

**I CAN'T SEEM TO FIND MY GLASSES – THE ENGLISH VERB
SEEM AND ITS MACEDONIAN TRANSLATION**

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Summary: This paper discusses the verb *seem* and its translation equivalents in Macedonian. *Seem* is a multifunctional verb. As a copula verb, it is a verb of indirect perception. It may also mark the verb phrase for evidentiality and epistemic modality. In other cases, *seem* may also function as a hedge, which is a pragmatic function of linguistic means that allows the speaker not to express the commitment categorically. Because of its multiple functions, *seem* has different translations in Macedonian. The most widespread are congruent correspondences, when *seem* is translated with a corresponding verb (*се чини, изгледа, личи*), and zero correspondences, when it is dropped. This variety may also appear due to different cultural attitudes towards evidence.

АНГЛИСКИОТ ГЛАГОЛ *SEEM* И НЕГОВИТЕ ПРЕВОДНИ ЕКВИВАЛЕНТИ ВО МАКЕДОНСКИОТ ЈАЗИК

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Резиме: Предмет на анализа во овој труд е англискиот глагол *seem* и неговите преводни еквиваленти во македонскиот јазик. *Seem* е полифункционален глагол. Како копуларен глагол, тој е глагол за индиректна перцепција. Но може да изразува и евиденцијалност и епистемичка модалност. Во некои случаи *seem* може да изразува несигурност што му овозможува на говорителот да не биде категоричен и да се дистанцира до извесен степен од кажаното. Заради различните функции, *seem* различно се преведува во македонскиот јазик. Најчесто се преведува со соодветен глагол (*се чини, изгледа, личи*) или, пак, се испушта. Различноста во преведувањето во некои случаи може да биде резултат на различниот однос на македонската култура кон фактичките ситуации.

Introduction to *seem*

The subject of analysis in this paper is the English verb *seem* and its translation equivalents in the Macedonian language. We consider translation equivalents as dual indicators: on the one hand they can contribute to clarifying the meaning of certain linguistic units; on the other hand, they may indicate the presence of categories that we are not aware of. In this sense, translation is of great interest for the analysis of linguistic elements because translators have to choose a particular translation based on their assessment of various linguistic and non-linguistic factors, including the cultural factor.

What has aroused our interest in the verb *seem* is the observation that Macedonian learners of English rarely use it although they are aware of it. Similarly, translators often drop it because examples with *seem* are rather awkward to translate in a way that they would sound natural in Macedonian. This has been noticed in other languages as well (Johansson, 2007; Aijmer, 2009; Usonienė and Šinkūnienė, 2013)

Seem is a very interesting verb for a number of reasons. The following are some of its features:

1. It is very frequent. Biber, et al. ([1999] 2007), in their grammar book written on the basis of Longman Spoken and Written English Corpus (LSWE) note that *seem* is common in both fiction and academic prose.
2. It has great collocational flexibility. As Lampert and Lampert (2010) point out, it collocates with evidential adverbs such as *evidently, obviously, clearly, and apparently*, with epistemic adverbs such as *probably, surely, certainly, necessarily*, as well as with adverbs like *only, merely, really, just*.
3. It may take different complements, as in the examples below from the book “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone”: *He didn’t seem at all upset; It seemed to be a silver cigarette lighter; they seemed to think he might get dangerous ideas; It seemed as though life would be back to normal next year.*
4. It is multifunctional.

Biber, et al. ([1999] 2007: 436) discuss *seem* as a copula verb, classifying it in the group of current copula verbs together with *be, keep, appear, remain, stay*. According to them, current copula verbs identify attributes that are in a continuing state of existence and they are mostly in the existence domain: *David Elsworth seemed quite satisfied with the performance of Barnbrook.*

Similarly, Berk (1999) classifies *seem* as a stative copula verb suggesting that a subject has a particular quality or is in a particular state: *Joyce seems happy*. In Berk’s words “[t]hese copulas underscore the fact that the state is apparent, but not necessarily real” (Berk, 1999: 46). Other authors discuss *seem* from the point of expressing evidential and epistemic meaning (Aijmer, 2009; Fetzer, 2014; Usonienė and Šinkūnienė, 2013), while Hyland (1998) refers to it as a hedge.

