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# **The Use of Semantic Prosody and Concordance In Analyzing the Idea of Rebellion in Animal Farm by George Orwell**

By:

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## **Abstract**

'Animal Farm' is a satirical novel written by George Orwell that tells the story of farm animals who revolt against a human farmer. George Orwell, in his novel Animal Farm, takes an event in history and interprets it to show his point of view. Animal Farm retells the story of the Russian Revolution and the rise the power of Joseph Stalin. Through his novel, Orwell hoped to show that the result of the Revolution was a more oppressive and controlling government than the people had worked to overthrow. The characters in the novel represent the political figures of that time, and Orwell even mirrors similar actions and events. In this paper, the writer concentrated on the idea of rebellion and how it is developed through the events of the novel by using concordance and semantic prosody as tools of corpus linguistics to interpret the idea of rebellion how it is begun and how it is ended.

**Key words:** corpus linguistics, concordance, semantic prosody, rebellion

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## **Introduction:**

This paper discusses the idea of rebellion in Animal Farm by George Orwell, which represents a stimulation of reality, and how the rebellion of the animals' succeeds at the beginning and ends in a bad way. The principles of the rebellion, in the beginning, were just dreams and ended as a nightmare. Our story is the story of animals that lead a revolution against their cruel human master to establish a society of justice and equality. The story shows that their leaders betray the ideals of the revolution. Power corrupts them and what is planned to be a society of justice and equality ends as a dystopian one.

Many critics agree that the novel is an image of what has happened in the Russian revolution, and the animals, especially the pigs, represent the characters of the real revolution of Russia. First organizing the revolution, then managing the farm, and finally enslaving the other animals. Kingsley Martin, editor of the new statement comments:

**There is plenty in the U.S.S.R. to satirize and Mr. Orwell does it well. How deftly the fairy story of animals who, in anticipation of freedom and plenty revolt against the tyrannical farmer, turns into a rollicking caricature of The Russian revolution. (Martin, 1945, P.166).**

George Orwell himself wrote:

**Nothing has contributed so much to the corruption of the original of socialism as the belief that Russia is a socialist country and that every act of its rulers must be excused, If not**

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**imitated, and so far the past ten years I have been convinced that the destruction of the soviet myth was essential if we wanted a revival of socialist movement.** (Orwell, 1968, P.405)

In the story, Orwell draws a society in which individuality is reduced and power is maintained. Animal farm is an image of oppression, but in reality, it is a model of the events of the Russian revolution. This paper tries to explain the idea of rebellion and the idea of creating a utopian society, and how the noble ideas turn into a nightmare by using Antconc in the analysis. The tools that will be used in the analysis are concordance and semantic prosody.

### **The meaning of semantic prosody and concordance**

In this paper, the analysis depends on two common tools of the corpus. The tools are semantic prosody and concordance. Before using them, there are some information that should be given to the reader about the meaning of corpus linguistics, semantic prosody, and concordance to help the reader to understand how the analysis is made by using these concepts.

In 1992, Leech argued that “computer corpus linguistics defines not just a newly emerging methodology for studying language, but a new paper enterprise, And a new philosophical approach to the subject” and goes on to describe the characteristics of computer corpus linguistics as a new paradigm (Leech,1992, P.106). Similarly, Stubbs (1993), rejects the limited definition of corpus linguistics as a methodology, and, commenting on Sinclair (1991), he notes that “[I]n this vision of the subject, a corpus is not merely a tool of linguistic analysis but an important concept in linguistic theory” (1993, PP.23–24). Teubert (2005, P.2) also emphasizes the theoretical conceptualization and describes corpus linguistics as “a theoretical approach to the study of language”. The notion of corpus linguistics as a paradigm is taken up by Gries (2006, P.191), but the methodological conceptualization is favored, as he states that “[o]ver the past few decades, corpus linguistics has become a major methodological paradigm in applied and theoretical linguistics”.

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Thompson and Hunston (2006. P.8)) state that “[A]t its most basic corpus linguistics is a methodology that can be aligned to any theoretical approach to language”

The corpus that is used in the analysis is AntConc. AntConc is a freeware concordance program developed by Laurence Anthony, Director of the Centre for English Language Education, Waseda University (Japan).

