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Transition Time Affecting Instruction Time in Middle School Classrooms

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Action Research

By

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In middle school, students will transition from class to class approximately eight times per day. Additionally, within the class, the students will transition roughly two or more times. This transition could include handing in homework, forming small groups, walking to the library, or switching from direct instruction to independent worktime.

Each of these instances involves a transition. During transitions, teacher's goals are for students to have smooth and effortless movement from one location to the next. Educators will hope that students head to the desired location with little to no distraction.

Every type of transition will require a different approach from the educator. When students are transitioning into a new classroom, the educator may want to have directions and needed materials ready to be displayed. That way, students know exactly what is expected of them when they walk into the classroom. If students are forming groups, the educator should know exactly how they will form groups and where each group will meet. These approaches will save time and create smooth transitions.

Brief Literature Review

In literature, there are studies that have been done to assist in smooth transitions. Some research states that implementing routines is the most effective way to establish good classroom management regarding transitioning (Banerjee & Horn, 2012). Other researchers set clear, fair, and brief expectations so all students know when and how to transition successfully (Fudge et al,

2008). Additionally, Landsman (1994) encourages educators to use bell ringers or attention getters for students to know when to be ready to learn.

Statement of the Problem

I have personally noticed that my students (ages 11-12) have a difficult time transitioning from classes or activities. During the transition time, they tend to get distracted, begin talking, or ignore directions. Some students get anxious during the chaotic breaktime while other students escalate in the unstructured time. As the educator, I wonder what I could implement to help this time. Do I need to establish better relationships with the students? Should I have more clear expectations with them? Would it help if I tried something different?

Purpose of the Study

This study is being conducted to find the best and most efficient ways to transition from one activity to another. Transitioning takes up valuable class time that could otherwise be used in academic related studies. Little to no studies have been documented at the secondary level regarding transitioning and best practices related to transitioning. This study will specifically focus on how often a middle school student transitions, how long it takes to transition, and what behavior management techniques work best to reduce transition time.

Research Question(s)

How does transitioning affect classroom instruction time in middle school?

Definition of Variables

The following are the variables of study:

Variable A: Transitions (dependent variable) will remain the same for each class. The educator will have students move from class to class or move around the room to transition activities.

Variable B: is student groups (independent variable). The educator will research four different Language Arts classes with different sets of students. Time of day, class size, and classroom behavior will all be different.

Variable C: is teaching of expectations (independent variable). The educator will begin the research by not explicitly teaching the expectations and time the transition time. Halfway through the study, the educator will begin clearly teaching the expectations of transitions, teach transition tools, and will time them again.

Significance of the Study

This study is important for the participants to work on listening to directions and self-discipline of following instructions. The study is important for educators to find out how to utilize the most class time for instructional purposes. There have not been many studies conducted on transitions at the secondary level. This will show the best practices for transitioning older students from classes or activities.

Research Ethics

Permission and IRB Approval

In order to conduct this study, the researcher will seek MSUM's Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to ensure the ethical conduct of research involving human subjects (Mills

& Gay, 2019). Likewise, authorization to conduct this study will be seek from the school district where the research project will be take place (See Appendix X and X).

Informed Consent

Protection of human subjects participating in research will be assured. Participant minors will be informed of the purpose of the study via the Method of Assent (See Appendix X) that the researcher will read to participants before the beginning of the study. Participants will be aware that this study is conducted as part of the researcher's Master Degree Program and that it will benefit her teaching practice. Informed consent means that the parents of participants have been fully informed of the purpose and procedures of the study for which consent is sought and that parents understand and agree, in writing, to their child participating in the study (Rothstein & Johnson, 2014). Confidentiality will be protected through the use of pseudonyms (e.g., Student 1) without the utilization of any identifying information. The choice to participate or withdraw at any time will be outlined both, verbally and in writing.

Limitations

There are potential limitations that could affect this study. Those limitations include students who are on 504 accommodations for physical movement or Individual Education Plans due to behavior modifications. These students have a paraprofessional with them to help and encourage positive choices.

