

[Article]

# Global Citizenship through Active Learning

— Participation at an English Model United Nations Conference —

Mark D. Sheehan  
Ling Wang (王 凌)

## Introduction

This paper focuses on Hannan University students' participation at an annual Model United Nations (MUN) conference called the Japan University English Model United Nations (JUEMUN). Hannan University students have attended JUEMUN since 2014. As an introduction, some background information on United Nations simulations will be given followed by an explanation of the steps taken before JUEMUN, as well as the activities students were engaged in during this three-day event. The merits of having students take part in such active learning opportunities will be demonstrated by explaining the learning processes that allowed students to attend this conference. The first section of this paper will focus on what student delegates did before and at JUEMUN. An analysis of post-event survey data taken from all participants on the 2015 Hannan University JUEMUN team will illustrate how participation in this event can play an important role in fostering global citizenship among university students in Japan while also providing them with unique learning experiences in a number of academic and vocational areas. After a description of JUEMUN delegate activities, this paper will conclude with a description of JUEMUN Journalism, and show how student journalists learned before and at JUEMUN, what they did in their role as multi-lingual podcast journalists, and how JUEMUN Journalism can be beneficial for their future careers. The successes of the twenty Hannan University students who attended JUEMUN 2015 should confirm the educational benefits of student participation in multi-cultural, English problem-solving discussions that focus on global issues.

## 1. United Nations Simulations

As the 70th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations approaches, and the 60th anniversary of Japan's membership in the UN nears, people from around the globe will have a number of opportunities to reflect on the role the United Nations has played in promoting peace and protecting human rights. Most likely, there will be a number of news stories and special events to commemorate this occasion. With this increased awareness, a number of educational opportunities will present themselves. Fortunately, there are a great number of Model United Nations events that take place around the world every year. These conferences

give students opportunities to not only learn more deeply about the UN, but also give them valuable experience in simulating the statesmanship of the UN members while gaining knowledge in international relations.

The roots of United Nations simulations are believed to have begun before the founding of the UN and were at that time Model League of Nations. After the founding of the United Nations, MUN activities began at Harvard University. MUN activities take place in middle schools, high schools and universities around the world. Many educators embrace these events and use them as opportunities to teach social studies, debate skills, global issues, and topics related to current events and human rights. In Japan, participation in an MUN can also be seen as an event that gives motivated students chances to test their mettle and use their English skills in a practical way while engaging in international communicative activities.<sup>1)</sup>

### 1.1 Japan University English Model United Nations (JUEMUN)

The Japan University English Model United Nations conference was founded in 2010 by Craig Smith of Kyoto University of Foreign Studies, Lori Zenuk-Nishide of Kobe City University of Foreign Studies, and Todd Thorpe of Kinki University. The three founders have a wealth of experience in United Nations simulations, engagement in global issues and in organizing educational events to promote multi-cultural learning. The inaugural JUEMUN was held in Nagoya at the Japan Association for Language Teachers conference. It had 51 participants. Subsequent JUEMUN conferences have been hosted in rotation by the universities of the founding members. As more educators and students have learned about JUEMUN, the number of participants has grown over the years and the level and diversity of students has also increased significantly. JUEMUN 2015, held at Kinki University, had 276 student delegates and journalists. One of the authors of this paper has been involved in JUEMUN since 2012, first as a faculty advisor and currently as a conference organizer. The other author joined the JUEMUN team in 2015 and was instrumental in bringing JUEMUN Journalism to another level as a multi-lingual journalism advisor.

The exponential increase in the number of students and teachers who want to get involved in JUEMUN shows how valuable and rewarding this experience can be for both educators and learners alike. The research students do to prepare for JUEMUN helps them deepen their knowledge of global issues and improves their empathy for people from other cultures and educational backgrounds. Students learn problem-solving skills and academic discussion skills. Of particular relevance to faculty and students at Hannan University, students who participate in JUEMUN gain valuable experience in active learning, which is in line with the mission statement and educational goals of the university.

### 1.2 JUEMUN 2014

JUEMUN 2014 was held at Kobe City University of Foreign Studies. The 2014 Hannan University JUEMUN team consisted of two delegates who were first-year students in the Faculty of International Communication and one first-year student who came to the event as an observer. The theme of the 2014 conference was the “UN Secretary General’s Global

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Initiative in Education.” There were three meeting rooms that each discussed a topic related to education, the meeting room agendas were: “Put every child in school,” “Improve the Quality of Learning,” and “Foster Global Citizenship.” There were 177 participants; 116 Japanese students and 61 international students took part in the event. Students from 23 nationalities and 49 universities gathered in Kobe for three days to discuss issues and resolve problems related to education. The event took place from Friday June 27th to Sunday June 29th.

