

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR- 55454

Title: ANANSE AS AN ICONIC TRICKSTER IN THE STORY ANANSE TOLD BY MARTIN OKYERE OWUSU

Recommendation:
Accept after minor revision

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓,		
Techn. Quality		✓,		
Clarity	✓,			
Significance	✓,			

Reviewer Name: Dr Abdul Haseeb Mir

Detailed Reviewer's Report

The article offers a sustained literary analysis of Ananse as an iconic trickster figure in the play *The Story Ananse Told by Martin Okyere Owusu*, situating the discussion firmly within the traditions of African oral literature and trickster theory. By foregrounding Ananse not merely as a source of entertainment but as a culturally embedded metaphorical and ideological construct, the study addresses an important gap in African literary criticism, where aesthetic analysis has often overshadowed deeper symbolic and socio-political interpretations.

One of the major strengths of the article lies in its strong theoretical anchoring. The author makes effective use of trickster theory as articulated by scholars such as Hynes, Doty, Vecsey, Yankah, and Finnegan, and successfully adapts this framework to the Akan cultural milieu. The discussion of Ananse as a boundary-crosser—operating between good and evil, truth and deception, order and chaos—is conceptually sound and well supported by both primary textual evidence and secondary scholarship. The identification of Ananse as simultaneously narrator, character, and manipulator is particularly insightful, as it highlights his omnipresence and quasi-deific status within the narrative structure of the play.

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The article's textual analysis is detailed and convincing. By closely reading key scenes—especially Ananse's manipulation of the hunter-turned-king, the deceptive use of prophecy and persuasion, and the orchestration of chaos through lies and flattery—the author demonstrates how Ananse's trickster traits are not confined to him alone but are metaphorically reproduced in other characters such as the King, Okyeame, and the Monster figures. This argument is one of the paper's most original contributions, as it persuasively shows that Ananse functions as a metaphorical template for societal vices, rather than a singular moral deviant.

Another commendable aspect is the paper's cultural contextualization. The discussion of Anansesem as a pedagogical and moral resource in Akan society is well articulated, and the connection drawn between folktales and moral instruction, social regulation, and communal reflection is consistent with established African literary scholarship. The extension of Ananse's tricksterism to contemporary issues such as propaganda, greed, political manipulation, and moral decay demonstrates the continuing relevance of oral literature in interpreting modern social realities.

Methodologically, the qualitative and interpretivist approach adopted by the author is appropriate for the subject matter. The use of content analysis, supported by extensive quotation from the primary text, allows for a nuanced examination of symbolism, characterization, and narrative strategy. The manuscript also demonstrates impressive engagement with a wide range of African and global scholarship, indicating thorough literature grounding.

Despite its strengths, the manuscript would benefit from editorial and structural refinement. The analysis is at times overly long and repetitive, particularly in the extended plot summary sections, which could be significantly condensed to allow greater analytical focus. Some arguments—especially those linking Ananse to contemporary propaganda and postcolonial power structures—are compelling but would benefit from sharper conceptual framing to avoid appearing overly generalized. Additionally, minor grammatical inconsistencies, typographical errors, and formatting issues should be corrected to meet international publication standards.

The conclusion appropriately reiterates the central argument but could be strengthened by more explicitly articulating the study's theoretical contribution to African oral literature and trickster studies, as distinct from existing scholarship.

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In sum, the article makes a substantial and original contribution to the study of African folktales, dramatic literature, and trickster theory. Its strength lies in demonstrating that Ananse is not merely a folkloric character but a powerful cultural metaphor through which societies interrogate morality, authority, deception, and human fallibility.

Recommendation: The manuscript is recommended for publication after minor revisions, primarily focused on reducing repetition, tightening analytical sections, and improving language and formatting clarity.