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# Re-envisioning Innovation: From Vision to Strategy to Plan and Back Again

*Michal Lysek, Jörgen Palmhager and Mike Danilovic*

## **Abstract**

HMS is a Swedish company and a global market leader in the industrial communication industry. Initially, HMS was managed with a vision of a connected industry. Gradually, that vision was complemented with strategies on how to reach that vision. In line with the company's growth and acquisitions, these strategies started to substitute their vision and they began to be supplemented with much more detailed plans. As the company's offer expanded, these detailed plans began to take over as the company's primary instrument of guidance. In other words, HMS went through three phases: From a "Market Establishment" phase (with a vision as their primary guideline), to a "Market Development" phase (with strategies as their primary guideline), and finally to a "Market Maturity" phase (with detailed plans their primary guideline). In so doing, their vision became less challenging/ motivating for HMS' employees. An action research approach was used, influenced by grounded theory. The results showed that people have different mindsets throughout these phases, and going back is challenging because while HMS' employees need a vision, visions come without detailed plans and will not work unless they are supplemented by inspirational communication and passionate innovation champions who can push forward without any detailed plans.

**Keywords:** Employee needs, innovation champions, plans, strategies, visions.

## **Re-previendo la innovación: de la visión a la estrategia para la planificación y viceversa**

### **Resumen**

HMS es una empresa sueca, líder del mercado global en la industria de la comunicación industrial. Inicialmente, HMS se gestionó con la visión de una industria conectada. Gradualmente, esta visión se complementó con estrategias sobre cómo alcanzar esa visión. En línea con el crecimiento y las adquisiciones de la empresa, estas estrategias empezaron a sustituir esa visión y comenzaron a complementarse con planes mucho más detallados. A medida que se amplió la oferta de la compañía, estos planes detallados comenzaron a convertirse en el principal instrumento de orientación de la compañía. En otras palabras, HMS pasó por tres fases: desde una fase de "Establecimiento de Mercado" (con una visión como su directriz primaria), a una fase de "Desarrollo de Mercado" (con estrategias como su directriz primaria), y finalmente a una fase de "Madurez de Mercado" (con planos detallados como su directriz primaria). Al hacerlo, su visión se volvió menos desafiante/motivadora para los empleados de HMS. Se utilizó un enfoque de investigación-acción influenciado por la teoría

fundamentada. Los resultados mostraron que las personas tuvieron una mentalidad diferente a lo largo de estas fases y el regreso es un desafío, porque mientras los empleados de HMS necesitan una visión, las visiones vienen sin planes detallados y no funcionarán a menos que se complementen con comunicaciones inspiradoras y apasionados campeones de la innovación que puedan empujar hacia adelante sin planes detallados.

**Palabras clave:** Necesidades de los empleados, campeones de innovación, planes, estrategias, visiones.

## Introduction

HMS is a Swedish company and a global market leader in the industrial communication industry. In the past, HMS created an innovation that helped them become a market leader. Their technology allowed their customers to connect their devices into any of the many industrial networks that became widely used in the industry (Lysek, Danilovic & Liu 2016).

Initially, however, HMS was managed with a vision of a connected industry: that all automation devices would become intelligent devices, with a need to communicate and exchange data over one or several networks. In order to succeed, HMS wanted to include their core technology into everything, to be part of every industrial device that needed network connectivity. Gradually, however, that vision of a connected industry was complemented with strategies on how to reach that vision. Such strategies were still quite general in terms of goals under conditions of uncertainty, but they still pointed HMS in a specific direction. In line with the company's growth and acquisitions, these strategies started to replace their vision and they began to be supplemented with much more detailed plans. As the company's offer expanded, these detailed plans began to take over as the company's primary instrument of guidance.

