiveness, George and Ron constantly used a cooperative approach for hunting moose; he has a good understanding of the concept of acting together, constantly helping one another.

As for the mode of alignment, all three dimensions were found to be present in the data, but the influence of this mode was much more present than for the other participants, simply because of the fact that George seems to have a solid perception of what moose hunting should be. In terms of connectedness within the mode of alignment, George has often experienced conflicts within his hunting groups because the members of the group had a different perception than his of what moose hunting is or should be. In his opinion, moose hunting is supposed to be fun, if it's not, he would rather not take part in it. In terms of expansiveness, George as well as all the groups he has been a member of seemed keen on following the rules and regulations emitted by the governing body that regulates moose hunting. He is also well aware of the limits imposed by the use of the bow and arrow. In terms of effectiveness, George is well aware of the regime of accountability by which he is evaluated. His brother had enough faith in his abilities to influence him to switch from hunting with a rifle to hunting with a bow and arrow.

Overall, the context of practice in which George learned and became a moose hunter is one in which engagement is slightly more predominant. George has had the opportunity to engage in joint enterprises on several occasions, however, the differences in perceptions of what hunting should be has influenced him to distance himself from the practice in order to imagine what hunting is or should be for him and to align his practice according to his perception.

Table 8.

## Dimensions of George's identity

| George (case 4) | Connectedness   | Expansiveness  | Effectiveness   |
|-----------------|---|--|---|
| Engagement      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Overall George has been involved with three different groups.</li> <li>-Throughout all these groups, his brother was always with him.</li> <li>-George and Ron trust one another without any doubt as they have always been partners.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-George has been exposed to a considerable number of varying contexts.</li> <li>-His transformation of identity from a peripheral to a full participant has provided him ample identity-forming experiences.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Ron has been hunting moose for over 30 years, his willingness to keep hunting with George is a good indication of his recognition of George's skills and abilities.</li> <li>-As soon as George decided to switch to bow and arrow for moose hunting, Ron immediately followed his brother's lead into this new venture.</li> </ul> |
| Imagination     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Except for the first group he engaged with, George has always had good conversations with members of his group.</li> <li>-George aspired to hunt moose with bow and arrow in order to get closer to nature.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The approach with bow and arrow is totally different, allowing George to imagine himself more in touch with nature.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-George and Ron have always practiced moose hunting from a cooperative approach in which hunters of the same group are constantly trying to help one another by taking advantage of the wind and the senses of the moose.</li> </ul>   |
| Alignment       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-George's commitment has been to his brother instead of a group.</li> <li>-The difference in perceptions of what hunting should be is often the cause of him leaving a group.</li> <li>-He seems very keen on practicing moose hunting according to his perception of what moose hunting is or should be.</li> <li>-He would easily stop hunting if he could not do it his way.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-George aligns his practice to stay within the guidelines of the rules and regulations.</li> <li>-It is also very important for him to feel in touch with nature.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-George was making the switch to bow and arrow no matter what, Ron switched also to follow George. For George, hunting has to be fun.</li> <li>-If the regime of accountability becomes too stringent, he would rather not hunt at all.</li> </ul>   |

*Case 5 (Philip, Natural born hunter)*

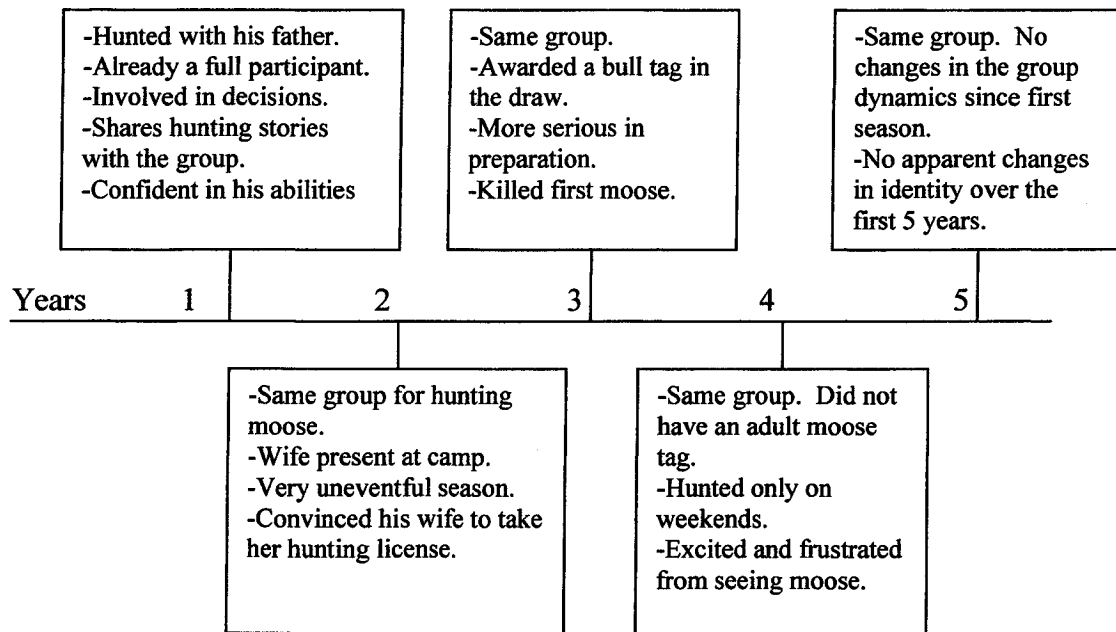


Figure 9. Philip's process of becoming

Philip's process of becoming to become a hunter is somewhat similar to that of Bob. However, the main difference comes from the fact that Philip was exposed to moose hunting while still very young, around eight or nine years old, as opposed to Bob whose first contact with moose hunting came after he had his own hunting license. For Philip, the main difference with the other four participants lies in the fact that most of his learning took place years before he ever engaged in moose hunting as a participant. The fact that his father had been hunting alone and was eager for Philip to grow up so the two of them would be able to hunt together made it very easy for Philip to learn from his exposure to his father's practice as well as with the access to the practice once he became of age to take part. His father said: "The reason for me to expose him that much at such a young age was

that I wanted him to be ready to be a real moose hunter as soon as he would get his license.”

*Year 1 (Formal participation)*

By the time Philip officially became a hunter by being old enough to get his license, he had already been exposed to the activity of moose hunting for at least 10 years. As Philip recalls:

By the time I started to hunt moose, I already knew a lot about the moose, what type of terrain they like, what they eat, where they sleep, how to call them, how and where to shoot them. My dad made sure I knew all about moose hunting long before I ever got my license.

Therefore, Philip never really engaged in the activity as a peripheral participant.

According to his father “When Philip started hunting with me, he already knew more than most guys who have been hunting for several years. He was already a fine hunter, a good caller and a good partner to go hunting with.”

The interactions between Philip and his father also indicate a sort of equality between the two members as the decisions are made through a joint discussion: “My dad is very easy-going. He has always allowed me to make decisions or at least give my input before deciding anything. Most of the time, we would have a discussion and we would make a decision based on that” (Philip). Another good indication of the role Philip was playing within his group is in regards to being left alone during the practice of hunting. As Philip recalls: “My dad has been leaving me alone for years. We have been together for so long, he was not worried to let me hunt alone.” In fact, the type of moose hunting that Philip and his father practice more or less requires them to be apart: “We both have a tree

stand. I go to my stand and stay there for hours, calling and waiting. It would not make much sense to have two guys in the same tree stand” (Philip).

In recognition of Philip’s abilities in the field, his father stated:

You can always count on him. I have never seen him panic. Philip is the kind of hunter you can trust 100%, especially when it comes to safety. In my opinion, I could not get a hunting partner more suited for the type of hunting we do.

According to Philip the hunting stories play a very important role in the preparation process for moose hunting:

We usually get together at our camp the Friday night before the season opens.

We have a few beers and we tell each other stories of past experiences. For me this is an important step as it allows me to get ready mentally. I get all psyched up from the stories and then I feel pumped and ready to go.

But that is not all that the stories do. As Philip recalls: “When I listen to a hunter telling a story, I can imagine myself sitting right beside him by the lake. I can imagine myself in his place. I really feel like I am there.”

#### *Year 2 (A family activity)*

Philip hunted with his father again. They did not get a tag in the adult moose tag draw. Philip convinced his wife to take her hunting license so they could have a better chance of being awarded a tag in the years to come. Philip’s wife started accompanying the group but she did not take part in the hunting: “She likes to go for walks in the forest and she also likes to hunt partridges, so she came along with us, but she did not get involved in moose hunting at all.” According to Philip the presence of his wife did not

have any influences on the dynamics between him and his father: “The one thing you can get my dad to talk about is fishing and hunting. So whether my wife was there or not, my dad and I still had our hunting conversations of sharing stories and preparing for the next day.”

*Year 3 (One day hunt)*

Philip hunted alone with his father again. His wife did not join them that year. Philip was awarded a bull tag in the adult moose draw: “Being awarded a tag changes the way we approach the season. We take it much more serious. We had been scouting the area for a good month before the season opened and since my dad is retired he spent a lot of time preparing the area, the tree stands and the camp.” The fact that the group had an adult moose tag may have influenced the way they prepared for the season, but it did not have any impact on the interactions between Philip and his father:

Since I was retired, I spent a lot of time preparing our site, but I also called Philip almost every night to keep him informed of what I was doing and of the presence of any moose in the area. We were both very excited that year  
(Philip’s father).

The hunting did not last very long that year:

We killed our bull before noon on the first day. My dad saw it twice the day before and once again the morning the season opened, but it was too far for him to take a clean shot. About an hour later he heard the shot I took to kill the moose” (Philip).

Even when describing how he killed his first and only moose, Philip remained very calm and composed. When asked what did killing his first moose meant for him as a hunter, he

replied: “It did not mean much for me personally. I was happy we got the moose, but it was not a personal reward or anything like that. To me it does not matter who killed it as long as we got it.” When asked if killing a moose made him feel like he was a better hunter, Philip smiled and said:

I don’t think that killing a moose has anything to do with being a good hunter. Some people drive up and down roads and kill moose out of luck. I know a guy who has killed at least five moose, yet he has no idea about anything that the moose does in the forest. If you ask me, killing a moose does not make anyone a hunter. Being able to call a moose or knowing what type of terrain they will be in, stuff like that. Really knowing about the moose and being able to go find them in the forest rather than wait for them on the side of the road is what makes anyone a good hunter.

The ability to go hunt moose in the forest is what most hunters develop once they engage in the practice of moose hunting with a group of experienced hunters. But for Philip, these abilities were developed a long time ago when he accompanied and observed his father in the context of practice.

*Year 4 (No tag)*

Philip hunted with his father again. They did not have a tag that year. They only went hunting during the weekends. The group’s experience that year was not very enjoyable:

It was frustrating really. We had one bull that came really close to us on several occasions. It is frustrating to see it and not being allowed to shoot it.

We still had a good time in the sense that it was interesting to see that moose so close, but at the same time it is frustrating not to be allowed to shoot it.

For Philip, the ability to see a moose is a positive thing, however, the fact that the rules and regulations do not allow you to kill a moose unless you are awarded the specific tag for that moose makes it a frustrating event: “I have heard many times of guys who get so frustrated from not being awarded a tag in the draw for several years, that they go out and kill a moose out of frustration and then they leave it there because they do not want to get caught” (Philip’s father). Most hunters would condemn such an action but for others who also feel very frustrated from the tag draw system, they can understand the frustration behind the action. It does not excuse the killing of a moose, but “for many hunters who have tried in vain to get answers from the ministry of natural resources, this is the only way they feel they can react to the injustice of the tag draw system” (Philip’s father).

#### *Year 5 (Full harmony)*

Philip has never hunted with anyone else but his father. The two of them have been loyal to one another ever since Philip started accompanying his father. The interactions between the two remain the same. They have established a routine proper to their approach to moose hunting and they stick to it year after year. As Philip recalls, “There has not been any changes in our approach or in our interactions since day one. Whatever we do seems to be working right and we have no reasons to change anything. We are both very comfortable with the way things are.”

When asked if he remembers when he first felt like he was a real hunter, Philip stated: “I think I was around 11 or 12. You know, the age at which you are no longer afraid to go in the forest by yourself. It is definitely a matter of confidence. It is from

building up your confidence through your experiences over the years.” For Philip, the identity of being a hunter is not related with the killing of a moose: “it has nothing to do with killing a moose really. I have only killed one moose so far. But I have seen so many, and I had so many opportunities to kill some, if I would have had the right tag.” According to Philip “The last thing you want is to kill a moose without a tag, then you get a bad reputation and other hunters no longer respect you. I would rather not kill anything than to kill a moose illegally.” The reputation of a hunter extends outside the group within which he is engaged. The rural communities are rather small, and news travels fast within these social structures. According to Philip: “The last thing you want is to be referred to as a poacher. Personally, I have no respect for those people and I know a lot of people who feel that way.”

In the process of conducting the interview with Philip, it seemed unnecessary to focus on the documenting more years of repeated experiences between him and his father. He quickly stated “things have not changed for years, and we have no intentions of having any changes either.”

#### *Dimensions of Philip's Identity*

In Table 9 below, I document some of the dimensions of Philip's identity. This exercise reveals the predominance of engagement as the most influential mode of belonging for the development of Philip's identity within his context of practice. In terms of connectedness, Philip's exclusive commitment to his group with his father is a good indicator of how well connected he is to his group. In terms of expansiveness, Philip has always maintained a good level of conversation with his father, even during his childhood, as his father brought him along with him all the time in order to make sure Philip would be

ready when the time came. In terms of effectiveness, Philip was a well respected hunter right from the start. He had already developed most of the skills and knowledge required to be a good hunter within his group.

