



## The Implementation of Gallery Walk for Teaching *Mahārat al-Istimā'*

Sabilaa Syahiratunnisa<sup>1\*</sup>, Sofyan Sauri<sup>2</sup>, Farhan Fuadi<sup>3</sup>, Ihsan Iwan Nugroho<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia

<sup>4</sup> Darul Uloom Pretoria University, Pretoria, South Africa

Email: [sabilaasyahira@upi.edu](mailto:sabilaasyahira@upi.edu)<sup>1</sup>, [sofyansauri@upi.edu](mailto:sofyansauri@upi.edu)<sup>2</sup>, [fuadifarhan4@upi.edu](mailto:fuadifarhan4@upi.edu)<sup>3</sup>,  
[ihsannugroho07@outlook.co.id](mailto:ihsannugroho07@outlook.co.id)<sup>4</sup>

\*Corresponding Author

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### ABSTRACT

Ineffective strategies for teaching listening skills (*mahārat al-istimā'*) at Pondok Pesantren Tahfidz Qolbul Qur'an Putri make the learning environment passive and boring. However, a gallery walk based on the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach can be an innovative strategy for teaching *mahārat al-istimā'*. This study aims to describe the implementation of the gallery walk for teaching *mahārat al-istimā'*, reveal students' responses to the gallery walk, and the impacts of the gallery walk on students' *mahārat al-istimā'*. This study employed a qualitative-descriptive approach. Data collection in this study includes observation, interviews, and documentation techniques. The results of this study show that gallery walks successfully provide positive impacts and responses in *mahārat al-istimā'* teaching by creating an active, collaborative, and enjoyable learning atmosphere with a student-centered concept. Students become more focused, enthusiastic, and motivated in listening. The students also show positive responses through their social interactions and understanding of the material. Thus, the gallery walk based on the CLT approach can be an innovative and effective strategy in improving the quality of teaching *mahārat al-istimā'* in Islamic schools.

Keywords: Arabic Language, Gallery Walk, CLT Approach, *Mahārat Al-Istimā'*.

### ABSTRAK

Strategi yang kurang efektif dalam pembelajaran keterampilan menyimak (*mahārat al-istimā'*) di Pondok Pesantren Tahfidz Qolbul Qur'an Putri membuat lingkungan belajar menjadi pasif dan membosankan, namun gallery walk berbasis pendekatan Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) dapat menjadi inovasi strategi dalam pembelajaran *mahārat al-istimā'*. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan penerapan gallery walk dalam pembelajaran *mahārat al-istimā'*, mengungkap respons peserta didik terhadap penerapan gallery walk, serta dampak gallery walk bagi *mahārat al-istimā'* peserta didik. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif-deskriptif. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan teknik observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa gallery walk berhasil memberikan dampak dan respons positif dalam pembelajaran *mahārat al-istimā'* dengan menciptakan suasana belajar yang aktif, kolaboratif, dan menyenangkan dengan berpusat pada peserta didik. Peserta didik menjadi lebih fokus, bersemangat, serta menunjukkan peningkatan motivasi dalam menyimak. Peserta didik juga menunjukkan respons positif dari interaksi sosial mereka dan pemahaman terhadap materi. Dengan demikian, gallery walk berbasis pendekatan CLT dapat menjadi strategi inovatif dan efektif dalam meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran *mahārat al-istimā'* di lingkungan pesantren dan lembaga pendidikan Islam.

Kata Kunci: Bahasa Arab, Gallery Walk, Pendekatan CLT, *Mahārat Al-Istimā'*.

## INTRODUCTION

Listening skills (*mahārat al-istimā'*) play an essential role in a human's life because it is the first step to socializing (Nushi & Orouji, 2020). Personally, a person has to master listening skills to face any situation, such as interpersonal communications, discussions, presentations, expanding knowledge, and increasing productivity (Ilmiani et al., 2023). On a larger scale, such as in the context of global development, listening skills are essential for a person to interact across languages and cultures and to understand the language patterns of other communities (Solehudin et al., 2025).

