

can apply AI to support them in creating creative and personalized warm-up activities in a reading lesson .

## 5.2. Conclusion

Teaching a language in an interesting and effective way is a big concern for most teachers and language learners. Therefore, the aims of the study are investigating into the situation of using warming up activities in a reading lesson in a high school and then point out some suggestions to improve them.

Warming up activities are activities used before starting a lesson to create students' learning motivation from the start. They are really of great importance. They get students thinking and focusing on what they are going to study. Besides, they provide the teacher with important opportunities to assess character and ability of the students. In addition, the more plentiful and diverse the warming up activities are, the more the students get involved into the lesson. Depending on each type of the lesson, the teacher can use different warming up activities such as bingo, hangman, brainstorming, and so on.

After analyzing the data collected, the researcher discovered some problems that teachers met when using warming up activities. The findings of the study have helped to make several practical recommendations for improving warming up activities in a skills lesson in general

and a reading lesson in particular at Dong Hoa High School. Therefore, the study as a whole can be considered to be significant not only to the teachers and students at Dong Hoa High School but also to those who share the same difficulties. To conclude, it is much hopeful that the study will be of interest to those who are interested in using and improving warming up activities in reading lessons.

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Moreover, students usually enjoy new activities more than old activities which are used too many times. So, the teacher should use different warming up activities in a reading lesson and use them alternatively in order not to create students' boredom.

- **Warming up activities must be interesting.**

Normally, warming up activities occupy very short amount of time. Moreover, a good warming up activity requires the careful preparation. To do this, it takes rather much time and effort, even money. So, many teachers mind using warming up activities and if they use, they only use some simple activities. These activities are often rather boring. Therefore, they can not create students' learning interest in the lesson after that. Warming up activities must be interesting in order that they can create the learning atmosphere from the start for students.

- **Warming up activities must be appropriate**

Warming up activities in a reading lesson should be used to revise words and phrases that students have learned before. At the same time, warming up activities must relate to the lesson at a certain degree. Because the main purpose of using warming up activities is create students' learning interest in the lesson from the start, the teachers should look carefully into the lesson to

find a warming up activity which is appropriate with their lesson.

Warming up activities should be suitable with students' learning ability. A warming up activity which is too easy or too difficult to understand and join can make students bored. Then, it can lessen the effectiveness of warming up activities.

- **Warming up activities must be challenging**

Warming up activities are usually fun for students. If they are games, students maybe try their best to be the winner, which helps motivate their study. In addition, they should be challenging for students because the challenge can make students explore the answers positively and actively. The challenge of warming up activities in a reading lesson can make learning atmosphere more exciting and interesting.

- **Warming up activities must be combined with modern technology**

Modern technology plays an important part in education. The teacher can make use of videos or show the activity on the Zoom platform. The activity helps students recall the vocabulary and grammar they have learned and use for the upcoming reading. Besides, the teacher can use websites and apps to find ideas and resources for warm-up activities. At the same time, the teacher

In terms of the interest of the warming up activities, we can see from the table above that the number of students who were very interested in warming up activities is not very high (47%). The number of students who thought that the activities were interesting enough and a little interesting is nearly the same. The data also show that a very small number of students were not interested in the warming up activities. This indicates that the teacher should make the warming up activities more interesting to the students to engage them into the tasks.

With regard to the challenge of warming up activities, more than 50% of the students found the activities very challenging while the number of the students thought that warming up activities were not very challenging is still high (21%). The data show that more attention should be paid to the level of challenge of the warming up activities because the challenge can make the learners become more excited and interested in the tasks.

## **5. RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION**

### **5.1. Recommendation**

Recommendations have been made basing on the results of the study discussed above. Some problems that teachers at Dong Hoa High School meet when using warming up activities in a reading lesson were found out by the

researcher during the process of analyzing data. Followings are some recommendations to those problems.

- **Warming up activities must be used frequently.**

A reading lesson is usually boring. The more frequently the teacher uses warming up activities, the more interest the teacher creates for the students. If the students are interested in the lesson, they will get better results for their study. Therefore, it is very necessary for teachers to use warming up activities frequently.

