

The Influence of Language Politeness on the Effectiveness of Student Communication in Academic Discussions and Gender-Based Politeness Differences

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to determine the effect of politeness on the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions and to describe the comparison of politeness between male and female students. This study uses a quantitative approach with correlational methods and simple linear regression. The subjects of the study were 60 students of Galuh University who were selected by purposive sampling. Data collection was carried out through a questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability. The results of the analysis showed that there was a positive relationship between politeness in speaking and the effectiveness of student communication with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.431$ and a significance of $p < 0.05$. Simple linear regression analysis produced the equation $Y = 38.95 + 0.464X$ which showed that each increase in politeness in speaking units would increase communication effectiveness by 0.464 units. The R-Squared value = 0.186 indicates that 18.6% of the variation in communication effectiveness can be explained by politeness in speaking, while the rest is influenced by other factors. Thus, this study confirms that politeness in speaking has a significant influence on the effectiveness of students' communication in academic discussions, although there are other factors that play a role. In addition, the average score of female students was higher (78.49) than male students (75.44). These findings provide important implications for the development of communication skills of students (both male and female) to be more polite in conveying ideas so as to create a more conducive and productive academic environment.

Keywords: Politeness, Communication Effectiveness, Academic Discussion, Influence, male, female.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is a fundamental element in human life that allows social interaction, conveying information, and exchanging ideas (Frymier, 2005). In an academic context, communication has a very crucial role, especially in group discussions which are often carried out by students at various levels of higher education. Academic discussions are the

main vehicle for students to develop critical thinking, test arguments, and expand scientific insight. In this process, effective communication is the main key so that the ideas conveyed can be accepted and well understood by other discussion participants (Dayasiri et al., 2025). One factor that can determine the effectiveness of communication in academic discussions is language politeness (Sari et al., 2025).

Language politeness is a form of application of social norms in communication that reflects an attitude of respect for the interlocutor, both verbally and in writing (Leech, 2014; Watts, 2003). In an academic context, language politeness is an integral part of good communication, because it can create a conducive discussion atmosphere and avoid misunderstandings. Polite language can increase the effectiveness of communication by ensuring that the message conveyed is well received by other participants, without causing discomfort or unnecessary conflict (Brown & Levinson, 1999). Politeness in speaking involves various aspects, such as choosing polite words, using appropriate intonation, being open to other people's opinions, and being willing to listen before responding (Brown, 2015).

However, in practice, there are still many students who do not pay attention to aspects of politeness in speaking (Riyanto et al., 2023; Susandi et al., 2024). Some students tend to use a communication style that is too direct, pays little attention to politeness norms, or is even aggressive in expressing their opinions. This can be caused by various factors, such as a lack of understanding of the importance of language politeness, communication habits in more informal social environments, or the influence of social media which often shows communication patterns that are not in accordance with academic norms. As a result, communication in academic discussions becomes less effective and can even trigger misunderstandings or conflicts between students.

Effective communication in academic discussions involves good speaking skills and active listening skills (Kuo et al., 2021; Littlemore, 2003). Students who are polite in communicating tend to respect other people's opinions more, not interrupt when other people are speaking, and respond in a polite and constructive way. This helps create a more inclusive discussion environment, where each participant feels comfortable to express their opinion without fear of criticism. On the other hand, students who pay little attention to language politeness often dominate discussions without giving others the opportunity to speak, convey criticism in a condescending tone, or do not respect differences of opinion.

The effectiveness of communication in academic discussions is greatly influenced by the extent to which students can apply language politeness in interactions (Sari et al., 2025). Effective communication allows each discussion participant to understand each other, avoid misunderstandings, and better achieve discussion goals. The effectiveness of communication in academic discussions can be measured through various indicators, such as the level of clarity in conveying information, active participation in discussions, acceptance of other people's ideas, and success in reaching agreements or solutions to the problems discussed. Students who are able to speak politely tend to be more easily accepted by other discussion participants, so they are more effective in conveying opinions and building strong arguments (Halil et al., 2023; Linda Eka et al., 2024; Susandi et al., 2024).

