ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study was to assess the prevailing alignment of EAP in EFL writing courses vis-à-vis the development of academic writing skills of students in public universities in ANRS. The study used a descriptive survey method that involves quantitative and qualitative methods. Questionnaire, syllabus and materials survey and focus-group discussions were used to gather the necessary data for the study. The English Language and Literature instructors who were delivering common writing courses in the target universities were the key participants. Sixty-eight instructors were opted through comprehensive sampling for the questionnaire. Thus, descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were employed in analyzing the quantitative data. The qualitative data were analyzed and reported thematically. The overall findings of the study showed that there existed a comparable horizontal (cross-department) distribution pattern of common writing courses among the three universities; all learners in taking the common course ‘Basic Writing Skills’ in each university learnt with the same syllabus and material regardless of their fields of study. And so, there was poor alignment of writing courses with the target students’ mainstream discipline (i.e., learning and discourse) both in terms of content and genre.

Keywords: Academic writing, Academic writing skills, Alignment, EAP, EFL

1. Introduction

Language is at the heart of academic life and success that depends on acquiring and effectively using the required language skills and standards that represent it. This fundamental belief has had significant implications to language pedagogy since about the second half of the 20th century when the retreat from pedagogical initiation in research had the effect of paradigm shift increasingly from the teacher’s methods to the situation of students (Otte & Mlynarczyk, 2010). In fact, current global trends of second/foreign language education signify that arguably the greatest concern and focus of needs analysis in curriculum development has been placed on the area and role of Language for Academic Purposes (LAP) (Leung, 2008; Richards, 1990). The principal concept and purpose of second/foreign language curriculum alignment, according to Richards and Hurley (1990: 154), essentially rest on “ensuring the second language curriculum reflects the content and processes of the regular school curriculum.” Accordingly, in contemporary EFL education, students’ academic literacy problems, especially where the language is the medium of instruction, have comprehensively been dealt with alignment and provision of EAP (English for Academic Purposes) courses across mainstream curricula (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002; Mol & Tin, 2008). This practice is believed to have greater effects in EFL/ESL higher education contexts in which the students are highly expected, but likely find it difficult, to acclimate themselves into their disciplinary discourse community and the range of genres associated with such community (Currie, 1991; Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002; Silva, Reichelt, & Lax-Furr, 1994).

The notion of academic writing is closely related to as well as can be drawn from the relationship between writing and learning as well as the role of the former in the latter. This is quite true for many reasons
including the fact that, according to Pühr (2007), writing is the principal medium for generating and conveying knowledge in all fields. In principle, since writing itself is either formally learned or culturally transmitted, it demands deliberate instructional settings in which the learning process essentially involves a set of continuous practice (Brown, 2000; Myles, 2002). One of the motivations behind the teaching and development of academic writing, as Belcher (2009) claimed, is to help those especially lacking and in need of the language and discourse skills required for the academic contexts they are situated and hope to succeed in.

In the Ethiopian higher education context, English writing tasks have such a vital role that most content courses provided across mainstream curricula often require students to write various types or genres of academic papers such as essays, reviews, laboratory reports, proposals, research reports, and so on as part of their ongoing assessments. This, however, has been a substantial challenge for students to deliver and instructors to assess in terms of the quality of students’ writing in particular and learning in general.

Several literatures and researches on writing and writing instruction show that though writing plays a vital role in learning across mainstream curricula, the skill of writing for academic purposes has long been a tremendous challenge for practitioners, particularly in higher levels of education (Arndt, 1987; Blanton, 1987; Kroll, 1994a, b; Myles, 2002; Ozarska, 2008; Richards, 1990; Silva, Reinchlet, and Lax-Farr, 1994). In other words, the more academic is the writing required (especially where L2 learners are involved), the greater the chance that students’ writing problems become both frequent and serious. Of note, over the last three or so decades, various problems in students’ academic writing have been pointed out across different research contexts. For instance, grammatical inaccuracy and fossilization of linguistic errors (Mardijona, 2003; Myles, 2002), problems of coherence and cohesion (Kooshafar et al., 2012), lack of critically deliberated and well-supported arguments (Sherman, 1992), lack of use of appropriate register and style (Ozarska, 2008), lack of use of appropriate genre (Paltridge, 1996), citation and referencing problems (Neville, 2007), and so on were claimed to be profound both in their frequency in and impact on the quality of students’ writing.

