Farasyah: Journal of Linguistics and Language Education
E-ISSN: 3124-7008
Volume 1, Issue 2, July 2026, pp. 92-99
DOI:

Arabic Love Poetry as a Humanistic Medium in Arabic Language Learning at Islamic Boarding Schools

Zara Aqeela[1], Mahfuz Rizqi Mubarak[2]*
[1] Maktab Mahmud Yan, Kedah, Malaysia
[2] Universitas Islam Negeri Palangka Raya, Palangka Raya, Indonesia
[1]m-ikdh11473711@moe-dl.edu.my, [2]mahfuzrizqimubarak@uin-palangkaraya.ac.id
*Correspondence

Article Information:
Received: 23 December 2025
Revised: 9 July 2026
Accepted: 13 July 2026
Published: 27 July 2026

Keywords:
Arabic Love Poetry, Humanistic Language Learning, Arabic Language Education, Islamic Boarding Schools, Affective Pedagogy.

Abstract
Arabic language learning in Islamic boarding schools often emphasizes grammatical mastery and memorization, which can limit students' emotional engagement and expressive confidence. This study examines the role of Arabic love poetry as a humanistic pedagogical medium in Arabic language learning at Islamic boarding schools. Using a qualitative case study design, the research was conducted in selected *pesantren* in Indonesia. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with students and teachers, and document analysis, and analyzed using thematic analysis with data triangulation. The findings indicate that the integration of Arabic love poetry enhances students' motivation, participation, and confidence, while supporting vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and expressive language use. Poetry-based instruction also fosters emotional engagement and moral reflection, enabling learners to connect linguistic forms with personal experience and values. This study demonstrates that Arabic love poetry can function as an effective humanistic resource in Arabic language pedagogy and offers practical implications for integrating affective literary texts into religious educational contexts.

How to Cite this Article: Aqeela, Z., & Masnun, M. (2026). Arabic Love Poetry as a Humanistic Medium in Arabic Language Learning at Islamic Boarding Schools. *Farasyah: Journal of Linguistics and Language Education*, *1*(2), 92–99.

INTRODUCTION

Language learning is not merely a cognitive process but also an affective and humanistic endeavor that involves emotions, values, and personal meaning. In the context of Arabic language education, particularly within Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) (Li et al., 2022; Rachman, 2025; Zarkasi, 2025), instructional practices have traditionally emphasized grammatical mastery, memorization, and textual comprehension. While such approaches remain foundational, they often overlook the affective dimension of language learning, which plays a crucial role in learners' motivation, engagement, and expressive confidence. As a result, many students experience Arabic as an abstract and rigid subject, detached from their emotional and lived experiences.

This condition presents a significant pedagogical challenge. Despite the central position of Arabic as the language of the Qur'an and Islamic intellectual heritage, students in *pesantren* frequently struggle to develop communicative fluency and expressive competence. Prior studies have noted that language instruction dominated by structural and teacher-centered methods may limit students' opportunities to internalize language meaningfully and to use it as a medium of self-

Copyright © 2026 The Author(2)
This article is licensed under CC-BY-SA

expression. Consequently, there is an urgent need to explore alternative pedagogical approaches that integrate linguistic development with emotional engagement and character formation.

One promising yet underexplored approach is the use of Arabic love poetry (syiʿr al-ḥubb) as a medium for language learning. Arabic poetry has long been recognized as a rich source of linguistic beauty, rhetorical sophistication, and cultural values. Love poetry, in particular, carries emotional depth, aesthetic appeal, and humanistic themes such as affection, empathy, longing, and moral sensitivity. When incorporated into language learning, such literary texts have the potential to lower affective barriers, foster emotional resonance, and create meaningful contexts for language use. However, in many *pesantren* settings, poetry especially love poetry is either marginalized or treated merely as supplementary material rather than as a central pedagogical resource.

Previous research on literature-based language learning has demonstrated that literary texts can enhance vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension, and interpretive skills, while also contributing to learners' affective engagement. Acim (2025) shows that poetry can function as a humanistic and affective pedagogical medium, as demonstrated through poetry (re)translation in nursing education. His findings indicate that poetic engagement enhances emotional resonance and learning motivation, providing interdisciplinary evidence of poetry's pedagogical value beyond literary studies.

From a literary perspective, Arslan (2021) analyzes moral and natural disposition (*ṭabīʿa*) motifs in classical Arabic poetry, positioning poetry as a vehicle for ethical and emotional meaning rather than mere aesthetic expression. However, the study remains text-centered and does not extend its analysis to pedagogical applications in language learning contexts.

