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**CULTURAL CONSTRUCTION IN AMERICAN WOMAN'S IDENTITY
IN DARREN STAR'S SERIES, *EMILY IN PARIS*;
A CROSS CULTURAL ANALYSIS**

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Abstract

Cultural construction is a process of forming a person's identity due to cultural differences. In this study, the writer formulates two problems of study, how Emily as American woman responses to French culture and the impact of cultural construction on Emily's identity in the series Emily In Paris. This research was analyzed using Chris Barker's cultural studies approach and used the description method to analyze the data. Two concepts applied in this research are subjectivity and identity. These two concepts are also divided into three classifications, the first and second classification, showing Emily's way as an American Woman in responding to French culture. Meanwhile, the third classification shows that identity requires recognition from other people.

Keywords: Cultural Construction, Identity, American Woman

I. INTRODUCTION

Cultural constructing is the process by which interactions between various cultures impact how individuals form. This process is defined by Barker (2008, p. 215) in his book *Cultural Studies, Theory and Practice* as the process of becoming a person who is shaped by culture. Society is an actor in culture and is included in the constitution of culture. They who, for the rest of their life, would embody their culture. People's actions, words, and mindsets during social interactions all reflect this depiction. After that, it turns into a habit that eventually shapes the society's identity.

Identity in this sense refers to cultural identity. Barker (2008, p. 216) asserts that identity is wholly a product of culture and is inextricably linked to cultural representation. The process of cultural construction that results from knowledge and experience being passed down from generation to generation gives rise to cultural identity. As a result, cultural identity is specific to the community. Subjectivity and identity are therefore intertwining like a process with a final product in each iteration. The outcome would serve as a gauge for the process's effectiveness.

A cross-cultural analysis is one that results from the collision of cultures that mutually impact one another. According to Adhiputra (2014, p. 9), cross-culturalism is more than just the existence of cultural diversity; it is the relationship between varied cultures. Interaction with people from other cultures results in the development of this bond. These cultural distinctions will affect one another and modify other cultures. In this situation, society is more powerful so that people are more impacted. People who become culturally assimilated will eventually create a new identity.

This series depicts a woman who is experiencing cultural construction while in Paris. This construction occurred due to significant cultural differences between American and French culture. This difference makes the main character, Emily, a subject of Parisian society. As a subject, Emily is depicted as a career woman who is trying to adapt to French society. Emily did this so that she could gain recognition from French society. On the contrary, the adjustments that Emily made actually changed her identity as an American Woman.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this research, the writer connects the cultural approach to making material objects of research *Emily in Paris*. The writer uses cultural studies by Chris Barker. To finalize this research the writer only utilizes two concept, subjectivity and identity in this research.

II.1 Subjectivity and Identity

Chris Barker argues in the book that subjectivity and identity are inextricably linked. Identity can vary depending on the culture, according to Chris Baker's phrase that identity is cultural "all the way down" (Chris Barker, 2008, p. 206). Everyone truly has an identity, but because of outside factors, identities are constantly changing. Put differently, everyone who has gone through the process of cultural acculturation will unconsciously acquire a new identity. All the same, each person has the chance to preserve their identity. Barker (2008) divides these two ideas into three categories as a result.

2.1.1 Self Identity as a project

Self-identity serves as a means of self-understanding. Giddens (1997), referenced in Barker (2007), states that

self-identity serves as a means of preserving the self's story. This implies that maintaining one's identity can be achieved by developing one's sense of self and understanding oneself. Individuals can accomplish this by being authentic. Maybe they demonstrate the identity they have previously formed by engaging in their routines.

2.1.2 Social Identities

The social context holds that socially shared material is used in a social process that shapes an individual. The shared material in this case is social, cultural, or linguistic practices. These materials are social characteristics that are subject to contextual factors that originate from the social environment. Gidden (as cited in Barker, 2008, p. 218) contends that social characteristics play a significant role in shaping an individual's identity. In other words, characteristics—regardless of cultural differences—are utilized as benchmarks to determine a person's class, gender, and age. An individual acquires an identity through social characteristics that are recognized and adhered to.

2.1.3 Personhood as cultural production

Personhood is formed by the interference of others, but it is only known by the individual. The local culture is the "other" in this instance. Essentially, human kinship was the reason for the formation. One will subtly impart their culture to another when friends with someone from a different culture, for instance. There is no personal connection to the cultural transfer that takes place. Instead, each region's uniqueness serves as cultural representation in this context (Chris Barker, 2008). Each personality will be impacted because of the kinship and cultural transfer processes. Furthermore, because the impact on identity results from a person's shifting emotions, it can only be comprehended as a discursive description.

