

An Analysis of Grammatical Errors in French Descriptive Texts of 11th Grade of Fashion Students at SMK Negeri 1 Wonogiri

Andriyana Adhayanti¹, Ria Fitrasah¹

¹Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

*Correspondence: andriyanaadhayanti@students.unnes.ac.id

ABSTRACT

Vocational high school (SMK) students who face heavy vocational-practice workloads encounter particular challenges in mastering the complex grammatical system of French. This study aims to analyse grammatical writing errors in French descriptive texts produced by 11th Grade of Fashion Design students at SMK Negeri 1 Wonogiri, with a view to identifying morphosyntactic weaknesses and informing more targeted pedagogical interventions. A descriptive qualitative design was adopted, employing an error-analysis method. Data were collected through documentary study of 32 students' written tasks on the theme *décrire une personne* (describing a person), evaluated against the A1 level standards of the *Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues* (CECRL). Results indicate that students performed best on instruction compliance (87.50%) and basic vocabulary (93.75%), while serious weaknesses were recorded in coherence and cohesion (78.12% low-scorers) and spelling (62.50% low-scorers). The dominant error types included failure to apply gender-agreement rules (*accord de genre*), omission of accent marks, and absence of cohesive devices, rendering student texts atomistic in nature. These errors are attributed principally to first-language interference from Indonesian, constrained instructional time, and the competing cognitive demands of vocational coursework. The study recommends the adoption of colour-coded visual strategies to teach grammatical gender, alongside scaffolded coherence-building exercises.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Published June 20th 2026



KEYWORDS

Error analysis, Descriptive text, French language, morphosyntax, gender agreement.

ARTICLE LICENCE

© 2026 Universitas Hasanuddin
Under the license CC BY-SA
4.0



1. Introduction

French plays a strategic role in equipping vocational high school (SMK) graduates to enter fields of expertise that are directly connected with international industries. At SMK Negeri 1 Wonogiri, especially in the Fashion Design (Tata Busana) competency programme, French is highly relevant. France's influence on the global fashion industry means that proficiency in French adds significant value for graduates, enabling them to understand technical fashion terminology, follow global trends, and communicate with clients or business partners in the international fashion industry (Prameswari et al., 2025; Said et al., 2021; Prihandoko et al., 2019).

In practice, however, learning French for SMK students is no easy matter. French possesses a highly complex grammatical system compared to Indonesian (Prameswari et al., 2025). The most fundamental difference that frequently becomes a stumbling block lies in morphosyntax (Sari, 2019). Morphosyntax combines the study of morphology (word formation) and syntax (the arrangement of words in a sentence). In French, a single verb can take dozens of forms depending on the subject and tense (*temps*) a concept entirely absent from the Indonesian language system. This syntactic complexity is consistent with findings by (Roihana, 2019), who showed that errors in sentence structure arrangement (syntax) frequently appear in students' productive skills, potentially impeding the accurate conveyance of meaning.

Based on a preliminary study conducted on 17 September through direct classroom observation, the learning outcomes of 11th Grade of Fashion Design students at SMK Negeri 1 Wonogiri revealed that students frequently fall into Indonesian thought patterns when constructing French sentences. For example, students tend to omit articles (*le, la, les*) or make errors in determining the grammatical gender (*genre: masculin/féminin*) of a noun. This is supported by (Muniroh, 2018) finding that grammatical interference from Indonesian into French is the primary cause of student errors. Furthermore, (Yunita et al., 2018) emphasise that verb conjugation errors are the most dominant type found in students

descriptive compositions. This morphosyntactic problem is reinforced by (Pratiwi, 2017) finding that limited morphosyntactic competence is also visible in students' difficulty in distinguishing between active and passive sentence structures, which differ radically from their mother tongue. This situation strengthens (ALFIAH, 2022) view that grammatical error analysis is indispensable for mapping the extent of learners' linguistic competence, so that pedagogical intervention can be directed with precision.

These errors, if left unaddressed, will impede communicative effectiveness. A small morphosyntactic error such as choosing the wrong preposition or misconjugating a verb can alter the overall meaning of a sentence.

Field reality reveals a gap between curricular expectations and students' actual ability. On one hand, students are required to produce short functional texts; on the other, their mastery of basic morphosyntactic structures remains weak. The focus of this study is deliberately restricted to morphosyntax because this aspect constitutes the primary foundation of writing competence. Phonetic or pronunciation aspects are excluded, as the central objective is to improve students' written communication quality to meet established linguistic standards. Such improvement is entirely feasible: (Retno, 2015) demonstrated that SMK students' writing skills can be significantly enhanced through appropriate instructional techniques once their fundamental problems have been identified.

