

Reconsidering *mau*

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Indonesian has no inflectional means of marking future tense; instead, there are four independent words which carry future tense meaning and which occur with high frequency. *Akan*, *hendak*, *ingin*, and *mau*, are syntactically of a familiar type, being auxiliary verbs that immediately precede the main verbs.

Among those auxiliary verbs, *akan* has been considered the most generally used future tense marker, as shown in (1).

- (1) *besok akan turun hujan*
tomorrow akan fall rain
'Tomorrow it will rain.'

The other three auxiliary verbs are considered to denote desire and willingness. Of them *mau* is the most often used, as in (2) and (3) below.

- (2) *mau makan apa?*
mau eat what
'What do you want to eat?'

- (3) *aku mau es krem*
1st p mau ice cream
'I want (to eat) ice cream.'

As has been discussed (e.g. Bybee 1985), as in many other languages, it is clear that these auxiliary verbs have developed from verbs denoting desire. However, I argue that the most frequently used auxiliary verb *mau* has started to be used to denote future tense for near future and evidentials, many times losing the meaning of 'desire'. Compare the following sentences (4) and (5) with the (1) above:

- (4) *mau turun hujan.*
mau fall rain
'It is about to rain.' (It looks like it's going to rain.)

(5) *tim kami mau kalah.*
team 1st p.pl. mau lose
'Our team is about to lose.'

Mau in (4) and (5) functions more as a presumptive. **Speakers of both of (5) and (6) predict the near future as there is a certain evidence for that based on their previous experiences**

This paper reconsiders extended uses of auxiliary verbs to express the future tense, especially *mau*. This study also shows how a verb denoting 'desire' gradually develops into one denoting simple 'future'. I will show a variety of uses of *mau* observed in modern Indonesian literature and media.