Key Problems of English Lexicology in Higher Education Institution

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ABSTRACT: The article is devoted to the main problems faced by students of philology in the study of English lexicology. In the university course lexicology is considered as a branch of linguistics that has its own goals and methods of research, main tasks and systematic description of vocabulary according to its origin, development and current use. The paper emphasizes the importance of studying lexicology in the course of higher education institution, because knowledge of lexical units is the basis for the formation of communicative competence and for mastering a foreign language in general. The study of lexicology plays an important role in all types of speech activity (reading, speaking, writing and listening). A sufficient number of programs and textbooks on English lexicology served the material of the article. After analyzing the research material, we can identify the main thematic blocks that are traditionally studied in the course of English lexicology in higher education institution: word formation, semasiology and etymology of the word. The main problems in studying word formation are the distinction between "morpheme" - "allomorph" - "morph", recognizing different affixes, knowledge of which promotes better understanding of texts and the ability to speak succinctly orally and in writing, defining different ways of word formation. In the thematic block "Semasiology" the most problematic issues are the meaning of the word, as well as synonymy and polysemy, due to which a large number of new meanings of words appear in the English language. Studying the problems of the thematic block "Etymology of the word", including the classification of native and borrowed vocabulary, the presence in English of such concepts as etymological doublets, triplets and hybrids, etc., will allow students of philology not only to distinguish English lexemes from borrowed ones, but it will also show them the richness of the English language, its development, dynamics and improvement, it will cultivate respect for the history and language of the English people. Lexicology should be considered the basic of the English language course in the higher education institution, as the formation of lexical competence is an important component in the formation of foreign language communicative competence. In the process of studying the course, students learn new words, phrases, phraseological units that they need to develop skills of their usage in various types of productive (speaking, writing) and receptive (reading, listening) activities.

KEYWORDS*:* Lexicology, higher education institution, word formation, semasiology, etymology.

INTRODUCTION

Modern theory and methods of teaching English, with have a rich history and traditions, have reached a new level of development, characterized by special socio-cultural status of society, specific requirements for the quality of English language teaching in higher education institution (HEI), the transition from traditional to innovative means of professional development of personality, etc. As Chaika (2021) notes in the process of globalization, intensification of intercultural contacts of representatives of different countries, new trends are arising in the development of the world community within the framework of either poly-culturalism or multiculturalism, tolerance of cultural diversity and cultural characteristics of other peoples [4, p. 1962]. Increasingly enough, these trends are manifested in the content plane of the youth upbringing and education of the younger generation in schools and high schools. The development of the methodology is carried out in close connection with other sciences, including philosophy, pedagogy, logic, country studies and various branches of the linguistic cycle (psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, linguoculturology). However, the scientific basis of methods of teaching English is linguistics, because the content of linguistic material depends on the choice of methods, techniques and teaching instruments.

The research is focused on the lexical-phraseological system because it is one of the most complicated language systems. English lexicology is studied in different aspects: general features of lexicology are analyzed through special lexicon [22; 34], through the prism of idioms, proverbs and clichés [3; 33], through word-building or derivation [2; 25] etc. We study lexicology as a complex branch of linguistics in which all components are interconnected.

The purpose of the study links to the main problems of English lexicology in higher education and ways to solve them. In Accordance with the research purpose, it is distinguished to follow the following objectives:

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1) To determine the place of lexicology among a number of other linguistic disciplines;

2) To substantiate the importance of lexicology in the process of learning English by students of philology in HEI; 3) To characterize the problematic issues of each thematic block of the course of lexicology.

METHODOLOGY AND LITERATURE REVIEW
Methodology and material of the study
As regards the research methodology, accounting for the nature of the paper, in the course of the study the following methods and techniques were used:

- The analysis of scientific literature – to describe the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the study in the area of lexicology,
- Method of system analysis – English lexicology is considered as a conceptual system that is a certain structural and logical construction with its own purposes and objectives,
- Synthesis – used in general theoretical and applied aspects of lexicological studies,
- Comparative analysis – allows for identifying similarities and differences between educational accessories and programs on lexicology.

The sources of the research were programs of lexicology of the English language by Harlytska, Chesnokova, Sorokina [5; 12; 26] and tutorials on the theory and practice of English lexicology and lexicography [8; 17; 20].