Computational research has approached Arabic poetry from linguistic and technological angles. Beheitt and Hmida (2022) highlight the linguistic complexity and expressive density of Arabic poetry through automatic poem generation, while Abandah et al. (2022) emphasize the role of diacritization in improving the readability and accessibility of Arabic poetic texts. Although computational in focus, both studies indirectly affirm the linguistic richness of Arabic poetry as a valuable input for learners. Habib et al. (2025) demonstrate that inspirational Arabic quotes enhance vocabulary acquisition and morphological awareness through psycholinguistic mechanisms such as emotional engagement and mnemonic reinforcement. This finding supports the present study by confirming that emotionally charged Arabic texts can function as effective humanistic media in Arabic language learning.

From an educational standpoint, Beaumont (2022) provides empirical evidence that poetry-based pedagogy enhances language development, vocabulary acquisition, and learner engagement among additional language learners through affective and embodied practices. Despite being situated in a Western ESL context, the study strongly supports poetry as a humanistic instructional medium. Agil and Mahmudah (2025) demonstrate that culturally embedded Arabic texts, such as proverbs, effectively enhance speaking fluency, confidence, and learner motivation through value-laden linguistic expressions. This finding supports the present study by confirming that humanistic Arabic literary forms can function as effective pedagogical media for developing communicative competence.

Finally, Shahriar et al. (2023) demonstrate that emotions particularly love are structurally embedded features of Arabic poetry through deep learning–based emotion classification. While situated within natural language processing, their findings confirm the high affective density of

Arabic love poetry, reinforcing its potential relevance for emotionally oriented pedagogical applications.

Despite the growing body of research on poetry from literary, computational, and pedagogical perspectives, several gaps remain evident. Existing literary studies largely focus on textual and moral analysis without extending their insights to classroom-based language learning. Computational research, while demonstrating the linguistic complexity and emotional structure of Arabic poetry, does not address how these features can be pedagogically harnessed for human learning. Pedagogical studies on poetry, on the other hand, are predominantly situated in non-Arabic and secular educational contexts, with limited attention to Arabic language learning in religious institutions. Consequently, empirical research examining Arabic love poetry as a humanistic pedagogical medium for developing Arabic language skills particularly within Islamic boarding school contexts remains scarce.

Responding to these gaps, the present study advances the field by positioning Arabic love poetry as a humanistic medium in Arabic language learning at Islamic boarding schools. Unlike prior studies that treat poetry as a literary object, a computational dataset, or a general pedagogical tool, this research integrates affective, linguistic, and educational dimensions within an authentic *pesantren* learning environment. By empirically examining how Arabic love poetry fosters emotional engagement, linguistic development, and character formation, this study contributes a novel, context-sensitive perspective to Arabic language pedagogy. It thus represents a state-of-the-art effort to bridge Arabic literary heritage with contemporary humanistic language education.

This study seeks to address this gap by examining the role of Arabic love poetry as a humanistic medium in Arabic language learning at Islamic boarding schools. Specifically, the research focuses on how the integration of love poetry influences students' engagement, motivation, and development of Arabic language skills across receptive and productive domains. The guiding research question of this study is: How does the use of Arabic love poetry function as a humanistic pedagogical medium in Arabic language learning at Islamic boarding schools? To narrow the scope, this study addresses two main sub-problems: (1) how Arabic love poetry is implemented in classroom practices, and (2) how students and teachers perceive its impact on language learning and character development.

The scope of this research is limited to selected Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia that actively integrate Arabic poetry into their language instruction. The study employs a qualitative case study design, focusing on classroom interactions, learners' experiences, and teachers' pedagogical perspectives. As a qualitative inquiry, the findings are not intended to be generalized statistically to all *pesantren* contexts but rather to provide in-depth insights into pedagogical processes and meanings. This limitation is acknowledged, while the depth of contextual understanding is emphasized as the primary strength of the study.

