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**Language use in ‘Loin du Périph’: A sociopragmatic study of characters****Muhammad Rizkyanca Nurfairuz\*, Tri Indri Hardini, Dudung Gumilar**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study investigates the antagonistic behavior of Alice –as someone who is in favor of extreme-right wing authority–, who initially conceals her support for the dominance of the extreme right-wing party that espouses white supremacy ideology in her interaction with Ousmane as someone who has been affected by racism and discrimination. As the film progresses, there is a change in her attitude from being concealed to being openly supportive of the ideology of the right-wing or even far-right party, which does not favor pluralism, immigrants, and non-white people, also known as xenophobia. Regarding Alice's behavior, all of her speech acts will be analyzed using Pragmatics-Sociolinguistics theory. It is hoped that by using Pragmatics-Sociolinguistics theory, the behavior and speech acts of the character Alice can be explained and analyzed.

**Keywords:** antagonistic behavior, far-right ideology, pragmatics-sociolinguistics theory**Article history***Submitted:*

2 August 2023

*Accepted:*

25 September 2023

*Published:*

30 September 2023

**Citation (APA Style):**

Nurfairuz, M.R., Hardini, T.I., & Gumilar, D. (2023). Language use in ‘Loin du Périph’: A sociopragmatic study of characters. *Diksi*, 31(2), 131-142. <https://doi.org/10.21831/diksi.v31i2.64713>.

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**INTRODUCTION**

The film *Loin du Périph*, directed by Louis Leterrier, which aired on Netflix in 2022, raises issues of racism and discrimination against immigrants and minorities in the city of Saint-Julien-en-Genevois. This study delves into the sociopragmatic analysis of dialogues between characters Ousmane Diakité and Alice Gauthier within the film, aiming to shed light on the nuanced communication dynamics in a multicultural context. As mentioned before, four main characters would be featured in this film, these characters divided into two groups of characters –protagonists and antagonists– namely Ousmane Diakité and François Monge –as protagonists came from Paris, Ousmane served in the criminal division of the French national police headquarters with the rank of *Commissaire* and François served in the 12th district police of Paris with the rank of *Capitaine*– and two other characters namely Alice Gauthier and Antoine Brunner –as antagonists, Alice is a member of the municipal police of Saint-Julien-en-Genevois with the rank of *Commissaire Adjointe* and Antoine Brunner who has the position of mayor of Saint-Julien-en-Genevois who has a political affiliation with France Vive–. In this study –of the four characters mentioned– there is a language interaction between Alice and Ousmane during the investigation of the death of Kevin Marechal in this city there is a familiar and communicative conversation between Alice and Ousmane which ends with a confrontation between Ousmane and François with sympathizers of Antoine Brunner and the exposure of Alice's nature as a xenophobe and a sympathizer of the far-right party.

In recent years, France has undergone a significant political and social transformation. Notably, during the 2017 French presidential election, Marine Le Pen, leader of the far-right National Front (now known as the National Rally or *Rassemblement National*), achieved a historic milestone by securing 23.15% of the vote in the first round. This marked the highest-ever vote share for a far-right candidate in a French presidential election. This trend persisted in the 2019 European Parliament election, with the National Rally capturing 23.3% of the vote. These political shifts reflect a growing support for right-wing ideologies and parties in France. Several key factors contribute to this shift, including concerns surrounding immigration and its perceived impact on job availability and benefits, with 90% of the

National Rally party expressing such concerns. Additionally, 85% of party members believe that refugees increase the risk of terrorism. Public opinion also reveals a negative attitude towards Muslims, with 29% holding unfavourable views, and 52% perceiving a desire among Muslims to maintain distinct lifestyles. By October 2020, a survey by IFOP found that 79% of respondents believed that Islamic extremists had declared war on France and its values. These trends are shaped by concerns about immigration, fears of terrorism, and economic uncertainties amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. This phenomenon in France inspired the character of Alice which was characterized as the extreme violence orchestrated by Alice's gunshot at Ousmane and Alice's xenophobic remarks as well as the blowing up of a housing facility for immigrants –with no casualties–.

Given the film's focus on racial tensions and social conflicts, a detailed examination of the verbal exchanges between the characters Alice and Ousmane becomes crucial. These dialogues serve as a microcosm of the larger societal issues at play, offering insights into the communication strategies employed in navigating such challenging circumstances. These utterances can be reviewed from the study of sociopragmatics which has two aspects, namely pragmatics and sociolinguistics. By using sociolinguistics, this research adopts 6 language functions, namely: phatic which has a function in social contact to maintain contact and sociological functions of a human being, conative has a function to influence the behavior and thoughts of the interlocutor referential serves to communicate information about the surrounding emotive aims to express emotions or feelings that are being felt by speakers metalingual which is used to communicate about the language itself and poetic used in order to achieve the purpose of beauty or aesthetics; (Linask, 2018). In relation to this research, the speech acts between Alice and Ousmane will be explored from the six functions above and will be determined on the tendency of the use of language functions used in the speech acts between Alice and Ousmane.

