

The Meaning of Love Language in Student Relations: Edmund Husserl's Phenomenological Approach

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: October 2023 Accepted: October 2023 Published: October 2023	Romantic relationships among university students constitute a form of interpersonal communication that involves emotional expression, affection, and the construction of meaning through various communicative practices. One prominent form of affective communication in romantic relationships is the concept of love language introduced by Gary Chapman. This study aims to analyze the meaning of love language among student couples at Mathla'ul Anwar University Banten based on their subjective experiences and Islamic values. This research employed a qualitative approach based on Edmund Husserl's transcendental phenomenology. The study applied a constructivist paradigm, while data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the dominant forms of love language among student couples include words of affirmation, quality time, and acts of service. Love language is interpreted as a form of attention, emotional appreciation, presence, and psychological support within romantic relationships. Furthermore, the values of mahabbah and rahmah serve as moral foundations in maintaining relationships while adhering to religious boundaries and social ethics. This study demonstrates that affective communication in students' romantic relationships is not solely emotional in nature but is also shaped by spiritual and cultural values that influence the subjective meaning of love.
Keywords: Love Language, Interpersonal Communication, Phenomenology, Romantic Relationship	

INTRODUCTION

Romantic relationships among students are a social phenomenon that cannot be separated from the dynamics of the development of interpersonal communication in early adulthood. In this phase, individuals experience the process of finding self-identity, forming emotional closeness, and exploring deeper interpersonal relationships. In this context, communication is an important element in building, maintaining, and interpreting romantic relationships. The interactions that are established in a romantic relationship are not only in the form of verbal communication, but also involve affective communication related to attention, affection, emotional support, and expressions of love.

The development of digital culture and changes in social interaction patterns among the younger generation also affect the way individuals express their feelings in romantic relationships. Students who actively use digital media tend to build a more open and expressive communication pattern, both through direct

communication and social media. In romantic relationships, the expression of affection is one of the important aspects that determine the quality of the relationship and the emotional closeness of the couple. This form of expression can be realized through attention, support, verbal appreciation, time given, or certain actions that are interpreted as a form of love.

One of the concepts that is widely used to understand the expression of love in interpersonal relationships is *love language* or love language introduced by Gary Chapman (1992). Chapman explains that each individual has a dominant way of expressing and receiving love. The five main forms of love language include *words of affirmation, acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time, and physical touch*. Differences in love language often affect the effectiveness of communication in romantic relationships because each individual has different emotional needs in receiving affection from a partner.

In the study of interpersonal communication, love language can be understood as a form of affective communication that functions to build emotional closeness and create a sense of mutual understanding in relationships. Love language is not only related to emotional expression, but also a symbol of communication that contains subjective meaning for the individual who is in the relationship. Therefore, the meaning of love language cannot be understood in general or universally, but needs to be seen based on personal experience and the socio-cultural context behind it.

Previous research on *love language* has generally focused on the psychological aspects of relationships, relationship satisfaction, and communication patterns of young couples. Some studies have shown that love language appropriateness can improve the quality of communication and emotional closeness of couples. However, research on the meaning of love language in Muslim student couples is still relatively limited, especially research that examines the subjective experiences of individuals in interpreting love based on phenomenological perspectives and religious values. Most previous research has also focused more on forms of expression of love in general, without looking at how spiritual and cultural values affect the construction of the meaning of love in students' romantic relationships.

In the context of Muslim students, romantic relationships are not only influenced by emotional and social needs but also by religious values that guide interpersonal behavior. The concepts of *mahabbah* and *rahmah* in Islam provide a moral basis for how love and affection should be manifested in human relationships. Love is not solely seen as the fulfillment of emotional needs, but also as a form of moral and spiritual responsibility that must be carried out by maintaining manners, respect, and social boundaries according to religious values. Therefore, the experience of Muslim students in expressing the language of love becomes interesting to study because it involves negotiations between affective needs and spiritual values that are believed.