For the mode of imagination, only two dimensions were found within the data collected, as there was no evidence of the presence of the dimension of expansiveness for the imagination mode of belonging. In terms of connectedness, for Philip the opportunity to share hunting stories is a great way to prepare and get in the mood at the beginning of a new hunting season. Moreover, when listening to stories, Philip can imagine himself sitting right beside the person as the story is being told. In terms of effectiveness, Philip has a very good understanding of the moose behavior and he has developed a very good sense for anticipating where moose are and how to call them. As for the mode of alignment, all three dimensions were found to be present in the data, but the influence of this mode was much less apparent than engagement and imagination. In terms of connectedness within the mode of alignment, Philip remains committed to hunting moose with his father, and the two of them share a similar view of what hunting is or should be. In terms of expansiveness, Philip and his father seemed exceptionally committed with respecting the rules and regulations emitted by the governing body that regulates moose hunting. In terms of effectiveness, Philip is well aware of what his father expects of him and he is quite comfortable and confident with his abilities. His father seems to have a lot of faith in his son's abilities as well.

Overall, the context of practice in which Philip learned and became a moose hunter is one of engagement. Philip has had countless opportunities to engage in the activity with his father. He has always embraced his father's perception of what hunting should be.

Therefore he has no need to distance himself from the practice to imagine a different approach.

Table 9.

Dimensions of Philip's identity

| Philip (case 5) | Connectedness  | Expansiveness   | Effectiveness   |
|-----------------|--|---|---|
| Engagement      | <p>-Philip has always hunted moose with his father. His father used to bring him moose hunting when Philip was less than 10 years old.</p> <p>-As soon as Philip got his hunting licence, his father saw him as an equal member of their group.</p> <p>-Philip's father has great trust in his son's abilities such as calling and shooting.</p> | <p>-Philip has not engaged in moose hunting with anyone other than his father.</p> <p>-His father saw him as a full participant and treated him accordingly right from the start.</p>     | <p>-The main competencies within this group lies in the ability to call in order to shoot a moose.</p> <p>-Philip's father openly embraces his son's ability to call and shoot.</p> |
| Imagination     | <p>-For Philip, the opportunity to share hunting stories plays a vital role in the preparation for a new season.</p> <p>-While listening to a story Philip can imagine himself sitting beside the person on the side of the lake.</p>  | <p>-There is no evidence of the presence of this dimension in the data collected.</p>   | <p>-Philip has spent years following and observing his father.</p> <p>-He knows exactly what is expected of him and he has the skills to act effectively when needed.</p>           |
| Alignment       | <p>-Philip has always remained committed to hunting moose with his father.</p> <p>-His view of moose hunting is highly similar to that of his father.</p>  | <p>-For Philip and his father, it is extremely important to respect the rules and regulations of moose hunting.</p> <p>-The last thing they want is to get caught infringing the law.</p> | <p>-Philip is well aware of what is expected of him.</p> <p>-The group has been hunting together successfully for many years, and they have no reasons to change anything.</p>      |

*Conclusion of Phase 1b*

From the data collected I can conclude that the context of moose hunting is one primarily of engagement. The activity of moose hunting is one that requires a considerable commitment of engagement as hunters do things together, they talk regularly, they establish routines, and they define and shape their identities based on their engagement within the CoP.

I can also state that imagination comes second with alignment trailing far behind. The presence of imagination is not as strong as that of engagement, however, the importance and the influence of the stories shared by the moose hunters within the context of practice as well as the influence it has on the children exposed to them is still quite considerable. The presence of alignment is still noticeable as most hunters strongly commit to their communities and they align their practice within their perception of what hunting should be, mostly within the rules and regulations surrounding the activity.

The participants have also indicated that a considerable amount of learning takes place during childhood, years before they engage in the activity of moose hunting. However the skills and competencies developed at a younger age seems to be a prerequisite in some cases in order to gain access to an existing CoP. I believe it is important to examine the phenomenon of learning before the participants engaged in a CoP of hunters in order to provide a more complete overview of the process of becoming a moose hunter.

## PHASE 2: LEARNING PRIOR TO ENGAGEMENT

The participants interviewed in phase 1 all indicated that some form of learning occurred before they ever engaged in the activity of moose hunting. All of them affirmed having participated in various outdoor activities which allowed them to develop some skills and knowledge that they later used for moose hunting. In fact, during the interviews with some of the peers of the initial participants it was apparent that some of the skills and knowledge developed during childhood are more or less seen as prerequisites in order for newcomers to gain access to an existing group of hunters. Especially in regards to safety, firearms manipulations, and rules and regulations.

### Participants

In order to widen the scope of the findings and provide more data for this phase, five more participants were added to the initial five case studies. To find these additional participants I have used a purposeful sampling approach as I wanted to focus on participants who had two to three years of experience. The rationale behind this choice was that I wanted the participants to be able to remember easily what activities they took part in before they started moose hunting.

The participants of the second phase were identified by word of mouth between local hunters and they were contacted by telephone. The first five participants contacted agreed to take part in the study. The reason for limiting to five more participants is that I felt I had reached a point of saturation as no new information was expressed by the participants after including five more participants to the five IPs of phase 1.

### Interviews

The interviews conducted during this phase were semi-structured (Appendix, E) and lasted between 30 and 45 minutes each. The focus of the interviews with the five participants was placed on their exposure to the activity of moose hunting before they engaged in the activity itself. The participants for this phase received the same letter of information and they all signed the same consent form used for phase 1.

### Findings

The content of the narrative interviews with the five IPs and the content of the semi-structured interviews with the five additional participants went through two forms of analysis. First I conducted an inductive analysis which served to identify the major activities in which the participants took part and seemed to influence their later participation in moose hunting. The analysis of the data was pushed further by using the work of Rogoff, more specifically the comparison between assembly-line instruction and intent participation as explained earlier in the review of literature.

#### *Activities Participated in During Childhood*

As illustrated in Table 10, there are a number of outdoor activities in which the participants have engaged during childhood. These outdoor activities are part of the everyday life of the people who live in that region. The activities are generally not used to prepare children for something else; they are merely part of the casual routine of parents who take their children along with them as they engage in some of their favorite pastimes. The children learn and develop new skills by engaging in these activities with their parents. These skills seem to reflect the prerequisite skills that moose hunting groups look for when

allowing new members to join their group. Some of these activities are more closely related to moose hunting, such as small game hunting, however, they all provide the children different opportunities to spend time outdoors and become more familiar with nature. I will present a few select quotes to highlight the influence of each of these activities.

Table 10.

Activities participated in during childhood, prior to moose hunting.

|         | Participants | Small game hunting | Fishing | Camping | Walks in the forest | Third party observation |
|---------|--------------|--------------------|---------|---------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Phase 1 | Allan        | X                  | X       |         | X                   | X                       |
|         | Heather      | X                  | X       | X       | X                   | X                       |
|         | Bob          | X                  | X       | X       | X                   | X                       |
|         | George       |                    | X       | X       | X                   | X                       |
|         | Philip       | X                  | X       | X       | X                   | X                       |
| Phase 2 | Donald       | X                  | X       | X       |                     | X                       |
|         | Bill         | X                  | X       | X       | X                   | X                       |
|         | Edgar        | X                  | X       | X       |                     | X                       |
|         | Mandie       | X                  | X       | X       | X                   | X                       |
|         | Stanley      | X                  | X       | X       | X                   | X                       |

### *Small Game Hunting*

For people who live in the remote communities of Northern Ontario, the various outdoor activities, including small game hunting, are part of many people's hobbies or pastimes. The proximity of nature and the forest makes these outdoor activities easily accessible and very much part of the regular lifestyle. It is very common for parents to bring children along when taking part in such activities. For most of the kids who were exposed to these activities, it became a source of learning, even if the purpose of taking the

children along for the activity was not necessarily to teach them about it, but merely to spend time together doing something interesting outdoors:

“My dad always took me along, whenever he went fishing or small game hunting”

(Donald).

“I used to go with my dad all the time, he started taking us along for small game when I was three or four years old” (Bill).

“My mom and dad have been taking me with them ever since I was born. The first time I went small game hunting, I was sitting in a car seat” (Stanley).

### *Fishing*

Fishing is also a very popular activity in these communities. The proximity and abundance of lakes and rivers makes it an activity of choice for outdoor enthusiasts. One of the interesting characteristics of fishing is that after being exposed to the activity, children tend to pursue it on their own, even at a relatively young age. There are no external motivators to fishing, none of the children reported taking part in fishing because their parents would give them money if they caught fish. They all took part in fishing because the activity itself was motivating:

“My dad was always very big on fishing; he used to take me along all the time when I was just a kid” (Allan).

“We had been fishing a lot before, but when my parents built the cottage, I was around eight or nine, then I really got into it big time. By the time I was 12 my parents allowed me to use the boat and I would be out on the lake everyday” (Donald).

“I always enjoyed fishing; I started when I was really young. I would go with my dad, or my uncle. After I got older, around 11 or 12 years old, I would ride my bike to the river

and fish all day. Honestly, when you live around here, you don't have much choice, there is not much to do" (Edgar).

### *Camping*

Camping is a highly informal activity in the sense that children are allowed a lot of freedom to play and roam around outdoors. Participation in this activity is highly unstructured. Children are mainly free to experiment and try new things on their own, while being in the presence of their parents. Camping is an activity which favors joint actions of the children and the parents:

"My parents have always owned a camper. At first, we would go camping close to where my dad used to work; we would spend all of our summers camping. It was great."

(Mandie).

"We actually did a lot of camping. When I was younger, we used to go camping almost every weekend" (George).

"My parents rent a spot in a provincial park for the whole summer. I have been spending all my summers over there. I get to go swimming and fishing all I want and there are some really nice trails to walk right behind our trailer" (Stanley).

### *Walks in the Forest*

People who grow up so close to the forest develop a close relationship with it. It is quite common for people to go for walks in the forest, for whatever reason one might have. Similar to other activities, parents bring their children as they take part in one of their preferred activities. The walks in nature provide a great setting for children to learn by observing during their participation in the shared endeavor with their parents. The activity

is highly unstructured, yet, the parents usually act as guides in order to allow the children more freedom to observe the natural environment:

“My dad used to bring me along for walks in the forest when I was a just a kid. He would tell me to watch and enjoy nature” (Bob).

“My parents used to have a cottage up here. We used to walk to it all the time. As I got older I would still go to the cottage just to enjoy the walk in the forest” (Heather).

“My dad is always checking out new spots to go fishing or hunting. He takes me along for walks in the forest when he goes to check out new places. Sometimes we go pretty far, I really enjoy it. We get to see all kinds of animal tracks” (Stanley).

### *Third Party Observation*

In the course of normal everyday life, parents interact with other adults or take part in some activities for various purposes. Children can be influenced by listening in on hunting stories shared among adults. They can also be influenced by adults who watch outdoors or moose hunting movies. The interactions are not focused on them; they are not aimed at providing them with information. However, the exposure to these activities has a considerable influence on the children and can be a valuable source of knowledge for children who have an interest in the activity in question:

“My dad keeps an album of pictures of the moose and the fish he has taken over the years. As a kid, I use to sit and listen to him sharing his stories while showing the pictures to his friends” (Edgar).

“My grandparents had lots of hunting movies. They watch them all the time. I just loved to sit and watch it with them. I was just a kid then, but I already knew I was going to hunt moose one day, just like I saw in those movies” (Bill).

“My dad loved to watch movies about moose. Whenever he watched one, I would sit with him and I would spend hours watching those movies. I just loved watching the moose and nature in general” (Heather).

*How the Activities Are Organized for Learning*

In the review of literature I devoted special attention to the work of Rogoff (1990, 1995, 2003). Her work provides interesting insight on learning in regards to children. What is even more interesting for this study is her last work where she pays specific attention to the organizational structure for learning across various cultures. The two types of organizational structures she presents are intent participation and assembly line instruction. The former being learning while participating in everyday activities and the latter being learning while participating in out of context activities specifically designed for teaching a specific skill. With reference to the six elements that characterize ways to organize learning, I present in Table 11 a general overview of the learning organizational structure of the activities that the participants took part in when they were young. This organizational structure may seem to be a contrast of intent participation and assembly-line instruction, however they are not dichotomous. Intent participation and assembly-line instruction are only two of many ways to organize learning. In some other cases, both organizing structure may overlap and be used simultaneously within the same activity.

Table 11.

## Organizational structure for learning within activities

|   | Intent participation   | Assembly-line instruction   |
|---|--|---|
| Participation structure                       | In most activities, the parents and the children collaborate and the responsibilities are fluid  | In some aspects, such as when safety is concerned, the parents take a more directive stance and hierarchical roles are very present                 |
| Roles of more-experienced people and learners | In most cases, parents guide children into activities that they both participate in  | For firearms manipulation, the parents manage the tasks while the children learn and practice a new skill   |
| Motivation and purpose                        | There is no external motivation for taking part in the activities listed above. The motivation for participating is intrinsic to the activities                  | There is no evidence of any extrinsic motivation within any activities listed above. (i.e. Parents do not reward children for a fish or small game) |
| Sources of learning                           | Children learn by taking part in activities and by observing others in the context of practice   | Some technical skills such as calling and shooting are often practiced outside the context of practice  |
| Forms of communication                        | Hunters have a propensity to share stories about their exploits. Stories are an important part of learning   | There is no evidence of the parents seeking to question or quiz the children  |
| Role of assessment                            | The parents will often take advantage of opportunities to test and further the knowledge of children by engaging in discussion while taking part in the activity | There is no evidence of the presence of any testing on the part of the parents to test the skills of the children                                   |

*Participation Structure*

As can be seen in Table 11, by looking closely at the data I find that in most cases the participation structure is a blend between intent participation and assembly-line instruction. The participation structure is not always clear cut but in some instances, one seem to be more apparent than the other.