In the academic world, polite communication also reflects a person's level of professionalism and emotional intelligence (Hartini et al., 2023). Students who are able to speak in a polite manner show that they have good self-control, are able to adapt to the academic environment, and can interact with various individuals from different backgrounds. Language politeness

is not only important in academic discussions, but also in daily interactions, both with lecturers, fellow students and other parties in the campus environment (Djalilova, 2023; Masruddin et al., 2023). Therefore, understanding and applying language politeness is compliance with social norms and a skill that can provide long-term benefits for students in academic and professional life.

Language politeness also has wider relevance in the world of work, the ability to communicate well and politely is one of the skills that is highly valued by many organizations and companies (Shibuya et al., 2023; Wulan Tresna et al., 2023). Students who are accustomed to using polite language in academic discussions will be better prepared to face communication challenges in the world of work, both in the context of meetings, negotiations, and interactions with colleagues and clients. Thus, improving language politeness during college can be a valuable investment for students' future career development.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the extent to which politeness affects the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions. With this study, it is expected to find empirical evidence regarding the importance of politeness in improving the effectiveness of communication in academic discussions. In addition, this study also aims to describe the comparison of politeness between male and female students. This study is expected to provide recommendations for students, lecturers, and educational institutions in developing strategies that can improve student communication skills, including aspects of politeness. Thus, the academic environment can be a more conducive place for the exchange of ideas that are productive and beneficial for all discussion participants.

Previous research highlights the role of politeness in education and its impact on academic performance and communication between students and teachers. The first study by Zannrni and Shareef (2023) examined the influence of politeness on students' academic performance at Iraqi universities through an interview-based qualitative approach. This study found that politeness contributes to increasing student engagement, motivation, and academic results, as well as strengthening relationships with lecturers. Meanwhile, the second study by Sari et al. (2025) used a quantitative approach with multiple regression to measure the impact of politeness norms and language skills on the way students communicate with teachers in Citizenship Education learning. The results show that politeness norms have a significant influence on students' communication ethics, with important implications for teaching strategies that emphasize politeness as part of learning. These two studies as a whole confirm that politeness is not only a social element, but also has a direct influence on the effectiveness of learning and academic interactions.

This research focuses on the influence of language politeness in students' academic discussions, which is different from previous research which focuses more on the relationship between politeness and academic performance and communication between students and teachers. The novelty of this research lies in its study of the effectiveness of communication in academic discussions and its exploration of gender-based differences in language politeness. Apart from that, this research also has implications for the development of higher education curricula, especially in courses related to communication skills and personal development. Universities can include material about the importance of language politeness in their curriculum, either in the form of lectures, training or extracurricular activities, tailored to address observed gender-specific communication patterns. In this way, students will gain a theoretical understanding of language politeness and have the opportunity to apply it in various communication situations in the academic environment

Overall, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between language politeness and communication effectiveness in academic discussions, including insights into gender-based differences in politeness. By understanding how these two aspects are related and considering demographic nuances, it is hoped that students will be more aware of the importance of polite communication in creating more effective and meaningful discussions. Apart from that, the results of this research can also be a basis for further research which can examine other factors that influence the effectiveness of communication in an academic environment, as well as strategies that can be used to improve students' overall communication skills

2. METHOD

This research uses a quantitative approach with a correlational design to analyze the relationship between language politeness and the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions. A quantitative approach was chosen because this research aims to test hypotheses and obtain data that can be measured statistically. A correlational design is used to determine the extent of the relationship between the independent variable, namely language politeness, and the dependent variable, namely the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions (Creswell, 2015; Creswell & Creswell, 2023; Rasinger, 2013).

Population and Sample

The population in this study consisted of 60 Galuh University students who actively attended lectures and were regularly involved in academic discussions, both in formal classroom settings and informal study groups outside of lectures. The sample for this research was selected using a purposive sampling technique, which involves choosing participants based on specific criteria aligned with the research objectives. The key sample criteria included students who held active status as Galuh University students, possessed verified experience participating in academic discussions during their coursework, and voluntarily consented to become respondents by completing the research questionnaires. To ensure these criteria were met, potential participants were identified through direct interaction in academic environments and confirmed their eligibility prior to inclusion in the study. The selected number of 60 students was considered sufficiently representative to describe the research population and met the minimum requirements for the correlational and simple linear regression analyses.

