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The Organizational Improvement Plan at Western University
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Increasing the Effectiveness of English Language Teaching Assistants

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Abstract

The purpose of this Organization Improvement Plan (OIP) is to develop an approach for increasing the effectiveness of Teaching assistants (TAs) working in the English language classrooms of an international university. TAs play an important role in teaching and learning activities of many universities, where they are employed across a variety of academic disciplines. A Japanese university recruits international undergraduate TAs to model the use of English and facilitate group discussions in small-sized classes. However, most TAs are untrained and inexperienced non-native English speakers, and many have expressed not feeling completely effective in their role. To begin to consider this issue, the paper commences with a background on the organization and an exploration of the problem using a combination of Bolman and Deal's (2017) framework, a PESTLE analysis, and relevant data and literature. Based on findings and the organization's current readiness for change, a two-pronged solution of developing a guideline for the TA role and providing corresponding training to equip TAs with needed skills, is recommended. Guided by principles of servant, transformational, and shared leadership theories, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and communication will be achieved using David Cooperider's (2013) Appreciative Inquiry, and Kotter's (1996) Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change. These approaches will be applied, in addition to the critical and constructivist lenses, to facilitate collaboration on a plan that will address the needs of stakeholders, but most importantly those of TAs – the least powerful, yet the most desirous of and impacted by the change. Lastly, the ethical implications of the initiative will be also considered, to ensure a process which optimizes TA effectiveness, as well as TA, teacher, and student satisfaction levels.

Keywords: *Undergraduate Teaching Assistants, English language Teaching Assistants, Teaching Assistant Training, Teaching Assistant Effectiveness, Servant Leadership, Kotter's (1996) Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change*

Executive Summary

This paper is the culmination of work completed over the span of a Doctor of Education program. It presents a plan to increase the effectiveness of TAs in English language classrooms at a medium-sized international university in Japan. Most of the TAs are international undergraduate students recruited to help Japanese students learn the English language. However, a significant proportion are inexperienced, non-native English speakers, who receive minimal training prior to commencing their tenure in the classroom. Many have reported feeling ill-equipped to fully meet the demands of their role.

Chapter one presents the organization by exploring its history, vision and mission, national culture, and its unique political, economical, social, technological, and legal characteristics. The change agent's leadership approaches – servant, transformational, and shared leadership, and a guiding leadership philosophy framed by two theoretical lenses – critical theory and constructivism, are also introduced. With these details in place, the problem of TA ineffectiveness is analyzed using key organizational models and relevant internal data and literature research. These provide a rich perspective on the issue, the organization, and the stakeholders impacted. Some of the issues identified include a lack of clarity in terms of the TA role, lack of preparation of TAs for the classroom, and time and budgetary limitations on the part of lecturers and the department. Additional possible lines of inquiry are outlined, and priorities for change and key drivers of change, including the change agent, a TA team, and TAs, are identified. The chapter terminates with an assessment of the organization's readiness for change, which reveals the presence of a positive level of organizational and stakeholder readiness, and necessary driving force to advance the change.

In Chapter two, further analysis of the organization and problem helps clarify needed changes. Consequently, it is determined that a guideline delineating the role of TAs should be

developed, and training offered to TAs in alignment with it. Leadership approaches, models, and theories which inform the change are examined in closer detail. Servant leadership is chosen to lead the change initiative, while transformational and shared leadership are used as complementary approaches because of the strengths they contribute to the plan. These leadership approaches encourage leaders to build close relationships with others, strive to improve their needs, and inspire them to higher levels of achievement. Two models, Appreciative Inquiry – which facilitates change by exploiting the positive aspects of an organization – and the Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change – which outlines a step-by-step process of change – are selected to execute the project. Both models promote engagement and collaboration, and compliment the three leadership approaches and two theoretical paradigms selected to advance the change process. They will enable the change agent to advance the desires of TAs, and balance these with the demands of other stakeholder groups – faculty members, administrators, and students. To conclude the chapter, ethical considerations which must be recognized are outlined and described. These include the ethical obligations of an organization to its workers, the duties of teachers and staff to students, and the maintenance of information confidentiality.

The final chapter of the paper provides details on strategies which will be used to implement, monitor and evaluate, and communicate the change. In order to specify the TA role and develop a training program, the implementation stage is divided into three phases: short-, mid-, and long-term. The phases will be executed in accordance with the Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change, and Appreciative Inquiry, and include building momentum, identifying support personnel for the change, understanding stakeholder reactions to change, and making adjustments to the plan. Applying the principles of Appreciative Inquiry will foster a process that is built on optimism and encouragement. The monitoring and evaluation stage advances tools such as surveys, focus group interviews and classroom observations to determine the level of support and areas necessary for modification. To ensure that all impacted by the plan are informed throughout the process, a consistent message of the advantages of the change and updates will be regularly communicated in meetings and informal discussions, as well as through emails, and reports.

The paper ends with a reflection on some next steps that can be taken to foster a sustained positive change. These include increasing opportunities for training to TAs and offering training to faculty members, as well as recruiting a dedicated TA manager to facilitate ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the effects of changes.

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List of Acronyms

AI – Appreciative Inquiry

CALL – computer assisted language learning

CVM – the Competing Values Model (Cooper & Quinn, 1993)

IU – International University (pseudo-name for the institution under examination)

KESP – Kotter's (1996) Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change

LMS – Learning Management System

MEXT – (Japanese) Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

OIP – Organization Improvement Plan

PoP – Problem of Practice

TA – Teaching Assistant

Glossary of Terms

Administrators: administrative, non-teaching staff, working to support students and faculty. In this OIP, this refers mainly to junior level office staff, not including deans and upper managers and executives, unless specified.

Appreciative Inquiry: developed by David Cooperider (2013), the model includes four stages: discovery, dream, design, and destiny. It prompts stakeholders to examine an organization's strengths and draw inspiration from its history and values, for the purposes of building a new shared vision (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). This model will be useful in prompting the change process described in this OIP in an uplifting manner.

Bolman and Deal's (2017) framework: an organizational analysis tool consisting of four frames: structural, human resources, political and symbolic. Using all four frames enriches understanding of organizations, and leads to the discovery of areas worthy of attention.

Change agents: refers to the author of this OIP. According to Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols (2016), a successful change agent plans and implements change initiatives, which moves the organization from the present to a future desired state.

Change champion: Cawsey et al. (2016) describe this as an individual who will advocate for the change plan at all cost. This term is used in this OIP to denote those who support the change, and enthusiastically embrace it.

Change participant: used interchangeably with the term, stakeholder, to denote TAs, faculty members, and students in the English department at IU; as well as administrative staff connected to the TA program at the university. They are expected to participate in this change proposal, and to be affected by it.

Change team: used interchangeably with the term, guiding coalition. They are usually chosen from across the organization to lead change (Cawsey et. al., 2006). In this OIP, the change team, or guiding coalition will be appointed volunteers: TAs, faculty members, administrators, and students, who care about the TA program and would like to see improvements. They will join the TA team to help the change agent in leading this change project.

Competing Values Framework: offers different lens which "represent[s] four different value sets which provide competing views on the measuring of organizational effectiveness" (Cooper and Quinn, 1993, p. 179). It can be used to assess an organization's primary culture, values, and tasks (Cawsey et al., 2016). It is divided into four quadrants which present an organization's orientation along two dimensions – flexibility versus control, and internal versus external orientation.

Constructivism: embodies the principle that reality is socially constructed (Mertens, 2019). Knowledge is actively created by individuals and groups through activities which enable them to generate a subjective interpretation and representation of the world (Cupchik, 2001; David, 2015; Hein, 1991). Constructivists attempt to understand reality from the point of view of those who experience it. This means working collaboratively with stakeholders to achieve change.

Course instructor: used interchangeable with lecturer and teacher; signifies any teaching staff including Part-time Lecturers, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, and Associate Professors and Professors in the English language department of IU.

Critical Lens: draws attention to the way dominant perspectives shape consciousness, leads to a better understanding of differing views, and helps modify them as necessary (Kincheloe, 1999). This theory is applied to emphasize on the perspective of TAs with respect to the problem of practice, and to ensure that their needs are met.

Culture: Morgan (2006) defines it as the “shared values, shared beliefs, shared meaning, shared understanding, and shared sense making” (p. 134), which distinguish a group from another. Understanding culture is important, as this OIP is situated in Japan, a conservative, hierarchal, and collective society ((Bachnik, 2019; DeVos, 1975; Ono, 2018; Wada, 1995). This has implication for the way the OIP will be implemented.

Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change: proposed by Kotter’s (1996), it describes a series of eight stages which organizations must follow one by one, to undergo successful change implementation.

Expert power - one of the three types of power the change agent exercises in the organization. The other two are, legitimate and referent power. This stems from experience within the department, and from the change agent’s position on the TA team. According to Yukl (2010), “the target person complies because he/she believes that the agent has special knowledge about the best way to do something” (Yukl, 2010, p. 201).

Faculty member: used interchangeable with lecturer and course instructors; signifies any teaching staff including Part-time Lecturers, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, and Associate Professors and Professors in the English language department of IU.

Guiding Coalition: a term coined by Kotter (1996); this is a “group with shared commitment and enough power to lead the change effort” (Kotter, 1996, p. 1). In this OIP, the guiding coalition is also called the change team. They will be appointed volunteers: TAs, faculty members, administrators, and students, who care about the TA program and would like to see improvements. They will join the TA team to help the change agent in leading this change project.

International University (IU): pseudo-name for the Japanese institution investigated in this OIP. IU is a mid-sized international university, with 50% of faculty members and students originating from outside Japan.

Lecturer: including Part-time Lecturers, employed by the university to carry out teaching and teaching-related administrative duties in the English language department of IU.

Legitimate power: one of the three types of power the change agent exercises in the organization. The other two are, referent and expert power. This stems from position on the TA team. According to Yukl (2010), with referent power, “the target person complies because he/she believes the agent has the right to make the request and the target person has the obligation to comply" (Yukl, 2010, p. 201).

MEXT - The (Japanese) Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) maintains overall influence over the development of higher education in Japan. It provides funding to selected universities, such as IU, to promote internationalization.

Organizational Culture: Every organization's culture is unique, is rooted in its history, and "radiates meanings into every aspect of the enterprise" (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012, Chapter 2, Section 4, Para 1). Moreover, national culture bears great influence on organizational culture (Morgan, 2006). Due to its mission of internationalization, IU's culture is characterized by a juxtaposition of Japanese and Western values.

Promotion of Global Human Resource Development: an initiative by MEXT, which provided funding to select universities such as IU in 2012, to cultivate internationally oriented workers (human resources), who can succeed globally and improve Japan's international competitiveness and relationship with other countries.

Referent power: one of the three types of power the change agent exercises in the organization. The other two are, legitimate and expert power. This stems from relationships with colleagues and other stakeholders. According to Yukl (2010), with referent power, "the target person complies because he/she admires or identifies with the agent and wants to gain the agent's approval" (Yukl, 2010, p. 201).

Senior Lecturer: Lecturers who have been granted seniority and tenure at International University.

Servant leadership: one of three leadership approaches applied to the change process; servant leadership will lead the change initiative, while transformational and shared leadership will complement its use. It was developed and popularized by Greenleaf in the 1970s. Essentially, servant leaders exist to serve others (Bass, 2000). Servant leadership aims to develop others and lead them to independence (Northouse, 2016), and seeks to improve the welfare of the marginalized (Greenleaf, 1970; 1998).

Shared leadership: one of three leadership approaches applied to the change process. It will complement and strengthen the use of servant and transformational leadership, as it places emphasis on relationships. Shared leadership is necessary because the change agent is working with a team of people on the TA program. This type of leadership involves groups working together toward a goal, with leadership being enacted by any member irrespective of position, based on the needs of the organization (Pearce & Conger, 2003).

Stakeholder: This is used interchangeably with the term, change participant, to mean all individuals or groups impacted by the OIP, including TAs, faculty members, and students in the English department at IU; as well as administrative staff connected to the TA program at the university. They are expected to participate in this change proposal, and to be affected by it.

Students: unless specified, undergraduate Japanese students studying in the English language department treated in this OIP.

TA Program: managed by a senior tenured lecturer, who is aided by a group of administrators and faculty members, including the change agent. They oversee recruitment, hiring and training of international students with advanced English skills, who work as TAs in English language classes of IU.

TA Team: comprised of a group of faculty members, including the change agent. They are aided by administrators to implement the TA program in the English department of IU.

Teaching Assistant (TA): mainly international, undergraduate students employed as Teaching Assistants in English language classrooms in the English language department of IU. TAs are hired not to fulfil administrative roles, but to facilitate group discussions, and model English language usage to Japanese students.

Teacher: used interchangeable with lecturer and course instructors; signifies any teaching staff including Part-time Lecturers, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers, and Associate Professors and Professors in the English language department of IU.

Top 30 Global Hub Universities: another project by MEXT which recognized select universities, including IU, in 2014 for its pioneering efforts in leading the globalization of Japanese universities and society. Funding was provided to support the academic endeavours of these universities that are striving to become lead institutions in the world.

Transformational leadership: one of three leadership approaches applied to the change process. It will complement and strengthen the use of servant and shared leadership, as it places emphasis on relationships. Transformational leaders influence, inspire, stimulate and “pay special attention to each individual’s needs for achievement and growth by acting as a coach or mentor” (Bass & Avolio, 1994, p. 3). Whereas, servant leaders inspire others for their own good, transformational leaders motivate others for the good of the group or organization (Hoch, Bommer, Dulebohn & Wu, 2018).

Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem

Chapter one presents the institution, International University (IU), and the problem of practice (PoP) to be investigated. The institution's location in Japan, and the unique challenges this poses for handling the OIP are also considered. This is followed by an explanation of the leadership approaches and theoretical lenses that will be applied to the PoP. Due to the institutional context and change agent's values and position within the organization, servant, transformational and shared leadership are chosen to guide the change, while the critical and constructivist lenses are selected to frame it. To examine the problem more closely, Bolman and Deal's (2017) framework, a PESTLE analysis, and relevant literature review are discussed. Next, possible lines of inquiry arising from the problem of practice are outlined. Lastly, the vision for change and the organization's current readiness for the initiative are discussed. Table 1.1 and Figure 1.2 summarize stakeholders' predicted reactions to the change, and forces driving and opposing the change, respectively.

Organizational Context

Examining the organizational context within which a problem of practice is situated can offer valuable insight. This section presents background information on the environment, history, vision, mission and goals, structure, and culture of the university.

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Japan. The institution examined in this Organization Improvement Plan (OIP) is a private university located in Japan. Higher education in Japan experienced a tremendous increase after World War II, especially from the 1960s to the 1980s, as the Japanese economy flourished (MEXT, 2012; Saito, n.d.; Yamamoto, 2004). Today, the system comprises different types of institutions including universities, junior colleges, colleges of technology, and specialized training colleges (MEXT, 2012). Each type of institution has its mission, academic standards, and organizational structure (MEXT, 2015). The Ministry of

Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) maintains overall influence over the development of higher education in Japan. According to MEXT (2012), private institutions account for 80% of all university student enrolment. As a result, the "Japanese Government has deemed the promotion of private universities as one of its important policy issues and has adopted various kinds of promotion measures" (MEXT, 2012, p. 9). As an example, the government provides loans and "subsidies for operating costs and facilities maintenance costs [and extends] preferential tax treatment" to private institutions. (MEXT, 2012, p. 9).

Japanese society is currently facing diverse challenges with repercussions on the tertiary educational landscape. First, a declining birth rate has led to changes in the demographic makeup and is expected to have a major impact on higher education institutions (Newby, Weko, Breneman, Johanneson & Maassen, 2009). The second challenge is a decrease in Japan's global competitiveness. The government has attempted to ameliorate this issue by launching various initiatives to internationalize education at the university level (MEXT, n.d.). One of these initiatives involves attracting more international students, whose number saw a two-fold growth between 2010 and 2018, and a 12% rise from 2017 to 2018 (JASSO, 2019). This increase has helped attenuate the effects of decreasing Japanese student enrolment at universities, such as the one which is the focus of this OIP. However, internationalization is gradually transforming Japanese culture.

National Culture. Japan experienced an extensive period of national isolation, which has resulted in a closed (Fukuhara, 2016) and conservative (Bachnik, 2019; Linhart & Frühstück, 1998) society that is slow to change. Furthermore, the culture is paternalistic and hierarchical in nature (DeVos, 1975; Ono, 2018; Wada, 1995). Based on Hofstede's (1984) dimensions, Japanese culture appears moderate in terms of power distance, and individualism. It is postulated that power distance is moderate because Japan’s hierarchical culture is tempered by collectivism, which prevents major power inequalities (Hofstede Insights, n.d.). Furthermore, individualism is moderate because although Japanese people display characteristics of highly collective behaviour and value group harmony, they are less bound to their families and community than in other Asian countries (Hofstede Insights, n.d.). However, the culture is assessed to be high on masculinity – valuing patriarchy, competition, and success; and uncertainty avoidance – setting up structures in attempts to avoid the unknown and control the future (Hofstede Insights, n.d.). The latter could be partial explanation for the resistance to change.

These features affect Japanese organizations, which have traditionally been viewed more as communities which employees become a part, rather than workplaces where distinct individuals assemble (Morgan, 2006). Organizations were typically perceived as extensions of family, and characterized by teamwork (Firkola, 2006), with a system of life-time employment and seniority based on years in the company (Fukuhara, 2016). However, internationalization and globalization are disrupting traditional values and causing changes from ““Male chauvinism to gender equality,” “Collectivism to Individualism,” and “Seniority to Meritocracy”” (Fukushige & Spicer, 2007, p. 520) within Japanese organizations. The effects of these features and changes on the institution considered in this OIP are explored in the following sections.

Background of the Organization

History. The institution, which will be called International University (IU) for the purposes of anonymity, is one of Japan’s newest private universities. IU is a mid-sized university, situated in a small city in rural Japan. The institution was founded at the end of the last century, by one of the nation’s oldest educational organizations, with the explicit mission of becoming the first authentic international university in Japan. To support this goal, half of all faculty members and students are foreign nationals from different countries and regions.

In Japan, IU is recognized as a leader in internationalization. In 2012, the institution was selected by MEXT, and provided funding for a special project, Promotion of Global Human Resource Development (MEXT, n.d.). The goal of this initiative is to cultivate internationally oriented workers (human resources), who can succeed globally and improve Japan's international competitiveness and relationship with other countries. Again in 2014, the university was chosen by the government, as one of Japan's Top 30 Global Hub Universities for its pioneering efforts in leading the globalization of Japanese universities and society ("Top Global University Project", n.d.). According to MEXT, the aim of the Top Global University Project is to support the academic endeavours of Japanese universities that are striving to become lead institutions in the world (MEXT, n.d.). Additionally, in 2016 IU was awarded the highest rating among Japanese universities for its international environment by a leading provider of higher education data (THE, 2016).

Some of the characteristics that have made IU successful in establishing its reputation as a top international institution in Japan is the afore-mentioned multicultural environment. This attracts both Japanese and international students. The university also offers a dual language education system in Japanese and English, which nurtures students' competency in both languages. The English language education system is a major draw for Japanese students, especially for those who prefer to remain at home rather than travel abroad for an international study experience.

Vision, Mission, and Goals. Despite its national success, IU is not resting on its laurels, but has an ambitious mission to evolve from being a top international university in Japan, to a top global institution worldwide ("Top Global University Project", n.d). To achieve these aims, administration has set a new series of goals, two of which align with this PoP: i) make a multinational, multicultural environment – with international students from at least 100 countries and regions represented on campus; and ii) provide multicultural learning opportunities in 100% of classrooms (“Top Global University Project”, n.d.). The university is already having success in these areas and is contributing to the internationalization of Japanese students and Japanese competitiveness. International students from a total of 92 countries or regions were enrolled in the fall of 2019 (International University, 2019a), and the university has welcomed international students from 152 different countries and regions since its opening (International University, 2019b).

Organizational chart. An organizational chart of the university’s governance structure is provided in Appendix A, while Figure 1.1 depicts the structural chart of the department with which this OIP is concerned. As evidenced by the departmental chart in Figure 1.1, there is a chain of command climbing up from students: from TAs (mainly present in the English

General Director of Language Center		
Director of English	Director of Japanese	Director of Asia Pacific Languages
Associate Directors	Associate Directors	Associate Directors
Senior Lecturers	Senior Lecturers	Senior Lecturers
Full-time Lecturers	Full-time Lecturers	Full-time Lecturers
Part-time Lecturers	Part-time Lecturers	Part-time Lecturers
English language TAs	--	--

Figure 1.1. Organizational chart of International University’s language department. (TAs are mostly present in the English language department.)

department), to part-time lecturers, full-time lecturers, senior lecturers, associate directors, and directors. This fits in well with Japanese culture's hierarchical nature. This OIP affects students, TAs, and English language faculty members, of which the change agent is a member.

According to Keidel (2005), organizations exhibit a balance of individual autonomy, hierarchical control, and spontaneous cooperation. Examining how an organization performs on these three variables provides further insight into its structure and operation. At IU, the English department's office layout exhibits evidence of control, with an "assembly line" (Keidel, 2005, p. 70) style of configuration, where "pecking order and communication patterns are revealed and reinforced by physical space and boundaries" (Keidel, 2005, p. 70). For example, instructors are assigned seating in distinct sections of the office, in accordance with their level on the organizational chart. Part-time Lecturers are grouped together in one area, Full-time Lecturers are present in another, and Senior Lecturers are in a yet separate third location. Associate Directors and Directors occupy offices on the upper floors of the language building. This type of organizational layout is reflected to varying degrees in other buildings and departments of the university. However, the controlled nature of physical space and organizational hierarchy do not completely preclude cooperation within and between departments. As is further discussed below, the culture of the institution exhibits features of both control and cooperation.

