Dickens's *Pictures from Italy* vs. Murray's *Handbook to Northern Italy*: An Investigation into Adjective Use

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Abstract

This study explores the use of adjectives in Dickens's *Pictures from Italy* and Murray's *Handbook to Northern Italy*. It is based on a 17,645-word corpus made up of sections chosen from the *Handbook to Northern Italy* and a 17,600-word corpus comprising chapters 5 to 9 of *Pictures from Italy*. The paper first looks at the frequency and use of adjective tokens in the two corpora and breaks them down into syntactic categories (e.g. predicative, attributive, postposed). It goes on to investigate the distribution of adjective types in the two corpora and illustrates how Dickens uses more adjectives, including some that were infrequently used in late modern English. It then explores adjective compounding in some detail, showing that Dickens makes use of a larger number of hyphenated compound adjectives than Murray. The findings suggest that *Pictures from Italy* is overall a more inventive and sophisticated piece of writing than the *Handbook to Northern Italy*, although the latter appears to have inspired the former to some extent. They also indicate that Dickens's work mainly addresses independent travellers rather than conventional tourists.

Keywords: tourism writing; corpus stylistics; late modern English; Dickens's *Pictures from Italy*; Murray's *Handbook to Northern Italy*

1. Introduction

Adjectives represent an important aspect of both the language of literary writing (e.g. Leech and Short 2007; Simpson 2014) and of tourism writing (e.g. Pierini 2009). They can be a "site for stylistic experimentation" and creativity (Simpson 2014: 57). Literary text writers obviously aim at creativity, and a careful selection of adjectives as well as the formation of new ones represent valuable resources to achieve this goal (e.g. Pierini 2015). By contrast, (present-day) tourism text writers need to keep a balance between creative uses and clichéd writing (Dann 1996). Recent research has shown that the tourism industry uses persuasive words to attract potential tourists and that these include adjectives, such as *famous, premium, fine* and *fun* (e.g. Xiang et al. 2009).

This paper sets out to examine the use of adjectives in a literary and in a tourism text, respectively, namely Charles Dickens's *Pictures from Italy* (henceforth *Pictures*) (1846) and Murray's *Handbook to Northern*

Italy (henceforth *Handbook*) (1836) by applying the methods and tools of corpus linguistics. Some literary critics (e.g. McNees 2007) have described Dickens's publication, first published in 1846, both as a travel book and a work of creative writing, and have compared it to the guidebooks of the time, most notably Murray's *Handbook*, the first edition of which dates back to 1836. While Murray's guidebook aimed to provide practical guidance to prospective British tourists of the time, Dickens wrote his text to entertain his readers with dramatic descriptions of Italy and its culture. Dickens appears to have consulted *Handbook* during the period he spent in Italy, as he partly relies on the travel routes suggested in it and on the descriptions it provides of specific sites and paintings (McNees 2007: 213). Murray's *Handbook* thus seems to have traced the conventional and safe boundaries of the tourist's route, from which Dickens departs to guide his "rebellious" traveller (McNees 2007: 224).

This paper first provides background information about the two publications and about the study of adjectives in literary texts. It goes on to describe the corpora and the method followed to explore them. Finally, it discusses the results and their implications for the exploration of the aims and style of the two texts.

2. *Dickens's* Pictures *and Murray's* Handbook

Pictures, first published in 1846, is a travel book about Dickens's tour of Italy in 1844. In this text, Dickens harmonises realism, autobiography and journalistic prose, and merges the comic, parodic and picturesque styles (Vescovi 2000; Phelan 2002). The picturesque, in particular, is a feature of Dickensian literary production, especially of his short stories and novels (Hill 1981). In *Pictures,* the picturesque represents a deviation from the straightforward accounts of places and attractions provided by the systematic and scholarly travel guides of his time, and from John Murray's popular series of "Hand-books for Travellers" in particular (McNees 2007: 211; Murray 2012: 343). Dickens indeed prefaced *Pictures* by saying that:

> This Book is a series of faint reflections – mere shadows in the water – of places to which the imaginations of most people are attracted in a greater or less degree, on which mine had dwelt for years, and which have some interest for all.

Another distinguishing feature of this work is the use of the intimate first-person singular pronoun *I*, something which Dickens also did in his autobiographical novel *David Copperfield* (1849).

