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WHATSAPP GROUP TO OPTIMIZE THE MAHĀRAH ISTIMĀ' LEARNING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic which began to plague Indonesia in March 2020 had a major impact on academic activities in higher education, including at IAIN Palangka Raya. This situation requires the lecturers to find ways to adapt to new conditions and reduce the risk of virus transmission. This study is a descriptive-qualitative research that aims to uncover the learning process of Mahārah Istimā' using WhatsApp Group media seen from the learning objectives, materials, strategies, and evaluation. The subject of this research is lecturers of Arabic Education (PBA) at IAIN Palangka Raya who teach the Mahārah Istimā' course. Data of the research was collected from observation, interviews, and documentation. The results showed that the learning process of Mahārah Istimā' during the Covid-19 pandemic could run optimally in terms of the learning objectives, materials, strategies, and evaluation. The objectives of Mahārah Istimā' learning are to understand, develop, interact, observe, conclude, and classify information. The learning materials used can be in the form of discourses, conversations, songs, guessing games, or chain messages using audio that is played through the voice note feature on the WhatsApp application. The strategies used include: (1) listen and then say, (2) listen and then answer, (3) listen and then identify, and (4) listen and then refine. The evaluations meant here involve daily evaluations for each assignment and summative evaluations, i.e. the midterm exam and the final exam.

Keywords: Arabic Language; Covid-19; Learning; Mahārah Istimā' ; WhatsApp

Abstrak

Pandemi Covid-19 yang mulai mewabah di Indonesia pada Maret 2020 berdampak besar pada kegiatan akademik di perguruan tinggi, termasuk di IAIN Palangka Raya. Keadaan ini menuntut dosen untuk mencari cara beradaptasi dengan kondisi baru dan

mengurangi risiko penularan virus. Kajian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif-deskriptif yang bertujuan untuk mengungkap proses pembelajaran *Mahārah Istimā'* dengan menggunakan media WhatsApp Group dilihat dari tujuan pembelajaran, materi, strategi, dan evaluasi. Subjek penelitian ini adalah dosen Pendidikan Bahasa Arab (PBA) di IAIN Palangka Raya yang mengajar mata kuliah *Mahārah Istimā'*. Data penelitian dikumpulkan dari observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa proses pembelajaran *Mahārah Istimā'* pada masa pandemi Covid-19 dapat berjalan dengan optimal baik dari segi tujuan pembelajaran, materi, strategi, dan evaluasi. Pembelajaran *Mahārah Istimā'* bertujuan untuk memahami, mengembangkan, berinteraksi, mengamati, menyimpulkan, dan mengklasifikasikan informasi. Materi pembelajaran yang digunakan bisa berupa wacana, percakapan, lagu, permainan tebak-tebakan, atau pesan berantai menggunakan audio yang diputarkan melalui fitur catatan suara pada aplikasi WhatsApp. Strategi yang digunakan antara lain: (1) mendengarkan lalu berkata, (2) mendengarkan lalu menjawab, (3) mendengarkan lalu mengidentifikasi, dan (4) mendengarkan lalu menyempurnakan. Evaluasi yang dimaksud disini meliputi evaluasi harian untuk setiap tugas dan evaluasi sumatif, yaitu ujian tengah semester dan ujian akhir.

Kata Kunci: Bahasa Arab; Covid-19; Pembelajaran; *Mahārah Istimā'*; WhatsApp

INTRODUCTION

After the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in Indonesia in mid-March 2020, the government through the Ministry of Education and Culture implemented a policy of learning and working from home since mid-March 2020.¹ The learning system changed drastically from face-to-face learning to online home learning, both at elementary, middle, upper, and higher education levels.² IAIN Palangka Raya as one of the PTKIN under the auspices of the Ministry of Religious Affairs responded to this policy by implementing learning and working from home through a circular issued for the first time on March 15, 2020. Therefore, conventional learning, that gathers a lot of indoor students, needs to be reviewed. Learning must be carried out with a scenario that is able to minimize physical contact between students and other students, or between lecturers and students.³

¹ Drph(C) George W. Contreras, "Getting Ready For The Next Pandemic Covid-19: Why We Need To Be More Prepared And Less Scared," *Journal Of Emergency Management* 18, No. 2 (March 1, 2020): 87–89, <https://doi.org/10.5055/Jem.2020.0461>; Lucie Cluver Et Al., "Parenting In A Time Of Covid-19," 2020, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)3073-4-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)3073-4-6).

² George W. Contreras, "Getting Ready For The Next Pandemic Covid-19"; Cluver Et Al., "Parenting In A Time Of Covid-19.": 8

³ Gunawan Gunawan, Ni Made Yeni Suranti, And Fathoroni Fathoroni, "Variations Of Models And Learning Platforms For Prospective Teachers During The Covid-19 Pandemic Period," *Indonesian Journal Of Teacher Education* 1, No. 2 (April 25, 2020): 61–70.