The experts agree that in learning a foreign language, listening skills should be the first to be taught (Nazarieh et al., 2022). This is based on a statement by the well-known English linguist, L.G. Alexander, "Nothing should be spoken before it has been heard; nothing should be read before it has been spoken; and nothing should be written before it has been read." (Rosyad et al., 2023). Similarly, in Arabic language learning, listening skill (*mahārat al-istimā'*) has to be mastered as the first language skill, because listening skill is the bridge to master the other language skills, such as speaking (*kalām*), reading (*qirā'ah*), and writing (*kitābah*) (Audina & Mubarak, 2021; Wahyuni et al., 2023).

The purpose of teaching *mahārat al-istimā'* is to habituate students whenever they hear the new Arabic vocabulary (Trenggono et al., 2023). However, several studies explain that students face many obstacles and problems in learning *mahārat al-istimā'* because of their backgrounds as non-native Arabic speakers (Jagadeesan & Subbiah, 2020). This causes disruptions in Arabic learning, such as limited vocabulary, lack of grammar mastery, and unfamiliar terms and expressions for students, which trigger issues in other language skills, since *mahārat al-istimā'* is the primary skill in Arabic language learning (Fauzi, 2023; Rosyad et al., 2023).

Another problem was caused by the selection of materials, teaching resources, methods, and strategies by teachers, which were unable to increase the students' interest in paying attention to the class (Alzamil, 2021; Hanifansyah & Mahmudah, 2024; Rosyad et al., 2023). The irrelevant teaching strategies often become the obstacles in learning activity, causing demotivated students to learning the Arabic language, especially *mahārat al-istimā'* (Alabri, 2023; Mulyanto et al., 2022). The difficulties, obstacles, and problems in teaching *mahārat al-istimā'* at Pondok Pesantren Tahfīzh Qolbul Qur'an Putri affected students' motivation and interest, particularly due to the ineffective and irrelevant teaching strategy.

Based on the results of the first interviews with three students at Pondok Pesantren Tahfīzh Qolbul Qur'an Putri, they stated that the learning activities were passive, boring, unenjoyable, and they did not fully understand the material being delivered. Student HN said, "When we study in class, we just have to pay attention to Ustadzah, Kak." Students AT and AI said the same about the learning situations in the class, "We just sit and watch Ustadzah, it is really boring. It even makes us lose our focus because we were sleepy." "After the lesson, when Ustadzah asks if anyone has questions, everyone says no. However, when Ustadzah gives us questions, we get confused." The teacher of *mahārat al-istimā'* also stated during the interview, "It is hard to choose an effective strategy to teach *mahārat al-istimā'*, so the students lack enthusiasm."

Several strategies that can be used in teaching *mahārat al-istimā'* include text segmentation, recording, translation, repetition, retrieval, presentation, and gallery walk (Fikri

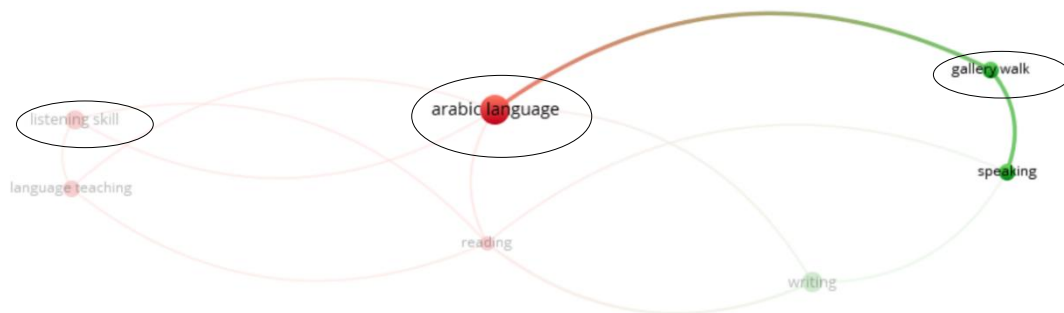
et al., 2024; Kamalia et al., 2022). Gallery walk is an innovative strategy that is relevant to implement. It is because teaching *mahārat al-istīmā'* can be more active and engaging by stimulating students to interact, encouraging them to exchange knowledge, ideas, and experiences with one another (Che-arón & Matcha, 2023).

