The language construction of Muslims as the others in French contemporary discourses

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DOI:10.18326/ijims.v7i1.77-99

Abstract

This article intends to explain the Muslims position in French contemporary discourses. France is a secular country, based on the principle of *laïcité* (separation between religion and State). France is also the country with the largest Muslim population in Europe. Muslims' positions, as with others', cannot be separated from the varied discourses in everyday life disseminated through different vehicles such as the media, literature, and conversations in society. Talking about the discourse of otherness is important to strengthen the argument that the social relation patterns in France, where there has been tension between Muslims and the French people in recent years, are not simply political or social questions. They are also language constructions. The Bourdieusian perspective explains how social construction is closely connected to language construction. Fear of Muslims, on the one hand, is related to political and social tensions, but on the other hand it is also related to language consumption and the historically constructed othering process. Based on the above situation, this article asks: first, in contemporary French discourses, what stereotypes regarding Islam and Muslims are represented in everyday language? Second, in which context do these

stereotypes appear? Third, how are the language effects of the stereotypes of otherness, which serve as mental models for positioning the Other, operated as social practices?

Artikel ini bermaksud untuk menjelaskan posisi Muslim dalam diskursus Prancis kontemporer. Prancis adalah negara sekular, berbasis pada prinsip *laïcité* (pemisahan antara agama dan negara). Prancis juga merupakan negara dengan populasi Muslim terbesar di Eropa. Posisi Muslim "sebagai liyan", tidak dapat dipisahkan dari berbagai diskursus sehari-hari yang terdeseminasi lewat berbagai kendaraan, seperti media, sastra, dan percakapan sehari-hari dalam masyarakat. Berbicara mengenai diskursus liyan menjadi penting untuk memperkuat argumen bahwa pola-pola hubungan sosial di Prancis, dimana ada ketegangan antara Muslim dan orang Prancis non Muslim akhir-akhir ini, bukanlah sekedar persoalan politik dan sosial. Ada pula persoalan konstruksi bahasa. Perspektif Bourdieusian menjelaskan bagaimana konstruksi sosial berhubungan erat dengan konstruksi bahasa. Ketakutan pada Muslim, di satu sisi, berhubungan erat dengan ketegangan politik dan sosial, namun di sisi lain, hal ini terkait pula dengan konsumsi dan konstruksi historis dalam proses peliyanan. Berdasarkan situasi di atas, beberapa pertanyaan diajukan: pertama, dalam diskursus Prancis kontemporer, stereotip apa yang terdapat dalam diskursus sehari-hari terhadap Islam dan Muslim? Kedua, dalam konteks apa diskursus ini muncul? Ketiga, bagaimana efek bahasa terkait dengan stereotip terhadap liyan, yang merupakan model mental dalam memosisikan liyan dalam praktik sosial tersebut?

Keywords: *Muslims*; *Laïcité*; *France Discourses*; *Others*

Introduction

In French discourse, Islam has experienced dynamic developments in both its social construction—the everyday life practices of the French people—and symbolic construction—within more psychological and imaginary frames[1].

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[1] John.R. Bowen, *Can Islam be French? Pluralism and Pragmatism in a Secularist State*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.

Islam is discussed in everyday life, in literature, and also in the media. In a 2011 meeting between delegates of the French and Indonesian Ministries of Foreign Affairs (including the researcher), held as part of a public diplomacy program to introduce Islam in an Indonesian context, there was a fundamental statement from a member of the French Foreign Affairs delegation who had a Maghrebi background: "You say that you want to speak of Islam from an Indonesian perspective. For us, this is not legitimate, because Islam is Arabic. Indonesia is not Arab." The association of Islam with Arabian indicates an act of "Othering" which is shaped culturally and socially within a stagnant corridor, *i.e.* the view that Islam is purely Arabic. Such a positioning of the Other is, on the one hand, fixed and thus enables stereotypes to emerge. On the other hand, however, it is dynamic because the social and political situation (context) in France continues to transform.

