

I. Introduction

- (1) The final stress may fall on Dickens's command of word, phrase, rhyme and image, in ease and range there is surely no greater master of English except Shakespeare (Leavis 1970: 274)
- (2) Dickens's mastery of language is unique amongst nineteenth-century novelists in its inventiveness and multilayered density which makes him in effect the James Joyce of the Victorian period. He deploys every available linguistic resource from word-making to literary allusion. Though Dickens is sometimes thought of as an untaught genius, his linguistic choices are rarely without earlier literary models, which he often develops beyond recognition. (p. 126, Patricia Ingham "The Language of Dickens," David Paroissien (ed.) *A Companion to Charles Dickens*, Blackwell, 2008)
- (3) (a) Of Dickens's style it is impossible to speak in praise. It is jerky, ungrammatical, and created by himself in defiance of rules—almost as completely as that created by Carlyle. (Anthony Trollope: *Autobiography*, published in 1883) (Phillip Collins (ed.) 1971: 326)
- (b) No young novelist should ever dare to imitate the style of Dickens. If such a one wants a model for his language, let him take Thackeray. (ibid. 326)

(c) MARLEY was dead: **to begin with**. There is no doubt whatever about that. The register of his burial was signed by the clergyman, the clerk, the undertaker, and the chief mourner. Scrooge signed it. And Scrooge's name was good upon 'Change, for anything he chose to put his hand to.

Old Marley was as dead as a door-nail.

Mind! I don't mean to say that I know, of my own knowledge, what there is **particularly dead** about a door-nail. I might have been inclined, myself, to regard a coffin-nail as the **deadest** piece of ironmongery in the trade. **But** the wisdom of our ancestors is in the simile; and **my unhallowed hands shall not disturb it**, or the Country's done for. You will therefore permit me to repeat, emphatically, that **Marley was as dead as a door-nail**. (*A Christmas Carol* (1843))

- (i) ungrammatical: to regard a coffin-nail as the **deadest** piece of ironmongery in the trade.
- ・ 商品として店に出ている金物のうちでは棺桶の釘こそは一番完全に死んでいるものだと言いたいところである。(村岡花子訳)
 - ・ 棺桶の釘なら、金物屋の品物ん中でいちばんおっちんでる親方だ (小池滋訳)
 - ・ 棺桶釘をこそくだんの生業において就中あの世めいた金物の端くれと見なす (田辺洋子訳)
- (ii) simile: Old Marley was **as dead as a door-nail**.
- ・ 老マアレイはドアの上の釘のように死にきっていた。(村岡花子訳)
 - ・ だから、マーレー爺さんは間違いなく死んでいます。「ドア釘みたいにおっちんでる」って、よく言いますな。(小池滋訳)
 - ・ 老いばれマーリは扉釘ほどにもあの世だ。(田辺洋子訳)
- (iii) unusual collocation: what there is **particularly dead** about a door-nail
- ・ ドアの釘を死んだものの見本としてだしている (村岡花子訳)
 - ・ ドアの釘のどこが死んでいるんだ、っておっしゃるんですか (小池滋訳)
 - ・ 扉釘に何か格別なあの世めいた所がある (田辺洋子訳)

II. Vocabulary: Linguistic innovator and reporter

(1) First citations in the *OED2 on CD-ROM*

(a) Table 1. The number of first citations from Dickens' main fictional works in the *OED2 on CD-ROM*

Title of Work	Year	Word-tokens	OED2/CD	/ 100,000 words
<i>Pickwick Papers</i>	1837	303,182	215	71.0
<i>Oliver Twist</i>	1839	159,256	109	68.4
<i>Nicholas Nickleby</i>	1839	325,345	107	32.9
<i>The Old Curiosity Shop</i>	1841	219,558	81	36.9
<i>Barnaby Rudge</i>	1841	256,082	66	25.8
<i>Martin Chuzzlewit</i>	1844	339,906	61	17.9
<i>Dombey and Son</i>	1848	344,851	119	34.5
<i>David Copperfield</i>	1850	358,720	29	8.1
<i>Bleak House</i>	1853	357,048	89	24.9
<i>Hard Times</i>	1854	104,322	33	31.6
<i>Little Dorrit</i>	1857	340,657	67	19.7
<i>A Tale of Two Cities</i>	1859	136,625	29	21.2
<i>Great Expectations</i>	1861	186,248	52	27.9
<i>Our Mutual Friend</i>	1865	328,961	127	38.6
<i>The Mystery of Edwin Drood</i>	1870	94,642	15	15.9
TOTAL		3,855,403	1,199	31.0

