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Cultural Representations and Potential Intercultural Friction in the Tendance A1 Textbook: Implications for Beginner Indonesian Learners

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ABSTRACT

Foreign language textbooks function not only as linguistic resources but also as vehicles for cultural transmission. In French as a Foreign Language (FLE) education, cultural representations embedded in teaching materials may generate intercultural tensions when they differ from learners' sociocultural norms. Despite extensive research on culture in FLE textbooks, the potential for intercultural friction in beginner-level materials remains underexplored, particularly in the Indonesian context. This study aims to identify French cultural representations in the audiovisual content of the *Tendance A1* textbook and examine their potential for intercultural friction from the perspective of Indonesian cultural values. Using an interpretive qualitative design, the study employs content analysis of audiovisual materials from Units 0 to 9. The analysis is informed by intercultural and ecolinguistic perspectives and focuses exclusively on textbook content rather than learners' perceptions or experiences. The findings reveal four recurring domains of cultural representation: greeting practices involving *la bise* and physical contact, norms of intimacy and interpersonal distance, diverse family and romantic relationship models, and individual autonomy in everyday life. These representations reflect values of informality, personal freedom, and relational openness that may contrast with the more collective, family-oriented, and religiously influenced norms commonly associated with Indonesian society. The study concludes that such cultural differences should be viewed as opportunities for developing intercultural competence rather than as barriers to learning. It contributes to FLE textbook research and offers pedagogical insights for contextualizing cultural content in Indonesian classrooms.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching French as a Foreign Language (FFL) involves more than the acquisition of linguistic competence; it also entails engagement with cultural representations embedded in pedagogical materials. Among these materials, textbooks play a central role in introducing learners to social practices, values, identities, and worldviews associated with the Francophone world. Recent scholarship has increasingly emphasized that language textbooks act as mediators of cultural knowledge rather than neutral instructional tools [1], [2], [3]. Through texts, images, and audiovisual resources, they shape learners' perceptions of the target culture while simultaneously conveying implicit cultural assumptions and value systems.

Research conducted in various educational contexts has highlighted recurring issues in the cultural representation found in FFL textbooks. Spiegelman [4] observes that many textbooks continue to privilege metropolitan France as the dominant cultural reference, thereby limiting the visibility of Francophone diversity. Similarly, Lamamri [5]identifies the persistence of simplified cultural portrayals in Algerian French textbooks, while Widihardjo et al. [6]report that *Édito B1* provides relatively limited opportunities for intercultural reflection among Indonesian learners. Comparable findings have been reported beyond the FFL context. Amerian and Tajabadi [1]demonstrate that language textbooks often prioritize target-culture knowledge while offering limited opportunities for intercultural comparison, whereas Mahbub et al. [3]identify persistent imbalances in the representation of dominant and marginalized cultures. Taqdir [7] further notes that stereotypical visual representations remain widespread in language-learning materials.

Beyond the question of representation itself, several researchers have emphasized the importance of examining the narratives and ideologies embedded in educational materials. From an ecolinguistic perspective, Schlindenbuchová [2] argues that textbooks function as carriers of implicit stories about society, identity, and cultural norms. Likewise, Martinez [8] suggests that stereotypical representations may essentialize French society and limit opportunities for critical engagement with cultural diversity. Derakhshan (2024) further demonstrates that visual elements in textbooks often reinforce dominant cultural narratives by presenting particular understandings of social reality as natural or self-evident. These studies suggest that textbook content deserves analysis not only for what it represents but also for the values and assumptions it implicitly promotes.

Research on intercultural learning has also shown the importance of critical reflection in helping learners engage with cultural diversity. Romero-Zeledón [9] demonstrates that authentic materials and reflective discussion can encourage learners to reassess preconceived cultural assumptions. Similarly, Morales and Escobar-Cristiani [10]argue that pedagogical resources may unintentionally reproduce cultural clichés unless accompanied by opportunities for critical reflection. Other studies emphasize that intercultural competence develops through engagement with multiple perspectives and interpretation of cultural ambiguity [11], [12], [13], [14]. Rather than viewing cultural misunderstandings as obstacles, Abrams [15] conceptualizes them as opportunities for learning, while Bouras [16] highlights the teacher's role in facilitating critical examination of cultural representations.

