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Semar: A Constructed Metalanguage of Distinctions, Event Roles, and Relations

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Abstract

This paper presents Semar, an experimental constructed metalanguage designed as an analytic overlay rather than as a replacement for a natural language. The content of an utterance remains in the base language, while Semar marks three additional dimensions: the semantic type of an element, its role within an event, and its relation to other elements. The system is built from seven primary states: Fact, Will, Play, Silence, Vulnerability, Depth, and Wonder. These states generate three independent 7 by 7 inventories: forty-nine semantic roots, forty-nine role suffixes, and forty-nine relational particles. A fixed event map can further arrange an analysis into participant, knowledge, goal, expectation, exclusion, risk, action, mechanism, and result. The paper explains the architecture of the system, distinguishes explanation from mechanism and sequence from causation, and demonstrates how Semar can expose hidden assumptions in apparently simple statements. Semar does not claim to establish truth merely by assigning a label. It records how a proposition is being treated and must therefore remain subject to evidence, counterexamples, and revision. The current version was developed over Russian; English content is used in this paper for demonstration while the canonical Semar codes are retained in Cyrillic.

Keywords: constructed language; engineered language; metalanguage; semantic notation; event structure; epistemic status; causal analysis.

Author biography

Grigory Sergeevich Maskaev is an independent writer and designer of conceptual systems. His work explores constructed languages, formal distinctions, creative reasoning, and methods for making hidden assumptions and causal structures visible. He developed Semar as an experimental overlay for analyzing knowledge, decisions, risks, mechanisms, and outcomes. He publishes literary and conceptual work in Russian.

Note on the English edition

Semar was developed as an overlay for Russian. In this paper, English phrases occupy the content layer so that the system can be explained to an English-speaking audience. The canonical Semar codes remain in Cyrillic. A reading aid is provided below, but the Cyrillic notation should be treated as the authoritative form of Semar.

Reading aid

Cyrillic	Reading	Function
к	k	Fact mirror
т	t	Will mirror
л	l	Play mirror

Cyrillic	Reading	Function
м	m	Silence mirror
н	n	Vulnerability mirror
р	r	Depth mirror
с	s	Wonder mirror
а	a	Fact lens
о	o	Will lens
и	i	Play lens
у	u	Silence lens
э	e	Vulnerability lens
ы	y / roughly [ɨ]	Depth lens
я	ya	Wonder lens

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1. Purpose and scope

Natural languages are effective at conveying content, but an ordinary sentence can conceal the internal structure of a thought. A compact explanation may merge evidence, expectation, omission, risk, mechanism, and outcome into a single label.

Consider the sentence: "The student made a careless mistake." It sounds informative, yet it does not say whether the student knew the rule, selected the wrong formula, overlooked a unit conversion, excluded an important condition, or obtained a plausible answer by an invalid method. The word "careless" compresses several possible processes into one judgement.

Semar is not intended to replace Russian, English, or any other natural language. The base language continues to state what happened. Semar adds an analytic layer that can mark:

- whether an element is being treated as a fact, hypothesis, explanation, mechanism, anomaly, or another semantic type;
- which role the element plays inside the event;
- how two elements are related;
- where goals, risks, exclusions, actions, mechanisms, and outcomes occur in the structure;
- whether a causal relation has actually been asserted or whether only a sequence has been listed;
- which stage a claim occupies in the maturation of knowledge.

The project is therefore closer to a constructed analytic metalanguage or semantic notation system than to a naturalistic spoken conlang. Its central aim is to prevent a smooth sentence from hiding several distinct processes under one convenient word.

2. The seven primary states

Semar begins with seven primary states. Each state names a broad mode of meaning rather than a moral value.

Primary state	Core function
Fact	Established, observed, or confirmed content
Will	Choice, direction, intention, or action
Play	Possibility, alternative, scenario, or strategy
Silence	Absence, pause, interruption, exclusion, or an unfilled position
Vulnerability	Dependence, risk, limit, damage, or a weak point
Depth	Mechanism, internal structure, law, or causal organization
Wonder	Discovery, transformation, invention, or the emergence of a new state

These states are descriptive, not evaluative. A fact can be harmful. A choice can be irrational. Play can describe a rigorous set of alternatives. Silence can be a productive pause or a dangerous omission. Vulnerability can lead either to collapse or to repair. Depth can describe a genuine mechanism or a mistaken architecture. Wonder marks the emergence of something new, but does not guarantee that the novelty is valuable.

