CULTURAL REPRESENTATION IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS "*ENGLISH FOR CHANGE*"

A THESIS

Submitted to Fulfill One of the Requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan* in English Education

By:

Dini Chaqiqi
SN. 2517032

ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI
K.H. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN
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2024

LEMBAR PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN SKRIPSI

Yang bertanda tangan dibawah ini:

Nama : Dini Chaqiqi

NIM   : 2517032

Dengan ini menyatakan bahwa skripsi yang berjudul "CULTURAL REPRESENTATION IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS "*ENGLISH FOR CHANGE*"" adalah benar-benar karya penulis, kecuali kutipan yang telah penulis sebutkan sumbernya.

Demikian pernyataan ini saya buat dengan sebenar-benarnya.

Pekalongan, 12 Juni 2024

Dini Chaqiqi
NIM. 2517032

ii

Isriani Hardini, M.A., Ph.D.
Jalan Kurinci Gg 3A no 2 Podosugih Pekalongan

NOTA PEMBIMBING

Lamp : 3 (Tiga) Eksemplar

Hal   : Naskah Skripsi

　　　　Sdri. Dini Chaqiqi

Kepada

Yth. Dekan FTIK UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan

c.q. Ketua Jurusan TBIG

di

　　PEKALONGAN

Assalamu 'alaikum Wr.Wb.

　　　　Setelah diadakan penelitian dan perbaikan, maka bersama ini saya kirimkan naskah Skripsi :

Nama	:	Dini Chaqiqi
NIM	:	2517032
Jurusan	:	FTIK/Tadris Bahasa Inggris
Judul	:	CULTURAL REPRESENTATION IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS "ENGLISH FOR CHANGE"

　　　　Dengan ini mohon agar skripsi tersebut segera dimunaqosahkan.

　　　　Demikian nota pembimbing ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas perhatian bapak/Ibu, saya sampaikan terima kasih.

Wassalamu'alaikum Wr.Wb.

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Pekalongan, 12 Juni 2024
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Pembimbing

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　Isriani Hardini, M.A., Ph.D.
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　NIP. 19810530 200901 2 007

APPROVAL SHEET

The Dean of the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, confirms that the undergraduate thesis by:

Name	:	**Dini Chaqiqi**
SN	:	**2517032**
Title	:	**CULTURAL REPRESENTATION IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS *"ENGLISH FOR CHANGE"***

Has been examined and approved by the panel of examiners on Thursday, 20th June 2024 as a partial fullfilment of the requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan* (S. Pd.) in English Education.

The Examiners,

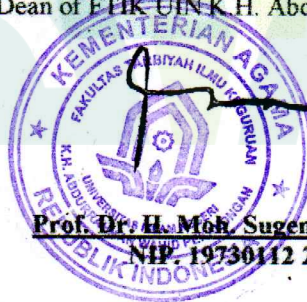Examiner I   Examiner II

Eros Meilina Sofa, M. Pd.   **Nadia Faradhillah, M. A.**
NIP. 19860509 202321 2 043   **NIP. 19930406 202012 2 015**

Pekalongan, 24th June 2024
Assigned by
The Dean of FTIK UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan

Prof. Dr. H. Moh. Sugeng Solehuddin, M.Ag
NIP. 19730112 200003 1 001

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MOTTO AND DEDICATION

MOTTO:

There is always hope for those who always pray, and there is always a

way for those who always try.

DEDICATION:

I would like to dedicate my final paper to:

My beloved parents (Bapak Barizi and Ibu Siti Fasichah) and

Grandmother (Ibu Sopiyah). Thank you for any support, all the trust

and permission, endless prayer, and many other things you have done

for me.

