



# June Interviews

**Interviewee:** Darcy

**Capacity:** Mentor Helper

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**Hello Darcy, how are you today?**

I am good, thank you. How are you?

**Today, we are going to interview you as a Mentor Helper. Roughly, how long have you been a Mentor Helper?**

I think about 4 months?

**Okay, so quite a while now then!**

I guess so! I'm still pretty new compared to Clara (@waywarder). *[laughs]*

**Yes, Clara has been doing this for a while now. What originally made you want to apply?**

Oh, I think I've talked about this before! *[laughs]* Basically I just wanted to be able to contribute something to this server after how much it helped me in my Korean learning journey, without ever asking for anything in return! When I first joined the server, I was constantly being surprised by how many resources and how much effort is put into the server for no cost to the members and so I wanted to give something back. I originally thought about being part of the Organizer Staff because I thought I'd be able to do that well, but I realized that I liked explaining concepts or grammar points if I knew them and that people seemed to understand my explanations, so I thought I'd give being a Mentor Helper try, once my Korean level was high enough!

**Yeah, you're definitely giving back, I've heard a lot of good things, and that you are helping out a ton. What was your experience while being a Mentor Helper trainee?**

It was quite interesting! It felt a bit like a covert operation sometimes because I had my own private thread with the Mentor staff and I was doing a



lot of my training during the server break too. I had to apply in January because I was on term break at the time but of course that meant that the server was still on break. That meant my training took a bit longer than it would otherwise have as I had to wait to get experience helping out with some of the server activities, such as *Comprehension* and *Speaking Activity*, in February once they restarted. In terms of the actual training though, I enjoyed it! It was a little overwhelming at first when Ka initially showed me all the channels I would have access to as part of the Mentor staff and I was like “[wow] there are so many hidden depths to this server!” but I just took a fair amount of notes and asked *plenty* of questions and the mentors were really helpful and patient with me so it was all okay in the end.

***I assume you've gotten used to all the channels by now and it's not so overwhelming***

I definitely have [*laughs*] I barely remember what the server was like before.

**How would you say this experience differs from being a promoted Mentor Helper?**

I think the biggest difference is probably that I no longer have a training thread to ask questions in. But we have a “mentor discussion” channel that works almost the same way, so it's not that different honestly! Whenever I want advice or input, I can ping people there. Another difference is that I no longer have anyone confirming my posts or corrections before I send them, unless I ping someone and ask for it. This is probably the most significant difference from before since it means there is a bit more pressure on me to be correct. There's a bit more pressure just from having that official 'Mentor Helper' role as opposed to the 'Trainee' role as well [*laughs*]

**Do you kind of feel hesitant in the fact that no one's confirming your posts?**

I actually don't! Because I know from experience that people will ping me in our Mentor channels if I made a mistake, so the only real worry is about making a mistake in some obscure thread, like in one of the subject channels, since they are not checked quite as often. I do think this is honestly partly my own irrational fear as opposed to anything else though [*laughs*] especially since I always confirm with someone if I'm actually that unsure.



**Well, I think you're doing a really good job. I don't think I've heard anyone say anything [negative] about your answers, so good job!**

I would be devastated if you *had* heard something negative [laughs] so I'm glad you haven't.

**All [messages are] VERY positive, don't stress!**

[sigh of relief] Phew~

**Could you tell us perhaps a funny memory you've made while being a Mentor Helper or Trainee?**

I'm not sure that I have one single funny memory. [thinks] Ka is quite funny to interact with just generally, with her Nitro emotes and her approachable and relatable way of speaking and existing. [chuckles] I've had some laughs working with her on materials and such. In terms of actual memories though, the only one that's coming to mind is a staff-related memory, not a Mentor-specific memory haha is that okay?

**Yeah, you can share the staff-related memory, although I think I have a few guesses [laughs]**

You're probably right ahahaha it's the April Fool's prank Griz (@thatgrizz) played on us all.

**Yeah, I think that's left a bit of PTSD in all of us, I can't lie [laughs].**

Truly!

