Cultural Diplomacy in French Language Teaching manuals

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RÉSUMÉ. Cet article se concentre sur la manière dont les efforts de diplomatie culturelle française sont menés à travers de l'enseignement des langues et comment la France était le pionnier de la diplomatie culturelle moderne à travers les établissements d'enseignement de la langue. En utilisant l'approche d'analyse critique du discours de Fairclough (dans Haryatmoko, 2016) et la théorie de "Soft Power Currencies" de Vuving (2009), cette étude a trouvé diverses images positives concernant l'État français, la société et ses produits culturels en français, dans des manuels d'enseignement des langues étrangères. Ces images sont construites par des éléments visuels et la sélection de sujets qui deviennent implicitement les outils de la France dans la mise en œuvre de la puissance douce à travers principalement les aspects de «*brilliance*» et de «*beauty*» pour le lecteur. Ces aspects révèlent que l'intention de les mettre en œuvre est de produire de l'admiration; tandis que «*benignity*» se trouve principalement dans la bonté, la gentillesse et la tolérance, un aspect rarement retrouvé dans les méthodes.

Mots-clés : *Apprentissage des langues, Diplomatie culturelle, Langue française, Soft Power Currencies*

ABSTRACT. *This article focuses on how French cultural diplomacy efforts are carried out through language teaching and how France has pioneered modern cultural diplomacy through language learning institutions. Using the Critical Discourse Analysis approach by Fairclough (in Haryatmoko, 2016) and Vuving's Soft Power Currencies theory (2009), this study found various positive images regarding the French state, society and its cultural products in French, in foreign language teaching manuals. These images are constructed by visual elements and the selection of topics which implicitly become France's tools in implementing soft power through mostly the aspects of "brilliance" and "beauty" for the reader. These aspects reveal that the intention to implement them is to produce admiration; while benignity is mostly found in goodness, kindness and tolerance, which is an aspect rarely found in the methods.*

Keywords : *Cultural Diplomacy, French, Language Learning, Soft Power Currencies*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Schneider (2005) revealed that cultural diplomacy is an important component of public diplomacy implementation effort. In the era of globalization where relations between countries are increasingly interdependent, cultural diplomacy refers to the process of exchanging ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture between countries and between communities to develop understanding of one another. Consequently, cultural diplomacy becomes an instrument of each country in competing to build its image in the world in order to assert its existence among other countries.

As an integral part of public diplomacy, the form of cultural diplomacy undertaken varies. Pajtinka (2014) describes forms of cultural diplomacy that are generally carried out: providing assistance to artists, non-governmental organizations, cultural institutions, athletes, and others; promoting national language learning; promoting and explaining cultural values in the destination country; cooperating with destination countries in the same cultural subject; negotiating international treaties related to cultural cooperation; providing support and establishing relationships with the expatriate community in the destination country. Although the methods used differ, the goals of each country in conducting cultural diplomacy are generally the same, namely to build a positive image of their country. Mark (2008) argues that cultural diplomacy carried out in order to project a national image abroad emphasizes aspects of modernity and cultural uniqueness.

Schneider (2005) says that cultural diplomacy is one of the main forms of soft power. The construction of a positive image is closely related to soft power theory. Joseph Nye (in Almer, 2018) put forward his definition of soft power as: a form of power that functions to influence other countries that are different from the coercive ways used in using military and economic power. Nye also equates soft power as the ability of a country to attract (attractive power) which includes immeasurable resources such as culture, ideology, and institutions. Furthermore,

Vuving (2014) proposed a method of measuring soft power itself. There are three main aspects to be demonstrated in his theory entitled soft power currencies: Benignity, Brilliance, and Beauty. The theory was used by Tella (2016), Prasari (2014), and Wulansuci (2010).

France's commitment in the use of soft power is reflected through the highest amount of budget in the world allocated for the development of its national identity, which is US $1 billion (Schneider, 2005). This is manifested through two French cultural promoter institutions: the Institut Français and the Alliance Française. The Institut Français is under the supervision of the Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires Étrangères and the Ministère de la Culture as a public institution responsible for all French international cultural policies (Vivre Les Cultures, n.d.); while the Alliance Française is a different institution established since 1883 and has 800 branches worldwide (Alliance Française, 2019). The age and number of Alliance Française institutions in the world shows that the promotion of national languages has a significant role in French cultural diplomacy.

