Diplomatic English and Civic Engagement: Integrating Model United Nations and Language Activities in Italian High Schools and Universities

Michela Giordano[1]

[1] Department of Humanities, Languages, and Heritage, University of Cagliari, Italy

Correspondence: Michela Giordano, MA, Department of Humanities, Languages, and Heritage, University of Cagliari, Italy.

Abstract

This paper explores the educational benefits of introducing English for Diplomacy and Model United Nations (MUN) programs in Italian high schools and universities, particularly for students preparing to participate in the *Studenti Ambasciatori alle Nazioni Unite* initiatives. Drawing from two workshops conducted in collaboration with the *Italian Diplomatic Academy*, the study highlights how structured diplomatic language training enhances students' linguistic competence, critical thinking, and civic awareness. The curriculum focuses on diplomatic English (formal expressions, negotiations, persuasive speech), international relations terminology, public speaking, and writing diplomatic texts (resolutions, position papers). Findings suggest that such programs (based both on authentic and/or teacher-made materials) not only improve language proficiency but also foster global citizenship, preparing students for active participation in international forums like the UN.

Keywords: English for diplomacy, Model UN, international relations, civics and citizenship, experiential learning

1. Introduction

"*The Model United Nations program has expanded to over 60 thousand students, ranging in academic level from the sixth E grade through graduate school. Both a "conference program" and an "operational simulation," Model UN conferences are held in over thirty countries (Muldoon, 1995). At a time when students report they feel increasingly divorced from world events, these simulations have demonstrated an ability to capture the imagination and encourage experiential learning*" (McIntosh, 2001, p. 270). This is how McIntosh introduced his discussion on the Model United Nations (MUN henceforth) trying to show how simulation increases student involvement and allows a sequence of courses to be organised as mandatory introduction to International Relations studies. On the same line, Taylor explains how simulation of global politics can be a valuable tool to help students "grasp abstract theoretical concepts and recognize fundamental challenges in conducting global politics" (Taylor, 2013, p. 134).

Kabdesov, similarly to Muldoon (1995), sees the MUN as a "synthesis of a simulation game and a conference imitating the real sessions of the United Nations". The scholar analysed the impact of MUN on students' improvement at the Kenzhegali Sagadiyev University of International Business in Almaty, Kazakhstan, concluding that the MUN is considered an effective experimental teaching method, recommended for universities with political science and international relations courses (Kabdesov, 2022). Obendorf and Randerson (2013, p. 352) explain that MUN simulations variously take place in teacher-led classrooms and courses as well as in student-run extra-curricular activities. They state that "(t)his is testament to the flexibility of the MUN simulation framework and its suitability for delivery in a variety of contexts and at a wide range of learning levels".

It is argued here that reconciling Model United Nations courses and international conference preparation with the objectives of global citizenship education (GCED) (Note 1) creates a powerful methodology for fostering civic awareness and addressing global issues, not only at universities, but also in high schools. In the meanwhile, MUN engages and involves students in experiential learning and practical activities.

MUN aligns with the three core dimensions of GCED and contributes to global citizenship objectives. The cognitive dimension entails knowledge and critical thinking: MUN courses teach students about global issues (e.g., climate change, human rights, inequality) through the lens of UN frameworks, treaties, and multilateral diplomacy. This builds knowledge of interconnectedness and interdependency. Students in their role of "delegates" analyse

country positions, historical contexts, and causes of problems, fostering critical thinking about local-global connections. "Conference participants are allocated specific roles as representatives of the UN member states or UN observer states/bodies" (Obendorf & Randerson, 2013, p. 351). MUN committees replicate real-world negotiations, helping learners grasp the challenges of global governance and power dynamics.

The socio-emotional dimension helps students to represent other countries, and this encourages empathy by requiring them to advocate for perspectives different from their own. The conferences bring together diverse participants, fostering respect for differences and a sense of shared humanity and promoting cross-cultural dialogue. The task of drafting resolutions with peers builds solidarity, since students negotiate competing interests to find common ground. The behavioural dimension accounts for responsible action: MUN trains students in public speaking, policy drafting, and persuasion and these can represent tools for civic engagement beyond the classroom, both in high school and universities. MUN training emphasises ethical negotiation and responsible leadership.

2. Theoretical Framework

This research is grounded in a theoretical framework that positions Model United Nations simulations as a powerful pedagogical tool for transformative student development. The study draws principally on the work of Coticchia, Calossi, and Cicchi (2020), with supporting insights from Jesuit and Endless (2018) and Zenuk-Nishide, Saito, McClelland, and Tatsuki (2017). Together, these scholars provide a sound theoretical structure built upon the core principles of active learning experiential learning and skill acquisition, which are essential for fostering real-world knowledge and enhancing the formative efficacy of student delegates. By participating as delegates, students undergo a formative process that enhances their capabilities, reshapes their perceptions, clarifies their career paths, and ultimately fosters an applicable knowledge of global affairs.

