

Ideological Representation of Globalism in Radiohead Music Videos (A Semiotic Analysis of *2+2=5* and *No Surprises* Music Videos)

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ABSTRACT

Music video is a media of communication between the musicians and their listener or viewers that conveys message or represents the ideas in a form of images, lyrics and music. This study investigates the way ideological representation of globalism is represented in *2+2=5* and *No Surprises* music videos. The theoretical framework employs in this research is Barthes's (1977) semiotic theory of orders signification which focuses on first order signification (denotation) and second order signification (connotation) of the visual elements of music videos. In addition, this study employs Goodwin's (1992) theory of music video to analyze the key features of music video. The findings of the investigation show that globalism is represented through the lyrics and the visual images in the two music videos. The lyrics analysis shows that the narrative story in *2+2=5* music video signifies public mind control and anger to the totalitarian government. While in *No Surprises* music video, the narrative story signifies the modern society, an absolute power of the corrupt government, the hopeless and powerless feelings of the lower class society. In the visual analysis, the findings of the investigation show that there are some similarities and differences in the way of illustrating the ideology of globalism in *2+2=5* and *No Surprises* music videos. The similarities are represented through the use of the symbolic visual style, the use of black and white color saturations and the amplifying relationship between the lyrics and visual. Meanwhile, the differences are represented through the use of warm (red) color saturation that signifies agitation and anger and the intertextual references. Whereas in *No Surprises*, the use of close up frame size that signifies emotion and the use of cool (blue) color saturation represent the way of illustrating globalism.

Keywords: *Globalism, Ideology, Music Video, Representation*

INTRODUCTION

Music represents the idea in the form of lyric and the visual images that is known as music video. Music video as a media has an important role in communicating the dominant ideology that belongs to a certain class or group. The ideology in music video presents the messages implicitly and explicitly through the music, lyric, and images. Hodge and Kress (1993, as cited in Jooma, p. 71) define ideology as “a systematic body of ideas, organized from a particular point of view”.

Referring to the potential of media in influencing people’s point of view, media is closely related to the process of globalization. “Globalization is growth of communication and trade” (Locke, 2003, p.10). Globalization relates to globalism. Globalism is “the dominant market ideology that is currently directing the process of globalization as the spread of unregulated capitalism” (Steger, 2001, cited in Walker, 2003, p.150). Recently, many people attempt to raise the issue of globalism such as in the form of novel, music or movie.

For example, in the novel *Empire Falls*, Richard Russo portrays the capitalist system and its effect to communities especially the labor workers. Due to the controversial topic of globalism, this present study attempts to analyze the issue of globalism that is represented in a form of music video, specifically in *Radiohead*’s music videos.

Music video as a form of a message consists of various signs such as music, lyrics and images. It will be proper if it is analyzed by semiotics theory. Semiotics is “everything that can be taken as sign” (Eco, 1976, cited in Chandler, 2002, p. 2). Signs do not only refer to sign in our daily speech but also anything which has meaning. Chandler (2002, p.17) states that “sign take the form of words, images, sounds, odours, flavours, acts or objects, but such things have no intrinsic meaning and become signs only when we invest them with meaning”. Therefore, sign will be considered meaningful if it is composed of a signifier (form that the sign takes) and a signified (the concept). For instance, a signifier word “no smoking” has a signified

concept that “it is forbidden to smoke in that place”.

According to Barthes (1977, p.31) sign is “a system consisting of signifier in relation to signified”. The relation of signifier and signified is known as *orders of signification*. There are two orders of signification, the *first order of signification* (denotation) which consists of a signifier and signified and *second order of signification* (connotation) which is a secondary sign of denotation. Below is the scheme of *orders of signification* which is proposed by Barthes.

Primary sign : denotation

Secondary sign: connotation

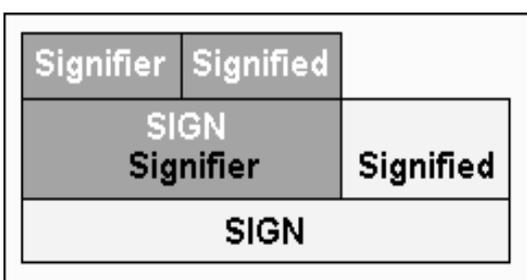


Table 2.1 Barthes’ orders of signification
(Source: Daniel Chandler, 2002, p.142)

The map above clearly shows the relation of signifier and signified. The first level is the primary sign (denotation meaning) which indicates the literal meaning that can be found

in the dictionary. The second level is secondary sign (connotation) which derives from denotative sign.

