



Specialist Schools
and Academies Trust
THE SCHOOLS NETWORK™

Preparing global citizens

Globalisation and education

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iNet Principal Supporter



The world's local bank

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Mission statement

The Specialist Schools and Academies Trust works to give practical support to the transformation of secondary education in England by building and enabling a world-class network of innovative, high performing secondary schools in partnership with business and the wider community.

Contents

1 Introduction	2
2 The death of distance: a personal encounter with globalisation	4
3 Talent diversification: preparing the global workforce	16
4 Global citizenship: the new universal knowledge and skills	39
5 Schools as global enterprises: road to preparing global citizens	49
6 Globalisation questions for school leaders	54
References	56

THIS PUBLICATION

Audience

Leaders at all levels of education

Aims

- To describe and explain the challenges of globalisation facing schools, school leaders and students
- To show why a global perspective is needed in schools and how it can be realised
- To suggest specific actions schools can take to implement a global perspective, and some challenges for school leaders to consider

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1 Introduction

This pamphlet is about preparing our children to meet the challenges of globalisation. The current global financial crisis serves as a jolting reminder of the complexity and consequences of globalisation. As national governments rush to save their economies and bail out their financial institutions, as economists ponder over the causes, and as millions of people face unemployment, the debate over the merits and damages of globalisation has begun to gain attention worldwide. However, one thing is clear and that is, globalisation is here to stay. This round of crisis may change its course in some way, but will be unlikely to bring it to a full stop.

Schools, as institutions charged with the responsibility for preparing future citizens, must take globalisation into full consideration when fulfilling their responsibilities. A globalised world is an interconnected and interdependent world where all human lives are intertwined, regardless of where they live on the planet. However, schools have historically been local entities. Very rarely does 'global' come into their thinking. Thus most schools today still hold a very local view of education.

The local view of education considers their students as citizens of their local communities, be it a city or nation. In this view, globalisation is considered a force that competes with and even threatens the local community, so schools have to ensure their students can compete with their foreign counterparts. As such, schools pay much attention to how they rank with other schools, particularly those in other nations, in the traditional subjects such as maths, science, and literacy. In addition, the local view leads schools to instil in students a local perspective, which asks students to judge events based on their impact on the local communities or themselves.

But the truth is just the opposite. In the globalised world, people move, businesses move, and through technology, individuals can work for businesses located in different countries. As such, one's well-being is affected as much by someone who lives thousands of miles away as by local neighbours, by governments in other nations as well as their own, and by businesses in foreign lands as well as local ones. To prepare students to live successfully in the globalised world, schools must adopt a global perspective.

This pamphlet discusses in detail why a global perspective is needed and how it can be realised in schools. The pamphlet begins with discussions of the various aspects of globalisation and how it may affect our views of the future world. It then presents the specifics of what successful living requires in this new world. It ends with specific actions schools can take to implement a global perspective and some challenges for school leaders to consider. I hope this pamphlet can be of use to all educators who are concerned about the future of our children.

Yong Zhao

Okemos, Michigan

December 31, 2008

2 The death of distance: a personal encounter with globalisation

'Honey,' I confided, 'the world is flat.'

Thomas Friedman

As electrically contracted, the globe is no more than a village.

Marshall McLuhan

The problem is that economic globalisation has outpaced the globalisation of politics and mindsets.

Joseph Stiglitz

On a rainy autumn day in 2007, I moved into a flat in Royal Leamington Spa, a city of about 40,000 residents in central Warwickshire, England. According to the Oak of Midland, an oak tree just outside the town, this is the centre of England. Just the day before, I was in East Lansing, a city of similar size in mid Michigan, USA, about 4,000 miles away. It took me about 12 hours on cars, jet planes, and trains to cover this distance. I was tired, lonely, and slightly disoriented. But considering that the Mayflower took 66 days to just cross the 'pond' from Plymouth, England to Plymouth, Massachusetts, which at that time did not even exist when the ship arrived, I should have been grateful. I should have been even more grateful when minutes later, I was reunited with my family back in the US via Skype on my Sony Vaio laptop through an O2 mobile phone service. I saw them, talked with them just like the day before. So the distance of 4,000 miles was practically erased!

