

Original Research

ELT for Inclusive Character Education: Religious Moderation Practices in Southwest Papua Islamic Schools

Misnariah Idrus ¹, Hasbullah Hasbullah ¹, Toja Romauw ¹, Vera Venita ¹, Sanitah Mohd. Yusof ²
Institut Agama Islam Negeri Sorong, Sorong, Indonesia

Article Info**Article history:**

Received 9 April 2026

Revised 20 May 2026

Accepted 26 June 2026

Keywords:

Religious moderation

Integrated values

English language teaching

State Islamic school

Islamic Boarding Schools

**Abstract**

English language teaching (ELT) is increasingly positioned as a pedagogical space where language competence, intercultural awareness, and inclusive character formation are developed together. In Islamic schools, ELT concerns not only listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency, but also how learners use English to negotiate difference, express respect, and participate responsibly in plural societies. Yet, empirical studies on religious moderation in Indonesian ELT remain limited, particularly in Southwest Papua, and few systematically connect moderation values with specific language skills. This study examined the integration of religious moderation values in English learning at MAN Kota Sorong and Darul Hufadz Islamic Boarding School in Sorong Regency, Southwest Papua. Using an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, data were collected from 52 proportionally selected students out of 522 through a 40 item Likert scale questionnaire, followed by semi structured interviews with six purposively selected students. The study focused on national commitment, tolerance, nonviolence, and acceptance of diverse traditions as integrated into listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The findings showed high implementation ($M = 4.21$), with tolerance as the strongest indicator ($M = 4.40$) and speaking as the most prominent skill domain ($M = 4.35$). Conversely, acceptance of diverse traditions ($M = 4.12$) and writing ($M = 4.09$) required stronger support through localized materials, reflective prompts, and clearer scaffolding. This study offers an original ELT based integration model that positions English classrooms as sites for moderation oriented communication, curriculum innovation, teacher preparation, and peaceful intercultural engagement in multilingual and multicultural education.

Corresponding Author: Idrus, misnariahidrus@iainsorong.ac.id

1. Introduction

In a world where religious difference can easily become a source of social tension, education is increasingly expected to do more than transmit academic knowledge. It is also called to cultivate civic maturity, ethical communication, mutual respect, and the ability to live responsibly with diversity. In Indonesia, this concern has become increasingly important through the national agenda of religious moderation promoted by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, which emphasizes inclusive religious attitudes, tolerance, national commitment, nonviolence, and respect for diverse traditions as foundations for strengthening social cohesion and national unity (Khasanah & Shodiq, 2024; Hidayat et al., 2024). Within schooling, these values are not peripheral moral additions. They shape how learners interpret difference, negotiate identity, communicate across social boundaries, and participate in plural community life, particularly in areas where interreligious, interethnic, and intercultural encounters are part of everyday social reality.

English language teaching occupies a particularly strategic position in this educational mission because English learning is never limited to grammar, vocabulary, or the mechanical mastery of the four language skills. In Islamic schools and Islamic boarding schools, ELT is closely connected to intercultural meaning making because students learn not only how to communicate in an international language, but also how to position themselves ethically when encountering different cultures, beliefs, identities, and communicative norms. As an international language, English proficiency requires learners to develop balanced intercultural awareness and moderate character so that they can engage in cross-cultural communication responsibly (Astuti et al., 2024; Hasbullah, Wahidah, & Nanning, 2023; Rahmanu & Molnár, 2024). From an applied linguistics perspective, language education is not value neutral because texts, tasks, classroom interactions, and communicative routines can shape students' social orientations and ideological positioning, including how they understand cultural difference, belonging, and legitimacy in communication (Chvala, 2020; Tollefson, 2012). Therefore, ELT can serve as a pedagogical space where linguistic competence and ethical dispositions are developed together through meaningful engagement with cultural and social responsibility.

A growing body of scholarship has shown that integrating values into language education can strengthen intercultural communicative competence and prepare students for socially responsible participation in diverse communities. Manshur and Munif (2023), Hidayat et al. (2024), Astuti et al. (2024), for example, have indicated that religious moderation values in teaching can support students' intercultural communication competencies. This direction is consistent with intercultural competence theory, which views effective intercultural communication as grounded in knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable learners to interact appropriately and respectfully across difference (Deardorff, 2006). However, these studies also reveal a methodological and pedagogical limitation. Many discussions of religious moderation in education remain broad and conceptual, while the specific ways moderation values are translated into listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities are not always made explicit. As a result, the connection between value constructs, ELT pedagogy, classroom practice, and measurable learning experience remains underdeveloped.

Previous empirical studies have also suggested that moderation-oriented language teaching is most visible when classroom practices foreground interaction, dialogue, and respectful negotiation of meaning. Astuti et al. (2024) and Subair et al. (2024) demonstrated that students who learn language through religious moderation approaches are better prepared to respond to diversity in global interactions. Similarly, Muhammad et al. (2019), Nirwan and Hasbullah (2021), and Hossain (2024) found that language teaching which integrates tolerance and respect for local traditions can support students' religious awareness, openness, and sensitivity to difference. These findings align with the view that English in global contact settings is frequently negotiated through multilingual and intercultural repertoires, where learners' values and identities become part of how meaning is produced and how communicative norms are co-constructed (Canagarajah, 2013). Nevertheless, the existing literature still leaves a sharp gap: religious moderation is often presented as a desirable educational principle, but less frequently examined through a systematic, skill-based ELT framework that shows how each moderation indicator can be integrated into specific language practices. This gap weakens replicability, limits pedagogical transfer, and reduces the explanatory power of findings for teachers and curriculum developers.

