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The Norwegian Nominal System

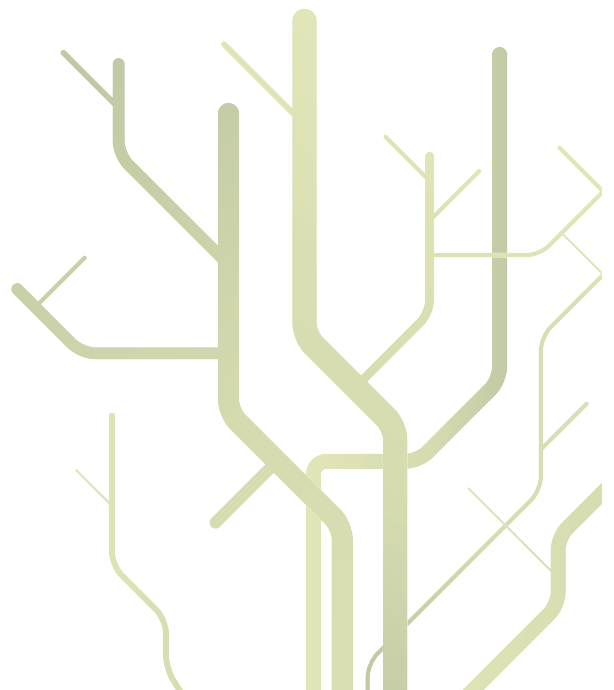
– A Neo-Saussurean Perspective



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The Norwegian Nominal System – A Neo-Saussurean Perspective

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List of abbreviations

CG	common gender
DEF	definite
DEIX	deixis
F	feminine
GN	general number
INDEF	indefinite
M	masculine
N	neuter
PL	plural
SG	singular

Chapter 1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is twofold. On the one hand, I wish to test the Neo-saussurean framework as it is presented by Bouchard (1995, 2002, forthcoming) against Norwegian data. An equally important goal, however, is to provide new insight about the Norwegian Nominal System. The investigation also has a contrastive focus, with English, French and the other Mainland Scandinavian Languages as the main languages of comparison.

One of the major contributions of the thesis is the demonstration that the Neo-saussurean theory actually works and is adequate for dealing with, and understanding, the intricate relationship between form, meaning and interpretation in the Norwegian Nominal System. On the basis of a parsimonious set of theoretical principles, which all follow from the fact that languages are systems of radically arbitrary signs (Saussure 1916), the Neo-saussurean approach yields insightful, though simple, descriptions and explanations of an extensive range of data.

Taking the entire Norwegian Nominal System as the empirical basis for a doctoral thesis might seem ambitious. The choice of such a large topic is, however, a consequence both of the theoretical goal of the investigation as well as of its framework. Firstly, you need a large amount of empirical material in order to test the true potential of a theory. Secondly, the choice of topic is related to the Neo-saussurean framework under scrutiny in the present thesis. A sign can only be fully understood through its relations to other signs. In other words, rather than illustrating the theoretical discussions with a narrow set of data, I found it more fruitful to investigate a larger part of the Norwegian language.

The thesis further offers several contributions in the analysis of the different signs that constitute the Norwegian Nominal System. Firstly, I reanalyse the featural values of several of the most important lexical signs in the system. The major and most radical proposal is the demonstration the truly bare noun in Norwegian cannot be understood as singular indefinite, but rather carries general number in the sense of Corbett (2000). The general number feature will also be proposed for adjectives ending in *-e*. The introduction of the value general number into the Norwegian Nominal System has a number of consequences for the understanding of the system as a whole, one particular advantage being that it yields a neat and economic picture of the featural distribution in attributive adjective-noun constructions. The search of context independent meanings for all signs will also be shown to have the desirable outcome that featural polysemy in Norwegian function words is abolished.

An empirical contribution that has direct implications for current (cross-) linguistic theorising is the demonstration that the so-called bare plural in Norwegian differs from its relatives in English and Danish in that it is a true indefinite, not just neutral with regard to definiteness. Because of this, Norwegian exhibits a grammatical distinction between kind and generic predicates, a system that has been predicted not to exist in natural language.

One of the broad generalisations that will be drawn from the investigation of Norwegian nominals concerns the role of number marking as a minimal means to identify an actant in grammar (Bouchard 2002). It will be shown that in Norwegian almost all nominal uni-signs have some value for number and thus may function as a full referential noun phrase in and by themselves. My presentation of the pronominal

use of adjectives will be of special interest in this connection, also because this is a part of the Norwegian Nominal System that has been neglected in previous works.

The methodology used for detecting the invariant, context-independent, meaning of the different words – or uni-signs – of the Norwegian Nominal System, is also applied to syntactically complex signs. The insistence on the Saussurean theorem that combinatorial signs and syntactically complex signs respond to the very same principles as words offers new insights into many important syntactic constructions in the Norwegian Nominal system. The syntactic part of my investigation is structured around the two most frequent combinatorial signs in Norwegian, viz. (direct) juxtaposition and superimposition, and offers a new perspective on the difference between pre- and postnominal possessives and the distribution of attributive adjectives, as well as on a variety of different definite attributive adjective-noun constructions. Among other things, it will be shown that the so-called double definiteness requirement in Norwegian is construction specific and, moreover, that the term ‘double definiteness’ is a misnomer since the construction, I will argue, only contains one definiteness feature. My syntactic analyses furthermore present data that has not been (much) discussed in the theoretical literature. This includes several definite adjective-noun constructions without a preposed demonstrative, including a neologism that has not previously been described, the Emotive Adjectival Construction.

One of the major theoretical contributions of the syntactic discussion is my insistence on the fact that also intonation, in the form of superimposed tonal signs, are arbitrary relations of a *signifiant* and a *signifié*. The introduction of tonal signs into the description and explanation of the Norwegian Nominal System has important consequences for the understanding of the interaction between the invariant values of uni-signs when these signs are combined into syntactically complex signs. It will be shown that the interpretation of the most complex Norwegian nominal phrases is always motivated by the compositionally invariant meaning of the sign as whole, a function of the meaning both of the uni-signs being combined as well as the combinatorial signs combining them.

The thesis is structured as follows. In Chapter 2, I will present the theory. I take Saussure’s dichotomies *signifiant/signifié*, *langue/parole*, *valeur/signification*, and *synchrony/diachrony* as my point of departure for presenting the theoretical, empirical and methodological scope of the investigation. In Chapter 3 I apply the theory and methodology to Norwegian Nouns and Adjectives. Chapter 4 investigates nominal function words, and Chapter 5 discusses syntax, the combination of signs through combinatorial signs into larger complexes of signs. Finally, the contribution of the thesis is summarised under the heading “Conclusion and Directions for Future Research.”

Chapter 2

Theoretical, Empirical and Methodological Foundations

A scientific work will always consist of at least two interacting fundamental components, the empirical questions/problems under investigation and the theoretical ideas used to understand these issues. Though the empirical and theoretical questions are necessarily intertwined, their relative importance may vary. The scientist may either have a particular empirical problem she wants to investigate and choose the theory she sees as most suitable for this purpose. Alternatively, she may have a theory she wants to investigate (the validity of) and choose a suitable empirical basis to test it on. While the main contribution of this Neo-saussurean investigation of the Norwegian Nominal System lies in the empirical analyses, the motivation behind it sees the theoretical questions as equally primordial. In other words, my main concern is to (better) understand and gain knowledge about and insight into, not only the Norwegian Nominal System, but the nature, foundations, possibilities and limitations of human language in general. The Norwegian Nominal System is thus used as a basis for testing and advocating my understanding of these broader issues.

The choice of framework for this particular thesis is made by strict adherence to Occam's razor, a principle generally attributed to the 14th-century English logician and Franciscan friar, William of Occam, which states that when given a choice between theories or hypotheses, one should choose the hypothesis that introduces the fewest assumptions and postulates the fewest entities. According to this principle, the explanation of any phenomenon should make as few assumptions as possible, eliminating those that make no difference in the observable predictions of the explanatory hypothesis or theory. Occam's razor thus advises economy, parsimony and simplicity as a guiding rule in scientific theorising.

Specifically, I argue that the best basis for a theory of human language, adhering to Occam's razor, was given already by Ferdinand de Saussure in the beginning of the 20th century, through his understanding of language as a system of arbitrary signs. I furthermore propose that the ideas of the Genovese master provide the rudiments of a full-fledged theory of grammar and human language. Although Saussure is generally considered the father of 20th-century linguistics, Saussure's theory has not until very recently been properly investigated and/or developed and put to use in (contemporary) concrete linguistic analysis.¹ However, in recent years, this task has been undertaken by Denis Bouchard (1995, 2002, 2006, 2009 and forthcoming), who has developed a Neo-saussurean theory of syntax. As a former student of Noam Chomsky, Bouchard acknowledges the insights provided by Chomskyan generative grammar. In particular, although he does not share the

¹ Saussure is, of course, known as the father of structuralism. Though this school was highly inspired by Saussure and especially his axiom of differentiability, the principle of arbitrariness, which is at the foundation of all Saussurean theorising, was neglected or rejected in structuralist research, confer Jakobson (1973: 24): "Ne parlons donc jamais de hasard ni de signes arbitraire". In addition, Saussure never talks about *structure*, only about *système*.

fundamental assumptions of generative grammar, Bouchard follows the generative tradition in emphasising the importance of syntax. The present study is informed by Saussure's ideas as they have been developed in Bouchard's work. The theoretical framework this thesis is couched in can thus be described not only as "Neo-saussurean", but, more precisely, as "Post-chomskyan Bouchardian Neo-saussurean".

For 80 years, Saussure's ideas were available to the general public only through *Cours de linguistique générale* (Saussure 1916, henceforth *Cours*), which, as is well known, was based mostly on his student's notes and published posthumously by his colleagues Charles Bally and Albert Séchehaye. However, the bulk of Saussurean research has, since the end of the last century, been based on the manuscript sources of *Cours* (Godel 1957) and especially the critical edition, based on both the autobiographical notes and the notes of his students, established by Rudolf Engler (Saussure: 1968). In 1996, the manuscript of Saussure's book *Sur la linguistique générale*, which one previously thought was forever lost, was discovered in Geneva. Together with his already known notes on the subject of general linguistics, these texts were edited by Simon Bouquet and Rudolf Engler as *Écrits de linguistique générale* (Saussure 2002, henceforth *Écrits*). With the critical edition of *Cours* with the notes and comments of Tullio de Muro (Saussure 1916/1967) grounded in the Engler edition, the Saussurean thinking is now available to the large audience, and in paperback.²

Although the present work is couched in a Neo-saussurean framework, thus giving the Genovese the credit and status he deserves, it is not a thesis about Saussure or Saussurean thinking (or reception) *an sich*, and it is most certainly not intended as part of the philosophical discussion on Saussure's thinking (see e.g. Bouquet 1997, Utaker 2002, Pétróff 2004). Rather, the present study is an attempt to lift Saussure out of the philosophical sphere and put his "program" to concrete use in linguistic analysis. In this respect, the finer nuances on Saussure's precise intentions are less important, and, in general, the theoretical and methodological ideas (given by Saussure and) used in this thesis should be quite uncontroversial for those familiar with the Saussurean writings. However, since these ideas have not received due attention by the majority of practising linguists and are often banalised or inaccurately interpreted, they will be presented in this chapter.

Saussure's understanding of language is centred around, and well known for, several interrelated concepts of which the most famous are synchrony/diachrony, *langue/parole*, and *signifiant/signifié*.³ Though these three 'conceptual pairs' are often cited in textbook introductory chapters as basic facts, most contemporary scholars see them as simple truisms with little relevance for linguistic theory. In fact, they are often completely neglected and most current grammatical frameworks have tools or fundamental ideas that are in direct opposition to Saussure's insights. From a Neo-saussurean viewpoint, these conceptual pairs are far from truisms. Instead, they are regarded as the fundamental basis for all linguistic theorising, which is how Saussure himself considered these concepts. In fact, the entire Saussurean view of language is structured through such sets of interrelated dualities defined by two opposites that are contradictory opposed and complementary, and at the same time undissociable, insofar as one cannot exist without the other (Pétróff 2004: 77). The Saussurean

² Saussurean reception has a tradition for citing the Engler edition (Saussure 1968). This is not a very accessible work and references will therefore as far as possible be made to *Cours* and *Écrits* as this thesis is about the Norwegian Nominal System, not about Saussurean philosophy.

³ The Saussurean terminology is far from straightforwardly translatable to English. Except for the duality synchrony/diachrony, I will therefore use Saussure's original terms in italics.

dualities are thus two-sided and interdependent principles and should not be confused (as is often done) with dichotomies, i.e. mutually exclusive and unrelated principles. Saussure's dualities are direct consequences of the fact that language, though a social convention, is trapped in, and thus determined by, human biology. The working hypothesis of this dissertation is that the Saussurean dualities are necessary components of linguistic theory and that they encompass everything – insights and tools – needed for a full-fledged theory and methodology for understanding both language, different languages and, thus, also the Norwegian Nominal System.

A scientist will necessarily, though not always consciously, use a specific method in her approach to the empirical and theoretical questions she is investigating. Such a methodology should, preferably, fall out naturally from the empirical and theoretical basis of the investigation. In this chapter, the theoretical, empirical and methodological issues under scrutiny in this thesis are presented through the three principal Saussurean dualities. Section 1.1, presents the theoretical basis of the investigation of language as a system of signs through the *signifié/signifiant* duality. This section presents the fundamental principles such as radical conventionalised arbitrariness, linearity and limitations of arbitrariness and shows how all these are direct consequences of the fact that the social institution of *langue* is defined by properties of human biology that are theoretically prior to language. While taking Saussure's understanding of human language as its point of departure, this section also provides an introduction to the current Bouchardian Post-chomskyan approach and development of Saussure's original ideas that I am advocating. Section 1.2 gives a presentation of the empirical issues that are investigated. I argue and explain my choice of object of study with reference to the dualities of synchrony/diachrony and *langue/parole*. This part also discusses and delimits the terms “Norwegian” and “Nominal System” used in the title of the thesis. Section 1.3 presents the methodology of the investigation through the dualities *syntagmatic/paradigmatic* and *signification/valeur*.

2.1 Theory: *signifié/signifiant*

In the opening lines of his coming book, Bouchard (forthcoming) states that “[t]his book explores a very simple idea. Language is a system which links concepts and percepts, and this takes place in human beings”. While this may sound like a banality no one would disagree with, the importance of this self-evident statement is generally neglected in contemporary linguistic theory. In the Saussurean view of language advocated by Bouchard (1995, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2009, forthcoming) and in this thesis, this is the fundamental basis for understanding human language and thus grammar. Being embedded in human bodies and brains, language is necessarily conditioned by the physical and cognitive properties of human beings. More importantly, as Bouchard points out, language would therefore not be the same if these properties of human beings were different. The simplest idea for a theory of language is thus that its highly specific properties “derive from logically prior properties of the conceptual and perceptual substances” (Bouchard 2005:1693). Contrary to the most powerful linguistic paradigm today, i.e. generative grammar, the Saussurean view of language assumes no language specific properties. The faculty of language is an interaction of pre-existing elements which at some point have started taking on a different function to produce language (Bouchard 2002, 2005, forthcoming).

As a system of signs – the social convention of a *signifiant* and a *signifié* – Saussurean theorising responds to two fundamental principles; the arbitrariness of the sign and the linearity of (oral) *signifiés*. These principles are to be understood in the strictest scientific sense as the foundation of a science (Bouchard 2002, 2006, 2009, forthcoming; Pétróff 2004: 157), and (as we will see) they are both determined by human biology. These two principles determine the universal character of language, namely that everything is differences « tout n’est que différences » (Saussure 1916, 2002), and furthermore clarifies the role of language as a system, which sets limitations on arbitrariness.

Radical arbitrariness is discussed in 1.1.1, Saussure’s view of syntax as a means to limit this arbitrariness is presented in 1.1.2 and Bouchard’s neo-saussurean theory of syntax as a set of combinatorial-signs is presented in 1.1.3. A summary of the section is given in 1.1.4.

2.1.1 Arbitrariness and conventions

Language is a system of signs.⁴ The Saussurean sign is the conventionalised association of thought and sound, or more precisely of a mental image coupled with a sound image⁵, i.e. that of a *signifié* (signified) and a *signifiant* (signifier).

In addition to being conventionalised, the foremost property of the sign is that it is radically arbitrary – two characteristics that are necessarily intertwined. The innovation of Saussure’s understanding of language was not the simple statement that the *relation* between the *signifié* (concept) and the *signifiant* (sound) was arbitrary. This is something that all present day linguistic theories to some degree accept and

⁴ Alternatively and more precisely, Language is a system of values and the unit of these values is the sign (Confer Pétróff, 2004). This distinction, though important from a theoretical and philosophy of language viewpoint, has little consequences for the concrete analysis I will carry out in this thesis, and will not be discussed in detail here.

⁵ The image might also be visual like in sign languages, see footnote 29, section 1.1.3.

take into account. Saussure's ideas were in fact far more innovative and controversial. His major contribution to linguistic understanding and explanation was the observation that linguistic arbitrariness is radical, in the sense that it applies to both sides of the sign. In other words, the characteristics of both the *signifiants* and the *signifiés* are in themselves necessarily arbitrary. Neither sound nor idea is distinct prior to language (Saussure 1916: 155), which means that neither has independent existence isolated from the other, i.e. neither *signifiés* nor *signifiants* (may) exist outside of the sign instantiating them. The two facets of the sign are thus indissolubly linked to one another. This must be so, Saussure explains, because the relation between *signifiant* and *signifié* cannot be established through logic or essential properties in the nature of neither the perceptual nor the conceptual substances that are combined since “il n'y a rien de commun, dans l'essence, entre un signe et ce qu'il signifie.” (Saussure 2002: 20)⁶.

According to Saussure, the radical arbitrariness of the sign is thus the inevitable result of the coupling of two heterogeneous and amorphous objects, sound and idea (*ibid*), and includes not only the relation between these two objects, but also – and importantly – the shape, delimitation or cutting, of the objects in and by themselves. There are no (a priori shaped) ideas or concepts waiting to be coupled with a sound and there are no sounds waiting to be coupled with ideas. Language thus brings about and establishes delimitations which render these two amorphous masses discontinuous, discrete. The significance attributed to this observation together with its grounding in the properties of human conceptualisation and sensory-motor system, which both are theoretically prior to language, is one of the major significant and essential elements that separates the Saussurean view of language both from those of his foregoers and from his followers. Saussure himself contrasts this radical arbitrariness with the classical view of the sound-meaning pairing as a nomenclature discussed already in Plato's *Cratylus* and revitalised in Saussure's time by Whitney (1875). The radical arbitrariness of the sign is further omnipresent in language (and languages) and applies to all signs – lexical, functional, morphological and syntactic. Today, the insights in Saussure's discovery of the necessity of radical arbitrariness are neglected by many scholars and linguistic theories. A case in point is many varieties of generative grammar and formal semantics where the meaning part of the sign is assumed to be universal, i.e. shared by all languages, and hence not (radically) arbitrary. Examples include notions such as Functional Sequence (f.seq) and today's Logical Form (and the earlier Deep Structure) from generative grammar and operators such as \forall , \exists , GEN and \cap in formal semantics.

The principle of arbitrariness is not merely a simple observation from comparing different languages or the comparison of closely related lexical items such as *mouton* and *sheep*. Rather the principle of arbitrariness falls out as a consequence of the substances combined in language, of human biology. As Bouchard (2002, forthcoming) insists, arbitrariness and the linguistic variation that it engenders derive from the physiological and conceptual makeup of human beings. Moreover, everything else in language and linguistic theory depends on and is related to this radical arbitrariness, and the two heterogeneous substances combined in the sign. “Le principe [...] domine toute la linguistique de la langue ; ses conséquences sont innombrables.”⁷ (Saussure 1916: 100)

⁶ There is nothing in common, in the essence, between a sign and what it signifies (Translation is Denis Bouchard's). Note that Saussure here uses “sign” for what he later/elsewhere terms signifiant.

⁷ The principle dominates everything in the linguistics of language; its consequences are innumerable. (The translation is my own, which will be the case unless otherwise is indicated. The many translations

Since both facets of the sign are (independently) arbitrary, also the relation between them is necessarily so. Nevertheless, once this relation is established through social convention, it can no longer be broken or altered by an individual's act or will. The conventions which constitute a language, Saussure insists, are different from other social conventions in that they are necessary. Individuals have no choice but to follow these conventions since they establish the sign in the first place. Without the necessary conventions, language, because of arbitrariness, would be unusable.⁸ “Le contrat est conventionnel [...], mais c'est un contrat qui ne peut plus être brisé, à moins de supprimer la vie du signe, puisque cette vie du signe repose sur le contrat.”⁹ (Saussure 2002: 103). The arbitrary and conventional facets of the sign are closely interrelated. As Saussure points out; it is precisely because the sign is arbitrary that it knows no other law than the one of tradition, and it is because it is founded in tradition that it can be arbitrary (1916: 108).

A fundamental consequence of radical arbitrariness is the fact that both the *signifiés* and the *signifiants* can be defined solely by their opposition with other signs. In other words, due to arbitrariness, the conceptual and material side of the sign has in common that their “plus exacte caractéristique est d'être ce que les autres ne sont pas.”¹⁰ (Saussure 1916:162). This is the principle of differentiability, which according to Saussure is the foremost universal character of language (Note N 24a, Pétrouff 2004: 64) as it follows directly from arbitrariness “Arbitraire et différentiel sont deux qualités corrélatives.”¹¹ (Saussure 1916: 163). Whether it is the sign as a whole, its *signifiant* or its *signifié*, they can only be defined, or be said to exist, through interaction with other objects that likewise are co-defined. This is what lies behind the definition of language as a system of values, as Pétrouff puts it “on n'a que des différences de différences. Autrement dit, les signes sont des valeurs.”¹² (Pétrouff 2004: 160). Though the exact shape and limitation of both sound and concept are arbitrary, the sign arises from the need to conceptualise a certain idea, a *signifié*, executed through the shape of a sound, *signifiant*, and not vice versa:

Dans l'association constituant le signe il n'y a rien depuis le premier moment que **deux valeurs existant l'une en vertu de l'autre** (arbitraire du signe). Si l'un des deux côtés du signe linguistique pouvait passer pour avoir une existence en soi, ce serait le conceptuel, l'idée comme base du signe. (Saussure 2002: 333)¹³

The study of meaning or *signifiés* (semantics, morphology and, as we will see, syntax) is thus primordial to the study of sounds or *signifiants* (phonetics and phonology), both in linguistic theorising and in this thesis. For the present investigation, then, the principle of differentiability will be especially important in the identification of the semantic value of the different signs in the Norwegian Nominal System. The effects of the differential character of signs, and especially the *signifiant*,

of Saussure to English are, of course, highly influenced by the translators interpretations. I have therefore tried to render Saussure as literally as possible with little attempt to write good English.)

⁸ This is illustrated in the famous short story *Ein Tisch ist ein Tisch*. by Peter Bichsel

⁹ The contract is conventional [...], but it is a contract that cannot be broken, without removing the sign's life, because this life (of the sign) depends on the contract.

¹⁰ Their most precise characteristic is to be what the others are not.

¹¹ Arbitrary and differential are (two) correlated qualities.

¹² There are only differences of differences. In other words, signs are values.

¹³ In the association that constitutes the sign, there is nothing except for two values, existing only in virtue of each other (arbitrariness of the sign). If one side of the sign could be said to have existence by itself, it would be the conceptual side, the idea as the foundation of the sign.

will be discussed with regard to the dualities of syntagmatic/paradigmatic and *valeur/signification* in 2.3.1.

The principle of radical arbitrariness and differentiability necessarily entails the denial of universals in Neo-saussurean theory, apart from those that are conditioned by the properties of our sensory-motor and conceptual-intentional system. We will come back to the absence of semantic universals – including its only exception – in the conclusion of this section 2.1.4. Before that, sub-section 2.1.2 introduces the second principle of language, namely linearity, together with Saussure's understanding of syntax, while 2.1.3 introduces Bouchard's Neo-saussurean sign-theory of syntactic combinations based solely on the two principles, arbitrariness and linearity.

2.1.2 Saussure and syntax: linearity, limitations of arbitrariness

One of the most prevalent misinterpretations of Saussure's understanding of Language concerns his view on syntax. The following citations from Seuren (1998) are typical:

He failed to see the importance of syntactic structure and took the word, not the sentence, as the primary unit of linguistic analysis (Seuren 1998: 155-6)

[T]he 'system' he envisages seems limited to morphological inflections. De Saussure really had no eye for syntax. (Seuren 1998: 150 fn)

Given his neogrammarian background, it is not very surprising that Saussure has more to say about phonology and morphology, than syntax. After all, the neogrammarians were concerned with sound laws and the impact of morphology on language change through analogy.

However, while it is true that Saussure is far more explicit regarding (compositional) analysis of words than of phrases and sentences, to say that he had no eye for syntax is simply wrong. Both *Cours* and *Écrits* contain several passages that show how Saussure placed syntax at the heart of linguistic analysis and theorising. As should be clear from the citations below, Saussure was explicit not only about syntax holding the most important role in the organisation of language as a system, he was also specific about the nature of syntactic combinations. Saussure furthermore commented on the role of syntax in the overall language system, i.e. on the relationship between lexicology, morphology and syntax:

Il faut ajouter une faculté d'association et de coordination, qui se manifeste dès qu'il ne s'agit plus de signes isolés ; *c'est cette faculté qui joue le plus grand rôle dans l'organisation de la langue en tant que système.*¹⁴ (Saussure 1916 : 29)

Dans la règle, nous ne parlons pas par signes isolés, mais par groupes de signes, par masses organisées qui sont elles-mêmes des signes. Dans la langue tout revient à des différences, mais tout revient aussi à des groupements.¹⁵ (Saussure 1916 :177)

¹⁴ One must add a faculty of coordinations and associations, which is manifest once we are not concerned with isolated signs; *it is this faculty that plays the most important role in the organisation of language as a system.*

¹⁵ As a rule, we do not speak with isolated signs, but by groups of signs, by organised masses which are themselves signs [...] these are always broader units, themselves made of smaller units, being in a relation of reciprocal solidarity.

L'interpénétration de la morphologie, de la syntaxe et de la lexicologie s'explique par la nature au fond identique de tous les faits de synchronie. Il ne peut y avoir entre eux aucune limite tracée d'avance.^{16,17} (Saussure 1916 :187)

Lexicology, morphology and syntax all respond to the same principles, namely (1) the arbitrariness of the sign, presented above, and (2) the linear character of the *signifiant*:

Le signifiant, étant de nature auditive, se déroule dans le temps seul et a les caractères qu'il emprunte au temps : a) il représente une étendue, et b) cette étendue est mesurable dans une seule dimension : c'est une ligne.¹⁸ (Saussure 1916 : 103)

As Saussure himself points out, this principle is so evident that it tends to be neglected “sans doute parce qu'on l'a trouvé trop simple ; cependant il est fondamental et les conséquences en sont incalculables, son importance est égale à celle de la première loi. Tout le mécanisme de la langue en dépend.”¹⁹ (Ibid). Due to restrictions of our auditory channel, acoustic *signifiants* are thus necessarily presented one after the other. The principle is thus responsible for the division of words into prefixes, stems and suffixes, while for phrases and sentences, it strongly determines the possibilities of syntactic combinations.

Whether at the word-, phrasal- or sentence level, combinations of signs interact with arbitrariness. Since groups of signs are themselves signs they succumb to arbitrariness, but when it comes to combinations of signs into larger signs, Saussure (1916: 180-184) insists, it is necessary to distinguish between absolute and relative arbitrariness. While the arbitrariness of unit signs is absolute, complex signs are relatively motivated because they evoke both the terms they are composed of and others with which they are associated. The faculty of combining signs into larger units of signs thus plays a primordial role in language as it sets limitations on arbitrariness.

Words may encode concepts of great complexity, but having a single word for every thinkable concept would not only be unpractical, it would be unviable. While there are no limitations on the complexity of the concepts that can be encoded in a sign, there are limitations on how many arbitrary signs the human brain can store.²⁰ The aptitude of combining a finite set of arbitrary unit signs into an infinite set of

¹⁶ The interpenetration of morphology, syntax and lexicology is explained by the fundamentally identical nature of all synchronic facts. There cannot exist any pretraced limit between them.

¹⁷ And even more specifically “Linguistiquement, la morphologie n'a pas d'objet réel et autonome; elle ne peut constituer une discipline distincte de la syntaxe.” *Linguistically, morphology has no real and autonomous object, it cannot constitute a discipline distinct from syntax.* (Saussure 1916 :186) and “[L]e fait lexicologique peut se confondre avec le fait syntaxique.” Facts of lexicology, may be confused with facts of syntax. (Saussure 1916: 187)

¹⁸ The signifiant, being audial by nature, takes place in time only and has the characteristics that it borrows from time: a) it represents an extension, et b) this extension may be measured in one dimension only: it is a line.

¹⁹ Probably because it is considered too simple; it is, nevertheless, fundamental and its consequences are incalculable, its importance is like that of the first law. The entire mechanism of langue is dependent upon it.

²⁰ A demonstration of the fact that every thinkable concept – no matter how complex or far fetched – may be coupled with a *signifiant* to form a sign is given by Douglas Adams and John Lloyd in *The meaning of liff* (1983), a dictionary where place names are given new use as terms for recognisable concepts. An example is “SCRANTON (n.) A person who after the declaration of the bodmin (q.v.), always says ‘... but I only had the tomato soup.’” which only makes sense if one knows the definition of “BODMIN (n.) “The irrational and inevitable discrepancy between the amount pooled and the amount needed when a large group of people try to pay a bill together after a meal.” Bouchard often uses the conceptual complexity of the word like *assassin* to illustrate this.

relatively motivated signs, is thus yet another direct consequence of radical arbitrariness, which is grounded in the characteristics of the prior properties of our conceptual and sensory-motor systems, see Bouchard (2002, 2006, 2009, forthcoming).

In both *Cours* and *Écrits*, it is repeated several times that the link between root and affix, between a word and a compound, and between a word and a phrase or a sentence, are all subject to the same principle, a positional theory directed by the principle of linearity. Saussure gives several examples of the way the phenomenon of linearity unifies the syntax of words like *désir-eux*, phrases like *Hôtel Dieu* and propositions like French *L'homme que j'ai vu* in contrast to English *The man I saw*.

En effet tout le système de la langue repose sur ce principe irrationnel de l'arbitraire du signe qui, appliqué sans restriction, aboutirait à la complication suprême; mais l'esprit réussit à introduire un principe d'ordre et de régularité dans certaines parties de la masse des signes, c'est là le rôle du relativement motivé.²¹ (Saussure 1916 : 182)

In all the cases above, the order is restricted and cannot be altered – there is no such thing as *eux-désir* or *Dieu Hôtel*. In other examples, a change in order necessarily results in a change in meaning. This shows that even if combinations are relatively motivated by their parts, the meaning of their ordering is subject to arbitrariness and differentiability: “[S]i par exemple en français les deux groupes *je dois* et *dois-je* ? ont des significations différentes cela ne tient qu'à l'ordre des mots.”²² (Saussure 1916 : 191). An especially good example of this is given by French numerals like *cent cinq* ‘(one) hundred and five’ and *cinq cent* ‘five hundred’; in both cases the meaning of the complex signs is formed by the meaning of its parts, but the different ordering of the uni-signs results in a different meaning. There is a double-angled generalisation here: the order big number-small number is always addition, whereas the order small number-big number is always multiplication. Though conventional, this is nevertheless arbitrary: there is no principled reason why the correlations could not be the opposite.²³

Another common misunderstanding of Saussure's view on syntax is that he regarded syntax as part of *parole* (the acts of speech) and not of *langue* (the linguistic system):

For de Saussure, the language system is word-centred, while the sentence as the rule-governed expression of a propositional thought is not taken into account. In fact, sentence syntax is for him part of *parole*, not of *langue*. (Seuren 1998: 149)

This is at variance with the essence of Saussurean thinking, and it is stated very clearly in *Cours* that “Il faut attribuer à la langue, non à la parole, tous les types de syntagmes construits sur des formes régulières.”²⁴ (Saussure 1916: 173). It is the actual execution of syntax as combinations into words, phrases and sentences that

²¹ Actually, the entire system of language relies on this irrational principle of the arbitrariness of signs which, applied without restrictions, would result in extreme complexity; but the mind manages to introduce a principle of order and regularity in certain parts of the signed masses, it is the role of relative motivation.

²² If, for instance in French, the two groups *je dois* and *dois-je*? have different interpretations, this is solely due to the order of the words.

²³ This was pointed out by Denis Bouchard in several lectures and discussions during my stay at UQAM 2006-2008.

²⁴ We must attribute to *langue* not to *parole* all phrases build on regular forms.

Saussure correctly sees as part of *parole*, but its principles and regularities are part of *langue*. Or as Bouquet (1997: 341) puts it “La syntaxe ne se manifeste que dans la parole; or elle fait partie de la langue.”²⁵

Since syntax boils down to the principles for the combinations of signs within *langue*, there is no need for a separate theory of syntax. As a fully integrated part of the sign system, furthermore, the domain of syntax should be just as free from universals as the lexical and morphological domain. In other words, Saussurean syntax is clearly arbitrary, conventional and language specific.

We have seen that Saussure was fully aware of the importance of syntax which he incorporated in his general theory of signs. Nevertheless, it is true that most of the examples he uses to illustrate his point are taken from the domain of words and not that of sentences. Saussure’s discussion of syntax lacks the formal precision required both for a modern theory and for practical execution of syntactic analysis. But as Bouchard (forthcoming) points out, both Chomsky (1964: 59) and Ruwet (1968:52) observe that Saussure cannot be blamed for this since the technical tools now currently used did not exist at his time and only became available later in the course of work in logic and foundations of mathematics.

In the following section, we turn to the development of Saussure’s ideas in the recent work of Bouchard. However, first one last Saussurean observation is in order:

Mais l’essentiel est que les entités abstraites reposent toujours, en dernière analyse, sur les entités concrètes. Aucune abstraction grammaticale n’est possible sans une série d’éléments matériels qui lui sert de substrat, et c’est toujours à ces éléments qu’il faut revenir en fin de compte.²⁶ (Saussure 1916: 190)

So even though there exist signs that are used outside of syntax, like *oui*, *non* and *merci* (Saussure 1916:177), there cannot be an independent syntax outside of the elements it combines. While this observation seems to capture an obvious fact, it goes against the generativist conception of syntax as an autonomous module (Fodor 1983, Chomsky 1986). In the Bouchardian sign-theory of syntax, presented in 2.1.3, this observation is pivotal.

To sum up, according to Saussure, syntax – i.e. the combination of signs into (more) complex signs – is a means to limit arbitrariness by imposing relative motivation. The aptitude for doing so is part of the language faculty and thus common to the species. At the same time, however, syntax is subject to the same principles that guide every aspect of human language, namely arbitrariness, differentiability and linearity. Like any other area of Language, a theory of Saussurean syntax should thus be language specific and free of universals except for those imposed by the human sensory-motor and conceptual systems. In addition, syntax nevertheless does hold a special (and dual?) status vis-à-vis the sign system; it is a condition for its usefulness and existence while at the same time being a sub-part of it.

2.1.3 Neo-saussurean syntax

While Saussure was clear on his view on the importance, and the overall nature of, syntax, he did not develop an exhaustive theory of the exact nature of syntactic relations. Since the present thesis is concerned inter alia with syntax, it is necessary to

²⁵ Syntax is manifest only in *parole*, but she is part of *langue*.

²⁶ What is essential is that the abstract entities always rely on the concrete entities. No grammatical abstraction is possible without a series of material elements serving as a substrate, and it is always to these elements one has to return.

present the contribution of Bouchard (2002, 2006, 2009, forthcoming) who – based on Saussure’s original ideas – has integrated a detailed theory of syntactic relations into the Saussurean framework.

The main contribution of Bouchardian Neo-saussurean grammar to linguistic theorising is the demonstration that syntax can be accounted for as a set of combinatorial signs.²⁷ This understanding is based on the observation that since linguistic signs have two facets, a *signifiant* and a *signifié*, the establishment of relations between signs necessarily operates on both these facets. Just like the signs it combines, the expressed relation between two signs thus has a conceptual and perceptual side too, and is consequently itself a sign. On this view, then, a syntactically complex sign has three sub-components that motivate the meaning of its whole, which then constitutes a fourth sign; the two signs being combined *and* the expressed relation between them. As we have seen, words and syntax are of the same fundamental nature. They are conventionalised arbitrary relations between a concept and a percept; in Bouchard’s Neo-saussurean grammar, words are uni-signs and syntax is a set of combinatorial signs (henceforth combi-signs).

Combi-signs nevertheless do differ from uni-signs in one important respect as they instantiate the only truly universal *signifié* in the theory, namely predication.²⁸ All combinations of signs are acts of predication, in the broadest sense of the term, insofar as one tells something about the other, a property that, according to Bouchard (forthcoming), has been exapted from the pre-linguistic cognitive system of humans. He argues that linguistic predication is directly related to the prelinguistic capacity human beings have to attribute properties to, or information about, objects, a capacity humans share with other animals, and cites Hurford who asserts that “[i]n the very earliest mental processes, long antedating language, binary structure can be found, with components that one can associate with the functions of identifying or locating an object and representing some information about it” (2007: 527). The syntactic relation between a head and its dependent can thus be seen “as a fossil in language of how more primitive mental processes operate” (Bouchard, forthcoming) and syntax – the most important component in language as a system – is thus the integration of this mental process into the sign system. Predication is a relation that is broad enough to apply to all different meanings like subject-predicate, topic-comment or saturation – like e.g. the property of object attributed to a verb or a preposition. Which of these possibilities is at play is determined by the elements being combined. Predication is omnipresent in our cognitive system.

While predication is its universal *signifié*, the *signifiants* of combi-signs directly obey the fundamental principles of language, i.e. conventionalised arbitrariness, differentiability and linearity. The *signifiant* of a combi-sign, Bouchard (2002, forthcoming) explains will take whatever form a language arbitrarily selects among those that our physiology provides as a combinatorial percept in the modality of this language. In an oral language, the auditory-oral channel is restricted to the single physical dimension of time, and the set of possible signifiants for a combi-sign is therefore extremely restricted. There is only a fairly small space of physiologically possible systems that can realize combinations of percepts. Arbitrariness, then, is limited by what are ultimately principles of physical science.

²⁷ Again, while this may seem a quite banal definition of syntax, it is one that has been neglected in most current linguistic theorising.

²⁸ (The lack of) semantic universals in Neo-saussurean theory will be discussed further in 2.1.4.

Because of the principle of linearity, there are only two direct ways to establish a relation between two percepts, i.e. between the *signifiants* of two constituents, in an oral language.²⁹ First, the two *signifiants* can share a temporal edge, so that they are ordered next to each other in a way that is grammatically significant, i.e. they may be temporally juxtaposed. Second, the two *signifiants* can “share a temporal space, as when a modulation is superimposed on the *signifiant* of a constituent: one *signifiant* is the intonation placed on the other *signifiant*, like an intonation expressing a question or exclamation meaning.” These two direct means of indicating the relationship between two *signifiants* are by far the most common ones in Norwegian, and their application in its nominal system is the subject of Chapter 4 where 5.2 looks at use of juxtaposition while 5.3 also investigates several superimposed signs.

In addition to these two ways of directly establishing a relation between signs, combinatorial relations can be indicated by physically shaping one of the *signifiants* in a conventionalised way that indicates the nature of the relation being established with the other. Such marking can take place on either of the *signifiants*, i.e. on the dependent *or* on the head, and are again restricted by the principle of linearity. They can thus only be performed by one of the physical means presented above, i.e. either by juxtaposition or by superimposition. A case marking, for instance, may be juxtaposed to the *signifiant* of a term, as with case endings, or it can be superimposed on a term, as with case tones. Both these means are just as well suited to indicate the relation between for instance a verb and its direct object as is juxtaposition (whether in the ordering VO or OV). Use of dependent marking in Norwegian, is discussed briefly in 5.2.5.

Altogether, there are thus six (and only six) possible ways to encode a relation between two *signifiants* in an oral language; two direct ones (syntactic ordering or syntactic intonation) and four indirect ones (morphological ordering or intonation on the dependent, or morphological ordering or intonation on the head). The six different means of encoding a relation between *signifiants* are all attested in the world’s languages, and a given language may choose to conventionalise the expression of a relation like e.g. ‘direct object’ by any of these combinatorial *signifiants*. See 5.1.3 for schematisation and exemplification.

The difference between the direct and indirect ways of giving a form to the predicative relation between two signs conform to the two ways of establishing a relation in Saussurean grammar namely *in praesentia*, i.e. syntagmatically or, *in absentia*, i.e. paradigmatically.³⁰

The *signifiants* of combi-signs are thus highly restricted by the properties of the human Sensory-Motor System. Like any other sign, they are subject to arbitrariness due to the nature of the substances they connect, and which combinatorial *signifiant* a given language chooses for any particular predicative relation is arbitrary. Bouchard’s sign theory of syntax presents a principled explanation for why syntactic relations cross-linguistically are restricted to the six types presented above:

²⁹ Combinatorial percepts are modality-dependent. Sign languages have more types of combinatorial percepts than oral languages since the visual-gestural channel uses more dimensions than the auditory-channel. For a discussion of the nature of combi-signs in sign languages, the reader is referred to Bouchard (1996).

³⁰ The syntagmatic-paradigmatic duality will be discussed further in 2.3.1 in relation to the duality *valeur-signification*.

The types actually found are exhausted by the coding possibilities allowed by our physiological make-up. Hence, interface properties provide a deep explanation of the fact that these morphosyntactic relations, and only these, are the ones that co-vary (Bouchard 2002: 385).

Basically then, it is the restrictions placed on arbitrariness by the principle of linearity that lie behind the fact that languages differ more in their phonology and morphology than in their syntax. In Bouchard's sign theory of syntax, syntactic theory is a sub-case of sign theory and uni-signs and combi-signs are subject to the same laws (arbitrariness, conventionality, differentiability, linearity). Applied together, these principles result in a precise, detailed and exhaustive theory of syntactic combinations, and there is thus no need for an autonomous syntax component as the integration of syntactic relations into sign theory limits "the language component" to the lexicon. We will come back to a more detailed presentation of Bouchard's sign-theory of syntax in Chapter 5, Syntax – combinatorial signs and syntactically complex signs, which treats the main combi-signs in the Norwegian Nominal System, as well as the most common syntactically complex patterns resulting from their application.

2.1.4 Summary and implications

With the inclusion of Bouchard's sign theory of syntax, the Saussurean view of language as determined by the two fundamental principles of arbitrariness and linearity is complete. These principles are not hypothesised properties of language, they are direct consequences of the two substances combined in the signs and are thus determined by properties of our biological make-up that are prior to language. Therefore, even though language is a social product, it is restricted and determined by our biology. Since, as we have seen, these same principles cover all levels of language – phonology, morphology, semantics *and* syntax – Neo-saussurean grammar is truly in line with Occam's razor as it does not introduce any assumptions or postulate any entities or theoretical tools that are unnecessary or cannot be explained on the grounds of these prior principles. Neo-saussurean theory is thus both as economical and as simple, and at the same time as rigid as a scientific theory can possibly be.

At this point, a few remarks on the implications of Neo-saussurean grammar are in order. I will comment on two important issues in contemporary linguistics, namely language universals and language acquisition. However, since these issues are somewhat peripheral in the present study, I will not go into detail.

Since Language is constituted by arbitrary signs, the principles of (radical) arbitrariness and differentiability necessarily exclude the idea of language universals. The only exception is universals that follow from the properties of the prior substances, hence they are not language-specific. Saussure's stance on the question of universals is not only implicit from his theoretical foundations, it is also explicitly stated several times throughout both *Cours* and *Écrits*: "Ce qui est faux, c'est de penser qu'il y ait quelque part des formes (existant par elles-mêmes hors de leur emploi) ou quelque part des idées (existant par elles-mêmes hors de leur représentation)."³¹ (Saussure 2002: 31, see also 37, 44, 53, 108). The language faculty (Saussure's *faculté de langage*) is the capacity to use (and acquire) the "necessary conventions" which individuals of a given "social body" must follow. This capacity is directly linked to a full theory of mind, and is shared by all humans. As we have seen, a collection of arbitrary signs would be unusable if, in addition to its uni-signs

³¹ What is wrong is to think that there are forms somewhere (existing by themselves outside of their use) or that there are ideas somewhere (existing by themselves outside of their representation).

(words), it did not also contain a set of combi-signs (syntax) limiting the extreme complexity that would otherwise result from radical arbitrariness by inducing relative motivation. The limitless expressive power of language – including discrete infinity, the capacity to combine meaningful units into an unlimited variety of larger units with systematic meaning differences between them – follows from the independently motivated presence of combi-signs. Their *signifié*, predication, is the only true exception to the absence of semantic universals in Neo-saussurean theory.³²

Outside of the Chomskyan generative framework, one of the most influential works on semantic universals is that of Wierzbicka and her followers (see e.g. Wierzbicka 1972, 1988, 1996 and Goddard & Wierzbicka 1994, 2002), who have proposed a list of 65 (in the 1996 version!) semantic primitives common to all languages grounded in human sociology and cognition. While these primitives are simple, indefinable, and possibly universally lexicalised concepts, the exact shaping and delimitation of the *signifiés* instantiating these primitives is just as arbitrary as the rest of the semantic system. By way of illustration, consider the first two items on Wierzbicka's (1996) proposed list of semantic primitives, *I* and *you*. While all languages make the distinction between first and second person in some way or other, the exact delimitation and shape of the individual signs instantiating this distinction vary. For instance, English *you* has a more general meaning than both French *tu* and Norwegian *du* on several levels. Firstly, differently from *you*, both *tu* and *du* have the value component singular (and for *tu* also familiar) in addition to second person because of the existence of the signs *vous* and *dere*. I assume with Peeters and Ramière (2009) that *vous* in French simply is marked as second person while Norwegian *du/dere* both have fixed number interpretations as singular and plural, respectively. In addition, *you* is unspecified with regard to case distinctions, while both *tu* and *du* exhibit nominative case as opposed to the oblique forms *te* and *deg*, and is further distinguished from *tu* and *te* in that it can be used with emphasis while French must use a third form *toi*. In other words, even the existence of such sociologically grounded primitives is not at variance with radical arbitrariness as the exact limitation and shaping of the signs instantiating these concept display significant variation just as expected from the principle of differentiability. Apart from the universal *signifié* of combi-signs, the assertion that there be no absolute meaning is therefore just as strong in the Neo-saussurean view of language as it was for Saussure himself.

The question of innateness and on how much of language actually has to be learned has been among the most debated since the advent of generative grammar. It is generally assumed that the syntax of human languages is highly complex and is acquired despite poverty of stimuli. The premises of the poverty of the stimulus argument are, however, not accepted outside of the generative paradigm. For a Neo-saussurean account of this question, the reader is referred to Bouchard (2002: 390-95, forthcoming) who also shows that both structure dependency and recursion are not accidental components of the linguistic system or unexplained elements which must be stipulated in UG, but on the contrary, that it follows from the nature of signs. Furthermore, even Chomsky (2007) now says that UG is the residue of elements

³² In Chomskyan grammar, discrete infinity is tightly connected to recursion, which again is seen as the fundamental and distinguishing property of grammar. For a discussion of the Neo-saussurean understanding on recursion as a natural by-product of the sign, requiring no additional assumptions, see the lingua debate between Bouchard (2005, 2006, 2006), Breheny and Adger (2005), Boeckx (2005), Newmeyer (2005), Crain and Pietroski (2006).

which lack a principled explanation, and we can hence extrapolate that every effort should be directed at dispensing with UG.

Under the innateness hypothesis words and syntax are assumed to be so different that they fall under different learning theories. Especially, syntax is understood to be so abstract and complex that it cannot be learned the same way as words which generally are assumed to fall under more general learning strategies. As Bouchard (forthcoming) points out one's theory of acquisition is directly dependent on one's theory of language, on what one assumes is the object that has to be learned (see also Tomasello 2003:3). In the Neo-saussurean approach, where words and syntax both are signs, this problem is non-existent. Being made of the same stuff, they both fall under the same learning theory, which Bouchard, relying on among others Lewis (1969) and Bloom (2000), suggests simply is a fully developed Theory of Mind, i.e. a rich understanding of the thoughts and mental states of other people. According to Bloom, what is needed to understand that both words and syntax have public meanings and are conventional is the realisation that others have thoughts and act, intentionally, according to them, or, as Bloom (2000) puts it himself, to "know enough about the minds of others to figure out what they are intending to refer to when they use words."

Whatever your linguistic theory, words have to be learned. Compared to the enormous amount of uni-signs in a language (according to Bloom (2000), the average English-speaking 17-year-old knows more than 60,000 words), the addition of a few combi-signs comes at no great cost. As Bouchard (forthcoming) points out, combi-signs "are not numerous to store in memory and they are quite easy to identify given their signifiant (juxtaposition or superimposition) and their signifié (predication), both of which are extremely salient in their respective domain." This does not mean that no syntactic constructions are memorised – indeed, the most frequently used patterns most probably are – but merely that all syntactic constructions are compositionally decomposable. From a Neo-saussurean viewpoint then, no language specific properties or organ are needed to explain any part of language.

2.2 The object of study: synchrony/diachrony and langue/parole

As the title indicates, this subchapter discusses the object of study of the thesis through the two dualities synchrony/diachrony and *langue/parole*. The first duality synchrony/diachrony is presented in 2.2.1 followed by a section on the delimitation of the object study in time and space, 2.2.2. Section 2.2.3 discusses the *langue/parole* duality while 2.2.4 defines the term Norwegian Nominal System as it is used in this work.

2.2.1 Synchrony/diachrony

Even though radically arbitrary signs cannot be voluntarily modified by the speakers and while the speaking subjects of a given language at a given period all have the impression of practising the same language, signs undergo irreversible changes so that successive systems are different. This is the essence of another Saussurean duality, namely that of the immutability-mutability of the sign. Also this is a consequence of radical arbitrariness and the nature of the two substances combined in language; “[t]he link established by a sign is a historical accident and that is why both the signifiant and the signifié can drift over time.” (Bouchard, forthcoming). These are obvious facts about signs that give rise to the two types of linguistic studies – synchronic and diachronic.

The synchrony-diachrony duality represents the two (possible) types of linguistic (studies) that can be entertained; the synchronic study of the signs of the community of the speaking subjects at a given period or the diachronic study of the events that lead to language change. It is because the synchronic phenomenon is conditioned by the diachronic phenomenon that they are narrowly dependant and on the other side completely independent. (Pétroff 2004: 75). Also the synchrony/diachrony distinction has been misunderstood, or simplified ad absurdum, Pétroff argues (2004: 190), in that it generally is understood as the difference between historic or contemporary linguistics, or as the comparison of a contemporary language state with that of its foregoer. According to Pétroff, Saussure saw the diachronic study of language as the study of the events that disturb and change the/a (language) system, while a synchronic study requires ‘the freezing’ of a language at a certain state and the act of the linguist of taking on the speakers point of view in order to analyse its system at this frozen moment. The difference between synchrony and diachrony is thus not a difference between historic vs. contemporary, but rather between static and evolutive studies.

Est synchronique tout ce qui rapporte à l’aspect statique de notre science, diachronique tout ce qui a trait aux évolutions. De même *synchronie* et *diachronie* désigneront respectivement un état de langue et une phase d’évolution.³³ (Saussure 1916:117)

The comparison of different synchronic systems related in time, like e.g. between Old-Norse and present-day Norwegian, is thus still in the realm of synchrony as it is a comparison between two different synchronies, just like a comparison between

³³ Everything that relates to the static aspect of our science is synchronic, everything having traits of evolutions diachronic. Likewise, synchrony and diachrony designate a language state and a phase of evolution respectively.

contemporary Norwegian and contemporary French would be. With the synchrony-diachrony duality in mind, we now turn to the delimitation of the object of study of this thesis.

2.2.2 Delimiting the object of study in time and space

The point of view taken in this dissertation is that of the speakers of Norwegian in the first decade of the 21st century. Norwegian (*norsk*) is a Germanic, Scandinavian language spoken primarily in Norway, where it is an official language. Spoken Norwegian is a continuum of dialects with a variety of mutually intelligible social and regional variants that vary mostly in their phonology and pronunciation, but also in their lexical inventory (so-called function words, affixes, systemic differences in e.g. the gender systems etc.). The system to be investigated in this thesis, i.e. the Norwegian Nominal System, is nevertheless generally shared by all varieties, and this thesis may therefore be said to investigate the system of "general or common Norwegian".

The data used in the investigation are mostly taken from Bokmål Norwegian, with the occasional examples in Nynorsk Norwegian. These two written standards are both official in Norway, but the former has a much wider expansion, and all native speakers of Norwegian have a shared competence, if not performance, in its oral counterpart, *standard østnorsk* (standard Eastern Norwegian). This is also the common ground that all contemporary dialects somehow stand in relation to and are influenced by. In the present thesis, dialectal variants, deviating from standard Norwegian in some particular respect, are sometimes used to shed light on the phenomena under discussion. In these cases, it will be made clear that the example is used as a contrast to the standard language, and that this system thus will constitute a different synchrony, like the other languages of comparison, viz. English and French. (Almost) all Norwegians master (possess) two parallel internalised language systems or grammars – the one of their regional dialect and the standard language. While these overlap to a very large degree, the difference between them is probably only quantitatively different from that between a native and a foreign language. Most Norwegians are fully able to distinguish regional varieties and standard language from each other.

Considering all the subtleties and intricacies in the relationship of form, meaning and interpretation of individual languages, it should be evident that such a task is more easily performed by someone with profound knowledge of and competence in the language under scrutiny. In the present study, I will make use of my native speaker competence, but refer to attested examples whenever possible.

2.2.3 Langage, langue, parole

Like all other linguistic phenomena, synchronic human speech (*langage*) encloses another two-faceted duality, namely that of language (*langue*) and speaking (*parole*).³⁴ While *parole* is the act of individuals speaking, the readily observable language that we experience, *langue* is the set of "necessary conventions" that the individuals of a language community must follow. Alternatively, in other words, *langue* is the collection of necessary conventions adopted by a social body permitting individuals to use their language faculty, a faculty, which, while distinct from *langue*

³⁴ The translation of the trinity *Langage, Langue, Parole* into (*human*) *speech, language* and *speaking* respectively is W. Baskin's. In the rest of the thesis/chapter, I will continue to use the French italics *langage, langue, parole*.

itself, cannot be exercised without it. *Parole*, then, designates the act of the individual realising its faculty through the means of *langue*.³⁵ Saussure describes *langue* as a treasure deposited through *parole* inside the brains of individual speakers where it is registered passively:

C'est un trésor déposé par la pratique de la parole dans les sujets appartenant à une même communauté, un système grammatical existant virtuellement dans chaque cerveau, ou plus exactement dans les cerveaux d'un ensemble d'individus ; car la langue n'est complète dans aucun, elle n'existe parfaitement que dans la masse.³⁶
(Saussure 1916: 30)

The citation clearly shows the interdependence of *langue* and *parole*, how they presuppose one another so that despite their different nature, one cannot exist without the other. For an individual brain to receive *langue*, it must experience *parole*, and without *langue*, there can be no execution of *parole*.

While *Parole* is (purely) individual, *Langue*, though located in individual brains, is social and cultural, as it exists perfectly only in the masses where “Un équilibre s'établit entre tous les individus.” (Quoted in note 64 by Mauro).³⁷ Bouchard (forthcoming) points out how the notions of social body, community and equilibrium correspond to an idealization of the competence shared by the speakers of a language and that this is an idealization typically found in scientific studies and which Chomsky later labelled ‘the ideal speaker’. It is thus *langue* that is of interest to the linguist as an object of study. Although the study of *langue* can only be carried out through careful examination of its use (i.e. *parole*), the separation between the two facets of *langage* is primordial. “En séparant la langue de la parole, on sépare du même coup: 1. Ce qui est social de ce qui est individuel ; 2. ce qui est essentiel de ce qui est accessoire et plus ou moins accidentel.”³⁸ (Saussure 1916: 30)

Langue is generally understood as the collection of words and the rules of functioning of a language³⁹, see e.g. Pétróff (2004:186), an understanding that, given Bouchard's sign theory of syntax presented above, may be rendered more concisely by the simple statement that *langue* is the collection of the conventionalised arbitrary (uni- and combi-) signs of a language. It is the location of this cultural convention in the brains of individuals that makes Bouchard (2002, 2006 and forthcoming) (rightly) insist that Saussure, like Chomsky did 50 years later, takes a biolinguistic stance. Since “La langue a pour siège le cerveau seul” it is, as we have seen, necessarily

³⁵ Confer de Mauro's note 63, citing Engler's manuscript.

³⁶ It is a treasure deposited by the practise of parole in the subjects belonging to a same community, a grammatical system which exists virtually in each brain [of the individuals belonging to a same community], in the brains of a set of individuals; because the langue is complete in nobody, it exists perfectly only in the masses.

³⁷ According to Bouchard it is precisely because *langue* is social that it is purely biological, “it follows from Saussure's idea that the meaning of a word depends on the system which it is part of, on the point of view of the community of individuals. He therefore adopts a fully internal language, with no pre-existing part of it. This is true biolinguistics since all aspects of language exists only in the brains of these individuals, not with a meaning component absolute and pre-existing to language. Meaning is only perceivable as relative meaning, as the signifiés of a particular language. There is no observable meaning independent from the observing speaker.” (forthcoming)

³⁸ By separating *langue* from *parole*, you immediately also separate : 1. what is social from what is individual; 2. what is essential from what is accessory and more or less accidental.

³⁹ Recall, that the prevailing understanding of Saussurean syntax as part of *parole* is wrong as “il faut attribuer à la langue, non à la parole, tous les types de syntagmes construits sur des formes régulières.” (Saussure 1916: 173)

conditioned by human biology, i.e. our conceptual-intentional and sensory-motor systems.

The following study is thus a *synchronic* study of the *signifiés* and *signifiants* of the uni- and combi-signs of the Norwegian Nominal System as they are stored in the brains of its individual speakers through the conventions of the community. Before presenting the methodology for separating the parts of meaning that are part of *langue* from those of *parole*, a few remarks about delimiting the Norwegian Nominal System are in order.

2.2.4 Further delimiting the object of study – the Norwegian Nominal System

This thesis' object of study is the Norwegian Nominal System, which I define as the (sub-system of Norwegian) signs that (may) make up, as a part or as a whole, a nominal phrase. A nominal phrase, in turn, is defined as any syntagma that may appear in a nominal function, i.e. as a subject, object or a predicative, and which is not itself a sentence.

The choice of the Nominal System as the focus of the first Neo-saussurean investigation of Norwegian is well founded, as the Nominal System is the locus of most of the inflectional morphology of Norwegian. While the Norwegian Verbal System is quite simple with only three finite forms – past, present and imperative – and no markings for aspect, number, gender or person, the Norwegian Nominal System is more intricate with markings for gender, number and (in)definiteness scattered over all its parts of speech in what I will argue is an economic agreement system.

The constituents of the Norwegian Nominal System are thus the different uni-signs of nouns, adjectives and pronouns/determiners found in the language. The delimitations of these classes will be discussed in their respective chapters Chapter 3 (Norwegian Nouns and Adjectives) and Chapter 4 (Nominal function words). The system, then, is the regularities found among these signs, which in the case of Norwegian, as we will see, translates into their (systematic) realisations of the categories of gender, number and definiteness, as well as the different combi-signs used in complex nominal phrases. The investigation thus looks at these signs both when used alone and in combination, with the goal to identify the relationship between form, meaning and interpretation both in its most simplex and more complex varieties.

The analyses of the different uni-signs will be centred on the four major paradigms of noun forms – *elg, elger, elgen, elgene* 'elk, elks, the elk, the elks' – the six adjective forms – *stor, stort, store* 'big' *større, 'bigger' størst, største* 'biggest' – and the most important classes of nominal function words.⁴⁰ As for the combi-signs to be investigated, Norwegian heavily relies on juxtaposition as the *signifiants* of relations also internally in the nominal phrase, but as we will see, the complexity of the signs interacts with the natural setting for the head-parameter in interesting ways. In addition to juxtaposition, tonal signs are also used distinctively in the Norwegian nominal System both at the word- and phrasal level.

⁴⁰ Relatively little will be said about the possessive –s that attaches to the far right of Norwegian Nominal Phrases, and even less about the few remaining case-forms that may occur after prepositions of fixed expressions. Among the nominal function words, reflexives like *seg* and *hverandre*, interrogatives like *hvem, hva, hvilken* and a few other (non systematic) signs like *selv*, are left out of the discussion.

Complex Nominal Phrases often include (non-nominal) expansions like prepositional phrases and relative clauses. Although these expansions interact with the other parts of the complex to make-up the meaning of its whole, the different uni-signs introducing such syntagmas, i.e. prepositions and subjunctions, are nevertheless not considered part of the nominal system per se, and will therefore not receive much (if any) attention in the present study.

Taking the entire Norwegian Nominal System as the empirical basis for a thesis, instead of, say, only one of its noun forms is of course, due to its complexity, an ambitious enterprise. It is, however, also a necessary one as it is grounded in the theoretical principle of differentiality. Since the value of a sign is determined entirely by coexistence with its surrounding signs, the only way to truly understand a sign is by close comparison and contrasting with its neighbouring signs.

Consequently, parts of the empirical presentations will have to be less thorough than what could have been the case with a narrower empirical basis, and features or characteristics that are either uncontroversial or well known will thus not be discussed in detail unless they are of particular importance to the present study.

2.3 Methodology

The presentation of the methodology underlying this thesis, will take two other important Saussurean dualities as its starting point, namely *syntagmatic/paradigmatic* and *valeur/signification*, which are presented in section 2.3.1. Section 2.3.2 comments on the contrastive side of the investigation while section 2.3.3 gives a short presentation of the collection and use of linguistic data.

2.3.1 Syntagmatic vs. Paradigmatic relations, Value and Signification

The *langue/parole* duality is closely connected with two other ones, namely those of *syntagmatic/paradigmatic* (or the *in praesentia/in absentia*) relations of signs and of the *valeur/signification* of *signifiés*. This section shows how these interrelated conceptual dualities to a large degree determine the methodology of Neo-saussurean linguistic research.

All signs are necessarily delimited from, and related to, other signs on two distinct levels, which determine both their phonetic and semantic component through the principle of differentiability. Firstly, a sign in discourse is always interpreted in relation to the signs surrounding it on each particular occasion/production. This is the syntagmatic, *in praesentia*, relation (which determines its interpretation on that particular occasion) “Placé dans un syntagme, un terme n’acquiert sa valeur que parce qu’il est opposé à ce qui précède ou ce qui suit, ou à tous les deux” (Saussure 1916:171).⁴¹

Secondly, outside of discourse, signs group in virtual mnemonic series with other signs that somehow are related to them. These signs are grouped *in absentia*, i.e. by association or paradigmatically, not through perception, but in our brains. The term *in absentia* pertains to the sign envisaged in *langue*, i.e. in absence of syntagmatic insertions (Bouquet 1997: 315). Today, the notion of paradigm is often interpreted as being restricted to the inflectional system a given sign belongs to, like e.g. the relation between the Norwegian noun forms *elg*, *elger*, *elgen*, *elgene* ‘elk, elks, the elk, the elks’, but Saussure’s *rappports associatifs* encompass far more than that and concerns all linguistic units including both the *signifié* and the *signifiant* facets of the sign (Saussure: 1916: 170-175). The relation between *elger* and the three other forms of the same noun mentioned above is based on their common root, but *elger* also stand in relation to all other nouns that take the same (plural indefinite) suffix as well as with a number of other signs from all parts of speech. The relation can be purely semantic and based on the analogy of *signifiés* such as *dyr* ‘animal(s)’, *klovdyr* ‘even-toed ungulate(s)’, *drøvtygger* ‘ruminant’, *kolle* ‘elk cow’, *kalv* ‘calf’, *hjort* ‘deer’, *rein* ‘reindeer’. Alternatively, the analogy can be phonetic relating commonalities of *signifiants* like e.g. *elger* ‘elks’ with *elger* ‘pukes’ as well as with *svelge r* ‘swallows’, *helger* ‘week-ends’. On a more abstract level, relations are formed between all signs ending in *-er* whether this syllable is one of the inflectional suffixes mentioned above, a derivational suffix like in *baker* ‘baker’, *sanger* ‘singer’, *drøvtygger* ‘ruminant’ or

⁴¹ Placed in a syntagma, a term acquires its value only because it is opposed to what precedes or to what follows, or to both.

simply part of the root *genser* 'sweater', *panser* 'armour'.⁴² Overall, a sign stands in relation to all other signs in the language.

As Bouquet (1997: 334-335) points out, the two levels *in praesentia* and *in absentia* are homologous of the spheres of *parole* and *langue*. The two types of relations are essential for the study of language as “tout ce qui compose un état de langue doit pouvoir être ramené à une théorie des syntagmes et à une théorie des associations.” (Saussure 1916: 188).⁴³ Like all other dualities, syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations are interdependent. The syntagmatic coordinations in space contribute in the creation of the associative, paradigmatic coordinations, which again are necessary for the analysis of syntagmas (Saussure 1916: 177).

While the syntagmatic/paradigmatic relations a sign enters into concern both the *signifiant* and the *signifié* facets of the sign, this investigation mostly concerns the *signifié* side where paradigmatic/syntagmatic translates into the division of the *signifié* into *valeur* (value) and *signification* (interpretation). Where *valeur* refers to the position of the sign in the semantic system of the language, i.e. its (core) invariant semantic value, and *signification* to the use of the sign in *parole*, i.e. the interpretation that the interlocutor wants to convey in the context of use. Where the sign thus contains the duality *signifié/signifiant*, the *signifié* itself consists of the duality *valeur/signification*. (Pétroff 2004: 216).

The partition of the *signifié* into *valeur/signification* is quite parallel to that of three layers of linguistic meaning defined by Bouchard (1995), i.e. to the division between *grammar semantics* on the one side and *linguistic* and *situational semantics* on the other. The term grammar semantic refers to the abstract non-situational meaning that is present in and common for, all interpretations of a sign, in all its possible syntagmatic insertions. It thus corresponds to the value of the *signifié*. The level of linguistic semantics in addition draws on the information present in the current linguistic context, while the level of situational semantics also includes extra-linguistic context, including the world-knowledge of the interlocutors.

An illustrative example is Bouchard's (1995) analysis of the French verb *aller* 'go' which, among other things, can express movement in space (a, a'), extension in space (b, b') or time (c).

- (0) a Max va à Québec (de Montréal).
Max goes to Quebec City (from Montreal).
- a' Ce nuage va de Montréal à Longueuil.
That cloud is going from Montréal to Longueuil.
- b Cette route va de Montréal à Québec.
That road goes from Montréal to Québec.
- b' Ce nuage va de Montréal à Longueuil.
That cloud goes/extends from Montréal to Longueuil.
- c Elle va courir le marathon (demain).
She is-going to-run the marathon (tomorrow).

⁴² The relationship between homophonous elements, both when it comes to complete signs and suffixes like indefinite plural and present tense *-er* will be discussed briefly in 3.1.

⁴³ The term paradigmatic is post-saussurean and does not figure in the Saussurean writings. Saussure himself used the terms associative vs. syntagmatic relation. I will nevertheless use the terms syntagmatic and paradigmatic to cover Saussure's syntagmatic and associative relations. So do Bouchard (2002, forthcoming) and Pétroff (2004), but not e.g. Bouquet (1997).

These different interpretations, however, are not due to different meanings or values of *aller* as they all depend on their syntagmatic insertion and can be obtained through inference. The difference between the interpretation (a) and (b) is due to the different subjects of *aller*, *Max* and *route*, and our knowledge of the world concerning differences between the referents involved, namely persons and roads. The reason why *nuage* may receive both interpretations (a', b') is due to our knowledge of clouds, i.e. their ability to move and their sometimes-important extension. The expression of time in (c) is likewise dependent on *aller*'s verbal complement. As Bouchard demonstrates, all the different interpretations may thus be derived, through inference, from a more abstract, though precise, general meaning of *aller*, which then is enriched by context, both linguistic, i.e. syntagmatic, and situational – including our knowledge of the world, see Bouchard (1995: 149-166).

According to Bouchard (1995, 2002, 2006, 2009, forthcoming) it is the limitations on the number of uni-signs the human brain can store, together with constraints of usefulness, that have the effect that meanings of linguistic signs tend to be quite general. Because of the potentially infinite number of concepts, particular objects and events the human mind can construct, it would be impossible to give a name to a substantial number, let alone all of them, since our lexical storage is limited. If language was fully explicit about events and had a sign for every thinkable concept, it would, still according to Bouchard (1995), be overburdened and unusable, as well as redundant with much of the shared background knowledge of speakers. Such an understanding of the relationship between value and signification or invariant meaning and interpretation has the consequence that (true) polysemy is nonexistent in *langue*. One of the major tasks undertaken in this investigation is thus to show that the many occurrences of assumed polysemy in the Norwegian Nominal system can be explained by relating one abstract value or meaning to different significations obtained by inference via the enrichment provided by context.

The division between syntagmatic/paradigmatic or between grammar semantics and linguistic and situational semantics parallels the more common division between semantics and pragmatics. It is my impression, however, that this split commonly is drawn between situational semantic on the one hand and linguistic and grammar semantic on the other so that more is left to the semantic side than in both Saussure and Bouchard's approach. One such example would be the assumption of several polysemous verbs *aller* for Bouchard's one as well as other areas of widely assumed polysemy.

The value of a sign is always determined by the whole system to which it belongs. Therefore, even though a semantic value designates something that it apparently defines, this is always the result of interactions internal to its own system. Consequently, the only way to define a value is to identify the differences with other values. The semantic value of a sign, like all other aspects of it, is thus always the result of a calculation, it is never, and cannot be, given *a priori* (see Pétróff 2004: 192-193). The identification of a value can thus only be done through numerous comparisons on the two types of axes: the axis of linearity (syntagmatique), and the associative axis (paradigmatique). So just like *langue* is *langage* minus *parole* (Saussure 1916: 112), the semantic value of a sign is found by extracting from its signification everything that is conveyed by *parole*.