Although these studies have contributed significantly to understanding cultural representation and intercultural competence, they have mainly examined cultural content in general, the persistence of stereotypes, or pedagogical strategies for intercultural learning. Comparatively little attention has been paid to the specific question of how beginner-level FFL materials may contain representations that generate intercultural friction when interpreted through different cultural frames of reference. This issue is particularly relevant for *Tendance A1*, a textbook widely used in introductory French language instruction and characterized by extensive audiovisual content depicting everyday social practices.

To address this issue, it is necessary to distinguish several concepts that are often used interchangeably in discussions of culture and language learning. Cultural difference simply refers to the existence of distinct cultural practices, beliefs, values, or social norms. Such differences are an ordinary feature of intercultural encounters and do not inherently imply disagreement. Intercultural friction refers to moments of questioning, discomfort, uncertainty, or interpretive tension that may arise when individuals encounter unfamiliar cultural representations. In contrast, cultural conflict involves a stronger opposition between competing or incompatible value systems. Finally, culture shock generally refers to the psychological and emotional difficulties associated with prolonged immersion in an unfamiliar cultural environment. Because the present study focuses on textbook content rather than learner experiences, its primary concern is the identification of representations that may generate potential intercultural friction, rather than the observation of actual cultural conflict or culture shock.

Within the Indonesian context, previous studies have examined cultural values in FFL materials [17], linguistic challenges encountered by Indonesian learners [18], intercultural competence development [19], and the pedagogical use of Francophone literature [20]. However, little research has specifically investigated how cultural representations in beginner-level French textbooks may be interpreted through different cultural perspectives or how such representations may require pedagogical mediation. Rather than assuming a uniform Indonesian cultural or religious response to French cultural content, the present study adopts a textual and analytical approach that focuses on representations contained in the textbook itself and their potential for generating intercultural friction as documented in relevant literature.

The study therefore addresses a more specific analytical gap than previous research. Instead of examining cultural representation in language textbooks in general, it focuses on the audiovisual materials of *Tendance A1* and investigates how particular representations of everyday French social life may become sites of intercultural interpretation. The study also moves beyond descriptive analyses of cultural content by combining intercultural theory with an ecolinguistic perspective. The intercultural framework, particularly Abdallah-Pretceille's [21] concept of cultural decentering, facilitates an examination of how cultural meanings may be interpreted from different cultural viewpoints. The ecolinguistic framework, in turn, enables analysis of the implicit narratives, values, and worldviews embedded in textbook discourse and visual representations. Taken together, these complementary perspectives provide a more comprehensive understanding of how cultural meanings are represented, interpreted, and potentially contested.

Accordingly, this study seeks to answer the following research questions: 1) What French cultural representations are conveyed through the audiovisual content of *Tendance A1*? 2) Which aspects of these representations are likely to generate intercultural friction for Indonesian beginner learners? 3) What pedagogical implications can be drawn from these findings to support the development of intercultural competence in FFL instruction?

The third question concerns the pedagogical implications of the content analysis rather than the investigation of actual classroom practices or learners' observed responses. Its purpose is to explore how the identified cultural representations may be used to foster intercultural reflection and critical engagement in pedagogical contexts.

The originality of this study lies in its combined use of intercultural and ecolinguistic perspectives to analyze the audiovisual content of an A1-level FFL textbook. While previous research has generally examined cultural representation, stereotypes, or intercultural competence separately, few studies have integrated these two frameworks to investigate how implicit cultural narratives may generate potential intercultural friction. By focusing on *Tendance A1*, the study contributes to ongoing discussions on textbook evaluation, cultural mediation, and intercultural learning while providing theoretically informed pedagogical insights for French language education.

2. METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative interpretive approach based on content analysis, which is particularly suitable for examining cultural representations embedded in pedagogical materials. The analysis is informed by intercultural [21], [22] and ecolinguistic [2] perspectives, which consider educational resources not only as language-learning tools but also as carriers of cultural norms, social representations, and identity narratives.

The corpus consists of all audiovisual materials included in the *Tendance A1* textbook (Units 0-9). A total of six videos, each strictly constrained to a duration between 1:30 and 2:05 minutes, were analyzed. No preliminary screening or selection was conducted; all videos accompanying the ten units were included in order to obtain a comprehensive representation of the cultural content presented to beginner learners. The videos portray a variety of everyday situations, including introductions, greetings, family interactions, leisure activities, housing, mobility, interpersonal relationships, and workplace communication. The corpus was selected because audiovisual materials provide contextualized representations of everyday social practices and therefore offer rich data for examining implicit cultural values and norms.

