

LEXICAL COHESION OF THE EXPRESSION OF REBELLION OF MADELINE MILLER'S CIRCE

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LEXICAL COHESION OF THE EXPRESSION OF REBELLION OF MADELINE MILLER'S *CIRCE*

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Abstract. Lexical cohesion refers to the way in which words in a text relate to each other through their meanings. The subject of this study is the literary work of the novel *Circe* by Madeline Miller. The focus of this study is how lexical cohesion supports themes of rebellion in this novel and demonstrates how vocabulary forms a network. This study answers the gap in existing research, which mostly explores lexical cohesion in educational contexts and journal articles, but not in literary works with certain themes such as rebellion. This study aims to identify and analyze the lexical cohesions used to convey the theme of rebellion in the novel *Circe* and, with existing data, investigate how lexical cohesion forms vocabulary networks. This study used Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) theory of lexical cohesion. This analysis reveals how lexical choices increase narrative coherence and thematic depth. The methodology used is qualitative research. The source of this study is Madeline Miller's *Circe*. The findings show that lexical cohesion in *Circe* is 50 data achieved through various devices such as synonymy (five nouns, four verbs, four adjectives), antonymy (seven nouns, five verbs, four adjectives), and hyponymy (nine nouns, twelve verbs, zero adjectives). This lexical cohesion demonstrates how vocabulary forms a network that enhances understanding and vocabulary.

Keywords: *Discourse, Lexical Cohesion, Novel, Rebellion*

INTRODUCTION

Language phenomena in daily social interactions are greatly influenced by lexical cohesion devices, which include relationships between words that help create cohesive and coherent texts. Lexical cohesion allows a better understanding of context and meaning in conversations and writing. Daily, using synonyms, antonyms, hyponyms, and other cohesion devices helps individuals convey messages more varied and clearly. A common example is using synonyms to avoid repeating the same word and antonyms to emphasize differences or contrasts in a discussion (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014). Lexical cohesion not only aids in making texts more comprehensible but also plays a crucial role in forming complex meaning relationships within narratives.

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), lexical cohesion involves selecting and connecting words to create a unified discourse. This ensures that a text is grammatically

irect and semantically linked. Lexical cohesion includes devices such as repetition, synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, meronymy, and collocation that enhance the text's cohesion. They emphasize the importance of lexical relationships in maintaining a coherent structure and meaning within the text. Lexical cohesion provides a way to link ideas in writing or speech, helping readers or listeners to understand the message in a more in-depth and structured manner.

Research on lexical cohesion spans various contexts. For example, Sidabutar (2023) explored lexical cohesion in student writing, aiming to uncover the challenges students face related to lexical cohesion and how they address these issues in narrative texts. Sidabutar found that repetition was the most frequently used cohesive device, accounting for 64% of instances, while hyponymy was the least common at 6.6%. This indicates that students often rely on repetition to create cohesion in their writing, likely due to their limited vocabulary and developing writing skills. On the other hand, Pitaloka and Cahyono (2022) analyzed lexical cohesion in academic journal articles, revealing that synonymy was the most frequent type of lexical cohesion aimed at enhancing writing style and coherence. Their study found that synonymy occurred 204 times (41.2%), while meronymy had the lowest frequency at just three instances (0.6%). This highlights the emphasis on using varied vocabulary to achieve cohesion in academic writing.

While these studies highlighted cohesive devices like repetition and synonymy, they did not focus on literary works like novels, particularly on themes such as rebellion. There is a significant gap in research focusing on how lexical cohesion supports themes like rebellion in literary works. Novels, especially those with rich thematic content like Madeline Miller's *Circe*, employ a wider range of cohesive devices to build narrative depth and thematic complexity. Madeline Miller's *Circe* is a reimagining of the life of the enchantress Circe from Greek mythology. The novel explores themes of power, transformation, and rebellion through Circe's interactions with gods, mortals, and monsters. Circe's journey is marked by her defiance against divine authority and societal expectations, highlighting her evolution from a marginal figure to a powerful, independent woman. Madeline Miller's use of rich and varied language creates a cohesive narrative that delves deeply into Circe's inner world and her struggles against a patriarchal system.