3. Mirror and lens

Every primary state is assigned both a consonant and a vowel. The consonant is called the mirror and marks the state from which the distinction begins. The vowel is called the lens and marks the state through which the first state is viewed.

State	Mirror (consonant)	Lens (vowel)
Fact	к	а
Will	т	о
Play	л	и
Silence	м	у
Vulnerability	н	э
Depth	р	ы
Wonder	с	я

A root is formed by combining mirror plus lens. The first symbol answers, "From which state does this distinction begin?" The second answers, "Through which state is it being considered?"

- ка: Fact through Fact
- ки: Fact through Play
- кэ: Fact through Vulnerability
- кы: Fact through Depth
- кя: Fact through Wonder
- нэ: Vulnerability through Vulnerability
- ра: Depth through Fact
- рэ: Depth through Vulnerability
- са: Wonder through Fact

Order matters. A direct and a reversed root are not assumed to have the same meaning. The architecture is directional: the first symbol gives the point of departure, and the second gives the mode of inspection.

4. The root matrix

The seven mirrors and seven lenses generate forty-nine root positions. The matrix is listed below in its canonical Cyrillic form.

Mirror	а	о	и	у	э	ы	я
к	ка	ко	ки	ку	кэ	кы	кя
т	та	то	ти	ту	тэ	ты	тя
л	ла	ло	ли	лу	лэ	лы	ля
м	ма	мо	ми	му	мэ	мы	мя
н	на	но	ни	ну	нэ	ны	ня
р	ра	ро	ри	ру	рэ	ры	ря
с	са	со	си	су	сэ	сы	ся

A position in the matrix does not automatically possess a final dictionary definition. Semar distinguishes three levels of maturity:

1. Open coordinate: the position exists structurally, but no stable meaning has yet been assigned.
2. Working meaning: the proposed meaning is being tested in examples and may still be revised.
3. Canonical meaning: the distinction has survived use across different texts, boundary cases, and counterexamples.

The matrix should not be filled with attractive labels merely to preserve symmetry. An openly undefined coordinate is preferable to a distinction that cannot be used consistently.

5. Canonical roots

The current version gives priority to roots that have already been tested in analyses of knowledge and events.

Root	Working canonical meaning
ка	Established datum or confirmed fact
ки	Hypothesis arising from facts
кэ	Testable proposition that must still encounter reality
кы	Explanation: a connection among facts that makes an event intelligible
кя	Confirmed anomaly that does not fit the previous picture
ла	Experiment: a point at which a possibility meets reality
ра	Mechanism: the internal sequence or organization by which an event actually arises
нэ	Intuition: sensitivity to a distinction that is not yet easy to formulate or prove
рэ	Blind spot: a region that a system cannot detect by its habitual method
са	Discovery: a verified new phenomenon incorporated into the picture of reality

A central distinction is the difference between explanation and mechanism. An explanation makes an event understandable; a mechanism shows how the event was actually produced. The two may coincide, but they must not be treated as identical by default.

```
кы у ра
```

The formula means: "The explanation does not yet disclose the mechanism." For example, "The plant grew poorly because it was not cared for" may be an explanation, but the mechanism could involve dry soil, root damage, insufficient light, or unsuitable acidity. Semar asks the analyst not to stop at a narratively satisfying label.

6. The maturation of knowledge

Semar can represent stages through which a possible insight becomes established knowledge.

```
нэ и ки; ки о кэ; кэ о ла; ла я ка
```

- нэ и ки: intuition may generate a hypothesis;
- ки о кэ: the hypothesis is directed toward a testable proposition;

- кэ о ла: the proposition is directed toward experiment;
- ла я ка: experiment may transform a possibility into an established fact.

This sequence is not a guarantee of discovery. Intuition may be noise. A hypothesis may be untestable. An experiment may be badly designed. A result may be accidental. A fact may be interpreted through an inadequate model.

Most importantly, a Semar label does not prove the truth of the content it marks. If a speaker labels a false belief as ка, the notation records that the speaker is treating the belief as an established fact; it does not make the belief true. Semar maps epistemic handling and event structure, not reality by decree.

7. Three independent layers

Semar consists of three independent 7 by 7 systems. They are related by the same seven-state architecture, but they perform different jobs and are not obligatorily multiplied into one enormous inventory.

Layer	Form	Question answered
Root	Consonant + vowel	What semantic type is this element?
Role suffix	Vowel + consonant	What does this element do in the present event?
Relational particle	Vowel + vowel	How are two elements related?

