

Religiosity in the Ecology of English Language Teaching: Moral and Socio-cultural Geography of Pre-Service Teachers in Islamic Education Context

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Abstract. Over the past two decades, religiosity has emerged as a significant factor in English Language Teaching (ELT), particularly within Islamic education contexts. This qualitative case study investigates the emotional experiences of five pre-service teachers from an Islamic education institution in Indonesia enrolled in a general English course. Utilizing Hargreaves' emotional geography framework, the study explores how moral and socio-cultural dimensions—rooted in religious beliefs and practices—influence the pre-service teachers' perceptions and interactions in the classroom. Data were collected through reflective journals and in-depth interviews, which provided rich, nuanced insights into the participants' inner emotional landscapes. The analysis reveals that integrating religious values into ELT not only enhances linguistic competence but also promotes moral and spiritual growth, thereby addressing cultural tensions associated with global language instruction. The findings underscore the importance of culturally sensitive pedagogical practices that respect diverse religious identities and suggest practical implications for teacher education programs. Future research should consider broader cultural contexts to further refine strategies for integrating religiosity into language teaching frameworks.

Keywords: emotional geography, religiosity, English language teaching, Islamic education

1 Introduction

The past two decades have seen increasingly rapid advances in religiosity in the ecology of English language teaching (ELT). The intersection of religiosity in ELT represents a nuanced and evolving area of study within the broader ecology of sociolinguistics, language material development, and teacher identity. In sociolinguistics, religiosity shapes world views, values, and social practices[1]. In language materials development, religiosity plays a significant role in shaping learners' insight through religious textbooks and the availability of learning resources [2]. In the area of teacher identity [3], [4], teachers' religious beliefs, practices, and values [5] influence both the teaching and learning processes of English as a second or foreign language that can shape learners' religiosity. Therefore, religiosity can be instilled through three dimensions: the cultural and social environment in which it occurs, learning resources, and teacher identity.

Previous studies have investigated the potential benefits of integrating religious perspective into ELT. It is a snapshot to elevate learners' character, beliefs, and values. Mambu pointed out that religious values can be integrated into ELT critically and reflectively, with a heightened awareness of power dynamics, especially between teachers and students, often associated with religious beliefs [6]. In the same vein, Soleimani and Lovat found out that the moral concept of learning would not only result in performance enhancement, but individual citizens would also get an opportunity to meet their obligations to other community members in general [7]. Similarly, Rohmah et al. discovered that teachers link the integration of Islamic beliefs with subjects such as English that comply with doctrine and the overall institutional guidelines. In addition, It has been used to promote the teachers' practice of including these values in the lessons [8]. Hence, creating a religious environment plays a pivotal role in shaping learners' values through the existence of the teacher's language materials and reading resources.

Even though religiosity in ELT has been investigated by many scholars[9], [10], few studies have been associated with pre-service teachers' emotional experiences during their involvement in an English course. On the one hand, English teachers should meet the needs of the official goal and curriculum guidelines. On the other hand, they meet the challenges regarding the socio-cultural and moral perspective of teaching English as a foreign language. Teaching English can be viewed as teaching a "Western" language [2], [[3], [4] and subsequently teaching Western culture. Similarly, distinct research centered around the specifics of atheist pre-service elementary school teachers, hence proving the intricate part that a non-religious person could have in the teaching practices [11]. Moreover, English teachers' religious beliefs and practices may enlighten their professional identities and pedagogical models taught in the English Language classroom [3].