Responding to this gap, the present study focuses on a specific and underrepresented educational setting, namely Islamic schools and Islamic boarding schools in Sorong, Southwest Papua, Indonesia. The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to connect four indicators of religious moderation, namely national commitment, tolerance, nonviolence, and acceptance of diverse traditions, with the four English language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This focus is particularly important because Papua is marked by complex religious, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity, making it a meaningful site for examining how ELT can support both communicative competence and inclusive character formation. Unlike studies that discuss religious moderation as a general educational value, this study offers a more pedagogically explicit and context-sensitive inquiry by mapping moderation values onto skill-based English learning practices while maintaining attention to intercultural demands in language education (Astuti et al., 2024; Subair et al., 2024; Hossain, 2024).

The significance of this study is both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it contributes to discussions in applied linguistics, intercultural communication, and value-based ELT by clarifying how religious moderation can be understood as part of communicative development rather than as an external moral addition to language learning. Practically, it provides evidence that can inform English teachers, Islamic school administrators, curriculum designers, and teacher educators in developing learning materials and

classroom tasks that integrate moderation values more systematically. Accordingly, this study has two main aims. First, it describes the level of application of religious moderation values in the English teaching process at the State Islamic Senior High School and the Islamic boarding school of Darul Hufadz. Second, it develops a model for integrating religious moderation values into English language skills so that English learning can improve linguistic competence while also shaping moderate, ethical, and interculturally aware learners (Manshur & Munif, 2023; Hidayat et al., 2024; Astuti et al., 2024).

This study is therefore positioned as a contribution to ELT scholarship that views English classrooms as spaces for both language development and social formation. By examining how religious moderation values are applied across language skills, the study moves beyond general claims about character education and provides a clearer pedagogical account of where moderation is strongly enacted and where further reinforcement is needed. This is especially relevant for ELT in multilingual and multicultural contexts because English learning can either reproduce narrow cultural assumptions or become a bridge for dialogue, empathy, and respectful engagement with difference. The findings are expected to help teachers design more meaningful listening, speaking, reading, and writing activities that connect English proficiency with ethical communication and local cultural realities.

The article proceeds by first establishing the scholarly and educational context for integrating religious moderation within ELT, then reviewing relevant studies to situate the research gap in both the Indonesian and Papuan contexts. It then presents the methodological approach used to examine the application of religious moderation values and to construct an integration model grounded in the study setting. Finally, the article synthesizes the findings and highlights implications for ELT practice, teacher development, and learning materials that foster moderation-oriented intercultural engagement. It argues that ELT can be a transformative space where students learn to use English accurately, communicate ethically, respect diversity, and contribute to plural societies.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design and Sampling Procedure

This study employed a mixed methods approach with an explanatory sequential design, in which quantitative data were collected first and followed by qualitative data to explain the statistical findings in greater depth (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Sarwono, 2011). The population was 522 students at the State Islamic Senior High School of MAN Kota Sorong and the Islamic boarding school of Darul Hufadz in Kabupaten Sorong. The sample was 52 students (10%) selected using proportional random sampling (Astuti et al. 2024). Interview Informants were 6 students selected purposively based on their high achievement, active in organizations, and representing diverse backgrounds (Kartika et al. 2024). The combination of these two instruments is expected to provide a comprehensive picture, both quantitatively and qualitatively, of the extent to which the values of religious moderation are internalized in English language learning (Manshur and Munif 2023; Subair et al. 2024; Muflihini et al. 2024).

2.2 Research Instruments

The study used a 40 item Likert scale questionnaire and a semi structured interview guide. The questionnaire measured students' perceptions of religious moderation values in English language learning through four indicators: national commitment, tolerance, nonviolence, and acceptance of diverse traditions. These indicators were mapped onto four English skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Each item used a five-point scale from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree.

Table 2.1 Blueprint of the 40-item questionnaire

Religious moderation indicator	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Total
National commitment	3	2	3	2	10
Tolerance	2	3	2	3	10
Nonviolence	3	2	3	2	10
Acceptance of diverse traditions	2	3	2	3	10
Total	10	10	10	10	40

The questionnaire was developed by operationalizing the four religious moderation indicators into skill based ELT activities (see table 2.1). It was then reviewed by 2 experts in English language teaching, Islamic education, and educational research to assess content relevance, clarity, and construct alignment. Revisions were made to improve wording, avoid ambiguity, and ensure suitability for students. The questionnaire reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha, resulting in $\alpha = 0.92$, which indicates very high internal consistency. The interview guide explored students' classroom experiences, moderation related materials, respectful communication, and the representation of local traditions and diversity in English learning.

2.3 Data Collection and Ethical Procedures

Data were collected after permission was obtained from the participating schools. Before completing the questionnaire and interviews, participants were informed about the study purpose, voluntary participation, their right to withdraw, and the confidentiality of their responses. Informed consent was obtained, and the process followed school procedures for research involving students. Anonymity was maintained by removing students' names from the report and using codes such as S1, S2, and S3 for interview participants.

Questionnaire findings were reported in aggregate form. Because religious moderation is a socially valued topic, students might provide socially desirable answers. To reduce this risk, the questionnaire was completed anonymously, interview questions were phrased neutrally, and students were told that their responses would not affect their grades, teachers' judgment, or school status.

2.4 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed by calculating mean scores for each moderation indicator and each English skill. The scores were interpreted as low, 1.00 to 2.33; moderate, 2.34 to 3.66; and high, 3.67 to 5.00. This analysis identified the overall level of implementation and the relative strengths and weaker areas across indicators and skills. Qualitative interview data were analyzed thematically through repeated reading, coding, theme grouping, and interpretation. The qualitative findings were then connected to the quantitative results to explain students' experiences and provide a fuller understanding of how religious moderation values were integrated into English language teaching.

3. Results

This section reports the results in three linked steps. First, the quantitative findings address RQ1 by showing the overall level of religious moderation integration and the relative strengths and weaker areas across moderation indicators and English skills. Second, the qualitative findings address RQ2 by explaining how students experienced these patterns through recurrent themes related to learning activities, materials, and implementation constraints. Third, the section addresses RQ3 by presenting a data-informed integration model that connects the moderation indicators with specific skill domains and illustrates how the quantitative pattern aligns with the qualitative themes.

