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実践型英語学習としての「日本英語模擬国連」

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	作成者: Keith, Barry, Murray, Adam
	メールアドレス:
	所属:
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Language in Action: Japan English Model United Nations
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Barry Keith & Adam Murray

Introduction

A Model United Nations (MUN) is a simulation of United Nations fora, where usually high school or university students role-play delegates, debate issues from their countries' perspectives and co-author resolutions to address real-world problems. MUN has a long history, in fact, activities pre-date the organization itself, having begun in the 1920s at Harvard University following the founding of the League of Nations (Kovacevic, 2015). MUN is a world-wide educational phenomenon, with more than 400,000 students participating in events around the globe (Adamson, 2016). In this paper, the authors will describe the rationale for a newly-established course under which University of the Ryukyus' students participated in a MUN held in Japan.

Rationale I: Use of MUN in the Classroom

The Model United Nations has been praised as an effective framework to engage students in complex issues through simulation (Frederking, 2005; Ripley, Carter & Grove, 2009) and role-play in a game-like atmosphere (Hazleton & Mahurin, 1986). The case-based approach of a MUN conference allows students to explore issues in greater depth as they research their countries' positions and debate them at the sometimes intensely competitive conferences (Hale, 2006). Traditional MUN activities have primarily focused on developing debate skills for the international stage, especially those of students in political science (McIntosh, 2001) and international relations (Hazleton & Jacob, 1983; McIntosh, 2001; Obendorf & Randerson, 2012), but also business (Phillips & Muldoon Jr., 1996)

programs. Studies have shown that the MUN conferences have raised student awareness in key competencies and the preparation needed for student participation often become the framework around which entire academic programs are developed (Wiek, Withycombe & Redman, 2011; Obendorf & Randerson, 2013). The learning which can take place is truly multi-disciplinary. The complexity of issues and interplay among countries leads to deep learning (Engel, Pallas & Lambert, 2017) through active learning (Haack, 2008). However, lessons can be learned from MUN activities, such as the need for humor (Dittmer, 2013) and that failure can prove to be more valuable than success (Sasley, 2010). Despite the educational value of MUN, practitioners caution that MUN is not a panacea and must be planned carefully by instructors to supplement more conventional teaching methods (McIntosh, 2001).

Rationale II: Use of MUN in the Second Language Classroom

Although the above describes the use of MUN in first-language settings, MUN has been receiving increasing attention in the second language classroom, especially in the context of Content and Language Integrated Learning, or CLIL (Mehisto & Frigols, 2008; Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2008; Dalton-Puffer, 2011). In this approach, the focus is on the content rather than on language. The instructors may offer some sheltered instruction, a method of teaching that helps learners master the contents while building their confidence. MUN activities in Japan are said to have begun in 1983 during club activities at Sophia University with Sadako Ogata, then professor and later the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (MUN in Japan, 2015). Although its history is relatively short, MUN in Japan is employed to teach global issues in Japanese but also in the language classroom as a means to teach transferable skills in English (Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2009; Fast, 2012; Adamson, 2016).

JEMUN: What is it and Why?

The Japan English Model United Nations (JEMUN) is hosted annually by Kindai University in Osaka, Japan. According to its website, its mission is described as follows:

1. to establish, strengthen, and expand networks for international dialogue between students, educators, and businesses,
2. to organize innovative educational programs in English that foster students' academic and professional skills, and
3. to choose conference themes and meeting room topics that help students gain a deeper understanding of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and the need for comprehensive and innovative solutions.

(JEMUN's Mission, 2019)

JEMUN distinguishes itself from other MUN events in two important regards. First, JEMUN is essentially non-competitive, and although participants are recognized for exemplary work, such as *Outstanding Position Paper, Diplomacy Awards*, and *Journalism Awards*, they are urged to always work in the spirit of collaboration in order to achieve consensus. This is in stark contrast to some other MUN, where best delegate prizes are highly sought after in cut-throat competition that advance academic or professional careers (Parrin, 2013). At JEMUN, "The process is more important than the final product," according to one advisor. Secondly, JEMUN adds journalists to a traditional MUN, who cover the conference events and meeting rooms.

