About the informality of competencies as situated properties of practical knowledge : The condition of Formal learning revisited

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2009. 10. 30, ICER

The purpose of study

- To understand the nature of competencies, what competencies might be alike & how they would work in the social situation

- To understand the condition of formal learning in schools

- To revisit into what the institutional form of school curriculum could be transformed in order to accommodate informal, contextual properties of competencies

Rationale of competence based school curriculum

- A widespread movement that introduces productive work into the educational process.

- A need to overcome a traditional dichotomy between work and learning.

- Assuming that productive work does not just mean engaging students in activities which are socially and economically useful,

- But developing the whole range of educational activities towards a scientific training, in which theory and practices are integrated in a balanced way beyond the ideas of manual and intellectual activities.

Figure 1. Skills for a New Economy
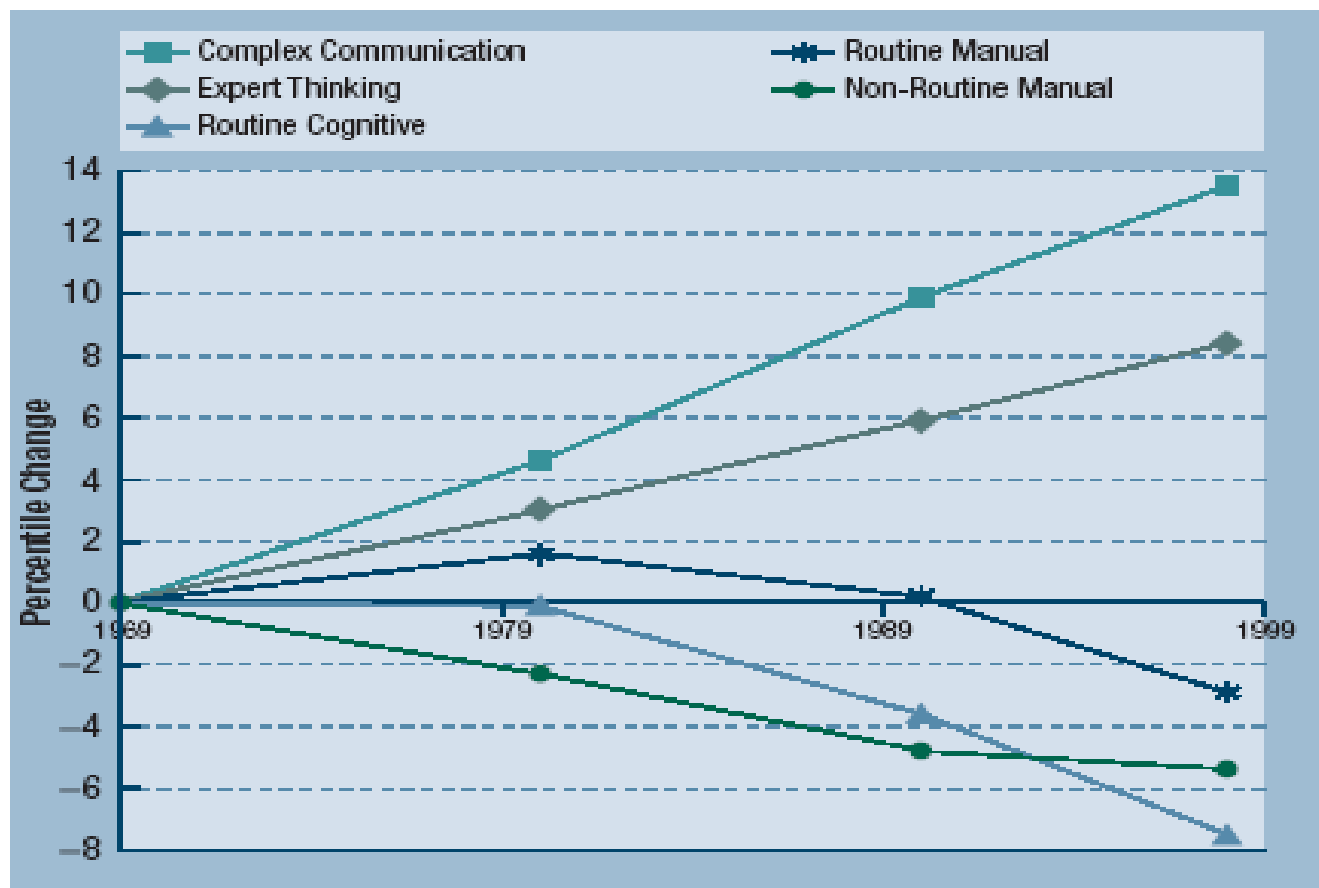
Source: Frank Levy and Richard Murnane, *The New Division of Labor: How Computers Are Creating the Next Job Market* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).