Each video was viewed repeatedly and transcribed into detailed descriptive notes focusing on verbal interactions, non-verbal behaviors, social practices, and contextual elements carrying cultural significance. The unit of analysis consisted of a culturally meaningful scene, interaction, or behavior represented in the videos. The coding process followed three stages of qualitative content analysis. During the first stage, open coding was conducted to identify cultural representations related to social interaction, family life, interpersonal relationships, personal autonomy, and everyday practices. Codes were assigned inductively from the data rather than predetermined categories. Examples of initial

codes included *la bise*, physical proximity, mixed-gender socialization, independent living, romantic relationships, and family diversity.

During the second stage, related codes were grouped through axial coding into broader thematic clusters. The emerging categories were subsequently examined in light of intercultural and ecolinguistic theories to identify the values, norms, and worldviews embedded in the representations. This iterative process resulted in four major categories:

1. Greeting practices and social distance;
2. Conceptions of intimacy and private space;
3. Family models and romantic relationships;
4. Individual autonomy and lifestyles.

Thus, the final categories emerged primarily from the data through inductive analysis, while their interpretation was informed by the theoretical frameworks adopted in the study.

The coding and interpretation were conducted by the researcher. Given the interpretive nature of qualitative content analysis, the possibility of subjective bias cannot be entirely excluded. To enhance credibility, several procedures were implemented. First, an audit trail was maintained throughout the analysis, documenting coding decisions, category development, and analytical memos. Second, peer debriefing was conducted with two colleagues specializing in French language and culture education, who reviewed the coding framework, category definitions, and representative excerpts. Divergent interpretations were discussed until a shared understanding was reached. Third, the findings were continuously compared with previous studies on cultural representations, intercultural competence, French language teaching, and French cultural practices to assess the plausibility and consistency of the interpretations.

The study is limited to the analysis of audiovisual content contained in *Tendance A1* and does not investigate learners' perceptions, attitudes, or actual experiences. Consequently, the situations identified in the analysis should be understood as potential sources of intercultural friction inferred from contrasts between the cultural representations observed and documented characteristics of Indonesian sociocultural norms. Future studies could complement this approach through interviews, focus groups, classroom observations, or learner surveys to examine how Indonesian learners actually interpret and negotiate these cultural representations in practice.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Greeting Practices and Social Distance

The audiovisual materials frequently represent *la bise* as a routine greeting practice among certain characters. However, the contrast between Mélanie's use of *la bise* and Ludovic's preference for a handshake demonstrates that greeting conventions are neither fixed nor uniform across French-speaking communities. Rather than presenting a single cultural norm, the textbook itself contains examples of variation in interpersonal practices.

From an intercultural perspective, the significance of this representation lies less in the practice itself than in the different meanings attached to physical proximity and politeness. The videos construct *la bise* as a socially acceptable form of interaction in particular contexts

and relationships. Through an ecolinguistic lens, the representation conveys assumptions concerning familiarity, sociability, and interpersonal closeness that accompany the linguistic content.

Because this study did not investigate learners' perceptions, no claim can be made regarding how Indonesian learners actually interpret such scenes. The analysis merely identifies greeting practices as a potential site of intercultural interpretation, insofar as learners may encounter social conventions that differ from those more commonly represented in their own sociocultural environments.



Figure 1. Mélanie et Greg kiss on the cheek

In *Tendance A1*, Unit 0 (p. 12) and in Scene 1: *La Villa Marie-Claire*, Mélanie greets Greg with *la bise* (cheek-kissing). In contrast, in Unit 1 (p. 20) and Scene 3: *Un nouveau locataire*, Ludovic, a Belgian character, avoids *la bise* when greeting Mélanie. In Belgium, *la bise* is not as widely established as a social norm as it is in France, where it is commonly practiced in everyday interactions. Consequently, Ludovic chooses to extend his hand rather than engage in *la bise*, thereby expressing his own cultural frame of reference regarding social distance and politeness.



Figure 2. Ludovic offers to shake hands

This scene illustrates that greeting conventions within the Francophone world are not culturally uniform but vary according to national and sociocultural contexts. The contrast between Mélanie's and Ludovic's greeting behaviors highlights the diversity of

interpersonal norms that coexist within French-speaking communities. From an intercultural perspective, such a representation reinforces Abdallah-Pretceille's [22] view that cultures should be understood as dynamic, heterogeneous, and context-dependent realities rather than as fixed and homogeneous entities. It also demonstrates that even within the Francophone sphere, practices related to social interaction, physical proximity, and politeness are subject to variation and negotiation.