According to Milman, as quoted by Firman and Rahayu, the use of digital technology allows students and lecturers to be in different places during the learning process.⁴ Various initiatives were undertaken to ensure learning activities continued, even though there were no face-to-face sessions. Technology, more specifically the internet, smartphones, and laptops are now widely used to support distance learning. One of the largest telecommunications service providers in Indonesia recorded a 16% increase in broadband flows during the covid-19 crisis caused by the sharp increase in the use of distance learning platforms.⁵

One alternative to distance learning that can be implemented during the Covid-19 emergency is online learning.⁶ According to Moore, online learning is learning that uses internet networks with accessibility, connectivity, flexibility, and ability to generate various types of learning interactions.⁷ Research conducted by Zhang et. al. shows that the use of the internet and multimedia technology can change the way of conveying knowledge and can be an alternative to learning carried out in traditional classrooms.⁸ Online learning in its implementation requires the support of mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets, and laptops which can be used to access information anywhere and anytime.⁹ The use of mobile technology has a major contribution in the world of education, including the achievement of distance learning goals.¹⁰ To save time, social media can be used as a learning medium.¹¹ Virtual learning that can be used is the Zoom application or creating virtual classes using Google Class Room, Edmodo, and Schoology services and instant messaging

⁴ Firman Firman And Sari Rahayu, "Pembelajaran Online Di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19," *Indonesian Journal Of Educational Science (Ijes)* 2, No. 2 (April 27, 2020): 81–89, <https://doi.org/10.31605/Ijes.V2i2.659>.

⁵ Nadia Fairuza Azzahra, "Mengkaji Hambatan Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh Di Indonesia Di Masa Pandemi Covid-19," May 7, 2020, 13–14, <https://repository.cips-indonesia.org/publications/309163/mengkaji-hambatan-pembelajaran-jarak-jauh-di-indonesia-di-masa-pandemi-covid-19>.

⁶ Joi L. Moore, Camille Dickson-Deane, And Krista Galyen, "E-Learning, Online Learning, And Distance Learning Environments: Are They The Same?," *The Internet And Higher Education*, Web Mining And Higher Education: Introduction To The Special Issue, 14, No. 2 (March 1, 2011): 129–35, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lheduc.2010.10.001>

⁷ Joi L. Moore, Camille Dickson-Deane, And Krista Galyen, "E-Learning, Online Learning, And Distance Learning Environments: Are They The Same?," *The Internet And Higher Education*, Web Mining And Higher Education: Introduction To The Special Issue, 14, No. 2 (March 1, 2011): 129–35, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lheduc.2010.10.001>.

⁸ Dongsong Zhang Et Al., "Instructional Video In E-Learning: Assessing The Impact Of Interactive Video On Learning Effectiveness," *Information & Management* 43, No. 1 (January 1, 2006): 15–27, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.im.2005.01.004>.

⁹ Joanne Gikas And Michael M. Grant, "Mobile Computing Devices In Higher Education: Student Perspectives On Learning With Cellphones, Smartphones & Social Media," *The Internet And Higher Education* 19 (October 1, 2013): 18–26, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lheduc.2013.06.002>.

¹⁰ Agah Tugrul Korucu And Ayse Alkan, "Differences Between M-Learning (Mobile Learning) And E-Learning, Basic Terminology And Usage Of M-Learning In Education," *Procedia - Social And Behavioral Sciences*, 3rd World Conference On Educational Sciences - 2011, 15 (January 1, 2011): 1925–30, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.04.029>.

¹¹ T.A. Duong Et Al., "Did Whatsapp® Reveal A New Cutaneous Covid-19 Manifestation?," *Journal Of The European Academy Of Dermatology And Venereology*, May 19, 2020, : 19-20 <https://doi.org/10.1111/jdv.16534>.

applications such as WhatsApp.¹² However, choosing to use distance learning media has various kinds of considerations seen from the several obstacles faced by both students and lecturers.

As mentioned by Putra in his article, education in Indonesia experiences obstacles in its implementation in the form of costs, learning motivation, service, feedback, and lack of lecturers' experience towards online learning.¹³ Apart from that, it is of particular concern in the implementation of distance learning, such as in remote areas or areas that do not have an internet connection and limited ownership of technology which are separate problems in the implementation of distance education.¹⁴ Many think that the teacher's responsibility in implementing distance learning is lighter than traditional learning,¹⁵ even though online learning also has its own challenges if no solution is found, such as how to build effective interactions with the learning content provided so as not to bore students.¹⁶

As with some of the obstacles faced by students in distance learning, one of them happened to most of the IAIN Palangka Raya students who live in the interior of the province of Central Kalimantan, where the server condition or telecommunication signal in some areas is unstable. Apart from that, the economic problem, related to the cost of purchasing excess quotas, also burdens them. Of course, this obstacle becomes a serious problem in participating in learning with applications that require stable signal access and consume a lot of quotas. Therefore, the fastest solution in overcoming this problem so that learning in lectures can continue during the pandemic optimally is to consider the choice of learning media that can be used by all parties with fewer possible obstacles

Seeing this problem, one of the lecturers at IAIN Palangka Raya, who taught the *Mahārah Istimā'* course in the fourth semester of the PBA study program took action and a joint agreement with his students to optimize the use of the WhatsApp application in the *Mahārah Istimā'* course by considering the obstacles faced by students during carrying out the learning process at home by adjusting *Mahārah Istimā'* learning objectives, so that learning materials can be obtained by all students equally. The choice of this media, of course, was not without reason, the PBA lecturers

¹² Öykü Dulun, Jennie F. Lane, And Armağan Ateşkan, "Student Perceptions Of Successful Learning Support For An International High School Programme: A Comparative Case Study In Turkey," *Compare: A Journal Of Comparative And International Education* 49, No. 6 (November 2, 2019): 905–23, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2018.1471343>.

¹³ Lina Handayani, "Keuntungan, Kendala Dan Solusi Pembelajaran Online Selama Pandemi Covid-19: Studi Eksploratif Di Smpn 3 Bae Kudus," *Journal Of Industrial Engineering & Management Research* 1, No. 2 (July 17, 2020): 15–23, <https://doi.org/10.7777/jiemar.V1i2.36>.