### 1.3 JUEMUN 2015

JUEMUN 2015 was held at Kinki University on the Higashi Osaka Campus from Friday June 26th to Sunday June 28th. The theme for the event was: “Fostering a Culture of Peace.” The agendas for the four meeting rooms were: “Women’s Equality and Empowerment,” “Protecting Indigenous Groups and their Cultures,” “Responding to Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation,” and “Protecting Children in Armed Conflict.” The number of participants at JUEMUN 2015 grew to 276 students; there were 199 Japanese students and 77 international students. People from 30 different nationalities and 47 universities met in Osaka to share ideas and work toward resolutions for problems related to peace and human rights.

### 1.4 JUEMUN Preparation

Preparing for JUEMUN is no mean task. Students must not only have sufficient English skills to participate in group problem-solving discussions, but they must also do a significant amount of research, information processing and writing. When a JUEMUN team is formed, each student is assigned a country, agenda and a meeting room. Each delegate is assigned the role of representative from a particular country. They are given a room agenda and they are placed on a specialized committee that is a sub-topic of the larger agenda. Therefore, students must learn about a web of topics that range from demographic information about their particular country to their country’s position on the topics related to their committee. Since students assume the role of country delegate, they must temporarily suspend their own personal values and beliefs, and their home country’s political positions and culture, so that they can role-play a character from a different culture and sometimes a different religion. Often students are assigned a country that they are not too familiar with; this provides them with an eye-opening, yet challenging learning experience. Once a student gathers enough knowledge about his or her country, he or she must write a Position Paper that will become the basis for a speech that must be given at JUEMUN. Students will also use all of their research notes in committee work to help stimulate group discussions and support their country’s positions.

Since many students are unfamiliar with the United Nations, they must learn background information on how the UN functions.<sup>2)</sup> Finally, and most importantly, students must learn the rules of procedure for JUEMUN and how the three-day event will flow and what the goals of the event are (i.e., they must learn what they have to do when they arrive at JUEMUN and what is expected of them over the long weekend).

The Hannan JUEMUN team met every Monday night for three months starting in April 2015 at study sessions in Hannan University's Student Commons to get ready for JUEMUN 2015. In the study sessions, students were instructed in the rules of procedure and flow of JUEMUN and the JUEMUN schedule. Students were given position paper instructions, Study Guides for each agenda, and some chapters of a Guide to JUEMUN manga that was being drawn by one of the JUEMUN editorial cartoonists; students were also given links to useful websites, so they could collect information on their countries and specialized topics. Students also had access to position papers from previous years to use as models. While the study sessions were fruitful, students were expected to do a lot of research on their own before each meeting. Students used the study sessions to get feedback on their position papers, share concerns and questions, and exchange ideas on their research. Students also commiserated with one another as the time for the big event drew nearer.

### 1.5 Activities at JUEMUN

JUEMUN is a three-day event that starts at 10 am on Friday morning and finishes at 5 pm on Sunday night. There are a number of activities that take place over the weekend. Students attend an opening ceremony, and a rules and procedure lecture. After that, students are divided into four rooms and spend most of their time in that meeting room working in their specialized committees. The goal of each committee is to discuss the issues related to their assigned topic and start to draft a resolution. There are a number of steps and challenges in the process. Students must work together to reach a consensus. This means listening to the opinions of others and trying to reach some type of compromise in cases when delegates see things from different perspectives. In each meeting room, there are a number of faculty advisors who volunteer their time for the weekend. The advisors are instrumental in helping students when they have questions about the rules of procedure and in encouraging them when they are struggling with the process.

To assist students in gathering information, a number of guest speakers come to JUEMUN to give lectures and take part in question and answer sessions. These are valuable experiences and give students an opportunity to interact with experts from a variety of academic fields and areas of expertise. Past JUEMUN guest speakers have included former diplomats from the UN, people involved in NPOs and NGOs, and other talented speakers with a passion for global issues and education. Throughout the weekend, students move between formal debate where they give and listen to speeches from country delegates in their meeting rooms, and informal debate where they work on committees and in regional blocs to share ideas and gather information. Students continue to take their working papers through the revision and amendment process and ultimately complete their resolutions. At the end of the final session on Sunday, each committee presents their resolution to the other delegates in their meeting room and it is voted on. At this stage of the event, there is an incredible feeling of relief at having completed this challenging task. Students have worked on teams over a long weekend and formed bonds to arrive at a consensus so that they can propose a resolution to an important problem related to international relations and global issues.

While the committee work is intense, there are also a number of opportunities for students to form friendships with students from other universities in Japan as well as with international students. All JUEMUN delegates and advisors stay at a hotel on Friday and Saturday night near the host university. Each year, there is a party, so students can get to know one another in a social setting. Also, students are assigned roommates from different universities, nationalities, and often different religions, and spend three days making friendships that last long after JUEMUN finishes.

