

ABSTRACT

As the need for intercultural language learning is increasing, the study is carried out aiming to find out the verbal exchanges used in Vietnamese and American family meals. It also compares and contrasts verbal table manners in the two cultures in order to clarify similarities and differences in the way the Vietnamese

and the American verbally behave in family meals. The results are expected to hopefully contribute to raising cultural awareness, thus avoiding communication breakdown in communication and interaction with people from another culture, either Vietnamese or American one. Recommendations and suggestions from the study are hopefully expected to bring new ideas for further researching.

The paper is aimed to investigate the Vietnamese and American table manners in family meals. It should be clear that the study is limited within the verbal communication. Its central focus is on which conversation topics are mentioned and which manners are applied before and after the meal. The data analysed is taken from two questionnaires for 30 Vietnamese and 30 American informants aged 18 to 25.

Despite the geographical and cultural differences, the Vietnamese and American share some major similarities in family meal conversations as well as verbal table manners. However, there are still some remarkable differences. The detailed discussion is presented more clearly in the main text of the study.