Conclusions

This chapter discussed the importance of smooth transitions. Educators and students alike will benefit when transitioning can be quick and effortless. When this occurs, instructional time will increase which will benefit lessons, test scores, and academics.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Every day in middle school, when one class finishes and the next class begins to file in, the educator may dread the transition time. In my opinion, most middle school learners do not do well with transitions. It seems that the four minutes between classes or shifting from one activity to the next seems to give the learners the green light to act obnoxiously, pick fights with one another, and get distracted by anything around them. Because of this, it takes the educator a long time to get the learners settled down enough to begin the lesson. The chaotic beginning to the class sometimes sets the tone for the remainder of the class.

This year, educators in my district had more academic content added to the curriculum. Time is a very valuable commodity during the school day. To cover all the concepts, the educator needs to start class efficiently with learners ready and prepared to learn. The educator may feel that they lose a lot of time when trying to get learner's attention back after the transition time. In my experience, educators constantly remind learners of the expectations, ask them to sit in their desk, and may resort to yelling. I believe that most educators want to interact with their classes on a positive and calm note.

Transitioning between classes or activities is important so that the class does not lose instructional time. An educator should explicitly teach the expectations of transitioning and practice with their class. Classroom management is key when transitioning.

Body of the Review

Context

This study will investigate the effects of transition time and learner behavior using multiple classroom management strategies.

Transitions

Transitions during the school day are defined as "a teacher-initiated movement from one ongoing classroom activity to another resulting in a change in the activity during a daily routine. Classroom transitions may occur individually or in groups" (Banerjee & Horn, 2013, p.3). Transitions amongst learners may occur before and after school, from a large group to a small group, between classes, or in the middle of activities within a classroom.

Hine, Ardoin, and Foster state that appropriate transitions involve physically moving from one activity to the next, quickly gathering and putting away materials, or quietly waiting for instruction to begin (Hine, Ardoin, & Foster, 2015, p. 495). Organizing classroom environments to facilitate transitions can lead to minimizing unproductive time for children, provide more instructional time, reduce challenging behaviors, and promote children independence (Banerjee & Horn, 2013, p.4).

To ease the transition time between activities, educators can conduct attention grabbers. These are tools to focus the attention on the teacher or curriculum rather than social or unproductive behaviors. Landsman (1994) offers advice for the beginning of class by stating

> Immediately after the bell rings, begin with an attention grabber to bring the class together. You will have the students with you right away. Attention grabbers can be a 'word of the day,' a trivia question, a vocabulary question, or a math problem. Use whatever enhances your curriculum and will get the students' attention. (p.5)

This type of activity will engage students to be on task and ready to learn. They will know their purpose as they walk into your classroom.

Sara Wicht (2008) shares another useful tool that are called bell ringers. She defines bell ringers as

> Warm-up activities that students complete at the beginning of class—when the bell rings—while teachers take attendance, pass out materials or briefly catch up with students who have been absent. This strategy allows teachers to utilize every minute of class time while taking care of 'housekeeping,' and also serves to jump-start student success by guiding thinking toward learning objectives, helping students quiet the many competing topics on their minds. (p. 4)

This type of activity allows the educator to prepare for their next class and complete their obligations such as attendance and organizing materials to prepare for the lesson.

When a teacher does not have a good grasp on the transition time at the beginning of class, or any transition during class, learners lose precious academic time. There is research that supports that transitions consume as much as 25% of non-learning activities in the classroom (Codding & Smyth, 2008, p. 326).

The article titled "Using Performance Feedback to Decrease Classroom Transition Time and Examine Collateral Effects on Academic Engagement" (2008) researched cutting down transition time during academic lessons and increase student attentiveness. The article states, "Students spend up to one-half of instructional time engaged in tasks not related to learning, such as classroom procedural matters, transitions between activities, discipline situations, and off-task activities" (Codding & Smyth, 2008, p. 326). Codding and Smyth set up tripod cameras and record an educator's 39-minute lesson. The researchers then gave the educator a checklist of how to reduce transition times. The checklist included: "Collect and distribute papers once per period, provide transition warnings, arrange materials in classroom to be easily accessible and available,

provide directions for transitions, bring activities to a closure before transition occurs, and begin the lesson on time" (Codding & Smyth, 2008, p. 326). The results concluded that before the checklist was given, transition time consumed an average of 15.2 minutes of the 39-minute lesson. After the checklist was given and changes were made, transition time decreased to an average of 4.47 minutes and student engagement rose by 13.2% (Codding & Smyth, 2008, p. 336).

