

Research on worklife learning

Projects and activities in the research group for Worklife Learning in the Knowledge Society (FALK) at University of Oslo, Faculty of Education

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Themes and organization in FALK

- Research group comprising ca 15 persons (senior + PhD-students) from three units at the Faculty of Education, UiO:
 - Institute for Educational Research
 - InterMedia Research Centre
 - Institute for Teacher Education and School Development
- Three research themes:
 - ICT and learning at work
 - Professional learning
 - Educational leadership
- Shared focus: the concept of Learning trajectories as a framework for studying and conceptualizing learning at individual- and organizational levels and how these interplay
 - The learning trajectories of individuals
 - Development and circuits of knowledge
 - Development of organizations

Projects

- Professional Learning in a Changing Society (ProLearn), Norwegian Research Council, 2004-2008
- Learning Trajectories in Knowledge Economies (LiKE), Norwegian Research Council, 2008-2010
- Knowledge Practices Laboratory (KP-lab), EU 6th FP, 2006-2011
- Follow-up of the Copenhagen process: Research into forms of individual career development and continuing vocational training (CVT), European Commission/EACEA, 2008-2009

Project information and links available from the FALK website:

<http://www.uv.uio.no/english/research/researchgroup/falk/>

ProLearn (2004-2008) Project leader: Prof. Karen Jensen, UiO

A comparative study of early career learning among nurses, teachers, accountants and computer engineers

Background: New challenges for professional learning

- Institutional and cultural shifts challenge the embeddedness of individuals in professional communities and transform their learning processes
- Shifts in the structure of knowledge towards more abstract and symbolic inputs
- What characterizes professionals' relations to knowledge? What role does knowledge play in the construction of a professional identity? How can relations to knowledge contribute to a will and desire to engage in continuous learning?

ProLearn - outcomes

- Substantial differences in the extent and ways in which the practitioners from the four groups engage in learning in working life
- One important factor is the extent to which practitioners access and are able to utilise distributed knowledge provided in texts, technologies and other artefacts
- There is a need to examine further how knowledge is organized, made accessible and enacted in professional work
- Such organizational patterns and structures reach beyond the local workplaces and relate to epistemic infrastructures in the professions more broadly

Learning trajectories in knowledge economies (LiKE)

Project leader: Monika Nerland, UiO

Follows up on the ProLearn-project and aims to:

- Elaborate the concept of “learning trajectory” as a framework that takes into account the transformation of expert knowledge in different professional fields. These processes are mediated by new artefacts and production regimes
- Develop research strategies that generate rich empirical material for multi-level analyses of knowledge development and learning in professional work
- Conduct comparative studies in four professional fields: Teaching, nursing, engineering and accountancy.

LiKE cont. - Research questions

- What characterizes trajectories of learning in work settings when new knowledge practices are emerging?
- How do epistemic infrastructures provided in these practices facilitate, or alternatively obstruct, learning among professionals?
- How are engagements with knowledge in different epistemic cultures related to learning patterns and epistemic movements over time?

Three strands of research activities

- In-depth case studies of learning practices in working life
Case studies in four professions: nursing, teaching, engineering, accountancy
Participant observation, interviews, artefact studies
- Comparative analyses of knowledge regulation and transformation in the professional fields
Globalization-driven transformations in knowledge and curricula
The role of institutional stakeholders at a national level
- Longitudinal studies of practitioners' learning trajectories
Survey + interviews, following individuals from education to work

KP-lab

Lead from Univ. of Helsinki, PI at UiO: Anders Mørch

Aims at facilitating innovative practices of working with knowledge ("knowledge practices") in education and workplaces

Explores collective knowledge creation processes and tool-mediated transformations of practice

Case studies with

- a) longitudinal, descriptive and historical analyses of evolving knowledge practices with existing and new tools
- b) interventionist perspective - design and implement new tools and/or customize / adapt existing ones
- c) use, testing and evaluation of new tools in different time spans

More information: <http://www.intermedia.uio.no/display/Im2/KP-Lab>

Individual career development and continuing vocational training (CVT)

Lead from ITB Bremen, PI at UiO: Terje Grønning

Research questions:

- How does CVT interlink with individual career development pathways?
- How do people use learning to structure their individual careers and continuing professional development?
- What kinds of learning and training do people engage in across the life course and what are their responses to the idea of participation in LLL?
- Is learning relevant in the context of seeking or inducing career changes?

