

ABSTRACT

To successfully break the ice to make friends with an American person or a Vietnamese person, people should understand the similarities and differences between two cultures in icebreaking; thus this thesis is carried out to reach that goal.

In this thesis, quantitative method is applied. Firstly, data is collected through observation of documents and questionnaire with open-ended and close-ended questions. Survey respondents include two groups of 30 American students and 30 Vietnamese students, which are chosen randomly provided that the numbers of male and female students are equal in each group. The collected data will be processed as follow. For close-ended questions, after using statistical analysis, the researcher will compare the calculated figures then come out the findings but for open-ended questions, the answers which are phrases will be analyzed in terms of their type of English (formal or informal) and then also be examined statistically as well to supplement the conclusions.

From those stages, the thesis contributes to the subject with findings on uniformity and distinction between icebreaking in American and Vietnamese cultures. Regarding the similarities, students from both nations enjoying making new friends but not many of them are willing to break the ice; however, for the most part, they welcome others to initiate a conversation with them. In addition, icebreaking in both cultures is affected by personality trait of the participants. Extrovert people tend to be more active in breaking the ice. Turning to the differences, American people usually use informal language and ask for name in icebreaking, which show values of informality and individualism respectively; meanwhile, Vietnamese students prefer more formal language and ask to know more about others, which demonstrate their traditional value of community.