

**THE POSITION OF THE  
ATTRIBUTIVE  
ADJECTIVE IN THE  
DON QUIXOTE, TOME XIX**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649258574

The Position of the Attributive Adjective in the Don Quixote, tome XIX by George Griffin  
Brownell

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**GEORGE GRIFFIN BROWNELL**

**THE POSITION OF THE  
ATTRIBUTIVE  
ADJECTIVE IN THE  
DON QUIXOTE, TOME XIX**



THE POSITION  
OF THE ATTRIBUTIVE ADJECTIVE  
IN THE *DON QUIXOTE*

---

MACON, PROTAT FRÈRES, IMPRIMEURS.

---

GEORGE G. BROWNELL

---

THE POSITION  
OF THE ATTRIBUTIVE ADJECTIVE  
IN THE *DON QUIXOTE*

---

Extrait de la *Revue Hispanique*, tome XIX

---

UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

NEW YORK, PARIS  
1908

THE POSITION  
OF THE ATTRIBUTIVE ADJECTIVE  
IN THE *DON QUIXOTE*

---

The apparent freedom with which the attributive adjective either precedes or follows the substantive in French territory has been the subject of much consideration during the past twenty-five years, and the laws governing this double position, although peculiarly elusive, have been characterized and reduced to a fair state of order. The same phenomenon in Spanish has never been especially investigated, so that we are confined to the necessarily brief and practical statements of the grammarians. The problem of adjective position, however, cannot be considered solved until we explain why post-position, or pre-position, corresponds to one kind or another of definite relation between substantive and adjective<sup>1</sup>. Hence, in the present study, formal rules, based on a majority of cases and treating variants as exceptions, have been laid aside, and the logical process has been sought in accordance with which the position of the adjective, or substantive, concept is determined.

It is undoubtedly true in Spanish, as has been clearly shown in French<sup>2</sup>, that the adjective has been placed differently at different epochs, also that an explanation of certain modern constructions is to be found only through the discovery of the historical foundation upon which they rest. The present investigation has

---

1. Cf. Tobler, *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, X, p. 307.

2. Schöningh, *Die Stellung des attributiven Adjektivs im Französischen*, 1899, p. 60.



been confined to the *Don Quixote*, hoping that it may be followed by a similar study of the Old Spanish period, and later extended to the usage of the best modern stylists. The aim has been to establish the underlying principles in accordance with which the Spanish language, as used by Cervantes, either invariably places the adjective before the noun, after the noun, or allows a freedom of choice in position. The edition of the *Don Quixote* used is that published by James Fitzmaurice-Kelly and John Ormsby<sup>1</sup>, which is based upon the first edition, and contains the important subsequent readings. All references are to volume, page, and line of this text; when the volume number is not stated, the first volume is understood.

To treat of the order of words is, in a manner, to treat of the order of ideas<sup>2</sup>, and the relation between substantive and adjective is the same as that between substance and phenomenon<sup>3</sup>. In accordance with the logically arranged word position of the Romance languages<sup>4</sup>, the element which first comes into consciousness, when the idea of the object and its quality are considered, is that which retains its full value, while the second element receives color from the idea which has already entered the mind<sup>5</sup>. Everything is seen as if in the light of the first representation. Thus, if the idea of the quality precede, there is more freedom and less definiteness of its elements than in the opposite case; the quality is grasped in its entirety, while the following object is essentially modified by the idea that has been previously

---

1. London, 1898, 1899, 2 vols.

2. Weil, *De l'ordre des mots dans les langues anciennes comparées aux langues modernes*, Paris, 1879, p. 1.

3. Schönningh, p. 12.

4. Weil, p. 50; Cron, *Die Stellung des attributiven Adjektivs im Altfranzösischen*, Strassburg, 1891, p. 85.

5. Tobler, *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft*, VI, pp. 169, 170 (1869).

expressed. If, on the contrary, the object stand first, it is as yet unrestricted, and is conceived in its complete meaning, while the quality loses such of its elements as cannot be brought into harmony with it. The quality here adds something external which does not change the essential nature of the object.

Inasmuch as the position in which the adjective retains its full value is its most forceful position, it is that which it will naturally assume when there is an appeal to the emotions. Gröber thus makes a practical application of this principle when he says that the adjective which precedes its substantive qualifies from an emotional standpoint, while the adjective which follows characterizes the object logically <sup>1</sup>.

Meyer-Lübke, after an examination of the work of his predecessors, tells us that the adjective in post-position individualizes the substantive, while in pre-position it completes its idea <sup>2</sup>.

When, then, the speaker unites his personal valuation of the object with the idea of quality, when he expresses his feelings, or desires to arouse those of his hearers, he places the adjective which denotes this quality in the position which calls out its full meaning and strength. If, on the contrary, he reports disinterestedly, if he merely describes from an objective point of view and in accordance with reason, wishing to define the object more closely or to distinguish it from other like concepts, he first expresses the substantive idea, which is now the important one, and afterward the modification or attribute. In other words, the substantive concept when predominant, being characterized by the distinguishing adjective in accordance with reason, occupies the first place. If, however, the qualification be subjective, addressing the feelings or expressing a personal valuation, the attribute takes the emphatic pre-position.

---

1. *Grundriss I*, p. 214.

2. *Grammaire*, III, 730.

Again, naming the quality first awakens the desire for the representation of the object with which it may unite, and, upon its expression, the union is **much** closer than in the opposite case, where the suspense is at once relieved by the satisfying object, while the attribute may be added almost as an after-thought. When, therefore, the quality denoted by the adjective is contained in the idea expressed by the substantive, the two are so closely bound together as to form a single concept, and the adjective may stand in pre-position although there is no appeal to the emotions. It is to be noted that the meaning inherent in the adjective is **not** the decisive factor in determining its position, but the intention of the speaker in each instance.

The normal position of the adjective may be changed by that stylistic element which seeks beauty of form, known as the *aesthetic influence*. It is plainly manifest in the following examples, where the variation of word position is due to an effort to preserve the balance and harmony of the phrase.

*Dichosa edad y siglos dichosos aquellos á quien los antiguos pusieron nombre de dorados, 85, 35.*

Lo primero que se le ofreció á la visita de Sancho fué, espetado en un asador de un olmo *entero*, un *entero* novillo; II, 160, 11.

Vió, dice la historia, el rostro *mismo*, la *misma* figura, el *mismo* aspecto, la *misma* fisonomía, la *misma* efigie, la perspectiva *misma* del bachiller Sanson, II, 116, 23.

Throughout the present study the terms *emotional* and *circumstantial* are used to designate the adjectives on either side of the great dividing line between pre- and post-position. These words are to be understood in their most general signification, the emotional adjective exhibiting at least a slight degree of mental excitement, while the circumstantial adjective adds a circumstance or detail from an impersonal and merely objective point of view.