PARTICIPLE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NSUKKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ENUGU STATE

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TITLE PAGE

PARTICIPLE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NSUKKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ENUGU STATE

M.A. PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND LITERARY STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF ART DEGREE IN ENGLISH

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APPROVAL PAGE

This project has been duly approved as having met the requirement for the award of Master of Art (MA) in English in the University of Nigeria Nsukka.

BY

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Supervisor          External Supervisor

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Internal Examiner    Head of Department

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Dean of Faculty      Date
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my dear husband and children
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank God for his infinite mercy in making this programme a success. Special thanks goes to my supervisor Prof. Sam Onuigbo for his patience, correction, suggestions and fatherly advice during this write-up. I humbly acknowledge the wonderful contribution of all the lecturers in the Department of English and Literary Studies. I am particularly grateful to all the authors and publishers whom I benefited from their wealth of experience.

Finally, my special appreciation goes to my husband Engr. Damian Eze and my children for their patience, support and encouragement towards the success of this research work.
This study is aimed at finding out the participle problems encountered by senior secondary school students with a view of solving the problems so found.

Teachers of the English language and student in senior secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government of Enugu State were used for this study.

Out of thirty-two (32) secondary schools in this local government area, five schools were used as target population.

A well-structured questionnaire was used to elicit information on the participle problems encountered by student of English and possible ways in which the teaching and learning of the participles can be improved in our schools.

The findings revealed that the teaching and learning of participles is faced with numerous problems in the target schools. Recommendation and possible solutions to the problems were made.

Finally, a suggestion was made for a similar research to be carried out in another part of the state using a wider population and samples to compare the findings of this study.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

English is used as a first language in countries like Britain, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. It is used as a second and official language in many of the former British Colonies. Nigeria is one of such countries that use English as an official language. The territories that make up Nigeria are made up of ethnic groups of varying sizes, each with an extended speech community and a dominant language – Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Edo, Efik among others.

According to Uzozie (1992), “the origins of the English language in Nigeria are shrouded in obscurity”

Spencer (1971) wrote that

*English was introduced into Nigeria by the activities of Portuguese traders, the first Europeans that came to the West Coast of Africa.*

The Portuguese spoke little English. Their interests were more in the area of trade. However, as seamen and traders exchanged goods and services with local people, there arose a need for a coherent system of communication. Anwosi further remarks that

*When English challenged the monopoly of Portuguese traders’ interests and finally ousted them from the ancient Benin Kingdom, the Portuguese language was replaced with English as the language of diplomacy and trade.*

The colonial period witnessed the institutionalization of the English language learning in Nigerian educational institutions.
European officials had very poor impression of our native languages which to them were neither extensive nor of high quality. Their own language (English) was therefore imposed on the people. Omelewa (1984) explains that

*The missionaries who came to Badagry near Lagos in 1842 introduced English into Nigeria. Schools were opened and pupils were taught in English language.*

These missionaries came as a result of the British attempts to suppress the trans-atlantic slave trade and replace it with the civilizing mission of colonialism. These schools, churches and government institution were established to aid in governing the native Africans. Crowder (1966) reports that

*In the late 1930s, many freed slaves from free town came to their original homes in Lagos and Badagry.*

Some of these freed slaves had received formal education in English. Many of them were later employed by missionaries, trading companies and British colonial administrators as interpreters, messengers and teachers which gave greater impetus to the spread of the English language in Nigeria. The English language in Nigeria has the status of a second language. The language has acquired the new forms of manifestation in the multilingual Nigerian situation. A diachronic study of a language is a statement about changes that occurred over a period of time in the life of that language. If language is seen as a...
product of history, a diachronic study of the English language in Nigeria can hardly be studied in isolation from its synchronic development. Many of the historical changes in the language are still observed in the present structure. A valid diachronic analysis therefore should be used on an effective synchronic (descriptive) study.

Statements about linguistic change in Nigeria cannot be made without recourse to existing descriptions of the language in at least two varieties of development: standard and non standard usage. Evidence that the English in Nigeria has undergone certain changes can be found in old manuscripts and written inscriptions. Synchronic linguistic is the state of a language at a particular time. Ubahakwe (1979) citing an editorial in the Journal of Nigerian English Studies Association maintains that

*The state of the English Language is no longer at a cross roads in Nigeria. English in Nigeria connotes English as a second language.*

The significant status assumed by the Nigerian variety of English makes it capable of being seen as a dialect sub-set comparable to British, American and Australia English among other dialect sub-sets. Adetugo (1984) opines that “the Nigerian variety which is called Nigerian English has as much viability as other varieties of English”

A new dialect has arisen as a result of the interplay between English and indigenous languages spoken in Nigeria. English in Nigeria is categorized as either standard (educated) or non-standard (uneducated) usage. A large number of English speakers in Nigeria are uneducated and these include those who have little formal education and illiterates who are exposed to English in communities where pidgin does not flourish. They are confronted with the difficulties posed by errors in the use the language.
English, apart from being the official language in Nigeria is also a second language and it is therefore important for students in post primary schools to have good knowledge of the English language generally and particularly the grammatical aspect of the language in order to enhance effective use of the language. The second system and structure forms the core of the language. The native speaker acquires these as unconscious habits before he enters school. This is not the case with African child learning it as a second language.

Cliff (2000) defines participles as “yet another verbal; a word derived from a verb”. There are three verb forms in English that are known as verbals. They are participles, gerunds and infinitives. They belong to the group of verbs called non-finite verbs. They are called verbal because they are derived from verbs and retain many of the characteristics of the verb, a verbal can take any kind of modifier or complement but cannot make a statement or act as a question. Very often, they are used as pure adjectives’ and are placed directly before the nouns they modify. The following examples show the participle used as simple adjectives.

He conducts a flourishing business (Here flourishing modifies business).
When the participle is used as a ‘predicative adjective it is found in the predicate and modifies the subject as in the following illustrations.
The game is exciting.
The book was interesting.
The rumour were starting.
The participles modify game, book and rumour and they are forms of verb. A better understanding of participles will enable the students to differentiate between verbal that act as adjectives, understand verbs- regular and irregular and tenses.
As a result of this, it must be accorded primary importance in any teaching endeavour. Commenting on this point, O’cornor (1967) affirms that

It is well known that a child of ten years old or less can learn a language perfectly if he is brought up surrounded by that language, no matter where he was born or who his parents are.

In spite of the above axiom, the teaching and learning of English language in secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu state is still being hindered by numerous problems which are instrumental to poor performance in most examinations. It is not strange that many users of English language are deficient in the effective use of participles and this is enough evidence to validate the claim that it is a problem area that demands great attention especially as much work has not been done in this area.

