MEDIA CORPORATIONS AND EFFECT OF GLOBALIZATION

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Abstract
The main aim of our research is to examine the relationship between media and globalization processes. The focus will be on the impact of media corporations on globalizations, and on the role of Global News Agencies, and their wider influence on the society at large. During and after the Second World War the role of media corporations has changed, and until today Multimedia Corporations had an important role in saving the most powerful stories of our century. Today, Multimedia Corporations are influential in so many different areas, like Economics, Politics and Culture. This impact is still examined by scholars.

Key words: Globalization, Multimedia Corporations, Cultural Change, Media Giants.

1. Introduction

Always I wanted to explore about Globalization and which is the main tool that helps globalization to grow with big dynamic in the world. Multimedia Corporations are very interesting for analyzing and search for their impact in changing the cultures. I would like to investigate how American Multimedia Giants work and are so powerful, how Global News Agencies influence the public opinion etc. Today, major global firms either own US production houses, or they produce elsewhere world-class competitive products for a global media market. Sony of Japan and Bertelsmann of Germany are good examples of foreign multimedia firms which compete daily with US media companies. Yet US firms still control a majority of foreign sales in the global communication market. They are also expanding through regional partnerships, international joint ventures, or outright takeovers. Time Warner, Disney, Viacom, News Corporation, and General Electric represent the major US media owners that dominate many global media and global media-related markets.

Time Warner controls CNN, HBO, Warner Brothers Record, AOL, and several other media properties. Disney controls ABC; Viacom owns MTV, CBS, BET, and Blockbuster. News Corp. owns the Fox properties, and General Electric owns NBC Universal. All are headquartered in the United States, the dominant core nation, with extensive semiperipheral and some peripheral market activities. (As shown in Figure 1)
2. Globalization

Globalization in general describes the late twentieth-century condition of encounter and interdependence across cultures, societies, nations, and it is expansion of capitalism on a global scale. The globalization made changes in world political structure after World War II (post-1945) that included the rise of the United States and decolonization of the formerly colonized world, it is a shift from the concept of the nation-state as bounded and independent toward a range of economic, social and political connections across nations, and an acceleration in the scale, mode, and volume of exchange and relationship in nearly all spheres of human activity.

Globalization is surely one of the most commonly used and misused terms in the world today whenever people talk or write about politics, economics, the environment, music or just their day-to-day lives. For different groups the word has different resonance. For the international jet set, Globalization means that their business and leisure activities know no borders. For those who work in offices or factories around the world, Globalization might simply mean that they constantly exchange e-mails with colleagues located on different continents and that decisions taken in central headquarters, far away in kilometers but within immediate reach electronically, have a direct effect on their lives. For teenagers in the economically privileged parts of the world, it might be MTV, with its dominant discourse of consumerism, which is most representative of Globalization. However, for the majority of the planet’s inhabitants, particularly in sub Saharan Africa and some parts of South America and Asia, Globalization may mean economic conditions associated with worsening life circumstances rather than changes associated with having access to the kind of technologies that make possible instant communication and watching television. Within the research community, a wealth of literature has been produced on the topic of Globalization and with this literature has come a multitude of definitions, many related to

Figure 1 Global media leaders (McPhail. 200, p. 60)

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<td>Activision Blizzard/Vivendi (France)</td>
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<td>Discovery Communications</td>
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economic relations. The definitions that are most revealing for the present research are those which refer to the spatial connections that Globalization encourages (Koenig, 2004, p. 23):

Globalization can be taken to refer to those spatio-temporal processes of change which underpin a transformation in the organization of human affairs by linking together and expanding human activity across regions and continents. Without reference to such expansive spatial connections, there can be no clear or coherent formulation of the term. (Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton, 1999: 15; Cited by Block, 2004, p. 24)

Globalization is the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa. (Giddens 1990: 64; Cited by Block, 2004, p.24)

With the flows and networks of closer social relations and connections, the fear of homogenization has surfaced. Scholars adopting the stance that Globalization will mean one world culture generally believe that homogenizing forces will eventually leave everyone in the world living, thinking and acting in very similar ways. For example, George Ritzer (1996, 1998; Cited by Block, 2004, p. 24) envisages the eventual homogenization of the means of consumption around the world, what he calls McDonaldization, that is ‘the principles of the fast-food restaurant [which] are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world’ (Ritzer, 1996: 1; Cited by Block, 2004, p.24). Ritzer’s work bridges economic Globalization to cultural Globalization as he effectively argues that consumption and consumerism are central tenets of late modern culture.

