This is very similar to the way an inanimate subject of *yào* in Chinese
triggers a change in interpretation of *yào* from 'want' to 'be about to'. And
this suggests that what is operating here is not only the first person
privilege effect, but a hierarchy of what has elsewhere been termed
'animacy'. An alternative interpretation that does not rely on a complex
notion like 'animate' is suggested below.

Such a hierarchy seems to operate along the same lines as animacy
phenomena observed in other areas of linguistic typology, such as case
marking, noun and verb agreement. In the case of desiderative
expressions, both grammatical rules and interpretation rules appear
sensitive to the same basic hierarchy:

human > nonhuman animate > inanimate

It should be noted that these categories are subject to some cultural
variation; for example in languages where wanting can be attributed to
higher animals, the division between higher and lower animals is culture-
specific. What is invariable is that if a particular desiderative construction
can be used to attribute wanting to a nonhuman Principal, it can also be
used of a human Principal. But the reverse does not hold: a construction
used to attribute wanting to a human Principal may be ungrammatical
with a nonhuman referent, or it may have a different meaning (e.g. near
future).

Within the category 'human' there appears to be a further hierarchy
of persons, and this sub-hierarchy exhibits one interesting difference from
those observed in other typological categories such as verb agreement. In
desiderative expressions, second person seems to rank above third person
in some contexts, but not in others. What seems invariable is that if a
desiderative expression can be used with third person reference it can be
used with first person, but not vice versa. For example, Maricopa
desiderative constructions with 'iim or aly'ii-m can be used of either first
or third persons, but the desiderative suffix -lya alone can only refer to first
person (see 2.2 above); first person privilege effects in Japanese and Hua
were mentioned above.

Second person is privileged over third in imperatives and
questions, as mentioned above, but there are cases where its rank is
questionable. One such example is *want* in English, whose reference
presents no problems with first or third person (*I want /she wants to go*),
or with second person in questions, but becomes ambiguous in statements with a second person Principal, for example You want to watch where you're going. Utterances like this are usually interpreted as referring not to what the addressee wants, but what the speaker thinks the addressee should do. It could be argued that this should be recognised as a construction type different from X wants to V, since it is usually the contracted form You wanna V that is open to this alternative interpretation, while a statement that is genuinely about what the addressee wants would more likely be expressed in the full form You want to V (e.g. You want to do what?? in response to some outrageous proposal). Note also that the ambiguity arises mainly in the present tense (You wanna get your hair cut cf. You wanted to get your hair cut).

Nonetheless, the possibility of ambiguity in a second person desiderative may be connected with the same pragmatic principle that underlies first person privilege: people have direct access only to their own desires. Because of this, it is very unlikely for a speaker to be telling an addressee what the addressee wants. This may have led to a shift in interpretation of You want to V whereby it became ambiguous between the literal meaning 'you want to V' and the more contextually plausible 'someone (possibly the speaker) wants you to V'. Since in at least some instances first and third person Principals are more alike than first and second, perhaps the proposed person hierarchy should be represented as follows:

1st person > 2nd/3rd person

Notwithstanding all this diversity of language-specific constraints, there are some things that seem to hold true for all languages about the combination of WANT and a Principal. First, that every language has some construction that expresses the combination I + WANT. Second, that every language has means of expressing combinations of YOU and SOMEONE (she/he) with WANT. Some languages use the same construction for all of these, while others divide them up according to language-specific rules. What is possibly universal is that all languages have semantic equivalents of these combinations: 'I want', 'you want', 'someone wants'.

There are at least as many, probably more, language-specific constraints applying to the combination of WANT with an Objective as those applying to the Principal. While many of the constraints on the
combination of Principal and WANT are sensitive to animacy, constraints on the WANT plus Objective combination seem to be sensitive to three often interwoven factors, which could broadly be termed event structure, probability, and control.

In the area of event structure, two major categories of have been discussed already, those where the Objective involves only the Principal (WANT to do something), and those involving a Performer (WANT Y to do something). These need to be considered along with two others: those involving a thing of some kind (WANT something, e.g. water), and those involving an event or state of affairs (WANT something to happen, e.g. rain). Languages display different sets of constraints on each of these types of Objective, and draw different kinds of distinctions among them, but it is possible to discern some things that may hold true for all languages.

In constructions that involve a Performer, there are generally fewer constraints on its nature than on that of the Principal. For example, while an inanimate Principal is ungrammatical in Arrernte (as in ‘that car doesn’t want to go’, mentioned above), an inanimate Performer is fine (Re ahentye mutekaye yanhe lheyek ‘She wants that car to go’). The internal structure of the Objective follows the same rules that apply elsewhere in the language, as seen in 3.1 above where an inanimate cannot be an agent of an Acehnese A class verb, whether in the Objective of meuh’sut ‘want’ or anywhere else.

Individual languages may reflect the presence of a Performer as described earlier in this chapter, through allolexes of WANT or grammatical properties of the complement or both. But this is not the only factor affecting the grammatical structure by which the Objective is represented. In some languages this structure is sensitive to the degree of control of the Principal over the Objective whether or not a Performer is present. For example the Buru construction X la V ‘X wants to V’ can be used if the Objective is an active predicate, but if it is non-active the construction X la X V must be used (as in example 40 in Chapter 3, where da ‘3s’ cannot be omitted from Ringe la da haa ‘He wants to grow’).

This does not mean that a Performer is involved in the structure of the Objective in Buru X la X V (Ringe la da haa), any more than in English X wants to V (He wants to grow). What it does mean is that the language-specific rules of Buru and English draw different distinctions within the range of Objective events. English groups all Principal-oriented Objectives together in the X wants (*X) to V construction; while Buru distinguishes
between Objectives that are under the Principal’s control and those that are not, assigning to the latter a full clausal complement structure similar to that used when a Performer is involved.

Any Buru predicate, active or non-active, can occur in the \( X la X V \) construction, but only active predicates can occur in the \( X la V \) construction. Thus active predicates can be seen as privileged in the sense that they can occur where others cannot. This kind of privilege appears to be pragmatically based, in that if a person wants to do something that is largely under the person’s own control, the probability that the Objective will be realised is higher than for involuntary actions or events.

The factor of probability also influences the representation of the relation between wanting and the Objective. Languages often display a degree of iconicity in the relationship of the probability of the Objective’s realisation, and the distance between it and the Principal. But these effects, like the animacy and first person privilege effects described above, operate in ways that are entirely language-specific. It is not possible to predict whether a language will represent a particular kind of Objective by means of a particular grammatical structure (such as a verbal or full clausal complement). It is only predictable that, for Objectives that consist of an action or an event, if two complement types are available, the shorter one is likely to be associated with Objectives that have a higher probability of realisation.

This generalisation excludes those cases where the Objective is a thing that the Principal wants to get or to have, which in many languages can be expressed as NP complements of the kind discussed in 3.2 above. Moreover, it does not predict much about the distinctions different languages draw among various types of Objective over which the Principal exercises little or no control. The factor of control also has an important influence on the structure of desiderative constructions in many languages. Objectives over which the Principal has little control include involuntary actions by and events that happen to the Principal, and actions by a Performer, but may also include other events in which neither the Principal nor anyone else is directly involved, such as rain, or the sun rising.

The linguistic evidence discussed above illustrates how much crosslinguistic variation there is just among those desideratives whose Objective is an action by the Principal or by a Performer, and how difficult it is to identify what is common to all languages. There is even more
variation in how languages express Objectives that are not actions, that is, ones that do not consist of someone (Principal or Performer) doing something. Even the categorisation of what ‘doing something’ includes is language-specific. In English, for example, involuntary actions can be thought of and spoken of as doing something (So what did he do -- he fell asleep!) But in Arrernte, ankwe atnyele-iweme ‘falling asleep’ is categorised not as doing something but as something happening to a person, and the appropriate question is not Kele iwenhe-ileke? ‘So what did he do?’ but Kele iwenhe-irreke? ‘So what happened to him?’

This distinction, which in Arrernte corresponds to the transitive-intransitive distinction, does not affect the structure of desiderative expressions: the Objective of ahentye ‘want’ can be either transitive or intransitive, with either the Principal or the Performer doing or undergoing something. But Arrernte ahentye ‘want’ is less free than English want to take Objectives involving anything other than persons. Even in English I want it to rain sounds a little odd out of context, but better than the Arrernte equivalent? Ayenge ahentye kwatye atnyetyeke (‘I want rain fall-PURP’).

Objectives that are entirely outside the control of either a Principal or a Performer are the type least likely to be permissible in desiderative constructions; they sound odder in some languages than others, and in some are completely ungrammatical for most speakers (e.g. Indonesian *Saya mau hujan datang ‘I want rain come’). This could be predicted from the pragmatic principle of relevance: if the Principal is powerless to influence the realisation of the Objective in any way, then the Principal’s desire is irrelevant to the Objective. Although the reverse may still hold (realisation of the Objective may satisfy the Principal’s desire for rain), the relationship is too tenuous for such a construction to be functional in many languages.

Here again, however, the pragmatic principle is applied in different ways in different languages. Whether or not the desiderative constructions of a language will encompass this type of Objective cannot be predicted. What can be predicted across languages is that this is the type of Objective most likely to be ungrammatical or infelicitous and thus excluded from the range of desiderative constructions in a language.

There is a very large middle ground between events over which the Principal has no influence at all, and actions over which the Principal has a high degree of control, and there are no fixed reference points according
to which such events can be categorised. What is regarded as ‘doing’ and what is regarded as ‘happening’ varies between languages, as mentioned above. Constructions that express wanting something to happen to oneself or someone else may involve very different grammatical structures in different languages. This is illustrated in the examples mentioned above: something happening to a person is expressed in Buru by a full clausal complement; in Samoan the Principal if in absolutive case is the undergoer of the desired action; in English the complementiser to is used in this as in all other complements of want (e.g. want to grow, to be carried).

One thing that holds true for all languages investigated here is that at least one of the desiderative expressions can have the equivalent of ‘happen’ as its Objective, in combinations like ‘I want something (good/bad) to happen (to this person)’. The identification of equivalents of ‘happen’ (another proposed semantic prime, HAPPEN) in different languages is at least as complex a matter as identifying equivalents of WANT, and would probably merit an investigation of similar scope to the present work, but the language-specific variations among these expressions of HAPPEN do not appear to interfere with their ability to serve as the Objective in a desiderative construction.

