

Imaginative Education within the Framework of Action

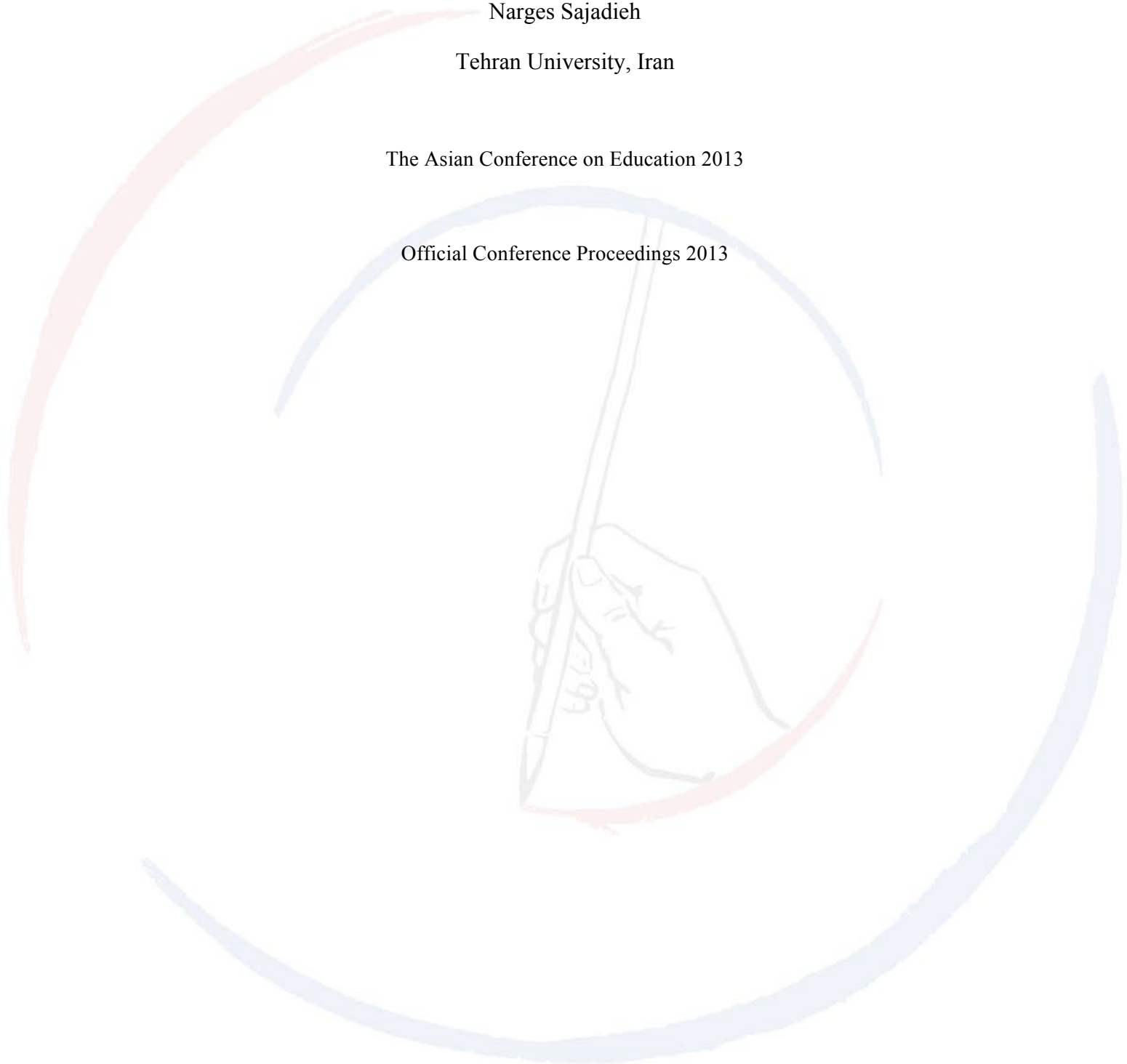
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The Asian Conference on Education 2013

Official Conference Proceedings 2013



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Introduction

Imagination is amongst important faculties of human mind that its definition plays a significant role in different areas of education. Educating imagination could be either an educational end itself or a mean to reach some other educational ends.

