

# Strategies of Students' Performance in Junior Middle School English Classes

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**Abstract:** The *English Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education* emphasize the process and practicality of language learning, which encourage students to master language knowledge and skills gradually through experience, practice, participation, exploration and cooperation. However, in the traditional English classes, students are afraid to speak, unwilling to speak and unable to speak English, which is a common phenomenon. The class is dull and lack of creativity. Teachers are the center of the class, whose indoctrinated teaching method makes students learn passively. Students' performance in English classes can not only enable students to participate in learning actively, but also cultivate their interest in English and develop their creativity. Performance teaching creates a real language learning environment, in which students can practise their oral English and improve their ability to use language in practice.

**Key words:** students' performance; junior middle English; strategies

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## 1. Introduction

An educator once said: "Games are a great way to take a break from regular classroom practice while keeping relaxed within the language learning framework". Class performance is an important way to stimulate and maintain students' interest in English.

Performance is an informal behavior and reflects comprehensive language ability of creativity and cooperation. Students can imitate the real communication environment and use language actions and expressions to convey effective information and rich emotions.

However, there are many studies concentrating on primary and high school English classes. Few studies are on students' performance in junior middle English classes. With the passage of time and the progress of society, maybe they are not authoritative enough. Second, these studies are relatively narrow in some key field and are mainly on textbook-based performance, the DIY performance is relatively less. Third, the classifications are not comprehensive enough to cover all the performance classifications. Therefore, this paper mainly talks about strategies of students' performance in junior middle English classes.

## 2. Significance of Students' Performance in English Classes

The teacher should attach great importance to students' performance in English class, for it can stimulate students' interest in English, develop their creativity, broaden their horizon.

### 2.1 Stimulating Junior school students' interest in English

Students' performance is extremely momentous, for it can stimulate junior students' interest in English. First, the use of performance in classes is in line with the law of junior school students' psychological development. Some students are lively in nature, so it is difficult for them to concentrate on their study. Children are born to imitate, so performance can promote students to actively recognize things and participate in learning activities. When students experience the English classes and imitate roles in performance, their displaying psychology is satisfied and they get the pleasure of learning English in the performance.

### 2.2 Stimulating Junior school students' creativity

Students' performance plays an important role in stimulating junior school students' creativity. Everyone is different and unique, so different performance can stimulate their own unique creativity. Through students' creative integration of language and careful design of roles, their creativity has been developed. What's more, creativity includes two parts: creative thinking and creative spirit. For example, when teaching Unit 4 "I want to be an actor" of Grade Seven, the teacher can design many different activities. There is a game activity in the textbook with the requirements of drawing a picture of someone at work. And the students can ask two questions and then guess the job. One draws a picture, the other guesses the job. In activities, students can draw any occupation. The first student to guess the answer is the winner. The teacher can praise the winner, of course, they should also encourage the losers. In the whole progress of performance, students' imagination and creativity have been developed.

### 2.3 Giving full play to students' subjectivity in class

Performing in class can give full play to students' subjectivity and make them become the principle part of classes. Student-centered teaching refers to the students' active participation in English class, and their initiative and creativity are fully developed. First, performance can give full play to students' learning autonomy, initiative and creativity. Autonomy means that students can choose their own learning objectives, and learning content. Creativity is something that students can think creatively in class. Second, performance creates a relaxing learning environment for students without more pressure, which is also conducive to the interaction between students and teachers.

## 3. Strategies for Textbook-based Theme Performance

Textbook-based theme performance is the most common in English classes

### 3.1 Characteristics of textbook-based theme performance

In textbook-based theme performance, taking textbook as the model and the communication-based theme unit as the center, students can perform in class after they adapt some vocabulary, dialogue or text according to their needs. There are some characteristics of textbook-based theme performance as follows.

Firstly, the content mainly comes from the textbook. The content of the performance can be vocabulary, dialogue or discourse in the textbook. For example, there is a dialogue performance adapted from the textbook (*Go for it, How often do you exercise*). Two students in a group, one is Bob, the other is Tom.

Bob: How often do you exercise?

Tom: Once a week.

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Secondly, the purpose of textbook-based theme performance is mainly to get familiar with knowledge and master knowledge. Through the above different performances, students can learn complicated phrases, dialogues and texts. what's more, their comprehensive ability has been improved, and their enthusiasm for learning has been stimulated.

