

**BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG**



ISO 9001:2015

KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP

NGÀNH: TIẾNG ANH

Sinh viên : Hoàng Gia Duy

Giảng viên hướng dẫn : ThS. Trần Thị Ngọc Liên

HẢI PHÒNG - 2020

BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG

**FACTORS AFFECTING SPEAKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH OF
CHILDREN**

KHÓA LUẬN TỐT NGHIỆP ĐẠI HỌC HỆ CHÍNH QUY

NGÀNH: TIẾNG ANH

Sinh viên : Hoàng Gia Duy

Giảng viên hướng dẫn : ThS. Trần Thị Ngọc Liên

HẢI PHÒNG - 2020

BỘ GIÁO DỤC VÀ ĐÀO TẠO
TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC DÂN LẬP HẢI PHÒNG

NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

Sinh viên: Hoàng Gia Duy

Mã SV: 1512751018

Lớp: NA1901A

Ngành: Tiếng Anh

Tên đề tài: Comparision between Vietnamese and American wedding customs

NHIỆM VỤ ĐỀ TÀI

1. Nội dung và các yêu cầu cần giải quyết trong nhiệm vụ đề tài tốt nghiệp (về lý luận, thực tiễn, các số liệu cần tính toán và các bản vẽ).

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2. Các số liệu cần thiết để thiết kế, tính toán.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

3. Địa điểm thực tập tốt nghiệp.

.....

.....

.....

CÁN BỘ HƯỚNG DẪN ĐỀ TÀI TỐT NGHIỆP

Người hướng dẫn thứ nhất:

Họ và tên:.....

Học hàm, học vị:.....

Cơ quan công tác:.....

Nội dung hướng dẫn:.....

Người hướng dẫn thứ hai:

Họ và tên:.....

Học hàm, học vị:.....

Cơ quan công tác:.....

Nội dung hướng dẫn:.....

Đề tài tốt nghiệp được giao ngày ... tháng năm

Yêu cầu phải hoàn thành xong trước ngày tháng năm

Đã nhận nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Sinh viên

Đã giao nhiệm vụ ĐTTN

Người hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày tháng.....năm 20..

Hiệu trưởng

GS.TS.NGƯT *Trần Hữu Nghị*

CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM
Độc lập - Tự do - Hạnh phúc

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIÁNG VIÊN HƯỚNG DẪN TỐT NGHIỆP

Họ và tên giảng viên:

Đơn vị công tác:

Họ và tên sinh viên: Chuyên ngành:

Nội dung hướng dẫn:

Tình thần thái độ của sinh viên trong quá trình làm đề tài tốt nghiệp

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

1. Đánh giá chất lượng của đề án/khóa luận (so với nội dung yêu cầu đã đề ra trong nhiệm vụ Đ.T. T.N trên các mặt lý luận, thực tiễn, tính toán số liệu...)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Ý kiến của giảng viên hướng dẫn tốt nghiệp

Được bảo vệ Không được bảo vệ Điểm hướng dẫn

Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm

Giảng viên hướng dẫn

(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM
Độc lập - Tự do - Hạnh phúc

PHIẾU NHẬN XÉT CỦA GIÁO VIÊN CHĂM PHẢN BIỆN

Họ và tên giảng viên:

Đơn vị công tác:

Họ và tên sinh viên: Chuyên ngành:

Đề tài tốt nghiệp:

.....
.....

1. Phần nhận xét của giáo viên chăm phản biện

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2. Những mặt còn hạn chế

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Ý kiến của giảng viênchăm phản biện

Được bảo vệ Không được bảo vệ Điểm phản biện

Hải Phòng, ngày ... tháng ... năm

Giảng viênchăm phản biện

(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

TABLE OF CONTENT

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	2
1.1. Rationale for the study	2
1.2. Aim and objectives of the study.....	3
1.3. Research questions	3
1.4. Scope of study	4
1.5. Significance of the study.....	4
1.6. Design of the study.....	4
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	5
2.1. Custom.....	5
2.1.1. Definition	5
2.1.2. Importance of culture in daily life.....	5
2.2. Typical Vietnamese customs.....	5
2.3. Typical American customs.....	6
2.5. Overview of wedding customs.....	11
2.6. Common wedding customs associated with various religions and cultures	13
2.7. Concluding remarks	15
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	16
3.1. Data collection and analysis.....	16
3.1.1. Preparing data.....	16
3.1.2. Setting criteria for data collection.....	16
3.1.3. Analyzing and interpreting data.....	16
3.2. Research methods.....	17
3.3. Concluding remarks	17
CHAPTER 4: FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS	18
4.1. Similarities between English and Vietnamese wedding customs	18
4.1.1. In terms of pre-wedding ceremonies.....	18
4.1.2. In terms of wedding ceremonies	18
4.1.3. In term of post – wedding ceremonies	19
4.2. Differences on American and Vietnamese wedding customs.	19

4.2.1. In terms of pre-wedding ceremonies.....	19
4.2.1.1. In Vietnam.....	19
4.2.2. In terms of wedding ceremonies	35
4.2.2.1. In Vietnam.....	35
4.2.3. In terms of post - wedding ceremonies	40
4.3. Concluding remarks	43
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION.....	44
5.1. Recapitulaion.....	44
5.2. Implications for further research.....	44
5.2.1. Implications for American-Vietnamese cross-cultural communication and understading.	44
5.2.2. Implications for language teaching and culture teaching.	47
5.3. Recommendations	49
REFERENCES	51

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A completed thesis would not be done without any assistance. Therefore, the author who conducted this research gratefully gives the acknowledgement to their support and motivation during the time of doing this research.

First of all, I would like to express my endless thanks and gratefulness to my supervisor, Mrs. Tran Thi Ngoc Lien, PhD. Her kindly support and continuous advice went through the process of completion of my thesis. Her encouragement and comments had significantly enriched and improved my work. Without her motivation and instructions, the thesis would have been impossible to be done effectively.

My special thanks approve to my parents for their endless love, care and and motivations for the whole of my life. I also would like to explain my thanks to my siblings, brothers, sisters for their support and care all the time.

As last, my deep thanks come to all the teachers of Foreign Language Department who gave me a chance to carry out this thesis.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Rationale for the study

America and Vietnam are two distinctive countries with many differences. The two countries are on different continents, and there is a wide range of differences between them. The culture, beliefs and practices of the people are also different. However, as the world becomes more global, and as people become more exposed to different cultures, the differences between them seem to be narrower. This is due to the willingness of people to adopt different cultures, while at the same time maintain some of the elements of their own culture. There are several similarities and differences between Vietnamese and American culture, especially in wedding ceremonies. “Wedding customs” is an interesting topic, which attracts much care of young people. Wedding is very important to one’s life, not only to the couple involved but also for both families. Therefore, it usually includes quite a few formal ritual observances. The process of wedding in Vietnam (an Asian country) and America (a Western country) is different from each other. This research will bring the readers common knowledge about wedding customs in those two mentioned countries.

In addition, students of Foreign Language Department have many core subjects related to culture such as: British culture, American Culture, Cross-Cultural Communication and so on. Many students including the author have difficulties in these subjects, so the author decided to conduct a culture-related research in order to fulfill author’s gap of knowledge in this field as well as to provide indiscriminate information for those who share the same concern. “Wedding custom” is one which most impresses the author due to its various cultural aspects and informative messages hidden in every single feature.

The above reasons are the motivation and driving force for the occurrence of this research.

1.2. Aim and objectives of the study

This study is aimed at comparing wedding customs in Vietnamese and American cultures. Therefore, the following objectives are set to fulfill the overall aim:

- Identify typical features and stages of wedding customs in Vietnamese culture
- Identify typical features and stages of wedding customs in American culture
- Figure out the similarities and differences between wedding customs in Vietnamese and American culture.

1.3. Research questions

To gain the objectives which are mentioned above, the following research questions were raised:

Question 1: What are typical features and stages of wedding customs in Vietnam?

Question 2: What are typical features and stages of wedding customs in America?

Questions 3: What are the similarities and differences between Vietnamese and American wedding customs?

1.4. Scope of study

Because of the limitation of time and ability, in this thesis I just study the wedding customs in Vietnamese and American culture starting from Feudalism age to nowadays. I will concentrate about wedding custom with three main stages: pre-wedding ceremonies, main wedding ceremonies and post wedding ceremonies.

1.5. Significance of the study

Understanding the wedding ceremony between the two countries of Vietnam and the US is very important. Through this it is possible to contribute more research materials on the wedding ceremony. At the same time the research finding ideas offer to help preserve and promote good cultural values at the wedding of both Vietnamese and Americans. From there, it can be applied in practice, contributing to building an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity.

1.6. Design of the study

This thesis consists of three main parts as follow:

Part 1: “Introduction” presents thereotical and practical background of the study, the aims, the research questions, scope, significance and the design of the study.

Part 2: “Development” consists of two chapters

- Chapter one provides some basic definitions and classification of “culture” and “marriage” in Vietnam and America.

- Chapter two analyzes typical features and stages of American and Vietnamses wedding customs. Based on that foundation, a comparison was conducted to find out the similarities and differences between wedding customs of those two countries.

Part 3: “Conclusion” summarizes all the main points presented throughout the study. It also presents the limitations of the study in which the author states the reasons for the study’s limitations, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Custom

2.1.1. Definition

Customs are all human activities formed in the course of history and settled in order, recognized by the community, passed down from generation to generation. Customs are not fixed and compulsory like rituals and ceremonies, but they are not as arbitrary as daily activities. It becomes a relatively sustainable and relatively unified social practice. Customs can be in a people, locality, social class or even a family, clan. Etiquette is a part of culture and can be divided into many categories. Customary systems related to human life cycles, such as customs of birth, maturity, marriage, longevity and aging ... Customary systems related to human activities in periodic cycles secretion of the year, the customary system related to the human labor cycle ...