Seem can also be a catenative verb. That is the case when it is a part of a complex verb phrase (VP), followed by the infinitive form of another verb. Sometimes it is followed by the verb *to be* (*That seemed to be okay with them*), but most often it is the infinitive form of a different verb (*The strangers in the street seemed to know him; They seemed to think he may get dangerous ideas*).

The complementation patterns that *seem* takes

One of the features of *seem* is that its complements may have various syntactic features:

- a. *seem* + NP/AdjP/PP

He didn’t seem at all upset at being almost knocked to the ground.

- b. *seem to be* + NP/AdjP/PP
That seems to be in order.
- c. *seem* + *to* infinitive
For some reason, the sight of the cat seemed to amuse him.
- d. *seem* + finite clause (FC)
It seemed that Professor McGonagall had reached the point she was most anxious to discuss.
- e. *seem* + *like/as though*
After what seemed like hours they reached the rock.
- f. parenthetical *seem*
Malfoy, it seemed, had sneaked up behind Neville and grabbed him as a joke.

According to Gisborne and Holmes (2007) the different complement structures of *seem* have developed in the order in which they are presented here and that they have continually increased their usage since their appearance. They suggest that the evaluative sense of *seem* in *seem* + infinitive and in *it seems that* is a later development and that “the increase in their use after 1570 is due to their development of the evaluative meaning” (Gisborne and Holmes, 2007: 14). Evidential meanings, therefore, appear before evaluative meanings. Pragmatic effects can drive semantic change, and semantic change, in turn, can drive syntactic change. (Gisborne and Holmes, 2007: 26)

In this study, we look at the verb *seem* and its translation equivalents in Macedonian on the basis of examples extracted from the book “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone” by J. K. Rowling. We first discuss the functions of *seem*. Then we analyze its translation correspondences in Macedonian. In the book analyzed for this purpose, there were 96 occurrences of *seem*. Table 1 shows that most of them were exemplifying *seem* as a copular verb and *seem* + *to* infinitive.

Table 1 Distribution of *seem* with different complementation patterns

copular <i>seem</i>	<i>seem to</i> <i>be</i>	<i>seem</i> + infinitive	<i>seem</i> + FC	<i>seem</i> + like	parenthetical <i>seem</i>	Total
18	10	60	3	3	2	96

The functions of *seem*

Seem as a verb of perception

The verb *seem* is multifunctional. Many authors consider it a verb of perception (Aijmer, 2009; Fetzer, 2014; Usonienė, 2003; Usonienė and Šinkūnienė, 2013). The perception, however, is not that of the subject, but

of the speaker, unless it is differently indicated. In *He seems unwilling to discuss his problem*, the perception is of the speaker; in *It seemed to the teacher that the child was cheating*, the perception is of the teacher. This allows for *seem* to take different subjects, including empty *it* (*It seemed right*), temporary *it* in extraposed constructions (*It seems impossible for anybody to have survived the accident*), as well as existential *there* (*There seemed to be a lot of strangely dressed people around*). Thus the subjective perception (that of the speaker or the teacher) is turned into intersubjective because there is also an implicit presence of a wider community. (Whitt, 2010: 44)

According to Aijmer (2007: 72) *seem* is related to other sense-impression verbs like *look*, *sound*, *feel*, but it is “vaguer and has developed additional uses where it is closer to evidential verbs such as *think*”. Similarly, Dixon (2005: 204) suggests that “*seem* is used when the speaker is not fully certain whether the adjectival description is appropriate, or whether the statement of the complement clause is correct—perhaps when there is not quite enough evidence” and it may imply “can be inferred by me”.

***Seem* expressing evidentiality and epistemic modality**

From semantic point, the meaning of *seem* can be viewed within the framework of evidentiality and epistemic modality. Evidentiality is a grammatical category whose primary meaning is information source, i.e. how one learnt about something: whether the speaker saw it, or heard it, or inferred it from indirect evidence, or learnt it from someone else. Aikhenvald (2004: 1) notes that “languages vary in how they mark evidentiality and how many types of information sources they express. Many just mark information reported by someone else. Others distinguish firsthand and non-firsthand sources. In rarer instances, visually obtained data are contrasted with data obtained through hearing or smelling, or through various kinds of inference.” In the sentence *They seem to be leaving* we make a conclusion on the basis of something that we see. If the meat that we have roasted is overdone and hard to eat, we may say *It seems that we will have to throw it away*. If John has won all matches, we may say *John seems (to be) unbeatable*.