It is probably not possible to predict which of the desiderative constructions of a language will be used to effect this combination of meanings, or what will be the structure of the complement expressing this Objective. Compare, for example, the complement structure in English I want something bad to happen to her with Arrernte Ayenge ahentye ikwere akurne-irre-tyeke ‘I want 3sDAT bad-happen-PURP’, where ‘3sDAT’ is in the role of subject of the purposive complement of ahentye. Although ‘happen’ is expressed in different forms in these languages, this combination of meanings is effected by the same basic desiderative constructions already seen.

In English the construction type is X wants Y to V; in this case the role of the complement subject Y is filled by something bad, the verb V is happen, and the undergoer is represented in a prepositional phrase to her. In Arrernte, on the other hand, ikwere ‘3sDAT’ appears in the role of subject of the intransitive verb complex akurne-irre- ‘bad-happen’, in the basic construction type X ahentye Y V-tyeke ‘X wants Y to do V’. So these two construction types are semantically equivalent, as established above (X wants Y to V = X ahentye Y V-tyeke), but the arrangement of elements
within the complement (the grammatical roles of 'something bad', 'happen' and the undergoer 'her') is determined by rules specific to each language.

The final type of Objective to be considered here is the 'thing' type, as in the combinations 'X wants something' or 'X wants this'. In 3.2 above it is shown that combinations of a desiderative with a NP complement are often complex in meaning: that they may encode a combination of WANT with not just the thing itself, but an event or state of affairs in which the Principal receives or possesses this thing. That is to say, the combination of semantic elements 'X wants this thing' may have to be defined via a more complex series of propositions:

\[
X \text{ wants } NP \ (= X \ ahentye \ NP-ke \ etc.) \Rightarrow \\
X \text{ wants: } X \ [\text{will} \text{ have } NP
\]

But 'having' in the sense of (alienable) possession (as distinct from 'having parts', incorporation or inalienable possession) is demonstrably a complex conditional meaning, definable along these lines:

\[
X \text{ has } NP \Rightarrow \\
\text{if } X \text{ wants to do something with this thing} \\
X \text{ can do it}
\]

Hence the full construction would be explicated as follows:

\[
X \text{ wants } NP \ (\text{e.g. } I \text{ want a banana}) \Rightarrow \\
X \text{ wants this:} \\
\text{if I want to do something with this thing, I can do it}
\]

But there is one major problem with this explication: the presence of an element 'this' in 'X wants this'. This seems to make the explication circular, if the combination 'X wants this' has itself to be defined as an instance of 'X wants NP'.

The answer to this puzzle has more to do with the semantics of 'this' (or NSM THIS) than with the semantics of 'want' (or WANT). Investigation of the proposed universal determiner THIS across a wide range of languages has indicated that THIS is not restricted to referring to (concrete) things, but can also refer both to an element in the discourse,
and to an extralinguistic situation. That is, in a great many languages, the equivalent of THIS can refer to a state of affairs like the one that constitutes the Objective in the above explication, ‘if I want to do something with this thing, I can do it’.

Some languages have a grammatically conditioned allolexy, with one form of ‘this’ as a nominal modifier/determiner and another form for situations, for example kono and kore in Japanese, nhenhe and alakenhe in Arrernte, or ini and begini in Indonesian. As mentioned in section 3.2, NP complements in desiderative constructions are more restricted in their occurrence than verbal and clausal complements, as in Indonesian where the combination X mau NP is not as felicitous as English X wants NP. So it is particularly interesting that, while in Indonesian mau ‘want’ does not combine well with the nominal determiner ini ‘this’, it combines much better with the ‘situational’ determiner begini ‘this/like this’, as in Dia tidak mau begini/begitu ‘She doesn’t want this/that’, where begini/begitu refers to an event or state of affairs, not to a thing.

This points to a prediction that Objectives of the ‘situation’ type are more likely to occur in languages than Objectives of the ‘thing’ type, and that if the desiderative constructions of a language include the combination ‘X wants this (thing)’ they will also include the combination ‘X wants this (situation)’, but the reverse is not necessarily true. Moreover, the former can be defined in terms of the latter as suggested above, where ‘X wants NP’ is defined as meaning ‘X wants this: if X wants to do something with this thing X can do it’. It should be emphasised that this does not constitute evidence that the proposed universal THIS is polysemous between ‘this thing’ and ‘this situation’. As a universal determiner, the functions of THIS could be expected to encompass both nominal and propositional deixis (and person, place and temporal deixis as well), and the preliminary crosslinguistic evidence supports this expectation.

However, in the specific context of desiderative constructions it seems necessary to recognise a distinction between ‘X wants this (thing)’ and ‘X wants this (situation)’, not on the basis of any polysemy of ‘this’ but on the basis of what follows it. The evidence discussed here suggests that in desiderative constructions what follows ‘this’ must always be a proposition of some kind. That is, the basic semantic combination is ‘X wants this: P’ where P is a proposition representing the Objective. From this it is predicted that in any language whose grammar permits
constructions like $X$ wants $NP$, where the Objective is a thing, this is always definable in terms of ‘$X$ wants this: $P$’ where $P$ is a proposition such as ‘if $X$ wants to do something with this thing $X$ can do it’.

In fact, any of the meaning combinations considered in this chapter can be reduced to ‘$X$ wants this: $P$’, since both the combinations ‘$X$ wants to do this’ and ‘$X$ wants $Y$ to do this’ can be expressed in the same form, where $P$ equals the propositions ‘I [will] do this’ and ‘$Y$ [will] do this’ respectively:

$$X \text{ wants to do } V \Rightarrow$$
$$X \text{ wants this: I will do this } [=V]$$

$$X \text{ wants } Y \text{ to do } V \Rightarrow$$
$$X \text{ wants this: } Y \text{ will do this } [=V]$$

This may be identifiable as the most basic universal combination of desiderative meaning, whose expression in each language is modified in language-specific, rule-governed ways as demonstrated above.

Both the structure and the content of the proposition $P$ are governed by the rules of the language in which it occurs. Its grammatical form is determined by language-specific rules, so that if the semantic elements contained in a particular proposition are ‘$Y$’ and ‘do $V$’, the word order, case marking of $Y$, tense of the verb and so on are all rule-governed. Thus the verbal inflection -s in the English version $X$ wants this is applied by the rules of English grammar, in agreement with the semantic context of this proposition. In some contexts the appropriate form of the proposition may include future tense marking ($Y$ will do $V$), since in most instances of wanting, the Objective is to occur in the future.

Futurity (or its semantic basis ‘after now’ or ‘after this time’) is not an obligatory semantic element in Objectives; compare, for example, I’m doing what I want, or We stayed there because we wanted to, where the time frame of the Objective is at least partly simultaneous with the Principal’s wanting. Yet even these Objectives are not semantically incompatible with some extension into future time; for example, I’m doing what I want is quite compatible with the interpretation that I want to go on doing it for some time after now. As shown above, rule-governed elements such as tense markers are semantically non-contributory so long as they are fully consistent with the meaning of the semantic combination.
Therefore, provided they are fully consistent with the semantic context of the Objective, the future-marked form \textit{Y will do V} and the present tense form \textit{Y does V} are allolexical variants of the combination \textit{Y + do V}.

The same principles apply to language-specific modal categories. The Objective in a desiderative construction is usually an event or state of affairs that is as yet unrealised; hence in some languages an irrealis or similar type of modal marking may be consistent with the meaning of the construction. The proposition \(P\) should therefore appear in whatever grammatical form is natural and felicitous in the semantic context, according to language-specific grammatical rules. In some languages this may be a tenseless clause, while in others the appropriate tense or modal marking is applied by obligatory rule. The essential nature of any proposition is that it is something \textit{‘proposed’}, that is, it is something that is \textit{‘sayable’}. A proposition at the level of semantic structure should therefore be represented in the form of a fully grammatical utterance in the relevant language.

If it is true that the Objective of \textit{WANT} is universally propositional in nature, this opens the way to explaining two of the most intriguing phenomena observed in this study. One is a fairly widespread pattern of polysemy linking \textit{WANT} with \textit{SAY}, to which we return in a moment. The other is the \textit{‘quotative’} nature of the proposition representing the Objective in the first formulation above, where \textit{‘I’} is the Principal \textit{‘speaking’} as it were (or perhaps thinking) in the first person; there is no Performer element in this combination. Compare this with a situation where the speaker is to be the Performer, for example \textit{X wants me to do V}. This is of course an instance of the combination \textit{‘X wants Y to do V’} where \(Y\) is the speaker of the utterance, and as such speaks in the first person, but is not the Principal. Thus, this too could be represented as \textit{‘X wants: I will do V’} but in this case \textit{‘I’} is the Performer, not the Principal.

But this is clearly wrong: \textit{X wants to do V} and \textit{X wants me to do V} do not mean the same thing at all, and should not be represented by the same combination of elements (\textit{X wants this: I will do V}). One way out of the dilemma would be to represent the meaning of \textit{X wants to do V} as \textit{‘X wants: X will do V’}, but section 3.4 argued against this on the grounds that many languages have separate constructions representing this meaning as distinct from the meaning \textit{‘X wants: I will do V’} where \textit{‘I’} is the Principal. The only other way out is to represent a qualitative difference between Principal-oriented and Performer-oriented Objectives specifically in the
semantic structure. The iconic device of quotation marks used as a stopgap measure in 3.4 was one way to represent this difference, but such a mechanical device fails to make explicit its semantic basis.

