

Introduction

Background

- Modal verbs vary in interpretation (root, epistemic etc.) depending on contextual factors ("polyfunctionality")... The status of modal verbs between full and auxiliary verbs varies crosslinguistically... In comparison with other modal verbs WANT shows an exceptional behaviour... There is a semantic linking property of a thematic role ('volitional force') in WANT, but this linking is not always manifested overtly... There is a wide range of syntactic WANT-constructions (cf. data section, samples from English, German and Romance).

Goal

- Define 'volitional force' and integrate it in the theory of modality
Sketch a unified formal analysis of the interpretation of volitional force and its interaction with (morpho-)syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic factors in a crosslinguistic view (Work in Progress).

Volitional Modality

Modal relation

=> necessity

(cf. Kratzer 1981:42; relative modal phrase, cf. Kratzer 1977, modal operator, cf. e.g. Zifonoun et al. 1997 among many others)

Goal of modality

=> a preferable world situation

(goal/destination of modality, cf. Calbert 1975:50, modal field, cf. Bech 1949:6; , 2nd argument of the modal relation, cf. Kratzer 1977:341)

Modal base

=> buletic / doxastic

(cf. Kratzer 1981:77; conversational background, cf. Kratzer 1981:45; 1st argument of the modal relation, Kratzer 1977:341; accessibility relation, cf. Heim 1992)

Source of modality

=> an intentional / volitional entity

(Source/origin of modality, cf. Calbert 1975; ordering source, cf. Kratzer 1981:77; modal factor, cf. Bech 1949; "intrasubjektiver Modalfaktor", cf. Bech 1951:7; 2004: 98)

The modal base in WANT-constructions contains an obligatory linking position to an ordering source, which, in the canonical use, is an argument ("subject") thematically compatible with volitional force towards the goal of modality. The modal relation basically is one of necessity.

Volitional Force

Internal theta-role for WANT / goal (cf. also Gruber 1965):

- [real] => projected future / subjunctive / de dicto / non factive
no independent existence (cf. Dowty 1991, Primus 1999) / ~theme

External theta-role for WANT / source (cf. also Gruber 1965) in (1)-(17):

- agentive animate cause (Calbert 1975:16,18,22)
agent (Abraham 2005:261)
agent / cognizer (Gerdts 1988)
agent-oriented modality (Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca 1994, Heim 1995)

But (test from Cruse 1973:13):

(i) Engl. A: What did John do? B: ??He wanted to go home.

=> no actual "doing" => no agentive theta-role / WANT as a mental or attitude verb: a non factive desiderative (Heim 1992, von Stechow 1999)

- experiencer (Hacquard 2006:170)
senser (Verplaetse 2003:159)
bearer of an intentional attitude (Doherty 1985:120)
intentional force / force of will (Copley 2002)

One can WANT something without having to do it intentionally, cf. especially (11), (15); volition is more "being compatible with desire"

(cf. Hacquard 2006:164) / "to prefer" (cf. Calbert 1975, Heim 1992 etc.)

Proposal: volitional force (VF): 'being mentally necessary for X'

Semantic Linking

Semantic linking of VF to an external theta-position / subject:

(1), (4)-(17), (23); metaphorical: (20), (21), (23)

Semantic linking of VF to an external theta-position (reactivated):

(2), (3)

Semantic linking of VF to a contextual locative:

(29)-(31)

Semantic linking of VF to the speech context / arbitrary reference:

(17b), (18), (19), (24), (25)-(28), (32)

VF shifted to the meaning of future:

(33)-(35)

Neutralized VF:

(22)

VF concerns a preferable world situation:

(1)-(21), (25)-(32)

VF concerns an assertion of a world situation:

(23), (24)

Future world situation:

(33)-(35)

Interpretation

Adaptation of the modular analysis for HAVE / WANT (cf. Kayne 1993, Harley 2003)

