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Book Review: *Practices That Work: Bringing Learners to Professional Proficiency in World Languages*

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realia, and 2) they add to the explanations of structures and illuminate them. Several exercises in the book are based on illustrations. The book's numerous charts, tables, and graphs help to organize the information and present it in an effective and concise way.

I would love to see more inclusion and diversity in the next editions of this book. For example, there is often disparity in gender use in exercises and examples, in which more male names (or no females names) are used (ex. 3, p. 219; ex. 3, p. 233; ex. 3, p. 265, to name just a few). More gender-inclusive language would be welcome to replace such words as "salesgirl" (p. 185) and "saleswoman" (p. 174). Some students might also find discussing gender stereotypes (ex. 3, p. 175) awkward and offensive even when asked to argue with them. Most of the book's references to the Russian culture concern Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Expanding the cultural geography to other areas of the Russian-speaking world, as well as using personal names other than traditional Russian names, would also be a welcome change.

Overall, this book can be used as a supplemental text for first-, second- or even third-year Russian language courses or as a primary self-study material for adult learners of Russian.

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References

Murphy, R., Viney, B., & Craven, M. (2004). *English grammar in use with answers and CD ROM: A self-study reference and practice book for intermediate students of English* (Vol. 1). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Thomas Jesús Garza, ed. *Practices That Work: Bringing Learners to Professional Proficiency in World Languages*. Hollister, CA: MSI Press LLC, 2021. 212 pages.

Practices That Work is an excellent resource for both new and experienced foreign-language instructors, as well as for foreign-language learners. The volume is a compilation of short, thematically organized articles written by numerous experts in the field of foreign-language teaching who share invaluable insights about bringing learners to high-level professional

proficiency in world languages. While *Practices That Work* offers a plethora of effective techniques for instructors, it also provides deep understanding of the learning process, which will benefit the development of learner's self-awareness and autonomy.

In Section 1, "Focus on the Learner," the authors offer examples of best strategies for building learner self-awareness and independence, as well as specific higher-proficiency skills characteristic of higher proficiency. In the first articles in Section 1, Leaver and Ehrman emphasize the importance of diagnostic assessment and teaching. Leaver reminds readers that there is no universal methodology for achieving Professional proficiency; successful learning strategies will vary among learners who are working to achieve the Superior level in the same language and in different languages. Additionally, successful polyglot learners report using different methods for learning different languages. While language aptitude and immersion environment factor into the learning process, they are not decisive components of successful language acquisition but rather are part of an adaptive learning plan that considers the learner's learning style and personality type.

Section 1 continues with various authors offering examples of successful activities that foster learners' autonomy and proficiency gains. For instance, Brendel describes activities that enable learners to adjust their language register, which is one of the "hallmarks of the Distinguished" level (p. 31). He provides a fascinating example of his students learning how to give public speeches while working with the best German speeches of the year that he brought into his class.

In Section II, "Focus on Instruction," the authors offer a diverse collection of teaching techniques and learning environments aimed at helping learners achieve Superior and/or Distinguished levels of proficiency. One of the key techniques is having learners imitate, rehearse, and some would even say memorize "chunks" of native verbal communication, as well as imitate natives' non-verbal communication. Opening the section is Leaver, Shekhtman, and Sibrina's article on further developing the memory capacity of high-level learners. The authors discuss effective memorization techniques, such as for instance "emotionally charging the classroom during the exercises that require memorization" (p. 46), as well as the role of the learner's learning style and personality in selecting memorization techniques.

In their articles, Martin and Fatorre-Olson continue the discussion providing models of authentic interaction to learners and having learners internalize them while working with authentic television and radio programs or studying and staging an authentic play and working with narrative-theater genre. Al-Shalchi extends the discussion by providing insight into the benefits of using the holistic approach with authentic materials and offering input on topics learners “may have limited background information” about, including such benefit as increasing learner motivation. She describes teaching a sample unit in which a single topic is explored from various points of view, such as historical, economical, religious, literary, and so on, with the students watching authentic television interviews, reading authentic texts with statistical information, reading a short authentic novel, and listening to and interacting with a native-speaker guest on that topic.

Another key theme of this section covers the advantages of providing an effective learning environment for high-proficiency learners. The models presented range from a flipped-classroom approach in which a learner finds appropriate teaching materials, hosts class discussions, and leads class activities, to simulated real-life tasks, such as a simulated academic conference in the target language.