1.2 Objective of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to find out how the teaching and learning of participles can be improved upon in our secondary schools. This research is undertaken to get reliable information about the participle problems encountered by senior secondary three students in the secondary schools in Nsukka Urban of Enugu State.

The researcher set out to study the participle problems encountered by students of English, the constraints they face and possible ways of helping them.

To achieve these goals, questionnaires containing relevant items were administered to the students and teachers of the English language. This study is based on the assumption that as second language learners students are bound to face difficulties in learning the grammatical units of the language.
This study is also aimed at finding out ways that students can best acquire the knowledge of participles, ways in which teachers can teach participles and how these students might be empowered to become more competent in the use of participles. Since very little has been done in this area and since our students encounter great difficulties in handling the participle, this research is therefore design to explore this aspect of the verb.

1.3 Research Problem
Since very little has been done in this area and since our students encounter great difficulties in handling the participle. English is a second language to our students and because of little provision made for the teaching of participles on the school time table, it is therefore difficult for the students to make effective use of participles in their written works. There is an overlap in the verb which poses a problem to learners of English as a second language. The present form of the verb ends in –ing and ed as the past form for regular verbs.

Participles which are derived from the verbs have their present and past forms as ordinary verbs. The present participle form also ends in –ing and past participle form ends in –ed for regular verbs and en, -t and other ways for the various irregular verbs. This kind of similarity in form brings about difficulty in differentiating between verbs (present and past tenses) and participles.

The problem of teaching the participle is certainly not simplified by the fact that this term is obviously a misnomer.

The student, accustomed to present tenses which indicate present time and past participle which indicates now present, now past, now future time... they insist on in calling the participle in-ing present no matter, what time it happens to be indicating.
With all the problems encountered in teaching and learning of participles, little research has been conducted in this area. The result is that some of the teachers are not quite informed and since one cannot give what one does not have; this study is designed to fill the yawning gap in order to provide a reliable date for both the teachers and students.

1.4 Relevance of the Study

This study is crucial because it is aimed at finding out the participles problems encountered by senior secondary three students in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu state. The finding will help the classroom teacher to be better informed about participles in order to achieve the desired goals in teaching. It will be of immense benefit to the students as they will have a better knowledge of what participles are all about. It will also help them to differentiate between verbs, participles and other verbal. It will also be of immense benefit to the government and curriculum planers since it provides some reliable data for improving the teaching and learning of participles and English language generally in secondary schools in Nigeria. It may also serve as reference material to the Faculty of Arts in the Nigerian universities. The result may be of great value to the students as they will develop the right attitude towards English language by dropping the ‘pidgin English’ and adopting the English language for their every day use. It may equally be of help to their parents and guardians if they realize their own faults after reading this work and correct them through suggestions proffered in this project.

1.5 Scope of the Study

This research is based on identifying the problems of participles encountered by senior secondary three students (SS3) in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State and ways in which teaching
and learning of participles can be improved. A casual look at the verb and other parts of speech whose operations involve the participle will be done. In undertaking this study, relevant data will be collected from secondary schools in Nsukka urban and other community secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State.

1.6 Research Question

The research questions include the following:

1. In what ways does insufficiency of qualified English teachers pose problems to the teaching and learning of participles?
2. How do misplaced and dangling participles affect the students’ performance in the use of English?
3. Does mother-tongue interference constitute problems to the teaching and learning of participles?
4. To what extent does poor teaching method affect the effective teaching and learning of participles?
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW
This chapter reviewed the relevant literature in this field of study. The researcher found out that while some scholars strongly believe that misplacement of participle in a sentence otherwise known as dangling participles could pose a problem, others are of the view that poor quality of many of the teachers of the English language in our schools constitutes problem. There is another school of thought which opined that change and variety of English spoken in Nigeria affect the performance of students in both spoken and written English.

Mother tongue interference has also been noted as one of the major factors militating against students’ proficiency in the use of the English language. Learners of English as a second language (L₂) tend to substitute the phonemes of English language with sounds in their mother tongue (L₁). Dustan (1989) pointed out that

\textit{A strong tendency on the part of anyone learning a second language is to use sounds, syllable structure and rhythm of his mother tongue in place of sounds, syllable structure and rhythm of the language he is learning}

Other scholars like Atonwu (1976) and Obemata (1985) agreed to the point above.

Broughton et al (1980) in their own view comment that

\textit{By learning a foreign language, we see our own in perspective; we recognize that there are other ways of saying things, other ways of thinking, and other patterns of emphasis.}
It was noted that Nigerian languages and English language belong to different linguistic families. Following the point above, our secondary students are bound to superimpose the speech patterns of their first language on English language.

It has also been noted that some English sounds do not exist in Nigerian languages. Such sounds include /θ/ as in thank. /s/ as in then and /n/ as in thing and thinking. Emphasizing on this point, Ezike (1983) noted that there are some English sounds that have not vernacular equivalents. Thus an averages Nigerian pupil pronounces ‘they’ and ‘day’ ‘thank’ and ‘tank’ alike.

The researcher noted with dismay that poor quality of many of the English language teachers is an impediment to the students’ mastery of the language. It was observed also that many of our English teachers did not have enough exposure to the language. Worse still is the insufficiency of qualified teachers of the language and because of this, all sorts of teachers are assigned to teach English language in our secondary school. Ekerefe in unpublished article wrote:

*It appears that state government have no criteria to go by in their recruitment of teachers as all sorts of people trained and untrained are being recruited as teachers.*

Common sense tells us that children are like yam tendrils for they way are directed. The teacher like a farmer directs the way of the children. This he does by organizing lessons, motivating the students to learn and finally directing the lessons. Commenting on the role of teachers, Hoyce (1976) noted that “the teacher is not only the director of learning but also the motivator and organizer of learning.

Eyrsi (2004) in her own view maintained that
Nothing gladdens the hearts of teachers than the fact that their students are doing well in their subject area. Teachers of English in Nigeria yearn to shear in this joy. Their almost concern is how to eliminate all the errors committed by their students and so help them speak and write accurately.

The unfortunate thing is that in a second a language situation such as the status of English in Nigeria, the errors become multifarious because students study the target language against the background of their mother tongues in which they have attained a reasonable degree of competence. As a result, in many cases, it becomes very difficult for the teacher to see them through. Also the fact that most of the English language teachers did not have enough exposure to the language during there training, they impact to the student what they think is correct and not what they know is correct. In this book Obiora (1976) wrote

*The complexity of language learning demands the teacher to have different method at his finger tip and a number of skills at his command but regretted that such teachers are still rate.*

Mark Damen (2000) identifies “dangling participles” another hindrance to students’ effective performance in essay writing. To him, dangling participles “can cause serious misunderstanding in academic writing”, participles are often misused in speaking and writing. Anything that dangles is said to ‘hang loosely’ without secure attachment.
A participle dangles when there is no word in the sentence which it could properly modify or when it seems to be related to a word which does not convey the meaning intended. Sometimes, the use of dangling participles or modifiers gives a ridiculous or a humorous slant to the meaning of the sentence.