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Lastly, thanks to myself for trying and not giving up

ABSTRACT

Teaching and learning about culture is closely intertwined with language education, as language reflects culture and is often presented in textbooks. However, current EFL textbooks often fail to include diverse cultural representations, which can lead to misunderstandings among students about foreign cultures. This research aims to analyze the representation of different cultural types in the EFL textbook "English for Change" for Indonesian eleventh-grade students, published by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2022. The study will use a qualitative content analysis method, specifically Yuen's (2011) framework of cultural elements (product, practice, perspective, and person) and Cortazzi and Jin's (1999) culture categories (source culture, target culture, and international culture). The findings reveal a lack of balance in the cultural content of the English for Change textbook, with the cultural element of "person" being the most prominent (43.2%), followed by "product" (40.9%) and "practice" (15.9%), while no "perspective" elements were included at all. Additionally, the study found that the content of the textbook heavily favors the source culture (72.7%) compared to the target culture (13.6%) and international culture (13.6%).

Keywords: cultural representations, textbook, cultural element.

ABSTRAK

Pengajaran dan pembelajaran tentang budaya sangat erat kaitannya dengan pendidikan bahasa, karena bahasa mencerminkan budaya dan sering kali disajikan dalam buku pelajaran. Namun, buku teks EFL saat ini sering kali tidak menyertakan representasi budaya yang beragam, yang dapat menyebabkan kesalahpahaman di antara siswa tentang budaya asing. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis representasi berbagai jenis budaya dalam buku teks EFL "English for Change" untuk siswa kelas sebelas di Indonesia, yang diterbitkan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan pada tahun 2022. Penelitian ini akan menggunakan metode analisis konten kualitatif, khususnya kerangka kerja Yuen (2011) tentang elemen budaya (produk, praktik, perspektif, dan orang) dan kategori budaya Cortazzi dan Jin (1999) (budaya sumber, budaya target, dan budaya internasional). Temuan menunjukkan kurangnya keseimbangan dalam konten budaya dalam buku teks English for Change, dengan elemen budaya "orang" yang paling menonjol (43,2%), diikuti oleh "produk" (40,9%) dan "praktik" (15,9%), sementara tidak ada elemen "perspektif" yang disertakan sama sekali. Selain itu, penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa isi buku teks sangat mendukung budaya sumber (72,7%) dibandingkan dengan budaya target (13,6%) dan budaya internasional (13,6%).