Institutional Culture. Culture is defined as the "shared values, shared beliefs, shared meaning, shared understanding, and shared sense making" (Morgan, 2006, p. 134), which distinguish a group from another. Schein (2010) postulates that culture arises from accumulated shared assumptions that a group has learned as it has adapted to internal and external changes. Every organization's culture is unique, is rooted in its history, and "radiates meanings into every aspect of the enterprise" (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2012, Chapter 2, Section 4, para 1).

Therefore, corporate culture is as essential to the inherent features of an organization as its formal organizational chart and codes of conduct (Morgan, 2006). Furthermore, leaders play an important role in forming the values that guide an organization (Alvesson and Spicer, 2011; Morgan, 2006).

Due to its international environment and perhaps also its relatively recent establishment, IU's atmosphere is lively and positive. Students actively organize and participate in many cultural events on campus, while faculty and administrators offer a wide array of learning opportunities to students both in Japan and abroad. However, as many administrators migrated from the founding Japanese organization to establish IU, the institution subscribes to a dominant conservative cultural ideology, and is hierarchical and bureaucratic. Employees are assigned roles and levels, and expected to adapt to them and follow rules. Systems are relatively inflexible, and change is often not welcomed.

Leadership is a mixture of authoritarian and consensus-based decision-making – welcoming employees' input. However, leaders retain final say. It has been proposed that Japanese leadership is a fine balance between humanism and authoritarianism (Sakano, 1983). Humanism is said to arise from the Japanese religion of Shintoism, which stipulates a citizen's obligation to be kind and selfless to others, and a superior's obligation to care for and serve inferiors (De Mente, 2012). However, "authoritarianism refers to a leader's behavior that asserts absolute authority and control over subordinates and demands unquestionable obedience from subordinates" (Cheng, Chou, Wu, Huang, & Farh, 2004, p. 91). In the past, administration has been criticized for mandating policies and agendas without consulting faculty; policies which lacked awareness of the realities of those working in the trenches. Generally, the institutions' unique environment comprising both Western and Japanese employees, combined with the

Japanese style of consensus seeking, often make decision-making slow and difficult.

The various departments are autonomous, as is typical for a university (Keidel, 2005). Every department customarily acts independently, with little interaction with each other, except when necessary. In particular, there is a distinct separation between its two major colleges, an issue which the current university president has remarked upon and attempted to address. The process of decision-making within each department also differs, depending on the type of leader – for example, whether Japanese or non-Japanese. As a result, leadership in terms of decision-making is situational.

At the language center, leadership patterns take more participatory forms and tend to be more distributed and shared. The general director, a Japanese national, presents and sometimes seeks input from each language department's director. The latter work collaboratively with associate directors and senior lecturers. Nevertheless, the overriding conservative culture of the institution still influences and limits actions, even in the English language department – where the majority of faculty members are non-Japanese. Therefore, although the language center has some leeway, it can only act within the constraints mandated by university administrators.

The preceding exploration provides a summary of how IU has risen to meet the demands of its mission and goals, to form a unique international environment, subjected to the influences of its national culture. As evidenced by the discussion of the institution's culture and decision-making process, the organization reflects a juxtaposition of contradicting ideas, perhaps resulting from the cohabitation of Japanese and international cultures. An appreciation of these contradictions provides apt context to the leadership style of the change agent.

Leadership Position Statement and Lens Statement

A change agent plays a pivotal role in the success of an improvement plan. Thus, it is crucial not only to understand the organization, but also the change agent. The individual's values, personality, and position within the organization will have consequences on the change process, especially as it pertains to the choice of leadership approaches and theoretical lens for solving the PoP.

Leadership Position Statement. This section outlines the leadership position and style of the change agent within IU. Northouse (2019) describes leadership as the ability to guide, motivate and inspire a person or group of people to work towards a collective goal or vision. Meanwhile, Vogel (2012) emphasizes the intentional aspect of leadership to catalyse change. The change agent is an English lecturer, who also belongs to a team of faculty members involved in improving the TA program. The main aim of initiating change is to empower and motivate TAs to take control of their learning and work. In terms of metaphors, the change agent's leadership style can be compared to a gardener, who "… seek[s] to grow" (Alvesson and Spicer, 2011, p. 136) and "develop people" (Alvesson and Spicer, 2011, p. 81). On the TA team, the change agent's role is to facilitate training for TAs. This is rooted in a desire to see TAs become leaders themselves, and ultimately improve student outcomes. According to Maxwell (1995), "focusing on a person's strengths promotes positive growth, confidence, and success as a potential leader" (p. 21). TAs are encouraged to discover and actively use their talents.

Although the change agent is a junior level lecturer, present on the TA team are faculty members who possess greater positional authority. As a result, the change agent can offer recommendations, and is able to indirectly influence departmental policies and agenda. Moreover, the change agent has sometimes become an informal leader to new lecturers who have been assisted in becoming integrated into the department. Thus, there is evidence of legitimate, expert and referent power – arising from the position within the organization, and personal attributes (Yukl, 2010). Yukl (1989) asserts, "effective leaders rely on a combination of power sources… they develop referent and expert power to supplement their position power, and they use it … [in a] fashion that minimizes status differentials and avoids threats to the self-esteem of subordinates" (p. 256).

As the change agent's junior position constrains changes that can be accomplished directly – without superiors' support and edict – it is essential to gain buy-in from senior faculty members and other stakeholders. This will involve negotiation and compromises, which could decrease the speed of change. Also, there is danger that the vision may become diluted if enough endorsement is not garnered. To mitigate this, servant, transformational and shared leadership approaches have been chosen to lead and implement the change process.

Servant leadership was developed and popularized by Greenleaf in the 1970s. According to Greenleaf (1970), "care [is] taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served" (p. 6). Essentially, servant leaders exist to serve others (Bass, 2000). Servant leadership strives to develop others and lead them to independence (Northouse, 2019), and seeks to improve the welfare of the marginalized (Greenleaf, 1970). The change agent seeks to be in the background as an encouraging facilitator, present and available to serve the needs of change participants and to help them grow.

In similarity to servant leadership, transformational leadership is also about developing others. Leaders influence, inspire, stimulate and "pay special attention to each individual's needs for achievement and growth by acting as a coach or mentor" (Bass & Avolio, 1994, p. 3). Moreover, transformational leaders motivate followers to surpass their expected performance (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009), and "…go beyond their own self-interests for the good of their group, organization or community, country or society as a whole" (Bass, 2000, p. 21).

Ideally this is the type of impact the change agent would like to have within this organization. The goal is to encourage modifications in attitudes and values through strategies of empowerment, increase TA self-efficacy beliefs, and foster the internalization of the vision for them (Conger & Kanungo, 1998) as partners and contributors in the classroom.

Finally, shared leadership is necessary because the change agent is working with a team of people on the TA program. According to Pearce and Conger (2003), shared leadership is active and multidirectional, blurring hierarchical lines. This type of leadership involves groups working together toward a goal, with leadership being enacted by any member irrespective of position, based on the needs of the organization (Pearce & Conger, 2003). Some members of the TA team are higher up the organizational hierarchy than the change agent, but each has an area of expertise. As a result, individuals contribute according to their expertise and comfort, and unofficial leaders emerge as needed.

These three leadership approaches will be used strategically at different points in the change process and with different participants, to maximize the chance of success, minimize conflicts, and foster support from stakeholders. Employing these three is privileged over the use of other theories, such as situational leadership, because they encapsulate the values and ideals of the change agent, and are appraised to be suitable to this particular organizational context. Moreover, they can be used simultaneously in different combinations to precisely engage and respond to the needs of the diverse change participants represented in this OIP. Engaging and considering the needs of all stakeholders aligns well with critical theory and constructivism, the theoretical lenses which will frame the PoP.

Lens Statement. Though the critical and constructivist lenses are designated for analysing this problem of practice, other theoretical paradigms – functionalism, interpretivism, and social justice – were also appraised, but discarded. In functionalism, the world is perceived as a stable, organized, and objective reality (Lyon, 2017; Burrell & Morgan, 2005; Putnam, 1983). As this theory would encourage maintaining the status quo to avoid the uncertainty and possible disorder that might arise from changes, it was deemed inappropriate.

Interpretivism is similar to constructivism in that it posits that reality is created by individuals' subjective experience, and opportunity exists for multiple realities (Lyon, 2017; Morgan, 1980). This recognition of many perspectives is advantageous to this project, because it would encourage heeding the viewpoint of all change participants, including TAs. However, interpretivism was not regarded as entirely suitable because of the potential loss of TA voice amidst the clamour of other voices, more powerful than theirs.

Lastly, social justice was also rejected because its focus was concluded to be too broad. This lens espouses "values of inclusion, collaboration, cooperation, equal access, and equal opportunity" (Ayale, Hage, & Wilcox, 2011, p. 2795) for all human beings, irrespective of race, age, gender, background, and experiences. However, other than class, which is addressed by critical theory, TAs in the English language department do not share any other characteristic which contribute to their demise. Issues of class can be addressed more specifically by critical theory, because "critical theorists often place class at the crux of their analyses, with sex, gender, race, and ethnicity being less emphasized" (Martin, 2002, p. 3). It can be argued that TAs with whom this OIP is concerned are of a distinct, and even lower, class than faculty and staff. Therefore, critical theory is privileged over social justice for this project.

Critical theory evolved in the first half of the 1900s from a group of German philosophers and social theorists known collectively as the Frankfurt school (Corradetti, 2018; Brookfield, 2014; Martin, 2002). "The Frankfurt school thinkers focused on identifying, and then challenging and changing, the process by which a grossly iniquitous society uses dominant ideology to convince people that this inequity is a normal state of affairs" (Brookfield, 2014, p. 418). The school began with works by Horkheimer and Adorno, and extends to Marcuse, Habermas, and Fromm (Bohman, 2005). Works by Foucault have also sometimes been included (Martin, 2002). Horkheimer sought to liberate people from capitalism, and transform society into a real democracy (Bohman, 2005). Second generation thinkers, such as Habermas, argued for a free and just society where democracy and democratic ideals preside (Bohman, 2005).

Davies, Popescu and Gunter (2011) contend that the aim of critical work is not only to understand the world, but to improve it. The critical lens draws attention to the way dominant perspectives shape consciousness, leads to a better understanding of differing views, and helps modify them as necessary (Kincheloe, 1999). An initial step toward the goal of improving TA practice will be to understand the current state from the stance of a diversity of stakeholders, and observe how those of TAs correspond to those of other stakeholder groups. This knowledge can be used to challenge the status quo, and provoke self-reflection that "better reflects and represents the interests and perspectives of all who comprise it" (Wood, 2008, p. 326), especially those of TAs.

As critical theory stems from Western ideology, it can at times be incongruous with Japanese culture, which is less direct, dogmatic, and individualistic. These drawbacks are exacerbated by the fact that the change agent is a foreigner in Japan, with limited positional power in the organization. Therefore, relying solely on critical theory may prove difficult and ineffective. As a result, constructivism will also be applied to the PoP, to build on the merits of using critical theory: empowering TAs and challenging current ways of perceiving the position (Howieson, 2011); and to attenuate disadvantages, by fostering engagement and team-work.

The constructivist paradigm embodies the principle that reality is socially constructed (Mertens, 2019). Knowledge is actively created by individuals and groups in activities which enable them to generate subjective interpretations and representations of the world (Cupchik, 2001; David, 2015; Hein, 1991). Consequently, constructivism focuses on the analysis of human interpretation and experience (University of South Australia, n.d.), and attempts to understand reality from the point of view of those who live it. Influential constructivist theorists include Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bruner (Hein, 1991; Mertens, 2019). They highlighted the significance of active methods and socialization in consolidating meaning (David, 2015; Piaget, 1965; Vygotsky, 1980).

Both critical theory and constructivism permit interactions between the researcher and participants to appreciate reality from the viewpoint of those who experience it (Mertens, 2019). Furthermore, these lenses accommodate multiple, and even conflicting versions of meaning and knowledge (Cupchik, 2001; Mertens, 2019). Employing the two will enable the change agent to engage in continuous dialogue with stakeholders, to obtain different interpretations of the TA position, and develop with stakeholders a fitting vision of the role for the English department.

Simultaneously, and in line with critical theorists who “consciously and explicitly position themselves side by side with the less powerful in a joint effort to bring about social transformation” (Mertens, 2019, p. 21), the change agent will be able to champion the needs of TAs. Acknowledging and striving to meet their needs is important, as this OIP stems in part from their complaints about gaps in their knowledge and skills. Moreover, although they are the group most impacted by the change, they hold the least power – and hence the potential to be most overlooked. Thus, even if TAs are unable to completely attain their desires with respect to this PoP, providing them with recognition and a forum to express their demands, will be an important and beneficial outcome of applying critical theory to this OIP.

In addition to constructivism, the application of servant, transformational, and shared leadership approaches, as well as the two change models discussed later, will also enhance cooperation. These theories and models will aid in appreciating the stance of different stakeholders, and in promoting successful relationships with the TA team and change participants. This will expediate the discovery of solutions to the problem of practice. However, defining the problem of practice is an essential step in tackling it.

Leadership Problem of Practice

International University is a mid-sized private institution in Japan, with domestic and international students from all over the world. It offers a dual language education system, where international students must learn Japanese, while Japanese students must study English. The English department recruits international undergraduate Teaching Assistants to model the use of English and facilitate group discussions in small-sized language classes. However, a large proportion of TAs recruited are untrained and inexperienced non-native English speakers, and many have expressed feeling ineffective in some aspects of their role, which indicates that TAs are not performing at their full potential or functioning at their optimum level. The problem of practice that will be addressed is the lack of optimal effectiveness of TAs working in English language classrooms of International University. The OIP will develop a plan for increasing the effectiveness of the TAs.

TAs play an important part in the teaching and learning activities of many universities (Sargent, Allen, Frahm & Morris, 2009), where they are employed across a variety of academic disciplines (Fingerson & Culley, 2001; Weidert, Wendorf, Gurung & Filz, 2012). TAs at higher education institutions are divided into two categories: Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) and

Undergraduate Teaching Assistants (UTAs). The usual tendency at universities is to employ graduate students as TAs, but “undergraduates have long held a role in teaching at liberal arts colleges and universities” (Romm, Gordon-Messer & Kosinski-Collins, 2010, p. 81). Undergraduate TAs fill a number of different roles, depending on the faculty, department, and institution (Estrada & Tafliovich, 2017; Hogan, Norcross, Cannon & Karpiak, 2007). Some take on considerable teaching responsibilities, including course planning and execution, keeping attendance records, grading student work, and maintaining office hours (Rodriguez-Sabater, 2005). Other TAs play less of a central role, as they work alongside classroom instructors to lead discussion groups and help students either in class (Karpenko & Schauz, 2017), or during office hours (Chandler, 2005). The TAs with which this OIP is concerned are undergraduate students who work in the classroom alongside instructors.

Since half the undergraduate student population at IU are international students, they are employed by the English language department as TAs to promote Japanese students’ English language acquisition. This OIP outlines an initiative for meeting the needs of TAs so that they can fully meet the demands of their position. An in-depth analysis of the problem of practice is provided in the ensuing sections.

Framing the Problem of Practice

At this juncture, a survey of the history of TAs within the English language department at IU will prove advantageous to understanding the problem of practice. Additionally, the integration of Bolman and Deal’s (2017) framework, a PESTLE analysis, data from the department, and information from literature, will help illuminate the present state.

Historical overview of the English Department’s TA Program. A special characteristic of IU is its bilingual education system, with approximately 90% of courses offered in both Japanese and English. Over the course of their academic career, foreign students are expected to learn Japanese while Japanese students are required to acquire an advanced level of English. To assist Japanese students, the English department recruits about forty to fifty new TAs and retains about thirty veteran TAs to work in language classes every semester. The English TA program is about ten years old, and employs mostly undergraduate international students, with a high level of English language skills. TAs are paid to foster second language acquisition: by engaging students in one-one and group discussions, and modelling English. Each TA is assigned to one or two English language classes, which they visit twice a week, for a period of ninety-five minutes each.

This brief description portrays a TA program that is simple and uncomplicated. This belies the challenges surrounding the implementation and management of the program. In the next section, Bolman and Deal's (2017) framework is used to assess some of these issues. Its multi-frame approach makes it an appropriate tool for application.

Bolman and Deal's (2017) framework. The framework consists of four frames: structural, human resources, political and symbolic. Bolman and Deal (2017) assert that using all four frames enriches understanding of organizations, and enhances the ability of leaders to take actions in today's turbulent environment. The framework has been found applicable to many fields, including that of education. Lyon, Nattestad, Kachalia and Hammer (2014) observed that the four frames "helped leaders better understand challenges and opportunities… [and] supported more efficient and authentic change" (p. 29) in a dentistry program. By employing the frames in conjunction with other change strategies, the dental school was able to achieve a major curricular reform. Therefore, the four frames will be used to treat this PoP.

Structural Frame. Bolman and Deal's (2017) structural frame highlights "the architecture of organization – the design of units and subunits, rules and roles, goals and policies" (p. 23). Underlying these are, efficiency, clarity, and specificity (Bolman & Deal, 1991). IU and the English department's hierarchy place TAs at the bottom of the chain of command, with unclear roles. Although there are informal rules and policies, there are no formal procedures in place for TAs to follow with respect to how they fulfil the demands of their job. While a TA's objective is to help teachers and students, the details on how to accomplish these are neither furnished, nor is there a benchmark against which to measure their work. This ambiguity should be addressed.

Human Resource Frame. The human resource perspective "emphasizes understanding people – their strengths and foibles, reason and emotion, desires and fears" (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p.). In this frame, the priority is on human needs, feelings, relationships, and facilitation and empowerment (Bolman & Deal, 1991). The English department desires for TAs to support students and teachers; this is the rationale for hiring them. TAs in turn, want to discharge their duties, and achieve them in the best way. Both TAs and the department have the same final aim: positive student outcomes. However, TAs are not being adequately prepared for their position, and would like to hone their skills so that they can perform better in the classroom. According to Bolman and Deal (1991), human resource leaders strive to adjust the organization and people to each other, for instance, through training. Therefore, from a human resource reference point, TAs should be provided with a means to acquire needed preparation.

Political Frame. The political standpoint "sees organizations as competitive arenas of scarce resources, competing interests, and struggles for power and advantage" (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p. 23). This outlook fits in with critical theory, which as previously stated, seeks to redress power imbalances. TAs lack positional power because they are at the bottom of the organizational structure. Moreover, conflict sometimes arises between TAs and faculty, who retain greater power. Even though there should be cooperation between both parties, some faculty avoid entrusting responsibilities to TAs. This is because some teachers lack knowledge on how to incorporate TAs into their lessons, while others lack confidence in TAs to carry out their instructions. Another potential reason might be that some lecturers perceive TAs as threats to their authority. Rather than being recognized as valuable contributors to the classroom, TAs are considered competition, and their presence seen as an intrusion into the teacher's territory. The unspoken conflict and power imbalance between TAs and faculty demands further attention.

Symbolic Frame. Finally, the symbolic frame "puts ritual, ceremony, story, play, and culture at the heart of organizational life" (Bolman & Deal, 2017, p.23). These elements, which infuse meaning and predictability into an organization, are socially created and open to interpretation (Bolman & Deal, 1991). This frame aligns with both constructivist and critical theories, which acknowledge subjective representations of the world. Presently, within the English department, the TA role holds different interpretations for different people. For some, in accordance with the name of the position, a teaching assistant is someone whose priority is to help teachers facilitate course objectives. On the other hand, others believe TAs should focus on students, and their needs. Moreover, as TAs work independently of each other, they lack opportunities to develop a sense of shared identity, which can foster belonging and confidence. There are no symbols, traditions, or culture in place for TAs to identify with as a community. This has led to a sense of alienation and isolation on the part of some TAs. Thus, the different representations of an English language TA needs to be examined, the meaning and priorities of the role clarified, and the construction of a common TA identity strengthened.

Bolman and Deal's (2017) framework signal several concerns: ambiguities with the TA role, an inadequate preparation of TAs, a power imbalance between TAs and lecturers, and an undefined TA identity. However, since the framework does not demonstrate how to resolve issues, other tools are necessary. Moreover, as the model portrays only a static view of the internal environment of the organization, performing regular PESTLE analysis will sanction continued awareness of developments both inside and outside the organization.

PESTLE Analysis. This analysis can be used to examine the political, economic, social, technological and legal factors which affect TAs and IU. As the environmental component is not applicable to the purposes of this plan, it is excluded from deliberation.

Political. At the governmental level, there are currently no policies or programs which directly influence the work of TAs. However, the previously discussed Promotion of Global Human Resource Development and Global Hub University projects indirectly affect them. Through these projects, IU receives funding to further build international competitiveness in higher education in Japan, ("Top Global University Project", n.d.). Moreover, the university wants to be recognized as the best international university, not only in Japan, but in the world (International University, n.d.a.). TAs have the multicultural experience, as well as the necessary English skills, to make meaningful contributions to these endeavours. According to government documents, "English and other foreign languages are an important means to greatly expand opportunities for our children who will live in the global society, and an important element of improving Japan's international competitiveness." (MEXT, 2011, p. 2). Therefore, TAs have a significant part to play in internationalizing the university, and Japan.

Economic. The TA system in the English department costs about 3 million yen (about 30,000 US dollars) a year to run. Funding comes from the university for the education of Japanese students learning English. Improving the TA program and increasing TA effectiveness, will require time and financial resources. However, it would be difficult to solicit more monetary support from the university as other departments, such as the Japanese language program, perceive the English TA program as already receiving more than its share of benefits.

Social. TAs have limited authority, as they are usually regarded by administrators and lecturers as only classroom helpers. However, TAs want more greater direction so that they can play a more vital role in the classroom. Administrators expect TAs to learn the bulk of their responsibilities on the job, by being mentored by teachers, and following their directions. But many teachers are either too busy, or inexperienced to mentor or train TAs. Moreover, some English teachers are frustrated with the random assignment of TAs, and their lack of freedom to either choose a TA or opt out of the program; faculty cannot decline having a TA in their classroom. TAs' lack of training and familiarity with their duties, and teachers' lack of time and experience in integrating TAs into lessons, causes challenges in their working relationship.