Pragmatics is a linguistic study that analyzes meaning based on context. The fundamental difference in general pragmatics studies is based on the context of the situation, while sociopragmatics is based on social context combined with situational context. The context referred to here is a sociolinguistic-based context, which is a science that discusses language and humans. (Yule, in Febtrina, 2019; Culpeper, 2021; Sentana, 2022; McKay, 2017; Wang, 2023; Hardini, 2017). Thus, sociopragmatics is a field that studies the intent of the speaker's utterance in relation to the social aspects surrounding the occurrence of the utterance. Pragmatics offers speech acts that are divided into three types, namely locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. In relation to this research, we will look for the tendency of speech act types between Alice and Ousmane. This is important because Alice produces manipulative speech acts –antagonistic– towards Ousmane who never suspects Alice as a xenophobe. Still in the context of pragmatics, locutionary is 'what is said', the form of words spoken, illocutionary is the use of speech 'what is done in saying words', expressing the specific purpose that is in the speaker's mind with examples, such as: inviting, advising, promising, commanding, condoning, and apologizing, and perlocutionary is 'what is done after saying something'; the effect of speech acts on the listener; the listener's reaction (Cutting, 2002). In this study, Alice's speech acts will be analyzed from the three types of speech acts above and then the strongest speech act tendency will be taken.

Illocutionary speech acts are speech acts that explain the actions performed based on what is spoken; 'performance of an act in saying something'. The action is performed by uttering a sentence with a certain force. The illocutionary force of an utterance is determined by several factors, including the context in which the utterance is made, the words used, and the intention of the speaker. For example, the sentence "I'm sorry" can be used as an assertive speech act, directive speech act, or expressive speech act, depending on the context in which it is used (Noredenstam, 1966; Oishi, 2016; Saifudin, 2017). Speech acts can be classified based on the speaker's intention when speaking into five major groups, i.e.: a. Assertive, this speech act has the function of telling people about something; b. Commissive, this speech act states that the speaker will do something; c. Directive, serves to make the speaker do something; d. Expressive, serves to express feelings and attitudes about the state of the relationship; e. Declarative, describing changes in a state of relationship (Searle, 1976). The other two areas of pragmatics involved in this study are the cooperative principle which governs what the participants –speakers and hearers– should do in order to make the conversation coherence. Speakers who do not contribute to the coherence of the conversation are not following the cooperative principle as well as the politeness principle which is meant to complement the maxims of the cooperative principle to better comprehend the intent and function of language in the context of speech acts.

Grice's principle of cooperation regulates what participants must do in order to make the conversation appear coherent. Speakers who do not contribute to the coherence of the conversation are not following the principle of cooperation. Leech reveals that Grice's principle of cooperation is not always applicable in real life. The principle is not enough to explain the function contained in the language. To explain the function, another principle is needed, that is the principle of politeness. Both the principle of cooperation and the principle of politeness are closely related to the culture and norms that prevail in the respective localities. Brown and Levinson have an opinion about politeness strategies that are closely related to maintaining a sense of trust by actively maintaining the "self-esteem" of speakers and hearers in social interactions. A politeness strategy that has the objective of maintaining the honorable feelings of the listener. The term "self-esteem" refers to honoring and maintaining one's self-confidence. In this case, it is important for each individual to pay consideration to and respect the self-esteem of others. When conversations take place comfortably, positive relationships can be established. Politeness norms that have been adhered to or violated –intentionally or unintentionally– are obtained by threatening the face of the interlocutor and by actively maintaining the face of the speaker. Face according to Brown and Levinson is the concept of a positive image of a person that is sought to be maintained. There are two types of Face concepts, positive Face and negative Face. Positive face refers to the desire to be wanted, appreciated, and accepted by others, while a negative face refers to one's desire to be free from restraints or coercive actions. Therefore, there is a close relationship between the discussion of the principle of cooperation and politeness with sociolinguistics (Wang, 2019; Puspita, 2019; Isabela et al., 2022;).

The research problem at the heart of this study revolves around understanding how sociopragmatic elements in the dialogue between Alice and Ousmane in the film *Loin du Périph* contribute to the portrayal of racism and discrimination. We seek to uncover the nuances of their interactions within the broader context of rising far right and right-wing ideologies in France and critical importance as it sheds light on the sociopragmatics dynamics in a multicultural setting and their reflection of real-world issues such as racism and xenophobia. Understanding these dynamics is essential for addressing societal challenges related to the topic of immigration, race, religion, and human identities and socio-cultural conditions.

## METHOD

In this study, the chosen research method is qualitative, which aims to gather data with specific purposes and focuses on words rather than numerical values. Qualitative research is commonly used when studying people, such as social groups or individuals. Data for this study was collected through interviews, observations, documents, and tests, enabling a qualitative analysis to be conducted (Sugiyono, 2013; Walliman, 2011; Corbin, 1990; Sutedi, in Annisa and Yulia, 2018).