Some linguists reject the idea that English has evidentiality (Aikhenvald, 2004; Aikhenvald and Dixon, 2003). According to Aikhenvald (2004: 10), if a language has lexical expressions that point to the source of information, it does not necessarily mean that it has a system for expressing evidentiality. Contrary to this, Chafe (1986: 261) thinks that “English has a rich repertoire of evidential devices. It expresses evidentiality with modal auxiliaries, adverbs, and miscellaneous idiomatic phrases, although not, for example,

with a coherent set of verb suffixes like those in some California Indian languages”. He stresses that he uses the term evidentiality in the broadest sense and that all the sets involve attitudes toward knowledge. Knowledge is central and speakers and writers may see it as more or less reliable. His system includes source of knowledge (evidence, language, hypothesis), mode of knowing (belief, induction, hearsay, deduction), and knowledge may be matched against verbal resources and expectations. *Seem* signals that knowing is reached through induction but it indicates that there is less certainty about the conclusion, e.g. *And she absolutely did not seem to know what was going* (Chafe, 1986: 267). He also mentions it as a hearsay evidence, e.g. *Well Schaeffer, it seems, had just found the latest article from the Smithsonian* (268)

Contrary to this, Lampert and Lampert (2010: 315-316) suggest that evidentiality requires reconceptualization which would allow for debatable candidates such as *seem* to be included as peripheral members of evidentiality. They further suggest that *seem*'s lexical semantics can best be covered by the comparison frame, which in the case of *seem* will link up the two concepts of ‘appearance’ versus ‘reality’, or fictivity vs. factivity. This means that propositions related to assertions modified by *seem* may either be seen to hold or not, depending on contextual specification.

The epistemic meaning expresses to what extent something is possible according to the speaker (*John seems to be tired; It seems that the party is over*). Very often both the evidential and the epistemic meaning can be included in the verb phrase containing *seem*. Cornillie (2009, in Fetzer, 2014) states that “Evidential expressions indicate that there are reasons for the assumption made by the speaker and epistemic expressions evaluate that assumption”. By saying *The party seems to be over*, the speaker has visual evidence that many people are leaving, but he/she can't be completely sure. He/she both has evidence and does evaluation of the situation. By using *seem* speakers and writers reduce their commitment to the truth of what is being said or written. Rather than saying that X is the case, they state that there is evidence of X. According to these views, *seem* may have both evidential and epistemic meaning. (Fetzer, 2014)

Many consider that evidentiality is interconnected with modality (Whitt, 2010; Anderson, 1986; Chef, 1986; Wiemer, 2018). Anderson (1986: 308–11), for example, shows that these two domains are connected in the mental domain, and that linguistic carriers of modal and evidential meanings often share common historical sources. Squartini (2018) notes that “the strategy adopted when using English *seem* underlines the epistemic uncertainty of the speaker, who signals potential discrepancy between the subjective interpretation of what externally appears and what is in fact true”. Aijmer (2009), also observes that English *seem* may express different degrees of

commitment to the factuality of the situation. Others fiercely oppose this stance (Aikhenvald, 2004; Cornillie, 2009). They claim that “[e]videntiality thus focuses solely on the evidence, whereas epistemic modality takes the speaker’s reaction to the evidence (evaluation of the possibility or necessity of a proposition being true or not) as its focal point” (Whitt, 2010: 13)

