

Reconceptualizing Arabic Language Education for Pluralism and Humanization through the L-STEAMS Framework

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ABSTRACT

Arabic language education in contemporary Islamic higher education faces increasing demands to remain relevant within plural societies and rapidly changing social contexts. This article aims to analyze the role of university students in value-based Arabic language learning grounded in pluralism and humanization by examining the thought of Islamic educational scholars within the L-STEAMS framework (Law, Science, Technology/Engineering, Economic, Art, Mathematics, and Spiritual). This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach using library research. Data were derived from classical and contemporary Islamic educational literature, Arabic language pedagogy studies, and research on pluralism, humanization, and integrative education. The data were analyzed through content analysis and interpretative-critical synthesis. The findings indicate that Arabic language education needs to be reoriented from linguistic formalism toward a humanistic pedagogy integrating values of justice, tolerance, and social responsibility. University students, particularly in community engagement contexts such as *Kuliah Kerja Nyata* (KKN), function as integrative agents connecting language learning with social realities. The L-STEAMS framework offers a holistic model that links legal-ethical awareness, scientific literacy, economic empowerment, cultural creativity, instructional design, and spiritual values within Arabic language learning. This article contributes conceptually by proposing a pluralism-oriented, humanistic, and integrative model for Arabic language education as a future direction for Islamic higher education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Arabic language education has long occupied a central position within Islamic educational institutions, functioning not only as a linguistic medium but also as a gateway to religious knowledge, intellectual traditions, and cultural heritage. In many Islamic higher education contexts, Arabic is primarily taught to facilitate access to classical texts and religious sources. However, in contemporary settings characterized by globalization, digital transformation, and increasing social diversity, the role of Arabic language education is undergoing significant re-evaluation. Traditional approaches that

emphasize grammatical mastery and textual analysis are increasingly considered insufficient to address the complex social realities faced by modern learners (Alghazali & Alzyoudi, 2025; Supriyadi, Julia, Gunara, Rahman, & Djumaydillayevich, 2026).

In practice, Arabic language instruction often remains dominated by form-focused and teacher-centered pedagogies, which prioritize linguistic accuracy over communicative competence and social relevance. This tendency contributes to students' perception of Arabic as a difficult and abstract subject, disconnected from their everyday experiences and societal contexts. As a result, the potential of Arabic language education as a transformative tool for developing critical thinking, ethical awareness, and intercultural understanding remains largely underutilized. This condition reflects what some scholars describe as "logocentrism" and "school-centrism" in Islamic education, where knowledge is confined within formal structures and detached from real-life applications (Asnawi & Zuhdi, 2025).

Recent developments in educational theory highlight the importance of adopting more humanistic and learner-centered approaches to language education. Humanistic pedagogy emphasizes the holistic development of learners, integrating cognitive, emotional, and ethical dimensions of learning (Rehman, Farooq, & Ismail, 2023). In this perspective, language is not merely a system of rules but a medium through which individuals construct meaning, express identity, and engage with others. Freire (1970) further argues that education should function as a process of humanization, enabling learners to critically reflect on their social realities and actively participate in transforming them. Within this framework, Arabic language education has the potential to contribute not only to linguistic competence but also to the formation of socially responsible and ethically conscious individuals.

In plural and multicultural societies, education is increasingly expected to promote values such as tolerance, dialogue, and mutual respect. Religious education, in particular, plays a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes toward diversity and social coexistence. Studies have shown that integrating pluralistic values into educational practices can foster inclusive mindsets and reduce social tensions (Montero, 2023; Felsenthal & Agbaria, 2026). However, the integration of such values into Arabic language education remains limited. Most existing studies focus on methodological innovations or technological integration without addressing the deeper epistemological transformation required to align language learning with pluralistic and humanistic objectives (Susanto, Muafiah, Desrani, Ritonga, & Hakim, 2022; Warisno, Anshori, Hidayah, & Dwianto, 2025).

At the same time, higher education institutions are increasingly tasked with preparing graduates who are capable of responding to real-world challenges. This expectation extends beyond academic achievement to include the development of social responsibility, critical thinking, and community engagement. In the context of Islamic higher education in Indonesia, programs such as community service initiatives provide opportunities for students to interact with diverse social environments and apply their knowledge in practical settings (Singh, Bhatt, Singh, & Pareek, 2023; Militante et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the connection between Arabic language learning and such experiential learning contexts remains underexplored. There is a lack of conceptual models that position Arabic as a medium for engaging with social issues, promoting pluralism, and fostering humanistic values.

In response to these challenges, interdisciplinary approaches to education have gained increasing attention. The integration of multiple domains of knowledge is considered essential for addressing complex societal problems that cannot be solved through a single disciplinary perspective. In Islamic education, efforts to integrate religious and scientific knowledge have been widely discussed, particularly in relation to curriculum reform and institutional transformation (Irham, 2025; Masdin, Ilham, Mulu, Nurfaidah, & Samrin, 2025). However, the application of interdisciplinary frameworks to Arabic language education is still limited, especially in terms of connecting linguistic learning with ethical, social, and cultural dimensions.

