

**THAI NGUYEN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

HUYNH CAM THU

**THE ROLES OF WARMING UP ACTIVITIES IN ENHANCING
ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS**

**(Vai trò của các hoạt động khởi động nhằm nâng cao
kỹ năng nói tiếng Anh)**

M.A THESIS

Field: English Linguistics

Code: 8220201

THAI NGUYEN – 2019

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(APPLICATION ORIENTATION)**

Field: English Linguistics

Code: 8220201

Supervisor: Nguyen Thi Dieu Ha Ph.D.

THAI NGUYEN – 2019

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

The thesis entitled “The role of warming up activities in enhancing speaking skill” has been submitted for the Master of English language.

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. I have fully acknowledged and referenced the ideas and work of others, whether published or unpublished, in my thesis.

My thesis does not contain work extracted from a thesis, dissertation or research paper previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any other universities.

Signed

Huynh Cam Thu

Date/...../2019

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Huynh Cam Thu

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CLT: Communicative language teaching

EFL: English as a foreign language

ESL: English as a second language

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ABSTRACT

This research tries to find out the effectiveness of using warm up activity in enhancing speaking ability in a classroom. The study was carried out at Ka Long primary school, Quang Ninh province.

The mixed methods of both quantitative and qualitative were used to obtain data for the research. The results show that warming up activities greatly benefit language learners in speaking as they related to their background knowledge. The most preferred warming up activities include team games and individual games.

In theoretical part, it covers details information about what is warm up, what are the principles of warm up activity and some examples of warm up activity. Most importantly, it tries to bring out the usefulness of warm up activity in the section why is warm up important by describing points: establish a relationship, motivation and warm up, attention and warm up, background knowledge and warm up, and lesson objective and warm up. A survey has conducted among some English teachers for this paper to find out whether warm up activity plays an important role in language classroom and whether it is useful for teachers and students at primary schools in language teaching and learning.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Rationale

One of the biggest challenges when teaching a second or foreign language is the input we can provide to our students. We all know that the success of the language acquisition process increases by level of exposure to the target language. In this sense the development of each specific skill depends on the input provided, so in the case of teaching and learning speaking, the schemata or students' background knowledge plays an important role in getting students to talk or participate in speaking practices. One of the techniques to stir up language performance is warming up activities teachers can do before any language practice. The warning up activities help language learners brainstorm ideas for speaking and writing as well as predicting knowledge for listening and reading. In this study, the researcher tries to investigate positive effects of warming up activities from psychological aspects in enhancing speaking practice.

English is now regarded as one of the important subjects taught at primary and junior high school levels in Vietnam. Students of all levels must learn English at schools in order to be able to speak English. The final goal of learning English is that students can use English in a real communication. Brown (1987: 202) states that the culmination of language learning is not simply in the mastery of the forms of the language but also in the mastery of forms in order to accomplish the communicative function. In reference to Brown (1987), it is clearly stated that the ability to speak English becomes the final goal of learning English. To achieve the goal, the teaching of speaking ability must be emphasized in the English teaching and learning process. Unfortunately, in practice, the students are not given sufficient opportunity to develop and practice the speaking skills. Based on the National Curriculum, it is stated that English teaching has to cover four main skills in equal portion. In fact, most Vietnamese English teachers focus more on the reading and writing skills, and less on oral skills, speaking and listening. While, the students can practice listening, reading and writing skills at home. On the other hand, they have less opportunity to practice speaking in English when they are not in classroom. Besides, the speaking activities are less communicative because the teachers give many theories to the

students without giving chances for them to practice language. In addition, the teaching and learning process seems to be teacher – centered since the teachers always explain the materials and the students only listen.

Based on the researcher's observations, when she was at the school, there were some problems in the English learning at junior high schools. When the students are asked to practice or perform their speaking ability in front of the class, they refuse it and they are afraid of making mistakes. In addition, during the English speaking lesson, the teacher tend to talk too much, students are not given sufficient input language for speaking performance, or in other words teacher do not create appropriate activities to active students' background knowledge to make their oral ability sound natural and fluent. In this study, the researcher attempts to investigate the importance of preparatory work for speaking class or what we call the warming up activities in a speaking lesson with a hope that they can active learners' schemata for more motivated speaking performance.

1.2. Problem statement

It is a fact that students are getting bored with poorly, and artificial speaking situations created by teachers when teaching speaking. Many teachers do not think warm up is useful that is needed for learning to be fun. They basically use it in the first class of a new course to give the students a chance to be familiar with each other. They ignore the other benefits of using a warm up activity in classroom. For example, it can motivate the students to participate in class activities, activate the students' background knowledge, and help the teachers introduce a new topic in an interesting way or help get the students' attention. However, teachers use common techniques such as questioning, and reviewing materials from the previous class, chatting with students as warm up activity whereas they can use jokes, songs, funny videos, games, stories or pictures to make the class more interesting. The appropriate warming up activities motivate students to talk more as their schemata are well activated.

1.3. Aims of the study

The study aims at exploring the role of warming up activities in a speaking lesson so that learners can become more activated for better speaking ability from

psychological perspectives. Also, the study attempts to find out some effective warming up activities that can be used in a speaking class.

1.4. Research questions

With the objective stated above, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

- (1) To what extent the warming up activities can promote the speaking ability in a speaking lesson?
- (2) What involves in designing appropriate warming-up activities for language learners?
- (3) What warming up activities are appropriate for young language learners?

1.5. Scope of the study

The study focuses on developing speaking participation for pupils in grade 5 in Ka Long Primary School by using warming-up activities. The young English language learners who have been studying English for two years at primary schools.

1.6. Significance of the study

The study will provide a framework for language teachers, especially those who are working with young learners at primary schools in designing warming up activities to promote more speaking participation in a speaking class. Also, the study helps language teachers to select appropriate warming up activities for the young learners both culturally and psychologically.

1.7. Design of the study

The present study consists of five chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction. In this chapter, the rationales of the study will be presented as well as statement of problem and scope of the study that lead to the research questions.

Chapter II is the review of related literature towards the issues such as language development for children, psychological aspects of warming up activities. Also, the principles of warming up activities will be discussed.

Chapter III deals with the methodology which consists of the key methods of collecting and analyzing data.

The results of the study will be presented in chapter IV. Finally, Chapter V will be devoted to discussions of the whole study as well as some practical implications of the study in the real language classroom.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Status of English language teaching in Vietnam

Vietnam has witnessed the rise and fall of a number of dominant for eight languages over the past 2000 years. In various parts of the country, foreign languages including English, Chinese, French and Russian respectively have each enjoyed dominant status during previous periods. Across the nation after the Vietnamese government introduced an open-door policy in 1986, English gradually took over the functions (and significance) of Russian, following the dissolution of the former Soviet Union which consequently had reduced influence over Vietnam.

The early 1990s witnessed an explosive growth in the demand for English language, in ‘an official acknowledgement of the role and status of English’ (Do Huy Thinh, 1999: 2) and in a requirement that government officials study foreign languages, usually English. Do Huy Thinh (1999: 2) states emphatically that “in contemporary Vietnam, there has never been a stronger, clearer decision concerning foreign language education policy and planning made at the highest-level authority”. To name just a few, English has been decreed to be the 'chief foreign language to promote among state managers and employees (Vo, 1994), a compulsory subject for the majority of secondary students (Canh, 1999) and has tended to be introduced at an earlier age (Tsui & Tollefson, 2007b), from the third grade (T. Nguyen, 2009); and teaching the language has been coupled with images of ‘desirability’ and ‘fashionability’ in contemporary Vietnam (Phan, 2008: 3).

The period from 1986 up to the present is characterized by the rapid growth and expansion of English in Vietnam. This English boom began in December 1986, when at its Sixth National Congress the Vietnamese Communist Party initiated an overall economic reform known as Doi moi (renovation), opening the door of Vietnam to the whole world. In the context of economic renovation and of the open

door policy, English become the first (and nearly the only) foreign language to be taught in Vietnam

2.2. Communicative language teaching

The field of foreign language teaching has undergone many changes and shifts over the last few decades. Many methods and approaches have come and gone. These changes have given birth to a variety of methods with different principles and techniques. Among them we have the grammar–translation method, the total physical response, the natural approach, and many others.