Barthes (1977, p.65) states that “system of secondary meaning defines as myths”. Furthermore, myth can be described as an ideology because it is constructed by the combination of denotation and connotation meaning. The connotation meaning which derives from denotation meaning is known as ideological meaning.

This research attempts to decode myth in *2+2=5* and *No Surprises* music videos by *Radiohead*. It uses myth in representation process to investigate the connotative meanings of the sign from its denotative meaning. By decoding the visual elements, this research investigates how “globalism” is represented in *Radiohead* music videos.

METHODOLOGY

This research utilized the descriptive qualitative method in revealing the ideology behind the *2+2=5* and *No Surprises* music videos. Qualitative descriptive study was employed in

this research since this research emphasizes on words and pictures rather than numbers. As suggested by Punch (1998, p.4) that “qualitative research is empirical research where the data are not in the form of number”. The descriptive method is considered relevant to the present study since it involves the collection of data for describing and examining the phenomena. Best (1979, cited in Jooma, p. 85) defines that “the descriptive method describes and interprets what condition or relationship that exist, opinion that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident or trends that are developing”. Through descriptive method, the phenomenon in the *2+2=5* and *No Surprises* music videos are presented to discover the ideology that is portrayed within the verbal and non-verbal message.

In the frame of semiotic theory which employs Barthes’ (1977) *orders of signification*, the verbal and non verbal messages are viewed as sign system. The sign system consists of two types of signifiers: a denotative signified and a connotative signified. Denotative and

connotative signification can be analyzed through the stylistic elements and technical aspects (camera works, editing, sound, special effect, Mise en Scene) of music video.

In addition, Goodwin theory (1992) is employed to analyze the key features of music video (the genre, the relationship between music, lyric, and visual, intertextual references).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings in the Lyric Analysis

Based on the data of the lyric analysis, the present study reveals that there is narrative story which indicates globalism in *2+2=5* and *No Surprises* music videos. The lyric analysis shows that the narrative story in *2+2=5* music video signifies a reality control and anger to the totalitarian government. While in *No Surprises* music videos, the narrative story focuses on the modern society, an absolute power of the corrupt government, and the hopelessness and powerlessness of lower class society.

The representation of globalism through the lyric analysis in *2+2=5* music video can be seen

through the narrative story of the lyric which focuses on public mind control and the totalitarian government. The public mind control of the reality communicates through the lyrics “..where two and two always make up five.” The ruling class controls over people thought can change the fact or past. While the anger of totalitarian government is represented in the lyrics, “..all hail to the thief, but I am not..”, the narrator’s anger is expressed through his statement that he will not hail the king that he called as the thief. It can be concluded that the lyrics represent globalism through its effect to the society such as public mind control and anger totalitarian government. Globalism is seen as the ideology that supports the unregulated capitalism in which the ruling class society have maximum power to control public capital and public mind. Steger (2005) argues that “the characteristics of unregulated capitalism are the corporate have maximum power over economic, social and political changes and government policies are used to increase the power of corporations and large business”. Therefore, in

regulated capitalism government policies are benefit to the upper classes over the lower classes.

The narrative story in the lyric *No Surprises* communicates a frustration condition of narrator’s life. In the lyric, “a job that slowly kills you”, the narrator communicates his stressful job that slowly kills him which indicates that he is a workaholic. Workaholic is one of the indicators of a modern society. While in the lyric “..bring down the government. They don’t, they don’t speak for us” I’ll take a quiet life, a handshake of carbon monoxide”, the lyrics communicate the idea of a corrupt government and the hopelessness of the minority or the lower class society who have no power to against the absolute power of the government. The ending of the narrative story expresses the narrator expectation of "Such a pretty house, and such a pretty garden, with no alarms and no surprises". It indicates the narrator expectation of the traditional social condition which has not been influenced by the modern things. To conclude, the representation of globalism

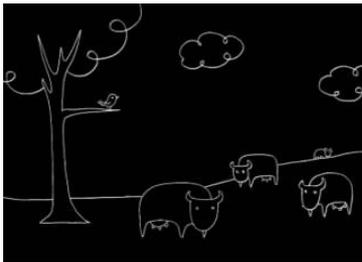
communicates through the narrative story of *No Surprises* music video which focuses on the modern society, an absolute power of the corrupt government, the hopeless and powerless feelings of lower class society.

