

The Influence of Digital Platform Use on Digital Language Politeness among Students of Bina Dharma Junior High School

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Abstract

The rapid integration of digital platforms in education has transformed students' communication patterns, particularly in digital language interactions. This transformation has raised new challenges related to digital language politeness among junior high school students. This study aimed to examine the effect of digital platform utilization on the digital language politeness of students at SMP Bina Dharma. The study employed a quantitative approach with a correlational research design. The sample consisted of 64 students of SMP Bina Dharma who were selected as research respondents. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire measuring digital platform utilization as the independent variable (X), which included intensity of use, types of platforms, and purposes of use, and digital language politeness as the dependent variable (Y), which covered word choice, communication style, and digital interaction ethics. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS), supported by descriptive statistical analysis and validity and reliability testing. The results indicated that digital platform utilization had a positive and statistically significant effect on students' digital language politeness, with a path coefficient of 0.97, a t-statistic value greater than 1.96, and a p-value less than 0.05. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.95, indicating that digital platform utilization explained 95% of the variance in students' digital language politeness, while the remaining variance was influenced by other factors outside the model. The research instruments were proven to be valid and reliable, with Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values exceeding 0.80. Therefore, this study successfully demonstrated that appropriate and responsible utilization of digital platforms significantly contributed to the improvement of digital language politeness among students at SMP Bina Dharma. The findings provided practical implications for schools in developing ethical digital literacy policies.

Keywords: Digital Platforms, Digital Language Politeness, Digital Literacy

Introduction

The rapid expansion of digital technologies has significantly transformed patterns of communication among adolescents, particularly within educational contexts. Digital platforms such as social media, instant messaging applications, and online learning environments have become dominant spaces for interaction, shaping how students express ideas, negotiate social relationships, and construct meaning.

While these platforms offer substantial benefits for collaboration and information exchange, they also raise critical concerns regarding the quality of language use, especially in relation to linguistic politeness and ethical communication practices. As adolescents increasingly rely on digital media for both academic and social purposes, understanding how digital platform utilization influences their language behavior has become an essential area of scholarly inquiry.

Linguistic politeness is a fundamental component of effective communication, as it reflects speakers' ability to maintain social harmony, show respect, and manage interpersonal relationships. In digital communication, politeness takes on new forms due to the absence of physical cues such as intonation, facial expressions, and gestures. Consequently, users must rely heavily on lexical choices, textual strategies, and contextual awareness to convey respect and mitigate potential misunderstandings (Ansoriyah & Irawan, 2023). Research in computer-mediated communication suggests that digital environments can intensify both polite and impolite language practices, depending on users' communicative competence and awareness of social norms (Herring & Androutsopoulos, 2019).

Digital literacy has been widely recognized as a key factor influencing individuals' behavior in online environments. It encompasses not only technical skills but also cognitive, social, and ethical competencies required to engage responsibly in digital communication. Empirical studies have demonstrated that individuals with higher levels of digital literacy tend to exhibit greater sensitivity to communicative norms, including the appropriate use of polite language in online interactions. Conversely, limited digital literacy is often associated with impulsive, informal, or inappropriate language use, particularly among adolescents who are still developing their pragmatic competence (Ng, 2019; Livingstone et al., 2021).

Recent studies focusing on adolescents' communication practices indicate that digital platforms may reshape traditional politeness norms rather than simply erode them. For example, research published in *Discourse, Context & Media* and *Journal of Pragmatics* highlights that young users frequently adapt politeness strategies to suit the affordances of specific platforms, such as brevity in instant messaging or expressive informality in social media comments. These adaptations suggest that politeness in digital contexts is dynamic and context-dependent, influenced by platform design, interactional goals, and peer norms (Darics & Koller, 2019; Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2020).

Within educational settings, the increasing integration of digital platforms into teaching and learning processes further emphasizes the importance of examining students' digital language behavior. Online classrooms, group chats, and learning management systems require students to communicate respectfully with peers and teachers alike. Studies in *Computers & Education* have shown that students' digital communication skills, including polite language use, are closely related to their engagement, collaboration quality, and overall learning outcomes (Redecker, 2020). Therefore, promoting polite and ethical digital communication is not merely a linguistic concern but also an educational imperative (Ansoriyah et al., 2024).