Coticchia, Calossi, and Cicchi (2020) analyse the impact of MUN on students' perceptions of relevant International Relations issue. They argue that simulations can be constructed around three core dimensions: skill acquisition, perceptual change, and career orientation. Their proposal posits that experiential learning, a pedagogical approach where students learn through direct experience and reflection, serves as the primary mechanism for these outcomes. The research is based on an original data set from a survey submitted to high school and university students who participated in MUN courses held in 2018. Their sample provides considerable variation in terms of age and level of education. The skill acquisition dimension is grounded in theories of active learning, which is particularly relevant for the present study. By simulating the complex environment of international diplomacy, MUN participation directly enhances practical and transferable skills. This includes substantive knowledge of IR, but more importantly, "soft skills" such as public speaking, negotiation, teamwork, and research. The simulation provides a realistic and challenging context that invites students to apply theoretical knowledge, solidifying their competencies and fostering their passion and interest towards the subjects at stake while understanding the complexities of negotiation. Coticchia *et al.* (2020) presents MUNs not merely as an academic exercise, but as a powerful experiential learning tool that transforms participants by simultaneously developing their capabilities, reshaping their understanding of world politics, and clarifying their professional career.

On the same line, Jesuit and Endless (2018) consider MUN as an ideal example of experiential and active learning pedagogy. MUN serves as the perfect concrete experience, immersing students in a simulated, real-world environment where they assume the roles of international diplomats. This immersion is not passive; it is the essence of active learning, which requires students to constantly engage in research, debate, negotiation, and collaborative problem-solving. In their study, they developed and administered a pre- and post-conference survey to participants in the 2007 American Model United Nations (AMUN). They were able to show that MUN offers not only surface learning, but also deep learning. The researchers provide systematic assessment of the learning outcomes associated with the simulations. They conclude that MUN endow students with meaningful learning opportunities and propose it as a learning activity and active experimentation that colleges and universities should continue to promote and enlarge. The power of simulations lies in their ability to transform students from passive recipients of knowledge into active co-creators of their learning experience.

Zenuk-Nishide, Saito, McClelland, and Tatsuki (2017) summarise the symposium contributions presented at the Asian Conference on Language Learning held in Kobe in 2017. The authors report about MUN experiences in Japan and relate about the positive effects of participation on learner self-efficacy. They comment on their experiences supporting student-delegates through the various stages of preparing for a MUN conference and describe the process of researching and writing an effective Position Paper. Their study also considers the efficacy of intensive workshops held over a four-month period in a flipped classroom and CLIL framework for a cohort of 28 university students. All the experiences described in the study underline that simulations build global citizenship, that is one of the benefits on MUN, along with learning, knowledge, and skill building. This occurs through the

acquisition of understanding in areas of social justice, diversity, sustainability and the mechanisms of peace and conflict. The MUN events are hosted by various universities in Japan since it is believed that this kind of simulation provide "an academic forum for the discussion of global concerns in a context that closely parallels the 'real world' of global policy meetings" (Zenuk-Nishide et al., 2017).

3. English for Diplomacy and Model United Nations in Italian Schools

MUN's process involves three main stages: **research**, **debate** and **reflection**. It fosters habits of critical engagement which, it is believed, can be applicable in both high schools and universities. Introducing English for Diplomacy and Model United Nations in Italian schools significantly enhances students' linguistic proficiency, critical thinking, and global citizenship awareness.

This study draws from two workshops conducted in two Sardinian schools (Italy)—*Istituto Salesiano Don Bosco* (Cagliari, December 20th, 2017) and *Convitto Nazionale Canopoleno* (Sassari, January 18th, 2018), in collaboration with the Italian Diplomatic Academy (*Accademia Italiana per la Formazione e gli Alti Studi Internazionali*) (Note 2), an NGO affiliated with the United Nations Department of Global Communications (DPI).

The workshops employed an immersive, student-centred approach, integrating Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) methodology and Project-Based Learning (PBL), along with the exploration of subjects such as history, law, geography, and civics, to simultaneously develop diplomatic English skills and subject-matter expertise. Key focus areas were diplomatic language (formal expressions and register, negotiations techniques and persuasive speech); international relations vocabulary (terminology related to treaties, alliances, and contemporary global challenges); public speaking and debate (how to prepare structured arguments, how to use rhetoric), and, finally, writing diplomatic texts (resolutions, position papers, and formal speeches). The various teaching methods that were utilised entailed the building of tailor-made materials along with the manipulation and adaptation of role-playing diplomatic scenarios (e.g., UN debates, bilateral negotiations on various topics, such as climate change and security crisis). The analysis of real, authentic UN speeches and documents, through the use of videos and media texts, enabled us to extract the useful specialised terminology and phraseology. Collaborative problem-solving tasks were proposed to reinforce intercultural communication and teamwork among the students.

The present analysis is specifically concerned with the nature of authentic materials and the construction of tailor-made activities utilised in the workshop sessions which allow for a hands-on experience and active learning. It explicitly does not report on the assessment of learning outcomes or the efficacy of the pedagogical activities, as these elements fall outside its defined scope. This limitation is principally due to the design of the workshops as modest, initial pilot events. With cohorts of fewer than ten students in both Cagliari and Sassari, the project operated on a scale that precluded relevant statistical analysis. Mechanisms for evaluation, such as comparative pre- and post-conference surveys designed to measure perceived preparedness (and suggested by other studies in the field) were not administered. For these reasons, the author abstains from offering any conclusive judgment regarding student satisfaction or the workshops' overall perceived utility.