*Intent Participation.*

In some cases, the activities are structured to allow the child to take part in the activity: “When I was eight or nine, we used to go partridge hunting, and my dad would let me shoot all the time” (Philip). Philip was definitely involved in the actual task, as his father always allowed him to be part of the activity, with some guidance.

For Stanley, who was an 11 year old boy at the time of data collection, his father treats him like a hunting partner: “Stanley often has suggestions about where to go and what to do next. Quite often we will follow his lead and let him take charge. He can be quite surprising sometimes” (Stanley’s father). In this context the participation structure is clearly collaborative and horizontal, as the father lets the children assume the lead and allows him to follow and test his/her own instinct.

*Assembly-line Instruction.*

It seems that the participation for some skills fits more in line with the assembly-line approach, especially for the activities of learning to shoot and moose calling. When it comes to teaching a child the proper way to handle and shoot a firearm, the parent tends to favor an approach of instruction outside the context of practice. For example, as Bob recalls: “I was 12 or 13 when I got my first gun, a pellet gun. My father taught me how to use it safely. I used to practice in our yard. We had a big yard” (Bob). The nature of the activity which is highly related to the safety of the child as well as that of others around him influenced the parents to take a more directive stance as they assumed a role of instructor for the purpose of this activity.

Another activity for which I found the structure to be more directive is for moose calling. For Bob, moose calling is one of the more important skills associated to moose

hunting. He remembers well how he used to practice it with his father: “It was rare for him to let me do it (moose call) while he was hunting, but we used to practice all the time in his garage” (Bob). The activity was practiced outside the context of participation and his dad was there to instruct him and give him feedback on his skill.

Philip’s experience was different as he mainly practiced the activity on his own using a record and his dad would only give him occasional feedback on his ability: “My father used to have an old record. It was to practice moose calling. I used to play it and practice all the time. My dad always told me I was good at calling” (Philip). Philip’s father was not engaging in the activity with him, but merely giving his son feedback occasionally. The hierarchy within the roles of the fathers and the children are quite clear within the structure of these activities.

#### *Roles of More-experienced People and Learners*

For the context of outdoor activities, including small game hunting, the roles assumed by the more-experienced people and the learners are more in-line with intent participation. In this instance, the more-experienced persons, usually the parents do not organize specific activities for children to learn. Parents merely engage in the practice of regular activities with their children. The purpose is not to teach or learn, but merely to spend time outside with their children.

#### *Intent Participation.*

As parents take their children along with them while they take part in various outdoor activities, it seems normal for them to slowly introduce the children to the practice of these activities, progressively allowing them to perform certain tasks within the context

of the activity. For instance, a vast majority of fathers guide their sons as the two of them participate in small game hunting. As Philip recalls, “I was eight or nine and I would shoot partridges with a 12 gauge shotgun. My father would always remind me to aim for the head. He was good for that” ( Philip).

Stanley’s father also guides his son when they are out small game hunting, however, he clearly allows Stanley to take some initiative: “When a partridge runs away before we had a chance to shoot, my dad always allows me to go in after it. He stays back on the road and keeps talking to me to make sure I don’t get lost.”

Bob’s experiences were highly similar, “whenever we would go to the cabin, my dad would let me go ahead of them and I got to shoot most of the partridges on the way. The only rule was that I had to wait for him if I wanted to chase a partridge into the forest.” In this type of approach the children were allowed to take some initiative as the fathers guided their sons in the activity while participating with them.

#### *Assembly-line Instruction.*

As stated earlier in the section on participation structure, the parents mostly guide their children while taking part in the activities with them. However, for certain specific skills, such as manipulating and shooting a rifle, parents tend to manage and devise specific tasks outside the normal context of practice in order for the children to receive valuable information on safe firearm handling. When it comes to safety and firearm manipulation, the parents do not assume that their children will learn through engagement in everyday activities as is the case for most of the skills learned by the children. In contrast to other tasks, the parents consciously devise out of context tasks that aim at teaching specific skills to the child. The purpose of the out of context activity is to ensure a safer practice later on

when the child requires the use of such skills in the context of practice. There is a distinct effort by the parents outside the context of practice to teach the child specific skills.

### *Motivation and Purpose*

The motivation and purpose for taking part in the activities mentioned above are totally intrinsic to the activities themselves. There is no evidence of any external motivation for the participation of children into the activities. They merely take part in the activities for the pleasure and satisfaction the activity provides them during their engagement.

### *Intent Participation.*

The children take part in the activities for the pleasure the activities provide them. The parents did not add any motivation by offering money or anything else to the children for bringing home a fish or a partridge: “Stanley has been trapping rabbits for over a year now. He has brought a few home, even though I would rather he did not. But when you look at the joy in his eyes when he brings home a rabbit, you can’t really tell him to stop doing it” (Stanley’s father). Stanley already knows too well that the skill he is developing now while catching wild rabbits will serve him well later on for other animals: “By trapping rabbits, I am learning how smart animals can be. By learning little things like that, I am getting closer to my goal of becoming a moose hunter one day” (Stanley).

*Assembly-line Instruction.*

There is no evidence of the presence of any external motivation for children to take part in the activities. Therefore the organization structure in relation to motivation for participation does not reflect assembly-line instruction at all.

*Sources of Learning*

There seems to be an interesting mix in terms of organization structure when it comes to sources of learning. The main source of learning seems to be in line with intent participation. However, there are certain skills for which lessons and exercises are devised in order for the children to learn. Such as how to handle a firearm properly, how to aim and shoot efficiently and practically anything related to the safety of participants within the context of hunting.

*Intent Participation.*

Most of the learning that takes place in the activities listed above occurs through observation while participating in shared endeavors with parents. As Philip recalls, “By following my dad around, I learned where the animals hang around, what type of terrain to look for, stuff like that.” Much of what Philip knows about hunting he has learned from observing his father while the two of them were taking part in various outdoor activities.

One element mentioned by Rogoff (2003) for learning to effectively take place by observing adults is the intention or the anticipation of the child to later take part in the activity he/she is observing. Heather has had numerous opportunities to observe her parents and her older brother while they took part in various activities such as small game hunting. However, being there does not necessarily mean intent participation. As Heather

recalls “I often did not pay attention, we were at the cottage and my brother would go hunting partridge all the time. Personally I did not really pay much attention at first. I did not really realise that they were hunting, it was just part of our activities at the cottage”(Heather). At the time she was exposed to these activities, Heather had no intentions of taking part in some of the activities she was observing, She did however state that the time spent outdoors with her family influenced her in loving nature and wanting to spend more time outdoors.

Heather’s lack of interest prevented her from learning even though she was well exposed to the activity. As one of the peers of an initial participant states:

It is very important that the person be interested in order to learn. You can’t expect people to learn something unless they are interested in the activity. You can bring them fishing and hunting all you want, if they are not interested they won’t learn a thing (Johny).

In an effort to explain the importance of being exposed to the context and to participate in the activities in order to learn, Ron suggests a metaphor “It is like a mechanic, you can teach him all you want in the classroom, but if you really want him to learn about mechanics, you have to bring him in the shop and let him get his hands dirty” (Ron).

#### *Assembly-line Instruction.*

Within the activities mentioned above, most of the time children learn from observing parents while taking part in the activity. However, for certain skills, such as moose calling and learning to shoot a rifle, some parents seem to resort to some form of training activity in order to help the child develop the skills required to act safely in the context of practice. As indicated earlier by Bob, he would practice moose calling with his

father in his garage. This was done outside the context of practice and was definitely a learning exercise meant to improve a skill that will be useful later on in the context of practice. The same is true for learning to shoot, as Bob tells that his dad taught him how to use a pellet gun safely and then allowed him to practice shooting in the backyard. The parent's effort to teach the child how to use and manipulate a firearm safely is similar to a lesson where the parent teaches the child what he needs to know. The practice shooting in the backyard is also in line with exercises meant to improve a skill for later use.

There is also an important step before any participants can become a legitimate participant in the activity of hunting. In Ontario, the Ministry of Natural Resources requires for anyone wishing to acquire a hunting license for the first time, that they follow a hunting course and pass a written examination as well as a practical firearms manipulation assessment. This course is definitely structured as assembly-line instruction. The course is out of context and meant to prepare hunters for later practice. This course is more or less a general hunting course and the participants all agreed to say that the course might have made them safer hunters, but it did not make them better hunters in terms of abilities to bag a moose.

### *Forms of Communication*

Words are a very important component of communication in learning. In intent participation the words are part of the joint action, and they are exchanged within the context of practice of the activity. In assembly-line instruction words are used to describe various elements out of the context of practice and they are also used to quiz the learners.

As Rogoff et al., describe it: “Talk is used in the service of engaging in the activity, augmenting and guiding experiential and observational learning; in an assembly-line lesson, talk is substituted for involvement” (2003, p. 195).

*Intent Participation.*

There are ongoing conversations within the context of practice of activities into which the parents informally discuss with the children and share needed information as they both participate in the activity: “Often, when we go fishing or walking in the forest, I will spot animal tracks. Then I wait for Stanley to see them and I let him tell me what animal he thinks made the tracks. When he is not sure he simply asks and I tell him. But I like to let him tell me first” (Stanley’s father).

Some activities are bounded by rules and regulations; this often becomes a topic of discussion within which information is shared as the children learn about the activities.

Using fishing as an example, Bill recalls:

I used to go fishing with my dad all the time and almost every time we would talk about the rules, like how many fish you are allowed to catch and stuff like that. My dad was very keen on making sure we did not bring home more fish than we were allowed (Bill).

*Assembly-line Instruction.*

Communication between parents and their children is mainly in the form of storytelling. There is no evidence of parents deliberately questioning or quizzing the children as to their knowledge of any activities. The communication between the parents and children

is mainly informative and serves to provide needed information while in the process of participating in the activities.

### *Role of Assessment*

Assessment of learning is seen very differently from the two traditions. In the case of intent participation it includes the interest and willingness of the children to be involved in the context, while in the case of assembly-line instruction, it is highly based on the confirmation of receipt and retention of the transmitted information.

#### *Intent Participation.*

The assessments seem to take place on an ongoing basis, during shared endeavors to aid learning, as parents and children participate in various activities. For example, whenever Stanley and his father go fishing or walking in the forest, if they come across animal tracks, Stanley's father might use the opportunity to engage Stanley in a discussion as a way to accentuate his son's knowledge in relation to animal tracks. The verbal engagement is done sporadically, when opportunities arise and it is done in the context of the activity. Sometimes the discussion is a little more subtle, as Ron confirms: "When you try and explain something to a newcomer, you see right away if he/she is interested or not. If you see that he/she is more or less interested, you are wasting your time in trying to teach him/her anything."

#### *Assembly-line Instruction.*

There is no evidence of any attempts by parents to test the knowledge of their children outside the context of practice of the activities. The assessments of knowledge clearly take place in the context of practice and fall in line with intent participation.

*Conclusion of Phase 2*

For children growing up in small remote rural communities in Northern Ontario, outdoor activities are part of their cultural environment. Some of the activities can overlap one another, as small game hunting can also be perceived as a walk in the forest in the eye of a child. Camping and fishing mostly occur during the warmer months of summer; these two activities often accompany one another. A camping trip often includes a fishing adventure and a fishing trip often involves overnight camping.

Each element identified to distinguish the organization structure for learning within the context of the specified activities predominantly highlights the perspective of intent participation over that of assembly-line instruction, the exception being for the elements that related to safety and rules and regulations. There is a special emphasis on the structuring of out of context activities in order to address the issues of safety and rules and regulations. As for the skills and competencies associated with participation in outdoor activities, the context within which these activities are practiced, mostly in rural areas where access to nature and wildlife is very easy, favors a learning structure reflective of intent participation.

It also seems that the learning that took place during childhood while being exposed and taking part in various outdoor activities is more or less a prerequisite for gaining access to the context of moose hunting later on. Especially in regards to safety, it seems to be a very important criterion for gaining access to an existing group of moose hunters.

### PHASE 3: AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT SOME ELEMENTS OF PARTICIPATION

As the data analysis was going on, I thought it would be interesting to interview a new group of moose hunters to complement and validate the findings obtained in the previous phases. I also thought that I could conclude the findings section by reporting some of the researcher's reflections on what he saw, heard and experienced during his stay in Northern Ontario.

#### Participants

The 20 participants interviewed for this phase varied widely in age. The main criterion for selection was that they needed to have at least 10 years of experience in the field of moose hunting. The participants were selected using a convenient sampling strategy; some were encountered in the field, others were contacted by phone to determine a time for an interview session.

#### Interviews

The interview guide (appendix, F) for these interviews was more structured than in the previous phases in order to obtain information in respect with specific topics related to the practice of moose hunting. The interviews lasted between 20 to 30 minutes and were conducted in the hunters' hunt camps or at their home. The interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. The software Nvivo was used to manage the data during the data analysis.

## Findings

I decided to present the findings of the analysis of the data collected during the 20 interviews into three themes: (a) competencies/knowledge required and where they have been developed, (b) their identity as a hunter and contributions of any particular event and (c) information related to hunting groups.

### *Competencies/Knowledge Required and Where They Have Been Developed*

Over the course of conducting the interviews for the data collection of phase 1 and 2 of this research, the participants regularly referred to the competencies and knowledge required to be a good hunter. Therefore I questioned the 20 new participants on this topic.