Previous studies conducted on soft power tend to focus on the scope of the state. That is, a state's soft power is analysed in accordance with its foreign policies and relations with other states, such as Brazil (Chatin, 2016), India (Hymans, 2009), China (Ding, 2010), Russia (Kiseleva, 2015), and Korea (Lee, 2009). The five studies focused on the dynamics of the overall soft power of the country in various fields but not specifically on language teaching manuals, as will be done in this study.

A study on a French language teaching manual was conducted by Kinnunen (2009) aiming to define what is included in French culture. Kinnunen concluded that there were differences in the quantity and theme of the cultural content being taught, including: gastronomy, sports, travel, comics, and French behaviour. Meanwhile, Puren (2010) focuses on the learning methods applied. He concluded that there was a movement in the trends of the latest French teaching manuals

from *communicative* methods to *actionnelle*. However, Puren did not discuss much about the problem of cultural content in these books.

Some previous research on soft power has been carried out within the scope of the state, and soft power currencies studies have been carried out taking popular cultural products as material for its analysis. Therefore, by looking at the results of studies on cultural learning in Kinnunen's study (2009), research on French language teaching manuals can be further developed by utilizing the theory of soft power currencies to reveal how cultural content in teaching manuals not only serves as a cultural insight, but is an instrument that influence the perception of readers and learners.

In 2012, one of the French book publishers, Hachette FLE published a French language teaching manual entitled Alter Ego+ A1, written by 5 authors, 3 of which were *Professeurs-formateurs* (Teacher trainer) at Alliance Française, Paris. The composition of learning materials in the Alter Ego + series corresponds to the level of competence set out in the CEFRL (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) framework. CEFRL is a form of language competency standardization that applies in Europe and includes language syllabus explanations, curriculum guidelines, examinations, and textbooks. The CEFRL also defines skills that allow measurement of student progress at each stage of learning (Council of Europe, 2001). The levels referred to include A1-A2 (basic level), B1-B2 (independent level), and C1-C2 (advanced level). Thus, Alter Ego + A1 is a language teaching manual at the basic level in the Alter Ego + series and it can be assumed that this book is the first book that is used by novice learners. At the elementary level (A1-A2) cultural content is taught through the Carnet de Voyage section.

Through the information presented above, it appears that learning French is one of the important instruments used in the context of implementing French cultural diplomacy, and based on this, this article examines the implementation of cultural diplomacy in the basic level of French

language learning in Alter Ego + A1 through describing French culture in linguistic and non-linguistic aspects through critical discourse analysis theory and soft power currencies.

2.   METHOD

This research was conducted with qualitative research methods to explain in depth the process of cultural diplomacy carried out through the signs that appear in the 9 chapters of Carnet de Voyage (hereinafter referred to as CV) in the book Alter Ego + A1 (2012) to find its role in the cultural diplomacy process. The research data were carried out through a literature study and analysed using Fairclough (2009) critical discourse analysis (CDA) approach by focusing to the application of the *actionnelle renforcée* (reinforce action) language learning method (Hachette FLE, 2019).

Rahayu and Armini (2010) define the *actionnelle* approach as "an action-based communicative approach". In this sense, language learning is done by giving readers assignments that are creative and do not merely reproduce rigid sentences. On the other hand, the characteristics of the *actionnelle* approach are forms of task that are centred on the activity of readers in using the structure of the language being studied.

There are three main principles of discourse in the concept of social theory according to Fairclough (in Ramanathan, 2015). First, discourse contributes to the formation and reflection of social structures, in other words discourse can be understood as constructing social practices. Second, discourse shapes social identities and relationships between social classes and different parties in society. Third, social practices contribute to knowledge and belief systems because they lead to other language functions such as identity, relational and ideational functions. Overall, the above principles are closely related to how discourse is bound to society.