Murray's *Handbook* was first published in 1836. It represented a reliable authority for the newly emerging middle-class British tourist, who demanded an efficient mapping of routes and pre-approved sites to travel in mid-nineteenth century Northern Italy by stagecoach with horses and couriers (McNees 2007: 225). However, Murray's early guides were not completely objective, as they presented sites and works of art both in "plain style as matter-of-fact descriptions and in the form of quotations from famous literary works" (Schaff 2009: 107). The 1847 edition of *Handbook*, like the previous ones, also contains quotations from poems and other literary works. Yet it uses fewer instances of the modal verb "ought to" and more of the anonymous and inclusive first-person plural "we" (McNees 2007: 212-215), which suggests that it is less prescriptive than the previous editions.

Dickens is very likely to have consulted an edition of *Handbook* during his journey. This speculation is supported by the fact that he follows Murray's route from Parma through Modena and Bologna to Venice, and, like Murray, he also starts his chapter on Venice with a description of San Marco square. However, Dickens's rendering of Venice most notably departs from *Handbook*. This is apparent from the very title of the chapter about Venice, i.e. "An Italian Dream", and from the fact that he does not mention the name of the city until the very end of the chapter, thus expressing his awe and inability to find the words to describe it (McNees 2007: 219-221).

Although both texts aimed to provide authentic and authoritative descriptions of Northern Italy, *Handbook* appears to mainly appeal to the tourist, i.e. someone who needs the verification of the guidebook, while *Pictures* to the (armchair) traveller, i.e. someone who keeps away from the beaten track and trusts his/her own impressions (McNees 2007: 211-212). The tourist-traveller distinction, however, is not always clear-cut. More generally, the difference between travelogues targeting readers who read for pleasure and guidebooks addressing travellers is not always clear in mid-nineteenth-century publications on Italy (Pfister 1996: 11). That is, it can be difficult to pin down the writers' purposes and their intended readership.

As suggested by research on stylistics (see section 3), this paper explores the use of the adjectives in the two texts with a view to shedding light on their specific communicative nature.

3. Stylistics, Corpus Stylistics and the Study of Adjectives

Leech and Short (2007: 60-61) aptly suggest that "every analysis of style [...] is an attempt to find the artistic principles underlying a writer's choice of language". In their view, there is no infallible technique for selecting what is significant; yet, making reference to a checklist of features usually proves to be useful. One of the features they include is the use of adjectives, which they recommend exploring by looking at their frequency in a text, their gradability, their syntactic role (e.g. attributive vs. predicative uses), and their semantic/pragmatic function (e.g. descriptive, evaluative). By way of illustration, they report a study investigating the specific choice of adjectives in Henry James's *The Birthplace* and how they can help describe a character's "mind style" (Leech and Short 2007: 157-158).

In a similar vein, Mahlberg (2007: 222) and Lindquist and Levin (2018: 67) suggest that a stylistic analysis may look at the high number of adjectives in a literary text. To this end, they put forward a methodological approach called "corpus stylistics", which combines corpus-linguistic methods with more intuition-based approaches for the study of style (Semino and Short 2004: 8). Corpus stylistic methods have also been applied to the study of Dickens's novels. Among the features analysed are creative collocations of adjectives and nouns (e.g. "*comfortable wickedness, glorious spider, old infant*"; Hori 2004: 77), lexical bundles and key clusters (e.g. "*for the first time, his hands in his pockets, I should like to*"; Mahlberg 2013: 52-65).

Adjectives play an important role in (present-day) tourism texts, too. Pierini (2009), for instance, observes that a corpus of online texts promoting tourist accommodation contains adjectives that reflect the combination of description, emotional impact and evaluation, with the overall aim of increasing the persuasive force of the message.

Adjectives are the third major word class in English and can have two main functions within larger structures: attributive (e.g. "They are *rich people*") and predicative (e.g. "They *are rich*"). Attributive adjectives can

pre-modify (head) nouns and thus describe, evaluate and/or classify them[1]. Predicative adjectives can be further distinguished into subject predicatives (e.g. "My life is *hard*") and object predicatives (e.g. "She made my life *hard*").

