SELF-REPRESENTATION AND INTERCULTURAL ACCEPTANCE IN COMIC BOOK *MA VOISINE EST INDONÉSIENNE*

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ABSTRACT

The research specifically examined French and Indonesian individuals' representation from cognitive and interactional perspectives within sociocultural and sociocognitive contexts, mainly using dialogues in the comic book "Ma voisine est Indonésienne" (My Neighbor is Indonesian) by Emmanuel Lemaire. This comic strip was about the discovery of France through an Indonesian woman's eyes and transcribes the two cultures's encounters. The textual and structural aspects of the conversations were subject to analyses; their topical and situational dimensions were examined. NVIVO was used to support the qualitative analysis. The findings contribute to the development of a discourse analysis model of representation and perception of culturally based images or culturological models of communication, drawing heavily on Ulrike Niens' social identity theory. The findings suggest that stereotypical conversations between the Indonesian and French characters in the comic book primarily occur within a social context, indicating that stereotyping is part of a complex dynamic process involving elements of subjectivity, collectivity, and intersubjectivity. These findings also reveal an unfavorable sociocultural representation of both Indonesian and French cultures, as 17 aggregated item codes demonstrate the representations of Indonesians are deemed unacceptable within French culture's framework, while ten aggregated item codes indicate the representations of the French are deemed unacceptable within the Indonesian culture's context. This implies language and cognition, influenced by prior experiences and societal norms, shape social interactions and contribute to stereotype creation.

Keywords: self-representation, intercultural acceptance, French, Indonesian

INTRODUCTION

It is essential for each citizen to contribute to building a positive image of their country, as this impacts not only diplomatic relations with other countries but also promotes economic, social, and cultural cooperation. Constructing a positive image can be viewed from internal and external perspectives. Internally, how citizens present themselves to the domestic public influences the country's image, and externally, public opinion from other countries shapes a country's image (Revilla-Camacho et al., 2022; Lee, 2021). According to Ingenhoff, Segev, and Chariatte (2020), diplomacy should consider and analyze public opinion from other countries. The attitudes and behavior of community members, or citizens, can affect the reputation or brand of the nation (Mariutti, Medeiros, & Buarque, 2019; Wang, Cao, & Park, 2019).

The concept of national identity, or the identification of individuals as citizens of a particular country, has been impacted by globalization and increased immigration, leading to a blurring of the distinction between national and global identities (Cârstea, 2022; Taniguchi, 2021; Konings & Coninck, 2021). However, with the rise of xenophobia, nationalism, and increased segregation between nations, the public has increasingly relied on prejudice and stereotypes in defining national identity. Identity, including national identity, is influenced by both image

and sentiment, which are interconnected. The image creates strong sentiment, while sentiment shapes the image through the use of symbols. National identity is, therefore, embedded in the image of each individual and is shaped by their experiences, associations with specific regions, cultures, and institutions, and emotional ties (Forsdick, 2018; Helal, 2019; Portier, 2018; Schneider, 2018).

The image of an individual as a citizen is often shaped by stereotypes that are influenced by their country's cultural and social context. Countries with diverse cultural characteristics may experience a higher frequency of both positive and negative stereotypes. This is the case for France and Indonesia, both of which are multicultural countries due to historical immigration patterns. France has a diverse culture due to immigrants, particularly from Africa and Asia, coming to the country for labor purposes, particularly following the World War II. Indonesia has also been influenced by the presence of various nations, including the Portuguese, Dutch, British, Chinese, Indians, and Arabs, who came to the country for political, trade, and marriage purposes. While both France and Indonesia are multicultural countries, they differ in their approaches to cultural diversity, with France being characterized by integration and assimilation and Indonesia being characterized by acculturation. This difference in approach to cultural diversity can lead to differing perceptions of stereotypes related to French and Indonesian citizens.

