

Chapter 20

High and low phases in Norwegian nominals: Evidence from ellipsis, psychologically distal demonstratives and psychologically proximal possessives

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This squib discusses the idea of a high and a low phase in Norwegian nominals. I argue that ellipsis phenomena and syntactic constructions yielding speaker perspective meanings corroborate the proposal that nominals may have a biphasal structure.

1 Introduction

This squib picks up on an idea most recently proposed by e.g. Cornilescu & Nicolae (2011), Simpson & Syed (2016), Simpson (2017), Syed & Simpson (2017) and Roberts (2017: 161), namely that the extended nominal projection may consist of two phases. If on the right track, this proposal gives us a new type of evidence for parallel structure in nominals and clauses (e.g. Abney 1987; Szabolcsi 1994).¹

While Cornilescu & Nicolae (2011) and the studies by Simpson and Syed focus on Romanian and Bangla, I will discuss the idea of a high and a low nominal phase in Norwegian. Previously, Julien (2005) has made a case for biphasal nominals in Scandinavian on the basis of case-licensing and definiteness phenomena

¹On phases in the clausal domain, see Chomsky (2000) and much subsequent work.



in certain possessive constructions.² I will introduce two types of data that are new in the context of Norwegian: first, like Simpson (2017) and Syed & Simpson (2017), I will look at ellipsis. Then I will consider speaker-perspective meanings, which I, drawing on work by e.g. Sigurðsson (2014), take to be derived via syntactic operations at the phase edges.³ The speaker-perspective meanings to be considered are (i) psychologically distal demonstratives (e.g. Johannessen 2008) and (ii) a possessive construction that I describe as psychologically proximal.

I assume the following structure of the extended nominal domain in Norwegian, as proposed by Julien (2005):

- (1) [QP... [DemP... [DP... [CardP... [α P... [*n*P... [NumP... [NP...]]]]]]]]]

In this hierarchy, QP hosts strong quantifiers, DemP demonstratives, CardP numerals/weak quantifiers, and α P adjectives (adjectives are sitting in the specifier of the α head). DP and *n*P both contribute to definiteness; the definite suffix originates in *n*P; D mostly probes and attracts lower material, or, in the case of modified nouns, can be lexicalised by a pre-adjectival definite determiner which comes in addition to the definite suffix (so-called *double definiteness*). example (2a) illustrates the order of different elements in the nominal phrase (quantifier – demonstrative – numeral – adjective – noun with definite suffix); example (2b) shows double definiteness with a pre-adjectival definite determiner.

- (2) Norwegian
- a. alle disse tre gode bøk-ene
all these three good book-PL.DEF
'all these three good books'
 - b. den nye bok-a
the new book-DEF
'the new book'

On Julien's (2005: 12) analysis, DP, *n*P, NumP and NP are present in every DP, whereas CardP and α P are only merged when they contain lexical material. I take it that this also applies to QP and DemP.

²Julien argues for a low phase in addition to the more standardly assumed high phase; see Julien (2005: 4–5, 73, 202, 219) for details.

³Cornilescu & Nicolae (2011: 40) mention speaker-perspective meanings ("judgements by the speaker") as a characteristic of the higher nominal phase, but not of the lower one. Their arguments for a biphasal structure are based on the properties of prenominal adjectives and the so-called adjectival article construction. The main data discussed in Simpson & Syed (2016) are blocking effects on nominal-internal movement. Roberts (2017) proposes a biphasal structure in a discussion of the final-over-final condition in DP.

2 Ellipsis

Like Simpson (2017), I adopt Bošković's (2014) proposal that ellipsis is constrained by phases; more precisely, ellipsis can affect either (i) the phase itself, or (ii) the complement of the phase head (see Bošković's paper and references there for cross-linguistic evidence). On this approach, ellipsis of complements of non-phase heads is disallowed (Bošković 2014: 42). For illustration, compare (3a) and (3b) (from Bošković 2014: 56; ellipsis is marked by strikethrough):

- (3) a. Betsy must have been being hassled by the police, and Peter must have been ~~being hassled~~...
- b. *Betsy must have been being hassled by the police, and Peter must have been being ~~hassled~~...