Kata kunci: representasi budaya, buku teks, elemen budaya.
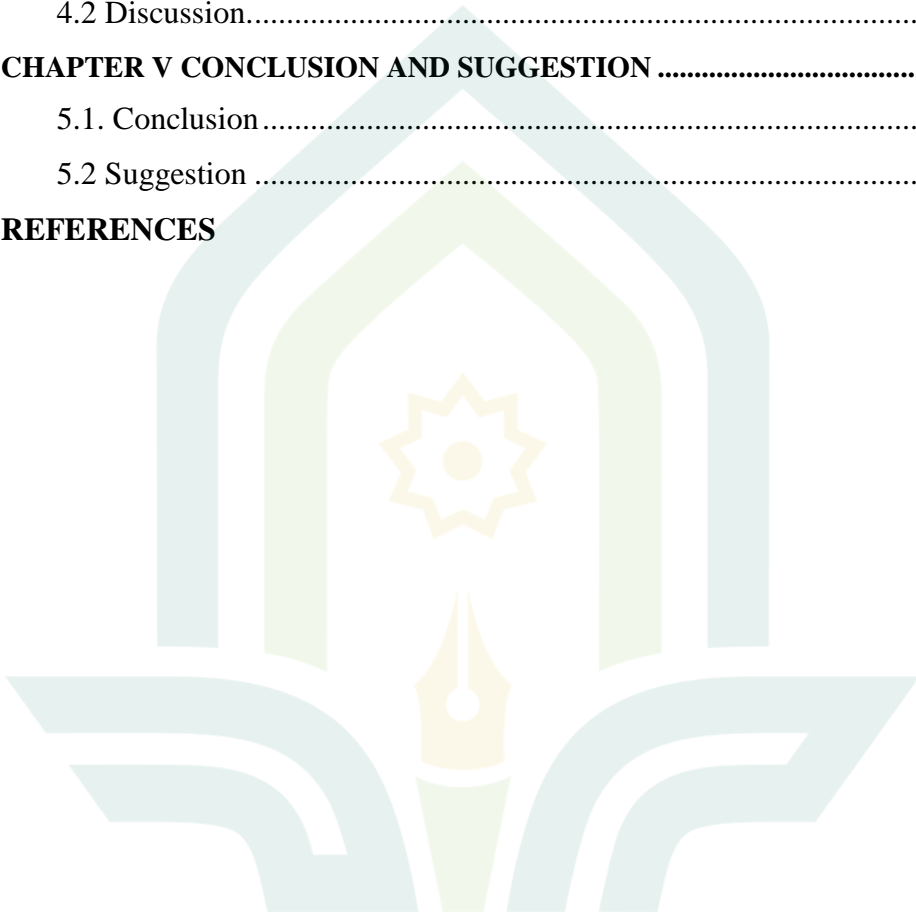
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This thesis is far from perfect. Therefore, critics and suggestions are welcome for this work. I hope this thesis will be helpful for readers and interested parties to this research topic.
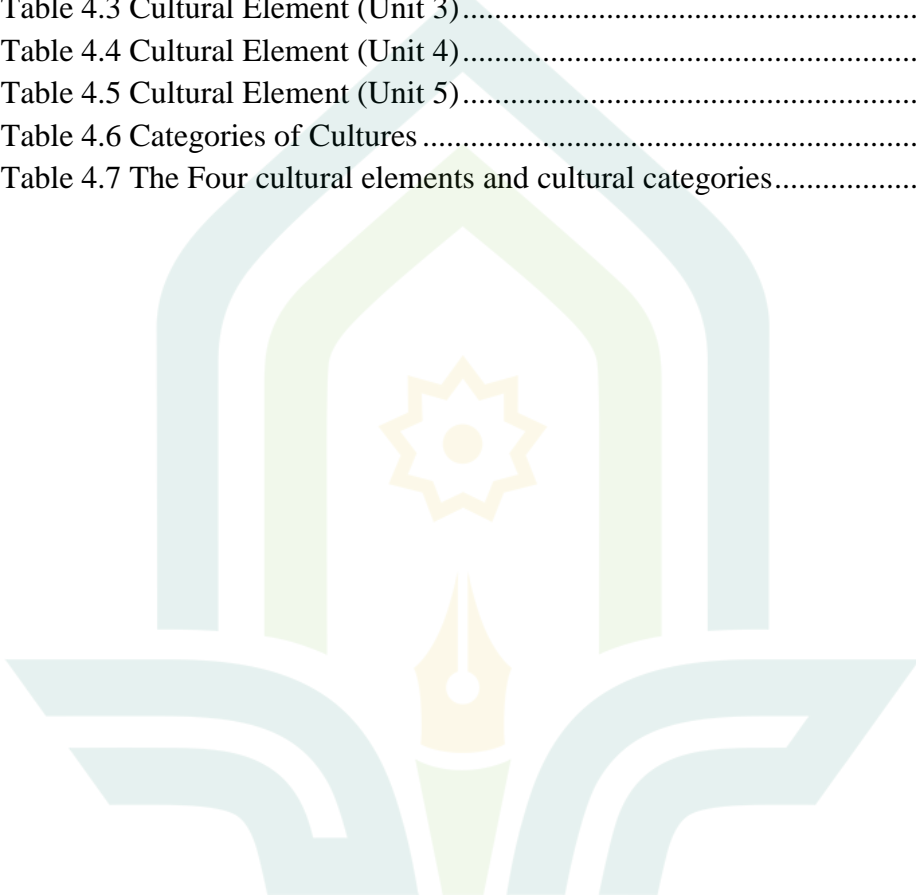
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Teaching culture is an integral part of language learning, with some researchers even considering it as the fifth skill in language acquisition (Maijala, 2020). As Brown stated, language and culture are inseparable, as language is a manifestation of culture (Baleghizadeh & Shayesteh, 2020). In order to effectively use a language, one must not only have competence in its linguistic elements but also in the culture, context, and values of the community that speaks it (Dahmardeh & Kim, 2021). Misunderstandings can arise when someone can use a language but lack the ability to communicate, interact, and adapt socially and culturally effectively (Lee & Li, 2020).