I was not the only one who travels to Leamington Spa from faraway places, as I soon discovered. A few hours later, I was delivered a Peugeot 305 made by the French automaker that has factories across Europe, China, Brazil and Argentina, by two very friendly Englishmen who work for Avis, an international car rental firm founded in Detroit, Michigan (where I had started my journey) and headquartered in

Parsippany, New Jersey. I took a short drive to town for some shopping. Of course, I ended up in Tesco, the British version of Wal-Mart, which sells worldwide everything from grocery to clothes, from DVDs to phone cards, and from financial planning to health insurances. Without any problem, I got what I wanted: wines from Australia and Chile, cheese from France, rice from Thailand, coffee from Columbia, and soap from China. Later I realised I could have got all of these from my flat online, without going to the store at all. But I enjoyed the physical visit anyway because I got to see other people in the shop. Some of them even looked like me.

In search of a restaurant for dinner, I walked the streets and was presented with many choices of cuisine. There are Chinese, English, French, Indian, Italian, Japanese, Middle Eastern, and of course, the quintessential American – MacDonald and KFC. I chose the Leamington Bar and Grill and was waited on by two excellent young men from Poland. Then I was driven back in a taxi by someone from Turkey.

In a matter of 24 hours, I had interacted, directly and indirectly, physically and virtually, with people from some 20 countries around the globe. This was by no means an epiphany, for I had traveled to many countries before and migrated from China to the US. I had also read much about how our world has become 'globalised', by writers such as Thomas Friedman and Marshall McLuhan. But for some reason, this experience gave me a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness and interdependency among human beings.

What you could describe as the death of physical distance resulted from advances in transport and communication technologies, which have been a major driving force of globalisation, but not the only one. Political changes have also played a significant role. Globalisation will affect every aspect of our lives: the way we live, work, socialise and play – and of course the way we are educated and how we use that education.

Born in a small village in China's Sichuan Province that had electricity only about 10 years ago and is still unreachable by car, I would have

been very unlikely to be in Leamington had China not opened up to the outside world, had the Berlin Wall not fallen, or had the US Congress not repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Political changes in the last century have been dramatic. The world saw two world wars and a damaging cold war: together they divided the human race into enemies and legalised killings of millions for much of the 20th century. But toward the end of the millennium, miracles happened. While regional conflicts remain, most of the human race began to exchange goods and services rather than bullets and hostility. Nations laid down their arms and opened their borders to their former enemies. The formation of the European Union, the signing of the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the birth of the World Trade Organisation, the expansion of the United Nations and its associated organisations have all helped build a new platform for people to have a different way of interacting and connecting with each other, through trade, through migration, and through negotiation.

What I experienced in Leamington Spa has been documented by many scholars. Almost half a century ago, the Canadian media theorist and communication professor Marshall McLuhan coined the phrase ‘global village’ to highlight his observation that thanks to the ‘electric technology, we have extended our central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned.’ (McLuhan, 1964). Events in one part of the world could be experienced in real time in other parts of the world – just like when people lived in small villages. McLuhan’s insights were revolutionary yet astonishingly correct, as attested by subsequent developments in communication and information technologies. Today, the internet has penetrated over 20% of the world’s population. Mobile telephones, nonexistent at McLuhan’s time, are used by over two billion people. Television has entered 90% of households in the world, with news and other programming running 24 hours a day.

What McLuhan did not anticipate is that the technologies that enable people to vicariously experience what happens in distant places have

also enabled physical movement of goods, services, and people, with the help of new transportation technologies, political and cultural changes. This increased flow across national borders led Thomas Friedman to declare the arrival of ‘the flat world’, in which more people on the planet are now participating and experiencing economic, cultural, and political activities on a global scale. In 2004, worldwide trade in merchandise and services contributed to 55% of world GDP, and global flows of foreign direct investment have more than doubled since 1990, reaching 28.4% of GDP in 2004.

Similarly, there have been dramatic increases in migration and international travel. In 2005 over 190 million people, or 3% of the world’s population, lived in a country they were not born in. Transfers by migrant workers and wages and salaries earned by nonresident workers reached 227 trillion dollars in 2004. In the same year, nearly 800 million tourists travelled to another country (World Bank, 2006).

