Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen,

My name is Thu Trang- the monitor of VNU- Southern New Hampshire TEFL Course Cohort 26. It has been a tremendous honor to be here today to make this Graduation Speech. So, after nearly a decade of being a monitor, writing numerous and endless “Hello” and “Goodbye” and “Thank you” notes to lecturers, finally here I am today, making a Graduation Speech- the noble task I have always dreamt of.

Since university days, a lecturer used to inspire me with this analogy: teaching resembles the way a bird flies: one wing represents the methodology and the other one represents the hands-on teaching experience. In order to fly high in the sky, you need to have both equally strong wings. The similar philosophy applies to teaching: in order to be a competent teacher, you need to form a concrete teaching methodology framework and you need to cultivate your experience via teaching practice. If one wing is biased; a bird will fall and likewise, a teacher will struggle to pursue his/ her vocation.

To be honest, I didn’t expect much when I registered this TEFL course, but in the end it turned out to go beyond my expectation. It is a turning point in my career path and now I know that I can fly. The first six months was a massive revision to all of us but none of the subjects was superabundant. I would like to send our gratitude to all the Vietnamese professors for your devoted teaching. If it hadn’t been for your dedication, we wouldn’t have known how much it matters to know how different teaching approaches affect the efficacy of the lesson; We wouldn’t have known how to design test specs to measure learners’ performance; we wouldn’t have known how learners acquire a language; we wouldn’t have known how to employ technology in teaching; and we wouldn’t have known that teaching isn’t solely about imparting knowledge; it is also about intercultural interaction. People often make excuses for their reluctance to learn theoretical subjects; they say practice makes perfect. But without this methodological foundation, teachers cannot reason their lessons. Thank you for teaching us that how and why we put every objective; every activity; every task has its own theoretical background and altogether, they will prove the outcome of the lesson.

The second phase of the course is definitely the time we will never ever forget. We sang, we danced, we read poems and we ran for deadlines together. I have to say that the second phase pushed us all to extremes, we didn’t know how far we could go because every single assignment was another hurdle we needed to pass. If anyone asked us what our superpower was back then, we would answer without hesitation that it was working against the clock. The dreamy passive learning was over; it’s time to be active, to apply and reflect what you have acquired from Phase 1 to practice. It was only during those 3 months that I fully understood the meaning of Practice makes perfect. I can still recall the shaky feeling I had whenever I deliver lessons in class. Believe it or not, each lesson is like a thriller with me being the main actor and others being critics and supportive actors. Like a movie, sometimes your lesson was on point, sometimes it had bloopers. But it doesn’t matter, this is not a competition and we are here to help each other. I will always feel grateful for all the bloopers I had in class, I will always feel thankful for all the constructive feedbacks I received from Prof. Rose, Prof. Garry and Prof. John and from my fellow classmates. All of you have motivated me to become the better teacher version of myself: more critical, more logical and more mature.

Well, It is a terrible pity that Prof. Garry, Prof. John and Prof. Rui Li cannot join our Graduation ceremony today.

Prof. Garry, We will always remember the “When you lying awake with a dismal headache” poem. You have strongly impressed us with Drama and Reader Theater in Pronunciation teaching.

Thank Prof. Rui Li for showing us how greatly technology can contribute in gathering students’ attention.

Thank Prof. Rose for being such a wonderful Instructor. We couldn’t feel exhausted in your lessons because you were so enthusiastic; sympathetic and well-meaning. We do hope you will always keep that energy to inspire more student generations.

Thank Prof. John for helping us challenge ourselves and exploit our potentials. We all know you were in a dilemma when you were teaching in Vietmam but after all you chose us. No word can express my gratitude towards you for not giving up on us.

Thank my fellow classmates for supporting me during the course. It’s so miraculous how strangers can get on so well together. I am so proud of the bones we have made and hope that we will stay this way forever.

Next, I want to thank my family, my boyfriend for your support. Thank you my dearly beloved Van Anh Hoang and Huyen for our sleepless nights when it felt like there were only us against the world. There’s a deeply ingrained conception in my mind that life is a long journey, and every single person I know is destined, so Thanks God we met halfway.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the Faculty of Postgraduate Studies, the University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University and Sothern New Hampshire University for this spectacular Master Course. Thank you for fulling my dream: to be a bold bird with two vigorous wings. Beginnings always hide themselves in ends, this is the end of our master course but I do hope we will be brave and fierce eagles flying high in the sky conquering new horizons.

Thank you!