Technological. English language classes are CALL (computer assisted language learning) based, with a learning management system (LMS) dedicated to information sharing, assignment submissions, and assessments. Hence, many classrooms are equipped with computers, and multimedia systems, such as smartboards. All TAs are familiar with the LMS, as they use it for their own course work. Therefore, it could be useful as a central place to coordinate and organize the activities of the TA program. Documents and video materials with ideas on how to improve TA effectiveness could be disseminated via this medium.

Legal. TAs are not unionized and are not entitled to any benefits. Nonetheless as they are employees of the university, the Japanese Constitution grants them and all workers the "right to organize, to bargain and to act collectively" (Jung, n.d.). If TAs were to recognize this power, and unionize, then they would be able to formally and legally demand better treatment, training, and benefits. However, unionizing is a challenging and difficult course of action.

The proceeding analysis reveals a political environment that urges better inclusion of TAs into the English curriculum of IU, because of their potential contributions to English language education and internationalization in Japan. However economic and social issues at IU frustrates the process due to restrictions on monetary resources and opportunities available to TAs to improve their skills, and the presence of tension between TAs and some faculty members. Legal and technological recourses suggest TA unionization or the use of available departmental LMS, respectively. However, these are either not feasible or adequate options. Further probing of the problem will aid in proposing possible solutions.

Relevant data. The TA program regularly carries out survey within the English department to assess the program. On a survey administered by the program in 2014, 64% of English language students stated that having a TA has a positive impact on their learning. Another survey of TAs in 2017 revealed that although 94% of TAs reported being satisfied with their role, they detail some specific issues which inhibit their effectiveness in the classroom. In particular, TAs expressed dissatisfaction with their integration into lessons; they would like clearer directions and want their strengths better utilized. Also, they would like to know how and when to take initiative during class so that they can engage students to a greater extent; and learn to effectively communicate with teachers. Improvements in these areas will enable TAs to offer a higher standard of service to the institution.

Literature review. The description centres on the merits TAs offer.

Benefits of TAs. Studies show that TAs have a positive effect on student learning, and other stakeholders (Crowe, Ceresola & Silva, 2014; Haswell, 2017; Hogan et al., 2007). TAs can provide students much needed support in course work (Hogan et al., 2007). Furthermore, they can be role models, who exemplify good student practices (Dickson, Dragon, & Lee, 2017), and who students perceive as more approachable and understanding of their concerns than faculty members (Fingerson & Culley, 2001; Hogan et al., 2007). Overall, TAs can also promote the idea that learning is important (Hogan et al, 2007), and help departments and institutions gain a more whole-some and community-like atmosphere (Dickson et al., 2017). Finally, in addition to helping instructors with administrative tasks, TAs can inject added perspective on teaching, as they “can become a source of feedback to the instructor” (Fingerson & Culley, 2001, p. 45).

Therefore, it can be concluded from literature, as well as report from students that TAs are important contributors to English language classrooms. However, analysis of their history and data from the English department, as well as results based on Bolman and Deal’s (2017) framework and PESTLE analysis, elucidate several issues: imprecision of TA duties; a lack of TA identity and voice; inadequate TA preparation; budgetary restrictions to the program; and busy academic staff. These challenges hinder their complete inclusion and success in English classes. Some principal questions which touch on these issues are further explored.

Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

There are several questions which pertain to this problem of practice. One of the most pertinent, on which this OIP hinges is: What does it mean to be an effective TA? Defining TA effectiveness is complex, and literature does not furnish a universal definition or criteria for TA, or even teacher effectiveness (Little, Goe & Bell, 2009). One construct that has been examined in relation to TA effectiveness is self-efficacy – a belief that a teacher can succeed in using the necessary teaching behaviour for the desired result (Prieto & Altmaier, 1994). Higher levels of self-efficacy have been linked to effective types of teaching behaviours that can increase student academic achievement (Prieto & Altmaier, 1994).

Also connected with the above discussion is this question: Which factors impact the effectiveness of TAs? Despite the widespread presence of TAs, there is lack of information (Weidert et al., 2012; Hogan et al., 2007) in this area. The research available focuses more on the influence of TAs on other constituents, such as students and teachers, as opposed to influence in the reverse sense. As noted, literature shows that TAs produce a positive effect on student learning (Crowe et al., 2014; Hogan et al., 2007) on teachers (Fingerson & Culley, 2001), on institutions (Dickson et al., 2017), and on TAs themselves (Haswell, 2017; Weidert et al., 2012). Therefore, defining TA effectiveness and elements which affect it is a contribution this OIP can make to the literature on teaching assistants.

Lastly, and to help advance the change initiative, it will be important to also pursue the following two questions: How can different stakeholders be encouraged to participate in the change?; how can a culture of collaboration be promoted between TAs, faculty, the TA team, and administration? Devising strategies that respond to these lines of inquiry will help gain stakeholders' support for and ownership of the change. It will mitigate possible damages, and ensure a smooth change implementation process. However, first, a comparison of the present state of TAs within the English department at IU, to the future desired state is necessary to explicate the types of change required.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

An awareness of the current TA condition is advantageous to shaping an appropriate future desired state. This section examines current and anticipated future states, priorities for change, as well as drivers of change who will aid advancement.

Present state. As aforesaid, TAs are drawn from the large body of international students with a high level of English language ability. Attempts are made to recruit and hire TAs with teaching or tutoring background, because research illustrates that the effectiveness of TAs increases with training and experience (Shannon, Twale & Moore, 1998). Nonetheless, the present state is that of mostly untrained and inexperienced TAs. Moreover, there is lack of a clear definition of the TA role, and of formal rules and set guidelines for what this role entails. Yet, they are expected to lead classroom activities and discussion, and promote students' English language utilization. As a result, TAs have reported uncertainty in interacting with students, and communicating with teachers about issues which arise in class. TAs have also expressed a desire for more preparation for their position so that they can acquire skills to be more successful in English language classrooms.

The English TA program is managed by a team of faculty members in the department, who oversee the recruitment and hiring of TAs, and who also provides a workshop for all TAs at the beginning of each term. The TA team is comprised of senior tenured lecturers and full-time lecturers. They receive assistance from university administration, which handles TA class assignment and remuneration. The workshop offers information to TAs about their role, but limited training in terms of skills formation. TAs are expected to learn the bulk of their responsibilities on the job, from observing and following the directions of classroom teachers, who it is presumed will train and mentor TAs. However, many teachers either do not have enough experience integrating TAs into their lessons, or are too busy to train them. There is therefore pressure on TAs and the TA program to make up for this lacuna, because students are not receiving the maximum benefit from having TAs in their classes.

Future envisioned state. The future desired state is one where definition of the TA role is specified, and a formal set of guidelines is developed for it, because although TAs have "linguistic as well as cultural value…[,] for TAs to provide adequate and organizational support for both teachers and students, clear communication of aims, expectations, and opportunities for feedback are required" (Haswell, 2017, p. 61). Thus, TAs should also be given opportunities to acquire necessary skills to become more effective contributors to the classroom. Developing more knowledgeable TAs will lessen the burden on classroom teachers, as TAs will require less direction in fulfilling their responsibilities and become more of an asset to them.

Presently, a Senior Lecturer leads the TA team. He is aided by a team including the change agent. Another desired outcome of this OIP is that other faculty members will become progressively involved in the program; be it by formally joining the TA team, or by mentoring TAs in their classroom. This will increase the range of expertise on the team, and decrease the burden on present members. After implementing this OIP, it is hoped that feedback from TAs, lecturers, and students, will reveal increased TA effectiveness, as well as higher self-reported TA job satisfaction. Fundamentally, the expectation is for student outcomes to improve, and the institution's English education and internationalization aims to be better supported. The foremost priorities on the path to achieving these aims are discussed next.

Priorities for change. Although this PoP concerns various participants - TAs, members of the TA team, academic and administrative staff, and students - TAs are the most directly impacted. Consequently, priority will be placed on outlining the scope of their duties. As previously noted, the TA role varies and depends on the needs of the institution and department. It is therefore important to decide what these criteria are for TAs in the English department at IU, with their full input. Also essential is ensuring that TAs have means to gain experience and expertise in the areas where deficiencies currently exist.

Another aim will be to promote a culture of collaboration between TAs, faculty and the TA team. As previously described, in similarity to other institutions of higher education, faculty at IU tend to work autonomously and independently (Keidel, 2005). More members should be encouraged and provided with incentive to work with TAs, assist TAs in developing their skills, and become involved in the TA program. Lecturers can be crucial drivers of change, who help foster increased TA effectiveness, and better student outcomes.

Change Drivers. Several internal and external constituents have potential to drive this change forward. First on the list of internal drivers are TAs, the primary recipients of this change initiative. TAs want to perform better, and this desire prompts leaders like the change agent to take steps to examine how to accomplish this goal. Moreover, their desire to enhance their skills could be channelled to fuel the change process.

The next driver of change is the change agent, who seeks for improvements in the TA program, an intent that stems from working with TAs and involvement in the TA team. Through interactions and discussions with TAs and faculty, the change agent has come to realize that aspects of the program deserve closer attention. Other English faculty members are also motivators for reviewing the program, as their dissatisfaction with aspects of TA conduct prompts changes as well.

Members of the TA team also recognize the need for TAs to work at their full potential, and are striving to modify the program. The team's composition is of lecturers who are of a similar rank to the change agent in the organization, and of senior lecturers possessing greater positional authority. The latter group extends the change agent's scope of influence beyond training, to policies and agendas which impact TAs.

The final internal, and most important reason for change are students. Any changes made will eventually flow down to affect them; therefore, the goal of increasing student outcomes is also stimulus to ameliorate the TA program. Improving student learning is the reason for TAs being in classrooms in the first place. More effective TAs will better support students, and assist teachers in helping students more efficiently and effectively.

Lastly, some external reasons for change include the afore-mentioned governmental policies: the Promotion of Global Human Resource Development and Top Global University Projects. These stem from aspirations of Japanese general public and surrounding community to improve English education and further internationalize Japan. In addition to these projects, IU's current mission of multiculturalism also prompts more efficient inclusion of TAs, in the interest of exposing Japanese students to other cultures. Moreover, IU can derive an economic advantage from improving the TA program, as substantially favourable student outcomes will increase its reputation and desirability to future students. University enrolment numbers could increase, and the need to spend funds on marketing and student recruitment decrease.

The presence of internal and external motivators – TAs, a change agent, a TA team, faculty members, students, and governmental policies – is a merit to the change process. Capitalizing on their agency will help fulfil the priorities of specifying the TA role, suppling TAs with opportunities to acquire necessary skills, and improving collaboration within the department. These steps will aid in making the leap from the present state of untrained TAs, to a future desired state of skilful classroom contributors. The organization's readiness for change, as well as possible reactions of stakeholders, are investigated next.

Organizational Change Readiness

Cawsey et al. (2016) state, "[d]iagnosing where an organization is in the present moment is a prerequisite for figuring out its future direction" (Chapter 4, Section 1.5, para 1). The authors propose that an organization's readiness for change depends on previous experience, openness to change, managerial support, information sharing, and a system of rewards (Cawsey et al., 2016).

They designed a readiness-for-change questionnaire as an instrument to assess an organization's openness to change.

IU achieves a score of twenty, out of a total ranging from minus ten to thirty-five (-10 to +35) on the Cawsey et al.'s (2016) readiness-for-change questionnaire (See Appendix B). According to the authors, a score below ten signifies an organization's unpreparedness for change, while a higher score means greater readiness. Cawsey et al. (2016) precise that "[b]y considering what is promoting and inhibiting change readiness, change agents can take action to enhance readiness, by focusing attention on areas that need strengthening in order to improve readiness" (Chapter 4, Section 1.5, para 10).

The areas in which IU performs well are as follows: response to previous change experience, presence of credible leadership and change champions, and good measures for change and accountability. The university is relatively new, less than twenty years old. Yet, it has gained recognition within Japan for its international environment, and secured success in recruiting and preparing international students for employment in Japan after graduation. Many changes, mostly positive, have taken place in the institution's short history, both within the English department and in the organization as a whole. Therefore, employees are generally receptive to change. Moreover, changes have been aided by the presence of credible leadership and change champions; and the TA program has the support of champions within the English department. As many people at various levels in the department have expressed concerns about the need for change, stakeholders want improvements. Lastly, there is a system for measuring change and accountability – regular surveys, meetings and discussions provide feedback on various initiatives that are being executed.

An area for improvement includes a need for further openness to innovative ideas. The conservative culture discourages and stifles ideas that are too divergent. Moreover, at times important decisions are made without consultation with concerned stakeholders. However, the constructivist and critical lenses advocate gathering and exploiting different ideas from all parts of the organization (Brookfield, 2014). There is need to encourage contributions from stakeholders lower in the hierarchy, and to have communication “that work effectively in all directions” (Cawsey et al., 2016, Chapter 4, Section 1.5, table 4.1).

Another area for development is the necessity for a system of rewards for change. Even though change is desired in the department, it will still be necessary to motivate stakeholders to embrace the change process, and advance it. This can be done through a system that includes intrinsic as well as extrinsic rewards (Cawsey et al., 2016), and which supports innovation. According to Cawsey et al. (2016), “if rewards for innovation and change are seen to be lacking, … steps [should] be taken to address such matters” (Chapter 4, Section 1.5, para 10). IU should work hard to reward in the short and long term, those who successfully carry out change, and not censure those who try and fail – a difficult feat to achieve in a culture where the norm is to avoid failure at all costs.

Results obtained from assessment administered using Cawsey et al.’s (2016) questionnaire reveal that although the organization is ready for change, leaders should proceed by engaging and motivating different stakeholder groups to partake in the process, and integrate their ideas. Consequently, it is essential to examine the reactions of individual groups within the institution to the proposed change, and not focus solely on change readiness at the organizational level. This is because as stakeholders gauge the change for its benefits and costs to themselves and to the organization, their reactions will range from positive, to ambivalent, to negative (Cawsey et al., 2016).

Table 1.1

Predicted reactions of different stakeholder groups to proposed change

Stakeholder	***Positive***	***Ambivalent***	***Negative***
TAs	✓		
Faculty	✓	✓	✓
TA Team	✓		
Students	✓		
Administrators	✓	✓	✓

Table 1.1 depicts the range of possible reactions stakeholders impacted by this OIP may have. These are predictions, determined based on the change agent's knowledge of and experience in the department and organization.

TAs will experience the greatest direct influence from this OIP, and it is expected that they will largely have a positive reaction to the proposed change. This is because it will provide them with a clearer definition of their role, formal guidelines to follow, and a chance to improve their skills-set. TAs are also predicted to be supportive of the change, because it will be an opportunity to have their concerns heard and heeded, and to participate in redesigning a program which affects them while thriving on the challenges it offers (Cawsey et al., 2016).

It is envisioned that faculty members will demonstrate a mixture of feelings. Some will welcome the change because they want TAs to communicate more with them and interact better with students. Course instructors have expressed interest in learning to integrate TAs better in to lessons, and will therefore view this as an avenue of growth. The TA team in particular, will exhibit a positive reaction, as they also want improvement in the program. However, budget limitations could place restrictions on the changes that can be made. Other lecturers and professors might be ambivalent or negative if changes mean relinquishing some of their autonomy to accommodate more TA roles in the classroom, or increasing their workload and time commitment to TA mentoring and training – especially if they lack knowledge in this area.

Students are expected to be positive because they have reported and demonstrated enjoyment with TAs in English classes. The change will lead to increased contact and opportunities to practice English with TAs, and learn about the cultures of the various countries from which TAs originate. Thus, students will perceive the increased role of TAs in lessons with excitement and enthusiasm.

It is anticipated that the reactions of university administrators will range from positive, to ambivalent, to negative. Upper management will be pleased because an improved TA program will be an asset to the reputation of the institution and could lead to increased student enrolment. However, unless change reduces workload, it is generally not welcomed until proven to be constructive. Japanese culture encourages stability and maintaining the status quo. Since for junior administrators the change could entail additional tasks without the surety of benefits, this PoP might generate initial suspicion and resentment until positive outcomes are demonstrated. Also, since administrators has limited cognizance of the role of TAs, they might already be satisfied with the current state.

The reactions of each stakeholder and stakeholder group are complex and varied, and may even deviate from the descriptions provided. Nevertheless, whether positive, ambivalent, or downright negative, they can prove useful to the change agent (Cawsey et al., 2016). Positive feelings can be used to champion and advance change, while ambivalent and negative feelings should be assessed further for legitimate reasons for skepticism and reticence. These can be addressed to improve proposed course of action, and win the support of an even larger proportion of stakeholders.

A summary of the driving and opposing forces to this change plan is presented in Figure

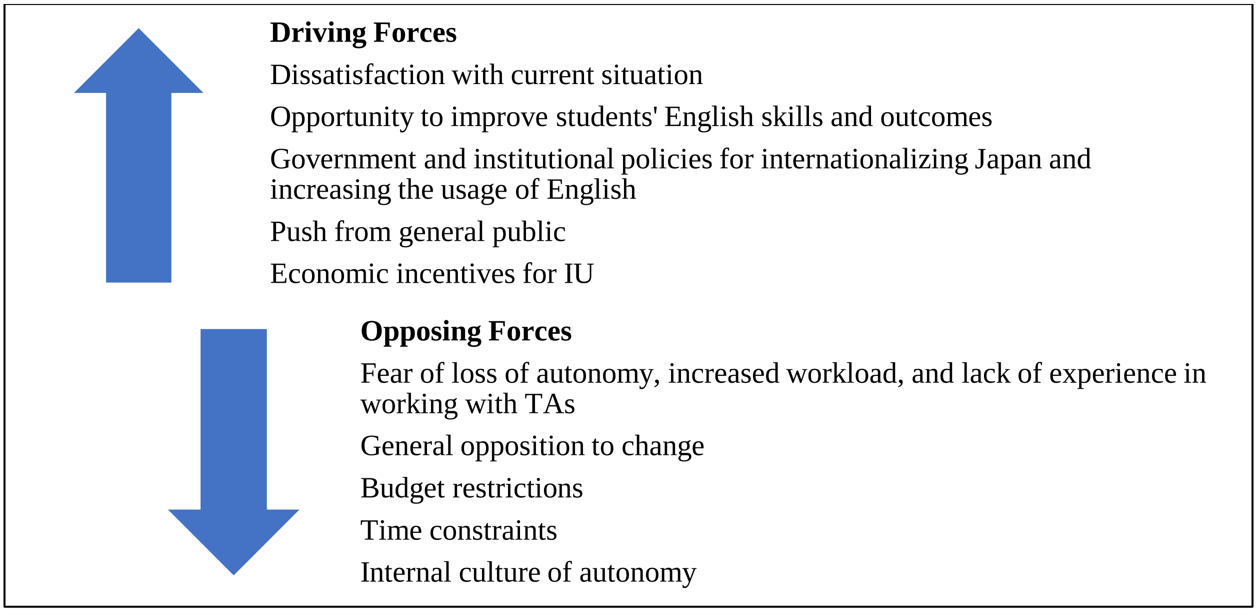

Figure 1.2. Driving and opposing forces influencing change in IU with respect to this OIP.

1.2. On the positive end, driving forces include the desires of TAs, change agent, TA team, and faculty. They are dissatisfied with the current state and recognize a need for change. Students are also a major motivating force – it is to their advantage to have TAs improve because this is expected to benefit student outcomes. Government and institutional aims for increased internalization of Japan and increased levels of English, the public support for these, and the potential economic gains for IU, are also a push for this change.

The potential opposing forces include faculty who lack expertise in incorporating TAs into their classrooms, fear loss of autonomy, and are resistant to additional workload. Administrators could also oppose the change if there are increases or disruptive modifications to their job. Lastly, limited financial and time resources on the part of the change agent and TA team, and an internal organizational culture of autonomy constrains the change process.

In conclusion, Cawsey et al.’s (2016) Organizational Change Readiness tool demonstrates IU’s preparedness for change. Evidence exists of past positive experiences with change, and the presence of change champions and accountability measures. However, increased motivation for stakeholder participation, improved openness to innovation, and greater rewards and incentives will stimulate better outcomes. Moreover, the reactions of different groups – TAs, lecturers, administrators, and students – should also be considered. Be it positive, ambivalent, or negative, they can be probed for validity, and combined with positive driving forces of change to oppose barriers such as fear, and budget and time restrictions.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the problem of practice of improving TA efficiency in English language classrooms at IU. Addressing this problem will help strengthen departmental and institutional aims of improving student outcomes, multiculturalism, and internationalization. Some of the issues identified include a lack of clarity of the TA role, lack of preparation of TAs for the classroom, and time and budgetary limitations on the part of lecturers and the department respectively. The institutional structure is conservative and hierarchical, with a culture that demonstrates a mixture of authoritarian and consensus-building characteristics. To combat potential obstacles and the change agent's junior rank, servant, transformational and shared leadership approaches have been chosen to tackle the PoP, and critical and constructivist theories to achieve cooperation and improved power balance.

Finally, an organizational readiness assessment reveals that IU is ready for change. However, for the process to proceed smoothly, it will be vital to engage all participants; even if they are ambivalent or negative, and display varying levels of commitment. As each stakeholder group possesses different needs, it will be important to carefully consider them, while ensuring that TAs – the main focus of the OIP – receive precedence. Having diverse internal drivers of change, as well as a strong driving force, will help propel the change forward. The next chapter proceeds to focus on approaches and models that will be used to effectuate the changes proposed.

Chapter 2: Planning and Development

Chapter one examined the institution treated in this OIP, deconstructed the problem of practice, and described the change agent's leadership perspective. On the basis of these analysis, it was concluded that three leadership approaches – servant, transformational, and shared leadership, and two change models – Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and Kotter's (1996) Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change (KESP), will best guide the change process. Furthermore, the critical and constructivist lenses were selected to shape the PoP, in order to respond to the needs of stakeholders, and purposefully those of TAs, in a constructive and collaborative method.

