

Research on the Implementation of Formative Assessment in the Junior Middle School EFL Classroom

Xiaona Jia

Jiangsu Province Liangfeng Senior School Suzhou, Jiangsu Province 215600

Abstract: In order to make up for the weakness of summative evaluation, which cannot truly reflect the progress and existing problems in students' learning process, in the basic education stage, this paper applies formative evaluation to junior middle school English teaching. In this study, the students of class 5, grade 2 in Zhangjiagang No.2 Middle School were selected as the research subjects, and formative evaluation was conducted in the experimental class for 10 weeks by using the methods of questionnaires and interview. After the experiment, SPSS software was used to compare and analyze the data of questionnaire for students before and after the experiment from two dimensions: learning interest and attitude, and self-reflection ability. In order to explore the resistance in the process of implementation, the English teachers in the experimental class were interviewed after the experiment. The results showed that students had a high degree of acceptance and recognition of formative evaluation and there was resistance in teachers' long-term use of formative assessment. In view of the difficulties encountered in the implementation of formative assessment, this study put forward some suggestions for the effective implementation of formative assessment.

Keywords: Junior middle school English teaching; Formative assessment; Empirical research

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

As the globalization of economy develops, there is an urgent need for high-quality English talents in Chinese society. English teaching in basic education is the key to cultivate English talents, especially in junior middle school where there are two remarkable phenomena: first, many students begin to lose interest which was generated in primary school in English learning; Second, there is a polarization in students' English learning achievement, which is becoming more and more serious, and it may affect students' lifelong English learning (Bu Yuhua, 2016). Hence, it is junior middle school that provides the best time for students to cultivate their interest in English learning and English language ability. It's worth mentioning that students' academic assessment is a significant factor that affects English teaching. However, because of the influence of the traditional view on education and talents, many teachers still mainly adopt a summative assessment system, which to a great extent limits the development of middle school students (Qiu Ailing, 2018). Although summative assessment has some value in teaching, it still has many limitations. Mechanical teaching, excessive assignments and examination are not conducive to cultivating middle school students' interest in English learning. Hence, it is particularly vital to choose proper evaluation methods in teaching.

1.2 Significance of the Research

First, this study reviews the researches of formative assessment at home and abroad, as well as the current situation of domestic teaching evaluation, so as to verify the importance and urgency of implementing formative assessment. Secondly, it will promote teachers' understanding of formative assessment and they can use formative assessment better in teaching practice. Thirdly, the paper conducts an empirical study on formative assessment in a middle school, which validates the positivity and effectiveness of formative assessment in junior middle school English teaching through the analysis of the survey results. Furthermore, it explores the problems and resistance that teachers may encounter in the process of using formative assessment. Fourthly, it puts forward reasonable countermeasures and suggestions for the existing problems, so that teachers can improve the quality of English teaching, ultimately

improving junior middle school students' interest in English learning and their self-reflection ability.

1.3 Organization of this Paper

This paper includes five main parts. Chapter 1 has described the background and the significance of this paper and has given an overview of its organization. Chapter 2 reviews the literature on formative assessment and the related theoretical researches, as well as the theoretical bases of formative assessment. Chapter 3, the research questions, the participants and the instruments which are used in the application of the formative evaluation in junior middle school English teaching are included. Chapter 4 analyzes the results and data of the experiment and provides some countermeasures and suggestions on how to implement formative assessment effectively. Chapter 5 draws the whole paper into conclusion and points out the major findings and limitations of this paper.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Theoretical Basis of Formative Assessment

2.1.1 Constructivism

The theory of Constructivism rose in the 1980s. Its core theme is that knowledge is constructed in the interaction of subject and object (Chen Qi & Liu Rude, 2007). Constructivism originated from the theory of children's cognitive development. Individual cognitive development is closely related to learning process, so constructivism can better explain the cognitive rules of human learning process: how learning occurs, how meaning is constructed, how concepts are formed, and what main elements should be included in an ideal learning environment.