The selection of SMK Negeri 1 Wonogiri as the research site is grounded in the unique characteristics of its students. As an academically high achieving vocational school, it is important to understand how much French language content is absorbed and implemented in writing by students carrying a heavy vocational workload. For Fashion Design students who will eventually write fashion product descriptions or business correspondence, written accuracy is an absolute competence requirement for graduates who will engage with the international fashion industry. The focus of this study is to analyse grammatical writing errors in French descriptive texts by 11th Grade of Fashion Design students at SMK Negeri 1 Wonogiri. Error analysis is employed as the method for objectively diagnosing students' weaknesses.

2. Methodology

This study uses a qualitative research design with a descriptive method through the error analysis technique. The researcher applies the Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues (CECRL) as the primary framework to ensure that the analysis is conducted in accordance with the demands of international French-language competence (Qulby & Laksman-Huntley, 2024). The qualitative approach was chosen because the researcher wishes to describe in depth the grammatical rule violations committed by students. With this descriptive method, the analytical results are expected to provide an overview of the obstacles faced by students as beginning learners.

The research subjects are 11th Grade of Fashion Design students at SMK Negeri 1 Wonogiri enrolled in the active academic year, comprising 32 students. Subject selection was based on the characteristics of vocational school students studying French as a local content subject to support occupational competencies in the fashion industry. The research object focuses specifically on grammatical writing errors found in students' French descriptive texts, encompassing errors ranging from verb conjugation to inaccurate use of articles. This is consistent with the error-writing taxonomy proposed by (Al-khresheh, 2016), which classifies language errors into: omission (deletion of an obligatory element), addition (inclusion of an unnecessary element), misinformation (incorrect word formation), and misordering (incorrect word order). In the context of French, conjugation errors fall under the category of misinformation, while article omission constitutes omission the two most dominant categories found in beginner level foreign language learners (Baharuddin, 2022). A clear specification of subjects and objects is essential to allow the researcher to delimit the scope of analysis and maintain the objectivity of findings.

Data were collected through documentary study of students' written production results, completed as part of regular classroom evaluation. The researcher gathered the French descriptive-text writing assignments on the theme *décrire une personne* produced independently by 11th Grade Fashion Design students. The use of pre-existing task documents was intended to obtain naturalistic data (*données naturalistes*) so that grammatical errors discovered purely reflect students' actual competence without pressure from the researcher. This is consistent with the methodology applied in (Y. Purnamasari & Nugraha, 2023) research, where data drawn from authentic learner-writing samples provide a solid basis for identifying grammatical error patterns. The data collection process was validated through direct coordination with the French-language subject teacher at SMK Negeri 1 Wonogiri, Ms. Syahdiah Istiqomah, S.Pd.

The primary instrument in this study is the researcher herself (human instrument), who bears full responsibility for planning, collecting, classifying, and deeply analysing the data. To support evaluative validity, the researcher employs a supplementary instrument in the form of a standardised A1 writing-production assessment rubric constructed on the basis

of official CECRL standards. The assessment rubric contains crucial criteria encompassing instruction compliance, grammatical competence, vocabulary, coherence and cohesion, and spelling (Moerni, 2020). In this process, the researcher uses A1-level writing indicators to determine the boundaries of grammatical mastery that beginning learners should command, so that evaluation results conform to objective and accurate assessment standards (Zakiah et al., 2024). The assessment rubric is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. A1 Writing Production Assessment Rubric

No	Assessment Criteria	Description	Max Score
1	Instruction Compliance (<i>Respect de la consigne</i>)	Student produces descriptive sentences covering: name, age, place of residence, nationality, personality, hobbies, occupation, and physical characteristics. Each sentence receives 1 point (max 10 sentences).	10
2	Grammatical Accuracy (<i>Correction de la langue</i>)	Correctness of verb conjugation (<i>être, avoir, aimer, habiter</i>), gender agreement (masculine/feminine), and use of articles/prepositions.	5
3	Vocabulary (<i>Lexique/Vocabulaire</i>)	Accuracy of basic vocabulary appropriate for the theme <i>décrire une personne</i> (identity, profession, hobbies, physical description).	4
4	Coherence and Cohesion (<i>Cohérence et Cohésion</i>)	Student connects simple sentences using basic conjunctions (e.g., <i>et, mais, parce que</i>).	3
5	Spelling (<i>Orthographe</i>)	Correct use of spelling and punctuation so that the message is comprehensible without difficulty.	3
TOTAL SCORE			25

