

# 神戸市外国語大学 学術情報リポジトリ

## Introduction

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# Introduction

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This volume is the result of a two-year (April, 2008-March, 2010) research project on the Model United Nations (MUN) supported by a grant received from the Research Institute of Kobe City University of Foreign Studies. This is “Phase 1” of our project examining the communicative strategies that are used in Model United Nations simulations, in order to facilitate Japanese and other non-native English speakers to scaffold their participation in this imagined community.

The MUN is an academic forum for discussing global concerns in a context that closely parallels the “real world”; it is an excellent example of experiential learning! The United Nations Association of the United States of America (2009) reported more than 400,000 junior high, high school and university students worldwide participate every year; in their own classrooms, in club activities and at international or national conferences. The MUN provides understanding of the inner working of the UN as students build skill in diplomacy and compromise. 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.

This grant has given us the opportunity to learn at two international conferences the National Model United Nations (NMUN) in New York, the biggest MUN in the world, with 4000 students from 35 countries participating; and the Duisburg-Essen University Model United Nations (DueMUN) in Duisburg Germany with mostly EFL students from Europe, but big delegations came from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and China. On a local level we have taken part in the Kansai Model United Nations a national Japanese MUN club conference in Kobe; the 2009 Japanese Delegation to the NMUN’s preconference training seminars; and interact with our own MUN club at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies; also we participate in conversation analysis study groups, to look at our data. We have met, students, faculty, UN staff, NGO’s, NPO’s, government officials, mayors, diplomats, and even

heard the Secretary General Ban Ki-moon address an international body of university student MUN delegates at the United Nations General Assembly and give them the following message:

Together you represent the United Nations as it should be: people from all countries coming together to find solutions to problems through constructive debate and an exchange of ideas...as leaders of the future, you can come up with innovative approaches to help confront the challenges facing the global community. (March, 2008)

Donna Tatsuki and I are indebted to Thomas Weiler who has not only introduced us to international MUN's in all corners of the world, but repeatedly invites our students and faculty to join his MUN delegation in MUN's in Germany, the USA, Russia, China and Taiwan. I joined him as a faculty advisor for his three 54 member German University Delegations in New York at the NMUN. With them I took part in briefings with the Liberian Ambassador to the United Nations, at the German House and with the Mission of the European Union to the UN; I attended MUN sessions that lasted until late each evening and were followed by group meetings at the end of each day. Even though German was the first language for these student delegates, during their entire stay in New York, English became their sole language of communication with the world and with each other. Now, that's experiential learning at its finest!

In 2010, Kobe Gaidai will begin its first Model United Nations class in the new International Culture Course. There are very few universities in Japan that offer MUN classes, and none that require students to extend their learning beyond the walls of the classroom, to find common ground with peers from other countries in international MUN's. It is our hope that Kobe Gaidai will be able to offer the kinds of rich experiences to Japanese students that we have seen offered by colleagues and institutions overseas. With that end in mind, the chapters in this book are a starting point.

Thomas Weiler in his paper describes his journey from student to faculty to a member of the Board of Directors of the National Collegiate Conference Association

(NCCA) working for academic value in MUN's. He empowers faculty and students, not only in Germany but in other parts of Europe as well, to participate in MUN.

Donna Hurst Tatsuki continues to mentor me and I feel that with MUN I am able to give back as she is new to the world of MUN. She asked all of the basic kinds of questions that I took for granted everyone would know, such as "What is the difference between informal debate and caucusing?" and "How do we train a student to be a chair?" and "How can we keep track of what we are doing in the meeting, what motions are active?" and "How can we make smooth transitions from one format of the meeting to another (i.e. from formal debate, to informal, to caucusing and back)?"

Through her eyes, I have become more present to what has to be scaffolded for learners. She is our communication expert and has introduced the world of conversation analysis to the world of MUN. Dr. Tatsuki is a teacher trainer in both the graduate and undergraduate programs at our university. In her article, she analyzes a caucusing session in the Security Council where delegates are negotiating. She captures in minute detail the moves in the interaction. At first glance the moves seem commonplace but upon closer examination they reveal the incredible precision by which interlocutors take part in multi-party talk. It is this precision work that our Japanese students need training to perfect. Enjoy her story and learn from her as I continue to do.

I have come full circle since I began the first MUN twenty years ago. The multiword units that I am researching now were the reason I thought MUN would be appropriate for Japanese High School students. In 1990, I was teaching in a content-based partial immersion course in a Japanese private High School and we were searching for a unit with a project for students in their final year of study that allowed them to speak English academically on a global issues for an extended period of time. With an American colleague, Renee Hawkins, I observed my first MUN at an International School in Japan in which the participants were mostly native English speakers (NES). We could see that we it could be scaffolded for Japanese non-native English Speakers (NNES) due to the structure of the meeting with it's repetitive language, prepared written speeches, sound-bites and country position papers for the

items on the agenda.

We created a syllabus that would provide the scaffolding that we felt was necessary for NNES using L1 materials and from then, we on began training teachers in our own program and at other High Schools in Japan. In 1991, we held *the first MUN conference for High School EFL students in the world*, according to Muldoon (1993), former Director of the MUN for the United Nations Association of America (UNA-USA). The two-day conference included 53 students from two schools simulating the Commission on Human Rights and debating the agenda item of the Israel and Palestine Conflict. (Again something Thomas Weiler and I share is that our first MUNs were on the same topic!) The annual EFL conference for High School students is now held for three days instead of two by student request, and in 2009 included almost 175 students from seven Japanese High Schools <<http://homepage.mac.com/angus64/KHSMUN/>>.

We would like to dedicate this journal to Donna's family and new friends in the MUN world, Thomas's NMUN-tutors and students; and my MUN mentor Renee Hawkins. Model United Nations all begin with the same rules and protocols but they quickly emerge as a dynamically co-created experience, every one of which is unique, unlike no other.