One emerging framework that offers a holistic approach to interdisciplinary learning is L-STEAMS, which integrates Law, Science, Technology/Engineering, Economics, Art, Mathematics, and Spiritual dimensions. This framework extends the conventional STEAM model by incorporating legal, ethical, and spiritual components, thereby aligning educational practices with broader humanistic and societal goals. Within the context of Arabic language education, L-STEAMS provides a conceptual foundation for linking language learning with real-world issues, such as social justice, economic empowerment,

technological innovation, and cultural expression. Despite its potential, the application of L-STEAMS in Arabic language pedagogy has not been systematically examined in the literature, creating a significant research gap.

Furthermore, recent studies in Islamic education emphasize the importance of integrating values-based approaches into teaching and learning processes. The concept of *fiqh al-ijtima'iyah*, for instance, highlights the role of social values in shaping educational practices and curriculum development (Adiyono & Sholeh, 2025). Similarly, research on leadership in Islamic higher education underscores the importance of relational and participatory approaches in fostering meaningful learning experiences (Aedi & Gorni, 2025). These perspectives suggest that education should not be limited to knowledge transmission but should also aim to cultivate ethical awareness and social responsibility. However, the extent to which these ideas can be integrated into Arabic language education remains underexplored.

Given these gaps, there is a need for a comprehensive and systematic examination of how Arabic language education can be reconceptualized to address contemporary challenges. This study seeks to fill this gap by proposing a new conceptual model that integrates humanistic values, pluralistic perspectives, and interdisciplinary learning within the framework of Arabic language education. To achieve this objective, this study employs a systematic literature review based on PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021). By synthesizing relevant studies published between 2020 and 2025, this research aims to provide a robust and evidence-based understanding of current trends, challenges, and opportunities in Arabic language education.

The novelty of this study lies in three main contributions. First, it reconceptualizes Arabic language education as a humanistic and value-oriented pedagogical practice that goes beyond linguistic competence. Second, it positions university students as active agents who bridge the gap between language learning and social engagement. Third, it introduces L-STEAMS as a comprehensive framework for integrating linguistic, ethical, and interdisciplinary dimensions in Arabic language education. Through these contributions, this study is expected to provide theoretical and practical implications for curriculum development, instructional design, and future research in the field of Arabic language education within plural and multicultural contexts.

2. METHODS

This study employed a systematic literature review (SLR) design, guided by the PRISMA 2020 framework to ensure methodological transparency, reproducibility, and analytical rigor (Page et al., 2021). The use of systematic review methodology is widely recognized as a robust approach for synthesizing scholarly evidence across disciplines (Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2016; Snyder, 2019). The use of PRISMA is particularly appropriate for conceptual and integrative studies that aim to synthesize scholarly evidence across multiple domains, as it provides a structured procedure for identifying, screening, evaluating, and selecting relevant literature. Systematic literature reviews are designed to provide structured, transparent, and replicable procedures for evidence synthesis (Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003; Carrera-Rivera, Ochoa, Larrinaga, & Lasa, 2022). In this study, PRISMA was applied to systematically examine academic publications, following the four stages of identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, Altman, & Group, 2009; Page et al., 2021).

The review process followed four sequential stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. These stages were implemented rigorously to minimize bias and ensure that only high-quality and relevant studies were included in the final synthesis. The literature search was conducted across several major academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, and Google Scholar, to ensure comprehensive coverage of international peer-reviewed publications. The search was limited to studies published between January 2020 and December 2025 to maintain the relevance and currency of the findings.

The search strategy was developed using a combination of keywords and Boolean operators, including "Arabic language education," "Islamic pedagogy," "pluralism in education," "humanistic education," "student engagement," "service learning," and "interdisciplinary education." These keywords were combined using AND and OR operators to refine the search and capture studies that intersected across multiple conceptual domains. Only peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers

indexed in Scopus, and reputable academic publications with accessible full texts were considered. The search strategy was developed using established systematic review protocols to ensure comprehensiveness and reproducibility (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006; Booth et al., 2016).

2.1 Identification Stage

In the identification stage, a total of 1,248 records were retrieved from the selected databases. Specifically, 612 records were obtained from Scopus, 238 from Web of Science, 176 from ERIC, and 222 from Google Scholar. Additional records were not identified from other sources to maintain methodological consistency and database reliability.

Table 1. Identification of Records from Databases (2020–2025)

Source Database	Records Retrieved
Scopus	612
Web of Science	238
ERIC	176
Google Scholar	222
Total	1,248

2.2 Screening Stage

In the screening stage, duplicate records were first removed using reference management software, resulting in the exclusion of 214 duplicate entries. The remaining 1,034 records were then screened based on titles and abstracts to assess their relevance to the research focus. During this process, 742 records were excluded due to lack of relevance, including studies unrelated to Arabic language education, those focusing solely on linguistic theory without pedagogical implications, and studies outside the context of education or social values. The screening process followed best practices in systematic review methodology, including duplicate removal and title–abstract evaluation (Polanin, Pigott, Espelage, & Grot peter, 2019; Carrera-Rivera et al., 2022).

