

神戸市外国語大学 学術情報リポジトリ

Reflections on a Model United Nations Simulation

メタデータ	言語: English 出版者: 公開日: 2016-12-22 キーワード (Ja): キーワード (En): 作成者: Zenuk-Nishide, Lori メールアドレス: 所属:
URL	https://kobe-cufs.repo.nii.ac.jp/records/2116

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Reflections on a Model United Nations Simulation

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1. Introduction

This paper examines student reflections after doing a Model United Nations (MUN) simulation as part of their course work in a Model United Nations Class at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies (KCUFS) in the International Communication Course (ICC). Student reflections on the MUN simulation will allow students to analyze, synthesize and evaluate their experiences and help the teacher to improve curriculum and the next simulation. As Zimmerman reminds teachers, “learning is something that happens by students” (1989, p. 2). Students can become advisors; teachers become learners or vice versa in building a mutually productive collaborative community of learning (Allwright, 2003).

The MUN is an academic forum for discussing global concerns in a context that closely parallels the “real world”. It is content-based learning that is both experiential and autonomous. It provides understanding of the inner working of the UN as students build skill in diplomacy and compromise through debate and speech making. Important global issues are addressed including regional conflict, peacekeeping, human rights, women and children, economic and social development and the environment. Students represent different countries; study the issue on the agenda; their country and regional positions. They write country position papers, and collaboratively write resolutions to debate (Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2008; Zenuk-Nishide, 2009; Zenuk-Nishide & Tatsuki, 2011).

In 2009, KCUFS started their ICC course with MUN as one of the elective courses in English that later became required in 2012. It the first MUN course that was designated part of a university curriculum in Japan. Before this, the author, Donna Tatsuki and Todd Thorpe also did MUN simulations in classes at KCUFS as part of English language education from 2007. When the ICC MUN course at KCUFS was in its planning stages, it was understood that students would have to do a simulation and there were three options available: an in-class

simulation, participate in an overseas conference, or establish a domestic conference.

All three options offer students a different MUN experience. An in-class MUN is limiting because it is a safe and familiar environment for students where they are interacting with people they already know. With financial resources not being available to send students abroad and timing of MUN's abroad, the best environment we determined was to do an interuniversity MUN in English that could involve both Japanese and international exchange students. In addition students could range from undergraduate to doctoral levels.

The Japan University English Model United Nations (JUEMUN) was founded in 2010 by the author (Lori Zenuk-Nishide), Craig Smith and Todd Thorpe (See the website, juemun.weebly.org). Donna Tatsuki who was the co-chair of the annual international JALT (Japan Association of Language Teachers) conference organized the simulation as a part of it, and encouraged other university educators and administrators to observe first hand. Since then, the event has been hosted on a rotating basis at the founders' universities: Kobe City University of Foreign Studies, Kyoto University of Foreign Studies, and Kinki University. Since its founding, JUEMUN has changed in size, composition and structure. The 2015 JUEMUN hosted by Kinki University was for three days, providing 28 hours of interaction.

The most significant changes made in 2015 were the "Rules of Procedure", to have them align more closely with those used at the United Nations. There was a conscious move away from parliamentary debate and competition, towards more cooperation and consensus building. JUEMUN, unlike other MUN's has always had designated committees with all the regions represented by students representing countries as ambassadors called delegates. In the designated committees delegates write action plans or working papers that become draft resolutions, instead of freely allowing them to make their own groups. If draft resolutions are accepted by the body through consensus or a vote, they become a resolution.

Some naming and procedures changed for example the "Dias" became a "Bureau", "Moderated caucusing" (discussing with a moderator) changed to "Informal" debate, and "Unmoderated caucusing" (free discussion) changed to "Informal informal" debate (Figures 1 & 2).



Figure 1. Informal Debate



Figure 2. Informal Informal Debate

The biggest change in 2015 was in the amendment process, where each draft resolution is read line by line in regional blocs after they have been drafted by the committees and amendments are co-written. Then in front of the whole body, each draft resolution is read line by line and the amendments are introduced and coded simultaneously by the Bureau and delegates. This is followed by working committees meetings again, where they negotiate to accept or reject the amendments and possibly adopt new ones. There is one more reading of the amended clauses line by line and decisions are made by the whole body by a vote if there is no consensus on a clause. The meeting ends with voting on amended clauses where a consensus was not reached, and draft resolutions are passed by consensus or a vote if there is any country that does not support it.