In the 1970s, a reaction to traditional language teaching methods and approaches began and spread around the world as older methods such as grammar–translation method, audiolingualism, and situational language teaching. With the growing need for good communication skills and the importance of English on today’s world, teachers seek to discover a significant that meets the demand of students to use this language for communication. Thus, communicative language teaching (CLT) is viewed as the best approach for this purpose. It is mainly related to the idea of Harmer (1991: 70) which stated that “Language learning will take care of itself”.

Therefore, on account of the limitations of the previous methods, CLT has been developed and it mainly focused on the students’ ability to interact and communicate which was absent in the other methods. Nowadays, communicative language teaching is considered as an approach for teaching rather than a method; hence, it is based on the idea that language learning means learning how to use the language to achieve a better communication inside and outside the classroom. Richards & Rodgers (2001, quoted in Brown, 2004: 241) noted that “CLT is best understood as an approach rather than a method”. CLT refers to both processes and goals in language classroom. The central concept in CLT is ‘Communicative Competence’. Therefore, it aims to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching; it means the ability to use the linguistic system effectively and appropriately. In other words, its goal is making use of real-life situations in which communication is needed. Richards (2006: 3) declared that:

“Communicative Language Teaching can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom”.

According to communicative language teaching approach, the learner is no longer seen to be a passive recipient of language input but rather, plays an active role in the learning process. The emphasis of communicative language teaching on the process of communication leads to different roles for learners. The learner’s role is a negotiator between himself, the learning process, interaction with the group’s activities and classroom procedures. According to Richards & Rodgers (1986: 77), “The implication for the learner is that should contribute as much as he gains in the classroom and thereby learn in an interdependent way”. Therefore, the learner is thought to construct meaning through interaction with others.

Furthermore, since CLT gives the freedom to use the language, learners are basically required to interact with each other and not only with the teacher. They should learn the language in a cooperative manner. Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991: 131) stated that:

Students are, above all, communicators. They are actively engaged in negotiating meaning-in trying to make themselves understood even when their knowledge of the target language is incomplete. They learn to communicate by communicating. Since the teacher’s role is less dominant than in a teacher-centered method, students are seen as more responsible managers of their own learning

In other words, the learners’ role in the classroom now, is that they have to participate in classroom activities that are based on cooperative approach of language rather than the individualistic one. Moreover, they have to become comfortable in group work or pair work tasks with listening to their peers, rather than relying on the teacher for a model; it means that students are expected to take the responsibility for their own learning.

According to CLT approach, the teacher has two major roles. The first role of the teacher in communicative language teaching is viewed as a facilitator of the communicative process; it means that s/he facilitates communication in the classroom

that is to establish situations likely to promote communication. During the activities, s/he acts as an adviser by answering students' questions and monitoring their performance. He might make notes on their errors to be worked on at a later time. The second role as Richards & Rodgers (1986: 77) stated that "is to act as an independent participant within the learning teaching group". Thus, he might be a co-communicator engaging in the communicative activity with students rather than being a model for correct speech. It is clear that in CLT approach, language learners are more active participating into the communication process with the facilitation of teachers who provide them with comprehensive language input from warming up activities.

2.3. The nature of speaking

Speaking has an important role in human beings life because speaking is a productive skill in which the speaker produces to communicate among people in a society in order to keep the relationship going well. Speaking is the thing that we use to express ideas at the same time he/she tries to get the ideas from others. Rivers (1987: 162) says that through speaking, someone can express his ideas, emotions, attentions, reactions to other person and situation and influence other person. Thus, through speaking, everyone can communicate well or express what he/she wants from other and responds to the speaker.

Theoretically, according to O'Grady (1996), speaking is a mental process. This means that it is a psychological process by which a speaker puts a mental concept into some linguistic form, such as word, phrases, and sentences used to convey a message to a listener. So the speech production is the process by which the speakers turn their mental concept into their spoken utterances to convey a message to their listeners in the communicative interaction. In order to be a good speaker, language learners need to be command at both macro and micro skills. The former relates to understanding or the content of the conversation, while the later refers to the language aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, semantic and pragmatic.

Speaking is a language skill that is developed in the child's life which is preceded by listening skills, a productive skill that can be directly and empirically observed (Brown, 2004: 140), the vehicle "par excellence" of social solidarity, of

social making of professional achievement. It is the activity in which two people are engaged in talking to each other actively use a language to express meanings so that other people can make sense of them (Cameron, 2001:40).

In the first understanding of the definition, speaking is a language skill that is developed in a child's life which is preceded by listening skills. It means that speaking is a basic language skill. The mastery of the speaking skill is preceded by listening skills. In this case, increasing listening skills, for example, is very beneficial for the speaking ability.

According to Chaney (1998), speaking is the process of making and sharing meaning by using verbal and non-verbal symbols in different contexts. Brown (1991) and Burns & Joyce (1997) defined speaking as an interactive process of making meaning that includes producing, receiving, and processing information. Bygate (1987) defined speaking as the production of auditory signals to produce different verbal responses in listeners. It is regarded as combining sounds systematically to form meaningful sentences.

Bailey & Nunan (2005: 2) asserted that speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. It can be perceived that speaking is a kind of interaction process involving two or more people (as speaker(s) and listener(s)) in order to convey and receive the intended information.

2.4. The role of speaking in language learning

Language is a tool for communication. We communicate with others, to express our ideas, and to know others' ideas as well. Communication takes place, where there is speech. Without speech we cannot communicate with one another. The importance of speaking skills is enormous for the learners of any language. Without speech, a language is reduced to a mere script. The use of language is an activity which takes place within the confines of our community. Pattison (1992) points out that when people mention knowing or learning a language, they mean being able to speak the language.

Bygate (1987) argued that “speaking is a skill which deserves attention every bit as much as literacy skill, in both first and second language”. The learners are often expected to speak with their high confidence to implement their most basic transactions. Therefore, speaking is believed to be one of the most challenging skills and should be paid more attention in both learning and teaching.

2.5. The teaching of speaking skills

The position of speaking in the hierarchy of language skills has evolved over the centuries. Rather ignored in the Grammar – Translation Method, it became a primary skill in the Direct Method. Audiolingualism brought even more focus on speaking, although the linguistic principle it was based on viewed oral discourse as imitative routine behaviour in typical and predictable situations. The grammatical syllabus of the Cognitive Method incorporated activities in all language skills, attaching equal importance to each of them. Finally, Communicative Language Teaching added a more realistic dimension to teaching oral discourse by introducing numerous forms of interaction to the classroom and practising the language in natural or probable situations which demanded defining of the discourse genre and the roles of participants. Although the contribution of CLT to developing forms of speaking practice in the language classroom can hardly be overestimated, there is a growing tendency among researchers and practitioners to criticize it for its insufficient recognition of the complexity of speaking as a psycholinguistic process and of placing too strong an emphasis on information gap criterion as leading to artificial or impractical tasks (Dakowska, 2005).

Nowadays, in spite of the inevitable criticism of available methods, techniques or resources, speaking is generally perceived as the most fundamental skill to acquire. Since the onset of the communicative era, it has been treated as the ultimate goal of language training and its proper development has become the focus of attention of both teachers and learners. However, it is also a commonly recognized fact that achieving proficiency in foreign language speaking in classroom conditions is not an easy task. Even advanced learners often finish a language course with the conviction that they are not sufficiently prepared for speaking beyond the classroom. This difficulty results basically from the character and inadequate frequency of speaking

opportunities in the classroom in comparison to the abundance of natural varieties and genres of oral communication. In fact, selecting the most appropriate types of spoken discourse for classroom practice in a particular language course is a very hard decision which, unfortunately, hardly ever reflects the natural occurrence and distribution of communicative situations.

Additionally, an advanced language course should create optimal conditions for developing learners' sociocultural knowledge, that is "the culturally embedded rules of social behaviour" (Thornbury, 2007: 31) and their linguistic knowledge, which includes discourse and speech act knowledge, and knowledge of the grammar, vocabulary and phonology of the target language. These knowledge areas must then be appropriately activated in order to be made available for use in regular speaking practice in the classroom and beyond.

