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MASTERING THE TASK AND TENDING TO THE SELF: A GUIDE FOR THE GRADUATE TEACHING ASSOCIATE

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MASTERING THE TASK AND TENDING TO THE SELF:

A GUIDE FOR THE GRADUATE TEACHING ASSOCIATE

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A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

—————————————

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

in

Communication Studies

—————————————

by

Angelina Nicole Burkhart

December 2017

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Approved by:

Jo Anna Grant, Committee Chair, Communication Studies

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ABSTRACT

Graduate teaching associates (GTAs) maintain a prominent presence in higher education institutions nationwide, warranting our attention to both their instructional effectiveness and well-being. Though they remain an integral part of higher education, the training practices implemented for GTAs often fall short in addressing all of the needs posed by the role GTAs fulfill. The shortcomings in training often stem from an overemphasis of basic teacher preparation skills (such as syllabus creation, lesson planning, and grading) and university/departmental policies, as well as a lack of attention to teaching effectiveness and skills on managing uncertainties and identity concerns in their unique role.

In the hopes of filling existing gaps in the training of GTAs, offered here is a supplemental guide that seeks to satisfy the needs of GTAs, regardless of the discipline within which they teach. The salient needs of GTAs can be classified as either task or self concerns. The GTA task concerns identified in this work stem from the want to be 'good' and effective teachers, who are not only well-liked by students, but who are also successful at promoting learning, motivating students, and managing the classroom effectively. In addressing these task concerns, this work introduces readers to instructional communication-based concepts/constructs, specifically teacher immediacy and behavior alteration techniques (BATs) and messages (BAMs), along with practical means by which GTAs can utilize them in the classroom. Self concerns experienced by GTAs,

such as role conflict due to managing multiple identities, impostor phenomenon, and teacher self-efficacy, are also addressed here, in addition to practical means by which GTAs can reduce uncertainties through taking an active role in the socialization process they undergo.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Graduate Teaching Associates in Higher Education

Graduate teaching associates (GTAs) serve as an integral part of higher education institutions. In 2007, GTAs accounted for over 20% of instructors in all U.S. institutions, and made up over 40% of instruction in public research/doctoral-granting institutions (American Federation of Teachers, 2009, p. 10). In 2016, U.S. universities, colleges, trade schools, junior colleges, and other professional schools employed over 135,000 GTAs (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). Considering their existing presence in higher education institutions nationwide, GTAs are indeed the "professors of tomorrow" (Ferris, 1991, p. 15). Whether GTAs plan to pursue higher education teaching long-term, or merely for the duration of their graduate education, they invariably impact their students in several ways; in many cases they are the first instructors students meet, meaning they may impact student perceptions of the university (Hennings, 2009), and shape students' early attitudes towards their field of study, or towards the learning process (Ouzts, 1991). Because of their role in higher education, and the potential to impact students in many ways, our attention to the instructional effectiveness and well-being of GTAs is not only warranted, but vital to both their academic and individual success, and the success of the students who occupy their classrooms.

Graduate Teaching Associate Training and Texts

Despite their significant presence in higher education, in many cases GTAs do not receive adequate training, if any, prior to entering the classroom. One national survey, for example, found that only one half of the GTAs in non-communication departments received formal training, which is cause for concern (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Gray, 1990). While some departments do implement some duration of training for GTAs, few delve into classroom management, pedagogy techniques, and interaction with students, all of which are important topics for developing effective teaching practices (Zhu, Li, Cox, London, Hahn & Ahn, 2013). Often times, training programs are focused primarily on departmental/university policies and course content, leaving GTAs less than satisfied with their training experiences (Gray & Buerkel-Rothfuss, 1991). Some argue that in many cases, GTA training program effectiveness is diminished by an overemphasis on university policy and underemphasis on pedagogical skill building (Shannon, Twale, & Moore, 1998). The lack of attention to pedagogy techniques often leaves GTAs unprepared for their teaching responsibilities due to not having learned the best practices in teaching and classroom management (Anderson, 1992). As disheartening as it may be, many have described the GTA experience as one that is "sink or swim" (Chadha, 2013; Gaia, Corts, Tatum, & Allen, 2003; Wise, 2011).

In recent years, research has acknowledged these shortcomings in the training of GTAs, and emphasized the value and necessity of implementing more

effective training programs. The necessity of effective GTA training practices is rooted in the idea that letting them "sink or swim makes it likely that some will have a poor experience that may have a lasting negative impact on their teaching skill, satisfaction, and motivation, perhaps causing them to avoid academic careers altogether" (Lowman & Mathie, 1993, p. 84). Many have stressed that proper GTA training is essential to their pedagogical development (Zhu et al., 2013). Additionally, training in instructional development at the *beginning* of one's career plays a crucial role, as it tends to have the highest impact on less experienced instructors (like GTAs) in regard to self-efficacy, confidence, and creativity (Gibbs & Coffey, 2000). Furthermore, GTAs who received prior training are found to be more effective in the classroom than those who did not (Prieto & Altmaier, 1994), suggesting training is a means of producing overall better learning experiences for both the GTA and their students (Park, 2004). While it is clear GTA training is invaluable, the shortcomings in the existing training practices of GTAs are in some cases due to time constraints, and/or lack of financial support (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Gray, 1990); for this reason, training GTAs may also entail less formal means, such as the use of supplemental resources (manuals and books) in further preparing GTAs for their role, beyond or in addition to face-to-face, formal training.

    It should be acknowledged that many supplemental resources, such as manuals and books, have been designed specifically for GTAs. While the existence of such texts is heartening, much like the training programs, there

seem to be some shortcomings in these texts. For one, many of the books are designed for niche readers, whether they are discipline-specific, like Wilhoit (2002) and Barr-Ebest (2005), or created for international GTAs, such as Ross and Dunphy (2007) and Gorsuch, Meyers, Pickering, and Griffee (2010) to name a few; while all useful resources for particular GTA groups, the content lessens their utility, thus making a large number of these resources impractical for a more general GTA audience. The most prominent of shortcomings among these texts, I would argue, typically lie in the absence of one or more of the following important topics: (1) instructional communication-based teaching concepts and how they may be practiced in the classroom as tools for increasing teaching effectiveness, (2) acknowledgement of GTA identity uncertainties and the role of professional socialization in reducing uncertainty, or (3) the inclusion of GTA voices and experiences (each of these three topics will be discussed in further detail in the proceeding section).

A study by Lowman and Mathie (1993), for example, reviewed GTA training manuals from 18 universities, finding that although valuable topics like professional socialization (e.g., professionalism of teaching) and interpersonal tasks (handling authority issues with students, motivating students, etc.) were covered in training manuals to a small degree, they were not addressed as frequently or thoroughly as topics such as planning the first day of class or designing one's syllabus. Even more recent texts still appear to be missing one or more of the three topics previously mentioned. For example, books like

Hendrix (2000) and Akil II (2009) provide thorough guides in preparing to teach a class for the first time (syllabus, lesson plans, grading), managing student misbehaviors (cheating, tardiness, talkative students, etc.), and using different techniques in the classroom (group activities, discussion, lecture, etc.), however, both neglect any mention of instructional communication-based teaching concepts, as well as the inclusion of GTA voices. Curzan and Damour (2011) also offer an impressive guide, covering everything from surviving the first day of the term, preparing for the job market, and even including GTA testimony intermittently throughout the book, however, any mention of uncertainties about identity, professional socialization, and the practice instructional communication-based teaching concepts, are absent. Still, there remains an absence of a non-discipline specific or niche guide which provides practical use of instructional communication-based teaching concepts for the classroom, guides GTAs in both understanding and navigating uncertainty about identity through socialization, while including the voices and testimony of former and/or current GTAs.

Significance and Utility of Guidebook

As mentioned previously, there remain opportunities to improve the training practices of GTAs. The guidebook developed here (Appendix A), *Mastering the Task and Tending to the Self: A Guide for the Graduate Teaching Associate*, aims to fill a gap in one or more ways. While face-to-face, hands-on training should never be replaced by text, this guidebook is intended to act as a supplemental resource for GTAs, which may either be referenced in training

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sessions facilitated by coordinators, or used at the GTA's own merit. While many

supplemental resources already exist, this guide aims to fill some existing gaps

by: (1) compiling instructional communication-based concepts for practice in the

classroom (2) reducing uncertainty by providing advice on navigating the unique

developing identity of the GTA, particularly focusing on professional socialization

and (3) including the voices and testimony of actual GTAs. As previously

mentioned, one or more of these three topics seem to be missing from the

current texts designed for GTAs. While professional socialization will be explored

in detail throughout Chapter 2, it is necessary here to briefly discuss the value in

including instructional communication concepts and GTA voices in the texts

designed for GTAs.

Instructional Communication

The contents of the guide presented here are drawn predominantly from

the instructional communication field, with intentions of introducing readers from

other disciplines to the valuable research produced in this field. What is valuable

about instructional communication is that it is interdisciplinary. Through the

integration of research and theory from communication, pedagogy, and

educational psychology, instructional communication focuses not only on the

meaning of messages, but equally on the teacher and learner as well (Mottet,

Richmond, & McCroskey, 2016). Instructional communication is particularly

useful in a guide such as the one presented here, as the research and theory

produced in this field of study has direct application to teaching or training in *any*

field (Mottet et al., 2016); this feature in particular makes instructional communication-based teaching strategies useful for all GTAs, regardless of the discipline they teach in. Since its inception, instructional communication has made significant contributions in the understanding of teaching, among them, teacher immediacy and behavior alteration techniques (BATs) and messages (BAMs). The inclusion of these particular instructional communication concepts is rooted in the idea that exposing GTAs to these concepts and providing them with practical means by which they can put them into practice, *prior* to entering the classroom as an instructor, will better equip them for navigating their role in a dynamic classroom environment. Learning how to effectively navigate the classroom would aid in enhancing GTA confidence, power and credibility, managing student misbehaviors, or simply allowing them to communicate in a way that promotes student motivation, and increases cognitive and affective learning among their students.

Graduate Teaching Associate Voices

Aside from introducing GTAs of all disciplines to instructional communication-based teaching strategies, which have proven effective in the classroom, this guide is also unique in comparison to many existing manuals and books, in that it includes personal accounts/experiences from former GTAs, which were surveyed from existing literature. In much of the literature, GTAs are often spoken for; many do not include the voices of actual GTAs, which is crucial in understanding how GTAs conceptualize their roles (Hennings, 2009). The

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inclusion of GTA voices/testimony within this guide serve as a means of (1) identifying the salient needs of GTAs, which are most eminent in their personal accounts, and (2) allowing readers to identify with the text through shared experiences with others. It is said that through stories we can understand and explain human activity, and make sense of our own personal identity (Bold, 2012). There is a great deal to be learned if we listen to the experiences of others, particularly when operating on new and uncertain turf, much like that on which GTAs find themselves.

With that said, the following chapter will explore the most salient needs of GTAs, whether related to task or self concerns, while introducing relevant academic constructs and how they may be put into practice, which may help to address these needs. Each of the constructs presented in the following chapter (teacher immediacy, behavior alteration techniques, and professional socialization) represent individual chapters of the guide, *Mastering the Task and Tending to the Self: A Guide for the Graduate Teaching Associate* (Appendix A).

CHAPTER TWO

SATISFYING THE NEEDS OF GRADUATE TEACHING ASSOCIATES:

ACADEMIC CONSTRUCTS

In any professional role, there are needs and uncertainties that must be addressed in order for an individual to be successful in said role. While GTAs, who (instructionally) are unique in a number of ways, have many needs and face many uncertainties in their role, Darling and Dewey (1990) suggest they have two main concerns: task and self. *Task* concerns revolve around teaching-related aspects and responsibilities, while *self* concerns involve role conflict and doubts about one's ability to assume an authority position (Darling & Dewey, 1990), or operate in their new academic arenas. The academic perspectives presented here are intended to address the needs or concerns of GTAs in these two categories, by providing instructional communication concepts and respective teaching strategies for managing concerns related to the *task*, as well as providing a sound understanding in identity and socialization as a means of addressing uncertainties and concerns related to the *self*. We'll first take a look at some of the needs or concerns related to the *task*.

Teacher Immediacy

While GTAs tend to be perceived by students as more approachable, relatable, accessible, and less intimidating than faculty members (Muzaka, 2009), they face other challenges related to the task of teaching, particularly

teaching effectiveness. Webb (2015) for example, identified a list of challenges faced by GTAs, suggesting that GTAs tend to express a high need to establish relationships with, and be liked by their students, but also express the need to viewed as credible, which presents a dilemma when it comes to creating closeness with students and simultaneously producing positive learning outcomes. In some cases, students perceive GTAs as instructionally inadaptable and interpersonally inflexible, due to lacking experience fulfilling a teacher role (Daniel, 1983). GTAs have been found to frequently make mistakes such as presentation issues (such as standing with back facing the class) and failing to foster supportive classroom dynamics (such as praising student contributions) (Buskist, 2000). McDowell (1994) found that among their 120 GTA participants, 50 percent did not rate themselves positively as using open and relaxed teaching styles. He also found that younger GTAs took less pleasure in teaching, felt less secure, and felt more comfortable using solely lecture method (McDowell, 1994); these are just a few of the challenges GTAs face in the classroom.

