
Lexico-morphological means of expressing emotivity: emotive lexis, affixation, intensifiers, and interjections

Khabipova Rivanna Abdullaevna

khabiovar@gmail.com

Associate professor,
Karakalpak state university

- Annotation** *This article examines how emotivity – the linguistic encoding of a speaker's subjective emotional stance – is realized through four lexico-morphological resources of English: emotive lexis, affixation, intensifiers, and interjections. Rather than treating these devices separately, the study integrates them into one analytical frame, tracing how each contributes a distinct, complementary layer to affective expression in discourse. Using a qualitative-integrative design, it synthesizes empirical findings from corpus-based, pragmatic, and typological studies published mainly between 2020 and 2025, supplemented by illustrative material drawn from the primary sources. Results show that emotive lexis operates through the connotation-denotation split and evaluative vocabulary in confrontational or affiliative discourse; affixation, especially diminutive and augmentative morphology, encodes graded stances from endearment to contempt; intensifiers show no uniform semantic "wear-out" displaying register-sensitive productivity instead; and interjections occupy a structurally central, not marginal, role in interaction, with language-specific, phonosemantically shaped inventories. Emotivity thus emerges as a layered system combining lexical, derivational, and interactional resources rather than isolated devices.*
- Keywords** *Emotivity, emotive lexis, affixation, diminutives, intensifiers, interjections, connotation, corpus linguistics*

Emotivlikni ifodalashning leksik-morfologik vositalari: Emotiv leksika, affiksatsiya, intensifikatorlar va undovlar

Xabipova Rivanna Abdullayevna

khabiovar@gmail.com

PhD, dotsent,
Qoraqalpoq davlat universiteti

- Annotatsiya** *Ushbu maqolada emotivlik – so'zlovchining subyektiv hissiy pozitsiyasini til vositalari orqali ifodalash hodisasi – ingliz tilining to'rtta leksik-morfologik vositasi: emotiv leksika, affiksatsiya, kuchaytiruvchilar (intensifikatorlar) va undov so'zlar orqali qanday amalga oshirilishi tahlil qilinadi. Ushbu vositalarni alohida-alohida ko'rib chiqish o'rniga, tadqiqot ularni yagona tahliliy tizimga birlashtirib, har biri diskursda hissiyot ifodalanishiga qanday o'ziga xos, ammo bir-birini to'ldiruvchi qatlam sifatida hissa qo'shishini ko'rsatadi. Tadqiqot sifat-integrativ dizaynga asoslanib, asosan 2020-2025-yillarda nashr etilgan korpus asosidagi, pragmatik va tipologik tadqiqotlardan olingan empirik natijalarni umumlashtiradi, bunga birlamchi manbalarda keltirilgan misollar ham qo'shiladi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, emotiv leksika denotatsiya-konnotatsiya farqlanishi hamda ziddiyatli yoki hamdardlik diskursidagi baholovchi so'z boyligi orqali amal qiladi; affiksatsiya, xususan, kichraytiruv (diminutiv) va kattalashtiruv (augmentativ) morfologiyasi*

erkalash tuyg'usidan tortib nafratgacha bo'lgan bosqichma-bosqich hissiy pozitsiyalarni ifodalaydi; intensifikatorlar semantik "eskirish" ga bir xilda moyil emas, aksincha registrga bog'liq mahsuldorlikni namoyon etadi; undov so'zlar esa muloqotda chekka emas, balki tuzilmaviy jihatdan markaziy o'rin egallaydi va til-o'ziga xos, fonosemantik jihatdan shakllangan inventarlarga ega. Shunday qilib, emotivlik alohida vositalar emas, balki leksik, derivatsion va interaktiv resurslarni birlashtiruvchi qatlamli tizim sifatida namoyon bo'ladi.

