

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the research by discussing the background, the problems, the scope, and the significance of the study.

#### **1.1 The Background of the Study**

There are various reasons for carrying out this research. First, Harry Styles, a former member of the boy band One Direction and one of my favourite male singers, achieved huge success in the music market with his first solo single, "Sign of The Times," which was released in April 2017. The song was a chart-topper in the UK and ranked fourth in the US. Additionally, it was awarded the BMI Pop Award in 2018, and its video received the Brit Award for British Artist Video of the Year.

Second, according to his interview with one of the leading magazines in the United States 'Rolling Stone', the song is written from the point of view as if a mother giving birth to a child with complications. The mother was told that her child was fine, but she only had five minutes to see her child before passing away. However, the lyrics are not entirely clear, as it does not explicitly refer to a mother or use any language directly related to motherhood. As a result, it is possible to interpret the lyrics in various ways, one of which, as stated by Amnplify, (2017), according to him the song represents Harry's farewell with One Direction. From one of these examples, an analysis to support and justify Harry Styles' statement about the meaning of the song is quite important. Because the lyrics are open to

interpretation, a detailed examination of the song's language, context, and topics is definitely required to present a well-reasoned and documented argument for Styles' interpretation.

Third, as noted in the second reason, I encountered two theories that offer significant insight into how people use language to convey emotions and interpersonal meanings in the text. Michael Halliday's theory about interpersonal meaning, which dates back to the 1970s, is one of these. Appraisal Theory, created by Martin and Rose in 2003 and perfected by Martin and White in 2005, is the other. I eagerly plan to apply these theories in order to analyse the song's lyrics and present linguistic evidence that shows their meaning.

## **1.2 The Problems of the Study**

Related to this research, it is hoped that this study answers the following research questions:

1. Is the interpersonal meaning claimed by Harry Style justified according to lexicogrammar perspective?
2. How is the interpersonal meaning realised within the clauses of the lyrics?

## **1.2 The Objectives of the Study**

The study aims to investigate the interpersonal meaning claimed by Harry Styles in his song "Sign of the Times" by conducting a lexico-grammatical analysis. The objectives of the study include determining the validity of Styles' claim through linguistic evidence and identifying the types of interpersonal meanings expressed

in the song using Michael Halliday's theory of interpersonal meaning and Appraisal theory. Additionally, the study aims to analyse the linguistic devices and techniques used to convey the interpersonal meanings in the song that influenced the creation and interpretation of these meanings.

### **1.3 The Scope of the Study**

To make sure that there are no overlapping theories, topics, or undefined results, the writer must limit the scope of the analysis. This study focuses on analysing clauses used in the lyrics of *Sign of the Times*. The song lyrics were taken from [www.billboard.com](http://www.billboard.com) and then analysed its lyrics. The clauses from the lyrics, after that, were classified as *Subject, Finite and Residue*. The relations between clauses in addition, have to be examined as they may influence the interpersonal meanings in the clauses.

Second, those data were analysed using Michael Halliday's theory of interpersonal meaning which focuses on mood and modality systems analysis. The attitudinal analysis by appraisal theory by Martin & White is then applied to the data.

### **1.4 The Significance of the Study**

Hopefully the findings of this study can be useful for linguistic development and to add to the richness of research in the field of interpersonal meaning analysis systems, which can be used as a reference for further research particularly regarding the meaning contained in the lyrics of the song *Sign of the Times*. The findings of

this study are also expected to be used as a reference in evaluating the language contained in song lyrics.