Table 2. Screening Process

Screening Criteria	Number of Records
Records after duplicates removed	1.034
Records excluded (title/abstract)	742
Records retained for full-text review	292

2.3 Eligibility Stage

In the eligibility stage, full-text articles were assessed in detail to determine their suitability for inclusion. Of the 292 articles retrieved for full-text review, 198 were excluded based on predefined criteria. The exclusion reasons included lack of theoretical relevance (78 articles), insufficient methodological clarity (54 articles), absence of peer-review status (32 articles), and limited accessibility or incomplete data (34 articles). Full-text eligibility assessment was conducted based on predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure methodological rigor and relevance (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006).

Table 3. Eligibility Assessment

Criteria	Number of Articles
Full-text articles assessed	292
Excluded due to irrelevance	78
Excluded due to methodological weakness	54
Excluded due to non-peer-reviewed status	32
Excluded due to inaccessible/incomplete data	34
Eligible studies	94

2.4 Inclusion Stage

In the final inclusion stage, 94 studies met all inclusion criteria and were incorporated into the systematic review. These studies represent high-quality scholarly works that contribute significantly to the understanding of Arabic language education within pluralistic, humanistic, and interdisciplinary contexts. The selected articles include empirical studies, theoretical analyses, and conceptual frameworks that align with the objectives of this research.

Table 4. Final Included Studies

Category	Number of Studies
Empirical studies	41
Conceptual/theoretical studies	33
Review articles	20
Total included studies	94

2.5 Data Analysis Procedure

The selected studies were analyzed using a combination of qualitative content analysis and interpretative-critical synthesis. Content analysis was employed to identify recurring themes, conceptual patterns, and theoretical orientations related to humanistic pedagogy, pluralism, student agency, and interdisciplinary integration. This analytical approach enabled the systematic categorization of findings across diverse sources while maintaining conceptual coherence.

Interpretative-critical analysis was subsequently applied to examine the relationships among identified themes and to construct a synthesized framework linking Arabic language education with the L-STEAMS model. This approach allowed for deeper theoretical engagement and facilitated the development of a coherent conceptual model that integrates ethical, social, and cognitive dimensions of learning.

To ensure analytical rigor, triangulation was conducted by comparing findings across different types of sources, including empirical studies, theoretical papers, and review articles. Transparency was maintained by clearly documenting each stage of the PRISMA process, including selection criteria, exclusion reasons, and analytical procedures. Although the study does not aim for statistical generalization, its strength lies in the depth of conceptual synthesis and the robustness of its systematic review process. The synthesis process followed interpretative and thematic approaches commonly used in systematic reviews to generate conceptual insights (Tranfield et al., 2003; Snyder, 2019).

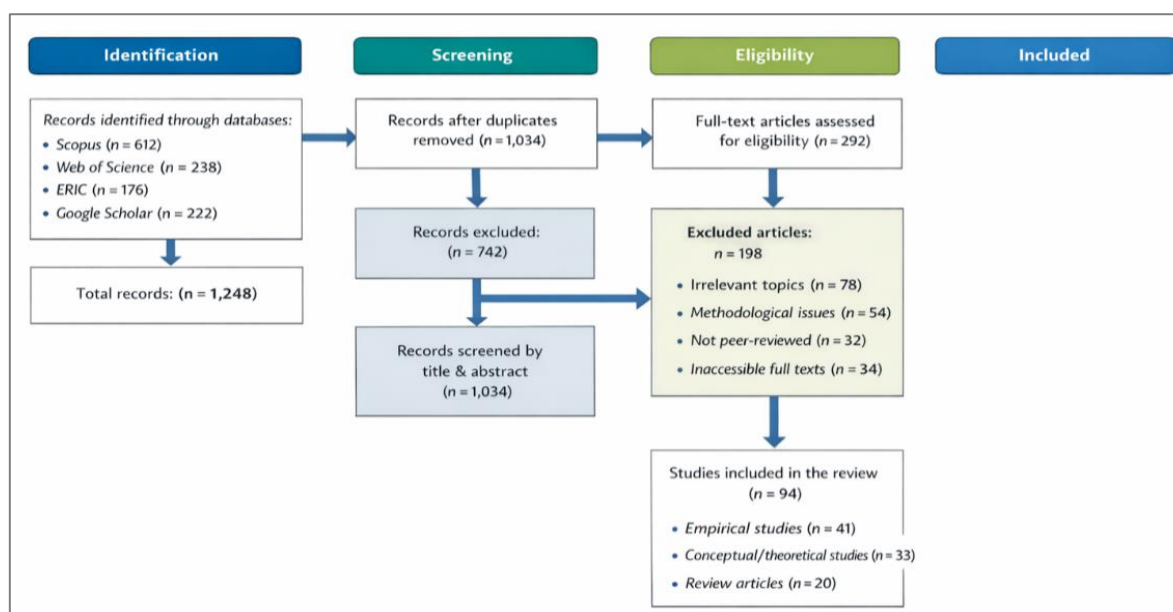


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram of the study selection process for Arabic language education, pluralism, and L-STEAMS framework (2020–2025)

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

This section presents the findings of the systematic literature review and provides an in-depth discussion of the results. The analysis focuses on major themes emerging from the selected studies, including humanistic pedagogy, pluralism in Arabic language education, student engagement, and interdisciplinary integration through the L-STEAMS framework.

