

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIETNAMESE VOCABULARY FOR FOREIGNERS BY MINDMAP

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**Abstract:** *This article analyzes the theoretical bases, thereby proposing ways to develop Vietnamese vocabulary for foreigners using mind maps and statistics of the initial survey results of using them to teach and establish Vietnamese vocabulary for foreigners at The University of Sciences and Education - University of Danang. Research results have confirmed the positive effects of using mind maps quickly, effectively, and scientifically accumulating words. In addition, mind maps help foreigners develop topics into a system of ideas and organize content coherently and scientifically, create an environment to practice the use of words in the context, and improve the ability to speak and write Vietnamese for foreigners.*

**Keywords:** *vocabulary, positivity, discourse, context, mind map, coherence, ability.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The mind map is a helpful tool in teaching and learning foreign languages in general and Vietnamese in particular. With the combination of topic ideas, the distribution of big ideas, small ideas, colors, and images, foreigners can promote their full thinking ability when learning Vietnamese. The language ability will be effectively formed in depth.

The research on developing Vietnamese language ability for international students in the form of mind maps is a necessary movement to affirm the close connection in teaching and researching Vietnamese as a foreign language, contributing to the improvement of methods to improve the quality of teaching Vietnamese to foreigners.

## 2. CONTENT

### 2.1. Research overview

The study of mind maps has received a lot of attention in countries around the world, shown through regular works such as:

The mind map book is a famous book by Tony Buzan, one of the world's leading brain research authors.

In *The mind map book*, the author has introduced a new thinking method to take advantage of the brain's ability to record images to synthesize or analyze a problem into a branching scheme. Unlike computers, the brain can also communicate and relate data together to memorize linear patterns (remembering in a particular sequence, such as the sequence of events appearing in a story). Tony Buzan's method exploits both abilities of the brain. The information and knowledge about mind maps are presented clearly and easily understood, so their popularity and applicability are high. Tony Buzan mentioned teaching and learning with mind maps is one of the top applications [1].

Mind Mapping in Executive Education research: Applications and Outcome by Anthony J.Mento, Patrick Martinelli, and Raymond M.Jones, published in the *Journal of Management Development* (1999), mentions the applications and results of mind mapping in education. The author presented the concept of the mind map, the steps to create a mind map, characteristics of the mind map. The authors also raise the issue of how learners develop mind maps and step-by-step problem-solving. The steps to apply mind maps are description, addition, process analysis, summary, and conclusion [2].

The Efficacy of the Mind Map Study Technique (2002) by Paul Farrand, Fearzana Hussain, and Enid Hennessy shows that after testing the same lesson on the group using a mind map and the group using the self-selected learning method during a week, the mind map method worked, the knowledge of this group increased by 10% after a week for the group using mind maps. Therefore, mind maps have provided an effective learning method through the numbers mentioned in the article [3].

Domestic studies have applied mind mapping techniques to teaching and have shown the positive effects of this, such as:

The book *Teach and learn well with mind maps for teachers and students from grades 4 to 12 and the application of technology in teaching* by two authors, Tran Dinh Chau and Dang Thi Thu Thuy, published by the Education Publishing House has attracted the attention of educational administrators, teachers, parents, and high school students. Practical application shows that combining mind maps with other active teaching methods will improve the quality of education, helping students to be more active and think better [4].

For teaching Vietnamese to foreigners, many authors have conducted studies with different levels related to the application of mind maps in teaching.

The article *Applying mind maps in teaching and learning Vietnamese speaking and writing skills (for international students)* (Manifest of the 2011 scientific conference of the Faculty of Vietnamese Studies - University of Social Sciences and Humanities) of the group of authors include Nguyen Thi Diem Phuong and Pham Van Tuoc analyzed how to apply mind maps in teaching Vietnamese speaking and writing skills to international students [5].

Research related to Vietnamese ability in general and the Vietnamese vocabulary capacity of foreigners can be mentioned as follows:

The article *Methods of teaching Vietnamese vocabulary to foreigners using mind maps* by the group of authors Nguyen Thi Kim Thoa and Pham Thi Thuy Hong (Electronic Manifest of the 6th National Conference on Interdisciplinary Studies on Language and Language Teaching) is based on the scientific basis of perception as well as the theory of semantic vocabulary. Teachers will guide to help students build mind maps for each topic when learning the language [6].

