

ROLE OF IMAGINATION IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHING THE SUBJECT – FAMILY ECONOMY AND GENDER

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Imagination is more important than knowledge, as knowledge is limited, while imagination embraces entire world, stimulates progress and gives birth to evolution. To be more strict creative imagination marks real advances in science

ALBERT EINSTEIN

What is imagination?

Human relies on perception, memory and thinking data in the process of every activity. We percept things, recall the events of the past, set the connections between them, and cause-effect relations. However, human's work, activity, studying, creative work frequently requires imagining of such events that are not given in the past or in the present, i.e. it becomes necessary to imagine things that one hasn't experienced. "A special characteristic of a human is that his/her behaviour is not limited with the narrow area of reality that is given in the present and past. Human breaks given limitations and creates new reality. Imagination or fantasy enable human to act so... By means of imagination we start to imagine new contents, we create new conceptions that aim not to reflect given objective reality, but to broaden its borders" (Uznadze, 1940).

Sometimes our fantasy is weak, dull and cannot cross the borders of existing reality. For instance, we are often faced with choice: Do I have enough money for a taxi or I should take a bus? Am I dressed correspondingly for the meeting? And etc.

D. Uznadze calls the first question a productive imagination, while the second one passive imagination.

Therefore, as L. Vigodski notes, imagination, fantasy, is a part of our everyday lives, no matter we want this or not. In this case, we are dealing with accidental action or passive fantasy (Vigodski 1987).

S. Rubinstein reckons that "Transformation of a reality into imagination is not its pure changing, it has own logical ways that are expressed in typical ways and rules of transformation" (Rubinstein, 2009). He reckons combining as one of such ways - combination of data in new, rather extraordinary mixtures. For instance, portrait of some literary character is created by unification of separate features. Characteristics of a personage are combined: from legends, from the nature of some exemplary person.

Essence of imaginative studying

For understanding essence of imaginative studying, it is necessary to define the reasons of imagination. Why a human breaks through the given borders of perception and memory when our life is passing in the given reality?

The answer to this question gives a rise to biological-economic category – need. "Objective reality is existing independently, it has its own strict regularity, that doesn't consider our needs and

desires and quite often our desires remain unfulfilled. In such case, subject reveals an impulse, in if existing reality doesn't satisfy his needs, to create such reality that ensures fulfilment of his desires... Unsatisfied need causes activation of imagination." (Uznadze, 1940).

In case of perception and memory, outer space, reality is given a priori and plays decisive role.

In case of imagination human is subject with a priori given, defined abilities. "Object reality defines subject in case of perception and memory, while in case of fantasy it is on contrary, subject defines object reality" (Uznadze, 1940).

From the beginning until now, human's household activities or the basis of economy development and progress was imagination. According to Sarasvathy, main aim of imagination in an economy is to create desirable society from the one that we live in (Sarasvathy, 2006). Economy is a dynamic process that besides rational experience is ruled by social norms and emotions. Why economists are studying economy only with the models of statistical balance and limited rational assumptions? Economic activity is as the function of imagination and social moods as rational optimization of advantages and goods.

Richard Bronk proves that economists would be able to better model and explain creative and social aspects of markets by means of structural assumptions and metaphors derived from poetry and philosophy. "Successful entrepreneurship requires much more than just rational analysis of the markets; in order to handle opportunities and create new, necessary goods, equipment, and new strategies entrepreneur needs rich imagination. He needs self-confidence and striving for victory. It is not surprising that best entrepreneur often resembles characters of Byron - self-confident and proud – instead of lifeless "economic human" de-

scribed in the handbooks (Bronk, 2009).

Economics is establishing a group of various economic indicators and then according to them economists are trying to measure economic activities. Economic activity, on its behalf is based on our perception of welfare. "Estimation is expectation, while expectation – imagination" (Shackle, 1972).

