

Daria O. Bestuzheva
Herzen University
Saint Petersburg, Russian Federation
d.bestuzheva@yandex.ru

Impersonal constructions with the verbs *sembler* and *paraître* in complex sentences with object clauses in French

Abstract

This article examines impersonal constructions with the verbs *sembler* and *paraître* in the main clause of complex sentences introducing object clauses in modern French. The structural-semantic analysis enabled to identify various structural types of these constructions (*il semble que*, *il me semble que*, *il paraît que* and *il me paraît que*) as well as to clarify and classify their meanings. The focus is made on epistemic and related evidential meanings of the patterns. An attempt is made to establish the relationship between structural types of the constructions and their epistemic (probability, certainty, supposition, impression, etc.) and evidential (inferential, quotative evidentiality) meanings. It is argued that the patterns with the verbs *sembler* and *paraître* belong to mixed (bicategorical) markers of the French language being the boundary phenomenon between epistemic modality and evidentiality. The analysis of the semantics of the patterns enabled to conclude that, firstly, their evidential and epistemic meanings were closely related to each other, since the nature of the source of information could influence the degree of speaker's certainty about the reliability of the information. Secondly, the meanings appeared not to be expressed equally: certain patterns might belong to the domain of the category of evidentiality or epistemic modality to a greater or lesser extent. Finally, the meanings expressed by the patterns were directly related to the speaker's assumption of responsibility for the reliability of the reported fact.

Keywords: impersonal constructions, epistemic modality, evidentiality, mixed markers, evidential-epistemic syncretism

© Bestuzheva D. O. 2023

For citation: Bestuzheva, D. O. (2023). Frantsuzskie bezlichnye konstruksii s glagolami *sembler* i *pa-raître* v slozhnopodchinennykh predlozheniyakh s pridatochnymi dopolnitel'nymi [Impersonal constructions with the verbs *sembler* and *paraître* in complex sentences with object clauses in French]. *Teoreticheskaya i prikladnaya lingvistika* [Theoretical and Applied Linguistics], 9 (4), 5–21. https://doi.org/10.22250/24107190_2023_9_4_5