4. What Is Diplomacy?

The workshops started with a definition of diplomacy as both the art and practice of conducting negotiations between nations and the skill in handling affairs, or even an awkward situation, with "diplomacy", without arousing hostility. From the beginning, students learnt that diplomacy can be defined as the art of conducting negotiations between representatives of states. It usually refers to international diplomacy, the conduct of international relations through the intercession of professional diplomats with regard to a full range of topical issues. International treaties are usually negotiated by diplomats.

The use of language in diplomatic contexts is of paramount importance, given that language does not merely serve as a rudimentary instrument for the conveyance of thoughts or a mere medium for communication. "…(L)anguage is not a simple tool, vehicle for transmission of thoughts, or instrument of communication, but very often the very essence of the diplomatic vocation" (Stanko, 2001, p. 39). Indeed, since time immemorial, the initial emissaries have been required to be erudite individuals, articulate and versed in multiple languages. Historically, there have been instances where a particular language, or languages, have functioned as a common, widely-used medium of interstate communication, albeit usually confined to specific geographic regions or political groupings of countries. Such a role was played by Assyrian-Babilonian, literary Chinese, Greek, Latin, Arabic, Turkish, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Italian, Dutch, German, French, and more recently, English. The historical fact that this role has been assumed successively by a multitude of languages serves to demonstrate that linguistic or semantic factors do not constitute the primary determinate. The preponderance of a particular language in diplomatic contexts can be attributed to the multifaceted influences of political, strategic, economic, cultural, and other forms of domination exerted by one power over another in the context of international relations (Stanko, 2001, pp. 39–47). The

employment of language and the selection of appropriate vocabulary are of paramount importance in the context of diplomacy. Delegates who do not speak one of the official or working languages proficiently may be reluctant to participate verbally or may miss the optimal moment to do so. Consequently, they significantly diminish the contributions of their own delegation and likely diminish the potential value of the final outcome of the meeting (Stanko, 2001, pp. 39–47). To say it with Jaber, "Diplomatic language is the child of the language of communication. Its formalisation into special patterns, with a chosen cadence and sometimes repetitive pattern is, and has been designed to oil the joints of relationships between people and nations" (Jaber, 2001, p. 50).

5. What is *Model United Nations*?

The history of the Model United Nations started with a MUN simulation in March 1947, less than 18 months after the UN itself came into existence on 24th October 1945. The MUN simulation today is a global phenomenon, delivered at almost all levels of teaching and learning (Obendorf & Randerson, 2013, p. 351).

MUN is an immersive academic simulation that offers high school and university students a platform to explore diplomacy, multilateral negotiation, and the inner workings of international relations through the lens of the United Nations system. Based on role-playing exercises, MUN promotes essential 21st-century skills, including research, persuasive public speaking, debate, and formal writing. It simultaneously fosters critical analysis, collaborative problem-solving, and proper leadership.

In the MUN experience, participants are referred to as delegates. They are assigned to fake or mock UN committees, and they have the task of representing the policies and perspectives of a specific member state on a crucial and current topic. Before taking active part in the conferences, delegates carry out specific research, investigate geopolitical contexts, seek historical precedents to compare them to current foreign policy stances and hot topics. The aim is to develop solid and well-substantiated positions on their committee's agenda issues. During the actual debates, delegates are required to articulate their country's stance and attitude towards the issue at stake in a persuasive manner, negotiate with allies and opponents, and draft possible resolutions. In doing that, they must use language effectively to reflect compromise, negotiation and challenge, while simultaneously promoting their country's interests. Mock conferences generally close with competitive recognition of outstanding delegates: the best can sometimes receive awards for exceptional diplomacy, rhetorical skills, or consensus-building. The results are of course the blending of individual excellence and performance with effective teamwork.

The MUN experience connects a deeper understanding of global governance, decent leadership, and the difficulties of international cooperation. Students who participate are empowered, linguistically speaking, but are also given support and encouragement to become engaged and informed citizens.

6. Research Stage: The Country You Represent

The students in a MUN simulation are taught to carry out research on the country they represent as delegates. The following are the key points they should investigate during the research stage:

- Geography: size, description, location, natural resources, neighbouring states;
- History: general history, present-day foreign policy;
- People and culture: population density and growth rate, life expectancy, standard of living, literacy rate, majority and minority components, religions, languages spoken, customs and traditions;
- Government: system of government, leaders, political parties, role in international politics;
- Foreign policy and international relations: allies, blocs, critical foreign policy concerns (e.g. trade, territorial disputes), membership and activity in international organizations (e.g. the UN);
- Development: development status, environment (problems, innovations);
- Economic system, currency, growth rate;
- Major cities, infrastructures;
- Natural resources, energy sources, agricultural products, industries;
- Differences between GNP and GDP;
- Trade, major exports/imports, trade blocs/associations;
- Military: military organization, money spent on defence, major weapons, nuclear weapons;
- Conflicts/Issues: problems that affect the nation, ethnic/cultural issues, minorities, refugee problems, major conflicts in the past and in the present;

- Current affairs: research into recent articles about the country.