Teaching Expectations

Before you can expect students to know how to successfully transition, you need to teach them your expectations of a successful transition. When planning lessons, teachers often do not plan for the time taken up by transitions. Research suggests that transition times should be carefully planned and taught. Roles and responsibilities should be assigned not only for students but also for any adults in the classroom. Planning for this time will reduce off task behaviors and increase the academic learning time (Banerjee & Horn, 2013, p. 4). Effective management of transition time leads to more opportunities for students to engage in learning opportunities and may also improve learning outcomes (Hine, Ardoin, & Foster, 2015, p. 495).

There are several recommendations for reducing transition time and increasing time for instruction within a classroom. Examples include beginning lessons on time, providing warnings of impending transitions, stopping activities before the transition, and adjusting the physical arrangement of the classroom (Codding & Smyth, 2008, p. 328).

Teaching explicit expectations is also important to the success of transitions. Banerjee & Horn (2013) state

> Carefully planned strategies may help children's effective transitions between classroom activities and consequently reduce or prevent challenging behaviors. Children come with

> varied levels of exposure to materials and environment. Therefore, when planning for transition activities, it is also important to ensure that these strategies are appropriate for children from linguistically, socially, economically, and culturally diverse backgrounds. Individualization is key. (p. 13)

Having specific expectations set will allow students to know the clear directions and educators to move on to more instructional time.

Another important part of successful transitions is teaching goal setting. Codding and Smyth (2008) state, "Goal setting paired with feedback on praise directed towards students resulted in substantially higher rates of praise statements by teachers. Moreover, this increase in teacher praise statements led to improvement in the percentage of appropriate behavior observed for both participating students" (Codding & Smyth, 2008, p. 329).

In the article titled "Effects of Behavioral Skills Training on Teachers Conducting the Recess-to-Classroom Transition" Smith and Higbee researched the specific transition time of lining up for recess. The researchers state, "Whether students are lining up or rotating between centers or preparing to go home, transitions can result in loss of instructional time as teachers try to manage students' inappropriate behaviors" (Smith & Higbee, 2020, p. 629). The teachers involved underwent a behavioral skills training (BST) on how best to help students with transitions. The teachers are taught an acronym- TEMPO (tell expectations, model practice, offer feedback (Smith & Higbee, 2020, p. 630). This, along with BST training, the teachers taught and modeled the transition time to their students. The major findings are that after explicitly teaching and modeling the wanted behaviors, students complied 98% of the time (Smith & Higbee, 2020, p. 631).

In the article titled "Taking the Time out of Transitions" (2014) Caroline Guardino and Elizabeth Fullerton found classroom modifications that improve transition time from one

academic activity to a different academic activity. Before the modification was made, when students were to transition from their desks to circle time, they needed to "Push in their chair, place their work in folders located on hooks across the room from the circle area, and navigate between the tables to the circle area" (Guardino & Fullerton, 2014, p. 215). This took approximately 03:12 minutes of time to transition (Guardino & Fullerton, 2014, p. 220). The researcher worked with the teachers to modify this transition time. Modifications included a chair bag to store student folders, furniture was removed or rearranged, and a bigger carpet was added to accommodate all students. After these modifications were made, transition time was reduced to 01:51 minutes (Guardino & Fullerton, 2014, p. 222).

Classroom Management

Transitions are one of the main sources of interruptions to instructional time in the classroom. Instructional time is wasted in classrooms when the educator struggles with beginning lessons, sustaining student attention, and making smooth transitions among lessons. Transitions are difficult for both teachers and students since student misbehavior is more likely and educational time can be lost when students are asked to stop their activity, perform a new set of tasks, and initiate movement without established classroom procedures (Codding & Smyth, 2008, p. 326). When the educator uses effective management of transitions, it "increases student independence, decreases disruption, and maximizes instructional time" (Hine, Ardoin, & Foster, 2015, p. 495). This shows that when a teacher has explicit expectations during transition times, student off-task behaviors are less likely to occur.

Students in all grades transition several times a day. This unstructured time gives students the chance to participate in disruptive and off-task behavior. A recent study found that students spend 17% of their day in transitional activities. However, teachers who can conduct quick

transitions can increase their academic learning time in the classroom (Guardino & Fullerton, 2014, p. 212). Spending a large portion of the day in transitions, it is important for educators to learn how to effectively manage their classrooms.