The Other is a historical concept, historical here means that the process of Othering "others" is a cognitive one in which the mental and logical models involved are connected with references to the past[2]. The above-mentioned delegate from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs could only correlate Islam with Arabness because, in his cognition, he only had Islam and Arabness as a reference. He did not position Indonesia as being associated with Islam because the Indonesian people do not, in general, speak Arabic. Muslim–Christian relations today, likewise, cannot be separated from the experiences and constructions of relations between Muslims and Christians in the past, particularly in a European context.

Physically, the Maghreb countries of Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya, which are *nota bene* frequently associated with Islam owing to the

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[2] T.A. Van Dijk, *Racism and the Press*, London: Routledge, 1991.

majority of their populations being Muslim, and European countries such as France are only separated by the Mediterranean Sea; the coast of France is thus only some 700 kilometers from these countries. The connections between France and these countries are also historical. In the past, these connections were those of colonizer (France) and colonized (the Maghreb states), and thus the Othering process produced *colonized others*. Today, the Othering process is different and more dynamic, between the "original" people of France and migrants.

After the Maghreb states proclaimed their independence in the 1950s and 1960s, thousands of Maghreb people immigrated to France. Furthermore, the strong French economy of the 1960s and 1970s led to even greater immigration from the area. Consequently, France's Muslim population saw a marked increase[3]. Statistics indicate that France's Muslim population, most of which is of Maghrebi heritage, has reached four to six million, or 6 to 9% of the country's total population. According to the National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (Institut National de la Statistiqueet des Etudes Economique, INSEE), since 2006 some 130,000 children of Maghrebi heritage have been born in France every year[4]. The "colonizer and colony" relationship between the two areas has transformed into one of self-appointed "guardians of the state" and immigrants, which has developed further into non-Muslim Europeans and Muslim immigrants.

These connections have deteriorated since the 11 September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York. Relations between the non-Muslim French population and Muslim immigrants have seen increased tension and even aggression. Far right groups have gained broader

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[3] Pascale, Breuil-Genier, Catherine Borrel, Bertrand Lhommeau, "Les immigrés, les descendants d'immigrés et leurs enfants", *l'INSEE* (2011), 33-39.

[4] Pascale, Breuil-Genier, Catherine Borrel, Bertrand Lhommeau, "Les immigrés...", 33-39.

popular support, including the National Front (Front National) which was first led by Jean-Marie Le Pen until 2011, when he was replaced by his daughter Marie Le Pen. This party has explicitly argued against immigration. The greatest show of aggression and tension between Muslims and non-Muslims in France occurred in 2015, when a string of bombings, attacks, and hostage situations were perpetrated by people, mostly youths, of Maghrebi descent. The deadliest attack in French history occurred on 13 and 14 November 2015, when mass shootings, suicide bombings, and hostage-taking occurred in Paris and Saint-Denis. Bombs exploded outside of the Stade de France, leading to the evacuation of French President François Hollande, who was watching an association football game between France and Germany. Hostages were taken at the Bataclan Theatre; of the 130 persons killed during the attacks, 89 were killed at the Bataclan.

Another case which drew worldwide attention was the attack on the satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* in Paris on 7 January 2015. This attack was in response to a cartoon published in *Charlie Hebdo* which Muslims, both in France and worldwide, considered insulting to the Prophet Muhammad. Twelve staff members were killed, including several cartoonists, and eleven more were injured. The perpetrators of these attacks were two brothers of Algerian background. Two further attacks happened that month, and later in that year an American-owned factory was bombed[5].

Yet another attack occurred on 14 July 2016, during celebrations of Bastille Day—France's national holiday. A truck, carrying 25 tons of granite, was deliberately driven through crowds of people who were watching

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[5] Eric ChienNevalskya, "Developing Terrorism Coverage: Variances in New Framing of the January 2015 Attacks in Paris and Borno", *Critical Studies on Terrorism*, Volume 8, Number 3 (November, 2015).

fireworks in Nice, killing 84. This attack has been attributed to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria; the organization, for its part, has also claimed responsibility for the attack.