***Seem* as a hedge**

Other studies focus on the use of *seem* in discussions of different aspects of discourse: hedging in scientific discourse (Chafe, 1986; Hyland, 1998) and in conversation, when expressing a different point of view (Chafe, 1986; Zhang, 2011). Fraser (2010: 22) defines hedging as a rhetorical strategy, by which a speaker, using a linguistic device, can signal a lack of commitment to either the full semantic membership (propositional hedging) or the full commitment to the force of the speech act being conveyed (speech act hedging). Halliday (1994, in Hyland, 1998: 3) considers hedging as part of modality which he defines as “the area of meaning that lies between yes and no”, taking in “either yes or no” and “both yes and no”. Hyland (1998: 1) describes hedging as “a) lack of complete commitment to the truth value of an accompanying proposition or b) a desire not to express the commitment categorically”. He employs the term epistemic evidential sensory hedge whose function is “to create a context which removes responsibility from the researcher in the degree of success in meeting these objectives. It allows the writer to express modesty in undertaking the study and caution in anticipating the degree of its success” because researchers are aware that they can never include every variable and their information can never be absolutely complete (Hyland, 1998: 125-127). This reference reflects the multifunctional nature of the verb and emphasizes its pragmatic function. Acting as a hedge, *seem* creates distance between the author and the proposition, thus establishing a strategic option for the author to avoid full responsibility for the statement (Usonienė and Šinkūnienė, 2013: 308). Zhang (2011) discusses *seem* as vague language and classifies it, together with *I think*, *we believe*, *seem to*, *appear*, *probably*, *maybe*, *according to her*, in the group of shields whose function is to express a less certain or less committal attitude of the speaker. She emphasises that vague language performs well in all areas of life.

Translation of *seem* into Macedonian

In this part of the paper, we analyze how *seem* is translated into Macedonian on the examples extracted from the book “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone” by J. K. Rowling and its Macedonian translation “Хари Потер и каменот на мудроста”. There were 96 instances of the use of

seem in the book. The most frequent is the *seem* + to infinitive – 70 (including the *seem to be* constructions), copula verb (*seem* + NP, AdjP, AdvP, PP) – 18, *seem like* – 3, *seem* + FC – 3, and parenthetical *seem* – 2 (Table 1, section 2). Table 2 presents the linguistic means used to translate *seem* in Macedonian:

Table 2 Macedonian correspondences of *seem* in “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone”

<i>Seem</i> correspondences	Frequency	<i>Seem</i> correspondences	Frequency
omitted	39.6% (38)	како да-clause	7.3% (7)
се чини дека/како/AdjP/Ø	29.2% (28)	мисли	1% (1)
изгледа дека/како/AdjP/Ø	16.7% (16)	навидум	1% (1)
личи	5.2% (5)		

These are probably not the only means used to translate *seem* and the list will surely expand if other translations are included. The parallel analysis of the sentences shows three types of translation correspondences: congruent, non-congruent and zero correspondence. A congruent correspondence has a lexical verb corresponding to *seem* and the same overall structure is similar to the *seem*-construction. A non-congruent correspondence is when the syntax of the *seem*-construction and its corresponding construction in Macedonian are different, i.e. other means have been used to convey the meaning of *seem* such as adverbs (*очигледно*, *веројатно*), modal verbs (*може*), or a *како да*-clause. The third type of correspondence that we found was zero correspondence, that is when *seem* is dropped and nothing else is used to convey its meaning. The distribution of these types of correspondences is as follows:

Table 3 Distribution of translation correspondences

Congruent correspondences	Non-congruent correspondences	Zero correspondences	Total
49 (51%)	9 (9.4%)	38 (39.6%)	96 (100%)

Congruent correspondences

The congruent correspondences consist of one of the three Macedonian verbs: *се чини* (28), *изгледа* (16) and *личи* (5). *Се чини* is the most common verb used to translate *seem*. The examples below show that it is mainly followed by *дека*-clause or *како да*-clause. Sometimes, it may take an adverb phrase, though.

(1) “It certainly seems so,” said Dumbledore; „Така се чини“, рече Дамблдор;

- (2) It seemed that Professor McGonagall had reached the point she was most anxious to discuss; Се чинеше дека професорката Мекгонагл стигна до точката за која најмногу сакаше да зборува;
- (3) They seemed to be arguing; Се чинеше како да се караат;
- (4) Everyone seemed to know Hagrid; Се чинеше дека сите го знаат Хагрид;
- (5) It didn't seem very important anymore; Веќе не му се чинеше важно;
- (6) It seemed as though life would be back to normal next year; Се чинеше дека наредната година животот во Хогвортс ќе се врати во нормала;

The verb *изгледа* is also quite frequent. It can be followed by an adjective phrase or a complement clause with *дека* or *како да*, or with no complementizer:

- (7) Ron and Hermione didn't seem as worried about the Stone as Harry. Рон и Хермајни не изгледаа толку загрижени за каменот како Хари.
- (8) Someone knew he had moved out of his cupboard and they seemed to know he hadn't received his first letter. Некој знаеше дека тој се иселил од шпајзот и изгледа знаеја и дека го нема добиено првото писмо.
- (9) It seemed she had been wanting to say all this for years Изгледаше како со години да чекала да го каже сето ова.
- (10) Your platform should be somewhere in the middle, but they don't seem to have built it yet, do they? Твојот перон би требало да е некаде во средината, ама изгледа уште не го изградиле, а?

