

UNIVERSITY OF BABYLON

**Iraqi EFL University Students'
Recognition and Production of
Split Infinitive**

A Thesis

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as a Foreign Language**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the problem of EFL learner's acquisition of the split infinitive in which the formative "to" is separated from a following infinitive by an adverb, such as "to hardly try". Behind this problem lies the traditional grammatical rule to "never split the infinitive", which was derived from Latin, but no longer holds in Modern English usage. EFL learners' sticking to this old standard rule is problematic because the structure of the split infinitive helps in avoiding ambiguity, and because its avoidance ignores actual language use. Therefore, this study aims at investigating the advantages of using the split infinitive construction, checking whether or not Iraqi EFL learners at the university level make use of this useful structure, and what difficulties they face in its production.

Three hypotheses have been proposed. These are:

1. A significant number of Iraqi EFL learners at the university level reject the use of split infinitive though such a use is both normal and useful.
2. The students face more difficulties in using split infinitive on the production level than the recognition level.
3. Mastery of the uses of the split infinitive construction is not achieved by Iraqi learners over a four-year period of EFL learning at the university level.

To test the validity of the hypotheses above, a diagnostic test has been formulated and administered to a representative sample of Iraqi EFL learners. The subjects of the study were the First and Fourth Level students

at the College of Education, University of Babylon and the University of Al-Qadisiya. Test items cover both recognition and production levels. Test format has been piloted, validated, and its reliability estimate computed by using Kuder-Richardson Formula 21.

Data analysis has revealed that the collective test pass-results of Iraqi EFL learners at the first- and fourth- year indicate that the subjects' acquisition of the split-infinitive construction over a four-year period increased by (28%) only. The rate of the start-year is at (16%), of the end-year (44%). In terms of the scores' mean, the increase was only at (19.6%) over a four-year-period of EFL learning at the university level. The low acquisition rates above are quite unsatisfactory and disappointing. Equally unsatisfactory is the acquisition level at the start-point, i.e., first-year level. Because the acquisition at this level is quite low, the significant gains made throughout a four-year period of EFL learning do not make learners attain the advanced level they are supposed to. Data analysis has also provided statistical evidence that the subjects' acquisition rates at the production level are considerably lesser than those of the recognition.

Error analysis has shown that the highest single cause of error in the data is the learners' use of communicative strategies, at (33%), owing to the subjects' unfamiliarity with the split infinitive structure. The second-highest rate of error cause is the negative effects of context of learning (i.e. 25%) since a significant number of subjects have been found to reject the use of the split infinitive though its use is correct due to their teachers' instructions as such. Intralingual transfer is behind (24%) of all subjects' errors due to overgeneralization. In the majority of cases, these errors have been found to be related to the adverb placement in the sentence final position. Interlingual transfer is the least-frequent error source, accounting

for (18%) of all subjects' errors. All of these errors are related to the wrong adverb placement in the sentence since the rules of Classical Arabic facilitate the use of the split infinitive. These results confirm the validity of the hypotheses stated above.

This study consists of five chapters, the first one is devoted to the discussion of the problem, aims, hypotheses, procedures followed, limits, and value of the study .

Chapter Two is a theoretical survey of the grammatical construction of the split infinitive in English, its definition, historical background, use, and function. It begins with a brief discussion of the grammatical notion of the to-infinitive and its counterpart in Arabic.

Chapter Three is dedicated to the description of the test administered to the First and Fourth year EFL college students, Department of English, College of Education, University of Babylon and University of Al- Qadisiya. The description includes the objectives of the test, subject, material selection, pilot and main test administration, reliability and validity as well as the scoring scheme adopted.

Chapter Four outlines the results of the test from both statistical and linguistic perspective. The subjects' errors have been analyzed and the probable causes of their errors have also been identified.

Finally, Chapter Five offers the conclusions arrived at in this study, on the bases of which some useful recommendations are given to EFL learners, syllabus designers, and teachers. It also suggests topics for future studies.

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List of Abbreviations

Symbol	<i>Description</i>
Adv	Adverb
AdvP	Adverb Phrase
C	Complementizer
CA	Classical Arabic
DI	Discrimination Index
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
FV(s)	Facility Value(s)
I	Inflectional Node
NP	Noun Phrase
N.P.	No Publisher
PP	Prepositional Phrase
PRO	Pronoun
S'	Matrix Clause
S	Subordinate (embedded) Clause
TGG	Transformational Generative Grammar
VP	Verb Phrase

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 The Problem

In English, an infinitive fulfils the function of a noun and is formed with "to" plus the base form of the verb as in: *to take, to laugh, to see, to run,...* etc. (Jerz, 1998: 1)

The separation of “to” from its verbal part is called **split infinitive**.

(1)

He tried to deliberately and maliciously trip me.

(Eckersley, 1933: 100)

Alexander states that splitting an infinitive (i.e. putting an adverb between to and the verb e.g. *to finally be, to quickly go, to fully understand*) is usually considered unacceptable and should generally be avoided. For instance *clearly* could not come between *to* and *read* in the following sentence:

(2)

I want you to read that last sentence clearly.

(Alexander, 1988: 304)

However, one often does separate “to” from the infinitive in spoken English, depending on where the emphasis falls:

(3)

It’s difficult *to really understand* the theory of relativity. (ibid.)

Some language stylists argue that the infinitive should never be split, but that is probably an extreme view because split infinitive is helpful in avoiding ambiguity by specifying grammatical relationships and as a clarifying element within the sentence. (Eunson,2003: 2)

Some writers think of the rule against split infinitives as an artificial, bookish restriction serving no real function and many grammarians see no grammatical reason for the rule, considering it merely a question of style.(Jerz,1988: 1)

In some sentences, it is better to leave the infinitive split rather than create a clumsy rhythm or an ambiguity:

(4)

I want you *to strenuously pursue* the option of meditating. (Eunson,2003: 2)

If one places the adverb *strenuously* after the infinitive, it sounds clumsy, and if one places it after the gerund, it sounds ambiguous.

This and other similar examples show clearly that avoiding split infinitive is problematic in two ways:

- 1- It ignores actual language use, and
- 2- It can be a source of standing ambiguity.

Despite the fact that split infinitive construction is useful and is widely used in modern English, most of Iraqi EFL learners at the university level are not aware of the use of such a useful structure. And it appears that they may ignore the advantages of using split infinitive and that such construction can have various functions within the sentence. In fact, the problem is that split infinitive construction is not expected to be difficult for the students to maintain.

1.2 Aims of the Study

This study aims at:

1. Investigating the advantages of using the split infinitive construction by discussing in the theoretical survey some of the latest linguistic material available in this respect.
2. Conducting a performance test to Iraqi learners of EFL at the university level to check whether or not these learners make use of this useful structure.
3. Checking whether or not the students face difficulties in producing this construction.
4. Finding out the causes behind the students' errors in the recognition and production of the split infinitive construction in order to suggest helpful remedial work.

1.3 Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

1. A significant number of Iraqi EFL learners at the university level reject the use of split infinitive though such a use is both normal and useful.
2. The students face more difficulties in using split infinitive at the production level than what they face at the recognition level.
3. Mastery of the uses of the split infinitive construction is not achieved by Iraqi learners over a four-year period of EFL learning at the university level.

1.4 Procedures

1. A theoretical survey is presented first to describe the functions and uses of split infinitive construction in Modern English speech and writing. This survey also touches upon the historical background of the prejudice against its use in English.
2. A section about the equivalent to the split infinitive structure in Arabic is offered in order to benefit from it in analysing the students' performance.
3. A test is formulated and administered to a representative sample of Iraqi EFL learners. Test items will cover both recognition and production levels.

4. Test results are then analysed using statistical means and rates to get at a corpus of data that can verify the validity of the hypotheses proposed in section 1.3 above.
5. Useful empirical conclusions are drawn from the test results and certain relevant recommendations are offered.

1.5 Limits

This study will limit itself to the analysis of the performance of Iraqi EFL learners at the university level in the use of the split infinitive constructions in contrast with non-split ones. The subjects of the study consist in the First and Fourth Level students at the Departments of English at the Colleges of Education, University of Babylon and University of Al-Qadisiya.

1.6 Value

It is hoped that the work conducted in this study will shed some useful light upon the structural intricacies of split infinitives in Modern English, as well as on the performance of Iraqi learners of EFL in this problematic topic, which has not been empirically investigated in Iraq so far as far as the researcher knows.

In addition, it is hoped that the results of this study can prove to be beneficial to both curriculum designers and language teachers in better understanding the learners' difficulties, and in designing affective remedial programs in this respect.

CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical Background

2.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a theoretical survey of the grammatical construction of the split infinitive in English, the historical background of its use and functions. It begins with a brief introduction of the grammatical notion of the to-infinitive itself before investigating the split infinitive. The chapter will also discuss the Arabic counterpart of the to-infinitive in order to find out whether it plays a facilitative or hindering role in EFL acquisition of this construction. The ultimate aim of this chapter is to come up with a general outlook of construction of the split infinitive in English that could be helpful in the selection of the test items that evaluate the subjects' acquisition of this grammatical form.

2.2 The Infinitive: Definition

The term “infinitive” comes from the Latin term “*infinitivus*” which consists of the prefix “*in*” meaning “not”, and “*finire*” meaning “to limit”. An infinitive is a non-finite form of the verb occurring in some (but not all) languages. It typically serves to express the meaning of the verb in the abstract, with no marking for or restriction in tense, aspect, mood or person (Trask, 1993: 141). Thus, the *New Webster's Dictionary* (1992: 496) defines the infinitive as “uninflected verb form conveying simply the idea of the action of the verb without limitation of person, number, or mood”.

In traditional grammar, the infinitive has been classed as a type of *mood*, in accordance with the usage of Latin grammarians, who called it *modus infinitives* = ‘the indefinite mood’. However, its function is not to express the manner of an action, nor to denote the aspect under which it is considered, but to simply express a doing or a happening without qualification, in the most general terms (Onions, 1971: 112).

Infinitives are most often used as complements of other verbs, but can also have various other uses; they are commonly used as the citation forms of verbs in the language which possess them (Trask, 1993: 141).

2.3 *The Infinitive: Forms*

English has two forms of infinitives: *to*-infinitive and bare infinitive (infinitive without *to*). The term *to*-infinitive is the conventional label for an infinitival verb phrase preceded by the formative *to*, as in:

(5)

He was the first man to climb Mount Everest.

Lisa wants to buy a car. (Allen, 1959: 182)

In traditional grammar, such a sequence as ‘to buy’ was regarded as a single form, the so-called ‘infinitive’ of the verb *buy*, but this analysis is rejected by all contemporary theories of grammar: all possible tests point to the conclusion that the sequence (*buy a car*) is a constituent (a verb phrase), and hence to the conclusion that (*to buy*) is not a constituent of any kind (Trask, 1993: 279).

The infinitive may denote either present or past time in eight tense forms as shown in Table (1) below (Quirk et al, 1985: 153 and Alexander, 1988: 299).

Table (1) Tense Forms of the to-infinitive in English

Infinitive	Active	Passive
Present	to ask	to be asked
Present progressive	to be asking	to be being asked
Perfect	to have asked	to have been asked
Perfect progressive	to have been asking	to have been being asked (<i>rare</i>)

A present infinitive is used to express an action or a state that may be either present or future in its relation to some given action or

time. A perfect infinitive is used to express an action or a state that is past in its relation to some given action or time (Miller, 1964: 170).

(6)

I am sorry to have caused you some inconvenience by misreading the subscription information. (Greenbaum, 2000: 266)

After verbs expressing *wish, intention, duty, etc.*, the perfect form of the infinitive is used, to show that the wish, intention, etc. was not carried out:

(7)

He intended to have gone. (but something stopped him)

He would have gone. (but he was not able)

He ought to have gone. (but he neglected to do so)

(Nesfield, 1939: 56)

There is no form for the future infinitive, but the idea of the future is expressed by means of such expressions as “about to”:

(8)

He was about to go.

(Tipping, 1933: 181)

As for the infinitive without-*to*, it is known as the plain infinitive. This form of infinitive is only used in a verbal function and never in a nominal function. In cases where other languages use a plain infinitive as the subject, object or nominal predicate of a sentence, English uses either an infinitive with *to* or a gerund (Zandvoort, 1957: 4).

The main use of the bare infinitive is after modal verbs. All the modal verbs (except *ought*) must be followed by a bare infinitive.

(9)

I can/ could/ may/ might/ will/ would/ shall/ should/ must leave soon.

(Alexander, 1988: 299)

The *to* is also left out after ‘than’ and ‘but’:

(10)

*He did nothing but laugh.**He did nothing else than laugh.* (Nesfield, 1939: 57)

And it is also left out after certain phrases:

(11)

*I had rather take this than that**You had better not remain here.* (Ibid.)The “to” is also omitted after verbs expressing sensation e.g (*see, hear, feel, watch, ...etc.*) and after such verbs as (*need, dare, make, let*):

(12)

*We saw the bird come to the door.**My father let me drive the car.* (Eckersley & Macaulay, 1953: 45-6)But if these verbs are used in the passive, the *to* is used.

(13)

*He was heard to speak**They had been made to work.* (Eckersley, 1933: 66)

It is not normally advisable to put any words between the *to* and the verb (i.e., split infinitive) (Thomson and Martinet, 1986: 212). However, there are certain cases where such splitting is obligatory as in:

(14)

He wasn't able to even move his fingers. (Quirk et al, 1985: 496)

To avoid repetition, an infinitive is sometimes represented by its *to* element alone:

(15)

Do you smoke? – No, but I used to (smoke). (Thomson and Martinet, 1986: 212)

2.4 Uses of the Infinitive

The uses of the infinitive in English fall into two main groups:

- i) those in which it is a noun-equivalent (noun infinitive),
 - ii) those in which it is an adverb-equivalent (qualifying infinitive)
- (Onions, 1971: 113). These functions are briefly discussed in the following sections.