Table 12 shows the main competencies and knowledge identified by each participant. Being familiar with the terrain and knowing the behavior of the moose are the most important elements of competencies for several hunters, along with being a safe hunter and knowing the laws and regulations of moose hunting. The differences between some of the hunters might be explained by the different approach used by each group to hunt moose. The member of a group that usually drives a pickup truck all day on gravel roads in the hope of coming across a moose will have a different perception of the competencies required to be a good hunter than the member of a group that tracks moose all day long in the forest, or one that hunts from tree stands. Ron offers interesting insights in that regard. “There are various ways to hunt. On the water, in the forest, in a tree stand, etc... It all depends what type of hunting you are interested in.”

Table 12.

Competencies/knowledge required to be considered a good hunter

| Participants | Competencies/knowledge required |                       |      |               |                   |               |       |
|--------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|-------|
|              | Law & safety                    | Familiar with terrain | Guns | Accurate shot | Behavior of moose | Moose calling | Other |
| Denis        |                                 | X                     |      |               | X                 |               |       |
| Luc          | X                               |                       | X    |               | X                 |               |       |
| Cedric       | X                               | X                     |      |               |                   | X             |       |
| Bill         | X                               | X                     | X    | X             |                   |               |       |
| Dominique    | X                               |                       | X    |               |                   |               |       |
| Conrad       |                                 | X                     |      | X             |                   |               | X     |
| Conrad       |                                 |                       |      |               |                   |               | X     |
| Michael      | X                               | X                     |      |               |                   |               | X     |
| George       |                                 | X                     |      |               | X                 |               | X     |
| Charles      |                                 |                       |      |               | X                 |               |       |
| Olivier      | X                               |                       | X    |               |                   |               | X     |
| Etienne      |                                 | X                     |      |               |                   |               |       |
| Hector       | X                               | X                     |      |               |                   |               |       |
| Lucien       | X                               | X                     |      |               | X                 |               | X     |
| Yves         |                                 | X                     |      |               | X                 |               |       |
| Simon        |                                 |                       |      |               | X                 |               |       |
| Jean-Luc     |                                 | X                     |      | X             | X                 |               |       |
| Nathan       |                                 | X                     |      | X             | X                 |               |       |
| Jeanne       | X                               | X                     |      |               |                   |               |       |
| Anthony      |                                 | X                     | X    |               | X                 |               | X     |

A hunter may not need to be exceptionally skilled in all areas listed in the table, but a good understanding of some of the more referred items would be more than helpful.

According to Jean-Luc, “The competencies and abilities have a big impact on your role within the group. When a guy does not have confidence in his ability to shoot for example he will most likely let someone else take care of the shooting.” In some cases the competencies or the lack of it will have an impact on the role that a hunter plays within a group. According to Etienne:

In our group, almost everyone has a specific role. My brother is the one who calls, I am the one who walks and flushes out the moose and my brother in-law is the sharp shooter. Everyone knows what they are good at and when the situation calls for a certain skill, the whole group knows who does what, nobody has to ask who does what.

The presence of specific roles within a group seems to depend on the type of hunting the group practices. In some groups, all of the members have more or less the same level of competencies across the board, while in other groups, each member has developed certain abilities in one area and his role within the group will be related to his level of competencies in specific areas of practice.

Table 13 shows where, from the participants’ perspective, the competencies and knowledge to be considered a good hunter have been developed. As indicated in the table, most of the knowledge related to hunting comes from social interactions within the group that moose hunters form for this activity. When asked to elaborate on the social interactions, most of the hunters replied that knowledge comes from the discussion with other hunters in the group, mainly in the form of stories: “It is almost impossible to talk about what happened to you in the field without putting it in the form of a story. It is

probably the only way for the others to be able to imagine and understand your point of view” (Simon). As described later, the stories are an important learning tool in the social interactions of the moose hunting groups.

Table 13.

The origin of competencies and knowledge

| Participants | Origin of competencies/knowledge |               |                    |              |            |         |       |
|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------|------------|---------|-------|
|              | Group interactions               | Trial & error | Outdoor activities | On the field | Book/video | Courses | Other |
| Denis        | X                                |               |                    | X            |            |         |       |
| Luc          | X                                |               |                    |              | X          |         |       |
| Cedric       | X                                |               | X                  |              | X          |         |       |
| Bill         | X                                |               |                    |              | X          |         |       |
| Dominique    |                                  | X             |                    | X            |            |         |       |
| Conrad       |                                  | X             |                    | X            |            |         |       |
| Conrad       | X                                | X             |                    |              |            |         |       |
| Michael      |                                  | X             |                    | X            |            | X       |       |
| George       | X                                |               |                    |              | X          |         | X     |
| Charles      | X                                |               |                    | X            |            |         |       |
| Olivier      | X                                |               |                    |              |            |         |       |
| Etienne      | X                                |               |                    | X            |            |         |       |
| Hector       | X                                |               |                    |              | X          |         | X     |
| Lucien       | X                                | X             |                    |              | X          |         |       |
| Yves         | X                                |               |                    |              | X          |         |       |
| Simon        | X                                |               |                    | X            |            |         |       |
| Jean-Luc     |                                  |               | X                  | X            |            |         | X     |
| Nathan       |                                  |               |                    | X            |            |         |       |
| Jeanne       |                                  |               |                    | X            |            |         |       |
| Anthony      | X                                | X             |                    |              |            |         |       |

Some of the hunters indicated that learning also occurs from trial and error.

However when questioned in regards to trial and error, most hunters say that the only way to know for sure if they have acted appropriately when faced with a specific situation is to describe the context to a more experienced hunter in order to confirm that the action taken was the proper one in the situation: "Moose hunting is very complex, the only way to know for sure if you did the right thing at the right time is to describe the situation to someone else and see if they would have done the same thing you did" (Olivier). In moose hunting the hunter will never face the same situation twice, therefore there are no ways of confirming or trying the same thing again to see if it works better if a different approach is used. The factors of the context are never identical and most of the time you have to rely on experience and gut feelings when facing new situations. For that reason people say they learn from trial and error, but when you look at it more closely, the trial and error practically becomes part of the group interactions, because of the nature and the complexity of the activity.

#### *Identity as a Hunter and Contributions of any Particular Event*

In the data collected during the process of conducting the earlier stages of this research, the participants often referred to the development of a feeling of becoming more competent. At some point in the interview they stated that they started to feel more like a real hunter, indicating a shift in their identity. In order to better understand the phenomenon of the feeling of competencies as well as what might influence the formation or transformation of a moose hunter's identity, I have asked the participants of phase 3 to tell me what kind of hunters they are as well as to specify any particular event that could have contributed to it.

Table 14.

Identity as a hunter and contributions of any particular event

| Participants | Identity of hunters |      | Contributions of any particular event/factor |            |
|--------------|---------------------|------|--|------------|
|              | Average             | Good | Yes  | No         |
| Denis        |                     | X    | After first moose                            |            |
| Luc          | X                   |      | After first moose                            |            |
| Cedric       |                     | X    | After first moose                            |            |
| Bill         | X                   |      |  | Experience |
| Dominique    |                     | X    |  | Experience |
| Conrad       | X                   |      | Army   |            |
| Conrad       | X                   |      | After first moose                            |            |
| Michael      | X                   |      |  | Experience |
| George       |                     | X    |  | Experience |
| Charles      |                     | X    |  | Experience |
| Olivier      |                     | X    | Interaction with<br>experienced hunter       |            |
| Etienne      | X                   |      | Forestry work                                | Experience |
| Hector       | X                   |      |  | Experience |
| Lucien       | X                   |      |  | Experience |
| Yves         | X                   |      |  | Experience |
| Simon        |                     | X    | Forestry work                                | Experience |
| Jean-Luc     | X                   |      | Forestry work                                | Experience |
| Nathan       | X                   |      | After first moose                            |            |
| Jeanne       | X                   |      |  | Experience |
| Anthony      |                     | X    | Trapping course                              |            |

As indicated in Table 14, all of the hunters identified themselves as either an average or a good hunter. Interestingly, two of the hunters who identified themselves as good hunters also added that they were good shooters. When asked why they identified themselves as being good shooters, one of them replied “I have never missed one yet. Whenever this group needs someone to take a sure shot, I am the one they turn to” (Yves). As for the other one, “I have always spent a considerable amount of time practicing my shooting skills. The guys I used to hunt with were not very confident in their shooting abilities. I have always been the go to guy when it came to shooting”(Jean-Luc).

As for identifying events or factors that have influenced their identities, almost half were unable to identify a specific moment preferring to say that their identity developed progressively through their experience, “It is a combination of little things, like the ability to call properly, to make the moose come to you, to be able to find and follow tracks, stuff like that, and that takes time” (Charles). Among the other half, some talked about the fact that working in the forest industry helped them with knowing and understanding the terrain: “What really helped me when I started is that I was working in the forest, and I had a good understanding of the surroundings. This is where hunting takes place; it is a big advantage if you know the context so well” (Etienne). Finally, some stated that killing a moose boosted their confidence, as Denis states: “Yesterday I killed my first, so I feel like I am a super good hunter. Well it is my first, so I guess I am not super good, but right now I feel like I am really good, as I just killed one” (Denis). Interestingly, some participants stated clearly that killing a moose did not influence their hunter identity because many hunters will end up killing a moose out of luck. According to Yves, “Some guys kill moose because they are plain lucky. They drive around on the gravel road all day and they

eventually see a moose and kill it. Killing a moose that way certainly does not mean you are a good hunter” (Yves).

### *Information Related to Hunting Groups*

The sizes of the groups within which the participants of phase 1 engaged in seem to vary widely. Allan was engaged in a rather large group of 7 or 8 hunters, while the others seemed to prefer smaller groups of two to four. I also noted that most of the members within the groups in phase 1 are family members, except for Allan. Finally, it seems that some of the participants in phase 1 had a specific role within their hunting group.

Accordingly, I wanted to ask the participants of this phase: (a) their preferred group size, (b) their link with the members of their group, and (c) if they had a specific role within the group they hunt with.

As indicated in Table 15, most hunters would prefer hunting with a group of four. However, the answers varied from two or three, up to seven or eight. Interestingly the hunters who suggested they preferred a smaller group stated that hunting with a large group is much too dangerous: “I would never hunt with a group of more than four hunters. I don’t think I would be able to feel safe when I am walking in the forest with so many hunters around me. I have to be able to trust the people I hunt with in order to be comfortable” (Etienne). The issue of safety is a very important concern for several hunters. Many agree that the level of danger increases with the size of the group.

Table 15.

## Information related to hunting groups

| Participants | Preferred group size | Links with members | Specific roles in group |
|--------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Denis        | 5 – 6                | Family             | Yes                     |
| Luc          | 5 - 6                | Family             | Yes                     |
| Cedric       | 3                    | Family, friend     | No                      |
| Bill         | 4                    | Family, friend     | No                      |
| Dominique    | 4 - 5                | Family             | Yes                     |
| Conrad       | 4                    | Friends            | Yes                     |
| Conrad       | 4                    | Family             | No                      |
| Michael      | No preference        | Family, friends    | No                      |
| George       | 4                    | Family, friend     | Yes                     |
| Charles      | 7 - 8                | Family             | Yes                     |
| Olivier      | 4                    | Family             | Yes                     |
| Etienne      | 2 - 4                | Family             | Yes                     |
| Hector       | No preference        | Family             | No                      |
| Lucien       | 4                    | Family             | No                      |
| Yves         | 4                    | Friends            | Yes                     |
| Simon        | 5 – 6                | Family, friends    | Yes                     |
| Jean-Luc     | 4                    | Family             | Yes                     |
| Nathan       | No preference        | Family             | Yes                     |
| Jeanne       | No preference        | Family             | No                      |
| Anthony      | 3 - 4                | Family, friends    | No                      |

On the other hand, those who stated they preferred larger groups alluded to the tag draw, stating that bigger groups have more chances of being awarded adult tags in the draw. In fact, Charles stated “The large groups are good for getting more tags, but when it comes to the actual act of hunting, I have to admit that I would rather be no more than four or five. More than that would probably be dangerous” (Charles). Overall, most hunters agree that a smaller group provides a safer hunting environment.

Hunters prefer to hunt in small groups, but who forms these groups? What are the links between the members of the groups? As indicated in Table 15, most groups are composed of family members or very close friends. For the groups who include friends, the relationship with the friend is usually quite strong: “I hunt with my brother-in-law, my cousin and my friend; well actually my friend is like a brother to me” (George). The presence of the family within the group of hunters is once again tied to the concept of safety: “You know when you are out here and everyone has guns, you feel much safer knowing that your group is made up of members of your family” (Bill). The close interaction between hunters is also easier when dealing with people you know and get along well.

As for the assignment of specific tasks or roles within the groups, several participants said that they have specific roles in their groups, while others state that they do not have specific roles within their groups. It seems that the type of hunting practiced by the group has an influence on whether groups assign specific roles or not:

In our group, we all have specific roles; it depends on who is good at doing what. We all seem to have our specialty. I am the go to guy when it comes to calling. That is my role in this group. I can do other things too, but that remains my number one contribution to the group (Cedric).

In this type of group, some of the hunters have developed some form of expertise recognized by the other members within the group.

In other groups, everyone seems to have more or less the same level of knowledge and the group does not assign any role to anyone: “No we don’t have any specific roles, whoever feels like walking that morning will go for a walk while the others will stay back and watch. We usually take turns. We don’t assign any specific tasks to anyone” (Hector). In this type of group, the hunters seem to have more or less the same level of knowledge. None of the hunters are recognized for any specific skills or knowledge.