While many of these challenges posed here may be rooted in a lack of teaching experience, a close proximity in age to students, or a lesser degree of knowledge of subject matter, there are means by which these challenges can be addressed and teaching effectiveness of GTAs can be improved. One construct, which may be particularly useful in managing these challenges, whether wanting to be liked by students and perceived as credible, fostering supportive classroom

environments, using open and relaxed teaching styles, or feeling secure and

taking pleasure in teaching, is teacher immediacy.

<u>Defining Teacher Immediacy</u>

Immediacy refers to communication behaviors, which increase closeness

and nonverbal interaction between individuals (Mehrabian, 1969). These

behaviors manifest both nonverbally and verbally. Immediacy is rooted in the

idea that individuals are drawn towards people and things they evaluate highly,

like, and prefer, and will stray from people and things they evaluate negatively,

dislike, or do not prefer (Mehrabian, 1971). From an instructional approach,

teacher immediacy is the degree of perceived psychological or physical

closeness between teachers and students (Mottet et al., 2016), which is

determined by a set of verbal and nonverbal behaviors indicating a teacher's

willingness to approach and be approached by students (Andersen, 1979). There

is a wealth of valuable research on teacher immediacy, and some have even

gone as far as to argue that for those interested in understanding the variables

impacting classroom learning, teacher immediacy is among the most important

bodies of research (Chesebro & McCroskey, 1998, 2000, 2001).

Research on immediacy provides a clear description of both nonverbal

and verbal communication behaviors which are practical for implementing in the

classroom. Andersen and Andersen (1982) for example, identified seven different

nonverbal manifestations of teacher immediacy: proxemics, the use of space;

haptics, the use of socially acceptable touch; vocalics, which refers to vocal

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characteristics; kinesics, the use of body motions; oculesics, otherwise known as eye behavior; chronemics, the use of time; and classroom environment, which refers to the arrangement of the classroom. Implementing nonverbal immediacy behaviors would entail engaging in actions such as moving around the classroom and towards students during interactions, making eye contact with students, using vocal and gestural expressiveness, eliminating barriers between teacher and students, and managing time effectively. Verbal manifestations of teacher immediacy have been identified as teacher self-disclosure (Sorensen, 1980), teacher's use of students' names, willingness to provide feedback, praise of students, actions or comments indicating willingness to interact with students inside and outside of the classroom, asking students to share their perceptions about assignments, due dates, etc., use of inclusive pronouns, such as "we," "our," and "us" (Gorham, 1988), and instructor use of humor (Wanzer & Frymier, 1999).

<u>Benefits of Practicing Teacher Immediacy</u>

While teacher immediacy is a useful construct for anyone pursuing a career as an educator, it is important here to explore how this construct is particularly useful for GTAs, who are unique in a number of ways, and how it addresses some of the challenges previously mentioned. Though few studies have focused specifically on GTAs' use of immediacy behaviors, the literature that does explore teacher immediacy in relation to GTAs identifies it as a useful construct for them to incorporate into their teaching strategies. As beginning

teachers, GTAs can benefit a great deal from employing immediacy behaviors as they develop strategies for effectiveness in the classroom (Andersen, 1979). For example, Collins (1976) found that instructors who were trained in immediacy behaviors felt more positive towards teaching. Andersen and Andersen (1982) also suggest that implementing immediacy behaviors can help improve instructor self-esteem (something GTAs often struggle with), resulting in higher evaluations from students, increasing feelings of being liked by students, and improving GTA affective learning for subject matter in their academic discipline. Beyond serving as a useful tool in addressing some of the GTA challenges previously mentioned, research on immediacy has produced at least 200 studies identifying several other positive associations and classroom outcomes (Witt, Schrodt, & Turman, 2010). Among these positive classroom outcomes, employing teacher immediacy behaviors has been found to have positive impacts on the teacher-student relationship, student learning, and student perceptions of instructors, attitudes towards learning and subject matter, and classroom behaviors.

Teacher-Student Relationship. Teven (2001) argues that "in order to maximize learning, it is essential for teachers to develop a good relationship with their students, because the rapport established between teachers and students, in part, determines the interest and performance level of students," (p. 159). Enhancing nonverbal and verbal immediacy behaviors will not only increase GTA influence in the classroom, but also positively impact their relationship with students, as well as student learning outcomes (Mottet et al., 2016). Employing

immediacy behaviors in the classroom helps to establish a more positive relationship between the GTA and their students, which aids in producing more favorable attitudes from students towards not only the institution (Tinto, 1975), but also towards the learning process in general (Richmond, Gorham, & McCroskey, 1987). Ultimately, teacher immediacy behaviors lead to increased communication between students and teacher, as well as increased liking and affect towards teachers, which are arguably two of the most important factors in developing strong relationships (Mottet et al., 2016).

Student Perceptions, Behaviors, and Attitudes. Beyond developing a positive teacher-student relationship, employing immediacy in the classroom may also positively influence students' perceptions of instructors, behaviors in class, and attitudes towards learning and subject matter. In a study conducted by Ambady and Rosenthal (1993), researchers examined the effects of specific nonverbal teacher behaviors, such as facial expressions, gestures, and head movements, on student evaluations of teachers. Findings suggested teachers who implement nonverbal behaviors which are immediate, such as walking around the room, and smiling, are more likely to be perceived by students as accepting, competent, confident, attentive, optimistic, supportive, warm, honest, likeable, and professional (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1993). Students tend to perceive immediate teachers as more caring and sensitive, leading to higher evaluations (Mottet et al., 2016). Teacher immediacy also determines both the degree of liking students have towards the teacher and the amount of power they

give to the teacher (Mottet et al., 2016). As far as classroom behaviors,

immediacy behaviors are also found to increase student motivation, reduce

resistance from students, increase compliance, alleviate student anxiety, reduce

challenge behaviors (Mottet et al., 2016), and increase student willingness to talk

in class (Menzel & Carrell, 1999). In regard to student attitudes, using nonverbal

behaviors serves as a means of increasing affect towards the subject matter and

class, not only leading students to learn and listen more, but also to have a more

positive attitude about school in general (Mottet et al., 2016).

Student Learning. While the teacher-student relationship, and student

perceptions, behaviors and attitudes are all important considerations with regard

to immediacy, student learning is perhaps the most important benefit to consider.

Over 30 years of extensive research indicates that immediate teachers produce

higher levels of student learning (Mottet et al., 2016). Teacher nonverbal

behaviors function as a means of improving liking for subject matter, teacher, and

class, and in turn increase students' desire to learn more about subject matter

(Mottet et al., 2016). Verbally immediate behaviors, such as self-disclosure,

humor, praise of students' work, comments, or actions, and engagement in

conversation before, after, and during class were all found to be significantly

related to student learning (Gorham, 1988). Furthermore, Teven and McCroskey

(1997) found that perceptions of teacher as caring increased both affective

learning and perceived cognitive learning in the classroom. Immediate teachers

produce far more liking from students than nonimmediate teachers, increase

affect for subject matter and learning, and increase both affective and cognitive learning by helping students retain more information, concentrate on subject matter, and recall more subject matter (Mottet et al., 2016).

Early research on immediacy and its effect on cognitive learning faced many challenges, whether a lack of cooperation on teachers' ends who were not fond of having their teaching evaluated, and mostly difficulty finding accurate measures for student cognitive learning (standardized tests, final grades, self-reports) (Mottet et al., 2016); to this day, many argue there is no way to prove teacher immediacy increases cognitive learning. However, after several attempts by researchers at linking teacher immediacy to cognitive learning, Kelley and Gorham (1988) designed an isolated laboratory experiment, which to some extent addressed these challenges. In their experiment, participants were taught content they could not have known prior to their participation, and four varied teaching conditions were utilized, in which they isolated particular immediacy behaviors, physical immediacy (leaning towards student, nodding, and lack of physical barrier between teacher and student) and eye contact. Their study's findings indicated immediacy behaviors increased cognitive learning among participants, making a strong case for the relationship of teacher immediacy and cognitive learning (Mottet et al., 2016). The body of research linking teacher immediacy to positive classroom outcomes may be convincing, but what is the explanation behind these links? One explanation is the motivation explanation, posed by Richmond (1990) and Christophel (1990); under this argument, teacher

immediacy behaviors increase student motivation and when students are more motivated they will put in more effort and hence, learn more. Another explanation posed in the Kelley and Gorham (1988) study is the arousal-attention explanation, which suggests that arousing students, which can be done through teacher immediacy behaviors, is a minimal condition for learning, as "mentally inert students cannot learn" (Mottet et al., 2016, p. 179). Whether due to increased motivation, liking towards instructor and subject matter, or more positive perceptions of instructors, an impressive body of literature has found a positive relationship between teacher immediacy and student learning.

In summary, GTAs often struggle with teaching effectiveness such as creating supportive classroom environments and utilizing open teaching styles, while often expressing the need to be liked by students. The use of teacher immediacy behaviors will not only enhance teaching effectiveness and produce higher degrees of liking towards the GTA, but it has also been found to enhance the teacher-student relationship, improve student perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors, and ultimately help promote student learning. Teaching GTAs how to put teacher immediacy into practice in the classroom may better equip them for their role as educators, thus reinforcing the value in including such a construct in texts designed for GTAs.

Power in the Classroom:

Behavior Alteration Techniques and Messages

Additional challenges faced by GTAs in the classroom as they relate to the *task*, tend to be rooted in the use of power. The use of power and compliance-gaining strategies are particularly useful for GTAs for a number of reasons, but perhaps most prominently because they tend to struggle with credibility and classroom management; power, unsurprisingly, lies at the core of each of these (Pytlak & Houser, 2014). Since GTAs are frequently seen as having less credibility than full-time professors, they often have to work harder to obtain and maintain it in their classroom (Hendrix, 1995). The struggle with implementing power and creating perceptions of credibility may, in part, be due to the fact that GTAs typically lack previous teaching experience and have a smaller knowledge base than professors (Pytlak & Houser, 2014). Beyond a lack of previous teaching experience and a smaller knowledge base to begin with, GTAs also tend to be close in age to their students, which may only further their concerns about their credibility (Golish, 1999).

Perhaps the most salient of the two GTA concerns is classroom management, particularly managing student misbehaviors. While effectively managing student misbehaviors is important for any instructional role, research indicates it is a crucial tool for GTAs who fill a unique role in the classroom. GTAs are often forced to implement classroom management techniques more frequently than full-time professors (Roach, 1991). This is likely because faculty

have more status, are older than, and more confident in subject matter than GTAs, thus they are often afforded more respect from students resulting in fewer student misbehaviors than GTAs (Roach, 1999). Additionally, in many cases, GTAs have little to no training in conducting effective classroom management (Luo, Bellows, & Grady, 2000). Managing student misbehaviors in the classroom shares a strong link with teacher power, particularly the types of power the instructor employs with their class. Kearney, Plax, Richmond and McCroskey (1985) suggest that while classroom management encompasses many factors such as teacher leadership, classroom structure, lesson formatting and others, teacher power differs from typical classroom management strategies, because student misbehaviors require ongoing instructor attempts to change these behaviors. With a sound understanding of power, and knowledge in crafting positive persuasive messages, GTAs may better manage any concerns they may have about classroom management, credibility, and ultimately power, in order to gain compliance and influence their students in a positive way.

Understanding Power

Creating perceptions of credibility, managing student misbehaviors, and ultimately employing power in the classroom effectively, will require GTAs to learn to communicate both verbal and nonverbal messages, as well as implement behaviors, that positively impact students' perceptions of their credibility and use of power. Learning how to effectively employ power in the classroom requires first understanding the nature of power itself. While power

has been defined in a number of ways, in instructional settings, teacher power

entails the ability to communicate in ways that influence students to achieve both

their desired individual and class goals (Schrodt, Witt, & Turman, 2007). In

examining power from an instructional standpoint, French and Raven's (1959)

typology of relational power provide us with a solid foundation for understanding

the different bases of power, which include: (1) reward power, (2) coercive

power, (3) legitimate power, (4) referent power, and (5) expert power.

Reward power stems from perceptions that the instructor has the ability to

reward students in some way. Reward power may be evident in tangible rewards

(e.g. extra credit), relational rewards (e.g. compliments from the instructor), or

psychological rewards (e.g. affirmation from the instructor), (Schrodt et al., 2007).