The activities related to JUEMUN include intense preparation by students and detailed instructions by JUEMUN advisors. Once at JUEMUN, students must learn to adapt and work with a number of people who they have never met before. They must do this all in English. Since it takes a great leap of faith and courage to participate in JUEMUN, the authors of this paper wanted to find out how students coped with JUEMUN preparation and the events at JUEMUN; therefore, a survey was conducted to gather this information. The survey results will be discussed below in Section 2.

## 2. JUEMUN Participant Survey

In order to gather feedback from the twenty Hannan University students who participated in JUEMUN 2015, students were given a survey on the last day of the conference and asked to respond to seven questions. Space was also provided for students to freely write comments on their experiences preparing for and taking part in the event. The survey results are given in the Appendix in Figures 1 to 7. The survey questions sought to ascertain what motivated students to join the event, what type of activities helped students prepare for JUEMUN, and what type activities at JUEMUN were relevant to the students' academic work and future studies. The authors of this study also wanted to find out whether or not students were able to communicate well at the event and how they perceived their English ability in relation to the other participants. We also wanted to see if participation in JUEMUN was a meaningful experience and whether or not this year's participants would be interested in attending other Model United Nations conferences. Nineteen out of twenty students completed the survey. The responses in Figures 1 to 7 are from seventeen delegates and the two podcast journalists.

### 2.1 Survey results and analysis

Preparation for and participation in JUEMUN takes a tremendous amount of time and effort. As a result, a high level of motivation is required to be successful. Students had to work independently doing research on the JUEMUN agenda, seek help from teachers and other team members, and attend weekly study sessions over the course of three months that took place outside of their regular lesson times. The authors sought to understand what motivated students to go through this rigorous training to attend this intellectually challenging event. Figure 1 shows how students ranked their reasons for participation in JUEMUN. The top three reasons were: "to make friends with students overseas," "an interest in participating in an international event," and "a desire to improve English skills or use English for practical

purposes.” These responses are indicative that there is a desire among students to take part in multi-cultural, academic events where English is the medium of communication. The reasons students gave also indicate that students recognize the need to improve their English skills and are willing to do so when given clear goals and guidance from experienced instructors.

Figure 2 shows student responses to a question related to preparation for the event. Given the limited time for students to prepare for JUEMUN, a number of resources and methods were enlisted to help students become confident and succeed at JUEMUN. Students ranked getting advice from their teachers of highest importance followed by the weekly study sessions at Student Commons. The JUEMUN website, which was created by one of the JUEMUN founders, was also a valuable resource. Since this was a team effort, it was essential that students get help from their peers and upperclassmen. Taken as a whole, the authors are encouraged to see that the students utilized a variety of support systems to help them develop the skills and knowledge that would be put to the test at the three days of JUEMUN.

Results in Figure 3 illustrate that the activities at JUEMUN can help students improve their academic and technical skills and inspire future research. In particular, the group discussions, both in the Committees and Regional blocs, were seen as the most meaningful activities. Producing podcasts was ranked high as well. Section 3 of this article will show the multifarious benefits student journalists received as a result of their hard work. Writing Position Papers and conducting research on the JUEMUN theme and individual country assignments was seen as a worthwhile activity and one that not only helped increase knowledge and improve skills, but one that also will aid students in their other coursework at university.

The JUEMUN 2015 participants comprised students from 47 universities, both in Japan and from abroad, and 30 different nationalities. Many of the participants were from high-ranking, highly selective Japanese or foreign universities. The language of interaction at the event was English. As a result, there was some concern over whether or not students would be able to communicate effectively at the event. Figure 4 shows that almost 72% of the students responded that they were able to communicate well or very well. These results show that despite some apprehension before the event, students could communicate successfully at this intense, international academic conference.

Group discussion and the sharing of opinions in English is perhaps the biggest challenge for students who participate in JUEMUN. Students need to master a wide range of content related to global issues while also following MUN protocols and rules. To add to this anxiety, students must do this in an all-English environment with native-speakers of English and other high-level, non-Japanese non-native speakers of English. Figure 5 shows the student responses to a question that sought to find out what types of problems students had at JUEMUN. The responses indicate that students had problems due to insufficient English skills, cross-cultural communication problems, and also difficulty communicating with people with different personalities. Perhaps the greatest challenge that students faced was the inability to share their opinions in English.

This is a perennial problem for Japanese students in JUEMUN’s heated, high-level

discussions. Many Japanese students lack the confidence to take the initiative in group problem-solving discussions. Furthermore, a lack of experience in such contexts, coupled with cultural differences in the ways students in Japan are trained in school and participate in university coursework leads to a failure to communicate effectively. Students, despite having adequately prepared for the event, tend to take a back seat in group work and allow the conversations to be dominated by non-Japanese students. One of the authors of this paper is currently doing additional research in this area and hopes to implement methods to help students overcome these obstacles and make greater contributions in such settings at future JUEMUN conferences. Nonetheless, the experience is a valuable one for students and one that provides them with opportunities to take chances to contribute more and also to reflect on what may have hindered them from achieving their goals.