Imaginative studying of economics

study materials to the front and represent it by means of economic task, situation or tests that quite often are transformed into dialogue, dispute and encourage development of imagination;

3. Comprehend and understand the study materials in such a way that student to be able to answer following questions: What have I heard new? How important will this knowledge might be for me?



should be based on above mentioned assumptions. Imaginative studying offers new understanding of study process that consists of three-stage study system: challenge – comprehension – reflection. "Successful education really requires emotional involvement of a student. Any kind of knowledge is a human knowledge and it is a result of human's hope, fear and determination. In order to bring life knowledge to students we should acquaint them in the context of people's hopes, fears and aspirations. The best instrument for this aim is imagination" (Egan, 2005).

Considering above mentioned, a teacher must be able to:

1. Reveal and connect student's emotions and notion, as "there are complicated connections between emotions and imagination";

2. Bring objective content of the

Methods of imaginative teaching of household economy

Studying of household economy by means of the mentioned three-stage system will be a process full of interesting, stimulating "discoveries" (Bruner) for the students.

The basis of imaginative study process is a system: I – my family – my country – world. A theme "family economy" was given special regard, as the family is the most familiar environment that is some kind of small model of real "big" economy", by means of which, children first get acquainted with the economic developments.

We offer several methods that have been used in the process of studying the subject "family economy" :

1. Study-research method implies:
 - Discussing of some unfamiliar economic event and researching;
 - Developing skills of independent working in the students;
 - Writing down main theses from the theme;
 - Presentation of elaborated theme.

2. Playing as some form of imitation (B. Ananov) causes a feeling of being another person (D. Uznadze). By means of plays, we can place student in a role of a mother, father, wife, husband, daughter, son, consumer, businessman, banker etc. By means of playing these roles student is evaluating economic behaviour, values.

3. Imitation as the process of studying without studying is characterized by the fact that students are given some information and they should make decision in a real situation. Teacher's role of a person giving knowledge is quite limited. Student is becoming direct participant of life activities. This is some kind of preparation for the future life experience as "in order to develop into built up adult, child should learn to imagine own future life and to walk toward this life" (Abbott, 2007). These might be business plays, case studies, subject-role plays etc.

4. Economic task. It is very important to set an economic task for the students and let them to solve it. Special importance is given the object content of a task, as the student's attention should be directed in this direction. Questions of a task "dictate" to the student that there are some rules, norms in an economy that might have some results. Question becomes an orienteer in this case. It evolves cognitive interest and gives a direction to a cognitive activity. Economic tasks might be used both for challenging students, activating their cognitive thinking and strengthening and checking their knowledge.

5. Condition of working with method "studying by discoveries" (G. Bruner) is:

- Clearly developed study subject, task;

- Masking some parts of study content;
- Re-appearing of well known topic during the lesson or gaining knowledge on the basis of initiative;
- Teacher's role of a leader-organizer.

Brief outline of a lesson

"Family economy and gender"

Brief description of a lesson:

Despite the fact that beginning from the times of Adam Smith, family was considered as main phenomena, much attention was not paid to it in an economic theories up to 1950-ies. Exception was a model of population's growth of Thomas Maltus. Harry Becker and other scientists by means of microeconomic theory and empirical methods gave a foundation to modern researches of family. Among standard aspects of family researches is a gender distribution of labour in a family economy and outside it.

Family economy is using analytical methods of microeconomics for explaining family behaviour. Its aim is to broaden our understanding about resources and welfare distribution in a family, investing in children and transfers between generations, family development and destruction, interrelation of families and markets. Non-market relations are essential in a family economy for family behaviour and individual welfare. Family production makes up one third of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) even under the conditions of modern economy.

Every society is characterized by some degree of gender distribution of labour. Gradually, such division of paid labour is even increasing. Gender division can be found both in a family labour and paid or unpaid work. Economists are explaining this division on the basis of fundamental economic conceptions of labour division effectiveness and investing in human capital. Despite this, gender discrimination might become reason of labour division either and converse effect of such discrimination complicates finding the reasons of gender division of labour.

