

**Negotiating citizenship: a young child's collaborative meaning-making constructions of beavers as a symbol of Canada**

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## Abstract

The right to share the social heritage of a nation is an element of citizenship closely associated with education (Marshall [1950]1992). Social heritage is understood as the negotiation of understandings within a dialectical understanding of social practice across multiple timescales. In this paper the meaning-making practices of one young child concerned with beavers as symbols of Canada is studied, using the *Day in the Life* methodology (Gillen, Cameron, et.al.), across two encounters in one day, the first in 'mat time' at a kindergarten and the second at afternoon tea with her family. The teacher's careful orchestration of the event is analysed, and elements of her structuring of heteroglossic discourses identified. Suhani both demonstrates close attention to certain complexities in her subsequent family dialogues and expands her narrative with imagined additional elements. The paper contributes to our understanding of bridging between the early development of academic discourse registers and home-based narratives (Gallagher 2016). Methodologically, a contribution is made to consideration of processes of transcription, for analytic and dissemination purposes. In conclusion, deepening linguistic ethnography through the use of multimodal methods, we find, with Pagani (2009, 92), 'complexes of representations and practices' in the negotiation of citizenship through daily life routines.

## Introduction

In an influential definition, Marshall ([1950] 1992) proposed that citizenship has three elements: civil, concerning freedom of speech; political, involving participation rights and social. He described social as '...the right to share the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society' (Marshall [1950] 1992, 8). He argued that education is closely associated with the promulgation of citizenship. We examine here the negotiation of citizenship by a young child, Suhani, in the course of two events in one day. Suhani encounters a discourse of 'symbols of Canada' in her kindergarten one morning. At home, when invited, she shares her knowledge of beavers as symbols of Canada among a supportive family audience. Thus the child, with first the teacher and then her family, collaborates in making meanings evoking multiple timescales and contexts. We will show too how she incorporates many features of the teacher's classroom register in her family oriented narrative, bridging these language socialization practices, a key element of developing an academic register (Gallagher 2016).

To approach an understanding of citizenship as discourses of national identity, we first ground our understanding of discourse as social practice as defined by Fairclough and Wodak (1997, 258):

‘Describing discourse as social practice implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s) and social structure(s) that frame it: the discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them. That is, discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned – it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people.’

Thus beavers as symbols of Canada, to presage our specific focus, as indeed any other such example of discourses of national identity, are viewed not as a static representation but as constantly renegotiated. This may be taken as an instantiation of Bakhtin's (1981) understanding of language in use as constantly in traction between centrifugal forces that blows stability of meaning apart and centripetal forces that try to tie meanings down. Our analysis will particularly bring out the “realities of heteroglossia” (Bakhtin 1981, 270), the tensions inherent in meaning-making in any particular time and place. At the same time, the centripetal forces Bakhtin (1981, 270) associates with “unitary language” and centralizing power, are evident in such discourses. For to have any traction, discourses of national identity must be brought down from any overly abstract domain, to have meaning in the life of the individual within her or his society. A key site for this, as other linguistic centripetal forces, is compulsory education.

Marshall's ([1950] 1992) assertion that education is closely associated with the promulgation of citizenship has been influential in the forging of understandings of the social element of citizenship (Lewis 2004). In the US for example, since the 1880s the Pledge of Allegiance utilizing national symbols is taken for granted in the daily life of many schools in what Billig (1995, 50) calls ‘banal nationalism.’ Hiver and Dörnyei (2015) prioritise training for citizenship in their argument as to the importance of teachers in society. Banjac and Pušnik (2015) report the use of European symbols in Slovenian civic curricular materials to promote European identity and increase awareness of EU-related information. In an article aiming to analyse aspects of ‘the symbolic dimensions of Canadian society,’ Breton (1984, 123) proposes that this entails the ‘definition of a collective identity which, with time, becomes articulated in a system of ideas as to who we are ....represented in the multiplicity of symbols...’ (Breton 1984, 125).

Such symbols permeate the chronotopes, the interwoven connections of time and space (Bakhtin 1981) in everyday life. Although perhaps rarely noticed they proliferate through repeated, often mobile presences such as flags in streets, on

stamps, banknotes and other artefacts (Billig 1995; Sebba 2013). A flag is a relatively static symbol in comparison to some of the other members of the multiplicity of symbols associated with Canada, such as the beaver. In appreciating the actual or potential malleability of this specific symbol, it is illuminating to examine the history of the beaver as firmly associated with citizenship in Canada. Indeed, in 1892 Horace T. Martin (cited by Backhouse 2015, iii) claimed, 'A traditional knowledge of the beaver is the birthright of every Canadian.' The beaver is an official symbol of Canada, having been adopted as an emblem by the Canadian Government in 1975 (Government of Canada 2014). The formal explanation for that refers only to its place in mercantile trading by early European settlers, and the use of the beaver on the coat of arms of the Hudson's Bay Company. Interestingly, that explanation occludes any association of particular characteristics of the beaver, made in other sources, for example: 'Today the beaver, noted for its industry, skills and perseverance, qualities considered suitable for a nation to emulate, decorates the reverse of the Canadian five-cent coin (Peel 2011). The World Wildlife Fund centres a North American campaign for the preservation of natural habitats on 'the industrious beaver' (World Wildlife Fund undated). Calling for donations as symbolic adoptions of beavers, it connects their long time survival with saving 'other species at risk around the world and...a healthier natural world for us all' (Ibid). Yet however persuasive this long-term perspective on the beaver's potential contribution to climate change may be, the reverse side of this industriousness can be less welcome locally, as trees are felled and giardia is spread. So it is simultaneously sometimes regarded as a 'destructive nuisance emblematic of its kinship to the unloved rodent family' (Wagner 2015, 13).

