

5. CONTEMPORARY STREET NAMES IN THE NETHERLANDS

In the previous chapter it has been explored how contemporary street names come about within the municipal officialdom. In the current chapter the actual street names will be looked upon. This means, that street names will be studied as names, being linguistic elements with a certain function, a certain meaning, certain formal linguistic properties and a certain place within the language system.

The most important aspect that will be dealt with in this chapter, is the meaning of contemporary street names in our language system. For that reason, ideas on the meaning of names in general will be outlined first.

- What kind of meaning do names have?
- What is the relationship between proper names and common nouns?

The ideas on the meaning of names will be applied to street names as well. This kind of meaning might be influenced by the function street names have in society and by the relationship of street names with other proper names and with common nouns. Therefore, also street names will be compared with common nouns.

- What kind of function do street names have in society
- What kind of meaning do street names have?
- Do street names have any linguistic meaning?
- What is the relationship between street names and common nouns?

From a morphological point of view form and meaning are closely related. For that reason, the formal linguistic properties of contemporary Dutch street names will be looked upon. Subsequently, an analysis of the morphological characteristics of the street names given in the sample municipalities in the period 1997-2003 will be made first. Secondly, an analysis of the possible meanings of these particular street names will be given referring to the theoretical points of view concerning names mentioned in the first sections. From a lexical semantic perspective street names will be regarded as toponymic compounds of which particularly the second elements will be analysed. Such a perspective is helpful to gain insight in the relationship between the lexical form and the possible lexical meaning of street names.

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5.2 Street names and meaning

5.2.1 Function

In the first subsection (4.1) of the previous chapter we have seen that street names have not always been given by municipal officials. There is a big difference between the way early medieval street names came into existence and how contemporary street names are chosen nowadays. In the early days settlements already existed when street names came into use. Most contemporary street names, on the other hand, are chosen before a particular settlement has even been built (Algeo 1978). The differences in the way streets have been named during early eras in comparison to the naming of contemporary streets show the different functions street names have in society; names that arose accidentally during oral speech and names that have been on the agenda of an official meeting perform different functions.

Street names as land marks

Street names are used to identify places. A name makes it possible to locate a certain place. We use street names to tell people where we are going and we use street names to ask passers-by for directions. In more advanced situations we are using street names in our navigation systems.

Early medieval street names came accidentally into existence when this locating function was performed explicitly. The first street names developed from a description of a place that was used to direct people to a certain place, for example *Het huis achter de kerk* 'the residence at the back of the church' (Rentenaar 1992). These directions included the characteristic landmarks that could be seen in the surroundings of this place: a significant building like a church, a windmill, a school, a bridge or a gate, or a marked element in the landscape like a hill, a river or a field. The next time someone mentioned the way to this particular place the same description was used and the more the description was used the more elements of the description disappeared. The remaining ellipsis came into use as a street name: *Achter de kerk* 'at the back of the church', *Bij de watertoren* 'near the water tower', *Nieuwe straat* 'new street', for example, or *Kerkstraat* 'church street', *Achterstraat* 'back street', *Torenstraat* 'tower street', *Nieuwstraat* 'new street', *Langegracht* 'long canal', *Veemarkt* 'cattle market'; an object was located and the resulting street name still forms a locating function or an orientation function, because the street names that developed from the early descriptions function as landmarks (Buitenhuis 1971). Van Loon explains this development of using a single word in stead of a syntactic phrase from the psychological idea of gestalt perception which is concerned with the relationship between the parts and the whole of concepts. The unity of perception is the idea that the parts of a concept together share a rigid mutual complicity. All concepts which can be perceived or created as gestalts, will preferably be referred to with one single word (Van Loon 1981). It is clear that at the time the name was determined one could find the church in the *Kerkstraat* or the *Kerkstraat* near the church, and the *Langegracht* must have been a place near a long canal. Of course, the canal that is mentioned in the *Langegracht* might have been filled in and the church that was referred to in *Kerkstraat* might have disappeared through the years and more churches in a certain area makes the locating function of such a street name less transparent, but the motive for naming these particular streets was to locate them.