As constructivism theory suggests, learners should give full play to their subjective initiative in the process of learning, which is a process of active knowledge construction by learners themselves, not a process of passive knowledge acceptance. Constructivism theory attaches great importance to learners themselves. Piaget, a representative of constructivism, believes that individual knowledge is constructed by human beings, and knowledge cannot exist alone without the construction activities of the subject (Chen Qi & Liu Rude, 2007).

Correspondingly, learning is the process of constructing knowledge by students themselves, instead of simply passed from teachers to students. External information itself is meaningless, meaning is constructed by learners through repeated and two-way interaction between the new and the old knowledge and experience. Formative assessment draws on the relevant contents of constructivism, discovery learning and cooperation theory, highlights the main position of students, and enables students to study more problems. English teaching should not only evaluate students' English knowledge, but also improve students' self-reflection ability, emotion, attitude and learning strategies in the daily learning process.

Modern teaching is greatly influenced by constructivism. Teaching is no longer the delivery of objective and definite ready-made knowledge, but the stimulation of students' original knowledge and experience and the promotion of students' knowledge-building activities. The center of the teaching process should be the students, not the teachers. Formative assessment emphasizes stimulating subjects through assessment, making them participate in the assessment and gain self-confidence. Furthermore, it provides continuous motivation and spiritual support for further learning (Zeng Ping, 2007).

In junior middle school English learning, constructivism should be reasonably implemented. Teachers should mobilize students' subjective initiative and promote the significance of their self-construction. Scaffolding teaching, interactive teaching and cooperative learning are recommended (Chen Qi & Liu Rude, 2007).

2.1.2 Multiple Intelligences

Gardner, a professor of Harvard University, mentioned in the book *Frames of Mind* in 1983 that human beings have at least eight kinds of intelligences: Verbal-linguistic Intelligence, Logical-mathematical Intelligence, Musical Intelligence, Bodily-kinesthetic Intelligence, Visual-spatial Intelligence, Interpersonal Intelligence, Intrapersonal Intelligence and Natural Environmental Intelligence (Howard Gardner, 1983). The main reason why people differ from each other is that each individual has different intelligences and their different combinations. One or several intelligences are outstanding, while others are relatively inferior, which also reflects the uniqueness of human learning type and intelligence type (Liu Manxue, 2017)

In his works, Gardner points out that it is one-sided to distinguish children's intelligence simply by using paper-and-pen tests. This denies other intelligences which are also needed by the society, leaving many important potentials of students unrecognized and unexplored. The theory of multiple intelligences provides us with a multi-dimensional way of looking at people, which is of great significance to evaluate students comprehensively in teaching. In the aspect of teaching evaluation, it believes that everyone has the potential to become a talented person. Teachers should teach students according to their aptitude and tap the specialty of

every student.

The teaching evaluation of junior middle school English should also be in line with the theory of multiple intelligences. It is essential for teachers to respect individual differences so as to stimulate students' potential in English learning. In the process of English learning, students' learning strategies, learning attitudes and cultural awareness should be evaluated in an all-round way, and diversified teaching methods should be adopted in order to help them maximize their development potential.

2.1.3 Humanism

Humanism theory is a trend of thought rising in the United States in the 1950s, whose main representatives are Maslow and Rogers.

In the 1960s, Rogers founded the "student-centered" education and teaching theory, advocating meaningful learning. One of its four elements is that learners evaluate themselves, because learners are most aware of whether this kind of learning meets their own needs. He stressed that teachers should pay attention to understanding the inner world of students and find out their needs, interests and personalities, so as to achieve the role of developing students' potential. He advocated independent evaluation, endowed students with the right and responsibility of evaluation, promoted students to correct their learning attitude, and was responsible for their own learning, and cultivated students' independence and creativity (Patterson, 1978).