### *Researcher’s Reflections on Hunting Participation*

As indicated in the methodological considerations’ section of this global research, the research tradition favored was the multiple case studies and the main data collection technique used has been the interview. Although the intent of the study was not to conduct a data collection through participant observations per se, I experienced and witnessed hunting events during the data collection. Reflections on my engagement can be used to validate some of the findings of the previous phases.

During the process of data collection, I came across some opportunities to join some groups in the context of practice. Out of personal interest for the activity as well as the opportunity to witness the social interactions within other groups, I jumped on the opportunity and engaged in the activity of hunting with two different groups during my stay in Northern Ontario. The ability to join and observe groups would not yield substantial data by itself, but in conjunction with the data collected during the interviews, it provided an interesting opportunity to validate and complement the existing data by examining the social interactions within the context of practice. It should be noted that I

was holding an adult moose tag for that season, which undoubtedly facilitated my access to the groups.

*First Hunting Group: Joining a Group as a Stranger*

On one occasion, I was filling my vehicle at the local gas station and struck a conversation with the pump attendant who was planning for a week long trip with his group in the upcoming days. Once informed of my interest for the activity as well as the study being conducted, the pump attendant invited me to join him and his group on their week long adventure.

I spent the next couple of days meeting with the gas pump attendant in order to find out more about what I needed to bring and other details. As agreed previously, the gas pump attendant picked me up bright and early and we left for the group's camp some 40 miles away on a forest road. Once at the camp, the morning was spent cleaning the camp and preparing it for the week long stay. During the process of preparing the camp for the hunt, I sensed that some members of the group felt suspicious as to the intentions behind my presence within the group. At first the members tended to keep to themselves and the only discussions with me were related to the study.

The experience was quite interesting as a whole. However, I felt that joining a group of strangers required a lot of effort to establish rapport with the group. In fact, it took two to three days before I started to feel as a member of the group. At that point, the social interactions with the group changed considerably. For the rest of the week, the group and I had reached a comfort zone into which I felt accepted by the group and the group was much more open to my presence.

After the first few days, the social interactions became more fluid and the stories shared within the group became more descriptive in nature. I felt that the group had finally accepted me. Even if the first few days were a bit rough in terms of acceptance, the experience in itself was very much worthwhile.

*The group as a CoP.*

In reflecting on my engagement within this group, it was quite obvious that this group was a CoP. They had maintained a mutual engagement to the group over a considerable period of time. The group has spent a considerable amount of time and effort in preparing the area in which they hunt. They have been hunting in the same area for over 10 years, and they all knew the terrain very well.

Their practice was well defined. Their joint enterprise was clear to everyone in the group. The members of the group often said something that sounded like: "We are here for the pleasure of spending a week away from the real world. If we kill a moose in the process, great, but it is not the most important aspect for us. What is important is that we spend some time together, just the guys and we enjoy ourselves." That perception was shared by all the members. It transpired through a lot of their discussions. Their shared repertoire was also quite evident by the amount of stories they shared. The group had several routines that they seem to execute on auto-pilot. Everyone would come back to camp for lunch, they had been doing it for years and it had become part of their routine as a group.

*Second Hunting Group: Joining a Group as a Familiar Person*

I also joined a group in which I was related to one of the participants. In that case, I was invited by my niece to join the group she was hunting with. I believe that my adult moose tag was a big incentive in getting invited to join this group. The group was composed of six hunters including the researcher. The members of the group were my niece and her husband, as well as the mother and father of the niece's husband and one of their cousin.

This group was somewhat different from the one I had joined earlier. The dynamic within the group was not the same as with the previous group. It might have been influenced by the presence of women in the group, or by the different perception of the activity the group had. Participation in the group did not allow me to identify the source of the differences. One thing that I was able to observe is the seriousness of the group and the importance awarded to success. This group was not in the forest to socialize and party, they were there to kill a moose.

One element that was quite evident was the role of the women within the group. They spent most of their time hunting close to the hunting camp, as opposed to the men who each had a specific area to patrol. Regardless of the role or the area they were hunting, the women seemed quite happy with their involvement. They quickly pointed out that a couple of years back, the men all walked to their spot in the morning and in doing so, they flushed a moose back towards the camp, where the women were watching. They both shot at, and killed the moose; the only one the group got that year. In listening to them telling that story, I could feel the pride in their voice as they emphasized that it was the only moose the group got that year. They seemed very proud of their accomplishment.

*The group as a CoP.*

In reflecting on my engagement within this group, it was also obvious that this group was a CoP. Not only had this group maintained a mutual engagement to the group by engaging in moose hunting together for more than 10 years, but the group also owned and maintained the camp, which they use every year during the moose hunting season. They always enter the adult moose tag draw together as a group and they share the expenses related to the maintenance and upkeep of their camp, as well as spend several weekends each summer cleaning old trails and clearing up new ones for the hunting season. This group's practice was very well defined, their joint enterprise was clear to everyone in the group. This group was serious in their quest to kill a moose and that was the most important element for them. Moose hunting season was not the time to socialize, play cards and drink beer. They were all very serious in their attempt to kill a moose and they sure seem to share a similar perception of what moose hunting is or should be. This group had developed an impressive shared repertoire of skills and competencies over time. In the process of negotiating and preparing for the next day, it was easy to see that this group had been hunting together long enough to share an interesting history of engagement. During the discussions between some of the members of the group, one of the members would describe various areas over which the group was and has been hunting for several years. Interestingly, everyone in the group was well aware of all the details at each location being discussed. Similarly to the first group the allusion to a specific location often prompted the telling of a story of a past experience.

Another difference between this group and the other is the fact that every hunter in the group was more or less hunting over a specific area. When the group engaged in discussions it was quickly evident as they would refer to the member's area when talking

about a specific location. The members of the group relied heavily on one another as they constantly collaborated in order to cover more terrain. Once a moose was spotted in one area, the whole group would converge on that area and the members of the group all assumed specific roles in order to get the moose.

### *The Presence of Stories within the Hunting Groups*

In the process of collecting data, the researcher encountered several groups of hunters, some of which he spent as much as two hours with, in order to discuss and to arrange for an interview with members of the groups. During that process, it became evident that stories are very integral to the context of moose hunting.

After observing various hunters sharing stories the researcher realized that some of the hunters use a different approach to sharing their field experiences. For example, in one context, an older hunter was telling a story in which he was trying to follow a female moose and a calf. The hunter was very assertive in the description of the behavior of the moose as well as his reaction to those behaviors. It was quite interesting to watch the younger hunters in the room listen quite attentively to the story being told by the more experienced and respected hunter. What was interesting is that the hunter telling the story was not interrupted once while telling his tale. However, at the end of the story, some of the younger hunter in the room started asking him some questions in relations to the story.

A few minutes later, a younger hunter started telling a story of a very recent experience he had while he was hunting moose. In contrast to the more experienced hunter, the younger hunter was sharing his story very tentatively, constantly scanning the room for feedback from the others. He would describe the context in which he found himself, where the moose was and what it was doing, but when he described his position

and his behavior in the context of practice, he would look at the others in the room as though he was searching for approval or feedback as he was going through his story. In contrast to the previous situation, this story was interrupted several times. The older hunters in the room intervened in the story in order to provide feedback to the story teller or to compare his situation with a similar one that was experienced by either himself or another hunter in the group.

Later on, when asked how he felt about the interruptions, the younger hunter quickly stated that he loved it. It was a great way to learn and to confirm that the way you acted was the way an older hunter would have reacted also. It is considered a very good way to learn and the younger hunters definitely value the presence of the stories, especially within the context of practice.

### *Conclusion of Phase 3*

The additional participants confirmed the importance of knowledge such as safety and rules and regulations from an experienced hunter's point of view. I have also established that experience is one of the major contributing factors in the formation of a hunter's identity, although, killing the first moose does provide an impressive boost of confidence for newcomers. For various reasons, safety being one of the major influences, most hunters prefer hunting in groups of approximately four hunters. The rationale for hunting in larger groups is associated with the increased chances of being awarded an adult tag in the draw. Groups of hunters are mostly made up of family members, however in some cases close friends will be allowed to join in. Interestingly, when that happens, the friends are considered family.

The groups that hunters form to engage in moose hunting are a great example of a CoP as the guidelines of the practice are negotiated and defined by the group. In spending even a minimal amount of time within a group of hunter, one can quickly determine the importance of stories within that context of practice. Among other things, stories are a great teaching and learning tool which play a very central role in the context of practice of this activity.

The researcher's participation within two hunting groups proved quite interesting in order to validate the data collected earlier in the study. It became apparent to the researcher that participation and observation alone would not have yielded sufficient information to understand and document the process of becoming a hunter. Nevertheless, it was a nice opportunity to observe first hand some of the elements described by some of the participants during the interviews.

**CHAPTER 4:**  
**DISCUSSION**

There are several elements within this research that set it apart from other research conducted using Wenger's conceptual framework. To show the particularity of the process of becoming a hunter, the discussion will focus on three major themes: (a) the presence of CoP in the context of moose hunting, (b) childhood outdoor activities (prerequisites), and (c) the formation and transformation of the moose hunter's identity.

### The Presence of Moose Hunter's CoP

Generally speaking, moose hunting is perceived as an adult activity and in today's society is considered a recreation activity as opposed to work or a survival activity (Kraus, 2001). Therefore, the purpose of getting involved in moose hunting is very different than the purpose of working or studying, where some kind of official assessment is usually performed. Consequently, this has a considerable impact on the nature of any CoP found in the practice of moose hunting. As indicated in the review of the literature, Wenger (1998, 2000) presents three main elements to define a CoP: the mutual engagement, the joint enterprise and the shared repertoire. In his book, Wenger presents mutual engagement first. In the workplace, people working together negotiate a joint enterprise to address an issue or resolve a problem. However, for the context of moose hunting, the negotiation of the joint enterprise starts before the individuals actually engage in practice. For that matter, it was decided that joint enterprise should be presented first.

*Joint Enterprise*

The first element for the presence of a CoP is a joint enterprise. The joint enterprise is what keeps a CoP together, “it is the result of a collective process of negotiation that reflects the full complexity of mutual engagement” (Wenger, 1998, p. 77). In the work environment, a number of coworkers define a joint enterprise based on a problem or an issue to be resolved or a task to be done (e.g., Savoie-Zajc & Dolbec, 2003; Stacey, Smith, & Barty, 2004; Wenger, 1998). The individuals are bounded within their work environment and have to negotiate the joint enterprise with coworkers in order to establish a CoP. Consequently, in the workplace, people rarely select the members of their CoP. In the field of moose hunting, individuals form a CoP out of interest for the activity as well as based on the perception of what the activity is or should be. In such event, the negotiation of the joint enterprise starts before and continues once the participants mutually engage in the activity. If one individual’s perception of the context of practice is different, that individual will most likely move on to another context until he/she finds others who share his/her view. In such event, the negotiation of a joint enterprise would only start once the individual has found other hunters who share a similar view or perception of moose hunting.

The creation of a joint enterprise includes various aspects of the lives of the individuals within a specific context. For example, in describing the complexities in the context of claim processing, Wenger states: “The practice of claims processors, for instance, reflects their attempt to create a context in which to proceed with their working lives” (p. 78). It certainly involves claims processing, but it also involves other components of the daily life within the context of practice. For moose hunters, it seems

that two major elements interact in the negotiation of the joint enterprise, as indicated in Table 16. These two elements are, spending time with family members in nature and wildlife, and killing a moose. In the process of negotiating a joint enterprise for a group, these two elements will be the central elements which will influence joint enterprise of a group of moose hunters.

Table 16.

Interaction of two elements influencing the negotiation of the joint enterprise

|   | Kill a moose          |  |   |
|---|-----------------------|--|---|
|   |                       | <i>Important</i>   | <i>Very important</i>   |
| Spend time with family members in nature and wildlife | <i>Very important</i> | Focus placed on having fun first. Spending quality time connecting with nature. Killing a moose is a bonus | Highly sociable environment with a serious focus on killing a moose as well as having a good connection with nature |
|   | <i>Important</i>      | Kill a moose only if close to the road. Minimal contact with nature  | Very serious environment, no parties, all energies focused on the hunt. Killing a moose at all costs                |

Based on the findings in this study, the interaction of the two elements influencing the negotiation of the joint enterprise will have an impact on the type of joint enterprise a group will have. The upper left quadrant of the figure reflects a typical joint enterprise of a group for which spending time with family members in nature is very important and killing a moose is slightly less important. The upper right quadrant reflects the joint enterprise of a group for which spending time with family members in nature is very important but yet killing a moose is also very important. The lower right quadrant reflects the joint enterprise of a group for which killing a moose is very important and spending time with family in nature is somewhat less important. Finally, the lower left quadrant reflects the joint enterprise of a group for which neither killing a moose nor spending time with family in nature seems very important.

### *Mutual Engagement*

A second element for the presence of a CoP is mutual engagement from the participants. The mutual engagement is the efforts made to form and maintain a CoP over time (Wenger, 1998). There are three main concerns in relation to mutual engagement; gaining access to a CoP, engaging as a legitimate peripheral participant, and becoming a full member. But the progression through these three stages can be long and difficult: “Becoming a member may sometimes involve a slow process of initiation where each step in one’s status as an insider is negotiated and earned through some sacrifice or committed action and even rituals” (Hundeide, 2003, p. 108). Hundeide points out that “such groups are usually highly disciplined with a clear hierarchical structure and leadership with a strong internal group pressure and control” (p. 108).

