Professional statement

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I am currently teaching Japanese part-time at the University of Tennessee. This valuable experience has allowed me to directly help students enjoy the joy of learning a new language and culture and hone my skills as an educator. My goal is to obtain a master's degree in instructional technology to improve the quality of education further and provide more effective teaching methods for undergraduate students.

My area of expertise in educational technology

I aim to maximize the learning effects of learners by utilizing the knowledge I have learned in the master's program in Instructional Technology and introducing the latest educational theories and techniques in Japanese language education. Department of World Languages and Cultures' Japanese language program at the University of Tennessee is designed to increase the number of undergraduate students minoring in Japanese. This program will establish a new Japanese language major in the fall of 2024 to further expand the Japanese language education provided. To achieve that goal, I would like first to become part of a team (full-time instructor) that considers student needs and efficiency in a Japanese language program that includes four years of language courses. Specifically, I support the language acquisition process using interactive learning platforms and tools, both online and offline. In addition, in curriculum development, I would like to provide teaching materials that emphasize practicality and relevance so that students can acquire practical Japanese language skills that can be used in the real world.

As a full-time instructor, I understand my role extends beyond teaching a language. It is about providing customized support to each student's learning challenges, facilitating their learning process and growth. I am dedicated to improving my ability to accommodate students from diverse educational backgrounds and design educational plans tailored to their individual needs. I believe that by supporting students inside and outside the classroom, I can help them develop the communication and critical thinking skills they need as members of society. This commitment to student success is at the core of my teaching philosophy.

In the future, I will collaborate with other faculty and staff to improve the program's quality, expand student recruitment, and promote participation in broader educational initiatives to contribute to developing the Japanese language program and the department. I believe that a master's degree in Instructional Technology will equip me with new skills and knowledge to achieve these goals.

My views on Instructional Design and Technology (IDT)

Advances in educational technology have revolutionized the way educators design learning experiences. At its core, instructional design is a process by which educators systematically address how to create effective educational curricula and learning environments. According to Reiser (2018), this field is "defined as a scientific approach to the development of instructional plans, including the selection of resources and methods necessary to help achieve educational goals."

The Association for Educational Communication Technology (AECT) standard, adopted in 2012, was born after a five-year development and vetting process. The standards include indicators such as learner diversity, collaborative practice, leadership, reflection on practice, theoretical foundations, and methods (AECT Standards, 2012). I am good at following directions and completing tasks, so this could be a metric that covers all competencies. I also like observing and analyzing learners' and other people's reactions to things, and I think this ability can be used in assessment. I am not good at creating something from scratch and often look for precedents, but I will continue to be conscious of increasing my creativity.

With the widespread use of digital media, incorporating ICT (information and communication technology) has become essential in educational practices. According to the AECT's 2008 definition, educational technology is "the research and ethical practice of promoting learning and improving performance through the use of appropriate technological processes and resources" (AECT, 2008). This definition focuses on how we leverage technology at each stage of education to achieve effective learning outcomes. In my educational pursuits, it is important to leverage these technologies to help learners learn at their own pace and build more profound knowledge. For example, a blended learning approach combines online resources with face-to-face interactions to increase learner engagement.

Furthermore, as Branch (2018) states, instructional design is a "student-centered process," and educators are responsible for designing a curriculum responsive to learners' needs. This philosophy is consistent with the approach I pursue in Japanese language education, emphasizing the importance of customized educational programs to maximize the abilities and interests of each learner. Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology advances are essential in enabling this personalized learning path. By using AI, patterns can be extracted from copious amounts of learning data, and based on that, instruction can be tailored to the learner's learning style and progress. Adaptive learning systems are essential for personalization (Muñoz J. L. et al., 2022). The system provides each learner with optimal learning resources and challenges through real-time feedback and learner behavior analysis. For example, if a learner struggles with a particular aspect of grammar, the system can help them understand by providing additional exercises or explanations. In my practice, I hope to explore how education powered by AI and adaptive technology can contribute to learner success. I believe using these technologies can significantly expand the breadth and depth of support I can provide as an educator and transform the quality of education.

References

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