Viewed through an ecolinguistic lens, the textbook does more than merely depict a communicative behaviour; it also implicitly conveys a worldview in which physical proximity is considered a legitimate and socially accepted expression of friendliness, solidarity, and interpersonal closeness. As Schlindenbuchová [2] argues, language-learning materials transmit not only linguistic knowledge but also implicit cultural norms, values, and representations of social reality. Consequently, the portrayal of *la bise* in *Tendance A1* reflects broader assumptions about interpersonal relationships within French society while simultaneously exposing learners to alternative ways of conceptualizing social interaction.

These findings suggest that greeting practices should not be presented as universal cultural norms but rather as culturally situated behaviours whose meanings depend on specific social and cultural contexts. In this regard, the identification and discussion of cultural stereotypes and differing social conventions, as advocated by Bouras [16], can contribute significantly to the development of intercultural competence. Pedagogically, the representation of *la bise* in *Tendance A1* provides a valuable opportunity for intercultural comparison, encouraging learners to examine the cultural values underlying both French and Indonesian greeting practices. Such reflective activities can foster openness to cultural diversity, reduce ethnocentric interpretations, and strengthen learners' ability to interpret and negotiate cultural differences in intercultural communication.

3.2. Conceptions of Intimacy and Private Space

A second category concerns the representations of intimacy and private space. In *Tendance A1* (Unit 3, p. 48, Scene 7), the scene in which Greg enters Mélanie's room and closes the door presents a particular representation of privacy, trust, and interpersonal relations. Within the narrative, this behavior is depicted as ordinary and unproblematic, suggesting a social environment in which mixed-gender interactions in private settings are normalized under certain circumstances.

Rather than treating this representation as characteristic of an entire society, it is more appropriate to view it as one possible model of social interaction selected by the textbook authors. As Abdallah-Pretceille (2011) argues, intercultural analysis should focus on situated practices rather than essentialized cultural characteristics.

From an ecolinguistic perspective, this scene illustrates how language-learning materials convey more than linguistic knowledge. As Schlindenbuchová [2] argues, textbooks also transmit implicit cultural narratives and social representations that shape learners' perceptions of social reality. In this case, the behavior depicted is presented as ordinary and socially acceptable within the French context, thereby implicitly conveying a worldview in which private interactions between men and women are normalized and generally free from moral judgment.

The same behavior may evoke surprise, discomfort, or even unease for Indonesian learners. Social norms in Indonesia, strongly influenced by religious and communal values, tend to regulate private interactions between unmarried men and women, especially in enclosed spaces such as a bedroom. Consequently, closing the door in such a situation may be perceived as inappropriate or even transgressive, potentially leading to social disapproval or misunderstanding, despite the absence of any romantic intention.

This divergence highlights the culturally situated nature of social practices and demonstrates that meanings attributed to gestures and behaviors are neither universal nor self-evident. From an intercultural perspective, the scene exemplifies what Martinez [8] describes as a process of *cultural decentering*, whereby exposure to alternative cultural frameworks encourages learners to reconsider the assumptions underlying their own social norms and values. Rather than viewing the represented behavior through an ethnocentric lens, learners are invited to understand it within the cultural logic of the society in which it occurs.

The contrast between French and Indonesian interpretations of private space underscores the importance of intercultural competence in international communication. Recognizing that social behaviors derive their meanings from specific cultural contexts can help prevent misunderstanding and foster more respectful intercultural interactions. Pedagogically, this scene offers a valuable opportunity for guided reflection and intercultural comparison, encouraging learners to examine differing conceptions of intimacy, gender relations, trust, and privacy. Such reflective engagement can contribute to the development of intercultural awareness and critical understanding of cultural diversity while strengthening learners' ability to navigate cultural differences in real-life communication.

3.3 Family Models and Affective Relationships

A third category concerns representations of family models and affective relationships. Expressions such as *"my mother and her partner"* in *Tendance A1* (Unit 3, p. 48, Scene 7), as well as the reference to a grandmother traveling with her boyfriend in *Tendance A1* (Unit 5, p. 77, Scene 11), reflect a pluralistic representation of contemporary French family life. Within the textbook, these family configurations are presented as ordinary and socially accepted, thereby reflecting the diversification of family structures that has characterized many Western societies in recent decades.