The verb *личи* was used in five examples only, always followed by a *на*-prepositional phrase:

- (11) He found what he was looking for in his inside pocket. It seemed to be a silver cigarette lighter. Го најде тоа што го бараше во својот внатрешен џеб. Личеше на сребрена запалка.
- (12) Slipping and stumbling, they followed Hagrid down what seemed to be a steep, narrow path; Лизгајќи се и сопнувајќи се, тие го следеа Хагрид по нешто што личеше на стрмна тесна патека;
- (13) "Yes, Severus does seem the type, doesn't he? Да, Северус личи на таков, нели?"

Личи points to what something or someone looks like, what their shape is. We can't be a hundred percent sure, but there is great probability that it

is what it looks like. We can see it and we can describe it. It is firsthand knowledge and in our description, we rely on both our perception and reasoning.

The verbs *се чини* and *изгледа* have two components: on one hand, they refer to something that is experienced firsthand; on the other hand, they express some uncertainty. And they both are followed by *дека* and *како да*. *Се чини* predominantly takes *дека* (41:4) while *изгледа* in this genre prefers *како да* (6:3). It seems that *дека* is more directed towards reality, pointing to some evidence. *Се чинеше дека сите го знаат Хагрид* because they all waved and smiled at him, and the bartender reached for a glass, saying, “The usual, Hagrid?” Similarly, *Се чинеше дека смрдеата доаѓа од големиот метален леген во мијалникот* is confirmed by Harry having a look and finding out that the tub was full of what looked like dirty rags swimming in gray water. In the ghost scene, however, the ghosts glide across the room talking to one another and hardly glancing at the first years and the translator says, *Се чинеше како да се караат*. First, they are ghosts, something unreal; second there is no hard evidence they were arguing. Also, in the example *По, како што им се чинеше цела вечност, таа се сврте и си отиде*, there is no evidence why they would think it was such a long period. It was only their feeling. We may conclude, therefore, that *дека* is preferred when the speaker has evidence about what they are describing while *како* is preferred when the speaker evaluates a situation or refers to something more abstract or hypothetical. Similarly, when Harry says *Но Снежн отсекогаш изгледаше како многу да ме мрази*, he does not offer evidence about this but expresses a personal feeling. When describing Hogwarts, Harry says *Исто така, беше многу тешко да се запамти распоредот на нештата, зашто изгледаше дека сè постојано се движи*. And then he explains what the doors, the walls and the portraits do.

Non-congruent correspondences

However, in many cases the syntax of the *seem*-construction in English and its corresponding construction in Macedonian are different, they are non-congruent. In the examples extracted from the book “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone” we found seven examples of representation with a *како да*-clauses, one example of *мисли* and one example of *наводно*.

(14) Albus Dumbledore didn’t seem to realize that he had just arrived in a street where everything from his name to his boots was unwelcome. Албус Дамблдор како да не сфаќаше дека туку што стигнал на улица во која ништо негово, дури ни името, не е добредојдено.

(15) They stared at each other, seeming to have forgotten that Harry and Dudley were still in the room. Тие зјапаа еден во друг како да заборавиле дека Хари и Дадли сè уште се во собата.

(16) It seems only yesterday she was in here herself, buying her first wand. Како вчера да беше кога таа дојде тука и го купи своето прво стапче.

(17) Nevertheless, Harry, while you may only have delayed his return to power, it will merely take someone else who is prepared to fight what seems a losing battle next time. Во секој случај, Хари, ти можеби само малку го одложи враќањето на неговата моќ, но сега само ќе треба во иднина да се појави уште некој што е спремен да се бори во таа навидум однапред загубена битка.

(18) “Seems a shame ter row, though,” said Hagrid, giving Harry another of his sideways looks. „Мислам дека е срамота да веслам“, рече Хагрид, пак погледнувајќи го Хари од страна.