Adjectives can occur in a range of syntactic structures, including postposed nominal modifiers (e.g. "all the people *involved*") and noun phrase heads (e.g. "*the rich* and *the poor*"). Predicative adjectives are much more common than attributive ones in the news, in academic writing and in fiction, while in conversation the two types are almost equally frequent (Biber et al. 1999: 506-521). Most adjectives are gradable, that is they accept degree modifiers (e.g. "*very rich*") and/or have inflectional comparative and superlative forms (e.g. *"richer, richest"*). Furthermore, they can take adverbs or other adjectives as modifiers (e.g. "*absolutely rich*", "*pure white*"). When adjectives are used for comparison, they can be expanded by means of comparative clauses or phrases expressing the notion of degree (e.g. "It is so *ugly* that ...; it is as *ugly* as that") (Biber et al. 1999: 521-529).

The formation of adjectives from another word can take place through either derivation or compounding. The former process consists in adding affixes to words from other parts of speech. Although some suffixes are typically or exclusively used to create adjectives (e.g. *–able, -al, -ial, -less*), they are not always recognisable by their form. They can, however, be identified by looking at their function in a clause (Carter and McCarthy 2006: 438-446). The process of adjectival compounding allows for "a compact and integrated expression of information" and is most common in written registers in attributive use. The interpretation of the meaning of compounds depends on the likely semantic relations between the compound members (Plag 2018: 150). Compounding also provides a powerful means to create both hyphenated and unhyphenated neologisms (Bauer and Renouf 2001). The most recurrent compounding patterns include "adjective+adjective", "adjective+noun", "adverb+adjective", "noun+*ed*-participle" and "noun+*ing*-participle", but many other combinations are possible (Biber *et al.* 1999: 533-535).

Section 6 investigates attributive, predicative and other uses of the

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[1] When multiple adjectives are used attributively in a noun phrase, those indicating evaluation tend to come first, followed first by those expressing physical qualities and then by those indicating type and purpose (Carter and McCarthy 2006: 450-451).

adjective tokens in the two texts, as well as the frequency of adjective types and of (un)hyphenated compound adjectives. Before moving on to the results of the investigation, however, section 4 describes the two corpora under investigation and the reference corpus, while section 5 outlines the research questions and the methodology followed to investigate them.

4. The Corpora

This study is based on a 17,600-word corpus comprising chapters 5 to 9 of *Pictures* (<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/650/650-0.txt>) and a 17,645-word corpus made up of sections chosen from Murray's *Handbook* (third edition, 1847) (<https://archive.org/stream/handbookfortrav01palggoog# page/n6/mode/2up>). In the attempt to obtain two corpora almost equal in size, chapters 5 to 8 of *Pictures* were analysed in full, while chapter 9 only up to the following words: "which the road subsequently passes, render it delightful." The parts selected from *Handbook* come from Section III; they are descriptions of Venice and other cities in the (present-day) Veneto region: the Austrian Dominions and the Lombardo-Venetian Kingdom. The literary references quoted in *Handbook* were not included.

Table 1 displays some quantitative data about the two corpora:

Table 1. Quantitative data about the *Picture* corpus and the *Handbook* corpus

Corpus data	*Pictures*	*Handbook*
tokens	17,600	17,645
types	3,929	3,642
type/token ratio	22.32	20.64
sentences	544	817
words/sentence	32	21

As can be noticed, the type/token ratio for *Pictures* is only slightly higher than that for *Handbook*. By contrast, the count of words per sentence indicates the presence of much longer sentences in the former text.

The *Corpus of Late Modern English Texts* (henceforth *CLMET*), version 3.1, was used as the reference corpus for some of the analyses of the two corpora. It consists of roughly 35 million words of modern British

English grouped into three 70-year periods: 1710-1780, 1780-1850, and 1850-1920. The genres represented are narrative fiction, narrative non-fiction, treatises, drama, letters and others (e.g. historical and travel texts). The narrative fiction component includes three novels by Charles Dickens, i.e. *A Christmas Carol in Prose*, *Barnaby Rudge* and *Dombey and Son*. The 333 texts that make up the corpus are available in the plain version and also in versions tagged for part of speech (i.e. POS-tagged) and lemmas (De Smet 2005; De Smet *et al.* 2015).

5. Research Questions and Method

This study addresses the following research questions:

- What are the main quantitative and qualitative differences, if any, between *Pictures* and *Handbook* with respect to the use of adjectives?

- How can the findings contribute to establishing the two texts' specific communicative intentions and target readerships? More specifically, do they confirm the hypothesis, put forward by literary critics, that *Pictures* was mainly addressed to the British travellers of the time and *Handbook* to British (would-be) tourists?