This chapter delves deeper into issues raised, and provides justification for the choice of leadership approaches and change models. Needed changes are further explored using an organizational effectiveness framework, the Competiting Values Model (CVM). Subsequently, four possible solutions for rectifying the problem of practice are proposed, as summarized in Table 2.1. Each delivers its share of advantages and disadvantages. The last section of Chapter 2 highlights some of the leadership ethical responsibilities of the organization with respect to this change proposal.

Leadership Approaches to Change

Before proceeding further with an examination of the change initiative, it is important to explain the leadership theories that will guide the change process. Servant, transformational, and shared leadership approaches have been chosen, given the change agent's values, position within the organization, the institutional culture, and the nature of the problem of practice. Servant leadership is the overarching leadership style which will be used throughout the planning, implementation, and evaluation and monitoring stages of the OIP. Transformational and shared leadership will be especially pertinent during the planning and implementation stages, when extensive effort will be made toward developing and gaining support for the change vision. Servant leadership is explored first.

Servant Leadership. Servant leaders are caring and help others attain their highest potential (Northouse, 2019). According to Greenleaf (1970), the main proponent of servant leadership,

> …care [is] taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived? (p. 6)

While other approaches focus on the actions of the leader, servant leadership is about the leader's character and commitment to serving others (Parris & Peachey, 2013).

Criticisms have been levied against servant leadership due to a lack of specific definition or measurement criteria (Wong, 2014). In fact, Winston and Fields (2015) report that this leadership type has been "described with as many as 28 different dimensions" (p. 415). Ten of these dimensions were proposed by Spears (2010), based on Greenleaf's writing. They include, listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of others, and building community (Spears, 2010). However, despite short-comings, the servant leadership style has continued to gain momentum and support since the concept was successfully exhibited and taught by Jesus Christ in the Bible over 2000 years ago (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002).

Servant leadership is prominently appropriate for dealing with the changes set forth in this OIP for several reasons. First, it fits with the personal values and beliefs of the change agent with respect to the characteristics a leader should embody. Leadership should be in service to others. Second, the cultural context of the organization is one where being a servant is well regarded. In Japan, those who lead quietly, and tend to the need of the group, have a favourable reputation. The Japanese esteem listening and humility, with most leaders staying away from "…taking on an up-front role [but] preferring to exercise power by manipulating events from behind the scenes" (Williams, 1996, p. 11). Moreover, the institution is conservative and hierarchical, and this PoP affects stakeholders at different levels of the organization – TAs, colleagues, senior faculty, and administrators. Servant leadership's emphasis on relationships will enable the change agent to adeptly navigate the hierarchy. It will also facilitate consideration of the subjective realities of each stakeholder, appreciate their desires, and serve them.

A drawback of using servant leadership is that it will be unrealistic to attempt to meet the needs of all stakeholder groups. The requirements of TAs must be prioritized, but in a way that is not harmful to others. Also, using servant leadership might slow down change implementation, as attempts are made to discover the desires of all, and respect them. Therefore, servant leadership will be used in conjunction with other leadership approaches – such as transformational leadership – to help facilitate the change process.

Transformational Leadership. The concept of transformational leadership was introduced by Burns (1978), and further developed by Bass and Avolio (1994). It shares similarities with servant leadership in that the objective is not for power, or other selfish gain. Burns (2003) posits that "instead of exercising power over people, transforming leaders champion and inspire followers… to rise above narrow interests and work together for transcending goals" (p. 32). Transformational leadership enables both leaders and followers to stimulate each other to attain higher levels of motivation and morality (Burns, 2012), while pursuing collective or organizational interests (Avolio et al., 2009; Hoch, Bommer, Dulebohn & Wu, 2018). However, although a servant leader primarily focuses on others, transformational leaders mainly concentrate on organizational objectives and stimulating others to achieve them (Hoch et al., 2018). Therefore, combining and balancing these approaches for use in this OIP implementation will ensure that both human and organizational needs are acknowledged.

To further develop the theory of transformational leadership, Bass (1999), specified its four components: individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. Based on individualized consideration, a leader provides each individual with one-on-one attention, and necessary opportunities through coaching and mentoring, to in turn develop into leaders (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Intellectual stimulation nourishes the ability to apply fresh insight, "to question assumptions and to generate more creative solutions to problems" (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999, p. 188). A leader uses inspirational motivation to provide "followers with challenges and meaning for engaging in shared goals and undertakings" (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999, p. 188). The focus is on the best qualities of people, and on motivating, enabling, and transforming others. Finally, through idealized influence a leader models high standards of ethics and conduct for others to follow (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

With respect to this OIP, transformational leadership will enable leaders within IU to recognize, encourage, and energize followers to work towards the change vision (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009). Instead of trying to force TAs to comply, or use positional power which the change agent does not retain over colleagues and superiors, employing the attributes of this leadership style will facilitate the sharing of a vision of how the TA program can be improved, and gain traction for the change initiative. Ideally, not only will there be supportive stakeholders, but it is hoped that the resulting motivation will empower and foster creativity. Researchers have shown that transformational leadership enhances creativity, at both individual and organizational levels (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009).

However, there exists a disadvantage in using this type of leadership. Notwithstanding its capacity to empower subordinates, danger exists in that transformational leadership might lead followers to become dependent on leaders (Kark, Shamir, & Chen, 2003), for recognition, affirmation, and instructions. Therefore, this leadership approach wields a double-edged sword. Shared leadership will be employed in order to combat some of this danger.

Shared Leadership. This style of leadership is dynamic and interactive, typified by dissemination of influence and leadership among team members (D'Innocenzo, Mathieu, & Kukenberger, 2016). Shared leadership permits groups to collaborate in decision-making, and share responsibility for outcomes (Hoch, 2013). Knowledge sharing among members allow for the development and refinement of ideas (Hoch, 2013); which aligns with the social and co-creative aspects of constructivism. Some of the behaviours that characterize shared leadership include: "establishing expectations and defining a collective mission, creating a supportive climate, sense making, structuring the team task, providing feedback, and problem solving" (Hoch, 2013, p. 161).

The major reason for applying shared leadership to this OIP is because a team in charge of the TA program is already in place. The change agent is a member, and this approach would be advantageous for working with others on the team to create a vision for change and implement it. Pearce and Conger, two leading advocates of shared leadership theory, submit that "a vision shaped collectively, [through shared leadership] is … potentially more powerful than one imparted from above" (Pearce, Conger & Locke, 2008, p. 623). Additionally, studies reveal a positive correlation between shared leadership and team effectiveness and performance (D'Innocenzo et al., 2016; Wang, Waldman, & Zhang, 2014). It appears then that adding this leadership style to the two already discussed will procure further advantages to the change process embodied by this OIP.

Comparable to the effects of transformational leadership, shared leadership has also been found to have positive impact on creativity, resulting in “better quality of shared information leading to higher quality idea generation, subsequent promotion of new ideas among members…, and facilitating the dissemination and implementation of ideas” (Hoch, 2013, p. 168). It is hoped that similar results will be obtained with the TA team, and the empowering effects of transformational leadership reinforced. As power will not be in the possession of a single individual, it is expected that subordinates will have opportunity to exercise authority informally and that they, in particular TAs, will grow and subsequently develop into leaders. This final factor is also another aim of transformational leadership.

In conclusion, servant, transformational, and shared leadership are considered to be the best leadership approaches for this OIP. They complement the change agent’s leadership philosophy, and fit the realities of IU. Other approaches such as autocratic, task-based or transactional leadership would not be as effective, and could undermine the process. Lecturers and TAs cannot be forced to change if they are unwilling to do so; attempting to control their actions would lead to dissatisfaction and even rebellion. Furthermore, the change agent is working as part of a team, and possesses limited positional power. Therefore, autocratic leadership cannot be applied. TAs and faculty do not have any transactional incentives to change their behaviour. Both groups are already being paid, and will not receive extra compensation to perform better at their jobs. Although faculty and TAs can gain greater job satisfaction, and TAs acquire increased self-esteem and improved job prospects, these are intangible benefits which both the servant and transformational approaches work better at fostering.

Therefore, servant, transformational, and shared leadership approaches will aid in the implementation of this change to improve TA effectiveness in English language classroom. Servant leadership theory is appropriate given the author's informal leadership role. Transformational leadership is just as important for inspiring and motivating TAs, students, and colleagues. Shared leadership will aid in navigating the dynamics of the TA team, while remaining cognizant of the conservative and hierarchical tendencies of IU. It will prevent the change agent from making judgements too independently, too quickly, or too radically.

In alignment with the critical and constructivist lenses, all three leadership theories accommodate the subjective realities of different stakeholders. Therefore, in devising a plan, the input of TAs, lecturers, administrators, and even students will be encouraged. However, the needs of TAs will be brought to the foreground, as per critical theory. The critical lens prompts attention to the power structures within the English department, and strives to "redefine authority in a way that rejects hierarchical divisions of labor that serve to disempower… [TAs]" (Kincheloe, 1999, p. 74). Special attention is needed to ensure that TAs, who possess the least power in this situation, are not marginalized. Whereas the conservative nature of IU would promote a traditional, top-down approach, the critical perspective would demand the inclusion, and participation of TAs in decision making. Instead of boxing TAs into a fixed role, the critical lens will seek for solutions which empower them to develop their own identities as they work and interact with students and teachers.

It is expected that these leadership approaches will empower TAs, and lecturers alike, to cultivate necessary skills, and make appropriate changes. Achieving departmental-wide change, however, will hinge on successfully leveraging the strengths of the change models discussed in the next section.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

Two change theories, David Cooperider's (2013) Appreciative Inquiry and Kotter's (1996) Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change have been chosen to initiate and implement this OIP. Both have been used by organizations to guide major strategic changes (Flanagan, Smith, Farren, Reis, & Wright, 2010; Pollack & Pollack, 2015). Appreciative Inquiry will be influential largely in the initial stages of the change process, while the Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change will have bearing throughout.

Cooperider's (2013) Appreciative Inquiry (AI). The model initiates the process of change with an optimistic tone. It prompts stakeholders to examine an organization's strengths and draw inspiration from its history and values, in order to build a new shared vision (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). This is unlike other models which begin with a focus on problems, and hence draw attention to the negative aspects of an organization. AI is based on the "premise that solutions are already within organisations, teams, individuals or communities and

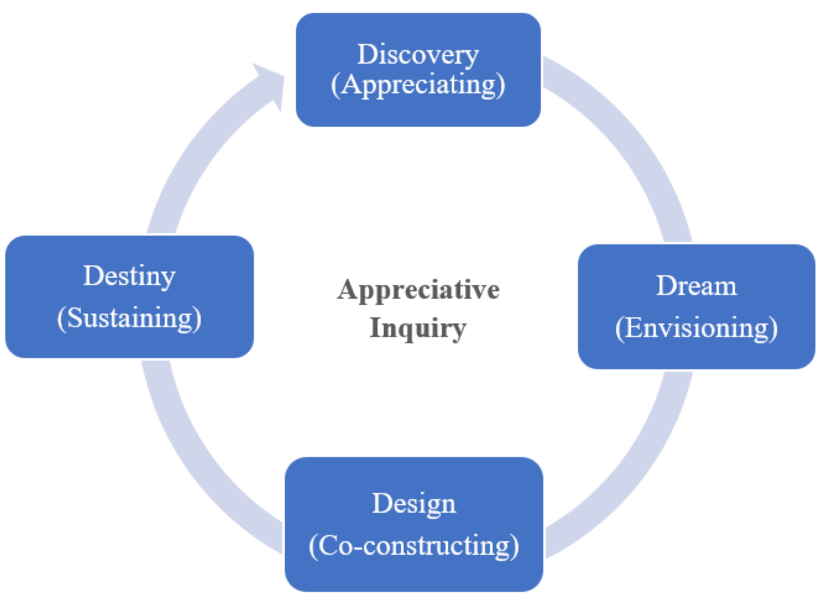

Figure 2.1. Stages of Appreciative Inquiry. Adapted from "Appreciative inquiry handbook: For leaders of change" by D.L. Cooperrider, D. Whitney and J.M. Stavros, 2008, San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, p. 27.

will be discovered if the right attention is given" (Duncan & Ridley-Duff, 2014, p.118). This aspect also, makes AI a worthy tool for this OIP, as there are diverse stakeholders – TAs, faculty, and students – who can be consulted for ideas. AI is divided into four stages, depicted in Figure 2.1, to guide change agents in leading organizational transformation.

Discovery. The primary objective in the first stage is to identify the organization's strengths and valuable characteristics, such as assets and innovations (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). By using stories and considering the past history and accomplishments of the organization, members are able to discover and frame values and areas of excellence. This step is uniquely important for this OIP, as there have been some negative reactions to the TA program in the past. Carrying out this step of discovery with stakeholders will launch the change on a constructive and uplifting note, and highlight the benefits of TAs to the English program.

Dreaming. In this stage, members use the values and strengths uncovered in the first stage to engage in creative thought processes to imagine new possibilities and build a new shared vision (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2005). Creating a shared vision is essential to making successful organizational change (Evans, Thornton, & Usinger, 2012). Cooperider, Whitney and Stavros (2013) assert, "Valuing the best of what is leads to envisioning what might be. Envisioning involves passionate thinking, creating a positive image of a desired and preferred future" (p. 6). This can be used to imagine possible changes to the TA program, and the new forms it can take.

Design. As implied by the name, the third stage involves stakeholders' design of structures that need to be in place to secure the shared vision; a vision grounded in the realities of the organization. This is achieved through dialogues and discussions, and ongoing collaborative efforts. The organization's past successes are leveraged to reach a new and realistic goal (Cooperider, Whitney & Stavros, 2013). The TA team, faculty, TAs and students can come together to form and shape the changes they have envisioned in previous stages. This can be done either face-to-face in workshops and meetings, or online via emails for idea collection.

Destiny. Action is brought to innovation (Cooperider, Whitney & Stavros, 2013), as each member makes their contribution to the vision. The creativity and enthusiasm built up in the dreaming stage fuels their commitment to action (Evans et al., 2012). Continued support is provided through structures such as meetings, and coordination between various parts of the organization. In this stage, stakeholders at IU can work together to achieve the desired end.

The description above illustrates how AI can pave the way in envisioning new possibilities and winning support for it, in a constructive and cooperative manner. The theory facilitates imagining and implementing a new shared vision which leverages strengths against organizational weaknesses and environmental challenges. It has been asserted that AI can be successfully used to catalyze “authentic dialogue and reflection” (Duncan & Ridley-Duff, 2014, p. 132). This will help reveal underlying dominant power structures and allow TAs to form a new and positive identity.

A disadvantage of AI is that it is counterintuitive to the way managers conventionally tackle change, which might initially make it challenging to apply (Evans et al., 2012). Furthermore, it has been criticized for narrowly focusing on the favourable attributes of an organization (Bushe, 2011). The effects of these drawbacks will be reduced by the presence of a change agent who embraces the model and recognizes the advantages of initiating this change process on a positive note. Commencing the project with AI in this way, will encourage and motivate stakeholders to action. The goal is to avoid burdening participants with details of problems within the TA program, many of which they are already well aware.

AI’s appeal to emotions will inspire participants to take ownership of the process of improving the TA role. The model will stimulate stakeholders to capitalize on the strengths and core values of IU to overcome current difficulties, and work toward a new purpose. Even at the individual level, the model will be effective, because drawing out and highlighting the strengths of TAs, faculty and administrators will help increase their motivation. These characteristics also make AI a compatible tool to use with the servant and transformational leadership styles in solving this problem of practice. Finally, AI will not be the sole model applied to leading the initiative; it will be used to reinforce the effects of Kotter's (1996) Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change, which will assist in confronting the challenges and negative aspects of the organizational change process.

Kotter's (1996) Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change (KESP). A second theory, KESP, will be used to drive the change forward. The model provides extensive direction, helping "managers know what they should do, when they should take specific actions, and when

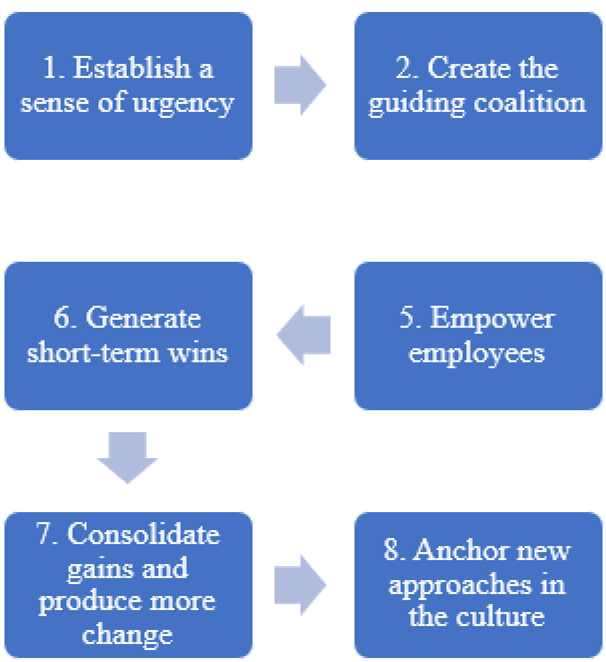

Figure 2.2. The Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change (KESP). Adapted from Kotter, 1996, *Leading change*, Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, p. 21.

and how they are ready to move to the next stage" (Cawsey et al. 2016, Chapter 2, Section 2, para. 1). It delineates a step by step process of change, and identifies desired behavioural responses (Calegari, Sibley & Turner, 2015). The eight stages of Kotter's model are depicted in Figure 2.2.

According to Kotter (2012), "the first four steps in the transformation process help defrost a hardened status quo [while] phases five to seven then introduce many new practices. The last stage grounds the changes in the corporate culture and helps make them stick." (p. 22). With respect to this PoP, applying AI in conjunction with KESP at the beginning of the change process, will help shed positive light on the need for change in the TA program and keep the focus on possible opportunities that can be gained. Moreover, the first two stages of KESP are similar to events already initiated within the English department. For instance, data from in-house surveys reveal that TAs want clearer role definition and training so that they can perform better in the classroom. Also, the beginning of a guiding coalition (Kotter, 1996) in the form of a TA team, is already in place working on the TA program. It is currently composed of faculty, including the change agent, but will be expanded to include other stakeholder groups to form a fully fledge coalition, with the implementation of this change.

The aim for this OIP is to inform and accelerate the change process of increasing TA effectiveness. The specifics of the application of KESP to each step of the change plan will be discussed in detail Chapter 3. Briefly, input from all stakeholders will be used to "develop a vision and strategy" (Kotter, 1996, p. 21), which will be "communicate[d]" (Kotter, 1996, p. 21) through change champions, who will help lead the change within the organization. Stakeholders will be empowered for "broad-based action" (Kotter, 1996, p. 21) by employing the chosen leadership approaches to eliminate barriers, and "encourag[e] risk taking and non-traditional ideas, activities, and actions" (Kotter, 1996, p. 21). Short-term wins will be shared as promising data and success stories emerge and are gathered from initial change implementation. These wins, as well as intrinsic and extrinsic rewards provided to successful change implementers, will encourage reluctant stakeholders to adopt the change. Results obtained from gathered data will also be basis for further modifications which will "[c]onsolidate gains and produce more change" (Kotter, 1996, p. 21). Seeking official recognition from superiors and the institution for change outcomes, will "[a]nchor new approaches in the culture" (Kotter, 1996, p. 21), and pave the way for changes to be permanently woven into the fabric of the organization's culture.

The use of KESP is expected to produce widespread and lasting change. Nevertheless, some researchers have observed that the linear progression of change embodied in Kotter's (1996) theory at times lends an element of impracticality to it (Calegari, Sibley, & Turner, 2015; Pollack & Pollack, 2015). Consequently, the model has been found to be more effective when there were multiple iterations of certain stages before progressing to the next. This amplifies the opportunity for an increased number of stakeholders at all levels of the organization to be involved in change transformation. Therefore, it will be important to adapt the model to IU's organizational needs (Calegari, Sibley & Turner, 2015). Another criticism levied against the model is that it is overly prescriptive (Cawsey et al., 2016). However, it is this very prescriptive quality which makes it attractive for application in this case. The step by step directions makes it a practical guide, which is especially useful given IU's conservative nature.

Finally, since both models promote relationships, AI and KESP complement the servant and transformational leadership approaches, which also place a high premium on relationships. Both AI and the KESP also align well with shared leadership and the constructivist lenses. For example, most stages of the models involve working with members from a cross-section of stakeholders, to cooperatively develop and implement a vision. Creating a shared vision is critical, as well as generating ample support for it. For the TA program, this would permit other voices, such as those of TAs and students, than the dominant ones of faculty and administration. By applying critical theory, it will be easier to give precedence to the concerns of TAs, for the purpose of equipping and motivating them to take a lead role in their growth, and to expand their contributions to the organization. With this understanding of the leadership approaches and change models that will engineer the process, needed changes can be analysed in more detail.

Critical Organizational Analysis

The Competing Values Model (Cooper & Quinn, 1993) has been selected for more in-depth analysis of the types of changes that are essential to this OIP. First, the model is manageable and valid for the proposed change. Second, it shifts the reference point from the individual to the organization. Cawsey et al. (2016) contend, "[m]uch of the change literature and thinking focuses on the change leader or manager or on those who may be resisting change… [but] if we focus only at that individual level, we will miss major environmental factors and system or organizational-level matters" (Chapter 3, Section 1, para 7).

The Competing Values Model (CVM). Not unlike Bolman and Deal's (2017) framework, the CVM offers different lens which "represent[s] four different value sets which provide competing views on the measuring of organizational effectiveness" (Cooper and Quinn, 1993, p. 179). The model can be used to assess an organization's primary culture, values, and tasks (Cawsey et al., 2016), and determine where improvements are essential to achieve overall effectiveness. The CVM connects and encourages interactions at the individual, departmental, and whole organizational levels (Cawsey, Deszca, & Ingols, 2016). The framework is shown in Figure 2.3; IU principally performs well in the quadrants with shaded names.

