

Amplifiers in International Journal Articles Ten Years on and Now

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Abstract

In the last ten years on, amplifier in academic prose has been formulated by Biber et. al (1999). This study tends to compare amplifier by Biber et. al (1999) with current circumstance in international journal articles. This study used a corpus taken from 400-journal articles published by Elsevier across science disciplines i.e., social sciences, health sciences, life sciences, and physical sciences. The finding exclusively shows that the academic prose specifically in the international journal article usually uses *so, very, highly, strongly, clearly, fully, potentially, statistically, too, quite, completely, entirely and extremely* as a vehicle to influence reader's reception. In contrast, in the last ten years, Biber et al. (1999) argue that the most common amplifiers in academic prose are *very, so, too, extremely, highly, completely, entirely, and fully*. According to those findings, it can be summarized that language is fluid, and amplifier adverb is slightly shifted from ten years on to current years. Moreover, these results are also expected to assist students, and teachers to be able influencing reader's perception by using amplifiers in their academic writing.

Keywords: amplifier/intensifier adverb; four-science disciplines; international journal articles

1. Introduction

All of the texts both written and spoken text always contains a small mode of expressive devices. These expressive devices usually were called as amplifier (Quirk, 1985; Biber et. al., 1999; Hinkel, 2003) or intensifier (Pérez-Paredes & Díez-Bedmar, 2012). Partington (1993) describes that amplifier is a vehicle for impressing, praising, persuading, insulting, and generally influencing the listener's reception of the message. Therefore, it can be summarized that amplifier/intensifier is important to exploit hyperbole in any genre text, emphasize messages, and convey meaning both spoken or written text (i.e., conversation, academic prose, news, or fiction).

Amplifier/intensifier in text can be reflected in adverb of quality, adjective or verb (De Devitiis, Mariani, & O'Malley, 1989). However, amplifier/intensifier in academic prose is important but rarely being used and uneven. Amplifier/intensifier found more frequently in spoken text (i.e., conversational discourse), but rarely occur in academic prose (Biber et al., 1999). Philip (2008) also found that amplifier/intensifier especially intensifying adverb are problematic for learner since the learner tends to over-used same intensifying adverb (i.e: quite, very, and really), but rarely used other intensifying adverb (i.e., highly, deeply). The usage of intensifying adverb is also problematic for EFL across nations, as Pérez-Paredes (2010) found that intensifying adverbs are a problem for Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish, and German young adult learners of English.

Schmitt (2010) suggests that EFL does not need to achieve native-like vocabulary sizes in order to use English well. EFL students should be better to learn some measurable, necessary and reasonable vocabulary to understand various English communication forms. In this case, amplifier/intensifier in academic prose is unarguably important to be measured. Although amplifier/intensifier adverbs are discussed in many studies (i.e., Biber et.al., 1999; Hinkel, *Journal of Pragmatics*; Pérez-Paredes & Díez-Bedmar, 2012), none of the research related common amplifier/intensifier adverb in journal article of four science disciplines in order to assist academic writing in making hyperbolic statement. Therefore, this research aims to figure out current amplifier/intensifier adverb in academic journal article and compare it into amplifier/intensifier of academic prose based on Biber et al., (1999).

2. Method

The corpus in this study is derived from international journal article by Elsevier. Elsevier was chosen as one of the top three of academic publishing houses of journals and books (Chatterton & Maxey, 2009). The corpus data were classified based on Elsevier's classification of four science disciplines (i.e., social sciences, health sciences, life sciences, and physical sciences). To retain the corpus data "academic only", there are several criteria were set. First, the journal selected must be open access journal. Second, the journal should have impact factor. Third, the year publication is around 2010-2015. Fourth, the journal article is in form of English journal based. In compiling the corpus, 100 articles for each science disciplines were selected. The final corpus data in this study are 400 journal articles or 2.954.587 word tokens were processed to figure out the amplifier/intensifier adverb in academic journal article (See Table 1).

Table 1: Corpus data Distributions

Science Disciplines	Number of Articles	Word Tokens
Health Sciences	100	467.549
Life Sciences	100	672.202
Physical Sciences	100	892.680
Social Science	100	922.156
Total	400	2.954.587

3. Finding

To figure out the amplifier/intensifier adverb, several steps were being followed. First, the software called AntConc (Anthony, 2014) is utilized. AntConc (Anthony, 2014) is used to extract the word list with their frequencies. In this processed, words with minimum frequencies of 100 were selected, and 3489 words were found. Second, in order to extract the adverb, those 3489 word lists were processed in CLAWS Tagger, in which can be accessed in <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/claws/trial.html> (Rayson). As the results, 155 adverbs were remained from CLAWS Tagger. Third, the adverb of quality or the amplifier/intensifier adverb was selected manually.