Humanism is reflected in the concept of education guidance: placing people first and training "fully functioning person". It advocates the "student-centered" educational thought, instead of the "knowledge-centered" in the traditional teaching thought. However, in practice, teacher evaluation is still regarded as the main or final evaluation method, which does not give students the freedom of active learning. It has seriously hindered the students' all-round free development and personality promotion.

Therefore, there is an urgent need for curriculum experts and teachers to reform and enrich the current education evaluation methods, highlight the position of students' self-evaluation, and make students become active learners. By changing the evaluation methods, another bright window can be opened to cultivate students' autonomy and creativity.

2.2 Research on Formative Assessment

2.2.1 Research Status of Formative Assessment Abroad

Michael Scriven (1976), a famous educator of Harvard University, first proposed the concept of formative assessment and summative assessment in his article *The Methodology of Evaluation*. According to the goal of gathering evaluation information and how to use the information, he differentiated the terms formative assessment and summative assessment. He explained that although a project is at the planning and developmental stage, it was still scalable. Hence, the information collected from the evaluation contributed to program change. He defined evaluations undertaken for this purpose as "formative". He also argued that once a project is created and implemented, the assessment can only generate information to determine whether the project has achieved the desired goal. Scriven described the final collection of information as "a summary assessment" (Zhang Lei, 2018).

In 1969, Bloom, an educator at the University of Chicago, proposed formative assessment as the basic principle of mastery learning, and later introduced the concept into the practice of educational assessment. In his view, formative assessment is "a systematic evaluation conducted in the process of teaching in order to obtain feedback information about teaching, improve teaching and make students master the knowledge they have learned (Zhang yue, 2011)". Mastery learning, whose aim is to ensure that students do not move on to the next level until they have mastered the learning goals set for current level, became the basis for modular teaching, which was popular in the 1970s. In theory, mastering learning is like scaffolding today, but in practice, almost all the students work in isolation, without much support from peers or teachers.

Formative assessment started to be explored widely in the following decades.

In 1998, Paul Black and Dylan William completed a study of more than 250 people and made significant progress in the acceptance of formative assessments. Their findings, published in *Inside the Black Box*, provided a compelling case for formative assessment. Black and William's comments suggested that "there is no other way to raise the standard to prove such strong facie evidence." (Black, Paul & William, Dylan, 1998) *The Inside the Black Box: Raising Standards Through Classroom Assessment* has led many education leaders to define and apply formative assessment methods in the classroom, not only in the United States, but around the world.

Nowadays, educators begin to explore the methods and effectiveness of formative evaluation, which can assist summative evaluation to comprehensively evaluate students, so as to improve learning interest. The correct use of these two evaluation methods has become a must for today's teachers.

However, there are still some shortcomings in the study of formative assessment abroad: most of the studies abroad are theoretical studies by experts, and few empirical studies by front-line teachers are available (Liu Manxue, 2017).

2.2.2 Research Status of Formative Assessment at Home

The study of educational evaluation in China started relatively late. Before the introduction of western educational evaluation theory into China, Chinese people generally thought that test results were more important than learning process. It was not until the mid-1980s that the concept of formative assessment was put forward, aiming at the defects of summative evaluation in talent cultivation, and the importance of formative evaluation was discussed from the perspective of pedagogy. In 1983, Chinese scholar Wan Yong first introduced the concept of formative assessment into the field of education in China. He believed that formative assessment is an assessment to form “education suitable for children” (Wan Yong, 1983). Relevant literature on formative assessment could not be found in China until the late 1990s. Yang Xiaotang (2000) defined the basic definition of formative assessment: an assessment of learners’ learning process. One year later, Yang Xiaotang (2001) summed up the specific purpose of formative evaluation in three aspects: “First, it is conducive to the guidance and management of the learning process; Second, it is conducive to timely feedback of learning information and guidance of teaching; Third, it is conducive to improving the comprehensive quality and ability of learners.” (Wu Changti, 2009)

In the past 20 years, more emphasis has been placed on the research and practice of teaching evaluation theory. The Ministry of Education promulgated the Outline of Basic Education Curriculum Reform (trial) (2001) and the Circular on Actively Promoting the Reform of the Evaluation and Examination System in Primary and Secondary Schools (2002), which emphasized that the curriculum evaluation should play the role of promoting the development of students and improving the teaching practice of teachers. But due to the long-term influence of traditional education, in English teaching, most of students, parents and teachers still regard the foreign language examination results as the only standard to evaluate the students’ foreign language learning ability. (Qiu Ailing, 2018).