Often, students delay instructional time by disregarding directions, participating in problem behaviors, or being inadequately organized. Educators have different ways of addressing these behaviors such as waiting, giving warnings, or encouraging students to engage in correct behavior. Regardless, these reactions usually extend the transition time (Hine, Ardoin, & Foster, 2015, p. 495). This can cause a long transition time to become even longer because the educator needs to address the behavior problems.

Regardless of if you are a new teacher or an experienced educator, many have difficulty managing student behaviors during transitions. D.L. Fudge (2008) writes,

> When several students fail to follow transition directions, educators may repeat directions, reprimand, or punish those who did not comply with directions, wait, and require the rest of the class to wait for the students to begin to comply with directions, and/or ignore those who are not following directions and start the next activity. (p. 576)

This may cause high levels of unacceptable behaviors and may decrease the time available for students to learn and educators to teach.

Theoretical Framework

One theory that focuses on the transitions would be the behavioral learning theory. Behaviorism is a concept that focuses on how students learn and on the idea that all behaviors are learned through interaction with the environment. Behaviorism is important regarding transitions because it "impacts how students react and behave in the classroom and suggests that teachers can directly influence how their students behave" (Western Governors University, 2021, p. 7). Behavioral learning theory promotes positive reinforcement, creating goals, and direct

instruction. These teaching strategies are important and relate directly to teaching expectations and having positive classroom management.

Research Question

How does transitioning affect classroom instruction time in middle school?

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is important to have quick and effective transitions in a middle school classroom. With the countless transitions each day, educators and students should practice transitions from all scenarios including entering classrooms, changing activities, or taking out supplies from a bag. It is crucial that the educator explicitly teaches the expectations then closely monitors behaviors. When students can properly transition, students receive more instructional time each day. In the next chapter, there will be data collected from middle school classrooms to show the positive effects of specific instruction on transitioning.

CHAPTER 3
METHODS

Introduction

This study has the intention to find the most effective ways for middle school students to transition between activities. The most effective way means that students transition quickly, purposefully, and quietly from one activity to another. Transition time includes anytime a student switches from one task to the next; this could include handing in an assignment, switching classes, or moving from a whole class discussion to independent worktime. The purpose of this study is to assist educators in finding the best way to teach transitions to students to have the most of their classroom time. In turn, this will assist students by giving them more learning time during the school day.

Research Question(s)

How does transitioning affect classroom instruction time in middle school?

Research Design

The teaching method in this study is using a quasi-experimental research design. The participants in this experiment will continue following their regular school schedule that they began in the fall. The researcher will collect baseline data for two weeks in four of their general education classrooms. The researcher will time the students during all transitions. Following that, the researcher will implement transition techniques and teach the students how to effectively transition. The researcher will observe, implement strategies, and time transitions for three weeks. The researcher will again time the students during these transitions to see if having transitional classroom management strategies in place affects classroom instruction time.

Setting

The study is taking place in a sixth grade Language Arts classroom in North Dakota. The population of the city is approximately 50,000 people and growing rapidly. The student population of the middle school encompasses grades six through eight and has approximately 1,200 students. The demographics are 69% Caucasian, 19% Black, 5% Hispanic, 4% Asian American, and 3% Native American. According to the Official Portal for North Dakota State Government website, in the school, 21% of students are considered low income, 12% of students have IEPs, and 6% of students are English Language Learners.

Participants

In the researcher's classroom, there are 83 students total over 4 class periods; 60% male and 40% female. The participants are average-achieving sixth graders (11 and 12 years old). The demographics are 73% Caucasian, 17% Black, 4% Hispanic, 4% Asian, and 2% Native American. Of the 83 students, 8 students have IEPs and 6 students are English Language Learners.

Sampling. This is a purposive sample because the participants are the researcher's students. There were no criteria in choosing the control group and experimental groups. All groups are similar in their size, academic ability, and behavior.

Instrumentation

The researcher will be using a stopwatch to time the transitions and a table (Appendix A) to write down the data of transition times. The table will be updated for each transition that the researcher has students partake in during the classroom time. The researcher will document what type of transition it was and what classroom management strategies they used for the

experimental groups. This data will show how transition times change and how instructional time increases when an educator incorporates classroom management strategies relevant to transitions.

Data Collection.

