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**Book Review: Reflective Dialogue: Advising in Language Learning
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and Jo Mynard**

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Reflective Dialogue: Advising in Language Learning is a comprehensive guide on understanding the field of advising in language learning. Language educators who are interested in exploring how to facilitate learner autonomy can learn the A to Z of advising in language learning from this book. The book provides practical resources for improving advising skills, recruiting and training learning advisors, as well as researching about advising. Therefore, this book will be useful for new and experienced learning advisors who work with learners on a one-to-one basis and/or in classroom settings, as well as those who are involved in managing self-access centers.

The book is divided into four sections. In the first section, the authors correct a common misconception associated with the word “advising” by explaining that “advising in language learning is an intentional dialogue whose aim is for the learner to be able to reflect deeply, make connections, and take responsibility for his or her language learning” (p. 2). The authors consider that learning advisors have a vital role to promote learner’s awareness of the language learning process by engaging in “intentional reflective dialogue (IRD)” (p. 6) with the learners. The second section contains continuous sample dialogues between a learner and a learning advisor based on authors’ real cases with learners. There are 30 dialogues which exemplify how advising sessions proceed and what strategies and tools can be used in the process. The third section discusses how to promote learner autonomy through different modes of awareness raising and types of advising services. This section might be beneficial especially for those who are interested in starting advising services in their institutions. The last section of the volume introduces previously conducted advising research as well as possible research topics readers can explore.

In Chapter 1 ‘From Research to Implications: Introducing Advising’, the authors define IRD as “a conscious discourse with learners with the purpose of engaging them in transformation in learning” (p. 6). Learning advisors facilitate the process of learners restructuring their beliefs and assumptions through IRD and help them to reflect critically and

achieve transformatory learning. The authors call this type of advising in language learning as “Transformational Advising” (p. 9).

Transformational Advising begins with ‘Promoting Action’ which involves suggestion-giving for the purpose of solving problems. In the next phase, ‘Broadening Perspectives’, advisors ask questions to analyze themselves critically and to search for new perspectives. By the third phase, ‘Translating Awareness into Action’, learners are likely to be able to take more initiatives in their learning. Thus, the learning advisor’s role here is to support learners “in becoming more specific about [their] plan, based on what they have become aware of, so that it results in action and achievement” (p. 11). When learners reach the final phase ‘Assisting Transformation’, they have now achieved a transformatory level, being able to take charge of their learning. A learning advisor’s job at this stage is to facilitate learners’ reflection by asking questions about their entire learning process, helping them feel a sense of achievement and confidence.

It is interesting to note that the authors also describe how learners and learning advisors *both* grow throughout the learning trajectory. The authors suggest that the four segments; Getting Started, Going Deeper, Becoming Aware, and Transformation can be used not only to foster learner autonomy, but also in training learning advisors.

Chapter 1 comes with useful tables and appendices. For example, information on ‘The Learning Trajectory for Learners’ in Table 1.1 showcases learners’ characteristics, advising themes, and tools advisors can use for each of the four segments. Furthermore, Table 1.2 ‘The Learning Trajectory for Advisors’ indicates for each segment, learning advisors’ general characteristics, advisors’ roles, tools used, and suggested areas for training. Appendix 1.2 at the end of the chapter is worthwhile reading as it contains advising tools including varieties of surveys, logs, and activity sheets which facilitate learners’ awareness.

All in all, Chapter 1 lays the groundwork for readers to understand the fundamentals of Transformational Advising. Both the learner and the learning advisor trajectories are exemplified later in Chapter 2 with a series of dialogues between a learner and a learning advisor.

The second chapter ‘From Implications to Application: Advising in Practice’ is separated into two sections. Part 1 ‘Dialogues in Advising’ contains 30 example dialogues from the very first advising session to the very last session between a learner and a learning advisor. The themes of all 30 dialogues are listed in the table of contents. Reading them in order helps the reader understand how advising sessions develop and how a learner and a learning advisor continue to work together for a common goal. Part 2 ‘Training and

Development for Learning Advisors' illustrates the training exercises for learning advisors. Both Part 1 and Part 2 have the same four developmental phases: Getting started, Going Deeper, Becoming Aware and Transformation that were explained in Chapter 1.

The first segment in Part 1 'Getting started: Setting the Scene' contains dialogues 1-10 and shows how the first session can be conducted. The aim of the first session is "to get to know the learner, build rapport, find out the real 'problems', and agree on an actual task that learners can try from today" (p. 100). The authors note that it could take more than one session to achieve the goals of the first session.

