L.A. Aminova* ⓘ

Master in Pedagogy, Expert-Teacher,
Toraighyrov University,
Pavlodar, Kazakhstan

R.Zh. Saurbayev ⓘ

Candidate of Philological Sciences, Professor,
Toraighyrov University,
Pavlodar, Kazakhstan

F.T. Yerekhanova ⓘ

Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor,
Central Asian Innovation University, Shymkent, Kazakhstan
siliconoasis702@gmail.com

THE SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF SYNTACTIC STRUCTURES THAT EXPRESS IDENTITY ASSESSMENT IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

Abstract. *The article explores the intricate semantics of syntactic structures that convey evaluations of identity in contemporary English. Through a thorough exploration of these structures, it becomes evident that the meanings associated with grammatical verbs expressing identity assessments are diverse and can be categorized into pairs of interconnected meanings. These meanings align consistently with the interpretations of other linguistic elements that convey similar semantic ideas. At the heart of articulating subjective evaluations of identity lies a collection of key structures featuring verbs like "to see," "to appear," "to happen," "to chance," "to turn out," and "to prove." Surrounding this central area are linguistic items possessing comparable semantic characteristics, situated more peripherally. An analysis of specific instances where these structures manifest in literary texts reveals their potential as a powerful stylistic device, enriching the narrative with nuanced layers of meaning.*

Keywords: assessment identity, comparison, combinations, grammatical constructions, lexical-semantic variations, narrative effects, syntactical structure, syntax, semantics

Introduction. One notable feature of modality expression in contemporary English is the subsystem dedicated to the subjective evaluation of identification. This subsystem includes a variety of modal verbs, such as "seem," "appear," "happen "chance," "turn out," and "prove." These verbs share similarities with modal expressions of possibility and certainty, including "may," "might," "perhaps and "probably". However, unlike these modal expressions, the semi-modal verbs convey a lexical meaning that signifies visible or apparent possibility. They typically form combinations with the infinitive forms of various meaningful verbs and function similarly to modal verb constructions in terms of their syntactic roles.

For illustration:

"He may have gone there to save time" (Galsworthy, OR, 153).

"This public enemy, however, turned out to have been born in Swedish Haven" (O'Neill, H, 73).

A comparative analysis of these linguistic units allows for the classification of service verbs into three subgroups, differentiated by their degree of identification assessment. This characteristic increases from left to right as follows:
- seem - happen - turn out
- appear - chance - prove

The second and third subgroups, in contrast to the first, demonstrate varying effectiveness in identifying actions, properties, states, or situations expressed in infinitive constructions. In Russian, verbs such as "to appear" and "to happen," which derive from the term for "possibility" (unexpected event), differ in form based on their aspect: imperfective versus perfective.

The first group comprises the verbs "seem" and "appear." These verbs represent a lexico-semantic variant with the implication of "to seem" and share a close semantic relationship, as illustrated by their compatibility range.

Both "seem" and "appear" convey similar meanings about the subject being described and the ensuing verb. They are typically interchangeable substantial alteration in meaning. For example, "I seemed to feel some strength in him" is to "He appeared to have that great opportunity had been missed."

In contrast, verbs such as "happen," "chance," "turn out," and "prove" reflect different levels of certainty. These verbs have a greater certainty compared to seem" or "appear," and their use in place of the latter would in a significant shift in meaning. For instance, "I seem to his name" differs considerably from "I happen to know his name."

The second and third subgroups associated with the lexico-semantic variation of "turn out" also represent a binary opposition at a subsequent categorization level. The members of this opposition vary significantly in their semantic feature of unexpected occurrence. The verbs "happen" and "chance" imply randomness, while "turn out" and "prove" introduce an element of surprise. Consequently, the invariant meanings of these terms are articulated in distinct manners, acknowledging their differences.

From a lexico-semantic perspective, these terms may be grouped into pairs of synonyms that capture various aspects and nuances of a similar concept, thereby representing distinct lexical-semantic variations. The concept of "synonymous amplitude," as proposed by Favorin (1953), aptly describes the degree of divergence among these pairs of synonymous expressions within the same paradigm.