The research design employed in this study is descriptive, focusing on describing and elaborating on current phenomena using scientific procedures to address real-world problems depicted in the movie. Purposive sampling was used to select specific data sources, considering individuals who could provide relevant insights for the research objective, in this case not individuals, but characters. The study's population encompassed the entire duration of the movie *Loin du Périph*.

Data analysis involved the record and commensurate techniques. The record technique transcribed dialogues from the antagonistic characters in the movie. The commensurate technique utilized free listening, including conversations, recording, and note-taking. The collected data was then analyzed using the commensurate method and normative method, with a focus on pragmatic sub-type analysis. This approach considered reactions received from speech partners, along with the utterances given by speakers, to understand the context and apply the principles of cooperation and politeness. The analysis targeted referential equivalence, involving objects, places, actions, qualities, and states referred to within identifiable linguistic units (Sudaryono, 2018).

In this study, we employ the theory of speech acts, primarily drawing from the works of J.L. Austin and John Searle. This theoretical framework allows us to dissect the communicative intentions and strategies employed by the characters Alice and Ousmane in *Loin du Périph*. We have chosen this theory of speech acts due to its robust framework for examining how language is used to perform various functions in communication. It provides the tools needed to uncover the intentions, illocutionary acts, and perlocutionary effects of the characters' utterances in the context of sociopragmatic analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to describe the character “Alice” as an antagonist through the lens of sociopragmatics seen from the interaction of the antagonist and the main protagonist in the film *Loin du Périph*. The analysis is conducted with the aim of examining the intended speech acts and implicatures that appear in the dialogue in the film. The film raises socio-political issues, especially the issue of the normalization of conservative political movements even towards the extreme-right –fascism– and race-immigrant conflicts that are of concern to political subjects and political entities in France. The classification of speech acts, subsets, and types is used to analyze the types of utterances that occur. In addition, to reveal the implicatures, a framework from the field of sociopragmatics is applied, taking into account the situational context, linguistic context, contextual factors, social relations, social roles, social norms, power dynamics, and, finally, the application of sociopragmatics studies; (Bliuc A-M et al., 2020; Krzyżanowski, 2022; Bures et al., 2023).

This research aims to gain a deeper understanding of the dialogue interactions in the film and highlight the implicit meanings contained therein. By using the aforementioned analytical framework, it is hoped that this research can provide a richer insight into the messages conveyed through dialogue in the context of the film *Loin du Périph*. The antagonistic role of the character of “Alice” that appears at the end of the film and the suspicion of Ousmane can occur because of the facts that Alice deliberately covered up to protect the main intentions of Alice’s colleagues and alliances against the ideology and plans of the political entity that Alice supports. The suppressed facts are also an indication of Alice’s lies. The manipulation paradigm of Alice’s character can be analyzed based on the speech acts expressed by Alice. The speech acts will be analyzed from the end of the film to the beginning of the film with the intention of getting a reference to find out the speech acts that are not in accordance with the dialogue that is used as a reference –in this case the speech acts at the end of the film– or being a dialogue that reveals the true intensity possessed by Alice –considered as the truth condition– and speech acts that are considered as manipulation and then analyzed through the theories that have been explained at the beginning of this article.

### Results

Through a meticulous analysis of speech acts and sociopragmatic nuances in the film *Loin du Périph* reveals a complex web of interpersonal dynamics and communicative strategies employed by the characters, shedding light on their true intentions, values, and ideologies. This section delves into the key findings of our analysis, which unveil the multifaceted nature of the characters’ interactions.

A central discovery of our research lies in the remarkable transformation of Alice’s character throughout the narrative. At the onset of the film, Alice skillfully crafts an image of herself as a friendly and cooperative police officer. Her interactions with Ousmane, a fellow officer from Paris, are characterized by flirtation and politeness, aimed at forging a rapport. However, as the story unfolds, we witness a stark metamorphosis in Alice’s demeanor. She discards her façade of politeness and exposes her true, more authoritarian, and extremist self. This transformation is especially evident in her assertive speech acts, where she challenges Ousmane’s perspective and openly supports the extreme-right political ideologies espoused by Antoine Brunner. Alice’s character arc serves as a poignant example of the potency of speech acts in shaping perceptions and deceiving others.

Our analysis has unveiled the presence of right-wing and far-right ideologies deeply embedded in the film’s discourse. Antoine Brunner, the city’s mayor, artfully employs populist rhetoric and emotional appeals to galvanize support among the residents. His speeches are replete with fear-inducing language and portray immigrants as a grave threat to the nation. Brunner’s adept use of emotional manipulation and nationalist rhetoric aligns with strategies commonly employed by right-wing politicians. The film’s portrayal of Brunner’s ascent to power underscores the influential role of speech acts in molding public opinion and mobilizing supporters.

The interactions between Alice and her superior, Commissaire Mercier, provide insights into the use of politeness strategies, particularly negative politeness. Alice employs negative politeness to mitigate face-threatening acts when interacting with Mercier. She strategically conceals her true thoughts and feelings, even when faced with condescending remarks from her superior. This use of politeness serves to maintain a semblance of harmony and cooperation within the police force, despite underlying tensions. Furthermore, Alice’s use of face-saving acts, such as humor, helps her navigate delicate situations and divert attention from controversial topics.

