Time to Sign!
Using Sign Language in Kindergarten
During Transition Times

By: Kristin Szklinski

2009-2010 Gray’s Woods Elementary School Intern
Kindergarten

kls1645@gmail.com

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Background Information:

Description of Teaching Context:

As an intern in the Professional Development School (PDS) through the Pennsylvania State University, I worked in a self-contained kindergarten classroom at Gray’s Woods Elementary School in the State College Area School District during the 2009-2010 school year. This kindergarten class consisted of twenty-one students, eleven female and ten male, each of which had unique academic, behavioral and social needs. Of the twenty-one students, there were eight Caucasian females, ten Caucasian males, one African-American female, one Asian female, and one Hispanic female. The majority of these students came from middle to upper class families.

While visually, my students looked extremely similar, I had a pretty wide range of students academically. In language arts, the majority of my students were independently reading well beyond the benchmark for kindergarten students at the end of the school year. I did not have any Title One students for reading or math, or any English as Second Language students. I did have one student who got pulled out of the classroom for a Speech IEP (Individualized Education Plan), in addition to two other students who left the classroom for extra Speech support, without IEP’s.

I had two students with Instructional Education Plans. One of my students, Mark, has cerebral palsy, which effected how he interacted, learned, and responded or reflected in the classroom. He did a lot of work on the computer, and had a keyboard that his occupational therapist provided to assist him in all of the writing and response work required on a daily basis. Mark used the keyboard anywhere in the room to record his notes and easily plugged it into one of our classroom computers to print out his writing.
Near the end of the year, he was issued a laptop from the district to help incorporate and assist him with the use of the computer during times where he needed to record his thinking, particularly during math.

My second student who had an IEP was a boy named Colin, who suffers from a muscle condition that can cause vision impairment. His doctors have been unable to diagnose a particular disorder, but we learned that his body is not as strong as his peers and because of this, he falls down often. When Colin falls, it can have extremely detrimental effects on his vision, causing his sight to be blurred or even can cause him to black out. When he falls, we were instructed to take him right to the nurse to be checked. Both of Colin’s issues were more health related than academic oriented, and because of this, we did not really need to differentiate instruction for him during the school year. What we did have to do for him was cut down his pencils, and get a softer lead for him to use so he would not fatigue quickly while working.

All of the students in my class had great social relationships with one another. They worked and played so well together, and the boys and girls interacted well with each other. It was easy to tell that they all genuinely cared for one another, and were truly disappointed and missed anyone that happened to be absent on a given day. Each one of my students was special and unique in their own way, and I truly enjoyed working with each of them, in groups and individually. I feel extremely fortunate to have had the opportunity to know them and be their classroom teacher. (See APPENDIX A for complete Inquiry Brief)
Wonderings and Questions:

Main Wondering

*How can using sign language help with classroom management during transition times?*

My inquiry question focuses on the use of sign language through transitional times to see if with this strategy, students could increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their actions during our transition to lunch, and to math time. Transitions between activities contribute to a big part of our day, and I had noticed that we were losing valuable learning time during these periods of change in our day due to one of three reasons: students not knowing what they were to do, students not knowing what was expected of them during this time, or students just not wanting to do what was being asked of them.

Sub-Wonderings

- How does using sign language through transitions increase eye contact from students?
- How does using sign language through transitions increase student engagement?
- How does using sign language through transitions create more effective and efficient transitions?

Data Collection:

Clear Description of Data Collection

I collected a great deal of video evidence during two of the busiest transition times during our day – our transition to lunch and our transition from quiet time to math. I collected video evidence during these times before and after implementing the use of sign language during these particular times. Once I had all of my video evidence, I went
through and coded each clip with a video analysis tool called StudioCode to look for specific behaviors during the two different transition times.

**Data Collected Before Implementing Sign Language**

Prior to implementing the use of sign language during transition times, I collected video evidence of the transition to lunch and the transition into math time. My intention for collecting this evidence was to have the opportunity to look back and compare how these specific transition times were in my classroom prior to the use of sign language, and then how they were afterwards. For each transition, I had an idea of what I was going to be looking for in the videos, and how that may or may not help me in answering some of my sub-questions, and in turn, my main wondering. I wanted to have a sufficient amount of video evidence to look back upon and compare and contrast trends I saw for each transition, and because there are just some crazy days where difference circumstances play in to making transitions more difficult than other days. I was able to capture three transitions to lunchtime, and four transitions to math time prior to implementing any type of sign language that I could analyze and look at further.

**Data Collected After Implementing Sign Language**

After the implementation of sign language during my two transition times, I collected the same amount of video clips for evidence as I had before implemented the use of sign language. I was able to capture three transition times to our lunch and four transition times to our math lessons. I was happy that I was able to get the same amount of video evidence both before and after using sign language so I could compare the results on an even playing field.
Data Analysis:

Steps Taken to Analyze Pre-Sign Language Data

When I started to think about how I wanted to collect data, I planned thoughtfully as to what type of data I thought would really be able to support my main wondering and sub-questions. I initially wanted to collect video evidence and take anecdotal notes during the same transition. After talking to a few different Professional Development Associates, it was suggested that instead of trying to do it all at the same time, I could just use the text-track tool in StudioCode to identify observations I made during the transition and things I maybe did not notice until I watched the video clips. Realistically, while it would have been great to be able to video the transition and do anecdotal notes at the same time, there is no way this could have been possible between my mentor and I. Between managing the transition, and her videotaping, we would not have been able to record anecdotal notes as well. The way I was able to take notes in StudioCode after the fact made much more sense. I got to write and comment on many of the same things and picked up on things in the video I didn’t notice during the actual transition. The way I was able to take notes after the fact made collecting the evidence much more manageable, yet still valuable in supporting my inquiry wonderings.