2.1.2. Importance of culture in daily life

Culture is the physical and mental value system of the creators, which is confirmed by the community, creating the individual identity of the human race, each society. Culture plays an important role in everyday life. Culture is belief, is lifestyle, is the spiritual place encouraging human encouragement constantly exists and develops. Thanks to the culture people have the purpose of living and working. The more people and human societies grow, the need for spiritual culture requires increasing. To meet the cultural needs of the spirit that is to ensure the increasingly growing of material wealth for people and society. Culture is the motivation of development, because every development is determined by man. Culture arouse and multiply all of the creative potential of human beings, mobilizing enormous endogenous strength in humans to contribute to social development. Thanks to the culture that people are becoming increasingly perfected.

2.2. Typical Vietnamese customs

Customs in Vietnam has a long tradition of thousands of years. It has become a customary law, deeply embedded in people more powerful than laws. According to the ups and downs of the history of the nation, the customs of

Vietnamese people are also constantly changing according to the trend of social and cultural change. However, there are some customs which have lost their own but the customs affirmed the correctness, beauty, and beauty of it through the customs which still exist in the life of Vietnamese today.

The earliest mentioned in the history is betel chewing tradition dating back to Hung King's thousands of years. Vietnamese and some other ethnic groups still keep this practice in their lives today. betel nut and then become a symbol for the brotherhood and spouses of the Vietnamese people, over time the significance of betel chewing tradition has been expanded to the hospitality and friendship of Vietnamese people.

Being born from the old time with the custom of eating betel nut is a custom to welcome the new year, also known as Tet, Tet is both a tradition and also a belief and a festival of Vietnamese people and some other ethnic groups. . Some other ethnic groups welcome the New Year in other times and their typical names such as Chol Chnam Thmay (around April) of the Khmer, Katie (around October) of the Cham Balamom people, ... From the Lunar New Year To welcome the new year, from time to time with influences from China, Vietnamese people add to other Tet customs such as Tet Nguyen Tieu, Tet Han Thuc, Tet Doan Ngo, Mid Autumn Festival,...

Not mentioning early mention in the history books, the customs of marriage, childbirth and funeral have been associated with Vietnamese people since time immemorial and until today are still customs associated with Vietnamese life.

2.3. Typical American customs

When meeting someone for the first time, Americans often have the habit of shaking hands, including men and women. They often only embrace each other dearly for close friends or long-time friends. Kissing is not common, and men often do not kiss other men. Americans often introduce themselves by first and last name (Hello, I am ...) or if not formal and friendly, they only introduce the name (Hi, I am...). Your usual answer when someone introduced you is Pleased to meet you. Unless that person introduces his / her first and last name (Mr / Ms), you should call them by their first names. Usually important to work

and society, Americans often call each other by their first names. However, you should always call professors in universities by title and surname (for example, Professor Smith), unless they allow or ask you to call them by name.

In the America, shaking hands is a common greeting. You can shake hands with both men and women at the first meeting or later. Americans have a habit of shaking hands with both hands rather than fingers (not to squeeze to hurt other people's hands) to show friendliness and enthusiasm. Loose handshakes can be seen as uncertain, lacking in confidence, and even indifferent in relationships. It is rare for Americans to use both hands to shake hands.

Americans often respond by phone by saying "Hello". If you call for work, the person answering the phone usually starts with the company name and their name after that. If you meet the person you need right away, just say Hello and your name. If not, you should ask the person who answered the phone politely. Most Americans usually have an answering machine at home. At the same time, most companies often have voice messages for their employees so you can leave a message. Give your first name clearly and leave your phone number so they can call you back. The messages should be short and to the point.

There are some situations where people always have to prepare a tip. The most frequent situation is going to a restaurant. Restaurants in America do not charge for service, so customers must leave a tip to the waiter. It is common for people to leave a tip of about 15% of the total bill, or 20% if the service is good. If the service there is unusually bad, they can pay 10% for the service. Other situations where people also have to pay a tip are haircuts, taxis, tips for luggage carriers, parking seekers or bar waiters. Usually the law is 15% of the total payment on the bill. In the absence of an invoice, customers can tip them up, but at least \$ 1 to \$ 5.

2.4. Mariage

On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In article 16 – right to marriage and family, the right declares that

“(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.”

According to the United States Supreme Court, there are at least 14 cases since 1888 rules that marriage is a fundamental right, for example:

Marriage is "the most important relation in life" and "the foundation of the family and society, without which there would be neither civilization nor progress." (Maynard v. Hill, volume 125.U.S. 190,1888)

The right "to marry, establish a home and bring up children" is a central part of liberty protected by the Due Process Clause. (Meyer v.Nebraske, volume 262.U.S. 390, 1923)

Marriage is "one of the basic civil rights of man" and "fundamental to the very existence and survival of the race." (Skinner.v. Oklahoma ex rel.Wiliamson, volume 316.U.S. 535, 1942)

The concept of marriage as stipulated in Law on Marriage and Family 2016 are as follows: “Marrige is relationship between husband and wife after marriage registration. ”

In brief, marriage, in generic terms can be defined as an arrangement of each society to correct physiological relationship between man and woman.

Marriage is a combination of individuals emotionally, socially and legally. Marriage often is the result of love. Marriage is a fundamental relationship in the family in most societies. In social terms, the wedding event usually marks the official marriage. Legally, it is the marriage registration.

Marriage is usually a combination of a man called husband and a woman called wife. Marriage under polygamy is a type of marriage in which a man has multiple wives. In some countries, same-sex marriages are recognized. In some other countries, the struggle to legalize same-sex marriage is taking place. Currently in Vietnam, marriage and family laws do not prohibit marriage between persons of the same sex, but also does not recognize this kind of marriage.

Cultural background has a great influence on the marriage custom. Culture, in a wide sense, is sum total of material and spiritual products created by man in the historical process of a social practise. In a narrow sense, it refers to a ideology and the political system and constitutional organization corresponding to the ideology. From cultural perspective, Vietnamese and American attitudes towards marriage and religion are the two main causes of these differences between the marriage customs in two culture. Previously, Americans and Asians have very different ideas about love and marriage.

Firstly, Western people believe in "romantic" marriage - a boy and a girl are attracted to each other, fall in love, and decide to marry each other. Eastern people, on the other hand, believe in "contractual" marriage - the parents of the bride and the groom have great influence in the decision of the young couple's marriage and love - if it ever develops - is supposed to follow marriage, not precede it. In Vietnam, marriage needs the permission of two families, if parents don't agree with that marriage, young couple are hard to come together. To show the differences, a survey (cited *The 12th grade English book* written by *Hoang Van Van*) conducted among American, Chinese and Indian students to determine their attitudes toward love and marriage. Below is a summary of each group's responses to the four key values.

In terms of physical attractiveness, the Americans are much more concerned about appearance than the Indians and the Chinese when choosing a wife or a husband. They also agree that a wife should maintain her beauty and appearance after marriage.

The second key factor is confiding. Few Asian students agree with the American students' view that wives and husbands share all thoughts. In contrast, a majority of Indians and Chinese think it is better and wiser for a couple not to share certain thoughts. A large number of Indian men agree that it is unwise to confide in their wives.

Another core value in marriage is the partnership of equals. The majority of Asian students reject the American view that marriage is a partnership of equals. Many Indian students agree that a woman has to sacrifice more in a marriage than a man.

The final value which is considered in the study is the trust built on love. Significantly, more Asian students than American students agree that a husband

is obliged to tell his wife where he has been if he comes home late. The Asian wife can demand a record of her husband's activities. The American wife, however, trusts her husband to do the right thing because he loves her not because he has to.

The comparison of the four values suggests that young Asians and American counterparts' view in love are not similar.

Moreover, in some special cases, Eastern people do not get married just for love. Those people more concern about the educational, social and economic background of their marriage partner than Western people. The attitude of pragmatism is more concerned than the romantic feelings in a marriage. In contrast, Western people rarely get married before they make sure if they are in love with each other. Perhaps we can say that romantic love is part of Western people's live and they can not live without it. A Western woman can get married to a poor man but still feel satisfied and happy. Though it is not that Eastern people do not have this kind of example, it happens less often because even if they want to get married with someone poor, their parents would not agree. We can see another apparent example that how Eastern and Western parents are showing their love toward their children. Parents in Eastern countries think that they have the obligations to decide what is the best for their children; however, parents in the West believe that it is best for their children to make their own decisions.

Western and Eastern people also have different views of divorce. Divorce is relatively simple and socially accepted in Western countries. Recently, the divorce rate in Western countries such as the U.S. has rocketed. Nevertheless, with the Eastern people, divorce is a serious problem. In some cases, divorce situation embarrasses parents and relatives. In Vietnam, it is not easy for a divorced woman to start a new relationship and family life. They are under pressure of public opinions. This difference is in light of some reasons. Westerners focus more on the physical aspect of relationship, and are thus obsessed with love, sex, beauty and so on. As a result, people get married based on these factors and then get disenchanted with one another very easy. However, Eastern culture that practise arranged marriages places far more emphasis on practical things, such as intergrity,diligence, ambition,humility,generosity and so on. People get married based on practical reasons, and work on building

affection later. Strong characteristics like the ones described above are very conducive to build love and affection in Eastern marriages. Therefore, these marriages seem to be much longer lasting than many Western marriages. It is because the primary emphasis is not on sex, and physical beauty. Arranged marriages are usually successful because the spouses get to know one another on a practical level before, looking beyond issues such as beauty or something like that.