Moreover, there are still some problems in the study of formative assessment in China. The most prominent problem is the lack of research on formative assessment based on primary and secondary school stage. According to research statistics, out of the 97 research articles on Formative Assessment collected from 12 CSSCI journals about foreign language education and 1 journal specializing in foreign language teaching and testing in China (as of December 30, 2018), only three have focused on primary and secondary education. In contrast, most formative assessment studies in the world focus on basic education (Gardner, 2006). Therefore, this study will focus on the application of formative assessment in junior middle school English teaching and explore the resistance and difficulties encountered in the implementation process.

3. An Empirical Study on Formative Assessment of English Classroom Teaching in Junior Middle School

3.1 Research Questions

This survey attempts to explore the application of formative assessment in junior middle school English learning. There are two main research questions: Is formative assessment positive and effective in junior middle school students’ English learning? What are the difficulties and obstacles for junior middle school English teachers to implement formative assessment? At the same time, according to the results of the survey, specific suggestions and methods are put forward. I hope it can play a further reference role in the application of formative assessment in junior middle school English teaching.

3.2 Subjects

In this empirical study on the evaluation of English classroom teaching in junior middle school, there are two main parts in English classroom teaching: teachers and students. A total of 49 students from Class 5, Grade 2 and six English teachers in Grade 2 are selected from Zhangjiagang No.2 Middle School, where the author practiced, as the research subjects. According to the investigation and the teacher’s feedback, the English teacher of this class used to carry out traditional evaluation methods.

3.3 Instruments

In order to ensure the authenticity of the sources of information and increase the accuracy of the survey, two research tools, questionnaires and interview, were used.

3.3.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire is an effective tool to collect information, which can save human, material and financial resources. This paper will conduct pre-questionnaire and post-questionnaire, while the former will be divided into teacher questionnaire and student questionnaire. The questionnaire for teachers was designed to get to know junior middle school English teachers’ understanding of

formative assessment. The questionnaire for students was used to get the information on students' learning interest and attitude, and self-reflection ability before the experiment. The post-questionnaire was designed to find out whether the students have improved in these areas after 10 weeks of formative assessment experiment.

Two postgraduates' questionnaires (one for teachers, one for students) are adopted in this survey and were modified according to the experiment. Their topic compilation and dimension setting are strictly in accordance with the educational research methods. 15 multiple choice questions were selected in the questionnaire for teachers and 10 multiple choice questions were selected in the questionnaire for students. There are two dimensions in the questionnaire for students: learning interest and attitude, and self-reflection ability. The participants need to choose A, B, C, D, E according to the degree they agree with the statements. (A=fully agree, B=agree, C=generally agree, D=partly disagree, E=fully disagree) In addition, the scoring method will be used to evaluate and analyze the changes of the experimental class students in two dimensions before and after the experiment. (A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, E=1) The result is to verify the hypothesis that formative assessment can stimulate students' interest in learning English and improve their self-reflection ability. And suggestions are put forward for the difficulties in the implementation of formative assessment.