It can be stated that members of this series communicate their meaning based on the quantity of a specific characteristic they possess, and they are organized in order of increasing intensity of that characteristic.

Conditions and methods of research. The concepts of identity and similarity have been extensively examined across various disciplines, including philosophy, logic, and linguistics, over many centuries [Goncharov; Ferrari and Carrara; Kabzhan et al] [1-5]. Novoselov (2000) advocates for a more thorough exploration of these concepts, highlighting their integral role in the processes of acquisition and understanding. The journey of knowledge acquisition begins with observation and comparison, necessitating the identification of

similarities and differences. In the field of linguistics, a systemic approach to the logical structure of reality hinges on the identification and categorization of characteristics. These categories and structures embody crucial conceptual features and relationships within a language framework.

Numerous studies have scrutinized the mechanisms through which identity and similarity are articulated in different languages. The formation of identity is inherently a product of comparison. Scholars generally contend that the semantic dimension of this concept can be categorized into three interrelated domains: identity, similarity, and difference [Benítez-Burraco; Fenters, 6]

Arutyunova elucidates the functioning of identity statements, asserting that "The terms used in such statements must meet the requirement of semantic consistency. Both terms must be referential and possess equal denotative meanings, although their connotations may vary" (1976, 323). These attributes distinguish identity relationships from predicative relationships, which connect denotative and connotative meanings.[7-8]

A diverse array of linguistic tools is available for articulating the identity of entities; specific syntactic structures are essential to this endeavour. Identity statements are generally formulated using a connecting structure comprised of two nouns [Atkinson et al; Murphy et al; Carston] [9-11]

Arutyunova's research (1999) facilitates the integration of identification and description functions, which are executed through predication. She posits that the semantics of identification emphasize the spatial dimension of the world, whereas the predicate is organized along the temporal axis. These dimensions are not mutually exclusive but are interconnected through the processes of transposition and exchange, resulting in statements characterized by varying degrees of abstractness (1999, 10).

Within the classification framework of Magirovskaya (2017) a transitional type that amalgamates identification and characterization through predication is embodied in propositions of feature identity. The principal components of this semantic structure include:

1) Fragments of reality exhibiting identical features

2) Features that are synonymous with these fragments

3) The concept of identity is associated with the formation of these fragments

4) A parameter that pertains to the aspect or domain referenced by the identical features [12]

Shatunovsky identifies several means of conveying feature identity in the Russian language (1996):

- Lexical indicators, including terms such as "same," "identical," "equivalent," "equal," and "corresponds"

- Pronominal indicators, exemplified by "the same" and "same" concerning size, colour, or characteristic

- Comparative constructions, such as "Vasya is as clumsy as a bear"

- Metaphoric expressions, for instance, "You are a rude animal"

- Noun and verb groups with genitive or comparative comparisons, such as "an arrow flying" or "sea-green cloth."

The following techniques were employed in the study:

- Component analysis: This technique is used in academic papers to examine the constituent parts of linguistic structures. It seeks to identify the minimal semantic units and their meanings.

- Formalization: This procedure assists in organizing linguistic elements and establishing a logical hierarchy. It may be utilized in works that concentrate on various connections within language.

- Logical comparison: This is the primary method employed for philological reasoning to validate theoretical conclusions. It enables us to contrast various scholars' perspectives, identify strengths and shortcomings, and verify hypotheses. [13]

Research results and discussion. The pairs of synonyms that have been identified through the method of opposition correspond with other methods of expressing perception. This type of evaluation is commonly referred to as an intellectual or logical evaluation, which is based on a rational comprehension of the object in question.
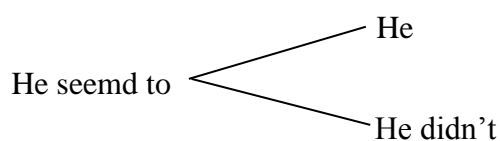
For example, words such as *"believe"*, *"consider"*, and *"regard"* are analogous to the verb *"seem"* and the adverb *"appear"*. Poutsma notes that *"seem"* often approximates *"think"* in meaning (1974). According to the definitions provided in explanatory and synonymous dictionaries, certain verbs, verbal phrases, and other expressions can be considered synonyms for *"seem"*, *"appear"*, *"happen"*, *"chance"*, *"turn out"*, and *"prove"*. These can be classified into three semantic categories based on their correlation with the pairs of opposites. Further information can be found in Table I.