In a comprehensive work, Backhouse (2015) reviews the species *castor Canadensis* and its relationship with humankind from prehistory to contemporary times, exploring how they were almost hunted to extinction in the nineteenth century principally owing to the use of their pelts as hats. Similarly, Heller (2011, 36) emphasises that beavers in newly colonised Canada were not primary resources, extracted for the purposes of food and shelter, but were rather 'used to make gentleman's hats... imbued with all kinds of symbolic value meant to provide their owners with what Bourdieu (1979) calls a capital "of distinction", that is, a means to use symbolic capital to conduct struggles over prestige and status.' Heller argues that struggles over beavers and other natural resources of the Canadian land were played out physically in the economic stratification of society, as well as discursively, placing people labelled as 'indigenous' in an unequal position. However, since most beaver pelts were exported, rather than retained in Canada for a relatively small fur wearing elite, it would seem that the impact on Aboriginal people was also more direct. Wright (1981), examining particularly the impact on women, argues that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century First Nations people suffered a 'degradation of women's traditional economic and social power' through the near extermination of the beaver and consequent impact on the environment.

Such material and ideological tensions underpinning the beaver as a symbol of Canada make it then the communications between our participant Suhani and her interlocutors a particularly fascinating example of “language conceived as ideologically saturated, language as a world view...” (Bakhtin 1981, 271).

## **Research Design**

### *Methods*

This small-scale study emanates from an international project: ‘Ecological study of a “Day in the Life” of kindergarten children in the transition to school.’ Using the Day in the Life methodology, the project videos children during a full day, then explores episodes through reviewing and discussions with families and others involved (Gillen, et al, 2007; Gillen & Cameron 2010) regarding the identification of the characteristics indicative of young participants’ thriving during their home to school transitions.

Our data collection procedure commences after an initial, somewhat extended recruitment period after thorough institutional ethical reviews have been conducted, during which the local researchers visit a school, a teacher and then a family to determine through an extensive process of informed consent the desirability and feasibility to engage in this highly involved and potentially challenging research activity. Emphasis is placed on the impossibility of complete anonymity in this visual methodology, though pseudonyms are used except where requested otherwise and specific locations are not revealed, other than the country and region of the family’s home and school. Informed consent is also obtained from parents of classmates and others who are present during the day before they appeared on camera. Once informed consent is reached for all concerned, the researchers, one film-maker and one note-taker, conduct interviews with all participants and a practice filming session to accustom everybody to the actual application of the procedures. All participants are consulted as to the day for actual filming.

The videoing of the ‘day’, both at home and at school and out in the community as the family’s routines dictate is the core activity of the methodology. The local researchers and another team member from another global location independently view the up-to-ten hours of video and select approximately one half hour (about a half dozen five-minute clips) of samples from the ‘day’ to make a compilation of interesting interchanges. This compilation is shown to all core participants who are invited to comment on their interest, veracity and representation of the ‘day’. These responses are audiotaped and along with the other interviews, transcribed as a source of information in subsequent analyses of the happenings during the day and the iterative viewing is followed up at the end of each elementary school year. Team members then identify and collaboratively analyze aspects of the day, often in light

of themes emerging from other children's 'days', crafting specific research questions that act as a focus for their investigations. Subsequently contact continues with assorted face-to-face meetings, phone calls and email exchanges of inquiry with both family and school that continue as draft papers are written. The present study emerged from the identification of discursive connections between events and their interrogation with respect to how they might contribute to the transitions of a thriving child.

### *Linguistic ethnography, multimodality and transcription*

We utilise linguistic ethnography, an ethnographically grounded analysis of communicative practice (Creese 2008; Maybin and Tusting 2011), enriched by a multimodal approach to study the co-construction of familial narratives (Cameron & Gillen, 2013). Children learn amidst social practice; they may make connections between their different experiences but it is difficult to make presumptions about 'transfer'; rather we have to look into the links they themselves manifest in their discourses (Lave 1996; Barron 2006). In this perspective on learning, we understand that identity itself is constantly developing, within these learning experiences that children share in with others. They contribute to discourses of families, schools and other places in the community, while being shaped at the same time by the discourses they encounter in these different environments (Maybin 2006; Rampton 2006). Such discourses are not singular, but as these and other authors drawing on the work of Bakhtin (eg. 1981, 1986) recognize, are themselves multivoiced, containing inherent tensions, not least in the simultaneous presence of discourses from different timescales. Lemke's (2005) principle of heterochrony is useful here:

'Heterochrony is the mixing of timescales, the coupling and interdependence of process that occur very quickly, on short timescales, and those that take place over much longer periods of time. Perhaps the most important aspect of heterochrony is the coupling of short-term meaningful action with long-term projects, persistence, and cumulation over time'. (Lemke 2005, 119).

Linguistic ethnography as a methodology and theoretical perspective is committed to the challenge of finding ways of investigating these dialectical relations without losing sight of their complexity. 'Close analysis of situated language use can provide both fundamental and distinctive insights into the mechanisms and dynamics of social and cultural production in everyday activity' (Rampton, Tusting, Maybin, Barwell, Creese and Lytra 2004, 2).

As Creese (2008) points out, linguistic ethnography has been associated with micro-ethnographic methods using video technology especially as practiced by Erickson (2004). A particular outcome of his work of interest to linguists relevant for the present study was a demonstration of the role of listening in meaning making. Documenting the collaborative building of a 'naturally occurring and interactionally

achieved story... [built in] a familiar, safe, and comfortable environment' (Lee 2015, 174) is one aspect of the present study.

