

Globalization



Globalization is a trend towards greater interconnectedness of the world's financial, economic, technological, political, cultural, sociological, ecological and geographical systems.

- It refers to the increasing integration of economies around the world, particularly through trade and financial flows. The term sometimes also refers to the movement of people (labor) and knowledge (technology) across international borders.
- The term was first 'coined' by Canadian communication theorist – **Marshall McLuhan** in 1967
- Fuelled by advances in technology (transportation & communication) allowing people to meet, exchanging ideas & views

Why do we need Globalization?

We need to develop an understanding of the global context within which our actions towards the environment & other people take place

- Is the first step toward real solutions & changes is better understanding
- Is thought to improve standard of living around the world but it can be harmful to some



Positive Impacts of Globalization

- As globalization has progressed, living conditions (particularly when measured by broader indicators of well being) have improved significantly in virtually all countries. However, the strongest gains have been made by the advanced countries and only some of the developing countries.
- Increased understanding of cultures around the world
- Access to larger markets increases jobs and economic gains
- Reduce product costs

Negative Impacts of Globalization

- Tends to focus on short-term gains over long-term benefits
- That the income gap between high-income and low-income countries has grown wider is a matter for concern.
- Increase destruction of the Earth's environment
- Wide spread neglect of human rights

Global Village Institutions

United Nations
NATO

World Bank
International Court

**We are all part of the global village
but do we all share it equally?**

Globalization



Read the National Geographic article on ‘Globalization’ provided. Based on the information you have learned on Globalization, examine the quotes in the chart below and write your personal reflection in the space provided.

Quote	Reflection
<p><i>"Globalization helped me to understand the far reaching significance and global impact of many of my personal decisions."</i></p>	
<p>Globalization</p> <hr/> <p><i>A growing number of young people are rebelling against big companies. They object to the degree of economic and political power that corporations wield. And on a personal level, they are choosing not to work for large firms with strong corporate cultures that do not suit their political beliefs or their character.</i></p> <p>Source: The Economist</p>	

Globalization



Section I

“Globalization”—lots of people seem to think it means that the world is turning into some consumer colony of America. Coke, CNN, McDonald’s, Levi’s, Nikes—if they haven’t taken over the world yet, the feeling goes, they will soon. (Odd: Japan is the world’s second largest economy, and yet I’ve never heard of anyone who buys Sony or eats sushi believing that it’s part of some plot to turn the world into Japan.)

But regardless of whether you’re buying or selling, **in the past 20 years much of the world’s economy has become increasingly integrated** and foreign direct investment has grown three times as fast as total domestic investment. From 1980 to 1995 the value of trade worldwide rose dramatically, with the total value of world exports estimated at U.S. \$5.1 trillion in 1995, up from U.S. \$2 trillion in 1980.

Yet the globalization phenomenon is more than the mere transfer of goods, the fact that, for instance, you can buy French mineral water and Danish beer in the Shanghai airport or eat Japanese ramen out of your suburban microwave. It’s the advent of **cheap and ubiquitous information technologies** that is dissolving our sense of boundaries. More and more television channels and the Internet have contributed to what expert Daniel Yergin calls a “woven world.”

When we talk about “globality” (a new buzzword), we’re trying to define a world in which cultures meet and, rather than fight, they blend. As observer Frederick Tipson notes, “More like a thin but sticky coating than a powerful acid, this cosmopolitan culture of communications networks and the information media seems to overlay rather than supplant the cultures it interacts with.” Because **when cultures receive outside influences, they ignore some and adopt others**, and then almost immediately start to transform them.

That’s how you end up listening to something called “bhangra pop” in India, to take an example at random: sounds like Jamaican reggae played on traditional Indian instruments, then amplified. **“As things get more global,” commented Norman Klein, a communications professor in Los Angeles, “they’re actually becoming more localized.”**

Section II

I went to China, India, and Los Angeles to discover what globalization feels like in three of the most diverse places on Earth. Almost immediately I found that the ideas I started out with turned out to be too small, too old, or just plain wrong.

For the past year and a half in Shanghai, for example, **Chinese children have been tuning in to that American children’s classic TV show *Sesame Street***. But here it’s called *Zhima Jie*, and when you look closer, it’s not simply the American show. The show’s team of actors and educators has been collaborating to produce a program that promotes Chinese, rather than American, values. The kids are loving it.

“The Chinese want an environment that’s relaxed and fun that their children can be learning in,” senior producer Cooper Wright told me on the phone from New York. “They think they have enough formal settings for learning already. But they wanted it to include a lot of their ancient culture. The parents get home late, they all work, and they don’t have time to teach their children this, so they feel the show will help with that.”

Da Niao, Big Bird’s Chinese cousin, is played here by a gentle young man who still works as a truck mechanic. **The other characters are all Chinese:** a lively three-year-old red monster called Little Plum; a furry blue pig, a kindly grandfather, a very sweet mother, and a little boy, An An, who is so funny and cute and smart that when I met him I could scarcely believe how perfect he was for the part.

This group does many of the usual *Sesame Street* activities—teaching numbers, for instance—but instead of the alphabet **they teach the origin and meaning of Chinese characters.** They explain the history and customs of certain festivals. They describe certain ancient art forms. And they also teach sharing and cooperation.

Why does this matter? Because the one-child policy has produced millions of only children who don’t live in the large families that once fostered such behaviors. Many Chinese freely admit that a lot of these kids, with two sets of grandparents and two parents who work, are pretty spoiled. In fact, they’re often called Little Emperors and Empresses. You can imagine.

“We want to concentrate on reflecting Chinese families,” explained Professor Li Ji Mei, who designed part of the show’s curriculum, “such as what children could do to show their respect for the family. Another important part of the program is to make children realize how much their parents do for their well-being. In reflecting Chinese society,” she concluded, “we reflect how people should help each other and how to share the joy in sharing.”

I asked Professor Li if she thought there was much difference between Chinese and American children. “I think American children are more active,” she replied immediately. “They’re freer in expressing themselves, take the initiative more, and they’re more independent. When Chinese babies fall on the ground, they lie there and expect their parents to pick them up.” But Ye Chao, the show’s producer in Shanghai, notes, “I think the difference today between children in Chinese cities and rural areas is far bigger than between American and Chinese children.”

Cooper Wright, the senior producer in New York, believes **American children could stand to gain from some of the material in the Chinese show.** “I think we could benefit a lot from the aesthetics,” she said. “And the respect for elders. I think some of the segments with the grandfather are wonderful, and I’d hope they could influence our shows.”

By now, **19 countries around the world are producing their own versions of *Sesame Street*,** using television to interpret their unique cultures. It seems to be working. Does Big Bird feel he’s promoting America to his tiny viewers? “I don’t think so,” Ye Chao said. “We just borrowed an American box and put Chinese content into it.”

By: Erla Zwingle National Geographic 2000