From an intercultural perspective, these representations convey implicit assumptions about family, intimacy, and personal relationships. The textbook normalizes family arrangements that extend beyond the traditional nuclear family model and portrays affective relationships as matters of individual choice rather than strictly institutional or religious commitments. Such representations implicitly communicate values associated with individual autonomy, personal fulfillment, and the legitimacy of diverse family forms within contemporary French society.

Viewed through an ecolinguistic lens, this finding supports Schlindenbuchová's [2] argument that language textbooks do not merely transmit linguistic content but also convey implicit cultural narratives, social values, and worldviews. In this case, *Tendance A1*

presents non-traditional family configurations as ordinary components of everyday life, thereby promoting a particular representation of social reality that may differ significantly from learners' own cultural frameworks.

For Indonesian learners, however, these representations may generate cultural surprise or even cultural shock because they challenge more traditional conceptions of family. In Indonesia, the family unit is generally understood as being structured around legal and religious marriage. The idea that a parent may live with a partner outside marriage or that romantic relationships may be represented independently of marital status can be perceived as unusual or even inconsistent with prevailing social norms. Although such family arrangements have become increasingly common in some Western societies, they remain relatively marginal in many parts of Indonesia, where cultural and religious values strongly emphasize marriage as the foundation of family life.

Furthermore, Indonesian social norms, shaped by religious traditions, particularly Islam, which is the majority religion in the country, place considerable importance on modesty, morality, and conformity to conventional family roles. Cohabitation outside marriage, even when presented in a neutral manner, may therefore be interpreted as inappropriate or socially unacceptable. Consequently, exposure to such representations without adequate intercultural contextualization may lead to confusion, discomfort, resistance, or misunderstanding among learners.

This contrast illustrates what Martinez [8] describes as a process of cultural decentering, whereby learners encounter alternative systems of values and are encouraged to critically reexamine their own assumptions regarding family relationships and social norms. Rather than viewing these representations as inherently right or wrong, an intercultural approach seeks to understand them within the sociocultural context in which they emerge. Such an approach helps learners recognize that family models are socially and historically constructed and may vary considerably across cultures.

Pedagogically, these representations should therefore be accompanied by explanation, guided discussion, and intercultural comparison. As Bouras [16] suggests, the critical examination of cultural representations and stereotypes can contribute significantly to the development of intercultural competence. By engaging learners in reflective discussions about differing conceptions of family, partnership, and social legitimacy, teachers can transform potential cultural tensions into opportunities for intercultural learning. Such activities foster openness to diversity, encourage critical reflection on cultural norms, and strengthen learners' ability to navigate cultural differences with respect and understanding.

3.4 Individual Autonomy and Lifestyles

A fourth category concerns representations of individual autonomy and lifestyles. Several videos in *Tendance A1* depict shared living arrangements and independent decision-making, which constitute some of the most visible manifestations of the value placed on individual autonomy within the French social context represented in the textbook. The characters are portrayed as making personal decisions independently and organizing their daily lives without constant reference to family authority or supervision.

Mixed-gender shared housing is illustrated, for example, in Unit 6 (p. 91, Scene 11: *Un cadeau pour Greg*) and Unit 9 (p. 136, Scene 20: *Li Na et Ludovic s'installent*). The first scene indicates that Bertrand, the grandmother's partner, lives in Marie-Claire's house, while the second presents Li Na and Ludovic sharing accommodation. In the French context, cohabitation between men and women who are neither family members nor romantic partners is generally regarded as a common and socially acceptable practice, particularly among young adults. Such arrangements reflect values associated with individual freedom, residential autonomy, and personal choice. In this context, sharing accommodation is primarily perceived as a practical and economic solution rather than a relationship carrying moral or emotional implications. This practice is further supported by a relatively flexible view of social relations, in which gender mixing is considered normal and unproblematic.

From an ecolinguistic perspective, these scenes reveal the presence of a cultural narrative grounded in the values of autonomy, individual freedom, and personal responsibility. As Schlindenbuchová [2] argues, language-learning materials transmit not only linguistic knowledge but also implicit worldviews and social values. Similarly, these representations correspond to what Blattner et al. [23]describe as *invisible culture*, namely the norms, assumptions, and values that shape social behavior without being explicitly taught. Through the depiction of shared living arrangements and independent lifestyles, *Tendance A1* implicitly constructs a vision of social reality in which personal autonomy is regarded as both desirable and legitimate.

