

## Omissible Experiencers in Norwegian

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In a series of lectures on "case grammar" presented at the 1970 Linguistic Institute in Columbus, Charles Fillmore suggested that verbs like (be) obvious, seem or resemble have associated with them an argument in what he calls the Experiencer case, abbreviated E (see Fillmore 1968b, 1970; and Postal 1970). The E can be expressed phonetically in sentences containing these verbs, but it does not have to be.

- (1) a. It is obvious to me that Henry is a hypocrite.  
b. It is obvious that Henry is a hypocrite.
- (2) a. Sheila seems to me to resent Paul's remark.  
b. Sheila seems to resent Paul's remark.
- (3) a. To me Jerry resembles Mike.  
b. Jerry resembles Mike.

The same applies to a "relative" adjective like (be) tall; cf. the appropriateness of To me she is rather tall and the oddity of \*To me she is exactly four feet tall.

Fillmore tried to account for these omitted Experiencers by postulating a transformational rule of Experiencer Shunting which he soon discarded and replaced by a more general Shunting rule. This rule says that if the case frame feature of a given verb tells us that a given case is omissible in sentences containing that verb, the case is shunted, that is, moved to the right outside the sentence boundary, where it is out of reach of the subject and object selection rules. An indefinite NP that has been shunted can undergo deletion. With the verb steal, for instance, the case that Fillmore has termed Source (see Fillmore 1970), is omissible. We can say Harry stole a watch or Harry stole a watch from his girl friend, where the "loser" or "victim" occupying the underlying Source role has been shunted and, in the former sentence, deleted, in the latter sentence, furnished with the preposition from. Although there are certain presuppositions that the two verbs do not share, rob enters into the same case frame as steal except that for it, the underlying Object NP is omissible while the Source is obligatorily expressed, e.g. Harry robbed his girl friend of a watch, Harry robbed his girl friend.

Whatever semantic difference there may be between (a) and (b) in the pairs (1)-(3) above does not concern us in this paper. I am

following Fillmore in his belief that the (b) sentences are like the (a) sentences except that overt mention of the E has been omitted in them. But whereas Fillmore's deletion of shunted Experiencers applies only to indefinite NPs, I find that we also need a rule in Norwegian that optionally deletes Experiencer NPs referring to the speaker, i.e. occurrences of the 1st person pronoun *jeg* ('I').

I shall argue in this paper that Experiencers in Norwegian have a tendency to appear in surface structure as the subject of a verb, SYNES, whose only function is that of supporting the Experiencer NP syntactically. SYNES will have as its direct object the sentence one of whose arguments was the E that was raised to a new main clause by the SYNES Formation rule. If the Experiencer NP refers to the speaker himself, we can either introduce the proper prepositions to go with the E, or delete it, or apply SYNES Formation. I assume that deleted Experiencers and Experiencers that have become the subject of the "surface verb" SYNES have previously undergone Shunting.

I find it convenient for my purpose first to consider the two English verbs remind and resemble and compare their syntactic behavior with that of their respective Norwegian equivalents, MINNE (OM) and LIGNE.

Both Postal (1970) and Fillmore have dealt with these verbs and the kinds of relationships that might be said to exist between them. I shall summarize first Postal's position and then Fillmore's.

Postal associates the verb remind conceptually with somebody's perceiving a similarity between two entities, that is, A perceives that B is similar to C. Beside being similar to he speaks alternatively of being like or resembling. To him, remind is a "surface verb", a lexical item inserted after the operation of certain transformations. Rather than perceive he needs an underlying predicate with the properties of strike in his analysis of remind. Unlike perceive, strike participates in the two transformational processes of Subject Raising (optionally) and Psych Movement (obligatorily). The latter rule is called Psych Movement by Postal because it applies exclusively to psychological verbs, verbs that express an inner, subjective experience. The underlying representation I strike that Jerry resembles Mike can be transformed into That Jerry resembles Mike strikes me by Psych Movement (the two arguments of strike are interchanged) and then into It strikes me that Jerry resembles Mike by Extraposition. Alternatively we can apply Subject Raising first, to get I strike Jerry to resemble Mike (the subject of the complement S is raised, to become object of the matrix S), and then Psych Movement, yielding Jerry strikes me to resemble Mike, and ultimately, by obligatory operations, Jerry strikes me as resembling Mike. Another possibility is to let McCawley's prelexical rule of Predicate Raising apply between Subject Raising and Psych Movement. This creates a derived complex predicate strike-resemble which is replaced by the lexical form remind. Then the argument that ends up neither as subject nor as object in the surface structure will have the preposition of put in front of it, and the result is Jerry