The implementation of the gallery walk will be integrated with the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach, which emphasizes student-centered learning activity, dynamic interaction, and expanding the language used within the class environment (Ho, 2020). The CLT approach is highly influential in teaching *mahārat al-istīmā'* because it combines the meanings and the forms of the language into the educational context (Trimadona et al., 2023). The integration between the gallery walk and the CLT-based approach forms a solid combination to become an innovative strategy in teaching *mahārat al-istīmā'*.

Previous studies on the use of the gallery walk have been widely conducted, such as the research by Amrullah & Dianti on the implementation of the gallery walk to improve English recount text writing skill among senior high school students (Amrullah & Dianti, 2021). The research conducted by Arifudin & Ma'rifatulloh studied the use of the gallery walk in relation to English descriptive text writing skill among junior high school students (Arifudin & Ma'rifatulloh, 2023). To improve speaking skills, Melisa has researched the use of the gallery walk in English discussion text material for senior high school students (Melisa et al., 2025).

Furthermore, the gallery walk has also been researched for improving reading skills, such as the research by Lopez & Cruz that analyzed the effectiveness of the use of the gallery walk to improve English reading comprehension and speaking proficiency among junior high school students (Lopez & Cruz, 2022). As'ad also investigated the integration of the cooperative-learning method and the gallery walk in developing Arabic reading skills among Islamic junior high school (MTs) students (As'ad, 2022).

Various previous studies have shown that the gallery walk is effective for teaching language skills; however, no research has been conducted on the use of the gallery walk for Arabic learning, particularly in teaching listening skills (*mahārat al-istīmā'*). This is evidenced by a review of previous research data using the keywords “gallery walk, Arabic language teaching, and listening skill”. The metadata was mapped using VOSviewer software and presented in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: The Mapping of the Previous Research Using VOSviewer**

The data analysis results in Figure 1 show a network of 7 interconnected items relating to “listening skills”, “language teaching”, “Arabic language”, “reading”, “writing”, “speaking”, and “gallery walk”. Based on these connections, there is no link between “gallery walk” and “listening skills”; rather, it is through the “Arabic language”. This indicates that research on the gallery walk in Arabic language teaching, especially in listening skill (*mahārat al-istimāʾ*), has not been widely explored or studied in depth. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by examining the implementation of the gallery walk in teaching *mahārat al-istimāʾ* at Pondok Pesantren Tahfizh Qolbul Qur’an Putri.

The novelty of this study lies in the specific use of the gallery walk for teaching *mahārat al-istimāʾ* in the *tahfizh pesantren* environment. By employing a descriptive qualitative method, this study aims to describe the implementation of the gallery walk for teaching *mahārat al-istimāʾ*, reveal students’ responses towards its implementation, and the impacts of the gallery walk on students’ *mahārat al-istimāʾ*.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study design focusing on the process of the implementation of the gallery walk, and the purpose is to present a description of the results of its implementation in teaching *mahārat al-istimāʾ* at Pondok Pesantren Tahfizh Qolbul Qur’an Putri. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, with the criteria being tenth-grade senior high school students, totaling eight persons. The interview informants in this study include the students in the sample and the *mahārat al-istimāʾ* teacher at Pondok Pesantren Tahfizh Qolbul Qur’an Putri.

The data collection techniques in this study are interviews, observation, and documentation. The researcher is using a semi-structured interview to create a natural and open situation between the researcher, students, and the *mahārat al-istimāʾ* teacher, guided by an interview protocol that contained the key points from the information to be obtained (Hidayatullah et al., 2024). Observation is carried out by examining the classroom conditions and situations during the teaching of the *mahārat al-istimāʾ* using the gallery walk, so that the researcher can completely understand the process of the teaching activity and complete the data from other techniques.