The significance of this research lies in its contribution to Arabic language pedagogy from a humanistic and literary perspective. By foregrounding love poetry as an affective and cultural resource, this study offers an alternative framework for integrating language learning with emotional and moral education. Practically, the findings are expected to inform teachers and curriculum developers about innovative ways to enrich Arabic language instruction in *pesantren*. Theoretically, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on affective and humanistic approaches to

language education by highlighting the pedagogical value of Arabic love poetry within religious educational contexts.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to examine the role of Arabic love poetry as a humanistic medium in Arabic language learning at Islamic boarding schools (Alam, 2020). A qualitative approach was chosen to capture learners' experiences, classroom interactions, and pedagogical meanings that cannot be adequately measured through quantitative instruments. The study was informed by humanistic language teaching, affective approaches to language learning, and literature-based pedagogy, which emphasize emotional engagement, personal meaning, and the pedagogical value of literary texts in language education.

The research was conducted in selected Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia where Arabic love poetry is actively integrated into language instruction. These sites were purposively selected based on their consistent use of poetry in Arabic classes, their emphasis on character education, and their accessibility to the researcher. The focus of the study was on classroom practices involving love poetry, students' linguistic and emotional engagement, and teachers' instructional strategies, with classroom interaction and participant experiences serving as the primary units of analysis.

Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data consisted of classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with students and Arabic language teachers (Buys et al., 2022; O'Leary, 2020), while secondary data included lesson plans, instructional materials, and selected Arabic love poetry texts used in teaching. Observations were conducted during poetry-based learning sessions, and interviews explored participants' perceptions of the linguistic, emotional, and pedagogical impacts of using love poetry.

Data analysis followed a thematic analysis procedure. Interview transcripts and observational notes were coded to identify recurring patterns related to language development, emotional engagement, and pedagogical practices. These codes were then organized into broader themes and interpreted in relation to the study's theoretical framework. To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, data triangulation was applied by comparing evidence from interviews, observations, and documents. Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process, including informed consent and participant anonymity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of Arabic Love Poetry in Classroom Practices

The findings indicate that Arabic love poetry was integrated into Arabic language instruction through guided reading, oral recitation, interpretive discussion, and creative writing activities. Teachers selected short and thematically appropriate poems that emphasized emotional expression, moral reflection, and linguistic beauty. Poetry was not treated merely as a literary supplement, but as a central instructional medium to stimulate discussion, vocabulary acquisition, and expressive language use.

Classroom observations revealed that poetry-based lessons encouraged interactive learning. Students were invited to interpret meanings, relate poetic expressions to personal experiences, and respond orally in Arabic. One teacher explained: *"Love poetry allows students to connect language with feelings. When emotions are involved, they are more willing to speak and participate."* (Teacher 1)

This instructional approach positioned poetry as both a linguistic and affective resource, enabling students to engage with Arabic beyond mechanical grammar exercises.

Beyond these observable instructional practices, the integration of Arabic love poetry also functioned as a structured pedagogical scaffold that reshaped classroom interaction patterns and learners' orientation toward the Arabic language. Teachers intentionally used poetry to mediate transitions from receptive to productive skills by sequencing activities that moved from listening and guided reading toward interpretation, discussion, and creative output. This gradual progression enabled students to internalize lexical items, rhythmic patterns, and syntactic structures within emotionally meaningful contexts, reducing the cognitive load often associated with spontaneous language production. Rather than requiring students to generate language from abstract prompts, poetry provided ready-made yet flexible linguistic models that could be adapted for personal expression. As a result, students were able to experiment with language more freely, drawing on poetic phrases to articulate feelings, opinions, and reflections. Importantly, the thematic focus on love, empathy, and moral sensitivity aligned with the ethical ethos of the *pesantren*, allowing language instruction to resonate with students' value systems. This alignment strengthened students' sense of relevance and ownership over the learning process, positioning Arabic not merely as an academic subject but as a medium for expressing inner experience and social meaning. Consequently, poetry-based instruction reconfigured the classroom from a space of grammatical transmission into a dialogic environment where linguistic practice, emotional engagement, and moral reflection were mutually reinforcing.

From a pedagogical perspective, these findings reinforce the view that emotionally meaningful texts play a crucial role in facilitating language use and participation. The observed increase in students' willingness to speak and interpret poetic language supports affective approaches to language learning, which posit that emotional engagement lowers psychological barriers and enhances communicative readiness. By embedding linguistic input within themes of love and moral reflection, Arabic love poetry functioned as an affective bridge between form and meaning, enabling learners to move beyond mechanical language practice toward expressive and value-oriented communication. This confirms previous research suggesting that literature-based and humanistic instruction fosters deeper language internalization when learners are emotionally invested in the learning content.