2.4.1 The Noun Infinitive

In this capacity, the infinitive does the work of (a) subject to a verb, (b) object to a verb, (c) subject complement to a verb, (d) object complement to a verb, (e) object to a preposition, and (f) a form of exclamation. Since it does the work of a noun in all the positions which a noun is expected to fill, it is very fitly called the Noun–Infinitive (Nesfield, 1927: 101).

(a) The subject of a verb

(16)

To ride with a drunk driver is dangerous. (Azar, 1999: 172)

The subject is often placed in extrapolation, represented before the verb by the preparatory *it*.

(17)

To swim is good exercise.

It is good exercise to swim. (Johnson and Thornley, 1948: 132)

(b) An infinitive as a predicative noun

(18)

It is easy to say so.

(Tipping, 1933: 178)

When we have infinitives both as subject and predicative as in:

(19)

To see her is to love her.

the sentence does not really denote complete identity of the two acts, for it is not possible to reverse the terms; what is meant is that *seeing* immediately leads *to love* (Jespersen, 1933: 331).

(c) The object of a verb:

(20)

I asked him to leave the room.

(Bruit, 2003: 20)

And as a second object:

(21)

We told him to resign

(Onions, 1971: 37)

(d) The subject complement of a verb:

(22)

He appears to be clever.

(Nesfield, 1939: 91)

(e) The object complement of a verb:

(23)

I ordered him to go.

(Nesfield, 1927: 101)

(f) The object of a preposition:

(24)

He was about to retire.

(Jespersen, 1933: 333)

(g) A form of exclamation:

(25)

To think that it has come to this!

(Oliphant, 1928: 47)

(h) An infinitive as appositive:

(26)

Your ambition, to become a farmer, requires hard work.

(Voigt and Germer, 2001: 2)

Bare infinitive can also function as subject complement, subject in a pseudo-cleft sentence, object complement, and an object of preposition:

(27)

a. *What the plan does is ensure a fair pension for all.*

b. *Turn off the tap was what I did.*

c. *They made her pay for the damage.*

d. *She did everything but make her bed.*

(Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990: 313)

2.4.2 *The Qualifying Infinitive*

In this capacity, the infinitive does the work of an adjective or of an adverb (Nesfield, 1927: 102).

(a) The qualifying infinitive as an adjective is used to qualify nouns as in the following examples:

(28)

Lend me a book to read. (Miller, 1964: 173)

There was no time to waste. (Stageberg, 1971: 227)

(b) The qualifying infinitive as an adverb is used to modify:

1- adjectives as shown in the examples below:

(29)

We were sorry to hear the bad news. (Azar, 1999: 175)

We are sure to win. (Tipping, 1933: 178)

Green persimmons aren't good to eat. (Sledd, 1959: 220)

2- verbs as in the examples below:

(30)

He came to see the sport. (Nesfield, 1927: 102)

He laughed to hear you speak. (Miller, 1964: 173)

The infinitive can also be used to introduce a parenthesis. Its use is then absolute, that is to say, more or less independently of the rest of the sentence.

(31)

To be honest, I didn't enjoy it. (Chalker, 1984: 189)

He is, to speak plainly, a thief. (Nesfield, 1939: 91)

To tell the truth, I do not know. (Tipping, 1933: 179)

The infinitive is also used to convey various semantic relations as shown in the following examples:

(32)

He came here to speak to me, not to you. (purpose)(Jespersen, 1933: 337)

I was shocked to see how ill he was. (reaction) (Swan, 1996: 270)

I couldn't write a sonnet to save my life. (result)(Jespersen, 1933: 338)

The noise was so tremendous as to be heard for miles. (result)(Tipping, 1933: 179)

He was angry to hear that. (cause) (Miller, 1964: 173)

To see him, you'd never think he was 20. (condition)(Chalker, 1984: 250)

It was too heavy to lift. (degree) (Villalon, 1997: 20)

An infinitive, according to its distribution in the sentence, can be primary (noun), secondary (verb), or a tertiary (modifier) (Jespersen, 1969: 147). It serves as a primary infinitive when it functions as a subject or an object. When the infinitive is a secondary, it is virtually a kind of participle and might therefore imply, but not really denote, a nexus:

(33)

This is never-to-be-forgotten day. (Jespersen, 1933: 334)

When an infinitive stands as a tertiary it is generally preceded by a preposition. But the preposition, which originally serves to indicate this role of the infinitive as purpose, reaction, etc., tends to become a fixed part of the infinitive as in '*The worst is still to come*' (Jespersen, 1969: 49, 147).

2.5 The Split Infinitive: Definition

When an adverbial or some other adjunct is embedded between the two parts of the *to*-infinitive (i.e. the infinitive marker *to*, and the base form of the verb) then the infinitive is said to be *split*. (Hartmann & Stork, 1972: 217)

(34)

*She was told **to regularly attend** classes.* (ibid.)

The Living Webster Encyclopedic Dictionary (1977:940) defines split infinitive as an infinitive with a modifier between “to” and the verb, as: *to readily understand*: a usage not now considered grammatically incorrect, but one commonly avoided by careful writers.

There is a strong tendency to put the sentence adverb not before *to*, i.e. outside of the clause, but within the clause immediately before the infinitive, just as one puts it in the full clause immediately before the verb containing the verbal meaning:

(35)

*a. I wish the reader **to clearly understand** this.*

*a`. I wish that the reader **may clearly understand** this.*

*b. She desired **to utterly forget** her past.*

*b`. She desired that she **might utterly forget** her past.*

(Curme, 1947: 269).

According to Curme (ibid.148) and Tipping (1933: 180), such examples clearly show that the split infinitive is in full accord with the spirit of Modern English, and one can find numerous examples of split infinitives in the works of many great authors both old and modern.

The inserted adjunct can be any adverb, the negative particle ‘not’, though *-ly* adverbs are more usually used:

(36)

*I'd like to **really** understand the philosophy.* (Swan, 1996: 260)

*They tried to **accurately** predict the future.* (Alexander, 1988: 304)

*To **deliberately** split an infinitive is necessary here.* (Sledd, 1959: 248)

*Martha tried to **always** finish first.*

(Greenbaum and Quirk, 1990: 162)

*His hardest decision was to **not** allow the children to go to summer camp.* (Quirk et al, 1985: 497)

*How could people be so insensitive as to **not** know they've got wax in their ears?* (Greenbaum, 2000: 147)

Many grammarians have continuously argued that one cannot really split an infinitive, since “to” is not part of the infinitive. Sometimes it is not present at all. In a sentence like “I helped him to break the code”, the “to” could easily be dropped. And in sentences like “I let him break the code” and “I saw him break the code”, the infinitive “break” must go alone (The New York Times, 2004:1). This point is discussed in the next section.

2.6 Split Infinitive: Overview

In Old English, an ending ‘*ian*’ was used with the verb to show the infinitive form; e.g., ‘*breokian* = to break’. As for the Modern English

infinitive, it is derived from the Middle English infinitive, which was marked by the endings ‘-e’ and ‘-en’.

(37)

a. ne nalde he nawt þolien þe þeof forte **breoken** hire
 would not he at all allow the thief to break it
he would not allow the thief to break into it.

(Bennett & Smithers, 1966: 247).

b. he ne oghte nat hyt for to **telle**
 he not ought not it to tell
he ought no to tell it.

(Sullens, 1983: 93)

The examples above show that the use of *to* with the infinitive in Middle English almost exactly matched its use in modern English; that is, sometimes it was used (as in 37.b), and sometimes not used (as in 37.a).

As Middle English lost the ‘-e’ and ‘-en’ endings, the use of the preposition “to” before the verb became the established indicator of the infinitive. Once this change took place, people began to split the infinitive by separating the verb from the preposition “to” (Crystal, 1995: 45).

Since the infinitival marker “to” is a separate word, adverbials (especially single adverbs) can sometimes intervene between it and the infinitive. The interruption results in what is traditionally known as the split infinitive (Greenbaum, 2000: 147).

This construction is common in English and it goes back to the thirteenth century, but was relatively rare until the nineteenth century. No split infinitives are to be found in the works of Shakespeare, Spenser, Pope, or in the King James Version of the Bible (Gowers, 1954: 324).

The construction got its name and ill fame many centuries after it first appeared in English but during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries great numbers of split infinitives appeared in print, and many complaints followed (Wilson, 1993: 1).

The only rationale for condemning the construction is based on a false analogy with Latin. The thinking is that because the Latin infinitive is a single word and therefore could not be split (“to love” is “*amare*”), it was arbitrarily decided that the equivalent English construction should be treated as if it were a single unit. But in fact English is not Latin, and each language has its own constructions and its own grammatical rules, and thus one cannot graft Latin structure onto English sentence. However, many distinguished writers have split infinitives without giving it a thought (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 2000: 1).

The earliest prohibition of the usage of split infinitive was made in 1762, when Robert Lowth argued that because a split infinitive was not permissible in Latin, it should not be permissible in English.(*ibid.*)

It is worth noting that it is impossible to split an infinitive in Latin, since the Latin infinitive is a single word. Some authorities (for example, Jespersen and *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary of English Usage*) claim that the English infinitive is also a single word.

The split infinitive was not used much in the eighteenth century, so Lowth’s prohibition did not attract much public adherence. However, split infinitives became more common in the nineteenth century, and general awareness seems to have started with Henry Alford’s condemnation of them in *A Plea for the Queen’s English*, published in 1866. Alford, a Classics scholar who sought to civilize the English of Shakespeare and Milton by imposing on it the rules of Latin

grammar, could not bear to see an adverb slip between “to” and an infinitive.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the prohibition was firmly established in the press and popular belief. During certain treaty negotiations with the United States, the British Government went so far as to issue instructions to its representatives allowing them to make concessions on fishing rights and reparations, but forbidding them to accept a treaty in which an adverb is separated to form an infinitive. The first known use of the term “split infinitive” in modern times was in 1897 (*The Free Encyclopedia*, 2004: 1).

For generations, such a strong condemnation of this construction was reiterated by grammarians of the prescriptivist bend, in spite of the fact that it is the normal English form; their insistence on placing the adverb somewhere else ignores the unnaturalness and even the occasional impossibility of reordering examples like:

(38)

She decided to gradually get rid of the teddy bears she had been collecting for years. (Trask, 1993: 257)

The rule against splitting infinitives, though simple, did not take actual usage into account. Ideally, English adverbs immediately precede the verbs they modify as in: *He stoutly defended his opinion*, or come at the end of the predicate and modify the whole sentence as in: *He defended his opinion stoutly*, or modify the entire sentence rather than just the verb by appearing at the beginning of the sentence as in: “*stoutly, he defended his opinion*”.

These generalizations also describe the placement of adverbial modifiers of the infinitive. These adverbials, however, can be ambiguous in writing, where intonation is not available to assist in specifying

grammatical relationships. This potentiality for confusion probably accounts for the popularity of the split infinitive, which eliminates all possibility of ambiguity (Wilson, 1993: 1). Consider these three sentences:

(39)

a. *The driver is instructed periodically to check the oil level.*

b. *The driver is instructed to periodically check the oil level.*

c. *The driver is instructed to check the oil level periodically.*

The first example (a), which avoids splitting the infinitive, is possibly ambiguous, at least in writing: *is the driver instructed periodically, or is it the checking that's to be done periodically?* The second example (b) splits the infinitive but makes it clear that *periodically* modifies the verb *check*. Sentence(c) does not split the infinitive, but unless it is punctuated as a sentence modifier; it could conceivably be thought to modify *instructed* rather than *to check*. It is a weak ambiguity, but it can well mislead at least some readers (*ibid.*).

In his book *The Mother Tongue*, Bryson points out that virtually all recognized authorities on English - from Theodore Bernstein and Henry W. Fowler to Eric Partridge and Ernest Gowers – agree that there is no reason to put the needs of the infinitive above the needs of the adverb (Crystal, 1995: 91). Accordingly, the old rule of “never splitting one’s infinitives” lost ground in speech. Its use is no more considered bad style, for there is now a more relaxed attitude to this, especially in spoken English.

(40)

It would take ages to really master this subject.

The adverb *really* is often placed after the marker *to* in colloquial English as in the example above (Thomson and Martinet, 1986: 221). Surveys of English Usage among educated British adults reveal numerous split infinitives. One such a survey conducted in 1980 (involving three women and one man) gives a count of nineteen split infinitives in a professional psychiatric discussion which lasted for three-quarters of an hour (Quirk et al, 1985: 498). The influential *New Oxford Dictionary of English* recently admitted that “in Standard English the principle of allowing split infinitives is broadly accepted as both normal and useful” (Jerz, 1998: 1).

Some modern grammarians consider the rule against the use of the split infinitive as an artificial restriction that serves no real function and contradicts actual language use. Other grammarians see no grammatical justification for the rule, considering it merely a question of style (ibid.).

The situation is different in written discourse. Proscribed against by educators, editors, authors, journalists, and a number of manuals dealing with the improvement of expository writing and the teaching of English as a foreign Language, the split infinitive seems to have no place in written discourse (Lucas, 2004: 1). When exceptions are stated in grammatical texts, the “rules” for the usage of the split infinitive in writing are vague at best. According to various grammatical guides, it is acceptable in writing if:

1. another construction would be ambiguous, awkward, or less emphatic,
2. the sentence will feel more natural,
3. or when a split infinitive is less awkward than a preceding one, adding the contradictory warning that

“to be on the safe side, however, one should not split such infinitives, especially in formal writing” (ibid.).