The last two questions on the survey sought to find out if students believed JUEMUN to have been a meaningful experience and whether or not students would be willing to attend other Model United Nations conferences. Students responded positively to both questions and the Hannan JUEMUN advisors (the authors) are encouraged to see that JUEMUN not only had a positive impact on the students, but also that the experience was one that they would like to try again in the future. Figure 6 shows that 95% of the students thought participation in the JUEMUN conference was very meaningful (79%) or meaningful (16%). In addition to the academic benefits of JUEMUN, this experience was also able to teach students important lessons about goal setting and hard work. Students had many ups and downs during the preparation stages of JUEMUN. At times, they were not sure they could do it, and some students felt various levels of stress. At the event, students experienced shock at the level of intensity of the activities. Students also felt intimidated by the academic levels of other JUEMUN participants and they were embarrassed by their own shortcomings. Nonetheless, the students persevered and never gave up. Therefore, the students were able to experience the process of working hard, facing challenges and achieving meaningful results. Not only that, as Figure 7 shows, students would be willing to go through the process again. In response to the question: "Would you like to participate in other Model United Nations conferences" 74% of the students responded, "I would definitely like to participate." Another 21% responded that they would like to participate. These results show that JUEMUN is a valuable and meaningful educational experience for students.

Overall, the survey results from students who participated in the 2015 JUEMUN Conference have given the authors some valuable insights into why the students chose to join such an event, how best to prepare the students for success, and what types of problems or challenges students faced while they participated in this project. JUEMUN provides a wide range of educational opportunities for students; they can learn about global issues, develop critical thinking skills and hone their research skills. Furthermore, with the implementation of JUEMUN Journalism in 2013, an even wider range of learning opportunities has become available to students. The Hannan University JUEMUN team was fortunate to have two students participate in JUEMUN Journalism as multi-lingual podcast journalists.<sup>3)</sup> Section 3 explains what these highly motivated, hard-working students did to prepare for JUEMUN

Journalism, and subsequently make a great contribution to the body of work that reports on this annual event.

### 3. JUEMUN Journalism

In this section, firstly, I will explain briefly JUEMUN Journalism, one important component of JUEMUN. Then, focusing on the participation of Hannan University's students at JUEMUN 2015 as student journalists, I will illustrate what learning opportunities JUEMUN Journalism can provide to university students, how the approach of JUEMUN Journalism enhances active learning and what the student journalists learned from JUEMUN Journalism. Lastly, I will discuss the English language needs of students majoring in Banking and Finance and explain how JUEMUN Journalism can be beneficial for them.

#### 3.1 What is JUEMUN Journalism?

JUEMUN Journalism is a digital journalism simulation that was introduced into JUEMUN in 2013.<sup>4)</sup> Student journalists, students who assume the role of journalists, collaborate in teams to cover the various events taking place at JUEMUN and report on them. All of the digital media broadcasts created by student journalists are published on the JUEMUN Journalism website (<http://juemunjournalism.weebly.com/>).

JUEMUN Journalism takes a task-based approach. The JUEMUN organizing committee assigns one meeting-room/agenda (each meeting-room is in charge of one agenda) to student journalists for them to cover, and gives them a list of events on which they will be in charge of reporting during the conference. This means that during the conference, student journalists are in the process of solving multiple problems simultaneously and continuously, which is intensive and difficult, but also motivating work for them.

Another unique feature of JUEMUN Journalism is that all broadcasts (except editorial cartoons in 2015) are made by pairs, not by individuals. This gives students a good chance to learn how to cooperate and collaborate with other students to accomplish their tasks. In particular, most of the pairs are in the combination of one Japanese student and one international student for the purpose of providing multicultural communication experience to both students.

At JUEMUN 2015, there were two big innovations in JUEMUN Journalism that brought more cooperative learning opportunities to students and made the conference more culturally diversified. One was the introduction of multi-language broadcasts. At JUEMUN 2015, student journalists made digital media broadcasts not only in English, but also in Korean, Chinese and Japanese. Another innovation was the introduction of cartoon journalists who drew cartoons to illustrate events and agenda at the conference.

Therefore, the journalism team for JUEMUN 2015 consisted of four sub-teams which were each in charge of one of four digital journalism formats: podcasts, videos, written news articles, and editorial cartoons. Moreover, the podcast team conducted audio broadcasts in both English and Chinese, the video team created videos in both English and Korean, and the



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chronicle team wrote articles in both English and Japanese.

### 3.2 What do Student Journalists Do?

At JUEMUN, those students who collect news stories and conduct interviews are called student journalists. As explained in 3.1, since JUEMUN Journalism has four digital journalism formats, there are four kinds of student journalist: podcast journalists, video journalists, newspaper journalists and cartoon journalists, according to their different tasks, i.e., creating podcasts or videos or newspaper articles or cartoons.