When a participle phrase is wrongly placed in a sentence, it brings about confusion and understanding of what is intended in a sentence.

According to Wikipedia (2010) "a dangling modifier a specific case of which the dangling participle is an error in a sentence structure whereby a grammatical modifier is associated with a word other than the one intended; or with no particular word at all”

For example, a writer may have meant to modify the subject; but word order makes the modifier seem to modify an object instead. To him “such ambiguities” can lead to unintentional humour or difficulty in understanding a sentence.

Participles or participial clauses may be at the beginning or at the end of a sentence, and a participial clause is usually attached to subject, as in “walking down the street (clause) the man (subject) saw the beautiful trees (object)”. However, when the subject is missing or the participle attaches itself to another object in a sentence, the clause is seemingly, “hanging on nothing or on an entirely inappropriate noun. It thus becomes a dangling participle, as in this, sentence:

“Walking down main street, the trees were beautify”

In this sentence, the “walking down” participle seems to connect to the trees because it has no subject. Presumably, the trees are not themselves walking done main street. Upon reflection the participle really should connect
to the unmentioned speaker of the sentence, the one doing the walking (and finding the trees beautiful).

When a participle phrase is placed at the beginning of a sentence, it should refer to the subject. When it could not possibly modify the subject from the standpoint of meaning, the sentence must be rewritten and a suitable subject supplied which it could logically modify. Considered the following sentences.

- Walking through the tunnel, a wallet was picked
- Entering the harbor, the statue of liberty came into view.
- Taking the test, the teacher gave me a passing grade.

In the first sentence, the participle phrase *walking through the tunnel* modifies the subject of the sentence which is wallet. A participle used at the beginning of a sentence modifies the subject. It is evident that the wallet was not walking through the tunnel but is the meaning conveyed by the sentence as it is written. Very often, the best way to get rid of a dangling participle is to substitute a clause for it as in the example, *while we are walking through the tunnel*, we picked up a wallet.

In the second sentence, the participle phrase modifies the statue of liberty. But it was not the status of liberty that was entering the harbor. The phrase which seems to be related to a word which the participle phrase really modifies is not in the sentence.

The sentence might be revised as follows: - *As we entered the harbor*, the statue of liberty came into view.

In the last sentence, the participle phrase modifies the word teacher. If you read the sentence carefully, you will readily see that it was not the teacher who took the test. The sentence would be correctly written if a change were substituted for the dangling phrase thus: *After I took the test*, the teacher gave me a passing grade.
Sometimes there is a word in a sentence which the participle phrase properly modifies but the participle is not placed correctly. As a result the meaning is confused. This error is commonly referred to as misplaced modifiers.

When a participle phrase is wrongly placed in a sentence, it brings about confusion and misunderstanding of what is intended in sentence. Instances of these misplaced modifiers include.

**Jumping into the water**, the children were rescued by the life guard. If you read this sentence carefully, you will see that the word which the participle modifies is in the sentence. It is the word lifeguard. It was the lifeguard who jumped into the water and not the children.

The trouble with the sentence is that the participle phrase should modify the subject. The sentence might be rewritten as follows: **Jumping into the water**, the lifeguard rescued the children.

The ever increasing size of English vocabularies results in two processes: process of growth through which words enter the language and process of change, where by words already in use undergo alternation in meaning.

Guthrie (2003) opines that “words after entering the language continue to have a history. They change as people do”.

Statement about linguistic change in Nigeria cannot be made without recourse to existing description of the language in at least two varieties of development: **standard and non standard usage**.

The considerable amount of literature which exists on the phenomenon of bilingualism and on the importance of English as a second or official language in Nigeria suggests that a large proportion of the country’s populace uses the language. Large number of English speakers in Nigeria
are uneducated and are usually confronted with the difficulties of errors in the use of the language.

Bangbosa (1971) quotes Bango as classifying the uneducated varieties of English used in Nigeria into four sectors which are marked by the use of phonological and morphological features. These features are neither socially acceptable nor internationally intelligible.

Our secondary school students mingle with them and pick these wrong expressions.

A variety of the language according to Jowll (1991) “is one of the many general and complete languages”. Thus we have British, American, Australian and Nigerian English as varieties of a single language. In the process of language acquisition, there are bound to be differences in the individual repertorie of each speaker.

Valdes (2003) wonders, “whether their perceived flaws are systematic and part of a variety of English, whether those flaws are problem of fluency selection, or whether they are both”

The use of the so called ‘pidgin English’ is another big problem. As it is a custom, our students especially those in secondary schools and tertiary institutions use it in and outside the school, during and after lesson. Worse still is the fact that some tribes in Nigeria have ‘pidgin English’ as their medium of communication especially when discussing something with people of other tribes.

Guthrie (2003) maintains that

"The task of creating national standards in English fell to the National council of teachers of English and the International Reading Association, whose members and their representatives agonized over the challenge of defining and describing what young people ought to be known and do with language."
Until this is done, English language learning faces a great challenge in Nigeria. Mgbodile (1999) in his own view maintains that “the average Nigerian secondary student is confronted with enormous writing problems in English language. According to him, the learner who is at this time an adolescent is growing fast and has need for written English to express his various communication needs. He discovers he cannot because he is handicapped in several ways. He is at this state battling with problems of spelling, punctuation and grammar. To express himself adequate in written English, the student has to go beyond disjointed sentences in order to communicate through continuous writing. He has to learn how to give an adequate description or to develop an agreement in English to convince a reader. He cannot report accurately in written English because he has problems recognizing the special attributes of written English correctly. As he grows older, he will need to convey factual information through writing. For example, he may have to describe how a motor can work, convey geographical or scientific information or give clear and precise instructions.

According to Mgbodile, these problems which face the average Nigerian student at the post primary school level arise not only because English is a second and not first language for the Nigerian child but mainly because at the primary school level, the average Nigerian child has not the opportunity to do much writing in English. This too is understandable because the primary school has first to teach the necessary communicative skills for the first language. Consequently, little time is left for enough practice in both oral and written English. Besides, most primary schools have neither the personal foundation in any aspect of English, including writing skills. In addition, there is the influence of the society which does not provide children adequate exposure to written English. These handicaps which the
child experiences in the primary school are inevitably carried forward to the secondary school.