This study uses Edmund Husserl's transcendental phenomenological approach to understand students' subjective experiences in interpreting the

language of love in romantic relationships. Phenomenology was chosen because it is able to explore the conscious experience of individuals as experienced directly by informants. This approach allows researchers to understand how students shape the meaning of love through the interpersonal communication experiences they have with their partners. Through the concepts of *epoche*, *noesis*, *noema*, and eidetic reduction, this study seeks to find the essence of the love experience that lives in the informant's consciousness.

The research was conducted on students of Mathla'ul Anwar University Banten who were in a romantic relationship. The selection of the research location was based on the characteristics of the academic environment, which has a fairly strong Islamic religious and cultural background. This condition allows the formation of romantic relationship dynamics that are not only influenced by emotional factors but also by social and spiritual norms that develop in the student environment.

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the meaning of love language in Mathla'ul Anwar University Banten student pairs in romantic relationships through a phenomenological approach. This research is expected to contribute to the development of the study of interpersonal communication, especially related to affective communication, student romantic relationships, and the construction of the meaning of love in social and religious perspectives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Love Language in Interpersonal Communication

The concept of *love language* was introduced by Gary Chapman through his book *The Five Love Languages* (1992). Chapman explains that each individual has a certain way of expressing and receiving affection in interpersonal relationships. Love language is understood as a form of affective communication that shows care, appreciation, and emotional closeness between individuals in a romantic relationship. According to Chapman, a couple's failure to understand each other's love language can lead to emotional misunderstandings even though the relationship is based on love.

Chapman groups the language of love into five main forms: *words of affirmation*, *acts of service*, *receiving gifts*, *quality time*, and *physical touch*. *Words of affirmation* are expressions of love through positive words, support, and verbal appreciation. *Acts of service* are manifested through tangible actions that show concern for their partner. *Receiving gifts* is understood as a symbol of emotional care and appreciation. *Quality time* emphasizes the importance of full presence and togetherness in relationships. Meanwhile, *physical touch* is a form of expression of affection through physical touch that provides a sense of security and emotional closeness.

From the perspective of interpersonal communication, love language is part of affective communication that functions to strengthen emotional relationships and create a sense of mutual understanding between couples. Devito (2016) explained that interpersonal communication is a process of exchanging messages that involves

emotional, perceptual, and subjective meaning aspects between individuals. Therefore, love language is not only understood as an ordinary act of communication, but also as a symbol of affection that has a personal meaning for individuals who are in a romantic relationship.

In the context of students, the use of love language is often influenced by emotional development, social environment, culture, and digital media. Students, as an early adult age group, are in the phase of identity exploration and the formation of more intensive interpersonal relationships. Romantic relationships in students are a space for individuals to build emotional closeness, psychological support, and the fulfillment of affectionate needs. In such situations, love language acts as a medium of communication that helps couples build relationship quality and emotional stability.

The Story of Edmund Husserl

Phenomenology is a philosophical approach and research methodology that seeks to understand human subjective experience as experienced directly in individual consciousness. Edmund Husserl, as the main figure of modern phenomenology, explained that phenomenology aims to return to essential experience (*zu den Sachen selbst*) by understanding the meaning of a phenomenon based on the conscious experience of the individual, not on the basis of external assumptions or theories.

Husserl emphasized that reality is not only understood as something objective, but is also shaped through human awareness of the experience experienced. In the phenomenological approach, individual experience is seen as having a certain meaning that can be understood through reflection on consciousness and lived experience. Therefore, phenomenology is used to explore the deepest meaning of one's subjective experience of a social phenomenon.

There are several important concepts in Husserl's phenomenology, namely *epoche*, *noesis*, and *noema*, as well as eidetic reduction. *Epoche* is a process of suspending the researcher's assumptions or prejudices so that the phenomenon can be understood purely based on the experience of the informant. *Noesis* refers to the individual's act of consciousness towards an experience, while *noema* is the object or meaning of the experience. The eidetic reduction is carried out to find the essence or universal meaning of the informant's experience.