Importantly, as far as the stages of mental processing involved in speaking are concerned, there is not much difference between native and target languages. Both combine the processes of conceptualizing, formulating, articulating, self-monitoring and negotiating. Yet, the skill of speaking is not automatically transferable from the speaker's first language into the second (Thornbury, 2007). Even extensive knowledge of the target language's grammar and vocabulary often presented by advanced students of foreign language departments does not guarantee success in oral communication when this knowledge is not properly integrated or accessed. Problems in speaking may be additionally aggravated by excessive use of self-monitoring processes and a tendency to formulate utterances in the native language first. These mental operations create obvious costs in terms of fluency and may lead to producing artificial discourse.

Other problems that are commonly observed in the language classroom are related to individual learners' personalities and attitudes to the learning process and learning speaking in particular. They can be defined as followed (Ur, 1995: 121):

- inhibition – fear of making mistakes, losing face, criticism; shyness;
- nothing to say – learners have problems with finding motives to speak, formulating opinions or relevant comments;

- low or uneven participation – often caused by the tendency of some learners to dominate in the group;
- mother-tongue use – particularly common in less disciplined or less motivated classes, learners find it easier or more natural to express themselves in their native language.

Parasaribu & Simanjuntak (1983) stated that teaching is an effort of giving stimulus, guidance, direction and support the students in learning process. It means that the role of the teacher in learning process is as director and facilitator. Teacher also should motivate the students to do what the teacher asks them to do. Speaking is one of language skills considered difficult. Generally, the students can read English better than they speak it. That is the reason why speaking is the important aspect in learning a language. Because, mostly, after the students listened and read some sentences in foreign language, in this case, English, they will try to speak it.

Usually, English teacher hard to make their students to talk in the classroom. As what Byrne (1978: 80) stated that one of the English teacher's main task is to get the students to talk, to express themselves freely, but within of the language they have learnt. According to Rivers (1987: 160) the teaching of speaking skills more demanding on the teacher than the teaching of any language skills. Based on the statement above, we can say that it is important for the teacher to prepare their material and the techniques in order to avoid boring class. As we know the purpose of speaking itself is to get the message or the information from the other. In order to make them understand each other, then the person should communicate. Kayi (2006) stated that EFL teachers should create a classroom environment where students have real-life communication, authentic activities, and meaningful tasks that promote oral language. There are so many teachers that try their best to find an interesting technique and method to teach speaking in order to make the class enjoyable for the students.

2.6. Warming-up activities

2.6.1. *What is warming up?*

A warm-up stage is a preparatory stage which helps the students feel relax and also sets a positive mood for learning (Rushidi, 2013). According to Robertson

& Acklam (2000: 30), “warm-up is a short activity for the beginning of lesson”. Kayi (2006) claimed that warm ups are different types of activities which help the students begin to think in English, review previously introduced materials and become interested in the lesson (as cited in Velandia, 2008: 11). Lassche (2005: 83) defined that for language learning lesson a warm-up stage is the “initial orientation”. Hence, a warm-up activity is used to start a class with an interesting task to help the students be comfortable in classroom setting and to help them start thinking in English.

Robertson & Acklam (2000) define warming up activities as a short activity in the beginning of a lesson. In addition, Le Blanc (2011) contributed to this by stating that warming up is an activity which has as aim to attract the students’ attention in the class and avoid external distractions, another definition of warming up is the one given by Rushidi (2013) who defines warming up as an activity that help students to feel relaxed and sets a positive attitude to learning. In that sense Flanigan (2011) concludes that warming up activities are very useful in language classes because these activities help learners to practice and improve the four skills (listening, speaking, writing and reading).

A warm-up activity could help a teacher to recognize the different types of student’s learning style. According to Cárdenas (2001:18), “Students learn best when they can address knowledge in ways that they trust. They will learn best through doing rather than reflecting”. Therefore, teacher could use different styles like play, demonstration, discussion, and totally we could say by action.

A warm-up activity helps students to put aside any distractions which are in their mind and focus on topic, and it helps ESL students to think in target language. According to Peterson (2010: 25), “Beginning your lesson plans with a five-minute warm up can serve to focus your students on the topic, open up creative thinking and help to apply the learning in new ways”.

It will not be a successful class if the students do not feel interested at the very beginning of a class. Hence, a teacher should try to start a lesson in a way which keeps his\her students engaged. An interesting way of starting a lesson

could be using activities called warm-up activities or icebreakers (Robertson & Acklam, 2000).

Different types of warm-up activities such as songs, games and discussion questions can be used to get students' attention in class. Ruiz & Ramírez (2008: 174) stated that to improve students' learning and to get the best from them, it is a must to start a class with a good warm-up session.

In short, warm-up activities will help students turn off the outside world and focus on the task at hand. By the end of the warm-up activity, every student will be ready to learn and being able to focus on their language lesson. In any classroom, there always are students who are more reticent and are willing to let others do all the participating. By engaging students to take part in a low-risk, warm-up activity, a teacher will reach every student and will help their students achieve their language goals.

2.6.2. Background and Warm-up

Teachers need to understand what students already know about the topic they are going to teach and they need to connect the topic with the students' present understanding. Teachers should start teaching from the point about which students have knowledge or they are familiar with.

Brown (2004: 2) defined that “prior knowledge is generalized mental representations of our experience that are available to help us understand new experiences”. In the introductory session of a lesson, it is essential to activate students' existing knowledge and relate them to the new information they are going to learn (Joshi, 2006).

Cheung (2001) describes two types of background knowledge; subject knowledge and encountered knowledge. Subject knowledge is students' prior knowledge acquired from educational institutes and whatever students learn through interaction with the world is encountered knowledge. If students are presented with new materials or topics or tasks by relating their subject knowledge and encountered knowledge, it will be easier for them to be connected to the new knowledge and they will be more eager to learn.

García & Martín (2004: 17) mentioned that “from a deductive methodological viewpoint”, we can assume warm-up as a ship that takes the learners for a journey from known to unknown as an attempt to activate their potential and passive vocabulary”. A warm-up activity helps the students trigger their existing knowledge and also drive their mind towards the main activity. This is the way students can build a connection between the old and new information.

2.6.3. Lessons’ objective and warming-up

If students get the idea about what knowledge and skills they will acquire from the starting of the class, their achievement level will be high (Joshi, 2006). According to Prabhu (1987), “perceived purpose and clear outcome was satisfying to learners because there was a clear criterion of success and a sense of achievement from success” (as cited in Lassche, 2005: 86).

Learning is a goal oriented activity where a teachers’ job is to engage their students to find out the importance of learning materials and make that journey enjoyable (Cheung, 2001). A brief warm-up activity can build a relationship between the students and the learning materials. If learners find that a task is related to their learning needs, they will perform the task with higher effort, but their performance level will be minimum when the task will be irrelevant with their needs (Murphy, 2002).

Oxford & Shearin (1994) claimed that when the learning objectives are clear and precise to the students, achievement rate is exceptional (as cited in Lassche, 2005: 86). It is true that a task will not automatically provide a clear goal for the learners. Teachers have to discuss the lesson aims and objectives with students so that they get clear, achievable, and relevant goals for performing the task (Spratt & Leung, 2000).

In addition, Nunan (1999) suggests, “making instructional goals explicit to the learner” (as cited in Lassche, 2005: 86). In initial warm-up stage, the lesson objective can be disclosed as students learn better as soon as they become aware about the learning goal (Lassche, 2005).

2.6.4. Principles of warm-up activities

Velandia (2008) stated some principles to design a warm-up activity. He suggests that a warm-up activity should take place at the beginning of the class. It

will help the teachers catch the students' attention. It has to be interesting so that students get motivated from the very beginning. It is usually a short activity as it is a preparatory stage of other stages of a lesson. Warm up activity has to be related with the lesson topic so that in other stages students can get involved in different activities easily to develop their language skill.