Besides, warming up activities, especially in the pre stage of a reading lesson can help engage the students in the tasks and activities and they will concentrate more on them. That's why, the activities will create students' learning motivation for a long time. Even weak students or those who do not like learning English will change their attitude towards learning.

- **Warming up activities must be plentiful and diverse.**

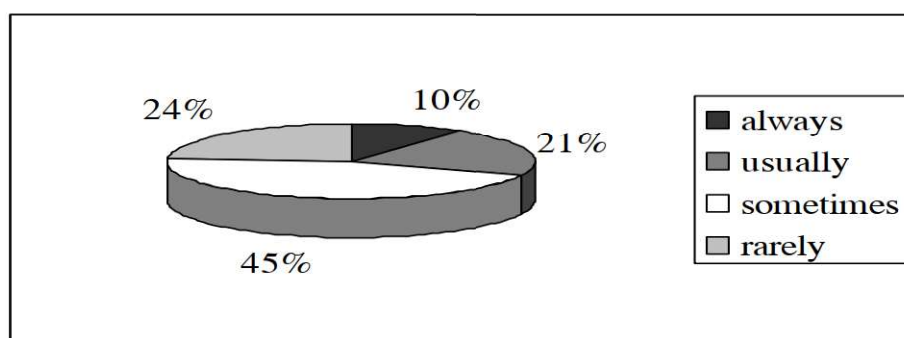
All of us know that using warming up activities can make students become more interested in the lesson. However, only using some warming up activities for almost lesson or using one warming up activity again and again continuously can easily make students become bored. Therefore, it lessens the effectiveness of warming up activities used.

Half of the students said that the teachers guided them quite carefully (50%). 20% thought that their teachers guided them very carefully. However, the number of students who said the teachers did guide them very carefully and not carefully at all was nearly the same (20% and 25%). It seems that the teachers didn't have difficulties guiding students with warming up activities in a reading lesson. As we know, because warming up

activities only occupy a very short time, most of them are familiar to the students and can be understood easily. So, teachers do not need to explain too much, students still can understand.

Students' learning motivation can be decreased if warming up activities are used again and again continuously. The following chart shows the frequency of teachers use of different warming up activities.

Chart 3: The diversity of warming up activities used in a reading lesson



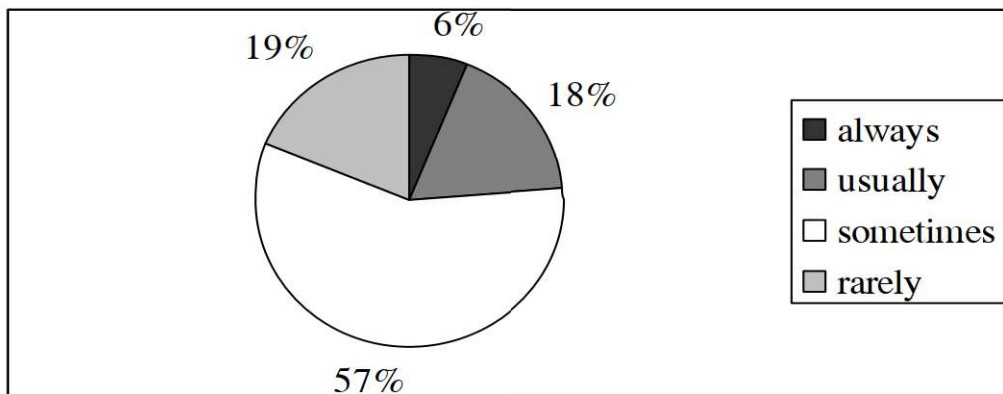
It can be seen from the chart, most students said that their teachers did not use different warming up activities frequently. 45% of the students said the teachers sometimes changed the activities and 24% said they rarely used different warming up activities. Only

one third of students considered two first answers (10% with "always" and 21% with "usually"). These proved that teachers have prepared and given different warming up activities but the frequent level of use has not been so high. This needs considering.