**Concordance lines:**

“Concordance is a program that searches a corpus for a selected word or phrase and presents every instance of that word or phrase in the Centre of the computer screen, with the words that come before and after it to left and right. The selected word appearing in the Centre of screen is known as the node word.

Here are 10 randomly-selected concordance lines for the word critical (from the 1999 Bank of English corpus):

**Attack on ground targets will be critical to success in any Gulf conflict**

**Benefit/ for parents is to children to be critical. Some ways to encourage**

**Benefit by adopting a more self-critical subtext and depth of**

**Within Afghan society. Army is critical of the lack of political**

**The daily telegraph remains critical of Syria and Iran. It says as on Guard who insists on a literary-critical seminar correct me if I'm wrong**

**Deconcini's letter is even more critical, the committee sailed that even claim to**

**Having helped, through his critical clue, physical relaxation may just**

**But a more considered view; highly critical of Eden was expressed among both**

**The importance of concordance**

“Concordance is helpful to sort these lines so that the lines that are like each other in some way appear next to each other. Below are the same lines sorted so that the words immediately before (to the

left of) **critical** are in alphabetical order. The words that the corpus users are likely to focus on are printed in bold.

This certainly might be a **critical** clue. Physical relaxation may just.

Attack on ground targets will be **critical** to success in any Gulf conflict.

For parents is to children to be **critical**, some ways to encourage

The chief is pector's view may be **critical** in determining its future

But a more considered view, highly **critical** of Eden, was expressed among both

(Huston ,2002, P. 40)

### **Semantic prosody**

“Most of definitions and descriptions examined so far present semantic prosody as a type of meaning. However, so close is the association between semantic and the process of phenomenon from which it derives that it is not uncommon to find semantic prosody defined as a process rather than as a meaning. For example, in Baker et al.'s (2006, P.85) glossary of corpus linguistics, the entry for “discourse prosody (the authors prefer the nomenclature proposed by Stubbs- (a term..... relating to the way that words in a corpus can collocate with a related set of words or phrases, often revealing (hidden) attitudes “ the definition supplied by coffin et al., (2004) is similar: “the way in which apparently neutral terms come to carry positive or negative associations through regular occurring in particular collocation.”

“Gaviolio (2005,P.46) defines it as “the way in which words and expressions create an aura of meaning capable of affecting words around them.” Semantic prosody has also been defined as a phenomenon (e.g. Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk,1996,P.135).

“The term ‘semantic prosody’ is thus used to denote not only a type of meaning but also the ways or processes that give rise to that meaning.”

“Sinclair (1996, PP. 87-88) defines semantic prosody as follows: (a semantic prosody..... Is attitudinal, and on the pragmatic side of the semantics/pragmatic continuum. It is thus capable of a

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wide range of realization, because in pragmatic expressions, the normal semantic values of words are not necessarily relevant, but once among the variety of expression, it is immediately clear that the semantic prosody has a leading role to play in the integration of an item with its surrounding. It expresses something close to the “function of an item- it shows how the rest of the item is to be interpreted functionally”.

**Results and discussion**

**The use of concordance in analyzing the idea of rebellion in the novel**

As the paper showed before, that Animal Farm is the story of animals that lead a rebellion against their tyrant human master to establish a society of justice and equality. Through this novel, we try to prove that the dreams of utopian society change into a nightmare of dystopian society and there is a difference between theory and practice that may defeat any chance to change.

In Animal farm, the word rebellion has different meanings in every position in the story, so we will divide the meanings of the word rebellion in the novel into three stages, by using concordance lines, which help us in sorting the lines that the word rebellion has the same meaning in them, and then, we will try to show that the word rebellion in animal farm has a positive meaning, although the meaning in a dictionary may show that it always has a negative meaning. We will use Collin co-build to make a comparison between the common meaning of the word rebellion, which gives a negative effect, and the meaning of the same word in the novel that has a positive effect.