This can only be achieved by recognising that the combination of semantic elements 'X wants: I will do V' is a predication about X and only X, while the combination 'X wants: Y will do V' is a predication about each of two entities. This latter combination predicates about X that this person wants something, and about Y that this person does V (or such is X's Objective). Now, a person can formulate a first-person Objective by thinking: 'I want this: I will do V', but an Objective involving a Performer has to be formulated in terms of a thought (a predication) about this other person. This difference can be represented in the semantic structure as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
X \text{ wants to do } V &\Rightarrow \\
X \text{ thinks: I want this: I will do } V \\
X \text{ wants } Y \text{ to do } V &\Rightarrow \\
X \text{ thinks about } Y: \text{ I want this: this person will do } V
\end{align*}
\]

These formulations can capture without difficulty the difference between \(X \text{ wants to do } V\) and \(X \text{ wants me to do } V\), as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
X \text{ wants to do } V &\Rightarrow \\
X \text{ thinks: I want this: I will do } V \\
X \text{ wants me to do } V &\Rightarrow \\
X \text{ thinks about me: I want this: this person will do } V
\end{align*}
\]

But they raise another issue: should the semantic structure of desiderative constructions always involve a component 'X thinks'? It could be argued that if all desiderative constructions involve an Objective in the form of a specific proposition, this proposition must be formulated in the mind as a cognitive structure, and hence as something that 'X thinks'. Moreover, empirical evidence gathered thus far suggests that equivalents of \textsc{think} across languages may be somewhat less subject to person restrictions than equivalents of \textsc{want}, so a structure 'X thinks: I want this' may provide a
more accurate representation of the special relationship of WANT and I
than a structure ‘X wants this’ can.

The evidence in favour of ‘X thinks’ in the second, Performer-
oriented structure is stronger, because this provides the only way of
representing that the Objective in this case is a predication ‘about Y’.
Furthermore, it provides the only currently available solution to the
problem discussed in 5.5 above: how to include both Principal and
Performer in semantic representations in languages where the
desiderative marker is internal to the clause representing the Objective.
The structures proposed above work just as well for Kayardild structures
involving -THu (~-THuru) as for English structures involving want:

\[ X \text{ V-THu} \ (’X \text{ wants to do V’}) \Rightarrow \]
\[ X \text{ thinks: I want this: I will do V} \]
\[ (X \text{ marrulmarath: ngada V-THu}) \]

\[ Y \text{ V-THu} \ (’[X, \text{ wants Y to do V’}) \Rightarrow \]
\[ X \text{ thinks about Y}: \text{ I want this: this person will do V} \]
\[ (X \text{ marrulmarath Y-ACT: danda dangkaa V-THu}) \]

The clause-internal desideratives also provide some support for the
first person orientation of the structure ‘X thinks: I want this: P’. This is
supported by the fact that the equivalent of ‘I want this: P’ in such
languages is simply ‘P + DES’ where DES is the clause-internal desiderative
marker; for example the Kayardild equivalent of ‘I want this: P’ in the
above structures is simply P-THu. But the equivalent of ‘X wants this: P’
must include a separate clause making a predication about X. In Kayardild
this works as follows:

\[ I \text{ want this: P} = \]
\[ P-\text{THu} \]

\[ X \text{ wants this: P} = \]
\[ X \text{ marrulmarath: P-THu} \]
\[ (\text{i.e. X thinks: I want this: P}) \]

These patterns of equivalence suggest that the combinations P-THu in
Kayardild and I want this: P in English may both be regarded as indivisible
and undefinable semantic ‘atoms’ whose core is a universal element WANT ( = -THu = want) with a universal ability to bond with a first person Principal I ( = I in English, and the inherent Principal of -THu in Kayardild) and with a proposition P. Note that although P-THu looks like a single propositional form, the evidence from negation indicates the presence of two separate propositions: ‘I don’t want this: P’ and ‘I want this: not-P’ are expressed via warnaja ‘not want’ and the negative potential suffix -nangku(ru) respectively.

This suggests at least the possibility of a radical reduction in the combinatorial possibilities required for equivalents of WANT across languages. If every desiderative construction can be reduced to ‘I want this: P’ (with or without an ‘X thinks’ element as needed), and only this combination of meanings is indefinable, then each language-specific equivalent of WANT need only be capable of combination with the elements I and THIS and a proposition in the relevant language, to serve as a semantic prime in terms of which all other more complex desiderative expressions can be defined.

If an Objective of WANT has to be in the form of a proposition, and a proposition is inherently something that must be sayable, this goes a long way toward explaining the special relationships between wanting and saying that are observable in quite a few languages. Of course there is a circumstantial link in that people often express their desires in words, and we cannot know about what is experienced internally by another person unless this is expressed in some outward way, but a semantic relationship based on the inherent ‘sayability’ of the Objective of WANT goes much deeper than circumstantial association. Yet it is still non-compositional in that saying is not an element in the meaning of WANT or in the meaning of an Objective of WANT.

Similarly, in order to be sayable, a proposition must first be thinkable, that is, represented in the mind as a cognitive structure that can then be given expression in speech. This association between wanting and thinking again seems to operate at a much deeper level than the circumstantial fact that people often think about what they want. Although thinking may be an element in the semantic structure of many desiderative constructions, as suggested above, it is not an element in the meaning of WANT itself or of the basic combination ‘I want this: P’.

The non-compositional relationship linking saying and thinking with the nature of propositions could help to explain the involvement of
equivalents of SAY and THINK in desiderative constructions of completely unrelated languages. A particularly interesting example is the way either ‘ii-m ‘say’ or aly’ii-m ‘think’ is used in Maricopa desiderative constructions with other than a first person Principal, illustrated in 2.2 above. Similar constructions can be observed in several Papuan languages; while in the Austronesian language Mangap-Mbula a single phonological form, -so, can refer to thinking, saying, wanting, or to hypothetical propositions (‘if P...’). The desiderative and hypothetical uses could perhaps be viewed as deriving from speech acts expressing desire and supposition (compare the hypothetical use of English say in Say you had a million dollars, what would you do with it?), and perhaps even the cognitive sense could be seen as internal speech (saying something to oneself). However, each of these four meanings is distinguishable on formal grounds, as each occurs in a different syntactic environment.

The syntactic difference in each case lies in the form of the following proposition. The ‘say’ sense is the only one that can be accompanied by an addressee phrase (pa NP) and the complementise ta kembei ‘thus’; this applies to both direct and indirect speech:

(1) a. Ni i-so (ta kembei): "Nio ko ang-mar".
   3s 3s-say (SPEC like)  1s UNCl 1s-come
   'He said (this): 'I will come'.

   b. Ni i-so (ta kembei): (ni) ko ang-mar.
   3s 3s-say (SPEC like)   (3s) UNc 3s-come
   'He said (that) he would come.'

The hypothetical sense is the only one that must be followed by a dependent proposition (apodosis), introduced by the conditional markers na, inako or so. It is also the only case where -so can occur without its verbal subject prefix (i- ‘3s’ in the following example). The phonologically bound nonfactual complementiser be (~mbe) is optional:

(2) Woonggo (i-)so(-mbe) i-mar, ina-ko ang-la.
    canoe   (3s-)if(-NF)   3s-come GIV-UNC 1s-go
    'If the boat comes, (then) I will go.'
The desiderative sense is the only one that can occur with the nonfactual complementiser but with obligatory subject prefix (referring to the Principal) and without a second proposition conditional upon the first. If there is a dependent clause (like the purpose clause ‘to see Atai’s village’ below) it has no conditional marker:

(3) \textit{Nio ang-so(-mbe) ang-la ang-re Atai kar ki-ni.}
1s 1s-want(-NF) 1s-go 1s-see Atai village POSS-3s
‘I want to go (to) see Atai’s village.’

Only in this context could the allolex \textit{lele- ‘want’}, discussed in 2.4 above, be substituted for \textit{-so}. The ‘think’ sense is distinguished by its inability to occur with the complementisers \textit{ta kembei} or \textit{be} and the fact that it is usually followed by the modal adverb of uncertainty, \textit{ko}:

(4) \textit{Nio ang-so (ko) ni i-meete kek.}
1s 1s-think (UNC) 3s 3s-die PERF
‘I thought (that) he had died.’

Because the distinguishing complementisers \textit{ta kembei} and \textit{be} and the adverb \textit{ko} are optional in each of the above contexts, a construction like \textit{Nio ang-so ang-la ‘1s 1s-so 1s-go’} could be ambiguous: ‘I want/think /say I’ll go’ (-so couldn’t mean ‘if’ here because there is no apodosis). However, any ambiguity could be dispelled immediately by insertion of the appropriate complementiser, or a nominal like \textit{sua ‘talk’}:

(5) \textit{Ni i-so sua som.}
3p 3p-say talk NEG
‘He said (*thought/*wanted) nothing.’

The multifunctionality of \textit{-so} is highly instructive as a case study of maximal polysemy. It demonstrates that a natural language can tolerate a very high degree of polysemy without confusion, vagueness, or loss of expressive power. It also illustrates something of how this can be, in that when the phonological material (the form \textit{-so}) is held constant, the crucial role of combinatorial properties in semantics becomes much clearer. The distinction between the four meanings ‘want’, ‘think’, ‘say’ and ‘if’ hinges essentially upon four different types of relationship between propositions.
These relationships are reflected in the various lexical and syntactic devices of different languages.

In the IF relation two propositions are related in a way such that one is conditional upon the other; hence -so can only be interpreted as 'if' in the environment of a corresponding 'then' clause. In the case of WANT, THINK and SAY, each of these is a predication about a Principal, who wants, thinks or says something that can be expressed as a proposition. These three elements are like IF in that they encode a relation between two propositions, but unlike IF they are central to the content of the first proposition because each of them is predicated of some Principal (X), who wants, thinks or says the second proposition. The essential difference between WANT, THINK and SAY resides in the predication itself, whose nature can to some extent be described but not defined, as each of these is an irreducible prime element of meaning.

Wanting, thinking and saying each place the Principal in a different relation to the second proposition. When all three are represented by the same phonological form -so, the function of representing these three different orientations of the Principal to the secondary proposition is performed by other elements in the linguistic structure, principally the complementisers ta kembei and be. That the integrity of WANT as a unique relation between a Principal and a propositional Objective is thus retained even under conditions of maximal polysemy is further evidence for its status as a universal element across languages.

Thus, despite the diversity of language-specific rules, structures and constraints examined here, it is possible to identify a constant set of semantic combinations that can be viewed as a 'universal syntax' of desiderative meaning. This universal syntax consists of a core desiderative element corresponding in each language to WANT, plus a Principal (I, YOU, or SOMEONE, with I in a privileged position), and a proposition that is the Objective (formulated in each language according to the language-specific rules for such a propositional structure). The appearance of such combinations in children's earliest utterances across languages, noted in 1.2 above, corroborates this proposal.