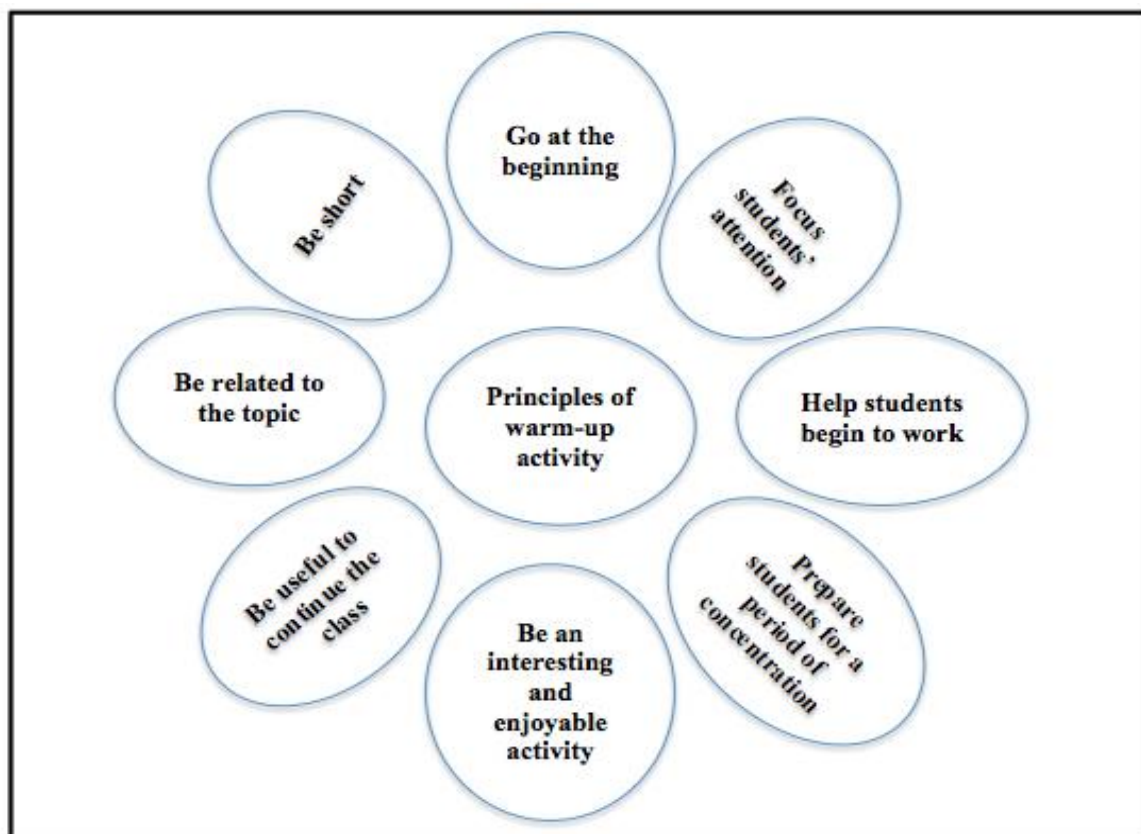


Fig. 1: Features of warm-up activity (Velandia, 2008)

Robertson and Acklam (2000) also described the main features of a warm-up activity. They include that a warm-up activity needs to be interesting to motivate the students for practicing English. It will not be the main part of the lesson as a warm-up activity is a short activity. Warm-up can be used to give the students a chance to revise previously studied language. Robertson and Acklam (2000) disagreed with Velandia (2008) that warm-up activity has to be related with the lesson topic. They mention that it is not necessary that warm-up activity be connected to the lesson as the main purpose of using warm-up activity is making the students ready to work in English. (p. 8)

2.6.5. Why is warming-up activities important?

The warm-up section is important because it serves the following purposes:

- *Establish a relationship*

Learning process is facilitated through building a positive relationship with the students. A fun or interesting class largely depends on the teachers as their personality and teaching method motivate the students to raise a positive attitude towards learning. Teachers' attitude is an important factor to develop cooperation between students and teacher.

Klippel (1985) mentions that the teacher sets an atmosphere within a class without being aware of it by choosing certain types of exercises and topics. The teacher can help the students share their ideas and opinions in less tensed situation by developing rapport with them (Lassche, 2005).

Building up a sense of rapport and mutual trust among the teacher and the students is the pre-condition to create a positive atmosphere in classroom. According to Hale & Whitlam (1995), "rapport is the ability to build trust and confidence with others, often when there is little time available" (as cited in Lassche, 2005: 84). Warm-up activities like joke, game, and puzzle establish a positive learning environment and make the students comfortable to participate in the classroom.

Krishnan & Hoon (2002) showed that in the language classroom learners need to support and motivate each other to promote success in learning. Warm-up or icebreaker activities help create a comfortable environment and establish peer trust among students which allow them to engage in negotiation with each other for other activities easily (Hansen & Liu, 2005). Language teachers should be aware of the usefulness of warm-up activities, especially for the first lesson of any new class where students get an opportunity to know each other and the teacher gets a chance to understand the general level of the class. These kinds of activities help create a bonding among the whole class (Senior, 1997).

- *How to motivate learners?*

By spending five or ten minutes for warm-up activities, learners can be motivated from the beginning of a class. Motivation for learning is influenced by the

learners' interest in the class activities. Nseendi (1984) suggests that students will be motivated to learn when the activities and exercises for language learning are interesting to them (as cited in Cheung, 2001: 59). As a result, the warm-up activity used to motivate students should be interesting.

Motivation is learners' interest and enthusiasm for the learning materials and tasks used in class and it indicates their levels of attention, concentration and enjoyment. In the preparation stage, a warm up exercise can act as an important factor to arouse students' interest to motivate them. Beginning a class with a warm up activity is a good way to grow curiosity and interest among the learners and motivate them to give their attention in further activities to know more.

- *Focus learners' attention*

Bowers (1984) suggests that unattended material stays in memory for short time and does not get processed in long term memory due to lack of attention and noticing. The opening activity mainly used to focus the students' attention on the lesson. Teachers can play a vital role to create a positive learning attitude among students. To make them interested and involved in class, teachers need to stimulate their curiosity and attract their attention. People learn about things when they give attention and do not learn much when they have lack of attention (as cited in Cheung, 2001: 109).

Walqui (2006: 169) states that by focusing students' attention on the main ideas, teacher first prepares the students for engaging them in interactive tasks to practice. Warm up activities are used to get students' attention so that they put aside their distracting thoughts and become ready to focus individually and as groups on class activities. Therefore, by using warm up activity learners' attention can be taken and they can be invited to start thinking of lesson topic. Warm-up activities help the students stop being distracted and focus their attention on the lesson. These kinds of activities lead the students to effective language learning from the beginning.

2.6.6. Warming up activities in a speaking class

Allwright (1984) considered that warm up activities are designed to attract students' attention, to help them put aside distracting thoughts, and to get them ready to focus individually and as groups on whatever activities that follow. They will cause

people to stop whatever they are doing or thinking and refocus their attention. We could say a warming up activity is a motivating starting point that will lead students to become animated to work efficiently in the language class. For the purpose of our study, it was the activity used to encourage students' involvement and permeate the development of the whole lesson, so we avoided looking at them as isolated activities. These kinds of activities might also be called zealous, enthusiastic or suggestive activities. How we can include these activities in the process of a class will be the next focus in our discussion.

When preparing lesson plans for our EFL classes, we must include at least the following parts so that warming up activities can play a clear and meaningful role in our teaching. Kay (1995) describes the stages of a lesson plan in the following way:

Warm up: "It is an effective way to help the students begin to think in English and to review previously introduced material. Different types of warm ups help provide variety and interest in the lesson". A warm up to prepare students for a period of concentration may involve physical movement with activities that keep them active by standing up, walking, jumping, matching pictures with sentences or vocabulary, drawing or writing personal experiences or stories, and singing or listening to familiar songs and chants. These are, among others, enjoyable and motivating warm ups.

Presentation: The first part of the presentation often involves pre-teaching to encourage the flow of information. In this initial stage, we conduct activities to present the new language by providing a context for each situation.

Practice: It involves a wide variety of tasks that ensure the practice of the target language. These activities can range from controlled to less-controlled and free expressions. The activities must provide opportunities to work on a particular skill or to work integrated skill exercises.

Application: The application provides students with hands-on opportunities to use what they have learned. This part of the lesson can also be considered part of the practice -particularly less controlled and free practice.

Assessment: Some assessment activities like games, tasks or projects let students carry out the activity while the teacher is circulating in the classroom

monitoring their use of the language, to examine students' progress and achievement. Also, a written assessment and a self evaluation section could be included.

Cotter (2011) stated that warming up activities in lesson plans receive less attention that it should. Some teachers tend to prepare these activities few minutes before starting the class. A well-prepared warm up offers more than just “have fun” in a session, it allows teachers to create a comfortable atmosphere in the classroom. Druckman (1995) concluded that games seem to be effective in enhancing motivation and increasing student interest in subject matter.