7. The Debate Stage

In the second stage, the students are prepared for debate. After the first introductory task focused on research, some practical activities are introduced such as the matching tasks (Tables 1 and 2) regarding the people who participate in a MUN conference, to allow students to familiarise themselves with the formal context.

Table 1. Matching. The people in a MUN conference (1)

1) Committee	a) Member of the dais who moderates debates, keeps time, rules on points and motions.
2) Dais	b) A group of people elected or appointed to perform some functions, such as to investigate a particular matter.
3) Chair or Moderator	c) Member of the dais who oversees the creation of working papers and resolutions.
4) Director	d) Member of the dais who keeps the speakers' list and takes the roll call.
5) Rapporteur	e) The group of people (high school or college students) in charge of a Model UN committee. It includes a Chair, a Director and a Rapporteur.

Table 2. Matching. The people in a MUN conference (2)

1) Delegate	a) A delegate in a Model UN Committee that has volunteered to pass notes from one delegate to another, or from a delegate to the dais.
2) Page	
3) The floor	b) The part of a legislative chamber, meeting room, etc., where the members sit, and from which they speak.
	c) A student acting as a representative of a member state or observer in all committees in a Model UN conference. They are usually all from the same school.

Another matching task (Table 3) lets students focus on the objects present in the conference room and uses pictures and definitions of the visuals.

Table 3. Objects in a MUN conference room

1) **dais**: the raised platform on which the chair traditionally sits.	a)
2) **gavel**: shaped like a small wooden hammer, it is the tool used by the Chair to keep order during debates. At the end of a committee, it is given to the best delegate as an award.	b)
3) **placard**: a piece of cardboard with a country's name on it. It is raised in the air by delegates when they want to signal to the Chair that they want to speak.	c)

The simulation begins!

Rules of Procedure: roll call

The roll call is the first order of business in a Model UN committee. The Rapporteur reads aloud the names of each member state of the Committee. When a delegate's country's name is called, he or she may respond 'present' or 'present and voting'. A delegate responding 'present and voting' may not abstain on a substantive vote.

CHAIR: "***If there are no objections***, *we will bring the committee into formal session. If delegates please take their seats,* ***the rapporteur will begin roll call***".

RAPPORTEUR: "*Before we begin roll call, allow me to clarify between the two possible and appropriate responses when your state is called: 'present' and 'present and voting'. Delegates who identify their status as 'present and voting' are not permitted to abstain on any substantive vote while in this session of committee. Instead, these delegates must vote strictly in favour or in opposition to any motion before the committee.*"

DELEGATE: "***Honourable chair, fellow delegates, (Italy) is present and voting***".

Rules of Procedure: agenda

The agenda is the order in which the issues before a committee will be discussed. The first duty of a committee following the roll call is usually to set the agenda, choosing the order in which to address the topics.

CHAIR**:** "***Are there any motions on the floor at this time?*** *Seeing none, the first order of business before the committee is to set the agenda order. The topics on the committee agenda are A and B. If there are no objections from the committee, the chair will open the speakers' list to begin deliberations on setting the agenda. All those who would like to be placed on the speakers' list, please* ***raise your placards*** *until your State has been recognized*".

"*If additional members of the committee wish to be put upon the speakers' list, please* ***send a note forward to the dais*** *with an explanation in this regard*".

Rules of Procedure: speakers' list

The **SPEAKERS' LIST** is a list that determines the order in which delegates will speak. Whenever a new topic is opened for discussion, the Chair will create a speakers' list by asking all delegates wishing to speak to raise their placards and calling them one at a time. During debate, a delegate may indicate that he or she wishes to be added to the speakers' list by sending a note to the dais. A Speakers' List will be established for the purpose

of debate on the order of the agenda. After the chairperson has deemed that sufficient debate has taken place, delegates may begin making motions proposing an agenda (e.g. a motion to address Topic B first and Topic A second, or vice versa). If the chairperson accepts the motion, it will be put to an immediate vote. If a proposed order passes, debate on the agenda is over, and debate on the first topic begins. If the motion fails, debate on the agenda continues until another motion is made and passed.

SPEAKER'S TIME: generally, about 1 or 2 minutes.

DELEGATE: "*Honourable Chair, fellow delegates, Italy would like to move to set the speaker's time to 1 minute*."

If time remains…

DELEGATE: "*Italy yields its time to (the Chair or to another n*ation)."

RIGHT OF REPLY: A right to speak in reply to a previous speaker's comment, invoked when a delegate feels personally insulted by another's speech. Generally, it requires a written note to the Chair to be invoked:

DELEGATE: "*Right of Reply, Honourable Chair*".

Debate and caucus

The **flow of debate** is the order in which events proceed during a Model UN conference, and it accounts for the movement between formal and informal debate and the process of drafting, debating and voting on resolutions.

The **formal debate** is the standard type of debate at a Model UN conference, in which delegates speak for a certain time in an order based on a speakers' list, while **caucus**, meaning an informal debate, is an important part of the Model UN simulation because it provides an opportunity for delegates to collaborate, negotiate and formulate draft resolutions.