The data-analysis technique proceeds through systematic stages beginning with data collection, error identification, error description, and explanation of error causes. At the data collection stage, the researcher gathers student task results previously completed as part of regular classroom assessment. As established by (Y. Purnamasari & Nugraha, 2023), the use of pre-existing task documents allows the researcher to obtain naturalistic data because they were produced in an authentic learning situation, without any element of pressure from the researcher's presence. As an important part of this analytical technique, the researcher includes a writing-production assessment rubric to determine the category of each respondent's writing in detail. The final results of this analysis will be evaluated to formulate effective pedagogical recommendations for the development of French-language teaching materials at the upper-secondary vocational level.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Findings

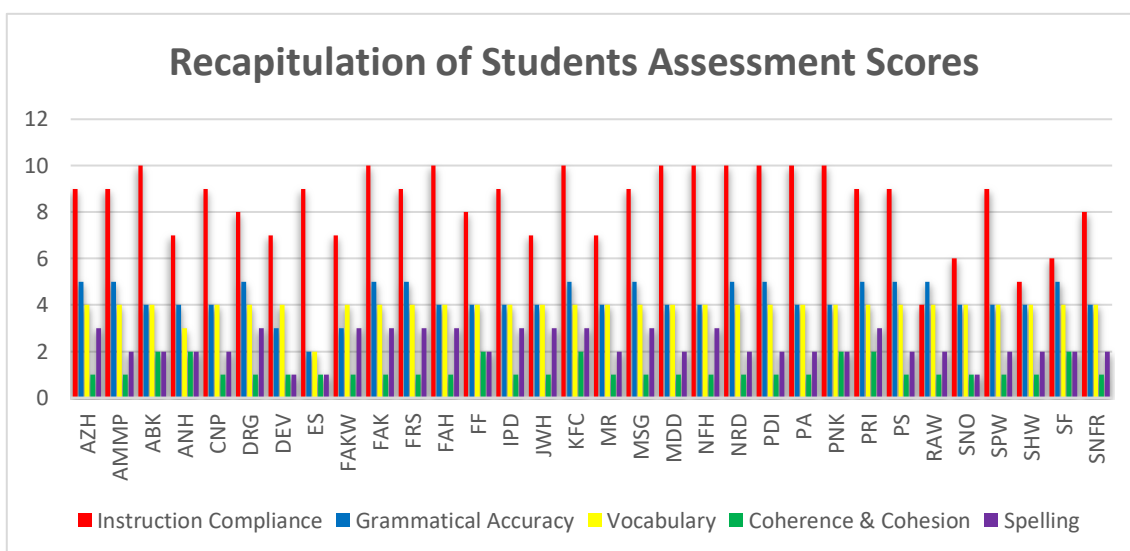
The data presented are the results of the assessment of writing assignments by 11th Grade of Fashion Design students at SMK Negeri 1 Wonogiri. The assessment centres on students' ability to produce a simple descriptive text in French on the theme *décrire une personne* (describing a person). Before presenting the score results, it is important to know the parameters used when assessing students' writing competence. This study employs an assessment instrument adapted from CECRL (Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues) A1 standards. This instrument was designed to measure initial communicative competence in French, specifically on the theme *décrire une personne*.

The assessment procedure for student writing was carried out through careful and thorough reading with reference to the established CECRL A1 standard assessment framework. This evaluation was conducted impartially to reduce the influence of personal views, so that every score obtained is an accurate reflection of the language proficiency present in the students' task documents.

The task completed by 11th Grade of Fashion Design students at SMK Negeri 1 Wonogiri centred on producing a concise descriptive text on the topic *décrire une personne*. In the instructions given, students were asked to describe a person by including specific identity and physical elements such as name, age, domicile, nationality, character, hobbies, occupation, and physical characteristics. From the initial review, it was apparent that students showed great enthusiasm for narrating, yet various levels of grammatical competence and technical writing ability became evident once those instructions were rendered into written work.