**What are some of the tasks you do as a Mentor Helper?**

One thing that we started doing more recently is the *Word of the Week* posts! Ka does the actual posting of course, with the lovely GIFs and formatting, but Clara and I, come up with the actual content for the posts. Then there's the *Intermediate YouTube* course, where Mentor Helpers give homework feedback. We also helped out with the *Beginner Korean* courses (Now known as *Soundcheck Courses*). We spend a lot of time creating materials! One of the things I like to do is to create audio scripts and audio files for Quizbot Quizzes (*Quiz Activity*). I generally have fun doing that. We also create materials for *Chat & Speaking*, *Comprehension* and *Speaking Activity*, and sometimes we help Nae (@yaadealid) out with the material for *Lives Activity*,



though she usually does those mostly by herself. Of course we attend those sessions as well to help out by monitoring the chat and answering any questions that may have been missed, taking attendance, participating in the speaking conversations and things like that. We also answer *subject [category] channel* questions! Technically everyone can answer there, so we don't have to check the channels all that often, but we do make sure that no question is missed. We also review the posts for the *Twitter Activity* (Now known as *Social Media Activity* which includes *Instagram*, *Tiktok* and *X*) before they get sent and we answer any questions staff might have. For example, *Sriya (@srimeraki)* sometimes asks for confirmation on a *vocabulary set* before posting it. But these lean towards general Mentor tasks not specifically Mentor Helper.

**Whoa okay [laughs], you definitely do a lot!**

Yup! [laughs]

**Would you say creating the audio scripts is your favorite task to do?**

My favorite task is marking homework on *Google Forms* [for *Soundcheck courses*]. [laughs] I don't know why, but it's too satisfying to me! Same thing with the *Exercise Lists* that people can choose to buy from the *Magic Shop* and submit. I generally try to grab those to mark because I enjoy doing it.

**To be fair, I think marking has a sense of satisfaction to it, so I can kinda see where you're coming from.**

It really does!

**Okay, what would you say your least favorite task is to do instead then?**

Ahh, that's difficult. I think that answering questions or giving feedback in any capacity in which I'm not fully confident is my least favorite thing to do. I do definitely take it as a learning opportunity, but I'm still uncomfortable giving guidance when the subject is new to me. For example, the *Intermediate YouTube course* came out and it included some grammar points I was unfamiliar with. Because of that I had to spend a while studying them in order to give feedback, and it did make me worried sometimes about how good my feedback was. Which would lead me pinging Clara and any available Mentor to confirm some things for me while I work it out.



**If you were to give a correction on something that's very new to you, do you often ask for confirmation? Because I know sometimes with staff, there's this quota so it can be an extra pressure to make sure you answer.**

I draft my own response to the best of my ability first, and then just ping someone to confirm it, as opposed to pinging someone right off the bat and saying I don't know how to respond. That way I don't make Mentors do extra work, while still addressing quota.

**Yeah, it definitely seems like an efficient way of doing it, and it's also, I guess, helping your own learning, in a way?**

Yes, it's exactly that! I learn better that way!

**That's always a good thing**

It definitely is! Plus everyone is always willing to help and review stuff so it doesn't feel like a bother whenever I ping them.

**That's really good! What would you say are some of the challenges you face as a Mentor Helper?**

There's a few things! Since we are so understaffed at the moment, mistakes hold a lot of weight, even more so since I have an official (not Trainee) role. It's not really an unfamiliar challenge, it came up a lot while I was training as well. I always double, even triple check my answers, or consult other Mentors, and sometimes even add disclaimers to my answers. It's not that daunting anymore.

**Yeah, but I think as long as you're doing the best you can, most people here- if not all- are very understanding so it's a nice environment to be in.**

Yes, for sure!

**How is a Mentor Helper different from a Mento?**

From a Mentor?