Despite the evidence the authors of such texts present demonstrating the practicality of the form, split infinitives are clearly stigmatized as something to be avoided in written discourse. However, the construction has not become obsolete. In fact, its appearance permeates every level of both spoken and written discourse, from the lowest registers to the most formal.

Perhaps the best-known example of a split infinitive is that of “to boldly go where no man has gone before” which was heard in the introductory voice-over to each episode of *Star Trek*. Here, “boldly” modifies the entire verb phrase. The meaning is “to have the boldness that the unprecedentedness of the destinations requires”. If “boldly” were placed after “go”, it would modify only “go”, changing the meaning to “to go where no man has gone before, and by the way, to go there boldly” (Faq, 2004: 1-2).

2. 7 Functions of the Split Infinitive

Today, split infinitives continue to appear often in standard speech and even in edited English, especially in sentences where to avoid them would be clumsier and less effective than to use them (Lucas, 2004: 3).

Despite the heavy prescription against the use of split infinitive, several important functions have been demonstrated. One of them is the use of the split infinitive as a clarifying and arranging element within the sentence (ibid. 4). Older usage with the adverb before *to* is often ambiguous:

(41)

He failed entirely to understand it.

This sentence is ambiguous since the hearer does not know whether *entirely* modifies *failed* or *understand*. But when the split infinitive is used, the meaning of the sentence becomes clear:

(42)

He failed to entirely understand it.

This is because it shows the adverb *entirely* to modify the verb *understand*. Thus the much censured split infinitive is actually an improvement of English expression (Curme, 1947: 269).

In some contexts splitting the infinitive avoids ambiguity, for example:

(43)

Certainly all the members of the panel here tonight are too young to really remember the Second World War.

If the adverb *really* was placed before *to*, it could be misunderstood as focusing on *too young*, though in speech the intended focus could be conveyed intonationally. In other contexts, the infinitive must be split, unless the sentence is rephrased (Greenbaum, 2000: 147).

The position of the adverb after “to” makes the meaning perfectly clear in some cases which would otherwise be open to misunderstanding. Thus, the structure with the split infinitive:

(44)

A vicious back-hander, which I failed to entirely avoid.

indicates imperfect success, while:

(45)

.... I failed entirely to avoid.

might mean complete failure (Jespersen, 1933: 346). The phenomenon described here may be taken as evidence of the fact that *to* is often felt as belonging more closely to the preceding verb than to the infinitive. This is shown even more conclusively by the possibility of using *to* by itself instead of a clumsy repetition of the whole *to*-infinitive:

(46)

Will they play?

Yes, I asked them to (= asked them to play) (ibid.)

Split infinitives are also employed when the speaker wants to really emphasize something and to provide a necessary emphasis in conversation:

(47)

Student A: I'm going to do better next year.

Student B: I'm going to really do better next year.

(The Free Encyclopedia, 2004: 3)

In speech, intonation would make the following sentences perfectly clear:

(48)

- *Such writers have not failed heartily to abet the leaders.*
- *Who makes it a business regularly to follow their activities?*
- *Do you intend seriously to review such garbage?*

(Robertson and Cassidy, 1954: 302)

But when they are written, the intonation is not shown, and the writer must recast them. One possible revision is to split the infinitives, replacing the ambiguous *seriously to review*, for example, by *to seriously review*, which is unmistakable.

The familiar taboo might be weakened if it were generally realized that split infinitives are sometimes a stylistic device to remedy the deficiencies of our writing system (Sledd, 1959: 270-1).

In fact, an infinitive will occasionally require splitting; sometimes for meaning, and sometimes for sentence cadence. Slipping an adverb in the middle of the infinitive can soften a thought, emphasize an idea, or improve a sentence's rhythm (Simmons, 1997: 3). In many cases, clarity and naturalness of expression are best served by a judicious splitting of infinitives (Norton, 1985: 298).

However, using a split infinitive may be the most stylish solution in some cases. But one must take care not to ruin the rhyme of the sentence or create an unintended meaning by displacing an adverb. When choosing to retain split infinitive, one should be wary of constructions that have more than one word between *to* and the verb:

(49)

She asked me to as quickly as possible drop over her house.

In the example above, the splitting of the infinitive makes the sentence awkward because the adverb is a four-word structure (Richards et al, 1992: 348).

On the other hand, in some different contexts, the split infinitive is unavoidable, as in the sentence:

(50)

We expect our output to more than double in a year.

Excessive zeal in avoiding the split infinitive may result in an awkward placement of adverbs in constructions involving the auxiliary verbs *be* and *have*. Infinitive phrases in which the adverb precedes a participle, such as *to be rapidly rising*, *to be clearly understood*, and *to have been*

ruefully mistaken, are not split and should be acceptable to everybody. By the same token, there are no grounds for objecting to the position of the adverb in the sentence:

(51)

He is committed to laboriously assembling all of the facts of the case.

since what is “split” here is not an infinitive but a prepositional phrase (ibid. 1).

Occasionally, one can even have a sentence in which it is impossible to leave the infinitive unsplit. In Tract No. 15 of the Society for Pure English, the following example is given:

(52)

*With us outside the Treaty, we must expect the commission to **at least** neglect our interests.*

“At least”, says the writer, “cannot be put before *to* because it would then go with *commission*, nor after *neglect* because it would then be doubtful whether it referred back to *neglect* or forward to *interests*, nor after *interests* because it would then belong either to *interests* or to *neglect our interests*, neither being what is meant; where it stands, it secures our realizing that the writer has in mind some other verb such as *injure* or *oppose* with which the weaker *neglect* is to be contrasted”

(Oliphant, 1928: 95)

2.8 Split Infinitive: Different Points of View

Just as the prohibition against the split infinitive was becoming part of popular culture, there was a reaction against it among leading

writers and grammarians. For example, in the 1907 edition of the King's English, the Fowler brothers wrote:

The Split infinitive has taken such hold upon the consciences of journalists that, instead of warning the novice against splitting his infinitives, we must warn him against the curious superstition that the splitting or not splitting makes the difference between a good and a bad writer.

(Cited in The Free Encyclopedia, 2004: 2)

The reaction against this “superstition” was based on grammatical, historical, and stylistic considerations. Grammatically, the prohibition of split infinitives was thought to be an application of Latin Grammar to a Germanic Language. In addition, there are good grounds to argue that “to” is not part of the infinitive and that placing another word between *to* and the following infinitive is not splitting the infinitive. Historically, English writers have been separating *to* from the infinitive at least since Layamon in 1250. And, stylistically, the careful placement of another word between *to* and the infinitive sometimes avoids ambiguity or ugliness.(*ibid.*)

There was frequent skirmishing between the splitters and anti-splitters up until the 1960s. George Bernard Shaw wrote letters to newspapers supporting writers who used the split infinitive, and Raymond Chandler complained to his publisher about a proofreader who changed Chandler's split infinitives. As some grammarians were condemning the split infinitive, others were endorsing it.

2. 8. 1 Jespersen (1933)

In his “*Essentials of English Grammar*” (1933) Jespersen mentions that placing an adverb between “to” and the infinitive is found as early as the thirteenth century and is favoured by many distinguished writers especially of late, but nevertheless it is often condemned by grammarians who have invented the name ‘Split infinitive’ for the phenomenon. (*ibid*: 345)

2. 8. 2 Curme (1947)

In his definitive work *English Grammar*, Curme argues that splitting an infinitive is often necessary to make the meaning clear. He offers the following ambiguous example, previously quoted in (41):

(53)

He failed entirely to understand it.

and asks the two important questions of i) what the adverb *entirely* actually modifies, and ii) whether it modifies *failed* or *understand*. This problem is solved as soon as the infinitive is split.

(54)

He failed to entirely understand it.

Curme traces the split infinitive back to the 14th century indicating that the split infinitive has been gaining favour as it has become better understood ever since. At present, it is widely used by our best writers because of its advantages while our minor writers avoid it following the instructions of their school – teachers (Curme, 1947: 269).

2. 8.3 Gowers (1954)

Gowers wrote in *The Complete Plain Words*, (1954: 324):

The well-known rule against splitting an infinitive means that nothing must come between ‘to’ and the infinitive. It is a bad name as was pointed out by Jespersen ‘because we have many infinitives without to’ as “I made him go”. To therefore is no more an essential part of the infinitive than the definite article is an essential part of a substantive, and no one would think of calling the good man a split substantive. It is a bad rule too; it increases the difficulty of writing clearly.

2. 8.4 Nesfield (1954)

Nesfield in *Manual of English Grammar and Composition* (1954) wrote that split infinitive is called “divided infinitive” and it is rejected: “an adverb should not be placed between the “to” and the infinitive.” The custom is springing up, but it is not sanctioned by the usage of any good writers (Nesfield, 1954: 130).

2. 8.5 Kierzek and Gibson (1960)

In *The Macmillan Handbook of English* (1960) Kierzek and Gibson argued that split infinitive is no longer considered one of the seven deadly sins of college composition - if it ever was. It is not true that the

parts of an infinitive are inseparable. But since a split infinitive still causes many persons discomfort, if not actual suffering, it is better for the student not to split his infinitives too rashly. A good rule to follow is this: “place the adverbial modifier between *to* and the verb of an infinitive only when such an arrangement is necessary to avoid an awkward phrase”. A writer should remember to not carelessly split his infinitive (ibid.390).

2.8.6 Fowler (1965)

In the second edition of Fowler’s *Dictionary of Modern English Usage* (1965), he writes that “to” + infinitive is “a definitely enough recognized verb-form to make the clinging together of its parts the natural and normal thing”. There is, however, no sacrosanctity about that arrangement. There are many considerations that should govern placement of adverbs: there are other sentence elements, he said, such as the verb and its object that have a stronger affinity for each other; but only avoidance of the split infinitive “becomes a fetish”. He concludes his statement by saying, “We will split infinitives sooner than be ambiguous or artificial” (ibid. 374).

2.8.7 Onions (1971)

Onions in *Modern English Syntax* (1971) argued that split infinitive known incorrectly by this name consists in the separation of “to” from the verb stem by means of an adverb.

A constant and unguarded use of it is not to be encouraged, some would refuse altogether to recognize it, as being inelegant and un-English.

On the other hand, it may be said that its occasional use is of advantage in circumstances where it is desired to avoid ambiguity by indicating the close connexion of the adverb with the infinitive and thus preventing its being taken in conjunction with some other word (Onions, 1971: 120).

2.8.8 Chalker (1984)

In her “*Current English Grammar*” (1984) Chalker states that it is often bad grammar to split an infinitive by putting a word between “to” and the base word. However, she contends that it is sometimes acceptable, as is the case in the following two examples:

(55)

- a. The United Nations is expected *to strongly condemn* action in sending armed fighter planes over the territory of another independent sovereign state.
- b. Could I ask you *to kindly ring* my secretary?

In (55a), *is expected strongly* would hopelessly alter the meaning; to condemn strongly is possible but breaks another ‘rule’ about not

separating a verb from its object. In (55b) *Kindly* cannot be moved. (ibid: 146).

2.8.9 Quirk et al (1985)

The co-authors of *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* stress the fact that the placement of adverbials in split infinitive structures should seem ‘perfectly acceptable and natural’ as that in perfective or modal verb phrases since they are closely parallel:

(56)

She ought to have seriously consider her position.

She should seriously consider her position.

She ought to seriously consider her position. (Quirk et al, 1985: 496)

They also note that split infinitives are more common with the gradable adverbs of “narrow orientation” whose scope of application seems to have a special relation with the subject rather than the whole sentence like those of manner such as *really, truly, rather, further* and *even* (ibid. 497-8; 573).

In Colloquial English, the split infinitive is often associated “with a following focus” as in:

(57)

Well, you ought to at least TRY.

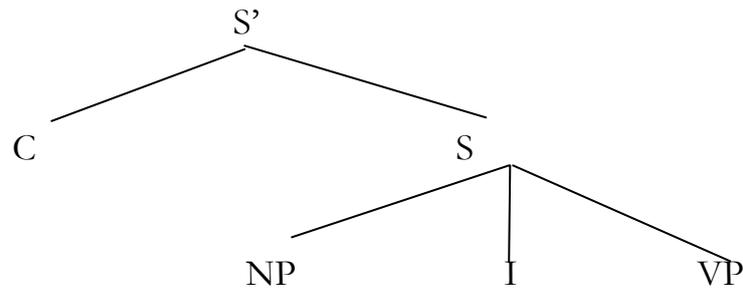
The focus can be intensified by superlatives or other expressions of comparison:

(58)

She was the first person to ever live in that house. (ibid. 498)

2.8.10 Radford (1988)

According to TGG, both the finite and non-finite clauses have the schematic S' form (Radford, 1988: 304):

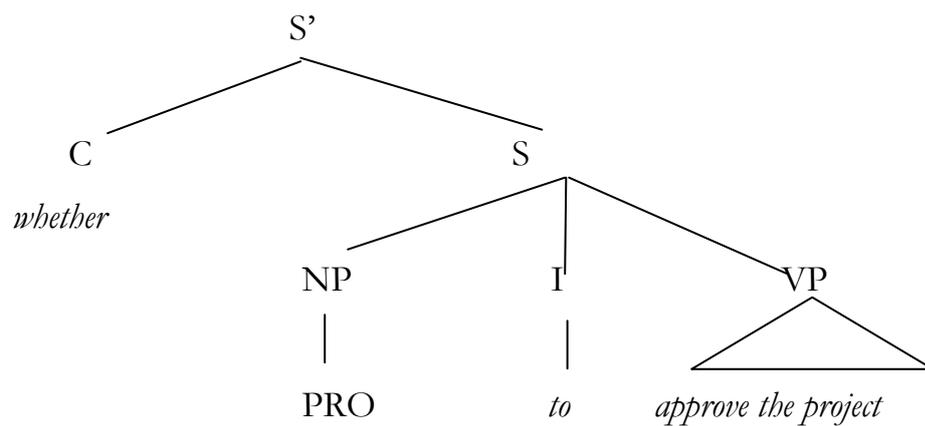


Where (S') is the Matrix Clause, (C) is Complementizer, S is the Subordinate (embedded) Clause, (NP) is Noun Phrase, (I) is Inflectional Node, and (VP) is the Verb Phrase. (ibid. 314):

