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Paper: “Le carré véridictoire et les régimes de la tromperie dans How Beautiful We Were d’Imbolo Mbue”

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Peer review:

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ESJ Manuscript Evaluation Form 2026

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Please respond within the appointed time so that we can give the authors timely responses and feedback.

NOTE: ESJ promotes a peer review procedure based on scientific validity and technical quality of the paper (not perceived impact). You are also not required to do proofreading of the paper. It could be recommended as part of the revision.

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Reviewer Name: Ibrahima DIEME	
University, Country: Université Gaston Berger de Saint Louis, Sénégal	
Date Manuscript Received: September 16 th , 2026	Date Review Report Submitted: September 21st, 2026
Manuscript Title: LE CARRÉ VÉRIDICTOIRE DANS LA FICTION MBUÉENNE THE VERIDICTORY SQUARE IN MBUEAN FICTION	
ESJ Manuscript Number: 21427-Article-Texte-62074-1-4-20260907	
You agree that your name is revealed to the author of the paper: Yes	
You approve, your name as a reviewer of this paper is available in the “review history” of the paper: You approve, this review report is available in the “review history” of the paper: Yes	

Evaluation Criteria:

Please give each evaluation item a numeric rating on a 5-point scale, along with a thorough explanation for each point rating.

Questions	Rating Result [Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]
1. The title is clear, and it is adequate for the content of the article.	It would be more adequate if narrowed to the novel is in study. As presented, it gives the impression that it's covering all the works of Imbolo Mbué.
<i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	
2. The abstract presents objectives, methods, and results.	Very satisfactory
<i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	
3. There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.	The article is grammatically correct apart from one indefinite article that I suggested to change, but it's a minor debatable error.
<i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	
4. The study methods are explained clearly.	The methods are very are articulated around the work of Greimas.
<i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	
5. The results are clear and do not contain errors.	The results are well presented.
<i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	
6. The conclusions or summary are accurate and supported by the content.	The conclusions meet the problematic of the article.
<i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	
7. The references are comprehensive and appropriate.	Some references are missing but all in all, the author has made a comprehensive use APA style.
<i>(Please insert your comments)</i>	

Overall Recommendation (mark an X with your recommendation) :

Accepted, no revision needed	
Accepted, minor revision needed	X
Return for major revision and resubmission	
Reject	

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

Though academic norms respected, I have identified some minor flaws. Some quotations do not have references and their length is a big issue when one looks at the proportional economy of references extracted from the works of only five (5) authors out of the fourteen (14) authors that are in the bibliography and the twenty four (24) works that it contains. There are some problems on the length of the article as regard to the font requirement of the guideline. The author has used font “1” instead of font “1.5”. I also suggest that the author reviews the article by synthetizing his idea to avoid repetitions that somehow affect the length of the article.

To sum up, the author should consider the following points:

- Reformulate the title of the article by explicitly bringing in forth the novel under study.
- Write synthetically in order to cut the length of the article.
- Complete the missing references.
- Bring a good balance between quotations and the announced references included in the bibliography.
- Present the tables without subtitles.
- Restore line spacing to 1.5 as recommended in the guideline.

Comments and Suggestions to the Editors Only:

Reviewer A:
Recommendation: Revisions Required

The TITLE is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.

Le titre paraît un peu large par rapport au contenu de l'article dans la mesure où l'auteur n'analyse qu'une œuvre d'Imbolo MBUE d'une part et d'autre part le carré véridictoire n'est qu'un outil, un modèle pour rendre compte d'une dynamique axiologique et épistémique.

The ABSTRACT clearly presents objectives, methods, results, and conclusions.

Oui le résumé est pertinent dans l'ensemble et il contient les éléments essentiels attendus

There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.

Le texte est très bien écrit même s'il contient quelques maladroites qui nécessitent un petit toilettage

The study METHODS are explained clearly.

Oui la méthodologie est explicite et bien amenée

The results are clear and do not contain errors.

Oui les résultats sont en adéquation avec l'analyse dans l'ensemble

The CONCLUSION or summary is accurate and supported by the content.

la conclusion reflète les principaux mouvements de l'analyse

The list of REFERENCES is comprehensive and appropriate.

