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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR- 59652

Manuscript Title: FORMES D\'ADRESSE ET DÃ‰SIGNATIONS POLITIQUES DES DÃ‰PUTÃ‰S AU BÃ‰NIN : APPROCHE SÃ‰MIOTIQUE DE LA RECONNAISSANCE INSTITUTIONNELLE ET DE LA CONTESTATION SYMBOLIQUE,

Recommendation:
Accept after minor revision

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✔		
Techn. Quality			✔	
Clarity			✔	
Significance	✔			

Reviewer Name: Dr. Abdul Haseeb Mir

Detailed Reviewer's Repot

General Overview

This manuscript presents a qualitative, documentary-based semiotic and interactional analysis of political communication within the parliamentary context of Benin. Specifically, the author investigates how linguistic forms of address—primarily the honorific title "Honorable"—and polemical political designations—specifically the contested phrase "appointed MPs" (*députés nommés*)—function to either construct institutional recognition or discursively challenge parliamentary legitimacy.

The paper establishes an interdisciplinary theoretical framework drawing upon five foundational theorists in sociology, linguistics, semiology, and philosophy of language:

- **Erving Goffman (1967):** Interaction rituals, rules of conduct, and face-work in public exchanges.
- **Ferdinand de Saussure (1916):** Structural linguistics, signifier/signified relations, and semantic oppositions.
- **Charles Sanders Peirce (1931–1958):** Triadic semiotics, sign-object relations, and context-dependent interpretants.
- **John L. Austin (1962):** Speech act theory, illocutionary force, and performative speech acts.

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- **Pierre Bourdieu (1982):** Symbolic power, linguistic exchanges, social recognition, and political field legitimacy.

The empirical corpus comprises twelve journalistic documents published between 2019 and 2026, divided into eight press articles analyzing the polemical emergence and circulation of "appointed MPs" following the controversial 2019 parliamentary elections, and four media interviews assessing the presence or omission of the title "Honorable".

Key findings from the analysis include:

- **Institutional Recognition vs. Approval:** The use of "Honorable" functions as a conventionalized interactional marker of institutional function rather than personal political endorsement. Omission of the title in media transcripts does not inherently signify political hostility or status rejection without explicit contextual cues.
- **Symbolic Contestation through Oxymoron:** The polemical designation "appointed MPs" (*députés nommés*) operates as a discursive oxymoron. Because parliamentary mandates are constitutionally elective, pairing "MP" with "appointed" creates a semantic clash that discursively challenges representative legitimacy without altering formal legal status.
- **Analytical Nuance:** The study demonstrates high scholarly caution, repeatedly emphasizing that its conclusions are exploratory, based on secondary media representations, and cannot be generalized across all Beninese political discourse.

Key Strengths

1. **Rigorous Theoretical Integration:** Synthesizing Goffman, Saussure, Peirce, Austin, and Bourdieu provides a multi-layered analytical lens that cleanly separates linguistic form, interactional force, and political power.
2. **Methodological Self-Awareness and Intellectual Honesty:** The author explicitly outlines the limits of the sample, distinguishing between reported journalistic speech and primary speech acts, while avoiding unwarranted claims regarding audience reception or cause-and-effect relationships.
3. **Conceptual Precision:** The paper carefully distinguishes between institutional recognition, interactional deferential markers, legal status, and political legitimacy, preventing binary or overly simplistic interpretations.

Recommendations for Improvement

To ensure the manuscript is fully prepared for publication, the author should address the following minor recommendations:

1. **Clarify the Corpus Selection Criteria:**

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www.journalijar.com

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In Section 1.2 (*Constitution et délimitation du corpus*), provide 2–3 additional sentences explaining the specific selection parameters used to identify the twelve media items. Clarifying whether keyword searches (e.g., "Honorable", "députés nommés") were conducted across digital archives would strengthen methodological transparency.

2. **Delineate Primary Media Quotations from Editorial Framing:**

In Section 2 (*Résultats*), ensure a clear distinction between direct verbatim statements attributed to political actors (e.g., Reckya Madougou, Kamar Ouassagari) and the editorial headlines or summaries chosen by media outlets (such as *La Nouvelle Tribune* or *Bénin Web TV*).

3. **Reconcile Bibliographic Citations and Standardize Formatting:**

Audit the reference list to ensure consistent formatting across all entries. Ensure that media article entries explicitly include full publication dates, media platform names, article titles, and active URLs conforming to standard journal style rules.

Final Evaluation and Verdict

This manuscript presents an insightful, original, and theoretically well-grounded investigation into political semiotics and discourse analysis in Benin. It makes a meaningful contribution to African political communication studies, sociolinguistics, and parliamentary discourse analysis.

The manuscript is **accepted with minor revisions**. Elaborating briefly on corpus retrieval methods, reinforcing the distinction between direct speech and editorial framing, and standardizing the bibliography will render the paper fully ready for publication

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