The method used for this study is corpus stylistics, which provides various "options for the comparison of one text with groups of other texts to identify tendencies, intertextual relationships, or reflections of social and cultural contexts", that is the features that make a literary text distinctive (Mahlberg 2007: 221). It combines a quantitative approach to the analysis of the corpus data and a closer qualitative examination of their co(n)texts of use.

First, the corpus-query system *Sketch Engine* (<https://www.sketchengine.eu/>) (Kilgarriff et al. 2014) was used to tag the two corpora under investigation for part-of-speech, and to retrieve the instances of the adjectives used in them in key-word-in-context (KWIC) format (see example 13, for instance). The concordance lines were copied onto an Excel file and inspected manually. Those that did not include adjectives were eliminated and the remaining ones were sorted out and divided into: a) plain, comparative and superlative forms; b) attributive adjectives, subject and object predicative adjectives; c) adjectives functioning as noun phrase heads, postposed adjectives and adjectives used in comparative structures and in exclamative clauses (see Section 6.1).

Second, the software *Wordsmith Tools* (v. 5 Scott 2008) was employed

to explore the POS-tagged CLMET corpus version and obtain a list of all the adjectives in it. The 2,440,073 adjective tokens and the 31,438 adjective types retrieved were divided according to their frequency of occurrence into nine frequency lists, as shown in Table 2. As can be seen, the more frequent a given adjective is in the CLMET corpus (see the second column), the lower the number of its types tends to be (see the third column). By contrast, when the frequency of occurrence of a given adjective decreases, the number of different types increases. This tendency, in fact, applies to all parts of speech.[2]

Table 2. Subdivision of the adjective types in the CLMET corpus into nine word lists according to the adjectives' frequency

Lists	Adj. frequency (*from-to*)	Tot. adj. types
one	53,381-2,020	211
two	2,010-1,002	211
three	999-511	298
four	510-301	371
five	300-115	1,015
six	114-58	1,067
seven	57-28	1,398
eight	27-11	2,149
nine	10-01	24,718

Third, the *Range* program[3] was employed. This piece of software enables one to compare a given corpus against pre-selected word lists, that is, it checks which words in a corpus are to be found in each list and how many of them are used (Nation 2016). *Range* was used in combination with the adjective lists derived from the CLMET corpus to investigate the frequency of adjective types in *Pictures* and *Handbook*, as discussed in Sections 6.2 and 6.3.

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[2] Sinclair (1991: 32; 144), for instance, discusses it with reference to all the words that make up a short text he analyses.
[3] The program is available at <https://www.victoria.ac.nz/lals/about/staff/paul-nation#publications>. It includes a variety of pre-compiled word lists by default, which were, however, not used for this study.

6. Results and Discussion
6.1. Attributive, predicative and other uses of adjectives
This section explores the use of adjective tokens, paying specific attention to their morphological form and to their syntactic role in the corpora. Table 3 shows the raw frequencies of the adjective tokens and their use in percentage values out of the total number of word tokens. As can be seen, *Pictures* contains more adjectives overall and specifically more plain adjectives than *Handbook*. This latter corpus, however, presents more superlative and comparative forms.

Table 3. Plain, comparative and superlative adjective tokens in *Pictures* and *Handbook*

Adjectives	*Pictures*	*%*	*Handbook*	*%*
Plain adjectives	1,580	8.98	1,162	6.59
Comparative adjectives	28	0.16	37	0.21
Superlative adjectives	31	0.18	46	0.26
Total adjectives	1,639	9.31	1,245	7.06

Examples (1) to (4) illustrate the use of superlative and comparative forms. In these extracts, Dickens uses comparative and superlative forms of adjectives to evaluate places, accommodation or people, while *Handbook* employs them with the main aim of accurately describing tourist attractions.

(1) There is the Farnese Palace, too; and in it one of the dreariest spectacles of decay that ever was seen -- a grand, old, gloomy theatre, mouldering away. (from *Pictures*)

(2) Where the original artist set that impress of his genius on a face, which, almost in a line or touch, separated him from meaner painters and made him what he was … (from *Pictures*)

(3) The centre of the building is covered with a dome, and over the centre of each of the arms of the cross, rises a smaller cupola. (from *Handbook*)

(4) The windows are arched, and in pairs; each pair is placed in an arched recess in the lower story, and crowned with a pediment in the upper. (from *Handbook*)

Table 4 breaks down the adjective tokens in the two corpora into attributive adjectives, subject and object predicative adjectives and adjectives used as noun phrase heads. It provides raw frequencies and percentages out of the total number of adjective tokens.

