


Distinguishing Cohesive Device Errors in Male and Female Students' Written Recount Texts

 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v11i2.2370>

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A B S T R A C T

Cohesion plays an important role in EFL writing as it helps students produce coherent texts. However, research on cohesive device errors from a gender perspective remains limited. This study examines the types of cohesive devices used by male and female tenth-grade students in recount texts and the errors in their use. Using a descriptive qualitative design, 34 student texts were analyzed based on Halliday and Hasan (1976) and Dulay et al. (1982). The results show that both groups used reference, conjunction, reiteration, and collocation, while substitution and ellipsis were absent. A total of 128 errors were identified across all texts. Male students produced more cohesive devices and contributed 72 errors, with conjunction addition errors as the most frequent. Female students produced 56 errors, with reference misformation errors dominating. These findings indicate that male and female students face different challenges in using cohesive devices and highlight the need for targeted instructional support.

Keywords: *Cohesive Device, Error Analysis, Recount Text*

Article History:

Received 10th April 2026

Accepted 27th April 2026

Published 28th April 2026



INTRODUCTION

Writing is a fundamental skill in English as a foreign language (EFL) learning because it enables learners to convey ideas, construct meaning, and communicate information accurately in academic and social contexts (Kusuma & Zuhri, 2025; Riadil et al., 2023; Rosmiaty et al., 2023). In formal education, writing works not only as a medium of expression but also as an important assessment of students' language skills. For EFL learners, writing in English often becomes a significant challenge, as students are expected to produce written texts that need clarity, accuracy, and logical structure that exceed their linguistic ability levels (Alqasham & Al-Ahdal, 2021; Priyatmojo, 2021). These challenges are particularly evident in the area of textual organization, where students must not only produce grammatically correct sentences but also ensure that those sentences are meaningfully linked to form a coherent whole. Without sufficient control over the devices that bind sentences together, even grammatically accurate writing may fail to communicate its intended meaning effectively (Riadil et al., 2023).

One characteristic that determines the quality of writing is cohesion. According to Halliday & Hasan (1976), cohesion refers to the linguistic strategies that connect sentences and clauses to form coherent texts. It is the network of lexical and grammatical relations that gives a text its texture, distinguishing it from a random collection of unrelated sentences. They categorized cohesive devices into grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. Four types of grammatical cohesion are reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. Two types of lexical cohesion are reiteration and collocation, which create textual unity through the repetition or semantic association of lexical items. In EFL writing, cohesive devices play a significant role in helping readers follow the flow of ideas and understand the meaning (Ismi & Anggreni, 2025; Rokhaniyah et al., 2022). Previous studies indicate that the appropriate use of cohesive devices contributes to text clarity and communicative effectiveness, while the

misuse or overuse of these devices may lead to ambiguity, unnecessary repetition, and fragmented writing (Ariwibowo et al., 2023; Zahara et al., 2023). Therefore, mastery of cohesive devices is considered as an essential component of effective writing in EFL contexts. Each type of cohesive device serves a distinct function in constructing unity; understanding these functions is important for both writers and researchers. Reference, the most commonly studied type of grammatical cohesion, establish semantic relationship between a linguistic element and the entity it refers to, and it can be realized through personal pronouns, demonstratives, and comparatives (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). When used correctly, references create a chain of participants that runs through the text, allowing the reader to track who or what is being discussed without unnecessary repetition. Substitution and ellipsis, by contrast, operate at a structural level, allowing writers to replace or omit elements that have already been established in the text, thereby contributing to stylistic economy and textual flow. Conjunction signals logical relationships between clauses or sentences, including additive relations such as *and*, *also*, and *furthermore*, adversative relations such as *but* and *however*, causal relations such as *because*, *so*, and *therefore*, and temporal relations such as *then*, *next*, and *after that*. At the lexical level, reiteration involves the repetition of a lexical item or its synonym or near synonym, superordinate, or general word, while collocation refers to the tendency of certain words to co-occur within the same semantic field. The functional diversity of these devices means that different errors in their use will have different consequences for textual coherence, and this underscores the need for a systematic approach to error classification that goes beyond simply noting that a cohesive device has been misused (Rokhaniyah et al., 2022; Uru et al., 2021).