WANT = [for XP] [YP [MUST BE] [P° XP]]

Interpretation depends on syntactic and semantic linking compatibilities:

- (1) For John, it is mentally necessary that a beer is with him.
(5) For her, it is mentally necessary to be in town tomorrow.
(7) For his father, it is mentally necessary that he is a doctor.
(13) For my son, it is mentally necessary to buy this book.
(15) For me, it is mentally necessary that you buy this book.
(16)c For the fairies, it was mentally necessary that nobody touched their water.
(17)a For everybody, it is mentally necessary to be loved.
(18) For the speech context, it is mentally necessary that the book is read.
(22) For the speech context, it is necessary that the door opens, but it doesn't.
(23) For him, it is necessarily true that he never saw this woman.
(27) For the speech context, it is necessary to wash the car.
(30)a For the speech context, it is necessary that there are three eggs.
(32) For the speech context, it is necessary that this pasta is with tomato sauce.
(34) In a future context, mankind is (necessarily?) extinct.

Mental necessity => contextual necessity => immediate future => future

Data

WANT with a nominal complement

- (1) Eng. John wants a beer.
(2) Ita. L'esistenza dell'uomo è stata voluta da Dio.
The existence of man is been WANT.PART.F.SG by God
"The existence.F.SG of man was wanted by God."
(3) Eng. Smaller classes are wanted by teachers' unions.
(www.irvineworldnews.com)

Semantics: volitional subject-theta-role
Syntax: transitive main verb (can be passivized) / direct object or concealed complement clause with empty X° (transitive/intransitive V°, SC, P°...)?
(References: Calbert 1975:37, McCawley1979, Redder 1983, Den Dikken, Larson & Ludlow 1996, Fodor & Lepore 1998, Harley 2003)

WANT with directional (ADV/PP)-complement

- (4) Ger. Ich will hier weg.
I WANT.1.SG here away
"I want to leave."
(5) Ger. Morgen will sie in die Stadt.
Tomorrow WANT.3.SG she in town
"Tomorrow she wants to go to town."
(6) Col. Engl. The dog wants out.
(www.thefreedictionary.com)

Semantics: volitional subject-theta-role; directional complement
Syntax: intransitive directional (with implicit empty verb GO?)
(References: Zifonoun et al. 1997:1255f etc.)

WANT with a Small Clause complement

- (7) Ita. Suo padre lo vuole medico.
his father him.CL WANT.3.SG doctor
"His father wants him to become a doctor."
(8) Ita. Ti voglio sana e salva.
I WANT.3.SG you healthy.F.SG and save.F.SG
"I want you to be healthy and save."
(9) Ger. Ich wollte den Tee aber mit Zitrone!
I WANT.PAST.1.SG the tea but with lemon
"But I wanted to have the tea with lemon!"
(10) Nea. Mario vò mannata chella lettera.
Mario WANT.3.SG send.PART.F.SG this letter.F.SG
"Mario wants to be sent this letter."

Semantics: volitional subject-theta-role
Syntax: SC verb; in (27) the subject of WANT is also implicitly the recipient of the letter (as in the English passive construction in the translation)
(References: Redder 1983, Reis 2001, GGIC, Rohlf's 1969, § 738:131)

WANT with a finite complement:

- (11) Ger. Hans will, dass sein Sohn nachhause kommt.
Hans WANT.3.SG that his son home come.3.SG
"Hans wants his son to come home"
(12) Ger. Karl, will, daß er, den Leuten gefällt / ein großes Geschenk bekommt / *den Leuten hilft / *ihr ein Auto schenkt.
K. WANT.3.SG that he the people please.3.SG / a big gift get.3.SG / *the people help.3.SG / *her a car give.3.SG
"K. wants to please people/ to get a huge gift / to help people / to give her a car."