(b) Table 2. The number of first citations from Dickens' non-fiction in the *OED2 on CD-ROM*

Title of Work	Year	Word-tokens	OED2/CD	/ 100,000 words
<i>Sketches by Boz</i>	1836	188,591	215	114.0
<i>American Notes</i>	1842	102,068	39	38.2
<i>The Uncommercial Traveller</i>	1860-69	143,148	42	29.3
Total		433,807	296	68.2
Letters	1832-70		136	

(2) Linguistic innovator

(a) he put his open hand to the side of his hat, in a military manner which that **angry-eyed, buttoned-up, inflammatory-faced** old gentleman appeared but imperfectly to appreciate. (OMF I, 5)

(b) Table 3. Classification of the compound words from Dickens treated as first-citations in the *OED*

Part of Speech	Number of lexemes
Compound noun	354 (75.5%)
Compound adjective	95 (20.3%)
Compound verb	13 (2.8%)

Compound adverb	7 (1.5%%)
Total (Compound word)	469 (100.0%)

(c) Table 4. Classification of the compound adjectives from Dickens treated as first-citations in the *OED*

Type	Example	Number of lexemes
Noun + <i>ed</i> -participle	apple-faced, beef-faced	33
Adjective + <i>ed</i> -participle	angry-eyed, bulbous-shoed	25
Noun + <i>ing</i> -participle	business-looking, life-thirsting	8
Noun + adjective	ginger-beery, self-devotional	5
Adverb + <i>ed</i> -participle	first-named, slack-baked	5
Noun + noun (attributive)	dog's-meat, cherry stick	5
Adjective + <i>ing</i> -participle	blithe-looking, responsible-looking	4
Adjective + noun (attributive)	half-quartern, half-price	2
Adverb + <i>ing</i> -participle	out-speaking, over-swinging	2
Adjective + adjective	politico diplomatico	1
Adverb + adjective	over-particular	1
Verb + <i>ed</i> -participle	draggle-haired	1
Others (attributive)	devil-may-care, matter-of-course	3
Total		95

(d) Neologism of manner adverbs

(i) *-ly* adverbs that are recorded as first citations in the *OED2 on CD-ROM* (40)

abstractedly (NN), acutely (NN), buzzingly (NN), changingly (TTC), cherubically (OMF), confusingly (Letter, 1863), constitutionally (PP), ding-dong-doggedly (Letter, 1870), disconcertedly (HM), distractingly (American Notes, 1842), emetically (Uncommercial Traveller, UT, 1860), emotionally (OMF), engrossedly (OMF), exasperatingly (Letter, 1851), fadedly (BH), fearfully (Letter, 1835), inflammatorily (Letter, 1840), locomotively (GE), melodramatically (PP), metropolitanously (Letter, 1852), monomaniacally (LD), mouldily (Letter, 1869), phosphorescently (DS), platformally (ED), polygamically (UT), potentially (GE), predictively (OCS), rakishly (OT), roundaboutedly (ED), skirmishingly (DS), slily (PP), spaciously (OMF), spasmodically (NN), spectacularly (TTC), surely (PP), unpromisingly (DS), unsympathetically (GE), uproariously (OT), uvularly (UT), viciously (BR)

(ii) *-ly* adverbs that are considered to be earlier or in the same year as the first citation in the *OED2 on CD-ROM* (21)

apoplectically (ED), banteringly (LD), blinkingly (HT), buoyantly (SB), caustically (OT), connubially (SB), cringingly (BH), detrimentally (LD), gloweringly (TTC), grandiloquently (LD), inanely (LD), lugubriously (SB), nomadically (BH), reassuringly (OMF), repellantly (HT), Shakespearianly (DC), smoothingly (BH), unadmiringly (LD), uncomplainingly (LD), unmistakably (DC), unmistakingly (OMF)

