

Teachability Preview

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SUMMARY

The speaker discusses the critical role of context in education, emphasizing that despite advancements in teaching methods and technology, educators are facing increasing challenges. The loss of cultural context affects the ability to teach and parent effectively, leading to a decline in students' receptiveness to learning.

- *Context is essential for effective teaching and parenting, yet it is often invisible and overlooked.*
- *Rapid cultural changes have disrupted the foundational context needed for raising children and teaching.*
- *Teaching is becoming more difficult despite improved resources, training, and technology.*
- *The "teachability factor" encompasses a child's readiness and desire to learn, which is crucial for educational success.*
- *The speaker draws from personal experiences in educational psychology, particularly with at-risk youth, to illustrate the disconnect between teaching efforts and student learning outcomes.*
- *There is a need for educators to recognize and address the underlying context that influences learning, especially for students who struggle despite having the potential to succeed.*
- *The discussion aims to raise awareness of these issues to foster improvements in the educational system.*

good morning I'm delighted to be here in Sherbrooke I I didn't actually get to hear the introduction so I don't know what she said about me so I'm uh if there are expectations there I hope I can live up to them but it is uh it's it's a light to talk about my favorite subject in education and that subject is is context

but before I go and Define that and get into the material I'd like to get a sense of the audience here of what venues and settings and professions you represent be wonderful if we could have everybody introduced but that might take us two days and then I wouldn't get a chance how many of you are classroom teachers here yes I love the wave in the hands like the first ones that understand the

English and then I can tell how many of you how many of you are administrators yes concentrated over here okay and a few groups uh uh psychologists ah a table over here they're congregating and sprinkled through psycho educators yes some behavioral technicians

okay so we have a large uh range how many of you are parents yeah yeah okay how many of you have been children there okay now now we got it as I said what I want to talk to you today is about context context is a difficult subject context

literally means to weave together context is usually invisible that which weaves together those threads are invisible in society we don't actually see them culture is meant to provide them and so when culture goes into

chaos when culture is changing too fast as it is now the amount of change in 10 years would

have been similar to the change a hundred years it would have taken a hundred years to create and so when this happens we lose context and what I'm we lose the context to parent and we lose the context to teach and in fact the most important context of all in a society is a context in which to raise children and so that is a topic that I'm going to talk about let me introduce it in a in a different

way that there are signs and certainly some of you who have been in the field for some years will have the sense that teaching is actually getting more difficult teaching is getting harder this despite the fact that we've never had more books telling us how to teach we've never been more trained in pedagogy and curriculum

our curriculum has never been better honed and we have technology that our predecessors could never even have dreamed about and yet despite all of these Advantage advantages those of you that have been in the field for 25 30 years will undoubtedly feel the sense that it isn't getting easier it is getting harder and this is happening throughout Western Civilization I just returned from a trip

to Germany addressing problems there I had been to Japan to address and and a conference there on the educational system and all over the place United States and Canada is that the educational system seems to be running into trouble that teaching seems to be getting harder when it it gets harder we focus even more on technology

curriculum and pedagogy those seem to be the three things that gather our in our our notice but what the problem seems to be is none of these three in fact all three together who don't make up a very significant part of the learning equation we could even add intelligence to this and it too doesn't make up a very large part of the

learning equation the other factor that I'm going to talk about and what I've called the teachability factor is the factor of context the factor that involves a child's receptiveness to being taught Readiness to being taught desire to learn the psychological factors that create the context in which we do our job and so the idea here is again that we are losing this context and so we need to become aware of it we

never need to become aware of something when it works as long as your car works you can remain blissfully ignorant of what is underneath the hood but it's when it doesn't work that you require some knowledge about it and it's as education is running into difficulty that we need to be able to attend to what is the problem and become aware of this thing called context which is the most important and pivotal Factor pivotal factor in the educational system

I don't come to you as a teacher my wife is a teacher I have two daughters who are teachers I don't come to you as a teacher I come to you as a developmental psychologist my first assignment when I had received my doctorate was to actually consult with four of three prison schools these schools were for young offenders they were in different prisons and my job was to consult with the teachers in this I was completely

unprepared for this job I had no idea what I was getting into and it the first thing that impressed me is that the the the adolescence that I was working with were were smart enough uh certainly there were learning disabilities there there were kinds of uh behavioral problems there but what couldn't be explained is that most of these kids were not functioning

Beyond a grade two or three or four level and the teachers were completely dedicated I've never seen such a group of dedicated teachers they were willing to turn themselves inside out to make learning occur in yet very little of their teaching translated into learning and that's the frustration when our teaching doesn't translate into learning it gets very discouraging now at the end of the day and you've put

everything into it and how much of our teaching has actually translated into learning and so that started a long process I was also teaching at the University of British Columbia and I was teaching courses in developmental psychology and and Adolescent psychology and and personality theory and and so on and I began to try and put the pieces together of why it is that some children despite

the fact that they have excellent teachers despite the fact that the curriculum uh is is is is matched to their ability despite the fact that there is excellent pedagogy are not learning and so hopefully they as I share this with you it will make sense uh it's not something I believe that we were meant to know so if you feel that if you if it is something that you uh uh

that your eyes are open to I believe that this part was always meant to be invisible but it's only because it's not working that we need to open our eyes to it we need to see it because something needs fixing in our society something needs fixing in our educational system we need to become conscious of this so hopefully it will make sense to you the focus then by uh by definition will be on those students who have trouble

learning and behaving this will apply to all students but mostly those students who do have trouble learning and behaving even though they have ample intelligence and ample opportunity to learn that again the teaching is not translating into learning so these uh we will focus on on these particularly