Along similar lines, Benjamin Barber argues that we are heading towards a single global culture, which he calls ‘McWorld’, defined as ‘an entertainment shopping experience that brings together malls, multiplex movie theatres, theme parks, spectator sports arenas, fast food chains (with their endless movie tieins) and television (with its burgeoning shopping networks) into a single vast enterprise …’ (Barber 1995: 97; Cited by Block, 2004, p. 24).

However, not all scholars would agree that Globalization leads necessarily to homogenization. As argued by Nederveen Pieterse (1995; in Block, 2004, p. 24) introduces into the discussion the concept of hybridization, understood as the natural mingling and mixing which goes on when the global meets the local. Elsewhere, Roland Robertson (1995; in Block, 2004, p. 24) translates the Japanese term globalization (Robertson, 1995; in Block, 2004, p.24), which he takes from the business context where it means marketing goods and services on global basis by catering to local particularities. Robertson re-invents the term for the context which interests him- cultures in contact- and uses it to signify what he calls the ‘interpenetrating’ of the ‘particular’ and the ‘universal’ (Robertson, 1995: 30; Block, 2004, p.24).

Both Pieterse and Robertson make the point that Globalization entails a synergetic relationship between the global and the local as opposed to the dominance of the former over the latter. It is evidence of this synergetic relationship with regard to language use that this present research is trying to track. Is there the equivalent linguistic globalization, with English and lesser used languages increasingly used as alternatives to national languages?

Where one locates the origin of globalizing forces influences one’s expectations about language practice. Some scholars (Schiller, 1985; Latouche, 1996; Ritzer, 1998; in Block, 2004, p.25) see
Globalization as hegemonic ally Western, and above all an extension of American imperialism (e.g. Schiller 1985, Ritzer 1998; in Block, 2004, p.25), Latouche (1996; in Block, 2004, p. 25) writes about the “Westernization of the world” and the progressive “worldwide standardization of lifestyles” (Latouche 1996: 3; in Block, 2004, p. 25). For Latouche, fundamental Western ideology and culture, best exemplified in the United States, are becoming the norm around the world as there is convergence in all aspects of people’s lives, from how they dress to how they eat, from their entertainment preferences to their work habits and from architecture to their attitudes towards personal freedom, gender, race, religion and science. Spread of English is an expected part of this creeping uniformity.

However, other scholars would disagree with the view that Globalization is merely US imperialism by other means. Writing in the early nineties, Giddens acknowledges that ‘[t]he first phase of Globalization was plainly governed, primarily, by the expansion of the West, and institutions which originated in the West’ (Giddens 1994: 96; in Block, 2004, p. 25); however, he goes on to state:

Although still dominated by Western power, Globalization today can no longer be spoken of only as a matter of one-way imperialism ... now, increasingly, ... there is no obvious ‘direction’ to Globalization at all, as its ramifications are ever present...’ (Giddens, 1994: 96; in Block, 2004, p. 25).

Elsewhere, (Robertson, 1992 and Friedman, 1994; in Block, 2004, p. 25) express similar views, that effectively it is unhelpful to frame the discussion in terms of Western dominance over “the rest”. The question then arises whether this multi polarity extends to language or whether even where Western power is diluted, the principal language of that power is still used as the lingua franca of globalizing groups.

Arising from such debates about Western hegemony and the relative strength of the local is the question of whether or not Globalization is seen as a generally positive or generally negative phenomenon. On the positive side, there are scholars, such as Kenichi Ohmae (1990, 1995; in Block, 2004, p. 25), who not only argue that global market forces and transactional corporations run the world today and that the nation state and labor unions have become obsolete as structures of social organization, but that these developments are a mark of progress. More typical of scholars, however, is a more skeptical and even negative stance.