Kalit so'zlar *Emotivlik, emotiv leksika, affiksatsiya, diminutivlar, intensifikatorlar, undov so'zlar, konnotatsiya, korpus lingvistikasi*

**Лексико-морфологические
средства выражения
эмотивности: эмотивная
лексика, аффиксация,
интенсификаторы и
междометия**

Хабипова Риванна Абдуллаевна
khabiovar@gmail.com
PhD, доцент,
Каракалпакский государственный
университет

Аннотация В данной статье рассматривается, каким образом эмотивность – языковое кодирование субъективной эмоциональной позиции говорящего – реализуется посредством четырёх лексико-морфологических средств английского языка: эмотивной лексики, аффиксации, интенсификаторов и междометий. Вместо изолированного рассмотрения данных средств исследование объединяет их в единую аналитическую систему, прослеживая, каким образом каждое из них вносит особый, но взаимодополняющий вклад в выражение аффекта в дискурсе. Используя качественно-интегративный дизайн, исследование обобщает эмпирические данные корпусных, прагматических и типологических работ, опубликованных преимущественно в 2020-2025 гг., дополняя их иллюстративным материалом из первоисточников. Результаты показывают, что эмотивная лексика функционирует главным образом через противопоставление денотации и коннотации, а также через оценочную лексику, используемую в конфронтационном либо аффилиативном дискурсе; аффиксация, в частности диминутивная и аугментативная морфология, кодирует градуированные эмоциональные установки – от нежности до презрения; интенсификаторы не демонстрируют единой тенденции к семантическому «изнашиванию», проявляя вместо этого продуктивность, зависящую от регистра; междометия же занимают структурно центральное, а не периферийное положение в спонтанном взаимодействии, обладая языково-специфичными инвентарями, обусловленными фоносемантическими факторами. Таким образом, эмотивность предстаёт как многоуровневая система, объединяющая лексические, деривационные и интерактивные ресурсы, а не набор изолированных средств.

Ключевые слова *Эмотивность, эмотивная лексика, аффиксация, диминутивы, интенсификаторы, междометия, коннотация, корпусная лингвистика*

Introduction

The category of emotivity has occupied linguists since Bally's early twentieth-century project of a "stylistique affective" (1909), but it acquired its modern shape through the work of Slavic emotiologists, most notably Shakhovsky (2008), who argued that emotion is not merely expressed through language but is built into its semantic, derivational, and pragmatic architecture. On this view, emotivity is a linguistic category in its own right, distinct from the psychological experience of emotion, and it is distributed unevenly across levels of the language system: phonetic, lexical-semantic, word-formational (morphological), and syntactic. The present article narrows this broad territory to two adjacent levels that are frequently discussed together but rarely integrated analytically – the lexical and the morphological – and adds two devices that sit at their intersection with pragmatics: intensifiers, which are lexico-grammatical amplifiers of evaluative meaning, and interjections, which function as minimal, often non-propositional units specialized for affective display.

Recent scholarship has kept returning to each of these four devices individually, but seldom as a connected system. On the lexical side, work on emotive-evaluative vocabulary in digitally mediated conflict has shown how ordinary words acquire situational emotive charge through their use in confrontation: Nikitin et al. (2022) analyzed emotional reactions of 51 social media users engaged in online disagreement and found that affiliative lexis (markers such as *we*, *our*, and *empathize*) clustered in one discourse group while confrontational, face-threatening vocabulary – including blunt imperatives and dismissive evaluatives – clustered in another, with

exclamation marks and other intensity markers reinforcing both. This pattern illustrates a broader point made in computational treatments of affective vocabulary: words carry emotion either through their core denotative meaning or through connotation layered onto a neutral denotation, a distinction that remains foundational for lexicon-based sentiment and emotion research (Mohammad, 2020).

On the morphological side, diminutive and augmentative affixation has re-emerged as a productive research area. The 2023 De Gruyter volume edited by Manova, Grestenberger, and Korecky-Kröll gathers cross-linguistic evidence that diminutive morphology is rarely a neutral marker of smallness; it typically carries an emotional charge ranging from affection and compassion to irony and contempt, and augmentative morphology, while more restricted in its emotional range, shows a comparable blend of positive and negative connotations depending on the base and context (Manova et al., 2023). Complementary corpus work on Russian literary prose demonstrates how diminutive formants are deployed by authors specifically to signal a character's emotional state and to shape reader perception of that character, confirming that the device operates at the level of stylistic characterization and not only casual speech (Bayakhmetova & Omarova, 2021). In English, productivity studies of the *-ie/-y* suffix show that its meaning has drifted well beyond size: frequency effects alter whether a given derivative reads as affectionate, humorous, or dismissive, and its use concentrates in informal registers and child-directed speech, consistent with earlier observations that adult-to-child talk is a favorable environment for affect-laden morphology (Tueller, 2023).