EXAMPLE OF A DEBATE

CHAIR: "*Are there any motions on the floor at this time?*" (France raises placard)

CHAIR: "*France, **to what point do you raise**?*"

FRANCE: "*Honourable Chair, fellow delegates, France would like **to move** for the suspension of the meeting for 20 minutes **for the purpose of** a caucus session/ **moves for** closure of debate/ adjournment of debate*"

CHAIR: "*Thank you delegate, **that motion is**:*

A) **out of order at this time**."

B) ***in order**. Are there any additional motions on the floor? Seeing none, a motion for the suspension of the meeting for 20 minutes for the purpose of caucus session **has been introduced**. Is there any objection to this motion*?"

A) No placards.

CHAIR: "*The motion for the suspension of the meeting for 20 minutes for the purpose of caucus session passes*."

B) The UK raises its placard in objection.

CHAIR: "*Seeing objection, **we will move to a vote**. The motion is decided by a **simple majority** of the committee and no debate is required. All those in favour of the motion to suspend the meeting for a period of twenty minutes, please raise your placards*".

The students are introduced to the difference between the moderated Caucus and the unmoderated Caucus.

1) Moderated Caucus: A type of caucus in which delegates remain seated, and the Chair calls on them one at a time to speak for a certain period of time, enabling a freer exchange of opinions. Typically, delegates who are interested in speaking will raise their placards up and the Chair will call on them to speak one at a time. In order to move into a moderated caucus, the motion must include the overall speaking time, the time per speaker, and the sub-issue to be discussed.

DELEGATE: "*Italy moves for a 5-minute moderated caucus with 30 second speaking time per delegate for the purpose of discussing solutions to women's rights*".

2) Unmoderated Caucus, also called **Informal Caucus** or **Lobbying Sessions,** is a type of caucus in which delegates leave their seats to go and talk to others freely and informally. It enables the free sharing of ideas. It is frequently used to sort countries into **blocs** and to write working papers and draft resolutions. This is usually when delegates find allies and work on draft resolutions. In order to move into an unmoderated caucus, the motion must include the overall caucus time and preferably the purpose of the unmoderated caucus.

DELEGATE: "*Italy moves for an unmoderated caucus for 10 minutes to complete draft resolutions*".

Motions and points

The **motion** is a request made by a delegate that the committee as a whole does something. Some motions might be to go into a caucus, to adjourn, to introduce a draft resolution, to suspend or to close the debate.

A point is a request raised by a delegate for information or for an action relating to that delegate. Examples include a point of order, a point of inquiry, and a point of personal privilege. The **point of inquiry**: used when a delegate has a question about something that is not clearly understood in committee. Students are taught to use this to ask a question if they do not understand a term or what is going on in committee. The **point of personal privilege** is used when a delegate experiences personal discomfort that hinders their ability to participate in committee. Examples can be the temperature of the room, distractions during committee, impossibility to hear another delegate. Finally, the **point of order** is used when a delegate believes that there was a mistake made regarding the rules of procedure.

8. The Reflection Stage: The Aim of the Debate

The debate's final objective is to create a **written statement** of aims, goals, and a means of effective action which takes the name of **RESOLUTION.** This implies several steps of reflection and drafting. The written document is then the result of compromise and consensus built during debate and caucus. The first draft undergoes a continuous process of revision, where the choice of words is essential and the need for precision and clarity is paramount. The various documents produced by the student delegates include a position paper, a working paper, a draft resolution and, finally, a resolution.

The position paper demands preliminary research which is necessary to determine whether evidence is available to back up a delegate's stance. Students are invited to (and guided) to search a few reputable sites to find professional studies and statistics, in order to collect a variety of sources, to include an expert's opinion and personal experience that can add an emotional appeal to the topic. Students are guided through the outline provided in Figure 1.

Outline for a position paper

A position paper might be arranged in the following format:

- Introduce your topic with a little background information.
- Build up to your thesis sentence which asserts your position.
- List possible objections to your position.
- Support and acknowledge the opposing points.
- Summarise your argument and restate your position.

Tips.

When you write a position paper, you should write with confidence. In this paper you want to state your opinion with authority. Be assertive. State your points and back them up with evidence.

Adapted from: https://www.thoughtco.com/how-to-write-a-position-paper-1857251

Figure 1. Outline for a position paper

From working papers to resolutions

The working paper (or **rough draft**) contains general ideas and is inevitably constantly changing. The people working on the working paper have different roles: the sponsors are the endorsers and proponents of all the content in the resolution, while the signatories are the delegates of those states who want a draft resolution to be discussed. By signing a resolution, the delegates indicate that they believe that the resolution deserves debate before the full committee. When approved by the board it becomes a **draft resolution.** If the draft resolution is voted by the majority of the voters **(to pass/to fail)**, it becomes a **RESOLUTION** that is a plan of action to solve a specific problem. Again, students are guided and trained in the drafting of a resolution which must contain three essential parts:

1) HEADER, which includes the committee's name, topic, list of sponsors;

2) PREAMBULATORY CLAUSES in order to describe the committee's intent and motivation;

3) OPERATIVE CLAUSES which contain the action of the resolution.

A sample resolution is provided in Figure 2.

The worksheets following this discussion were submitted to students after the preliminary plenary sessions giving information and instructions on how to proceed in a MUN conference. Students were invited to work in pairs.