All the examples with a *како да*-clause include mental verbs (*како да не сфаќаше, како да сфати, како да не забележа, како да заборавиле*) which confirms that *како* is used when the speaker evaluates a situation or refers to something more abstract or hypothetical. The example *It seems only yesterday* with *Како вчера да беше* is also not based on facts but on personal feelings. *Навидум* and *мислам* are also used to convey a perception or judgement of a situation.

The number of sentences that we found in the book is relatively small and their translation may be somewhat limited by the genre – children’s fantasy. But it seems that epistemic adverbs, such as *очигледно, обично* and *сигурно*, as well as modal verbs such as *може*, are good candidates for translating constructions with *seem*.

(19) David seemed to suffer, but he had to face it: what mattered was the house and the life that would be lived in it. На Дејвид очигледно му беше тешко, но мораше да се соочи со вистината: најважна беше куќата и животот што таа можеше да го пружи.

(20) ... that Seekers were usually the smallest and fastest players, and that most serious Quidditch accidents seemed to happen to them; ... дека трагачите обично се најмалите и најбрзи играчи и дека најголемите незгоди во Квидич обично им се случуваат ним;

(21) And nothing he said seemed to reach Harriet. И ништо што ќе речеше не можеше да допре до Хариет.

Zero correspondence

Another highly frequent feature observed in contrastive studies of *seem* is a high percentage of zero-correspondences. In the Macedonian translation of the first Harry Potter book, there were 38 examples when *seem* was omitted, which mounts up to 39.6%. Most of them were with to infinitive (32, including *seem to be*), four were copula + adjective, one was with *seem like* and one was parenthetical *it seemed*.

(22) This seemed to cheer Ron up. Ова го орасположи Рон.

(23) Malfoy, it seemed, had sneaked up behind Neville and grabbed him as a joke. Малфој му се прикрал на Невил од зад грб и на шега го зграпчил.

Johansson (2007) notes that “the general background for the occurrence of zero correspondences is the weakened meaning of *seem*”. This may apply to cases when *seem* is followed by another copula verb (to be, to become) and the translator decides to drop *seem*.

(24) It seemed to be a handsome, leather-covered book. Тоа беше убава книга со кожени корици.

But those cases were not numerous (5). Most of the cases were *seem* + to infinitive. It may be that in some of those cases, the translator regards *seem* redundant because there are other mental or perception verbs around it. (Johansson, 2007)

(25) ... they seemed to think he might get dangerous ideas. ... тие сметаа дека тој би можел да добие опасни идеи.

(26) ... the Dursleys were his only family. Yet sometimes he thought (or maybe hoped) that strangers in the street seemed to know him. Дарслиеви беа неговата единствена фамилија. Сепак, понекогаш имаше впечаток (или можеби, се надеваше) дека непознатите луѓе на улица го знаат.

(27) No one seemed to have noticed that Harry’s broom was behaving strangely. Никој не ни забележа дека метлата на Хари се однесува чудно.

This explanation does not account for the examples below, however, in which there are no other mental or perception verbs. There is no uncertainty either and the speakers do not express any reservations or doubts about the truth of the assertion. On the contrary, both sentences refer to something that is certain or usual.

(28) The afternoon's events certainly seemed to have changed her mind about Snape. Настаните од тоа попладне очигледно го сменија нејзиниот став кон Снежп.

Seem may be lost in translation if the translator thinks that it is redundant because of the presence of many *seems* and other hedges in the book. We may agree with Usonienė and Šinkūnienė (2013: 307) that “[t]he given cases of translation differences perhaps could be attributed to a culture-specific alternative conceptualization of *seem* or culture-specific understanding and realization of certain pragmatic functions, for instance, hedging”. This is especially true for Macedonian speakers when referring to something that we consider a fact and the translator may feel that *seem* twists reality.

This may be the reason why Macedonian speakers are often confused by the use of *seem* in certain collocations:

(29) I can't seem to find them in the telephone book.
I can't seem to think straight.
I can't seem to stay awake.
What seems to be the matter?