¹⁴ Handayani.

¹⁵ Sarka Hubackova, "Teacher Responsibility In Distance Education," Accessed June 3, 2020, <https://core.ac.uk/reader/82110890>.

¹⁶ Wahyudin Darmalaksana Et Al., "Analisis Pembelajaran Online Masa Wfh Pandemi Covid-19 Sebagai Tantangan Pemimpin Digital Abad 21," *Karya Tulis Ilmiah (Kti) Masa Work From Home (Wfh) Covid-19 Uin Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung*, 2020, 1–12.

thought that by optimizing the WhatsApp application, *Mahārah Istimā'* learning process would still run smoothly. He mentioned four specific reasons why he chose to use the WhatsApp application in learning *Mahārah Istimā'*.

The first reason is that all students have previously had a WhatsApp application as a medium for communicating with other people so they don't have to bother adapting to new learning media or applications. It can even be ascertained that all students who have smartphones have the WhatsApp application as an application that is used daily. As noted in the study of Montac, he revealed that in a large sample of N = 2,418 users, WhatsApp behavior was recorded for 4 weeks. The results obtained show that the use of WhatsApp contributed 19.83% (= 32.11 min) of all smartphone behavior (compare: Facebook only 9.38% = 15.19 min). The average daily smartphone usage average is 161.95 minutes.¹⁷ As we have known, WhatsApp is the most popular instant messaging application compared to other instant messaging services. WhatsApp is the Multiplatform instant messaging with most users worldwide in 2013. The popularity of WhatsApp has raised the need for a better understanding of how to store archive chats within the application.¹⁸

According to the Statista website, 1.2 billion users as of January 2017 are actively using this application. In Indonesia, it is the youngest mobile internet user in Southeast Asia, with 21% of mobile internet users in Indonesia under 18 years of age, followed by 32% of users aged 18-24 years, 33% in the age range 25-35 years, and most recently 14% of mobile internet users in Indonesia are in the age range of more than 35 years.¹⁹ The second reason, along with the WhatsApp update, various features in this application, including Web-Based WhatsApp for Computers, this feature makes it easier for users to share files of certain types and can be synchronized with their smartphones and computers.²⁰ This is used by lecturers to share learning materials and collect their assignments back into the WhatsApp group. The third reason, the WhatsApp application is known as a cost-effective application and easily reaches all kinds of internet networks. With the WhatsApp application, communicating messages can take place instantly, besides that the costs incurred are cheaper than telephone or SMS.²¹

¹⁷ Christian Montag Et Al., "Smartphone Usage In The 21st Century: Who Is Active On Whatsapp?," *Bmc Research Notes* 8, No. 1 (August 4, 2015): 331, <https://doi.org/10.1186/S13104-015-1280-Z>.

¹⁸ Ahmad Raf'ie Pratama, "Whatsapp Forensics: Eksplorasi Sistem Berkas Dan Basis Data Pada Aplikasi Android Dan Ios," *Teknoin* 20, No. 1 (2014): 18, <https://doi.org/10.20885/V20i1.6689>.

¹⁹ Andika Prajana, "Pemanfaatan Aplikasi Whatsapp Untuk Media Pembelajaran Dalam Lingkungan Uin Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh," *Cyberspace: Jurnal Pendidikan Teknologi Informasi* 1, No. 2 (November 1, 2017): 122, <https://doi.org/10.22373/Cs.V1i2.1980>.

²⁰ Nuril Anwar And Imam Riadi, "Analisis Investigasi Forensik Whatsapp Messenger Smartphone Terhadap Whatsapp Berbasis Web," *Jurnal Ilmiah Teknik Elektro Komputer Dan Informatika* 3, No. 1 (June 30, 2017): 30, <https://doi.org/10.26555/Jiteki.V3i1.6643>.

²¹ Muhammad Agung, Roslina Roslina, And Ria Eka Sari, "Implementasi Aplikasi Pembuatan Chat," *Jurnal Mahasiswa Fakultas Teknik Dan Ilmu Komputer* 1, No. 1 (July 1, 2020): 293-306.

Several previous studies have proven that the WhatsApp application is a new and convenient learning medium for teaching and learning activities, as the research conducted by Sonia Gon and Alka Lawekar which aims to assess the effectiveness of social media such as WhatsApp in providing knowledge to fourth-semester students and comparing the increase in knowledge acquisition through the e-learning WhatsApp application. The results showed that the WhatsApp application was effectively used for teaching and learning activities.²² Another study was conducted by Baishya and Maheshwari that explored the use of WhatsApp groups in the context of learning to see how the presence of teachers in groups can affect group function. The results of his research showed that the presence of the teacher significantly affected group conversations.²³ In addition, the results of Rosenberg and Asterhan's research prove that WhatsApp group classes have become the main communication channel for school-related topics. It is used primarily for organizational purposes (sending and receiving updates and managing learning activities), as well as a means for teachers to enforce discipline. Students mentioned the many advantages of WhatsApp communication, such as easy access, the ability to create communities, the ability to maintain personal privacy, and the format of the communication (such as written, mediated, private, or group).²⁴ From the three studies that have been mentioned, it is known that the WhatsApp application is effectively used as learning medium as evidenced by several research results.