Semantics: volitional subject-theta-role; restrictions for subject identity
Syntax: transitive verb, subjectidentity impossible, if embedded subject is agentive (in this case, a control structure is needed); in several languages the subjunctive is needed in the embedded clause
(References: Reis 2001, Zifonoun et al. 1997)

WANT with an infinitival complement

- (13) Ger. Mein Sohn will dieses Buch kaufen.
my son WANT.3.SG this book buy
"My son wants to buy this book."
(14) Ita. a. Mia figlia ha voluto andarci.
my daughter has WANT.PART go-there.CL
b. Mia figlia ci è voluta andare.
my daughter.F.SG there.CL is WANT.PART.F.SG go.
"My daughter wanted to go there (and she did so)."
c. Mia figlia ci voleva andare.
my daughter there.CL WANT.PAST.IMPERF.1.SG go
"My daughter wanted to go home (but maybe she didn't)."

Semantics: volitional subject-theta-role; subject identity
Syntax: modal control verb / ± Restructuring; (14)a shows "actuality entailment" (cf. Hacquard 2006)
(References: Napoli (1981), Rizzi 1982, Öhlschläger 1989, Wurmbrand 2001, Cinque 2001, Cardinaletti & Shlonsky 2004, Hacquard 2006, among many others)

(15) Eng. I want you to buy this book.

Semantics: volitional subject-theta-role
Syntax: modal ECM verb

- (16) Sar. a. Cherjo a benner tue.
WANT.1.SG to come you.NOM
"I want you to come."
Sar. b. Non cheren a cantaremus.
not WANT.3.PL to sing.INF.1.PL
"They don't want us to sing."
Sar. c. Sas fadas non cherian a toccare s'abba issoro.
the fairies not WANT.PAST.3.PL to touch the water of-them
"The fairies didn't want anybody to touch their water."

Semantics: volitional subject-theta-role; the implicit embedded subject in c. has arbitrary reference
Syntax: modal transitive verb / personal infinitive with overt nominal subject in a. / inflected infinitive in b. / impersonal infinitive in c. (without a 'to' c. would automatically be a control structure)
(References: Jones 1993, Mensching 2000)

- (17) Ger. a. Jeder will geliebt werden.
everybody WANT.3.SG loved.part become.PASS.AUX
"Everybody wants to be loved."
b. Das Kind will gestreichelt werden.
the child WANT.3.SG caressed.PART become.PASS.AUX
"The child wants to be caressed / One should caress this child."

Semantics: volitional subject-theta-role, but deontic reading optional in b.
Syntax: modal control (or raising, cf. b.) verb / embedded passive construction

- (18) Ger. Dieser Mensch will bestraft werden.
this man WANT.3.SG punished.PART become.FUT.AUX
"This man should be punished."

Semantics: no volitional subject-theta-role (since world knowledge tells us that being punished is not wanted by anybody) / deontic modality
Syntax: modal raising structure / embedded passive

- (19) Ger. Dieses Buch will gelesen werden.
this book WANT.3.SG read.PART become.PASS.AUX
"One should read this book."

Semantics: no volitional subject-theta-role / deontic modality
Syntax: modal raising structure / embedded passive

- (20) Ita. La nostra casa vuole essere un luogo d'incontro internazionale.
the our house WANT.3.SG be a place of meeting international
"Our house should be/is thought as a international meeting place."
(21) Eng. This essay wants to examine..."

Semantics: volitional subject-theta-role in metaphorical use
Syntax: modal control verb; in Ita. mainly with embedded copula

- (22) Ger. Die Tür will nicht aufgehen
the door WANT.3.SG not open
"The door doesn't open."

Semantics: circumstantial? modality / negation seems to be a trigger for the neutralization of volitional force / the speaker seems to prefer what is negated
Syntax: modal raising structure?
(References: Bech 1949:9)

- (23) Ger. Er will die Frau nie gesehen haben.
he WANT.3.SG the woman never see.PART have
"He maintains that he never saw this woman."