Introduction for opening of theme content:

Teacher hands out to students copies of Curt Vonegut's allegory: "God

created the world with plants, animals, snakes... in the end God created human and asked him: Do you like what I have created?

- Everything's beautiful, but what's the sense of it - answered the man.

- God become astonished, and asked: does it have to have a sense too?

- Of course! - answered the man.

- Then, I let you to find out the sense of this - said God and disappeared."

A teacher should show to students by means of imagination a connection between allegory and human's first attempts to create family economy and lead it. This connection might be shown by some mathematical formula:

Human + needs + family labour + economy = welfare

Construction of a lesson

In an introduction of a lesson, teacher asks some questions for activating students. What was the role of needs in the development of family economy? How a human managed to satisfy big part of needs in a family economy? How do you understand historical role of a man and a woman in the managing of family economy?

Teacher is talking about difficulty of accomplishing household economic function. She/he mentions H. Becker's (Nobel Prize laureate) understanding of a family as a "mini factory".

Imagine a family that is like a small factory - units with several people which by using market goods and time of family members, their knowledge and skills, produce food, health, skills, children and sense of own dignity. This is an important conception that Harry Becker studies in his epochal work dedicated to family - "Tractate on family". Becker assimilates economic theory with such neat decisions as choosing a husband or wife and having children or not. He uses basic economic assumptions to analyse time management between child upbringing and career, marriage or divorce both in polygamous and monogamous societies; increase and fall of welfare from generation to generation. Considering a family from such perspective gave a foundation to theoretical and practical approaches. Beck-

er shows that programs of social welfare have essential influence on resource distribution among families. For instance, social taxes cause reduction of the resources that children are giving to their elderly parents. Influence of these researches is obvious. In the near future, family will take important place in the agenda of social sciences.

Not only social groups and ongoing interactions in them are given huge importance in social relations, but also whether a person is taking a role and what repertoire is connected with this role, expectations, person's attitude toward those real interrelations that he/she is involved in. (Nadirashvili, 1975).

Awareness of own role is not enough for performing family functions, it is necessary to adopt the role, the more it depends on recognition and perception of traditions, definition of rights and obligations, established ideas, norms, and values.

The right of motherhood, fatherhood doesn't exist without obligations and on the contrary obligations without rights. If the labour is fairly distributed between mother and father, this right requires fair obligation and responsibility from them. Equal opportunities of women and men, and women's involvement in social activities and prevalence of moral-physiological values in the family staggers traditional structure of role of a man and a woman.

Analysing historical context of the subject

Versatility of the subject gave us an opportunity to involve historical themes in an objective of students' imagination and introduce economic and historical-ethnical aspects of teenagers' participation in family-household activities. By means of using projection and analogue methods, students also discussed another important issue of a family economy - gender division of labour.

At integrated lessons of history and economics, students are acquainted with the materials that reveal teenagers' positive role in a family and household activities, traditional types of family labour and established practice of labour division by sex.

In order to give a rise to discussion, extract from Gabriel Labatt's work

Scientific View

"Children labour in Georgia" are handed out to students: "Not every work done by children belongs to the forms of the work to be eradicated. In fact, children's work might be educational and thus done for child's benefit. For instance, this might be helping a parent in a family labour, by the time when child has passed minimal age and an activity does not prevent child's education. Long working days that induces child to reduce time of studying or leave the school at all might be considered as the contrary variant." (Labatt, 2004).

After comprehending the problem, students are given following discussion questions:

1. In your opinion, which type of child labour belongs to the forms that should be eradicated? Ground the answer.
2. How do you understand G. Labatt's words "Children's labour might be educational"? Give an example from your life experience or by imagination and ground its educational importance.
3. Do you help parents in family activities? In case of positive answer, describe your activity and ground its importance or economy of your family. In case of negative answer, explain the reason.