In this study, a phenomenological approach is used to understand how students interpret the language of love in romantic relationships based on their conscious experiences they experience. This approach allows researchers to explore subjective meanings regarding attention, affection, presence, and emotional support in students' romantic relationships.

Student Romantic Relationships

A romantic relationship is an interpersonal relationship that involves emotional attachment, psychological closeness, and the expression of affection

between two individuals. Sternberg (1986), through *the Triangular Theory of Love*, explained that romantic relationships consist of three main elements, namely *intimacy*, *passion*, and *commitment*. These three elements shape the quality of the relationship and determine the depth of the relationship between couples.

In the early adult phase, students tend to experience emotional and social development that encourages the formation of romantic relationships. Arnett (2000) calls early adulthood a phase of identity exploration, including in aspects of interpersonal and emotional relationships. Romantic relationships in college students not only function as a fulfillment of affection needs, but also as part of the process of forming self-identity, developing social skills, and finding the meaning of interpersonal relationships.

In romantic relationships, interpersonal communication is an important factor that determines the quality of a couple's relationship. Knapp and Vangelisti (2009) explained that romantic relationships are built through open communication, intensity of interaction, and the ability of couples to build emotional understanding. Therefore, the expression of love language in students' romantic relationships is part of the process of interpersonal communication that forms closeness and stability of relationships.

However, students' romantic relationships are also influenced by the social, cultural, and religious norms that develop in their social environment. For Muslim students, the expression of love is often confronted with moral and religious boundaries that govern patterns of interaction between the opposite sex. This condition causes students not only to interpret love as an emotional relationship, but also as a relationship that has ethical and spiritual dimensions.

The Concept of Mahabbah and Rahmah in Romantic Relationships

In an Islamic perspective, love is understood as part of spiritual values that contain elements of compassion, respect, and moral responsibility. The concept of *mahabbah* refers to sincere and deep love, while *rahmah* means affection manifested through care, tenderness, and protection for others.

The concepts of *mahabbah* and *rahmah* are the ethical foundation of interpersonal relationships, including romantic relationships. Islam views that the relationship between men and women should be built on affection, respect, and social responsibility. These values are reflected in the principles of maintaining manners, avoiding behavior that violates religious norms, and building mutually supportive relationships in goodness.

In the context of Muslim students, the concepts of *mahabbah* and *rahmah* influence the way individuals express the language of love in romantic relationships. The expression of affection is not only understood as the fulfillment of emotional needs, but also as a form of attention that pays attention to religious values and social norms. Therefore, the meaning of love language in Muslim student couples cannot be separated from the construction of spiritual values that shape their interpersonal experiences.

Based on this study, this study focuses on how students of Mathla'ul Anwar University Banten interpret the language of love in romantic relationships through subjective experiences influenced by interpersonal communication, religious values, and socio-cultural contexts they experience.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with phenomenological methods to understand students' subjective experiences in interpreting *love language* in romantic relationships. The qualitative approach was chosen because this research focuses on understanding the meaning, experience, and interpretation of social phenomena experienced directly. The phenomenological method is used to explore the essence of informants' conscious experiences related to affective communication, expressions of love, and religious values in the romantic relationships they are in.

This study uses Edmund Husserl's transcendental phenomenological approach. This approach aims to understand individual experiences as experienced consciously without being influenced by the researcher's subjective assumptions. In the research process, the researcher applied the concept of *epoche*, or the suspension of prejudice, to gain a deeper understanding of the informant's experience in interpreting the language of love. Through this approach, the researcher seeks to find the essence of the love experience based on the informant's awareness and life experience.

The research paradigm used is constructivism. This paradigm views social reality as formed through the experience and process of subjective meaning of individuals. In the context of this study, the meaning of *love language* is understood as the result of the construction of students' interpersonal experiences in romantic relationships influenced by social, cultural, and religious interactions.