As is frequently argued, the act of transcribing is a vital element in the research enterprise and engaging with multimodality potentially extends the challenges virtually exponentially (Norris and Maier 2014). Our aims in transcription were encapsulated by Copland and Creese (2015, 196):

'Whether transcribing talk only or talk and visual data, it is impossible to produce a transcript that is perfect...Nevertheless, transcriptions need to be fit for purpose. By this we mean that transcriptions should provide the level of detail required for the job they have to do.'

We would argue that transcriptions have two functions and it may, as in this case, be useful to distinguish between them. First, it is necessary to decide on means of transcription that is employed consistently for the data studied. Accordingly, we employed the conventions of Richards (2003); while adding in a final column we titled "salient actions", verbally describing actions as seen in the video. Necessarily the scale of such description is ultimately to a degree arbitrary, but the multiple replaying of each second of footage, as required for transcription of this depth, certainly also sensitized us to repeated viewings of agents and activities in each frame. As with all transcription, this remains a selective and interpretive act, as recognised within the practice of linguistic ethnography. Nevertheless, repeated viewing and improving the accuracy of transcription, enabled us to examine closely all our data including our preliminary interviews with the teacher, family and child, and arrive at some initial ideas and questions which we could then explore in various ways, including later discussions with participants.

The second function of transcriptions lies in communicating our findings and illustrating our interpretations to the reader. Necessarily given the rich yet deep scope of the endeavour of linguistic ethnography, examples of analysis are selected and how these are presented requires careful consideration. In this paper we have found three styles of presentation 'fit for purpose' and we now adumbrate these.

First, we employ simple transcriptions of utterances, where this is adequate to illustrate the interpretation. Second, we make use of multimodal vignettes, combining still images grabbed from the video with descriptions, often including transcriptions of utterances emboldened. This recognizes the particular importance placed on multimodality in transcription of interactions involving young children (Flewitt 2012) and is common to other publications using this 'Day in the Life' methodology (e.g. Cameron & Pinto, 2009; Cameron, Pinto, Hunt & Leger, 2011; E.L. Cameron, Kennedy & Cameron, 2008; Pinto, Accorti Gamannossi, & Cameron, 2011). Third, we present temporally reorganized data according to an analytical frame

arrived at inductively from studying the data. This appears as Table 1 (see appendix) and will be explained further below.

Underlying these tools are understandings from linguistic ethnography and a sociocultural perspective more generally, that the relationship of context and event is dynamic, each mutually constitutive through semiotic practice (Tusting 2013). Our contextual understandings are therefore drawn from different chronotopes: the episodes themselves, the day, the wider experience of working with this family and teacher, and a broader knowledge of Canada as a nation, its history and symbols. The idea of chronotopes is particularly useful as it avoids metaphors of linearity or concentric circles for these time-based relationships, but rather emphasises how ‘meaningful activities are linked across timescales by our use of discursive-semiotic artifacts’ (Lemke, 2005, 110).

### *Participants*

In the study forming the basis for this paper, Suhani, 5 years old, was followed through her day, which included five hours in her kindergarten class in a Canadian elementary school and five hours before and after, at home. Suhani (her self-selected pseudonym) was chosen by her kindergarten teacher during her first month in kindergarten as a child thriving in transition to school. Her parents, who are both professionally employed and of second generation Indo-Canadian heritage were approached and agreed to their participation in the research. Her parents and one older sister live in a home shared in separate units with her paternal grandparents.

### *Research questions*

Through examining the footage, we were particularly struck by two episodes in the day, discursively strongly connected. In the first, Suhani in kindergarten participates in a whole class ‘mat-time’ instructional event, as her teacher introduces symbols of Canada, especially using a book about beavers (Crewe 1999). Later in the afternoon, back at home, she has tea with her family and a visitor and for a while monopolises the conversation as she strives to tell the gathering about her new knowledge of beavers, co-constructing that knowledge in the process. Our research here entails the consideration of three different kinds of discursive spaces, each considered as being socially constructed and understood: a whole class literacy event; a family conversation and finally the dialectically connected abstract discourse of beavers as symbols of Canada.

Our research questions are:

- How are understandings of beavers communicated by the teacher, multimodally, in the kindergarten in the morning sequence?



- What knowledge about beavers is co-constructed by Suhani and her family at home in the afternoon?
- What does the analysis reveal about the chronotopes of understandings of this particular discourse of beavers as a symbol of Canada?

## Findings and discussion

### *RQ1: How are understandings of beavers communicated by the teacher, multimodally, in the kindergarten in the morning sequence?*

We had identified our focus of interest in investigating commonalities between discourses at home and school and how these might contribute to a positive transition from home to school. We had an opportunity during the one recorded 'day' to interrogate school and home based discourses on a common, participant selected topic. Key elements in developing our understandings were a subsequent interview, and several following communications, regarding the impetus for the teacher's decision to include material on beavers as symbols of Canada in her curriculum. We found that Suhani's kindergarten teacher was tasked with bringing the idea of Canadian citizenship and some familiarity with the map of Canada through the prescribed curriculum. She reported as her own idea the notion of grounding the idea of Canadian citizenship in discussions of specific symbols of Canada. She had found that previous cohorts of children responded well to these expansions and expected that this cohort, that included children of diverse heritage groups, including Asian and First Nations, would similarly be engaged.