Documentation is conducted by analyzing the curriculum and the *mahārat al-istimāʾ* learning implementation plan (RPP) to enhance and finalize the necessary data. The instruments used for collecting the data include interview guidelines (indicators) and an observation sheet. The results of interviews and observations obtained will be the primary source of research data, with literature about the gallery walk and *mahārat al-istimāʾ* teaching as the secondary data source.

The data analysis technique in this study is based on the theory of interactive data analysis by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana in 2014 (Norlaila et al., 2025). First, the data from interviews, observation, and documentation will be collected and organized. Second, condensation or reduction of the data by filtering, summarizing, and sorting the data collection to serve a valid and systematic conclusion. Third, the results from data analysis will be served. Fourth and last, concluding and presenting the findings from data analysis. A

credibility data test is conducted using source and technique triangulation to assess the validity of the research findings (Barid et al., 2025).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Implementation of Gallery Walk for Teaching *Mahārat al-Istimā'*

The gallery walk at Pondok Pesantren Tahfidz Qolbul Qur'an Putri was implemented directly by the Arabic language teacher during the *mahārat al-istīmā'* lesson, attended by eight female students. Before starting the lesson, the teacher had prepared a learning implementation plan (RPP) designed for learning activities using the gallery walk. In its implementation, the gallery walk has three phases that the teacher must carry out (Tan & Perrault, 2025).

In phase 1, the teacher begins the learning activity by briefly explaining the concept, objectives, and steps of the gallery walk (Tan & Perrault, 2025). This aligns with the teacher's role in managing the class and providing clear instructions regarding the gallery walk's flow (Listiyani, 2021). After explaining the flow, the teacher delivered a verbal explanation of the material without using any audio media. The purpose is for students to listen attentively and observe the teacher's pronunciation and articulation (Nurkholis & Munawwaroh, 2021).

Moving on to phase 2, the teacher divided students into three small groups of 2-3 students (Tan & Perrault, 2025). By randomly assigning groups, students are encouraged to collaborate and communicate to create an interactive learning environment (Indriyani, 2025). This group division and collaboration also aligns with the advantages of the CLT approach, which aims to foster cooperation and a sense of responsibility for students' learning activities in a learning environment that requires listening, reflection, exploration, and reasoning (Qasserras, 2023). After dividing the groups and arranging the seating positions, the teacher then instructed the students to create posters based on their understanding of the *madrasah* (school)-themed material that had been presented. Each group was free to design its posters using its imagination and creativity.



Figure 2: Teacher Divides Groups and Students Create Posters

Figure 2 illustrates the conditions observed during the observation, where students were seated in their respective groups, as assigned by the teacher, preparing to design a



creative poster. The resulting posters were then displayed side by side on the wall, forming an exhibition gallery containing lesson materials to be presented during the rotation phase, as shown in Figure 3 below.



**Figure 3: Groups Present Creative Posters during The Rotation Phase**

Figure 3 above shows a group whose gallery was visited by another group, requiring them to present their work. Meanwhile, the visiting groups were seen listening, observing, and occasionally asking questions or responding to each other's galleries. The teacher is seen accompanying the students throughout the activity. This aligns with the gallery walk procedure and the CLT approach, which emphasize the teacher's role as a facilitator who assists, guides, clarifies misunderstandings, and provides additional explanations to students (Ghafar et al., 2023; Rochmat et al., 2024). This process demonstrates that the teacher is no longer the center of the learning, but rather a companion, guiding students to become more independent and collaborative. This aligns with the principles of the CLT approach, which emphasize student-centered learning activities through dynamic and interactive participation, enabling students to explore the use of the language more meaningfully in the learning process (Ho, 2020).