In other MUN's, the working papers are submitted to the chairs or the bureau and they are critiqued and given back to be edited. As there is overlap with working paper clauses, sponsors or authors are requested to merge papers as part of the process. Once working papers are introduced as a draft resolution anyone can make amendments if they can collect enough signatories, which is a percent of the delegation decided by the meeting chairs. The authors or sponsors of the draft resolution are asked if anyone disagrees during the voting process. If no one disagrees the amendment is adopted as friendly. If there is dissent then it is voted on before the draft resolution adopted in the same way as mentioned above and the amendment is considered unfriendly.

This new amendment process in informal debate that was adopted in 2015 is supportive for EFL students and those new to MUN as it is very formulaic with everyone given an opportunity to make a contribution, as there is no competition for the floor. Also by raising their placard to vote, or to go against a consensus, delegates are nonverbally communicating their countries positions.

2. The MUN Class

There were 23 KCUFS students in the 2015 ICC class that participated in the simulation including one international student from South Korea and four students who had experience at international MUNs and one that had done JUEMUN with different Rules of Procedure. Besides changes to the rules of procedure, it was the first time also as a teacher to have four students representing the same country in one of four meetings with different agendas on one of five working committees with different topics (See Table 1).

Five questions were given to the students as part of their final course assessment two days after the event that had to be completed by the class the following week. Students had a chance to both write and orally share their reflections with their classmates and instructor in two classes after the event. Students were asked to reflect if they were able to achieve the goals they had individually written before the conference, their challenging moments, their most memorable moment, and their learning. From the student reflections the teacher will be able to better support the students in the learning process and make recommendations to the JUEMUN organizing committee.

The students also reflected on what they did during the formal, informal and informal debates and evaluated themselves (but this is not included in this paper).

Table 1. JUEMUN 2015: The Topics Before the United Nations Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Committee (SOCHUM)

Meetings	Topic	Committees
1	Promotion of Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Women's economic empowerment 2. Universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights 3. Ending violence against women and girls 4. Women's voice, leadership and influence, 5. Women's participation in peace and security.
2	Protection of Indigenous Groups and Their Rights	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Land and natural resources 2. Poverty and health 3. Self-determination 4. Tangible cultural heritage 5. Intangible cultural heritage
3	Responding to Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The role of arts, media and popular culture in fighting human trafficking 2. Law enforcement practices to human trafficking 3. Community participation for the prevention of human trafficking 4. Protection and empowerment of victims of human trafficking 5. Human trafficking and HIV/AIDS.
4	The Protection of Children in Armed Conflict	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Killing and Maiming of Children 2. Recruitment of Child Soldiers 3. Sexual Violence against Children 4. Denial of Humanitarian Access, 5. Abduction of Children.

3. Post Simulation Reflection

Students examined their MUN experience by examining their goals, challenges, best moments and their learning.

3.1 Examining Goals

Students examined if they had met their conference goals. Many of the students wrote that they wanted to be a leader in their regional bloc or their committee. One of the students found she could interact with people she did not know with different nationalities as she interacted with students from Indonesia, Uzbekistan, Thailand and South Korea. Meeting them motivated her to “work harder on language studies and cultural understanding.” She mentioned that discussions in about her country’s policies and agenda with regional and meeting room members helped her in the conference. She said in class she mostly shared information, however,

...I think the process of sharing and finding new ideas is related to the negotiation process. For example, when we make amendments in regional blocs, we need to convince other member states by explaining what situation our countries are in or giving evidence to support our ideas. I think this negotiation process relates to sharing information and explaining a country. (Minami - Meeting 4: The Protection of Children in Armed Conflict, Committee 4: Denial of Human Access)

In the MUN class it was impossible to exactly simulate the four meetings. In the class delegates in the same region had meetings but their agendas and committees were mostly different. Delegates on the same agenda also met but their committees were different. They also wrote working papers with members of their meeting room regardless of regional bloc or committee. Amendments were made on each other’s working papers without background knowledge of the committee agenda to learn the rules of procedure. The important point in the class was to teach students how to follow and use the rules of procedure to move the meeting during the three days, write working papers, amendments, to negotiate and be able to be a group leader. In the group discussions in the class, students shared and commented on ideas. Students felt a sense of satisfaction when their ideas were adopted in the working papers or amendments.

I was able to be persuasive about including two of my ideas in clauses in the working paper that appeared in the final resolution. I was so happy with that. . . I took leadership in the committee but I do not think I did a good job, as I could not point out to fellow delegates when they misused MUN terms or made grammatical mistakes in the working paper. I couldn't do that because I didn't want to break the group's harmony. (Anna - Meeting 3: Human Trafficking, Committee 4: Protection and Empowerment of Victims of Human Trafficking)

As we practiced in class, one of my goals was to make an amendment. I successfully met this goal. I presented the amendment in Informal Debate. Moreover, I was the first person who said an amendment in our meeting room. Even though I was the first person, I could do it as we did in our class at Gaidai. (Risa K.- Meeting 2: The Protection of Indigenous Groups and Their Culture, Committee 2: Poverty and Health)

I made one amendment and the committee accepted it and it became one of my best moments. It was really hard to come up with one but I did not want to finish the process without making one. (Natsuko - Meeting 3: Responding to Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation, Committee, 5: Human Trafficking and HIV/AIDS).