3.1.1 Data-Based Thematic Distribution of Included Studies

A total of 94 studies were included in this review, consisting of 41 empirical studies, 33 conceptual or theoretical studies, and 20 review articles. The analysis shows that the most frequently discussed theme is humanistic pedagogy, followed by pluralism and social values, interdisciplinary integration, student engagement, and identity formation. This distribution indicates that although the literature increasingly recognizes the need to reorient Arabic language education toward social relevance and ethical responsiveness, the development of an integrative model remains fragmented.

The thematic mapping also demonstrates that the literature is unevenly distributed. Humanistic pedagogy is the most established theme, whereas studies explicitly connecting Arabic language education with L-STEAMS dimensions remain limited. Likewise, student engagement is often discussed in relation to experiential learning, but less frequently connected to broader curricular transformation. These patterns suggest that current scholarship still tends to address Arabic language education in partial rather than integrative ways.

Table 5 summarizes the thematic distribution of the 94 included studies.

Table 5. Thematic Distribution of Included Studies

Theme	Number of Studies	Dominant Study Type	Main Focus
Humanistic pedagogy	38	Conceptual and empirical	Learner-centered pedagogy, ethics, motivation
Pluralism and social values	29	Conceptual and review	Tolerance, dialogue, diversity, justice
Student engagement and experiential learning	21	Empirical	Service-learning, community engagement, active learning
Interdisciplinary integration	26	Conceptual and review	Integration of knowledge domains, curriculum innovation
Identity formation and humanization	18	Conceptual and empirical	Religious identity, dialogical learning, inclusive selfhood

The table indicates that the literature pays strongest attention to humanistic pedagogy, while the integration of interdisciplinary and pluralistic approaches remains less systematically developed. This confirms the need for a conceptual framework that connects these themes more coherently.

3.1.2 Humanistic Orientation in Arabic Language Education

The findings indicate a significant paradigm shift from traditional grammar-oriented approaches toward more humanistic models of Arabic language education. Historically, Arabic instruction has been dominated by structural and text-centered pedagogies, emphasizing linguistic accuracy and mastery of grammatical rules over meaning-making and social relevance. While such approaches have contributed to the preservation of linguistic rigor, they often fail to engage learners in meaningful and contextualized language use. Consequently, Arabic language learning is frequently perceived as abstract, difficult, and disconnected from students' lived experiences.

Recent studies, however, demonstrate a growing emphasis on integrating affective and ethical dimensions into language learning processes. This transformation reflects a broader shift in educational paradigms, where language learning is increasingly understood as a socially embedded and value-oriented process rather than merely a cognitive activity (Nguyen & Doan, 2026). In this perspective, Arabic language education is redefined as a pedagogical space that facilitates not only linguistic competence but also the development of empathy, responsibility, and ethical awareness.

Humanistic pedagogy provides a theoretical foundation for this transformation by emphasizing the holistic development of learners, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and moral dimensions. Within this framework, learners are viewed as active subjects who construct meaning through interaction, reflection, and experience, rather than passive recipients of knowledge. The role of the teacher shifts from knowledge transmitter to facilitator of learning, creating a dialogical and participatory environment that encourages student autonomy and critical engagement. This perspective aligns with the broader principles of learner-centered education, which prioritize individual growth, intrinsic motivation, and self-actualization.

The application of humanistic principles in Arabic language education has been shown to positively influence students' motivation and learning independence. For instance, recent literature indicates that humanistic approaches contribute to the development of learner autonomy and intrinsic motivation, which are essential for sustained language acquisition (Asfihani & Munidzar, 2025). By fostering a supportive and meaningful learning environment, these approaches enable students to engage more actively with the language and to perceive it as relevant to their personal and social contexts.

Moreover, the integration of humanistic pedagogy in language education is closely مرتبط related to critical pedagogy, particularly as conceptualized by Paulo Freire. Freire's notion of education as a process of humanization emphasizes the importance of dialogue, critical reflection, and social transformation. In contrast to the "banking model" of education, where knowledge is transmitted unilaterally from teacher to student, Freire advocates for a problem-posing approach that encourages learners to critically engage with their social realities and to develop a sense of agency (Freire, 1970). This approach positions language learning as a means of empowerment, enabling students to articulate their experiences, question dominant narratives, and participate in social change.

In the context of language education, critical pedagogy has been widely recognized as a powerful framework for humanizing learning processes. It emphasizes the role of language as a tool for developing critical consciousness, cultural awareness, and social responsibility. Recent research in foreign language education indicates that critical and humanistic pedagogies can create inclusive and empowering learning environments that promote empathy, mutual respect, and intercultural understanding (Abad-Céleri, Fajardo-Dack, & Argudo-Serrano, 2025).

