



The Concept and Important Importance of Intensity in Linguistics

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Abstract: Linguistics, as a scientific discipline, focuses on the study of language and its structure. Within this field, one of the fundamental concepts is intensity, which pertains to the level of strength, force, power, or significance of a linguistic element, be it a word or a sentence. The role of intensity in communication and language comprehension is pivotal, and it holds a crucial position in linguistic analysis and interpretation. In the realm of linguistics, intensity can manifest itself in various ways, including stress, emphasis, and intonation. These linguistic attributes have a profound impact on the meaning and understanding of a linguistic expression, making them indispensable for effective communication and comprehension. This article aims to delve into the concept of intensity in linguistics, highlighting its utmost importance and exploring its implications for the study and analysis of language.

Keywords: linguistic means, attributes, qualities, language comprehension, comparative phraseological units, morphological, syntactic, phonetic methods, verbal representation.

Introduction. In recent years, the linguistic literature has dedicated significant attention to the analysis of linguistic methods used to intensify utterances. This research encompasses a wide range of topics, including the varying degrees of intensity exhibited by adjectives, verbs, and nouns, as well as how the intensity of actions, attributes, qualities, and conditions can be expressed. Additionally, the degree of intensity associated with attributes, the distinction between "graded" and "non-graded" words, and the linguistic means of expressing large and small quantities are also explored.

A particular emphasis is placed on interpreting the semantic content of intensifying adjectives, reinforcing adverbs, and certain fixed phrases. The works delve into the description of verbs and verbal modifiers, specific categories of nouns, intonation patterns, morphological forms, and syntactic methods. Soviet researchers have extensively analyzed relatives and superlatives, comparatives, affixation, word composition, repetition, comparative phraseological units, various classes of intensifying words, linguistic means of representing large and small quantities, and numerous other related issues. Notably, S.A.Shvachko's comparative study on the category of quantity and its connection to intensity stands out among the works on Anglistics from the past decade or so[1]. Furthermore, there are several studies dedicated to exploring the semantics of words and adjectives, particularly their role as intensifiers. The titles of these works reflect the diverse directions of scientific research in this field[2].

Literature review. Various aspects of speech are explored in separate works. These include nouns, adverbs, particles, and modal words as intensifiers. Additionally, there are studies dedicated to syntactic methods and phraseological means of intensifying utterances, as well as the degrees of comparison of adjectives. Furthermore, a significant number of studies analyze and interpret the system of intensification in modern English. The bibliography at the end of the book mentions works related to the issue of intensity in German, French, and other European languages. Notable foreign authors in this field include G.Kirchner, B.Charleston, S.Greenbaum, D.Bolinger, and others. Their recent works directly relate to the subject of our research[3]. In terms of studies conducted on the Russian language, notable works include those by I.K.Kalinina, A.N.Polyansky, V.V.Akulenk, and a comparative study by I.I.Ubin.

Let us direct our attention to the research conducted by E.N.Sergeeva in 1966, which delves into the methods used to express the relative and absolute degree of intensity of quality in English and, to



some extent, in Russian[4]. The study explores various linguistic means, such as flexic, morphological, syntactic, and phonetic methods, to convey the intensity of a particular quality. It also distinguishes between objective and affective comparisons and thoroughly analyzes the tendency to exaggerate the intensity of a feature as a reflection of a specific mood or subjective attitude. Notably, this work by Sergeeva is among the earliest Russian works to introduce the concept of intensity category. In her conclusion, Sergeeva asserts that the relative form cannot be classified under the grammatical category of degrees of comparison, but rather belongs to a distinct category known as intensity, which aligns semantically with the relative form (highlighted by the author) [4]. Additionally, Sergeeva differentiates between emotionality and intensity, emphasizing that emotionality, which represents a subjective assessment, should not be conflated with the expression of intensity. While the former often accompanies the latter, imparting a subjective tone to a statement, it is crucial to recognize that both categories are subjective. Furthermore, due to the inherent connection between intensity and the degree of emotionality, these concepts are always intertwined and mutually influenced.