There are also several studies related to teaching methods, such as the Doctoral dissertation of Nguyen Thi Yen, "System of exercises to develop the ability to use Vietnamese words for Lao military students (2018)", "Building a system of exercises to strengthen and enrich Vietnamese vocabulary for Lao students (A level)" by Le Phuong Thao (Master's thesis in philology) [7], [8].

The research works of the above authors have obtained general conclusions about the value and impact of mind maps on many aspects of study and work. This is an advantage for us to study how to apply mind maps in teaching to encourage international students to use this tool to develop Vietnamese vocabulary actively.

## **2.2. Problems of developing Vietnamese vocabulary**

### ***2.2.1. The role of vocabulary for learners of Vietnamese as a foreign language***

Learning and mastering the language's vocabulary plays an important role in teaching and learning any foreign language. According to Wilkins (1972), learners can only convey very little of their ideas if they do not understand grammar. But if they don't have a particular vocabulary, they can't express anything in communication. Thus, vocabulary is a tool to help learners communicate successfully. In addition, vocabulary is the foundation for developing other language skills such as reading comprehension, listening comprehension, speaking, writing, and translation,...

Recognizing this importance, today, all methods applied in teaching focus on teaching vocabulary. Without vocabulary, learners will fail to establish communication relationships, or with a small vocabulary, they will also not be able to read more advanced material leading to losing the opportunity to expand their vocabulary and difficulty in using strategies to learn vocabulary. Furthermore, language skills are also affected if the necessary vocabulary is lacking. Instructors should strive to develop the vocabulary for their students and help them develop their communication skills using the vocabulary they have learned because of the importance of vocabulary for Vietnamese learners.

### ***2.2.2. Important notes in teaching vocabulary to foreigners***

According to the traditional method, vocabulary is not taught independently but integrated with the lessons of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. During skills class, students use their existing vocabulary and learn new words provided by the teacher or new words that their classmates use to perform classroom activities on topics pre-designed in the textbook.

For many students who learn Vietnamese passively, learning vocabulary means learning a bunch of new words just by remembering their meanings without practicing using them in

real communication situations. Therefore, in the learning process, they often encounter many unfamiliar words. They will look up their senses in a bilingual dictionary and then spend most of their time copying those words into a very long word table without noticing their actual usage in context. This way of learning often makes it impossible for students to correctly understand and convey the message they are reading. Sometimes, they blame communication failure on poor memory. Still, the real reason is that if they take the words out of context, they will not remember the meaning for a long time and will not recognize its meaning when encountered in other documents with the same context.

As a sequence, many scholars discourage learning vocabulary by memorizing new words. According to them, new words should not be learned individually or memorized without understanding their meanings because learning words in this way will lead to students ignoring the meaningful aspect of the word. In other words, students only know how to use words with their literal meaning but do not know how to use their different shades of meaning in real communication situations.

Many other strategies and methods have been applied to develop students' vocabulary. First, vocabulary can be acquired naturally through active and regular participation in language activities. Second, words can be learned through direct instruction. Students will understand the meaning and function of words in sentences and contexts. In addition, teachers can encourage students to use dictionaries, find synonyms and learn how to write to expand the range of vocabulary learned. In addition, teachers can use vocabulary games, creating interactive vocabulary walls that help students grasp interesting new words.

A rich vocabulary will increase the learner's understanding, thereby causing the development of relevant language skills. In addition, if you have a vast vocabulary, it will be easier for learners to read and make them want to read more. There are many ways for foreign language teachers to be proactive in maximizing word learning. Using mind maps is a simple, economical, but equally helpful method.

### ***2.2.3. Orientation to develop vocabulary for foreigners learning Vietnamese***

The development of vocabulary for people learning foreign languages in general and learning Vietnamese as a foreign language usually focuses on three main tasks: vocabulary enrichment, correcting vocabulary, and active vocabulary.

Vocabulary enrichment is also known as vocabulary expansion; developing vocabulary means building a prosperous, permanent and systematic vocabulary in students' memory to create favorable conditions for words to enter language activities (listening - reading, speaking - writing).

