Norwegian word forms may be accented (carrying a word-tone) or unaccented, and they may be stressed or unstressed. Both in the F0 (fundamental frequency) contour of Figure 1 and in the F0 contour of Figure 2 (see p. 2), the word *den* is unaccented and even unstressed. There is a semantically interesting prosodic difference, though, between *den* in these two East Norwegian intonation contours. The unstressed *den* in Figure 1 forms an Accent Unit (AU) together with the preceding accented word form *bak*, but the unstressed *den* in Figure 2 is AU-external (extrametrical). While there is a pitch movement from Low to High in the disyllabic, ‘trochaic’ AU *bak-den* in Figure 1 (between the two vertical lines drawn), the corresponding movement from Low to High in Figure 2 is completed within the monosyllabic word *bak* (again indicated by vertical lines). The prosodic realization of the substring *bak den* in Figure 2 causes a hearer to perceive the AU-external form *den* as prosodically more prominent than its AU-internal counterpart in Figure 1, giving the hearer the procedural information that this word is to be processed as a distal demonstrative determiner despite its lack of stress: ‘that black door’. The prosodic handling of *den* in Figure 1, however, causes the hearer to perceive this form as the pre-adjectival part of the definite article (*den* Adj N-a): ‘the black door’.

This paper relates how the distinction between AU-internal and AU-external unstressed determiners affects a group of East Norwegian hearers’ evaluations of the (context-sensitive) degree of naturalness of utterances similar to the ones whose F0 contours are presented in Figure 1 and Figure 2, respectively (p. 2, examples (1) and (2)). Their responses support my analysis of the former as the definite article and the latter as a demonstrative determiner. Native hearers’ reactions to data that include a pre-nominal determiner but no adjective (p. 2, example (3)) and data with an anaphoric modifier like *andre* (‘other’) between the determiner and the head (p. 2, example (4)) also corroborate the analysis proposed. A pre-nominal definite determiner in Norwegian requires the presence of an adjective in the descriptive Noun Phrase. When there is no adjective, a pre-nominal determiner can only be interpreted as a demonstrative determiner. The presence of the modifier *andre* (read as ‘other’, not as ‘second’) forces the hearer to resolve the reference of the definite description by relying exclusively on inference based on discourse-given information. This leads to neutralization of the pragmatic difference between an AU-internal determiner which requires a uniquely identifiable referent but not necessarily a familiar one and an AU-external determiner which does require a familiar referent.

I have also considered the possibility that even a demonstrative pronoun in Norwegian might possibly be realized as an unstressed, AU-external form, but the evidence for the existence of unstressed demonstrative pronouns is not strong. Except for the opposition between an unaccented and an accented pronominal form, there may be no encoded indicator of the distinction between non-demonstrative personal pronouns and demonstrative pronouns.
Examples:

(1) Ta heisen opp til femte etasje. Se til høyre når du går ut av heisen. Kontoret mitt er bak den svarte døra. (The contour of Figure 1 is acceptable; the contour of Figure 2 is not.)
   ‘Take the elevator to the fourth floor. Look to the right when leaving the elevator. My office is behind the black door.’

(2) Ta heisen opp til femte etasje. Når du går ut av heisen og ser til høyre, ser du ei svart dør. Kontoret mitt er bak den svarte døra. (The contours of Figure 1 and Figure 2 are both acceptable.)
   ‘Take the elevator to the fourth floor. When leaving the elevator, look to the right and you’ll see a black door. My office is behind the black door/behind that black door.’

(3) Ta heisen opp til femte etasje. Når du går ut av heisen og ser til høyre, ser du ei svart dør. Kontoret mitt er bak den døra. (Due to the absence of an adjective a contour with an AU-internal den is not acceptable in any context; an AU-external den is acceptable.)
   ‘Take the elevator to the fourth floor. When leaving the elevator, look to the right and you’ll see a black door. My office is behind that door/behind the door.’

(4) Hvor er de andre deltakerne? (The AU-internal and the AU-external de are equally good.)
   ‘Where are the other participants?’ (AU-internal de); ‘Where are those other participants?’ (AU-external de).

Reference