

**ENGLISH TEACHER'S STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES IN  
IMPLEMENTING MERDEKA CURRICULUM AT ISLAMIC HIGH  
SCHOOLS KEDIRI**

**THESIS**

**Presented to**

State Islamic Institute (IAIN) of Kediri  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of Sarjana in English Education



**By:**

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION  
FACULTY OF TARBIYAH  
STATE ISLAMIC INSTITUTE (IAIN) OF KEDIRI  
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I hereby declare that the thesis and the work presented in it are my own and it has been generated by me as the result of my own original research. It does not incorporate any materials previously written or published by another person except those indicated in quotations and references. No portion on this work has been submitted in support of an application for another agree or qualification of this or any other university or institution of higher education. Due to this fact, I am the only person responsible for the thesis of there is any objection or claim for others.

This thesis is to fulfill the requirement for degree sarjana (S1) in English Study Program State Islamic Institute (IAIN) of Kediri.

Kediri, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025

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## **APPROVAL PAGE**

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### **TITLE**


**ENGLISH TEACHER'S STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES IN  
IMPLEMENTING MERDEKA CURRICULUM AT ISLAMIC HIGH  
SCHOOLS KEDIRI**

**SHALSA BILLA**

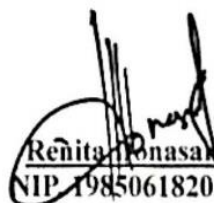
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## DEDICATION SHEET

Thank to Allah SWT, because whatever we have done in this world happens by his will. All praises be to Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful, who has blessed me with strength, patience, and guidance throughout the process. By Allah grace, I was able to complete this thesis properly. This thesis is dedicated to:

1. My beloved late mother, Lilik Nuryani (may Allah SWT grant her the highest place in Jannah). Her love, prayers, and guidance remain with me even though she is no longer physically by my side. Her strength and kindness will always inspire me.
2. My beloved father, Abd. Halim, whose prayers, sacrifices, and unwavering support have been my strength throughout this journey. His dedication means the world to me.
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7. To myself, thank you for the patience and effort through every challenge. You kept moving forward, even when it wasn't easy. I'm proud of you for making it this far.

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In preparing this thesis, the researcher found many difficulties and challenges. However, the researcher received many valuable and meaningful contributions, suggestions and guidance from many parties. With a lot of help from the following people, the researcher was able to complete this thesis. The researcher would also like to thank:

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2. Prof. Dr. Hj Munifah, M.Pd., as the Dean of the Faculty of Education, State Islamic Institute (IAIN) of Kediri.
3. Nur Afifi, M.App.Ling, Ph.D., as the Head of the English Language Study Program, State Islamic Institute (IAIN) of Kediri.
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The researcher realizes that this research still needs improvement, therefore the researcher expects suggestions and input from readers or other parties. In the end, may Allah always protect and bless every process of all of us.

Kediri, 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 2025  
The Researcher

Shalsa Billa  
21202065

## MOTTO

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

“Indeed, with hardship (will be) ease” (QS. Al-Insyirah:6)

## ABSTRACT

**Billa, Shalsa.** 2025. English Teacher's Strategies and Challenges in Implementing Merdeka Curriculum at Islamic High Schools Kediri. Thesis. Department of English Language Education, Faculty of Tarbiyah, State Islamic Institute (IAIN) of Kediri. Advisor: (I) Nur Afifi, M.App.Ling., Ph.D. (II) Renita Donasari, M.Pd.

**Keywords:** Challenge, English Teacher, Merdeka Curriculum, Solution, Teaching Strategy.

The implementation of Merdeka Curriculum encourages educators to carry out teaching methods that are more adaptive, student-oriented, and flexible according to individual needs. In this case, English teachers at Islamic High Schools Kediri must create teaching approaches that are not only creative but also appropriate to the situation in the classroom. This study aims to describe the methods used by teachers in implementing Merdeka Curriculum, recognize the challenges that arise in classroom management, and formulate solutions applied by teachers to overcome these challenges.

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and documentation. The data were analyzed thematically by following the six steps of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), to explore patterns of learning strategies, types of challenges in classroom management, and how teachers deal with these problems, and validated through triangulation of data sources to ensure the validity of the finding. The subjects in this study were three English teachers from several Islamic High Schools in Kediri who have implemented Merdeka Curriculum in their learning process.

The results show that teachers use various strategies, including innovative methods such as Genre-Based Approach and Project-Based Learning (PJBL), different learning for each individual, active participation, the use of digital media, and flexible assessment. Various challenges that arise include fewer active students, unsupportive behavior, differences in academic ability levels, and role conflicts due to non-academic activities. To overcome these, teachers apply appropriate, adaptive, and collaborative classroom management, such as establishing emotional relationships, adjusting methods and materials, providing substitute assignments, establishing consistent but flexible classroom rules, collaborating with counseling guidance teachers, encouraging peer learning, and applying best practices, such as the use of jigsaw methods, humor, technology, and lottery systems as a form of professional reflection on student needs and issues. In conclusion, a success in implementing Merdeka Curriculum depends on teachers' ability to adjust teaching and classroom management strategies in a way that is reflective, professional and supportive of students' needs.

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