The research subjects consisted of active students of Mathla'ul Anwar University Banten who were in a romantic relationship. The research informants amounted to five pairs of students or as many as ten informants who were selected using the *purposive sampling* technique. This technique is used because the informant is considered to have experience that is relevant to the focus of the research. The criteria for informants in this study include: (1) active students of Mathla'ul Anwar University Banten, (2) are or have been in a romantic relationship, (3) have intense interpersonal communication experiences with their partners, and (4) are willing to provide information openly about romantic relationship experiences.

Data collection was carried out through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. In-depth interviews are conducted in a semi-structured manner to give the informant the flexibility to explain the experiences, feelings, and meaning of love that they understand. Observations were made to see the interaction and communication patterns of couples in their social environment. Meanwhile, documentation is used as supporting data in the form of field notes, interview recordings, and other documents relevant to the research.

The data analysis technique in this study uses the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Data reduction is carried out by selecting and focusing on data that is relevant to the research theme. Furthermore, the data is presented in the form of descriptive narratives and thematic categorization to facilitate interpretation. The final stage is carried out through concluding to find the essence of the meaning of love language in students' romantic relationships based on the subjective experience of the informant.

To maintain the validity of the data, this study uses triangulation and *member check* techniques. Triangulation is carried out by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation to obtain more valid and consistent data. Meanwhile, *member checks* are carried out by reconfirming the results of the researcher's interpretation to the informant so that the meaning and experience conveyed are in accordance with the reality experienced by the informant.

RESEARCH RESULTS

This study involved 12 informants consisting of six pairs of students of Mathla'ul Anwar University (UNMA) Banten who were in a romantic relationship. All informants are eighth-semester students with an age range of 21-24 years and a relationship length of one to three years. Based on the results of in-depth interviews, four main themes were found that describe the experience of informants in interpreting and expressing the language of love in romantic relationships, namely: (1) love language as a form of emotional communication, (2) love as a process of adaptation and mutual understanding, (3) the integration of the values of mahabbah and rahmah in romantic relationships, and (4) dynamics in balancing emotional needs with the limits of sharia.

Table 1. Characteristics of Research Informants

Code	Gender	Age	Study Programs	Semester	Length of Relationship
I1	Male	24	Information Systems	8	1 Year
I2	Women	21	Indonesian Language and Literature Education	8	1 Year
I3	Male	22	Information Systems	8	3 Years
I4	Women	21	Mathematics Education	8	3 Years
I5	Male	21	Farmasi	8	2 Years
I6	Women	21	Farmasi	8	2 Years
I7	Male	21	Management	8	1 Year
I8	Women	21	Law	8	1 Year
I9	Male	22	Mathematics Education	8	3 Years
I10	Women	22	Islamic Religious Education	8	3 Years
I11	Male	23	Food Technology	8	3 Years
I12	Women	22	Accounting	8	3 Years

Source: Research Results, 2025.

Based on Table 1, all informants are active final semester students who have relatively stable romantic relationship experience. This condition allows the informant to provide an in-depth reflection on their experience in expressing and interpreting the language of love in the relationship they are living.

Love Language as a Form of Emotional Communication

The results of the study showed that all informants viewed love language as a form of emotional communication used to convey affection, attention, and concern to their partner. Love language is understood as a medium that helps couples build emotional closeness and strengthen the quality of the relationship.

The majority of male informants show a tendency to express love through *acts of service*, such as helping to complete college assignments, providing help when couples face difficulties, providing time to accompany them, and providing practical support in daily life. For them, tangible actions are considered more meaningful than mere verbal expressions.

In contrast, most female informants revealed that they felt more loved when their partners provided *quality time* and *words of affirmation*. The presence of a partner in important moments, attention through intense communication, and words of encouragement are the forms of affection they feel the most.