Though a number of local studies have been conducted on different EFL writing and writing instruction issues, most of them appeared to lack specification and/or meticulousness in their respective writing purposes and framework and, most unfortunately, did not address academic writing issues in due particularity and depth (for example, Adane, 2012; Agenagn, 2005; Dawit, 2013; Zelealem, 2012; etc.). Perhaps worth-mentioning exceptional attempts made in this regard are the studies by Wubalem (2013), Zelealem (2015) and Kefalegn (2003) that respectively assessed academic genre knowledge of EFL learners through Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), explored academic writing problems and associated factors in Bahir Dar University, and investigated students’ academic writing in response to instructors’ expectations at Addis Ababa University. The latter researches, however, overlooked and, therefore, failed to assess the existing groundwork for EFL writing education – the curriculum. As a result, local researches remain negligent of EAP alignment and implementation in writing courses towards developing students’ academic writing skills in the specific higher education context.

The fundamental premise in proposing this study is that tertiary level students are expected to acquire considerable competence in writing their academic projects so that they can succeed throughout their academic journey and beyond. Lacking this competence, on the other hand, leads one to “losing touch with the joy of inquiry, the sense of intellectual curiosity, and the inestimable satisfaction of acquiring wisdom that are the touchstones of 'humanity’” (Graham and Hebert, 2010). The argument here is, therefore, that where this problem is faced and due investigation is required, it is essential that educators should assess the prime foundation and policy that guides the actual teaching-learning practice, which is the curriculum in the particular academic context. This can be further drawn from the broader conception that language and language teaching problems are usually subjective to the particular social context and setting they represent (Davies, 2007).

This study, therefore, aimed at assessing the prevailing alignment of EAP in EFL writing courses vis-à-vis the development of academic writing skills of students in public universities in Amhara

Cite this article as: Workie, M., & Haregu, Z. (2020). EAP Alignment in EFL Writing Courses towards Developing Student’s Academic Writing Skills. International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies, 8(1), 71-79.
National Regional State (ANRS). To this end, the study principally inquired and disclosed answers to the following major questions:

1. How are writing courses distributed across mainstream curricula at the target universities?

2. To what extent are common writing courses compatibly aligned with the disciplinary content across host departments?

3. How effectively are academic writing genres incorporated in common writing courses vis-à-vis the respective disciplinary discourse of host departments?

2. Methodology

A mixed methods design was chosen and employed for this study due to the nature of the research problem and the fundamental beliefs in and purpose of conducting this particular study. In fact, curriculum alignment and implementation in the context of educational institutions is the result of the intricate relationships of various educational and socio-cultural domains (Richards, 1990). Thus, EAP alignment in terms of teaching writing for academic purposes rooted in such contexts is best investigated through a mixed methods approach; mixing of qualitative methods with complementary quantitative data were used for the study.

ANRS is one of the three largest regional states in Ethiopia. The region consisted of seven public universities which were categorized into first, second and third generations based on their ascending chronological phase of establishment (See Table 1).

Table 1: Categorical list of universities in ANRS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>Third</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bahir Dar</td>
<td>Debre Birhan University</td>
<td>Debre Tabor University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>University of Gonder</td>
<td>Wollo University</td>
<td>Nidelan University</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Debre Markos University</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MoSHE, Ethiopia, 2018

Bahir Dar and Wollo Universities were selected from the first and second generations respectively using lottery method whereas Debre Tabor University was selected on purpose due to the fact that this research was founded in, sponsored by and reported to the university.

The English Language and Literature Departments of the target universities delivered different writing courses for students of their own and across mainstream curricula. Since this study was set out to assess the alignment of EAP in EFL writing courses across mainstream curricula, its primary concern and sources of data were the common writing course syllabi and materials as well as the academic staff involved in developing and teaching them. Hence, instructors who are responsible for designing, preparing and teaching the existing writing courses were the key participants of the study.