Street names as indicators

Since 1851 naming streets is an official task of the municipal government. The names of streets do not unintentionally develop in everyday speech on the basis of characteristic features of the streets at issue anymore. On the contrary, street names are on the agenda of local officials who discuss them thoroughly and who often have to decide upon them long before a particular street has been built. Of course, some of the street names that are discussed and given by local officials still include characteristic features within the surroundings of a particular street, for example, in the newly built district of *IJburg* in Amsterdam situated in the *IJmeer* 'IJ lake', *IJburglaan* 'IJburg lane' and *Pampuslaan* 'Pampus lane' (Pampus is an island in the IJmeer). Those objects in the public space that are defined within the Municipal Act of 1851 to be officially named, like street names, evidently receive names intentionally, while objects in the public space that officially do not need names, like bridges or canal tour boat moorings in Amsterdam, still receive names in everyday speech. Even in Amsterdam where the bridges are on the agenda of the street naming committee as well, the unofficial names seem to be preferred by the people of Amsterdam above the official names. The bridge leading from the Amsterdam city ring road to the district of *IJburg*, for example, has been named *Enneüs Heermabrug*, after a Dutch politician, but is called the *Beha-brug* 'bra brigde' by the inhabitants because it looks like a bra. Most contemporary street names are systematically given in groups to streets in suburbs that are still under construction when the name giving takes place. The names that have been chosen for the streets in these newly built districts mostly belong to all kinds of semantic categories, for example in the municipality of Wageningen, Dutch authors (*Willem Elsschotstraat*, *Edgar du Perronstraat*, *Jan Slauerhoffstraat*), Dutch comedians (*Corry Vonkstraat*, *Wim Kanstraat*, *Wim Sonneveldstraat*) and children's book characters (*Laantje van Dik Trom* 'little lane of Dik Trom', *Pietje Bellpad* 'Pietje Bell path', *Laantje van de Veertien Uilen* 'little lane of the fourteen owls'; characters from books by C.Joh. Kieviet, Chris van Abkoude and Annie M.G. Schmidt respectively). These street names cannot be regarded as (an ellipsis of) a description of a location anymore. Contemporary street names are labels which clearly came about through other naming motives than medieval street names. The semantic categories and the individual street names that belong to these categories function as indicators for directions (Buitenhuis 1971). When one has to go to the *Mozartstraat*, there is a chance that one is going to an area where the street names are chosen from the semantic category of composers. And if your destination is one of the colourful streets in *Rokkeveen*, a new quarter of the municipality of Zoetermeer, your indicators for direction are the street names that are named within the range of a colour palette: *Ivoorwit* 'ivory white', *Hagelwit* 'hailstone white', *Kanariegeel* 'canary yellow', *Napelsgeel* 'Naples yellow', *Bladgroen* 'leaves green', *Flessegroen* 'bottle green' etc. Apart from this, incidentally also individual street names have to be given and in such a case a *Mozartstraat* or a *Regenboogsingel* 'rainbow boulevard' might have been chosen because of completely different naming motives.

Street names as identity markers

Viljamaa-Laakso considers the situation in Scandinavia and looks upon the difference in function between medieval and contemporary street names as a difference between rural and urban areas: in rural areas, naming traditions have become part of the local identity, because the local dialect and local cultural elements that are important for a certain settlement have become sources for naming motives. In urban regions, on the

other hand, a particular culture or identity has not been created at the time of name giving, because the naming of streets precedes the constructions of the streets in question (Dalberg, Vibeke, Bent Jørgensen (eds.) 1997). What she means is that the semantic categories that are chosen to name contemporary streets in new areas in urban regions hardly reflect an existing local identity. Yet, also Viljamaa-Laakso admits that urban names have a particular function, for example the aforementioned indication function. On the other hand, she does not mention the function of those urban street names that have been chosen because of specific local naming motives. That is, some semantic categories are being used to provide street names intentionally with a function that street names have for people besides the locating and the indicating functions, which is the function of identity marker. As we have seen in section 4.3.3, Together with property developers and landscape architects municipal naming officials, for example, try to create new housing estates with a particular identity, for instance that of a 'green' district, which will attract a certain target group of people who are willing to buy a house in such a district. Besides building a specific type of houses and buildings and creating a district's planting and artificial streamlets, they also invent, for example, 'green' street names. In those projects street names are not named individually; they are part of the context of a certain street name theme that has to mirror the chosen identity of a new estate.