A comprehensive examination of the identified sets of synonyms reveals a diverse nature of connections and relationships between these terms. Despite the shared semantic feature, we can speak of semantic proximity between words, yet it is impossible to assert their equivalence.

Compared to *"seem"* and *"appear"*, the verbs *"believe"*, *"regard"*, and *"consider"* convey a higher degree of confidence. Phrases such as *"is not considered"* and *"is not regarded"* indicate that the speaker reports on a characteristic of the subject rather than expresses their own opinion. Rather, they refer to the opinion of others, akin to the use of *"rumoured"* and *"considered"* in the Russian language.

The use of *"seem"* and *"appear"* implies a lack of certainty in a sentence or broader phrase, akin to other constructions involving probabilistic assessment. The subject being evaluated correlates with two potential scenarios.

The reasons for the subjective assessment are either objective signs of the referent or signs that the speaker assumes and have no objective basis in the referent.

The accurate interpretation of identification evaluation expressions can be achieved through their examination in a wider context. For instance, when the signals used by a speaker do not correspond to reality (they lack an objective basis in the entity being referred to):

Silent, with something of scorn in his smile, Soames seemed to notice nothing, but now and again his eyes, finding that which they sought, would fix themselves on a point in the shifting throng and the smile die off his lips. (Galsw., MP, 185)

Verena seemed to let the matter die; yet very often, sitting at the supper table, her eyes paused ponderingly on

Dolly... by then, I suppose, her plan had taken shape, but she did not make her first move until summer. (Cap., GH, 38)

Table. № 1

Three semantic categories

Pairs of synonyms	Verbs and phrases synonymous with them	A common semantic feature
I.	1. to believe to regard to consider (to be) to one's mind (to be) in one's opinion	to appear in one's mind or opinion
seem appear	2. to look to exhibit to manifest	to have, to give the appearance or impression of being
	3. may maybe perhaps be probable be likely	to be apparently true
II. happen chance	to occur by chance on occasion to turn up to take place	to have the luck or occasion
III. turn out prove	to result to eventuate to be found to be	to be in the end

Consider the following example, in which the objective characteristics of a given object form the basis for a subjective evaluation.

He seemed to have lost all power of will; he was like an obedient child. (Maugh., MS, 154)

The presence of a shared component in the meaning of *"have"* gives the impression of being

semantically similar to the verbs *"seem"* and *"appear"*, which brings them closer to the group of words II such as *"look"*, *"exhibit"*, and *"manifest"*. For example:

He seemed to be the only person she knew who approved of the convicts. (Mit., GW, 744)

By the time he was seventeen, he had earned a small fortune and he looked to be one of the best-dressed young men in town. (Sar., S, 51)

The words that are closest in meaning to *"seem"* and *"appear"* are the

words in the third group - *"may"*, *"maybe"*, *"perhaps"*, and *"probably"*, which express uncertainty and doubt. These verbs can be combined with modal verbs, which is one example of how semantic connections between words can be seen in their co-occurrence in text.

It can be said that these combinations create a tertiary layer of modality in sentences, because *"seem"* and *"appear"*, in addition to their grammatical modal meaning, also add additional meaning to the overall semantics of the sentence. For example:

At that moment I couldn't seem to remember the story, only the image of her riding away on a horse. (Gap., BT, 125)

Of all the people connected with this thing, I must seem to do least, don't you think? (Gold., S, 6)

He became aware that no matter how quickly now the time might seem to both of thorn to have passed there still was thirty years of unshared experience between them. (Bar., D, 165)

For example, consider the case of turn out.

In a billion light years it might turn out that Lord was a disembodied man with a long whiteboard; He might also turn out to be Jank Lucas. (O'Har., I, 234)

The verbs *"appear"*, *"happen"*, *"chance"*, *"turn out"* and "prove" are much less commonly combined with modal verbs. This is explained by the nature of their semantic meaning, which involves accidental or unexpected effectiveness.