In (3a), the complement of a phase head is elided (the phase head is Asp1, spelt out by *been*; see Bošković 2014: 62 for the full syntactic structure). In (3b), on the other hand, not only *been*, but also *being* is stranded; this would involve ellipsis of the complement of a non-phase head, which is not acceptable.

Some languages seem to disallow ellipsis for independent reasons even under the appropriate phasal conditions (Bošković 2014: 48); thus, ellipsis being impossible does not necessarily exclude the presence of a phase. However, according to Bošković's analysis, the possibility of ellipsis can be taken as an indication of phasehood.

2.1 Ellipsis in the higher phase

Ellipsis data suggest the presence of a phase in the higher nominal domain in Norwegian. It is, for example, possible to strand a pronominal possessive pronoun while the rest of the nominal phrase is elided, as illustrated in example (4) (the relevant nominals are in italics):

- (4) Norwegian
- a. Han er min beste venn, og jeg er *hans beste venn*.
 he is my best friend and I am his ~~best friend~~
 'He is my best friend, and I am his.'
- b. Jeg kom i min fineste kjole, og Anne kom i *sin fineste kjole*.
 I came in my nicest dress and Anne came in her.REFL ~~nicest dress~~
 'I was wearing my nicest dress, and Anne was wearing hers.'

I follow Julien (2005: 207, 210), who argues that prenominal possessive pronouns are first-merged in Spec-NP and move to Spec-DP (via intermediate positions). What we have in example (4) then, is ellipsis of everything below D (α P, n P, NumP and NP). The most obvious analysis that presents itself is that D is a phase head whose complement is elided. The analysis is illustrated (somewhat simplified) in (5):

- (5) hans beste venn
 [DP [α P [n P [NumP [NP]]]]]

It is worth noting that not only DP, but also projections located even higher in the nominal phrase can license ellipsis. This lends support to Bošković's (2014) proposal that phases are contextually defined: the edge of the phase is constituted by the highest functional projection present. Thus, in a structure where a QP is merged above DP, Q will be the phase head. An example of ellipsis with a stranded QP element (the strong quantifier *alle* 'all') is provided in example (6):⁴

- (6) Norwegian
 a. Det er noen ekstra skruer i skuff-en, men ikke ta *alle*
 there are some spare screws in drawer-DEF but not take all
de ekstra skru-ene i skuff-en
 the spare screw-PL-DEF in drawer-DEF
 'There are some spare screws in the drawer, but don't take all of them.'
 b. alle de ekstra skruene i skuffen [QP [DP [α P [n P [NumP [NP]]]]]]]

2.2 Ellipsis in the lower phase

While the data presented above seem to indicate a phase headed by the topmost projection in the nominal domain, Norwegian also allows ellipsis exclusively targeting material in the lower part of the nominal. The perhaps clearest evidence of this is ellipsis following adjectives, as illustrated in (7):

⁴It is also possible to strand a strong quantifier and a demonstrative: *Alle disse bøkene er solgt*, lit. 'all these books are sold'. Many such cases can be straightforwardly analysed as ellipsis in the lower phase, which is discussed in the next section. An issue that invites further research, both empirically and theoretically, concerns ellipsis of a noun modified by an adjective in such contexts (an elided adjective would be higher than n P). I leave that aside here.

(7) Norwegian

- a. Vi har vanligvis t-skjorter i alle farger, men *de svarte*
 we have usually t-shirts in all colours but the black
t-skjort-ene er utsolgt akkurat nå.
 t-shirt-PL.DEF are sold.out just now
 ‘We normally have t-shirts in all colours, but the black ones are sold out right now.’
- b. Jeg har funnet de fleste nøkl-ene vi mistet, men *alle de fire*
 I have found the most key-PL.DEF we lost but all the four
små nøkl-ene er fortsatt borte.
 small key-PL.DEF are still missing
 ‘I have found most of the keys that we lost, but all of the four small ones are still missing.’