III. RESEARCH METHOD

To analyze the problems in this series, the writer uses cultural approach and mimetic analysis. Then, the writer described the data by qualitative research. to collect data the writer was watching the series and transcribing each dialogue in the series. To support the script, the writer also presents the scene in the image form. Finally, the data was investigated

and reported the data used descriptive qualitative.

IV. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This research will be discusses about the way American Woman, Emily, to respond Parisian cultural construction. Emily is undoubtedly attempting to preserve her identity as an American who is teaching French people about American culture, as she is making her first trip to Paris. Additionally, Emily's answers are demonstrated by her efforts to improve her French communication skills and modify her behavior. As a result, the author describes how Emily's identity was accepted by society in the final subchapter. Identity is self-produced, in fact, but it also needs to be acknowledged by others. This kind of phenomenon, which is examined through a cultural lens to ascertain the immigrant's cultural construction process and its influence on their identity, can be found in the television series Emily in Paris.

4.1. Emily's Responses to Cultural Construction

Society plays a crucial role in the cultural construction process,

supporting individual formation through shared materials like language and objects. Interaction between communities and migrants facilitates cultural transfer, as seen in Emily's responses to maintaining American identity, building communication, and adjusting to French culture.

4.1.1 By Maintaining Identity as An American

As an American, Emily lives up to two values which she has believed in, such as punctual and be yourself. Therefore, Emily as an American is

used to always being disciplined with time. In Paris, she continues to implement these values. It could be

seen this quotation below.

Picture 1. Emily comes at office on 08.30

(calling sylvi)

Emily: Sylvi,
It's Emily. Um,
are we closed
today? Or is
there a national
holiday, I don't
know about?
Cause I've been

hanging around
here for two
hours and.....

(Julien comes)

Julien: what are
you doing?

Emily: I've
been since 8.30

Julien:

Pourquoi? We
open at 10.30

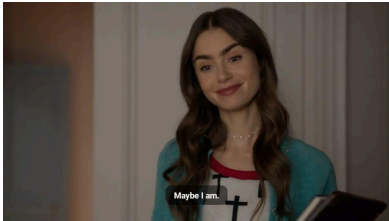
*(Emily
badmood)*

(Ep. 1 17:05- 17:18)

From the quotation shows Emily endeavors to build her own narrative. Barker stated in maintaining self-identity, individuals will act in accordance with what they have received in the past and what they expect in the future. (2008:217). Emily's 8.30 a.m. arrival to work indicates an action that she has accepted and applied since childhood until now. The action is part of the punctual culture adopted by the Americans. Thus, through the habits applied by Emily, even though she is already in France, it proves that Emily is manifesting her identity as a true American.



During her time in Paris Emily tried to defend herself. This time, she defended herself by understanding herself first. The comprehension aims to make her more familiar with who



she is and what she should do to maintain her identity. It could be seen through from the conversation

below:

Picture 2. Emily's expression about her identity

Emily: Maybe I'am. But... I do understand what it means to be on the outside looking in. I have a perspective that you will never understand because, no, I'm not sophisticated or

French, and I don't know how to look like you. That slouchy, sexy, je ne sais quoi thing. But, I am the customer that wants it. And you're not because you've already got it, and you don't even know how you did it.

(Ep. 2 03.29-04.19)

The quotation indicates Emily agreed with French's assessment of her. She has first come to know herself, which is why she is accepted. Barker affirms, "Identity is something that the self reflexively understands in relation to its origin, rather than a characteristic that individuals possess" (Barker 2008:217) The phrases "I don't know how to look like you, and I'm not sophisticated or French" It demonstrates Emily's awareness of her American identity and her determination to never adopt

French culture. However, it was evident from "do understand and have a perspective" that Emily had a deep understanding of who she was. She knew what it took to be herself without French's assistance. Emily's self-perception is therefore a kind of self-defense.

4.1.2 By Doing The Intercommunication in Society

Hall and Barker emphasize the importance of building relationships with the community for cultural construction,



highlighting intercommunication as a key tool for sharing materials, such as Emily inviting French for lunch. It can be show from this conversation.

Picture 3. Emily's ask French to get lunch

Emily to Sylvie, Luc and Julien

Emily: Do you wanna have lunch?