There is a significant gap in research focusing on how lexical cohesion supports themes like rebellion in literary works. This study addresses this gap by examining lexical cohesion through synonymy, antonymy, and hyponymy in word classes such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives in Madeline Miller's *Circe*, and demonstrating how vocabulary forms a network that enhances understanding and vocabulary among language learners.

METHOD

For this study, the researcher uses the qualitative method. According to Creswell (2018), the qualitative methodology involves collecting data in the form of written and spoken words, aiming to understand and describe a phenomenon based on the perspectives and contexts provided by the participants and the literature. This design is suitable for this study as it aims to identify and analyze the lexical cohesion related to the expression of rebellion in Madeline Miller's *Circe*.

The source of data used in this study is the 2018 American novel "Circe" by Madeline Miller, the 393-page book is divided into 27 chapters, each telling a story set against the backdrop of the Greek Heroic Age and inspired by a different Greek myth. The novel

delves into themes of power, independence, and rebellion as Circe defies the gods and carves out her own place in a world dominated by divine and mortal forces. Through Madeline Miller's cohesive narrative rich the novel brings to life the struggles and triumphs of a woman fighting against the constraints imposed upon her by a patriarchal society.

The document analysis applied to collect the data as follows: (1) Read the novel "Circe" in its entirety to understand the general context and identify passages relevant to the research topic. (2) Write and categorize evidence according to relevant themes.

The content analysis applied to analysis data as follows: (1) Find the meaning of the data using the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (10th edition). (2) Identify whether the data belongs to synonymy, antonymy, or hyponymy. (3) Classify the word classes into belonging to noun, verb, or adjective categories. (4) Interpret the findings based on the lexical theory of Halliday and Matthiessen (2014) and relate them to the context of the expression of rebellion in the novel *Circe*. (5) In the last step, After the data is classified using lexical cohesion with the topic of rebellion, create the vocabulary relation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A. 24 The Lexical Cohesion Used in Novel *Circe*

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2020, p. 1286), the meaning of *rebellion* (n) is an attempt by some of the people in a country to change their government using violence. Opposition to authority within an organization, a political party, etc. Opposition to authority; being unwilling to obey rules or accept normal standards of behaviour, dress, etc. In the novel *Circe*, there are 50 words which relate to the theme of rebellion. The researcher found synonymy, antonymy, and hyponymy in the form of nouns, verbs, and adjectives.

Table 1. Lexical Cohesion Finding of Rebellion

Type of Lexical Cohesion	Nouns	Verbs	Adjectives	Total
Synonymy	5	4	4	13
Antonymy	7	5	4	16
Hyponymy	9	12	0	21
Total	21	21	8	50

The table above shows that the word rebellion has lexical relations to synonymy, antonymy, and hyponymy, which can be found in word classes: nouns, verbs, and adjectives.

A.1. Synonymy

There are 13 synonyms word of rebellion which are divided into 5 nouns, 4 verbs, and 4 adjectives.

A.1.1. Nouns

A.1.1.1. *Data SNI* : By then, the people of Crete were restive at having to lose their sons and daughters every harvest, and were threatening *revolt*... (137:5)

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2020, p. 1331), the noun "revolt" has a meaning.

(1) a protest against authority, especially that of a government, often involving violence; the action of protesting against authority

Based on the meaning of the noun *revolt* in presented data, in the context of *Circe*, the noun describes the people of Crete threatening to rebel due to the loss of their sons and

daughters. This usage closely aligns with the definition, emphasizing an organized protest against authority. Therefore, *revolt* and *rebellion* are considered synonyms, as both terms describe acts of defiance against established power.

A.1.2. Verbs

A.1.2.1. *Data SVI* : She defied my commands and contradicted my authority.... (63:11)

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2020, p. 407), the verb "defied," as same as "defy" has three meanings.