Taking the nature, scope and purpose of the research into careful consideration, the researchers employed purposive sampling strategies. In so doing, by using department heads as source of information (i.e., snowball sampling), the researchers had first identified EFL instructors who were responsible for designing, preparing and teaching the existing common writing courses for further sampling. Then, due to the manageability of their total population size, all of the identified instructors, sixty-eight, were taken as sample informants (i.e., comprehensive sampling).

In this study, questionnaires were administered to collect data from writing instructors in the target universities. The questionnaire consisted of both closed-ended and open-ended items. The questionnaire items focused on inquiring how academic writing genres were integrated in common writing courses, and what gaps teachers had observed in alignment of EAP in their writing courses vis-à-vis development of their students’ academic writing skills.

The content and face validity of the questionnaire items was first reviewed by two EFL educators at Debre Tabor University. On the basis of comments from these reviewers, the content of the questionnaires were revised before they were ready to be tested via a pilot study. Various literature in research methods suggest that researchers are believed to benefit much from ascertaining the face validity of questionnaires by using some participants of their research for a pilot study (Gray, 2004). Hence, a pilot study involving participants in Debre Tabor University was conducted before the actual administration of the questionnaires.

First-hand data were also gathered from survey of the current writing course syllabuses and materials in the target universities; this was intended to investigate the extent to which EAP is compatibly incorporated in the existing EFL writing curricula, and how different academic writing genres are integrated in the writing
courses. A review check-list was developed in light of the research questions and questionnaire as well as EAP material evaluation guidelines suggested by Hall (2000) and Barnard & Zemach (2003). The check-list was piloted and scrutinized by ELT experts at DTU before being used for the reviews.

Semi-structured FGDs were conducted with the Curriculum and Materials Evaluation and Development Committee members in the ELL departments of the three target universities. The FGDs were mainly concerned with the curricular orientations and teacher mediation issues regarding EAP alignment in writing courses. The guiding items of the FGDs were scrutinized by independent TEFL scholars in DTU before the actual administration in order to ensure face and content validity.

Thematic approach was used to analyze and interpret qualitative data obtained from syllabus and materials survey and open-ended questionnaire items. Complementary quantitative data obtained from closed-ended questionnaire items, on the other hand, were analyzed statistically using frequency, percentage and mean.

3. Findings

Data collection and analysis were made based on the research study questions. The analysis was initiated from instructors’ questionnaire, syllabus and materials survey and focus-group discussions (FGDs). The data collected by the research tools were categorized, scrutinized and interpreted. Then, data of each research question was presented, and then the findings of related research studies that consolidated the findings of the current study were demonstrated.

To answer the first question, “How are writing courses distributed across mainstream curricula at the target universities?”, syllabus and materials survey and focus-group discussions (FGDs) were conducted.

Writing courses that are given across mainstream curricula – i.e., those courses that are correspondingly distributed across and shared by different departments – are widely referred to as common courses. In the present case, the existing distributions of common writing courses across mainstream curricula in the target universities are analyzed and discussed from two outlooks: pattern and manner of the distributions.

The reviews conducted on the existing university curricula revealed that all departments of all the target universities have incorporated Basic Writing Skills (course code: EnLa 1012) in their curricula. However, there are slight interdepartmental timetable variations. For instance, while most departments provide the course in the second semester of the first year of study, a few departments such as Department of Tourism & Hotel Management and Department of Civil Engineering provide the course in the first semester of the second year of study.

Still, some faculties, including those of technology and agriculture, provide an additional technical writing course – in majority cases, entitled Research and Technical Report Writing – despite variations in course name, code, content and delivery among faculties. The research and technical report writing courses can be either faculty or department based, and, in most cases, provided for senior class students. Hence, the contents of the writing texts and activities in the course are often in line with the broad academic subject matters and discourses of the target students’ study areas.

The problem that the FGD informants persistently raised in this regard was, however, biased course ownership and teacher assignment. According to the FGD informants, even though the course was meant to be (and should have been) taught by language teachers from the Department of English Language and Literature, if not jointly with host department teachers, the host departments ‘illicitly’ took the liberty of teaching it exclusively by their own teachers, who ‘are not qualified’ to teach language courses.