However, these representations may generate tension when interpreted from the perspective of Indonesian learners. Indonesian society, which is strongly influenced by religious values, communal norms, and family-oriented social structures, generally imposes stricter boundaries on private interactions between unmarried men and women. Living under the same roof without marital or familial ties may be perceived as a violation of norms of modesty, family honor, and social propriety, and may even be considered morally inappropriate. Consequently, the normalization of mixed-gender cohabitation in the textbook can create a significant cultural gap between the values conveyed by the instructional material and those prevailing in many Indonesian communities.

This divergence reflects a deeper tension between two value systems: one emphasizing individual freedom and personal autonomy, and the other prioritizing collective expectations, family responsibility, and social conformity. In this regard, Morales & Escobar-Cristiani [10] argue that pedagogical resources frequently convey implicit cultural representations whose meanings may vary considerably depending on learners' sociocultural backgrounds. For Indonesian learners, therefore, these representations may provoke surprise, discomfort, or critical questioning of their own assumptions regarding acceptable social behavior.

From an intercultural perspective, however, the pedagogical objective is not to promote a particular social model but rather to enable learners to understand the sociocultural contexts within which such practices acquire meaning. Romero-Zeledón [9] emphasizes that the deconstruction of stereotypes requires the contextualization of cultural phenomena and the creation of opportunities for intercultural dialogue. Accordingly, representations of

mixed-gender cohabitation should be approached as culturally situated practices rather than as universal norms to be adopted or rejected.

For learners originating from more community-oriented and family-centered environments, these depictions may initially appear unfamiliar. Nevertheless, exposure to alternative perspectives can contribute substantially to intercultural learning. Eide et al. [11] demonstrate that engagement with diverse cultural perspectives promotes intercultural competence by encouraging learners to move beyond monocultural understandings of social reality. Likewise, Tran et al. [14] show that the analysis of culturally marked situations and critical incidents enhances intercultural awareness and learners' ability to interpret behaviors within their sociocultural contexts.

Consequently, the representations of autonomy and shared living arrangements in *Tendance A1* should be viewed not merely as descriptions of everyday French life but also as valuable pedagogical resources for fostering intercultural reflection. Through guided discussion, comparison of cultural norms, and critical examination of underlying values, learners can develop a deeper understanding of how different societies conceptualize autonomy, interpersonal relationships, and social responsibility. Such an approach transforms potential cultural tensions into opportunities for developing intercultural competence and cultivating a more nuanced understanding of cultural diversity.

The findings indicate that the cultural representations embedded in *Tendance A1* extend far beyond the merely illustrative function traditionally attributed to pedagogical materials. In line with the ecolinguistic perspective developed by Schlindenbuchová [2], these representations convey cultural narratives, values, and worldviews that contribute to the construction of social meaning. The four categories identified in this study, namely greeting practices, intimacy and private space, family models and affective relationships, and individual autonomy and lifestyles, constitute potential sites of intercultural friction for learners operating within a different sociocultural environment.

These findings are consistent with the conclusions of Bouras [16], Martinez [8], and Romero-Zeledón [9], who argue that cultural differences should not be viewed as pedagogical obstacles but rather as opportunities to foster critical reflection, mediation, and a deeper understanding of cultural otherness. The results also corroborate the work of Eide et al. [11] and Tran et al.[14], who demonstrate that engagement with diverse cultural perspectives is a fundamental condition for the development of intercultural competence.

Consequently, rather than removing or avoiding content that may generate cultural dissonance, it appears more productive to use such content as a resource for intercultural reflection and learning. In this context, the teacher's role is to guide learners in interpreting culturally marked content, make explicit the underlying cultural norms and values, and encourage a process of decentring that enables learners to understand the social logics of the target culture without abandoning their own cultural frames of reference [21], [22].

From this perspective, potential intercultural tensions should be regarded not as barriers to language learning but as valuable pedagogical opportunities. When appropriately contextualized and critically discussed, they can promote intercultural awareness, encourage learners to question ethnocentric assumptions, and develop their ability to negotiate cultural differences in a reflective and respectful manner. Ultimately, the integration of intercultural

and ecolinguistic approaches into FFL teaching can contribute to the formation of learners who are not only linguistically competent but also capable of engaging constructively with cultural diversity in an increasingly interconnected world.