Eric Hobsbawn (1994; in Block, 2004, p. 25) and Paul Smith (1997; in Block, 2004, p. 25) make the point that Globalization is really the traditional capitalism of economic imperialism and international hierarchies, which has been transformed by the use of new technologies and a clearer than ever distinction between industrially-based and service-based economies. Elsewhere, Gray (1998; in Block, 2004, p. 26) discusses the results of this combination of the old philosophy and new means. He sees the new globalized economy in the form of the Washington Consensus2 as fundamentally destructive, leading above all to the dismantling of the welfare state, which so characterized the economically advanced countries in the world over the second half of the twentieth century. Meanwhile, Ritzer (1996, 1998; in Block, 2004, p. 26) is equally dystopic as he believes that the process of McDonaldization cited above will lead the citizens of the world to a soulless and “disenchanted”
existence where experiences which were previously authentic to individuals, have become commodified and over-rationalized.

Whether Globalization means homogenizations or not, or Americanization or not, or a dystopic future for the world or not, it remains the dominant framework for current discussions and analyses of social phenomena. And the two social phenomena that intersect and are the focus of this issue of the IJMS - language use and Internet use - cannot be discussed, researched or analyzed without taking into account the contrasting views on Globalization outlined above. Indeed, as I have started to indicate, there is an obvious parallel between global/local tension running cross the views summarized above and the competition between English and other languages as media for the Internet. I will have more to say about this below. First, however, I discuss the relationship between Globalization and the spread of English, the origins of the Internet and how English came to be considered ‘the language of the Internet’ during the mid-nineties. (Block, 2004, p. 26)

Globalization in future perspective made huge changes in political, economical and communications arenas. Nowadays we have historical and continuing role of communication in globalization, corporate control of global communication and transnational media conglomerates, international and national communication policies, defining the architecture of global communication, intellectual property and copyright, governance of cyberspace, futures of the mass media and journalism, growth of new media in non-democratic societies (such as China), Access to communication technology and the digital divide, international broadcasting rights, global advertising, marketing practices and national policies, information revolutions and challenges to state power.

Globalization is shaped by culture and influences different areas, such as:

- Influences of globalization on traditional languages and cultures
- Cultural imperialism,
- Resistance to globalization among cultures
- Migration and population movements
- Diasporic communities
- Global virtual communities
- Negotiation among cultures
- Globalization and religion
- Comparative religion study
- The growing role of Global Islam
- Transformation of the international workforce
- The local in a globalized world – “globalization”
- The globalization of sport
- The cultural implications of the Olympics, Super Bowl, and World Cup
- Transformation of the university and education. (Kolar Panov, 2015, IBU)

Whether Globalization means homogenizations or not, or Americanization or not, or a dystopic future for the world or not, it remains the dominant framework for current discussions and analyses of social phenomena. Depending on the circumstances, the driving forces behind global cultural
homogenization can be weak. In all cases, imported media is never a sufficient condition to dominate local cultures.

Other intervening factors must coincide, such as a weak national identity or the political and/or economic suppression of local media and local culture. In any case, local cultures are likely to redefine the semiotic and social meanings of imported content.

3. Globalization of Multimedia Corporations

Media within globalization has been understood in several ways:

- The cultural imperialism argument emphasizes the information technology divide within which dominant cultures impose information, products, and values on those of less dominant ones.

- The hybridization thesis stresses that globalization of economy, trade, and migration has created cultures that are hybridized, mixed, syncretic and composite. Globalization creates combinations of sameness and difference: center to periphery, periphery to center, creolization, and regional media productions.

- A new media order, beyond sameness and difference suggests that cultural exchanges are more complicated than similarity and difference: polycentrism, indigenization, overlapping ‘scapes’ – create alternative approaches to media and visual cultures.