**Yeah, sorry, I realize I pronounced that really weirdly for some reason [laughs]**

Like "Mento"! [laughs]



**[cries in embarrassment]**

[laughs] It's pretty different I would say! We do have a definite overlap when it comes to things like the *Twitter Activity* or the *subject [category] channels*, but Mentors have the hosting role for activities while Mentor Helper only assists. We also take on different tasks; a Mentor will usually take on any CS2 members for *Chat & Speaking*, that's the highest level, the advanced level. While Clara and I do the beginner and intermediate levels. Apart from that, Nae does a whole load of material creation at a very high level. For example her *Live Activity* contents, the *Beginner Korean lessons*, etc. But that's more of a "Nae-specific" thing rather than a "Mentor thing" [laughs]. She works hard as always.

**Oh yeah, definitely a clear difference then! I mean, the overlap is always nice though, which leads us to the next question actually! Do you like working with the Mentor team?**

I do~! I'll elaborate about Ka (@choitaba) specifically, my favorite Mentor and Admin and ㅇㅈㅍ KSG person.

**Don't let Nae see.**

I'm ~~mostly~~ joking, Nae don't come at me okay! But people always talk about Nae since she is the one who is more active with members in the server, while Ka is more behind the scenes with staff. For that reason, I want to say I always have fun working with Ka and she's very approachable and funny and really nice. She is not scary the way Nae is [laughs]. She always works hard and answers questions whenever we are confused about something. As for Nae... alright, I'll be honest and say she's nice too. She still scares me a lot but I think it is because she was once my teacher, she probably always will scare me a little. But either way, she's very funny sometimes and she's also the kind of person where if she compliments your work or anything you've done, it makes you feel over the moon, so there is that. I also feel confident that she will call me out and correct me immediately if she sees I've made a mistake, which is scary of course but also simultaneously reassuring. And I think that becoming part of the Mentor Staff team showed me even more clearly how much work she puts in all the time for ㅇㅈㅍ KSG and it made me glad that I'm able to help out and be a small part of it. And then, Clara is lovely! I knew her as part of club leadership and then as a *K-Reading Club* member way before I



became a Trainee so it was kind of nice to have her as the other Mentor Helper since I was already familiar with her [smiles]. She's very nice and has a very strong work ethic and it feels like I can rely on her as the other part of our two-person team. We discuss and confirm things together if I'm uncertain, and she would also share advice that she has from having been a Mentor Helper longer than me. Basically, I love the Mentor Staff team. [chuckles happily]

**I think that's one of the advantages of having an understaffed team. You get to know them a bit better and interact more.**

Yeahh, definitely!

**So you obviously mentioned the *abundance* of tasks you have to do, would you say it becomes difficult or overwhelming?**

Oh no! Please don't phrase it like that [cries]. I meant that I do more tasks than required of me under the Mentor Quota, because I want to make sure they get done. It's not that the tasks itself are super overwhelming or anything!

**Okay, I guess that's nice then [laughs]**

It's mostly because there are only a few of us [in Mentor Staff] and there is more work than people to complete it. Most of us generally do more than our Staff Quota in order to keep the server functioning and to avoid backlog. But I don't feel pressured to do it, I just do it when I can, and if I can't, I can always take time off without feeling guilty. For example, I had to be excused for exams.

**Do you prefer creating materials for the K-Reading club or creating materials as a Mentor Helper?**

Ooh! Okay, they're very different, oddly enough! Sometimes there is overlap, so for example, if we did something like "Folktales Month" in *K-Reading Club*, and I could also use a folktale for one of the activities like *Comprehension* or *Chat & Speaking*. But generally speaking, [making] *K-Reading Club* materials is a lot more aesthetic work and vocabulary deck-making. While material creation for my Mentor Helper tasks is pretty bland [laughs] in the sense that I only need to post a couple lines of text and format them. Although, I will say



I've started putting a nice background on the *Chat & Speaking* posts because I think we deserve to live luxurious lives. As for which one I prefer to do more? It really depends on my mood; if I feel like formatting slides on *Canva* or transcribing scripts from Korean subtitles, that kind of thing, I'll do *K-Reading Club* work. If I'm studying or am going through my Korean learning resources, I'll gather some stuff for the *아미* KSG activities at the same time.

