

Globalization Culture, and Contemporary Media

How content moves across borders — and why meaning
never travels empty.

Key idea: Global connection changes media circulation, but cultural context still shapes meaning.

Today's Learning Objectives

01

DEFINE

Explain globalization, culture, and contemporary media in relation to creative content.

02

ANALYSE

Identify how media flows across borders while meaning changes across audiences.

03

APPLY

Use globalization and culture frameworks to evaluate content for multiple platforms.

Physical Borders Fade. Cultural Borders Remain.

Past: media distribution was constrained by geography, language, and national broadcasting systems.
Present: transnational platforms move images, sounds, and stories across borders in seconds.
Creator question: How can a story travel across cultures without losing its identity?

“Global reach does not mean global sameness.”

What Is Globalization?

Globalization is the intensification of connections among people, goods, images, technologies, economies, and meanings across distance.

For media: content travels faster and farther.

For audiences: choices expand beyond national media.

For creators: competition and opportunity become transnational.



Reference: Appadurai (1996).

Globalization Is Not Westernization

Globalization does not mean the world becomes one culture. It creates flows, mixtures, inequalities, resistances, and new forms of local expression.

Cultures borrow, translate, remix, and reject.
Dominant media industries still have power.
Local audiences actively reinterpret global content.

References: Appadurai (1996); Hall (1980).

Five Flows of Global Media

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|---|
| 01 | People | migration, tourism, diaspora, fan communities |
| 02 | Technology | platforms, algorithms, smartphones, AI tools |
| 03 | Images | aesthetics, characters, genres, visual styles |
| 04 | Ideas | values, ideologies, aspirations, fears |
| 05 | Capital | industry investment, IP, branding, global markets |



Adapted from global cultural flow thinking: Appadurai (1996).

What Is Culture?

Culture is not only tradition, food, costume, or national customs. It is the ordinary, lived system of meanings, values, practices, and ways of seeing the world.

It appears in habits, humor, taste, class, gender, family, faith, aspiration, and emotion.
It shapes how people create content and how audiences interpret it.
It is dynamic: culture changes through contact, conflict, technology, and daily life.

References: Williams (1958, 1976); Hall (1997).

Surface Is Visible. Meaning Is Deeper.

What audiences see first is often style. What makes content resonate is usually underneath.

Surface: fashion, food, music, setting, camera style, edit rhythm.

Deep level: values, fears, hopes, hierarchy, belonging, taboo, identity.

Creator task: translate deep meaning into visible form.

Teaching metaphor drawing from cultural analysis and meaning-making approaches.

Culture as Ordinary

Raymond Williams argues that culture is not reserved for elite art. Culture is found in ordinary life, shared meanings, work, entertainment, habits, and experience.

Creative content draws power from lived experience. Burnout, loneliness, ambition, family pressure, fandom, and youth anxiety can become cultural material. The ordinary becomes meaningful when creators observe it carefully.



Reference: Williams (1958).

Culture as Meaning-Making

Media do not carry fixed meanings. Creators encode meanings through signs and conventions; audiences decode them through their own cultural experience.

ENCODING

Creators arrange images, sounds, stories, genre, tone, and symbols.

DECODING

Audiences interpret through identity, memory, values, taste, and context.

NEGOTIATION

Meaning can be accepted, modified, resisted, remixed, or misunderstood.

References: Hall (1980, 1997).

What Is Contemporary Media?

Contemporary media is a networked, participatory, algorithmic, and platform-based environment. It changes not only where content appears, but how content is made.

Multi-platform: one story can become episodes, clips, memes, edits, podcasts, and fandom discourse.

Participatory: audiences react, remix, critique, and circulate.

Algorithmic: visibility is shaped by platform systems and engagement signals.

References: Jenkins (2006); Nieborg & Poell (2018).

Platforms Shape Content

A platform is not a neutral container. It rewards particular formats, speeds, lengths, visual languages, metrics, and modes of audience interaction.

TikTok / Shorts: immediacy, repeatability, strong hooks.

YouTube: searchable depth, communities, long-tail learning.

Streaming: binge rhythm, global catalogs, subtitled circulation.

Instagram: image identity, lifestyle aesthetics, shareability.



Reference: Nieborg & Poell (2018).

Glocalization

Glocalization describes the interaction between global and local forces. Content may use globally legible formats while preserving local specificity.

“The strongest global content is often not culturally empty — it is locally grounded and widely resonant.”

Global form + local texture
Universal emotion + specific setting
Platform logic + cultural authenticity

Reference: Robertson (1995).

Cultural Hybridity

Global culture is not simply imported or copied. It often emerges as a hybrid: a mixture of styles, genres, languages, aesthetics, and identities.

Hybridity can produce new creative forms.

It can also raise questions of appropriation, power, and authenticity.

Creators should ask: Who is borrowing? From whom?
For what purpose? With what respect?

References: Bhabha (1994); Pieterse (2009).

The Local That Went Global

CASE

Squid Game

LOCAL ROOT

Korean childhood games

GLOBAL RESONANCE

Class inequality

CREATOR LESSON

Hyper-local detail can carry universal tension.

Art Toy / Blind Box

Subculture collecting

Kidult identity

Niche culture can become pop culture through platforms.

Short-form Folk Video

Rural craft, food, daily life

Slow life / authenticity

Visual simplicity can cross language barriers.

Case analysis for classroom discussion; connect to globalization and cultural hybridity frameworks.

When Content Travels, Ask Five Questions

- 1 **Origin** Where does this content come from culturally?
- 2 **Meaning** What values, fears, desires, or memories does it encode?
- 3 **Platform** Which platform accelerates or transforms it?
- 4 **Audience** Who can read it, enjoy it, or misunderstand it?
- 5 **Adaptation** What should change — and what must remain?



The Cultural Iceberg

Mission: Analyse one globally circulating viral content example and move from surface description to deep cultural explanation.

Surface level: format, visual style, music, editing, genre, platform language.

Deep level: values, fear, hope, desire, identity, class, gender, belonging, social tension.

Action: groups of 3–4 summarize in three lines on Padlet or class board.

Activity connects Week 2 concepts to cultural analysis skills used in later assignments.

From Description to Analysis

DESCRIPTIVE

“This content is popular globally.”

ANALYTICAL

“This content travels because it combines a specific cultural setting with a widely recognizable emotion, and platform circulation makes it easy to remix.”

Use this standard for discussion, reflection, and assignments.

Three Takeaways

Globalization connects media across borders.
Culture gives media meaning.
Contemporary media accelerates circulation,
participation, and transformation.

Exit prompt: Choose one global content example you consumed this week. What is local in it? What makes it resonate beyond its origin?

“Great creators do not erase culture to become global; they translate culture with intelligence.”

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