Our analysis underscores the significance of context in understanding speech acts. Alice's speech acts are contingent on the evolving context of the narrative. Her initially cooperative and flirtatious approach shifts as the investigation progresses, revealing the influence of her hidden agenda. Similarly, Brunner's use of emotional rhetoric is context-dependent, designed to resonate with the concerns and fears of the city's residents. The fluidity of speech acts in response to changing circumstances highlights the dynamic nature of communication.

The findings of our research extend beyond the confines of the film, carrying substantial implications for the field of sociopragmatic studies. These findings emphasize the necessity of considering the intricate interplay between speech acts, ideology, and context when deciphering human communication. Speech acts are not rigid constructs but rather adaptable tools, employed to serve the goals and intentions of individuals operating within specific social and political contexts. This adaptability can be harnessed for both constructive and manipulative ends, as exemplified by the characters in the film.

Finally, our analysis leaves us with lingering questions regarding Alice's motivations and beliefs. While her actions and speech acts may align with right-wing and authoritarian ideologies, her true convictions remain enigmatic. It is essential to approach her character with nuance, recognizing that her behavior may be driven by a complex interplay of personal motives and situational factors.

## Discussion

The utterances below provide a deeper insight into the antagonist character "Alice" and her strategies in speech act activities with the protagonist character "Ousmane". By hiding the truth and using fabricated speech, Alice manages to create unsuspection from Ousmane and keep her plans and intentions protected.

Through the analysis of speech acts and implicatures in these utterances, it can be revealed how Alice actively manipulates the dialogue and creates suspicion from Ousmane's character. By revealing the lies and masks she uses at the beginning of the film, we can gain a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the interaction and the purpose behind her words.

By applying the aforementioned analytical framework, this study is expected to reveal more about the antagonistic role of the character "Alice" and explore the implicatures contained in the dialogues in the context of the film *Loin du Périph*. Thus, this research will provide a richer insight into the messages conveyed through the utterances used by Alice in dealing with Ousmane and the situation in the film.

(1) Ousmane: "*C'est pas toi.*"

Alice: "*Non, C'est pas moi. Pas la gentille Alice qui flashe sur le flic parisien. La petite nana sympa qui a la patate, c'est ça? T'es aveugle, en fait? Sur le terrain, c'est pas deux patrouilles en plus. et du foot avec les gamins qui vont tout changer. Brunner a la raison. Il faut repartir de zéro. Table rase.*"

Ousmane: "*En massacrant des innocents?*"

Alice: "*Ouais, ben... Allez.*"

01:35:16, 458

The utterance above is the one uttered by Alice to Ousmane while Ousmane is held at gunpoint. This is the point of the revelation of Alice's –true– character. It was uttered by Alice when she came to the scene of the crime reported by Ousmane and François who were sneaking around by eavesdropping on a meeting of sympathizers of the *Fils de Clovis* group which has an extreme-right political ideology. This group is about to launch an attack to destroy a temporary residence center for immigrants who do not yet have a permanent residence.

The speech acts in this conversation can be categorized as assertive speech acts. Drawing on John Searle's classification of illocutionary acts (Searle, 1976), the speech acts in this conversation can be categorized as assertive speech acts. Assertive speech acts encompass various types, such as asserting, rebutting, stating, arguing, and admitting. Alice employs assertive speech acts, challenging Ousmane's perspective. She denies her previous friendly persona with statements like "*C'est pas moi*" (It's not me) and questions his naïveté regarding how to 'correctly' police the community. These assertive acts showcase her transformation. This can be further explained in the following quote when she continues speaking, "*Pas la gentille Alice qui flashe sur le flic parisien. La petite nana sympa qui a la patate, c'est*

*ça?*” (Not the nice Alice who fancies the Parisian cop. The friendly and cheerful girl, is that it?) Here, she implies that throughout their interaction, she pretends to be attracted to the Parisian police – Ousmane– and displays a friendly and cheerful attitude. By questioning their black-and-white worldview and innocence with the statement “*T'es aveugle, en fait? Sur le terrain, c'est pas deux patrouilles en plus. Et du foot avec les gamins qui vont tout changer*” (Are you blind, in fact? In the field, it's not –just adding– two more patrol–officer–s and playing football with the kids that will change everything), she challenges his perspectives and innocence by expressing her more nuanced perspective. She suggests that the reality on the ground is more complex than simply adding a few patrols or playing football –engaging in community activities– with the kids, implying that his approach is too naïve. The aforementioned speech acts can be categorized as assertive speech acts of rebutting, stating, arguing, and admitting. Alice’s bias towards Brunner becomes further evident through another assertive speech act, “*Brunner a la raison. Il faut repartir de zéro. Table rase.*” (Brunner is right. We need to start from scratch. Clean slate.) This assertive speech act can be categorized as asserting –speech acts– as she claims what she states as a truth. In this utterance, she supports Brunner’s political views and endorses the idea of starting anew or creating a “fresh start”.