“Internationalization” is a fashionable, mysterious, and magic word on everyone’s lips. For some people, it is what we must do if we wish to be happy; for others it is the cause of much angst. Most agree that the trend toward internationalization appears to be irreversible, and it is a process that is bound to affect all in one way or another. Although we accept the situation as significant, there are some problems with the term, itself. Does globalization turn our planet into a world society, a “global village”? Or, conversely, does it disintegrate the nation-state system, and dissolve stable national identities? Some theorists support the idea that a global village will encourage universal citizenship and allow national cultures to interact. Others argue that the flow of media from the rich states to the poorer countries may aggravate the already existing power gap between them, or that imported media cultures may threaten the native culture of the receiving country. The terms “internationalization” and “globalization” have somewhat different foci of meanings.

The former usually refers to standards and rules, while the latter often identifies social, migratory, linguistic, and economic practices of global integration. For simplification, the terms will be used interchangeably in this paper, which will use the experience of India’s media industry to analyze the influence of media internationalization on national cultures. (Wang, 2008, p. 203)

It has been argued that the globalization of media will result in the decentralization of power and permit more bottom-up control. Marshall McLuhan provides two important concepts: “the medium is the message” and “the global village” (Marchessault, 2005, p. 213; in Wang, 2008, p. 204). This insightful phrase “global village” was chosen by McLuhan to highlight his observation that an electronic
nervous system, the media, was rapidly integrating the globe - i.e. events in one part of the world could be experienced from other parts in real-time. What human experience was like when we lived in small villages?

Wheeler (1997; in Wang, 2004, p. 204) argues that the new media challenges the one-way flow of information by enhancing interactivity.

Thus, the production of knowledge is decentralized and democratized. Through such decentralization, technologies prevent dominant authorities from managing the flow of information. In turn, the new technologies allow for the globalization of the media economy, compress time, make spatial relations horizontal, relocate information and undermine the role of nation states...The globe’s citizens may engage in a shared culture, a global village, which undermines the previously hierarchical, uniform or individualizing methods of ideological control.

Because of the American monopoly in communication research since the Second World War, some people viewed mass media as a channel of Westernization. The flow of media from the West to less developed countries was regarded by the developed west as good not only for the recipients but also for the senders who saw it as an integral part of their fight against socialism and totalitarianism. But this ethnocentric view of global communications has drawn a critical response from international scholars and receiving countries. During the Cold War and the numerous resistance movements within many semi-colonial areas, the issue became an inevitable argument. New media imperialism seemed to succeed more easily than the previous international propaganda because of its form of ordinary entertainment and the willingness of mass audiences to enjoy popular culture. (Wang, 2004, p. 205)

Internationalization of media can influence national cultures in different ways. However, the cultural hegemony of media exporters is unlikely in and of itself to result in cultural domination. “Media may be a necessary, but are unlikely to be a sufficient, condition for cultural resistance or submission” (McQuail, 2000, p. 238; Wang, 2004, p.205). International media’s effect on local culture should always be examined within the context of different economic, technological and cultural situations. Economic and technological internationalization of media not only recharges the existing media strengths, but also allows new media outlets to emerge and grow. In the case of India, the national and local media players grow increasingly stronger; due to cultural factors, they have an edge over foreign competitors. (Wang, 2004, p. 210)

Globalization of media is not a term of global nature. As Sparks (2000; Wang, 2004, p. 205) has argued, no media is genuinely global in nature. In addition, the so-called global media’s audience is ‘too small, too rich and too English-speaking to be considered inclusive.’ There is little evidence that supports the existence of a global public sphere and the public sphere remains largely state-oriented. There is no question that all these globalizing trends are made possible with the help of mass media at both the domestic and international level.

This process of “globalization” is often portrayed as a positive force which is unifying widely different societies, integrating them into a “global village”, and enriching all in the process. It is variously described as an inevitable by-product of human evolution and progress, as if it were an organic process, governed by the laws of nature. However, globalization is not necessarily a natural progression emerging out of the ordinary communication and interaction of people and cultures around the world. Rather, it
results from elaborate human choice by a powerful group of nations, transnational corporations (TNCs) and international organizations which have stakes in the process.