The root can identify a hypothesis, explanation, mechanism, anomaly, or other semantic type. The suffix can show that the same content functions as a goal, expectation, risk, condition, action, cause, or result. The particle connects two marked elements and specifies identity, direction, possibility, absence, dependence, causation, or transformation.

8. The structure of a Semar element

The basic written unit follows this pattern:

```
base-language content - root - role suffix
```

For example:

```
"the method will work"-ки-ил
```

The English phrase provides the content. The root ки marks the content as a hypothesis. The suffix -ил marks it as an expected scenario. The complete element therefore means: "The hypothesis that the method will work is functioning as the expectation in this event."

The base-language content remains necessary because Semar is an overlay, not a complete lexical replacement. A root may be omitted when the semantic type is obvious, and a suffix may be omitted when the role is irrelevant. In a complex analysis, however, retaining both layers prevents type and role from collapsing into one another.

Two elements are connected by a relational particle:

```
"the method will work"-ки-ил аа fact-ка-ак
```

This notation says that an expected hypothesis has been equated with an established fact. The construction diagnoses a possible error in reasoning; it does not confirm the hypothesis itself.

9. Forty-nine role suffixes

A role suffix is built in reverse order, vowel plus consonant. The final consonant identifies the role family, and the initial vowel specifies the mode within that family.

Family	Suffix	Event role
Fact (-к)	-ак	Established datum
Fact (-к)	-ок	Required condition or constraint
Fact (-к)	-ик	Available resource
Fact (-к)	-ук	Absent fact
Fact (-к)	-эк	Conditional or unstable fact
Fact (-к)	-ык	Fact that points toward a mechanism
Fact (-к)	-як	New or anomalous fact
Will (-т)	-ат	Completed choice or action
Will (-т)	-от	Desired goal
Will (-т)	-ит	Plan of action
Will (-т)	-ут	Refusal or interrupted will
Will (-т)	-эт	Consciously accepted cost
Will (-т)	-ыт	Motive for a choice
Will (-т)	-ят	Decision that establishes a new order
Play (-л)	-ал	Realized alternative
Play (-л)	-ол	Selected bet or option
Play (-л)	-ил	Expected scenario
Play (-л)	-ул	Excluded alternative
Play (-л)	-эл	Risky bet
Play (-л)	-ыл	Strategy or model of alternatives
Play (-л)	-ял	Experimental possibility
Silence (-м)	-ам	Actual non-action
Silence (-м)	-ом	Deliberate pause
Silence (-м)	-им	Unfilled possibility
Silence (-м)	-ум	Element excluded from consideration
Silence (-м)	-эм	Unspoken fear or need
Silence (-м)	-ым	Hidden cause
Silence (-м)	-ям	Emergence that matures during a pause
Vulnerability (-н)	-ан	Existing damage
Vulnerability (-н)	-он	Need requiring action
Vulnerability (-н)	-ин	Possible risk
Vulnerability (-н)	-ун	Unnoticed danger
Vulnerability (-н)	-эн	Dependence on a condition
Vulnerability (-н)	-ын	Mechanism of failure

Family	Suffix	Event role
Vulnerability (-н)	-ян	Possibility of repair through the weak point
Depth (-р)	-ар	Confirmed structure
Depth (-р)	-ор	Control lever
Depth (-р)	-ир	Architecture of a possible process
Depth (-р)	-ур	Hidden structure
Depth (-р)	-эр	Structural conflict
Depth (-р)	-ыр	Active cause of the result
Depth (-р)	-яр	Law that generates new forms
Wonder (-с)	-ас	Discovery
Wonder (-с)	-ос	Creative direction
Wonder (-с)	-ис	Invented possibility
Wonder (-с)	-ус	Unexpected emergence
Wonder (-с)	-эс	Rare and fragile opportunity
Wonder (-с)	-ыс	Process of transformation
Wonder (-с)	-яс	New state that has come into being

10. Semantic type and event role

A root and a suffix answer different questions. The root asks what kind of meaning an element is. The suffix asks what that element is doing here.

The base-language word "decision" does not possess one permanent Semar role:

- decision-от: a desired goal;
- decision-ит: a plan;
- decision-ул: an excluded alternative;
- decision-ин: a possible risk;
- decision-ак: a decision that has actually been made;
- decision-яс: a new order created by the decision.

One element can also change roles across time:

```
project-ил; project-эк; project-ак
```

The project first existed as an expected scenario, then remained an unstable possibility, and later became an established part of the work. Repeating the element at each stage is preferable to attaching several simultaneous labels, because repetition preserves the temporal movement of the event.