To conclude the section, Davidson and Lekič provide a detailed description of the constituents in an effective study-abroad environment and curriculum for Superior-level learners, highlighting the benefits of taking subject courses at local universities, staying with a host family, going on field trips, interviewing locals, gathering research data, and participating in other “experiential learning” opportunities such as internships and field- and volunteer work.

In Section III, “Focus on the Instructor,” the authors explore the challenges high-proficiency-level instructors and programs face and ways of overcoming them. Leaver’s article brings to the reader’s attention the fact that using compensation strategies by learners hinders their ability to achieve the Distinguished level of proficiency, because these strategies are not expected at the level. Instructors are faced with the challenge of having learners abandon the compensation strategies they have been using the entire course of their language learning and must push them toward achieving the near-native “lexical precision, structural accuracy and appropriate register” use (p. 104). Leaver also

suggests fostering metacognitive strategies in learners to help them gain higher proficiency.

Gambhir continues discussing challenges by presenting the issue of communicative differences between non-native speakers, Superior-level learners, and native speakers. He offers a set of exercises that instructors of Superior-Distinguished learners can use to close the gap. For instance, “Complication Exercises” focus on practicing “embellishing” the learners’ speech in “literate ways” (p. 109). In his article, Shekhtman points out the lack of automaticity of rare expressions in Superior-level-learner’s discourse and emphasizes the importance of its development. He proposes four ways high-proficiency-level instructors can bring learners to the automaticity.

Ehrman’s article focuses on yet another challenge Superior- and Distinguished-level learners face: fossilization. She defines several forms of fossilization, including the affective form, which is the most difficult for learners to overcome. Ehrman stresses the importance of the instructor having strong analytical skills, as well as a “strong temperament” (p. 119), and experience in individualized instruction as key factors which help learners achieve native-like competence.

Last, Shekhtman, Lord, and Sibrina, present an effective model of the “short-term project- or task-oriented mini-courses” that are designed to bring learners with a 3/3+ oral-proficiency level to near-native proficiency within specific-domain job-related tasks.

Section IV, “Focus on Skills,” provides innovative, detailed models for teaching specific language skills, such as writing, and/or specific language aspects, such as collocations, which help language learners transition to near-native proficiency. The authors also draw readers’ attention to topics that are often overlooked in higher-level instruction, including developing learner comprehension of the variety of native handwritings. In the first article in the section, Shekhtman, Lord, and Sibrina present the “rule of the expanded answer” and the “island” rule—techniques learners can use to help them become equal partners in their conversations with native speakers. The authors suggest for instance, that the language instructor presents “islands” from the professional life of the Superior-level speakers.

In their articles, Kubler and Howard discuss the importance and ways of reducing learner’s accent and teaching learners to understand

dialects. Chang and Evans-Romaine provide ample examples of high-level listening activities that promote further development of learner's listening-comprehension and speaking. Al-Khanji presents numerous advantages of working on writing with 3/3+-level learners, while Bernhardt gives a detailed account of teaching what he calls "voracious reading" (p. 149). Flanzer describes a course in which she uses cultural journal writing and oral presentations to help her students gain higher discourse proficiency and cross-cultural competence. Finally, Kemp stresses the importance of the ability to support both sides of an argument rather than present their own opinion, for Superior-level speakers.

In section V, "Focus on Assessment," Leaver and Garza provide a formula for setting up effective diagnostic assessment in high-level courses and programs. Leaver offers examples of systematic diagnostic assessment implemented at various institutions, and Garza lays out a framework for the "multi-tiered assessment model of production" (p. 196).

Lastly, every article in the volume gives excellent suggestions for further reading on the topic.

Practices That Work is a valuable resource for both instructors and learners. The volume provides insightful guidance and diverse methodologies for achieving Professional proficiency in world languages.

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Betty Lou Leaver, Dan E. Davidson, and Christine Campbell, eds., *Transformative Language Learning and Teaching*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2021. 289 pages.

Leaver, Davidson, and Campbell's *Transformative Language Learning and Teaching* is a groundbreaking volume on the theory and practice of transformative teaching in the language learning context. The volume consists of chapters on the transformative learning and teaching of world languages organized into seven thematic parts: theoretical framework, transformative learning and teaching applications in government programs, transformative language learning and teaching applications in university programs, transformative language learning and teaching programs in immersion programs, the learner, faculty development,