

heavy atom effect

The enhancement of the rate of a spin-forbidden process by the presence of an atom of high atomic number, which is either part of, or external to, the excited molecular entity. Mechanistically, it responds to a spin-orbit coupling enhancement produced by a heavy atom.

Source:

PAC, 1996, 68, 2223 (*Glossary of terms used in photochemistry (IUPAC Recommendations 1996)*) on page 2245