Table 4. Attributive and predicative adjectives and adjectives used as noun phrase heads in *Pictures* and *Handbook*

Adjective use (1)	*Pictures*	%	*Handbook*	%
Attributive	1,302	79.44	1,020	81.93
Predicative	325	19.83	210	16.87
- subject predicative	311	18.97	199	15.98
- object predicative	14	0.85	11	0.88
Noun phrase head	12	0.73	15	1.20
Total	1,639	100.00	1,245	100.00

Attributive adjectives are by far the most frequent in both corpora; yet, *Handbook* presents a slightly higher percentage of them as well as of adjectives used as head nouns (e.g. *the Italians*). On the other hand, *Pictures* contains more adjectives used as subject predicatives.

Extracts (5) and (6), taken from *Handbook* and *Pictures*, respectively, illustrate the subject predicative use of *elegant*, the attributive use of *foliaged*, *Ionic*, *sudden*, *incessant* and *falling*, and the object predicative use of *sublime*:

(5) The sculptures here are <u>elegant</u>, particularly the <u>foliaged</u> frieze of the <u>Ionic</u> story, interspersed with sea-gods and sea-nymphs. (from *Handbook*)
(6) Its <u>sudden</u> turns into the shining of the moon and its <u>incessant</u> roar of <u>falling</u> water, rendered the journey more and more <u>sublime</u> at every step. (from *Pictures*)

Table 5 displays information about the frequency of use of postposed adjectives, of adjectives employed in comparative structures and of those used in exclamative clauses respectively:

Table 5. Postposed adjectives, adjectives used in comparative structures and those used in exclamative clauses in *Pictures* and *Handbook*

Adjective use (2)	*Pictures*	%	*Handbook*	%
Postposed	70	4.27	48	3.86
Comparative	51	3.11	20	1.61
Exclamative	11	0.67	1	0.08

As can be seen, *Pictures* contains more postposed adjectives as well as adjectives used in both comparative structures and exclamative clauses. A closer look at the data shows that Dickens sometimes uses postposed adjectives repeatedly with reference to the same noun in the same sentence. He thus ends up producing long sequences of them, such as the one exemplified in extract (7):

(7)   A grand and dreamy structure, of immense proportions; golden with old mosaics; <u>redolent</u> of perfumes; <u>dim</u> with the smoke of incense; <u>costly</u> in treasure of precious stones and metals, <u>glittering</u> through iron bars; <u>holy</u> with the bodies of deceased saints; […] <u>dark</u> with carved woods and coloured marbles; <u>obscure</u> in its vast heights, and lengthened distances; <u>shining</u> with silver lamps and winking lights; <u>unreal</u>, <u>fantastic</u>, <u>solemn</u>, <u>inconceivable</u> throughout. (from *Pictures*)

Interestingly, not only do most of the adjectives in this example post-modify the same head noun *structure*, but are in turn post-modified by prepositional phrases (e.g. *with old mosaics*).

Handbook also contains such sequences of adjectives, which, however, tend to be shorter, as can be seen from example (8):

(8)   The roofs are supported by ancient arches, <u>lofty and massy</u>, some <u>circular</u>, some <u>pointed</u>, standing upon huge cylindrical pillars, with angular leafy capitals, like those found in the crypts of churches. (from *Handbook*)

With regard to the use of intricate sequences of adjectives, *Pictures* thus appears to be stylistically more elaborate than *Handbook*.

Examples (9) and (10) illustrate Dickens's use of adjectives in clauses/phrases of comparison and degree:

(9)   The marshy town was *so* intensely <u>dull</u> and <u>flat</u>, *that* the dirt upon it seemed not to have come there in the ordinary course … (from *Pictures*)

(10) From Juliet's home, to Juliet's tomb, is a transition *as* <u>natural</u> to the visitor, *as* to fair Juliet herself, or to the proudest Juliet that ever has taught the torches to burn bright in any time. (from *Pictures*)

The structure in the former extract is introduced by the degree adverb *so* and is complemented by a *that* comparative clause, while the one in the latter is realised by the presence of the adverb *as* modifying the adjective *natural* followed by a *to*-prepositional phrase and by another instance of *as* followed by yet another two phrases. As can be seen, these structures

enable Dickens to compare the attractions he visited and the people he met to others with whom the readers should already be familiar, and thus add clarity and descriptive precision to his writing.