The relationships of the senses of -so ('want', 'if', 'think' and 'say') appear to be entirely non-compositional in nature, as none of these elements is a component of any of the others. Yet they are not as unrelated as the two senses of the phonological form /nou/ in English ('know' and 'no'). This too may have to do with the combinatorial
properties or universal syntax of these semantic primes. The basic
semantic combinations in which KNOW and NO occur are largely, perhaps
entirely mutually exclusive, while those of WANT, THINK and SAY are very
similar, and IF is similar to them in one aspect and different in another as
explained above.

While much remains to be discovered about the operation of non-
compositional relationships in semantic systems, the present study points
to two tentative generalisations. One is that, if a single form expresses two
or more semantic primes, the meanings should be entirely distinguishable
by their combinatorial properties, as the meanings of -so are. This is not to
say that ambiguous constructions should be impossible, but rather that
disambiguation must always be possible. Unrelated homophones like
know and no are unlikely ever to occur in contexts similar enough for
ambiguity to arise between them, but -so 'want' and -so 'say' can do so, and
to function effectively in a semantic system they must be distinguishable
on some independent, formal basis, such as the complementisers in this
case (be versus ta kembali).

The other tentative generalisation is that certain semantic primes
may be blocked from co-occurrence as meanings of a single polysemous
form. A constraint of this kind may apply to WANT and KNOW, and to
WANT and DO. The homophony of know and no is essentially trivial
because the semantic functions of the primes KNOW and NO are so
different that they could not be confused with one another. The same
could apply to WANT and NO, or UNDER or ALL; but not to WANT and
KNOW because their combinatorial functions are much more similar.
KNOW, like WANT (and SAY and THINK) encodes a particular relation
between a Principal and a proposition, which in this case represents not an
Objective but the content of the Principal's knowledge.

A block to polysemy between WANT and KNOW might arise from the
status of the proposition. The Objective of WANT, as a projected outcome,
may be inherently un-KNOW-able. One can both THINK and SAY whatever
one can WANT or KNOW, but it may not be possible simultaneously to
WANT and KNOW the one proposition; or to WANT and DO the same thing.
IF, too, may be incompatible with KNOW, while CAN is more compatible
with both WANT and KNOW, in that both the Objective of WANT and the
proposition that one KNOWs can be something that CAN be. Relationships
like these are reflected in some language-specific grammatical systems like
reals/irreals marking, but further research into NCRs is needed in order
to clarify whether this is basically an extralinguistic matter or whether it is specific to the semantic systems of certain languages.

For indivisible semantic elements to be able to be combined together to build up complex meanings, there would have to be some non-compositional, externally operating principles governing these combinations. Such principles may be essentially pragmatic in nature, but they must involve relations between elements of the semantic system. Thus, aspects of semantic relations that appear to be influenced by pragmatic factors like animacy or control may be better explainable in terms of NCRs between semantic primes. For example, the animacy hierarchy discussed above is not as accurately predictive as the generalisation that WANT must be combinable with a Principal who is SOMEONE; and the first person privilege effects are best described in terms of a relation between WANT and I.

While the issues of the temporal/modal status and the Principal's control over the Objective are apparently governed by language-specific constraints, the most accurate way of describing these constraints may be in terms of their sensitivity to whether the Objective CAN occur, whether one can KNOW that it can happen, and so on. And a non-compositional incompatibility of WANT with KNOW and DO provides a basis for explaining the crosslinguistic tendency to association of wanting with future and potential meanings, without suggesting any universal link of WANT with language-specific temporal or modal categories based on elements such as 'after now' (future), 'not happened' (irrealis), or 'can happen' (potential).

Finally, the proposed universal syntax of WANT can also be described in terms of prime elements. WANT must be able to occur in the context:

\[ I + WANT + THIS \]

THIS must be able to occur in the context:

\[ SOMEONE + THINK/SAY + THIS \]

and the combination SOMEONE + WANT + THIS may be at some level a product of the first two:

\[ SOMEONE + THINK/SAY + THIS: I + WANT + THIS \]
6.4 A 'universal syntax'?  

All of the observations made in the foregoing account of desiderative constructions and their properties are consistent with these relationships between semantic primes.

6.5 Cultural values and language change  

In attempting to identify elements of desiderative meaning that may be universal, much attention has been devoted to aspects of desiderative constructions that are specific to the structure of individual languages. Many of these language-specific characteristics are produced by grammatical rules that operate throughout the language in question, but others seem to be at least partially influenced by cultural norms and preferences. This section takes a brief look at some examples of possible cultural influences on the structure of desiderative expressions, and how such language- and culture-specific factors may affect the origins and development of particular desiderative expressions. Analysis of how these influences work can contribute substantially to the understanding of processes of language change, both lexical and syntactic.

Although this study of desiderative expressions was not directly concerned with language change, it uncovered a surprising amount of evidence of recent and ongoing changes in these expressions. These changes include semantic shifts whereby lexemes from a variety of sources have acquired desiderative meanings, and desiderative terms have acquired temporal and other meanings. There are examples of borrowing of desiderative terms from other languages, changes in the syntactic behaviour of desideratives, and evidence of grammaticalisation affecting desiderative constructions in a number of ways.

Indeed, desiderative expressions may be a particularly rich source for observing language change in progress. From a functional perspective this would make sense. Expressing what a person wants is a language function that has a high degree of impact on other people; hence this functional domain could be expected to be subject to strong interpersonal, social and cultural pressures and sanctions. Mediating and regulating the expression of what people want is a necessary function of culture and social structure, to prevent continuous open conflict that would arise if individual desires were unconstrained.
But this is somewhat more problematic for a theory of semantic primes expressed as lexical universals. If a lexeme like *querer* or *want* expresses a basic, indefinable element of meaning in a particular language, this would seem to be a highly stable situation, with no reason ever to change. Moreover, how could such a change take place? If a semantic universal such as *WANT* is expressed in a particular language by a particular lexeme, how could this be one lexeme at one time and another lexeme at another time? Yet just such a change must have happened in the case of Spanish *querer* ‘want’, while French and Italian preserved their particular forms of the earlier Latin *volere* ‘want’. The observations made in this study of how universal and language-specific elements interact in desiderative expressions provide some prospects for addressing the question of language change in NSM theory.

The proposals advanced in the previous section for a semantic universal with specific combinatorial properties suggest a view of *WANT* as inherently relational. This *WANT* relation can be likened to the script of a play, with a central plot, certain characters in particular relationships to each other and to the plot, and a cast of lexical ‘players’ that is subject to considerable variation. The central plot consists of the relationship *WANT* between the Principal and the Objective. The Principal is of course the main character, and the Objective proposition may introduce other characters, notably a Performer. The lexemes that fill each of these roles, including the exponent of the central *WANT* relation, are of course subject to variation from language to language, and within each language according to specific lexical and grammatical rules; and they are also subject to change over time.

As each language has certain structural constraints that modify the form of desiderative expressions, so too each society has certain social constraints that modify how its members express what they want. It is an observable fact that both language structures and social structures change over time. Each of these structures is built up of elements that can be identified and described in terms of meaning; and as a systematic method of analysing meanings, the NSM approach offers a way to develop a coherent account of the interactions between linguistic meanings and structures, and social meanings and structures.

Interactions between semantic universals with their combinatorial properties or universal syntax, non-compositional relationships, and cultural values are deserving of a great deal of further investigation.
There is room here only to mention some of the relevant observations from this study, but even this brief sampling illustrates the extremely fruitful potential of this approach in analysing influences on language change and the interaction of language and culture within a broader perspective of human communication.

Consider first the case of subjunctive complements in desiderative expressions. Although it has been shown that these may be semantically non-contributory for the purpose of assessing expressive equivalence of constructions like 'X wants Y to do V' across languages, this does not explain why subjunctive marking should occur in such a context at all. If the semantic content of subjunctives in most languages is along the lines of 'I don't say: this will happen', it can be seen that cultural beliefs would influence the assignment of this meaning to different situations. Cultures vary in the importance they attach to distinguishing between propositions based on knowledge and those based on hearsay or projection. Languages have a variety of means, both lexical and grammatical, to signal such distinctions, and the cultural importance of doing so influences both the frequency with which people use these linguistic devices, and the extent to which they are grammaticalised as optional or even obligatory elements of the structure of any proposition expressed in the language.

The operation of influences like these offers a way of explaining why expressions that are fully semantically equivalent on the criteria established in this chapter should nonetheless display different language-specific patterns of modal marking, for example:

(6) a. *Me-dí bé má-yi kplí wò* (Ewe)
1s-want that 1sSSJV-go with 2s

b. *Je veux aller avec toi.* (French)
I want go-INF with you

c. *I want to go with you.* (English)

In Ewe all complements of *dí* 'want' carry subjunctive marking; while semantically consistent with the meaning of the construction, this marking represents a distinction between the unrealised status of a wanted event, and the indicative complements of verbs like *nyá* 'know' and *bé* 'say'. French, on the other hand, uses subjunctive marking to represent a
similar kind of distinction within the set of possible complements of vouloir 'want', assigning subjunctive forms to Performer-oriented complements and other less certain outcomes, and infinitive forms to more confident contexts like (6b). No such distinction is represented in English complements of want, though it can be expressed in other construction types.