RQ1. What is the level of application of religious moderation values in English learning?

Overall, students reported a high level of religious moderation integration in English learning across the two sites, with an overall mean score of 4.21 (high category). Although all indicators and skills were classified as high, the distribution of mean scores indicates a consistent internal pattern that is analytically meaningful. Among the moderation indicators, tolerance was the strongest ($M = 4.40$), suggesting that students perceived respectful engagement with difference as the most salient moderation value in their English learning.

In contrast, acceptance of diverse traditions was comparatively the weakest ($M = 4.12$), implying that local tradition and cultural plurality were less explicitly foregrounded in learning activities or materials, even though the score remained within the high band. Across language skills, speaking was the strongest ($M = 4.35$), which signals that moderation was most visible to students when English learning involved real-time interpersonal interaction, negotiation of viewpoints, and communicative performance. Writing was comparatively the weakest ($M = 4.09$), indicating that moderation-related meanings were less consistently enacted or assessed in written production, where students may prioritize grammar and vocabulary over reflective value-oriented expression.

Table 3.1 Moderation-related meanings

Domain	Dimension	Mean	Category	Analytic note
Overall	All indicators and skills	4.21	High	High integration reported across sites
Moderation indicators	Tolerance	4.40	High	Most salient moderation indicator
Moderation indicators	National commitment	4.19	High	Strong, but lower than tolerance
Moderation indicators	Non-violence	4.14	High	Strong, may depend on text selection
Moderation indicators	Acceptance of diverse traditions	4.12	High	Relative weakness, indicates localization gap
English language skills	Speaking	4.35	High	Moderation strongest in interactive tasks
English language skills	Listening	4.20	High	Strong receptive skill integration
English language skills	Reading	4.20	High	Strong receptive skill integration
English language skills	Writing	4.09	High	Relative weakness, suggests reflective scaffolding needed

To make the pattern easier to interpret, [Figure 1](#) summarizes the same means visually. The concentration of higher scores around tolerance and speaking suggests that moderation integration was most legible in dialogic classroom events, whereas the lower values for acceptance of traditions and writing suggest a need for more explicit cultural content and reflective writing prompts that connect local diversity with English meaning-making.

Figure 1. Mean scores by religious moderation indicators and English language skills

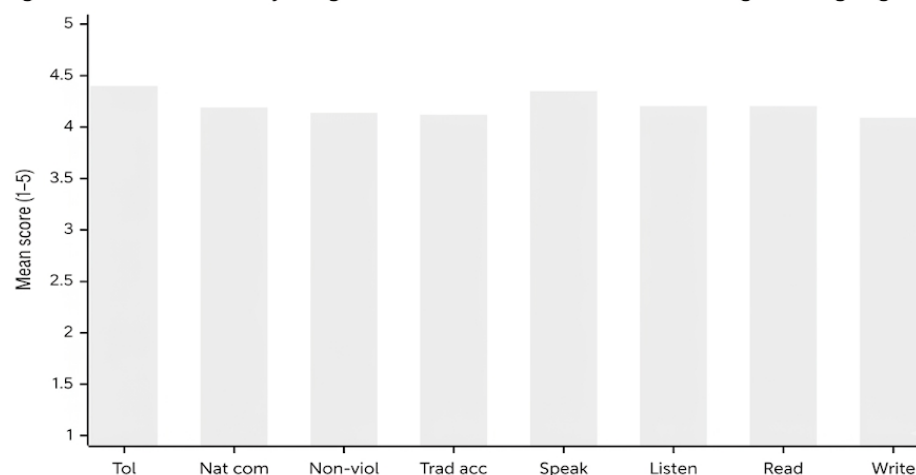


Figure 1. Mean scores by religious moderation indicators and English language skills

The results do not simply show that moderation is “high.” They show that moderation is most strongly perceived where English learning resembles real social interaction, and it is comparatively less explicit where English learning becomes a solitary and form-focused activity, especially writing. This pattern is important because it suggests that moderation values are not automatically transferred across all skill areas; instead, they appear to require task designs that make values visible as communicative choices, not only as abstract attitudes.

RQ2. How do students describe the integration of moderation values in English learning?

The qualitative findings explain how students experienced the integration of moderation values in English learning. Three major themes emerged: moderation was most visible in interactive speaking-oriented activities, tradition-related values were less explicit in writing and learning materials, and the consistency of implementation depended strongly on instructional materials and teacher preparation. These themes clarify that students did not understand moderation only as an abstract moral concept, but as a classroom practice shaped by task design, communication patterns, and the availability of culturally relevant learning resources.

Because the available qualitative data were presented as summarized interview findings rather than full verbatim transcripts, the excerpts below are displayed as *interview summary excerpts*. They should be replaced with direct quotations when complete interview transcripts are available.

Table 3.1 Thematic Display of Students’ Descriptions of Moderation Values in English Learning

Theme	Key Finding	Analytical Interpretation
Moderation was most visible in interactive speaking-oriented tasks	Students experienced moderation most clearly through debates, discussions, role plays, and group work.	Speaking tasks created real-time opportunities for students to practice tolerance, respectful disagreement, turn-taking, and cross-cultural awareness.
Tradition-related moderation was less explicit in writing tasks and materials	Students rarely connected English writing with local culture, traditions, and plural identities.	Writing appeared to be treated mainly as a technical skill focused on grammar and vocabulary, leaving limited space for value-based reflection.
Implementation depended on materials and teacher preparation	Students noticed that moderation values were not integrated equally across all skills and classroom activities.	The integration of moderation values was present but not yet systematic, suggesting a need for clearer materials, teacher support, and explicit assessment criteria.