In the context of foreign language education, English as a Lingua Franca requires learners to have intercultural understanding. English speakers not only encounter American and British cultures but also the cultures of non-native speakers, which they must integrate with their own culture (Xiao, 2010). Therefore, as Cortazzi and Jin (1999) recommended, the source, target, and international cultures must be integrated into language learning.

Additionally, English is taught as a compulsory subject in the formal education curriculum from elementary school to university level in Indonesia (Banegas, 2019). Learning English in the Indonesian national curriculum broadens students' perspectives on themselves, social relationships, culture, and global job opportunities (Ministry of Education and Culture, n.d.). By understanding cultural differences, students can develop appreciation, understanding, and tolerance towards foreign cultures while maintaining their own. Thus, cultural understanding helps students build cultural awareness, respect, and tolerance toward other cultures.

Culture must be incorporated into foreign language classes to help students understand the cultural aspects of a language. As Bradella explains in McCandless et al. (McCandless et al., 2022), the classroom is the most appropriate place to promote culture, and textbooks are one of the primary learning sources for displaying culture. Textbooks play an essential role in teaching and learning activities in the classroom.

In Indonesia, many teachers rely on textbooks as their teaching guide because they provide clear material and instructions (Fauziyyah, 2023). Textbooks are also beneficial for teachers as a reference and guide and for building an effective teaching and learning process where students actively express their ideas in class (Safa & Tofighi, 2022). However, it is important to consider which textbooks are suitable for promoting cultural understanding among students.

As English is now an international language, there is a debate about which culture should be represented in textbooks, especially since the number of non-native English speakers surpasses native speakers. According to Cunningsworth (Cunningsworth, 1995), textbooks with a biased perspective can influence students' worldviews and lead to discrimination towards certain cultures. Alptekin (Alptekin, 2002) also emphasises the need for textbooks to reflect English as an international language and meet learners' communication needs in both global and local contexts. Xiao (2010) suggests that textbooks should include more non-native speaker characters and cultural issues from the source culture. Therefore, textbooks that balance local and global cultural content without favouring or being dominant towards any specific culture are necessary to promote culture. The goal is for students to learn to understand their own cultural diversity while increasing awareness of other cultures.

Considering the importance of balance and unbiased cultural content in textbooks, it is necessary to analyze it. In this

study, the researchers selected the textbook "English for Change," used in senior high schools in Indonesia. It was chosen because it is already part of the Merdeka curriculum and is widely used in most Indonesian schools.

1.2. Formulation of the Problem

The research question based on the research background above is as follows:

1. What are the cultural representations in the "English for Change" textbook?
2. Why are cultural representations predominantly presented in the "English for Change" textbook?

1.3. Research Objective

1. To identify and categorize the cultural representations present in the "English for Change" textbook.
2. To analyze the reasons behind the predominant presence of cultural representation in the "English for Change" textbook.

1.4. Operational Definition

1. Cultural Representation: Cultural representation is the production of meaning through language, discourse, and images that reflect and shape the practices, beliefs, and lifestyles of specific groups and can influence how people understand and interact with other cultures (Hall, 1997).
2. Textbook: A textbook is a standard book compiled by experts for instructional purposes in a specific field of study. To support educational programs, it is equipped with appropriate teaching materials that are easy to understand for schools and university users (deepublish, 2020).
3. Cultural Content: Cultural elements are symbols, language, beliefs, values, and artefacts that are part of every society (SelineShenoy, 2022). They can be physical objects or abstract concepts. Some examples of cultural elements are norms, language, rituals, holidays, food, art, and architecture (Drew, 2023).