At JUEMUN 2015, there were 28 student journalists. Among them, were 8 podcast journalists (4 pairs: 3 Japanese students and 5 international students), 8 video journalists (4 pairs: 5 Japanese students and 3 international students), 8 newspaper journalists (4 pairs: 5 Japanese students and 3 international students), and 4 cartoon journalists (all Japanese students).

Although student journalists have different tasks, there are two common features. One is that they need to communicate actively with other participants (student delegates, other student journalists, advisors, and guest speakers) in English to collect as much information as they can. The other is that they need to be creative enough to transform the collected information into the format of which they are in charge.

For podcast journalists, video journalists and cartoon journalists, they also needed to have technical skills, such as knowledge of how to use broadcast equipment, a talent for drawing, and advanced computer skills.

### 3.3 Hannan University Students' Participation in JUEMUN Journalism

At JUEMUN 2015, two international students from Hannan University (Department of Economics) participated in JUEMUN Journalism as English/Chinese podcast journalists. In this section, I explain briefly how they made preparations, illustrate the contribution that they made to JUEMUN Journalism, and summarize what they learned from JUEMUN Journalism.

The students spent nearly three months preparing for the bilingual podcast journalism. During the preparation stages, they learned how to conduct an interview, how to use podcast-specific equipment and software, how to do bilingual broadcasts, and how to make a successful podcast. They completed pre-JUEMUN assignments well. The tasks were designed to help them (1) become familiar with the soft- and hardware that they would be required to use at the conference; (2) learn about the specific global issues on which they would be reporting, and (3) become familiar with the events that they were going to cover.

At JUEMUN 2015, they became the first and only pair to make English/Chinese broadcasts. In order to accomplish their task as bilingual podcast journalists, first they needed to collect as much information as they could and then transform the collected information into the form of podcasts. Besides interacting actively with other JUEMUN participants in order to acquire information -- for example, communicating with student delegates, conducting interviews on guest speakers and advisors -- they also needed to write transcripts, record them in both English and Chinese, and edit the recordings using technical equipment. This was not an easy

task for them, considering that JUEMUN 2015 had 276 student participants, 25 advisors, 5 guest speakers, and various events.

With the knowledge and skills that they have acquired and also with their advantages -- being able to speak three languages plus having been trained in Economics and Finance, they worked very hard and showed their creativity at JUEMUN 2015. The students created four English/Chinese podcasts, and won praise from journalism advisors.

For the two students, JUEMUN Journalism was both a big challenge and a unique learning opportunity to develop real-world skills since it provided a more motivating form of active learning in an authentic environment. Speaking more specifically:

Firstly, since they needed to fully utilize their language skills to create the podcasts, JUEMUN Journalism was a good chance to develop their multi-lingual skills and get to know in which skills they are weak and needed to improve in the future.

Secondly, since they needed to report how other JUEMUN participants discuss and think about specific global issues as news stories, the approach of JUEMUN Journalism not only gave them a deeper understanding of those global issues, but also made them think about those issues from the perspective of Economics and Finance, which improved their understanding of the academic background information.<sup>5)</sup> For example, when the students attended the guest speaker's lectures (including Q&A sessions) to gather information to report them, they had a chance to learn directly from experts in the field. Moreover, in the process of acquiring relevant information, evaluating and processing it, observing events, conducting interviews and writing transcripts, their abilities to think critically and express their own opinions were also strengthened.

Thirdly, since creating podcasts is a collaborative task, bringing many people together in the production process, the ability to get along and be cooperative with other people is necessary. Hence, JUEMUN Journalism provided a good opportunity for students to develop interpersonal skills and learn how to collaborate with other people to develop a group understanding in a problem-solving setting. In particular, since the participants of JUEMUN are very culturally diversified, JUEMUN Journalism was very helpful in raising their awareness of cultural differences through international communication.

Furthermore, as stated earlier, the podcast journalists needed to use special equipment to record and to edit their work, and therefore, JUEMUN Journalism was also a good chance for them to learn, understand and hone their practical technical skills relating to equipment use and maintenance.

In summary, participation in JUEMUN Journalism, which is a highly task-oriented (i.e., journalists need to produce content covering assigned events) creative challenge, gave the students an active learning experience involving both an integrated set of skills and a background knowledge of important global issues. Through JUEMUN Journalism, they not only learned such practical skills as planning, negotiation, implementation, problem solving, multi-linguistic skills and technological expertise, but also learned how to apply their academic knowledge to enhance their understanding of the real world.

### 3.4 Synergetic Learning Effect of JUEMUN Journalism: English Language Needs of Students Majoring in Banking and Finance

It is widely acknowledged that English is becoming a necessary globally accepted language in almost every field. Globalization -- the integration, interdependence and intensified exchange involving different regions and societies all over the world -- increases the need for non-native speakers of English.<sup>6)</sup>

The field of Banking and Finance is regarded as one of the earliest fields to undergo globalization and one of the most heavily influenced as well. As financial markets have become increasingly globalized with the rapid development of technology, banks, securities companies, insurance companies and other financial institutions have expanded their global operations and networks (see Stulz, 1999; Berger, *et al.*, 2000; Goldberg, 2009).