In line with these principles, Fairclough offers 3 dimensions in conducting CDA (in Haryatmoko, 2016): text, discursive practices interpreting the text and socio-cultural praxis dimension. In this last dimension the results

of interpretation are explained again by relating them to context and intertextuality. Kaur et al. (2013) said that the conception of discourse in three dimensions aims to find the relationship between language, text ideology, and power. These three dimensions become the foundation in discovering how the image of France is constructed in the text and how the construction of the image can influence the text reader in perceiving France as desired by the text creator. The formation of images used to influence the perception of others can be seen as a form of power, including images that may appear in the cultural content of the research corpus and act as soft power.

Shin-wha Lee (in Almer, 2018) suggests that there are three aspects that must be taken into consideration in measuring soft power: cognitive, affective, and normative. In connection with these three aspects, Vuving further develops the cognitive aspect into Benignity, Brilliance, and Beauty that he placed into soft power currencies theory. In implementing soft power there are terms of agents and targets. In this case the agent refers to the sender of the image, while the target is the recipient who perceives it. These soft power currencies are then the benchmarks of soft power sent by the agent country to the target country through various linguistic and non-linguistic units (pictures, statistics, etc.).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Carnet de Voyage (CV) in Alter Ego+ A1

3.1.1 *Attractive Learning Design Layout*

Part of *Leçon* serves as an expansion of cultural and intercultural insights contained within 2 pages. The CV, as the name implies, is a pocket book for traveling to distant or unfamiliar places, and has a more specific learning content through raising cultural topics. Overall cultural learning material delivered through CV uses the same arrangement of pictures and writing as the "frame" of each CV. The frame in question is a structure consisting of several components: title, subtitle, theme colour, and page background. In the title, there are two elements namely dossier marker and CV marker. These two elements have a fixed position in all CVs. CV markers were found to have a unique writing style. Letters that function as CV markers have a relatively larger size than the letter size contained in the learning material. The title uses a typeface that resembles a hand shading that can be seen through the lines contained in each letter. If the black colour is associated with the typeface, the title appears as if it was written using a pencil like a note in a pocket book and is not formal.

Figure 1. Comparison of *Leçon* and CV titles and subtitles

This irregular impression can be perceived as the writer's attempt to build an atmosphere of cultural learning that tends to be more relaxed and pleasant in the CV. This atmosphere also aims to distinguish the types of learning provided in language and CV, between language and culture learning.

In accordance with what is stated in the *mode d'emploi* (usage guide) of the book, which proves that the CV is indeed designed for cultural learning that is fun (*ludique*). Each CV also has a certain colour that becomes the dominant theme and at the same time differentiates between one CV and the other.

The colours used tend to be bright and attract attention to provide aesthetic accents in CV design and to avoid a monotonous learning atmosphere. Diverse colour variations also reinforce the impression of "fun" in the learning process as it appears in other parts of the CV structure.

Figure 2. CV Description as Cultural Learning (Berthet et al., 2012, p. 4)

In each CV, learning material is presented using different media. In the first CV next to the text that contains information such as the names of countries, regions, etc., there is a map of the European continent and photographs of cultural products of different countries. These elements are arranged in the text through systematic steps. These steps act as a guide for teachers and readers in the learning process. Each step can take the form of an explanation (information) and instructions (orders or tasks). The steps are also given numbers that mark the order placed sequentially from left to right of the CV page. As such, these figures serve as markers of the learning flow that governs how the learning process should be carried out.

Considering the claimed approach used is the *actionnelle* approach as described above, the reader is given tasks related to a particular topic. In a CV, the form of implementation of the *actionelle* approach is seen through the instructions explained earlier. The instructions contained in the CV are marked with the type of form of the verb used. In this case, it is found in the use of words in imperative form or in other words called command words.

In addition to imperative words, instructions that appear in a CV can also use interrogative types. In text, this type is in the form of a question word that aims to assign the reader to answer a question based on the information contained in the text. The use of words in the interrogative form has the same goal, namely to assign the reader to explain something based on information in the text or outside the text. If based on information in the text, the reader is assigned to answer questions relating to information in the text only, while explanations based on information outside the text can be in the form of questions that make the reader compare information with himself or his own experience.

The purpose of using these imperative and interrogative words can be a category for grouping instruction words found in the CV. Two categories are created based on the purpose of each word used: passive tasks and active tasks. Passive tasks refer to non-productive activities (reading, observing, etc.) while active tasks refer to productive activities (explaining, writing, drawing, etc.). The

difference in the frequency of occurrence of both is important to prove the use of the action learning approach in CV. It was found that CV uses more active tasks than passive ones.