The sharp distinction between value and signification, semantics and pragmatics, determines the approach to the data and hence the methodology adopted in the present study. To fully understand a sign it has to be considered in as many different syntagmatic relationships as possible in order to determine the range of its

possible significations and compare these to significations of the signs it is paradigmatically related to when they are inserted in the same systems. The value is found by extracting everything that is available from context and that cannot be identified in all its uses. “C’est peut-être une des opérations les plus délicates à faire en linguistique, de voir comment le sens dépend et cependant reste distinct de la valeur.”⁴⁴ (Saussure by Constantin, Saussure 1993: 134)

This approach to linguistic data is quite different from looking at one (type of) sign in one (type of) context, which only gives you the signification it receives in that particular context or type of construction.

2.3.2 The contrastive view

In 2.1.4, we saw that Neo-saussurean grammar differs from many other contemporary theories with regard to language universals; since Neo-saussurean grammar does not presuppose universals, language variation is virtually unlimited apart from the restrictions on the possible signifiants of combi-signs. As both the meaning of words and the choice of signifiants for different combi-signs depend on the system they are part of, i.e. the shared conventions of a community of individuals, individual languages may, and do, vary in all ways possible within the boundaries established by our physiology. Since linguistic meanings exist only in virtue of the signs instantiating them and any element of the perceptual substance is a potential *signifiant* just as any element of the conceptual substance is a potential *signifié*, arbitrariness entails contingent of individual languages. Despite the principle of arbitrariness, linguistic studies reveal that unrelated languages have profound resemblances. This is, however, explained by the limited reservoir of possible combi-signs and the Wierzbickian primitives mentioned above, in addition to worldwide resemblances in human sociology and habitats.

Throughout the present thesis, the Norwegian data are compared and contrasted with related signs (including constructions) in other languages, of which the most important ones are English, French and the other Mainland Scandinavian varieties (Danish, Swedish and dialectal varieties of Norwegian). These languages, with their different nominal systems, serve as bases of comparison and contrast for a better understanding of the peculiarities/idiosyncrasies of the Norwegian Nominal System, but no attempt is made to give full descriptions or analyses of their respective systems. The comparison of related signs from different languages, or systems, is a different operation from comparing signs within one language as the comparison of individual signs cross-linguistically would make no sense if it did not take place inside a broader comparison of the systems in question as a whole. Compared to intralinguistic studies comparative linguistics will always take place at a meta-level.

The choice of these languages of contrast is motivated in several ways. The contrasting with English and French is interesting because they both are closely enough related to Norwegian to make the contrasting relatively transparent in the sense that it is possible to identify and pin down the major resemblances and differences quite clearly. In their nominal systems, the three languages all mark/exhibit distinctions of number and definiteness, but, as we will see, they diverge with regard to the exact values being distinguished by these categories and, maybe more importantly, in the way these features are distributed among the nominal vocabulary of the languages in question. These differences influence the behaviour –

⁴⁴ It is probably one of the most delicate operations in linguistics, to see how the interpretation depends on and still is distinct from the value.

range, interpretation and distribution – of the different nominal signs in the three languages, both when used alone and in combination. The contrasting properties in the value and distribution of number and (in)definiteness in the three languages provide insight not only into the grammar (and) semantics – import, cutting and shaping – of these categories in the Norwegian Nominal System, but also into the possible ranges of these categories cross-linguistically.

In addition, both Norwegian and French exhibit gender distinctions in their nominal systems while this is lost in English, except for personal pronouns. The differences in gender marking in French and Norwegian and its contrasts with the total lack of the same category in English is helpful for understanding the semantics of this (rather poorly understood) category, as well as its relationship and interaction with the category of number.

Both English and French further share with Norwegian the property of having lost case markings on their nouns (though all three still distinguish nominative from oblique case in their pronominal systems). This, of course, has the effect that all three languages rely extensively on the use of juxtaposition as a means to encode the relations between the different nominal phrases and the main verb in the sentence. For our purpose this, more importantly, means that in all three languages, the referential properties of the individual nominal phrases are not affected by case. Since both English and French lack case, these languages are better suited for comparison to Norwegian, than are, say, German and insular Scandinavian, which have maintained (relatively) elaborate case systems.

English and French are among the most studied languages of the world. The comparison and contrasting with these well known languages should thus provide a good basis for understanding the different interpretations and subtleties of the Norwegian system to readers not already familiar with Scandinavian Languages. It is also an important asset to this investigation that much of Bouchard's (1995, 2002, and other) work on the Neo-saussurean model is based on contrastive analyses of French and English, which are also the two languages that I master best after Norwegian.

In addition, data from the two other mainland Scandinavian languages, Danish and Swedish, and from Norwegian dialects will occasionally be used to shed light on the idiosyncrasies of Norwegian.

2.3.3 The concrete data

Most of the Norwegian data is taken from actual discourse, mostly from contemporary Norwegian literature, but since a large data collection was lost in a hard drive crash a year before completion of this work, there are also a vast amount of examples taken from the World Wide Web. The use of search engines for collecting specific linguistic data is a wonderful tool, which also has its pitfalls as the web is not good for statistical analysis and abounds with language mistakes. As a native speaker of the language in question, and at the search for illustrations of specific phenomena, these are nevertheless easily avoided since statistical analysis of e.g. frequency is not relevant for the present research. Because of the low register often used in certain fora, use of the Internet for data collection has the advantage that you more easily find typical oral expressions that are less common in prose or fiction. Access to written colloquial Norwegian from chat-groups and other net-fora has been particularly valuable in the section on Norwegian adjectives 3.9 and with the Intensifying and the Emotive Construction presented in 5.3.2 and 5.3.4.3 respectively. In addition, several examples are taken from diverse sources such as newspapers or spontaneous speech.

For literary examples, the reference is given by author name and publication date as for other citations. Search results from the web are marked (www), while the source of other examples is indicated with initials in parentheses. A full list of data references is given at the end.

Data from Norwegian Bokmål, English and French will not be marked as such, as it should be easy for the readers to tell them apart (at least by context). When other languages or variants of Norwegian are exemplified this will be marked in parentheses after the example or otherwise clearly indicated.

Norwegian and other non-English examples are followed by English glosses and/or translations. The theoretical framework of the investigation implies that there cannot exist any universal or general semantics, which in turn implies that there can be no true objective or neutral meta-language for linguistic descriptions. I have therefore made no attempt to give full grammatical glosses of every word or morpheme in the examples, but have concentrated on the form – simplex or complex – that is under discussion and made the translations of the rest as literal as possible. Two main strategies have been used; the English description of the example has either one or two lines depending on how much the construction differs from or resembles corresponding constructions in English. A one line description generally consists of a simple translation, sometimes with morphological features included, and is used either when the construction is straightforwardly translatable into English or when it does not have an English equivalent. In the first case, such one-line descriptions may contain parentheses with words that are obligatory in English, but missing in the relevant Norwegian construction. Examples with two lines usually have more complex structures with glosses on the first line and a more conventional translation on the second.

2.4 Neo-saussurean grammar vs. other current theories

The present study is primarily an investigation of Norwegian from the perspective of Neo-saussurean grammar. Comparison with other frameworks is not a major concern and I will therefore limit myself to the brief remarks below. In 1.4.1, I comment on generative grammar, while 1.4.2 compares Neo-saussurean grammar to cognitive linguistics. The goal of this subchapter is neither to criticise these other frameworks nor to justify all the assumptions of Neo-saussurean grammar, but rather to situate the framework in the landscape of contemporary linguistic theorising.

2.4.1 Neo-saussurean vs. generative grammar

Neo-saussurean grammar and its view of language as a system of signs diverge from Chomskyan generative grammar, in its most fundamental assumptions. The Chomskyan idea of an innate, language specific, autonomous syntactic component, Universal Grammar (UG), of which individual languages are understood to only exhibit superficial parametric differences, is in strict opposition to the Saussurean principle of radical arbitrariness.

As we have seen, one of the major consequences of radical arbitrariness is that there is no prelinguistic determination of what can be a signifié, i.e., of how elements of the conceptual system can become linguistically relevant. Since Cinque (1999), UG is generally defined through the hypothesis that there is a universally fixed hierarchy of categories, the functional sequence. Language variation, then, is generally accounted for by postulating different means by which the lexical items of individual languages identify these categories. Both the idea of a universal functional sequence and the postulation of different syntactic levels with a uniform level for semantic interpretation (deep structure or logical form), different from the phonetic or spell-out level, that has been prevalent in generative grammar (almost) from the start, is in direct opposition to this important axiom of Saussurean grammar.

The implementation of the idea of a universal structure for all languages into concrete analyses has resulted in the invention of various analytical tools in the generative theoretical apparatus. Devices such as empty categories or movement (remerge) with its resulting traces (or copies), which are essential in generative analyses, are prohibited on principled grounds in Neo-saussurean grammar as they bring forth the existence of signifiés without signifiants, i.e. meanings without sound. In other words, in Neo-saussurean grammar there can be no *Movement and Silence* (Kayne 2005).⁴⁵

Chomskyan generative grammar is based on the idea that syntax and words are so different that they need to be accounted for by distinct theories – UG and the Lexicon respectively. In Bouchard's Neo-saussurean sign theory of syntax, on the other hand, where syntax and words are made of the same stuff, the language specific component is reduced to the internalised inventory of conventionalised arbitrary unit- and combi-signs, the *treasure* of *langue*, i.e. to the Lexicon. The denial of an autonomous and universal syntactic component is in line with Occam's razor, which advises economy and parsimony of the theoretical apparatus.

Both the Chomskyan and Neo-saussurean approaches to language may be said to be biolinguistic, although in quite different senses of the term. In generative

⁴⁵ For a demonstration on how the questions explained by empty categories, displacement, locality and long distance dependencies in generative grammar are tackled in Neo-saussurean framework, see Bouchard (2002: 321-377 and forthcoming).

grammar, language, i.e. UG, is understood as an innate part of the biological make-up of human beings, but as a language specific organ (Chomsky 1986), UG is perceived as being different from anything else in the organic world, and is thus not governed by principles of human biology as such. For Saussure, on the other hand, language is a social product, not a biological organ, but since this social product is internalised in human bodies and brains, it is necessarily conditioned by human biology, especially the characteristics of our Sensory-Motor and Conceptual-Intentional systems, which, as Bouchard (e.g. 2002, 2005, 2009, forthcoming) points out, are theoretically prior to language.

In generative linguistics, where language is split into two components, a theory of the origins of language must account both for the origins of the lexicon and for the autonomous syntactic component. While Chomsky never has expressed any thoughts on the early development of the lexicon, i.e. the origin of signs, he suggests that the changes that led to the core principles of language (now identified as unbounded merge) took place in an individual, not a group, and must have arisen from some rewiring of the brain, presumably as the effect of some small mutation. (Chomsky 2007).

The Saussurean insistence on the fact that neither language nor languages could exist outside of a social community is in sharp contradiction to this Chomskyan view of language as having evolved from a strictly internal component. Bouchard (forthcoming) demonstrates how his Neo-saussurean theory provides simpler and more straightforward answers also to the question of language evolution. With the linguistic component reduced to the lexicon, all that is needed for language to evolve is the emergence of non-immediate arbitrary signs, a transition that, according to Bouchard, was made possible by the meeting in human brains of *representations* of percepts and concepts through recently identified mirror neurons which can operate off-line, a trait unique to humans (forthcoming). No accidental mutation or act of God was thus needed neither in order to install (the) language (capacity) nor to provoke its variational character. The Saussurean view of language, its origin and evolution is, thus, perfectly compatible with an adaptive/exaptive Darwinian theory.

The foundational differences between generative and Neo-saussurean grammar are reflected in quite a different focus of attention. In Neo-saussurean grammar, it is the relation between form (*signifiant*) and meaning (*signifié*) in individual languages where the latter is a duality consisting of one stable value (*valeur*) that can receive different significations or interpretations (*significations*), depending on context, that is of prior interest to the researcher. In generative grammar, on the other hand, the hypothesised entity that is assumed to be common for all languages guides all research. The hypothesis of an innate UG component is in fact so strong that Chomskyan grammar has been criticised for confusing their object of study with their extensive theory-internal apparatus which is understood as inherent characteristics of the functioning of language (see e.g. Dyvik 1992, Seuren 2004). If this criticism is valid, Neo-saussurean grammar does not only diverge from current mainstream generative research from a theoretical viewpoint, it actually denies the existence of its object of study. This, of course, has profound consequences for the questions asked by the linguist and as a result, for the way linguistic research is conducted.

If languages are considered to be basically similar and variation is regarded as a superficial phenomenon as in generative grammar, the task of the linguist lies in uniforming all languages to make them fit into the same mould. For the Neo-saussurean linguist, on the other hand, variation is considered the rule and no

language is assumed to be the same. The interest therefore lies in detecting how languages differ, and how this variation is constrained by our Sensory-Motor and Conceptual-Intentional systems.

2.4.2 Neo-saussurean vs. cognitive linguistics

While generative grammar diverges from the present approach in its most fundamental assumptions, cognitive linguistics, which was founded as a reaction to Chomskyan generative grammar in the late seventies (cf. Langacker 1987 and Lakoff and Johnson 1980), has several basic commonalities with Neo-saussurean grammar.

Cognitive linguistics holds that language creation, learning, and usage is best explained by reference to human cognition in general, and not to some innate autonomous linguistic faculty. Both this and the cognitivist axioms that grammar is best understood in terms of conceptualization and the claim that knowledge of language arises out of language use are in line with the Neo-saussurean framework. The close relationship between the fundamental assumptions of Neo-saussurean and cognitive grammars is evident from the content requirement of Langacker which states that “the only elements ascribable to a linguistic system are (i) semantic, phonological, and symbolic structures that actually occur as parts of expressions; (ii) schematizations of permitted structures; and (iii) categorizing relationships between permitted structures” (2008: 24, 25)

Contrary to Saussure, Langacker does not explicitly state the interdependence between phonological and semantic units,⁴⁶ and he is vague with respect to the possibility of the phonological and semantic structures as having existence in and by themselves. In other words, the question of radical arbitrariness is not discussed explicitly. Although e.g. Croft (2001) refuses the idea of too many semantic universals, these are not banned from cognitivist theories on principled grounds.

One apparent point of resemblance between the Saussurean and the cognitive approach is found in the cognitivist definition of a construction as a form-meaning pairing that can be as small as the tiniest morpheme or as big as any sentence, which, in many ways replicates the definition of Saussurean signs. The view of the construction as the primary unit of linguistic analysis is prevalent in all cognitive theorising, though it is especially salient in the (two) sub-branch(es) of cognitive linguistics called construction and radical construction grammar (Goldberg 1995, 2006, Croft 2001). In both the Saussurean and the cognitive frameworks, then, words, phrases and sentences basically are of the same type – as (unit-) signs or constructions respectively. However, the substitution of the sign for the construction as the basic unit of language implies a shift in focus where the composition of complex signs is disregarded. According to Croft (2001), “[t]he representation of the syntactic structure of a construction should not include any syntactic relations between the elements that make it up.” In other words, (radical) construction grammar lacks, or denies the need for, a theory of combi-signs. This is reflected both in the fact that, contrary to Neo-saussurean grammar, full compositionality is not assumed on a principled basis (Langacker 2008: 40) and in the non-acceptance of the (sharp) division between semantics and pragmatics in cognitive theorising.

In Saussurean grammar, the division between semantics and pragmatics is fundamental as it parallels the division between *langage* into the duality of

⁴⁶ In fact, the citation could easily be interpreted as though the symbolic structure also carried existence on its own, and not only as the result of the combination of the phonological and semantic ones as in the Saussurean sign. This was probably not his intention though.

langue/parole and of the *signifié* into the one of *signification/valeur*. Probably the most important difference between Saussurean and cognitive grammar is thus that in the former the goal of the linguist is to identify the invariant meaning of a sign (simplex or complex), i.e. its place in *langue*, while the cognitive researcher either denies the existence of such invariants, or finds them to be of little interest and instead identifies meaning through schemas, prototypes and fuzzy categories reflecting all the possible interpretations different constructions may hold (see Wierzbicka 1980). From a Saussurean viewpoint then, one could probably say that cognitive linguistics deals with the realms of *parole* rather than of *langue* or at least that they do not draw any strict boundary between the two. As a consequence, and contrary to what is the case in Neo-saussurean grammar, there is wide acceptance for synonymy, homophony and polysemy in cognitive linguistics.

Cognitive grammar has been criticised for falling into the same pit as generativists in that they confuse their theory with their object of study – even if language appears to be fuzzy, your theory need not be (Dyvik 1995). Without taking a stand with regard to whether or not this criticism is warranted, it is worth pointing out that the Saussurean understanding of signs as having abstract/general meanings, together with its formal and compositional theory of syntax escapes such reproaches.

2.4.3 Summary

The generative and the cognitive frameworks both differ widely from and show resemblances with Neo-saussurean grammar, though with regard to different aspects. While generative and Neo-saussurean grammar differ profoundly in their fundamental understanding of what language is, and hence what constitutes the object of study, they share the view of syntax as a fundamental part of language as a system, and thus also the view that a precise, detailed and exhaustive theory of combinations of signs should hold a primordial place in linguistic theorising. Their views of syntax, as an autonomous computational system vs. as a small set of combi-signs, are, nevertheless, very different. This last point is, however, of little interest to the cognitive linguist, who, on the other hand, shares the view of language as a social product with the Saussurean grammarian. This fundamental similarity notwithstanding, they diverge again in the view of the necessity of separating semantics from pragmatics, i.e. *langue* from *parole*. Basically, then, the three frameworks define different objects of investigation which is reflected both in the questions asked and in the methodology used to approach the data.

Most recent research on the Norwegian (and Scandinavian) Nominal System has been performed within the framework of Chomskyan generative grammar, either through The Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995) or Government and binding theory (Chomsky 1986); see e.g. Julien (2005), Vangnes (1999), Delsing (1993). These works have been of great interest and assistance for the present investigations as they contribute valuable empirical observations. Although these works will be referred to in connection with the analyses of the individual signs and constructions in chapters 2-4, the generative analyses and their technicalities deviate so much from the present investigation that they will not be discussed in detail. The same is true for works on Norwegian within cognitive grammar and (non-mainstream) generative frameworks, such as HPSG (see Pollard and Sag 1994) and LFG (cf. Bresnan 2001). A particular important and valuable source of information was Borthen's (2003) insightful thesis, which treats data directly relevant for the present study.

2.5 Closing the Chapter

The theoretical, empirical and methodological foundations of the dissertation set a natural structure and methodology for the investigation. Firstly, one has to identify the grammatical value of the different (types) of uni-signs (at the word level) that make up the nominal system. This can, as we have seen, only be done by considering the different signs in as many syntagmatic relationships as possible. By extracting everything that is common to all uses of a (type of) sign, and by leaving out the parts of meaning that are available from context, one is able to distil the invariant semantic value of the sign. This is the task of the coming chapters. Chapter 3 investigates Norwegian Nouns and Adjectives, i.e., the open nominal categories, while Chapter 4 discusses the closed nominal categories. In addition to its words or uni-signs, the Norwegian Nominal System consists of several combi-signs which, when applied to the different uni-signs, creates (patterns of) syntactically complex signs. Combi-signs and syntactically complex signs are the subject of Chapter 5.

Chapter 3

Norwegian Nouns and Adjectives

The majority of uni-signs in the Norwegian Nominal System belong to one of the two open word classes, or lexical categories, Nouns and Adjectives. All together, this chapter will discuss (and define) 14 different ‘abstract forms’, 8 for nouns and 6 for adjectives, and will propose new featural values for at least seven of them. Most importantly, I will argue that the truly bare Norwegian Nouns do not carry the features singular and indefinite as is traditionally assumed, but that they are marked for general number and are neutral with regard to definiteness. I will furthermore propose that the Norwegian Indefinite Plural Noun is a true indefinite, not just neutral with regard to definiteness as is commonly suggested. New featural values will also be proposed in the Adjectival System in section 3.9.

The bulk of the chapter is devoted to my account of the eight Norwegian noun forms. As the main nominal category, the analysis given for nouns will be foundational for the analysis of the rest of the system. It will be argued that the proposed values provide not only a straightforward account of the use of the relevant forms in a number of constructions, but also enables us to capture both similarities and differences between Norwegian, English, French, Swedish and Danish. Of particular interest is the discussion of the Norwegian Indefinite Plural; it is shown that these forms occur with (weak) indefinite and generic reference, but not with kind reference. They therefore represent a system that has been predicted not to be possible in natural languages. Also the parts on the truly Bare Noun and the Adjectival System present new data that has not previously been discussed; this leads to the most radical and theoretically important contribution of this chapter, namely the introduction of a general number feature in the Norwegian Nominal System. This feature, which is introduced in section 3.4 in order to explain the wide distributional and interpretational range of the Norwegian Bare Noun, will also be proposed for Norwegian Adjectives ending in *-e* in 3.9, as well as for a few of the function words discussed in Chapter 4.

Section 3.1 through 3.8 are devoted to nouns. After a short introduction in 3.1, section 3.2 discusses the two definite noun forms, 3.3 the indefinite plural noun and 3.4 the truly bare Norwegian noun. Section 3.5 discusses the value and interpretation of the four main noun paradigms, 3.6 presents some remarks and speculations on (cross-linguistic) variation, and 3.7 some thoughts about the relationship between grammar and ontology. The section on nouns is closed in 3.8. After a discussion of adjectives in 3.9, the contribution of the analysis is closed in 3.10.

3.1 Norwegian Nouns

A Norwegian Noun generally comes in four basic forms, that I will refer to as the “(Norwegian) Bare Noun”, the “(Norwegian) Indefinite Plural”, the “(Norwegian) Definite Singular” and the “(Norwegian) Definite Plural”. In addition, the Bare Noun regularly combines with the indefinite articles. Examples are given in (1) below.

- (1) a. [F]or begge studentene var det første gang de skjøt **elg**.
for both the students was it first time they shot elk.
'It was the first time both students shot an elk.'⁴⁷
- b. Jeg vet at det fins **elger** her. (Loe 2004, 9)
I know that there exist elk.PL.INDEF here.
'I know there are elks here.'
- c. **Elgen** er det største pattedyret i Norge. (www)
elk.M.SG.DEF is the biggest mammal in Norway.
'The elk is the biggest mammal in Norway.'
- d. **Elgene** var så tamme at vi kunne klappe dem. (www)
elk.PL.DEF were so tame that we could clap them.
'The elks were so tame that we could pat them.'
- e. [H]an så **en elg** i hagen og fyrte av. (www)
he saw an elk in the garden and fired off.
'He saw an elk in his garden and fired off.'

All four major noun forms appear in all syntactic functions that must or may be realised as a noun phrase, i.e. as subjects; direct, indirect and prepositional objects; as both copular and free predicatives and, though relatively seldom, as sentence or predicate adverbials.

In Norwegian, nouns may be delimited as the category whose members carry inherent gender and (thus) may combine with one (and only one) of the definite suffixes *-en*, *-a*, *-et*, and/or one (and only one) of the indefinite articles *en*, *ei*, *et*.⁴⁸ Thus, masculine *elg* 'elk' combines with the indefinite article *en* (*en elg*) and the definiteness suffix *-en* (*elg-en*). Feminine *kolle* 'elk-cow' combines with the indefinite article *ei* (*ei kolle*) and the definiteness suffix *-a* (*koll-a*), and neuter *dyr* 'animal' with the indefinite article *et* and the definite suffix *-et* (*dyr-et*). This is both a necessary and sufficient condition for nounhood. Importantly, it distinguishes nouns from adjectives, which may form a full noun phrase with the indefinite articles, but do not carry inherent gender. As

⁴⁷ In American and Canadian English, the equivalent of *elg* is *moose* (from Algonquian), and not *elk*, which is used there for wapitis. For a brief discussion on the 'irregular plural forms' of these signs see A Note on Grammar and Ontology 3.7.

⁴⁸ There are very few exceptions to this delimitation, but there are some words that traditionally are counted as nouns while not meeting these conditions. The words *går* and *fjor* which only appear in the fixed expression *i går* 'yesterday' and *i fjor* 'last year' and variants of these and as part of compounds like *gårsdagen* 'yesterday/the previous day' and *fjoråret* 'yesteryear, the previous year', cannot be said to have gender and combine neither with the definite suffixes nor with the indefinite articles. A small group of other nouns may seldom or never combine with one of the three for conceptual reasons; one example is *utland* 'abroad N' which almost exclusively appears in the definite singular form *utlandet*. Since these and other borderline cases are not relevant for my line of argument, they will not be discussed in this thesis.

opposed to nouns, adjectives combine with the different indefinite articles depending on the gender of the noun they are (anaphorically) related to.

Other morphosemantic criteria like the fact that nouns function as the (lexical) head of noun phrases and that they may be modified by adjectives are only indicative, as they may also apply to other nominal categories. In Norwegian, (almost) all representatives of nominal categories may function as a full noun phrase,⁴⁹ and adjectives may modify pronouns.

The non-plural forms also display properties of the noun's inherent gender and we thus get the following paradigm for Norwegian Nouns.

TABLE 1: NORWEGIAN NOUNS, MAIN PARADIGM:

	Singular		Plural		Gloss
Masculine	(en) elg	elgen	elger	elgene	elk
Feminine	(ei) kolle	kolla	koller	kollene	(elk) cow
Neuter	(et) dyr	dyret	dyr-	dyrene	animal

As can be seen from the table above, there is full syncretism in the plural endings. In addition, as indicated by the ‘-’ in the table above, neuter nouns (as well as some masculine and feminine ones) typically do not have a particular indefinite plural form. A study of Norwegian nouns therefore needs to account for eight different paradigmatic forms. Five of the forms in the paradigm above are formed by suffixation. In (Neo-) Saussurean theory, suffixes have the status of (incomplete) *complementary* signs (Saussure 2002: 48). Even if this investigation will present an analysis where the value of the five suffixed forms may be seen as directly added to that of the bare noun, the suffixes are nevertheless not understood as carrying any existence in and by themselves, as both their meaning and form may be identified only by the syntagmatic and paradigmatic oppositions they partake in (Saussure 1916: 258). Although I do not assume the existence of any signs *-er*, *-en*, *-ene* in isolation, the high frequency of noun forms ending in these syllables facilitates an abstraction of the type [N+ \emptyset], [N+ *-er*], [N+ *-en* (-a, *-et*)], [N+ *-ene*]. For a phonetic form like *-er*, e.g., admitting the existence of ‘independent affixes’ as signs with a *signifiant* and a *signifié* would lead to the postulation of either three homophonous signs (i.e. signs with identical signifiants) or of one polysemous sign with three distinct meanings, as this form also is used as the inflectional suffix for the present tense of verbs and as a nominal derivational suffix corresponding to English *-er* like in *baker*. Instead, we have the three abstractions, or ‘schemas’ in the cognitivist terminology (Langacker 1987:68), *N+*-er**, *V-er*, *L-er* formed solely on the basis of the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relationships of words like *elger* ‘elks’, *tygger* ‘chews’, and *drøvtygger* ‘ruminant (literally cud-chewer)’.

It is the invariant grammatical meaning, the semantic value, of these abstracted forms [N+ \emptyset], [N+ *-er*], [N+ *-en* (-a, *-et*)], [N+ *-ene*] that is the topic of this chapter. The

⁴⁹ Exceptions are, I believe, limited to *all*, see 4.3.3.1.

investigation concerns the grammatical meaning that is common to all instantiations of a (paradigmatic abstraction), not the idiosyncratic meaning of individual lexical entries. As Saussure insists, identification of the lexical meaning of a sign, i.e. its *signification*, is an impossible task that one easily could spend a lifetime pursuing. (Saussure 2002: 77). However, I propose the following grammatical definitions.⁵⁰

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION I: PROPOSED VALUE OF NORWEGIAN NOUNS

Bare Noun (m) – <i>Elg</i> :	[ELG.MASCULINE.GENERAL NUMBER]
Bare Noun (f) – <i>Kolle</i> :	[KOLLE.FEMININE.GENERAL NUMBER]
Bare Noun (n) – <i>Dyr</i> :	[DYR.NEUTER.GENERAL NUMBER]
Definite Singular M – <i>Elgen</i> :	[ELG.MASCULIN.SINGULAR.DEFINITE]
Definite Singular F – <i>Kolla</i> :	[KOLLE.FEMININE.SINGULAR.DEFINITE]
Definite Singular N – <i>Dyret</i> :	[DYR.NEUTER.SINGULAR.DEFINITE]
Indefinite Plurals – <i>Elger</i> (koller, dyr):	[ELG.PLURAL.INDEFINITE]
Definite Plurals – <i>Elgene</i> (kollene, dyrene):	[ELG.PLURAL.DEFINITE]

Throughout the chapter, these Norwegian Noun forms will be compared and contrasted with nouns in other languages, especially English and French. I will assume the following grammatical definitions for the different nouns in these languages.

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION II: ASSUMED VALUE OF ENGLISH AND FRENCH NOUNS

English Singular – <i>Elk</i> :	[ELK.SINGULAR]
English Plural – <i>Elks</i> :	[ELK.PLURAL]
French Noun – <i>Élan(s)</i> :	[ÉLAN.MASCULINE]
French Noun – <i>Vache(s)</i> :	[VACHE.FEMININE]

Nouns have been defined semantically as the category that denotes *things* (Langacker 1987) and as the category whose members are prototypically referential. These intuitions are both claimed to be explained by Geach's proposal that nouns denote predicates with identity criteria. I will not try to present a universal definition of nouns. The investigation will (nevertheless) make use of one assumption concerning the lexical entry for the (universal) category of nouns. Following Bouchard (2002), the lexical entry of a common noun is understood as a network of interacting elements: the characteristic function *f*, which provides the property that interprets the noun; the time interval *i* indicating at what moment *f* holds; the possible world *w* telling us whether *f* holds in the actual world or in some other imagined world in which *f* is not necessary false; and the variable assignment function *g*, that allows us to determine the truth value of the final

⁵⁰ In addition, all these forms may take the possessive (genitive) suffix *-s*; *elgs, kolles, dyrs, elgers, kollers, dyrs, elgens, kollas, dyrets, elgenes, kollenes, dyrenes*. These will not be discussed in any detail in the thesis, but see 5.2 on possessives and possession. Norwegian also still exhibit residues of dative and genitive case inflections in fixed expressions following preposition like *på tide* 'about time', *av gårde* 'on way?', *til havs* 'at seas', *til fjells* 'at/to the mountains'. There will be no further mention of these forms as they are unproductive and not part of the current Norwegian Nominal system as such.

formula by associating each variable with a particular entity in the model. The network determines the extension of the noun, i.e. the set of things that have the property of being an f in w at i . The variable assignment function g determines the denotation of the expression (Bouchard 2002: 7).⁵¹ The division of a noun's network into these sub-functions will be important in the analysis of adjectival modification 5.2.3.

While there is consensus that nouns are the referential category par excellence, the understanding of the term “referential” varies. In this thesis, no principled distinction is made between the term *reference* and Wilmet's (1986) *extensivité*, i.e. with an intralinguistic understanding of the word. Simply put, I will take *refer* to mean ‘indicate an entity or individual’ where entity and individual are opposed to property or category. Both *entity* and *individual* thus have to be understood in the widest sense of the terms; they can be abstract or concrete, countable or masses, singular or plural, exist in this world or in some hypothetical or imagined world. This view of linguistic reference is different from the view of reference as a relation strictly between language and real world entities. According to such ‘logical’ views of referentiality, negated nominals or nouns denoting mythological creatures do not refer as they denote entities that do not exist in the real world. (Norwegian) grammar, however, does not distinguish between words denoting real or imaginary entities, and the form of the noun is independent of whether its extension is assured or negated (*Det finnes (ikke) enhjørninger/ingen frihet* ‘there exists no unicorns/freedom’). As Martin (2002:120) points out, language presents freedom or unicorns as existing entities, while at the same time denying their existence; their extension (in this world) is zero. However, the linguist only investigates linguistic properties, and has nothing to say about reality itself.

Another view of referentiality takes *refer* to mean “indicate or introduce a discourse referent”. This view is closer to the conception adopted in the present study. In particular, I will say that nouns may be referential even when they appear in “non-referential functions”, such as nominal predicates, because they identify some entity in some possible world/mental space. Predicative nouns, however, do not introduce a discourse referent. In the present study, referentiality is thus seen as a grammatical property of lexical items, not as a pragmatic concept. Nouns, however, are not necessarily referential per se. As we will see, both in Norwegian and our languages of comparison the referentiality of nouns is (normally) only achieved through association or combination with (functional) nominal categories that may provide a referential anchoring, the major of which is number. The importance of number as the primary referential force in the Norwegian Nominal System as laid out in 3.3.3.2 is one of the most important hypotheses of this thesis.

After this presentation of the form inventory and the clarification of the notion of reference, we are now ready to consider the individual forms in detail. This is the topic of sections 3.2 to 3.4. We start with the definite forms in 3.2 followed by the Indefinite Plural in 3.3 and the Bare Noun in 3.4. The values and interpretational range of the four noun forms is summed up in 3.5, 3.6 presents some speculations on linguistic variation and 3.7 offers some thoughts on the relationship between grammar and ontology.

⁵¹ This follows the tradition of Montague Semantics. Like Bouchard, I do not tie my analysis up to general assumptions of this framework, but only to the assumption that distinct elements like these are part of the network of a common noun.

3.2 The Norwegian definite forms

Norwegian marks the feature definite, with a singular and a plural distinction, on the noun itself (via suffixation). This characteristic, which sets the Scandinavian languages apart from the rest of the Germanic family, is one of the major differences between Norwegian and our two main languages of comparison, English and French, which both have separate definite determiners: *the* and *le, la, les*. This difference, nevertheless, seems to have more effect on the rest of the nominal sign inventory than on the distribution and interpretation of the definite forms themselves (which are quite similar whether they are syntactically simplex as in Norwegian or complex as in English and French.)

The two basic definite noun forms in Norwegian, exemplified in (2) below, will be referred to as the (Norwegian) Definite Singular and the (Norwegian) Definite Plural.

- (2) a. Jeg står på et gulvteppe, Mikkel har ett kne på **teppet** og ett kne på **dørstokken** inn til **badet**. (Marstein 2009: 76)
 i stand on a carpet. Mikkel has one knee on carpet.N.SG.DEF and one knee on door.step.M.SG.DEF of bathroom.N.SG.DEF
 ‘I am standing on a carpet, Mikkel has one knee on the carpet and one knee on the doorstep of the bathroom.’
- b. **Solen** skinner i **fontenespruten** så **vanndråpene** glitrer. (Marstein 2009: 30)
 sun.F.DEF.SG shines in fountain.squirt.M.DEF.SG so waterdrop.DEF.PL glimmer
 ‘The sun is shining in the fountain squirt so that the drops of water glimmer’

Strictly speaking, the Norwegian Definite Nouns come in four primary paradigmatic forms: Three singular ones distinguished by different gender values and generally ending in *-en*, *-a* and *-et* indicating masculine, feminine or neuter definite singularity respectively and a plural definite form common for all genders ending in *-ene*, as indicated in Grammatical Definition I.

The proposed values for the definite noun forms are the standard characterisations of these paradigms, and there should be no controversy concerning them. One thing worth noticing is that I do not assume that the plural definites have any gender features as part of their semantic value. The same assumption will be made for Indefinite Plurals and I base it on the fact that contrary to what is the case with the Norwegian Bare Noun and Definite Singular, the plural forms do not display any gender-based agreement with other signs which typically agree with the noun, i.e., adjectives and pronouns. This point will be discussed further in 3.6, which explores the relationship between gender and number.

Since there is no controversy around the value of the definite noun forms, the primary aims of this section are, firstly, to present briefly their distribution, use and interpretations in order for them to serve as a basis for understanding the two other noun forms in Norwegian, the Indefinite Plural and the Bare Noun (see 3.3 and 3.4). Secondly, I wish to delimit or determine the semantic contribution of the feature definite. This will be the task of the coming section 3.2.1. In addition, a quite idiosyncratic use of definiteness in Norwegian (compared to English), namely the so-called missing possessives is discussed in 3.2.2.

3.2.1 Distribution and Interpretation of the Definite Forms – Definiteness as Identifiability

The function of the feature definite used in the definitions above is to identify a unique individual in the universe of discourse. The first definite form in (2)a *teppet* ‘the carpet’ illustrates an intra-linguistic *anaphoric* use of the definite form where the referent is introduced by a noun phrase headed by an indefinite article in the previous sentence. Such intra-linguistic clues to identify the referent may also be *cataphoric* (or anticipatory anaphoric), i.e. they may follow rather than precede the definite form. This is the case with the second form in (2)a where *dørstokken* ‘the doorstep’ is identified through association with *badet* ‘the bathroom’. The information required for identification may also be provided extra-linguistically, either because the referent may be understood as being unique through general world knowledge or because the physical situation in which the speaker and hearer are located contributes to the identification. This is exemplified by the two first definite forms *solen* ‘the sun’ and *fontenespruten* ‘the fountain squirt’ in (2)b. In addition, reference may be achieved through a combination of general knowledge and anaphoric/cataphoric types like in bridging cross-reference or associative identifications. This is the case with the last definite form in (2)b, *vanndråpene* ‘the drops of water’, which is identified through an anaphoric relation with *fontenespruten* ‘the fountain squirt’ and our general knowledge about fountain squirts and drops of water. (For a more detailed, but still short, overview of conditions for use of definiteness see Lyons 1999: 2-7)

I assume, following Lambrecht (1994) and Lyons (1999), that definite interpretations, qua the identification of a unique individual in the universe of discourse, are achieved through the expression (and interpretation) of the semantic/pragmatic concept of identifiability. The view of definiteness as expressing identifiability is a continuation of the so-called familiarity hypothesis (Christophersen 1939, Hawkins 1978) expanding it to also include referents that are not necessarily known or familiar to the listener. Definite forms are used when “from among all those which can be designated with a particular linguistic expression” one may be picked out and identified as “the one which the speaker has in mind” (Lambrecht 1994: 77). With the use of a definite form, the speaker does not assert that the listener (necessarily) knows or can identify the actual real world referent, merely that she presupposes that the listener disposes sufficient clues to identify (in his mind) the same (discourse) referent that the speaker has in hers. As we have seen, the identification is made possible through extra- and intralinguistic context and inferences from the listener’s world knowledge about the existence of such a referent.

As an information-structuring element (see Lambrecht 1994), definiteness qua identifiability diverges from categories like gender and number in that it does not provide information of the real world referent independently of the discourse situation. This is why definite and non-definite forms often may be interchanged (in episodic contexts) without altering the referential (extensional) scope of the noun phrase. Compare the examples in (3), where the prepositional objects from (3)a are presented with opposite values for definiteness and number in (3)b and (3)c respectively.

- (3) a. Å, så deilig nå, sier jeg, etter alt det maset med **unger** og **bikkje** og alt.
(Marstein 2009: 30)
oh, how delightful now, say I, after all the fuzz with kid.INDEF.PL and dog.F.GN

and everything.

“Oh, how delightful, I say, after all the fuzz with kids and dog and everything.”

- b. Å, så deilig nå, sier jeg, etter alt det maset med **ungene** og **bikkja** og alt.
oh, how delightful now, say I, after all the fuzz with kid.PL.DEF and dog.SG.DEF and everything
“Oh, how delightful, I say, after all the fuzz with the kids and the dog and everything.”
- c. Å, så deilig nå, sier jeg, etter alt det maset med **unge/ungen** og **bikkjer/bikkjene** og alt.
oh, how delightful now, say I, after all the fuzz with kid.M.GN/kid.SG.DEF and dog. INDEF.PL /dog.PL.DEF and everything.
“Oh, how delightful, I say, after all the fuzz with (the) kid and (the) dogs and everything.”

The situation with the kids and the dog has been mentioned several times in the previous conversation containing the original utterance (3)a, and as both the kids and the dog are the speaker’s kids and dog, the referents of the indefinite forms are highly familiar, contextually salient and hence identifiable. The utterance in (3)b with the definite forms *ungene* and *bikkja* would thus have been equally felicitous in the conversation, though with a slight change in interpretation. Previously mentioned or otherwise identifiable referents may very well be referred to by non-definites if one e.g., like here, wants to minimise focus on the particular referents. The opposite situation occurs when third person narrative texts open with definite forms even if the referent is not identifiable as a literary *in medias res* effect. Contrary to what is the case in (3)b, neither the definite nor the indefinite version of (3)c where the number features are altered could replace (3)a to describe the same situation.

In addition to identifiability, definiteness should thus also be defined in terms of speaker’s intention. The speaker will use a definite form when she *intends* or *wants* the listener to (make the inferential effort required to) identify the referent, not only when, or even if, she believes him capable of doing so. Likewise, indefinite forms may be used when the speaker does not want the listener to (make the inferential work necessary to) identify the referent, even if she knows him to be capable of doing it.

A concept that is often used in theoretical discussions of definiteness is *inclusiveness*. I understand inclusiveness (aka uniqueness, maximality) as a hyponym to the more general notion of identifiability since a referent that can be understood as being maximal or unique necessarily is identifiable qua its inclusiveness. The present understanding of definiteness thus sees no opposition between identifiability and theories of definiteness in terms of inclusiveness.^{52,53} Identifiability through inclusiveness is at

⁵² The familiarity or identifiability hypothesis is commonly seen as opposed to theories of definiteness in terms of inclusiveness (there is only one entity satisfying the description being used relative to a particular context). Inclusive reference is made to the totality of objects or mass in the context which satisfy the description (uniqueness for singulars and maximality for plurals) with the result that scholars working on definiteness traditionally have defined themselves as belonging to one or the other camp. See Lyons (1999: 1-13 and 253-279) for accessible discussions on different views on definiteness in the contemporary history of linguistics.

work both when reference is made to contextually delimited entities and with kind-reference, as will be discussed in 3.3.3.

While the underlying grammatical concept of identifiability probably is universal, as Lyons (1999:278) points out, its encoding is not, i.e. many (most?) languages do not have any specific markers for a category like definiteness (just as expected under radical arbitrariness). In addition, the different languages that do encode definiteness exhibit great variation in the way the category is encoded both with regard to the status (as a full word form, a clitic or an affix) and distribution of the sign hosting it, and with regard to the actual values (definite, specific, indefinite) that are distinguished/expressed.

The interpretational range of the Norwegian Definites is to a large degree co-extensive with that of English Definites headed by *the* and to French Definites introduced by *le, la, les*, but there are of course also differences. The main differences in the use of definite forms between the three languages will be accounted for by reference to the different paradigmatic relations they participate in, i.e. to the individual choices made in the encoding of definiteness (and other nominal categories) in the systems of the individual languages and the closest paradigmatic neighbouring signs, not to cross-linguistic differences in the semantic contribution of definiteness features.

As will be shown in this thesis, the Norwegian Nominal system contains (i) signs that hold the value *definite*, like the two types of nouns discussed in this section and the definite numeral *ene* ‘one’; and (ii) signs that (we will see) clearly are indefinite like the indefinite plural noun, the indefinite forms of the numerals ‘one’ *en, ei, et(t)* and the singular indefinite forms of adjectives; as well as (iii) signs that are neutral with regard to definiteness and thus may be interpreted as definite or indefinite depending on context. Examples of the latter type include the Bare Noun, *-e* suffixed adjectives and most numerals and quantifiers. Norwegian thus exhibits a tripartition in the values of the category definiteness with definite, indefinite and non-definite signs. On the other hand, Norwegian has no particular ways of encoding specificity.⁵⁴ The choices in what values of definiteness are grammaticalised are language specific, and thus in our case idiosyncratically Norwegian. Many languages have not grammaticalised definiteness at all in their nominal system and among those that have, the choice of what values are distinguished is free, as assured under Saussurean arbitrariness, recall 2.1.1.

As already mentioned, the use of the two definite noun forms in Norwegian correspond to a large degree to the uses of syntactically complex noun phrases introduced by *the* or *le, la, les* in English and French respectively. I will assume that the coextensive range of uses between these forms in the different languages is a result of the equivalence in semantic import of the concepts of definiteness (and number) in these different signs cross-linguistically. The differences in their uses, I argue, are then due to the interpretative range of the relevant neighbouring signs in the different languages. Differences in the use of definite forms for generic and kind referring expressions are

⁵³ This view is thus slightly different from that of Lyons (1999: 278) which understands the use of definites to convey inclusiveness as an unrelated expansion or development from the “core” grammaticalisation of identifiability. The result is nevertheless the same; the notion of identifiability includes uniqueness and maximality.

⁵⁴ Certain adjectives like *viss* ‘certain’ and *spesifikk* ‘specific’ necessarily entail specific readings of the noun phrases they are part of because of their lexical meaning, but there is no reason to assume any feature +specific anywhere in the Norwegian Nominal System.

discussed in connection with the understanding of the Norwegian Indefinite Plural in 3.3.3, while 3.4.2 discusses the use of definite forms with intentional and/or extensional readings of noun phrases functioning as prepositional objects with reference to the Norwegian Bare Noun where we see that Norwegian takes an intermediate position between English and French.

Before we turn to the non-definite forms, however, the next section demonstrates how an account of definiteness in terms of identifiability and speaker's intension straightforwardly explain an(other) idiosyncrasy in the use of the Norwegian definite forms, namely the phenomenon of so-called missing possessives.

3.2.2 “Missing or zero possessives”

Nouns denoting body-parts and kinship terms cross-linguistically often require a syntactically realised possessor if they are not interpreted as being detached from the body. In Norwegian, this possessor is generally realised phrase externally as exemplified in (4). Lødrup (2009) discusses (a sub-group of) this phenomenon, which he has termed *missing possessives*. The term alludes to the fact that corresponding constructions in many languages like e.g. English require a phrase internal possessive in such cases. In examples such as in (4), the definite forms are felicitous regardless of any previous mention or physical presence of the entity referred to. In fact, a phrase internal possessive would have rendered the utterances truly odd, if not ungrammatical.

- (4) a. Hun smiler og legger **hånda** under **haka**, tapper med **fingeren** på **overleppa**.
 she smiles and lays hand.F.SG.DEF under chin.F.SG.DEF, taps with finger.M.SG.DEF on upper.lip F.SG.DEF
 “She smiles and lays her hand under her cheek, taps her finger on her upper lip.”
- b. Hun sier, ja, selvfølgelig var det godt, smiler og knepper **buksa** hastig.
 she says, yes, of course was it good, smiles and buttons trousers.F.SG.DEF hastily.
 “She says, yes, of course it was good, smiles and buttons her trousers hastily”
- c. De har problemer i **ekteskapet**. (www)
 they have problems in marriage.N.SG.DEF
 “They have problems in their marriage.”
- d. Han har mistet **hørselen/hukommelsen**.
 he has lost hearing.M.SG.DEF/memoryM.SG.DEF
 “He has lost his hearing/his memory.”

While these sentences may seem puzzling from the perspective of Anglo-centric theories hypothesising a universal semantic level, they fall out quite naturally from the present Neo-saussurean understanding of definiteness as identifiability. I propose that nothing particular has to be assumed in order to explain these constructions. On the contrary, I suggest that these are ordinary uses of the definite forms where identification is made through association, as we have already seen with example (2)b. Just as the water drops are identified by association with the fountain squirt, the hand, chin, finger and upper lip in (4)a are identified through association with the subject of the sentence. Also the pants, marriage and hearing/memory in (4)b,c and d are easily identifiable as the linguistic

context provides a potential possessor. Under this view, then, the possessive relations in (4) are not grammatically explicit, only inferred through the identification process.

Which nouns occur in the "missing possessive construction", i.e. which nouns can be used in examples like (4) without a possessive? And why? As suggested by example (4)a, body parts are commonly used without possessives. However as indicated by examples (4)b-d and as pointed out by Julien (2005), other nouns are also common: "In addition to body-part nouns, also inalienables appear in missing possessive constructions when they can be easily accommodated" (p 34, fn. 7). Lødrup (2009) suggests that non-body part nouns represent a straightforward extension as long as they are understood as natural belongings of a possessor within a socio-cultural frame. This socio-cultural frame, Lødrup suggests, may be understood in terms of Bally's (conceptual) personal domain (Bally (1926) so that while a body part noun may be related to an external possessor because it "represents a subset of a person (...) other nouns with missing possessives represent a subset of a persons 'personal domain'" (Lødrup: 2009).⁵⁵ This means that in principle, at least, any noun can occur without a possessive as long as one can create a context. In short, Norwegian omits the possessor if it is clear who the possessor is. This is conventionalised for body-parts and similar nouns, but can extend beyond such nouns whenever the context permits it.

The account of the missing possessive construction sketched above suggests that the name is not well chosen. There is no missing possessive in Norwegian sentences like (4), and the question is not why Norwegian lacks a possessive in such examples. Rather, the interesting question is why languages like English include a possessive even when it is redundant. Strictly speaking, this thesis is about Norwegian and not English, so a detailed discussion of this is beyond the scope of the present study. I therefore limit myself to the following brief remarks. Both possession and definiteness are marked differently in Norwegian and English. In Norwegian, the neutral way of expressing the possessive relation is through a definite noun followed by a possessive pronoun. Since the choice is between a syntactically complex noun phrase with both a definiteness suffix and a postposed possessive pronoun on the one hand, and a single noun with a definiteness marker on the other, it is clear that the former represents the simplest, most economic option. It is therefore not surprising that Norwegian prefers this variant whenever the possessor is readily identifiable through context.

In English, possession is expressed through a preposed possessive which is in complementary distribution with the definite article. In English, the choice is therefore between a noun with a definiteness marker *or* a possessive marker. These alternations are equally complex, so considerations of economy do not lead to the preference of either option. English has thus conventionalised the most informative alternative. This is consistent with the relevance theoretical axiom that the encoded message should be transmitted through the most informative message in the relevant context based on the least amount of effort required (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995). I suggest that this state of affairs is (part of) the explanation why English uses explicit possessives even when the possessive relation is not focused and the possessor is readily identifiable in context.

⁵⁵ In addition to nouns denoting garments, like in (4)b, also nouns denoting implements of material culture (Seiler 1983:13) like bow, arrow, bed, home, furniture, tools, vehicles, personal items etc; abstracts like hearing, memory, senses and physical mental states like disappointment, strength, fear or other abstracts like marriage typically receive possessive interpretations by inference.

3.3 The Norwegian Indefinite Plural

Now that we have considered the definite forms in some detail, we are ready to tackle the non-definites. We start with the Indefinite Plural Noun. These forms are particularly interesting as they exhibit an otherwise unattested distinction between kind and generic predicates since they may be subjects of the latter, but not the former. This problem will therefore be discussed in detail. The main hypothesis of the section is that the Norwegian Indefinite Plural is truly indefinite and not only neutral with regard to definiteness as I will assume for the English plural.

Section 3.3.1 discusses the sentential distribution of the Indefinite Plural while section 3.3.2 looks at its phrasal distribution. After the discussion on kind- and generic reference in 3.3.3, section 3.3.4 provides a discussion of related forms in the other Mainland Scandinavian languages. A summary is given in 3.3.5.

3.3.1 Sentential Distribution and Interpretations of the Indefinite Plural

Like the English plural, the Norwegian indefinite plural may appear bare – i.e. without a preposed determiner – in all major syntactic functions. This is illustrated in (5) which gives examples of bare Norwegian Indefinite Plurals in the function of subject (a), direct object (b), indirect object (c) and prepositional object (d) and as a nominal predicate with a plural subject (e):

- (5) a. Jeg trodde **elger** var mer selvstendige. (Loe 2004, 18)
I thought elks were more independent.
- b. Det er forbudt å kaste (levende) **elger** ut fra et fly. (www)
It is forbidden to throw (living) elks out from a plane.
- c. Det er forbudt å servere **elger** alkoholholdige drikker. (www)
It is forbidden to serve elks alcoholic drinks.
- d. Og det fins grenser for hva jeg gidder å ta imot av dritt fra **elger**.
(Loe, 2004: 12)
And there exist limits on how much crap I can stand from elks.
- e. Edith Rinkel og Pål Bentzen er **språkvitere**. De er **lingvister**.⁵⁶
(Uri, 2006: 15)
Edith Rinkel and Pål Bentzen are language.knowers. They are linguists.

Apart from the generic subject in (5)a and the nominal predicate in (5)e, all the examples in (5) are so-called weak indefinites. Generic, quantificational and taxonomic readings (see 3.3.3) are the only readings available for Norwegian Indefinite Plurals in subject position as Norwegian, unlike e.g. English, does not have a progressive present form favouring episodic readings. In episodic contexts, Norwegian bare nouns typically refer to unatomised entities i.e. “anything carrying the characterising property of the lexical N”, never to ordinary (stage-level) individuals.

⁵⁶ As nominal predicates, Norwegian Indefinite Plurals side with English Plurals and indefinite singulars in being ambiguous between categorisation and characterisation – see discussion on nominal predicates in 3.4.1.

The Norwegian Indefinite Plural also parallels the English bare plural in its scopal properties, and takes only narrow scope with regard to negation and is always opaque, and never transparent, as seen in (6):

- (6) a. Jon leser ikke **bøker**. ($\neg\exists$, not $\exists\neg$)
 John reads not books.
 b. Jon ønsker å møte **filmstjerner**. ($\text{\textcircled{ø}}nske > \exists$, not $\exists > \text{\textcircled{ø}}nske$)
 John wants to meet movie stars.

As should be well known, none of these readings are available in French, which has a very limited distribution of bare noun phrases in argument position. The only example from (5) and (6) that could have a bare noun also in French is the predicative in (5)e.

Even if the Norwegian Indefinite and the English Plural exhibit distributional similarities, there are also striking differences between the two. As we will see, the Norwegian Indefinite Plural is especially interesting in that it exhibits the rare property of distinguishing between generic and (true) kind predicates. While the English (bare) Plural has been famous since Carlson (1980) for receiving three interpretations as weak indefinites, generics and kinds, the Norwegian Indefinite Plural may only receive the two former readings. The theoretical and interpretational implications of this, and the contrast it gives with English, presented in 3.3.3, have not received much attention in scholarly literature. One of the major claims put forward in this study is that this property can only be explained if the Norwegian Indefinite Plural is different from the English Plural in that it is a true indefinite and not only neutral with regard to definiteness, a claim that is also supported by differences in the phrasal distribution of the two signs (see 3.3.2).

The claim that the Norwegian Indefinite Plural is indefinite and not just neutral with regard to definiteness may seem an unnecessary one, as *indefinite plural* is the label used for this sign in the Norwegian reference grammar (Faarlund et al., 1997). To my knowledge, however, no previous investigation has stressed the fact that it is truly indefinite, as in non-identifiable, and not only non-definite as in neutral with regard to definiteness. On the contrary, both the Norwegian reference grammar and current theoretical works on the Norwegian Nominal System in generative grammar (see e.g. Julien, 2005, Vangsnes 1999) reject (or neglect) the idea that there is anything more indefinite to the Norwegian indefinite than to the English bare plural – c.f. the following quote: "it seems clear to me that (...) the noun is indefinite only in the sense that there is no definiteness marker morphologically attached to it" (Julien 2005: 36).

In addition to the discussion on kind vs. generic reference in 3.3.3, further evidence supporting the analysis of the Norwegian Indefinite Plural as indefinite is presented. Section 3.3.2 considers its inter-phrasal agreement requirements, or distribution, and 3.3.4 parallel forms in Swedish and Danish. A summary is given in 3.3.5.

3.3.2 Phrasal Distribution

True kind-predicates are, as we will see in 3.3.3, quite rare compared to predicates that combine with generic and weak indefinite subjects. Even though the distinction between kinds and generics is highly interesting, it thus only provides quite a small empirical basis for distinguishing between the semantic value of English and Norwegian ‘bare’ plurals

based on their sentential distributional and interpretational range. However, the idea that the Norwegian Indefinite Plural is a true indefinite finds strong support also in its phrasal distribution.

Firstly, the two Norwegian plural forms diverge with regard to what closed nominal categories they combine with. Especially, while the Indefinite Plural readily combines with the indefinite determiner *noen* ‘some’, combinations of Indefinite Plurals and demonstratives only yield quite idiosyncratic interpretations and are not valid as translations for (standard interpretations of) English demonstrative constructions, as illustrated in (7).

- (7) a. Disse/de (store) elgene
 these/the big_{PL} elk_{DEF, PL}
 ‘These/those/the (big) elks’
 b. #Disse/de (store) elger
 these/the big_{PL} elk_{INDEF, PL}
 c. Noen/tre (store) elger
 some/three big_{PL} elk_{INDEF, PL}
 ‘Some/three (big) elks’
 d. *Noen/tre (store) elgene
 some/three big_{PL} elk_{DEF, PL}

Example (7)b above is not strictly ungrammatical, just inappropriate for the intended context,⁵⁷ the relationship between demonstratives and definiteness is discussed in 5.3.1.3. The pattern illustrated in (7) contrasts with English, where the plural combines equally well with strong and weak determiners/quantifiers:

- (8) The/these/those/some/three (big) elks.

Related to this is the so-called *double definiteness construction*. When a definite Norwegian noun phrase is modified by an adjective, a preposed demonstrative normally accompanies the suffixed determiner. Such noun phrases thus require both pre- and postposed determination as shown in (9)b and (9)d, whereas this is not the case with indefinites, as (9)a shows.

- (9) a. Store elger
 big-e elk_{INDEF, PL}
 ‘big elks’
 b. #Store elgene
 big-e elk_{DEF, PL}

⁵⁷ The use of “#” before example (9)b is meant to indicate this. Constructions marked with # will, even though inappropriate with the intended meaning or in the given context, nevertheless be possible with different interpretations or contexts than the one exemplified. For strictly ungrammatical sequences the conventional “*” will be used. In addition, “?” will be used for constructions that are not strictly ungrammatical, but where it is hard to come up with a plausible interpretation and “%” for constructions where judgments seem to vary.

- c. #De store elger
the big-e elk INDEF, PL
- d. De store elgene
the big-e elk DEF, PL
'the big elks'

Again, like example (7)b, (9)b and (9)c are not strictly ungrammatical – phrases like the one in (9)b may e.g. be used (as a vocative?) when addressing somebody directly, and are attested in a neologism that I call The Emotive Construction. We return to this construction in 5.5.3.⁵⁸

Another revealing difference between the English Plural and the Norwegian Indefinite Plural deserves to be mentioned in this connection. As opposed to the English Plural, a Norwegian Indefinite Plural may not function as a title modifying proper names in appositive constructions, and as shown in (10)a the correct Norwegian form would be a Definite Plural. A similar choice is made in French where plural titles require the plural definite article *les*, (10)b.

- (10) a. Forslag fra **stortingsrepresentantene**/***stortingsrepresentanter** Laila Dåvøy, Åse Gunhild Woie Duesund og Ola Lånke om å opprette etiske komiteer på sykehjem. (Dagbladet, 16/08-06)
'Proposal from parlament-member.PL. DEF/PL.INDEF Laila Dåvøy, Åse Gunhild Woie Duesund and Ola Lånke about establishing ethical committees in nursing homes.'
- b. De janvier 2005 à janvier 2008, ***(les)/(*ø/des) professeurs** Dupont et Gagnon ont recensé 976 incidents de pertes ou vol de données personnelles en Amérique du Nord (...) (www)
From January 2005 to January 2008, the professors Dupont and Gagnon...
- c. As **(*the) Professors** Hjort and Dahl point out, to expect to increase the supply of cod by artificial means in the face of these figures can only result in ... (www)

The proper names in these constructions provide the unique referents for the pre-modifying noun phrase, which then is readily identifiable. This use of definite forms is expected if my hypothesis that the Norwegian Indefinite Plural, like French noun phrases introduced by *des*, are true indefinites signalling that their referents are intended not to be identified. That English may use a bare plural in such contexts is motivated by the fact that the English Plural is neutral with regard to definiteness and thus not incompatible with identification. The use of a bare form in English may therefore be motivated on economical grounds.

The different intraphrasal behaviour of Norwegian Indefinite and English Plurals provide valuable support for the idea that these two forms diverge in their semantics

⁵⁸ In Bokmål and a few southern dialects a shift between the definite and the indefinite form following a demonstrative may, under particular contextual circumstances, be used for special meaning distinctions (see e.g. Faarlund et al, 1997: 309). This is due to the (especially) strong influence from Danish, which lacks “double definiteness” (see 3.3.4.) on these variants of Norwegian. Such constructions, with non-definite forms following demonstratives, are ungrammatical in most dialects, and will be discussed in 5.3.3.

pertaining to definiteness. While the English Plural is used in all (plural) contexts, the Norwegian Indefinite Plural is deviant in contexts where another element assures the identifiability of the intended referent. The idea that the Norwegian Indefinite Plural is truly indefinite and not only neutral with regard to definiteness is thus grounded both in its sentential and phrasal interpretational range. More support for this suggestion is provided by a comparison with the other Mainland Scandinavian languages, Danish and Swedish, presented in 3.3.4. Before that section, 3.3.3 shows how the characteristics of the Norwegian Indefinite Plural provide crucial information for the long-standing debate on (the difference between) kind and generic reference.

3.3.3 Reference to kinds from a Norwegian perspective

Questions pertaining to different expressions of kind reference and genericity, and the distribution and interpretation of bare nouns, have been closely intertwined since Carlson (1977) presented his *Unified Analysis of the English Bare Plural*. More than thirty years later, the debate is still vivid.⁵⁹

- | | | |
|---------|--|-------------------|
| (11) a. | Elks are not on the verge of extinction. | (Kind) |
| b. | Elks are magnificent animals. | (Generic) |
| c. | I saw elks and bears around the campsite. (www) | (Weak indefinite) |

While the English Plural is famous for receiving the three different interpretations presented in (11) – as kinds, generics and weak indefinites – the coming sub-section shows that the Norwegian Indefinite Plural only may receive the two latter interpretations. Norwegian thus exhibits a grammatical distinction between the subjects of generic and true kind-predicates. In French, which has a very limited distribution of bare nouns in argument position, none of these interpretations are available.

The distinction between these three readings for the English Plural has remained undisputed for 30 years, but – in spite of intense debates – no real agreement has been reached on exactly what constitutes a true kind-predicate or where to draw the line between kind and generic readings – even though an honourable effort was provided by Krifka et al. (1995). For instance, even if everyone seems to agree that predicates like *be extinct/invented* require a kind-reading of the subject and e.g. *are magnificent animals* a generic one, predicates of the type *are mammals* may in the literature sometimes be classified as belonging to either of the two groups.

A language like Norwegian clearly exhibiting the distinction between subjects of kind and generic predicates seems otherwise unattested. The Norwegian data are therefore quite unexpected in most current analyses deriving generic subjects directly from kinds, and has even been predicted not to exist.⁶⁰ For these reasons, the Norwegian

⁵⁹ For an overview, the reader is referred to the introduction of Carlson & Pelletier (1995). After the influential paper by Chierchia (1998), the debate witnessed a cross-linguistic boost and more and more languages were added, see e.g. Cheng and Sybesma (1999), Dayal (2004), Deprez (2005), De Swart and Farkas (2007), Heycock and Zamparelli (2003), Krifka (2004), Munn and Schmitt (2005), to mention only a few.

⁶⁰ “[N]otre analyse fait la prédiction qu’il n’y a pas de divergence à l’intérieur d’une langue entre les deux types de phrases génériques. Une langue où l’on exprimerait la référence à l’espèce au moyen d’un pluriel défini, et la généralisation générique au moyen d’un pluriel indéfini serait donc un contre-exemple à notre analyse. Nous n’avons pas trouvé de langue de ce type.” (De Swart and Farkas 2005) Our analysis predicts

data presented below should be particularly valuable in the cross-linguistic understanding of these phenomena, especially in that they may define the limits of what actually constitutes a true kind-predicate.

3.3.3.1 Norwegian Indefinite Plurals as a diagnostic for kind reference

As seen below, even though the Norwegian Indefinite Plural is fine both with weak indefinite readings (12) and generic readings (13), it is nevertheless unable to obtain true kind-readings (14).⁶¹

- (12) a. Det er **elger** i hagen.
There are elks in the garden.
b. Kjøpte du **lyspærer**?
Did you buy light bulbs?
- (13) a. **Elger** er flotte dyr/ pattedyr/har fire bein.
Elks are magnificent animals/mammals/have four legs.
b. **Lyspærer** avgir mye varme. (www)
Light bulbs produce much heat.
- (14) a. **#Elger** står ikke i fare for å bli utryddet.
Elks are not in danger of extinction.
b. **#Lyspærer** ble oppfunnet av Edison.
Light bulbs were invented by Edison.
c. **?Poteter** kom til Norge først på 1600-tallet.
Potatoes were introduced in Norway in the 17th century.

As can be seen in (13)a, at least in Norwegian *be mammal* groups together with generics rather than with true kinds since it can take a Norwegian Indefinite Plural subject. The difference lies in the fact that being a mammal is true not only of the elk kind, but also of (all) individual elks, while for the (true) kind-predicates in (14) the opposite holds; they apply to the kind as a whole but, crucially, not to its individuals.

Other predicate types that are sometimes claimed to require kind denoting subjects, but which felicitously do combine with Norwegian Indefinite Plurals include the Norwegian equivalents of *originate from* and *be protected (by law)*:

- (15) a. **Poteter** kommer opprinnelig fra Peru. (www)
Potatoes come originally from Peru.
b. **Fugler** er fredet (...) for skade, ødeleggelse. (www)
Birds are protected (...) against damage, destruction.

that there should be no divergence inside a language between the two types of generic sentences. A language where one would express kind reference by use of a definite plural and generic generalisations by use of an indefinite plural would thus be a counter example to our analysis. We have found no such language.

⁶¹ This distinction between plural kinds and generics, exhibited by the two Norwegian plurals is also described in the *Norsk referansegrammatikk* (Faarlund et al., 1997: 292-293).

Again, individual potatoes all originate from Peru, though not in the sense that they were grown there – just like individual birds are protected by law – but they were not all introduced to Norwegians in the 17th century. Genericity is, cross-linguistically, also often expressed with explicit indefinite singulars:⁶²

- (16) a. **En elg** har fire bein/er et pattedyr/ et flott dyr.
An elk has four legs/is a mammal/ a grand animal
- b. ??**En potet** kommer opprinnelig fra Peru.
A potato comes originally from Peru
- c. ??**En fugl** er fredet (...) for skade, ødeleggelse osv.
A bird is protected (...) against any kind of damage

The fact that the predicates in (15) are infelicitous with singular indefinites (16)b,c may be one of the reasons why they are often considered true kind- rather than generic predicates. While the difference in acceptability between plural and singular indefinites in these contexts may seem strange from an understanding of genericity as a uniform phenomenon arising from a generic operator (Chierchia 1998), they fall out naturally if the relationship between interpretation and meaning is allowed to be one-to-many. Under the present account, there are at least two ways to yield singular indefinite generic readings. Firstly, a common property may be distributed to each individual of the class one by one, or, secondly, one individual may be used as a representative sample – a prototype – of the class as a whole. Being protected or originating from Peru are less salient properties of birds and potatoes respectively, than having four legs or being grand are for elks. Both the distributive reading and the predication over prototypes, which both focus on individuals, are therefore less fortunate – which explains the difference in acceptability between (16)a and (16)b,c.

Returning now to the examples in (14), it is important to point out that they are not strictly ungrammatical, just inappropriate for the intended kind reading. The b-version may receive a generic reading with an interpretation stating that Edison had the habit of inventing light-bulbs (a new one, say, twice a week!), while (14)a might get a taxonomic kind-reading stating that no elk subspecies is threatened by extinction. It is, however, difficult to find a suitable interpretation for a sentence like (14)c. Clearer examples of such taxonomic readings – i.e. predications over sub-kinds or subspecies – are given in (17):

- (17) a. **Elger** kommer i flere underarter, blant annet *alces alces*, *alces alces americanus* og *alces alces andersoni*. (www)
Elks come in several subspecies, among other *alces alces* etc. (...)
- b. **Katter** er ikke utrydningstruet hvis det er huskatter det er snakk om, men det finnes **kattedyr** som er utrydningstruet. (www)
Cats are not threatened if you are talking about domestic cats, but there are felines that are threatened

⁶² In fact, generic interpretations are, in most languages, available from a variety of forms. In e.g. French both definite and indefinite plurals, definite and indefinite singulars as well as cardinal expressions may receive generic reading, see Kleiber (1987, 1990), Bouchard (2002: 301-303).

With predicates like *være utrydningstruet* ‘be endangered’, also singular indefinites may be used taxonomically to refer to one (specific) sub-kind. Such forms are not available with the predicates in (17) which clearly require plural subjects.

(18) **En løve**, nemlig berberløven, er utryddet.

Also well formedness as subjects of quantificational properties has been taken as evidence for the availability of kind-readings in the literature, see e.g. Chierchia (1998). In Norwegian, the equivalents of quantificational properties like *be rare* or *widespread* differ from kind-predicates like *be extinct* and *invented* in that they may take a bare Norwegian Indefinite Plural subject:

- (19) a. Her er **hunder** veldig vanlige og **ulver** er sjeldne. (www)
'Here dogs are very common_{PL} and wolves are rare_{PL}.'
b. **Borebiller** er utbredt fra Telemark til Finnmark. (www)
'Bore-beetles are widespread_{N, SG, IND} from Telemark to Finnmark.' (www)

The adjectives may in such cases either agree with the subject in number, as in (19)a, or they may take the adverbial neuter gender form as in (19)b. In the second case, the statement is about the distribution of the entities in question, whereas in the first case it is an act of predication.

The fact that adjectival and prepositional modifications may change the referential range of (otherwise) bare noun phrases has been reported for many languages, see e.g. Chierchia (1998) and Longobardi (2001) for Italian. In Norwegian, this has the effect that the Norwegian Indefinite Plural, which normally is unable to take a kind-predicate, presumably may combine with one when modified by an adjective.

- (20) a. **#Tigere** står på randen av utryddelse.
Tigers stand on the verge of extinction.
b. **Hvite tigere** står på randen av utryddelse.
White tigers stand on the verge of extinction.

This should not be too surprising since the modification clearly derives a subgroup of the unmodified version in (a). Even though white tigers are not a distinct sub-species of tigers ontologically speaking, the adjective *hvit* like any other modifying element will necessarily pick a restricted and specific sub-group of tigers – the white ones – out of the non-specific group of tigers denoted by the lone Indefinite Plural. A taxonomic kind reading, then, is dependent on grammar not on ontology; without any contextual restrictions, a noun like *tiger* cannot receive a taxonomic reading even though tigers are sub-kinds of cats and mammals, while the non-ontological sub-kind *hvit tiger* may do so because it is grammatically taxonomic.