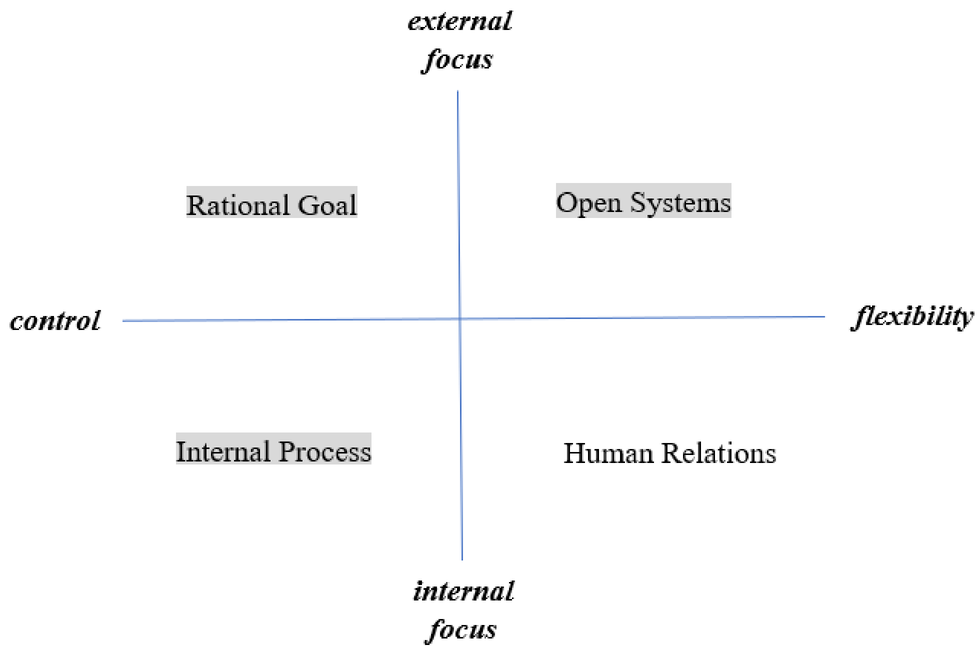

Figure 2.3. The Competing Values Model (CVM). IU principally performs well in quadrants whose names are shaded. Adapted from "Implications of the competing values framework for management information systems" by R. B. Cooper and R. E. Quinn, 1993, *Human Resource Management*, *32*, p. 179.

The CVM is divided into four quadrants which present an organization's orientation along two dimensions – flexibility versus control, and internal versus external orientation. Cooper and Quinn (1993) specify that an organization must be attentive to all four quadrants and achieve a balance consistent with the demands of the external environment. Flexibility must be tempered by control, and attention to internal environment modulated by an external focus.

The rational goal model is characterized by control, but with an external orientation. Importance is placed on increasing output, and "productivity, profit maximization, planning, directing, and goal setting." (Cooper & Quinn, 1993, p. 179). The next quadrant, internal process, is also based on control, but with an internal focus. The emphasis is on "stability, equilibrium, measurement, documentation, and information management" (Cooper & Quinn, 1993, p. 179). The open systems model is grounded in flexibility, and has an external perspective, which values "survival, elaboration, insight, innovation, and adaptation" (Cooper &

Quinn, 1993, p. 179).

IU performs relatively well in the above three quadrants, most especially in the two with an external orientation – rational goal and open systems. The institution also favors control, evidenced by the highly regulated structure of the organizational chart of the language department (Figure 1.1). The bureaucratic structure and conservative culture are conducive to using control to attain relative stability and continuity, which buffers the institution against sudden and excessive change. However, administrators recognize that the institution's reputation as a leading international university in Japan will not endure, unless continuous attention is dedicated to the external environment. Therefore, some flexibility is displayed and external conditions are considerably scrutinized, in order to keep the overall competitive position of the organization. Moreover, governmental incentives through projects such as the previously discussed Promotion of Global Human Resource Development and Top 30 Global Hub Universities initiatives, force the institution to continue to improve. Since the university is striving to establish a world-class reputation, administrators are pursuing several aims simultaneously– research, teaching, and practical skills. In addition, a new college for training students to take up jobs in the local community, is set to open in the near future.

The final quadrant, human relations, also emphasizes flexibility, but with an internal orientation. This quadrant places value on "cohesion, commitment, contribution, dialogue, participation, training…" (Cooper & Quinn, 1993, p. 179). The university should develop in this area, as well as enhance its performance in the internal process quadrant. Currently, the institution is actively pursuing new activities and expansion, but it can be argued that the aims should instead be to deepen and improve what already exists. Some new and young faculty are offered training in pedagogy; but more faculty and staff – including TAs – need further development. Also, there is aspiration to create a multicultural university that aligns with Western standards and recognition, while retaining Japanese practices. This sometimes leads to tension between faculty and administration. Even though the institution seeks to decentralize power and differentiate structures and processes, flexibility is curtailed. These factors have retarded the development of a strong human resource culture, one result of which is the TA program in its current form.

Overall, findings from the CVM correspond to observations made based on the organizational readiness questionnaire, the Bolman and Deal framework, and the PESTLE analysis discussed in Chapter 1. At the organizational level, collaboration across departments, and a culture of innovation should be cultivated more extensively. There is need to be further receptive to new ideas from different parts and levels of the organization. It would also be beneficial to have a system of rewards for change, which enables employees to experiment with new ideas, without encountering adverse repercussions for failing. Rewards should be intrinsic and extrinsic, and available in the short-, mid-, and long-term. Using shared leadership would help address some of these problems; it would further encourage creativity and ideas from different parts of the organization.

At the departmental level, clear directives for TAs should be developed. There is need to decide what the TA role entails, and imbue it with positive meaning. AI will be an excellent instrument for prompting all stakeholders, particularly TAs, to share their stories and contribute to building a vision of the ideal TA role. Included in this vision, should be acknowledgment of the important role TAs can play in internationalizing Japanese students and the university through their work in English language classrooms. Also, greater efforts should be devoted to TA skills formation.

Furthermore, sources of conflict and power imbalance between faculty and TAs should be addressed, and more cooperation fostered between them. Increased collaboration between faculty and the TA team should be encouraged. If TAs are to continue to be a part of the system, then it would be necessary to accommodate them more in the classroom, for the benefits of students, faculty, the institution, and TAs themselves. If course instructors cannot refuse having a TA nor choose the individual, then concerns about their inexperience with working with TAs and the extra time required to mentor or train TAs, should also be addressed. Faculty should be reassured that revising the TA program will not be to their disadvantage, and provided ample support to work successfully with TAs.

Finally, as much as possible, minimal burden should be placed on administrators. There is already stigma that change means extra and detrimental workload. Hence, attempts should be made to boost stakeholders' morale, and assure them of the potential positive rewards to be gained.

Thus, the CVM confirms results of initial organizational analysis of challenges arising from the TA program – i.e. supporting further skills development of TAs, and fostering cooperation between TAs and faculty. An exploration of possible solutions for addressing these concerns follows.

Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

Previous analysis has centered on leadership approaches and change models prioritized given the organization, stakeholders and change agent influenced by this OIP. Discussion now shifts to solutions for the problem of practice. Issuing from the context and analysis of the organization in previous sections, four options are advanced as possible solutions to maximizing TA benefits to the English classroom. These options are summarized in Table 2.1. They are:

Table 2.1

Alternatives proposed for addressing the problem of practice

Options	***Justification***	***Additional Resources***	***Pros***	***Cons***
Maintain the status quo	Path of least resistance	None	Situation remains as is Challenges of change process avoided	Existing problems persist Lose opportunity to gain greater benefit from TA role Risk future TA program termination
Terminate the TA program	Eliminate associated costs and problems	Time, human and financial costs are recouped – this includes TA budget of approx. 30,000/yr.	Save resources Avoid discomfort of lengthy change process	Lose benefits of TA role Potential challenge of adjusting to absence of TAs
Define the TA role*	Clarify TA Duties	Time and human resource needs largely satisfied by volunteers Negligible added financial cost to current TA budget (less than $100 to make printed material)	Scope of TA duties is delineated Strengthened TA-teacher / TA-student relationships Increased collaboration across the department Greater understanding of TA role Improved TA Effectiveness	Overcome status quo Combat fears of and resistance from stakeholders Time and human resource consumed
Train TAs*	Design suitable training for TAs	Time and human resource needs satisfied by volunteers No added financial cost as TAs compensated for training by decreasing TA English class visits by a few periods per semester	TAs receive appropriate training Strengthened TA-teacher / TA-student relationships Greater collaboration in department Increased TA effectiveness Improved student outcomes Enhanced institutional reputation	Overcome status quo Combat fears of and resistance from stakeholders Time and resource consumption Need to compensate TAs for attendance at training sessions by decreasing class visits

*Note * These options are advanced as the solution to this problem of practice.*

maintain the status quo, eliminate the TA program, define the TA role, and train TAs. Each alternative presents its set of benefits and drawbacks, as further discussed.

Maintain the status quo. The first option considered is to do nothing and maintain the TA program as it presently is. Research shows that "[f]aced with new options, decision makers often stick with the status quo alternative" (Samuelson & Zeckhauser, 1988, p. 8), because stakeholders perceive organizational change as a process filled with risk, uncertainty, and potentially negative results (Holten & Brenner, 2015). Furthermore, engaging in change is a challenging process, which "can require people to modify their personal or professional identities, skill sets, and other deeply held beliefs and expectations" (Cawsey et al., 2016, Chapter 7, Introduction, para. 2).

Hence, avoiding disruptions to the status quo would generate the least institutional resistance. The current TA program is functional, as evidenced by its ten years of existence, and some faculty believe that it operates sufficiently well. Making changes could result in increased workload, and possible loss of power and autonomy for faculty members. Whereas, maintaining the current level of programming would not challenge resource input.

However, the benefits of the TA program to students and the organization as a whole would also remain lower than it potentially could be, while underlying concerns of TA ineffectiveness persist. The TA role would remain ambiguous, faculty disquiet uneased, and the organizational culture surrounding TAs unaltered. These could lead to a decrease in the benefits of the TA program, and even cuts to funding. As a result, not deviating from the status quo is not assessed to be a valid solution for this problem of practice.

Terminate the TA program. On initial reflection, the recommendation to eliminate the TA position appears contradictory to the aims of this OIP, but it is one that has been put forth by upper level faculty members in the past. The change agent has no direct power to execute this course of action, but could support and encourage it. In Japan, institutions without TAs in

English classrooms are the norm, and not the exception. Hence, IU would simply be joining their ranks if this option is selected.

An advantage of this solution is that renouncing ties with the TA program would free up resources currently invested in it. As mentioned previously, the TA program costs approximately 30,000 dollars per year to run. This solution would release for use elsewhere, these funds as well as the time, and personnel necessary to run the program. It would also nullify the need to improve the program.

Nevertheless, terminating the TA program would eliminate benefits that the TA position accords to students, teachers, and TAs themselves. Many of these advantages have been described in Chapter one. Principally, in the department, Japanese students would lose opportunities to improve their English skills by interacting with TAs, who are customarily international students from other cultures. As a result, this unique means of fulfilling part of the university's mandate of multiculturalism and internationalization would be forfeited. Furthermore, TAs would lose a key on-campus source of income and job experience. Finally, the department would miss out on an avenue to nourish a culture of collaboration, and a chance for lecturers and TAs to grow professionally by learning to work together. For these reasons, this solution is not recommended.

Define the TA role. A third possible solution offered to resolve this problem of practice is to specify what the TA role entails. Literature on TAs in other countries reveals imprecision, and lack of conformity with respect to their duties (Hogan et al., 2007). Furthermore, search for information in English about TAs in Japanese institutions produced sparse results; mainly TA handbooks from a few institutions. This dearth of information is attributed to the fact that in comparison to Western countries, in Japan the TA role is a relatively recent phenomenon that dates back to the early 1990s (Hiroshima University, 2014).

Concerning the position of TAs, the 2014 Hiroshima University TA handbook states that responsibilities vary and are at the discretion of course instructors. Duties may include helping students accomplish activities such as assignments and group discussions, and assisting with preparation of teaching materials. However, perhaps in recognition of the broadness of these statements and that improvements were necessary, beginning in 2016, Hiroshima University introduced a new TA structure, with three levels of TAs: Phoenix Teaching Assistant (PTA), Qualified Teaching Assistant (QTA), and Teaching Fellow (TF) (Hiroshima University, n.d.). These differ in terms of engagement and duties. PTAs are the lowest of the three, and do not receive training. They fulfill administrative duties such as preparing teaching materials and taking attendance (Hiroshima University, 2016). QTAs are trained, and are more involved in classroom teaching activities, such as facilitating student discussion. From the level of a QTA, a TA can progress to become a TF, which entails preparing syllabi, and practicing teaching under the supervision of a teacher (Hiroshima University, n.d.). It should be noted that students hired into the role of teaching assistants at Hiroshima University are doctoral students.

Another example, Osaka University, arguably one of the top three universities in Japan, recruits a combination of undergraduate and graduate students as TAs. Prior to 2017, there were three categories of TAs: junior TAs (JTAS), who supported academic staff in teaching; senior TAs (STAs), who worked with academic staff to prepare pedagogical materials for junior TAs to use; and student assistants, who performed lecture tasks unrelated to teaching activities (Osaka University, 2014). However, from 2017 onwards, a new system was introduced: Teaching Assistant (TA), replaced JTAs; and Teaching Fellow (TF) replaced STAs. Thus, while the student assistant roles remained unchanged, TAs assumed responsibility of the role of JTAs –

supporting the teaching activities of an instructor; while TFs acquired greater responsibilities than STAs – developing and implementing a plan for teaching, under guidance of an instructor (Osaka University, 2020).

From the preceding descriptions, it is apparent that there is absence of a predefined TA role or list of duties. Each institution determines the categories and scope of responsibilities, according to its requirements, and sets its own standards. The TAs in the English department at IU are recruited chiefly to facilitate language acquisition through duties, such as guiding group discussions, and modeling the use of the English language. However, the specifics of their role remain uncertain, even though it is important that TAs have "a clear vision of what [their] duties are in order to best fulfil those duties" (Tulane & Beckert, 2011, p. 53). Haswell (2017) affirms, "…TAs have linguistic as well as cultural value. However, for TAs to provide adequate and organizational support for both teachers and students, clear communication of aims, expectations, and opportunities for feedback are required" (p. 61).

Formulating actions to define the TA role would encompass working with TAs, and other stakeholders to construct a TA identity and function specific to the English language department. Resources required would be time from TAs and change participants to provide feedback – either via in-person meetings or through surveys and questionnaires – on what it means to be effective in the role, and the actions of ideal English language TAs. Ideas procured would help determine the needs of TAs and of the department, and clarify the role. Results could be disseminated online to TAs and academic staff for their use. Printing several paper copies to be made available at key locations within the department, would incur a very small fee. The change agent and TA team members would execute this project, and thereby minimize human resource requirements.

Working with TAs to implement this solution would favour and empower them in the decision-making process, while involving all stakeholders would further cultivate collaboration and innovation within the department. Having clearer guidelines would help improve TA effectiveness and the satisfaction of TAs and faculty with the position. As this solution responds to some of the issues resulting from the problem of practice, it is advanced as an option for application.

Train TAs. The final proposed solution to this OIP is to offer suitable training to TAs. The English department holds a workshop for all TAs at the beginning of the semester, but this is more informational than formational. TAs are provided with examples of their duties, and informed of their administrative obligations. Data from a 2017 departmental survey of TAs show 47% of TAs desire training to ameliorate for their position in English classes. Therefore, training should be designed in consultation with stakeholders, particularly TAs, based on their ideas about effective TAs, and the factors which influence the role. Leaders should recognize and respond to the needs of TAs, without neglecting those of other stakeholders. Lastly, best practices from literature and higher educational institutions, both within and outside Japan, should also be included.

Literature indicates that lack of training is detrimental to TA success. Without adequate preparation, TAs lack a “clear understanding of expectations and requirements” of their roles (Tulane & Beckert, 2011, p. 52). Consequently, they must learn from on-the-job experience (Shannon et al., 1998). But if there are only limited opportunities for TAs to “obtain feedback about their teaching and [they] must learn how to teach on their own” (Shannon et al., 1998, p. 442), their development becomes adversely affected. For instance, Tulane and Beckert (2011) found that a lack of training led some TAs to believe that they were more capable and effective than students perceived them to be. Their limited training and teaching experience prevented them from accurately gauging their performance (Tulane & Beckert, 2011).

The effectiveness of TAs increases with training and experience (Shannon et al., 1998). Trained TAs "have clearer aims and organization and [produce] more meaningful content than untrained TAs… [and] more effectively involve[e] students in the instructional process than untrained TAs" (Dalgaard, 1982, p. 49). In one study, Meadows, Olsen, Dimitrov, and Dawson (2015) illustrated that TA training had a quantifiable impact in improving TA and student engagement in an undergraduate class. Moreover, TAs with training display evidence of higher self-efficacy, which corresponds to increased confidence in executing effective teaching behaviours that can increase the academic achievement of students (Prieto & Altmaier, 1994). Dalgaard (1982) concluded that even a short period of training could positively influence the teaching skills of TAs; it could also help them gain "a deeper understanding about what it means to be a teacher" (Sargent et al., 2009, p. 540).

Appropriate TA training also benefits students (Carroll, 1980; Romm et al., 2010) and reduces negative student experiences (Bent, et al., 2016; Weidert et al., 2012). In a large-scale review of empirical studies, Carroll (1980) concluded that TA training benefits both TAs and students, as it significantly improved student ratings of instruction, student achievement, and student attitudes. More current research confirms that "structured comprehensive TA training programs will enhance the learning experience for students enrolled in TA-facilitated courses" (Romm et al., 2010, p. 81).

Restructuring the workshops offered at the beginning of each term to include appropriate training for TAs is within the influence of the change agent, as a member of the TA team. The frequency of these workshops could also be expanded to provide more regular training for TAs. Gaining the cooperation of other members of the team would alleviate the human resource burden necessitated by this solution. By utilizing information from literature and feedback from TAs and teachers, tailoring training to the ideals and needs of TAs and the English program would be achieved. Training sessions would occur at pre-determined intervals, for example every week, once a month, or every semester, depending on the needs and resources of the department.

This solution demands the collaborative effort of all stakeholders touched by this OIP – TAs, faculty, administration, and even students. Therefore, it would be imperative to foster team-spirit within the department, and to attain the support of ambivalent stakeholders by convincing them of the need for and benefits of change. This option also requires time commitment from faculty, as well as additional financial resources to remunerate TAs for the training sessions. Since faculty members have busy schedules during the semester, it could be challenging to sacrifice time for the project. Furthermore, the TA program already enjoys a robust budget; it could prove difficult to solicit additional funds from the university to reward faculty and TAs for their time.

One way to convince academic staff to volunteer their time to help with training sessions, is to promote this as an opportunity for them to informally take on a leadership role and as a chance for further professional development. Their contributions would become a vital part of their curriculum vitae, and an asset to future promotion within the department. Enlisting volunteers would eliminate the need to pay faculty for time spent before, during, and after training sessions. The financial burden of paying TAs would be circumvented by slightly decreasing the total number of TA class visits, and allocating this extra time to training. TAs would still receive the same compensation, but visit classes a few times less, and receive training and support to become more efficient in their role. Employing these strategies will augment the benefits of this option, and make training TAs a feasible solution for implementation.

Analysis of Recommended Solutions. Based on analysis of each of the presented options, maintaining the status quo or eliminating the TA program are deemed inappropriate solutions for this problem of practice. Neither options will address the needs of TAs, or other stakeholders. Employing the former solution will ignore problems inherent in the program, while the latter will completely eliminate the benefits associated with it. Undergoing reforms will help improve student outcomes, which is a key goal of both faculty and administration. The TA program orients to the institutions' aims of increasing the multicultural experiences of Japanese students. Even though it comes at a financial cost, adapting the program is a preferable solution to abolishing it, given the benefits it offers to faculty, students, TAs, and the institution overall.

Therefore, the options of defining the TA role and training TAs are selected as suitable solutions to address the problem of practice of expanding the benefits of TAs in English classes. Both solutions are complementary to each other. Whereas, developing a criteria for the TA position is a constructive way to begin to address the problem, adding TA training as a solution reinforces the positive effects of clarifying what it means to be an effective TA in the English language department at IU. TAs have complained of feeling ill-prepared for their position in the classroom. Training them according to the new guidelines will supply the necessary knowledge to fulfil the demands of their role, while requiring minimal time and financial resources. Prioritizing their voice in the process will ensure that changes meet their desires.

Creating clear expectations for TAs and offering training will also fulfil departmental needs described in earlier sections. Bolman and Deal's (2017) framework, the PESTLE analysis, and the Competing Values Framework elucidated the necessity for further human resource development and increased internal collaboration within the organization. Exercising the constructivist approach to solicit ideas from and co-create the TA role and training with stakeholders, will not only help reinforce cooperation between TAs and faculty, but also between other faculty members and the TA team. It will promote new avenues of communication and engagement (Cupido & Norodien-Fataar, 2018), which will help alleviate resistance on the part of faculty and other stakeholders. Considering and addressing stakeholder unease will be an important step in implementing the two parts of this solution.

Finally, the change agent possesses both positional and referent power to implement these options, which are also in line with the tenants of servant and transformational leadership: pursuing mentoring relationships and active growth of others. Training TAs will accomplish these, as well as empower TAs - one of the aims of critical theory. As training sessions will allow TAs to build networks and support systems with each other, they can unite as a community, strong enough to articulate and redress other problems they have faced.

