

A Study on Negators Appearing in the Split Infinitive Construction

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The split infinitive is defined as a clause where the sentence adverb is put, not before *to*, *i.e.* outside of the clause, but within the clause immediately before the infinitive (Curme, 1947). This paper argues on previous controversies on the split infinitive, and introduces current judgements of linguists.

The split infinitive construction, especially the insertion of negators *i.e. not* and *never* is discussed by reviewing earlier literature that deals with comparison between the *not-to-V* order and the *to-not-V* order and by interviewing some native speakers of English. This paper proposes two reasons for the use of split infinitives. One is to emphasize the infinitive. The other is to achieve a natural rhythm with strong (stressed) and weak (unstressed) syllables alternating and/or to achieve smooth phonetic linking.