Many studies have found similar patterns in students' use of cohesive devices in different writing genres. Generally, in academic writing contexts, references and repetitions dominate the cohesion strategies used by EFL students, suggesting that learners tend to rely on the most basic and transparent forms of cohesion while struggling with more complex devices such as substitution and ellipsis (Alfitri & Yuliasri, 2021; Junina, 2020; Uru et al., 2021; Usman Sidabutar, 2021). Specifically, in writing their recount texts, students tend to use references and conjunctions more than substitution and ellipsis (Maheswari, 2024; Manullang et al., 2023; Nurpitriyani et al., 2023). In recount texts, cohesion is particularly vital, as the genre requires retelling past events in a chronologically, logically connected sequence. Recount text is a genre that retells past events or experiences with the purpose of informing or entertaining readers. It typically consists of three main parts: orientation, events, and re-orientation, and commonly employs temporal conjunctions and past tense verbs (Hyland, 2004). The genre also commonly employs temporal conjunctions and past tense verbs to signal the sequence of events. Due to its chronological organization, recount texts rely heavily on cohesive devices to maintain logical sequencing and clear connections between events. Research on EFL students' recount writing demonstrate that cohesive devices enable writers to effectively signal temporal order, establish causal relations, and maintain the continuity of events throughout the discourse (Lestari et al., 2023; Pane & Pane, 2021). Without adequate cohesive ties, recount text risk become a fragmented list of events rather than a unified and readable narrative (Priyatmojo, 2021).

Several studies present errors in students' application of cohesive devices. For example, students frequently misuse references and conjunctions, which cause unclear connections between sentences (Sukma et al., 2024; Zahara et al., 2023). These errors are not merely superficial; they can fundamentally disrupt the reader's ability to follow the development of ideas across a text. However, most of the previous studies focus on analyzing the frequency of cohesive devices or on overall writing performance (Alqasham & Al-Ahdal, 2021; Zahra et al., 2021), rather than providing detailed error categories of how cohesive devices are incorrectly used. This limitation means that existing research offers relatively little insight into the specific nature of cohesive device errors, such as whether a device has been omitted entirely, used in an incorrect form, or placed in the wrong position within a sentence to address this gap, this study adopts the surface strategy taxonomy proposed by Dulay et al. (1982), which classifies errors into four categories based their observable surface characteristics such as omission,

addition, misformation, and misordering, offers a structured way to analyze cohesive device errors in students' written recount texts, omission occurs when a required linguistic element is absent in a sentence; addition happens when an unnecessary element is inserted; misformation refers to the use of an incorrect form of a linguistic element; and misordering involves the incorrect arrangement of elements within a sentence. Although this taxonomy was originally developed in the context of second language acquisition, its four categories are broad and formal enough to serve as an adaptable classificatory framework for describing the classifications of error in cohesive devices. Applying this taxonomy to the analysis of cohesive devices allows researchers to move beyond simply noting that an error has occurred and to specify precisely how the cohesive elements have been incorrectly realized in the text. These classifications help to identify their error patterns of cohesive devices usage; however, this study limits the application of the taxonomy to grammatical cohesive device errors, as lexical cohesion relies on semantic field interpretation and frequency patterns that do not align with the surface-level classification approach of Dulay et al. (1982) Taxonomy.