Coercive power reflects student perceptions of their instructor's ability to issue

punishment in some way. The use of coercive power can be seen through

actions such as grade penalties or criticism/discipline from the instructor in front

of classmates. Legitimate power refers to the instructors authoritative role in

relation to students, which generally stems from societal norms about hierarchal

positions of authority. In classrooms, it is generally accepted that instructor's

maintain the right to exercise authority over students in classroom contexts

(Schrodt et al., 2007). Referent power refers to the degree to which students

identify with and have a positive regard for the instructor, which stems from their

feeling of oneness with, affinity towards, and perceived similarity with the

instructor (Schrodt et al., 2007). The last base of power, expert power, refers to

perceptions of the instructor's knowledge or expertise as an educator, which stems from factors such as their professional background, mastery of course content, and skillful delivery methods (Schrodt et al., 2007).

Prosocial vs. Antisocial Power Bases. While the five bases mentioned above are in fact exercises of power, some are less than effective in instructional contexts. Each of the five bases of power is regarded as either prosocial or antisocial in nature. Prosocial power bases (expert, referent, and reward) are associated with positive classroom and learning outcomes, while antisocial power bases (coercive and legitimate) are associated with negative classroom and learning outcomes (Kearney et al., 1985). The importance of using prosocial forms of power is eminent when we consider the benefits of doing so. Prosocial forms of behavior are positively related to student motivation (Richmond, 1990), cognitive and affective learning (Schrodt et al., 2007), reduced student resistance (Chesebro & Martin, 2010), as well as more positive student evaluations of instructors (Turman, Schrodt, & Soliz, 2006); the same studies indicate the reverse is true when using antisocial power bases. Having laid a foundation for understanding power, we can develop an understanding for behavior alteration techniques (BATs) and messages (BAMs).

Understanding Behavior Alteration Techniques and Messages

BATs are known as power-based techniques that instructors use to gain student compliance (Pytlak & Houser, 2014), and have been identified as a strong contributing factor to students' perception of their instructor's power in the

classroom (Kearney et al., 1985). BAMs are the actual messages communicated

by instructors, which are embedded within these compliance-gaining techniques.

In other words, there are BATs, which are communicated through BAMs, all of

which are categorized under one of the five bases of relational power. As a

means of generating a practical list of techniques for instructors to use in

managing power in the classroom, Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey

(1984) identified 22 different techniques associated with BAMs, and classified

them as either prosocial or antisocial (much like the power bases we previously

explored). Richmond et al. (1987) identified prosocial BATs as focusing on

positive consequences for student compliance, and antisocial BATs as focusing

on negative consequences for non-compliance. For example, statements like

"you will find it rewarding" or "it will help you later in life" are considered prosocial

as they communicate reward or positive consequences for compliance. On the

contrary, statements like "it is your loss" or "I will give you an F if you don't" are

considered antisocial, as they communicate negative consequences for non-

compliance. Having defined BATs and BAMs, it is necessary to explore the

positive outcomes when an instructor communicates in ways that are considered

prosocial.

The instructor's use of power in prosocial ways, and implementation of

prosocial BATs, much like teacher immediacy, has been found to enhance

motivation, teacher-student relationship, as well as cognitive and affective

learning (Golish, 1999; Richmond, 1990; McCroskey & Teven, 1999).

Additionally, students have been found to mirror the type of power their instructors use (Golish & Olson, 2000). For example, "if a teacher is perceived to possess high reward power, the student may then use reward power with the instructor by working hard, giving positive evaluations, and engaging in other positive classroom behaviors" (Pytlak & Houser, 2014, p. 290). In short, if GTAs can learn to communicate in prosocial ways, they can maintain power in the classroom, motivate students, positively impact student learning outcomes, and reduce student misbehaviors.

Reducing Graduate Teaching Associate Uncertainties:

Professional Socialization

The academic perspectives explored thus far have worked at addressing the needs of GTAs in relation to *task* concerns. However, GTAs also have needs in relation to the *self*, which must also be addressed. Beyond their coursework and balancing the courses they teach, GTAs are also presented with uncertainties about their identity and role as they develop both professionally and intellectually. Perhaps what makes the GTA unique to simply a beginning instructor (aside from the fact that they tend to be very close in age to their students) is the dynamic environment within which they maneuver, constantly wearing different hats as they shift from student, to teacher, to researcher, and to member of a cohort. GTAs have been described as "neither fish nor fowl" (Park, 2002, p. 1), "postgraduate chameleons" (Harland & Plangger, 2004, p. 1), "postgrads on the edge" (Linehan, 1996, p. 1), and "the donkey in the

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department" (Park and Ramos, 2002, p. 1); each of these descriptions attest to the fact that not only are GTAs in a transitional period within their fields, but they are also managing uncertainties in relation to the self. Among the concerns related to the self, the perhaps the most prominent, involve identity and role conflict, impostor phenomenon (IP), and teacher self-efficacy.

<u>Identity and Role Conflict</u>

Some have described GTAs as dynamic and multi-layered beings, whose identities are neither static, nor easily divisible (Hennings, 2009). Identifying as many different things simultaneously can leave them feeling as though they are in a juggling act, that is equally as challenging as it is confusing. Because the role of a GTA is multi-faceted in nature, there is a great deal of uncertainty surrounding it, whether from students, faculty, and perhaps most prominently, GTAs. Much of the uncertainty experienced by GTAs stems from identity. GTAs construct themselves variously as a learner, student, academic, teacher, and researcher, requiring them to constantly change identities in a chameleon-like manner, depending on the academic context (Harland & Plangger, 2004). While individuals with multiple identities are seen as being better at responding to a variety of situations because they have a bigger knowledge and experience base to draw from (Hoelter, 1983), there are some disadvantages, such as role conflict and overload (to be discussed) (Biddle, 1986).

Since maintaining multiple identities can conflict with one another, balancing multiple identities as a GTA calls for some degree of identity

management (Allen, Wilder, & Atkinson, 1983). Pratt and Foreman (2000) distinguish between four identity management responses: (1) compartmentalization, or preserving all current identities without seeking to attain any synergies among them; (2) deletion, or removing the organization of one or more of its multiple identities; (3) integration, which entails fusing multiple identities into a distinct new whole; and (4) aggregation, or attempts to retain all identities while forging links between them. Among these four responses, managing identity as a GTA may call for them to aggregate, or maintain each of their identities while recognizing that each of them is linked in some way; this is not an easy task to do, though it can be beneficial. For example, a GTA who can forge links between being a teacher, student and researcher, may apply what is learned from their research to their roles as teachers and students, in turn recognizing that being an effective researcher may also mean being a better student and a more effective teacher. Being able to maintain each of the identities while recognizing they are linked in some way, may also mean being able to apply what is learned from one identity, to other identities.

Among the various identities GTAs take on, uncertainty stems most prominently from the fact that they simultaneously identify as both a student and a teacher. While the two roles are distinctly separate, they are expected to perform each role effectively and with mastery. Unfortunately, the success in one role does not necessarily imply success in the other; in fact, in some cases one role can detract from the success of the other (Staton-Spicer & Darling, 1986).

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Identifying with two different roles, such as student and teacher, raises the potential for concerns about role conflicts (Muzaka, 2009). Role conflict is described as representing a struggle to manage multiple roles effectively (Potee, 1993), whether it is teaching, serving as a role model for students and peers, doing research, participating in the community of their department, or being a student and progressing in their coursework. More specifically, role conflict occurs when a person takes on two or more roles that are contradictory to each other (Brandau, 1999), much like student and teacher.

Role conflict is generally categorized under one of five types: (1) role ambiguity, (2) intrarole conflict, (3) role overload, (4) interpersonal role conflict, and (5) interrole conflict (Brandau, 1999). Role ambiguity stems from uncertainty about a course of action when various roles one holds contradict one another. Intrarole conflict entails uncertainty surrounding a person in a group whose ideas about enacting a certain role differ from group members. Role overload involves uncertainty about what to do when one has too many roles to fill; this is a common conflict for GTAs (Forsythe, 1999). For example, if a GTA finds themself under strict time constraints and conflicted about whether to grade their students' work or study for the exam they have tomorrow, they may be experiencing role overload. Interpersonal role conflict is derived from uncertainty about which role is most acceptable in a given context. For example, if GTAs find themselves sitting among their professors at a conference and wondering whether they should behave as a student or as a junior faculty member, they may experience

interpersonal role conflict. Lastly, interrole conflict stems from uncertainty experienced when behaviors associated with a role one holds, are incompatible with that of another role they hold. For example, if GTAs find themselves refraining from venting about their coursework and exams for fear of compromising their teaching persona, or avoiding their students on non-teaching days when they are dressed as a student, they may be experiencing interrole conflict. GTAs are most likely to experience role overload, interpersonal role conflict, and interrole conflict, which is unfortunately seen as one of the most problematic conflicts among the five (Forsythe, 1999).

Impostor Phenomenon

Beyond uncertainties rooted in identity, which often leads to role conflicts, GTAs may experience what is referred to as impostor phenomenon (IP). IP can be described as feeling like an intellectual fraud, having attained success merely by being at the right place in the right time, as opposed to being qualified or deserving of one's position (Clance, 1985); it is also characterized by feelings of self-doubt, lack of confidence, or fear of making mistakes. It is not unusual for students pursuing advanced degrees, nor individuals operating in competitive or stressful occupations, much like that of academic environment, to experience IP (Kets de Vries, 2005). In fact, it is estimated that nearly 70% of the population experience some degree of IP (Clance, 1985). Experiencing IP on both fronts simultaneously (as a graduate student and a teacher in higher education) can be doubly difficult. As a GTA, IP becomes problematic if it leads to reduced

accessibility to students, discomfort acting as a role model/mentor to students, conducting less research and avoiding opportunities to submit to/present at conferences, avoiding departmental functions, and avoiding opportunities to socialize with peers and faculty members.

<u>Teacher Self-Efficacy</u>

The last need addressed here is more specifically related to teaching, and is referred to as teacher self-efficacy (TSE). From an instructional standpoint, IP can negatively affect one's TSE because it generates negative views about one's qualifications and feelings of self-doubt. TSE is a construct, proposed by Denham and Michael (1981) which refers to a teacher's perception of his or her ability to reach desired objectives regarding student learning and engagement. In other words, it is a teacher's perception of whether they have the ability to generate learning, motivation, and engagement among their students. According to Bandura (1997) our self-efficacy comes from four primary sources: (1) mastery experience, (2) vicarious experience, (3) social persuasion, and (4) physiological responses. The most prominent source, mastery experiences, develops through your interpretation of your capabilities in certain tasks, based on the execution and outcomes of said tasks. For example, this could be a GTA's interpretation of their skills as a teacher based on their execution and outcomes of a lesson plan. The second source, vicarious experiences, refers to learning from observations of others who you believe have similar attributes to you, as they carry out a particular task. For example, a GTA may observe another GTA teaching, and

develop their self-efficacy based on whether or not they are successful at the task. The third source, social persuasion, refers to the judgments or feedback you receive from others about your ability to carry out a task. For example, if a GTA's coordinator gives them positive feedback about their teaching, their self-efficacy increases, while the reverse would lower their self-efficacy. Lastly, physiological responses refer to the moods, or degree of stress and/or anxiety you experience while carrying out a particular task. For example, if a GTA experiences joy or excitement while teaching, their self-efficacy is higher, though if they experience anxiety while teaching, their self-efficacy is lowered.

GTAs typically lack previous teaching experience and have little to no training prior to entering the classroom, which is a recipe for lower degrees of TSE (Prieto & Altmaier,1994). TSE is an important factor to consider, as a higher sense TSE has been linked to more innovative and student-centered approaches to teaching (Wertheim & Leyser, 2002), more flexible and adaptable teaching strategies (Guskey, 1988), increased resilience to challenges faced in the classroom (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy & Hoy, 1998) and overall better performance in the classroom (Woolfolk-Hoy & Davis, 2006). A GTA's degree of TSE will determine whether they incorporate new technologies in the classroom, to enhance learning (Albion, 2001). Furthermore, maintaining a higher degree of TSE may increase their persistence, effort, and enthusiasm towards teaching (Milner, 2002).

Understanding Professional Socialization

One means by which GTAs may reduce uncertainties related to identity, role conflict, IP, and TSE is through professional socialization. Professional development is an important consideration in any educational context, and all graduate students experience some extent of professional socialization, a process in which a student willingly adopts and internalizes a new, professional self-image through role taking and identification with significant others (Friedenberg & Roth, 1954; Sherlock & Morris, 1967; Weiss, 1981). Professional development through socialization has several benefits for GTAs, including building their knowledge and skills in teaching (Carroll, 1977), improving their likelihood of landing an academic position after graduation (Svinicki, 1995), improving their confidence in teaching (Salinas, Kozuch, & Seraphine, 1999), and ultimately preparing them for future faculty positions (Austin, 2002).

In the socialization process, faculty members generally serve as agents of change, instilling both professional values and beliefs in graduate students through mentoring and role modeling (Egan, 1989). Graduate assistantships may be perceived as a way to expedite the process, as student-faculty interactions are more frequent and the amount of time spent in environments with competing socialization processes is reduced (Nettles, 1990). Becoming a GTA is considered a powerful socialization experience due to the need to develop knowledge and skill as a teacher and an academic, as well as adoption of the norms, values, attitudes, and rules of the organization you function within

(Braxton, Lambert, & Clark, 1995). The socialization process is both stressful for newcomers (Spector, Dwyer, & Jex, 1988), and one that requires effort from both the institution and the individual (Myers & Oetzel, 2003), but through both understanding of, and acting as an active member of the process, it is manageable for GTAs.