Sylvie: No, I'll have a cigarette

Luc: Uh, I have a ... bad stomach

Julien: I have previous engagement

(Ep. 1 18:13 – 180:27)

From the quotation refers Emily's efforts to start a relationship with French. As described in sub-chapter 3.2, the culture of eating together is private for French. The sentence "Do you wanna have lunch?" refers to Emily's use of French culture to build a new relationship with the French. In the future that Emily can enter and become part of the French.

4.1.3 By Having Cultural Adjustment to French Culture

Literary adjustment involves responding to cultural construction, often occurring after migrants establish relationships with their community and transfer cultural attributes. This process is not immediately visible after interaction, but rather involves processing the culture through knowledge gained, as Emily did in this series. It could be seen from the quotation.



Picture 5.
Emily and Her
boyfriend in

Bar Chicago

Emily's boyfriend: Can we get a couple beers here?

Emily: White wine, actually. Anything French, if you have it.

Server: for sure

(Ep.1 02:29 – 02:31)

From the quotation, it shows that Emily has been trying to learn things related to Paris since America. According to Barker, individual experience is not only factored by society but also supported by oneself. In this case, Emily has knowledge about French culture in the form of wine as a mediated. The sentence "White wine, actually. Anything French, if you have it" reflects that Emily has knowledge about white wine as a characteristic of French culture. The knowledge of the drink reflects that while still in America, Emily had already constructed French culture in herself. It proves, the application of attributes symbolized in the form of drinks.

4.2 The Acceptance of Emily's Identity from Society

Identity is a self-created concept, and it is not perfect until it receives recognition from society. Recognition is proof that an individual's identity aligns with societal standards. In this series, Emily undergoes two cultural construction processes: in America, she receives cultural representations, and in Paris, she narrates herself as American. However, both identities are meaningless without recognition from society. The writer demonstrates that the Parisian society recognizes both Emily's identities, as American and French. This process of cultural construction is crucial for obtaining recognition and ensuring that an individual's identity aligns with societal standards.

This time, Emily narrates herself by showing a professional attitude when getting into trouble at work. It is shown in the following situation.

Picture 7. Savior's employee and Antoine are meeting at Savoir

Antoine: So, what do we think? Sexy or sexiest?

Luc: Definitely, sexy

Antoine: I am asking Emily

Emily: Uh, It... it doesn't matter what I think. It matters what your customer thinks. So why not let them make up their own minds? Put the commercial on Twitter with a poll: "Sexy or Sexiest?" Get a conversation going. Let the world decide, and make it part of your campaign.

Antoine: "sexy or sexiest?" or maybe both. It's a little controversial. I like it

Sylvi: Well, finally, finally Emily, a reason to smile

(Ep. 3 16.34 – 17:16)

From this situation, it can be seen Emily was recognized for her American identity after behaving professionally. According to Barker, culture is not the uniqueness of an individual but the uniqueness of a

group of people. The sentence "Uh, It... it doesn't matter what I think" reflects the American identity of being selfless and always putting the client's wishes first. From the way she responds to the situation she is representing American culture. Then, Emily responded well to French with sentences "I like it and Well, finally, finally Emily, a reason to smile". The sentence is a compliment to Emily's actions. The compliment also reflects French's recognition of the professional work attitude adopted by the American. Therefore, Emily's unique identity as an American is recognized by French.

Identity is a product of cultural representation, as Barker argued, and is not about oneself but an adjustment to society's expectations after a process of cultural construction. Society constructs individuals according to cultural standards, and individuals consciously and unconsciously adjust to this. This adjustment in cultural studies indicates that an individual's identity is changing but not yet perfect. Recognizing this is necessary to ensure that an individual is in accordance with society's expectations of the cultural construction experienced.

V. CONCLUSION

Subjectivity is a process of cultural construction experienced by individuals, influenced by societal representation of culture in habits, language, and objects. This subjectivity affects an individual's identity if they participate in representing and receive recognition from the community. This research examines an American woman named Emily, who experiences subjectivity while working in Paris. Emily aims to introduce American culture and develop her career in the city. Using cultural studies, the writer concludes that culture greatly impacts identity. Emily applies American culture, such as using American language and acting like an American, while society represents French culture and interacts with her. Cultural transfers occur, with Parisian society becoming more dominant. However, Emily's cultural practices as both American and French are not fully recognized. Ultimately, Emily gains recognition for her identity as both American and French, as she narrates herself as an American through actions and is recognized by the French community. This recognition is manifested in the form of praise for her success.

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