At the beginning, we will use one of common tools of Antconc corpus, that is concordance lines to show the three stages that the word rebellion has in the story. By using this tools, we will see that we will have three stages in the novel. They are: the meaning of rebellion in their life before it is happened, the life of the animals after the rebellion and their life of them after the end of the

rebellion, and the meaning of this word through these three stages. These stages are:

**First stage: the meaning of rebellion and the animals' life before it:**

The first mention of the word rebellion appears in chapter 1, in the speech of the old major during the meeting of the animals in the big barn. In this meeting, all the animals in the manor farm attend this meeting. The old major told the animals about his dreams of better life for all animals instead of the life of misery and slavery they live with human beings who owned them. He wants to give them an image of the life that they should live, a life of justice, equality and freedom and to achieve this wonderful life, they should get over the control of human beings. This can be achieved by rebellion against their tyrant master (Mr. Jones), and destroy all the boundaries that prevent them from living happy and comfortable life that they deserve. During his speech, he tries to give them hope and advise them not to surrender to their misery life. He always emphasizes the necessity of rebellion, and the importance of it. To achieve their dreams and rebellion is their way to the utopian life they deserve. This is showed obviously, when he said:

“It is not crystal clear, then, comrades, that all the evils of this life of ours spring

From the tyranny of human beings? Only get rid of man, and the produce of

Our labour would be our own. Almost overnight we could become rich and free

..... That is my message to you comrades: rebellion”.

(Animal farm, p.10)

After his speech, he begins to give them a good image about their life after the rebellion. The animals listen to him carefully, especially the pigs which lead the rebellion and manage the farm after that meeting and play an important part in the events of the novel. Now the animals know their way to the utopian life, but they do not know how to achieve that. The only thing they keep by heart is that the rebellion is their duty. The rebellion happened very easy

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when the men of Mr. Jones forgot to feed the animals and left them hungry. Their suffering from hunger leads them to rebel and they succeeded in getting Mr. Jones and his men out of the farm and control it. The rebellion happened and a new and important change begins. This is shown in the second stage in which rebellion has a different meaning.

**Second stage: the meaning of the word rebellion and their life after it**

At the beginning, the rebellion was just a dream. No one can imagine that it will be real, but the meaning of the rebellion changes, now it is a part of the animals' life, and becomes real. The rebellion happened very easy and without any preparations for it, as mentioned before. Now, it is the beginning of a new stage of animals' life. They achieve their dreams of getting over the control of human beings. Now the gap between theory and practice will begin. The animals' life is changed. They become responsible for themselves. They put some rules that should guide their life in the future. They put seven commandments to rule their life and call them the principles of animalism.

These commandments are:

- 1- Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy.**
- 2- Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.**
- 3- No animal shall wear clothes.**
- 4- No animal shall sleep in a bed.**
- 5- No animal shall drink alcohol.**
- 6- No animal shall kill any other animal.**
- 7- All animals are equal.**

They create their own world. They now work without any master. They work for themselves and all the profits of their working in the farm become their own. The animals begin to plan for their life. This paper will show that the rebellion creates a new society that begins as a utopian society and ends as a dystopian one. The pigs become the leaders and the mind of the farm that prepare everything and manage the farm, and the other animals are the



workers that carry out all the orders of the pigs. At the beginning, the pigs think about educating animals and create animals committees. For example, snowball forms the egg production committee for the hens and the clean tails league for the cows. The animals, after the rebellion face some problems like the problem of milk and the problem of building the windmill that will save electricity for the farm. By their faith and the good management of the pigs, they get over these problems. They also begin to spread the news of their rebellion to other farms and teach them how to do rebellion as they did.