This study investigates pre-service teachers' emotional experiences during their involvement in general English courses. This study uses Hargreaves' emotional geography framework to explore how these pre-service teachers' religious beliefs and practices relate to their emotional reactions to English language learning [12]. The findings of this study contribute significantly to a better understanding of the intersection of religiosity, identity, and language learning, which is a multifaceted process. The research will look at the emotional aspects of pre-service teachers' experiences in order to provide information that will help pre-service teachers and policymakers create and implement effective teacher education programs that will meet the diverse needs and beliefs of pre-service teachers

2 Method

This qualitative case study investigated the impact of religiosity on pre-service teachers of Islamic education enrolled in a general English course. Guided by Hargreaves' (2001a) emotional geography framework, the study sought to illuminate the emotional dynamics—moral and socio-cultural—underpinning these teachers' experiences. A purposive sample of five pre-service teachers was drawn from an Islamic education institution in Indonesia. Participants were selected to capture a range of religious perspectives and emotional responses during the English course, ensuring that the findings reflect the diversity inherent within the context.

Data were collected using two primary methods. First, participants maintained reflective journals throughout the course, recording their inner thoughts, emotions, and personal experiences. This self-observation method enabled the capture of nuanced and intimate insights into their emotional journeys. Second, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted to explore further and clarify the themes emerging from the reflective journals. The flexibility of the interview format allowed the researcher to probe deeper into areas of interest and address emerging issues in real-time.

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis informed by Hargreaves' emotional geography framework. This process involves identifying key themes related to the moral and socio-cultural dimensions, comparing and contrasting these themes across the reflective journals and interview transcripts, and interpreting the findings to reveal how individual emotional experiences are connected to the broader educational environment. Several strategies were implemented to ensure rigor and credibility. Data triangulation was achieved by cross-verifying insights from the journals and interviews, while member checking allowed participants to review and confirm the interpretations. An audit trail of detailed records from the data collection and analysis procedures further ensured transparency and replicability of the study.

3 Result

3.1 Moral Geography Perspective

From Hargreaves' moral geography perspective, religiosity in the context of ELT primarily deals with the moral dimensions and ethical relationships that shape the practice of ELT. English teachers are frequently situated at the nexus of religion, ethics, and education as they navigate the moral landscape of their ideas and those of their students. It necessitates a considerate, sensitive instruction method that honors the local religious customs and the more general, frequently secular language learning objectives. This section reveals four themes: teachers' professional identity and ethics, globalization, and secularism. The following is a presentation of the data from this research based on Hargreaves' moral geography theory:

3.1.1 Teachers' Professional Identity and Ethics

In addition to addressing teacher identity, Hargreaves' concept of moral geography also considers how personal values, whether religious or not, affect moral judgment. Religious beliefs can impact a teacher's sense of duty and responsibility, affecting how they handle inclusivity, discipline, and student participation, as shown in the following excerpt.

Participant 1

Before English class began, my English teacher always asked us to perform prayer together.

The statement provided by Participant 1 suggests that their English teacher embodies a professional identity that integrates religious values into their teaching practice. This identity is associated with moral values and behaviors.

Participant 1 reported that the English class began by praying together. That indicates that a sense of religiosity can be incorporated into ELT before it has begun. This activity allows pre-

service teachers to reflect on their values and beliefs and how they might influence their teaching practice.

Participant 3

At the beginning of the English class, we pray together and continue performing Shalawat Asyghil.

Participant 3 states that the teacher identifies a religious background and integrates this aspect of their identity into their teaching practice. That suggests a commitment to incorporating personal beliefs and values into the classroom environment. Otherwise, the teacher is committed to promoting moral values within the classroom, such as spirituality and communal harmony. That aligns with the ethical responsibility of educators to create a conducive environment for students' development.

A comparable pattern emerged in the concluding rituals of the lectures. Upon completion of each session, all class members would uniformly recite the *Hamdalah* as an expression of thanks, as illustrated by the interview data below:

Participant 5

At the end of the English class, we always close the class by reciting "Hamdalah" together.

The teacher recognizes the importance of incorporating cultural elements into the classroom. Reciting *Hamdalah* together reflects an understanding and respect for the student's cultural background and religious beliefs. This practice suggests a commitment to the student's development and spiritual and moral well-being.

3.1.2 Globalization

Participant 4

Religious values in a globalized world should be instilled through English language teaching.

Participant 4's statement reflects that religious values should be integrated into ELT in a globalized world. It suggests that ELT can impart linguistic skills and shape students' moral and religious character.