This proves that the teaching approach used in this book primarily use an action approach CV. Most of the instructions contained in each CV are tasks that must be done by the reader actively both in class and outside of class. Through this the reader is expected to be able to feel happy, active, not bored, and not afraid, as described by Rahayu and Armini (2010).

In addition, each CV content has a proportion of images that is more dominant than text and the quantity of text begins to be added to CV 6 to 9 because the language level of chapters 6-9 has entered A2. This is appropriate when related to the language skills of the readers who are the target of this book, the basic level. The target audience in this level do not have a large vocabulary and also have not achieved sufficient linguistic ability to understand texts with complex structures at the independent level. Therefore, the text is designed so that it can be more easily understood by readers. This might also be the reason why cultural learning with the CV template is only given at the elementary level and is not found at the independent level (B1-B2). At the independent level, cultural learning can be adapted to a higher linguistic competence of the reader and can be done with a different template or done in language learning.

If we consider the CV as a message to be communicated from the French, which could be from the author, Alliance Française, or the French state in general, then this form of effective approach can be seen as a means of strengthening the power of the text to the reader. Instead of dictating readers to French cultural information, the CV uses an interactive and communicative learning style that is dominated by providing pictures or photographs. This conditions readers to indirectly absorb the cultural material

provided by doing the assignment. Similar conditions may not be achieved if, for example, learning cultural material is carried out in a passive and non-interactive atmosphere where more emphasis is placed on passive tasks. Readers tend to be overwhelmed and become bored learning the contents of the text. Thus, aside from being merely a choice of learning approach, the *actionelle* approach in the CV has a significant role in achieving the objectives of the text in enriching the cultural and cross-cultural understanding of the reader or in other words, internalizing French images in the reader.

3.1.2 *Image of Unity among European Countries*

Vuving (2009) explains Benignity or kindness as an aspect of the relationship between agents and other countries which can be either targeted or not. This refers to positive attitudes or behaviours that can produce reciprocity in gratitude and sympathy. When a country carries out altruistic activities and shows its identity as a "good" country, the target will feel sympathetic and perceive the country as a cooperative party and may be interested in working with agents. For example, providing assistance to people who have experienced disasters or show a sense of brotherhood with other countries.

In the first CV, the text consists of three parts which are marked by the subtitles *La France en Europe*, *Quelques symboles*, and *Quelques chiffres*. In general, this CV discusses the picture of the French state and its geographical and cultural position in the European sphere. In Activity 1-2, readers are asked to identify the country of France and its neighbours on a map of Western Europe. In the first activity the text introduces the country of France with another name, namely "*l'Hexagone*". Furthermore, in the second activity the reader is assigned to identify European countries that are geographically close to France. Through this the text aims to broadly introduce the concept of the French state and countries in Europe. Furthermore, among these neighbouring countries, the

reader is required to recognize francophones (countries that use French as the official language). Through this task readers are introduced to a community of countries that have similarities with France in the field of language. Then in the final assignment in this number, the text asks the reader to identify the countries that are members of the European Union.

In the first subtitle, the text seeks to introduce France and Europe in general. But the task also shows that countries in Europe are in a community and this gives rise to an impression of solidarity between countries. This is reinforced by the map image that shows the countries of the European Union in the same colour. Although the countries on the map are actually different, by only using one colour, the impression of equality and unity exists between countries and it implicitly gives the impression that these countries work well together with one another. Of course, in reality there is the possibility of ideological, cultural and social differences, but the text chooses to make everything uniform to build the impression that these countries are "joined" in one force. Thus, the image that is built is based on equal, united and solid international relations. The image contains the values of goodness which in soft power belongs to the aspect of benignity. So, through the aspect of benignity that appears in the introduction of the French state and the European Union community, the reader as the target of soft power, is driven towards feeling sympathetic and interested in the community.