Other studies also stated that WhatsApp media was more widely used in Indonesia compared to other applications such as Zoom Meeting and Google Class Room, during the Covid-19 outbreak. The results of the survey by Gunawan et al. Obtained data that as many as 212 LPTK lecturers made use of several online learning applications. Based on the data obtained, it is known that almost all lecturers, namely around 94%, use the WhatsApp application to conduct online learning.²⁵ This is because both lecturers and students have a WhatsApp application on their respective smartphones. The WhatsApp application is equipped with the WhatsApp group feature, so that lecturers and students can join a discussion group to discuss lectures. Of course, this WhatsApp platform is one of the applications that were effectively used during the Covid-19 prevention period. Lecturers or students are used to using the application.

²² Sonia Gon And Alka Rawekar, "Effectivity Of E-Learning Through Whatsapp As A Teaching Learning Tool," *Mvp Journal Of Medical Sciences* 4, No. 1 (May 22, 2017): 80, <https://doi.org/10.18311/Mvpjms/0/V0/I0/8454>.

²³ Diganta Baishya And Saurabh Maheshwari, "Whatsapp Groups In Academic Context: Exploring The Academic Uses Of Whatsapp Groups Among The Students," *Contemporary Educational Technology* 11, No. 1 (2020): 31–46, <https://doi.org/10.30935/Cet.641765>.

²⁴ Hananel Rosenberg and Christa S. C. Asterhan, "'Whatsapp, Teacher?' - Student Perspectives On Teacher-Student Whatsapp Interactions In Secondary Schools," *Journal Of Information Technology Education: Research* 17 (July 3, 2018): 58, <https://doi.org/10.28945/4081>.

²⁵ Gunawan, Suranti, And Fathoroni, "Variations Of Models And Learning Platforms For Prospective Teachers During The Covid-19 Pandemic Period," 67–70.

The fourth reason is that the WhatsApp application is very suitable to significantly support *Mahārah Istimā'* learning. By using the voice-note feature in this application, PBA lecturers can send voices in Arabic and students can listen to them directly. This is useful for training students' listening skills. Like communicating, it is hoped that students can be more relaxed and interactive in following the ongoing learning, because they can participate and interact with lecturers or other friends anywhere and anytime. This is in line with research conducted by Minalla in learning English, students who learn by utilizing voice messages on the WhatsApp application are significantly superior to verbal communication skills, therefore utilizing active voice messages in the WhatsApp chat group can be recommended as an efficient technique in improving learning English as a Foreign Language.²⁶ Most students also think that learning using the WhatsApp application is quite fun. Students like to learn to use WhatsApp anytime, anywhere and it helps them learn as well as communicate.²⁷

From all the previous data that the researchers have described above, it can be concluded that there have been many studies that prove that the WhatsApp application is effectively used for learning activities. In addition, some of the benefits or advantages obtained by using this WhatsApp application for learning are first, easy access to use, because it does not require a lot of money and can also be reached more easily even with a limited signal. Secondly, WhatsApp application can be used anytime and anywhere such as when communicating, so that it makes students feel more relaxed and easier to interact when learning takes place. Thirdly, this WhatsApp application is very suitable for learning language skills.²⁸ However, from this data also, it is known that there is no research that directly discusses the teaching and learning process carried out by PBA lecturers to students who take *Mahārah Istimā'* learning.²⁹ Therefore, through this research, researchers will review more far about the learning process, in terms of objectives, materials, strategies and evaluations used in *Mahārah Istimā'* learning using the WhatsApp application by PBA lecturers at IAIN Palangka Raya during the Covid-19 prevention period.³⁰

One of the language skills in learning Arabic is *Mahārah Istimā'*. In the context of learning Arabic, *Mahārah Istimā'* includes the main skills that students must master and is the first step in

²⁶ Amir Abdalla Minalla, "The Effect Of Whatsapp Chat Group In Enhancing Efl Learners' Verbal Interaction Outside Classroom Contexts," *English Language Teaching* 11, No. 3 (2018): 1–7.

²⁷ Shital Sopanrao Maske Et Al., "Feasibility, Effectiveness, And Students' Attitude Toward Using Whatsapp In Histology Teaching And Learning," *Journal Of Education And Health Promotion* 7 (December 28, 2018): 90, https://doi.org/10.4103/Jehp.Jehp_30_18.

²⁸ Aulia Mustika Ilmiani Et Al., "Multimedia Interaktif Untuk Mengatasi Problematika Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab," *Al-Ta'rib Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 8, No. 1 (June 2020): 17–32.

²⁹ Ahmadi Ahmadi And Aulia Mustika Ilmiani, "The Use Of Teaching Media In Arabic Language Teaching During Covid-19 Pandemic," *Dinamika Ilmu* 20, No. 2 (2020): 307–22.

³⁰ Aulia Mustika Ilmiani Et Al., "The Implementation Of Semester Learning Plan (Rps) On Maharah Istima' Course By Using Cartoon Story Maker," *Lisania: Journal Of Arabic Education And Literature* 4, No. 1 (2020): 1–22.

mastering language competencies.³¹ Listening skills are a person's ability to absorb and understand words or sentences uttered by speech partners or certain media. To find out the difference between the sound element (phoneme) and other elements according to the correct letter makhorijul, listening activities can be achieved by continuous practice by listening to utterances either directly from the original speaker (*al-Nāṭiq al-aṣli*) or through recording.³² So that it allows someone to understand Arabic used orally, so as to avoid misunderstandings in communicating.³³ By having adequate listening skills, students are expected to be familiar with Arabic sounds in the form of words, phrases, and sentences. Therefore, it makes the students easy to pronounce these words, phrases, and sentences correctly.