Recall that adjectives are located in α P, a projection below DP and CardP. On the assumption that ellipsis can only affect phases and complements of phase heads, the examples in (7) cannot be licensed by the topmost functional projection. In example (7a), the highest element present is a pre-adjectival definite determiner, and the phase head would be D. The elided material, a noun with a definite suffix, is located in n P, which is a complement of α , i.e. a non-phase head. In (7b), the highest element present is a strong quantifier, and the phase head would be Q. Again, the elided material is located in n P, a complement of α , and in addition to α P, both CardP and DP intervene between the ellipsis site and the highest phase head. To account for the data, I propose, consistently with Julien (2005) (who reaches this conclusion on different grounds), that n P is a phase and that the examples in (7) are phasal ellipsis of n P.⁵ The analysis is illustrated in (8):

- (8) a. *de svarte t-skjortene*
 [DP [α P [n P...]]]
- b. *alle de fire små nøklene*
 [QP [DP [CardP [α P [n P...]]]]]

Having looked at some ellipsis data, we now turn to speaker-perspective meanings.

⁵Simpson (2017), citing Ruda (2016), makes a similar proposal for Polish and Hungarian.

3 Speaker-perspective meanings

There is now a significant body of work developing formal syntactic accounts of phenomena related to speech acts, indexicality and speaker perspective, going back to Ross's (1970) (e.g. Speas & Tenny 2003; Giorgi 2010; Hill 2014; Sigurðsson 2014; Wiltschko & Heim 2016). While many works focus exclusively on the left periphery of CP, Sigurðsson (2014: 179) connects speaker perspective (and indexicality more generally) to phases and argues that edge linkers, a type of feature that enables narrow syntax to link to context and that includes speaker and hearer features, must be present in *any phase* (although some phases may not have a full set). This proposal, which I adopt here, is consistent with the idea that phases have a parallel structure (Poletto 2006). The edge linkers most relevant for the present discussion are the following:

- (9) a. Λ_A , representing the logophoric agent (speaker).
b. Λ_P , representing the logophoric patient (hearer).

If there is evidence that speaker-perspective meanings can arise from syntactic operations both in the higher and the lower part of the nominal domain, it could be taken to suggest that there are two nominal phases.

3.1 Speaker-perspective meanings in the higher phase

In the higher nominal domain, a clear example of speaker-perspective meanings is provided by so-called psychologically proximal demonstratives (PDDs), most elaborately described by Johannessen (2008) (see also further references cited there).⁶ The PDD itself has the same phonological form as a 3rd person personal pronoun, but when it combines with a (human) noun, it conveys a particular meaning: it signals psychological distance. This sets it apart from regular demonstratives. Often, the PDD is used when the speaker does not know the person under discussion personally, or when they want to signal a negative attitude towards that person (cf. examples 10a,b).⁷ The reference point may also be with the hearer: the speaker uses the PDD to introduce someone that they are familiar with themselves, but that the *hearer* might not know personally (cf. 10c).

⁶Other relevant speaker-perspective phenomena are possibly the emotive adjectival construction (EAC) (Halmøy 2016: 294–297) and certain uses of *sánn* 'such' (Johannessen 2012).

⁷All examples in (10) are from Johannessen (2008); notation and translations slightly adapted.

(10) Norwegian

- a. jeg og Magne vi sykla jo og *han Mikkel* da
 I and Magne we cycled then and he Mikkel then
 ‘Me and Magne and that guy Mikkel, we rode our bikes’ (NoTa, M, 36, Johannessen 2008: 164)
- b. *hun dam-a* hun blei jo helt nerd da
 she woman-DEF she became yes totally nerd then
 ‘That woman, she became a complete nerd, you know.’ (NoTa, M, 18, Johannessen 2008: 166)
- c. du vet *han kjørelærer-en* jeg har?
 you know he driving.teacher-DEF I have
 ‘You know that driving instructor I have?’ (NoTa, F, 18, Johannessen 2008: 164)

Johannessen (2008: 178) shows that the PDD in Norwegian cannot co-occur with the pre-adjectival definite determiner in double definiteness constructions (example 2b); the most obvious interpretation of this is that the PDD is a D element.⁸ Since no higher projections are merged in the examples in (10), DP is a phase and will contain speaker and hearer features (Λ_A and Λ_P).

