Globalization And Americanization

Rhiannon Beunder

English 101

Kevin Leaverton

03 – 17 – 09
This essay is going to focus on today’s issue of globalization. All over the world countries are becoming more like one another, however it seems that many of the similarities are all coming from one country in general, the United States of America. Although a lot of countries struggle to maintain their important cultural aspects, many of them are still allowing multinational companies to intrude because of such high demand and most of these are coming from America. What we should be trying to determine is whether this is globalization, Americanization or both.

Globalization means that different countries adopt certain cultural trends from each other such as TV shows, food, music, cars, and much more. Americanization is when other countries grow to be a lot more similar to the United States by inheriting many aspects of the American culture and allowing multinational companies such as Coca-cola, Mc Donald’s, Disney Land, and Ford to flood them.

Throughout this essay the positive and negative outcomes of globalization and Americanization are going to be discussed by mainly focusing on issues with the economy (trade, jobs, large organizations, etc.), cultural identity, co-operation between countries all over the world and a lot of the things that people do and use on an everyday bases that features globalization. This will be done by collecting research from reliable internet sites containing the domain, “.edu.” Theses sites will also give references to where they retrieved their research making it easier to verify that it is an essentially reliable source.
Where in the world today would you not be able to order Coca-cola in a restaurant? The answer to this question is easy, nowhere. Over the years large companies such as Coca-cola have spread throughout every country on the planet. Certain products might not come in the same packaging as other nations would have them in but the same company would still be producing it. In Frederick Millet’s article on Americanization he focuses on China stating that “Chinese can eat at any of 130 McDonald’s restaurants or get takeout from Boston Chicken and Domino’s Pizza.” This is a perfect example of what the world has become today. If we could blindfold someone and transport them to a city in any other country, they would most likely be incapable of figuring out where they were, especially with a McDonald’s, Kentucky Fried Chicken and a Starbucks at each corner.

In the small town of Ellensburg close to Central Washington University there are several restaurants that serve popular cuisine dishes from other countries. There’s the Italian restaurant on Main Street and then there’s Kiku-chan, which is a popular Japanese restaurant on University Way. One block down from Kiku-chan is the Korean barbeque restaurant, which also serves teriyaki, a famous Japanese dish. These places are not only put here for the students that have travelled from their homeland to enjoy but they are also here for the local Americans to have the benefit of trying different dishes from all over the world.

When shopping in your local supermarket most of the food you purchase would have been manufactured here in the United States but when you look at certain sections, there are usually a majority of products from other countries,
especially fruit. Trade is one of the most important aspects in today’s society, which is clearly mentioned in the report Globalization’s Hidden Benefits by Richard W. Fisher, “Trade as a percentage of gross world product has risen from 15 percent in 1986 to nearly 27 percent today.” Many countries rely on it for their own economy. When it comes to money, globalization can be extremely helpful, providing a majority of people with jobs. You may think about the owner of Ford setting up dealerships worldwide to make money but it’s not only the large co-operations that make money through globalization, it also has an effect on a coffee bean farmer in Indonesia. Globalization and trade affects everyone and sometimes it might not always be a positive outcome. Fair trade is important but doesn’t always take place for example a coffee bean farmer in South East Asia could be receiving lower funds than he or she really should be for all their hard work. Some multinational companies such as Starbucks make sure that their coffee beans were produced via fair trade so the farmer is collecting what they deserve.

It’s difficult to debate on whether the world is becoming globalized or Americanized but when you look a certain aspects, it’s both. Porsche, BMW, Ferrari, Honda, Mitsubishi and Toyota, which are all major car companies from Europe and Japan that have all spread globally. Multinational companies are able to take advantage of America just like America does of them by setting up businesses throughout the States, for example Germany setting up BMW dealerships. A sum of the people in the States enjoys driving a BMW as much as some people in Germany may enjoy driving a Ford Mustang. It gets people wondering, where would the world be without globalization? Some companies have better luck producing and selling
their products overseas as Ramesh Garg from Eastern Michigan University stated in his *Americanization versus Globalization,*" Toyota became a truly global company by Americanization of its operations.”

America is known for its famous Hollywood movies and television shows such as CSI, Prison Break, The Simpsons, Family Guy, Baywatch and hundreds more, however a majority of them contain a considerable amount of violence which could be “causing wrong judgments to be made about American life” as Frederick Millet stated in his article, “In a recent French poll of images that come to mind when thinking of America, 67% of those polled said "violence"." 

Americanization also sets positive impressions for the United States. Disney is popular with children all over the world, whether it is on television, in the movies or taking a trip to Disney land. There was a time where Disney land was only located in America but now there’s even one located in Tokyo, Japan. Everyone has heard of Mickey and Minnie mouse and most children dream of going to Disney Land one day to meet them, this shows that Americanization and globalization have a huge effect on almost every individual at some point in their life, it doesn’t even have to be related to Disney, it could be related to absolutely anything such as coming across a person that is a descendent from the complete opposite side of the world.

The great thing about globalization is that countries spend a lot more time bonding. People are interested in many of the different cultural aspects including language. It is currently required for students to learn different languages in school or university even though the most important language in the world is English.
When learning about other cultures, people are usually able to build appreciation for them. Doing this reduces racism resulting in less conflict with other countries. People become more interested and care more for one another.

Globalization has had a great effect on peace. During the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, almost the entire world joined in on the rescue operation, donating generous amounts of money and sending out teams of people trained to deal with disastrous situations. These countries didn’t only do this because they may have had citizens from their countries laying relaxing on the beach that day, they did it because the world has learnt to work together when times get rough. Experiencing globalization, people know that everyone is the same and they would want the help too if it had happened to them. It is all based on appreciation for one another.

Appreciation for another country is great and traveling has become more common because of this, but what is the point in traveling if every country is going to end up becoming so similar? It’s better to travel now before globalization completely takes over. Globalization is destroying the true aspects of cultural identity. Today a tourist can go to Africa, visit a local tribe and discover a man directing his cattle to a different part of the village wearing a Yankees baseball cap. Some countries are trying to slow down on Americanization for example, “France and Germany are making plans to slow Americanization... raising taxes and tariffs on foreign companies and investors... making it harder for American companies to profit overseas” mentioned in Millet’s Americanization article.
It’s easy to understand why countries would not want to become “Americanized” because of losing their cultural identity. Is the world becoming globalized or Americanized? Going through the research in great detail and looking at numerous aspects has shown that there definitely is a large influence coming from the United States of America, but in a sense the whole world influences each other because without globalization, the earth would be a significantly different place. If globalization and Americanization continues to take effect, it leaves clues to how the world could change in a few years not knowing whether all the countries could end up being the same or not.