Despite the growing body of international research on digital communication and literacy, empirical studies specifically examining the relationship between digital platform utilization and linguistic politeness among junior high school students remain limited, particularly in non-Western educational contexts. Many existing studies focus on university students or general online populations, leaving a gap in understanding how early adolescents negotiate politeness norms in digital environments shaped by both educational and social demands. Addressing this gap is crucial, as junior high school students represent a formative stage in the development of communicative competence and digital citizenship.

In response to this gap, the present study investigates the effect of digital platform utilization on digital language politeness among students at SMP Bina Dharma. By examining how patterns of digital platform use relate to students' polite language behavior in online interactions, this research aims to contribute to the growing field of digital pragmatics and provide evidence-based insights for educators and policymakers. The findings are expected to support the development of digital literacy programs that integrate linguistic politeness and ethical communication as core components of responsible digital engagement in school contexts (Cintia et al., 2024; Zidansyah et al., 2024).

Method

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design to examine the

influence of digital platform utilization on digital language politeness among junior high school students. This design was selected to identify and measure the statistical relationship between the independent and dependent variables objectively (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The participants consisted of 64 students of SMP Bina Dharma in the 2025/2026 academic year. A census sampling technique was applied, involving the entire population due to its manageable size, ensuring comprehensive representation of students' digital communication behavior (Sugiyono, 2016). Data were collected using a structured Likert-scale questionnaire. Digital platform utilization was measured through indicators of usage frequency, platform types, and communication purposes. Digital language politeness was assessed through indicators of word choice, communication style, contextual appropriateness, and digital interaction ethics, adapted from contemporary digital politeness frameworks (Leech, 2014; Ng, 2019).

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 26 and SmartPLS 4. Validity and reliability tests confirmed that all indicators met acceptable thresholds. PLS-SEM was employed to evaluate the measurement model and structural model due to its suitability for small sample sizes and predictive analysis (Hair et al., 2019). This research followed research ethics principles including voluntary informed consent from respondents and parents, confidentiality of respondent data, and transparency in the research process. Respondents were given the right to withdraw from participation at any time without sanctions. Research data was used solely for academic purposes and stored securely (Ernst & Young, 2021).

Results and Discussion

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis showed that the majority of respondents (73.4%) agreed that digital platform utilization helped accelerate their daily work to maximize the benefits of digital platform utilization data and application access, 71.9% of respondents stated that digital platforms enabled them to access data and applications consistently and stably without time or location

barriers. In terms of platform suitability with work needs, 67.2% of respondents stated that digital platforms were very suitable for their daily work needs, with 18.8% stating quite suitable, and no respondents expressing unsuitability.

For the digital language politeness variable, 78.1% of respondents stated that digital platforms supported them in producing more accurate work with minimal errors. Regarding work focus and task flow, 76.6% of respondents felt more focused because workflows became more integrated thanks to digital platform use. Additionally, 78.2% of respondents stated that digital platforms helped them reduce waiting time or technical disruptions while working.

Validity and Reliability Testing

Validity Test Results

Validity testing used Pearson Product-Moment correlation between each questionnaire item and the total score. With 64 respondents and a 5% significance level, the *r*-table value was 0.246. The results showed that all questionnaire items (P01-P15) had *r*-count values > *r*-table (0.246), indicating that all items were valid. The highest correlations were found in items P10 (*r* = 0.675), P06 (*r* = 0.640), and P05 (*r* = 0.631), while the lowest correlations were in items P01 (*r* = 0.290) and P07 (*r* = 0.307), although still above the validity threshold (Sugiyono, 2016).

Using SmartPLS 4, convergent validity testing showed Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for the Digital Platform Utilization variable (X) of 0.719 (> 0.5) and for the Digital Language Politeness variable (Y) of 0.541 (> 0.5), indicating that both constructs had good convergent validity (DeLone & McLean, 2003). Loading factor analysis showed that indicators X2 (0.976), X6 (0.965), and X4 (0.911) had the highest contributions to the digital platform utilization construct, while indicators Y9 (0.944), Y4 (0.930), Y5 (0.854), and Y6 (0.851) had the highest contributions to the digital language politeness construct.