Finally, in Western countries, having children is not a prerequisite of each marriage. Many couples decide not to have children, they receive adopted children instead because they want to have time for each other. In addition, having children before marriage are very common in Western society. Child Trends channel reported that: “After years of growth, the proportion of births that are to unmarried women has leveled off, and since 2009 has been at just over 40 percent”. In contrast, having children is a very important thing of each couple after marriage in Eastern countries. Having children brings about happiness and wealth for family. Besides, Eastern countries are under feudal thinking’s influence, so they don’t accept the children born to unmarried women.

2.5. Overview of wedding customs

A wedding is a ceremony where two or more people are united in marriage. Wedding traditions and customs vary greatly between cultures, ethnic groups, religions, countries, and social classes. Most wedding ceremonies involve an exchange of marriage vows by a couple, presentation of a gift (offering, rings, symbolic item, flowers, money, dress), and a public proclamation of marriage by an authority figure or celebrant. Special wedding garments are often worn, and the ceremony is sometimes followed by a wedding reception. Music, poetry, prayers or readings from religious texts or literature are also commonly incorporated into the ceremony, as well as superstitious customs originating in Ancient Rome.

Some cultures have adopted the traditional Western custom of the white wedding, in which a bride wears a white wedding dress and veil. This tradition was popularized through the marriage of Queen Victoria. Some say Victoria's choice of a white gown may have simply been a sign of extravagance, but may have also been influenced by the values she held which emphasized sexual

purity. Within the modern 'white wedding' tradition, a white dress and veil are unusual choices for a woman's second or subsequent wedding.

The use of a wedding ring has long been part of religious weddings in Europe and America, but the origin of the tradition is unclear. One possibility is the Roman belief in the Vena amoris, which was believed to be a blood vessel that ran from the fourth finger (ring finger) directly to the heart. Thus, when a couple wore rings on this finger, their hearts were connected. Historian Vicki Howard points out that the belief in the "ancient" quality of the practice is most likely a modern invention. "Double ring" ceremonies are also a modern practice, a groom's wedding band not appearing in the United States until the early 20th century.

The exit from the wedding ceremony is also called the "send off", and often includes traditional practices, such as the newlyweds and the wedding party bowing and kissing the knees of the elders in Ethiopian weddings. The send off often includes throwing rice (a symbol of prosperity and fertility) or other seeds at the newlyweds in most of the Western world, as well as for example India and Malaysia. Despite fears of the opposite, the use of uncooked rice for this purpose is not harmful to birds.

The wedding ceremony is often followed by wedding reception or a wedding breakfast, in which the rituals may include speeches from the groom, best man, father of the bride and possibly the bride, the newlyweds' first dance as a couple, and the cutting of an elegant wedding cake. In recent years traditions has changed to include a father-daughter dance for the bride and her father, and sometimes also a mother-son dance for the groom and his mother.

2.6. Common wedding customs associated with various religions and cultures

Christian customs

Most Christian churches give some form of blessing to a marriage, which is seen as a sacred institution in some sense, although terminology and associated theological meanings vary widely from one denomination to another: e.g., "holy matrimony," "sacrament of marriage," "holy ordinance of marriage," "holy union," and so forth.

In some Western countries, a separate and secular civil wedding ceremony is required for recognition by the state, while in other Western countries, couples must merely obtain a marriage license from a local government authority and can be married by Christian or other clergy authorized by law to do so.

Hindu customs

Hindu ceremonies are usually conducted totally or at least partially in Sanskrit, the language of the Hindu scriptures. The wedding celebrations may last for several days and they can be extremely diverse, depending upon the region, denomination and caste. Mehendi ceremony is a traditional ritual in Hindu weddings, where Henna application takes place on bride's hands and legs, before the wedding. On the wedding day, the bride and the bridegroom garland each other in front of the guests. Most guests witness only this short ceremony and then socialize, have food and leave. The religious part (if applicable) comes hours later, witnessed by close friends and relatives. In cases where a religious ceremony is present, a Brahmin (Hindu priest) arranges a sacred *yajna* (fire-sacrifice), and the sacred fire (Agni) is considered the prime witness (*sākshī*) of the marriage. He chants mantras from the Vedas and subsidiary texts while the couple are seated before the fire. The most important step is *saptapadi* or *saat phere*, wherein the bride and the groom, hand-in-hand, encircle the sacred fire seven times, each circle representing a matrimonial vow. Then the groom marks the bride's hair parting with vermilion (*sindoor*) and puts a gold necklace (*mangalsutra*) around her neck. Several other rituals may precede or follow these afore-mentioned rites. Then the bride formally departs from her blood-relatives to join the groom's family.

Jewish customs

In a traditional Jewish wedding, before the ceremony, the couple formalize a written ketubah (marriage contract), specifying the obligations of husband to the wife and contingencies in case of divorce. The ketubah is signed by two witnesses and later read under the chuppah (wedding canopy).

There are many things done in the wedding customs. First, the couple is married under the chuppah signifying their new home together. The chuppah can be made from a piece of cloth or other material attached to four poles, or a giant tallit (prayer shawl) held over the couple by four family members or friends. The wedding couple is accompanied by both sets of parents and they join the wedding couple under the chuppah. Seven blessings are recited, blessing the bride and groom and their new home. The couple sip a glass of wine from a Kiddush cup . The groom will smash a wine glass with his right foot, ostensibly in remembrance of the destruction of the Second Temple. At some weddings, the couple may declare that each is sanctified to the other, repeat other vows and exchange rings. The ceremony ends with the groom breaking a glass underfoot.

Islamic customs

A wedding is typically a happy time for families to celebrate. In the Muslim world, there are colorful, cultural variations from place to place.

Two male witnesses who are the members of family in most cases, are required for Nikah. According to the Quran, a married Muslim couple, both husband and wife act as each other's protector and comforter and therefore only meant "for each other".

All Muslim marriages have to be declared publicly and are never to be undertaken in secret. For many Muslims, it is the ceremony that counts as the actual wedding alongside a confirmation of that wedding in a registry office according to *fiqh*, in Islam a wedding is also viewed as a legal contract particularly in Islamic jurisprudences. However, most Muslim cultures separate both the institutions of the mosque and marriage, no religious official is necessary, but very often an Imam presides and performs the ceremony, he may deliver a short sermon. Celebrations may differ from country to country depending on their culture but the main ceremony is followed by a Walima (the marriage banquet).

Chinese custom

In traditional Chinese wedding ceremonies, bride arrives in a *jiao*. At traditional Chinese weddings, the tea ceremony is the equivalent of an exchange of vows at a Western wedding ceremony. This ritual is still practiced widely among rural Chinese; however, young people in larger cities, as well as in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore, tend to practice a combination of Western style of marriage together with the tea ceremony.

When the bride leaves her home with the groom to his house, a "Good Luck Woman" will hold a red umbrella over her head, meaning, "Raise the bark, spread the leaves." This "Good Luck Woman" should be someone who is blessed with a good marriage, healthy children and husband and living parents. Other relatives will scatter rice, red beans and green beans in front of her. The red umbrella protects the bride from evil spirits, and the rice and beans are to attract the attention of the gold chicken.

The newlyweds kneel in front of parents presenting tea. A Good Luck Woman making the tea says auspicious phrases to bless the newlyweds and their families. The newlyweds also present tea to each other, raising the tea cups high to show respect before presenting the tea to each other.

The attendants receiving the tea usually give the bride gifts such as jewelry or a red envelope.

The tea ceremony is an official ritual to introduce the newlyweds to each other's family, and a way for newlyweds to show respect and appreciation to their parents. The newlyweds kneel in front of their parents, serving tea to both sides of parents, as well as elder close relatives. Parents give their words of blessing and gifts to the newlyweds.

2.7. Concluding remarks

This chapter has delineated issues relevant to the weddings and wedding customs in Vietnamese and American culture. A review of the wedding customs associated with religions and cultures support the researcher to analyse typical wedding customs in Vietnamese and American culture.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Data collection and analysis

3.1.1. Preparing data

Data can be defined as the quantitative or qualitative values of a variable. Data is thought to be the lowest unit of information from which other measurements and analysis can be done. It plays the most important and vital role in any research studies as it helps to bring about the quantitative evidence for a hypothesis or supports the justification for a qualitative study. Within this study, data is collected from a number of articles, books, and materials about Vietnamese and American cultures. The author first collected data according to different periods of time in two different cultures so that he can figure out the similarities and differences of wedding customs based on time. In addition, data is collected based on geographical locations. In fact, different places have different customs.

3.1.2. Setting criteria for data collection

To get data for analysis, some criteria are set up.

First, the books, articles, and materials collected for the study must be reliable. They are published books, not the ones posted on the internet.

Second, the sample size is large enough to guarantee that each main category of data should include at least thirty cases as recommended in Cohen (2000) to guarantee the validity of statistical findings. To satisfy this requirement, the researcher has collected more than 30 different sources of materials so that it helps to guarantee the reliability and validity of the statistics borne out.

3.1.3. Analyzing and interpreting data

Once data are collected, we start to analyze them from two approaches. The quantitative approach guarantees the completion of a statistical analysis which helps to provide necessary statistical evidences for the generalization of common features and stages of wedding customs in Vietnamese and American cultures.

The qualitative approach supports the researcher to interpret the occurrence of prominent features and stages of wedding customs in two cultures. Specifically, from the processed data related to the common features help to justify the implication of the study on the culture of learning English at HPU.