Methodology

Desk review of

- Theoretical concepts on individual careers and vocational learning
- Qualitative empirical studies (national, sectoral and biographical contextualisation)
- Quantitative empirical studies – third party surveys (identifying relevant questions)

Survey

Implementation and evaluation of a small-scale survey in 10 European countries

Target groups: mid-career professionals (30 - 50 years), special focus on low-skilled and 'career changers'

Target sectors: New economies/ICT/multimedia, Engineering, Health care/nursing

Data analysed in relation to high/low employability, flexibility and security

For more information: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/current/copen/>

FALK publications - examples

- Arnseth, H.C., Ludvigsen, S., 2006. Approaching Institutional Contexts: Systemic versus Dialogic Research in CSEL. *International Journal of Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning*, 1(2)
- Jensen, K. & Lahn, L. (2005). The binding role of knowledge. An analysis of nursing students knowledge ties. *Journal of Education and Work*, 18 (3): 307-322.
- Jensen, K. (2007). The desire to learn: an analysis of knowledge-seeking practices among professionals. *Oxford Review of Education*, 33(4), 489 – 502.
- Karseth, B. & Nerland, M. (2007). Building professionalism in a knowledge society: examining discourses of knowledge in four professional associations. *Journal of Education and Work*, 20 (4).
- Lahn, L. C, Jensen, K. (2007). Models of professional learning: Exploring the epistemic tool perspective”. *Knowledge, Work & Society*, 4(3).
- Ludvigsen, S., R.Konkola, and T.T. Tuomi-Gröhn (2007). Promoting learning and transfer between school and workplace, *Journal of Education and Work* 20 (3).
- Mørch, A.I. et al.(2009). Adaptation and Generalisation in Software Product Development. In H. Daniels et al. (Eds.), *Activity theory in practice: Promoting learning across boundaries*. Taylor & Francis.
- Nerland, M. & Jensen, K. (2007): Insourcing the management of knowledge and occupational control: an analysis of computer engineers in Norway. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 26 (3).
- Nerland, M. (2008): Knowledge cultures and the shaping of work-based learning: the case of computer engineering. *Vocations and Learning: Studies in vocational and professional education*, Vol. 1, 49-69.
- Rasmussen, I., Ludvigsen, S. (2009). The Hedgehog and the Fox. A discussion of the approaches to the analysis of ICT reforms in teacher education of Larry Cuban and Yrjö Engeström, *Mind, culture and activity* 16 (1).

Workplace learning in educational programs at the Faculty of Education, University of Oslo

- Courses in *workplace learning*, *organizational learning*, and *ICT and learning*, as part of the bachelor program in education
- Under construction: Professional master program in *Learning, technology and work* (planned to start fall 2010)
- PhD: Higher education and professional learning is one of four tracks in the National Graduate School in Educational Research (NATED)

Recent PhD-thesis from the Faculty of Education, UiO

- Hatlevik, Ove E. (2006) *Læringsstrategier i arbeidslivet. En studie av strategibruk ved organisert, bedriftsintern opplæring i et flyselskap.*
- Ottesen, Eli (2006) *Talk in Practice. Analysing student teachers' and mentors' discourse in internship*
- Agerup, Kristi (2007) *Nettbasert samarbeidslæring og kunnskapsdeling i prosjektledelse: Utvikling, utprøving og implementering av et arbeidsintegret læringssystem i en høytteknologibedrift*
- Solbrække, Tone D. (2007) *Understanding Conceptions of Professional Responsibility*
- Aas, Marit. (2009) *Diskusjonens kraft. En longitudinell studie av et skoleutviklingsprosjekt der leseeksperter/forskere støtter rektorer og lærere ved sju skoler i utvikling av skolens leseundervisning.*
- Skovholt, Karianne (2009) *Email Literacy in the Workplace. A study of Interaction Norms, Leadership Communication, and Social Networks in a Norwegian Distributed Work Group*

More information: <http://www.uv.uio.no/forsk/disputaser/>

Other research groups / institutions in Norway

NTNU, Trondheim

- Research group for Adults in lifelong learning (www.ntnu.no/vill)
- Master program in Adult education (www.ntnu.no/studier/voksneslaering/master)

University of Bergen, Dept of Administration and Organization Theory

- Research on working life, relations between knowledge - politics – organizations
- <http://www.uib.no/admorg/en>

Oslo University College, Centre for the Studies of Professions

- Master- + PhD program in the Study of Professions
- Research Centre, administers the StudData database for studies of recruitment to and qualifications for professional work (<http://www.hio.no/content/view/full/10591>)

Akershus University College, Faculty of technical and vocational teacher education

- Research on vocational pedagogy in education and work (<http://www.hiak.no/index.php?ID=394>)
- Master program in vocational pedagogy

Research institutes: AFI, FAFO, NIFU Step, ISF,...