Monitoring cycle. As stages of Kotter's (1996) Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change can be reiterated to achieve the results of a Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle, a discrete model is not introduced for this initiative. The steps that will be exercised are described extensively in Chapter 3. Briefly, three stages of Kotter's (1996) model will be cycled: Empower employees; Generate short-term wins; and Consolidate gains and produce more change. Availing these stages as a PDSA cycle will involve drawing up an initial TA guideline and training protocol based on stakeholder recommendations, submitting the template to TAs and lecturers for use, and creating training for TAs based on it. Feedback and observations will be gathered from this first trial to modify and ameliorate the change process. These steps will be repeated until it is established that the aims of TAs, and other stakeholders, are being realized, before subsequent stages of Kotter's (1996) model are effectuated.

Combining the two recommendations of specifying the TA role, and training TAs according to the requirements of the role, will fulfil OIP objectives of addressing a lack of optimal TA performance. These options are privileged over sustaining the status quo – which will not resolve current issues; or abolishing the program – which will only eliminate program benefits to stakeholders. Moreover, as this recourse is within the change agent's influence, they will require minimal financial and time resources. Ideally, measures taken to realize the solution will prioritize TAs, and proceed in an ethically sound manner.

Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change

Northouse (2016) claims, "[i]n any decision-making situation, ethical issues are either implicitly or explicitly involved. The choices leaders make and how they respond in a given circumstance are informed and directed by their ethics" (p. 330). Organizational changes are not precluded from this, but are influenced at every stage by the values and beliefs of the leaders involved (Vogel, 2012). Conversely, leaders must comply with ethical demands imposed by their particular context, which constrains their actions.

There are several frameworks which appertain to establishing the ethical responsibilities of leaders of this OIP. Northouse (2019) identifies five principles of ethical leadership: respecting others, serving, showing justice, manifesting honesty, and building community. Furthermore, Northouse (2016) stipulates that leaders have an ethical obligation "to attend to the needs and concerns of followers" (p. 7). This compares with the mandates of servant and transformational leadership, as well as critical theory; three approaches applied to this problem of practice. Both servant and transformational models call for leaders to be caring individuals who strive for the greater good of others and act at the highest level of morality. Moreover, a fundamental tenant of the critical lens is to defend the lowest in society, and fight for their interest. Complying with the prescriptions of these theories will require leaders to act ethically and in the best interest of stakeholders; especially TAs, who are prone to being the most marginalized in this scenario.

The context of this OIP also compels leaders to peculiar ethical conduct, as per standards demanded of academics. Using information from one large Japanese university as a general guide on the expectations of Japanese academic staff, it appears that they are bound by similar ethical principles as their counterparts in other regions of the world. That is, Japanese faculty members are expected to respect students, be fair in their assessments, protect students' private information, make continuous efforts to improve their professional practice for the benefit of students, and aid students in becoming "self-sustained independently-minded individuals" (Hokkaido University , n.d.). This obligation to students supports the implementation of this OIP, which aims to augment the value TAs offer students.

Although it will be important to practice ethical awareness throughout the process of change implementation, several issues in particular are in need of closer attention. First, the university has an ethical and legal obligation to treat TAs justly and fairly. Under Japanese labour laws, TAs are to be duly compensated for their work, which they are. But it could also be argued that ethics demand TAs be provided the necessary tools, such as training and clear directives, to do their job appropriately. Not doing so could be seen as a form of exploitation or mistreatment, whose consequences also affect faculty and students. As a result, these latter parties do not receive the greatest benefit possible from having TAs in their classes.

Based on the ethical frameworks considered in previous paragraphs, the TA team should advocate for TAs, so that they can perform their tasks more effectively. TAs should not be deprecated because they are students, but they should be treated with respect, and honesty. It will be important to model leadership and stewardship, which will in turn encourage TAs to become good leaders and care for students. When implementing changes TAs, and students, should be encouraged to take part in decision-making.

Ethical leadership will also be crucial in responding to the concerns of faculty, which should be acknowledged and validated. Suitable feedback should be provided in cases when it is not possible to accommodate their demands. Academic staff should be respected and granted the liberty to embrace the change process consistent with their comfort levels. Undue pressure or expectations should not be placed on teachers to dedicate more time to the change process as it is not their primary responsibility.

In the classroom, ethics also come into play in the relationship between faculty and TAs. Although academic staff do not have flexibility in selecting a TA, they should respect the individual, and be prepared to delegate some of their authority. Faculty must not misuse their power, but should incorporate TAs into lessons and permit them to fulfil their responsibilities. Conversely, TAs should also respect faculty, and not seek to usurp their power or authority. They must come prepared to contribute to the classroom, to support students and faculty. Ideally, there should be mutual trust between both parties, with freedom to make errors and grow, for the sake of students. This is an ideal worth pursuing, even if it proves difficult for all to achieve.

The ethical needs of students should also be carefully considered. Faculty are already cognisant of their obligations to students, but TAs must be made more aware of the importance of their ethical conduct. For example, an important legislation that TAs should be aware of is the Act on the Protection of Personal Information (Act Number 57 of 2003). Although they are reminded informally about the importance of protecting students' personal information, the policy is not written down anywhere for them. TAs need to be better informed of this policy and other pertinent ethical considerations that they should observe as they work with students.

Lastly, the confidentiality of all stakeholders must be protected as they partake in the change process. For instance, as changes are made, feedback will be collected through surveys and questionnaires. Stakeholders should be reassured that their responses will not be used against them or disclosed without their permission.

Leaders will be able to remain attuned to their ethical responsibilities and maintain ethical relationships, by respecting and applying concepts outlined by Northouse (2019), servant and transformational leadership, critical theory and other ethical principles pertaining to this context. Remaining abreast of differing viewpoints, will also permit them to carefully weigh and respond to the needs of stakeholders, especially TAs. Applying other tools already discussed, such as the change models of AI and KESP, and shared leadership, will minimize conflict and other negative influences.

Chapter Summary

The complexities of effecting change can be aided by applying appropriate approaches and models to facilitate the process. Two options are proposed as a solution to rectify decreased TA effectiveness in English language classrooms: clarifying the TA role and training TAs. Servant, transformational, and shared leadership will guide implementation of these actions. All three emphasize a commitment to others and ethical leadership. These leadership approaches also complement the preferred change models – Appreciative Inquiry and the Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change, which prioritize relationships. Using these approaches and models will assist the change agent negotiate among different stakeholder groups in an ethical manner, to achieve an equitable balance between the needs of TAs and those of other stakeholders. How these elements will be combined to achieve desired changes, is described in the next and final chapter of this OIP.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

Chapter 1 focused on elucidating the problem of practice of increasing the effectiveness of TAs in the English language classrooms of an international university in Japan. Analysis of the organization revealed that although stakeholders desire and are ready for change, the conservative and hierarchical nature of the institution, and the junior rank of the change agent could prove to be impediments. Therefore, servant, transformational and shared leadership, as well as David Cooperider's (2013) Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and Kotter's (1996) Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change (KESP) were selected as frameworks for solving the problem of practice.

As literature specifies that transitioning from planning, to implementation and practice is not always an easy or smooth process (Smith, 1973), Chapter 3 explores actions needed to implement the solution of delineating the TA position and restructuring TA training. To reinforce this implementation plan and ensure a sustainable change process, both monitoring and evaluation, and communication plans are also described. Although each plan is outlined separately, they will occur concurrently for reinforcement, and will contain built-in checkpoints for feedback. Table 3.1 summarizes the approaches, change models, and tools, which will be applied to achieve these objectives. The final section of the chapter outlines some next steps and future considerations.

Change Implementation Plan

According to DeGroff and Cargo (2009), "Implementation …[is] unique for representing the transformation of a policy idea … Reflecting a process involving change over time, implementation is characterized by the actions of multiple levels of agencies, institutions, organizations, and their actors and is influenced by context throughout" (p. 48). In order to

Table 3.1

Summary of leadership approaches, change models, and change tools utilized to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate, and communicate the OIP.

Approaches, Models, & Tools		**Stage Used**			
Leadership Approaches		Planning	Implemen-tation	Monitoring & Evaluation	Communi-cation
1.	Servant Leadership *(main approach)*	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Transformational Leadership *(important in the initial stages for vision buy-in)*	✓	✓		✓
3	Shared Leadership *(used throughout because working with a team)*	✓	✓	✓	✓
Change Models					
1.Apprecia-tive Inquiry *(to develop vision and gain buy-in)*	a) Discovery	✓	✓		
	b) Dreaming	✓	✓		
	c) Design	✓	✓		
	d) Destiny		✓	✓	
2. Kotter's 8 stage Model *(main approach to be used throughout)*	a) Establish a sense of urgency	✓	✓		
	b) Create a guiding coalition	✓	✓		
	c) Develop a vision and strategy	✓	✓		
	d) Communicate	✓	✓	✓	✓
	e) Empower employees		✓	✓	✓
	f) Generate short-term wins		✓	✓	
	g) Consolidate gains and produce more change		✓	✓	✓
	h) Anchor new approaches			✓	✓
Change Tools					
1.	Emails	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	One-on-one conversations	✓	✓	✓	✓
3.	Group Discussions	✓	✓	✓	✓
4.	Surveys	✓	✓	✓	✓
5.	Change Team	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.	Responsibility Charting	✓	✓	✓	✓
7.	Meetings	✓	✓	✓	✓
8.	Reports	✓	✓		✓
9.	Focus Groups			✓	✓
10.	Classroom Observations			✓	✓

facilitate this complex undertaking, Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and the Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change (KESP) are employed not only to implement, but also to monitor and evaluate the change plan. AI's emphasis on effecting change from a positive frame of reference will augment the benefits of using KESP to lead the change. The prescriptive feature of KESP is practical in the context of this organization, and some of the steps have already been partially executed within the department. In addition, the linear, step-by step nature of the model eases the division of stages into phases that are realizable in the short-, mid- and long-term. Finally, as discussed in previous chapters, these models also complement well other approaches – critical and constructivist theories; and servant, transformational, and shared leadership – that have been selected to solve this problem of practice. These approaches advance the inclusion of stakeholders in the decision-making process as leaders seek to care for and lead them to their highest potential.

Goals and Priorities. The solution recommended to rectify the dissatisfactory level of TA efficacy in IU's English language classrooms is two pronged: establish a clear guideline for the TA role, and develop appropriate training for TAs. Consequently, the short-term goals for the implementation plan are to: i) build momentum by increasing the awareness of stakeholders to the need for change; and ii) identify support personnel in the form of a team of individuals within the department who will lead the change. These steps will be carried out using the first two stages of Kotter's (1996) model: Establish a sense of urgency, and Create a guiding coalition team; as well as Cooperider's (2013) Discovery step. Subsequently, the mid-term goals are to: i) clarify the TA role, and redesign TA workshops to augment instruction and skills development of TAs; and ii) understand stakeholder reactions to change, and adjust plans. These actions fall under Develop vision and strategy in KESP. In addition, the first three stages of AI – Discovery,

Table 3.2

Summary of short-, mid-, and long-term implementation goals of the OIP

Range	**Short-term**	**Mid-term**	**Long-term**
When	**Year 1 Semester 1 Quarter 1**	**Year 1 - Semester 1 Quarter 2**	**Year 1 - Semester 2, Quarter 1**
Actions Based on Kotter's (1996) Eight-stage Model and Cooperider's (2013) Appreciative Inquiry (AI)	***Establish a sense of urgency; Discover*** ♦ change agent uses research and existing internal survey data to compile report underscoring the urgency to define and develop guidelines for TA role, and train TAs ♦ shares content of report in informal discussions, formal meetings and emails with stakeholders ♦ focuses on positive aspects of TA roles, as per AI theory ***Create a guiding coalition*** ♦ a TA team is already partially in place ♦ change agent reviews members and include TAs, teachers, administrators and students (if possible) ♦ coalition team outlines each member's duty, and uses responsibility charting to keep track of tasks ♦ change agent announces members of change team and their roles via email and in meetings	***Develop vision and strategy; Discover, Dream and Design*** ♦ change agent uses standards of AI Inquiry to encourage stakeholders to provide details on positive attributes of TAs, and 'dream' of the ideal TA and training content ♦ based on this feedback, coalition team discusses and 'designs' TA role, determines rules and responsibilities for it, and re-'designs' TA workshops to facilitate appropriate training ♦ change agent, supported by coalition team, announces new vision – new formal guideline and training for TA role; shares these with stakeholders in end of term meetings, emails and reports.	***Empower employees; Destiny*** ♦ through informal discussions, meetings and emails, change agent and coalition team seek the support of all stakeholders and ask for volunteers to help organize TA training, and implement changes ♦ change agent and team discuss and train TAs with the new guideline in training sessions for TAs with help of volunteer teachers ♦ change agent and team keep focus on positive aspects of TA role, and on how to encourage and increase these

Note. *A quarter is 7 weeks long. Each semester is divided into two halves: Quarter 1 and Quarter 2.

Dreaming, and Design – will be most useful in this phase. They offer a positive means of creating vision through the participation of all stakeholders. Lastly, the long-term goals are to use the new TA role guideline to: i) educate teachers; and ii) train TAs. These correspond to KESP's Empower employees stage. Destiny, the last step of AI, will also take place during this period. Only the four stages of KESP which are pertinent to the implementation of the solution are described. The next section, Evaluation and Monitoring, will see a shift in focus to the last three stages of the model. Communication, which is a separate stage in Kotter's (1996) model is viewed as an action that will occur throughout all phases of the plan and is therefore not discussed separately here. A distinct communication plan will be outlined in section 3 of this chapter.

Table 3.2 summarizes the implementation plan and time frame. The short-term phase will be launched in the first half of the semester (Quarter 1) in which the OIP is implemented. The mid-term stage will begin in the second half of the first semester (Quarter 2), while the long-term period will be initiated in the second semester of the initiative. Delays will see the implementation plan pushed forward by a quarter or semester, depending on which step is being protracted or repeated. The discussion which follows outlines the goals and actions of each phase of the implementation plan.

Short-term goals (Year 1 – Semester 1, Quarter 1). In the short-term phase, the aims are to build momentum and create a team of individuals who will support the change vision, and help guide implementation of the plan. The first step of AI and the first two stages of KESP lend themselves well to this phase of the process. Ideally, these measures will be accomplished in the first quarter of the first semester in which the change plan unfolds.

Establish a sense of urgency (Build momentum). In order to reawaken consciousness on the issue and build momentum for change, using the principles of servant and transformational leadership, the change implementor will broach the subject informally with colleagues and superiors one-on-one and in small groups. According to Kotter (1996), creating urgency is essential to gaining stakeholder support. Kotter (2007) claims, "underestimating the difficulty of driving people from their comfort zones" (p. 1) is a pitfall on the road to change. Therefore, informal discussions with stakeholders will enable the change agent to assess their position and heighten their awareness of the subject.

Responses from past survey questionnaires administered within the department reveal that many instructors and TAs believe that changes are needed in the TA program. These results will be compiled into a brief report, focusing on the benefits of TAs and of providing further opportunities for them to develop their skills. The aim is to rouse stakeholders' dissatisfaction with the status quo, and prompt them into perceiving the pre-offered solution as "valid, feasible, and worthwhile" (Gaubatz & Ensminger, 2017, p. 153). Consistent with AI, the purpose of the report will be to celebrate the contribution of TAs to the English language program. However, also highlighted will be areas of need within the program, and the risks of not improving. The best course of action selected in Chapter 2 will be discussed, as well as the importance of realizing greater TA effectiveness through collaboration which champions the perspectives and needs of TAs, without neglecting those of other stakeholders – but instead balance both.

Additionally, changes occurring with respect to TAs at other universities in Japan, will also be highlighted. Institutions, such as the previously discussed Hiroshima and Osaka universities, have recently restructured and refined their TA programs, to deliver greater advantages to TAs and students. Emphasis will be placed on the present being the right time to make changes, given current governmental mandates to increase students' English language skills and internationalize Japanese universities, as well as IU's aims of increasing students' multicultural exposure. The Japanese government encourages and rewards English language usage and internationalization in society and educational institutions. IU has been able to obtain major grants, in recognition of its efforts in these areas. Improving the TA program will be beneficial to students' English language use, and translate to further recognition for the institution. Internally, the university aspires to increase the multicultural awareness of students. TAs originate from a diverse number of countries in Asia and the world, and are a ready means of cultural exchange with Japanese students in English language classrooms. Therefore, TAs can procure additional competitive advantage for the institution, as it is one of the few in Japan which employs TAs in English classrooms. This confers a unique academic environment and experience to students.

Since English department faculty meetings typically enjoy a near 100% attendance rate, the report is expected to have maximum reach. Furthermore, introducing the project at such an event will provide added gravitas; that it is something that should be tackled by all. Delivering the information in person will facilitate a more factual, constructive and sensitive (Cawsey, Deszca & Ingols, 2016) discussion around the matter. Stakeholders' reactions, the department's preparedness, and issues that should immediately be resolved will be more evident. Observing the reactions of stakeholders will enable the change agent not only to gauge those passionate and interested in joining a coalition team, but also those opposed to the plan. These first-hand impressions can be used to strategize further course of action.

The information presented will be sent out post-meeting by email to faculty, as well as to TAs and TA administrators. As there is minimal opportunity to convoke TAs or TA administrators, email will be the next best means of informing them of the plan. All stakeholders, and especially TAs, will be invited and encouraged to provide input and participate in the project.

Overall, both on paper and in meetings, information will be presented with optimism, in keeping with the precepts of AI. To encourage communication, regular emails will be sent out to stakeholders regarding the progress of the project. Furthermore, the change agent will continue to communicate with all participants through informal one-on-one and small group discussions to assess their needs and wants, and pay close attention to TAs.

Create a guiding coalition team (Identify support personnel). As previously mentioned, a TA team is already in place. This is similar to Kotter's (2007) guiding coalition, "a group with shared commitment and enough power to lead the change effort" (p. 1). Since the team currently only comprises of faculty, making a fulsome and complete coalition will involve including TAs, administrators, and even students - all stakeholders affected by this PoP. These individuals will lend their diverse perspectives, roles and skills to the team (Cawsey et al., 2016), and formally assist the change agent to lead the change process. As Kotter (2007) urges guiding coalitions to abandon the trappings of normal organizational hierarchy, shared leadership will be an essential tool for working together. Shared leadership is even more vital as TAs will be on the team.

Theoretically, there will be a pool of willing volunteers from which a cross-section of stakeholders can be purposefully appointed to the coalition team, or change team. Otherwise, specific individuals will be invited by the change agent and the TA team. These will comprise faculty members, TAs, administrators and students who care about the TA program and would like to see improvements. Cawsey et al. 2016 advise "using credible spokespersons who are liked and trusted" (Chapter 7, Section 4). Included will be senior faculty and staff, such as the senior lecturers who are already part of the original TA team, who "can act as sponsors of change foster [and] commitment to the change, … can act visibly, can share information and knowledge, and can give protection" (Cawsey et al., 2016, Chapter 8, Section 3, para 10).

Attempts will be made to diversify to include dissenting voices, and not only members of similar perspectives to each other or to the present TA team. The team can include a few sceptics, but they should be individuals open to the change, and who can be persuaded to champion the cause. One or two people from each stakeholder group will be sufficient, as too large a group of people could become unwieldly. Reluctant invitees, such as faculty and administrators, will be swayed with promises of leadership experience, and improved student experience. Servant and transformational leadership will be useful here, to encourage stakeholders to go beyond themselves and aspire for the good of all. Once members of the guiding coalition are decided, the composition of this change team will be announced via email, and during faculty meetings. An appeal will be made for cooperation from TAs, faculty, administration and students; which will lead to increased engagement and collaboration in the department.

Thus, in the short-term phase of the implementation plan, the change agent will create momentum for the change and designate a team to assist in carrying out the process. Completion of these actions in the first half of the semester of initiating implementation will usher the project into the mid-term phase.

Mid-term goals (Year 1 - Semester 1, Quarter 2). The transition from short- to mid-term goals will coincide with the mid-semester break, which bridges the first and second halves of each semester. Each semester is composed of two halves, called quarters, each seven weeks in length. Ending the first quarter having garnered stakeholders' support and instituted a guiding coalition, will create anticipation for the change over the one-week mid-semester break. The beginning of the second quarter will then be a natural lead-in to the next phase of actions in implementing the initiative – defining the TA role and redesigning TA workshops to include suitable training; as well as reviewing stakeholder feedback and fine tuning the change plan. If for any reason, a coalition team is not solidified or more time is needed to convince stakeholders of the urgency of the project, then the mid-term phase will be deferred until the following semester, or until short-term goals have been accomplished.

Develop vision and strategy (Clarify TA role and redesign TA workshops; Understand stakeholder reactions to change and adjust plans). Kotter (2007) states that the aim of this stage is to "create a vision to direct the change effort [and] develop strategies for realizing that vision." (p. 1). Once a coalition has been established, members will meet, led by the change agent and the initial TA team. The aims will be two-fold: to construct a vision of what the TA role entails, and remodel TA workshops. Initially, ideas about the TA role, effective TAs, factors which influence TA effectiveness, and suitable forms of training, will be generated by all stakeholders. These will be gathered via questionnaires sent out in emails and if possible, departmental meetings. Surveys will be most feasible in the case of administrators, TAs, and students, as there will not be many opportunities for large group meetings with the coalition team. Furthermore, guided by transformational and servant leadership principles, change leaders will hold informal meetings and discussions in small groups and one-one with stakeholders to obtain feedback. Coalition team members will also use these means to gently coax reluctant stakeholders to complete surveys, provide feedback, and participate in the initiative.

Corresponding with Appreciative Inquiry, during discussions and on surveys, stakeholders will be requested not to focus on problems they have had with TAs. Instead TAs, faculty, staff, and students will be asked to remember positive actions that English TAs have taken in classrooms and elsewhere, and to imagine an ideal TA. Approaching their responses from this standpoint, will help respondents 'dream' of possible roles for TAs in the English department. According to Cooperider and Whitney (2001), having a sense of appreciation "draws our eye toward life, … stirs our feelings, sets in motion our curiosity, and provides inspiration to the envisioning mind" (p. 8-9). Thus, alternatives to negative situations will be uncovered, and addressed during the change process (Cooperider & Whitney, 2001). Based on answers obtained through this exercise, and guided by experience and research presented in this OIP, it would be possible to elucidate what it means to be an effective TA and which elements influence TA effectiveness in the English language department of IU. Identifying these factors is an important step in the change process, and will aid the change agent – through servant and shared leadership – to lead the change team to dream of TA roles and re-'design' the TA training program (Cooperrider & Whitney, 2001).