I propose that the encoding of psychological distance in relation to the speaker or hearer is achieved in a way similar to that of deictic gender control (Sigurðsson 2014: 185–186). An example of deictic gender control is given in (11), where the Icelandic 1st person pronoun triggers agreement in gender (fem. or masc., depending on the speaker’s gender), although the pronoun itself does not exhibit any overt gender distinctions.

- (11) Icelandic (Sigurðsson 2014: 185)
 Ég gerði þetta sjálfur / sjálf / *sjálft
 I did this self.M self.F self.N
 ‘I did this myself.’

Deictic gender control, according to Sigurðsson, involves gendering of the speaker/hearer features. In an example such as (11), the speaker feature at the C-edge will have the value $\Lambda_{A/M}$ if the speaker is male and $\Lambda_{A/F}$ if she is female; the value is passed down to the pronoun *ég* ‘I’ via Agreement with the gendered speaker feature and triggers gender agreement in *sjálfur/sjálf* ‘myself’. In a similar fashion, I propose that the PDDs in (10a) and (10b) get their psychologically distal

⁸Norwegian differs from Swedish and Danish in this respect; in Swedish and Danish the PDD seems to be merged higher (Johannessen 2008: 175–176), probably in DemP.

meaning via a speaker feature at the D-edge with the specification $\Lambda_{A/PSYCH-DIST}$. The PDD in (10c) differs in that the hearer, not the speaker, is the reference point; in this case, the syntactic source of the psychologically distal meaning would be the hearer feature, with the specification $\Lambda_{P/PSYCH-DIST}$.

3.2 Speaker-perspective meanings in the lower phase?

The next question is whether there is any evidence for speaker-perspective meanings arising in the *lower* nominal domain. I would like to draw attention to a particular possessive construction that might instantiate this. The construction involves a proper or common noun and a postposed 1st person possessive pronoun, and it contrasts with the PDD in that it does not convey psychological distance; on the contrary, it yields a very affectionate reading and is only appropriate in intimate contexts.⁹ The construction seems to be primarily used in vocatives, and to my knowledge, it has not been discussed much in the previous literature, although it is very briefly touched upon by Julien (2016).^{10,11}

Because the construction conveys the opposite of psychological distance, namely psychological proximity, I refer to it as the *psychologically proximal possessive (PPP) construction*. Some authentic examples are given in (12):¹²

- (12) a. Natt'a, Anne min. Jeg får vel kalle deg det?
 night-night Anne my I get well call you that
 'Night-night, my dearest Anne. I suppose I can call you that?' (The novel *Størst av alt*, Lillian Wirak Skow, 2010)
- b. Søte Håkon vår du fyller 8 år den 18. juni, hipp hurra for deg!
 sweet Håkon our you fill 8 years the 18 June, hip hooray for you
 'Our sweet Håkon, you turn 8 on 18th June, hip hooray for you!'
 (Birthday greeting in local newspaper, 2013)¹³

⁹This description is based on my intuitions as a native speaker of Norwegian.

¹⁰Julien (2016: 90) writes: "The use of first person possessive pronouns in vocatives would be an interesting topic in itself, especially since it often appears to add a flavour of endearment to the utterance, but I will leave this topic aside here."

¹¹The construction bears some resemblance to the emotive adjectival construction (EAC) (Halmøy 2016: 294ff), which consists of an adjective and a noun with a definite suffix. However, there are important differences. While the EAC is characterised by the presence of an adjective, the construction to be discussed here does not necessarily contain other modifiers than the possessive. The EAC occurs independently of possessive pronouns. Moreover, the EAC does not necessarily convey affection; it can also express negative feelings.