reminds me of Mike. Remind, which superficially seems to behave in a unique way among English verbs, becomes quite "normal" if it is analyzed deep-structurally as the Psych Movement predicate strike plus a complement containing a "similarity predicate" like similar, resemble or like. Postal points to a number of syntactic properties that strike as being similar to and remind share.

Fillmore thinks that resemble and remind both have associated with them the same three roles or cases, the Instrument (not in the 'implement' sense), the Object and the Experiencer. In the sentence Jerry resembles Mike, the NP Jerry is the I, Mike is the O, and the third, phonetically absent, argument is the E, which is understood to be identified with the speaker of the sentence. According to Fillmore, this sentence means roughly that Jerry as stimulus evokes in the speaker memories of Mike. He argues that resemble belongs to the class of verbs that obligatorily undergo Shunting. Eventually the E will either appear as to me--To me, Jerry resembles Mike--or the shunted case will be deleted. Remind does not undergo Shunting but it has to undergo Psych Movement,<sup>1</sup> which in Fillmore's framework

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<sup>1</sup>There is, of course, another verb remind which involves an Agent and is non-Psych Movement, as illustrated by Jerry reminded me of the meeting at three o'clock.

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means that the positions of the case destined to become subject of the sentence and the one destined to become object are interchanged. Since the deep case E of remind does not participate in the shunting process, there is no such sentence as \*To me, Jerry reminds of Mike, or \*Jerry reminds to me of Mike, or \*Jerry reminds of Mike. The E must be present as direct object even if its representative is impersonal one, as in Jerry reminds one of Mike. Fillmore would say that the former of the two sentences It seems to be a good idea, It seems to me that it is a good idea has undergone Subject Raising (of it), and that the E is (shunted and) omitted, the O case anaphoric it now being the only candidate for the subject position, while in the latter sentence, the that-clause O becomes subject and is then obligatorily extraposed. Postal's claim is that these sentences undergo Psych Movement, and that, in sentences with remind, it is not remind that undergoes Psych Movement but the prelexical predicate whose syntactic properties are those of the verb strike in It strikes me that Jerry resembles Mike or Jerry strikes me as resembling Mike.

Let us look at the following well-formed and ill-formed Norwegian sentences:

- |        |                                |                                      |
|--------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| (4) a. | JERRY LIGNER MIKE              | (lit.: Jerry resembles Mike)         |
| b.     | JEG SYNES JERRY LIGNER<br>MIKE | (lit.: I think Jerry resembles Mike) |

- (5) a. JERRY MINNER OM MIKE (lit.: Jerry reminds of Mike)  
 b. JERRY MINNER MEG OM MIKE (lit.: Jerry reminds me of Mike)  
 c. JEG SYNES JERRY MINNER OM MIKE (lit.: I think Jerry reminds of Mike)  
 d. \*JEG SYNES JERRY MINNER MEG OM MIKE (lit.: I think Jerry reminds me of Mike)

(5a) shows that unlike English remind, the Norwegian Psych Movement verb MINNE does not require its E argument to be mentioned. It seems that the Experiencer has been shunted and subsequently deleted in (5a) as well as in (4a). The difference between (4a) and (4b), and between (5a) and (5c) is that whereas Deletion of the E applies in the (a) sentences, it is SYNES Formation that applies after Shunting in (4b) and (5c). All the sentences (4a) - (5c) have the same meaning. (5d) is ungrammatical because the E appears twice, both as the subject of SYNES and as the derived object of MINNE.

At this point I think it may be a good idea to show which part of the meaning of think the verb SYNES covers. The sentence I think Ed is easy to co-operate with is ambiguous. It could mean that the speaker believes Ed is easy to co-operate with (he probably knows people who have co-operated with him) or it may be a personal judgment based on the speaker's own experience with Ed. Accentuation could be a disambiguating factor in this case. Relatively more stress on think favors the 'belief' interpretation.

In Norwegian the two interpretations require different verbs, TRO ('believe') and SYNES. It is easy to find environments in which only one of them makes sense.

- (6) { ??TROR } DU DET FOTOGRAFIET DU NETTOPP SÅ LIGNER MEG?  
       { SYNES }  
 ('Do you think the photo you saw right now resembles me?')

- (7) { TROR } DU DU KOMMER TILBAKE I MORGEN?  
       { \*SYNES }  
 ('Do you think you'll come back tomorrow?')

Semantically the verb SYNES appears to be a chameleon. Consider the sentences (8) - (12).

- (8) a. JEG SYNES BERGLJOT ER SVAERT PEN (lit.: I think B. is very pretty)  
 b. TORGEIR SYNTES IKKE NOEN AV KANDIDATENE VAR AKSEPTABLE (lit.: T. thought not any of the candidates were acceptable)
- (9) a. JEG SYNES JEG HØRTE SKRITT (lit.: I think I heard footsteps)

- (9) b. JAN SYNTES HAN SÅ NOE SOM BEVEGET SEG I BUSKENE  
(lit.: J. thought he saw something that moved  
(itself) in the bushes)
- (10) JEG SYNES DU SER BLEK UT  
(lit.: I think you look pale (out))
- (11) a. JEG SYNES DET SER UT SOM VI FÅR REGN  
(lit.: I think it looks (out) if we get rain)  
b. ARNLJOT SYNTES DET VIRKET SOM OM ELVIRA VAR BEDRØVET  
(lit.: A. thought it seems as if E. was sad)
- (12) a. BILLIE SYNES DET ER IRRITERENDE AT ALLE TAR HENNE  
FOR EN MANN  
(lit.: B. thinks it is irritating that everybody  
takes her for a man)  
b. JEG SYNES DET ER INTERESSANT Å PRØVE EKSOTISK MAT  
(lit.: I think it is interesting to try exotic  
food)

(8a) expresses the speaker's personal judgment or opinion, and (8b) reports the opinion of some other person. Paraphrases of these sentences might start with a phrase like ETTER MIN/TORGEIRS OPPFATNING (lit.: according to my/Torgeir's conception) instead of JEG SYNES/TORGEIR SYNTES.

In (9a) and (9b) we find the perception verbs 'hear' and 'see', respectively. There is subject-subject coreference in both sentences. Subjects of perception verbs are definitely Experiencers. But if the subjects of HØRTE in (9a) and SÅ in (9b) are Experiencers, we would not expect there to be any SYNES part (henceforth called the Experience Preface) in these sentences, as we cannot both raise the E by the SYNES Formation rule and keep it as the subject of HØRTE or SÅ. The double occurrence of E in (9) is, I believe, explained by the fact that in this (and only this) kind of sentence, SYNES and TRO are virtually synonymous. The main clause of these sentences is not really the derived Experience Preface. (9a) means 'I heard something that I believe to be footsteps'. (9b) is ambiguous in that it can be a report either of Jan's stating his belief that there was something which was moving in the bushes, or a report of his stating that he saw something moving there (in which case the speaker of (9b) assumes the right to consider the possibility that one cannot be absolutely sure that there was anything there).

The verb SE UT ('look') in (10) never has an E subject. This sentence means exactly the same as DU SER BLEK UT. The additional Preface is merely an overt indication that the perceiving person is the speaker. Whereas the E argument in (10) could have been deleted, it is absolutely necessary to retain the E of a sentence like BIRGER SYNES JEG SER BLEK UT (lit.: Birger thinks I look pale (out)). Only JEG (Experiencer) SYNES JEG (Object) SER BLEK UT is reducible to JEG SER BLEK UT.

SE UT in (10) and SE UT in (11a) are different lexical verbs. The former verb does not take a complement; the latter is a Psych Movement verb in the Postalian sense but not in the Fillmorean sense. If the E undergoes Shunting but not SYNES Formation, the final result will be DET SER UT FOR MEG (lit.: for me) SOM (OM) VI FÅR REGN. If SYNES Formation applies in addition to Shunting, the result is (11a). Since the E is the speaker, omission of this role would be a third possible realization. VIRKE in (11b) means approximately the same as SE UT, but it is more common than SE UT when there is no reference to the outer appearance of things. One paraphrase of (11b) is DET VIRKET PÅ ARNLJOT (lit.: on A.) SOM OM ELVIRA VAR BEDRØVET.

The adjectival predicates IRRITERENDE and INTERESSANT of the two sentences (12) take an E and a sentence complement as arguments. (12a) has the paraphrase DET IRRITERER BILLIE AT ALLE TAR HENNE FOR EN MANN (lit.: It irritates B. that everybody takes her for a man). IRRITERE is a Psych Movement verb, like English irritate. Because there is coreference between the Experiencer NP of INTERESSANT and the Agent NP of PRØVE in the complement sentence, (12b) has undergone the cyclic rule of Equi-NP deletion.<sup>2</sup> If the Experience Preface were

<sup>2</sup>Notice that if the deep structure of (12b) is something like

[[I interest [I try [I eat exotic food]]],  
           S                  S          S

then it is Equi that has applied here, not Super Equi (see Grinder 1970, Neubauer 1970, for a discussion of the Super Equi-NP deletion).

omitted, the E could also be interpreted as an indefinite NP.

Except in the two sentences (9), in which SYNES is equivalent to TRO, SYNES has no kind of independent meaning in (8) - (12). The subjective judgment which it seems to convey in (8) can be attributed to the fact that the statement in (8a) and Torgeir's statement referred to in (8b) are both evaluative, even without the Experiencer Preface. JEG SYNES adds nothing semantically in (8a). In (8b), TORGEIR SA ('said') could replace TORGEIR SYNTES without affecting the meaning.

The Experience Preface is simply the overt sign that what is expressed in the complement of this derived main clause is somebody's-- i.e. the Experiencer's--subjective opinion or somebody's sensation.

For most Norwegian Psych Movement verbs, there appears to be a non-Psych Movement adjectival counterpart that tolerates the Experiencer Preface or, if the E is the speaker or if it is indefinite, deletion. If neither of those two rules operates, the Preposition Selection rule will have to apply. Consider (13) - (18).

- (13) (JEG SYNES) DET ER ERGERLIG = DET ERGRER MEG =  
           DET ER ERGERLIG FOR MEG  
       (lit.: (I think) it is annoying = It annoys me =  
           It is annoying for me)

- (14) (JEG SYNES) DET ER FRISTENDE = DET FRISTER MEG = DET ER FRISTENDE FOR MEG  
(lit.: (I think) it is tempting = It tempts me = It is tempting for me)
- (15) (JEG SYNES) DET ER OVERRASKENDE = DET OVERRASKER MEG = DET ER OVERRASKENDE FOR MEG  
(lit.: (I think) it is surprising = It surprises me = It is surprising for me)
- (16) (JEG SYNES) DET ER SKUFFENDE = DET SKUFFER MEG = DET ER SKUFFENDE FOR MEG  
(lit.: (I think) it is disappointing = It disappoints me = It is disappointing for me)
- (17) (JEG SYNES) DET ER SKREMMENDE = DET SKREMMER MEG = DET VIRKER SKREMMENDE PÅ MEG  
(lit.: (I think) it is frightening = It frighten me = It appears frightening on me)
- (18) (JEG SYNES) DET ER FORUNDERLIG = DET FORUNDRER MEG = DET VIRKER FORUNDERLIG PÅ MEG  
(lit.: (I think) it is amazing = It amazes me = It appears amazing on me)

These data seem to suggest that Psych Movement could be a rule which is postlexical rather than prelexical as argued by Postal. The general rule is that Psych Movement and Shunting are mutually exclusive and that SYNES Formation can apply just in case Shunting has already applied.