The exercise of closely transcribing the video data led us to substantial appreciation of the sophistication of the teacher's orchestration of the event. Here is a considerable number of lively young children sitting on a carpet, being socialized into this particular pedagogical event (Nichols 2007). A mat or carpet based activity, whereby children sit in front of a teacher for a whole-class reading, story-telling or similar event is a staple activity of Western kindergartens, nurseries or indeed as in our participant's school, also in the first grade (Bilton 1994; Nichols 2007). In this particular kind of literacy event (Barton 2007) the teacher retains control, links her talk to a visible literacy text, and talks most of the time while clearly signaling some slots in which the children are called upon to respond. Some of these solicited responses may be non-verbal, such as raising hands. At other times an individual child may be called upon to speak, in a very directed way, (typically an answer to a narrowly focused question) or a collective response of some kind might be elicited. Thus even young children are socialized through such pedagogic interactions into a specific academic language register as Gallagher (2016) found through study of 'sharing time'. Here, we can pay attention through detailed transcription of the talk and activities, in association with the visual evidence in order especially to examine

the teacher's meaning-making processes, verbal and multimodal, including how she makes use of the text. We may learn something about the children's understanding through their responses and levels of attention, but our opportunities to examine the comprehension of an individual child in the chronotope of the moment are necessarily severely limited at best.

The teacher talks most of the time to the group, while always being prepared to notice and deal with individual slight transgressions of behavior or other issues. She uses a separate, quiet tone for these kinds of remarks, indicating to the group as a whole that they are not part of the group talk. She maintains attention through careful deployment of a number of multimodal resources. These include, in her own person, variation in pitch and tone, careful use of pauses and emphasis as well as gesture. However, although there is a small element of overt attention to discipline, such as 'sit down *name* ((more quietly))' this is carefully executed so as not to spoil the flow of her communicative practice. Most of the time she commands attention but also carefully signals when and how the children should contribute, in ways that can be appealing to them, drawing upon their funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, and González 1992). Thus, she creates the conditions for the possibility of active listening; owing to the Day in the Life methodology we are enabled to capture evidence of this by Suhani through her later talk.

Overall, the structure of the teacher's talk can be divided into three main sections. First, as illustrated in Figure 1, Vignette 1, she brings in, not for the first time, the notion of symbols of Canada in general and reiterates various examples such as the flag and maple leaf from previous lessons.

Figure 1 Vignette 1



After connecting to a previous discussion on symbols of Canada, and showing and talking about images of the Canadian flag and maple leaves, the teacher turns the page. She says:

**....and when you see this animal (1.0) it makes you think. (1.0) of Canada. (1.0) ha:nds up if you know what [this animal is**

This overlaps with Suhani whispering:

**[it's a beaver**

The second and third sections focus on beavers. The second section is a narrative of the beaver's history as a species, in particular its damaging encounters with non-indigenous hunters, as illustrated in Figure 2, Vignette 2. The scene is set with there having been, in the past, millions of beavers, before hunters came in, hunted them for their fur – for clothing – but eventually stopped so that the beaver' population was enabled to recover. The third and final section concerns beavers' characteristics and habits, centring on their behavior cutting down trees with their teeth.

Figure 2 Vignette 2

	<p>The teacher is introducing the hunters' motivation for interest in the beavers:</p> <p><b>they thought no they didn't think I'd like to eat the beaver but they said wow that beaver has (...)</b></p> <p><b><u>beau:tiful</u> (...)</b> fur. (...)</p> <p>She makes a stroking motion over the fur of the beaver depicted in the book here.</p>
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We noted, at a finer level of detail, that her talk is structured so that a topic often appears in two parts. There is a first, relatively simple assertion, which for analytic purposes we call an *introduction*, abbreviated to *intro* for convenience, and then added information, which extends or complicates the original point, which we have termed an *elaboration*, abbreviated to *elab*. For example, in the third section of talk, regarding beavers' characteristics and habits, she introduces their home building activities: "the beavers like to make a den." This is likely to be comprehensible to the children, drawing on very familiar vocabulary. However, shortly afterwards, this topic is returned to, using a different term: "sometimes oops it's called (...) a lodge (.) and that's what a beaver likes to make their home out of."

This is not a discourse of formal mathematical logic, with each word and proposition positioned as distinct but the 'living, tension-filled interaction' (Bakhtin, 1981, 279) of many worlds and multiple perspectives. Elsewhere the teacher's narrative of extermination of beavers is preceded by seeking to ensure that an understanding of "hunters" is shared by the children. She then commences the story of (unsustainable) hunting with: "a long time ago before anybody lived in Canada (...) some people came on a boat." This *intro* presents a simple picture, a virgin land of unthreatened

beavers. But of course although immediately comprehensible this was not the historical case, as the teacher very well knows. She follows this up with an *elab*: “well the First Nations people lived here (.) but before other people (.) lived here”.

Her way of talking, simultaneously striving for coherence while revealing inextricable heteroglossic tensions, is, we presume, in part designed to meet the possibly differentiated or at least developing understandings of the children. (See Gallagher, 2016 for evidence of a teacher's differential discursive scaffolding during the sharing of personal narratives in a group setting). The teacher has various opportunities to talk with children individually, but also seeks to socialize them into this whole class genre of discussion, where children's active although brief contributions are occasionally solicited. Some may understand the relatively simple *intro* but are perhaps not ready yet for the complicating *elab*. Perhaps many (or for all we know all) are able to comprehend the explanation as a whole as it develops. In this case we have been given the opportunities to hear Suhani choose to talk to her family about this topic, later summarised by her grandmother as ‘quite a bit of learning today’ over afternoon tea.

***RQ2: What knowledge about beavers is co-constructed by Suhani and her family in the afternoon?***

Family members can have the capacity to co-construct complex meaning-making narratives, in part through their close understanding of their young children's affective worlds (Cameron & Gillen, 2013). Here we focus on a number of points of particular interest in this accomplishment.