3.2. Research methods

The following methods have been deployed in this research:

First, *descriptive* method enables the researcher to figure out typical features and stages of wedding customs in Vietnamese and American culture.

Second, *interpretative* method provides justifications for the occurrence of such features and stages.

The next method to be mentioned is the *synthetic* method which is applied to help the researcher categorize the common features found in the analysis. After these features are described, the typical ones are synthesized and categorized.

Finally, *comparative* method is employed to find out the similarities and differences in typical features and stages of wedding customs in Vietnamese and American cultures.

3.3. Concluding remarks

This chapter is devoted to the presentation and analysis of the appropriate the methods for data collection and analysis. Moreover, a brief review of the research methods are also mentioned.

CHAPTER 4: FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Similarities between English and Vietnamese wedding customs

In all of countries, a wedding is organized with many formal ritual observances. In Vietnamese and American customs, engagement and wedding ceremony are not replaceable. However, engagement and wedding ceremony are complete different in detail.

4.1.1. In terms of pre-wedding ceremonies

Engagement is one of the indispensable ritual of wedding culture of both Vietnamese and American. Although there are some slight differences between the forms, but in general the nature of the engagement ceremony was unchanged. Specifically, in Vietnam, the groom's family will visit the bride's home to ask permission to welcome the bride as well as discussing the wedding. Engagement will take place the solemn atmosphere and the two families will have representatives speak about the wedding. Similarly, in America, though the engagement ceremony does not take place according to the solemn rites as well as only the groom to the bride rather than the groom's family, the purpose of this work is still the groom would have offered to marry bride and parent permission bride agrees. Both engagement ceremony have a common purpose is to demonstrate the love of both the bride and groom and received endorsement from the organization marriage two families.

4.1.2. In terms of wedding ceremonies

The main wedding ceremony in both America and Vietnam has the same sequence and nature. About the nature, the wedding ceremony as a message to the whole family, friends, colleagues,... On the marriage of happy couples as well as the desire for the couple will receive good wishes for the marriage life later from the guest side.

In terms of the order, both Vietnamese and American have a common point. Guests will be welcome to enjoy a warm reception before they sit on the party. Then the wedding host will introduce the happy couple, the bride of the groom will appear before the blessing of everyone. The ritual will continue with the couple's vows and they will give the wedding ring as well as kiss for each

other. Everything will take place in a warm-up scene with a romance music to celebrate young couple's love. After that great ritual, the bride and groom will come to each party to receive a blessing and thank guests for the presence of this great day.

4.1.3. In term of post – wedding ceremonies

Today, the Vietnamese and American people have the same views on what they would do after the ceremony ended, that honeymoon. This time the newly married couple will spend time together. Most couples will take the time to travel in the beautiful and quiet place in one or two weeks. Couples would also open the small party at home and invite guests who can not come the wedding party to dine and chat happily. Despite the difference in scale as well as organizational forms, but generally both couples Vietnamese and Americans want to spend time with their other half more, to build a happy long life.

4.2. Differences on American and Vietnamese wedding customs.

4.2.1. In terms of pre-wedding ceremonies

4.2.1.1. In Vietnam

a) Choosing wedding date

After both families consented to this marriage and the bride's family received the wedding gift, they would consult an astrologer to choose an auspicious day for the wedding ceremony according to the astrology in order to get some good fortune. Selecting the perfect wedding date is one of the most complicated and time-sensitive tasks on a bridal to-do list. Vietnamese couples consult a fortune-teller to help them choose the luckiest wedding date. The 5,000-year tradition is so ingrained in the culture that couples may hasten or postpone their wedding plans to escape from an ill-fated day.

Grandparents often have saying “have abstain have luck”, so the family should pay attention on choosing the wedding date. The date was chosen by augurs whom two families believe in their ability, then they will agree together to select a date. However, each family usually chooses many places to consult, so they do not know which the best is. To overcome the current disagreements, families often go to the temple to ask the elderly monks who have profound

knowledge about lunar date and time to pick up the wedding day for families. It also avoids the controversy caused by asking for advice from too many different augurs.

In Vietnam, superstition plays an important role in Vietnamese wedding customs. Traditionally, preparations for the traditional Vietnamese wedding begin with choosing a date and time for marriage ceremony. They want to have a good wedding day which will make the new couple happy forever. Tradition holds that a couple's future depends on "age compatibility" of the would-be spouses. The engagement and wedding ceremonies should be celebrated on a propitious day and hour. The Vietnamese people believe that the couple's happiness largely based on the groom and the bride's age. Normally, an intermediary is asked by his family to go and find out the four groups of two cyclical characters expressing the year, the month, the day and the hour of the girl's birth and to exchange them for the characters of the birth date of the suitor. This is the so-called ceremony of exchange of the eight characters, *bát tự*.

The two series of *bát tự* are subjected to a horoscopic examination. This work is entrusted to a scholar or more often, to a fortune-teller. Formerly, if the consultation is unfavorable, the marriage could be renounced. The families are satisfied with the exchange of the "eight characters" and proceed to the accomplishment of the rites. The date of the wedding in Vietnam also depends on the age of the bride and groom. They must find out the most suitable time that suits their age most. This is decided by a Buddhism monk, a Spiritual leader, or a fortune teller. For a Vietnamese woman, getting married at the age of 21, 23, 26, or 28 called "*tuoi Kim Lau*" is considered unlucky. It is said that if the marriage were celebrated in these ages, the couple would have many bad lucks.

In brief, when the couple decides to celebrate the wedding, choosing the date is the first thing they need to do. The common belief of the ancients is that choosing "a good day" for the wedding will make the wedding go smoothly and the newly married couple will live happily forever.

b) Choosing wedding dress

In Vietnam, brides often prepare both the traditional *Ao Dai* and other modern dresses for this occasion. The wedding dress in a Vietnamese wedding is an integral part of the proceedings that will make the bride radiantly beautiful on the most important day of her life. Nowadays, most of the brides are interested not only in colors and materials but also in design and style of the dress.

The *Ao Dai* is worn in engagement ceremony and in the wedding, especially when the groom's procession arrive the bride's home to receive and bring her to his house. The advantage of the traditional wedding dress of Viet Nam is that it is discreet, subtle, and suitable for many statures as well as skin colors. These charming gowns set off all curves of woman's body, and represent feminineness and gracefulness. The highlights created sophisticatedly by national patterns on bosom and body parts of the dress, for example, kettle-drum, lotus, bamboo, phoenix, and so on, symbolizing good luck, and bringing the most regal, luxurious and elegant beauty to Vietnamese brides.



With appropriate color and design, the Ao Dai will help the bride be striking and attractive. This kind of wedding dress is made of various materials such as lace, silk, chiffon due to its features of softness and lissomness. It is not by chance that the traditional wedding dress in Vietnam would be in attractive and prominent colors like red, white, pink, yellow, blue and so on. All of them make contribution to create their sense, and expectation of a bright future for the bride. Among these colors, the red Ao Dai are often chosen by most of the brides for wedding dress because they contribute the brilliance for the wearers on the greatest day of their lives. Apart from being the color of youthfulness and passion, the red Ao Dai represents good luck and prosperity as a wish for a comfortable life of the couples. The red Ao Dai is the most suitable choice because they make the brides outstanding, and fit perfectly the place which is decorated elaborately to hold the ceremony. Pink – the youthful, sweet and charming beauty and yellow – color of freshness and vitality – brings gentle, luxurious and original beauty to young brides on their happy day.

Besides the traditional Ao Dai, Vietnamese brides also change modern wedding dresses in the party when receiving guests and friends. In recent times, wedding dresses reflect clearly the brides' personality. Bridal fashion is very diversified and abundant. Every year, there are hundreds of wedding dress collections launched by a large number of designers around the world, from fishtail dresses showing sexy curves of the body to décolleté ones flaunting tender beauty, or romance and sophistication expressed by lace dresses. There are various trends of wedding dress which are preferred currently.

First of all, Lace dresses for gentle brides could be considered as one of the most popular trend in modern weddings. Lace had no sign of cooling in the past few years yet, especially in bridal field. In recent wedding seasons this material is increasingly loved, exploited and used absolutely for both bosom and body of the dress, or decorated along the bobbing lines on the body part. Moreover, it is easy to create glamorous patterns or delicate cut-outs showing slender shoulder of the brides. The Viet Nam wedding dress with lace will give the brides charm, sweetness and romance.

Secondly, Fishtail wedding dresses with gorgeous fishtail design is also a remarkable style at present. With the combination of romance and luxury, the brides will be taller, slimmer and more lissome because of the embracement of curves.

Besides, off the shoulder wedding dresses with off shoulder design are suitable for young brides who want to be sexy but still gentle. Some skirts just show a bit graceful shoulder, others are more audacious by baring shoulder and the beautiful curve of bust.

Next, Strapless wedding dresses are also a popular design which helps the bride show off suggestive shoulders and neck. Young brides will be very fascinating and feminine thanks to the design of holding close chest with a V-neckline. Silky and velvety shoulder, taper neck are accentuated by strapless wedding dresses.

Another elegant design for the bride in her wedding day is Backless wedding dresses: The low back dresses fit to the shape of the brides' body, and flatter their beauty with elegant neck as well as tapering back. It is sure that the brides will be the center of attention on their wedding day.