Under this world-wide trend, Japanese financial institutions have also increased their overseas presence. For example, before, it was Japan's large banks (such as city banks) that accounted for the majority of Japanese banks' overseas presence.<sup>7)</sup> Nowadays, however, Japan's regional banks are also becoming increasingly globalized because of (1) the weak demand for lending due to an aging and declining population, (2) diminished earnings due to the Bank of Japan's large-scale monetary easing, and (3) an increase in the number of locally-oriented SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises) -- regional banks' main clients -- that have started to expand or even relocate their businesses overseas (Nikkei Asian Review, 8/12/2015).

With increasing globalization in the field of Banking and Finance, English has become the common language in this field. It is noteworthy that, besides the above-mentioned global changes in the practical world, in the academic world of Banking and Finance, which provides financial theories and ideas to applied practice, English has been the dominant language.<sup>8)</sup> All of these factors make English language skills a crucial requirement for personnel in the field of Banking and Finance. In other words, in the globalized financial industry, a good command of the English language makes for greater mobility within the organization, greater ability to interact with international clients, and more efficient access to information around the world. Such skills can give one a good competitive edge when it comes to career advancement.

Although it is widely recognized among banking and finance professionals that English language skills are very important to their professional duties and functions, one can hear everywhere (and especially from non-native English speaking countries) that (1) general English may not be adequate for the performance of job-related communicative functions in the financial industry, (2) banks' training programs incorporate little or no teaching of any aspect of the English language, and (3) many banking and finance professionals have found the challenges posed by the English language considerable. See Chew (2005), Wu and Chin (2010), Ademumi and Owoyemi (2012), and Mohammadzadeh, *et al.* (2015).

For these reasons, there is an increasing demand in the financial industry for "English for Special Purposes" (ESP). "English for Special Purposes" refers to the teaching or studying of English in view of the requirements of a particular career, or in respect to a particular context. One of the challenges in conducting English education for university students

majoring in Banking and Finance is narrowing the gap between English training received at universities and the English skills required in realistic specific business situations. Needless to say, this is a very difficult thing to do.

As illustrated in previous sections, JUEMUN Journalism provides task-based active learning opportunities within which student journalists can focus on the specific needs of particular situations. Furthermore, since student journalists need to show their creativity and express their own opinions, JUEMUN Journalism gives them a good opportunity to apply what they have learned about banking and finance and express those ideas in English. Therefore, JUEMUN Journalism can be regarded as an innovative ESP educational experience.

In the increasingly globalized financial world, it is necessary to equip students majoring in Banking and Finance with the necessary English skills as well as a sufficient level of financial literacy. Participation in JUEMUN Journalism can make a solid contribution to the achievement of that objective.

## Conclusion

Many educators in Japan would concede that there is a great need for Japanese students to improve their competence in English so that they can take a more active role in international business and global affairs. Furthermore, buzzwords like *Global Jinzai*<sup>9)</sup> are used in a number of contexts in Japan to express the desire for Japanese workers to acquire the linguistic skills, communicative ability, and world knowledge necessary to be successful as society changes as result of globalization. Bearing these external, and often internal, pressures in mind, it is essential for university students in Japan to have educational experiences that help them develop 21st century skills, and for them to take part in activities where they can apply what they have learned in their coursework in an international, intellectually stimulating setting. Students and teachers are able to meet these needs in Japan by participating in JUEMUN and other MUN events. This paper describes the educational benefits of student participation at the Japan University English Model United Nations. It explains the processes undertaken to ensure students' success, and it also reports on the students' experiences at JUEMUN. As Hannan University students have completed their second year of participation at this event, the authors of this paper are encouraged by the results and look forward to finding other innovative ways to engage students in active learning events that incorporate multi-cultural collaborative experiences.