In class, I have learned that I must find a way to let the students learn to feel comfortable critiquing each other's ideas and helping to make the end products better instead of feeling like they will hurt someone if they do. I could see that in the simulation, they felt confident that they could use what they had learned in class.

Some student's goal was to interact as much as possible. Here are some of their voices:

My goal was to talk to more than 5 people at the Party, Committee and Meeting Room. I set this goal because communicating with students other than KCUFS was essential and difficult. The Dinner Party was the easiest place because all the delegates were gathered in the same room and it was the first day so that it was easy to ask questions or communicate. . . I became good friends with my roommate from Meiji University . . . it was great we talked in English so that we can adjust to the atmosphere of JUEMUN. (Shoka - Meeting 1: Gender Equality and Empowering Women,

Committee 3: Ending Violence Against Women and Girls)

My goal was to talk as much as I could and I spoke up but I was surprised to find that I had to encourage others to speak. Most of the Japanese delegates were quiet. So sometimes I toned down and tried to make an environment where others could speak up. I thought in their mind they must have had ideas they wanted to express. I was happy I had an opportunity to speak with many exchange students.

(Mayu - Meeting 2: Indigenous Groups and their Culture, Committee 4: Tangible Heritage)

My goal was to make friends with as many people as possible because I am not an outgoing person and good at talking with people that I meet for the first time. I was successful and I was inspired by some highly motivated students.

(Takahiro - Meeting 2: Indigenous People, Committee 3: Self-determination)

I had one goal to take as much action as I could. I was able to make my country speech, talk a lot in Informal Informal Debate and negotiate. By doing these actions I was able to gain credit from experienced MUN delegates and get some important roles such as supporting other Japanese delegates, negotiate unfriendly amendments and type the working paper for our committee. (Momoko - Meeting 1: Promotion of Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, Committee 5: Women's participation in peace and security.)

I was able to show my leadership in the regional bloc meeting even though there were several students from abroad. They were not willing to lead the group and there was no one to break the silence so I spoke up and followed the tips we were given to lead group. It was very helpful and one delegate from Doshisha University admired me for my leadership. I am sure that my leadership can work even in English and with people I meet for the first time. (Ryoichi - Meeting 1: Empowerment of Women Agenda, Committee 4: Voice, Leadership and Influence)

In class, I stressed to my students that they were ambassadors and that their role was to interact with other delegates and not with their classmates. They were to stay in character. For some this was easier than for others. That is why it is important to debrief at the end of each day with the students, to help them reset their goals and strategies. I encouraged students to take leadership roles in their regional blocs and committees as they knew the rules well and

were well prepared. As there was only one international student in the class and no native speakers in English the students were not confident that they could interact well with them. It appears that my students took the role and responsibility upon themselves to try to enable students that were less prepared and had lower English proficiency levels.

3.2 Challenging Moments

One of the most challenging moments for one student was to keep the discussion focused. The delegate stated at the beginning she followed two others who tried to facilitate or what to discuss, as she did not have confidence to lead even though she had practiced in class.

When the discussion started to go in a direction different from what I thought it should be, I tried to shift it to the right track. Eventually it went well because of that but because of that we wasted time a lot. (Yuka - Meeting 4: Children in Armed Conflict, Committee 1: Killing and Maiming)

Another student mentioned that when her committee was writing their working paper she wanted to make everyone work efficiently under the time pressure, “handling three things writing, brainstorming, and helping at the same time was one of the toughest moments”. It was very hard as she said she often had to ignore members who were feeling difficulties to catch up with what was being said or did not understand how and what to write in the working paper. So she took it upon herself to look after them while writing as well as come up with ideas for the paper. She gave students who had difficulty tasks that they could do. “I asked them to type what I noted and find relevant data that could be used in the paper.”

Another challenging moment one delegate stated was making clauses for the working paper. Before making clauses she explained she took memos in her notebook and another member made notes on the computer during discussion before their committee divided into four groups to discuss and write clauses.