11. Forty-nine relational particles

A relational particle has the form vowel plus vowel. The first vowel identifies the relation family; the second specifies its mode. Single vowels remain available as broad abbreviations: а for identity or status, о for direction, и for possibility, у for absence or interruption, э for dependence, ы for causal or mechanistic origin, and я for transformation.

Family	Particle	Relation
Status (а)	аа	Definitely is or is equated with
Status (а)	ао	Is assigned or is to be treated as
Status (а)	аи	May be or may belong as an alternative
Status (а)	ау	Is not
Status (а)	аэ	Is under a condition
Status (а)	аы	Is by an established basis
Status (а)	ая	Has become a new state
Direction (о)	оа	Is actually directed toward
Direction (о)	оо	Is intentionally directed toward as a goal
Direction (о)	ои	May be directed toward
Direction (о)	оу	Direction is cancelled or interrupted
Direction (о)	оэ	Is directed under a condition
Direction (о)	оы	Is directed by an internal mechanism
Direction (о)	оя	Creates a new direction
Possibility (и)	иа	Possibility is confirmed
Possibility (и)	ио	Possibility is selected or desired
Possibility (и)	ии	One of equal alternatives
Possibility (и)	иу	Possibility is excluded
Possibility (и)	иэ	Possible under a condition
Possibility (и)	иы	Possible because of a mechanism
Possibility (и)	ия	Possibility generates a new alternative
Absence (у)	уа	Absence is confirmed
Absence (у)	уо	Is intentionally rejected or terminated
Absence (у)	уи	May be absent
Absence (у)	уу	Is completely absent or destroyed
Absence (у)	уэ	Is absent under a condition
Absence (у)	уы	Is absent because of a mechanism
Absence (у)	уя	Absence opens space for something new
Dependence (э)	эа	Dependence is established and the condition is met
Dependence (э)	эо	Necessary condition
Dependence (э)	эи	One possible condition
Dependence (э)	эу	Condition is not met
Dependence (э)	ээ	Depends on a combination of conditions

Family	Particle	Relation
Dependence (э)	эы	Depends through a known mechanism
Dependence (э)	эя	Condition triggers a new state
Causation (ы)	ыа	Cause is established
Causation (ы)	ыо	Cause directs or compels
Causation (ы)	ыи	Possible cause
Causation (ы)	ыу	Cause is absent or the causal chain is broken
Causation (ы)	ыэ	Cause operates under a condition
Causation (ы)	ыы	A complete causal chain is given
Causation (ы)	ыя	Cause produces a transformation
Change (я)	яа	Transformation is completed and established as fact
Change (я)	яо	Transformation is intended or goal-directed
Change (я)	яи	Transformation is possible
Change (я)	яу	Transformation is interrupted or reversed
Change (я)	яэ	Transformation occurs under a condition
Change (я)	яы	Transformation occurs by a known mechanism
Change (я)	яя	One transition generates the next transition

12. Directionality

The source of a relation is placed on the left. Its goal, condition, cause, or result is placed on the right. Relational particles are directional, not symmetrical.

```
action-ат оо goal-от
```

This means: "The action is intentionally directed toward the goal." Reversing the order would make a different claim, such as the goal selecting or directing the action.

Causation requires special discipline. A sequence of items does not prove that the first caused the second. The notation:

```
a person entered; the light turned on
```

states temporal order only. The light may have been activated by the person, by a sensor, by a timer, or independently. A causal assertion must use a particle from the ы family, and the assertion still requires evidence outside the notation.

```
entry-ат ыа sensor activation-ыр
```

The particle makes the causal claim explicit. It does not exempt the claim from verification.

13. Syntax and notation

Semar uses a small set of written conventions.

Sign	Function	Example
Hyphen	Connects base-language content, root, and role suffix	hypothesis-ки-ил
Particle	Connects two marked elements	hypothesis-ки-ил о experiment-ла-ял
Semicolon	Separates adjacent event positions; does not itself express causation	goal-от; expectation-ил; risk-ин
Colon	Separates a participant from the event chain or explicitly names a role	researcher: observation-ак
Parentheses	Limit the scope of a condition, dependence, or negation	result-эк ээ (temperature-ок; humidity-ок)

The most important syntactic rule is negative: punctuation and order must not be forced to perform the work of a causal particle. Semar separates adjacency, direction, dependence, causation, and transformation so that they cannot silently substitute for one another.

14. The full event map

For complex analysis, Semar uses a fixed event order. Not every event must contain all positions, but the stable sequence makes different cases comparable and makes omissions visible.