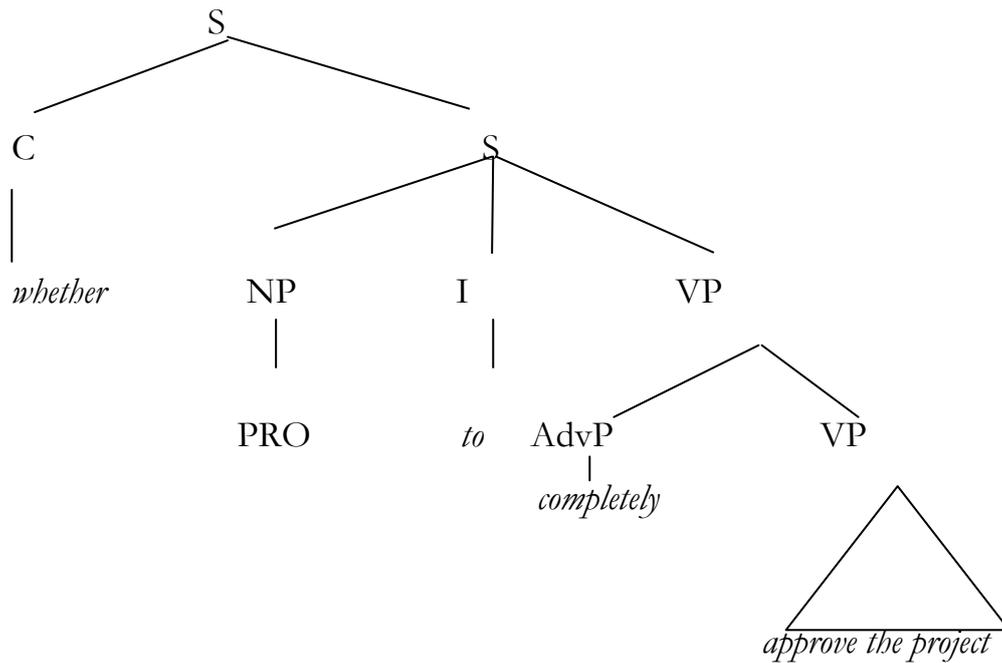
(59)

whether to approve the project

is:



In case of split infinitive, the adverb node is dominated by the VP node:



2. 8.11 Wilson (1993)

Kenneth Wilson wrote in *The Columbia Guide to Standard American English*, (1993): “split an infinitive in speech whenever you wish, if the result sounds clear and unambiguous, but in writing follow the conservative path, especially when you’re uncertain of your readers’ expectations and sensitivities in this matter” (ibid.: 2)

2.8.12 The Oxford American Desk Dictionary (1998)

The Oxford American Desk Dictionary which came out in October of 1998 is considered by many to be the final word on the English language and when Oxford speaks, people listen. It says that the rule against the split infinitive can generally be ignored, that the rule “is not firmly grounded, and that treating two English words as one can lead to

awkward, stilted sentences”. Thus according to the Oxford Dictionary Split infinitives were not just condoned but encouraged and the rule in this matter ought to be this: “The form which serves the reader or listener best is the one you should go for.” So captain Kirk was right all along.... *to boldly split what no man has dared split before.*

Today’s dictionaries allow us to split the infinitive, but it should never be done at the expense of grace. Hardly any serious commentator believes that infinitives should never be split. The dispute is between those who believe that split infinitives should be avoided when this can be done with no sacrifice of clarity or naturalness, and those who believe that no effort whatever should be made to avoid them.

2.8.13 Zimmer (2004)

Zimmer advocates the use of the split infinitive all the time as stated in the following quotation:

"Rules of grammar are largely descriptive rather than prescriptive as it is, and the injunction 8th grade English teachers give against the split infinitive is one I have always found hard to understand. I like split infinitives. In fact, I believe that sometimes to not split an infinitive makes the sentence sound awkward."

(ibid: 6)

2.9 Problems Caused by Trying to Avoid Splitting Infinitives

The prohibition on split infinitives is more surprising when one observes that there are a number of expressions in English that are weakened considerably by avoiding the split infinitive. The phrase “I plan to really enjoy the party” is more natural and rhythmic than alternatives such as “I plan really to enjoy the party” and “I plan to enjoy really the party”. The final possible alternative “I plan to enjoy the party, really” actually possesses a slightly different meaning. (The otherwise perfectly acceptable variation “I really plan to enjoy the party” is not relevant to this particular discussion, as the adverb modifies the indicative verb “plan” rather than the infinitive “enjoy”) (The Free Encyclopedia, 2004: 2).

Clumsy avoidance of split infinitives often leads to ambiguity. For example, does the sentence “You fail completely to recognize” mean “You completely fail to recognize” or “You fail to completely recognize”? Does the construction “to further cement trade relations” mean “to cement trade relations further”, or “to promote relations with the cement trade”?

Perhaps the worst problem caused by the belief that infinitives should not be split, however, is that it leads to a wholly groundless avoidance of splitting in other compound verb forms. For example, people will contort sentences to avoid placing an adverb in its usual position between the auxiliary verb and the participle, leading to constructions such as, “**The argument originally had been used..*” in stead of “*The argument had originally been used..*”, which is more natural for most speakers (ibid.3).

The widespread prejudice against split infinitives must not be underestimated, especially with respect to formal writing, and indeed there is no feature of usage on which critical native reaction more frequently focuses. In consequence, it is by no means unusual to detect awkward and unidiomatic usage that clearly results from conscious avoidance:

(60)

She was forced apologetically to interpose a question at this point.

In this example, the avoidance of splitting the infinitive has produced ambiguity, since one can not tell whether it was 'she' who was apologetic or those who 'forced' her. Similarly, on reading the sentence:

(61)

She has tried consciously to stop worrying about her career.

Here one cannot decide whether it was *her trying* that was conscious or whether *she wished the stopping to be conscious*. On the other hand, with an alternative avoidance:

(62)

She has tried to stop consciously worrying about her career.

One does not know whether the sentence refers to 'a conscious stop' or to 'a conscious worry'. If the former were intended, defiance of the prejudice against the split infinitive would at least make the meaning clear:

(63)

She has tried to consciously stop worrying about her career.

(Quirk et al, 1985: 497)

It should be acknowledged, that in some cases the split infinitive is the only tolerable ordering, since avoiding the split infinitive results in clumsiness or ambiguity (Quirk & Greenbaum, 1973: 312).

Thus split infinitive structures are quite common in English, especially in an informal style but some people consider them incorrect or careless, and avoid them if possible by putting the adverb in another position:

(64)

He began slowly to get up off the floor. (Swan, 1996: 261)

2.10 Compound Split Infinitives

Compound split infinitives – where more than one adverb is employed – are still contentious; as recently as 1996 the Usage Panel of *The American Heritage Book of English Usage* was evenly divided for and against such sentences as:

(65)

I expect him to completely and utterly fail.

To at all times properly empty all closets.

We are seeking a plan to gradually, systematically, and economically relieve the burden.

Ernest Gowers describes the last sentence as a “Crescendo of Splitting” and more than three quarters of the panel rejected this sentence. The panel was not entirely consistent, however, as 87% deemed “We expect our output to more than double in a year” to be acceptable (The Free Encyclopedia, 2004: 3).

Problems can arise if a very long modifying sequence of words is placed between the *to* and the verb:

(66)

I want you to without any delay and any kind of lily-livered second-guessing or beating about the bush or quibbling over trivialities inform the writers of their responsibilities.

Here, the reader or listener may well become confused about just what the real meaning is, and it is thus justifiable to re-cast the sentence to avoid compound split infinitive (Eunson, 2003: 18-19).

2.11 Non-adverbial Insertions

There are rare examples of non-adverbial insertions into infinitives, as in

(67)

It was their nature to all hurt each other.

It's going to all ruin things. (The Free Encyclopedia, 2004: 3)

Splitting infinitives by using negations, as in the phrase “I want to not see you any more”, are generally considered awkward or ungrammatical, the phrasing “I don’t want to see you any more” being preferred (ibid.).

(68)

His hardest decision was to not allow the children to go to summer camp.

(Quirk et al, 1985: 497)

How could people be so insensitive as to not know they've got wax in their ears? (Greenbaum, 2000: 147)

Another variant of split infinitive construction involves the placement of “so” between *to* and the infinitive (this is particularly rare) as in:

(69)

To so organize the service is administratively difficult.

To further prolong discussion beyond the present meeting would be very undesirable. (Quirk et al, 1985: 498)

2.12 Split Infinitive in Arabic

2.12.1 Introductory Word

In the following sections, a survey is offered about the equivalent of the to-infinitive and the split infinitive in Classical Arabic. The survey will discuss the form and functions of the to-infinitive in Classical Arabic (Henceforth: CA) first, then the acceptability of the split infinitive is explored. The rationale here is to see whether there are cross-linguistic differences or similarities as far as this construction is concerned, and whether the mother tongue plays a facilitative or a negative role in the acquisition of this structure by Iraqi EFL learners. It is also expected that the results of this discussion will cast some useful light upon the causes of learners' errors.

(72)

1. _____ I like you to work hard.
2. _____ I was told that you are a decent man.
3. _____ I admire your working hard.
4. _____ I came in order to learn.
5. _____ I'd like it if you worked hard.

2.12.3 Functions of the Infinitive

Similar to English, the Arabic paraphrased substantive can assume all the functions of the noun in the two main types of Arabic sentence: nominal () and verbal (). Thus, it can function as the inchoative, object, complement, etc. of the sentence (, 1975: 204).

(73)

1. () (*184*)". _____ "
To fast is better for you.
2. () . _____
To disclose your secrets to others is bad for you.
3. () . _____
It is advantageous for you to keep your secrets to yourself.

4. () . _____

I want to visit you.

5. () . _____

I shall stay at home till he leaves.

6. () . _____

It is praiseworthy for you to work hard.

7. () . _____ ()

To hear of al-Mu'aidi is better than to see him.

In the first sentence above, the infinitival clause () functions as its inchoative (); so does the clause () in the second sentence. In the third example, the infinitival clause () is a delayed inchoative () because the sentence begins with a PP PP () that functions as the fronted enunciative (). The fourth sentence offers an example in which the infinitival clause () functions as the object of the verb (), whereas in the fifth sentence the infinitival clause () fills the slot of the genitive ().

In the sixth sentence, the infinitival clause () functions as the pro-agent () for the passive verb (). The last sentence is actually a proverb which has two infinitival clauses serving two different functions: (()) and (). The first infinitival clause () offers one example in CA of the “bare infinitive” in which the particle () is deletable. This clause functions as the inchoative of the sentence. The second infinitival clause () functions as the genitive noun slot-filler () for the preposition () (Howell, 1883: I. 3).

2.12.4 The Split Infinitive in Arabic

The split infinitive in Arabic occurs when the particle that introduces it is negated either with the negative particle () or () inserted between the infinitival particle (*to*) and its verb (Wright, 1955: 103). In the case of (), it is normally assimilated with () both in speech and writing, producing the form ().

(74)

. _____ ()

I'm afraid he won't leave me.

. _____

It is by God's will that I should never stop to love you.

It also occurs in those clauses where the verb is asserted by the verbal assertive particle (**لَا**):

(75)

(**لَا**) _____

Don't you see that you have indeed brought to pass a great calamity? (Howell, 1883: I. 273)

Other cases of the Arabic split infinitive include those structures where an adverbial is placed between the particle and the verb as is the case with the adverbial (**لَا**) in (74) above.

2.12.5 The Split Infinitive In Arabic: Conclusion

The discussion above shows that in Classical Arabic the split infinitive is the obligatory structure. Whenever the speaker wants to negate or affirm the verbal form that follows the particle, he must use the split infinitive form. In view of the linguistic similarity, it is expected that such a similarity plays a facilitative role in the acquisition of split infinitive construction by Iraqi EFL learners whose mother tongue is Arabic.

CHAPTER THREE

Data Collection: The Test

3.1 Introduction

The present chapter is dedicated to the empirical part of the study. It describes test design and procedures followed in its implementation. Its sections define the test's objectives, design, material selection, and sample of the study as well as pilot test and main test administration. It is also concerned with the discussion of the test virtues in terms of its reliability and validity through the use of statistical means and equations. Finally, this chapter specifies the description of the scoring scheme, which has been adopted for the test.

3.2 Test Objectives

As a device that measures the learners' actual performance in the target language, the present test is of a performance type. It has been designed to measure the subjects' ability to recognize the correct use of the split infinitive as well as their correct production of such a grammatical structure.

The objectives of this test have been determined by the requirement of testing the validity of the three hypotheses postulated in Chapter One (See 1.3). Therefore, the test format has

been designed so as to be presented to all subjects. These include both first year and fourth year students since all the hypotheses are related to the acquisition rate of the split infinitive over a four-year period of studying English as a second language at the Departments of English of Iraqi Colleges of Education. The rationale behind such cross-sectional testing is to measure the linguistic performance achieved by the subjects at each particular college level. Then by differentiating the results of the subjects' scores at the first and fourth level, the analyst can get at statistical differential data that allows drawing inferences about the level of acquisition achieved during the target period of four years of EFL learning.

3.3 Subjects

The random sample of the study consisted of four groups of EFL learners, two at the Department of English of the College of Education in the University of Babylon and two at the same department of the College of Education in the University of Al-Qadisiya. Two groups were selected from each college, one from the first-year students (Henceforth: First level) and one from the fourth-year (Henceforth: Fourth level). For the sake of easy reference, the four groups have been named in the following manner:

G1B: First Group, First level, University of Babylon.