Furthermore, Alice goes on to admit that she does not care if her actions of violence threaten the lives of immigrants. “*En massacrant des innocents?*” (By massacring innocents?), “*Ouais, ben... Allez.*” (Yeah, well...). The emergence of extreme-right ideological tendencies is based on authoritarianism and xenophobia (Bures, 2023). The manifestation of these violent tendencies is evident in the speech acts uttered by Alice, as she shows a lack of concern when it comes to massacring innocents. This aligns with the plan to detonate the immigrant housing facility, which is associated with extreme-right ideology rooted in nativism and ultimately leads to racism against immigrants.

“Older antiblack and antisemitic discourses have converged with newer forms of anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim racism. For example, Marie Le Pen and her party replaced antisemitism with anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim racism in France.” –Moalem (in Bures, 2023)

The true intention behind Alice’s manipulation is to make Ousmane –a police officer from Paris– trust her as a fellow officer who can work together to swiftly solve the ongoing case and return to Paris. This is revealed through her subsequent speech acts by Alice at 01:35:10,125, Alice uttered “*T'aurais dû repartir. Ça aurait été plus simple.*”

In order to ensure that the conveyed message is understood comprehensively, from a sociolinguistic perspective, it can be observed that Alice utilizes the emotive function of language to express her emotions, attitudes, and opinions about the topic and her views towards Ousmane himself. She also refers to her views on the existing situation in relation to Brunner's ideology. To maintain the ongoing communication, Alice employs the phatic function of language. Consequently, her speech acts can be categorized as utilizing the phatic-emotive function of language.

The analyzed speech acts indicate that Alice uses these utterances to express her true self and intentions. However, at the beginning of the film, Alice used different speech acts, which were lies and masks deliberately concealed from Ousmane. At the outset, Alice employed speech acts with the aim of concealing her main intentions and manipulating Ousmane’s perception. Through these lies and masks, Alice successfully created an impression of herself that differed from the actual reality. These speech acts can be linked to the earlier analysis of speech acts.

(2) Alice: “*C’est une ville patriote*”

Ousmane: “*C'est pas, ça. Patriote.*”

Alice: “*Mais, non. Ces derniers temps, la ville a connu pas mal de trafics. Les gens sont devenus fans du respect de l'ordre, du maintien des valeurs. Ils cherchent un mec qui les comprenne.*”

François: “*Comme lui?*” while pointing to a billboard that said “*ANTOINE BRUNNER*” “*Notre ville, Notre combat*”.

00:25:25, 208

The point where François points to the banner indicates a connection between Alice’s earlier statements and the banner itself. The banner displaying Antoine Brunner’s name with the slogan “*Notre Ville, Notre Combat*” suggests a political movement or campaign related to the city and the notion that the residents are united behind Brunner as their representative, aligning with their shared values and

“fighting” for their city. Following this, a debate ensues between Ousmane and François, culminating in a humorous remark made by Alice.

Ousmane: “*Le facho de la France Vive, non?*”

François: “*Un mec de droite, c'est un facho? Pourquoi pas un nazi?*”

Ousmane: “*Nazi? Rappelle-moi la difference.*”

François: “*Alors, pour ta gouverne, sache que le fascisme est une période de l'histoire. Certes sombre, mais pas inintéressante...*”

Ousmane: “*Arrête!*”

François: “*... en économique...*”

Ousmane: “*Il est contre les noirs, les arabes, les juifs, les gays, l'Europe, Me Too, le rap... Tout! T'appelles ça comment?*”

Alice: “*Un bon Français.*”

Ousmane and François stare at her immediately

Alice bursts out laughing

Alice: “*Vos têtes!*”

00:25:43,000

Alice's speech tends to lean towards illocutionary speech acts, as she expresses her views and opinions about the city and the mayor she represents. The language function that emerges in this speech is referential language function, as she references the state of the city and Brunner's qualities. Emotive language function also emerges as she expresses her opinions about the city –“*c'est une ville patriote*” (it is a patriotic city)–, the residents –“*les gens sont devenus fans du respect de l'ordre, du maintien des valeurs*” (people have become keen to maintain order and values)–, and the chosen mayor –“*un bon Français*” (a good Frenchman)–. Therefore, the language functions that appear in this speech are emotive-referential.

The speech acts performed by Alice in the dialogue can be categorized as assertive speech acts. Her initial statement, “*C'est une ville patriote*”, constitutes an assertive speech act where she expresses her belief about the city being patriotic. She delivers her opinion with confidence, presenting it as a fact. The assertive speech act encompasses asserting, claiming, informing, and stating. As the conversation progresses, it becomes clear that Alice violates politeness and cooperation principles by not being her true self. She presents a distorted image of herself, deviating from her true thoughts and feelings to maintain harmony and save face in the conversation.