When all of my initial data and video footage had been collected, the first thing I did was import all of the videos into StudioCode so that I could further analyze them. For each of the two transitions, I looked for different behaviors to help me understand and answer my sub-questions.

For transition one, I was looking to code the total amount of time each transition took and how many times I lost student eye contact. When I coded for this lack of eye
contact, I also made note of how many students fit the specific behavior. For example, when I coded into the video that there was a student who had no eye contact with me, I also recorded how many students fit the profile of no eye contact with me. I found that the average amount of time that the transition to lunchtime was two minutes 5 seconds. For each of my three videos for this particular transition, there was a combination of 8 different occasions that I coded one or more students who completely lost eye contact with me when I was giving directions. On each of these occasions, for all three video clips, at least a fourth of my class fit the profile of the specific behavior while I was giving directions.

Beyond coding these video clips for specific behaviors, I also took observational notes on specific students that were off task during these transitions. In addition I took notes of distractions that might have been going on in the room during the transition time, circumstances that may have had an impact on the effectiveness of the transition, and any other factors that I felt might have played a part in making the transition go the way it did on a particular day. For example, one day during our transition to lunch, we had three extra parents in the room and we were running a few minutes behind our usual time in getting lined up for lunch. Because of these circumstances at this transition time, the change from one activity to another did not go as smoothly as it might have gone if the parents were not in the room or we were not rushing to get to lunch.

For the second transition, I was looking to code for the total amount of time the transition took, the lack of student eye contact while giving directions, any continuation of their own activity when they were to be getting ready for math, any ignoring or blatantly not following the directions I had given, and students that seemed to be delaying
the start of math time. Similar to the first transition, when I coded for specific behavior, I also made a note of how many students were exhibiting that behavior. I looked for any patterns I could find in regards to how many students were exhibiting one of the coded behaviors, if it tended to be the same students, and why that might have been.

Again, like for the first transition, beyond just coding my data for the five behaviors listed above, I also took observational notes of students that were off task during the transition. I wrote down anything that might have been causing difficulty for students to handle the transition effectively and efficiently, like other adults in the room, or distractions for other students.

**Steps Taken to Analyze Post-Sign Language Data**

Similar to how I began the analysis of my pre-sign language video data, I began my post-sign language data analysis in the same way, by importing each video into StudioCode. After I imported each of my videos, I coded for specific behaviors for each transition again, and looked at how many occurrences and students fit each coding of a specific behavior.

For transition one, I coded the post-sign language clips the same way I coded the beginning videos. I looked for the total amount of time that the transition took, as well as, the number of instances that I lost student eye contact. Beyond coding the two behaviors in my videos for this transition, I also took observational notes of particular students that may have been off task, or not paying attention. I took note of anything that might have been going on in the room that was out of the ordinary or different from the routine that our students are used to. I looked at other elements that might have factored into the student behavior during these transition times. As I mentioned before, this could have
been something like having extra teachers in our room at the time, or a change or running
behind in our schedule.

When I began to code my video data from the second transition post-sign
language, I looked at the five behaviors I coded for when I looked at the initial videos. I
again coded for the total time the transition took, the lack of student eye contact while
giving directions, any continuation of their own activity when they were to be getting
ready for math, any ignoring or blatantly not following the directions I had given, and
students that seemed to be delaying the start of math time.

After coding the video for the listed behaviors detailed above, I then took
observational notes for the particular student behaviors I noticed, any unusual activity
happening in the room, or any other factors that might have effected an otherwise typical
transition from quiet time to math.

**Explanation of Findings**

Before I began coding, I had an idea of some of the differences I thought I would
see from my pre-sign language videos. I thought the amount of time for each of the
transitions would decrease for both transition one and transition two. I also thought I
would see the amount of student engagement and student eye contact increase as I gave
instructions. I expected to see students that were more engaged during our transition time
and more efficient in moving from one activity to another. Because I expected them to be
more efficient, I also expected the transitions to go much quicker, with fewer teacher
prompts to get students through the transitions.
After analyzing the data, I found patterns and commonalities that support four strong claims about the effects sign language had during transitional times in my kindergarten classroom.

**Claim One: Students are more efficient and effective during transitions times when expectations and procedures are not only signed to them, but also verbalized.**

During my pre-sign language data collection, I noticed patterns where students were not looking at me while I was giving directions, and in turn, they did not know what they were being asked to do for this already crazy and busy time of the day. For my pre-sign language transitions, I only verbalized to students what they were to do between one activity and another. *(SEE APPENDIX B)* Students were more efficient and effective during transitions time when expectations and procedures were not only signed to them, but also verbalized. *(SEE APPENDICES C, D, I).*

However, for my post sign language data, I not only signed what I was asking them to do, but for students that were having a harder time learning the signs, I also mouthed the words of signs I was giving. This way, students’ eyes were either on my hands or my mouth. They always knew what they were to be doing because of the nature of the transition. If they had not been looking at me they would have no idea what to do, which is the problem the class was running into before I began using sign language. By using signing during transition times, they had to be both listening to me and looking at me. This certainly helped with reducing the amount of students who were not following directions, or continuing to do their own things during these important transitions throughout the day. *(SEE APPENDICES G, H).* I was able to see an overall decrease in the numbers of students that were off task during the transitions characterized by the
following behaviors: not giving me their eyes, continuing their own work, not following my directions, and procrastinating the move to the next activity. (SEE APPENDICES E, F, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q).