Vinsonneau (1996) has explored the different perceptions of generalized image and their impact on stereotypes and social devaluation of certain ethnicities in an article titled *L'identité des jeunes en société inégalitaire: Le cas des Maghrébins en France - Perspectives cognitive et expérimentale.* In her experiments involving French people, black Indians, and North Africans, Vinsonneau has found that image tends to be internalized and operates indirectly in the cognitive domain of individuals.

Prendes, Vassiliadou, and Vladimirska (2020) and Bres (2021) have also examined stereotypes and discourses of French identity in the context of cultural identity; they discuss the concept of communication that aims to deconstruct stereotypes in the media. Both authors utilize Jacques Bres' perspective on dynamic identity in their analyses.

The issue of stereotypes has also been examined from various perspectives, including a gender perspective, as demonstrated by the research of Lindvall-Östling, Deutschmann, and Steinvall (2020), who examine how stereotypical prejudices about gender and conversational behavior can influence speakers' perceptions, showing that such prejudices can alter perceptions of linguistic behaviors that are actually similar.

Identifying commonalities in the image of Indonesians held by foreigners can be difficult due to Indonesia's diverse ethnicities, cultures, and religions (Jayadi, Abduh, & Basri, 2022). They also note that there is a significant cultural and population distance within Indonesia, including Indian, Chinese, European (Dutch), Islamic, and Christian influences. Indonesia's majority Muslim population also affects the image of Indonesians in the eyes of foreigners. Therefore, it is worth examining the views of foreigners, in this case, the French, on this topic. France is a country that has been characterized by the Republic model since its emergence in Europe during the Modern Christian era. France's secular system is based on the principles of "universalism" and "individualism", meaning that the relationship between the state and individuals should exclude all intermediary groups, including religion and culture. As a result, religion and culture should not be at the center of the relationship between the state and individuals. Laïcité, or secularism, serves as a separation between the state and all religious organizations, and therefore, citizens are not allowed to display their cultural and religious characteristics in public spaces (Firmonasari, 2020; Firmonasari, Udasmoro, & Salzano, 2021; Portier, 2018).

The image of a citizen can be conveyed through written, verbal, and visual discourses, such as in films, novels, comic books, or conversational dialogues. The stereotypes of a citizen, tailored to their country's cultural and social context, are often depicted in these forms of media. The portrayal of images through written and spoken media can influence a country's reputation. For example, the comic book *Ma voisine est Indonésienne (My Neighbor the Indonesian)* by Emmanuel Lemaire portrays the image of an Indonesian citizen. It tells the story of Madame Hibou (from '*ibu*', the Indonesian honorific for a married Indonesian woman), who works as a freelance translator in France. Madame Hibou is an adventurer who travels around France every weekend, and Lemaire presents a touching and sensitive portrait of Madame Hibou and her story through her journeys. An example of this portrayal is presented in the following statement in the book: *"La culture Indonésienne ne permet pas qu'une veille femme soit seule car ça veut dire qu'elle est abandonee"* (Indonesian culture does not allow an old woman to be alone because it means she is abandoned (Lemaire, 2021: 32).

The passage illustrates the comic book author's perspective on the social phenomenon in Indonesia that older women should not live alone. In Indonesian culture, it is customary for elderly parents to live with family members, particularly their children. Children who allow their parents to live alone may be viewed as immoral because they are perceived as neglecting their parents. In contrast, living alone is common and accepted in French culture, with many older people living in their own apartments while their children and grandchildren live in other locations (Jayadi, Abduh, & Basri, 2022).

That example illustrates the assumptions held by the author through the experiences of Madame Hibou, which showcase the image of Indonesians and the perception of French people towards this image. According to Niens et al. (2003) 's identity theory, individuals engage in the process of identification

and self-definition through the utilization of social categories to associate themselves with specific groups. This theoretical framework posits that individuals strive to attain a positive social identity by engaging in comparisons between their in-group and other individuals or social groups, referred to as out-groups. The purpose of such comparisons is to enhance the positive portrayal of the in-group, either on an individual or collective level. Building upon this theory, the present research examines the depiction of Indonesian individuals in comics and explores the perception of the French population towards this representation. The image or self-image of individuals displayed in written discourse, in this case, in the form of a comic book, can be gleaned from the dialogues between the characters. The utterances can be seen as representations and perceptions between characters of different cultures. Through these cultural differences, there are "acceptance" and "rejection" of socio-cultural values among the characters. Based on this, the research aims to analyze (a) how representations and perceptions of Indonesian and French self-images are depicted in written dialogues, and (b) how these representations and perceptions can be understood as a phenomenon of stereotyping an ethnicity or community.