If students get the idea about what knowledge and skills they will acquire from the beginning of the class, their achievement level will be higher (Joshi, 2006). Teachers have to be sure about what they are teaching and how much information the students have about the subject, and then he/she needs to connect the topic with students' present understanding. A teacher can do that through activities as simple conversation between learners that allow him/her to sit back and observe the languages abilities that they have. García & Martín (2004) mentioned that one of the objectives of using warming up activities is to activate students' background knowledge which gives a new perspective to the concept in view of the fact that from a traditional point of view, warming up has been seen just as a small introduction to the topic, in order to introduce the lesson or an alternative to start the class in a more entertaining way, warming up is essentially an effective strategy to prepare students for the lesson. Peterson (2010) stated that starting the lesson plan with a short warm up activity may help students to focus on the target topic, and arise their creativity and provide a context to apply the knowledge they have acquired. Warming up activities also provides the opportunity to reach each student and arouse their interest, even the more reluctant students can be engaged by using a low risk warming up activity it also not only offers an approach to students, but also gives the possibility of reviewing language skills presented in past English lessons and activate previous knowledge (Le Blanc, 2011).

According to Flanigan (2011), “performing warming up activities in English class will help students to be in the right frame of mind to learn” as cited by Khodareza & Estalkhbijari (2012: 191). Also proper warming up activities ensure

that students will get the most from their class. Warming up is actually the convergent point between the student reality outside the classroom and the language lesson, when students enter in the ESL classroom they all come from a wide different range of busy life in which they spend most of the time speaking.

2.6.7. Warming up activities for young learners

Halliwell (1992: 66) affirms that:

“Children do not come to classroom empty-headed. They bring with them an already well-established sets of instincts, skills and characteristics which will help them to learn another language. We need to identify those and make the most of them”.

For example, children:

- are already very good at interpreting meaning without necessarily understanding the individual words;
- already have great skill in using limited language creatively;
- frequently learn indirectly rather than directly;
- take great pleasure in finding and creating fun in what they do;
- have a ready imagination;
- above all take great delight in talking!

Children differ from grown up learners, and the warming up activities used for them are different too, actually, implementing warming up activities can be more accepted by the learners as they are more willing to participate, young learners lack of the shame that adults may have so they, in most of the cases do not, hesitate before participating in a determinate activity, the actual challenge is to motivate students to keep their attention in the task at hand, as children can be easily distracted, Harmer (2009) claimed that teachers of young learners need to spend time understanding how their students think and operate. They need to be able to pick up on their student’s current interest so they can use them to motivate the children.

The learning of a foreign language is an effort that needs to be maintained at every moment and over a long period of time, especially when working with children

Aisyatin (2014), following that idea Paul (2003) cited by Aisyatin (2014), stated that in line with this condition, games are needed to help and encourage learners to sustain their interest and work, in view of this fact, it is accurate to ensure that the more accurate up activities for children need to integrate a ludic component, that stimulates not also the student motivation but also his previous knowledge also Paul (2003) suggest that games may contribute to teachers to create a real context in which language is useful and meaningful. Halliwell (2002) supports the idea of taking special advantage of the kid's nature instinct for playing and make fun of almost everything, she says that using for example guessing activities in which they try to simulate to have 'telepathic powers' in order to deduce what one of their partners is thinking their personalities emerge, woven into the language use, so they are actually making the language in their

We know from experience that very young children are able to understand what is being said to them even before they understand the individual words. Intonation, gesture, facial expressions, actions and circumstances all help to tell them what the unknown words and phrases probably mean. By understanding the message in this way they start to understand the language. In later life, we all maintain this first source of understanding alongside our knowledge of the language itself. It remains a fundamental part of human communication.

Children come to primary school with this ability already highly developed. They continue to use it in all their school work. For example, even though their mother tongue skills are already well established, they may well find it difficult to follow purely verbal instructions and information. When this happens, or sometimes simply out of laziness or inattention, children will tend to rely on their ability to 'read' the general message.

Standing in the front of a class full of students you have never met before can be daunting and nerver-acting. Students respond when they are comfortable in the classroom. One of the best ways of ensuring you have a good start to class and settle those nerves is to start the class off with some fun warm-up activities. The aim of warm-up activities is to ensure your students are comfortable with you and feel safe

in their English learning environment. Harmer (2004: 38) stated that children would learn better if the lessons focus on interaction, meaning, and fluency rather than on accuracy.

We all know that children differ from grown up learners, and the warming up activities used for them are different too, actually, implementing warming up activities can be more accepted by the learners as they are more willing to participate, young learners lack of the shame that adults may have so they, in most of the cases do not, hesitate before participating in a determinate activity, the actual challenge is to motivate students to keep their attention in the task at hand, as children can be easily distracted, Harmer (2004) claimed that teachers of young learners need to spend time understanding how their students think and operate. They need to be able to pick up on their student's current interest so they can use them to motivate the children.

The learning of a foreign language is an effort that needs to be maintained at every moment and over a long period of time, especially when working with children Aisyatin (2014), following that idea Paul (2003) cited by Aisyatin (2014), states that in line with this condition, games are needed to help and encourage learners to sustain their interest and work, in view of this fact, it is accurate to ensure that the more accurate up activities for children need to integrate a ludic component, that does not stimulates the students' motivation but also his previous knowledge also Paul (2003) (cited by Aisyatin, 2014) suggest that games may contribute to teachers to create a real context in which language is useful and meaningful. Halliwell (1992) supports the idea of taking special advantage of the kid's nature instinct for playing and make fun of almost everything, she says that using for example guessing activities in which they try to simulate to have 'telepathic powers' in order to deduce what one of their partners is thinking their personalities emerge, woven into the language use, so they are actually making the language in their own, so in this way students are living the language though their sense of fun and play. Halliwell (1992) uses the terms 'stir' and 'settle down' when referring to activities that wake students up or keep them from overexcited during speaking practice.

2.6.8. Types of warming up activities

In language teaching, the warming up activities can be divided into three types namely:

(a) *Physical warming up students* which consists of rolling your shoulders, head or hips a few times, or doing some bend-and-stretch exercises will help your students release tension and become alert before they turn to the class material.

Incorporate instructions (and therefore vocabulary) into the exercise. For example, for a head-roll warm-up, you'd recite: "front, left, back, right" while the students roll their heads. You can also include other useful words like up, down, reach, pull, push and twist.

Giving instructions while physically performing them contextualizes this vocabulary. Your students will never wonder again which is their left hand and which is their right.

(b) *Prepare students' voices.* These activities correct pronunciation depending upon how you use the muscles involved in speech production. It's probable that 99.9% of your students will have been speaking their native language just before sitting down to study foreign languages, and some of them continue doing so even after you have started teaching.

This means that the muscle strength and articulation that they will need to pronounce English words will be secondary to what they have just used in their native language. You need to stretch out those muscles to at least shed the native language tensions and get those mouths ready for the muscle movements needed for correct English pronunciation.

It is important also to relieve stress. The groups of muscles used in pronunciation are very small and react very easily to muscular stress. Though it's unlikely your students will suffer vocal lesions from cold English pronunciation, doing some simple vocal warm-ups before class will help reduce the stress they will experience when trying to wrap their lips, tongue and teeth around English sounds.

(c) *Awaken students' minds.* Students often come into class in a kind of bubble formed by their native language. Some students, even adults, might be distracted and

not mentally prepared for the work they need to do. To burst that bubble, you will want to combine different types of warm-ups with linguistic points, which will get them mentally prepared for the day's class objectives.

You can slip pronunciation, grammar and language points into the different types of warm-ups you do with your students. Warming up activities should be ice breakers that get your students loosened up and ready to learn. While you can try to include points from the curriculum, be aware that students will notice if the warm-up is just another grammar exercise.