In terms of subjects, the "Other" is itself discursive. The European residents of France have a different positioning than the country's Maghrebi Muslim residents. Meanwhile, political leaders employ different positioning of the Other than ordinary citizens. Various discourses circulate in the positioning of the Other, which is assumed to be understood differently by different subjects and using different material objects. This article attempts to examine the networks and positions to find the order of discourse in which Islam and Muslims are constructed in France. Several questions will be answered in exploring this issue: first, what dominant discourses regarding Islam and Muslims are present in everyday language of French people? Second, in which context stereotypes appear in positioning the Muslims? Third, how are the language effects of the stereotypes of otherness? This article explores the order of discourse in the Othering process which shapes relations the "French people" (of European descent) and Islam or Muslims, relations which, it should be noted, have been shaped even before the end of the colonial age.

Positioning the other and the ideological frame of discourse

The concept of the Other in a contemporary context differs significantly from the concept of the Other during colonial times. However, the Othering process and its operations remain relevant. The Other, as conceptualized by Homi Bhabha[6], is a silent figure or one whose narrative has been erased. The Other begins to speak when there is space to narrate a self-identity. The term "Other" can cover natives[7], minorities, or

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[6] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London and New York: Routledge, 1994.
[7] Edward Said, *Orientalism*, London: Penguin Books, 2003.

the subaltern[8]. The positioning of the Other is not only important politically, but also epistemologically and methodologically. Epistemologically, several theories built on the concept of the Other have emerged, such as those which view women as being positioned as the Other by Beauvoir in her Book entitled the Le deuxième Sexe published in 1949[9], the article written byChandra Mohanty in 1984 entitled Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses[10] and also the book of Patricia Hill-Collins published in 2000[11] entitled Black Feminist Thought. Beauvoir, in her classical book Le deuxième Sexe, explain in her first chapter"who are women" and she concluded that women are the other, they are the second sex. While Mohanty and Collins argue that different social class, ethnicity, race, age show also the position of the others in the society. Methodologically, several critical understandings, particularly the approaches and methods of Critical Discourse Analysis by Norman Fairclough in 2000[12],Teun Van Dijk, in 1993[13]; Theo van Leuween in 2008[14]and the most recent one is Dominique Maingueneau[15] have become increasingly common in explorations of Otherness. Norman Fairclough[16]

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[8] Ghayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speaks" in PatrickWilliams and Laura Chrisman, *Colonial Discourse and Post Colonial Theory: A Reader,* Hertfordshire: Harvest Wheatsheaf, 1994.

[9] Simone de Beauvoir, *Le deuxieme Sexe*, Paris: Gallimard, 1949.

[10] Chandra-Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses", *Boundary 2*, Volume 12, Number 3 (Spring - Autumn, 1984): 333-358.

[11] Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought*, New York and London: Routledge, 2000.

[12] Norman Fairclough, "Discourse, Social Theory and Social Research: The Discourse of WelfareReform", *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 4 (2000), 163-195.

[13] Teun Van Dijk, *Discourse and Society*, London: Sage, 1993.

[14] TheoVan Leuween, *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

[15] D. Maingueneau, *Manuel de Linguistique pour les Textes Littéraires*, Paris: Armand Colin, 2015.

[16] N. Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: Critical Study of Language,* New York: Longman, 1995.

is interested in looking at the process of othering through the mecanism of discursive practice[17] in the area which is called by Teun Van Dijk as the mental (cognitive) model. Van Leeuven is interested to see the social relations that people experience everyday. Maingueneau is focussing his research to see how every process, including othering is a complex network between language and other social phenomena. The concentration of this methodological approach by putting the importance of parole (individual language) than langua (social language) is a way to mention the importance of giving position to the others usually discriminated in the society[18].

Several questions are frequently asked in the context of Otherness. Who is the Other, who is the Self, and what is the connection between these two? How is that connection? Is it a hierarchy of dominance and subordination, or is there space between them, frequently referred to as third space by Bhabha[19]? Can the Other narrate itself? In post-colonial studies, the Other is commonly understood as subordinate. The Other is more of an object to be exploited and manipulated. This can be seen, for instance, in the concept of exotic Other, a term which almost always refers to women in colonialized countries as viewed through the eyes of the male colonizers. This view of colonialized women is a physical and sexual one: women are considered exotic because their bodies and sexuality can be conquered.