3.3.2 Interview

Interview is an effective way to understand the inner thoughts of interviewees, which can supplement the relevant information to the questionnaire. In order to understand the teachers' feelings after using formative assessment, the interview is based on the interview outline of the teaching assessment reform of Luo Shaoqian (2015). Combined with the actual situation of the survey, the interview outline is compiled. This interview, lasting for about 20 minutes, was conducted after the experiment and the subjects were English teachers of the experimental class. The outline is divided into five questions, focusing on the obstacles and difficulties encountered by English teachers in the use of formative assessment.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

The process of statistical procedures for data collection will be divided into three stages: the pre-experiment stage, the experiment stage and the post-experiment stage.

3.4.1 The Pre-experiment Stage

Firstly, the author communicated with the English teacher of the experimental class before the experiment, told her the content and method of this experiment, and discussed the implementation strategies of formative assessment with her.

Secondly, the teacher informed the students of the content and ways of evaluation, which made sure that the students had a certain preparation and realized from the beginning that they would be evaluated.

Thirdly, two questionnaires were distributed to both teachers and students.

3.4.2 The Experiment Stage

This experiment lasted 10 weeks. However, it is not realistic to conduct a complete and specific experimental study within 10 weeks on the influence of formative assessment on students. So, this experiment mainly adopted the distribution of daily homework evaluation form (including self-evaluation and parent evaluation), classroom learning evaluation form (including self-evaluation, mutual evaluation and teacher evaluation), and other methods.

In the experimental class, from Monday to Friday, students needed to fill in one homework evaluation form every day, including self-evaluation and parent evaluation. According to the feedback, students began to pay attention to the quality of homework and monitor their learning progress.

During this 10-week period, students also needed to complete the classroom performance evaluation. Through classroom observation, I found that students were more concentrated in class and actively answer questions in class. The teacher left more time for students to think about problems and explore the content of the text, and sometimes gave some guidance. The students discussed intensely and began to construct knowledge actively.

3.4.3 The Post-experiment Stage

After applying formative assessment to junior middle school English teaching, the questionnaire is to find the changes on learning interest and attitude before and after the application of formative assessment. In order to ensure the validity of the questionnaire results, the previous questionnaire was still selected. The questionnaire was conducted in the classroom. A total of 49 sets of questionnaires were recovered and all the 49 sets were valid.

What is more, in order to understand the difficulties or resistance that teachers may encounter in the process of using formative assessment, and their prospect of the evaluation mechanism in the future, an interview designed for the English teacher in the experimental class was implemented after the experiment

3.5 Data Analysis

The results obtained from the questionnaires were first put into Excel table and then analysis process was shown in the following part. SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solutions) was used as a tool to analyze the questionnaires for students before and after the experiment.

4. Results and Analysis

4.1 Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire Results Before the Experiment

Before the experiment, a questionnaire survey was conducted among 6 teachers in the English group with the help of the author's practice instructor (the English teacher in the experimental class) to get some information about the junior middle school English teachers' understanding of formative assessment. In order to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, the filling process was completely conducted under the face-to-face guidance.

According to the survey data, there were no teachers who did not know formative assessment at all, and all the teachers surveyed had different levels of understanding. This showed that although the evaluation system advocated in the new curriculum reform focused on the positive role of formative evaluation in the long-term teaching, which made English teachers generally understand formative evaluation, at present, junior middle school English teachers still do not understand it well enough. Moreover, summative evaluation is still the most effective and frequently used evaluation method in these teachers' mind.

4.2 Questionnaire Results Before and After the Experiment

A questionnaire with 10 questions was used among the students in the experimental class with the help of the author's practice instructor. A total of 49 questionnaires were received and 49 were valid before and after the experiment.

The tables below are the comparison of the results of the questionnaires before and after the experiment in the experimental class.

