

DISTANCING

Distancing expressions are often used in journalism when a speaker wants to **stress that the information is second-hand** and comes from a specific source or sources, rather than being their own knowledge or opinion, or they are not sure of the sources.

How to show distance from the information:

1. SEEM / APPEAR

Seem and **appear** are used to give information **without stating that we definitely know it is true**, this way we can distance ourselves from that information.

Appear is slightly more formal than **seem**.

- **it seems / appears that + clause**

It seems that the environment will have improved by the end of this pandemic.

- **subject + seem / appear + to infinitive**

The new minister **appears to be** very concerned about the climate.

Politicians **seem to be working** on the effects of climate change.

Peter **seems to have learned** from all his bad experiences

- **there + seem + to infinitive**

There seems to be a great acceptance among members. (singular)

Parecer haber una gran... / Parece que hay una gran....

There seem to have been two options to solve the crisis. (plural)

Parecer que ha habido dos opciones para

If we want to **distance ourselves even further** from the information and make it sound even less sure, the expression ***It would seem/ appear that*** can be used. It is **more formal** than **it seems / appears**.

- **It would seem / appear that + clause**

It would seem/ appear that the situation is finally under control.

2. PASSIVE VOICE WITH VERBS OF SAYING AND REPORTING

It is especially used in **formal written English**. Saying and reporting verbs are used in the passive: say, think, believe....

- It + passive verb + that + clause

It is believed that the government will decrease the tax by the end of the year.

Some verbs: agree, announce, believe, expect, hope, say, suggest, think.....

- Subject + passive verb + to + infinitive

The government is believed to decrease the tax by the end of next year.

Some verbs: believe, expect, report, say, think, understand....

- There + passive verb + to + infinitive

There are said to be new proposals for the project (plural)

Se dice que hay nuevas propuestas....

There is believed to be a new donor for the organization (singular)

Se cree que hay un donante para.....

3. OTHER DISTANCING EXPRESSIONS

- Apparently, (por lo visto)

It can be written at the **beginning** or **end** of the sentence. It means that **we have read or heard but it may not be true**. It is used in **informal conversation**.

Apparently, the new president of the company is going to visit the new headquarters by the end of the month.

- According to....., + clause

It specifies where the information comes from and it attributes opinions to someone else.

According to a recent research, the probability of suffering heart attacks is increasing in the British population.

- May / might

They suggest that something is a **possibility but not necessarily true**.

They **may / might** be spending their holidays together.