



# TEACHING ENGLISH SENTENCE FRAGMENTS AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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## ABSTRACT

This research work attempts to find out the secondary school learners' writing problems with a particular attention to the teaching-learning of the English sentence fragment. Through questionnaire and observation, it appears that teachers only concentrate on the different sentence forms in English (Affirmative-Negative-Interrogative-Interro negative). They totally neglect the teaching-learning of English sentence items in general and sentence fragment in particular. Two reasons can justify the reasons why teachers behave so. Firstly, the lack of teaching strategies to cope with this English language issue as regards the teachers' training process. Secondly, the INRAP (Institut National de Recherche et d'Action Pédagogiques) researchers fail to organize in-service training in order to reinforce teachers' capacities through seminars and workshops. Consequently, the secondary school learners are unable to solve some writing exercises in English. This article suggests the teaching strategies and a sample of a lesson plan to guide both teachers and learners implement the selected items in classes successfully.

**Keywords:** teaching-learning, compound sentence, sentence fragment

## RESUME

Ce travail de recherche tente de découvrir les problèmes d'écriture des apprenants au secondaire avec une attention particulière focalisée sur l'enseignement-apprentissage du fragment en anglais. Par le biais du questionnaire et de l'observation, il apparaît que les enseignants se concentrent uniquement sur l'enseignement des différentes formes de phrases (affirmative, négative, interrogative, interronégative). Ils négligent totalement l'enseignement et l'apprentissage des fragments de phrase en langue anglaise qui modifie les formes de phrase anglaises ordinaires. Deux raisons peuvent justifier les raisons pour lesquelles les enseignants se comportent ainsi. Tout d'abord, le manque de stratégies d'enseignement pour faire face à ce problème de langue anglaise au cours de leur processus de formation. Enfin, l'INRAP, qui doit organiser des formations de renforcement de capacités au profit des enseignants, n'organise plus ni séminaires ni ateliers. En conséquence, les enseignants sont incompetents pour enseigner les fragments de phrase au cours secondaires. Ce travail de recherche suggère les moyens d'enseigner, d'apprendre et d'évaluer le fragment de phrase en anglais en fonction de stratégies d'enseignement, d'apprentissage et d'activités de test. Un exemple de plan de leçon a été proposé comme ligne directrice.

**Mots clés :** Enseignement, phrase composée, fragment

## INTRODUCTION

The attainment of accuracy and competency in writing is not an easy task to master, due to its intricate and complex nature that requires rigorous practices that can be learnt explicitly through experience. It is crucial for Congolese learners, especially the secondary school to study how to write accurately when dealing with English written activities. Therefore, the current research work raises both the secondary school teachers of English and learners awareness about the relevance of teaching and learning English sentence fragment. In fact, the teaching and learning of English sentence is suggested and requested by INRAP syllabus as other grammar teaching items (G.O 4: Expressing by writing; S.O.4.2: Building types of sentences) to be taught, learnt and assessed in classes. The teaching and learning of the English sentence fragment can eradicate difficulties that learners encounter when dealing with sentence construction by avoiding fragments. Otherwise, the relevance of teaching English sentences is to help the secondary school learners grasp the learning process of writing activities such as words order, sentence order or writing a paragraph and composition in classes. The main focus of this work is to encourage both teachers and learners deal with sentence fragment because the Congolese Secondary learners recover serious problems or difficulties on building sentences and recognizing sentence problems in general and sentence fragment in particular. Thus, the main objective is to provide the didactical way of carrying out the teaching of English sentence fragment based on compound sentences in classes from. To achieve successfully this dissertation, the following questions should be answered: (i) why teachers and learners do not cope with the selected item? (II) How to teach, learn and assess the English sentence fragment? Finally, the content of this article includes literature review, data collection methods and teaching English compound sentence fragment.

### 1. Previous works on English sentence problems

This section aims at reviewing some previous works related to the teaching of English sentence problems in general and sentence fragment in particular in connection to writing activities at Secondary school. In this dissertation, we are concerned with the following authors: Linebarger et *al* (1987), Marshall et *al*, and Lori Jan Nielsen.

