

A SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS OF NOUN PHRASES IN ‘SEASONS’ BY WAVE TO EARTH

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the syntactic structure of noun phrases used in the song “Seasons” by Wave to Earth. The analysis found thirteen noun phrases divided into three main patterns. The identification of thirteen noun phrases in the lyrics is syntactically significant because it indicates that the song uses very minimal noun structure. The small number of noun phrases indicates that the songwriter does not rely heavily on complex noun phrase constructions. Instead, the lyrics prefer simple and straightforward patterns. Such as Determiner + Noun (Det + N), Quantifier + Noun (Quant + N), Quantifier + Determiner + Noun (Quant + Det + N), and singular Noun (N). The Det + N pattern is the most frequently occurring structure, followed by Quant + Det + N, one Quant + N and one singular noun phrase. Syntactically, these patterns demonstrate a simple writing style yet remain effective in conveying emotions and closeness of meaning. The results of this study indicate that the simplicity of the language structure in the song “Seasons” is an artistic strategy used to strengthen the emotional message and the life theme it wants to convey. Thus, a minimalist syntactic structure can be an effective aesthetic tool in building depth of meaning in musical works.

Keywords: *Syntax, Noun phrase, Song lyrics, Seasons, Wave to earth*

I INTRODUCTION

Syntactic analysis is crucial because it examines how words are arranged into meaningful structures. In the context of this study, syntactic analysis focuses specifically on how noun phrases are formed in the song “Seasons” by Wave to Earth. By identifying patterns and structures within these noun phrases, this study aims to understand the grammatical choices made by the songwriter and how these choices contribute to the overall structure of the lyrics. This approach helps reveal the simplicity, consistency, and stylistic characteristics of the noun phrase constructions used in the song.

Although the object of this study is a song lyric, it is still closely related to literature. Literature itself can be defined as a discipline that presents depictions of life, most of which consist of the social realities experienced by humans. It represents human feelings and experiences that are conveyed through both written and spoken forms, transformed into imaginative works. Al-Ma'ruf; A. I.; & Nugrahani; F., (2017) further explain that through literature, authors are able to express and communicate their ideas and reflections on the feelings and experiences they encounter in life, including the meaning and essence of human existence. Language, on the other hand, is a system of sound symbols governed by certain rules to produce meaning in the process of communication. Therefore, language functions as an essential medium through which people communicate, share knowledge, and perform various aspects of life (Hussein et al., 2021). Through language, literature becomes a medium for reflecting reality and expressing thoughts, experiences, and emotions.

Besides its literary aspect, song lyrics are also part of the music, which brings another dimension to the analysis. Meanwhile, music is an art form that organizes sounds into rhythm, melody, and harmony. It also functions as a medium of emotional release, experienced at various levels (Al Bahy & Darmawan, 2025). This means that music is more than just entertainment; it serves as a medium for expressing feelings, ideas, and messages, while at the same time strengthening cultural identity. In line with Lems (2018), the use of songs in language learning is considered a natural and enjoyable way to develop skills toward fluency. Within songs, lyrics act as a medium through which songwriters convey their ideas or heartfelt expressions. For this reason, song lyrics are often chosen as objects of study since they contain a wide range of sentence structures; simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex, as well as various sentence types such as declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory. This diversity makes song lyrics a compelling subject for syntactic analysis. Miyares (2016) argues that song lyrics can be regarded as literary and expressive texts that often reflect the songwriter's personal experiences and creative identity. Every word in song lyrics carries specific meanings that can be examined syntactically, (Manisde, 2023) has shown that song lyrics are suitable objects for syntactic analysis since they often display variations in sentence types, phrase structures, and even non-standard language forms. When

determining song lyrics, the chosen words and sentence structure can express and reflect the feelings, thoughts, and meanings that the songwriter wants to convey.

Syntax, a branch of linguistics, examines how words are arranged to form meaningful sentences. Etymologically, the term syntax derives from the Greek *Syn*, meaning “together,” and *Taxis*, meaning “arrangement” (Purnomoadjie & Mulyadi, 2019). Syntax may be defined as the study of the principles and rules governing the formation of sentences in language. Wafi (2019) further explains that in the context of English, syntax refers to the rules and categories that allow words to be combined into sentences. Thus, syntactic analysis plays an important role in understanding the meanings embedded in texts, including literary works such as song lyrics.