Theme 1. Moderation Was Most Visible in Interactive Speaking-Oriented Tasks

The strongest qualitative pattern showed that students experienced moderation most clearly in speaking-based activities. Discussions, debates, role plays, and group presentations required students to listen to others, manage disagreement, and express different viewpoints politely. These activities made moderation visible because students had to practice it directly through language use. In this context, moderation was not merely taught as a value; it was performed through communicative behavior.

Students described speaking activities as spaces where tolerance, respect, and openness became part of classroom interaction. They learned to disagree without attacking others, respond to different opinions without judgment, and use English expressions that were polite and socially appropriate. This finding suggests that speaking tasks functioned as practical sites for the enactment of moderation values, especially when students were required to communicate across different perspectives.

“In English debate, we had to give different opinions, but we also had to keep our words polite. I learned that disagreeing does not mean disrespecting friends.”
[INT-S1_Set 1 | 08:32. SpAct]

"When we worked in groups, we listened to friends who had different views. The teacher reminded us to respond calmly and not laugh at other opinions."
[INT-S2_Set 1 | 11:05. Group Discussion]

"Role play helped me understand how to speak with people from different cultures. We practiced how to ask questions without judging their beliefs."
[INT-S3_Set 2 | 06:48. RLP]

"During presentation, we had to accept questions from friends. Sometimes the questions were different from our ideas, but we learned to answer respectfully."
[INT-S4_Set 2 | 13:20. Prest]

These excerpts show that interactive speaking tasks encouraged students to transform moderation values into concrete classroom actions. The students' descriptions indicate that tolerance was learned through repeated communicative routines, such as listening, responding, negotiating meaning, and using polite expressions. Therefore, the strong pattern in speaking suggests that moderation becomes more meaningful when students are placed in situations that require immediate interpersonal engagement.

Theme 2. Tradition-Related Moderation Was Less Explicit in Writing Tasks and Materials

The second theme revealed that students perceived tradition-related moderation as less visible, particularly in writing tasks and learning materials. Although students recognized the importance of respecting local culture and different traditions, they did not frequently encounter English tasks that explicitly asked them to write about cultural diversity, local wisdom, or plural identities. As a result, the value of accepting traditions appeared less developed than general tolerance in classroom interaction.

Students also explained that writing activities were usually directed toward grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, and text organization. This technical orientation made writing less connected to moderation values unless the teacher intentionally designed prompts related to culture, diversity, or social harmony. The issue, therefore, was not that students rejected tradition-related moderation, but that the learning design gave them fewer structured opportunities to express it.

"When writing in English, we usually focus on grammar and vocabulary. We rarely write about local traditions or differences in society."
[INT-S5_Set 1 | 09:14. WrtTask]

"Some texts are about general topics, but not many are connected to our local culture. So, we do not always see how English relates to our traditions."
[INT-S6_Set 1 | 15:37. LearnMatr]

"I think it would be easier to understand moderation if the writing topic asked us to describe different cultures or traditions around us."
[INT-S7_Set 2 | 10:26 | Cult-Cont]

"If the teacher gives a topic about respecting different traditions, maybe we can write more about moderation. Without that topic, we only think about correct sentences."
[INT-S8_Set 2 | 17:42. RefWrt]

These excerpts indicate a design gap in the integration of moderation values into writing instruction. Students were able to recognize the relevance of tradition and diversity, but the instructional prompts did not consistently activate those values. This suggests that writing can become a stronger medium for moderation learning if students are given culturally grounded prompts, reflective tasks, and assessment criteria that value both language accuracy and ethical meaning.

Theme 3. Implementation Depended on Materials and Teacher Preparation

The third theme showed that the integration of moderation values depended on the availability of suitable materials and the teacher's ability to connect values with English skills. Students reported that some

teachers integrated moderation clearly, especially in speaking activities, but the integration was not always consistent across reading, writing, listening, and grammar-focused lessons. This uneven pattern suggests that moderation integration was present, but it remained activity-dependent rather than fully embedded in the curriculum.

Students also indicated that teacher explanation, examples, and classroom instructions played an important role. When teachers explicitly connected English tasks with respect, tolerance, cultural awareness, or peaceful communication, students understood the value more clearly. However, when tasks were presented only as language exercises, the moderation message became less visible.

“The value became clearer when the teacher explained why we had to respect different answers, not only whether our English was correct.”

[INT-S9_ Set 1 | 07:55. Teacher-Instrc]

“Sometimes the activity was good, but the material did not explain moderation directly. We understood it more from the teacher’s explanation.”

[INT-S10_ Set 1 | 12:18. Ler-Resources]

“Speaking activities often included respect and tolerance, but in other lessons, such as grammar or writing, the value was not always mentioned.”

[INT-S11_ Set 2 | 14:09. Skill-Integ]

“If there are more examples and materials about moderation, I think students can understand it better in all English lessons, not only discussion.”

[INT-S12_ Set 2 | 18:31. Class- Pract]

These excerpts demonstrate that moderation integration is strongly mediated by pedagogical planning. Students’ experiences were shaped not only by the presence of value-based content, but also by how teachers framed the tasks, selected materials, and guided classroom interaction. The finding implies that teacher preparation and instructional resources are central to making moderation values more systematic across English learning.

Overall, the qualitative findings reveal that students experienced moderation most strongly when English learning involved interaction, dialogue, and perspective exchange. Speaking-oriented tasks created authentic spaces for students to practice tolerance through polite disagreement, respectful listening, and cross-cultural communication. However, the weaker visibility of tradition-related values in writing and materials suggests that the integration of moderation was not yet equally distributed across all English skills.