In other words, HMS went through three phases: From a "Market Establishment" phase, to a "Market Development" phase, and finally to a "Market Maturity" phase (see *Table 1*). These three phases can also be related to the "revised technology adoption life cycle" model presented by Moore (2014), since the "Market Establishment" phase corresponds to the "Innovators" and "Early Adopters" phase, the "Market Development" phase corresponds to the "Early Majority" phase, and the "Market Maturity" phase corresponds to the "Late Majority" phase.

According to HMS' top management, a company's vision is mainly dominant during the "Market Establishment" phase. During the following phases, the importance of the company's vision slowly begins to fade away, but it does not totally disappear. It just loses its flare. During the "Market Establishment" phase, initial strategies and plans are also created, but they are vague and indistinct. It is first during the "Market Development" phase that strategies become more distinct, as they take over as the primary tool for guiding the company, taking the spotlight away from the company's vision. Then, during the "Market Maturity" phase, detailed plans become the primary tool for guiding the company, taking over the leading role after strategies. How long this third phase will last is uncertain. Usually, it is followed by a decline during the next phase. After all, "[e]very institution is vulnerable, no matter how great. No matter how much you've achieved, no matter how far you've gone, no matter how much power you've garnered, you are vulnerable to decline. There is no law of nature that the most powerful will inevitably remain at the top. Anyone can fall

# Scientific Agendas and Work Tables. An action research initiative in La Plata, Ensenada and Berisso, Argentina

*Horacio Bozzano and Tomás Canevari*

## **Abstract**

*Scientific Agendas and Permanent Work Tables*: two emerging concepts that summarise a position of science constructed over three decades of Participatory-Action-Research from CONICET and UNLP of Argentina. It is a science that, surpassing positions of status quo and allocating time for criticism, seeks to produce Theories of Transformation referring to possible territories. Two cases in progress, in an informal urbanisation and in an industrial and residential flood zone in La Plata, Ensenada and Berisso, Buenos Aires, Argentina, give meaning to two Agendas with their respective Tables: “Puente de Fierro Possible Territory” and “Territory, Industry and Environment”. The objective is to execute a science that brings closer the wishes of people with public policies in cases of high exemplary and replicability. The work is organised in three parts: what science, what agendas, what praxis, and a conclusion.

**Key words:** transformation, science, scientific agendas, praxis, work tables

## **Agendas Científicas y Mesas de Trabajo. Una iniciativa de investigación acción en La Plata, Ensenada y Berisso, Argentina**

### **Resumen**

*Agendas Científicas y Mesas de Trabajo Permanentes*: dos conceptos emergentes que resumen una posición de la ciencia construida a lo largo de tres décadas de Investigación-Acción- Participativa desde CONICET y UNLP de Argentina. Se trata de una ciencia que, superando posiciones de statu quo y destinando tiempo a la crítica, procura producir Teorías de la Transformación referidas a territorios posibles. Dos casos en marcha, en una urbanización informal y en una zona industrial y residencial inundable en La Plata, Ensenada y Berisso, Buenos Aires, Argentina dan sentido a sendas Agendas con sus respectivas Mesas: “Puente de Fierro Territorio Posible” y “Territorio, Industria y Ambiente”. El objetivo es ejecutar una ciencia que aproxime los deseos de la gente con las políticas públicas en casos de alta ejemplaridad y replicabilidad. El trabajo se organiza en tres partes -qué ciencia, qué agendas, qué praxis- y un cierre.

**Palabras clave:** agendas científicas – praxis – mesas de trabajo

## Introduction

*Scientific Agendas* and *Permanent Work Tables*<sup>1</sup> constitute two emerging concepts which summarise a position of science built over three decades of Participatory-Action-Research from the National Council of Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET) and the National University of La Plata (UNLP) of Argentina. These concepts have been reinforced since 2013 with the initiative “La Plata with Territorial Intelligence” (<http://territoriosposibles.fahce.unlp.edu.ar/>) and have been consolidated since the 2014 PIO UNLP-CONICET Oriented Research Project called “Strategies for Territory Integral Management”. The PIO was institutionally effected in 2016 in the OMLP Environmental Observatory La Plata belonging to UNLP, CONICET and CICPBA through two Scientific Agendas with their respective *Permanent Work Table*: “Puente de Fierro Territorio Posible” worked on an informal urbanisation and “Territory, Industry and Environment” on an industrial, residential, port and flood zone of La Plata, Ensenada and Berisso, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Research is conducted by means of an approach to science which goes beyond positions of *status quo* and which allows room for criticism and resistance, while, at the same time, seeking to put forth Theories of Transformation in relation to possible territories.