Presently, the concept of the Other has considerably different ideological aspects than the concept of the Other as mentioned above. The Other in present discourse is more ideological in nature. According to Theo van Leeuwen[20], three strategies of Othering, all of which are in-

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[17] N. Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1992.

[18] D. Maingueneau, *Discours et Analyse du Discours,* Paris: Armand Colin, 2014.

[19] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London and New York: Routledge, 1994.

[20] TheoVan Leuween, *Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Discourse Analysis,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

tended to represent specific people and groups as Others or "not like me", are available. These strategies are, first, the strategy of distinction, of representing people as "not close to us" or as "strangers"; second is the strategy of disempowerment, representing people as "below us" or "down-trodden"; third is the strategy of objectification, of representing people as objects instead of subjects. Borrowing from Laura Mulvey[21], it is clear that, in this context, the viewer—or reader, in a literary context—is given a "gaze" through which he or she can see the "Other" as an object. According to Dominique Maingueneau[22][23], the first writer to view works of literature as being part of discursive analysis was Pierre Bourdieu, who used such an approach to analyze Gustave Flaubert's *Education Sentimentale* ('Sentimental Education'). In this analysis, Bourdieu[24] focuses not only on the content of the work analyzed, but also on outside aspects (*i.e.* the author's life) as context. In this context, there is a shift in approach to viewing the research object (the work of literature, in this case). Literature becomes not only a question of who are the characters, what is the setting, or what is the plot, but also the context which influences the development of the literary text.

In order to understand the othering process towards Muslims and Islam, Critical Discourse Analysis method is used. In this method, the levels from Norman Fairclough which are the linguistic practice, the discursive practice and the social practice are used as tools of analysis. The language used by the informants are seen based on these 3 levels. The

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[21] Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" in Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen, *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999: 833-44.

[22] D. Maingueneau, *Pragmatique pour le Discours Littéraire*, Paris: Armand Colin, 2005.

[23] D. Maingueneau and Ostenstad I., *Au-dela des Oeuvres: les voies de l'analyse du discours littéraire*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 2010.

[24] P.Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature*, New York : Columbia University Press, 1994.

tools used are the wording, the alternative wording and also the re-wording of the utterance produced by the informants. The linguistic practice is then connected to the social practice, which is the ideology, power and hegemony of the social construct. The last point viewed is the discursive level, which is the mental model or the cognitive of the people's mind that can be seen from the language produced.

Self-identity in anothering culture: Muslim life in France

In interviews with French Muslims of Arabic descent (read: of Maghrebi heritage), it was explained that French Muslims consider it very important that they exist between two different (or, even, opposing) cultures. The term *culture* here is used in the plural to simplify the situation. In reality, there is frequently overlap between practices of European culture and Maghrebi, even as, in other aspects, both can be contradictive.

The various informants had differing views regarding how these two cultures are experienced, narrated, considered, and practiced in their day-to-day lives. As stated by one informant, AM:

> The culture I practice, I mean, in general, people like me often have this culture, because we're born in France, we're raised in France, we study in France, but at home we have another culture, the culture of our parents, our origins. So, it is a little complicated to position us. It can be said that we are a little between the two, but we are not more French than Algerian or more Algerian than French. We are between the two.

Most interesting of this informant's statements is the fact that neither culture belongs to him. French culture is a culture which must be studied because he lives in France. Algerian Islamic culture is not his either; it is termed as "the culture of our parents" or the culture of "our origins". The Self here, as a French person of Algerian descent, is located between two Others, both of which must be accommodated because he

lives between them. This person is in an ambivalent because although it seems that he mention that belong to two culture, in fact he does not belong to both of them. The culture is belong to his parents and also the French people parent.

The Self, which is situated between these two Others, explains a complex habitus, one which sometimes offers spaces for disposition (Bourdieu, 1980)[25]. From the utterance in the above paragraph, it is apparent that AM is located between these two poles, attempting to accommodate two different cultures, and unable to choose one of the two. However, referring to the concept of the habitus as a system of dispositions, as argued by Pierre Bourdieu[26], the following utterance explains the informant's position in more detail.