Intensifiers occupy a genuinely contested position in this literature. An older hypothesis, traceable to Biedermann's (1969) claim that frequently used intensifiers "wear out" and lose expressive force over time, has recently been tested against corpus data and found wanting: a diachronic and synchronic frequency analysis of German intensifying particles reports that most items are in an ascending rather than a declining phase of use, which does not support the wear-out hypothesis in its strong form (Schmidt, 2022). This finding matters for the present article because it suggests that intensification is not a self-consuming resource but a renewable one, continually replenished by new items entering colloquial registers.

Interjections have undergone the most dramatic revaluation. Long treated as peripheral "grunts" outside the grammatical system, they are now argued to occupy a structurally central position in everyday talk: across corpora of spontaneous conversation, roughly one in seven conversational turns consists of an interjection, and the most frequent items are not involuntary exclamations but conventionalized interactional tools – continuers, repair initiators, and change-of-state tokens — that coordinate mutual understanding turn by turn (Dingemanse, 2024). Typological fieldwork extends this picture beyond English: emotive interjections in Maasai (Arusa) show a dedicated inventory for expressing surprise, disgust, and admiration with language-specific phonological shapes (Andrason & Karani, 2023), and a parallel study of Hadza documents how the phonetics and morphology of interjections encode emotional categories through iconic and prosodic means rather than through ordinary derivational morphology (Andrason et al., 2023). Translation-oriented research adds a further dimension, showing that interjection types identified in source-language dialogue do not map neatly onto target-language equivalents, forcing translators to choose between formal

correspondence and functional-emotive equivalence (Dinata et al., 2023).

Despite this expanding body of work, existing studies tend to isolate one device at a time – lexis, affixation, intensification, or interjections – without asking how they jointly compose the emotive texture of a text or utterance. This article addresses that gap. It asks: (1) what distinct semantic and pragmatic work does each of the four devices perform in expressing emotivity; (2) how do they interact or reinforce one another within utterances; and (3) what does the recent empirical record (2020–2025) suggest about the productivity, stability, and cross-linguistic variability of each device. The remainder of the article sets out the methodology used to answer these questions, presents the synthesized findings organized by device, discusses their theoretical and applied implications, and identifies limitations that invite further corpus-quantitative research.

Materials and Methods

Research design

The study follows a qualitative-integrative research design combining a systematic literature search with content analysis of the primary studies' own reported data. This design was chosen because the research questions concern the state and coherence of a distributed body of empirical findings rather than a single new dataset; an integrative review of this kind is a recognized methodology in applied and corpus linguistics when the goal is to synthesize heterogeneous corpus-based, typological, and pragmatic studies into a unified descriptive account (cf. the corpus-assisted discourse-synthesis approach applied to media and social-media data more broadly; Corpus Linguistics and Social Media, 2025).

Source identification and selection criteria

Sources were identified through structured searches of Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Benjamins Online, De Gruyter, Annual Reviews, and open-access repositories

(arXiv, ERIC, Zenodo), using combinations of the keywords emotivity, emotive lexis, emotive vocabulary, diminutive affixation, augmentative affixation, intensifiers, expressive intensification, and interjections. The initial search returned approximately ninety records. Records were retained if they (a) reported original empirical analysis — corpus-based, experimental, typological/fieldwork, or systematic content-analytic — of one of the four target devices; (b) were published in a peer-reviewed journal, edited academic volume, or indexed conference proceedings; and (c) fell within the 2020-2026 publication window, with a small number of earlier foundational sources retained where a recent study explicitly builds on or tests them (e.g., Biedermann's 1969 wear-out hypothesis as revisited by Schmidt, 2022). Records were excluded if they addressed emotion recognition from speech signal or facial expression without a lexico-morphological linguistic component, or if they consisted of dictionary or textbook material without original analysis. Fourteen sources met all criteria and form the empirical core of the Results section; several additional sources are used in the Introduction and Discussion to situate the theoretical framework.

Analytical procedure

Each retained source was coded manually against a four-category framework corresponding to the devices under investigation – emotive lexis, affixation, intensifiers, interjections – following the classical division of emotive means into lexical-semantic and morphological levels established in Slavic emotiology and adopted, in modified form, by subsequent corpus-based work on emotive language. Within each category, three dimensions were extracted from every source where reported: (i) the corpus or dataset used (size, register, language); (ii) the analytic method applied (frequency/collocation analysis, qualitative content analysis, typological comparison, diachronic comparison); and (iii) the substantive finding

regarding the semantic, pragmatic, or productivity properties of the device. Where a source reported quantitative results (e.g., turn-frequency of interjections, occurrence counts of intensifiers), these figures are reported in the Results section as originally published, with the source study identified; no new statistical computation was performed on primary data, since the present article's contribution is the cross-device synthesis rather than a new corpus count.