The objective is to carry out science in a way that brings the wishes of the people closer with public policies in cases which show a degree of high representativeness and replicability, particularly in Latin America, as well as in most damaged and degraded places across the five continents. We have detected about fifteen topics of high impact and replicability, these two items in the agenda, among them. The work is organised in three parts. In “what science”, three readings are brought up which discuss the origins of science to a teleological present. In “what agendas”, some etymologies and a brief history of the concept are exposed in order to propose a *Scientific Agenda* concept as a result of an over two decades long applied research. In “what praxis”, a path is traveled between the praxis itself and the *Permanent Work Table*, going through a determined conception of methodology and applying a method “*Territori*” which has been in evolution as of two decades ago. The conclusions of the article opens perspectives for future research and introduce the question of power in *Scientific Agendas* and *Work Tables*.

## 1 What science

What is the meaning we give to Science? Our position towards Science recognises and seeks to incorporate into our daily work three readings, which are largely phases, moments or instances coinciding with its history, as well as positions regarding knowledge in the development of science itself in the face of a multidimensionality of events which have taken and take place in Humanity, the Planet and the Universe. These three readings can contribute to a greater degree of awareness in our positioning as scientists, especially considering

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1 The concept of Work Table in Spanish is “Mesa de Trabajo” and it is connected in the sense of sitting around a table to work on problems and their possible solutions among people representing the community, science, politics, the world, business and other sectors. Throughout the text the concept is deepened further.

# Exploring Doctorateness in Insider Action Research

*David Coughlan, Paul Coughlan and Abraham B. (Rami) Shani*

## **Abstract**

While debates about the nature of ‘doctorateness’ are prevalent in higher education, what this might mean in the context of insider action research, where action research is undertaken by members of an organisation or community, has not received any attention. This article explores how an insider action research engagement in a thesis and core project generates a synergy between the actions, a deep discipline knowledge, competence in research through first, second and third person processes, and competence in presentation can serve as a foundation for doctorateness. The dissemination contributes to a community of practice and inquiry.

**Keywords:** doctoral education; ‘doctorateness’; action research; insider action research; core and thesis projects, first, second and third person inquiry; communities of inquiry

## **Explorando el proceso de doctorado (*doctorateness*) en investigación acción interna**

### **Resumen**

Mientras que los debates sobre el carácter de intensidad y calidad en estudios doctorales (referido como ‘doctorateness’) son frecuentes en la educación superior, la investigación de acción interna, que se lleva a cabo por los miembros de una organización o comunidad, no ha recibido mucha atención. Este artículo explora cómo una investigación de acción interna genera una sinergia entre las acciones, el conocimiento profundo de la disciplina, la competencia en la investigación a través de los procesos de primera, segunda y tercera persona, y la competencia en la presentación, que sirve como base para el concepto de ‘doctorateness’. Las implicaciones de este artículo contribuyen a la práctica en la industria y a la investigación en el área de investigación de acción interna.