(1) *to refuse to obey or show respect for somebody in authority, a law, a rule, etc.*

(2) *to be impossible or almost impossible to believe, explain, describe, etc.*

(3) *to successfully resist something to a very unusual degree* 2

For present data, the verb defy aligns closely with the first meaning "to refuse to obey or show respect for somebody in authority, a law, a rule, etc.". This meaning is appropriate here because it describes an action of willful disobedience and lack of respect towards someone in a position of power. This defiance reflects a direct challenge to the established order or commands, embodying a rebellious attitude. Consequently, in this context, defy and rebellion can be considered synonymous, as both terms depict acts of resistance and opposition against authoritative control.

A.1.3. Adjectives

A.1.3.1. *Data SAI* : All those stories I had hidden from him leapt into my mind. Odysseus beating the *mutinous* Thersites into unconsciousness.... (241:16)

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2020, p. 1030), the adjective "mutinous" has a meaning.

(1) *refusing to obey the orders of somebody in authority; wanting to do this*

For the present data, the adjective *mutinous* aligns closely with the meaning. This meaning is appropriate because it describes a state of defiance and rebellion against authority figures. Thersites' *mutinous* behavior implies a refusal to conform to Odysseus' commands or possibly to the established hierarchy within their group. Therefore, *mutinous* and *rebellion* can indeed be considered synonymous in this context. Both terms suggest an act of defiance and disobedience against authority, highlighting a theme of challenging established norms and rules.

A.2. Antonymy

There are 16 antonyms word of rebellion which are divided into 7 nouns, 5 verbs and 4 adjectives.

A.2.1. Nouns

A.2.1.1. *Data ANI* : It is the place where my father threw his strength to Zeus and proved his *loyalty*.... (80:27)

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2020, p. 937). the noun "loyalty" has a meaning.

(1) *the quality of being constant in your support of somebody/something*

(2) *a strong feeling that you want to support and be loyal to somebody/something* 21

For present data, the noun *loyalty* aligns closely with the first meaning, "the quality of being constant in your support of somebody/something." This definition emphasizes steadfast support and commitment, often towards a person, cause, or belief. In the context

provided, *loyalty* contrasts with *rebellion*. While *loyalty* involves unwavering support and adherence to authority or a cause, *rebellion* entails challenging or opposing authority, often due to a lack of loyalty towards established norms or figures. The mention of *loyalty* in the passage highlights a commitment to a cause or leader, reinforcing themes of allegiance and fidelity. Therefore, *loyalty* and *rebellion* are antonyms in this context. They represent opposing concepts: *loyalty* signifies steadfast support and commitment, while *rebellion* denotes dissent and defiance against established authority or norms.

A.2.2. Verbs

A.2.2.1. Data AVI : Even Polydamas, in his borrowed tunic, *obeyed*. ... (94:24)

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2020, p. 1067), the verb "obeyed," as same as "obey" has a meaning.

(1) *to do what you are told or expected to do*

For present data, the verb *obey* aligns closely with the meaning. This definition emphasizes compliance and adherence to instructions or commands from authority figures. In the context provided, *obey* contrasts with *rebellion*. While the act of *obey* involves following directives or conforming to expectations, *rebellion* entails defiance or resistance against such directives or expectations. The mention of *obey* in the passage suggests a state of compliance or submission, indicating adherence to authority rather than opposition. Therefore, *obey* and *rebellion* are antonyms in this context. They represent opposing behaviors and attitudes: *obey* signifies compliance and submission, while *rebellion* denotes dissent and opposition to authority or established norms.

A.2.3. Adjectives

A.2.3.1. Data AAI : "It is funny," she said, "that even after all this time, you still believe you should be rewarded, just because you have been *obedient*. ... (122:7)

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2020, p. 1067), the adjective "obedient" has a meaning.

(1) *doing what you are told to do; willing to obey*

For present data, the adjective *obedient* aligns closely with the meaning. This definition emphasizes compliance and willingness to follow instructions or commands. In the context provided, *obedient* contrasts with *rebellion*. While *obedient* involves following directives and showing compliance, *rebellion* entails resisting or defying authority or established norms. The mention of *obedient* in the passage suggests a character who has consistently followed orders or adhered to expectations, highlighting a submissive or compliant behavior. Therefore, *obedient* and *rebellion* are antonyms in this context. They represent opposing behaviors and attitudes: *obedient* signifies compliance and willingness to follow authority, while *rebellion* denotes defiance and opposition to authority or established norms.

