

Fehringer C, Corrigan KP.

[The rise of the \*going to\* future in Tyneside English:  
evidence for further grammaticalisation.](#)  
*English World-Wide* 2015, 36(2), 198-227.

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**Link to published article:**

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1075/eww.36.2.03feh>

**Date deposited:**

25/09/2014

# The rise of the *going to* future in Tyneside English: Evidence for further grammaticalisation\*

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This paper investigates the relative frequencies of the two major syntactic markers of future time expression (FTE), *be going to* and *will* in the Diachronic Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English (DECTE). In particular, the rise in the frequency of *be going to* will be examined in the light of current theories of grammaticalisation. The various grammatical constraints that have been identified in the literature as determining the distribution of *will* versus *be going to* will be investigated. It will be shown that a number of interesting changes have occurred within the fifty-year period covered by the data-set. In specific areas of grammar, contrasts have been maintained (e.g. first person versus the other persons in the favouring of *will*), strengthened (e.g. subordinate clauses versus main clauses in the favouring of *going to*), weakened (e.g. the dominance of *will* in contexts of distal future reference) or even introduced (e.g. the apodoses of *if*-clauses emerging as a syntactic niche for the favouring of *will*).

**Keywords:** future, grammaticalisation, variation, English, Tyneside, diachronic, frequency

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\* We are grateful to the Centre for Research in Linguistics and Language Sciences at Newcastle University for an award to assist with the completion of this project from their SDF Fund for Research Collaboration and Infrastructure. We would like to express our thanks to Claire Childs for research assistance with the statistical analyses, and we are also grateful to the two anonymous reviewers of the first draft of this paper for their very helpful feedback.

## 1. Introduction

The rise of *be going to* + infinitive as a future time expression (FTE) in English has often been claimed to be a classic example of grammaticalisation (Bybee et al. 1991, Hopper and Traugott 1993, Bybee et al. 1994). This term is used to describe the process by which lexical morphemes develop gradually into grammatical ones. For instance, the original meaning of the lexical verb *go* is a spatial one, indicating that the subject is on a path moving towards a goal. When combined with a following infinitive, this meaning changed over time to indicate that the subject is on course towards a particular endpoint in time. Thus, expressions such as *I'm going to do it* became functionally equivalent to *I will do it*.

Note, however, that Hopper and Traugott (1993: 82–83) argue for a semantic difference between *be going to* and *will*, in that the origins of the former suggest intention on the part of the subject and also that the event described is likely to be imminent. Indeed, according to Leech et al. (2009), the textbook definition of *be going to* is that it is an FTE that refers to “a future happening that in some sense is implicit in the present state of affairs – typically either an outcome of existing intentions or existing causes – often with the implication that the future event will happen soon” (Leech et al. 2009: 107–108). This differs somewhat from the original meaning of *will* historically, which denotes willingness or desire: *Will you marry me? Of course I will.* (Gotti 2003: 286).<sup>1</sup>

Bybee et al. (1994: 17) point out that, in the process of grammaticalisation, the original meaning of the lexical morpheme may persist to some extent in the new grammatical morpheme and that these varying degrees of persistence can indicate how far along the path of grammaticalisation a particular construction is. For instance, if we consider *be going to* as an indication of movement towards a goal and an expression of intention on the part of the subject, we would expect it to co-occur with animate subjects. Thus, its occurrence in a sentence such as *That tree is going to lose its leaves* (Bybee et al. 1994: 5–6), in which the subject can neither move from A to B nor express intention, shows that the construction is at an advanced stage of grammaticalisation. Similarly, if *going to* expresses motion we would not expect it to co-occur with motion verbs. Yet its acceptability in sentences such as *Are you going to go and see John today?* demonstrates that it has undergone semantic bleaching and can be used more generally in a wider range of contexts (see Tagliamonte 2012: 285).

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<sup>1</sup> See Section 2.1 for the history of *will* and its meanings.

Further indications of advancing grammaticalisation are frequency of occurrence and phonological reduction (Hopper and Traugott 1993, Bybee et al. 1994: 6). Mair (1997, 2006), Krug (2000) and Leech et al. (2009) all show that *be going to* (in its full form and in its reduced form *gonna*) has increased in frequency in the last few decades,<sup>2</sup> and synchronic sociolinguistic studies availing themselves of the apparent time construct such as Tagliamonte (2012) demonstrate that this FTE is used more by younger than by older speakers. The increased frequency of *be going to/gonna* can be seen particularly in varieties of spoken American English (Leech 2003: 230; Mair and Leech 2006: 327; Leech et al. 2009: 102).