The most important interpretation is that the lower emphasis on tradition and writing reflects a learning design issue rather than a lack of student awareness. Students showed readiness to engage with moderation values, but they needed more explicit prompts, localized materials, reflective writing tasks, and clearer assessment indicators. Therefore, the integration of moderation values in English learning can be strengthened by moving beyond spontaneous classroom interaction and embedding these values systematically into materials, tasks, and evaluation across all language skills.

RQ3. What integration model can be formulated from the data?

The integration model formulated from the findings is an applied instructional framework rather than a causal model. It was developed by connecting the quantitative patterns with the qualitative themes to identify which English skill most strongly supports each moderation indicator. The model shows that moderation values are not integrated in the same way across all language skills. Instead, each value appears to become more visible when it is linked to a skill domain that naturally allows students to practice, interpret, or reflect on that value.

The key finding is that speaking functions as the strongest pathway for tolerance because it provides direct opportunities for interaction, negotiation, respectful disagreement, and cross-cultural communication. Listening also supports national commitment because students can engage with civic, national unity, and social harmony texts through comprehension and reflection. Reading supports non-violence because texts can present conflict, moral choices, and peaceful resolution. Meanwhile, writing appears as the weakest but

most strategic pathway for strengthening acceptance of diverse traditions. This weakness does not suggest that students lack appreciation for traditions. Rather, it indicates that writing tasks have not yet been sufficiently designed to activate local culture, plural identity, and reflective expression.

Table 3.2 Skill-Based Moderation Integration Model in English Learning

Moderation Indicator	Skill Pathway	Empirical Signal from Results	Qualitative Explanation	Suggested Learning Task	Reinforcement Needed
National commitment	Listening	Listening showed a high mean score (M = 4.20), while national commitment was also high (M = 4.19).	Students can understand national values more effectively when they listen to texts related to unity, civic responsibility, and social belonging.	Listening to short speeches, dialogues, or audio texts about national unity, diversity, and shared citizenship, followed by guided comprehension questions.	Provide listening materials that explicitly connect English learning with civic awareness, national identity, and social responsibility.
Tolerance	Speaking	Tolerance obtained the highest indicator score (M = 4.40), and speaking was the highest skill score (M = 4.35).	Tolerance becomes visible when students interact, exchange opinions, respond politely, and manage disagreement in real time.	Structured discussion, debate, role play, group presentation, and peer response activities using respectful communication rules.	Strengthen classroom interaction norms, such as polite disagreement, turn-taking, active listening, and non-judgmental responses.
Non-violence	Reading	Reading showed a high mean score (M = 4.20), while non-violence also received a strong score (M = 4.14).	Reading allows students to analyze conflict situations, identify peaceful responses, and reflect on the consequences of aggressive or intolerant behavior.	Reading narratives, dialogues, news-based texts, or short stories about conflict resolution, empathy, and peaceful communication.	Add critical reading questions that guide students to identify causes of conflict, peaceful alternatives, and ethical language use.
Acceptance of diverse traditions	Writing	Acceptance of diverse traditions received the lowest indicator score (M = 4.12), and writing was the lowest skill score (M = 4.09).	Students rarely express tradition-related moderation in writing because writing tasks tend to focus more on grammar, vocabulary, and text structure than cultural reflection.	Reflective writing, descriptive essays, comparative cultural narratives, and short opinion texts about local traditions and cultural diversity.	Develop localized writing prompts, tradition-rich model texts, reflective scaffolds, and assessment criteria that value both language accuracy and cultural meaning.

Based on this model, moderation integration appears strongest when the English skill creates an authentic space for students to practice the intended value. Speaking is the most productive pathway because it requires students to demonstrate tolerance immediately through language choices, interactional behavior, and social responsiveness. This explains why tolerance and speaking emerged as the strongest dimensions in the findings. In this pathway, moderation is not only understood cognitively, but performed communicatively.

The model also shows that listening and reading support moderation through interpretive engagement. Listening can expose students to messages of unity, citizenship, and national belonging, while reading can guide students to examine peaceful conflict resolution and non-violent communication. These two skills are important because they help students internalize moderation values through comprehension, analysis, and guided reflection before expressing them in spoken or written form. The most important area for improvement is the writing pathway for acceptance of diverse traditions. Writing has strong potential to deepen moderation because it allows students to reflect, organize ideas, compare cultural experiences, and articulate personal understanding of diversity. However, this potential will remain underdeveloped if writing tasks continue to emphasize only linguistic accuracy. To make moderation more visible in writing, students need prompts that ask them to describe local traditions, compare cultural practices respectfully, and reflect on the importance of living with diversity.

Therefore, the proposed model can be summarized as a skill-based moderation integration model: listening strengthens national commitment, speaking activates tolerance, reading supports non-violence, and writing reinforces acceptance of diverse traditions. The model highlights that moderation values should not be inserted into English learning only as moral messages. They need to be embedded into task design, classroom interaction, learning materials, and assessment criteria. In practical terms, the model suggests that English learning becomes a meaningful space for moderation when each language skill is intentionally connected to a specific value pathway and supported by relevant pedagogical scaffolding.

4. Discussion

This study highlights that students perceived the integration of religious moderation values in English learning positively, although the pattern varied across moderation indicators and English language skills. The overall mean score of 4.21 suggests that English learning at MAN Kota Sorong and Darul Hufadz Islamic Boarding School in Kabupaten Sorong was perceived not only as a linguistic activity, but also as a pedagogical space for cultivating moderation-related values. The key finding shows that tolerance obtained the highest mean score (4.40), while acceptance of diverse traditions received the lowest mean score (4.12). In terms of language skills, speaking emerged as the strongest pathway ($M = 4.35$), whereas writing was the weakest pathway ($M = 4.09$). Listening and reading produced identical mean scores, indicating a relatively balanced integration of moderation values in receptive skills.