Learner-related variables may influence their writing performance. Individuals' different backgrounds, such as age, motivation, aptitude, and gender, may contribute to variation in second language outcomes (Ellis, 1990). Although many researches on cohesion in EFL writing have been conducted, research on gender differences in the use of cohesive devices is still limited. Analyzing this variable is important because it may reveal discourse-level differences that are not visible when students are treated as a homogeneous group. However, previous studies have rarely examined cohesive device errors by integrating gender differences with detailed error classification frameworks such as Dulay et al.'s taxonomy, particularly in the context of recount writing. This study aims to analyze the types of cohesive devices used by male and female students and to examine the errors they made in applying cohesive devices in their written recount texts. The findings are expected to contribute to a clearer understanding of cohesive device errors with a gender perspective in EFL writing. The results may help teachers in identifying specific patterns of cohesive device errors and designing more focused writing instruction adapted to students' needs.

Based on the issues above, this study addresses the following research questions:

- a. What types of cohesive devices are used by male and female students in their written recount texts?
- b. How do the types and frequencies of cohesive device errors differ between male and female students in their written recount texts?

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to describe and interpret the types of cohesive devices used by male and female students, as well as the patterns of errors found in their written recount texts, without administering any treatment or intervention. This design enabled the researcher to examine linguistic phenomena as they naturally occurred in students' writing. Numerical data in the form of frequencies were used to support the description and comparison of cohesive device usage and error patterns between the two groups. This approach is consistent with qualitative research principles that emphasize the description and interpretation of textual data (Creswell, 2014).

Data Source and Data Collection

The data sources of this study were 34 written recount texts produced by tenth-grade students of a senior high school located in a rural district in Kota Semarang. The dataset consisted of 15 texts written by male students and 19 texts written by female students. The texts were obtained from one intact class selected through purposive sampling, as the participants met the criteria relevant to the research focus (Fraenkel et al., 2012). All students had previously learned recount text and had produced written work aligned with the objectives of this study.

The data were collected through a regular classroom writing task in which students were instructed to write recount texts based on their personal experiences during the “Masa Pengenalan Lingkungan Sekolah” (MPLS), or school orientation week. The shared topic ensured consistency of content and minimized variation due to differences in topic familiarity. Thus, variations in cohesive device usage were more likely to reflect differences in students’ linguistic competence. The task was part of regular instruction, and no additional treatment was provided, ensuring that the data represented the students’ natural writing ability. Gender (male and female) was used as a contextual variable for comparative analysis. All texts were anonymized to ensure confidentiality and comply with ethical research standards.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis through several systematic steps. First, Halliday and Hasan’s (1976) framework was applied to identify and classify cohesive devices in the students’ texts into grammatical cohesion (reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction) and lexical cohesion (reiteration and collocation). The frequency of each type was calculated to describe the distribution patterns of cohesive device usage between male and female students. Second, Dulay et al.’s (1982) surface strategy taxonomy was employed to analyze errors in the use of grammatical cohesive devices. The classification of cohesive devices based on Halliday and Hasan served as the analytical foundation, and each inaccurate use was subsequently categorized into omission, addition, misformation, or misordering. This combined approach enabled a systematic analysis by first identifying the forms of cohesive devices and then evaluating their accuracy through error categorization.

Error analysis was limited to grammatical cohesion due to its compatibility with the surface strategy taxonomy. Lexical cohesion was analyzed only in terms of its frequency and functional use and was not included in the error classification. The findings were interpreted descriptively to explain patterns of cohesive device usage and error distribution across male and female students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings of the study on cohesive device usage and errors in the written recount texts of tenth-grade EFL students at a senior high school in Semarang, analyzed based on gender. The analysis was conducted on 34 texts, consisting of 15 texts written by male students and 19 texts written by female students. Cohesive devices were identified and classified based on the framework by Halliday & Hasan (1976), including grammatical cohesion and lexical cohesion. Errors were classified using the surface strategy taxonomy by Dulay et al. (1982). The findings are organized to address two research questions: (1) What types of cohesive devices are used by male and female students in their written recount texts? (2) How do the types and frequencies of cohesive device errors differ between male and female students in their written recount texts?

