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Case Study of Conflict Formation Process Among Schoolchildren in Classroom: Focusing on Class Interactions Unrelated to Teaching and Learning Activity

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The purpose of this study was to clarify the process of conflict formation among children in classroom. A fourth-grade class during Japanese Language lessons was observed for five months. The observation focused on children's interactions that were not directly related to teaching and learning activities of their lessons. Two sessions were selected for analysis, because a conflict incident occurred during each. Results of classroom observation showed that conflict started with minor differences in opinions or friction among a few children, grew as others started taking sides, and finally became a full-blown incident when a child started to cry. In addition, it was shown that the targets of teasing and verbal attacks changed, depending on momentary interpersonal relationships among class children. It was also suggested that even the behavior of children that the classroom teacher believed to be appropriate for teaching and learning activities of their lessons, could become a possible cause for classroom conflicts in the context outside the activities. Finally, we discussed effectiveness and usefulness of classroom observation that focused on interactions not directly involved in lesson activities and future research directions of conflicts among children in classroom.

Keywords: classroom, communication, conflicts among children, case study

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