Such hierarchy was found in witchcraft, where every newcomer has to start at the bottom of the hierarchy regardless of previous experience in other witchcraft groups (Merriam et al., 2003). Witchcraft is quite particular in that there are interactions between the members of the group and each group is formally taught by slightly more experienced participants. In their first year they are taught by those who are in their second year and those in the second year are taught by those in the third, so on so forth. In most cases, the newcomers will find a mentor that will guide them in their process of becoming a witch. After a year or so of engaging in the context, the participants start to teach newcomers. The much older and more experienced members of the group only teach to more experienced members in order to prepare them to become the leaders of the group.

There is also evidence of a hierarchy in the sport context. However the hierarchy found in sport is much more subtle, it is not as formal as that of witchcraft. To start with, it is the coach who decides who will be part of a team, yet, it is the other athletes on the team who decide whether a player will be accepted by the group (Galipeau & Trudel, 2004). The newcomers have to learn to fit in order to be allowed to become legitimate participants and eventually move from peripheral participation towards full participation. The newcomers joining a team are referred to as rookies and they have to gain the acceptance of the veterans of the teams in order to remain with the team long enough to be able to become veterans.

In moose hunting, there is no formal hierarchy. The newcomer's role into a group will vary from one group to the next, based on the level of experience of the newcomer, as well as the joint enterprise of the group. In groups where the joint enterprise is to

spend time with family, there will be very little distinction between a newcomer and a more experienced member. However in a community where the focus is placed on killing a moose, the newcomer will be identified as less experienced and will have to develop his identity through engagement in the context. The acceptance and the treatment of newcomers will vary widely from one group to the next. However, there seems to be no formal hierarchy within the groups who engage in moose hunting.

### *Shared Repertoire*

The third element for the presence of a CoP is a shared repertoire among the participants. The shared repertoire is the result of a joint enterprise and a mutual engagement over time. The choice of actions and types of interactions make every CoP unique as the repertoire is negotiated among the participants over the course of practice. Consequently, the shared repertoire is the mutual learning that took place within the course of participation. According to Wenger (1998) a shared repertoire “includes routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions, or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence, and which have become part of its practice” (p. 83).

Hung and Chen (2002) are quite keen on clarifying the type of learning within a CoP, a learning about and a learning to be: “Learning to be and learning about are deeply intertwined. We learn ‘how’ through practice; and through practice we learn to be” (p. 247). They go on to say “when we learn more about a particular domain or profession, we identify more with the profession – forming in a sense an identity of that profession” (p. 247). The statement is clearly linked with the workplace context, but it can be

assumed that the same can be said for other contexts such as sports and recreation. For example, in sport, each time an athlete moves to a higher level of play, he/she must adapt and learn from the new context. According to Galipeau and Trudel (2004) athletes coming into a team as rookies spend a considerable amount of time learning to fit in. For example, the athlete must learn how the decisions are made in the group, how the team takes and sits on the bus, who will share the hotel rooms on road trips, what is expected of rookies and how veterans expect to be treated. In this case, the athletes do not learn about the sport, these athletes learn to be part of a team, to fit in.

In the case of moose hunting, most of the elements, (e.g. routines, tools, stories, gestures, symbols, genre) can be found, although one is definitely more prominent than the others; the stories. The shared repertoire in moose hunting is quite distinct as stories play such a central role. Although stories are sometimes referred to in other contexts, such as research conducted in the workplace or the field of education (Fuller, Hodkinson, Hodkinson, & Unwin, 2005; Harris, Simons, Willis, & Carden, 2003; Hildreth, Kimble, & Wright, 2000; Iverson & McPhee, 2002; Janson et al., 2004; Stacey et al., 2004; Sutherland, Scanlon, & Sperring, 2005; Triggs & John, 2004), their role is not prevalent. The constant use of stories in the context of moose hunting is a good indicator of both mutual engagement over time as well as a shared way of doing things. Some stories go way back and often include clues of routines and ways of doing things that is proper to every group. In the context of a group, the stories often start with a question from one member to another, for example, do you remember when...? This is also a good indicator of mutual engagement over time as the two hunters will each tell parts of the story. In listening to stories of moose hunters from other groups, it is quite common for

a hunter from another group to not understand some of the jargon or actions described. The language used and the ways of doing things can vary from one group to the next as they are negotiated by each individual groups and become part of their shared repertoire.

#### Indicators of the Presence of a CoP

In addition to the three elements required for the presence of a CoP, Wenger (1998) also provides a list of indicators that a CoP has formed. In all, Wenger lists 14 indicators; however he clearly states that it is not necessary for all indicators to be present for a CoP to exist. Nevertheless, the presence of the indicators should reflect all three elements of the CoP discussed earlier. Some of the indicators that are notable in terms of moose hunting are the following:

1. Sustained mutual relationships – harmonious or conflictual.

Most groups are very harmonious by nature as moose hunting is mostly practiced in a tight social context of family relationship; the indicator of sustained mutual relationship is clearly present. In the one case where a conflict was identified (the participant was pushed too far in the periphery to be a legitimate participant) between one of the participants who was a newcomer and other members of the group, the conflict did not last very long as the newcomer simply abandoned the group and joined a new one.

2. Shared ways of engaging in doing things together.

Each group has a specific approach to hunt moose. Some groups will hunt on water, while others will use tree stands and moose calling. Regardless of the approach preferred, members of each group clearly have shared ways of engaging in the practice of moose hunting.

3. Knowing what others know, what they can do, and how they can contribute to an enterprise.

Within each group of moose hunters there are members who are known for having developed special skills and competencies. Some are better at shooting, some are good at calling, and some are good at tracking. Considering the rather small size of the group and the complexity of the activity of moose hunting, it would be hard to imagine that each members of a group would not be aware of each others skills and competencies.

4. Mutually defining identities

The hunters within each group help define each other's identity by attributing specific roles and responsibilities to various members based on their skills and competencies in specific areas. For that purpose, some hunters will refer to themselves, or will be referred to by others in the group as being a good shooter, or being good at calling, or even being good at cooking, if that is the case.

5. Local lore, shared stories, inside jokes, knowing laughter.

The context of moose hunting is first and foremost a context of recreation. The practice of hunting is filled with practical jokes, inside jokes and tons of stories. In fact, most discussion within the field eventually turns to the telling of a story.

6. Jargon and shortcuts to communication as well as the ease of producing new ones.

The language used within the context of practice is quite particular and varies slightly from one group to the next. For example, in sharing information with members of his group, one of the hunters was telling how he had come to see the fresh tracks of a moose

as he stumbled on some fresh 'Tim bits' (moose droppings) in the trail. In most other context 'Tim bits' would certainly have a different meaning.

7. Certain styles recognised as displaying distinct membership.

There are several approaches to hunting and each group defines its own approach. However, generally speaking, people will refer to various types of hunters. Some will be referred to as callers, because they rely on the moose call to attract moose. Others will be referred to as water hunters, because they mostly hunt on rivers and lakes. Some will be referred to as tourists, because they spend most of their time driving up and down gravel roads.

8. A shared discourse reflecting a certain perspective on the world.

In general, groups seem to share a similar view of what hunting is or should be. Nevertheless, some subtle differences can be found from one group to the next (Figure 10). In many cases they display their perspective by stating what hunting is not. In one of the groups encountered, the use of a global positioning system became a hot topic as the members of the group clearly agreed that a moose hunter who needs to use such a device to find his way in the forest, is not a real moose hunter and should stay home.

### Forms of CoP

According to Wenger et al., (2002): "CoP vary widely in both name and style in different organizations.... Knowing these variations is important because it helps people recognize CoP, despite different guises and names" (p. 24).

1. A CoP can be small or big.

Smaller ones will be more intimate while larger ones will mostly likely not be as intimate (Wenger et al., 2002). Small CoP have been identified in the context of ice hockey where the head coach and his assistants form a CoP of two or three members (Trudel & Gilbert, 2004). Very large CoP have been identified in the work context. According to Wenger et al., the largest one counts more than 1000 members. In moose hunting, the CoP is quite small, most hunters prefer to hunt in groups of four, in order to ensure a safer practice. The distinctly small size of the groups as well as the relationships between participants makes for a very intimate setting. Most of the members of a group are family related and when a member is not related, he is a very close friend of the group, most often considered to be part of the family.

2. A CoP can be long-lived or short-lived.

Some communities will last over a life span while others will last only several years (Wenger et al., 2002). In some cases a CoP will form out of necessity to overcome an issue or address a problem (e.g., Janson et al., 2004), then it dissolves itself as the problem or issues are no longer present. In other cases, the members who join a CoP do so in order to take part in a way of life, such as witchcraft (Merriam et al., 2003). These CoP tend to be long-lived. Fittingly, one of the factors that were highlighted in regards to engagement in a CoP is stability. According to Boud and Middleton (2003), “stability may be conducive to the emergence of a CoP and practices of a temporary nature may be an inhibitor to their growth” (p. 201). A lack of engagement over time could prevent the formation of a CoP as there needs to be a sufficient stability of time of engagement for

the CoP to form. In the case of moose hunters, some minor movement was noted among the participants. However the CoP were stable over sufficient time.

3. A CoP can be collocated or distributed.

Some communities are characterized by the close interactions between its members on a regular basis, while others will be distributed over a larger area and the members do not interact as regularly (Wenger et al, 2002). In the field of education, Triggs and John (2004) describe a collocated community or practice among teachers within the same university and even refer to some of the smaller groups as a 'micro-community'. This type of close social interaction is in contrast to the business world where, "the internalisation of business is making companies turn to teams and communities, making operations more geographically distributed (Hildreth et al., 2000, p. 30). As most of the members that form a CoP of hunters are from the same family, the community is collocated as they interact closely on a regular basis.

4. A CoP can be homogenous or heterogeneous.

Some communities are formed by people with very similar backgrounds, while others bring together people with different backgrounds (Wenger et al., 2002). The formation of a CoP among homogenous members is most likely easier as the members have a better chance of reaching common ground and developing a joint enterprise (Janson et al., 2004). The CoP formed by Ph.D. students to overcome the intricacies of graduate school is very homogeneous as the members have a highly similar background and level of education (Janson et al.,). However, in some cases, as in witchcraft the members come from very diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and form a CoP out of common interest (Merriam et al., 2003). Most of the members with a CoP of moose

hunters are from the same sociocultural as well as similar socioeconomic backgrounds. In the case where the members did not come from the exact family, the similarities between the members were still evident.

5. A CoP can be inside or across boundaries.

Some communities will exist entirely within boundaries while others will stretch across (Wenger et al., 2002). CoP formed by youths of counter-cultural groups (i.e. Satanists, motorcycle clubs) are very inside the boundaries. The members of such groups are asked to cut all contacts with previous friends and family in order to keep a tight control on the members of the group (Hundeide, 2003). However, Triggs and John (2004) have noted that within a project on interactive education, there was inter-connections across various CoP which helped improve the professional growth of the members within these groups. Moreover, in some apprenticeship training, Harris et al. (2003) suggest that learning through an apprenticeship could be enhanced if the boundaries between off the job training and on the job training could be crossed. In such cases the apprentices could learn more by a more appropriate communication across the boundaries. In moose hunting, the CoP are very inside the boundaries. There are no efforts made or required to share knowledge with others as it can occur in business settings. In the case of moose hunting, the groups are perceived as being in competition with one another for moose, especially those who hunt in the same area. In such cases, the boundaries between groups seem to be even more prominent as there are no perceived benefits of crossing the boundaries.

6. A CoP can be spontaneous or intentional.

Some CoP form out of necessity or interest without any outside influence, while others are intentionally structured or influenced (Wenger et al., 2002). Schools try to create or nurture intentional CoP in order to foster the professional development of their teachers through sharing and dialoguing between them (Hung, Chee, Hedberg, & Seng, 2005). In other settings, teachers form spontaneous CoP to deal with everyday issues: Such as computer problems and dealing with students (Boud & Middleton, 2003). These CoP are not intentional; they simply form out of necessity. In moose hunting, the individuals who get together to form a CoP do so spontaneously, without any outside pressure to act collectively.

7. A CoP can be unrecognized to institutionalized.

Some communities will be completely unrecognized by any organisations, while others will be part of and acknowledged by a larger institution. The CoP formed by individuals who have an interest in witchcraft is highly unrecognized. Such CoP are mostly kept secret as the people within such marginalized activities want to protect it (Merriam et al., 2003). In other context, informal learning within the work field is common practice and expected. For example, police officers, especially newcomers to the practice engage in groups (CoP) that provide them with on the job learning from other more experienced officers. These CoP are part of the police institution and are highly valued (Harris et al., 2003). In moose hunting, the CoP are largely unrecognized. The practice of moose hunting is not marginalized as the practice of witchcraft (Merriam et al., 2003), but the CoP formed to engage in the activity are not recognized by any formal

organization and their structure is not mandated by any institution, as is the case with some CoP in the workplace (Triggs & John, 2004).

### Childhood Outdoor and Hunting Activities

This research has shown that to have access to a moose hunters' CoP, there are some prerequisites most often gained at a very young age through outdoor activities with family members. Nine out of the ten participants interviewed over the course of the first and second phases of research revealed that they accompanied their father while he was hunting small game. In some cases the participants were as young as two or three years old, but overall, the majority were exposed to the activity of hunting by the time they were five or six years old. In the case of the participant who was not exposed to the activity by his father, it was an older brother who took him along when going small game hunting. As some of them have indicated, the time spent in the great outdoors has influenced them in developing a keen liking if not a passion for the outdoors. It is that same passion that fuels the participants' interest for activities such as moose hunting, simply because the activity takes them outside and allows them to connect with nature. The same goes for the anticipation to participate in the activity, most of the participants never questioned if they would become moose hunters, it was simply a matter of time.