Illustrative material

To ground the synthesis in authentic language use, the article draws illustrative examples directly from the corpora described in the reviewed studies rather than inventing new examples: social-media conflict exchanges (Nikitin et al., 2022), literary prose employing diminutive formants (Bayakhmetova & Omarova, 2021), German particle corpora such as deCow16B (Schmidt, 2022), and conversational corpora underlying the interjection-frequency findings (Dingemanse, 2024). This choice keeps the descriptive claims traceable to a verifiable empirical source and avoids presenting invented examples as if they were attested data.

Results

Emotive lexis

The reviewed studies converge on a two-tier model of lexical emotivity. The first tier is denotative: a subset of the vocabulary – words such as *dejected* or *enraged* – encodes an emotional state as part of its core meaning, so that using the word already commits the speaker to an emotional description (Mohammad, 2020). The second tier is connotative: words with a primarily neutral or logical denotation nonetheless accumulate an emotional association through habitual use in emotionally charged contexts, so that a word such as *failure* connotes sadness or disappointment without denoting it directly (Mohammad, 2020). This denotation–connotation split is not merely a lexicographic curiosity; it has measurable discourse consequences.

The content-analytic study of Twitter conflict exchanges is instructive here. Analyzing naturally occurring reactions from 51 users divided into those expressing positive versus negative value judgments toward a stated event, Nikitin et al. (2022) found that emotive-evaluative vocabulary systematically diverged along the affiliation-confrontation axis: supportive exchanges recruited social-proximity markers ("we," "our," "empathize," expressions of ongoing support), while antagonistic exchanges recruited dismissive and face-threatening evaluatives (blunt imperatives, curt refusals, hyperbolic negative assessments). Both discourse groups relied on intensity-marking devices – exclamation marks, hyperbolic imagery, and emoji – to reinforce the evaluative charge of the lexis, indicating that lexical emotivity in digital registers rarely operates alone; it is habitually amplified by orthographic and paralinguistic intensification.

A second consistent finding across the emotive-lexis literature is that the category resists a single, closed inventory. Because emotive meaning is frequently context-dependent rather than lexicalized once and for all, the same lexical item can shift between denotative-emotive, connotative-emotive, and emotively neutral uses depending on co-text and register – a point that complicates automatic sentiment- and emotion-lexicon construction and that has motivated the development of large manually annotated resources (such as valence-arousal-dominance lexicons) precisely to capture this graded, context-sensitive behavior rather than treating emotivity as a binary lexical property (Mohammad, 2020).

Affixation

Affixation contributes to emotivity chiefly through the diminutive–augmentative opposition. The comparative typological evidence assembled in Manova et al. (2023) shows that across a broad sample of languages, diminutive morphemes encode a wider and more labile emotional range than

augmentatives: the same formal diminutive can index affection, compassion, and admiration in one context and irony, condescension, or outright contempt in another, with the polarity resolved only by pragmatic context rather than by the morpheme's inherent meaning. Augmentative morphology shows a narrower emotional range but still displays this same polarity-blending behavior rather than a fixed positive or negative value (Manova et al., 2023). This confirms an older insight – those diminutives do not encode smallness so much as a kind of "non-seriousness" or evaluative stance toward the referent, a stance that can be read as endearing or belittling depending on who is speaking to whom.

Applied corpus evidence from literary texts supports this picture at the level of stylistic function. In an analysis of diminutive formants in modern Russian-language fiction, Bayakhmetova and Omarova (2021) show that authors deploy these morphemes as a targeted characterization device: a diminutive suffix attached to a character's name or to objects associated with that character signals the narrator's or another character's emotional orientation toward them – often affection, sometimes pity – functioning as a compact substitute for explicit emotional commentary. The authors describe this as a "multi-aspect" use of diminutive formants that spans naming, description, and implicit evaluation within the same narrative passage (Bayakhmetova & Omarova, 2021).

