

Title: 'The Labyrinth of Linkages' Decoded: Character Networks in *Anna Karenina*
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Abstract:

A character network represents relations between personages, which are based on the proximity, shared events, direct speech, and narrative space allotted to each character. This paper brings together theoretical approaches to the character systems (Woloch, 2003), literary social network analysis (Elson, 2012; Sack, 2013) and digital humanities methods (Moretti, 2011, 2013). The method I use to study the dynamic relationship among all 134 speaking personages of *Anna Karenina* is direct and simple. By modelling the “character space” in Gephi (an interactive visualization and exploration platform for hierarchical and dynamic networks), the invisible “labyrinth of linkages” can become apparent. I compute the character system along the three types of centrality (degree, closeness, and betweenness) and distribute the characters among the four “universes” of the novel (tentatively labelled as “Anna Karenina,” “Konstantin Levin,” “Stiva Oblonsky,” and “Kitty Sherbatskaya”). The results of network analysis of *Anna Karenina* can help identify a typology of narrative roles of the characters and the structural principles behind each chapter. The networks highlight characters with intermediary roles: they provide narrative links between the societies (“universes”) and secure the robustness of the entire network. The proposed research method can be applied to the study of any Russian novel, which is usually populated by numerous episodic and minor characters that lack differentiation. The dynamic character networks can be also used in teaching the Russian novel as they help develop a macro vision of the complex system of the novel.