1.5. Significances of the Research

Textbooks should be easy learning materials for teachers. However, a critical approach is needed when selecting textbooks and materials to use in English language learning. In fact, this study will provide a wealth of knowledge for a more international culture-focused, neutral and unbiased English textbook research. Theoretically, the results of this research are expected to benefit future studies related to cultural studies in English language teaching, especially in using textbooks as learning media.
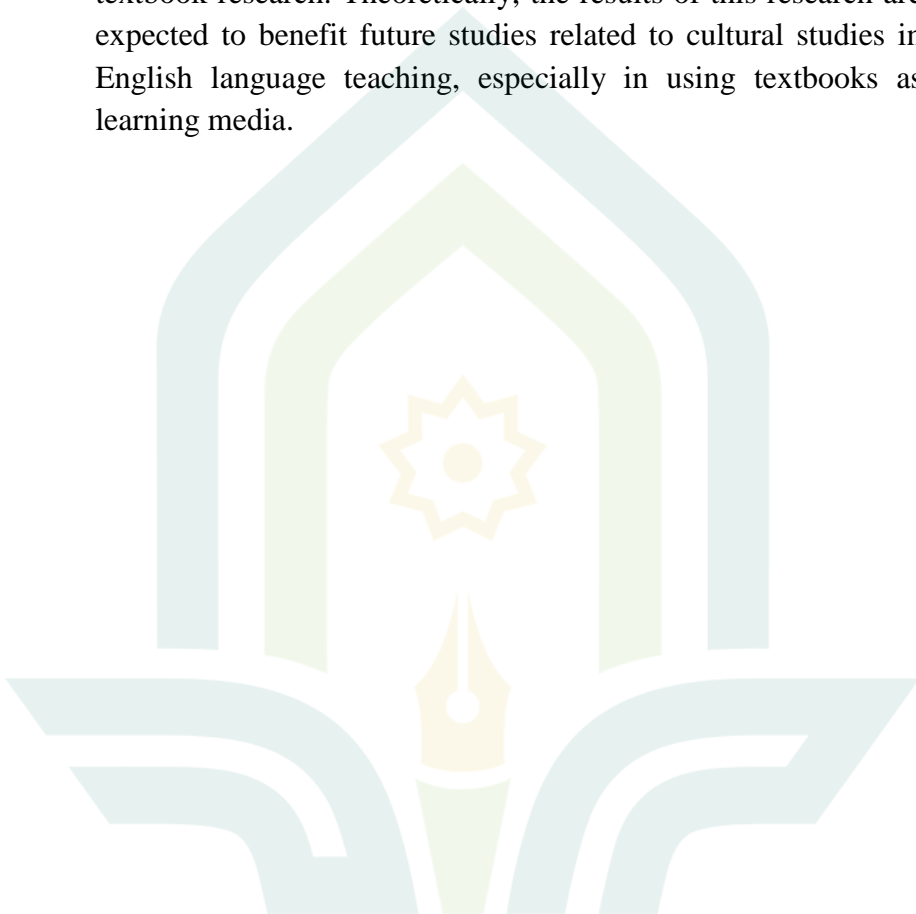
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1. Conclusion

This research aims to identify cultural elements and categories present in textbooks. The researcher utilized data from the textbook "English For Change" by documenting screenshots from the digital book. The data analysis technique employed was content analysis.

Based on the researcher's analysis of the 11th grade textbook "English for Change," it is evident that there is an imbalance in the representation of the four cultural elements defined by Yuen: products, practices, perspectives, and people. The findings indicate that the cultural element of people (or persons) is most prominently featured, appearing in 43.2% of the data. Followed by products, appearing 40.9% of the cultural content. Practices, encompassing daily life and societal habits, appear less frequently, for only 15.9% of the content. The element of perspectives, which includes inspirations, myths, and worldviews, is entirely absent from the textbook. The reason why persons element domanantly appear in the textbook because the presence of such figures in the textbook can inspire students and enhance their understanding of societal values. And the reason why perspective completely absent may stem from the prioritization of factual information over more abstract concepts, which are deemed less relevant or too complex for 11th grade students. The result above are in contrast with Lee and Li's study about "Cultural Representation in English Language Textbooks: A Comparison of Textbooks Used in Mainland China and Hong Kong" which found that product elements were the most frequently represented, followed by practice.