The final amplifier/intensifier adverbs in this international journal article are only 13 words, those are: *so, very, highly, strongly, clearly, fully, potentially, statistically, too, quite, entirely, completely, and extremely*. In contrast, in the last ten years, Biber et al. (1999) argue that the most common amplifiers in academic prose are *very, so, too, quite, extremely, highly, completely, entirely, and fully*. The finding shows that some of amplifier/intensifier from 1999 are slightly shifted in which can be seen in Table 2 (See Table 2).

Table 2: Amplifier/intensifier Ten Years on and Now

Amplifier/intensifier Distributions			
No	Both Biber et al. (1999) and Current Research	In Biber et al. (1999) only	In this Current Research only
1	<i>Very</i>	-	<i>Strongly</i>
2	<i>So</i>		<i>Clearly</i>
3	<i>Too</i>		<i>Potentially</i>
4	<i>Quite</i>		<i>Statistically</i>
5	<i>Extremely</i>		
6	<i>Highly</i>		
7	<i>Completely</i>		
8	<i>Fully</i>		
9	<i>Entirely</i>		

According to Table 2, there are 8 amplifier/intensifier adverbs are constant from 1999 to 2018, those are *very*, *so*, *too*, *quite*, *extremely*, *highly*, *completely*, and *fully*. That amplifier/intensifier can be considered as common amplifier/intensifier adverb or general amplifier/intensifier adverb in academic prose. Biber et al. (1999) established that *very*, *so*, and *too* are common amplifier/intensifier adverb in academic prose. Moreover, *so* is also highly used in current journal articles and makes up about 2030 hits. *Very* is also highly obtained, and makes up about 1354 hits. In contrast, *too* surprisingly only has 309 hits. Several collocates of *too* in this journal article are *small* (21), *much* (17), *high* (13), *large* (21), and *many* (10). Biber et al. (1999) argue that *too* is describing the degree of a characteristic as excessive relative to the requirements of a particular set of circumstances (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: The examples of *too* usage in International journal articles

caseecontrol sample sizes studied to date are **too small to detect** particularly small-effect risk compliance, reported a sample size that was **too small to draw** any definite conclusions.29 The is lost because the photon energy is **too small to excite** the absorber (E < Eg), , even then the cross section limits are **too small to explain** any of the proposed the precision of the experiment and were **too small to have** clinical relevance. Tibial Exter symbols. Glass spheres that would have been **too small to have** retained at least 90% of boxes. Glass shards that would have been **too small to have** retained at least 90% of rates. This is because the animals are **too small to inject** with weighed quantities of number the population of each cluster becomes **too small to make** meaningful comparisons. For the

The rest words such as *quite*, *extremely*, *highly*, *completely*, and *fully* are also included in Hinkel (2003) amplifier’s formulations as scalar lexical intensity. The example of the usage of *extremely* and *highly* as scalar lexical intensity can be seen in the examples 1 and 2 below :

1	phosphoric acids, perhaps, so this control is	extremely	difficult	if not at times impossible	H0161
2	the response of the material is	highly	sensitive	to fornix lesions	P0133

The functions of *extremely* and *highly* in example 1 and 2 are to stress the scalar lexical intensity of the adjective (i.e., *difficult*, and *sensitive*). The words *extremely* and *highly* absolutely give an emotive impact of adjective. In example 1, it says, “phosphoric acids, perhaps, so this control is extremely difficult if not at times impossible”. The amplifier/intensifier *extremely* tends to strength the difficulties in controlling *phosphoric acids* in health science disciplines.

In fact, amplifier/intensifier adverb found in current research slightly more complex. There are four amplifier/intensifier adverb only found in this research, and it is absent in Biber, et. al. (1999). The amplifier/intensifier adverbs were statistically only found in this current research, such as *strongly*, *clearly*, *potentially*, and *statistically* (See Table 3).

Table 3. Amplifier/intensifier adverb only found in this current study

No	Amplifier/intensifier Adverb	Frequency	Collocation
1	<i>Strongly</i>	465	<i>Agree (40), associated (20)</i>
2	<i>Clearly</i>	423	<i>Demonstrate (21), show (11)</i>
3	<i>Potentially</i>	382	<i>Important (13)</i>
4	<i>Statistically</i>	362	<i>Significant (259), insignificant (13)</i>

According to Table 3, the highest frequency amplifier/intensifier adverb only found in this current study are *strongly* (465), *clearly* (423), *potentially* (283), and *statistically* (362). Different with *potentially* and *statistically* as scalar lexical intensity of the adjective, *strongly* and *clearly* are scalar lexical intensity of the verb. *Strongly* commonly used to strength verb such as *agree*, and *demonstrate*. Meanwhile, *clearly* usually used to emphasize verb such as *demonstrate* and *show*.

4. Conclusion

According to those findings, it can be summarized that language is fluid, and amplifier adverb is slightly shifted from ten years on to current years. Amplifier/intensifier in academic writing is totally important in stressing, impressing, praising, persuading, insulting, and influencing the academician's reception of the message. Therefore, a research related amplifier/intensifier need to be explored and monitored deeply. By composing amplifier/intensifier adverb is expected to be able assisting students, and teachers in their academic writing.

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