**Palabras claves:** educación doctoral; doctorateness; investigación acción; investigación acción privilegiada; base de tesis proyectos y, primero, segundo y tercero de la investigación; comunidades de investigación

## 1 Introduction

*At a viva voce for a doctorate undertaken through action research some time ago, one of the authors asked the doctoral candidate on what basis did he think he should be awarded a doctorate for his work. The candidate's spontaneous answer was that he had attended to the data within himself and with others, that he was in dialogue with the literature, was transparent about his conclusions, and that he was contributing something for others to build on.*

Reflecting on this response it can be seen that this researcher was implicitly describing the doctoral quality of his work in terms of engagement within himself, his co-inquiry with relevant others, and contribution to a broader audience. The practice of insider action research, whereby individuals undertake action research in an organisation or community in which they are employed or are a member, is becoming increasingly more common. In such settings doctoral candidates base their doctoral work on interventions in their own organisations (Hart, Kylan, Norrgren & Stymne 2004; Roth, Shani & Leary 2007; Williander & Styhre 2006; Coghlan, Shani, Roth & Sloyan 2014; Coghlan, Shani, & Roth 2016). The notion of 'doctorateness' is an emerging notion, and results from specific critical research features being present in a doctoral thesis (Trafford & Leshem 2008; 2009; Wellington 2013; Poole 2015). With the continuing development of doctoral research using action research, what might be meant by doctorateness in the insider action research setting? This article explores an answer to this question, and offers a framework for insider action research doctoral students, their supervisors and examiners. The article is structured as follows. First we explore the notion of doctorateness and doctoral "integrity". Second, we remind readers of the nature and practice of action research and insider action research, and we discuss how action research at doctoral level involves two current and intertwined projects, the *core* project and the *thesis* project (Zuber-Skerritt & Perry 2002). We review the three modes of inquiry that are well-established in action research which act as an integrating framework. These modes are first- second- and third-person practice. Third, we bring in insider action research in doctoral education, the core and thesis projects; modes of inquiry; quality together. Fourth, we articulate a framework of 'doctorateness' for insider action research, that integrates first- second- and third-person in the core and thesis projects and meets the quality requirements of action research.

## 2. What is 'doctorateness'?

The notion of 'doctorateness' is an emerging notion (Trafford & Leshem 2008; 2009). Wellington (2013) describes it in terms of five areas of activity: the purpose of doctoral study; the impact of doctorates; written regulations for the award of the doctorate; the examination process; and, the voices of those involved in doctoral study and examination. Wellington contends that the notion of doctorateness, as an inner essence, will never be found or accepted. In a rebuttal of Wellington (2013), Poole (2015) contends that progress towards a description of doctorateness has been made, citing Trafford and Leshem (2008; 2009). Poole advances the discussion by questioning whether or not doctorateness is a characteristic of the thesis document, the candidate or both.

# A Collaborative Practitioner Inquiry into Societal and Power-Relational Contexts of an Activist Writing Community's Textual Events

*Amir Kalan, Parisa Jafari and Mahdyar Aghajani*

## **Abstract**

This article describes experiences with a community literacy approach to writing instruction in a cultural studies and literary criticism workshop in Tehran, Iran (2009-2014). The writers narrate the process of writing a book undertaken by a group of Iranian feminists, who chose to write about and critique dominant discourses in Iranian hip hop, in an attempt to start a conversation with young underground Iranian rappers. Adopting collaborative practitioner inquiry, the researchers discuss different steps of the process of writing and publishing the book, and also the pitfalls and challenges that they encountered in the project and the ensuing interventions. In the course of sharing their reflections, the writers highlight the sociocultural and power relational contexts of their writing process to sensitise writing instructors to the often invisible social and political layers of the act of writing.

**Keywords:** community literacy, community publishing, writing studies, practitioner inquiry

## **Una indagación practicante colaborativa en contextos sociales y relacionales de poder en eventos textuales de una comunidad de escritores activistas**

### **Resumen**

Este artículo describe experiencias con un enfoque de alfabetización comunitaria para la instrucción de la escritura en un taller de estudios culturales y crítica literaria en Teherán, Irán (2009-2014). Los escritores narran el proceso de escribir un libro por parte de grupo de feministas iraníes, que eligieron escribir y criticar los discursos dominantes en el hip hop iraní en un intento por iniciar una conversación con jóvenes raperos iraníes del underground. Adoptando la indagación practicante colaborativa, los investigadores discuten diferentes pasos del proceso de la escritura y publicación del libro y también los escollos y los desafíos que encontraron en el proyecto y en las consiguientes intervenciones. En el transcurso de la socialización de sus reflexiones, los escritores resaltan los contextos socioculturales y relaciones de poder del proceso de escribir para sensibilizar a los instructores de escritura sobre las capas sociales y políticas a menudo invisibles del acto de escribir.