Globalization” emerged as a buzzword in the 1990s, just as "interdependence" did in the 1970s, but the phenomena it refers to are not entirely new. Our characterization of interdependence more than 20 years ago now applies to globalization at the turn of the millennium: "This vague phrase expresses a poorly understood but widespread feeling that the very nature of world politics is changing. Like all popular concepts meant to cover a variety of phenomena, both "interdependence" and "globalization" have many meanings.

To understand what people are talking about when they use the terms and to make them useful for analysis, we must begin by asking whether interdependence and globalization are simply two words for the same thing, or whether there is something new going on.

Twenty years ago people talked about Americanization of media in the world. Today people talk more about globalization because it is apparent that although American media play a prominent role in the global scene, media industries from a number of other countries are also heavily across the world.

A handful of firms dominate the globalize part of the media system. The six largest are AOL, Time Warner (U.S.), Disney (U.S.), Vivendi-Universal (French), Bertelsmann (German), Viacom (U.S.), and Rupert Murdoch’s News Corporation (Australian). The other four main global firms are AT&T (U.S.), Microsoft (U.S.), and two media groups that are part of much large industrial corporations: General Electric/NBC (U.S.) and Sony/Columbia/TriStar (Japanese) (Variety, 2002).

Of the top 10 global media firms, then, six are American (counting News Corporations as Australian), mostly produce, distribute, and regulate almost all media outlets. These types of companies were growing and globalizing quickly. Time Warner and Disney generated around 15 percent of their income outside of the United States in 1900, a figure that rose to 30-35 percent by 2002.

Cable and satellite TV, which has been familiar to most Americans, Canadians, and some Europeans for years, is now expanding in most other countries of the world. Direct Broadcasting Satellite (DBS) or Direct-to-Home (DTH) started in Japan and Britain and has readily spread too many other countries, often spanning the borders of neighboring countries.

By the 1990s, cable systems and the private satellite TV channels to feed them were blossoming in Europe, Latin American, and Asia. These cables systems delivered what is for the most part a one-way expansion of new video channels, especially U.S. cable channels into these new markets.

A number of channels quickly became global in reach: CNN, MTV, HBO, ESPN, TNT, Nickelodeon, the Cartoon Network, Discovery, Disney, and others began to dell their existing channels in these countries or even to translate and adopt their U.S. channels to the languages and cultures of the new audiences (Straubhaar & LaRose, 2004; Wang, 2004, p. 20).
4. American Multimedia Corporations

No long ago, US productions particularly feature film and television shows, dominated theater screens and television sets around the globe. Foreign productions provided relatively little competition. Today, other major global firms either own US production houses, or they produce elsewhere world-class competitive products for a global media market. Sony of Japan and Bertelsmann of Germany are good examples of foreign multimedia firms which compete daily with US media companies. Yet US firms still control a majority of foreign sales in the global communication market. They are also expanding through regional partnerships, international joint ventures, or outright takeovers. Time Warner, Disney, Viacom, News Corporation, and General Electric represent the major US media owners that dominate many global media and global media related markets.

Time Warner controls CNN, HBO, Warner Brothers Records, AOL, and several other media properties. Disney controls ABC; Viacom owns MTV, CBS, BET, and Blockbuster. News Corp. owns the FOX properties, and General Electric owns NBC Universal. All are headquartered in the United States, the dominant core nation, with extensive semi peripheral and some peripheral market activities. This chapter details origins, assets, and global interests of major US multimedia firms.

It is important to note the profiles of such multimedia firms. First, in terms of revenue, the three largest global media empires are all American. Time Warner, which owns several major properties, is by far the largest, but it does not own a general-interest national television network such ABC, CBS, FOX, or NBC. Disney is second and owns ABC radio and television, as well as ESPN. Viacom is third and owns CBS radio and television, along with MTV and BET. The fourth largest global media empire is the News Corporation, which domestically controls the FOX television network, 20th Century Fox, and has many other global properties. NBC network is owned by General Electric and is detailed in this chapter. NBC also has global activities such as CNBC, MSNBC, which is a partnership with Microsoft, and cable TV channels in Europe and Asia.