Worksheet 1

MODEL UN VOCABULARY

1) Read the definitions and provide the right word. Work in pairs.

1. The tool shaped like a small wooden hammer that the Chair uses to keep order during the debate.	
2. The group of people, usually high school or college students, in charge of a Model UN committee. It generally consists of a Chair, a Director and a Rapporteur.	
3. A cardboard sign that identifies the country you represent.	
4. The calling of a list of names for checking attendance at the beginning of a Model UN session.	
5. A person authorized to act as representative for a country.	
6. Answer given to the roll call when a delegate is present.	
7. Answer given to the roll call when a delegate is present and wishes to vote.	
8. A list, plan, outline of things to be discussed or voted upon.	
9. A list that determines the order in which delegates will speak.	
10. A discussion involving opposing viewpoints.	

2) Matching. Match the words in column A with the definitions in column B.

A	B
1. Position paper	a. Countries that would like to see a certain draft resolution debated.
2. Sponsors	b. A group of nations.
3. Signatories	c. A paper that helps delegates to organize their ideas and represent a country's policy.
4. Moderated caucus	d. An early version of a resolution that may be discussed and revised.
5. Resolution	e. Informal meeting in which delegates discuss their country's positions and ideas for draft resolutions.
6. Bloc	f. The final result of discussion, writing and negotiation for addressing a specific issue.
7. Draft resolution	g. Countries that are the main authors of Model UN resolutions.
8. Formal debate	h. When delegates share their views with the entire committee.
9. Unmoderated caucus	i. A mixture of both formal and informal debate.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Source: Adapted from the 2006 UNA-USA Model United Nations Conference Advisors Guide

Worksheet 2

POINTS AND MOTIONS-WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Match the description of the action in column A with the words you would say in column B.

Be careful: two actions in the list can be expressed in two different ways.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION	WHAT DO YOU SAY?
1. The delegate has a question regarding the rules of procedure.	a) Honourable Chair, (Country name) yields to Point of Information.
2. Delegate wishes to adjourn the meeting until next session (lunch or dinner).	b) Honourable Chair, (Country name) moves to table the topic of …(topic) to be discussed at a later time.
3. Delegate wishes to yield time to points of information or questions from other delegates about the speech.	c) Honourable Chair, (Country name) has a Point of Information for the delegate.
4. Delegate wishes to tell the chair about a physical discomfort he/she is experiencing (inability to hear, the room is too hot).	d) Honourable Chair, (Country name) moves to suspend the meeting for the purpose of a moderated caucus to discuss… (topic) for 25 minutes, with a minute speaking time.
5. Delegate wishes to suspend debate in order for a moderated or unmoderated caucus. The purpose and the length of the suspension need to be stated.	e) Honourable Chair, (Country name) has a Point of Inquiry.
6. Delegate wishes to end the debate on the topic. This topic can be returned to at a later time.	f) Honourable Chair, (Country name) moves for Closure of Debate on this topic.
7. A delegate has just finished his/her speech. Another delegate would like to ask him/her a question about the speech.	g) Honourable Chair, (Country Name) moves to suspend debate for the purpose of lunch/dinner.
8. Delegate wishes to close the debate and move to voting.	h) Honourable Chair, (Country name) moves to suspend the meeting for an unmoderated caucus for 20 minutes.
	i) Honourable Chair, (Country name) is open to questions.
	j) Honourable Chair, (Country name) has a Point of Personal Privilege: we cannot hear the speaker; the room is too hot…

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Adapted from the 2006 UNA-USA Model United Nations Conference Advisors Guide

Worksheet 3
Watching a video-GAP FILLING

1) **Fill in the gaps with the right words or expressions.**

to pass notes	countries	Chair	roll call	participants
representatives	right to speak	dais	role	working papers

Welcome to the basic Model UN

Chapter 1-Who is who?

In this chapter we will have a look at the role of individual **1)** _____ in a Model UN simulation. Before we begin, however, we must first set the stage for our presentation. Imagine this line to represent a division of participants into two dissimilar groups. The largest of the two groups are Delegates of various **2)**_____ or international organizations. The smallest group can consist of one, two, three or more people and it is the so-called **3)** _____**.**

We will begin by looking at the **4)** _____ of the dais and then we will move to look at the special **5)** _____ of the delegates.

Our ideal dais consists of three people: a Rapporteur, a **6)** _____ and a Director.

1) The Rapporteur is responsible for **7)** _____**,** for keeping the speakers' list and for counting during voting procedure;

2) The Chair is responsible for keeping track of speakers' time and, most importantly, hands and takes away a delegate's **8)** _____;

3) The Director is responsible for **9)** _____ and draft resolutions coming in from the delegates.

Among delegates there is only one kind of specialisation: from among their own, delegates may elect one or several **10)** _____ between delegates. These are the so-called pages.

2) **Fill in the gaps with the right words or expressions.**

in favour	topic	agenda	unmoderated	procedural
Committee	abstain	substantial	present and voting	removed

Chapter 2-A typical session

The session begins with the Director making a roll call. The roll calls will be conducted by the Rapporteur. In the roll call, delegates may state whether their country is present or **1)** _____**.** Should they announce themselves as present and voting, they cannot **2)** _____ from substantial matters.