¹²Some speakers report that they do not use the construction with proper names, but they generally seem to be familiar with it.

¹³<https://www.an.no/vis/personalia/greetings/3561747> (accessed 22/11/2017).

- c. Jeg vil for alltid bære med meg minne om deg *Kari min* i
 I will for always carry with me memory about you *Kari my* in
 mitt hjerte
 my heart
 ‘I will carry with me the memory of you in my heart for ever, my
 dearest *Kari*’. (Memorial webpage, 2017)¹⁴
- d. [...] du vil aldri bli glemt, *Godgutt-en min*
 you will never be forgotten good.boy-DEF my
 ‘You will never be forgotten, my good boy’ (Kennel webpage, 2015)¹⁵
- e. [...] Elsker deg masse *venn-en min* :-)
 love you lots friend-DEF my
 ‘I love you a lot, sweetie!’ (Text message)¹⁶

The examples in (12a–c) illustrate the PPP construction with proper names. (12a) is taken from a novel, more precisely from a scene in which a new couple are saying good night to each other. Note that the person who addresses his girlfriend as *Anne min* (lit. ‘Anne my’) explicitly asks for permission to do so; this highlights the intimate style of the construction. Example (12b) is from a birthday greeting to a young boy from his parents; (12c) is taken from a memorial webpage. The examples in (12d,e) illustrate the PPP construction with common nouns; (12d) is a greeting addressed to a dog on a kennel web page; (12e) is from a text message exchange between spouses. Note that when the noun in a PPP construction is modified by an adjective, like in (12b), there is no pre-adjectival definite determiner (i.e. no double definiteness); this is a characteristic of the PPP construction (and vocatives in general).¹⁷

Now, it could be argued that the psychologically proximal meaning of the PPP construction is a pragmatic (i.e. non-syntactic) phenomenon that automatically

¹⁴<https://wang.vareminnesider.no/> (accessed 22/11/2017; full URL omitted because of the sensitive nature of this example).

¹⁵<http://kennelulwazi.com/våre%20hunder/gandhi/index.html> (accessed 22/11/2017).

¹⁶<http://www.p4.no/underholdning/p4-lytternes-beste-kjerlighetsmeldinger/artikkel/336327> (accessed 22/11/2017).

¹⁷Occurrences of what looks like the PPP construction can be found in non-vocative contexts too: [...] *ta godt vare på Håkon vår* ‘take good care of our dearest Håkon’ (<http://www.torgeirogkjendisene.no/10/48/2/bangkok-og-cha-am-thailand-19-29-september/>, accessed 28/11/2017). However, in this paper, I limit my attention to vocatives. Postposed possessive pronouns are regularly used in Norwegian, and in non-vocative contexts a post-nominal 1st person possessive does not necessarily yield an affectionate reading; a statement like *Jeg skal besøke broren min* ‘I am going to visit my brother’ comes across as neutral.

follows when certain nouns (including proper nouns) are combined with a 1st person possessive pronoun. However, although possessives are regularly postposed, Norwegian also allows preposed possessive pronouns, and, in these contexts, the degree of affection and intimacy associated with the PPP construction does not arise. Imagine a situation in which a highly respected senior member of staff in a company is about to retire and a more junior member of staff is giving a speech. The speaker could be expected to say something along the lines of (13a), with a preposed possessive pronoun. The minimally different example in (13b), on the other hand, with a postposed possessive, would come across as inappropriate; the PPP construction conveys too much intimacy in the given context.¹⁸

(13) Norwegian

- a. *Vår* kjære *Anne*, vi ønsker deg alt godt i år-ene som
our dear Anne we wish you all good in year-PL.DEF that
kommer.
come
'Our dear Anne, we wish you all the best in the years to come.'
- b. # *Kjære Anne vår*, vi ønsker deg alt godt i år-ene som
dear Anne our we wish you all good in year-PL.DEF that
kommer.
come
intended meaning: 'Our dear Anne, we wish you all the best in the
years to come.'