### 3.2 Strategies of students' performance

Firstly, create a relaxing and enjoyable learning atmosphere. Teachers need to build a safe and lively environment for

students, which can reduce their tension and anxiety, and encourage students to participate performance bravely. Secondly, some words and sentences related to the key content of the class need to be presented to help students broaden their thoughts. On this basis, teachers can provide other phrases and sentences related to this topic. Thirdly, have a correct evaluation for students. Students are growing people, so they should be allowed to make mistakes in the performance. Teachers should often show authentic and vivid expression, which can help create a relatively real context for student and exert an imperceptible influence on students' English expression.

The first thing to evaluate is the ability to speak English. The ability includes appropriateness, fluency and naturalness in the performance. The assessment indexes mainly include intonation, voice, speed, body language, the language expression. In addition, teachers can also focus on whether students' performance has educational significance, whether the content is creative, and whether students participate actively.

#### **4. Strategies for DIY Theme Performance**

DIY theme performance is mainly made by students themselves.

##### 4.1 Characteristics of DIY theme performance

In DIY theme performance, teachers need to choose some topic words or key points that have been learned for a period of time and students give full play to their subjective initiative and imagination to conceive the content and plot of the performance, and assign their own roles to rehearse, then perform in class. Students are both directors and actors in the performance.

Firstly, the content of DIY theme performance is independently made by students. When the teacher determines a topic, students need to mobilize the learning content and adapt it into a dialogue or a story, which needs the students' creativity. Secondly, the purpose of DIY theme performance is to enable students to read, recite and use what they have learned. If students can create a simple dialogue or drama, it proves that they have fully mastered the content.

##### 4.2 Strategies of students' performance

Teachers guide students to write plays. For example, the teacher can provide a scene for students to write plays according to their daily life or make appropriate prompts to develop students' thinking. Taking the teaching of "Where did you go on vacation?" in Grade Eight as an example, the teacher requires students to write a dialogue or short drama using the names of places and expressions of food in class. In order to help students write scripts, the teacher reminds them to refer to the holiday scenes in our daily life.

A: Where did you go on vacation?

B: I went to my hometown.

A: Did you go out with anyone?

B: My father and mother.

A: How was the food?

B: Everything tasted really good!

Secondly, teachers provide some examples for students to open their minds. In English teaching, teachers should be a minded person. Teachers show and appreciate these games to students and explain why they are good or bad. This can help students develop ideas and find inspiration.

#### **5. Strategies for Extracurricular Theme Performance**

Extracurricular theme performance is also necessary for students in English class, for they can acquire what they cannot learn from textbook.

### 5.1 Characteristics of extracurricular theme performance

Firstly, the content of extracurricular theme performance mainly comes from extracurricular materials, which can be from other books or the Internet. After finishing a chapter, the teacher can choose a famous dramatic piece related to the lesson from the Internet. Then students perform the dramatic piece. It is not only an opportunity for students to consolidate their new knowledge and practice their spoken English, but also an excellent opportunity to perform on stage. Secondly, its purpose is to enable students to flexibly use and increase their knowledge. At the same time, it is a good physical and mental exercise. Students can satisfy their innate desire and experience the sense of achievement through performance.

### 5.2 Strategies of students' performance

Firstly, the teacher guides students to participate in the performance. Before the activity, the teacher can make a demonstration. The choice of extracurricular content should be based on junior students' cognitive development. Teachers should choose short, concise and repetitive performance content, which is helpful for students to understand and is neither too simple nor too difficult. We should choose the content within the ZDP, so that students are not afraid of learning English. Secondly, the content should be suitable for performance. The language style, roles, plot development are all basis of the performance. It is necessary to choose the content that students can easily imitate and perform.

## 6. Conclusion

Overall and in a nutshell, this paper talks about the significance of students' performance in junior middle school English classes. Performance can stimulate students' interest in English, develop their innovation ability and make them learn about Chinese and Western culture. There is no doubt that students' performance is an indispensable part in English classes. In the process of implementation, the teacher should pay more attention to many factors, such as the psychological development level of students, the requirements of English curriculum standards. Obviously, performance plays a great role in promoting teaching. Performance can activate class atmosphere and the more students participate in the class, the more it can stimulate students' interest in English and improve their spoken English.

### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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