Participant 2

Learning English is not necessary because it can be regarded as a place where Western cultural values are instilled. Learning a Western language requires religiosity.

The student views English as a vehicle for Western cultural values, implying a negative association with globalization. Due to this negative perception, the student doubts the importance of learning English.

The student believes incorporating religious values into ELT can protect against the perceived negative influence of Western culture. This perspective suggests a desire to balance acquiring language skills with preserving religious and cultural identity.

3.1.3 Secularism

Participant 3

Learning English is considered a space where secularism can be instilled. Therefore, religiosity should be incorporated into English language teaching.

Participant 3 holds a somewhat contradictory perspective on secularism and religious values in ELT. On the one hand, they recognize the potential of ELT as a space for secularism, which typically implies a separation of religion and state. However, they also advocate for the integration of religious values into ELT.

Participant 2

English is considered a global language. Teachers might instill secularism and Western cultural values through English language teaching. So, teachers should incorporate religiosity in ELT.

Participant 2's perspective on secularism in ELT is that it is a potential threat to integrating religious values. They believe that English, as a global language, can be used to promote secularism and Western cultural values. To counter this, they propose incorporating religiosity into ELT to maintain a balance and ensure students' religious beliefs are not undermined.

3.2 Sociocultural Geography Perspective

3.2.1 The Cultural Landscape of English Classroom

From the cultural setting perspective, the English classroom should be designed as a more religious environment to avoid clashing with a local culture. The role of the English language teacher is important in providing religious ecology in ELT to shape the process of language teaching, as stated in the following excerpt.

Participant 2

I chose Islamic education as my learning interest to avoid English, which is, in fact, one of the compulsory subjects at this university.

Participant 2 voiced that she did not need to learn English because she did not want to alter her perspective on life. To avoid studying English, she decided to pursue Islamic religious education. That demonstrates his unwillingness to learn about other cultures, which subtly implies that he picks up ideals unrelated to his religion.

Participant 4

English teachers have to facilitate the process of language teaching by providing religious materials and learning resources by adopting and adapting to the existing materials.

Participant 4 believed that religious education should be incorporated into ELT through religious materials so that she could adapt the taught content to the English classroom. That indicates that she needs religious English materials. For this purpose, Participant 4 echoed that providing religious materials can be considered a way to cope with problems related to their negative perception of the English subject.

Participant 5

English language teaching should be designed by respecting religious traditions and local culture.

Furthermore, participants 5 voiced that the notion of ELT and the learning process should take into account local culture understanding and compare it with that in Western culture. That indicates that the participant needs a deep understanding of the local culture associated with her religiosity and spirituality, which is raised in the teaching of Western culture.

3.2.2 Curriculum and Material Adaptation

Adapting the curriculum and learning materials with diversity includes several forms, including student reading texts, song selection, monologue texts, and reading activities of English texts. The following is the explanation:

1) Religious Reading Text

One form of adaptation of materials and curriculum with religious culture can be seen from the use of teaching elements and values contained in the holy book in the reading materials used as learning materials in the classroom. Some of the textbooks and worksheets prepared by lecturers involve texts about Islamic religious beliefs in English. Here are some sample excerpts from the readings entitled Belief in One God and The Fundamental Principles of Islam.

THE BASICS OF ISLAMIC BELIEFS

Belief in One God

Muslims believe in one, unique, incomparable God, who has no son nor partner, and that none has the right to be worshipped but Him alone. He is the true God, and every other deity is false. He has the most magnificent names and sublime perfect attributes. No one shares His divinity, nor His attribute. In the Qur'an, God describes Himself. Say, "He is God, the One. God to whom the creatures turn for their needs. He begets not, nor was He begotten, and there is none like Him." (QS. 112: 1-4)

Adopted from "Islamic Studies"