A.3. Hyponymy

There are 21 hyponyms word of rebellion which are divided into 9 nouns, 12 verbs and 0 adjective.

A.3.1. Nouns

A.3.1.2. Data HN2 : 8. I understand of course that you can make no judgments now. You should know that I would be happy to give Zeus a more... impressive *demonstration*....(59:30)

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2020, p. 412), the noun "demonstration" has four meanings.

- (1) *demonstration (against somebody/something) a public meeting or a march (= an organized walk by many people) at which people show that they are protesting against or supporting somebody/something*
- (2) *an act of showing or explaining how something works or is done*
- (3) *an act of showing or explaining how something works or is done*
- (4) *an act of showing a feeling or an opinion*

For present data, the noun *demonstration* aligns closely with the last meaning, "an act of showing a feeling or an opinion." This definition fits the context of the character's intention to display their feelings or stance towards Zeus in a significant and noticeable way. The connection between *demonstration* and *rebellion* lies in the act of publicly displaying defiance or dissent. In the narrative of *Circe*, *demonstration* often serve as a form of *rebellion* against the gods' authority or societal norms. Such acts of showing feelings or opinions are crucial elements of rebellious behaviour, as they make visible the underlying resistance and challenge to power structures. Therefore, *demonstration* can be considered hyponyms of *rebellion*.

A.3.2. Verbs

A.3.2.1. *Data HVI* : Oceanos' most likely. Our grandfather. She will be *terrorizing* the nymphs as she used to.... (277:8)

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2020, p. 1618), the verb "terrorizing," as same as "terrorize" has a meaning.

- (1) *to frighten and threaten people so that they will not oppose something or will do as they are told*

For present data, the verb *terrorize* aligns closely with the meaning. This definition aligns with the context where a character's actions are intended to instill fear and compliance. In this context, *terrorize* can be seen as a tactic employed within a broader narrative of *rebellion*. It involves using fear and intimidation to exert control or assert dominance over others, typically defying established norms or authority. The act of *terrorize* can be a manifestation of *rebellion*, where individuals or groups seek to disrupt or challenge existing power structures through intimidation and coercion. Therefore, *terrorize* can be considered a hyponymy of *rebellion*.

A.3.3. Adjectives

In linguistics, hyponymy refers to the relationship between words that denote subclass or superclass and is primarily found in nouns and verbs, not adjectives. However, adjectives like "rebellious" describe characteristics related to rebellion but do not create subclass or superclass. Therefore, in texts, the concept of rebellion is elaborated using nouns and verbs that show hyponymy relationships, while adjectives describe related traits without forming such relationships.

B. The Form of Vocabulary Network as Lexical Cohesion

The vocabulary network can be seen in the figure below.