3.5 Didactic Implications for the Development of Intercultural Competence

The findings of this study indicate that the cultural content embedded in *Tendance A1* serves not only as a resource for linguistic learning but also as a valuable opportunity for fostering learners' intercultural competence. The situations analyzed, particularly those related to greeting practices, intimacy and private space, family models, and individual autonomy, reveal significant differences between French and Indonesian cultural frameworks that may generate questioning, misunderstanding, or resistance among learners. However, in accordance with the intercultural approach advocated by Abdallah-Pretceille [22], such differences should not be regarded as obstacles to learning but rather as pedagogical resources that promote understanding of cultural otherness.

A first implication concerns the need to make explicit the implicit cultural content embedded in language textbooks. The findings support Schlindenbuchová's [2] argument that pedagogical materials convey cultural narratives, values, and worldviews that often remain invisible to learners. Teachers therefore have a crucial role in guiding learners' interpretation of instructional materials by drawing attention to the social norms and cultural meanings underlying the behaviors and practices represented in the textbook.

A second implication relates to the development of cultural decentering. Situations that may generate cultural dissonance can be exploited through intercultural comparison activities that encourage learners to identify differences between French and Indonesian practices without establishing hierarchical judgments between cultures. Such an approach is consistent with the work of Martinez [8], who argues that situations of *cultural clash* can become spaces for reflection that foster mediation, critical awareness, and mutual understanding.

Furthermore, activities based on critical incidents appear particularly relevant. According to Tran et al. [14], the analysis of situations marked by cultural differences contributes significantly to the development of intercultural awareness and learners' interpretive abilities. In the context of *Tendance A1*, teachers could invite learners to analyze how an Indonesian character might react when confronted with certain French social practices and subsequently discuss the cultural factors that account for these differing responses.

The findings also highlight the value of integrating a broader range of authentic materials and digital resources in order to enrich the cultural representations provided by the textbook. In this regard, Blattner et al.[23] demonstrate that the use of authentic digital resources enables learners to access *invisible culture* and to gain a deeper understanding of the values, beliefs, and norms that shape social behavior. The incorporation of videos, social media content, and authentic testimonies could therefore complement textbook materials and promote a more nuanced understanding of contemporary French society.

Finally, the development of intercultural competence requires moving beyond a purely descriptive approach to culture toward a more reflective and critical orientation. As Eide et al. [11] emphasize, exposure to diverse cultural perspectives enhances learners' ability to question their own assumptions and to understand alternative worldviews. Consequently, the objective of French as a Foreign Language (FFL) teaching is not to encourage learners to adopt the norms of the target culture, but rather to equip them with the ability to interpret cultural practices, discourses, and behaviors within their specific sociocultural contexts.

From this perspective, *Tendance A1* should be regarded not only as a language-learning tool but also as a resource for intercultural mediation. When supported by explicit contextualization and critical reflection, the textbook provides Indonesian learners with opportunities to develop the knowledge (*savoirs*), interpretive and relational skills (*savoir-comprendre*), and attitudes of openness and respect (*savoir-être*) that are essential for effective intercultural communication.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the cultural representations embedded in the audiovisual content of *Tendance A1* and their potential to generate intercultural friction among Indonesian beginner learners. Through a qualitative content analysis informed by intercultural and ecolinguistic perspectives, four main categories were identified: greeting practices, intimacy and private space, family models, and individual autonomy.

The findings show that these representations convey social norms and values associated with contemporary French society. While presented as ordinary within the textbook, certain practices, such as *la bise*, mixed-gender interactions in private spaces, non-traditional family structures, and mixed-gender cohabitation, may be interpreted differently by Indonesian learners due to distinct cultural, religious, and social backgrounds. Such differences, however, should be viewed not as cultural incompatibilities but as opportunities for intercultural learning and reflection.

The study also confirms that FFL textbooks transmit not only linguistic knowledge but also implicit cultural meanings, values, and worldviews. Consequently, *Tendance A1* can serve as both a language-learning resource and a tool for intercultural mediation.

Pedagogically, these findings highlight the importance of contextualizing cultural content, encouraging intercultural comparison, and fostering learners' critical reflection. Rather than avoiding culturally sensitive topics, teachers can use them to develop learners' intercultural competence, particularly their ability to interpret, mediate, and understand cultural differences.

Future research should investigate how Indonesian learners actually perceive and respond to these cultural representations in classroom settings in order to gain deeper insights into intercultural meaning-making in FFL learning.

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