Furthermore, when Ousmane and François inquire about Antoine Brunner and his associations with fascism and Nazism, Alice uses humor as a face-saving act. She responds by stating “*Un bon Français*” (A good Frenchman) and bursting into laughter, diverting the seriousness of the discussion and saving face by using silence and humor. Alice's speech includes assertive statements and face-saving acts using positive politeness strategies through the use of humor, allowing her to navigate the conversation while preserving and protecting her own face.

Alice employs a positive politeness strategy to try to align her opinion by indicating her view on Antoine Brunner and his slogan. When Ousmane and François engage in a debate about right-wing ideologies and the distinction between “*facho*” (fascist) and Nazi, Alice interrupts with the statement “*Un bon Français*”, instantly catching their attention. Instead of directly explaining or defending her statement, Alice responds with silence first and then proceeds to laugh, exclaiming “*Vos têtes!*” using humor to defuse tension and divert attention from the controversial topic. By employing positive politeness, Alice indirectly expresses her political stance on Brunner with Ousmane's viewpoint, avoiding direct confrontation or the need for detailed explanations and quickly concealing her true intentions with humor.

In the investigation of Kevin Marchal's death, Alice impresses Ousmane with her deductions. This interaction gives the impression to Ousmane that Alice is a skilled police officer and detective. In her subsequent utterances, Alice gives the perception that she is trustworthy in handling the case they are investigating, Kevin Marchal's death in the city where Alice works as a police officer. At the beginning of the film, Alice uses a polite and cooperative speaking style to make Ousmane believe that she shares his intentions. She also employs flirtations to create a good rapport and the impression that she is not appreciated by her superior, Commissaire Mercier, aiming to portray herself as an innocent

and charming police officer. Alice's goal is to have the Kevin Marchal case solved and Ousmane and François return to Paris without knowing her true intentions.

After completing the crime scene investigation where Kevin Marchal's body was found severed in two, Alice acts cooperative and overly friendly towards Ousmane but not towards François. The hospitality received by Ousmane could even be perceived as a 'code' that Alice is trying to flirt with him, especially when she asks for Ousmane's personal mobile phone number.

- (3) Alice: "*Bon, filez votre 07.*"  
 Ousmane: "*Mon 07?*"  
 Alice: "*Oui, pour l'enquête.*"  
 Ousmane: "*Je suis vieux jeu, mais c'est un 06.*"  
 Alice: "*Ben, votre 06.*"  
 Ousmane: "*Alors donc 06...*"  
 Alice: "*Oui.*"  
 Ousmane: "*39, 98, 32, 15. Appelez quand vous voulez.*"  
 Alice: "*OK.*"  
 François: "*Moi, c'est 06...*"  
 Alice: "*Ça ira, vous êtes tout le temps ensemble, donc... OK....*"  
 Ousmane: "*À toute.*"  
 Alice: "*À toute!*"

00:31:14, 041

Alice's utterances towards Ousmane exhibit elements of politeness and flirtation, showing her effort to create a positive impression and maintain a cooperative atmosphere during the investigation. Alice appears friendly and slightly flirtatious. When Ousmane says, "*Je suis vieux jeu, mais c'est un 06*", Alice politely corrects him by responding, "*Ben, votre 06*". Alice uses a positive politeness strategy, aiming to enhance the positive identity received by the listener and emphasizing friendliness, togetherness, and mutual interests. Her teasing behavior and efforts to create a good impression demonstrate her intention to build a positive rapport with Ousmane. By employing positive politeness, Alice can communicate effectively with Ousmane, and the exchange of information flows smoothly, preserving Alice's face, and deceiving Ousmane into trusting her as a fellow police officer.

The speech acts uttered by Alice can be classified as directive speech acts. Directive speech acts are used to encourage the listener to do something. There are six types of directive speech acts: requestive, question, requirement, prohibitive, permissive, and advisory (Yule, in Suryadani, 2021), (Ibrahim, in Suryadani, 2021). Alice's speech falls into the requestive category, as she politely asks Ousmane to give her his number. The speech functions that appear in this speech act are conative –to influence Ousmane– and phatic, thus the speech functions used by Alice are phatic-conative.

Afterward, Alice and Commissaire Mercier behave as if Alice is not respected by Mercier based on some of the speech acts that occur between them both –at the end of the film, Mercier participates in the explosion and attack on the immigrant housing facility–.

- (4) Mercier: "*..., Ah, oui. Gauthier, bien tient la procédure. Tout doit être consigné.*"  
 Alice: "*Oui, chef. Parfois, il confond secrétaire et adjointe.*"  
 In the next interaction, Alice even said that she didn't get any appreciation and that she had only been getting appreciation for 18 months.  
 Mercier: "*Idem pour la balistique, ils confirment. C'est bien l'arme du crime.*"  
 François: "*Donc, et moi, je le dis Grand chelem.*"  
 Mercier: "*Toute mes félicitations. Vous avez des méthodes expéditives, mais vu les résultats... Vous aussi, Gauthier.*"  
 Alice: "*Hmmm*"  
 François: "*Merci, commissaire.*"  
 Alice: "*Puis, le premier compliment en 18 mois. Merci les gars*"