These findings indicate that moderation-based English Language Teaching (ELT) should not be understood as the mere insertion of moral, civic, or religious messages into English materials. Instead, moderation values become pedagogically meaningful when they are transformed into communicative, interpretive, and reflective language practices. Speaking appeared to provide the most visible pathway for tolerance because students were required to practice respect through turn-taking, negotiation of meaning, collaborative interaction, and polite disagreement. Listening and reading supported moderation through exposure to themes of national commitment, civic responsibility, peaceful communication, and social coexistence. Writing, however, required more explicit pedagogical scaffolding because students did not automatically connect written English tasks with local traditions, cultural plurality, or religious moderation unless such themes were deliberately embedded in the task design.

The qualitative findings strengthen this interpretation. Students and lecturers reported that discussions, debates, role plays, group activities, and diversity-themed tasks helped foster mutual respect, confidence, and inclusive religious awareness. However, writing activities were often described as grammar- and vocabulary-oriented rather than value-oriented. This explains why writing and acceptance of diverse traditions appeared as the weakest dimensions, although both remained within the high category. In line with the logic of explanatory sequential mixed methods, the qualitative data clarified the statistical pattern by showing how students experienced moderation values in everyday learning activities (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Sarwono, 2011).

The findings confirm previous scholarship in ELT that views language learning as a social, cultural, and ideological practice rather than a purely technical process of mastering grammar, vocabulary, and skills. Speaking activities became the strongest space for moderation because they required students to negotiate meaning, respond to different opinions, and perform respectful interaction. This supports intercultural perspectives on language education, which argue that language classrooms can develop learners' capacity to communicate across cultural, religious, and ideological differences (Deardorff, 2006). The findings also align with character education scholarship, which emphasizes that values become more meaningful when students practice them through repeated social interaction, guided reflection, and classroom routines, rather than through direct moral instruction alone (Lickona, 1991; Berkowitz & Bier, 2005).

At the same time, this study extends previous research on religious moderation in education by showing that moderation values may be skill-dependent in English learning. Earlier studies have generally positioned religious moderation as a broad educational goal involving tolerance, national commitment, non-violence, and acceptance of diverse traditions (Manshur & Munif, 2023; Subair et al., 2024; Muflihin et al., 2024). This study adds a more specific pedagogical interpretation by showing that each moderation indicator may require a different English skill pathway. National commitment was most closely associated with listening, tolerance with speaking, non-violence with reading, and acceptance of diverse traditions with writing. This skill-based interpretation offers a more operational model for teachers who need to translate abstract moderation values into concrete classroom tasks.

The high score for tolerance is consistent with studies arguing that communicative language teaching can foster tolerant orientations because it requires learners to encounter difference, negotiate meaning, and maintain interpersonal relationships while communicating (Hossain, 2024). From the perspective of intercultural competence, tolerance is not merely a declared attitude, but an interactional capacity involving attitudes, knowledge, and skills that enable appropriate and effective communication across difference (Deardorff, 2006). In this study, tolerance became visible through discourse practices such as turn-taking, politeness strategies, respectful disagreement, and collaborative problem-solving. This supports the growing view that language education is a value-laden practice rather than a neutral pedagogical activity (Hossain, 2024; Suharmoko et al., 2025; Chvala, 2020).

The prominence of tolerance may also reflect classroom practices at MAN Kota Sorong and Darul Hufadz Islamic Boarding School, particularly group discussion, cooperative learning, and dialogical interaction. These practices likely provided repeated opportunities for students to rehearse moderation as interpersonal conduct. This interpretation is consistent with Indonesian studies showing that tolerance tends to be the most visible and easily operationalized dimension of religious moderation when delivered through interactive pedagogies (Patak et al., 2013; Subair et al., 2024; Fadlilaturrohman & Shofiyuddin, 2025; Satir & Akidah, Sri, 2025). However, this interpretation should remain cautious because questionnaire items on moral, religious, and civic virtues may be influenced by social desirability and institutional expectations (Tourangeau & Yan, 2007). Therefore, the high tolerance score should be read as evidence of perceived integration and value salience, not as direct proof of actual classroom behavior.

In contrast, acceptance of diverse traditions obtained the lowest mean score. Although it remained in the high category, this relative weakness suggests that local cultural and customary traditions, particularly Papuan traditions, may not yet be sufficiently represented in English learning materials and tasks. This finding resonates with critiques of ELT in Indonesia and other EFL contexts, where globally oriented materials may marginalize local knowledge and reduce the visibility of learners' cultural repertoires (Mali & Salsbury, 2021; Subair et al., 2024). Textbook scholarship also shows that local culture is often underrepresented or unevenly represented in widely used ELT textbooks, limiting opportunities for learners to interpret and produce English through locally meaningful content (Shin et al., 2011). In the context of Southwest Papua, where local wisdom, ethnic plurality, and cultural traditions are central to social cohesion, this finding points to the need for culturally grounded texts, tasks, and genres.

The local context of Southwest Papua is therefore essential to the interpretation of the findings. MAN Kota Sorong and Darul Hufadz Islamic Boarding School are located in a region characterized by religious, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity. In such a setting, English learning can become more than a subject for developing communicative competence. It can also function as a pedagogical space where students learn how to communicate ethically across social, cultural, and religious differences. The high score for tolerance may reflect the relevance of moderation values to students' everyday social environment. However, the lower score for acceptance of diverse traditions suggests that exposure to diversity does not automatically

lead to structured reflection on cultural plurality. Students may live in diverse communities, but they still need guided classroom tasks that help them articulate the meanings of tradition, identity, coexistence, and mutual respect in English.

This point is particularly important for moderation-based ELT in Southwest Papua. If English materials are dominated by general, distant, or globally standardized cultural topics, students may not see a strong relationship between English learning and their own social world. The findings suggest that locally grounded materials, such as texts on Papuan traditions, interfaith cooperation, cultural ceremonies, local wisdom, multilingual communities, and community harmony, could make religious moderation more concrete and contextually meaningful. In this sense, moderation-based ELT should not only prepare students to communicate globally, but also enable them to express local diversity ethically, critically, and confidently in English.