Linebarger et *al* (1987) develop the notion of sentence fragment as regular structures or fragments that are distinguished from full assertions by a missing element or elements which are normally syntactically obligatory. In fact, they try to show how the sentence fragment functions in a given structure and how this grammar item is distinguished in a sentence structure. Thus, they integrate sentence fragment in a linguistic representation basing on syntax, semantics and pragmatics in order to interpret and regulate it as in the following passage:

We argue here that sentence fragments provide a strong case for linguistically modular systems such as PUNDIT, because such elisions have distinct consequences at different levels of linguistic description. Our approach to fragments can be summarized by saying that syntax detects “holes” in surface structure and creates dummy elements as placeholders for the missing elements; semantics and pragmatics interpret these placeholders at the appropriate point in sentence processing, utilizing the same mechanisms for fragments as for full assertions (p. 8)

From this passage, Linebarger et al try to demonstrate that the sentence fragment represents a linguistic analysis which is consisted of syntactic components (string grammar and restriction grammar), semantic components (inference-driven mapping: predicating expressions into predicates and thematic roles) and pragmatic components (referring expressions and temporal expressions). Otherwise, PUNDIT system is concerned with the “how” fragments can be treated in syntax, semantic and pragmatic. Talking about sentence fragment in connection to syntax, Linebarger et al think that sentence fragment reflects a syntactic representation when a sentence has holes or misses a subject or a verb as in: “*old house too small*”. From this fragment, we notice that the missing element is the verb and this latter is considered as the elided element of the selected sentence. In fact, the concern of syntax is to regulate the missing element in a given sentence. In other words, when a sentence misses a subject or verb, syntactically speaking, it refers to a sentence fragment. Moreover, the authors consider these elided elements as placeholders or a reserved place where the elided components of the sentence must be located accordingly.

Basing on semantics and pragmatics, Linebarger et al unveil that the sentence fragment refers to interpretation of these placeholders for the elided elements. This means that, semantics and pragmatics are concerned with filling the holes or placeholders with the elided elements in a given simple sentence in the appropriate place as in: “*old house was too small*”. As a matter of fact, the elided subject or verb created by syntax is now treated by semantic and pragmatic based on the context and content of the sentence. Otherwise, when a subject or a verb is not placed appropriately in a sentence, the notion of sentence fragment is expressed from the meaning or content changes as in: “*old house too small was*”. This example is a fragment because the elided element “*was*” added is unplaced in the sentence and its context or content changes. At that time, the above group of words becomes a fragment. Therefore, Linebarger et al think that sentence fragments originate from linguistic modular systems and those sentence fragments require a linguistic description.

Additionally, this passage retraces how sentence fragments are viewed in context and content referring to elided elements as in the following example: “*The old house too small but the new house will be larger*” (Linebarger et al, 1987, p. 8). In fact, the analysis of this group of words shows that, the first part of the sentence is a fragment because it misses a verb whereas the second one is a complete sentence. Due to this

situation, it is important to consider that, the first part is related to the second one and it can be understood in a given context in the field of semantics and pragmatics. However, syntactically, this group of words must be written as follows "*The old house was too small but the new house will be larger*" in order to get a compound sentence expressing opposition from the coordinating conjunction "*but*". In the same connection, the authors use the term "fragment ellipsis" which refers to the dropped element as in "*Eaten by a tiger*". As a matter of fact, this group of words is a fragment because the subject of the sentence in the passive voice has been elided and then, the thought conveying is not complete or meaningful. Thus, the correct form of this idea is as follows: "*He is eaten by a tiger*" to describe the action undergone by the subject. Furthermore, Linebarger et al demonstrate that sentence fragments result from normal construction that misses sentence elements that can be treated through linguistic aspects. The following passage describes:

In PUNDIT treatment of fragments, each component contributes exactly what is appropriate to the specification of elided elements. Thus, the syntax doesn't attempt to fill in the holes that it discovers, unless that information is completely predicable given the structure at hand. Instead, it creates a dummy element. If the missing element is an elided subject, then the dummy element created by the syntactic component is assigned a referent by the pragmatic component. (Linebarger et al, 1987, p. 9)

This passage shows the way sentence fragment can be analysed in different dimensions such as syntax and pragmatics. That is, when an elided subject or verb created by syntax is placed appropriately in dummy elements, (elements that surround the missing or left element) the complete sentence should obey to the content by pragmatics. In fact, in the teaching and learning process, when both teachers and learners build sentences in different structures, they should not only be limited at the level of sentence constituents but they should also take into account the content of these sentences in English language. Without considering it, they can produce sentence fragments, either in syntax or in pragmatic field as in the following example "*A baby gives birth*". Syntactically, this sentence is correct but its content is wrong because a baby cannot give birth. At this level, this sentence becomes a fragment because it does not obey to the pragmatic explanation. And then, the correct content form of this fragment is: "*A baby cannot give birth*". In a word, this work has dealt with the scientific dimension that stands for providing rules that can remedy some problems related to sentence fragment.

