

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INTENSIFIERS IN ENGLISH, UZBEK, RUSSIAN, TURKISH, GERMAN AND KOREAN

Nasirova Xurshedabonu Sharof qizi,

*Student of Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages*

*Faculty of English Philology and Translation Studies*

*E-mail: [nasirovaxurshedabonu5@gmail.com](mailto:nasirovaxurshedabonu5@gmail.com)*

**Abstract.** *This study compares intensifiers in English, Uzbek, Russian, Turkish, German, and Korean, analyzing their structural, semantic, and functional features. It highlights typological differences and similarities in expressing degree, emphasis, and speaker attitude across languages.*

**Keywords:** *intensifiers, degree, comparison, typology, semantics, morphology, pragmatics, emphasis, language, structure.*

**Annotatsiya.** *Ushbu maqolada ingliz, o'zbek, rus, turk, nemis va koreys tillaridagi intensifierlar qiyosiy tahlil qilinadi. Ularning strukturaviy, emantic va funksional xususiyatlari hamda daraja va urg'uni ifodalashdagi farqlari ko'rib chiqiladi.*

**Kalit so'zlar:** *intensifierlar, daraja, qiyoslash, tipologiya, semantika, morfologiya, pragmatika, urg'u, til, tuzilma.*

**Аннотация.** *В статье проводится сравнительный анализ усилителей в английском, узбекском, русском, турецком, немецком и корейском языках. Рассматриваются их структурные, семантические и функциональные особенности выражения степени, усиления и коммуникативного значения.*

**Ключевые слова:** *усилители, степень, сравнение, типология, семантика, морфология, прагматика, акцент, язык, структура.*

**Introduction.** Intensifiers are linguistic elements used to modify the degree of qualities, actions, or states, typically by strengthening or emphasizing meaning. They commonly occur with adjectives, adverbs, and occasionally verbs, contributing to expressive and evaluative language use. Despite their apparent simplicity, intensifiers play an important role in shaping how speakers convey emphasis, attitude, and emotional nuance in communication. Across languages, intensification is expressed through different structural means, depending on typological characteristics. Analytic languages such as English primarily rely on lexical items, while agglutinative languages like Uzbek and Turkish may employ morphological processes, including affixation and reduplication. Fusional languages such as Russian and German combine lexical and morphological strategies, whereas Korean integrates intensification into its system of adverbials and particles. This study aims to compare these patterns across English, Uzbek, Russian, Turkish, German, and Korean, focusing on their structural, semantic, and functional features.

**Literature analysis.** The phenomenon of intensification has been widely studied in linguistics from semantic, pragmatic, and typological perspectives. Researchers such as Paradis (2000) and Lorenz (2002) examined the functional and semantic properties of

intensifiers in English, emphasizing their role in expressing degree, evaluation, and speaker attitude. In Turkic linguistics, Göksel and Kerslake (2005), as well as Rahmatov (2019), analyzed lexical and morphological intensification strategies in Turkish and Uzbek, highlighting the importance of reduplication and agglutinative structures. Comparative and cross-linguistic approaches presented in the works of König (2017) and König & Gast (2012) demonstrate that intensifiers represent a universal linguistic category whose realization varies according to grammatical structure, discourse traditions, and pragmatic norms across languages.

**Research methodology.** This study employs a descriptive-comparative approach to analyze intensifiers in English, Uzbek, Russian, Turkish, German, and Korean. The data were collected from a combination of linguistic corpora, grammar references, and naturally occurring examples in both spoken and written discourse. Representative instances of intensifiers were selected to reflect common usage patterns across different registers, including formal and informal contexts. The analysis focuses on identifying structural types of intensifiers, their syntactic distribution, and their semantic functions. Each language is examined individually and then compared to determine similarities and differences in the expression of intensity. Particular attention is given to how intensifiers interact with adjectives and adverbs, as well as their role in conveying emphasis and speaker attitude. The comparative framework allows for the identification of both universal tendencies and language-specific features.

### **Results and discussion.**

**1. English.** English intensifiers are predominantly realized through lexical adverbs such as *very*, *really*, *extremely*, *so*, *absolutely*. The language demonstrates a strong tendency toward analytic expression, where degree modification is external to the adjective or adverb and is encoded by independent lexical items rather than morphological changes within the word structure. For example, constructions such as *very happy*, *extremely difficult*, *so beautiful* illustrate straightforward scalar modification.

A key characteristic of English intensification is semantic bleaching, a diachronic process in which originally strong lexical items gradually lose their intensifying force. The adverb *very*, once historically associated with “truth” or “veracity,” now functions as a general-purpose intensifier and often requires reinforcement by stronger forms such as *absolutely*, *totally*, *completely*. This reflects a cycle of intensifier strengthening typical in English discourse.

Additionally, contemporary spoken English exhibits innovation and colloquial expansion, where intensifiers such as *literally*, *super*, *insanely*, *ridiculously* are increasingly used. These forms often extend beyond literal semantic boundaries, serving pragmatic and emotional functions rather than purely grammatical ones. This indicates that

English intensification is highly dynamic, influenced by youth language, media discourse, and digital communication.

**2. Uzbek.** Uzbek, as a typical agglutinative language, employs a combination of lexical intensifiers, morphological repetition, and reduplication. Common lexical intensifiers include *juda* (very), *nihoyatda* (extremely), *bag‘oyat* (highly), *rosa* (very much). These elements function as pre-modifiers and are widely used in both formal and informal speech. A particularly productive mechanism in Uzbek is reduplication, which intensifies meaning through repetition of lexical roots: *katta-katta* (very big), *tez-tez* (very often), *yaxshi-yaxshi* (quite good / repeatedly good). This strategy not only strengthens semantic intensity but also adds rhythmic and expressive value to discourse.