LITERATURE REVIEW
The study of theoretical and methodological principles of lexicology in higher education is based on scientific generalizations of native and foreign linguists, whose research is devoted to language as a integral branched system in which all components are interconnected and complementary. After all, to master a word means to master its meaning, form (sound, graphic, grammatical), to know the ways of its word formation, the possibility of combining it with other words and using it in a certain context. In addition, the well-known researcher Ter-Minasova (2000) also considers the cultural component as an important aspect influencing the use of the word, because "learning a new foreign word, the equivalent of the native, one should be very careful with its use", "…each word has its own lexical and phraseological compatibility. It is national, i.e. it is peculiar only to a given specific word in a given specific language" [30, p. 52]. Thus, "knowledge of the word contains more than just the relationship between the meaning of the word and its form, knowledge of the word is a versatile concept" [16, p. 21].

The lexical-semantic language level does not exist in isolation, it is in constant connection with other language levels:

Phonological, morphological and syntactic, at the junction of which there are intermediate levels: morphological, word-forming and phraseological. The lexical-semantic system, which became the subject of our study, "is one of the most complex language systems, due to the multidimensionality of its structure, heterogeneity of its units, the diversity of relations reflected in them and openness to constant replenishment of new units (words and meanings). Its peculiarity is also that, unlike other language systems (phonological and grammatical), it is directly related to the objective reality of which it is a reflection" [6, p. 262].

Issues of lexical system of language, in particular its basic unit, unsolved problems of lexicology are raised in the works of Some native and foreign researchers [8; 10; 19; 20], other linguists discuss modern trends in the development of lexicology [23; 28].

There is also a number of philologists who research theoretical and methodological principles of teaching lexicology [1; 24].

For a long time, lexicology was a component of grammar, as a discipline it was formed in the Enlightenment, when in 1765 the French encyclopedists D. Diderot and J. D'Alembert introduced the term "lexicology" [7]; finally lexicology formed by the middle of the XX century during the development of national languages. Lexicology of the English language in general is a little-studied field.

Although there are many works on specific issues in this field, they focus on the history of the English language, and the leading place belongs to historical phonetics and morphology.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
In the content of linguistic education in higher educational institutions lexicology is considered as a part of linguistics that studies the vocabulary of language and the properties of words as the main units of language. After studying and summarizing a number of works, we propose to interpret lexicology as a branch of linguistics that studies the words, morphemes, variable word-groups and phraseological units, and the main task of which is to study and describe the vocabulary of language (origin, development and current use). Quite prolific and perspective for the study of a foreign language, in particular lexicology, became an orientation on the perception of the language not as a formal system that is abstracted from the conditions of its use, but as a means of communication and communicative influence. Formation of lexical skills and experience in a higher educational institution "provides not only taking into consideration the information of the formal-structural nature, but also knowledge of situational, social, cultural and contextual rules, which are adhered to the speakers of the language" [10, p. 287].

In the university course lexicology should be considered as a branch of linguistics that has its own goals and methods of Research, main tasks and systematic description of vocabulary according to its origin, development and current use. In linguistics, it is

customary to distinguish between general (studies vocabulary, not taking into account the specific features of a particular language) and special lexicology (studies the characteristics of the lexicon of a particular language). It is vital to note that the research of methods used in lexicology is closely related to general trends in linguistics. Thus, in linguistics there are two main areas of study of language material: synchronous and diachronic. Synchronous (descriptive) approach deals with the vocabulary of the language that exists at the present stage. According to the diachronic (historical) approach, lexical units are considered from the standpoint of their origin and changes in the process of historical development of language. In this paper we consider the lexical system of the English language in terms of special descriptive lexicology. This approach allows us to explore the functions of words, their characteristics, morphological and semantic structures of the vocabulary of the English language that exists today.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of lexicology in the course of higher institution, because knowledge of lexical Units is the basis for the formation of communicative competence and for mastering a foreign language in general. Most researchers [1; 19; 28; 31] emphasize that the study of lexicology plays an important role in all types of speech activity (reading, speaking, writing and listening). However, teaching lexicology is considered one of the most controversial issues in learning English, because the teacher and student face many problems and challenges: how to teach lexicology, what new methods and techniques must be used to achieve satisfactory results, how much lexical minimum must be mastered on each topic, how to memorize new vocabulary for a long time, so that over time its study does not become useless, what is the meaning of the word to use in context, how to use multicomponent units (complex words, phrasal verbs, constant phrases, idioms and proverbs) etc. All these unsolved problems once again demonstrate the relevance of the study of lexicology as a linguistic discipline in the university course of English.