Marshall et al (2010) introduce and practice the concept "Glue" or "the Glue system" in order to deal with some ways to remedy some problems related to sentence fragments in English. The term "Glue" refers to all clause markers; including coordinating conjunctions, subordinating conjunctions, relative pronoun, and noun clause introducers. In this article, they suggest a practical approach which provides simple and reliable strategies that can help both teachers and learners understand and identify the sentence fragments:

In place of learning piecemeal rules, students are presented with the concept of Glue as a system and guided in developing the ability to take control over their use of language and to create correct sentence boundaries. Because the Glue system makes extensive use of their own writing, these students become more personally involved and more vested in eliminating fragments sentences in their work (Marshall et al, 2010, p. 8)

In this passage, Marshall et al try to demonstrate that the Glue system is an appropriate method that facilitates the teaching and learning of English sentence fragments. From this method, the secondary school learners will be able to identify sentence fragments, which cover dependent or independent clause joined by conjunctions. In fact, the teacher introduces the concept of "Glue" when teaching sentence fragments to explain how two ideas or clauses (each having a subject and a finite verb) are joined by a conjunction to get complete thoughts. By using conjunctions in sentences, learners can gain control of their writing and be able to avoid sentence fragments. Furthermore, it is important to mention that Marshall et al are interested in complex sentences where subordinating conjunction are used to show the difference between dependent and independent clauses. This means that, teachers and learners are requested to apply this method in order to correct sentence fragments through complex sentences.

Otherwise, Marshall et al (2010) select "Glue system" in order to facilitate both teachers and learners understand sentence fragment since complex sentences require two clauses joined by a conjunction when they argue: *"The approach taken here is that such students will be able to monitor their incorrectly formed sentences if given a system designed to help them understand English sentence structure. The key concept "Glue" is a term used for all clause markers"* (p.1). The above passage unveils that the concept "Glue" is a teaching method that can enable learners to face sentence problems related to fragment. Since the teaching of sentences causes problems at secondary school, both teachers and learners need this method in order to master the study of sentence fragment. Because learners generally know that the notion of sentence fragment is limited on the missing of a verb or a subject in a simple sentence, the relevance of "Glue system" is to help learners be familiar with the notion of coordinating and subordinating conjunctions in order to solve sentence problems related to compound and complex sentences. In fact, both teachers and learners have to master or know elements that join two ideas in compound and complex sentences. Otherwise, this teaching method will help learners know how to introduce all clause markers in complex and compound sentences and then correct sentence fragments in writing.

Emphasizing on "Glue system" to help learners recognize and correct sentence fragments, Marshall et al (2010, p. 7) enlighten that: *"In implementing Glue in a college composition course specifically designed for non-native speakers with limited academic writing skills, the authors found preliminary indications that this strategy helps these students recognize and correct fragments sentences"*. The analysis of this passage reveals

that, Marshall et al encourage teachers of English to select the teaching method “Glue” in order to help the non-native or foreign learners of secondary school face writing activities. As a matter of fact, this method does not facilitate only the writing of compound and complex sentences but also the organization of a paragraph since a paragraph is made of sentences. Apart from that, it will help learners to deal with the guided writing or word order and composition during the formative and summative assessment in classes. Thus, the implementation of “Glue” can be attested in the Congolese secondary schools because learners from Junior up to senior secondary schools learners have serious problems with the writing activities such as guided writing in the class of 3<sup>e</sup> (college) and composition in the class of Terminale (Lycée). In short, Helaine W. Marshall et al have developed the “*Glue system*” as a linguistic process that can facilitate the teaching and learning of sentence fragments in connection to compound and complex sentences.

Nielsen (1984) mentions the grammatical elements that can help both teachers and learners write their thoughts in complete sentences and avoiding sentence problems such as run-on sentences and sentence fragments when producing oral or written sentences in English:

Apparently, to avoid writing run-ons and fragments students need to know the elements of a complete sentence, the principles of coordination and subordination, and the pertinent punctuation rules. Students must have an analytical grasp of the sentence in order to punctuate correctly the rhetorical units their intuitions identify (Nielsen ,1984, p. 5).

In this quotation, Nielsen shows the linguistic issues that can help both teachers and learners face the sentence fragment and run-on sentences. As a matter of fact, the author requests teachers to teach some grammatical items such as coordinating, subordinating and punctuation in order to enable the secondary school learners implement the sentence problems quoted above when learning English in classes. Therefore, the relevance of teaching these grammatical items is to skill learners being able to identify or to make the difference between a complete sentence and run-on sentence or sentence fragment when writing sentences, paragraphs and compositions during the formative or summative evaluations. Elsewhere, when talking about the pertinent punctuation rules, Nielsen wants to underline that many learners have problems with how to punctuate types and purposes of sentences in English. That is the reason why, he encourages teachers of English to integrate the teaching of punctuation in order to identify and remedy some problems caused by the missing or the lack of punctuation in English sentences. Advising teachers to facilitate the teaching process when dealing with sentence fragments based on subordinate clauses, Nielsen (1984, p. 21) writes:

At the secondary level, fragments are frequently subordinate clauses (...). To facilitate the process, instructors should present the principles of subordinating and teach the difference between independent and dependent sentence structures. (...). Besides, students or learners should be allowed to experiment with acceptable uses of fragments

of grammatical completeness by writing complete sentences and correcting any fragments they find in their composition.