The second segment 'Going Deeper: Moving Toward a Turning Point' contains dialogues 11-20 and exemplifies how the learners develop their awareness about their difficulties and successful experiences through several sessions. The learning advisor starts to focus more on supporting the learners to attain a deeper level of awareness by effectively using the IRD.

Dialogues 21-25, 'Becoming Aware: The 'Aha' Moment in Advising' is the third segment. At this stage, learners tend to keep the floor during the sessions and the quality of their utterances changes from questions to the learning advisor to critical observation of their own experiences. Thus, a learning advisor's role is "to ask reflective questions to encourage the learners to talk more" (p. 157) so that the learners can think even more deeply and experience the 'aha' moment. The authors define 'aha' moment as a moment which "often comes suddenly and it is often a full understanding of something" (p.156). It is when things start to make sense to learners about what is happening in their learning process.

In Dialogues 26-30, 'Transformation: Learning to 'Self-Advise', learners having experienced 'aha' moments, have the confidence to take charge of their leaning and are now able to reflect deeply and holistically. They can "describe, analyze, create an action plan, implement the plan, and reflect on the action being taken" (p. 179). They can even initiate the session by themselves and manage the session using metalanguage skillfully. Therefore, the learning advisor's role at this stage is to be a listener and to help them develop skills to self-advise.

The second half of Chapter 2, 'Training and Development (T&D) Exercises' gives details on how the training can be done for learning advisors. The same four segments are used to describe the training process: 'Getting Started: What It Means to Be an Advisor', 'Going Deeper: Getting Ready for the Move', 'Becoming Aware: Knowing Yourself as an Advisor' and 'Transformation: Developing Further, and Back to Basics.' There are eight practical T&D exercises that can be done in pairs or in groups. While there is a growing need

to foster autonomous language learners, in reality, opportunities for advisor training are scarce. Thus, learning advisors need to support each other to keep growing, as the authors say “[b]y mentoring others, you also establish a process of mentoring ‘yourself’”(p. 236). Table 2.3 ‘Sample Training and Development Program for Advisors’ will give the readers some hints to develop their own professional development program.

In Chapter 3, ‘From Application to Implementation: Advising in Context’, the authors discuss the possibilities for fostering learner autonomy in other contexts besides advising sessions. The authors state that autonomous language learners are highly aware of their learning process and themselves and that autonomy can be facilitated by “structured awareness raising” (p. 243) activities either explicitly or implicitly in language classes, self-directed learning courses, and self-study modules. The authors recommend that advising sessions should be available in the process of structured awareness raising. The authors mention various kinds of advising such as face-to-face advising, written advising, group advising, peer advising, combination advising, on-line advising and advising inside class. The language used in advising sessions have been one of the concerns for advisors. The use of the mother tongue and the target language is also discussed here with solid arguments.

One needs to consider many things when establishing an advising service. This chapter also explains recruitment and on-going structured training and professional development of learning advisors. Those who are interested in running self-access centers and incorporating advising services into their centers might find this section informative.

The last chapter ‘From Implementation to Research: Researching Advising’ contains a variety of research ideas and methods. Table 4.1 ‘Research Approaches that follow the Learning Trajectory’ is interesting as it gives readers suggestions for research focuses and methods depending on learning advisors’ levels of awareness. So that readers can familiarize themselves with researching advising, the authors suggest possible research questions, example projects and papers in this chapter.

The unique aspect of this book is that in almost all sections, the authors give their own reflections to share useful tips and examples based on their personal experiences. It gives an impression that the authors are communicating with the readers and this is done using a friendly tone of voice. There are also reflection questions at the end of each section. These reflection questions give the readers opportunities to think about the given themes in depth and to reflect on their own practices. Overall, the essence of the authors’ philosophy — reflective practice in advising and advisor training— is condensed into this volume. In reality, it is no exaggeration to say that learning advisors in most cases rarely receive formal

training before becoming a learning advisor. *Reflective Dialogue: Advising in Language Learning* has great potential to help inform individual teachers and learning advisors who are eager to explore the field of advising, but also to be utilized as a practical training resource for those who are running advising services.

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Keiko Takahashi holds an MA in TESOL from Monterey Institute of International Studies, California, USA. Since graduating, she has worked as a Japanese language instructor in Taiwan and also has experience in sales in Japan. She started her career as a full-time learning advisor in April 2010 at Kanda University of International Studies. From April 2014 to March 2017, she was engaged in establishing and running a new self-access center at Kyoto University of Foreign Studies. Her research interests include learner development, advising discourse, and coaching.