Cultural values and norms of expression that may influence linguistic structures like these can also be analysed in terms of combinations of elements of meaning. For example, a cultural principle of recognising individual autonomy may be the basis for assigning subjunctive marking to Performer-oriented Objectives in many European languages. In terms of basic elements of meaning, such a principle can be stated along the following lines:

it is not good if I say something like this about someone:
   this person has to do this

From this principle it follows that it is usually inappropriate to imply that one person (the Performer) has to do what someone else (the Principal) wants:

it is not good if I say something like this about someone:
   this person has to do this because someone wants this

In French, subjunctive marking is available as a device to forestall any such unwanted inference:

if I say:  I want this: this person will do this
it is good if I say at the same time something like this:
   I don't say it will happen

In Ewe, on the other hand, a different unwanted inference may be at issue, arising from a cultural concern with the status of events, possibly along these lines:

it is not good if I say:  this will happen
if at the same time I don't know it
In such a cultural context, subjunctive marking can be used as a device to allow reference to a projected proposition without implying any claim to knowledge of the outcome:

if I say: I want this: P
it is good if I say at the same time something like this:
I don't say it will happen

While the structure and operation of cultural influences like these are a very promising field for further exploration, it should be noted that the specific linguistic devices in which they are reflected may not be predictable. For example, many English speaking groups share a general European tendency to value individual autonomy, but English does not use subjunctive forms in the way French does. On the other hand, English expresses similar cultural norms through other linguistic devices. Notable among these are the 'whimperatives', or the use of the grammatical form of a question to convey directives. From a similar basic principle:

it is not good if I say something like this about someone:
this person has to do this

it follows that giving orders is usually inappropriate, except in certain specialised arrangements of power based on rank or other sources of status:

it is not good if I say something like this to someone:
you have to do this because I want this

Imperatives in English are often regarded as a violation of this principle, and hence may arouse resentment in the addressee, while the unwanted inference can be forestalled by phrasing the directive as a question. The meaning of the interrogative form includes the elements 'I don't know' which avoids any implication that the person has to do anything, and 'I want to know' which implies at least a mildly desiderative sense:

if I want to say to someone: I want this: you do this
it is good if I say to this person something like this:
I don't know if you will do this
I want to know if you will do it
The use of these forms as the normal way of indicating that one wants someone to do something may over time have produced a shift in the meaning of the English imperative, whereby there is evidence that it now conveys not only wanting the addressee to do something, but also a belief that the person will do as ordered:

Do V! (e.g. Go away!)
I want you to do this
I think: you will do it because I say this

Accordingly, imperatives are comparatively rarely used in mainstream English, and are limited to contexts where it is appropriate to convey such a strong message to the addressee.

These observations must be regarded as highly speculative, pending further study of the structure of cultural values in general, and in the cultures referred to here. Nevertheless, the nature of the mechanisms proposed as a basis for understanding cultural influence in language change should be clear. Cultural values motivate the use of linguistic forms that convey meanings compatible with these values. Attitudes based on cultural values affect speakers’ behaviour, causing them to use certain favoured constructions with increasing frequency over time; while negative attitudes to other constructions (such as imperatives in English) are reflected in decreasing usage.

Studies of language change processes indicate that increasing use of a particular linguistic form in a certain context is often associated with increasing grammaticalisation of that form. This process can be observed at work among desiderative constructions in many languages, from the grammaticalisation of the originally desiderative English will as a future tense marker, to the development of complementisers like Ewe bé (from ‘say’) or French que (from ‘what’). Decreasing use of a form, on the other hand, is often associated with greater specialisation of meaning, such as that proposed for the English imperative construction.

Influences like these may have operated in the development of the present form of desiderative expressions in Japanese, for example. The adjectival desiderative hoshii ‘want’ was originally a derived form of a verb hossuru, which is not used in modern Japanese, but in earlier sources refers to requesting or desiring. There is also some evidence that the linker -te may have developed from the desiderative suffix -tai. These
6.5 Cultural values and language change

changes may be understood in relation to social and cultural pressures mediating how speakers express what they want.

Descriptions of Japanese culture and psychology by both Japanese and non-Japanese scholars recognise the powerful influence of certain cultural principles on the social and linguistic behaviour of individual Japanese people. Among the most important of these is the principle of enryō, sometimes translated as 'self-restraint', which encourages people to refrain from acting solely on the basis of their own feelings and motivations, and to take note of other aspects of their situation, especially the feelings of other people. Thus enryō is linked with another key principle, omoiyari, sometimes translated as 'empathy', which emphasises awareness of and consideration for the feelings of others. The effects of these principles on social interaction have been observed in many contexts, from business negotiations to customs of hospitality. In terms of basic elements of meaning, they may be represented along the following lines:

it is not good if I say something like this:
'I want this', 'I feel this', 'I think this'

if I say something like this
someone might feel something bad because of this

These principles are directly reflected in people's speech behaviour in several ways. In most social settings it is seen as inappropriate to express personal desires directly, so the constructions Watashi wa V-tai 'I want to do V' and Watashi wa CPLT hoshii 'I want CPLT' are not very frequently used. People try instead to be aware of what others might want and provide it without anyone having to say anything. Asking someone else what they want is also disfavoured because this would put the addressee in the embarrassing position of having to violate the cultural norm by answering. The favoured way of phrasing invitations is in terms not of desire but of possibility: 'I don't suppose you would be able to come to dinner' rather than 'Do you want to/ would you like to come?'

The syntactic properties of the adjective hoshii, described in 3.1 above, allow it to be used without overt mention of the Principal. The same cultural attitudes that discourage saying 'I want this' promote the omission of watashi 'I' from CPLT hoshii, to such an extent that speakers perceive it as redundant. This same motivation may have led speakers to
prefer the adjectival form *hoshii* over the verb *hossuru*, causing the latter to fall out of contemporary usage.

Japanese speakers are also circumspect about attributing wanting directly to a third person, so the constructions *X wa V-tai* and *X wa CPLT hoshii* are even less frequently used than the first person constructions. However, the construction *X wa V-te garu* 'X appears/seems to want to do V' is more acceptable, and this appears to have developed from *X wa V-tai* 'X wants to do V' with the addition of *garu* 'appear'. Cultural attitudes favour this expression because it puts the speaker in the position of commenting on observable signs rather than directly attributing wanting to another person. Through frequent use, this has become a standard construction for referring to a third person's wanting, accompanied by phonological reduction of -tai to -te as it became grammaticalized as a linker between the Objective verb and garu. The direction of semantic and grammatical change is such that -tai may become restricted exclusively to first person use, and a corresponding semantic shift could result in *X wa V-te garu* becoming semantically equivalent to 'X wants to do V'. At present, this meaning is still expressed by *X wa V-tai*, but this construction appears to be falling out of use due to cultural preference for the -te garu construction.

A different set of cultural influences operates in Samoan, where a very high value is placed on elegance and refinement in speaking, with high status accorded to those who are skilled in using elevated speech styles. One feature of refined speech is the avoidance of direct personal references, especially to persons of higher status than the speaker, and direct reference to oneself in the presence of persons of higher status. This is facilitated by the grammar of Samoan, which freely allows ellipsis of arguments of a verb. Thus one can say *E si'i le pepe e le teine* 'The girl carries the baby', or *E si'i le pepe* 'The baby is carried' (someone carries the baby), or just *E si'i* 'There is carrying' (someone carries something). This grammatical characteristic allows speakers to avoid any direct reference to persons in desiderative expressions: *E fia si'i le pepe e le teine* 'The girl wants to carry the baby', or *E fia si'i le pepe* 'The baby wants to be carried' (by someone), or just *E fia si'i* 'Carrying is wanted' (someone wants to carry something, or someone wants to be carried, or someone wants someone to carry something); *E mana'o le teine i le tusi* 'The girl wants the book', or *E mana'o i le tusi* 'The book is wanted' (by someone)'.

In social contexts where it is desirable to be as vague as possible with respect to persons, the adverb-like nature of fia 'want' is especially valuable. Arguments of the verb mana'o 'want' can be omitted (E mana'o X e V X/Y 'X wants X/Y to do V', E mana'o e V 'V is wanted (by someone)'), but as a main verb, mana'o 'want' is a predication about some specific person, even if the identity of that person is not mentioned. Fia, on the other hand, modifies a main verb, which is predicated of someone who may or may not be the wanter: E fia V 'V-ing is wanted' could refer to situations where someone wants to do something (e.g. the girl wants to carry the baby), or someone wants someone else to do something to them (the baby wants to be carried), or someone wants someone else to do something (the mother wants the girl to carry the baby).

Thus a desiderative construction with fia can be maximally vague as to the identity of the Principal and the Performer. The usefulness of this in a particular social and cultural context could contribute to a functional explanation of the alloglossy of fia and mana'o as exponents of WANT in Samoan. Allolexes in NSM theory are held to be fully equivalent in meaning, but each must have its own distinctive functions, or there would be no motivation for its existence. If two forms are completely synonymous in a language, one or both are likely to acquire additional semantic content. If each allolex did not have its own functional load, they would probably cease to be allolexes of a single semantic element through this process of semantic differentiation.

On the analysis proposed here, any fia construction could also be expressed in terms of mana'o, but not vice versa. In 2.5 above it is suggested that even with inanimates, fia implies the existence of a wanter; that E fia tatā lāvulava nei 'These clothes "need" washing' means 'someone (unspecified) wants someone else (unspecified) to wash these clothes'. Thus, although mana'o differs grammatically from fia in that it cannot be associated with an inanimate argument, this same semantic combination could nonetheless be expressed in terms such as e mana'o se tasi e tatā lāvulava nei e se isi 'someone wants another to wash these clothes'.

Although it is argued here that these constructions are semantically equivalent, they are neither grammatically nor pragmatically equivalent. Fia is often preferred over mana'o on both of these grounds. With transitive verbs, fia indicates that the Principal is either the Performer or an undergoer of the Objective. It performs this grammatical function
more efficiently than the semantically equivalent mana’o construction where the Principal NP would have to be repeated in the complement clause either as Performer or as undergoer of an action by someone else (A) (e fia V X = e mana’o X e V ERG X/e V X ERG A). Because of its grammatical properties, fia can also function more effectively than mana’o in social contexts where vagueness is desirable. Thus, the origins and maintenance of allolexical relationships may be explained at least partly in terms of grammatical and sociocultural functions, often operating in combination.

Some cultural influences on language structure may be due to aspects of the environment other than cultural values. An example of this is seen in the verbal semantics of Papuan languages. While it makes general pragmatic sense in terms of the internal accessibility of wanting, the use of a ‘say’ element in third-person and Performer-oriented desiderative constructions seems to reflect a distinctive Papuan tendency to explicitness and literalness. Such a tendency is by no means limited to desideratives, but can be seen in other verbal constructions in numerous Papuan languages where, for example, ‘bring’ is rendered by ‘take come’, ‘tumble’ by ‘come descend hit’, ‘cut with a knife’ by ‘knife take cut’, ‘have a headache’ by ‘head hits me’ and so on.