Although the youngest person in the gathering so could be presumed to be with the least resources and the least powerful, Suhani is encouraged by this supportive family to dominate a tea time exchange, even chuckling in appreciation of her persistence. This illustrates Lindfors' (1999) claim that handing floor over to the child can be a vital element in an authentic act of inquiry, as she puzzles out a genuine issue through talking it through.

Suhani's talk mirrors much of her teacher's discourse with some exactitude, such as with her explanation of symbols of Canada. Compare the teacher's explanation in the morning with Suhani's smooth recapitulation to the family in the afternoon:

Teacher: ‘symbols of Canada (.) so different things (2.0) that we see (1.5) and when we see that (1.0) they remind us about Canada.’

Suhani: ‘so symbols are things when you look at it you think about Canada.’

This is a fine example of intertextuality, as discussed by Kristeva (1986), drawing on Bakhtin's work. She argues that intertextuality is more than the trivial sense of

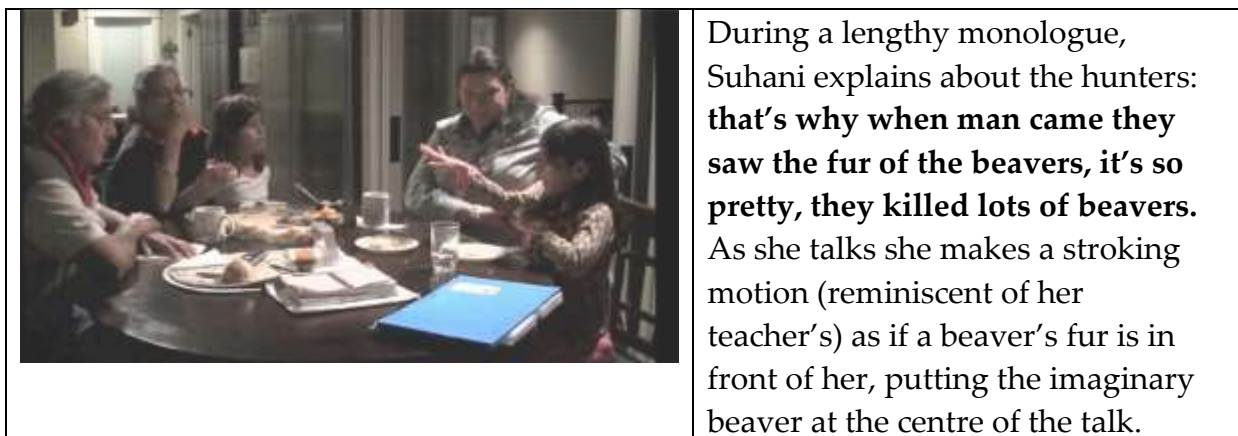
echoing somebody else's words, but rather indicates an activity of transposition, of resituating "a new articulation of the thetic – of enunciative and denotative positionality" (Kristeva 1986, 111). Recalling Marshall's ([1950]1992) three elements of citizenship introduced at the very beginning of this paper, we can perceive Suhani's appropriation of the right to participate as a citizen in society.

Suhani's persistent talk about beavers has layers of intertextuality and transposition in the very structure of her discourse. Her explanations frequently feature *intros* and *elabs*. Just as with her teacher's talk, the *elab* may actually include some apparent contradiction of the first by the second at some level, but can also be viewed as an expansion and complication. Within a lengthy monologue Suhani says:

'there was lots of beavers. and they loved the fur.'

After discussing other features of beavers she returns to this topic, multimodally echoing her teacher's *elab*, as shown in Figure 3, Vignette 3.

Figure 3 Vignette 3



There is one topic of which Suhani has missed the import of one of her teacher's *elabs* and stuck with her *intro*: the issue of there already being people in Canada when the settlers arrive. Her grandfather, called 'Papa' by her, offers a lengthy explanation including about why the First Nation people were termed Indians by those arrivals, a salient but complex point given the Canadian context for this family of East Indian origin. He pitches it carefully at her level and ensures her close attention; he makes his points once rather than use the *intro* and *elab* structure. Of course, we cannot know if he is appealing to knowledge she previously shared at some point. Whether that may be the case or not, her incorporation of this issue later, revising and enhancing her earlier narrative, is impressive:

Suhani: but Papa I need to talk about beavers. so beavers love to chew trees down and by the way when two people came on a boat,  
Papa: yeah


Suhani: they thought it was India, - where India was. and then do you know what happened next? ....

Another of Suhani's notable achievements is her own initiation of an *elab*; she is the first person in these dialogues to introduce the idea of protests against the beaver fur trade. The following is the continuation of the turn discussed immediately above:

Suhani: .... but they told me (and that) but, so when the people saw the, the beavers' fur, they really loved it, and then they k-, and when they took the fur off the beavers, the beaver died they did that to lots of beavers. and then everybody want, loved to wear beaver, beaver jackets and beaver hats, so they wear them. and when, and then they gave, and then they didn't want to. so then they put up signs, I don't want to wear those anymore! so then when they gave e-, beaver hats (.) and then beaver, and beaver hats and beaver jackets

She has included here a vivid example of stylization, 'an artistic representation of another's linguistic style, an artistic image of another's language,' (Bakhtin 1981, 362) in the inclusion of the imagined protesters' words. Our interpretation of this imagined recontextualised speech and gestures was aided through discussions with the family. Suhani was inserting actions of social protest in order to craft a narrative that appeared plausible to her. Figure 4, Vignette 4 focusses on this.