Ten Core Life Skills (UNICEF, UNESCO and WHO)

- 1. Self-awareness
- 2. Coping with emotions
- 3. Coping with stress
- 4. Empathy
- 5. Decision-making
- 6. Problem-solving
- 7. Creative thinking
- 8. Critical thinking
- 9. Effective Communication
- 10. Interpersonal relationship skills

14Core competencies(DeSeCo)

- **Social competencies:**
  - · participating actively in society with respect for multiculturalism and consideration for equal opportunities
  - · communication competencies (including assertiveness, resilience and maturity)
  - · the ability to cooperate

- **Positive self-image:**
  - · having a positive self-image with awareness of possibilities for self-development (including self-confidence)

- **The ability to think and act autonomously:**
  - · information-acquisition and -processing competencies (including ICT)
  - · problem-solving competencies
  - · self-control and self-regulation (including a sense of responsibility and decisiveness)
  - · thinking and acting critically and reflectively

- **Motivational competencies:**
  - · daring to explore and being inquisitive
  - · a sense of initiative

- **Mental flexibility:**
  - · creativity and inventiveness
  - · flexibility and adaptability

- **Functional competencies:**
  - · linguistic competencies
  - · vocational (technical) competencies

  - 출처: **http://www.eaea.org/doc/eaea/Minutes_General_Assembly_2004_annex_3.doc**

A 21st Century Skills Learning Model
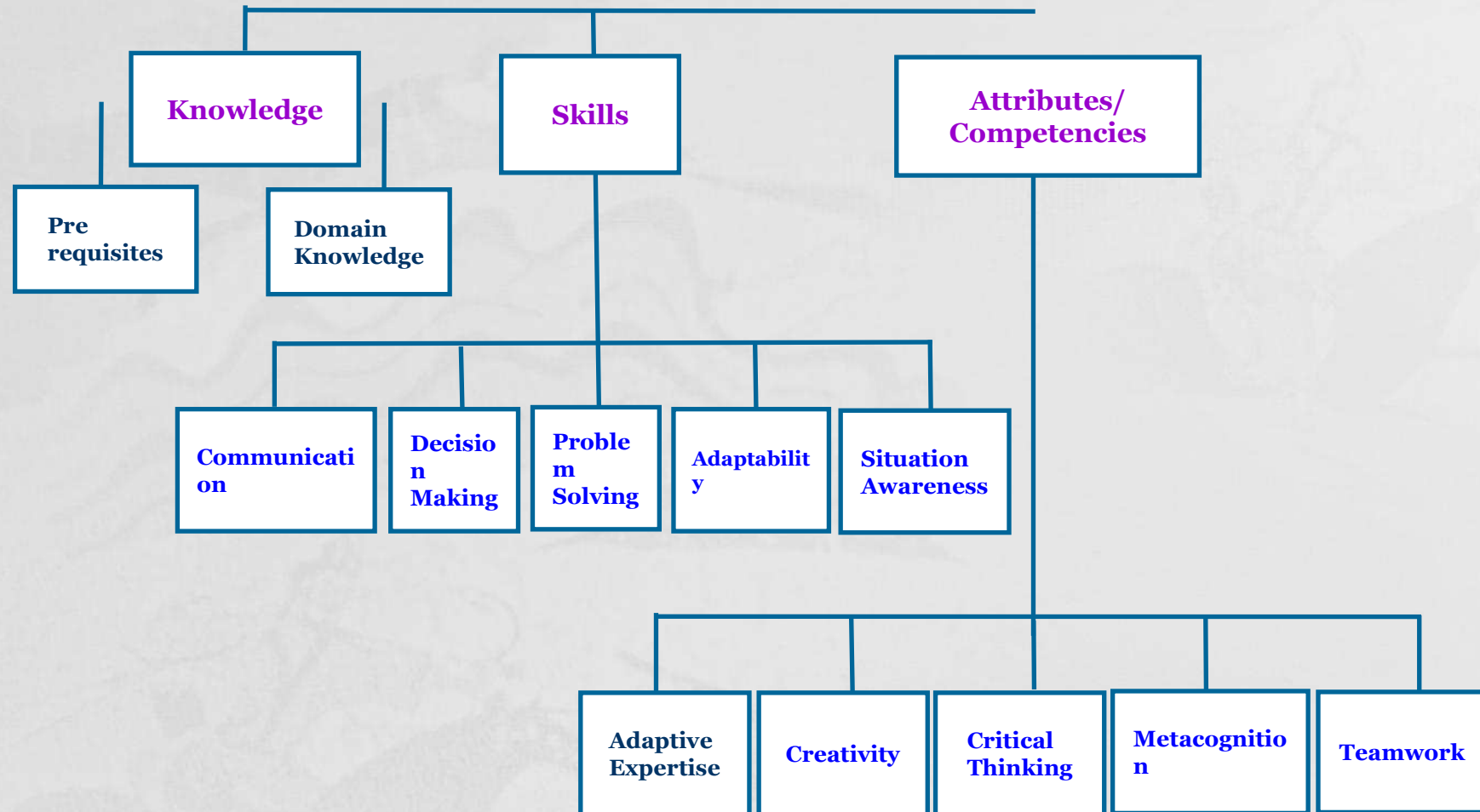
What makes competence informal? :
The context-boundedness of Competencies