Reliability Test Results

Reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha obtained a value of 0.801, which is above the minimum reliability threshold of 0.70, indicating that the instrument had high and stable reliability in measuring the intended variable constructs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Item-total analysis also showed that most items had good

correlations with total scores, although there were two items (P01 and P07) with correlations below 0.30, but overall did not significantly decrease the alpha value.

Based on Figure 1, using SmartPLS 4, composite reliability testing showed very high consistency: Digital Platform Utilization variable (X) had Cronbach's Alpha = 0.916, rho_A = 0.936, and Composite Reliability = 0.938; while Digital Language Politeness variable (Y) had Cronbach's Alpha = 0.887, rho_A = 0.946, and Composite Reliability = 0.906. All reliability values > 0.8 indicated very good internal consistency (Petter et al., 2008).

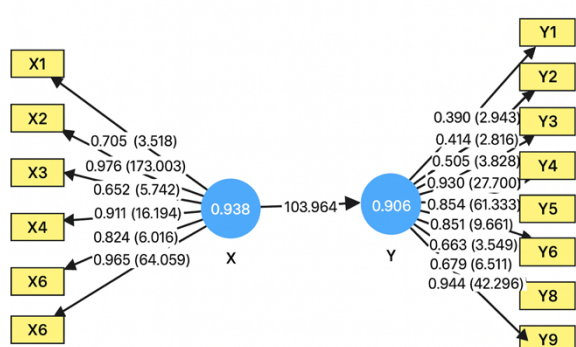


Figure 1. Bootstrapping Results

Hypothesis Testing Results

Path Coefficient Analysis

PLS-SEM analysis results showed that the Path Coefficient from the Digital Platform Utilization variable (X) to the Digital Language Politeness variable (Y) was 0.976 with t-statistics of 103.964 and p-value of 0.000. These results indicated:

1. The path coefficient of 0.976 shows a very strong and positive influence between digital platform utilization and students' digital language politeness.
2. The t-statistics value of 103.964 (> 1.96) confirms that this relationship is statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.
3. The p-value of 0.000 (< 0.05) indicates that the null hypothesis is rejected, meaning there is a significant influence.
4. Each one-unit increase in digital platform utilization will increase students' digital language politeness by 97.6%.

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Based on the analysis results, the R^2 value for variable Y was 0.953 (95.3%). This indicates that:

1. The model has very high predictive power with $R^2 = 95.3\%$.
2. Digital platform utilization can explain 95.3% of the variation in students' digital language politeness.
3. Only 4.7% of the variation in digital language politeness is explained by other factors outside the model.
4. The model is categorized as "strong" because $R^2 > 0.75$ (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

Classical Assumption Test Results

Testing of classical assumptions showed that the research model met all required requirements: (1) the normality test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov showed a significance value > 0.05, indicating that the data was normally distributed; (2) the multicollinearity test showed Tolerance values > 0.10 and VIF < 10, indicating no multicollinearity problems; (3) the heteroscedasticity test using the Glejser test showed significance values > 0.05, indicating homogeneous variance; and (4) the linearity test confirmed linear relationships between variables (Zhou & Chen, 2019).

Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Based on the PLS-SEM analysis conducted, it can be concluded that the hypothesis "Digital Platform Utilization has a positive and significant effect on Digital Language Politeness of students at SMP Bina Dharma" is accepted (valid). This is supported by:

1. Very Strong Influence: Digital platform utilization has a very strong influence on students' digital language politeness with a path coefficient of 0.976, indicating an almost perfect relationship.
2. Statistical Significance: The relationship is proven to be very significant (t-statistics = 103.964; $p < 0.001$), providing high confidence in research findings.
3. High Predictive Power: The model can predict 95.3% of the variation in students' digital language politeness through digital platform utilization, indicating that digital platform utilization is a major determinant factor.
4. Instrument Reliability: All measurement instruments show very good reliability (> 0.88), ensuring measurement result consistency.
5. Construct Validity: Both constructs have adequate convergent validity, confirming that

the indicators used appropriately measure the intended concepts.

Discussion

This study's findings demonstrate a remarkably strong positive relationship ($\beta = 0.976$, $p < 0.001$) between digital platform utilization and digital language politeness among junior high school students. This finding aligns with and extends previous research by Putri and Rahmawati (2021), who found that higher intensity of social media use without supervision led to decreased politeness in digital language. However, our results suggest a more nuanced relationship: when digital platform utilization is accompanied by proper digital literacy guidance, it can actually enhance students' digital language politeness.

