

ABSTRACT

Apriliano, D. (2025). *Exploring teacher autonomy in Indonesian higher education: A case study of EFL lecturers in Kediri* Skripsi, English Education Department Faculty of Teacher Training and Education Islamic University of Kediri. Advisor I: Entusiastik, SS., MA., Advisor II: Kristanti Yuntoro Putri, M Pd.

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This qualitative case study explores how EFL lecturers of three higher education institutions in Kediri conceptualize and practice teacher autonomy, and how institutional and professional factors shape this autonomy across the university environment. Focusing on three lecturers with varying levels of teaching experience ranging from beginner, advanced, and highly effective, this study also incorporates insights from a Study Program Coordinator from a Private Islamic University in Kediri. Thematic analysis of interview, observation, and syllabus data reveals a consensus: autonomy is perceived as a professional duty to align teaching with institutional standards, not as unchecked liberty. While lecturers enact this responsibility by adapting classes, employing student-centered methods, and interpreting curriculum, their efforts are stifled. A rigid curricular framework, administrative burdens, and frequent policy shifts act as significant impediments, hindering the deeper pedagogical innovation especially seen among experienced staff. The primary factors supporting their autonomy are institutional trust, professional development, and the freedom to choose their teaching style. This study highlights how teacher autonomy is shaped by structural forces and personal values, developing over time through professional growth and reflective practice. In line with prior scholarship that frames autonomy as goal-directed agency shaped within institutional contexts, this study adds to the global discourse by offering insights from a multi-institutional and regionally grounded Indonesian perspective. The findings indicate that teacher autonomy is not a fixed

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entitlement but rather a dynamic practice, continually negotiated through pedagogical identity, personal beliefs, and professional judgment.