The research gives an explanatory critical discourse analysis that frames the images of individuals in two countries: Indonesia and France. It is investigated using systematic linguistics how the images are conveyed and how the "acceptance" and "rejection" of the representations are raised in the conversations between the comic characters with regard to cultural differences. The findings of the research provide a discourse analysis model of representation and perception of culturally based images or culturological communication models.

METHODS

The data for the research are sourced from the dialogues between Madame Hibou and the French figures, as depicted in the comic *Ma voisine est Indonésienne (My Neighbor is Indonesian)* by Emanuelle Lemaire, published in 2021. This specific comic is selected as the primary data material due to its ability to capture the interplay of Indonesian and French cultural identities.

The research applies a qualitative research with a discourse and situational analysis approach. A textual approach is utilized in the discourse analysis, examining the content of each relevant utterance in the comic book and its relation to the context in which it is made. From a structural viewpoint, the discourse in the book is composed of a series of dialogues between characters. These exchanges contain explicit and implicit statements and ideas, and the modes of expression used (descriptive and narrative) contribute to the coherence and cohesion of the discourse. The topical aspect of the discourse refers to the subject matter of the dialogues, as a topical discourse analysis in its practical implementation involves examining the words and expressions used by the characters. Finally, situational discourse analysis examines the motivations and processes behind the construction of the statements made by the characters.

The situational approach to discourse analysis allows for a thorough examination of the various factors that influence communication, including the participants, contexts, goals, actions, norms, and genres. Based on these three elements, the research is undertaken through qualitative methods, following a procedure outlined below. The first step involves a literature review, during which relevant articles, books, and research reports on critical discourse analysis in relation to the cognitive social dimension, self-identity, image, stereotypes, representation, and perception are reviewed. The second step involves data collection, which aims to gather a sufficient and representative sample of data for analysis. The third step involves classifying the data using the NVIVO tool based on the phenomena that appear in the speech, including socio-culture, beliefs, education, entertainment, fashion, feelings, and relationships, followed by the fourth step of analyzing the coded data through the use of an argumentation scheme. Finally, the results of the argumentation scheme analysis are interpreted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

According to social identity theory, people use social categories to understand and define themselves and their place in the world. By aligning themselves with certain groups, individuals form a social identity. This process is driven by the desire to have a positive self-concept, which can be achieved through positive identification with a group. Social identity theory posits that people and groups compare themselves to others in order to enhance their own self-image and that of their group. This process involves finding ways in which the group they identify with (in-group) is superior to other groups (out-groups) with the goal of improving the group's self-image and individual self-esteem.

From a theoretical perspective, self-identification can potentially lead to the development of stereotypes, which may serve as a way to represent a group or activity. This approach diverges from the dominant social cognitive perspective, which sees stereotypes as simplified mental frameworks that are used to understand reality, and from self-categorization theory, which regards stereotypes as accurate representations of intergroup relations. Stereotypes should not be viewed solely as the result of individual cognitive processes but rather as social and collective phenomena that function to legitimize and justify existing power dynamics in society. The research examines the interaction between cognitive, social, and cultural factors in the process of self-identification, as manifested in the self-image representations of French

and Indonesian individuals (in the form of utterances). Table 1 illustrates these representations.