The following thematic blocks are traditionally studied in the course of English lexicology of HEI: word formation, semasiology and etymology of the word. The section "Word formation" contains information about morpheme and derivational approaches to the study of word structure, morphological structure of the word, types of morphemes and derivations, productive and unproductive ways of word formation. In the section "Semasiology" the types of word meanings (grammatical and lexical, connotative and denotative meaning), causes and results of semantic changes, semantic fields and different types of semantic relations (polysemy, synonymy, antonymy, homonymy) are studied. This thematic block is the most capacious and problematic but at the same time the most interesting (for learning from the point of view of students) due to its diverse content and practicality. In the section "Etymology of the word" students should study not only the etymological features of English vocabulary and stages of its historical development, but also get acquainted with standard variants and dialects of English, regional differences of English-speaking countries, social stratification. Each of the sections has its own discussion questions, the solution of which will help students of philology to better master the material, develop research and creative abilities, as well as consider English as a holistic system in which each component occupies its own gap and related to other components of the systems. Such structured knowledge of the language will be extremely useful for students in their further teaching activities.

In the thematic block "Word-Building" students get acquainted with the minimum semantic unit of language - a morpheme. Like a word, a morpheme is two-sided, i.e. it has a sound form and meaning, however, unlike a word, a morpheme is not an autonomous unit and can arise in speech only as a component of a word. English morphemes are usually arbitrary because there is no natural connection between their sound and meaning. In morpheme analysis there are "three types of morpheme segmentation of words: complete, conditional and defective division" [17, p. 90]. Complete segmentation is a characteristic of a large number of words the morpheme structure of which is quite obvious, i.e. individual morphemes can be recognized even in isolation from the word. Conditional morpheme segmentation is a characteristic of words whose segmentation into morpheme components is questionable for semantic reasons. Defective morpheme segmentation is inherent in words whose constituent morphemes are rarely or never repeated in other words.

In our opinion, in the process of studying word formation it is also important for students to understand and distinguish the concepts of "morpheme", "allomorph" and "morph", which are clearly defined by Plag (2003). The researcher defines a morph as the realization of a morpheme (plural morpheme and possessive case morpheme have the same morph */ -s /*), and allomorph - as variant forms of the morpheme (English indefinite article has 2 allomorphs: *a* and *an*) [21, p. 27]. All morphemes of the English language are divided into free (morphemes that can be independent words, in fact, root morphemes), related (morphemes that must necessarily join other elements) and semi-related (can exist as affixes, and as individual words); root, derivational and inflectional [29]. Learning morphemes is a very important step, because it helps to reveal the structure and meaning of words. After all, most English prefixes, suffixes and bases are written the same in different words and often have a constant meaning and function. Even if students come across unknown words, knowledge of most affixes will allow them to identify their semantic, grammatical, morphological features (for example, the suffixes *-ful* and *-less* are adjective (the first with a positive connotation, the second with a negative one), the suffixes *-er*, *-or* used in the names of professions, the suffix *-ly* is adverbial, with the prefix *un-* antonyms are formed to adjectives, the ending *-s* in verbs indicates that the action is performed by the third person singular). Therefore, a good knowledge of English affixes is favorable to better understanding of texts and the ability to express oneself succinctly orally and in writing because adding some prefixes or suffixes allows you to remove unnecessary prepositions or even sentences needed to convey meaning.