In short, this chapter of the thesis mainly focuses on the uses of warming up activities from psychological perspectives, that means the term awaken students' minds or activation of the schemata will be discussed in detailed.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Context of the study

The study is carried out at Ka Long Primary School in Quang Ninh province. Children start learning English from grade 3 through out grades 4 to 5. Most of them age from 8 to 11 years old. The teaching of both Vietnamese and English at the same time confronts teachers many challenges. Children at these ages do not have many things to talk. The teaching activities rely heavily on visual aids such as pictures, flash cards and animations. Children have three class hours a week for English study. Many of them have been attended extra English classes run by English centers in the city. That makes them communicate quite well in English when talking about simple topics of everyday issues such as; name, ages, colors, habit, free time activities... There are six classes of grade 5, and the total number of pupils of this level is 180.

3.2. Participants of the study

The participants of the study consist of 85 students in grade 4 at Ka Long Primary school and 5 English teachers at Ka Long Primary school and 30 English teachers at five other primary schools in Quang Ninh. These participants will tell the researcher about their perceptions towards doing warming up activities in a speaking class. Among the teachers of English, 32 are female teachers, only 3 are males, 5 of them hold Master degree and the rest (30) are Bachelors. Besides, 85 grade 5 students from Ka Long Primary school will be interview about their perceptions of warming up activities that teachers have done with them.

3.3. Research design

Based on the purposes of the study, the mixed method of both qualitative and quantitative will be employed. The use of both qualitative and quantitative research techniques in a single study constitutes mixed method research. A consensus definition by Johnson et al. (2007) defines the approach as a type of research in which a researcher or a group of researchers combines the elements of qualitative and quantitative approaches in an effort to enhance the breadth and depth of research understanding and collaboration. For example, the use of data collection, quantitative

and qualitative viewpoints, and analysis and inference techniques in a single piece of research is an evident use of mixed research methodology.

According to Marguerite & Katherine (2010), educational researchers are increasingly recognizing the value of collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. One of the major advantages is that it combines the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research, providing both an in-depth look at context, processes, and interactions and precise measurement of attitudes and outcomes. In mixed-methods research, the researcher has flexibility in choosing methods of data collection, and the presentation of results can be convincing and powerful when both summary numbers and in-depth portraits of a setting are included.

In more recent research, there has been the identification that qualitative and quantitative research are not incompatible and their combination can result in better understanding of social phenomena (Hashemi & Babaii, 2012). The application of concurrent designs in mixed methods research is more common than the sequential design. The effectiveness of the concurrent approach ensures that data obtained from both quantitative and qualitative approaches has the same time relevance. This feature emerges from a study of linguistic articles since 1995 to 2008. Both strands of the mixed methods approach should receive equal emphasis at the point of analysis (Hashemi & Babaii, 2012). The nature of this approach to research as a versatile research methodology would facilitate more effective uses of mixed methods in the future.

Another benefits of mixed method as summarized by Greene (2007) as followed:

Triangulation: Mixing methods for this purpose seeks convergence, corroboration, and correspondence of results across the different methods.

Complementarity: Mixed methods as used for this purpose measure overlapping, but distinct facets of the phenomena under investigation.

Development: For this purpose, different methods are used sequentially in order to use the results of one method to help develop the other method or inform its implementation.

Expansion: For this purpose, different methods are used for different inquiry components in order to extend the breadth and range of the inquiry.

Initiation: For this purpose, mixed methods intentionally seek the discovery of paradox and contradiction, and new perspectives or frameworks via the recasting of questions or results from one method with questions or results from the other method.

However, mixed-methods research also has some disadvantages. As Marguerite and Katherine (2010) state mix-methods requires knowledge and skills in both qualitative and quantitative methods. In addition, a mixed-methods study usually requires more time and resources to complete than a study using only one type of data. In addition, another shortcoming of mixed method research is the inherent challenges of providing statistical measurements of qualitative data. According to Roberts (2000), quantified qualitative data is vulnerable to collinearity, where statistical relationships are a result of the coding strategy employed rather than a true reflection of the data. To reduce the time used to analyze the data, researchers have to change their research design, including reducing the sample of the research in an effort to affect the statistical outcomes such as variance and t-test analyses. As a challenge, this limits the researcher's knowledge and statistical power to support the outcomes of their research (Driscoll et al., 2007). Other challenges and weaknesses of mixed method research pointed out by Johnson & Onwuegbuzie (2004) are that it is time consuming and expensive, and it is also hard to find a dedicated researcher who has inherent knowledge of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Therefore, a balanced utilization of the two approaches in the same research becomes a challenge.

3.4. Data collection instruments

The present study was carried out through several instruments, which were employed in order to collect the data and analyze the participants' results. First of all, questionnaires will be delivered to 35 teachers who have been teaching English at 5 primary schools in Quang Ninh, and to 85 students in grade 5 at Ka Long Primary school. The total number of teachers who involve in the study is 35. The questionnaire consists of 20 items on a five point Likert scale; from 1 which indicates strongly

disagree to 5, strongly agree. The data obtained from this questionnaire will indicate teachers' perceptions on the uses of warming up activities in everyday speaking class. Secondly, in the qualitative phase, the researcher carried out some semi-structured interview with five selected teachers. The findings from the interviews will consolidate information obtained from questionnaires. This is also a triangulation to strengthen for the quantitative phase. Last but not least, the researcher attends some speaking classes to find out the real effects of the warming up activities in class. Also, all comments, recommendations and conclusions will be made based on the data analysis.

3.5. Data analysis

The data from quantitative phase the will be analyzed using the software SPSS version 2.0. The researcher also arranged the data into three different categories to analyze:

- The data from questionnaires will be analyzed to find out the teachers' perceptions towards warming-up activities.
- The data from the interviews with teachers to find out types of warming-up activities that are used.
- The findings from class observations will be used to show the effects of warming-up activities in a speaking class.

In short, in this chapter.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this part, the researcher will summarize the findings of the thesis. After that, the discussions will also be included.

4.1. Findings from questionnaire for teachers

In order to find out teachers' perception towards the use of warming up activities in a speaking class, the researcher carried out a survey with a questionnaire of 20 items. The results from the questionnaires for teachers are shown in the table 2 below:

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	Warm-up is a short activity that is not the main part of a lesson.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	35 100%
2	A warm-up is related to the lesson topic and other activities of a lesson.	2 5.7%	5 14.3%	20 57.2%	8 22.8%	0 0%
3	It helps students to begin to think in English, review previous-class lesson and become interested in class.	0 0%	2 5.7%	8 22.8%	20 57.2%	5 14.3%
4	For the students' betterment teachers should start teaching from the point students have knowledge and relate them with the new information.	0 0%	0 0%	5 14.3%	2 5.7%	28 80%
5	Learners comprehend things better that they can relate to the things they already known.	0 0%	0 0%	5 14.3%	4 11.4%	26 74.3%

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
6	Warm-up activities help the students build a connection between old and new information.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	10 28.6%	25 71.4%
7	Warm-up activities help students know the lesson objective.	2 5.7%	5 14.3%	3 8.5%	20 57.2%	5 14.3%
8	Learners give higher effort to do a task if they find it related to their learning needs.	10 28.6%	8 22.8%	2 5.7%	10 28.6%	5 14.3%
9	Students need to know the lesson aims and objectives at the beginning so that they get a clear goal to perform a task.	0 0%	11 31.4%	15 42.8%	4 11.4%	5 14.3%
10	Warm-up activities create a positive learning environment for the students to participate in the class comfortably.	0 0%	2 5.7%	4 11.4%	25 71.4%	4 11.4%
11	Warm-up activities build rapport and mutual trust among students and teachers.	0 0%	0 0%	6 17.1%	21 60%	8 22.8%
12	Warm-up activities help learners know each other and establish peer trust.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	10 28.6%	25 71.4%
13	Warm-up activities promote motivation among students.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	18 51.4%	17 48.6%
14	Warm-up activity helps students to start a class with an interesting and motivating task.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	20 57.2%	15 42.8%

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
15	Warm-up activities arouse students' interest so that they get motivated to learn.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	15 42.8%	20 57.2%
16	Learners' attention is necessary from the beginning for effective language learning.	0 0%	2 5.7%	12 34.3%	11 31.4%	10 28.6%
17	Warm-up activities help students concentrate in the class lesson.	4 11.4%	7 20%	8 22.8%	6 17.1%	10 28.6%
18	Warm-up activity fails to serve students if it is too difficult as compared to their level of competence.	0 0%	0 0%	10 28.6%	10 28.6%	15 42.8%
19	Warm-up activity can be a threat for introvert students when they get nervous to perform exercises alone in front of the whole class.	0 0%	5 14.3%	10 28.6%	15 42.8%	5 14.3%
20	Teacher should provide warm up activity that is students' i+1 level (i represents the students' existing knowledge and 1 is just one advance step from the students' current level of competence).	0 0%	0 0%	15 42.8%	10 28.6%	10 28.6%

Table 1: Teachers' perception towards warming up activities

The results obtained from the survey reveal the fact that warming up is not the main part of a lesson (100%). The majority of the teachers agreed that a warm up is related to the lesson topic and other activities of a lesson (57.2%). The same percentage confirmed that warming up activities help students to think in English,

review previous lessons and become interested in class. Most of the teachers (80%) agree that teachers should relate what students already know to new information. The warming up activities also help students build a connection between old and new information. 25 teachers (71.4%) agreed that warm up activities create a positive learning environment for the students to participate in the class comfortably. The same number of teachers said that warming up activities help learners know each other and establish peer trust. 20 teachers (57.2%) reported that warming up activities help students start a class with an interesting and motivating task.