The high coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.953$) indicates that digital platform utilization accounts for 95.3% of the variance in digital language politeness, which is substantially higher than what previous studies have reported. For instance, Utami (2022) found that digital literacy positively contributed to maintaining ethics and politeness in online communication, but the effect size was considerably smaller. This discrepancy may be attributed to the structured educational environment at SMP Bina Dharma, where digital platform use is integrated into the curriculum with explicit instruction on digital communication ethics.

Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study provide empirical support for Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness theory in the digital context. The very strong relationship between digital platform utilization and digital language politeness suggests that the principles of face-saving and politeness strategies are not only preserved but potentially reinforced in digital communication when students receive proper guidance. This extends Leech's (2014) politeness maxims to the digital realm, demonstrating that principles such as the tact maxim, generosity maxim, and approbation maxim remain relevant and observable in students' online interactions.

Furthermore, our results contribute to the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) proposed by Davis (1989) by demonstrating that when students perceive digital platforms as useful (perceived usefulness) and easy to use (perceived

ease of use), they are more likely to adopt appropriate communication behaviors, including linguistic politeness. The high loading factors for indicators X2 (0.976), X6 (0.965), and X4 (0.911) suggest that technological compatibility, security, and flexibility are crucial dimensions influencing how students engage with digital platforms and, consequently, how they communicate.

Practical Implications for Education

The findings have significant practical implications for educational institutions. First, the strong positive relationship between digital platform utilization and language politeness suggests that schools should not view digital platforms merely as tools for information dissemination but as environments for developing digital citizenship and communication competence. As Nasrullah (2020) argues, digital platforms serve as social interaction spaces where users share information, collaborate, and build social networks—all activities that require and can reinforce politeness norms.

Second, the high predictive power of the model ($R^2 = 0.953$) indicates that investing in proper digital platform implementation and digital literacy education can yield substantial returns in terms of students' communicative competence. Schools should therefore prioritize: (1) providing structured guidance on digital communication ethics; (2) modeling appropriate digital language use; and (3) creating opportunities for students to practice polite digital communication in authentic contexts (Syafrida & Nugroho, 2023).

Third, the loading factor results reveal that certain aspects of digital platform utilization are more strongly associated with language politeness than others. Indicators with the highest loadings (X2, X6, X4) relate to system stability, accessibility, and security—suggesting that when students can reliably and safely access digital platforms, they are more likely to engage in thoughtful, polite communication. Educational institutions should therefore ensure robust technological infrastructure as a foundation for developing digital language competence.

Comparison with Previous Research

Our findings both confirm and challenge existing literature. Similar to Sari and Hidayat (2020), we found that digital communication

styles among adolescents are influenced by trends and informal language patterns. However, unlike their study which focused on negative impacts, our results demonstrate that when digital platform use is structured and guided, it can positively influence politeness. This suggests that the relationship between digital platform use and language politeness is moderated by educational context and guidance, a factor that deserves further investigation.

The study also extends the work of Ansoriyah et al. (2023) on digital communication ethics among adolescents. While their research identified challenges in maintaining politeness in digital spaces, our findings suggest that these challenges can be addressed through systematic integration of digital platform utilization with explicit instruction in digital communication norms. The extremely high path coefficient (0.976) indicates that digital platforms, when properly leveraged, can be powerful vehicles for teaching and reinforcing linguistic politeness.

Interestingly, our findings diverge from Wulandari and Prasetyo (2021), who documented frequent violations of digital language politeness among adolescents, particularly in pragmatic aspects such as sarcastic language and criticism without empathy. The positive relationship we observed may be attributed to the specific educational interventions at SMP Bina Dharma, including digital literacy programs and explicit instruction in online communication ethics. This underscores the importance of educational context in shaping how digital platforms influence language use.

Mechanisms of Influence

Several mechanisms may explain the strong positive relationship between digital platform utilization and digital language politeness. First, as Pradipta (2022) notes, digital platforms in educational settings provide students with opportunities to practice critical thinking, innovation, and public communication ethics. When students use platforms like Instagram and TikTok to introduce their products or share their work, they learn that polite, persuasive language is essential for building positive reputation and consumer trust.