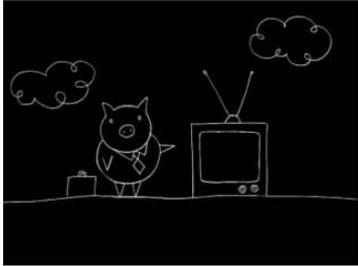
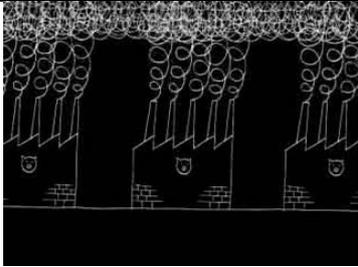
Findings in the Visual Analysis

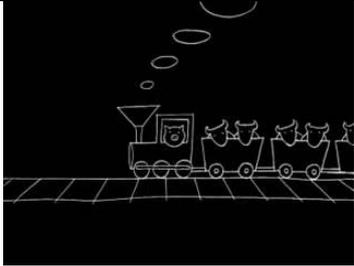
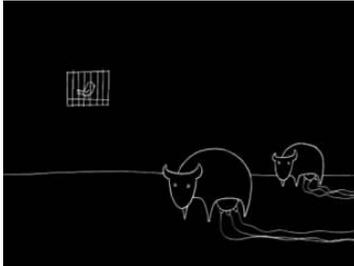
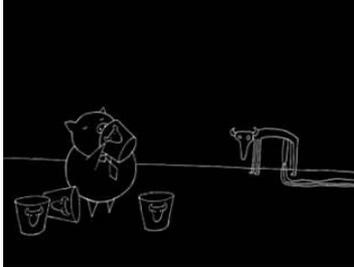
In order to reveal the way globalism issue is represented in 2+2=5 and *No Surprises* music videos, the videos are divided into several selected scenes.

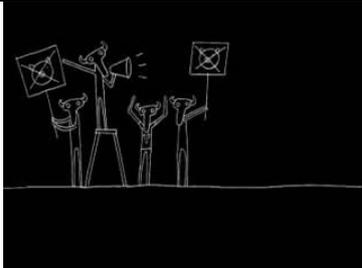
The data are elaborated below:

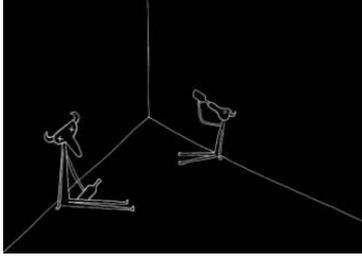
**First order signification and second order signification
in selected scenes of Radiohead’s music video 2+2=5**

Time line	Visual and Lyric	First Order Signification	Second Order Signification
00.22-00.52	<p>Visual:</p>  <p>Scene 5</p>	<p>The scene visualizes the tree, bird, sky, and the cows</p> <p>Frame Size: Extreme long shot</p> <p>Camera Angle: Eye level</p> <p>Color Saturation: Black and white</p>	<p>-The setting in the video signifies a peaceful environment. The tree and the cloud symbolize the nature. The bird symbolizes freedom and the healthy fat cow signifies the prosperous, fertility and abundance.</p> <p>- Extreme long shot signifies a wide and tremendous impression of the object and the environment.</p> <p>- Eye level camera angle identifies the equality. It is a neutral angle and has no dramatic power.</p> <p>-Black and white colors signify realism and factual condition of the society.</p>

	<p>Lyric:</p> <p>Are you such a dreamer? To put the world to rights? I'll stay home forever Where two & two always makes up five</p>	<p>Color Saturation: Black and white</p>	<p>is a neutral angle and has no dramatic power. -Black and white colors signify realism and factual condition of the society.</p>
	<p>Visual:</p>  <p>Scene 21</p>	<p>The visualization presents a pig is wearing a tie and bringing a television</p> <p>Frame Size: Long shot</p> <p>Camera Angle: Eye level</p> <p>Color Saturation: Black and white</p>	<p>The pig signifies an educated and modern people. Television signifies the development in technology. - Long shot signifies a clear description of every objects and the condition of its setting. - Eye level camera angle identifies the equality. It is a neutral angle and has no dramatic power. -Black and white colors signify realism and factual condition of the society</p>
<p>00.54-01.21</p>	 <p>Scene 26</p>	<p>There are some factories and the pollution from the factories</p> <p>Frame Size: Long shot</p> <p>Camera Angle: Eye level</p> <p>Color Saturation: Black and white</p>	<p>Factories and pollution signify modern social condition. - Long shot signifies a clear description of every objects and the condition of its setting. - Eye level camera angle identifies the equality. It is a neutral angle and has no dramatic power. -Black and white colors signify realism and factual condition of the society</p>