Developing a professional identity entails a number of factors, from learning the skills and knowledge required to perform a job, to understanding the norms, values, language, and attitudes needed to "interpret experiences, interact with others, prioritize activities, and determine appropriate behavior" (Perna & Hudgins, 1996). There are several socialization models in literature, though here we will reference organizational socialization, which involves three phases: (1) anticipatory, (2) encounter, and (3) metamorphosis (Van Maanen, 1978). In the anticipatory phase, GTAs will develop expectations about what it will be like to be a member of the organization (Louis, 1980). GTAs experience this phase upon learning of their acceptance into the position/program as they anticipate what teaching, as a graduate student, will be like. The encounter phase involves actually beginning their graduate program and teaching assignment. This phase, typically six to ten months into assuming their new position, will entail a certain degree of culture shock if expectations do not coincide with reality (Louis, 1980), and learning new processes and letting go of old ones (Miller, 2009). The final phase, metamorphosis, is when GTAs shift from newcomer to insider (Louis,

1980). As a GTA, this stage can be described as finally feeling as though they identify as a true member of their department and program, and as a teacher.

If GTAs are encouraged to be active members of the socialization process, this may aid in reducing uncertainties related to the self (role conflict, IP, and TSE), and allow them to more easily adopt and internalize their new professional identities as teachers, graduate students, and academics. Adopting and internalizing the new identities may better help them aggregate their multiple identities and allow these multiple identities to work *for* them instead of *against* them. Being properly socialized may also help them feel less like impostors and more confident in their ability as teachers. Park (2002) suggests effective GTA professional development entails practice and feedback, peer interaction, and reflection. Thus, *Mastering the Task and Tending to the Self: A Guide for the Graduate Teaching Associate* offers practical means by which GTAs can take on an active role in the socialization process, primarily emphasizing the value in: (1) seeking mentorships (Hall & Burns, 2009) as means of contributing to the individual's professional development, improving the undergraduate experience, and expanding the teaching practices and effectiveness of GTAs (Gaia et al., 2003), (2) developing and maintaining relationships with peers, in order to create communication networks (Wise, 2011) as a means of helping GTAs learn the knowledge, values, and skills needed to reduce anxieties and uncertainties about teaching, and truly become a part of the profession (Staton & Hunt, 1992; Staton-Spicer & Darling, 1986), (3) seeking professional development opportunities

outside of training (DeChenne, Lesseig, Anderson, Li, Staus, & Barthel, 2012),

and (4) seeking social support as an additional means of reducing uncertainties,

and creating a better understanding of what is expected of them in their

departments (Dixon, 2012).

CHAPTER THREE

CONCLUSION

There is no doubt GTAs account for a large percentage of instruction in higher education, and it is unlikely that will change anytime soon; their prominent presence in academia warrants our attention to both their instructional effectiveness and well-being. It is apparent that there is room for improvement in the training practices of tomorrow's professors, both in formal (training programs) and informal (GTA manuals/guides) contexts. While it is difficult to make major changes in the formal training practices of GTAs, across the U.S. and across disciplines, creating wholesome supplemental resources like the guidebook referenced in this work, is both necessary and manageable.

Filling the gap in existing literature/resources for GTAs entails identifying their most salient needs, and addressing them in a way that is practical. While GTAs are faced with many challenges and uncertainties, the most salient can be classified as related to the task and the self. In regards to teaching, GTA challenges related to the task involve producing cognitive and affective learning, motivating students, minimizing student misbehaviors, creating supportive classroom climates, and developing positive student-teacher relationships. Despite these task-related challenges, instructional communication provided some promising literature, which may help GTAs overcome them. In developing positive student-teacher relationships, motivating student, and producing positive

outcomes in cognitive and affective learning domains, teacher immediacy has proven fruitful in research. In reducing student misbehaviors, creating perceptions of credibility, producing positive behaviors and attitudes among students, the use of prosocial behavior alteration techniques has had promising effects in the classroom.

Beyond challenges related to teaching, GTAs also experience uncertainties in relation to the self due to their multi-faceted role. Some of these uncertainties are role conflict, impostor phenomenon, and low teacher self-efficacy. One agent, which may help with uncertainty reduction in these three categories, is professional socialization. If GTAs take an active role in the socialization process, adopting and internalizing a new professional self-image may be a much easier transition. By actively engaging in the socialization process, through actions such as seeking mentorships, establishing relationships with peers, engaging self-appraisal and reflection, and seeking professional development opportunities, GTAs may reduce uncertainties about their identity and role, as well as their abilities as educators.

Despite the challenges faced by those occupying the role of the GTA, whether related to the task or the self, it is a rewarding endeavor that is deserving of our continued attention and support. We have made great leaps and bounds in the training of GTAs over the past few decades, having come from a period of no training at all, to both the implementation of training programs at many schools and the production of several resources aimed at better preparing

GTAs; the creation of this guide is merely another addition. For the sake of higher education and teaching, and the individual and academic success of GTAs and their students, we should never stop seeking improvements and renovations in how we prepare the professors of tomorrow.

APPENDIX A:

MASTERING THE TASK AND TENDING TO THE SELF:
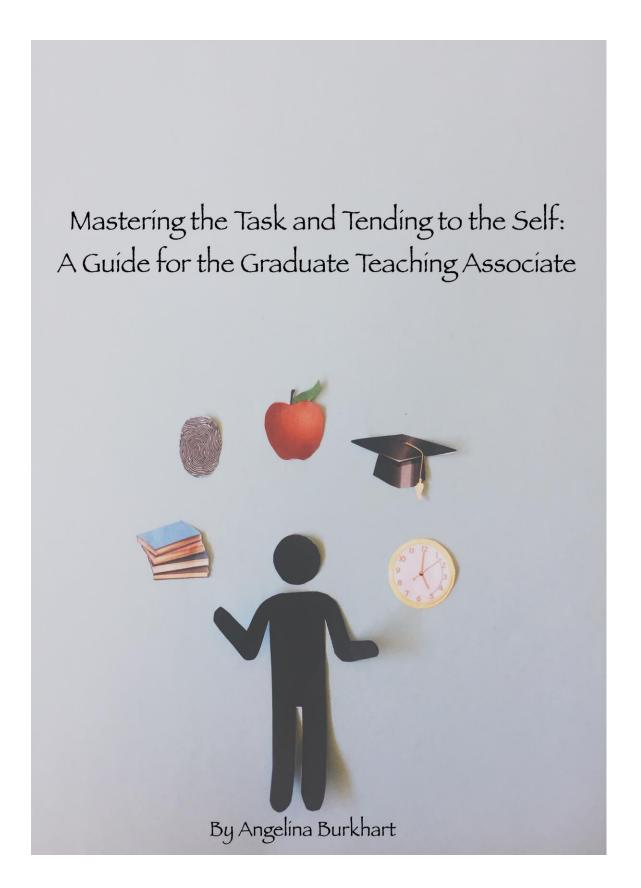
A GUIDE FOR THE GRADUATE TEACHING ASSOCIATE

Mastering the Task and Tending to the Self:
A Guide for the Graduate Teaching Associate

By Angelina Burkhart

Table of Contents

Introduction

The conception of this guidebook first grew from what I felt was a need to introduce GTAs, regardless of their discipline, to instructional communication teaching strategies as a means of enhancing their teaching effectiveness. As I progressed in both my teaching assistantship, and in the writing of this book, I quickly realized that there was also a need to provide mechanisms to manage identity in this often ambiguous role. Additionally, I wanted to give back to a community, which fostered a tremendous amount of personal growth in me. But what could I possibly give back? Answering this question became possible when I read much of the existing literature created for GTAs and felt a lack of a visceral connection with the content; while informative, I wanted to read something that I identified with. I wanted to hear the voices of GTAs before me, and I wanted to know that they shared my experiences, my fears, my challenges, and find solace in doing so. So, I decided to create something that I felt was missing; something academic, but more importantly, something that GTAs can read and truly connect with.

This journey as a GTA has by far been my most rewarding endeavor, both professionally and academically. Along the way, I have learned so many new things about myself, and my abilities. Perhaps most importantly, realized my love for teaching, and I hope that others can too. If this guidebook will bring about confidence in fellow GTAs, create a sense connection amongst GTAs through shared experiences, and equip them with new tools for overcoming challenges and progressing towards being the best educators they can be, then I will consider it a success.

GTAs as an Integral Part of Higher Education

As a graduate teaching associate (GTA), you are part of a much larger community of individuals whose presence and impact in higher education is both prominent and continuously growing. In 2007, GTAs accounted for just over 20% of instructors in all U.S. institutions, and made up over 40% of instruction in public research/doctoral-granting institutions (American Federation of Teachers, 2007, p. 10). In 2016, U.S. universities, colleges, trade schools, junior colleges, and other professional schools employed over 135,000 graduate teaching assistants (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). You are the "professors of tomorrow" (Ferris, 1991, p. 15). You should be very proud to fulfill such a role, and hopeful of the opportunities and personal growth this position will afford you. Whether you plan to pursue teaching long-term, or merely for the duration of your graduate education, you will have an impact on students in so many ways. You will play an important role in shaping their early attitudes about college, whether towards their field of study or towards the learning process (Ouzts, 1991). You will play a part in their motivation, retention, and achievements. You will teach them new things, and inspire some of them along the way. Because of your role in higher education, and potential to impact students in so many ways, our attention to your instructional

effectiveness and well-being is not only warranted, but vital to your success and to the success of the students who occupy your classroom.

Preview of this Guide

The position held by a GTA is often described as a journey, and one that feels like a juggling act; you balance teaching, coursework, identity, research, and time, trying diligently not to drop anything. The nature of this position rightfully calls for identifying and satisfying the needs of GTAs, needs which are not necessarily always addressed in training. Much of the literature assessing the training of GTAs has identified shortcoming in adequately preparing them for the classroom. Among these shortcomings, an overemphasis on university policies and a less than desirable emphasis on pedagogical skills (Shannon, Twale, & Moore, 1998), as well as the tendency to overlook other important topics, like professional socialization (Lowman & Mathie, 1993). While this text (and any other) should never replace face-to-face, hands-on training, it is intended to serve as a supplemental resource for GTAs. The content of this book is based on the idea that being proactive in learning effective teaching strategies and mechanisms for managing your unique role as a GTA, will help you minimize or better cope with some of the challenges you may face along the way. Throughout this book, I hope to address the most salient of needs amongst GTAs, as they relate to the task (teaching) and the self (uncertainties regarding identity, role-conflict, teacher self-efficacy).

It should also be noted that you will notice throughout this chapter (and the collective text) the frequent use of narrative, personal accounts, and reflections from GTAs (myself included). The GTA voices shared in this chapter will be used to preview this guide. I mentioned previously that much of the literature I read for GTAs did not invoke a visceral feeling within me, which would have allowed me to truly connect with the text. Much of the literature written about GTAs neglects to include their own voices. The inclusion of GTA voices within this text serve as a means of (1) identifying the salient needs of GTAs, which expressed in their personal accounts, and (2) to allow readers to identify with the text through shared experiences with others. It is through stories that we can understand and explain human activity, and make sense of our own personal identity (Bold, 2012). There is a great deal to be learned if we listen to the experiences of others, particularly if we are operating on new and uncertain turf, much like the ones on which GTAs find themselves.

Chapter 1 - Developing Teacher Immediacy

An excerpt from Myers (2010):

I would say it is my struggle to be liked by my students. I often hear other GTAs talk about the extraordinary connection they have made with their students and how they interact with them almost as friends. I have seen my colleagues discuss their students' personal lives with them and I have often wondered if something about me prevents my

students from reaching out in this manner. I suppose I didn't have the time or energy to do anything of this kind, but I wonder if I will ever manage to form a connection with any of my students or if I will always see them as beings who turn in papers when they are required to do so (p. 116).

An excerpt from Cost (1997):

My goal is to help them learn. I want the experience to be meaningful and to impact them in a positive way (p. 133).

The excerpts here highlight the desire among GTAs to be 'good' teachers, to be liked by their students, and to create meaningful and impactful interactions and student-teacher relationships. Chapter 1 explores the notions of a 'good' teacher, which is often rooted in perceived closeness between teacher and students. This chapter offers teacher immediacy as an effective teaching tool in creating closeness with students, tips on enhancing teacher immediacy, and the benefits in doing so.

Chapter 2 - Managing Power in the Classroom: BATs and BAMs

An excerpt from Brouse (2000):

Maria sees distinct advantages and disadvantages to her being so close in age to her students. She says that she enjoys being able to laugh with them and sees her age as an advantage in this sense. Maria also acknowledges that it is a disadvantage in that she sometimes has difficulty separating herself from her students, and knows that she needs to maintain the decorum she worked hard to establish at the onset of the semester (p. 56).