**EMPIRICAL FRAME WORK**

**ERROR ANALYSIS**

Oji (1998) maintains that “errors are errors on whose lips or from whose pen they appear notwithstanding”

Eyisi (2004) Quoting Confucius noted that
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

English is used as a first language in countries like Britain, Australia, Canada and New Zealand. It is used as a second and official language in many of the former British Colonies. Nigeria is one of such countries that use English as an official language. The territories that make up Nigeria are made up of ethnic groups of varying sizes, each with an extended speech community and a dominant language – Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Edo, Efik among others.

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The researcher set out to study the participle problems encountered by students of English, the constants they face and possible ways of helping them.

To achieve these goals, questionnaires containing relevant items were administered to the students and teachers of the English learners, the students are bound to face difficulties in learning the grammatical units of the language.
This study is also aimed at finding out ways that student can best acquire the knowledge of participles, ways in which teachers can teach participles and how these students might be empowered to become more competent in the use of participles. Since very little has been done in this area and since our students encounter great difficulties in handling the participle, this research is therefore design to explore this aspect of the verb.

1.2 Research Problem
Since very little has been done in this area and since our students encounter great difficulties in handling the participle, English is a second language to our students and because of little provision made for the teaching of participles on the school time table, therefore difficult for the students to make effective use of participles in their written works. There is an overlap in the verb which poses a problem to learners of English as a second language. The present form of the verb ends in –ing and ed as the past form for regular verbs.

Participles which are derived from the verbs have their present and past forms as ordinary verbs. The present participle form also end in – ing and past participle form end in –ed for regular verbs and en, -t and other ways for the differentiating between verbs (present and past tenses) and participles.

The problem of teaching the participle is certainly not simplified by the fact that this term is obviously a misnomer.

The student, accustomed to present tenses which indicate present time and past participle which indicates now present, now past, now future time... they insist on in calling the participle in-ing present no matter, what time it happens to be indicating.

With all the problems encountered in teaching and learning of participles, little research has been conducted in this area. The result is that some of the
teachers are not quite informed and since one cannot give what one does not have; this study is designed to fill the yawning gap in order to provide a reliable date for both the teachers and students.

### 1.3 Relevance of the Study

This study is crucial because it is aimed at finding out the participles problems encountered by senior secondary three students in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu state. The finding will help the classroom teacher to be better informed about participles in order to achieve the desired goals in teaching. It will be of immense benefit to the students as they will have a better knowledge of what participles are all about. It will also help them to differentiate between verbs, participles and other verbal. It will also be of immense benefit to the government and curriculum planers since it provides some reliable data for improving the teaching and learning of participles and English language generally in secondary schools in Nigeria. It may also serve as reference material to the faculty of arts in the Nigerian universities. The result may be of great value to the students as they will develop the right attitude towards English language by dropping the ‘pidgin English’ and adopting the English language for their every day use. It may equally be of help to their own faults after reading this work and correct them through suggestions proffered in this project.

### 1.4 Scope of the Study

This research is based on identifying the problems of participles encountered by senior secondary three students (SS3) in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State and ways in which teaching and learning of participles can be improved. A casual look at the verb and other parts of speech whose operations involve the participle will be done. In undertaking
this study, relevant data will be collected from secondary schools in Nsukka urban and other community secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State.

1.6 Research Question
The research questions include the following:

5. In what ways does insufficiency of qualified English teachers pose problems to the teaching and learning of participles?
6. How do misplaced and dangling participles affect the students’ performance in the use of English?
7. Does mother-tongue interference constitute problems to the teaching and learning of participles?
8. To what extent does poor teaching method affect the effective teaching and learning of participles?
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviewed the relevant literature in this field of study. The researcher found out that while some scholars strongly believe that misplacement of participle in a sentence otherwise known as dangling participles could pose a problem, others are of the view that poor quality of many of the teachers of the English language in our schools constitutes problem. There is another school of thought which opined that change and variety of English spoken in Nigeria affect the performance of students in both spoken and written English.

Mother tongue interference has also been noted as one of the major factors militating against students’ proficiency in the use of the English language. Learners of English as a second language (L\textsubscript{2}) tend to substitute the phonemes of English language with sounds in their mother tongue (L\textsubscript{1}). Dustan (1989) pointed out that

\begin{quote}
A strong tendency on the part of anyone learning a second language is to use sounds, syllable structure and rhythm of his mother tongue in place of sounds, syllable structure and rhythm of the language he is learning.
\end{quote}

Other scholars like Atonwu (1976) and Obemata (1985) agreed to the point above.

Broughton et al (1980) in their own view comment that

\begin{quote}
By learning a foreign language, we see our own in perspective; we recognize that there are other ways of saying things, other ways of thinking, and other patterns of emphasis.
\end{quote}
It was noted that Nigerian languages and English language belong to different linguistic families. Following the point above, our secondary students are bound to superimpose the speech patterns of their first language on English language.

It has also been noted that some English sounds do not exist in Nigerian languages. Such sounds include /θ/ as in thank. /s/ as in then and /n/ as in thing and thinking. Emphasizing on this point, Ezike (1983) noted that there are some English sounds that have not vernacular equivalents. Thus an averages Nigerian pupil pronounces ‘they’ and ‘day’ ‘thank’ and ‘tank’ alike.

The researcher noted with dismay that poor quality of many of the English language teachers is an impediment to the students’ mastery of the language. It was observed also that many of our English teachers did not have enough exposure to the language. Worse still is the insufficiency of qualified teachers of the language and because of this, all sorts of teachers are assigned to teach English language in our secondary school. Ekerefe in unpublished article wrote:

\[
\text{It appears that state government have no criteria to go by in their recruitment of teachers as all sorts of people trained and untrained are being recruited as teachers.}
\]

Common sense tells us that children are like yam tendrils for the way they are directed. The teacher like a farmer directs the way of the children. This he does by organizing lessons, motivating the students to learn and finally directing the lessons. Commenting on the role of teachers, Hoyce (1976) noted that “the teacher is not only the director of learning but also the motivator and organizer of learning.
Eyisi (2004) in her own view maintained that

Nothing gladdens the hearts of teachers than the fact that their students are doing well in their subject area. Teachers of English in Nigeria yearn to shear in this joy. Their utmost concern is how to eliminate all the errors committed by their students and to help them speak and write accurately.

The unfortunate thing is that in a second language situation such as the status of English in Nigeria, the errors become multifarious because students study the target language against the background of their mother tongues in which they have attained a reasonable degree of competence. As a result, in many cases, it becomes very difficult for the teacher to see them through. Also the fact that most of the English language teachers did not have enough exposure to the language during there training, they impact to the student what they think is correct and not what they know is correct. In his book Obiora (1976) wrote

The complexity of language learning demands the teacher to have different method at his finger tip and a number of skills at his command but regretted that such teachers are still rare.

