

Three Futures in Indonesian

In Indonesian, there are three ways to talk about the future: *mau*, *akan*, and *pasti*, as exemplified in (1). They have different meanings, evidenced by different distributions. Here I present these distributions and a theory of the different (though related) meanings.

We begin by distinguishing *mau* and *akan* through their ability to appear in offers. Typically *mau* cannot be used to make offers; instead *akan*, is used for this purpose, as shown in (2b). The use of *mau* in (2a) conveys that the speaker was already planning on making the coffee, whether the colloquium organizers wanted her to or not. This meaning is incompatible with an offering speech act (Searle, 1975), which requires that the offerer be prepared to *not* carry out the action if the offeree doesn't want it to happen. The action has to be still open for discussion.

To explain these facts, I propose that *akan* is a future modal in the sense of Thomason (1970) (that is, a modal that quantifies universally over branches of the future). *Mau*, however, consists of a temporal inclusion relation (i.e., a Kleinian imperfective aspect) in addition to a future modal. The aspect affects the temporal input to the accessibility relation of the future modal. In (2a), in which offering is not possible, *mau* is in the consequent of a conditional (the antecedent “If you want” can be left unexpressed). The antecedent is evaluated at the topic time t , but the branching is calculated from a larger interval t' due to the presence of the imperfective semantics as part of *mau*. Thus some worlds in which the antecedent p is false, q is true anyway, making the sentence infelicitous as an offer. This state of affairs is graphically depicted in (3).

The third future morpheme, *pasti*, has a different distribution and meaning from *mau* or *akan*. Speakers report that the sentence with *pasti* in (4) reflects a high level of certainty that it will rain. On the other hand, we would not want to say that the corresponding *mau* example in (4), reflects some lesser level of certainty. There too the speaker is absolutely sure.

Yet, nonetheless, there is a clear intuition that *something* about the *pasti* sentences is stronger. Moreover, what is stronger has something to do with the speaker's evidence for the claim. Both the *pasti* examples and the *mau* examples rely on the speaker's evidence, but somehow, the *pasti* examples require more or better or more general evidence, or more strongly inevitable conclusions. I argue that these intuitions stem from a Kleinian temporal inclusion operator with universal instead of existential quantification, as depicted in (5). The “stronger” feeling comes from the quantificational set being larger than it is for either *mau* or *akan*. The presence of aspect in both *mau* and *pasti* allow it to be used about the present, as in *akan*, while a version of the present perfective (=aspectless) constraint (Dowty, 1979) keeps *akan* from occurring in such a context.

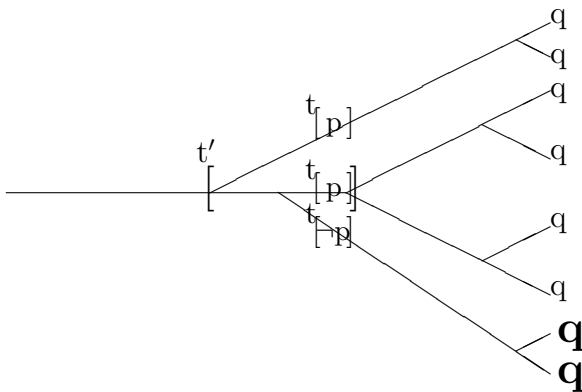
- (1) Budi mau/akan/pasti makan ikan.
Budi MAU/AKAN/PASTI eat fish
'Budi (future) eat fish.'
- (2) We don't have anyone yet to make coffee for the colloquium. Can we have a volunteer?
 - a. Saya mau membuat kopi.
I mau make coffee
'I (future) make coffee.'

#offer

- b. Saya akan membuat kopi.
 I akan make coffee
 'I (future) make coffee.'

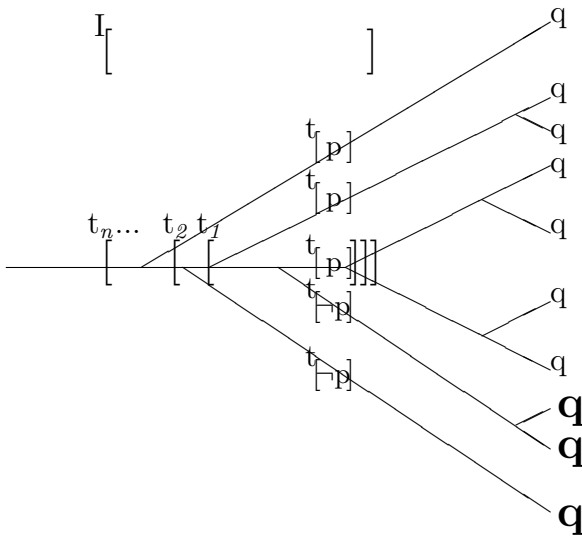
✓offer

(3)



- (4) Mau/#Akan/Pasti hujan.
 MAU/AKAN/PASTI rain
 'It (future) rain.'

(5)



References

- Dowty, D. (1979). *Word meaning and Montague Grammar*. Dordrecht: Reidel.
 Klein, W. (1997). *Time in Language*. New York: Routledge.
 Searle, J. R. (1975). Indirect speech acts. In P. Cole and J. L. Morgan (Eds.), *Syntax and Semantics*, pp. 59–82. New York: Academic Press.
 Thomason, R. (1970). Indeterminist time and truth-value gaps. *Theoria* 36, 264–281.