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The problems of morphology and word formation of the English language were studied by different native and foreign Linguistics [6; 13; 18; 27]. In our opinion, the scheme of English word formation methods proposed by Dzharasova (2020) is quite meaningful and structured [8].
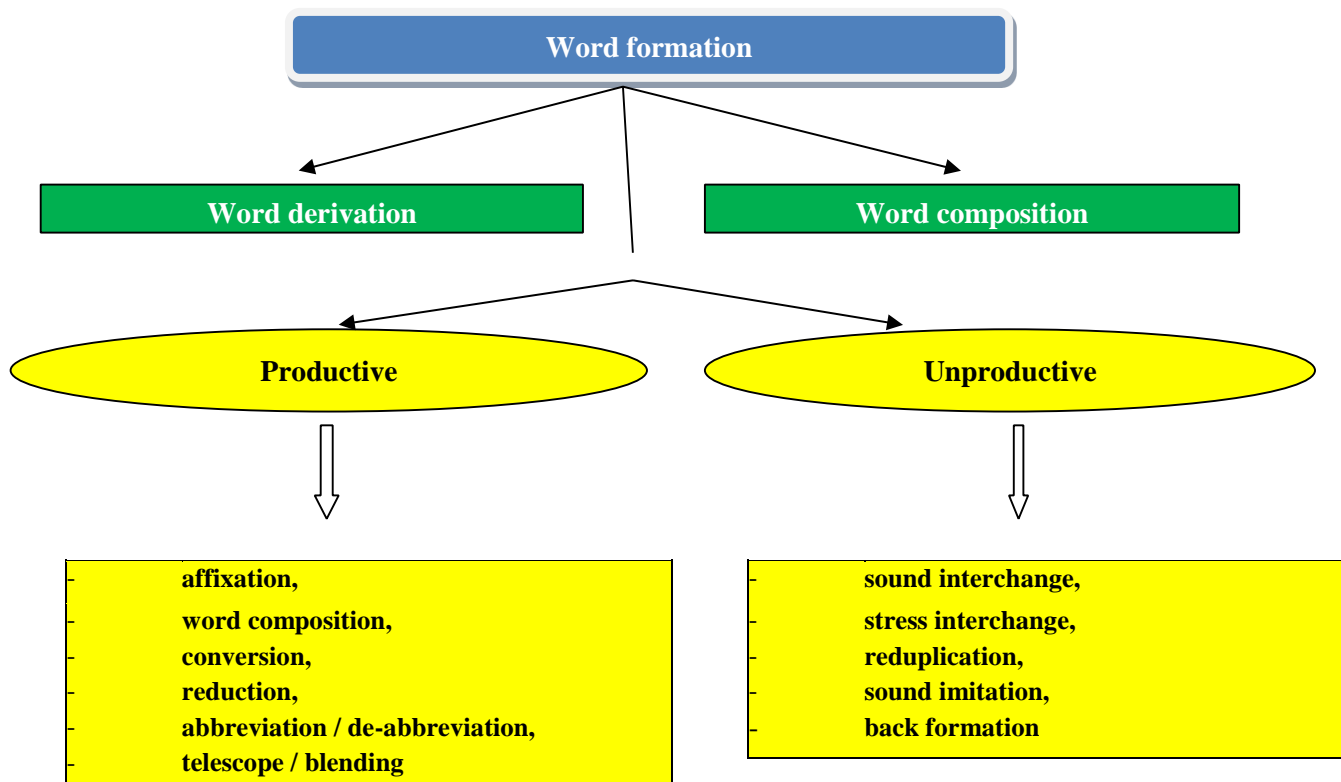

Fig. 1. English word formation methods proposed by Dzharasova.

This structuring makes it easier to memorize all the components of a word formation and allows you to trace its systemic Organization. In addition, in the process of learning word formation, we consider it necessary to focus students' attention more on the ways that are unproductive in their native language, or generally inherent only in English, including blending and back formation. Thus, blending (telescopy / amalgam words / abbreviated words / contamination) is considered one of the new ways of word formation, the essence of which "is to merge the initial element of one word with the final second or abbreviated bases of two words" [11, p. 82]. Most lexemes, formed in this way, in Ukrainian are slang or situational, but in English such a word-formation model is extremely productive (for example: *familyday* (family + holiday) - family vacation, *taxver* (taxi + driver) - taxi driver; *brunch* (breakfast + lunch - brunch or early lunch). Back formation is a process in which a new word is formed by losing the affix of an existing word; there is a morpheme transformation of the word structure (for example: *to baby-sit* from *baby-sitter*, *to burgle* from *burglar*).

In the thematic block "Semasiology" the basic concept with which students of philology are acquainted is the meaning of the Word. It should be noted that meaning is one of the most controversial terms in language theory. Taking into account a number of scientific approaches devoted to the study of the meaning of the word, in the course of HEI we propose to consider two of the most modern and important of them: conceptual and functional theory of meaning. According to conceptual theory, the meaning of a word is considered according to the well-known reference model of the so-called "basic triangle", which consists of three sides: concept (represents the general meaning of the object), sound form (phonetic representation of the word) and the object / referent (object that we see or talk about). The material side of the word (sound form), its meaning and the referent are closely related, because the meaning of the word is a reflection of objective reality in our consciousness, and the word is a form of material existence of the concept. Students should also understand that the phonetic representation of a word is not identical to the meaning of the word, and the concept is not identical to the referent. The difference between meaning and sound form can be demonstrated by comparing words of different languages that have different sound forms but the same meaning (table - table - tisch). The difference between a concept and a referent is that a concept is an abstraction, because it is a category of human cognitive activity; it is the understanding of the object that distinguishes its essential features, and the referent is a specific entity in the world, which the word or phrase denotes [15]. In most modern methods of lexicological analysis words are studied in context. Therefore, according to the functional approach, the meaning of a language unit is studied through its relation to other language units, so the meaning is considered as a function of the word in speech [20; 65].