Why would an English speaker prefer *What seems to be the matter?* to *What is the matter?* There is clearly a difference in impact between the first and the second question. The form without *seem* is direct and asks for the identification of a particular problem with no hesitation. The question with *seem*, on the other hand, is politer and gives the addressee more options in answering; it does not presuppose that there really is a problem. But Macedonian speakers would certainly get rid of *seem* in it. To them, the question requires a factual answer and when we talk about facts they do not need to be hedged.

Why is *seem* lost in the Macedonian translation?

This analysis of the translation of *seem* casts light on some differences between Macedonian and English. One of the highly frequent features observed in it is a high percentage of zero-correspondences of *seem* in the Macedonian translation. This could be indicative of both meaning bleaching of *seem* and of the overuse (redundancy) of evidential-epistemic markers in English. (Usonienė and Šinkūnienė, 2013)

According to Frajzyngier (1985:247) indicative sentences express what the speaker wants to convey as the truth. If they have any doubts about the truth, they may use hedging devices such as *sort of*, or constructions “with such verbs as *seem*, *appear*, sentential adverbs *apparently*, *presumably*,

etc.”. Therefore, by using *seem* speakers express some doubt in the truth of the sentence indicating that it does not reflect their belief. While “it appears that in English there are no limitations in expressing doubt” even about one’s own speech (Frajzyngier, 1985: 247), in Macedonian, this “hedging” of the truth may work somewhat differently. Native speakers of Macedonian feel that it is not possible to express doubts about the truth if you have actually seen or experienced something. You don’t say *I can’t seem to stay awake* when you really feel like going to bed or *I can’t seem to find my glasses* when you clearly can’t find them. The translator has dropped *seem* in (30) because the use of *изгледа, се чини*, or any other of the mentioned correspondences would negate the personal experience of the noticing.

(30) As he sat in the usual morning traffic jam, he couldn’t help noticing that there seemed to be a lot of strangely dressed people about. Додека се пробиваше низ вообичаениот утрински сообраќаен метеж, не можеше да не забележи дека по улиците се моткаат многу чудно облечени луѓе.

Similarly, the situation in (31) would seem absurd if any doubt was expressed that people vanished the second Harry tried to get a closer look.

(31) The weirdest thing about all these people was the way they seemed to vanish the second Harry tried to get a closer look. Најчудно во целата таа работа беше тоа што во моментот кога Хари ќе се обидеше да ги погледне одблиску, луѓето исчезнуваа.

These sentences are given in isolation here. But in the book they are usually elaborated and there is enough evidence of what happened or how it happened. Such situations are understood as facts and we do not speculate about facts. The use of *seem* would deteriorate the truth and resort to speculation. For Macedonian speakers, the insecurity and doubt that *seem* conveys in these instances is in contradiction with factive data.

Another motivation for the translator to drop *seem* may be the abundant use of evidential-epistemic markers. For instance, *think* and *might* were used in (25) and *thought, maybe* and *hoped* in (26).

One of the fields that has often been marked as a stark difference between English and Macedonian is directness. Macedonian speakers sound more direct in comparison with English speakers. This analysis has successfully proven that some of the sources of this may be the different attitude of Macedonian speakers towards firsthand experience and the much smaller amount of epistemic markers and hedges in their speech.

Summary

In this paper we focus on the English verb *seem* and refer to its various complements and multiple functions as well as to how it is translated into Macedonian. As a copula verb, it is a verb of perception or of state. The perception, however, is not that of the grammatical subject, but of the speaker (unless it is differently indicated). We have defined evidentiality as reference to the source of information, and epistemic modality as expressing how much the speaker believes something is possible. Very often both meanings are included. Because of its multiple functions, *seem* has different translations in Macedonian: congruent, non-congruent and zero correspondences. The congruent correspondences include the three verbs *се чини*, *изгледа* and *личи*. The non-congruent correspondences include translation with a *како*-clause, the verb *мисли* and the adverb *наводно*. We believe that other linguistic means will probably be identified if the analysis is expended to other translations. The Macedonian correspondences illustrate the wide range of means of expressing evidentiality, including lexical verbs, modal auxiliaries, and adverbs. The zero correspondences may be rooted in the abundant use of hedging words in English and their different use in Macedonian. But the cultural attitude towards hedging may also account for the omissions. The wide range of correspondences gives evidence of the translators' struggle to find ways of expressing the different meanings of *seem* in another language.

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