Kind, generic, quantificational and taxonomic predicates share the property of being non-episodic. While taxonomic predicates often are treated apart since they also may combine with explicit (singular) indefinites, a language like Norwegian, which makes a clear grammatical distinction between kinds on the one hand and generic and

quantificational properties on the other, seems otherwise unattested. This might explain why the distinction between these readings sometimes gets somewhat fuzzy or blurred in the theoretical literature. While the Norwegian data presented above clearly demonstrate that there is a distinction between these types of predicates, they also show that the class of true kind-predicates is far less important in number than what is commonly assumed. It is in fact very hard to come up with other true kind-predicates than those already mentioned in (14). Note that I am not saying that quantificational and *be-mammal*-type predicates cannot take kind denoting subjects – they most certainly do. My point is that these types of predicate should not constitute evidence for the availability of kind-readings, as is often claimed in the literature, since they evidently also may take other (types of) subjects yielding closely related but nevertheless different interpretations.

A language like Norwegian, overtly manifesting the distinction between kinds and generics, seems cross-linguistically rare, and is quite problematic for most current analyses, which since Chierchia's (1998) influential approach almost univocally derive generics directly from kinds. There is nevertheless one understanding of English bare nouns that actually predicts the empirical observations just witnessed for Norwegian, namely that of Bouchard (2002). Since both my discussion of the Norwegian Indefinite Plural and the Norwegian Bare Noun as well as my understanding of the category of number rely directly on his proposal, I take some time to present the basics of his analysis.

3.3.3.2 Number and the English Bare Plural, Bouchard (2002)

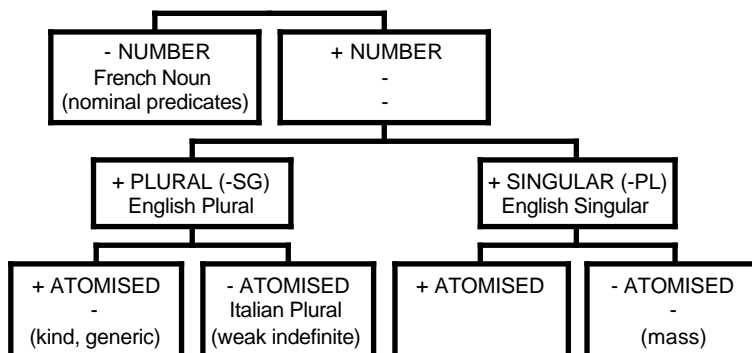
To understand Bouchard's proposal for the three possible readings of the English Plural in (11), a short presentation of his view of the semantic import of the category of number is needed. This understanding of number will be crucial in the coming analyses not only of the four major noun forms, but also of adjectives 3.9 and the closed nominal categories in Norwegian, see Chapter 4, as well as for the cross-linguistic differences with English and French.

For Bouchard, (following Link 1983 and Landman 1991, see also Chierchia 1998), the semantic contribution of number – a minimal means to identify an actant in grammar – is twofold:

Number marking can contribute to semantic interpretation in two different ways; Number can atomize the superset defined by the property of the N and provide access to ordinary singular individuals, and Number can indicate that the sort of individual involved is a plural or a singular individual (Bouchard, 2002: 308)

Number is thus a minimal means to give a noun an extension or a referential force. I will represent Bouchard's view on the interaction of number marking on nouns, and their distributional and interpretational properties as in the chart in Figure 1:

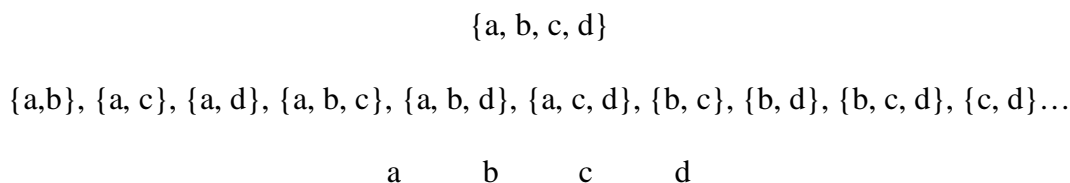
FIGURE 1: NUMBER AND NOUNS IN ENGLISH ITALIAN AND FRENCH



The top-line of each box in the chart (in upper cases) gives the grammatical meaning pertaining to number of the (potential) signs it contains (exemplified in title case on the second line), while the bottom lines provide non-exhaustive examples of possible interpretations. The chart is furthermore accumulative – signs high up in the hierarchy may access the meanings of those below, i.e. nodes high up in the chart encompass the meanings of those further down. Consequently, the signs lowest in the hierarchy have the most specified meanings.

The English plural covers the three lower left boxes in Figure 1 and encompasses both types of plural number.⁶³ The pluralisation of an English Noun, since it involves atomisation, is further understood as giving access to the entire domain of plural interpretation including both plural individuals and ordinary singular individuals, as depicted in Figure 2 (attributed to Link 1983). A true kind-interpretation is obtained directly from the idealised superset – denoting all occurrences as a whole – i.e. the top-line in Figure 2. The availability of this is due to the fact that reference tends to be as wide as possible when no (contextual) restrictions are available (see Kleiber, 1981, Bouchard 2002), which translates into maximality for plurals and uniqueness for singulars.

FIGURE 2: DOMAIN OF PLURAL INTERPRETATION



In addition to the superset on the top-line, Figure 2 also includes all (possible) plural and singular individuals instantiating the kind – depicted in the middle and bottom lines

⁶³ The rest of Figure 1 will be explained and developed in the coming sub-sections.

respectively. While a true kind reading is dependent on accessing the superset regrouping them all, other readings of the English Plural may be obtained independently, by reference to the individuals on the two lower lines.

For generics, while stating a fact about a kind may be interpreted as a generalisation, generic readings may *also* be obtained independently of the direct kind reference, namely by applying the predication distributively to the singular entities of which the kind is made up or by taking one singular individual as a representative sample or prototype – in both cases reference is made to entities in the bottom line of Figure 2. Differently from kinds, then, generic statements allow for exceptions.

The weak indefinite reading of the bare English Plural arises, again according to Bouchard, when the plural suffix provides access to individuals that are pluralities rather than to a plurality of singular individuals, c.f. the citation above. As may be seen in Figure 1, Bouchard uses Italian Plurals as an example of a sign that only contributes this latter semantics, which explains why Italian (bare) Plurals only allow weak indefinite interpretations, but not kind and generic readings.⁶⁴ The lack of all these readings for bare Nouns in French is due to the assumed lack of number marking on French nouns altogether.

Bouchard's analysis preserves the main findings of Carlson's original proposal, such as the unified understanding of the English Plural, and the idea that the choice between its three readings is made inferentially and determined by context. Since Bouchard assumes quite a different framework, his analysis nevertheless diverges from this tradition on two fundamental points.

Firstly, even if Bouchard agrees that the choice between the three readings is resolved contextually, in his approach none of the three interpretations is considered more basic, or as corresponding with the exact value of the form. This contrasts with the guiding idea for both Carlson (1977) and Chierchia (1998). For these scholars, and their followers, the (argumental) bare plural is considered to primarily denote a kind, and the generic and weak indefinite readings are considered to be derived from this first one, which therefore holds a special status.

Secondly, for Chierchia, the English Plural is ambiguous and denotes either a property (it's a predicate) or a kind (it's an argument). Bouchard, on the other hand, regards English Nouns as always being marked for number, which for him is a minimal means to identify an actant in grammar. Under this view, both English Singulars and Plurals thus always denote entities, and crucially – except with interpretational inference – never properties.⁶⁵ Krifka (2004) states that English “Bare NPs (are) basically **properties**, hence they are **neither** kind-referring nor indefinites”. Bouchard, on the other hand, reaches the opposite conclusion.

Even if none of these differences are essential for understanding Bouchard's analysis of the English Plural, they nevertheless derive from profound theoretical

⁶⁴ Chierchia (1998) use examples with taxonomic and quantificational predicates as evidence for the availability of kind readings from Italian Bare Plurals. The present understanding of both taxonomic and quantificational subjects is thus appropriate for explaining why Italian (bare) Plurals do not take neither generic nor true kind predicates.

⁶⁵ As the *signifié* of relations between signs universally is predication (recall 2.1.3), even if an English noun never *denotes* a predicate, it will *function* as one when occurring as the dependent in a combinatorial relation or as a post-copular noun phrase. The same is true for all referential elements like full determiner phrases, proper names, clauses, etc., see also 3.4.1.

differences with regard to the assumptions made on the relation between form, meaning and interpretation and on the scope of linguistic variation, and will thus become important in the coming analysis of both the Norwegian Bare Noun and the Norwegian Indefinite Plural. That English Nouns never denote properties is essential for understanding their behaviour as nominal predicates 3.4.1, but most importantly, the independence of generic and existential readings from kind reference is crucial for understanding the Norwegian Indefinite Plural, as the following subsections will show.

3.3.3.3 (Sentential) Interpretations of the Norwegian Indefinite Plural

Norwegian Indefinite Plurals are clearly marked for number, and since they may refer both to a plurality of singular individuals as well as to one or more plural individuals they must, like the English Plural, encompass both atomised and unatomised number. If number was the only parameter involved in deciding the interpretational range of the Norwegian Indefinite Plural, one would have expected that the Norwegian Indefinite Plural could refer to kinds just like the English Plural. In this section, I propose that the reason why the Norwegian sign cannot attain this interpretation is that it is a true indefinite and not just neutral with regard to the definiteness category.

Though this is never stated explicitly, Bouchard's analysis of the English plural is dependent on the fact that it is truly bare, i.e. unmarked or neutral with regard to definiteness (and other morphosemantic categories). Even if the English plural is not *prima facie* a definite, it is nevertheless not incompatible – just undefined – with regard to definiteness. Consequently nothing prevents it from attaining maximal reference, and, thus, true kind-readings, if context allows – or demands – it. If the Norwegian Indefinite Plural on the other hand is a true indefinite, maximal reference will necessarily be inaccessible together with the availability of the kind reading since indefiniteness indicates lack of recoverability, and thus consequently also reference to maximal entities, while kinds necessarily are recoverable. In fact, and as a result of its indefiniteness value, the Norwegian Indefinite Plural has the capacity to refer to all potential sets of pluralities, except for the superset. If the standard domain of pluralities introduced by Link (1983) in Figure 2 above is fit to describe the domain of interpretation of the English Plural, the indefiniteness feature on the Norwegian Indefinite Plural will narrow its domain of interpretation down accordingly, and prevent access to the kind seen as a whole. Both the unavailability of kind-readings and the use of Norwegian Indefinite Plurals as subjects for generic properties follow naturally.

Although Bouchard never explicitly discusses combinations of quantificational and taxonomic predicates with English (bare) Plurals, they nevertheless find their natural place in his system. Both quantificational and taxonomic predicates may be seen as applying to one or several entities that are pluralities, and differ from true kind-predicates in that they apply to subgroups, i.e. to one or several (specific) sets other than the superset, represented in the middle line of Figure 2. The different pluralities making up a kind may be arranged in many ways; taxonomic kinds are typically restricted by common properties – which explains the felicitousness of modified Norwegian Indefinite Plurals – while subjects combining with quantificational predicates are restricted by their location in (temporal) space. They have in common that their predicates do not affect the (super-) kind seen as a whole.

Reference to the top-set, and thus kinds, may of course also be attained by other forms than truly bare plurals. In English, definite singulars are often used for kind reference while plural definites are more rare in such contexts. In French and Norwegian, plural and singular definites are the canonical way to refer to kinds. This is the subject of the next subsection.

3.3.3.4 Reference to kinds in Norwegian

To obtain a true kind reading of its subject, Norwegian typically uses a definite – either singular or plural – form, as shown in (21) and (22).

- (21) a. **Elgen** står i fare for å bli utryddet.
The elk is in danger of extinction.
b. **Elgene** står i fare for å bli utryddet.
The elks are in danger of extinction.
- (22) a. **Lyspæra** ble oppfunnet av Edison.
The light bulb was invented by Edison.
b. **Lyspærene** ble oppfunnet av Edison.
The light bulbs were invented by Edison.

The use of singular and plural definite forms for kind reference is well known from French.

- (23) a. **[L]e saumon** est en voie d'extinction. (www)
The salmon is on the verge of extinction.
b. **Les baleines et les veaux de mer** sont en voie d'extinction. (www)
The whales and the sea cows are on the verge of extinction.

In English, definite singulars may receive kind-interpretations, but this reading is generally less frequent for the definite plural.

- (24) a. **The tiger** is on the verge of extinction.
b. (%) **The tigers** are on the verge of extinction

Though the readings of different kind denoting subjects resemble each other closely, the differences in their value are, by closer scrutiny, also reflected in their interpretational range. A distinction between singular and plural kinds is seen in that the former, but not the latter, is infelicitous when applied to nouns denoting super-kinds with high positions in a hierarchy of sub-kinds, as in (25).

- (25) a. **Dinosaurene/?#Dinosauren** er utryddet.
The dinosaurs/the dinosaur is/are extinct.
b. **Hvalene/?#Hvalen** er utrydningstruet.
The whales/the whale is/are threatened by extinction.
c. **Pattedyrene/?#Pattedyret** er utrydningstruet.
The mammals/The mammal is threatened by extinction.

The same contrast is seen in that plural, but not singular, definite kinds may access sub kinds:

- (26) a. **Dinosaurene**, både tyrannosaurus rex, velociraptor etc, er utryddet (alle som en).
The dinosaurs, both tyrannosaurus rex, velociraptor etc, are all extinct.
b. ***Dinosauren**, både tyrannosaurus rex, velociraptor etc, er utrydningstruet.
The dinosaur, both tyrannosaurus rex, velociraptor etc, are all extinct.

Interpretations of definite subjects with non-episodic predicates are not restricted to true kind-readings. Like French, Norwegian may use its definite forms with both generics and quantificational properties:

- (27) a. **Elgen** er drøvtygger. (www)
The elk is a ruminant.
b. **Elgene** er drøvtyggere.
(The) elks are ruminants.
c. **Elgen** er sjelden på våre kanter av landet (...) (www)
The elk is rare in our parts of the country.
d. **Elgene** er vanlig(e).
The elks are common.

The use of definite forms for kind reference, genericity and quantificational properties is known from many languages, and has been intensively studied for e.g. French. As we have seen, kind-readings are achieved through reference to the superset – an ideal comprising all possible entities in present, past and future that fulfil the requirements of the denotation of the noun – seen as a whole. The fact that this superset may be referred to by means of definite forms follows from its maximal and unique character, which we have seen are subsumed under the broader concept of identifiability.

Kleiber (1990) gives the following explanation of the difference between kinds and generics introduced by the French definite forms *le* (singular) and *les* (plural). When *le* is used, the reference is mass-like and the members of the class are conceived as homogenous. When *les* heads a generic, the same kind is represented from a heterogeneous aspect. A similar idea is expressed by Dayal (2004) stating that “singular kind terms, while semantically plural, are grammatically atomic.” This fits the Norwegian data presented above well and falls out naturally from the difference in the referential scope of singular and plural definites in Figure 2.

If the singular kind is indeed conceived as homogenous, the distinction in (25) and (26), which showed that Norwegian definite singulars and plurals diverged in their ability to access sub-kinds, is expected since the dinosaur and whale (super)- kinds, by most, are perceived as far too diverse to count as one homogeneous species. English singular versions of (25)a and (25)b are nevertheless often seen without question marks in the literature (see e.g. Dayal 2004), and judgments on these seem to vary among speakers of English. Most people nevertheless perceive the difference in (25)c with mammals – a, from our anthropocentric viewpoint, extremely heterogeneous super-kind.

The Norwegian data presented above thus accord with Kleiber's description of French, which provides clear criteria for distinguishing the semantics of singular and plural definites with kind-interpretations.

The homogenous kind-reading of definite singulars, I propose, is attained by making reference to the idealised kind directly via the set on the top-line of Figure 2, while the heterogeneous reading found with plural kinds, encompasses the whole figure. The distinction between kind-readings from definite plurals like in French and Norwegian and a bare plural as in English comes from the fact that the former necessarily includes all sub-kinds making up the kind, while the bare plural also may make reference to non-maximal subsets.

Kind reference may thus, just like generics, be obtained through a variety of forms as long as they are not incompatible with maximal or unique reference. However, even though different forms with different grammatical meanings may refer to the same entity, and thus receive quite similar interpretations, there will always be detectable meaning differences between them.

While the relationship between a form and its value – or invariant meaning – by Saussurean arbitrariness necessarily is one-to-one, the relationship between meanings and interpretations, which is context dependent, may be one-to-many or many-to-one, recall 2.3.1. French almost exclusively uses its definite forms in the contexts presented in this section, and reserves their explicit indefinites for generalisations made over pluralities of pluralities (see e.g. data and discussion in Dobrovie-Sorin 2009). This may, just like the fact that English rarely uses its definite plural for generics – Farkas and de Swart (2007) show they are not ungrammatical, as is often claimed – be explained by matters of convention. The fact that similar readings are fully available from the less complex bare plural in English most certainly plays a role in the rarer use of plural definites for this interpretation in this particular language. In French, the plural indefinite determiner *des* has evolved from a partitive construction consisting of the preposition *de* and the definite determiner *les*. While it may be argued that this complexity is lost in modern French *des*, it is nevertheless not to be unexpected that traces of its origin still may be detectable in its conventionalised usage.

3.3.3.5 Summary - kinds

Norwegian clearly makes a distinction between subjects of predicates that are true of a kind as a whole, but not of its individual (kinds), predicates that apply to plural entities other than the superset (taxonomic and quantificational predicates), and the subjects of predicates that (also) apply to each individual one by one (generics). The two latter, but not the former, may be referred to by a bare Norwegian Indefinite Plural. In Bouchard's system, this indicates that the Norwegian Indefinite Plural has the capacity to refer both to singular entities as well as to all potential sets of pluralities – except for the superset. In addition to the two definite forms, also the Norwegian Bare Noun may be used with kind, generic and quantificational readings. We will therefore return to questions pertaining to kind and generic reference in 3.4.2 and 3.4.3.

3.3.4 Non-definite plurals in Danish and Swedish

Norwegian, Swedish and Danish are closely related both in their lexicon, morphology and syntax, and speakers of the three languages generally understand each other. There

are nevertheless also remarkable differences between the three languages. Regarding the nominal inflection system, the three languages seem parallel. Most importantly, and as shown in Table 2, they all have four distinct noun forms as well as singular indefinite articles. The definite suffixes distinguish Scandinavian from the rest of the Germanic languages, while the existence of the indefinite article again distinguishes Mainland Scandinavian from Icelandic, which also diverges in still having an elaborate case system.

TABLE 2: NOUN FORMS IN MAINLAND SCANDINAVIAN

Danish:	(En) elg	elg-en	elg-e	elg-ene
Norwegian:	(En) elg	elg-en	elg-er	elg-ene
Swedish:	(En) älg	älg-en	älg-ar	älg-arna

Despite the parallelism in Table 2, Danish differs from Norwegian and Swedish in that it lacks the double definiteness constructions that is compulsory in its two neighbouring languages – confer the parallel data of Danish and Swedish in (28); see also (7) and (9) for Norwegian.

- (28) a. Elge (Danish)
 Älgar (Swedish)
 Elks
- b. Elgene (Da)
 Älgarna (Sw)
 The elks
- c. De elge/*elgene (Da)
 Dom *älgar/älgarna (Sw)
 Those elks
- d. De sultne elge/*elgene (Da)
 Dom hungriga *älgar/älgarna (Sw)
 The hungry elks
- e. (Nogle) sultne elge (Da)
 (Nogra) hungriga älgar (Sw)
 (Some) hungry elks

This indicates that in Danish, unlike what seems to be the case in Swedish and Norwegian, there is no featural or conceptual clash preventing ordinary agreement between the proposed plural demonstrative and the bare plural noun. I take the fact that the Danish Plurals are readily compatible with demonstratives as an indication that they are neutral with regard to indefiniteness and not truly indefinite like the Norwegian one.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ The interaction between demonstratives and definiteness in Norwegian is discussed in 5.3.1.3.

If this is so, we predict that Danish plurals can receive kind reference. As shown in (29) this prediction is borne out by the facts.

- (29) a. **Elge** er truet av udryddelse. (Danish)
 b. **#Elger** er truet av utryddelse. (Norwegian)
 c. **#Älgar** är hotade. (Swedish)
 Elks are threatened (by extinction)

The data in (30) furthermore strongly suggests that the Danish Non-definite Plural, unlike its Swedish and Norwegian relatives, is unmarked with regard to definiteness rather than truly indefinite, on a par with the English Plural.

- (30) Således indledte **professorer** Jensen og Winsløw deres hudfletning af vores nuværende læreruddannelse (...). (www)
 Thus opened professors Jensen and Winsløw their criticism of our current teacher.education

The Danish and English bare plurals thus differ from their Norwegian counterpart at three specific points, which are associated with identifiability and definiteness; they readily combine with demonstratives, they may achieve kind-reference and they function as titles in appositive combinations with proper names.

3.3.5 Summary: Norwegian Indefinite Plurals

The rare distinction between kinds and generics exhibited by the Norwegian Indefinite Plural is natural for a sign that marks number like English Plurals, but at the same time also encodes (in)definiteness. Also the fact that Norwegian Indefinite Plurals cannot serve as title modifiers follows from my analysis in which indefiniteness is part of the Norwegian Indefinite Plurals inherent grammatical meaning. The proposal has the implication that there is a difference between simple absence of definiteness marking and true indefiniteness, i.e. that indefiniteness is considered an independent value so that nouns may be marked either as definites or as indefinites, or just simply be unmarked with regard to this category.

The Norwegian data, and the hypothesis put forward above, thus support Bouchard's understanding of English bare plural noun phrases while at the same time expanding it by introducing the effects of the interaction of (in)definiteness and number.

3.4 The Norwegian Bare Noun

The Norwegian Bare Noun is omnipresent, and distinct from French Nouns and English Singulars because of its ability to receive count readings in argument positions without the presence of a determiner, in addition to functioning as a bare nominal predicate and receiving mass-readings. Norwegian Bare Nouns are generally bad agents, but may otherwise occupy all nominal syntactic functions, and function in all kinds of semantic roles. Though the Norwegian Bare Noun may serve all syntactic functions, they are most productive and abundant as objects where they can follow all transitive verbs (and prepositions) that combine with the other noun forms, and they are often the canonical choice for roles pertaining to possession, instrument or result.

- (31) a. Dette er andre gang på seks år vi har **elg** i hagen.
This is (the) second time in six years (that) we have (an) elk in the garden.
- b. Jeg kjørte/tok **bil** til jobb i dag.
I drove/took (the) car to work today.
- c. Mor strikker **genser** og smører **matpakke**.
Mother is knitting (a) sweater and buttering (a) lunch-pack.

Borthen (2003), who provides the most thorough investigation of countable Norwegian Bare Nouns in argument positions, as in (31), concludes that the most striking interpretational characteristic of Norwegian Bare Nouns is that they typically emphasise *type* rather than *token*. I find this description very lucid, and I will therefore adopt and develop it further in what follows.

Borthen delimits her object of investigation by defining a bare singular as a “nominal constituent that is countable, singular, and indefinite, and that doesn't have a phonetically realised determiner” (2003:10). After having argued for this delimitation, she goes on to present uses of Norwegian Bare Nouns without determiners that do not conform to this definition because they cannot be regarded as either countable, singular or indefinite and which therefore fall outside of the scope of her analysis. While Borthen's investigation thus is concerned only with one particular use of the Norwegian Bare Nouns, I will attempt the opposite approach and look at a great variety of uses for the same item and try to identify its invariant value by abstracting away from context (both intra- and extra-linguistic), and retain only what is common to all its uses. This is in line with the Bouchardian Neo-saussurean framework of this thesis since as we have seen in Chapter 2 the arbitrariness of the sign necessarily excludes both polysemy and synonymy, and there should thus be no differences in semantics without corresponding morphological differences.

With this in mind, I explore the possibility that the data excluded by Borthen should be understood not as deviant in meaning, but rather as interpretational differences of one and the same value. I will therefore take these 'exceptions' seriously when I challenge the idea that Norwegian Bare Nouns have countability, singularity and indefiniteness as part of their grammatical value, and instead propose that the Norwegian Bare Noun is better defined as being unmarked for number and definiteness, or as being marked for general number in Corbett's (2000) terms. For a thorough presentation of

(lone) Norwegian Bare Nouns receiving singular indefinite interpretations, the reader is referred to Borthen's study, which includes an impressive amount of data.

Bouchard (2002) explains most differences in the nominal domain of French and English by exploring the idea that number is semantically encoded on the determiner in the former and on the noun in the latter – recall Figure 1, section 3.3.3.2 – which he takes to motivate (i) the use of lone argumental determiners (i.e. pronominal clitics) and predicative bare nouns in French and (ii) the wider use of bare argumental noun phrases in English, as well as (iii) the variation in adjectival modification between the two languages. While Norwegian Adjectives are preposed like in English, the language also exhibits all the properties in (i) and (ii). In the following investigation of the Norwegian Bare Noun, I hope to relate all of this to its non-commitment to number.

The first two parts deal with distributional and interpretational properties of the Norwegian Bare Noun that are especially suitable for comparison with French and English since they have parallels in either of the two languages, but – crucially – never in both, while 3.4.3 discusses Norwegian data that are more idiosyncratic. Section 3.4.3.1 clarifies its affinity to number and definiteness, 3.4.3.2 presents my view of the Norwegian Bare Noun as bearing general number while 3.4.3.3 and 3.4.3.4 discuss general number features and agreement.

3.4.1 Norwegian and French – Nominal predication (and lone determiners)

Whereas the suffixed Norwegian noun forms always seem to supply values for both number and (in)definiteness, and only occasionally combine with preposed determiners, the Bare Noun systematically combines with the indefinite article when the features singularity and indefiniteness are salient. The Norwegian indefinite article is further distinct from the English one in that it is clearly marked for number as well as for definiteness, a property that, in accordance with Bouchard's proposal, enables it to function as a lone argument. This is illustrated in (32).⁶⁷

- (32) a. Jeg tok **en/ei/et**.
I took a (masculine/feminine/neuter one).
b. Jeg tok **en stor/den store**.
I took a/the big (one).

Similar properties are found with French articles (Bouchard (2002: 219-264):

- (33) a. J'en ai pris **un**/je l'ai pris.
I (of them) took a (masculine one)/I took the (masculine one)
b. J'ai pris **un/le rouge**.
I took a/the red (one).

As can be seen by the translations above this function is not available for English articles, which require the support of the nominal element *one/ones* bearing number in such situations. In this respect, it is interesting to notice that in Norwegian as well as in French

⁶⁷ The indefinite article/pronoun-series *en, ei, et* are discussed in 4.3.1. Adjectives without noun-constructions, as in (32)b and (33)b, are discussed in 3.9.2.

where the bare nouns are not marked as singular, the indefinite article is identical to the numeral for *one*, while in English, the indefinite article is a different form *a*, possibly an indication that it no longer manifests singularity, this feature obligatory being present on the noun anyway.

The existence of four elements – the three suffixes and the indefinite article – each supplying different values for number and (in)definiteness, and all combining with the Bare Noun, is a first indication that the truly bare Norwegian noun itself does not carry a specific number value, and thus (consequently) not one for indefiniteness either.

The similarity between Norwegian and French is also seen in that even if nouns typically serve to denote referents, one of the canonical functions of bare nouns in these two languages is to serve as nominal predicates in copula constructions.⁶⁸ Such constructions express a categorisation of the subject into the class/kind that makes up the extension of the noun. As seen in (34), such constructions are not limited to human subjects in combination with a restricted set of predicates:

- (34) a. Jeg er **lingvist**.
'I am (a) linguist'
b. Dersom man er **elg** og blir kjørt på av et tog, blir man som oftest drept. (www)
'If you're (an) elk and get hit by a train, you normally get killed.'
c. Det gamle postbygget midt i Bergen sentrum blir **kjøpesenter**. (www).
'The old postal building in the center of Bergen becomes (a) mall.'

I have already proposed (Halmøy 2001, 2002) that the bare noun in such contexts is devoid of its referential properties, and that such copular constructions express a predicational relation where the cluster of properties making up the nouns intention (its characteristic function) are predicated over the subject, and thus, that the categorisation is obtained inferentially. If an entity possesses the (contextually relevant) defining properties of a kind or category, it belongs to that category. Humans like to categorise, and see themselves as especially versatile, which may be why these constructions tend to have predicates evoking human categories combined with human subjects:

- (35) Jeg er **syklist**. Og jeg er **ektemann** og **far** og **sønn** og **arbeidstaker**. Og **huseier**. Og en mengde andre ting. Man er så mangt. (Loe 2004: 24)
I am (a) biker. And I am (a) husband, and (a) father, and (a) son and (an) employee. And (a) house.owner. And a bunch of other things. One is so many things.

Similar constructions are also found in French – the example in (36)a is the published translation of (35):

⁶⁸ This section is based on Halmøy (2001, 2002); for a more thorough treatment of data and on the difference between categorising, characterising and identifying readings the reader is referred to discussions and references there. For Romance languages, Peteghem (1991) is a particularly good reference. While these works are written within a generative (minimalist) theory, the intuitions and foundations of the analysis are directly transferable to the present Neo-saussurean approach.

- (36) a. Je suis **cycliste**. Et je suis **époux, père, fils, salarié. Propriétaire d'une maison**. Et je suis un chapelet d'autres choses aussi. On est tant de choses. (Loe 2006b, 31)
- b. Je vais devenir **fontaine, fontaine de larmes, fontaine de sang (...)** (Pancol 2006, 11)
I will become (a) fountain, (a) fountain of tears, (a) fountain of blood...
- c. Comment Le Louvre est devenu **musée** ? C'est le 10 août 1793...(www)
How the Louver did become (a) museum? It is August 10, 1793...

In both Norwegian and French, the classifying reading of bare predicative nouns contrasts with that of referential nominal predicates introduced by articles or containing other referential items. When the nominal predicate is referential, the copular construction no longer expresses predication of (a cluster of) properties over an entity, but rather an equation between two entities. With a singular indefinite predicative, we notice a well known ambiguity; when the reference is non-specific, as in (37)b, the equation evoked is between the subject and an unknown, prototypical butcher, giving rise to a characterising (metaphoric) interpretation, while a specific predicate (37)c – with the reference known to the speaker, but not to the listener – expresses an act of identification.

- (37) a. Han er **slakter**.
Il est **boucher**. (categorising)
He is (a) butcher.
- b. Han/det er **en slakter**.
C'est **un boucher**. (characterising)
He is a butcher.
- c. Han/det er **en slakter** (i nabolaget).
C'est **un boucher** (du quartier). (identifying)
He/that is a butcher.

The difference between the three interpretations – categorising, characterising and identifying – are easily distinguished as prototypical answers to different questions. The categorising reading of the true predicative answers questions like *what does he do/what is his occupation*, while the characterising and identifying readings are typical answers to *what is he like* and *who is that/he* respectively.

The contrast between a categorising and a characterising reading in relation to absence versus presence of the indefinite article is also found with secondary predicates introduced by the particles *som/comme* in Norwegian and French, respectively:

- (38) a. Han jobber som **slakter**/ Han snakker som **en slakter**.
He works as (a) butcher/He talks as (like) a butcher
- b. Il travaille comme **boucher**/Il parle comme **un boucher**.
He works as (a) butcher/He talks as (like) a butcher

In English, most predicative nouns are preceded by indefinite articles, making them ambiguous between the interpretational shift that in French and Norwegian is expressed

via presence vs. absence of such (39)a.⁶⁹ For the free predicatives, English normally uses a shift in particle (as/like) to obtain the meaning difference witnessed in (39)b, c.

- (39) a. He is ***(a) butcher**. (3 ways ambiguous)
b. He works **as** *(a) butcher.
c. He talks **like** *(a) butcher.

There is nevertheless one context where English allows nominal predicates to be bare, namely when the predicative denotes a uniquely identifiable role or function:

- (40) a. Brother Elk is **chairman of the Native American Cultural Center**. (www)
b. Det er ei eldre kolle som er **leder i flokken**. (www)
It's an older cow-elk that is leader of the herd
c. Il est **président d'Auvidec depuis 1995**. (www)
d. He is president of Auvidec since 1995.

As seen in (40), all three languages may use a bare noun in such contexts. Unique readings of English Singulars are discussed further in the next sub-section.

Identification, in the form of equation, is also present with definite predicatives, where a speaker informs the listener of the shared extension between two known intentions, as in *Clark Kent er Supermann* 'Clark Kent is Superman', *Hun er min beste venn* 'She is my best friend' and *Morgenstjernen er Aftenstjernen* 'The morning star is the evening star'. If the listener necessarily is aware of this coextension the tautology translates into an (insisting) characterisation – *Jon er Jon* 'John is John', *Gutter er gutter* 'boys will be boys' etc. In all cases, the predicative noun phrase denotes an entity, and such identificational and equational predicatives are thus typical examples of referential noun phrases in a non-referential function.

3.4.2 Norwegian vs. English – Uniqueness, intentionality, massiveness

The unique reading of the English bare singular is also found in argument positions where it contrasts with more intentional readings:

- (41) a. She goes to **school** at Harvard Westlake. (www)
b. She goes to **school** at eight o'clock. (www)

In French, equivalents of the sentences in (41), whether unique or intentional in its reading, would take a definite determiner, while Norwegian would use a bare form for the intentional readings (41)a and an explicit definite form for the unique reading in (41)b. This is illustrated in (42):

⁶⁹ In Icelandic, (which still has definite suffixes like in Mainland Scandinavian as well as a rather elaborate case marking system on nouns, but no indefinite article) the barest nominative form is ambiguous in the same way as the English explicit indefinite.

- (42) a. Jeg går på **skole** i Trondheim. (www)
I go to school.M in Trondheim.
b. Jeg går på **skolen** klokka kvart på åtte. (www)
I go to school.M.SG.DEF the clock quarter on eight.
'I leave for school at a quarter to eight '

Norwegian thus sides with French in wanting an explicit definite singular form to express uniqueness in argument position, but with English in that a bare form suffices for intentional interpretations. Norwegian also sides with English in that the barest noun form often receives mass interpretations – a property lacking from the French Noun:

- (43) a. Vi har **elg** i fryseren. (www)
We have elk in the freezer.
b. Vi skal ha **elg** til middag (...). (www)
We're having elk for dinner.

It is also worth noticing that Norwegian, unlike English, generally prefers a definite form for mass-kinds, but as shown below a bare mass noun is good with generic (and quantificational) predicates. Compare (44) with the English examples in (45) taken from Dayal (2004) (her (5a) and (6c, d)):

- (44) a. (...) siden før mennesket oppfant **stålet** /***stål**. (www)
since before man invented steel.N.SG.DEF /steel
b. **Risen** kom til Norge på midten av 1600-tallet (www)
Rice.M.SG.DEF came to Norway in the middle of the 17th century
c. **Vann** er livsviktig for alt levende på jorda. (www)
Water is vital for all life on earth
d. **Gull** er ikke bare sjeldent og meget vakkert...(www)
Gold is not only rare and very beautiful...
- (45) a. Man invented (*the) steel.
b. (*The) water is becoming scarce.
c. (*The) gold is rare.

This is, of course, reminiscent of the behavior of Norwegian Indefinite Plurals.

The Norwegian Bare Nouns thus exhibits both similarities and differences with both English and French at specific points where these two very well studied languages diverge. Before investigating the more idiosyncratic properties of the Norwegian Bare Nouns, I present a short summary and a preliminary understanding of the findings so far while at the same time relating them to Neo-saussurean theory.

With its one-to-one relationship between form and meaning, the use of the sign as the basic linguistic unit requires a sharp distinction between context and background knowledge on the one hand, and the invariant, non-situational meaning of a linguistic item, abstracted away from both linguistic and extra-linguistic context in particular occurrences. The invariant, abstract grammatical meaning of an item – including a sentence – may thus be strongly distinct from all the various *interpretations* the same

item might receive and most cases of polysemy and homonymy may be reduced to interpretational differences, recall 2.3.2. The lack of bare arguments in French is a consequence of the assumed absence of number marking on the French Noun altogether – since lack of number marking is seen as entailing non-referentiality.⁷⁰ At the same time, it is this non-referentiality of the French Noun that allows its bare use as a nominal predicate. The unavailability for this use of the English Singular is, likewise, explained by the fact that the English Noun always is referential since it obligatorily marks number, which in turn is what enables it to function as a full argument.

It has already been argued (Halmøy 2001, Bouchard 2002) that the absence of bare categorising predicatives in English is due to the fact that the English noun is always marked for number, and thus is always referential. As we already saw for kind reference in 3.3.3.2, referential items without contextual restrictions always seek the widest reference possible. For singularities, this translates into uniqueness which explains the contrast between the English predicatives in (39)a and (40)a.

In French and Norwegian, a similar interpretation arises from a non-referential noun. While the equation between a subject and a unique entity, and the assignment of the properties constituting a unique category over a subject differ, they both lead to the same interpretation; the assertion that the subject occupies this unique role or function.

The fact that the English (bare) Singular always receives unique (or mass) interpretations, explains the presence of indefinite articles in English sentences associating a subject with an occupation. The article is necessary to ensure that the equation is made with a non-established, indefinite representative of the category. In English, we thus see how three different interpretations – categorisation, characterisation and identification – arise from the same (complex) value, an indefinite singular. In French and Norwegian, the corresponding signs only receive two of these interpretations – characterisation and identification. This is because the categorising reading in these languages is available from a less complex sign – the truly bare noun – thus reserving the singular indefinite predicatives for the two other readings. The ambiguity of the singular indefinite construction – whether twofold as in Norwegian and French, or threefold as in English – is always resolved by context. In order to understand how Norwegian may show similarities with both English and French at specific points where these two languages diverge, the next section considers some more idiosyncratic properties exhibited by the Norwegian Bare Noun.

3.4.3 Idiosyncratically Norwegian – Type readings

In addition, Norwegian also exhibits idiosyncratic behaviour having no parallel in either of our languages of comparison. As already indicated in (31), Norwegian bare count nouns may, as arguments, receive non-intentional and non-mass interpretations in episodic contexts. Further examples are given below.

- (46) a. Det er første gang at ei dame har skutt **elg** for Halvøya jaktlag. (www)
It is first time that a dame has shot (an) elk for Halvøya hunting-team.

⁷⁰ Both Bouchard and myself are of course aware of the fact that (bare) French Nouns may appear in argument positions under specific circumstances – these may nevertheless all be understood as non-referentials, or shown to get their referentiality set otherwise. A thorough presentation of the conditions allowing determiners to be absent in French is given by Curat (1999), see also Bouchard (2002: 275-297).

- b. Og så er jeg flink til å tegne **elg**, smiler 10-åringen. (www)
I'm also good at drawing elk(s), smiles the ten year old.
- c. Hun opererer med garanti. Enten ser man **elg**, eller så får man pengene tilbake. (Loe 2006: 77)
She operates with guarantee. Either you see (an) elk(s) or you get your money back.

Noun phrases like the direct objects in (31) and (46) are often claimed to be non-referential (see e.g. Borthen 2003, Faarlund et al 1997). However, the direct objects in (31) and (46) all refer to independent extra-linguistic objects just as well as their number marked English translations, and they are thus considered to be grammatically referential under the present understanding of the term, recall the introduction to Chapter 3. A particularly clear display of the Norwegian Bare Noun's referentiality is given in (47):⁷¹

- (47) Her er det **avis** nedi postkassen fra før. (Marstein 2006, 96)
Here, there is (a) newspaper in the mailbox already.

Another sign of the grammatical referentiality of Norwegian Bare Nouns is seen in their ability to introduce discourse referents, as exemplified in (48):

- (48) a. Jeg har fått **sykkel**. **Den** er knallblå. **Den** er en drøm å sykle på (...)
(KK 27/8-09)
I have gotten bike. It is blue. It is a dream to ride.
- b. Jeg har kjøpt meg **bil**. **Den** er grønn. Varmen fungerer (...).(www)
I have bought me car. it is green. the heat is functioning...
- c. [H]ar svake minner fra skole tiden da jeg strikket **skjerf**, **det** ble bare bredere og bredere uansett hva jeg gjorde. (www)
have weak memories from school when I knitted scarf, it only got broader and broader no matter what i did.

Though such uses of Bare Nouns are not understood as non-referential, the sentences in (31) and (46) through (48) are, nevertheless, good examples of Norwegian Bare Nouns being type rather than token focusing. Even if individual elks were targets of the shooting, result of the drawings, themes of the seeing etc., focus is on the type of entity, not on the individual occurrences.

3.4.3.1 Norwegian Bare Nouns, Number and Definiteness

The examples of type readings given in (46) and (47) are all compatible with plural interpretations of the bare Norwegian Bare Noun even though truth conditions in all cases would be satisfied by a singular elk – or newspaper. Examples showing that a lone

⁷¹ Especially, Norwegian Bare Noun objects differ from the non-referential object in the first of the following French examples discussed by Bouchard: (i) *Jean forme écran devant Paul* – John forms a screen in front of Paul, (ii) *Jean forme un écran devant Paul* – John screens/shields Paul. The first sentence, where *écran* is bare, differs from the last determined one "in that the object characterised as a screen by *écran* is not an independent object: Jean must be acting as screen and *écran* has no reference" (Bouchard 2002: 281). While such readings also may be available from the Norwegian Bare Noun, the examples in (46) and (47) clearly refer to independent objects.

Norwegian Bare Noun is acceptable also in contexts that are truly incompatible with singular interpretations are given in (49).

- (49) a. Derfor jaktet mine forfedre på **elg**, og derfor jakter vi på **elg** i dag. (Loe, 2004: 15)
That's why my ancestors hunted elk(s), and that's why we hunt elk(s) today.
- b. Det finnes **elg** i Europa, Asia og Nordamerika. (www)
There are elk(s) in Europe, Asia and North-America.
- c. Jeg har sett **elg** tusenvis av ganger, og jeg har tatt noe sånt som 20.000 elgbilder. (www)
I have seen elk(s) thousands of times, and I've taken around 20 000 elk pictures.

These examples clearly show that Norwegian Bare Nouns cannot be regarded as inherently singular even when in argument position, but rather are neutral with regard to number. The following example may thus just as well represent a situation where there was one horse, four cows and 36 pigs, as one with six horses, a cow and two pigs.

- (50) Laurits Didriksen hadde **hest, ku og gris** her. (www)
Laurits Didriksen had horse, cow and pig here.

Even clearer evidence in favour of singularity not being part of the grammar semantics of the Norwegian Bare Noun is given by (51) where the bare noun *elg* is anaphorically referred to by the plural definite pronoun *dem*.

- (51) Er det **elg** her (...), så garanterer Maj Britt at Gregus finner **dem**. (Loe, 2006: 78)
'If there are/is elk(s) here, Maj Britt guarantees that Gregus will find them.'

It should thus be quite clear that singularity is not a property of the Norwegian Bare Nouns per se, but that it is determined contextually. Furthermore, if the Norwegian Bare Noun is not marked as singular, its dichotomic relation is not with the Norwegian Definite Singular. Rather, it has no dichotomic relation, though there is one between Bare Nouns determined by the indefinite article and the definite singular suffix. This leads us to the Norwegian Bare Noun's status with regard to definiteness.

Firstly, the Norwegian Bare Noun is the canonical form to express singular titles in Norwegian – recall that this function is unavailable for the (truly) Indefinite Norwegian Indefinite Plural, recall example (10) from 3.3.1.⁷²

- (52) **Kosmetikkdronning** Celina Middelfart, **nyhetsanker** Christian Borch, **skuespiller** Aksel Henie, **biskop** Ole Christian Kvarme (...) er på lista over kjendiser i nabokonflikter. (Dagbladet 16/8-06)
Cosmetics queen Celina Middelfart, news anchor Christian Borch, actor Aksel

⁷² Conservative Bokmål uses definite forms with artistic professions and we thus get dichotomies like: *maler Hansen* (painter Hansen, a craftsman), *maleren Hansen* (the painter Hansen, an artist).

Henie, bishop Ole Christian Kvarme (...) are on the list of celebrities in neighbour conflicts.

Again, we see that French uses an explicit definite form in an environment where English and Norwegian get by with a bare one.

- (53) a. **Le Professeur** Trum vous invite a découvrir sa méthodologie. (www)
The professor Trum you invite to discover his methodology.
'Professor Trum invites you to discover his methodology.'
b. Move It & Lose It with **Professor Trim**. (www)

Clear evidence that the Norwegian Bare Noun is not incompatible with concepts closely related to definiteness such as familiarity, maximality and uniqueness, and are used in context where they are intended to be identifiable are given in (54):

- (54) a. Karoline er den eldste, Benedikte er lillesøster. Men **lillesøster** ser eldre ut enn **storesøster**. (Marstein 2006, 38)
Karoline is the oldest, Benedicte is little.sister. But little.sister looks older than big.sister.
b. Nanna er så liten av vekst at han, når han skal kysse henne, på **panne** eller **munn**, må bøye seg kraftig. (Uri 2006, 334)⁷³
Nanna is so small that he, when he wants to kiss her, on forehead or mouth, must bend down heavily.

In addition, while section 3.3.3 showed how the lack of kind-readings for Norwegian Indefinite Plurals could be explained by the fact that the Norwegian Indefinite Plural is inherently indefinite, this reading is available to the Norwegian Bare Noun. In fact, the Bare Noun may receive all major interpretations discussed for the Indefinite Plural – weak indefinites, generics, quantificational and kind.

The characteristic type reading or type focus of the Norwegian Bare Noun is also present in (55)a, which parallels the weak indefinite readings of the Norwegian Indefinite Plural, except that they leave open the slight possibility that there might be only one elk in question, as well as with the subjects of the generic, quantificational and 'true' kind-predicates in (55)b,c and d, respectively.

- (55) a. Vi så **elg** i skogen. (www) (w. indef)
We saw elk in the forest.
b. **Elg** er et stort partået klovdyr. (www) (generic)
Elk is a big two-toed cloven-footed animal.

⁷³ (Unique) reference of bare nouns is cross-linguistically facilitated by conjunction, and related examples are available in many languages including English and French. This does, nevertheless, not speak against my suggestion since bare nouns, in most languages, are neutral with regard to definiteness – there of the term. Such unique readings should nevertheless, coordination or not, not be available for the Norwegian Bare Noun if it was a true indefinite. That such coordinated nominals are endowed with uniqueness conditions are discussed in a minimalist framework by Heycock and Zamparelli (2003).

- c. **Elg** er vanlig i området, mens **hjort** bare er lokalt utbredt. (quant.)
Elk is common in the area, while deer is only locally spread.
- d. **Elg** står i fare for å bli utryddet. (kind)
'Elk(s) is/are in danger of extinction

Combinations of Bare Nouns with kind and generic predicates are less canonical than the definite forms, but are nevertheless quite common – especially in speech, but also in written sources – and their acceptability as kind-subjects by far exceeds that of the Norwegian Indefinite Plural, which of the four main forms of Norwegian Nouns, thus is alone in not combining with kind-predicates. While kind readings are dependent on non-indefinite forms, they are, as we have seen, compatible with both singular and plural forms. The coming sections will, however, show that there are good reasons to believe that the kind and generic readings of Norwegian Bare Nouns are dependent on their possibility of receiving plural interpretations. None of these three readings are, of course, available from the barest nouns in neither French nor English where, to make them acceptable, one would have to add either a definiteness or a number morpheme, or both.

With both singularity and indefiniteness being so evasive in constructions containing a lone Norwegian Bare Noun, one may of course wonder why these features are so commonly used to define this form. One reason may come from its agreement requirements, which will be the subject of section 3.4.3.3. Before that, I present my understanding of the Norwegian Bare Noun as being numberable or, in Corbett's (2000) terminology, as expressing general number.

3.4.3.2 Norwegian Bare Nouns are Numberable

Both the interpretational and the distributional range of the Norwegian Bare Noun surpasses not only all other noun forms treated in this thesis, but in fact also the sum of all of them taken together.

Grønn (2006), who bases his analysis solely on Borthen's (2003) data, proposes a Neo-carlsonian approach to the Norwegian Bare Noun. Like English Plurals, Norwegian Bare Nouns are seen as ambiguous between properties and kinds, which he takes to explain their distribution as nominal predicates and as subjects of kind and generic predicates. As for the type reading of Norwegian Bare Nouns in object position, Grønn, following ideas from Asudeh and Mikkelsen (2000) and Dayal (2003) for Danish and Hindi respectively, makes recourse to the phenomenon of (semantic) incorporation. Grønn thus presents a threefold analysis to account for the dispersed properties of the Norwegian Bare Noun. While it is true that the Norwegian Bare Noun may function both as nominal predicates and receive kind reference, and that lone Bare Noun objects may have interpretational properties in common with incorporated objects in other languages, there are also major differences between the use of bare nouns in Norwegian and languages with object incorporation. Especially, in many languages including Norwegian's close relative Danish, bare argumental objects cannot carry sentential stress.⁷⁴ While obligatory lack of accentuation is often taken as an argument for incorporation analyses, it is not a criterion for Norwegian Bare Nouns in object position, which appear both stressed and unstressed. An incorporation analysis is therefore not

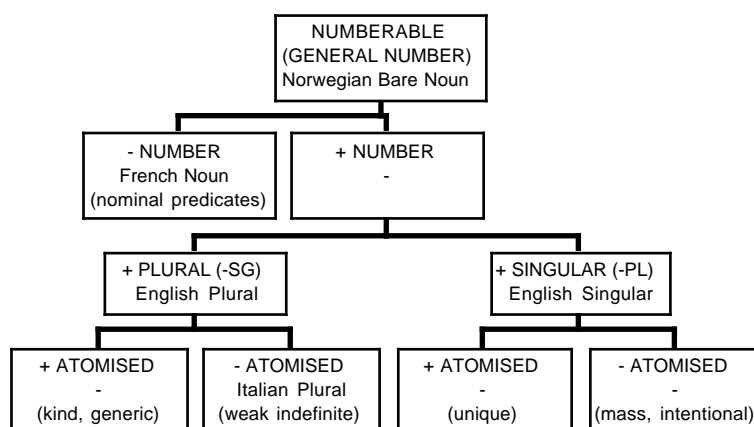
⁷⁴ Nedergaard Thomsen (1991) and Pedersen (2007) discuss object incorporation in Danish.

straightforwardly suited for Norwegian. Although Grønn agrees with the present proposal that Norwegian Bare Nouns are not inherently indefinite, he never considers their plural readings or apparent number neutrality. Grønn thus uses the Norwegian data against Chierchia's (1998) proposal that the down-operator – which turns properties into kinds – should be undefined for singulars. As we will see in 3.4.3.4, there are strong reasons to assume that the kind- and generic readings of Norwegian Bare Nouns in fact are dependent on their receiving a plural, or at least a non-singular – interpretation.

Under the present proposal, the type reading of the Norwegian Bare Noun is naturally explained by its non-commitment to number, to atomisation and to (in)definiteness. There is nevertheless no indication that the relation between the verb and its direct object is anything other than simple transitivity.

Because of its capacity to both receive the non-referential reading required for a nominal predicate and all the referential readings found with English Bare Nouns, the Norwegian Bare Noun would – in order to preserve Bouchard's analysis of French and English – have to be able both to receive and to avoid number interpretations depending on context. This possibility to optionally receive a number interpretation may be represented by adding a new box on top of the chart in Figure 1, as in Figure 3:

FIGURE 3: NUMBER INTERPRETATIONS OF THE NORWEGIAN BARE NOUN



This understanding of the Norwegian Bare Noun is both inspired by and corroborated by Corbett's (2000) notion of general number. In languages with general number, number is, according to Corbett, expressed only when it matters; otherwise the general form is used. This is exactly what we find in Norwegian; when number and/or (in)definiteness values are important or relevant, the bare noun combines with one of its suffixes or with the indefinite article. When on the other hand these values are irrelevant or unambiguously given by context the general form may be used.

Number neutral interpretations in argument position should also be available from the box in Figure 3 marked [+NUMBER]. As Corbett (2000) does not discuss nominal predicates, it is not clear where he hypothetically would have placed his *general number* in my figure. As he nevertheless describes elements marked for general number as being 'outside of the number system', I have entered it on the top box. My term *numberable* –

as in able to bear number - is meant to highlight that elements like the Norwegian Bare Noun also may avoid number interpretations entirely, and is further distinct from numerable – able to be counted – which in this context could be confused with atomisation.

Corbett uses (among other) the Cushitic language Bayso, and the following set of data, as an example of a language exhibiting general number:

- (56) a. **Lúban** foofe (Bayso)
 Lion. GENERAL watched. 1.SG
 literally: 'I watched lion' (it could be one or more than one)
- b. **Lúban-titi** foofe
 Lion-SG watched. 1.SG
 'I watched a lion'
- c. **Lúban-jaa** foofe
 Lion-PAUCAL watched. 1.SG
 'I watched a few lions'
- d. **Lúban-jool** foofe.
 Lion-PL watched. 1.SG
 'I watched (a lot of) lions' (Corbett 2000, p 11)

One obvious similarity between Norwegian and Bayso is that both languages take several suffixes associated with different number values while at the same time having one form which seems totally unrestricted in its number interpretation. I therefore suggest that what differentiates the Norwegian Bare Noun from the French Noun is that, even if it is not obligatorily marked for number, the former can receive, and host, a number interpretation from its linguistic or extra-linguistic context, while the latter always relies on a determiner for number interpretations. In other words, the Norwegian Bare Noun, which is numberable, carries the feature *general number* while the French Noun does not.

3.4.3.3 Norwegian Nouns and Agreement

Contrary to English (and more pronounced than in French), in Norwegian not only nouns and determiners, but also (attributive) adjectives are sensitive to the referential values of the noun phrase that contains them. While (most) nouns come in eight forms, Norwegian adjectives only have three, exemplified here by *stor* 'big':

- (57) a. En **stor** elg
 a.M big.CG elk.M
- b. Ei **stor** kolle
 a.F big.CG cow.F
- c. Et **stort** dyr
 a.N big.N animal.N
- d. **Store** elger/koller – **store** dyr – den **store** elgen – de **store** elgene
 Big elks/cows – big animals – the big elk – the big elks

As seen in (57) the two first forms (ending in \emptyset and $-t$) require indefinite singular contexts, and diverge only in their marking for gender (common vs. neuter), while the

third form (with the ending *-e*) combines with all suffixed forms, as well as with bare nouns that lack separate indefinite plural forms outside of indefinite-singular contexts.⁷⁵ The fact that the latter sign shows compatibility with all three suffixed noun forms has often been seen as an indication of polysemy between a plural and a (singular) definite value. Since polysemy is disallowed by Saussurean arbitrariness (recall 2.3.1), I instead propose, in section 3.9 that while the first two adjective forms in (57) are marked as singular-indefinite in addition to their respective gender value, as is commonly accepted, Norwegian adjectives ending in *-e* display general number. The rest of this section is devoted to showing that the interpretational scope of Norwegian Bare Nouns in agreement contexts incorrectly has been taken to qualify the semantics of the Norwegian Bare Noun as a whole. I propose that in non-predetermined adjective-Bare Noun combinations, it is the adjective and not the noun that induces singularity.

Although Norwegian has three noun suffixes, it is a fact that the majority of neuter nouns – together with a handful of masculine and feminine ones – do not have an indefinite plural form. (All nouns take both the definite suffixes, however.) In such cases, the number interpretation of the noun depends entirely on context and world knowledge.

- (58) a. Flyktingehjelpen bygger **hus** i Sør-Libanon. (www)
The refugee-help builds house in South-Lebanon.
b. Her har jeg bygd meg **hus**, og her bor jeg med min lille chihuahua. (www)
Here I have built myself house , and here I live with my little chihuahua.

Even if the contextual information is quite suggestive, neither in (58)a nor in (58)b is there any way to really be sure whether reference is made to one or several houses.

Since Norwegian adjectives nevertheless always will take on a singular indefinite form when this number value is to be communicated, the interpretation of the whole noun phrase will, when an adjective is present, be restricted accordingly. When a bare noun combines with a modifying adjective, the interpretation is therefore no longer free.

- (59) a. Vi har nettopp bygd **stort hus**, men allikevel ... (www)
we have just built big.N.SG house.N.GN but still...
'We've just built a big house, but still...'
b. De bygger **store hus** og anskaffer store inntekter... (www)
they build big.GN house.N.GN and acquire big incomes.
'They build big houses and acquire large incomes.'

Even if the first direct object in (59)b displays no specific number or definiteness values, it will always be interpreted as a plural indefinite. This is due to the existence of separate singular and plural noun forms, and the singular-indefinite adjective, which are perfect matches for these other combinations of number and definiteness values. The indefinite plural reading of the first noun phrase in (59)b is thus just as much defined negatively by its relation to other signs, as by its own proper value.

Example (60)a,b shows that the bare masculine *hest* 'horse' likewise is undetermined with regard to the singular/plural distinction, and that its reference is unambiguously singular when combined with a singular adjective. Unlike the neuter *hus*

⁷⁵ This section anticipates the results of subchapter 3.9 where adjectives are analysed in and by themselves.

‘house’, which does not combine with the indefinite plural suffix, the masculine *hest* that has a separate indefinite plural form cannot combine with an *-e* adjective (60)c, while this is the only adjectival form that combines with plurals (60)d.

- (60) a. Jeg har **hest** på Ebru islandshestgård :) **Islandshester** er det jeg har der (...).
(www)
I have horse at Ebru iceland.horse.farm :) Icelandic horses is it I have there.
- b. Jeg har **brun hest** og synes da det passer best med svart utstyr. (www)
I have brown horse and think then it fits best with black equipment.
- c. *Vi har **brune hest**.
we have brown-e horse.
- d. Vi har **brune hester** /***brun hester**.
we have brown-e horse.INDEF.PL/ brown horse.INDEF.PL.
'We have brown horses.'

This agreement requirement of the majority of Norwegian Bare Nouns has been taken as support for their intrinsic indefiniteness and singularity, and thus also indirectly for the assumed polysemy of nouns lacking an indefinite plural form.

Instead of projecting the reading of Norwegian Bare Nouns in agreement contexts to account for all its occurrences, I suggest that the only difference between the two types of lexical items resides in their agreement requirements. In other words, the only difference between them is the fact that nouns that do not combine with an indefinite plural suffix also may combine with plural adjectives. That Norwegian Bare Nouns may combine with both plural and singular adjectives is not unexpected, since their non-commitment as to number prevents possible feature clashes. This understanding of Norwegian Bare Noun and adjective combinations is in accordance with the Saussurean axiom that the value of a sign can be limited only negatively by its relation to other signs, recall 2.3.1 and see e.g. Saussure 2002 (70-80).

An interesting effect of the agreement requirements of Norwegian Bare Nouns is that adjectival modification of Bare Nouns combining with true kind-predicates gets the opposite effect of Norwegian Indefinite Plurals, where we saw that adjectival modification improved the grammaticality:

- (61) a. **Tiger** står på randen av utryddelse.
b. ***Hvit tiger** står på randen av utryddelse.
Tiger/White tiger stand on the verge of extinction

Recall from example (20), section 3.3.3.1, that in the plural, the combination with the modifying adjective restricts the indefinite class of tigers to the one consisting of white ones, thus yielding a taxonomic reading. While an unmodified Norwegian Bare Noun may take the widest reference possible and attain the superset of the class denoted by the noun, which we have seen is the locus for kind-interpretations, the combination with the adjective – bearing the features singular-indefinite, and restricting the interpretational domain of the Norwegian Bare Noun accordingly – makes the kind-interpretation unavailable.

The use of the Norwegian Bare Noun as subject for kind and generic predicates is thus dependent on the fact that it appears in a non-agreement context as this property is lost when combined with an Indefinite Singular Adjective. Since Norwegian has no number agreement on finite verbs, kind and generic predicates poses no agreement requirements on their subjects.

3.4.3.4 General Number and Subject-Tense Agreement

The previous subsection suggested that the use of the Norwegian Bare Noun as a subject for kind and generic predicates is dependent on the fact that Norwegian lacks subject-tense agreement on (finite) verbs. The present proposal predicts the possibility of a language having a bare noun form with a value or grammar semantics paralleling that of the Norwegian Bare Noun, but where the kind and generic reading of the bare subject are unavailable because of singular agreement requirements on the verb. This seems to be the case with Albanian where the barest noun form, like in Norwegian, combines with three suffixes – singular definite, plural and plural definite – and takes an indefinite article when indefinite singularity is evoked. Consider the following sentences with a bare Albanian noun phrase:⁷⁶

- (62) a. Unë jam **linguiste**.
"I am a linguist."
b. Ne kemi **dre** në frigorifer.
"We have deer in the fridge"
c. Ne pamë **dre** në pyll.
"We saw deer(s) in the forest"
d. Në pyll ka **dre**.
"There is deer in the forest"
e. ***Dre** është gjitar/ janë gjitarë.
"Deer is mammal/are mammals".
f. ***Dre** është/ janë në zhdukje.
"Deer is/are on the verge of extinction."

The Albanian bare noun may as seen in (62) function as a nominal predicate (a) and receive both mass and number neutral type readings (b, c and d), but may not function as a subject for kind and generic predicates (e, f) this can be explained by the fact that the bare noun requires singular agreement on its finite verb. This agreement prevents the Albanian Bare Noun from getting the kind or generic interpretations which are dependent on plural readings of the subjects.

Despite the similarity between the bare nouns of the two languages, the Albanian non-definite plural parallels the Italian (recall 3.3.3.2) rather than the Norwegian plural in that it only may have a weak indefinite reading, making the definite forms obligatory for both kind and generic plurals (see Vocaj, 2008). Out of four languages marking both number and definiteness on the nouns, we have thus met three different values for the non-definite plural; in Danish it is neutral with regard to definiteness, in Norwegian and

⁷⁶ These data were first presented by Vocaj and me at the ABLT/BWTL X, Queens University, Kingston, Ontario, November 2006, see also Vocaj (2008).

Swedish it is indefinite but can be both atomised and unatomised, while in Albanian it may only be unatomised.⁷⁷

My proposal that the Norwegian Bare Noun is marked for general number, or is numberable, has the advantage that it does so without altering the kind canon. One of the predictions made by Chierchia (1998, see also Dayal (2004), Deprez (2005)), is that no language should form plural kind terms with the definite determiner while allowing singular kind terms to be bare – 'English in reverse' – since the down operator ' \cap ', which turns properties into kinds, is assumed to be defined only for plural properties. The Norwegian data do not contradict this prediction since neither singularity nor indefiniteness should be part of the description of the grammatical properties of the Norwegian Bare Noun.

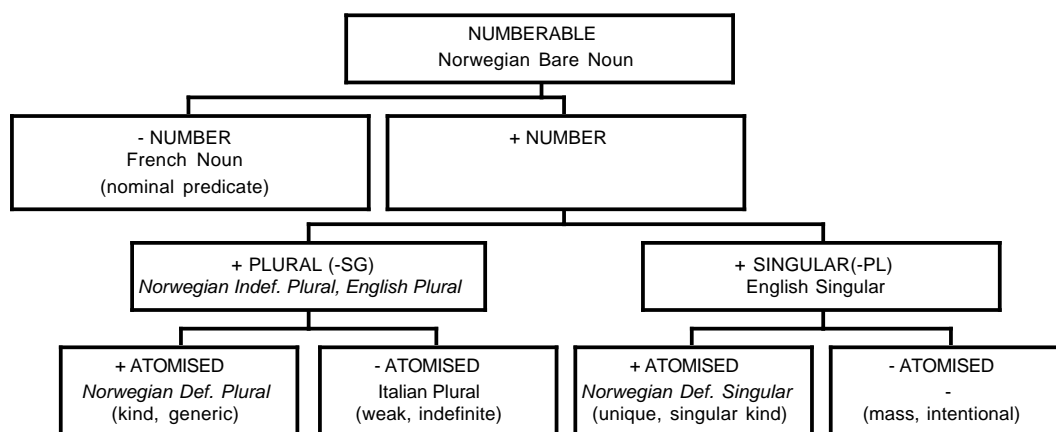
⁷⁷ Also Kallulli (1999) discusses the similarities between Albanian and Scandinavian, but she does not explore either number neutrality or the difference between the two languages with regard to subject/tense agreement.

3.5 Value and Interpretations of Norwegian Nouns

As we have already seen several examples of, not only the meaning of the sign or lexeme in question, but also its paradigmatic relationship with other signs must be taken into consideration in order to explain a sign's distributional and interpretational properties.

In order to fully understand the interpretational and distributional range of the different Norwegian Nouns we therefore need to consider them all together. These differ from the two non-definite signs in that they always evoke both number and definiteness, and occupy the + atomised singular and plural boxes on the number chart, see Figure 4. The relationship between the Norwegian indefinite and definite plurals, as well as its importance for the discussion on kind reference and genericity was covered in section 3.3.3: The following thus concentrates on the relationship between the Norwegian Bare Noun and the three suffixed forms. In Figure 4, the latter are set in italics to remind us that they also carry obligations and restrictions with regard to their definiteness value in addition to their semantics pertaining to number, which is depicted in the chart.

FIGURE 4: NORWEGIAN NOUNS: NUMBER VALUE AND INTERPRETATIONAL RANGE



With the addition of the definite forms, the chart in Figure 4 may account not only for the breadth, but also for the limitations, of the Norwegian Bare Noun's distributional and interpretational properties. Recall from section 3.4.2, that in English, a bare singular is ambiguous between what I called an intentional and a unique reading, (41), while Norwegian uses different values for these readings as was shown in (42), repeated here as (63):

- (63) a. Jeg går på **skole** i Trondheim.
I go to school in Trondheim.
- b. Jeg går på **skolen** klokka kvart på åtte.
I go to school.M.SG.DEF the clock quarter on eight
'I leave for school at a quarter to eight'

As indicated in Figure 4, I relate this ambiguity of the bare English Singular to its +/-atomisation option. Like mass nouns, intentional readings may be said to refer to "an object having the property of the N, but not instantiated in an individual" (Bouchard 2002: 305). Figure 4 thus also indicates why Norwegian prefers its definite singular form for the unique reading implying atomisation. Since the Norwegian Definite Singular necessarily implies both atomisation and uniqueness, it will, in such contexts, always be the better candidate over the Norwegian Bare Noun, which is vague with regard to both these features. At the same time, the more abstract Bare Noun is the only available candidate for the intentional non-atomised reading. That one, though quite rarely, nevertheless may encounter uses of bare nouns referring to extensional and uniquely recoverable token or entities, like in examples (54), could be explained by the fact that lexemes like *søster* 'sister', *mun* 'mouth' and *panne* 'forehead' do not evoke their intentional reading as readily as *skole* 'school' does, and confusion is less likely to occur. While the examples in (54) tend towards a literary style, removing the definiteness suffix in (63)b, or adding it in (63)a would give the utterance an L2-learner's flair.

By the same line of reasoning, also the fact that Norwegian uses the definite – and English the bare – singular with mass-kinds (recall examples (44) and (45)) falls out naturally from the present proposal and the respective placement of the Norwegian Bare Noun and the Norwegian Definite Singular in the chart in Figure 4. Just as plural kinds depend on maximal reference, the referentiality of their singular counterparts – mass-kinds – is (maximally) unique. The English singular encompasses both atomic and non-atomic instantiations, which explains why it may be interpreted both as instantiating the mass kind as a whole, as well as indefinite portions of it. In Norwegian on the other hand, even if the Norwegian Bare Noun is not incompatible with uniqueness per se, the specific definiteness value of the Norwegian Definite Nouns/Singulars will be preferred for kind reference.

The wide distributional and interpretational range of the truly bare Norwegian noun is thus achieved from its position on top of Figure 4 – potentially giving interpretational access to all the meanings below it – while at the same time being restricted by the existence of the indefinite article and the three suffixed forms. That signs with more specified meanings are the natural choice over the Norwegian Bare Noun, when these meanings are salient, or just naturally present, in the intended interpretation, should not be unexpected. That this again gives an interpretational or stylistic flavour to expressions where the speaker nevertheless chooses a Bare Noun over one of the determined forms is likewise natural.⁷⁸ A Norwegian Bare Noun will therefore never be the first choice for expressions where plurality (either atomised or not) is salient in the information, nor to atomised singularities since such meanings generally are better covered by other forms. For non-referential meanings and unatomised singularities, there is, on the other hand, no better candidate available, and the bare noun is therefore the canonical form for expressing categorising nominal predicates as well as mass and intentional reference in Norwegian.

⁷⁸ In expressions where Bare Nouns are the canonical choice, we of course see the opposite effect. This is the case with characterising predicatives (recall 3.2.1), and can also be seen from the following effect of introducing an indefinite article in (31)b, p74, as in *Jeg tok en bil til jobben i dag* 'I took a taxi to work to day' (literally 'I took a car').

The distribution and interpretation of the Norwegian Bare Noun thus does not only, or even primarily, depend on its own proper value, but just as much on the existence and values of the other elements it competes with, and had these been non-existent, fewer or comprising other features, its use would change accordingly. A hypothetical sign with the same semantics as the Norwegian Bare Noun but without any of the Norwegian tools available for specifying number and definiteness values, would encompass the whole meaning range expressed by the five Norwegian forms and rely on context and world knowledge to help choose between them. In addition to the existence and nature of other nominal signs (including adjectives and determiners), we have also seen that grammatical properties lying outside of the nominal system, like the lack of both subject-tense agreement, and progressive tense, influence the behaviour of bare nouns in Norwegian. This is all as expected under Saussurean arbitrariness, where signs necessarily are defined negatively through their co-existence with other signs.

Before concluding this part on Norwegian Nouns, the next section presents some remarks and speculations on linguistic variation.

3.6 Some remarks and speculations on variation.

In a language having grammaticalised other features in their nominal system in addition to or instead of those present in Norwegian, a form with the same grammar semantics as the Norwegian Bare Noun would have to relate to these accordingly. Number neutrality, or the concept of general number, in fact, seems quite common cross-linguistically, and has, just to mention a few references directly pertaining to the discussion on kinds and generics that has been important for the present investigation, been proposed for among others Haitian Creole and Brazilian Portuguese by Deprez (2005) and Munn and Schmitt (2005) respectively. That these languages diverge strongly in the distributional and interpretational scope of the signs being assumed (or shown) to carry such a feature is but a natural consequence both of the otherwise diverging inventory of the languages, and of the fact that the less specific the proper value of a sign is, the more its usage will depend on the value of the signs it competes with.