In other CVs, there is no appearance of French imaging in the aspect of benignity. This is allegedly due to the lack of urgency the French believe necessary in promoting their country or society as "good" or altruistic, while the image of France that has been built up to this day is as a "developed" and "prosperous" country as appeared in the imaging in the next CVs. In addition, given the size of the "goodness" and altruism of a country is subjective, the form of benignity imaging that can be used to convince targets is thought to be difficult through visual imaging as will be explained in aspects of

brilliance. Another challenge in the aspect of benignity is also related to the reality that exists outside of these images. Do the imaged actions of the state and nation fully reflect this aspect? Social conflicts both at home and abroad are very likely to threaten the validity of imaging and soft power that is trying to be implanted in the public. Thus, it is probable that soft power agents (text writers) avoid these risks and highlight the aspects of soft power and imaging in other fields.

3.1.3 *Image of the Great French Culture*

Brilliance is explained by Vuving (2009) as an aspect of one party in relation to their work. Brilliance refers to the success and ability of a party and this creates soft power through the production of awe. Brilliance is related to the ability of a country to produce quality cultural products or being able to create findings and modernization in its people. Brilliance can emerge through strong military portrayals, a developed economy, a peaceful society and so on. Thus, the target is expected to accept and trust the agent because of the ability and success of the agent. As a result, soft power is built up through the production of admiration for the target.

From the 9 existing CVs, this book constructs a positive image specifically on French cultural products as displayed in the first CV for cultural products in Europe. Kinnunen (2009) classifies French culture into four areas: the field of civilization, which includes the following: history, geography, the city of Paris, the education system, society and environment, industry and agriculture, scientific traditions, interest in modernity, and the Francophone world; the field of social life and values, which includes gastronomy, sports, recreation, fashion style, joke traditions, French manners, daily life and holidays; the field of art which includes literary and comic works, painting, music, theatre and film; and architecture. Cultural products that appear in the CV vary according to the topic of each CV. The following table shows what cultural products appear on the CV in relation to the four categories of French culture. A positive sign (+) indicates the appearance of cultural products in the field

while a negative sign (-) indicates the opposite.

Table 1. Classification of Cultural Content in Each Carnet de Voyage

CV	Cultural content	Civilization	Social life and values	Art	Architecture
1	Fashion show, TGV train and French revolution. (Cultural diversity)	+	+	+	-
2	Architectural style of modern buildings in Paris	+	-	-	+
3	Recreational activities carried out by the French community	-	+	-	-
4	The division of homework in the relationship between men and women	-	+	-	-
5	Superstar figures in the world of French music and cinema	-	-	+	-
6	Two figures from the francophone countries (Canada and Senegal)	+	-	+	-
7	New object discoveries by designer Philippe Starck	-	+	+	-
8	French culture in converting historic buildings	+	+	-	+
9	The architectural style of traditional houses in different regions of France (sea, village, mountain)	+	-	-	+
	Total	5	5	4	3

From table 1 it can be seen that there is a relatively balanced distribution of cultural content in each CV. All CVs have different cultural content and enter different fields. But overall, the four fields that represent French culture are represented in all CVs. Of these four fields two of them (art and architecture) refer to material cultural products which are the work of French society. Meanwhile, the field of civilization which mostly includes concrete matters, also sends the same message to readers about the richness of French and Francophone civilizations. Therefore, through the appearance of cultural products that belong to the fields of civilization, art, and architecture, the text seeks to influence the reader to accept great and superior images related to French culture.

The brilliance aspect of the CV is generally shown through visual media such as pictures or photos because the reader can see directly and clearly the form of the product. Instead of presenting many explanations through text, this book tends to invite readers to observe and argue because at the A1 level targeted readers have competence only in simple language understanding. Thus, the book conditions the reader to be more active in the learning process and this is a positive thing because at a glance the book does not dictate what the reader should think about France. However, based on the choice of images and photographs contained in the CV, it was found that there is an attempt to showcase the richness and progressiveness of French cultural elements. In other words, CV constructs a positive image of the success of French civilization in the minds of its readers. This image creates soft power through awe inspired in the reader.