In any rebellion, there are many things that appear to prevent the rebellion from success. In the novel, these things are represented in the owners of other farms, like the owners of Frederick and Pilkington farms who do not want to face the same fate of Mr. Jones, the owner of manor farm and his men, so they fight the animals of Animal Farm in the battle called the cowshed battle. The animals in Animal farm do not surrender to these problems, they begin to create their life, the pigs help in improving the life of animals, and they become, not only the leaders but also teachers to other animals in the farm. All animals in the farm, during the days, after rebellion, were very good, and the animals feel for the first time that they are free and happy. Although they face some problems, they get over all of them. They have a deep faith and a good will to make anything. They think that they can work very hard and all the time to improve their life and make their life better than before. As the paper shows how animals have a better life in this stage, but all of these things are illusions, they do not know that they live in a nightmare a terrible nightmare. They will discover that their life becomes worse than before. This will be shown in the third stage, when the power and authority corrupt everything, and they return to the starting point. This stage can be called the stage of collapse or disintegration.

**Third stage: the meaning of rebellion and their life after the end of it**

As mentioned before in the previous stage, how the animals manage their life after the rebellion and how they get over all the hardships that face them and create a utopian society of justice and freedom. Now, everything is changed, the dreams of better life turn into a nightmare. The conflict of power between Snowball and Napoleon begins. This conflict shows how power corrupts everything, and corrupts the leaders themselves. The conflict between them represents the beginning of the collapse. Instead of directing their efforts to improve the conditions of the farm, and to solve the problems of animals, Napoleon and Snowball become involved in the struggle for more power and authority. The breaking point is reached to its end when Snowball proposes the building of the windmill to produce electric power to warm the farm, and run the machines to work instead of the animals. Napoleon calls in his nine fierce dogs. The dogs chase Snowball off the farm. The other animals are very frightened to do anything.

Napoleon puts an end to the democratic discussions, before Napoleon leads the farm. There was meeting every Sunday to discuss the matters of farm and give solutions to the problems that face the animals, but now everything is changed. Every Sunday the animals come to listen to the orders of the pigs, then leave to do it without any discussion or understanding. The pigs begin to deceive the animals and convince them, that napoleon must take all the power in his hand to prevent the return of Mr. Jones. Accordingly, the animals trust napoleon, and do the orders without asking.

Napoleon's takeover of animals is a clear sign that events are moving to the stage of collapse. Napoleon creates a reality in Animal Farm that corresponds to his wishes. This special reality is an integral part of any totalitarian system that represents the system that Russia followed after the revolution.

The main point that proves that the rebellion comes to the end is when the pigs decide to live in the farmhouse. They become like

Jones and other human beings. What was expected to be an ideal society becomes a class-society; a society of masters and slaves, not a society of justice and equality. It is the gap between theory and practice that is responsible for the failure of revolutions. Power and authority are the tools that lead to collapse.

The pigs that were the leaders of the revolution betrayed the seven commandments and changed the seven commandments. Those seven commandments become a single commandment:

ALL ANIMALS ARE EQUAL  
BUT SOME ANIMALS ARE MORE  
EQUAL THAN OTHERS

(Animal farm, p.114).

The life of other animals becomes very miserable. Through one betrayed after another, each serving to enslave the animals more and more. Orwell save his cruelest blow for the very last lines, where the pigs and their human neighbors are quarreling over a card game. This is the final betrayal, because it is the final proof that nothing has changed and that revolution is no revolution. All hopes of establishing a society of equality and welfare end with replacing the old tyrant Jones with the new tyrant Napoleon. The end of this stage represents the end of the story and the end of the dream of utopian society. The rebellion becomes a memory of the old animals that see it, and for young animals that do not attend it. The thing that remains for animals is a nightmare of enslaving and injustice.

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### Concordance lines:

AntConc 3.3.0w (Windows) 2012

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Corpus Files  
animal farm.txt

Concordance Concordance Plot File View Clusters/N-Grams Collocates Word List Keyword List