‘Global village’ and ‘flat world’ are only two of many different metaphors used to describe globalisation. But they capture the essence of this process that has profoundly changed how we live, work, and entertain. Our lives are ‘becoming increasingly intertwined with those of distant people and places around the world – economically, politically, and culturally. These links are not always new, but they are more pervasive than ever before.’ (Legrain, 2002, p. 4). They are both the result and forces of the defining characteristic of globalisation – the increasing free movement of people, goods and services, information, and money across national borders and physical distances that have traditionally limited their movement within political, economical, and geographical boundaries.

Fragmentation of production: outsourcing, offshoring, and job losses

Not all of globalisation’s consequences are good for everyone.

Just before my visit to Leamington, Peugeot closed its plant in nearby

Coventry. Along with the closure went 2,300 jobs. This led to the loss of other things, spiritual and physical, such as sports facilities and teams, which used to be an integral part of the local culture (The Courier, 2008). And there is fear that more plants will be closed and relocated in other countries in the future.

Similar things have happened in my home state, Michigan. Since mid 2000, Michigan has lost over 350,000 jobs, most of them in manufacturing for the auto industry, which has relocated its plants to other countries (DeGroat, 2006). As a result, Michigan is rapidly slipping from being one of the most prosperous states in the US to being one of its poorest. In 2006, Michigan was 'the only state with a shrinking gross domestic product', according to the chief economist of Comerica Bank. Michigan made national news with its budget crisis and a partial government shutdown in the fall of 2007.

The same technological and political changes that made my travel to Leamington Spa so efficient enable businesses to distribute their production process globally. Thanks to the decreased cost of transportation and increased efficiency of communication, a company can locate its designers, manufacturers, marketers, and managers anywhere in the world and still have them all work together on the same product as if they were located in the same place.

In fact, companies do not even have to own all parts of the production. They can hire other companies, wherever they are located, to work on parts of their products. This is called outsourcing, which is enabled by the unbundling of the production process. As the US Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke recently noted, the US microchip producer AMD locates most of its research and development in California; produces in Texas, Germany, and Japan; does final processing and testing in Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, and China; and then sells to markets around the globe. (Bernanke, 2006).

Outsourcing is not new but in recent years it has become a major concern in many countries because it has become much more global

and increased in scale. When outsourcing becomes global and jobs are sent to other countries, it is called offshoring. The extent of offshoring has been growing dramatically and the trend is projected to continue. A study by the research firm Forrester Group suggested that over one million jobs in Europe will move offshore by 2015. Nearly 760,000 of these jobs are in the UK. In other words, each year about 3% of UK's total jobs will move abroad. The situation is worse for the US, which is expected to have about 3.4 million service jobs moved to other countries (John McCarthy, '3.3m US Services Jobs To Go Offshore', Forrester Research, November 2002).

Jobs that can be outsourced are not only limited to manufacturing and IT. Airlines, credit card companies, insurance institutions, accounting firms, medical services, and even education institutions have joined the global production chain. When you call an airline to track your lost luggage, you are likely to be speaking with one of some 240,000 call centre employees in India. Your X-ray images may be first read by a doctor in India, so may your tax documents when you think you have employed a local accounting firm (Friedman, 2005).

Education offshored too

Education, too, can be outsourced. The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) exam board in the UK has used Indian markers for its GCSE scripts. A growing number of Indians have been working for American tutoring companies and helping American students master their maths and statistics. As Washington Post reporter Amit Paley noted in 2005: 'If low-paid workers in China and India can sew your clothes, process your medical bills and answer your computer questions, why can't they teach your children, too?' (Paley, 2006).

One's loss is another's gain. While closing plants and cutting jobs in Michigan, General Motors and Ford have been adding plants and creating jobs in China. General Motors, which already has five plants in China, planned to invest \$3 billion in China in 2004-07 and Ford is in the midst of a \$1 billion expansion, building new assembly and engine plants

in China (Press, 2007). Both companies are also looking at investing in India, the country that has been the primary recipient of jobs outsourced, especially in the IT sector.