As a consequence of the wide possibilities for variation assumed by the Neo-saussurean framework, the present work in no way aspires to account for or predict the behaviour of bare nouns in (most or all other) languages. For the same reasons and since no languages are predicted to be identical, in the neo-saussurean framework no analysis can be dismissed just by pointing to a language that behaves differently without having checked all possible sources for this difference. In fact, in one of the reviews of Bouchard's (2002) book, Åfarli (2004) uses Norwegian, and the fact that it has both nominal predicates and mass readings, to argue against Bouchard's proposal. I nevertheless hope to have shown in my analysis that the Norwegian data, and the assumption that the Norwegian Bare Noun bears general number, on the contrary, provides strong support for the Neo-saussurean framework.

The numerous factors involved in understanding the behaviour of Norwegian Bare Nouns further suggest that in-depth investigations can only be performed by someone with profound competence on the language under scrutiny. In the following, I will therefore just sketch some suggestions on possible paths to follow for two other relatives of Norwegian, namely German and Dutch, and present a few speculations concerning the three main languages of the investigation.

German and Dutch exhibit both similarities and differences in the interpretational properties of their bare nouns compared with English and French. For German, case marking constitutes a third parameter to be taken into consideration, in addition to examining its peculiarities with regard to marking and values for number and definiteness. Even if case markings primarily serve to identify the relations between a verb and its actants, the mere fact that it appears in the noun phrase suggests that it has consequences for the signs that either host or depend on them. A quick look at German shows that determiners are highly involved in case markings and distinguish case more clearly than nouns, a fact that should be taken into account when investigating the distribution of German nouns.

German and Dutch also both allow bare nominal predicates, but at least for Dutch their distribution is more restricted than in Norwegian, and is really just restricted to a small class of nouns (see de Swart et al., 2007). One possible explanation for this relates

to the category of gender. All languages mentioned so far, except for English, still display grammatical gender distinctions in their nominal system.⁷⁹

The speculation I will suggest for the restricted distribution of bare nominal predicates in Dutch is that this can be due to a progressive gender loss having the consequence of obligatory number marking on the bare noun. Since all signs must have a grammatical value – a functional meaning stating what features or properties it contributes in combination with other signs – it is expected that nouns that do not obligatorily mark for gender should feature some other grammatical category—in the present case, number. This has already taken place in Afrikaans, where the loss of gender has resulted in the loss of (obligatory) bare nominal predicates with nouns denoting professions, just like in English (Donaldson 1993: 65-66). As we saw in 3.4.1, bare nominal predicates are not possible in English because English nouns are marked for number. Another possible indication that Dutch, like Afrikaans, is heading in the direction of English may be found in the fact that the definite article only distinguishes neuter singular (*het*) from both feminine and masculine singular and plural (*de*), making the latter resemble English *the* in being unmarked for number. If this is indeed what is happening also in Dutch, it is only expected that the most canonical uses like categorisation in terms of occupation, religion, political belongings, etc. would be the last to disappear. That there is a relationship between obligatory number marking and absence or loss of gender is further suggested by the fact that in Norwegian (and many other languages) all gender distinctions disappear in the plural.

In French and Norwegian, singular and plural number features – whether in the form of articles or suffixes – combine with a form that is undefined with regard to number, whereas the 'plural' suffix in English attaches to a sign that under the present proposal is regarded as inherently singular. This might suggest a difference in the value of the singular and plural features between the languages. In French and Norwegian, singular seems to indicate one, and plural two or more, whereas in English 'plural' could actually be indicating absence of singular – this intuition is corroborated by English expressions like *one and a half days* and *0,5 apples* (from Corbett 2000: 20).

This shows that languages and their grammars do indeed vary both with regard to what categories they grammaticalise, the way they do it, and with regard to the exact value of the features chosen to instantiate this grammaticalisation, just like expected under Saussurean arbitrariness.

⁷⁹ In English, gender distinctions on nouns, like in actor/actress, are clearly lexical and pose no interphrasal agreement requirements.

3.7 A note on grammar and ontology

Before closing this section on Norwegian Nouns, a few words should be said about the relationship between grammar and ontology. It is a prevalent and long standing tradition both in descriptive and theoretical literature (on languages like Norwegian) to separate the category of Nouns into a typology of lexically based subclasses. The main division of such classifications is generally drawn between proper names and common nouns, with the latter group being further divided into e.g. abstracts and concretes, countables, massives and collectives. It is an important axiom of the present investigation that such classifications, though they may be descriptively useful, have no theoretical status, as they, at least in Norwegian, are purely ontological, not grammatical. They thus belong to what Bouchard (1995) terms situational semantics, which is contextual, as opposed to grammar semantics, which is part of language proper. Recall the discussion on Bouchard's (1995) analysis of the different interpretations of the French verb *aller* from 2.3.1. The analyses and the grammatical definitions proposed in these sections on Norwegian Nouns are thus meant to be valid for all kinds of nouns no matter what the ontological properties of their (real world) referents are. A noun is neither abstract nor concrete, neither countable nor massive, even though the referents they may be used to refer to most commonly are perceived as such.

The different distributional and interpretational ranges exemplified for the different signs in the previous sections should thus (in principle) be available for all signs that may be categorised as a noun in Norwegian. Proper names, abstract, countable, massive and collective concrete nouns are all part of the same paradigm. They all have a bare form and combine with both the Definiteness Suffixes – and most of them also with the Indefinite Plural Suffix – and in all cases, the additional semantic values contributed by the abstract schemas [N.M.GN], [N.M.SG.DEF], [N.PL.INDEF] and [N.PL.DEF] are the same. If a lexical item seems strange, or unintelligible, in a context where another representative of the same abstract scheme is understandable, this is then due to differences in the ontology of the real world entities associated with the lexeme, and our capability of conceptualising it in different situations, not to the differences in the grammatical values of the signs.⁸⁰

The same line of reasoning is, of course, also valid for the different lexemes belonging to one of the different sub-groups. The fact that different types of concrete nouns appear more easily in certain constructions than others is situational and extra-linguistic, not grammatical. A case in point is the extended use of *elks* in my examples. The fact that the interpretational range of this lexeme may easily be conceptualised both as an atomised (countable) majestic ruminating animal and as non-atomised (massive) delicious piece of meat roasting in the oven, makes it more suitable for a wider range of constructions than many other nouns, say e.g. fax machine. Also, both *elk* and *moose* may be irregular plurals in English (e.g. *one elk, two elk, two moose*). This, of course, does not affect the analysis of Norwegian *elg/elger*, but there is, nevertheless, also in Norwegian, a strong tendency to use the general form more often with wild animals of our own fauna, than for domestic animals and more unfamiliar species. This is also seen in that names for these animals also combine more frequently with determiners like *mye* 'much' and *lite*

⁸⁰ See also footnote 145,p 188 discussing compatibility of 'lexical' meanings.

'not much'. Unlike in English, where this seems to be a lexical peculiarity of a group of nouns, in Norwegian, this is clearly a context dependent reflection of differences in our everyday perception of elks and dogs – not a linguistic fact. At a kennel, *det er mye hund her* 'there's much dog here' would be perfectly natural, and with a little imagination, it should also be possible to come up with a suitable context for an utterance like *her var det mye faksmaskin* 'there's much fax machine here'. The signifié *elg* is neither countable nor massive. In fact, to rephrase Martin (1996), it does not even ruminant...

3.8 Closing Norwegian Nouns

It seems quite clear that the meaning, distribution and interpretation of the different Norwegian noun forms – whether intra- or cross-linguistically – cannot be captured with reference only to one or two single parameters. In addition to all the different meanings resulting from different choices in the marking of singular and plural number indicated in Figure 3 and Figure 4, this investigation clearly shows that not only a category like definiteness, but also grammatical properties located outside of the nominal domain – like nominal agreement on verbs – must be taken into consideration.

The two Definite Nouns pose no problem from a featural viewpoint, and my grammatical definition of these signs is in accordance with former analyses. The Neo-saussurean framework does however offer valuable insight into the use of these forms in so-called “missing possessive constructions” and a scrutiny of their distributional and interpretational range was essential for understanding the two non-definite noun forms. The present account of the Norwegian Indefinite Plural as being truly indefinite, and of the Norwegian Bare Noun as bearing general number and being neutral with regard to definiteness rather than encoding singular indefiniteness, satisfactorily describes the otherwise so intriguing properties of both these two signs – including their importance for the long standing debate on kind reference and genericity – in a unified way, thereby supporting not only Bouchard's (2002) analysis of number in French and English, but also the whole idea of Saussurean arbitrariness requiring a strict one-to-one relationship between form and meaning. Also, all sources of variation predicted by the arbitrariness of the sign have been exemplified by this small sample of languages; they have all grammaticalised e.g. plural number, but display variation both with regard to how it is encoded – on the noun or on the determiner – and to the exact value of its expression – non-singular in English, two or more in French and Norwegian. Languages may also choose not to grammatically realise certain features. This is seen in that Norwegian and French, but not English, nouns also are marked for gender, and in that none of the languages any longer have grammatical case in their nominal domain.

In line with its Neo-saussurean framework, the analysis has been carried out using a minimal theoretical inventory. Powerful tools like functional projections and empty heads, or logical operators like \forall , \exists , GEN, \cap and \cup that are commonly used in generative grammar and formal semantics, are in contradiction with Saussurean arbitrariness since they depend on the idea that there (somewhere) exist meanings or *signifiés* that are prior to the signs instantiating them.

The account of Norwegian Nouns presented in this section has been compared and contrasted exclusively with other languages that likewise have article systems and where both the singular/plural distinction and (in)definiteness are grammaticalised. Furthermore, neither Norwegian, English nor French still productively mark case in their nominal domain. It would therefore be interesting to also study the impact of varying degrees of case markings, and different case marking systems as well as of other nominal categories not found in these languages, like classifiers, both in languages that have, or not, grammaticalised number and (in)definiteness. This task should nevertheless preferably be carried out from a Non-norwegian viewpoint – and thus by someone other than me.

3.9 Norwegian Adjectives

In Norwegian, the category of adjectives may be morphologically defined and delimited by their presence in the comparative paradigm with the values *positive*, *comparative* and *superlative*. Adjectives, furthermore, generally inflect for, but do not carry inherent, gender.⁸¹ Semantically adjectives typically denote properties and not things, and unlike nouns, which have immediate reference, the referentiality of adjectives is mediated through association with another referent, typically expressed by a noun or a pronoun (see e.g. Wilmet 1986).

While Norwegian Nouns exhibit eight different paradigmatic values, the language only provides three positive, one comparative and two superlative adjective forms for them to combine with. The main paradigm of Norwegian Adjectives is exemplified in Table 3 below:

TABLE 3: NORWEGIAN ADJECTIVES, MAIN PARADIGM:

Positive	Comparative	Superlative	Gloss
Hel – helt – hele	helere	helest – heleste	whole
Sterk – sterkt – sterke	sterkere	sterkest – sterkeste	strong
Grov – grovt – grove	grovere	grovest – groveste	coarse
Stor – stort – store	større	størst – største	big

This discrepancy in the number of paradigmatic forms between Norwegian Nouns and Adjectives has resulted in a number of assumptions of polysemy and different types of adjectival inflection, traditionally called “weak” and “strong”, see 3.9.3 below. (Generalised) polysemy is unwanted in Saussurean theory as it evokes the possibility of one *signifiant* having several *signifiés*. One contribution of this section is therefore to show that the supposed cases of polysemy are unnecessary assumptions since the relevant facts may be motivated or explained otherwise.

This section investigates how the analysis of Norwegian Nouns proposed above can be extended to also give a more unified account of the Norwegian adjective forms, motivating their distributional and interpretational properties based on one invariant

⁸¹ The gradability of adjectives is a syntactic or morphological and not a semantic phenomenon. Although many adjectives denote properties that are not straightforwardly perceived as gradable in the extra-linguistic world all adjectives may be graded given an appropriate linguistic context. The nongradability of property denoted by *død* ‘dead’, for instance, is an ontological and not a linguistic problem, and legal definitions of ‘dead’ or ‘death’ are irrelevant to the Norwegian Nominal System. The additional requirement that adjectives do not carry inherent gender separates them from nouns, which, albeit not very frequently, also may be graded. A classic example, in this respect, is *Han er mer mann enn deg* ‘He is more (of a) man than you’. In addition, certain adjectives with comparative and superlative forms only have a prepositional, and no adjectival, positive form that, consequently, lacks gender inflection. Typical examples of this are *bakre* and *bakerste*, *øvre* and *øverste* with the prepositions *bak* and *over* in the positive. The definition further includes quantifiers like *mange* and *få*, which will not be discussed here. Like adjectives with prepositional positive form, quantifiers like *mange* and *få* do not inflect for gender.

value. The analysis I propose has the advantages of eliminating the need for polysemy in the Norwegian adjectival paradigm while, at the same time, revealing an economic picture of the distribution of grammatical features in Norwegian adjective-noun combinations.

I propose the following grammatical definitions for the six Norwegian Adjective forms, which, except for the stem- and the comparative form will be termed after their suffixes:

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION III: PROPOSED VALUE OF NORWEGIAN POSITIVE ADJECTIVES:

Stem-Adjective – *stor*: [STOR.POSITIVE.COMMON GENDER.SINGULAR.INDEFINITE]

-*t* Adjective – *stort*: [STOR.POSITIVE.NEUTER GENDER.SINGULAR.INDEFINITE]

-*e* Adjective – *store*: [STOR.POSITIVE.GENERAL NUMBER]

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION IV: PROPOSED VALUE OF NORWEGIAN COMPARATIVES AND SUPERLATIVES

Norwegian Comparative – *større*: [STOR.COMPARATIVE.GENERAL NUMBER]

-*est* Superlative – *størst*: [STOR.SUPERLATIVE]

-*este* Superlative – *største*: [STOR.SUPERLATIVE.GENERAL NUMBER]

Compared with English and French, Norwegian Adjectives exhibit rather elaborate featural distinctions. In English, positive adjectives are invariant, while in French they clearly inflect for gender.⁸² I assume the following definitions for English and French adjectives:

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION V: ASSUMED VALUE OF ENGLISH AND FRENCH ADJECTIVES

English (Positive) Adjective – *big*: [BIG.POSITIVE]

English Comparative – *bigger*: [BIG.COMPARATIVE]

English Superlative – *biggest*: [BIG.SUPERLATIVE]

French (Masculin) Adjective – *grand(s)*: [GRAND.POSITIVE.MASCULINE]

French (Feminin) Adjective – *grande(s)*: [GRAND.POSITIVE.FEMININE]

With their values for gender, number and definiteness, Norwegian positive adjectives carry more information than their relatives in both English and French do. One contribution of this section is to show how these differences in featural composition between Norwegian and French and English adjectives are reflected in their distributional and interpretational properties. Specifically, I will present data that have not previously received much attention in the literature on the Norwegian (or Scandinavian) Noun Phrase, showing that, contrary to what is the case in French and English, Norwegian

⁸² In accordance with the assumed lack of semantic number markings on French nouns (recall Figure 1 in 3.3.3.2, I take the same to be true for adjectives. Like with nouns the plural *-s* of adjectives is only audible under specific circumstances, and unlike Norwegian, French adjectives do not display any distributional or interpretational properties that one would expect from a number marked element, see 3.9.2 below.

Adjectives may be used pronominally and function as fully referential noun phrases without the support of any other number marked element.⁸³⁸⁴ Though Bouchard does not discuss referential adjectives, this characteristic/function of Norwegian adjectives is in accordance with his theory of number presented in section 3.3.3.2. Recall that for Bouchard (2002), number is a minimal means to identify an actant in grammar. In other words, (semantic) number marking on nominal elements makes them apt and able to function as arguments. Because Norwegian Adjectives carry number (and definiteness) values, they function as not only predicatives and nominal modifiers, but also as full referential noun phrases.

While the proposed definitions for the two first positive adjectival forms should be relatively uncontroversial, the proposed general number feature on the *-e* Adjective and the *-este* Superlative together with the elimination of the strong/weak distinction is more novel (but see 3.9.4). Traditionally, one distinguishes between a so-called weak and strong inflection, but, as will be shown, the features in Grammatical Definition III and Grammatical Definition IV above eliminate the need for this distinction. We return to this in 3.9.3. In order to support the proposed featural description, I will analyse the different forms in the various functions and contexts they appear, and extract what is shared by (and/or relevant in) all their uses. The bulk of the section is devoted to the positive forms. Section 3.9.1 discusses positive adjectives in their attributive use, and 3.9.2 deals with adjective-without-noun constructions and what I have termed the pronominal use of Norwegian Adjectives. In these two first sections the different forms' affinity to number and definiteness are discussed based on their distribution and interpretation in referential contexts, i.e. when they appear as (part of) a referential noun phrase. Predicative adjectives are discussed in 3.9.3 where it is argued that the weak/strong distinction is irrelevant in modern Norwegian, while 3.9.4 briefly looks at over- and under-differentiated paradigms. Comparative and superlative adjectives are the subject of 3.9.5. The section on adjectives is closed in 3.9.6, which also presents a welcome consequence. Sub-chapter 3.9 deals exclusively with the invariant grammatical value of the adjectival forms. We return to syntactic constructions with adjectives in 5.2.3 and 5.3.

3.9.1 Positive Adjectives – Attributive use

The stem form and the *-t* suffixed adjective differ only with regard to gender. The former is common gender and the latter neuter. Their different affinities to gender are clear from their distribution as attributives. Both forms exclusively combine with bare nouns, but the stem form combines with masculine or feminine nouns and indefinite articles, while the *-t* form combines with neuter ones. This is illustrated below.

- (64) a. (En) **sterk/stor/grov/hel** deig.
A strong/big/coarse/whole dough.
b. (Ei) **sterk/stor/grov/hel** bok.
A strong/big/coarse/whole book.

⁸³ For the use of the term pronominal(ly) with reference to adjectives, see 3.9.2.

⁸⁴ Use of lone argumental adjectives is typical for spoken, and not written, Norwegian. The bulk of examples of such constructions is therefore found in informal chat-groups on the Internet. Though these language users do not have full control over Norwegian orthography, their use of pronominal adjectives are part of the standard Norwegian (spoken) repertoire.

- c. (Et) **sterkt/stort/grovt/helt** rundstykke.
A strong/big/coarse/whole book.

The third positive adjectival form in Norwegian, the *-e* Adjective, has a wider distributional and interpretational range than the two forms presented above. Attributively, the *e*-form combines with all the suffixed noun forms, both Plural Definites and Indefinites, and Singular Definites of all genders:

- (65) a. (Den) **grove** deigen/boka.
The coarse dough.M.SG.DEF/book.F.SG.DEF
b. (Det) **grove** rundstykket.
The coarse bun.N.SG.DEF
c. (Noen) **grove** deiger/bøker/rundstykker.
(Some) coarse doughs/books/buns.PL.INDEF
d. (De) **grove** deigene/bøkene/rundstykkene.
The coarse doughs/books/buns.PL.DEF.

The examples in (64) and (65) are consistent with the values proposed for these forms in Grammatical Definition III. In example (64), the gender, number and indefiniteness features of the adjective correspond to the values of the noun phrase as a whole, while in (65) the versatile general number feature of the adjective receives a fixed interpretation by agreement with the different nouns and determiners.

As already seen in the previous section on nouns, and as indicated by the parentheses above, prenominal determiners are not compulsory in Norwegian. Interpretations of non-predetermined attributive Bare Noun constructions provide further support for the proposed values of these signs. Recall from 3.4.3.3 that even without the indefinite article present, Stem and *-t* Adjectives will trigger singular (indefinite) interpretations of the noun phrase as a whole. In other words, while a lone Bare Noun is potentially ambiguous or vague in its number interpretation, a Bare Noun modified by one of the Indefinite Singular Adjectives will always be interpreted as singular (indefinite). While this is well known for nouns that do not have a separate indefinite plural form, the fact that this also holds for other nouns as well has not previously been described. In example (66)a below, while the first sentence is vague with regard to the number interpretation of *hest* and easily could have been picked up by a singular antecedent, the following sentence unambiguously determines its reference as plural. The number vagueness or ambiguity of *hest* from (66)a is nevertheless no longer present when the bare noun is modified by a stem adjective as in (66)b, which unambiguously is singular indefinite.

- (66) a. Jeg har **hest** på Ebru islandshestgård :) **Islandshester** er det jeg har der (...).
(www)
I have horse at Ebru iceland.horse.farm :) Icelandic horses is it I have there
etc...
b. Jeg har **brun hest** og synes da det passer best med svart utstyr. (www)
I have brown horse and think then it fits best with black equipment.

The fact that the adjective can determine the number interpretation as singular of an otherwise undefined noun, is a strong indication that singularity should be part of the adjective's grammatical description and that its semantic import is stronger than that of a mere agreement marker. Furthermore, while we saw in 3.4.3.1 that bare nouns are neutral not only with regard to number, but also, and as a consequence, with regard to definiteness, the boldfaced noun phrase in (66)b is clearly indefinite, which justifies the indefiniteness feature.

Also *-e* Adjectives may disambiguate the number and definiteness interpretation on the rare occasions where *-e* Adjectives occur in combination with Bare Nouns. In these cases, neither the adjective nor the noun has any fixed definiteness and number value, and the values of the noun phrase as a whole is determined by competing forms. Two examples are given below:

- (67) a. Vi ville bake **grove brød** og **grove kjeks**, men begikk noen **grove feil** under oppmålinga.
We wanted to bake coarse bread.M.GN and coarse cookie.F.GN, but made some coarse measuring mistake.N.GN.
- b. **Kjære venn!**
Dear Friend.M.GN!

In the constructed example (67)a, the *-e* Adjective combines with Bare Nouns (of all three genders) that do not have a form to convey plural indefiniteness.⁸⁵ The plural indefinite interpretation is assured since, as we have just seen, the other adjectival forms would yield singular indefiniteness in such cases while regular definite interpretations would be achieved by use of the definite nouns. In the vocative construction in (67)b, identifiability is assured insofar as the listener is identical to the referent (see also (78) below). Again, the interpretation of *kjære venn* is understood as singular, 'definite' since an indefinite singular would have required the indefinite adjectives, and the plural forms a plural noun. The fact that combination of a bare noun with an *-e* Adjective as in (67)b also may receive singular non-indefinite interpretations, corroborates the proposal that not only the number interpretation, but also the indefiniteness interpretation in (66)b arises from the adjective.

3.9.2 Positive Adjectives – Pronominal Use

Further support for the values of Norwegian Positive Adjectives proposed in Grammatical Definition III above come from their distributional and interpretational range in what Gil (2008) calls adjective-without-noun constructions. In such constructions, the adjective functions as the main lexical item within the noun phrase – typically when the noun is either unimportant or reconstructable from the discourse. Adjective-without-noun constructions have so far attracted relatively little attention in the general linguistic literature (Gil 2008), and Norwegian is no exception. The coming subsections introduce data that, even though they most certainly are part of the standard

⁸⁵ While *kjeks* is feminine in several dialects – including my trønder – it is masculine (only) in standard Bokmål. In Nynorsk, however, the gender of *kjeks* is optional between masculine and feminine. To preserve the spontaneity (and elegance) of the example, as well as for language politics reasons, I nevertheless gloss it as feminine here as this is the gender intended by the speaker, i.e. me.

Norwegian (spoken) repertoire, have not been previously described in either the descriptive or the theoretical literature on Norwegian. Before that, we warm up with some more familiar data.

Gil (2008) distinguishes six types of adjective-without-noun constructions cross-linguistically, with French and English representing two different strategies. In French, adjective-without-noun constructions do not require any special marking, though the articles that are compulsory with the noun present will also be so when it is absent. In English, on the other hand, such constructions are marked by an additional following word, the dummy pronoun *one(s)*. This is illustrated below.⁸⁶

- (68) a. J'(en) voudrais **un** fort/ grand/grossier/entier.
I (of them) would like a strong/big/coarse/whole
- b. Je voudrais **le** fort/le grand/le grossier/l'entier.
I would like a strong/big/coarse/whole
- c. I'd like **a** strong/big/coarse/whole **one**.
- d. I'd like **the** strong/big/coarse/whole **one(s)**.

The difference between English and French here is (as already mentioned 3.4.1) motivated by the fact that in French, but not in English, the determiners are marked for number. Since French determiners mark number, they may function as actants in combination with an adjective without a noun present, while in English where the noun, and not the determiner, is the number marking element, determiner and adjective combinations need a dummy numeral in order to fill the role of an argumental noun phrase (Bouchard 2002).

Norwegian may employ the French, the English or a more idiosyncratic strategy in such cases. The two Norwegian Indefinite Adjectives may combine with the indefinite articles (or numerals) *en, ei, et*, like in French, and in spoken Norwegian often also with a postposed version of the same elements, more parallel to English. This is illustrated in (69)a-b. The interpretational and combinatorial properties for Indefinite Adjectives are thus the same as in constructions where the noun is present. This is also the case with *-e* Adjectives, which may appear in adjective-without-noun constructions with plural indefinite, as well as both singular and plural definite, interpretations, as illustrated in (69)c-e.⁸⁷

- (69) a. Jeg vil ha en/ei **sterk/stor/grov/hel** (en/ei).
I want a (masculine or feminine) strong/big/coarse/whole (one).
- b. Jeg vil ha et **sterkt/stort/grovt/helt** (et).
I want a big (neuter) one.
- c. Jeg vil ha noen **sterke/store/grove/hele** (noen).
I want the (common gender/neuter) strong/big/coarse/whole (one).
- d. Jeg vil ha den/det **sterke/store/grove/hele**.
I want the (common gender/neuter) strong/big/coarse/whole one.

⁸⁶ The remaining four strategies presented by Gil (2008) are (i) marking by a preceding word, (ii) marking by a suffix (iii) marking by a prefix and (iv) marking by mixed or other strategies.

⁸⁷ The examples in (69) and (70) are constructed for ease of presentation, attested examples will be discussed in the following sub-sections.

- e. Jeg vil ha de **sterke/store/grove/hele**.
I want the strong/big/coarse/whole ones.

As can be seen from the examples in (69), employing a postposed numeral is only available with indefinites. This is explained by the fact that the signs *en, ei, et* and *noen* as opposed to English *one(s)* are intrinsically indefinite, which makes them unable to combine with definites (see 4.3.1). The lack of (compulsoriness of) post-posed numerals in Norwegian adjective-without-noun constructions is in accordance with the fact that the Norwegian determiners are marked for number just like French ones.⁸⁸

More interestingly, and as illustrated in (70) below, none of the numeral elements are compulsory in Norwegian and, as opposed to both English and French, Norwegian Adjectives may function as argumental noun phrases all by themselves without the support either of a determiner or a postposed numeral dummy.

- (70) a. Jeg vil ha **sterk/stor/grov/hel**.
I want (a) strong/big/coarse/whole (masculine or feminine one).
b. Jeg vil ha **sterkt/stort/grovt/helt**.
I want a strong/big/coarse/whole (neuter one).
c. Jeg vil ha **sterke/store/grove/hele**.
I want strong/big/coarse/whole (ones).

While the adjectives in the examples in (68) and (69) above, as Gil (2008) says, are the lexical heads of the noun phrases in which they occur, they are not the grammatical heads. The function of the adjectives in (68) and (69) is similar to that of ordinary attributives, it modifies the grammatical actant provided by the (main) number marking element. In the constructions in (70), on the other hand, the adjectives are the only elements in the argumental nominal phrases, and they function both as the lexical and grammatical heads. The main proposition of the following sub-sections is that this function is more available to Norwegian, than to English and French adjectives because Norwegian Adjectives exhibit more featural distinctions, particularly with regard to number. In order to separate the two different types of Norwegian adjective-without-noun constructions, I will use the term pronominal use of adjectives to refer to adjectives functioning as referential nominals without the support of a noun or another number marked item. The term is chosen in order to highlight the similarity between this use of adjectives and similar uses of lone determiners/pronouns as discussed in section 3.4.1 and Chapter 4. In both cases, I propose, it is the number marking that makes them able to replace a full noun phrase. In other words, to function pronominally.

3.9.2.1 Pronominal use of the Singular Indefinite Adjectives

While the strategies for Norwegian adjective-without-noun constructions including the numerals *en, ei, et* or other number marked elements, e.g. the demonstratives, are mentioned briefly in the literature see e.g. Faarlund et al (1997:236), and Julien (2005: 29), the use of Norwegian Adjectives as the only element of a nominal phrase in argument position has, to my knowledge, not been discussed previously. In the present

⁸⁸ Contrary to Norwegian, repeating *un, une* post adjectivally would be ungrammatical in French, also in indefinite constructions.

investigation, these constructions play an important role not only in determining the featural composition of the respective forms, but also for the understanding of cross-linguistic differences between Norwegian, English and French. Some authentic examples of pronominal use of Norwegian Indefinite Adjectives are presented below.

- (71) a. Det finnes så mange situasjoner ved et sykehus der pasienten trenger *grønn* veneflon eller grovere, at jeg heller legger **grønn** med en gang enn å måtte gjøre det igjen senere. (www)
 there are so many situations at a hospital where the patient needs green 'veneflon' or coarser, that I rather lay *green* at once than to have to do it later.'
- b. 1/2 Big Bite med salat, agurk, løk og ost. Skulle egentlig ha **grov**, men det var de tom for selvfølgelig. (www)
 ½ Big Bite with salad, cucumber, onion and cheese. Should really have *coarse*, but they were of course free of that.
- c. Vi synes det er viktig å ha nok frukt inne, og at det er valgmulighet i brødsortimentet. Da kan folk velge om de vil ha **grovt** eller **fint**. (www)
 we find it is important to have enough fruit in, and that there is choice in the bread assortment'. Then people can choose whether they want *coarse* or *fine*.
- d. Har funnet en side med supra-utstillingsmodeller, men vil ha **fjernstyrt**. (www)
 Have found a page with supra-exhibition.models, but want *remote.controlled*.
- e. Vel, punchen min gikk til pokkers her om dagen (...). Så i dag var jeg og kjøpte meg **ny**, trengte bare noe fort som pokker. (www)
 Well, my punch went to [expletive] the other day (...) So today I bought me *new*, just needed something fast as [expletive].

In the examples in (71) the lone adjectives agree in gender with the noun they are associated with. We have the forms *grønn*, *grov* and *ny* which all are common gender in (71)a,b and e because *veneflon*, *big-bite* (or *baguette*) and *punch* are masculine and the neuter forms *grovt* and *fint* in (71)c because *brød* is neuter. In (71)d, the adjective *fjernstyrt* does not distinguish between neuter and common gender and the adjective may be related to either *fly* 'airplane', which is neuter, or *bil* 'car' which is masculine or feminine depending on the dialect, as the context is unclear.

Since such pronominal uses of Norwegian Adjectives have not received much attention, it is also worth mentioning that neither the noun nor the adjective has to be previously mentioned in order for the identification to take place, as long as they are reconstructable from the immediate situation. An illustration of this is given in the following typical opening dialogue:⁸⁹

- (72) A (pointing at B): - (Så fin/fint/fine!) Har du fått deg **ny/nytt/nye?**
 (so nice!) Have you gotten new.M.SG.INDEF
 /new.N.SG.INDEF/new.GN?
 (How nice!) is it/are they new?
- B (smiling back): - Ja, kjøpte den/det/de i går.

⁸⁹ See Tasmovski-De Rijk and Verluyteb (1981) for a discussion of similar situations in French.

Yes, I bought it.CG/it.N/them yesterday.

Yes, I bought it/them yesterday.

The chosen gender and number marking on the adjectival forms used by A indicates whether she refers to B's dress or jacket, scarf (or skirt) or boots or gloves.

Even though the nominal phrases in (69)a-b, (70)a-b and (71) will all carry the features singular and indefinite regardless of whether the numerals *en*, *ei*, *et* are included or not, there are, of course, interpretational differences between them. While the versions without any numerals are neutral with regard to atomisation and may be interpreted as referring to both countable individuals and masses depending on context, the versions including *en*, *ei*, *et* are necessarily interpreted as individualised entities. The sentence in (70)a-b can thus be used to refer to any (contextually salient) singular, indefinite big/strong/coarse/whole referent that would otherwise be referred to by a common gendered or neuter noun. The compulsory individualised interpretation of the predetermined adjective-without-noun constructions is reminiscent of the behaviour of Bare Nouns, which also necessarily are interpreted as atomised when accompanied by an indefinite article. The affinity between the numerals *en*, *ei*, *et* and atomisation is discussed in 4.3.1.

Like the versions including *en*, *ei*, *et* in Norwegian, the French and English examples in (68) also necessarily refer to atomised entities. To refer to masses, French will use the partitive article *du* just like when the noun is realised, whereas, in English, both the indefinite article and the dummy *one* may be omitted when a sharp contrast is presented as in (73) below. This kind of omission nevertheless seems more restricted in English than what is the case in Norwegian. From the examples above, (71)b and c, which may be interpreted as non-atomised, could be rendered by a lone adjective also in English, while (71)a,d,e and the dialogue in (72) would be impossible.

- (73) a. Red and white wine are comparable in calories but **red** is better for you. (www)
 b. Let it stand, depending on your taste of strong or weak tea (I prefer **strong**, but that's because I'm butch)

For discussions on the omission of the numeral dummy *one* in English, see Bouchard (2002: 225-227) and references there.

3.9.2.2 Pronominal use of *-e* adjectives

When *-e* Adjectives are used pronominally, they normally receive a plural indefinite interpretation. To express definite interpretations in adjective-without-noun constructions, unaccentuated demonstratives are generally required. This is consistent with the fact that demonstratives are present also for standard definite interpretations of attributive adjective and noun combinations, see 5.3.1.

- (74) a. Jeg vil ha (noen) **grove**.
 I want (some) coarse ones
 b. Jeg vil ha #?(det/den) **grove**.
 I want the coarse one

- c. Jeg vil ha #?(de) **grove**.
I want the coarse ones

The use of lone argumental *-e* Adjectives seems more common (and less familiar) than that of the two indefinite forms. One reason for this might be that while the shift between a lone Singular Indefinite Adjective and one accompanied by an indefinite article only resides in the atomisation distinction, the 'plural indefinite determiner' *noen* also carries the quantitative meaning 'small-scale' (see 4.3.2.1), which restricts its referential range.

- (75) a. Jeg ville ha **fine** og han ville ha **grove**, så vi bakte begge deler. (www)
i wanted fine.GN and he wanted coarse.GN, so we baked both parts.
"I wanted fine (ones) and he wanted whole-grained ones, so we baked both."
b. Han [er] ikke kun [...] god i teoretiske fag, men også i **fysiske** (...) (Loe 2005: 166)
he is not only good in theoretic subjects, but also in physic.GN
"He is not only good in theoretic subjects, but also in physic(al) ones"
c. Jeg tenkte med ett ikke på om vi skulle ha italienske fliser eller **spanske** eller **matte** eller **blanke**, (...) (Loe 2004:26)
i thought with one not on whether we should have italian tiles or spanish.GN or matt.GN or blanc.GN
"Suddenly, I didn't think (more) about whether we should choose Italian tiles or Spanish ones, or matt or blanc ones"
d. Hvilke epler du velger er helt opp til deg selv, jeg foretrekker **røde** fordi de er søte. (www).
what apples you choose is entirely up to you, I prefer red.GN because they are sweet
"What apples you choose is entirely up to you, I prefer red ones because they are sweet."

The strong preference for plural indefinite over singular and/or plural definite interpretations of pronominal *-e* Adjectives is motivated through the close affinity between demonstratives and adjectives modifying definite noun phrases. Indefinite plurals, on the other hand, readily combine with adjectives without the presence of a preposed determiner.⁹⁰

Though unaccentuated demonstratives generally are required with definite adjective-noun combinations, there are attributive adjective constructions that require the demonstrative to be absent, see 5.3.4. This is e.g. the case with the quantificational adjectives *hel* 'whole' and *halv* 'half'. With these adjectives, the demonstrative triggers either a restrictive or a non-restrictive (descriptive) reading opposed to the quantitative reading obtained without the demonstrative. The same opposition is found in

⁹⁰ In the dialects of Trondheim and Trøndelag, the two nominal definite suffixes may also attach to argumental adjectives. In these varieties of Norwegian an argumental adjective may thus unambiguously distinguish all combinations of number and (in)definiteness, just like a full noun phrase: (I) *Æ vil ha stor* – I want a big (masculine or feminine) one (i) *Æ vil ha stort* – I want a big (neuter) one (iii) *Æ vil ha store* – I want big ones (iv) *Æ vil ha storen/stora/store(t)* – I want the big (m/f/n) one (v) *Æ vil ha storan* – I want the big ones.

constructions where the noun is absent. For quantitative singular uses of *hele*, the adjective appears alone, while in restrictive uses it must be preceded by a demonstrative.

- (76) a. Glasset hennes står igjen, det er tomt, det er lepestiftmerker langs kanten, tre steder, og fettete fingeravtrykk over **hele**. (Marstein 2002: 28)
 glass her stands left, it is empty, it is lipstick.marks along the edge, three places, and greasy finger.prints over whole.GN.
 “Her glass is left, it’s empty, there are lipstick marks along the edge, on three places, and greasy finger prints all over (over the entire glass).”
- b. Her spiste jeg også min første bleksprut, armene var veldig seige og [sic] bite av, kan ikke anbefales. **MEN** jeg spiste **hele**! (www)
 here ate I also my first squid, the arms were very though to bite of, can not be recommended. But I ate whole.GN.
 “I also ate my first squid here, the arms were very though to chew, and cannot be recommended. But I ate the whole thing!”
- c. Jeg har ikke lest **hele** selv, men bladde litt i den i en bokhandel. (www)
 I have not read whole.GN self, but leafed little in it in a bookstore.
 “I have not read the whole book myself, but I briefly leafed through it in a bookstore.”

Potentially, then, constructions involving *hele* and *halve* used pronominally are ambiguous between a plural indefinite and a singular definite interpretation.

- (77) a. Tilsett hermetiske tomater. Benytt enten **hele** eller **hakkede**. (www)
 add hermetic tomatoes. use either whole.GN or chopped.GN.
 ”Add hermetic tomatoes. Use either whole (ones) or chopped ones.”
- b. Jeg har 6 søsken (ingen halvsøsken kun **hele**) og jeg er minst (...). (www)
 I have 6 siblings (no half.siblings only whole.GN) and i am smallest.
 ”I have 6 siblings (no half sibling only whole ones) and I am the youngest.

As already mentioned, vocatives are intrinsically identifiable, and thus inconsistent with true indefiniteness, and as can be seen below the referents of lone *-e* adjectives in vocatives like *kjære vene* may be interpreted as both singular and plural, as can be seen by the different pronouns in the examples below:

- (78) a. **Kjære vene**, hvor har **du** vært de siste årene? (www)
 Dear.GN pretty.GN where have you.SG been these last years?
- b. **Kjære vene dere**, gå nå inn på hjemmesiden til Sevan. (www)
 Dear.GN pretty.GN you.PL, go to Sevan’s homepage.

All in all, then, *-e* Adjectives do not only combine attributively with both singular and plural definites as well as with plural indefinites, they may also receive interpretations consistent with all these three combinations of number and definiteness when used pronominally. Just like the Norwegian Bare Noun, *-e* Adjectives thus cannot be said to have a fixed value neither for number nor for definiteness, which is why I propose that they both are marked for general number. Like the Bare Noun, *-e* Adjectives receive their

number interpretation from the context either intra- or extra-phrasal, or intra- or extra-linguistic.

Despite their similarities with regard to featural composition, Bare Nouns and *-e* Adjectives, diverge in their interpretational range. While Bare Nouns typically receive singular indefinite interpretations, this is the only interpretation that is unavailable to the *-e* Adjective. This is due to the existence of competing forms that carry the relevant features. In adjectives, the presence of the Stem- and *-t* Adjective blocks the interpretation of *-e* Adjectives as singular indefinite. Bare Nouns, on the other hand, will more seldom receive interpretations compatible with indefinite plural or plural and singular definiteness because of the three competing noun forms that carry these exact featural combinations. Also, and still because of their differing paradigmatic relationships, the two types of signs are subjected to completely different agreement requirements. While *-e* Adjectives combine with forms of all number and definiteness values except for singular indefinites, Bare Nouns usually combine with singular indefinite articles and adjectives. Like with Bare Nouns, the interpretations of number and definiteness of the general *-e* Adjective is determined both by the sign's primary paradigmatic relations and by context.

3.9.2.3 Closing

Adjective-without-noun constructions are often analysed with reference to empty or null heads. Notions like empty heads have no status in a Saussurean sign system as they evoke the impossible idea of a *signifié* without a *signifiant*, or, in other words, a meaning or a value without a sound. In the present analysis, there are no empty elements in the syntactic or semantic representation of any kind of adjective-without-noun construction, whether it contains a preposed determiner or not. The reason why Norwegian Adjectives may fulfil the role of an argumental noun phrase is that Norwegian Adjectives are marked for number, the minimal means required to identify an actant in grammar (Bouchard 2002).

The pronominal use of Norwegian Adjectives and the contrast witnessed with French and English thus provides further indication that the number feature of Norwegian Adjectives, whether it is general or singular, has real semantic import transcending that of a mere agreement marker, as is assumed for French. The Norwegian data thus corroborates Bouchard's proposal that any number-marked nominal element should be able to indicate a grammatical actant. In Norwegian, this has the effect that all nominal categories, including adjectives, may function pronominally.⁹¹

⁹¹ The Norwegian data and the present proposal nevertheless do not necessarily corroborate Bouchard's view that semantic number should only be marked once in the noun phrase (2002: 41-42) as, in Norwegian, determiners, adjectives and nouns all carry number values. While having number marked on only one type of nominal element is economic when the elements are combined noun phrase internally, the Norwegian strategy has economic advantages in that signs of all major categories may fill a referential noun phrase on their own without the support of a dummy element. Bouchard (personal communication) suggests, that semantic number still may be marked only once in Norwegian nominal phrases, but that the language freely allows it to be on the noun, the determiner or on the adjective, which he sees to fit in with the Elsewhere way of functioning generally found in other aspects of the language. I do not however see that there is anything to gain from such an assumption as the number values are intrinsic parts of the signs invariant meaning. In most cases, however, although number is marked several times in a syntactically complex noun phrase, it is only the most specific one that is interpreted.

Though they all have a number feature, Stem- and *-t* Adjectives are very different from *-e* Adjectives. While the two former have fixed values for gender, number and definiteness, *-e* Adjectives are undefined or vague with regard to its value for these features. When appearing in a strict agreement environment, the interpretational values of *-e* Adjectives are settled by the values of the signs it combines with. In their pronominal use or when combining intra-phrasally with other undefined forms, its interpretation is settled by context and competing forms.

In addition to being singular, the Stem- and the *-t* Adjectives are also both unambiguously indefinite. This is seen in that they never combine with definite singulars and only receive indefinite interpretations when used alone. The gender distinction between the two forms also serve functions besides dictating their distributional and interpretational range as attributives and lone referential adjectives. Gender marking may also, as we will see in 3.9.3, be crucial for picking out the right predicational base with non-copular (secondary) adjectival predicates.

3.9.3 Predicative use: an apparent problem – the weak/strong distinction

The previous sub-sections discussed the three positive adjectival forms in Norwegian in their attributive and pronominal functions. This section introduces predicative adjectives to the discussion. The discrepancy in number between noun forms (8) and positive adjectival forms (3) are traditionally explained with reference to polysemy and different declensions – weak and strong – for attributive and predicative adjectives, respectively (see e.g. Faarlund et al. 1997: 366-386).

The previous two sections showed that Norwegian attributive and pronominal adjectives receive interpretations depending not only on gender and number, but also on (in)definiteness. When used predicatively, on the other hand, the adjective shows affinity to gender and number, but, crucially, not to definiteness.

Examples (79)a and b, show that *-e* Adjectives combine with all plural subject bases, both definite and indefinite when functioning as a predicative, which is consistent with their distribution as attributives. As seen in (79)c, this is not the case with Definite Singular Nouns, which cannot combine with predicative *-e* Adjectives, contrary to what is the case with attributives.

- (79) a. (Noen) deiger/bøker/rundstykker er **grove**.
(Some) doughs/books/buns are coarse.
- b. Deigene/bøkene/rundstykkene er **grove**.
The doughs/books/buns are coarse.
- c. *Deigen/boka/rundstykket er **grove**.

As predicational bases for predicative adjectives, then, Definite Singular Nouns combine with the Indefinite Singular Adjectives, just like their indefinite counterparts. The stem Adjective combines with singular bases of masculine and feminine gender and *-t* Adjectives with neuter, singular (indefinite or definite) bases:

- (80) a. En deig/deigen er **sterk/stor/grov/hel**.
A/the dough is strong/big/coarse/whole
b. Ei bok/boka er **sterk/stor/grov/hel**.
A/the book is strong/big/coarse.
c. Et rundstykke/rundstykket er **sterkt/stort/grovt/helt**.
A/the bun is strong, big, coarse/whole.

Definite Singular Nouns thus combine with different adjectival forms depending on their function as predicative (81)a,b, or attributive (81)c, a situation that traditionally has been explained by reference to two different inflections, weak and strong:

- (81) a. Deigen/kjeksa er **grov**.
The dough.M/cookie.F is coarse.
b. Brødet er **grovt**.
The bread.N is coarse.
c. Jeg liker den/det **grove** deigen/kjeksa/brødet best.
I like the.CG/N coarse dough/cookie/bread best.
d. Jeg liker de **grove** deigene/kjeksene/brødene best.
I like the.PL coarse doughs/cookies/breads best.
e. Jeg liker **grove** deiger/kjeks/brød best.
I like coarse doughs/cookies/breads best.

The predicative occurrences *grov* and *grovt*, in (81)a and (81)b respectively, show agreement in number and gender, but not in definiteness, with their base and are said to be strong. The occurrences of *grove* in (c) and (d) which do not show agreement in gender or number, are called weak and understood to be marked as definite. In addition, the weak form is identical to the strong (indefinite) plural form from (81)e and (79)a, and adjectives ending in *-e* are thus considered to be polysemic between a strong (indefinite) plural form and a weak (definite) one that is unmarked for number. Though the present proposal agrees that there is no definiteness agreement for predicative adjectives, it rejects both the idea of polysemic *-e* Adjectives and the idea that they are definite. The apparent distinction between the two inflections – a weak one that occurs only with attributives and is sensitive to definiteness and a strong one used for predicatives and indefinite attributives – may be explained simply by the fact that definiteness is irrelevant with predicative properties.

Firstly, while grammatical agreement is phrase internal in Norwegian, extra-phrasal agreement is pragmatic. This is in line with the placement of attributive and predicate and personal pronoun targets in Corbett's (1991:226) Agreement Hierarchy (see also Corbett 2006: 206-37). A few examples are given in (82):

- (82) a. Jeg kjente igjen den ene **vakta, han** bodde i nabogata vår. (www)
I recognised (the) one guard.F, he lived in our neighbour street.
b. Da mannen kom hjem (...), fikk de høre at **postbudet** var **død**. (www)
When the man came home, they learned that the mailman.N was dead.CG.

- c. **Gjengen** var rimelig **spente** (...), det kan nok ikke stikkes under en stol. (www)
The gang.SG was/were pretty exited.GN/(PL), that can not be hidden under a chair.
- d. Mmm, **grove rundstykker** er **godt**, og det er gøy å bake. (www)
Mmm, coarse buns is so good.SG, and it is fun to bake.

In (82)a, a grammatically feminine noun is picked up by a masculine pronoun in the following sentence in agreement with the gender of its real world referent. As shown in (b, c and d) also predicative adjectives display features in concord with the real world referent, rather than with the grammatical values of its predicational base. In (82)b, a common gendered adjective is predicated over a neuter gendered base, in accordance with the fact that mailmen, in real life, necessarily are masculine or feminine. Example c shows that the grammatically singular *gjengen* combines with a predicative that is interpreted as plural in accordance with the fact that a group consists of a plurality of members to which the predicate applies. Finally, in (82)d a neuter singular noun is predicated over a (generic) plural subject with the interpretation *å spise grove rundstykker er godt* ‘to eat whole grain buns is good’.⁹² Extra-phrasal agreement, including predicatives, is thus not grammatical, but ontological in Norwegian, which explains why definiteness is irrelevant in such contexts.

Predicative adjectives are non-referential, in the sense that they denote properties and not entities, and can thus be understood as neither identifiable (definite) nor as unidentifiable (indefinite). In argument position and as modifiers, on the other hand, adjectives are (part of) referential constituents that need a definiteness interpretation. In addition, definiteness, while a common category in the world’s languages, typologically seldom engage in agreement relations, and is not considered among the (classical) nominal phi-features (Corbett 2006). As an information-structuring element (recall 3.2), definiteness differ from the ontological categories of gender and number in that it does not provide information about the nature of the real world individuals in question. Given that extra-phrasal agreement is pragmatic rather than grammatical in Norwegian, we have an explanation for why definiteness, contrary to number and gender, is irrelevant with predicatives. While gender and number features on a predicative adjective indicate common features with the real world referent of its predicational base, definiteness features play no role in this context as the predicational base necessarily is identifiable as such, whether it is marked as definite or not.

As attributives on the other hand, adjectives respond to strict grammatical agreement requirements specifying that members of a phrase should not have conflicting features. While Stem- and *-t* Adjectives may agree with singular definite nouns in gender and number, such combinations will crash because of the conflict between the indefiniteness feature of the adjective and the definiteness feature of the noun. An adjective marked for general number, on the other hand, will never evoke featural conflicts, which explains why this is the chosen form for attributives. In the predicative position, where definiteness is discarded anyhow, the singular form of appropriate gender is chosen instead. Contrarily to definiteness these features do fulfil a purpose in this

⁹² Construction as the one in (82)d have received quite some attention and are often termed *pannekakesetninger* ‘pancake sentences’. Some references are Faarlund (1977) Enger (2004), Corbett (2006: 223-4).

function, as will be shown below. In addition, since definiteness is irrelevant with predicative adjectives, and because of the existence of two singular forms, *-e* Adjectives bearing general number will be interpreted as plural in this function.

Contrary to definiteness, the more prototypical phi-features number and gender indicate ontological characteristics of the referents and do play a role in determining to which base the predicate is meant to apply. While markings for number and gender may seem superfluous in primary adjectival predicatives, where the copulas *være* 'be' or *bli* 'become' link the adjectival predicative and its predicational base (the subject), the gender and number markings may be crucial with secondary adjectival predicates. In such cases, adjectives have the same distribution as sentence and predicate adverbials, and the number and gender features on the adjective may disambiguate between subject and object predicatives when these have diverging number or gender values. This is illustrated in (83) where the (b) example is modified from the actual google hit in (a):

- (83) a. Det var på Tromsø lufthavn vi først møtte ham, **slitne** og **ubarberte**. (www)
It was at Tromsø airport we first met him, tired.GN.(PL) and unshaved.GN.(PL)
- b. Det var på Tromsø lufthavn vi først møtte ham, **sliten** og **ubarbert**.
It was at Tromsø airport we first met him, tired.SG and unshaved.SG

In (83)a, the general number features of *slitne* and *ubarberte* indicates that the predication applies to the plural subject *vi* and not the singular object *ham*, while in (83)b, the situation is reversed and the singular adjectives are necessarily understood to be predicated over the singular object.

Non-copular adjectival predicatives have the same distribution as sentence and predicate adverbials. In this respect, it is worth noticing that *-t* Adjectives also have an additional function not found with the other two forms, as the *-t* suffix is the regular way to derive adverbs from adjectives in Norwegian. In this respect, *-t* corresponds to the English and French adverbial suffixes *-ly* and *-ment*. This is illustrated in example (84), which shows adjectives ending in *-t* both as adjectival and sentential modifiers:

- (84) a. [I] innspurten av valgkampen blir en Oslo-politiker avslørt å ha **grovt diskriminerende** holdninger til innvandrere. (www)
In the final spurt of the election campaign, an Oslo-politician is revealed to have coarse.SG.NT (i.e coarsely) discriminating attitudes towards immigrants.
- b. Morten forsyner **seg grovt** av dagens lunsj.
Morten serves him (self) coarse.SG.NT (i.e coarsely) of today's lunch.

Because of this function of *-t* Adjectives, a shift between a neuter and a common gender adjective distinguishes between a sentence adverbial and a free predicative if the subject is masculine or feminine. This is illustrated in (85) where the adjective in (a) functions as a nominal predicate and the one in (b) as a sentence adverbial.

- (85) a. Avdelingen sto **fin** og **påskepyntet** til foreldremøte (sic) (...). (www)
The department.M stood nice.CG and easter.decorated.CG for the parental.meeting

- b. Han sto **fint** så lenge han fikk gjøyme hode (sic) (...). (www)
He stood nice.N (i.e. nicely) as long as he could hide his head.

If the subject is neuter or the adjective invaried between the two indefinite forms (see 3.9.4), the adjective is most commonly ambiguous between the two functions. The fact that the *-t* Adjective take on the adverbial function does not entail that the sign is polysemic, but may, on the contrary, be seen as a natural extension/reflex of the semantics of neuter gender in Norwegian. While masculine, feminine and common gender relates exclusively to masculine or feminines, neuter is a left-over category and relates to everything that is not masculine or feminine, whether it is nominal or not, confer Corbett's (1991) neutral agreement. Extensions of the use of neuter gender to refer to non-nominals will also be discussed in 4.3.2 and 4.4.4

A particularly interesting illustration of the non-grammatical agreement requirements of predicative adjectives in Norwegian is given by the following gem from Erlend Loe's latest novel *Stille dager i Mixing Part* (2009):

- (86) Sannheten Nina, er at du ikke aner hva teater er. Du ville ikke kjent igjen **teater** om **det** danset **naken** foran deg og ropte med ropert at det var teater. (Loe 2009)
the truth Nina, is that you have no idea what theatre is. You would not (have) recognised theatre if it (demonstrative.N.SG) danced naked.N.SG in front of you and screamed with a megaphone that it was (a) theatre.

The adjectival predicative *naken* is here common gender even though it is predicated over (what seems to be) a non-human neuter subject *det* with its antecedent *teater*. One could thus have expected a neuter *-t* Adjective since theatre(s) normally are perceived as non-human. Instead, the use of Stem Adjective here brings about a metaphorical anthropomorphism of the subject. Interestingly, the use of a neuter form here, which most readily would have given rise to an adverbial interpretation, would give a literal reading of the subject *teater* and *det* (as in the building or institution), but a metaphorical one of the predicates *danse nakent* 'dance naked(ly)' etc., while in the actual example, the predicates *danset* 'danced' and *naken* 'naked' and *ropte med ropert* 'screamed with (a) megaphone' are interpreted literally since they apply to the anthropomorphised *teater*. I have never seen any discussions of a similar example in the scholarly literature.⁹³

The proposed featural composition in Grammatical Definition III also explains the behaviour and interpretational range of Norwegian Positive Adjectives in the predicative (and adverbial) function. There is therefore no need to assume any polysemy in the regular Norwegian positive adjectival system.

3.9.4 Over- and under-differentiated paradigms – featural composition revisited

In addition to the regular pattern discussed so far, the Norwegian positive adjectival system also contains both over- and under-differentiating paradigms. The present understanding of featural distribution in Norwegian adjectives as well as the

⁹³ I thank Erlend Lien for discussing – and sharing my enthusiasm over – this example.

understanding of why singular definite nouns combine with different adjectival forms depending on their function as predicatives or attributives is corroborated by the over-differentiating declension of the adjective *liten* ‘small’. Differently from most adjectives *liten* come in five (or even six), and not three, forms (*liten, lita, lite, lille (vesle), små*), for which I propose the following definitions:

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION VI: PROPOSED VALUE FOR THE PARADIGM OF *LITEN*

Liten: [LITEN, POS, M, SG, INDEF]
 Lita: [LITEN, POS, F, SG, INDEF]
 Lite: [LITEN, POS, N, SG, INDEF]
 Små: [LITEN, POS, PL]

Lille: [LITEN, POS, SG, DEF]
 (Vesle): [LITEN, POS, SG, DEF]

Firstly, *liten* is the only adjective in standard Norwegian that has separate masculine and feminine indefinite forms *liten* and *lita*, instead of one common form for both genders. Secondly, and also more importantly for our discussion, *liten* is the only adjective that does not have a form marked for general number, but instead uses a plural suppletive form *små*, that combines with both predicative and attributive plural indefinites and definites. Since *liten* lacks a form marked for general number and neither the plural *små* nor the singular indefinite forms *liten, lita, lite* may combine with singular definites in strict agreement environments, its positive paradigm also contains a form, for some speakers even two (i.e. *lille* and *vesle*), that is marked as singular indefinite and that combines attributively with definite singulars of all genders. In the predicative function, on the other hand, where gender, but not definiteness, has a function, the indefinite forms are used. See also Corbett’s (2006: 15, 87) use of *liten/små* as an illustration of suppletion.

The existence of the *liten* paradigm corroborates two important points in the present analysis. Firstly, the paradigm shows that gender as an ontological category is more important from the predicative non-agreement position than definiteness is. Secondly, the fact that *små* combines with both Definite and Indefinite Plurals, shows that the definiteness requirements in attributive position only requires that there be no featural clash inside the phrase, not that all members should carry the same features. The over-differentiated declension of *liten* thus supports the present proposal that all *-e* Adjectives are marked for general number, and never for definiteness. In the present understanding, *lille* and *vesle* are the only adjectival forms that are marked as definite in the entire Norwegian Nominal System. In the regular positive adjectival paradigm, no adjective is marked as definite, but two forms are marked as indefinite while one is necessarily neutral with regard to definiteness, as it doesn’t even have a specified number value.

The positive system of Norwegian adjectives also includes under-differentiated paradigms. Firstly, a number of adjectives do not have distinct gender forms in the

singular indefinite (mostly for phonological reasons).⁹⁴ Secondly, many adjectives ending in vowels or *-s* only have one form in the positive.⁹⁵ I propose the following featural composition for the two types of under-differentiating paradigms, illustrated by *glad* ‘glad’ and *lilla* ‘lilac/purple’ respectively.

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION VII: PROPOSED VALUES OF GLAD AND LILLA

Glad:	[GLAD, POSITIVE, SG, INDEF]
Glade:	[GLAD, POSITIVE, GENERAL NUMBER]
Lilla:	[LILLA, POSITIVE, GENERAL NUMBER]

The proposed values above satisfactorily describe the distributional and interpretational range of the under-differentiated paradigms. The singular indefinite *glad* covers the distribution of both neuter and common gendered Indefinite Singular Adjectives. This indicates that *glad* shares the same features as other Indefinite Singulars except for their gender specifications, which, thus, are removed from their featural specification. The distribution of *glade*, of course, is the same as for *-e* Adjectives belonging to the regular pattern. Due to the lack of any singular indefinite form whatsoever, adjectival forms like *lilla* may cover the full range of positive adjectival functions due to its versatile general number marking. The fact that regular general positive adjectives, i.e. *-e* Adjectives have a more limited distribution is due to the existence of the singular indefinite forms.

Before closing these sub-sections on positive adjectives, I will shortly discuss two other accounts of the featural composition of Norwegian (and other Mainland Scandinavian) Adjectives, namely those of Julien (2005) and Börjars and Donahue (2000). While these scholars propose what may seem to be a more economic featural distribution of Norwegian Adjectives than the one presented here, it will be shown that the present proposal not only gives a more accurate account of the data, but also yields a neat and highly economic distribution of gender, number and definiteness features in Norwegian attributive adjective-noun combinations.

Julien (2005) proposes a more sparse featural composition of the two Indefinite Adjectives which she gives the values singular, for the stem form, and singular neuter, for the *-t* form. Differently from the present proposal, Julien thus does not assume any indefiniteness feature on these two forms, or a common gender feature on the stem form. The lack of indefinite features in Julien’s proposal may be motivated by the fact that these forms combine predicatively with definite subjects. As seen in 3.9.3, this may, however, be explained by the fact that definiteness is irrelevant in the non-strictly grammatical agreement context of predicatives. On the other hand, Julien does not take into consideration either the pronominal use of adjectives or the number neutrality of bare nouns. Under the present approach, the proposed indefinite feature plays several important roles in deciding the distribution and interpretation of these two adjectival forms. Firstly, it restricts the interpretation of bare nouns in attributive modification, recall section 3.9.1, secondly it prevents them from combining with singular definites in

⁹⁴ This is typically the case with adjectives ending in different suffixes like *-lig* and *-ende*, with adjectives ending in *-t*, *-tt*, *-d*, *-dd*, and with some ending in *-sk* and *-s*.

⁹⁵ For an overview of the different paradigms see Faarlund et al (1997), § 5.1.2.2

the same position, and, thirdly, it limits their interpretation in their pronominal use to singular indefinite referents as we saw in section 3.9.2.1. The lack of a common gender feature on the stem form in Julien’s proposal is (probably) based on the idea that since the *-t* form is marked for neuter gender, the stem form may be seen as a left-over category combining with everything that is not neuter. While I am sympathetic to an economic distribution of features, I suggest that the common gender feature does play a role. Norwegian grammar clearly shows that the major gender division is between common gender on the one hand and neuter on the other and that it is neuter that is the left over category – comprising everything that is not masculine and/or feminine, i.e. common gender. In other words, common gender is a more specific feature than neuter. If it were the other way around, as Julien proposes, we would expect the common gender form, qua the least specific one, to be used for neutral agreement. However, in all parts of the Norwegian Nominal System, this is the role of neuter gender. Also example (86) where a Stem Adjective *naken* triggers the anthropomorphism of the neuter *det* (and/or *teater*), is an indication that Stem Adjectives carry a common gender feature, which, as the merger of masculine and feminine, is associated with humanness.

While the introduction of general number as a featural value for *-e* Adjectives is novel (as is its presence in the Norwegian Nominal System as a whole), accounts of *-e* Adjectives without reference to polysemy have also been proposed by Julien (2005) and Börjars and Donahue (2000). Julien proposes that the *-e* suffix on Norwegian (and other Mainland Scandinavian) adjectives is “an unspecified realisation of agreement” (2005: 47) while Börjars and Donahue propose that Danish *store* since it “can occur in environments of either value for all three features (DEFINITE, GENDER and NUMBER) (...) must be unspecified for these features” (2000: 337). While these proposals may satisfactorily describe the distribution and interpretation of these forms as predicatives and attributives, it is more difficult to see how they may explain the difference with English and French when it comes to their pronominal use. English and French adjectives combine with singulars and plurals, definites and indefinites, and must therefore likewise be underspecified or neutral with regard to number and definiteness agreement. However, contrary to *-e* Adjectives and the other two Norwegian positive forms, the English and French adjectives do not function pronominally. Neither Julien nor Börjars and Donahue discuss pronominal uses of adjectives. I therefore maintain that the *-e* Adjective, although, like adjectives in English and French, it is neutral with regard to number and definiteness values, differ from its English and French counterparts in that it carries general number or is numberable.

While the difference between predicative and attributive use has played a definitional role in traditional treatments of Norwegian Adjectives, their pronominal function as presented in 3.9.2 has been quite neglected. From the present Neo-saussurean viewpoint, this use of Norwegian Adjectives is highly relevant since they appear in a non-agreement environment where their interpretation, consequently, is independent of other nominal elements. The previous sub-sections also showed that attributive adjectives in Norwegian often would restrict the interpretations of otherwise ambiguous noun phrases – an indication that their featural contribution goes beyond agreement.

3.9.5 Comparative and Superlatives

Comparatives and superlatives are, in Norwegian, marked either morphologically, by the

use of suffixes and, sometimes, vowel or stem change, or syntactically by combination of the positive forms with the comparative and superlative forms of the quantifier *mye*, namely *mer* and *mest*. This subsection briefly discusses the morphological forms. As this chapter deals exclusively with the uni-signs of the Norwegian Nominal System, the syntactic forms will not be discussed.

Norwegian has only one comparative form ending in *-(e)re*, while the superlative comes in two forms, marked by *-(e)st*, and *-(e)ste*, which are traditionally named the "strong" and the "weak" form, respectively (see e.g. Faarlund et al. 1997).⁹⁶ Since in 3.9.3 we have argued that the weak/strong distinction is irrelevant in the contemporary Norwegian Positive System, an alternative explanation of the difference between the two superlative forms will be investigated. I propose that while the first one is marked simply as superlative, the second one, with the additional ending *-e*, is marked for general number, parallel to the positive *-e* Adjective(s). Also the comparative form ends in *-e*, and I will suggest, based on its interpretational and distributional range, that also this form is marked for general number, recall Grammatical Definition IV, p. 100.

The general number values will be taken to motivate distinctions in the use of Norwegian Comparative and Superlatives compared to English forms like *bigger* and *biggest*, which I assume are just marked as comparative and superlative, respectively. The assumption of a general number feature on the Norwegian Comparative and Superlatives comes at relatively little cost, since the value, as the present investigation shows, seems to be pervasive in the Norwegian Nominal System. (As we will see in Chapter 4, also many Norwegian function words are marked for general number.) The major topic of this section is the difference between the two superlative forms, but first, a brief presentation of the comparative is in order.

Norwegian Comparatives may, in principle, occur in, or combine with, all kinds of noun phrases both attributively and predicatively, and they function adverbially without any additional marking. The predicative and adverbial function of Norwegian Comparatives are illustrated in (87)a,b, while examples of attributive comparatives in combination with the four different noun forms are given in (87)c-f.

- (87) a. [F]iskekjøttet er **rødere** hos ørreten enn hos laksen (...) (www)
fish.flesh.DEF is redder at trout.DEF than at salmon.DEF.
"The flesh is redder on trouts than on salmons"
- b. Lav lønn er hovedgrunnen til at kvinner stemmer **rødere** enn menn, melder
Forskning.no. (www)
low income is main.reason.DEF to that women vote redder than men, reports
Forskning.no
"Low income is the main reason why women vote redder than men, reports
Forskning.no"
- c. Rød aroma. Lik aroma i smak, men har **en rødere farge**. (www)
Red aroma. Like aroma in taste, but has a redder colour.
- d. Har noen **rødere høstfarger** på bladene enn andre? (www)
have some redder autumn.colours on leafs.DEF than others.
"Do some have redder autumn.colours on their leaves than others"

⁹⁶ The presence of the initial *e* in *-(e)re*, *-(e)st* and *-(e)ste* depends on the form of the stem. In what follows, I will use the forms without the parentheses.

- e. Hvis ansiktet ligger i **den rødere enden** av spekteret, er det mest sannsynlig en mann. (www)
If the face lies in the redder end of the specter, is it most probably a man.
- f. **[D]e rødere bildene** hadde en tendens til å havne i mannebunken, mens de grønnaktige oftere... (www)
The redder pictures had a tendency of showing up in the man.pile, while the greenish ones more often....

Attributive use of definite comparatives as in (87)e,f is nevertheless quite restricted and typically receive absolute or partitive interpretations. In English, definite forms of the comparative are used with superlative interpretation when only two items are being compared, but this is not the case here. Norwegian used to be like English in this respect, but though this construction still is used in a few dialects, the use of comparatives in combination with the demonstratives *den, det, de* to express superlativity is now impossible in standard Norwegian (Faarlund et al 1997: 364).⁹⁷ When used in combination with definites, the comparative meaning is relaxed and Norwegian comparatives typically receive an absolute lesser-degree interpretation, as opposed to the high-degree interpretation of absolute superlatives, in these contexts.

As witnessed in (88), Norwegian comparatives may also be used pronominally, with both singular and plural interpretations.

- (88) a. [Da?] Greier jeg meg med det buret jeg har (Kunne alltid tenkt meg **større** men mitt bur er nok hakket større enn ditt likevel.)
[then] cope i me with the cage i have (could always thought me bigger but my cage is adv the notch bigger than yours anyway)
'Then I'll cope with the cage I have (could always have wanted a bigger one but my cage is probably slightly bigger than yours anyway.'
- b. Jeg har aldri likt de, har alltid ønsket meg **større**.
I have never liked them, have always wanted me bigger.
'I never liked them, I've always wanted bigger ones'
- c. Når det gjelder orgasmer, så er det godt mulig at gutter kan få **sterkere**. Men jenter har **lengre** og kan få flere.
'When it comes to orgasms, so is it well possible that boys may have stronger. But girls have longer and can get more (manyer).'
'When it comes to orgasms, it is very well possible that boys have stronger ones. But girls have longer ones and may have several.'

While the referent of *større* in (88)a is singular, the referents of the boldfaced adjectives in (88)b,c are necessarily interpreted as plural. Contrary to English, Norwegian has no element that can serve as a plural dummy numeral in such cases. The distinction attained when switching between *one* and *ones* in English thus cannot be explicitly expressed in

⁹⁷ In French, comparatives are predominantly formed syntactically by combining the positive adjective with *plus* 'more'. Since the standard way to form superlatives in French is the combination of the comparative with the definite articles *le, la, les*, there is no such thing as "definite comparatives" in French as such combinations always will receive a superlative interpretation.

Norwegian.⁹⁸ In accordance with Bouchard's understanding of number as the minimal means to identify an actant in grammar, and earlier proposals for the value of Bare Nouns and *-e* Adjectives, I suggest that Norwegian Comparative Adjectives are marked for general number. Recall from 3.4.3.1- 3.4.3.4, that a general number feature, though vague with regard to its number, and consequently also definiteness, values, may receive interpretations compatible with all featural values of these categories, and further that its interpretation always is fixed in strict agreement contexts. Like all other number features, general number also assures that its host may function as a referential noun phrase without the support of another element. If we assume that Norwegian Comparatives have the feature general number we therefore predict that they should be able to refer pronominally both to singular and plurals, and that they should combine with all types of nouns and noun phrases – singular and plural, definite and indefinite – both attributively and predicatively. As seen in (87) and (88) above, this prediction is borne out by the facts.

Whereas Norwegian has only one comparative form, the language possesses two superlative forms, which, as we have seen, have the endings *-est* and *-este*. We will start by looking at the *-este* Superlatives that I propose are marked for general number. Attributively, the *-este* Superlative may be part of both singular and plural, definite and indefinite noun phrases:

- (89) a. Trafikkregel nummer én: **Den største** bilen med **det groveste** hornet har forkjørsrett. (www)
traffic.rule number one: the biggest car with the coarsest horn takes precedence.
- b. Det finnes derfor god grunn til å avstå fra **de største** bilene. (www)
there exist therefore good reason to renounce from the biggest cars.
- c. Vår egen øyelinse, pupillen, har **en største** diameter på ca. 6 millimeter. (www)
our own eye.lence, the pupil, has a biggest diameter on around 6 millimetre.
- d. Det må altså være **noen "minste deler"** som naturen er bygd opp av. (www)
there must therefore be some smallest parts that nature is built up of.