Fig. 1. Sample of Religious English Text entitled Belief in One God

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF ISLAM

1. Sholatus-Subuh or the early Morning Prayer which must be offered sometime after dawn and before sunrise and the number of its rak'ats are two.
2. Sholaatud-Dhuhur or the early afternoon prayer which must be offered sometimes after the sun begins to decline, and lasts until the shadow of anything as long as the thing itself, the number of its raka'at are four.
3. Sholatul-'asr or the late afternoon prayer which must be offered any time after time for Sholatud-Duhr comes to an end, until a little before the sun begins to set, and the number its raka'ats are four.
4. Sholatul-Maghrib the evening prayer which must be offered between the sunset and the disappearance of the light similar to the light at dawn, which follows when the red glow from the horizon in the West has vanished, the number of its raka'ats are three.
5. Sholatul-'Isa or the night prayer, which must be offered any time after the time for Sholatu-Maghrib comes to end and before the break of dawn, the number of its raka'ats are four.

Adopted from "Islamic Studies"

Fig. 2. Sample of Religious English Text entitled The Fundamental Principles of Islam.

The existence of religious reading texts is crucial for students of Islamic religious education. They can be regarded as religious references that can support their content knowledge, especially when they are going to be prospective teachers. The texts show that religious knowledge can be incorporated into ELT, which shapes their identity as pre-service teachers. In addition, these pre-service teachers are prepared to be prospective Islamic religious teachers when they teach Islamic religion overseas, where English is used as a medium of instruction.

2) *Religious English Song*

In addition to using reading materials containing texts with religious content, religious songs or poems are also used. English religious songs are the choice used in listening exercises. An example is the following excerpt:

FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE

MAHER ZAIN

I praise Allah for sending me you, my love
You've 1) your home, it's here with me
And I'm here with you
Now let me2) you know
You've opened my3)
I was always thinking that love was4)
But everything was5) when you came along
Oh, and there's a6) of words I wanna say

Fig. 3. Sample of a Religious English Song entitled For the Rest of My Life

3) *Religious Monolog Text*

In addition to songs, English monologue texts are also used to contain Islamic religious teachings. For example, in the excerpt of the monologue text that reads as follows:

Dear Muslims brothers of mine

Islam is a rational religion. Islam is a religion ideology. Islam is a system of life. Islam is a force of life. Islam is a source of peace and salvation. Islam is suitable with development and modernity. Islam is covering all aspects of human life. My brothers! You may choose any way but Islam is the best one. You may choose any ideology in the world but Islam is the most comprehensive one.

Adopted from "Islamic Studies"

Fig. 4. Sample of Religious English Monolog Text

This type of text can be viewed as a religious learning resource in teaching speaking monolog text. This text can also be regarded as the learning material for pre-service teachers who become "*Khatib*" or religious speakers when they perform "*Praying Jum'ah*". The text shows that the existence of religious monolog text can be considered as the answer to the negative perception of ELT in which liberalism and secularism are instilled. It also indicates that religious monolog texts can teach the intertwin between religiosity and ELT.

4) Religious Pre-Reading Activities

READING I

JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN'T SEE THE AIR, DOESN'T MEAN YOU
STOP BREATHING
AND JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN'T SEE ALLAH, DOESN'T MEAN YOU
STOP BELEIVING

1. What does the text mostly talk about?
2. Why should Muslim beleive in God?
3. What will happen if God has a partner?

Adopted from a Book entitled "General English for Practice":

Fig. 3. Sample of Religious English Reading Activity

Pre-reading activity is a crucial activity before learning to read. It can be considered an activity for brainstorming to open students' schemata. Religiosity can be incorporated into the activity, and the students can elevate their spiritual activity by asking questions based on the materials they will discuss. The religious pre-reading activity stated in the above script indicates that the teacher plays a pivotal role in providing religious pre-activity before reading a text. It also can be regarded as a paving avenue to elevate students' spirituality.

3.2.3 Religious Identity

Forms of religious identity are closely related to faith and religion. Likewise, English language learning is undoubtedly influenced by religious identity insights. It is as stated by the following participant:

Participant 2

We have different religious and educational backgrounds that are associated with religious beliefs. So, English teachers should be careful and aware of delivering religious English materials.

