
Communicative Competence: An 11th Skill Needed to Thrive in the Fourth Industrial Revolution

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Résumé

Ten skills have been identified (by the World Economic Forum) as necessary for one to thrive in the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR): cognitive flexibility, negotiation, service orientation, judgement and decision-making, emotional intelligence, coordinating with others, people management, creativity, critical thinking, and complex problem solving, listed here in reverse order of importance. Generally, this subsumes the fact that language communication skills in the 21st century are and will remain critically important. Thus, it is argued that we should revisit the old notion of ‘communicative competence’ in Applied Linguistics and perhaps view it in a new light as the eleventh skill necessary for professionals in real as well as in technology mediated interactions. Now that English has become the global language, making inroads to regions/countries where it was not that important before (witness global tech companies such as Google, Microsoft, Apple, etc. establishing new plants in China, Vietnam, Indonesia, etc), might it not be time to reconsider communicative competence in English as a global language as an eleventh skill?

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