The use of attributive superlatives in predetermined indefinite noun phrases as in (89)c,d seems restricted to measure adjectives and are far more common in the singular than in the plural. Further examples are given in (90).

- (90) a. Vi jobber for å komme fram til **noen minste standarder** på kvalitet og tilgjengelighet på kundebehandlingen, forklarer Thon. (www)
we are working on defining some smallest standards on quality and availability on customer.treatment, explains Thon.
- b. For forbrytelser finnes en øvre straffegrense og det er helt okay, men det burde også finnes **en laveste grense**.
for crimes (there) exist an upper punishment.limit and that is fully ok, but there should also exist a lowest limit.

⁹⁸ The indefinite quantifier *noen*, corresponding to English *some* is seldom used post-adjectivally. In addition, *en*, *ei*, *et* are generally used post-adjectivally only in combinations with a preposed version of the same element.

- c. Her er det ingen regler om at leieavtalen må inngås for **en minste leietid**.
there is no rule saying that the lease must be signed for a smallest lease.time
- d. Dersom det fantes **et høyeste primtall**, så finnes [*sic*] det også et endelig
(motsatt av uendelig) antall primtall.
if there existed a highest prime.number, there would also be a finite (opposite
of infinite) number prime.number.

Superlatives in *-este* also combine attributively with non-predetermined Bare Nouns. This is the case with superlatives that indicate a ranking in a hierarchy such as *første buss* 'first bus', *største størrelse* 'biggest size' and with superlatives with absolute meanings, e.g. *største fornøyelse* 'greatest pleasure', *beste hilsen* 'best regards'. In both cases the property of the superlative adjective is presented as an inherent characteristic of the entity denoted by the noun, there is thus no explicit comparison with other entities in either case. Superlatives indicating a ranking may be used pronominally (while this is not the case with absolute interpretations).

- (91) a. I stedet for å kjøpe minste strl. på voksenavdelingen kan man kjøpe **største** på
barneavdelingen billigere! (www)
instead of to buy smallest size on adult.department can one buy biggest on
children-department cheaper!
- b. [O]k, men hvorfor ikke kjøpe **nyeste** da? (www)
ok, but why not buy newest then?

Traditionally, the forms in *-este* have been described as “weak” as opposed to the forms in *-est*, which are considered “strong”. The weak/strong distinction is considered to correspond to definiteness insofar as the weak is definite and the strong indefinite, recall 3.9.3. In other words, the prediction from the traditional analysis is that the weak *-este* Superlatives are definite. However, as seen in (89) and (90), *-este* combines with both explicit definites and indefinites. In order to accommodate this fact, I propose analysing *-este* Superlatives as having general number.⁹⁹ The proposal that *-este* superlatives are marked for general number is in accordance with the data we have witnessed so far as it both may be used pronominally and may combine with other signs marked for all combinations of number and (in)definiteness. Further properties that support this hypothesis will be presented in the comparison between the *-este* and the *-est* Superlatives below.

Contrary to all other adjective forms we have treated so far, the *-este* Superlative is never used predicatively, only attributively and pronominally. The predicative function is therefore held exclusively by superlatives ending in *-(e)st*, which are used with all types of subject, bases both singular and plural (definite and indefinite) as illustrated in (92)a,b. Superlatives ending in *-est* also take on the function of positive *-t* Adjectives in that they are used adverbially, as seen in c.

⁹⁹ Use of superlatives in predetermined indefinite plural noun phrases as in (89)d and (90)a is quite rare. This, I suggest, is nevertheless due to interpretational ‘clashes’ between the superlative and the plural indefinite meaning, not because of any featural clash between the two (types of) items.

- (92) a. Faren for elgsmell er **størst** ved fullmåne. (www)
The danger of elk.bang is biggest with full.moon
b. Jeg/du/han/vi/dere/de er **størst** i klassen.
I/you/he/we/they are biggest in the class
c. Da har vi tatt med Vålerenga, som tenker **størst** av alle. (www)
then have we taken with Vålerenga, who think biggest of all.

Contrary to *-este* Superlatives, the *-est* forms never combine attributively with either definites or predetermined indefinites, but they do combine with non predetermined Indefinite Plurals and Bare nouns, as in (93):¹⁰⁰

- (93) a. Hvem har **størst** bil?! Jeg har **størst** bil! (www)
who has biggest car I have biggest car (www)
”Who has the biggest car? I have the biggest car..”
b. Italia er ikke det landet som er kjent for å ha **størst** biler (www)
italy is not the country that is known for to have biggest cars.
”Italy is not the country that is known to have the biggest cars.”
c. Da slipper vi å krangle om hvem som har **finest** dress, konstaterer Lasse.
then drop we to fight about who that has nicest suit, ascertains Lasse.
then we don’t have to fight over who has the nicest suit, Lasse ascertains.
d. Limenaria er etter min mening den koseligste og har **finest** strender.
Limenaria is in my opinion the cosiest and has (the) nicest beaches.

While combinations of *-este* Superlatives and Bare Nouns, as mentioned above, always present the (superlative) property of the adjective as inherent, the superlatives in (93) are relative and require contextual information. (It is also worth noticing that contrary to what is the case with positive adjectives where the so-called weak form triggers indefinite interpretations, the superlatives in (93) would be translated by definites in English, which goes counter to the weak/strong analysis.) Like all other Norwegian Adjectives, also the *-est* Superlative may function pronominally, and the occurrences of *bil* in (93)a and *dress* in (93)c could very well have been omitted if the extra-sentential context was clear enough. We return to the pronominal function of *-est* Superlatives in examples (94) and (95) below.

The two superlatives thus stand in complementary distribution for the functions of adverbials and predicatives, which are exclusive for the *-est* form, and as attributives in predetermined or definite noun phrases, which only is available to *-este* Superlatives. On the other hand, they both function as attributive modifiers of Bare Nouns as well as pronominally – with consistent interpretational differences. The distribution of the two Norwegian Superlatives is summarised in Table 4 below, where X means that the relevant superlative form is not attested in a certain function, while √ indicates that the form is attested.

¹⁰⁰ The *-este* form is thus not obligatory in prenominal position, contrary to Julien (2005:40)

TABLE 4: FUNCTIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF NORWEGIAN SUPERLATIVES

Function/Form	<i>-est</i> Superlatives	<i>-este</i> Superlatives
Attributive:		
- Predetermined/definite:	X	√
- Bare:	√	√
Pronominal:	√	√
Predicative:	√	X
Adverbial:	√	X

The proposal that the two Norwegian Superlatives diverge in that the one ending in *-est* only is marked as superlative while the one ending in *-este* in addition is marked for general number suggest that *-este* Superlatives, because of their additional number marking are more noun-like (more referential) while *-est* Superlatives are more adjectival (more relational). As shown in Table 4, this is reflected in their interpretational and distributional range.

Firstly, the fact that *-este* Superlatives have more noun-like and referential properties, explains why the *-est* form is chosen in the non-referential predicative and adverbial function. The referential properties of the general numbered *-este* Superlative would be superfluous in the predicative and adverbial function and the strictly relational and less marked *-est* Superlative is thus preferred. (With positive adjectives, the *-e* Adjectives, which likewise carry general number, are nevertheless used as predicatives with plural bases. That this is not the case with the superlative *-este* form is explained by the fact that contrary to the positive Stem- and *-t* Adjectives, *-est* Adjectives are not marked as singular and there is thus no numeral difference between the two superlatives).

The present proposal also predicts that both superlatives, in theory, should be able to agree (attributively) with all kinds of elements, irrespective of their gender, number and definiteness values, as none of them carry any agreement requirements or restrictions. This prediction, however, is not entirely supported by the facts as *-est* Superlatives never appear in either definite or predetermined indefinite noun phrases and since *-este* superlatives are extremely hard to find with (non-predetermined) plural indefinites. On the other hand, we find consistent meaning differences when switching between the two superlative forms as attributives for non-predetermined Bare Nouns as well as in their related pronominal use. While *-este* Superlatives, in such contexts, typically are interpreted as absolute or as having an (inherent) position in a ranking hierarchy, *-est* Superlatives are always interpreted through (a contextually defined) comparison. With *-este* Superlatives the superlative property is thus seen as inherent to the entity, prior to the utterance and independent of context, so, in other words, they are individual and not stage level predicates. The difference in interpretation should be clear from the examples below where the relative *-est* Superlatives are contrasted with both absolute and inherent uses of *-este* Superlatives, in (94) and (95) respectively.

- (94) a. Jeg har alltid lest dine bokkritikker med **største fornøyelse**. (www)
I have always read your book.critics with (the) biggest pleasure

- b. Hvilken skive(r) ser Dere tilbake på med **størst fornøyelse**? (www)
 what album(s) do you look back on with (the) biggest pleasure
- (95) a. Jeg kjøpte **største** (størrelse)
 i bought biggest (size)
 ”I bought the biggest one/size (available)”
- b. Jeg kjøpte **størst** (størrelse)
 i bought biggest (size)
 ”I was the one that bought the biggest one/size, (but there were bigger sizes that nobody bought”

The difference in interpretation between non-predetermined *-est* and *-este* attributive constructions, witnessed in (94) and (95) is reminiscent of the one between pre- and postposed superlatives in French, noted by Bouchard (2002: 150-151). In French, both comparatives and superlatives are generally postposed, but may be preposed with absolute interpretations (the distinction nevertheless seems less clear in French than in Norwegian). In Bouchard (2002), this is linked to the fact that post- and preposed attributive adjectives combine with different parts of the noun – preposed ones with a sub-element of the N-network, postposed ones with the whole noun (see 5.2.3). Preposed adjectives thus form a tighter connection with their head noun than postposed ones do, which in the case of superlatives explain why preposed adjectives receive inherent or absolute interpretations, while postposed ones are relational. A similar explanation might be available also for Norwegian. Superlatives ending in *-este* are then closely connected to their head noun, as they modify a subpart of the noun, (it’s characteristic function), and are perceived as inherent properties. This tight connection is strengthened by their general number feature which absorbs the number and definiteness features of its head. The *-est* Superlative, on the other hand, combines with the noun as a whole, and since it does not seek any agreement relation with any particular entity, it is perceived as strictly relational.

Because of its (general) number feature, one might expect the *-este* form to function pronominally more readily than the *-est* form. However, and as we have seen, both forms are used pronominally. We have already seen that also English and French comparatives and superlatives are used pronominally more easily than the positive adjectival forms, which likewise are unmarked for number. I suggest that this may be due to the inherent relational character of the comparative and superlative features which presupposes a comparison between two or more referents. While it does not carry a number feature, the *-est* comparative always evoke the idea of at least two referents, of which one is identifiable, something that facilitates its pronominal use.

3.9.6 Closing Norwegian Adjectives

The data presented in this section corroborates the proposal that the Norwegian adjectival forms have the values proposed in Grammatical Definition III and Grammatical Definition IV.

The first two forms *stor* and *stort* are relatively unproblematic and the present understanding of these two signs is in line with *Norsk Referansegrammatikk* (Faarlund et al 1997). Attributively, they combine with Bare Nouns of the relevant genders and yield

indefinite singular interpretations, and when used pronominally, they refer to singular, indefinite entities that otherwise would have been referred to either by a masculine or feminine, or a neuter noun, respectively. The gender features indicate or restrict what kind of lexical noun the adjectives may combine with (predicatively or attributively) or refer to, when used pronominally, while the singular number feature either determines or agrees with the number value of the full noun phrase, with attributive adjectives, or enables it to function pronominally and refer to singular entities. Finally, the indefiniteness feature assures that pronominal adjectives may only refer to indefinite entities, while preventing them from combining with definite forms in environments with strong agreement requirements, i.e. as attributives.

The introduction of the notion of general number or number ability into the Norwegian Nominal System has proven fruitful also for the understanding of Norwegian Adjectives. Norwegian Adjectives are different from adjectives in English and French in that they are marked for (either singular or general) number – a property that enables them to function pronominally in accordance with Bouchard's (2002) proposal of number as a minimal means to identify an actant in grammar. The proposed analysis, of adjectives ending in *-e* as being numberable may explain both its apparent polysemic character and its ability to function pronominally as a referential noun phrase. The introduction of general number also in the adjectival system further helps dispatch both the notions of polysemy and the different declensions which are problematic from a Neo-saussurean viewpoint since they are at variance with the assumed one-to-one relationship between form and meaning.

This section has dealt exclusively with the strict syntactic distribution and the morphological featural composition (gender, number, definiteness) of Norwegian Adjectives. More in-depth analyses of the many different interpretations that result from combining adjectives with other nominal elements will be given in 5.3.

3.10A Welcome Consequence – Economic Featural Distribution in Attributive Adjective-Noun Combinations

All in all, this chapter has discussed fourteen different abstract forms, and proposed new analyses or grammatical definitions for at least 6 or 7 of them. It has further been demonstrated how these modifications in the featural distribution may explain all major cases of previously assumed polysemy in the Norwegian Nominal system.

As can be seen from the table below, the present understanding of the different Norwegian Adjective and Noun forms further yields a compositional and economic account of featural distribution in attributive adjective + noun combinations where signs that do not have fixed values – for gender, number or definiteness – combine with signs that do.

TABLE 5: VALUE OF ATTRIBUTIVE ADJECTIVE-NOUN COMBINATIONS

Stor.GC.SG.INDEF	+	Elg.M.GN	→	stor elg.M.SG.INDEF
Stor.GC.SG.INDEF	+	Kolle.F.GN	→	stor kolle.F.SG.INDEF
Stort.N.SG.INDEF	+	Dyr.N.GN	→	stort dyr.N.SG.INDEF
Store.GN	+	Dyret.N.SG.DEF	→	store dyret.N.SG.DEF
Store.GN	+	Dyrene.PL.DEF	→	store dyrene.PL.DEF
Store.GN	+	Elger.PL.INDEF	→	store elger.PL.INDEF
Store.GN	+	Dyr.N.GN	→	store dyr.N.GN (⇒ PL.INDEF)

In the two first rows, we see how the common gender feature of the adjectives are determined by the more specific masculine or feminine features of the noun it combines with, which in turn gets their general number feature specified by the singular indefinite features of the adjective. In rows 4-6, on the other hand, it is the general number value of the adjectives that get their interpretation determined by the specified number and (in)definiteness values of the three suffixed forms. In all cases the more specific feature wins over the less specific one. The last combination [store dyr.N.GEN] is special in that it is the only one that does not have full featural specifications. Such a phrase will nevertheless always be interpreted as an indefinite plurality since all other combinations have full-fledged forms. This is represented by the sign ⇒ in the table.

The interdependence in the distribution or organisation of number, gender and definiteness values between Norwegian Nouns and attributive Adjectives displayed in Table 5 might be a reflection of the fact that such combinations make up a syntactically complex head, with a tighter relation than what is normal between a head and its dependent, see 5.2.3 in the chapter on adjectival modification and syntactically complex signs where it will be shown how the present understanding of Norwegian nouns as being

obligatory marked for both number and definiteness may motivate the strong preference for preposition for Norwegian attributive adjectives, even if the language is head first, and the variation seen with English and French.

The proposed analysis of Norwegian Nouns and Adjectives, corroborates all parts of Bouchard's theory of number as the minimal means to identify an actant in grammar. The present analysis thus provides further support both for Bouchard's (2002) analysis of adjectives number and interfaces in English and French, while at the same time demonstrating the suitability of Saussurean grammar for understanding the relationship between form, meaning and interpretation in language.

The presentations of data and the analyses performed both depend entirely on the theoretical and methodological principles given by Saussure and Bouchard's Neo-saussurean framework, presented in Chapter 2. In the next chapter the same methodology will be applied to the signs of the closed parts of speech in the Norwegian Nominal System, namely ad- and/or pronominals.

Chapter 4

Nominal function words

One of the core ideas of this monograph is that the same principles apply to all facets of language. Language is a collection of socially conventionalised arbitrary signs, and this conventionalised arbitrariness applies to all parts and levels of language, and to all kinds of signs. While chapter Chapter 3 discussed the two lexical nominal categories nouns and adjectives, this chapter explores Norwegian functional signs, or function words – i.e. words that traditionally have been considered to “ha[ve] little or no meaning apart from the grammatical idea [they] express[.]” (Fries 1940).

The previous chapter has shown that Neo-saussurean theory yields straightforward accounts of Norwegian Nouns and Adjectives. In this chapter, I argue that the same approach is also capable of accounting for nominal function words. When we have considered nouns, adjectives and function words, we are in a position to account for the combination of these elements in syntactically complex noun phrases, which we turn to in Chapter 5.

The distinction between lexical (content) words and open word-classes on the one hand and function words and closed classes on the other is, despite the fact that no true agreement has been reached on exactly where to draw the lines between them, one of the most established axioms in linguistics. If both lexical words and function words are signs expressing the conventionalised arbitrary relation between a *signifié* and a *signifiant* as assumed here, they should nevertheless all operate on, and respond to, the same basic principles. One guiding idea behind this chapter is thus that the distinction between lexical and functional items or classes, while being descriptively useful, is theoretically irrelevant.

Even though I see no theoretical reason to distinguish between lexical and functional signs, I nevertheless devote a whole chapter to the latter. This is a clear admittance of the fact that I find the distinction both descriptively adequate and necessary. Nominal function words differ from lexical words in that not only their additional semantics, but also their core meaning is ‘grammatical’ in nature. Because of this, nominal function words are more problematic than lexical words when it comes to separating between what I will term their core and additional or paradigmatic value. That is, even if it might seem obvious that a sign like *elgen* consists of two kinds of information, a core meaning, ELG, and additional paradigmatic features indicating MASCULINE, SINGULAR, DEFINITE, it might be less obvious that a function word like *en* consists of a core meaning EN different from its additional values MASCULINE, and INDEFINITE. This is nevertheless exactly what I will propose; in the same way as lexical signs consist of a core lexical value, common for all signs in an inflectional paradigm, as well as additional (more) grammatical features, paradigmatic function words consist of a core content semantics, which, though grammatical and less tangible in nature than the core value of signs from the open word classes, has a special status compared to their additional paradigmatic features. The bulk of this chapter will thus be devoted to showing

that such a distinction is valid (and fruitful) also in the explanation of (paradigmatic) function words. This distinction will e.g. be useful for understanding the role of accentuation on Norwegian function words. As we will see, many nominal function words in Norwegian display a difference in interpretation between accentuated and nonaccentuated occurrences. These interpretational differences are often so sharp that they have been described as different signs. This is the case with both the *en-* and the *den-*series. In the Norwegian reference grammar, the former *en* is termed both *ubestemt artikkel* ‘indefinite article’, *ubestemt pronomen* ‘indefinite pronoun’ and *tallordet en* ‘the numeral one’, while *den* goes by the name *demonstrativt pronomen* ‘demonstrative pronoun’, *personlig pronomen* ‘personal pronoun’, *bestemt artikkel* ‘definite determiner’ *demonstrativ artikkel* ‘demonstrative determiner’ (Faarlund et al 1997). One of the proposals put forward in this chapter is that stress, in these cases, does not yield a change in word class or category. Rather, it has the normal function of accentuation in Norwegian, namely to indicate prominence of the core meaning of the accentuated sign.

The coming sections of this chapter provide support for this view by looking at different clusters of nominal function words applying the same methodology as for nouns and adjectives used in the previous chapter. Different function word forms (*signifiants*) will be scrutinised one by one in their numerous contexts, functions and interpretations in order to extract what is common to all their uses, i.e. their contextually invariant value. By doing this, I show that it is possible to provide a unified synchronic analysis of the different Norwegian nominal functional elements that not only eliminates unnecessary polysemy and homophony in the system, but at the same time also is compatible with (and supports) the analyses of nouns and adjectives proposed in Chapter 3.

Another proposition put forward in this chapter is that, in Norwegian, there is no need to distinguish between two distinct categories “determiners” and “pronouns”. In Norwegian all (so-called) determiners, except for one of the three members of the Norwegian *all-*series, which will be discussed in 4.3.3, may also be used pronominally. I will argue that the distinction between “determiner” and “pronoun” is contextual and distributional, rather than categorial. This is a very old hypothesis, presented already by Arnould & Lancelot (1660) and upheld by e.g. Guillaume (1973), Postal (1966), Stowell (1989), Miller (1992), which also is adapted by Bouchard (2002). A nice summary and additional references are given by Curat (1999: 37-42). However, although the hypothesis that determiners and pronouns does not constitute separate categories has a long history, this hypothesis has not been fully tested on Norwegian data before

The following treatment of Norwegian function words is far from exhaustive as a full-fledged analysis of each and every sign lies well outside the scope of this thesis. The coming sections therefore concentrate on the most important clusters of Norwegian function words. Section 4.1 argues that determiners and pronouns do not constitute separate word classes in Norwegian. 4.2 takes a brief look at case marked (personal) pronouns, 4.3 discusses quantifiers and 4.4 looks at demonstratives. A short summary of the role of function words in the Norwegian Nominal System is given in 4.5.

4.1 On function words and word classes

Nominal function words of different languages are often said to belong to (at least) two groups; pronominal function words (pronouns) or adnominal function words (determiners). The demarcation line between the two classes is rather fuzzy, and there seems to be a cross-linguistic tendency for these categories to overlap. Nevertheless, many languages have elements that uniquely represent one or the other. This is the case with both English and French. While many English nominal function words like e.g. *some* function both ad- and pronominally, the language also contains elements that only appear adnominally, i.e. with complements. Examples are the definite and indefinite articles *the* and *a(n)* and possessive determiners like *my*. In addition, English has elements that never take complements like the third person singular pronoun *it* and possessive pronouns like *mine*. French has clusters of function words that are exclusively either ad- or pronominal. This is the case with e.g. demonstratives (*ce chat (là/ci)*, *cette chatte (là/ci)* vs. *celui là/ci*, *celle là/ci*) and possessives (*mon/ton/son chat* vs *le mien/tien/sien*). Nevertheless, the closest French equivalents to English *a(n)* and *the*, namely *un/une* and *le/la/les*, function both pro- and adnominally.

Under the present proposal, this distinction is explained by the fact that the French articles, but not the English ones, are marked for number, which, as a minimal means to identify an actant in grammar, enables them to function as arguments (recall section 3.4.1 and Bouchard (2002)). The relevant data, exemplified with definite articles, are given in (96) for English and (97) for French:

- (96) a. I saw the (big) elk/elks.
 b. I saw the big *(one/ones).
 c. I saw it/them/(*the).
- (97) a. J'ai vu le/les (grand(s)) élan(s).
 b. J'ai vu le/les grands(s).
 c. Je le/les ai vu.

Because the French definite article is marked for number, it may function both ad- and pronominally, while English *the*, which is unmarked for number, functions only adnominally.

In Norwegian all independent (i.e. nonaffixal) nominal elements – function words included – may, except for *all*, see 4.3.3.1, function as arguments alone. Since they either display distinct properties related to different number values or has a quantificational meaning as part of their core value, I take this as support for Bouchard's hypothesis of number as a minimal means to identify a grammatical actant. In addition, except for the reflexive and reciprocal, Norwegian has no pure pronouns that never take complements like English personal *it* or possessive *mine*.

The Norwegian reference grammar (Faarlund et al, 1997) distinguishes determiners and pronouns morphologically by stating that determiners inflect for gender and number while pronouns inflect for case, and syntactically by saying that pronouns are heads of pronoun phrases while determiners determine nouns. However, there is no correspondence between the syntactic and morphological criteria. Norwegian Bokmål has

very few nominal function words that never take complements and thus always are used pronominally. These are the reflexive *seg* and the reciprocal *hverandre*, the indefinite pronoun *man* and possibly also the interrogatives *hva* ‘what’ and *hvem* ‘who’.¹⁰¹ While all these pronouns are invariable, and thus do not exhibit any case (or other kinds of) inflection, the only signs that readily show variation with regard to case, i.e. personal pronouns, function both pro- and adnominally, as we will see in the coming section 4.2.¹⁰² At the same time, all the signs listed by the reference grammar as determiners, except for *all*, also function pronominally and, as we will see, it is not clear, from a synchronic point of view, that they all inflect for (both) number and gender.

I therefore propose that, in Norwegian, there is no need to distinguish two distinct categories determiners and pronouns. Under the present view, the difference between Norwegian determiners and pronouns depends solely on the fact that the so-called determiners take complements, while the so-called pronouns do not. The distinction is then contextual rather than functional and categorial, and should therefore play no role in the semantic description of these signs. The few signs that do appear solely ad- or pronominally are all quite idiosyncratic, and are thus dubious as foundations for a categorical division, especially since none of them self-evidently fulfil the morphological criteria proposed by Faarlund et al (1997).

Compared to the two lexical nominal classes, nouns and adjectives, functional nominal elements are far more heterogeneous with regard to their paradigmatic relations or inflectional properties. While (almost) all nouns and adjectives are parts of the same respective paradigms and inflect for the same additional grammatical features, no such regularity is found for the totality, or even sub-groups, of the different functional elements. Because of this it seems difficult to pin down criteria for one or several nominal functional word classes. Rather, it seems like the different functional stems (*signifiés*) make up small idiosyncratic word classes on their own.

¹⁰¹ In spoken dialects of south-eastern Norway, which also are the ones that are closest to Bokmål, *hvem* ‘who’ is often used adnominally instead of the more standard *hvilken* ‘what/which’.

¹⁰² Even though they do not inflect for case the reflexive and reciprocal– *seg* and *hverandre* – only appear as objects, while the indefinite (generic) pronoun *man* only function as subjects. The interrogatives *hva* and *hvem* appear in all argument positions

4.2 Personal Pronouns

Below is a list of the Bokmål personal pronouns and my not very controversial proposal for their semantic values.¹⁰³

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION VIII: NORWEGIAN PERSONAL PRONOUNS

Jeg	[1P.SG.NOMINATIVE]	Meg	[1P.SG.OBLIQUE]
Du	[2P.SG.NOMINATIVE]	Deg	[2P.SG.OBLIQUE]
Han	[3P.SG.MASC.(NOMINATIVE)]	Ham	[3P.SG.MASC.OBLIQUE]
Hun	[3P.SG.FEM.NOMINATIVE]	Henne	[3P.SG.FEM.OBLIQUE]
Vi	[1P.PL.NOMINATIVE]	Oss	[1P.PL.OBLIQUE]
Dere	[2P.PL]		
De	[3P.PL.NOMINATIVE]	Dem	[3P.PL.OBLIQUE]

Personal pronouns are also clearly deictic, but I choose to see this as part of their person features. As can be seen from the list above, all personal pronouns, except for the second person plural, fulfil Faarlund et al's (1997) morphological criteria for pronounhood and inflect for case with a nominative-oblique distinction. Since the second person plural is invaried and may be used both as subject and object, I see it as unmarked for case. For the masculine, third person singular pronoun, both many dialects and written versions of Bokmål use the form *han* both as subject and objects while for others it is clearly nominative distinct from the oblique form *ham*. This is why I have put the nominative feature of *han* in parenthesis. The personal pronoun system listed above, is the only locus for case distinctions in the Norwegian grammar.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, all these pronouns (except for *dem*, *ham* and *henne*) are also used adnominally and it is this use that will be the focus of this section. We will briefly come back to the role of case-markings as signifiants of combinatorial signs in 5.2.5.

The 2. person and 1. person plural pronouns *vi* 'we', *oss* 'us' and *dere* 'you_{pl}', combine both with definite and non-definite nouns with interpretational nuances. With a definite plural noun, the reference is contextually restricted to the speech situation while with indefinite plurals, reference tends to be unrestricted and generic.¹⁰⁵ This is illustrated in (98):

- (98) a. Kan **vi menn** bli dummere? (www)
Can we men become more stupid.
- b. Da må **vi mennene** ta ansvar, sier han. (www)
Then we men_(DEF) must take responsibility, he says.
- c. Fyttirakkern, dette er flaut for **oss menn!** (www)
'Expletive', this is embarrassing for us men!

¹⁰³ In addition, the list could contain the (third person) common and neuter gendered signs *den* and *det*, which will be discussed in section 4.4 on demonstratives.

¹⁰⁴ Exceptions here are a few fixed prepositional expressions with traces of genitive *til fjells/havs/lands/vanns* 'to mountain.GEN/ocean.GEN/land.GEN/water.GEN or dative *i tide* 'in time.DAT'.

¹⁰⁵ Also demonstratives and the *all*-series combine with both definite and indefinite nouns, see 4.3.3.1 and 5.3.3.

- d. Hun setter seg i god avstand fra **oss mennene**. (www)
She sits down in good distance from us men_(DEF).
- e. Og vi kvinner vi elsker **dere menn!** Hva ble vår tilværelse uten?
And we women we love you men! What was our existence without (you)?
- f. Hva mener **dere menn** om dette? (www)
What do you men think about this.

As can be seen above, both the nominative and oblique versions may be used adnominally. Nevertheless, in written Norwegian, third person pronouns exhibit a distinction between case marking and the ability to function adnominally. As can be seen in (99) below, oblique *ham* ‘him’ and *henne* ‘her’ do not appear adnominally and the ‘nominative’ *han* ‘he’ or *hun* ‘she’ function as a determiner regardless of whether the noun phrase it heads is a subject or an object:

- (99) a. Hvem er **han gutten** på tv, mamma? (www)
Who is he boy_{DEF} on tv, mum?
- b. Så du er ikke kjæreste med **han/(*ham) gutten**, nå lenger? (www)
So you are no longer girlfriend with he (him) boy_{DEF} anymore?
- c. **Hun jenta** hørte meg ikke, men det gjorde **han mannen** som kom (...) rett bak. (www)
She girl_{DEF} did not hear me, but so did he man_{DEF} who came right behind.
- d. Jeg har ikke noen kontakt med **hun/(*henne) jenta** nå. (www)
I do not have any contact with she (her) girl_{DEF} now.

In spoken Norwegian, the third person pronouns, normally in the form of clitics, nevertheless rarely (never?) distinguish between oblique and nominative case and this distinction is thus only valid in written language. In fact, modern orthography allows the ‘nominative’ form of third person singulars used pronominally also in object positions.¹⁰⁶ The fact that case distinctions, in many languages, survive longer on pronominals than on nouns and adnominals has its natural reason as thematic roles are more likely to be confused with pronouns than with lexical noun phrases (see also 5.2.5.) This further explains why the distinction survives longer also in written than in spoken language, as the immediate speech situation and intonational pattern of spoken language facilitates disambiguation. The difference between third person and other pronouns is that the set of potential referents always will be larger than with first and second person ones. This is seen in that most Norwegian spoken dialects, as well as the written standard Nynorsk, combine third person pronouns with proper names as in (100):

- (100) a. **Han Ola** hadde langeleik og var flink til å spela på han. (www)
He Ola had ‘langeleik’ and was good at playing he/him (i.e. it).
- b. Brått so ser dei **ho Kari** kjem gåande mot dei. (www)
Suddenly they see she Kari walking towards them.

¹⁰⁶ I.e. of the two third person, masculine, singular pronouns *han* ‘he’ (nominative) and *ham* ‘him’ (oblique), *han* may function both as subject and object, while *ham* only function as objects. Also, the third person plural pair *de/dem* is exclusively used (as a pair) in written language, few, if any, dialects distinguish case with third person plurals, but they vary in which form they use either *de/de* or *dem/dem*.

Also plural first and second person pronouns offer a choice with regard to the exact nature of the referent since both the speaker and the listener may belong to several pluralities. In all the examples seen so far the noun complement thus specifies and helps identify which referent is intended by the personal pronoun/determiner in a straightforward determinerlike way.

With the first and second person singular pronouns *jeg-meg* and *du-deg* on the other hand, the referent is already unambiguously given by their person features since there can only be one singular speaker and one (intended) singular listener at the time. In such cases the noun does not help identify the referent from a potentially larger set, but rather indicates and focuses on one of the different labels this referent may be given or go by. Some examples are given in (101) and (102):

- (101) a. Og **jeg idioten** glemmer å gratulerer (sic). (www)
And I idiot.M.SG.DEF forgets to congratulate
b. Noen glupinger som kan fortelle **meg idioten**, hvorfor og hva som skjer i New York nå? (www)
Any smart-asses that kan tell me idiot.M.SG.DEF why and what is happening in New York now?
- (102) a. Takk **du venn**, for at du ikke ber meg slutte å gråte,! (www)
Thanks you friend.M.GN, for not asking me to stop crying.
b. Du er så nydelig **du vennen!** (www)
You are so beautiful you friend.M.SG.DEF!
c. Så til **deg venn**; vær deg selv, stå for de verdier du står for. (www)
So to you friend.M.GN; be yourself, stand for the values you stand for.
d. [J]eg må spørre **deg vennen** om en tjeneste. (www)
I have to ask you friend.M.SG.DEF for a favour.

As with first and second person plural pronouns, both the nominative and oblique versions function adnominally. There is nevertheless one major distinction between them. Contrary to the examples in (98) through (100), the examples in (101) and (102) will often receive comma intonation. The distinction between the complements of plural and third person pronouns in (98) through (100) and the appositives in (101) and (102) is nevertheless not connected to case or any other grammatical feature, but to the fact that with the appositives the complement noun does not contribute to identifying the referent since this is already unequivocally given by the personal pronoun. If all relations between signs are predicational, there should be no relational difference. The only difference pertains to the referential force of the elements being combined.¹⁰⁷

Apart from the personal pronouns, Faarlund et al (1997) list the reflexive *seg* and the reciprocal *hverandre*, the indefinite (generic, human) pronoun *man* and the interrogatives *hva* ‘what’ and *hvem* ‘who’ as the bokmål pronouns. While it is true that the three former never function adnominally, but only pronominally, they never inflect for case. Furthermore interrogatives, which are likewise not inflected for case, are more

¹⁰⁷ Both *jeg-meg* and *du-deg* may be followed by proper names, and in the case of the two latter, the proper name may be used to disambiguate between potential singular listeners.

and more used adnominally in spoken Norwegian. Reflexives, reciprocals and interrogatives are quite idiosyncratic among the Norwegian nominal function words and perform highly specific grammatical functions that lie outside the scope of this thesis. They will therefore not be discussed any further.

The personal pronouns on the other hand, function, like the vast majority of Norwegian nominal function words, both ad- and pronominally. This shows that Faarlund et al.'s (1997) proposal that the classes pronoun and determiner are distinguished by the former, and not the latter, being case-marked (see Faarlund et al 1997:28) is based on their most common distribution, not on inherent grammatical distinctions. As the pronominal use by far is the most common function of these signs, I will continue to use the term personal pronoun.

4.3 Quantifiers

Quantifier is a cover term for nominal words that express some kind of quantity, i.e. amount or number, as their core meaning. The core meaning of quantifiers thus contains information that is generally contributed by number markings – like singularity or plurality as well as commitment to atomisation. That *en* ‘a/one’ and *fjorten* ‘fourteen’ combine with and yield singular or plural meanings respectively, or that *mange* ‘several’ and *mye* ‘much’ differ with regard to atomisation effects is part of their core meaning and does not have to be specified in their additional features. Unlike the rest of the nominal vocabulary of Norwegian, quantifiers therefore do not normally display number values among their paradigmatic features. One exception to this is the *all*-series, which exhibit clear number distinctions. In 4.3.3 this will be motivated by the special core meaning of the *all*-series compared to other quantifiers. Before the discussion on the *all*-series, however, 4.3.1 looks at *en*, *ei*, *et* and 4.3.2 *noe* and *noen*.

4.3.1 The en-series

4.3.1.1 The semantics of the en-series

The three signs *en*, *ei*, *et* generally go by the names Indefinite Article, Indefinite Pronoun and Numeral depending on context and interpretation. This subsection proposes that these three signs have EN ‘ONE’ as their core meaning and that they, in addition, are grammatically marked as INDEFINITE and as MASCULINE, FEMININE and NEUTER respectively. In addition to these three gender marked indefinite forms, the paradigmatic *en*-series also has a definite member *ene* which combine with all genders. The gender and definiteness marking on the signs of this series distinguishes them from other numerals which are unmarked for these features. Contrary to number markings, use of numerals also necessarily induces individualisation or atomisation, a property I see as parasitic on their specific number value. The proposed semantics for each of these three signs is thus as described below:

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION IX: PROPOSED VALUE OF THE –EN SERIES (AND NUMERAL *TRE*)

En [EN.INDEFINITE.MASCULINE]

Ei [EN.INDEFINITE.FEMININE]

Et [EN.INDEFINITE.NEUTER]

Ene [EN.DEFINITE]

Tre [TRE]

With their markings both for indefiniteness and gender *en*, *ei*, *et* diverge from both English *one* and French *un*, *une* which I assume are neutral with regard to definiteness just like the numeral for *three* in all three languages. This is illustrated below:

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION X: ASSUMED VALUE OF FRENCH AND ENGLISH INDEFINITE ARTICLES AND NUMERALS

Un [UN.MASCULINE]

Une [UN.FEMININE]

Trois [TROIS]

One [ONE]

A(n) [INDEFINITE]

Three [THREE]

That all the values, EN, INDEFINITE and MASCULINE, FEMININE or NEUTER are part of the semantics of *en*, *ei*, *et* may be exemplified by their adnominal function as indefinite articles. As seen in (103)c,d,e,f the choice between the three forms depends on the gender of the noun they combine with, which indicates that the different genders should be part of the description of these sign:

- (103) a. Det er **elg** i skogen/kjøleskapet.
There is elk in the woods/fridge.
“There are elks in the woods”/ “There is elk in the fridge”
- b. Det er **vann** i skogen/kjøleskapet.
There is water in the woods/fridge.
- c. Det er **en elg** i skogen/i kjøleskapet.
There is an elk in the woods/fridge.
- d. Jeg så **ei kolle** i skogen.
I saw an elk-cow in the woods.
- e. Jeg så **et dyr** i skogen.
I saw an animal in the woods.
- f. Det er **et vann** i skogen/kjøleskapet.
There is a water (lake/bottle of) in the woods/fridge

Example (103) further indicates why EN is among the values of *en*, *ei*, *et*. Recall from 3.4 that a Norwegian Bare Noun functioning alone as an argument could receive various (and often opposing) interpretations depending on context, and that the ability to be interpreted both as singular and plural, indefinite or definite and as mass as well as as atomised entities, was due to its being marked for general number. This versatility in interpretation of lone Norwegian Bare Nouns is illustrated in (103)a,b where the numeral interpretation of *elg* and *vann* to a large degree depends on the following adjunct. While *elg* in (8a) most likely will be interpreted as plural if followed by *i skogen* (in the woods), it will be given a mass interpretation if followed by *i kjøleskapet* (in the fridge). This is possible because Norwegian Bare Nouns are neutral with regard to number and thus also between individualised and nonindividualised interpretations. In (103)c-f on the other hand, where *en*, *ei*, *et* precede the Norwegian Bare Nouns, this interpretational ambiguity disappears and the noun phrases are all necessarily interpreted as atomised singularities.

It is important, in this respect, to distinguish between the core value of these signs, EN, and the paradigmatic value SINGULAR found on nouns, adjectives. Differently from the paradigmatic value SINGULAR which is compatible with both atomised and unatomised interpretations, the core feature EN will because of its specific number value always be interpreted as individualised just like other specific numerals. In Norwegian,

nonpredetermined noun phrases introduced by Singular Indefinite Adjectives is an example of a construction that is intepretationally ambiguous between individualised and nonindividualised interpretations even though they, contrarily to (lone) Bare Nouns, are marked as singular. The same holds for lone uses of English Bare Nouns.

En, ei, et also necessarily express indefiniteness. Both when used adnominally as above, or pronominally without a complement (cf (104) below), they will always make sure that reference is made to a singular entity that, in addition to conforming to the right gender, also is understood as indefinite, i.e. to a singular entity that from the speakers viewpoint is (intended as) nonidentifiable to the listener. For pronominal *en*, this is reflected in that B is an appropriate answer to the request for an indefinite entity in (104)a below, but not in (104)b where request is made for a known entity.

- (104) a. A : Jeg leter etter **en elg/ei kolle/et dyr**.
I am looking for an elk/ an elk cow/ an animal
B : Jeg ser **en/ei/et**.
I see (a masc/fem/neut) one
- b. A : Jeg leter etter **elgen min/kolla mi/dyret mitt**.
I am looking for my elk/my elk cow/my animal.
#B : Jeg ser **en/ei/et**.
I see (a masc/fem/neut) one

Due to the existence of the (deixis neutral singular) demonstratives *den, det* that are interpreted as definite pronouns when unaccentuated (cf. 4.4), such indefinite interpretations could however also arise from signs that were neutral with regard to definiteness.

Clearer proof that *en, ei, et* are indefinite is provided by the existence of a fourth sign *ene* that I suggest belongs in the same series. As can be seen in (105), combinations of *ene* and a definite singular noun, together with the demonstratives *det/den*, may be used to refer to one out of several entities from an identifiable set with the meaning ‘one of the X’es’ like in (105)a,b,c (showing that *ene* combine with all genders):

- (105) a. I fjor fikk det **ene** marsvinet vårt betennelse i kjeven. (www)
last year the one guinea-pig.N.SG.DEF our got infection in the jaw.
‘Last year, one of our guinea-pigs got an infection in the jaw.’
- b. Da fikk den **ene** hesten kolikk. (www)
then got the one horse.M.SG.DEF colic.
‘The, one of the horses got a colic.’
- c. Den **ene** kua har fått jurbetennelse. (www)
the one cow.F.SG.DEF has gotten udder.infection.
‘One of the cows has gotten an udder infection.’

In addition to the interpretation exemplified above, *den ene* may be used to refer to a contextually unique singular occurrence with the interpretation ‘the (only) one’ as in (106):

- (106) a. Han fikk det **ene** kortet i stokken som gjorde at han vant potten.
He got the one card.N.SG.DEF in the deck that made him win the table.
b. Kanu reduserte for oss, men det ble med **det** ene målet.
Kanu reduced for us, but we only got the/that one goal.N.SG.DEF

Ene is also used without the presence of *den/det*.¹⁰⁸ Constructions like the ones in (107) belong to a more colloquial register and are more frequent in oral than in written language. When *ene* in this way is used alone as a determiner, it can only yield the reading corresponding to ‘one of the Xs’. This is seen in that the examples in (106) are ungrammatical when the demonstrative is absent as in (107)c,d:

- (107) a. Dermed fikk **ene** staven ekstra trykk på seg, og knakk (...).
as a result one (skiing) stick.MASC.SG.DEF got extra pressure on itself and broke
b. Vi fikk **ene** pusen vår av Dyrebeskyttelsen.
We got one cat.MASC.SG.DEF ours from Animal.protection.DEF
c. *Han fikk **ene** kortet i stokken som gjorde at han vant potten. (...)
he got the/that one card.NEUT.SG.,.DEF in the deck that made him win the table.
d. *Kanu reduserte for oss, men det ble med **ene** målet.
kanu reduced for us, but we only got the/that one goal.NEUT.SG.DEF.

En, *ei*, *et* are thus distinct from the English numeral *one* and the French numerals/indefinite articles *un/une*, which do not have any definite form and seem to be undefined with regard to definiteness since they combine with definiteness markers, compare (108)a,b and c:

- (108) a. [N]icotine addiction is **the one thing** all members have in common. (www)
b. [L]e penchant de nicotine est **l'une chose** que tous les membres ont en commun. (www)
c. Nikotinavhengighet er **den ene/(*en) tingen** alle medlemmene har felles.

The (proposed) indefiniteness feature of *en*, *ei* and *et* thus make these signs distinct both from Norwegian *ene* which I, in accordance with the electronic version of *bokmålsordboka*,¹⁰⁹ see as their definite form, and from English *one* and French *un(e)*, which I propose are neutral with regard to definiteness. In addition all these elements differ from the English indefinite article, which I propose is a simple indefiniteness marker without any number value. Recall Grammatical Definition IX: Proposed Value of the *-en* series (and numeral *tre*) and Grammatical Definition X: Assumed value of French and English indefinite articles and numerals. Where Norwegian and French (leaving gender distinctions aside) use only one sign for both the functions of indefinite article and for the (pronominal) numeral meaning one, English uses two distinct signs for these functions, as illustrated in (109). This falls out naturally by the suggestion that *a(n)* is unmarked for number and Bouchard's proposal of the semantic import of number as a minimal means to identify an actant in grammar.

¹⁰⁸ Because of its core meaning, *ene*, of course, never combines with plural noun forms or the plural demonstrative *de*.

¹⁰⁹ <http://www.dokpro.uio.no/ordboksoek.html>

- (109) a. What a strange animal!
 *I saw **a** yesterday as well.
 b. What a strange animal!
 I saw **one** yesterday as well.
 c. Quel animal étrange!
 J'*(en) ai vu **un** hier aussi.
 d. For et rart dyr!
 Jeg så **et** i går også.

Norwegian *en, ei, et* and French *un, une* differ, I suggest, in that only the former is marked as indefinite. While this might seem strange given the function of *un* as an indefinite article, it may be explained if definiteness is a unipolar feature in French. The lack of an indefiniteness feature on *un/une* might then also indicate why French needs the support of the partitive pro-preposition *en* in examples like (109)c above, but this is speculative. Further evidence is needed to substantiate the claim, but this is beyond the scope of the present study, which concentrates on Norwegian, not French.

While a lone Norwegian Bare Noun receiving singular indefinite interpretations always will be non-specific, combinations of indefinite articles and Norwegian Bare Nouns may, as seen in (110), receive both specific and non-specific interpretations.

- (110) a. Jeg ønsker å komme i kontakt med **en fonolog**. Jeg forstår ikke trykktilordning i nynorsk.
 I want to get in contact with a phonologist. I don't understand stress assignment in Nynorsk.
 b. Jeg ønsker å komme i kontakt med **en fonolog**. Jeg så ham på konsert og har ikke fått ham ut av hodet siden.
 I want (to get in contact with) a phonologist. I saw him at a concert and have not gotten him out of my head since.

Specificity is not grammatically marked in Norwegian; indefiniteness indicates that the referent is intended to be understood as non-identifiable for the listener, but says nothing about the speaker. As the head of a noun phrase, the indefinite article may thus provide specific or non-specific reference depending on context. That this distinction (always) is resolved contextually indicates that *en, ei, et* are not marked for specificity. The lack of possibility for specific identifications for undetermined noun phrases with indefinite singular interpretations is probably due to the lack of a specified numeral or quantificational value. The same difference is also found between lone Indefinite Plurals and Indefinite Plurals determined by the other numerals or *noen* in 4.3.2.

4.3.1.2 *En, ei, et* and (de)accentuation

En, ei, et exhibit clear interpretational nuances depending on whether they (may or may not) receive stress. The function as an indefinite article is only available when *en, ei, et* are unaccentuated, while when accentuated, adnominal *en, ei, et* receive contrastive numeral interpretations. This is seen in that they will be rendered by different translations *a/an* or *one* in English, as shown in (111):

- (111) a. Det er **en** elg i hagen./Det er **én** elg i hagen.
There is an elk in the garden./There is one elk in the garden.
b. Det er **ei** kolle i hagen./Det er **éi** kolle i hagen.
There is an (elk) cow in the garden./There is one (elk) cow in the garden.
c. Det er **et** dyr i hagen./Det er **ett** dyr i hagen.
There is an animal in the garden./There is one animal in the garden.

The same dichotomy between absence vs presence of accentuation on *en*, *ei*, *et* is also seen in their pronominal use. Since *a(n)*, because of its lack of a number value, does not function pronominally, this difference will be marked by accentuation also in English.

- (112) a. Jeg så **en/én**.
b. Jeg så **ei/éi**.
c. Jeg så **et/ett**.
I saw one/óne (masculine/feminine/neuter one).

In both (111) and (112), lack of accentuation on *en*, *ei*, *et* diminishes the focus on its core value. While both versions make reference to singular, indefinite entities, only the accentuated versions gives a contrastive interpretation where singularity is opposed to other possible numeral interpretations, thus indicating ‘one and only one’, i.e. EN.

While this use of accentuation traditionally is taken to indicate a change of word class, between the numeral one on the one hand and the indefinite articles and pronouns on the other, I propose that lack of accentuation yields a non-contrastive reading of the core meaning of the item(s) in question, as removing emphasis from the *signifiant* removes emphasis also from the *signifié*. The difference is thus not due to a change in grammatical category or word class, rather it is the natural consequence of (iconically) deaccentuating the core value of the *signifié*. The difference between accentuated and unaccentuated versions of *en*, *ei*, *et* is that the unaccentuated versions tone down the importance of their core value, EN or ONE, while this naturally is in focus with the accentuated versions. This function of accentuation is found all over the Norwegian language and is used with all (parts of) parts of speech and with all kinds of elements. The same pattern will be seen both for *noe(n)* (4.3.2) and for the demonstratives *den*, *det*, *de* (4.4 and 5.3.1, see especially 5.3.1.4), which analyses this phenomenon in terms of the sign *deaccentuation* -CONTRAST. The examples in (113) below show the same contrastive interpretation found with accentuated *en*, *ei*, *et* with accentuated lexical signs:

- (113) a. Jeg så **én** elg (ikke to).
I saw one elk (not two).
b. Jeg har **rød** bil (ikke grønn).
I have red car (not green)
c. Jeg krøp **óver** gjerdet (ikke under).
I crawled over the fence (not under)

The parallel between the examples in (113) is a good indication that absence vs presence of accentuation in Norwegian indicates absence vs presence of contrastive emphasis as a

general sign. There should thus be no more reason to separate between the indefinite articles or pronouns *en*, *ei*, *et* and the accentuated numerals *én*, *éi*, *ett* than between accentuated and unaccentuated versions of any other signs like e.g. the adjectives and prepositions in (113)b,c. In both cases the change in interpretation is related to accentuation, and there is thus no reason to assume a change of category or value of the affected sign. In Chapter 5, Syntax – combinatorial signs and syntactically complex signs, lack of accentuation will be analysed as a tonal sign with the *signifiant deaccentuation* and the *signifié* –CONTRAST, see section 5.3.1.4.

The fact that it is the numeral meaning of *en*, and not indefiniteness or masculinity, that is focused when it receives stress, lends support to the claim that this feature indeed enjoys a special status compared to the others. I take this as support for the idea that the separation between core and additional features is valid not only for lexical elements, but also for the more functional or grammatical signs. (De)accentuation thus seems to have the same function with all linguistic items as it concerns focus on their core values.¹¹⁰ In the following sections of this chapter, I will use the interpretation resulting from accentuation as an indication of the core meaning of the sign in question. Or conversely, interpretations of signs that are incompatible with accentuation indicate that the core meaning is downplayed.

4.3.1.3 Special interpretation of *en* – with a note on *man*

The masculine indefinite form of the *en*-series, *en*, is special in that it also may be used non-anaphorically as an indefinite pronoun with a generic (human) interpretation. Related uses of pronominal *one* is found also in English as seen in the translations of (114).

- (114) a. Under en kamp bør **en** alltid være konsentrert om det som skjer (...).
During a match one should always be concentrated about that which happens
b. **En** kan forestille seg språket som en flytende masse.
One can regard language as a floating mass.

This use of *en* is not available for the two other members of the paradigm *ei* and *et*, and this indefinite, generic interpretation is further unavailable if the pronoun is accentuated. That this reading cannot be combined with accentuation indicates that the role of EN necessarily is toned down, which is compatible with the generic reading. Generic readings often arise from attributing a predicate distributively to singular entities, but such a distributive reading is necessarily blocked if accentuation indicates that the singularity should be understood as one and only one, cf. (115) below, where the difference should be obvious from the English translations:

- (115) a. **En** elg har fire bein. (generic)
An elk has four legs.
b. **#Én** elg har fire bein. (only episodic or taxonomic)
One elk has four legs.

¹¹⁰ It is also possible to focus on additional features e.g. when correcting somebody by informing him or her that a definite or masculine form was used instead of an indefinite or feminine one. Focus on additional level nevertheless always takes place at a meta-linguistic level.

Also the gender restriction on this reading finds its natural motivation. The main semantic difference between the Norwegian genders is between non-individualised (unatomised) neuters and individualised masculines and feminines, which because of the importance of individuality for people (cf, Haspelmath 1997:29) exclude neuter in such readings, and since, in Norwegian, feminine gender is more specific than masculine (Trosterud 2001), reference to people in general will be made through the masculine form.

In the subject position, such occurrences of *en* can often be substituted by *man* in Bokmål. The unaccentuated indefinite, generic pronoun *man* is etymologically related to, and still homophonous with, the noun *mann* ‘man’. As already mentioned, *man* is special among the Norwegian function words in that it only functions pronominally. In addition it does not hold any particular grammatical function like the other pure pronouns – reflexive *seg*, reciprocal *hverandre* or interrogative *hva* and *hvem* – and may be swapped for *en* in all contexts. The many restrictions on the use of *man* are thus probably related to its etymological origin as a (generic) noun. Support from this is given by the French pure pronoun *on*, which often will translate *man* in such contexts. Also *on* is restricted to subject positions, and is likewise etymologically derived from a word meaning ‘man’, namely Latin *homo*.¹¹¹

4.3.1.4 Summing up

We have seen that *en*, *ei*, *et* may receive many different interpretations or take on different functions like e.g. indefinite article, (contrastive) numeral and indefinite pronoun. These are nevertheless always context dependent or related to whether they are accentuated or not. It should therefore be possible to see this as several uses of one and the same sign.

En, *ei*, *et* always yield singular interpretations. This indicates that they are intrinsically singular. The fact that this meaning also gets more prominence when the item is accentuated, and is toned down when unaccentuated, suggests that the singularity is more than an additional feature. The core meaning of these signs is therefore identified as EN. The expression of a specified numeral value also necessarily brings about individualisation or atomisation, which is a necessary prerequisite for countability.

En, *ei*, *et* are also truly indefinite. Support from this comes from the fact that they cannot combine with any of the suffixed noun forms, and in that there is a special form *ene*, which is used in combinations with singular definites. The indefiniteness feature on the Norwegian signs for the numeral one makes them different both from other Norwegian Numerals and from their French and English relatives. This lends further support to the idea that the Norwegian Bare Noun is neutral with regard to both number and definiteness as it consistently combines with four other elements that supply the fetural values of these categories, the three suffixes and *en*, *ei*, *et*. Norwegian thus has a tripartite value for (in)definiteness with signs that are definite like *ene*, signs that are indefinite like *en*, *ei*, *et* and signs that are neutral with regard to definiteness like the truly Bare Noun.

¹¹¹ Even if restricted to subject position, *on* nevertheless has a much wider interpretation than *man* and is readily used instead of *nous* ‘we’. In this respect *on* is interesting since it, when equivalent to *nous*, takes singular agreement with the verb, but plural agreement with adjectives and participles. See sylleptic agreement in Bouchard (1995:230-232) and references there. For a recent study on the semantics of *on* with a small contrastive part with Norwegian, see Gjesdal (2008).

4.3.2 Noen and noe

The indefinite quantifiers *noen* and *noe* have evolved from Old-Norse *nǫkurr*, which again is contracted from proto-Scandinavian *ne-wait-ek-hwarjar* 'ikke-vet-jeg-hvem' (not-know-I-who). Neither *noen* nor *noe* have any true equivalents in English or French. In positive declaratives *noe(n)* will often be translated by English *sm, some, somebody, someone, something, a few or little* and by French *des, certain(s) quelque(s), quelqu(es)'un, quelque(s) chose(s) du (de la), d'un(e), un peu (de)*. Unlike most of these signs, however, *noen* and *noe* have no problems appearing in negative or interrogative sentences. In such (and other) contexts *noe(n)* will be translated either by simple (non-pronominal) negation or by e.g. English *any, anybody, anyone, anything, no* and French *personne..ne, nul..ne, aucun(e), ne ...pas de*. French will not be discussed (further) in this section.

The proposal put forward in section 4.3.2.1 is that *noen* and *noe*'s core semantics expresses quantitative indefiniteness on a small-scale, i.e. that *noe(n)* indicates that the limitation of the entity referred to is unknown. This is different from English *some* which according to Haspelmath (1997) first and foremost is an indefiniteness marker. While *noe(n)* also induces referential indefiniteness, I propose that this is an accidental property – parasitic on its core meaning – which indicates small-scale quantitative indefiniteness. I suggest that this difference between English *some* and Norwegian *noe(n)*, which is reflected in their distributional and interpretational range, is connected to differences in the encoding of number in the two languages.

In section 4.3.2.2, I propose that both *noen* and *noe* are undefined with regard to the singular-plural distinction, but that they differ in that *noen*, which is marked for common gender, always refers to individualised entities, while *noe* is unmarked for gender and generally refers to non-individualised entities. The link between common gender and atomisation effects, or individualised interpretations, is motivated by the fact that the primary semantic basis for common gender is individuation, while neuter is associated with mass. I propose the following semantic description of the two signs:

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION XI: PROPOSED VALUE OF *NOEN* AND *NOE*

Noen	[NOE.COMMON GENDER]
Noe	[NOE]

Under the present proposal *noen* and *noe* do not exhibit numeral distinctions in the traditional sense as they may both combine with both singulars and plurals. Furthermore, since only *noen* is assumed to carry a gender feature, neither *noe* nor *noen* fulfils Faarlund et al's (1997) morphological criterion of inflection for gender and number. Like the vast majority of Norwegian functional words, *noe(n)* function both ad- and pronominally.

Section 4.3.2.1 discusses the core meaning of *noe(n)*, while 4.3.2.2 looks at the additional features that separate them. In 4.3.2.3 some special interpretations and uses of *noe(n)* are discussed before the section is summarised in 4.3.2.4.

4.3.2.1 The core meaning of *noe(n)*

As seen above, the two Bokmål signs *noen* and *noe* correspond to a variety of different morphologically complex signs in English and French. According to Haspelmath, it is cross-linguistically common for indefinite pronouns to “consist of (i) a stem indicating the ontological category, plus (ii) a formal element shared by all members of an indefinite pronoun series (...) called INDEFINITENESS MARKER” (1997: 22). While *noe(n)* also may be used as the first part in pro-adverbs like *noenlunde* ‘approximately’ *noensteds* ‘somewhere/anywhere’ *noensinne* ‘anywhere/at any time’ and pro-adjectives *noenslags* ‘some kind of’, they never combine morphologically with nominal or numeral elements to form compound pronouns. I take this as an indication that *noe(n)*’s core meaning is more than just an indefiniteness marker indicating non-identifiability. Rather, I suggest that *noe(n)* is a (full) nominal element referring to an undefined small-scale quantity.¹¹² That the reference of *noe(n)* is small-scale is reflected in its combinatorial properties. The examples in (116) are illustrative.

- (116) a. **Noen**, men ikke mange.
 ‘noen’, but not many
 b. **Noe**, men ikke mye.
 ‘noe’, but not much.
 c. ? **Noen**, men ikke få.
 ‘noen’, but not few
 d. ? **Noe**, men ikke lite.
 ‘noe’, but not little
 e. ***Noen** mange.
 ‘noen’ many.
 f. **Noen** få.
 ‘noen’ few
 “A few.”

As shown above, *noen* combines felicitously with *(ikke) få* ‘(not) few’, but not with *(ikke) mange* ‘(not) many’. I suggest that this is because *mange* is contradictory to *noen*’s core meaning as small-scale.

The fact that *noen* indicates indefiniteness of quantity, rather than just indefinite reference, is also seen in that it only combines directly with numerals that can themselves be modified by another numeral like *hundre* ‘hundred’, *tusen* ‘thousand’ and *million* ‘million’, and not with e.g. *femti* ‘fifty’. Compare (117)a,b with (117)c,d:

- (117) a. ***Noen** femti mennesker.
 Some fifty human beings (people)
 b. ***Fire** femti mennesker
 Four fifty human beings (people)
 c. **Noen** hundre/tusen mennesker.
 Some hundred/thousand human beings (people)

¹¹² The term small-scale is, of course, relative – on a scale from one to ten, the range of *noen* would lie around 2-5.

- d. **Fire** hundre/tusen mennesker.
Four hundred/thousand human beings (people)

In this respect *noen* is clearly distinct from *some* which may combine not only with hundred and thousand, but also with fifty and e.g. two hundreds.

- (118) a. Some fifty people were missing and about 100 others injured. (www)
b. Some two hundred striking teachers in Middletown. (www)

This use of *some* is clearly distinct from the examples with *noen* in (117). While (117)c means something like ‘a few hundred’ or just ‘hundreds’, the English examples in (118) are interpreted as something like ‘around fifty/two hundred’ or ‘something like fifty/two hundred’. This interpretation is consistent with *some* as an indefiniteness marker, and seems related to another construction with *some* that is unavailable with *noe(n)*, namely what Warfel (1972) termed its *spesumptive* meaning like in (119):

- (119) a. Some general has been shot.
b. John is looking for some book on reserve.
c. Hortense is watching for some sailor, who is due in port today.

In (119)a *some general* does not indicate an indefinite or unknown quantification, but rather that the reference of this singular general is unclear or unimportant, i.e. non-identifiable and indefinite. This is not possible with *noe(n)*, which is naturally explained if *noe(n)* primarily indicates uncertainty of quantity, not of reference. Rather, indefiniteness interpretations, in the sense of non-identifiability, are necessarily parasitic on the core meaning of *noe(n)* as an undefined small scalar quantity. If their core semantics indicate that the quantity of the referent is undefined, it can hardly be identifiable to the listener. I therefore propose that, despite its etymology, indefiniteness is an incidental property of *noe(n)*, a by-product of its core meaning indicating undefined small-scale quantification. To translate the English examples in (119) into Norwegian we would use the construction *en eller annen* ‘one or another’.¹¹³

Differently from the Norwegian *noen general*, English *some general* is unambiguously singular because English bare nouns, as opposed to their Norwegian counterparts, are marked as singular. Norwegian *noe(n) general*, on the other hand, has no fixed number value since the Norwegian bare noun *general* is marked for general number, and neither *noen* nor *noe*, as we will see in the next section, are restricted to neither singular nor plural interpretations.

¹¹³ Neither *noen* nor *noe* combines directly with definite nouns, though. With the plural definite, *noe(n)* nevertheless parallels English *some* and can be used together with a preposition in part-of-constructions as in (i). For singular definites (ii), *noe* is the only appropriate form.

- (i) *Jeg har lest noe(n) *(av) bøkene.*
‘I have read some of the books/parts of books’
(ii) *Jeg har lest noe *(av) romanen/boka/essayet.*
‘I have read some (parts) (of) the novel/book/essay’

Even if *noe(n)* never combines with definites, I see no reason to assume that indefiniteness is part neither of their core nor of their additional meaning. Definite forms signal identifiability of both quantity and reference and are thus conceptually incompatible with heads indicating undefined quantity.

In this respect, the Bokmål forms *noen* and *noe* differ from other contemporary descendents of Old-Norse *nǫkurr* and proto-Scandinavian *ne-wait-ek-hwarjar* like e.g. Nynorsk *Nokon*.M.SG, *Noka*.F.SG *Noko*.N.SG and *Nokre*.PL and Swedish *Någon*.CG.SG, *Något*.N.SG and *Några*.PL which have clear gender and number values and distinguish between plural and non-plural forms. Syntactic constructions involving English *some* or one of the variants of *någon* and *nokon* in Swedish and Nynorsk respectively, will thus, contrary to constructions involving Bokmål *noe(n)*, always have a fixed number value since either the noun, as in English, or the determiner, as in Nynorsk and Swedish, will be marked as either singular or plural. That the possibility of spesumptive readings is dependent on whether the noun phrase as a whole receives a fixed number value or not is supported by the fact that also Swedish has constructions parallel to the English sentences in (119). The Swedish sentence *Någon general har blivit skjuten* is a synonymous and direct translation of English *some general has been shot*.¹¹⁴ While all these signs, not only the Bokmål ones, indicate small-scale quantification, I suggest that English *some-* and the Swedish *någon-*, and possibly also Nynorsk *nokon-*series, in addition carry (referential) indefiniteness as part of their semantics.

That small-scale quantification is part of the core meaning of *some*, *någon* and *noko* is indicated by the fact that they are compatible with the negation of words meaning ‘many’ and ‘much’, but not with the negation of words meaning ‘little’ or ‘few’. This is illustrated for English by (120) which are thought of as answers to the question ‘have you had any beer(s)?’:

- (120) a. I had some, not much/many.
 b. *I had some, not little/few

In contrastive expressions like those in (120) and (116), *some* and *noe(n)* are necessarily accentuated. I take the fact that the small-scale interpretation is the one that prevails in such contexts as a strong indication that this is indeed (part of) the core meaning of these signs.

Also the fact that *noe* and *noen* cover almost all other uses of the English *some/any*-series except for the free-choice reading of *any* is probably related to *noe* and *noen* not being marked neither for any numeral value nor for indefiniteness. In Norwegian, (singular) free-choice is normally indicated by the complex phrase *en hvilken/hvem som helst* (literarily) ‘a which/who as preferably’.

- (121) a. Spør **en hvilken som helst** lege.
 b. *Spør **noe(n)** lege.
 Ask any/some doctor.

Free-choice *any* indicates free choice of referent, not of quantity, and is therefore incompatible with *noe(n)* which I propose only bears the latter meaning.

¹¹⁴ I will not, in this thesis, raise any claim regarding the numeral value of Swedish bare nouns, i.e. suggest whether it is intrinsically singular and indefinite or whether it encodes general number as Norwegian ones. For discussions of spesumptive meanings of Swedish *någon* the reader is referred to Nivre (2002) and Round (2004).

As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, I do not assume any theoretical distinction between lexical and functional classes. Not only the more lexical signs, but also function words are thus understood to consist of two kinds of semantics – one core meaning in addition to (possibly) several additional pragmatic features. While it is relatively easy to identify the core meaning of *en*, *ei*, *et* as EN, it is slightly trickier to precisely define the meaning of *noe(n)*, which seems to have a more complex conceptual structure. However, such a task lies outside of the scope of this thesis, which focuses on the grammatical system. I will therefore continue to indicate the core semantics of *noe(n)* by capitalising it as NOE.

4.3.2.2 Additional features of *noe(n)*

While the previous sub-section tried to discern the core meaning of *noen* and *noe*, this section deals with their additional features. As seen in Grammatical Definition XI, I propose that both *noe* and *noen* are unmarked for number and that what seems to separate these two signs is their marking for gender. The more specific common gender feature of *noen*, which is associated with individuality, entails atomisation and individualised interpretations while the unmarked *noe* entails nonindividualised interpretations.

That both *noe* and *noen* are undefined with regard to the singular/plural distinction is seen in that both combine adnominally with both plural and non-plurals, as seen in (122).

- (122) a. Jeg har ikke spist **noen** gulrot/gulrøtter i dag.
I have not eaten any carrot/carrots today.
b. Jeg har ikke spist **noe** gulrot/gulrøtter i dag.
I have not eaten any carrot/carrots today.

This number ambiguity is also present with pronominal *noen*. In (123) below, (123)a typically refers to a singular person (even without the following disambiguating sentence) while (123)b clearly is plural.

- (123) a. Så kjekt at du har møtt **noen**. Han svarer nok.(www)
So nice that you have met some(one). He will probably answer.
b. **Noen**, men ikke mange, vil kunne leve med en partner som praktiserer slike fetisher (sic).(www)
Some, but not many, could live with a partner that practises such fetiches.

The number value of *noe(n)* is thus given by context – either intra- or extraphrasally – and not by the elements itself, whose core meaning is an undefined quantity.

In its adnominal use, *noen* combines with Indefinite Plurals, which do not display gender distinctions, as well as with masculine and feminine Bare Nouns, and will normally be translated by English *some*, *any* or *a few* depending on context and the sentence type (declarative, negational and interrogative) in which it occurs. This is illustrated in (124)-(125):

- (124) a. Jeg har lest **noen** bøker /romaner /essay.
I have read some/a few books.PL.INDEF /novels.PL.INDEF /essay.N.GN

- b. Jeg har ikke lest **noen** romaner /bøker /essay
I haven't read any books.PL.INDEF /novels.PL.INDEF /essay.N.GN
- c. Har du lest **noen** bøker /romaner /essay?
Have you read any books.PL.INDEF /novels.PL.INDEF /essay.N.GN?

In the plural (and as seen above), *noen* is used in all three types of sentences, but this is not the case in non-plural contexts where *noen* is infelicitous in declaratives, but fine in negated and interrogative sentences.

- (125) a. Jeg har lest (en /ei) roman/bok i dag.
I have read (a.M.SG.INDEF/F.SG.INDEF) novel.M.GN/book.F.GN today.
- b. *Jeg har lest **noen** roman/bok.
I have read some novel/book
- c. Jeg har ikke lest **noen** roman.
I have not read any novel.M.GN /book.F.GN..
- d. Har du lest **noen** roman/bok?¹¹⁵
Have you read any novel.M.GN /book.F.GN. ?

The full story regarding the interaction between sentence types and the different interpretations of noun phrases containing *noen* is beyond the scope of this work. The polarity effect of *noen*, i.e. the fact that it never combines with masculine and feminine bare nouns to yield singular interpretations in declaratives is, however, naturally explained by competition with other signs without any need for a particular semantic property. As we will see on the coming pages, *noen* typically has an atomising effect and induces individualised interpretations. Discrete entities are necessarily either singular or plural. The latter case would require an indefinite plural noun, the former an indefinite article. Declaring that something is atomised without indicating whether it is singular or plural, is so strange that one would express it more specifically with a phrase like *en eller flere* 'one or several'. In negative and interrogative contexts on the other hand, it is more natural to express this kind of uncertainty and *noen* receives the interpretation (neither) one (n) or several.

In non-plural contexts, *noen* further discriminates between masculine and feminine Bare Nouns on the one hand and neuter ones on the other, in that it only combines with the two former. Bare Neuter Nouns that have separate indefinite plural forms are thus ungrammatical in combination with *noen* regardless of sentence type. Compare (124)-(125) above which featured masculine and feminine nouns with the neuter nouns in (126):

- (126) a. Jeg har lest **noen** hefter/*hefte.
I have read some pamphlets.PL.INDEF /pamphlet.N.GN.
*Jeg har ikke lest **noen** hefte.
I have not read any pamphlet.
- b. *Har du lest **noen** hefte?
Have you read any pamphlet.N.GN?