Types of Cohesive Devices Used by Male and Female Students

Table 1. Distribution of the cohesive device in Male and Female students' written recount text

Types of cohesive devices	Male	Female
<i>Grammatical Cohesion</i>		
Reference	207	178
Conjunction	130	114
Substitution	0	0
Elipsis	0	0
<i>Lexical Cohesion</i>		
Reiteration	224	193
collocation	83	84
Total	644	569

Table 1 presents the overall distribution of cohesive devices identified in the written recount texts of male and female students. Both groups used the cohesive device as proposed by Halliday & Hasan (1976), which consists of grammatical cohesion in the form of reference and conjunction, and lexical cohesion in the form of reiteration and collocation. This pattern

is consistent with previous studies on EFL students' writing, which similarly found that reference and conjunction were the most dominant grammatical cohesive devices, while substitution and ellipsis were rarely used (Ariwibowo et al., 2023; Manullang et al., 2023; Pane & Pane, 2021). Notably, neither substitution nor ellipsis was found in the texts of either group in this study, indicating that these two types of grammatical cohesion remain outside the productive repertoire of these learners. Overall, male students produced a higher total frequency of cohesive devices (644) compared to female students (569)

Reference

In terms of reference, male students produced a total of 207 instances, while female students produced 178. Both groups dominantly rely on personal reference, particularly first-person pronouns. Female students tended to use first-person singular forms more frequently, reflecting a personal and individual narrative orientation, as evident in F14, in which the pronoun "I" appears as the primary cohesive device across all sentences:

(F14) *I followed activity MPLS in SMAN, I followed caramony and seminar on day 1. I followed fun gam and made a mozaik on day 3.*

Male students, by contrast, more frequently used plural forms such as "we" and "our", indicating a more collective narrative orientation, as seen in M7 and M10, where "we" consistently functions as the cohesive subject across multiple sentences. Demonstrative reference, including the use of "that" and "this" to refer anaphorically to previously mentioned entities, was also present in both groups. Comparative reference forms such as "same" "another", and "other" appeared in a small number of texts across both groups, function to signal similarity, difference comparison in relation to previously mentioned entities, as in F5 ("same as yesterday") and M3 ("in the same class with me"). The dominance of personal reference across both groups is consistent with findings by Pane & Pane (2021) and Sukma et al. (2024), who reported that reference, particularly personal pronoun, constitutes the most frequently used cohesive device in EFL recount writing, largely due to the genre's requirement to narrate personal experiences in a first-person perspective.

Conjunction

Regarding conjunction, male students produced 130 instances compared to 114 in female students. Both groups demonstrated a clear dominance additive conjunction, with "and" being the most frequently used across virtually all texts. Temporal conjunctions, including "then", "after that", "before", and "after", were also present in both groups, functioning to signal the chronological sequence of events. Male students showed greater variation in conjunctive repertoire, with some texts employing a range of markers including "after that", "then", "before", and "finally", as in M5, M7, and M9. Female students, while also using temporal conjunctions, tended to rely on a limited set. Adversative conjunctions such as "but" and causal conjunctions such as "because" appeared at lower frequencies in both groups, as illustrated in F5:

(F5) *We did fun games, that's soo exciting. But sad anyway because my class didn't win.*

The predominance of additive conjunction, particularly "and", is consistent with findings from Pane & Pane (2021), who found that conjunction was the most frequently used cohesive device in EFL recount writing, and Lestari et al. (2023), who similarly reported that students relied heavily on conjunction and reference while demonstrating limited use of more varied connective forms. EFL learners at the secondary level may consistently favor simple additive connectors, reflecting a limited conjunctive repertoire that may reduce the logical flow and readability of the text.