(iii) *-ly* adverbs that are not recorded in the *OED2 on CD-ROM* (12)

aperiently (BR), evil-adverbiously (TTC), patientissamentally (LD, an Italian nonce-word), pipingly (LD), remorsefully (MC), repeatedly (BH), sleepily (OMF), teedlely (OMF), toodlely (OMF), temperedly (MC), undauntingly (DS), unwholly (GE)

(3) Linguistic reporter or recorder of his age

(a) slang (62)

- (i) balmy “sleep,” (OCS 8) (E.P.) 'Proverb, suggested by balmy slumbers (Shakespeare).'
- (ii) catch-em-alive-o “name for a 'fly-paper' for catching flies,” (LD I, 16) (E.P.) 'Originally a fisherman's phrase, but by 1853, if not a year or two earlier, it had a tremendous vogue. Its intent was to raise a smile, its meaning almost null.'

(b) commodities (34)

- (i) butter-knife “a blunt knife used for cutting butter at table” (DC 61) (COD)
- (ii) Cuba “[The name of a large island in the W. Indies, also called Havana.] A cigar made of tobacco grown in Cuba.” (PP 29)

(c) dialect (17)

- (i) allus “always,” (BH 46) (Jo, the wretched little crossing sweeper in London) 'He wos allus willin fur to give me somethink he wos, though Mrs. Sangsby she was allus a chivying on me—like everybody everywhere.'
- (ii) flummox “to bring to confusion,” (PP 33) (Tony Weller, Sam Weller's father in London) 'Sammy, that if your governor don't prove a alleyvim he'll be what the Italians call reg'larly flummoxed, and that's all about it' (COD) 'transitive verb, colloquial, bewilder, confound, disconcert.'

III. Unusual or creative collocations

(1) Eight types of unusual collocations

(i) figurative collocations

The Commandments say, no murder. NO murder, sir!' proceeded Mr. Honeythunder, **platformally pausing** as if he took Mr. Crisparkle to task for having distinctly asserted that they said: You may do a little murder, and then leave off. (ED 17)

(ii) transferred collocations

Mr. Snagsby drinks, and murmurs with **an admiring cough** behind his hand. "Dear me, very fine wine indeed!" (BH 22)

(iii) oxymoronic collocations

He had been to call upon the dear **old infant** [Skimpole]. (BH 37)

(iv) disparate collocations

That when Miss Murdstone took her into custody and led her way, she [Dora] smiled and gave me her **delicious hand**. (DC 26)

(v) unconventional collocations

We were to stay a month at Mr. Boythorn's. My pet [Ada] had scarcely been there a **bright week**, as I recollect the time, when one evening after we had finished helping the gardener in watering his flowers, and just as the candles were lighted, Charley, appearing with a very important air behind Ada's chair, beckoned me mysteriously out of the room. (BH 37)

(vi) modified idiomatic collocations

little and big, young and old: yet growing up, or already **growing down** again – there are not, I say, many people who would care to sleep in a church. (*Chimes* 1)

(vii) parodied collocations

To paraphrase the idle legend of Peter Piper, who had never found his way into their nursery, **If the greedy little Gradgrinds grasped at more than this, what was it for good gracious goodness' sake, that the greedy little Gradgrinds grasped at?** (HT I, 3)

(viii) relexicalized collocations

'He was in wants of copying work to do, and was—**not to put too fine a point upon it**—' a favorite apology for plain-speaking with Mr. Snagsby, which he always offers with a sort of argumentative frankness, 'hard up!' (BH 11)

(2) Oxymoronic collocations in *Bleak House*

(a) In Esther's non-dialogue (totally 25 examples)