Semantics: epistemic/evidential/inferential modality ("to want the truth of the assertion to be believed"); E_WANT=R2; no projected future;
Syntax: epistemic control verb; embedded posterior or processes / states;
(References: Calbert 1975:16; Doherty 1985, Redder 1983, Reis 2001:301, Öhlschläger 1989, Abraham 2005:249)

- (24) Eng. Do you have coolers? - Coolers? They wanna be on one of the top shelves somewhere.

Semantics: no volitional subject-theta-role; epistemic modality / probability;
Syntax: raising modal
(References: Verplaetse 2003; Krug 2000 "emerging modal")

Deontic WANT-passive

- (25) Cal. Tutti figghioli vonnu amati.
all children WANT.3.PL loved.PART
"All children need to be loved."
(26) Sar. Deu bollu agiudau po fai is scalas.
I WANT.1.SG helped.PART to do the steps
"I need help to climb up the steps."
(27) Eng. This car wants washed.
(Murray & Simon 1999)
(28) Sar. Sa mákkina keret accontzada dae unu meccánicu.
the car WANT.3.SG adjust.PART by a mechanic
"This car needs to be adjusted by a mechanic."

Semantics: normally no volitional subject-theta-role (also if semantically compatible, even more if animate and / or in the 1st P.) / deontic modality
Syntax: auxiliary; in some languages (as basso Polesano, cf. Benincà & Poletto 1994) only admitted in 3.P. (but cf. (16)) / in some languages, the reduced argument of the passive construction can be reactivated (cf. (18)); nevertheless it won't be able to get volitional force / deontic passive construction
(References: Salvioni 1911:379, Jones 1993, Ledgeway 2000, Remberger 2006a/b)

Impersonal deontic WANT-construction

- (29) Ita. Ci vuole una macchina per andarci.
there.CL WANT.3.SG a car to go.there.CL
"One needs a car to go there."
(30) Ita. a. Ci vogliono tre uova.
there.CL WANT.3.PL three eggs
Sar. b. B'at kèrfitu tres ovos [...].
there.CL have.3.SG WANT.PART.M.SG three eggs
"One needs three eggs."
(31) Ita. Ci voleva qualcosa di più, ci voleva che sulla luna ci andassero degli uomini.
there.CL WANT.PAST.3.SG something more there.CL WANT.PAST.3.SG that on-the moon there go.PAST.SUBJ.3.PL of the men
"Something more was needed, it was needed that men would go on the moon."

Semantics: no volitional subject-theta-role, impersonal / deontic modality
Syntax: impersonal modal construction with existential / locative clitic in subject position / only in 3rd person / there might be agreement (Italian) or not (Sardinian) with the 'needed' argument, which is always postverbal / the complement might be an nominal argument or a finite subjunctive clause.

WANT as a deontic copula

- (32) Cal. Sta pasta vo' cu ru sugu...
this pasta WANT.3.SG with the tomato-sauce
"This pasta has to be with tomato sauce."

Semantics: no volitional subject-theta-role / deontic modality
Syntax: deontic copula

WANT-future

- (33) Ita. Sembra che voglia piovere.
seem.3.SG that WANT.SUBJ.3.SG rain
"It seems to be going to rain."
(34) Eng. Mankind will be extinct soon.
(35) Rum. O să lucrez / lucreze.
WANT.INVARIABLE that work.1.SG / work.SUBJ.3.SG
"I / he will work."

Semantics: no volitional or deontic modal meaning (but for volitive will / won't cf. Palmer 2001 among others); future with different flavours;
Syntax: periphrastic auxiliary construction
(References: Heim 1993, Bybee, Perkins & Pagliuca 1994, Van Der Auwera & Plungian 1998, Copley 2006 among many others)

Ger. = German • (Col.) Eng. = (Colloquial) English • Ita. = Italian • Neap. = Neapolitan • Cal. = Calabrian • Sar. = Sardinian • Rum. = Rumanian