An FGD informant further added that: “Even the Technical Report Writing course syllabus and modules are prepared only by host departments; they do not have any consultation and comments from the English language department…. In my view, host department teachers may be experts in the [subject-matter] content, but they do not have knowledge of teaching English and preparing [ELT] materials.” (FGD)-DTU

These claims were cross-checked against official teacher-to-course assignment documents from respective host faculties and found to be true.

Nevertheless, most of departments in the faculties including Social Sciences, Humanities, and Behavioral Sciences did not have their own academic and/or technical or
equivalent writing courses in their curricula, except ‘Basic Writing Skills’. According to the FGD informants, as far as academic writing is concerned, students in these faculties are confined to, and perhaps rely only on, what they learn in the freshman ‘Basic Writing Skills’ course, which is not particularly designed for and aligned with their specific disciplinary content, discourse as well as learning needs.

To answer the second question, “To what extent are common writing courses compatibly aligned with the disciplinary content across host departments?”, instructors’ questionnaires and focus-group discussions were steered.

**Table 2: Instructors’ responses on compatibility of writing courses with mainstream disciplines**

(Source: Questionnaire, 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Total Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The courses (you teach &amp; specifically designed for your learners’ particular field of study or are topically compatible)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The objectives of your course match with high expectations of the learners’ academic writing competence on a range of topics related to their mainstream discipline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The content of models in your courses are topically related to their learners’ field of study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The writing tasks in your course are topically related to the learners’ field of study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Either the syllabus or material of your course guides you to adopt a range of academic writing topics to your mainstream discipline teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grand Mean:** 2.30

According to the above table, majority of the instructor respondents either strongly disagreed (60.2%) or disagreed (32.4%) with the statement that the common writing course they teach (i.e., ‘Basic Writing Skills’) was specifically designed for their learners’ particular field of study while the rest 7.4% agreed. This clearly indicates that the course is rather designed commonly for and aligned with disciplinary content and disciplinary discourse of individual fields of study.

Similarly, regarding whether the objectives of the course clearly set high expectations for the learners’ academic writing competence on a range of topics related to their mainstream discipline, 42.7% and 25% of the respondents respectively expressed disagreement and strong disagreement whereas the remaining 17.6%, 13.2% and 1.5% agreed, strongly agreed and were not sure respectively. This in turn shows that the objectives of the course clearly do not set high expectations for the learners’ academic writing competence on a range of topics related to their mainstream discipline.

In more specific terms, the third and fourth items, respectively, inquire whether the contents of model texts and writing tasks in the course were topically compatible to the learners’ particular field of study. Hence, majority of the teacher respondents either disagreed (42.7%) or strongly disagreed (26.4%) against the compatibility of model texts; similarly, 29.4% and 27.9% respectively disagreed and strongly disagreed against the compatibility of model texts with the specific curricular contents of the target students’ mainstream learning. Here, one can understand that the contents of model texts and writing tasks in the course were not deliberate to be topically compatible to the learners’ particular field of study.

Last but not least, the teacher respondents were asked to rate their opinions about whether either the syllabus or the material of their course guides them to adapt a range of academic writing topics to their students’ mainstream learning. Consequently, most of them (i.e., 44.1% who disagreed and 26.4% who strongly disagreed) responded negatively. It can be implied from the responses that neither the syllabus nor the material of their writing course guides them to adapt a range of academic writing topics to their students’ mainstream learning.

In addition, the conducted reviews of ‘Basic Writing Skills’ course syllabus and materials showed comparable material preparation schemes in the three universities in spite of some differences in details and format. That is, the course is prepared and, therefore, provided as a common course across all university departments – for freshman students in most cases. Consequently, all students who take course in each university learn with exactly the same modules regardless of their fields of study. And, although there might be arbitrary relevance of texts with random fields of study, no deliberate attempt was indicated in the course syllabus and materials design to align contents of texts and tasks with the specific disciplinary content and discourse of each host department or faculty (Bailey, 2011).

To answer the third question, “How effectively are academic writing genres incorporated in common writing courses vis-à-vis the respective disciplinary discourse of host departments?”, instructors’ questionnaires and syllabus and materials survey were shepherded.