A number of researchers believe that *be going to* is still undergoing further grammaticalisation. For instance, Tagliamonte's (2013) study of selected modern British dialects demonstrates how the construction appears to be at different stages of grammaticalisation in the different varieties, with urban dialects evidencing more advanced stages than more peripheral rural ones. Indeed, quantitative, variationist studies such as those of Tagliamonte (2013) and Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) investigate processes of grammaticalisation not only by measuring rates of discourse frequency but also by examining the internal and external factors which contribute to the variation of forms. For instance, the type of clause, grammatical person, animacy of the subject and imminence of future event have all been shown to play a role in the distribution of the competing FTEs. Such studies allow us to gain a deeper understanding of the process of ongoing grammaticalisation in that they not only reveal changes in frequency over time but also diversity in encoding: i.e. how variant forms can become specialised so that they take on particular functions.

The present paper will contribute to ongoing research in this area by investigating the frequency and distribution of *be going to* versus *will* as FTEs in North Eastern English, using the *Diachronic Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English* (DECTE), which captures the speech patterns of communities in this region between the 1890s and 2010. The paper will follow the same methodology as the quantitative variationist studies of Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) and Tagliamonte (2013) in order to ascertain whether these variants are continuing to undergo grammaticalisation in this region to the same degree as has been reported for other dialects in the British Isles and North America

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<sup>2</sup> These large-scale frequency studies primarily use the LOB and F-LOB corpora of British English and the Brown and Frown corpora of American English. Other corpora regularly used are the British National Corpus (BNC) and the ARCHER corpus.

(including Canada).<sup>3</sup> Thus, both the frequency of the competing variants and the internal and external constraints on their distribution will be examined. In common with the research just noted, this analysis is also based on spoken dialect data. However, it differs from it in one key respect, i.e. the approach of Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) and Tagliamonte (2013) is synchronic and comparative across regional space, whereas this paper concentrates on diachronic change within a single dialectal variety.

## 2. *Will* versus *be going to* as FTEs<sup>4</sup>

In order to be able to account fully for the distribution of these variants in present-day English (PDE), it is necessary to understand their history and development. This section will give a brief synopsis of the origin and development of each form.

### 2.1 History of *will* (and *shall*)

*Will* has been present in the language since the Old English (OE) period and at that time its central meanings were ‘to will, intend, wish, be willing’ (Warner 1993: 167). However, one can also find uses of *will* in OE that express futurity, without the more common volitional sense. Consider the following examples from Warner (1993: 168), where *will* in (1a) expresses volition and in (1b) futurity:

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<sup>3</sup> Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) investigate African American varieties in Canada, whereas Tagliamonte (2013) covers a selection of British dialects: Cumnock (Ayrshire, Scotland), Buckie (far north-east of Scotland), Maryport (Cumbria), Wheatley Hill (County Durham), York (north-east England), Henfield (West Sussex), Wincanton (Somerset), Tiverton (Devon), Cullybackey (County Antrim, Northern Ireland), Portavogie (Ards Peninsula, Northern Ireland).

<sup>4</sup> Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) also consider the present and present progressive as markers of futurity, however they eliminate these from their final analysis due to the low number of tokens in the data. Tagliamonte (2013) deliberately excludes these constructions from her analysis of British dialects, also owing to their restricted usage. Similarly, Berglund (2000: 29) argues that, in utterances using the present or present progressive, the future reference lies in the grammatical context rather than the verb form itself (e.g. in the use of future temporal expressions). As such, it is therefore fundamentally different from the “primary” future expressions *will* and *be going to* (see Szmrecsanyi 2003: 297 for discussion of this term). For this reason, we will not consider the present or present progressive in our analysis of DECTE.

- (1) a. Hwiltne hafoc wilt þu habban?  
‘Which hawk do you want to have?’  
b. Ic wat sopllice hwæt þeos axung bion wile  
‘I know indeed what this question will be’

Warner (1993: 167) points out that, since it is often difficult to isolate futurity from volition, there has been disagreement amongst scholars as to when *will* first became a marker of futurity. However, most agree that by Late Modern English (LME), *will* was the established means of indicating future time, along with *shall*. Gradually, by LME, *will* lost its sense of ‘desire’ and the uses of *will* to express volition decreased in frequency (Warner 1993: 181, Denison 1998: 167).<sup>5</sup> In the modern language, *will* can be seen as a marker of general futurity. However, there are some contexts in which a volitional reading is still possible. Consider the following examples from DECTE, where (2a–c) appear to refer generally to future time while (2d–e) could be interpreted as expressing volition on the part of the subject:<sup>6</sup>