Free movement of goods vs cultural clashes

While China may have sought the economic growth, it did not always welcome the cultural differences that came with it – especially when Starbucks set up a shop inside the Forbidden City, the palace of China's emperors. After a wave of protest, Starbucks ended its seven year residency inside the Forbidden City in 2007.

The battle against Starbucks was not an isolated incident. In 2006, a group of doctoral students from some of China's most prestigious universities issued a call to boycott Christmas. Strong support for the call was expressed in China's online chatrooms, discussion forums, blogs, and opinion polls. In 2007, the Chinese government added three major traditional festivals as legal holidays, stating that previous national holidays did not give adequate consideration of Chinese tradition.

Another international chain that has sparked strong resistance in some countries is McDonald's. 'From 1994 to 2003, McDonald's restaurants were subject to violent attacks (including bombings) in Rome, Macao, Rio de Janeiro, Prague, London, Karachi, Jakarta, Mexico City, Beirut, and Beijing' among other countries, wrote the anthropologist James Watson (Watson, 2004, p. 160). Every year, organised and globally coordinated protests continue against McDonald's.

Protests such as these exemplify a widespread concern about the impact of globalisation on local and indigenous cultures. Cultural homogenisation and standardisation of everyday life – other examples being KFC, Wal-Mart, Microsoft, Levi jeans, Google, Coca-Cola, Hollywood, Disney, and CNN – seem to be an inevitable consequence of globalisation. The concern over the loss of identity is as acute and widespread as that over the loss of jobs.

Free movement of people: migration, cheap labour, and national identity crises

Migration is not a new phenomenon but recent technological, cultural, economic, and political developments have significantly increased its impact. People move from one country to another for all sorts of reasons: escaping from poor living conditions, political turmoil, mistreatment, or lack of opportunities; seeking better jobs, better education, more opportunities, and better living conditions. Forces of globalisation have made movement across national borders and geographical boundaries easier and more appealing and hence fuelled more migration in recent years. Information and communication technologies help immigrants stay in touch with their own cultures, families, and relatives, easing the psychological strain of living in a foreign land.

Political changes are exemplified by the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. Removing this barrier between the West and East freed millions of people to move to and from countries that had been off limits for half a century. Political changes inside China since 1979 gave over a billion people the potential to move out of their country. The formation and development of the European Union made it possible for millions of people in over 20 countries to work and live in any member state. On the demand side, many countries aim to attract certain types of immigrants to help sustain and further develop their own economy. Each year, China imports over 300,000 'foreign experts' as technical advisors, professors, and consultants (Lin & Wang, 2006). The United States annually issues around 100,000 non-immigrant visas for skilled professionals, in addition to other types of visas for guest workers. In 2006, the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) programme to attract foreign graduates to teach language (mostly English) and promote internationalisation had nearly 6,000 participants (JET Programme, 2007).

The scale of recent migration has been astounding for some countries. Since 1997, UK has had a net immigrant increase of 2,337,000. Today, about 10% of the UK population was born outside the country. In 2003,

11.7% of the US population was foreign-born (Larsen, 2004). The immigrant population is even higher in Australia with almost one quarter of its people born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005).

Other countries have experienced a net population loss. Mexico is perhaps the country that has experienced most emigration in recent years. According to available statistics, over 1.6 million Mexicans moved across the border into the United States in the five years between 1995 and 2000 (Gutiérrez, 2006). China has also seen many of its citizens moving to work and live in other places. In 2007, there were an estimated 750,000 Chinese in African countries, 600,000 in Russia, and nearly a million in Europe. India, too, is a country of emigration. Nearly 1.25 million Indians emigrated to the US, Canada, UK, and Australia between 1950 and 2000, and 3 million Indians have emigrated to the Middle East since the late 1970s (Srivastava & Sasikumar, 2003).

Increased migration is both a consequence and a cause of globalisation. While globalising forces have significantly increased the level of migration, migration itself is further globalising the world we live in. The movement of people affects both the home and the host country and the impact is not clear cut.