Lexical cohesion

In the domain of lexical cohesion, reiteration was the most frequently used device in both groups, with male students producing 224 instances and female students producing 193. Reiteration in the texts was dominated by simple repetition, in which the same lexical item was repeated across sentences to maintain topical continuity. The most commonly repeated items were content nouns directly related to the MPLS context, including "MPLS", "school", "seminar", and "ceremony". Near synonym was also identified in a small number of texts,

such as “group” and “team” in M5, where two different words were used to refer to the same concept. This overall reliance on repetition as the primary reiteration strategy is clearly illustrated in M7:

(M7) *On July 11th, the first day of pra MPLS and MPLS... On the second day... The third day was the extracurricular demo day... On the fifth day, we started with a cheerful morning exercise... joining the closing ceremony of MPLS*

The dominance of reiteration through simple repetition is consistent with the previous studies on EFL recount and descriptive writing. Usman Sidabutar, (2021), found that repetition and synonym were the most common lexical cohesion devices, while Uru et al. (2021) similarly noted that reiteration, particularly repetition, was the most dominant cohesive type across multiple EFL studies. Maheswari (2024) further observed that students' dependence on simple repetition reflects a preference for cohesive safety over lexical variety, which is characteristic of developing EFL writers.

Collocation, in which lexically related items co-occur within a shared semantic field, was found at nearly equal frequencies in both groups, with male students producing 83 and female students producing 84. Common collocation chains identified across texts included MPLS terms such as “school tour – seminar – fun games – extracurricular demonstration”, organizational terms such as “OSIS – MPK”, and extracurricular type terms such as “band – basketball – volleyball – dance”. The near equal distribution of collocation between groups suggests that both male and female students were similarly able to organize lexical items within a shared semantic field, which is likely facilitated by their shared MPLS experiences as the writing prompt.

Absence of Substitution and Ellipsis

It was noted that substitution and ellipsis did not occur in the 34 written recount texts produced by male and female students. According to Halliday & Hasan (1976), substitution refers to the replacement of a lexical item by a grammatical function such as “one, do, same, so”, while ellipsis refers to the omission of an item that is presupposed as recoverable from the surrounding text. Rather than employing these strategies, students consistently opted for full lexical repetition, as evidenced by the high reiteration counts across both groups. This finding aligns with Manullang et al. (2023), who reported that university-level EFL students showed difficulties in using substitution and ellipsis, and with Ariwibowo et al. (2023), who similarly found substitution to be absent in students' recount texts. Nurpitriyani et al. (2023) further noted that ellipses were entirely absent from students' recount texts. It requires a high level of discourse awareness to use these devices, which many EFL learners have not yet developed to this level.

Absence of Substitution and Ellipsis

When comparing the two groups, male students consistently produced higher frequencies across most cohesive device categories, with the exception of collocation, where the counts were nearly identical. Male students demonstrated greater variation in conjunction use and more consistent uses of demonstrative and comparative reference. Female students, while producing fewer total instances, maintained effective topical continuity through consistent personal reference and lexical reiteration. Both groups shared a tendency to rely heavily on a limited set of cohesive devices, particularly additive conjunction and lexical repetition, which is a common characteristic of EFL writers at the secondary level (Lestari et al., 2023; Sukma et al., 2024). An additional observation across the data is that most students, regardless of gender, demonstrated an ability to deploy cohesive devices in contextually appropriate ways even when their grammatical accuracy was limited, suggesting that cohesive device competence and grammatical competence develop somewhat independently at this level.

Cohesive Device Errors in Male and Female Students' Written Recount Text

Table 2. Distribution of the cohesive device errors based on Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's (1982) Surface Strategy Taxonomy

Types of error	Total
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Types of Cohesive Device	Omission		Addition		Misformation		Misordering			
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Grammatical Cohesion										
Reference	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	1	4
Conjunction	3	0	16	4	4	5	0	0	23	9
Total	3	0	16	4	5	9	0	0	24	13

Table 2 presents the distribution of errors identified in the cohesive devices of male and female students, classified based on Dulay, Burt, and Krashen's (1982) surface strategy taxonomy. Errors were found in two categories: reference and conjunction. Lexical cohesion was not included in the error analysis, as it was analyzed descriptively in terms of its function. Overall, male students produced more errors (24) than female students (13), consistent with their greater overall use of cohesive devices.