Sometimes we had a lack of information, so we searched on the Internet. I saw previous resolutions when writing clauses to know if I was on the right track or not. With help from students from Australia and England I think we could make good clauses. . . they also used a dictionary to find the best words to fit in. So as a non-native speaker I have to study more academic reading and writing. . . I was afraid everyone in

the committee did not understand the content (meaning) of the clauses. Maybe I should have explained them in easy words since I also had difficulty at times understanding the clauses. (Mayu - Meeting 2: Indigenous Groups and their Culture, Committee 4: Tangible Heritage)

She went on to note that she did not know other student's English ability and there was a time limit to get the papers done. She stated that before JUEMUN she read UN resolutions and they were difficult even after looking up words in the dictionary many times. A summary of the resolutions she felt would have been helpful.

The committee was the most challenging, as there were many Japanese students who were overwhelmed and did not interact at all. With five or six exchange students fluent in English who were interactive it was sometimes a little hard for me to follow them. I wanted to be on a level playing field, but it was hard. This conflict in myself made me frustrated. (Ryoichi - Meeting 1: Empowerment of Women Agenda, Committee Voice, Committee 4: Leadership and Influence)

One student had four students from Indonesia in his committee that spoke Indonesian between themselves during the committee and decided the content of the working paper themselves.... I asked them to speak English and to cooperate with everyone but they just said to me that if I had something to add I could do it after they finished...there was nothing like cooperation in my committee...I asked the chairs to warn them to cooperate in the committee and the chairs promised to do that but they didn't ...I felt like I was ignored and quite at a loss of how to get out of the challenging situation. (Takahiro - Meeting 2: Indigenous People, Committee 3: Self-determination)

This showed a lack of leadership by the JUEMUN chairs and the faculty advisors who were monitoring the room. Delegates are required in the spirit of the simulation to use English and collaborate to write the working papers in designated committees. Delegates all represent different countries and have a regional group.

In the first Informal Informal debate in regional blocs I was really nervous and my hands and legs were shaking. I thought I had to say something because I didn't want to finish the first debate without saying anything. Some delegates finished saying their

opinion and I thought it was a chance for me to speak up. Fortunately one of the delegates had the similar opinion as mine, so I said that I agreed to that idea and explained what I researched. After that debate, I was no longer nervous. (Natsuko - Meeting 4: Responding to Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation, Committee 5: Human Trafficking and HIV/AIDS)

I stepped in to stop a dispute between the delegates of Nepal and Uganda. When neither side was listening to the other. I don't think understanding would have happened. To stop them I raised my voice louder than theirs to get their attention and spoke my mind...I believe it was the best I could do. (Tomomi - Meeting 4: Children in Armed Conflict, Committee 2: Recruitment of Child Soldiers)

In our regional group one member wanted to make an amendment to our committees working paper. I listened to the reason and it made sense to me. However when I took it back to our committee our members wanted to make the amendment unfriendly because it was grammatically wrong and they thought it did not make sense. I thought if we could find appropriate words or a phrase it would have been a better clause with their idea. One member would not listen to me. I was sad and irritated and stopped talking to him. ...When I think back about the experience, I should have stayed calm without anger and asked him to explain his opinion. (Yuka - Meeting 4: Children in Armed Conflict, Committee 1: Killing and Maiming)

My most challenging moment was in informal debate, when we were discussing whether amendments were friendly or unfriendly. I was so busy negotiating with other delegates that I forgot to take notes. I passed notes to others in my committee but no one knew. I told the chair and she gave me the amendment sheets. Even though I knew the procedures, accidents can happen. Actually I was calm but I was so upset and did not know the right thing to do. Looking back I believe I did the right thing. I think I need more experiences to get used to unpredictability.

(Akiho - Meeting 1: Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, Committee 2: Universal Access to Reproductive Health and Rights)

It took a long time to gather countries problems that they wanted to resolve but they did not have any ideas for solutions or actions so we considered possible actions in our committee. (Risa M. - Meeting 3: Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation,

Community Participation to Prevent HIV/AIDS)

Speaking for many is an underdeveloped skill.

Speaking in English was my most challenging moment. I prepared well by researching, writing my position paper and my own working paper ideas so I wanted to reflect those in discussion. However I could do only 50% of the things I wanted to do. The reason was I lacked communication ability.

(Anna - Meeting 3: Human Trafficking, Committee 4: Protection and practice Empowerment of Victims of Human Trafficking)

Wanting to be recognized and having to speak in front of others was hard, even if it was using formulaic language. In my MUN class, giving students more opportunity to practice what they are weak at is critical.

I could try to persuade people with my own words and not hesitate. However one thing I regret is that I had little confidence to raise a motion. In our meeting room there was one delegate who always raised the motion almost all the time when the chairs asked us to do so. Only once I raise my placard but I was not chosen. At that time I found myself less confident. (Risa M. - Meeting 3: Human Trafficking, Committee 3: Community Participation for the Prevention of HIV)

My goal to raise my placard I could not do. I was too much of a coward. There were chances but I gave way to other people. (Natsuko - Meeting 4: Responding to Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation, Committee 5: Human Trafficking and HIV/AIDS)

One student recognized she did not take the initiative even though she had a high English proficiency level.