To protect confidentiality and follow ethical research principles, the real identities of all students in the following data analysis table have been anonymised. Students' names have been changed to initial codes to maintain the confidentiality of individual respondents' data throughout the research and dissemination period

Chart 1. Student Score Recapitulation Chart



Based on the information from the chart above, conclusions can be drawn regarding the score results of 11th Grade of Fashion Design students at SMK Negeri 1 Wonogiri. The highest score was achieved by student 'KFC' with a total of 24 out of a maximum 25 points. Conversely, the lowest score was obtained by student 'ES' with a total of 15 points. When all scores are summed, a class average of 20.12 is obtained. Overall, this figure indicates that the majority of students have reached the A1 writing-competence standard, although the per-criterion score distribution shows considerable variation in ability, particularly with respect to understanding of text structure rules.

After completing the score calculation, a more in-depth examination was conducted to map the distribution of errors that appeared most frequently in students' writing. The percentages below reflect the level of student difficulty on each assessment criterion:

Table 2. Error Frequency Distribution

No	Assessment Aspect	Max Score	Low Score Threshold	No. of Students	Percentage
1	Instruction Compliance	10	≤ 6	4 students	12.50%
2	Grammatical Accuracy	5	≤ 3	3 students	9.37%
3	Vocabulary	4	≤ 3	2 students	6.25%

4	Coherence & Cohesion	3	≤ 1	25 students	78.12%
5	Spelling	3	≤ 2	20 students	62.50%

The data in Table 2 reveal that the greatest difficulty faced by students lies in Spelling (62.50%) and Coherence & Cohesion (78.12%). This indicates that, although students can follow the content instructions, they still experience difficulty in applying correct punctuation rules and in linking sentences using simple connectors such as *et*, *mais*, or *parce que*.

3.1.1 Instruction Compliance

In the instruction-compliance aspect, 87.50% of students successfully fulfilled the task requirements by including the required descriptive elements such as personal identity, hobbies, occupation, and physical characteristics. Most students were able to follow the task instructions appropriately and produce descriptive texts that corresponded to the assigned topic. One example of students' descriptive writing can be observed in the work of student "AZH" presented below.

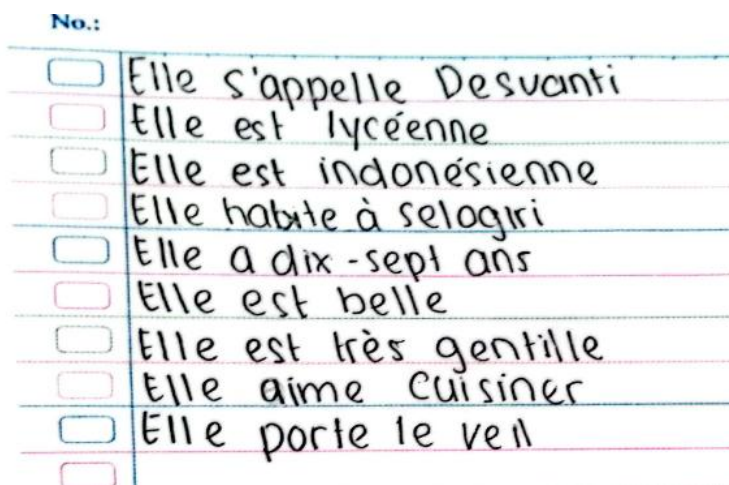


Figure 1. Descriptive Text of Student AZH

In addition to having the necessary number of sentences, student "AZH" descriptive text contained a number of crucial identity components, including name, age, interests, and physical attributes. The student was able to offer fundamental descriptive details that were pertinent to the subject. Nonetheless, the majority of the text was made up of brief, distinct sentences with little in the way of supporting descriptive details and physical appearance elaboration.

3.1.2 Grammatical Accuracy

The most common grammatical mistake found in students' writing was accord de genre, or gender agreement between adjective and subject. Several student texts frequently used this grammatical pattern, especially when feminine adjective markers were omitted. The student "ES" work below is one instance

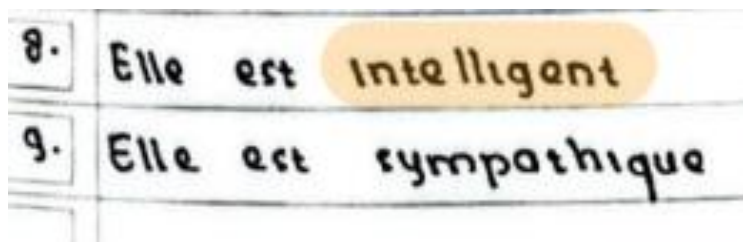


Figure 2. Grammatical Error Accord de Genre

Despite referring to a feminine subject (*elle*), the student in the example above omitted the feminine suffix (-e) on the adjective *intelligente*. Several student documents showed similar omissions of feminine markers, suggesting persistent challenges in consistently applying gender agreement rules.