Correcting vocabulary is to help foreigners understand the meaning of words correctly - especially for words acquired by foreigners through natural learning and, simultaneously, to help learners grasp the meaning of new words. Active vocabulary helps learners practice and use words in speaking and writing, helping learners transform negative words (words that the subject understands but does not or rarely uses) into positive words (words used by the subject in speaking - writing) to develop skills and techniques for developing words for foreigners.

In addition, to a certain extent, the systematic development of vocabulary also provides learners with some simple concepts of theory, approaching Vietnamese as a linguistic science such as word structure and meaning, meaning relationships in vocabulary or context, and communication factors...Theoretical knowledge about this word is a basis for foreigners to use Vietnamese in official activities.

### **2.3. Mind map and the development of Vietnamese vocabulary for foreigners**

#### ***2.3.1. The relevance of the mind map and the development of vocabulary***

The mind map is a form of note-taking to explore, deepen, expand an idea, and systematize a topic or a knowledge circuit by combining images, lines, colors, and words simultaneously. Write with a positive mindset to expand and deepen ideas. Especially the mind map is an open plan, does not require the scale or tight details like a geographical map, and can draw more or fewer branches.

Each person draws in a different style, using different colors, images, and expressions. With the same topic, each person can "express" it in a particular way, so creating a mind map can maximize each person's creativity.

The working mechanism of mind maps is to focus on images and colors with associative networks (branches). A mind map is a graphical tool that connects related images, so it is possible to apply mind maps to support teaching new knowledge, consolidate knowledge after each lesson, review and systematize knowledge after each chapter, and help students understand the lesson, remember it for a long time, and remember it deeply.

#### ***2.3.2. The necessity of the mind map for the development of Vietnamese vocabulary for foreigners***

With a near-representation of the brain's workings, the mind map can serve several purposes. Three of the main purposes are to make thinking visible through diagrams:

- Learning what we know helps identify key concepts, show connections between ideas, and form a meaningful pattern from what we know and understand, thus helping to remember them sustainably.
- Help to plan an activity or a project by organizing and gathering ideas and showing each connection between them.
- Help to evaluate experience or knowledge through a thought process about what is known or done.

In mind maps, users can develop ideas, build and design models to solve real-world problems. From there, they form and develop knowledge and thinking skills for learners.

With a mind map, learners receive information and need to think about it, interpret it, and connect it to their understanding. And what is more important is that learners learn to organize information and organize ideas.

Using mind maps for teaching foreign languages will bring high efficiency and promote students' positivity. Thanks to the mind map, learners will deeply understand the essence of

the problem and develop logical thinking, the ability to synthesize, help understand the lesson, and remember for a long time instead of memorizing it by rote.

Some research results show that the human brain will deeply understand, remember for a long time, and bold what it thinks, writes, and draws in its language, so using mind maps helps people learn actively and maximize the brain's potential.

With a mind map, learners not only receive information but also have to think about that information, interpret and connect it with their understanding. It helps the words in the vocabulary not be isolated but put into imaginary contexts associated with ideas and problems. Words are, therefore, alive and become part of learners' language abilities.

#### **2.4. Some application form of mind map to develop Vietnamese vocabulary for foreigners.**

##### ***2.4.1. Using mind maps helps to correct and enrich vocabulary for learners.***

The most important function of mind maps is to organize information into appropriate groups to help language learners easily remember what they have written. When thinking about a particular topic, related content will form and link.

A mind map can be divided into two parts:

- (1) Ideas and examples.
- (2) Words (parts of speech).

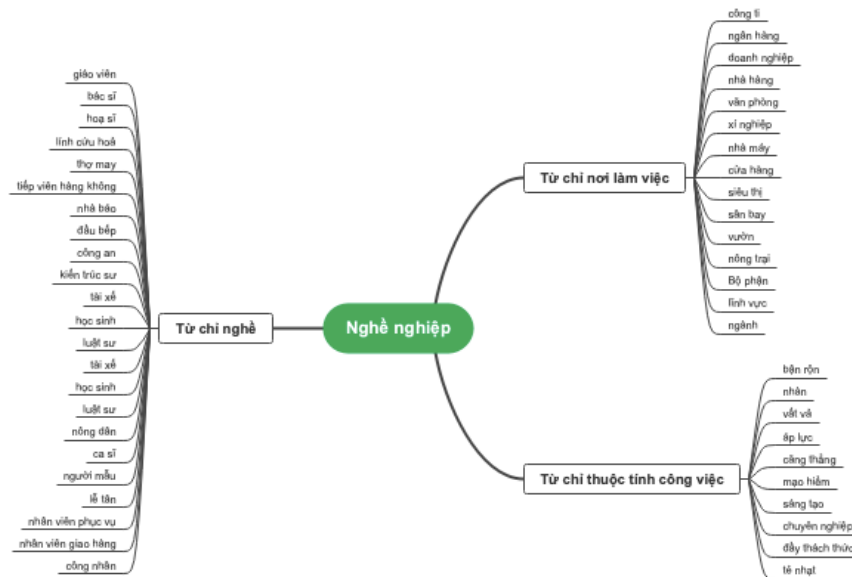
For this reason, the mind map is suitable for implementing lesson topics in foreign language teaching to help learners understand the correct meaning of words and have a basis for expanding vocabulary according to logical connections.

