



UNCSW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TOPIC A:

EFFECTS OF LANGUAGE ON PERCEPTIONS OF GENDER

Language is the air we breathe—invisibly, it inhabits every moment of the human experience. Ironically, the implications of language are rarely discussed in a formal setting. This topic will do exactly that through the lens of gender identity. Subtle habits in language can inform a great deal of opinions and beliefs subconsciously, and by expanding this concept to an international scope the significance is truly highlighted. Gender is dealt with differently in several different languages. The well known Latin-based romance languages are gendered in nature, some nouns being female and some being male. On the other hand, languages such as Yoruba, spoken in Nigeria, have no gender at all even within pronouns. This topic will look at how gender appearing in different languages impacts equality internationally as well as how to effect change without crossing sovereignty and perpetuating colonialism.

We chose this topic for numerous reasons, but first and foremost because of how we believe that this could be impactful for you, the delegates. I personally have always been interested in grand topics such as language and metacognition, and I truly believe that it is something that every single person should take time to think about, research, and discuss in their lifetime. While this is not a topic the United Nations would likely discuss at an actual conference, we as a dais think that it is something that should be discussed on an international scale as we have a lot to learn from other languages and countries. Lastly, we wanted to choose a more theoretical topic without clear solutions to give you an opportunity to stray away from solutions that are common in Model United Nations conferences, and instead critically think about these complex topics together.

Along with the previously stated reasons, there is one large factor as to why this topic is important to discuss. Language is a powerful tool, and if we let it, it can be very destructive. On the other hand, if we learn to understand language and adapt, we

could make social change that has never been seen before. There is a lot more that goes into social, political, economic, or environmental change than what meets the eye, and this is a big part of it. The other side of this is that you will better be able to understand problems through language; this could be using the undertones in grammar rules to understand the biases that a country may hold in their nation's sociocultural beliefs, or it could relate to how biases are formed through language. Overall, language is a very important piece to the puzzle that is societal change.

As you read and research, there are a few things that you should keep in mind. This topic is complicated and needs to be addressed on the individual, local, national, and international level, meaning that as you go through your research you should think about how you personally use language, and what those implications are as well as looking at community, national, and international trends. In this topic, the human inability to be unbiased in research will actually help you as your own experience is valuable, too. Another important thing to consider while you complete your research is that despite the good that the United Nations has done, it is a flawed organization full of colonial and oppressive ideals. Please think about how to negate these patterns and whether your solutions are contributing to colonialism or fighting against it. Lastly, while this conference takes place in English and will naturally have an American and Euro-Centric context, try your best to truly understand how the country that you are representing communicates and how that affects them socially. While it will not be easy, we believe in all of you, and if you let it, this topic can be extremely impactful to you personally.



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TOPIC B:

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND THE LEGAL INDEPENDENCE OF WOMEN

Over one in three women are abused in their lifetime. One in four men are estimated to have used violence against their partner in their lifetime. It is not just important, but necessary to recognize that domestic violence is disproportionately committed by men; it is equally as important to recognize that the patriarchy negatively affects men, as well. Women are not the only demographic of people to face domestic violence, assault, or abuse, but seeing that this is the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, the focus of this topic will be abuse inflicted on women. This is an issue that spans nations and changes the lives of people across the world. While domestic violence may seem like a simple concept initially, there are actually several factors that lead to the result of abuse, and similarly to the previous topic, this will continue to take a very sociocultural lens. The difference, however, is that in this topic, there will be a focus on the legal independence of women and how their legal rights affect the likelihood of abuse. There are several laws ranging from mandatory reporting to abortion laws that may perpetuate or halt the rates of abuse in a nation. This topic will dive into what makes laws effective and what makes women safer in their homes.

In a modern day environment in which people are increasingly at their homes due to online work, school, and COVID-19, it is an extremely relevant issue that needs to be addressed. Additionally, this is an important issue to discuss because it is both highly stigmatized and difficult to address because of the amalgamation of social, political, cultural, economic, and environmental factors that lead into it. This topic is also an opportunity to work on centering female voices while balancing that with male accountability. As you research, you may find articles and statistics that discuss how many women are victims of domestic violence: in my experience it is far more rare to find articles that mention how many men abuse women. This topic is a chance

for you to change that narrative and focus both on holding the perpetrator accountable while also seeing to the needs of survivors of domestic violence internationally.

By beginning to understand the underlying factors that play into the legal rights regarding domestic violence against women (DVAW), we enable ourselves to become both better delegates and advocates for the cause. The topic of domestic violence is often discussed in the media through mostly morality and ethics. By digging deeper into the technicalities of the DVAW, and then taking it a step further to see what factors affect these laws for each country, we can build better tailored solutions and methods for advocacy that fit the underlying issues for each region. Without understanding the complexities of DVAW, and in specific the legal rights, we prevent ourselves from improving it, and rather feed into a repetitive cycle of blame and misinformation. Having a holistic approach can ensure that justice and prevention of DVAW around the world is actually carried out through personalized solutions for each country.

There are a few things that we recommend when researching this topic. First, if the country that you are representing has not supported women in the past, that is valuable information. We can not stress that enough. Research into why this is the case. Are there cultural or societal reasons? Do laws not effectively protect women? Are their underlying religious reasons? We do not want you to sugarcoat the problem and talk about what your country has done even though it has been ineffective. Instead, discuss what made it ineffective. If we can not address the fact that there are problems, then there is no way to find solutions. Of course, critically think about the topic and come up with solutions that are addressing the underlying cultural perspectives having to do with legal rights and legislation. We wish you the best of luck delegates!



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