3.1.3 Vocabulary

The vocabulary component performed comparatively well, in contrast to the grammatical component. In the descriptive context, the majority of students showed that they could appropriately use basic French vocabulary

No.:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elle s'appelle Giezza
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elle est lycéenne
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elle est Indonésienne
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elle habite à Wonogiri
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elle a seize ans
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elle est belle
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elle est petite.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elle aime faire un journal
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elle porte le voile.

Figure 3. Basic Vocabulary Mastery in Person Description

The example above shows how well students can use hobby-related verbs that are pertinent to person-description themes along with basic descriptive adjectives like *belle* and *petite*. In the majority of student texts, simple vocabulary items were more frequently and accurately found than intricate grammatical structures.

3.1.4 Coherence & Cohesion

On the other hand, the largest percentage of low scores was found in the coherence and cohesion aspect. When writing at the A1 level, students typically used simple, isolated sentences without cohesive devices or conjunctions to connect ideas. Conjunctions like *et*, *mais*, and *parce que* (and, but, because) were rarely used by most students to create logical connections between statements. Many descriptive texts seemed fragmented and incoherent as a result.

3.1.5 Spelling

Low scores were found in the spelling component in addition to coherence issues. Proper nouns and geographical names were frequently capitalised inconsistently, and accent marks like "é, à, è" were frequently omitted

1.	Elle s'appelle Anissa Razendia.
2.	Elle est indonésienne
3.	elle habite à wonogiri
4.	Elle est belle

Figure 4. French Accent Mark Writing Errors

Figure 4 illustrates how some students wrote geographical names without proper capitalisation, such as "wonogiri" instead of "Wonogiri," and omitted French accent marks. Several student documents contained similar orthographic patterns, especially in words that needed accent marks and formal writing conventions.

3.2 Discussion

The data analysis revealed that the instruction-compliance dimension performed the best. Quantitatively, 87.50% of students were able to complete the fundamental task requirements, such as providing identity-related details and completing the necessary number of sentences. Nevertheless, many texts remained atomistic and lacked in-depth elaboration, even though students were successful in incorporating basic information. The researcher found that translating visual ideas into more intricate French expressions was challenging. This outcome corroborates the findings that students' limited vocabulary frequently keeps them from creating more in-depth descriptive texts (D. Purnamasari et al., 2021).

The primary challenge in the grammatical aspect was accord de genre. The lack of feminine suffixes suggests that students still struggle to consistently apply French grammatical-gender rules. Given that Indonesian does not recognise grammatical gender in adjective forms, the researcher interprets this phenomenon as a type of interference with the Indonesian language. Learners often apply grammatical logic from their mother tongue to the construction of French sentences (Itsna Roihana, 2019).

The students' strongest linguistic skill was vocabulary. Compared to learning intricate grammatical structures, students seemed more adept at memorising and using concrete lexical items. Grammar necessitates more methodical cognitive processing, whereas vocabulary is typically learned more quickly in the early phases of learning a foreign language because lexical items have concrete meanings that are simpler to associate cognitively (ALFIAH, 2022).

The coherence and cohesion data show that students continue to prioritise sentence-level production over discourse-level organisation. Conjunctions like *et*, *mais*, and *parce que* were not used by the majority of students, which made the texts seem stiff and disjointed. This implies that writing instruction at the beginner level still places more emphasis on the construction of individual sentences than on the organisation of paragraphs and coherent n

Additionally, the spelling results show a poor understanding of French orthographic conventions. Despite accent marks' significant grammatical roles in French, students often treated them as optional writing symbols. Students still need extensive self-correction practice and exposure to standard French writing conventions, as evidenced by the omission of accents and inconsistent capitalisation.

Overall, the language errors found in this study were caused by two main factors. First, students automatically incorporate Indonesian grammatical patterns into their French writing due to mother-tongue interference. The second factor has to do with the features of vocational education, where students focus more on practical fashion courses than on learning foreign language structures. As a result, students frequently prioritise memorisation of vocabulary over grammatical accuracy and writing mechanics, both of which call for more sophisticated cognitive processing.