Table1: Learning interest and attitude before and after the experiment

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test of learning interest	15.6735	49	3.56714	.50959
	Post-test of learning interest	18.0204	49	2.91183	

Table2: D-value of learning interest and attitude before and after the experiment

Mean				Paired Differences			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)				
				Std. Deviation						Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
											Lower	Upper	
Pair 1	Pre-test of learning interest - Post-test of learning interest	2.34694	1.88802	.26972	1.80464	2.88924	8.701	48	.000				

To explore whether there is significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of learning interest, the results show that the significance $P < 0.05$, indicating that the learning interest presents significant difference at the 5% significance level. Further comparing the mean value of pairing difference, we find that the post-test score of learning interest is higher than the pre-test score, indicating that the post-test performance of the test population is significantly higher than the pre-test, that is, after the formative evaluation, the learning interest of the test population is raised, and the application of formative assessment is effective.

Table3: Self-reflection ability before and after the experiment

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test of self-reflection ability	14.7755	49	2.56795	.36685
	Pre-test of self-reflection ability	16.6122	49	2.32573	.33225

Table4: D-value of self-reflection ability before and after the experiment

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Pre-test of self-reflection ability - Post-test of self-reflection ability	1.83673	1.35933	.19419	1.44629	2.22718	9.458	48	.000

To explore whether there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of self-reflection ability, the results show that the significance $P < 0.05$, which shows that the self-reflection ability presents a significant difference at the 5% significance level. Further comparing the mean value of pairing difference, it is found that the post- test score of self-reflection ability is higher than the pre-test score, which means that the post-test performance of the test population is significantly higher than the pre-test, that is, after the formative evaluation, the self-reflection ability of the test population is improved, and the measures of formative evaluation are effective.

4.3 Analysis of the Interview

In order to understand the difficulties or resistance that teachers encounter in the process of using formative assessment, and their prospect of the evaluation mechanism in the future, the interviewee was the English teacher in the experimental class. Five questions are listed.

The questions, such as “Do you think the English classes during this 10-week period were different from the English classes you have before?” and “What do you think about the use of classroom observation, interviews, questionnaires and other methods to evaluate students’ English level? Will they be more effective than paper-and-pencil tests? ”, are to find out the English teacher’s feeling after applying formative assessment. The results showed that the teacher was satisfied with the effect of formative assessment. With classroom activities increasing, many students began to actively participate in the classroom, and began to pay attention to their performance. “I think that although these methods are subjective, they do give me a good idea of the progress or shortcomings of the students in the learning process, so that I can adjust my teaching plan in time. However, it is a little bit difficult for me to keep their main position in evaluation all the times, you know, they still need me to organize a unified feedback for them. As for effectiveness, we need to look further. After all, paper-and-pencil tests are now essential.”

The question “What obstacles or difficulties have you encountered in using evaluation methods other than paper-and-pencil tests?” is to explore the resistance teacher may encounter in the process of using formative assessment. “Although formative evaluation can better reflect the learning process of students, some students’ evaluations are subjective, and the differences between students will lead to different evaluation standards, some students do not even have the concept of evaluation standards. Moreover, due to the influence of the senior high school entrance examination, the proportion of formative assessment in the teaching process cannot be expanded, and students and their parents are still concerned about their academic achievements.”

The questions, such as “Do you agree to let students evaluate themselves or each other?” and “Do you expect to continue using formative assessment in the future?”, can be used to get information on the teacher’s attitude towards the prospect of the evaluation mechanism in the future. “Yes, I’m looking forward to it, because I can feel the enthusiasm of the students increased during this experimental period, but I think the implementation of formative assessment has certain requirements for our teachers, such as the assessment ability and literacy of teachers.”

In conclusion, through analysis of the interview results, we found that students' interest towards English learning in the experimental class improved apparently. The English teacher also showed positive attitude to the application of formative assessment. However, there were still some obstacles in the process of application. First, students lacked understanding and grasp of the evaluation criteria. Second, the examination system had great influence. Third, it was difficult to realize the full implementation of the students' major role in evaluation. Fourth, the ability and literacy of teachers' evaluation needed to be improved.