First, ask guiding questions:

- (1) What do you do or want to do?
- (2) Where do you work?
- (3) What are the characteristics of that job?
- (4) Why do you like doing that job?
- (5) ...

To help create mind maps, teachers directing the class choose words that describe ideas and examples that make descriptive words more explicit. Also, think about the negative aspects of your concept that help complete the problem.

From the above questions and prompts, the teacher can develop new vocabulary equipment for learners through the following diagram:

Diagram 1. *The topic of Careers*

With the teacher's guidance and the learners' active participation, we can make a mind map on the topic of Careers. This technique not only helps us to implement the lesson vividly but also has communicative value. Learners do not receive the lesson passively but fully participate in forming the lesson content. After participating in class, learners can associate ideas with words, build a mind map to learn new words, and speak or write about a topic.

#### **2.4.2. Using mind maps to improve learners' vocabulary in communication actively.**

Using words flexibly and effectively in communication is the most important goal of foreign language learners. Therefore, learning a foreign language continues beyond memorizing vocabulary and how many words. Still, it is essential that when speaking/writing, you can use words in the proper context, thereby fully expressing the content you want to convey and achieving the communication goal. Equally important is that spoken and written Vietnamese have distinctive differences in their language style. In teaching languages, we are always aware of flexibly applying mind maps to form natural and effective language creation.

When practicing the creation skills (speaking or writing) of Vietnamese learners, we always pay attention to the preparation of vocabulary and the formation of ideas in the process of expression. Using words to create the spoken language needs to show the natural style of the speech. However, it still has to ensure the coherence of logical thinking, the coherence of the thesis system, and the connection between the components of the talk. Forms of practicing skills in using words in spoken language often revolve around asking learners to create conversations, situations or discussions, and presentations on topics. Creating a situational conversation usually only puts words in the framed contexts given in the textbook, so we can let learners practice in pairs and not focus on this activity but focus on using mind maps to present topics.

2.4.2.1. Using directional mind maps to present topics

Developing topics. We provide suggestions and directions for speakers through keywords in the mind map. First, learners can learn the content of topics and vocabulary systems around that topic. Next, the speaker will practice linking them into sentences and complete paragraphs from keywords, suggested words, and branches representing the main ideas. These orientations also make the speaker go in the right direction, ensuring logic without losing the naturalness of speech. Here are some mind maps we have provided to Lao students studying Vietnamese at the University of Education to active vocabulary in the context. Diagram 1 corresponds to the Beginner level, and diagram 2 corresponds to the Advanced level.