Teaching English in Islamic education, where all the students are Muslim and have various ways of showing their Islamic identity, is complex and dynamic. It requires a wise teacher to facilitate diverse religious identities and symbols. The excerpt shows that inclusive education can be viewed as a proper way to accommodate diverse students' educational backgrounds, showing that they have different religious views, beliefs, and identities.

4 Discussion

4.1 Moral Geography Perspective

4.1.1 Teachers' Professional Identity and Ethics

Participant 1's perspective highlights a teacher identity intertwined with religious beliefs. This integration of faith into pedagogical practice suggests a commitment to moral values and ethical conduct. Such an approach might influence classroom dynamics, curriculum selection, and instructional strategies. It raises questions about the potential impact of religious beliefs on language teaching methodologies and student learning outcomes. Barrett hypothesized that deeply rooted religious beliefs could subtly impact teaching methods, which may not be apparent unless we examine these beliefs more closely [13].

According to White, as cited by Brooks, teachers can control how much religion is included in their teaching. Teachers regularly practicing religion give students more opportunities to share their religious insights [14]. The literature suggests that teacher beliefs, especially religious beliefs, significantly shape classroom practices and student interactions. Teachers' religious affiliations can also significantly shape their professional identity as English language teachers [15].

In a volume edited by Wong, Kristjansson, and Dörnyei, several language teaching professionals representing diverse faith traditions such as Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, and atheism shared their perspectives on the impact of faith on their pedagogical practices. This well-attended event underscores the legitimacy of exploring teachers' faith identities within the realm of professional language conferences [16].

On the other hand, Mun and Bermejo's study reveals that the effectiveness of faith integration in classrooms is influenced by students' spiritual orientation and their prior level of faith integration at the beginning of the semester. The study suggests that the benefits of faith integration in classrooms may not be uniform across all students, varying based on their active involvement in integrating faith into their coursework [17].

The practice of beginning English class with prayer signifies a deliberate attempt to create a spiritually charged learning environment. This ritualistic act can foster community and shared values among students. The research findings indicate that teachers actively integrate their religious beliefs into their teaching practices, suggesting a deep-seated commitment to incorporating personal values and spirituality into the classroom environment.

By doing so, the teacher aims to foster moral development and communal harmony among students. Furthermore, the teacher's emphasis on moral values, such as spirituality and communal harmony, demonstrates a conscious effort to instill positive values in students. This approach can contribute to developing well-rounded individuals who are academically proficient, morally upright, and socially responsible. By fostering a sense of spirituality and communal harmony, the teacher creates a conducive environment for students to explore their values and beliefs and develop a sense of belonging and connection with others.

Pamela King's research proposes that identity development, rooted in ideological, social, and spiritual religious contexts, extends beyond the individual self. This expanded identity can cultivate a sense of commitment, fostering personal well-being and societal good [18].

Erikson, as cited by De Bruin-Wassinkmaat et al., is convinced that religion plays a crucial role in identity formation by offering a coherent worldview and encouraging strong personal convictions and commitments [19].

4.1.2 Globalization

The students' perspective aligns with the idea that education should be holistic, encompassing cognitive and affective domains. It also highlights the potential of ELT to promote cross-cultural understanding and respect for diverse religious beliefs [20].

However, it is essential to note that integrating religious values into ELT can be a sensitive issue, requiring careful consideration of various factors such as curriculum design, teacher training, and classroom management. Ensuring that such integration is inclusive, respectful of different religious beliefs, and avoids imposing any particular religious ideology on students is crucial.

Participant 2's viewpoint highlights a potential conflict between globalization and religious beliefs. The student seems wary of the cultural implications of English language learning and advocates for a more culturally sensitive approach that integrates religious values into the ELT process.