However, despite its theoretical significance, the implementation of humanistic and critical approaches in Arabic language education remains limited and uneven. Many educational institutions continue to rely on traditional pedagogical models that prioritize memorization and structural analysis over critical engagement and experiential learning. This condition reflects what has been described as logocentrism and institutional rigidity in Islamic education, where knowledge is confined within formal structures and detached from real-world applications (Asnawi & Zuhdi, 2025). Such constraints hinder the adoption of innovative and learner-centered approaches, thereby limiting the transformative potential of Arabic language education.

Furthermore, the integration of humanistic pedagogy requires not only changes in instructional strategies but also a reorientation of educational goals and epistemological assumptions. Language learning must be reconceptualized as a multidimensional process that involves cognitive, affective, and social components. This implies that curriculum design should incorporate activities that promote reflection, dialogue, and real-world engagement, rather than focusing solely on grammatical accuracy and textual analysis.

Another important implication of this transformation is the redefinition of the role of language in identity formation. Arabic, as a language closely associated with Islamic tradition and culture, carries significant symbolic and ideological meanings. Within a humanistic framework, language learning becomes a means of negotiating identity, enabling learners to connect their linguistic competence with their personal, cultural, and social identities. This process is particularly relevant in pluralistic societies, where individuals are required to navigate multiple cultural and ideological contexts.

Nevertheless, this dual function of language—as a tool for identity formation and as a medium for social interaction—raises important pedagogical challenges. Educators must balance the need to preserve linguistic and cultural authenticity with the imperative to promote openness, inclusivity, and

critical thinking. Humanistic pedagogy offers a potential solution by emphasizing dialogue, mutual respect, and the recognition of diversity as essential components of the learning process.

In conclusion, the findings of this study suggest that the adoption of a humanistic orientation in Arabic language education represents a critical step toward enhancing its relevance and effectiveness in contemporary contexts. By integrating cognitive, emotional, and ethical dimensions of learning, humanistic pedagogy provides a comprehensive framework for transforming language education into a meaningful and socially responsive practice. However, the successful implementation of this approach requires systemic changes in curriculum design, teacher training, and institutional support. Without such changes, the shift toward humanistic pedagogy may remain superficial and limited in its impact.

3.1.3 Pluralism and Social Values in Arabic Language Learning

Another key finding of this study is the increasingly significant role of Arabic language education in promoting pluralism and social values within contemporary educational contexts. In multicultural and plural societies, education is no longer confined to the transmission of knowledge but is also expected to foster tolerance, dialogue, and mutual understanding among diverse groups. Language learning, as a socially situated practice, plays a crucial role in shaping learners' attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives toward diversity. Within this framework, Arabic language education possesses substantial potential to function as a medium for cultivating inclusive and socially responsive mindsets.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, language is not merely a neutral system of communication but a carrier of cultural meanings, ideological positions, and social identities. Therefore, the process of learning a language inherently involves engagement with the values and worldviews embedded within it. In the case of Arabic, which is deeply intertwined with Islamic intellectual and cultural traditions, language learning can serve as a powerful tool for introducing students to ethical principles such as justice, compassion, and coexistence. However, this potential has not been fully realized in many instructional settings, where Arabic language teaching remains focused primarily on formal linguistic competence rather than its broader social and ethical implications.

Previous studies have emphasized the importance of integrating pluralistic values into educational practices, particularly within religious education contexts. Montero (2023) argues that the inclusion of diversity as a core value in religious education can contribute to the development of more inclusive and democratic societies. Similarly, Felsenthal & Agbaria (2026) highlight the role of critical Islamic education in promoting justice-oriented and pluralistic perspectives. These findings suggest that education, including language education, can serve as a platform for fostering dialogue and understanding across cultural and ideological differences.

In the context of Arabic language education, the integration of pluralism involves more than simply introducing diverse content; it requires a fundamental reorientation of pedagogical practices. Instruction should encourage students to critically engage with texts, interpret meanings within diverse contexts, and reflect on the ethical implications of language use. This approach aligns with the broader principles of critical pedagogy, which emphasize dialogue, reflexivity, and the recognition of multiple perspectives (Freire, 1970). Through such practices, Arabic language classrooms can become spaces for meaningful interaction and mutual learning rather than mere sites of knowledge transmission.

Despite this potential, the findings of this study indicate that the integration of pluralistic values into Arabic language education remains limited and often implicit. Many existing studies focus on technological innovation, such as the use of digital tools and online platforms, or on instructional strategies aimed at improving linguistic proficiency (Susanto et al., 2022). While these approaches are important, they tend to overlook the ethical and social dimensions of learning. As a result, the transformative potential of Arabic language education as a medium for promoting pluralism is not fully realized.

This limitation can be partly attributed to the persistence of traditional educational paradigms that prioritize standardized knowledge and formal assessment over critical engagement and social relevance. In such contexts, language learning is often reduced to the mastery of vocabulary and grammar, with little attention given to its role in shaping social attitudes and values. Furthermore,

institutional constraints, such as rigid curricula and limited teacher training, may hinder the implementation of more innovative and value-oriented approaches.

To address this gap, the concept of *fiqh al-ijtima'iyah* offers a relevant and contextually grounded framework for integrating social values into Arabic language education. As discussed by Adiyono and Sholeh (2025), this approach emphasizes the importance of understanding Islamic teachings within their social contexts and highlights the role of education in addressing contemporary societal challenges. By incorporating principles of social justice, community engagement, and contextual interpretation, *fiqh al-ijtima'iyah* provides a foundation for developing more inclusive and socially responsive educational practices.

