A New Perspective on Imagination in Curriculum Theory

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Abstract
Imagination is required in a lifelong learning society so as to make knowledge applicable in solving various problems. Imagination is a capability to configure unrealistic regions from the phenomenological perspective, and a creative function responsible for understanding and interpreting the world from the hermeneutic viewpoint. Cultural philosophy views imagination as an ability for symbol formation based on epistemological and esthetic functions. Considering narrative is a story, a mode of thinking, and a cultural toolkit for understanding and making human mind, the imagination from the narrative viewpoint is closely related to narrative thinking in charge of making plausible stories, changing and reinforcing cultural scripts, and communicating culturally and cross-culturally.

Keywords
Imagination, phenomenology, hermeneutics, cultural philosophy, narrative, narrative thinking, plausible stories, cultural scripts

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Introduction

Imagination is more important than knowledge in the 21st century. Thanks to the advance of science and technology, there are various ways to obtain knowledge we need regardless of time and place. Imagination, however, is almost impossible to be replaced by artificial intelligence (AI) technology. Then what is imagination? Imagination is etymologically from *Imaginatio* in Greek and *Imago* in Latin. The former means imitative pictures and the latter means images and representations, which induces invisible worlds to visible forms (Lee, 2017; Ryu, 2017). Plato referred to imagination as defective chaos and falsity, whereas Aristotle regarded it as a mental capability to perceive truths. Not only Descartes but also Sartre considered imagination as an uncertain mental function or an unreal value (Hwang, 2009). Kim and Kang (2017) argued imagination including fantasy and creativity is an ability to form images and to draw concrete realities from uncertainties. Imagination is a perfect and dynamic image of instant abstraction as well as an ability to have intuition about the whole using the moment (Hwang, 2009). It is not the reproduction of the given but the power of creating the new (Ryu, 2009).

In order to cultivate students' imagination through school curricula, the meaning of imagination should be clarified in the first place. This paper is to review the current philosophical perspectives on imagination and to suggest a new viewpoint of imagination based on narrative.

Philosophical Perspectives on Imagination

Phenomenological philosophy criticizes the epistemological stance where imagination is a mere ability to mediate between senses and perception, and provides a chance to understand imagination from a different point of view (Kang & Kim, 2006). According to Husserl, imagination is the configuration of similar reality and it is involved in meaning-making because the experience of imagination is considered as the experience of similar reality (Park, 2011). He pondered the various meanings of imagination and carefully examined the individual subjective imagination and the inter-subjective