The number of instances as well as the number of students seen exhibiting these behaviors decreased across the board for both transitions. Before using signs during these times, on average, I had 4 or 5 students either not looking at me, or not following my directions in some form. That is a fourth of my class off task during a very important time during the day. After implementing the use of sign language, the average number of students still giving me no eye contact or not following my directions dropped down to only 1 or 2 students. (SEE APPENDICES E, J).

Claim Two: When students are given deliberate directions through sign language, the management during transitional times in the classroom is much more structured and in turn, behaviors are more in line with expectations.

While looking over my video analysis from transition one before implementing the use of sign language, I noticed that many students were not participating in the transition as they were asked. While I did not code and chart these behaviors, very few students lined up and got ready for lunch like they are asked to everyday. I found myself having to wait for students to be ready each day before heading to the lunchroom.

Similarly, I noticed patterns in my video evidence before I began using sign language to help ease confusion and promote productive activity during transitions. Many students were not following through with actions that needed to be taken to get ready for math. This was causing frustration all around; on the students’ part because they did not know what they were to be doing and when they were to be doing it, and on my part,
because after feeling as though I was giving explicit verbal directions, they were getting lost among the various activities taking place.

When I began using sign language to make explanations and processes during transitions clear, I also made sure to get the students’ attention. Having student eye contact is vital when using sign language in the classroom. When I had their attention and their eye contact, I knew they were watching and hearing the directions. After I began to use sign language, I saw the amount of students following directions increase. While there were still a few students who wanted to finish what they were doing, and get ready for math as it was convenient for them, I saw dramatic improvements in the overall calm environment that was created by using sign language during transitional times. (SEE APPENDICES E, F, J, K).

Claim Three: Student eye contact while giving directions during transitions increases with the use of sign language but student involvement throughout the transition does not.

I was able to observe and document through video evidence the amount of student eye contact during directions of a transition, whether it was for our transition to lunchtime, or our transition to math. Before the implementation of sign language, my data shows that many students were not paying attention or giving me eye contact many times throughout instructions given before a switch in the day. Once sign language was introduced, and I started to use it during our changes from one activity to another, I saw student eye contact increase because of the sheer importance to have eye contact with a person who is signing. (SEE APPENDICE E, F, J, K).
One of the biggest changes I was hoping the use of sign language during transitional times would bring to students was more involvement on their part during these changes through out the day. I envisioned students signing along with me, and while they did know the signs and understood them, they really just looked to me for signs, and rarely joined in with me. I was surprised and somewhat disappointed because I really thought that being an active participant would help them enjoy sign language even more than they already do. Although the use of signing did not increase student involvement, they still seemed engaged for the most part and liked seeing and learning the signs.

Claim Four: Student procrastination incidents decreased during the transition to math time when sign language was used.

During the transition from quiet time to math, one of the biggest problems I faced before implementing the use of sign language, was students who always took their time. I felt like they would do every last thing they could think of to delay the start of our math lessons.

After implementing sign language during this transition, I saw a dramatic decrease in the number of students who continued to procrastinate. In fact, the only students who were still procrastinating were students who tend to do this during each transition through out the day. The one or two students who still chose to finish their projects, or get ready for math on their own terms, are the students who I believe also try as hard as they can to always be last; they are the ones who want to be the last in line to walk down the halls, the last one in line when we come in from recess to get a drink, and the last one to the carpet to begin a new activity. Other than these one or two students, the
level of procrastination in the other nineteen students in my classroom completely went away. (SEE APPENDIX P, Q).

In addition to the improvements seen with the use of sign language, I saw another change in student behavior. Before using sign language, I’d let students know that by the end of the song that happened to be playing during quiet time, they needed to be cleaned up and in their carpet squares ready for math. When I used sign language to transition students, I stopped them from what they were doing, had them give me their attention, and let them know it was time to put their things away and come to the carpet, not giving them that time to choose when they were ready to move on to the next activity. The combination of taking away this additional time to end their activity and using sign language to give explicit and clear directions, helped my students respond more positively to both transitions.

**Reflection and Implications for Future Practice**

In completing my inquiry project, I have realized that there are indeed many benefits to using sign language in the classroom. With that being said, I think there is a time, place, and particular strategy to keep in mind when using sign language to move from one activity to another throughout the day. During the first few days when I used sign language from quiet time to math, I noticed it was very hard to give my directions to students. So many of them were making independent choices, it was difficult to direct their attention away from their free choices and onto me. I realized that before I gave my directions through signs, I needed to ask them to look at me for some important directions. While I truly believe the use of sign language was a large contributing factor as to why the effectiveness and efficiency of students increased during transition times, it
also realistically could have been partially due to the fact that I asked students to stop and look at me.