Table 1: The interest and challenge of warming up activities in a reading lesson

Questions	very interesting/ challenging	interesting/ challenging enough	a little interesting/ challenging	not interesting/ challenging
4	47%	27%	24%	2%
5	45%	22%	12%	21%

Chart 1: The frequent level of teachers' using warming up activities in a reading lesson

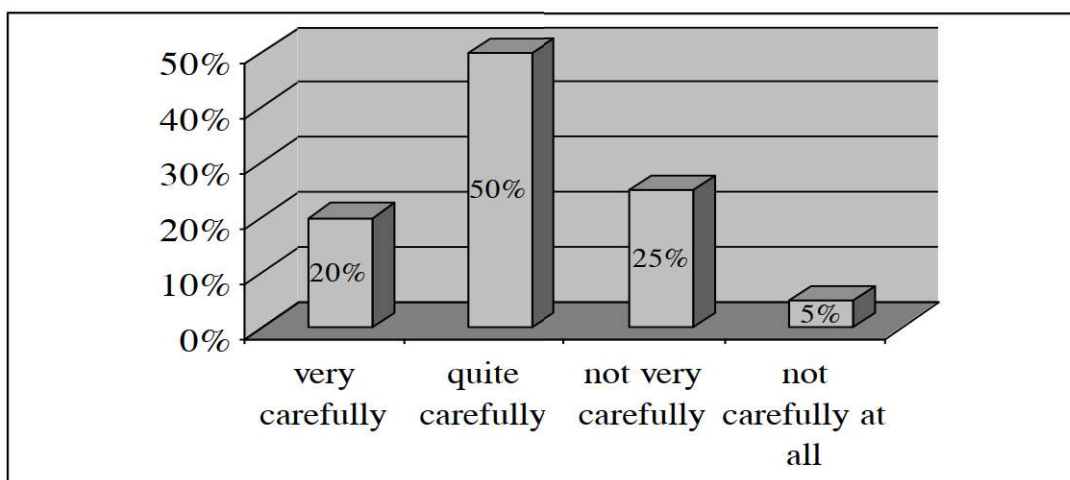


As can be seen from chart 1, most of the students considered that their teachers did not use warming up activities frequently. More than half of students said the teachers sometimes used warming up activities (57%). 19% of the students said the teachers rarely used them and only 6% confirmed that their teachers always used warming up activities. From the results, we see that although most of the teachers know the role of warming up activities, they still

mind using warming up activities often because these activities occupy a little time. Moreover, to make a warming up activity effective, it takes rather much time and teachers need more time to prepare.

As mentioned above, teachers did not use warming up activities frequently but when using them, their careful level of guiding students was rather high. Chart 2 presents information from question 2.

Chart 2: The careful guiding level of teachers when using warming up activities in a reading lesson



- *Incomplete definition*

The teacher asks the students to play in teams. A member of one team defines something and asks somebody in the other team to guess what it is. If the team can give the correct answer, they get one point for each correct answer. The team with more correct points will be the winner.

Examples: A piece of furniture in which we keep clothes (a wardrobe)

A way of telling us to stop or go ahead in the street (traffic lights)

A place where a farmer keeps his cows (a cattle shed)

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Description of the subjects**

In order to collect data, the researcher has done a survey with the participation of the students from four classes: 10C2, 10C3, 10C4 and 10C5 at Dong Hoa High School. Generally, the students are at the age of 16 and quite good at English in comparison with the average level of the 10<sup>th</sup> form students at the school. All of them have been leaning English for 5 years and they belong to social science and natural science classes. It implies that they have a particular level of English knowledge.

#### **3.2. Description of data collection instruments**

Questionnaire is the main data collection instrument used to get the information about the current situation of using warming up activities in a reading lesson. The questionnaire consists of 6 questions as follows.

Question 1 gathered information about the frequent level of teachers' use of warming up activities in a reading lesson.

Question 2 sought information about the guiding level of teachers when using warming up activities in a reading lesson.

Question 3 collected information about the diversity of warming up activities used in a reading lesson.

Question 4 sought information about how interesting the warming up activities were in a reading lesson .

Question 5 gathered information about how challenging the warming up activities were in reading lessons.

### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The data collected and analyzed are shown in the following charts.

The frequent use of warming up activities in a reading lesson can reflect how well the teacher prepares for the lesson.

relates to the topic in each group. The group who finds out the word first wins.