- Main Problematic :

- Discourses of competencies have been restricted to the cognitive components of competence.

- However, the complex nature of competencies comes from its nature of inseparability from context

How Problem solving can be context-bounded

- To assume that flexibility is a defining characteristic of practical work. As a hallmark of practical skill, flexibility requires that variation serve the purpose of fitting means precisely to their occasions of use.

- To assume that the indeterminacy of meaning in competence reflects flexibility of practical work.

How Problem solving can be context-bounded

- Managerial problem solving often is not characterized by a linear progression through the stages of problem formulation, solution search, and solution implementation

- But instead may be characterized by either a recursive and interrupted cycling through the various stages or by a compressed response that truncates part of the problem solving process- quick action or adjust plans of action as necessary.

How competence can be grounded in social organization of work

○ To be **built upon tacit knowledge in collaborated and negotiated practice**. To be an expert, one must participate in a particular work activity and transform it. Expert workers reproduce also the culture and meaning in their work activities and then bring to it their own personal sense.

○ **Competence is not merely the ability to perform certain actions, the possession of information, or mastery of certain skills in the abstract. It is a community of practice and its practice that establish what it is to be a competent member.**

Culture & community

○ Knorr Cetina(1999) 'epistemic cultures'

○ Those amalgams of arrangement and mechanism-bonded through affinity, necessity, and historical co-incidence-which, in a given field, make up how we know what we know. Epistemic cultures are cultures that create and warrant knowledge, and the premier knowledge institution throughout the world is, still, science.

Design of the institutional condition of curriculum

- The introduction of competencies in school curriculum does not only call for changes in educational structures, methodology, and content.

- It also requires structural changes that make flexible the formal characteristic of school learning.

- This formality decides a way of accredit learning, with a norm of how and where learning outcomes are acquired. This formality influences significantly what kind of contexts students learn in, and thus what kind of competencies students can develop.

Design of the institutional condition of curriculum

- The form of curriculum is essentially determined by the pedagogic arrangements, particularly suitable for classrooms. Classrooms provide affordable context for teachers and students and they fit the constraints of teacher and student work systems.