Mark Damen (2000) identifies “dangling participles” as another hindrance to students’ effective performance in essay writing. To him, dangling participles “can cause serious misunderstanding in academic writing”,

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participles are often misused in speaking and writing. Anything that dangles is said to ‘hang loosely’ without secure attachment.

A participle dangles when there is no word in the sentence which it could properly modify or when is seems to be related to a word which does not convey the meaning intended. Sometimes, the use of dangling participles or modifiers gives a ridiculous or a humorous slant to the meaning of the sentence.

misunderstanding of what is intended in a sentence.

According to Wikipedia (2010)

"a dangling modifier a specific case of which the dangling participle is an error in a sentence structure whereby a grammatical modifier is associated with a word other than the one intended; or with no particular word at all”

For example, a writer may have meant to modify the subject; but word order makes the modifier seem to modify an object instead. To him “such ambiguities” can lead to unintentional humour or difficulty in understanding a sentence.

Participles or participial clauses may be at the beginning or at the end of a sentence, and a participial clause is usually attached to subject, as in “walking down the street (clause) the man (subject) saw the beautiful trees (object)”. However, when the subject is missing or the participle attaches itself to another object in a sentence, the clause is seemingly, “hanging on nothing or on an entirely inappropriate noun”. It thus becomes a dangling participle, as in this, sentence:

“Walking down main street, the trees were beautify”

In this sentence, the “walking down” participle seems to connect to the trees because it has no subject. Presumably, the trees are not themselves
walking down main street. Upon reflection the participle really should connect to the unmentioned speaker of the sentence, the one doing the walking (and finding the trees beautiful).

When a participle phrase is placed at the beginning of a sentence, it should refer to the subject. When it could not possibly modify the subject from the standpoint of meaning, the sentence must be rewritten and a suitable subject supplied which it could logically modify. Consider the following sentences.

- Walking through the tunnel, a wallet was picked
- Entering the harbor, the statue of liberty came into view.
- Taking the test, the teacher gave me a passing grade.

In the first sentence, the participle phrase **walking through the tunnel** modifies the subject of the sentence which is wallet. A participle used at the beginning of a sentence modifies the subject. It is evident that the wallet was not walking through the tunnel but is the meaning conveyed by the sentence as it is written. Very often, the best way to get rid of a dangling participle is to substitute a clause for it as in the example, **while we are walking through the tunnel**, we picked up a wallet.

In the second sentence, the participle phrase modifies the statue of liberty. But it was not the status of liberty that was entering the harbor. The phrase which seems to be related to a word which the participle phrase really modifies is not in the sentence. The sentence might be revised as follows: **As we entered the harbor**, the statue of liberty came into view.

In the last sentence, the participle phrase modifies the word teacher. If you read the sentence carefully, you will readily see that it was not the teacher who took the test. The sentence would be correctly written if a change were substituted for the dangling phrase thus: **After I took the test**, the teacher gave me a passing grade.
Donald et al (1992) in their point of view noted that

*Sometimes there is a word in a sentence which the participle phrase properly modifies but the participle is not placed correctly. As a result the meaning is confused. This error is commonly referred to as misplaced modifiers.*

When a participle phrase is wrongly placed in a sentence, it brings about confusion and misunderstanding of what is intended in sentence. Instances of these misplaced modifiers include.

**Jumping into the water,** the children were rescued by the life guard. If you read this sentence carefully, you will see that the word which the participle modifies is not in the sentence. It is the word lifeguard. It was the lifeguard who jumped into the water and not the children.

The trouble with the sentence is that the participle phrase should modify the subject. The sentence might be rewritten as follows:

**Jumping into the water,** the lifeguard rescued the children.

The ever increasing size of English vocabularies results in two processes: process of growth through which words enter the language and process of change, where by words already in use undergo alternation in meaning.

Guthrie (2003) opines that “words after entering the language continue to have a history. They change as people do”.

Statement about linguistic change in Nigeria cannot be made without recourse to existing description of the language in at least two varieties of development: standard and non standard usage.

The considerable amount of literature which exists on the phenomenon of bilingualism and on the importance of English as a second or official language in Nigeria suggests that a large proportion of the country’s populace uses the language. Large number of English speakers in Nigeria
are uneducated and are usually confronted with the difficulties of errors in the use of the language.

Bangbose (1971) quotes Banjo as classifying the uneducated varieties of English used in Nigeria into four sectors which are marked by the use of phonological and morphological features. These features are neither socially acceptable nor internationally intelligible.

Our secondary school students mingle with them and pick these wrong expressions.

A variety of the language according to Jowitt (1991) “is one of the many general and complete languages”. Thus we have British, American, Australian and Nigerian English as varieties of a single language. In the process of language acquisition, there are bound to be differences in the individual repertorie of each speaker.

Valdes (2003) wonders, “whether their perceived flaws are systematic and part of a variety of English, whether those flaws are problem of fluency selection, or whether they are both”

The use of the so called ‘pidgin English’ is another big problem. As it is a custom, our students especially those in secondary schools and tertiary institutions use it in and outside the school, during and after lesson. Worse still is the fact that some tribes in Nigeria have ‘pidgin English’ as their medium of communication especially when discussing something with people of other tribes.

Guthrie (2003) maintains that

"The task of creating national standards in English fell to the National council of teachers of English and the International Reading Association, whose members and their representatives agonized over the challenge of defining and describing what young people ought to be known and do with language."
Until this is done, English language learning faces a great challenge in Nigeria. Mgbodile (1999) in his own view maintains that “the average Nigerian secondary student is confronted with enormous writing problems in English language. According to him, the learner who is at this time an adolescent is growing fast and has need for written English to express his various communication needs. He discovers he cannot because he is handicapped in several ways. He is at this state battling with problems of spelling, punctuation and grammar. To express himself adequate in written English, the student has to go beyond disjointed sentences in order to communicate through continuous writing. He has to learn how to give an adequate description or to develop an agreement in English to convince a reader. He cannot report accurately in written English because he has problems recognizing the special attributes of written English correctly. As he grows older, he will need to convey factual information through writing. For example, he may have to describe how a motor can work, convey geographical or scientific information or give clear and precise instructions.