The above quotation shows clearly that, to master sentence fragment, learners are requested to learn the sentence structures when dealing with complex sentences and to be familiar with some grammatical items such as dependent and independent clauses, subordinators or coordinators whose role is to join two ideas. In fact, Nielsen encourages teachers to teach coordination when dealing with compound sentences and subordination when dealing with complex sentences to remedy the problem of sentence fragment. Talking about the sentence fragment, Nielsen (1984) focuses on principles of subordination and coordination. And then, she requests teachers to master those principles to facilitate the teaching of sentence fragment when she (Nielsen, 1984, p. 56) writes: *“these omissions reveal serious inconsistencies with the research and the analysis of the student samples which indicate that fragments occur when students misunderstand coordination and subordination”* In fact, a sentence fragment is made up of the missing of a subject, verb and object or complement. When teaching, the teacher has to select types of sentences (compound and complex sentences) and then, enable learners to practice in taking into account principles or elements justifying the teaching of compound and complex sentence fragments.

Elsewhere, the work of Lori has dealt with the teaching and learning of sentence fragment basing on compound and complex sentences. She has limited her work on principles of coordination and subordination to facilitate the teaching of sentence fragment and run-on sentences. Whereas, this work lacks an adapted didactical process that can transpose this linguistic knowledge into the grammatical items that can be taught according to the learners' level or class at secondary schools.

This section has dealt with the review of some previous research works connected to the teaching and learning of English sentence problems in general and sentence fragment in particular at Secondary school. In fact, these previous works have dealt with the linguistic knowledge that aim to provide the different linguistic features of English sentence fragment in general. As a matter of fact, this research works is inspired from the above linguistic works in order to select one feature or item of these works and to suggest its teaching strategies, learning activities and a sample of a lesson plan. Otherwise, this present work aims at suggesting a didactic process which covers the different strategies related to teaching, learning and assessing English sentence fragment through 3Ps (Presentation, Practice and Production).

## **2. Data collection method and analysis**

The purpose of this section is to provide some different research instruments used to collect data for this research work. In fact, pre-investigation, observation and questionnaire for teachers have been selected to collect the appropriate data dealing

with the teaching of English sentence fragment in the class of 3<sup>e</sup> at CEG LIBERTE in Brazzaville.

## 2.1. Pre-investigation

The purpose of this sub section is to analyse documents such as the INRAP syllabus, the inspectors term planning, the teachers' previous teaching cards and the learners' copybooks. Firstly, the analysis of English syllabus has been proved that the teaching of English sentence problems really exists in the syllabus. Consequently, the teaching items related to the study of English sentence structures are recommended to be taught, learnt and assessed in different classes at secondary school. To show evidence, it is written in INRAP (2009, p. 18): "G.O 4: *Expressing by writing; S.O.4.2: Building types of sentences*". Secondly, about the teachers' teaching cards, it only takes into account the teachers of our sample population who have accepted to give their teaching cards in order to check whether there are some notions related to the teaching of English sentence fragment. But, none of what we have been looking for has been found in the teachers' teaching cards. Fourthly, concerning the learners' note books, it is concerned with the selected learners of our sample population who have accepted to provide their former lessons before we arrive so that we can check whether they have learnt some items linked to English sentence problems based on fragments. However, none of lessons related to English sentence fragment have been found in the learners' note books. Consequently, the above pre-investigation analysis encourages the deep research on the hindrances that cause the lack of teaching and learning English sentence fragment at secondary schools.

## 2.2. Classroom observation

The purpose of this section is to explore what has been observed in the class of 3<sup>e</sup> at CEG LIBERTÉ on the teaching of English sentence fragment items in the following check list observation.

Sentence problem	Contents	Observation
Sentence fragment	<b>Missing of:</b>	<i>Sentence fragment items are not taught as autonomous lessons in classes of 3<sup>e</sup>.</i>
	- <i>Subject</i>	
	- <i>Verb</i>	
	- <i>Complement/Object</i>	
	- <i>Independent clause</i>	
	<b>Phrase</b>	
	- <i>Prepositional phrase</i>	
	- <i>Participial phrase</i>	
	<b>Miss use of punctuations</b>	
	<b>Miss use of conjunctions</b>	

Table 1: Check list observation

This observation unveils that, the secondary school teachers disregard the relevance of teaching and learning English sentence problems in general and sentence fragment in particular. To illustrate, we notice that the teaching of English sentence fragment items are not visible in the teachers' term planning by the inspectors, the teachers' previous teaching cards and the learners' copybooks. And then, when observing in different classes of 3<sup>e</sup> level, we notice that teachers often teach sentence forms (affirmative-negative-interrogative-interrogative) based on conjugation. In fact, when teaching sentence forms, teachers of English are interested in the morphology of the verb phrase and its positions. However, the teaching of sentence types, sentence purposes and sentence problem items such as fragment and run-on-sentences to quote only a few have not been taken into account during the observation period. So, it is important to mention that, our observation period has lengthened for two terms. And then, we have been in four classrooms of 3<sup>e</sup> level to observe four teachers of English for six times per term. Elsewhere, the following questionnaire for teachers will help to know the reason why the English sentence items are not taught, learnt and assessed in classes at junior secondary school.