G2B: Second Group, Fourth level, University of Babylon.

G3Q: Third Group, First level, University of Al- Qadisiya.

G4Q: Fourth Group, Fourth level, University of Al- Qadisiya.

Hereunder is a table that shows the representative rate for each Group:

Table (2) Sample Representativity Rate

<i>Group No</i>	<i>No of Subjects</i>	<i>Representative Rate</i>
G1B	70	60%
G2B	55	60%
G3Q	43	60%
G4Q	35	60%

Achieving a uniform representative rate of (60%) is quite adequate, given that the above rate is coextensive with all the legible subjects who were present at the time of the test presentation.

The random samples above include subjects who share the same linguistic background, age, nationality, years of EFL learning, and level of study. Female-to-male ratios for each group have always been favorable to female learners since one of the classes contained only one male learner. Such admission distribution makes gender homogenization impossible.

3.4 Material Selection

Most of the test items have been selected from the general grammar books mentioned opposite the examples cited in Chapter Two. These items were selected on the basis of allowing the widest possible coverage of the different functions of the split infinitive.

Test item selection as well as its questions' formats have been approved first by the researcher's supervisors, and subsequently by a jury of fifteen experienced university lecturers whose recommendations and remarks have all been taken into consideration by modifying the test-format accordingly before its application.

The jury included the following members (in academic degree order and alphabetically):

Prof. Abdullatif Al-Jumaily (Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics), College of Arts/ University of Baghdad.

Prof. Salih M. Hameed (Ph.D. in Literature), College of Education / University of Babylon.

Asst. Prof. Abbas D. Darweesh (Ph.D. in Linguistics and Translation), College of Education/ University of Babylon.

Asst. Prof. Abdul-Karim F. Jamil (Ph.D. in English Language and Linguistics), College of Education, Ibn Rushd/ University of Baghdad.

Asst. Prof. Adil Al-Akkam (MA in English Language and Linguistics), College of Basic Education/ University of Babylon.

Asst. Prof. Dunya A. Al-Jazrawi (Ph.D. in English language and Linguistics), College of Arts/ University of Baghdad.

Asst. Prof. Hameed Hassoon (Ph.D. in Linguistics and Translation) College of Education/ University of Babylon.

Asst. Prof. Hashim A. Al-Muradi (Ph.D. in Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language), College of Education/ University of Al-Qadisiya.

Asst. Prof. Lamia' Al-Ani (MA in English Language and Linguistics), College of Education, Ibn Rushd/ University of Baghdad.

Asst. Prof. Mu'ayyad M. Saeed (Ph.D. in Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language), College of Education, Ibn Rushd/ University of Baghdad.

Asst. Prof. Omran M. Mahood (Ph.D. in English Language and Linguistics), College of Education, Ibn Rushd/ University of Baghdad.

Asst. Prof. Razzaq N. Mukheef (MA in English Language and Linguistics), College of Education/ University of Babylon.

Lecturer. 'Aasim A. Al- Dulaimi (Ph.D. in Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language), College of Basic Education/ University of Babylon.

Lecturer . Fareed H. Al-Hindawi (Ph.D. in English Language and Linguistics), College of Education/ University of Babylon.

Lecturer. Maysaa' K. Hussein (Ph.D. in English Language and Linguistics), College of Education/ University of Al- Qadisiya.

3.5 Pilot Test

One week prior to the administration of the main test, a pilot test was conducted on January 8th, 2005 to a random sample of ten students, five from the first level and five from the fourth level at the Department of English, College of Education, University of Babylon. This try-out was carried out to assert two things:

1. that the time limit of (60) minutes is enough for all the learners to write down their responses and submit their answers, and
2. that all learners know well they are required to do without encountering any difficulty in understanding the wording of the questions. The testees were encouraged to ask questions about any difficult item in the test.

As expected, all the testees submitted their responses within the time limit of (60) minutes and no special difficulty was raised about how to answer the questions during this pilot sitting. This meant that the time limit specified above and the forms of questions in the pilot test format are quite adequate for main test administration.

3.6 Main Test Administration

The final test format was administered to the four groups in four separate sittings during the first half of the academic year (2004-2005). Two university lecturers generously collaborated in administering these sittings: Asst. Prof. Dr. Riyadh Al-Ameedi in the University of Babylon, and Asst. Prof. Dr. Hashim Al- Muradi in the University of Al-Qadisiya.

The subjects were informed that their answers will help the researcher attain her purpose, and they were asked to take the test seriously and were encouraged to ask any question for the purpose of explaining the given instructions.

Test format has been organized in such a way that the subjects can provide their responses on the test paper to reduce time and effort.

3.7 Test Description

The present test is an achievement one in that it is designed to look back over a four-year period of FEL learning as far as the acquisition of the split infinitive is concerned. It is divided into two parts, each with two questions. Questions One and Two measure the recognition level in twenty-five multiple choice items, while Questions Three and Four test the production level via the same number of test items. This means that the whole test consists in fifty items, equally split between the recognition and production levels.

Question I includes twelve multiple-choice items that test the subjects' ability to use the split infinitive in those cases where its use is obligatory .

Question II tests the subjects' recognition of the split infinitive form in comparison with the bare- and to- infinitives. This question has thirteen items.

Question III requires a rearrangement production of the split infinitive in twelve items. As for Question IV, it needs the production of the split infinitive through substitution in thirteen items (see Appendix 1).

3.8 Test Virtues

Adequate tests are required to possess the two most important features of *reliability* and *validity*. Ingram (1968: 70) affirms that “tests are only worth having if they measure accurately (i.e. Reliability) what you want them to measure (i.e. Validity)”. These two qualities are discussed in the next two subsections.

3.8.1 Reliability

Test reliability is related to the precision of the measurement that the test makes possible to the effect that the test results allow having confidence in them (Bell, 1981: 199). In other words, reliability means the consistency with which a test measures the same thing all the time (Harrison, 1983: 11)

The calculation of the reliability of the present test has been carried out using Kuder-Richardson Formula No 21:

$$r = 1 - \frac{M(n - M)}{ns^2}$$

where:

r : is the reliability,

M : is the mean of the test scores,

n : is the number of items in the test,

s : is the (SD), i.e., Standard Deviation (ibid: 126).

The means of the collective figures for the symbols above are given in the following equation (fractions discarded):

$$r=1-\frac{41(50-41)}{50(20)^2}$$

$$r=1-\frac{41\times 9}{20000}$$

$$r=1-\frac{369}{20000}$$

$$r=1-0.01845$$

$$r = 0.98155$$

The reliability estimate of (98%) above is considered to be an ideal one, since an estimate of mere (70%) is considered as an indicator of an acceptable reliability factor (*ibid.*). It provides concrete statistical evidence to the fact that the present test measures with consistency what it is designed to measure across different times (Bachman, 1990: 24).

3.8.2 Validity

Validity means “how well a test actually measures what it is supposed to measure” (Lado, 1961: 32). For a test to be valid, it should be accurate in measuring what it is designed to measure. To achieve the validity of the test, it must meet the two criteria of *face* validity and *content* validity.

Face validity is concerned with the way the test looks to the educators, testers and the like (Mehrens and Lehmann, 1984: 295). This test attribute has been maintained by submitting the format to a jury of fifteen specialists in the field before its administration. (See 3.4).

Content validity is concerned with what goes into the test (Harrison, 1983: 11). This attribute has been observed by designing the test items in such a way as to include only those that are strictly related to the recognition and production of the split infinitive.

3.9 Scoring Scheme

The present test is an objective one since it does not depend on the personal opinion of the testee himself. Rather, the

individual is required to either supply brief answers or to choose the only correct alternative. Accordingly, the scoring of the test is objective and consistent

Each test paper was scored out of (100) marks. Scores were equally allocated to both the recognition and the production levels, and to all test items by assigning two marks for each correct response and zero score for the incorrect one. Spelling mistakes and wrong production of sentence elements that are unrelated to the construction of the split infinitive are ignored. All blank items are considered incorrect responses and are, therefore, given zero score since they predict that the subjects have failed to give the required correct response.

The scoring scheme adopted for the present test can be illustrated in the following table:

Table (3) Distribution of the Test's Scores

No. of Question	No. of Item	Scores	Percentage
I	12	24	24%
II	13	26	26%
III	12	24	24%
IV	13	26	26%
Total	50	100	100%

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis by describing the test items' discrimination indices, and facility values with the aid of statistical tables. Then the discussion offers the specific and general results of the subjects by describing the four groups' test means, pass-rates, and their interpretation in terms of contrastive acquisition values. The aims of the analyses above are to test the validity of the three hypotheses offered in Chapter One. This chapter is concluded with an investigation of the probable sources of learners' errors.

4.2 Item Analysis

Two types of item analysis are offered in the next subsections. The first is test-item's Discrimination Index, the second is item's Facility Value.

4.2.1 Item Discrimination Index

This index shows how each test item serves the purpose of sorting out good from poor learners. The basic testing concept involved here is that good learners are expected to be able to answer the most difficult items rather than the opposite. An adequately discriminatory test shows that the correct responses to the most difficult test items coincide with those subjects, who have the highest scores; while the incorrect responses to those same items coincide with the lower scoring subjects.

Items discrimination index (Henceforth: DI) is indicated by the positive correlation between the different measures of the same item by the highest scoring subjects, according to the following formula:

$$DI = \frac{X - Y}{\frac{1}{2}N}$$

where X is the item's particular number of correct responses as scored by the upper half of subjects, Y is the number of correct responses scored by the lower half of subjects, and N is the number of all subjects.

Item's zero discrimination index shows either all the subjects have answered it correctly or incorrectly, or that the item is non-discriminatory in that the number of correct responses to it is equal in the two groups. Significantly, no zero discrimination indexes appear in the data.

The following tables illustrate the DI of the tests' items in the four groups.

Table (4) Discrimination Index for Question I, G1B

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI	
1	0.28	5	0.40	9	0.68	
2	0.32	6	0.32	10	0.56	
3	0.44	7	0.32	11	0.48	
4	0.44	8	0.08	12	0.40	
					Mean	0.39

Table (5) Discrimination Index for Question II, G1B

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI	
1	0.48	5	0.8	9	0.28	
2	0.32	6	0.32	10	0.32	
3	0.20	7	0.24	11	0.36	
4	0.24	8	0.32	12	0.24	
					13	0.44
					Mean	0.30

Table (6) Discrimination Index for Question III, G1B

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI	
1	0.12	5	0.36	9	0.36	
2	0.36	6	0.40	10	0.04	
3	0.20	7	0.44	11	0.60	
4	0.24	8	0.12	12	0.40	
					Mean	0.30

Table (7) Discrimination Index for Question IV, G1B

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI
1	0.36	5	0.20	9	0.28
2	0.20	6	0.36	10	0.40
3	0.28	7	0.40	11	0.36
4	0.44	8	0.24	12	0.20
				13	0.40
				Mean	0.32

Table (8) Discrimination Index for Question I, G2B

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI
1	0.36	5	0.28	9	0.40
2	0.56	6	0.28	10	0.36
3	0.36	7	0.36	11	0.28
4	0.28	8	0.28	12	0.20
				Mean	0.33

Table (9) Discrimination Index for Question II, G2B

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI
1	0.24	5	0.08	9	0.08
2	0.16	6	0.24	10	0.24
3	0.16	7	0.24	11	0.12
4	0.28	8	0.24	12	0.12
				13	0.24
				Mean	0.19

Table (10) Discrimination Index for Question III, G2B

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI	
1	0.52	5	0.72	9	0.56	
2	0.52	6	0.36	10	0.40	
3	0.56	7	0.44	11	0.52	
4	0.16	8	0.08	12	0.56	
					Mean	0.45

Table (11) Discrimination Index for Question IV, G2B

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI	
1	0.56	5	0.40	9	0.68	
2	0.56	6	0.56	10	0.36	
3	0.24	7	0.48	11	0.36	
4	0.44	8	0.36	12	0.44	
					13	0.72
					Mean	0.48

Table (12) Discrimination Index for Question I, G3Q

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI	
1	0.08	5	0.08	9	0.20	
2	0.08	6	0.28	10	0.12	
3	0.24	7	0.20	11	0.08	
4	0.08	8	0.20	12	0.08	
					Mean	0.13

Table (13) Discrimination Index for Question II, G3Q

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI
1	0.48	5	0.40	9	0.48
2	0.40	6	0.36	10	0.44
3	0.40	7	0.24	11	0.32
4	0.40	8	0.68	12	0.28
				13	0.52
				Mean	0.42

Table (14) Discrimination Index for Question III, G3Q

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI
1	0.28	5	0.16	9	0.20
2	0.16	6	0.24	10	0.16
3	0.08	7	0.24	11	0.20
4	0.20	8	0.08	12	0.24
				Mean	0.19

Table (15) Discrimination Index for Question IV, G3Q

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI
1	0.36	5	0.28	9	0.28
2	0.36	6	0.28	10	0.32
3	0.28	7	0.20	11	0.12
4	0.36	8	0.12	12	0.08
				13	0.08
				Mean	0.24

Table (16) Discrimination Index for Question I, G4Q

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI	
1	0.44	5	0.76	9	0.36	
2	0.60	6	0.24	10	0.60	
3	0.48	7	0.64	11	0.48	
4	0.48	8	0.40	12	0.64	
					Mean	0.51

Table (17) Discrimination Index for Question II, G4Q

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI	
1	0.08	5	0.08	9	0.16	
2	0.64	6	0.08	10	0.20	
3	0.20	7	0.12	11	0.24	
4	0.20	8	0.40	12	0.08	
					13	0.52
					Mean	0.30

Table (18) Discrimination Index for Question III, G4Q

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI	
1	0.44	5	0.72	9	0.32	
2	0.48	6	0.36	10	0.40	
3	0.40	7	0.40	11	0.48	
4	0.20	8	0.12	12	0.60	
					Mean	0.41

Table (19) Discrimination Index for Question IV, G4Q

Item	DI	Item	DI	Item	DI
1	0.48	5	0.52	9	0.44
2	0.52	6	0.64	10	0.40
3	0.56	7	0.40	11	0.48
4	0.68	8	0.48	12	0.44
				13	0.40
				Mean	0.50

The figures and means of Tables (4-19) show the following statistical indicators:

1. There are no negatively valued discrimination indices for any test item in the whole sample.
2. There are no non-discriminatory items in the test. In other words, all the test items have a certain discriminatory estimate, which ranges from the lowest rate of (0.8) to the highest rate of (0.76). In addition, the collective mean of DI for the whole test stands at (0.34), which is a quite adequate index.
3. Interestingly, items of Question I have scored both the highest discriminatory mean (0.51 by G4Q), and the lowest one (0.13 by G3Q). This means that there are lesser differences among the members of this group in the level of acquisition at the first stage of the College of Education, University of Al-Qadisiya, and that these differences maximize between the upper half and the lower half at the fourth stage. However, this statistical fact is opposite to that between G1B and G2B since

the responses of the first group show a relatively higher discrimination mean of (0.39), against a mean of (0.33) for the second one. One possible explanation in this connection is that the individual differences among the students of the fourth stage at the College of Education, University of Babylon are less pronounced.