	 <p>Scene 29</p> <p>Lyric: I'll lay down the tracks Sandbag & hide January has April's showers And two and two always makes up five</p>	<p>Frame Size: Long shot Camera Angle: Eye level Color Saturation: Black and white</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long shot signifies a clear description of every objects and the condition of its setting. - Eye level camera angle identifies the equality. It is a neutral angle and has no dramatic power. -Black and white colors signify realism and factual condition of the society
	<p>Visual:</p>  <p>Scene 33</p>	<p>There is a bird in a cage and the cows are milked</p> <p>Frame Size: Extreme Long shot Camera Angle: Big close up Color Saturation: Black and white</p>	<p>The bird signifies that people no longer have freedom and they become powerless.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long shot signifies a clear description of every objects and the condition of its setting. - Eye level camera angle identifies the equality. It is a neutral angle and has no dramatic power. -Black and white colors signify realism and factual condition of the society
<p>01.22-01.53</p>	 <p>Scene 35</p>	<p>The pig is drinking milks whereas the cow is getting thinner.</p> <p>Frame Size: Long shot Camera Angle: Big close up Color Saturation: Black and white</p>	<p>The scene signifies the greediness of the ruling class society and the powerless of the lower society to against their power.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long shot signifies a clear description of every objects and the condition of its setting. - Eye level camera angle identifies the equality. It

			<p>is a neutral angle and has no dramatic power.</p> <p>-Black and white colors signify realism and factual condition of the society</p>
	 <p>Scene 37</p>	<p>The scene depicts the cows is protesting against the pig.</p> <p>Frame Size: Long shot</p> <p>Camera Angle: Big close up</p> <p>Color Saturation: Black and white</p>	<p>The cows signify the demonstrators who fight for their rights.</p> <p>- Long shot signifies a clear description of every objects and the condition of its setting.</p> <p>- Eye level camera angle identifies the equality. It is a neutral angle and has no dramatic power.</p> <p>-Black and white colors signify realism and factual condition of the society</p>
	 <p>Scene 38</p>	<p>The scene visualizes the dog is barking at the cows</p> <p>Frame Size: Long shot</p> <p>Camera Angle: Big close up</p> <p>Color Saturation: Black and white</p>	<p>The dog is signifies as the guardian of the ruling class society or the government. The dog can be symbolized as the police who works for the advantages of the ruling class.</p> <p>- Long shot signifies a clear description of every objects and the condition of its setting.</p> <p>- Eye level camera angle identifies the equality. It is a neutral angle and has no dramatic power.</p> <p>-Black and white colors signify realism and factual condition of the society</p>

	 <p>Scene 40</p> <p>Lyric: It's the devil's way now There is no way out You can scream and you can shout It is too late now</p>	<p>The scene visualizes the cow that looks thinner than the previous scene and they are drinking probably an alcohol.</p> <p>Frame Size: Long shot Camera Angle: Big close up Color Saturation: Black and white</p>	<p>The scene signifies frustration, hopeless and the degradation of moral relates to the addiction of alcohol.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long shot signifies a clear description of every objects and the condition of its setting. - Eye level camera angle identifies the equality. It is a neutral angle and has no dramatic power. -Black and white colors signify realism and factual condition of the society
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First order signification and second order signification in selected scenes of Radiohead’s music video *No Surprises*

Time line	Visual and Lyric	First Order Signification	Second Order Signification
00.27-01.10	<p>Visual:</p>  <p>Scene 3</p>  <p>Scene 6</p>	<p>The scene presents an image of a man in dark background. There is scrolling texts reflecting on the tube surface</p> <p>The scene presents a man in flat expression and the background is getting brighter than the first.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The visualization of the man in a flat expression identifies that he has serious problem and in depression, frustration, and stressful condition. The scrolling text is a reference to media and television that control people mind. -The physical appearance of the man who has small eyes and a bald head signifies that he has a serious view or sight of