(i) A word of favourable meaning + a word of unfavourable meaning

benignant shadow (Ch. 65) / captivating looseness (Ch. 37) / cheerful gravity (Ch. 13) / curious indifference (Ch. 8) / delightfully irregular (Ch. 6) / friendly indignation (Ch. 52) / good-humoured vexation (Ch. 6) / good-natured vexation (Ch. 6) / loving anxiety (Ch. 50) / modest consciousness (Ch. 14) / pleasant absurdity (Ch. 15) / pleasantly cheated (Ch. 6) / pleasantly irregular (Ch. 6) / professions of childishness (Ch. 15) / resolutely unconscious (Ch. 18) / respectful wretchedness (Ch. 8) / serene contempt (Ch. 50) / smiling condescension (Ch. 5) (18 examples)

(ii) A word of unfavourable meaning + a word of favourable meaning

absent endeavours (Ch. 6) / haughty self-restraint (Ch. 36) / mournful glory (Ch. 61) / old-faced mite (Ch. 50) / plaintive smile (Ch. 13) / rapacious benevolence (Ch. 8) (6 examples)

(iii) Others

thoughtful baby (one example)

(b) In the third-person non-dialogue (totally 24 examples)

(i) A word of favourable meaning + a word of unfavourable meaning

affectionate distress (Ch. 55) / affectionate lunacy (Ch. 55) / exalted dullness (Ch. 56) / harmonious impeachment (Ch. 49) / magnificent displeasure (Ch. 28) (5 examples)

(ii) A word of unfavourable meaning + a word of favourable meaning

awful politeness (Ch. 40) / cold sunshine (Ch. 12) / dismal grandeur (Ch. 48) / dull repose (Ch. 66) / exhausted composure (Ch. 2) / foggy glory (Ch. 1) / frosty fire (Ch. 56) / frowning smile (Ch. 54) / gloomy enjoyment (Ch. 20) / gloomy relief (Ch. 39) / interminable brief (Ch. 1) / mechanically faithful (Ch. 36) / stolid satisfaction (Ch. 49) / stunned admiration (Ch. 25) / wicked relief (Ch. 55) / worn-out placidity (Ch. 2) (16 examples)

(iii) Others

boastful misery (Ch. 20) / official den / waking doze (Ch. 58) (3 examples)

IV. Idiomatic wordplays

(1) Three types of idiomatic wordplays

(a) Substitution

Saying which, the old lady, quite unconscious that she had spoken above a whisper, drew herself up, and **looked carving-knives at** the hard-headed delinquent. (PP 6)

(cf. “dagger: 3b. *to speak or look daggers* : to speak so as to wound, to speak or look fiercely, savagely, or angrily” in the *OED*.)

“I will speake Daggars to her” in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* (iii. ii. 414) in 1601. In 1833, Marryat replaced the verb “speak” with the verb “look,” as seen in “Lord Privilege . . . looked daggers at me” (in *Simple*.)

(b) Expansion

Mr. Trotter raised the pot to his lips, and, **by gentle and almost imperceptible degrees**, tilted it into the air. (PP 44)

(c) Conversion

Every morning, the regular water-drinkers, Mr Pickwick among the number, met each other in the pump room, took their quarter of a pint, and **walked constitutionally**. (PP 36)

(2) Extended idiomatic expressions: “by degrees”: (Card—Entry—degrees)

Dickens Lexicon Digital

Keyword/Phrase: (You can use wild cards, "*" as a character and "_" as a word.)
degrees

