



Editorial: Summer 2026

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This journal, the *Nordic Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, is published on behalf of the Nordic vocational education and training (VET) research network *NordYrk*. The network met in June in Jyväskylä, Finland, at its annual conference, where a broad spectrum of VET research was presented. The research projects and findings that were presented will hopefully result in new articles published in our journal in the coming volumes. But for now, we are presenting four new articles based on earlier research efforts in Sweden, Finland, and Denmark. They are about matchmaking in the technology industry via recruitment to VET, literacy practices expressed in reading a blueprint at a construction site, transitions from school- to workplace-based training, and learning outcomes in professional education concerning collaboration.

The four articles

The first article, *Matchmaking i industri- och teknikbranschen: En diskursanalys av Teknikcolleges hemsida* (Matchmaking in the technology industry: A discourse analysis of the Teknikcollege website), is written by **Maria Terning**, **Katarina Kärnebro**, and **Daniel Persson Thunqvist** from Sweden. Their article addresses previously known matching problems in the Swedish context, namely the gendered industry sector and the dominance of masculinities, and offers a new perspective by analysing this mismatch through the lens of tensions among labour markets, education, and young people's wishes. The authors examine the digital marketing strategies of a branding and certification collaboration among technical colleges called 'Teknikcollege' (TC), a certification concept for upper secondary vocational education, designed to attract students, educational



institutions, and employers. The theoretical underpinning of the analysis is gender systems theory. Three discursive strategies are explored through a critical discourse analysis of TC's website: social identities, relationships, and power structures. The website seems to reflect international trends towards the marketisation of education, expressed through advertising and target-group thinking in the competition for attention in an age of economisation and technological boom-up. The results suggest that an overarching industrial discourse permeates all discursive strategies, while additional discourses are often contradictory. The results indicate that TC's marketing directed at students, especially young women, emphasises autonomy in ways that challenge traditional gender norms within industrial professions. Also, communication aimed at educational providers reflects discourses of responsibility and inclusivity. In contrast, employer-oriented messaging relies on traditional masculine ideals as a hierarchy, positioning students as production resources that contribute to and reproduce the masculine: the strong male worker and the manager, whose mis-recruitment costs money and jeopardises economic growth at local and global scales. Although TC seeks to increase attractiveness across non-gendered routes and careers in the industry sector, its marketing fails to address underlying power dynamics and tensions, thereby maintaining the existing mismatch.

In the second article, **Anne Kolehmainen** from Finland writes about *Vocational students' literacy practices at a construction site: Nexus analysis of reading the blueprint*. The article's point of departure is that literacy is one of the 'key competencies' for lifelong and continuous learning in the European Qualifications Framework, and Kolehmainen examines professional literacy practices in vocational education and training (VET) in Finland. The participants in her study are eleven students, young people in a technical building services programme, and their vocational teacher, who work at the construction site on the vocational school's premises. Literacy skills are understood as multiliteracies, as texts increasingly comprise linguistic, visual, audio, spatial, and gestural semiotic systems. Kolehmainen explains that, in this context, a multiliterate person is flexible in understanding and using traditional and new communication technologies, has a repertoire of literate knowledge and practices, and can engage with new texts in different contexts. The article's analytical focus is on reading a 'ventilation blueprint' at the work site, and it asks what kind of literacy practice the blueprint represents and what situated factors affect its use. The data consist of ethnographic field observation data at the work site and interviews with the students. These data were analysed using nexus analysis. The results are discussed through three cycles of discourse: the discourses in place, the discourse of interaction orders, and the discourse of participants' embodiment. The results show that reading the blueprint is the prerequisite for performing the work task, because its material substance is relevant, as it enables using embodied methods in the concrete

working environment. Interaction around and with the blueprint includes significant activities such as resolving, organisation of workflow, evaluation and bridging the theory/practice divide. Kolehmainen concludes that reading the blueprint required a concrete environment for the work at hand, which we, as editors, would argue aligns well with earlier work published in this journal, showing that the educational part of vocational learning is inseparable from the communities and contexts in which practical knowledge translates to action.

The third article presents a study from Denmark, *Transition from school-based to workplace-based training: Student, teacher, and trainer perceptions of the interrelation of school-based and workplace-based training*, made by **Vibe Aarkrog** and **Anne Katrine Kamstrup**. The article aims to examine VET students' experiences of transition from school-based training to workplace-based training. In addition to exploring the students' own perspectives on the relationship between school- and workplace-based training, the study also considers the positions of teachers and workplace trainers as factors that influence students' experiences of this transition. Therefore, the authors investigate the narratives students construct to make sense of the transition and explore how the positions adopted by teachers and workplace trainers shape these narratives. The article is based on empirical data from interviews with students, their teachers, and workplace trainers. The students were recruited from five schools and were interviewed at school before their transition to workplace-based training and again at their workplaces after they had commenced the training. The study identifies four student narratives (two expressed during school-based training and two after the commencement of workplace-based training), as well as two teacher positions and two trainer positions. These groups produce contrasting narratives concerning the relationship between school-based and workplace-based training, the relevance of school-based learning for workplace training, and the role of school-based education. During school-based training, students construct two contrasting narratives: 'I want to use the knowledge I have acquired at school during workplace-based training' and 'I want to put school behind me.' Similarly, during workplace-based training, students construct contrasting narratives regarding the meaningfulness and relevance of school-based learning. The analysis of the teacher interviews reveals differing views on the role of school-based training, with some teachers emphasizing broad knowledge and general skills, while others focus on specific vocational skills. Likewise, workplace trainers adopt different positions regarding the relevance of school-based training for workplace learning. While juxtaposing the student narratives with the different positions by teachers and workplace trainers, the article shed light on conditions that promote either smooth or more irregular transitions. Furthermore, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of students' experiences of moving between school-based and workplace-based training in VET.

On the note on knowledge and contexts we were already into. The fourth article published in this issue is a study from Sweden, *Collaboration at the intersection of policy, practice, and professional identity: An analysis of governance and degree learning outcomes in four Swedish professional higher education programmes*, written by **Matilda Fredriksson** and **Charlotta Pettersson**. Their article analyses how Swedish national degree learning outcomes regarding collaboration across educational and workplace contexts are interpreted, implemented and assessed in four education programmes. In this context, they also explore how professional logics and indirect governance enable or limit the pedagogical possibilities for practice-based learning and equitable assessment across institutions. Drawing on neo-institutional theory and a governance perspective, their article analyses semi-structured interviews with programme directors from 21 Swedish universities and university colleges. The analytical focus is on the interpretation, implementation, and assessment of the learning outcomes. From this perspective, the article's analysis suggests that collaboration is framed as a self-evident core competence but is interpreted differently across education programmes. The findings suggest that professional logics shape local interpretations in a way that can give similar outcomes different meanings. They also suggest that organisational structures, such as timetables, course architecture, and placements, function as indirect governance, enabling or constraining collaboration. Thirdly, Fredriksson and Pettersson's results suggest that assessment of learning outcomes tends to privilege reflection over action, shifting responsibility from students to supervisors in the practical learning contexts analysed. Their study concludes that authentic, practice-based learning and assessment designs, supported by coherent organisational and policy conditions, are crucial for achieving functional equivalence of the notion of learning outcomes across contexts and institutions.