The words "happen" and "chance" are correlated with the expressions "on occasion" and "occasionally", which have a semantic feature of luck or opportunity in their meaning. For example:

It seemed to me that perhaps Antigone came very near perfection. In the modern drama I think no one on occasion approached it more closely than Racine. (Maugb., SU, 164)

The only definite reaction that I can recall of that period was a reflection that occurred to me when I was walking along Panton Street one morning. Passing the Comedy Theatre, I happened to look up and saw the clouds lit by the setting sun. (Ibid., 121)

The verbs *"happen"* and *"occur"*, as full-meaningful in the event characterization function, are generally recognized as synonyms. They share the common semantic feature of having the connotation of *"luck"*, which allows them to be considered synonyms, but they differ from each other in many ways.

The peculiarity of their use stems from the unique semantics of each verb. A characteristic feature of *"happen"*, both in its full meaning and semi-meaning, is that it indicates the unique nature of events, contrasting with their regularity. *"Occur"*, on the other hand, characterizes actions as regular. This distinction in meaning between the two verbs makes them complementary expressions.

Syntactically, the constructions that correspond to these verbs can be expressed using combinations of *"seem"*, *"appear"*, *"happen"*, *"chance"*, *"turn out"*, and *"prove"* with a nominal element. Comparing the two sets of sentences reveals a clear semantic and syntactic distinction between them.

However, this perspective is to fully endorse as the inclusion or omission of the verb " *be*" alters the sentence's structure and meaning. The infinitive form of the verb in these constructions plays a specific role in highlighting the significance of the connecting word,

adding a percept dimension to the sentence. For example:

The cottage, when at last he found it, proved to be fully as picturesque as he had imagined. (Hux., AH, 194)

But his advice did not prove sound. (Gr., QA, 162)

Another stylistically marked form in the correlative series of constructions under consideration is their negative form without an auxiliary verb. This is a remnant of the older form of verbal negation. For example:

He seemed not to mind – indeed, he was happy in the wealth of affection she bestowed. (Dr., JG, 225)

But this man seemed not to care for rules and evidently enjoyed talking of things no one ever talked about. (Mit., GW, 181)

Compare this negative form with the auxiliary verb "do":

But Melly and Pittypat did not seem to mind. (Mit., GW, 159)

It was all over, they said, all finished, and they did not seem to care much or want to talk about it. (Ibid., 477)

The auxiliary verb form in an emphatic statement can be compared to a regular negative sentence.

He did seem to enjoy playing with Wade and often brought him presents. (Mit., GW, 667)

Cases of combining emphasis and negation in the same evaluative-identifying sentence are interesting. For example:

.., and never did he seem to roam the moors for the sake of their soothing silence... (Br., JE, 44)

In the process of the development of the English verb system, as is well known, auxiliary verbs have been used to form analytical forms and the form of negation with the post-verbal "not" has gradually replaced the traditional form.

Fendel explains this change in negation by the non-independent and semi-connected nature of these verbs, as well as their closer semantic connection with infinitives in the 19th and 20th centuries compared to the 21st century. The analysis of the semantic structure of negation suggests that there are differences between the two types of negative sentences, which explains their coexistence in modern English.

As shown in several studies, negation can be directed at any part of the meaning of a sentence. The negative particle *"not"*, as a rule, emphasizes the part of the sentence that carries the new information, that is, the part that the speaker wants to emphasize.

Therefore, the difference between the two types of negation mentioned above lies in the way they are used in the given constructions. In sentences with the negative auxiliary verb, the whole combination is seen as an undivided whole. However, in sentences with *"not"* after the verb, the emphasis is placed on the action itself and its importance in the situation is highlighted.

The use of these constructions is not limited to a specific style, although their frequency may vary in different functional styles. For example, compared to impersonal constructions that are synonymous with these, which are more common in scientific and official writing, constructions with infinitives are more prevalent in newspapers, journalism, and fiction writing, occurring five times more frequently.

The author often incorporates these constructions into the narrative as a way to characterize the appearance or internal state of a character. For instance:

He seemed, as usual, to be most convincingly sane.