I will be using sign language in the future to help students transition throughout the day and this will be something I keep in mind. I will always make sure to ask my students for their eyes before signing the expectations and directions for the particular transition because I do think this was a small, but vital piece to making these transitional times successful.

One thing that I expected to find as a result of this inquiry was that using sign language during transition times would decrease the amount of time it took to get finished with one activity and ready for another. From the data I collected, the amount of time it took to complete transitions before the use of sign language and after the use of sign language was pretty comparable, if not even a little longer with the use of sign language. While this was not what I expected to find, I was okay with the transitions taking a little longer. I felt as though by using sign language, transitions were more calm and controlled and students were really doing what I was asking of them in a timely manner. I felt like the transitions went much smoother because I was more composed and felt more in control over a somewhat crazy time during the day. I could tell my relaxed feelings influenced my students’ demeanor and feelings as well.

While I have learned so many valuable things from this inquiry to take with me and use in my years to come my inquiry will not stop here. One of the things I was most interested in and excited to explore with this particular inquiry was how to increase student engagement during transition times. I envisioned students actively participating in the transition with me, however the students were still observers of the transition times,
and not participants. I am wondering what I can do in the future when using sign language during transitional times and how I can further engage and include students through their use of sign language in unison with mine. I am curious when I look at the few instances where students were still not active members of the transitions and wonder if being more involved by signing along with me would help in keeping students engaged and a part of the move from one activity to another. This will be a question I continue to explore as I try new strategies to see how I can accomplish the task of increasing student engagement during transitional times, while still maintaining order and control as well.
Appendices

A.

Final Inquiry Brief and Bibliography

Context:

As a Professional Development Intern through Penn State University, I have worked in a self-contained kindergarten classroom at Gray's Woods Elementary School in the State College Area School District during the 2009-2010 school year. This kindergarten class consists of twenty-one students, eleven female and ten male, each of which has unique academic, behavioral and social needs. Of the twenty-one students, there are eight Caucasian females, ten Caucasian males, one African-American female, one Asian female, and one Hispanic female. The majority of these students come from middle to upper class families.

While visually, my students look extremely similar, I have a pretty wide range of students academically. In language arts, the majority of my students are already reading at the benchmark for where kindergarten students should be at the end of the year. I have no Title One students for reading or math, and have no English as Second Language students. I do have one student who gets pulled for a Speech IEP, and additionally have two students who leave the classroom for extra Speech support.

I have two students with different Instructional Education Plans. One of my students, Mark, has cerebral palsy, which effects how he does a lot of the work in the classroom. He does a lot of work on the computer, and has a keyboard that his occupational therapist got for him. Mark can use the keyboard anywhere in the
room to record his notes and then he can then easily plug it into one of our classroom computers to print out his writing.

My second student who has an IEP is a student, Colin, who suffers from a muscle condition that can cause vision impairment. His doctors have been unable to diagnose a particular disorder, but we know that his body is not as strong as his peers and because of this, he falls down a lot. When Colin falls, it can have extremely detrimental effects on his vision, causing his sight to be blurred or even blacked out. When he falls, we are instructed to take him right to the nurse to be checked. Both of Colin's issues are more health related than academic oriented, and because of this, we have not really needed to differentiate instruction for him up to this point.

All of the students in my class have great social relationships with each other. They work and play so well together, and the boys and girls interact well with each other. It is easy to tell that they all genuinely care for one another, and are truly disappointed and miss anyone that happens to be absent. Each one of my students in special and unique in their own way, and while I enjoy working with each of them, in groups and individually, I feel fortunate to have the opportunity to know them and be their classroom teacher.

**Rationale:**

Throughout my experience in the Professional Development School program, and in my self-contained kindergarten classroom, there has been a combination of two different but big experiences that have led me to my inquiry topic. First off, my mentor, from day one, has used sign language in our classroom. She has used it as a way to introduce letters or letter sounds (vowels especially), she has used it for
management, and she has used it to open students eyes to a new and different
language. It has opened my eyes to new techniques I wouldn’t have even thought
existed otherwise, and I have become fascinated with the effectiveness and fun of
using signs through out the school day.

Secondly, about once a month, one of our parents comes in for about half an
hour to do sign language work with our class. She has taught them so many practical
signs that we use through out our day, like lunch and recess, and she has taught
them signs to show how they are feeling. Beyond that, she has built a unique
knowledge in their young minds about accepting and embracing people that are
different from them. I know that I personally get so excited when this parent comes
in to our classroom to work with the students, but I can tell that it is really
something they value and enjoy as well. They are inquisitive, and responsive and
incorporate what they learn into their daily lives in our classroom. This got me
wondering how my mentor and I could really utilize sign language to help us with
classroom management during transitions throughout our school day.

Our transition times right now, while they are not totally chaotic, they could
definitely use some improvement in regards to efficiency and effectiveness. Since
our students are more than halfway through the year, they are convinced they know
the routine (and most of the time they do!) but they do not always understand what
we are asking of them. I think by using sign language through transitions, it will
make these in-between times much smoother as well as increase the amount of eye
contact we get from students during directions. I think it will also dramatically
increase the efficiency and effectiveness of quick transitions.
After seeing my mentor use sign language, as well as one of our students’ parent, it got me really excited to see what I could do with sign language. It seems as though when the parent comes into our classroom, we really try and use her signs for the next couple days, and then it fades off. I really want to see with consistent use, how using sign language in the classroom can help with classroom management.

