

Notes made after final corpus analysis meeting, summer 2006

In discussing the findings of this corpus search, Deirdre suggested the following:

Let's take for instance the proper name 'Downing street'. 'Downing street' is used in a strong locative sense in utterances such as:

'He wrote to Downing street' [literally true]
'The neighbours at Downing street' [literally true]

However, the examples found indicate some gradation from such purely locative uses to cases where the locative sense disappears completely:

Type 1

Purely locative

'... the gate across Downing street...'

Type 2

Locative with strong (political) implications

'...talks with Margaret Thatcher in Downing street'
'...discord with sir Alan in Downing street'

Here we assume that the fact that Downing street is the place where the prime minister lives becomes very important and brings about strong additional effects.

Type 3

The locative sense becomes very weak and the (political) implications prevail

'Kinnock would be in Downing street with a raised...'
'A Downing street spokesman'

Type 4

The locative sense disappears totally

e.g. in utterances where Downing street refers to the prime minister

Only Type 4 is metonymic. It seems therefore that there is a *threshold* somewhere between Type 3 and 4. This threshold distinguishes between a case in which a proper name maintains its locational sense but at the same time carries very strong (if not mainly) implications and a case in which a proper name loses its locational sense completely.

We must also note here that in many cases we seem to have more than pragmatic processes related to the locational sense taking place simultaneously; more specifically, some form of *Locational Narrowing* also seems to be taking place in conjunction with the gradation briefly described above. For instance we could say that the interpretation of the utterance:

a) The prime minister slept at Downing street

possibly goes through two at least 'stages' of locational narrowing:

first 'Downing street' could be said to pick out the narrower concept *10 Downing street*
second *10 Downing street* in the context of the above utterance could also be said to pick out a narrower concept along the lines of *bedroom of 10 Downing street*

Accordingly:

b) The prime minister came out of number 10