Excerpts from Myers (2010):

I am nervous because last year many of the guys did not respect my authority—   and that was with another teacher in the room! How will they be with me by myself? (p. 111).

In many ways, I think authority is a matter of confidence; I could tell that if I ever let my guard down and showed my students that I was feeling vulnerable or doubtful about my abilities, that would be the end of my authority in the classroom. It was a matter of acting as if I knew more and more importantly, that I knew what I was doing. I have learned that it's okay to treat them like adults and to maintain an open dialogue. Some will always see this as "weakness" from a younger, female teacher, this being open and conversant and all, but I know I cannot be an autocrat. Not that I don't get drunk with power. As always, it's the continuing battle to find the right balance (p. 111).

Emphasized in the excerpts here are GTA concerns about possessing and employing authority or power in the classroom. GTAs often struggle with establishing credibility and managing student misbehaviors, both of which are rooted in the use of

power. These struggles often have to do with their lack of previous teaching experience and/or close proximity in age to students. Chapter 2 defines power, and explores the use and benefits of prosocial behavior alterations techniques (BATs) and messages (BAMs) as an effective classroom management tool.

Chapter 3 – Navigating your Role as a GTA

An excerpt from Hennings (2009):

Since we are teachers and students at the same time, we often feel ourselves tugged in conflicting directions. As teachers, we are expected, rightfully, to behave as appropriate representatives of the university. We attend faculty meetings and course assessment meetings. We conduct our own courses and evaluate student work. In this role, we need to establish positive working relationships with our colleagues (including those in our hallway) by making sure we contribute to a comfortable working environment. We must pay attention to how we dress in the classroom, and to the language we use with our students. Yet as students, we also want to blow off steam, joke with our friends, gossip about our professors, and laugh out loud. We juggle the tasks of grading students' papers with writing our own. We debate the wisdom of "outing" ourselves as graduate students to our own students, uncertain whether this will improve our rapport with them or undermine our credibility.

One conspicuous symbol of our transition from teacher to student is how we choose to dress. Depending on whether or not we are teaching on a given day, our outfits change considerably. Some TAs who teach in the morning and have graduate seminars at night will change clothes in between; their "student" clothing is generally less formal and more revealing. For me, the sartorial struggle surfaces during election season. I studiously avoid discussing my political preferences in my classroom. One day, I repeatedly encourage my students to vote, yet make it clear that I don't want to sway them to vote in a particular way. Yet, the next day, I show up on campus in a bold political t-shirt weighed down by political buttons. When a GTA friend raises her eyebrows at my outfit, I respond, "Hey, I'm a student today, not a teacher" (p. 3-4).

The excerpt here sheds light on some of the internal challenges faced by GTAs, which are often rooted in the ambiguity or uncertainty associated with their role. Beyond their coursework and balancing the courses they teach, GTAs are often also presented with uncertainty about their identity and abilities as a teacher. Perhaps what produces the greatest uncertainty is simultaneously identifying as a teacher and a student as they constantly shift between the two. Chapter 3 highlights some of the uncertainties GTA's face, explores the concept of professional socialization as a means of navigating this unique role, and offers tips on how to take an active role in the socialization process.

Additional GTA Reflections: A Positive Experience

While the reflections above are primarily personal accounts of challenges presented to GTAs, to close this preface I'd also like to give voice to the positive accounts and reflections shared by GTAs, as it can be truly rewarding experience of great personal growth.

An excerpt from Cost (1997):

I really like the networking with the students. I like teaching them. I feel like I am accomplishing something even if I don't reach all of them. Some of them will remember things that I have taught them and this information will be valuable in their lives sooner or later. I find that this part is very rewarding to me because this is what it is all about (p. 134).

An excerpt from Munoz (2007):

By the end of my time as a GTA, I grew more self-assured and knew that I did have a place within the profession. I even caught myself feeling enthusiastic about presenting a lesson to the students or energized when I started envisioning ways to teach the course material. Even though I know I need to learn more, I now feel like teaching is something I can do, which was not the case at the start of my journey (p. 5).

Excerpts from Brouse (2000):

Bailey has come to see herself as a teacher. By the end of the semester, she no longer feels that she is simply "playing at being a teacher" and now feels "strong in the role" (Interview, 12/7/99) (p. 61).

As Al reflects on the semester, he thinks of his GTA experience as "perfect," in spite of the challenges he has had to face along the way. The experience has reaffirmed his ideas about being a college teacher. He knows, without a doubt, that this is what he wants to do with his life and that it is as "rewarding as [he] suspected it would be" (p. 58).

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Chapter 1
Developing Teacher Immediacy

When I first learned that I would be teaching as a GTA, I was overwhelmed with excitement, but also flooded with concerns. Having no previous teaching experience, the array of concerns was vast. Among those concerns was teaching effectiveness. I wanted to be a "good" teacher, a "great" teacher even. I wanted to motivate my students to learn. I wanted to be engaging and personable. Quite frankly, I wanted my students to like me. In my quest to be motivating, engaging, personable, and well liked by my students, I turned to teacher immediacy.

The "Good" Teacher

An excerpt from Emmel (2002):

Barb's anxiety was exemplified in her remarks when she stated, "...some people just have that natural gift for teaching. I don't think I am one of those people." From what Barb told me in that first interview, she wanted very much to be a good teacher and she cared whether the students would learn from her (p. 49).

Perhaps you have found something in common with the narratives above. As you enter this new journey as a GTA, you may be asking yourself what a "good" teacher is, and how you might become that teacher. While there is a wide array of descriptions for a 'good' teacher, this kind of teacher is often described as one who produces positive outcomes in the affect, cognitive, and behavioral domains (Andersen, 1979). It has also been argued that a teacher who is close to their students is more likely to be a 'good' teacher than one who maintains a considerable social, emotional, and psychological distance from them (Sibii, 2010). So, how might you produce positive outcomes in the affect, cognitive, and behavioral domains, while maintaining appropriate social, emotional, and psychological closeness with your students? One way to do so may be through teacher immediacy, a term introduced in the instructional communication discipline by Mehrabian (1971) and Andersen (1979).

Defining Immediacy

Immediacy refers to communication behaviors, which increase closeness and nonverbal interaction between individuals (Mehrabian, 1969). These behaviors manifest both nonverbally and verbally. Immediacy is rooted in the idea that individuals are drawn towards people and things they evaluate highly, like, and prefer, and will stray from people and things they evaluate negatively, dislike, or do not prefer (Mehrabian, 1971). From an instructional approach, teacher immediacy is the degree of perceived

psychological or physical closeness between teachers and students (Mottet, Richmond, & McCroskey, 2016). There is a wealth of promising research on teacher immediacy, and some have even gone as far as to argue that for those interested in understanding the variables impacting classroom learning, teacher immediacy is among the most important bodies of research (Chesebro & McCroskey, 1998, 2000, 2001). This chapter will explore the various nonverbal and verbal teacher immediacy behaviors, tips on implementing these behaviors into your teaching, and the potential benefits to you and your students.

Nonverbal Teacher Immediacy

Early in its development, immediacy revolved primarily around nonverbal communication techniques. **Nonverbal communication** refers to the sending and receiving of wordless messages. Often times, much attention is paid to what we communicate verbally, though our nonverbal behaviors account for a great deal of the meaning produced in our interactions, and the classroom is no exception. Because many recognize the importance of nonverbal communication, research on immediacy initially focused specifically on nonverbal communication techniques, which reduced social, emotional, and psychological distance between students and instructors. Andersen and Andersen (1982) for example, identified seven different nonverbal manifestations of teacher immediacy: (1) proxemics, (2) haptics, (3) vocalics, (4) kinesics, (5) oculesics, (6) chronemics, and (7) classroom environment.

Proxemics, the study of the use of space, relates to the physical distance between teachers and students. Proxemics entails positioning yourself with few barriers between you and your students, and positioning yourself at the student's level during interactions, in order to create a sense of inclusivity (Johnson, 2016). **Haptics**, which studies the use of physical touch, involves the teacher's use of socially appropriate touch. Haptics might entail a hand on a student's shoulder, or a handshake (Johnson, 2016). It is important to be sure the use of haptics are within the school and community norms (Andersen & Andersen, 1982). **Vocalics**, known as the study of vocal characteristics of the voice apart from verbal content, entails teacher's use of vocal expressiveness and variation. These vocal variations include variations in loudness, tempo, and pitch of the voice (Mottet et al., 2016). **Kinesics**, the use of body motions, manifests in a teacher's gestural activity, posture, and facial expressions; these include behaviors such as nodding, which can communicate that the teacher is listening to and understanding the student, and smiling which can be used as an indications of positive affect and warmth; use of these behaviors may communicate higher levels of caring from the teacher, and increase students' desire to learn (Andersen & Andersen, 1982). Other body motions related to teacher immediacy include relaxed body movements and postures, and leaning or moving towards students. **Oculesics**, the study of eye behavior, entails eye contact between teachers and students. Andersen and Andersen (1982) suggest eye contact is a major proponent of teacher immediacy, which provides opportunities for communication to take place, and argue that immediacy could not be effectively practiced without it. **Chronemics**, known as the study of time in communication, would refer to a teacher's time management during,

before, and after class, and the degree to which they spend time with students. Lastly, the **classroom environment** refers to the arrangement of the classroom, such as the placement of desks. A few ways to ensure an effective classroom environment are to remove physical barriers between you and students (such as podiums), walk about the classroom frequently, and "reduce the number of students who are behind other students" (Andersen & Andersen, 1982, p. 108). As you can see, there are several easy ways to implement nonverbal immediacy in your classroom (see below for a simple breakdown of nonverbal dos and don'ts in the classroom).

The Dos and Don'ts of Nonverbal Immediacy

Do:
- Smile at students frequently   - Remove barriers between you and your students   - Move around the classroom frequently   - Move closer to students when addressing them personally in class   - Incorporate socially appropriate touch   - Practice vocal expressiveness and variation   - Use gestures frequently   - Engage in eye contact with students   - Nod at students to communicate you are listening and/or understand   - Maintain relaxed body movements and postures   - Arrive to class on time   - Be available to students outside of the classroom
Don't:
- Hide behind barriers, such as podiums or desks, while teaching   - Maintain uptight body movements and postures, such as standing with arms crossed or hands in pockets   - Avoid eye contact with students   - Arrive late to class   - Speak in monotone, with little to no vocal expressiveness   - Avoid interaction with students outside of the classroom   - Maintain considerable distance between you and your students while teaching   - Teach from a stationary position in the classroom   - Close your door during office hours   - Neglect responding to student emails, or take an unreasonable amount of time to do so

Verbal Teacher Immediacy

As the body of literature on teacher immediacy has increased, it has grown to include verbal communication techniques as well. Frequently, nonverbal immediacy behaviors are correlated with verbal immediacy behaviors, meaning a teacher's verbal behaviors have varying impacts based on the teacher's use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors (Mottet et al., 2016). It was the work of Sorensen (1980), which made the first attempt to include verbal behavior in the study of immediacy, focusing primarily on the use of self-disclosure as a manifestation of immediacy. **Self-disclosure** is defined as "the act of revealing personal information to others" (Jourard, 1971, p. 2). Self-disclosure has been found to increase student affect towards the course (Sorensen, 1980), increase student participation (Goldstein & Benassi, 1994), increase student motivation, and create a more positive classroom climate (Mazer, Murphy, & Simonds, 2007).

Beyond the use of self-disclosure, verbal immediacy behaviors are demonstrated through teacher's willingness to provide feedback, praise of students, actions or comments indicating willingness to interact with students inside and outside of the classroom, asking students to share their perceptions about assignments, due dates, etc., and use of inclusive pronouns, such as "we," "our," and "us" (Gorham, 1988). Teacher's use of humor is also a form of verbal immediacy. Humor has been found to help in creating a supportive classroom climate by "reducing distance and creating closeness" (Wanzer & Frymier, 1999, p. 56). Wanzer and Frymier (1999) also found that students perceived higher degrees of learning from teachers with high humor orientations. Lastly, using students' names is another form verbal immediate behavior (Frymier, 2012). Teachers are often viewed as being student-centered when knowing and using student names (Kramer & Pier, 1999). Just as nonverbal immediacy behaviors are easily implemented, likewise are verbal immediacy behaviors. The chart below offers a simple breakdown of verbal dos and don'ts in the classroom.