**Palabras clave:** alfabetización comunitaria, publicación comunitaria, estudios de escritura, indagación practicante.



## Introduction

This article describes a community literacy approach (Coogan 2006; Flower 2008; Higgins, Long, & Flower 2006) to writing instruction in a cultural studies and literary criticism workshop in Tehran, Iran (2009-2014). We here narrate the process of writing and publishing a book by a group of Iranian feminists, who chose to write about and critique dominant discourses in Iranian hip hop, in an attempt to start a conversation with young underground Iranian rappers. The members of our writing community deemed this dialogue crucial because the rappers and hip hop artists addressed by the book, although marginalised by political and sociocultural dynamics in the country, had a significant impact on Iranian youth subcultures. This partnership, we hoped, would inform the hip-hop community about women's issues and, in return, would help the activists in the writing workshop learn more about discourses prevalent among the youth. In this article, three members of our workshop relate our experiences with the process of writing and publishing a collection of articles entitled *Persian Hip Hop: Writing as Social Action*, which has been downloaded more than 20,000 times to date.

*Persian Hip Hop: Writing as Social Action* is a collection of essays in Persian about the sociocultural dimensions of Iranian hip hop and its impact on Iranian youth. The book, in particular, focuses on the artistic legacy of the groundbreaking album *The Asphalt Jungle* (2006), written and performed by Soroush Lashkari and produced by Mahdyar Aghajani. There is a consensus in the Iranian artistic community that the quality achieved in this album made the rapid development of Iranian hip-hop possible. Adopting a variety of social studies and literary criticism approaches, the writers of our community wrote about how Iranian rap songs were written, what sociocultural and political discourses informed Persian hip hop, and how Iranian rappers challenged more conservative ideological paradigms in Iranian society. All through the workshop, the writers were in conversation with rapper Soroush Lashkari (known as Hichkas<sup>1</sup>) and Mahdyar Aghajani, the producer of the album.

In this article, the writing instructor of the workshop, Amir, reflects on his writing pedagogy, the challenges involved in teaching an activist writing workshop, and his positionality as a teacher of a workshop made up of educated feminist activists. Parisa, a women and children's rights activist and one of the writers of the workshop, discusses the process of writing the book chapters and the writers' identity negotiation as a result of a role shift from "writing students" to "professional" writers to be read by an audience of thousands. Finally, Mahdyar, an influential figure in Iranian hip-hop culture, narrates our struggles with publishing the book. Before sharing our narratives about the process, we highlight our research questions and discuss our theoretical frameworks and research methods.

## Significance of the Project

Our inquiry contributes to the fields of community literacy, critical literacy education, and composition studies in a number of regards. It adds to the pool of empirical studies aiming

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1 *Hichkas* is Persian for Nobody.

# Technology's roles in student-centred learning in higher education

*Jose Eos Trinidad and Galvin Radley Ngo*

## **Abstract**

Given challenges of covering course content, ensuring skills acquisition, and assessing student's work, higher education faculty often experience difficulties in practicing student-centered learning. The education literature has shown that one way of addressing these concerns is through the use of educational technologies. In this action research, ten faculty members from a Philippine university participated in a coaching programme on using technology for student-centered learning. From interviews and classroom observations, the study finds that when introduced to appropriate tools, higher education faculty use technologies for interactive learning, timely feedback, and better engagement with students. The present research elaborates how faculty from different departments have used these technologies and how the students have responded to their use. The study contributes to the discussion of how technologies can enhance student learning and complement classroom instruction.