Teacher is giving a direction by providing students with additional information, so that it would be easy to answer the questions for them. Teacher hands out working papers that briefly review traditions of family economic activities and its role.

Working paper

Children's participation in a family economy in Georgia, mainly takes place in family plots or workshops. Part of the children living in Georgian villages is actively involved in family's economic activities. Helping the parents while working in vegetable garden or feeding domestic animals is a usual occasion for them. Elder teenagers participate in non-economical activities either, such as tidying up the house, preparing meals, looking after elderly family members or young children.

By citing examples of modern and past life, students assume that from early ages (5-6 years) children were accustomed to labour lightly and imperceptibly, so that

they did not feel tiredness. Teenagers had to live in such environment where everybody was working and their education through work was done naturally. The work that they were doing aroused sense of responsibility in them, from the very early ages children get used to serious perception of life and learned habits and methods of adult people.

Girls mostly were helping mother in family activities. Their function was tidying up the house, washing the dishes, helping mother in preparation of the meals. They were learning various needlework from early ages – they could sew, knit, embroider.

Boys were mostly got used to such activities as looking after the cattle; boys were main assistants for father in land cultivation and yielding.

Household traditions and peculiarities of living were influencing teenagers mind, encouraging gaining of household knowledge and perception of surrounding nature.

Tusheti is a mountainous region of Georgia. Main field of household in Tusheti was a sheep breeding, "As the sheep breeding was developing in Tusheti, it was considered as popular activity. Every man who had the strength should have been in sheep farm. Young people were taught of sheep breeding, watching after sheep's direction, places for rest and drinking of water, milk, fleece, cheese making etc from childhood. Children were taught various folk methods of treatment and other customs and traditions... Tushes were proud with their craftsmanship in sheep breeding. Those who did not want to work in this common activity were becoming objects of mockery and nobody would marry a young woman to such a "loser"... (Gamkhreidze, 1993).

It is important to acquaint students with traditions and today established practice of labour division by gender when discussing family economy. Students should understand role of women and man in a family and express their position. Students are familiarized with ethnographic materials, according to which:

Cultivation works that require phys-

ical strength such as digging, hoeing, fencing the plots were considered as man's responsibility... but somehow women were participating in these works too, they were helping husbands in the works on the plot.

Division of labour among women was done according to age groups. Middle-aged women were participating in cultivation works, while elderly women were taking care of meal preparation and house cleaning. Girls were helping in upbringing of small brothers and sisters.

Needlework was one of the important types of family labour. Women were processing wool and silk textiles. Sewing and knitting were important parts of needlework. Embroidering was also popular needlework for women. Mainly girls were embroidering and young women to be married were standing in beauty with these handmade accessories.

Pottery has a long history in Georgia. Traditionally men were potters mainly, but women's work was often used also. "Women and children were picking out clay out of stones and then moistening it with water. They were kneading the clay with feet and flattening it..." (Chelebadze, 2005).

Women had distinguished function in cattle breeding and poultry production. If sheep breeding was considered as men's job, feeding and watering of animals, milking and cheese production was considered as women's obligation.

In the final phase of the lesson, students are divided into two groups and develop own positions on the following issues:

1. What are the similarities and differences between traditional and modern ways of keeping family economy?
2. How fair are age and sex division of labour in traditional and modern models of a family household?
3. Historians are proving by the example boys' education through work in Tusheti that determining role in development of their consciousness and skills was playing household traditions of this region (sheep breeding). Think of an example that proves or negates this assumption.

Conclusion

Discussion among the students on the above stated themes revealed:

1. Exploitation of children and women is alien in Georgia historically. Child might participate in a family labour, but not in such amount that would hinder child's physical or intellectual development. This tradition is kept even nowadays. Exceptions are the cases when teenagers are induced to drop studies to support the family. Such cases are result of economic poverty that many families suffer of over the years.