Next the delegate from Russia will motion to set the **3)** _____ order. As this is in order at this time, delegates can now vote upon it. Delegates either vote **4)** _____ or opposed, depending on their preference. As this is a procedural vote they may not abstain. This motion clearly passes.

The speakers' list is then established for the new **5)** _____. This is done by member states submitting their name to the Rapporteur who compiles them into a list and puts this list up for everyone to see.

The Chair will hand the right to speak to the various countries in order of the speakers' list. A country is then **6)** _____ from the speakers' list. However, Austria will be out of luck this time as Russia motions for a caucus. The Director approves of this motion and therefore it is now being voted upon. Austria is obviously opposed, while the rest of the **7)** _____ appears to be in favour. This

motion clearly passes.

We are now in an unmoderated caucus. Delegates are able to walk around freely, or leave the room, they may talk to one another for negotiations or have a cup of coffee. After the amount of time specified in the motion has elapsed, we will return to formal session.

We are now back in formal session. During the **8)** _____ caucus, two working papers were produced which are now being sent to the Director. The Director will check them for style and grammar and send them back if they are insufficient. Should they meet the requirements, the Director may approve of them. Luckily, one of the working papers has found the approval of the Director. It is now being introduced as Working Paper 1.1 and distributed to all participants. Usually, we will now continue with the general speakers' list. However, there's a motion from China to move to immediate voting procedure. This is in order and therefore put to a vote.

Again for a **9)** _____ vote delegates may vote in favour or opposed but not abstain. This time it is unanimous, however. This motion clearly passes.

We are now in voting procedure. Because of this, delegates may not enter or leave the room. Also, only a limited number of motions is in order. As a motion is put to a vote, this will be **10)** _____ therefore delegates may vote opposed, or in favour, or they may abstain. As this motion passes, our session ends with the passage of the draft resolution.

3) Fill in the gaps with the right word or expressions.

violations	undiplomatic	symbols	integrity	impolite
rude	Voting Procedure	delegations	behaviour	conference

Chapter 3-What to avoid

Violating the dress code: Delegates not adhering to the dress code or displaying national **1)** _____ may be removed from the room by the Director until they get changed.

Not speaking English: Speaking a language other than English during a Model UN session is considered extremely **2)** _____ as most of the participants can't understand you; we, therefore, ask you to refrain from such **3)** _____**.**

Interrupting other speakers: When the delegate holds the floor it is considered extremely **4)** _____ to interrupt him with a speech, a motion or a point. Please refrain from doing so.

Entering or leaving during **5)** _____: Under no circumstances, short of medical emergency, is anyone allowed to enter or leave the room during voting procedure, regardless of the reasons.

Disrespectful behaviour: Insulting members of other **6)** _____ or getting into fights is considered extremely **7)** _____**.** This rule also applies to messages to the dais.

Sexual harassment: This most extreme form of improper behaviour will not only ruin the fun for everyone but also lead to the perpetrator being expelled from the **8)** _____ and potentially facing criminal charges.

Right of reply: Delegates possess the defence against some minor **9)** _____**,** the so-called right of reply. Should your personal or national **10)** _____ be severely attacked you may send a right of reply in writing to the Rapporteur. If the Director approves it, you will be given the chance to read it out.

Created with and adapted from:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=268ROcmJjLU- **Model United Nations Overview**

SAMPLE RESOLUTION

General Assembly Third Committee

 Sponsors: United States, Austria and Italy

 Signatories: Greece, Tajikistan, Japan, Canada, Mali, the Netherlands and Gabon

 Topic: "Strengthening UN coordination of humanitarian assistance in complex emergencies"

 The General Assembly,

<u>Reminding</u> all nations of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which recognizes the inherent dignity, equality and inalienable rights of all global citizens,

<u>Reaffirming</u> its Resolution 33/1996 of 25 July 1996, which encourages Governments to work with UN bodies aimed at improving the coordination and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance,

<u>Noting</u> with satisfaction the past efforts of various relevant UN bodies and nongovernmental organizations,

<u>Stressing</u> the fact that the United Nations faces significant financial obstacles and is in need of reform, particularly in the humanitarian realm, it:

1. <u>Encourages</u> all relevant agencies of the United Nations to collaborate more closely with countries at the grassroots level to enhance the carrying out of relief efforts;

2. <u>Urges</u> member states to comply with the goals of the UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs to streamline efforts of humanitarian aid;

3. <u>Requests</u> that all nations develop rapid deployment forces to better enhance the coordination of relief efforts of humanitarian assistance in complex emergencies;

4. <u>Calls</u> for the development of a United Nations Trust Fund that encourages voluntary donations from the private transnational sector to aid in funding the implementation of rapid deployment forces;

5. <u>Stresses</u> the continuing need for impartial and objective information on the political, economic and social situations and events of all countries;

6. <u>Calls</u> upon states to respond quickly and generously to consolidated appeals for humanitarian assistance;

7. <u>Requests</u> the expansion of preventive actions and assurance of post-conflict assistance through reconstruction and development.