Research Variables

This research consists of two main variables, namely the independent variable (X) and the dependent variable (Y). The independent variable (X) is language politeness, which reflects the level of student compliance in applying politeness principles in academic communication. Aspects measured in this variable include polite choice of words, respect for other people's opinions, and the ability not to interrupt during discussions. Meanwhile, the dependent variable (Y) is the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions, which is measured based on the extent to which the message conveyed is well received, the level of active participation in discussions, and success in reaching an agreement or solution to a problem. The relationship between these two variables was analyzed to determine whether language politeness contributed to increasing the effectiveness of student communication in an academic context.

Research Instrument

The data in this study was collected using a questionnaire prepared based on a Likert scale with five rating levels, namely 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. This questionnaire consists of two main parts designed to measure politeness variables and student communication effectiveness in academic discussions. Each statement in the questionnaire is prepared systematically so that it can represent the main aspects of the two variables studied, thus allowing respondents to provide assessments that are appropriate to their experiences and perceptions in the context of academic discussions.

Table 1.1. Variable X and Y Questionnaire Grid Table

Variable	Indicator	Statement Number
Language Politeness (X)	Choice of polite words	3, 12, 25, 34
	Respect other people's opinions	8, 20, 29
	Voice tone and intonation	6, 17, 27
	Open attitude in communication	5, 11, 21
	Ethics in communication	2, 14, 30
	Appropriate language to the situation	9, 19
	Clarity in speaking	10, 23
Communication	Clarity of information delivery	7, 18, 24
Effectiveness (Y)	Active participation in discussions	4, 13, 26
	Acceptance of other people's ideas	1, 15, 28
	Ability to reach agreement	9, 19, 23
	Comfort in discussions	10, 16, 22
	Ability to respond to arguments	31, 32
	Delivery of constructive criticism	33, 35
	The impact of communication on understanding	36

Before being used in research, the questionnaire is tested for validity and reliability to ensure that the instrument can measure variables accurately and consistently.

Data collection technique

Data was collected through distributing questionnaires. These questionnaires were administered both digitally, in the form of a Google Form, and physically, directly to the predetermined respondents. The Google Form link was shared via secure university communication platforms, while direct distribution occurred in designated campus discussion areas to capture responses in real-time. Respondents were given sufficient time to fill out the questionnaire honestly and accurately, reflecting their true experiences in academic discussions. After the data was collected, it underwent a rigorous filtering and rechecking process to ensure data completeness and absence of inconsistencies before further analysis.

Data Analysis Techniques

This research involved several stages of analysis to ensure the reliability and validity of the data used. The validity test is carried out to ensure that each item in the questionnaire actually measures the variable in question, while the reliability test uses Cronbach's Alpha to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire. Next, a Pearson Product Moment correlation test was carried out to determine the extent of the relationship between language politeness (X) and communication effectiveness in academic discussions (Y). Correlation values range from -1 to +1, values close to +1 indicate a strong positive relationship, while values close to 0 indicate a weak or insignificant relationship.

In addition, a simple linear regression test was used to determine how much influence language politeness has on the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions. The regression equation used in this research is $Y = a + bX$, Y is the effectiveness of communication in academic discussions, X is language politeness, a is a constant, and b is the regression coefficient. To test the significance of this influence, a t test is carried out, which determines whether the independent variable has a significant influence on the dependent variable. If the p-value < 0.05 , then the null hypothesis is rejected, which means there is a significant influence between language politeness and the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions.

Based on the research objectives, the hypotheses tested in this research are as follows. Null hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between politeness in language and the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions. Alternative hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between language politeness and the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Before carrying out correlation and regression analysis, descriptive statistical analysis was carried out to describe the distribution of research variable data. The following is a summary of descriptive statistics for the variables language politeness (X) and communication effectiveness (Y):

Table 1.2

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Language Politeness (X)	60	75.55	5.68	67	88
Communication Effectiveness (Y)	60	73.78	6.21	62	84

From the table above, it can be seen that the average student language politeness score is 75.55 with a standard deviation of 5.68, while the average student communication effectiveness is 73.78 with a standard deviation of 6.21.

