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**ENGLISH LANGUAGE GRAMMATICAL AND DISCOURSE  
COMPETENCIES OF 3<sup>rd</sup> YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS  
OF THAI NGUYEN UNIVERSITY : BASES FOR  
INTERVENTION EXERCISES**

A Dissertation Proposal  
Presented to  
The Faculty of Graduate School  
Batangas State University  
Batangas City, Philippines

In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Of Doctor of Philosophy  
Major in English

By:  
**NGUYEN THI HONG CHUYEN**  
June 2015



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## **APPROVAL SHEET**

This dissertation entitled “**ENGLISH LANGUAGE GRAMMATICAL AND DISCOURSE COMPETENCIES OF 3rd YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS OF THAI NGUYEN UNIVERSITY: BASES FOR INTERVENTION EXERCISES**” prepared and submitted by **NGUYEN THI HONG CHUYEN** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy major in English has been examined and is recommended for Oral Examination.

**MATILDA H. DIMAANO, Ph.D.**  
Adviser

## **PANEL OF EXAMINERS**

Approved by the committee on Oral Examination with a grade  
of \_\_\_\_\_.

**DR. AMADA G. BANAAG**  
Chairman

**DR. MARIA LUISA A. VALDEZ**  
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Accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
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Comprehensive Examination: **PASSED**

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## **ABSTRACT**

**Title : English Language Grammatical and Discourse Competencies of 3rd Year College Students of Thai Nguyen University: Bases for Intervention Exercises**

**Author : Nguyen Thi Hong Chuyen**

**Course : Doctor of Philosophy**

**Major : English**

**Year : 2015**

**Adviser : Dr. Matilda H. Dimaano**

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### **Summary**

This study focused on determining English language grammatical competence and discourse competence of 3rd year college students of Thai Nguyen University. The grammatical competencies of student respondents covered were parts of speech, morphology and syntax, and vocabulary while in the discourse competencies of students', cohesive devices, transitional phrases, coherence, connectors and choice of words were included.

Further, the study also dealt with the assessments of the English language teachers on the same mentioned competencies and the comparison as well as the significant differences to the student respondents' grammatical and discourse competencies with intervention exercises as output of the study to enhance students' language competencies.



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The study made use of the descriptive method of research and utilized a survey questionnaire and teacher-made test as the main data gathering instrument. Statistical tools used are frequency distribution and percentage, weighted mean, standard deviation, and independent t-test.

Findings of the study showed that in the grammatical competence of the 3rd year College students as to parts of speech the % correct items of the students are above 50 percent in all five items which implies that the students' performance in this grammatical area is high average and that the students' demonstrated a reasonable degree of competence. In morphology the total rating obtained by the students is 83.07 percent or good where the students showed the best performance and demonstrates mastery of this grammatical skill component. For syntax the total rating obtained by student respondents is 74.74 percent which falls under the high average level of classification which reflects on the advanced level of proficiency. In the case of vocabulary the total performance rating under this grammatical area is 82.53 percent or good performance which implies their high level of competency.

For discourse competencies of the 3rd year College students in terms of cohesive devices results showed that students' performance is heterogeneous with the ratings distributed in the extreme ends of the spectrum while in



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transitional phrases findings showed that student performance is 73.73 percent or its equivalent of high average which implies that the student performance is heterogeneous. In coherence, results showed that the total rating of % correct items is 54.74 percent or average which implies inferior student performance relative to cohesive devices and transitional phrases and further implies that only approximately half of the students developed and demonstrated the advanced skill of coherence.

For connectors, findings indicated that the total rating of the students' performance under this component is 69.95 percent or high average which indicates that the student performance in connectors is equally superior relative to cohesive devices and transitional phrases. Moreover in choice of words results showed that the total rating of the students' performance under this component is 57.57 percent or average which implies that students have not developed mastery.

In relation to teachers' assessment of the grammatical and discourse competencies of 3rd year college students, results of the study showed that seven of nine items obtained an "agree" score of 100 percent. These items pertain to the grammatical skills involving parts of speech and vocabulary; and the discourse skills involving cohesive devices, transitional phrases,



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coherence, connectors and choice of words.

According to the frequency by which the students apply these skills in their various encounters in class, results showed students practice and use these skills more often in the class as observed by teachers while according to their degree of importance results showed that six out of nine items had mean scores close to 5.0 or equivalent to very important which mean that the teachers had high regards and valuation for the nine items as important skills to be developed by the students.

As to relationship of teacher's assessment and students' grammatical and discourse competencies findings revealed that only seven out of nine items showed a p-value that is below 0.05 which means that the teacher's assessment and students' grammatical and discourse competencies along these areas are significantly different and further indicates that no relationship exist between the means being compared and are independent of each other. Only two items showed a p-value of greater than 0.05 which indicates that the teacher's assessment and students' grammatical competencies along these two areas such as morphology and syntax are not significantly different.

Based on the findings of the study, an English intervention exercises, the output of the study focused on the low-scoring items that are below 70 percent.



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From the findings, the study recommended that the proposed English intervention exercises may be reviewed by administrators and suggestions maybe adopted before utilization; that teachers must be given seminar and trainings along discourse competence to enhance students' writing skills; and that a similar study may be conducted in other higher educational institutions.



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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

The researcher would like to express her sincere gratitude to the following persons who in one way or another made this work possible.

Dr. Dang Kim Vui, President Thai Nguyen University, Vietnam for the opportunity given to be included in the Ph.D. major in English Program in cooperation with Batangas State University, Philippines;

Dr. Matilda H. Dimaano, dissertation adviser, for her guidance, scholarly inputs, and consistent encouragement. Her expertise in the field of research work contributed much in the completion of this academic work. Thank you so much for being my adviser. The precious time shared in reading patiently the manuscript, all the help and support make me a better researcher;

The panel Members from Batangas State University Philippines: Dr. Felix M. Panopio, Dr. Myrna G. Sulit, Dr. Corazon B. Cabrera, Dr. Amada G. Banaag, and Dr. Maria Luisa A. Valdez for their valuable comments and suggestions;

Dr. Remedios P. Magnaye, Recording Secretary for her dedication in preparing and encoding the final defense minutes;

Ms. Le Quynh Anh, Staff of International Training Center, TNU College of Agriculture and Forestry for the support; and





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Her parents, husband, son, and daughter for their love, and understanding and support in the completion of this academic endeavor.

Nguyen Thi Hong Chuyen



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## **DEDICATION**

This work is wholeheartedly dedicated to my parents, husband, children and friends.

Nguyen Thi Hong Chuyen