Creating such a new identity by giving certain street names that symbolize this new identity has, for example, been the naming motive in the district *Meerhoven* in the municipality of Eindhoven. In this district different 'green' areas have been created: *Zandrijk*, *Bosrijk*, *Grasrijk*, *Waterrijk* ('sand country', 'wood country', 'grass country', 'water country'; an interesting semantic aspect of these names is the meaning of the second part *rijk*, which means 'country' or 'state' when it is considered a substantive, and 'wealthy' or 'well provided with' when it is regarded an adjective. In Dutch this adjective is common to be used as the second part of compounds in which the first part mentions the characteristics with which something is well provided, 'sand', 'wood', 'grass' and 'water' in the aforementioned examples). At the website of the municipality of Eindhoven one of these areas is described as a residential area in which there is much attention for green, open spaces and the use of colours (www.eindhoven.nl/meerhoven/). The streets have been given the following names: *Grasplant* 'grass plant', *Grasvogel* 'grass bird', *Grassavanne* 'grass savannah', *Grasboom* 'grass tree', *Grasdreef* 'grass avenue' etc. Another example of this type of street naming is a new residential estate on the outskirts of the municipality of Leeuwarden that is considered to receive a rural and comforting impression. The streets are named after original country estates and waters in the surroundings. The historical name of this district, *Zuiderburen*, refers to a former hamlet in this area and the streets are named after less known Frisian rivers and lakes, for example: *De Fluessen*, *De Boorne*, *De Linde*, *De Tjonger*, *De Lauwers*, *De Lits*, *Het Var*, *Ûlemar*, *Guozzemar*, *Eeltsjemar*, *Hissemar*. A completely different identity has been created in an industrial estate in the northern part of Amsterdam, officially named in 2001. There, naming officials drew from the context of the latest technologies to give the streets of a new industrial estate their names. Therefore, we know the *Hardwareweg* 'hardware road', the *Disketteweg* 'floppy disk road' and the *Toetsenbordweg* 'keyboard road', street names in which the first element refers to particular computer tools.

Street names as memorabilia

Through the years the function of street names might have changed, all street names can be considered as memorabilia. As we have seen in section 1.2.5 “street names, particularly the historical one, are modest historical monuments (Moll 1953, p. 45, translated). But also contemporary street names are a means to “communicate cultural memories” (Kohlheim 2006, p.57, translated). And not only the names, also the street naming system tells us something about the characteristics of a city in a certain period of time (Tarpley 1996, Algeo 1978)).