4. Conclusion

This study shows that 11th Grade of Fashion Design students at SMK Negeri 1 Wonogiri have not achieved uniform mastery of French, as evidenced by the errors found in their descriptive texts. Students were able to follow the task format and use relevant concrete vocabulary, achieving the highest scores in vocabulary (93.75%) and instruction compliance (87.50%). Significant difficulties were also recorded in coherence and cohesion (78.12%), spelling (62.50%), and the grammatical dimension of accord de genre (9.37%). These errors are caused by Indonesian-language interference a language that lacks a gender system and conjugation mechanism as well as students' lack of familiarity with using conjunctions to form cohesive sentences. Vocational students do not have much time to study complex foreign language structures because their academic focus lies on the vocational practice of pattern making and sewing.

References

- Alfiah, A. U. A. (2022). *Analisis kesalahan gramatikal dalam tugas expression écrite 3 mahasiswa semester III angkatan 2019* [Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Hasanuddin]. Universitas Hasanuddin.
- Al-khresheh, M. H. (2016). A review study of error analysis theory. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Research*, 2(1), 49–59.
- Asty, N. A., Sawaluddin, S., Sabilla, D., & Nasution, S. (2025). Analisis penerapan metode berbasis tugas dalam meningkatkan kompetensi berbahasa asing di sekolah menengah: Perspektif linguistik terapan. *Pediaqu: Jurnal Pendidikan Sosial dan Humaniora*, 4(2), 2893–2911.
- Baharuddin, L. (2022). Analisis kesalahan gramatikal dalam tulisan bahasa Inggris siswa kelas XI MAN 1 Ternate. *JUANGA: Jurnal Agama dan Ilmu Pengetahuan*, 8(2), 185–196.
- Itsna Roihana. (2019). *Analisis kesalahan sintaksis dalam karangan deskripsi bahasa Prancis mahasiswa semester 2* [Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia]. Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia.
- Moemi, S. (2020). Strategi think, talk, write untuk meningkatkan keterampilan menulis. *Ideguru: Jurnal Karya Ilmiah Guru*, 5(2), 1–9.

- Muniroh, F. S. K. (2018). *Program studi pendidikan bahasa Prancis Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta 2018* [Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta]. Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta.
- Prameswari, R. F., Intrisnawati, I. A., & Ratih, P. D. K. (2025). Konten YouTube Kelas Prancis sebagai media pembelajaran dasar. *Jurnal Majemuk*, 4(3), 1–13.
- Pratiwi, G. N. A. (2017). *Kemampuan morfosintaksis mahasiswa Program Studi Bahasa dan Sastra Prancis Fakultas Ilmu Budaya Universitas Brawijaya angkatan 2014 dalam menggunakan kalimat pasif aktif berbahasa Prancis* [Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Brawijaya]. Universitas Brawijaya.
- Prihandoko, L. A., Tembang, Y., Marpaung, D. N., & Rahman, F. (2019, October). English language competence for tourism sector in supporting socio-economic development in Merauke: A Survey Study. In *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* (Vol. 343, No. 1, p. 012170). IOP Publishing.
- Purnamasari, D., Hidayat, D. N., & Kurniawati, L. (2021). An analysis of students' writing skill on English descriptive text. *English Education: Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris*, 14(1), 101–114.
- Purnamasari, Y., & Nugraha, D. G. (2023). Kesalahan gramatikal bahasa Inggris pada penjabaran grafik dalam mata kuliah Bahasa Inggris 1. *Jurnal Bahasa Lingua Scientia*, 15(1), 1–14.
- Qulby, A. M., & Laksman-Huntley, D. M. (2024). Ragam bahasa Prancis dalam majalah digital. *Jurnal Ilmu Budaya*, 12, 2–18.
- Retno, E. (2015). *Upaya peningkatan keterampilan menulis bahasa Prancis peserta didik kelas XI SMK Wiyasa Magelang melalui teknik concept sentence* [Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta]. Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta.
- Said, M. M., Rita, F., Weda, S., & Rahman, F. (2021). English language performance development through extracurricular activities at Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Tadulako University Palu. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*.
- Sari, D. M. (2019). *Analisis kontrastif abreviasi bahasa Prancis dan bahasa Indonesia* [Undergraduate thesis, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta]. Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta.
- Yunita, E., Flora, & Kusriani, N. (2018). Analisis kesalahan konjugasi verba bahasa Prancis pada karangan deskripsi siswa kelas XI di SMAN 16 Bandarlampung. *Pranala*, 1(1), 1–12.
- Zakiah, C., Hardini, T. I., & Widawati, R. (2024). Analisis materi pada buku ajar *S'il vous plaît* untuk tingkat A1. *Silampari Bisa*, 7(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.31540/silamparibisa.v1i1.4>