4. Generally speaking, item discrimination indices for the whole test are quite satisfactory since they stand at a collective mean of (0.34). Significantly, this mean is the same for the two groups as shown in Table (20) below:

Table (20) Collective Mean of DI for G1-2B and G3-4Q

Group G1B & G2B	Mean of DI	Group G3Q & G4Q	Mean of DI
QI, G1B	0.39	QI, G3Q	0.13
QII, G1B	0.30	QII, G3Q	0.42
QIII, G1B	0.30	QIII, G3Q	0.19
QIV, G1B	0.32	QIV, G3Q	0.24
QI, G2B	0.33	QI, G4Q	0.51
QII, G2B	0.19	QII, G4Q	0.30
QIII, G2B	0.45	QIII, G4Q	0.41
QIV, G2B	0.48	QIV, G4Q	0.50
Mean of Mean	0.34	Mean of Mean	0.34

4.2.2 Item Facility Value

The facility value (FV) of a test item (also called “item difficulty”) is an index that shows how easy or difficult that a particular item proves to be in the testees’ responses. In other words, it is simply the percentage of students who give the correct response to the test item. This index is calculated by using the formula:

$$FV = \frac{R}{N}$$

Where R is the number of the correct answers, and N is the number of the students taking the test (Heaton, 1988: 178-9 and Richards et al, 1992: 192).

Tables (21-36) show the facility values for all test items in accordance with the responses of the four groups: G1B, G2B, G3Q, and G4Q.

Table (21) Facility Value for Question I, G1B

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV
1	0.34	5	0.36	9	0.46
2	0.40	6	0.24	10	0.48
3	0.26	7	0.20	11	0.48
4	0.22	8	0.24	12	0.40
Mean					0.34

Table (22) Facility Value for Question II, G1B

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV
1	0.56	5	0.66	9	0.74
2	0.68	6	0.68	10	0.64
3	0.74	7	0.64	11	0.62
4	0.44	8	0.60	12	0.76
				13	0.58
				Mean	0.64

Table (23) Facility Value for Question III, G1B

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV
1	0.46	5	0.38	9	0.18
2	0.42	6	0.24	10	0.14
3	0.22	7	0.38	11	0.30
4	0.40	8	0.06	12	0.28
				Mean	0.29

Table (24) Facility Value for Question IV, G1B

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV
1	0.22	5	0.18	9	0.14
2	0.18	6	0.22	10	0.24
3	0.14	7	0.32	11	0.22
4	0.26	8	0.24	12	0.10
				13	0.24
				Mean	0.21

Table (25) Facility Value for Question I, G2B

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV	
1	0.42	5	0.42	9	0.50	
2	0.56	6	0.38	10	0.42	
3	0.34	7	0.22	11	0.70	
4	0.34	8	0.18	12	0.34	
					Mean	0.40

Table (26) Facility Value for Question II, G2B

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV	
1	0.64	5	0.88	9	0.92	
2	0.80	6	0.80	10	0.88	
3	0.84	7	0.90	11	0.86	
4	0.50	8	0.88	12	0.94	
					13	0.76
					Mean	0.82

Table (27) Facility Value for Question III, G2B

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV	
1	0.62	5	0.52	9	0.40	
2	0.58	6	0.22	10	0.20	
3	0.36	7	0.40	11	0.54	
4	0.48	8	0.00	12	0.44	
					Mean	0.40

Table (28) Facility Value for Question IV, G2B

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV
1	0.54	5	0.56	9	0.46
2	0.62	6	0.52	10	0.38
3	0.62	7	0.32	11	0.38
4	0.56	8	0.48	12	0.36
				13	0.48
				Mean	0.48

Table (29) Facility Value for Question I, G3Q

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV
1	0.16	5	0.20	9	0.30
2	0.28	6	0.26	10	0.18
3	0.16	7	0.10	11	0.38
4	0.16	8	0.18	12	0.24
				Mean	0.22

Table (30) Facility Value for Question II, G3Q

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV
1	0.44	5	0.60	9	0.64
2	0.44	6	0.54	10	0.54
3	0.48	7	0.44	11	0.40
4	0.44	8	0.54	12	0.58
				13	0.50
				Mean	0.51

Table (31) Facility Value for Question III, G3Q

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV	
1	0.26	5	0.28	9	0.10	
2	0.24	6	0.12	10	0.08	
3	0.20	7	0.16	11	0.14	
4	0.22	8	0.02	12	0.12	
					Mean	0.16

Table (32) Facility Value for Question IV, G3Q

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV	
1	0.22	5	0.14	9	0.14	
2	0.22	6	0.14	10	0.16	
3	0.14	7	0.10	11	0.06	
4	0.18	8	0.06	12	0.04	
					13	0.10
					Mean	0.13

Table (33) Facility Value for Question I, G4Q

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV	
1	0.34	5	0.48	9	0.54	
2	0.58	6	0.32	10	0.54	
3	0.36	7	0.40	11	0.64	
4	0.40	8	0.28	12	0.44	
					Mean	0.44

Table (34) Facility Value for Question II, G4Q

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV
1	0.70	5	0.88	9	0.88
2	0.52	6	0.88	10	0.86
3	0.78	7	0.74	11	0.68
4	0.46	8	0.68	12	0.84
				13	0.70
				Mean	0.74

Table (35) Facility Value for Question III, G4Q

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV
1	0.50	5	0.44	9	0.28
2	0.60	6	0.34	10	0.20
3	0.40	7	0.44	11	0.48
4	0.50	8	0.06	12	0.42
				Mean	0.39

Table (36) Facility Value for Question IV, G4Q

Item	FV	Item	FV	Item	FV
1	0.40	5	0.38	9	0.26
2	0.50	6	0.36	10	0.32
3	0.48	7	0.24	11	0.24
4	0.46	8	0.36	12	0.22
				13	0.24
				Mean	0.34

The percentages in the Tables above show that the facility values of the test items range between (0.00) and (0.94). These indices are wide apart, since the range usually falls between (0.40) and (0.60) (Heaton, 1988: 179 and Harrison, 1983: 128). Such a wide distribution of FVs is attributable to three main reasons: i) the large number of subjects and groups involved, ii) the differences in their levels, iii) the fact that the test presents a new and unfamiliar subject (Heaton, 1988: 179).

4.3 Acquisition Results

The next five subsections discuss the rates of acquisition achieved by each group first, then in terms of group-to-group differentials. Finally, the general results are investigated to test the validity of the hypotheses presented in 1.3.

4.3.1 G1B-G2B Recognition and Production

The two tables below offer the general results of the two groups G1B and G2B, separately.

Table (37) Subjects' Performance at the Recognition and Production Levels (G1B)

Level	Correct Response No	%	Incorrect Response No	%
Recognition	621	49.6	629	50.4
Production	308	24.6	942	75.4
Total	929	37.1	1571	62.9

Table (38) Subjects' Performance at the Recognition and Production Levels (G2B)

Level	Correct Response No	%	Incorrect Response No	%
Recognition	772	61.7	478	38.3
Production	550	44.0	700	56.0
Total	1322	52.8	1178	47.2

The figures in the two tables above provide statistical evidence that the subjects' acquisition rates at the production level are considerably lesser than those of the recognition. In G1B, this rate is at (24.6/49.6%); in G2B, at (44.0/61.7%). As far as G1B and G2B are concerned, these rates validate the second hypothesis proposed in section 1.3, which reads:

It is hypothesized that the students face more difficulties in using split infinitive at the production level than what they face at the recognition level.

4.3.2 General Acquisition Rates, G1B-G2B

Table (39) below offers the general results of the test papers for the two groups G1B and G2B (in the University of Babylon), and their level-to-level differentials.

Table (39) G1B-G2B Acquisition Rates

Group	Score Mean %	Pass Rate (50% out of 100%)
G1B	37.16	20%
G2B	53.20	50%
Group-to-Group Differential	16.04	30%

The results above show that the mean of G1B's correct responses is at (37.16%), and their subjects' pass-rate at (20%). This is quite a low performance rate, which reflects a poor acquisition rate as far as the recognition and production of the split infinitive are concerned.

As for G2B, its subjects' score-mean stands at (53.2%), with a pass-rate of (50%) (minimal passing mark calculated at 50%). Though considerably higher than those of G1B, the above rates are quite unsatisfactory if taken in general acquisition terms.

The comparison between the scoring and pass-rates of G1B and G2B yields a differential of (16.04%) in score's mean, and (30%) in pass-rates. Both of these rates indicate quite a humble acquisition of the split infinitive construction over a four-year period of studying English as a foreign language at the college level. As far as G2B is concerned, these results confirm the third hypothesis presented in 1.3, which reads:

Mastery of the uses of the split infinitive construction is not achieved by Iraqi learners over a four-year period of EFL learning at the university level

4.3.3 G3Q-G4Q Recognition and Production

The results of the two groups G3Q and G4Q (University of Al-Qadisiya) are tabulated in terms of rates and statistical means in Tables (40) and (41) below. These indicate that only (12%) of the subjects in G3Q managed to pass the exam, against a pass rate of (38%) for the subjects in G4Q. These rates are quite humble, both as start-points and end-results as well.

As for the difference in the acquisition rates of the production and recognition levels for each group, the rates of the correct responses are at (14.6%) and (36.5%) for the production in G3Q and G4Q against (36.7%) and (59.6%) for the recognition. These results are, again, indicative of a low performance rate. In addition, they supply further evidence to the validity of the second hypothesis already quoted in 4.3.1.

Table (40) Subjects' Performance at the Recognition and Production Levels (G3Q)

Level	Correct Response No	%	Incorrect Response No	%
Recognition	459	36.7	791	63.3
Production	182	14.6	1068	85.4
Total	641	25.6	1859	74.4

Table (41) Subjects' Performance at the Recognition and Production Levels (G4Q)

Level	Correct Response No	%	Incorrect Response No	%
Recognition	746	59.6	504	40.4
Production	456	36.5	794	63.5
Total	1202	49.2	1298	51.8

4.3.4 General Acquisition Rates, G3Q-G4Q

Moving from the particular results to the general ones for the two groups above, these are outlined in Table (42) below.

Table (42) General Acquisition Rates, G3Q & G4Q

Group	Score Mean %	Pass Rate (50% out of 100%)
G3Q	25.64	12%
G4Q	48.08	38%
Group-to-Group Differential	22.44	26%

The Table above highlights the fact that in G3Q group, the subjects scores' mean is at (25.64%), whereas the pass-rate is at (12%). These figures are lower than those of G1B, and reflect a poorer performance at the first-year level.

As for G4Q, the collective scores' mean and pass-rate are at (48.08%) and (38%), respectively. Again, these rates are significantly

lower than those of G2B and illustrate a very low performance estimate.

The acquisition rate obtained during the subjects' four-year period of EFL learning is only at (22.44%). The pass-rate differential on a group-to-group basis is (26%). Both of these rates show a very low level of acquisition for the construction under discussion. These results provide further confirmation for the third hypothesis presented in 1.3 and quoted in 4.3.2 above.

4.3.5 General Acquisition Rates: All Groups

Putting group differences aside, the collective test pass-results of the two levels of EFL learning (first- and fourth- year at the Departments of English in the University of Babylon and the University of Al- Qadisiya) indicate that the subjects' acquisition of a single construction over a four-year period increased by (28%) only. The rate of the start-year is at (16%), of the end-year (44%). In terms of the score mean, the increase was only at (19.6%) over a four-year-period of EFL learning at the university level.

Given that the grammatical structure of split infinitive is pretty straightforward:

to+Adv+Base Verb

the low acquisition rates above are quite unsatisfactory and disappointing. Equally unsatisfactory is the acquisition level at the start-point, i.e., first-year level. Because the acquisition at this level is quite low, the significant gains made throughout a four-year period of EFL learning do not make learners attain the advanced level they

are supposed to attain. These results confirm the validity of the third hypothesis previously quoted in 4.3.2.

Hereunder are two tables, which outline the general results of the acquisition rates achieved.