When one examines the map of a city or a municipality, one can distinguish the street names with different functions; the way a settlement has grown through the years tells you something about those functions. Palonen (2002) considers street names part of a collection or an exhibition which can be experienced as a national or local history. She reads the complete collection of street names and statues in a village as a city-text. One might compare the street name map of each settlement with a local museum and the different districts of such a settlement with different rooms referring to different street naming periods. Street names within the centre of a particular city or village are the historical department of the museum; they give insight into the way a village has developed and into which parts of a settlement were important in the early days. In the Netherlands, almost every village has, for example, his own *Dorpstraat* ‘village street’, *Kerkstraat* ‘church street’ and *Schoolstraat* ‘school street’. What a collection of historical street names also might exhibit is the way the area of a particular village was named before the settlement arose: former field names, water names and names of old houses and farms have often been renamed in street names, for example in the Frisian village Menaldum where the streets in a relatively new neighbourhood have been named after old farms: *Beckrypleane*, *Fleringastrjitte*, *Goyckemastrjitte*, *Lyaersmastrjitte*, *Romptastrjitte*. The exhibition of names in the centre of several urban municipalities can be read as a map of a fortress or a trading town (*Bolwerk* ‘bulwerk’, *Kanonsteeg* ‘artillery alley’, *Oude Vest* ‘old fortress’, *Vestwal* ‘fortress wall’; *Koornmarkt* ‘grain market’, *Oude Turfmarkt* ‘old peat market’, *Kaasmarkt* ‘cheese market’, *Varkensmarkt* ‘pigs market’, *Vismarkt* ‘fish market’). The areas surrounding the city centre represent the classic department of the museum. There, one will find streets named after well known local inhabitants like mayors, professors and bishops, and national famous persons like authors, painters, politicians and seamen, but also other traditional categories like flowers, plants, trees and birds. The modern wing of the museum of street names can be found in the outer quarters of a settlement. In this department not only groups of people in unusual categories have been honoured with a street name, for example in the municipality of Leiden (famous female inhabitants of Leiden, female founders of the almshouses in Leiden, female authors (of children’s books), female resistant fighters and feminists) also nautical terms and utensils can be found in these street names, like in the municipality of Amersfoort (*Het Vooronder* ‘the forecastle’, *Het Kompas* ‘the compass’, *Het Ruim* ‘the hold’, *De Kajuit* ‘the cabin’, *De Boeg* ‘the bow’, *Reling* ‘rail’, *Bakboord* ‘port’, *Stuurboord* ‘starboard’) and Alkmaar (*Gaffelstraat* ‘pitchfork street’, *Disselstraat* ‘adze street’, *Passerstraat* ‘compass street’, *Harpoenstraat* ‘harpoon street’, *Schoffelstraat* ‘hoe street’, *Waterpasstraat* ‘level street’, *Houweelstraat* ‘pickaxe street’, *Vijzelstraat* ‘mortar street’). Some of these names are extremely unusual, because they do not even look like street names, as one can see in *Rokkeveen*, a quarter of the municipality of Zoetermeer: *Algengroen* ‘algae green’, *Ambergeel* ‘amber yellow’, *Bermudablauw* ‘Bermuda blue’, *Cadmiumgeel* ‘cadmium yellow’, *Flessegroen* ‘bottle green’, *Hemelsblauw* ‘heavenly blue’, *Kanariegeel*

‘canary yellow’, *Mokkabruin* ‘mocha brown’, *Spierwit* ‘white as a sheet’, *Zaansgroen* ‘green like the painted wooden houses in the Zaanse Schans, a touristic village on the banks of the river Zaan with tradesmen’s workshops, historic windmills and hump-backed bridges’.

This idea of street names representing a settlements’ history and development and reflecting events or experiences worthy of remembrance, thereby functioning as the memorabilia of a place, and the fact that many street names have changed through the years, as we have seen in section 1.2.5, is reason for a broader perspective on the function of street names. The ‘city text’ can also be seen as the memory of the city: those people will be remembered that are actually honoured within a street name and those former field and farm names will be kept in mind by new generations that have been renamed in street names. The people, fields and farms that have not been renamed, will be forgotten. Therefore, the city text can be seen as a historical canon of a particular settlement (Palonen 2002). Not only the street names of a certain place themselves are historical remains, the development of the street naming process as we have seen in section 4.1, and the development of the city text are witnesses of history as well. The latter perspective cannot be neglected by people who are nowadays responsible for naming streets in the Netherlands. One of the guidelines for naming streets tells them to prevent unnecessary street name changes, not only for practical reasons – changing a street name is administratively very expensive – but also for historical reasons: changing a street’s name is rewriting history (Sommer, 1991).

In practice, this perspective on street names has opponents and advocates, which roughly can be seen as a difference in perspective between people who are scientifically involved with street names and people who are working with street names within a different profession, for example, naming officials and language planners, or who are concerned with street names because of their historical interests, for example, members of associations of local history and lore or authors of local historical books. Yet, also among scientists the opinion that street names should be historically interesting is very common. Wahlberg, who analyses street names as regards their value as historical sources and their evidence of the influence of authorities, finds spontaneously-created medieval street names valuable historical sources, whereas he defines semantically grouped contemporary street names as stereotyped and historically uninteresting, without much local associations, as we have seen in section 1.2.5 (Wahlberg 1998, p. 376-377). Also Algeo regards historical street names “an integral part of history and life of the community (Algeo 1978, p. 95).” During international scientific onomastic congresses also name planners present their work on names and name giving. Most of the time this means that they are not presenting a report of onomastic research projects, but more presumably, a list of regulations for naming urban streets: To care for the continued existence of local culture, names should have their origin in the culture, the dialect and the history; names of new districts should be based on old local names to stand for the local culture, language and dialect; street names should be functional and systematic, but they should also embody local connotations to give new residents some historical background; during name planning old place names are being researched and original residents are being interviewed etc. (Viljamaa-Laakso 1998). Name planners, for example from Finland, realize that the urban name stock has functional meaning, but they are more concerned with culture and identity. “Therefore, we should fight against prejudices, name giving trends and models from English and Mediterranean languages (...) When the world becomes smaller, the importance of the local vicinity grows. It is good to live in a community with an individual nature. Factors that contribute to that