Supporters of immigration argue that international migration brings economic prosperity to those who migrate and to both countries involved. Immigration encourages prosperity, according to a recent report in *The Economist*, because:

- Migrants tend to have a better life than the one they left behind
- On return, they bring back new skills, savings, technology, and ideas
- The money they send home helps their home country. At least \$260 billion, more than aid and foreign investment combined, were sent to poor countries by migrant workers in 2006
- They supply the rich countries with fresh workers. 'It is no coincidence that countries that welcome immigrants – such as Sweden, Ireland, America and Britain – have better economic records than those that shun them' (*The Economist*, 2008)

However, one cannot ignore the negative consequences of migration. Immigrants take away their home countries' investment and talent – 'brain drain'. They often suffer from prejudice, exploitation, and lack of access to public services and civil rights enjoyed by citizens of the host country. They can be treated as second-class citizens and subject to discrimination and even physical attack. They also become scapegoats for domestic problems in the host country.

Immigrants can be viewed a threat to the host community. They may be blamed for unemployment of local residents, added burden to public services such as health and education, and most serious of all, causing crisis in national identity. These concerns, justified or not, are widespread, as noted by *The Economist*: 'Italians blame gypsies from Romania for a spate of crime. British politicians of all stripes promise to curb the rapid immigration of recent years. Voters in France, Switzerland and Denmark last year rewarded politicians who promised to keep out strangers. In America... many presidential candidates promise to fence off Mexico. And around the rich world, immigration has been rising to the top of voters' lists of concerns – which, for those who believe that migration greatly benefits both recipient and donor countries, is a worry in itself.' (*The Economist*, 2008; see also Huntington, 2004).

Globalisation of education

I was in Leamington Spa because of International Networking for Educational Transformation, better known as iNet, a growing network of educators and education institutions with presence in Australia, Chile, China, England, Mauritius, the Netherlands, South Africa, Sweden, and the United States. iNet wanted me to share my thoughts on globalisation and education with schools in the United Kingdom.

The plan was made about a year before in Beijing, when iNet with the support of HSBC brought together over 100 leading school principals from 14 different countries to discuss issues they face. After three days of intensive conversations, they reached the agreement that their

challenges are very similar, if not completely the same, as evidenced by the communiqué that was unanimously approved by all participants at the last session of the conference.

The communiqué includes five 'self-evident truths' accepted by the participants:

- Vast inequality exists within schools, between schools, and between school systems in the world. Such inequality is morally unacceptable and practically detrimental to the common good of all human beings. While social, economic and political factors are the primary causes, effective school leadership and classroom practices can reduce their negative effects on student achievement.
- Global economic integration and the advancement of information, communication, and transportation technologies have shrunk the world into an interdependent and interconnected village. Harmony in this village is vital to the continuation and further prosperity of the human race.
- Children are differently talented and schools should strive to cultivate different talents and help all children realise their potentials. Our privileged task as educators is to help them expand their horizons of what it is possible for them to achieve.
- School leaders are at the forefront of educational innovation and transformation. They can have a powerful impact on the quality of education their schools provide for their students. Working together they can transform their systems.
- Education systems and schools in different cultures have developed effective practices and policies. These practices and policies may be unique to their own contexts but are invaluable sources of inspiration for others. There is an emerging global agenda for educational reform based on the personalisation of learning, the professionalisation of teaching, networking and collaboration and the intelligent and ethical use of data. Leadership has the ability to mould these drivers for transformation to the context of their schools and school systems.

As a member of the group that drafted this communiqué and one who led the final session that discussed and approved it, I of course wholeheartedly believe in these 'self-evident truths'. They very well capture the current situation of education and project a future that will continue to be shaped by globalisation. Faced with the complex and messy issues of preparing our children for this new world characterised by globalisation, educators must seriously rethink the why, what, and how of education.

It is clear that globalisation has already transformed how we live, work, and entertain, affected our views of relationships, made salient the people who live thousands of miles away and were out of sight and out of mind.

As a social institution, education has been mostly a local entity, funded with local or national taxes, serving the purpose of the local community or the nation, preparing workers for the local economy, and passing on local values. The idea of a local community has already become something of the past. We all live in a globally interconnected and interdependent community, so we need to transform our thinking about education. It may still be locally funded and controlled, but the students it prepares are going to work, live, and lead in the global community.