

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Writing has an important urgency in learning English because it is a productive skill that demonstrates critical thinking skills, vocabulary mastery, and grammatical accuracy. However, EFL learners still often face different types of errors in academic writing, so directed practice and continuous evaluation are needed (Hossain, 2024). Additionally, effective writing demands clarity and conciseness to improve readability (Kojima & Popiel, 2024). In the digital era, the writing process has also undergone a transformation through the use of AI, which is considered to help improve the quality of writing and provide constructive feedback (Teng, 2024; Wang, 2024). In fact, students view AI as a supporter of academic writing (Kim et al., 2025) and part of the digitization of modern literacy (Zhao et al., 2024).

There have been many previous studies related to *writing*, but in general it focuses on the development of writing teaching materials in English learning. Wu and Xu (2025) found that the Poe and Gemini platform effectively improves writing skills while fostering positive emotions and academic self-efficacy of *upper-intermediate* level learners. In addition, Li and Qian (2024) prove that *dialogic peer feedback* plays an important role in increasing student engagement and writing development. Another study by Agzamxanova and Golovko (2025) shows that AI-based devices help improve grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, and plagiarism detection, even though AI only serves as a complement, not a substitute for the human writing process.

Research on the integration of religious moderation values in education has also shown significant developments. Jeniva and Tanyid

(2025) emphasized that moderation based on religious and cultural values is able to create social harmony in people's lives. Prichard et al. (2025) through an integrative review emphasized the importance of collaborative moderation in the higher education assessment process as an effort to build common standards. Furthermore, Hasan and Juhannis (2023) revealed that the study of religious education and moderation is still relatively new in the scientific literature, although its relevance is increasing. Overall, research in this area shows the urgency of moderation as one of the important foundations in a peaceful, inclusive, and civilized educational process.

In addition, a number of studies highlight multicultural awareness and inclusive education. Babayiğit et al. (2025) show that *blended multicultural in-service teacher training programmes* have been shown to improve the pedagogical competence of egalitarian and multicultural teachers. Iioya's research (2025) also found that teachers have a high level of multicultural awareness and intercultural sensitivity in the context of education. Meanwhile, Richardson et al. (2025) emphasized that the instrument (MAKSS-CE-R) or Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, and Skills Survey–Counselor Edition–Revised has six important factors so that it cannot be summarized into a single score. In general, the three studies emphasized that strengthening multicultural awareness is an important basis in creating an inclusive, adaptive, and equitable education for all students.

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demands clarity and conciseness for good readability (Kojima & Popiel, 2024). In the digital era, the writing process is transformed through the presence of AI, which helps improve the quality of writing and provides constructive feedback (Teng, 2024; Wang, 2024). In fact, students see AI as a supporter of modern literacy (Kim et al., 2025; Zhao et al., 2024).

There has been a lot of previous research on *writing*, but it generally focuses on improving writing skills and developing teaching materials. Wu and Xu (2025) show that Poe and Gemini improve writing skills as well as foster positive emotions and self-efficacy of *upper-intermediate learners*. In addition, Li and Qian (2024) prove that *dialogic peer feedback* is able to strengthen the development process of student writing. Research by Agzamxanova and Golovko (2025) also confirms that AI devices are effective in improving grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure, even if only as a complementary tool. Thus, *writing research* is still centered on the technical aspects of writing, not yet leading to the integration of character values based on social contexts.

Research on the integration of the value of religious moderation in education is also growing. Jeniva and Tanyid (2025) emphasized that religious and cultural values are able to create social harmony in people's lives. Prichard et al. (2025) show the importance of collaborative moderation in educational practice to establish fair standards. Meanwhile, Hasan and Juhannis (2023) found that research on religious moderation in education is still relatively new and has not been explored much applicatively. Thus, religious moderation has a strong urgency because it plays a role in building peaceful education, but

its integration into teaching materials, especially *writing materials*, has not been touched much.