(Dr., JG, 198)

Her eyes indeed were dry but her very soul seemed to be torn in pieces within her. (Ibid., 312)

These combinations are usually found in a stylistically coloured context when describing the setting in which the action takes place. For example:

In full moonlight now the reeds glistened and the willows seemed to drip into the water, dark below their branches. (Galsw., EC, 255)

The construction "seem to V" is widely used to express an unrealistic comparison. This use acquires the character of a specific artistic device when it is used in the context of sawn-offs. For example:

He seemed to partake of those obscure forces of nature which the Greeks personified in shapes part human and part beast, the satyr and the faun. (Maugh., MS, 109)

He seems to me to be possessed by some power which is using him for its ends, and in whose hold, he is as helpless as a fly in a spider's web. (Ibid., 74)

See also an example where the combination with the infinitive conveys irony:

"...You seem to forget you're a guest." (Car., HM, 249)

Detailed descriptions with various combinations of these verbs can be found in literary texts, creating a vivid and emotional perception of the actions and states described. For example:

They seemed anxious to get out of the eight of the houses and their kind, and this road appeared to offer the quickest means of doing so. (Har., TD, 415)

At first, it is true, that when Clare's intelligence was fresh from a contrasting society, these friends with whom he now hobnobbed seemed a little strange. Sitting down as a level member of the dairyman's household seemed at the outset an undignified proceeding. The ideas, the modes, the surroundings, appeared retrogressive and unmeaning. (Ibid., 131)

This connotation is especially strong when the construction of identification is repeated:

"They seem to want to betray everything," said Kate.

"They seem to love criminals and ghastly things. They seem to want the ugly things. They seem to want the ugly things to come up to the top. All the foulness, that lies at the bottom, they want to stir up to the top. They seem to enjoy it..." (Lawr., PS, 41)

Conclusion. Analyzing the semantic aspects of relevant grammatical constructions reveals a fascinating variety of meanings in verbs that express evaluative identification. These meanings can be grouped into pairs that share similar traits with other linguistic elements. At the heart of this expression are verbs like "*see*," "*appear*," "*happen*," "*chance*," "*turn out*," and "*prove*," which convey subjective evaluations of identification and subtle interpretations of reality. Surrounding this core are linguistic features that add layers to how language conveys meaning. In literary contexts, these constructions prove to be flexible stylistic tools, creating unique emotional or narrative effects. This interplay between meaning and usage highlights how effectively these constructions enhance reader experiences and enrich literary depth.

References

1. Favorin, V.K. Synonymy in Russian. – Sverdlovsk, 1953. – 166p.
2. Goncharov, J. About very // Linguist and Philos, 2025. 48. P. 1–41. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10988-024-09421-9
3. Ferrari F, Carrara M. Logic and Science: An Exploration of Logical Anti-Exceptionalism. – Cambridge University Press, 2025.
4. Kabzhan Z, Shakhnovich A, Gorshkov S, Yemenov Y, Gorshkov F and Shogelova N. Semantic and ontology-based analysis of regulatory documents for construction industry digitalization // Front. Built Environ, 2025. 11, No.1575913. doi: 10.3389/fbuil.2025.1575913
5. Novoselov, M.M. Logic of Abstractions: Methodological Analysis. Part 1. – Moscow, 2000. – 191 p.
6. Benítez-Burraco, A. The cognitive science of language diversity: achievements and challenges // Cogn Process, 2025. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10339-025-01262-z
7. Fenters, V.W., Balven, R., Ashforth, B.E., Waldman, D. How Identity Structure Influences Identity Adoption: The Case of Hybrid Entrepreneurs // Academy of Management Journal, 2025. 68, No.3. DOI:10.5465/amj.2023.0520
8. Arutyunova, N.D. (1999) Language and the Human World. – Moscow: Languages of Russian Culture, 1999. – 896 p.
9. Atkinson, D., Mejía-Laguna, J., Custodio Ribeiro, A., Cappellini, M., Kayi-Aydar, Hayriye., Lowie, W. Relationality, interconnectedness, and identity: A process-focused approach to second language acquisition and teaching (SLA/T).
10. Murphy, E., Murphy, Villiers, J.D., Morales, S.L. A comparative investigation of compositional syntax and semantics in DALL•E and young children // Social Sciences & Humanities Open, 2025. 11, No.101332
11. Carston, R. Words: Syntactic structures and pragmatic meanings // Synthese, 2022. 200, NO.430. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-022-03861-1
12. Magirovskaya, O.V. The Coordinate Representation of Anthropocentric Language Space. In: Issue XXVIII: The Anthropocentric Nature of Language. – Moscow & Tambov, 2017. – 106p.
13. Shatunovskiy, I.B. Sentence Semantics and non-referential words: Meaning, communicative perspective, pragmatics. – Moscow: School "Languages of Russian Culture", 1996. – 400 pp.