In the field of linguistics, a noun phrase (NP) is one of the most essential elements in syntactic analysis because it serves as the basic structure of many sentences. As stated by Ardianto (2023) further elucidates NP structure, stating that in general, noun phrase has a common structural pattern composed of one noun as the core head and several modifiers both pre-modification and post-modification. Similarly, Subajana & Senaratne (2025) further explains that a noun phrase is an extension of a noun in which one or more adjectives or modifiers are used with the noun. These perspectives collectively emphasize that a noun phrase is not merely a single noun, but a syntactic construction that integrates determiners, modifiers, or complements to form a more complete expression of meaning in discourse. In line with this, Zandroto et al. (2024), A noun phrase is a linguistic unit consisting of a noun along with explanatory words that describe or complement the noun. This shows that a noun phrase functions as a grammatical unit that revolves around a noun as its head.

The song “Seasons” by wave to earth was selected as the object of this study due to its poetic and expressive lyrics, which uniquely portray human experiences. This song is also known for its gentle tone and reflective lyric composition. The lyrics portray feelings of longing, loss, and emotional changes that occur over time, as suggested by the title “Seasons,” which serves as a metaphor to symbolize love and life. From a linguistic perspective, the lyrics of this song are interesting to study. Despite their simplicity, they contain many noun phrases with strong emotional value.

A previous study by Nasution, A. N., Setia, E., (2024) also examined the syntactic structures of noun phrases in song lyrics, entitled “A Syntactic Analysis of the Noun Phrases in Justin Bieber’s Song Lyrics.” The research focused on identifying various structures and grammatical functions of noun phrases across an entire album. However, the study did not explore the relationship between these syntactic structures and the meaning or emotional impact of the lyrics. The analysis was primarily structural, with limited attention to how the identified noun phrases contribute to lyrical style or thematic expression. This study seeks to fill this gap by focusing on a single song, Wave to Earth’s “Seasons,” allowing for a more detailed and focused analysis. By examining a smaller but more in-depth dataset, this study not only identifies the syntactic structure of noun phrases but also discusses how these structures support the overall lyrical expression. This approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of how simple syntactic patterns can contribute to emotional nuance. Thus, this study offers a stronger connection between syntactic form and lyrical meaning, which has not been fully explored in previous research.

Therefore, this study aims to identify and analyze the structure of noun phrases found in the lyrics of “Seasons” by wave to earth. Moreover, it also aims to interpret the meaning and function of their usage within the lyrical context. Theoretically, the results of this research are expected to contribute to the development of syntax, particularly in connecting language and music. Practically, this research may serve as a reference for students of English linguistics as well as for other researchers interested in syntactic analysis of literary texts such as song lyrics.

II METHOD

This research uses a qualitative method because its primary focus is analyzing the noun phrases contained in the lyrics of wave to earth's song “Seasons.” The qualitative approach was chosen because this study is not oriented towards numbers or statistical data, but rather focuses on a deeper understanding of the noun phrases used in the lyrics. The descriptive method serves to describe in detail the structure of noun phrases that appear, so that the meaning and style of the language contained can be clearly explained.

The data source for this research is the lyrics of wave to earth's song “Seasons,” obtained from the official website and digital music platforms that provide accurate lyric text. Lyrics were chosen as the object of research because they contain a rich, meaningful language structure and can represent the songwriter's style. By using the lyrics as the primary source, this research is documentary-based, meaning that data are obtained from existing written documents, not from direct observation or interviews.

The data collection method used lyrics text of the song “Seasons.” After that, the text data was analyzed based on syntactic unit which is noun phrase. Using this technique, the syntactic structure of the lyrics can be systematically mapped according to the syntactic theory used as a reference. Data analysis was conducted through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction involves selecting parts of the lyrics that are relevant to the research focus, namely the noun phrase. Data presentation is done by describing sentences in the lyrics and analyzing them according to theory. Next, conclusions are drawn by formulating general patterns of the noun phrase found and their relationship to the meanings constructed within the song's lyrics.

Using this method, the research is expected to reveal how the use of syntax in the lyrics of the song “Seasons” shapes the aesthetic and emotional messages the songwriter wishes to convey. Descriptive qualitative analysis also allows this research to contribute to linguistic studies, particularly in the field of syntax, while enriching our understanding of language in modern musical works.

