Many teachers do good work, but all too often on the basis of incorrect theories.

Pedro De Bruyckere, Paul Kirschner & Casper Hulshof

Introduction

Pedro De Bruyckere is a teacher trainer who was alarmed when, one day, he was confronted by a student teacher about a diagram he was using. It was the learning pyramid that showed the percentage of material learned when using different methods and media. You know the one. We’ve all been presented it at some stage on a training day.

So perturbed was Pedro, that as soon as his lecture ended, he started to research its origin. He eventually landed at businessman Edgar Dale who invented it in 1946. Later on, in the late 1960s, it was adopted by the National Training Laboratories. None of its content is valid. It was a fabrication. And believed ever since.

From then on, Pedro, along with Paul Kirschener and Carl Hulshof, set about researching which topics were myths. The result is this wonderful book.

The Myths

Myths about Learning
01: Learning styles
02: Learning pyramid
03: Learn 70% from informal
04: Knowledge is unimportant
05: Knowledge doesn’t keep
06: Discovery learning is best
07: Problem learning is best
08: Boys are better at Maths
09: Multiple intelligences
10: Our memory if perfect
11: School kills creativity
12: % of communication is non-verbal

Neuro Myths
13: We are good multitaskers
14: We only use 10% of our brain
15: Right/left brain differences
16: Brain Gym works
17: Different gender brains
18: Learn while asleep
19: Classical music helps
20: Being under pressure helps

Myths about EdTech.
21: ICT, a revolution in learning
22: Use the internet because...
23: Digital natives
24: Internet makes us dumber
25: Young people don’t read
26: Games make you violent
27: Computers help the poor

Myths in Educational Policy
28: Comparing countries
29: Class size doesn’t matter
30: Larger schools are better
31: Single sex is better
32: Male teachers better for boys
33: Holding back a year is good
34: More money is better
35: Education never changes.

Selected Myths

Here are a few myths I’ve chosen as they’ve been the focus of so much derision after having been central to the educational belief systems of managers, inspectors and teachers.

Learning Styles
Seemingly common sense and obvious, learning styles has been debunked by a wide range of researchers. See leading cognitive scientist, Daniel Willingham, on the subject at www.youtube.com/watch?v=-sv9rz2NTUk

Knowledge is Unimportant
There was a growing belief that with the advent of Google, you no longer needed to have a body of knowledge — it could just be looked up. But you can’t look up effectively unless you know something about it first. Knowledge is the base of everything. Even reading comprehension is dependent on it, however great one’s powers of inference.

Schools Kill Creativity
Everybody loves to hear Sir Ken Robinson humourously slate schools for being dull prisons for the mind. What is somewhat less well known is that he builds his entire case based on research from the 1960s into brainstorming, exploring the uses of a paper clip. Really. He goes on to equate creativity with genius, ascribing that state to all children. Again false. Plenty of spin; no substance or verity.

Don’t be Fooled Again

Teachers need no longer be fooled by these myths and those who peddle them. Buy this book, read it cover to cover and spread the word. Be professional, be informed, be armed.

REFERENCES
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