This has as a consequence that phrasal combinations of *noen* and nouns that lack a plural indefinite form always receive plural interpretations:

- (127) a. Jeg har lest **noen** essay/blad.
I have read some essay.N.GN/magazine.N.GN
“I have read some essays/magazines.”
- b. Jeg har ikke lest **noen** essay/blad.
I have not read any essay.N.GN /magazine.N.GN
“I have not read any essays/magazines.”
- c. Har du lest **noen** essay/blad?
Have you read any essay.N.GN /magazine.N.GN
“Have you read any essays/magazines?”

As opposed to *noen*, *noe* combines perfectly with neuter bare nouns with non-plural interpretations:

- (128) a. Jeg har ikke lest **noe** essay.
I have not read any essay.
- b. Jeg har ikke spist **noe** eple.
I have not eaten any apple.
- c. Har du lest **noe** essay ?
Have you read any essay?
- d. Har du spist **noe** eple ?
Have you eaten any apple?

The agreement properties of *noe* are nevertheless not restricted to neuter bare nouns. Differently from *noen*, *noe* combines with nouns of all genders – and in all types of sentences – to express mass interpretations:

- (129) a. Jeg har kjøpt **noe** paprika /gulrot/brød
I have bought some pepper.M.GN/carrot.F.GN/bread.N.GN
- b. Kjøpte du **noe** paprika/gulrot/brød?
Did you buy any pepper.M.GN /carrot.F.GN /bread.N.GN ?
- c. Jeg kjøpte ikke **noe** paprika/gulrot/brød
I didn't buy any pepper.M.GN /carrot.F.GN /bread.N.GN

I take this as an indication that *noe* is unmarked for gender, while *noen* signals common gender. Such featural values will correctly rule out combinations of *noen* with neuter nouns in non-plural interpretations, but will not exclude neuter nouns in plural contexts since, in Norwegian, gender distinctions are irrelevant in the plural and there will thus be no featural clash leading to ungrammaticality. *Noe*, on the other hand, combines with nouns of all genders and can therefore not be understood as carrying any gender features whatsoever.

The data in (129) above highlight what I consider the major interpretational difference between *noen* and *noe*, namely the fact that *noen* refers to individualised

entities while the opposite holds for *noe*. In (129) *paprika*, *gulrot* and *brød* are all necessarily interpreted as masses, and crucially not as individualised instantiations. That *noe* typically refers to non-individualised unatomised entities is also seen in that it may combine with plurals to give collective interpretations:

- (130) a. Ingen av mine gode filmer, (...), tjente **noe** penger. (www)
None of my good movies, (...), earned any money.PL.INDEF.
b. Fikk vite dette da jeg ga bort **noe** klær ved juletider. (www)
Learnt this when I gave away some clothes (stuff) around Christmas.

Collective readings are the plural versions of singular mass readings in that neither gives access to ordinary singular individuals.

This difference in atomisation, or individualising interpretations, between the two signs is further seen in that adnominal *noe* and *noen* behave quite differently with respect to the ontology of the world-referents associated with the nouns they combine with. While carrots may be viewed either as individuals, as mass or as a collective plurality, other nouns like *honning* (honey) or *bønner* (beans) are typically understood either as masses or as collectives respectively. This is also reflected in their aptitude to combine with *noe* and *noen*. As can be seen in (131), a typical collective plural noun like *bønner* ‘beans’ combines well with both *noe* and *noen*, while its bare form is strange when a mass-interpretation is sought from *noe* as in (131)d.

- (131) a. Jeg kjøpte **noen** bønner.
I bought some beans.
b. Jeg kjøpte **noe** bønner.
I bought some beans.
c. Jeg kjøpte ikke **noen** bønne.
I did not buy any bean.
d. ?Jeg kjøpte/spiste/så ikke **noe** bønne.
I did not buy/eat/see any bean.

While (131)a gives an individualised plural interpretation so that *noen bønner* may be interpreted as a few (single) beans or as a few types or tins of beans, (131)b refers to a collective plurality of beans and (131)c to a singular bean occurrence. The question mark before example (131)d indicates that it is difficult to perceive beans as non-individualised singularities. *Noe bønne* must refer to either some part of a bean or to one squashed bean, which makes it utterly strange as the object of the verb *kjøpe*. This is similar to the “Universal grinder” effect of Pelletier (1979) for English bare singulars like *I ate bean*. With a verb like *spise* ‘to eat’ or *se* ‘see’ the sentence becomes more easy to conceptualise.

Contrarily to *bønne* ‘bean’, a mass-noun like *honning* ‘honey’ may combine with *noe* in its bare general form with a regular mass interpretation (132)a, and with *noen* in order to refer to an individualised occurrence, typically a jar (132)b. When its indefinite plural form combines with *noen*, this latter will similarly yield an individualised interpretation of the otherwise so massy noun. The direct object in (132)c thus refers to a plurality of individualised honey(s), i.e. to a plurality of honey jars or types.

- (132) a. Jeg kjøpte **noe** honning.
I bought some honey.
b. Jeg kjøpte ikke **noen** honning.
I did not buy any honey.
c. Jeg kjøpte **noen** honninger.
I bought some honeys.
d. ???Jeg kjøpte ikke **noe** honninger.
I did not buy any honeys.

Example (132)d is even stranger than (131)d. This is probably because the different grammatical markings contained in the noun phrase *noe honninger* are contradictory. The indefinite plural suffix on *honninger* individualises the ontologically mass noun *honey*, which makes it strange in combination with the massifier *noe*.

The deatomising effect found with *noe* is, I propose, a consequence of its lack of gender marking and the division of labour with *noen* which is marked for common gender – a value which has individualised entities as a primary part of its semantic assignment base. We saw in the previous section on *en, ei, et* that their specific numeral value yields individualised interpretations, with *noe* and *noen*, it is the absence or presence of a common gender feature associated with individualisation that makes one behave like a massifier and the other like an individualiser.

When *noen* is unaccentuated, as in all the examples so far, focus on its core meaning is weakened, just like it is with English *some* and with *en, ei, et* as we saw in the previous section. It has been proposed, see e.g. Carlson (1977) and Haspelmath (1997) for English and Julien (2005) for Norwegian, that such occurrences of *some* and *noen* are plural indefinite articles and/or determiners. While it is true that the semantics of *noen* is weakened in such cases, I see this as a natural consequence of the parallel weakening of its form. Just like accentuation will strengthen focus on an element's core meaning, a weakened form will indicate that it should be toned down. I therefore see no more reason to distinguish between two different *noe(n)* depending on whether it is accentuated or not, than I did with *en, ei, et* in the previous section. Finally, just like *en, ei, et*, unaccentuated *noen* is ambiguous between specific and non-specific readings. That *noe(n)* like the *en*-series, and unlike lone Bare Nouns and indefinite Plurals, have this possibility to refer specifically is due to its more specific core meaning. To unambiguously refer to a specific plurality, however, the *-e* suffixed form of the adjective *viss*, 'certain', namely *visse*, is used with a restrictive determiner-like function.¹¹⁶

- (133) a. Jeg leter etter **noen** bøker.
I am looking for some books.
b. Jeg leter etter **visse** bøker.
I am looking for certain books.

This sub-section has showed that both *noe* and *noen*, contrary to what is assumed in the Norwegian Reference Grammar (Faarlund et al 1997), are unmarked for number, and thus compatible with both singular and plural signs and interpretations. The two signs

¹¹⁶ See also 5.3.4.1, Restrictive definite adjectival constructions.

diverge in that *noen* is marked for common gender which, in this context, typically induces atomisation, while *noe*, which is unmarked for gender, often receives mass or collective plural interpretations. The next sub-section looks at some special interpretations of pronominal *noe(n)*.

4.3.2.3 Special interpretations of *noe(n)*

Non-anaphoric uses of pronominal *noen* will normally be understood as referring to human beings, and will be translated to English either as someone/somebody or anyone/anybody as is indicated by the translations in (134):

- (134) a. Jeg synes jeg hørte **noen** utenfor, hvisker Sølvi. (www)
I thought I heard some (-one/-body) outside, whispers Sølvi.
b. Sammen med en kollega sto han og kikket ut av vinduet for å se om de så **noen** utenfor. (www)
together with a colleague stood he and looked out of the window to see if they saw some (-one/-body) outside.

This nevertheless does not seem to be founded in its grammatical properties. The examples in (135) show that anaphoric *noen* may refer to any contextually relevant discrete entities.

- (135) a. Innvandrerbutikker selger mange ukjente, gode grønnsaker. **Noen** kan spises rå, **noen** bør kokes eller stekes først. (www)
immigrant.stores sell many unknown, good vegetables. Some may be eaten raw, some should be boiled or fried first.
b. **Noen** kan fryses direkte, som f.eks steinsopp. (www)
some may be frozen directly, like e.g. cepes.

The fact that *noen* normally will refer to a person or persons is, like its individualising property, motivated by its common gender feature, the merger of masculine and feminine which both have sexus as part of their semantic base (Trosterud 2001). Though neither *noen*, nor other masculine, feminine or common gendered signs are marked as +human, per se, and readily combine with inanimates with individualising interpretations, the tendency to receive person interpretations is also favoured by the fact that, in addition to being the individualised entities par excellence, (other) persons are our number one favourite conversational subject.¹¹⁷ One interpretational peculiarity about pronominal *noen* is that its numeral ambiguity only is present when it refers to human beings. Whenever *noen* refers pronominally to non-humans, it will always yield plural interpretations. This restriction is most likely related to pronominal *en*, *ei*, *et* which would be used instead since their meaning is more specific, e.g. in that it would imply knowledge about the sex of the person in question through the use of masculine or feminine gender.

¹¹⁷ Anthropocentrism is pervasive in human languages and is a natural consequence of the fact that the different collections of arbitrary signs that make up the world's languages, are restricted by the human minds and bodies in which they are set.

Pronominal *noe* differs from *noen* in that it never refers to humans. It will thus mostly be translated into English by *something*. This is of course again a consequence of the fact that while *noen* always refers to common gendered discrete entities, *noe*'s reference is perceived as non-individualised. (136) gives some examples.

- (136) a. Hun er usikker på hva hun hørte, om hun hørte noe. (www)
she is insecure about what she heard, whether she heard something.
- b. Er noe “utenfor” universet[,] må det jo være “noe”, og da er det per definisjon i universet. (www)
if something is “outside” of the universe it must be “something”, and, then, it is per definition in the universe.

Before closing this part, it is worth mentioning that *noe* also may combine with adjectives and adverbs in a more adverbial sense.

- (137) a. Han oppførte seg ikke **noe** pent (...). (www)
He didn't behave any good.
- b. Han snakket **noe** gebrokkent. (www)
He talked some(what) broken (Norwegian)
- c. Det hjalp nok **noe**. (www)
It helped some.
- d. Jeg er ikke **noe** flink til å takle følelser. (www)
I am not any good at handling emotions.

In the examples in (137) *noe* doesn't quantify occurrences of entities instantiating the properties of the adjectives, but rather modifies them on a small-scale level in accordance with its core meaning. Such uses of *noe* also lend further support to the additional semantics I propose for this sign, namely that it has no agreement restrictions, different from *noen*, which only agree with masculine and feminine gender. The uses of *noe* in (137) could also have arisen from a neuter marked element, but, as we have seen in example (129), p. 151, *noe* readily combines with masculine and feminines and thus cannot be marked as neuter.

4.3.2.4 Summary

The Norwegian reference grammar seems to consider *noen* as polysemic between a singular common gender and a plural meaning with *noe* as its singular neuter counterpart in accordance with their morphological criteria that determiners inflect for gender and number (Faarlund et al 1997: 216), but as we have just seen this is not even descriptively accurate since *noe* may combine with both Indefinite Plurals and Bare Nouns of all genders, confer examples (128)-(130) above. Even if the following characterisation may not represent a complete analysis, it has at least two advantages over the analysis and accounts proposed in Faarlund et al (1997) for the data discussed in section 4.3.2.2. Firstly, we avoid both the problem of polysemic *noen* and the inaccurate characterization of *noe* as neuter gendered, and secondly, it motivates the most striking difference between *noen* and *noe*, namely that the former always refers to individualised entities, and the latter to non-individualised ones. In addition we have seen that *noe(n)* differ from

the much-studied English *some* in that indefiniteness is not part of its value, but only arises as a parasitic interpretation of its undefined small-scale meaning.

4.3.3 Norwegian All quantifiers

The Norwegian all quantifiers are *all* (*alt, alle*), *begge, samtlige, hver* (*hvert*) and *enhver* (*ethvert*). 4.3.3.1 discusses *all, alt, alle* while 4.3.3.2 briefly looks at the rest.

4.3.3.1 *All, alt, alle*

The signs *all, alt, alle* are the least specific (and probably most common) Norwegian all quantifiers, generally corresponding to English *all* and French *tout/s* and *toute(s)*. While English *all* is invaried, the French *tout*-series inflect for gender and number. The Norwegian *all*-series resembles French in that it is clearly sensitive to both number and gender. I propose the following semantic values for the all-series :

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION XII: PROPOSED VALUE ALL, ALT, ALLE

All	[ALL.COMMON GENDER]
Alt	[ALT.NEUTER.SINGULAR]
Alle	[ALL.PLURAL]

All is different from most Norwegian nominal function words including *alt* and *alle* in that it only functions adnominally. This is why I don't assume that it carries any numeral value, contrary to *alt* and *alle* – a point we will return to at the end of this section. The difference in gender marking between *all* and *alt* may thus only be illustrated in their adnominal function, as in (138) below :

- (138) a. [D]et tegnet lovende inntil **all** vinen en morgen var blitt til eddik. (www)
It seemed promising untill all the wine one morning had turned to vinegear.
b. De større meieria hadde ikke kapasitet til å ta unna **all** melka. (www)
The biggest milk producers did not have the capacity to handle all the milk.
c. Juryen testet **alt** ølet uten å vite hvor det kom fra. (www)
The jury tested all the beer witout knowing where it came from.

As can be seen from the examples in (138) *all* combines both with masculine and feminines, while *alt* combines with neuter nouns. In (138) *all* and *alt* combine with Singular Definites, but as seen in (139) they also combine with Norwegian Bare Nouns:

- (139) a. **All** vin, musserende og ikke musserende, sterkvin og aromatisert vin...
All wine, sparkling and not sparkling, strong wine and aromatised wine...
b. I henhold til forskrifter skal **all** melk pasteuriseres.
According to prescripton all milk shall be pasteurised.
c. Enkelte øl skummer mer enn andre, men **alt** øl skal gi skum.
Some beers foams more than others, but all beer shall give foam.

The difference between these two combinations is that in the former, but not the latter the quantity is contextually restricted in the speech situation. In the examples in (138) the

referent of the noun is identifiable (and restrictable) (even) without the presence of the all quantifier, while in (139) there is no such restriction and the interpretation is thus generic. This is nevertheless a one-way distinction; nondefinite nouns combined with *all/alt* may be contextually restricted, but combinations with definite nouns cannot be interpreted as generic.

As shown in (140) below *all* cannot combine with neuter nouns while *alt* cannot combine with masculine or feminine ones. Neither combines with plurals:

- (140) a. *All øl/ølet
 b. *Alt vin/vinen
 c. *Alt melk/melka

I therefore conclude that *all* is marked for common and *alt* for neuter gender. In the examples (138)-(139) *all* and *alt* typically combine with (ontological) mass nouns. In fact, neither of these signs can be used to quantify countable singular entities as discrete entities. Even though definite nouns always are interpreted as individualised and bounded, their referent will still be viewed as massive, i.e. they can never refer to individualised portions or containers following *all* and *alt*. In such cases the adjective *hel* ‘whole’ is used. :

- (141) a. De drakk **hele** vindunken (#**all** vindunken) .
 They drank whole wine.carton.M.SG.DEF (all wine carton.M.SG.DEF)
 b. Jeg drakk **hele** flaska (#**all** flaska).
 I drank whole bottle.F.SG.DEF (all bottle.F.SG.DEF)
 c. Jeg drakk **hele** glasset (#**alt** glasset).
 I drank whole glass.N.SG.DEF (all glass.N.SG.DEF)
 d. Jeg drakk **hele** dagen/natta (***all** dagen/natta).
 I drank whole day/night.SG.DEF (all day/night.SG.DEF) → the whole night
 e. Jeg drakk i **hele** dag/natt.
 I drank (in) whole day/night. → all night.

As indicated by the #, the use of *all* and *alt* in (141)c are not really ungrammatical, just inappropriate with the intended reading. Just like in English, *glass* ‘glass’ may be viewed either as an individual entity or as a measure, with a mass interpretation and *alt glasset* would therefore be more natural as the object of *sluke* ‘devour’ and a typical object for *feie opp* ‘sweep up’. The same is true for *vindunken* ‘the wine carton’ in (141)a and *flaska* ‘the bottle’ in (141)b, though the mass readings here are less obvious.

English will often use constructions like ‘the whole’ or ‘the entire’ as a parallel to the examples in (141), but nevertheless diverges from Norwegian in that also *all* may be used, (142)b-f:

- (142) a. [T]he guy drank **all** the bottle by himself. (www)
 b. **All** day/**all** night.
 c. The **whole** day/night.
 d. ***All** dag(en)/natt(a)
 all day.(M.SG.DEF)/night.(F.SG.DEF.)

- e. **Hele** dagen/natta.
whole.GN day.M.SG.DEF/night.F.SG.DEF
“The whole day/nigt.”
- f. I **hele** dag/ i **hele** natt.
in whole.GN day.M.GN/night.F.GN
“All day/all night”

As seen in (143), also French *tout* and *toute* may be used both with countables and non-countables:

- (143) a. J’ai bu **toute** la biere/**toute** la bouteille.
I drank all the beer/the whole bottle
- b. On a fini **tout** le vin/**tout** le carton.
We finished all the wine/the whole carton.
- c. Nous avons dansé et bu **toute** la nuit.
We danced and drank all night.

While I do not assume that core meanings of functional items are language universal, as implied for instance by functional categories in generative grammar or logical operators in formal semantics, I see no reason why the core meaning of the all-quantifiers should vary. All is all. The explanation for why *all/alt* display differences with English *all* and the French *tout*-series with regard to atomisation effects should therefore be sought elsewhere. There are two obvious sources. Firstly, the three languages vary with regard to the additional features marked on their all-quantifiers and, secondly, they vary in the rest of their nominal sign inventory, i.e. with regard to competing signs. To take the first point first, the core meaning of all-quantifiers implies regarding the totality of possible referents together. If this quantity in addition is opposed to another sign specified as plural, like *all* opposed to *alle*, or is specified as singular, like *alt* is, the referent will necessarily be perceived as a non-individualised entity. English *all*, on the other hand, which itself is unspecified and has no paradigmatic siblings specified for number, does not carry the same implication. Another reason for the massifying interpretations of *all* and *alt* is, as we have seen, due to their competition with the general form of the adjective *hel*, *hele*, in non-plural contexts, which indicate the totality of an individualised single individual. While both English and French have adjectives with meanings similar to *hel*, these are not as readily available for this particular type of context because of differences elsewhere in the nominal system. In both English and French, definiteness is marked on preposed determiners, not on the noun as in Norwegian. Since the definiteness marker thus necessarily precedes the adjective this cannot scope over the definiteness of the expression unlike the Norwegian adjective which precedes the definiteness marking.

Both *all* and *alt* may, however, combine with countable Singular Definite Nouns if these are viewed together as a collective of individuals as in (144):

- (144) a. Kanskje du er så heldig at jeg (...) plukker av **all** paprikaen til deg. (www)
Maybe you are so lucky that I will pluck of all pepper.M.SG.DEF for you.

- b. [O]g **all** gulrota var kommet i jorda første dagene i mai. (www)
And all carrot.F.SG.DEF had come in the soil first days of may.

In (144)a *all paprikaen* refers to (all) the small pieces of bell pepper found on the Norwegian national dish (the frozen pizza *grandiosa*) viewed as a collective entity. With a plural form *alle paprikaene* could also be used to refer to a plurality of whole peppers or to focus on the individual entities, while *hele paprikaen* refers to one singular whole bell pepper. The use of the singular form *all gulrota* ‘all the carrot’ in (144)b indicates that the speaker, probably a farmer, does not perceive of carrots as singular individuals during sowing and harvest season.

The plural form *alle* combines with definite and indefinite plurals as well as with Norwegian Bare Nouns (necessarily) receiving plural interpretations. Since gender distinctions in Norwegian are neutralised in the plural, *alle* combines with nouns of all three genders. This is shown in (145):

- (145) a. I prinsippet har **alle** viner godt av å få kontakt med luft (...). (www)
In principle all wines profit from contact with air.
b. **Alle** vinene var lyse på farge, med kjølig fruktighet (...). (www)
All the wines had light colour, with cool fruitiness.
c. Han kan ikke spise (sic) **alle** kaker pga laktoseintolleranse. (www)
He cannot eat all cakes because of lactose intolerance.
d. Da bestemmer Albert seg for å ete **alle** kakene (...). (www).
Then albert decides to eat all the cakes.
e. **Alle** brød bør merkes på denne måten, mener Borchsenius. (www)
All breads should be marked this way, says Borchsenius.
f. **Alle** brødene var økologiske. (www)
All the breads were ecological.

Contrary to *all* and *alt*, *alle* yields individualising interpretations. This is a natural consequence of the combination of the values of its core meaning and additional features; if something is viewed together in its totality, as one, and then specified as being plural, this naturally leads to individualised interpretations of the entities being quantified over.

As already mentioned *all* is one of the very few Norwegian nominal function words that appear only adnominally and thus never functions pronominally. I suggest that this is due to the fact that *all*, contrary to *alt* and *alle*, does not carry a numeral value, but only is marked as common gender, a feature that normally is associated with individualisation. Recall the individualising interpretations of common gendered *noen*, 4.3.2.2. One reason why *all* cannot function pronominally may be that it is difficult to see what it could refer to without a restricting complement that would not be better covered by the more specific features of *alt* and *alle*. (A non-individualised view of everything classified as individualised (common gender) to the exclusion of unindividualised matter?) That it nevertheless only combines with bare, or singular definite nouns and always receives singular interpretations is explained by the existence and featural values of its two siblings; all (intended) plural forms will combine with *alle* and all singular neuter forms with *alt* since these signs are more specific. While *all* differs from *alt* and

alle in this respect (146)a-c, it parallels English *all* which is likewise unable to function pronominally (146)d:

- (146) a. *Han tok **all**.
He took all.
- b. Han tok **alt**.
He took it all/all of it/everything.
- c. Han tok **alle**.
He took them all/all of them/everything/everybody.
- d. He took *(it/them) all.
- e. *Han tok (den/dem) **all** (den/dem)

Unlike English *all*, Norwegian *all* cannot make up a referential noun phrase by combining with another number marked element, cf. (146)d and (146)e. This might be motivated by the fact that the use of the two number marked elements *alt* and *alle* are less costly.

When used pronominally *alle* will normally be translated by *(them) all* or *everybody* and *alt* by *(it) all* and *everything*.¹¹⁸

- (147) a. [M]en jeg vil ha **alle** hjem i god behold. (www)
But I want everybody home safe.
- b. Jeg vil ha **alle** inn om natten, jeg vil ha tid til å trene unghestene. (www)
I want them all in for the night, I want time to train the young horses.
- c. Jeg krever ingenting, men jeg vil ha **alt**. (Ingrid Bergman/www)
I demand nothing, but want everything.

The plural feature of *alle* is always interpreted as ‘more than two’ this is due to the existence of *begge* ‘both’ that will briefly be mentioned in the next subsection.

4.3.3.2 Other all quantifiers

In addition to the *all*-series and *samtlig*, (Bokmål) Norwegian has the all-quantifiers *begge*, *hver/hvert* and *enhver/ethvert* that I will only mention briefly.

Begge and its English equivalent *both* have the same etymology and are related to Old-Norse *báðir*. Like *both*, *begge* is used to refer to two entities regarded and identified together. One peculiarity about *begge* is that even if its core semantics most certainly

¹¹⁸ Like *alle*, its close, but less frequent, near synonym *samtlig* is plural and induces atomisation. The two signs nevertheless differ in that *samtlig* cannot combine with definite nouns.

- (i) a. Samtlige 1. klassinger får egen bærbar PC. (www)
All first graders get their own laptop.
- b. *Samtlige 1. Klassingene
- c. Samtlige av 1. klassingene har fått utdelt en egen bok.
All of the first graders have received their own book.

There might be a historical explanation for this. *Samtlig* originates from German and has come to us via Danish, which does not have so-called double definiteness, recall 3.3.4. In Danish, contrary to Norwegian, definite forms thus never combine with strong determiners. Given the close bounds between Danish and (written) Bokmål Norwegian, a possible explanation could be that the ban on definite forms in combination with *samtlig* is inherited from Danish.

indicates duality, it often combines with (phrases containing) the numeral two as in (148)a.

- (148) a. **Begge** (de/dé/disse) to.
Both (the/these) two.
- b. Forutsatt at **begge** menn synes det er stas å dele én dame... (www)
On the condition that both men.INDEF like sharing one woman.
- c. **Begge** mennene godtok varetekt. (www)
Both men.DEF accepted custody
- d. **Begge** to mennene nektet enhver befatning med narkotikaen. (www)
Both two men.DEF denied all involvement with the drugs.
- e. ***Begge** to menn.

French does not have any form corresponding to *both* and *begge* and uses the complex *tous les deux* ‘all the two’. In both Norwegian and English, such a combination would be ungrammatical as shown in (149). This is probably entirely due to the existence of *both* and *begge*, as there is no other obvious grammatical reason, like featural clashes, to explain the ungrammaticality:

- (149) a. Tous les deux.
b. *All (the) two.
c. *Alle (de) to.

Like most other Norwegian nominal function words *begge* also functions pronominally:

- (150) a. Jeg traff **begge** via internett. (www)
I met both via the internet.
- b. Jeg har spilt gjennom **begge**, og må si jeg liker **begge** like godt. (www)
I have played through both, and must say I like both equally well.

While *all*, *alt*, *alle*, *samtlig*e and *begge* refer collectively to all entities (in the group), the *hver*- and *enhver*-series are like *each* used to refer to every one of two or more people or things, considered and identified separately. It thus has a distributive function and is hence understood and marked as singular. They differ with regard to their gender, common gender for *hver/enhver* (*ei*hver) and neuter for *hvert/ethvert*. Both *hvert(t)* and *enhver/ethvert* function both ad- and pronominally:

- (151) a. Jeg ble sint, og ga **hver** en ørefik. (www)
I got angry, and gave each a slap on the ear.
- b. Han delte gruppa i to og ga **hvert** barn et dyr de skulle være. (www)
He divided the group in two and gave each child an animal they should be.
- c. **Enhver** kunne ha gjort det, men ingen gjorde det.
Anybody could have done it, but nobody did.
- d. George W. Bush sier han er åpen for “**enhver** idé og **ethvert** forslag”.
George W. Buh says he is open to any idea and any proposal

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Both *enhver* and *hver* will often, as exemplified in (151)c,d be translated by English free-choice *any*. The syntax of such free-choice readings is discussed by Vangsnes (1999).

4.4 The demonstratives *den, det, de*

The Norwegian Demonstratives *den, det, de* and *denne, dette, disse* differ in their gender and number marking – singular common or neuter gender for the two first in each series and plural for the latter ones – and function both as pronouns and determiners.¹¹⁹ The demonstratives are among the few functional word-series where all members show clear gender and number distinctions in accordance with Faarlund et al's (1997) criterion that determiners inflect for gender and number. Deixis is, together with person, among the nominal values in Norwegian that seems to be universally encoded in all languages in some form or other and their core meaning may therefore more easily be expressed in (purely) grammatical terms. My proposal for a semantic description of these signs is given below:

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION XIII: PROPOSED VALUE OF THE NORWEGIAN
DEMONSTRATIVES

Den [DEIXIS (NEUTRAL).THIRD PERSON.COMMON GENDER.SINGULAR]

Det [DEIXIS (NEUTRAL).THIRD PERSON.NEUTER.SINGULAR]

De [DEIXIS (NEUTRAL).THIRD PERSON.PLURAL]

Denne [DEIXIS PROXIMAL.THIRD.PERSON.COMMON GENDER.SINGULAR]

Dette [DEIXIS PROXIMAL.THIRD.PERSON.NEUTER.SINGULAR]

Disse [DEIXIS PROXIMAL.THIRD.PERSON.PLURAL]

While it is often claimed that *den, det* and *de* are distal and *denne, dette, disse* proximal, I propose that the former are deixis neutral rather than distal. In Norwegian like in many other languages, deictic adverbs may be added to demonstrative determiners and pronouns to further stress distance or proximity:

- (152) a. Den/det/de (**her/der**).
that.CG/that.N/those (here/there)
- b. Denne/dette/disse (**her/*der**).
this.CG/this.N/these (here/there)

While the proximal adverb *her* 'here' combines equally well with both forms (*den* and *denne*), the distal *der* 'there' generally combines only with neutral ones (*den*), as seen in (152)a,b. Since *den, det, de* combine both with distal and proximal adverbs, I conclude that they should be described as neutral with regard to proximity.¹²⁰ According to Diessel (1999), distance neutral demonstrative pronouns are relatively rare from a typological perspective. As will become clear in the coming subsections, *den, det, de* take on several functions where the deixis feature is downplayed. I see the distance neutrality of *den, det, de* as a prerequisite for their use as personal pronouns and preposed

¹¹⁹ Other demonstratives like the adjectivals *slik* 'such' and *sånn* 'so' and the interrogative *hvilken* 'which one' will not be discussed.

¹²⁰ No other deixis features like visibility, elevation, geography or movement come into play (confer Diessel 1999).

‘definite determiners’ as well as for the expletive use of *det*. The neutral deixis value will therefore also be important for the understanding of the so-called double definiteness construction, discussed in 5.3.1.

The rest of this section will focus on *den*, *det*, *de*. 4.4.1 discusses their core semantics and 4.4.2 their additional features as well as their distribution. 4.4.3 looks at a special property-reinforcing use of *den*, *det*, *de*, while 4.4.4 briefly comments on the special status of *det*. The section on demonstratives is summed up in 4.4.5.

4.4.1 Core semantic of *det*, *den*, *de*

When used pronominally, *den*, *det*, *de* function either as regular demonstratives or as personal pronouns. The two readings are distinguished by the former being accentuated (or accompanied by an adverb). Pronominal *den*, *det*, *de* further occupy all argument positions. Below are some examples with *den*, *det*, *de* functioning as direct objects. The difference in interpretation between the examples in (153) and (154) should be clear from the English translations.

- (153) a. Jeg så **dén**.
I saw this/that.M/F (one)
b. Jeg så **dét**.
I saw this/that.N (one)
c. Jeg så **dé(m)**.
I saw these/that (ones)
- (154) a. Jeg så **den**.
I saw it.M/F
b. Jeg så **det**.
I saw it.N
c. Jeg så **de(m)**.¹²¹
I saw them

As will become clear from the next subsection (see examples (155) and (156)), the same dichotomy is also found when *den*, *det*, *de* are used adnominally, where we get an interpretational shift between that of demonstrative and definite determiners. I take the fact that the deictic function is prominent when the demonstratives are accentuated as an indication that the deictic feature represents their core meaning. The interpretational shift between accentuation/non-accentuation and the demonstrative vs. personal pronoun (or demonstrative or definite article) use of *den*, *det*, *de* is in line with Diessel’s (1999) suggestion that the difference between demonstrative and personal pronouns is that the latter are not deictically contrastive. My proposal thus sees the use of *den*, *det*, *de* as personal pronouns or definite articles as derivative of their demonstrative use. When *det*, *den*, *de* are unaccentuated, the contrastiveness of their core deixis feature is toned down, just like we saw with the singular meaning of the unaccentuated *en*-series and with the

¹²¹ The plural demonstrative is the same element that also functions as the plural third person pronoun. As already discussed in section 4.2. Bokmål here makes a case distinction that is absent in the spoken dialects where one either uses *de* or *dem* both as subjects or objects regardless of whether it functions ad- or pronominally.

small-scale quantity meaning of *noen*. While it is typologically common for demonstratives to devolve into third person pronouns (Diessel 1999: 119), the fact that *den*, *det*, *de* (still) share the same form indicates that deaccentuation in these cases is a modulation acting on and toning down one meaning. As already mentioned in 4.3.1.2, the shift between the two forms of *den* will be explained through application of the superimposed combination of the sign *deaccentuation* with the signifié –CONTRAST with the demonstrative.

In its pronominal use, *den* and *det* tend to refer to non-humans. I nevertheless see no need for a -human feature in their semantics. The reason why they tend not to refer pronominally to human beings is due to their competition with *han* and *henne* which are more precise since they encode the distinction between masculine and feminine gender in addition to third person. Also, both *den* and *det* naturally combine with human denoting nouns in its adnominal use, see examples (155) and (156) below, which is a strong indication that they cannot be marked as –human.

4.4.2 Distribution and additional semantics of *den*, *det*, *de*

The demonstratives are, together with the possessives, the Norwegian function words that most clearly ‘inflect’ with regard to both gender and number. Examples (155) and (156) illustrate this with adnominal uses and show that both *den* and *det* combine with singulars while differing with regard to gender, and that *de* combines with plurals. *Den* combines with both feminine and masculine nouns and must therefore carry a common gender feature, while *det* combines only with neuter ones. The featural distinctions between these three forms is of course also evident in their pronominal use (confer the glossings of examples (153) and (154) in the previous subsection) and will also be evident from the examples in the rest of this section.

- (155) a. **Den** store elgen/katta
The big elk/cat
b. **Det** store barnet/eplet
The big child/apple.
c. **De** store elgene/kattene/barna/eplene
The big elks/cats/kids/apples

- (156) a. **Dén** store elgen/katta
That/this big elk/cat
b. **Dét** store barnet/eplet
That/this big kid/apple
c. **Dé** store elgene/kattene/barna/eplene
Those/these big elks/cats/kids/apples.

Nouns combining with *den*, *det*, *de* will, except for a few special cases, be definite, but exceptions nevertheless exist (recall 3.3.2). The interpretational difference between noun phrases introduced by adnominal demonstratives followed by definite or nondefinite nouns will be discussed in 5.3 (see also 5.2.4). For the time being, I will just mention that this is an indication that these demonstratives do not contain any definite feature, only a neutral deictic feature.

As already mentioned, we witness the same interpretational ambiguity related to accentuation with adnominal uses of demonstratives as we saw with pronominal ones. Without accentuation we get normal definite, and with accentuation demonstrative determination (notice the difference in the English translations). The nondemonstrative use is often termed the ‘double definiteness construction’ and the determiner often ‘the adjective’s definite article’. This is due to the fact that the preposed determiner is more common with adjectival modification of definite nouns than with indefinites. Under the present approach where both demonstratives and *-e* Adjectives are understood as unmarked with regard to definiteness, the term double definiteness is a misnomer. Such constructions, which are the subject of 5.3.1, will therefore instead be referred to as the Default Definite Adjectival Construction. As will be shown in 5.3, however, the demonstrative is typically present with restrictive and descriptive modification, but there are also circumstances where it may or must be absent. The term the adjective’s demonstrative is then more appropriate since its use indicates that the property of the adjective (deictically) singles out the referent among others that could be identified by the same noun. The difference in interpretation between pre- and nondetermined definite adjective-noun combinations will be treated in depth in 5.3, see especially section 5.3.4.

4.4.3 Other interpretations

In a special type of construction termed “intensifying noun phrases” by Vangsnes (1997, 1999), the demonstrative serves to reinforce a salient property of a (pragmatically indefinite) referent. Some examples are given in (157)-(159) below. A particular compulsory accentuation and intonational pattern (indicated by the use of capitals) implies that such demonstrative + adjective-noun combinations express a different grammatical relation than in the more prototypical constructions we have just seen.

- (157) a. **DEN** store elgen/katta
This big elk/cat
b. **DET** store barnet
This big kid
c. **DE** store elgene/kattene/barna/eplene
These big elks/cats/kids/apples
- (158) a. **DEN** elgen/katta
This elk
b. **DET** barnet/eplet
This kid/apple
c. **DE** elgene/kattene/barna/eplene
These elks/cats/kids/apples

According to Vangsnes (1999 : 78) “whenever an intensifying noun phrase is used, the referent must be understood as having some remarkable property – the demonstrative ‘points’ to a property rather than to a referent, as it were.” (See also Vangsnes 1997) According to Vangsnes, such constructions are grammatically indefinite since they (typically) appear in existentials :

- (159) Det var **DEN** (store) elgen i skogen.
There was this (incredibl(y)) (big) elk in the forest.

The Intensifying Construction has no equivalents in English or French, but may be translated by inserting *incredible* or *incredibly* to an ordinary English demonstrative construction. There is nevertheless also in English a construction where a noun phrase headed by a demonstrative may appear in existentials. Such indefinite specifics (in the terminology of Bernstein 1997) are nevertheless highly different from the property reinforcing ones just seen, and are furthermore strictly unacceptable in, and untranslatable into, Norwegian. The examples in (160) are Bernstein's (19b) and (20):

- (160) a. This woman (from Paris) = a woman (indefinite specific)
b. There's this book (that) you ought to read.

As indicated by the citation from Vangsnes above, also the intensifying use of *den*, *det*, *de* is consistent with the proposed semantic description of the signs. While in the other cases, the demonstrative tells you to single out a referent – an item, an extension – denoted by the complement, the deictic feature in the Intensifying Construction singles out some salient (remarkable) property of its intention. The Intensifying Construction is analysed in 5.3.2 where it is shown that also the definiteness feature on the noun, contrary to Vangsnes' assumption, retains its usual semantics in this construction and indicates identifyability even though they may appear in existentials. The particular twist in the understanding and interpretation of the definiteness suffix and the special target of the demonstrative are explained by the superimposed sign *Intensify* which provides the construction with its special interpretational pattern.

4.4.4 Special uses of *det*

In its pronominal use *det* stands out among the three in that it is also used to refer anaphorically to elements that do not have a fixed gender value.

- (161) a. Jeg har sett elg mange ganger. **Det/dét** har Martin aldri gjort.
I have seen elks many times. Martin has never done that.
b. **Det/dét** er rart (det)
That is strange.

This is consistent with the fact that neuter is the default gender in Norwegian. As can be seen from (161), *det* both may and may not receive sentence accent in such cases depending on whether a contrastive interpretation is sought or not.

Det also stands out among the three signs in that it is the Norwegian expletive subject. As seen in (162), expletive *det* covers both English expletives, i.e. *there* and *it* and is used in meteorological sentences (162)a, in existentials (162)b as well as in clausal subject sentences also (162)b.

- (162) a. **Det** regner.
It rains (i.e it is raining).

- b. **Det** er sikkert at **det** fins elg i skogen.
It is certain that there are elks in the forest.

Impersonal constructions are very common in Norwegian and as shown in (163) we often find expletive *det* in situations where English would not use an expletive construction .

- (163) a. **[D]et** kom en ny prest til bygda året etter. (www)
there came a new priest to the village the year after.
b. **Det** ble funnet skjelettresten av to kvinner i skipet. (www)
there was found skeleton remainings of two women on the ship.
c. Visste du (...) at **det** selgest flest cabrioletter på vestlandet (...)?(www)
Did you know that there sell.PASSIVE.PRESENT most cabriolets in western Norway?

A thorough account of expletives is far beyond the scope of this study, which focuses on the nominal system as a whole. I will nevertheless briefly mention that I do not see expletives as empty placeholders without any referential function. Rather, I see such subjects as referring to the general background of the event, its ‘stage’ or ‘world of event’, cf. Maslova and Bernini’s (2006) work on (S-) topics. According to Eriksen (2008) expletives based on third person neuter pronouns are the only type of expletives which have been found in all expletive contexts, which indicates that *it*-expletives are the unmarked type of expletives. As opposed to most other uses of *det*, expletive *det* cannot receive accentuation and is therefore always interpreted nondeictically as a personal pronoun.

4.4.5 Summary demonstratives

The additional features pose no problem for the analysis of Norwegian demonstratives. What is interesting, is the numerous different interpretations of *den*, *det*, *de* as regular demonstratives, personal pronouns, intensifiers and as expletives. In this chapter I have indicated that all these interpretations may be related to their one invariant meaning. Firstly, like with all other nominal function words marked for number, their use as determiners or pronouns relies solely on whether they seek their referent extra- or intraphrasially. The shift between their interpretations as true demonstratives, personal pronouns or the adjectival demonstrative article depends on whether they are accentuated or not; demonstrative interpretations always rely on accentuation, while the lack of accentuation on personal pronouns indicates that the contrastive deixis feature is toned down. When it is the adjectival property that is targeted by the deixis feature, the adjective normally bears the phrasal accentuation. Finally, the special scope of the intensifying deixis feature is marked by a special intonational pattern.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the same analysis that was used for lexical words (nouns and adjectives) is fruitful also for nominal function words. Both lexical words and function words may be accounted for in terms of a core meaning and a subset of additional grammatical features.

There is no need to assume any categorical distinction between determiners and pronouns since the Norwegian nominal function words are very varied when it comes to morphology and they (generally) perform the same syntactic functions. The determiner/pronoun distinction is not even functional, but rather contextual (i.e. function words are not multifunctional elements) since they perform the same function in both uses, namely to 'identify' a referent, but in different contexts, either intra- or extra-phrasially.

Also other types of apparent polysemy of the different functional signs have been rejected since they always are connected to absence or presence of accentuation. With accentuated items the core meaning receives a focused and contrastive interpretation, while lack of accentuation indicates that the core meaning is somewhat toned down. The relationship between accentuation and change in interpretation is found with all (paradigmatic) nominal functional elements.

Chapter 5

Syntax – combinatorial signs and syntactically complex signs

The two previous chapters treated the unitary signs, or uni-signs, that constitute the Norwegian Nominal System, i.e. Norwegian Nouns, Adjectives and Function Words. This chapter discusses a second type of signs, namely combinatorial signs or combi-signs, introduced by Bouchard (2002), and the complex signs that result from applying combi-signs to uni-signs. In other words, this chapter discusses syntax.

The main purpose of the chapter is to advocate the view that also syntax is part of the system of signs – it provides a *signifiant* to a combination of *signifiés* – and thus that the pervasiveness of arbitrariness in language and the limitations set upon it by human cognition and physiology, together with the distinctions between paradigmatic and associative relations, is sufficient also to account for the various properties of both combinatorial signs and (syntactically) combined signs. This understanding of syntax was introduced by Bouchard (1996, 2002) and further developed and refined in Bouchard (2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2009 and forthcoming) who shows how such a view is motivated (solely) by the prior properties of the conceptual and perceptual substances on which language is built.

It will be shown that the interpretational ranges of the constructions under scrutiny are motivated by the compositional meaning of the construction as a whole – a function of the meaning of its parts, the uni- and combi-signs constituting the construction – together with its relationship to connected signs. Just like any other sign, syntactically complex signs have one invariant meaning that may receive varying interpretations – and appear more or less appropriate – depending on context.

The Neo-saussurean approach often yields straightforward answers to phenomena that may seem more intricate from perspectives with a more elaborate technical apparatus or looser boundaries between invariant meaning and interpretation. Among the issues explored in this chapter is the difference between pre- and postnominal possessives, the distribution of attributive adjectives, the so-called double definiteness construction, as well as several other definite attributive adjective-noun constructions. One asset of this chapter is the introduction of tonal signs into the description and analysis of the Norwegian Nominal System, an aspect of the system that has received little attention in previous accounts. It will be shown that the Neo-saussurean framework facilitates a principled account of the contribution of superimposed tonal signs in the Norwegian Nominal System.

Subchapter 5.1 gives a presentation of Bouchard's Neo-saussurean Sign Theory of Syntax and discusses the role and nature of combinatorial signs. The Sign Theory of Syntax will then be applied to several types of combinatorial signs and syntactically complex signs. Subchapter 5.2 discusses the use of juxtaposition in the Norwegian Nominal System with a special look at the distribution of possessives and attributive adjectives, while 5.3 explores several issues related to adjectival modification of definite noun phrases with a focus on superimposed tonal signs. The chapter is closed in 5.4.

5.1 The Sign Theory of Syntax: Combinatorial signs

Like any other sign, combinatorial signs are complex entities consisting of a *signifié* and a *signifiant*. Subsection 5.1.2 discusses the meaning, or *signifié* part, of combinatorial signs and 5.1.3 the possible forms of combinatorial *signifiants*. In the following subchapters, this theoretical framework will be applied to several types of combinatorial signs and syntactically complex signs of the Norwegian Nominal System. First, however, we shall consider the theory of syntax as combinatorial signs in 5.1.1.

5.1.1 Syntax as Combinatorial Signs

As mentioned in 2.1.2, Saussure (*Cours*) has often been criticised for neglecting (the importance of) syntax, among others by Seuren (1998: 155) who states that “one of the main sources of de Saussure’s inadequacies is clear: he failed to see the importance of syntactic structure and took the word, not the sentence, as the primary unit of linguistic analysis”.

Regarding the first statement, namely that he failed to see the importance of syntactic structure, it can easily be refuted by the following citation: “Il faut ajouter une faculté d’association et de coordination, qui se manifeste dès qu’il ne s’agit plus de signes isolés; *c’est cette faculté qui joue le plus grand rôle dans l’organisation de la langue en tant que système*”¹²² (Saussure 1916: 29). Furthermore, while it is true that neither *Cours* nor other Saussurean writings say much about sentences (or about phrases), stating that he took the word and not the sentence as the primary unit of linguistic analysis is not only inaccurate, but also actually false. For Saussure, the primary unit of linguistic analysis is, unequivocally, the sign, which he, just as unequivocally, takes to include words, phrases and sentences: “Dans la règle nous ne parlons pas par signes isolés, mais par groupe de signes, par masses organisées qui sont elle-même des signes. Dans la langue tout revient à des différences, mais tout revient aussi à des groupements.”¹²³ (Saussure 1916: 177).

The misunderstanding of (the lack of a) Saussurean syntax might, as Bouchard (forthcoming) points out, be rooted in an early criticism from Chomsky (1964: 59-60): “he appears to regard sentence formation as a matter of *parole* rather than *langue*, of free and voluntary creation rather than systematic rule (or perhaps, in some obscure way, as on the border between *langue* and *parole*”. Saussure, indeed, states that both *langue* and *parole* play a role in the production of combination of units (Saussure 1916: 173). *Parole*, the act of an individual speaking, involves the *choice* of words and morphemes, as well as the *choice* between the regular syntactic patterns available in *langue*.¹²⁴ However, just like words and morphemes, the syntactic patterns themselves are clearly seen as part of *langue*: “Il faut attribuer à la langue, non à la parole, tous les types de syntagmes construit sur des formes régulières”¹²⁵ (Saussure 1916: 173). Both the major importance of syntax for Saussure’s model and its location

¹²² We must add a faculty of association and coordination, which is manifest as soon as there is no longer a question of isolated signs: *it is this faculty that plays the largest role in the organisation of language as a system*. (Highlighting is my own, MH)

¹²³ Normally we do not express ourselves by using single linguistic signs, but groups of signs, organised in complexes which themselves are signs. In linguistic structure everything in the end comes down to differences, and also to groups.

¹²⁴ See Bouchard (forthcoming) for a demonstration that the act of an individual speaking is as much at work in syntactic analysis in G[enerative]G[rammar] as it is in Saussure’s model.

¹²⁵ We must attribute to *langue*, not to *parole*, all types of syntagmas constructed on regular forms.

in *langue* should thus be obvious. However, what is then its role or function? Also this question receives a clear answer in *Cours*. For Saussure, syntax is a means of imposing limitations on the otherwise irrational arbitrariness, which without any restrictions would lead to extreme complexity:

Tout ce qui a trait à la langue en tant que système demande, c'est notre conviction, à être abordé de ce point de vue, qui ne retient guère les linguistes : la limitation de l'arbitraire. C'est la meilleure base possible. En effet tout le système de la langue repose sur le principe irrationnel de l'arbitraire du signe qui, appliqué sans restriction, aboutirait à la complication suprême ; mais l'esprit réussit à introduire un principe d'ordre et de régularité dans certaines parties de la masse des signes, et c'est là le rôle du relativement motivé.¹²⁶ (Saussure 1916: 182)

Because of the arbitrariness of the sign, there are no limitations on the complexity of the meaning a word (or a uni-sign) can have, and, in principle, anything – i.e. all thinkable concepts – can be the *signifié* of a word. The same holds for the *signifiant*, which can also be arbitrarily complex. At the same time, and as pointed out by Bouchard (2002, forthcoming), the number of uni-signs (lexical associations of a *signifié* and a *signifiant*) that the human brain can store is limited and our perceptual system can only make a limited number of clear distinctions.¹²⁷ The uni-signs in our lexicon therefore generally correspond to quite general concepts, which, in order to express meanings that correspond with more specific concepts, may be combined with another sign attributing a distinguishing property to the first one. According to Bouchard (forthcoming) words do have the correct power to produce the creativity of language, but having a word for every concept is not practical, and impossible to store in our limited brain. Syntax is thus a means to express more specific concepts than those available from the stored uni-signs. By iterating its combinations, syntax allows the creation of groups of signs, which are themselves signs and which can attain an unlimited degree of complexity.

While uni-signs are fully arbitrary, combinations of signs are (necessarily) relatively motivated: “Une partie seulement des signes est absolument arbitraire; chez d'autres intervient un phénomène qui permet de reconnaître des degrés dans l'arbitraire sans le supprimer: le signe peut être relativement motivé.”¹²⁸ (Saussure 1916: 181). As an example of a (fully) unmotivated sign Saussure uses the French numeral *vingt* ‘twenty’. *Dix-neuf* ‘nineteen’, literally ‘ten-nine’, on the other hand, is not unmotivated to the same extent because it evokes both the terms that it is composed of, and others with which it is associated, like e.g. *dix* ‘ten’, *neuf* ‘nine’, *vingt-neuf* ‘twenty nine’, *dix-huit* ‘eighteen’, *soixante-dix* ‘seventy’. Both *dix* and *neuf*

¹²⁶ Everything having to do with languages as systems needs to be approached, we are convinced, with a view to examining the limitations of arbitrariness. It is an approach which linguists have neglected. But it offers the best possible basis for linguistic studies. For the entire linguistic system is founded upon the irrational principle that the sign is arbitrary. Applied without restriction, this principle would lead to utter chaos. But the mind succeeds in introducing a principle of order and regularity into certain areas of the mass of signs. That is the role of relative motivation. (The translation is Roy Harris' (Saussure 1983:131))

¹²⁷ That general categories are of greater usefulness was pointed out already by John Locke: “a distinct name for every particular thing would not be of any great use for the improvement of knowledge: which, though founded in particular things, enlarges itself by general views; to which things reduced into sorts, under general names, are properly subservient” (Locke 1690:15).

¹²⁸ Not all signs are absolutely arbitrary. In some cases, there are factors that allow us to recognise different degrees of arbitrariness, although never to discard the notion entirely. *The sign may be motivated to a certain extent.*

are by themselves just as arbitrary as *vingt*, but their combination as in *dix-neuf* is relatively motivated. While this example might be understood as taken from the word-level and to discuss morphological combinations, there is no doubt that Saussure assumed the same principles to apply for syntactically combined signs as well:

[T]out mot qui n'est pas une unité simple et irréductible ne se distingue pas essentiellement d'un membre de phrase, d'un fait de syntaxe ; l'agencement des sous-unités qui le composent obéit aux mêmes principes fondamentaux que la formation des groupes de mots.¹²⁹ (Saussure 1916: 187)

L'interpénétration de la morphologie, de la syntaxe et de la lexicologie s'explique par la nature au fond identique de tous les faits de synchronie. Il ne peut y avoir entre eux aucune limite tracée d'avance.¹³⁰ (Saussure 1916: 187)

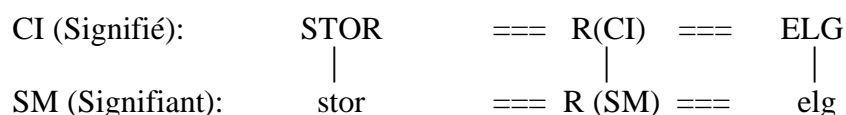
Saussure's views both on the role and the importance of syntax are thus clear enough. Syntax is at the core of the language system where it sets limitations on the arbitrariness of language which otherwise would be unusable because of extreme complexity. He was nevertheless much more sparse when it came to indicating how this mechanism worked.

It is a fact that Saussure's discussions of syntax lacks the formal precision of many present-day syntactic theories, but, as Bouchard (forthcoming) points out, he cannot be blamed for this since the technical tools now currently used did not exist at the time (see also Chomsky 1964: 59 and Ruwet 1968: 52). The task of formalizing syntax at the core of the sign-system has been embarked upon by Bouchard (1996, 2002 (see especially 37-40), 2006, 2009 and forthcoming), and his theory of Saussurean syntax as combinatorial signs is the subject of the coming sub-chapter.

5.1.2 The Meaning of Combinatorial Signs

As the union of a concept and a percept, a sign is by definition a complex entity. According to Bouchard, whenever two signs are combined by a relation R, R will therefore necessarily operate simultaneously on both their *signifié* and their signifiant. This might be illustrated as in Figure 5 below (modified from Bouchard 2006a:538) where CI stands for Conceptual-Intentional and SM for Sensory-Motor using the noun phrase *stor elg* 'big elk' as an example:

FIGURE 5 ILLUSTRATION OF RELATION BETWEEN SIGNS



Since it consists of both a signifié part and a *signifiant* part, the relation that mediates between the two uni-signs is itself a sign. This observation, simple and obvious as it may seem, has major implications for syntactic theory.

¹²⁹ Every word that is not a single, unanalysable unit is essentially no different from a phrase, syntactically speaking. For the arrangement of smaller constituent units obeys the same basic principles as govern the formation of groups of words.

¹³⁰ The interpenetration of morphology, syntax and lexicology is explained by the fact that all synchronic features are ultimately of the same kind. No boundary between them can be laid down in advance.

The main question addressed in this sub-section is the nature of the CI part of the relation R, i.e. the nature of R's *signifié*. This entails the subquestion of whether there exist different kinds of conceptual-intentional relations (i.e. combinatorial meanings) or whether all combinatorial signs express the same meaning. The minimal assumption would be that all combinatorial signs express the same meaning or value, but that this will be interpreted differently depending on its context, i.e. on the nature of the elements it combines. That the nature of abstract grammatical relations is dependent on the elements they apply to is clearly also the view of Saussure:

Mais l'essentiel est que les entités abstraites reposent toujours, en dernière analyse, sur les entités concrètes. Aucune abstraction grammaticale n'est possible sans une série d'éléments matériels qui lui sert de substrat, et c'est toujours à ces éléments qu'il faut revenir en fin de compte. (Saussure 1916: 177 ?)¹³¹

Bouchard formalises this by proposing that the *signifié* of R is a relation of predication. The notion of predication must here be understood in its broadest sense: The *signifié* of R (i.e. R (CI)) links two elements so that one tells us something about the other, i.e. attributes a property to the other. In a sentence like (164) below, we find at least the relations indicated in Figure 6:

(164) Du så den der.
You saw it there.

FIGURE 6: INTERPRETATIONS OF PREDICATION AS COMBINATORIAL SIGNIFIÉS

så R1 den	→	Property of direct object attributed to 'seeing', i.e. the verb,
[så den] R2 der	→	Property of location attributed to the VP.
du R3 [så den der]	→	Property of VP attributed to the subject.

While the interpretation of the relations expressed between the constituents, or signs, differs, this is due to the nature of the signs being combined not to the core meaning of the *signifié* of the combinatorial sign R itself. Just like any other sign, combinatorial signs are sensitive to their context. If the attribution of a direct object to a verb differs from the attribution of an adjectival property to a noun, this is solely due to the different nature of verb, noun and adjective phrases. It is thus a question of different contextual interpretations.

A consequence of this view is that combinatorial signs differ from uni-signs, in that their *signifié* is universally given. The meaning of combi-signs is one of very few semantic universals assumed in the present study. Positing universal meanings for uni-signs is contradictory to Saussurean arbitrariness since they depend on the idea that there (somewhere) exist meanings or *signifiés* that are prior to the signs instantiating them.

According to Bouchard (forthcoming), there are two reasons why the combinatorial *signifié* universally is predication. Firstly, it derives from the conceptual substance and the way human beings conceptualise things and construct categories, and secondly predication comes from the fact that human physiology

¹³¹ What is essential is that the arbitrary entities always rely on the concrete entities. No grammatical abstractions are possible without a series of material elements that could serve as its substrate and it is always to these elements one has to return in the end.

imposes limits that force signs to denote broad classes of concepts. Predication through combinatorial signs is a means to narrow these down to more restricted ones, as shown in 2.1.3. Predication thus allows syntax to create organized groups of signs which are themselves signs and which can attain an unlimited degree of complexity. That simple rules generate complex patterns, is well-known from the work on fractals and chaos (cf. Prigogine & Stengers 1984 for an influential overview). In language, the potential chaotic dispersions of arbitrary signs are constrained by the physical properties of the various material elements of human physiology with which signs are confronted.

5.1.3 The Form of Combinatorial Signs

While the *signifié* of combinatorial signs is universally identified as predication because of the properties of human physiology and cognition, their signifiant will “take whatever form a language arbitrarily selects among those which our physiology provides as a combinatorial percept in the modality of this language” (Bouchard 1996). Because the auditory channel is restricted to the single dimension of time, oral languages offer only two ways to directly establish a physical relation between the *signifiant* of two constituents. They can share either a temporal edge or a temporal space. The first case results in temporally juxtaposing the two *signifiants*: they are ordered next to one another, and this ordering is grammatically significant.¹³² In the second case, a modulation is superimposed on the signifiant of a constituent so that one signifiant is the intonation placed on the other signifiant. Both these ways of combining signs are syntagmatic. The relation is established *in praesentia*: The combinatorial signifiant R(SM) physically links the *signifiant* of two terms (Bouchard forthcoming). In Norwegian, direct temporal juxtaposition is the preferred *signifiant* of combinatorial signs, but superimposition in the form of intonation is regularly used to express foci, questions and exclamations, and, as we will see in 5.3, it also plays an important role in differentiating between several complex noun phrases containing the same uni-signs.

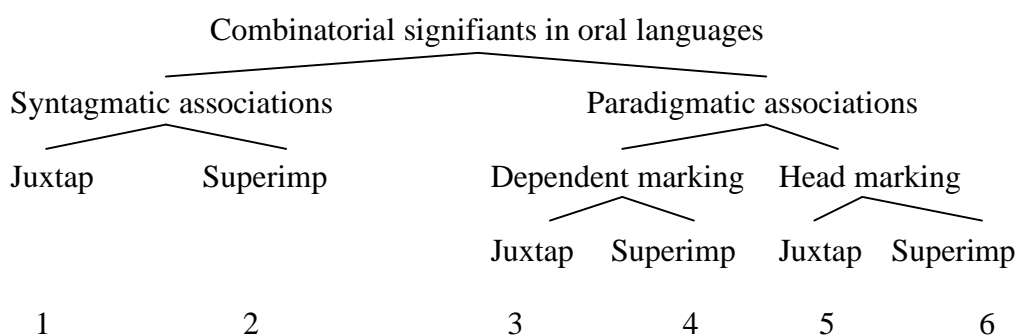
In addition to these very direct ways of indicating that there exists a relation between two signs, the nature of the link between the two may also be established *in absentia*, i.e. by means of a paradigm or what Saussure terms *rappports associatifs*.¹³³ In such cases, the relation between two *signifiants* is expressed by physically shaping one in a conventionalised way that indicates what relation is being established with the other. Either such markings can affect the dependent, as with Case markings, or it can be placed on the head as in some polysynthetic languages. The ‘conventionalised way’ is captured in a paradigm which a speaker learns and keeps in (nonconscious)

¹³² Because of the temporal restrictions in oral language signs must necessarily be temporally ordered, therefore not all cases of temporal ordering can be significant. Bouchard (forthcoming) shows that in a sentence like *Mary saw John yesterday*, it is grammatically significant that *saw* and *John* are juxtaposed, but not that *John* and *yesterday* are juxtaposed: the juxtaposition of *yesterday* is grammatically relevant only with respect to the phrase *saw John* (or *Mary saw John* under different assumptions). Bouchard further stresses that the functional aspect of order – the notion of temporal juxtaposition – and the articulatory aspect to order must not be confused: some order is required in oral languages since we cannot produce more than one sound at a time. The functional and contingent aspects of order are two distinct properties: two elements could be semantically combined, and yet their ordering relation could be unrelated to the semantic combination, and conversely, two elements could hold an ordering relation but not be semantically related.

¹³³ See section 2.3.1 and Saussure (1916:17 ff) for the Saussurean distinctions syntagmatic/associative, *in praesentia/absentia*.

memory. In order to know what kind of link is established between which terms, the value of the relevant term in the paradigm needs a physical expression. In oral languages, the only means to mark a term is through one of the two physical means given above, i.e. either by juxtaposition or by superimposition. Case markings may e.g. be marked either by case endings or by case tones, the first being an instance of paradigmatic juxtaposition and the latter one of paradigmatic superimposition. The figure below, which is taken from Bouchard (forthcoming, see also 2002, 2006a, 2009, sums up the possible physical means to express combinatorial signs in oral languages¹³⁴:

FIGURE 7: COMBINATORIAL SIGNIFIANTS IN ORAL LANGUAGES (EXHAUSTIVE)



- 1- syntactic ordering: head and object, phrase and modifier adjunct, etc.
- 2- syntactic intonation: emphatic focus, question or exclamation intonation, etc.
- 3- morphological ordering: case affixes in Latin, German
- 4- morphological tone: case tones in Rendille
- 5- morphological ordering: object marking on verb in Mohawk
- 6- morphological tone: tone on the verb which indicates tense or aspect in Ngiti

The schema in Figure 7 forms the basis for a large amount of cross-linguistic grammatical variation. As Bouchard (forthcoming) points out, the syntactic relation ‘direct object’ can be expressed by any of these combinatorial signifiants and they are all attested in the worlds languages. This is a direct result of Saussurean arbitrariness: as there is no particular reason for a language to choose any particular combinatorial *signifiant* in order to express a particular relation.

Languages thus vary in their choices of *signifiants* among the combinatorial percepts in Figure 7, just as they vary in their choices of the *signifiants* of their uni-signs. This view of syntax sets Neo-saussurean grammar apart from several other schools where one of these is taken as basic. “In G[enerative] G[rammar], one of these is taken as basic. The dominating proposal is that fixed positions encode R, i.e., that Juxtaposition is the universal (often underlying) means to encode R. This contrasts with classical schools, which took functional markers as basic, since Latin was the language of prestige on which the models were based.” (Bouchard 2009) While it is true that Generative Grammar claims to deal with hierarchy and not

¹³⁴ Combinatorial percepts are modality-dependent. Sign languages have more types of combinatorial percepts than oral languages since the visual-gestural channel uses more dimensions than the auditory-channel. For a discussion of the nature of combi-signs in sign languages, the reader is referred to Bouchard (1996).

linearity, Bouchard (2006a) further points out that linearity directly determines the hierarchical choices.¹³⁵

Before closing this section, it is worth mentioning that even if Saussure did not formalise the possible variation in the *signifiant* part of syntax, he clearly advocated the view that similar relations could be expressed by different modes: “Une langue exprime quelque fois (...) la notion de complément d’objet direct uniquement par la position du substantif après le verbe transitif (...) tandis que le latin et d’autres langues le font par l’emploi de l’accusatif” (Saussure 1916:191).¹³⁶ A few lines down, he describes the use of juxtaposition more explicitly while at the same time denying the existence of null elements:

En anglais *the man I have seen* (...) nous montre un fait de syntaxe qui semble représenté par zéro, tandis que le français le rend par *que*. Mais c’est justement la comparaison avec le fait de syntaxe français qui produit cette illusion que le néant peut exprimer quelque chose ; en réalité les unités matérielles, alignées dans un certain ordre, créent seule cette valeur. (Saussure 1916 : 191)¹³⁷

The following subchapters and sections examine some of the most prominent uses of combinatorial signs in the Norwegian Nominal System by investigating some of its most frequent and prototypical constructions. Subchapter 5.2 looks at the use of juxtaposition with a focus on the distribution of possessives and attributive adjectives, while 5.3 discusses the use of several types of superimposed tonal signs as distinguishing marks between constructions containing the same lexical elements.

¹³⁵ Bouchard cites Chomsky (2000) who, while discussing an example of the active/passive alternation says that “the surface phonetic realisations are dissociated from the semantic ones” thus implicitly assuming that some semantic relations are ‘normally’ associated with particular surface positions.

¹³⁶ A language sometimes expresses the notion of direct object uniquely by the position of the noun, whereas Latin and other languages do it by means of the accusative.

¹³⁷ In English, *the man I have seen* shows a syntactic phenomenon that seems to be represented by zero, while in French it is rendered by *que*. But it is exactly the comparison with the syntax of French that creates this illusion that nothing can express something : in reality it is the material units, aligned in a certain order, which alone creates this value.

5.2 Juxtaposition and the Distribution of Possessives and Attributive Adjectives

This subchapter discusses the use of juxtaposition as a combinatorial *signifiant* in the Norwegian Nominal System. Section 4.2.1 shows how a notion like the head parameter is an inevitable consequence of choosing juxtapositions as the means to express a relation between two uni-signs, and 5.2.2 discusses the formal and interpretational differences between pre- and postnominal possession. Section 5.2.3 provides motivation for the postnominal distribution of Norwegian attributive adjectives, while section 5.2.4 discusses the difference between lack of convention and conceptual incompatibility as reasons behind ungrammaticality and apparent featural incompatibility. Finally, 4.2.5 shortly mentions two cases where also dependent marking by juxtaposition has consequences for the Norwegian Nominal System.

5.2.1 The Head-Parameter

According to Bouchard’s Neo-saussurean Sign-Theory of Syntax, direct juxtaposition is one out of only six possible ways to indicate a relation between two signs in oral languages. The limited number of combinatorial *signifiants* is the inevitable result of restrictions imposed on oral languages by the necessary linearity of the *signifiant*, a restriction forced upon us by the limited means of our articulatory or sensory-motor system. Once juxtaposition is chosen as a means to conventionalise a combinatorial signifiant, however, a new choice forces itself upon the language community. When deciding to conventionalise juxtaposition as a means to combine two signs, a head and a dependent, one simultaneously has to conventionalise an order to combine them in. The head must necessarily either precede or follow its dependent – it has no other choice.

In Norwegian direct juxtaposition is the most prominent means to express relations between signs, not only inside of the nominal system, but also in the syntax of the language as a whole. The head-parameter is set to head first, which is clear e.g. from its general VO-structure and in its prepositional inventory. One of the major discussions in nominal syntax concerns the relational status between nouns and determiners, or preposed adnominals. In accordance with the head setting in Norwegian, I see the preposed adnominals as heads of the noun phrases they are part of. This is also the position generally taken in generative grammar since the influential thesis of Abney (1987). However, as already mentioned, the predication relation between Norwegian determiners and nouns is, because of the equal referential force of both elements, strictly speaking an equation between two elements, not a pure predication relation. The combination of an adnominal head like *den* ‘that’ with a dependent like *elgen* ‘elk.M.SG.DEF’ through juxtaposition may be illustrated as below:

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION XIV: JUXTAPOSED COMBINATION OF *DEN* AND *ELGEN*

a.	CI (Signifié):	DEN	===	PREDICATION	===	ELGEN
	SM (Signifiant):	den	===	juxtaposition	===	elgen

- b. *Den* [DEIX.CG.SG] **R** *elgen* [ELGEN.M.SG.DEF]
Den elgen [DEIX.(CG).SG [ELGEN.M.SG.DEF]]

While the relation between determiners and nouns follows the regular setting for the head-parameter in Norwegian, the picture might at first glance seem a bit more confusing for other parts of the Norwegian Nominal System. Though modifying prepositional phrases and relative clauses follow their head noun, attributive adjectives precedes their nominal heads and the Norwegian possessives are found on both sides of the possessed noun. These two facts are the subjects of the two following sections which, among other things, will show that both these puzzles are explainable and fully compositional.

5.2.2 Pronominal Possession

Norwegian Possessives clearly inflect for both gender and number, and I see no need to propose important changes in their featural composition compared to standard assumptions. Norwegian Possessives are different from English and French possessives in that the same form is used both ad- and pronominally. This is illustrated in (165)-(167):

- (165) a. Dette er **min** hund/hunden **min**.
 b. Den er **min**.
 c. Hunden er **min**.
- (166) a. Ceci est **mon** chien.
 b. Celui-ci est le **mien**.
 c. Le chien est à **moi**.
- (167) a. This is **my** dog.
 b. This one is **mine**.
 c. The dog is **mine**.

I see this as evidence that Norwegian *min/mine* contrary to English *my* are marked for number, but this cannot be the whole story since French possessive articles show number distinctions without functioning pronominally. The most puzzling thing about Norwegian possessives is that they, as seen in (165)a above, may be both pre- and postposed when used adnominally, and that their position affects the form of the noun they combine with.

There are three basic ways of expressing possessive relations in Norwegian. Either through pre- or postposed possessives or by use of a preposition, normally *til*.¹³⁸ This is illustrated in (168):

- (168) a. Boka mi. – Sitter her med **boka mi** og leser. (www)
 Book.F. SG.DEF my (I am) sitting here with my book reading.
 b. Mi bok – **Mi bok** er på bokmål. (www)
 My book My book is in Bokmål-
 c. Boka til X. – – **Boka til Randen** er einestående i sitt slag. (www)
 The book to X The book to randen is unique in its genre.

¹³⁸ Nynorsk also sometimes uses the preposition *åt*, also ‘to’, and some dialects in Agder and Telemark use *av* ‘from’ (Faarlund et al 1997 : 263).

Prepositional possessive constructions with *til* are only used with common and proper names, never with pronouns. They will not be discussed further here.

