

## **DISCIPLINARY ENCULTURATION: FIRST YEAR STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN WRITING SCIENCE**

**Gayani Ranawake<sup>1\*</sup> and Maya Gunawardena<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*English Language Teaching Unit, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

<sup>2</sup>*Academic Language Unit, University of New South Wales, Canberra, Australia*

*\*gayaniranawake@gmail.com*

English as an *academiclingua franca* is increasingly becoming popular in South East Asian universities because of the dominance of English as the global language. While English medium instruction is promising in meeting current demands and enhancing the profile of global multilingual learners, its implementation poses numerous challenges to its learners in the enculturation process in non-native speaker contexts. Disciplinary enculturation is a complex process in any context but it can be most challenging in EAP (English for Academic Purposes) contexts where practitioners are challenged with enhancing skills of non-native speakers to adopt the western way. This study therefore examines writing difficulties faced by first year undergraduates of physical and biological science streams by means of a questionnaire from a leading University in Sri Lanka. Quantitative data demonstrated that the majority of students have positive attitudes towards writing science in English but the majority believe that their language competency skills need improvement to increase their disciplinary specific performance. Results also indicated that many students face challenges in learning and acquisition of academic specific vocabulary and using them in meaningful contexts. Students employ several coping strategies to overcome with their other writing focused difficulties. The study suggests effective pedagogical strategies for the EAP and disciplinary specific academics and implications for curriculum design.