Table (43) Level-to-level Results

Group	Score Mean %	Mean	Pass Rate (50% out of 100%)	Mean
G1B	37.16	31.4	20%	16%
G3Q	25.64		12%	
G2B	53.2	51%	50%	44%
G4Q	48.8		38%	

Table (44) Level-to-level Differentials of Results

Group	Score Mean %	Pass Rate (50% out of 100%)
First year G1B & G3Q	31.4	16%
Fourth year G2B & G4Q	51.0	44%
Level-to-level Differential	19.6	28%

4.4 Error Analysis

The following sections are dedicated to error explanation, or error sources. This is a difficult task since it requires hypothesizing about the processes going on in the learner's mind, which have caused error occurrence. In this area, the analyst can only suggest plausible answers as being explanations of the facts since there may well be more than one plausible explanation or source (Bell, 1981: 175).

Error sources in foreign language acquisition can be broadly classified into four main categories (Brown, 1987: 177-184):

1. *Interlingual Transfer,*
2. *Intralingual Transfer,*
3. *Context of Learning,*
4. *Communication Strategies.*

Each of the categories above is discussed separately in the next four subsections.

4.4.1 Interlingual Transfer

Many errors of foreign language learners can be traced back to the negative interference of the rules of the native language (Arabic in this case) on L2 acquisition (i.e., English). This negative influence occurs when the already learned patterns or elements within the native language system interfere with the acquisition of new patterns or elements in the target language system when the two systems are

different. One example in this respect is when the English learner of French as L2 produces the incorrect French sentence:

(76)

* *Elle regarde les.* ("She sees them.")

according to the word order of English, instead of the correct French sentence:

(77)

Elle les regarde. (Literally, "She them sees.") (Richards et al, 1992: 187).

The cause of such interlingual transfer lies in the fact that before a learner becomes familiar with the system of the second language, the native language is the only linguistic system upon which she/he can draw (Brown, 1987: 177).

It is worth mentioning in this respect that, as far as the structure of the split infinitive is concerned, Arabic plays a facilitative or positive influence since the rules of the two language are pretty the same. However, the negative interference occurs with the adverb placement rule. Arabic allows the use of the verb almost anywhere in the sentence:

(78)

.
. .
. .
. .

Such freedom in adverb-placement is not possible in English, and that is why example (79) is unacceptable in English:

(79)

* *I tell now you the truth.*

The following are some examples of errors attributable to interlingual transfer:

(80)

- a. **It is time to lift now the ban on foreign aid.*
- b. **He liked to close half his eyes.*
- c. **No one invited me to have so much as a class of water.*
- d. **I do try to understand- to understand truly what happened.*
- e. **I told them to look darned well for themselves.*
- f. **I expect him to be a fail.*
- g. **They planned to together boldly go where no man has ever gone before.*
- h. ** He didn't have sufficient time to consider about the issues.*
- i. ** They plan to change quickly their lives.*
- j. **He was too ill to really his duties carry out.*
- k. **He liked to half his eyes close.*

The error in the first sentence in (80a) above is caused by the incorrect placing of the adverb 'now'. This same source also explains the incorrect placement of the adverbs (*truly*, *darned well*, *boldly*, *quickly*, and *really*) in sentences (80d, e, g, i, and j). In the second sentence (80b), the error seems to be the result of literal translation in which the adverb 'half-close' is functionally shifted into the predicate 'close half his eyes' (). The same explanation applies to the last sentence (80k), which shows that because the two-word adverb 'half-close' does not occur in Arabic, the learner has split it into two separate words in order to insert the patient noun (eye) between them. This is because in Arabic, the structure:

(81)

is acceptable, while the English-corresponding one:

(82)

*

is not.

Literal translation and the absence of two-word adverbs also seem to be behind such deviant structures as the third sentence, whose equivalent Arabic structure is:

(83)

.

In sentence (80*b*) above, the functional shift of the adverb ‘*about*’ into a preposition is conditioned by the fact that its Arabic equivalent () is a preposition, not an adverb.

Similarly, in (80*f*), the acceptability of the Arabic literal form:

(84)

.

explains the occurrence of the deviant structure: ‘*to be a fail*’.

Interlingual transfer has been found to explain only (18%) of all the subjects’ errors. In contrast with the other three sources of errors, it is the least frequent cause in the data.

4.4.2 Intralingual Transfer

Intralingual transfer can be defined as the negative transfer that occurs through overgeneralization when FL learners make use of their prior knowledge of the system of the target language in the process of learning that target language (Taylor, 1975: 394). Here, the deviant structures in the target language (e.g. *goed, *fied) are

related to the learners' incorrect application of their previously learned material to a present foreign language context (Brown, 1987: 82-3). These structures reflect faulty or partial learning of the target language (Richards et al, 1992: 187).

Many errors have been made because the learners insist upon putting the adverb at the end of the sentence as shown in sentences (*a, b, c, d, e, and f*) of (85) below:

(85)

- a. *She was the first person to live in that house **ever**.*
- b. *She didn't bother to look at her **even**.*
- c. *I'm going to look about **just**.*
- d. *He liked to close his eyes **half**.*
- e. * She needs to write the letter **as quick as possible**.*
- f. *She expected them to stay **nearly**.*
- g. *His hardest decision was **to not to allow** the children to go summer camp.*

In the sentence (85g), overgeneralization through the double use of the to-infinitive form (*to not to allow*) renders the produced structure quite odd.

Intralingual transfer accounts for (24%) of all errors in the subjects' responses. It is the second-frequent cause of errors in the data.

4.4.3 Context of Learning

This error source refers to the negative influence of elements of the learning situation, such as the classroom, the teacher, and the curriculum. Another term used in this respect is "induced error", which refers to an error caused by the way in which a language item has been taught.

For example, in teaching the preposition *at*, the teacher may hold up a box over his head and say:

(86)

I'm looking at the box.

However, the learner may infer that '*at*' means '*under*'. If later this learner uses '*at*' for '*under*', this would be an induced error (Richards et al, 1992: 177-8).

It has been found that a high rate of errors (i.e. 25%) is caused by the subjects' rejection of the use of the split infinitive due to strict instructional causes. This rate is the second highest in the data, and is quite significant since it exceeds the statistical threshold of (5%) rate. It seems that most, if not all, of English grammar teachers tell their students that splitting their infinitives is wrong in English. Adherence to such an instruction has induced a lot of subjects to choose those distractors that always begin with the base form of the verb since they are already told that the *to*-infinitive form must not be split. This is why these subjects have rejected the choice of the correct alternatives of multiple choice items of the split infinitive, simply because they consider them to be wrong English on the basis of the argument that these distractors do not start with the base form of the verb. Hereunder are some examples of such incorrect choices, which are underlined:

(87)

- * *I failed to **avoid** entirely them.*
- * *She ought to **consider** seriously her position.*
- * *She has tried to **stop** worrying about her consciously career.*
- * *Your task is to **understand** your students really problems.*
- * *We seek to **persuade** you of our adequately good intentions.*
- * *She is ready to **leave** simply him.*

- * *He likes to **help** always anyone.*
- * *We tended to **sit back** rather and wait for the developments.*
- * *He decided to **leave** for ever the country.*

The high frequency of teacher-induced errors which make the subjects reject the use of the split infinitive even when its use is obligatory validates the first hypothesis presented in 1.3 which reads:

It is hypothesized that a significant number of Iraqi EFL learners at the university level reject the use of split infinitive though such a use is both normal and useful.

4.4.4 Communication Strategies

By a communicative strategy is meant that strategy used by learners to overcome a communication problem caused by a lack of or inability to access L2 knowledge (Ellis, 2003: 340). One such strategy is paraphrase; another is avoidance (Brown, 1987: 183).

Data error analysis shows numerous examples of erroneous responses, which reflect the learner's attempt to somehow cope with the testing situation by producing deviant answers. The types of deviations involved resist any attempt to reasonably attribute them to any of the three sources of error above since they clearly indicate that the learner's insufficient EFL learning induces her/him to give any response whatsoever just for the sake of responding. Here are some examples of such errors:

(88)

**It is time to them punish always.*

**He decided to the country leave.*

**She needs to the letter write.*

**She hopes to her homework finish.*

**I'm trying to project my startly.*

**He is ready to his job quit ever.*

**It is time to now lift on foreign aid the ban.*

**It would be very undesirable to further the discussion prolong.*

** I feel it my duty to plainly you inform.*

**She was the first person to live in that house.*

**To the service so the organize is administratively difficult.*

** The driver is instructed to look check the oil level.*

Communicative strategies is the highest frequent error source in the data, accounting for (33%) of all errors. It seems that the students' unfamiliarity with the split infinitive structure impels them to frequently produce extremely odd structures.

4.5 Error Source: Summary

The discussion of error source above can be summarized in the following points:

1. The highest single cause of error in the data is the use of communicative strategies, at (33%), because of the subjects' unfamiliarity with the split infinitive structure.

2. The second-highest rate of error cause is the context of learning (i.e. 25%) because a significant number of subjects have been found to reject the use of the split infinitive due to their teachers' instructions as such though its use is correct.
3. Intralingual transfer is behind (24%) of all subjects' errors due to overgeneralization. In the majority of cases, these errors are related to the adverb placement in the sentence final position.
4. Interlingual transfer is the least-frequent error source, accounting for (18%) of all subjects' errors. All of these errors are related to the wrong adverb placement in the sentence since the rules of Arabic facilitate the use of the split infinitive.

Table (45) below outlines the results above.

Table (45) Error Source

<i>Error Source</i>	<i>%</i>
Interlingual Transfer	18
Intralingual Transfer	24
Context of Learning	25
Communicative Strategies	33
Total Rates	100

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions, Recommendations, and Suggestions

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the general findings of the study by outlining their theoretical and practical conclusions, and by recommending certain pedagogical procedures based on these conclusions. The chapter ends with some suggestions for future studies that are related to the subject under discussion.

5.2 Conclusions

Two types of conclusions can be drawn from the whole study, theoretical and practical. These are outlined in the next two subsections.

5.2.1 Theoretical Conclusions

1. Despite the heavy prescription against the use of split infinitive by certain traditionalists, this construction often appears today in Standard English speech and even in Edited English, especially in sentences where the avoidance of its use would be clumsier and less effective than its use.
2. The use of the split infinitive serves many important syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic functions in both speech and writing. Among these are:
 - a. to clarify and arrange elements within the sentence,
 - b. to avoid ambiguity,
 - c. to avoid misunderstanding,
 - d. to highlight certain written elements or ideas due to the absence of intonation in writing,
 - e. to provide a necessary emphasis in conversation.
3. In addition to the functions above, split infinitives sometimes serve as a stylistic device to remedy the deficiencies of the English writing system.
4. Slipping an adverb in the middle of the infinitive can soften a thought, or improve a sentence's rhythm, cadence, and naturalness of expression.
5. Excessive zeal in avoiding the split infinitive may result in an awkward placement of adverbs in constructions involving the auxiliary verbs *be* and *have*.

6. In certain contexts, the use of the split infinitive is a must.
7. However, one must take care not to ruin the rhyme of the sentence or create an unintended meaning by displacing an adverb. When choosing to retain split infinitive, one should be wary of constructions that have more than one word between *to* and the verb.
8. Classical Arabic grammar allows infinitive-splitting. This means that the rules of the mother tongue play a facilitative role in the learning of the split infinitive construction in English.
9. However, the freer rule of adverb-placement in Classical Arabic is likely to play a negative role in the Arab learners of English.

5.2.2 Practical Conclusions

1. The collective test pass-results of Iraqi EFL learners at the first- and fourth- year at the Departments of English in the University of Babylon and the University of Al- Qadisiya indicate that the subjects' acquisition of the split-infinitive construction over a four-year period increased by (28%) only. The rate of the start-year is at (16%), of the end-year (44%). In terms of the scores' mean, the increase was only at (19.6%) over a four-year-period of EFL learning at the university level. The low acquisition rates above are quite unsatisfactory and disappointing.

2. Equally unsatisfactory is the acquisition level at the start-point, i.e., first-year level. Because the acquisition at this level is quite low, the significant gains made throughout a four-year period of EFL learning do not make learners attain the advanced level they are supposed to.
3. Error analysis has yielded the following results:
 - a. The learners' use of communicative strategies is the highest single cause of error in the data; it is behind (33%) of all the subjects' errors, due to the subjects' unfamiliarity with the split infinitive structure.
 - b. The second-highest rate of error cause is the negative effects of context of learning (i.e. 25%). This is caused by the subjects' rejection of the use of the split infinitive due to strict instructional causes.
 - c. Intralingual transfer accounts for (24%) of all the subjects' errors due to overgeneralization. In the majority of cases, these errors have been found to be related to the adverb placement in the sentence final position.
 - d. Interlingual transfer has been found to explain only (18%) of all the subjects' errors. All of these errors are related to the wrong adverb placement in the sentence since the rules of Classical Arabic facilitate the use of the split infinitive.

5.3 Recommendations

1. EFL learners need to get acquainted with the fact that the use of the split infinitive construction is no longer frowned upon in Modern English.
2. EFL learners need to be aware of the various useful syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic functions of the split infinitives outlined in points (1-6) of section 5.2.1.
3. Syllabus designers need to take the two points above into consideration in their selection of grammar materials for Iraqi EFL learners.
4. EFL teachers are no more required to prescribe against their students' use of the split infinitive in view of the facts stated in points 1-2 above.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

1. A study similar to the present one can be dedicated to investigating the recognition and production of the split infinitive by Iraqi EFL learners during different pre-university stages.

2. Another study of the order of acquisition of the different kinds of infinitives by Iraqi EFL learners at pre- and post university levels can also be carried out.

3. A third useful study can tackle the syntactic and semantic similarities and differences of all kinds of infinitives, split or otherwise, in English and Arabic.