4.2. Responses from the interviews

In order to confirm the results obtained from the questionnaire, the researcher interviewed five teachers of English who have been teaching English at Ka Long primary school in Quang Ninh. The first interviewee was an experienced teacher who have been teaching English for 9 years. She said that the warming up activities play an important role in motivate pupils to participate in a speaking class. Those activities include games of many types that help pupils laugh and learn better. She even described some games such as “Pick a Pet” or “Rubber-Band Rodeo” that are suitable for children from age 6 to 11. She also added that children by nature are playful, so there should be games for them to play and learn at the same time. They are different from adult learners who have lots of ideas to talk.

The second interviewee was a newly graduated teacher with full of enthusiastic. She strongly believed that warming up activities help pupils to learn because these activities connect what they already know with what they are going to learn in the lesson. However, the most challenge for her is to find appropriate activities because children at primary schools are energetic and easy to lose control while playing games. She mentioned some co-operative learning activities such as English club or project-based learning approach will help students use English more in a speaking class.

The third teacher in the interview said that warming up activities really help pupils to strengthen friendship and team-work. They learn a lot more other skills while doing activities together such as problem-solving or negotiation. She added that

by doing warming up activities, she can find her pupils' strengths and weaknesses so that she can help them in adjusting behaviors.

The fourth interviewee won the first prize in the English language teaching contest for teacher at primary schools in Quang Ninh in 2017. She usually uses 5 to 10 minutes before the class for warming up activities. She argues that warming up activities help pupils activate their schemata which motivate them in their learning new lessons. Also, the appropriate warming up activities can help consolidate what pupils have learned in previous lessons.

The final interviewee had positive opinions towards warming up activities. She shares the same ideas with other teachers about the usefulness of those activities. She added that active games can function as stimulus for pupils to learn better in a speaking class. However, she noted that activities should be well selected because pupils at these ages are immature enough and teacher should be sure of well-controlled of those activities.

4.3. Pupils' perception of the warming up activities

The researcher used a Vietnamese version of questionnaire to investigate the pupils' perceptions towards warming up activities. Three classes of 85 grade 5 pupils participate in the survey (See the appendix C). The questionnaire consist of only 5 items on a five point Likert scale; from 1 which indicates strongly disagree to 5, strongly agree. The result is summarized in the table 3 below.

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	I like the way my teacher asks me questions about what I did when I was at home.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	12 14%	73 86%
2	I find it easier to talk about my own experience.	0 0%	0 0%	10 12%	50 59%	25 29%
3	I love talking with my classmates about people in my family.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	10 12%	75 88%

4	The 5 minutes preparation before class helps me bring back what I have learnt.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	5 6%	80 94%
5	I love playing games where I speak English with friends in my class.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	85 100%

Table 2: Pupils' perception towards warming up activities

Most of the pupils said that they liked the question about what they did at home before each class. 50 out of 85 pupils (59%) reported that they find it easy to talk about their own experience. All of the pupils said that they loved talking with their classmates about their families. The same numbers of the pupils reported that preparation time of 5 minutes help them to recall what they had learned before. All of them loved playing games for better learning in class.

4.4. Preferred warming up activities

In order to investigate the appropriate warming up activities among young learners, the researcher described some kinds of warming up activities such as games, ice-breaking activities to the pupils and explained the procedures for those activities. The researcher then grouped those activities into types such as team games, whole class activities, individual games. The level of preference is indicated by 5 scales; 1 means *do not like at all*, 2 means *do not like*, 3 means *not sure*, 4 means *like*, 5 means *like very much*. The results were summarized in the table 4 below.

No.	Types of warming up activities	1	2	3	4	5
1	Team games	0 0%	0 0%	5 6%	75 88%	5 6%
2	Whole class activities	0 0%	80 94%	0 0%	5 6%	0 0%
3	Individual games	0 0%	5 5.8 %	3 3.5 %	30 35%	47 55.2 %

Table 3: Preferred warming up activities

From the table we can see that the team games are the most favorable types of warming up activities, while the whole class activities received less response. Most of the pupils said that they did not like those activities. The majority of the pupils (90%) said that they liked individual games.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

The learning and teaching of English in Vietnam have received considerable attention from early ages, especially the communicative aspects of language. The implementation of grammar-translation has long been dominated entirely teaching practice. These obstacles are originated from deficiency in real use of language at the level of oral performance. That is, the difficulty in oral production and lack of fluency.

Speaking skill is believed to be a difficult task since it requires special abilities to be mastered and generally success is shown through the speaking ability. That's why psychological basics are indeed demanded in learning speaking.

Due to this factor, some prime activities were proposed on behalf of reinforcing the speaking skills inside and outside the classroom for further competence. These activities were suggested for oral expression achievement and to approach knowledge with more energetic and motivated students who will certainly trust their own abilities and become positive.

When working with young students getting them to get involved into specific task during the lesson is quite difficult as their attention span is short and they tend to lose the interest. Besides, most of them are predisposed because of the frustration that English learning may cause. The implementation of warming up activities can make students feel comfortable during the lesson, and encourage them to become a part of the activities as the warming up reduces the stress that students face when there are facing listening tasks. In addition, warming up activities prompts the creation of good learning environment by interacting and having fun in each activity making students and teacher work together and building an appropriate rapport which leads to an improvement of the language learning process.

The current work was motivated by our personal desire to learn about how to enhance English speaking skills to youngsters through warming up activities. Thus, the main objective of this investigation was to exhibit adequate understanding of the importance of using warming up activities as a tool to improve English speaking skills of young English learners. In addition, the study concerns also the existing relationship between the speaking skill and warming up activities in a speaking class. The study employs questionnaires as tools to investigate teachers' perceptions as well as students' perceptions of the activities. Besides, some preferred warming up activities have been revealed by young learners of English at primary schools.

The study was carried out at one primary school in Quang Ninh, the results obtained through the study may not cover everything related to the usefulness of warming up activities. However, from the researcher can come to the following conclusions:

- Most of the teachers of English at primary schools believed that warming up activities help their students, pupils in this case, connect what they have learned in the previous lessons to the new language input.
- Warming up activities enhance the team working strategies among young children. Also, these activities activate learners' schemata.
- Most of the teachers in the study agreed that warming ups activities make their pupils speak better in a speaking class.
- Most of the pupils like games, especially team games as warming up activities.

Some important aspects to be considered for the warm up development are the classroom conditions and the clarity of the activity rules, particularly if they are games or competitions to avoid confusion among students. That means we have to explain the procedure carefully before starting, to have all the materials ready, to encourage students to participate and to motivate them by means of examples or guides.

It is also important to remark that no matter how simple warm up activities can be, they should be well-prepared. In addition, we need to examine the connection for the later activities so that we, as teachers, can take advantage of them to develop our lessons. For example, to prepare the warm up related to the use of a Bingo in the

topic Daily activities and their frequency, the teacher only had to think about the sentences the students must include in the bingo and the right order to develop the activity. Consequently, it did not demand a lot of time to prepare or complicated materials to be implemented.