1. participant;
2. knowledge or support;
3. goal;
4. expectation;
5. excluded element;
6. risk;
7. action;
8. mechanism;
9. result.

When a position is absent, the analyst can ask whether it was truly absent or merely unnamed. Was there no goal, or was the goal hidden? Was there no risk, or was it not noticed? Is the mechanism unknown, or has an explanation been substituted for it? Was an alternative tested, or excluded before examination?

A neutral plant-growth example can be written as follows:

```
researcher: observation-ка-ак; goal: improved plant growth-от; expectation:
additional light will help-ки-ил; excluded: overheating-ум; risk: soil drying-
ин; action: increased illumination-ат; mechanism: increased evaporation-ра-ыр
ыа drying-кя-як; result: slower growth-кя-як
```

The researcher observes the initial condition and wants to improve plant growth. Additional light is treated as an expected hypothesis. Overheating is excluded from consideration, while soil drying remains a risk. Illumination is increased. Increased evaporation becomes the established cause of drying, and the slower growth is anomalous relative to the original hypothesis.

The analysis may continue:

```
anomaly-кя-ык о mechanism-ра; mechanism-ра-ар я discovery-са-ас
```

The anomalous fact directs the inquiry toward mechanism. Once the mechanism is confirmed, the failed expectation can be transformed into a discovery.

15. Diagnosing an error

Return to the ordinary sentence: "The student made a careless mistake." A Semar analysis can separate the hidden stages:

```
student: rule-кы-ок; goal: solve the problem-от; expectation: the familiar
formula applies-ки-ил; excluded: a different unit of measurement-ум; risk:
incorrect substitution-ин; action: calculation-ат; mechanism: mixed units-па-
ыр ыа error-кя-як; result: answer-эк
```

The analysis shows that the rule was known, the goal was clear, and a familiar formula became the expected scenario. The difference in units was excluded from consideration. This created the risk of an invalid substitution. Mixing the units became the mechanism of the error, and the final answer remained unstable.

The word "carelessness" is not prohibited. It disappears here because it failed to identify the structure of the failure. After the analysis, ordinary language can be rewritten more precisely:

```
The student applied a familiar formula without noticing that the quantities
were expressed in different units.
```

The revised sentence is longer, but it identifies a repairable point in the procedure. The intervention can now target unit checking rather than the personality of the student. Semar does not need to remain visible in the final prose; it can operate as an internal instrument that produces a more accurate natural-language account.

16. Canon, testing, and future development

Semar remains a developing system. A proposed root, suffix, or particle should not become canonical merely because it fits one attractive example. The system requires repeated testing.

16.1 Cross-domain repetition

A distinction should work across unrelated domains such as scientific inquiry, everyday decisions, interpersonal conflict, technical failure, and narrative structure. A marker that functions only in one carefully chosen case is not yet stable.

16.2 Boundary testing

Neighbouring meanings must be tested where they are easy to confuse: explanation versus mechanism, risk versus unnoticed danger, goal versus expectation, condition versus cause, discovery versus mere surprise. If the distinction cannot be stated and applied consistently, one of the categories may be redundant or underspecified.

16.3 Reversal testing

Directional relations should change when their elements are reversed. If "action oo goal" and "goal oo action" are interpreted identically, either the particle is being used carelessly or its definition is too broad.

16.4 False precision

A complex notation can look authoritative even when its content is invented. Semar must therefore separate the architecture of a statement from the truth of the statement. A beautiful analysis is not evidence.

16.5 Compression after analysis

After a full analysis, unnecessary markers should be removed. Semar should not transform a simple thought into a grammatical maze merely to display the system. The notation earns its complexity only when it reveals a distinction that would otherwise remain hidden.

16.6 The decisive test

The strongest question is: Did Semar reveal a distinction that was concealed in the original sentence? If the result is only the same statement with added labels, the system has contributed little. If the analysis exposes an omitted risk, a false cause, a hypothesis treated as fact, an explanation mistaken for mechanism, or an alternative excluded too early, Semar has performed its intended function.

Conclusion

The base language states the content. The root identifies the semantic type. The suffix identifies the event role. The particle identifies the relation. The fixed order identifies the position of each element, and causal particles state what is claimed to have produced the result. Semar turns a single smooth label into a small map of knowledge, choice, expectation, omission, risk, action, mechanism, and outcome.

Its purpose is not to make language ornamental or obscure. Its purpose is to make hidden structure difficult to ignore.

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