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It is important for students of philology to learn to distinguish between types of word meanings, namely: lexical (general, Substantive meaning that the word retains within its paradigm) and grammatical (expression of relations between words in speech) and realize that the lexical meaning of a word contains two components: denotative (correlation with objects and phenomena of the surrounding reality), which is obligatory, and connotative (conveys the emotional-evaluative and stylistic coloring of the word) - additional. An important aspect in semasiology is also the modification of meaning, which is manifested in the expansion / generalization (eg., stock - stock of firewood → stock of any goods) and narrowing / specifying the meaning of the word (eg., fiction - figment → a type of book or story that is written about imaginary characters). A notable consequence of semantic changes is also the transfer of meaning, which generates the formation of such stylistic figures as metaphor, metonymy, hyperbole, summer, comparison and so on.

However, the most problematic in semasiology are the issues of synonymy and polysemy, due to which a large number of New meanings of words appear in the English language. Thus, polysemy is a phenomenon that is extremely important for describing the language system and solving practical problems related to adequate understanding of the meaning of the word and its appropriate use. The dominance of polysemantic lexemes is explained by the monosyllabic nature of English words and the predominance of root words. The higher is the frequency of use of the word, the greater is the number of meanings that make up its semantic structure. A special formula known as "Zipf's law" has been developed to express the relationship between the frequency, length and ambiguity of a word. According to this formula, "the shorter the word is, the higher is the frequency of its use; the higher is the frequency, the wider is its compatibility, i.e. the more phrases it can form; the wider is its compatibility, the more values are realized in different contexts" [20, p. 136]. One of the meanings of a polysemantic word qualifies as its lexical-semantic variant; and all lexical-semantic variants constitute the semantic paradigm of the word. The problem with polysemy is the relationship between different lexical and semantic variants. A single semantic component common to all lexical-semantic variants may not exist, but each variant has something in common with at least one of them.

It should be noted that the meaning of a polysemantic word can be classified by the method of naming objects of objective reality, by communicative value and relative frequency of implementation [32, p. 952]. According to the method of naming denotations, there are direct and figurative meanings. The word in a figurative sense not only names a denotation, but also contains in its meaning an indication of similarity with another subject, i.e. there is a metaphorization of meaning. According to the communicative value and frequency of implementation in the polysemantic word there can be distinguished main and subordinate / marginal meaning. The main one is a direct nominative non-derivative value, which is the initial value for the rest of the values, and the subordinate value is the one that is most context-dependent and has limited, selective compatibility, as opposed to the main one.

In addition to polysemy, as it was mentioned above, extremely difficult and dilemma for students is the concept of synonymy, Which is "one of the fundamental phenomena that affects the structure of the vocabulary of the language" [9, p. 106]. English is very rich in synonyms, as it has more than 8,000 synonymous rows, the vast majority of which are enriched by foreign borrowings. A special group consists of American-British synonyms, i.e. the names of the same items that exist, respectively, in the American and British versions of English. In this case, students of philology should know that while comparing the meanings of such words it should be always indicated in what meanings they are compared, because due to the polysemy one and the same word may belong to different semantic groups, acting as synonyms for different words. In addition, "all synonymous rows have a "central" word, which has a denotative meaning common to all synonymous rows" [8, p. 52]. This word is called a dominant synonym, which is characterized by high frequency of use, broad general meaning and combination, lack of connotations.