The findings revealed that Participant 4 advocated integrating religious values into ELT within a globalized context. This perspective indicates a belief that ELT should not be limited to acquiring linguistic skills but should also contribute to developing students' moral and religious character. Such an approach suggests a holistic view of education, where language learning is intertwined with cultivating ethical and spiritual values.

4.1.3 Secularism

From the research findings, a perspective suggests a potential tension between secular principles and religious beliefs. The student may reconcile these two seemingly opposing ideas by suggesting that religious values can be incorporated to respect diverse beliefs and promote understanding.

The findings also highlighted the concern that secularism in ELT might lead to the marginalization of religious values and the promotion of a worldview that may conflict with students' beliefs. Participant 2 emphasizes the importance of preserving religious values within the context of English language education to maintain a sense of cultural and spiritual identity.

The second participant expressed concern that the global influence of English could promote secularism and Western cultural values within ELT. This secular approach might conflict with integrating religious values into the curriculum. To mitigate this perceived threat, they suggest incorporating religiosity into ELT to safeguard students' religious beliefs and foster a balanced approach that respects student's cultural and spiritual perspectives.

Contemporary ELT extends beyond linguistic instruction to encompass the cultivation of responsible language use guided by specific values. Integrating moral and cultural values into ELT materials fosters an awareness among language learners of the ethical and cultural dimensions inherent in language learning [21]. However, it is essential to note that the specific interpretation of secularism and the role of religion in education can vary across cultures and individuals [22], [23].

4.2 Sociocultural Geography Perspective

4.2.1 The Classroom Cultural Landscape

From the cultural landscape perspective, the data appear to reveal a clear tension between the globalized content of ELT and the preservation of local religious and cultural identities. Participant 2's remark that she opted for Islamic education to avoid the compulsory English subject underscores a significant resistance toward curricular content perceived as conflicting with her religious worldview. This resistance suggests that when the content of ELT is seen as foreign or incompatible with local values, learners may choose alternative educational pathways to preserve their cultural integrity[24].

Similarly, Participant 4's emphasis on the need for English teachers to adapt religious materials into the classroom reflects an urgent call for curricular reform. By integrating religious content into English language instruction, educators can create a learning environment that is linguistically enriching and culturally congruent with the students' backgrounds[9], [25]. This approach supports the notion that effective ELT in Islamic education contexts should incorporate local religious values, thus providing learners with educational materials that are both relevant and respectful of their cultural context.

Participant 5 further reinforces this perspective by arguing that ELT should be designed with a deep understanding of local cultural traditions. The call for respect toward religious traditions and local culture in language teaching suggests that a one-size-fits-all approach—often derived from Western pedagogical models—may not be appropriate in contexts where religious and cultural identity is strongly interwoven with everyday life. Instead, ELT programs must be tailored to accommodate the socio-cultural realities of the learners[26], [27], promoting an inclusive educational environment where students can engage with the English language without compromising their own cultural and spiritual identities[28].

These findings indicate that the cultural landscape of the English classroom is pivotal. They underscore the importance of developing pedagogical strategies that bridge the gap between global linguistic competence and local cultural values. Future curricular development in ELT should consider integrating religious and cultural materials into the curriculum to mitigate learners' potential alienation and foster a more harmonious learning environment that respects and reflects the students' identities.

4.2.2 Adapting Curriculum and Material of ELT

The data on curriculum and material adaptation reveal a multifaceted approach to integrating religiosity into the English language curriculum, which reinforces students' cultural and spiritual identities and prepares them for future roles as educators in Islamic contexts. The use of religious reading texts—such as excerpts from "Islamic Studies" on themes like "Belief in One God" and "The Fundamental Principles of Islam"—demonstrates how core religious narratives are embedded within learning materials. This incorporation of religious content serves a dual purpose: it enhances content knowledge relevant to Islamic education while simultaneously shaping the pre-service teachers' professional identities as educators who are both linguistically competent and religiously grounded. Such integration is essential for future educators who may teach Islamic religious studies abroad, where English is the medium of instruction.