Addition

Addition was the most dominant error type in both groups, occurring exclusively in the conjunction category. Male students produced 16 addition errors while female students produced 4. The most frequent pattern involved overuse of the additive conjunction "and", inserted in positions where it was unnecessary or where a different cohesive strategy would have been more appropriate. A representative example is found in F9:

(F9) *and activity happy is fun games. ("and" is unnecessary at the start of a new statement with no preceding clause to link.)*

A similar pattern was observed in F7, where "and" was used redundantly alongside the temporal marker "lastly.":

(F7) *and lastly on Friday I joined an exercise in the field. (The conjunction "and" is redundant when combined with "lastly", which already functions as a conclusive connective)*

Male students showed a particularly high frequency of addition errors related to temporal conjunction overuse. In M10, the repetitive use of "after" and "then" within close proximity produced redundant sequencing:

(M10) *then after finding our class we introduced ourself one by one, after knowing each other the first day of MPLS is over. ("then" and "after" are used redundantly within a single sentence.)*

The high frequency of addition errors in conjunction aligns with findings from (Sukma et al., 2024), who reported that conjunctions were both frequently used and contributed to the highest proportion of errors. Furthermore, misuse and redundancy were also identified as common error patterns. This tendency may suggest that students rely on conjunctions to create connections between ideas, although such usage is not always contextually appropriate.

Misformation

Misformation was the second most frequent error type, with female students producing 9 and male students producing 5, distributed across both reference and conjunction categories. In the reference category, female students produced 4 misformation errors while male students produced 1. The most common pattern was the use of an incorrect pronoun form. In F2, the objective pronoun "me" was used in subject position instead of "I.":

(F2) *On day two me and my friend are supporting my class doing their fun game. ("me" should be "I", as it functions as the grammatical subject of the clause.)*

The same pattern was also found in F3

(F3) *yesterday me on the frist day follow pre MPLS ("me" should be "I" in subject position)*

In F1, a phonologically similar misformation was identified, where "as" was used in place of the objective pronoun "us":

(F1) *The teacher gave as the material. ("as" should be "us", this appears to be a phonological misformation)*

In F4, the pronoun "her" was used where context required the plural form "their":

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(F4) *her* name is salwa and finnova they're so kind and lovely too. ("her" should be "their" when referring to Salwa and Finnova collectively.)

In M1, a code-switching misformation was identified, where the Indonesian pronoun "kita" appeared within an English text:

(M1) *Two weeks ago I with all my friend did MPLS, kita attended seminar in the mosque...* ("kita" is an Indonesian first person plural pronoun, the correct English form is "we")

In the conjunction category, misformation involved the use of incorrect or contextually inappropriate forms. In M4, "even though" was misformed of "even through"

(M4) *Even through* our class lost, we still enjoyed those moments. ("even through" is a misformation of "even though")

Reference misformation is consistent with findings from Sukma et al. (2024), who identified reference error as one of the common error patterns in students' recount texts. In addition, the error use of cohesive devices may lead to unclear connections between sentences. Conjunction misformation also indicates students' limited familiarity with the appropriate use of conjunctions.

Omission

Omission errors were found exclusively in the conjunction category, with male students producing 3, and no omission errors were identified in female students' texts. Omission occurred when a necessary conjunction was absent, resulting in unclear transitions between clauses. In M9, omission was found following a prepositional phrase:

(M9) *we returned to class it was over, and relaxed after a whole 5 days of activity.* (A conjunction such as "when" or "because" is missing between "we returned to class" and "it was over")

In M5, an omission was identified at the juncture of two independent clauses:

(M5) *On Monday, the official MPLS started, I brought all the required equipment..* (A conjunction such as "and" is missing between the two independent clauses.)