00:48:28, 583

In this particular scenario, Alice manages to deceive Ousmane and François by putting up a



façade, concealing her true intentions. Alice employs a negative politeness strategy. This strategy is used to mitigate face-threatening acts; Alice avoids giving a negative impression of Mercier. The speech act “...*bien tient la procédure. Tout doit être consigné*” from Mercier confirms the imposition of a negative face on Alice, indicating that she is working under Mercier's responsibility as *Commissaire Adjointe*. However, Alice responds with a polite “*Oui, chef*”, acknowledging Mercier's authority while minimizing the negative impression of him, followed by a grumble “...*, il confond secrétaire et adjointe*”. The negative politeness strategy is used to avoid a negative impression of Mercier. This may be because Alice seeks sympathy from Ousmane and François by trying to create an impression that Mercier does not respect her and she is not valued by him, and thus, Alice uses a negative politeness strategy to gain sympathy from Ousmane and François.

Alice's speech acts can be classified as assertive and expressive speech acts. The assertive speech acts involve stating, as she expresses her intention to follow Mercier's instructions as her superior. The expressive speech acts are categorized into nine types: apologizing, thanking, congratulating, condoling, deploring, lamenting, welcoming, forgiving, and boasting. The expressive speech acts that appear in Alice's speech are lamenting (“...*, il confond secrétaire et adjointe*”) and thanking (“*Puis, le premier compliment en 18 mois. Merci les gars*”). (Norrick, in Ronan, 2015). Alice uses a combination of phatic and emotive language explicitly in her speech acts, but implicitly employs conative language.

After Ousmane and François tail *Commissaire* Mercier and uncover his association with Brunner, they confront Brunner at his home. During the confrontation, Ousmane and François question Brunner about police involvement, particularly *Commissaire* Mercier's, and *Fils de Clovis*. Instead of providing clear answers, Brunner responds with insults and threats, remaining defensive about Mercier's involvement. Despite interrogating someone known as “*La Pookie*” and finding possible connections between drug distribution, Mercier, and *Fils de Clovis*, Brunner evades giving a straightforward explanation. Following the encounter with Brunner, Ousmane and François are forcibly expelled from his house. Undeterred, they decide to continue tailing Mercier. During their surveillance, they find themselves chased by an armed gang sent to protect Mercier. As a result, Mercier manages to elude them. After successfully defeating Brunner's gang, Ousmane and François promptly meet with Alice to discuss their findings. During the meeting, Alice demonstrates a cooperative and polite attitude, indicating her willingness to assist Ousmane and François in their investigation.

- (5) Ousmane: “*Il est quelle heure, là ? Faillait me réveiller?*”  
 François: “*Tu dormais*”.  
 Ousmane: “*Tu réveilles les gens quand ils dorment plus? Pardon. Ça va?*”  
 Alice: “*Ouais, super. On discutait, avec François.*”  
 Ousmane: “*De?*”  
 François: “*De ce que faire maintenant. On peut pas d'attaquer Brunner frontalement, apparent. Trop prudent. Il faut trouver la faille.*”  
 Alice: “*Je vous propose la préposition. Vous restez ici à l'abri. Je me rends au bureau du commissaire, Je récupère les dossiers qui le concernent et puis, on épluche tout ici ensemble.*”  
 Ousmane: “*OK, ouais. Faisons ça.*”  
 Alice: “*Ouais?*”  
 Ousmane: “*Ouais.*”  
 François: “*Tu fais travailler la tête, aujourd'hui?*”  
 Alice: “*Ben, je vais à la douche!*”  
 [Alice kisses Ousmane]  
 Alice: “*J'ai pas non plus besoin de permission.*”

01:21:41, 541

Alice demonstrates the use of negative politeness strategy or hedging in this conversation. By presenting a suggestion and framing it as a recommendation rather than a command, Alice respects the freedom of Ousmane and François. Her statement, “*Je vous propose la préposition. Vous restez ici à l'abri. Je me rends au bureau du commissaire, Je récupère les dossiers qui le concernent et puis, on épluche tout ici ensemble*”, allows her to buy time without directly imposing her intentions. Through this strategy, Alice maintains a cooperative and harmonious atmosphere, giving them the perception of choice and freedom while secretly preventing them from taking action against Brunner. The functions

of language contained in Alice's speech acts are emotive-phatic-conative. She expresses her intuition about why Brunner was elected as the mayor, while also maintaining the ongoing conversation with Ousmane and François, influencing their actions.

The type of speech act present in Alice's utterances is a directive speech act, more specifically, an advisory one. Alice openly suggests that Ousmane and François stay at her place while she goes to the police station to find folders that can be used to prosecute Brunner. The function of language used by Alice is the cognitive function, as she explicitly influences Ousmane and François to stay at her residence.

Alice's speech acts are applicable in a real-world situation, as demonstrated in an article by Barber (2020). The author suggests that expressing a falsehood is not the same as trying to make someone believe the falsehood. Instead, the key element in an act's expression of something false is the presence of a communicative intention, where the success of the act depends on the audience's understanding. This premise is being shown as a social critique thorough this film during conversations between Alice and Ousmane. The key to understanding Alice's utterance is solely dependent on what Ousmane interpreted based on the interaction that Ousmane has had from the beginning –friendly, competent, underestimated officer– to the point he is held at gunpoint by Alice.