Eg: horn, graze, milk, hay \_\_\_\_\_  
horn, graze, milk, hay \_\_\_\_\_ cow

- *Picture Talk*

The teacher asks the students to work in two groups. They stick pictures of some things on the board and the teacher asks students to name them and find out what the pictures talk by collecting the first letters of each name from the picture. The group that can find out the word first (the word relates to the topic of the new lesson) will be the winner.

- *Kim's game*

The teacher asks the students to work in two groups. The teacher shows some things in front of class in 30 seconds and then puts them away. The teacher then asks the students to write down the names of the things they have seen. The group that can write down the names of the things the most quickly will win the game. The teacher shows the things again to check students' answers.

### ***2.3.2. Warming up activities to revise learned vocabulary relating to the lesson***

- *Bingo*

The teacher asks the students to write the words they have learned in the

previous lesson in their notebooks. The teacher reads out some words loudly for the students to hear and put a tick next to the word they hear. The student who has the same words as the ones the teacher has read first will say loudly "Bingo" and becomes the winner.

- *Brainstorming*

The teacher divides the class into two groups. He/she asks the two teams to write things related to the topic they have learned. In about 3 minutes, the group which writes more correct words will win.

### ***2.3.3. Warming up activities to create joyful atmosphere before starting the new lessons***

- *Riddles and definitions*

The teacher asks the students some riddles and the students try to give answers to the questions. This kind of game creates relaxing feeling for the students to engage in the new lesson more effectively.

Eg: What is the end of everything?  
(The letter G)

What has legs but cannot walk?  
(A table)

What has teeth but cannot bite?  
(A comb)

games used because they are fun and interesting. Warming up activities can be used to review the language the students have learned in the previous lessons.

### **2.3. Common warming up activities in a reading lesson.**

A reading lesson is usually boring. It is not as interesting as a speaking lesson. Therefore, the teachers can use warming up activities to make students interested in the topic of the lesson. Warming up activities are diverse and they can be used in any kinds of language lessons. Basing on the purpose and requirement of the lesson, the teachers can choose an appropriate and useful warming up activity (Nguyen Quoc Hung, 2004).

Moreover, a reading text normally requires students to answer a set of comprehensive questions (Le Van Su, 2005), so the teachers can use warming up activities for them to brainstorm for new words and phrases related to the topic that they are going to study. This will help them get better results in the end.

The followings are the common warming up activities that teachers often use in class.

#### ***2.3.1. Warming up activities to introduce the topic of the new lesson***

- *Hang man*

This is the game in which the students have to guess a secret word. The teacher tells the students the rules and gives them some clues and the number of letters of the word that they are going to guess and divides the class into two teams to play the game. The two groups take turns to suggest a letter . If the letter appears in the word, the teacher writes it in the correct position on the board. If the chosen letter is not in the word, the teacher starts to build a gallow for that team. One line is added for each wrong choice. Each team has its own gallow. Each team can also make a guess at the word but only when it is that team's turn. A wrong guess means one more line on the gallows. A correct guess finishes the game. If a team wins by completing on guessing a word correctly, member of the team takes over as the hangman. The teacher gives the right word and declares the winner.

- *Word Association*

The teacher divides the class into groups and gives each group handouts with the groups of words. Each word in the groups of words is connected with the same thing. The teacher asks students to write down the missing word which

Fowler (2009) states that warm-up is a preparation stage including a game performance or task. They are designed to get students' attention to think about what they are going to study so that they will be ready to focus on the activities that follow.

According to Robertson and Acklam (2000), warm-up activities are short activities for the beginning of lesson which help the students to review previously introduced lessons and become engaged in the lesson. In addition, LeBlanc (2011) affirms that warming up is an activity aiming at attracting the students' attention in the class and avoid something external that distract them. In other words, warming up is an activity that motivates students to feel relaxed and get engaged in learning.

In short, warming up activities are activities or games which the teachers often use at the beginning of each lesson to motivate students and make the lessons more interesting, therefore, the students can contribute to a more effective lesson and get better results in teaching and learning process.

## **2.2. The importance of warming up activities**

It is clear that warming up activities in teaching and learning

English is really important. Akther (2014) indicates that warming up activities at the beginning of the lesson is of great importance to introduce new topics because often games and similar tasks can motivate the students' learning and make them engaged in the lesson as well. Besides, warming up activities are also of great help to teachers because they can help the teacher to manage the class successfully. In addition, warm-ups can increase group rapport and promote socialization as well.