are nature, history, architecture, a way of live and local names” (Dalberg, Vibeke, Bent Jørgensen (eds.) 1997, p. 159-170, translated).

Palonen shows that all street names are historically interesting. The city text which represents different periods of remembrance is proof that “no point of time can be present and experienced by itself, but is always tied to the existence of other times.” Street names are expressions of time and even though opinions differ and some people prefer historical street names, from the perspective that history is something of all times, eternal and continuous, trends in naming streets show different naming eras (Palonen 2002). The advocates of historical street names seem to neglect this latter view and consider contemporary street names “another reflection of our time”, “an artificial appliqué, a mere decoration of doubtful taste” (Wahlberg 1998, p. 376-377; Algeo 1978, p. 95), which seems to be an esthetical approach versus the historical approach of Palonen.

Summary

In section 4.3.3 on newly built areas, the development of the way streets names have been given through the years has been distinguished by means of five stages. Each of these stages is characterized by a street naming authority, a type of naming from this authority’s perspective and a most significant naming motive that is used by this naming authority in a particular period of time (table 12). As we have seen in this section, the differences in the way streets have been named during early eras in comparison to the naming of contemporary streets also show the different functions street names have in society; names that arose accidentally during oral speech and names that have been on the agenda of an official meeting perform different functions. These function can be seen as one of the characteristics of the stages of the development of naming streets as well (table 21).

	street naming authority	type of naming	naming motive	Function of street names
I	inhabitants	spontaneous	reference	landmark
II	municipality	official	national important persons	indicator
III	naming committee	cultural	traditional semantic categories	indicator
IV	naming committee	incidental	honourable mention	memorabilia
V	property developers	prestigious	less obvious and locally important categories	identity marker / memorabilia

Table 21. Five stages in the development of naming streets, characterized by the street naming authority, the type of naming, the most significant naming motive and the function of street names (Stage I occurred before 1800, stage II between approximately 1800 and 1900, stage III between approximately 1900 and 2000 and the stages IV and V past 2000.)

The differences in the way streets have been named during early eras in comparison to the naming of contemporary streets not only show the different functions street names have in society. The development of the way streets have been named through the years has also influenced the linguistic features of street names and in particular the

semantic features. The changes of these semantic features reflect the different functions of street names through the years. As has been shown in section 5.1 the main characteristic of names in general is their referring function. Therefore, the semantic changes of street names should be explained on the basis of a scale of referentiality.

5.2.2 Referentiality

Opposite to common nouns, names do not categorize lexically. If street names would not have lexical meaning they would be completely arbitrary. Yet, “the fact that a proprial compound summons a different idea than the original appellative does not mean that the name becomes opaque” (Van Loon 1981, p. 156, translated). If one looks at historical street names like *Kerkstraat* ‘church street’, *Beukenlaan* ‘beech lane’ and *Havenkade* ‘harbour quai’ it is clear that one cannot speak of a completely arbitrary relationship between the name and a particular street. Both the first and the second part of these street names have some kind of referential meaning. The second part of the name, the generic, has deictic referential meaning in relationship to the kind of street; a street, a lane, a quai. The first part of the name has referential meaning in relationship to the object it refers to. Historical street names thus show a deictic aspect within this relationship; at the time the name was determined one could find the church in the *Kerkstraat* or the *Kerkstraat* near the church, the *Beukenlaan* was most probably a lane with beeches on both sides, whereas the *Havenkade* was actually the quai of a particular harbour.