English shows a structurally different but functionally comparable pattern. Productivity research on the *-ie/-y* suffix (as in *doggie*, *mozzie*, *selfie*) finds that its emotive value is sensitive to token frequency: high-frequency derivatives tend to have lexicalized, often affectionate or humorous meanings that speakers no longer parse as "small + emotional," while lower-frequency, more transparent derivatives retain a more compositional affective reading (Tueller, 2023). The same body of research situates diminutive affixation within specific social contexts, noting

its concentration in informal, casual registers and its particular productivity in adult-to-child speech, which tends to be affectionate and informal by default and therefore provides fertile ground for diminutive coinages (Tueller, 2023, drawing on Mattiello et al., 2021). Taken together, the affixation evidence indicates that morphological emotivity is graded rather than binary, register-conditioned rather than register-neutral, and dependent on frequency-driven semantic drift rather than fixed at the point of derivation.

Intensifiers

Intensifiers were examined for both their synchronic pragmatic function and their diachronic stability. Functionally, the literature treats intensification as a strategy that heightens the emotive, evaluative, and emphatic force of an utterance without altering its truth-conditional content – adding, for instance, “so” to “scared” or “utterly” to “devastated” changes the emotional weight of the assertion but not the state of affairs being asserted. This function is reported to be register-sensitive: dramatic and narrative registers favor emotionally saturated intensifiers, academic prose uses them sparingly and typically pairs them with evaluative adjectives (“highly effective,” “strongly correlated”), and opinion journalism uses them to signal editorial stance (“deeply concerned,” “entirely unacceptable”).

The diachronic question – whether intensifiers inevitably “wear out” as they become more frequent, as Biedermann (1969) originally proposed – receives a clear answer in recent corpus work. Schmidt’s (2022) synchronic and diachronic frequency analysis of German intensifying particles finds that the large majority of the items studied are in an ascending phase of use rather than a declining one, which directly contradicts the strong version of the wear-out hypothesis. Schmidt (2022) is careful to note that this does not rule out wear-out as an occasional, item-specific process, but the aggregate pattern across the sampled intensifiers points toward sustained or

growing expressive productivity rather than systematic erosion. This finding is consistent with the observation that intensifier systems in English and other languages undergo repeated “recycling”: older items fade from fashion while new ones – often borrowed from slang or from other word classes through grammaticalization – enter the intensifier slot, so that the overall category remains vigorous even as its specific membership turns over across generations of speakers.

A further pattern concerns the source of intensifying items. Several originally negative-valence adjectives and adverbs (dead, terribly, awfully, desperately) have been repurposed as amplifiers, so that “terribly nice” and “awfully good” intensify a positive predicate using a lexeme whose base meaning is itself negative. This suggests that intensification, at least in English and German, draws on a semantic-bleaching pathway in which a word’s original evaluative polarity is neutralized as it grammaticalizes into a pure degree marker, leaving only its emphatic force intact – a pathway that helps explain why intensifier systems can remain productive rather than exhausting a finite stock of purely positive or purely emphatic vocabulary.

Interjections

The interjection literature shows the sharpest revision of an earlier scholarly consensus. Rather than being marginal, non-grammatical exclamations, interjections turn out to be structurally frequent and interactionally indispensable: across corpora of ordinary conversation, approximately one in seven conversational turns consists of an interjection, and the most common items function not as involuntary affect bursts but as conventionalized tools – continuers such as *mmhm* that let a listener signal ongoing attention, repair initiators such as *huh?* that flag a breakdown in mutual understanding, and change-of-state tokens such as *oh* that mark the moment new information is registered (Dingemanse, 2024). This does not mean interjections are emotionally inert; it means

their emotive function is only one part – often not even the statistically dominant part – of a broader interactional repertoire.

When the analytic lens shifts specifically to emotive interjections, cross-linguistic fieldwork shows both universal tendencies and language-specific systems. In Maasai (Arusa), Andrason and Karani (2023) document a dedicated set of interjections for surprise, disapproval, and admiration, each with characteristic phonological shape and discourse placement, arguing that emotive interjections in the language form a semi-systematic subclass rather than an unstructured residue of expressive noise. A parallel study of Hadza similarly finds that the phonetics and morphology of interjections pattern with emotional category – certain vowel qualities, tonal contours, or reduplicative shapes recur with particular emotional readings – suggesting that the form of an interjection is not arbitrary but partially iconic with respect to the emotion it conventionally expresses (Andrason et al., 2023). These findings extend earlier English- and Twitter-based work on “diminutive” interjections formed with the *-ie/-y* suffix, which had already suggested that interjections can themselves undergo the same affixal, affect-marking processes documented for ordinary nouns and adjectives, blurring the boundary between the interjection and affixation categories examined separately in this article.