There is unfortunately one exception to this rule, namely MINNE. Consider again the sentences (4) and (5)

- (4) a. JERRY LIGNER MIKE (lit.: Jerry resembles Mike)  
b. JEG SYNES JERRY LIGNER MIKE (lit.: I think Jerry resembles Mike)
- (5) a. JERRY MINNER OM MIKE (lit.: Jerry reminds of Mike)  
b. JERRY MINNER MEG OM MIKE (lit.: Jerry reminds me of Mike)  
c. JEG SYNES JERRY MINNER OM MIKE (lit.: I think Jerry reminds me of Mike)  
d. \*JEG SYNES JERRY MINNER MEG OM MIKE (lit.: I think Jerry reminds me of Mike)

(5a) shows that MINNE undergoes Psych Movement as opposed to LIGNE. However, if MINNE were a Psych Movement verb, we would have expected the non-existence of (5a) and (5c), but those sentences are perfectly grammatical. Perhaps this problem is solved if we allow there to be

two lexical verbs MINNE in Norwegian, one that undergoes Psych Movement and one that undergoes Shunting and SYNES Formation.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>MINNE would not be the only example of a pair of this kind in Modern Norwegian. The lexical item SE UT in sentence (11a), whose E case NP was shunted there, has a Psych Movement counterpart that is used mostly facetiously or ironically. Whereas (JEG SYNES) DET SER UT SOM OM DU HAR FEBER = DET SER UT FOR MEG SOM OM DU HAR FEBER really means what it says, namely 'It looks as if you have fever', the sentence DU SER MEG UT TIL Å HA FEBER (lit.: You look me out to to have fever) might be said to somebody who looks very fit. Here Subject Raising applied prior to Psych Movement.

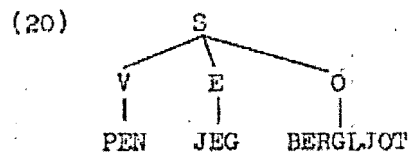
Postal's strike-resemble analysis does not seem to work for Norwegian. (19) is grammatical (and guaranteed natural).

(19) DET SLÅR MEG AT JERRY MINNER OM MIKE  
(lit.: It strikes me that J. reminds of M.)

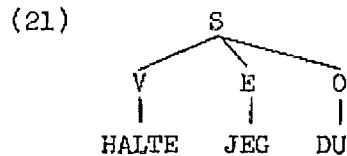
Even though the question remains to be answered why Psych Movement MINNE is the only Norwegian Psych Movement verb that is associated with as many as three arguments, I think it would be preposterous to argue that a more "remote" representation of (19) should be something like this: DET SLÅR MEG AT JERRY SLÅR MEG Å LIGNE MIKE. SLÅ corresponds to English strike because it means the same and shares with it the sense illustrated by TOM SLÅR ALLTID BARE EN GANG ('Tom always strikes only once'), but the English and the Norwegian verb differ in their syntactic behavior since SLÅ is non-Subject Raising, and there is no other Psych Movement verb in Norwegian that can be said to play the role that Postal assigns to strike. Since strike and SLÅ do not share the syntactic properties that were crucial for Postal, I am not happy with an analysis that derives occurrences of the Norwegian verb MINNE by the strike-resemble analysis.

If Psych Movement is a postlexical rule, how are we to analyze English remind sentences? Most people seem to agree that x reminds me of y means x makes me think of y, so I suggest the adoption of a modified version of Fillmore's case analysis mentioned at the beginning of this paper: x is the Instrument which brings it about that I, the Experiencer, am thinking of the Object y.

My claim then is that the underlying structures of an evaluative statement like BERGLJOT ER PEN (lit.: B is pretty) and an exclamation like JEG SYNES DU HALTER (lit.: I think you limp) are roughly like (20) and (21), respectively.







The E of (20) undergoes the Shunting rule, which means that this NP is Chomsky-adjoined to the rest of the sentence, and as it refers to the speaker of the sentence, it is subsequently deleted. After the E of (21) has been shunted, the SYNES Formation rule (22) creates a new main clause.



The other transformations intimately connected with the derivation of Norwegian sentences whose surface main verb is SYNES are Shunting and Shunted NP Deletion, or more precisely, the optional part of Shunted NP Deletion, which concerns Experiencer NPs referring to the speaker;<sup>4</sup> the deletion of indefinite NPs is obligatory, as it is in

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<sup>4</sup>It is possible that this sub-type of Shunted NP Deletion should be considered a separate rule, different from the rule of Shunted Indefinite Deletion that Fillmore postulated for English.

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English. These three rules all abhor the Psych Movement transformation.

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