Respondents' Characteristics

Prior to conducting correlation and regression analyses, descriptive statistical analysis was performed to provide an overview of the demographic characteristics of the research respondents. A summary of the respondents' characteristics is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Summary of Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

Respondent Characteristic	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	25	41.7%
	Female	35	58.3%
Age	19-20 years	28	46.7%
	21-22 years	24	40.0%
	> 22 years	8	13.3%
Academic Level/Semester	Semester 2	10	16.7%
	Semester 4	20	33.3%
	Semester 6	18	30.0%
	Semester 8	12	20.0%
Total Respondents		60	100

As shown in Table 1, the majority of respondents were female (58.3%), indicating a higher participation rate of female students in this study. Most respondents fell within the age ranges of 19-20 years (46.7%) and 21-22 years (40.0%), which collectively accounted for 86.7% of the total respondents, consistent with the characteristics of active university students. The distribution of respondents also demonstrated diversity across various academic semesters, with the largest proportions coming from Semester 4 (33.3%) and Semester 6 (30.0%), suggesting that the respondents possessed sufficiently mature academic discussion experience. This demographic information provides valuable context regarding the participants' backgrounds and aids in the interpretation of the obtained results.

Validity and Reliability Test

Before further analysis is carried out, validity and reliability tests are carried out to ensure that the research instrument has good quality in measuring the variables studied. The validity test was carried out using Pearson correlation analysis, namely by measuring the relationship between the score of each item and the total score of the variable. The validity test results show that all items have a Pearson correlation value of more than 0.30 with a significance level of $p < 0.05$, so that all items are considered valid and suitable for use in this research. Meanwhile, reliability testing was carried out using the Cronbach's Alpha method to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire, so that it can be ensured that the instrument used in this research produces stable and reliable data in measuring the variables studied. The reliability test results are displayed in the following table:

Table 3

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Language Politeness (X)	0.812
Communication Effectiveness (Y)	0.845

The Cronbach's Alpha value obtained for both variables was more than 0.70, which shows that the research instrument has a good level of reliability and can be used consistently to measure the variables in this research.

Pearson Correlation Test

To determine the relationship between language politeness and student communication effectiveness, a Pearson correlation test was carried out. The results of the analysis show that there is a moderate positive correlation between the two variables with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.431$ and a significance of $p < 0.05$. This means that the higher the level of politeness in students' language, the higher the effectiveness of their communication in academic discussions. Even though the relationship found is in the moderate category, these results still show that language politeness has an important role in supporting more effective communication.

A correlation of 0.431 indicates that the relationship between language politeness and communication effectiveness is positive, meaning that increasing politeness in speaking will be followed by an increase in communication effectiveness. However, because the value is not close to 1, this relationship is not completely strong, which means there are other factors that also play a role in the effectiveness of student communication.

Statistical significance $p < 0.05$ indicates that this result did not occur by chance and can be trusted in scientific analysis. In other words, language politeness does contribute to the effectiveness of communication in academic discussions, although it is not the only determining factor.

This relationship can be visualized via a scatter plot. Below is a scatter plot showing the relationship between the two variables, namely language politeness (X) and communication effectiveness (Y):

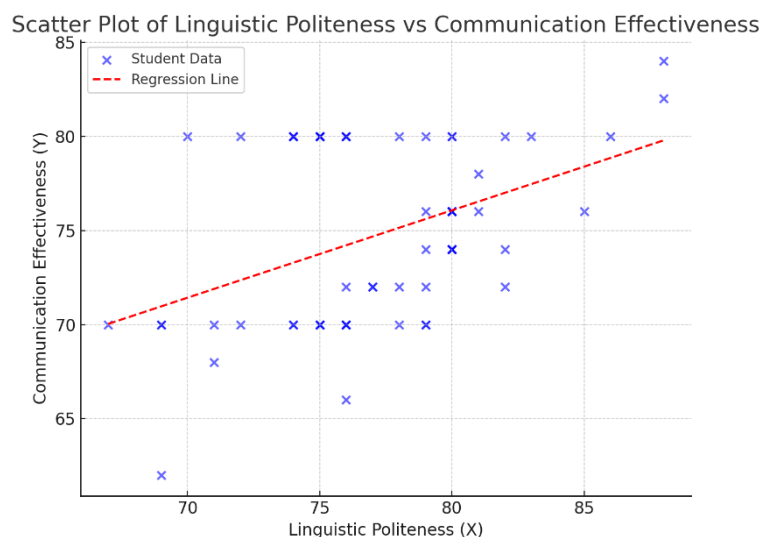


Figure 1

The blue dots in the scatter plot represent each student, with language politeness (X) on the horizontal axis and communication effectiveness (Y) on the vertical axis. The dashed red

line shows the regression line reflecting a moderate positive relationship trend between the two variables.