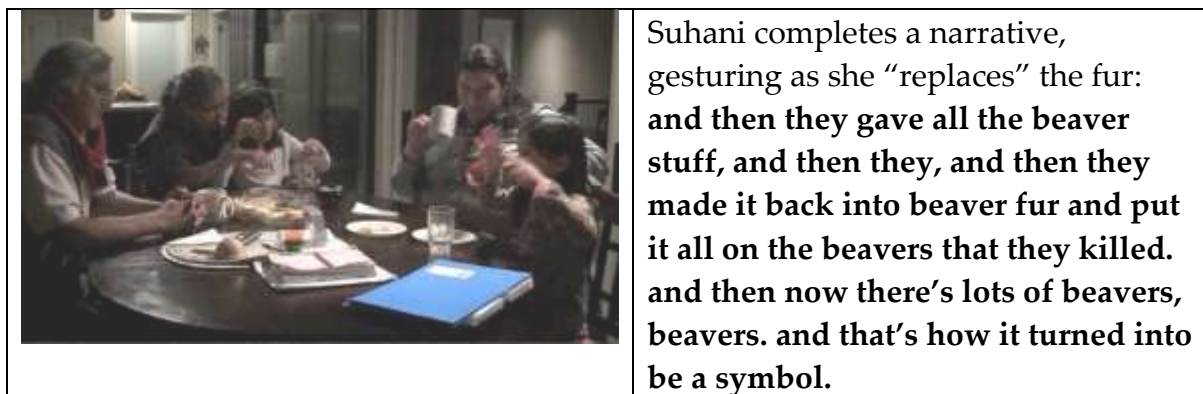
Figure 4 Vignette 4

	<p>Suhani's words:  <b>so then they put up signs, I don't want to wear those anymore!</b>          are accompanied by arm waving and fist brandishing, while virtually upright on the chair. She is communicating the attitudes and literacy artefacts of an imagined protester. From discussions with the family we know that she has learnt that a shift in community values might be expected to be heralded by placard waving social protests watched on television news programmes.</p>
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Her inhabiting the protesters' role is an example of how stylization contributes to what Rampton (2006, 364), drawing on Bakhtin, terms 'ideological becoming'. His

work presented adolescents using such stylized borrowings as they work out what social groups or representations of groups they align with and which they distance themselves from. This activity is an element of constructing her social heritage, drawing on other elements of her understanding of Canadian citizenship including Marshall's ([1950]1992) civil and political dimensions. Her meaning-making achievement is further developed as she combines the three topic elements of her teacher's earlier discourse into a single, coherent narrative (coherent, that is, as a narrative; we are not saying objectively it is a wholly accurate encapsulation of information about beavers). As already mentioned, in the beginning of her explanation she had introduced beavers as a symbol of Canada in a near-mirroring of her teacher's formulation. She narrates the new arrivals' pursuit and killing of the beavers for their fur. She then initiates the concept of protests against beaver killing for beaver fur; it is not entirely clear whether one or both of these issues are being identified but Papa helps her out: 'So people said, we don't want to wear them anymore because we were killing beavers, right?' This is a supportive move in her act of inquiry, demonstrating his close and purposeful listening (Lindfors 1999; Erickson 2004). She is encouraged to her final tour de force; see Figure 5, Vignette 5:

Figure 5 Vignette 5



Plainly, for adult standards of logic there are some lacunae in the narrative, including a confusion between the history of beavers as a species as opposed to single animals. But rather than focus on that, which would be unremarkable in a literary context, we would prefer to suggest, with Vygotsky (1987, 349), the links between imagination and the ‘profound penetration of reality’ as she concludes that it is the rejuvenation of the beaver population in the land, that, understandably, can make one think of Canada and thus turn into a symbol.

A further level of analysis is presented in Table 1, responding both to research question 2 and also to research question 3, as further discussed below. Here we have in analysis moved across all the timescales evoked in the dialogues. We have identified all the separate topics of beaver characteristics and events relating to them,

terming these 'beaver discourses' and indicated where the teacher and Suhani have produced *intros* and *elabs*, as well as where statements have occurred without that structure, including by Papa. We give indicative examples of each from the transcript. This does reveal that it is not just the content that displays extensive intertextuality, but also the very nature of the elaborations; generally where Suhani demonstrates a new complexity in her *elab*, this is a topic for which the teacher's *elab* also contained new information, rather than being repetition.

For example, one characteristic discussed of beavers relates to their eating of tree parts, yet at the same time the main reason for cutting down trees is not in order to obtain food. The teacher's *intro* first raises the possibility of tree parts being a beaver's favourite food, through her question, "guess what a beaver's favourite (0.5) food is" This is followed by some off-topic talk regarding behaviour management but also elicits the very audible response "tree branches" from the class. Thus we characterized the question as her *intro*, that was some moments later followed up by the *elab*, ": so they might not eat that much of it" as she moves towards the topic of building with the branches. In the afternoon, Suhani displays a similar preference for an *intro* followed up by an *elab* that also contains a measure of near-contradiction. Her *intro* is "beavers love eating trees" followed shortly by the *elab*, "beavers love to eat trees, but no, but not really."

The only point at which Suhani does not follow up an *intro* with an *elab* is when she supplies the (perhaps overly simple?) piece of information that beavers are brown in response to a direct question from her grandmother.

***RQ3: What does the analysis reveal about the chronotopes of understandings of this particular discourse of beavers as a symbol of Canada?***

Table 1 demonstrates complexities in the beaver discourses. In the afternoon Suhani has made more complex the teacher's original division into narration of the history of beavers as a species and a set of characteristics. The representation of beavers includes a number of tensions or contradictions that are discursively constructed across the two events with complexities in terms of who draws them into the discussion.