3.1.4 Positive Image Construction on French Society

CV was also found to construct the beauty aspect. According to Vuving (2009), Beauty is an aspect of a party's relationship and the ideas, goals, and visions of a country. This

can then produce soft power through the tendency to join people who have similar thoughts and goals, so this aspect works through the production of inspiration on the target. In some cases, through the promotion of constant values, a country can be perceived as a representation of these values or even as a determinant of moral standards for other countries. Constant promotion of good values, ideas, or vision can produce soft power that is produced through inspiring the target and making them feel connected to the agent. For example, a country adheres to ideology A, if the country really implements the values of the ideology so that it is seen as a representation of the ideology itself, then the country has the potential of soft power for other countries that have a harmonious vision with it.

CV displays aspects of French beauty by implying the values adopted by the people. In addition to progression, in the following CVs French society is represented through the following qualities: happy, active, creative, equal, and superior. Happiness is constructed in the third CV titled *loisirs* (free time) on page 74. The word refers to activities carried out for recreation such as holidays, breaks, and others. On the first page of this CV five posters of *loisir* activities are displayed: The first is titled *Salon de la Photographie & des Loisirs Numériques* (photography), then posters titled *2ème salon des Loisirs créatifs* (craft activities), *Salon de la Peche & des Loisirs Aquatiques* (fishing activities, jetski and diving), posters of *Vivre le Plein Air* (mountain climbing, biking, volleyball and skiing), and Music & Your Paris (music).

Figure 3. CV page Chapter 3

The display of these posters is a form of representation of local activities related to French society. Through the various types of activities displayed through different posters, it creates the impression that French society has an active and creative nature. These posters also show the expressions of faces and bodies

In line with what was expressed by Mark (2008) about the tendency of the implementation of cultural diplomacy, the analysis that has been carried out implies the existence of French imaging efforts in the CV which emphasizes aspects of modernity and

that are vibrant and happy accompanied by the selection of bright poster colours. This is a form of image constructed by the text in order to form the perception that through these activities the French people obtain happiness and enthusiasm. Thus, the perception built is that French society is a happy society.

the uniqueness of French culture. From the contents associated with concrete products, which can be observed visually and audibly, the text constructs soft power in the form of brilliance, while more implicitly, behind the explanation of the habits of French society, the

text tries to construct positive values which are soft power in the form of beauty. The following table recapitulates the soft power loads that appear in each CV and shows the tendency of soft power choices brilliance and beauty rather than benignity.

Table 2. Load Classification of Soft Power Currencies in Each CV

CV	Cultural content	Benignity	Brilliance	Beauty
1	Fashion show, TGV train and French revolution. (Cultural diversity)	+	+	+
2	Architectural style of modern buildings in Paris	-	+	+
3	Recreational activities carried out by the French community	-	-	+
4	The division of homework in the relationship between men and women	-	-	+
5	Superstar figures in the world of French music and cinema	-	+	-
6	Two figures from the francophone countries (Canada and Senegal)	-	+	-
7	New object discoveries by designer Philippe Starck	-	+	+
8	French culture in converting historic buildings	-	+	+
9	The architectural style of traditional houses in different regions of France (sea, village, mountain)	-	+	-
	Total	1	7	6

3.2 Comparison of Cultural Materials in French Language Teaching Manuals

Soft power implementation is rarely found in French language learning information achieved through learning. Nevertheless, the methods and intensity of cultural learning in French teaching manuals has changed. In books published in 2011 (and possibly books previously published), the learning method still focuses on increasing the reader's language competence. The cultural elements that are inserted also function to fulfil that goal. The following books (including AlterEgo+ A1), show the development of language learning enriched with cultural learning that has a purpose beyond introducing the language, namely building intercultural understanding with its readers. Soft power is the result of this development.

Various French teaching manuals published by different publishers also present cultural material as a medium of language teaching. In addition to Alter Ego +, Hachette also published Agenda (2011) with a Culture section consisting of *Culture Jeux* and *Culture Vidéo* as part of expanding the knowledge about France. In *Culture Jeux*, cultural content is introduced through various types of games carried out both in writing, orally, and in classroom activities with the teacher, including puzzle solving, filling in crosswords, finding words, and others. Slightly different, *Culture Vidéo* utilizes the videos on the DVD included in the book in its learning. This page contains questions that are supplemented with video footage and presented in game form: guessing objects from sound pieces, matching pictures, arranging words, and others. Thus, although the approach taken emphasizes the activeness of the reader in completing tasks (games), which is also the *actionnelle* approach, cultural content that is used as teaching material still dominantly acts as a forum for deepening French rather than broadening the reader's insight on the dynamics of culture and society. However, in relation to soft power implementation, some elements of this book can be seen as an effort to promote France. Thus, the images displayed emphasize the brilliance aspect of French soft power currencies. However, the media for the formation of these images is still lacking when compared to *Carnet de Voyage*. Agenda 1 uses photos only as a means of supporting texts or tasks.