The JEMUN 2019 conference was attended by more than 490 participants of 22 nationalities, representing 42 universities and 10 high schools, both domestic and international. More than 40 faculty advisors volunteer time to mentor the delegates and journalists. Students served as delegates in six meeting rooms, one of which was dedicated exclusively to high school students. The theme for the 2019 conference, *At the Crossroads of Climate Change*, was divided into six agendas, as in Table 1.

Table 1. JEMUN 2019 Agendas and Participants

Rm.	Agenda	UN Body or Type	Delegates	Journalists
1	Protecting Vulnerable Groups from the Health Impacts of Extreme Heat	World Health Organization (WHO)	60	10
2	Addressing Children's Vulnerability to Climate Change and Disasters	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)	60	10
3	Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management in the Pacific Region	United Nations Development Program (UNDP)	20	10
4	Sustainable Cities and Resilience to Disasters	Crisis Simulation Center	20	10
5	The Coordination and Implementation of Earthquake Preparedness and Response Activities	LEGO® Serious Play	12	10
6 (High School only)	Sustainable Lifestyle Choices: Increasing the participation of civil society in tackling climate change	United Nations Environment Program	48	10

Each year several specialists are invited as guest speakers to address the delegates and lend their expertise to the discussions. Guest speakers in 2019 included Akiko Takai of *Save the Children Japan*, Linda Hornisberger, Senior Search Expert of *REDOG Switzerland*, and Xerxes Seposo, specialist in health economics and environmental epidemiology, among others. Delegates cannot choose which country they will represent; they are assigned countries by the JEMUN organizing committee. The role as a delegate is seen as more demanding than that of a journalist because delegates must prepare a written *Position Paper* based on the actual position of their assigned country. This entails doing research in English and following the guidelines of composing a position paper. In addition, delegates must learn the procedural rules of a UN meeting, so they should learn public speaking and debate skills. Journalists must also complete a pre-conference assignment. This enables them to practice the skills necessary for in-conference journalism. At the conference, journalists update a 'coverage board' as they complete a series of 'required' reports. Journalists are also encouraged to explore stories of personal interest, known as 'free' assignments.

The agendas in each meeting room are normally divided into smaller subcommittees, where delegates meet in regional blocs to debate the issues and ultimately craft a resolution (see Table 2). All of these activities are conducted according to the meeting protocols of the United Nations. Another educational innovation of JEMUN is the crisis simulation center, where delegates tackled simulated crises as they occurred real time. In 2019 for example, the computer generated a tsunami crisis in Bangladesh, leaving 60,000 refugees at risk. Delegates had to negotiate with the governments of Bangladesh and India, countries which have military or political conflicts of interest, in order to provide timely humanitarian assistance. Finally, in Room 5, participants in the Lego® Serious Play room used the iconic blocks to develop principles for earthquake preparedness in their respective countries.

Table 2. Committees / Descriptions for each Meeting Agenda

Rm.	Agenda	Committees / Description
1	Protecting Vulnerable Groups from the Health Impacts of Extreme Heat	Committees: 1) The less abled, pregnant, or already infirm 2) The poor, displaced and homeless 3) Children and the elderly 4) Athletes 5) Outdoor and manual workers
2	Addressing Children's Vulnerability to Climate Change and Disasters	Committees: 1) Water scarcity 2) Food insecurity and malnutrition 3) Disruptions in school attendance 4) Migration and risks of exploitation 5) Disruptions in healthcare
3	Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management in the Pacific Region	Description: 1) The UNDP focuses its efforts to prevent and increase resilience in the face of crisis, find nature-based solutions, develop clean, affordable energy, women's empowerment, develop just societies, and fight to keep people out of poverty
4	Sustainable Cities and Resilience to Disasters	Description: 1) This committee will use a software platform that allows delegates to witness real time impact of an emergency or crisis. The task of the delegates is to craft collaborative resolutions in order to resolve the crisis.