METHOD

This research is a descriptive-qualitative research that is directly related to complex phenomena in daily life practices. The research referred to in this research is the learning process of *Mahārah Istimā'* during the pandemic which was carried out by PBA lecturers of IAIN Palangka Raya. Another definition is also put forward by Strauss and Corbin that qualitative research is a type of research whose findings are not obtained through statistical procedures.³⁴ In line with this understanding, the researchers emphasize that this study is a study that highlights everyday experiences which is also a method for testing and answering questions about how, where, what, when and why someone acts in a certain way on a specific problem. The purpose of this study is to describe the learning process of *Mahārah Istimā'* by optimizing the WhatsApp group application during the Covid-19 pandemic, for students of Semester IV of PBA Study Program who take the *Mahārah Istimā'* course. The learning process of *Mahārah Istimā'* which the researchers mean includes objectives, materials, strategies and evaluation. The data collection techniques used by researchers were observation, interviews and documentation.

From the results of observations in eight meetings, from mid-March to mid-June, *Mahārah Istimā'* learning took place online by utilizing the WhatsApp group application feature. The data to be obtained is the *Mahārah Istimā'* learning process in detail and is technical in nature related to

³¹ Cahya Edi Setyawan, "Konsep Landasan Teori Dan Rancangan Silabus Pembelajaran Maharah Istima Di Perguruan Tinggi," *Journal Al-Manar* 7, No. 1 (June 1, 2018): 17, <https://doi.org/10.36668/Jal.V7i1.83>.

³² Nuril Mufidah Et Al., "Ict For Arabic Learning: A Blended Learning In Istima' Ii," *لساننا (Lisanuna): Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa Arab Dan Pembelajarannya* 8, No. 2 (March 20, 2019): 174–83, <https://doi.org/10.22373/Ls.V8i2.4561>

³³ Cahya Edi Setyawan, "Konsep Landasan Teori Dan Rancangan Silabus Pembelajaran Maharah Istima Di Perguruan Tinggi," *Journal Al-Manar* 7, No. 1 (June 1, 2018): 23, <https://doi.org/10.36668/Jal.V7i1.83>.

³⁴ Sholihatul Atik Hikmawati, "Efektifitas Model Pembelajaran Daring Dalam Perkuliahan Bahasa Arab Di Institut Agama Islam Sunan Kalijogo Malang," *Muhadasah: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 2, No. 1 (June 1, 2020): 77–89.

the objectives, materials, strategies and evaluations carried out by PBA lecturers during the Covid-19 pandemic. The researchers made observations by looking at the interaction process that occurred in the WhatsApp group between lecturers and students during the *Mahārah Istimā'* learning period. From the results of interviews with PBA lecturers as research subjects, the data that the researchers obtained were descriptions of activity steps regarding the *Mahārah Istimā'* learning process related to the learning objectives implemented, learning materials, learning strategies and learning evaluations used. The researchers also had the opportunity to interview several students as informants who also provided information about the *Mahārah Istimā'* learning process by utilizing the WhatsApp group application during the Covid-19 pandemic. From the results of the documentation during the learning process, the researcher also obtained RPS *Mahārah Istimā'*, learning materials in the form of audio, evaluation text, and special notes for PBA lecturers, as a result of the activities that have been carried out.

From all the raw data that the researchers got, then the data analysis was carried out by filtering all the information obtained from the observations, interviews, and documentation that the researchers got, with a predetermined time scale. From this, there is a reduction in the data obtained by previous researchers after the confirmation and comprehensive comparison between the results of interviews, observation, and documentation. After obtaining valid data in the data analysis process, this data is then validated by the Triangulation method. Triangulation is essentially a multimethod approach that researchers take when collecting and analyzing data. The basic idea is that the phenomenon under study can be understood well if it is obtained from a variety of different points of view so that a reliable level of truth will be obtained. Therefore, triangulation is positioned to check the correctness of data or information obtained by researchers from different viewpoints by reducing as much as possible the bias that occurs during data collection and analysis. This is based on Norman K. Denkin's opinion which defines triangulation as a combination or combination of various methods used to study interrelated phenomena from different points of view and perspectives.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Objectives of the *Mahārah Istimā'* Course

As for the results of the research, which the researchers conducted for approximately two months, namely eight meetings in the *Mahārah Istimā'* learning process during the Covid-19 pandemic using the WhatsApp group application, it was known that the learning objectives of *Mahārah Istimā'* for PBA Semester IV students were divided into two, namely general goals and specific objectives. The general objectives of the skills to be achieved in this *Mahārah Istimā'*

learning are, first, students are able to develop information acquisition. Second, students are able to develop understanding competence in following the conversation of the interlocutor. Third, students are able to listen and interact with the interlocutor in accordance with showing positive attitudes and behavior by showing seriousness and being interactive. Meanwhile, the specific objectives are, first, students are able to examine the overall information contained in the Arabic text in oral form and be able to answer questions correctly. Second, students are able to conclude the teaching material that is being played and express it verbally. Third, students are able to classify spoken material in the form of oral either directly or indirectly. This data the researchers got from the documentation of the *Mahārah Istimā'* learning implementation plan for the fourth-semester students.