The educator will teach similar content and activities for both the control group and the experimental groups. During the transitions, the educator will use the stopwatch to time the students during the time it takes them to transition from one activity to another. The researcher will document the transitions during each class on the table (Appendix A). The researcher will document what type of transition it was and what strategy was used in the experimental group. The researcher will look for decreased transition time and increased instructional time in the experimental groups.

Data Analysis.

The researcher will analyze the transition time of both groups. During the experiment, the researcher will average the times of the control and experimental group transitions. The researcher will document what tools they are using to increase classroom instruction time and determine which tools save the most time. Over time, the researcher will see what transition tools work best to increase instructional time in the classroom

Research Question(s) and System Alignment.

Table 3.1.

Research Question(s) Alignment

Research Question	Variables	Design	Instrument	Validity & Reliability	Technique (e.g., interview)	Source
How does transitioning affect classroom instruction time in middle school?	DV: Transitions IV: Student Groups IV: Teaching of Expectations	Quasi-experimental	Stopwatch and table to document transition times	Time of day can affect student behavior and willingness to follow teacher instruction. School security drills, assemblies, state testing, or irregular schedules may affect classroom times.	Observation of transition times.	Sixth grade language arts classroom of 83 students.

Procedures

The control group will consist of students that will not receive any additional classroom management strategies regarding transitions. The researcher will simply tell the students the task or activity and let them move into their groups on their own accord. The researcher will time the students from the moment they are dismissed from instruction until they are working on the instructed task at hand.

The experimental group will have direct instruction on how to transition from one activity to the next. They will have written and oral instruction regarding transitions, and they will practice transitioning to and from activities.

The experiment will last approximately three weeks in time. The experiment will be conducted during a unit of literature circles where students meet with a group of peers reading the same novel. This will create multiple transitions per class period.

Ethical Considerations

Students partaking in this study are not at risk of harm physically or psychologically. The students in the control group will have no change to their school routine. The students in the experimental group will listen to more explicit expectations of the classroom but will not be harmed in doing so.

Conclusions

This study is a quasi-experimental design to gather information on classroom transitions and whether implementing classroom management strategies improves instructional time. The next chapter will include the results.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Interpretation

This purpose of the study is to find the most effective ways for middle school students to transition between activities. This means that students transition quickly, purposefully, and quietly from one activity to another. Transition time includes anytime a student switches from one task to the next. When students can properly transition, students receive more instructional time each day. Many teachers do not realize the amount of instruction time is lost due to transitioning. This study will specifically focus on how long it takes to transition and what transition techniques work best to reduce transition time. The goal is to assist educators in finding the best way to teach transitions to students to have the most of their classroom time. In turn, this will assist students by giving them more learning time during the school day.

Data Collection

This study explored the different types of transitions students partake in during the school day and how the educator can reduce the time it takes to transition. The study focused on ### sixth grade students transitioning in a general education Language Arts classroom. ## of the students were male and ## were female. The study used a purposive sample; the study was comprised of students in the researcher's class. Throughout the study, the students continued their normal day-to-day learning during. For the first two weeks of the study, the researcher timed the students during their transitions and took notes on their behaviors during the transition period. The researcher did not teach any transition techniques, but rather observed how students naturally transitioned. This information became the control data. Following that, the researcher began explicating teaching and implementing different techniques for transition time. For three

weeks, the researcher timed the students partaking in the same transitions all while continuing to teach transition techniques. This became the experimental data. The researcher studied the differences in time from the control data to the experimental data. These results would show how transition techniques affected classroom time.

Research Question

How does transitioning affect classroom instruction time in middle school?

Figures

Figure 4.1 shows a comparison of time before and after the researcher began implementing transition techniques for beginning class. The scores are shown over the span of five weeks. For the experimental data, the researcher implemented a new transition technique every five days. As one can see, by day twenty, the time it takes for students to transition into class is extremely low.