The beaver has a number of characteristics and behaviors, some of which contain a level of ambiguity: it actively cuts down trees possibly to eat them and certainly to build its lodge, also called a den. The beavers' historical interactions with people in Canada is complex including relations over three or four time periods, depending on how one boundary is drawn. That is, first there is the period of co-existence with First Nations people; second being hunted by European arrivals and finally some process of social change through which Canadians cease to exterminate beavers and



adopt them as a symbol. There is some ambiguity as to the relation of these events and so they can be thought of as two periods or as facets of the same temporal period (even if a possibly more objective historical account would find evidence for adoption as a symbol before the cessation of hunting).

These complexities are constructed through collaboration:

‘Collaboration operates through a process in which the successful intellectual achievements of one person arouse the intellectual passions and enthusiasms of others, and through the fact that what was at first expressed only by one individual becomes a common intellectual possession instead of fading away into isolation.’ (John-Steiner, 1985, 133)

This account is apposite in connecting three processes of entwined timescales. First, there is the ‘successful intellectual achievement of one person’, the young child Suhani who learns about beavers as symbols of Canada. Second, there are the ‘intellectual passions and enthusiasms of others’, which are the lively contributions and collaborations of her teacher in the morning and with the family in the afternoon. This reveals the connections across microgenetic learning across settings in a quasi-microgenetic study in a learning ecology (Dmytro, Kubiliene & Cameron, 2014; Cameron, et al., 2015; Barron 2006). Further, John-Steiner’s emphasis on the dynamics of the ‘common intellectual possession’ across time highlights the collaborative processes involved in discursively constructing beavers as symbols of Canada. This is not a static research artefact, but rather a multimodal representation that itself shifts across time, in ways that are shaped but also go beyond the material and cultural spaces of the interactions studied here.

## **Conclusions**

Suhani’s afternoon talk, supported by her family, demonstrates that she is able to draw expansively on her learning that morning about beavers as symbols in Canada. She drew on a considerable amount of knowledge as shared by the teacher. This is not just a considerable amount of knowledge in terms of facts, such as beavers are brown, cut down trees and so on, but is complex and multilayered. Not only did the child appropriate content, but also the discourse structure with which to organize and discuss information. She dealt with partial contradictions contained in the teachers’ expansions, repeating or even reshaping them for her own purposes. Particularly notably, she recontextualised and reshaped her learning about beavers into her own, quite coherent narrative. Her coordinations of perspective are multivoiced. It is also notable that the multimodality of the morning event was also drawn upon as a resource, for example she echoed the teacher’s gesture of stroking a beaver’s fur to emphasise its beauty and desirability.

The opportunity of being able to trace Suhani's transposition of language to her morning talk has provided concrete examples of heteroglossia, of how language in use is "half....someone else's words" (Bakhtin 1981, 339). Suhani transposes the teachers' words, that themselves have intertextual relations with specific books and other discourses relating to Canadian citizenship. Suhani's "enunciative and denotative positionality" (Kristeva 1986, 111) is manifest in her creative navigation among the intertextual discourses around her, including the teacher's earlier, and the contributions of her Papa and others in the new moment.

That she is able to do this, to learn in the morning and to marshall her knowledge and construct her narrative in the afternoon, is in part owing to her socialization into the types of event and the discourses they enable and support. In the kindergarten, such a large number of children can only be talked to all at once, giving them the opportunity to listen and learn, if they are disciplined into the mat-time pedagogical event. Fine-grained transcription reveals the professional skill of the teacher in orchestrating the event, and especially during the second month of the academic year. As we have found, she used both a macro structure for the whole event and, frequently, an internal structure of introduction and elaboration for specific topics. She has focused the children's attention not only on her talk, but also on books, texts and illustrations, particularly drawing their attention to images that are carefully selected to complement her talk.

Barwell (2013, 220) suggests that moving from everyday to an academic discourse (in his case mathematics) "is not simply one of developing greater precision, or learning to use the technical language.... it is part of being able to express mathematics for a range of different audiences." Relatively fine-grained attention to the afternoon event reveals many ways in which Suhani is supported to construct, or, more accurately co-construct her talk about beavers. We have not given due attention above, for reasons of space, to all the ways in which this is accomplished, some of which occur in intervals between her beaver-centred talk. These include how new entrants to the gathering are managed and all the diverse ways in which her talk is supported, including through close visual attention and backchannels. Sometimes support that is evidently particularly effective is very explicit; just before one long turn Papa says to her, 'tell me more.' Such support appears to us to have been important in facilitating Suhani's positive experience of transition to kindergarten.

These events then highlight Suhani's learning as social practice, initiated by her teacher in the mat-time discourse and then within the subsequent act of meaning making supported by the family gathering discursive space. This has been a fascinating exemplar of learning realized as transformations in the patterns of participation in joint activity (Rogoff 1997; Rogoff 2003). Attention to language has particularly brought out an interesting pattern of relationship between *intros* and *elabs* that perhaps warrants further research.

Suhani's agency and full participant as a citizen in her domains of society are evident (Nichols 2007) in her confidence and apparent comfort in leading a tea-time discussion of beavers as symbols of Canada with her grandparents and their afternoon guest. This is a vivid instantiation of Marshall's ([1950] 1992) three elements of citizenship: civil, concerning freedom of speech; political, involving participation rights and social, in the sharing of a social heritage.