Technically, the learning objectives of *Mahārah Istimā'* have been conveyed first on the WhatsApp chat feature in the form of a *Mahārah Istimā'* learning implementation plan document at the beginning of the meeting. As the results of the researchers' observations at the first meeting, the lecturers gave an explanation of the learning objectives using the voice-note feature. *Mahārah Istimā'* learning objectives to be achieved in the first meeting are, first, translating words, phrases, or sentences about "Family" from the discourse or conversational text being played. The second is to distinguish between fact or fiction material about "Family" from the discourse or conversational text that is heard. The third is to answer questions related to discourse or conversational texts being heard about "Family." As stated in the lesson plan for the *Mahārah Istimā'* course in each meeting, there are different goals. Therefore, in each activity there are different learning activities, both related to the material, strategy, and evaluation used, these are designed based on learning objectives.

The Materials in the *Mahārah Istimā'* Course

The *Mahārah Istimā'* learning material used by the lecturers is audio material, which is played through the audio or voice-note feature contained in the WhatsApp application. The lecturer sends the audio to be played as learning material. The material can be in the form of discourse and conversations, and even on several occasions, the lecturers provide songs, games, guessing games, chain messages that are tailored to the theme to be studied. Giving material to students is accompanied by explanations from the lecturers using the voice-note feature or explanations with text. After that, the lecturers gave the opportunity for students to provide comments or questions related to the material that had been given. The following is the *Mahārah Istimā'* learning material used by PBA lecturers at IAIN Palangka Raya for up to eight meetings, namely: 1) Family, 2) Residence, 3) Daily Life, 4) Food and Drink, 5) Prayer, 6) Lessons, and 7) Profession.

The Strategies in the *Mahārah Istimā'* Course

There are several kinds of *Mahārah Istimā'* learning strategies used by PBA lecturers at IAIN Palangka Raya, as follows: 1) Strategy 1: listen and then say. The steps for implementing this strategy are: (a) students listen to the audio that has been given; (b) students are asked by the lecturer to state the perfect sentence from the discourse played. 2) Strategy 2: listen and then answer. The steps for implementing this strategy are: (a) students listen to the audio that has been given; (b) students are asked to answer questions related to the audio that has been played; (c) the lecturer provides comments on the answers given by the students. 3) Strategy 3: listen and then identify. The steps for implementing this strategy are: (a) the students listen to the audio that has been heard; (b) the students classify the sentences from the discourse that is played, either the number of *ismiyyah* or the number of *fi'liyyah*. Strategy 4: listen and then refine. The steps for implementing this strategy are: (a) students listen to the audio they have heard; (b) students complete the blank sentences in the conversation or discourse that is being heard.

The Evaluation of the *Mahārah Istimā'* Course

The learning evaluation carried out by the lecturers is divided into two parts. The first is the evaluation carried out by the lecturers while still in the process of implementing *Mahārah Istimā'* learning, such as direct training or assignments. Second, the evaluation is carried out by the lecturers after the implementation of *Mahārah Istimā'* learning is completed according to the predetermined time limits such as midterm and final semester exams. The process of evaluation activities carried out by the lecturer in *Mahārah Istimā'* learning is as follows. After listening to the audio as *Mahārah Istimā'* learning material, the lecturers provide exercises in the form of written and oral questions regarding the learning material that has been studied. The questions given will always be related to the audio that has been played.

At the first meeting, the lecturers gave an evaluation of *Mahārah Istimā'* learning by asking students to say five total *ismiyyah* and five total *fi'liyyah* along with their meaning in Indonesian using the voice-note feature in the WhatsApp application from the audio that has been played. In the second meeting, the lecturers gave an evaluation of *Mahārah Istimā'* learning by asking students to identify the main idea or supporting idea orally by using the voice-note feature contained in the discourse in the form of text that has been played via audio. At the third meeting, the lecturers gave an evaluation of *Mahārah Istimā'* learning by asking students to identify active sentences and passive sentences verbally using the voice-note feature contained in the discourse in the form of text that has been played through audio. At the fourth meeting, the lecturers gave an

evaluation of *Mahārah Istimā'* learning by asking students to make short conclusions orally using the voice-note feature in the WhatsApp application regarding the material that had been played.

Next, at the fifth meeting, the lecturers gave an evaluation of *Mahārah Istimā'* learning by asking students to answer verbally using the voice-note feature, the questions that had been prepared by the lecturers. At the sixth meeting, the lecturers gave an evaluation of *Mahārah Istimā'* learning by asking students to complete the conversation from the audio in the form of *hiwar* that had been played by saying a sentence that was in accordance with the previous sentence. At the seventh meeting, the lecturers gave an evaluation of *Mahārah Istimā'* learning by asking students to provide comments, be it criticism or suggestions according to their personal experiences in everyday life from the discourse material in the form of audio being played. At the eighth meeting, the lecturers gave an evaluation of *Mahārah Istimā'* learning by asking students to analyze orally by using the voice note feature regarding the linguistic errors of the audio material that was played both in pronunciation and linguistics rules.