Another problem is the fact that absolute synonyms are very rare in English. Sometimes you can find words that have almost identical meanings that can be interchanged, at least in some contexts, but according to many linguists, they will still differ in morpheme, phonemic structure, shades of meaning, connotations, style, emotional color, valence and idiomatic use. Therefore, the question of the types of synonyms, which are considered from many positions and approaches, is also quite controversial in linguistics. Taking into consideration the classifications of different researchers [8; 9; 35], in the course of lexicology of HEI we propose to consider the types of synonyms in several areas, which will help students better understand all synonymous correlations: the difference in denotative and connotative components, the possibility of interchangeability in context, the difference in connotations and the degree of synonymy. Thus, according to the criterion of differences in denotative and connotative components, synonyms are divided into ideographic (denoting different shades of meaning or different degrees of a given quality) and stylistic (differ in stylistic characteristics); by the criterion of interchangeability in the context they are divided into complete (members of a synonymous group that can replace each other in any context without changes in meaning), relative (denote different degrees of the same concept and can be replaced only in some contexts) and contextual (context dependent); by differences in connotations – synonyms with the connotation of intensity, duration, manner, reason, additional features, as well as emotional, evaluative and stylistic connotations. According to the degree of synonymy, synonyms are divided into absolute (words that match in all shades of meaning and all stylistic characteristics), close (words similar but not identical in meaning) and partial (meet the criterion of identity, but for various reasons do not meet the conditions in which they are usually called absolute synonyms).

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The last in the list, but not the last in importance is the thematic block "Etymology of the word". In English, only 30% of words are of English origin (lexemes of Anglo-Saxon origin), the rest are borrowed from different languages, so knowledge of etymology will help students of philology not only distinguish these two groups of vocabulary, but it will also show them the richness of English language, its development, dynamics and improvement, it will cultivate respect for the history and language of the English people.

Native English words are divided into Indo-European, which include lexemes which denote family relationships, names of animals and birds, body parts, numerals from 1 to 100, and general-German which include names of natural phenomena, plants, time periods, most adjectives, adverbs and prepositions. Root words "are characterized by a wide range of lexical and grammatical valence, developed polysemy, high word-forming potential and the ability to form phraseological units" [14, p. 115].

Lexemes borrowed from other languages, which make up the vast majority of English vocabulary, differ from indigenous lexical units in phonetic and morphological structure, in their grammatical forms, and in that they are semantically unmotivated. Students should also be aware of several criteria for classifying borrowings. According to the nature of borrowing, lexemes are divided into proper / phonetic borrowings (when the recipient language receives words with preservation of their pronunciation, spelling and meaning), translation loans (metaphrases), semantic (borrowing meanings of words) and morpheme borrowing (borrowing affixes) [8, p. 38]. According to the degree of assimilation, borrowings are classified into fully assimilated (ceased to be considered borrowings), partially assimilated (lexemes that have retained their grammatical, phonetic or graphic forms and semantics) and nonassimilated (barbarism). According to the language from which the borrowing takes place the words are divided into Romanic (Latin and Greek), French, Italian, Spanish, Scandinavian, German, Danish borrowings, etc. [14, p. 115]. Historically, English has absorbed more borrowings than other modern languages. However, it is important for students to Realize that the acceptance of foreign words should not be understood only as quantitative changes. Any import into the lexical system causes semantic and stylistic changes in the words of this language. In addition, borrowing has significantly increased the number of synonymous groups in English. But the role of English words should not be underestimated. The only way to assess the meaning of root words, compared to borrowings, is to consider how they are used in speech, including writing. After all, the vast majority of reading materials contain about 70-80% of root lexemes, which indicates the extreme importance of a relatively small number of native words.

It is also worth knowing about the existence in English lexicology of such concepts as etymological doublets, triplets and hybrids. Etymological doublets are pairs of words that originate from the same etymological source, but differ in phonemic expression and meaning. These can be words borrowed from the same language twice, but in different periods (for example, *travel* - NormanFrench (ancient period) and *travail* - Paris-French (medieval period)), or words borrowed from different languages, but which historically came from one root (for example, *canal* - Latin, *channel* - French). Etymological triplets are groups of three words with a common root (for example, *hospital* - Latin, *hostel* - Norman-French, *hotel* - Paris-French) [20, p. 24]. Hybrids are words formed from morphemes derived from two or more languages (for example, *readable* - has an English root and a suffix derived from the Latin abilis and borrowed from French).

CONCLUSIONS

Summarizing all the above, it makes sense to consider lexicology the basic of the English language course in HEI, as the forming of lexical competence is an important component in the forming of foreign language communicative competence. In the process of studying the course, students learn new words, phrases, phraseological expressions which they need to develop skills of their usage in various types of productive (speaking, writing) and receptive (reading, listening) activities. In addition, knowledge of lexicology will allow students to recognize different types of words by semantic and stylistic characteristics, learn different ways of word formation and combination of lexical units, and allow students to choose lexical units according to context, and, finally, through learning foreign language vocabulary, we involve students in the language and culture of the people whose language is being studied.

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