### 2.3. Questionnaire addressed to teachers

This subsection aims at analysing and interpreting each question of the questionnaire addressed to the EFL teachers. These questions are related to problems associated to the teaching of English sentence in general and sentence fragment in particular at junior secondary school:

***Question 1: Are the teaching of English sentence problems mentioned in the INRAP syllabus?***

The aim of this question is to collect the teachers' opinions about the inclusion of English sentence in the English syllabus of INRAP. The chart below details.

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	09	90%
No	01	10%
Total	10	100%

Table 2: The English sentence problems in the syllabus.

Evidently, a lot of teachers from the sample population admit the inclusion of English sentence in the INRAP syllabus. This means that the teaching of sentences is requested to be taught, learnt and assessed autonomously as other grammar items in English course. Otherwise, the existence of teaching English sentence in classes is known by the secondary school teachers of English whereas, they might lack some teaching strategies to teach such item effectively in classes.

**Question 2: Have you been trained to teach English sentence fragments? Justify.**

This question has been asked to check whether the secondary teachers have been trained to teach sentence fragment during their training period at the Teachers Training College. Thus, the following chart brings results.

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	01	10%
No	09	90%
Total	10	100%

Table 3: Teachers' training on sentence problems.

It is clear to acknowledge that the selected teachers at Liberté junior secondary school have not been trained on English sentence fragment. They have not been presented with such notion at ENS (Ecole Normale Supérieure) and they judge this notion as a strange teaching item. Thus, these teachers lack some teaching strategies to tackle the teaching of sentence fragment in classes. In fact, the course of English sentence is only limited at the level of its forms and the conjugation.

**Question 3: What is the content of the teaching of English sentence items in the class of 3<sup>e</sup>? Justify**

The purpose of this question is to collect the teachers' point of view about the issue on which they teach the English sentence items in the class of 3<sup>e</sup>. This table tells more about.

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Sentence constituents	01	10%
Sentence forms	06	60%
Types of sentences	02	20%
Purpose of sentences	01	10%
Total	10	100%

Table 4: Teachers' issues to teach English sentence problems.

The results contained in the above table show that many teachers from the sample population are skilled in teaching sentence based on forms of sentences. Otherwise, forms of sentences represent the only issue or way used to teach sentence in classes since they copy them from books of conjugation and paste on the board accordingly. It means that, the secondary school teachers have not benefited by other issues to teach a sentence like the constituents of a sentence, the types of sentences and the purposes of sentences in classes. Additionally, our teacher sample population think that when teaching types of sentences they refer only to simple sentence but they do not fix the learners' attention on types of sentences like compound, complex and compound-complex sentences which are made of independent and dependent

clauses joined by conjunctions. As a result, when talking with them during the observation period they argued that the reason that pushes them deal with only sentence forms is related to the lack of teaching strategies or the appropriate learning activities. Consequently, they prefer to stop at the level of forms which are the easiest ways or issues to teach English sentence that help learners from 3<sup>e</sup> face the sentence writing exercises during the formative and summative evaluations.

**Question 4: Which sentence problems do you often face while teaching in the class of 3<sup>e</sup>? Justify**

This question at knowing the kinds of sentence problems the secondary school teachers train learners of 3<sup>e</sup>. The table below provides details.

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Run-on sentence	01	10%
Sentence fragment	01	10%
Faulty parallelism	00	00%
Subject -Verb - Argument	08	80%
Total	10	100%

Table 5: Types of sentence problems.

From this table, the majority of teachers have selected Subject-verb agreement. In fact, these teachers have justified that they face sentence problems when referring to the agreement that shares a subject and a verb within a sentence. The case of singular third person subjects (she, he, it or a singular noun) which need a singular verb, with an "s" ending in the present simple tense. It means that among English sentence problems that exist, teachers of English only select and teach subject-verb agreement to help learners face writing activities. However, a few of these teachers are tempted to teach other English sentence problems in classes.

**Question 5: Which strategy of correction used when teaching English sentence fragment in the class of 3<sup>e</sup>? Justify**

This question has been asked to check the option of correction the selected teachers use to teach the English sentence fragment in classes. Therefore, the chart below evidences.

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Missing of sentence components	01	10%
Miss use of punctuations	05	50%
Miss use of conjunctions	04	40%
Total	10	100%

Table 6: Options of correction to teach sentence fragment

The above table unveils that many teachers of English are interested on “miss use of punctuations” and “miss use of conjunctions” to correct the English sentence fragments. In fact, two reasons justify the secondary school teachers’ choices. Firstly, they refer to the basic definition of a sentence which starts by a capital letter and ends by a dot. Secondly, the selected teachers think about the teaching of sentence types based on the compound sentence. However, few of them have not selected the “missing of sentence components”. They confess that the teaching of sentence components is not necessary since the secondary school learners are already familiar with them when learning a sentence in French at Primary school.

### **3. Major findings**

Talking about the first major finding, we can evoke the lack of appropriate training received by the secondary school teachers at ENS based on English sentence with its related problems. In fact, during their training period at university, these teachers have not been presented with the notion of English sentence including its problems when dealing with the course of grammar. That is, the course of grammar is taught, learnt and assessed at ENS, but the way that this grammar is taught cannot help or allow these teachers face English sentence with its problems, because this presented grammar refers only to the teaching of conjugation and forms of sentences. Due to that privation, teachers are incapable of daring to teach sentence structure with its problems because they are only taught with what is written in books which is not presented with a given didactic transposition. So, a teacher cannot be satisfied to his/her own knowledge to teach an item in a given classroom but this latter needs a training. It comes to report that, a training is considered as the only issue that allows a teacher take what is scientific in his/her mind or in books and add on it the didactic process that will help him/her to transpose the scientific information. In doing so, a teacher is then capable of teaching an item by developing appropriate teaching strategies and methods as the case of the teaching of sentence fragment. In the same perspective, Mampassi (2019, p. 55) adds that: “The teachers of English trained at ENS and those coming from faculties have not been trained on the teaching of writing in English. This justifies the teachers’ incompetence in classes”. (Our translation from French into English)

This passage means that, secondary school teachers do not have good materials or knowledge to implement some English notions in classes, because they have not been well trained at university on how to transpose the scientific notions to didactic process. This fact reveals the incapacity of university training. From this passage, Beri Mampassi underlines the insufficient of teachers on the ground when teaching. He thinks that teachers should be presented with the didactic transposition since

ENS because the objective of ENS is to train prospective teachers by providing them with good strategies and techniques to face the English items.

The second major finding is concerned with the INRAP responsibility for the teaching and learning of English sentence structure containing its problems. As a matter of fact, INRAP in relationship with inspectors when organizing the yearly planning on English grammar items they absolutely ignore to mention teaching strategies and learning activities of English sentence problems in general and sentence fragment in particular that hamper learners face writing, while the teaching and learning of English sentence appears in INRAP syllabus and then requested to be taught, learnt and assessed autonomously in classes. Unfortunately, inspectors when organizing workshops or seminars on grammar notions, they often base on tenses, word formation and tense agreement to quote only a few. However, when tackling the English sentence they often put an emphasis on sentence forms followed by conjugation and they disregard problems that hamper the teaching of this item.

The third major finding is based on the secondary school teachers' ignorance on the INRAP program content. In fact, English teachers do not take into account what is prescribed in the INRAP programme; they put only their particular attention on the allotment that they consider easy while, the teaching and learning of sentence is well inserted in the entire syllabus of secondary school with general and specific objectives but these teachers reject it and prefer dealing with the allotment where they can select the suitable item.

Lastly, the major findings recover also the incapacity of secondary teachers based on their own creativity and audacity to transpose what reflects the scientific image in books. It means that, these teachers are unable to provide teaching strategies and learning activities on sentence problems in general and sentence fragment in particular in classes. So, this lack of innovations prevents them deal with the teaching and learning of English sentence fragment.

To sum it up, this section of the article is consisted of three sub-sections. The first sub-section has dealt with the analysis of classroom observation in which it has been noticed the absence of teaching and learning of English sentence fragment in the class of 3<sup>e</sup> at secondary school. That is, this teaching item is not found neither in teachers teaching cards nor in learners' copybooks. The second sub-section has discussed the analysis of questionnaires which reveals the confusion that teachers apprehend when dealing with words order, long sentences and subject-verb agreement. This results to the lack of training. In other side, learners are not closed to such item because they are not presented with it in classes. The last sub-section has clarified the major findings. In fact, it has been justified that, the problems that handicap the secondary teachers to teach sentence fragment is the fact that they have not been trained on English sentence fragment at university, then the lack of the

appropriate teaching strategies and methods from the INRAP and the organization of some workshops and seminars on the selected item, the teachers' ignorance about the INRAP syllabus content and their incapacity to create and innovate some teaching strategies and learning activities that can facilitate the implementation of the English sentence fragment lessons freely in classes.

#### **4. Teaching English compound sentence fragment**

The teaching and learning of the English sentence fragment based on the compound sentence is possible when following the method of 3Ps (Presentation, Practice, and Production). Actually, this didactic strategy could facilitate the teaching, learning and assessing of the selected item in classes.