Why imagination is important in this time? We can consider this question from various view, first of all, we are living in a changing time. Every thing is becoming different from the previous and in every time we need to form new solutions for solving new problems (Singh & Nath, 2007). So, we can not repeat our old generation life style because it dos not work. We should think originally and make novel efficient life style. Imagination is an essential component of this kind of creative thinking.

On the other hand, our world is full of contingencies. We do not know what will happen in our future. We do not have cognitive dominance on our world and its events. In this contingent situation, we need to guess our future and its dimensions (Rorty, 1989). Imagination can help us to imagine our future and identify its elements.

In addition, our existential essence requires to our attempts. We, ourselves are making ourselves. Hence, we have to create ourselves every time in a new modified manner to become genuine (Garrison, 1998,). In the other words, we have to be self-creator. This self-creation involves human imagination to go beyond ourselves and sketch new frames (Foucault, 2000).

However, imagination has been ambiguous yet and we should identify it and its conceptual components to open those ways through which it become developed. Any ambiguity in imagination concept leads to a chaos and disordering in education.

Considering the significant role of imagination in our life and importance of its identification, we attempt to analyze its concept and identify it in this paper. This conceptual analysis has been done in an action-based frame work. First of all, we endeavor to elaborate this theory of action. Then, we use this view as our framework and try to redefine imagination upon it. Finally, we trace effects of this kind of imagination in the various areas of education.

1. Theory of action

Regarding human action and its influences on human identity and environment surrounding her, imagination can be considered in a different way. Human being imagines something and then upon these imaginations, conceives the world in specific manner and appeals to particular dimensions of things, and acts specially. So, we can name imagination as a component of human action.

But what is the role of imagination in a specific human action? First of all, we have to response to this question: what do we mean from the word “action”? For this reason,

concentrate on a framework of action. In this framework, action is the essential component of human being (Bagheri, 2013). In addition, he (2013) holds that every human action is based on three foundations. It means that whenever we do an action, we have has three components in our selves. These foundations discriminate action from behavior.

At first, in very action, we know what we do. This knowledge can encompass some responses to some questions like these: why I want to do this action? Which needs this action relates to them? How should I do this action? Regarding these questions, we can speak about a kind of foundation, which can be named as cognitive. This foundation prepares a kind of knowledge about our action and via this, motivates us to do that action.

At the second step, we can concentrate on those emotions in ourselves which motivate us to do particular action. These emotions are influenced by our knowledge but should not be reduced to it. Considering these emotions and inclinations, we can understand why some time we do like to do an action or dislike to do it.

Finally, if we will not to do something, we do not it. It means that for actualization an action, knowledge and emotions are not sufficient. This foundation is related to human free will. Free will implies on human freedom to will this or nill that. This kind of foundation is different from emotional one too. While emotional foundations are blind and empty of judgmental aspects, human volition is a capacity for judging between emotions and power of action. Considering this capacity, it becomes possible to speaking about acceptance an option or ignoring it.

Whenever these triple foundations become complete in human being, the action becomes done. So, concentrating on these foundations and their content and status, we can study human action and be aware of essence of it.

2. Imagination and action

We can identify imagination in term of action. In this view, imagination can be considered as an action with all of triple foundations. If human being does not need to imagination, does not it. So, we can say that all of our imaginations are consciousness. So, imagination is a conscious human action for some specific purposes. But what are the cognitive human endeavors constitute imagination.

First of all, in every imagination we need to manipulate some previous mental images, change them and invent some new images. So, we can infer this fact that previous mental images are necessary to every imagination. These images are primary content of imagination process and enactive that. But from where we attain these images? We can say: from our surrounding environment, our dialogues with others, our context which we live in, our dairy experiences and interactions. In these situations, we encounter with different realities and conceive them in various manners. We touch real facts, we hear them, we see them, and save much information about them in our

mind. Our sensation from real facts, sketch some images from them in our minds. When we see a horse, our sensors like ears, eyes and hands touch it in various ways, and transfer specific information to our brain. Then we have in our mind a synthetic realistic image of a horse.