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Appendix

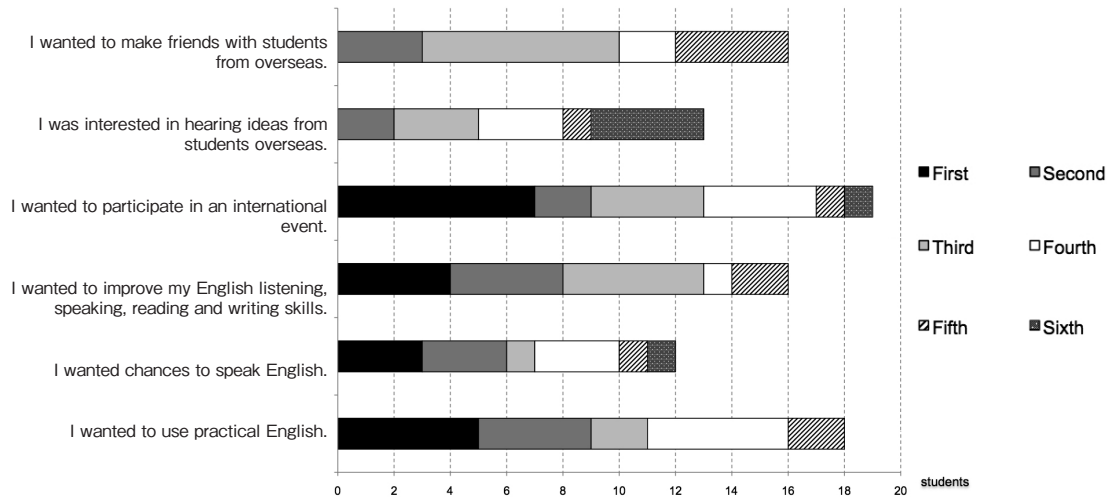


Fig. 1 What motivated you to join JUEMUN 2015? Rank the most important reason with a 1, and follow with 2, 3 and 4. Choose all items that apply.

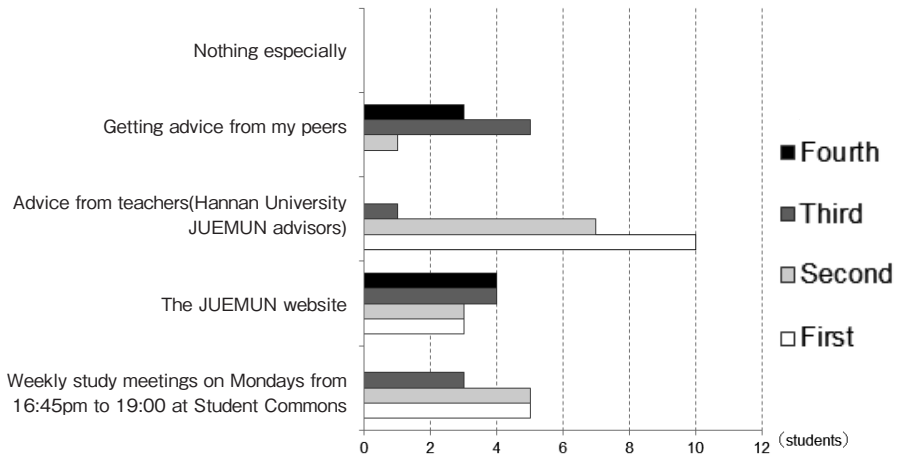


Fig. 2 What activities helped you prepare the most for JUEMUN 2015? Please rank the items in order of the most helpful to the least helpful. Choose all items that apply.

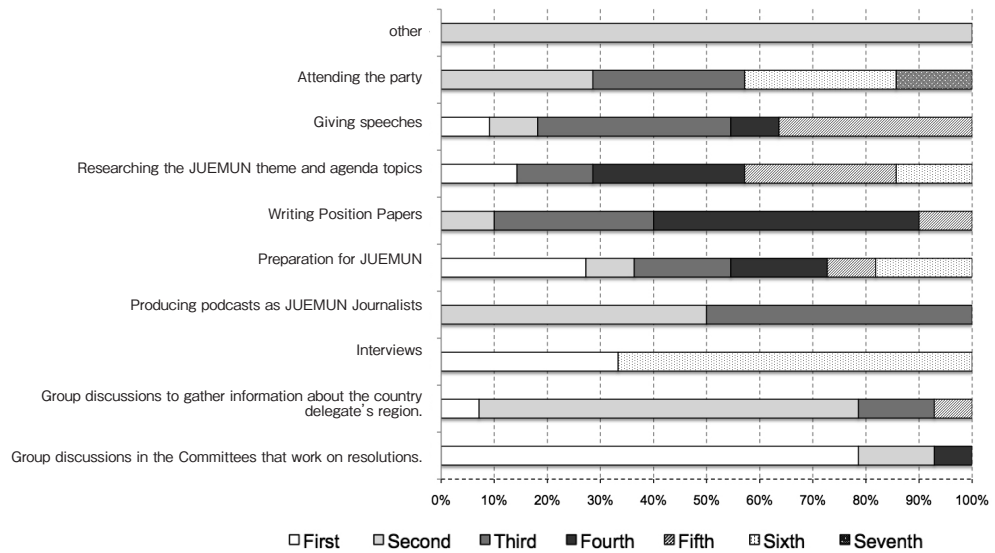


Fig. 3 What activities at JUEMUN 2015 do you consider the most meaningful in helping you with your studies and future research activities? Please rank the items in order of the most helpful to the least helpful. Choose all items that apply.