With regard to the examples with common nouns in (12d,e), one might perhaps wonder if the proximal, affectionate reading is simply due to the lexical semantics of the cited nouns; the nouns used in the PPP construction often have a "pet-name-like" feel even in other contexts. Note, however, that nouns that are neutral with respect to such inherent properties can also be used, and the proximal reading still arises, as illustrated in (14):

(14) Norwegian

Gratulerer masse med dagen lille *brannmann-en vår*!
congratulations much with day.DEF little fire.man-DEF our
'Happy birthday, our little fire man!' (Birthday greeting in local
newspaper)¹⁹

¹⁸ Again, this description is based on my native-speaker intuitions; I have consulted other native speakers who agree.

¹⁹ <http://www.f-b.no/vis/personalia/greetings/7330499> (accessed 22/11/2017).

Also, note that nouns whose lexical semantics are at odds with notions such as intimacy and affection seem inappropriate in the PPP construction. Cf. the contrast between (15a) and (15b):²⁰

(15) Norwegian

- a. Kom hit, kjærest-en min!
 come here girlfriend/boyfriend-DEF my
 ‘Come here, my love!’
- b. # Gå bort, fiend-en min!
 go away, enemy-DEF my
 intended meaning: ‘Go away, my enemy!’

The data presented in (13–15) seem to suggest that the speaker-perspective meaning of the PPP construction follows from its syntax, not from pragmatics or lexical semantics. I propose the following analysis of the PPP construction.

nP is a phase and thus contains edge linkers. In the PPP construction, the Λ_A feature of nP is equipped with a proximal counterpart of the PSYCH-DIST specification responsible for the PDD construction (see above); I call this $\Lambda_{A/PSYCH-PROX}$. Now, just as in regular possessive constructions, postposing of the possessive pronoun follows from movement of the noun from its NP-internal position past the possessive, which is first-merged in Spec-NP (Julien 2005: 143), and up to the edge of nP . The difference is that in the PPP construction, the possessive pronoun Agrees with $\Lambda_{A/PSYCH-PROX}$; this yields the psychologically proximal reading. A sketch of the relevant pieces of structure is given in (16) (for convenience I mark movement with traces and the Agreement relation between the possessive and the edge linker with an arrow):²¹

(16) Anne min

[nP [$_n \Lambda_{A/PSYCH-PROX}$ Anne_{*i*}] [$NumP$ [Num t_i]] [NP min_{*A/PSYCH-PROX*} [N t_i]]]

↑↑

Admittedly, it is a challenge to show unequivocally that a syntactic operation in nP is responsible for the speaker-perspective meaning in the PPP construction; it does not have overt, phase-internal morphological or syntactic effects (unlike the PDD in the DP phase, which has a special form). A full investigation into this issue must be left for future research; in particular, it is important to

²⁰Example (15b) would sound stylistically marked even with a prenominal possessive pronoun, but not as inappropriate as it does with a postnominal possessive, according to my judgement.

²¹I follow Julien (2005) in analysing the movement of the noun as head movement.

consider possible interactions with the higher phase, for which the concept of speaker/hearer-perspective is currently more established.²² However, I would like to point out some possible indications that the PPP construction indeed gets its speaker-perspective meaning from an edge linker in *nP*.

First, as shown in example (12b), repeated below in (17), the PPP construction is compatible with a prenominal adjective:

- (17) Norwegian
Søte Håkon vår du fyller 8 år den 18. juni, hipp hurra for deg!
sweet Håkon our you fill 8 years the 18 June, hip hooray for you
'Our sweet Håkon, you turn 8 on 18th June, hip hooray for you!'
(Birthday greeting in local newspaper)