##### ***4.1. Presentation***

In this stage, the main purpose is to refer to the listening skill. The focus is put on the learners' attention towards the presented item by the teacher. For the sake of this research work, the first task is to provide a list of fragments on the board, the second task is to provide the corrected sentences from the fragments given above. Finally, the teacher gives the hint justifying the correction of the sentence fragment based on the compound sentence. That is, to give learners arguments and the explanation to face fragments in the compound sentence.

##### ***4.2. Practice***

The main objective of this stage is based on the speaking skills. In fact, the task of this stage is to reward the learners' comprehension on the selected topic or item by getting them practice with him/her around examples. So, in this research work, the teacher asks learners to repeat the sentences above and then he/she requests pairs of them to make a fragment with its corrected form orally.

##### ***4.3. Production***

The role of this stage is dedicated to the reading and writing skills. As a matter of fact, the teacher's role here is to ask learners to provide their examples orally and then produce them on the board. In the case of this work, the teacher asks learners to write on the board fragments with its corrected forms. One may notice that, when dealing with this stage, the examples provided by learners can constitute a summary of the day's lesson that they can then copy down in their copybooks.

**Level:** 3<sup>e</sup>

**Subject:** English

**Matter:** Grammar

**Title of the lesson:** Sentence fragment based on compound sentence

**G.O4:** Expressing by writing

**S.O4.2:** Building the types of sentences

**Teaching card n°1**

**Attendance list**

**B:            G:**

**Date:** Monday, November 9<sup>th</sup> 2021

**Duration:** 55mn

**Documents:**

Go for English,

Cours de grammaire anglaise L2EA

Performance Objective	Teaching strategies	Learning activities	Evaluation	Timing	Obs
By the end of the lesson, learners should be able to correct English sentence problems thanks to the teacher's explanation.	<p><b>I- Beginning</b></p> <p><b>I.1. Warming up</b></p> <p><b>Greeting</b> The teacher greets the class.</p> <p><b>Asking for the date</b> The teacher asks learners to tell the date.</p> <p><b>Attendance checking</b> The teacher checks the roll.</p>	<p>Good morning sir! We are doing well.</p> <p>Today is Monday, November 9<sup>th</sup> 2021</p> <p>Nobody!</p>	<p>Good morning class! How are you doing?</p> <p>What is date today?</p> <p>Who is missing today?</p>	5mn	
	<p><b>I.2. Pre-requisite</b> The teacher asks learners to provide the different English sentence problems.</p>	<p><b>Answers</b></p> <p>(1) 1. Run-on sentence Eg: The music was loud my neighbour complained.</p> <p>2. sentence fragment Eg: Two hundred spectators attending the game.</p> <p>3. Parallel structure</p>	<p><b>Task one:</b> Provide English sentence problems with its example.</p>	5mn	