4.4 Countermeasures and Suggestions

According to those obstacles mentioned above, some countermeasures and suggestions are listed as follows:

Firstly, when it comes to the subjectivity of students, teachers can set clear evaluation goals and standards with students, which may avoid subjective bias as much as possible. The goal is the expectation of students' learning performance and results, and the "road sign" for the implementation of formative evaluation. Without goals as a reference, whether students' learning is promoted or not cannot be judged clearly. Without a comparison with the goal or standards, any evaluation result will lose its significance. Therefore, in order to implement effective evaluation, teachers must first establish clear learning goals and evaluation standards with students according to curriculum standards. In the new curriculum reform (2001), it points out that the new curriculum goal includes three dimensions: knowledge and ability, process and method, emotional attitude and values. Teachers should evaluate students from these three aspects in an overall and comprehensive way, so as to effectively implement formative evaluation to promote students' learning.

Secondly, for the influence of the examination system, it is advisable for teachers to deal with it actively. In the process of using formative assessment, teachers should keep a positive attitude. For the impact of the senior high school entrance examination, teachers can actively put forward opinions to the relevant departments and conduct real-time education research to measure the effectiveness of formative assessment.

Thirdly, the embodiment of the students' major role is of great importance. According to the three theoretical bases of formative assessment, students are the main body of learning, which means that in the process of implementation of formative assessment, the main position of students in the assessment should be highlighted. Specifically, first, students should make clear the intention of the teacher's goals; second, students should be offered the opportunity to participate in the setting of learning goals; third, students should take the initiative to participate in the collection of information or evidence; fourth, students should participate in the exchange of evaluation results (Cui Yunguo, 2012). Through participating in the evaluation, students can develop their ability of self-reflection and self-monitoring.

Fourthly, teachers' evaluation ability and literacy should be strengthened. Junior middle school English teachers should possess higher evaluation ability so that they can evaluate students comprehensively and effectively. In order to enhance the evaluation ability of teachers, on the one hand, we should develop training courses in evaluation in stages according to teachers' professional practice; on the other hand, we should provide teachers with professional evaluation practice, so that teachers can reflect on and study the practice of evaluation in the way of team cooperation, so as to promote the professional development of evaluation literacy (Cui Yunguo, 2012). In addition, it is essential for teachers to form a correct evaluation concept, change the traditional practice of teaching for examination and evaluation for screening, and fully understand the value of formative evaluation for teachers' teaching and students' learning. Effective implementation of formative assessment in English teaching requires teachers to have a high degree of assessment literacy, to understand the basic rights of students, the rights of students to ask for confidentiality, the privacy rights of students, the rights of students to ask for understanding the assessment process, and the rights of students to ask for equal treatment (Jerosky, 1997).

5. Conclusion

5.1 Major Findings

Through 10 weeks of experiment, after analyzing the results of two questionnaires and an interview, the following are the results of the application of formative assessment in junior middle school English teaching.

First of all, through the questionnaire for teachers, we have obtained information about junior middle school English teachers' understanding of formative assessment. At present, junior middle school English teachers still do not understand it well enough.

Secondly, through comparative analysis of the questionnaires for students before and after the experiment, we found that formative assessment stimulated students' interest and self-reflection ability in English learning.

Thirdly, through the interview after the experiment, we found that the English teacher showed positive attitude to the application of formative assessment. However, there are still some obstacles in the process of application.

5.2 Limitations of the Study

Although the results verified two questions of this study. But there are still many drawbacks.

Firstly, the study lasted 10 weeks, which is relatively short, and it is not enough for the application of formative assessment in junior middle school English teaching. Secondly, the samples are insufficient. The samples of this survey are mainly concentrated in Zhangjiagang No.2 Middle School. There are 49 students and 6 English teachers recovered in this study and interview only involves one English teacher. Therefore, the findings may not be representative. Thirdly, questionnaire is the main research method, which has some limitations. It makes the data analysis not comprehensive.

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About the author:

Xiaona Jia, (1998.07.14), Female, Han, Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, second-grade teacher, Bachelor, Jiangsu Province Liangfeng Senior School

Research direction: English teaching