Even if the bride chooses the traditional Vietnam *Ao Dai* or other modern dresses, she will want to be the focus of attention and the most beautiful person in her wedding. Therefore, choosing the wedding dress is an important work that every bride is looking for.

c) The engagement

The engagement ceremony is known as a ritual in traditional marriage customs of the Vietnamese. It is the official announcement of the betrothal between them, an important stage in the relationship of marriage that the girl has become "fiancée" of the boy, and the boy after bringing gifts to the bride is formally requested to be accepted as a son-in-law and called the girl's parents as his parent-in-law. During the engagement ceremony, if the bride's family receives the wedding gifts from the groom's family, it means that they agree with this marriage. The young couple is considered to be unmarried husband and wife who are waiting for the perfect wedding date to announce this marriage.



Before the engagement day, each family chooses a representative. This person is a member of the family who has a happy life and a high ranking position in the family. Both of representatives do representation, exchange gifts and control the flow of the ceremony. Besides choosing the representatives, both families would sit together to negotiate the dowry and the good time for the ceremony. The time is chosen very carefully based on the propitious time and day of lunar calendar.

To prepare for the engagement ceremony and make sure that it would take place successfully, the two families will discuss and agree on the amount of trays. Normally the number of trays in the North is odd, from 3, 5, 7 to 9, 11, 15 depending on each family. In the South, the number of tray is usually a random number 4, 6, to 10, 12 caskets. In the ceremony, there must have black money. The groom's black money which is considered as the ritual, showing groom's respect when his family presents in front of the altar of the bride's family. The number of black envelopes depends on the number of altars. Both families need to prepare a team of young men and women who are unmarried to carry the trays. The number of people needs to be the same as that of tray. Participants of the engagement ceremony are selected carefully.

The groom's family includes the groom, parents, grandparents, relatives, close friends and some unmarried young men. The groom's family needs to wear formal clothes, men usually wear suit and women wear "Ao dai" – the

traditional dress of Vietnam. The groom usually wears west and puts a branch of flower in front of his chest.

The bride's family includes the bride, parents, grandparents, relatives and a team of young girls who would bring and receive the wedding gifts. The bride wears red or pink "ao dai" because it is a symbol of happiness and luck.

d) Betrothal gifts

Betrothal gifts are items that the boy brings to the girl's house in the engagement day to ask for the permission of the wedding ceremony. It is regarded as an offering to thank the bride's family as well as the binding of the two family sides. Betrothal gifts are prepared by the son for the bride's family according to their requirements. The meaning of the offering items could reflect many aspects in the Vietnamese culture.

Betel leaves and areca nuts

Betel leaves and areca nuts are symbols of love and marriage in Vietnam. "Betel leaves and areca nuts were offered as a first conversation starter to guests"... Thousand year-old tradition of betel chewing constitutes an important and popular cultural activity in Vietnam.



An undated legend of Vietnamese origins centre around the betel leaf and Areca nut. The story begins with a pair of twin brothers who both fell in love with one woman. It was the order of the twin brothers, Tan married the woman as Vietnamese custom called for the elder to marry first. However one day in the confusion of identifying the right twin brother as her spouse, the woman showed

her affection to the younger of the twin brother, Lang. Considering it as an extremely profane act, the younger Lang, filled with remorse, left home and died in a far flung place across the river. On the spot where he died, a slender tree bearing nuts in the shape of a heart sprung out. Concerned for his missing brother, the older brother similarly set off and by a twist of fate, rested by the areca plant died at the same spot where his younger brother laid. He in turn changed into a block of limestone. Finally, the wife set out and found the place where her husband and his twin had died and she too collapsed in despair. She became a betel vine that crept and twined round the limestone. The story symbolizes the strong bonds of love and marriage and explains the use of betel chewing with lime and areca nut to signify love in marriage. Betel leaves are still offered at engagements and weddings. In Vietnam, the areca nut and the betel leaf are such important symbols of love and marriage that in Vietnamese the phrase "matters of betel and areca" (chuyện trầu cau) is synonymous with marriage. Areca nut chewing starts the talk between the groom's parents and the bride's parents about the young couple's marriage. Therefore, the leaves and juices are used ceremonially in Vietnamese weddings. The folk tale explaining the origin of this Vietnamese tradition is a good illustration of the fact that the combination of areca nut and the betel leaf is ideal to the point that they are practically inseparable, like an idealized married couple.

Wine and cigarette:



Betrothal gifts, alcohol and tobacco show filial piety and respect of descendants for ancestors. Therefore, wine and tobacco are indispensable engagement gifts. A tray of wine and tobacco needs to be arranged harmoniously and beautifully, combined by the ties, ribbons and fresh flowers to create the exquisite beauty and luxury for the offering tray.

Cakes:



A tray of cakes includes husband and wife cakes, green rice flake cakes, pie and sticky rice cakes. They are indispensable and in pairs such as husband and wife cakes- green rice flake cakes, pie-sticky rice cakes. Husband and Wife cake (or called Phu The or Xu Xe cakes) is traditional Vietnamese food. According to the legend, the name of cakes is determined by the King Ly Anh Tong. In the legend, when the King Ly Anh Tong fought in the battle field, his wife baked a cake to send her love to him. When eating the cake, he felt in good mood and healthy because he thought of his wife's love, so he named this cake Husband and Wife. Just because of the name, husband and wife cakes are tied in pairs, presenting the steadfast and faithfulness of husband and wife. **Husband and Wife cake is a must-have thing at the wedding of Vietnam.** In the past, only royal families and dignitaries could afford to buy this kind of cake as

conjugal cakes were only on sale at some important events. Nowadays, thanks to the higher living standards, almost every family can go for such pairs of delicious and beautiful cakes. “Bánh phu thê” is a Vietnamese sweet with a jelly-like texture made of tapioca, pandan, mung bean paste, sugar, sesame seeds and coconut milk. No flashy color, no fancy design, but once eating them, people simply can not help being surprised with the flavor of this cake. The black sesame seeds are under the skin spots, wrapped in a square mold bread crust with coconut. It reveals the philosophy of yin and yang. The stickiness of the cake represents the stickiness of the marriage ties. Normally, a man would offer these to the girl he wants to marry. These cakes are still an essential part of a wedding banquet, or the gift packages that the groom’s family sends over to the bride’s family. The philosophy of yin and yang is also reflected in the form of boxes made of coconut leaves. The small, low inside box, also called yin, holds the cake and the bigger outer box, also known as yang, covers the yin box. Its message is the symbol of caring between a husband and wife, the harmony between the human and the earth, man and women. All of them blend together to create its very own flavorful cake. Nowadays, many grooms choose this cake as the betrothal gifts because of its exquisite harmony. Instead of using coconut leaves to make boxes like before, it is replaced by cellophane. In the joyful atmosphere of a happy wedding day, happy forever is always the message that conjugal cake gives to the bride and the groom on the most important day of their lives.

Tea and Jam:



Tea in the engagement ceremony is the offering carrying filial respect. Meanwhile, Lotus jam offers meaningful engagement, symbolizing the couple's fruiting. Like the tray of cake, lotus tea and jam are packed into boxes, so people often put them in the pyramid form, and decorate them with the text “double happiness” written in the ribbons and glitter yarns.

Fresh fruits:



Fresh fruit is an indispensable offering in the wedding day. Betrothal gifts are meant to symbolize the fruits of the season with fragrant flowers and fresh fruits to bless the couple soon to have children.

Currently, fruits in engagement ceremony were arranged in dragon-phoenix forms which are very eye-catching to bless riches and honours.

Other betrothals:

Recently, betrothals gifts are more diverse such as: roaster pork, wedding cake...and each betrothal gift brings a deep meaning.



On the engagement day, the fiance family brings the gifts to the fiancée family with the warmly welcome. After receiving the gifts, the young couple prays in front of the fiancée’s family altar to ask for approval of fiancée ancestors. When this ritual finishes, the fiancé give the fiancée the engaged ring.

Following the engaged ring giving, both representatives introduced the members of both families in certain hierarchy. Then both families enjoy the party which prepared by the fiancée family. It is also expected that some of gifts are returned to the fiancé family for luck before the fiancé family leaves.

The days after the engagement ceremony, normally, the parents of fiancée family will bring the wedding cards with gifts to their friends, family members... and neighbors to invite them to the wedding party of their young couple.

e) Bachelor party and bachelorette party in Vietnam:

In Vietnam, Bachelor party and Bachelorette party are influenced by Western culture. Vietnamesees celebrate “Bachelor party” and “Bachelorette party” quite simple and change some features to fit with Eastern culture. The groom will celebrate a small party at a coffee shop, bar or his house, the bride also have a small one in her house and invite some close friends to the party. Even the groom and the bridge can celebrate together. Other ways to celebrate “Bachelor party” and “Bachelorette party” are travelling or shopping with a group of groom or bride’s best friends which are very interesting idea.

4.2.1.2. In America

a) Choosing wedding date

The date of weddings in Vietnam depends on the age of the bride and groom who must carefully find out the most suitable time for the most important

day in their life. Similarly, American people have some common knowledge about the time for marriage.

As for the time of year, the saying “Marry in the month of May, and you’ll live to rue the day” dates back to the pagan times. May, the start of summer, was dedicated to outdoor orgies (in the summer festival Beltane), hardly the best way to begin married life. Queen Victoria is said that have banned her children from marrying in May, and Nineteenth Century Vicars were rushed on April 30th because brides refused to marry during May. In Scotland, it was traditional for the bride to ‘walk with the sun’, proceeding from east to west on the south side of the church and then circling the Church three times ‘sunwise’ for good luck.

b) Choosing wedding dress

The wedding dress trend currently is white or ivory, as this symbolizes purity. This is a newer superstition because white was started to be worn as a wedding dress only during the Victorian age over a hundred years ago. And that time, white was worn as an announcement of affluence because white dresses then were only worn once.