**Figure 4: Students Revisit for The Rotation Phase and Re-Observe**

Figure 4 illustrates the activities in phase 3, when the teacher invites the students to re-tour and re-observe what they have learned from the previous rotation phase (Tan & Perrault, 2025). The teacher also leads a discussion about each task at the station and occasionally asks questions to assess students' ability to listen attentively during each station visit as a form of reflection. For evaluation, the teacher provides an assessment rubric for students to measure their participation, cooperation, accuracy in receiving information, ability to restate their observations, and draw conclusions, all aspects of listening skills (Che-arón & Matcha, 2023).

The *mahārat al-istimā'* teacher mentioned challenges in teaching *mahārat al-istimā'* using a gallery walk, stemming from students' diverse friendship circles. Passive intergroup interactions often present a barrier to learning using the gallery walk due to differences in friendship circles (Indriyani, 2025). However, this can be overcome by the teacher through mixing all students and separating those who share close friendship bonds.

*"Indeed, there are friendship circles, Kak. For example, group C looks enthusiastic when group B comes forward. When group A comes forward, they pay attention but are not as enthusiastic as group B. Luckily, I have separated the friends who look close to each other and put them in different groups, even though they are still enthusiastic about only their close friend."* (Siti, 2025).

Overall, the implementation of the gallery walk with the CLT approach-based for teaching *mahārat al-istimā'* has successfully shifted the learning paradigm from teacher-centered to student-centered. This gallery walk, integrated with the CLT approach, can be an effective strategy for transforming the concept of *mahārat al-istimā'* learning to be more interactive, creative, and meaningful (As'ad, 2022; Qasserras, 2023).

### **Students' Responses to the Implementation of Gallery Walk for Teaching *Mahārat al-Istimā'***

The result of the interviews and observation of the implementation of the gallery walk for teaching *mahārat al-istimā'* showed a positive response from students. The result of the observations showed that during the implementation, students appeared very enthusiastic about creating creative posters. The students seemed eager to examine and observe each displayed poster and did not hesitate to discuss them with other groups. This fostered interaction was a boost provided by the gallery walk, which provided an opportunity for students to collaborate and communicate with those they had previously rarely interacted with (Indriyani, 2025).

In the direct interview, students stated that the gallery walk helped alleviate drowsiness and boredom during the class by encouraging physical movement as they walked to visit posts and increasing conversational activity. This aligns with a psychological study's findings that stated female students tend to be more active and enthusiastic in a gallery walk because they enjoy social activities and communication (Che-arón & Matcha, 2023).

*"When we use gallery walk, we become more active, moving and talking, not just sitting still like usual. So we will not get sleepy and will not be afraid to talk with friends because usually we have to pay attention, stay still, sit neatly, and are not allowed to talk freely."* (Heni, 2025).

Based on the advantages of the CLT approach, which can reduce listening fatigue, students feel far from boredom and are actually more active in listening, so they can think critically and produce strong memories (Sadikov & Abdusalimova, 2025). Several students stated that the *mahārat al-istimā'* learning session feels like it passes quickly because they enjoy the fun and interactive classroom atmosphere, so that they do not realize the learning time is being eroded.

*"It was really fun and I enjoyed it! The class finished quickly, and I understood the lesson. Usually, it feels like it takes forever, I get bored, and I do not understand anything."* (Lulu, 2025).

When the students walked around to visit the station, they appeared more confident in initiating interactions. Several students actively asked questions, demonstrating their attention to both the presentations delivered by fellow students and the material presented by the teacher. The presentations also proceeded smoothly, as the students reported feeling more confident speaking in front of the class. This aligns with the benefits of a gallery walk, which can enhance students' confidence in speaking and arguing, enhance interaction, and enhance the use of the language taught (Melisa et al., 2025). Although some students admitted to having difficulty choosing appropriate Arabic vocabulary, they still attempted to complete their presentations and listened attentively to explanations from their friends and the teacher.

*"I dare to step forward and speak up. I dare not be afraid of making mistakes because I see my friends and I are learning together, so we help each other to answer the questions when they pop up."* (Aini, 2025).