Card/Text Entry Definition Dictionary Text Cf Quoted
OED: Yes No

Sort by: Limit
200 Search

"degrees (Field: Entry)" in the cards of all works
13 / 13 hits
1

by slow degrees (TTC: II.14) - They were still fishing perseveringly, when he peeped in at the gate for the sec ...
by slow degrees (LD: I.24) - "True," said Pancks. "What's it worth? You shall live to see, Miss Dorrit." Re ...
by slow degrees (LD: II.33) - I have had her before me all this time, finding no pleasure in anything but keep ...
by slow degrees (MC: 18) - He patted Anthony upon the hand as one might comfort a child, and drawing the ...
by slow degrees (MC: 21) - By slow degrees, however, some heads and shoulders appeared, and connecting the ...
by slow degrees (DS: 15) - As these reflections presented themselves to the Captain's mind, and by slow deg ...
by slow degrees (DS: 41) - But Mr Toots takes courage, when they whisper a kind thought to him; and by slow ...
by slow degrees (DS: 46) - In fatal truth, these were associated with a woman, a proud woman, who hated hi ...
by slow degrees (HT: I.13) - He closed his eyes, more to please her than to rest his weary head; but, by slow ...
degrees in temperature (MC: 17) - These ladies were all three talking together in a very loud tone when Martin a ...
degrees, by painful (BH: 15) - Really, sir, I think she might, said Mrs Blinder, getting her heavy breath by ...
slow degrees, by (BH: 4) - At length, by slow degrees, they became indistinct and mingled. I began to lose ...
slow degrees, by (MC: 31) - Mr. Pecksniff brought up to the top of the pew, by slow degrees, his hair, his f ...

(3) (Text—by __ degrees)

Keyword/Phrase: (You can use wild cards, "*" as a character and "_" as a word.)
by __ degrees

Card/Text C/W Length Author: Dickens Sort by: Limit
Text word 50 Work: All Following word 200 Search

14 hits (Sort by a precedent word)
1

1	be quite so bad again, and that I shall get better	by very slow degrees.	I'll try very hard. I won't stop at five-and-twten (LD2)
2	e being poorly inhabited. It has been progressing	by almost imperceptible degrees.	The occupiers of the shops have gradually given u (SBS)
3	lift your head to get it on my arm? I will do it	by very gentle degrees.	You shall hardly feel it." (OMF3)
4	last, as a hopeless attempt; and moving her chair	by very slow degrees	a little nearer to the stranger, sat with her eyes (CBD)
5	ion, whom he has observed sinking lower and lower,	by almost imperceptible degrees,	and the shabbiness and utter destitution of whose (SBT)
6	with the light of the rising sun; and the streets,	by almost imperceptible degrees,	begin to resume their bustle and animation. Marke (SBS)
7	joined and mixed by chance; and when, and how, and	by what wonderful degrees,	each separates from each, and every sense and obje (CHM)
8	ther, but read a deal o' poetry and pinned away, ~	by rayther slow degrees,	for she ain't dead yet. It took a deal o' poetry (MHC)
9	ed until he rested it upside down upon the table.	By the same degrees	his attention became concentrated on the knife. A (OMF2)
10	th. Neither did the idea come upon me at once, but	by very slow degrees,	presenting itself at first in dim shapes at a very (MHC)
11	ns that they were really too hard upon him, it was	by very many degrees	the best professional job he had ever had, and one (PP)
12	gether, how lonely Smike had been all night ~ and	by very ray degrees,	too; for on this subject also, Kate seemed to spea (NN)
13	The reverend gentleman gradually opened the door	by almost imperceptible degrees,	until the aperture was just wide enough to admit o (PP)
14	an old house in an old ghostly inn), and recounted	by very slow degrees	what had yesterday taken place between him and Qui (OCS)

(4) (Text—by ___ degrees)

7 hits (Sort by a precedent word)
1

1	y, her sister has become more sensible and womanly	by just the same degrees.	It would be as hard to convince me that if I was (LD1)
2	ith a woman, a proud woman, who hated him, but who	by slow and sure degrees	had been led on by his craft, and her pride and re (DS)
3	hen John Browdie came to be spoken of, he dropped,	by slow and gradual degrees,	into a chair, and rubbing, his hands upon his knee (NN)
4	absence ~ must see, for I, upon whom it has come	by slow and hard degrees,	see it and know it well ~ will not move you to pi (NN)
5		By slow but sure degrees,	the terrors of that hateful corner swell until the (AN)
6	was strong, and it was very, very hard, to loosen;	by gradual efforts and degrees	unclosed a little here, it clenched the tighter th (TTC3)
7	the first street-corner breakfast-sellers. And so	by faster and faster degrees,	until the last degrees were very fast, the day cam (UT)