As can be seen in (168)a,b, there is a change in the form of the noun depending on whether the possessive is pre- or postposed. Postposed possessives combine with the definite forms, (169)a,b while preposed possessives are followed by one of the non-definite forms (169)c,d:

- (169) a. **Boka** mi/di/hans/hennes/vår/deres/deres.
book.F.SG.DEF my/your/his/her/our/their/your
- b. **Bøkene** mine/dine/hennes/våre/deres/deres.
book.PL.DEF my/your/his/her/our/their/your
- c. Mi/di/hans/hennes/vår/deres/deres **bok**.
my/your/his/her/our/their/your book.F.GN
- d. Mi/di/hans/hennes/våre/deres/deres **bøker**.
my/your/his/her/our/their/your book.PL.INDEF
“My/your/his/her/our/their/your book/books”

The two constructions are (generally) quite synonymous and are used interchangeably. There are nevertheless both stylistic and grammatical factors involved in the choice of constructions.

According to Faarlund et al (1997: 264-265), the following factors favour (or require) the use of preposed possessives: (i) the noun is abstract as in (170)a,b, (ii) the possessive is focused (170)c, (iii) since genitive marked possessives involving *sin* or *s* never appear post-nominally (170)d, this is also transferred to pronominal possessives coordinated with such possessives (170)e.¹³⁹ The possessive is further (obligatorily) preposed when (iv) the (head) noun is omitted (170)f and (iv) in combination with *egen* and *hver* (170)g,h:

- (170) a. Nasjonalitetsbevegelsens styrke var selvsagt en viktig grunn til **deres seier**.
(Faarlund et al 1997: 264)
The nationalist.movements force was of course an important reason for their victory.M.GN
- b. **Min mening/hennes del/i vår tid**. (Faarlund et al 1997: 265)
My opinion.M.GN/her part.M.GN/in our time.F.GN.
- c. Det er **mine penger**, ikke **dine penger**, er det ikke? (www)
It is my.PL money.INDEF.PL, not your.PL money.INDEF.PL
- d. Kristin er husfrue på **Erlend sin gård** Husaby i Trøndelag. (www)
Kristin is housewife at Erlend POSS.3p.M.SG farm.M.GN
- e. Det er **min** og **jon sin sang**. (www)
It is my.M.SG and jon POSS.3p.M.SG song.M.GN
- f. Nå er det leenge til **mine små** kan begynne å formere seg da. (www)
Now, It is long before my.PL little.PL can start breeding Adv.
- g. En kvinne er skadet etter at hun ble overkjørt av **sin egen bil**. (www)
A woman is hurt after having been over.driven by POSS.3p.M.SG own.M.SG car.M.GN

¹³⁹ Possessive genitives will not be discussed further.

- h. Guro og Silje har funnet **hver sin mann** i «Jakten på kjærligheten». (www)
 Guro and Silje have found each POSS.3p.M.SG man.G.GN. in “The hunt for love”

The examples in (170)b that not only involve abstract, but also are fixed expressions, and the ones in (170)d-g which may be said to deviate for structural reasons, have in common that they do not generally have an equivalent with a postposed possessive. The ones in (170)d-g would be ungrammatical, while the fixed expression would receive non-idiomatic readings with more tangible and defined concrete readings of the abstract nouns. This, however, is not the case with examples like the ones in (170)a and (170)c where the difference is merely stylistic. Both focus and possession of abstractions may, in most cases, be expressed just as well by postposed possessives.

In Old-Norse, both pronominal and genitive possessives were postposed. The preposed possessive construction came to Norwegian from Danish, and is more common in written than oral Norwegian, and also in Bokmål compared to Nynorsk. The stylistic variation between the two types of possessive constructions is thus probably related to their origin. Preposed possessives are more formal, and are typically used in official writing, or will give a more poetic touch to the utterance. This is all natural considering that the influence from Danish came via the leading class and written language. Conversely, use of postposed possessives in (written) Bokmål will typically have connotations that are more colloquial. The stylistic differences between the two types of possessive constructions in present-day Norwegian are thus natural reflexions of the status of their origin.

The strong synonymy in their interpretation suggests that the pre- and postposed possessives are parallel means to express similar interpretations. Their diverging structures, however, indicate that their grammar nevertheless is different. It is thus interesting to see whether, or how, their diverging grammar is reflected in their interpretational differences. The two types of structures diverge at two specific points; the ordering of the elements and the form of the noun. Let us consider the first point first.

Both in Danish and in Norwegian, the head parameter is set to head-first, recall the previous section. Because of this, it is natural to assume that the/one major difference between post- and pre-posed possessives regards their status as either heads or dependents. In accordance with the setting of the head parameter, preposed possessives would thus be the head and the following noun its dependent, while in postposed possessive constructions, the noun would be the head and the possessive element its dependent. In other words, in preposed possessive constructions the property of the noun is attributed to the possessive element, while with postposed possessive constructions, the property of (personal) possession is attributed to the (head) noun. The only other possible assumptions would be either that the postposed possessive construction was a unique exception to the head-first setting in Norwegian, which is in line with the idea that determiners head the nominal phrases they appear in, or conversely, if the noun is always regarded as the head of a nominal phrase, all preposed determiners would be the exception to the head-setting (since they then would precede their head) and the postposed possessives would be the only instance where this general rule was not violated. There is (probably) no principled reason why a language couldn't choose different values for the head parameter depending on the types of element involved in the combination, but since the overall design of the system would benefit from a consistent choice here, one should have very good

reasons to make other assumptions. I therefore maintain the idea that one basic difference between pre- and postposed possessive constructions, is the different status of the possessive element – in the former it is a head, in the latter a dependent.¹⁴⁰

While Faarlund et al (1997), as seen above, list contexts where preposed possessives are favoured, they do not mention that there also are contexts where they are unnatural to the point of being ungrammatical.

- (171) a. ??(*)Jeg finner ikke **mi(n) penn**.
 b. Jeg finner ikke **penna mi/pennen min**.
 I can not find my pen.
 c. Jeg finner ikke **min kone/ (?) mi kone**.
 d. Jeg finner ikke **kona mi/(?) konen min**.
 I can not find my wife.

Example (171)a is highly infelicitous unless the possessive element is focused by emphatic stress in Norwegian. (171)b is thus the only way to express that you cannot find your pen without placing emphasis on the ownership, no matter how formal you want to be.¹⁴¹ This is, however, not the case with a noun like *kone* ‘wife’, which, as can be seen in (171)c,d is just as felicitous whether the possessive is pre- or postnominal and whether it is focused or not. The only difference between (171)c,d is stylistic.¹⁴² Furthermore, the referent of a noun like *kone* ‘wife’ is just as concrete as one of *penn* ‘pen’, confer Faarlund et al’s factor (i) above.

I suggest that these distinctions are motivated by the status of the possessive as either a head or a dependent. As the dependent, the postnominal possessive may be perceived as a (more) contingent property of the item referred to. When, on the other hand, the possessive element is the head of the nominal phrase, the referentiality of the phrase as a whole may be interpreted as being established through its relation with the possessor. The difference here is not that one noun is more concrete than the other is, it resides in the fact that one, but not the other, is relational. While a pen is a pen no matter who possesses it, a wife, a daughter or a son is so to say defined through the possessor. If this line of reasoning is valid, it may also motivate why abstract nouns are more common in prenominal possessive constructions. Although not relational as such, abstractions like *kjærlighet* ‘love’, *idé* ‘idea’, *tid* ‘time’ or *forståelse* ‘understanding’ will always be defined through the possessor in possessive contexts. Like with wives and kids, possessed love, idea, time and understanding would not exist or be the same without the possessor. They are determined with respect to the possessor in a much more “personal” or intricate way than a pen or any other such concrete object.

It thus seems like all the (reported) non-stylistic differences between pre- and postposed possessives are directly related to the status of the possessive as either a

¹⁴⁰ There is, however, one other possible explanation that is readily given by Neo-saussurean theory, see footnote 143 in the coming section.

¹⁴¹ I disregard the possibility that the preposed possessive could be used in poetry for reasons of rhyme and rhythm.

¹⁴² In this respect it is interesting to notice the difference between the choice of masculine and feminine for the noun *kone* in (171)c,d. In the formal prenominal context the feminine form seems very unusual, while in the more colloquial postnominal construction it is the masculine form that seems strange. This is consistent with the fact that the use of feminines is far less frequent in formal Bokmål because of the strong influence from Danish that does not distinguish masculine and feminine gender except for on 3. person singular pronouns. This difference is, however, absent in (171)a,b where the former is close to being ungrammatical anyway.

head or a dependent. In all contexts where the preposed possessives are favoured, the possessive might be understood as being focused, either in contrastive way (with another potential possessor) or because of its ‘defining nature’. When no such focus is established as in (171)a,b where the possession is seen as contingent property of the noun, the possessive must be postposed. Notice that this distinction is idiosyncratically Norwegian. Many languages do fine with just one type of possessive constructions. There is no reason of nature to indicate possession by the means of two different constructions, but when a language does have access to different constructions there will generally be some interpretational difference, albeit small.

The examples cited in (171) show that prenominal possessives combine with Norwegian Bare Nouns and Indefinite Plurals while postnominal possessives cooccur with the Definite Nouns. I propose that this distribution is related to the different head-dependent relations. As the head of the phrase, a Norwegian Noun in combination with a postposed possessive needs to be marked with definiteness features in order to convey identifiability (for the noun phrase as a whole). When, on the other hand, the head function is performed by the possessive, which contains person features that secure identifiability, the noun, by virtue of its role as the dependent, takes on a predicative function. The noun is thus not required to have definiteness features in order to attain identifiability of the nominal phrase as a whole. In fact, since the noun functions as a predicate, definite features would be superfluous.

5.2.3 Distribution of Attributive Adjectives

In Norwegian, attributive adjectives are preposed with regard to their head-noun as in (172)a below. This is at variance with the fact that the dependent in a phrasal relation normally follows its head in Norwegian. Also in English, attributive adjectives are generally prenominal as shown in (172)b, but, as we will see below, postnominal adjectives do occur in specific contexts where they are not used in Norwegian. In French, as shown in (172)c,d, on the other hand, attributive adjectives may be used both post- and prenominally, and the switch between the two produces clearly defined interpretational distinctions. Both in Norwegian and English, noun phrases with prenominal adjectives are ambiguous between the two interpretations that in French are obtained by altering between pre- and postnominal distribution of the adjective. This is all illustrated in (172):

- (172) a. Gamle venner
- b. Old friends
- c. Des amis vieux
- d. Des vieux amis

While the Norwegian and English noun phrases *gamle venner* and *old friends* are ambiguous between the readings ‘friends that are old/aged friends’ and ‘friends that go way back’, the French separates these two interpretations formally. The postposed adjective in (172)c yields the interpretation ‘aged friends’ and the preposed adjective in (172)d ‘friends that go way back’.

The data in (172) raises several questions. Firstly, what is the relation between pre- and postposition of attributive adjectives and the interpretational distinctions found in French? In other words, how is the interpretational distinction motivated formally in French? Secondly, why do English and Norwegian generally not allow attributive adjectives to be postposed, and, thirdly, what creates the ambiguity in the Norwegian and English examples in (172)a,b? Although this thesis mostly concerns

Norwegian, my understanding of these phenomena are directly based on Bouchard's (2002, see also 1998) understanding of adjectival modification in French and English, and I will thus start by presenting the main points of his analysis. There is no way I can do justice to his impressive analysis within the limits of this thesis on the Norwegian Nominal System, and I will therefore just present a broad sketch of his major points.

Bouchard's understanding of adjectival modification in French is strictly compositional and founded solely on the basic principles of Neo-saussurean grammar – the arbitrariness of the sign and the linear property of oral language. His thorough analysis is able to account for the intricate properties of adjectival modification with regard to semantic, syntactic and phonological facts. This includes the scopal properties of (multiple) attributive adjectives, the factors favouring post- or prenominal position including the many subtle interpretational distinctions it entails, as well as the non-complement restriction on prenominal adjectives.

According to Bouchard, there is always a systematic semantic difference between pre- and postnominal adjectives in French, which is correlated with the two positions, and since this difference is strictly compositional it is both regular and predictable. Furthermore, classification of adjectives in terms of predicative, intersective, intensional or restrictive, which often are used to explain why certain adjectives appear in post- or prenominal position, have no theoretical status, according to Bouchard, and thus do not make up formal classes to which adjectives belong. Rather, they describe statistical tendencies due to what the meaning of the adjective is compatible with (2002:68).

Following the tradition of Montague Semantics, Bouchard assumes that the lexical entry of a common noun is a network of the following interacting elements (recall 3.1): the characteristic function f , which provides the property that interprets the N; the time interval i indicating at what moment f holds; the possible world w telling us whether f holds in the actual world or in some other imagined world in which f is not necessarily false; and the variable assignment function g that allows us to determine the truth value of the final formula by associating each variable with a particular entity in the model. The network determines the extension of the noun, i.e. the set of things that have the property of being an f in w at i . The variable assignment function g determines the denotation of the expression (2002: 7). This network of subfunctions of N are unified in a lexical item so that the fully specified set of descriptive features is closed off. The different functions will thus normally function as a whole in relation with other lexical items.

The head noun denotes a set of entities, and the adjective narrows it down to a subset. Combinations of a head noun with the set denoted on the basis of the property of the adjective produces a new nominal whose extension is the intersection of the two sets. This is the case with the so-called intersective readings of French postnominal adjectives as in (172)c above.

Like Norwegian and English, French is a head-first language relying extensively on juxtaposition as a signifiant for combinatorial signs. This is the case with French postnominal adjectives where the adjectival property is directly attributed to the noun itself. Such a combination of a noun and its adjective denotes the intersection between the entity denoted by the noun and the entities that display the adjectival property – in our example, the intersection between friends and things that are old, i.e. aged friends. When, on the other hand, the adjective is prenominal we have a different combinatorial order and thus also a different *signifiant* and we hence expect a different *signifié*. The *signifié* of the adjective-noun order therefore cannot be

predication of the property of the adjective to the whole network of the noun. The adjective must therefore be attributed to something else of the noun, i.e. to a subpart of its network (as assumed in Montague Semantics), like e.g. its characteristic function (un grand auteur ‘a great author’) or, as is the case in example (172)d above, the temporal interval.¹⁴³

Bouchard (2002) proposes that the difference in placement of French and English adjectives is due to the difference in the marking of number in the two languages – on the determiner in French and on the noun in English (confer the introduction to 3.4). In both languages normal linear order predicts that the head should precede its dependent. In languages like English, where the noun is obligatorily marked for number, however, a postnominal adjective cannot access only the noun itself, but rather must combine with the complex [noun+number]. From its prenominal position, on the other hand, the English adjective may reach both the denotation of the noun as a whole, as well as one of its subparts. This is possible because a prenominal adjective, as we have just seen, applies to a subelement of what it combines with along the logic of above comment, so this adjective can access a subelement of the complex [N + number]. With a postnominal English adjective, which combines with the whole complex, the adjectival property is attributed to an extensional or atomised noun (see Bolinger (1967), Bouchard (2002)). From this position, English adjectives are interpreted as stage-level adjectives as in (173)b, which contrasts with the ordinary individual-level attribution in (173)a:

- (173) a. (The) visible stars
 b. (The) stars visible

In Norwegian, the adjective keeps its preposed position even when combining with atomised nouns.

- (174) a. *(De) stjernene synlige
 the stars visible
 b. *Stjerner synlige
 stars visible
 c. (De) synlige stjernene
 (the) visible stars

¹⁴³ Bouchard (personal communication) has pointed out to me that a similar explanation also could be underlying the difference in interpretation between Norwegian pre- and postnominal possessive constructions discussed in the previous section. The preposed possessive would then be a dependent, just like the postposed one, but with an elsewhere relation, in the sense that the possessive property is not attributed to the whole network of the noun but only to one of its subelements, the characteristic function *f*. If this was the case the preposed possessive would be interpreted as modifying the characteristic function of the noun which, I suggest, could explain the interpretational effect that the referent of the noun seems to be defined by the possessor. This difference between the interpretation of pre- and postposed possessives is, in fact, quite reminiscent of the interpretational difference in French adjectival modification where postnominal adjectives assign their property to the noun as if contingent, while prenominal adjectives establishes the relation as more solid. I find this option intriguing as the different head status and the elsewhere relation explanations both are readily available within the framework of Neo-saussurean theory. Both options therefore deserve further study before a final choice is made between them. There are, however, probably historical arguments for the different head status explanation, as the preposed possessive construction is influenced or loaned from Danish, which only has this one option.

- d. Synlige stjerner
visible stars

Example (174)c,d are thus ambiguous between the two readings exemplified in (173). I propose that the strong preference for preposed adjectives in Norwegian, is naturally explained by the fact that in Norwegian, nouns are not marked only for number, but also for definiteness. Only when preposed, the Norwegian adjective may thus target the atomised [N+Num], this latter being a subelement of [[N+Num]+(In)def].¹⁴⁴

N: Adj + [[N+Num]+(in)def] E: Adj + [N+Num]

The Norwegian data provides additional support for Bouchard's analysis of the distributional and interpretational range of French and English adjectives and the effects of paradigmatic markings on nouns. The fact that Norwegian attributive adjectives are both predominantly prenominal and interpretationally ambiguous is motivated by the complexity of Norwegian Nouns which forces the adjective to precede its dependent in order to combine intentionally only with a subpart of the nouns network. Since in Norwegian the head-parameter is conventionalised to a head-first setting, the opposite ordering of the elements necessarily indicates a deviation from the default setting, in this case conceptual intentional combination only with a subpart of the head's signifié, not with the entire complex. Adjectival attribution thus provides support for the Saussurean axiom that everything is differences and that a sign can only be understood in relation to other signs.

5.2.4 Agreement and Ungrammaticality: Convention vs. Conceptual Incompatibility

In the previous subsection, we saw that Norwegian pronominal possessives combine with definite and non-definite forms depending on whether they head the phrase they are part of, or not (175)a,b. As can be seen from the starred examples in (175)c,d, the switch is rigorous.

- (175) a. Mi bok/mine bøker.
b. Boka mi/bøkene mine.
c. *Bok mi/*bøker mine.
d. *Mi boka/*mine bøkene.
My book/my books

Note that the ungrammaticality of (175)c,d cannot be rooted in agreement violations since the only difference between them and the examples in (175)a,b is the ordering of the components. While the examples in (175)c,d are ungrammatical, I believe they are so for different reasons. As already mentioned in the previous section, one reason for the ungrammaticality of (175)c is that the noun, in its function as the head, needs definite features in order to provide identifiability for the nominal phrase as a whole. In (175)d on the other hand, the possessive heads the nominal phrase and secure identifiability. Haspelmath (1999) offers a thorough discussion showing that

¹⁴⁴ That attributive adjectives in many languages (like English and Norwegian) are placed in contradiction to the normal head-parameter in the same languages have been widely discussed in generative grammar, where both this fact and the variation found with, and within, French is explained by movement of either the adjective or the noun or both.

definiteness marking (to some extent) is redundant in possessed noun Phrases. Though he assumes that the noun is the head of possessive phrases, both when the possessive is post- and preposed, his explanation for why definite articles cross-linguistically are more likely to be omitted with preposed possessors is nevertheless strikingly close to mine:

If the possessor precedes the head noun, then at the time the hearer encounters the head noun he or she already has the information about its probable definiteness. Thus overt indication of definiteness is still more redundant under these circumstances. Conversely, the definite article is relatively more useful with postposed possessors because at the time the head noun is encountered the anchoring information of the possessor is not yet available. (Haspelmath 1999: 235)

We will come back to this line of reasoning in the discussion of the role of unaccentuated demonstratives in the Default Definite Adjectival Construction, or the so-called double definiteness construction, in 5.3.1. While the ungrammaticality of (175)c is conceptual – the noun simply does not have what it takes to function as the head in such an environment – the reason for the unacceptability of (175)d must be sought elsewhere.

There are three main sources of (compositional) ungrammaticality. A combination of signs may be impossible because of conceptual incompatibility between their values, or because for one of the signs there exists a better candidate to entertain the relation with the other sign. These two sources of ungrammaticality are both directly related to the conceptual part of signs. In addition, ungrammaticality, in the sense of unacceptability, may arise for combinations of signs that are not incompatible per se, if the combination has not been conventionalised. This last point will become clear below. The three types of ungrammaticality are exemplified in (176), and will be discussed in turn below.

- (176) a. *Mitt bok → impossible, because of conceptual incompatibility
 my.N.SG book.F.GN
 b. *Mine bok → (im)possible, ruled out because of better candidate
 my.PL book.F.GN
 c. *Mi boka → possible, but not conventionalised.
 my.F.SG book.F.SG.DEF

Let us start with the first example. A complex sign is formed when two (conventionalised, arbitrary) signs are combined in a conventionalised way. Since a sign is a two faceted entity combining a concept and a percept, the combination of two signs will, as we have already seen, always affect both the conceptual and the perceptual side. One important cause of ungrammaticality therefore arises if the elements combined are conceptually incompatible. This is the case in (176)a where the combination is infelicitous because the two signs combined have conflicting gender values, neuter for the possessive *mitt* and masculine, or feminine, for the noun *bok*. Other examples of ungrammaticality due to conceptual incompatibility in Norwegian would include combinations of different values for the categories of number and definiteness; a supposed combination like e.g. **min bøker* has a featural clash between the singular value of *min* and the plural value of *bøker*, while **god boka* is infelicitous because the adjective *god* is singular, indefinite while *boka* is singular definite. Agreement violations are consequently nothing but reflections of featural incompatibility. For references to agreement viewed as coherence of

interpretation see Baker and Brame (1972), Jackendoff (1972), Fauconnier (1974), Hoeksema (1983), Chierchia (1987), Pollard and Sag (1992), Bouchard (1984, 1987, 1995), see also Corbett (2006:114-16) on the difference between unification and copy-theories of agreement.

Even if the grammatical system of Norwegian disallows featural clashes due to conceptual incompatibility, there is no principle stating that elements that are combined need to share the exact same features. Quite the contrary, as we have seen, the Norwegian nominal system is quite economical, and in many of the most common patterns for syntactically complex nominal signs, signs with specified values for number and definiteness, combine with signs that are neutral or undefined with regard to the same categories. There is thus no incoherence as there is no clash of feature values. This is e.g. the case both with combinations of indefinite articles, or the stem- and *-t* forms of adjectives, which are all singular indefinite, with Norwegian Bare Nouns that have the value general number, and for combinations of *-e* adjectives bearing general number with one of the suffixed noun forms, which have specific values for number and definiteness, recall section 3.10.

In (176)b, we also have a combination of a form bearing general number *bok* with another one that has a specific number value, namely the plural *mine*. Contrary to the cases discussed in the paragraph above, this combination is ungrammatical. There is nevertheless no conceptual reason why a plural possessive should not combine with a form bearing general number since there is no (direct) featural clash between the two. I relate the ungrammaticality of (176)b to a ‘competition between signs’. Even if Norwegian grammar does not require combined elements to share the same featural values, only that they should not clash, there seems to be a Grice-like principle that requires that when paradigmatic signs contain values for the same categories, combination of members of these paradigms should, if possible, consist of signs bearing the same value, i.e. if such signs exist. The ungrammaticality of (176)b is thus not due to some featural mismatch or agreement violation between *mine* and *bok*, but simply to the existence of *bøker*, which just like *mine* (and unlike *bok*) is specified as plural. With nouns that do not have an indefinite plural form, the bare form does indeed combine with plural functional words like in e.g. *mine hus*. Both (176)a and (176)b nevertheless sound equally shocking to speakers of Norwegian, and while they both may be said to violate the agreement requirements of Norwegian, they do it differently. Only in the former is there a true conceptual incompatibility.¹⁴⁵ The choice between the two ‘possible forms’ is thus settled by the Elsewhere Condition, generally attributed to Panini or what Aronoff’s (1976) terms morphological blocking, see Casstairs-McCarthy (1992) for an overview.

Example (176)c illustrates a third source of ungrammaticality. Here there is no featural clash or agreement violation. In fact, the same two signs combine perfectly just as long as their order is reversed – *boka mi*. The reason behind the ungrammaticality of (176)c, must thus be sought elsewhere. Again, the answer lies in the existence, or possibility, of competing signs in interaction with principles of

¹⁴⁵ Conceptual incompatibility interacts with grammaticality first and foremost at the ‘grammatical level’, i.e. between function words and paradigmatic features. With signs or words from the open word classes the meaning and interpretational range is wider and more flexible. Chomsky’s (1957) famous sentence ‘colourless green ideas sleep furiously’ is not ungrammatical to most people, just interpretationally bizarre. And while its Norwegian translation *fargeløse grøne idéar søv rasande* may seem unintelligible to some, it may be understood as highly poetic by others. *Fargeløs grønt idéer...*, with the neuter form of the adjective, on the other hand, displays incompatibility at the paradigmatic level, and is neither uninterpretable nor poetic. It is simply ungrammatical.

informational transmission and economy. As there is no obvious interpretational difference between *mi bok* and *mi boka*, and the two forms may be said to convey an equal amount of information, I propose that the simplest form has been conventionalised for reasons of economy.

An important contribution of Chomskyan linguistics is the recognition of the importance of ungrammaticality for linguistic theory. A grammatical constituent is a linguistic constituent that is judged as acceptable by the members of a language community, and an ungrammatical one is, conversely, one that is judged unacceptable by the same group. According to this view, the major task for a generative linguist is to come up with a grammatical theory that produces all possible grammatical combinations in a language, to the exclusion of the ungrammatical ones. While it is certainly true that competence in a language includes recognizing the acceptable utterances from the unacceptable ones, giving almost similar status to the two is not unproblematic. A theory that can generate only the (presently) acceptable constructions of a language to the exclusion of the non-acceptable ones might easily turn out to be too restrictive as it may rule out possible constructions that simply happen not to have not been conventionalised. Another pitfall to avoid when relying on ungrammatical data is the lack of context surrounding examples created by linguists. Sentences, phrases and structures that might seem utterly odd in the linguist's head or paper, may be perfect given the right context. Paying sufficiently attention to context (as well as lack of context) is thus important when determining what is and what is not part of (a) language.

5.2.5 Dependent Marking

Marking is the means of expressing a relation that is the least used in the Norwegian Nominal System. There are nevertheless cases of dependent marking by the addition of a juxtaposed suffix (a case ending) on Norwegian personal pronouns. Since most Norwegian personal pronouns are marked either as nominative or as oblique, they may indicate subject- or objecthood independently of their position in the sentence. In (177), for example, the forms *han* 'he' and *hun* 'she' are nominative forms and *ham* 'him' and *henne* 'her' oblique forms.. The situation is different for lexical nouns, both proper and common ones, whose argumental status depends on structural positioning, i.e. relational juxtaposition, as shown in (178).

- (177) a. Han liker henne.
He likes her
b. Henne liker han.
Her likes he → 'He likes her'
c. Ham liker hun.
Him likes she → 'She likes him'
d. Hun liker ham.
She likes him

- (178) a. Kari liker Jon.
Kari likes Jon
b. Jon liker Kari.
Jon likes Kari
c. Gutten liker jenta.
The boy likes the girl.

- d. Jenta liker gutten.
The girl likes the boy.

Oblique case marking on Norwegian Personal Pronouns thus performs a role external to the Norwegian Nominal System itself. Differently from gender, number and definiteness which does not interact with non-nominal signs, a case marking functions as the *signifiant* of the relation between its nominal host, the dependent object, and the head of the relation, a (non-nominal) transitive verb or preposition.

All instances of paradigmatic features in the Norwegian Nominal System do of course indicate what type of other signs they are related to. Generally, however, the relation between noun phrase internal signs is primarily indicated by direct juxtaposition. We have nevertheless already seen examples where gender and number features were essential for determining the right predicational base for predicative adjectives, recall examples (83) and (86) from section 3.9.3. In these instances, the paradigmatic features of the adjectives function as relational signs, with the *signifié* PREDICATION and the *signifiant* ‘marking of (agreeing phi-features on the) dependent’.

5.3 *Superimposition and Adjectival Modification*

This section explores several issues concerning the form, meaning and interpretation of Norwegian Noun Phrases modified by adjectives. The section continues the investigation of the interaction between the values of the signs that constitute syntactically complex noun phrases. We will see that several tonal signs are at work in the Norwegian Nominal System. It will be shown how the meaning of a syntactically complex sign as a whole is compositional from the parts that constitute it, both the uni-signs and the different combi-signs that relate them. The interpretation of a sign, however, will always be motivated from the meaning of the complex and the existence of competing signs.

It will be demonstrated how the numerous interpretations of Norwegian noun phrases like *den store elgen* ‘the big elk’ containing the same preposed lexical elements – a determiner, an attributive adjective and a noun – to a large degree depend on formal differences in the shape of superimposed *signifiés*. In other words, we investigate several types of grammatically significant uses of intonation and accentuation in the Norwegian Nominal System. Sections 5.3.1 to 5.3.4 is devoted to different types of ‘definite’ constructions involving attributive adjectives. 5.3.1, looks at what is traditionally called the double definiteness constructions, which I have renamed as the Default Definite Adjectival Construction. 5.3.2 considers Intensifying Noun Phrases, while 5.3.3 and 5.3.4 treat different types of constructions where the definiteness suffixes or the preposed demonstrative are absent. A short summary is given in 5.4.

5.3.1 *Definite Adjectival Combinations and Deaccentuate*

The standard way of combining a definite noun and an adjective in Norwegian involves including a deaccentuated preposed demonstrative. The construction thus contains the same lexical elements as demonstrative noun phrases containing a modifying adjective, but differs from these in that the demonstrative is necessarily unaccentuated. Examples are given in (179):

- (179) a. Den store elgen (Default Definite Adjectival Construction)
 the big elk.
 b. Dén store elgen (Demonstrative Construction)
 that big elk.

Interpretationally, the two constructions differ in the scopal range of the demonstrative. While the demonstrative in the Default Construction seems to target (only) the adjective, it is the whole complex adjective-noun head that is focused by the accentuated demonstrative. The term *adjektivets bestemte artikkel* ‘the adjective’s definite article’ is therefore descriptively accurate, (but not the idea that it constitutes a different element from the other *dens*). This is illustrated below:

- (180) a. Dén store elgen (ikke de(n) andre (store elgen(e)).
 that big elk not that/those other big elk(s)
 b. Den store elgen (ikke den lille).
 the big elk not the little one

In (180)a, the demonstrative points to one big elk by distinguishing it from (an)other big elk(s). This is contrary to the default construction in (180)b where the

demonstrative either picks out a/the big elk distinguished from other (not so big) elks or simply adds a characteristic to an already established entity.¹⁴⁶

This construction involving an unaccentuated demonstrative is traditionally called the *double definiteness construction* (see e.g. Faarlund et al 1997, Julien 2005). The term is used to distinguish definite adjectival constructions in Norwegian (and Swedish) from their counterparts in Danish where the definiteness suffixes are omitted on the noun in this particular context. The difference between Norwegian and Danish is illustrated in (181)-(182):

- (181) a. Elg/elger/elgen/elgene (Norwegian)
 elk.M.GN/elk.PL.INDEF/elk.M.SEG.DEF/elk.PL.DEF
 b. Stor elg/store elger/ (#) store elgen/ (#) store elgene
 (a) big elk/big elks/big.GN elk.M.SEG.DEF/ big.GN elk.PL.DEF
 c. den store elgen/de store elgene.
 the big elk/the big elks
- (182) a. Elg/elge/elgen/elgene (Danish)
 elk/elks/the elk/the elks
 b. Stor elg/store elge/ *store elgen/ *store elgene
 big elk/big elks/ big.GN elk.M.SEG.DEF/ big.GN elk.PL.DEF
 c. Den store elg(*-en)/de store elge(*-ne)
 the big.GN elk.M(-SEG.DEF)/ the big.GN elk.PL(-DEF)

The data in (181)-(182) raises several questions that will be discussed in the coming subsections. Firstly, what motivates the presence of the unaccentuated demonstrative whenever an adjective modifies a definite noun phrase in Mainland Scandinavian? Secondly, what motivates the difference between Norwegian and Danish in the use of the definiteness suffixes? Thirdly, what are the similarities and differences between Deixis and Definite(ness)? Fourthly, what is the formal difference between the constructions in (179)?

I propose that the presence of the demonstrative is connected to information structure and the expectation of users of Norwegian as a head-first language that information regarding the identificational indices of a nominal phrase be present on its first element. The required unaccentuation of the demonstratives in such contexts and the following change of meaning are explained by a tonal sign *deaccentuation* [-CONTRAST] which is superimposed on the demonstrative, and which also is assumed to combine with other members of the Norwegian nominal inventory.

Under the present approach, the term Double Definiteness is a misnomer since I suggest that the construction only involves one occurrence of definiteness – the one on the noun – as the adjective is marked for general number and the demonstrative only carries a neutral deixis feature. I will therefore instead refer to constructions as in (179)a and (181)c above as the Default Definite Adjectival Construction.

Subsection 5.3.1.1 discusses the role of the demonstrative in constructions such as (179)a and (181)c, subsection 5.3.1.2 looks at differences between Norwegian and Danish, 5.3.1.3 discusses the difference between the semantics of definiteness and deixis, and 5.3.1.4 introduces the tonal sign *deaccentuation* [-CONTRAST]. This sign

¹⁴⁶ In non-adjectival demonstrative-noun combinations, accentuation on the demonstrative is, as mentioned in 4.4, not rigorous, but may still be used to distinguish between deictically contrastive and (non-contrastive) anaphoric deixis.

forms the basis for the interpretation of the Default Definite Adjectival Construction which is discussed from an interpretational view-point in 5.3.1.5. This presentation of the relationship between form, meaning and interpretational range of the Default Definite Adjectival Construction will serve as a basis for understanding other adjectival noun phrases in the coming sections. Some closing remarks are given in 5.3.1.6.

5.3.1.1 The role of the demonstrative in the Default Definite Adjectival Construction

What is the role played by the demonstrative in the Default Definite Adjectival Construction, or why is it there? In other words, why could one not just add an adjective to the definite noun phrase in the Scandinavian languages parallel to what we see in English and French, compare (183)a-c?

- (183) a. The elk → The big elk.
 b. L'élan → le grand élan
 c. Elgen → #store elgen → den store elgen

The complex head (recall 3.10, 5.2.3) *store elgen* in (183)c is univocally singular definite since these are the features contributed by the noun, and since the adjective is marked for general number and adapts to the number and definiteness features of its environment, recall 3.9. From a featural viewpoint, it is thus difficult to motivate the need for a demonstrative in (183)c since *store elgen* should be just as much definite singular as *the big elk* or *le grand élan*. Therefore the solution cannot be motivated in featural composition. Instead, I propose they are motivated in factors facilitating processing and that it is the expectation for identificational cues to be presented as early as possible in the noun phrase that demands the use of a preposed determiner.

English, French and the Scandinavian languages all typically use juxtaposition to indicate a relation between signs, and are all head first languages. Since the head of a phrase normally carries its defining features, speakers of head first languages are used to receiving indications of the main features or characteristics of a phrase already when encountering its first element. This is the case with the English and French examples in (183)a,b where the definite articles, as first elements, univocally indicate that the phrases are both nominal and definite (and in French also singular). In *store elgen* on the other hand, the first element is an adjective marked for general number which gives no indication of either definiteness or number. Contrary to *the* and *le*, a Norwegian *-e* Adjective can be used to introduce (pure/predicative) adjective phrases, as well as both definite and indefinite noun phrases, and the same is true for Danish. Contrary to the French and English articles, the *-e* Adjective does thus not indicate either nominality or any identificational indices.

While they all unambiguously indicate a nominal phrase, the Definite and Indefinite Articles in English are, contrary to the French Definite Articles and the Norwegian Demonstratives, unmarked for number. This suggests that, in languages that indicate such features, definiteness values are more important than number values for identificational purposes. One motivation for this could be that identificational indices are presented early because they, to a larger extent than number and gender, depend on active participation from the listener. I therefore propose that the demonstrative in Norwegian Default Adjectival Constructions is introduced simply in order to indicate to the listener that the coming phrase is identifiable. The extra element is thus introduced mostly in order to improve the information flow by

presenting this important piece of information as early as possible. This way of thinking is analogous to the argument about the absence vs. presence of definite forms with pre- or postnominal possessives in 5.2.2, where we saw that elements indicating identifiability tended to be presented as early as possible.

The proposed explanation for the presence of unaccentuated demonstratives in Definite Adjectival Constructions may be motivated by economy, albeit not in the sense of rationalising features, but rather in the sense of providing information that is crucial for interpretation as early as possible during processing, i.e. economy of working memory. Facilitating of processing in this way, as a means to restrict possible ambiguities as soon as possible, is part of the main function of syntax, namely to set limitations on arbitrariness, to create order out of disorder (Saussure 1916, Bouchard 2002-forthcoming, Pétróff 2004)

5.3.1.2 Norwegian vs. Danish

Concerning the difference between Danish and Norwegian with regard to presence vs. absence of definiteness suffixes on nouns following demonstratives illustrated in (182) above, I suggest it may be motivated by differences in feature composition between the non-definite signs in the two languages. While Danish has three nominal suffixes just like Norwegian, the two languages differ with regard to feature composition. Whereas the non-definite plural is a true indefinite in Norwegian, it is neutral with regard to definiteness in Danish, as shown in section 3.3.4, where we saw that unlike the Norwegian Indefinite Plural, the Danish Bare Plural could be subject of true kind-predicates. Because both the two non-definite nouns in Danish, i.e. the Danish Bare Noun and the Danish Bare Plural, are neutral with regard to definiteness, the motivation for the absence of definite forms in the context of demonstratives is probably due to featural economy. Since demonstratives readily imply identifiability and the Danish bare nouns both are compatible with such an interpretation, there is no real need for the definiteness suffixes.¹⁴⁷ Since the more economical construction without the definiteness suffixes has been conventionalised, repetition of this same element will be understood as deviant even if there is no featural clash involved just as we saw with Norwegian Possessives in 5.2. In Norwegian on the other hand, the non-definite plural is inherently indefinite, which makes the definite form compulsory when normal definiteness (or identifiability) interpretations are intended, at least in the plural.

The definite suffix is also used in the singular even though the Norwegian Bare Noun, as demonstrated in 3.4, bears general number, is neutral with regard to definiteness, and, thus, contrary to the Norwegian Indefinite Plural also is compatible with definite readings. One could therefore anticipate that the demonstratives combined with bare nouns in the singular, but with the definite form in the plural. One of the main motivations for why this strategy has not been conventionalised might be that the economical gain of omitting the definiteness suffix is poorer if it only affects one member of the paradigm. By analogy with the plural, where the definite suffix is compulsory, Norwegian thus keeps its definite form also in the singular. It is also

¹⁴⁷ I have not studied the Danish Bare Noun in detail, but assume that it is neutral with regard to definiteness on a par with the plural. Norwegian and Danish (truly) bare nouns nevertheless differ in a consistent way. This might of course be due to indefiniteness, but also, and I think more probably, to number so that while the Danish Bare Noun is singular, the Norwegian one is marked for general number. Recall 3.6 where we saw that the truly bare noun in Danish has a far more restricted distributional and interpretational range than the Norwegian one. Differences between Danish and English bare nouns may be due to the lack of gender marking in English.

worth noticing that the Norwegian Bare Nouns has its origins in a form that was probably both singular and indefinite. Its distributional and interpretational range seems still to be evolving.

5.3.1.3 Definite vs. Deixis

This section examines the similarities and differences between deixis and definite(ness). Two prevailing ideas will be discussed and refuted, namely that the unaccentuated demonstrative is a pure definite article, see e.g. Julien (2005), and that demonstratives necessarily also encode a [+def] feature (Lyons 1999).

For many scholars working on Norwegian (and other Mainland Scandinavian languages), the term double definiteness is literally accurate as they equate the unaccentuated Norwegian demonstrative with a pure definiteness marker on a par with English *the* and French *le, la, les*. Unaccentuated *den, det, de* are thus understood to carry exactly the same definiteness and number features as the head noun and are often renamed e.g. as *the prenominal definite determiner*.¹⁴⁸ If one in addition assumes that *-e* Adjectives also indicate definiteness, one may even count three definiteness features (as do Faarlund et al 1997:296).

I propose that demonstratives (mostly) combine with definites in Norwegian not as the result of any (direct) featural agreement requirement, but rather due to semantic compatibility. Under the present approach, the demonstrative is not assumed to carry any definite feature, only a neutral deixis feature, as shown in 4.4 Since *-e* Adjectives, which are marked for general number, are neutral with regard to definiteness, there is only one definite(ness) feature in such constructions, namely the one on the noun. On this account, the traditional term double definiteness is therefore a misnomer.

As we saw in 4.4, Diessel (1999) proposes that the main difference between demonstrative and personal pronouns is that the former imply contrast, and shows how both personal pronouns and definite articles tend to have evolved from demonstratives. While the Norwegian definiteness suffixes originated from Old Norse Demonstratives, and the present day unaccentuated demonstrative undoubtedly functions as a personal pronoun, I do not believe a similar development has taken place with the (unaccentuated) prenominal demonstrative yet. Although I agree that the interpretation of (unaccentuated) Norwegian Neutral Demonstratives is close to that of the Definite Suffixes, I still believe there is a significant difference between them. Definiteness and deixis are both tools concerned with identification of referents, but they differ in the point of view from which this identification takes place. With a deixis feature, identification is performed by the speaker, while with definites the task falls on the listener. While personal pronouns are deictic and thus differ from neutral demonstratives in the lack of contrast, devolution to definiteness requires the additional step of losing deixis, which concerns the speaker's role in the identificational process.

In 3.2, definiteness was defined with regard to the speaker's intentions, and crucially not with shared knowledge. A definite form is used when the speaker intends the listener to identify the designated referent himself, through inference based on linguistic, situational and world knowledge. While many languages do not encode definiteness, demonstratives and deixis are in some form, standardly believed to be a

¹⁴⁸ See e.g. Julien (2005) who also glosses unaccentuated *det, den, de* as DEF, SG or DEF, PL respectively

Language Universal.¹⁴⁹ This difference between Demonstratives and Definiteness is nicely presented by Christopher Lyons in his typological study of definiteness:

[A] demonstrative signals that the identity of the referent is immediately accessible to the hearer, without the inferencing often involved in interpreting simple definites. This may be because the work of referent identification is being done for the hearer by the speaker, for example by pointing to the referent. The deictic feature typically expressed on a demonstrative plays a similar role to pointing, guiding the hearer's attention to the referent. This suggests a necessary connection between [+ Dem] and [+ Def], the former implying the latter. I take demonstratives, then, to be necessarily definite. (Lyons, 1999: 21).¹⁵⁰

I fully agree with Lyons up to the very last sentence. Although demonstrativity or deixis necessarily implies identifiability, this does not entail that demonstratives *are* definite, at least not in the sense of carrying a definiteness feature. Under the present view, deixis and definiteness are understood as different and independent features. Deixis is the core feature of the uni-signs it is part of, i.e. the *den-series*, while definiteness is a paradigmatic feature, mostly of (Norwegian) Nouns, but also of its Adjectives and the Indefinite Pronouns of the *en-series*. Since the core feature of Demonstratives inevitably yields identification, there is no reason to assume a secondary feature [+def] on the same element.

Many closed parts of speech, and some members of open ones, have a core meaning that is intrinsically related to the paradigmatic features in the Norwegian Nominal System – gender, number and definiteness. Quantifiers like *mange* 'many' and *få* 'few' necessarily imply plurality, the *noen-series* implies indefiniteness and the *en-series* singularity. Though this has the effect that such signs combine with signs encoding features that are semantically compatible with these meanings, I see no reason to assume that they, in addition, encode these secondary features themselves. This is in line with the unification theory adapted in this dissertation. In addition to demonstratives, all-quantifiers like the *all-series* 'all' and *begge* 'both' have core meanings that cause the noun phrase they head as a whole to be identifiable. Unlike demonstratives, these signs are nevertheless readily compatible with both definite and non- or indefinite complements and the switch between them creates clear and constant interpretational distinctions resulting from their diverging form/meaning pairing. This shows that signs may have core meanings that render the noun phrases they head identifiable, without being marked as [+def] themselves. I suggest this is also true for demonstratives, and as we will see in the coming sections demonstratives combine with both definite and indefinite forms with clear meaning and interpretational differences.¹⁵¹

I thus propose that the reason why Demonstratives (mostly) combine with Definites in Norwegian is a reflex of semantic compatibility, not the result of any (direct) featural agreement requirement. The demonstratives need to combine with a

¹⁴⁹ Deixis figures among the Wierzbickian (1996) universals.

¹⁵⁰ Lyons (1998) makes a distinction between the features *deixis* and *dem(onstrative)* and sees *dem* as some sort of hyperonym for *deixis*. While this is not very relevant for our discussion, his *dem* feature correlates with my (nominal) *deix*.

¹⁵¹ That definiteness and deixis are not the same is also seen in constructions where demonstratives exceptionally combine with non-definites, see 5.3.3, and in the fact that while definites may be interpreted as true kinds, constructions involving demonstratives can only denote sub-kinds. Deictic referents thus have narrower referential scope than definites.

noun that agrees with its number and gender features. In the choice between definite and non- or indefinite forms, the definite forms are normally chosen since interpretation of indefiniteness typically is conceptually contradictory with that of demonstratives. While the meaning of unaccentuated demonstratives in Norwegian certainly is weakened compared to their accented counterparts, I maintain the idea that they are both deictic elements and that neither of them encode a [+def] feature. In fact, the only thing that distinguishes them is the obligatory lack of accentuation on one of them. The next subsection explores how the differences between unaccentuated and accented demonstratives may be represented formally and thus also between the Default and the Demonstrative Adjectival construction.

5.3.1.4 The sign *deaccentuation*/-CONTRAST

I assume that the Default and the Demonstrative Adjectival Constructions of the form *den store elgen* all consist of the following parts: The uni-signs *elgen* and *store* and the combi-sign *R1*, with the *signifié* ‘predication’ and the signifiant ‘juxtaposition’, indicating the relation between them (I). Together these three signs form the complex head *store elgen* (II), which is combined with the uni-sign *dén* by a second combinatorial sign *R2* (III), which results in the complex sign *dén store elgen* (IV):

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION XV: COMPLEX SIGN *DEN STORE ELGEN* ‘THAT BIG ELK’

- I *Elgen* [ELG.M.SG.DEF] **R1** *store* [STOR.GN]
- II *Store Elgen* [STOR ELG.M.SG.DEF]
- III *Dén* [DEIX.CG.SG] **R2** *store elgen* [STORE ELGEN.M.SG.DEF]
- IV *Dén store elgen* [DEIX.(CG).SG [STORE EGEN.M.SG.DEF]]

The two Relations, *R1* and *R2* in (I) and (III), which combine *store* with *elgen* and *den* with *store elgen*, respectively, are equal; they have the same *signifié* ‘predication’ and the same *signifiant* ‘juxtaposition’. Nevertheless, both the (linear) output of juxtaposition and the ‘nature’ of the predicational relation differ. The *signifié* of *R1* in (I) is an instance of prototypical ‘predication’ in that the property of the dependent adjective *store* is predicated of the concept in *elgen* (probably by means of intersection). The use of ‘juxtaposition’ as its signifiant is, furthermore, typical for Norwegian. However, because *elgen* is a complex sign, consisting also of number and definiteness and denoting an entity, not merely a concept, the ordering of the elements are reversed compared to the setting of the head-parameter in the language, as shown in 5.2.3. As a result, the dependent *store* exceptionally precedes its head *elgen*.

With the combinatorial sign *R2* in (III), the juxtaposition follows the normal ordering with the head *den* preceding its dependent *store elgen*, but since both the signs *den* and [*store elgen*] denote entities (and not concepts/properties), the predicational relation is (strictly speaking) not that of the attribution of a property to an entity, but rather one of an equation between entities. The entity referred to by *den* and the one referred to by *store elgen* are one. The interpretation of such an equation, even though it is structurally different, does nevertheless not differ from the one of determined noun phrases where the noun itself is unmarked for number and thus not entity denoting so that the predication is more prototypical. The result is, in both cases, a complex sign denoting one entity having the (referential) properties contributed by the determiner, the adjective and the noun, as shown in the discussion of copulative predication and equation in 3.4.1. I take (IV) above to be the simplified structure of Demonstrative Constructions including an adjective. Without any specific

instructions, the demonstrative bears word accent and the sign thus contributes fully to the interpretation.

The Default Definite Adjectival Construction differs formally from the Demonstrative Construction only in the fact that the demonstrative is deaccentuated. I suggest this deaccentuation is the result of the combination of *den* with an additional sign that has the *signifié* [-CONTRAST] and the *signifiant* *deaccentuate*. This sign operates, on the demonstrative through a combinatorial sign reading which superimposes as *deaccentuation* on its *signifiant* with a resulting contrastive reading of its *signifié*:

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION XVI: UNACCENTUATED *DEN*

a.

Signifiant:	DEIX.CG.SG	==	R (PRED)	==	[- CONTRAST]
	I		I		I
Signifié:	Dén	==	R (superimp)	==	Deaccentuate

b.

I *Dén* [DEIX.CG.SG] **R** *De-accentuation* [- CONTRAST]

II *Den* [DEIX.CG.SG [- CONTRAST]]

The combinatorial sign in Grammatical Definition XVI above deserves some attention. While its *signifié* as always is predication – it predicates the property [-CONTRAST] to the demonstrative – its *signifiant* is not juxtaposition, but superimposition. Instead of placing one sign next to another, one sign is superimposed on the other. Recall from 5.1.3 that from a Neo-saussurean viewpoint superimposition and juxtaposition are the two only available direct modes to encode a relation in an oral language. Tonal *signifiants* differ from lexical ones in that their relation to their *signifié* more often seems iconic. As opposed to lexical (uni-) signs, the relations between *signifié* and *signifiant* in tonal signs may give the impression of being less arbitrary, i.e. more motivated since the devaluation of form results in a devaluation in meaning. It is nevertheless important to keep in mind that this iconicity is not necessary. While the sign *deaccentuate* seems iconic, it is not a priori given, insofar as both its form-meaning pairing and its application are conventionalised and language specific like all other signs. That conventionalised intonational signs observe the same principles as lexical signs is e.g. seen in that there are, in fact, intonational signs that have *signifiant-signifié* pairings that are contradictory to iconicity. An example is falling intonational pattern for interrogatives in Chickasaw (see Gussenhoven 2004:54).

The Default Adjectival Constructions can thus be represented formally as below:

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION XVII: DEFAULT DEFINITE ADJECTIVAL CONSTRUCTION

Den store elgen [[DEIX.(CG).SG [-CONTRAST]] [stor elg.F.SG.DEF]]

Stating that the difference between the Default and the Demonstrative Adjectival Construction resides in the deaccentuation of the demonstratives is of course far from new. What does separate this from other proposals is that this is in fact the only thing that distinguishes between them. While unaccentuated or deaccentuated *den* is formally more complex than the accented version, this does not entail any constitutive difference of the sign per se, i.e. it does not change its

categorial status or featural composition except for the added deaccentuation feature. The formal explicitness of the sign *deaccentuation* and its status as any other sign, i.e. as a conventionalised pairing between a *signifiant* and a *signifié*, further add to the economy and elegance of the Norwegian Nominal System as a whole. In addition to being responsible for the meaning difference between accentuated and deaccentuated demonstratives, both in their pro- and prenominal use, the tonal sign *deaccentuation* also combines systematically with signs of the *en-* and the *noen-*series creating the meaning differences we saw resulting from deaccentuation of these signs in Chapter 4. With the *en-* series, as shown in 4.3.1.2, presence vs. absence of accentuation entails a shift between the contrastive numeral *én* ‘one’ and the indefinite pronoun (or article) *en* ‘a/one’. Deaccentuation of members of the *noen-*series (4.3.2) implies a lack of contrast of its core small-scale meaning. The internal structure of accentuated and de-accentuated *en* and *noen* may thus be depicted as follows:¹⁵²

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION XVIII: ACCENTUATED AND NON-ACCENTUATED *EN* AND *NOEN*

<i>én</i>	[SINGULAR.MASCULINE.INDEF]
<i>en</i>	[SINGULAR. MASCULINE.INDEF [-CONTRAST]]
<i>noen</i>	[NOEN.GENERAL NUMBER.COMMON GENDER]
<i>no’n</i>	[NOEN.GENERAL NUMBER.COMMON GENDER [-CONTRAST]]

Demonstratives, the *en-* and the *noen-*series all have in common that their core meanings are contrastive in nature; *en* ‘one’ implies contrast with other numerals, *noen* ‘some’ the contrast of its small-scale feature with other scales and demonstratives the contrast of the deictic target with non-targeted referents. This may be the reason why the application of non-contrastiveness to these signs gives the impression of being more radical, in the sense of being understood as contributing to more meaning differences like the change of word-category, than with other signs without specific contrastive meanings.

In addition to the sign *deaccentuate* Norwegian also contains a parallel sign *accentuate* with the signifié [+contrast]. I assume that the two signs operate on different kinds of elements. While *deaccentuate* typically combines with elements that are contrastive in nature and normally receive accentuation, like the signs just discussed, *accentuate* combines with signs without any particular inherent contrastive semantic content. Accentuate thus typically combine with lexical words. Despite the strong parallelism between the examples in (113) from section 4.3.1.2, I suggest that (113)b is structurally different from (113)a in that it contains the sign *accentuate*.

As is evident from Grammatical Definition XVI through Grammatical Definition XVIII, I assume that the sign *deaccentuation* [-CONTRAST] combines directly with the heads (*den*, *en*, *noen*) at the word level, i.e. before complements are added. In 5.3.2, we will consider an example of a tonal sign that is added at the ‘complex-phrasal level’, but before that we look at the interpretation of the Default Adjectival Construction which will be used as a basis for understanding other constructions in the coming sections.

¹⁵² A similar sign is by all probability responsible for the difference between English ‘some’ and its deaccentuated form (sometimes written ‘*sm*’), cf. Milsark (1979 (1974)).

5.3.1.5 Restrictive vs. Descriptive Interpretations of the Default Construction

In Norwegian most definite adjectival noun phrases in English and French would be rendered by what I have termed the Default Adjectival Construction exemplified in (179)a and defined in Grammatical Definition XVII above. The construction leads to (at least) two distinguishable interpretations, known as restrictive vs. non-restrictive. I assume that both restrictive and non-restrictive, or descriptive, adjective-noun combinations arise from the same structure, namely the one in Grammatical Definition XVI above and that they differ only with regard to their contextual interpretation. The two interpretations are exemplified below. (184)a,b give examples of typical restrictive interpretations and (184)c,d of descriptive or non-restrictive ones:

- (184) a. Gi meg **den dårlige nyheten** først. (www)
Give me the bad news first.
- b. Bruk **den spisse enden** av en neglefil (...) og skyv neglebåndene ned.
Use the sharp end of a nail file and push (?) the cuticles down.
- c. Jeg satte meg ut bak huset i **den velstelte hagen**, og kjente at livet var bra å leve. (www)
I sat down behind the house in the well-kept garden, and felt that life was good to live.
- d. Jeg brukte hele dagen på å jage **den fordømte kalven**. (ELD 13)
I spent the whole day chasing the damned calf.

Restrictive and descriptive interpretations differ with regard to the identifiability of the entity in question, which depends on the nature (and novelty) of the information brought by the adjectival property.

The restrictive interpretation arises where there otherwise would have been two or more potential referents for the lone definite noun, but where the adjective distinctively singles out the intended referent. With (184)a,b, it is clear that the adjectival property is necessary to single out the intended referent in order to distinguish it from other contextually salient occurrences – the good, or not so bad, news and the blunt, or not so sharp, end of the nail file. In restrictive adjectival interpretations, the adjective is thus crucial in the identification of the entity in question.

In (184)c,d on the other hand, the adjective plays no role in identifying the referent or in distinguishing it from other occurrences. The garden in (184)c is identifiable by extension of the house scene (houses often have gardens), which is enough to authorise the use of a definite. While there is an obvious link between houses and gardens, no such connection exists between houses and well-kept gardens. Therefore, even if the garden in (184)c is identifiable to the listener, its well-keptness is (in this context) new information, purely descriptive and plays no part in the identification of the referent. In other contexts it may, however, be crucial to distinguish between well-kept and not well-kept gardens. The same is true for (184)d. We are introduced to the calf Bongo, which is one of the main characters already on the first page of Erlend Loe's novel *Doppler*, but this is the first time we hear about its damnedness. The adjectival property of descriptive interpretations is not limited to new

information. The adjectival property may also be used descriptively to focus on well-known or inherent characteristic properties of the referent.¹⁵³

In descriptive interpretations, the adjective is used to add new or characteristic information about an already established referent, while in restrictive interpretations the adjective is used to unambiguously establish referentiality. The two interpretations thus depend on the shared knowledge of the interlocutors and the contextual situation of the utterance more than on the different lexical elements involved. In contexts that do not disambiguate the two interpretations, accentuation on the adjective will normally indicate contrast (as it often does) and thus yield restrictive interpretations. The two types of interpretations also differ in that in the restrictive one, the demonstrative may (sometimes) be omitted, while this is far less frequent with descriptive ones. Omission of the (default) demonstrative will be the subject of 5.3.4.

In the contrastive reading where one entity is singled out among several potential referents, the demonstrative's deixis value seems more relevant for the interpretation than with the descriptive reading. The frequency of the two readings, restrictive and descriptive, is genre dependent. While a quick look in most written texts would show a majority of descriptive interpretations over restrictive ones, the opposite is the case in oral communication. Descriptive phrases are important narrative constructs, but play a less important role in everyday communication. Since spoken, and not, written language is foundational for all natural language communication, the distinctive interpretation may be considered the basic one. A thorough genre dependent investigation of the frequency of the two interpretations, though interesting and relevant, is beyond the scope of this dissertation. It is nevertheless interesting to notice that if the descriptive interpretation is derived from the restrictive one, which appears to be more basic, this gives further motivation for the use of the demonstrative in these contexts since the indexicality is present in the interpretation. Also the fact that the demonstrative, as we shall see in 5.3.4, is more easily omitted when the adjective by itself suffices to provide identifiability is in line with the present proposal.

Even if the conventionalised default way of expressing adjectival modification of definite noun phrases in Norwegian involves both an unaccentuated demonstrative and the definite suffixes, there are, in Norwegian, also several constructions where one of the two is absent. Such constructions will often yield marked interpretations that differ from the default construction. These constructions will be the topic of sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.4.

¹⁵³ Note that I am not saying that combinations like *den velstelte hagen* or *den fordømte kalven* could not be used restrictively, merely that this is not the intended reading in these cases. Potentially, all default constructions of adjectival modification of definite noun phrases are ambiguous between the two readings. There are nevertheless (as always) combinations of lexemes that because of their individual and combinatorial meaning more readily will yield one of the two interpretations. This is the case with e.g. *den spisse enden av neglefila* which typically will yield the restrictive reading. The 'restrictiveness' is not inherent in either the adjective or the noun (phrase) by themselves, but arises from the association of the elements. Nail files typically have two ends, one sharp and the other less so. In a sentence like *Den spisse hatten (...) utgjør hovedkjennetegnet på en trevlesopp* 'the pointed hat constitutes the main identificational indice of inocyebe rimosa', the adjective is naturally interpreted as descriptive, or non-restrictive, because mushrooms (generally) only have one hat. In a sentence like *Apropos den farlige neglefila. Hvor mye farligere er ikke ei knust glassflaske?* 'Regarding the dangerous nail file. How much more dangerous isn't a broken glass bottle?', on the other hand, the adjective will be interpreted as descriptive due to the unlikelihood of a situation where there is one dangerous nail file, and one (or several) non-dangerous one(s).

5.3.1.6 Adjectival modification of non-definite NPs

While default interpretations of Norwegian definite noun phrases require a prenominal demonstrative, indefinite noun phrases more readily appear without any (preposed) determiner. Some examples are given in (185):

- (185) a. Hvorfor bruker alltid Pongus **rød skjorte**? (www)
Why does Pongus always wear red shirt.
b. Zinedine Zidane fikk **rødt kort** under VM-finalen 2006. (www)
Zinedine Zidane got red card under the WC-finale in 2006.
c. Blodrips har **røde blomster** i hengende klaser (...). (www)
Ribes sanguineum has red flowers in hanging clusters.

This empirical fact finds its natural motivation if the main function of the demonstrative in the definite default construction is to be a mere indicator of the main featural characteristics of the phrase it introduces.

Let us take a look at indefinite singulars as in (185)a,b first. We have already seen that the two singular indefinite adjectival forms – the base form, which is marked for common gender, and the neuter *-t* Adjective – may disambiguate the many possible interpretations resulting from the truly Bare Noun, which, since it carries general number, is (potentially) neutral with regard to both number and definiteness. Examples (60)a,b from chapter 3.4.3.3 are repeated here as (186):

- (186) a. Jeg har **hest** på Ebru islandshestgård :) **Islandshester** er det jeg har der (...).
(www)
I have horse at Ebru iceland.horse.farm :) Icelandic horses is it I have there.
b. Jeg har **brun hest** og synes da det passer best med svart utstyr. (www)
I have brown horse and think then it fits best with black equipment

As opposed to the *-e* Adjectives, which combine with definites, these other two forms actually do give indications about the defining values of the phrase they introduce, not only with regard to definiteness, but also with regard to number and gender. The need for a preposed determiner is thus weakened.

One possible objection that could be raised against this explanation is that even if the adjective has number and definiteness values, these are also present when the adjectives appear outside of noun phrases, functioning as either predicatives or adverbs. The indefinite singular adjectives do therefore not univocally signal a noun phrase. While no Norwegian adjective univocally can be understood to signal a noun phrase, they all have in common that their value always is dependent on another element, the intra- or extra-phrasal subject with which they are associated. In the case of singular indefinite adjectives, the additional features indicate that the adjectives are (to be) associated with an indefinite singular entity, while an *-e* adjective is three ways ambiguous with regard to the definiteness and number of its predication base.

If the two Indefinite Adjectives carry the necessary features in order to identify a singular indefinite noun phrase, one could ask why such noun phrases (nevertheless) regularly still combine with the Indefinite Pronouns. There are several motivations for this. Firstly, the preference for the Indefinite Pronoun over an Indefinite Adjective to introduce a phrase might be due to the fact that the Indefinite Pronoun, but crucially not the adjectives, are what Hawkins (1994:62) termed *mother-node-constructing category*, i.e. a category that constructs (and thus uniquely

indicates) a phrasal mother node. Thus differently from adjectives, the Indefinite Pronoun univocally designates a noun phrase.

Secondly, there is a difference in the status of singularity between the two types of signs; for the Indefinite Pronoun, singularity is the core, defining, feature, while for the adjectives it is a secondary paradigmatic feature. The Indefinite Pronoun is also more specific than the adjectives when it comes to gender features since it distinguishes between all three, while the adjective only distinguishes common from neuter gender.

The main distinction between noun phrases with or without the Indefinite Pronoun is, however, that the Indefinite Pronoun brings about atomisation, while noun phrases introduced by Indefinite Singular Adjectives are neutral with regard to atomisation just like the bare noun.

The indefinite article therefore brings about a consistent meaning and interpretational difference compared to bare adjective-noun combinations. The conditions for absence of Indefinite Pronouns are the same as for bare nouns with indefinite, singular interpretations. Definite noun phrases, on the other hand, are always interpreted as atomised and such a distinction is therefore neither needed nor available.

Though the wider use of bare singular indefinite noun phrases may be motivated by the more specific values of their adjectives compared to the *-e* Adjectives, this explanation is nevertheless not straightforwardly transferable to bare plural indefinites like in (185)b since these combine with the same adjectival form as definite noun phrases. Also in this case, however, the motivation is manifold. Firstly, even though the *-e* Adjective carries general number and thus combines with all three suffixed noun forms, indefinite plural seems to be (something like) its default interpretation. This was already discussed in 3.9.2.2 where we saw that lone argumental *-e* Adjectives, readily received indefinite plural interpretations, but not definite ones, whether singular or plural. By way of illustration consider (187):

- (187) Jeg vil ha **grove**.
I want coarse ones (not I want the coarse one(s))

The preference for plural indefinite interpretations of *-e* Adjectives is again motivated by the Norwegian functional nominal inventory. Because of its deixis neutrality the demonstrative-series is vague enough in its core meaning to be suited as “dummy definiteness markers” and in addition distinguishes between plural and singular, as well as between neutral and common gender in the singular in its additional features. However, no such (evident) candidate exists for the role of “dummy plural indefiniteness marker”. The closest candidate would be *noen* (cf. 4.3.2), and there have in fact been several proposals that ‘demote’ unaccentuated *noen* to a plural indefinite determiner (see e.g. Julien 2005, Vangsnes 1999).¹⁵⁴ There are, however, some indications that this analysis is not correct. Firstly, the *noen*-series and the demonstratives diverge in the informational import of their core-features. Whereas deixis neutrality comes very close to the meaning of personal pronouns and definiteness, the *noen*-series not only have the values *indefinite quantity*, which could probably be demoted to *indefiniteness*, but also *small scale*. One could imagine that

¹⁵⁴ That English *sm* is a plural indefinite determiner was proposed already by Carlson (1977), and the same has also been suggested for Swedish *några* by Börjars (1998). English and Swedish nevertheless seem to differ from Norwegian here in that these signs also have indefiniteness as part of their core meaning, recall 4.3.2.1.

the small scale value in some way blocks the lowering to an unscaled indefiniteness interpretation.

Also, while demonstratives may be said to have a less specific core value than the *noen*-series, the opposite holds for their additional features – at least according to the analysis I have proposed in 4.3.2.2. We saw in Chapter 4 that while the demonstratives series clearly distinguishes plural from singular in addition to two gender forms, the *noen*-series distinguishes only between common and neuter gender in its paradigmatic features, but not between singular and plural. The result of a demotion of *noen* would thus not have been an indefinite plural determiner, but an indefinite determiner with a neutral number value and without gender distinctions.

The probably most important factor motivating a preposed determiner in the two definite cases, but not with the indefinite plural, and, thus, also plural indefiniteness as the default reading of *-e* Adjectives, is the fact that while the *-e* Adjective potentially may receive two definite readings – singular or plural – it will always be interpreted as plural if indefinite. Because of this, even if *noen* or some other sign could be used as a sort of (obligatory) dummy indefinite plural article, a non-predetermined *-e* adjective would still be ambiguous in its number interpretation. The use of the demonstratives series, on the other hand, solves this ambiguity since they are clearly marked for both number and gender.

5.3.1.7 Closing Remarks

The use of a pre-posed demonstrative as some sort of a dummy definite determiner is, like all syntactic phenomena, rooted in the force of constraining arbitrariness, in creating order out of chaos, and thus of facilitating processing. Because it results in the creation of a syntactically complex head with the dependent element first, modification of a noun phrase by an adjective creates disorder in the system of Norwegian since it disturbs the interlocutor's expectation that the first element of a phrase should bear indications of its defining, and especially identificational, features. All the choices made are arbitrary, but at the same time motivated both by the existing uni-sign inventory, or vocabulary, and the system working upon it, i.e. syntax. The formalisation of the deaccentuation of the demonstrative as resulting from the application of a superimposed sign with the *signifié* –CONTRAST provides a good understanding of why the neutral demonstratives fulfill this role. The sign *deaccentuate*, which seem to be at work in the entire Norwegian language system, is furthermore a far more theoretically economic option than assuming polysemous entries for every (functional) word class in the language.

Also, if the unaccentuated Norwegian Demonstrative had become a pure indefiniteness marker differing from the Definiteness Suffixes only in having a full word-status (and a lack of distinction between masculine and feminine gender), one would expect there to be some pressure on the (use of the) suffixes. A situation where a language has two signs with no distinction in their *signifié* is at variance with arbitrariness. Strictly speaking, arbitrariness does not demand that any difference in the *signifiant* should be followed by a difference in the *signifié* and vice versa. As long as there is no natural connection between *signifiant* and *signifié*, there could be multiple *signifiés* for a *signifiant* and vice versa: each link would still be arbitrary. But a system of arbitrary signs brings about mutual exclusivity (Clark 1990) if it is used by individuals endowed with a Theory of Mind (Diesendruck & Markson 2001): if they already know a form-meaning association, they expect that if a speaker is using a new form, he/she has a different intention, and so the new form is associated with a different meaning, and vice versa.

5.3.2 Intensifying Noun Phrases

This section discusses a third type of construction involving the same constituents as the Demonstrative and the Default Definite Adjectival Construction, namely a demonstrative, a noun and (often also) an adjective, namely the Intensifying Noun Phrase Construction. This construction, which was first discussed by Vangsnes (1994, 1997), is used to express that a referent has some remarkable property. The construction, exemplified in (188) below, has a rather idiosyncratic interpretation and is recognised by a special intonational pattern. Differently from the intonational sign *de-accentuation* [- CONTRAST] discussed in 5.3.1.4, which applies to a single word or uni-sign, the intonation pattern responsible for the Intensifying Construction seems to apply at the phrasal level, i.e. to signs that are already syntactically complex.

5.3.2.1 gives a presentation of the interpretation and usage of the construction, while 5.3.2.2 investigates its formal representation through the sign *Intensify*. Some closing remarks on the relationship between prosody and iconicity are given in 5.3.2.3.

5.3.2.1 A description of Intensifying Noun Phrases

Intensifying Noun Phrases are quite idiosyncratic and mostly used in spoken Norwegian. The construction is, to my knowledge, not found in the other Scandinavian Languages, and I cannot think of any equivalents in English or French. The best way to render them in English would be to insert the intensifying *incredible/y* to an otherwise ‘direct’ lexical translation, as in the glossings below:

- (188) a. Du tror du har nedlagt **DEN deilige dama**, men neste dag oppdager du at hun ser ut som en gris i trynet. (www)
 you think you have conquered this (incredibly) hot chick, but the next day you discover that she looks like a pig
- b. [H]an bare MÅTTE se på **DEN fine dama**, med **DEN kroppen**. (www)
 he just had to look at this [incredibly] nice [looking] woman, with this [incredible] body.

The convention of setting the demonstratives in these constructions in capitals, which was introduced by Vangsnes (1994) and adopted by Faarlund et al. (1997), may now be said to have become standard among Norwegian linguists. Interestingly, the same convention seems to have been adopted by the community of non-linguists, as is evident from searching for the construction on the web. A large part, maybe the majority, of the relevant hits had the demonstratives, and sometimes also the adjective, in capital letters. As users of Norwegian chat rooms hardly can be believed to have consulted the Norwegian Reference Grammar, this convention must have arisen independently, or it is spontaneous each time, which shows its appropriateness. This is also interesting since the typological convention of marking accentuation on *dén* and *én* is rather rare and is used mostly by users with a somewhat elevated relationship to their written language; the frequent use of capitals in Intensifying Constructions is thus indicative of its idiosyncratic and intensified character.