> We can say it is quite complicated. Very, very complicated. There are times when we have trouble integrating, even though we shouldn't, because we were born in France and that makes us French. But it's very complicated. I mean, we have two cultures, as I already explained, and integration is a bit difficult. We can say that. It all depends on better things in the future. We don't need integration because, logically, we are French, but the culture of our parents is sometimes difficult to integrate because our lifestyles at home are not the same as the lifestyles in France.

There are specific words and phrases which are continuously repeated by the informant:

1. C'est trés compliqué on va dire, c'est vraiment tréstrés compliqué, c'est trés compliqué. (We can say it quite complicated. Very, very complicated).

2. On a beaucoup de mals à s'integrer, l'integration se fait un petit peu difficilement on va dire, on a pas besoin de s'integrerlogiquement, la culture de nos parents fait que des fois de petit mal de s'integrer. (Integration

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[25] P. Bourdieu, *Questions de Sociologie*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1980.
[26] P. Bourdieu, *Questions de Sociologie*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1980.

is a bit difficult. We can say that. … We don't need integration because, logically, we are French, but the culture of our parents is sometimes difficult to integrate).

The words *compliqué* (complicated) and *s'integrer* (to integrate oneself) are used repeatedly by the informant to indicate the difficulty of being the Self in another culture. The word integration itself, as used here, refers to a form of subordination undergone by immigrants and their children in France. Although he is already a French citizen, the reality of the matter is that, as a person of a Maghrebi descent he requires a way to integrate himself, something which the informant considers to be complicated.

The above explanation indicates a linear correlation, in which the informant's two identities (French and Muslim) cause complications when they appear to never intersect. This complexity leads to a further issue: the difficulty of integration. Furthermore, there is an order of discourse in which causal relations are presented by the informant, as seen below:

on a pas besoin de s'integrerlogiquement que justement on est français, mais *la culture de nos parents fait que des fois de petit mal de s'integrer*

(We don't need integration because, logically, we are French, but the culture of our parents is sometimes difficult to integrate).

The informant opines that, logically, he needs not integrate himself, because he is French. However, because of his parents' culture, he finds it difficult to integrate himself. Furthermore, there is a paradoxicality in this sentence. At the beginning of the paragraph, the informant states that he has no need to integrate himself, but he subsequently states that his parents' culture makes it difficult for him to integrate himself.

This paradox indicates a further paradoxical situation, one in which, legislatively, within a legal context, he should not need to integrate himself, but owing to his parents' status as immigrants he feels the need to

integrate himself. Furthermore, in social practice his attempts to integrate himself have been difficult.

Meanwhile, another informant conveyed a rather different view:

People ask *"are you French or Algerian". We must choose* between the two. No, no, I'm *French from Algeria.* A few of them don't understand that we can have several senses of *belonging.* Some people say that *identity is belonging.* But, in my opinion, *an identity can have several belongings.* I'm a young university student, *both French and Algerian.*

The informant had no doubt regarding his position in the context of Otherness. There is a binary opposition which led the informant to an issue of identity, and she feels as though she should not choose one identity or integrate herself. One wording which is used strongly in the above utterance is that of identity as belonging. The informant identifies identity as belonging, and accepts the possibility of multiple belongings. As a social effect of this view, the informant takes the position of not choosing only one of her identities, but both her French and Algerian identities.

In the above two examples, both informants take the identity position that, although they were born and raised in France, they are incapable of shedding their other identity as Maghrebi Muslims. They have a plural identity which positions them in different situations. The first informant focuses on the issue of integration as part of plural identity negotiation in an attempt to be accepted by the "Other" culture. Meanwhile, the second informant attempts to practice the politics of inclusion towards both French and Algerian identity in her Self.

This kind of situation can usually be found in many different places in the world where the immigrants have to face the complexitiesof culture. The immigrants who are usually minorities have to face the questions of territory and also ideology. They have their own space with their own ideology and culture, but that space is within a bigger space having different ideology and culture.