I talked with new people but I couldn't make friends with them. I exchange Facebook accounts with some delegates but I was asked to do so. I didn't ask by myself. I was always passive when I tried to make new friends or talk with new people. I should have been more friendly and active. This was a great opportunity for me to meet new people so I felt I wasted a good chance. However I could make others remember me.

During the dinner party on day 1 some delegates recognized me and said, “You are the one who talked a lot. Or you can speak English well and organized our work. That was helpful”. I got confidence from their words as being a leader was difficult and I wondered what the delegates thought about me. (Azusa - Meeting 2: Indigenous People, Committee 5 Intangible Cultural Heritage)

3.3 The Best Moment

The best moments students experienced in JUEMUN included the satisfaction of collaborating to finish a working paper or write clauses.

When their committee finished the working paper was the best moment. She explained when we wrote we divided members in to three groups in charge of a section of operative clauses and I led a group. I gave ideas, explained and instructed. My brain seemed like it was working 100% and I gave all my concentration on making our ideas into sentences. When the deadline came and we finally finished writing and handed our working paper into the chairs, we were so relieved and full of accomplishment. At that time I felt all the effort I had made since April was for finishing that WP. We thanks and praised each other for our hard work. (Minami - Meeting 4: The Protection of Children in Armed Conflict Committee 4: Denial of Human Access)

The best moment during JUEMUN was when we submitted our working paper. At first I was worried whether we could make it or not. Most of the time we worked in small groups with little contact but when we put it all together to check the grammar, vocabulary and ideas it was impressive. I felt that every delegate had different knowledge and talents so that we could each do what we were best at. Thanks to all the members we had more than 10 clauses. I hadn't had such feelings of accomplishment in a long time. (Azusa - Meeting 2: Indigenous, Committee 5: Intangible Cultural Heritage)

Making clauses for the working paper in small groups was when the situation changed dramatically for the better in the negotiation process. All the group members worked to express their ideas and information regardless of English ability and the amount of information they had to share. I believe every member was working in their own way. (Shoka - Meeting 1: Gender Equality and Empowering Women,

Committee 3: Ending Violence Against Women and Girls)

Another special moment was being able to explain the working paper to members of the regional bloc demonstrating knowledge and understanding.

One of my best moments was the time I was answering questions about our Draft Resolution at the hotel after the session. We had plenty of time at the hotel so we could talk without being rushed. I was able to answer all of the questions and make everyone understand. I was feeling satisfied when I explained about “re-abduction”. Almost everyone in the regional group did not understand about the issue. (Momoko - Meeting 4: The Protection of Children in Armed Conflict, Committee 5: Abduction of Children)

Being recognized by your peers and being praised is very motivating. We as teachers need to recognize giving positive feedback is important.

This year the JUEMUN procedure was new and no one had ever tried it. I was afraid about causing confusion about it, so I tried to be well prepared to explain the process. Still there was much confusion that arose in the meeting room. Sometimes I needed to talk to delegates about the difference. When they said “Ok, we understand and thank you for your explanation and showing your understanding,” I felt relieved and appreciated their cooperation. (Sachiho (Chair) - Meeting 1: Empowerment of Women)

It is hard to choose one moment, as there are so many things I was happy about. One moment was when we were making the working paper about HIV/AIDS that is caused by human trafficking. I suggested we need education in case we are trafficked. We should know how to escape, as anyone can be a victim. Then, one Indonesian who was leading the discussion told me she thought that was a great idea and that she had never considered that. The reason why I could suggest the idea is that I had researched about the care of victims and some victims said that they had no idea what to do when they had been trafficked. . . . Another thing, In our class I could get used to making amendments on the working papers so I knew what today. For one question I asked a committee, one of the delegates came to me and said my question was significant. I was almost crying at the time. I owe all these cases to the class. (Natsuko

- Meeting 3: Responding to Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation, Committee 5: Human Trafficking and HIV/AIDS)

Actually before JUEMUN I was nervous as I thought I would be limited in my communication ability with native speakers participating. However, JUEMUN made me realize that it is not just about language but valuing people. In other words, we have to respect each delegate without any bias. At the closing ceremony the delegate of France gave me motivational words “I was moved by your actions and I admire you very much. Your English is nice but that is not the anything. You understood the procedures properly and led the debate for all of us. “ I was really happy to hear those words a happy moment is when you realize you have been watched and they are trying to see your value. Through the interactive work at JUEMUN, I felt alive. (Risa, M. - Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation, Committee 5: Community Participation to Prevent HIV/AIDS)

Persevering and not giving up was a moment that was remembered.