One of the informants revealed:

"I'm happy that he takes the time to look after me or encourage me. It makes me feel appreciated."

While another informant stated:

"I prefer to show love through actions. Like help with chores or food anneal. I think it's more felt."

These findings suggest that the experience of expressing and receiving love is subjective and influenced by the emotional needs of each individual. Although the forms of expression are different, all informants view attention, presence, and care as the core of the language of love.

Love as a Process of Adaptation and Mutual Understanding

The second theme that emerged from the results of the study is that love is interpreted as an adaptation process that involves an effort to understand the emotional needs of a partner. All informants admitted that they had different love language preferences from their partners.

These differences initially led to various misunderstandings. Some female informants expect more verbal expression as a form of emotional validation, while male partners are more likely to express affection through action. On the other hand, some male informants consider that actions are enough to show love without always having to be expressed through words.

However, as the relationship progresses, the informants begin to learn to understand the couple's way of expressing love. They realize that love is not only

given according to personal desires, but also needs to be tailored to the needs of the partner.

As one of the informants revealed:

"At first, I needed to hear words. But over time, I understood that he showed it through action."

Another informant explained:

"Now I'm learning to be more verbally open because my partner feels more valued that way."

These findings show that the meaning of love in romantic relationships is formed through the process of communication, self-adjustment, and empathy for the partner. Love is not only understood as a feeling, but also as the ability to understand and meet each other's emotional needs.

The Integration of Mahabbah and Rahmah in Romantic Relationships

The results of the study show that all informants integrate Islamic values in the relationships they live, especially through the concepts of mahabbah and rahmah.

Mahabbah is interpreted as love accompanied by good intentions, earnestness, and commitment to maintain a relationship towards a better future. Informants view that love is not only aimed at meeting emotional needs, but also as a means to take care of each other and support each other in kindness.

One of the informants stated:

"Mahabbah is when we really want the best for our partner, not just for fun."

Meanwhile, rahmah is understood as affection that is manifested through patience, empathy, care, and the ability to accept your partner's shortcomings. Rahmah appears to be supportive of couples when they face academic pressure, personal problems, and unstable emotional conditions.

As one of the informants said:

"I feel the grace I feel when he is patient in the face of my sometimes emotional nature."

In addition, the values of mahabbah and rahmah are also manifested in the form of reminding each other in worship, maintaining good communication, praying for their partner, and avoiding behaviors that can damage the relationship.

These findings show that the romantic relationships that informants have not only an emotional dimension, but also a spiritual dimension that is the basis for building and maintaining relationships.

Negotiating Emotional Needs and Sharia Boundaries

The last theme found is the dynamic of balancing emotional needs with the limits set in Islamic teachings.

All informants admitted that emotional closeness often presents challenges in maintaining relationship boundaries. Longing, the need for attention, and the intensity of the relationship are getting stronger and are factors that can push couples to exceed the limits that have been set.

Nevertheless, all couples show awareness of keeping the relationship within the Sharia corridor. The forms of effort made include avoiding excessive physical contact, not being alone in a quiet place, limiting communication that has the potential to lead to unhealthy behavior, and choosing public places when meeting.

One of the informants stated:

"When we start to feel like we're going to be overreacting, we're going to remember each other."

Another informant revealed:

"We agreed not to meet in a quiet place and limit communication that can make it excessive."

In addition to open communication, the informants also applied strategies such as reminding each other, strengthening religious activities, and taking a temporary distance when they felt that their emotional conditions began to be difficult to control.

These findings suggest that informants seek to balance the need for affection with the religious values they believe in. In this context, sharia boundaries are not seen as a barrier to relationships, but rather as guidelines that help maintain the quality and direction of the relationship.

The Essence of the Informant Experience

Based on the informant's overall experience, the essence of love language in the romantic relationship of Muslim students of Mathla'ul Anwar University Banten can be understood as a form of affectionate communication that not only serves to meet emotional needs but also as a means of building moral and spiritual responsibility.