The position of Muslims through Muslim eyes

Muslim informants had varying views of the position of Muslims in France. One informant, AM, expressed the following opinion:

> I think that France, as a whole, as a country, is rather good for Muslims. Actually, there are many Muslim communities in France, and have been for a while. Now it's four generations. There are more in the big cities, rather than the small ones. There are large Muslim communities, there are many mosques.... halal food, halal butchers. Rather than go to Spain... we must go to France, yeah.... We're quite represented, sorry, I mean we're not represented well.... We have the ability to practice [our religion].

Two important points can be drawn from the above utterance. First, there is the issue of the wording frequently used at the beginning of sentences. The informant uses words such as *j'assume* (I assume), which only refer to an assumption (rather than fact). He also uses the phrase "*c'estdans l'ensemble*", which means "as a whole". One can thus question how the situation would be taken partially (rather than as a whole). Another wording choice is *c'estplutot* ("is rather"). The informant did not use a more direct phrasing, such as by stating "la France, c'est un bon pays pour les Musulmans" ("France, ... as a country, is good for Muslims") meaning that France is a good country for Muslims (to live in). He used the phrase *c'estplutot* because he was not entirely certain of his statement. Another word used was *justement*, meaning "actually". The meaning of *justement* becomes non-actual when used in this context.

A particularly interesting statement can be found in the sentences: *par rapport en Espagneilfaut y aller...en Franceoui..on a assez bien represente, excusez-moi... je voulais dire, on est pas très bien representées ... on a la possibilite de pratiquer* ("Ratherthan go to Spain... we must go to France, yeah.... We're quite represented, sorry, I mean we're not represented well.... We have the ability to practice [our religion]."). These sentences are mutually contradictive.

The sentence *par rapport en Espagneilfaut y aller...en franceoui*("Rather than go to Spain... we must go to France, yeah") indicates that France is considered better than Spain, and as a result Muslims should go to France. However, there is contradiction between this sentence and the ones that follow it. The sentence which immediately follows, *on aassezbienrepresente* (We're quite represented) does not contradict its precedent. However, this sentence is immediately corrected with the sentence *excusez-moi... je voulais dire, on est pas trèsbienrepresenté* (sorry, I mean we're not represented well). Why has the informant clarified that France is better than Spain, then gone on to say that Muslims are not well represented. Another contradiction emerges when the informant states *on a la possibilite de pratiquer* (We have the ability to practice [our religion, Islam]).

One of a French woman interviewed express also her feelings about her own Muslims people in France related to the discourse of terrorism that become recent discourses in the media, she said:.

En tant de faire croire que c'était terroriste parce que c'était musulman. En fait c'est la jeunesse qui a perdu, qui sait pas qui il est. Endoctriné et debile.

Il y a plein de musulmans avec des enfants, des femmes, on a dit " Ya Allah..Allez tuer les innocents." Je ne comprends pas trop ce qui se passe en ce moment en France dans le monde de général avec les musulmans.

In order to make believe that this is terrorist because it is Muslim. In fact, this is about the young people who are lost who don't know who they are. Indoctrinated and stupid.

There are a lot of people with children and women, we said: "Ya Allah, kill those innocents." I don't really understand what is happening now in France, in the world in general.

From her arguments above, she mentions that media is only representing Muslim as terrorist and they show it in their news to make people belive that Muslim is terrorist. However, in regards to this situation, she gives indication about the position of the young people who are fragile in France. They are indoctrinated by their environment to be terrorist and create those practices of terrorism.

Stereotyping Muslims as terrorist is new discourses, especially in many Western countries. The situation after the September 11 creates this strong discourse of otherness about Muslims. There is constructions in the structural cognition of many non Muslims people towards Muslims based on their religion and not because of what they do or what they are. Reffering to Bourdieu's theory on misrecognition,[27] he states as refers to an everyday and dynamic social process where one thing is not recognized for what it is because it was not previously 'cognized' within the range of dispositions of the habitus of the person(s). In this context, people are misrecognissed because they tend to see Muslims directly connected to terrorrism.