Although this tendency is associated with a particular cultural area, it is not necessarily the product of a specific cultural value of explicitness or literal-mindedness. It is probably better explained in relation to the sociolinguistic situation in Papua, which is characterised by extensive and rapid linguistic diffusion, language shift and change. These conditions have resulted in many languages having a very small stock of verb stems, which are nonetheless deployed in logical combinations to express a full range of verbal meanings; and in this context, the combinations of verbal elements in desiderative constructions appear to be just one example of such a linguistic mechanism at work.

Particularly in cases of recent language change, etymologies may be highly transparent, so that semantically indivisible elements may be expressed by morphologically complex forms. This is not at all uncommon in languages, for example Yankunytjatjara mukuringanyi ‘want’ mentioned earlier, and ngayulu ‘T’ which comes historically from ngayu plus an ergative suffix -lu but is synchronically indivisible, the present ergative form being ngayulu-lu; French beaucoup ‘many’ (from beau+coup); or English someone (from some+one), because(by+cause)
and before (by+fore). As demonstrated earlier, the semantic content of such forms and their equivalence or non-equivalence to indivisible primes must be assessed according to criteria other than morphological transparency.

Another aspect of the linguistic environment that may influence the direction of change among basic semantic elements is the availability of complex constructions to express common combinations of these meanings. Many examples of this can be seen among Australian Aboriginal languages, where imperative forms and purposive inflections serve to express wanting in many contexts.

Imperatives, marked in most Australian languages by a verbal inflection traceable to a proto-Australian suffix *-ka, are used very freely in everyday social interaction. These imperative forms (e.g. kuli-la ‘listen-IMP’ in Yankuntjatjara) do not convey any compulsion or obligation upon the addressee, a fact in keeping with the non-hierarchical nature of Australian Aboriginal society. Even small children disregard imperatives with impunity, in contrast to the Anglo-Australian attitude that the social fabric requires children and other subordinates to do as they are told or face specific consequences. Thus imperatives in Australian languages appear to encode the meaning ‘I want you to do this’, without any additional elements of the kind suggested above for English imperatives.

Purposive constructions are also very frequently used in Australian languages. Many languages have both nominal and verbal purposive affixes, as in the Arrernte examples below, where the suffix -tyeke marks purposive on verbs, and on nominals the dative inflection -ke functions to indicate purpose. Most of these purposive affixes are traceable to a proto-Australian purposive suffix *-ku. Like the Kayardild purpose constructions described in 5.2 above, they encode the meaning combination ‘X wants this: P; because of this X does V’, where P is the Objective and V the antecedent. This combination of meanings can be expressed in Arrernte by means of purposive constructions like these:

(7)  Anwerne lheke kere-ke / kere ine-tyeke.
    we         went    meat-DAT / meat get-PURP
    ‘We went for meat / to get meat.’
    i.e. ‘We wanted meat; because of that we went.’
The same combination of meanings can also be expressed via *ahentye* ‘want’:

(8) *Anwerne kere-ke ahentyeneke; ikwere-nge anwerne lheke.*

we meat-DAT wanted that-because we went

‘We wanted meat; because of that we went.’

However, because the purposive construction is an efficient means of expressing precisely this combination of meanings, there is far less motivation for speakers to use *ahentye* ‘want’ in these contexts. Similarly, the meaning of *kuli-la* ‘listen-IMP’ can also be expressed in terms of *mukuringanyi* ‘want’ in Yankunytjatjara: *Ngayulu mukuringanyi nyuntu kulintjaku* ‘I want you listen-PURP’ or *Ngayulu mukuringanyi nyanga alatji: nyuntu kulini* ‘I want this: you listen’. But for everyday communicative functions the imperative construction is a far more efficient way to express this meaning.

The communicative efficacy of these two semantically complex constructions leads speakers to use them frequently, and this produces a corresponding reduction in the frequency of use of the basic WANT equivalents *ahentye* and *mukuringanyi* in these languages. This is not because the notion of wanting is nonexistent or unimportant in these cultures: the very high frequency of imperatives and purposives suggests quite the opposite. But the availability of these functionally useful semantic combinations in pre-packaged form is a feature of the linguistic environment that influences speakers’ use of the basic desiderative constructions. In the development of some languages the less frequently used desiderative forms may eventually fall out of use altogether, and their functions may be taken over by the purposive morpheme. This process of language change may be what brought about the Kayardild situation described in Chapter 5, where WANT is expressed by the grammatical morpheme *-THu(ru)* and not by any other independent lexeme.

It may prove possible to identify across languages certain recurring ‘semantic molecules’, pre-packaged combinations of primes such as ‘I want you to do this’ (*I WANT THIS: YOU DO THIS*) and ‘X wants this: P; because of this X does something’. This would make sense from a functional perspective, since combinations of meaning like these are associated with two of the most common language functions, the regulatory and
explanatory functions. But such generalisations should be approached with caution because of the language-specific nature of all complex meaning combinations. Imperative constructions are extremely widespread across languages, but by virtue of their semantic complexity they are open to language-specific variation. It is predictable that imperatives in all languages will include the combination 'I want you to do this', but the presence or absence of other illocutionary elements cannot be predicted, and can only be established on the basis of language-specific evidence.

Language contact is another feature of the external social environment that clearly influences language change. It is at first difficult to imagine why a language would need to borrow an exponent for a semantic prime, but the motivation and processes involved in such a change become clear from closer examination of examples. Miskitu has borrowed the English word want, while its closely related neighbour Ulwa has the polysemous verb walnaka 'seek, want':

(9) Yang dusa pihnì di-aia want sna. (Miskitu)
Yang panka pihka buih-naka walt-ayang. (Ulwa)
1s stick white smoke-INF want(-)PRES1
'I want to smoke a cigarette.'

The Miskitu verb plikaia 'seek' is sometimes used in a desiderative sense, just as walnaka is; thus it may well be that plikaia was used as the main Miskitu desiderative prior to the borrowing of want, though want is now the most frequently used desiderative.

In describing this situation, Hale has proposed that the borrowing of want suggests that it may represent a conceptual universal, and that the motivation for borrowing was to name a concept known to Miskitu speakers, but for which they had no fully satisfactory word. Hale does not view walnaka and plikaia as precisely equivalent to WANT because of the distributional resonance arising from the other meaning, 'seek'. However, on the criteria proposed here, Ulwa walnaka would qualify as an equivalent of WANT; the 'seek' sense is a more complex meaning, presumably definable in terms of wanting, in that to 'seek' an object is to do something because one wants to find or have that object. As desiderative uses of Miskitu plikaia are still found, the present situation is
probably that it too is polysemous, but that its desiderative sense is falling out of use due to the availability of the borrowed *want*.

This is a common process of semantic change in a language contact situation: polysemy of a word like *plikaia* ‘want, seek’ can motivate borrowing of a term (*want*) that corresponds to one of the meanings. The availability of this unambiguous term leads to a decrease in use of *plikaia* in the desiderative sense, and semantic specialisation may result in the eventual loss of this meaning of *plikaia*. The fact that one of the meanings here is a semantic prime is no obstacle to this natural process of language change. For a time, *want* and *plikaia* in its desiderative sense are allolexes of WANT. This allolexical relationship may remain stable if each allolex has a significant functional load, as Samoan *fia* and *mana'o* have; but if *plikaia* ‘want’ performs no grammatical or pragmatic function that cannot be fulfilled by *want*, then *plikaia* is vulnerable to semantic reduction and may soon come to be used only in the sense of ‘seek’.

Borrowing is a notoriously unpredictable kind of historical change in languages, and there may be no explanation why *want* should have been borrowed into Miskitu but not Ulwa. Polysemy of words like *plikaia* or *walnaka* is not in itself a sufficient motivation for lexical change; there are many examples of languages tolerating a much greater degree of polysemy than this. Although language change processes deserve more attention than they have hitherto received in NSM semantic research, the preliminary indications are that exponents of semantic primes themselves may not be any more or less susceptible than other linguistic elements to natural processes of language change.

A more fruitful application of the NSM approach to language change may be in providing an analysis of the interaction of lexical, grammatical, social and cultural influences in the historical development of languages, along some of the lines suggested above. None of these influences operates in isolation, and only an analysis based on meaning can provide a coherent account of their interaction. Moreover, while many aspects of language change remain unpredictable, a meaning-based approach can predict some things about the direction of change, both semantic and grammatical change.

There are several examples of apparently unidirectional change among desiderative expressions, that could be thought of in terms of two questions about language change: where do desiderative terms come from, and where do they go? While the patterns of lexical relations
discussed in Chapter 2 are suggestive, the direction of lexical change is not always clear, particularly for languages without historical documentation. In Ulwa, for example, it may not be possible to determine whether the 'seek' sense of walnaka predated the desiderative sense or vice versa. In Arrernte, the body part sense of ahentye may predate the desiderative sense, since it has the form of ahe-, possibly a root having to do with breathing, plus nominaliser -ntyte. In Australian languages there is a general tendency to semantic extension of body part terms; but there are also several examples of lexical association between wanting and breath, so whether the meaning 'throat' predated the meaning 'want' is unclear.

In various languages with written documentation, desiderative words have developed from terms with more externally accessible reference. In English the decline in use of want with reference to material lack is suggestive, though whether the WANT meaning arose more recently than the other is not fully clear; the modals should and ought have developed from words for 'owe'. Meanwhile will has developed from a primarily desiderative term in the direction of a future tense marker. A similar direction of change has been noted in many unrelated languages; for example the purposive -ku has in some Australian languages developed into a future tense marker.

It would be premature to draw any conclusions here, but it can be noted that changes along these lines would be consistent with some general patterns of historical change. Grammatically, some desideratives show signs of transition from less to more verbal in character, for example the basically nominal Arrernte ahentye 'want' acquiring the verbal elements ne/-irre-, the verb kaia 'be' accompanying want in Miskitu, or the anomalous verbal properties of the desiderative morpheme la in Buru, mentioned in 4.3 above. In those cases where desideratives have developed into future tense markers, this has been accompanied by other signs of grammaticalisation such as affixation or loss of independent lexical status.

Semantically, changes along these lines may be associated with a general direction of historical change described as 'subjectification', whereby meanings tend to be extended from reference to an external situation to encompass reference based purely on the speaker's opinion. This kind of development has been traced by Traugott in different classes of words. For example, among the English modals, should has developed from referring to an externally observable situation where someone is
obliged to pay money to a creditor, to an internally referenced sense of obligation. The same trend can even be seen in the extensions of speech act verbs such as promise from an externally referenced situation where someone makes a verbal undertaking, to an expression of the speaker’s opinion as in It promises to rain. This is a kind of metaphorical extension, but one that takes a specific, predictable direction.