Second, in terms of electronic colonialism theory, all of the US multimedia empires, along with their extensive advertising networks, project and encourage US tastes, values, mores, history, culture, and language around the world. To a considerable extent, it is this influence that concerns other core, semi peripheral, and peripheral countries because of the impact of US multimedia fare on those countries’ domestic media.

Their concern covers a vast range of cultural products such as music, movies, television series, magazines, books, and now the internet. In terms of world-system theory, the United States’ activities in semi peripheral nations, which have large, accessible markets with growing disposable incomes, as well its activities in some peripheral nations, illustrate well the model explaining the broad range of offshore economic activities undertaken by major US communication corporations.

Major US global multimedia empires define relations with other nations along several product lines, as well as advertising, on an expanding number of foreign commercial television, radio networks, and print publications.

Hollywood- and New York-based communications corporation do well on a global scale because they have four substantial advantages. First, they operate in English, the language of the largest global
segment of media outlets with purchasing power. Second, they have access to substantial fiscal resources and capital markets, allowing them to finance multimillion-dollar productions. A single Hollywood feature film cost more than most other nations spend annually on all their feature films. Third, US television networks overwhelmingly prefer US made primetime shows. ABC, CBS, FOX, and NBC seldom purchase foreign-made programs. Fourth, Hollywood and New York have access to the broadest range of acting talent, producers, writers, and directors. Some of the talent is from other core nations such as Australia, Canada, Britain, France, or Japan.

The best global actors and actresses work primarily or exclusively on US productions. The critics of US cultural imperialism are at a virtual loss about what to do. Some call for media protectionist policies, which emerge from time to time around the globe. Quotas limiting US media import are a good example.

Other simply laments the fact that the business is all about economics and job opportunities and that there are scant opportunities for actors, writers, or producers from semi peripheral and peripheral nations to obtain employment and needed exposure in core nations. Most foreign commercial market buys US television and movies for their television and theater outlets. For example, across Europe, 60 to 80 percent of their purchases of foreign television programming are native to the US. At least 50 percent of the movie screens in Europe show Hollywood productions as well.

Across Latino America 60 percent of the movie screens show Hollywood productions. In the future, as the number of channels increases in other core and semi peripheral nations thanks to cable, satellite, and digital technologies, the need for content will only increase the demand for American productions for all genres.

The three largest media conglomerates in the world are all US owned. They are Time Warner, Disney, and Viacom. (McPhail, 2007, pp.59-61)

5. Conclusions

Globally there is an expansion of movie theaters, cable systems, satellite distribution systems, personal computers, music, CD, and video outlets. In particular, US multinational communication corporations such as Disney, News Corp., GE, Time Warner, Dow Jones, Gannett, and Viacom are strategically repositioning themselves as global corporations rather than simply US communication firms.

The growth and impact of US multimedia firms changed considerably in 2004. The addition of News Corp. from Australia, and Universal properties to NBC from France’s Vivendi, represents an enormous net gain for the US media sector. At the same time, it represents a net loss to two other core nations, Australia and France.

Because the United States is the leading core nation, these corporations have become aggressive in other core nations in Europe and Asia. At the same time, they have expanded into the semi peripheral nations because these represent substantial new markets where there is strong demand for US products of all types, ranging from CDs and DVDs, to movies, to the internet. These semi peripheral nations also have the greatest number of potential new customers with discretionary disposable income. They represent a new customer base for all the major US communication empires.
US media giants, with their advertising, products, and services, have inundated only a few peripheral nations. Most peripheral nations lack the necessary technical infrastructure, ability to provide security or sufficient disposable income to make economically worthwhile to establish major activities in these regions.

At the same time, some of these peripheral nations are seeking to avoid contact with US popular and media culture as they attempt to protect and promote an indigenous culture, which is usually low technology, or because of religious beliefs, authoritarian governments, or antidemocratic leaders. Finally, these global media firms must continue to grow if they want to remain competitive.

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