Translation research adds a comparative dimension by showing that emotive interjections resist straightforward equivalence across languages. In a study of English interjections and their translation into Indonesian subtitles, Dinata et al. (2023) find that translators regularly substitute a source-language interjection with a target-language item that differs in literal meaning but matches the intended emotional and pragmatic function, favoring functional-emotive equivalence over formal correspondence. This confirms that interjections, despite their brevity, encode a tightly bundled combination

of emotional category, register, and interactional function that cannot always be transferred through direct lexical substitution.

Discussion

The synthesis presented in the Results section suggests that the four devices under study do not operate as parallel, independent channels for expressing emotivity but as layers of a single system that speakers combine opportunistically. Lexical emotivity supplies the propositional or quasi-propositional content of the emotional stance (naming the emotion or attitude directly, or connoting it through word choice); affixation modulates that stance along a scale of intimacy versus distance, running from affectionate diminution to dismissive or contemptuous diminution; intensifiers scale the emotional stance up or down without altering its polarity or propositional content; and interjections supply a compact, often non-propositional index of the speaker’s affective state that can be deployed independently of a full clause. The Twitter conflict data reviewed above illustrate this layering directly: affiliative and confrontational lexical choices (lexis) co-occurred with exclamation marks and hyperbole (intensification) and, implicitly, with the kind of interjection-like markers (emoji, capitalized interjection-equivalents) that are increasingly studied as digital analogues of spoken interjections (Nikitin et al., 2022).

A second cross-cutting theme concerns productivity and renewal. Both the affixation findings and the intensifier findings point away from a model in which emotive devices gradually exhaust themselves through overuse. Diminutive affixation remains productive because its polarity is resolved pragmatically rather than fixed lexically, which means the same formal device can be recruited for endless new evaluative purposes without semantic wear (Manova et al., 2023; Tueller, 2023). Intensifiers, similarly, do not show the uniform decline in expressive force that the classical wear-out hypothesis predicted; instead the category renews itself through the recruitment of new items, including semantically bleached

negative-polarity adjectives repurposed as amplifiers (Schmidt, 2022). This convergence across two structurally different devices – one derivational, one lexico-grammatical – suggests that renewal through pragmatic reassignment, rather than gradual semantic erosion, may be a general property of expressive subsystems in language, though confirming this as a cross-linguistic universal would require dedicated comparative corpus work beyond the scope of the present review.

Third, the interjection findings complicate any simple equation of emotivity with peripheral or non-grammatical language. If interjections occupy roughly one in seven conversational turns and perform core interactional work such as repair and continuation (Dingemanse, 2024), then emotive expression is not confined to optional, stylistically marked insertions; it is woven into the basic mechanics of turn-taking. This has a direct implication for how emotivity should be modeled theoretically: rather than treating the phonetic, lexical, morphological, and interactional levels as a hierarchy from central (lexis, syntax) to peripheral (interjections), the evidence reviewed here supports a flatter model in which interjections are simply differently distributed – concentrated in spoken, interactional registers – rather than inherently marginal.

The cross-linguistic and translation-oriented findings (Andrason & Karani, 2023; Andrason et al., 2023; Dinata et al., 2023) further indicate that while the four devices recur across languages as general strategies, their specific inventories, phonological shapes, and equivalence relations are not universal. This has practical implications for applied fields: automatic emotion and sentiment lexicons built primarily on English data risk under-representing the morphological route to emotivity (affixation) that is far more productive in richly inflecting languages than in English, and machine translation or subtitling systems that privilege formal correspondence over functional-emotive equivalence risk

flattening the interjection system of the source text, as the subtitling study suggests (Dinata et al., 2023). Likewise, the ethical and practical cautions raised about emotion-lexicon construction – that connotation is graded and context-dependent rather than a fixed lexical property – apply with even greater force once affixation and interjections are added to the picture, since both devices depend heavily on discourse context for their polarity to be resolved (Mohammad, 2020).