La liste des références est correcte dans l'ensemble mais l'auteur n'indique presque jamais le lieu d'édition des ouvrages mentionnés. Seules les maisons d'édition sont indiquées.

Please rate the TITLE of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

Please rate the ABSTRACT of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the LANGUAGE of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the METHODS of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the RESULTS of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

5

Please rate the CONCLUSION of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

5

Please rate the REFERENCES of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

Overall Recommendation!!!

Reject

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

La méthodologie est intéressante et l'analyse souvent rigoureuse malgré quelques maladresses. Cependant le texte gagnerait à mieux faire ressortir la dimension postcoloniale voire décoloniale en examinant de plus près l'impact des colonialités sur les dynamiques axiologiques et épistémiques. Les travaux de Mignolo pourrait être d'un bon apport. Les travaux de Jacques Fontanille et de Claude Zilberberg permettraient aussi de mieux exploiter l'alternance des moments euphoriques et dysphoriques dans le cheminement du faux à la vérité.

Reviewer B:

Recommendation: Resubmit for Review

The TITLE is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.

Yes.

The article is based on a relevant subject, an identifiable research question, and a potentially fruitful theoretical framework. The use of the “veridic square” to analyze the narrative transformations of illusion, secrecy, and revelation represents an interesting approach.

The ABSTRACT clearly presents objectives, methods, results, and conclusions.

The approach should be clearer, more methodical, and more demonstrative.

There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.

1. Overly Obscure Style

The accumulation of abstract concepts and specialized terms hinders clarity. The rewrite should prioritize scientific precision, simplicity, and readability.

2. Excessive Use of Metaphors

The proliferation of metaphorical expressions (“mapping,” “topography,” “wall of secrecy,” “varnish,” “textual machinery,” etc.) sometimes gives the text a literary tone. Their use should be significantly reduced.

3. Excessively Long Sentences

Some sentences contain numerous clauses and theoretical concepts. Shorter sentences would improve readability and the precision of the argument.

4. Repetitive Connectors

The frequent use of “indeed,” “therefore,” “furthermore,” “Moreover,” “in short,” etc., makes the text cumbersome. Their use should be varied and limited to connections that are truly necessary.

5. Grammatical and typographical corrections

Several wordings, subject-verb agreements, punctuation errors, and typos need to be corrected.

The accuracy of English and French quotations must also be systematically verified.

6. Terminology to Be Standardized

The terms “veridic square,” “veridiction square,” “semiotic square,” and “dynamic veridic square” are used inconsistently. A primary set of terms must be selected and defined.

7. Figures and Diagrams: How to Integrate Them More Effectively

Figures must be numbered, titled, cited, and explicitly referenced in the text. Their relationship to the various stages of the analysis must be clearly established.

The study METHODS are explained clearly.

1. Substantive Shortcomings

1.1. Excessively Complex Problem Statement

The problem statement is relevant and consistent with the subject of the study, but its formulation is overly dense and employs concepts such as “discursive kinetics,” “truth-conversion,” and “gnosis-based journey,” at the expense of readability.

It would benefit from being formulated more directly around the transition from secrecy and lies to revelation and resistance.

1.2. Insufficiently Operationalized Objective

The objective remains too general. The characters, the selected episodes, the categories of the veridictory square employed, and the criteria for selecting the excerpts should be specified.

1.3. Methodology Not Sufficiently Explained

The absence of a proper methodology section constitutes a significant weakness. The corpus, units of analysis, criteria for selecting passages, and stages of analysis must be clearly presented.

1.4. Theoretical Framework Too Extensive

The discussion of the history of semiotics takes up a disproportionate amount of space compared to the analysis. Refocus the presentation on the concepts directly employed: being/appearance, true/false, secret/lie, and the veridiction contract.

1.5. Application of the Veridictory Square: Areas for Improvement

The categories of the square are sometimes asserted rather than demonstrated.

Analyze each excerpt based on the relationships between “being” and “appearing” and “true” and “false,” providing a precise justification for its classification as true, false, secret, or a lie.