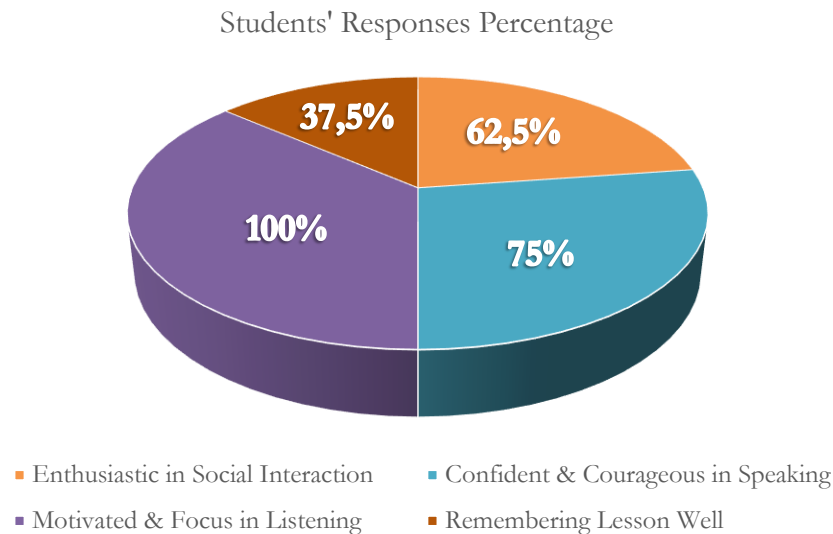
In interviews with students, researchers observed that students understood the importance of the role of *mahārat al-istimā'* in Arabic language learning, felt enthusiastic and gave positive responses, and were also motivated to learn Arabic further using a gallery walk. This is evidenced by the percentage of students' responses in the *mahārat al-istimā'* learning, which uses the gallery walk, in Figure 5. Figure 5 displays the percentages obtained from direct interviews with eight students regarding their responses to learning *mahārat al-istimā'* using a gallery walk. Based on the following diagram, as many as 37.5% of students, or three students, reported that they could remember the lesson well. In comparison, 62.5% of students, or five students, stated that their enthusiasm for social interaction with friends during gallery walk learning increased. Furthermore, 75% of the students, or six students, experienced increased confidence and courage to speak, and 100% of the students stated that they felt more enthusiastic, motivated, and focused in listening and paying attention during learning using the gallery walk.

*"I became more focused and enthusiastic about learning and listened attentively to Ustadẖah's explanations."* (Zafira, 2025).

The positive responses from students as the results in the gallery walk based on the CLT approach for teaching *mahārat al-istimā'* are not only strengthening understanding of the material but also increasing motivation, creativity, and self-confidence in learning activities (Che-arón & Matcha, 2023; Qasserras, 2023). The learning atmosphere, which was previously



passive, has now become more active, creating a pleasant environment that improves the quality of learning and social relationships among students in the Islamic boarding school (As'ad, 2022).



**Figure 5: Diagram of Students' Responses to *Mahārat al-Istima'* Learning Using Gallery Walk**

### **The Impacts of the Gallery Walk Implementation on Students' *Mahārat al-Istima'***

Based on the analysis of observation and interview data, the implementation of the gallery walk significantly impacted students' listening skills (*mahārat al-istima'*). Observations showed increased student enthusiasm during *mahārat al-istima'* learning using the gallery walk, especially when they started making posters and visiting each group's posts. Interviews with the teacher confirmed this:

*"Wow, Kak. It is the first time I have seen the kids so enthusiastic. Usually, they sit in the class, often busy with themselves. Some doodle, pass letters around on paper, and even get sleepy. I also explain the material alone. Sometimes it is really quiet; no one asks or talks to the kids because they should be listening. However, during this gallery walk, the kids were very enthusiastic. They were making posters and were also enthusiastic about exchanging colors. Kids who are not close enough also started chatting. They also learned how to give a presentation, although some were still shy. However, I kept encouraging them to keep talking, and the class became more fun because they were communicating."* (Siti, 2025).