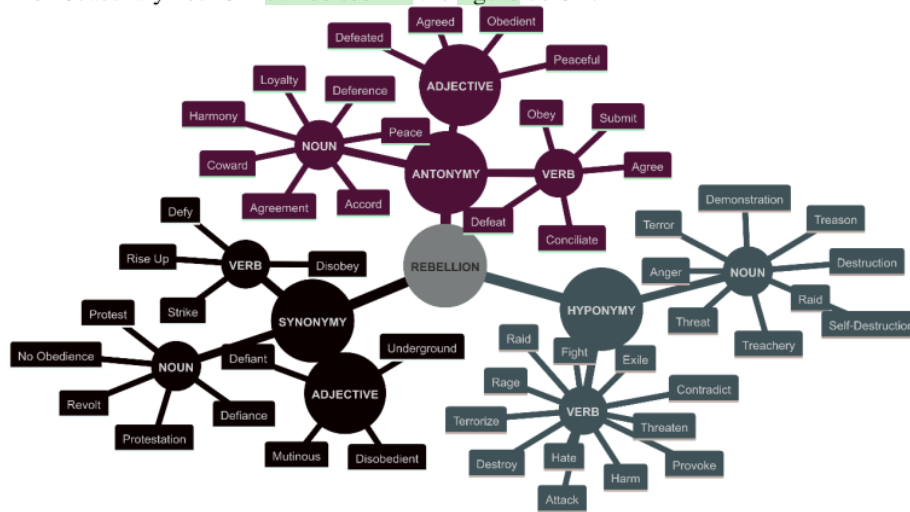


Figure 1 Lexical Network of Rebellion

A vocabulary network is a system showing the relationships between words and their meanings. To develop this network: (1) identify main keywords or themes from a text, (2) find related words, such as synonyms, antonyms, and hyponyms, (3) analyze the word classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives) of these words to understand their function in sentences, (4) integrate these words into a network to visualize their connections.

In Madeline Miller's *Circe*, various expressions of rebellion are depicted through different words, creating a vocabulary network centered around this theme. The figure visually represents the relationships between words using connecting lines. Each line shows how words relate to rebellion through synonyms, antonyms, or hyponyms, subdivided by word class. This network enriches the vocabulary of rebellion by displaying related words and their connections.

The findings of this study indicate that lexical cohesion plays a significant role in shaping the narrative and thematic structure in Madeline Miller's novel "Circe." This aligns with the literature review, which highlights the importance of lexical cohesion in creating coherent and meaningful texts, as explained by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014). Previous research also suggests that various lexical cohesion devices, such as synonymy, antonymy, and hyponymy, are used to enrich narratives and deepen the themes presented.

There are findings in this study that are not fully covered by the lexical cohesion theory proposed by Halliday & Matthiessen (2014). One such phenomenon is the vocabulary network. This network illustrates the relationships between various words related to the theme of rebellion in the novel, indicating that there are aspects of lexical cohesion more complex than those described in the theory.

Furthermore, the findings regarding the vocabulary network are not included in Halliday & Matthiessen's (2014) theory. The vocabulary network demonstrates how different expressions of rebellion are interconnected through the novel's lexicon, adding thematic depth and narrative coherence.

The practical implications of this study show that a deeper understanding of lexical cohesion can help readers and researchers enrich their vocabulary and comprehend more

complex word relationships. In the field of discourse analysis, these findings contribute to understanding the mechanisms of lexical cohesion in literary texts, providing a practical tool for language learners to develop their language skills. The study also suggests that while Halliday & Matthiessen's theory provides a strong foundational framework, there is a need to develop further theories that can encompass more complex lexical cohesion phenomena like vocabulary networks.

13 CONCLUSION

This study examines the lexical cohesion in Madeline Miller's *Circe*, focusing on the theme of rebellion. Using Halliday and Matthiessen's (2014) theory, the analysis revealed the following 50 key findings: there were 13 instances of synonymy related to rebellion, distributed across 5 nouns, 4 verbs, and 4 adjectives; 16 instances of antonymy, including 7 nouns, 5 verbs, and 4 adjectives; and 21 instances of hyponymy, which was the most frequent type of lexical cohesion, including 9 nouns and 12 verbs. Notably, no adjectives fell into this category. The study highlights how these devices reinforce the theme of rebellion and create a cohesive narrative. The vocabulary network constructed from these instances illustrates the interconnectedness of words related to rebellion, adding thematic depth and narrative coherence.

The implications are multifaceted. Theoretically, it extends understanding of lexical cohesion in literature, confirming Halliday and Matthiessen's framework as robust but suggesting additional frameworks for phenomena like vocabulary networks. Practically, it helps language learners enhance vocabulary and comprehension and offers writers and critics methods to analyze language use in literature. The study has limitations, focusing solely on rebellion; future research could explore other themes in *Circe* or similar works. Additionally, incorporating quantitative methods could provide a more detailed analysis.

In conclusion, lexical cohesion in *Circe* significantly enhances narrative coherence and thematic richness, particularly regarding rebellion. The study underscores the importance of cohesive devices in literary analysis and provides valuable insights for educators, students, and literary scholars. It opens avenues for further research into the complex web of lexical relationships that underpin effective storytelling.

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