With 47 references, stereotypes related to social contexts rank first in Table 1. When comprehending a group's stereotypes, the socio-cultural circumstance is frequently the defining factor that distinguishes one group from another. Based on this, all group members are assumed to share the same qualities. This generalization process frequently results in misinterpretation of them by others outside the group due to their lack of socio-cultural knowledge of that group. The following is an example from the comic book *Ma voisine est Indonésienne*:

"En Indonésie, avoir une voiture pour une femme de ménage est quasiment impossible, elles ne gagnent pas assez d'argent. Dans mon pays, une femme de ménage c'est comme une femme de ménage en France au XIXe siècle." (Lemaire, 2021: 19)

("In Indonesia, having a car for a cleaning lady is almost impossible; they do not earn enough money. A cleaning lady in my country is like those in France in the 19th century.")

In France, domestic work is currently recognized as a legitimate profession, subject to minimum wage regulations and prescribed working hours. In contrast, domestic work in Indonesia continues to be viewed as a low-status occupation with accompanying low pay. The character Madame Hibou is surprised to see that domestic helpers in France can buy cars. Furthermore, she likens the condition of domestic helpers in Indonesia to that of domestic helpers in France in the nineteenth century. A domestic helper in France at the time worked full-time at their employer's home by taking care of its cleanliness, preparing food, and serving the needs of every member of the employer's family. This example depicts the French as having a more favorable image than Indonesians.

In contrast, there are examples of French representation in a sociocultural context through the eyes of the Indonesian character, as seen in this statement:

"La radinerie est l'un des stéréotypes que j'ai découvert chez les Français lors de mon premier travail d'étudiant en Indonésie." (Lemaire, 2022: 60)

("Stinginess is one of the stereotypes I discovered among the French during my early days as a student in Indonesia.").

Madame Hibou's statement aligns with the findings of a survey conducted by the Institut d'études Opinion et Marketing en France et à l'international

Table 1 Categories of French (Fr) and Indonesian (Ind) Stereotypes

Codes	Number of coding references	Aggregate number of coding references	Number of items coded	Aggregate number of items coded
Codes\\SOCIOCULTURAL	0	47	0	2
Codes\\SOCIOCULTURAL\Ind	26	26	2	2
Codes\\SOCIOCULTURAL\Fr	21	21	1	1
Codes\\BELIEF	0	11	0	1
Codes\\BELIEF\Ind	10	10	1	1
Codes\\EDUCATION	0	5	0	1
Codes\\ENTERTAINMENT	0	3	0	1
Codes\\EDUCATION\Ind	3	3	1	1
Codes\\FASHION	0	2	0	1
Codes\\FEELINGS	0	2	0	1
Codes\\RELATIONSHIP	0	2	0	1
Codes\\EDUCATION\Fr	2	2	1	1
Codes\\ENTERTAINMENT\Ind	2	2	1	1
Codes\\FEELINGS\Ind	2	2	1	1
Codes\\RELATIONSHIP\Ind	2	2	1	1
Codes\\BELIEF\Fr	1	1	1	1
Codes\\ENTERTAINMENT\Fr	1	1	1	1
Codes\\FASHION\Fr	1	1	1	1
Codes\\FASHION\Ind	1	1	1	1
Codes\\FEELINGS\Fr	0	0	0	0
Codes\\RELATIONSHIP\Fr	0	0	0	0

(IFOP) in 2019, which reveals that the French tend to exhibit frugal behavior in their consumption habits. The survey finds that 78% of French individuals, particularly those under the age of 25, consistently seek out affordable options online when making purchases or searching for low-cost leisure activities, such as visiting museums, attending exhibitions, or going to the movies. Additionally, 81% of French respondents report waiting for the most favorable prices when considering international travel (Emparan, 2019).

The second most-referenced context in the comic book that illustrates French and Indonesian stereotypes pertains to belief, which is evident in a total of 11 references in Table 1. According to Uwayezu et al. (2022) and Hoffmann et al. (2022), belief refers to religion, faith, and superstition. Religion is characterized by a set of principles and practices that are shared among a particular group, while superstition refers to a set of notions that are influenced by external, mystical factors. Unlike religion, superstition posits a causal relationship between objects and events, giving it an adaptive function that allows it to control illusions. As such, superstition is often viewed as a form of belief that diverges from religious norms and conflicts with scientific understanding. An example of this can be seen in the comic book.