While acknowledging the differentiation between intensity and emotionality as proposed by E.N.Sergeeva, it is challenging to concur with the author's assertion that "expressivity" refers to the capacity to convey a specific level of intensity [4]. This viewpoint would be tantamount to suggesting that brightness pertains to the ability to convey a certain degree of color. Common sense dictates that, conversely, color is characterized by varying degrees of brightness, and it is not brightness that conveys a particular color. (Nevertheless, it is customary to discuss the intensity of coloring in principle.) The same principle applies to the relationship between the concepts of intensity and expressiveness.

While acknowledging E.N.Sergeeva's differentiation between intensity and emotionality, it is challenging to concur with the author's assertion that "expressivity" refers to the capacity to convey a specific level of intensity. This viewpoint would be tantamount to claiming that color denotes the ability to convey a particular degree of brightness. However, common sense suggests that color is characterized by varying degrees of brightness, and it is not brightness itself that conveys a specific color. (Nevertheless, it is customary to discuss the intensity of coloring.) The same applies to the relationship between intensity and expressiveness, sensitivity, and subjective assessment, which are associated with a high degree of a trait. Based on this premise, four subgroups of adverbs of degree are distinguished. L.Ya.Gerasimova highlights that "intensity" is understood as a manifestation of amplification, representing one of the quantitative characteristics of a trait or process[5]. O.F. Shevchenko explains that the category of intensity implies a semantic category that expresses the degree of manifestation of a feature and emphasizes individual parts of a statement. I.I.Sushchinsky refers to the same phenomenon as "potentiation" (derived from the German word "potenzieren": to enhance, increase, strengthen). G.G.Galich prefers the term "gradual characteristics" when discussing individual parts of speech. D.Bolinger also explores the concepts of "graded" and "non-graded" words (degree and non-degree words) and emphasizes the use of intensifiers as a means of emphasizing utterances in his book[6].

In all instances, the focus is on the measurement of quantity. This broad interpretation of the concept of intensity can be traced back to S.Bally, who defined "intensity" as encompassing "all differences that can be categorized as quantity, magnitude, value, strength, and so on." Bally further expanded on this notion, stating that "quantitative difference, or difference in intensity, is one of the general 'categories' into which we can classify any objects of our perception or thought"[7]. The connection between intensity and the category of quantity serves as the foundation for most recent works addressing this issue. I.I.Sushchinsky emphasizes the idea of quantitative gradations and defines amplification (potentiation) as "a semantic category that reflects a specific portion of objectively existing quantitative gradations"[8]. K.M.Suvorin views intensity as "a particular manifestation of the category of quantity". E.I. Sheigal describes "the category of intensity" as an approximate quantitative assessment of quality, representing a specific aspect of the quantity category that is characterized by an undisclosed (indefinite) quantity[9].



Research methodology. In this book, the author proceeds from the following considerations. Native speakers of the Russian language highly value the word "big" for its obvious expressiveness compared to "large". When used independently, the same word, with its recording expressing and emphasizing the nature of the utterance, appears as a Prebolyio-oh oh! which undoubtedly adds to its expressiveness. However, upon comparing the forms of "very large" and "very big", it becomes evident that the level of expressiveness differs between them: the second option is more expressive than the first. There exists a variation in strength and intensity of expression. Just as in the study of nature and society, where different processes are characterized by varying intensity and quantitative features, the field of linguistics, particularly expressive stylistics, interprets the term "intensity" as the measure or degree of expressivity. It is worth noting that the term "intensity" can also be applied to the objective characteristics of objects in the surrounding world, such as the height, weight, or complexion of a person. The different intensity of these characteristics in the language is expressed either grammatically (through degrees of comparison: high - higher - highest), in word formation (using diminutive affixes, for example: pale - paler), or lexically (smart - talented). All these distinctions highlight the "degree of presence of a trait" or the amount of a trait, which essentially refers to its intensity.

The author of the book acknowledges the unquestionable validity of the universal understanding of the term "intensity". However, within the context of expressive stylistics, the author proceeds to define intensity solely as a gauge of the level of expressiveness. While there exists a certain correlation between the intensity of a tangible object and the intensity of its expressive evaluation by the speaker (such as referring to the Kolomenskaya verzila or versta as genuinely tall), there is no fixed connection between objective reality and the whimsical nature of its subjective verbal representation. Further elaboration on this matter is provided in subsequent chapters.