Students' Linguistic Engagement and Affective Responses

Interview data show that students experienced higher levels of motivation and confidence when learning Arabic through love poetry. Many students reported that poetry helped them feel emotionally connected to the language, which reduced anxiety and increased willingness to speak. *"After learning Arabic through poetry, I feel more confident speaking. The words feel closer to my heart."* (Student A) From an observational perspective, students demonstrated increased participation in oral discussions and showed improved responsiveness during listening and reading activities. Teachers also noted that students were more attentive and expressive during poetry-based lessons compared to conventional instructional sessions. *"The class atmosphere becomes more alive. Students who are usually silent begin to speak."* (Teacher 2) These findings suggest that Arabic love poetry functions as an affective catalyst, fostering emotional engagement that supports language use.

Language Development and Humanistic Learning Outcomes

Beyond affective engagement, the data indicate perceived improvements in students' Arabic language skills, particularly in vocabulary use, reading comprehension, and expressive writing. Students reported learning new lexical items and sentence structures through repeated exposure to poetic language. *"Poetry helps me understand new words and how to arrange sentences beautifully."* (Student B) Moreover, poetry-based instruction contributed to humanistic learning outcomes, including moral reflection and character awareness. Students described how poetic themes of love, empathy, and respect influenced their attitudes toward others. *"Learning poetry teaches us about love and kindness, not only language."* (Student C) These findings highlight that Arabic love poetry supports both linguistic development and character education within *pesantren* contexts.

The findings of this study demonstrate that Arabic love poetry functions as an effective humanistic medium in Arabic language learning at Islamic boarding schools by fostering emotional engagement, linguistic development, and character formation. These results align with interdisciplinary evidence suggesting that poetry enhances learning motivation and emotional resonance when integrated into instructional contexts. Acim (2025), for instance, shows that poetic engagement in professional education strengthens reflective thinking and affective involvement, supporting the present finding that emotionally charged texts facilitate deeper learner engagement beyond purely cognitive processing.

From a literary standpoint, the results corroborate Arslan's (2021) assertion that Arabic poetry embodies moral and emotional meanings rather than serving merely aesthetic purposes. While Arslan's study remains text-centered, the present research extends this insight empirically by demonstrating how such moral and emotional dimensions actively function in classroom-based language learning, particularly in shaping students' attitudes, empathy, and expressive confidence.

The linguistic richness observed in students' vocabulary growth and expressive language use is consistent with computational studies that highlight the structural and expressive density of Arabic poetry. Beheitt and Hmida (2022) emphasize the complexity of Arabic poetic language, while Abandah et al. (2022) underline the importance of accessibility and readability in engaging with poetic texts. Although these studies focus on artificial intelligence and language processing, their findings indirectly support the present study by confirming that Arabic poetry provides linguistically rich input capable of supporting language acquisition when appropriately mediated pedagogically.

The affective engagement reported by students in this study strongly resonates with educational research on poetry-based pedagogy. Beaumont (2022) demonstrates that poetry, rhythm, and embodied practices enhance language development and learner engagement through affective and experiential learning. Similarly, the present findings show that love poetry lowers affective barriers, increases participation, and encourages expressive language use, even though the context differs substantially in terms of learners' age, language, and educational setting.

Furthermore, the emotional salience of love poetry identified in this study is reinforced by Shahriar et al. (2023), who empirically confirm that love is a dominant and structurally embedded emotional category in Arabic poetry. While their work is computational rather than pedagogical, it provides strong evidence that Arabic love poetry possesses inherent affective density, which explains its pedagogical effectiveness as observed in the present study.

In addition, the findings align with prior pedagogical research employing culturally embedded Arabic texts. Agil and Mahmudah (2025) show that Arabic proverbs enhance speaking

fluency, confidence, and learner motivation through value-laden expressions, while Habib et al. (2025) demonstrate that inspirational Arabic quotes support vocabulary and morphological mastery through psycholinguistic and emotional mechanisms. Together with the present study, these findings indicate that emotionally meaningful Arabic texts whether proverbs, quotes, or poetry serve as powerful humanistic resources that bridge linguistic competence and authentic language use.