Stereotypes about Muslims and their social effects

Holding identities ensconced within the context other identities, the informants felt as though they had frequently been afflicted by the stereotypes which had been socially constructed in France. Stereotypes are images that are constructed historically based on a belief that a certain group of people share an identity determined by the group constructing the images. These stereotypes are problematic as they have a measurable social effect on the groups labeled through them[28]. The following discussion of stereotypes comes from L, an informant.

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[27] P. Bourdieu, Pascalian meditations, (R. Nice, Trans.), Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000.
[28] D Hook, "The Racial Stereotype, Colonial Discourse, Fetishism, and Racism", *Psychoanalytical Review* 92/5 (2000), 701-734.

Ah, yes. I was in a park with one of my cousins, who is still young. *There was a woman walking in the park with her dog. My cousin was ten years old and terribly afraid of dogs.* I also have a dog. My cousin is afraid of my dog. *In the minds of older people, Muslims hate dogs because we are Arabs and Muslims and so we must certainly hate dogs.* But honestly, we're only afraid. Only afraid. *My cousin stepped back, hugged me tightly, and said "I'm afraid. I'm afraid".* And *that woman said "go back to your country, Africans!".* That occurred in Lyon, a major city, in a large park. There were a lot of families there. We were attacked freely (*i.e.* without cause).

From the above paragraph, two elements can be identified. First is the situation as described, which is written above using normal type. Second is the situation of stereotyping, one which influences the relations between non-Muslims and Muslims in France.

There was a woman walking in the park with her dog. My cousin was ten years old and terribly afraid of dogs. In the minds of older people, Muslims hate dogs because we are Arabs and Muslims and so we must certainly hate dogs.My cousin stepped back, hugged me tightly, and said "I'm afraid. I'm afraid". That woman said "go back to your country, Africans!"

The above utterance indicates a situation of stereotyping and the social effects which occur because of it. Non-Muslims in France believe that all Muslims hate dogs. The social effect of this stereotype is hate speech directed towards Muslims. In this context, an opposite stereotype about non-Muslims is also developed among Muslim communities. They often ask, "Why are dogs loved more than people?" Hate speech often contains within it aspects of racism, as apparent in the above utterance.

Another informant, AM, explained the stereotypes about Muslims based on his own experiences. These too had their social effects.

Of course, *we often amalgamate Muslims and terrorists.* I call them false Muslims. [They] don't follow Islamic principles. These people besmirch our image... Islam is, at its essence, respect, peace, tolerance, and life

in harmony.... Its essence is against violence.... Muhammad was ethical, against violence. Being constant, being constant in living together.

I had an unpleasant experience. *At the time we were on a plane, on holiday to Spain. I have a cousin named Osama, the same as that September lunatic.* He's still young. He's maybe six or seven years old. *And he was sitting on that plane, and next to him there was a little boy about his age. Then my little cousin said "What's your name?" He answered "My name's Marc. What's your name?" He said "My name's Osama"* and *when [the other child's] parents heard that name, it was suddenly "Marc, don't talk to him",* That... *he has really suffered because of that name.* He wants to change his name, but he has truly suffered.

From the above two paragraphs, a connection between stereotypes and naming choice is apparent. In the first paragraph there is the stereotype widely held by non-Muslims in France, at least according to the informant, that Islam is identical to terrorism. Islam being equated with terrorism is not limited to conceptual discussions or political campaigns by anti-immigrant political groups. Rather, Islam being equated with terrorism is influential even in social practice. This is apparent, for example, when the parents in the above anecdote forbade their son (in bold text) from speaking with a young boy named Osama simply because of these stereotypes. The naming choice behind the child's name, Osama, which was also the name of a terrorist, reinforced the social effect of Islam being considered equivalent to terrorism, and as a result even a young boy named Osama had to bear the social effects of this naming choice.

The existences of such stereotypes about Muslims were confirmed by the non-Muslim French persons interviewed. One informant, who identified himself as an atheist, was named JB. When asked his opinion about Muslims, he stated the following:

I see them as friends. I have friendships with Muslims, just as I do with others. The problem now is that *there is unjust tension, victimizing, difficult situations. The atmosphere is not an easy one. There is stigma.*

Several of the words and phrases used by the speaker indicate the difficult position of Muslims. These include "tension", "unjust", "difficult situations", "The atmosphere is not an easy one", and finally "There is stigma" (*stigmatisant*). The existence of stigma and stereotypes regarding Muslims in France was also made explicit by another informant, F, as follows.