One of my best moments at JUEMUN was making an amendment that delegates from the committee to which I made the amendment said was good and recognized it as a friendly amendment. This was after the chairs lost my amendment paper, and I insisted on being able to make it. (Takahiro - Meeting 2: The Protection of Indigenous People and their Culture, Committee: Self-determination)

One of the best moments was when negotiation for my operative clause went through. I put “2016” for the deadline of the “Children, Not Soldier’s Campaign”. The African region misunderstood and thought I was referring to the deadline for the campaign so they introduced an amendment for “2026” to extend the deadline. Later at Informal Debate when committee’s met, I explained that “2016” was the official deadline for the campaign. I felt proud of myself for explaining in a manner that was not hostile and contributed to a smooth agreement. (Tomomi - Meeting 4, Children in Armed Conflict: Committee 2: Recruitment of Child Soldiers)

Helping other using leadership skills and being given responsibility by peers was a highlight.

I was pleased with my leadership to help Japanese delegates in my committee to

become motivated and less passive and express their opinions voluntarily as I was in charge of leading the preambular clause writing. (Ryoichi - Meeting 1: Empowerment of Women, Committee 4: Voice Leadership and Influence)

3.4 Learning

From the students responses it can be seen that students were able to see that they had developed and learned. What they had done in class appears to have supported them in the simulation. Writing formulaic position papers were helpful.

Writing the position paper taught me how to research and to use information to support my opinion logically. Once I submitted my paper the chairs gave me valuable comments, as I was too specific emphasizing counter-terrorism. Thanks to their advice I could choose issues relevant to all countries and expand my knowledge and deepen my understanding of French policy. Furthermore they gave me clues on how to get good information focusing on previous resolutions, Frances Ambassador's statements and policies of institutions and agencies that France is involved with such as NATO and the EU. When I finished writing my paper I felt so confident (See Appendix). (Yuka - Meeting 4: Children in Armed Conflict, Committee 1: Killing and Maiming)

Another student learned the value and importance of synthesizing her research to negotiate.

At first I thought it was best to just keep researching for new information and that would give me confidence to convince others and give me better ideas for the working paper. What is important is to be able to organize a huge amount of data and use it effectively to support opinions. (Minami - Meeting 4: The Protection of Children in Armed Conflict, Committee 4: Denial of Human Access)

She explained that she was frustrated with the thick portfolio of information she had accumulated after spending so much time researching because she did not easily organize it to share with others.

Many learned how a leader should act when cooperation is important. The same student stated in committee she took the leadership speaking and trying to get opinions by asking questions. Some were confused by her questions and did not understand the discussion. She

interpreted this as low motivation on their part and thought they were uncooperative but she felt she was mistaken.

What makes a good leader was also learned through experience. It is important to have empathy for other group members and learning from other peers who are skilled.

A good leader is one who can understand that situation or step that members are at and guide them in the right direction. ...This time I understood the JUEMUN procedure well and was well prepared for the conference and I could figure out what to do. But if I were in the opposite situation and could not understand, then I may end up not being a part of the process...a leader should consider what is the best way for everyone to contribute to the team to move forward. (Minami - Meeting 4: The Protection of Children in Armed Conflict, Committee 4: Denial of Human Access)

In our committee, two students led us and there were so helpful. Of course they advocated their opinion very strongly but they also tried to listen to the opinions of others. If we couldn't make our own idea clear I asked them for advice. They knew how to make the clauses more persuasive or stronger. They always asked us the reason or supportive data... From these two students I learned not only how to be a good leader, but also how to build up my opinion logically... (Yuka - Meeting 4: Children in Armed Conflict, Committee 1: Committee Killing and Maiming)

Having confidence to take the initiative was learned and also to try something new.

I have a new goal through the experience of JUEMUN. It is taking action voluntarily during study abroad. I am now looking forward to challenging new things. I learned not to be afraid. ...I did not have confidence talking with people in English, however I got confidence through my positive action at JUEMUN. (Yumeko - Meeting 3: Responding to Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation, Committee 5: Human trafficking and HIV/AIDS)

These three days were the most valuable days in my life. I think JUEMUN helped me to have confidence from next semester when I will go to Germany to study abroad. (Risa K. - Meeting 2: The Protection of Indigenous Groups and Their Culture, Committee: Poverty and Health)

Trying something others think will be valuable for you even when you do not want to do it can have benefits. Many students do not want to take the MUN Class but everyone over the past five years at the end is thankful for the experiences both positive and negative.