Within this framework, Arabic language learning can be positioned as a medium for exploring real-world issues and fostering critical awareness among students. For example, language activities can be designed to engage students in discussions about social inequality, environmental sustainability, and intercultural dialogue, using authentic texts and contexts. Such approaches not only enhance linguistic competence but also promote critical thinking and ethical reflection.

Moreover, the integration of pluralistic values in Arabic language education is closely related to the development of global citizenship competencies. In an increasingly interconnected world, students are expected to possess the ability to communicate across cultural boundaries, understand diverse perspectives, and contribute to the common good. Research by Militante et al. (2025) demonstrates that pedagogical approaches such as service-learning can effectively enhance students' global citizenship skills by connecting academic learning with community engagement. When applied to Arabic language education, such approaches can help bridge the gap between classroom learning and social practice.

Another important dimension of pluralism in language education is the negotiation of identity. As learners engage with the Arabic language, they encounter not only linguistic structures but also cultural and religious meanings that may influence their sense of identity. In plural societies, this process of identity formation can be complex, as students must navigate multiple cultural and ideological frameworks. Rather than viewing this complexity as a challenge, it can be seen as an opportunity for developing more nuanced and inclusive identities.

In this regard, Arabic language education can play a dual role: strengthening students' connection to their cultural and religious heritage while also fostering openness to diversity and difference. This dual function requires pedagogical approaches that emphasize dialogue, critical reflection, and mutual respect. By creating learning environments that value diversity and encourage the exchange of ideas, educators can support students in developing balanced and inclusive perspectives.

Nevertheless, the implementation of pluralistic approaches in Arabic language education requires significant changes at multiple levels. At the curricular level, there is a need to incorporate themes related to social values, diversity, and global issues into language learning materials. At the pedagogical level, teachers need to adopt more interactive and reflective teaching strategies that encourage student participation and critical thinking. At the institutional level, support is needed in the form of training, resources, and policy frameworks that promote innovation and flexibility in teaching and learning.

In conclusion, the findings of this study underscore the importance of integrating pluralism and social values into Arabic language education as a means of enhancing its relevance and impact in contemporary contexts. While significant progress has been made, particularly in recognizing the role of language as a social and cultural practice, much work remains to be done in translating these insights into concrete pedagogical practices. By adopting a more intentional and systematic approach to integrating pluralistic values, Arabic language education can contribute to the development of more inclusive, ethical, and socially engaged learners.

3.1.4 Student Engagement and Experiential Learning

The findings further highlight the evolving role of students as active agents in the learning process, marking a significant departure from traditional teacher-centered paradigms. In contemporary educational theory, students are no longer viewed as passive recipients of knowledge but as participants who actively construct meaning through interaction, reflection, and experience. This shift

is particularly relevant in language education, where meaningful engagement with real-world contexts is essential for developing communicative competence and critical awareness.

Experiential learning approaches, including community engagement and service-learning, have been widely recognized as effective strategies for enhancing students' cognitive and social development. These approaches emphasize learning through direct experience, enabling students to connect theoretical knowledge with practical applications. In higher education contexts, experiential learning has been shown to improve critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and social responsibility (Kolb, 2015; Singh et al., 2023). Furthermore, service-learning initiatives have been found to foster global citizenship competencies, including intercultural communication, empathy, and ethical awareness (Militante et al., 2025).

In the context of Arabic language education, the integration of experiential learning offers significant potential for transforming traditional instructional practices. By engaging students in real-world activities such as community service, intercultural dialogue, and social advocacy, language learning can be contextualized within meaningful social interactions. This approach aligns with communicative language teaching principles, which emphasize the use of language as a tool for authentic communication rather than as an abstract system of rules.

However, the findings of this study indicate that the connection between Arabic language learning and experiential practices remains underdeveloped. In many cases, language courses are designed as isolated academic subjects, focusing primarily on linguistic structures without meaningful integration into broader social contexts. This separation limits the transformative potential of language education and reduces opportunities for students to apply their knowledge in real-life situations.

One of the key challenges in integrating experiential learning into Arabic language education is the lack of a coherent pedagogical framework that connects linguistic objectives with social engagement. While programs such as community-based learning and fieldwork exist in many Islamic higher education institutions, they are often not systematically linked to language curricula. As a result, the potential for integrating language learning with social practice remains largely untapped.

Addressing this challenge requires a reorientation of curriculum design to incorporate experiential components as an integral part of language learning. For example, students can be involved in projects that require them to use Arabic in authentic contexts, such as translating community documents, conducting interviews, or participating in cross-cultural exchanges. Such activities not only enhance linguistic competence but also promote critical thinking and social awareness.

Moreover, the role of the instructor is crucial in facilitating experiential learning. Teachers must act as facilitators who guide students in reflecting on their experiences, connecting them with theoretical concepts, and developing meaningful insights. This approach requires a shift from traditional instructional methods toward more flexible and student-centered pedagogies.