III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 FINDINGS

After identifying the entire lyrics of “Seasons” by wave to earth, the findings show that there are nine noun phrases which become the focus of the analysis. These phrases were analyzed structurally using the phrase structure theory with the basic pattern:

$$\text{NP} = (\text{Quantifier}) + (\text{Determiner}) + \text{Noun}$$

This model follows the principles of Generative Grammar proposed Chomsky (1965), using a simplified representation of the Chomskyan phrase-structure model, which explains that sentence constituents are hierarchically organized based on syntactic categories and rules. The analysis was conducted with the aim of revealing how the syntactic elements are organized and how these structures support the meaning that the lyrics intend to convey. The noun phrases found in the lyrics are presented below:

Table 1. Data findings of noun phrase found in the lyrics

No.	Noun Phrase	Structure	Explanation	Type
1.	your love	Det + N	“your” functions as a determiner showing possession, and “love” is the head noun.	Simple Noun phrase
2.	my life	Det + N	“my” shows possession, and “life” functions as the head noun representing the speaker’s existence.	Simple Noun phrase
3.	no one	Quant + N	“no” functions as a quantifier indicating absence, and “one” serves as the head noun meaning “nobody.”	Simple Noun phrase
4.	all the time	Quant + Det + N	“all” is a quantifier indicating totality, “the” is a determiner, and “time” is the head noun referring to constancy or continuity.	Simple Noun Phrase
5.	your side	Det + N	“your” modifies the head noun “side,” referring to companionship or presence.	Simple Noun phrase

6.	all my life	Quant + Det + N	“all” acts as a quantifier expressing entirety, “my” is a determiner showing possession, and “life” is the head noun meaning one’s existence.	Simple Noun Phrase
7.	my Seasons	Det + N	“my” shows possession, and “Seasons” symbolizes the phases of the speaker’s emotional life.	Simple Noun phrase
8.	your life	Det + N	“your” indicates possession, and “life” as the head noun represents the addressee’s existence.	Simple Noun phrase
9.	the leaves	Det + N	“the” is a definite determiner specifying the noun “leaves.”	Simple Noun phrase
10.	daisies	N	A single noun functioning as the head without any determiner or modifier.	Singular Noun Phrase
11.	all the chances	Quant + Det + N	Contains a quantifier “all,” determiner “the,” and head noun “chances.”	Simple Noun Phrase
12.	your Seasons	Det + N	Similar to “my Seasons,” but indicates belonging to the addressee.	Simple Noun phrase
13.	my love	Det + N	“my” expresses possession and “love” is the head noun; the repetition emphasizes affection and emotional attachment..	Simple Noun phrase

Based on the table above, which contains the structures of noun phrases found in the lyrics of Seasons by wave to earth, it can be stated that, structurally, three main types of noun phrases are identified in the lyrics: simple noun phrases, complex noun phrases and singular noun phrases.

3.2 DISCUSSION

3.2.1 SIMPLE NOUN PHRASES

Most of the noun phrases in the song “Seasons” have the Determiner + Noun (Det + N) pattern. This structure is found in phrases like “my life,” “your love,” “your side,” “my seasons,” “your life,” “the leaves,” “your seasons” and “my love”. In these phrases, the determiner functions as a marker of possession or reference, while the noun serves as the core meaning that defines the entire phrase. In addition to these forms, the song also includes a Quantifier + Noun (Quant + N) structure in the phrase “no one.” Here, no acts as a quantifier that expresses zero quantity or absence, and one functions as a noun meaning “a person.” Together, “no one” forms a simple noun phrase indicating the absence of any individual. This syntactic structure contributes to the emotional tone of the lyrics, emphasizing feelings of loneliness, isolation, or lack of companionship within the narrative of the song.

The dominance of this pattern demonstrates the syntactic simplicity characteristic of the song's lyrics, which typically emphasize intimacy and straightforward emotional expression. The use of the

determiners “my” and “your” demonstrates a personal connection between the speaker and listener, creating a strong sense of closeness. For example, in the phrase “your love,” the presence of the determiner “your” makes the meaning of “love” more personal and emotional, as if emphasizing the emotional connection between the two parties. Similarly, the phrases “my life” and “your life” convey two sides of feeling: the speaker's personal reflection and his concern for the lives of others.

Furthermore, the phrases “my seasons” and “your seasons” deepen the song's symbolic meaning. The recurring “seasons” suggests emotional change and development that are not only personal but also represent interconnected experiences. Meanwhile, the phrase “the leaves” adds a symbolic dimension of transience and natural change, aligning with the song's main theme of impermanence.