The results from these meetings will be delivered back to all stakeholders for assessment. Based on the input received, ideas will be further revised and confirmed by stakeholders. These steps will be reiterated once or twice to ensure that enough information is generated from all change participants, and that there is enough emphasis on feedback from TAs. Critical theory demands that TAs' voice is not lost, but their interests placed ahead of those of faculty and administrators. Therefore, these latter groups must not dominate the process. Once ideas are finalized, they will be formalized and disseminated as a working template of TA role guide and new TA training plan, to all stakeholders, via emails and in meetings. The template will be used to implement the long-term phase of the project.

Long-term goal (Year 1 - Semester 2, Quarter 1). The final phase of implementation begins by utilizing the working template of TA guideline and training, to educate stakeholders about the scope of the TA role, and train TAs. Barring delays, this step will occur at the beginning of the second semester of change implementation. In this way, during the semester, TAs can practice the skills gained through training, and lecturers avail themselves of information obtained from the TA guideline and any information sessions they participate in. However, having a quarter- and semester-based school year facilitates postponement of the long-term phase for another quarter or even semester, if necessary, to continue developing the aims of the mid-term interim.

Empower employees (Educate teachers and train TAs). The long-term phase of OIP implementation will hinge on proffering stakeholders with information and education on the TA role. Kotter (1998) maintains that removing impediments to change will enable others to embrace and act on the change vision. Lack of clarity and instruction about the TA role are key obstacles to achieving the aim of improving TA contributions to the English classroom. Thus, incoming and experienced TAs – new TAs are recruited every semester – will attend training sessions so that they can understand the new guideline and be formally and centrally prepared for their duties. Workshops will be held for faculty, to provide in-person information and direction in making use of the new guideline to work with TAs. As administrators and students are not directly implicated, they will not be offered formal training or information sessions. They will be kept abreast of developments by email and announcements from instructors. However, some students will be invited to participate in TA training sessions to help make the experience more authentic to TAs.

These workshops will be conducted by the change agent, members of the guiding coalition, and other volunteers from among staff and faculty. Shared leadership will be useful in assigning responsibility in workshops and meetings. Servant and transformational leadership will continue to be employed to mentor and steer TAs, faculty and students to making changes in the desired direction.

The small size of the department and relatively small TA number (approximately forty to fifty TAs) makes it possible to execute the whole process once through. This is advantageous, as the availability of limited manpower precludes a trial run or a pilot study of the training program on a subset of TAs before full launching. However, results from the first cycle will be gathered and used to inform subsequent changes.

Limitations and potential implementation issues. One limitation foreseen in the implementation of this initiative is dependence on willing stakeholders to join the guiding coalition, and to assist in running TA training sessions. Creating a coalition team can be a complex and time-consuming process (Cawsey et al., 2016). Moreover, neither participation on the coalition nor conducting training for TAs will procure financial benefits to instructors, although TAs will receive wages to take part in these development workshops in lieu of working some classroom shifts.

A second major constraint is potential opposition from faculty members and administrators to the idea of prioritizing the needs of TAs, or even considering them. Academic and administrative staff might question the involvement of TAs in the discussion, and wish to focus on the needs of students and staff.

Another limitation is that the plan relies on the participation of stakeholders in completing surveys in a forthcoming and timely manner, multiple times over the course of the project. Given the wide range of stakeholders impacted, it will be difficult to schedule regular face-to-face meetings to transmit information and updates. Moreover, gathering input and analysing results will also entail time and human resource inputs.

Finally, acceptance of changes will also depend on the willingness of stakeholders to utilize the information from the guideline and training. Resistance or non-compliance can arise from fear over what the changes might mean for faculty – loss of autonomy and power in the classroom, lack of knowledge and education to make changes, fear of increased work burden, and lack of conviction on the benefits of the project to students and the department. TAs may be afraid of changes to the status quo, and of having to learn new skills, while administrators may fear increased responsibilities.

To combat these limitations, first, the potential of the change initiative to improve the standing of the institution will be underlined. A more successful department where students enjoy learning English and improve their language skills due to the presence of international student TAs will provide a boost to the reputation of IU and increase student enrolment. This will be an advantage for administration, and this success could in turn bring further recognition to the English department, faculty, and TAs. Therefore, it is in the best interest of all stakeholders to make positive changes.

Skeptical academic and administrative staff will be assured that their power will not be usurped, or their needs neglected. The rationale for involving TAs is to practice inclusion, and achieve a more equitable distribution of power within the department. Furthermore, since this OIP arises partly as a result of feedback from TAs, and changes will have the most influence on them, it is vital to include them in the decision-making process. This will expedite the discovery of a more agreeable resolution to TAs. In the long run, increasing TA effectiveness will reduce the workload of faculty members and administrators. Instructors will be able to procure additional free time which can be devoted to other aspects of teaching; which will also ultimately improve student outcomes.

In practical terms and as much as is possible, meetings and workshops will be scheduled to coincide with major departmental events where the presence of all faculty is required. This will help disperse information more efficiently and decrease the burden of time on faculty. Comparably, TA training sessions and in-person meetings will be vehicles for information sharing, while email communication will serve as reinforcement. Additionally, members of the guiding coalition will remind stakeholders one-on-one and in small groups, both formally and informally, of upcoming survey deadlines and other pertinent details.

The presence of credible coalition and change team members with both referent and positional power to influence others will also be of support in garnering further commitment to the initiative. They will prompt stakeholders' sense of duty (Gaubatz & Ensminger, 2017), and convince them to become involved in the endeavour for the benefit of students – the raison d'etre of the department and institution. Also, since new policies developed from results of the project will affect all, active participation is an opportunity to voice concerns and shape decisions.

Possible reasons for resistance will also be recognized and examined for validity, with a view to making alterations to the plan (Cawsey et al., 2016). Kotter (2007) enumerates three positive methods for dealing with resistance. The first is through education and communication, which will be provided in the process of OIP implementation. The second approach is to solicit participation and involvement; stakeholders will be invited to be part of the coalition team, and activities such as training. Finally, Kotter (2007) recommends the use of facilitation and support, which will be promoted by grounding actions in the precepts of servant and transformational leadership.

Practicing servant, transformational, and shared leadership approaches from the onset and throughout the project will encourage care and concern for stakeholders. This parallels the ethos of critical theory, which advocate considering the input of all stakeholders, while prioritizing the concerns of TAs. Applying constructivism to stay closely connected with the various groups touched by the initiative, will permit leaders including the change agent, to gain better insight and remain attuned to their various needs, and present timely and relevant information. Finally, showing genuine care and concern will help win over resistance, and gain buy-in for the project.

Three phases, with distinct goals, are submitted for the change implementation plan of this project. Short-term aims are to increase awareness and urgency for the change, and to appoint a guiding coalition or formal change team, in the first half of the first semester of the plan. In the second half of the same semester, mid-term goals of a vision and strategy for the TA role and training will be developed, with stress on the requests of TAs. The final phase of implementation will centre on long-term aims of empowering employees by training TAs and educating faculty. Stakeholders will be encouraged to participate by viewing this as an occasion to influence important policies and trends within the department and campus, and to impact student outcomes. Limitations of time and resource will be stymied by engaging the support of the guiding coalition members and other volunteers to lead TA training workshops, and by providing information to faculty and staff at official meetings. Resistance and fear will be attenuated by gaining supportive of credible change champions, actively promoting input from all stakeholders, and endeavouring to balance their needs. It is expected that as implementation unfolds, success stories will multiply, and change champions will increasingly emerge. However, achieving success will necessitate a pragmatic and robust monitoring and evaluation plan.

Monitoring and Evaluation

When employed appropriately, feedback can be a source of enrichment and progress, for both individuals and organizations (Walker, 2017). According to Baker, Perreault, Reid & Blanchard (2013), "[b]oth formal and informal feedback practices are needed at all levels of the organization" (p. 260), at frequent and timely intervals. Informal assessment of this OIP will occur throughout all phases of the change initiative; including the implementation phase – which comprise stages one, two, three and five of KESP (see Table 3.1). Gathering formal feedback is dedicated to the model's fifth and sixth stages, "generate short-term wins" (p. 21) and "consolidate gains and produce more change" (p. 21). This information will in turn be used to fine-tune the project.

Table 3.2 outlines the tools for monitoring and evaluating the change proposal, which include emails, one-on-one conversations, discussion groups, surveys, a change team, responsibility charting, meetings, reports, focus groups, and classroom observations. Using these instruments – as well as AI, critical theory, and servant, transformational, and shared leadership approaches – in conjunction with KESP, will help ensure that feedback obtained is constructive and productive.

Generate short-term wins. The end of the first round of adjustments to the TA role guidelines and training is a timely point to assess the ramifications of changes on TAs and other stakeholders. This will also provide an occasion to identify and celebrate positive strides that have been made in the short interim. Kotter (2007) stresses the importance of recognizing short-term improvements. He states, "without short-term wins, too many people give up or actively join the ranks of those people who have been resisting change" (p. 7). Thus, he recommends actively and purposefully designing "visible performance improvements" (Kotter, 2007, p. 1) in the first twelve to twenty-four months of a change project, to guarantee that success in the short-term is not just happenstance.

Other researchers also caution against strict interest in long term successes alone. Fullan (2006) identifies simultaneous commitment to both short- and long-term goals as one of the elements of leadership for sustainable change. Short-term gains can boost morale and motivate employees to work harder for long-term outcomes and continuous change (Fullan, 2006). While motivation may wane due to slow or absent results, promising outcomes can provide encouragement. Cawsey et al. (2016) state that positive news can permit stakeholders to "…rest and reenergize from time to time, celebrate what [has been] …accomplished, and become fully competent in extracting the benefits the changes make possible" (Cawsey et al., 2016, Chapter 11, Section 1, para 2). Thus, even reluctant employees can be persuaded to persist in pursuing

Table 3.3

Change tools with timeline and frequency of use

	**Yr 1 *Sem 1 *Qua 1*	*Yr 1 Sem 1 Qua 2*	*Yr 1 Sem 2 Qua 1*	*Yr 1 Sem 2 Qua 2*	*Yr 2 Sem 1 Qua 1*	*Yr 2 Sem 1 Qua 2*	*Yr 2 Sem 2 Qua 1*	*Yr 2 Sem 2 Qua 2*
***Change Team** (emails, one-on-one conservations, group discussions)*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Responsibility Charting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Surveys								
• ***Pre-OIP implementation survey***	✓							
• ***TA training survey***			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
• ***TA program evaluation survey***			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Focus group interviews	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓
Classroom observations	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓

Note. *Yr – signifies year of change implementation. For example, Yr 1 refers to the first year of change implementation. Each year has two semesters – Semester 1 and Semester 2. *Sem signifies a semester of the academic year. Each semester is divided into two quarters – Quarter 1 and Quarter 2. *Qua signifies a quarter of a semester.

new solutions and opportunities. Moreover, positive results can lead to increased confidence in the change initiative, and procurement of additional resources - which can help deliver additional results in the long run (Fullan, 2006).

Generating short-term wins in this instance will entail sharing encouraging data, as well as inspiring stories from the project's progress, with participants. This information will be acquired via the change team, responsibility charting, surveys, focus group interviews, and classroom observations. Table 3.3 illustrates the timeline and frequency in which they will be used.

Change team. Instructors, TAs, administrators, and students on the guiding coalition will comprise the change team, which will be an excellent source of regular feedback. Members can provide information based on casual observations and personal anecdotes obtained via emails, meetings, one-on-one conversations, and informal group discussions as they continuously interact with stakeholders.

Responsibility Charting. Details on the responsibilities, tasks, and deadlines of each member of the coalition team will be managed using responsibility charting. Simply stated, it will make explicit, "…who should do what, when, and how" (Cawsey et al., 2016, Chapter 9, Section 2, para. 1), and prevent confusion and missed deadlines.

Surveys. Cawsey et al. (2016) note, "[s]urveys are used to access the opinions of internal and external stakeholders and assess attitudes and beliefs of relevance to the change" (Chapter 9, Section 4, para. 2). The institution and department already make regular use of surveys to gauge responses and views on various issues. It is a very familiar evaluation resource, with satisfactory response rates. Therefore, surveys will be developed based on the criteria and contents of the new TA guide and training program. This will provide formal feedback regarding the usefulness and impact of changes made.

At the beginning of the first semester, before the OIP is launched, a pre-OIP implementation survey will be administered to all stakeholders, to obtain a base line of data for future comparisons. Questions will assess opinions on the role of TAs in English language classrooms, TA-teacher and TA-student relationships, and participants' satisfaction with the position. The first guideline and training will be delivered to TAs and faculty at the beginning of the first quarter of the second semester of change implementation. Training will occur twice each semester, to coincide with the beginning of each quarter (or first and second half of each semester). At the end, TAs and staff present at each training session, will be requested to provide feedback, which will be useful in evaluating the sessions. Additionally, at the end of each quarter, a TA program evaluation survey will be distributed to all stakeholders to appraise the effects of changes.

In order to alleviate respondent fatigue, stakeholders will be regularly reminded of the value of their responses to the change process. Furthermore, survey results will be promptly and efficiently communicated to all stakeholders. Lastly, once feedback indicate that the project is responding to stakeholder needs and achieving the aim of helping TAs increase their contributions in the classroom, the regularity of survey administration will be reduced to once every semester (see Table 3.3).

Focus group interviews. This type of interviewing has been deemed "particularly suited for obtaining several perspectives about the same topic" (Gibbs, 1997, p. 1), and is suitable to the tenets of both the critical and constructivist lenses. In comparison to surveys, focus group interviews afford more in-depth responses about the attitudes, beliefs, experiences, feelings, and reactions of change partakers (Gibbs, 1997). Consequently, new lines of inquiry, which may not have surfaced in surveys, can be explored. Moreover, focus group interviews are privileged over one-to-one interviews. Although the latter can furnish more detailed information, they are time and resource consuming. Also, coalition members will already be privy to more individualized responses from stakeholders in a less formal and intimidating manner on account of regular interactions. Therefore, using focus group interviews will provide adequate insight into different stakeholder groups' reactions, especially when sufficient care is taken to ensure representative samples.

In each session, three to five volunteers from the same stakeholder group will partake in a short interview, conducted either by the change agent or another member of the coalition team. Similarly to TA program evaluation surveys, interviews will be conducted at the end of each quarter of the first semester of change implementation. However, due to resource constraints, supplemental focus groups will only be organized at the end of subsequent semesters. A limitation of this tool is ensuring that a representative sample of each stakeholder group is assembled, and protecting anonymity and confidentiality of respondents (Gibb, 1997). Thus, great care will be taken to reassure participants that their responses will only be used to assess the impact of changes, and will not be used against them. There is a general level of trust amongst stakeholders, which should permit open and honest responses in focus group interviews.

Classroom observations. These are selected as another medium of monitoring and evaluation because, as Cooper, Lewis, and Urquhart (2004) specify, classroom observations display a "collection of rich and directly observed data for relatively low costs" (p. 9). In addition, according to Cohen and Goldhaber (2016), "classroom observations …have high levels of face validity because they assess teaching practices that teachers themselves can observe" (p. 378). Hence, observations will grant opportunities to not only hear about the impact of the initiative, but also see TAs, teachers, and students in action and as recipients of changes. Lastly, the way TAs and teachers have adopted and modified information can be observed; and justifications for deviations will offer useful perspectives in effecting further changes.

Classroom observations will be carried out by the change agent and members of the change team. An observation tool will be developed based on literature as well as participants' feedback on criteria determined to be important for a successful TA role within the department. Once an initial tool has been constructed, it will be modified as necessary with use.

Observations will be made at the end of each quarter of the first semester of change. In ensuing semesters, they will occur once at the end of each term. A cross-section of lecturers and TAs will be chosen from volunteers. One restriction is potential difficulties in procuring volunteers willing to permit observations. There is risk of an insufficient number of volunteers, or only one type of volunteer - for example, those already confident and effective in using TAs. In such situations, new teachers who customarily have to undergo mandatory observations and their partner TAs, as well as amateur TAs and their partner teachers will be observed. Also, in determining teachers and TAs to observe, data from surveys will be used to inform selections; for example, TAs and teachers whose responses appear enthusiastic will be approached to see what they might be doing differently. Individuals who appear to be struggling will be offered further support. Nevertheless, attempts will be made to keep observations on a voluntary basis as much as possible. Whenever participants are chosen, efforts will be made to appeal to their sense of duty to students, and the asset their involvement will be to the project.

It is expected that combining results from the change team, surveys, focus group interviews, and classroom observations will provide abundant and rich data from which short-term wins, or benefits of the change initiative can be amassed. These tools will be invaluable for assessing first-hand the reactions of TAs especially, to changes made. Successful change adopters will be rewarded with intrinsic and extrinsic rewards in forms, such as, certificates of recognition and class parties. This will provide acknowledgement of and help celebrate their contributions to the project. It is envisioned that an increasing number of change resistors will become convinced of the positive influence of the plan, while all change participants will be encouraged and motivated to persist in their efforts.

Consolidate gains and produce more change. Despite a strong emphasis on celebrating initial wins, Kotter (2007) cautions against declaring premature victory. Instead, he urges leaders to "use the credibility afforded by short-term wins to tackle even bigger problems" (Kotter, 2007, p. 8). Tackling challenges encountered in the process of ascertaining short-term wins would decrease future issues (Fullan, 2006). Thus, information compiled from the change team, surveys, focus group interviews and classroom observations will be analysed and compared to measurements taken before OIP implementation, to assess the extent of improvements in TA effectiveness.

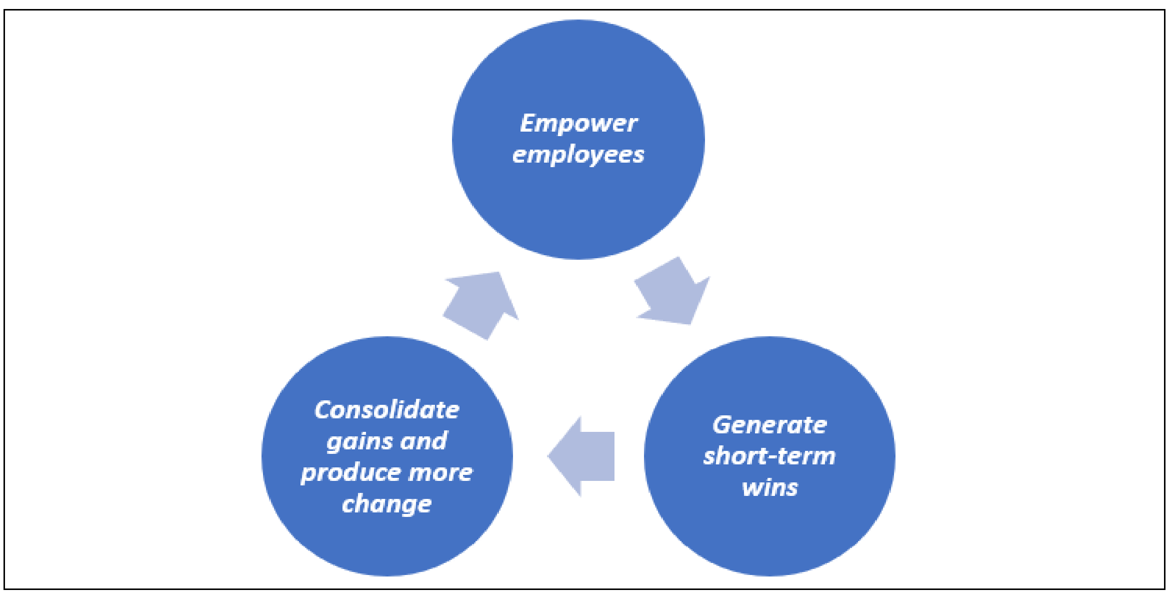

Figure 3.1. Steps reiterated to monitor and evaluate the change plan. Adapted from Kotter, 1996, *Leading change*, Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, p. 21.

Essentially, the stages depicted in Figure 3.1 will be reiterated in evaluating the plan and making supplemental adjustments, in each quarter for two consecutive semesters. The three stages will be repeated quarterly, beginning at the start of the quarter with the stage of empowering employees, when TAs and faculty are provided with the TA guideline and training. At the end of the quarter, after the information has been utilized, feedback will be collected via the various avenues discussed in the previous section to generate short-term wins and provide encouragement to participants. Concurrently, the feedback gathered will also be analysed to fine-tune the project by consolidating gains and producing more change. Gains made will be carried forward, while negative results will be assessed for validity and to inform further adaptations of the TA handbook and training.

As already stated, in the interest of monitoring and evaluating the change process, the major stages that will be consistently repeated are the three depicted in Figure 3.1. However, it could prove necessary to add other stages if, for example, a need arises within the department on account of new mandate from the university or government. In such cases, initial steps KESP - such as establish a sense of urgency, create a guiding coalition, and develop a vision and strategy – will be reinstituted in conjunction with AI, to safeguard that new alterations to the TA role and training complement the new objectives.

Irrespective of external factors, it would be beneficial to regularly review and remind stakeholders of the change vision, as well as revise members of the change team. The former to safeguard that the vision continues to align with the needs of TAs, other stakeholders, and the department, while remaining in the foreground of departmental activities. In the future, it will be necessary to recruit new members to the team, and release others, such as students and faculty, whose tenure at the university has ended. Doing so will increase the potential for committed and motivated change leaders, with innovative ideas and fresh energy.