From the perspective of language skills, speaking emerged as the strongest pathway for moderation integration. This supports the argument that oral interaction provides immediate conditions for enacting moderation because learners must negotiate meaning, manage differences of opinion, and choose respectful language strategies under social presence and audience awareness (Hossain, 2024; Ortaçtepe, 2016; Yildiz, 2016; Khairifa et al., 2025). Debates, role plays, group discussions, and presentations can function as structured spaces for rehearsing tolerance and non-violence through discourse management. This means that moderation is not only taught as content, but also performed through interaction.

Listening and reading also played important roles in moderation integration. Their identical mean scores suggest that audio and reading materials may have carried themes related to peaceful coexistence, national unity, civic responsibility, and respectful communication. This pattern is consistent with the view that classroom texts can transmit cultural values and ideological positions through representation and framing, even when teachers do not explicitly label the lesson as character education (Nurkanti et al., 2023; Mujayanah et al., 2023). Receptive skills may therefore support moderation by shaping learners' interpretive repertoires, including how they understand respectful discourse, social harmony, difference, and peaceful conflict resolution.

Writing emerged as the weakest skill pathway. This suggests that students may prioritize grammatical accuracy and lexical correctness over reflective engagement with moderation values, especially when writing is assessed as a technical product rather than a meaning-making process (Cahyono & Rahayu, 2020; Metboki, 2025). Writing scholarship has argued that writing should be positioned as meaning-making and "teaching to mean," especially when writing is expected to express ethical stance, cultural interpretation, and respectful representation of difference (Byrnes, 2013). Therefore, moderation-oriented ELT needs writing prompts, genre models, and rubrics that explicitly elicit value-oriented meaning, such as reflective journals, culturally grounded essays, comparative cultural narratives, and project-based writing on local cultural content.

The qualitative findings also showed that interactive activities, such as role-playing, tolerance-based debates, and diversity-themed essays, were useful in fostering mutual respect, confidence, and inclusive religious awareness. These findings align with sociocultural perspectives that understand learning as socially mediated participation, where dispositions develop through interactional experience and guided meaning-making (Hayani et al., 2025; Pajarianto et al., 2025). They also support Indonesian qualitative work suggesting that dialogical and participatory learning models strengthen character formation and academic engagement (Wahyudin et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the qualitative data also revealed constraints, including limited teaching materials explicitly designed to integrate religious moderation and limited professional development for lecturers and teachers. This echoes research indicating that value integration often depends on individual teacher initiative rather than systematic curriculum design, which may produce uneven integration across skills, materials, and learning units (Muhammad et al., 2019; Anayanti et al., 2025).

A central gap addressed by this study is the limited empirical connection between religious moderation, English language skills, intercultural competence, and local educational contexts. Previous studies have often discussed religious moderation as a broad institutional or character education agenda, while ELT studies have tended to discuss intercultural competence without always linking it to moderation values in specific Indonesian contexts. This study bridges that gap by showing how moderation indicators are perceived across listening, speaking, reading, and writing in two Islamic educational institutions in Southwest Papua. The novelty of the study lies in the formulation of a skill-based integration model that

links English language skills with religious moderation indicators: listening with national commitment, speaking with tolerance, reading with non-violence, and writing with acceptance of diverse traditions. This model is theoretically consistent with multidimensional views of intercultural competence and moderation-oriented education (Hidayat et al., 2024; Subair et al., 2024; Pajariantio et al., 2025), but it offers a more practical ELT framework grounded in students' reported learning experiences.

The study also contributes by showing that moderation integration is uneven across skills. Indicators that are more easily enacted through interaction, especially tolerance through speaking, appeared stronger than indicators that require curricular localization and reflective production, especially acceptance of diverse traditions through writing. This finding challenges any assumption that moderation values automatically transfer from one skill area to another. It suggests that moderation-based ELT requires skill-specific task design, culturally responsive materials, and explicit assessment criteria. Thus, the model proposed in this study should be understood as an applied framework for curriculum development rather than a causal model of learning outcomes.

Pedagogically, moderation-oriented ELT should maintain and expand speaking-centered activities that cultivate respectful disagreement, intercultural dialogue, and collaborative interaction. At the same time, teachers need to strengthen localized materials and writing pedagogy so that tradition and cultural diversity become legitimate English content (Mali & Salsbury, 2021; Shin et al., 2011). Teacher development programs should support lecturers and teachers in mapping moderation indicators onto skill-specific outcomes, designing reflective prompts, developing culturally responsive materials, and constructing assessment criteria that value ethical stance, respectful representation, and intercultural awareness. At the curriculum level, the findings support systematic integration rather than reliance on individual teacher initiative, particularly in diverse regions where schooling plays an important role in sustaining social cohesion (Tollefson, 2012; Subair et al., 2024).

The findings should be interpreted carefully because this study involved only 52 questionnaire respondents and six interview participants from limited research sites. The study also relied on self-report questionnaires, which may be influenced by social desirability, particularly because religious moderation, tolerance, and civic values are normatively valued in school contexts. In addition, the absence of classroom observation limits the study's ability to verify how moderation values were enacted in actual teacher talk, peer interaction, instructional materials, and assessment practices. The limited qualitative sample also means that the interview findings should be treated as explanatory rather than broadly generalizable. Therefore, the results should be understood as context-specific evidence from MAN Kota Sorong and Darul Hufadz Islamic Boarding School, not as a basis for broad generalization across all Islamic schools or all ELT contexts in Indonesia.