In the case of desideratives, something like subjectification may be operating in cases where terms with external reference to a body part or a speech act are also used with reference to the internal experience of wanting. And a further operation of the same principle could accompany the development of a desiderative into a future tense marker. Although desideratives refer to an internal experience rather than to anything external, this experience is directly accessible at least to its experiencer, the Principal; while an utterance about a future event relies entirely on the opinion of the speaker, since what will happen in the future is not directly accessible to anyone.

If this is so, then the process of subjectification may hinge upon non-compositional relationships between semantic elements similar to those suggested earlier; in particular, the contrast between what one can know and what one can think and say. For example, one can know that ‘this person says this: P’, whether it be a promise or an expression of desire, while one cannot know directly that another person wants something. One can think and say ‘this person wants this: P’, but one cannot know it; it is the speaker’s subjective opinion formed on the basis of observation or conjecture. Only the Principal can know ‘I want this: P’. Moreover, a person who wants the Objective P can think and say ‘this will happen after now’, but no-one can know ‘this will happen after now’; this is again the speaker’s subjective opinion. Perhaps, then, the subjectification process has its basis in the human ability to think and say things that are beyond the bounds of the speaker’s knowledge; and to talk about things like future events as if one knows they will happen. The linguistic mechanism may reflect a cognitive one.

The principle of subjectification may interact with the principle of relevance, proposed earlier as a way of understanding the use of desideratives with inanimates. If want is a universal of the kind proposed here, listeners faced with the task of assigning a meaning to an utterance like the Ewe Tsi di bé ye-a dza ‘Rain wants to fall’ are aware at some level that want can only be predicated of I, You, or Someone, not of
a SOMETHING like rain. Assuming that the speaker has said something relevant, listeners may access two possible sources of information external to the utterance, in order to construct a plausible inference. One source is the universal syntax of WANT whereby there must be a Principal, and this Principal is more likely to be the first person than any other. If applied directly, this would yield the interpretation 'someone (possibly the speaker) wants this: rain will fall'.

The other source is the subjectification principle, that the utterance may be interpretable in terms of opinion rather than knowledge. This could yield an interpretation along the following lines. If someone says 'this person wants to do V', one can think 'some time after now this person will do V'; one can't know this will happen, but one can form the opinion that it will. If someone says something like this about rain: 'rain wants to fall', then one can think 'some time after now rain will fall'. Both of these possible interpretations of a desiderative in combination with an inanimate are attested in languages (compare Samoan and Chinese, as discussed earlier in this chapter).

Note that this view of subjectification does not rely on direct metaphorical interpretation ('rain is like a person'). Metaphors like this can be ephemeral creative or poetic associations made by an individual, or regular patterns of association in the literary or philosophical tradition of a particular culture. But they do not provide an adequate basis for explaining much about processes of pragmatic inference or semantic shift, or the influence of these processes on language structure.

If the combinatorial properties of semantic primes, and the non-compositional relationships between them, contribute in the ways suggested here to the construction of pragmatic inferences, then they may offer some insight into the operation of some other processes of cognitive association less directly related to language. For example, a pattern of association along the following lines is sometimes described by people experiencing compulsive behaviour: 'if I want to do something (e.g. have a smoke), I think: when I do it I will feel something good'; this may then lead to an association 'if I don't do it I will feel something bad', and a further association 'if I don't do it something bad will happen to me', leading to a compulsive thought 'because of this I have to do it'.

People who have been treated abusively by others often think something like this: 'if someone is a bad person, other people want to do bad things to this person'; 'people did bad things to me'; 'because of this I
think: I am a bad person'; and so on down the path of associations to low self-esteem. In such a situation people often experience the emotion of shame, a key cognitive component of which is 'people can know something bad about me'; and this emotion is often reflected in both linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour, such as not wanting to talk, and wanting to avoid contact with other people. Thought patterns of this kind can also lead towards a motivation for self-abusive behaviour ('I think: I am a bad person'; 'because of this I want to do bad things to me'); and to the adoption of a victim role in interactions with others ('I think: I am a bad person'; 'because of this people can do bad things to me').

Obviously, paths of association like these are an individual matter. Whether or not a person in a given situation will think along these lines at all, or repeat such patterns of association until they become habitual and influence the person's behaviour, is not predictable. Moreover, they do not follow predictable logical sequences. It does not necessarily follow that I have to do something just because I'll feel something bad if I don't; or that if people did something bad to me it was because I am a bad person. Some approaches to counselling focus on helping people to recognise such logical inconsistencies in their belief systems, underlying emotional distress and dysfunctional behaviour.

Illogical though they may be, such patterns of association are remarkably frequent and tenacious in human thought. They are similar to the overgeneralisations made by children in the normal course of cognitive development. It is normal for small children, when they don't get what they want, to feel that something very bad is happening to them, and to express great distress; and to take a very egocentric view of other people's actions and feelings, assuming things like 'dad is angry because I am bad' when dad's anger may really be due to a bad day at work. The potential for adults and children to formulate these combinations of meaning and associative relationships may to some extent be predictable from the combinatorial properties and non-compositional relationships among basic semantic elements. Analysis of these semantic relationships may thus contribute to an understanding of more general patterns of cognitive function and dysfunction.

The impact on language structure and interpretation of influences from culture, pragmatics, sociolinguistic and environmental factors poses immense challenges to linguistic description. Theoretical constructs such as metaphor, subjectification and relevance have great explanatory power,
but none of them alone provides a full account of linguistic mechanisms in the representation of meaning, or of how these undergo change. This section has tried to suggest how a theory based on universal elements of meaning, each with its distinctive combinatorial properties and relationships to other universal elements, may provide a key to the interactions of these influences on language structure and language change.

But while a theory based on meaning, and on combinations and interactions of meanings, may have great explanatory power, and should be able to predict all meaning-bearing aspects of language structure from semantic structure, it may never be fully predictive with respect to language change. The great variety of language-specific properties and their influences on the expression of universal elements of meaning are never static. Language change is a constantly unfolding process, and any theory of language universals has to come to grips with this fact in some way.

The NSM approach has a good deal to offer in explaining these processes, and in predicting some of the directions of change, but it cannot predict which changes will occur in a language, or when. Human creativity and ingenuity in manipulating semantic elements and combinations thereof appears limitless. Hence there is plenty of room in such a theory for almost infinite language-specific and culture-specific variation in how those universals are expressed and combined, and how these expressions and combinations develop and change. Given the immense power, flexibility and individuality of human languages, it could not be expected that semantic primes would appear in pure, unique or unmistakeable forms that match up isomorphically across languages; but rather that each language represents these basic semantic elements according to some universal principles, and that careful attention to these principles will yield valid crosslinguistic generalisations.
Notes to Chapter 1
The Ewe word *di* is discussed in Ameka (1994:67-68); Buru and Japanese are treated in more detail in sections 4.3 and 3.1 below.

1.1
The Arrernte example is from ECAED (1994:83). The involvement of wanting in emotion terms, speech acts, and transitivity can be seen from analyses like those of Wierzbicka (1992a:119-179) and Goddard (1995a); Wierzbicka (1987a); Dixon (1984; 1991a:268-297), Hopper and Thompson (1980), and Wierzbicka (1975; 1988:237-255). My concept of linguistic description was formed by reading Sapir (1921) and Bloomfield (1933) before undertaking any formal study of linguistics, and later through studying Chomsky (1965, 1972) and Comrie (1981), along with many other theoretical works and descriptive grammars of languages.

1.2
These religious and philosophical ideas are seen in Lao Tzu (1963:96), *Bhagavadgītā* (Radhakrishnan 1948:175), Harvey (1990:47-72). While such teachings clearly refer to all types of desire, there is a widespread tendency among religious practitioners, from many different cultural backgrounds, to interpret them with reference to specifically sexual desire. The special salience of this particular type of desire finds linguistic reflection in the fact that words for ‘wanting’ in many different languages can be used with sexual connotations (see section 3.3). There is of course considerable discussion and controversy surrounding the translation of terms from other languages into English as *desire, wish, want* and so on.


1.3


The semiotic perspective adopted here is more in sympathy with Peirce (1932, v.2:230ff) and Eco (1984), than with approaches that locate meaning outside language, for example in truth conditions or logical

1.4

Similar explications of LOVE are found in Wierzbicka (1992a:145-146), see also Goddard (1995a:342-348), cf. the complex phrases in, for example, SOED (1993:1636). Wierzbicka (1992a:146) discusses other linguistic evidence for treating the non-interpersonal use of LOVE as a separate meaning. The concepts of allolexy and semantic valency are discussed in Goddard & Wierzbicka (1994:31-34) and Wierzbicka (1995b); the Aboriginal English study is Harkins (1994).

Hill (1987), has investigated the proposed primes GOOD and BAD. The studies in Goddard & Wierzbicka (1994) include brief discussions of WANT in the combination ‘I want to do V’ in fourteen different languages.

Notes to Chapter 2
The sample of languages considered here is an informally constructed one, influenced by the availability and quality of sources, but care was taken to include languages from as many different language families and higher-level groupings as possible (and isolated and creole languages) in an effort to make the sample genuinely representative of the world’s languages (see Bell 1978, Bybee 1985:24-26, Comrie 1981:10-12, Perkins 1989). The languages examined in more detail in the following chapters are ones that illustrate particular problems and issues in identifying and analysing their desiderative constructions, and for which speakers and/or linguists thoroughly familiar with them could be consulted in addition to documentary sources. Throughout this work the examples cited are, wherever possible, ones that are attested in other written sources, or collected for other purposes, so as to minimise the possibility of interference that could result from direct crosslinguistic elicitation of particular desiderative constructions. Sources of examples are given in the notes to each section, and adjustments to the original glosses for the sake of consistency have been kept to a minimum; but the interpretations of examples and linguistic evidence, on the basis of the principles and methods explored in this work, are my own.