Other publishers also publish various French learning books that present cultural content: Nouveau Rond-Point (Maison des Langues, 2011) with *Regards Croisé*; Echo A1 (CLE International, 2013) with *Civilization*; and by Didier: Saison 1 (2014) with *Se comprendre: ActuCulture*; Decibel 1 (2015) with *Je lis et je decouvre*; and Edito 1 (2016) with *Civilization et Detente en alternance*. Nouveau Rond-Point 1 uses teaching based on assignments (*basée sur l'apprentissage par les tâches*) or *actionnelle* approach. *Regards Croisé* page 2 encourages students to complete assignments by utilizing information about French culture and society provided in the form of text, photographs or graphics. In this book, the elaboration of the diversity of French cultural elements is an effort to promote the brilliance aspects of French soft power currencies. The community is described as a dynamic entity capable of producing superior products. For example, data on increased use of the internet, famous singers, beautiful natural attractions, festivals, and others. It is this cultural wealth that builds a positive impression on the minds of readers regarding France and its people.

CLE International published the Echo A1 book in 2013 with a special page on cultural learning, entitled Civilization, in which each chapter is inserted in a special page to discuss various matters relating to French culture. Because of the limited presentation space, the photos and illustrations in this book are far less than other books. At first glance, the presentation of the material in this book seems denser about the elements of the text in paragraph form than other books, most of which have only included text in paragraph form at the middle and end of the book.

Still related to the composition of sub-chapters, it was found that the learning atmosphere emphasized the reader's ability to understand text because the amount of text contained was relatively more than some other books which tended to accentuate photographs and illustrations (Decibel, Nouveau Rond-Point, Agenda 1). This may also be caused by the limited amount of space (only 1 page per chapter). Nevertheless, it can

be said that *Civilization* in Echo A1 still includes a number of photos and illustrations that are used as a reference for the reader in carrying out existing tasks.

In this book, French culture that is highlighted is the way of life and habits of the people. It also includes an explanation of the family structure and even how to deal with emergencies in France (fire, accident, illness). In general, it can be interpreted that the material aims to "prepare" readers before entering the French cultural environment (if for example they visit France). Thus, because the cultural elements that are highlighted are things that are related to values and thought patterns, it can be said that in this book the soft power concerns the aspects of beauty and perhaps also benignity.

At Saison 1, cultural learning is carried out under the heading *Se Comprendre: Actu Culture*. Most of the information contained in the *Actu Culture* chapter is presented through text in the form of bullet points and paragraphs such as snippets of articles or letters. It is also enriched with photos, illustrations and graphics that are not only decorative, but also a source of answers to questions that the reader must answer. The interesting thing about *Actu Culture* is that it uses a presentation model for all chapters. What is meant here is the uniformity of material structure and task instructions. First, in each *Actu Culture* there are always three question boxes (that can contain one or more questions) and not all of them are related to the text provided, some ask the reader's opinion about similar cultural elements in their country. Second, in each chapter the reader is introduced to a certain phrase in French under the subtitle "*Drôle d'expression*" and there is a question box that is always related to this subtitle. With these subtitles, in each *Actu Culture*, readers' insight into French idioms is expected to increase. Cultural learning does not seek to discuss culture critically, but only acts as an exhibition of cultural elements that will create a positive impression on the minds of readers. Along with this, if the impression is achieved, then soft power in the form of brilliance will also be achieved.