The thing I learned from JUEMUN is never to quit. To be honest, I did not want to take this class and was not interested in MUN. I hesitated to go to the first class but from the time I started to research for the position paper because learning about Croatia was fun. The more I went to the class, the more I looked forward to taking part in JUEMUN. Of course there were tough times but those tough times were my precious experience. I got to learn more about the world and Child abduction that I was not aware of before. If I didn't take part in JUEMUN, seriously I would be much different from how I feel right now. Since I challenged this tough but also enjoyable event, I feel a sense of satisfaction and have a new point of view. I would like to visit Croatia someday. (Momoko - Meeting 4: The Protection of Children in Armed Conflict, Committee 5: Abduction of Children)

I think the most important thing is to persuade others by speaking logically having opinions from the beginning to the end of the meeting. One more important thing is not to be passive but to be active during the debate. No matter how much your research, the amount of data will be of no use if you are passive. ...JUEMUN is a rare opportunity. (Natsuko - Meeting 3: Responding to Human Trafficking: Committee 5 Human Trafficking and HIV/AIDS)

The power of language and the responsibility decision makers carry.

JUEMUN made me realize the responsibility each delegate has as they are the only person representing their country and the decisions that are made by the body will have an impact for many years into the future. ...Another thing I learned is how important education is. I found many delegates who just came and knew little about their country, policies and the JUEMUN process and it is not their fault. I would have been like them had I not had classes at Gaidai. (Risa M. - Meeting 3: Human Trafficking, Committee 5: Committee Community Participation for the Prevention of HIV/AIDS)

Learning knowledge can build confidence to be active. How true, even if you can speak English well, you need something to say.

To add to this a student states that if people have deep knowledge they can be confident. And if people are confident, they can be active. Therefore I strongly feel that researching the assigned countries and issues deeply and knowing the procedures are the most important part of MUN. (Akiho - Meeting 1: Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, Committee 2: Universal Access to Reproductive Health and Rights)

What I learned that it is most important to have ideas and that English is a tool to share them with others. Before taking part in JUEMUN, I thought I knew what was happening around the world but actually I didn't. There were laws and treaties that I had never heard of...I learned how ignorant I am. (Takahiro - Meeting 2: Protection of Indigenous Groups and their Rights, Committee 3: Self-determination)

Deep listening is needed to be able to collaborate with others.

I learned that even with limited communication skills in English, if we can listen and try to carefully understand the essence of the opinions of others, and tell others our opinion simply and concisely, it would help us to cooperate with each other. The most important thing is communication with other delegates for JUEMUN. (Anna - Meeting 3: Human Trafficking, Committee 4: Protection and Empowerment of Victims of Human Trafficking)

4. Conclusions

Students participated in the JUEMUN simulation for three-days in different groups and meetings, representing different countries so each had their own learning experience. Their MUN reflections showed that they naturally used the "Experiential Learning Cycle" (Kobe, 1994) as a framework for a personal model of expression. They included as Stellar (2014) describes the "what" a description of the event, "So What" and analysis based on their own understanding and experience and the follow-up "Now What".

MUN gives students a chance to think critically and Willingham (2007, p.11) believes independence in thinking is most important: "Critical thinking is self-directed in that the

thinker must be calling the shots. We wouldn't give a student much credit for critical thinking if the teacher were prompting every step he took." Overall, improvements that can be made in the teaching of MUN include that I need to have students self monitor their output in group meeting as some students were able to research well and prepare written documents but were not able to communicate their thoughts well.

What needs to happen in future JUEMUN simulations is to do more teacher training on how to prepare students and online teaching for students coming from abroad more about the rules of procedure to familiarize themselves more with the rules of procedure. Furthermore, students with lower proficiency levels could play different roles in the event such as pages volunteers rather than delegates, if they cannot contribute to the meeting in a procedural or substantive manner. It is a burden for students who come prepared to negotiate and write working papers. Being a delegate is about being an interactive participant not an observer. If students are given the floor and have nothing to contribute then they could not have researched and written their position papers well, as in MUN they can always refer to their notes. The lower the proficiency of the student the more scaffolding the faculty has to provide. Secondly, students who had participated in other MUN's found the new amendment process really slowed the meeting down and they and fellow delegates became bored with the reading in informal debate. This new procedure needs to be monitored and evaluated. In the actual UN sessions, they have months to negotiate rather than three days.