**Table 3: Instructors’ responses on incorporation of academic genres in writing courses**

(Source: Questionnaire, 2018)
As shown in Table 3 above, in response to whether the objectives of the common writing course clearly set high expectations for the learners’ competence in writing a range of text types (genres) related to their mainstream learning, 41.1% and 19.1% of the respondents respectively express disagreement and strong disagreement whereas the remaining 22.1%, 11.8% and 5.9% agreed, strongly agreed and were not sure respectively. This in turn implies that the objectives of the course clearly do not clearly set high expectations for the learners’ competence in writing a range of text types (genres) related to their mainstream disciplinary learning and discourse.

For the second item in the table, however, majority of the teacher respondents either agreed (38.2%) or strongly agreed (26.5%) the common ‘Basic Writing Skills’ course incorporated the different kinds of rhetorical patterns such as narratives, descriptions, arguments, and expositions that learners may need for academic writing. Still, in the succeeding (fourth) item, contrasting responses were obtained regarding whether course offers students with sufficient activities to practice writing a wide range of academic papers (e.g., lab reports, surveys, term papers, etc.) that they are expected to write as their mainstream learning. Consequently, most of them (i.e., 41.1% who disagreed and 30.9% who strongly disagreed) responded disparagingly. The responses imply that neither the syllabus nor the material of the common writing course guide teachers to adapt a range of alternative genres in accordance with their students’ disciplinary discourse.

According to the syllabus and material reviews, the chapters and topics of ‘Basic Writing Skills’ courses in all the target universities are organized and graded from simple to more complex levels of writing despite some variations in the substance, detail and assortment of notes and tasks among materials. The course is broadly divided into three consecutive parts or levels of writing: Sentence Writing, Paragraph Writing and Essay Writing.

In terms of genres, one of the noteworthy strengths of the course is that different types of texts at sentence, paragraph and essay levels are presented, discussed and exercised vis-à-vis their structures and purposes in written communication. Sentences are classified based on both their function (i.e., declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, and imperative) and structure (i.e., simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex). Paragraphs and essays, on the other hand, are categorized according to their communicative functions (i.e., expository, descriptive, narrative, and argumentative). Accordingly, different sample texts are provided followed by activities for students.

The following samples are extracted from ‘Basic Writing Skills’ modules in the target universities to show how different text types (i.e., genres) are presented at different levels of writing:

3.1 Sentence Level Writing

**Declarative sentences**: are sentences which tell us about any kind of information in a statement form. A declarative sentence always ends with a period (.).

**Example**: Hailu is a doctor. Gambling is an illegal activity. I always think of my profession.

3.2 Paragraph and essay level writing

---

Description – is a verbal picture of a person, place, or thing. It is the kind of writing which attempts to appeal to the reader’s sense, recreating for him the author’s original impression of the subject being described. It is very much concerned with sensory impressions (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch). Description can be objective or impressionistic. Description rarely appears alone in modern writing. It is most often used with narration. 

Such detailed explanations are normally followed by example texts such as the following:

**Example 1**

And to all these familiar sounds of birds, cars, people, pet animals, ... chirps, engine-noise, chatter, barks, ... to all the sharp and thrilling odors of the trains – the smell of cinders, acrid smoke, of musty, rusty freight cars, the clean pine-board of created produce, and the smells of fresh stored food- oranges, coffee, tangerines and bacon, ham and flour and beef-there would be added now, with an unforgettable magic and familiarity, all the strange sounds and smells of the coming circus...

(Extracted from: Basic Writing Skills Module, BDU, p.111)

Subsequent activities for students include identifying types of given texts and writing own paragraphs and essays having different genres. Topics for extended writing tasks are given more often than not along with the type(s) of text(s) the students are expected to produce; hence, students may learn to compare and contrast different topical areas with corresponding genres.

4. Discussion

The first question in the study is sought to determine the distribution of writing courses across mainstream departments. Results revealed that there existed a comparable horizontal (cross-department) distribution pattern of common writing courses among the three universities. However, there are considerable professionalism issues in assigning teachers particularly to teach research and technical report writing courses. That is, these courses are being exclusively taught by host department teachers who are assumed to have subject matter (content) expertise regardless of their lack of qualification and expertise in ELT, if not also in the language itself.