Л.А. Аминова*¹, Р.Ж. Саурбаев¹, Ф.Т. Ереханова²

¹Торайғыров университеті, Павлодар қ., Қазақстан
²Орталық Азия инновациялық университеті, Шымкент қ., Қазақстан

ҚАЗІРГІ АҒЫЛШЫН ТІЛІНДЕГІ СӘЙКЕСТІКТІ БАҒАЛАУДЫ БІЛДІРЕТІН СИНТАКСИСТІК ҚҰРЫЛЫМДАРДЫ СЕМАНТИКАЛЫҚ ТАЛДАУ

Аңдатпа. Мақалада қазіргі ағылшын тіліндегі сәйкестікті бағалауды беретін синтаксистік құрылымдардың күрделі семантикасы зерттеледі. Осы құрылымдарды жан-жақты зерделеу арқылы тұлғалық бағалауды білдіретін грамматикалық етістіктермен байланысты мағыналардың алуан түрлі екендігі және өзара байланысқан мағыналардың жұптарына жіктелуі мүмкін екендігі белгілі болады. Бұл мағыналар ұқсас семантикалық идеяларды беретін басқа тілдік элементтердің интерпретацияларымен сәйкес келеді. Сәйкестікті субъективті бағалаудың негізінде «көру», «пайда болу», «болу», «кездейсоқ», «шығу» және «дәлелдеу» сияқты етістіктерден тұратын негізгі құрылымдардың жинағы жатыр. Бұл орталық аймақты қоршаған перифериялық жағынан салыстырмалы мағыналық сипаттары бар лингвистикалық элементтер орналасқан. Бұл құрылымдар көркем мәтіндерде көрінетін нақты жағдайларды талдау олардың қуатты стилистикалық құрал ретіндегі әлеуетін ашады, баянды мағынаның реңктері қабаттарымен байытады.

Л.А. Аминова*¹, Р.Ж. Саурбаев¹, Ф.Т. Ереханова²

¹Торайгыров университет, г. Павлодар, Казахстан
²Центрально Азиатский инновационный университет, г. Шымкент, Казахстан

СЕМАНТИЧЕСКИЙ АНАЛИЗ СИНТАКСИЧЕСКИХ СТРУКТУР, ВЫРАЖАЮЩИХ ОЦЕНКУ ИДЕНТИЧНОСТИ В СОВРЕМЕННОМ АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

Аннотация. В статье исследуется сложная семантика синтаксических структур, выражающих оценку идентичности в современном английском языке. Благодаря тщательному исследованию этих структур становится очевидным, что значения, связанные с грамматическими глаголами, выражающими оценку идентичности, разнообразны и могут быть разделены на пары взаимосвязанных значений. Эти значения согласованно согласуются с интерпретациями других языковых элементов, передающих схожие семантические идеи. В основе артикуляции субъективных оценок идентичности лежит совокупность ключевых структур, включающих такие глаголы, как «видеть», «появляться», «происходить», «случайно», «обернуться» и «доказывать». Вокруг этой центральной области располагаются языковые единицы, обладающие сопоставимыми семантическими характеристиками, расположенные более периферийно. Анализ конкретных случаев проявления этих структур в литературных текстах раскрывает их потенциал как мощного стилистического приёма, обогащающего повествование тонкими смысловыми нюансами.

Cite the article: