

Syntactic Deviations and Semantic Oddities in Cody Fry's *Pictures of Mountains* Album

Ana Maria Jati Aryani
anamaria.aryani@gmail.com

Made Frida Yulia
frida@usd.ac.id

Universitas Sanata Dharma

ABSTRACT

This study identified the syntactic deviations and semantic oddities in the song lyrics of the *Pictures of Mountains* album by Cody Fry. The lyrics of the songs were pleasant to listen to. However, there were some intentional deviations, which could catch the listeners' attention. In order to explore that phenomenon, this research employed qualitative content analysis to analyze the lyrics of eleven songs in the *Pictures of Mountains* album. One song out of twelve was not included as the object of this research due to the absence of lyrics in it. The analysis revealed that this album showed two types of syntactic deviations. Those were 44 instances of omission and 2 types of addition, which varied from parts of speech, clauses, and particles. Nevertheless, misordering and misformation, as other types of syntactic deviations, did not appear in the album. On the other hand, 10 occurrences paradox and an example pleonasm recognized as forms of semantic oddities in the album. Meanwhile, periphrasis and oxymoron were nonexistent in all the song lyrics of the mentioned album. The findings of this research contribute to linguistic study by pointing out how syntactic deviations and semantic oddities serve as intentional linguistic variations in song lyrics. Moreover, it offers new insights on the contributions of the songwriter's works to the discussion about language and its creativity. Lastly, it serves as proof that linguistic phenomena vary across literary works, such that language can be modified to enhance the unique expression and emotional portrayal.

Key words: Qualitative Content Analysis; Semantic Oddities; Song Lyrics Analysis; Syntactic Deviations

INTRODUCTION

Songs are part of human communication as a form of language use, which conveys meaning with its artistic forms. Songs, as one of the various forms of literary works, convey the messages of the lyricists' emotional expressions through their lyrics and melodies (Simorangkir & Sofiani, 2023). Songs become the poetic work that is passed down across generations, enabling humans to express their emotions and ideas (Sumbad, 2025). Songs have long tended to be inseparable from people's lives, becoming the symbolization of identity in nations, communities, and cultures all over the world. Aside from that, a study by Pujiati et al. (2024) showed that

songs can assist language learning in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, as they help the young learners in mastering various vocabulary and increasing motivations. In another context, songs can serve as support for the cancer patients' well-being during their therapy (Bailey, 1984). Therefore, songs have their way of connecting people all around the world through interactions with one another.

Song lyrics serve as a medium to show not only the feelings or nuance intended by the songwriters but also linguistic creativity in the words that they use. Oftentimes, the songwriters choose to deviate from the standard grammar rules to highlight the song lyrics' rhyme, catchiness, and ease of understanding. Previous studies revealed that singers such as Arthur Nery, Beyoncé, Lady Gaga, and SB19 use double negatives, omission of verbs, incorrect subject-verb agreement, and misuse of pronouns in their song lyrics to enhance the expressiveness, rhythm, and reflection of real-life spoken utterance patterns (Sumbad, 2025; Uktolseja, 2020). The song lyrics of the *Pictures of Mountains* album were chosen as the objects of the present research. This choice aligned with the studies by Rahmawati et al. (2022) and Pujiati et al. (2024), which corresponded to the idea that song lyrics were valuable media that could be used academically as the tools to help audience understand language elements and the reasons or meanings behind their usage. Such research contributed to a deeper analysis of the process of meaning-making, linguistic choices, and the relationship between language and feelings among people nowadays (Silalahi et al., 2024). The study of song lyrics aided in revealing how language was used and constructed to shape the conveyance of meanings and expressions that were intended by the songwriters.

Leech (1969) argued that foregrounding is used in song lyrics to highlight the artistic and creative innovations, even though they appear as deviations of language. In the use of poetic language, "foregrounding" enables literature to show meanings that are deeper and complex enough to be understood in everyday words. Hence, those deviations are intentional and typically acceptable, as most songs are meant to serve as a medium of aesthetic expression and entertainment for the listeners. Foregrounding can be attained through linguistic manipulations, especially through the use of syntactic deviations and semantic oddities. Leech (1969) claimed that deviation in semantics is the presence of "absurdity" or nonsensical words that disobey the standard language rules. This led to the view of semantic oddity that appears in the usage of language in day-to-day life and literary works. Furthermore, Leech (1969) stated that semantic oddity can be differentiated into five types, which are pleonasm, oxymoron, tautology, paradox, and periphrasis.

Previous studies have explored syntactic deviations (Gafur et al., 2021; Saggi et al., 2025), sentence patterns along with phrase structures (Daulay et al., 2021; Rahmawati et al., 2022; Rizkiyah et al., 2023; Sumbad, 2025; Therendy et al., 2024; Uktolseja, 2020), semantic deviation (Anggraeni et al., 2022, Ibrahim et al., 2020; Ilahi et al., 2023; Lestari, 2018; Tamara et al., 2022), and semantic oddities (Ezenwoali & Ugwu, 2019). Each study primarily focused on selected poems

(Ezenwoali & Ugwu, 2019; Ibrahim et al., 2020; Ilahi et al., 2023), poetry collections (Lestari, 2018; Tamara et al., 2022) selected songs of chosen singers (Anggraeni et al., 2022; Rizkiyah et al., 2023; Therendy et al., 2024) and a specific song (Daulay et al., 2021; Rahmawati et al., 2022), rather than a full album of any songwriters or singers. Some of those previous studies explored the semantic deviations, which are the umbrella of honest deception, transference of meaning, and semantic oddities in poems, poetry collections, and songs (Anggraeni et al., 2022; Ibrahim et al., 2020; Ilahi et al., 2023; Lestari, 2018; Tamara et al., 2022). On the other hand, previous studies by Gafur et al. (2021) and Saggu et al. (2025) have mainly concentrated on syntactic deviation using different research objects and theoretical frameworks from this study. Additionally, the study by Ezenwoali and Ugwu (2019) explored semantic oddities with different analytical focus. However, the current study expanded the research of the mentioned topic by analyzing the song lyrics of the *Pictures of Mountains* album using Dulay et al.'s (1982) theory and further explored the semantic oddities aspect. This study analyzed the topic of semantic oddities, which has received limited attention in recent academic research, through Leech's (1969) theory. This intended to provide an alternative perspective on the linguistic study of song lyrics in an album.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Related Studies

Some previous studies have explored the syntax of song lyrics in English, uncovering how songwriters use the words and manipulate the sentence or clause structure creatively in their works. One of the studies about this topic was done by Daulay et al. (2021), who analyzed the phrase structures in a song entitled "You Raise Me Up" by Josh Groban. They revealed that the syntactic process often enhances rhythm, poetic expression, and the meaning of the songs. They highlighted the importance of syntactic structures in shaping the songs, yet the study did not further explore the syntactic deviations. Thus, the current study aimed to expand the research about the syntactic study of song lyrics, but with the focus on the deviations, while also involving the analysis of the odd aspects of semantics.

A study conducted by Rizkiyah et al. (2023) examined syntactic patterns in Taylor Swift's *Lover* album. They recognized many sentence types that conveyed the emotional depth and narrative development in the lyrics. The study revealed that pop songs often used both simple and complex sentence structures to convey meaning in their lyrics. However, the study did not include a further investigation about the syntactic aspects. Therefore, the present study aimed to explore the deviations in syntactic level, as well as the semantic aspects of song lyrics, to provide new insights into the linguistic studies about songs in an album.

Apart from that, the study done by Rahmawati et al. (2022) analyzed Annet's song lyrics using phrase structure rules. Their study found the creative use of clause structures for poetic expression. They emphasized that lyrics were valuable

materials to aid the process of analyzing language use. Hence, the current study used song lyrics from a different songwriter as the focus of research to look into creative use of language. The study aimed to discover the special use of language in the perspective of deviations in syntax and semantically unique usage to enhance the poetic style.

The former study by Therendy et al. (2024) also explored some pop songs. This one came from Louis Tomlinson's song lyrics, whose objective was to identify the recurring sentence patterns. Despite the valuable findings, the study was still limited to the syntactic analysis. There was no further explanation of the semantic aspects of the songs, which related directly to the songs' meanings. Meanwhile, the present study explored the semantic oddities related to meanings while paying attention to the syntactic analysis, specifically the syntactic deviations topic.

The study by Lestari (2018) investigated semantic deviation and its functions in a poetry collection. It addressed semantic deviation, a broad term that covered semantic oddity, transference of meaning, and honest deception. It provided the examples of periphrasis, oxymoron, and paradox as part of semantic oddity, along with synecdoche, metonymy, metaphor, and simile as aspects of the transference of meaning. In terms of honest deception, they found hyperbole, litotes, and irony as instances. It highlighted that the functions of the mentioned semantic deviations were to bring additional imagery, to add emotional intensity, to make the imagery more engaging, and to deliver utterances briefly. Even though this previous study presented various types of semantic deviations, they did not go further to analyze the syntactic ones. Thus, the present study included an analysis of syntactic deviations, along with semantic oddities, specifically pleonasm, that the previous study did not provide. The current study focus was to utilize another type of object, which was a whole song album that would differ from the previously mentioned study.

The previous study by Ibrahim et al. (2020) discovered the semantic deviation in an Arabic poem titled "The Detective" and an English poem titled "Ash-Wednesday". They found that there were instances of pleonasm, tautology, oxymoron, paradox, and periphrasis in both poems as types of semantic oddities. Besides, in terms of transference of meaning, both poems covered synecdoche, metaphor, simile, and metonymy. Aside from that, the hyperbole, litotes, and irony were also present in both poems as examples of honest deception. However, they only focused on the semantic aspect, which the present study addressed in the form of semantic oddities. The present study also investigated the analysis of syntactic deviations in an entire album by an American songwriter to broaden the research focus.

The former study by Anggraeni et al. (2022) examined the semantic deviation and its functions using Leech (1969) theory. This study selected eight songs in Maroon 5's V album to be analyzed using the stylistic approach. They identified three types of semantic deviations, which were semantic oddity, transference of meaning, and honest deception. The findings showed that there were eight kinds of semantic

deviations that occurred in those research objects, which were pleonasm, oxymoron, paradox, simile, metaphor, irony, hyperbole, and litotes, with metaphor being the most used deviation. They found that those deviations elicit additional imagery through metaphors, enabling creative pleasure and emotional depth in the words composed by the vocalist of the band, Adam Levine. This study by Anggraeni et al. (2022) examined selected songs in an album and used a broader term, which was “semantic deviations.” Meanwhile, the present study used the song lyrics of the whole album by a different songwriter and aimed to analyze the part of semantic deviations, which were semantic oddities, while complementing it with syntactic deviations.

A preceding study by Tamara et al. (2022) identified the semantic deviations, specifically in the transference of the meaning aspect. They explored the applications of simile in the poetry collection by Ilda Karwayu, called “Bintang Kesepian dalam Tubuhmu.” Their objective was also to identify the implications of that semantic deviation in language learning in the Indonesian high school context. They found many examples of the words that indicated simile in the poems, and the findings support poetry learning in Kurikulum 2013 (Indonesian education curriculum), particularly in aiding students’ ability to analyze and write poetry by understanding its literary elements. This study specifically explored one aspect of semantic deviation, but did not examine the research object from a syntactic perspective. Therefore, the present study aimed to put forth another side of semantic deviation, which is semantic oddities, along with syntactic deviations, to add another viewpoint about the linguistic study.

The former study by Ilahi et al. (2023) examined the semantic deviations in *The Dyak Chief* poem by Erwin Clarkson Garrett. Aside from analyzing the types of semantic deviations using Leech’s (1969) theory, the purpose of their study was also to explore how the deviations serve the meaning purpose of the research object. They found that the poem provided the examples of various semantic oddities (except for paradox), transference of meaning, and honest deception (except for litotes), with the most prominent being the use of metaphor as a form of meaning transference, followed by pleonasm as one of the types of semantic oddity. The semantic deviations were proven to reveal the poem’s narrative that emphasized the emotional aspect of the main character and highlighted the themes that were brought by the poet. They suggested that future research should focus more on other forms of literary criticism. Therefore, the present study aimed to identify the syntactic deviations and also included an analysis of semantic oddities, using different research objects.

The study by Ezenwoali and Ugwu (2019) highlighted conversions in Dennis Brutus’ nine selected poems. They applied the theory of foregrounding by Mukarovsky (1964) and the concept of deviation by Leech (1969). They explored the conversion of words’ form from one to another and perceived them as neologisms. Even though they could categorize this kind of phenomenon as a lexical deviation, they label this as a production of semantic oddity due to the

utterances' bizarreness. Thus, the present study aimed to add different perspectives of semantic oddities into the literal categories that were stated by Leech (1969), which were pleonasm, periphrasis, paradox, oxymoron, and tautology. Additionally, the current study also took into account the exploration of syntactic deviations in a different research object, specifically song lyrics for an album.

A study by Gafur et al. (2021) identified the types and functions of syntactic deviation in Ed Sheeran's selected song lyrics. They found that double negation, deviation of verbs, omission, deviation of prepositions, anastrophe, deviation of articles, and hypallage were present. Those marked the divergent syntactic aspects in seven Ed Sheeran songs. However, some aspects of syntactic deviations were not present in those songs they analyzed using the theories by Crystal (2008) and Trask (1996). Those were overgeneralization, deviation of nouns, and deviation of pronouns. Nevertheless, the present study analyzed the syntactic deviations with more varied types in different song lyrics from a whole album while also investigating the semantic oddities' applications.

More recently, another study done by Saggu et al. (2025) analyzed the syntactic deviations in Caribbean singers' selected songs. The theory being used by Saggu et al. (2025) was syntactic deviation by Leech (1969), which they claimed to consist of overgeneralizations, double negations, omissions, deviations, use of slang, and hyperbaton. Meanwhile, in those selected songs, they found some deviations, namely, omission, deviation, use of slang, and hyperbaton in the "So Big," "Replay," "Umbrella," and "Your Love" lyrics. However, this previous study did not explore any other linguistic deviations than syntactic deviations, and they selected one to two songs sung by three singers randomly. Furthermore, they suggested future studies to explore more songs and other linguistic deviations in poetry, songs, or speeches. Therefore, the current study identified more songs from a different songwriter's album than the previous study, while also expanding the analysis to another linguistic deviation. The linguistic deviation that became the focus of the present study was semantic oddities, which were one of the aspects of semantic deviations.

Songs and Stylistic Deviations

Songs have been recognized as the product of literature since the medieval era, in which the lyrics show the "acoustic features of literary phenomena" (Klarer, 2023). Songs have a unique position in language studies because they combine poetic expressions as the form of language creativity in the lyrics, and musical arrangement to live them up. However, linguists have realized that this topic is eventually linked to the literature studies, where the linguistic principles were manipulated and applied in various ways (Ching et al., 2014). In linguistic analyzes, the main concern of analyzing songs was how the lyrics appeared to be, as it focused on "the study of language and languages, either by themselves or in comparison" (Kortmann, 2020). Distinctive from academic writing, lyrics often deviate on purpose from the grammatical norms. The deviations sometimes have non-literal

meaning, but they are used to excite emotions, match the rhythm between lines, create certain effect for the songs, or emphasize the meanings of certain utterances.

The deviations in song lyrics are one of the things that are studied in the scope of stylistics. As a subdiscipline of linguistics, stylistics emphasizes the systematic analysis of style in language (Rivera, 2023). More importantly, stylistics primarily focuses on the style in general, although it also includes the concept of deviation (Manqoush & Al-Wadhaf, 2021). The lyrics of a song certainly have some patterns or styles that differ from one another and from other types of writing. This unique appearance emerges due to some deviations that are proven by the lyricists' diction. Although songs are different from each other, they share the same trait to make them stand out and to match the musical arrangements.

One common trait that many songs share is that they deviate from certain aspects of standard languages, as it depends on the songwriters' choices and intentions. Jakobson (1960) explained that the poetic function of language was to deliver "the message for its own sake," which focused on how literary texts foregrounded their form and structure. In songs, foregrounding is intensified by rhyme, rhythm, and melody. Thus, the feature of foregrounding helps to create artistic or creative innovations in literary works and aided in revealing complex or deeper meaning in literary works, which the standard language could not convey.

Based on the foregrounding theory, which highlights that certain elements of literary works become prominent through linguistic deviations (Leech, 1969), there are two stylistic deviations that become the main focus of this study. The first is syntactic deviation, which refers to noticeable violations of grammar. Second, semantic oddities, which refer to non-literal, ambiguous, redundant, or unusual uses of words to enhance the poetic effects or to emphasize the parts of the songs. Songwriters integrate these deviations to build the mood, evoke emotions, and add the meaning and depth of the songs. This way, song lyrics not only become musical works but also literary-linguistic works that can be analyzed systematically.

Syntactic Deviations

To create a unique style in song lyrics, the songwriters involve the act of deviating from the standard language rules. According to Leech (1969), deviations in literary work can be differentiated into eight types: lexical, grammatical, phonological, graphological, semantic, dialectical, register, and historical deviations. The deviation at the syntactic level is categorized as a grammatical deviation, aside from the morphology category (Leech, 1969). Furthermore, in this study, a key element discussed is the act of alteration at the syntactic level that often serves as a sign of deeper meanings in poetic figures of speech, which is called "syntactic deviations" (Leech & Short, 2007).

Aligned to Leech's (1969) theory about grammatical deviations at the syntactic level, another theory by Dulay et al. (1982) about "Surface Strategy Taxonomy"

classified syntactic deviations into four types. Those classifications discussed the alteration of language in the surface structure or the obvious, intelligible parts of any sentence. According to Dulay et al. (1982), syntactic deviations can be classified as omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. Omission is concerned about the missing element in an utterance, while addition is the opposite of it. Additionally, misformation is about “the use of the wrong form of the morpheme of structure,” while misordering involves the “incorrect placement of morphemes in an utterance” (Dulay et al., 1982). Thus, those categories show that syntactic deviations fall under invalid use of grammar structure, rearrangements of words or phrases in utterances, and wrong arrangement of morphemes.

Semantic Oddities

Semantic oddities are another key aspect of linguistic deviation, which becomes another focus of the current study. This phenomenon is found in literary works to evoke an effect that shifts meanings of utterances from literal to figurative (Hashem & Muhi, 2021; Leech, 1969). This kind of deviation has several types that offer various effects on the work of literature. According to Leech (1969), semantic oddities can be divided into five types, namely pleonasm, oxymoron, tautology, paradox, and periphrasis.

Each semantic oddity possesses different impacts in literary works. Pleonasm concerns semantically redundant expressions in which the meaning is contained in the previous or next utterances. Meanwhile, an oxymoron is about combining two contradictory expressions that have no meaning literally (Leech, 1969). In addition to that, Leech (1969) noted that tautology is like adding unnecessary details to clear statements, while paradox is an absurd statement that has contradictory meanings inside it. Last but not least, periphrasis is about stating the lengthy utterance that is needless, as it can be inferred briefly (Leech, 1969). Thus, every type of semantic oddity is about additional parts of utterances that might look excessive but can actually create emphasis on some sentences they are in.

METHOD

Design and Samples

This study applied qualitative content analysis to analyze the meanings communicated in song lyrics. This research design enables researchers to interpret the data systematically and recognize patterns of meaning within the data (Krippendorff, 2019; Lim, 2024). The data source of this research was the *Pictures of Mountains* album by Cody Fry. The album consists of twelve songs, which are “Thinking about You,” “Take You There,” “Our Love,” “Photograph,” “Fantasietta on a Theme from ‘Photograph,’” “London,” “Wander Anymore/Dunes,” “What I Needed,” “Skipping Stones & Fireflies,” “Pictures of Mountains,” “If Only My Heart Could Speak,” and “Make It.” However, only eleven songs were purposefully selected, as the song, “Fantasietta on a Theme from ‘Photograph,’” is only

instrumental without any lyrics to be investigated. All of the selected songs were used as data for their patterns related to syntactic deviations and semantic oddities to be examined.

The selection of the *Pictures of Mountains* album as the source of data in this research was mainly based on its recognizable deviations from the standard English rules. It made the researchers interested to delve deeper into that phenomenon. The lyrics of the songs presented various syntactic deviations and semantically creative expressions that corresponded with the aim of this study. The lyrical elements allowed an extensive qualitative content analysis. Further, the songs depicted poetic and stylistic features, which made them suitable for the investigation on how linguistic deviations function to produce artistic and communicative sense.

Instrument and Procedure

In this research, the researchers themselves acted as the human instrument. This choice was based on the fact that the researchers can function as the primary interpretation and analysis instrument (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The frequency distribution of each phenomenon's type and amount of occurrence in the research objects was also recorded in two tables, one for syntactic deviation and the other for semantic oddities. Additionally, analysis tables were also utilized in the process of documenting the song lyrics, lines, and types of syntactic deviations or semantic oddities as evidence of the occurrence of those linguistic phenomena.

The research procedure was conducted through several steps. First, the song lyrics were accessed through a reliable website, genius.com, and the lines were chosen purposefully under the category of noticeable syntactic linguistics deviations. Second, the data were coded into two main categories, which are syntactic deviations and semantic oddities. Third, those categories were investigated further into more specific themes. The categorization was based on the "Surface Strategy Taxonomy" theory by Dulay et al (1982), which classified syntactic deviations into four, namely omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. On the other hand, the theory of "Semantic Oddities" by Leech (1969) was used to classify the five types of them, which are pleonasm, oxymoron, tautology, paradox, and periphrasis. Finally, the relevant data were narrated into findings and discussion, fitting the research topic.

Data Analysis

The data were examined using qualitative content analysis, adapted from the procedures by Krippendorff (2019). The analysis started with the process of identifying the lyrics from selected songs. The lines were then categorized to point out the linguistic patterns related to syntactic deviations and semantic oddities. The criteria that were used to identify the syntactic deviations followed Dulay et al.'s (1982) "Surface Strategy Taxonomy" theory. If the lines contained missing words or morphemes, they fell into the omission category, while if they used more words

or morphemes than they needed according to standard English rules, they were categorized as addition. Meanwhile, misordering concerned the wrong placement of morphemes, and misformation was about the incorrect form of morphemes or structures. On the other hand, the criteria for categorizing lines with semantic oddities were based on Leech's (1969) theory of "Semantic Oddities." If any lines contained semantically redundant expressions that repeated the meanings contained in other lines, they fell under the pleonasm category. If the lines contained absurd or conflicting ideas, then they were categorized as paradoxes. Apart from that, if the lines used a statement that restated what was implied and made them self-evidently true, they were categorized as tautologies. If the lines used semantically opposing terms that cannot be interpreted literally, they were examples of oxymorons. Last but not least, if the lines contained expressions in a roundabout way, and the meanings could have been expressed in brief wording, they would fall under the periphrasis category. The findings were documented using tables to specify the data that belong to the syntactic deviations and semantic oddities category.

The credibility of the analysis was enhanced by the expert validators' review process. The initial findings, including the interpretations, were reviewed by two validators who were knowledgeable in linguistics. Their feedback was used to improve the accuracy of the whole finding and sharpen the interpretation, and eventually to better prepare the research report.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Syntactic Deviations in *Pictures of Mountains* Album's Song Lyrics

The analysis about syntactic deviations in *Pictures of Mountains* is based on the surface strategy taxonomy by Dulay et al. (1982). This theory classifies what this research recognizes as syntactic deviations into four types, namely omission, additions, misformation, and misordering (Dulay et al., 1982). The total occurrence of syntactic deviations in the *Pictures of Mountains* album is displayed in Table 1. There were two types of syntactic deviations found in the album with various subtypes. This table also included the findings and perspective about the occurrence of syntactic deviations in the album.

There were 46 occurrences of syntactic deviations in the *Pictures of Mountains* album. Those syntactic deviations were differentiated into two big categories, which are omission and addition. In both of those big categories, the majority of them deviated from the figures of speech. There were 44 frequencies of omission from the ten songs. Meanwhile, the addition in this album was only presented twice in two different songs, which are "Our Love" and "What I Needed." There was only one song, "Photograph," which had zero syntactic deviation in the mentioned album. Even though misorderings and misformations are included in the theoretical framework of this study, they did not appear in the analyzed song lyrics, as all the lines used the accurate morpheme placement and formation.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Syntactic Deviations in the Chosen Album

Syntactic Deviation	Specific Type of Syntactic Deviation	Frequency
Omission	Omission of subject	20
	Omission of subject and auxiliary verb	4
	Omission of subject and action verb	4
	Omission of action verb	2
	Omission of linking verb	1
	Omission of action verb and object	1
	Omission of verb phrase	1
	Omission of prepositions	1
	Omission of conjunction	1
	Omission of independent clause	7
	Omission of particle	1
	Omission of direct object	1
Addition	Double negation	1
	Addition of subject	1
Total		46

The analysis of each song in the mentioned album is presented in Table 2 until Table 11, with each table discussing each song. Each table represented the songs that provided examples regarding the mentioned phenomenon. The classification table provided the lyrics that contained the syntactic deviations, the line in which they occur, and the category they were in.

Table 2. Syntactic Deviations in the Song "Thinking about You"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Syntactic Deviations
1.	"Can't stop thinking about you"	14 (chorus)	Omission

There was an example of syntactic deviation in the song "Thinking about You" as presented in Table 2. There was an omission of the subject before the verb in the line "*Can't stop thinking about you.*" The songwriter omitted the subject "I" at the beginning of that line. The lines before and after this line already stated the subject which it referred to, as to say, it was meant to put emphasize that the subject here kept on thinking about "you."

Table 3. Syntactic Deviations in the Song "Take You There"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Syntactic Deviations
1.	"The radio loud"	2 (verse 1)	Omission
2.	"But too late now"	4 (verse 1)	Omission
3.	"Driving 'til the sky starts turning gold"	7 (verse 1)	Omission
4.	"Sneaking onto beaches"	21 (verse 2)	Omission
5.	"Really too cold to swim"	23 (verse 2)	Omission

The song "Take You There" contained examples of syntactic deviation classified as omission. The omission of the linking verb "was" before the adjective "loud" in the line "The radio loud." Furthermore, the omission of independent clauses that functioned as the core subjects and verbs are evident in the lines "But too late now," "Driving 'til the sky starts turning gold," "Sneaking onto beaches," and "Really too cold to swim." Those kinds of omissions might be intended to shorten the lines to make them more concise and pleasing to be listened to.

Table 4. Syntactic Deviations in the Song "Our Love"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Syntactic Deviations
1.	"Cause we don't slow down for nothing"	16 (verse 2)	Addition
2.	"Right through walls like they're made of sand"	18 (pre-chorus)	Omission
3.	"Take on a hurricane (our love)"	24 (bridge)	Omission
4.	"Go back and do it again (our love)"	25 (bridge)	Omission

In the song "Our Love," there were also the syntactic deviations in the form of omission and addition, as displayed in Table 4. The songwriter omitted the subjects at the beginning of the lines, such as in "Take on a hurricane," and "Go back and do it." Meanwhile, the line, "Right through walls like they're made of sand," showed an example of the omission of an independent clause that should have consisted of a subject and action verb. The instances of omission in "Our Love" were intentional to introduce the nuance of the song in certain lines before the details were added in the following lines. On the other hand, the use of addition in this song was intended to make the line have an additional word that rhymed with the ending word of the preceding line. Additionally, the line, "Cause we don't slow down for nothing," which employed double negation, might be used to emphasize the idea that the subject "we" was truly unstoppable.

There was no syntactic deviation in the song "Photograph," as the song was clear enough and adhered to the normal formation, amount, and order of morphemes and words in utterances.

Table 5. Syntactic Deviations in the Song "London"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Syntactic Deviations
1.	"Stepping off the train to find some coffee"	5 (verse 2)	Omission
2.	"Or any kind of refuge from the cold"	6 (verse 2)	Omission
3.	"Sipping pisco sours in the corner of the room"	15 (verse 2)	Omission

In the song "London," there was one type of syntactic deviation, which was omission. The omission occurred in the subjects, such as in the lines, "Stepping off the train to find some coffee," "Or any kind of refuge from the cold," and "Sipping pisco sours in the corner of the room." Aside from the absence of subjects, the lines "Stepping off the train to find some coffee" and "Sipping pisco sours in the corner of the room" displayed the omission of auxiliary verbs. Meanwhile, the line, "Or any kind of refuge from the cold," also lacked an action verb, as it was the continuation of the preceding line. These kinds of omission were meant to add nuances to the new elements in the verse they were in.

Table 6. Syntactic Deviations in the Song "Wander Anymore/Dunes"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Syntactic Deviations
1.	"Swallowing my feet"	2 (verse 1)	Omission
2.	"Filling up the sky"	18 (verse 2)	Omission
3.	"Steals away my sight"	19 (verse 2)	Omission
4.	"And the compass in my mind"	21 (verse 2)	Omission
5.	"Is spinning all the time"	22 (verse 2)	Omission
6.	"Can't remember who I was before"	33 (chorus)	Omission

In the song "Wander Anymore/Dunes," as identified in Table 6, there was one instance of syntactic deviation variation, namely omission. Subjects were omitted in the lines, "Swallowing my feet," "Filling up the sky," "Steals away my sight," "Is spinning all the time," and "Can't remember who I was before." Meanwhile, the line, "And the compass in my mind," showed the lack of an action verb, which was caused by the splitting of the lines, which could be perceived as ambiguous if read or listened to as a single line. Those kinds of omission were utilized to make the lines more concise, as the omitted words had already been presented in the previous lines.

Table 7. Syntactic Deviations in the Song "What I Needed"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Syntactic Deviations
1.	"Close my eyes"	1 (verse 1)	Omission
2.	"Paid attention when you showed me"	11 (chorus)	Omission
3.	"Know what I needed to be"	15 (chorus)	Omission
4.	"Tried to act like it was worth it"	18 (chorus)	Omission
5.	"Call you up"	26 (verse 4)	Omission
6.	"Just hang up the phone"	29 (verse 4)	Omission
7.	"But images of you they last"	6 (verse 2)	Addition

In the song "What I Needed," two types of syntactic deviations were identified, which were omission and addition, as showed in Table 7. The songwriter omitted the subject "I" in phrases such as "Close my eyes," "Paid attention when you showed me," "Know what I needed to be," "Tried to act like it was worth it," "Call you up," and "Just hang up the phone." This kind of omission were meant to introduce variation to the lines so that they would not be monotonous. Other than that, there was a line that contained addition, which made the subject doubled, as in, "But images of you they last." In this kind of phenomenon, the songwriter could have omitted one subject, either "images of you" or "they," as both carried the same meaning in the line.

Table 8. Syntactic Deviations in the Song "Skipping Stones & Fireflies"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Syntactic Deviations
1.	"Buried in the earth alone"	2 (verse 1)	Omission
2.	"Then one day a passerby"	4 (verse 1)	Omission
3.	"Threw me over the lake and I"	5 (verse 1)	Omission
4.	"Skipped and for a moment I could fly"	6 (verse 1)	Omission
5.	"Staring up at starry skies"	13 (verse 2)	Omission

In Table 8, the syntactic deviations of the song "Skipping Stones & Fireflies" were shown. In the line, "Skipped and for a moment I could fly," only the subject was omitted. There was an omission of subjects that were followed by the absence of auxiliary verbs in the lines "Buried in the earth alone" and "Staring up at starry skies." On the other hand, in the line "Threw me over the lake and I," both the subject and the action verb were omitted. Lastly, in the line "Then one day a passerby," the action verb and object were absent, causing it to be ambiguous. These omissions made the line concise and seemed intentional so that the listener would listen to the whole song to fully understand it.

Table 9. Syntactic Deviations in the Song "Pictures of Mountains"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Syntactic Deviations
1.	"I look opinions 'bout news and religion"	3 (verse 1)	Omission
2.	"Almost tasting the food, almost breathing the air"	12 (chorus)	Omission
3.	"From the feeling of being surrounded by pictures of mountains"	14 (chorus)	Omission
4.	"Pretend I'm unaware"	19 (pre-chorus 2)	Omission
5.	"In pictures of mountains"	40 (outro)	Omission

In the song "Pictures of Mountains," the syntactic deviations were presented in Table 9. There was an example of omission of subject, as in the line, "Almost tasting the food, almost breathing the air." Meanwhile, there were incomplete lines that lacked subjects and action verbs, as in "From the feeling of being surrounded by pictures of mountains" and "In pictures of mountains." Aside from that, there was an example of the omission of the preposition "for" in the line, "I look opinions 'bout news and religion." Another example, "Pretend I'm unaware," showed the omission of the conjunction "that." This omission was meant to make the lines varied and more concise, as the details were present in the preceding lines.

Table 10. Syntactic Deviations in the Song "If Only My Heart Could Speak"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Syntactic Deviations
1.	"I never dreamed that you"	1 (verse 1)	Omission
2.	"Would feel the way I do"	2 (verse 1)	Omission
3.	"To think of any rhymes"	17 (verse 3)	Omission

In the song "If Only My Heart Could Speak," a type of syntactic deviation called omission was present. In the line, "I never dreamed that you," the type of syntactic deviation was the omission of a verb phrase, which made this line alone ambiguous. In contrast, the line "To think of any rhymes" illustrated an example of subject omission, in which the subject was put in the preceding line. Other than that, in the line, "Would feel the way I do," there was an omission of the subject and action verb, which was also previously stated in another line. This omission could spark listeners' curiosity as parts of the full meanings being conveyed by the songwriter were put in several lines.

Table 11. Syntactic Deviations in the Song "Make It"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Syntactic Deviations
1.	"When I was younger"	1 (verse 1)	Omission
2.	"But as I got older"	4 (verse 1)	Omission
3.	"I started to figure"	5 (verse 1)	Omission
4.	"I can't remember"	17 (verse 3)	Omission
5.	"Felt worn and sinking"	21 (verse 3)	Omission
6.	"Turned out not to love me back?"	31 (bridge)	Omission
7.	"Can't wait to see how"	35 (outro)	Omission

Table 11 showed the syntactic deviations found in the song "Make It." The lines "When I was younger," and "But as I got older," were examples of omissions of independent clauses. Meanwhile, the line, "I can't remember," showed the omission of a direct object. Other than that, there were omissions of subjects in "Felt worn and sinking," "Turned out not to love me back?" and "Can't wait to see how." Furthermore, the line "Can't wait to see how" seemed incomplete as one line as the continuation of "how" was presented in the next line. Lastly, the songwriter also omitted the particle "out" in the line, "I started to figure." These kinds of syntactic deviations existed to maintain pauses, allowing understanding of each line and providing emotional conveyance to the listener.

Discussion About the Findings of Syntactic Deviations in *Pictures of Mountains* Album

Although the syntactic deviations in *Pictures of Mountains* album only existed in two forms, namely omission and addition, they aided the songs to have pleasant delivery. The omissions made the lines more concise, as they were stated in previous lines. The lines that included omissions tended to be the repetition of previous lines, so the omitted words had already been presented previously. They also happened to make the lines less monotonous by using varied words to start the lines that were not always the same subjects, objects, or specific words. It could be an alternative way to introduce new nuances to each line as well. Most of the time, in this album, the omissions happened because the lines were split to the following lines. Gafur et al. (2021) claimed in their study that omissions happened to make each line briefer or even match the melody of the songs. This claim was relevant to the context of *Pictures of Mountains* album rhyme or amounts of syllables that the songwriters intended, such as in the song "Make It." The first line ended with the word "younger," while the second ended with "dreamer," both of them consisted of five syllables. In the fourth line, the phrase, "But as I got older," was followed by "I started to figure," and both lines ended with the same sound and number of syllables. The deviations made the lines briefer and easier to comprehend. Aside from that, the melody of the lines matched with the meter (number of syllables), thereby highlighting the song's rhythm with its recognizable patterns. It exposed the style of songs that the songwriter, Cody Fry, wanted to specifically carve into his album.

In terms of double negation and addition, the syntactic deviations showcased the unique style of the songwriter. Double negation was used to show emphasis in a line. Any lines have the possibility of being flat and basic without emphasis or additional elements to make them stand out instead of being normal types of utterances. The songwriter's choice to use double negation was brilliant to make sure that the listeners could feel that the rejection was undeniable. As in the line "Cause we don't slow down for nothing," the songwriter wanted to convey that the subject would always keep going no matter what happened in the future. It showed unbreakable determination. Meanwhile, the addition of a subject in this album, seen in the line "But images of you they last," was intentional as it matched the number of syllables in the following line. Besides, it used the same ending sounds in the preceding and following lines of the same verse, which made the listening experience more enjoyable because they rhymed. This outcome corresponded with the study by Mansoor and Salman (2020), as well as one that was done by Saggu et al. (2025), which revealed that linguistic deviations of literary works allowed writers to unleash their creativity and enhanced the audience's engagement. In this present study, the syntactic deviations used in *Pictures of Mountains* exposed Cody Fry's freedom and innovative way of using language by pouring down his creativity into the song lyrics.

Semantic Oddities in *Pictures of Mountains* Album's Song Lyrics

The analysis on semantic oddities in *Pictures of Mountains* is based on the theory by Leech (1969). Semantic oddities are divided into five categories, which are paradox, periphrasis, pleonasm, tautology, and oxymoron (Leech, 1969). The frequency of occurrence of semantic oddities in the *Pictures of Mountains* album is presented in Table 12. There were two types of semantic oddities found in the album. This table also included the findings and perspective about the occurrence of semantic oddities in the album.

Table 12. Frequency Distribution of Semantic Oddities in the Chosen Album

Semantic Oddity	Frequency
Paradox	10
Pleonasm	1
Total	11

There were eleven (11) occurrences of semantic oddities in the *Pictures of Mountains* album. Those semantic oddities were differentiated into two (2) categories, which were paradox and pleonasm. There were ten (10) frequencies of paradox from each research object, which provoked the contradiction in the character inside the songs' mind and action. On the other hand, pleonasm only appeared once, in the song "If Only My Heart Could Speak" to portray the complicated feelings of the character in the song. Meanwhile, the song "Take You There," "Our Love," "London," and "Skipping Stones & Fireflies," which had 0 oddities. Lastly, the examples of tautology, periphrasis, and oxymoron were absent

in the analyzed song lyrics, as the lines did not use self-evidently true utterances, roundabout statements, and semantically incompatible terms.

The identification of semantic oddities in each song in the mentioned album is presented in Table 13 until Table 18. Each table represented the songs that showed instances of the mentioned phenomenon. The classification table provided the lyrics that contained the semantic oddities, the line in which they occur, and the category they were in.

There was no semantic oddity in the song “Thinking About You,” “Take You There,” “London,” “Skipping Stones & Fireflies” This song did not contain redundant, contradictory, lengthy, or absurd utterances. Aside from that, those songs were free of semantic oddities, as it presented clear use of language in every line, with no oddities inside.

Table 13. Semantic Oddities in the Song “Photograph”

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Semantic Oddities
1.	“If I had my will - Time would just stand still”	10-11 (chorus)	Paradox

Table 13 depicted an example of a semantic oddity in the song “Photograph.” In the line “If I had my will, time would just stand still,” the songwriter portrayed “time” as “stand still,” which was contradictory. Time could not be stopped literally, but it expressed a deeper meaning. If he had a strong will and did the things he wanted to do wholeheartedly, it would be worth the time that had been spent.

Table 14. Semantic Oddities in the Song “Wander Anymore/Dunes”

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Semantic Oddities
1.	“Can’t remember who I was before”	33 (chorus)	Paradox
2.	“Cause I’ve forgotten what I’m looking for”	34 (chorus)	Paradox

Table 14 exhibited the examples of semantic oddities in the song “Wander Anymore/Dunes.” The line “Can’t remember who I was before” was an example of a paradox that showed a conflict about self-identity. The songwriter hinted that he wanted to reflect on his past self, but he could no longer recall who he was, as if he had become an entirely different person. Meanwhile, in the line “Cause I’ve forgotten what I’m looking for,” the songwriter implied self-doubt by portraying that he had forgotten the thing he had been looking for.

Table 15. Semantic Oddities in the Song "What I Needed"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Semantic Oddities
1.	"You were the one that I wanted - But I didn't know what I needed"	13-14 (chorus)	Paradox
2.	"I'm walking 'round like I'm just fine - But it's a hurricane inside"	23-24 (verse 3)	Paradox

Table 15 presented the examples of semantic oddities that are found in the song "What I Needed." The line "You were the one that I wanted," that was followed by another line, "But I didn't know what I needed," displayed the example of paradox. The songwriter implied the self-conflicting paradox that he was confused, as "you" was the one that he wanted, but he did not know what exactly he needed. Moreover, in the line "But it's a hurricane inside," which came after "I'm walking 'round like I'm just fine," he showed another paradox. In those lines, he had an issue with himself, in which he pretended to be just fine outside when he actually was not.

Table 16. Semantic Oddities in the Song "Pictures of Mountains"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Semantic Oddities
1.	"Everyone's right here on my phone - So why do I still feel so alone"	29-30 (bridge)	Paradox

Table 16 showed the example of a semantic oddity in the song "Pictures of Mountains." There was a line, "Everyone's right here on my phone," that was followed by "So why do I still feel so alone" which was an example of paradox. The first line showed that the songwriter has connections to many people online, but in the real-life context, he still felt alone. Despite the people he knew online or had contact with, he still craved real friends who could accompany him and make his life more exciting because of the real, close connections.

Table 17. Semantic Oddities in the Song "If Only My Heart Could Speak"

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Semantic Oddities
1.	"But suddenly my voice is feeling very weak - If only my heart could speak"	4-5 (verse 1)	Paradox
2.	"I'm puzzled and bemused - I'm fuddled, heart's been puddled by the thought"	7-8 (verse 2)	Pleonasm

The song "If Only My Heart Could Speak" by Cody Fry provided examples of semantic oddities as displayed in Table 17. The first example is a paradox in the line "But suddenly my voice is feeling very weak" that was followed by "If only my heart could speak," which was contradictory because someone's heart could not speak, but it had the meaning that he did not have any words to convey the feelings

in his heart. The line “I’m fuddled, heart’s been puddled by the thought” that was preceded by “I’m puzzled and bemused” was an example of the songwriter’s way of emphasizing that he felt overwhelmed by thoughts and feelings of amusement with the use of rhymed words. He had a lot to say, but he did not know the clear way to express it. This example of pleonasm showed redundant patterns, as the meaning of the utterance was already presented in the previous line, and it was repeated again in the next line.