A black wedding gown was considered taboo in the last decades, but recently, this is also becoming an option for brides. Black flatters a woman's figure and skin tone, and this flattery has been appreciated on a bride's wedding day.

In America, a common superstition is that the groom is not supposed to see the bride in her wedding dress before the wedding day. There is also the superstition for the bride to avoid wearing the dress before the day and see herself in the mirror, because something that prevents the wedding may happen. This is a headache for the brides who want to make sure everything should be perfect on the day. All brides deserve a perfectly-fitting dress. Some who still want to follow this superstition fit the lining of the dress, and leave all trust to the dress maker. Some dress makers leave some stitches unfinished and only do the last finishing stitches before the bride leaves for the wedding.



c) The engagement

In America, couples can be together anytime from a few months to a few years before they get engaged. Sometimes the boyfriend will ask the girl's father for his blessing; sometimes he does not. He will buy an expensive ring for the girl and will usually surprise her with a memorable evening when he proposes, or asks her to marry him such as: "Will you marry me?" or "BMW- Be my wife". American men have many impressive and unique proposals. For example, the proposal of Justin Davis và Nikki Marquez. This is probably the most elaborate and jealous proposal in the world by the number of 1017 participants and the proposal script is extremely impressive. Justin took Nikki to a new movie premiere in which they met Justin's ex-lover. She threw water on his's face, which makes Justin's girlfriend was suprised and cried because of

misunderstandings. After that, Justin went out and come back. He said that all were a play and gave her a dance with 1017 dancers as a proposal gift. Then, he knelt down and proposed to her and she agreed. It is more special that Justin announced that they will be holding the wedding immediately, wedding dresses had been prepared. All of this made Nikki extremely happy "I am one of the luckiest women in the world because I have a man do everything for me." Another impressive proposal belongs to Dean and Jenifer. For everyone, proposal is a romantic moment at a time but for Dean Smith, proposal is a moment to accompany him throughout the year - 365 days. Before going to marriage with Jennifer Kessel, Dean came up with the idea of proposing in an extremely unique and impressive way that was a proposal to her girlfriend during 365 days. It was because of this idea that during the year, every day, wherever she was and doing any work, Dean also carried the table "Jennifer, Will you marry me?" and recorded. After a full year, Dean officially proposed to Jennifer at Aruba beach. With the help of the Jennifer family along with the sincerity that he had prepared for 365 days, Jennifer was deeply touched and agreed immediately. Both of them are extremely romantic proposals that all of the girls in the word are looking forward.

Traditionally, the man usually gives his finance a diamond ring as a symbol of their engagement. Actually, it's a tradition dating back to the ancient Egyptians, who believed circles were symbols of eternity. Wedded couples exchanged rings made out of braided reeds. These were worn on the left hand ring finger, which apparently had a vein that ran directly to the heart, later named Vena amoris.

Fast-forward to the 2nd century B.C., when the ancient Romans are believed to have started the tradition of betrothal rings in lieu of giving the bride money or a valuable object. But its symbolism wasn't so much about love as it was ownership. According to Pliny the Elder, the groom first gave the bride a gold ring to wear during the betrothal ceremony and at special events, then an iron ring to wear at home, signifying her binding legal agreement to his ownership of her.

Diamonds didn't appear on engagement rings until centuries later. One of the first recorded uses of a diamond engagement ring was in 1477. Archduke Maximilian of Austria proposed to Mary of Burgundy with a ring set with thin,

flat pieces of diamonds in the shape of an “M.” This set a glamorous precedent for European nobility, who added more precious gems to their jewelry. The Middle Ages also saw the rise of “posey rings,” bands engraved with romantic poems and sayings.

The sentimental Victorians popularized ornate engagement ring designs that mixed diamonds with other gemstones, precious metals and enamels. Often these rings were crafted in the shapes of flowers and were dubbed “posey rings.” Diamond rings crafted during the Edwardian era continued the tradition of pairing diamonds with other jewels, commonly mounted in filigree settings.

Everything changed when diamonds were discovered in South Africa. In 1880, Cecil Rhodes founded the DeBeers Mining Company with other investors. Within the decade, they controlled 90 percent of the world’s diamond production—and turned diamond engagement rings into nothing more than an ad campaign. Once the Great Depression ended, the company’s ad agency N.W. Ayer & Son launched its famous “A diamond is forever” slogan and encouraged men to spend two months’ salary on the rock. By the early 1940s, engagement rings became the leading line of jewelry in most department stores. The implied durability of a diamond conveyed the meaning in the American psyche that marriage is forever. A diamond's purity and sparkle have now become symbols of the depth of a man's commitment to the woman he loves in practically all corners of the world. Now more than 80 percent of American brides get diamond engagement rings.

Engagement can also last from a few months to a few years. For couples who are serious about getting married, this period is generally six months to one year. This is a fun and happy time. They will usually have a party and take photos together to remember this special time. This is also a busy time as the couple makes plans for their wedding, honeymoon, and life after marriage.

d) Bachelor party and bachelorette party in America:

Bachelor and bachelorette parties are the occasion of relaxation of the bride and groom before entering the married life. After this party, the bride and groom basically will end or reduce the frequency of joining parties to focus on building and cultivating their families.

The groom and male friends will organize a party, drinking wine or spending the whole night in a bar. Traditionally, in the United States, friends of the groom will challenge the groom's responsibility for marriage and family life; therefore, all these things happened in the party will be kept secret. The men give a pledge never to reveal the secret and promise to carry the secret to the grave. It is difficult to know what the bride and groom can create for a single party apart from those who are present.

Previously, in the United States, banquets are alluded as a libertine night out and most of them are pushed further than the limit. Some single bachelor parties are alcohol and gambling, or some grooms go to a dance hall or hire a stripper for themselves. The person holding the banquet will be a member of a group of friends or colleagues. Traditionally, they will play a trick on the groom to test the groom's level of responsibility for future marriage. Also in the United States, it exists as an underground law of the young American men, before marriage, the groom or the best friends of the groom will hold a monumental party before the groom enters marriage life. Attenders must immediately forget all these things happened at the party after it ends, they have to undergo an unforgettable bachelor party by the way the American boys still do. However, nowadays, bachelor and bachelorette parties are organized in more wholesome and healthy way. The boys and girls usually spend time in chatting, drinking or eating.

In bachelorette party, the bride and the girlfriends will also do bold things and be a bit liberal or just talk, consult and review memories together. Bachelorette party is usually a drunken night at home, at a bar or a restaurant. The girls will talk to each other and give some advice to the bride before she enters the marriage life.

4.2.2. In terms of wedding ceremonies

4.2.2.1. In Vietnam

Vietnamese brides and grooms usually send wedding cards only about 2 weeks in advance, even if someone just invites a few days in advance. Inviting guests too late causes inconvenience because guests cannot arrange. In addition, many fastidious people are not satisfied because the urgent invitation is not respecting the guests. So the wedding man should consider getting married

early. Wedding in Vietnam takes place at noon or evening, can take place on weekdays or weekends depending on the family has seen the day before.



Vietnamese weddings are still very formal, and many people believe that this is an opportunity to "repay" each other with congratulatory money and gifts. In Vietnam, weddings are not only for couples but also largely decided by parents. Parents usually take care of the main expenses and have the right to make decisions about the party.



The guests in Vietnamese weddings are at least a few hundred people, even with weddings that invite more than 1,000 guests. Because the parents are the main host, parents want to invite more friends and acquaintances to their children's parties. There are couples who invite people to court, just communicate with acquaintances at work or just meet 1-2 times. This is still limited in weddings in Vietnam. This also increased the organization costs significantly. The bride and groom should persuade parents to invite little to compact, intimate wedding. Families should only invite relatives, close friends, guests for both families should be less than 300 guests.

In Vietnam, it is common for guests to arrive later than the time indicated on the wedding card. This is also what makes many couples "confuse" because it is difficult to arrange seats as well as calculating the number of guests. Guests in Vietnamese weddings often celebrate with money. Because many guests are not close, do not understand the love of the couple, they limit the choice of gifts but instead with gifts for couples to choose gifts or cover wedding expenses.

Most Vietnamese couples do not speak at weddings, but do this for their parents. The father of the bride or groom will thank the guests and invite everyone to the party. The family will also rarely mention the couple's love. Traditional weddings in Vietnam are simpler, so the budget depends on the family's economic ability. In addition, not all couples hire professional wedding organizers or elaborate wedding decorations, so this cost is cut.

Wedding feast of Vietnamese often has 8 to 12 dishes and all of them are the traditional food in wedding custom such as: soup for appertizer, salad, dishes made from chicken (boiled, steamed, roasted,...) , seafood (shrimp, fish, mussel...), stir-fried beef with bamboo shoots, sticky rice, dessert (fresh fruits), drinks (soda, wine, beer,...).

When the wedding ceremony is over, there will be a party at the groom's house. Some traditional Vietnamese wedding parties are celebrated at their houses (usually in the countryside); others are celebrated in the restaurants. This day is the culmination of desires, dreams, hopes and anxieties. There is a band to play music during their meal. Some guests are free to sing related wedding songs on the stage to send the best luck to the bride and the groom. During the reception, the groom, the bride, and their parents will stop by each table to say

thank to their guests. The guest in return, will give the blessings to the newly wedded couples

4.2.2.2. In America

American bride and groom send cards a few months in advance to make an appointment early with the guests, so even though the guests are far away, they can arrange for the wedding party. American weddings usually take place on weekend evenings (ranging from Friday to Sunday) because they want all of guest have time to join the party. The Western wedding party is the occasion for family and friends of the bride and groom to gather, exchange and share happiness with the couples.