From the scatter plot, it can be seen that most of the points move upwards as language politeness increases, which means that the more polite students are in speaking, the better their communication effectiveness in academic discussions. However, the dots are also distributed in a pattern that is not completely straight, which shows that there are other factors that influence communication effectiveness besides language politeness.

Simple Linear Regression Test

Simple linear regression analysis was carried out to determine the effect of language politeness on the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions. Simple linear regression was used because this research involved one independent variable (language politeness) and one dependent variable (communication effectiveness). The results of the regression analysis are displayed in the following table:

Table 4

Model	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
Constant (a)	38.95	4.12	9.45	0.000
Language Politeness (X)	0.464	0.078	5.95	0.000

Based on the regression results above, the regression equation $Y=38.95+0.464X$ is obtained. Y represents the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions, while X represents language politeness as an independent variable. A constant value of 38.95 indicates that if language politeness is zero, then the effectiveness of student communication remains at the level of 38.95. Meanwhile, the regression coefficient of 0.464 indicates that every one unit increase in language politeness will increase student communication effectiveness by 0.464 units. This shows that the higher the level of language politeness applied by students, the greater the effectiveness of their communication in academic discussions.

In addition, the results of the regression analysis show that the language politeness variable has a significant influence on communication effectiveness, with a significance value of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). This means that the relationship between these two variables does not occur by chance and can be statistically trusted. Overall, the results of this regression test confirm that language politeness plays an important role in increasing student communication effectiveness, although communication effectiveness can also be influenced by other factors not examined in this study.

Coefficient of Determination (R-Squared)

R-Squared value = 0.186, which indicates that 18.6% of the variation in student communication effectiveness can be explained by language politeness. In other words, language politeness contributes to the effectiveness of communication in academic discussions, although in a non-dominant proportion. Meanwhile, the remaining 81.4% was influenced by other factors not included in this study.

Significance Test (t Test)

To test whether language politeness significantly influences the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions, a t test was carried out on the regression coefficient. Based on the results of the regression analysis, the value of $t = 5.95$ with a significance of $p = 0.000$. Because the p value < 0.05 , the null hypothesis is rejected, which means language politeness has a significant influence on the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions. Thus, the results of this study show that language politeness has a significant relationship with the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions, although there are still other factors that contribute.

Comparison of Language Politeness between Male and Female Students

In addition to analyzing the relationship between language politeness and communication effectiveness, this study also explores differences in language politeness levels based on gender. Based on the results of descriptive analysis, male students ($N = 25$) had an average language politeness score of 75.44, while female students ($N = 35$) had an average language politeness score of 78.49.

The difference in average scores indicates that female students in this study tend to have a higher level of language impression than male students. The following is a difference test to determine whether this difference is statistically significant.

Table 5

Gender	N	Total Score	Mean	SD
Male (M)	25	1.886	75.44	3.87
Female (F)	35	2.747	78.49	4.51

Based on the t-test results, there was a statistically significant difference in the politeness scores between male and female students ($t(58) = -2.801$, $p = 0.007$). Female students (mean = 78.49, standard deviation = 4.51) showed significantly higher politeness scores than male students (mean = 75.44, standard deviation = 3.87). This indicates that, in this sample, female students tend to show higher levels of politeness in academic discussions than male students.