The Dos and Don'ts of Verbal Immediacy

Do:
- Incorporate appropriate self-disclosure   - Provide (written or verbal) feedback for students   - Praise students for their participation in class (use phrases such as "great question" or "thank you for sharing")   - Frequently remind students that you are available outside of the classroom   - Welcome student feedback assignments, due dates, and course content   - Use inclusive pronouns such as "we", "our" and "us" when referring to the class   - Incorporate the use of appropriate humor   - Refer to students by name   - Welcome student participation in class

Don't:
- Disregard student comments and/or questions in and/or outside of class   - Praise students when they provide the correct answer(s) and ignore students who offer incorrect answer(s)   - Neglect learning and remembering all student names   - Avoid reminding students of your office hours and availability beyond the classroom   - Fail to acknowledge student feedback on assignments, due dates, and course content   - Use exclusive pronouns such as "you" and "they" when referring to the class   - Silence student voices

GTAs and Teacher Immediacy

While teacher immediacy is a useful construct for anyone pursuing a career as an educator, it is important here to explore how this construct is particularly useful for GTAs who are unique in a number of ways. Though few studies have focused specifically on GTAs' use of immediacy behaviors, the literature that does explore teacher immediacy in relation to GTAs identifies it as a useful tool for you to incorporate into your teaching strategies. As a beginning teacher, you can benefit a great deal from employing immediacy behaviors as you develop strategies for effectiveness in the classroom (Andersen, 1979). For example, Collins (1976) found that instructors who were trained in immediacy behaviors felt more positive towards teaching. Andersen and Andersen (1987) also suggest that implementing immediacy behaviors can help improve your students liking towards you, result in higher evaluations from your students, and give you greater persuasive power in the classroom.

As a GTA, you may be at an advantage to some extent with regard to being perceived as using immediate behaviors, as GTAs are often perceived by students as more approachable, relatable, accessible, and less intimidating than faculty members (Muzaka, 2009). However, despite some of the advantages you may have in being perceived as immediate, there are challenges posed by certain factors, whether a lack of teaching experience, a close proximity in age to your students, or a lesser degree of knowledge of subject matter. Webb (2015) extends this list of challenges you may face as a GTA, suggesting that GTAs tend to express a high need to be liked by their students, but also express the need to viewed as credible, which presents a dilemma when it comes to practicing immediacy in the classroom. In some cases, students perceive new GTAs as instructionally inadaptable and interpersonally inflexible due to lacking experience fulfilling a teacher role (Daniel, 1983). Furthermore, a study conducted by McDowell (1994) found that among their 120 GTA participants, 50 percent did not rate themselves positively as using open and relaxed teaching styles (McDowell, 1994). They also found

that younger GTAs took less pleasure in teaching, felt less secure, and felt more comfortable using lecture method (McDowell, 1994); these are among just a few of the concerns expressed by GTAs.

If you face any of the challenges mentioned above, it may come as a relief to know that these challenges may be managed by developing a high degree of teacher immediacy. LeFebvre and Allen (2014) for example, suggest "immediate strategies constitute a crucial tool" for teaching assistants teaching stand-alone courses (many of whom do) because they cannot depend upon anyone else to "fill the gap" for them, as they might if only supplementing material for professors (p. 33). Being an immediate teacher is not simply inherent, but instead a construct that you can mold and improve through training (Mottet et al., 2016). LeFebvre and Allen (2014) suggest that becoming versed and trained in immediacy, regardless of your discipline, would not only create more positive classroom outcomes for your students, but also give you a more positive attitude toward teaching in general. Learning about and practicing immediate behaviors while you develop your own teaching style, will also aid in building and maintaining your confidence as a teacher (LeFebvre & Allen, 2014). Through the use of particular verbal and nonverbal behaviors, which we explored early in this chapter, you can communicate a greater willingness to approach and be approached by your students, and decrease perceived physical and psychological distance between you and your students (Andersen, 1979; Mehrabian, 1969). This construct will enable you to use positive forms of power in your classroom, such as referent power, in order to maintain control and gain compliance (Mottet et al., 2016). Furthermore, your knowledge and practice of immediacy behaviors can also help you create a supportive classroom climate for your students (Johnson, 2016), which refers to an environment producing a "mutual respect attitude" which fosters participation and learning (Andersen, Nussbaum, Pecchioni & Grant, 1999, p. 363). So, while you may experience any or all of the challenges mentioned here, you can rest assured teacher immediacy is a useful tool in combatting many of these challenges.

Benefits of Implementing Teacher Immediacy

So far we have defined teacher immediacy, and explored simple ways to implement it in the classroom, but how exactly does it benefit you and your students? Research on immediacy has produced at least 200 studies of which reported a number of positive associations and classroom outcomes in relation to immediacy behaviors (Witt, Schrodt, & Turman, 2010). Among these positive classroom outcomes, teacher immediacy has been found to have positive impacts on the teacher-student relationship, student learning, and student perceptions of instructors, attitudes towards learning and subject matter, and classroom behaviors.

Teacher-Student Relationship

Teven (2001) argues that "in order to maximize learning, it is essential for teachers to develop a good relationship with their students, because the rapport established between teachers and students, in part, determines the interest and performance level of students (p. 159). Enhancing your nonverbal and verbal immediacy behaviors will not only increase your influence in the classroom, but also positively impact your relationship with students, as well as student learning outcomes (Mottet et al., 2016). Employing immediacy in your classroom helps to establish a more positive relationship between you and your students, which aids in producing more favorable attitudes from students towards not only the institution (Tinto, 1975), but also towards the learning process in general (Richmond, Gorham, & McCroskey, 1987). Teacher immediacy behaviors lead to increased communication between students and teacher (Mottet et al., 2016), as well as increased liking and affect towards teachers, which are arguably two of the most important factors in developing strong relationships.

Student Perceptions, Behaviors, and Attitudes

Beyond developing a positive teacher-student relationship, employing immediacy in your classroom may also positively influence your students' perceptions, behaviors, and attitudes. In a study conducted by Ambady and Rosenthal (1993), researchers examined the effects of specific nonverbal teacher behaviors, such as facial expressions, gestures, and head movements, on student evaluations of teachers. Findings suggested teachers who implement nonverbal behaviors which are immediate, such as walking around the room, and smiling, are more likely to be perceived by students as accepting, competent, confident, attentive, optimistic, supportive, warm, honest, likeable, and professional (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1993). Students tend to perceive immediate teachers as more caring and sensitive, leading to higher evaluations (Mottet et al., 2016). Teacher immediacy also determines both the degree of liking students have towards the teacher and the amount of power they give to the teacher (Mottet et al., 2016). Students are more likely to feel confident in subject matter transmitted from immediate teachers, thus increasing their willingness to engage in the content later in life (Andersen & Andersen, 1987). Immediacy behaviors also increase student motivation, reduce resistance from students, increase compliance, and help to alleviate student anxiety, as teachers are perceived as more caring and sensitive (Mottet et al., 2016). In using nonverbal behaviors as a means of increasing affect towards the subject matter and class, your students are not only more likely to learn and listen more, but also to have a more positive attitude about school in general (Andersen & Andersen, 1987; Mottet et al., 2016). Lastly, teacher immediacy behaviors can also be used to reduce challenge behaviors (Mottet et al., 2016), and increase student willingness to talk in class (Menzel & Carrell, 1999).

Student Learning

While the teacher-student relationship, and student perceptions, behaviors and attitudes are all important considerations with regard to immediacy, student learning is perhaps the most important benefit to consider. Over 30 years of extensive research

indicates that immediate teachers produce higher levels of student learning (Mottet et al., 2016). Teacher nonverbal behaviors function as a means of improving liking for subject matter, teacher, and class, and in turn increase students' desire to learn more about subject matter (Mottet et al., 2016). Verbally immediate behaviors, such as self-disclosure, humor, praise of students' work, comments, or actions, and engagement in conversation before, after, and during class were all found to be significantly related to student learning (Gorham, 1988). Furthermore, Teven and McCroskey (1997) found that perceptions of teacher as caring increased both affective learning and perceived cognitive learning in the classroom. Immediate teachers produce far more liking from students than nonimmediate teachers, increase affect for subject matter and learning, and increase both affective and cognitive learning by helping students retain more information, concentrate on subject matter, and recall more subject matter (Mottet et al., 2016).

Early research on immediacy and its effect on cognitive learning faced many challenges, whether a lack of cooperation on teachers' ends who were not fond of having their teaching evaluated or difficulty finding accurate measures for student cognitive learning (standardized tests, final grades, self-reports) (Mottet et al., 2016). Kelley and Gorham (1988) designed an isolated laboratory experiment which to some extent overcame these challenges posed when evaluating student cognitive learning. Their study's findings indicated both verbal and nonverbal immediacy behaviors increased cognitive learning, and though it is difficult to say with certainty that their study proves a relationship between immediacy and cognitive learning in an actual classroom, their study makes a strong case (Kelley & Gorham, 1988). So, the body of research linking teacher immediacy to positive classroom outcomes may be convincing, but what is the explanation behind these links? One explanation is the motivation explanation, posed by Richmond (1990) and Christophel (1990); under this argument, teacher immediacy behaviors increase student motivation and when students are more motivated they will put in more effort and hence, learn more. Another explanation posed in Kelley and Gorham (1988) study is the arousal-attention explanation, which suggests that arousing students, which can be done through teacher immediacy behaviors, is a minimal condition for learning, as "mentally inert students cannot learn" (Mottet et al., 2016, p. 179). Whether due to increased motivation, liking towards instructor and subject matter, or more positive perceptions of instructors, an impressive body of literature affirms a positive relationship between teacher immediacy and student learning.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide you with a sound definition and understanding of teacher immediacy, through exploring its nonverbal and verbal manifestations, simple behaviors you can implement in the classroom to increase your immediacy, and finally the wide array of benefits the construct offers to both you and your students. New teachers, and GTAs particularly, face a number of challenges as they begin their journeys as educators, many of which revolve around teaching effectiveness. While some of the nonverbal and verbal behaviors presented here are easier to implement

than others, developing a strong degree of teacher immediacy is a process, and with practice and time, many of these behaviors become increasingly natural elements of your teaching. Through mindful verbal and nonverbal behaviors, you can tremendously and positively impact your students' perceptions and attitudes towards learning, their motivation, compliance, and behaviors in the classroom, as well as their cognitive and affective learning, all while generating higher evaluations and greater liking from your students; it's a win-win! If, upon beginning your journey as a GTA, you have found yourself concerned at all with your teaching effectiveness, or have asked yourself what a "good" teacher is, and how you might become that teacher, don't be afraid to start small. In a classroom, something as simple as a smile can go a long way.

Key Terms

Chronemics (47)	Classroom environment (48)	Haptics (47)
Immediacy (46)	Kinesics (47)	Nonverbal communication (47)
Oculesics (47)	Proxemics (47)	Self-disclosure (49)
Vocalics (47)		

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Chapter 2
Managing Power in the Classroom: BATs and BAMs

As I anticipated what my first teaching experience would be like, I wondered if my close proximity in age to my students would make it difficult for me to garner respect and employ power in the classroom. I wondered if my young appearance, and the fact that I am a woman, meant that I had to work harder at classroom management. I found myself frequently wondering whether my students would take me seriously. What I later came to find, is that managing power in the classroom can be done effectively, regardless of the instructor's age and gender. Through a thorough understanding of power itself, and knowledge in communicating power in a positive way, GTAs can effectively manage their power in the classroom and create a positive classroom climate in the process.

GTAs and Power in the Classroom

An excerpt from Myers (2010):

I saw a recurrence of the same issues I talked about earlier: the tendency among some students to not take a relatively young teacher seriously. I found that, in my interactions with some students, I sounded more stern than I intended. I did have a few students in my class who were overtly disrespectful and I generally had to respond to such behavior in class (p. 114).

Much like the experiences expressed above, navigating your new role as a GTA may leave you wondering how you might employ power, or influence, effectively in the classroom. Doing so can be tricky, as there are several factors working together simultaneously, which can either positively or negatively impact the degree of power your students will give you. The instructional motives behind wanting to maintain power in the classroom revolve primarily around the need to gain compliance from students as a means of minimizing student misbehaviors, which may detract from creating a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Garnering respect and power in classroom requires effective communication, and it is important to remember that students are the ones granting this power (McCroskey, Richmond, & McCroskey, 2006).

Credibility and Classroom Management

The use of power and compliance-gaining strategies are particularly useful for GTAs for a number of reasons, but perhaps most prominently because they tend to struggle with credibility and classroom management (Pytlak & Houser, 2014). The struggle with creating perceptions of credibility may, in part, be due to the fact that GTAs typically lack previous teaching experience and have a smaller knowledge base than professors (Pytlak & Houser, 2014). Beyond a lack of previous teaching experience and a

smaller knowledge base to begin with, you may also be close in age to your students, which may only further your concerns about your credibility (Golish, 1999). Since GTAs are frequently seen as having less credibility than full-time professors, you may have to work a little harder to obtain and maintain it in your own classroom (Hendrix, 1995); doing so will require you to communicate both verbal and nonverbal messages, as well as implement behaviors, that positively impact your students' perceptions of your credibility and power.