The bride and groom are responsible for organizing the entire banquet in American weddings. The number of guests at weddings is often small, mostly close friends of the couple with family members, they want sure that the wedding party is time to couples show their love and feel happy.

At American weddings, guests often come early to the party. Each guest will be seated in advance and the seat position will be announced in the card, each party table has a photograph or a story about the memories of groom and bride. That make the atmosphere become more romantic. Guests often give gifts to the American bride and groom, because guests are close friends, they can ask the couple in advance about the gift or they confidently choose the right gift for the couple, most of gift are houseware.

American weddings has a ritual of giving rings, cutting wedding cakes and drinking toast. Wedding is an indispensable part of the bride and groom's speech. Couples often share their love story and say things about memories and weddings. Weddings often cost a lot of money because not only focus on the menu, the wedding venue but the wedding also wants to decorate the splendid banquet or rent wedding planner to handle the banquet. Many also organize weddings in combination with traveling, inviting guests to famous cities for parties.

American weddings are usually divided into 3 sections, including appetizers, main courses and desserts. The number of dishes therefore is not much. Some weddings hold buffet weddings.



The wedding ceremony is usually followed by a wedding reception where a meal and wedding cake are served. At the reception the guests will toast to cheer the newlyweds before the meal. After the meal, the bride and groom will cut the wedding cake and serve it to the guests. Another enjoyable tradition during the reception is for guests to randomly clink their silverware on their glass which obliges the newlyweds to kiss after each time of clinking. After the meal, it is often the time for dancing, with the newlyweds usually having the first dance.



4.2.3. In terms of post - wedding ceremonies

4.2.3.1. In Vietnam

a) The honeymoon

Nowadays, a newly married couple usually takes a honeymoon after the wedding, this habit was influenced by Western culture. They often spend their honeymoon in some famous resorts or tourist attractions. The journey often lasts for a short time of 2 days, 3 days or a week, depending on the economic condition and time of each couple. In fact, they do not spend too much money on honeymoon like Americans because many couples have to pay debt which they have borrowed to celebrate the wedding.

b) The second rejoicing(lễ lại mặt)

After the wedding, the newly married couple have to carry out the second rejoicing “*le lai mat/le nhi hi*”. The ceremony takes place at the house of the wife’s parents. The new groom, new bride and the parents of the groom will come back to the bride’s house and bring the objects of sacrifice, red coloured glutinous rice, roasted pork, fruits and so on as offerings, placed on the altar of the ancestors to express filial piety. Furthermore, this ceremony will help two families to be closer through family meals.

4.2.3.2. In America



After the wedding bells have rung, the cake has been eaten, and the celebratory rice has been swept up, tradition dictates that it’s honeymoon time for the happy couple. The modern reasons for going on a honeymoon may differ slightly from earlier in history and the meaning of honeymoon back then. However, there are also enough similarities to enable us to fit both old and new meanings of the honeymoon into the followings.

To celebrate marriage: Many people today see honeymoons as the grand finale to the wedding celebrations. It is so ingrained in many Western cultures that the honeymoon is almost as much a part of the wedding as wearing a white dress and exchanging rings. Considering the amount of thought, effort and elaborate preparation that go into wedding planning these days, sometimes the

honeymoon is a much needed holiday from all the stress of the lead-up to the big day!

To enable togetherness: Having time away from the distractions and interruptions of everyday life enables newlyweds to connect and enjoy each other's company; and therefore, to start married life together on the best possible note. Their seclusion sets up the optimal conditions for intimacy and romance. Depending on personal preference, it may be an opportunity to luxuriously rest or relax together, to explore the world or seek out adventure together. It says so in the Bible: In Deuteronomy 24:5 it is written that "When a man is newlywed, he need not go out on a military expedition, nor shall any public duty be imposed on him. He shall be exempt for one year for the sake of her family, to bring joy to the wife he has married." The term honeymoon suggests it would have lasted for one lunar month.

In cases of arranged marriages, it enables time to get to know one another: Arranged marriages or marriages by capture were once far more common than they are today. Spending time together after getting married was ideal for finding out more about partner, and it provides an opportunity to acclimate to life together. Today, arranged marriages are still carried out by some cultures, and for them, the honeymoon experience still serves this purpose of getting to know one another in a relaxed environment away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Hopefully in a beautiful and romantic setting, the honeymoon would enable love to blossom.

To visit family abroad who could not come to the wedding: In the past, people did not travel very far for their honeymoon. Because travelling was so expensive, it was mostly for the very wealthy. Those who were well-off enough to travel often took the opportunity of their honeymoon to visit those relatives who were unable to come to the wedding. Around the 1820's it became more common to travel on honeymoon; so that the French began calling this British-derived habit of travelling after the wedding "voyage a la facon anglaise ", i.e. the English-style voyage. It is thought that the British were inspired to use the post-wedding time to travel by a concept borrowed from the Indian elite in the Indian Subcontinent. This custom first appeared in the UK and quickly spread to other countries including the United States. Until now, this custom still exists in part of American's habit.

It's the ideal time to try for a baby: Thinking of the month after the wedding as "baby-making time" comes from two of the slightly more questionable theories behind the origins of the term "honeymoon". Some suggest that the term honeymoon is based on an ancient practice of drinking a fermented honey liquor, similar to mead or metheglin everyday for a month, after the wedding, to increase fertility. Some folk etymology, such as that written in Charles' Pantati's book "The Extraordinary Origins of Popular Things", suggests that the term honeymoon arose from the Norse word "hjunottsmanathr", which means "in hiding" and describes the time after the abduction and capture of a new bride. In the month following her abduction, her new husband would take her into hiding and try to get her pregnant within the first month, to seal the marriage and make it irreversible, so that she would be his and therefore be unreclaimable by anyone else.

4.3. Concluding remarks

This chapter refers mainly to the main characteristics of cultural weddings with three main stages as pre - wedding ceremonies, wedding ceremonies and main post - wedding ceremonies. Moreover some of the similarities and differences have been analyzed primarily based on the following factors: choosing the wedding dates, wedding dresses, bachelor party, order details of the wedding and the activities after the wedding ends .

From the above analysis, we easily see between Vietnamese and Americans have in common on the organization of the ceremonies was from before, during and after the wedding ceremony of betrothal, wedding primary and moon confidential.

Yet still exist many differences apparent in the organization of ceremonies, the notion of choosing the wedding day and the wedding dress. From there we can see Vietnamese people attach importance to the form of the wedding while Americans focus on the nature of romantic wedding.

Finally, despite the similarities and differences but the purpose of the wedding remains to congratulate for the happy couple.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1. Recapitulation

Wedding ceremony is one of the most significant events in life of couples in both countries. The weddings in both cultures are organized with certain rituals so that the couple has to closely observe and consider those etiquettes in order to ensure that their wedding ceremony would be organized in appropriate way, which not only marks a turning point in their life but also be suitable with the traditions of each culture.

This research use some methods such as descriptive, interpretative, synthetic, comparative. As a result, the author clarifies the similarities and differences in Vietnamese and American wedding culture such as the order of the ceremonies, the choice of wedding day or wedding dress, the concepts of the wedding procedure, etc... The above analysis helps readers to better understand the culture of the two countries and contributes to affirming the importance of culture for daily life.

5.2. Implications for further research.

5.2.1. Implications for American-Vietnamese cross-cultural communication and understanding.

Each culture has its own characteristics, so it is necessary to understand the features and behaviours in each culture to avoid misunderstandings and cultural shocks. One of the most important and interesting rituals at the wedding is giving the wedding gifts. However, giving wedding gifts in two cultures are completely different.

People in Vietnam often use lucky money put it inside the envelope as the wedding gifts for the couples. Probably, money is considered the most important gift to give a newlywed Vietnamese couple because it is a symbol of prosperity. Besides, Vietnamese people also give decorations or furniture as wedding gifts. When giving a gift to Vietnamese, people should closely consider some taboos or unappreciated practices of Vietnamese wedding gift etiquette. First of all, Vietnamese do not like the black color, so they always wrap their gifts in bright, colorful paper. Dark colors should be avoided in wrapping the gift or packaging the box. Normally, the black wrapping paper is viewed as a bad omen in the Vietnamese culture. At a Vietnamese wedding, the couple may open their gifts

in public, or they may wait and open them in private. Secondly, giving knives or anything sharp is regarded as a taboo because it is the symbol of severing the relationship between the couple and the gift givers.

The culture of offering wedding gifts is quite different in America. There is gift registry which is a list of things that grooms and brides want to buy. For example, American grooms and brides will go to the shop and choose clothes or furniture and the guests could completely or partly pay for those gifts, depending on how they can afford. The couple often registers for gifts at a store well in advance of their wedding. This allows them to create a list of household items, usually including china, silverware and crystalware, linens or other fabrics, pots and pan and so on. Registries aim at aiding guests in selecting gifts that the newlyweds truly want. The service is sufficiently profitable that most retailers, from luxury shops to discount stores could offer the opportunity. Registry information should, according to etiquette, be provided only to guests upon direct request, and never included in the invitation. Some find bridal registries inappropriate as they contravene traditional notions behind gifts, such as that all gifts are optional and delightful surprises personally chosen by the givers, and that registries lead to a type of price-based competition, as the couple knows the cost of each gift. Traditionally, wedding was considered a personal event and inviting people to the wedding who are not known to at least one member of the couple well enough to be able to choose an appropriate gift was considered inappropriate, and registries therefore, should be unnecessary. Whether considered appropriate or not, others believe that weddings are opportunities to extract funds or specific gifts from as many people as possible, and that even an invitation carries an expectation of monetary reward rather than merely congratulations.