The learning objectives of *Mahārah Istimā'* in the PBA IAIN Palangka Raya study program have a more prominent skill content compared to their science and knowledge. This can be seen from the general goals and specific objectives that have been described. Keywords in the learning objectives of *Mahārah Istimā'* in the PBA IAIN Palangka Raya study program include understanding, developing, interacting, observing information, concluding, and classifying. This is in line with *Mahārah Istimā'* learning objectives which are contained in the Learning Outcomes (CP) formulation which is summarized in the Indonesian National Qualifications Framework (KKNI) curriculum.³⁵³⁶ A research by Fatwiah mentioned the general objectives in learning Arabic, namely: 1) fostering Arabic linguists, which includes linguistics, language learning and literature 2) providing Arabic proficiency in certain aspects as a means of communicating in social interactions every day, as a tool for understanding Arabic books, as a supplementary tool, as a technical aid tool (vocational).³⁷ Meanwhile, the learning objective of *Mahārah Istimā'* is so that students are able to recognize speech sounds, identify words, phrases and sentences, obtain information, interpret, capture meanings, conclude meaning, respond, appreciate, criticize, and assess.³⁸

³⁵ Sutrisno Dan Suyadi, *Desain Kurikulum Perguruan Tinggi Mengacu Kerangka Kualifikasi Nasional Indonesia*. (Depok: Rosda, 2016). Hal. 33

³⁶ Nanin Sumiarni And Aziz Syafruddin Syafrawi, "Efektifitas Pembelajaran Menyimak Dan Berbicara Untuk Pemula (Maharat Al-Istima' Wa Al-Kalam Li Lmustawa Al-Tamhidi) Berbasis Kkni Pada Mahasiswa Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Arab (Pba) Iain Syekh Nurjati Cirebon," *El-Ibtikar: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 8, No. 1 (July 15, 2019): 78, <https://doi.org/10.24235/Ibtikar.V8i1.3910>.

³⁷ Fatwiah Noor, "Kurikulum Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Di Perguruan Tinggi," *Arabiyatuna : Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 2, No. 1 (June 30, 2018): 1, <https://doi.org/10.29240/Jba.V2i1.305>.

³⁸ Syafruddin Nurdin, "Pengembangan Kurikulum Dan Rencana Pembelajaran Semester (Rps) Berbasis Kkni Di Perguruan Tinggi," *Al-Fikrah: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan* 5, No. 1 (January 30, 2018): 21–30, <https://doi.org/10.31958/Jaf.V5i1.813>.

The main materials that are usually presented in *Mahārah Istimā'* learning are related to the following materials: text themes (such as: religion, education, social, economy, etc.), the expected abilities (such as: knowledge, understanding, practice, analysis, and evaluation), the types of facilities used (such as: audio, visual, and audio-visual), and types of material and text (such as: cut words, sentences, paragraphs, dialogues, stories, songs, poems, verses of the Al-Quran, prophetic hadith, and sermons or lectures).³⁹ The requirements for *Mahārah Istimā'* learning materials must be chosen according to the learning objectives. These requirements are easy, Gradations from general to specific, coherent vocabulary.⁴⁰ Based on this principle, PBA lecturers choose the material used in *Mahārah Istimā'* learning with the theme of family, place of residence, daily life, food and drink, prayer, lessons and work which are social themes which are daily activities. This theme was chosen because it was considered easy and used in daily activities, so it was hoped that students could quickly understand the material being played via audio.⁴¹

Each learning strategy has its own peculiarities and uniqueness. No particular learning strategy is better than another learning strategy.⁴² For this reason, educators must be able to choose a strategy that is considered suitable for the situation. According to Sanjaya, there are four general principles that educators must pay attention to in using learning strategies, namely: the first (1) is goal-oriented. In this learning system, goals are the main component. All activities of educators and students must be strived to achieve predetermined goals, because the success of a learning strategy can be seen from the success of students in achieving learning objectives.⁴³ The second (2) is activities. Learning is not only memorizing a number of facts or information, but also taking action, gaining certain experiences in accordance with the expected goals.⁴⁴ Therefore, the learning strategy must be able to encourage student activity, both physical activity, as well as psychological activities such as mental activity. The third (3) is individuality. It is an effort to develop each individual student.⁴⁵ The fourth (4) is integrity. Teaching must be seen as an effort to develop the students'

³⁹ Ilmiani Et Al., "The Implementation Of Semester Learning Plan (Rps) On Maharah Istima' Course By Using Cartoon Story Maker."

⁴⁰ Qomi Akid Jauhari, "Pembelajaran Maharah Istima Di Jurusan Pba Uin Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang," *Tarbiyatuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Ilmiah* 3, No. 1 (June 30, 2018): 129–52.

⁴¹ Mahfuz Rizqi Mubarak Et Al., "Penggunaan Vlog Dalam Pembelajaran Mahārah Kalām," *Al Mi'yar: Jurnal Ilmiah Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab Dan Kebahasaaraban* 3, No. 1 (April 4, 2020): 109–26, <https://doi.org/10.35931/Am.V3i1.209>.

⁴² W. Gulo, *Strategi Belajar Mengajar (Cover Baru)* (Grasindo, 2008), 120.

⁴³ Mahfuz Rizqi Mubarak et al., "Zoom Cloud Meeting: Media Alternatif dalam Pembelajaran Maharah Kalam di Tengah Wabah Virus Corona (Covid-19)," *Arabiyatuna : Jurnal Bahasa Arab* 4, no. 2 (November 17, 2020): 15–30, <https://doi.org/10.29240/jba.v4i2.1445>.

⁴⁴ Bisri Mustofa And M. Abdul Hamid, *Metode Dan Strategi Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* (Malang: Uin-Maliki Press, 2016), 142, <http://Repository.Uin-Malang.Ac.Id/1653/>.