**Okay that makes sense, I can imagine it being mood-dependent. Is there a system Mentor Helpers use for managing tasks?**

Basically we have a Staff Quota for Mentors organized in the same way that the rest of staff has quotas, in our case we need to complete our quota every two weeks. There are some systems in place to prevent us from accidentally working on the same assignment. For example with C&S (*Chat and Speaking*), there's a Google Sheet where we put our name down next to someone's C&S submissions for the month while we work on it. And then later tick off the row once we've finished our feedback back to the member. Stuff like that! But for other things like *Intermediate YouTube* or *Exercise Lists*, for example, particularly since it's just Clara and I, we rarely run into an issue of working on the same piece of feedback at the same time, so we don't really worry about it [laughs].

**Seems very organized! Haha Are your exams still going on or are they over? How did they go?**

[keysmash of mixed emotions] Well I actually think they went okay! Which is miles better than how I felt last year, when I was genuinely unsure if I'd passed the year or not, so I guess that's good?

**How come you feel like you did better, did you revise more or is it the sense that you enjoyed the modules this year?**

I think I have a better understanding of how they mark now, with another year of experience and yes, I also definitely did a lot better this year in terms of not only studying more but being much more organized, staying on top of lectures and deadlines.





**Yeah, it must be scary coming up to almost graduation, right? I think you're in 2nd year, if I remember right, or is it 3rd year? [laughs] My numbers are messed up. But yeah! It's always exciting to finish exams.**

It really is! It's a bit of an odd feeling too because I'm quite disoriented at the moment my last exam finished like four hours ago so I haven't really had time to process that I'm done for the year yet.

**An hour ago! Darcy, why are you online right now? You should be resting or sleeping or something.**

Four hours ago!

**Oh! Oh [laughs] you should still rest. My brain misunderstood that so badly.**

Haha and also yes I agree, I actually want to sleep but it's a friend's birthday so I will be baking her something after this and then sleeping.

**Oh, what're you baking her, 'cause it's gonna take a while, right?**

It might, I'm baking with a friend though so hopefully that'll speed up the process. And I don't know what we're baking because my friend was just like.. "I'll see what's in my cupboards".

**[laughs] Hopefully. We'll try and speed up the interview a little bit, so you can get to that ASAP.**

Aw no lol it's okay! She's out right now anyway so it was going to be a late night baking thing

**Ohh I see, okay. Well, hopefully you can get some rest tonight then.**

Yes, thank you~!

**How do you manage your Mentor Helper's responsibilities alongside being the leader of K-Reading Club and then also being a university student on top of that?**

Well, I do have to prioritize sometimes, which is how I ended up being excused these past five weeks so I could revise for and take my end-of-year exams, but generally-speaking it's a lot of organization and a lot of passion! I think the passion part is at least equally if not more important though 😊 in the sense that I do the work for K-Reading Club and as a Mentor Helper because I care about it and have that motivation to do it. It does also require



a fair bit of organization though, things like compartmentalizing, setting reminders, noting which tasks generally need to be done by which days, getting into the habits of checking the relevant channels for any new tasks to do, etc. – but fundamentally, I do it all because it's important to me.

**Oh, definitely, if you don't care about something you're just not gonna have the work ethic you need for it, you know. That's always the best mindset to be in.**

100%! I wouldn't want to be doing it feeling like it was a chore either, I feel like that would translate into the quality of my work. If I am ever to get to a point where I feel like that about any of this, I'll step back and maybe take a break, and make sure I come back only when I have that spark.