Concordance Hits 29

Hit	KWIC	File
1	human race! That is my message to you, comrades: <b>Rebellion!</b> I do not know when that Rebellion will	animal farm.
2	ou, comrades: Rebellion! I do not know when that <b>Rebellion</b> will come, it might be in a week or in	animal farm.
3	new outlook on life. They did not know when the <b>Rebellion</b> predicted by Major would take place, the	animal farm.
4	are what happens after we are dead?" or "If this <b>Rebellion</b> is to happen anyway, what difference do	animal farm.
5	owball was: "Will there still be sugar after the <b>Rebellion</b> ?" "No," said Snowball firmly. "We have	animal farm.
6	etings always ended. Now, as it turned out, the <b>Rebellion</b> was achieved much earlier and more easi	animal farm.
7	almost before they knew what was happening, the <b>Rebellion</b> had been successfully carried through:	animal farm.
8	in, the donkey, seemed quite unchanged since the <b>Rebellion</b> . He did his work in the same slow obsti	animal farm.
9	ver volunteering for extra work either. About the <b>Rebellion</b> and its results he would express no opi	animal farm.
10	n neighbouring farms, tell them the story of the <b>Rebellion</b> , and teach them the tune of 'Beasts of	animal farm.
11	less, they were both thoroughly frightened by the <b>rebellion</b> on Animal Farm, and very anxious to pre	animal farm.
12	nd once on Midsummer Day, the anniversary of the <b>Rebellion</b> . Chapter V As winter drew on, Mollie	animal farm.
13	y must send out more and more pigeons and stir up <b>rebellion</b> among the animals on the other farms. T	animal farm.
14	lison of Jones, there was something resembling a <b>rebellion</b> . Led by three young Black Minorca pulle	animal farm.
15	s worse than that. We had thought that Snowball's <b>rebellion</b> was caused simply by his vanity and amb	animal farm.
16	he very beginning--yes, and from long before the <b>Rebellion</b> was ever thought of." "Ah, that is dif	animal farm.
17	ens who had been the ringleaders in the attempted <b>rebellion</b> over the eggs now came forward and stat	animal farm.
18	that night when old Major first stirred them to <b>rebellion</b> . If she herself had had any picture of t	animal farm.
19	ssing to shocking crimes. There was no thought of <b>rebellion</b> or disobedience in her mind. She knew t	animal farm.
20	tiffly. "Beasts of England" was the song of the <b>Rebellion</b> . But the <b>Rebellion</b> is now completed. Th	animal farm.
21	England' was the song of the <b>Rebellion</b> . But the <b>Rebellion</b> is now completed. The execution of the	animal farm.
22	clearly what conditions had been like before the <b>Rebellion</b> . All the same, there were days when the	animal farm.
23	who were still sent out to spread tidings of the <b>Rebellion</b> were forbidden to set foot anywhere on	animal farm.
24	ades!" he whispered. "Forward in the name of the <b>Rebellion</b> . Long live Animal Farm! Long live Conrad	animal farm.
25	was no one who remembered the old days before the <b>Rebellion</b> , except Clover, Benjamin, Moses the rave	animal farm.
26	fer years. Many animals had been born to whom the <b>Rebellion</b> was only a dim tradition, passed on by w	animal farm.
27	accepted everything that they were told about the <b>Rebellion</b> and the principles of Animalism, especia	animal farm.

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rebellion Advanced 50

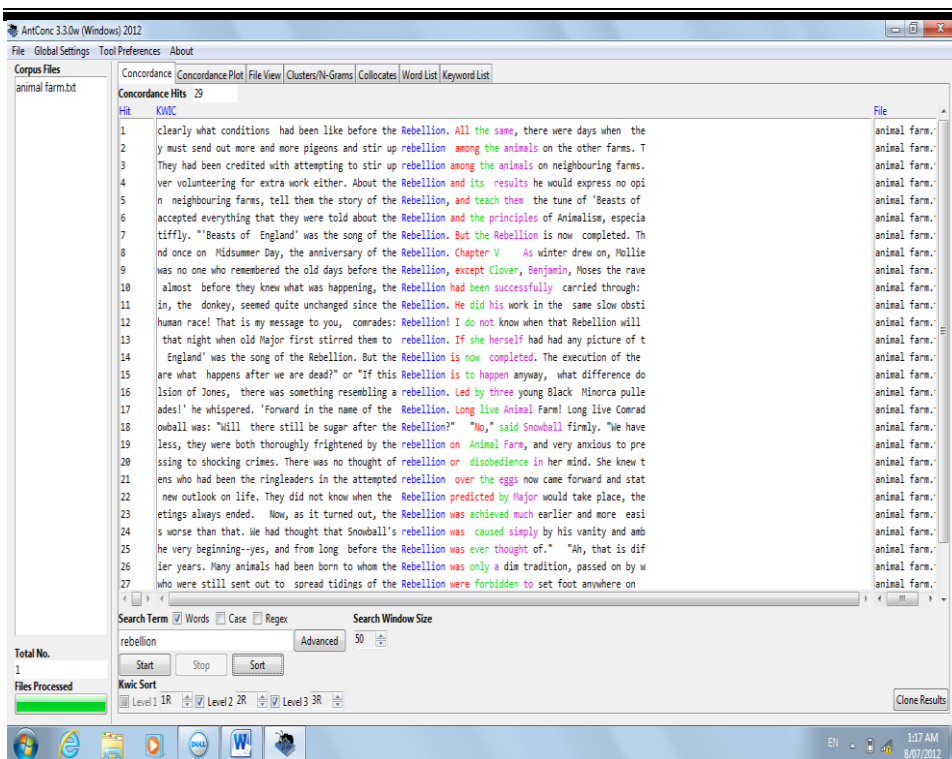
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### The use of semantic prosody in interpreting the word rebellion