According to Peterson (2010), a short warm up activity at the start of a lesson will help students to pay attention to the topic they are going to learn. At the same time, it helps stimulate their creativity so that they will focus on the lesson more easily. After a warming up activity, the students usually become more attentive and engaged in the lesson and they will participate fully in the next tasks. Deacon (2002) also indicates that a simple, short warming up activity at the start of the lesson will create a positive and relaxing atmosphere which will motivate the learners to pay more attention in the class.

LeBlanc (2011) emphasizes that warming up activities also make the students more interested in the tasks, even weaker students can be encouraged by the

sinh. Do đó, nghiên cứu về việc sử dụng các hoạt động khởi động trong giờ học đọc tại Trường THPT Đồng Hòa đã được tiến hành. Khảo sát bằng bảng câu hỏi được sử dụng để thu thập dữ liệu vì đây là phương pháp thu thập dữ liệu khách quan đáng tin cậy và hiệu quả. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy tần suất sử dụng các hoạt động khởi động chưa cao và tính đa dạng của các hoạt động cần được cải thiện. Ngoài ra, mức độ gây hứng thú và thử thách cần được xem xét. Các phát hiện của nghiên cứu sẽ nâng cao nhận thức của giáo viên về việc cải thiện việc sử dụng các hoạt động khởi động trong giờ học đọc hiệu quả tại trường phổ thông.

**Từ khóa:** Hoạt động khởi động, bài học đọc hiểu, dạy và học ngoại ngữ.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, learning English is a need helping students approach the source of knowledge in the world. To make the learning environment interesting is really important in language teaching and learning at high schools. In the process of teaching and learning a foreign language, although warming up activities occupy a very short period of time compared with the whole lesson, it is extremely important to increase students' motivation because of the following reasons:

According to Nguyen Quoc Hung (2004), warming up activities are the first work of the teacher when going to class, start a period of activities to aim at a lot of common teaching purposes such as settling the class, preparing about psychology and knowledge for the new lesson, enlarging available

knowledge for students, being related and necessary for the new lesson, helping students to link knowledge learned with the new lesson, creating learning interest into the new lesson for students.

The study aims at studying the current situation in using warming up activities in a reading lesson at Dong Hoa High School in order to discover the problems in using these activities . From then, the researcher can give some suggestions to help teachers improve the effectiveness of warming up activities in a reading lesson. The study focuses on answering the question: what problems may arise when warming up activities are used in a reading lesson at Dong Hoa High School?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Definition of warming up activities

## WARMING UP ACTIVITIES IN A READING LESSON AT A HIGH SCHOOL

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**Abstract:** Warming up activities at the start of a reading lesson are often used with a view to motivating students to learn the lesson in a more interesting and effective way. They get students thinking about what they are going to study and draw their attention to the topic. However, teachers at school are using the activities with different approaches which sometimes may not meet the students' expectations. Therefore, a study on the use of warming up activities in a reading lesson at Dong Hoa High School was conducted. The questionnaire survey was used to collect the data because this is the method of objective test which is trustworthy and effective. The results of the study show that the frequency of using warming up activities was not high and the diversity of activities need improve. Also, the level of interest and challenge needs to be taken into consideration. The research findings will raise teachers' awareness of improving the use of warming up activities in a reading lesson effectively at their high school.

**Key words:** Warming up activities, reading lesson, language teaching and learning.

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### HOẠT ĐỘNG KHỞI ĐỘNG TRONG BÀI HỌC ĐỌC Ở TRƯỜNG TRUNG HỌC

**Tóm tắt:** Hoạt động khởi động vào đầu giờ học đọc thường được sử dụng với mục đích thúc đẩy học sinh học bài theo cách thú vị và hiệu quả hơn. Chúng khiến học sinh suy nghĩ về những gì mình sẽ học và thu hút sự chú ý của học sinh vào chủ đề. Tuy nhiên, giáo viên tại các trường phổ thông đang sử dụng các hoạt động này với những cách tiếp cận khác nhau, đôi khi có thể không đáp ứng được kỳ vọng của học