> *"Oh oui! A Makassar, il y a beaucoup de superstitions ! Par exemple, si on s'assoit sur un oreiller on aura mal à la tête. Ou alors, quand il y a un papillon qui entre dans sa maison, ça veut dire que l'on va avoir de la visite. Quand on oublie le nom de quelqu'un, c'est qu'il est radin. Si on met du jus de citron sur le sang qu'à laissé l'assassin sur le lieu du crime, il aura mal et on pourra ainsi le démasquer!"* (Lemaire, 2022: 49).

("Oh yes! In Makassar, there are many superstitions! For example, if you sit on a pillow, you will have a headache. Or when a butterfly enters your house, it means that you will have a visitor. When you forget someone's name, it means they are stingy. If you put lemon juice on the blood left by the murderer at the scene of the crime, he will be in pain, and you will be able to expose him!")

The passage demonstrates the prevalence of superstitions in Makassar, Indonesia, which serve to enforce conformity to societal norms and prevent deviant behavior. The specific examples provided suggest that it is considered ethical, within the context of the local culture, to abstain from sitting on pillows, refrain from killing butterflies that enter one's home, and commit to memory the names of those one is acquainted with. This aligns with the findings of Ulya et al. (2018) on the cultural function of superstitions.

The comic book appears to primarily associate religion and belief with Indonesians, with only a single reference to French beliefs being identified in the text, namely in the utterance:

> *"J'étais très surprise de voir dans un pays moderne comme la France qu'on pouvait encore croire à la sorcellerie. Mais la serveuse m'a assuré qu'il y a encore beaucoup de sorcellerie dans le berry"* (Lemaire, 2021: 50)

("I was very surprised to see in a modern country like France that you could still believe in witchcraft. But the waitress assured me that there is still a lot of witchcraft in the berry.")

The example provided highlights Madame Hibou's surprise that some individuals in France continue to hold beliefs in superstition and magic, specifically regarding the supposed magical properties of berries. She assumes that individuals in a developed country such as France would tend to rely on logical thinking. However, data from a recent IFOP survey (Kraus & Jussian, 2022) indicates that the opposite is true, with a 7% increase in the percentage of French people who believe in superstitions (31%) from 2014 to 2022. The survey also finds that belief in astrology among the French population rose by 11 points to 44%, and belief in hand lines increased by 15 points to 32%.

The next category of stereotypes French and Indonesians hold in the comic book pertains to social relations. Individuals are generally considered to be connected to others from different groups based on their attributes within various social categories. These social relations are connected to social cognition, which acknowledges stereotypes' role in establishing relationships between different groups. The relationships between individuals from different social groups often involve asymmetrical power dynamics, with stereotypes playing a significant role in shaping these dynamics. For instance, in work relationships, individuals in high-status groups may hold paternalistic stereotypes of those in low-status groups. This demonstrates the reciprocal relationship between stereotypes and the dynamics of social structure, as described by social cognition theories (Prasad, Sockbeson, & O'Brien, 2022). In other words, the dynamics of social structure, such as power imbalances, can shape and reinforce stereotypes, while at the same time, stereotypes can also contribute to the maintenance and reproduction of these power imbalances within social structures (Dawd, Oumar, & Cukur, 2021). The comic book provides this example: *"Si elle est indonésienne, elle doit être musulmane, c'est une sœur!"* (Lemaire, 2021: 53) (If she's Indonesian, she must be Muslim; she is a sister!).

In the given scenario, Mousse, a Turkish man, assumes that Madame Hibou, a person from Indonesia, must be Muslim because he knows that Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country. This assumption is based on Mousse's social cognition and reflects his tendency to categorize individuals based on their perceived group membership. By constructing Madame Hibou as a Muslim due to her Indonesian

nationality, Mousse sees her as a member of his group, and even a sister. In this context, Madame Hibou serves as a representative of people who are perceived to be part of the in-group through an individual's social cognition process. The perceived relationship may extend to other contexts, such as fashion, food, and entertainment.