1. by just the same degrees (LD), 2. by slow and sure degrees (DS), 3. by slow and gradual degrees (NN), 4. by slow and hard degrees (NN), 5. by slow but sure degrees (AN), 7. by faster and faster degrees (UT)

(5) (Text—by _____ degrees)

(i) Dickens

7 hits (Sort by a precedent word)

1	As they stole farther and farther in	by slight and scarcely perceptible degrees,	and with such caution that they scarcely seemed to (NN)
2	range, very strange, even to himself, to find how,	by quick though almost imperceptible degrees,	he lost his delicacy and self-respect, and gradual (MC)
3	ld man's disorder was past, and he began to mend.	By very slow and feeble degrees	his consciousness came back; but the mind was weak (OCS)
4	hed this ghostly mist, and became enveloped in it,	by the easiest succession of degrees	imaginable. Passing from the roar and rattle of t (MC)
5	the green sea, and followed them, as they swelled,	by slow and almost imperceptible degrees,	into a continuous line of coast, can hardly be exa (AN)
6	ished, Mr Trotter raised the pot to his lips, and,	by gentle and almost imperceptible degrees,	tilted it into the air. He paused once, and only o (PP)
7	a wooden tray he carried, and letting it go again	by very gentle and careful degrees,	when he and the tray had got in, lest it should cl (CBE)

1. NN (1839), 2. MC (1844), 3. OCS (1841), 5. AN (1842), 6. PP (1837), 7. CBE (*The Haunted Man*) (1848) (4番は該当しないので、合計6例)

(ii) 18th and 19th Century Fiction (including Dickens)

Keyword/Phrase: (You can use wild cards, "*" as a character and "_" as a word.)

by _____ degrees

Card/Text C/W	Length	Author: All	Sort by:	Limit
Text	word	50	Following word	200
Work: All		Search		

12 hits (Sort by a precedent word)

1	As they stole farther and farther in	by slight and scarcely perceptible degrees,	and with such caution that they scarcely seemed to (NN)
2	ving composers, singers, and masters, decided upon	by the Miss Falconers. By degrees	he began to see a little through the palpable obsc (Patronage)
3	range, very strange, even to himself, to find how,	by quick though almost imperceptible degrees,	he lost his delicacy and self-respect, and gradual (MC)
4	er, he did not attempt to disengage her arms; and,	by degrees, by very slow degrees,	her grasp loosened. At last her arms gave way and (Vivian Grey)
5	ld man's disorder was past, and he began to mend.	By very slow and feeble degrees	his consciousness came back; but the mind was weak (OCS)
6	hed this ghostly mist, and became enveloped in it,	by the easiest succession of degrees	imaginable. Passing from the roar and rattle of t (MC)
7	the green sea, and followed them, as they swelled,	by slow and almost imperceptible degrees,	into a continuous line of coast, can hardly be exa (AN)
8	or else be contented to be in the hospital, which,	by the by, was three degrees	more offensive and more suffocating than our own b (Roderick Random)
9	ished, Mr Trotter raised the pot to his lips, and,	by gentle and almost imperceptible degrees,	tilted it into the air. He paused once, and only o (PP)
10	wbray's daughter a very fair young person, he grew	by gradual, but pretty rapid degrees,	to perceive that she was the very loveliest tabern (The Vicar of Wrexhill)
11	a wooden tray he carried, and letting it go again	by very gentle and careful degrees,	when he and the tray had got in, lest it should cl (CBE)
12	firmness wherewith you hold your resolutions, not	by the tedious scarcely perceptible degrees	with which I must sap the foundation of Sibella's (Secresy or The Ruin on the Rock)

1 (Dickens), 3. (Dickens), 5 (Dickens), 7 (Dickens), 9 (Dickens), 10 (Mrs. Trollope), 11 (Dickens), 12 (Eliza Fenwick) (2番、4番、6番、8番は該当しないので、合計8例。そのうち6例はDickens。)

And it was strange, very strange, even to himself, to find how, **by quick though almost imperceptible degrees**, he lost his delicacy and self-respect, . . . (MC Chapter13)

(b) Conclusion

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