According to Mgbodile, these problems which face the average Nigerian student at the post primary school level arise not only because English is a second and not first language for the Nigerian child but mainly because at the primary school level, the average Nigerian child has not the opportunity to do much writing in English. This too is understandable because the primary school has first to teach the necessary communicative skills for the first language. Consequently, little time is left for practice in both oral and written English. Besides, most primary schools have neither the personal foundation in any aspect of English, including writing skills. In addition, there is the influence of the society which does not provide children adequate exposure to written English. These handicaps which the
child experiences in the primary school are inevitably carried forward to the secondary school.
EMPIRICAL FRAMEWORK

ERROR ANALYSIS

Oji (1998) maintains that “errors are errors on whose lips or from whose pen they appear notwithstanding”

Eyisi (2004) Quoting Confucius noted that

*If the language is not correct, then what is said is not what is meant, then what ought to be done remains undone; if this remains undone, morals and arts deteriorate; if morals and arts deteriorate; justice goes astray; if justice goes astray, the people will stand about in helpless confusion. 
Hence there must be no arbitrariness in what is said. This matters above everything.*

According to Broughton et al (1980),

*However, good the teaching and however effective the learning, there will always be a place for remedial work of one kind or another because it is beyond the capacity of human being to absorb perfectly and retain indefinitely everything he is presented with.*

Hence, from one point of view, every learner needs remedial teaching after the first teaching.

Behaviourists regard language learning as a skill comparable to learning of other practical or complex skills like driving, blowing of flutes, playing piano etc. the behaviourists in language learning restrict themselves to external of speed behavior. Therefore, their analysis of language use is entirely in terms stimulus and response. For them the ability to perform in a language is presented by the possession of a set of habits which enable a speaker to response correctly to any given stimulus.
Another school of thought known as the mentalists in their own view have it that a speaker of language knows his language. They accept the fact that a speaker in language learning makes conscious choice when he/she speaks or writes. It is their own view that the speaker’s use of language reflects their thought which may be entirely original or even unpredictable. Therefore, they believe that language use is potentially creative. They also believe that the ability to perform in the language results from the knowledge of the fact about the rules of language.

More recently, the mentalists put forward a different view of error which has gained a wide acceptance. The argument in its strong form is that a learner must make errors as an unavoidable and necessary part of the learning. So errors are not the bad thing once thought but visible proof that learning is taking place. As the student learns a new language, very often, he does not know how to express what he wants to say. So he makes a guess on the basis of his knowledge of his mother tongue and of what he knows of the foreign language. The process is one of hypothesis formulation and refinement.

As the student develops a growing competence in the language he is learning, he moves from ignorance to mastery of the language through transitional stages, and is a sign that learning is taking place.

**CAUSES OF ERROR**

Some of the possible reasons for errors include the following:

i. Poor material
ii. Bad teaching
iii. Learning process
iv. Mother tongue interference.
Poor Material
An important factor which can produce poor learning and a potential remedial situation is the many choice of materials to teach from. They must not only be constructed on sound educational and linguistic principles but also be suitable for the part of the world they are to be used in. Many courses are not well suited to the less developed part of the world and for this reason, they should not be given to the students in underdeveloped countries.

Bad Teaching
The way a teacher presents the course may lead to frequent errors by the students but very often, there are circumstances quite beyond the teacher’s control which produces a remedial situation. The syllable for example, is usually not within the control of most ordinary teachers. Some older courses follow a ‘linear’ progression from one teaching point to the next. This will enable the students to follow. But if this is not done well, it will result to the student’s poor performance in the new area.

Learning process and mother tongue interference
It is clear that the learner brings with him one source of error. His mother tongue, even more importantly, the learning process itself is the source of other errors. The most suitable course of action, with present knowledge, for the teacher is to reject the extreme position on one hand that errors are wrong and must be avoided at all cost by very careful drilling. On the other hand, incorrect forms are necessary, even vital and so should be actively planned into the teaching process and attempt should be made to blend the best features from both approaches into his error correction.
How to handle errors

Behaviourist Psychologists in particular emphasized the importance of massive manipulative practice of language, often in a rather mechanical fashion to ensure correctness. The drills should be structured in such a way that it may be difficult for students to make many mistakes. It is believed that contrastive analysis comparing the learners’ mother tongue with the target language, would predict the difficulties a learner would encounter and so enable the teacher to concentrate on them to avoid them in handling the errors, the teacher has to first of all establish what the error is, establish the possible source of the error, decide how serious the mistake is, decide on the remedial teaching strategy which the teacher will use to teach the appropriate use of forms in their social context and their correction.

Immediate feedback is extremely valuable to a student. This often follows the teacher pointing out the mistakes, explaining what is wrong and attempting on spot to give some extra practice. As this is not always easy to provide on the spur of the moment, another strategy is to postpone some items to another date and after adequate preparation, make a teaching point of them in another lesson.

It is always important to avoid seas or red ink over the page, perhaps by means of a technique found successful by many teachers over the years. It is by no means necessary or advisable that all the corrections should come from the teacher. The student himself can say what he feels he has written or said wrong.

Relevance of errors to language learning

Errors will always be made, and they have direct implications for remedial work because they are by their nature, systematic infringement of the normal rules of the language. The teacher needs to plan his remedial treatment of them into the syllables for the coming weeks or months.
Quite different are the minor errors of speech or writing which everybody makes native speakers as well as non-natives. Errors are important in learning because they show the extent of learning that has taken place.

**SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature review was organized based on theoretical and empirical frameworks comprising participle problems encountered by students of the English language in general. Notable among the persistent problems are misrepresentation through a new set of box corresponding to the sounds of English, teachers’ incompetence, conservatism as regards method of teaching by some teachers, ignorance about the students’ background, dangling modifiers, misplaced participles, numerous variation of English and poor attitude of both the teachers and the students to academic work.

However, the teaching and learning of the participles and the English language in general could be enhanced if these are observed: teachers should update their knowledge periodically and teach in situations. They should also be mindful of the students’ background, written exercise on various topics should be given regularly to the students which are followed by a remedial work.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHOD
This chapter focuses on the general procedure for the study.
It described the research design, area of study, population, sample and sampling techniques. It equally describes the instrument used in data collection, the instrument for validation as well as the method of administration and then instrument for data analysis.

RESEARCH DESIGN
The study is a survey of the existing problems of teaching and learning the participles in senior secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State.

AREA OF STUDY
Nsukka Local Government Area is one of the seventeen local government areas in Enugu State. There are thirty two Secondary Schools in this local government area of which five were chosen for the study. The schools used for this study include
Community Secondary School, Isienu
Community Secondary School, Ibagwa Ani
Community Secondary School, Edeobala
Community Secondary School, Okutu
Community Secondary School, Edem Ani

POPULATION OF THE STUDY
The population of this study is made up of senior secondary three (SS III) students and the English language teachers in the five schools used.
This comprises a hundred and fifty students and fifteen English language teachers. This gives a target population of a hundred and sixty five respondents.

**SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE**

The researcher limited her work to five schools which formed the target school population from which the researcher generated the information below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/No</th>
<th>Name of School</th>
<th>No of Respondents Teachers</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>C SS, Isienu</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>C SS, Ibagwa Ani</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C SS, Okutu</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>C SS, Edeobala</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>CHS, Edem Ani</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>150</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stratified random sampling technique was used for both teachers and students.

**INSTRUMENT FOR DATA COLLECTION**

The instrument used for this study was the questionnaire entitled ‘Participle problems encountered in the teaching and learning of English language’ the instrument was developed by the researcher after a through review of literature. The questionnaire comprised twenty four items in four clusters of (A, B, C, D) on which the respondents were requested to indicate their opinion on a four rating scale of strongly agreed, agree, disagreed and strongly disagreed with the value of 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively.
VALIDATION OF INSTRUMENT
In order to validate the instrument for data collection, the questionnaire was submitted for scrutiny to the project supervisor and three other lecturers in the department of English and Literary Studies, University of Nigeria Nsukka. The supervisor was requested to read through the instrument so as to point out statements that were poorly worded and those that did not confirm with the purpose of the study.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION
The researcher administered the questionnaire directly to the respondents in each school and collected back immediately after completion. This was to prevent loss of any of the questionnaire.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS
The data were analyzed using weighted mean. Based on the four point rating scale of the questionnaire, a mean of 3.21 was adopted as cut-off point for the questionnaire.
CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF RESULT

This chapter is concerned with the presentation of the result of this study. The data presented here are in accordance with the four research questions that guided the study.

RESEARCH QUESTION I

In what ways does insufficiency of qualified English language teachers pose problems to the teaching and learning of participles?

Table 1: Mean ratings of the response on insufficiency of qualified English language teachers in our schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/NO</th>
<th>QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>DECISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Insufficiency of qualified English teachers poses problem to effective teaching and learning of participles.</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>English language teachers should be inspected regularly</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poor remuneration affects teachers’ performance.</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Other subject teachers should not be allowed to teach English language.</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table one above shows that items 1-4 have the mean scores of 3.34, 3.21, 4.21 and 3.25 respectively. These show that in the opinion of the respondents, insufficiency of qualified English teachers, irregular inspection
of the English language teacher, poor remuneration and teachers of other subjects teaching English language constitute to effective teaching and learning of the participle.

**RESEARCH QUESTION 2**

How do misplaced participle and dangling participle affect the students’ proficiency in the participle?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/NO</th>
<th>QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>DECISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Dangling participles affect the students proficiency in English</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Inadequate time is allotted to the teaching of participles in schools.</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Participles are not treated as separate topics but are treated under verbs.</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table two indicates that items 5-7 have the mean scores of 3.36, 3.96 and 3.81 respectively.

The scores suggest that in the opinion of the respondents, dangling participles, inadequate time for the teaching and participles not treated as separate topic militate against the effective teaching and learning of the participles.

**RESEARCH QUESTION 3**

Does mother tongue interference constitute problem to the teaching and learning of participles?
Table 3: Mean rating on how mother tongue interference affect or militate against effective teaching and learning of participles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/NO</th>
<th>QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>DECISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mother tongue interference poses a problem to the effective teaching and learning of participles.</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Students’ background should be considered by the teachers.</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Parents help their children to overcome this problem of interference.</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table three shows that item 8-10 have mean scores of 3.35, 3.43 and 2.89 respectively. These imply that in the opinion of the respondents, mother tongue interference, and student’s background are major factors that militate against the effective teaching and learning of participles while attitude of parents towards helping their children to overcome the problem of mother tongue interference is a minor problem.

**RESEARCH QUESTION 4**

To what extent does poor teaching method affect the effective teaching and learning of the participles?

**Table 4**: Mean rating of the response on how poor teaching influences the effective teaching and learning of the participles?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/NO</th>
<th>QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>DECISION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>There is Luke-warm attitude of teachers towards the teaching of the participles</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Poor teaching method poses a problem to the effective teaching and learning of the participle</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Participle lesson are not made interesting</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table four indicates that the mean scores for items 11-14 include 3.40, 4.21, 3.85 and 3.22 respectively. These simple show that in the opinion of the respondents, Luke-warm attitude of teachers towards the teaching of participles, poor teaching methods, absence of co-curricular activities such as drama and debates which are relevant to participles and lack of motivation by teachers of English language constitute major problems to the effective teaching and learning of the participles.
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION, IMPLICATION, RECOMMENDATIONS, SUGGESTION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter deals with the discussion of the results of this study, implication of the research finding, recommendation, suggestion for further studies and conclusion.

Discussion of Result

The result of this study reveals that there are serious problems to the teaching and learning the participles in secondary schools. Schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State are not exception as exemplified by the responses from the schools sampled.

The findings in table one in respect of the research question shows that insufficient qualified English language teachers irregular inspection of English language teachers, poor remuneration and teachers of other subjects teaching English language are all impediment to effective teaching and learning of the participles in secondary schools.

The above findings can be supported by the view of Bamaye and Onwuka (1987) that the following factors are known to influence the students’ learning in schools “quality of staff, teachers expectation of students, administrative policies, schools, culture, school curriculum, influence of class size, availability of adequate infrastructure and necessary equipment, authority relationship in the class as well as school environment”

In research question two, it is observed that dangling participles hamper the teaching and learning of the participle. This is also confirmed by the opinion of Mark Damen (2003) which holds that ‘Dangling participles’ can cause serious misunderstanding in academic writing”.

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Participles are often misused in speaking and writing. Inadequate time for the teaching of participles and inability of teachers of English language teaching participles as a separate topic makes participles lessons uninteresting to the students.

In research question three, it is clear that mother tongue interference, heterogeneous background of the students and attitude of parents are serious impediment to effective teaching and learning of the participles. Finally, in research question four, it was observed that luke-warm attitude of teachers towards the teaching of participles, poor teaching method, absence of co-curricular activities teaching and learning of participles in our schools. This could be the reason of Agwu (1989) to say that most of the previous researchers have “failed to identify co-curricular activities such as debate, drama, excursion and project as very important means of ensuring better teaching and learning of English” Canham (1978) observed that motivation is very important in learning all through life “No motivation, no learning... We must do all we can to make our classes and our lesson interesting”

**IMPLICATION OF THE FINDINGS**

The findings of this work have important educational implications on the secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State. First, the teachers’ improper knowledge of participles could be traced to the nature of their educational training. This is because participles may not have been stressed when they had their training and since nobody can give what he does not possess; the students are always the worst for it.

Again, as long as the students are denied adequate time in learning participles, the implication is that they will continue to perform poorly in English language overall results. They will also find it difficult to converse fluently with other users of the English language.
Furthermore, teacher’s inability to have the student’s background in mind while preparing and delivering their lessons will result in students’ poor performance in the subject. Since most schools under study lack adequate qualified teachers, the consequence is that students’ interest would not be properly aroused and thus resulting to poor performance both in written and speech work.