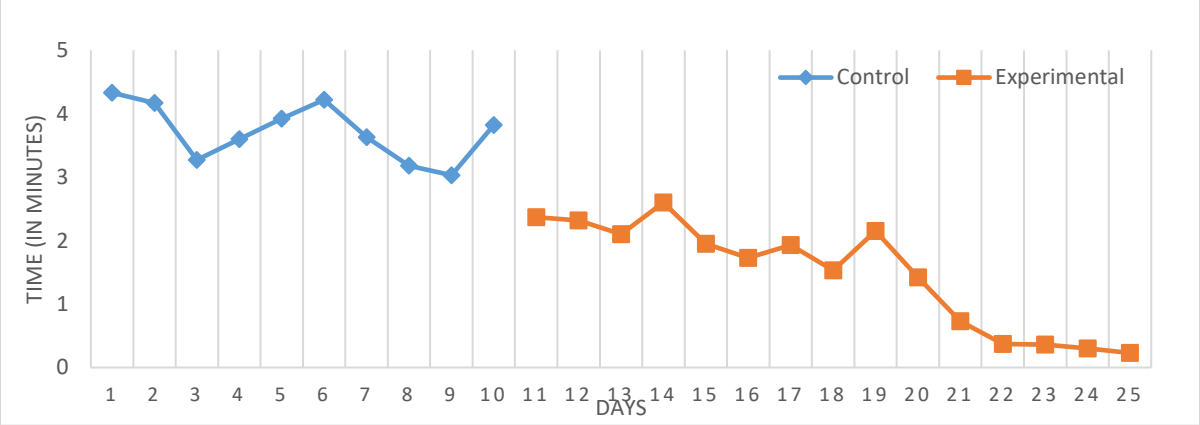
Figure 4.2 shows a comparison of time before and after the researcher began implementing transition techniques for handing out material to students. The scores are shown over the span of five weeks. In this study, the researcher did not hand out material every day of the study so there are fewer data points. In the experimental data, the researcher added transition techniques every five days. As one can see, by the end of the study it took much less time to hand out material.

Figure 4.3 shows a comparison of time before and after the researcher began implementing transition techniques for students moving from whole group instruction to small group or partner work. The scores are shown over the span of five weeks. In this study, the researcher did not have students partake in small group work every day of the study so there are

fewer data points. In the experimental data, the researcher added transition techniques every five days. As one can see, by the end of the study it took much less time for students to transition to small group or partner work.

Figure 4.1

Comparison of time it takes to transition to class with and without transition techniques



Data Analysis

In the ten days of the control data collection, there was about thirty-seven minutes of instruction time lost due to transitioning to a new class. On average, students took three minutes and forty-three seconds past the start of class per day to begin instruction time. The majority of this time was the educator prompting students to sit at desk and students leaving to use the restroom or fill their water bottles.

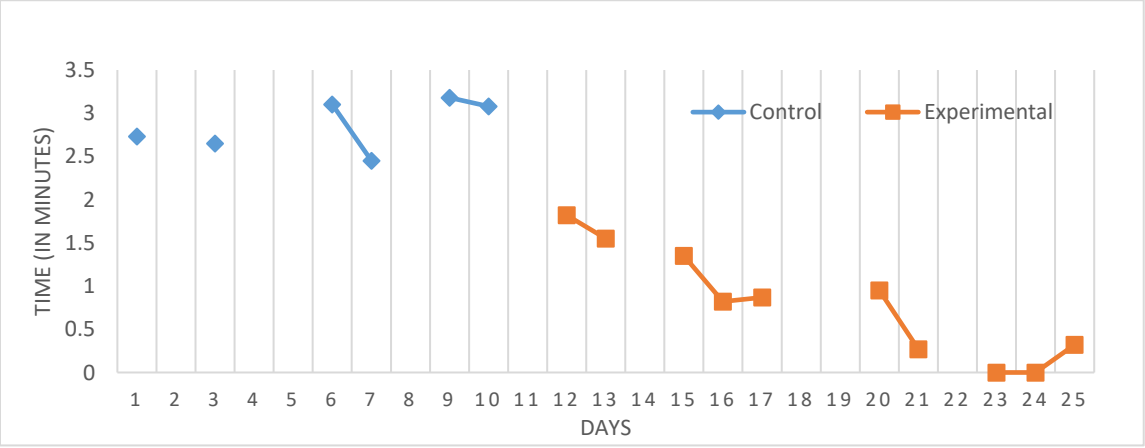
In the fifteen days of the experimental data, there was about twenty-two minutes of instruction time lost due to transitioning to a new class. On average, students took about one minute and twenty-eight seconds past the start of class per day to begin instruction. In the first five days of the experimental study, the researcher stood at the door and reminded students as

they walked in what time the class started and the expectations of how to begin class. The researcher also eliminated bathroom and drink passes for the first five minutes of class. During the next five days, the researcher continued standing at the door reminding students of the expectations and had a bell ringer question on the board for students to work on. In the last five days of the study, the researcher continued standing at the door reminding students of expectations and set a timer to go off when class time begins.