The actions and speech acts of Brunner, including the bombing of the housing facility and his rhetoric, indicate that he falls within the spectrum of right-wing ideology, possibly leaning towards far-right beliefs. Brunner's use of populist rhetoric, emphasizing emotional appeals, reflects a common strategy employed by right-wing politicians. In his speech, he portrays himself as a populist who listens to the concerns of citizens and tries to improve their lives, which aligns with right-wing populist tendencies.

Brunner's statement, "*Le message qu'on envoie à ces malheureux, c'est quoi? 'Venez dans notre pays, nous pouvons vous accueillir.' Ce qui est faux! Ce qui les attend, c'est la misère et le désarroi.*" showcases emotional language and appeals to fear. By claiming that immigrants are misled into thinking they will be welcomed and offered a better life, he presents himself as a nationalist and realist, tapping into the concerns and fears of some segments of society.

The use of emotional manipulation and rhetoric is a common tactic among far-right politicians, as observed in the example of the extreme-right party Golden Dawn, as mentioned in the study by Ekström, Patrona, and Thornborrow in 2018. Far-right politicians often denounce the mainstream media, the government, and established political parties, using emotionally charged language to appeal to their base and create a sense of solidarity among their supporters.

Moreover, in light of Brunner's nationalist and populist rhetoric, it raises questions about Alice's potential alignment with xenophobic views. While Alice's actions and speech acts may not overtly display xenophobia, her close association with Brunner and her willingness to manipulate Ousmane and François for their investigation suggest that she may share similar sentiments or be complicit in xenophobic ideologies. The context of their collaboration and the coordinated assault of the housing facility, which seemingly targeted immigrants, further warrant examination of Alice's beliefs and values, as her actions may indirectly support or condone xenophobic tendencies. However, it is essential to approach this aspect with caution, as Alice's true motivations and beliefs remain complex and may require further investigation and analysis.

## CONCLUSION

The sociopragmatic analysis of speech acts in the film *Loin du Périph* offers a profound exploration of the intricate communication dynamics and language strategies employed by its characters. Rooted in sociopragmatic theories such as Brown and Levinson's politeness strategies, Searle's speech act classification, and Jakobson's language functions, our research provides valuable insights into the nuanced world of linguistic interactions and their impact on interpersonal relationships and ideologies.

The research findings highlight the character development of Alice, the central figure in our study, who undergoes a remarkable transformation throughout the film. Through the lens of sociopragmatics, we witness her evolution from a seemingly cooperative police officer to a manipulative and extremist figure. Her adept use of speech acts becomes a compelling narrative thread, illustrating the power of language in shaping human interactions.

Our analysis reveals the strategic deployment of politeness strategies, with a particular emphasis on negative politeness and face-saving acts by Alice. When interacting with Commissaire Mercier, Alice

adeptly conceals her genuine thoughts and emotions, employing humor as a face-saving mechanism to navigate sensitive topics. These findings underscore the dynamic nature of politeness strategies and their crucial role in maintaining social harmony within complex contexts. Searle's speech act classification proves instrumental in categorizing Alice's utterances within the film. Her speech acts span a range of illocutionary acts, encompassing assertive, expressive, and declarative speech acts. Alice employs assertive speech acts to challenge Ousmane's perspectives and advance her own agenda, all while maintaining an outward appearance of cooperation. Her expressive speech acts provide a window into her evolving emotions and motivations, revealing the depths of her character's complexity.

Additionally, our analysis delves into Jakobson's language functions, shedding light on the conative and phatic functions employed by Alice. These functions serve as the tools through which Alice conceals her true intentions and masterfully manipulates Ousmane and François. The phatic function, in particular, aids in the preservation of social norms during their interactions, further exemplifying the nuanced strategies at play. Alice's character emerges as a skillful orchestrator of speech acts, deftly transitioning from deceptive and flirtatious language to manipulation and deceit as the film's plot unfolds. This evolution in her speech acts becomes a pivotal narrative element, illustrating her complex character development and central role in the film's overarching theme.

In this analysis, grounded in established theories and frameworks, provides a comprehensive understanding of the intricate communication dynamics evident in the dialogues between the film's protagonist and antagonist characters. The research unveils the enigmatic identity of Alice as a far-right extremist and the intricate dance of language she orchestrates to achieve her goals while adhering to face-saving and social norm-preserving strategies. This study not only contributes to our comprehension of the sociopragmatic dimensions of cinematic discourse but also underscores the broader implications for real-world interactions. It highlights the profound influence of language in shaping perceptions, molding public opinion, and revealing concealed facets of human interaction. *Loin du Périph* serves as a compelling reflection of the socio-political complexities of contemporary society, emphasizing the potency of speech acts in navigating the intricacies of interpersonal relationships and ideological landscapes.

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