

Syntax in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

These examples are taken from the very full account of eighteenth- to nineteenth-century English syntax by David Denison in S. Romaine (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the English Language*, vol. IV: 1776–1997 (Cambridge University Press, 1998), where many other instances and details of the sources can be obtained.

Noun number: I could not make out I had so many acquaintance (Keats, 1819)

Determiner: when none such troubles oppress me (Keats, 1819)

Predeterminer: And then he told it her all (Trollope, 1860–1)

Postdeterminer: A many of them played the truant (Parley, 1840)

Premodifying adverb: A monstrous fine young mam (Bulwer-Lytton, 1840)

Tense: Jenny & James are walked to Charmouth this afternoon (Austen, 1804)

Aspect: I really think this illness is being a good thing for me (Froude, 1834)

Passive: But are there six labourers' sons educating in the universities at this moment? (Kingsley, 1850)

Modal: Shall you miss your train? (Green, 1862)

Negative: I assume you had no plans yesterday as you wrote not (Dowson, 1890)

Tag question: Soaper praises people, don't he? (Taylor and Reade, 1852)

Question: How came you to make such a mistake as this? (Eliot, 1871–2)

Indirect object: repeat her some of your own verses (Sheridan, 1777)

Phrasal verb: You have been bred up in the country (Dickens, 1836–7)

Inversion: Now will he go (Sheridan, 1779)

Imperative: Do not you add to the idle race (Porter, 1807)

Noun clause: I beg you will not do anything of the kind (Eliot, 1871–2)

Relative clause: He married in his father's life-time, who gave up his own apartment to him (Reeve, 1778)

Compound conjunction: I would send it, but that I am sure you could not read half of it (Martineau, 1859)