

Ethnography of Practice in 50-Minute Cooking Class in Junior High School

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Abstract

In W Junior high school, the home economics teacher is allotted 50 minutes in teaching her practice in cooking class. The researchers attempted to explain the realities, some factors and educational significance of this 50-minute practice enabling the home economics teacher to teach her class. Ethnographic methods are used to describe the practice in cooking class in W junior high school to interpret participatory fieldwork in her class. In addition, field notes of her interviews and correspondence for the past ten years were analyzed. In one example, 40 senior students engaged in cooking curry and rice with a pork cutlet. At the beginning of the class, the home economics teacher presented two directions, and observed students all the time during the class. All the students in each group understood the point of cooking activities based on a handout, and took part in cooking activities cooperatively. It was thus possible for them to set the table within 30 minutes. They ate together, cleared the table after a meal, wrote what they felt about it, and left the cooking room by the end of the 50-minute lesson time. In order to finish the practice in cooking class within 50 minutes, the teacher needs to pay attention intensively by not only analyzing the cooking activities and reactions of the students but also exerting her originality and ingenuity in developing her teaching materials and instructional methods, and improving the environment of the cooking room. As a result, such classes help the students acquire basic cooking skills needed for their daily life, and stimulate their group activities and communication.

Key words; ethnography, a practice in cooking, 50 minutes, junior high school