Finally, paying attention to the dynamic and heteroglossic construction of meaning-making around the idea of beavers as a symbol of Canada has been rewarding. As Verdery (1996) points out, the idea of the nation is itself a symbol. Beavers, as a *synecdoche* of Canada, can be used differentially, even by people who think they understand the same thing by it. The promulgation of the beaver as a symbol, interwoven across the education and family contexts, demonstrates the mixing of timescales in heterochrony, through which actions in the moment are nonetheless shot through by past events of varying duration.

These discussions about beavers necessarily take place in moments where the generation of new understandings can be traced as they happen in collaboration, such as Suhani's multimodal, stylized reconstruction of a protest march. Moments like this are also 'multiple itineraries of discourse and action on many levels' (Jones 2014, 46); through which the family (and indeed the morning class, also viewed as a social group) incorporate in some way the beaver as a symbol of Canada into their understandings of identity and social action. As Martin and Wodak (2003, 9) propose, 'the dialectics between "text and context", between certain historical events, certain historical images and narratives....all are involved in forming certain histories.' Beavers as symbols of Canada appear on the pages of a book but are also recontextualised in lively ways by Suhani's teacher and Suhani herself, placed into differential interactions with people. Beavers too have their own characteristics and agency and also occur in histories of the Canadian people.

As Martin and Wodak (2003) also argue, such histories are always contestable and can be viewed in different ways from different participants' perspectives. A beaver may have felled a tree that impedes an individual's route along a road, while from another perspective contributes to hydrology and water conservation (Backhouse 2015). This small scale investigation, of two discursive spaces participated in by one young child within one 'day', has turned out to be surprisingly rich in elucidating chronotopes of discourses of beavers as symbols of Canada, revealing the complex heterochrony involved. Through multimodal methods, we have found, with Pagani (2009, 92) that everyday contexts are rich for the negotiation of 'complexes of representations and practices' involved in developing citizenship.

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**Appendix: Table 1**

Beaver discourses: in the morning by the teacher (T) and in the afternoon by Suhani (S) and Papa (P)

characteristic /event	where constructed	timescale/duration as presented	intertextuality (indicative examples)
symbol of Canada	T's intro; T's elab; S's intro; S's elab;	historical;	T: when you see this animal (...) <u>it</u> makes you think. (...) of Canada. T: they stopped hunting beavers and now we have (..) millions and millions and millions of beavers again. because we have so many beavers in Canada (...) the beaver (...) became a symbol of Canada S: "symbols are things, when you look at it, you think about Canada." S: ...that's how it turned into be a symbol.
previous high beaver population reduced	T's intro; T's elab S's intro; S's elab	long ago, before European arrivals	T's intro: long ago (..) before anybody lived in Canada (...) we had (2.0) <u>millions</u> (..) of beavers T's elab: they killed so many of the beavers (0.5) that there weren't very many beavers S's intro: there's lots of kinds of beavers before lots of people came to Canada.... S's elab: they killed lots of beavers.
lots of beavers now	T S	since hunting stopped	T: now we have (..) millions and millions and millions of beavers S: now there's lots of beavers, beavers.
possesses desirable fur	T's intro T's elab S's intro S's elab	permanent	T's intro: wow that beaver has (...) <u>beau:tiful</u> (...) fur. T's elab: I bet people would <u>lo:ve</u> to wear S's intro: they loved the fur. S's elab: the fur of the beavers, it's so <u>pre:tty</u>
hunted for fur	T's intro T's elab S's intro P S's elab	during a defined historical era	T's intro: what do you call people who like to go and (2.0) trap animals or take animals (2.0)...hunters! [across 2 turns] T's elab: people started hunting (...) the beavers S's intro: they killed lots of beavers. P: And lots of Indians were killed too. Not like beavers, but lots of them...." S's elab: "then they k-, and when they took the fur off the beavers, the beaver died.
fur clothing	T's intro T's elab [no new info] S's intro S's elab [no new info]	permanent characteristic	T's intro: beaver jackets. (...) or would <u>lo:ve</u> to wear a beautiful hat (.) made out of beaver fur. T's elab: they would turn the beavers' fur (..) into... jackets and hats. now everybody wanted to wear [across 2 turns] S's intro: everybody want, loved to wear beaver, beaver jackets and beaver hats



			S's elab: beaver hats and beaver jackets.
cessation of hunting/ protests against beaver hunting/beaver fur	T: S's intro P S's elab	relatively recent history	T: They stopped hunting beavers S's intro: then they didn't want to. so then they put up signs, I don't want to wear those anymore! So then when they gave e-, beaver hats and then beaver, and beaver hats and beaver jackets. P: So people said, we don't want to wear them anymore because we were killing beavers, right? S's elab: they made it back into beaver fur
eats/doesn't eat trees	T's intro S's intro T's elab S's elab	(permanent) behaviour	T's intro: guess what a beaver's favourite (0.5) food is S's intro: beavers love eating trees T's elab: so they might not eat that much of it S's elab: beavers love to eat trees, but no, but not really.
cuts down trees	T's intro Ts elab S's intro S's elab	(permanent) behaviour	T's intro: bottom part of the tree so that the tree goes oop ((high tone)) and falls over. T's elab: there's a reason why the beaver likes to cut down trees. S's intro: They just chop trees down because they like it. S's elab: beavers love to chew trees down,
builds dens/lodges with branches	T's intro T's elab	(permanent) behaviour	T's intro: the beavers like to make a den T's elab: sometimes oops it's called (...) a lodge (.) and that's what a beaver likes to make their home out of.
has long and sharp teeth	T's intro T's elab (no new info)	(permanent) characteristic	T's intro: their very long <i>name</i> (...) and very sharp teeth T's elab: a beaver has very long (..) and (.) very (.) sharp (.) teeth.
brown	S	(permanent) characteristic	S: beaver's br (.) brown.