**Main Wonderings:**

How can using sign language help with classroom management through transition times?

**Sub-Wonderings:**

- How does using sign language through transitions increase eye contact from students?
- How does using sign language through transitions increase student engagement?
- How does using sign language through transitions create more effective and efficient transitions?

**Timeline:**

**Week of February 8-12:**

- ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND BRIEF DUE (2-10)
- “From Wonderings to Practice” Seminar (10th)

**Week of February 15-19:**

- Collect video data on 2 transitions without sign language (Kris)
  - Transition (1) on Wednesday from our short Read Aloud to Lunch
Time to Sign!

- Transition (2) on Wednesday from Quiet Time to Math

- Import video into Studio Code and code for students that are not on task during transition. This could include not having eye contact with teacher, continuing their activity instead of listening, not following directions, or procrastinating. I will also be looking at the amount of time it takes for ALL students to successfully complete the transition.

**Week of February 22-26:**

*REVISED ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY AND BREIF DUE! (2-24)*

- “Data Analysis – Claims and Evidence” Seminar (22nd)

- Collect video data on 2 transitions without sign language (Leslie/Jess/Kris)
  
  - Transition (1) on Wednesday from short Read Aloud to Lunch
  - Transition (1) on Thursday from short Read Aloud to Lunch
  - Transition (2) on Thursday from Quiet Time to Math
  - Transition (2) on Friday from Quiet Time to Math

- Import video into Studio Code and code for students that are not on task during transition. This could include not having eye contact with teacher, continuing their activity instead of listening, not following directions, or procrastinating. I will also be looking at the amount of time it takes for ALL students to successfully complete the transition.

**Week of March 1-5:**

- INTRODUCE NEW SIGNS FOR FIRST TRANSITION TIME DURING MONDAY MORNING GREETING MEETING!
Time to Sign!

- Transition One, TEACH:
  - Packing
  - Milk
  - Lunch 1,2,3,4
  - REMIND:
    - Walk
    - Quiet
    - Door
    - Line Up

- Show Video(s) during this week!
  - Signing Time: Welcome to School
  - Signing Time: My Favorite Things

- Collect last video data on 2 transitions without sign language (Leslie/Jess/Kris)
  - Transition (1) on Monday from short Read Aloud to Lunch
  - Transition (2) on Wednesday from Quiet Time to Math

- Import video into Studio Code and code for students that are not on task during transition. This could include not having eye contact with teacher, continuing their activity instead of listening, not following directions, or procrastinating. I will also be looking at the amount of time it takes for ALL students to successfully complete the transition.

- At the end of this week, I should have all my data collection completed for our transition times before I begin to incorporate signs. I will have
eight different pieces of video evidence of two different transition times that are coded for specific behaviors.

**Week of March 8-12:**

- **SPRING BREAK**

**Week of March 15-19:**

- “Data Analysis: Writing Your Results” Seminar – Bring DATA! (17th)

- RE-INTRODUCE SIGNS FOR TRANSITION ONE TIME DURING MONDAY MORNING GREETING MEETING (Same signs as taught during morning meeting on March 1)

- Teach new signs for second transition
  
  - Transition Two, TEACH:
    
    - Blue Row, Purple Row, Dark Green Row, Light Green Row
    - Put away
    - Marker box, paper
    - Books
    - Sit criss-cross apple sauce, hands in lap
    - REMIND:
      
      - Quiet
      - Walk

- Collect video data on 2 transitions WITH sign language (Leslie/Jess/Kris). Even though I am only collecting data on some days, we will be using signs every day through these two transitions.
• Time to Sign!

- Transition (2) on Monday from Quiet Time to Math
- Transition (1) on Wednesday from short Read Aloud to Lunch
- Transition (2) on Wednesday from Quiet Time to Math
- Transition (1) on Friday from short Read Aloud to Lunch

• Import video into Studio Code and code for students that are not on task during transition. This could include not having eye contact with teacher, continuing their activity instead of listening, not following directions, or procrastinating. I will also be looking at the amount of time it takes for ALL students to successfully complete the transition. I am hoping the amount of coding will have decreased!

Week of March 22-26:

• Collect video data on 2 transitions WITH sign language (Leslie/Jess/Kris). Even though I am only collecting data on some days, we will be using signs every day through these two transitions.
  - Transition (2) on Monday from Quiet Time to Math
  - Transition (1) on Wednesday from short Read Aloud to Lunch
  - Transition (2) on Wednesday from Quiet Time to Math
  - Transition (1) on Friday from short Read Aloud to Lunch

• Import video into Studio Code and code for students that are not on task during transition. This could include not having eye contact with teacher, continuing their activity instead of listening, not following directions, or procrastinating. I will also be looking at the amount of
time it takes for ALL students to successfully complete the transition. I am hoping the amount of coding will have decreased!

- At the end of this week, I should have all my data collection completed and I should be ready to move onto my data analysis! 😊 I will have sixteen different pieces of video evidence of two different transition times that are coded for specific behaviors both pre-sign language and with the use of sign language in transitions!