<p>By the end of the lesson, learners should be able to provide the explanation justifying the correction of the sentence fragment based on the compound</p>	<p>The teacher asks learners to give the seven English coordinating conjunctions.</p> <p>The teacher asks learners to choose the compound sentence from the following examples.</p> <p><b>II. Day's lesson</b>  <b>1. Presentation</b>  The teacher gives fragments, the corrected forms and the hint to justify the correction.</p> <p>A. Sentence fragments  1. Kiba plays piano and dances in the church.  2. Learners learn and teachers teach in the classroom.  3. Today, I study grammar, and I will write better.</p> <p>B. Corrected sentences</p>	<p>Eg: Jennifer ate, drank and was dancing.  4. Subject-verb agreement  Eg: Andzamba don't claim.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Answers</b></p> <p>(2)  The seven coordinating conjunctions are: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Answers</b></p> <p>(3)  Eg: Guyson talks but he is hungry.</p> <p>Learners listen and follow carefully the teacher's explanation.</p>	<p><b>Task two:</b> Give the seven English coordinating conjunctions.</p> <p><b>Task three:</b> Choose the compound sentence from the following sentence type examples  1. Branham is a prophet.  2. Kiba is a teacher because he has been trained at ENS.  3. Guyson talks but he is hungry.</p>	<p>15mn</p>	
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<p>sentence.</p>	<p>1. Kiba plays piano and <u>he</u> dances in the church.                  2. Learners learn <u>but</u> teachers teach in the classroom.                  3. Today, I study grammar, and <u>tomorrow</u> I will write better.</p> <p>C. Explanation                  The sentence fragment based on the compound sentence is corrected when:                  1. <i>The missing element is identified.</i>                  2. <i>The thought is written with two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction.</i>                  3. <i>The meaning of the coordinating conjunction is attested.</i></p> <p><b>2. Practice</b>                  The teacher asks learners to repeat the sentences above and then he requests pairs of them to make a fragment with its corrected form orally.</p> <p><b>3. Production</b>                  The teacher asks learners to write on the board fragments with its corrected forms.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Answers</b></p> <p>Learners repeat the sentences above and make fragments with its corrected forms orally.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Answers</b></p> <p><b>A. Fragments</b>                  1. Regina makes some cookies she dislikes them.</p>	<p><b>Task four:</b> Repeat the sentences above, make your own fragments with its corrected forms orally.</p> <p><b>Task five:</b> Write your own fragments with its corrected forms on the board.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">10mn</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10mn</p>	
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	<p><b>III. Evaluation</b> 1. Applied exercise The teacher asks learners to say whether the following sentences are true or false in terms fragments and complete sentence.</p> <p><b>2. Follow up activity</b> The teacher asks learners to put the following sentence</p>	<p>2. Georges prefers and loves business. 3. Lions and crocodiles are dangerous animals. 4. Neither today tomorrow nor is suitable in our program.</p> <p><b>B. Corrected forms</b> 1. Regina makes some cookies <u>but</u> she dislikes them. 2. Georges prefers and <u>he</u> loves business. 3. Lions and crocodiles are dangerous animals <u>and they often kill people.</u> 4. Neither today <u>nor</u> tomorrow nor is suitable in our program.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Answers</b></p> <p>1. True 2. False 3. True 4. False</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Answers</b></p> <p>1. My uncle changed his decision <u>and</u> he was happy. 2. Teacher is well-dressed <u>but</u> he</p>	<p><b>Task six:</b> Say whether the following sentences are true or false in terms of fragments and correct sentence. 1. Vimo works at a private company but his wife works in a public one. 2. Alban and Clavis go to the training work they will succeed to their test. 3. The run over the street, for the police officer tries to arrest them. 4. My classmate and I laugh at each other.</p> <p><b>Task seven:</b> The following sentences are fragments, order them and insert the appropriate coordinating conjunction given hereafter. But - and - so - for</p>	10mn	
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	<p>fragments in good order and then insert the appropriate coordinating conjunction.</p>	<p>behaves like baby.          3. Twins are good <u>for</u> they bring blessing.          4. Black people must struggle <u>so</u> they become free.</p>	<p>1. My uncle/his decision/he/happy/was/changed/          2.is/he/baby/like/teacher/behaves/well-dressed/          3. for/bring blessing/twins/good/are/they/          4. must/become free/black people/struggle/they/</p>		
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## CONCLUSION

This article has tackled the didactic process of the teaching of English sentence problems based on compound sentence fragment in the class of 3<sup>e</sup> at secondary school. As a matter of fact, the selected topic has covered the terms “teaching/learning” which has been explained like the didactic process related to facilitate or simplify the teaching and learning of sentence fragment throughout teaching strategies and learning activities. The term “sentence problems” is considered as all incomplete sentences that does not convey a complete idea or difficult to understand. “Sentence fragment” is seen as a broken piece of sentence that misses a subject, predicate or starts with a dependent clause and expresses an incomplete idea. The relevance of teaching sentence fragment has showed that when dealing with the English sentence fragment, secondary learners could become more skilful in sentence construction by recognizing missing elements of a sentence and being able to join two clauses to form a compound or a complex sentence.

In addition to this background information, we have re-examined some existing research works related to the teaching and learning of English sentence fragment at schools. In fact, these research works on one hand is concerned with the scientific or linguistic information for the teaching and learning of sentence fragment based on rules (Linebarger et al, 1987; Marshall et al, 2010 and Nielsen, 1984). However, on the second hand they tackle the didactic process likely Ngoma (1996) and Beri Mapassi (2019). Actually, these research works have provided the transposition of the scientific or linguistic information based on the teaching and learning of sentence (fragment) by suggesting the teaching and learning strategies and, testing activities and a lesson plan to help both secondary teachers and learners face writing at secondary school. If the former works concentrate on natural English sentence form, the present work enlarges the content of English sentence by incorporating fragment sentences.

The collected data in this research work has revealed that the teaching and learning of English sentence appears in INRAP English syllabus (G.O 4: Expressing by writing; S.O.4.2: Building types of sentences) but secondary teachers do not take into account its teaching as other teaching grammar items. In fact, they take time on teaching forms and conjugation. From analysis, we have discovered that, these teachers do not teach sentence fragment at secondary school because they have not been trained at ENS with the teaching of such item. Additionally, the failure of INRAP is related to the lack of organizing seminars and workshops on the teaching and learning of English sentence problems at secondary school.

Finally, it has been suggested all along this work that the English sentence fragment could be taught, learnt and assessed at secondary school as any other English grammar issues. Thus, a lesson plan has been suggested showing the teaching

strategies and learning activities that can help and guide the secondary school teachers to deal with English compound sentence fragment freely in classes.

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