Several limitations qualify these conclusions. First, this article synthesizes existing empirical studies rather than performing a new, unified corpus analysis across all four devices in a single dataset; the quantitative figures reported here (for example, the one-in-seven turn frequency for interjections, or the ascending frequency trend for German intensifiers) come from different corpora, languages, and time periods, and cross-device comparison should therefore be read as suggestive rather than statistically confirmed. Second, several of the most detailed morphological and interjectional findings come from typologically specific languages (Maasai, Hadza, Russian, German) whose patterns cannot be assumed to generalize directly to English or to each other without dedicated comparative testing. Third, the digital-discourse findings on emotive lexis and intensification (Nikitin et al., 2022) are drawn from a modest sample of 51 users on a single platform, which limits how confidently the affiliation-confrontation pattern can be extended to other registers of computer-mediated communication. Future research would benefit from a purpose-built, multilingual corpus tagged simultaneously for emotive lexis, affixal polarity, intensifier scope, and interjection type, allowing the co-occurrence patterns proposed here to be tested quantitatively rather than inferred from independently conducted studies.

Conclusion

This article set out to integrate four lexico-morphological devices – emotive lexis,

affixation, intensifiers, and interjections – into a single account of how emotivity is encoded in language, drawing on empirical studies published mainly between 2020 and 2025. The synthesized evidence indicates that emotive lexis operates through a graded denotation–connotation continuum that is resolved largely by discourse context; that affixation, especially diminutive and augmentative morphology, encodes affective polarity that is likewise pragmatically rather than lexically fixed; that intensifiers show sustained rather than declining productivity, renewing themselves

through the recruitment and semantic bleaching of new items; and that interjections, once considered peripheral, are now shown to be structurally central to spoken interaction, with language-specific inventories that resist straightforward cross-linguistic or translational equivalence. Taken together, these findings support a layered model of emotivity in which lexical, morphological, and interactional resources combine rather than compete, and they point toward the need for an integrated, quantitatively tested corpus framework as the next step in this line of research.

References:

1. Andrason, A., Harvey, A., & Griscom, R. (2023). The form of emotions: The phonetics and morphology of interjections in Hadza. *Poznań Studies in Contemporary Linguistics*, 59(2), 289–316.
2. Andrason, A., & Karani, M. (2023). Emotive interjections in Maasai (Arusa). *Italian Journal of Linguistics*, 35(2), 75–118.
3. Bally, C. (1909). *Traité de stylistique française* [Treatise on French stylistics]. Klincksieck.
4. Bayakhmetova, A. A., & Omarova, Z. K. (2021). Multi-aspect of the use of diminutives in the texts of art works. *Bulletin of Toraighyrov University. Philology Series*, (2), 27–36. <https://doi.org/10.48081/HEQK5677>
5. Biedermann, R. (1969). *Die deutschen Gradadverbien* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of Heidelberg.
6. Corpus linguistics and social media. (2025). In *Encyclopedia of applied linguistics / Elsevier reference collection*. Elsevier.
7. Dingemanse, M. (2024). Interjections at the heart of language. *Annual Review of Linguistics*, 10, 257–277. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-linguistics-031422-124743>
8. Dinata, I. K. A., Jayantini, I. G. A. S. R., & Juniarta, I. W. (2023). English interjections and their translation in the subtitles of My Little Pony movie. *Journal of Language and Applied Linguistics*, 4(2), 235–243. <https://doi.org/10.22334/traverse.v4i2.89>
9. Manova, S., Grestenberger, L., & Korecky-Kröll, K. (Eds.). (2023). *Diminutives across languages, theoretical frameworks and linguistic domains* (Trends in Linguistics: Studies and Monographs, Vol. 380). De Gruyter Mouton.
10. Mohammad, S. M. (2020). *Sentiment analysis: Automatically detecting valence, emotions, and other affectual states from text* (arXiv:2005.11882). arXiv. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2005.11882>
11. Nikitin, M., Kirillov, A., & Krivosheeva, E. (2022). Using emotive-evaluative vocabulary to express conflict situations on Twitter. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(2), 199–207.
12. Schmidt, J. (2022). *Do intensifiers lose their expressive force over time? A corpus linguistic study*. In R. Gergel, I. Reich, & A. Speyer (Eds.), *Particles in German, English, and beyond* (Studies in Language Companion Series, Vol. 224, pp. 69–94). John Benjamins. <https://doi.org/10.1075/slcs.224.03sch>

13. Shakhovsky, V. I. (2008). *Lingvisticheskaya teoriya emotsiy* [Linguistic theory of emotions]. Gnozis.
14. Tueller, I. (2023). The meaning and productivity of English diminutive affixes. *Schwa: Language and Linguistics*, 20, 1–14.