2. Children's living conditions are not homogeneous. A child living in a city might not even need to be involved in agricultural activities. Parents' occupation is playing a decisive role either. In villages where families have plot, vegetable garden, domestic animals and so on, teenager is actively involved in agricultural activities. Family activities are taking different character in cities, they mainly comprise of preparation for winter, supplying provisions and their preserving.

3. Differential definition of man's and woman's roles in a family household is still preserved. Majority of students reckon on this differentiation as logical, they consider it defined by so-called natural circumstances such as physical strength - for men and physiological mission of maternity for women. This defines different functions and obligations in a family: man - keeper of family; woman - housewife and a person taking care of children. However, students agree that such differentiation of roles in a family and barriers between separated obligations become more conditional.

Teacher sums up the discussion: According to Harry Becker, the most famous researcher of a family economy, the most wide spread division of labour in a family is the following: traditionally, women spend major part of their time on children's education and other family activities, while men are hunting, fighting, cultivating land and are involved in other "market" activities. Differentiated division of obligations in a family is partially defined by biological differences, and partially by different experiences and different investment made in human capital.

Specialization in time management and human capital saving in a family would have been identical even if the family members were biologically identical; Biological differences might even weaken the level of specialization. As the married woman is specialized in children upbringing and family activities, she needs a long-term contract from husband in order to protect herself from desert of a family by him and other worries. Essentially every society has elaborated a long-term protection for married women - this is a marriage (Becker, 1991). However, due to versatility and complicity of family relations even marriage might not be a protection. It is important that man and woman to realize own role in a family and responsibilities and obligations connected with it. If a man is well bred he will help woman in family activities and woman on her part will be grateful. In this case, both of them will understand that family labour is a mean of expressing care and love; in this way they will successfully overcome difficulties connected with this labour.

Assessment

In this part of the lesson we can use traditional methods - question and answer, summing up and so on. However, we reckon that it would be beneficial to:

- Hand out the papers with the information about experiment conducted by Swedish psychologist Margaret Radholm and ask them to express their opinion.

Swedish psychologist Margaret Radholm conducted the following experiment: Women in their fifth month of pregnancy were listening to voices of several men. One of the voices was father's voice. Unborn fetuses were recognizing father's voice and reacting - heartbeats were becoming frequent and fetus was starting to move. Several fetuses were noticed that had no reaction on father's voice and it appeared that fathers were not showing caress to them.

After born of the children, research was continued on 45 children. Fathers of 16 children were asked only to watch their newborns, while others were allowed to take in hands, show caress, and talk to their children.

Psychologist was observing children at home. Father's and child's relation was recorded on a video. It appeared that fathers who had direct contact with their newborns, in comparison with the fathers who only observed their children, were more sensitive in relations with them, they were more caress, they were harriving to come back home after working day.

After acquainting with these materials, children's answer to the teacher's question: how this experiment changes traditional notion of mother's and father's role in child's upbringing, students agree that child's upbringing, taking care of his health and education is equal obligations for parents. However, arguments are caused by the forms of parents' participation in the process of children's upbringing. Part of the students reckons that dropping a boundary between their functions is unacceptable. Another part suggests that role of the parents in child's upbringing should be differentiated. For instance, mother feeds, clothes child and takes care of her/his personal hygiene, while father walks, teaches children, especially boys, so-called "man activities", father finances children's education and rest.

In the end of the lesson, students are given a homework "independent work" - they should write about nature of family labour and reasonabilities.

Conclusion

Structure of society is a complicated net of social roles and statuses. Human's status in a society strongly depends on a family. People need to have such status and motivation of taking some role. Family is an environment where human is realizing oneself by performing some specific family role. Teenagers see first examples of equal rights of women and men in a family. Therefore, in order to solve gender related conflicts in a society, it is necessary to prepare students for family life, leading a family economy, and taking roles of father or mother. Study process directed to the development of expectation and dependencies related to these roles plays important role in this preparation. ■

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