Many Americans who are invited to the Vietnamese wedding feel puzzled because they do not know what gift they should buy and Vietnamese people are puzzled too. It is recommended that lucky money for Vietnamese people and household gifts for Americans are quite suitable gifts in the wedding in both countries.

The second distinguished feature in Vietnamese wedding is the betrothal gifts. Some days before the wedding, the groom's family will visit the bride and her family with round lacquered boxes known as betrothal presents. It composes

of areca nuts and betel leaves, tea, cake, fruits, wines and other delicacies which covered with red clothes and carried by unmarried girls or boys. However, this etiquette does not exist in American wedding because of different views.

In the past, from the Vietnamese' perspective, people think that after the wedding, their family will lose a person which means losing a source of income and the bride's family is at a disadvantage compared with the groom's family. Therefore, betrothal gifts are considered as important as a compensation for the bride's family when their daughter has to leave her family to start a new life in other's house with big burden of a new wife and daughter-in-law. In contrast, American people think that marriage is equal, depending on groom and bride's selection. Thus, there is no need for betrothal gifts in America.

Another difference between Vietnamese and American wedding customs is the second rejoining. American wedding does not have the second rejoining as that in Vietnam. This rite is quite strange to them. Otherwise, Vietnamese people attach very great importance to this etiquette.

Besides the differences mentioned above, there are a lot of taboos that people in both cultures should avoid to reduce the tension triggered from misunderstanding and culture shock.

In Vietnam, the bride must not cry in her wedding because it is a bad omen, which leads to unhappy marriage. Besides, she must not turn around before coming the groom's family since it can make the happiness of the young couple fell into pieces. Furthermore, it is also important to abstain getting married to people whose age is not suitable. From Vietnamese's views, each person has different Zodiac signs. The zodiac signs are determined by the lunar year in which people were born, including: rat, ox, tiger, cat, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog, pig. According to fortune tellers, there are some Zodiac signs which conflict with each other. For example: tiger and pig, dog and cat and so on, so the people whose age is tiger should not marry the people whose age is pig.

In addition, Vietnamese do not celebrate the wedding when the family has the newly dead person because the wedding is a happy occasion and they want to avoid unlucky things for the couples. If the dead is bride or groom's mother or father, the couple must wait for three years, and if the dead is their

grandmother or grandfather, they must wait for one year for their official marriage.

In America, the first superstition is that the groom should carry the bride over the threshold to thwart bad luck and evil spirits. Another common superstition is that the groom is not supposed to see the bride in her wedding dress before the wedding day. There is also the superstition for the bride to avoid wearing the dress before the day and see herself in the mirror because something that prevents the wedding may happen. This is a headache for the brides who want to make sure everything should be perfect on the day. All brides deserve a perfectly-fitting dress. Some who still want to follow this superstition fit the lining of the dress, and leave all trust to the dress maker. Some dress makers leave some stitches unfinished and only do the last finishing stitches before the bride leaves for the wedding.

Culturally, rain tends to be a good thing on American wedding day. Some say that getting the bad weather out of the way so the rest of marriage can be bright and sunny. Others claim that the rain will clean the bad luck and lead to a more solid relationship from the start. The superstition is probably based mostly on the tradition that a wet knot is harder to untie. Also, rain is good for crops and many creatures, so rain on a wedding day symbolizes the future financial well-being of the happy couple. With the same token, rain was the root of the fertility of crops so it could convey the message that the couple would be blessed with children. In addition, tears were also said to be cleansing for the marriage and it was thought the good luck if the bride or a child cried at the wedding, which is different from Vietnam because the Vietnamese bride must not cry in her wedding.

Also, catching the garter is one of the most interesting tradition in American wedding. The garter is worn just above the knee of the bride. After the reception, she will throw it in back of her to the single men. Garter is a fertility symbol and the man who catches it will be the person who is going to get married.

5.2.2. Implications for language teaching and culture teaching.

The relationship between language and culture is deeply rooted. Language is used to maintain and convey culture and cultural ties. Different ideas stem

from differing language use within one's culture and the whole intertwining of these relationships start at one's birth.

When an infant is born, it is not unlike any other infant born, in fact, quite similar. It is not until the child is exposed to their surroundings that they become individuals in and of their cultural group. This idea, which describes all people as similar at birth, has been around for thousands of years and was discussed by Confucius as recorded in the book by his followers, *Analects* (Xu, 1997). From birth, the child's life, opinions, and language are shaped by what it comes in contact with. Brooks (1968) argues that physically and mentally everyone is the same, while the interactions between persons or groups vary widely from place to place. Patterns which emerge from these group behaviours and interactions will be approved of, or disapproved of. Behaviours which are acceptable will vary from location to location (Brooks, 1968) thus forming the basis of different cultures. It is from these differences that one's view of the world is formed. Hantrais (1989) puts forth the idea that culture is the beliefs and practices governing the life of a society for which a particular language is the vehicle of expression. Therefore, everyone's views are dependent on the culture which has influenced them, as well as being described using the language which has been shaped by that culture. The understanding of a culture and its people can be enhanced by the knowledge of their language. This brings us to an interesting point brought up by Emmitt and Pollock (1997), who argue that even though people are brought up under similar behavioural backgrounds or cultural situations; however, speak different languages, their world view may be very different. As Sapir-Whorf argues, different thoughts are brought about by the use of different forms of language. One is limited by the language used to express one's ideas. Different languages will create different limitations, therefore a people who share a culture but speak different languages, will have different world views. Still, language is rooted in culture and culture is reflected and passed on by language from one generation to the next (Emmitt & Pollock 1997).

From this, one can see that learning a new language involves the learning of a new culture (Allwright & Bailey 1991). Consequently, teachers of a language are also teachers of culture (Byram 1989).

The implications of language being completely entwined in culture, in regards for language teaching and language policy are far reaching. Language teachers must instruct their students on the cultural background of language usage, choose culturally appropriate teaching styles, and explore culturally based linguistic differences to promote understanding instead of misconceptions or prejudices. Language policy must be used to create awareness and understandings of cultural differences, and written to incorporate the cultural values of those being taught.

Teachers must instruct their students on the cultural background of language usage. If one teaches language without teaching about the culture in which it operates, the students are learning empty or meaningless symbols or they may attach the incorrect meaning to what is being taught. The students, when using the learnt language, may use the language inappropriately or within the wrong cultural context, thus defeating the purpose of learning a language.

Because language is so closely entwined with culture, language teachers entering a different culture must respect their cultural values. As Englebert (2004) describes: "...to teach a foreign language is also to teach a foreign culture, and it is important to be sensitive to the fact that our students, our colleges, our administrators, and, if we live abroad, our neighbours, do not share all of our cultural paradigms."

Language teachers must realize that their understanding of something is prone to interpretation. The meaning is bound in cultural context. One must not only explain the meaning of the language used, but the cultural context in which it is placed as well. Often meanings are lost because of cultural boundaries which do not allow such ideas to persist. As Porter (1987) argues, misunderstandings between language educators often evolve because of such differing cultural roots, ideologies, and cultural boundaries which limit expression. One should not only compare, but contrast the cultural differences in language usage. Visualizing and understanding the differences between the two will enable the student to correctly judge the appropriate uses and causation of language idiosyncrasies.

5.3. Recommendations

Many of the problems we have in this world are due to cultural misunderstandings. When people learn about another culture, and see why

others do the things they do, it is easier to understand them. Therefore, understanding the similarities and differences between Vietnamese and American wedding are very important because it will help people avoid “culture shocks” and be more ready for an increasingly global world. With technology making the world ever-smaller, and with the ease of travel between countries, it is getting easier and easier that people would meet someone with a different cultural heritage at some point. Being able to tolerate others, and not berate them because of their differences is not only an essential skill of living in a global community, but it is also the mark of a well-rounded person. If once wants to be able to adapt more when they travel, and when encountering others in their own country, it makes sense to learn about other cultures so that people can avoid faux pas. Also, each should take the trouble to learn about other cultures and customs in order that they would have richer experiences no matter where they go.

Due to the short time as well as limited knowledge, the research still has many shortcomings. The biggest limitation is that only some parts of wedding customs are mentioned, including the first encounter between two families, the wedding date, the wedding attire, the engagement ceremony, the bachelor party and bachelorette party, the wedding ceremony, the receptions, honeymoon and the second rejoining. Secondly, for some aspects of the wedding ceremony, the study only mentioned to the general information. The author hopes to fulfill those gaps with a deeper look on the origins and religious features hidden behind the similarities and differences of the weddings in two cultures in further research. Previously, the study has left spaces for further discussions, improvements and criticisms by those who concerns. All remarks, the author hopes for receiving comments, suggestions and contributions from other researchers.

REFERENCES

- Brooks N (1986) Culture in the classroom. In JM Valdes (ed) Culture bound: bridging the cultural gap in language teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Byram M (1989) Cultural studies in foreign language education. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Emmitt M & Pollock J (1997) Language and learning: an introduction for teaching (2nd ed). Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Englebert (2004) Character or Culture? *An EFL Journal*, 24(2), 37-41.
- Hantrais L (1989) The undergraduate's guide to studying languages. London: Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research.
- Hoang, V (2014) The 12th grade English book. HaNoi: Education Publisher.
- Porter E (1987) Foreign involvement in China's colleges and universities: a historical perspective. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol 11, no 4, pp 369–385.
- Xu ZG (1997) Interpretation of Analects. Beijing: People's Literature Press.