Love language is interpreted as the process of understanding each other, adapting, and supporting couples through various forms of expression that are tailored to the needs of each individual. At the same time, the expression of love is carried out within the framework of Islamic values through the integration of mahabbah and rahmah, which is manifested in patience, care, commitment, and efforts to maintain relationships in accordance with sharia principles.

Thus, the experiences of the informants show that love is not only understood as a feeling or emotional attraction, but also as a responsibility to maintain, guide, and grow together towards a more meaningful and good-oriented relationship.

DISCUSSION

Students' Subjective Experience in Expressing and Receiving the Language of Love

The findings of the study show that love language is understood by all informants as a form of affectionate communication that is manifested through actions, attention, presence, and verbal expressions. Although each individual has different preferences for expressing and receiving love, all informants view love language as a means to show care and build emotional closeness with their partner.

The most dominant forms of love language found in this study were *acts of service*, *quality time*, and *words of affirmation*. Male informants tend to express love through tangible actions, such as helping with coursework, providing practical support, or taking time to accompany a partner. On the other hand, female informants place *quality time* and *words of affirmation* as the most meaningful forms of love language.

These findings are in line with the theory of *The Five Love Languages* put forward by Chapman (2015), which explains that individuals have different preferences in giving and receiving affection. In the context of this research, love language serves as a medium of interpersonal communication that allows couples to understand each other's emotional needs.

In Husserl's transcendental phenomenological perspective, the experience shows the existence of a relationship between *noesis* (the subjective consciousness of the individual) and *noema* (the meaning of love experienced). Love does not exist as an objective and uniform concept, but is understood through the life experiences directly experienced by each individual. Thus, love language is a phenomenon that acquires meaning through the conscious experience of informants.

These findings also support the research of Surijah, Putri, and Aryanata (2020), which shows that real *acts of service* and *quality time* are the dominant forms of expression of affection in interpersonal relationships of Indonesian people.

The Construction of the Meaning of Love Language in Romantic Relationships

The results of the study show that love language is not only interpreted as an expression of affection but also as a form of responsibility, commitment, and willingness to understand your partner. The informants consider that meaningful love is not just giving according to one's own desires, but giving according to the emotional needs of the partner.

This meaning is formed through a continuous process of interaction. The difference in love language preferences that initially caused misunderstandings actually became a learning space for couples to understand and adapt to each other. Through this process, couples develop an understanding that love is a reflective activity that requires empathy, patience, and openness.

In the framework of Husserl's phenomenology, this process can be understood as an effort to achieve *eidetic reduction*, that is, the search for the essential meaning of an experience. After going through various concrete experiences in relationships, the informants no longer interpret love as a romantic emotion, but as a form of presence, attention, and sacrifice that is made consciously.

These findings show that love language functions as a mechanism for the formation of meaning in romantic relationships. Love language is a medium that allows couples to build a deeper sense of security, trust, and emotional attachment.

The results of this study are in line with Amiruddin (2021), who found that young couples who interpret love as responsibility and commitment tend to have

more stable relationship quality than couples who are only oriented towards emotional attraction.

The Integration of Mahabbah and Rahmah in the Romantic Relationship of Muslim Students

One of the main findings of this study is the presence of the values of mahabbah and rahmah as the foundation in interpreting romantic relationships. The informants do not separate romantic love and religious values, but rather integrate them into daily relationship life.

Mahabbah is interpreted as love based on good intentions, commitment, and hope towards a halal relationship. Meanwhile, rahmah is understood as a form of affection that is manifested through patience, empathy, understanding, and the ability to accept the weaknesses of your partner.

These values are seen in various relationship practices carried out by informants, such as reminding each other to worship, maintaining healthy communication, avoiding forbidden physical contact, and trying to maintain interaction within the corridor of Islamic law. Thus, love is positioned not only as an emotional relationship, but also as a spiritual relationship that contains moral responsibility.