So, the first requisite of imagination is interaction with natural and human environments and touch (observe) real things. It means that without relationship with real world, we can not imagine any thing.

The second condition of human imagination is related to human capacity for invention. In the other words, if you do not change and manipulate your previous mental realistic images, you do not an imagination. Therefore, ordinary sensations can not be considered as imagination. In this step, emphasizing on her creative capacities, tries to manipulate these images and combine some parts of them with others. These kinds of combinations create some new images, which delineate new worlds and new worlds.

The third part of imagination process emergent in relating imagination to action. As van Leeuan (2011) argues, imagination can be semi-pretense or pretense. While pretense is connected to human action, semi-pretense is detached from it. If imagination will be a sort of semi-pretense, imaginer knows herself that her images are not real (Van Leeuwen, 2011). Oppositely, when we have a pretense we can relate it to our action. This kind of imagination forwards new possibilities for our action. For example you imagine about Ideal shooting personally and upon it, judge about soccer player's shoot. You imagine it but never want to be a soccer player and realize that shoot. This is a semi-pretense. On the other hand, you can consider A student always imagines to be a doctor; she sees herself as a doctor, she study hard to success in university exam and be a doctor. She endeavors to realize this imagination. This is a pretense.

But, which conditions should our imagination have for connecting to our action? If the distance between imagination and the real world is too much, this imagination can not purposes new real possibilities for our action. So, a kind of accompany with Truth is necessary for connection to our action. Hence, the connection between imagination and action, establish the third component of imagination. This component is alliteration with real facts and a kind of coordination with Truth.

Consequently, we can illustrate imagination as a construction of three concepts: 1) real mental images, 2) manipulation of mental images, and 3) coordination with Truth.

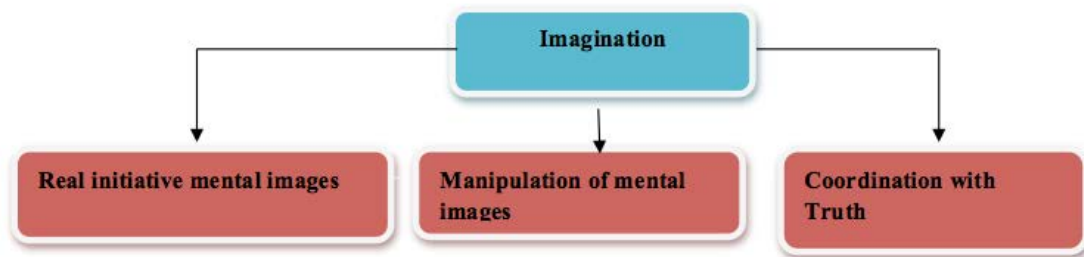


Figure1- complete imagination

3. Redefining imaginative education

Regarding previous concept analysis of imagination, we can say that in an imaginative education we should perform three enterprises. The first enterprise is connecting children to the real world. In this step we ought to enhance their sensors to catch dimensions of the real world as much as we can. The better they can conceive and touch the real world, the more real mental images they have. These images are initial content of children imaginations in next steps.

The second necessary activity of imaginative education is reinforcing children's creativity to manipulate their mental images and create new images. The more they can change their mental images, the more they can forwards new possibilities in front of their actions and lives.

The third one is a kind of comparison and coordination between new images and the real world and Truth. In this step, we concern about the authenticity of our imagination and discriminate it from fantasy.