In comparing the first five days of the study to the last five days, during the first five days, there was nineteen and a half minutes of non-instruction time due to transitioning while in the last five days, there was only two minutes of non-instruction time due to transitioning. If an educator makes these transitional changes in their classroom, they could gain seventeen minutes of instructional time per week, two hours and thirty-three minutes of instructional time per quarter, and ten hours and twelve minutes of instructional time per school year.

Figure 4.2

Comparison of time it takes for educator to hand out material with and without transition techniques



Data Analysis

In the ten days of the control data collection, there was about seventeen minutes of instruction time lost due to handing out material. On average, it took the educator about two minutes and fifty-two seconds to hand out material. To hand out materials, the educator would walk around the classroom handing out the material to each student individually. The educator had to walk around the room, maneuvering through desks to distribute the material.

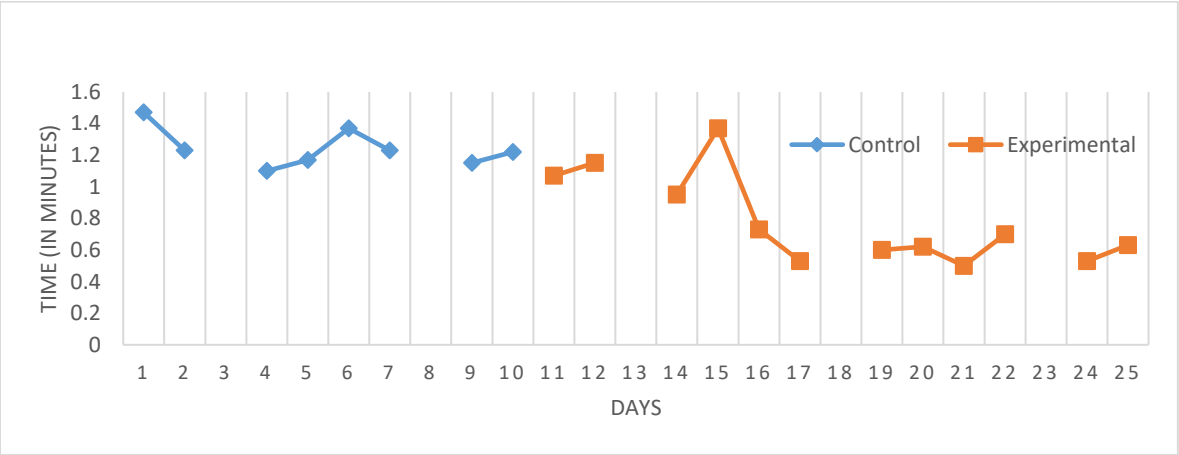
In the fifteen days of the experimental data, there was about eight minutes of instruction time lost due to the educator handing out material. On average, it took the educator about one minute to hand out material. In the first five days of the experimental study, the researcher counted the papers needed and handed them to the first student in each row. That student then passed them back and so on. During the next five days, the researcher handed out a stack of papers-without counting them- to the first student in each row. They handed them back and so on until the last person who brought up any remaining papers. In the last five days of the study, the researcher set the stack of papers on a table by the door. During the transition to class, the students picked up the material needed before finding their seats. The time listed represents the student(s) who did not grab the material when they walked into the class and had to leave their seat to get the material.

In comparing the first five days of the study to the last five days, during the first five days, there was three minutes and twenty-two seconds of non-instruction time due to transitioning while in the last five days, there was only thirty-four seconds of non-instruction time due to transitioning. If an educator makes these transitional changes in their classroom, they

could gain two minutes and forty-eight seconds of instructional time per week, twenty-five minutes of instructional time per quarter, and one hour and fifteen minutes of instructional time per school year.

Figure 4.3

Comparison of time it takes to transition from whole group to small group with and without transition techniques



Data Analysis

In the ten days of the control data collection, there was about ten minutes of instruction time lost due to transitioning. On average, it took the students about one minute and fifteen seconds to transition from whole group instruction to small group or partner work. There was no instruction given to students on how to transition. The educator explained the assignment then told students to meet with their group (predetermined) or find a partner to do work (they could choose a partner or work alone). The time is from when the educator dismissed the class to when everyone was working on the assignment at hand.