1.6. Confusion Between Semiotic, Fictional, and Historical Truth

The analysis sometimes tends to equate the truth constructed by the narrative with historical or ontological truth. Distinguish between the narrative’s truth-making mechanism, real-world truth, the narrator’s position, and the researcher’s interpretation.

1.7. Interpretations That Are Sometimes Too Assertive

Certain expressions (“colonization of consciousness,” “predatory capitalism,” “state secret,” “undeniable truth,” etc.) are part of critical interpretations that must be explicitly linked to textual clues or a theoretical perspective.

1.8. Analytical exploration of excerpts requiring further examination

The corpus is extensive, but the analysis should focus more on linguistic markers of appearance, the modalities of belief, semantic oppositions, clues to secrecy, and shifts from one truth-related category to another.

1.9. Repetitive Arguments

The pattern “illusion → secret → revelation → realization → resistance → truth” recurs frequently. The findings of each section should be distinguished more clearly, and successive restatements of the same argument should be avoided.

1.10. Comparative dimension insufficiently developed

References to the struggles in Nigeria or Cameroon should either be expanded upon with specific textual and historical details or removed.

1.11. Scientific Contribution Needs Further Clarification

The claim that the study “renews” the Greimasian model must be substantiated. Specify what the analysis contributes that is new and what the “truth square” helps us understand that previous works had not sufficiently demonstrated

The results are clear and do not contain errors.

Review and expand on the analysis

The CONCLUSION or summary is accurate and supported by the content.

In the conclusion, avoid overly definitive phrasing such as “validate the hypothesis” or “the quintessential heuristic operator.” It would be preferable to present the results obtained, the model’s contributions, and its limitations, while maintaining a strict distinction between the properties of the text and the interpretations proposed by the researcher.

The list of REFERENCES is comprehensive and appropriate.

The bibliography requires systematic verification, focusing in particular on:

- The completeness of the cited references;
- The consistency between citations and the bibliography;
- The dates and titles of the works;
- Incomplete references;
- The accuracy of bibliographic information;
- Compliance with APA 7th edition standards;
- Consistent formatting of works, articles, chapters, DOIs, and URLs.

Any inconsistencies identified—particularly regarding Floch, Zilberberg, and Hébert- must be verified using the original sources.

Please rate the TITLE of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

Please rate the ABSTRACT of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

2

Please rate the LANGUAGE of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

Please rate the METHODS of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

2

Please rate the RESULTS of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

Please rate the CONCLUSION of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

Please rate the REFERENCES of this paper.

[Poor] **1-5** [Excellent]

3

Overall Recommendation!!!

Return for major revision and resubmission

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

Reviewer C:

Recommendation: Revisions Required

The TITLE is clear and it is adequate to the content of the article.

The title is accurate for the work

The ABSTRACT clearly presents objectives, methods, results, and conclusions.

The abstract contains all the parts

There are a few grammatical errors and spelling mistakes in this article.

No grammatical error however some sentences can be restructured into shorter sentences
Egouverture de l'œuvre romanesque d'Imbolo Mbue, *How Beautiful We Were*, convie le lecteur à une saisissante plongée au sein d'une géographie fictionnelle où la dramaturgie postcoloniale se double d'une profonde crise des régimes de sens.

The study METHODS are explained clearly.

The methodology is accurate but not clear literature review it can added
The theories are too old.Current ones can be added.
Objectives should be clearer

The results are clear and do not contain errors.

The results are appropriate and no errors

The CONCLUSION or summary is accurate and supported by the content.

Good conclusion but the limitations should be explained

The list of REFERENCES is comprehensive and appropriate.

Good Referencing

Please rate the TITLE of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the ABSTRACT of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

3

Please rate the LANGUAGE of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the METHODS of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the RESULTS of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

4

Please rate the CONCLUSION of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

3

Please rate the REFERENCES of this paper.

[Poor] 1-5 [Excellent]

3

Overall Recommendation!!!

Accepted, minor revision needed

Comments and Suggestions to the Author(s):

The article shows a great demonstration of the novel .It will add more knowledge to the research community especially in literature