These findings show that the concepts of mahabbah and rahmah serve as an ethical framework that guides couples' behavior in living a romantic relationship. These values have not only become normative rules but have been internalized into the awareness and relational identity of informants.

The results of this study reinforce the findings of Prathama and Mahadwistha (2024), who explain that mahabbah and rahmah are forms of affection that are not only emotional but also contain spiritual and social dimensions in human relationships.

Dynamics and Challenges of Balancing the Language of Love with Mahabbah and Rahmah

Although the informants showed a commitment to Islamic values, they still faced various challenges in living a romantic relationship. The main challenge that arises is how to meet the emotional needs of the couple without violating the limits of sharia.

The difference in love language is one of the sources of dynamics in relationships. Some informants admitted to having misunderstood because couples have different ways of expressing affection. Nevertheless, open communication and a willingness to understand the partner's perspective are the main strategies in resolving these differences.

In addition, informants also face challenges in maintaining physical and emotional boundaries. Increasingly intense closeness often gives rise to the urge to go beyond the agreed boundaries. However, all couples show active efforts to control the situation by strengthening religious values, reminding each other, limiting

gatherings, and avoiding situations that have the potential to cause violations of religious norms.

From a phenomenological perspective, the experience shows that there is an ongoing process of self-reflection. The informants experience not only love as an emotion, but also as a moral responsibility that must be consciously considered in every action. It is this awareness that allows them to balance the need for affection with spiritual commitment.

These findings are in line with the research of Hafid and Nurhasanah (2023), which states that the internalization of religious values in premarital relationships contributes to increased self-control, emotional maturity, and the ability of couples to manage relationship conflicts.

Synthesis of Research Findings

Overall, this study shows that love language in Muslim student couples not only functions as a means of communication of affection but also as a medium for the formation of meaning, relational identity, and spiritual values. Love language is constructed through intersubjective experiences that involve the process of mutual understanding, adjustment, and building a shared commitment.

The integration of *mahabbah* and *rahmah* enriches the meaning of love built by informants. Love is not understood solely as an emotional expression, but as a form of moral and spiritual responsibility directed at the common good. Thus, the romantic relationships of Muslim students in this study show a combination of modern affective needs and Islamic values that form a unique, reflective, and meaningful love experience.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that love *language* in Mathla'ul Anwar University Banten student pairs is interpreted as a form of affective communication that plays a role in building emotional closeness, a sense of appreciation, and psychological support in romantic relationships. Through a phenomenological approach, the research found that the experience of love in college students is not only related to emotional expression but is also shaped through subjective experiences, interpersonal interactions, and religious values that they believe in.

The dominant forms of love language in students' romantic relationships include *words of affirmation*, *quality time*, and *acts of service*. *Words of affirmation* are interpreted as a form of emotional validation and appreciation for the partner through positive verbal communication. *Quality time* is understood as a symbol of emotional presence and attention that strengthens the closeness of the relationship. Meanwhile, *acts of service* are interpreted as a form of care and emotional responsibility that is manifested through real actions towards the partner.

This study also found that Muslim students interpret love not only as an affective relationship, but also as a relationship that must be carried out based on the values of *mahabbah* and *rahmah*. These religious values affect the way students

express affection while maintaining manners, respect, and moral boundaries in romantic relationships. Thus, the language of love in student couples is the result of the construction of meaning influenced by personal experiences, interpersonal communication, culture, and spirituality.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of the study of interpersonal communication, especially related to affective communication and the construction of the meaning of love in romantic relationships among Muslim students. Practically, this study shows the importance of understanding love language as an effort to build healthy, supportive, and respectful communication in interpersonal relationships.

This research still has limitations in the number of informants and the scope of research, which is only conducted in one university environment. Therefore, further research is expected to develop a study of love language in a broader social and cultural context, including the influence of digital media on the romantic communication patterns of the younger generation.

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