> It's true that *there are stereotypes* which arise at school. We have friends in our class, and *there are many stereotypes*. In France, *the hijab* has, since the time of Jacques Chirac, not been allowed in public schools because it is indicative of a religious affiliation.

> We have friends who are Muslim. *Their names show it. Their names are Mohammad, Leila.* It's true that there are jokes about *pork*, about *mandatory prayers* etc. I know that it *hurts their feelings*, but that is mostly *joking*.

The informant explained that these stereotypes, which are numerous, are even apparent in schools. Jokes are used to explain these stereotypes. Some of these stereotypes are related to Muslim practices. This is indicated with the words *pork* (because Muslims are forbidden from eating pork), *mandatory prayers* (*sholat*, the way Muslims pray), and *hijab* (the veil worn by many Muslim girls and women).

There is a border which delineates different identities in this situation. Practices which are considered different or inappropriate, such as those of Muslims, are used as the basis for stigmatization. The minority's different social practices are keys to their stigmatization.

According to F, the jokes at school are not more dangerous than the discourse voiced by the political party *Extreme Droite Front National*, which she considers concerning. The stereotypes developed by this party in their campaigns are as follows:

They want to force halal food into the canteens. They want to build mosques everywhere. They want to destroy the French identity which, according to the National Front Partisans, is in essence Catholic.

Stereotypes... eeh, I want to say that many French people don't know Islam.

Mostly Morocco is used as a destination for French tourists. And many people don't know that in the Quran, that the issues of hijabs, of polygamy, they are not required by the Quran. They don't understand the religion of Muslims. They only know the stereotypes about hijabs, polygamy, burqas and djellabas.

From the above utterance, there is a chain of ideas being explained. There are questions of stereotypes, of ignorance, and of Muslim practices which are stereotyped, including the hijab, polygamy, and also *djellaba*. It is clear from this word order that the informant intends to explain that stereotypes emerge because of ignorance about Islam. In the concept of Homi Bhabha, it is a fixity. As Homi K. Bhabha[29] says, fixity is a key component "in the ideological construction of otherness. The practices stereotyped are those which are not found in French non-Muslim culture, those which are considered unusual or even strange. This fixity creates superiority toward other cultures considered lower, unusual and subordinated.

Conclusion

From the above explanation, the dominant discourses related to the context of otherness is linked closely with the ambivalent situation. Muslim as a self in French contemporary discourse, has a double position. On the one side, in *de jure*, they are included because they are also French citizen. However, on the other side,*in de facto* they are excluded in the

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[29] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London and New York: Routledge, 1994.

social practice because they are placed as the outsiders. Their situation of ambivalence by having plural identities position them as objects in many different level of discourses. This ambivalence creates also the difficulty of their integration because there is no clear space that match with their identity. It is also a sense of subordination as an immigrant. It becomes more difficult because the integration is becoming unclear since it is an integration to the person's own identity as a French. This situation creates strategy for the Maghrebi people in different ways. Some are challanged to follow the rule of the dominant power by following the steps of integation in order to be accepted by the dominant culture. However, some prefer to practice the politics of inclusion towards both French and Algerian identity in her Self.

The discriminations have been produced and reproduced along the history and also in the contemporary discourse. The discrimination has been practiced not only by the adult but also by the young people (the pupils in the primary school) because it is reproduced in the everyday life through the stereotypes. Everyday language is a very important aspect in constructing the others in the process of otherness. These stereotypes are also the result of the incomprehension of the other culture and the objective to place her or his own culture as the most correct. The fixity towards the other is one of the most problematic situation in this context. These stereotypes create the language effect considered by the Muslims as the obstacles and challenges in their social life, such as the hate speech and other forms of discrimination. The inclusion by using language and discourses in everyday life towards the "otherness" can be one of the ways to minimise the domination and subordination of power between the French people and the French Muslim people.

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