	<p>Lyric: A heart that's full up like a landfill, A job that slowly kills you, Bruises that won't heal. You look so tired-unhappy, bring down the government, they don't, they don't speak for us.</p>	<p>Physical appearance: Bald head and small eyes</p> <p>Frame size: Close up</p> <p>Color Saturation: Black and white</p> <p>Camera Angle: Eye level</p>	<p>things and a mindful person (Barnard, 2006).</p> <p>-Close up frame size signifies the emotion, intimate or close (Selby and Coedery, 1995).</p> <p>-The background color black and white signify realism, actualism and factual (Selby and Coedery 1995)</p> <p>-Eye level camera angle identifies the equality. It is a neutral angle and has no dramatic power.</p>
<p>01.16-01.59</p>	<p>Visual:</p>  <p>Scene 8</p>  <p>Scene 10</p> <p>Lyric: I'll take a quiet life, a handshake of carbon monoxide, with no alarms and no surprises, No alarms and no surprises,</p>	<p>The man is in flat expression while the water fills in his face. From the image, we can see that the man is in a tube of glass. The background is brighter than the beginning scene.</p> <p>The man closes his eyes and the water raises and fills the glass.</p> <p>Frame size: close up</p> <p>Color Saturation: Black, white, blue</p> <p>Camera Angle: Eye level</p>	<p>The water signifies the problem and it seems that the problem keeps increased as the volume of the water is rising through his face.</p> <p>The man is hopeless and powerless. He gives up to his problem.</p> <p>-In this music video, close up represents the emotional feeling of the man.</p> <p>-The background color black and white signify realism, actualism and factualism. The blue light signifies hopelessness and pessimism (Selby and Coedery 1995).</p>

	No alarms and no surprises, Silent, silent.		-Eye level camera angle identifies the equality. It is a neutral angle and has no dramatic power.
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In the analysis of the visual images, the findings show that there are some similarities and differences in the way of illustrating the ideology of globalism in *2+2=5* and *No Surprises* music videos. The similarities in illustrating the ideology of globalism were represented through three ways, namely; the use of the symbolic visual style, the use of black and white color saturations which signify the visualization of the factual and realistic condition of the modern society, the amplifying relationship between the lyrics and visual.

The differences in illustrating globalism in *2+2=5* were represented through the use of warm (red) color saturation that signifies agitation and anger and the intertextual references. Whereas in *No Surprises*, the use of close up frame size that signifies emotion and the use of cool (blue) color saturation represent the way of illustrating globalism.

The research also finds that camera angle and video editing effect

in both music videos do not represent globalism issue. The eye level camera angle in both music videos is used only to give a neutral shot straight to the object. In addition, the use of fade in and fade out video editing in both music videos is the most appropriate video editing to show the beginning and the ending of each shots especially in the narrative video.

Ideological representation as portrayed in the two music videos (*2+2=5* and *No Surprises*) is globalism, which is the ideology that directing the process of globalization. Steger (2005, p.13) suggest that “globalization is a social process that are changing our current social condition based on the modern system of independent nation-based”. The social process can be clearly seen in the two music videos through the lyric and the visual images. In *2+2=5* music video, globalization illustrates through the visual images in each scenes. For instance, the visualization of the characters (the pig, the cow, the

bird and the dog) signify the social changes in the society from traditional social condition into the modern system. In addition, the visualization of television, factory and electricity illustrate the expansion of culture and idea. According to Steger (2005, cited in Walker, 2003, p.151) media and academia is a method to consider globalization as globalism.

In *No Surprises* music video, globalism is illustrated through the lyrics which illustrate the modern society living and a capitalist system of the government. The capitalist system of the government is depicted in the lyric "Bring down the government they don't, they don't speak for us". As suggested by Whitaker (2011), capitalism is one of the pillars of globalism. In capitalism the ruling class society has an absolute power to monopolize public capital. In addition, government policy is utilized to benefit and support the ruling class society (Steger, 2005). Meanwhile, the modern and robotic social life is illustrated through the lyric, "A heart full like a land fill, the job that slowly kills you". Both music videos illustrate globalism as

ideology which controlled the process of globalization in which unregulated capitalism is absolute. This is in line with

Steger (2005, cited in Walker, 2003, p.148) states that globalism is "the idea that unregulated capitalism is the inevitable, inescapable fate of successful economy". Based on the data analysis, globalism in *2+2=5* music video is represented by the way of the music video presenting the lyrics through the use of visual images. The use of animal characters (pig, cow, bird and dog) as the symbolism in order to deliver the narrative aspect of the video which illustrates globalism as an ideology that control social changing process in the society. Whereas the use of black and white colors signify realism, actualism and factualism (Selby and Cowdery, 1995).

The use of warm (red) color saturation in "*2+2=5*" music video is the most appropriate color saturation. Red color is used to represent agitation and anger of society's condition which has been affected by globalism. Warm color saturation, such as grey, yellow, orange, and red,

particularly signify optimism, hope, desire, and agitation (Selby and Cowdery, 1995).