We can promote students' involvement at the very beginning of the class by applying warm ups. And for warm ups to be effective they should be short, related to the topic, useful to continue later activities, interesting, and enjoyable. In doing so, we can prepare students to concentrate and to help them begin to think

The role of warming up is not only to create a good environment and reduce pressure or anxiety because the warming up activities can be useful to different stages of a lesson. For example, teacher can introduce a topic through a warm up activity, students can put in practice their language skills through a warm up activity and the teacher can evaluate to the students skills developing a warming up activities, those possibilities were implemented this project getting excellent responses. These results make a huge contribution to the language teachers since now they have an effective strategy to implement in their language classes. Besides, these results redefined the term warm up activity and expand its role in this field.

Some important aspects to be considered for the warm up development are the classroom conditions and the clarity of the activity rules, particularly if they are games or competitions to avoid confusion among students. That means we have to explain the procedure carefully before starting, to have all the materials ready, to encourage students to participate and to motivate them by means of examples or guides. It is also important to remark that no matter how simple warm up activities can be, they should be well prepared. In addition, teachers need to examine the connection for the later activities so that they, as teachers, can take advantage of them to develop their lessons.

Although warm up activity has lot of benefits, many teachers neglect it to use. Instead of directly starting the class with the main activity, teacher can use warm up activity to make the class interesting. The students do not give attention in class when they find it boring. Warm up activity can bring variety in class and hold the students' attention.

Teachers in observed classes reviewed previous class lesson, chatted with the

students in informal tone, elicited information through questioning etc. as warm up activity. There are different things like jokes, games, puzzles, songs and video clips which can be used as warm up activity. Though the observed classes were technologically rich, teacher did not use them. Teachers can use jokes, games, puzzles, songs or video clips to bring a change in classroom environment.

Students can get a chance to communicate and share their ideas with each other in warm up session on those classes where teachers provide them individual work and students do not have any option to interact with each other.

It is necessary to tell the students why they are doing certain tasks. A warm up session can be a good time to discuss the lesson objective so that students get a valid reason to perform any activity.

Due to its own particular features, this study has certain limitations:

Due to the limited time frame, the findings from this study might not very well generalized the effectiveness of warming up activities for young learners at primary schools. In order to make that clearer, it is suggested that the study can be done in a larger scale with many more students and teachers as samples so the results will be more reliable and better generalization.

The more efficient benefits of warming up activities can be applicable for other language skills rather than speaking. We strongly believe that, studies of warning up activities can be useful for listening and reading activities for not only young learners but also adult learners. That would be suggestions for further studies.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

(English version)

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Not sure
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	Warm up is a short activity that is not the main part of a lesson.					
2	A warm up is related to the lesson topic and other activities of a lesson.					
3	It helps students to begin to think in English, review previous-class lesson and become interested in class.					
4	For the students' betterment teachers should start teaching from the point students have knowledge and relate them with the new information.					
5	Learners comprehend things better that they can relate to the things they already known.					
6	Warm up activities help the students build a connection between old and new information.					
7	Warm up activities help students know the lesson objective.					
8	Learners give higher effort to do a task if they find it related to their learning needs.					

9	Students need to know the lesson aims and objectives at the beginning so that they get a clear goal to perform a task.					
10	Warm up activities create a positive learning environment for the students to participate in the class comfortably.					
11	Warm up activities build rapport and mutual trust among students and teachers.					
12	Warm up activities help learners know each other and establish peer trust.					
13	Warm up activities promote motivation among students.					
14	Warm up activity helps students to start a class with an interesting and motivating task.					
15	Warm up activities arouse students' interest so that they get motivated to learn.					
16	Learners' attention is necessary from the beginning for effective language learning.					
17	Warm up activities help students concentrate in the class lesson.					
18	Warm up activity fails to serve students if it is too difficult as compared to their level of competence.					
19	Warm up activity can be a threat for introvert students when they get nervous to perform exercises alone in front of the whole class.					
20	Teacher should provide warm up activity that is students' $i+1$ level (i represents the students'					

existing knowledge and 1 is just one advance step from the students' current level of competence).					
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Appendix B: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

(Vietnamese version)

1. Hoàn toàn không đồng ý
2. Không đồng ý
3. Không rõ
4. Đồng ý
5. Hoàn toàn đồng ý

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	Hoạt động khởi động là hoạt động nhỏ chứ không phải hoạt động chính của bài học.					
2	Một hoạt động khởi động có liên quan đến chủ đề và các hoạt động khác trong một bài học.					
3	Nó giúp cho học sinh suy nghĩ bằng tiếng Anh, nhớ lại những kiến thức đã học và tham gia tích cực hơn trong giờ học.					
4	Với những học sinh yếu hơn giáo viên cần bắt đầu bài học bằng việc hệ thống lại kiến thức đã học và giới thiệu kiến thức mới.					
5	Học sinh học tốt hơn có thể liên hệ những kiến thức mới và những kiến thức đã học.					
6	Hoạt động khởi động giúp cho học sinh xây dựng mối liên hệ giữa kiến thức cũ và kiến thức mới.					
7	Hoạt động khởi động giúp học sinh biết được mục tiêu của bài học.					

8	Học sinh thường cố gắng làm các bài tập mà theo nhu cầu của họ.					
9	Học sinh cần nắm được mục tiêu của mỗi bài học từ đầu để có kế hoạch học tập cụ thể.					
10	Hoạt động khởi động tạo ra một môi trường học tập lành mạnh cho học sinh tham gia.					
11	Thông qua hoạt động khởi động giáo viên và học sinh cùng xây dựng mối quan hệ và hỗ trợ lẫn nhau.					
12	Hoạt động khởi động giúp cho học sinh hiểu nhau hơn và tin cậy lẫn nhau hơn.					
13	Hoạt động khởi động thúc đẩy động cơ học tập của học sinh.					
14	Hoạt động khởi động giúp cho học sinh bắt đầu giờ học một cách vui vẻ và tích cực.					
15	Hoạt động khởi động đánh thức sự say mê của học sinh để họ tham gia tích cực vào bài học.					
16	Sự tập trung của học sinh là rất cần thiết cho một bài học ngôn ngữ.					
17	Hoạt động khởi động giúp học sinh tập trung hơn vào các hoạt động trong giờ học.					
18	Hoạt động khởi động sẽ thất bại nếu học sinh cảm thấy khó hơn so với khả năng của họ.					
19	Hoạt động khởi động có thể sẽ làm người học chán nản khi họ sợ việc phải thể hiện các bài tập/ hoạt động một mình trước cả lớp.					
20	Giáo viên nên thiết kế hoạt động khởi động vui vẻ phù hợp với năng lực của học sinh hoặc cao					

hơn 1 bậc (những kiến thức học sinh đã được học và 1 phần kiến thức mở rộng)					
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Appendix C: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR STUDENTS

(English version)

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Not sure
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	I like the way my teacher asks me questions about what I did when I was at home.					
2	I find it easier to talk about my own experience.					
3	I love talking with my classmates about people in my family.					
4	The 5 minutes preparation before class helps me bring back what I have learnt.					
5	I love playing games where I speak English with friends in my class.					

Appendix D: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR STUDENTS

(Vietnamese version)

1. Hoàn toàn không đồng ý
2. Không đồng ý
3. Không rõ
4. Đồng ý
5. Hoàn toàn đồng ý

TT	Nhận định	1	2	3	4	5
1	Em thích cách giáo viên hỏi các câu hỏi như em đã làm gì khi em ở nhà.					
2	Em thấy việc nói về những kinh nghiệm cá nhân rất dễ.					
3	Em thích nói chuyện với các bạn cùng lớp về những thành viên trong gia đình em.					
4	5 phút đầu giờ giúp em nhớ lại những gì em đã được học từ buổi học trước.					
5	Em thích chơi các trò chơi và nói tiếng Anh với các bạn cùng lớp.					

Appendix E: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR STUDENTS

(English version)

1. Do not like at all
2. Do not like
3. Not sure
4. Like
5. Like very much

No.	Types of warming up activities	1	2	3	4	5
1	Team games					
2	Whole class activities					
3	Individual games					

Appendix F: QUESTIONNAIRES FOR STUDENTS

(Vietnamese version)

1. Hoàn toàn không thích
2. Không thích
3. Không rõ
4. Thích
5. Rất thích

TT	Loại hình hoạt động nhóm	1	2	3	4	5
1	Trò chơi theo nhóm					
2	Trò chơi cả lớp					
3	Trò chơi cá nhân					