One of the primary manifestations of intensity in linguistics is through the utilization of stress and emphasis. Stress, in the realm of phonetics and phonology, pertains to the relative prominence or emphasis given to a particular syllable within a word. In the English language, stress plays a crucial role in distinguishing between phonetically identical words. Take, for example, the pair of words "record" and "record," which possess distinct stress patterns and consequently convey different meanings. The first word functions as a noun, whereas the second word serves as a verb, and their stress patterns are pivotal in discerning their differentiation.

Similarly, emphasis is employed to highlight specific words or phrases within a sentence, thereby conveying a particular meaning or expressing a specific attitude or emotion. Emphasis can be achieved through various methods, such as alterations in pitch, volume, or duration. For instance, consider the sentence "I didn't say he took the money." By emphasizing different words within the sentence, the speaker can convey diverse meanings and intentions. "I didn't say he took the money" emphasizes the denial of the statement, while "I didn't say he took the money" emphasizes the specific person being accused.

Analysis and results. Intonation plays a crucial role in linguistics as it contributes to the overall intensity of speech. It encompasses the patterns of pitch changes that occur during communication and serves various communicative functions, including making statements, asking questions, giving commands, and expressing emotions. The way intonation is used can greatly impact the meaning and interpretation of a sentence as it can indicate the speaker's attitude, emotions, or intentions. For instance, a rising intonation at the end of a sentence typically signifies a question, while a falling intonation indicates a statement. Additionally, the placement of stress and emphasis within an intonational pattern can convey additional information such as contrast, emphasis, or importance.

The concept of intensity extends beyond intonation and applies to the fields of semantics and pragmatics as well. In semantics, intensity is associated with semantic strength, which refers to the level of force or emphasis conveyed by the meaning of a word. For example, in English, adjectives can be modified to express different degrees of intensity, such as "big," "bigger," and "biggest," indicating varying levels of size. These modifiers significantly influence the meaning and interpretation of the words they modify by conveying different levels of intensity.



In pragmatics, intensity is linked to pragmatic strength, which pertains to the level of force or emphasis conveyed by a speaker's utterance in a specific context. Pragmatic intensity is crucial for conveying attitudes, emotions, intentions, and speech acts such as requests, promises, and apologies. The degree of pragmatic intensity in a request can vary depending on the speaker's tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language, which can convey the speaker's level of urgency, politeness, or authority.

The significance of intensity in the field of linguistics cannot be overstated, as it plays a crucial role in facilitating effective communication and comprehension. Intensity allows speakers to convey a wide range of meanings, attitudes, emotions, and intentions, while also enabling listeners to interpret and understand these communicative functions. Without the presence of intensity, language would lack variation and clarity, leading to monotonous and ambiguous communication. Consequently, the absence of intensity would greatly compromise the effectiveness of communication.

The study of intensity in linguistics holds important implications for language analysis and interpretation. Linguists examine the intensity of linguistic elements to gain insights into how meaning is conveyed and interpreted across different languages and dialects. By analyzing factors such as stress, emphasis, intonation, and semantic and pragmatic intensity, linguists can uncover the fundamental principles and patterns that govern the use of intensity in language.

Moreover, the concept of intensity in linguistics has practical applications in various domains, including language teaching, speech therapy, and communication disorders. Language teachers can assist their students in developing their communicative skills by instructing them on the effective use of stress, emphasis, and intonation. Speech therapists can collaborate with clients to enhance their ability to convey and interpret pragmatic intensity. Additionally, understanding the role of intensity in speech can aid in the diagnosis and treatment of communication disorders, such as prosodic disorders that impact the appropriate use of stress and intonation.

Conclusion. To summarize, the significance of intensity in linguistics cannot be overstated, as it plays a pivotal role in our communication and comprehension of language. Intensity is evident in various linguistic aspects, including stress, emphasis, intonation, and the strength of semantic and pragmatic elements. It is indispensable for conveying meanings, attitudes, emotions, and intentions. The exploration of intensity in linguistics holds significant implications for language analysis, language instruction, and clinical applications, making it a crucial component of linguistic research and theory. By recognizing and valuing the importance of intensity in linguistics, we can gain valuable insights into the essence of language and its communicative functions.

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