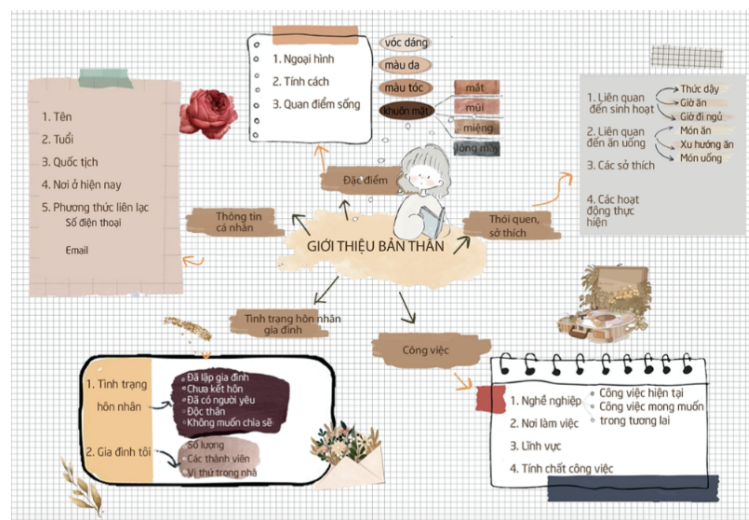


Diagram 2. Introduce yourself



Diagram 3. Present about environmental problems

2.4.2.2. Guiding learners to build mind maps by topic

In previous activities, learners were familiar with mind maps. At this level, learners are guided to practice building mind maps on different topics, from which to apply the finished diagrams for presentations or develop into complete articles. This is also a preparation step

for meeting the test of speaking and writing ability in the competency assessment exam according to the needs of most Vietnamese learners at the University of Education.

In this exercise, the speaker is only given one request without any specific direction. The request can be: create a conversation, describe a situation, or give a talk using a particular group of words. The speaker is free to develop within the framework required by the topic. This type of exercise should be done in groups under the supervision and support of the teacher to avoid digression.

- Instructions on how to draw a mind map.
- Step 1: Identify the main topic of the mind map and brainstorm development ideas.
- Step 2: Identify significant branches related to the topic or idea.
- Step 3: Complete details in each branch.

When guiding learners, it is necessary to focus on the advantages of mind maps in implementing topics such as logic and information connection between big and small ideas. In addition, a practical mind map is coherent, clear, and impressively receptive. The brevity when building a mind map depends on the learner exploiting the keywords to represent the points briefly.

Besides using traditional tools such as pen and paper, we have introduced learners to use software to create beautiful, simple, and easy-to-understand diagrams. Currently, many mind mapping software is easy to install or can be used online, such as X-mind, Coggle, Edraw, Mindmeister, and Canva. The software design is quite handy with the study habits of learners today. Besides, the manipulation, as well as storage, is also more convenient than the traditional method.

\* Using mind maps improves the ability to use words when writing.

A special feature of building mind maps is that learners can active vocabulary in specific contexts. That helps words not to be isolated, not only having a dry meaning but being realized in particular communication situations, helping learners to master words and their meanings in depth.

Mind maps help learners to solve problems, generate creative ideas, memorize new vocabulary, take notes, improve presentation skills, organize tasks and prepare presentations. Mind mapping strategies significantly impact foreigners' Vietnamese presentation and description skills. Not only that, but the ideas of the mind map can also improve the student's writing to become coherent, ensure coherence and complete the requirements of the topic. When learners brainstorm, ideas can come quickly and be written down using keywords with colored lines and arrows included in the software. From there, learners can develop leading presentations in turn. For writing practice, the topic sentence is the main idea of the whole paragraph. All the sentences that will be written in the paragraph are meant to clarify the concept of the topic sentence. In Vietnamese, this sentence acts as a thesis statement. Next, the proof sentence: explain the reason for the topic sentence. Usually, each topic sentence has 2-3 sentences of evidence in a paragraph, and then is an example sentence illustrating the reference sentence. The concluding sentence is located at the end of each paragraph to

summarize each paragraph's main idea. With the suggestions in the mind map, learners can develop the topic in the right direction, avoiding digression or rambling in expression. Therefore, this is an effective way to orient content for foreigners when speaking and writing Vietnamese.



Here are some mind maps that learners have designed and presented themselves on learning topics:

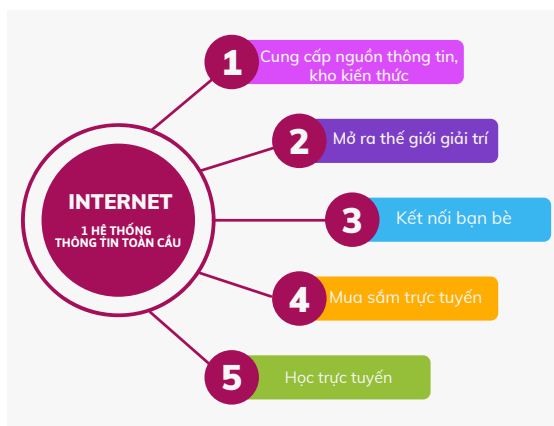


Diagram 4. The topic of internet

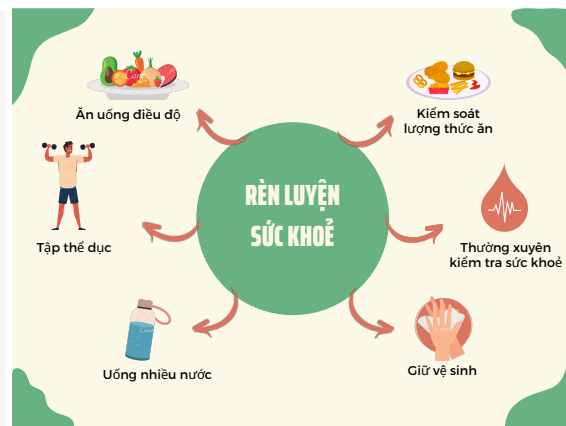


Diagram 5. The topic of health training

In addition to the above main methods, in teaching Vietnamese to international students, we have combined mind map exercises such as mind map exercises to fill in the blanks and group work with online mind maps... and promote the positive for learners.

To have a more reliable basis, we surveyed 76 Lao students studying Vietnamese at *University of Sciences and Education - University of Danang* before and after implementing the forms mentioned above of mind mapping in teaching and obtained the following results as follows:

**Table 1.** Statistics of student survey results

No.	Title	Questionnaire before starting the experiment (%)	Questionnaire after the end of the experiment (%)

		<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Uncertain</i>	<i>Agree</i>
1	Do you like to use mind maps when learning Vietnamese?	23.7	76.3	0	7.9	92.1
2	Do you often use mind maps when learning Vietnamese?	92.1	7.9	3.9	19.7	76.4
3	Mind maps help you expand your vocabulary.	21	98	6,6	32.9	60.5
4	Using mind maps helps you speak and write more confidently.	15.8	84.2	13.2	14.5	72.3
5	Using mind maps helps you learn Vietnamese more effectively.	47.4	52.6	2.6	6.6	90.8

From Table 1, the percentage of students who evaluated the effectiveness of mind maps for vocabulary development for learners changed in a positive direction. The data shows that learners are aware of the role of mind maps. Since then, learners gradually form the habit of using mind maps in self-studying Vietnamese and developing the language in communication.

### 3. CONCLUSION

The mind map is a teaching technique that has existed for a long time and is considered an effective form of foreign language teaching. This article has shown the principles and methods of using mind maps in teaching Vietnamese to foreigners. The initial survey results confirm the positive effects of mind maps in developing the Vietnamese vocabulary of foreigners. Our research results have clearly shown the effectiveness of mind maps in accumulating words quickly, effectively, and scientifically. In addition, mind maps help foreigners develop topics into a system of ideas and organize content coherently and scientifically, create an environment to practice the use of words in the context, and improve the ability to speak and write Vietnamese for foreigners. The application of mind mapping in teaching and learning Vietnamese has received positive learner feedback. It also confirms the efforts to improve the quality of training in Vietnamese as a foreign language at University of Sciences and Education - University of Danang.

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## PHÁT TRIỂN VỐN TỪ TIẾNG VIỆT CHO NGƯỜI NƯỚC NGOÀI BẰNG SƠ ĐỒ TƯ DUY

**Tóm tắt:** Bài viết này phân tích các cơ sở lý luận, từ đó đề xuất cách thức phát triển vốn từ tiếng Việt cho người nước ngoài bằng sơ đồ tư duy và thống kê kết quả khảo sát bước đầu của việc sử dụng sơ đồ tư duy dạy học phát triển vốn từ tiếng Việt cho người NN tại trường Đại học Sư phạm – ĐH Đà Nẵng. Kết quả nghiên cứu đã khẳng định những tác động tích cực của việc sử dụng sơ đồ tư duy trong việc tích lũy từ ngữ một cách nhanh chóng, hiệu quả và khoa học. Bên cạnh đó, sơ đồ tư duy giúp NNN phát triển chủ đề thành hệ thống ý và sắp xếp nội dung một cách mạch lạc, khoa học; tạo môi trường rèn luyện việc sử dụng từ trong ngữ cảnh, nâng cao khả năng nói, viết tiếng Việt cho NNN.

**Từ khóa:** Vốn từ, tích cực hoá, ngôn bản, ngữ cảnh, sơ đồ tư duy, mạch lạc, năng lực.