2.1
Examples in this section are from AHLSD (1986:549), Anderson (1978:430), Mosel (1994:338), Mosel & Hovdaugen (1992:461), Sulkala & Karjalainen (1992:36), and Arandic Dictionary Project (p.c.) Bybee (1985:147) found that nearly a third of languages in her sample had zero morphological marking on imperatives. Fijian (Dixon 1988:91), and Longgu (Hill 1994:318) also distinguish lexically between wanting to do something and wanting someone else to do something. Albanian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Pashto and Hausa ( Noonan 1985:52-95, Robinson 1959) all have subjunctives in
both coreferential and non-coreferential complements of ‘want’, while Moru, like English, has infinitives in both (Tucker 1967). Turkana (Dimordial 1983:372-373) has infinitive in the former and a fully conjugated verb in the latter, while in Maasai (Tucker & Mpaayei 1955:61-63) the same ‘N-tense’ verb form is used in both construction types.

The desiderative sense of Iatmul wə- ‘say, want’ has purposive complements (Staalsen 1972), like Arrernte (see section 2.2, Wilkins 1989:451-452, ECAED 1994:49); the desiderative sense of Kalam og- ‘say, want’ has hortative complements (Pawley 1994:400), like Kpelle (Welmers 1973:359); nominalised complements like those in Jarawara (Dixon 1993) are mentioned in section 3.2. Desideratives with no special marking on the complement verb include Vietnamese muộn ‘want’ (Nguyen 1966), Mandarin yào ‘want’ (Chappell 1994:115-121), Haitian vle ‘want’ (Spears 1990:131-132); with Saramaccan ke ‘want’ the complement verb has no special marking but is introduced by the complementiser fu for both coreferential and non-coreferential complements (Byrne 1987:124, 141-142). Wolof (Munro & Gaye 1991) and Haitian (Spears 1990:130-132), like Samoan (section 3.3), have subjunctive markers that are optional, and add connotations of uncertainty to basic desiderative constructions.

2.2

Desiderative constructions in Yimas have the irrealis/future /purposive marker -ŋ (~k) where someone wants to do something, and ‘say’ plus infinitive complement where someone wants someone else to do something (Foley 1986:156-157, 1991); while Selepet desiderative construc-
tions have ‘say’ and ‘do’ with a future-marked complement verb, and switch-reference marking to indicate whether the subordinate actor is coreferential or not (e.g. Ari-we s-m o-an [go-1sFUT say-SA do-1sImmPAST] ‘I want to go’) (McElhanon 1975:527-568); cf. also the desiderative construction with ‘do’ plus future-marked complement in Kaluli (section 1.2). Semantic constraints on bound morphemes are discussed in Shibatani (1976a:1-40), cf. also Haiman (1983:782, 1985). On accessibility to grammaticalisation, see Bybee & Dahl (1989); Heine, Claudi & Hünnemeyer (1991).

2.3

2.4

2.5


For languages with multiple desiderative lexemes, it is necessary to investigate them individually in order to determine whether or not they are compositionally related, and whether they can be defined in terms of one basic desiderative element, as demonstrated in this section. Such sets of desiderative terms include the English words mentioned in section 2.1 (*want, wish, desire, hope, intend, yearn* etc.); the Acehnese ones seen in 3.1 (*tém, meuh’eat, keumeung, meu, (keu)neuk, teugiyan, ék* etc.); the Hungarian *kell, akar, kiván, óhajt, szeret, vágy*, etc. (Orságh 1969); and similar sets in other languages.

**Notes to Chapter 3**

This approach to meaning correspondences is suggested by Bogusławski (1994a); cf. also his remarks on Polish *chcieć, mieć chęć*, ‘want’ (1994a:90); the *mne xočet’sja* example is from Wheeler (1972:874).
3.1


3.2

Nominalised complements are also found with muna- 'want' in Imbabura Quechua (Cole & Hermon 1981). Georgian -nda 'want' can have a nominalised ('masdar') form or a fully conjugated finite verb form as its complement (Harris 1981:157, 294). Basque (Saltarelli 1988:141-142) and Uzbek (Sjoberg 1963), like Yankunytjatjara (Goddard 1991b:49), have nominalisers on complement verbs whose subject is someone other than the wanter. Indo-European infinitive forms have been shown to have developed historically from nominalisations (Jeffers 1975); and the Arrernte purposive suffix -tyeke could possibly have developed from nominaliser -tye plus dative -ke (cf. examples 21a,b in Chapter 2).
Accusative and possessive marking on complement verbs with Luiseño ma’ma- ‘want’ could be considered similar to nominalisation (e.g. Felisita čaami ma’maq poy [čam-ma’ma-x-i] ‘Felisita wants us [to like her] [1pPOSS-like-ACC-her]’, Langacker 1977:171). In Moru, -le ‘want’ takes complement verbs in infinitive form, but possessive marking on non-coreferential complement subjects produces a nominalisation-like effect (e.g. Ma-le ku Ayangwa ri wa omou-ni [I-want not Ayangwa POSS beer drink-INF] ‘I don’t want Ayangwa to drink beer’, Tucker 1967). In the Diegueño construction 𬜯ߘ人生 yu rschein swaarп-x uma white [I there go.in-1s-UNR.SPEC want-3p/3sUNR not(3p)] ‘They won’t want me to go there’, there is no overt marker of subordination and the two clauses are in a paratactic relationship, but the pronominal crossreferencing on swaarп-‘want’ indicates 3p subject and 3s object (swaarп-x ‘they want it’) (Langdon 1970). Here again the effect is somewhat similar to a nominalisation. A similar paratactic construction is found in Nunggubuyu (Heath 1984:583).

3.3
Examples in this section are from Mosel (1994:338), Mosel & Hovdhaugen (1992:354-362, 605, 709-716), and Asafou So’o (p.c.), cf. also the Fijian constructions with via ‘want’ (Dixon 1988:205-208). The term ‘ergative’ applied to verbs whose argument structure includes an ergative-marked agent follows Mosel & Hovdhaugen’s description of Samoan, but cf. also Dixon’s (1987:5-6, 13) caveats on the use of this term.

3.4
Non-coreferential complements of Thai ย่าก ‘want’ and Khmer iators reator ‘want’ are full clauses introduced by switch-reference markers หาย and ジャー respectively; both of these forms also occur as main verbs meaning ‘give’ (Diller 1994:153, Ehrman 1972:102-103, Poo-israkij 1993). In Turkana, the coreferential แอสกี้ เย็น a-k-imuj ‘I want to eat’ has the verb in infinitive form, while แอสกี้ เย็น ื่อง r-ar-รก ‘I want you to kill it’ has the fully conjugated verb form r-ar-รก ‘you-kill-A’, as does the reflexive แอสกี้ เย็น a-iwa-j (เย็น bonj ‘I want to hide (I) self’ (Dimmendal 1983:373-381). See also Van Valin (1985:392-393) on the tight syntactic linkage between Lakhota ชี ‘want’ and both coreferential complements like Mary ลำับไก wa-ชี ‘I want to see Mary’ and non-coreferential ones like Wičhāska ki Mary นะยูทอ ่ฟิช ‘The man wants Mary to buy food’. To and for...to complements are differentiated by Wierzbicka (1988:109-132) but not by Bresnan (1979:79), Lakoff (1968) or Noonan (1985:43), cf. also Dixon (1991a: 225-229); I regret for you to be in this fix is acceptable to Kiparsky & Kiparsky (1971:363). On propositions and facts, cf. Dirven (1989), Kiparsky & Kiparsky (1971), Karttunen (1971); on independent negation of ‘want’ and ‘wanted’ propositions cf. Cornulier (1973), Horn (1975), Jackendoff (1971), Shopen (1972).

Notes to Chapter 4

4.1
4.2
Examples in this section are from Evans (1985:67, 236; 1988:241; 1994:208-210; and p.c.) On ‘if...then’ constructions see Evans (1994:217). The English should, as found in some of the glosses, can also be construed in terms like ‘it is good if X does this’ and/or ‘it is bad if X doesn’t do this’, cf. Harkins (1994:97).

4.3

4.4
Examples in this section are from Grimes (1991:137, 213-223); he also gives a thorough description of Buru verb classes (1991, chap.7), and discusses Hale (1991:137-138).

4.5
The example in this section is from Grimes (1991:216).

Notes to Chapter 5

5.1

5.2
5.3
Examples in this section are from Evans (1985:209, 314; 1994:219); the modal case marking system is described briefly in Evans (1994:203-204) and more fully in Evans (1985).

5.4
Examples in this section are from Evans (1994:225 and p.c.)

5.5

Notes to Chapter 6

6.2
Arofa and love are explicated by Wierzbicka (1992a:155, 145); muku-ringanyi and sayang by Goddard (1990, 1991b, 1995a:344). See Bogusławski (1994a:51) on matrices of distinctive features versus semantic content. On Thai yâak see Diller (1994:153); on contextually conditioned variation see Goddard & Wierzbicka (1994:34); on French time expressions see Peeters (1994:435). Constructions like I want that I should go are found in Indian English, where the modal and that complement are associated with some degree of uncertainty.

The same principle of language-specific contextually conditioned grammatical marking applies to the assignment of case marking in desiderative constructions. For example, the Principal is marked dative in Tamil enakku kaapi veequm 'I-DAT want coffee' (Ascher 1985:169), but nominative in Spanish (Yo) quiero café 'I(NOM) want-1s coffee', cf. also Davidson (1990:359-360), Hook (1990:322) on Hindi; Klaiman (1980) on Bengali. The Performer is marked accusative in English I don't want him(ACC) to drink beer, but possessive in Moru Ma-le ku Ayangwa ri wa omou-ni 'I don't want Ayangwa POSS drink beer' (Tucker 1967). On the meaning of to in English complements see Duffley (1992:19, 136-137),

6.3

6.4

Semantic properties of THIS are discussed by Goddard and Wierzbicka (1994:40); on Japanese kono/kore see Onishi (1994:371-372); on similar distinctions in Arrente and Indonesian see Harkins & Wilkins (1994:291) and Poerwadarminta (1976:105, 382). An obvious problem with ‘X thinks: I want this’ is that wanting may not necessarily be accompanied by thought; this is reflected in the fact that (in English at least) many people attribute both thinking and wanting to higher animals, like dogs, but more readily attribute wanting than thinking to, for example, insects.