**Week of March 29-April 2:**
- Analyze Data from after using sign language in transitions
- Begin compiling post-data into Inquiry Paper Draft

**Week of April 5-9:**
- Finish analyzing data from after using sign language in transitions
- Continue compiling Inquiry Paper Draft

**Week of April 12-16:**
- **INQUIRY PAPER DRAFT DUE! (4-16)**
- Complete Inquiry Paper Draft

**Week of April 19-23:**
- Peer Edit of Inquiry Papers, Tips for Presenting Seminar (21st)
- Revise Inquiry Paper Draft to Final Draft

**Week of April 26-30:**
- **FINAL INQUIRY PAPER DUE (5-2)**
- Prepare for Inquiry Conference Presentation
• Prepare abstract

Week of May 3-7:
• Prepare for Inquiry Conference Presentation
• Prepare abstract

May 8:
• **INQUIRY CONFERENCE**

**Data Collection Ideas:**
- I plan on taking video of transition times before we start using sign language, and after I start using sign language. This will allow me to see as a whole class, the effectiveness of the change in transitions
- I want to find some way to record a “time on task” or eye contact of students through transitions. I would like to see that eye contact and efficient transitions increase
- I want to time transitions before and after using sign language. I would have to time the same transitions, like transition to lunch, or transition from writer’s workshop into stations, so that I had similar instructions to base the timing off of. (For example, the other day coming back from lunch, I started signing “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” and by the time I finished the song one time through, all of my students were on the carpet in their spots signing with me. This is MUCH quicker than the normally find their spots on the carpet)
- I want to find out if overall, using sign language in transitions helps with classroom management, so I want to collect data on the overall environment of the classroom – whether students are “frozen” and listening, with both their eyes and ears (meaning it should be silent in the room), whether students seem to know what is expected of them, etc.

References


This is an online source put together by the Michigan State University Communications Technology Laboratory. It is a website in which you can click on any letter of the alphabet, and browse through their “library” of words and sign demonstrations. It not only provides a video of how to do the sign, but it also gives an explanation of which ways to move your body to do the sign correctly. This will be a great resource for me to use when I am looking for signs to go with the different transitional times we have during our day. This would not be a resource that I would share with my students, because I think the website would be too hard for them to navigate, and I also think some of the words (and signs) are inappropriate for them to see.


This is an online source put together by teachers and interpreters who want to provide a free, easy-to-use reference and learning tool to enhance in-classroom learning for ASL Educators and their Students. While I am not an ASL Educator, I still think this
can prove to be a great resource for me. Similar to the website put together by the Michigan State University Communications Technology Laboratory, this web site has a main dictionary where you can click on any letter of the alphabet. From there, you can browse through the words (and signs) they have available. Once you click on a word, a video dictionary comes up, with an ASL Educator demonstrating how to do the sign. Again, this would be a great teacher resource for me, but not one that I would share with my students to explore on their own. The website is too difficult to navigate on their own, but will be great for me to look for specific signs I want to use in my transitions.


This is an online source put together by the Singing Time and Two Little Hands company. It is a place where I was able to see not only the four DVDs that one of my student’s parents lent to me, but I could also see the many other DVDs available. I was also able to explore some of the Classroom Edition. This website was useful in seeing what resources could be available to me, but as for informational, it was not my most useful resource. A lot of the website resources were for purchase only, or they would show you some of what you could use if you bought their product. Even though I could not see and use the resources in their entirety, this website was still very informative to me. This is certainly an online source that was beneficial to me, but it would not be one that I could use with my students. Because it is so many resources for purchase only, this would not be an online source I would send my students to.

This is a great print resource that I got from my mentor. It is written by a Penn State professor, and is about the benefits of using signs with children as young as six-months old. Marilyn Daniels was able to explain to readers the benefits of using signs with students that can hear to help build their literacy skills (among other skills). She presents her research of using signs with such young children – she tells us that because many signs look similar to the word they represent, they are easy for a child to remember and use. The child sees the word, makes the sign, and then can eventually pronounce the word. While the content in this book dealt more with another inquiry topic I was considering, I still felt that this book was a worthwhile read and that it was still related enough to my topic to include in my references. This will certainly be a resource for just myself, and not for my students. It is a lengthy chapter book with lots of research and rationale for signs, and this would certainly not be appropriate to share with my students. I thought it was interesting how she talked about how not only teachers, but parents could also use these signs to advance their child’s education. I will not even necessarily use the information I learned in this book with my particular inquiry topic, but it did open my eyes to the benefits of signing for increased literacy confidence, especially beginning at such young ages.

February 4, 2010, from

http://www.outreach.psu.edu/news/magazine/vol_5.1/sign.html

This online source is an article written for Penn State Outreach News. It is an article written about the work Dr. Marilyn Daniels does as a Speech Communications professor at Penn State Scranton. She has done extensive work to “improve the communication ability of children”. It also mentions her book, “Dancing With Words: Signing for Hearing Children’s Literacy”. One of the most interesting things to me, mentioned in the book, but also in this article, was the “child’s ability to remember a sign in association with the word it represents is muscle memory. “Physical usage equals remembrance,” Daniels said of this “hands-on” approach, which helps with recall through a learned movement”. While this again, is a resource that does not directly relate to using signs in transitions, it has broadened my education and interest in using sign language in the classroom. This is a resource that was great for me to come across, but it is not a source I would use with my students. It was great information for me to read, but not a place I would send my students on the internet!

Howlin Gustafson, Cari. Personal interview. 5 Feb. 2010.

