

【研修報告】

An International Conference Report on The Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE) Conference October 23rd - 25th 2017 in Dubrovnik, Croatia

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The Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE) is a non-profit organization that contributes to the development of all levels of teacher education, and promotes scientific research and the dissemination of research results. Their 2017 conference, themed 'Changing Perspectives and Approaches in Contemporary Teaching' had a sub-theme of 'Building Networks in Education', a category which greatly appealed to my interest in developing The Japan Association for Nursing English Teaching (JANET 全国看護英語教育学会), a network for nursing English teachers in Japan which I co-founded in 2016.

My presentation involved explaining the origins and structure of JANET, while highlighting the various issues that we have had to address as a developing educational community. As stated in the conference submissions outline, "Networking in education includes ... the interconnection and joint communication of different institutions and communities aimed at improving various aspects of education. How can teachers embrace networking and build it to improve education?" This is exactly what we are hoping to achieve through the activities of JANET.

Background

Over the past decade, Japan has experienced considerable growth in the field of nursing education and almost all nursing colleges and universities include English in their curriculum. As a result, many tertiary institutions have hired English

teachers who are either inexperienced in teaching nursing English, or who are motivated enough to learn more about the subject, but are isolated from other English teachers working in similar contexts. It became clear to the author that there was a need for a collaborative community in which these nursing English teachers could exchange ideas and experiences, with a view to improving the quality of teaching, learning, and research in the field of nursing English education. In late 2016, the author and a colleague established the Japan Association for Nursing English Teaching (JANET) in order to address these issues and, by extension, promote and enhance the quality of nursing students' English language education.

Stages of Development

The possibility of creating a community such as JANET had been informally discussed at language teaching conferences in Japan over a number of years; a concrete plan was made to coordinate a nursing English roundtable at the 2016 JALT International language teachers' conference, providing an initial step in gathering like-minded supporters for the project. After discussions with attendees we could commit to the next stage, which involved creating two websites: a public 'portal' site to introduce the organization, and a private 'members only' site with a forum for discussion, links to nursing English articles and research papers, and other useful resources (eventually including an archive of the JANET journal and

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back numbers of our newsletter).

This stage also involved researching and learning from organizations with similar goals, among them The Japan Association for Medical English Education (JASMEE), The European Association for Language Teaching for Healthcare (EALTHY), and The Japan Association for Self-Access Learning (JASAL). We then began promoting JANET, by word of mouth, email, social media, and conference attendance, gradually recruiting volunteers and establishing a publications / editorial committee, and an executive committee whose members comprised of:

- Coordinator (responsible for maintaining overall continuity and providing general strategy and officer support)
- Membership Chair (responsible for member recruitment and general outreach)
- Program Chair (responsible for symposium planning and other conference-related activities)
- Publications Chairs (responsible for the formatting and dissemination of e-magazine, newsletters, and publicity materials)
- e-Magazine Editor (responsible for content in JANET's bi-annual e-Magazine)
- Newsletter Editor (responsible for assembling content for JANET's monthly newsletter)
- Webmaster (responsible for the maintenance of our websites) and
- Liaison Officers (responsible for establishing and promoting JANET's relationships with the Japanese Nursing Association, the Japan Association of Nursing Programs in Universities and JASMEE).

The final key stage in our development was to create a regular outlet for news, research and ideas related to nursing English teaching. We have achieved this by publishing a monthly e-mail newsletter, and an ISSN accredited bi-annual e-magazine - Nursing English Nexus - providing a record of JANET members' activities and an opportunity for members to share their experience and expertise.

Potential challenges

As well as actively promoting JANET as a

collaborative community, we also need to safeguard against potential issues that could restrict JANET's development. Among these we have identified and seek to avoid:

- An over-dependence on core officers - and the risk of officer burnout.
- Failure to maintain professional online presence and publications.
- Failure to generate traffic and participation in websites and newsletters.
- Failure to promote linguistic inclusivity. (While JANET operates primarily in English, we need to attract Japan-based teachers of nursing English, by providing as much bilingual content as possible, and by making all publications and conferences genuinely bilingual).
- Risk of losing momentum within the executive committee.

JANET charges no fees - and has no plans to introduce fee-based membership - so we recognize that the success of this venture will largely depend on how much genuine engagement we can generate among our members. Since holding our first conference (in Fukui, June 2018), many of these potential pitfalls were to some extent alleviated by being able to meet members face-to-face, and by recruiting volunteers to become involved with JANET at a more practical level. The conference proved to be a vital engine for development, and plans are already under way for future conferences to be held in Nagano (2019) and Iwate (2020).

Future directions

We are keen to support members' research activities and grant applications by bringing people together and providing resources, information, and materials. The founders and two members have recently been awarded a grant-in-aid from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science to carry out a comprehensive needs analysis of nursing English in Japan. This research will be undertaken with a view towards creating a national core curriculum for nursing English and, ultimately, the creation of a national English for Nursing Purposes (ENP) proficiency test. Ultimately we aim to

transition from being a volunteer-based organization to an officially recognized academic society that can provide recognized standards and generally help to improve the quality of nursing English teaching and learning in Japan.

Appreciation

The ATEE conference involved participants from a wide variety of teaching contexts, from schools and universities throughout Europe. Having the opportunity to visit and meet with such teachers

was a unique and invaluable experience, and I benefitted greatly from my interactions there. Discussions both in my presentation and in general open exchange provided a number of ideas for the further development of our professional community, and hopefully also provided a template for others to use in their efforts to create similar communities of practice. I would like to thank Japanese Red Cross Hiroshima College of Nursing for their generous support, without which my attendance at the conference would not have been possible.