⁴⁵ Toni Bakhtiar, "Optimal Intervention Strategies For Cholera Outbreak By Education And Chlorination," *Iop Conference Series: Earth And Environmental Science* 31 (January 2016): 13–18, <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/31/1/012022>.

entire personality.⁴⁶ Thus, teaching not only develops cognitive abilities, but also develops affective aspects and psychomotor aspects. Therefore, learning strategies must be able to develop the entire personality of students which includes cognitive, affective, and psychomotor.⁴⁷

In the Covid-19 pandemic period, *Mahārah Istimā'* learning which is usually carried out in a language laboratory classroom by utilizing soundproof room facilities and a computer that uses earphones is hampered.⁴⁸ Due to conditions that do not allow face-to-face learning, *Mahārah Istimā'* learning is carried out using the WhatsApp Group media. Therefore the lecturers of the IAIN Palangka Raya PBA study program also chose learning strategies that could be used in distance learning conditions using WhatsApp media. The strategies used are: 1) listen and then say, 2) listen and then answer, 3) listen and then identify, and 4) listen and then refine. Of the four strategies used by PBA lecturers in *Mahārah Istimā'* learning, PBA lecturers ask students to listen first, and then do other activities. All these four strategies require audio learning as the media used.

The National Education System states that educators are professionals who are tasked with planning learning, carrying out the learning process, assessing learning outcomes, conducting guidance and training, and conducting research and community service, especially for educators in higher education. Thus, one of the competencies an educator must have is the ability to conduct evaluations, both in the learning process and in the assessment of learning outcomes.⁴⁹ Learning evaluation is basically not only assessing learning outcomes, but also the processes that educators and students go through in the whole learning process.⁵⁰ Based on this understanding, Hilmi explained that evaluation is a systematic and continuous process to determine quality in accordance with the considerations and criteria that have been decided in advance.⁵¹

Therefore, PBA lecturers distinguish two types of evaluations used in the *Mahārah Istimā'* learning process, namely daily evaluations which are carried out at each assignment used, and the second semester evaluation which is carried out twice in one semester, namely midterm exams and end exam of semester. In the assessment, PBA lecturers make several measurable indicators. The indicators measured in the assessment and evaluation of listening skills are 1) the ability to identify letters, 2) the ability to distinguish the sounds of similar letters, 3) ability to understand the meaning

⁴⁶ Prof Dr H. Abuddin Nata Ma, *Perspektif Islam Tentang Strategi Pembelajaran* (Kencana, 2014), 44.

⁴⁷ Dr Wina Sanjaya M.Pd, *Perencanaan Dan Desain Sistem Pembelajaran* (Kencana, 2015), 117.

⁴⁸ Karin Boczek And Lars Koppers, "What's New About Whatsapp For News? A Mixed-Method Study On News Outlets' Strategies For Using Whatsapp," *Digital Journalism* 8, No. 1 (January 2, 2020): 126–44, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2019.1692685>.

⁴⁹ M.Aini, *Evaluasi Dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Arab* (Misykat, 2016), 87, [Http://Repo.Iainbatusangkar.Ac.Id/Xmlui/Handle/123456789/6233](http://Repo.Iainbatusangkar.Ac.Id/Xmlui/Handle/123456789/6233).

⁵⁰ Agus Wismanto, "Evaluasi Pembelajaran Bahasa Menggunakan Taksonomi Bloom Mulai Dari Versi Lama Sampai Versi Revisi," *Sasindo* 2, No. 2 Agustus (2014): 88–90, <https://doi.org/10.26877/Sasindo.V2i2.Agustus.971>.

⁵¹ Hilmi Hilmi, "Teknik Evaluasi Aktual Terhadap Maharah Lughawiyah [," *Jurnal Mimbar Akademika* 3, No. 2 (September 9, 2019): 55, [Http://www.mimbarakademika.com/index.php/jma/article/view/66](http://www.mimbarakademika.com/index.php/jma/article/view/66).

of vocabulary and phrases, 4) ability to understand sentences, 5) ability to understand discourse, and 6) the ability to respond or respond to the contents of the discourse being listened to. This is in line with Kosbandono's opinion in his article that assessment for listening skills can take the form of 1) performance which requires students to respond verbally or written, 2) portfolio, which is a systematic collection of students' work, and 3) self-assessment, namely an assessment or assessment carried out by the students themselves.

CONCLUSION

The present study was undertaken to uncover the learning process of *Mahārah Istimā'* using WhatsApp Group media seen from the learning objectives, materials, strategies, and evaluation. The results of the study showed that the learning process of *Mahārah Istimā'* during the Covid-19 pandemic could run optimally in terms of learning objectives, learning materials, learning strategies, and learning evaluation. Here, the *Mahārah Istimā'* learning objectives are divided into two, i.e. general and specific objectives. The general objectives include the ability to develop students' information acquisition, the ability to develop competence in following the conversation of the interlocutor, and the ability to listen and interact with the other person. Meanwhile, the specific objectives include the ability to examine the overall information contained in the Arabic text in spoken form and to answer questions correctly, the ability to conclude the teaching materials being played and to express it verbally, the ability to classify spoken materials in the form of oral response both directly and indirectly. Next, the learning materials used can be in the form of discourses, conversations, songs, guessing games, or chain messages using audio that is played through the voice note feature on the WhatsApp application. The strategies used include: (1) listen and then say, (2) listen and then answer, (3) listen and then identify, and (4) listen and then refine. The evaluations meant here involve daily evaluations for each assignment and summative evaluations, i.e. the midterm exam and the final exam. In general, the findings of this study support the idea that WhatsApp plays a useful role for distance learning activities during the Covid-19 pandemic. Further, as this study is limited only to WhatsApp platform, similar researches that involve other platforms will be interesting to do in the future.

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