I was fortunate enough to be able to interview a parent from my classroom, Cari Gustafson. She has been coming in all year about once a month to do some signing work with our class. She has taught them signs to use in the classroom, like tissue and jacket, as well as signs to show how they are feeling – excited, happy, tired, grumpy, etc. She has been a great resource for me because she has shared many of her resources she uses with me. We talked a lot about her experience with signing, and ways that I could go
about using signs through transition times. She was very excited to hear about my inquiry, and told me she would support and assist me any way I needed. She said she would come in and do more signing work with our class, and that I could email her at any time with any questions I might. Our interview lasted a little less than half an hour, but after it, I was much more clear and decided and confident about my inquiry topic.


This is an online resource put together by the National Association of the Deaf. This resource I was able to use to learn more about the National Association. I was also able to browse through some of their resources they put out for use, and some of the technology they have available for hearing impaired people. This is not necessarily a resource that directly relates to my inquiry question, but it did broaden my knowledge about sign language use in general. This is a resource that was great for me to utilize, but is not something I would use with my students. First off, the website is way to hard for them to navigate, but it also has inappropriate information for them, and a lot of information they could not read.

This was an online resource used mainly to help with parents who want to introduce signing to their young children. It explains in detail, the benefits of signing with young children, and promotes a “Kinder Signs” program to use. It emphasizes that this is a program to use with children that can hear, and NOT for hearing impaired students. This is a resource that does not directly relate to using signs to help with efficiency and effectiveness during transition time, but it was informative about using signs in general. This is a resource that was great for me, but again, not one that I think would be appropriate academically to use with my students.


This is a VHS lent to me by a student’s parent. It is an interactive VHS that teaches signs that one might use to explain how they are feeling or if they are talking about their family. Signs like mom, dad, class, share, and play are just a few of the signs used and taught in this VHS. This VHS is not only interactive in showing and teaching children signs, but it also includes songs to make the learning more fun and interactive for children. This is a resource I will be able to use to learn signs to teach to my students, but it is also a resource I will consider showing to my students. I really think they would enjoy and benefit from seeing and learning from this VHS and not just from me.


This is a DVD lent to me by a student’s parents. It is an interactive DVD that teaches signs that one might use in their daily routine. It goes through a child’s day
teaching signs for time such as waking up, getting dressed for school, playing, and going
to bed. Signs like Awake, brush hair, clothes, and clean up (to name a few) are used and
taught in this DVD. This DVD is not only interactive in showing and teaching children
signs, but it also includes songs to make the learning more fun and interactive for
children. This is a resource I will be able to use to learn signs to teach to students, but it is
also a resource I would consider showing to my students. I really think they would enjoy
and benefit seeing and learning from this DVD and not just from me.

title]. United States of America.

This is a VHS lent to me by a student’s parents. It is an interactive VHS that
teaches signs that one might use to describe the colors they see, different plants and
animals, and different foods they eat. Signs like red, blue, yellow, watermelon,
vegetables, and flowers are just a few of the signs used and taught in this VHS. This VHS
is not only interactive in sowing and teaching children signs, but it also includes songs to
make the learning more fun and interactive for children. This is a resource I will be able
to use to learn signs to teach to students, but it is also a resource I would consider
showing to my students. I really think they would enjoy and benefit seeing and learning
from this VHS and not just from me.

Two Little Hands Productions. (2006). *Signing Time: Welcome to School* [Motion
title]. United States of America.

This is a DVD lent to me by a student’s parents. It is an interactive DVD that
teaches signs that one might use in their day at school. Signs like pencil, paper, backpack,
line up, and numbers are a few of the signs taught in this DVD. This DVD is not only
interactive in showing and teaching children signs, but it also includes songs to make the
learning more fun and interactive for children. This is a resource I will be able to use to
learn signs to teach my students that we can utilize in transitions, but it is also a resource
I would consider showing to my students. I really think they would enjoy and benefit
from seeing and learning from this DVD and not just from me.
B.

**TRANSITION ONE:**

*Pre-Sign Language*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transition One</th>
<th>Total Time</th>
<th>No Eye Contact with Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 19, 2010</td>
<td>1:44</td>
<td>2 Major Occasions (4,6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 1, 2010</td>
<td>2:06</td>
<td>2 Major Occasions (2,3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2, 2010</td>
<td>2:13</td>
<td>4 Major Occasions (4,3,2,3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Occasions pertain to how many times I noted or coded that students were exhibiting a particular behavior. The numbers included after instances include how many students were exhibiting that behavior during each occasion.
### Transition One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Total Time</th>
<th>No Eye Contact with Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 22, 2010</td>
<td>2:27</td>
<td>3 Major Occasions (2,2,2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 29, 2010</td>
<td>2:04</td>
<td>3 Major Occasions (2,2,2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 30, 2010</td>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>2 Major Occasions (2,2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
D.

**Time Taken To Complete Transition to Lunch**

![Bar chart showing the total amount of time for transition to lunch. The chart compares the time taken before and after the transition in different conditions.](chart.png)
E. Students With Lack of Eye Contact During Transition to Lunch

![Bar chart showing number of students lacking eye contact with teacher during transitional directions.](chart.png)
Students with No Eye Contact

Pre-One  
Post-One

Pre-Two  
Post-Two

Pre-Three  
Post-Three

• Each “X” represents a student exhibiting the particular behavior; in this case, students who have no eye contact with me during directions. The black “X”s are for coded behavior before implementing sign language, and the red “X”s are for students showing the behavior while using sign language during transitions.
G.