Anchor new approaches. Once the project has been underway for two to three semesters, the TA guideline and training will require fewer changes, assuming there are no major developments in the department or university. The change agent will draw up a formal report, in cooperation with the change team, outlining the TA role and pertinent information from TA training. This report will be delivered to administrators and directors of the English department for approval. It is anticipated that approval will be received, as these executives will have been included and involved in every phase of the change process. Once approved, the report will become a TA handbook; an information and training tool for TAs and teachers to use in future semesters. The handbook will also be made available to the university, as reference for other departments with TAs. Supervision of the program will continue, and regular revisions will be made to the report.

Consolidating results of this OIP into a TA handbook will permit changes to become embedded in the very fabric of the organization, as “the way we do things around here” (Kotter, 2007, p. 8). To further anchor changes, recommendations will be made to administrators to seek out faculty members versed or interested in working with TAs, when doing new hires. Furthermore, admissions officers will be encouraged to recruit students interested in learning via non-traditional classroom means, such as TAs.

A number of different methods will be harnessed to monitor and evaluate the OIP. While responsibility charting will enable the change team to maintain timelines, surveys, focus group interviews and classroom observations will be used to generate results from the project. These will help demonstrate short-term progress and wins, to encourage change participants. Moreover, these results will aid in determining how well the needs of TAs and other stakeholders are being managed, and highlight necessary adjustments. Once changes are completed, a formal TA handbook will be created based on the TA role guide and training. The handbook will be dispersed within the department and university, to create permanent and wide-reaching effects. Throughout the steps described, communication will be critical, to ensure that appropriate information is distributed, ample feedback is received, and pertinent changes are made.

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and Change Process

It has been asserted that communication is not only a tool for change implementation, but is itself a change driver (Beatty, 2015). Communication was concluded to be important enough by Kotter (2012) that he dedicated a full stage of his Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change model to it. He notes, "without credible communication, and a lot of it, the hearts and minds of the troops are never captured" (Kotter, 2007, p. 6). Therefore, it will be essential to communicate effectively with stakeholders, to garner and retain their support and cooperation for this change. The communication plan for this OIP is divided into two parts: 1) a plan for building awareness of the need for change within the organization; and 2) communicating the change and its effectiveness.

Plan for building awareness of the need for change. To achieve optimum effect, "communications must start at the very beginning of the change and continue right through to the end" (Beatty, 2015, p. 1). Communicating the need for change for this PoP will begin well in advance of developing the TA guideline and new training, through informal and formal interactions with stakeholders. As previously discussed, the change agent will compile a report before the start of the OIP. The report will utilize internal survey data from the department and literature research to demonstrate gaps between current and ideal TA practices. The report will outline challenges facing TAs and faculty, the disadvantages of not making improvements, and the advantages of doing so – especially by purposefully focusing on TA perspectives and needs.

The two-fold recommendation of clarifying the TA role and developing suitable training TAs, will be identified as valid and viable solutions to these issues.

The four stakeholder groups touched by this change are distinct, hence the message of the

Table 3.4

Stakeholders impacted by the OIP, the targeted message, anticipated questions, and responses

Audience	**Message (It is anticipated the change plan will result in…)**	**Potential Questions**	**Responses**
TAs	• opportunities to influence TA program decisions • a better understanding of TA role • training to become more effective in English language classrooms • increased job satisfaction	• Why undergo the change? • Why now?	Internal survey results show that TAs and faculty want improvement Current governmental and institutional mandates make this the right time.
Faculty	• smoother integration of TAs into lessons • better relationships with TAs • more positive classroom environment • improved student outcomes	• Why privilege TA needs? • How will changes take place?	They are the most implicated by changes, and deserve greater recognition In collaboration with all stakeholders.
Administrators	• improved student outcomes • higher TA retention and less paperwork for administrators	• How much more work will be involved for me?	As much as can be given.
Students	• improved relationship with TAs • more positive and unique classroom experiences • better English skills and outcomes	• What will change? • What evidence is there that the recommended solution works?	A TA guideline and training will be developed. Research exists on the benefits of having a guideline for TAs and training them.

change proposal will be adapted to their specific needs and interests. However, the content of the message will retain its consistency (Beatty, 2015), and the importance of prioritizing TAs highlighted. Thus, modified versions of the report will be shared with faculty, TAs, administrators and students. The change agent will present the report to faculty at one of the initial departmental meetings of the semesters, while a modified version will be discussed with TAs at the first training session of the semester. Students will receive a simple email in both English and Japanese outlining the essential message of the report – purpose and scope of the project – and asking for their participation in surveys and in-person feedback to change leaders. Table 3.4 outlines the different stakeholders impacted by the OIP, the message that will be used to reach each group, some potential questions they might have, and responses.

For TAs, the change will result in opportunities to influence decisions about the TA program, provide a better understanding of their role, receive training to become more effective in English language classrooms, and correspondingly experience increased job effectiveness and satisfaction. Faculty members will be encouraged to view this as a chance to learn to integrate TAs more effectively into lessons, develop better relationships with them, create a more positive classroom environment, and consequently improve student outcomes. This will also be the rationale presented to students and administrators – that the project is a chance to improve student experience and outcomes.

Beatty (2015) reminds change leaders that "Just because [they] are thoroughly familiar with the why, what and how of a change initiative, they should not assume that everyone else knows about it too" (p. 1). Hence, stakeholders' questions are predicted to be similar to the following: Why undergo the change? Why now? Why privilege TA needs? How will changes take place? How much more work will be involved for me? What will change? What evidence is there that recommended the solution works? Answers will have basis in discussions from earlier sections of the OIP. The rationale will be included in reports and emails to stakeholders, and also presented during meetings about the project. Moreover, change leaders will be primed to respond uniformly to queries from stakeholders.

Communicating the change. To advance the process of change, it is critical that change leaders employ “every vehicle possible to constantly communicate the new vision and strategies” (Kotter, 1996, p. 21). In doing so, in-person communication is more effective than print or electronic media (Barrett, 2002). This is especially important when it comes to reporting negative news (Cawsey et al., 2016). Moreover, as “What change leaders do and say in the hallways is more powerful than any formal communications,” (Beatty, 2015, p. 13), efforts must be made to have a message and communication strategy that is consistent, coherent, and unified. Therefore, although it is not listed as a communication vehicle, the actions of the change team and other leaders will play a significant role in communicating this initiative. Their attitudes must mirror the expectations specified in reports and other forms of communication, and they must model the behaviour expected of employees (Kotter, 1996).

Across all communication forums, the principles of Appreciative Inquiry which stresses a focus on positive experiences, should be respected. Therefore, in communication via electronic means or in meetings, emphasis will be placed on the favourable outcomes that partnership between TAs and lecturers bring to the English program and on maximizing these benefits.

Table 3.5 presents a detailed version of the communication channels that will be employed for this OIP. Depending on the stakeholder group, slightly different modes of communication will be effective, due to accessibility and relationship of the group to the change.

Table 3.5

Communication channels exploited for different stakeholder groups

	TAs	Faculty	Administrators	Students
Informal face-face interactions and discussions	✓	✓	✓	✓
Formal meetings		✓	✓	
Emails	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reports	✓	✓	✓	
TA training sessions	✓			
Faculty development workshops		✓		
Announcements on learning management systems (LMS)	✓			✓

Note. ✓ signifies a feasible means of communication with a particular stakeholder group

TAs. The TA training sessions which will take place every semester will be the most practical and efficacious space to transmit important news to TAs. This is because there would be few occasions to convene TAs together for formal meetings on a regular basis. Consequently, other forms of communication such as, emails and reports, will also be used regularly. For emphasis, instructors will be asked to remind their partner TAs of the information sent out. Members of the coalition will also speak with TAs, as they have opportunities to interact with them informally.

Faculty. There will be greater opportunities for frequent contact between the change team and academic staff. Thus, more direct, face-to-face modes of communication can be used. For example, opinions can be obtained informally from instructors as change leaders interact and converse with them in the staff room, while mandatory faculty meetings can be used for more formal announcements. In addition, faculty development workshops can be organized specifically to elaborate on complex details. Finally, emails and reports will be sent out to underscore and remind instructors of information shared via face-face means.

Administrators. Since these individuals work in offices far removed from the English department, there will be minimal regular interaction between them and most members of the guiding coalition. A senior member of the TA team presently acts as liaison between the English department and the administration office. Hence, it will be easier to relay important information regarding the change plan through him to administrators, before sending out emails. Less significant or general information can be reported directly via emails.

Students. Although students are the end recipients of change, they will not be closely associated with carrying it out. As a result, there is less priority to communicate a large quantity of information about the change process with them; although they will be provided with regular updates. As it will be impossible to have formal meetings or large group discussions with all students studying in the department, communication will take place mainly via email, and through the learning management system where general information is customarily disseminated. Individual classroom instructors will also be crucial in directly transmitting pertinent updates in class. For example, it would be an invaluable service for instructors to remind students to complete the TA program evaluation surveys at the end of each quarter. This is particularly important as students will be a significant source of information, and they may not have another avenue to provide formal input.

Communication is an indispensable component of a change plan; it will be crucial in expanding collaboration and cooperation for this project, and within the department as a whole. Therefore, the methods described for conveying news about the project will be reviewed regularly to ensure that the communication strategy remains efficient and constructive.

Unproductive means will be discarded, and greater efforts dedicated to reaching all TAs, academic and administrative staff, as well as students influenced by the plan. This rechannelling of efforts for greater functionality will not be limited to communication, but will be applied to the entire TA program – both during and after the project.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

Refinement of the TA program will continue to be necessary post OIP completion, so that it remains aligned with the priorities and requirements of the department and institution. Increasing the effectiveness of TAs by developing a TA handbook and formally preparing TAs for their role, is an initial step in enhancing the program. Further steps that can be taken include increasing the frequency of training to TAs, providing training to lecturers, recruiting a TA manager, and fill a gap in the literature on TAs by identifying constructs from this OIP which affect TA effectiveness.

Offering training to TAs twice a semester is a solid step in providing TAs an avenue to formally procure the skills and instruction necessary to attain greater success in their role. However, to cement changes and develop TA skills further, increasing the frequency of training and dedicating budget to this purpose, are recommended. Once initial results from this project have been evaluated, the number of training sessions can be revised and increased to once, twice or even four times a month, depending on resources. This will enhance the rate of TA improvement, and also ultimately student outcomes.

Although an extensive part of discussion in this OIP has centred on training TAs, equipping faculty members with know-how to successfully collaborate with TAs is also necessary for overall and continual development of the TA program. Research indicates that not only TAs, but also teachers require training and support as well (Cupido & Norodien-Fataar, 2018). 40% of teachers in the English department at IU reported on internal surveys that they would be interested in further training to work with TAs, if they had extra time. Therefore, and to supplement the TA handbook, faculty members can be provided with training and coached on incorporating TAs into lessons. As they develop in this aspect, course instructors will learn to train and mentor TAs in their classrooms; which can alleviate some of the time and financial costs of training TAs as a group.

Making regular adaptations to the TA program, such as by increasing the frequency of TA training and creating training for instructors, can be promoted by the presence of a dedicated TA program manager. To build permanent and lasting change, Kotter (2007) recommends going "after systems and structures that are not consistent with the transformation vision and have not been confronted before" (p. 8). Hence, it is recommended that the department appoint staff, preferably a member of the change team, or an expert in faculty development from outside the organization. Although doing so will necessitate additional funds, it will sustain long-term improvements and support scaling up the program if it is necessary in the future.

Finally, as literature does not provide a specific definition or criteria for TA effectiveness (Little, Goe & Bell, 2009), results obtained from this project could help fill this gap. Over the course of the project, it will be possible to identify different factors which influence the success of TAs. Meaningful contribution to research can be made if these elements can be directly linked to TA effectiveness, as well as student outcomes. This will in turn make it easier to understand which factors to concentrate on when training TAs, and faculty.

Chapter Summary

Chapter three has outlined the implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and communication sections of the initiative to improve the contributions of English language TAs.

Actions are grounded in Kotter's (1996) Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change, and Cooperider's (2013) Appreciative Inquiry. The implementation phase is divided into three parts, a short-term phase which involves creating urgency regarding the need for change, and identifying change champions for it; a mid-term phase that will result in the development of guidelines and training for the TA role; and a long-term phase where TAs will be trained as per the new criteria for their role. Monitoring and evaluation of the plan comprise collecting feedback from participants – TAs, lecturers, administrators, and students; and appraising and fine-tuning the change process. The communication plan presents a system for reaching and addressing the needs of each stakeholder group represented. Lastly, future steps which include, increasing the frequency of TA training, offering training to faculty members, hiring a TA manager, and identifying constructs which impact TA effectiveness, are also specified.

Conclusion

Although initiating change can be challenging, having a well-constructed strategy, with engaged and supportive change leaders will enable goals to become attainable. The three chapters of this organizational improvement plan have presented an approach to the problem of practice of how to enhance the effectiveness of TAs at an international university in Japan. Chapter one described the institution, IU, and the English language department impacted by the problem. Despite its short history, IU has gained prominence in Japan for its successful internationalization efforts, in which English language education plays a major role. However, analysis of issues facing TAs in the department reveals an ill-defined role, inadequate training, lack of agency, and restrictions of time and finances. As the change agent's leadership style is grounded in a concern for the growth of others and for the marginalized, servant, transformational, and shared leadership approaches, as well as critical and constructivist theories, are chosen to guide the OIP. These will help to successfully navigate the demands of different stakeholder groups, as the change agent advances the needs of TAs – the least powerful and yet most impacted by the change – and strives to balance these with the desires of other groups. The chapter concludes with evidence of the organization's readiness for change, and of the presence of change drivers and positive driving forces within the institution and department.

Chapter two began with an extensive examination of the leadership approaches and change models, David Cooperider's (2013) Appreciative Inquiry (AI) and Kotter's (1996) Eight-Stage Process of Creating Major Change, selected to advance the change initiative. These are prioritized over others on account of their complementarity, and expected benefits given the organizational context, change agent's values and position, and the type of problem of practice. To address the PoP, two out of the four options proposed are combined. They are to define the TA role and provide TAs with training corresponding to the guidelines of their role. These two alternatives will purposely privilege the voice of TAs. Moreover, they are feasible and appropriate because they are most consistent with the current aims of the department and institution, are well within the agency of the change agent, and require minimal time, human, and financial costs.

Chapter three explored the implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and communication of actions needed to execute the solution of delineating the TA position and providing standardized instruction to TAs about their responsibilities. The implementation process includes building urgency for the change, designating a change team, rallying stakeholders to help create a vision of the TA role and new training, and subsequently training TAs accordingly. Monitoring and evaluation of the plan will occur throughout the change process, via regular feedback from participants. The feedback will also be used to refine changes.

Communication of change efforts will be facilitated through the actions of the change agent and change team, via channels such as emails, reports, and workshops. As the TA program will continue to need modifications even after completion of the OIP, future considerations include training faculty members, and recruiting a TA manager.

Overall, this change initiative aligns with organizational priorities as it will strengthen IU's aims of improving student outcomes, multiculturalism, and internationalization. Stakeholder engagement will be essential for a smooth change process, but the needs of TAs will be prioritized as they are the focus of the plan. The diversity of internal change drivers will provide a large pool of talent to help propel the change forward. Throughout the project, the precepts of the critical and constructivist lenses, servant, transformational and shared leadership will be adhered to. These will ensure that the goal of equipping TAs with the necessary skills for their position is also fulfilled in an equitable and just manner.

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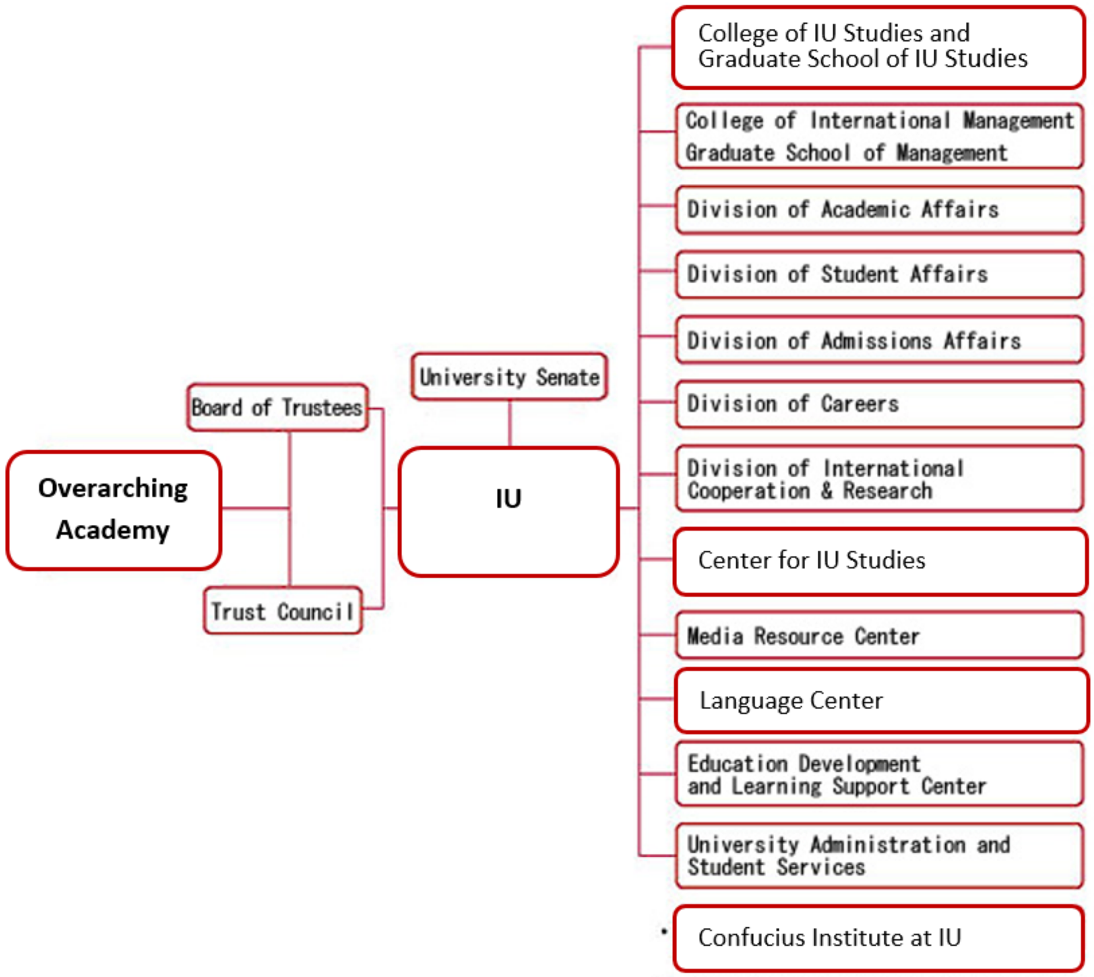
APPENDIX A

Organizational Chart of International University (IU)



Adapted from International University, (2019). *Organization Chart*. [citation withheld for anonymization reasons].

APPENDIX B

Rating of IU's Readiness for Change

Readiness Dimensions	**Readiness Score**
Previous Change Experiences	
1. Has the organization had generally positive experiences with change? If yes, Score +1	+1
2. Has the organization had recent failure experiences with change? Score –1	0
3. What is the mood of the organization: upbeat and positive? Score +1	+1
4. What is the mood of the organization: negative and cynical? Score –2	0
5. Does the organization appear to be resting on its laurels? Score –1	0
Executive Support	
6. Are senior managers directly involved in sponsoring the change? Score +2	+2
7. Is there a clear picture of the future? Score +1	0
8. Is executive success dependent on the change occurring? Score +1	0
9. Has management ever demonstrated a lack of support? Score –1	0
Credible Leadership and Change Champions	
10. Are senior leaders in the organization trusted? Score +1	+1
11. Are senior leaders able to credibly show others how to achieve their collective goals? Score +1	0
12. Is the organization able to attract and retain capable and respected change champions? Score +2	0
13. Are middle managers able to effectively link senior managers with the rest of the organization? Score +1	+1
14. Are senior leaders likely to view the proposed change as generally appropriate for the organization? Score +2	+2
15. Will the proposed change be viewed as needed by the senior leaders? Score +2	+2
Openness to Change	
16. Does the organization have scanning mechanisms to monitor the environment? Score +1	+1
17. Is there a culture of scanning and paying attention to those scans? Score +1	+1
18. Does the organization have the ability to focus on root causes and recognize interdependencies both inside and outside the organization's boundaries? Score +1	0
19. Does "turf" protection exist in the organization? Score –1	-1
20. Are the senior managers hidebound or locked into the use of past strategies,	

approaches, and solutions? Score –1	-1
21. Are employees able to constructively voice their concerns or support? Score +1	+1
22. Is conflict dealt with openly, with a focus on resolution? Score +1	0
23. Is conflict suppressed and smoothed over? Score –1	-1
24. Does the organization have a culture that is innovative and encourages innovative activities? Score +1	0
25. Does the organization have communications channels that work effectively in all directions? Score +1	0
26. Will the proposed change be viewed as generally appropriate for the organization by those not in senior leadership roles? Score +2	+2
27. Will the proposed change be viewed as needed by those not in senior leadership roles? Score +2	+2
28. Do those who will be affected believe they have the energy needed to undertake the change? Score +2	+2
29. Do those who will be affected believe there will be access to sufficient resources to support the change? Score +2	+2
Rewards for Change	
30. Does the reward system value innovation and change? Score +1	0
31. Does the reward system focus exclusively on short-term results? Score –1	0
32. Are people censured for attempting change and failing? Score –1	-1
Measures for Change and Accountability	
33. Are there good measures available for assessing the need for change and tracking progress? Score +1	+1
34. Does the organization attend to the data that it collects? Score +1	+1
35. Does the organization measure and evaluate customer satisfaction? Score +1	+1
36. Is the organization able to carefully steward resources and successfully meet predetermined deadlines? Score +1	0

Adapted from Cawsey, T.F., Deszca, G., & Ingols, C. (2016). *Organizational change: An action oriented toolki*t (3rd ed.) [Kindle Edition]. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, Chapter 4, Section 2, Table 4.1.