In conclusion, the integration of student engagement and experiential learning represents a critical dimension in the transformation of Arabic language education. By linking language learning with real-world contexts, educators can enhance both the relevance and impact of their instructional practices. However, achieving this integration requires systemic changes in curriculum design, pedagogical approaches, and institutional support.

3.1.5 Interdisciplinary Integration through the L-STEAMS Framework

A major contribution of this study is the identification of the L-STEAMS framework as a comprehensive model for integrating interdisciplinary dimensions into Arabic language education. Unlike traditional language teaching models that operate within disciplinary boundaries, L-STEAMS emphasizes the interconnectedness of knowledge domains, including Law, Science, Technology/Engineering, Economics, Arts, Mathematics, and Spirituality. This integrative approach reflects contemporary educational trends that prioritize holistic and interdisciplinary learning as essential for addressing complex societal challenges.

The application of interdisciplinary frameworks in education has gained increasing attention in recent years, particularly in response to the growing complexity of global issues. In the context of Islamic higher education, efforts to integrate religious and scientific knowledge have been widely discussed as part of broader curriculum reform initiatives (Irham, 2025; Masdin et al., 2025). These

efforts aim to overcome the dichotomy between religious and secular knowledge, promoting a more unified and coherent understanding of education.

Within this context, the L-STEAMS framework offers a novel approach to Arabic language education by positioning language learning as a bridge between multiple domains of knowledge. For instance, students can explore legal texts (Law), scientific discourse (Science), digital communication (Technology), economic terminology (Economics), artistic expression (Arts), and spiritual reflection (Spirituality) through the medium of Arabic. Such integration enhances the relevance of language learning by connecting it with real-world issues and interdisciplinary perspectives.

Furthermore, interdisciplinary learning has been shown to enhance students' problem-solving abilities, creativity, and critical thinking skills (Repko & Szostak, 2020). By engaging with diverse knowledge domains, students develop a more comprehensive understanding of complex phenomena and are better equipped to address real-world challenges. In the context of Arabic language education, this implies that language learning can serve as a platform for interdisciplinary inquiry and innovation.

However, the implementation of interdisciplinary frameworks such as L-STEAMS presents several challenges. One of the primary obstacles is the lack of teacher preparedness for interdisciplinary teaching. Many educators are trained within specific disciplinary frameworks and may lack the knowledge and skills required to integrate multiple domains effectively. Additionally, institutional constraints, such as rigid curricula and standardized assessment systems, may limit the flexibility needed to implement interdisciplinary approaches (Susanto et al., 2022).

Another challenge is the need for appropriate learning materials and resources that support interdisciplinary integration. Traditional textbooks often focus on linguistic structures and do not provide opportunities for exploring broader themes and contexts. Therefore, curriculum developers must design innovative materials that incorporate interdisciplinary content while maintaining linguistic rigor.

Despite these challenges, the L-STEAMS framework offers significant potential for transforming Arabic language education into a more dynamic and relevant field. By integrating linguistic, cognitive, and ethical dimensions, this framework aligns with the broader goals of education in preparing students to navigate complex and interconnected global environments.

Table 6. Operationalization of the L-STEAMS Framework in Arabic Language Education

L-STEAMS Component	Definition in Arabic Language Education	Pedagogical Indicators	Example Learning Activities	Curriculum Implications
Law	Integration of legal-ethical discourse and justice-related themes in Arabic learning	Students interpret ethical/legal texts; discuss fairness, rights, and responsibility	Reading and discussing Arabic texts on justice, fiqh al-ijtima'iyah, and civic ethics	Arabic curriculum should include socio-legal discourse and ethical literacy
Science	Use of scientific themes and inquiry-based texts in Arabic learning	Students engage with Arabic texts on environment, health, and science	Vocabulary building through environmental texts; summarizing Arabic science articles	Curriculum should broaden text genres beyond religious and literary materials
Technology	Integration of digital tools and media in Arabic language instruction	Students use digital platforms for Arabic communication and production	Creating Arabic podcasts, digital posters, videos, or discussion forums	Curriculum should include digital Arabic literacy and multimodal tasks
Engineering	Application of problem-solving and design thinking to Arabic learning tasks	Students solve authentic communicative problems through structured projects	Designing Arabic learning modules, campaigns, or community communication materials	Curriculum should support project-based and problem-based learning
Arts	Use of aesthetic, literary, and cultural	Students engage creatively with Arabic	Writing Arabic poems, performing	Curriculum should integrate creativity

	expression in Arabic learning	poetry, storytelling, drama, and visual culture	dialogue, interpreting songs or short stories	and cultural appreciation
Mathematics	Development of logical, structured, and analytical thinking through language tasks	Students organize patterns, structures, and reasoning in Arabic	Grammar pattern mapping, categorization tasks, structured argumentation in Arabic	Curriculum should link language learning with analytical reasoning
Spirituality	Internalization of moral, reflective, and spiritual values through Arabic learning	Students reflect on ethical meanings and personal values in Arabic texts	Reflective journals on Qur'anic verses, moral narratives, and character themes	Curriculum should align Arabic learning with value formation and reflective practice

The operationalization presented in Table 6 shows that L-STEAMS can function not only as a conceptual framework but also as a practical pedagogical model. Each component can be translated into instructional indicators, concrete classroom activities, and broader curriculum implications. This strengthens the applicability of L-STEAMS in Arabic language education, particularly in Islamic higher education settings.