The findings of our study confirm Deruiter and Donnelly (2002) in stating that socialisation is the main influence in determining the value orientation of participants toward wildlife. Participants whose parents engaged in fishing and hunting, demonstrated a stronger bond with nature and a stronger affinity for the outdoors than those whose parents did not engage in such activities. This clearly reinforces the point of

view that parents and the activity they take part in have a strong influence on the values of their children.

According to Deruiter and Donnelly (2002), the second most important determinant for the value orientation towards wildlife was the place of upbringing. The children who grew up in rural areas had stronger affinity and a better sense of connection with nature than those who grew up in cities or in the suburbs. One of the participants in this study emphasized that the small community in which he was brought up did not offer much in terms of activities; therefore it was inevitable for him to turn to outdoor activities such as fishing and hunting. As highlighted by several authors (Hultsman, 1993; Iso Ahola, 1980; Kelly, 1974; Kleiber, Larson, & Csikszentmihalyi, 1986) in the field of outdoor recreation, participation at an early age is a very important factor in determining the implication of a person in outdoor activities later on in life. For the children who grow up in rural Northern Ontario in families who participate in fishing and hunting, the double influence of the family setting and the isolation makes it almost natural for children to develop a strong interest for outdoor activities such as fishing and hunting.

Deruiter and Donnelly (2002) noted that the father had a stronger influence on the value orientation of the children when it came to outdoor activities such as fishing and hunting. Based on the importance of the father's role in the informal education of the children who eventually access a CoP of moose hunters, it is interesting to look at the way participation is structured for various outdoor activities. The work of Rogoff (2003) and Rogoff et al. (2003) on guided participation, more precisely on the two types of learning within guided participation (assembly-line instruction and intent participation) provide an interesting framework to examine the structure of participation in outdoor

activities. The findings of our study show that for the most part, children learn through intent participation when participating in various outdoor activities. However, there are some situations which influence the parents to revert to an assembly line type approach, especially when the safety of the child is involved. The participants indicated that they received some out of context instructions and they engaged in practice events that would help them develop the necessary skills to handle and shoot a firearm safely.

### Moose Hunter's Identity

The issue of identity within the concept of CoP is an integral aspect of a theory of social learning. The focus on identity is simply a shift in focus within the same topic. According to Wenger (1998): "Focusing on identity within this context extends the framework in two directions:

1. It narrows the focus onto the person, but from a social perspective
2. It expands the focus beyond CoP, calling attention to broader processes of identification and social structures" (p. 145).

Phase 1b of this research focused on the concept of identity and the three modes of belonging (engagement, imagination, and alignment). The findings show that for the most part, moose hunters develop their identity through engagement in the practice. In accordance with Wenger's definition of engagement, moose hunters learn through "active involvement in mutual processes of negotiation of meaning" (1998, p. 173). The context of moose hunting described in this document is one of engagement as the participants actively engage in the activity which provides constant social interactions between the members of the group.

In some cases imagination may play a role in the development of the hunter's identity. For example, those who decide to switch from regular hunting to bow and arrow, use that mode of belonging to develop and form their identity. One of the participants who switched to bow and arrow no longer wanted to be identified with regular moose hunting with a firearm. He clearly stated that he would no longer participate in the regular hunt, thus solidifying his identity by his non participation in the regular moose hunt.

The findings of the study also show that alignment plays a rather small role in the identity of the moose hunter, as there are no larger entities that moose hunters aspire to. The CoP of moose hunters are very local and there are no larger or higher organisations or institutions that hunters look up to. This is in contrast to a context like sport where athletes align their practice with an intended trajectory (Galipeau & Trudel, 2004). It is quite common for athletes to align their practice with a higher league. Consequently, the actions of the athlete are in line with attaining higher levels within his practice.

Generally speaking, moose hunters identified strongly with the activity of hunting. Each of the hunters had a particular view of himself as a hunter and each had a particular view of what a good hunter is or should be, in terms of skills and competencies. Moreover, all of them demonstrated a clear passion for the activity and were more than willing to discuss it. In most cases moose hunting can be defined as 'serious recreation' and the activity clearly is the *central life interest* (Stebbins, 1998) of the individuals interviewed for this research. In the context of serious recreation, Stebbins addresses the issue of identity in relation to an activity based on the perception of importance of that activity. In some instances, Stebbins states that for some people an activity can be their

central life interest and by talking with them for a few minutes you will undoubtedly find out what that person's central life interest is. According to Stebbins, there is a difference between someone who plays golf and someone who is a golfer. For the person who plays golf, it is simply an activity they participate in, but the person who identifies himself/herself as a golfer is much more serious about the activity. Similarly to the current study, the very meaning of the activity will vary widely based on the individuals' perceptions of what golf is.

In a study conducted by Larocque (1999) in a recreational sport activity, the element of importance awarded to the activity was quite prevalent. Most of the adult members of a traditional shotokan karate (Martial art) dojo adopted the philosophy of their sensei (teacher) in making the practice of the martial art a way of life. In one instance, one of the participants revealed that his wife had given him an ultimatum between karate and her. He was quick to tell her to pack her stuff and leave as karate was a way of life which he had chosen to live his life by. For the participants in this dojo, karate became more than a recreational activity, it became an integral part of their lives and had a considerable influence on the behaviours of these people even outside the dojo.

The same seems to apply to moose hunting. Some people are very serious about their activity and certainly identify heavily with their engagement in the activity even if the activity is seasonal. Most hunters prepare for several months in advance and spend a considerable amount of money on vehicle and equipment for the purpose of moose hunting. The activity of moose hunting is definitely a very central part of their life, even several months before the season actually starts.

The perception of what moose hunting is or should be also plays a huge role in the hunter's identity as well as identifying what he is not. In some instances, the hunters who have switched over to bow and arrow for moose hunting no longer want to identify themselves as regular moose hunters with rifles. In such instances, the hunter defines himself by his practice as well as by the types of practice he does not want to be associated with.

**CHAPTER 5:**  
**CONTRIBUTIONS**

The present research provides empirical support that allows me to put forward contributions at two different levels. At the first level, some theoretical contributions will be provided. Then some more practical contributions will be offered as a guide to help improve the Ministry of Natural Resources' approach for teaching newcomers the practice of moose hunting.

### Theoretical Contributions

As I have used Wenger's (1998) CoP framework to examine how individuals become moose hunters, it is appropriate at this point in the thesis to evaluate the contributions of this study in regards to the conceptual framework. In order to evaluate the contribution of this research towards the conceptual framework of CoP, it is imperative to look at how the framework has been used in the past few years. Overall, most of the research using the CoP framework can be summed up in two categories: studies describing or examining for the existence of CoP (Boud & Middleton, 2003; Fuller et al., 2005; Savoie-Zajc & Dolbec, 2003; Stacey et al., 2004; Triggs & John, 2004), and studies aiming at creating or nurturing CoP (Driver, 2002; Pelle & Briner, 2001; Smeds & Alvesalo, 2003; Soekijad, Huis in 't Veld, & Enserink, 2004; Swan, Scarborough, & Robertson, 2002). Our study contributes to the first group as it describes the existence of CoP in the context of a recreational activity; that of moose hunting.

The second theoretical contribution of this study is that it describes the presence of social learning entities which fit within the CoP framework in the context of outdoor recreational activities. It also adds to Wenger's (2000) statement as to the possibility of

having various forms of CoP into which engagement, imagination and alignment would have a different influence depending on the context of practice.

A third contribution comes from the presence of conditions for gaining access to a CoP. Very few studies discuss the presence of conditions for gaining access to a CoP. At the very least some will discuss the difficulties associated with becoming a member in certain CoP (e.g., Hundeide, 2003; Stacey et al., 2004), such as the stages of apprenticeship and becoming a legitimate peripheral participant. Janson et al., (2004) is the only study who suggests a prepotential stage that students must attain before engaging into a CoP. The prepotential stage of engagement in a CoP is different from the prerequisites needed for gaining access to a CoP in this study. For the newcomer into the practice of moose hunting, there are certain skills and competencies that a potential newcomer is expected to have developed before he or she is granted access to the group. In the case of the prepotential stage, it is simply a lack of reaching common grounds with surrounding students (Janson et al., 2004). For the context of moose hunting, it is the gatekeepers that will decide if and when a newcomer can join the CoP, based on the skills and competencies developed in the practice of other outdoor activities such as fishing and small game hunting.

There is also an indirect contribution of this research on the influence of parents on their children's chosen activities later in life. This is not trivial as some of the participants have indicated during their interviews that when they were younger they tended to hang out more with other children who had similar interests, such as hunting and the outdoors. This means that more active children will tend to hang out with more active children and those who are more sedentary will tend to spend more time with kids

who have similar interests. In considering the problems associated with a less active lifestyle, the family unit may be a good way to influence children into more active lifestyles.

### *Future Research*

This study does suggest other questions of investigations in CoP. This study shows that women may have a hard time gaining access to a men's CoP. Therefore, it would be interesting to see a study on the existence of CoP for women only. None of the studies on CoP seem to have documented the existence of a CoP for women only. There are studies that look at the benefits of single gender experiences for women (e.g., McDermott, 2004; Theberge, 1987; Warren, 1985). However, none of these look or describe women in a social learning setting. It would be interesting to see if there are significant differences between the process of becoming in a women only CoP.

This study also shows that children can eventually integrate into a CoP that includes at least one of their parents. It would be interesting to examine if children can create a CoP of their own. In my effort to review the literature on CoP I have not encountered any research focusing on children CoP.

Moreover, considering that CoP are formed out of a mutual interest or problem, it would be interesting to see if this framework could help people deal with illnesses or disabilities. Eng and Davies (1991) highlight the value of opportunities for children with cancer to socialise and participate actively with others who suffer from the same illness. It would be interesting to examine the benefit of creating or nurturing CoP for people with illnesses, as they could negotiate and share meanings that are very distinct to them.

It might be easier for individuals dealing with a disease or a disability to reach common ground with others who are afflicted by similar difficulties.

The difficulties or issues that influence people to engage mutually in a CoP can vary widely based on the contexts in which the CoP exists. The context of moose hunting in Northern Ontario is quite particular as the nature of the activity dictates the formation of groups to participate in the activity. It would be interesting to see if and how other hunting contexts would fit the CoP framework as a social learning structure. Perhaps a similar research in a different sociocultural setting would provide interesting differences or similarities that would offer an interesting point of comparison across diverse social and cultural contexts.

One of the most valuable elements of the community or practice framework is that it provides a framework to study contextualized learning in everyday life settings. Based on the assumption of this framework that “engagement in social practice is the fundamental process by which we learn and so become who we are” (Wenger, 1998, p. i), it might be important to reconsider the views on outdoor education, in order to shift toward a more unstructured play environment into which children can learn from social interaction with one another (Fjortoft, 2001). It might be interesting to see if children who share an interest for a particular type of activity can form a social learning structure that would fit the CoP framework.

### Practical Contributions

Moose hunting, in Ontario, is regulated by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. This institution has implemented programs and rules that directly affected the

practice of hunting. The biggest changes have come in the process to award adult moose tags to moose hunters in specific Wildlife Management Units. Data from this study can be used to comment about the effects that these changes have had on the moose hunters. In the process of data collection, I have met some individuals who used to hunt but no longer do. These individuals indicated that the numerous changes in the regulations over the years eventually influenced them to not engage in hunting anymore. Nevertheless, as the data show, the politics associated with the gun registration process also had a considerable impact on several hunters who did not feel comfortable with the gun registry system (<http://www.cfc-ccaf.gc.ca/>, Sept, 07, 2005).

Over the years, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources has established a strong working relationship with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters in regards to fish and wildlife management. Currently, the Federation has taken over the responsibility of providing the Hunter Education Program for individuals who want to become hunters. However,

The M.N.R. will continue to appoint hunter education instructors and examiners, and the government will still pass the regulations, issue licences and set policy. The government did a commendable job with hunter education, but, recognizing that reduced government budgets and program cutbacks are a reality of the 1990s and beyond, the O.F.A.H. had to ensure Hunter Education did not suffer. Priorities change from time to time, but the O.F.A.H. will make hunter education a consistent top priority. It is part of our mandate. (<http://www.ohep.net/>, July, 26<sup>th</sup>, 2005)

It is important to note that the Federation is located in Southern Ontario and caters mostly to the needs of the hunters of that part of the province. This has serious repercussions for potential hunters in Northern Ontario. The current Hunter's Education Program focuses heavily on ducks and waterfowl. It is commonly known that this type of hunt is practiced mostly in the South and is practically non-existent in the Northern part of Ontario. The data of this study shows that the participants did not learn much in terms of moose hunting when they followed the Hunter's Education Program. In fact most of them indicated that they did not pay much attention to the presentations as they did not feel it was appropriate for their hunting interest. It is clear that more emphasis is needed in providing a proper and more appropriate Hunter Education Program that is suited to the needs and interest of the individuals attending the program.

In the process of constantly changing the regulations as well as the process for moose tag allocation, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources has recently implemented a system of groups. Moose hunters are allowed to apply as a group for the draw that allocates tags in various Wildlife Management Units. The province of Ontario is divided in more than 100 Wildlife Management Units, and the group size required for a guaranteed adult moose tag varies from one zone to the next. The Ministry encourages people to hunt in larger groups by automatically awarding an adult moose tag to a group of a predetermined size. In some Units, a group may require 6 hunters, while in others groups of 12 would not even be guaranteed a tag. This system is based on the number of applications received within each particular Unit. This group allocation process has had a serious impact

on the moose hunters. In many cases, hunters have sent their wives, daughters and other friends who normally do not hunt to take Hunter Education Program in an effort to virtually increase the size of their group. It is quite common now for a group of four hunters to have eight or more names on their application. This has seriously affected the chances for 'real' hunters to be awarded a tag in the draw.