4. A further contrastive study can be carried out to explore the grammatical phenomenon of subject raising in Arabic and English. In such a phenomenon, an NP which is semantically the subject of a lower infinitival predicate appears on the surface as the subject of a higher predicate as in the sentence: *Leyla seems to be happy* in which the NP *Leyla* is semantically the subject of the predicate *be happy* but functions grammatically as the subject of *seem*. A similar Arabic structure is (طفق الولد يلعب).

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Appendix I

The Test

QI. Answer the following question by ticking \checkmark inside the box of the most appropriate choice as shown in the example below .

Example:

Question:

I do not know

- a. where lives she
- b. she where lives
- c. where she lives
- d. she lives where

Answer :

- c.

1. I failed to

- A. entirely avoid them
- B. them avoid entirely
- C. avoid entirely them
- D. entirely them avoid

2. I feel it my duty to

- A. inform plainly you
- B. plainly inform you
- C. plainly you inform
- D. you plainly inform

3. She ought to..... .

- A. consider seriously her position
- B. seriously her position consider
- C. seriously consider her position
- D. her position seriously consider

4. She has tried to

- A. consciously stop worrying about her career
- B. stop worrying about her consciously career
- C. worrying consciously stop about her career
- D. consciously about her career stop worrying

5. Your task is to

- A. your students' problems understand really
- B. really your students' problems understand
- C. understand your students' really problems
- D. really understand your students' problems

6. It would be very undesirable to

- A. the discussion further prolong
- B. further prolong the discussion
- C. the discussion prolong further
- D. further the discussion prolong

7. We seek to

- A. adequately persuade you of our good intentions
- B. persuade you of our good adequately intentions
- C. adequately you persuade of our good intentions
- D. persuade you of our adequately good intentions

8. It is time to

- A. now lift on foreign aid the ban
- B. lift the now ban on foreign aid
- C. now lift the ban on foreign aid
- D. lift now the ban on foreign aid

9. She is ready to..... .

- A. leave simply him
- B. him leave simply
- C. simply leave him
- D. him simply leave

10. He likes to

- A. help always anyone
- B. always help anyone
- C. anyone help always
- D. always anyone help

11. They planned to Where no man has ever gone before.

- A. boldly go together
- B. together go boldly
- C. boldly together go
- D. together boldly go

12. She did not mention any details which would help the reader to

- A. identify the exactly cottage
- B. identify cottage the exactly
- C. exactly identify the cottage
- D. exactly the cottage identify

QII. Write down whether the underlined expression in the following sentences is to-infinitive , bare infinitive ,or split infinitive .

1.I made them go .

2.You must remember to immediately see her .

3.She helped me do it .

4.He thinks he'll be able to more than double his salary this year.

5.It is a good thing for him to recognize his faults.

6.I know him to be an imposter.

7.It is a pity to refuse such an offer.

8.To suddenly resign my job is unthinkable.

9. She hoped to tell the truth.

10. Let her go.

11. Well, you ought to at least try.

12. It is a good thing to forgive and forget.

13. I want you to completely eliminate these pests.

QIII. Complete the following sentences by using the words given between brackets in the correct order so as to make split infinitives as shown in the example below.

Example :

a. It is time(gave up, you, at once, smoking)

Answer :

b. It is time you gave up smoking at once.

1. He was too ill to
(carry out, really, his duties)

2. I'm going to
(look, just, about)

3. He liked to
(close, his eyes, half)

4. His hardest decision was to
(allow, not, to go to summer camp, the children)

5. I do try to understand – to
(understand, truly, what happened)

6. I told them to
(for themselves, darned well, look)

7. She was the first person to
(in that house, live, ever)

8. No one invited me to.....
(a glass of water, as, so much, have)

9. My grandson was the latest person to
 (or even allude to it, this with me, discuss, either)

10. To is administratively difficult.
 (so, organize, the service)

11. She didn't bother to
 (look, even, at her)

12. We tended to and wait for the developments.
 (back, sit, rather)

QIV. Change the to-infinitive in the following sentences into a split infinitive by inserting a suitable adverb to each sentence (Use each adverb once).

1. To understand the book is a good thing.
 To is a good thing.

2. It is time to punish them.
 It is time to

3. He decided to leave the country.
 He decided to

4. She needs to write the letter.
 She needs to

5. She hopes to finish her homework.
 She hopes to

6. I'm going to start my project.
 I'm going to

7. She expected them to stay.
 She expected them to

8. I expect him to fail.
 I expect him to

9.I'm going to hide it.

I'm going to

10.He is ready to quit his job.

He is ready to

11.The driver is instructed to check the oil level.

The driver is instructed to

12.He did not have sufficient time to consider the issues raised.

He did not have sufficient time to

13.They plan to change their lives.

They plan to

Appendix II

The Test's Possible Answers

QI

- 1- A
- 2- B
- 3- C
- 4- A
- 5- D
- 6- B
- 7- A
- 8- C
- 9- C
- 10- B
- 11- A
- 12- C

QII

- 1- bare infinitive
- 2- split infinitive
- 3- bare infinitive
- 4- split infinitive
- 5- to- infinitive
- 6- to- infinitive
- 7- to- infinitive
- 8- split infinitive

- 9- to-infinitive
- 10- bare infinitive
- 11- split infinitive
- 12- to-infinitive
- 13- split infinitive

QIII

- 1- He was too ill to really carry out his duties.
- 2- I'm going to just look about.
- 3- He liked to half close his eyes.
- 4- His hardest decision was to not allow the children to go to summer camp.
- 5- I do try to understand –to truly understand what happened.
- 6- I told them to darned well look for themselves.
- 7- She was the first person to ever live in that house.
- 8- No one invited me to so much as have a glass of water.
- 9- My grandson was the latest person to either discuss this with me or even allude to it.
- 10- To so organize the service is administratively difficult.
- 11- She didn't bother to even look at her.
- 12- We tended to rather sit back and wait for the developments.

QIV

- 1- To carefully understand the book is a good thing.
- 2- It is time to now punish them.

- 3- He decided to suddenly leave the country.
- 4- She needs to correctly write the letter.
- 5- She hopes to completely finish her homework.
- 6- I'm going to really start my project.
- 7- She expected them to not stay.
- 8- I expect him to utterly fail.
- 9- I'm going to quickly hide it.
- 10- He is ready to immediately quit his job.
- 11- The driver is instructed to periodically check the oil level.
- 12- He did not have sufficient time to properly consider the issues raised.
- 13- They plan to gradually change their lives.

. (to hardly try) :

"to"

.

.

.

:

.1

.

.2

.

.3

.

/

. /

.21 " - "

(%28)

(%16)

(%44)

(%19.6)

(%33)

(%25)

(%24)

(%18)

جامعة بابل

تميز و إنتاج الطلبة الجامعيين
العراقيين الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية
لغة أجنبية للمصدر المشطور

رسالة

تقدمت بها إلى مجلس كلية التربية في جامعة
بابل جزء من متطلبات نيل درجة ماجستير في
طرائق تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية لغة أجنبية

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م 2005

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الملخص

تُعنى هذه الدراسة باستقصاء المشكلة التي يواجهها الطلبة العراقيون الدارسون للغة الإنكليزية لغةً أجنبية خلال المرحلة الجامعية في استخدام صيغة المصدر الإنكليزي المشطور و التي يتوسط فيها الظرف بين قسميها المتألفين من "to" المصدرية المتبوعة بالصيغة القاعدية للفعل مثل: (to hardly try) . وترتبط هذه المشكلة بتلك القاعدة النحوية القديمة القائلة بوجود عدم شطر المصدر الإنكليزي المؤول ، و المأخوذة من اللغة اللاتينية ، رغم عدم إنطباقها على الإستخدامات الفعلية للغة الإنكليزية المعاصرة . إن إصرار الطلبة على التقيد بهذه القاعدة التقليدية يثير العديد من المشاكل لكون استخدام صيغة المصدر الإنكليزي المشطور يفيد في إزالة الإلتباس ، علاوة على أن تجنب استخدام هذه الصيغة لا يتطابق مع الواقع الإستعمالي للغة . و عليه ، فقد إستهدفت هذه الدراسة تقصي أفضليات استخدام صيغة المصدر الإنكليزي المشطور ، و مدى إنتفاع الطلبة الجامعيين العراقيين الدارسين للغة الإنكليزية لغةً أجنبية باستخدامات و طبيعة الصعوبات التي يواجهونها في تلك الإستخدامات.

قدّمت الدراسة ثلاث فرضيات تنص على أن :

1. عدداً مهماً من الطلبة الجامعيين العراقيين الدارسين للغة الإنكليزية لغةً أجنبية يرفضون استعمال صيغة المصدر الإنكليزي المشطور رغم كونها صيغة لغوية طبيعية و مفيدة .
2. أولئك الطلبة يواجهون صعوبات في استعمال صيغة المصدر الإنكليزي المشطور على المستوى الإنتاجي أكبر منها على المستوى الإدراكي .
3. أولئك الطلبة لا يكتسبون كفاية استخدام هذه الصيغة خلال فترة دراستهم الجامعية للغة الإنكليزية و البالغة أربع سنوات.

و للتحقق من صحة الفرضيات أعلاه ، فقد أعدت الباحثة إختباراً تشخيصياً لمجموعة تمثيلية من الطلبة الجامعيين العراقيين الدارسين للغة الإنكليزية لغةً

أجنبية في المرحلتين الأولى و الرابعة بكلية التربية / جامعة بابل و كلية التربية / جامعة القادسية . و غطت مفردات الإختبار المستويين الادراكي و الانتاجي ، كما تم فحصه تمهيدياً و التحقق من مصداقيته و إحتساب معامل الثبات له باستخدام معادلة "كودر-ريتشاردسن" رقم 21.

و بيّن تحليل نتائج الإختبار أن كفاية إكتساب الطلبة لصيغة المصدر الإنكليزي المشطور قد تحسنت بنسبة (28%) فقط في بحر أربع سنوات دراسية، حيث إرتفعت من النسبة الإبتدائية البالغة (16%) لطلبة المرحلة الأولى الى النسبة النهائية البالغة (44%) لطلبة المرحلة الرابعة . أما معدل الدرجات ، فقد إزداد بنسبة (19.6%) فقط خلال نفس الفترة البالغة أربع سنوات . و تعكس نسب الإكتساب المنخفضة أعلاه مستوىً متدنياً و غير كافٍ من التعلم في نهاية السنة الدراسية الرابعة . كما كانت نسب الإكتساب الأبتدائية للمراحل الدراسية السابقة على المرحلة الجامعية منخفضة هي الأخرى ، و لهذا فإن نسبة التحصيل المهمة المتحققة خلال سنوات الدراسة الجامعية لم تكن كافيةً لبلوغ ذلك المستوى المتقدم الذي يفترض بالدارسين التوصل إليه . كما بيّن تحليل المعطيات أن نسب التحصيل على المستوى الادراكي أعلى من نسب التحصيل على المستوى الإنتاجي .

و بيّن تحليل الأخطاء أن أعلى سبب لها هو لجوء الطلبة الى إستخدام الاستراتيجيات التواصلية المسؤولة عن نسبة (33%) منها بسبب نقص أطلاعهم على الموضوع ؛ تليها في الأهمية سياقات التعليم ، حيث وُجد أن نسبة (25%) من الأخطاء تعود إلى رفض الطلبة إستخدام صيغة المصدر المؤول المشطور رغم كونها هي الصيغة الصحيحة و السائدة و ذلك لأسباب تعليمية . و جاء عامل التعميم الخاطيء في إطار اللغة الأجنبية ذاتها بالمرتبة الثالثة من حيث الأهمية النسبية حيث كان وراء (24%) من الأخطاء ، و أغلبها يعود إلى وضع الظروف في نهاية الجملة . أما إنتقال القواعد اللغوية من اللغة الأم إلى اللغة الأجنبية فقد وجد أنه يفسر نسبة (18%) من الأخطاء و كلها ترتبط بوضع الظروف في غير مكانها الصحيح في الجملة بسبب كون قواعد اللغة العربية تيسر إكتساب صيغة المصدر المؤول المشطور . إن تلك النتائج تؤيد صحة الفرضيات الثلاث المدرجة أعلاه .

تقع هذه الدراسة في خمسة فصول كرس الفصل الأول منها لعرض مشكلة الدراسة والأهداف والفرضيات وحدود البحث والإجراءات المتبعة فيه والفوائد المرجوة منه .

و يتضمن الفصل الثاني و صفاً لصيغة المصدر الإنكليزي المشطور مع استعراض استعماله و وظائفه من مختلف وجهات النظر ، حيث يبدأ هذا الفصل بمقدمة موجزة عن مفهوم المصدر الموول ويختتم بعرض موجز عما يناظر صيغة المصدر المشطور في اللغة العربية .

و يتناول الفصل الثالث وصفا للاختبار الذي أجرته الباحثة على الطلبة العراقيين الدارسين للغة الإنكليزية لغة اجنبية في المرحلتين الأولى و الرابعة من قسم اللغة الإنكليزية ، كلية التربية ، جامعة بابل و جامعة القادسية . و يشتمل هذا الوصف على شرح لعينة البحث و مجتمعه ، و لأهداف الاختبار و أسلوب اختيار مفرداته، و صلاحية الاختبار و ثباته ، و خطة التصحيح المعتمدة .

و يتضمن الفصل الرابع تحليلاً مفصلاً لنتائج الاختبار من جهتي النظر الإحصائية و اللغوية مع تشخيص للأسباب المحتملة للأخطاء التي يقع فيها الطلبة.

أما الفصل الأخير فيعرض النتائج العامة التي توصلت إليها هذه الدراسة، و التي تم في ضوءها تقديم بعض التوصيات المفيدة لدارسي اللغة الإنكليزية و المدرسين لها و لمصممي المناهج التعليمية ، كما اختتمت هذه الدراسة بتقديم بعض المقترحات للدراسات المستقبلية ذات الصلة .

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