Discussion

The research results show that there is a significant relationship between language politeness and the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions. With a correlation coefficient value of $r = 0.431$, the relationship between these two variables is in the medium and positive category. This means that the higher the politeness of a student's language, the better the effectiveness of their communication in academic discussions. This is in line with the theory of language politeness which states that the use of polite language can create more effective communication, reduce conflict, and increase understanding between participants in a discussion (Brown & Levinson, 1999; Leech, 2014; Mills, 2014; Watts, 2003). The Pearson correlation test carried out produced a p value < 0.05 , which means that the relationship between language politeness and communication effectiveness is statistically significant. This shows that the higher the politeness of students' language, the better their

communication effectiveness in academic discussions. Even though the relationship found is in the moderate category, these results still show that language politeness has an important role in supporting more effective communication.

The results of the regression analysis show that the regression equation obtained is $Y=38.95+0.464X$. This equation shows that every one unit increase in language politeness will increase communication effectiveness by 0.464 units. However, the R-Squared value = 0.186 shows that only 18.6% of the variation in communication effectiveness can be explained by language politeness, while 81.4% is influenced by other factors. This shows that although language politeness plays an important role, there are still many other factors that influence the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions. To test whether language politeness significantly influences the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions, a t test was carried out on the regression coefficient. Based on the results of the regression analysis, the t-value obtained = 5.95 with a significance of $p = 0.000$. When compared with the t-table value for $df = 58$, the t-count is greater than the t-table for a significance level of 0.05, so the null hypothesis is rejected and it can be concluded that language politeness has a very significant influence on the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions.

The results of this research are in line with previous studies which show that language politeness has an important role in increasing communication effectiveness. For example, research by Daulay et al. (2022); Mantasiah and Yusri (2020) stated that individuals who use more polite language tend to be more easily accepted in academic and professional environments. In addition, research conducted by Saleh et al. (2017); Sergeyevna and Xafizovna (2024) indicate that the relationship between language politeness and communication effectiveness is in the medium category. This shows that although language politeness is an influential factor, there are other variables that play a role in increasing the effectiveness of student communication.

In addition, the results of this study indicate that there are differences in the level of politeness of language between male and female students. Female students have an average politeness score of 78.49 with a standard deviation of 4.51, while male students have an average score of 75.44 with a standard deviation of 3.87. The results of the independent samples t-test produced a value of $t(58) = -2.801$ with $p = 0.007$ ($p < 0.05$), which indicates that this difference is statistically significant.

This finding strengthens the hypothesis that female students in academic discussion contexts tend to show higher levels of language politeness than male students. This result is in line with the literature stating that women are more likely to use a communication style that maintains interaction harmony and pays attention to politeness norms (Brown & Levinson, 1999; Leech, 2014). However, it is important to note that formal academic contexts also require all students to maintain politeness in communication. Therefore, this difference, although significant, must still be understood in the context of academic communication culture that emphasizes politeness norms for all discussion participants.

The implication of this research is that students need to be given a deeper understanding of the importance of language politeness in academic discussions. Educational institutions can also develop communication training programs that emphasize speaking and argumentation skills as well as language politeness aspects so that communication can run more effectively

and harmoniously. In this way, the academic environment can become a more conducive place for the exchange of ideas that is productive and beneficial for all discussion participants.

4. CONCLUSION

The research results show that language politeness has a significant effect on the effectiveness of student communication in academic discussions. The Pearson correlation test produces a value of $r = 0.431$ with $p < 0.05$, which indicates a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. Regression analysis produces the equation $Y = 38.95 + 0.464X$, which means that every increase in one unit of language politeness increases communication effectiveness by 0.464 units. The significance test shows $p = 0.000$, so that language politeness is proven to have an important role in supporting more effective academic communication. However, with an R-Squared of 0.186, only 18.6% of the variation in communication effectiveness is explained by language politeness, while the rest is influenced by other factors.

Although language politeness contributes to communication effectiveness, this research shows that other aspects such as speaking skills, understanding of material, and group dynamics also play a role in determining student communication success. Therefore, further research is recommended to consider other factors that can increase communication effectiveness, as well as exploring more comprehensive communication skills development strategies for students.

In addition, the independent sample t-test showed a significant difference between the politeness scores of male and female students ($t(58) = -2.801$, $p = 0.007$), with the average score of female students being higher (78.49) than male students (75.44). This finding emphasizes the need for educational strategies that strengthen communication skills while taking gender differences into account.

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