Source:

http://www.unausa.org/global-classrooms-model-un/how-to-participate/model-un-preparation/resolutions/sample-resolution

Figure 2. Sample resolution

9. Conclusions

This analysis focused solely on describing the *design* of the workshop—specifically the authentic materials and tailor-made activities used for hands-on learning. It explicitly does not evaluate the workshop's effectiveness, learning outcomes, student satisfaction, or perceived utility, as its small pilot scale prevented any statistical measurement or assessment.

The study shows how taking part in the MUN training course improves students' English fluency both in academic and formal language, helps develop critical thinking and negotiation skills, boosts the learners' confidence in public speaking, and most importantly, encourages global citizenship and cultural awareness. The training course is often offered (or integrated as an elective course) in Italian schools, especially *Licei Linguistici* or international high schools. It is believed that the tailor-made activities presented in this study are also well applicable to university courses, especially in Political Sciences or International Relations, whose students seem to be the major beneficiaries in other countries, according to some works cited here. As an outcome, learners are endowed to translate awareness into action, whether through activism or even everyday choices aligned with sustainability, human rights, and justice.

The described MUN workshops, with their core pillars of authentic materials and tailor-made, hands-on activities, possess a highly adaptable pedagogical structure. It is believed that their value extends far beyond the Italian *Liceo* or university contexts. It can be concluded that they can be adapted to different educational settings, focusing on the key themes of intercultural competence, experiential learning, and civic education.

References

Coticchia, F., Calossi, E., & Cicchi, L. (2020). A reality check for students? How participating to the Model United Nations influences skills, IR perceptions, and perspectives on future career. *Politics*, *40*(2), 245–261. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263395719852238

How to MUN – Basic Debate Rules. (n.d.). *Model United Nations Overview*. Retrieved August, 2025, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=268ROcmJjLU

Jaber Kamel, S. A. (2001). Language and Diplomacy, in Language and Diplomacy. In K. Jovan & S. Hanna (Eds.), *Diplo Projects, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, University of Malta* (pp. 49–54).

Jesuit David, K., & Endless, B. (2018). Model United Nations and Experiential Learning: An Assessment of Changes in Knowledge and Attitudes. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research*, *9*(4), 198–213.

Kabdesov Kenzhekhan, T. (2022). *Model of United Nations and its impact on the student's skills development*. Sagadyev Readings 2022, New Economic Policy: Realities and Prospects, International Scientific Conference.

McIntosh, D. (2001). The Uses and Limits of the model United Nations in an International Relations Classroom. *International Studies Perspectives*, *2*, 269–280. https://doi.org/10.1111/1528-3577.00057

Model United Nations Overview. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHNw2lDRY1E

Muldoon James, P. (1995). The Model United Nations Revisited. *Simulation and Gaming*, *26*(1), 27–35. https://doi.org/10.1177/1046878195261003

Oberndorf, S., & Randerson, C. (2013). Teaching and Training. Evaluating the Model United Nations: diplomatic simulation as assessed undergraduate coursework. *European Political Science*, *12*, 350–364. https://doi.org/10.1057/eps.2013.13

Stanko, N. (2001). Use of Language in Diplomacy, in Language and Diplomacy. In K. Jovan & S. Hanna (Eds.), *Diplo Foundation, Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies, University of Malta* (pp. 39–47).

Taylor, K. (2013). Simulations Inside and Outside the IR Classroom: A Comparative Analysis. *International Studies Perspectives*, *14*, 134–149. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1528-3585.2012.00477.x

The 2006 UNA-USA Model United Nations Conference Advisors Guide.

Useful Websites. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://bigmun.dk/delegate-info/resolutions-position-papers.html; https://sites.google.com/site/brentwoodmodelunitednations/home; http://www.unausa.org/global-classrooms-model-un/how-to-participate/model-un-preparation/caucusing; https://it.readkong.com/page/progetti-m-u-n-scuola-italiana-di-atene-8448136; https://www.munprep.org/unlocking-your-students-potential-through-model-un/

Useful videos. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SMmb3IneV44

Zenuk-Nishide, L., Saito, S., McClelland, N., & Tatsuki, D. (2017). *Developing Global Leadership Skills with Model United Nations* (MUN). The Asian Conference on Language Learning 2017 Official Conference Proceedings, iafor, The International Academic Forum.

Notes

Note 1. Global Citizenship Education TOPICS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization gced@unesco.org and http://www.unesco.org/new/en/global-citizenship-education. Global citizenship education aims to be transformative, building the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to enable learners to contribute to a more inclusive, just and peaceful world. This publication, titled Global Citizenship Education: Topics and learning objectives, is the first pedagogical guidance from UNESCO on Global Citizenship Education. It presents suggestions for translating Global Citizenship Education concepts into practical and age-specific topics and learning objectives in a way that allows for adaptation to local contexts. It is intended as a resource for educators, curriculum developers, trainers, as well as policy-makers, but it will also be useful for other education stakeholders working in non-formal and informal settings.

Note 2. IDA is a higher education institution affiliated with the United Nations Academic Impact in New York and works in direct partnership with the UN Department of Global Communications. Its role involves promoting and raising awareness of UN initiatives and programs, with a focus on academia and civil society. https://www.italiandiplomaticacademy.org/

Copyrights