As we have seen in the previous section, most of these early street names came into existence because people used descriptions to direct people to certain places, for example *Het huis achter de kerk* ‘the residence at the back of the church’. As these descriptions were used more often parts of their elements disappeared. The remaining ellipsis came into use as a street name, for example *Achter de kerk* ‘at the back of the church’, *Achterstraat* ‘backstreet’ or *Kerkstraat* ‘church street’. Street names of this kind function as landmarks and altogether they lead to a frame of reference within the centre of a village or a city, because of the referential meaning of the first part of the name in relationship to the object to which it refers. Within this category of street names functioning as landmarks different subcategories can be distinguished. Not every street name within this category has the same level of accurateness concerning the landmark to which it refers. The first subcategory that can be distinguished includes those street names that refer to a simplex location with a clear landmark, for example, the harbour, the chapel, the church or the monastery in street names like *Havenstraat*, *Kapelstraat*, *Kerkstraat* or *Kloosterweg*, a vague landmark, for example, in street names like *Achterstraat* ‘back street’, *Voorstraat* ‘street in front’, *Dorpstraat* ‘village street’ or *Juffrouw Idastraat* ‘miss Ida street’ (miss Ida was one of the inhabitants of this street at the time this name was given) or with the characteristics of a certain street, like in *Kromstraat* ‘curved street’, *Breestraat* ‘wide street’, ‘*Hoogstraat* ‘high street’, *Nieuwmarkt* ‘new market’ and *Tuinaardsteeg* ‘garden mould alley’. Particularly in streets like *Achterstraat* and *Voorstraat* the remaining ellipsis is rather vague, while in *Dorpstraat* the first element covers a location that is rather large and in *Juffrouw Idastraat* the exact relation to the object of reference is not clear. In this subcategory two of the three historical naming motives mentioned in section 4.1 can be recognised: the characteristics of a street and some kind of relation between the street and something or someone (Rentenaar 1992). The second subcategory consists of those street names that refer to a complex location. The landmarks in those names give an indication of the location that is meant, for example

in the following street names: *Achter de Dom* 'behind the Dom', *Achter het vleeshuis* 'behind the meat house', *Bij de Watertoren* 'near the water tower', *Op de thermen* 'on the thermae', *Binnen de Veste* 'within the fortress', *Om e Tsjerke* 'around the church', *Over 't Spoor* 'on the other side of the railway'. In these street names the original description of a certain location still can be seen. The last subcategory includes those street names that refer to the function a street had in daily life, like a market place or a crafts place (Rentenaar 1992). The landmark that is named within these street names is only an indirect reference to a location, for example, *Aardappelmarkt* 'potato market', *Veemarkt* 'cattle market', *Ezelmarkt* 'donkey market', *Looiersgracht* 'tanners canal'.

Summary – subcategories of street names functioning as landmarks

Street names that refer to:

- a simplex location
 - clear landmark *Havenstraat* 'harbour street', *Kapelstraat* 'chapel street', *Kerkstraat* 'church street', *Kloosterweg* 'monastery road', *Molenstraat* 'mill street', *Raadhuisstraat* 'town hall street', *Schoolstraat* 'school street', *Stationsstraat* 'station street', *Torenlaan* 'tower avenue'
 - vague landmark *Achterstraat* 'back street', *Voorstraat* 'street in front', *Dorpstraat* 'village street', *Juffrouw Idastraat* 'miss Ida street'
 - characteristics *Kromstraat* 'curved street', *Breestraat* 'wide street', *Hoogstraat* 'high street', *Nieuwmarkt* 'new market', *Tuinaardsteeg* 'garden mould alley'
- a complex location: *Achter de Dom* 'behind the Dom', *Achter het vleeshuis* 'behind the meat house', *Bij de Watertoren* 'near the water tower', *Op de thermen* 'on the thermae'
- an indirect location: *Aardappelmarkt* 'potato market', *Veemarkt* 'cattle market', *Ezelmarkt* 'donkey market', *Looiersgracht* 'tanners canal'