Fashion, food, and entertainment are cultural constructs that are shaped by society and often conveyed through unwritten social norms. These cultural domains can serve as a form of communication, allowing individuals to express their gender, social status, and cultural and religious identities through their clothing and other forms of self-presentation. For example, Akdemir (2018) has noted that the style and elaborateness of an individual's clothing can reflect their social class and certain cultural and religious symbols may be represented through clothing choices. In France, before the death of King Charles I and the implementation of clothing codes by Puritans in the seventeenth century, there was minimal differentiation in clothing worn by men and women. Before this time, fashion in France was not gender-specific, and men and women would wear ornate costumes. A person's social class was often indicated by the color and style of their clothing rather than their gender, with aristocrats and the bourgeois displaying wealth through the use of lavish materials such as lace, velvet, and silk, as well as decorative shoes, hats, wigs, and perfume (Arghittu, 2022). It was not uncommon for men to wear pink silk suits adorned with gold and silver embellishments, as fashion was seen as a marker of social status, with those who dressed more elaborately considered to be of a higher social class. In *Ma voisine est Indonésienne*, clothing-related stereotypes are exemplified as:

> *"Pendant mon ascension, je croisais des gens très chic. Avec des bérets, des foulard, des fourrures. Bizzares hihihi. Mais pas bizzars dans le sens péjoratif !Je vous explique: en Indonésie, on suit des standards. Ces standards veulent que jamais on ne mettra ensemble du rose et du beige, par exemple le rose va avec le blanc ou avec le rouge, on n'ose pas faire d'autres associations de couleurs."* (Lemaire, 2021:62).

> ("During my ascent, I met some very chic people. With berets, scarves, fur. Weird hehe. But not weird in the pejorative sense! Let me explain, in Indonesia, we follow standards. These standards mean that we will never put pink and beige together, for example pink goes with white or with red, we do not dare to make other color combinations.")

The aforementioned example refers to Madame Hibou's experience visiting Christian Dior's childhood home, where she observes French individuals wearing boldly mixed and matched clothing. Madame Hibou remarks that Indonesians are not likely to dress in flashy colors and instead tend to mix and match colors in a more modest manner. From the previously mentioned representations of Indonesians and French, some may be accepted by the respective communities, while others may be rejected. Unacceptable portrayals can lead to the creation of negative stereotypes, while acceptable representations can lead to the emergence of positive stereotypes. These two concepts will be explored in more depth.

The manner in which a group is represented determines the positive or negative characteristics of its stereotypes. Positive characteristics tend to emerge when the representation aligns with the social norms and values of the group evaluating it, which can be advantageous for members of the evaluated group whose actions are deemed acceptable by the evaluating group. Conversely, negative characteristics of a stereotype emerge when the representation is deemed unacceptable by the evaluating group due to a perceived lack of alignment with their social values. Positive stereotypes may contribute to the maintenance of positive interpersonal relationships, whereas negative stereotypes can perpetuate differences between groups. Table 2 illustrates differences in the acceptance of Indonesian and French stereotypes in *Ma voisine est Indonésienne*.

Table 2 illustrates that, based on the coding of the comic book characters' conversations, there are 23 instances of stereotypes about Indonesians held by French characters and 13 instances of stereotypes about French people held by Indonesians. Of these, 17 instances of the representation of Indonesians are considered unacceptable within the context of French culture, and ten instances of the representation of French people are considered unacceptable within the context of Indonesian culture.

French stereotypes that are considered unacceptable by Indonesians can be found in this example:

> *"Une des choses qui m'a choqué quand je suis arrivée en France la première fois, c'était une femme en bikini qui s'était allongée sur l'herbe près de la Tour Eiffel. C'était l'été, il faisait très chaud, il y avait même des enfants qui jouaient mais cela ne la gênait pas du tout."* (Lemaire, 2022: 48)

> ("One of the things that shocked me when I first arrived in France was a woman in a bikini lying on the grass near the Eiffel Tower. It was summer, it was very hot, there were even children playing, but that didn't bother her at all.")