In the fifteen days of the experimental data, there was about nine minutes and twenty seconds of instruction time lost due to transitioning. On average, it took the students about forty-five seconds to transition from whole group to small group or partner work. In the first five days of the experimental study, the researcher assigned locations in the room for groups to meet before students got out of their desks. During the next five days, the researcher had students ready all materials needed before dismissing students to their assigned location in the room. In the last five days of the study, the researcher continued the two transition techniques from the first two weeks and organized the classrooms desks to better accommodate group work.

In comparing the first five days of the study to the last five days, during the first five days, there was five minutes and six seconds of non-instruction time due to transitioning while in the last five days, there was only one minute and twenty-two seconds of non-instruction time due to transitioning. If an educator makes these transitional changes in their classroom, they could gain three minutes and forty-three seconds of instructional time per week, thirty-three minutes of instructional time per quarter, and one hour and forty minutes of instructional time per school year.

Recommendations for Future Research

The researcher understands that the results of action research are relative only to the setting in which it took place, which is a limitation of the generalizability of the study. The next steps to further research transitions in middle school would be to perform another study in a different classroom to see if similar results occurred. Another step to solidify results would be to expand the population of students to those in other middle school classrooms. If the researcher were to do this study again, they would expand the duration of the study to an entire quarter. They would also concentrate on more different transitions that students make throughout the

school day. Lastly, the researcher would focus not only on the beginning transition to the desired activity, but also on the return transition.

Conclusion

The study followed the anticipated results suggested by literature. The literature had limited data on the middle school age range, but this data suggests that it is similar to that of elementary aged students. The results showed that by using transition techniques, educators save ample instruction time.

Chapter 5

Implications for Practice

Action Plan

After carrying out this research, the findings show that incorporating transition techniques in middle school classrooms increases instructional time. Analyzing the control and experimental data, the researcher believes that when educators plan out the transition time thoroughly, they gain time in the classroom.

Regarding the transition of entering the classroom, the researcher found that simply standing by the door and reminding students of expectations and class time was a big time saver. The bell work gave students an activity to focus on, however it ended up using more class time. Students wanted to share their answers to the bell work with their peers and in the end, instruction time was lost. Having a tone to indicate class time had started was the most influential time saver. Although some students did not hear the tone, it signaled to the educator that instruction time could begin. It was brought to the educator's attention through this transition technique that often times they lost track of time during the passing time and was not beginning instruction promptly at the start of class time. It is worth noting that having a sound to signal the beginning of class was exciting to the students since they were not used to having one. The researcher speculates that the times may vary after students become accustomed to it.

Concerning the second transition technique, handing out material, the researcher found that individually handing out material to students loses instructional time and encourages students to be off task. By involving students in the process of handing out materials, it saved class time. More so, by having students pick up material as they entered the classroom, it saved

the most classroom instruction time. The researcher believes that doing these small changes in handing out material can save ample instruction time if used consistently.

Lastly, in response to the transition of moving from whole group to small group, some techniques saved time while others did not. A technique that saved time was having all students gather needed materials before dismissing for transitions. This eliminated students from needing to rifle through their backpack to obtain items needed. A technique that did not save time was changing the classroom layout. This did not necessarily add time but it did not decrease the transition time at all.

The researcher plans to continue incorporating transitions to gain instructional time.

Plan for Sharing

The researcher works in a school where collaboration is a priority. The researcher plans to share this information with colleagues and team members. These results will be applicable to all members of the school in the interest of gaining as much classroom time as possible. Teachers in the building will benefit most from the data and results.

The researcher plans to share this information out to administrators when they discuss the building schedule for the following year. They will also share the data on the tone to begin class in hopes the school building will bring bells back to begin and end class.

The researcher will share these transition techniques and classroom management procedures with instructional coaches. The instructional coaches will in turn relay the information to first year teachers and new teachers to the building. This will help these teachers in starting their year off using as much instructional time as possible.

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Appendix A

Transition Title	Transition to class		Hand out material		Whole group to small group/partner work	
	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental
Day 1						
Day 2						
Day 3						
Day 4						
Day 5						
Day 6						
Day 7						
Day 8						
Day 9						
Day 10					X	
Day 11	X		X		X	
Day 12	X		X		X	
Day 13	X		X		X	
Day 14	X		X		X	
Day 15	X		X		X	