**Oh yeah, a hundred percent. So, you were obviously a regular member for a long time [laughs] before becoming a part of the staff team, and becoming a Mentor Helper. How would you say the change in experience on the server feels?**

Oh... hm. I feel like more of an insider now because I can see all the “behind-the-scenes” action. But mostly it feels the same, to be honest! I already knew a lot of the staff members before I joined the staff team because I was so active and involved with server activities, courses and tournaments. But now I have more opportunities to connect with them! The most crazy memory with staff was during Griz's April Fool's prank because I had just joined the staff team, and that was enough to make me reconsider all my decisions up until that point. [laughs]

**[laughs] Yeah, I think that being a part of the staff, you gain– well not necessarily a sense of closeness– but when you interact with them on a daily basis, a mutual relationship, compared to how it would be in normal cases.**

Yeahh, it's something in the feelings, the vibe, you know? The 느낌.

**Absolutely haha! So, how long have you been studying Korean for?**

I count it as since I joined the server! So since February 2022

**Oh wow, you've really improved then, in that time!**

[laughs] I guess you could say that! Depends on how you view it, since it has been more than a year now and I'm still not really good at improv (talking about something without preparing beforehand) or things like that.



**Yeah, I would say you've improved a ton, I mean, you're considered advanced now on the server so that's gotta mean something, right?**

[laughs] I can at least give myself that!

**So you said you started learning when you joined the server, would you say that's how you got into Korean or did you get into it beforehand?**

I got into Korean through K-Dramas and K-Pop.

**Oh okay! Would you say there was a specific K-Drama or like K-Pop group that initially caught your interest?**

I've been watching K-Dramas on-and-off for a good seven years, at this point so I don't really remember but I think having a friend who watched K-Dramas and recommended me ones she liked helped with that. Then I got into RUN BTS and really liked it and I actually got to know BTS that way before I ever started listening to their music, and I think perhaps that helped with me getting interested in the language more than just listening to the music might have done.

**Oh wow, I knew you'd been watching K-Dramas for a while now but I didn't realize it was 7 years, or longer!**

It was a bit on-and-off for the first couple years, if I remember correctly but yeah!

**Oh, I see! I guess we've kind of covered this a little bit but would you say being a Mentor Helper helps you with your Korean learning?**

It definitely does! It pushes me to learn things that I would maybe normally only come across later in my learning journey at my own, slower pace. It also means I'm more involved and get to learn from the feedback that other people give - I did do that before [I became a Mentor Helper] as well but I think I do it more thoroughly now that I want to really understand the ins-and-outs of any grammar point or concept. It also means I'm thinking about different applications as well, whereas the way I used to learn before was much more simple. Via a textbook or a particular course, and didn't necessarily explore all the different contexts in which you might see a particular concept used. Being a Mentor Helper has put me in situations



where I see random new contexts and ways of utilizing grammar points and instead of just assuming it's something beyond me as I would have in the past, now I take a deep dive to understand how these concepts work and add my understanding onto it, if that makes any sense.

**Yeah, it definitely seems like a good process, and a way to kind of speed up the learning and skip the parts that usually you have to deal with later on in studying.**

Yess, they say that teaching something helps you solidify your own knowledge of that thing.

**Absolutely! What would you say to someone who wants to apply for a Mentor Helper position?**

Do it, please goodness!

**[laughs]**

Um, I mean, we're not desperate at all.

**Not at all, right?**

What I'd say is don't be afraid of the process or the commitment or think that it seems daunting to have that responsibility; it's a team effort and it's actually quite a lot of fun behind the scenes, and you also end up learning a lot even if you're quite advanced already! Even Ka has moments where she reevaluates something she's previously learnt while thinking about a question that someone asked in the *subject [category] channels*, for example. It's fun and it's definitely rewarding and you get no cooldown in the *botspam* channel and also you get to give back to the server! So join!

**And with that, we finish the interview. Do you have anything you want to say before we end?**

Hm... maybe just thank you for having me, Mentor Team, and I've really enjoyed my time working with you so far! And thank you for the interview, Azzy (@azzyy).



**No worries, thank you for the interview and we hope you have an amazing day!  
And get lots of rest tonight, Darcy! That's a threat, not a request [laughs] just  
sleep, Darcy**

Thank you [laughs]! I intend to sleep for a *long long* time.