For French people, sunbathing in a bikini on the beach or a park is a normal activity, but for Indonesians, it is considered unacceptable and goes against Indonesian socio-cultural norms. This unacceptability is expressed through the phrase "*m'a choqué*" (surprised me) in the text. Other instances

Table 2 The Degree of Difference in Unacceptability of Indonesians and French Stereotypes

Codes	Number of coding references	Aggregate number of coding references	Number of items coded	Aggregate number of items coded
Codes\\Indonesian Stereotype Value	0	23	0	2
Codes\\Indonesian Stereotype Value\Negative	17	17	2	2
Codes\\French Stereotype Value	0	13	0	2
Codes\\French Stereotype Value\Negative	10	10	2	2
Codes\\Indonesian Stereotype Value\Netral	6	6	2	2
Codes\\French Stereotype Value\Positive	3	3	2	2
Codes\\French Stereotype Value\Netral	0	0	0	0
Codes\\Indonesian Stereotype Value\Positive	0	0	0	0

of unacceptability in the comic book are indicated through expressions such as "*c'est très étrange*" (it's very strange), "*incroyable*" (unbelievable), "*je suis gênée*" (I'm embarrassed), "*olala-lala*" (an interjection denoting astonishment), and "*la société Indonésienne est très différente*" (Indonesian society is very different). Representations of Indonesians that are considered unacceptable by the French can be seen in the example:

> *"En Indonésie, même aujourd'hui, une relation sans mariage est quasi impossible. Si en plus j'avais un enfant, ma famille aurait honte et me mettrait en retrait de la société."* (Lemaire, 2021: 43)

> ("In Indonesia, even today, a relationship without marriage is almost impossible. If I also had a child, my family would be ashamed and would put me away from society.")

This example illustrates that Madame Hibou presents the Indonesian cultural belief that cohabitation or having children outside of marriage is not recognized, stating that it is almost impossible (*est quasi impossible*) for that to happen. However, this representation is not accepted by one of the French characters, as in French culture, it is acceptable for a woman and man to have a relationship and have children without marriage.

Of all the data on stereotypes from the comic book, there is only one instance that is considered positive, which pertains to a French stereotype in the following example:

> *"Les français sont tellement sages. Ils restent cool avec leur smartphone, d'autres dorment ou lisent. Ils n'ont pas l'air de s'inquiéter du retard."* (Lemaire, 2022: 58)

> ("The French are so wise. They stay cool with their smartphone, others sleep or read. They don't seem to care about the delay.")

In this example, Madame Hibou describes the attitude of the French when there is a delay in the train departure. The adjective "*sage*" (wise) has a positive meaning, which in Larousse's dictionary means "*qui fait prevue de sûreté dans ses jugements et sa conduit*" (showing sureness in judgments and conduct). This meaning certainly gives French people a positive value in the eyes of Indonesians, in this case Madame Hibou. This is an individual judgment, but it can be implicitly placed in the context of French culture.

The analysis of the categories of contextual stereotypes and the evaluation of the representations of French and Indonesian individuals demonstrates that stereotypes can be applied to one's own group (in-group) or another group (out-group). These stereotypes can serve to differentiate individuals within in-groups and out-groups. However, it is important to note that the value judgments associated with these groups, whether positive or negative, may not always be accurate as values are subjective and depend on individual perspectives.

Viewed through a cognitive and interactional lens, an individual's capacity as a subjective speaker is conceptualized as their ability to comprehend the interconnectedness between themselves and others, drawing upon cognitive elements and their personal experiences. Furthermore, the interactions between speakers and their discourse partners give rise to intersubjective relationships. In a broader sense, intersubjectivity refers to the connection between participants (speakers and discourse partners) that emphasizes the interplay between cognitive aspects and verbal exchanges. Within intersubjective relationships, the interactions between speakers and their discourse partners generate symbolic and imaginary values. These values manifest in various forms of representation, encompassing social knowledge, general knowledge, ideology, and norms.

Each representation can be organized based on its respective schema structure and category, including elements such as place, time, participants, and so forth.