Since adjectives are merged in Spec- αP (cf. example 1), this suggests that the noun does not leave *nP*, and that the postnominal possessive pronoun stays in an even lower position, in Spec-NP. This does not in itself exclude the possibility of interaction with edge linkers in the higher phase, but it is certainly compatible with *nP* as the locus of the $\Lambda_{A/PSYCH-PROX}$ feature. Second, in terms of its meaning, the PPP construction bears resemblance to diminutives; cross-linguistically it is common for diminutives to mark affection (see Jurafsky 1996 and references there). Diminutive formation is often thought to take place in a low position in the nominal; Wiltschko (2006) proposes, on independent grounds, that diminutives (e.g. in German) are light nouns in *n*, comparable to *n* in the framework adopted here. To me it seems plausible that the PPP construction and diminutives have structural similarities, so that arguments for diminutive formation in *nP* are also relevant for the PPP construction. I hypothesise that a speaker-perspective *n*-edge-linker is involved in diminutives marking affection, and that the PPP construction arises via syntactic operations involving the same feature. The similarity between the PPP construction and diminutives finds some support in orthography: the PPP construction can occasionally be found with a hyphen linking the noun and the possessive pronoun, as shown in (18):²³

²²In vocatives, the higher phase is probably not DP (Longobardi 1994); the lack of a D-layer in Norwegian vocatives is evidenced by the lack of a pre-adjectival definite determiner with modified nouns (cf. examples 12b and 14). One could perhaps argue that vocatives are small (reduced) nominals, a parallel to small clauses (Pereltsvaig 2006), consisting of the lower phase only. However, recent research argues for a Voc projection that encodes the vocative function (e.g. Hill 2007; 2014; Espinal 2013; Stavrou 2014; Julien 2014; 2016). VocP would be a phase if phases are contextually defined.

²³I have only seen this orthographic pattern in PPP constructions involving proper names.

(18) Norwegian

Gratulerer med dagen, kjære søte fine nydelige *Marianne-min*
 congratulations with day.DEF dear sweet lovely beautiful Marianne-my
 ‘Happy birthday, my dear, sweet, lovely, beautiful Marianne’ (Birthday
 greeting on Facebook, 2017)

The hyphen suggests a tight connection between the noun and the possessive; it could mean that the possessive pronoun in the PPP construction is a diminutive suffix (see also Lødrup 2011 and Svenonius 2017).

Many Norwegian speakers can use the suffixes *-mor* ‘mother’ and *-far* ‘father’ to form what can be described as affectionate diminutive forms of proper names. Interestingly, some of the speakers that I have informally consulted report a reluctance to use the diminutive forms in the PPP construction (I share this intuition); cf. (19):

- (19) a. PPP construction
 Anne min
 Anne my
 b. Diminutive
 Annemor
 Anne.DIM
 c. Diminutive used in PPP construction
 ?? Annemor min
 Anne.DIM my

There are also speakers who accept (19c); clearly, further investigations into the inter-speaker variation and its underlying reasons are needed. However, a possible interpretation of the dubious status of (19c) could be that it is not possible for both the diminutive suffix *-mor* and the possessive pronoun of the PPP to enter into a relationship with the $\Lambda_{A/PSYCH-PROX}$ feature at the *n*-edge at the same time.

4 Conclusion

In this squib, I have discussed the idea that Norwegian nominal phrases, like clauses, can consist of both a high and a low phase. I have shown that Norwegian allows ellipsis both in the higher and lower nominal domain; according to Bošković (2014), ellipsis is an indication of phasehood. Moreover, inspired by Sigurðsson (2014), I have argued that speaker-perspective meanings arise via syntactic operations in the higher nominal domain (psychologically distal demonstratives, Johannessen 2008), and, somewhat more tentatively, also in the lower

part of the nominal (*nP*) (in the psychologically proximal possessive construction). Assuming that speaker-perspective meanings are related to edge-linkers at phase edges (Sigurðsson 2014), this also corroborates a biphasal structure.

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Abbreviations

DEF	definite	N	neuter
DIM	diminutive	PDD	psychologically distal demonstrative
EAC	emotive adjectival construction	PL	plural
F	feminine	PPP	psychologically proximal possessive
M	masculine		

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