Finally, extracts (11) and (12) exemplify Dickens's comparatively more frequent use of adjectives in exclamative clauses:

(11) 'Only the poor, Signore! It's very cheerful. It's very lively. *How* green it is, how cool! It's like a meadow!
(12) Heaven knows how beautiful they may have been at one time.

For literary writers, this type of clauses represents a valuable linguistic resource to express their evaluations and emotions openly and directly. Compilers of guidebooks, by contrast, might not have this freedom of expression.

6.2 Frequency of adjective types
In order to investigate the degree of variability in the choice of adjective types in the two texts, the type/token ratio for adjectives was calculated. Furthermore, in the attempt to explore the level of sophistication of the choice of adjectives, the frequency of use of adjective types in the two corpora was mapped onto the frequencies attested in the CLMET corpus.

The type/token ratio for adjectives shows that the repertoire of adjectives Dickens used in *Pictures* is wider than the one employed by Murray in *Handbook*. More precisely, the values of the indices are 41.48 and 37.59 respectively.

The bar graph in Figure 1 represents the percentages of the types of adjectives in the two corpora divided into nine lists, according to their frequency in the CLMET corpus, and the percentages of types not found in any list.
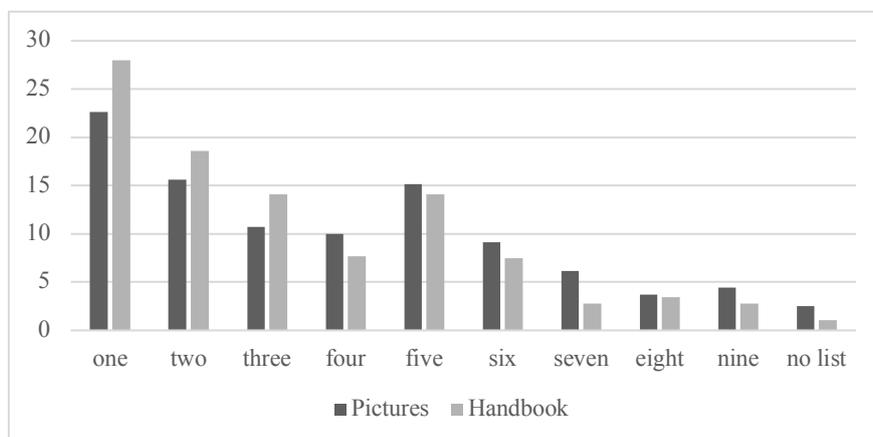
Figure 1. Percentages of adjective types across the nine CLEMT-based frequency lists in the two corpora

As can be seen, the highest percentages of types in both corpora are associated with lists one to three and with list five. That is, the most frequent adjective types in the CLMET corpus tend to also frequently occur in the two corpora under investigation. It can also be noticed that while *Handbook* contains more adjective types in the first three lists, *Pictures* scores more types associated with lists four to nine or with no list. That is, not only does Dickens use more adjective tokens and types than Murray, but also employs adjectives that were infrequent and/or rare in late modern English. This factor is likely to lend originality and possibly (perceived) creativity to Dickens's writing.

Table 6 displays the three most recurrent adjective types in each one of the nine lists of the two corpora and three from those not occurring in any list:

Table 6. The three most frequent adjectives in each corpus across the frequency lists

Lists	*Pictures*	*Handbook*
one	old, great, little	great, ancient, remarkable
two	lofty, brave, cheerful	celebrated, splendid, Greek
three	monstrous, picturesque, stately	finest, Gothic, Eastern
four	fantastic, grim, mournful	Byzantine, classical, preferred

Lists	*Pictures*	*Handbook*
five	rusty, fanciful, massive	Venetian, pointed, adjoining
six	swollen, Tuscan, replete	allegorical, Ducal, azure
seven	marshy, bright-eyed, covered	Corinthian, legendary, ascending
eight	Etruscan, grass-grown, votive,	Doric, Ionic, Franciscan
nine	steeple-crowned, balustraded, blue-tailed	arabesque, alchemical, allusive
no list	gauntest, abrupter, ivy-coloured	crenulated, stellated, Vicentine