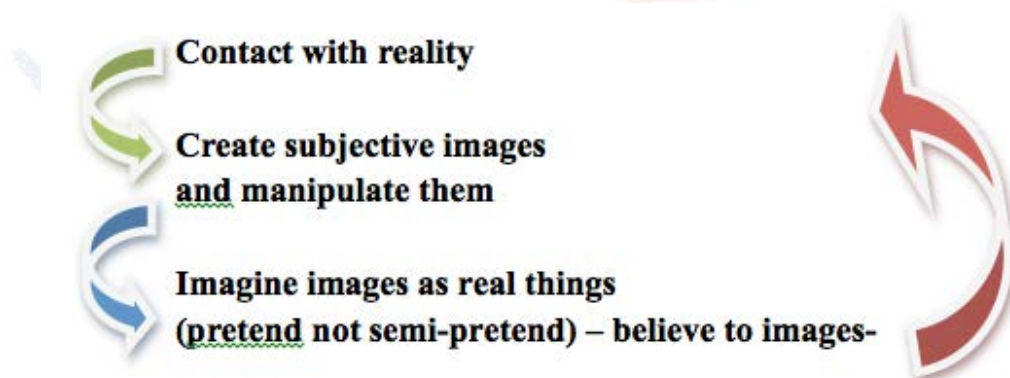


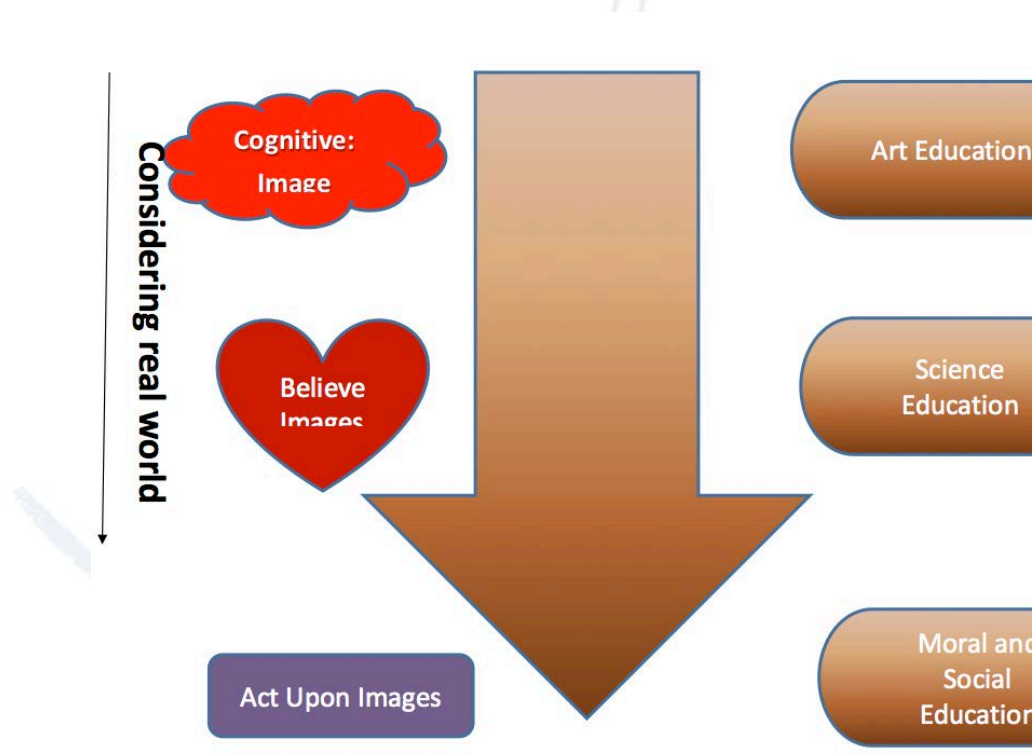
Figure2 - the complete imagination

On the other hand, we can apply imaginative education in different areas of education. The first step of imaginative process is the essential base of many kinds of education. Art education, science education and moral education imply on human imagination.

Regarding the identification of art, as human construct, we can consider imagination as a constructive component of art. Additionally, the first step we need in science education is relation to the facts and gathering some data from them (Bhaskar, 2008). So, contact with reality as the first stage of imaginative education is an essential requirement of science education. On the second step, we should make a hypothesis about reality and relate different relevant facts to one coherent system (Strenberg, 2001). In this step, human creation plays an important role and via that, imaginative education connects to science education.

Moreover, in moral education we need to imagination too (Johnson, 1993) and we can see that imagination as an essential conceptual part of moral literacy (Tuana, 2007). So, in this manner imaginative education can connect to the moral education.

Therefore, our imaginative education can be illustrated as Figure3:



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