And this is in line with Hyland and Hamp-Lyons (2002), Leung (2008) and Adane (2012). English for Academic Purposes refers to language research and instruction that focuses on the specific needs and practices of particular groups in academic contexts. It means grounding instruction in an understanding of the cognitive, social, and linguistic demands of specific academic disciplines.

The second research question scrutinized the compatibility of common writing courses with target disciplinary content. The findings implied that all learners in taking the common course ‘Basic Writing Skills’ in each university learnt with the same syllabus and material regardless of their fields of study. Therefore, the contents of common writing courses at public universities in ANRS were not accordingly aligned and compatible with the specific disciplinary content and written discourse of target students’ particular fields of study although there may be arbitrary relevance between texts and thematic areas of random fields of study. The result of the computed aggregate mean value is 2.30. This indicated that there was no compatibility of common writing courses with target disciplinary content. This is consistent with Graham and Hebert (2010), Belcher (2009) and Ožarska (2008).

It has recurrently been appealed that the development of language and language-related skills is an important part of learning across mainstream curricula. An obvious and general reason for such claims is the assumption that language is the medium with/through which knowledge or content is transmitted. Hence, the argument in this case is that competency in using language and associated skills contribute a great deal to enhance learning. Moreover, current applied linguistic and language teaching theories tend to advocate an integrated approach to language teaching and language curriculum design that language and content are complimentary rather than distinctive to each other (Davies, 2007).

The third question in this study is pursued to determine the incorporation of academic genres in the writing courses. Results publicized that two major limitations were detected in the ‘Basic Writing Skills’ course materials with respect to incorporation of academic writing genres. Firstly, the incorporated text genres are not clearly identified, explicitly discussed and deliberately exercised in terms of their function, accordance and use in particular academic writing settings. Secondly, since the course has a ‘common course’ status (i.e., given across all departments), the different text genres are not respectively
specified for and aligned with the particular – and often unique – curricular content, academic discourse and learning needs of individual target departments.

This idea is in line with Bailey (2011), Dawit (2013) and Murrey and Hughes (2008). Many studies in academic writing at higher education contexts show that writing instruction must consider, among other things, the learning needs of students across disciplines and associated discourse genres. This claim is strongly supported by Brown (2000) and McDonough (1985). It is, nonetheless, a peculiar problem for many practitioners.

5. Conclusion

This study aimed at assessing the prevailing alignment of EAP in EFL writing courses vis-à-vis the development of academic writing skills of students in public universities in Amhara National Regional State (ANRS). Based on the analyses and discussions made in the study, conclusions are drawn.

The findings of this study showed that there exists a comparable horizontal (cross-department) distribution pattern of common writing courses among the three universities. All departments of all the target universities have incorporated Basic Writing Skills (course code: EnLa 1012) in their curricula. Still, some faculties, including those of technology and agriculture, provide an additional technical writing course – in majority cases, entitled: Research and Technical Report Writing – despite variations in course name, code, content and delivery among faculties.

Accumulating the research findings one can comprehend that all learners in taking the common course ‘Basic Writing Skills’ in each university learnt with the same syllabus and material regardless of their fields of study. Therefore, the contents of common writing courses at public universities in ANRS lack deliberate alignment and compatibility with the specific disciplinary content and written discourse of target students’ particular fields of study even if there might be inadvertent thematic relevance between random texts and fields of study. And, this problem involves poor alignment of writing courses with the target students’ mainstream discipline (i.e., learning and discourse) both in terms of content and genre.

Since higher education students essentially need critical understanding, extensive practice and high competence of EAP writing, the universities should develop and provide a distinct Academic Writing course in particular alignment with learners’ mainstream learning and disciplinary discourse.

Auxiliary studies need to be conducted in the area towards obtaining critical understanding of students’ academic writing practice, problems and needs, as well as exploring and experimenting effective approaches for EAP curriculum alignment vis-à-vis target learners’ academic context.

References


*COVID-19 Fees Waiver Granted*