3.1.6 Identity Formation and Humanization in Arabic Language Education

Another important dimension identified in this study is the relationship between language learning, identity formation, and humanization. Arabic language, particularly within Islamic educational contexts, carries strong symbolic, cultural, and religious significance. As a result, the process of learning Arabic is closely linked to the development of students' identities, both as individuals and as members of a broader cultural and religious community.

Research indicates that Arabic linguistic symbols play a significant role in shaping students' religious identity and sense of belonging (Supriyadi et al., 2026). Through engagement with religious texts, cultural expressions, and linguistic forms, students develop a deeper connection to their heritage and values. This process is particularly important in Islamic education, where language is closely *مرتبط* *الدین والثقافة* *dengan*.

However, in pluralistic societies, identity formation is a complex and dynamic process that involves negotiating multiple cultural, social, and ideological influences. Students are often required to navigate diverse perspectives and to reconcile their personal identities with broader societal expectations. In this context, language education plays a crucial role in facilitating this negotiation process.

The findings of this study suggest that Arabic language education can simultaneously strengthen students' religious identity and promote openness to diversity when supported by dialogical and reflective pedagogies. This dual function reflects the concept of humanization, where education is understood as a process of developing individuals who are both rooted in their identities and open to engaging with others in meaningful ways (Freire, 1970).

Humanistic and critical pedagogies provide a framework for achieving this balance by emphasizing dialogue, mutual respect, and critical reflection. Through these approaches, students are encouraged to explore their identities, question assumptions, and develop a deeper understanding of themselves and others. Language learning becomes a space for personal and social transformation, rather than merely a technical exercise.

Nevertheless, achieving this balance presents significant pedagogical challenges. Educators must carefully design learning environments that support both identity formation and openness to diversity without reinforcing exclusivist or rigid perspectives. This requires a nuanced understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and identity, as well as the ability to facilitate meaningful dialogue among students.

In addition, institutional and societal factors may influence how identity is constructed and expressed within educational settings. For example, curriculum policies, cultural norms, and political

contexts may shape the ways in which language and identity are represented. Therefore, efforts to promote humanization and pluralism in Arabic language education must consider these broader contextual factors.

In conclusion, the integration of identity formation and humanization represents a critical dimension of contemporary Arabic language education. By adopting pedagogical approaches that emphasize dialogue, reflection, and inclusivity, educators can support students in developing balanced and socially responsible identities. This transformation reinforces the role of Arabic language education as a powerful medium for personal growth and social change.

3.1.7 Implications and Limitations

The findings of this study have several important implications. Theoretically, this study contributes to the development of a new paradigm in Arabic language education that integrates humanistic, pluralistic, and interdisciplinary perspectives. Practically, the results can inform curriculum development, instructional strategies, and policy design in Islamic higher education.

However, this study is not without limitations. As a systematic literature review, the findings depend on the quality and scope of the included studies. Although PRISMA guidelines were followed to ensure methodological rigor, potential publication bias and limited access to certain sources may affect the comprehensiveness of the review.

Future research is recommended to empirically test the implementation of the L-STEAMS framework in Arabic language classrooms and to explore its impact on students' cognitive, social, and ethical development.

4. CONCLUSION

This study has reconceptualized Arabic language education as a humanistic, pluralistic, and interdisciplinary practice within the context of Islamic higher education. Through a systematic literature review guided by the PRISMA 2020 framework, the findings demonstrate a clear shift from traditional grammar-oriented approaches toward more socially responsive and value-based pedagogies. Arabic language learning is no longer limited to linguistic competence but increasingly functions as a medium for fostering ethical awareness, social responsibility, and intercultural understanding. The study highlights three main contributions. First, it establishes a humanistic orientation in Arabic language education, emphasizing the integration of cognitive, affective, and ethical dimensions of learning. Second, it underscores the importance of pluralism by positioning language learning as a space for promoting tolerance, dialogue, and mutual respect in diverse societies. Third, it introduces the L-STEAMS framework as a comprehensive model that integrates linguistic, scientific, technological, economic, cultural, and spiritual dimensions into Arabic language pedagogy.

The findings also reveal that university students play a crucial role as active agents who connect language learning with real-world contexts, particularly through experiential and community-based learning. However, the integration of these dimensions into existing curricula remains limited, indicating the need for more systematic and intentional instructional design. This study offers important implications for curriculum development and pedagogical innovation in Arabic language education. Educators and policymakers are encouraged to adopt interdisciplinary and value-oriented approaches that align language learning with contemporary societal needs. At the same time, institutional support and teacher readiness are essential for the successful implementation of such frameworks.

Despite its contributions, this study is limited by its reliance on existing literature and potential publication bias. Future research is recommended to conduct empirical investigations on the implementation of the L-STEAMS framework and to examine its impact on students' cognitive development, social engagement, and ethical formation in diverse educational settings.

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