



ACADEMIC RESEARCH WORKS AND DOMAIN DYNAMICS: RESOURCES AND TOOLS FOR BASQUE ACADEMIC WRITING

Abstract

Academic authorities in many non-English-speaking countries promote English for higher education. Strong English-language policies often adopted by academic authorities have aroused some scholar's awareness of the risk that weakening the role of local languages for academic purposes might erode their functionality (Görland 2002; Laurén et al. 2002). A language will be capable to be used in a specialist field if it has at its disposal the necessary means of expression and is therefore of use within this domain. Consequently, when a language community fails to develop suitable means of communication, there is a risk for domain loss (Laurén et al. 2002). University students acquire academic registers necessary to become members of the specialist discourse community of a domain thanks to a wide range of tasks accomplished through language (Biber 2006). Thus, a certain presence in the curriculum is required for effective development of student's proficiency in any language. The conquest of academic domains for Basque has resulted crucial for its revitalization. Nevertheless, academic registers are not thoroughly developed and stabilized, resulting in additional difficulties for the students to acquire academic writing skills. The use of Basque as instruction language and for academic works in the university is required in order to prevent domain loss, before specialized fields are fully cultivated. This paper describes the starting-points and goals of the HARTAvas project, devoted to design an academic writing assistance tool in Basque. This tool would help students developing their academic writing skills and, in the same time, would contribute to the cultivation of Basque in academic domains.

Key words: domain dynamics; domain loss; academic writing; domain cultivation



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