From this frequency-based selection of adjectives, at least three main features emerge. Firstly, *great* is common to both corpora, and indeed scores the second highest number of adjective tokens in *Pictures* and the largest one in *Handbook*. Extracts (13) and (14) display five concordance lines for *great* from each corpus, and show that this adjective is used in both of them to describe either the size of monuments, places or entities or the importance of something/someone:

(13) always stopping for him, with   great gravity. This disorder,
monstrous ugly Tuscan, with a   great purple moustache, of which
man with a flaring torch, into a   great, cold room, where there were
influence. It is miserable to see   great works of art –
in their roofs. In one part a   great tower rose into the air (from *Pictures*)
(14) particularly than before, to the   great fresco works existing in the part
Tuscan or Volgare. It possesses   great softness and pleasantness of sound,
by Sansovino. It stands like the   great altar, under a
unbounded admiration for the   great Roman philosopher. The Venetians,
been their origin, they are of   great curiosity and antiquity. (from *Handbook*)

Secondly, *Pictures* appears to be characterised by the presence of a large variety of descriptive/evaluative adjectives (e.g. *brave*, *picturesque*, *grim*), while *Handbook* is less rich in them. In contrast, this contains a large number of adjectives indicating nationalities or geographic origin and artistic styles (e.g. *Greek*, *Venetian*, *Byzantine*), and also purely descriptive adjectives (e.g. *adjoining*, *pointed*, *ascending*).

Thirdly, only the former corpus shows a recurrent use of hyphenated compound adjectives, the use of which is discussed in the next section.

6.3 Hyphenated compound adjectives

As seen in Section 3 above, word compounding is a powerful resource through which English neologisms can be created. As is apparent from Table 7, Dickens makes a more extensive use of this typology of adjectives than Murray. In *Pictures*, 52 adjective types (7.65% of the adjective types) and 58 adjective tokens (3.54% of the adjective tokens) are hyphenated compound ones, while in the *Handbook* the percentages are lower, viz. 9 adjectives types (1.92%) and 10 adjective tokens (0.80%).

Table 7. Hyphenated compound adjectives across CLMEC frequency word lists

Hyphenated compound adjectives		*Pictures*		*Handbook*
Lists	types	tokens	types	tokens
five	3	4	1	1
six	4	4	2	3
seven	4	6	1	1
eight	9	10	1	1
nine	18	20	3	3
no list	15	15	1	1
Total	52	58	9	10

Interestingly, these adjectives are associated with lists five to nine only. Furthermore, most of them belong to either list nine or to no list and are used only once in the corpora, especially the types in no list. This suggests that some of these compound adjectives may represent linguistic choices specific to Dickens's writing.

Table 8 gives examples of hyphenated compound adjectives from *Pictures* mapped onto lists five to nine. It also shows all the instances that are not found in any list.

Table 8. Selection of hyphenated compound adjectives in *Pictures*

Lists	Examples
five	e.g. good-humoured (2), good-looking (1), middle-aged (1)
six	e.g. one-half (1), business-like (1), light-hearted (1)
seven	e.g. bright-eyed (3), full-blown (1), sea-sick (1)
eight	e.g. grass-grown (2), far-famed (1), half-formed (1)
nine	e.g. steeple-crowned (3), blue-tailed (1), dark-complexioned (1)
no list	viz. beautifully-finished (1), fiery-eyed (1), gauzy-looking (1), grim-visaged (1), hairy-faced (1), half-delicious (1), half-sorrowful (1), ivy-coloured (1), jealous-looking (1), long-untrodden (1), marble-fitted (1), metal-covered (1), phantom-looking (1), smooth-fronted (1) walled-up (1)

As can be seen, only four adjective types are repeated, i.e. *good-humoured*, *bright-eyed*, *grass-grown* and *steeple-crowned*, while the remaining ones are used only once, which again suggests that at least some of them might represent Dickens's original and creative uses.