5	The Coordination and Implementation of Earthquake Preparedness and Response Activities	Description: 1) Twelve country delegates from the Asia-Pacific region will use LEGO blocks as a communication tool to collaboratively develop a set of guiding principles for the coordination and implementation of earthquake preparedness and response activities.
6	Sustainable Lifestyle Choices: Increasing the participation of civil society in tackling climate change	Committees: 1) Energy 2) Food and Agriculture 3) Transport 4) Water Management

JEMUN journalists usually work in international pairings, i.e. a Japanese student works with an international student. Depending upon the role, journalists develop a wide range of skills, from writing to more technical skills such as editing sound and video files (see Table 3). There is even a role of cartoonist, who draws editorial cartoons of the proceedings. The innovation of this journalism program allows JEMUN to cast a wider net for participation, allowing more low-proficiency learners to not be confined to the intimidating role as a delegate.

Table 3. Journalist Formats, Number, and Descriptions

Format	Number	Description
Video	12, 6 teams of 2, one Japanese student and one international	Record interviews of the guest speakers and goings-on of the assigned meeting rooms and conference events.
Newspaper	12, 6 teams of 2, one Japanese student and one international	Create news stories which follow the events of each meeting room.
Podcast	12, 6 teams of 2, one Japanese student and one international	Broadcast interviews of the guest speakers and delegates.
Social Media	6, one for each meeting room	Promote the event through forms of social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
Photo	6, one for each meeting room	Photograph the events for newspaper and magazine articles.
Magazine	6	Create a multi-media magazine that chronicles the entire conference.
Cartoon	3	Depict the events through editorial cartoons.
Videographer	2	Create videos that encompass the entire conference.

Participation by the University of the Ryukyus

The University of the Ryukyus (Ryudai) has participated in two events, JEMUN 2018 and JEMUN 2019. The 2019 delegation from the University of Ryukyus was comprised of two Japanese students (one sophomore and one junior) and one international student. At JEMUN 2019, one Ryudai student was a magazine journalist and the other two were video journalists. One faculty advisor assisted Meeting #2 and the other worked in the journalism center advising video journalists.

To introduce the 2019 program, three explanatory sessions were held to recruit participants. Because students received financial support from the university, a competitive application process was held for the limited number (3) of positions. The nine applicants were asked to write an essay and also record themselves reading their essay. The one-page essay, entitled "My Thoughts on Climate Change," was assessed by the faculty advisors using an itemized rubric, which included organization, originality, and mechanics. The purpose of recordings was to assess applicants' "intelligibility," a necessary trait for working in a noisy journalism room with a partner of a different nationality. Finally, the three successful applicants were enrolled in a new, credit-bearing course *Special Lectures on Inter-Disciplinary Sciences VII*, which was developed specifically for MUN participation. To qualify for credit, students had to complete a pre-conference assignment over four class sessions, participate fully in the JEMUN conference, and then complete a post-conference journalism assignment, in which they documented their participation in the event.

Conclusion

This report has described the rationale for the development of a new course at the University of the Ryukyus based on participation in Model United Nations' activities. The unique characteristics of JEMUN, which combines a traditional, but non-competitive MUN, with a program for journalists, make JEMUN particularly well-suited for Ryudai

students, allowing them to 'get their feet wet' as a journalist or if they qualify, participate in a more demanding role as a delegate. Regardless of their role at the conference, students are engaged with authentic, real-world issues. Depending on the type, journalists develop a broad range of skills, from writing, editing, to operation of video and audio software – all through the medium of English. For future programs, we hope that Ryudai students will develop the skills needed to become a delegate such as writing position papers and mastering debate techniques which in turn will help them become active global citizens.

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