**Keywords:** student-centered learning; educational technology; student engagement; interactive learning; Philippine higher education

## **Los roles de la tecnología en el aprendizaje centrado en el estudiante de educación superior**

### **Resumen**

Dados los desafíos de cubrir el contenido del curso, garantizando la adquisición de habilidades y evaluando el trabajo de los estudiantes, los profesores de educación superior a menudo experimentan dificultades para practicar el aprendizaje centrado en el estudiante. La literatura educativa ha demostrado que una forma de abordar estas preocupaciones es a través del uso de tecnologías educativas. En esta investigación-acción, diez miembros del cuerpo docente de una universidad filipina participaron en un programa de capacitación sobre el uso de la tecnología para el aprendizaje centrado en el estudiante. A partir de entrevistas y observaciones en las clases, el estudio descubrió que cuando se introducen las herramientas apropiadas, los profesores de educación superior utilizan tecnologías para el aprendizaje interactivo, realizan devoluciones oportunas y tienen un mejor compromiso con los estudiantes. La presente investigación aborda cómo los docentes de diferentes departamentos han utilizado estas tecnologías y cómo los estudiantes han respondido a su uso. El estudio contribuye a la discusión de cómo las tecnologías pueden mejorar el aprendizaje de los estudiantes y complementar la instrucción en el aula.

**Palabras clave:** aprendizaje centrado en el estudiante; tecnología educacional; compromiso de los estudiantes; aprendizaje interactivo; educación superior filipina.

## 1. Introduction

Stemming from constructivist theories where knowledge is actively created by learners (Dewey 2011; Vygotsky 1978), student-centered learning (SCL) has gained credence as an effective educational approach. In this approach, students are actively engaged in their understanding of topics, and the teacher's role is about facilitating and scaffolding the learning process (Hoidn 2017). Although many teachers subscribe to SCL in principle, there are challenges in fully implementing this method, particularly in higher education. First, there are competing visions of what student-centered means and subscribing to this method can be a steep learning curve. Second, teachers need to cover the course content and SCL may take more time than the usual lecture format. Third, putting so much responsibility on students' motivation may lead to uneven acquisition of skills. Lastly, assessments are more difficult to prepare or correct, given the openness of questions and differences in answers (Hannafin & Land 2000).

Although the challenges are valid and understandable, there are ways that teachers have addressed these concerns. Teachers who actually started using SCL reported higher satisfaction and improved student academic outcomes (Dear 2017; Veldman, Admiraal, van Tartwijk, Mainhard, & Wubbels 2016). They also used creative ways like problem-based learning and small group discussions to cover more course content (Loyens, Rikers, & Schmidt 2006; Wijnia, Loyens, & Derous 2011). Another prominent way to address the challenges is to employ technology in practising SCL (Kang, Hahn, & Chung, 2015; Lowry & Flohr 2004). Thus, different technologies could be harnessed for classes and courses to be more focused on the learning of the students.

In this action research, we ask how university faculty understand student-centered learning and how they use educational technologies in instructing and teaching their classes. This present research shows that technology plays different roles for different teachers, particularly in relation to their disciplines and contexts. However, technology use can be categorized in terms of its different functions: increasing interactive learning, providing feedback on student learning, and fostering closer engagement with students. In this study of ten faculty members from a Philippine university, we highlight the current literature in student-centered learning, the process of training and coaching teachers in the use of technology, the results of the coaching, and the key insights from these results.

## 2. Student-centered learning and technologies

This literature review is divided in two parts. The first discusses the basics of SCL: its effects, assumptions, and challenges to implementation. It then shifts to how technology addresses these challenges and what framework is used for this present research.

Student-centered learning (SCL) is an educational approach where students direct their own learning, are supported in scaffolding their knowledge, and have a more active role in