Perhaps the most salient of the two GTA concerns mentioned here, is classroom management, particularly managing student misbehaviors. While effectively managing student misbehaviors is important for any instructional role, research indicates it is a crucial tool for GTAs who fill a unique role in the classroom. GTAs are often forced to implement classroom management techniques more frequently than full-time professors (Roach, 1991). This is likely because faculty have more status, are older than, and more confident in subject matter than GTAs, thus they are often afforded more respect from students, resulting in fewer student misbehaviors than GTAs (Roach, 1997). Managing student misbehaviors in the classroom shares a strong link with the teacher power, particularly the types of power the instructor employs over the course the class. Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey (1985) suggests that while classroom management encompasses many factors such as teacher leadership, classroom structure, lesson formatting and others, teacher power differs from typical classroom management strategies, because student misbehaviors require ongoing instructor attempts to change these behaviors. While you may identify with some of challenges expressed here with regard to power, don't let these discourage you. With a sound understanding of power, and knowledge in crafting positive persuasive messages, you can tackle any concerns you may have about classroom management, credibility, and ultimately power, in order to gain compliance and influence your students in a positive way.

The Five Bases of Power

Learning how to effectively employ power in your classroom requires first understanding the nature of power itself. While power has been defined in a number of ways, in instructional settings, **teacher power** entails the ability to communicate in ways that influence students to achieve both their desired individual and educational goals, such as getting students to comply with instructor requests, and acquiring cognitive learning (Schrodt, Witt, & Turman, 2007). In examining power from an instructional standpoint, French and Raven's (1959) typology of relational power provide us with a solid foundation for understanding the different bases of power, which include: (1) reward power, (2) coercive power, (3) legitimate power, (4) referent power, and (5) expert power. **Reward power** stems from perceptions that the instructor has the ability to reward students in some way. Reward power may be evident in tangible rewards (e.g. extra credit), relational rewards (e.g. compliments from the instructor), or psychological rewards (e.g. affirmation from the instructor). **Coercive power** reflects student perceptions of their instructor's ability to issue punishment in some way. The use of coercive power can be seen through actions such as grade penalties or criticism/discipline

from the instructor in front of classmates. **Legitimate power** refers to the instructor's authoritative role in relation to students, which generally stems from societal norms about hierarchal positions of authority. In classrooms, it is generally accepted that instructor's maintain the right to exercise authority over students in classroom contexts. **Referent power** refers to the degree to which identify and have a positive regard for the instructor, which stems from their feeling of oneness with, affinity towards, and perceived similarity with the instructor. The last base of power, **expert power**, refers to perceptions of the instructor's knowledge or expertise as an educator, which stems from factors such as their professional background, mastery of course content, and skillful delivery methods.

Prosocial vs. Antisocial Power Bases

While the five bases mentioned above are in fact exercises of power, some are less than effective in instructional contexts. Each of the five bases of power is regarded as either prosocial, or antisocial in nature. **Prosocial** power bases (expert, referent, and reward) are associated with positive classroom and learning outcomes, while **antisocial** power bases (coercive and legitimate) are associated with negative classroom and learning outcomes (Kearney et al., 1985). The importance of using prosocial forms of power is eminent when we consider the benefits in doing so. Prosocial forms of power are positively related to student motivation (Richmond, 1990), cognitive and affective learning (Schrodt et al., 2007), reduced student resistance (Chesebro & Martin, 2010), as well as more positive student evaluations of instructors (Turman & Schrodt, 2006); the same studies indicate the reverse is true when using antisocial power bases. Having laid a foundation for understanding power, and the importance of utilizing prosocial power bases, let's talk about the techniques you can use to maintain positive forms of power in your classroom.

Defining Behavior Alteration Techniques and Messages

So far, we've explored the five bases of power, but how might you actually use them effectively in your classroom? Doing so entails familiarity with behavior alteration techniques (BATs) and behavior alteration messages (BAMs). **BATs** are known as power-based techniques that instructors use to gain student compliance (Pytlak & Houser, 2014), and have been identified as a strong contributing factor to students' perception of their instructor's power in the classroom (Kearney et al., 1985). **BAMs** are the actual messages communicated by instructors, which are embedded within these compliance-gaining techniques. In other words, there are BATs, which are communicated through BAMs, all of which are categorized under one of the five bases of relational power we previously discussed. As a means of generating a practical list of techniques for instructors to use in managing power in the classroom, Kearney, Plax, Richmond, and McCroskey (1984) conducted an extensive study, identifying 22 different techniques associated with BAMs, and classifying them as either prosocial or antisocial (much like the power bases we previously explored). Richmond, McCroskey, Kearney, and Plax (1987) later identified prosocial BATs as those that focus on positive consequences for

student compliance, and antisocial BATs as those that focus on negative consequences for non-compliance, which gives us a bit more insight into why these particular techniques are either beneficial or consequential in the classroom. The 22 techniques and some of their related BAMs identified by are displayed below in Figure 2.1 (Kearney et al., 1984, p. 33-34).

Figure 2.1

BATs (P = prosocial, A = antisocial)		**BAMs**
1. Immediate reward from behavior	(P)	"You'll find it rewarding. It's a good experience"
2. Deferred reward from behavior	(P)	"It will help you later on in life. It will help on upcoming assignments."
3. Reward from teacher	(P)	"I will give you a reward if you do. I will give you a good grade if you do."
4. Reward from others	(P)	"Others will respect you if you do. Others will be proud of you."
5. Self-esteem	(P)	"You are good at it. You will feel good about yourself if you do."
6. Punishment from behavior	(A)	"It's your loss. You'll feel bad if you don't"
7. Punishment from teacher	(A)	"I'll give you an F if you don't. If you don't do it now, it will be homework."
8. Punishment from others	(A)	"Your classmates will reject you."
9. Guilt	(A)	"If you don't, others will be hurt. You'll make others unhappy if you don't."
10. Teacher/student relationship: pos.	(P)	"I will think more highly of you. I will be proud of you."
11. Teacher/student relationship: neg.	(A)	"I'll be disappointed in you. I will think less of you if you don't"
12. Legitimate – higher authority	(A)	"It's a rule, I have to do it and so do you. It's school policy."
13. Legitimate – teacher authority	(A)	"Because I told you to. Don't ask, just do it."
14. Personal (student) responsibility	(A)	"It is your obligation. Everyone has to pull their own weight."
15. Responsibility to class	(A)	"Your group needs it done. The class depends on you."
16. Normative rules	(A)	"We voted, and the majority rule. Everyone else has to do it."
17. Debt	(A)	"You promised you'd do it. You said you'd try this time."
18. Altruism	(P)	"If you do this, it will help others. Others

		will benefit if you do."
19. Peer modeling	(P)	"Classmates you respect do it. Your friends do it."
20. Teacher modeling	(P)	"This is the way I always do it. I had to do this while I was in school."
21. Expert teacher	(P)	"From my experience, it is a good idea. This has always worked for me."
22. Teacher feedback	(P)	"Because I need to know how well you understand this. It will help me know your problem areas."

Using Prosocial Compliance-Gaining Strategies

As outlined in Figure 2.1, there are several prosocial BATs and respective BAMs which you may implement in your classroom as a means of maintaining power in a positive manner, some of which include expert teacher, positive teacher/student relationship, and teacher feedback. You are also encouraged to gain compliance from students by communicating reward for said compliance, hence among the 22 BATs outlined in Figure 2.1, you may find immediate reward from teacher, deferred reward from behavior, and reward from teacher as particularly useful. You also want to use BATs and BAMs, which reflect caring and trustworthiness, such as self-esteem and deferred reward from behavior (e.g. "It will prepare you for getting a job after school" or "You always do such as good job"). Also outlined in Figure 2.1 are antisocial BATs, which should be avoided in the classroom, such as punishment from behavior, guilt, debt, and punishment from teacher. Avoid using messages that communicate your intent to punish students for non-compliance (e.g. "I'll be disappointed in you" or "I'll give you an "F" if you don't"). Do your best to avoid antisocial messages at all costs, as it can be difficult to recover from these types of messages. Lastly, avoid treating your students as if they are subordinates, instead using BATs which give your students responsibility over their own success and/or failures; remember, power is not something that we *take* from our students, but instead something that is *given* to us by our students (Pytlak & Houser, 2014).

Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to explore the use of power among GTAs, develop a sound understanding of the bases of power, along with their prosocial and antisocial classifications, and lastly to explore the BATs and BAMs you may utilize in your own classroom, as a means of obtaining and maintaining power, or influence, with your students. The use of power in the classroom remains an important instructional topic, and warrants our attention, not only as a means of developing sound student-teacher relationships, but also as a means of reaching individual and educational goals in the classroom (Schrodt et al., 2007). Frequently, reaching individual and educational

goals entails effectively managing and reducing student misbehaviors, which detract from the learning environment; managing these student misbehaviors relies largely on the instructor's use of power. As we've established here, using power effectively in the classroom calls for us to employ the prosocial power bases: expert, referent, and reward power. It also entails our use of messages that communicate reward for compliance, and our avoidance of messages that communicate punishment for non-compliance. While your unique role as a student-teacher may bring about struggles with power or credibility, it is important to acknowledge that an understanding of power and the ability to communicate in prosocial ways, can provide you with an opportunity to overcome some of these challenges. So, if you find yourself at all concerned about employing power in your classroom, or asking yourself whether your students will take you seriously due to your age or lack of previous teaching experience, rest easy knowing that even though power is given, in a classroom you do have a degree of control over whether or not your students decide to hand over that power.

Key Terms

Antisocial messages (61)	BAMs (61)	BATs (61)
Coercive power (60)	Expert power (61)	Legitimate power (61)
Prosocial messages (61)	Referent power (61)	Reward power (60)
Teacher power (60)		

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Chapter 3
Navigating your Role as a GTA

I think what was most challenging for me when I began teaching as a GTA, was learning how to navigate my identity as both a student and a teacher. This role requires you to find your voice as a student, a teacher, a scholar in your discipline, and a member of your department, which can be difficult to juggle at times. I can remember vividly many occasions, which left me with a great deal of uncertainty about my identity. I remember overhearing my students speak frantically about their finals, but for fear of compromising my teaching persona, refraining from sharing that I also hadn't gotten any sleep that night because I too was working on finals. I remember putting my dry erase markers and notes away after teaching a class, only to sit in the very seats my students sat in because just ten minutes later, I became a student in that same classroom. I remember the perplexed looks and scoffs I received when I told others that I, a woman in her early twenties, was teaching in higher education, and I remember the self-doubt that overcame me when these reactions made me question my qualifications and my identity as a teacher. For a long time I felt as though I were functioning mostly in a grey space, where I had to be incredibly mindful of everything I did, said, and even wore, in any given context. When I spoke to fellow GTAs, I found comfort knowing they too experienced this uncertainty. What I hope to accomplish in this chapter is to offer tools for reducing these uncertainties, and validate the experiences of and provide solace to, the GTA who feels like they too are functioning in this grey space.

Understanding the GTA's Multi-Faceted Nature and the Uncertainties it Poses

In navigating this dynamic role as a GTA, you too may experience some uncertainties about *who* or *what* you are, as well as uncertainties about your capabilities as both a graduate student and teacher. When reflecting on their experiences, GTAs often express confronting issues related to identity and competence, as well as notions of self-worth (Park, 2004), which will be explored in this chapter. While attention to your teaching and research is important, it is equally important that you tend to your well-being by acknowledging your internal experiences with identity and other uncertainties during this transitional time. Along the way, you *can* and *will* learn to move gracefully through these new dimensions of your identity as a graduate student and as a teacher; learning to do so involves understanding of the dynamic nature of your role as a GTA, and acceptance that somewhere along the way you will adopt and internalize a new facet of your identity, which will allow you to function well in this new arena that is higher education.

Identity and Role Conflict

Identity is what allows us make sense of, and find our place in, an almost limitless world (Schwartz, 2005); it is the answer we provide to the question "who are you?" (Vignoles, Schwartz, & Luyckx, 2011). While this question has never truly been easy to objectively answer, it may become even more difficult to conceptualize when you add "GTA" to the mix. Your experience as a GTA will be nothing short of multifaceted, and this is perhaps what makes your role so unique; you are constantly wearing a different hat as you shift from student, to teacher, to researcher, to peer. Because the role of a GTA is multi-faceted in nature, there is a great deal of ambiguity surrounding it, whether from students, faculty, and perhaps most prominently, GTAs. Much of the literature on GTAs attests to this sense of ambiguity, describing GTAs as 'neither fish nor fowl' (Park, 2002), 'postgraduate chameleons' (Harland & Plangger, 2004), 'postgrads on the edge' (Linehan, 1996), or donkeys in the department (Park & Ramos, 2002). If you are regarded as 'neither fish nor fowl' or as a 'postgraduate chameleon', you can imagine why it can be difficult to answer "who are you?"