Intensifying Noun Phrases behave atypically compared to other definite and demonstrative constructions. Even if the speaker uses definite forms, she does not expect the listener to identify the referent in the normal sense of picking out its (exact) extension or identity. Rather it is the awesomeness of the intensified property that is picked out. As Vangsnes aptly puts it: «the primary function of intensifying noun phrases is not to pick out unique individuals, but rather to emphasise some property of

the referent» (1994: 107). Intensifying noun phrases, though structurally definite, are not pragmatically so. As we saw already in 4.4.3 they may therefore appear in existential constructions, example (159) is repeated here as (189):¹⁵⁵

- (189) Det var **DEN store elgen** i skogen.
There was this [incredibly] big elk in the forest.

The special intonational pattern, and thus the intensifying interpretation, is compulsory in such contexts and Norwegian Intensifying Noun Phrases are thus highly different from English Indefinite Specifics (Bernstein 1997), recall (160). The only thing the two constructions have in common is that they contain a demonstrative, but nevertheless escape the definiteness effect. As we will see in 5.3.3.2, this is also the case with hypothetical referents introduced by demonstratives. I assume that the definiteness effect is pragmatic and not grammatical so that their appearance in existentials is due to their non-uniqueness, which is an interpretational function of the construction as a whole, not of its individual elements.

Differently from the Default Adjectival Construction and like the (true) Demonstrative Construction, Intensifying Noun Phrases do not necessarily include an adjective:

- (190) a. Jon har møtt **DEN dama**.
Jon has met that (incredible) woman.
b. Du skulle sett **DEN rotta** på kjøkkenet.
You should have seen that (incredible) rat in the kitchen.

When the intensifying construction lacks the adjective as in (190), the nature of the intensified property is left to interpretation. The referents of the phrases *DEN dama* and *DEN rotta* may be understood as simply being incredibly womanish or ratish, whatever that may mean. However, depending on context and the tone of the utterance, the interpretations may also be more specific, yielding e.g. something like ‘that incredibly hot, beautiful, ugly, smart, stupid, fat or eccentric woman’ for (190)a. While the natural interpretations of (190)b are a bit more limited, because of the nature of the noun, usually yielding something like that incredibly big, ugly or unpleasant rat, it may also – if uttered by a teenage punk-girl and the tone is right – be interpreted as e.g. that incredibly cute rat.

The Intensifying Construction has a multiple accentuation pattern so that all the elements of the construction are accentuated. Double accentuation on the demonstrative and the following noun is also found in another type of construction where the referent is identified as the contextually unique individual fitting the property given by a (postposed) modifying relative clause as in (191):

- (191) a. Den biologiske far din er **dén mannen** som har befrukta mor di og gitt deg liv. (www)
The biologic father your is that man.M.SG.DEF that has fertilised mother your and given you life.
Your biological father is the man who fertilised your mother and gave you life.

¹⁵⁵ Furthermore, Intensified Noun Phrases cannot occur in negative contexts and always take narrow scope (Vangsnes 1994: 98).

- b. Sei er **dén fisken** som katter flest liker best. (www)¹⁵⁶
 Coalfish is the fish that most cats like best.

According to Vangsnes (1994: 97), it is “not possible on formal grounds to distinguish the two uses of the determiner” i.e. between the two types of constructions. I agree that the Unique Demonstrative Construction and Intensifying Noun Phrases resemble each other, but I do not think it is impossible to distinguish them on formal grounds. Intensified Constructions are characterised by a (n exaggerated) lengthening of the vowel, which is not mentioned by Vangsnes. This feature may not be necessary to obtain the intensified reading, but it is incompatible with the unique demonstrative reading, which makes it a distinguishing mark of the Intensified Construction. In addition, a strong intuition of mine perceives this lengthening of the vowel as more pronounced when an adjective is present. While they both have a double accentuation pattern, the two types of constructions also generally differ in the type of modifying elements they combine with: Intensifying Noun Phrases with adjectives and Unique Demonstrative Constructions with post-posed modifiers.

The demonstrative, I suggest, fulfils its usual role in Intensified Noun Phrases, except for the peculiar switch that its deixis feature points to a property rather than to an entity. The motivation for the definiteness suffix also needs to be sorted out. Vangsnes (1994, 1997) proposes a polysemic solution where the definite suffix is a specificity marker in Intensifying Constructions, and thus only indicates identifiability from the speaker’s viewpoint. Again, I suggest that use of the definite suffix in this construction is closely tied to its more prototypical uses. The speaker really intends the listener to identify the referent at least in the form of a precise mental picture just by the extreme emphasis put on its attributes. Remember that definiteness, under the present assumptions, does not involve the listener’s (actual) knowledge, but rather the speaker’s intentions or indications on what viewpoint the listener should adopt. The act of using a definite is thus part of what creates the reinforced property or intensified interpretation; it had such incredible “big elk”-features that you should be able to (mentally) identify it!

5.3.2.2 The Formal representation of Intensifying Noun Phrases

The four constructions discussed or mentioned so far in this chapter, namely the Default Adjectival Construction, the Demonstrative Construction, the Unique Property Construction and the Intensifying Property Construction all (more or less) consist of the same lexical elements in the same order. The only way to distinguish them is thus by their intonational patterns. The three types of constructions are repeated below:

- | | | |
|----------|---------------------|--|
| (192) a. | Den store elgen. | (Default Definite Adjectival Construction) |
| b. | Dén (store) elgen. | (Demonstrative (Adjectival) Construction) |
| c. | Dén elgen som (...) | (Unique Property Construction) |
| d. | DEN (store) elgen | (Intensified Property Construction) ¹⁵⁷ |

¹⁵⁶ The accents are added by me, M.H.

¹⁵⁷ The adjectives in (192)b,d are placed in parentheses to indicate that the adjective is not obligatory in the Intensified and Demonstrative Constructions.

Since they contain the same elements that are marked for the same features and arranged in the same order, juxtaposition alone is insufficient to distinguish these constructions. The difference between the Default Adjectival and the Demonstrative Construction was discussed in 5.3.1; the following therefore focuses on the difference between the Unique and the Intensified Property Construction, as well as their relation to the Demonstrative Adjectival Construction, from which I assume they are derived.

The intonational sign that creates the Intensified Construction, which I will refer to as *intensify*, can be described as consisting of a *signifié* – INTENSIFY (SALIENT PROPERTY) – and a *signifiant* [accentuation + lengthening of vowels (on all elements)]. This construction specific sign combines with the basic structure of the Demonstrative Construction through a combinatorial sign R as in I below to create Intensified Noun Phrases like *DEN store elgen* in II. Since *intensify* is a tonal sign, the *signifiant* of R takes the form of superimposition while its *signifié* as always is predication; it assigns the property of the dependent, i.e. the idiosyncratic cues to the intensified interpretation, to the head noun phrase.

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION XIX: COMPLEX SIGN, INTENSIFIED NOUN PHRASE

- I *Dén store elgen* [DEIX.CG.SG [STORE ELGEN.M.SG.DEF]] **R** *Accentuation + lengthening of vowels (on all elements)* [INTENSIFY SALIENT PROPERTY]
 II *DEN store elgen* [[DEIX.CG.SG [STORE ELGEN.M.SG.DEF]] [INTENSIFY SALIENT PROPERTY]]

As opposed to the tonal sign *deaccentuate*, discussed in the previous section, which I assume combines with a single word form, *intensify* combines with, and thus works on the whole complex of the Demonstrative Construction. This is seen in that the intonational pattern (normally) affects all the lexical elements of the construction, and in that its application is highly construction specific. While *deaccentuate* combines with different kinds of elements independently of whether they take complements or not, *intensify* exclusively combines with Demonstrative Constructions (with or without a modifying adjective).

The double intonational pattern of the Unique Property Construction may also be said to be construction specific in that the interpretation seems dependent on an obligatory postposed modifier. One could therefore hypothesise that its interpretation was due to a special sign unique to this construction. I nevertheless also think it might be possible to understand it simply as arising from a more general sign with the *signifiant accentuate* and the *signifié* [+CONTRAST], i.e. the opposite of *deaccentuate*, superimposed on the noun. Since the demonstrative, as an inherently contrastive element, is accentuated unless it combines with *deaccentuate*, this creates the double accentuation pattern and the uniqueness of property meaning could thus be explained (quite compositionally) from the meaning of double contrastiveness.

5.3.2.3 Closing Remarks: Prosody and Iconicity

The differences in intonation between the four different constructions composed of a demonstrative, an adjective and a noun are quite revealing illustrations of how prosody serves to distinguish meanings that cannot be recognised simply by means of juxtaposition. The difference between the (normal) Demonstrative Construction and the Default Adjectival Construction is marked by the fact that the demonstrative in the latter necessarily is deaccentuated. The obligatory presence of accentuation in the Demonstrative Construction is (highly) motivated by the fact that it is in this function that the demonstrative's core features, including its inherent contrastiveness, are put

to full use, while in the Default Construction, the demonstrative is toned down both semantically and phonetically. The difference between the Default Adjectival and the Demonstrative Construction is a good example of how the *signifiant* of tonal signs often mimic their *signifiés*, i.e. tend to be iconic. Peripheral positions in a sentence and strong prosodic features often correspond to prominence in information structure. As Bouchard (forthcoming) shows, this does, however, not invalidate Saussure's proposal of arbitrariness. Saussure explains why signs are overwhelmingly arbitrary, but this does not exclude the possibility also for uni-signs to be motivated in some cases. Loudness expresses attentional prominence in general, not just in language, but it can be used meaningfully in language too.

The Unique Property Construction and Intensifying Noun Phrases are both variations over the (normal) Demonstrative Construction. The former may be explained as the result of the general sign *accentuate* in combination with the non-de-accentuated demonstrative.

Intensifying Noun Phrases carry the most specialised meaning of the four constructions. This comports well with the fact that this construction is recognised by a lengthening of the vowel in addition to the multiple accentuation pattern it shares with the Unique Property Construction. Again, we witness the tendency of tonal signs to be iconic in that intensity is reflected in an intensified meaning. The exact correlation between form and meaning is nevertheless quite idiosyncratic and thus not a priori given. This demonstrates that while iconic intonational signs may be understood as relatively motivated, they do not escape arbitrariness.

My suspicion that the lengthening of the vowel in the Intensifying Construction is more pronounced when an adjective is present is also motivated. With the adjective present, the construction needs to be distinguished from three, not only two, other constructions containing the same lexical elements in the same order. In other words, the need for an extra distinguishing marker is more crucial.

The next sections deal with definite adjectival constructions where either the demonstrative or the definiteness suffix is omitted. Once again, we will see that intonation plays an important role in the disambiguation of complex noun phrases containing the same lexical signs.

5.3.3 Omissions of the definite suffixes

Since deixis naturally implies identifiability, many languages that encode definiteness in their noun phrase omit the definiteness marker in the presence of a demonstrative. This is the case in both English and French where both demonstratives and definite articles are preposed and the noun itself is neutral with regard to definiteness. This seems natural given that deixis lacks the 'lexical' content of all-quantifiers while at the same being more specific than definiteness. In Norwegian on the other hand, nouns are marked for definiteness, and the demonstratives are, as we have seen, normally followed by definites rather than non- or indefinites. Both the definiteness suffixes and the demonstratives may nevertheless be absent under special circumstances. This section discusses different syntactically complex signs where an unaccentuated demonstrative combines with non- or indefinite nouns. Absence of the demonstrative is discussed in the next section, 5.3.4.

Omission of definite suffixes in the presence of demonstratives have a formal stylistic flair and there are restrictions on omission. Recall that since demonstratives, as analysed in this thesis, do not encode definiteness per se, the definite suffixes are not obliged by any featural agreement requirements, but rather by (a default) reflex of

conceptual compatibility. The interpretation of omission of the definite value will thus always depend on the Adjectival Default Construction.

While possession, as we saw in 5.2, is compatible with the referent of the noun phrase as a whole being both identifiable and non-identifiable, there are other function words that by virtue of their core meaning necessarily renders the noun phrase identifiable (confer Milsark's (1977) strong noun phrases, Barwise and Cooper's (1981) strong determiners). In Norwegian, this is the case with the all-quantifiers *all* (*alt, alle*) 'all' and *begge* 'both'. Though the core meaning of these signs necessarily makes their referent (at least mentally) identifiable, they are not marked as definite per se and may combine both with definite, non-definite and indefinite forms, a shift that creates consistent meaning distinctions.

In order to better understand the conditions behind, and the effects of, the omission of the definite suffixes in noun phrases headed by a demonstrative and modified by an adjective, such constructions are compared both with constructions headed by the all-quantifiers *alle* and *begge* in 5.3.3.3, and with constructions where the modifier is a (post-posed) relative clause in 5.3.3.2. The section is closed in 5.3.3.4.

5.3.3.1 Omission of definite suffixes in adjectival constructions

In definite noun phrases modified by an adjective, the definite suffix may be omitted with generic and/or abstract interpretations that typically have neither deictic nor anaphoric reference as a means to distinguish them from concrete individual occurrences. Such omissions are restricted to formal style, and are more common in Bokmål than in Nynorsk and the spoken dialects where the suffixed versions thus are ambiguous between the two interpretations. The versions with the definite suffix are ambiguous between the two interpretations in Bokmål too, while the one without is always understood as more abstract. The examples in (193) are taken from Faarlund et al (1997:308).

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------------------|---|---------------------------|
| (193) a. | den hvite mann | – | den hvite mannen |
| | the white man.M.CG | | the white man.M.SG.DEF |
| b. | den ugifte mor | | den ugifte mora |
| | the unwed mother.F.CG | | the unwed mother.F.SG.DEF |

In (193)a the first occurrence of *den hvite mann* unambiguously refers to (men of) Caucasian origin in general, while the version with the suffix (also may) refer(s) to one individual man that can be identified or described as being white. In the second case, the whiteness does not necessarily apply to the referents complexion, but might as well depict e.g. the colour of his clothes. The same difference is found in (193)b where the construction without the suffix refers to unmarried mothers in general, while the one with refers to an individual occurrence. Faarlund et al. (1997) use almost exclusively singular forms in their exposition of the difference in use between definite and non-definite forms following demonstratives, but plural forms also occur with similar interpretations:

- (194) a. Det ser ikke ut til at **den hvite mann** bryr seg om den luften han puster i.
(www)
it does not seem like the white man cares about the air he breathes in.

- b. **De hvite menn** manglet kvinnelig selskap og tok inn urinnvånerne kvinner. (www)
the white men lacked female company and took in the indigenous' women.
- c. I forrige århundres litteratur var **den ugifte mor** som regel en tragisk skikkelse. (www)
in the literature of the last century, the unwed mother.F.CG was generally a tragic character.
- d. Vi kan (...) danne oss et bilde av hvem **de ugifte mødre** i Telemark var i perioden 1916 –1965. (www)
we can conjure an image of who the unwed mothers.PL.INDEF in Telemark were in the period 1916-1965.

Making generalisations is a first step towards abstraction and it should therefore not be surprising that Bokmål often omits the suffixes also with abstract notions:

- (195) a. Den kristne tro, den marxistiske lære
The christian faith, the marxist ideology
- b. den oppvoksende slekt/de oppvoksende slekter
the growing-up generation/ the growing-up generations

The difference between singular and plurals deserves some attention. Though their interpretation seems to vary mostly on a numeral scale, their internal structure displays more differences. I suggest the following representations:

GRAMMATICAL DEFINITION XX: DEMONSTRATIVES AND NON-DEFINITES

Den hvite mann: [[DEIX.CG. SG [- CONTRAST]] [HVITE MANN.M.GN]]

De hvite menn: [[DEIX.PL [- CONTRAST]] [HVITE MENN.PL.INDEF]]

While the two demonstratives display different additional/paradigmatic features, it is the differences in the complement noun phrase that will be in focus here. The dependent noun phrase *hvite mann* in *den hvite mann* has a rather rare structure in Norwegian, which is otherwise only attested vocatives (confer 5.3.4.4 below). A noun phrase like *hvite mann* is special in that it is the only (possible) adjective noun combination in Norwegian that does not specifically encode any number or definiteness features since it combines two signs marked for general number. As we saw in 3.4.3.3, 3.9 and 3.10 Norwegian Bare Nouns generally combine with adjectives that are marked with the additional features *singular* and *indefinite* which are inherited by the resulting complex head. The three other noun forms that do encode both number and definiteness (the Norwegian Indefinite Plural, Definite Singular and Definite Plural) combine with *-e* Adjectives, which encode general number.

The meaning of the complex head *hvite mann* is thus distinct both from that of singular indefinites, singular definites, plural indefinites and plural definites. If one considers only its additional feature, one could perhaps anticipate that *hvite mann* would have the same distribution and interpretation as an unmodified Norwegian Bare Noun since they both are [M.GN], but this would be an erroneous assumption. Recall the Saussurean principle that the value of a sign always is defined negatively, i.e. by what it is not. This means that to understand the value of a sign, you cannot consider only its proper features, but also those of the other signs to which it is related. While *hvite mann* and *mann* display the same features, they vary in the paradigmatic

relations they (primarily) participate in. As for *mann*, its primary paradigmatic relation is with *mannen*, *menn*, *mennene* and *en mann*, while for *hvite mann* it is *hvit mann*, *hvite mannen*, *hvite menn* and *hvite mennene*. This means that while the normal interpretation of the Norwegian Bare Noun *mann* is singular and indefinite, this cannot be the interpretation of *hvite mann* since there is a more specific form namely *hvit mann* that does encode this featurally. Lone combinations like *hvite mann* must thus be understood independently of number and (in)definiteness values. In contexts like that of (193)a the demonstrative will nevertheless assure that the noun phrase as whole will be both singular and identifiable. Notice also that despite the vague featural values of *hvite mann*, the singular common gender form, *den*, is the only one among the neutral demonstratives that may combine with such a phrase since *de* and *det* would require plural and non-common gender agreement respectively.

The complex head *hvite menn* in (194) above on the other hand is, under the present proposal, intrinsically both plural and indefinite since these are the features carried by the noun *menn*. The presence of indefiniteness on the complement of a demonstrative confirms that the demonstrative cannot be marked as definite since this would create a clash between the additional grammatical features of the signs being combined. While the lack of a [DEF] feature on demonstratives explains the absence of an agreement clash in (194) above, we are still faced with the problem of the intuition that indefiniteness should be conceptually incompatible with deixis. Again we must not be blinded by the additional grammatical features, but rather look at the meaning/interpretation of the complex head as a whole. A (complex) sign is so much more than the sum of its paradigmatic features. In addition to the paradigmatic and core features, a syntactically complex sign includes the meaning resulting from the combination of the signs performed by (some) R. In this particular case, R contributes the predication of a property over an indefinite set of individuals (singular or plural).

As we have already seen in the discussion of kind and generic reference in 3.3.3, even though a lone indefinite plural could only receive a plural taxonomic reading, a combination of the same noun with an adjective could be used to refer to a (specific/determined) sub-kind. While this is not specified in the featural composition of the sign, it is a direct consequence of the combination between the two signs, insofar as the predication of a property over an unbounded set naturally yields a specific sub-set of the first set.

In neither (194) nor (195) is the complex sign as a whole interpreted as indefinite. I believe the interpretations of these signs are not primarily dependent on their featural composition and values of in- or non-definiteness; rather they arise from being different from the default construction. In other words, they are not dependent on a non- or indefinite definiteness value; they are defined based on the lack of a definite value.

The definiteness suffix is further absent with absolute superlatives, i.e. in cases where the superlative is used without any explicit comparison, in both Bokmål and Nynorsk.¹⁵⁸

- (196) a. Moren tryller fram **de lekreste retter**, og de seks barna har få bekymringer.
(www)
The mother conjures the most delicious dishes, and the six children have few worries.

¹⁵⁸ This is not possible in many dialects, including my Trøndersk where the definite suffix would be rigorous, except for in many fixed expressions.

- b. Ut av bilen kom **den vakreste dame**, med pizza. (www)
Out of the car came the most beautiful lady, with pizza.
- c. Det lå **den sterkeste lukt av marihuana** i leilgheta. (Vangsnes 1997)
There laid the strongest smell of marihuana in the apartment.

Superlatives are distinctive in nature since they imply the existence of other referents carrying the same property, but to a lesser extent, even when this is not made explicit. Nevertheless, absence of the suffix conveys an interpretation where the contrast to other referents normally conveyed by demonstratives and superlatives seems absent - i.e. where its superlativeness is hypothetical. As can be seen in (196)c such hypothetical referents may appear in existentials, which we will come back to in the next sub-section. The three types of interpretations resulting from absence of the definiteness suffixes – generalisations, abstractness and hypotheticality – have in common that their interpretations are removed from the contextually inferential domain conjured by definiteness.

5.3.3.2 Demonstratives, relative clauses and (in)definiteness

Interpretational differences due to presence vs. absence of a [+def] feature like the ones in (193) and (194) are also found in certain contexts with modifying (postposed) relative clauses. The examples in (194)-(197) are grammatical in Bokmål and spoken varieties that are very close to this written standard, but generally not available in most Norwegian dialects where a definite form is used instead. Since all speakers have profound knowledge of the (most standard) standard language, they are nevertheless recognisable to all users of Norwegian and therefore part of their linguistic competence.

- (197) a. Jeg skulle gjerne se **den redaktør** som kunne redigere et tidsskrift nummer for nummer på frilansbasis - eller **den utgiver** som kunne finne på å gå inn på en slik ordning. (www)
I should like to see the editor who could edit a journal number for number on a freelance basis – or the publisher who would agree to such an agreement.
- b. Vis meg **den kvinne** eller **man** (sic.) som aldri har vært utro i henhold til din definisjon. (www)
Show me the woman or man who never has been unfaithful according to your definition
- c. Vis meg **de menn** av i dag som virkelig kan fungere som vaktmestere i hjemmet. (www)
Show me the men of today who really can function as caretaker in the home.

In all the examples in (197) the speaker conveys a strong supposition that no referent exists that could satisfy the predicate of the relative clause, a fact she reinforces by omitting the definite suffixes. According to Faarlund et al (1997: 309) omission of the definite suffix in such cases indicates non-specificity while its presence assures specificity, a fact they illustrate with the example below where the referent in the first sentence must be understood as hypothetical while the second one refers to an identified referent:¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁹ The same distinction can be obtained by adding definiteness suffixes to the examples in (197).

- (198) a. Jeg skulle gjerne se **den mann** som kunne hjelpe henne. (Faarlund et al 1997: 309)
I would like to see that man.M.GN that could help her
- b. Jeg skulle gjerne se **den mannen** som hjalp henne. (Ibid)
I would like to see that manM.SG.DEF that helped her

If specificity is defined as identifiability from the speaker's viewpoint this is certainly correct considering the speaker's supposition of non-existence in (198)a). There is nevertheless no marking of non-specificity in such cases, just the absence of [+def].¹⁶⁰

Compositionally, the interpretation seems to arise from a tension between the identification performed by the demonstrative (which is intra-linguistic) and the indefiniteness value of the noun stating that such a referent is non-identifiable (extra-linguistically). The interpretation is thus, again, hypothetical. In this respect, it might be interesting to notice also that the noun itself often may be omitted in these cases without any major change of interpretation. Neither the noun itself, nor the suffixes can be said to play an important role in this construction, which thus mostly concerns the interaction between the demonstrative and the relative clause. Importantly, like with modifying adjectives, the version containing the definiteness suffix is (normally) ambiguous between the hypothetical and the definite interpretation.¹⁶¹

This interpretational difference between the use of definite and in- or non-definite forms combined with demonstratives in Norwegian, is reminiscent of the one found in the change between the indicative and the subjunctive in French:

- (199) a. Le metteur en scène cherche un homme qui **ait** une cicatrice sur la joue gauche. (www)
b. Le metteur en scène cherche un homme qui **a** une cicatrice sur la joue gauche. (www)
The director is looking for a man that has a scar on his left cheek.

With the subjunctive as in (199)a, the director's search is aimed towards any man with a scar on the left cheek (and his problem should thus be solvable with some make-up!), while with the indicative in (199)b he is searching for a specific man that can be recognised by such a scar.

The parallelism between (198) and (199) is a good example of how similar interpretations may arise through highly different means and parts of the grammatical system. The difference between the two languages comports well with the fact that Norwegian has a relatively rich nominal morphology compared to its verbal system, while the opposite may be said for French. In both (Bokmål) Norwegian and French, the distinctions in (198) and (199) above nevertheless seem to be in the process of losing their relevance. In Bokmål Norwegian, use of definite forms may be used for both readings and in colloquial French, the same is true for the indicative. Absence of the definiteness suffix or the subjunctive forms will nevertheless always yield the marked, non-specific, reading. In English, none of these means are available, and

¹⁶⁰ That the definiteness suffixes are 'ambiguous' between the role of a definiteness and specificity marker has been proposed several times, see e.g. Vangsnes (1994, 1997) – confer also 5.3.2.1 – and Julien (2005).

¹⁶¹ In (198)b, the past tense of *hjelpe*, *hjalp* 'help(ed)' neutralises the possibility for a hypothetical interpretation.

related constructions will always be ambiguous between the two types of interpretation.

Interestingly, demonstrative constructions with non-specific readings may also appear in existentials. In the examples below the speaker asserts to the addressee that such referents, despite their improbability, actually do exist. In other words, the supposed hypotheticality expressed through the absence of the suffix is refuted.

- (200) a. Det finnes **de menn som** prioriterer sin familie og ikke løper rundt som kåte hannbikkjer. (www)
 There exist those men who prioritise their family and do not run around like horny dogs.
- b. Likevel – det finnes **de teaterfolk som** tar Artaud ganske bokstavelig, og Lars Øyno er blant disse. (www)
 Anyway – there exist those theater.people who take Artaud quite literally, and Lars Øyno is among these.

This fact is also discussed by Delsing (1993) and Julien (2005) for Swedish and Norwegian. Delsing, who was the first to report this, concludes, based on data from Swedish, that the definiteness effect (Diesing 1992), in the Scandinavian languages, is dependent on the presence of the definiteness suffixes. This suggestion is nevertheless refuted by Julien who shows that, in Norwegian, the definite suffix may actually be present, confer the difference between (201)a,b:

- (201) a. Det finns de lingvist-er som tror att all-t flyttar i LF. (Swedish, Julien:2005:101)
 There exist those linguist.PL.INDEF who believe everything moves in LF.
- b. Det finst dei lingvist-ane som trur at ingenting flyttar. (Nynorsk, Julien 2005: 101)
 There exist those linguist.PL.DEF who believe everything moves in LF

Note that Julien's example in (201)b is in Nynorsk. Differently from the constructions in (197) and (198) where Bokmål may use both definite and non-definite forms, the Nynorsk construction in (201)b with a definite suffix will be ungrammatical in Bokmål.¹⁶²

Contrary to the examples in (197) and (198) where Bokmål display a switch in interpretation depending on the use of definite vs. non-definite forms, the examples in (200) and (201) show that a similar distinction cannot be obtained in existentials. This is nevertheless natural given that the noun phrase introduced in existential constructions, which main function is to assert the existence of a referent, cannot possibly be hypothetical. The reason why none of the languages accepts both versions is thus explained by the fact that no distinction between the two forms can be maintained in this context.

The fact that these constructions can appear in existentials at all cannot on principled grounds be based in any lack of formal definiteness as suggested by

¹⁶² Actually, it might seem like no variety of Norwegian may shift between definite and indefinite forms in examples like (201). For me personally, my Trønder dialect will demand the definite suffix in such cases and not accept its absence, while the opposite is true for (my) Bokmål where the suffix cannot be present. : (i) *Det finnes dæm lingvistan som meine at aillt flytte – heile tida.* (Trøndersk) (ii) **Det finnes dæm lingvista som meine at aillt flytte....* (trøndersk) (iii) *Det finnes de lingvister som mener at alt flytter.* (iv) **Det finnes de lingvistene som mener at alt flytter.* (Bokmål)

Delsing (1993). I follow Abbott (1993) and Zucchi (1995) and see the definiteness effect as a pragmatic, rather than grammatical constraint and propose that the reason these constructions are acceptable in existentials simply is that they may be interpreted as hypothetical in the first place. This is in line with the Neo-saussurean view that syntactically complex signs are made by combining concepts and sound, not grammatical features (*per se*). As long as a noun phrase may be interpreted as non-identifiable, it may escape the definiteness effect and appear in existentials.

5.3.3.3 Def. vs. non-def. after all-quantifiers

Definite and nondefinite forms also compete as the complements of other pronominals. Presence vs. absence of definite suffixes following all-quantifiers yield interpretational differences parallel to the ones obtained by switching between presence or absence of the definite article in English. Indefinite or non-definite forms are used when reference is general, while definite forms are used when reference is anaphoric and refers to something known (for Norwegian see Faarlund et al 1997: 303, recall also 4.3.3):

- (202) a. Alle (dumme) menn
All stupid men
- b. Alle (de dumme) mennene
All the stupid men
- c. All mat
All food
- d. All maten
All the food.

The difference in interpretation in the examples above, is compositionally transparent and parallel to their English translations. In (202)b,d, the definite nouns designates a contextually identifiable set and the combination with the quantifier assures that the predicate applies to its totality, i.e. to all its members. With the indefinite and non-definite forms in (202)a,c on the other hand, reference is unrestricted and no such set is evoked. The quantifier thus regroups all (potential) entities that can be designated by the expressed noun.

A related change in interpretation is seen with *begge* ‘both’ which, like its English counterpart, is used to refer to two entities regarded or identified together so that the referent generally is contextually given. The core feature of *begge* is more specific than that of the *alle*-series in that it includes a specified numeral value, which, unlike *alle*, imposes restrictions on its referential scope. The unrestricted interpretation from (202)a is therefore not available with *begge*. Nevertheless, also with *begge*, a change between definite and non-definite form on the dependent will yield specific interpretable differences. Indefinite forms as in (203)b will typically be used when no actual real world reference is evoked, i.e. when reference is hypothetical.

- (203) a. **Begge spillerne** gjorde det klart at de trivdes godt i Oslo. (www)
Both players.DEF made it clear that they liked it in Oslo.
- b. Hvis **begge spillere** har identiske par, vinner den med høyest sidekort.
(www)
If both players.INDEF have identical pairs, the one with the highest side.card wins.

Indefinite or non-definite forms following *begge* may also be used to convey more abstract interpretations, opposed to the definite forms that are used to refer to concrete entities.

- (204) a. Hun tok i mot tilbudet med **begge hender**.
 She received the offer with both hands.INDEF
 b. Hun tok i mot ballen med **begge hendene**.
 She received the offer with both hands.DEF

Again, the interpretational distinctions are compositionally motivated, if not transparent. Definite forms are used when reference is restricted by extra-linguistic context, indefinite forms when identification is achieved only through the quantifier, and are thus understood as hypothetical or abstract, just like we have seen with demonstratives. The distinction is nevertheless not as clear-cut with *begge* as with the *all*-series and with *begge* both non-definite and definite forms are often used to refer to concrete entities. This is expected since the core meaning of *begge* implies regarding two entities as being identified together so that they always are contextually given. The lack of definiteness will nevertheless always signal less familiarity or more hypotheticality or abstractness than the definite forms.

Although both the *all*-series and *begge* necessarily render the noun phrases they head identifiable, they are not marked as definite per se and thus do not impose any grammatical agreement restrictions with regard to definiteness on their complements. The examples in (202) through (204) show that the definiteness features of the dependent noun phrase are fully interpretational also after the combination with the quantifiers. This predicts that all closed class elements that do not specifically encode definiteness should be able to combine both with definites and non-definites as long as such a switch provides semantic distinctions that appear meaningful to the language community and their core meaning is not completely contradictory with the value of the complement.

While the switch between indefinite, or non-definite, and definite forms following all-quantifiers is found in many languages, including English, Bokmål Norwegian stands out in that it, though far more rarely, also may switch between definite and indefinite forms following unaccentuated demonstratives.

5.3.3.4 Summary

In all the Norwegian examples considered in this section, omission of the definiteness suffix in the presence of a demonstrative conveys an interpretational distinction separating them from the concrete contextual referents of the default construction marked for definiteness. While the interpretations diverge, they are nevertheless clearly related. Generalising, hypotheticality and abstractness have in common that they focus away from contextually present instances. Though these interpretations certainly are compositionally motivated, they are not fully transparent. Their interpretations are dependent on being distinguished from the default case and, as we have seen, contemporary speakers of Norwegian probably find these distinctions too marginal to deserve their own construction, and as a result the distinctions are losing territory. One of the reasons why these distinctions are not found worthy of formal marking may be that the difference between hypothetical and specific real life referents normally is easy to infer from context.

5.3.4 Absence of the demonstrative

There are also several definite adjective–noun constructions where the demonstrative either may be omitted or must be absent. As opposed to the cases discussed above, these constructions are not associated with an elevated style; on the contrary, they are either neutral or colloquial. Omission of demonstratives occurs more regularly with certain types of adjectives depending on prototypical interpretations, either by themselves or in combinations with particular nouns. Section 5.3.4.1 discusses inherently restrictive definite adjective–noun constructions, 5.3.4.2 looks at adjective–noun constructions that require absence of the demonstrative. Section 5.3.4.3 introduces and discusses a neologism that I have termed the Emotive Adjectival Construction, before 5.3.4.4 explores the resemblance between these and third person vocatives.

5.3.4.1 Restrictive definite adjectival constructions

One important group of adjectives that typically favours omission of the demonstrative consists of signs with clear restrictive content indicating location or ordering like e.g. *høyre, venstre, øvre, nedre første, siste, neste* (Faarlund et al. 1997 : 312, 313). These adjectives have in common that they are part of a defective paradigm and do not distinguish either gender, number or definiteness values in the positive, confer the paradigm for *lilla* in Grammatical Definition VII, from 3.9.4. These adjectives furthermore do not distinguish (all) positive, comparative and superlative forms and show syncretism in form with *e*-adjectives as they all end in an *-e*. Finally, these adjectives do not (normally) function as predicatives.

- (205) a. Tett inntil greenen på **venstre sida** ligg ein liten dam. (www)
Close to the green on left.GN side.F.SG.DEF lays a litte pond.
- b. Sjå sjekklste på **siste sida** av blanketten. (www)
See the cheklist on last.GN page.F.SG.DEF
- c. Gjør det vondt **første gangen**? (www)
Does it hurt first.GN time.M.SG.DEF

The motivation for the omission of the demonstrative in these cases should be quite transparent. The core meaning of the adjectives is sufficient to secure the necessary identifiability – just as precisely as a [deixis] value would do. If the demonstrative in the default construction, as I suggest, is present only in order to assure that the first element indicates whether or not the phrase as a whole should be interpreted as identifiable, then this demonstrative is no longer required when the adjective itself provides this information. The possibility of omitting the demonstrative in these cases therefore lends support to the idea that the demonstrative features are relevant in the basic reading of the default construction. Compared to one of the *den*-demonstratives the adjectives lack overt gender and number distinctions, just like other *-e* adjectives, but differently from these they clearly indicate an NP, since these adjectives normally do not function as (extra-phrasal) predicatives.

Omission of the demonstrative is thus less frequent with characterising, intersective adjectives. Restrictive interpretations may nevertheless also arise from such adjectives if context or shared knowledge between the interlocutors make their identificational properties sufficiently clear, i.e. when the referent is familiar enough, probably by extension of examples such as in (205). High familiarity is frequent in

day-to-day conversation and such omission of demonstratives is thus typical in spoken, rather than in written Norwegian.

- (206) a. Du kan ta **nye bilen**. (Julien 2009: 32 (her 2.11 b))
 You can take new.GN car.M.SG.DEF
 b. Kan du ta hit **blåe fatet**? (spontaneous speech, MH)
 Can you bring blue.GN plate.N.SG.DEF
 c. Har du sett grønne genser'n min?
 Have you seen green.GN sweater.SG.DEF min.

The adjective will normally be accentuated in such cases, which is a natural way to indicate its prominent part in the identificational interpretation. Again, the role of accentuation seems transparent in indicating contrast, which again implies restrictivity.

Because such restrictive interpretations are also attested in the default construction, the demonstrative could be added without any major change in interpretation to all the examples above. There are nevertheless also groups both of adjectives alone and of adjective–noun combinations where presence vs. absence of the demonstrative would lead to marked interpretational changes. Such combinations are the topic of the two coming subsections.

5.3.4.2 Constructions that require absence of the demonstrative

There are basically two types of adjective-noun combinations that require the demonstrative to be omitted. The demonstrative is typically omitted with quantificational adjectives and with adjectives that convey a specified, but inherent and defining quality of the noun they modify. I will refer to these interpretations as the quantificational and the expressive interpretation, respectively. In both cases, omission of the demonstrative is required in order to distinguish the intended meaning from those available from the Default Construction, viz. restriction and description.

The examples containing the adjectives *hel* and *halv* below are good illustrations of quantificational interpretations.

- (207) a. Han hadde spart penger til **halve sykkel**en sjølv.
 He had saved money to half.GN bike.M.SG.DEF (him) self
 b. Smør et tynt lag med syltetøy over **hele kake**bunnen (...).
 Spread a thin layer of jam over whole.GN cake.bottom.M.SG.DEF
 c. Vi prata **hele natta** om alt mulig. (www)
 We talked whole.GN night.F.SG.DEF about everything.
 d. Jeg har ventet **halve dagen**, forjeves. (www)
 I've been waiting half.GN day.M.SG.DEF, in vain.¹⁶³

¹⁶³ Both the demonstrative and the definiteness suffixes may also be omitted under similar circumstances that permit omission of the demonstrative. The Norwegian Definite Distinctive Adjectival Construction, as defined in 5.4.4.1, is more common in Nynorsk and spoken variants of Norwegian; in Bokmål Norwegian (and dialects strongly influenced by or close to it) where the influence from Danish is more present, the definite suffix of the noun is often omitted as well. This is often the case with both distinctive and quantificational constructions:

- (i) a. Vi satt oppe hele natta/i hele natt.
 We sat up whole.GN night.F.SG.DEF/in whole.GN night.F.GN.
 b. I min bibel er siste side i Det Nye Testamentet 666...(www)
 In my bible is last.GN page.F.GN in The New Testament 666...

The adjectives in (207) have clear quantificational content, and according to Faarlund et al. (1997: 301) they function as determiners in such cases. They corroborate this view by pointing out that the adjectives in question may precede a demonstrative (recall 4.3.3.1 where we saw that *hel(e)* competed with *all*):

- (208) a. Hun satt alene på en benk **hele den dagen** også (...). (www)
She sat alone on a bench whole.GN that day.M.SG.DEF also
b. Nå har nesten **halve denne dagen** gått (...).(www)
Now has almost half.GN this day.M.SG.DEF gone

While it is true that *hele* and *halve* have a determinerlike function in these cases, this is no less true of the adjectives in the restrictive construction. The difference between them is that the restrictive adjectives determine the identity of the referent while *hele* and *halve* determines its quantity. As I see it, the distribution of the demonstrative in such cases is strongly motivated by the fact that they need to be distinguished from the default construction where the same adjectives would yield a restrictive or a descriptive interpretation as in the examples below.

- (209) a. **Den halve sykkelen** festes til foreldresykkelen, enten til setepinnen eller til bagasjebæreren.
That half.GN bike.M.SG.DEF attaches to the parent.bike, either to the seat.stick or to the bagage.carrier.
b. Dekk **den hele kakebunnen** med kremblandingen, legg så de fire delene av kakebunnen på toppen.
Cover that whole.GN cake.bottom.M.SG.DEF with the cream, then lay the four parts of the cake.bottom on top.

The example in (209)a does not refer to 50% of a bike, but to this new invention for kids that looks like a bike with a missing front wheel and combines into some kind of a tandem with the parents' bike. The modification may here be said to be descriptive. In (209)b *hele* is used to distinguish one cake from another one that is cut in half and thus not whole, and the interpretation is thus restrictive.

The demonstrative is also consistently omitted in constructions where the adjective has what Faarlund et al. (1997: 301) calls an expressive meaning and convey an inherent, constitutive property of the noun they combine with as exemplified below:

- (210) a. Det krevde noe så umenneskelig som å stå opp midt på **svarte natta**.
(www)
It takes something as inhuman as to wake up in the middle of black.GN night.F.SG.DEF.
b. Morgonen etter hadde ikkje far gått på skulen då me vakna, endå det var **lyse dagen**. (www)
The morning after father had not left for school when we woke, even though it was light.GN day.M.SG.DEF

In these cases, the adjectives provide neither a restrictive nor a typical descriptive interpretation. While the adjective certainly denotes a property, this property does not consist of new information, rather it is just used as a reinforcer. A similar effect is found with the adjectives *ren* and *skjær*, often in combination, which function almost as focusing adverbs (see Faarlund et al. 1997: 302).

- (211) a. Verkstedet er jo **rene kaoset** og ingen ting virker strukturert.
The garage is adv. clean.GN chaos.N.SG.DEF and nothing seems structured.
- b. Det er jo **rene og skjære galskapen**.
It is adv clean.GN and pure.GN madness.M.SG.DEF

The absence of the demonstrative in these constructions is readily motivated by the theorem that a difference in form necessarily yields a difference also in meaning. If an attributive adjective has the potential to contribute an additional interpretation distinct from restrictive or descriptive ones, it will do so by choosing a contrasting form. Quantificational and expressive constructions differ from inherently restrictive ones in that with the latter, the demonstrative is omitted when the information contributed by the adjective is sufficient to take on the demonstrative's function, while in the two other constructions, the demonstrative is omitted in order to avoid the default interpretations associated with the presence of the demonstrative.

5.3.4.3 Emotive Adjectival Construction

The construction I have termed the *Emotive Adjectival Construction* has, to my knowledge, not been previously described in the scholarly literature. Like with inherently restrictive constructions, it is made up by a general adjective and a definite noun, and may be distinguished from paradigmatic constructions by a special intonational pattern (accentuation on both adjective and noun, and lengthening of vowel) which may be defined as a sign *emote/+EMOTIVE*. From an interpretational viewpoint, the Emotive Constructions differs from the Restrictive Adjectival Construction in that it does not evoke other referents. The adjective thus plays no role in identifying the referent, which is already established. In other words, while restrictive adjectival interpretations (whether they arise from a noun phrase containing a demonstrative or not) evoke multiple potential referents and picks out one, the referent of the Emotive Constructions is uniquely given and identifiable without the adjective. The interpretation is also different from that of descriptive interpretations (introduced by demonstratives) where the referent likewise is identifiable. Rather than conveying a neutral, objective description, the adjective in the Emotive Construction expresses the speaker's personal feelings towards the referent. The adjectival property also seems reinforced, and they are interpreted as highly subjective and exclamatory, which is reflected in the fact that they typically function as additional comments or exclamatives. Some first examples are given in (212):

- (212) a. Jeg er så heldig at jeg får servert kaffe på senga hver morgen (**fine, fine mannen!**) (www)
I am so lucky that I get served coffee in bed every morning (fine.GN, fine.GN man.M.SG.DEF)
- b. [H]an er selektiv med hvilke oppdrag han tar på seg (sa bl.a. nei til "Idol" – **fine mannen**). (www)
he is selective with what assignments he takes on (said among other things no to "Idol" – fine.GN man.M.SG.DEF)

- c. Hvilket band/artist har betydd mest for deg personlig? Må bli Metallica og Lemmy (**fine mannen**) (www)
 What band/artist has meant most for you personally? Has to be Metallica and Lemmy (fine.GN man.M.SG.DEF).

Even though they convey exclamative interpretations, the emotive construction is not exclusively used as comments as in (212). Though more rarely, they also appear as arguments of verbs and prepositions as well as in the predicative function. The Nemi comic strip by below is illustrative:



- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| <p>- Clever.GN
 woman.SG.DEF shall
 pay bills on the net
 bank !</p> | <p>- Just a small trip to
 strange.GN
 shop.SG.DEF first!</p> | <p>- Oh! Nice dress!
 Want it! Shall I
 have it? Can't
 Afford! Want it!
 Klikk Have
 bought it.
 -Stupid.GN
 woman.SG.DEF can
 no longer afford to
 pay bills.</p> | <p>- Bah! Cool.GN
 woman.SG.DEF has
 no time to pay bills
 anyway. She shall
 wear nice dress and
 play with strange
 thingy with propell
 she bought on
 Monday.</p> |
|--|---|---|---|

As seen above, Nemi uses the Emotive Construction both as subjects and as a prepositional object. The comic strip also illustrates the subjectivity of the construction through Nemi's changing attitude towards herself; *flinke damen* 'clever woman_{DEF}', *dumme damen* 'stupid woman_{DEF}' and *kule damen* 'cool woman_{DEF}' can be understood neither as restrictive – they do not evoke other potential referents – nor as objectively descriptive. The emotional part is seen in Nemi's facial expressions.

The Emotive Construction seems to occupy all nominal functions. The sentences below provide examples of Emotive Constructions as direct objects (213)a and as predicatives (213)b.

- (213) a. Næmen, ska' dem klipp **lange håret** av **fine mannen**? (Trøndersk, Sunniva Saksvik, spontaneous speech)
 No.but, are they gonna cut long.GN hair.N.SG.DEF of nice.GN man.M.SG.DEF?
- b. Akymisten (sic) er **fine boka**, og Coelho er **fine mannen**. (www)
 The alchemist er fine.GN book.SG.DEF and Coelho is fine.GN man.SG.DEF

Some speakers nevertheless have problems accepting the Emotive Construction as arguments or predicatives as in (213) even though they fully understand, accept and even use it as exclamative comments. I believe this may be explained by its novelty; the construction probably started out as a pure exclamative, and is now conquering new territory with people following in their own pace.

The Emotive Adjectival Construction is a neologism that is still expanding its domain – both linguistically and population-wise. From a Saussurean view-point a neologism is an analogical creation where the existing system of values is used for a new term or construction in order for a speaker to better convey the signification of her thoughts (or emotions). The innovation will be (successfully) decoded as long as the interlocutors possess the same system of values, and will become productive, and spread, if found relevant enough by the language community (Pétroff 2004: 233). In this particular case, I have personally experienced the expanding productivity and frequency of the Emotive Construction at first hand from the beginning of the millennium. Though I found the new construction strange, I fully decoded it at my first encounter (which shows I possessed the right system of values), but while the linguist in me noticed, and slowly got used to its rapid expansion, I was still stunned to hear myself use it for the first time. The construction seems to be spreading very rapidly among Norwegian speakers – at least from my generation and down. It is generally acknowledged that the higher the status of its initial users, the better are the chances that a neologism will be found relevant, so to some extent the construction's success may be due to its frequent appearance in Lise Myhre's very popular cartoon *Nemi*.

The relationship between form, meaning and interpretation of the Emotive Construction is straightforwardly motivated by the compositional meaning of its whole and its paradigmatic relationships with related signs. As opposed to the inherently restrictive constructions, adding a demonstrative to the Emotive Constructions would totally change their signification or render them unintelligible as it would force either a restrictive or an (objectively) descriptive interpretation upon them. Because of the subjective and exclamatory import of the construction, even though the referent is identifiable without the adjective, it will generally not make much sense to leave it out. The special intonation pattern provided by the *signifiant* of the tonal sign *emote*, which supplies the subjective exclamatory quality of the construction, further distinguishes the Emotive Construction formally from the inherently restrictive and quantificational interpretations discussed in the previous subsections. Concerning the *signifiant* of *emote*, it might also be interesting to notice its resemblance to the *signifiant* of *intensify*, discussed in 4.3.2. Both the Emotive and the Intensifying Construction differ clearly from otherwise similar syntactic complexes by a characteristic intonation pattern involving (sometimes exaggerated) vowel lengthening

In addition, since it expresses the speaker's personal feelings towards the referent, the Emotive Construction shares qualities with Norwegian Vocatives. They nevertheless differ in that the emotive construction generally refers to a third person and not to the addressee, and in the fact that vocatives normally are combinations of an *-e* adjective and a bare or indefinite plural noun, which brings us to the next section.

5.3.4.4 Vocatives and the Emotive Construction

In vocatives, both the demonstratives and the definite suffixes are regularly omitted:

- (214) a. Kjære venn!
Dear.GN. friend.M.GN
b. Ærede publikum.
Hounored.GN audience.N.GN
c. Kjære venner.
Dear.GN. friend.PL.INDEF

The example in (214)a, is interesting both from a feature compositional and a interpretational viewpoint in that it combines an *e*-Adjective with a Bare Noun that has a plural indefinite form. As we have seen 3.10 *e*-Adjectives generally combine with the three suffixed noun forms, and with bare nouns otherwise only when these receive plural interpretations, recall also 5.3.3.1 which discussed similar combinations with preposed demonstratives. In (214)a, the interpretation is nevertheless clearly singular. The combination in (214)a is thus opposed not only to plural and explicit definite readings, but also to indefinite singulars. That vocatives are to be distinguished from indefinites seems obvious, but why from definites? The listener is certainly identifiable to himself. Remember that under the present account definiteness is not linked to the listener's ability to identify, but to the speaker's intention on what point of view the listener should take on. Definiteness, therefore, gives a third person flair (go out and identify!) that is unwanted or at least unnecessary with vocatives, which are deictic in nature and have a 2. person referent.

While the vocative in (214)a consists of two elements that are neutral with regard to definiteness, the plural versions in (214)c contains an element that, at least under the present approach, is marked as indefinite. This is at first glance contradictory to the idea that indefiniteness entails non-identifiability. We have nevertheless in the discussion on kind-reference already seen that (adjectival) modification of an indefinite plural necessarily creates a restricted, and thus identifiable sub-group of the potential set defined by the indefinite.

While the definiteness suffix normally is absent in vocatives, it nevertheless appears if a possessive is added. In such cases, the construction is ambiguous between a vocative and an emotive reading:

- (215) **Snille mammaen** min! (ambiguous)

The definiteness suffix may further also be used in vocatives to address kids and dogs, probably as a way to encourage them to see themselves from outside, i.e. as third persons.

- (216) **Flinke jenta** som ikke gir opp! (Tore Nettet, spontaneous speech)

Again, example (216) can be used with reference both to the listener and to a third person, and is thus potentially ambiguous between the Vocative and the Emotive Construction, though it would be distinguished by the particular tonal sign for the emotive reading. Like Emotives, Vocatives are exclamatory and subjective rather than objectively restrictive or descriptive. A fair guess could be that the Emotive Construction arose as a direct extension of the third person vocative construction. Investigation of the origin and the development of the emotive construction is nevertheless a question of diachrony and is therefore beyond the scope of this work.

5.4 Summary Superimposition and Adjectival Modification

This chapter has shown that Neo-saussurean theory provides adequate tools for the analysis of the syntax of the Norwegian Nominal System. The Saussurean theorem that the same basic principles apply to all facets of language thus receives additional support. By showing how the complex and interpretationally diverse syntactic patterns of the Norwegian Nominal System are motivated by the invariant compositional meaning of the relevant uni- and combi-signs, the chapter lends support not only to the appropriateness of the theory, but also to the analyses of the uni-signs provided in the two previous chapters.

The basic principles of arbitrariness, linearity and differentialisation yield straightforward and principled motivations for the distributional idiosyncrasies of possessives and attributive adjectives, as well as for the interpretational range of the definite adjective-noun constructions. A consistent application of the results of the analyses of uni-signs in the syntactic analyses revealed that the traditional term “double definiteness” is inaccurate as there is little reason to assume more than one definiteness feature in the construction. Furthermore, the presence of demonstratives in definite adjectival constructions is not as dummy-like as it is understood traditionally. It actually does play a role in selecting the referent, and the demonstrative is furthermore highly construction specific.

Omission of the demonstrative happens under two types of circumstances. Firstly, the demonstrative is omitted when the adjective by itself is able to perform the job of a demonstrative, either by virtue of its core meaning or by a combination of immediate familiarity and stress, and, secondly, when the phrase as a whole receives an interpretation that is incompatible with the demonstrative or the default adjective reading. This may (at first glance) seem contradictory, but actually is quite logical; the element is omitted either because it needs not be there or because it cannot be there. It is the interpretation of the complex, not of the individual features that is primordial.

Omission of the definiteness suffixes is favoured when the noun is seen as unidentifiable outside of this special pointing event, i.e. when the range of the referent is known only through the demonstrative. In such cases, the referent is generally understood as being hypothetical. The definiteness suffix is further omitted in vocative constructions where the referent is contextually identifiable. In these cases, the definiteness suffix is omitted because definiteness normally entails a third person interpretation

One major contribution of this chapter has been the introduction of the four tonal signs *accentuate*, *deaccentuate*, *intensify* and *emote* into the Norwegian Nominal System and Grammar. Although few researchers would probably dispute the relevance of intonation for the Norwegian Nominal System, intonation has not been integrated into previous analyses in a principled way. The present chapter has shown that clarifying the role of intonation makes it possible to see the semantic contribution of the segmental signs more clearly.

Chapter 6

Conclusion and Directions for Future Research

Neo-saussurean theory provides a suitable basis for understanding the intricate relationship between form, meaning and interpretation in the Norwegian Nominal System. This investigation has explored its most important uni-signs, combi-signs and combinatorial signs in their many different contexts and uses and has shown that for (almost) each and every one of them their distributional and interpretational properties and characteristics may be explained by a small set of theoretical principles.

The Neo-saussurean framework has been tested on a broad empirical basis as it has been applied to a substantial chunk of the Norwegian Language, namely its entire nominal system. The reason why I have chosen this large object of study instead of illustrating my analysis with an eclectic set of problems from different areas is that I believe that the potential of a theoretical framework is not evident before one offers an analysis of a substantial chunk of a language. One of the major assets of this work is thus the demonstration that simple, basic assumptions about signs and their interaction provide an adequate toolbox for the analysis of the semantics and morpho-syntax of the Norwegian Nominal System.

My investigation has been executed in strong adherence to Occam's razor, a sound theoretical principle requesting parsimony, economy and succinctness in the choice of hypotheses and theoretical assumptions, stating that the simplest explanation or strategy (most probably) is the best one. The present study has shown that a parsimonious set of theoretical principles suffices to provide an insightful account of a system as complex and extensive as the Norwegian Nominal System. This suggests that the Neo-Saussurean approach should be able to handle the rest of the Norwegian language as well as other languages, i.e. language and languages in general.

By taking a very few logical principles like the arbitrariness of the sign, the linearity of oral *signifiés* and the Saussurean dichotomies synchrony/diachrony, *langue/parole*, *signifiant/signifié* and *signification/valeur* seriously, the investigation has resulted in a unified theoretical understanding of the intricate relationship between form, meaning and interpretation of the many different signs constituting the Norwegian Nominal System. Furthermore, none of these principles are unfounded assumptions. On the contrary, they are all necessary principles imposed on language by the nature of the two substances it combines – sound and thought. All the principles adopted thus derive entirely from properties of our sensory-motor and conceptual-intentional systems, which are theoretically prior to language. (If one or both of these systems were different, the conditions and restrictions on language would be different, and we would thus need different principles.)

Throughout the thesis, I have consistently pursued the Neo-Saussurean approach. This has produced a number of new insights concerning the value and interaction of the signs constituting the Norwegian Nominal System. In some cases, I have redefined and reanalysed well-known features such as definiteness. In other cases, I have introduced new feature values such as general number on the Norwegian Bare Noun and adjectives ending in *-e*. These interpretations have been arrived at

through careful analysis of the relevant signs and features in a variety of contexts extracting what is common to all their uses. Just as a theory needs to be tested on a broad empirical basis, the understanding of individual signs needs to be based on as many of its interpretational and distributional facets as possible.

The Neo-Saussurean approach often yields simple and straightforward analyses of phenomena that may appear complex and intricate from the perspective of theories with a more elaborate technical apparatus. One such example is the Norwegian use of (simple) definites in contexts where other languages like e.g. English requires a possessive determiner, the so-called missing possessive constructions discussed in 3.2.2. If one adopts an Anglo-centric perspective and assumes that similar interpretations in different languages derive from identical underlying structures, the Norwegian facts may appear puzzling and require a separate and complicated explanation. According to the Neo-Saussurean approach, on the other hand, language variation is more than superficial variations based on shared underlying structures. Furthermore, definiteness is not defined solely in terms of uniqueness and maximality, but rather understood as identifiability. The Neo-Saussurean assumptions about language variation and definiteness facilitate a straightforward and insightful analysis of the English and Norwegian possessive constructions in question. In English, definites and possessives are equally complex and the most informative form, i.e. the possessive, wins. In Norwegian, on the other hand, the definite forms trumps the possessives as the latter are more costly since they involve an extra sign.

An example where the Neo-Saussurean approach yields valuable insights into issues of broader theoretical and empirical interest, is the analysis of the Indefinite Plural in 3.3. The analysis I have proposed has a bearing on the long-standing issue concerning the difference between kind and generic reference cross-linguistically. Although the cross-linguistic literature on kind and generic reference is quite substantial, a language like Norwegian, which draws a clear grammatical distinction between the two types of reference, has not previously been introduced to the discussion (and has in fact been proposed to be impossible in human language). The contribution of my analysis is threefold. First, I show that the Norwegian data enable us to draw a clear-cut and principled boundary between generic and true kind predicates, which so far has appeared somewhat blurred. Second, the proposed analysis shows that the influential Chierchian proposal that generic readings cross-linguistically necessarily are derived from kinds cannot be maintained. Third, my proposal that the Norwegian Indefinite Plural is a true indefinite (as opposed to its close relatives in Danish and English) motivates a number of subtle differences between these languages regarding these forms' ability to appear in appositive titles and their compatibility with demonstratives.

Also my investigation of the Norwegian Bare Noun in 3.4 has interest for the cross-linguistic debate on kind reference and the related discussion of possible interpretations of bare nouns. The most important and radical contribution of the thesis is the demonstration that the Norwegian Bare Noun cannot possibly be marked as singular indefinite, but rather has to be understood as being numberable or as carrying the value general number. In other words, I analyse the Norwegian Bare Noun as interpretationally neutral with regard to both number and definiteness. This vagueness in the invariant meaning of the Norwegian Bare Noun explains its wide distributional and interpretational range spanning from its true predicative function via its important use in object position with type-readings to its function as subjects of both generic and true kind predicates. The understanding of the Norwegian Bare

Noun as being marked for general number further explains its seemingly incompatible similarities and differences with the distributional and interpretational properties of Bare Nouns in English and French. The present analysis lends further support to Bouchard's proposal of the importance of number marking in the cross-linguistic understanding of the nominal systems of English and French. At the same time, my analysis develops Bouchard's system further, insofar as I have added the feature general number. With its place on top of Figure 3 on p. 85, the general number feature adds the last missing piece in the puzzle and completes Bouchard's original analysis.

The general number feature is also present in Norwegian adjectives ending in *-e* which combine with all types of nouns. The introduction of the general number feature on *-e* Adjectives explains not only the versatile combinatorial and interpretational properties of these signs, but also sheds light on the role of economy in feature combinations. Signs marked for general number, the Bare Noun and the *-e* Adjectives, normally combine with signs that have specified number and definiteness values, i.e. the three suffixed noun forms and the two indefinite singular adjectives. When a word marked for general number combines with a word with a specific number (and definiteness) value, no feature clash occurs, and the resulting complex phrase carries the specific number value. This neat and economic picture of the interaction of feature distribution in attributive adjective-noun constructions is a good example of the validity of investigating a larger part of a language and not just isolated uses of one item.

Norwegian Adjectives differ from adjectives in English and French in that they also function pronominally. This property or function of Norwegian Adjectives has received little or no attention in the scholarly literature on Norwegian Nominals, and the data presented in 3.9.2 thus fills out a missing piece in the description of the Norwegian Nominal System. In Norwegian, not only nouns and determiners, which are the categories discussed by Bouchard, but also adjectives are marked for number. The fact that Norwegian Adjectives may function as a full referential noun phrase on their own, without the support of a(nother) number marked element like a determiner or a dummy numeral, also has theoretical implications as it corroborates and elaborates Bouchard's understanding of number marking as a minimal means to identify an actant in grammar by introducing a third part of speech.

The presentation of the most important Norwegian function words in Chapter 4 demonstrates that the division between lexical and functional signs, or open and closed parts of speech, though descriptively useful is theoretically inaccurate. Both function words and lexical words are signs made up of a *signifiant* and a contextually invaried *signifié*. In the same way as lexical signs, the *signifié* of paradigmatic function words may be analysed as consisting of the Norwegian paradigmatic or additional nominal features gender number and definiteness, in addition to a core meaning – be it ELG, EN or DEIXIS NEUTRAL. The analysis I propose further shows that there is no theoretical reason to distinguish between two parts of speech, pronouns and determiners, for Norwegian function words. There is no systematic distribution of additional features that covers all, or even most, classes of function words, and, a few exceptions apart, all nominal signs from closed parts of speech function both ad- and pronominally. As the function words all perform the same function, namely to (help) identify a referent – either extra- or intralinguistically, extra- or intraphrasially – the distinction between pronouns and determiners is neither categorial nor functional, but merely contextual. For a theoretically consistent analysis, the distinction between determiners and pronouns has no place in the description of a sign's invariant meaning or value.

Traditionally, polysemy has not only been assumed at the categorial or functional level, but also in semantics of functional words, resulting in multiple entries for signs like *en* and *den* as indefinite article/pronoun or numeral one and demonstrative vs. definite pronoun or determiner, respectively. The separation between core and paradigmatic features also for function words nevertheless reveals that these distinctions always depend on a difference in accentuation. I have therefore proposed that deaccentuated function words receive a non-contrastive interpretation of their core feature as a result of the application of the tonal sign *deaccentuate*. A consistent Neo-saussurean analysis thus leads to an understanding of Norwegian function words free of non-contextual polysemy, which is nevertheless able to motivate their varied and versatile functional, distributional and interpretational range. It is important to notice that the (welcome) abolishment of categorial and semantic polysemy for nominal function words as well as the obliteration of a theoretical distinction between lexical and functional signs are not obtained by the use of various technical tools invented for this purpose. On the contrary, we are dealing with inevitable consequences of the few theoretical principles of Neo-saussurean theory. As function words and lexical words both are arbitrary signs restricted by human physiology and cognition, there is no reason to treat them as theoretically different. Stating that function words, just like lexical words, are arbitrary signs may not appear particularly radical or novel. However, the analysis I have proposed in Chapter 4 shows that if we take Saussure's ideas seriously in practical analysis and distinguishes between contextual interpretation and invariant meanings, we arrive at a unified and principled account of these signs' distribution and interpretation.

Although the fact that words are (some sort of (arbitrary)) signs is commonly accepted, the fact that they are radically arbitrary couplings of an arbitrary signifiant with an arbitrary signifié is generally either refuted or neglected in current (Anglo-centric) linguistic theorising. More radical than the return to Saussurean sign theory and arbitrariness as the basis for analysing words and morphemes is perhaps the idea that words and syntax have the same ontological status: words are uni-signs (unitary signs) and syntax is a set of combi-signs (combinatorial signs). Both the lexicon and syntax are hence sets of elements with the same essential properties, i.e., signs. This is at the essence of Bouchard's Sign Theory of Syntax, which is a consistent development of Saussure's insistence on the fact that the principles of arbitrariness and linearity determine all parts of language.

While the *signifié* of combinatorial signs – identified as predication – is the only true semantic universal in Neo-saussurean theory, their *signifiants* respond to arbitrariness and may vary between the six possible forms made available by our vocal apparatus, recall Figure 7 on p.176. The syntactic part of the investigation in Chapter 5 focuses on the two main types of combinatorial *signifiants* used in Norwegian, direct juxtaposition and superimposition. Although Norwegian is a head-first language, both possessive and attributive adjective constructions have word orders that may seem contradictory to this general principle. Both the unexpected prenominal position of attributive adjectives and the difference between pre- and postnominal possessives are, however, motivated through the complexity and value of the signs being combined. The differences between pre- and post-nominal possessives are all accounted for through general principles of Neo-saussurean theory. Prenominal possessives receive more focused possessive interpretations because of their head status, while the fact that they combine with non-definites is explained by the fact that a definiteness feature is unnecessary in order to assure identifiability since this already

is indicated by the possessive. With postnominal possessives, on the other hand, the picture is reversed.

Norwegian Adjectives are generally prenominal because the nouns they combine with are complex referential entities marked for both number and definiteness. In order to avoid combining with the fully extensional sign, as in clausal subject-predicative relations, but instead indicate the attribution of a property to the intentional part of the noun, the relation has to take on a different form and the head order is therefore reversed. This is exactly as expected from Bouchard's analysis of attributive adjectives in English and French, where the predominance for prenominal adjectives in English is explained by the number marking on English Nouns. My analysis does not however merely reduplicate or support Bouchard's understanding of English and French. The analysis I propose expands Bouchard's analysis by showing that the fact that Norwegian Adjectives are prenominal also in contexts where English uses postnominal adjectives is readily explained if we assume that Norwegian Adjectives are marked not only for number, but also for definiteness. English postnominal adjectives combine with the extensional number marked noun in order to yield stage-level interpretations. Since in Norwegian the [noun + number] complex may be seen as a (conceptual) subpart of [[noun + number] + definiteness], a Norwegian Adjective may obtain the same reading also in its prenominal position. Both apparent deviations from the head first setting in the Norwegian Nominal System are thus explainable through the values of the relevant signs and basic principles such as economy of working memory and the fact that a difference in meaning necessarily must be expressed by a difference in form.

A consistent application of Neo-saussurean theory requires reanalysis of one of the most famous constructions of Norwegian grammar, namely the so-called double definiteness construction. In consistency with the morphological analysis of uni-signs in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, the analysis I propose assumes only one definiteness feature in such a construction, the one on the noun. The investigation further weakens the impression that the demonstrative is obligatory in all definite attributive-noun constructions and discusses several examples where either the demonstrative or the definiteness suffix can or must be absent. A detailed analysis of the semantic import and different functions of these elements in the demonstrative and the default constructions provides a good basis for understanding the motivation both for their absence and their presence. The non-contrastive reading of unstressed demonstratives in such contexts is explained as the result of the application of the tonal sign *deaccentuate*, and its presence in the construction in the first place is motivated by principles of economy demanding that information about the identifiability of a noun phrase should be presented already on its first element. The tonal sign *deaccentuate* with the value –CONTRAST also combines with other function words with contrastive meaning. In addition to the sign *deaccentuate*, Norwegian grammar also contains a corresponding sign *accentuate* that typically applies to signs of a less contrastive nature. Stating that accentuation yields contrastive interpretations and that the difference between demonstrative and definite adjectival constructions relies on presence vs. absence of stress is a simple observation. Taking this seriously by integrating it into a theory in a principled way is, however, not common in current theorising on the Norwegian Nominal System. By showing how tonal signs, which just like any other sign consist of both a *signifiant* and a (context independent invaried) *signifié*, combine with other signs through superimposition, the present analysis manages not only to abolish polysemy in nominal function words, it also explains a number of more idiosyncratic constructions.

While the twin signs *deaccentuate*/-CONTRAST and *accentuate*/+CONTRAST operate on all kinds of signs in the Norwegian language also outside of the nominal system, other tonal signs are construction specific. Two such signs are *intensify* and *emote* which combine with demonstrative or vocative constructions in order to yield intensified and emotive constructions, see 5.3.2 and 5.3.4.3. With both constructions, the tonal signs are modulations imposing a particular idiosyncratic reading of the different interacting elements of the initial constructions, which nevertheless retain their intrinsic value.

The emotive construction is a neologism in the Norwegian Nominal System that has not previously been described in the scholarly literature. Together with other constructions from more colloquial or oral registers, e.g. the pronominal use of adjectives and restrictive adjectival constructions with descriptive adjectives, that have received little attention in the literature this construction extends previous descriptions of the Norwegian Nominal System. My investigation has been based on real examples extracted from a variety of sources and registers ranging from contemporary novels, newspapers, cartoons, internet chat-rooms and spontaneous speech. The inclusion of data also from less formal sources is an important asset of the present thesis, because it broadens the empirical scope of the analysis. Constructions that are more frequent in colloquial registers than in formal writing are often left out or ignored in scientific research. In the present investigation, however, these constructions have played an important part in understanding the Norwegian Nominal System as a whole. A good example of this is the pronominal use of adjectives. While these are rare in written varieties of Norwegian, they abound in every day language. Their inclusion in my research leads not only to an important broadening of the description of the Norwegian Nominal System, it also offers new and valuable insights into the role and importance of number marking for argumenthood.

Because of its extensive empirical and theoretical scope, this thesis analyses a large number of constructions. Many of these constructions are highly complex and would in fact be suitable topics for a whole thesis in themselves. Several constructions, problems and analyses advanced in the present thesis therefore constitute good starting points for future research. However, in addition to opening up for new perspectives for future in-depth analyses of specific parts of the Norwegian Nominal System, the investigation's success in handling this broad empirical area suggests that the same theory and methodology could be applied successfully to other parts of Norwegian Grammar and languages in general. The Norwegian Verbal System differs from both the Nominal System of Norwegian, and the verbal systems of my two main languages of comparison, English and French, in that it contains relatively little inflectional morphology. A similar investigation as the one presented here, but applied to the Norwegian Verbal System would therefore provide a different theoretical contribution. In a system with fewer signs, more of the interpretational weight will necessarily fall on contextual information. In this respect it is interesting to notice that among the three main languages discussed in this work the amount of morphology in the verbal systems of the individual languages seems to be in relative contrast with the amount of morphological information in the nominal systems. French has quite an extensive verbal system, but very little nominal morphology. Norwegian has relatively little verbal morphology, but an extensive amount of grammatical information in its nominal system, while English occupies an intermediate position between French and Norwegian. A future comparative analysis

of the verbal systems of Norwegian, French and English would therefore would therefore be a natural extension of the analysis I have presented in this thesis.

The Norwegian Nominal System contains three paradigmatic categories, viz. gender, number and definiteness. My analysis has demonstrated that the Neo-saussurean framework is fully capable of accommodating these categories in Norwegian, French and English. Taking Neo-saussurean theory beyond these languages, it would be interesting to consider languages with case marking and/or classifiers. Another natural direction for further research would be to look for other languages like Norwegian, which make a grammatical distinction between generic and true kind predicates. Although this distinction has posed serious problems for formal semantic analysis, and even has been predicted not to exist, we have seen that a straightforward account is available in the Neo-saussurean approach pursued in the present thesis.

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