Future research should extend this study through classroom observation, discourse analysis, teacher interviews, and document analysis to examine how tolerance, non-violence, national commitment, and acceptance of diverse traditions are enacted through teacher talk, peer interaction, feedback, materials, and assessment practices. Intervention studies could also test whether localized writing prompts, genre scaffolds, and culturally grounded projects improve students' ability to express acceptance of tradition and reflective value positions in English, especially when writing is treated as meaning-making rather than only technical accuracy (Byrnes, 2013; Cahyono & Rahayu, 2020). Comparative studies across public schools, Christian schools, pesantren, vocational schools, and multicultural classrooms in other regions of Indonesia would further help determine which patterns are specific to the Sorong context and which represent broader dynamics of moderation-oriented ELT in multilingual and multicultural educational settings.

6. Conclusion

This study highlights that English language teaching in MAN Kota Sorong and Darul Hufadz Islamic Boarding School in Kabupaten Sorong, Southwest Papua, has been perceived as a meaningful pedagogical space for integrating religious moderation values with language learning. The key findings show a high overall level of implementation ($M = 4.21$), with tolerance emerging as the strongest moderation indicator ($M = 4.40$) and speaking as the most prominent skill pathway ($M = 4.35$), suggesting that interactive oral activities such as discussion, role play, debate, and group presentation provide effective spaces for practising respectful communication, openness, and intercultural awareness. However, acceptance of diverse traditions ($M = 4.12$) and writing ($M = 4.09$) require further pedagogical reinforcement, particularly through localized materials, reflective writing prompts, and culturally grounded tasks that allow students to express Papuan

traditions, plural identities, and inclusive values in English. The novelty of this study lies in its skill-based integration model, which connects national commitment with listening, tolerance with speaking, non-violence with reading, and acceptance of diverse traditions with writing, thereby offering a practical framework for moderation-oriented ELT in multilingual and multicultural Islamic school contexts. The findings imply that English teachers, curriculum designers, and teacher educators should move beyond general value insertion by systematically embedding moderation values into task design, classroom interaction, materials development, and assessment criteria. Future research is recommended to examine this model in broader educational contexts, including public schools, Christian schools, pesantren, vocational schools, and multicultural classrooms in other regions of Indonesia, using classroom observation, teacher interviews, discourse analysis, and intervention-based studies to verify how moderation values are enacted in actual English learning practices.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. Likert-Scale Questionnaire (40 Items)

1. National Commitment (10 Items)

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Statements of Questionnaire <i>1. National Commitment (10 Items)</i>	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Moderate (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1.	I believe Pancasila reflects values that unite all Indonesians.					
2.	I feel responsible for maintaining national unity.					
3.	Learning English helps me understand Indonesia's role globally.					
4.	I respect national symbols and civic values.					
5.	I support cooperation among people of different religions.					
6.	School education should strengthen love for the nation.					
7.	Diversity does not weaken national identity.					
8.	I am proud to be an Indonesian citizen.					
9.	I believe religious differences should not divide the nation.					
10.	English learning can promote a positive national image.					

2. Tolerance (10 Items)

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Statements of Questionnaire <i>2. Tolerance (10 Items)</i>	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Moderate (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1.	I respect classmates from different religious backgrounds.					
2.	I enjoy learning about other cultures.					
3.	Differences should be discussed openly and respectfully.					
4.	I feel comfortable communicating with people who think differently.					
5.	Tolerance is important in everyday communication.					
6.	English class helps me understand cultural differences.					
7.	I accept different opinions without hostility.					
8.	Respectful dialogue is better than argument.					
9.	Diversity enriches learning experiences.					
10.	I value cooperation over conflict.					

3. Non-Violence (10 Items)

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Statements of Questionnaire <i>3. Non-Violence (10 Items)</i>	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Moderate (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1.	Problems should be solved through discussion, not aggression.					
2.	Harsh language can cause conflict.					
3.	I try to speak politely even when I disagree.					
4.	Peaceful communication reflects good character.					
5.	Violence should never be justified in education.					
6.	English lessons can teach respectful communication.					
7.	I avoid insulting others during discussions.					
8.	Calm dialogue helps solve misunderstandings.					
9.	I believe words can promote peace.					
10.	Non-violence is important in multicultural societies.					

4. Acceptance of Papuan / Local Traditions (10 Items)

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Statements of Questionnaire <i>4. Acceptance of Papuan / Local Traditions (10 Items)</i>	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Moderate (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1.	Local Papuan traditions should be respected in education.					
2.	Cultural diversity is a strength of Papua.					
3.	I am proud of Papuan local wisdom.					
4.	Learning English does not mean rejecting local culture.					
5.	Traditional values can coexist with modern education.					
6.	Teachers should include local culture in lessons.					
7.	Cultural traditions deserve appreciation.					
8.	Papuan culture can be introduced globally through English.					
9.	Respecting local customs builds harmony.					
10.	Education should preserve local identity.					

Appendix 2. Interview Questions

1. Interview Questions for English Teachers

1. How do you understand the concept of religious moderation in education?
2. How do you integrate values such as tolerance and non-violence into ELT?
3. What strategies do you use to link English materials with local Papuan culture?
4. How do students respond to value-based English instruction?
5. What challenges do you face teaching English in a minority-Muslim context?
6. How do you manage differing opinions during classroom discussions?
7. How does religious moderation influence your teaching philosophy?
8. What support do you need to strengthen moderation-based ELT?
9. How do you assess students' attitudes alongside language skills?
10. How can ELT contribute to peaceful intercultural relations in Papua?

2. Interview Questions for Students (Papuan Minority-Muslim Context)

1. How do you feel about learning English in a culturally diverse environment?
2. What values do you learn from English lessons?
3. How does English class help you respect differences?
4. Can you share an experience of learning tolerance in class?
5. How do teachers encourage peaceful communication?
6. Do English lessons reflect your local culture? How?
7. How does learning English help you communicate with people from other backgrounds?
8. What challenges do you face as a Muslim student in Papua?
9. How can English help promote harmony?
10. What changes would you suggest for English learning in your school?