Overall, this study advances previous research by integrating literary, affective, and pedagogical perspectives within an authentic *pesantren* learning environment. Unlike prior studies that treat poetry as a literary artifact, computational dataset, or general instructional tool, the present research empirically demonstrates how Arabic love poetry operates simultaneously as a linguistic resource, an affective catalyst, and a medium of character education. In doing so, it contributes a context-sensitive and humanistic perspective to contemporary Arabic language pedagogy.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Arabic love poetry functions effectively as a humanistic medium in Arabic language learning at Islamic boarding schools by integrating emotional engagement, linguistic development, and character formation within classroom practice. The findings demonstrate that the use of love poetry enhances students' motivation, confidence, and participation, while supporting the development of vocabulary, expressive language, and reading comprehension. Beyond linguistic gains, poetry-based instruction fosters moral reflection and emotional awareness, aligning language learning with the humanistic values emphasized in *pesantren* education. By empirically situating Arabic love poetry within an affective and pedagogical framework, this study contributes to Arabic language pedagogy by offering an alternative model that bridges literary heritage and contemporary language education. The study thus extends existing research by showing that emotionally charged Arabic texts can serve not only as linguistic resources but also as catalysts for meaningful, value-oriented language learning in religious educational contexts.

REFERENCES

Abandah, G. A., Suyyagh, A. E., & Abdel-Majeed, M. R. (2022). Transfer learning and multi-phase training for accurate diacritization of Arabic poetry. *Journal of King Saud University - Computer and Information Sciences*, *34*(6), 3744–3757. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jksuci.2022.04.005

Acim, R. (2025). Poetry (re)translation and the nursing practice. *New Writing*, *22*(1), 118–134. https://doi.org/10.1080/14790726.2024.2442985

Agil, A. A., & Mahmudah, M. (2025). Arabic Proverbs as a Pedagogical Tool to Enhance Arabic Speaking Skills among University Students. *Al-Ta'rib : Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Palangka Raya*, *13*(2), 495–510. https://doi.org/10.23971/altarib.v13i2.10603

Alam, Md. K. (2020). A systematic qualitative case study: Questions, data collection, NVivo analysis and saturation. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, *16*(1), Article 1. https://doi.org/10.1108/QROM-09-2019-1825

Arslan, A. (2021). Klasik Arap Edebiyatı Kaynaklarında Ahlak-Yaratılış Karşılaştırması ve Şiirde Bunun Bir Motif Olarak Kullanılmasına Dair Bir Alan Taraması. *Cumhuriyet İlahiyat Dergisi*, *25*(2), 941–956. https://doi.org/10.18505/cuid.986787

Beaumont, N. E. (2022). Poetry and Motion: Rhythm, Rhyme and Embodiment as Oral Literacy Pedagogy for Young Additional Language Learners. *Education Sciences*, *12*(12), 905. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci12120905

Beheitt, M. E. G., & Ben Haj Hmida, M. (2022). Automatic Arabic Poem Generation with GPT-2: *Proceedings of the 14th International Conference on Agents and Artificial Intelligence*, 366–374. https://doi.org/10.5220/0010847100003116

Buys, T., Casteleijn, D., Heyns, T., & Untiedt, H. (2022). A Reflexive Lens on Preparing and Conducting Semi-structured Interviews with Academic Colleagues. *Qualitative Health Research*, *32*(13), 2030–2039. https://doi.org/10.1177/10497323221130832

Habib, Moh. T., Masnun, M., Mahmudah, M., & Syakur, S. A. (2025). A Psycholinguistic Approach to Enhancing Arabic Vocabulary and Morphology Mastery Through Inspirational Quotes. *An Nabighoh*, *27*(1), 1–24. https://doi.org/10.32332/an-nabighoh.v27i1.1-24

Li, J., King, R. B., & Wang, C. (2022). Profiles of motivation and engagement in foreign language learning: Associations with emotional factors, academic achievement, and demographic features. *System*, *108*, 102820. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2022.102820

O'Leary, M. (2020). *Classroom Observation: A Guide to the Effective Observation of Teaching and Learning* (2nd edn). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315630243

Rachman, L. (2025). Teaching Mahfuzat as a Medium for Internalizing Islamic Values and Ethical Conduct. *Al-Munawwarah: Journal of Islamic Education*, *1*(2), 141–152. https://doi.org/10.38073/almunawwarah.v1i2.3520

Shahriar, S., Al Roken, N., & Zualkernan, I. (2023). Classification of Arabic Poetry Emotions Using Deep Learning. *Computers*, *12*(5), 89. https://doi.org/10.3390/computers12050089

Zarkasi, L. (2025). Enhancing Arabic Speaking Skills through Short-Phrase Memorization in an Islamic Boarding School. *Al-Muhawaroh: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab*, *2*(1), 70–81. https://doi.org/10.38073/almuhawaroh.v2i1.3670