Table 18. *Semantic Oddities in the Song “Make It”*

No.	Lyric	Line	Type of Semantic Oddities
1.	“Sky was the limit for me - But as I got older - I started to figure - It’s just not that simple, you see”	3-6 (verse 1)	Paradox
2.	“Hard work is given - But I hate to admit it - Sometimes it comes down to luck”	10-12 (verse 2)	Paradox
3.	“A thousand complimenters - One critic drowns them all out”	18-19 (verse 3)	Paradox

The song “Make It” by Cody Fry consisted of examples of semantic oddities as shown in Table 18. The first example, “Sky was the limit for me - But as I got older - I started to figure - It’s just not that simple, you see,” portrayed a paradox. The songwriter implied that he had so much potential, but reality sometimes hit hard because as he got older, he could not just simply get everything he wanted. The second example, “Hard work is given - But I hate to admit it - Sometimes it comes down to luck,” showed the paradox that hard work was indeed good, but sometimes it was not enough because luck played a part in someone’s life. The last example, “A thousand complimenters - One critic drowns them all out,” showed the psychological paradox that one critic might bring someone down even though they received compliments from a lot of people in their lives. The songwriter somehow highlighted that sometimes a person’s criticism could make someone’s life collapsed and the things they achieved became meaningless as they would continuously doubt themselves.

Discussion About the Findings of Semantic Oddities in *Pictures of Mountains* Album

The findings indicated that the *Pictures of Mountains* album showed two types of semantic oddities. The pleonasm concerned the redundancy of utterances. The lines “I’m puzzled and bemused” that were followed with “I’m fuddled, heart’s been puddled by the thought,” presented the example of pleonasm by the use of rhymed words. The words “puzzled,” “fuddled,” and “puddled” not only rhymed, which made them pleasant to listen to, but also provided an instance of repetitive expressions. This repetition used varied words to highlight the songwriter’s expressive and innovative way of portraying the feelings of confusion and

overwhelm that happened to the character of the song “If Only My Heart Could Speak.” Pleonasm made the ideas contained in the lines clearer by the repetitive nature to capture the real burst of emotions of the subjects. This statement corresponded with the study of Ibrahim et al. (2020), which discussed how the use of repetitions made the notions being delivered by the writers more understandable and gave the solid impression of the emotions being conveyed.

On the other hand, paradox in *Pictures of Mountains* showed the absurd side of the album. The paradoxes used in this album were used to express conflicting emotions that the characters of the songs overcame. The songwriter highlighted the characters’ impossible wishes (Table 14 and Table 20); self-doubt and reflections (Table 16, Table 17, and Table 21); and conflicts between characters’ real emotions and how they showed them (Table 17 and Table 19). The use of paradoxes in this album made the songs interesting by utilizing various conflicting expressions that evoked the emotions of sadness and hope. The songwriter intentionally used this type of semantic oddity to make the song more captivating and impactful by highlighting the clashing nature between humans’ thoughts, wishes, and reality. This claim was supported by the study of Ezenwoali and Ugwu (2019) that revealed that sometimes the writer used language in odd manners in their works to make the message more comprehensive and influential.

CONCLUSION

This study highlighted the use of syntactic deviations and semantic oddities in the song lyrics of the *Pictures of Mountains* album. The findings indicated that the syntactic deviations found in the album were omission and addition. However, each type could be perceived as having many branches. The findings in this study showed that those branches included omission of subjects, linking verbs, auxiliary verbs, action verbs, direct objects, verb phrases, prepositions, conjunctions, independent clauses, and particles, as well as combinations of two aspects. The analyzed songs also contained the addition of a subject and double negations. The most common syntactic deviation in this album was the omission of subjects, which suggested that this songwriter focused on the actions and feelings portrayed by the characters in his songs. Meanwhile, the addition of negative term and subject were present in a fair amount, which showed that the songwriter wanted to put emphasis on certain things through the words that were added.

In terms of semantic oddities, the most common category in this album was paradox. This type appeared ten times, implying that Cody Fry, the songwriter, used many contradictory words that carried deep truth in his songs. Meanwhile, the least frequent was a pleonasm that only appeared once, which showed deliberate repetitive utterances for emphasis through different words with similar meanings. However, this research could not present any examples of periphrasis, oxymoron, and tautology due to their absence in the data source.

The syntactic deviations and semantic oddities in the *Pictures of Mountains* album depicted how the songwriter used the language to introduce his style and creativity. The syntactic deviations in the song lyrics of the mentioned album did not affect the overall meanings of the songs, but they presented uniqueness in the words' choices. They made the listeners uncover the meanings through lines that were connected to each other. On the contrary, semantic oddities related to how utterances shape the deep, reinforced meaning and serve as additional emphasis to point out certain aspects inside the songs. The findings showed that songs were unique literary works, as the songwriters sometimes chose not to arrange the words that complied with the standard grammar rules to evoke emotions or moods. The occurrence of semantic oddities, which was fewer than the syntactic deviations, demonstrated that the songs were relatively easy to understand, as the oddities only appeared eleven times, with a maximum of three per studied song. Lastly, the songwriter employed paradox to convey the song's subject's conflicting feelings and, in some songs, utilized repetitive wording to draw listeners' attention to specific parts of the songs.

This study presents several implications for English learners, educators, and future researchers. This study can provide English learners with the evidence that alteration of language is common in literary works, such as poems and song lyrics, in order to stimulate deeper interpretations of meanings. The educators may use this study as a reference on how song lyrics can be used as a medium to aid the learning process of grammar topics and not only of figurative language. This shows how songwriters sometimes modify versions of standard English rules. Besides, the semantic oddities can be the reference on how the odd structures of utterances in song lyrics can carry certain meanings that enhance the audience's interpretations. Additionally, for future research it is suggested that this album be used as the source of data to analyze different types of linguistic phenomena. Moreover, future researchers may also conduct a comparative analysis on different albums about how the syntactic deviations and semantic oddities are adapted in the songs.

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