

TITLE: *A semantic constraint on compound stress: with special reference to an exceptional stress assignment and alphabet-related words in Sandnes Norwegian*

ABSTRACT: This study aims at providing a revised explanation of compound stress in Sandnes Norwegian, a northwestern dialect, based on the findings about the semantics and prosody of its ‘alphabet-related words’, that is ‘initialisms’ (e.g. *IBM*, including one-letter alphabets), and compounds consisting of them.

So far, I have claimed that the stress pattern of compounds in Sandnes Norwegian is generated by the simple rule: *primary stress is assigned to the first immediate constituent, and secondary to the second immediate constituent, irrespective of i) parts of speech, ii) the number of constituents, and iii) directions of branching (i.e. left or right)*; e.g. i) adj. 'vand,tæt' ‘watertight’, n. 'ris,mark' ‘rice field’, v. 'ut,skriva' ‘print’, adv. 'innen,dørs' ‘indoors’; ii) 3-ELEMENT: 'perle,halsbånd' ‘pearl necklace’, 4-ELEMENT: 'unnergrunnsbanesta,sjon' ‘subway station’; iii) LEFT-BRANCHING: 'rødvins,glass' ‘a glass for red wine’ ([[rød vin] glass]), RIGHT-BRANCHING: 'plastik,vinglass' ‘a wineglass made of plastic’ ([plastik [vin glass]]).

A stress pattern of ‘initialism-compounds’, i.e. compounds consisting of an initialism, will be determined by the same rule mentioned above: 'p-plass' ‘parking lot’, 'cd-drev' ‘CD drive’, *NR'K-ka,nal* ‘a channel of a Norwegian TV company’, 'skarre-r' ‘Gutteral R (like in French)’, 'farge-tv' ‘color TV’, 'kjerne-DNA' ‘nuclear DNA’. However, initialism-compounds may also exceptionally take primary stress only on the second constituent when it is an initialism: *lag-B* ‘team B’, *byant-HB* ‘HB pencil’.

What underlies the occurrence of such an exceptional stress placement? The key to the question is the semantic connection between the first and second elements. An initialism-compound with a regular stress pattern like 'skarre-r, for instance, denotes ‘a specific sort of the letter R’ and, in this sense, *r* is the HEAD and *skarre* is a MODIFIER semantically speaking; this ‘modifier-head’ construction is typical in compounds in Sandnes Norwegian. However, an initialism-compound with an exceptional pattern like *lag-B* involves ‘head-modifier’ semantic construction; the compound denotes a specific team (*lag*) and the second component *B* identifies which team it is. The point is that primary stress always falls on a modifier.

Now I will propose a new, semantically conditioned stress rule, ‘STRESS-MODIFIER RULE’. The rule has more explanatory power than the former compound stress rule because the rule can generate an ‘exceptional’ stress pattern as in *lag-B* as well as a ‘regular’ pattern as in 'ris,mark, 'p-plass and 'skarre-r, where the ‘modifier-head’ construction is involved.

Additionally, STRESS-MODIFIER RULE is more effective because it can also predict exceptional stress patterns found in other types of compounds properly. For example, the rule can explain the occurrence of a ‘double-stress’ in *dvandva*, where every compound element functions as head: 'svart-'kvitt' ‘black-and-white’. Furthermore, the rule can also explain the ‘exceptional’ stress patterns in i) institution’s names, ii) person’s names with a title, and iii) noun plus numeral constructions, where the second element specifies the first element semantically and the primary stress falls only on the second element: *Hotel 'Sverre* (a hotel in Sandnes), *kong 'Harald* (the King of Norway), *billettnummer '3* ‘ticket number 3’.

From what has been argued, it is reasonably concluded that any compound stress pattern in Sandnes Norwegian can be predicted by STRESS-MODIFIER RULE.