



## **Investigating the Difficulties Encountered by the Students in Understanding and Using Style in Academic Writing**

**Ramadan Ahmed Shalbag**

Lecturer, English Department, College of Education, Al Mergeeb University (Libya)

[ramshalbag@gmail.com](mailto:ramshalbag@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

The study aimed to determine the actual area of difficulty in academic writing in terms of ambiguity and parallelism. The former is classified into ambiguous reference, general reference, weak reference, indefinite reference, dangling modifier, misplaced modifier, and two-way modifier. The latter is divided into parallel ideas, completed parallelism, and incomplete parallelism.

The study was conducted in the College of Education in Al Mergeeb University, Libya during the academic year 2010 – 2011. Respondents involved fifty (50) fourth year students. The tool used for this study was a test in order to manifest and analyze students' ability to produce clear and parallel sentences in academic writing.

Research findings revealed that ambiguity and parallelism were very difficult for the subjects to answer. Some of these errors were attributed to the students' lack of exposure, inappropriate teaching methodology, and the influence of the first language.