There are also street names in which this deictic aspect of referentiality is less visible than in the examples above. Particularly, contemporary street names show this indirect deictic aspect of referentiality when they can be regarded as a description of a location indirectly. For example, street names like *Rozenstraat* 'rose street', *Dahliastraat* 'dahlia street' and *Tulpenstraat* 'tulip street' in an area where used to be a flower auction, the street names named after composers and musicians in the surrounding of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw (*Johannes Verhulststraat*, *Valeriusstraat*, *Jacob Obrechtstraat*) or those streets named after characters from the old Greek myths and legends in the neighbourhood of the Amsterdam Olympic stadium (*Afroditekade*, *Eosstraat*, *Rheastraat*, *Hestiasstraat*, *Amazonenstraat*, *Argonautenstraat*). If in these example the flower auction, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw and the Amsterdam Olympic stadium have been the motives to name these streets, it is possible to indicate a deictic aspect within the relationship between the first name of the street name and the object it refers to. Then, these names can be regarded as indirect references as well. People who are not aware of these particular

street naming motives will consider these group of street names equal to a group of street names which show a third kind of referentiality: categorical referentiality. Those street names that have been given in semantic groups, functioning as indicators, show a categorical aspect within the relationship between the first part of the street names and the streets to which they refer. This referential meaning can be seen at the level of a semantic category. This semantic category legitimates the existence of the individual street names within a neighbourhood, for example, in a neighbourhood in Almere where the streets have been named after comic book heroes (*Lambikstraat*, *Suskeplantsoen*, *Wiskestraat*, *Sidoniastraat*, *Jeromstraat*). Consequently, there is less agreement between the name and the named object: at first sight there is no relationship between the *Mozartstraat* (Mozart street) or the *Bachstraat* (Bach street) and Mozart or Bach apart from their shared categorical referentiality. Or, like Algeo (1978) states, “the appropriateness of the new names is linguistic, relating a name to other names around it; the appropriateness of the old names is referential, relating a name to the thing it designates or to the history of the community”. Ainiola (1998) defines a toponym as “an identifying expression which has been formed under the rules which govern name formation in a language, intended as a toponym by the speaker and understood as one by the listener (p. 47)”; the main function is to identify a place, but descriptiveness is possible and can be a major function of a name as well.

In the previous section we have seen the opinion of the advocates of historical street names. Their opinion can now be explained from the view point of referentiality. Those people who find historical street names historically more interesting than contemporary street names prefer street names with a deictic referential relationship over street names with only categorical referential meaning.

5.2.3 Semantic features of street names

To summarize, all semantic features mentioned in this section, concerning the function and the referential meaning of street names will be listed here. First of all, to list the types of street names with one semantic feature, a distinction can be made between street names with or without a deictic aspect of referentiality, street names with or without a categorical aspect of referentiality and street names with or without the function of identity marker. An example of a street name with a deictic aspect of referentiality is *Kerkstraat* ‘church street’. Street names with a mere categorical aspect are those street names that have only been chosen within a semantic category, without any reference to the surroundings of a street, for example, *Lambikstraat* ‘Lambik street’ within the category of comic book heroes or *Rozenstraat* ‘rose street’ within the category of flowers. Those street names that have a deictic aspect of referentiality can also be regarded as landmarks whereas categorical references are typical for street names that function as indicators. An example of a street name which does not refer to a specific landmark and which does not have a categorical referentiality, but refers to a local event and thus merely functions as an identity marker is *Drie Octoberstraat* ‘third of October street’ (on the third of October the city of Leiden traditionally celebrates its liberation from the Spaniards in 1574). Secondly, the types of street names with two semantic features will be given. Even though the naming motive of a street name like *Kerkstraat* has not been categorical, a categorical aspect of referentiality can be distinguished as well within this type of street name, since the existence of this street name is an indication for the existence of the category of historical street names that refers to certain landmarks (*Torenstreet* ‘tower street’, *Schoolstraat* ‘school street’, *Molenstraat* ‘mill street’ etc.). Of course, this categorical aspect of referentiality does not exist when this kind of street name is the only one in