A number of studies confirm the importance of inclusive multicultural education. Babayiğit et al. (2025) show that *blended multicultural training* is able to improve the competence of egalitarian teachers. The ПООYAH (2025) study also found that teachers have high multicultural awareness and intercultural sensitivity, while Richardson et al. (2025) reinforce the urgency of comprehensively measuring multicultural awareness. However, these studies have not been connected to the development of writing teaching materials. In fact, *writing* has the potential to be a means of internalizing multicultural values and religious moderation through literacy activities. Thus, there is an academic gap to combine the three aspects *of writing*, religious moderation, and multicultural awareness into one more integrative learning design.

The preliminary study was carried out on November 10, 2025 involving 2nd semester students of the English Language Teaching Study Program (TBI) UINFAS Bengkulu. Data collection was carried out through student needs questionnaires, semi-structured interviews with teaching lecturers, and observation of the learning process in the classroom. *Further information can be found in Appendix 1, namely the Preliminary Research Classroom Observation.* The results of the questionnaire show that most students still have difficulties in determining topic sentences, maintaining coherence between sentences, developing ideas into complete paragraphs, and using proper grammar in academic writing. In addition, some students also admitted that they lacked confidence when asked to write academic paragraphs. These findings show the need to develop teaching materials for writing

paragraphs that are more directed, contextual, and in accordance with the needs of students.

The results of the preliminary study also show that the teaching materials used in learning to write paragraphs so far still focus on technical aspects of writing, such as paragraph structure, idea development, and the accuracy of language use. Based on the results of the questionnaire, most students stated that they needed material that could help them understand the paragraph structure more clearly and systematically. In addition, students show a good understanding of the concept of religious moderation and view that the values of religious moderation, such as tolerance, balance, justice, and respect for diversity, are relevant to be integrated in learning to write. The results of interviews with lecturers also confirm that the integration of these values has the potential to enrich learning materials as well as shape student character.

Another finding from the preliminary study relates to the multicultural awareness of students. Based on the survey data, the majority of students feel comfortable interacting with friends who have different cultural and religious backgrounds, appreciate the diversity in the campus environment, and realize the importance of tolerance in academic activities. However, the results of class observations show that the issue of diversity and multicultural awareness is still rarely integrated into writing activities and teaching materials used. Interviews with lecturers also revealed that there are no teaching materials for writing paragraphs that are systematically designed based on the analysis of student needs and integrate the value of religious moderation and multicultural awareness. Therefore, it is necessary to develop teaching materials that are valid, relevant, and in accordance with the

needs of students to support the improvement of writing skills while fostering multicultural awareness.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on the background of the research, several main problems can be identified:

1. The paragraph writing skills of EFL students, especially 2nd semester students of TBI UINFAS Bengkulu, still face various obstacles such as grammatical errors, vocabulary limitations, lack of paragraph coherence, and low ability to convey ideas clearly and concisely. This condition shows the need for writing teaching materials that are more directed, contextual, and in accordance with the needs of students.
2. The development of writing teaching materials that have been used so far tends to focus on the technical aspects of writing alone, such as paragraph structure and linguistic rules, without integrating character values and relevant social contexts. In fact, writing has great potential as a means of internalizing values, including the values of religious moderation that emphasize tolerance, fairness, balance, and respect for diversity.
3. Although research on religious moderation and multicultural awareness in education is constantly evolving, the integration of the two concepts into English writing teaching materials is still relatively limited. This causes writing learning to not optimally contribute to the formation of students' multicultural awareness, especially in the context of a pluralistic Indonesian society.
4. There is no draft teaching material for writing paragraphs that are systematically developed based on student needs analysis and validated by experts, especially those that integrate the values of religious moderation to increase the multicultural awareness of 2nd

semester students of TBI UINFAS Bengkulu. Therefore, development research is needed that designs, validates, and evaluates the feasibility of these teaching materials.

C. Limitation of the Problem

To make this research more focused and in-depth, some restrictions are set as follows:

1. This research only focuses on the development of teaching materials for paragraph writing in English learning.
2. The integration of the values studied in this study is limited to the values of religious moderation that are relevant to support the increase of multicultural awareness.
3. The research subject is limited to 2nd semester students of TBI UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, so the research results are not intended to be generalized to other educational levels or contexts.
4. The validity of the teaching materials developed in this study is based on the assessment and validation results of experts (material, language, and/or learning experts), without involving large-scale trials in the field.

D. Research Questions

Based on this description, this study designed moderated writing teaching materials to increase multicultural awareness; The problem is therefore formulated in the following main research questions:

1. What are the needs, problems, and expectations of students in learning to write paragraphs, especially related to the integration of religious moderation values to increase multicultural awareness in 2nd semester students of TBI UINFAS Bengkulu?

2. How is the design of teaching materials for writing paragraphs that integrate the values of religious moderation to increase multicultural awareness in 2nd semester students of TBI UINFAS Bengkulu?
3. How valid is the teaching material for writing paragraphs developed by integrating the values of religious moderation to increase multicultural awareness in 2nd semester students of TBI UINFAS Bengkulu based on the assessment and validation results of experts?

E. The Purposes of the Research

This research aims to produce teaching materials for writing moderated paragraphs that are relevant, tested, and oriented towards strengthening students' multicultural awareness.

Research Objectives:

1. Identify the needs, problems, and expectations of students in learning to write paragraphs, especially related to the integration of religious moderation values to increase multicultural awareness.
2. Designing teaching materials to write paragraphs that integrate the values of religious moderation to increase the multicultural awareness of 2nd semester TBI UINFAS Bengkulu students.
3. To determine the validity of teaching materials developed based on the assessment of material experts, media experts, and religious moderation experts in order to increase students' multicultural awareness.

F. The Significance of the Research

This research has important significance in the context of English language learning, especially in the development of paragraph writing skills that are relevant to the needs of the times. The integration of religious moderation values and strengthening multicultural awareness

in teaching materials is expected to be able to create a learning process that not only focuses on language skills, but also the character and perspective of students towards diversity. Thus, this research contributes to the development of education that is inclusive, civilized, and oriented towards social harmony in the campus environment and a pluralistic society.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of scientific studies in three fields at once, namely teaching writing, multicultural education, and religious moderation. The results of this study are expected to enrich the literature on the integration of moderation values in English teaching materials, which have been rarely applied at the university level. In addition, the findings of this study can be a conceptual reference for future researchers in developing a writing learning model that is oriented towards character formation, tolerance, and mutual respect in the context of a multicultural society.

Practically, this research is beneficial for lecturers, students, and curriculum developers. For lecturers, the teaching materials produced can be an alternative to a writing learning model that is more contextual, interactive, and characterful. For students, this teaching material helps improve their paragraph writing skills while fostering a moderate, tolerant, and sensitive attitude towards cultural and religious diversity.

As for curriculum developers, the results of this research are input in the preparation of learning programs that support diversity-oriented education and are in line with the values of social life in Indonesia.

Overall, this research has real benefits in strengthening the academic and humanistic dimensions in writing learning. The teaching material products developed not only improve language skills, but also build students' social competence as a generation that is ready to live in a multicultural environment. By combining literacy skills, moderation values, and diversity awareness, this research is expected to be able to make a sustainable contribution to improving the quality of higher education, especially in the English Language Study Program of UINFAS Bengkulu, as well as becoming an adaptive learning model in the global era.

G. Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Defining key terms is important to clarify the focus of the research, minimize ambiguity, and ensure consistency in the development of teaching materials.

1. *Paragraph Writing* is a text writing activity consisting of main and supporting sentences, focusing on coherence, cohesion, grammar, and vocabulary according to the academic context.

2. *Religious Moderation* is a balanced attitude and behavior in religious practice, respecting differences, avoiding extremism, and fostering tolerance in the social and academic environment.
3. *Writing Materials* are media, modules, or learning resources designed to guide students to develop the ability to write paragraphs with certain character value content.
4. *Multicultural Awareness* is the understanding, acceptance, and appreciation of cultural, religious, and social differences, which is manifested through a tolerant and inclusive attitude.