The 11th grade textbook "English for Change" prominently features the "source culture," meaning Indonesian culture, which appears 32 times (72.7%). This finding aligns

with Riandini and Cahyono's (2021) research, where source culture constituted 58% of textbook content. The emphasis on local culture aids in promoting students' intercultural awareness and understanding of their own culture, as supported by Byram et al. and explained by Mrs. Kurnia Wiyawati. Target and international cultures each appear 6 times (13.6%), indicating a balanced yet source culture-dominant approach. This inclusion of diverse cultural elements aligns with Yuen's (2011) assertion that cultural content in textbooks is influenced by social context, purpose, and timing. Meng (2023) notes that the revised 2022 textbook should provide more local cultural information, enhancing students' understanding of their national culture while comparing it to foreign cultures. Cunningsworth (Akhmad et al., 2022) asserts that a good textbook aligns with the language learning program's goals. The "English for Change" textbook meets the Merdeka curriculum's objectives by fostering intercultural competence and appreciation of both Indonesian and foreign cultures. Regular updates ensure the content remains relevant, helping students develop cultural awareness through contemporary and pertinent learning materials.

The "English for Change" textbook for 11th graders effectively promotes intercultural awareness by emphasizing Indonesian culture while incorporating target and international cultures. This approach aligns with educational goals and helps students appreciate cultural diversity. Regular updates to the textbook ensure it remains a valuable tool for developing comprehensive cultural understanding and intercultural competence.

5.2. Suggestion

Based on the findings of this research, textbook authors should include the four cultural elements—product, practice, perspective, and person—in their textbooks. This will ensure that the textbooks are rich in cultural content and help students better understand culture.

However, it is also worth mentioning that the international culture category was the least represented in this research. This serves as a reminder for authors to focus not only on the source culture or target culture but also on the international culture category, as English is an international language.

This research was limited to two theoretical frameworks - Yuen and Cortazzi & Jin. Therefore, it is recommended that future researchers explore cultural representations in this textbook using other frameworks to provide a more diverse perspective.

Additionally, further research can be conducted on cultural representations in other EFL textbooks, using the same theoretical framework or other frameworks, to contribute to the development of high-quality EFL textbooks for students in Indonesia.
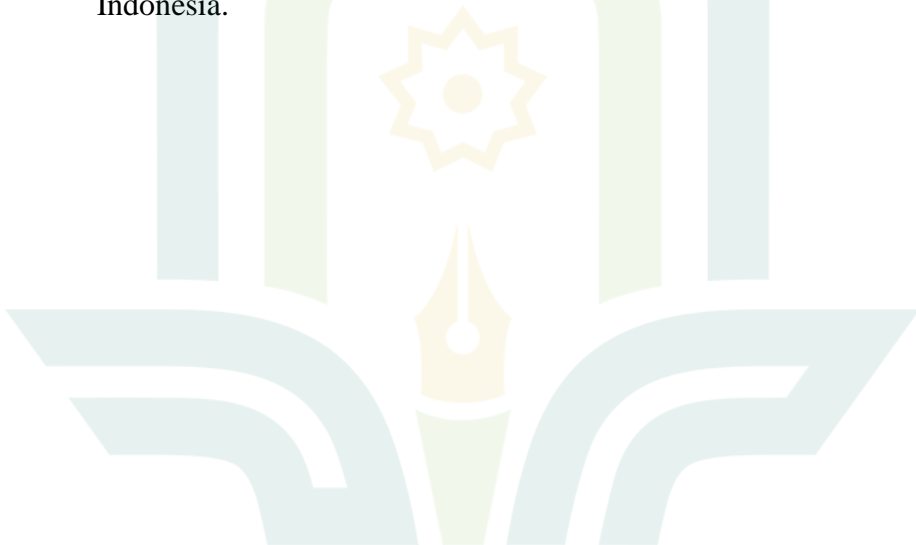
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CURRICULUM VITAE

Name   : Dini Chaqiqi
Student Number   : 2517032
Place and Date of Birth   : Batang, 12 Maret 1999
Gender   : Female
Address   : Desa Bandar RT.03 RW. 03, Kecamatan
                                Bandar Kabupaten Batang
Educational Bacground   :
   1. SD Negeri 3 Bandar   (2011)
   2. SMP Negeri 1 Bandar   (2014)
   3. SMK NU Bandar   (2017)