its surrounding. When the landmark to which a street name refers is like a symbol for a municipality, one can also distinguish the semantic feature of (local) identity marker within such a street name, for example *Domplein* ‘Dom square’ in the city centre of the municipality of Utrecht. There are also street names without a deictic and with a categorical aspect of referentiality that serve as identity markers, for example, *Grasplant* in the municipality of Eindhoven which is one of the street names in the district *Grasrijk* (as we have seen in section 5.2.1). The kind of identity this street name marks is not a local kind of identity, but a new identity for a newly built neighbourhood. Thirdly, those types of street names with three semantic features will be listed. We can, for example, distinguish street names with deictic and categorical aspects of referentiality, for example, *Rozenstraat* in a neighbourhood with streets named after flowers because of the reference to a former flower auction. If this auction has been a local symbol for a municipality, the street name also functions as an identity marker. A slightly different example of this type of street name is one of the street names that function as markers for a new identity for a newly built neighbourhood and have a deictic aspect of referentiality because of a relationship with still existing landmarks, for example, *De Fluessen* in a new residential estate on the outskirts of the municipality of Leeuwarden that is considered to receive a rural and comforting impression. Finally, there are street names that have a restricted deictic aspect of referentiality, for example, *Varkensmarkt* ‘pigs market’. Not only street names like *Kerkstraat* also street names like *Varkensmarkt* can show a categorical aspect of reference when several kinds of street names with a restricted deictic aspect occur in the same neighbourhood, for example *Vismarkt* ‘fish market’ and *Aardappelmarkt* ‘potato market’. This category of street names does not refer to a landmark, but to the historical function of a street in daily life at the time this particular street name came into existence.

Summary - Semantic features

- +/- deictic referentiality
- +/- categorical referentiality
- +/- identity marker
- ± restricted deictic referentiality

Distribution of semantic features

deictic referentiality <i>landmark</i>	categorical referentiality <i>indicator</i>	identity marker	type of street name
+	-	-	<i>Kerkstraat</i> (kind)
-	+	-	<i>Lambikstraat</i>
-	-	+	<i>Drie Octoberstraat</i>
+	+	-	<i>Kerkstraat</i> (type)
+	-	+	<i>Domplein</i>
-	+	+	<i>Grasplant</i>
+	+	+	<i>Rozenstraat</i> (motive)
+	+	+	<i>De Fluessen</i>
±	+/-	-	<i>Varkensmarkt</i>

5.3 The form of street names

Street names in the Netherlands are commonly composed as compounds. They consist of a specifier and a generic (*Kerkstraat* 'kerk + straat', 'Church street'; *Langegracht* 'lange + gracht', 'Long canal'; *Tomatenstraat* 'tomaten + straat', 'Tomatoes street'). The generic, which is the second part of the street name, consists of a noun that mentions the kind of street (*straat* 'street', *steeg* 'alley', *gracht* 'canal', *plein* 'square', *boulevard* 'idem', *passage* 'idem', *promenade* 'idem' etc.). The specifier, which is the first part of the street name, can consist of different word types and morphological structures. In the first place it can comprise a proper name that consists of several parts, for example a person's full name (*Jacob van Mearlantstraat*, *Vincent van Goghstraat*) or the name of an estate (*Hof ter Eikenlaan*). The specifier can also consist of a phrase (*Lunterse Bosweg*) or an adjective specifying the generic (*Bredaseweg*, *Heerenveenseweg*). Besides, an adjective can precede a specifier specifying the whole street name (*Korte Nieuwstraat*, *Nieuwe Bosweg*). Finally, the specifier can be written as one word with the generic, but the street name can also contain a space (*Nieuwe Dijk*, *Nieuwedijk*, *Greate Buorren*, *Greatebuorren*). Street names can also consist of only one part, a specifier without a generic (*Noord*, *Linge*, *Ondiep*) or a generic without a specifier (*Passage*, *Promenade*). In some cases the single specifier consist of a complete noun phrase (*De Pesse*, *Onder de toren*, *Onder de Boompjes*).

The development of the form of street names reflects the changes in the function of street names through the years and can be seen along a line that starts with a description and ends in a proper name. Phrases, compounds and toponymic compounds are stations along that line.

Phrases and compounds

Motives for naming streets influence the function of the street name. And the function of a street name influences the form of a street name. The form of street names that function as landmarks is defined by their locating function. Historical street names changed from complete phrases into ellipses. When they originated there was a strong agreement between the form and the meaning of the descriptions of a certain location that are now in elliptic form used as street names. Moreover, these historical street names can formally be looked upon as phrases and compounds in stead of proper nouns.

Toponymic compounds

Also the form of street names that function as indicators is defined by this indicating function. Contemporary street names can formally be looked upon as toponymic compounds.