Some of these compound adjectives consist of an adjective combined with another part of speech. For instance, in extract (15) the basic adjective *good* (11 tokens) is used on its own or in combination with *humoured* and *looking*:

(15) up in miserable ground, and every   good thing that has its birth in sorrow
     who was very conversational and   good-humoured) travelled on, until nearly
     good ones. Seeing this little man (a   good-humoured little man he was, who
     day's journey, as wild and savagely   good-looking a vagabond as you would

All these adjectives obviously express a positive connotation. However, while the basic form denotes any good thing, the compound ones express specific positive evaluations/connotations of people (e.g. a man, a vagabond).

Hyphenated compound adjectives involving colours convey more specific denotations than the basic adjectives. For example, the terms *blue* (6 tokens), *dark* (17 tokens) and *red* (12 tokens) are used in both their basic form and in compounded ones, as illustrated by extract (16):

(16) Anything springing out of that   blue water, with that scenery
     very loose stomach: dressed in a   blue-tailed coat down to his heels,

with white cottages, patches of	dark olive woods, country
to see. He was a tall, stout-made,	dark-complexioned fellow, with a
straw bonnet and green veil, and a	red spencer; and who always
stock of poultry, and groups of	red-cheeked children, there was an

As can be noticed, the compound adjectives offer more specific and refined descriptions and/or evaluations of people and objects (e.g. *blue-tailed, dark-complexioned, red-cheeked*).

The concordance lines in extract (17) exemplify the use of *bright* (13 tokens) and of its inflected and derived forms, and show that they are all used to both describe the brightness of objects and to connote the facial expressions of a woman:

(17)	incense, tinkling bells, priests in	bright vestments: pictures, tapers,
	Their leaves are now of the	brightest gold and deepest red; and
	admitted, at a shattered gate, by a	bright-eyed woman who was
	tank, or water-trough, which the	bright-eyed woman – drying her I could do
	no more than believe that the	bright-eyed woman believed; so I

A few more instances of compound adjectives consist of combinations of the adverb *half* with other parts of speech, as shown by the lines in extract (18):

(18)	where the furniture, half awful,	half grotesque, was mouldering
	to want to come out. What a strange,	half-sorrowful and half-delicious doze
	passed before me, came back like	half-formed dreams; and a crowd of
	so very wistful and anxious, in the	half-opened doorway, and there was so

As is apparent, *half* occurs before both hyphenated and unhyphenated compound adjectives that are often used in pairs (e.g. *half-sorrowful and half-delicious*).

7. Conclusions

This paper has adopted a corpus stylistic approach to the study of adjectives in *Pictures* and in *Handbook*. It has discussed corpus-derived data that back up the hypothesis, put forward by literary critics, that the former was meant to be a piece of travel writing targeting the British (armchair) travellers of the time, while the latter was a guidebook for British (would-be) tourists. As regards the use of adjectives overall, *Pictures* displays a

larger number of adjective tokens and types than *Handbook*. A more fine-grained qualitative analysis of the co(n)texts of use of the adjective tokens has brought to light that the former text contains a higher number of postposed adjectives, some of which occur in long sequences in the same sentence, and of adjectives employed in comparative structures and exclamative clauses. Furthermore, the study of the frequency of adjective types and of their distribution across the CLMET frequency lists has shown that *Pictures* scores larger amounts of adjectives that were infrequently used in late modern English. It also features more hyphenated compound adjectives than *Handbook*. This last typology of adjectives, in particular, enables Dickens to describe and evaluate the sites and the people he talks about in his work in detailed ways. These findings thus suggest that *Pictures* is more oriented towards subjectively and creatively describing and evaluating nineteenth-century Northern Italy and its people rather than towards objectively informing its readers about Italy and guiding them on their tours.

The picturesque descriptions provided in *Pictures* are likely to share style markers with (some of) Dickens's major works. Future quantitative and qualitative research could compare *Pictures* to Dickens's novels and short stories and check whether, and to what extent, the uses of adjectives described in this paper are also attested in the author's main literary production.

From a methodological perspective, this study has illustrated how the application of corpus stylistic methods can provide quantitative and qualitative linguistic evidence in support of (or against) a given critical reading of a literary text. In particular, the application of frequency lists derived from a reference corpus representing the language of a given period (e.g. the CLMET corpus for late modern English) has the potential to be especially revealing in comparing literary texts with each other and/or in exploring the extent to which a literary text differs from a comparable non-literary one. This and similar frequency-based analyses, complemented by qualitative ones, could thus be applied to the study of a variety of other lexico-grammatical and rhetorical features of a text or corpus of literary texts.

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