Balancing your multiple identities as a GTA may call for some identity management. Pratt and Foreman (2000) distinguish four identity management responses: (1) compartmentalization, or preserving all current identities without seeking to attain any synergies among them; (2) deletion, or removing the organization of one or more of its multiple identities; (3) integration, which entails fusing multiple identities into a distinct new whole; and (4) aggregation, or attempts to retain all identities while forging links between them. Managing your identity as a GTA may call for you to aggregate, or maintain each of your identities while recognizing that each of them is linked in some way. In other words, recognize that you have many identities, but also acknowledge that you can bridge links between each of them. So, who are you? Some might say you are a dynamic and multi-layered being, whose identities are neither static, nor easily divisible (Hennings, 2009). In an academic context, you are a graduate student, a teacher, a junior scholar and a peer. Identifying as all of these things can leave you feeling as though you are in a juggling act, that is equally as challenging as it is confusing, however, understanding the root of this ambiguity may help clear some confusion and help you better manage your multi-layered identity as a GTA.

So, what is the root of this uncertainty? As a GTA, you may construct yourself variously as a learner, student, academic, teacher, and researcher, requiring you to constantly change identities in a chameleon-like manner, depending on the academic context (Harland & Plangger, 2004). Among these various identities, this uncertainty stems most prominently from the fact that you simultaneously identify as both a student and a teacher. While the two roles are distinctly separate, you will be expected to perform each role effectively and with mastery. Unfortunately, the success in one role does not necessarily imply success in the other; in fact, in some cases one role can detract from the success of the other (Stanton & Darling, 1989). Identifying with two different roles, such as student and teacher, raises the potential for concerns about role conflicts (Muzaka, 2009). **Role conflict** is described as representing a struggle to manage multiple roles effectively (Potee, 1993), whether it is teaching, serving as a role model for students and

peers, doing research, participating in the community of your department, or being a student and progressing in your coursework. More specifically, role conflict occurs when a person takes on two or more roles that are contradictory to each other (Brandau, 1999).

Role conflict is generally categorized under one of five types: (1) role ambiguity, (2) intrarole conflict, (3) role overload, (4) interpersonal role conflict, and (5) interrole conflict (Brandau, 1999). **Role ambiguity** stems from uncertainty about a course of action when various roles one holds contradict one another. **Intrarole conflict** entails uncertainty surrounding a person in a group whose ideas about enacting a certain role differ from group members. **Role overload** involves uncertainty about what to do when one has too many roles to fill. **Interpersonal role conflict** is derived from uncertainty about which role is most acceptable in a given context. Lastly, **interrole conflict** stems from uncertainty experienced when behaviors associated with a role one holds, are incompatible with that of another role they hold. As a GTA, you are most likely to experience role overload, interpersonal role conflict, and interrole conflict, which is unfortunately seen as one of the most problematic conflicts among the five (Forsythe, 1999). For example, if you find yourself under strict time constraints and conflicted about whether to grade your students' work or study for the exam you have tomorrow, you may be experiencing role overload. If you find yourself sitting among your professors at a conference and wondering whether you should behave as a student or as a junior faculty member, you may be experiencing interpersonal role conflict. And, if you find yourself refraining from venting about your coursework and exams for fear of compromising your teaching persona, or dodging your students on non-teaching days when you are dressed as a student, you may be experiencing interrole conflict.

Impostor Phenomenon

Additional uncertainties may also surface as you maneuver through new roles as both a graduate student and a teacher, one of which is referred to as **impostor phenomenon (IP)**, sometimes also called impostor syndrome. IP can be described as feeling like an intellectual fraud, having attained success merely by being at the right place in the right time, as opposed to being qualified or deserving of one's position (Clance, 1985); it is also characterized by feelings of self-doubt, lack of confidence, or fear of making mistakes. It is not unusual for students pursuing advanced degrees, or individuals operating in competitive or stressful occupations, much like that of academic environment, to experience IP (Kets de Vries, 2005). In fact, it is estimated that nearly 70% of the population experience some degree of IP (Clance, 1985). Experiencing IP on both fronts simultaneously (as both a graduate student, and teacher in higher education) can be doubly difficult. As a GTA, IP becomes problematic with potential to lead to reduced accessibility to students, discomfort acting as a role model/mentor to students, conducting less research and avoiding opportunities to submit to/present at conferences, avoiding departmental functions, and avoiding opportunities to socialize with peers and faculty members.

Teacher Self-Efficacy

From an instructional standpoint, IP can negatively affect your teacher self-efficacy (TSE) because it generates negative views about one's qualifications and feelings of self-doubt. **TSE** is a construct used to refer to a teacher's perception of his or her ability to reach desired objectives regarding student learning and engagement (Denham & Michael 1981;Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001). In other words, it is your perception of whether you have the ability to generate learning, motivation, and engagement among your students. According to Bandura (1997) our self-efficacy comes from four primary sources: (1) mastery experience, (2) vicarious experience, (3) social persuasion, and (4) physiological responses. The most prominent source, mastery experiences, develops through your interpretation of your capabilities in certain tasks, based on the execution and outcomes of said tasks. For example, this could be your interpretation of your skills as a teacher based on your execution and outcomes of a lesson plan. The second source, vicarious experiences, refers to learning from observations of others who you believe have similar attributes to you, as they carry out a particular task. For example, you may observe another GTA teaching, and develop your self-efficacy based on whether or not they are successful at the task. The third source, social persuasion, refers to the judgments or feedback you receive from others about your ability to carry out a task. For example, if your coordinator gives you positive feedback about your teaching, your self-efficacy increases, while the reverse would lower your self-efficacy. Lastly, physiological responses refer to the moods, or degree of stress and/or anxiety you experiences while carrying out a particular task. For example, if you experience joy or excitement while teaching, your self-efficacy is higher, though if you experience anxiety while teaching, your self-efficacy is lowered.

As a GTA, your TSE is an important factor to consider, as a higher sense TSE has been linked to more innovative and student-centered approaches to teaching (Wertheim & Leyser, 2002), more flexible and adaptable teaching strategies (Guskey, 1988), increased resilience to challenges in you may face in the classroom (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, & Hoy, 1998) and overall better performance in the classroom (Woolfolk-Hoy & Davis, 2006). Your degree of TSE will determine whether you incorporate new technologies in the classroom, to enhance learning (Albion, 2001). Furthermore, maintaining a higher degree of TSE may increase your persistence, effort, and enthusiasm towards teaching (Milner, 2002). Because IP generates feelings of self-doubt and a lack of confidence, it is no wonder why it can generate a lower sense of TSE.

Acknowledging some of the uncertainties and/or challenges presented to GTAs in the realm of identity, perceptions of one's capabilities, and self-confidence (whether role conflicts, IP, or TSE), is not meant to discourage you, but rather to preface the role of professional socialization in your journey as a GTA. Having developed an understanding of the factors influencing your sense of identity and abilities as a GTA, we can explore how professional socialization may serve as a transitioning agent, allowing you to successfully navigate your journey a graduate student and teacher.

GTAs and Socialization: Reducing Uncertainties

So, what is **socialization**, and how might it be useful in navigating your unique role as a GTA? From a professional standpoint, it is the process by which a student willingly adopts and internalizes a new, professional self-image through role taking and identification with significant others (Friedenberg & Roth, 1954; Sherlock & Morris, 1967; Weiss, 1981). It is through socialization that the nature of our identity changes over time, we learn to reduce uncertainty about our identity, and it is the means by which we adapt to and learn about new jobs and roles (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994).

There are several socialization models in literature, though here we'll reference organizational socialization, which involves three phases: (1) anticipatory, (2) encounter, and (3) metamorphosis (Van Maanen, 1978). In the anticipatory phase, you will develop expectations about what it will be like to be a member of the organization (Louis, 1980). As a GTA, you experience this phase upon learning of your acceptance into the position/program as you anticipate what teaching, as a graduate student, will be like. The encounter phase involves actually beginning your graduate program and teaching assignment. This phase, typically six to ten months into assuming your new position, will entail a certain degree of culture shock if expectations do not coincide with reality (Louis, 1980), and learning new processes and letting go of old ones (Miller, 2009). The final phase, metamorphosis, is when you shift from newcomer to insider (Louis, 1980). As a GTA, this stage can be described as finally feeling as though you identify as a true member of your department and program, and as a teacher.

Developing a professional identity is a crucial tool for success as a GTA. Establishing a professional identity through socialization entails a number of factors, from learning the skills and knowledge required to perform a job, to understanding the norms, values, language, and attitudes needed to "interpret experiences, interact with others, prioritize activities, and determine appropriate behavior" (Perna & Hudgins, 1996). Becoming a GTA is considered a powerful socialization experience due to the need to develop knowledge and skill as a teacher and an academic, as well as adoption of the norms, values, attitudes, and rules of the organization you function within (Braxton, Lambert, & Clark, 1995). In this process for graduate students, faculty members generally serve as agents of change, instilling both professional values and beliefs in graduate students through mentoring and role modeling (Egan, 1989), though that does not mean you will play a passive role in the process. The socialization process is both stressful for newcomers (Spector, Dwyer, & Jex, 1988), and one that requires effort from both the institution and the individual (Myers & Oetzel, 2003), but through both understanding of, and acting as an active member of the process, it is manageable. Here I encourage you to avoid regarding the socialization process as something that simply *happens* to you, and instead, participate as an active member in the process. So, how exactly can you be an active member in the socialization process? Below are some suggestions, which may both expedite the process and make it a much easier one:

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Seek and maintain mentorships. While some mentor-mentee relationships develop naturally, this is not always the case. This may require you to seek out faculty members with similar research interests and experiences, who may offer you support and guidance as both as student and a teacher. If you have already established a mentor-mentee relationship within your department, actively maintain the relationship by keeping in frequent contact with mentors, and by seeking advice and guidance in academic contexts when needed.

Develop relationships with fellow GTAs. Another crucial element of the socialization process is developing relationships with peers and establishing communication networks (Wise, 2011). Establishing and maintaining relationships with your fellow GTAs creates a space where each of you can share your experiences and challenges, truly empathize with one another, and work collectively to conceptualize ways to navigate any tensions with regard to identity or teaching. These relationships also allow for venting and confidence checks, which are important components in the socialization process in allowing new teachers to relieve frustrations and uncertainties associated with a new role (Staton-Spicer & Darling, 1986). Additionally, establishing these kinds of relationships allows for each of you to share new ideas about teaching, whether activities, assignments, or lesson plans.

Be present in your academic/department community. Being an active member of your academic social network will allow you to more quickly adapt and assimilate into your role as both as graduate student and teacher. This may entail attending department functions and events, attending study sessions or outings with members of your cohort, interacting with fellow students and faculty on a regular basis, etc. Participating in these activities will allow you to more quickly identify and adopt the norms, values, language, and behaviors of your organization, develop a sense of community and belonging, as well as create networks, which will help you professionally in the future.

Seek social support. Don't be afraid to seek support, regardless of where it might come from. Categories of support known to be crucial in the socialization process include: emotional support, such as venting with other GTAs; instrumental support, such as borrowing materials from peers or faculty for research/teaching, such books or teaching activities; informational support, such as asking for advice from a more seasoned GTA; and appraisal support, such as seeking feedback on a new classroom activity you plan to try (House, 1981). Acquiring social support will help you to maintain or increase your TSE (Dixon, 2012).

Seek instructional development beyond GTA training. It's important to view teaching as fluid and ever changing. Our teaching strategies should never be fixed or stagnant; instead we should constantly be growing as teachers, trying new and innovative strategies in the classroom, reflecting on our teaching practices, and always asking ourselves where and how we might improve. While most GTA programs provide some sort of training, you should seek out other means of instructional development when teaching and

studying permits, such as workshops facilitated at your college. Attending instructional workshops will help you in a number of ways: (1) exposure to new and creative teaching strategies or activities you may try in your own classroom, some of which may offer teaching perspectives outside of your own discipline (2) expanding your network, as you meet and engage with other teachers, both within and outside of your department, and (3) ultimately instilling within you a mindset that teaching is a craft; one that we continuously improve with time, practice, and reflection.

The suggestions referenced above are just a few ways you can become an active member in the socialization process you will undergo as a GTA. Being properly socialized into your new role has a number of benefits, including a higher degree of career involvement, decreased sense of role ambiguity and role conflict, and ultimately a better sense of personal and professional identity (Miller & Jablin, 1991).

Summary

The goal of this chapter was to direct our attention to and acknowledge the challenges you may experience as a GTA in regard to managing your identity in a multifaceted role. Among these challenges are ambiguities about identity, role-conflict, impostor phenomenon (IP), and reduced teacher self-efficacy (TSE). In addressing these challenges, the socialization process was introduced as a means of managing the layered nature of your role, and functioning successfully in your organization. By playing an active role in the socialization process, whether through mentorships, engaging in your academic communities, or seeking out social support, you can learn to assimilate into your new role and identity and reduce uncertainties along the way. If you have at all found yourself faced by uncertainties about your identity in your role as a GTA, I hope this chapter has provided you solace knowing that you can turn that grey space into a space of positive change and growth, by which you embrace the new bits (graduate student) and pieces (teacher) of yourself.

Key Terms

Identity (68)	Impostor phenomenon (69)	Interpersonal role conflict (69)
Interrole conflict (69)	Intrarole conflict (69)	Role ambiguity (69)
Role conflict (68)	Role overload (69)	Socialization (71)
Teacher self-efficacy (70)		

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