Another impact evident during the observations was that several students could answer the teacher's questions about the material presented at the beginning of the learning session. Furthermore, several students successfully delivered creative poster presentations during the visiting station phase, thanks to their attentive listening to the lesson, which helped them remember the material. The teacher's statement reinforced this during the direct interview session:

*"...with the gallery walk, they can review the material already presented or learn new things they learned during the lesson. Memorizing vocabulary is also much faster, Kak. Because they really focus on listening and paying attention to the material in the new gallery walk atmosphere."* (Siti, 2025).

The result of these observations and interviews aligns with the proven implementation of the gallery walk to increase learning motivation. When learning motivation increases, students are more committed, focused, and strive to engage and pay attention to the lesson (Che-arón & Matcha, 2023). Some students expressed difficulty in understanding the explanation due to their limited mastery of Arabic vocabulary. However, this did not prevent them from asking about things they did not understand and remaining motivated to listen as best as possible.

Based on the advantages of the CLT approach, students feel comfortable in the learning environment due to the mutual support among their friends, eliminating feelings of anxiety and stress during learning (Sadikov & Abdusalimova, 2025). This was stated by a student during the direct interview:

*"I get along well with my classmates, and I learned through good teamwork. I do not think Arabic is difficult to understand anymore because we are all learning together."* (Ulfi, 2025).

The gallery walk, with its creative poster exhibition concept, successfully stimulated students' curiosity about the artwork on the posters, motivating them to focus and pay attention to each explanation. This was reinforced by a student in the interview:

*"...because I was curious about the other posters, I paid attention when someone explained something."* (Syakira, 2025).

Thus, the implementation of the gallery walk in *mahārat al-istimā'* learning has successfully had a positive impact on students' *mahārat al-istimā'*, with increased student enthusiasm during *mahārat al-istimā'* learning (Che-arón & Matcha, 2023). Because students listen attentively, they can also answer questions from the teacher and make good presentations. Student motivation also increases and has an impact on engagement in listening to the lesson (Che-arón & Matcha, 2023; Qasserras, 2023). In addition, students feel they are in a supportive environment, so they are not burdened with the need for perfection in *mahārat al-istimā'* learning (Sadikov & Abdusalimova, 2025).

## CONCLUSION

This study aims to describe the results of implementing a gallery walk for teaching *mahārat al-istimā'*, reveal students' responses to this approach, and assess its impact on students' *mahārat al-istimā'*. The implementation of the gallery walk for teaching *mahārat al-istimā'* at Pondok Pesantren Tahfidz Qolbul Qur'an Putri consists of three phases. In phase 1, the teacher briefly explains the concept, objectives, and procedure of the gallery walk activity as an introduction. In phase 2, group division, poster making, and post rotation are carried out. In phase 3, the teacher invites students to walk around each post again and leads a discussion. The responses given by the students were very positive. This is indicated by 37.5% of students remembering the lesson well, 62.5% being enthusiastic in social interactions, 75% feeling increased self-confidence and courage to speak, and 100% of students feeling more passionate and focused in listening. The implementation of the gallery walk based on the CLT approach also has a positive impact on students' *mahārat al-istimā'*. This is evidenced by the increased enthusiasm and motivation of students in learning *mahārat*

*al-istima'* as well as students' ability to answer questions and deliver presentations due to listening attentively to the lesson. Thus, the implementation of the gallery walk can be used as an innovation in Arabic language teaching, especially in *maharat al-istima'*. Every educational institution, especially Islamic ones with Arabic lessons, should implement the gallery walk as an innovation in Arabic language teaching to foster motivation, increase active involvement, and build a communicative learning environment. Further research can expand the focus by examining the effectiveness of the gallery walk on the other Arabic language skills, such as *maharat al-kalam* or *maharat al-kitabah*.

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