Accordingly, "knowledge" can be defined as a cognitive structure comprising the "beliefs/views/opinions" held by a particular community or culture. These cognitive structures are organized, reliable, and historically validated within specific social communities. "Knowledge" is characterized by its factual and objective nature, while "beliefs/views/opinions" are evaluative and intersubjective in nature. Consequently, something regarded as "knowledge" within one community may be considered merely a "belief/view/opinion" within another community. This same principle applies to the representations of French and Indonesian cultures, which can be accepted or rejected by both parties. The unacceptability of cultural representations stems from certain beliefs that are deemed unacceptable within their respective cultural contexts. This is in contrast to the acceptance of cultural representation, which is considered "knowledge" as it can be relied upon based on historical and cultural aspects. In the comic *Ma voisine est Indonésienne*, cultural unacceptability primarily arises from differences in beliefs among characters with diverse cultural backgrounds.

CONCLUSIONS

Stereotypes can be understood as representations or constructions of individuals within a group and the social relationships surrounding them that are shaped by socio-cultural factors. Stereotyping is part of a complex and subjective process that involves in-group dynamics and intergroup relations, as well as the relationship between language, thought, and individual experience. Social interactions between individuals also give rise to intersubjectivity, which is evident in the utterances communicated between the speakers.

This notion of intersubjectivity becomes evident in Madame Hibou's dialogues during interactions with the French characters. The utterances in these interactions reflect identity constructions that can be asserted or challenged, validated or rejected, displayed or concealed, depending on the dynamics of the social and interactive processes. Through the utilization of the NVIVO tool for classification, it is identified that there are 17 representations of Indonesians that are deemed unacceptable within the context of French culture and ten representations of the French that are deemed unacceptable within the context of Indonesian culture. This observation highlights the relational nature of identity, indicating that the formation of the "self" is intricately intertwined with the construction of the "other". Hence, identity can be viewed as a relational concept, underscored by the historical, natural, and distinctive characteristics of a particular group, setting it apart from other groups.

Utterances, or spoken or written communication, are often viewed as solely belonging to individuals, existing only in each speaker's perspective. However, it is necessary to consider that utterances are also influenced by the culture of a speaker's community and cannot be reduced to individual phenomena. Rather, they are derived from the culture to which the individual belongs. The debate on the nature of language often posits individualism and collectivism as opposing viewpoints. To fully understand language, it is necessary to consider the interactivity between these two extremes.

To effectively engage in interactivity, individuals must possess linguistic competence, which includes a mastery of the language system, proficiency in using the language, and a shared language. Interactivity and intersubjectivity involve the direct or indirect participation of more than one individual, with interactivity being the more foundational element than intersubjectivity. This concept can be applied to interactions between individuals from different cultural backgrounds when conveying beliefs or norms prevalent in their respective communities. The validity of intersubjectivity in interactions between individuals, particularly when a speaker is presenting themselves to someone outside their community, is influenced by cognitive elements, interactions, and norms that exist among the speakers.

From the standpoint of discourse analysis research, it can be inferred that the process of intersubjectivity involves the construction of discourse. This construction is defined as a set of strategies employed by the subject, influenced by cognitive factors and the dynamics of relations among subjects, which in turn are influenced by the discursive situation, goals, and social norms within which the subject is situated. Consequently, comprehending the discourse produced by the subject necessitates an understanding of the speaker's identity as well as the social, historical, or cultural context of the specific community. Therefore, the range of speech expressed by the subject is not merely a linguistic representation but also a social representation enacted by the subject.

The research endeavors to make a scientific contribution to the advancement of discourse analysis, not only within the scope of French discourse analysis but also in the broader field of discourse analysis from both theoretical and methodological perspectives. To date, the research of stereotypes and individual representations has predominantly been approached from a singular perspective, namely that of cognitive linguistics or interactional linguistics. This research seeks to examine the representation of French and Indonesian individuals from two perspectives, namely the cognitive and interactional while embedding them within a socio-cultural or socio-cognitive framework.

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