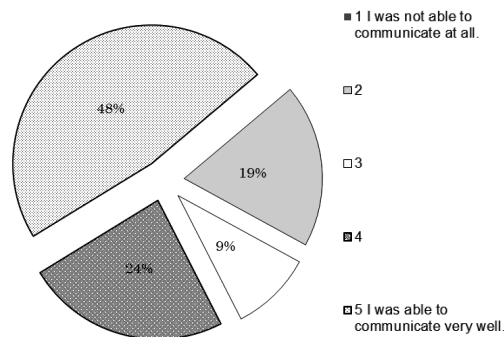


Fig. 4 Were you able to communicate well with the teachers and students who participated in JUEMUN 2015?

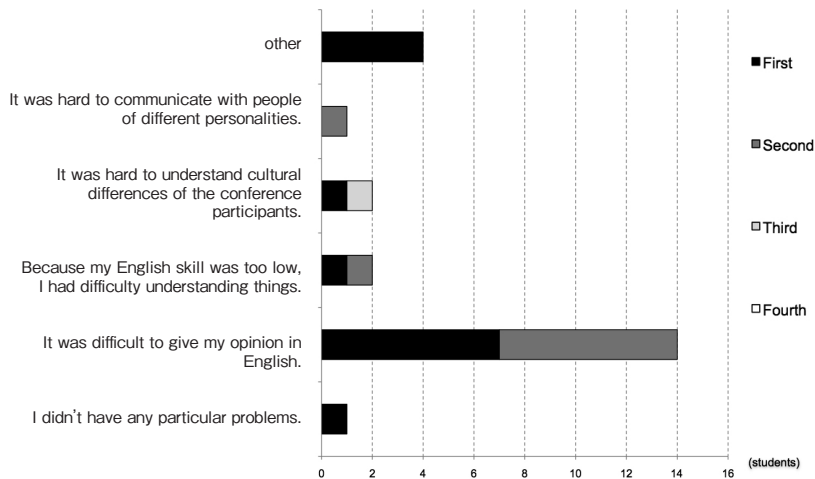


Fig. 5 Did you have any problems at JUEMUN 2015? Please rank the items in order of the most problematic to the least problematic. Choose all items that apply.

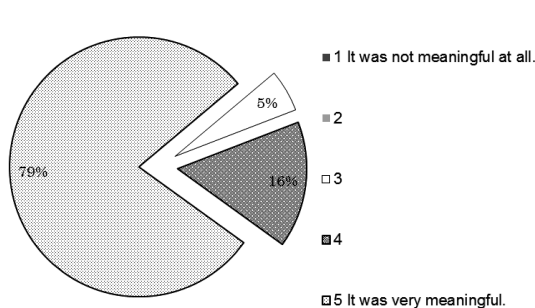


Fig. 6 Was participation in JUEMUN 2015 meaningful to you?

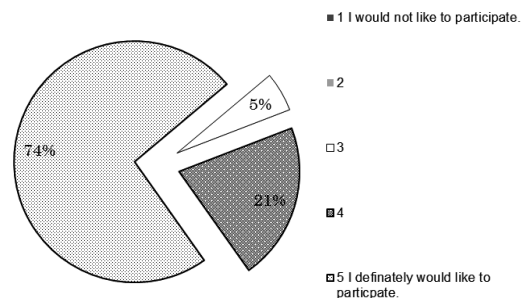


Fig. 7 Would you like to participate in JUEMUN again?

Notes

- 1) For more on the history of and educational uses of MUN see Sheehan (2013).
- 2) Professor Dan Kasai from Hannan University's Faculty of International Tourism generously spared his time and resources during some study sessions to instruct students in the workings of the UN and suggested useful resources to help them broaden their understanding of these challenging topics.
- 3) 2014 was the first year that Hannan University participated in JUEMUN. 2015 was the first year that Hannan University participated in JUEMUN Journalism.
- 4) For the origins and evolving process, see Sheehan, *et al.* (2015).
- 5) For example, the conference theme of JUEMUN 2015 was "Foster a Culture of Peace". The agendas were Women's Equality and Empowerment; Protecting Indigenous Groups and their Cultures; Responding to Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation; Protecting Children in Armed Conflict.
- 6) For the link between globalization and English as a lingua franca, see Dewey (2007). Chang (2006) and Fujimoto-Adamson (2006) illustrate the impact of globalization on English education in China and Japan respectively.

- 7) According to Malcolm (2001), at the end of March 1998, of the 427 overseas offices, 364 (almost 90 percent) were those of Japan's 19 biggest banks. (p.133)
- 8) For readers from other disciplines, if one glances at any Japanese textbooks of Banking and Finance, he/she will find a large number of words written in *katakana* (one of the two phonetic scripts used in the Japanese language) which means those academic words have been introduced from western languages (mainly English). It is interesting that in China, another East Asian country which has also been coping with the introduction of Western knowledge since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Chinese scholars can only use Chinese characters to present Western academic knowledge and ideas, due to the inherent features of the Chinese language. For more on this linguistic phenomenon and its cultural and economic implications, see Wang and Wang (2014) and Wang (2015).
- 9) This term in Japanese: グローバル人材 can be understood as internationally competent human resources.

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