Several noun phrases in the song also follow the simple structure of Determiner + Noun (Det + N), particularly those introduced by the quantifier “all.” Examples include “all my life,” “all the time,” and “all the chances.” In these phrases, all functions as a quantifier that emphasizes totality or completeness, while the accompanying noun (life, time, chances) serves as the central element that carries the main semantic content. Although these noun phrases are structurally simple, the use of all adds an expressive intensity that highlights the songwriter's sense of entirety, continuity, and emotional significance.

3.2.2 SINGULAR NOUN PHRASES

The only singular noun phrase found in the lyrics is “daisies.” From a syntactic perspective, this NP consists solely of a head noun without any determiners, adjectives, or modifiers. Its bare-noun structure is significant because it appears in an unmarked, minimalist form, which allows the noun to stand independently and receive interpretive weight within the clause. The absence of determiners also creates an open, non-specific reference, allowing the noun to function symbolically rather than referring to a particular set of flowers.

Following this syntactic interpretation, the word daisies can then be understood as contributing to the song's thematic meaning. While culturally the term may evoke ideas of innocence, purity, or even death (as in the idiom “pushing up daisies”), within the context of the song “Seasons,” its standalone form reinforces broader themes of natural cycles and transformation. Thus, the syntactic simplicity of the NP “daisies” supports its role in expressing continuity between life, loss, and renewal.

The analysis shows that the Det + N structure occurs eight times, a frequency that reflects the songwriter's preference for clear, personal, and relational expression. Because determiners, especially possessive ones, anchor the noun to a specific viewpoint, their repeated use highlights the intimate tone of the lyrics. The Quant + Det + N structure appears three times, showing that the songwriter occasionally intensifies meaning through quantifiers such as “all,” which convey emphasis and completeness. Additionally, the lyrics contain one instance of a Quant + N structure, found in the phrase “no one.” Meanwhile, the single N structure appears only once, indicating that bare nouns are used sparingly and likely for symbolic emphasis. Altogether, the total of thirteen noun phrases demonstrates that Seasons relies on simple yet expressive syntactic patterns to strengthen the emotional message of the song.

This simplicity is not a sign of grammatical limitations, but rather a deliberate linguistic strategy used to create emotional closeness between speaker and listener. The recurring syntactic pattern reflects the calm rhythm and the cycle of feelings expressed in the song. From a semantic perspective, the use of determiners such as my and your not only functions as a grammatical element, but also symbolizes emotional relationships, a sense of belonging, and closeness between the characters in the song.

IV CONCLUSION

The analysis of Wave to Earth's song “Seasons” identified thirteen noun phrases, consisting of eight using the Determiner + Noun (Det + N) pattern, three using the Quantifier + Determiner + Noun (Quant + Det + N) pattern, one Quantifier + Noun (Quant + N) structure, and one single noun. These patterns demonstrate that despite their simple structures, the resulting meanings remain rich and profound.

The predominance of the Det + N structure reflects a deliberately simple writing style that emphasizes emotional intimacy. Phrases such as “my life,” “your love,” “your side,” “my seasons,” “your life,” “the leaves,” “your seasons,” and “my love” show how pronouns and determiners strengthen the personal connection between speaker and listener, turning nouns into carriers of feeling and identity. Meanwhile, phrases using the Quant + Det + N pattern, such as “all my life,” “all the time,” and “all the chances,” broaden the emotional and temporal scope of the lyrics by adding emphasis and totality. The single noun “daisies” further enriches the symbolic dimension of the song by highlighting themes of purity, transience, and the continuous cycle of life.

From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to NP syntax by demonstrating how even minimal NP structures can generate complex interpretive effects when situated in expressive discourse. The findings reinforce the generative grammar view that syntactic form, such as the choice to include or omit determiners, quantifiers directly shapes meaning potential. By showing how pop-lyric discourse relies heavily on simple NP templates to achieve emotional depth, this study highlights the functional efficiency of basic NP configurations and illustrates how syntactic minimalism can coexist with semantic richness.

Overall, this research indicates that the syntactic structure in the song “Seasons” plays a crucial role in constructing the unity of meaning and emotional atmosphere of the lyrics. Through consistent and repetitive phrase patterns, the lyrics successfully express themes of change, intimacy, and emotional reflection in a simple yet meaningful way. The findings of this study suggest that syntactic analysis of literary texts such as song lyrics can provide a deeper understanding of how linguistic forms contribute to the creation of meaning and linguistic beauty.

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