Omission errors in conjunction may reflect a gap in students' awareness of when explicit conjunctive links are required to signal relationships between propositions. These findings are aligned with Lestari et al. (2023), who observed that insufficient use of cohesive devices can result in texts that appear as disconnected sequences of events rather than unified narratives.

Misordering

Misordering errors were not found in any of the 34 texts written by male or female students. This absence suggest that while students frequently made errors related to the selection, form, and quantity of cohesive devices, they did not produce errors involving the incorrect placement or arrangement of cohesive elements within their sentences. This finding may indicate that at this level of EFL writing, students tend to place conjunction and reference items in positionally predictable locations, even when the items themselves are incorrect or redundant.

Gender Differences in Error Patterns

When comparing the error profiles of male and female students, several meaningful differences emerge. Male students produced a higher total number of errors (24) compared to female students (13). The most pronounced difference was in addition errors, where male students produced 16 conjunction addition errors compared to only 4 in female students. This may indicate a tendency among male students to use a wider range of conjunctions, which in some cases led to redundant or unnecessary use. Female students, in contrast, showed a higher frequency of reference misformation errors (4 vs 1), indicating some difficulty in selecting appropriate pronoun forms. Omission errors were found only in male students' texts, reflecting a tendency to produce complex multi-clause structures that occasionally lack necessary conjunctive links. Misordering errors were not found in either group, suggesting that both male and female students were able to place cohesive device in structurally position despite making errors in other aspects of cohesive device use. Overall, the error patterns

suggest that male students tend toward overproduction of cohesive markers while female students are more prone to errors of form selection, particularly in the domain of reference.

The findings suggest that differences in cohesive device usage are reflected not only in frequency but also in the patterns of errors produced. The higher number of conjunctions may result in redundancy in some cases. This pattern is partially in line with previous studies indicating that cohesive devices are frequently used yet can be challenging for EFL learners (Zahara et al., 2023). Similarly, this tendency may be related to findings suggesting that inappropriate use of cohesive devices can affect clarity and effectiveness of a text (Lestari et al., 2023). In contrast, female students appear to demonstrate relatively more controlled use of cohesive devices, although some difficulties in form selection, particularly in reference, are still evident. This finding reflects a pattern reported in previous studies, where learners tend to rely on certain cohesive devices, especially reference and conjunction, while still experiencing challenges in using them accurately (Ariwibowo et al., 2023). Overall, these results suggest that the use of cohesive devices is related to learners developing writing competence, where both frequency and accuracy contribute to the production of coherent and meaningful texts.

CONCLUSIONS

This study investigated the types of cohesive devices used by male and female tenth-grade EFL students in their written recount texts and the errors in their application based on Halliday and Hasan (1976) and Dulay et al. (1982). The participants were 34 students, consisting of 15 males and 19 females, which enabled a gender-based comparison. The findings showed that both groups used reference, conjunction, reiteration, and collocation, while substitution and ellipsis were not found, which indicates limited mastery of more complex cohesive forms. Male students produced a higher frequency and greater variety of cohesive devices, especially conjunctions, while female students maintained more stable topic continuity through personal reference and lexical repetition. Both groups depended on additive conjunctions and simple repetition. In terms of errors, addition became the most dominant type and appeared only in conjunction use, with male students producing more errors due to overuse and redundant connectors. Female students showed more misformation errors, especially in pronoun selection, while omission errors appeared only in male students' texts and misordering did not occur. These patterns indicate different challenges in cohesion use. Teachers should guide male students to control additive conjunctions by emphasizing logical relations and reducing redundancy through structured exercises, while for female students, instruction should focus on pronoun-antecedent agreement through sentence completion and error correction tasks. Teachers should also introduce substitution and ellipsis through guided writing to expand cohesive competence. This study used one class, so future research should involve larger samples and different contexts.

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