Intertextual reference that relates to $2+2=5$ music video is George Orwell's novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1984). $2+2=5$ is a false belief that uses in the George Orwell's novel in order to describe the government or the ruling class control over people's thought. The government or parties in the novel is depicted have an absolute power to control present and past. In $2+2=5$ music video, pig is illustrated brainwashing cows's thought and controls their mind through media such as television. This illustration shows that globalism is an absolute unregulated capitalism where government and ruling class control public capital and public's thought.

Therefore, the ideology of globalism illustrates through the amplifying relationship between the lyrics and visual. For instance, in scene 33 and scene 35 amplify the lyric "it's the devil way now, there is no way out". Scene 33 describes a bird in the cage and the cows are

milked. The bird signifies freedom and the cows signify human being. While scene 35 visualizes a pig is drinking few buckets of milk and the cow is getting thinner. The pig in the video amplifies the lyrics "The devil's way" and the bird in the cage amplifies the lyrics "There is no way out".

Next, based on the data analysis, globalism in *No Surprises* music video is represented by the way of the music video presenting the symbolic visual style which illustrated the effect of capitalist system such as depression, hopeless, unhappy and monotonous modern life which control by the government. This signification is derived from the visualization of a flat facial expression of man's face in a tube of glass and the light blue color which appears as the water starts to fill up the glass signifies depression and hopeless feeling. According to Wilfred (1962), light blue color identifies peacefulness, spiritually calm, depression, introvert, delicacy and firm. Another symbolic visualization is the scrolling texts in the tube of glass which reflecting a

reference to media that control people mind

In order to emphasize character's emotion, *No Surprises* music video was taken in a close up shot in which a certain feature of the object takes up the whole frame in order to describe the object intimately (Selby and Cowdery, 1995). The video visualizes a detail of a man's face. The facial expression of the man can describe the emotion of the object and his physical appearance which has small eyes and bald head signifies he has a serious view or sight of things and a mindful person (Barnard, 2006).

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that globalism in *Radiohead* music videos (*2+2=5* and *No Surprises*) is represented through the lyrics and the visual images. Based on the data of the lyric analysis, the research found that there is a narrative story which indicates globalism in *2+2=5* and *No Surprises* music videos. The lyric analysis shows that the narrative story in *2+2=5* music video signifies a reality control and anger to the totalitarian government. While in *No Surprises*,

the narrative story of the lyric focuses on the modern society, an absolute power of the corrupt government and the hopelessness and powerlessness feelings of the lower class society. This means that the lyrics of *2+2=5* and *No Surprises* illustrate globalism through its effect to the society such as reality control, anger to totalitarian government, an absolute power of the corrupt government. Reality control and corrupt government are the characterization of unregulated capitalism (Page, 2005). In unregulated capitalism the ruling class has an absolute power to control and manipulate public capital. Therefore, corruption is one of the characterization in unregulated capitalism because the ruling class society can manipulate public capital for their own benefit. Whereas Steger (2005) argues that globalism is "an ideology which supports unregulated capitalism as the inevitable fate of successful economy".

Based on the findings the research also concludes that the representation of globalism in *2+2=5* and *No Surprises* music videos is illustrated through visual images.

Globalism in $2+2=5$ music video is represented by the way of using symbolic visual style to illustrate the process of globalization which is directed by the ideology of globalism; using warm (red) color saturation that signifies agitation and anger to the totalitarian government; using amplifying relationship between the lyrics and visual which signify the effect of globalism to the society and using intertextual reference that signifies reference to the dangers of a totalitarianism authority and the concept of $2+2=5$ as a public mind control by the ruling class society. This means that $2+2=5$ music video seems to show the negative effect of globalism as the ideology that has shifted into unregulated capitalism.

In *No Surprises* music video, globalism issue is illustrated through the symbolic visual style of the actor which represents a flat expression of the man's face as the symbolism of hopeless, powerless, unhappy and monotonous life because he is living in a robotic of modern social life. Another important feature of the video is the scrolling texts reflecting on the tube surface which is a

reference to media and television that control people mind. Next, the use of close up frame size signifies emotion; the use of cool (blue) color saturation identifies depression and hopeless feelings as the effect of globalism and the amplifying relationship between the lyrics and visual. This means that *No Surprises* music video represents globalism as an ideology which give disadvantages to the society specifically the lower class society.

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