TRANSITION TWO:

Pre-Sign Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transition Two</th>
<th>Total Time</th>
<th>No Eye Contact with Teacher</th>
<th>Continuing Activity</th>
<th>Not Following Directions</th>
<th>Procrastinating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 17, 2010</td>
<td>2:15</td>
<td>2 Major Occasions (3, 2)</td>
<td>1 Major Occasion (2)</td>
<td>1 Major Occasion (2)</td>
<td>4 Major Occasions (1, 1, 1, 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 24, 2010</td>
<td>3:30</td>
<td>0 Major Occasions</td>
<td>4 Major Occasions (7, 5, 5, 3)</td>
<td>4 Major Occasions (5, 5, 3, 2)</td>
<td>6 Major Occasions (5, 2, 3, 2, 2, 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 3, 2010</td>
<td>1:42</td>
<td>1 Major Occasion (3)</td>
<td>1 Major Occasion (2)</td>
<td>3 Major Occasions (1, 1, 3)</td>
<td>6 Major Occasions (5, 2, 3, 2, 2, 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 4, 2010</td>
<td>1:42</td>
<td>1 Major Occasion (8)</td>
<td>4 Major Occasions (6, 4, 2, 3)</td>
<td>3 Major Occasions (7, 2, 3)</td>
<td>3 Major Occasions (1, 1, 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
H.

**Post-Sign Language**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transition Two</th>
<th>Total Time</th>
<th>No Eye Contact with Teacher</th>
<th>Continuing Activity</th>
<th>Not Following Directions</th>
<th>Procrastinating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 17, 2010</td>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>1 Major Occasion (6)</td>
<td>1 Major Occasion (3)</td>
<td>0 Major Occasions</td>
<td>3 Major Occasions (3, 2, 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 18, 2010</td>
<td>1:59</td>
<td>1 Major Occasion (1)</td>
<td>1 Major Occasion (1)</td>
<td>1 Major Occasion (1)</td>
<td>0 Major Occasions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 22, 2010</td>
<td>2:20</td>
<td>0 Major Occasions</td>
<td>1 Major Occasion (1)</td>
<td>1 Major Occasion (2)</td>
<td>2 Major Occasions (4, 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 29, 2010</td>
<td>2:28</td>
<td>2 Major Occasions (2, 4)</td>
<td>2 Major Occasions (2, 2)</td>
<td>2 Major Occasions (2, 1)</td>
<td>3 Major Occasions (1, 1, 1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. 

**Time Taken to Complete Transition to Math**

- Pre-1: 2.25
- Pre-2: 3.5
- Pre-3: 1.67
- Pre-4: 1.67
- Post-1: 2
- Post-2: 2
- Post-3: 2.33
- Post-4: 2.5

[Bar chart showing the total amount of time for transition to math, with Pre-Sign Language and Post Sign Language categories.]
J.

Students With Lack of Eye Contact During Transition to Math
K.

**Students with No Eye Contact**

- **Pre-One** ➔ XXX XXXXXX
- **Post-One** ➔ XX

- **Pre-Two** ➔ X
- **Post-Two** ➔

- **Pre-Three** ➔ XXX
- **Post-Three** ➔

- **Pre-Four** ➔ XXXXXXXXXXXX
- **Post-Four** ➔ XXXX

- Each “X” represents a student exhibiting the particular behavior; in this case, students who have no eye contact with me during directions. The black “X”s are for coded behavior before implementing sign language, and the red “X”s are for students showing the behavior while using sign language during transitions.
Students Who Choose to Continue Activity During Transition to Math
M.

Students Continuing Their Activity

Pre-One  →  XX
Post-One

Pre-Two  →  XXXXXXXX
Post-Two   XXXXXX
            XXXXXXXX
            XXX

Pre-Three →  XXX
Post-Three

Pre-Four  →  XXXXXXXX
Post-Four  XXXXXX
           XX
           XXX

* Each “X” represents a student exhibiting the particular behavior; in this case, students who continue their activity during directions. The black “X”s are for coded behavior before implementing sign language, and the red “X”s are for students showing the behavior while using sign language during transitions.
N.

Students Who Are Not Following Directions During Transition to Math
O.

Students Not Following Directions

Pre-One  →  XXX
Post-One

Pre-Two  →  XXXXXX
Post-Two  XXXXXX
       XXX
       XX

Pre-Three  →  XXX
Post-Three  X
       XXX

Pre-Four  →  XXXXXXXXX
Post-Four  XXX
       XXX

* Each "X" represents a student exhibiting the particular behavior; in this case, students who are not following directions while I give them. The black "X"s are for coded behavior before implementing sign language, and the red "X"s are for students showing the behavior while using sign language during transitions.
Students Who Are Procrastinating During Transition to Math
Q.

Students Procrastinating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-One</th>
<th>XXXX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-One</td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Two</th>
<th>XXXXX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-Two</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Three</th>
<th>XXXXXX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-Three</td>
<td>XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Four</th>
<th>XX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post-Four</td>
<td>XX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Each “X” represents a student exhibiting the particular behavior; in this case, students who are not following directions while I give them. The black “X”’s are for coded behavior before implementing sign language, and the red “X”’s are for students showing the behavior while using sign language during transitions.