The chapter *Je lis et je découvre* in Decibel 1 looks more striking because it uses colourful themes, cartoon nuances and other visual elements such as informal font types and colours. The learning material also has photos and illustrations in it in an effort to create an interesting and non-rigid learning atmosphere, as found in the design of *Carnet de Voyage*. However, cultural learning in Decibel 1 is placed at the third or final level in each chapter. Decibel 1 also tries to place cultural learning as an integral part of language learning. Thus, the reader is expected to perceive the chapter *Je Lis et Je Découvre* not only as material that is optional, but the reader must also indirectly study the cultural material. However, the material in *Je Lis et Je Découvre* is not only about cultural elements, in some tasks the aim of learning is also language skills. Because the target users are young people or even children, cultural learning in this book is positioned as part of language learning, so that the intention to create a positive image or even soft power is not commonly found.

Meanwhile, Edito carried out its cultural learning through two different chapters, namely "*Civilization*" and "*Detente*". Both of them have different learning methods where *Detente* uses games more as a tool to introduce French culture and society. Nevertheless, the *Civilizations* chapters tend to have more cultural material and activities. These two types of chapters appear in books alternately in each chapter. However, the frequency of occurrence of *Civilization* is still with a ratio of 12:6. The existence of this Detente-like chapter is a form of innovation from cultural learning because in the books previously discussed, a pleasant learning atmosphere is created only through visual aspects, but in Edito 1 cultural learning is made to be "fun" through games and puzzles that complement the chapter on culture in general.

From the perspective of soft power, this book seems to have a similar approach to Saison 1 because most of the cultural elements contained in learning are not given a deep explanation and are only "displaying" their cultural products to readers. This may be because learning material tends to be designed to focus on the use of cultural elements to practice language competence. However, if in some chapters the cultural products displayed are material such as regional specialties, fashions, and celebrities, there are also chapters that discuss social aspects such as the habits of the people in each Francophone country, celebration days, and brief biographies. Thus, aspects of beauty and brilliance are displayed.

It can be seen that all of the above books contain cultural learning that is *actionnelle* and importantly the *actionnelle*'s frame is the purpose of presenting a part of culture. Nouveau Rond Point, Echo, and Saison use cultural elements to deepen the insight of French culture in the reader, while Agenda and Decibel use cultural elements to enhance the readers' language skills. Meanwhile, Edito tries to combine the two, where language learning is done along with deepening the reader's thematic cultural insights. The result of this difference in purpose is the difference in the level of soft power emergence. The aspects of brilliance and beauty will emerge more through a comprehensive and thematic explanation of cultural elements than material that merely uses cultural elements as language learning tools (as in Agenda 1 and Decibel 1). In other words, this comparison can be analogous to a book that teaches how to pronounce the Eiffel Tower and a book that constructs a positive image of France through text and visuals about the tower's history. For France, such an approach is more useful.

4.   CONCLUSION

From the analysis that has been done on linguistic and non-linguistic elements, it is found that cultural learning is a text instrument used to construct positive images of three things: the French state, French and Francophone society, and French culture. Considering culture and language learning is one form of cultural diplomacy, these images are instruments of the implementation of French cultural diplomacy to readers who use the book Alter Ego + A1.

In comparable language teaching manuals, the number of aspects of beauty is more widely used than brilliance and benignity. The last two aspects of soft power currencies are said to appear alternately, but in Alter Ego + the three are used even though they are not balanced. The occurrence of brilliance and beauty aspects is significantly more than benignity. Brilliance tends to be exhibited through visual elements such as architectural photographs of buildings, artists, and other cultural aspects. Meanwhile, values that highlight Beauty are exhibited more implicitly in activities or tasks that the reader must do. The benignity on the other hand, is not in the spotlight because it is suspected that this aspect is difficult to show through concrete matters and because the goodness or tolerance in a CV is subjective and can therefore create different perceptions in the public of other countries. It is different from two other aspects that can be shown through photographs of material objects or real events. By referring back to the theory of soft power currencies, this emphasis on aspects of beauty and brilliance reveals that the intention to implement soft power on target readers comes from the creation of awe and inspiration.

The implementation process is accommodated by the general structure of the text that presents learning material in a relaxed and pleasant way. This is supported by the action approach since this approach seems most effective in learning. In *Carnet de Voyage* the *actionnelle* approach has a significant role in achieving text goals in enriching the cultural and cross-cultural understanding of the reader. Thus, it can be concluded that the practice of French cultural diplomacy through the book Alter Ego + A1 is carried out through a combination of French soft power construction and effective teaching methods.

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