WAYS OF ENHANCING THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF THE PARTICIPLE

The teaching and learning of participles and the English language in general can be enhanced using the following approaches. Teachers should update themselves in refresher courses from time to time. Unless a teacher is secure in fundamental knowledge of his subject matter, he can be threatened by the infinity of change. To be an effective English language teacher therefore, one must have all-round knowledge of one’s discipline. Williams (1973) on teaching, point out that

We are aiming to install the right language habits to our children that they will be able to produce, almost automatically sentences conveying certain ideas.

If they are to do this, the best way of teaching will be in situations which would naturally produce the patterns of words which the teacher wants to impact to the students.

Consequently, if you are teaching conditional sentences for instance, think up some conditions to do with the real life of the class.

When you are teaching writing, let them write real letters to real people.

It is also pertinent for teachers of English to be familiar with the students’ native language. This is to enable them recognize, appreciate and
guide the students in language interference problems which they will naturally face.

At the upper classes of secondary school, the students should learn how to use appropriate links to bring sentences together to form connected writing for the purpose of expressing himself when describing what he has seen, heard or read.

He should also learn to use appropriate words, phrases, and sentence patterns to describe persons, situation and events and to express personal reactions to them.

In this way, the problem of dangling modifiers will be minimized.

Improved working conditions for the English language teachers would have direct impact on their performances. This could be achieved through prompt payment of salaries and other emoluments, reward for excellent performance, engaging them in training and re-training programmes and workshops.

Teachers of other subjects should be enjoined to pick interest in forming correct sentence structures so as to reinforce the effort of the English language teachers.

Above all, it is believed that availability and skillful use of teaching aids will motivate the students and lead to their further interest in English language. In order words, adequate provision of suitable teaching aids and their effective utilization are sine quo non to an ideal teaching and learning the English language.

Schools should encourage co-curricular activities such as drama, debates, reading passages, writing essays and other practices. This will help the students to improve on their use of participles both in speech and written work.

Finally, the use of vernacular and pidgin English by the students within their school premises should be discouraged.
SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In view of the limitations encountered in this research, it would be misleading to claim an exhaustive coverage of the problems associated with the teaching and learning of participles. The researcher therefore, proffers the following suggestions for further studies.

1. A more comprehensive study of the problems militating against the effective teaching and learning of the participles in the entire Enugu State should be undertaken.

2. Inadequate time and teaching methods as major factors militating against the effective teaching and learning of the participles.

3. Problems of dangling modifiers encountered by students in the study of the participles.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing, it is evident that lack of motivation, influence of the first language and the teacher’s incompetence owning to inadequate training, lack of adequate English language teachers, non-devotion to duty by teachers and irregular or absence of supervision of the teacher’s work are all serious problems to the teachers of the English language in secondary schools.

In some cases, we do not have enough English teachers from survey in schools.

There is therefore, the tendency for non-English language teachers to teach the subject in schools. The implication is poor performance in learning and instruction. Sometimes the English language teachers may not have been well trained to carry out the assignment. The well trained ones are recruited into few privileged upper class schools, there are less qualified teachers.
teaching the subject. This should be checked by the state government for proper grooming of every student learning English language in schools.

Similarly, it has become glaring that in most of the schools under study, enough period is not used to teach participle since the same English language teacher handles Literature in English along with some post of responsibilities.

The proper intellectual development of child can be ensured by continual instruction in the language the child has known and spoken from birth. This is his mother-tongue.

It is therefore, necessary that he continues using this language all through his formal education career. Learning English as a second language has a number of linguistic and socio-cultural implications which make identification of the contrasting features of the two languages important for effective teaching and learning of the target language. Certain structures and constructions are subject to negative transfer and will appear in the target language as influenced by the native language. The transfer usually applied to the grammatical structures of the target language. Therefore, proper grooming of students in grammar, semantics and phonetics will go a long way in helping the students.

Finally, negative attitude of students, poor learning environments, ignorance of parents and guardians, influence of pidgin and poor rating of teachers by the general public have all been established as great impediments to the teaching and learning of participles in the secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State.
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## APPENDIX 1

### LIST OF SAMPLED SCHOOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>NAMES OF SCHOOLS</th>
<th>NO OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>STC, NSUKKA</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>QRSS, NSUKKA</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>UCSS, NSUKKA</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>OPI HIGH SCH. OPI</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>CSS LEJJA</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>CSS, EDEM</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>CHS, UMABOR</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>11.</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>CSS, OBIMO</td>
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<td>14.</td>
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<td>15.</td>
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<td>18.</td>
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<td>19.</td>
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<td>MSS, NSUKKA</td>
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<tr>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>C.H.S, LEJJA</td>
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<td>25.</td>
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<td>Quantity</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>URBAN B. S.S, NSUKKA</td>
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<td>27.</td>
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<td>28.</td>
<td>CSS, OKUTU</td>
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<td>30.</td>
<td>CSS, BREME</td>
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<td>31.</td>
<td>NHS, NSUKKA II</td>
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APPENDIX III
QUESIONNAIRE ITEM

SA stands for strongly agree.
A stands for agree.
SD stands for strongly disagree.
D stands for strongly disagree.

You are required to tick accordingly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>IN WHAT WAYS DOES INSUFFICIENCY OF QUALIFIED ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS POST PROBLEM TO THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF PARTICIPLES?</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>D</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Insufficiency of qualified English language teachers poses problem to the effective teaching and learning of participles.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>English language teachers are to be inspected regularly</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poor remuneration affect teacher’s performances.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Other subject teachers should be allowed to teach English language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>S/N</td>
<td>HOW DO MISPLACED PARTICLES AND DANGLING PARTICIPLES AFFECT THE STUDENTS’ PERFORMANCE?</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dangling participles affect the students’ proficiency in English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Inadequate time is allotted to the teaching of participles.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Participles are not treated as separate topic but are treated under verbs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>DOES MOTHER TONGUE INTERFERENCE CONSTITUTE PROBLEM TO THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF PARTICIPLES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mother tongue interference is a hinderance to effective teaching and learning of participles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Students’ background is to be considered by teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Parents help their children to overcome this problem of</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
interference.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TO WHAT EXTENT DOES POOR TEACHING METHOD AFFECT THE EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF THE PARTICIPLES?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>There is luke-warm attitude of teachers towards the teaching of participles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Poor teaching method poses problem to the learning of participles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Co-curricular activities such as debates and drama are relevant to the learning or participles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Participle lessons are made interesting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>