Furthermore, including religious English songs in listening exercises introduces an affective dimension to language learning. By engaging with songs that encapsulate religious sentiments, pre-service teachers are provided with an alternative yet complementary learning mode that appeals to emotional and cognitive domains[29]. That not only deepens their understanding of religious values but also challenges the prevailing notion that ELT is solely a vehicle for secular Western ideologies.

The data also highlight the use of religious monolog texts in speaking activities. These texts, which incorporate Islamic teachings, offer pre-service teachers practical linguistic resources aligned with their cultural context. The monologs bridge language learning and religious practice—preparing the teachers for roles such as "Khotib" during Praying Jum'ah—and counteract the negative perceptions of ELT as inherently liberal or secular. In doing so, they underscore the potential of curricular adaptation to address ideological tensions in multicultural educational settings[9], [30].

Finally, implementing religious pre-reading activities, adapted from "General English for Practice," underscores the importance of activating prior knowledge and eliciting spiritual engagement before delving into new content. This strategy not only primes students for effective learning by linking new material to their existing religious schemas but also elevates their spiritual consciousness. The teacher's role in orchestrating these pre-reading activities is crucial; it reinforces the idea that effective language teaching in Islamic education contexts requires sensitivity to both linguistic and cultural dimensions.

These adaptations suggest that integrating religious elements into the curriculum can serve as a viable response to the challenge of reconciling global language proficiency with local religious identity. By aligning instructional materials and pedagogical practices with the learners' cultural and religious context, the adapted curriculum supports the development of pre-service teachers who are better equipped to navigate and mediate the complex interplay between religiosity and the globalized nature of ELT.

4.2.1 The Classroom Cultural Landscape

The data from Participant 2 underscore the complexity of integrating religious identity within the context of ELT in Islamic education. The participant's remark—that English teachers need to be "careful and aware of delivering religious English materials" given the diversity in religious and educational backgrounds—suggests that religious identity is not monolithic even in a predominantly Muslim environment[10], [31]. Instead, it is multifaceted and dynamically expressed through various symbols and practices. This complexity demands an inclusive pedagogical approach whereby teachers acknowledge and actively facilitate the diverse manifestations of Islamic identity among their students.

Educators must tailor their instructional strategies to accommodate these varied expressions of faith, ensuring that the delivery of religious content in English does not inadvertently marginalize any subgroup. This finding aligns with broader discussions in the literature on culturally responsive teaching, emphasizing integrating students' cultural and religious identities into the learning process to foster a more engaging and respectful classroom environment[10], [32]. By situating language learning within a framework that recognizes and values diverse religious identities, teachers can help build an inclusive educational setting that respects and nurtures the complexity of students' backgrounds[10], [33].

Furthermore, the participant's insights call attention to the role of the teacher as a mediator of not just language skills but also cultural and ethical values. This dual responsibility is crucial in ensuring that the language curriculum does not become a vehicle for imposing a singular religious perspective but instead serves as a platform for dialogue and mutual understanding among students with diverse identities. Consequently, this approach contributes to a more holistic educational experience, promoting linguistic competence and intercultural sensitivity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study elucidates the complex interplay between religiosity and English Language Teaching (ELT) within Islamic education contexts, revealing the multifaceted influence of moral and socio-cultural dimensions on pre-service teachers' experiences. By employing Hargreaves' emotional geography framework, the findings demonstrate that integrating religious values into ELT not only enhances linguistic competence but also fosters moral and spiritual development, effectively addressing cultural challenges inherent in learning a global language. The evidence indicates that pre-service teachers' emotional and professional identities are deeply shaped by their religious beliefs, which in turn impact classroom dynamics and educational outcomes. These insights highlight the critical importance of adopting culturally sensitive pedagogical approaches that accommodate diverse religious identities and promote ethical values. Moreover, the study contributes to the broader discourse on teacher identity and curriculum development by offering a nuanced understanding of how religiosity can be integrated into language education. Future research should extend this inquiry across varied cultural contexts and explore the long-term implications of such integration to further inform teacher education policies and practices.

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