This paper tries to show the semantic prosody of the word rebellion in *Animal farm*, and how this word has a positive impact on the novel, and make a comparison between the meaning of the word rebellion in the novel and the meaning of this word in Collins Cobuild Dictionary to prove that rebellion has both meanings (negative and positive meanings).

In *Animal farm*, rebellion has a positive meaning. In the novel, rebellion is the tool that animals use to achieve their utopian society where there are justice, equality and freedom. They make the rebellion to get over the control of their human master (Mr. Jones) who treats the animals very badly and exploits them to achieve his interests.

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Rebellion in Animal Farm happened without any victims and without violence, and the rebellion happens very easy, and the animals achieve their dreams of getting rid of their tyrant master and become responsible for themselves, so the rebellion becomes a necessary thing in their life, and all the animals consider rebellion as their duty. As mentioned above, the word rebellion has a good meaning in the novel.

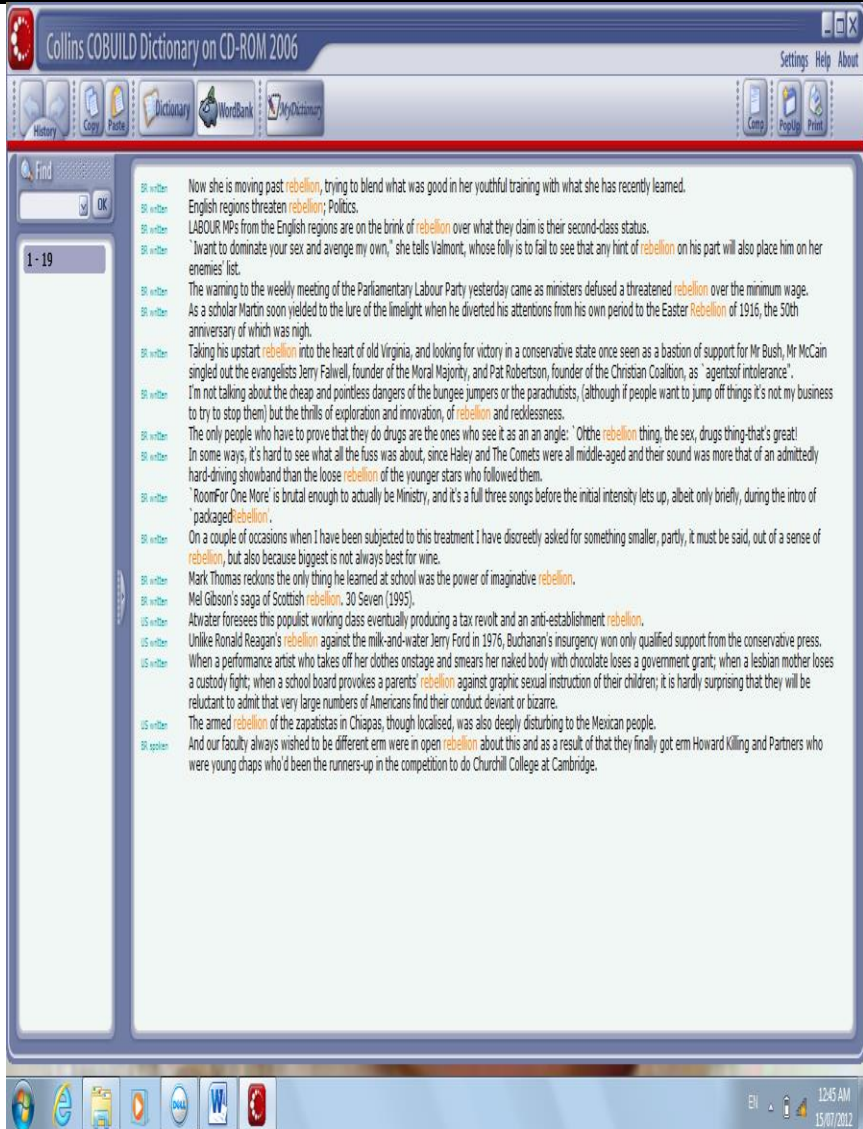
The meaning in the dictionary is different. The word rebellion may have a negative meaning, to show that the use of Collins Cobuild is useful to prove this. The meaning of the word rebellion in the dictionary is:

Rebellion: is a violent organized action by a large group of people who are trying to change their country's political system.

Rebellion: a situation in which politicians show their composition to their own party's policies can be referred to as a rebellion.

As mentioned above, the word rebellion may be interpreted as violent actions by which some people want to achieve a special goal, or it may mean that some politicians want to protest against the system in their country, and if the politicians' rebellion is not full of violence, it is just an action to show their objection. The paper will show some examples of using the word rebellion in British and American writing:

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This is the difference between the word rebellion in Animal farm that has a positive meaning and the meaning of that word in the dictionary, which has a negative meaning. So the word rebellion has both meanings (negative and positive meanings).

## **Conclusion**

Orwell made the animals carry out a rebellion against their cruel master, and used the story to represent his experience of the oppression to which revolutionary grabbing of power could lead. He stressed in his novel that the oppressors are alike; there is nothing to choose between them. What important in Orwell's vision of the revolutionary change is its out comes in the society portrayed in Animal farm.

Orwell draws a society in which individuality is reduced and power is maintained. The ideals of justice, freedom and equality are shattered when put into practice. Orwell's vision of social change seems to be moving in a closed circle in Animal farm. He draws a society in which revolution which planned to establish a better society, led to point that it started from. Even the revolution became ineffective. On the contrary, with the revolutionary ideals betrayed, revolutions become harmful. What Orwell tried to do in his novel is to set an earthly paradise, but this earthly paradise turns into a nightmare.

What began as a dream of utopian, as heaven on earth, has ended as a society of slavery and oppression. As Orwell seems to say, good will, good intentions, ideals, common decency are not enough, although they should be. Power corrupts everything and leads to dictatorship. The longing for power leads to oppression and hinders all plans of social change. He believes that the oppressed are always right and the oppressors are always wrong, the oppressed do not have any right to choose. They should carry out all the orders without any objection. This is the life in a dictatorial society. In this society, there is no place for change or choose, the only thing to do is to obey the orders of the oppressors.

In Animal Farm, Orwell does not mean to attack revolutions, but to say that the gap between theory and practice defeats all possibilities of change. The paper shows the vision of the author who wanted to convey to the readers that his novel was part of



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reality, and it was an image of power conflict and how power could destroy the good principles, and how power and authority create a society of oppressors and oppressed living together in a society of tyranny, cruelty and justice. In his novel, he succeeded in proving that animals' revolution, which in reality represents Russian revolution, failed in achieving its goals and the dreams of justice, equality and freedom, which change into a nightmare of oppression and exploitation. The life after of the animals does not change, but their master is changed after their rebellion. Their life after the revolution becomes worse than their life before the revolution, and this proves that there is difference between theory and practice that defeats all possibilities of change.

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