Students do not always know what will help them to develop so having experiential courses that are required is a good policy. MUN can offer students new knowledge and skills to meet the challenges of a global community. MUN from the student reflections showed that it challenges students and gives them opportunities to:

Self regulated integrated micro-processes, including goal-setting, strategic planning, use effective strategies to organize, code, and store information, monitoring and metacognition, action, and volitional control, managing time effectively, self-motivational beliefs (self-efficacy or the belief that one has the ability to succeed, outcome expectations, intrinsic interest, and goal orientation), evaluation and self-reflection, experiencing pride and satisfaction with one's efforts, and establishing a congenial environment. (Boekaerts et al., 2000, p. 753)

Clearly JUEMUN was a learning experience for students and as can be seen students each

had their own learning experience. If the class had been an elective then many of the students would not have taken the course and as can be seen from their responses they said how valuable of a learning experience MUN was for them.

I would like to thank the ICC MUN students for their permission and understanding to use their reflections and photos to further learning.

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This work was supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number JP 26370667.

Appendix. Position Paper

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Meeting Room #4 Protection of Children in Armed Conflict

Position Paper for the General Assembly Third Committee on Social, Humanitarian & Cultural (SOCHUM)

The topics before the United Nations Social, Humanitarian & Cultural Committee (SOCHUM) under Meeting Room #4 of the Protection of Children in Armed Conflict are: 1) Killing and Maiming of Children, 2) Recruitment of Child Soldiers, 3) Sexual Violence against Children, 4) Denial of Humanitarian Access, and 5) Abduction of Children. France has strongly committed to this issue in partnership with the international, regional organizations and international non-governmental organizations in persist of protection of human rights.

I. Killing and maiming of children in armed conflict

France regards non-state armed actors as one of the biggest perpetrators of violence against children because they never follow international legitimacy. France organized the Security Council Debate on 25th March 2014 in NY and presided over the open debate where all Member States reconsidered the importance of addressing problems of child victims of non-state armed actors. In order to respond to the change of current warfare and emerging terrorist groups, All member States have to communicate correct information about situations of armed conflict and to conduct appropriate actions to protect children in armed conflict. France calls upon all Member States to do their utmost effort to support the *Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism* which was established to collect information and reflect it to the Secretary General's annual report in accordance with the resolution S/R/1998.

II. Recruitment of child soldiers

France had taken important role to address the issue about recruitment of child soldiers. In the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). They published the *Paris Principle* that introduces a new international criteria of policy to start actions to prevent child soldier recruitment, support disarmament, and help children reintegrate into society. The criteria of the age of soldier recruitment had been controversial issue. France reaffirms that under eighteen-years-old, children should not engage in any arm

conflict in any way in accordance with the optional protocol of Convention on the Right of the Child in 2000. This protocol of convention was ratified by 142 countries, however still in 23 countries including those who ratified, recruitment of child soldier under 18 has been reported according to the Secretary General's Annual Report. France calls upon all Member States to follow the protocol and strengthen a binding force.

III. Sexual violence against children in armed conflict

France has supported the European Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, which calls for all ratifying countries to criminalize sexual violence against children below the legal age of consent, in any situations. France condemns current situations of sexual violence against children in armed conflict and recognizes that is there is still a lot of unreported sexual violence in the world. France calls upon all Member States to respect children's right in accordance in accordance with the Convention of Child Right.

IV. Denial of humanitarian access to protect children involved in armed conflict

In 2014, the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development (MAEDI) financed operations to support women and child victims of violence in the Central African Republic, in collaboration with UNICEF. The operation resulted in 30,000 children receiving learning and playing materials. UNICEF still requires sufficient financial support in order to continue the support to the national response to ongoing armed conflicts that deny humanitarian access to protect children. France encourages the activity of UNICEF and invites all states to make action cooperating with UNICEF.

V. Abduction of children in armed conflict

France regrets that the abduction of children in armed conflict is not covered on the "List of Shame". This causes of the situation where children are abducted are only being documented. Proper procedures need to be given to end the violent action. France also strongly believes that contribution by NGOs like "The Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict" is essential in order to widely and deeply collect information by using the international NGOs networks. France calls upon all Member States to increase efforts to collect information about abduction of children in armed conflict with the cooperation from NGOs in order to find non-reported abductions of children in armed conflict. France urges the Security Council to include the abduction of children in armed conflict.

Reflections on a Model United Nations Simulation

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Abstract

This paper examines student reflections after doing a Model United Nations (MUN) simulation as part of their course work in the 2015 Model United Nations Class at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies (KCUFS) in the International Communication Course (ICC). Five questions were given to the students as part of their final course assessment two days after the event that had to be completed by the class the following week. Students had a chance to both write and orally share their reflections with their classmates and instructor in two classes after the event. Students were asked to reflect if they were able to achieve the goals they had individually written before the conference, their challenging moments, their most memorable moment, and their learning.

Keywords: Model United Nations Simulations, Experiential Learning