Second, digital platforms often provide immediate feedback on communication effectiveness. Students can observe how their

language choices affect responses from peers and teachers, allowing them to refine their communication strategies. This aligns with Rahman's (2021) finding that polite, friendly, and informative language in digital business communication can increase customer trust and loyalty, a lesson that is transferable to other contexts of digital interaction.

Third, the structured use of digital platforms in educational settings may promote metalinguistic awareness—consciousness of language as a system and object of reflection (Leech, 2014). When teachers guide students in analyzing effective digital communication, students develop explicit knowledge of politeness strategies that they can then apply in their own digital interactions.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Despite the strong findings, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design limits our ability to make definitive causal claims. While the path coefficient suggests a strong influence of digital platform utilization on language politeness, longitudinal research would provide stronger evidence of causal relationships and reveal how this relationship develops over time (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Second, although the sample size ($n = 64$) is adequate for PLS-SEM analysis, it represents a single school context, which may limit generalizability. SMP Bina Dharma's specific educational programs and student characteristics may not be representative of all junior high schools. Future research should replicate this study in diverse educational settings to test the robustness of the findings.

Third, while some indicators had loading factors below 0.7 (e.g., Y1-Y3), they were retained in the model. Future research should refine these indicators to ensure all dimensions of digital language politeness are accurately captured. Additionally, qualitative research could provide deeper insights into the specific mechanisms through which digital platform utilization influences language politeness.

Fourth, the model explains 95.3% of the variance in digital language politeness, leaving 4.7% unexplained. Future research should investigate additional factors that may influence digital language politeness, such as parental

mediation of digital use, peer norms, and individual differences in personality or linguistic competence.

Implications for Digital Literacy Education

The findings underscore the importance of comprehensive digital literacy education that goes beyond technical skills to encompass digital citizenship and communication ethics. As Leclercq-Vandelannoitte (2015) argues, successful BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) implementation requires not only technological infrastructure but also clear policies and user education. Our results suggest that when digital platform utilization is accompanied by explicit instruction in communication ethics, students develop both technical competence and communicative competence.

Schools should therefore develop integrated digital literacy curricula that: (1) teach students to evaluate the credibility and appropriateness of online content; (2) provide explicit instruction in digital communication norms and politeness strategies; (3) create opportunities for students to practice polite digital communication in authentic contexts; and (4) help students understand the long-term consequences of their digital communication choices for their personal and professional reputations (Miller et al., 2012; Song et al., 2016).

Moreover, the findings suggest that digital platform utilization can serve as a context for developing not only language politeness but also broader competencies such as empathy, perspective-taking, and ethical reasoning. Educational programs should therefore adopt a holistic approach to digital literacy that recognizes the interconnections among technological, linguistic, social, and ethical dimensions of digital communication.

This study demonstrates that digital platform utilization has a very strong positive influence on digital language politeness among junior high school students, with the model explaining 95.3% of the variance. The findings extend existing theories of politeness to the digital context and provide empirical evidence for the positive potential of digital platforms in developing students' communicative competence. However, the results also highlight the importance of educational context and guidance in shaping how digital platforms influence language use. Future

research should adopt longitudinal designs, investigate mediating and moderating factors, and explore the specific pedagogical strategies that maximize the benefits of digital platform utilization for developing digital language politeness.

Conclusions

This study examined the influence of digital platform utilization on digital language politeness among students at SMP Bina Dharma using a quantitative correlational design with 64 students as respondents. The findings provide strong empirical evidence for a positive and significant relationship between these constructs. Digital platform utilization demonstrates a remarkably strong positive influence on students' digital language politeness, as evidenced by a path coefficient of 0.976 (t -statistics = 103.964, $p < 0.001$). This relationship indicates that students' engagement with digital platforms enhances their ability to communicate politely in digital contexts. The model exhibits exceptional predictive power, with digital platform utilization explaining 95.3% of the variance in digital language politeness ($R^2 = 0.953$). In addition, all measurement instruments demonstrated excellent validity and reliability, with AVE values above 0.5 and Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability values exceeding 0.88. Finally, technological compatibility, flexibility, and system security were identified as the strongest dimensions influencing students' digital language politeness.

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