Uzbek intensification is strongly tied to pragmatic and emotional expression, especially in spoken language. Speakers frequently use intensifiers to convey subjectivity, emphasis, or interpersonal stance. Compared to English, Uzbek relies less on borrowed intensifiers and more on native lexical resources and structural repetition, reflecting a more internally motivated system of intensification.

**3. Russian.** Russian exhibits a hybrid intensification system, combining lexical adverbs, derivational morphology, and evaluative affixation. Frequent lexical intensifiers include *очень* (very), *крайне* (extremely), *совершенно* (completely), *совсем* (entirely). However, Russian stands out for its rich morphological means of intensification. Prefixation plays a crucial role, particularly with prefixes such as *пре-* and *сверх-*, as seen in words like *прекрасный* (very beautiful), *сверхинтересный* (extremely interesting). These morphological devices embed intensification directly into word formation, allowing compact semantic expression.

Furthermore, Russian makes extensive use of diminutive and augmentative suffixes, which contribute not only to size modification but also to emotional and evaluative intensity. For instance, suffixes can express affection, exaggeration, or contempt depending on context. This makes Russian intensification highly expressive and semantically layered, integrating both grammatical and pragmatic meanings.

**4. Turkish.** Turkish intensification is characterized by its agglutinative structure and high morphological productivity. Lexical intensifiers such as *çok* (very), *aşırı* (extremely), *bayağı* (quite) are widely used in standard discourse. However, Turkish also relies heavily on reduplication and phonological emphasis.

Reduplication forms such as *güzel güzel* (very nicely / emphatically nicely) and *büyük büyük* (very large / in large quantities) serve to reinforce intensity while maintaining rhythmic structure. In spoken Turkish, phonetic lengthening and stress modification are also used informally to emphasize meaning. Another important feature is the strong context dependency of intensifiers, where meaning often shifts based on pragmatic setting. For instance, *çok güzel* may range from neutral admiration to strong

emotional emphasis depending on intonation and discourse situation. This highlights the interaction between syntax, phonology, and pragmatics in Turkish intensification.

### 5. German

German intensification is primarily realized through lexical adverbs and compounding mechanisms. Common intensifiers include *sehr* (very), *ziemlich* (quite), *äußerst* (extremely), *total* (totally). The language maintains a relatively structured and syntactically regulated system, where intensifiers typically precede adjectives or adverbs.

A distinctive feature of German is its productive use of compound adjectives and prefixes to encode intensity, such as *hochinteressant* (very interesting), *superschnell* (super fast), *brandneu* (brand new). These formations allow intensification to be embedded directly into lexical structure, reducing the need for external modifiers.

Compared to English, German tends to exhibit greater semantic precision and lower colloquial inflation, meaning that intensifiers are used more conservatively and systematically. This reflects a tendency toward grammatical stability and lexical clarity, especially in formal registers.

### 6. Korean

Korean expresses intensification primarily through adverbs, particles, and syntactic repetition, rather than morphological modification. Common intensifiers include *매우* (very), *정말* (really), *너무* (too/very), *아주* (very). These elements function at the sentence or phrase level rather than within word morphology. A notable feature of Korean is the use of repetition for pragmatic emphasis, as in *너무 너무 좋아* (very, very good). This repetition strengthens emotional force and is particularly common in spoken and informal registers.

Korean intensification is also closely tied to speech level and politeness strategies, meaning that intensity is not purely semantic but also social. The choice of intensifier can reflect respect, intimacy, or emotional stance. Unlike Indo-European languages, Korean integrates intensification into discourse-level pragmatics, where meaning is shaped by context, speaker intention, and relational dynamics rather than purely lexical or morphological means.

The analysis shows that intensifiers are a universal linguistic category, but their expression varies significantly across English, Uzbek, Russian, Turkish, German, and Korean due to typological differences. English relies mainly on lexical adverbs such as *very*, *really*, *extremely*, and shows frequent semantic bleaching, where intensifiers lose strength over time and are replaced by stronger forms (*absolutely*, *totally*). It is highly flexible in informal usage, allowing new intensifiers like *super* and *literally*. Uzbek and Turkish, as agglutinative languages, use both lexical intensifiers and structural strategies

such as reduplication (katta-katta, tez-tez; güzel güzel). Intensification here is closely tied to emotional and pragmatic emphasis in spoken discourse. Russian and German combine lexical and morphological strategies. Russian uses prefixes (пре-, сверх-) and evaluative suffixes, making intensification highly expressive. German relies on adverbs (sehr, äußerst) and compounding (hochinteressant), with a more structured and precise system. Korean differs by using adverbs, particles, and repetition, with intensification strongly influenced by pragmatics and politeness levels rather than morphology.

Overall, intensification ranges from lexical (English), to morphological (Uzbek, Turkish, Russian), to structured compounding (German), and finally to discourse-pragmatic encoding (Korean), showing that while the function is universal, its realization is language-specific.

**Conclusion.** Study shows that intensifiers are a universal linguistic feature, but their realization differs across languages due to typological structure. English mainly uses lexical adverbs, while Uzbek and Turkish rely on lexical items combined with reduplication. Russian and German use both lexical and morphological strategies, making their systems more hybrid and structured. Korean expresses intensification mostly through adverbs and discourse-level context, with strong pragmatic influence. Although the function of intensifiers is the same across languages, expressing degree and emphasis, their forms and usage patterns vary significantly. This confirms that intensification is a shared linguistic category with language-specific realizations, shaped by grammar, morphology, and pragmatics.

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