Moreover, it also had a much more serious effect. In some cases, larger groups have formed in order to improve their chances of being awarded a tag in the draw. However, the data of this study shows that moose hunters prefer to hunt in smaller groups, out of concern for their safety and that of others. Considering that one of the primary goals of both the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and hunters is to focus on the safety in the practice of hunting, it is somewhat ironic that it is them who encourage people to form larger groups which are perceived by the moose hunters as being more at risk for hunting accidents. Safety is definitely an important issue when it comes to hunting, and if the Ministry and Federation are serious about it the data in this study suggest that they take a closer look at the impact of the practice of moose hunting in larger groups.

Finally, this research demonstrates how individuals learn through social interactions in natural environments. Based on these findings, it might be interesting to rethink the way schools address teaching and learning and award more importance to learning through informal social interactions, even in more structured environments such as schools.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study emphasize the need to look at learning from a perspective other than in formal settings such as schools. We are surrounded by people and events that shape the context in which we live and with whom we interact and learn. The daily social interactions we are faced with everyday allow us to learn and shape our identities as we become members of several CoP set within a sociocultural context. This is as true for adults as it is for children who join their parents in their activities.

The community of moose hunters, like any other cultural community is subject to change as the members of that community negotiate and learn the meanings of engagement and non-engagement within the various activities. With the strong lobby by anti-hunting groups and animal rights activists, the identity of the moose hunters as well as those of non or anti-hunters is about to get even stronger. This will inevitably have a strong impact on the way hunters view themselves and how those who do not hunt view those who do.

Moose hunting has changed considerably over the years; it is no longer an activity of subsistence. Hunters no longer rely on their ability to kill a moose to ensure a supply of meat to their family over the winter. The activity has become one of choice, in which individuals engage with close relatives. In some cases, the activity has become much more social in nature, and killing a moose is not necessarily the prime objective. Nevertheless, moose hunting has remained a way of life, specifically in rural regions of Northern Ontario. Those who engage in the activity, for various reasons, do so very passionately. This passion for nature, the outdoors and the wildlife transpires rapidly through a discussion with a 'moose hunter', even in the off-season.

The process of becoming a moose hunter is a long one, much longer than I first expected at the beginning of this research. It is obvious that when children are exposed or take part in various activities with their parents, they will inevitably learn from observing and listening to the stories of their parents. In that sense, parents have a huge influence on the development of their children as well as the activities the children will most likely develop an interest for.

This exercise has undoubtedly brought an answer to a personal long standing question, but in reality it brought even more questions and an even greater thirst for learning. It is with anticipation that I look forward to a career in academics and research. It is somewhat ironic that this journey through school has allowed me to discover the importance of learning outside of it. To realize the importance of learning outside of context, through a structured Ph.D. program reminds me of Sfard's (1998) warning on the dangers of using only one metaphor of learning when trying to understand how people learn.

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## APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A**  
**CONSENT FORM**

Consent form

Léon Larocque Ph.D. candidate  
 University of Ottawa, Faculty of Education  
 (613) 837-4258

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am interested in collaborating in the research conducted by Léon Larocque, of the faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa, on the process of becoming a hunter. The project is under the supervision of Dr. Pierre Trudel. The purpose of the research is to examine the process of learning and becoming a hunter.

My participation will consist essentially of attending 2 or 3 interviews of 45 to 120 minutes, during which I will provide my own life experiences as a hunter. The sessions have been scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_. I will also be asked to validate the transcribed interviews as well as take part in some observation session. I understand that the contents of the interviews and the observation sessions will only be used for the doctoral dissertation of Léon Larocque, as well as publications and conference proceedings and that my confidentiality will be respected. I will be given a pseudonym from the beginning and my actual name will never be made public. Tape recordings of interviews and other data collected will be kept in a secure manner as to not provide access to anyone to the data other than the researcher and his supervisor. The tapes will be stored in a locked cabinet for a period of three years, after which they will be destroyed.

I understand that this activity deals with personal information. I have received assurance from the researcher that every effort will be made to minimize occurrences, which may bring back negative memories. I will be awarded the freedom to not discuss any event that may cause hardship or emotional distress. I am free to withdraw for the project at any time, before or during an interview, refuse to participate and refuse to answer questions.

Any information about my rights as a research participant may be addressed to **Catherine Lesage, Protocol Officer for Ethics in research, 30 Stewart Street, Room 301, (613) 562-5800 ext. 1787 or [clesage@uottawa.ca](mailto:clesage@uottawa.ca).**

**There are two copies of the consent form, one of which I may keep.**

**If I have any questions about the conduct of the research project, I may contact the researcher or his supervisor Dr. Pierre Trudel (613) 562-5800 ext. 4268 or [ptrudel@uottawa.ca](mailto:ptrudel@uottawa.ca)**

**Researcher's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_**

**Research Participant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_**

**APPENDIX B**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INITIAL PARTICIPANTS**

### Interview guide for initial participants:

#### Introduction

- personal introduction
- introduction of the research topic
- consent form

#### Data collection (chart)

As indicated in the consent form, we are interested in your evolution as a moose hunter.

#### **Before the first year**

1. How long have you been involved in moose hunting?
2. Were you involved in any other type of hunting before you began moose hunting?
  - a) Which type of hunting and for how many years?
3. Were you involved in other outdoor activities?
  - a) Which type of activity and for how many years
4. Who or what sparked your interest for hunting?
5. Who or what sparked your interest for moose hunting?
6. **Before** you became a hunter, did you follow any training or courses?
  - a) Type of courses?
  - b) Number of hours?
  - c) Offered by who?
7. **After** you started hunting, did you follow any training or courses?
  - a) Type of courses?
  - b) Number of hours?
  - c) Offered by who?
8. In your opinion, regarding these courses?
  - a) Did you learn a lot from them?
  - b) Did the content of these courses help you become a better moose hunter?
    - i) Any examples?
  - c) Did you keep in touch with others who took the course with you in order to
    - discuss the use of the information during moose hunting?
  - d) Do you have any intention of following any other courses or training?
    - i) Why?

***EXPERIENCE: from the first year until now***

The experience of hunting can be written as a book, I would like you to think of your experience as a hunter as if you wanted to write a book. Each year as a hunter could be a chapter in a book. I have here a page that will help us in this task. You could give a title to each chapter in order to illustrate what you experienced during that year. I will ask you questions in order to help you write each chapter. The questions will focus on what you have experienced, the persons that you have been with, the problems encountered..... (This scenario is suggested by Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilbert, (1998).

9. How did you gain access to a hunting group the first year?
10. Who were you hunting with?
11. What was your role and what was the role of the others?
12. Did your group have any preparatory meetings?
  - a) Did you prepare your hunting site?
13. Can you describe your experience the first year, from the beginning to the end?
  - a) Who was making the decisions?
    - i) Where, when and how were decisions made?
    - ii) With or without discussion or negotiation?
14. During the course of hunting, were you left alone?
  - a) Were there instructions and discussions before and after the period of hunting?
15. During that first year, did you encounter any problems in particular?
  - a) What was the problem?
  - b) How did you react towards the problem?
  - c) Was there any other problem?
16. You gave me an example of a problem that you faced. During such situation, how did you react and what steps did you follow to solve the problem?
  - a) Reflect on your past experiences?
  - b) Reflect on training or courses that you have taken?
  - c) Invent a solution
  - d) Consult
    - i) Books (magazines etc...)
    - ii) Internet
    - iii) Watch hunting on t.v.. ?
  - e) Consult other hunters?
  - f) Consult members of a hunting association or club?

- g) Consult family members?
- h) Consult colleagues at work?
- i) Watch other hunters in order to steal their techniques?

17. During or after the hunting season, did you take the time to reflect and analyze your

hunting behaviors?

- a) Alone or with someone else?
- b) Can you give me an example of something you reflected upon?

18. Was there a lot of interaction between hunters of other groups?

- a) What was the focus of discussion? ( Hunting or anything but...)

19. Was there a lot of interaction between members of the local hunting club or association?

- a) What was the focus of discussion?

20. Did you take part in any activities organized by the hunting club or association?

- a) Within your city or village
- b) Outside your local community

21. Did any of your obligations (family, work ... ) enter in conflict with your hunting?

22. What title would you give this chapter?

For each year, ask the same questions and ask if there were any changes from the previous year.

23. Do you intend to keep moose hunting?

- a) For how long?
- b) Why?

## Second interview

### Introduction

I will present you a summary of our last meeting, which is a summary of each chapter of your book..... You will tell me if my summary is accurate and I will ask you a few questions.

### Data collection (The chart)

1. Read the summary of each year and ask specific questions if necessary.
2. We have here your 'x' number of years of experience. As a hunter, do you see yourself differently today than you did when you started?
  - a) In what ways?
  - b) Can you identify key moments or events that facilitated the change?
3. Do you believe that people around you (family, other hunters, friends) see you differently today than they did when you first started?
  - a) In what ways?
  - b) Can you identify key moments or events that facilitated the change?
4. Do you feel like you have learnt a lot within those 'x' years as a hunter?
  - a) what has contributed the most to your learning?
    - i) Courses or training, taking part in the activity, one person in particular?
5. Would it have been possible to maximize even more your learning?
  - a) Do you believe in hunters meeting or training courses?
    - i) Would hunters participate?
    - ii) What should those meetings focus on?

APPENDIX C  
EVOLUTION CHART

Evolution Chart

| (Year)           | 1<br>( ) | 2<br>( ) | 3<br>( ) | 4<br>( ) | 5<br>( ) | 6<br>( ) | 7<br>( ) |
|------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|                  |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |
| Title of chapter |          |          |          |          |          |          |          |

**APPENDIX D**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PEERS OF INITIAL PARTICIPANTS**

## **Interview guide for peers of initial participants**

### Introduction

- personal introduction
- introduction of the research topic
- consent form

### Data collection

As indicated in the consent form, we are interested in the evolution of individuals as moose hunters. 'Initial participant' has identified you as one of the more experienced members of his hunting group. The focus of this interview will be on identifying your perception of newcomers to the practice as well as the role they play within hunting groups.

1. How many years have you been hunting moose?
2. How many hunters form your hunting group?
3. What is your role and the other's role within your hunting group?
4. What is the importance of bringing in newcomers to a hunting group?
  - a) What makes someone a good candidate to becoming a hunter?
  - b) Do you have any criteria that you look for in a newcomer?
  - c) What made 'initial participant' a good candidate to join your group?
5. How should newcomers be treated?
6. How long does it take for someone to become a hunter?
7. Would you recommend that newcomers follow any formal training or courses?
8. Do you consider yourself a mentor or a teacher of the practice of hunting?
  - a) Can you give us an example of you teaching a newcomer?
9. Do you believe in training or courses?
10. What could newcomers learn from courses or training?
  - a) where, when and how should courses or training be offered or taken?
11. How should courses or training be given and what should they focus on?
12. How much experience should a hunter have before inviting a newcomer to join him?

**APPENDIX E**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS OF PHASE 2**

**Interview guide for participants Phase 2:****Introduction**

- personal introduction
  - introduction of the research topic
  - consent form
1. How long have you been hunting moose?
  2. Before you started moose hunting, did you take part in other types of hunting?
  3. Did you take part in other outdoor activities?
  4. What has gotten you interested in hunting?
  5. What has gotten you interested in moose hunting specifically?
  6. Before you started to hunt, did you take any courses?
  7. After you started to hunt, did you take any courses?
  8. What have you learnt from these courses?
  9. Did following these courses make you a better hunter?
  10. Did you follow the course with anyone you knew?
  11. Did you keep in touch with anyone from the course?
  12. Do you have the intention to follow any other courses?
  13. Do you remember the first time you went hunting?
  14. Do you remember your first rifle or your first hunting knife?
  15. Do you remember who you hunted with the first year you hunted moose?
  16. What was your role within the group?
  17. How were the decisions made?
  18. Did you encounter any problems or issues that year?
  19. During or after the season, did you reflect on events that happened during the season?
  20. Was there hunting stories told within the group?

21. Did you interact with other hunting groups?
22. Were you part of any hunting clubs?
23. Was the club a good opportunity to meet other hunters?
24. Can you describe your experience during the first year?
25. Can you describe your experience during the second year?
26. Did your role change within the group?
27. Did you have any meetings before the season to prepare?
28. Did your group kill a moose since you joined them?
29. Who shot it?
30. Who took care of field dressing the moose?
31. Did you know how to do it?
32. If you had to do it on your own, would you be able to do it?
33. Do you know how to 'call'?
34. How long have you been practicing?
35. When you have issues or questions in regards to moose hunting, where do you find the information?
36. Who is the person you would most likely ask for help or advice?
37. Do you remember how old you were when you got interested in hunting?
38. Do you remember how old you were when you decided that you would become a hunter when you got older?
39. Do obligations, like school, family or work conflict with hunting?

**APPENDIX F**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS OF PHASE 3**

### **Interview guide for participants Phase 3:**

#### **Introduction**

- personal introduction
  - introduction of the research topic
  - consent form
1. Do you always form groups to hunt moose?
  2. How many people in the group?
  3. Who are the people within your group?
  4. How long have you been hunting together?
  5. What are the advantages or disadvantages of large or small groups?
  6. How important is it to hunt with people you get along well with?
  7. Do members of your group have specific roles?
  8. Has moose hunting change since you first started to hunt?
  9. What are the skills required to be a good hunter?
  10. How do you learn these skills?
  11. Has a moose hunter, how would you rate yourself?
  12. Do you remember how many years it took for you to become a reasonably good hunter?
  13. Is killing a moose an indication of a good hunter?

Does killing a moose influence your perception of yourself as a hunter?