- (2) a. Aye Nissan but unfortunately the likes of the shipyards and that you’ve lost – that will never ever come back (03a/NECTE2)  
b. I think the North East will always be home (11b/NECTE2)  
c. I’ll be at uni then still (02a/NECTE2)  
d. He kept saying, ‘ah, give us your number and I’ll take you out one night’ (01b/NECTE2)  
e. I won’t pay to go to the pictures to see it (G08/NECTE2)

Note that *will* is often realised as *’ll* in DECTE, which is typical of spoken language data. This form is particularly frequent after personal pronouns (see Table 2 below).

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<sup>5</sup> More recent findings on the complex interaction of future markers in LME have been provided by Nesselhauf (2010).

<sup>6</sup> Examples taken from DECTE are marked with a speaker identification number followed by the time period of the recording (Tyneside Linguistic Survey (TLS) sub-corpus = late 1960s–70s; Phonological Variation and Change (PVC) sub-corpus = 1991–1994; The Newcastle Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English 2 (NECTE2) = 2007–2010). See Section 4.1 for full details of the corpus. More detailed information on these sub-corpora can be found in Corrigan et al. (2012), and in Allen et al. (2007) as well as Corrigan et al. (2014).

In addition to *will*, *shall* was also an FTE in OE. However, while the former tended to express volition, the latter often incorporated obligation and necessity (Fischer 1992: 264). Nonetheless, these uses decreased in frequency over time, and by ME *shall* came to express pure futurity, although it was also often used to denote a pre-ordained event, e.g. *And rightful folk shul gon, after they dye, to hevene* – ‘And righteous people will go to heaven after they die’ (Fischer 1992: 264). In PDE *shall* is used much less frequently than *will*, particularly in the spoken language (see e.g. Gotti 2003: 296) and it is now associated with formal speech and writing (e.g. Myhill 1995: 187). In DECTE, *shall* is extremely infrequent: there are only seven instances (0.49 per cent of the total FTEs), six of which appear in first person questions (see (3a–b) for examples) and one of which is used in a pseudo-formal way (3c):

- (3) a. Which age group eh well I’m in between the two. Shall I say the one nearest or go on to eh the last one? (G16/TLS)
- b. Shall we go down to the woods today? (01a/PVC)
- c. Like, um there was this one teacher who we all despised and someone who shall remain nameless just wrote on the blackboard in massive block capitals so-and-so is an absolute so-and-so (07a/NECTE2)

These findings tie in with earlier observations made on the use of *shall* in Tyneside English. For instance, McDonald (1981: 96–97) states that *shall* is rare in her spoken data, and, where it does occur, it is restricted to first person subjects in the contexts of offers and suggestions.<sup>7</sup> Trousdale (2003: 381), reporting on a smaller data set, observes that *shall* does not occur at all as a marker of futurity. Indeed, Beal (1993: 194–195) goes so far as to say that “*may* and *shall* are hardly ever used in Tyneside English [...] and have no important part to play in the grammar”. We therefore believe that it is appropriate to disregard *shall* in our analysis of FTEs in the North East and concentrate instead on the two more generalised variants, namely, *will* and *be going to*.

## 2.2 History of *be going to*

The *going to* or “andative” future first developed at the very end of the Middle English period (Fischer 1992: 265), although there are relatively few attestations before the seventeenth century (Danchev and Kytö 1994: 68). Early examples

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<sup>7</sup> Contrast Scottish and Irish English where *shall* is rarely used as a marker of prediction and *will* is preferred for all persons, as noted in Miller (1993: 116) for the former and Harris (1993: 158) for the latter.

from the late 1500s and early 1600s demonstrate that *be going to* was used when movement was implied and there was often also an element of intention on the part of the subject. Consider sentences (4a) and (4b) from Danchev and Kytö (1994: 64–65):

- (4) a. But now I'm going to see what flood it is, for with the tide my master will away (*Drama Corpus, Arden of Feversham, 1592*)  
b. Escalus: I am going to visit the prisoner (*Measure for Measure, 1603*)

From the mid-seventeenth century onwards, however, we see the use of *be going to* markedly increasing in frequency<sup>8</sup> and we begin to see attestations of the form where neither movement nor intention is implied. Indeed, Danchev and Kytö (1994: 66) provide an example of *be going to* which displays early grammaticalisation (see 5) and they argue that the process may well have set in before the mid-seventeenth century:

- (5) He is fumbling with his purse-strings, as a Schoole-boy with his points, when he is going to be Whipt (*Earle, Microcosmography, 1628: 71*)

In PDE, *be going to* is an established FTE, its use having increased dramatically in the last two centuries, particularly in the spoken language (see e.g. the frequency studies of Mair (1997), Berglund (1997, 2000) and Krug (2000)). The fact that it can now co-occur with motion verbs demonstrates that it has undergone semantic bleaching and is no longer an indicator of movement. Numerous examples of this type can be found in DECTE (6a–c):

- (6) a. I'm going to go out for dinner (12b/PVC)  
b. I don't know whether he's going to go or not (09b/PVC)  
c. I mean to say he's not going to come in at half past one of a morning (G19/TLS)

Note that while the form is transcribed as *going to*, it is mostly realised as *gonna* in DECTE, which is the most common pronunciation in PDE in informal spoken registers (see e.g. Tagliamonte (2012) for British English, and Myhill (1995), Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) for American and Canadian English). Interestingly, in DECTE, the lexical verb *go* is realised by many speakers as *gan*, which is an old dialect form. This means that there is a clear formal distinction between grammatical *going to* (*gonna*) and lexical *gan* in this variety, see (7):

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<sup>8</sup> See Royster and Steadman (1923) for a fuller account.



- (7) If you're going to (realised as *gonna*) gan to Whitley Bay, you gan around nine o'clock and make a night of it (PVC01b).

*Gan to* (or *ganning to*), used as an FTE, is very rare (only 7 tokens / 1.9 per cent, as opposed to 356 occurrences of lexical *gan*, 98.1 per cent).

### 2.3 Form and function

In an attempt to account for variation in the expression of futurity, specific semantic and pragmatic functions have been attributed to the distribution of *will* and *be going to* by some scholars. For instance, Nicolle (1997: 355) argues that the original meaning of prior intention associated with *be going to* is still present in many of its uses. For example, as a response to the question *Can somebody visit John tomorrow?*, the statement *I'm going to visit him* differs from *I will visit him* in that the former indicates that the subject had already intended to visit John whereas the latter implies that the intention originated subsequent to the request. This explains the oddness of the sentence *?I'm going to visit him but I wasn't intending to* (Nicolle 1997: 372). Similarly, in a diachronic study of LME, Nesselhauf (2012) argues that the use of 'll (specifically the contracted form) increased over time to express pure prediction, while the use of *be going to* increased in contexts expressing a prediction based on the intention of the subject. Other scholars (e.g. Quirk et al. 1985 and Mair 1997) associate the distinction between *will* and *be going to* with a difference in register rather than semantics: i.e. *be going to* characterises a less formal style.

Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000: 321) and Torres-Cacoullous and Walker (2009: 325–326) point out that there is no consensus in the literature on whether the variable instantiations of FTE reflect semantic differences or whether they are simply interchangeable. Most accounts of semantic differences rely on notions such as intention and willingness, which are often difficult for the analyst to identify objectively (Dollinger 2008: 231), and it may be that these distinctions are more a matter of pragmatics than semantics. Indeed, Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000: 321) claim that, to date, they have found little support for the argument that the semantic nuances that have been traditionally ascribed to the variant forms play an important role in their distribution. Turning to our DECTE data, we find numerous examples of *will* and *be going to* being used interchangeably, with no obvious semantic difference (8a–e):

- (8) a. I don't think I'll get taken on there. I mean there's four of we altogether  
... my odds are that I'm not going to get taken on there (06b/PVC)

- b. A placement'll work on them cars a lot more than the college'll work with them so obviously they're going to have a faster way of doing it (06b/PVC)
- c. Maradonna ... he's past it. He says he's only going to play half sort of thing like he'll say when he's coming off (10a/PVC)
- d. It'll be more skill and all that won't there because eh people are going to be shooting from like halfway line (10b/PVC)
- e. They said "no we're not going to stitch it because it's torn we'll put Steri-Strip on" (11b/PVC)

Thus, it appears that what we have here is a case of "layering": a well-known principle of grammaticalisation in which new grammatical morphemes enter the language and co-exist alongside older morphemes expressing the same function (see Hopper 1991: 22). *Will*, the original auxiliary, was joined by the newer form *be going to* and these variants now compete as FTEs with no clear-cut semantic distinction.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1 The DECTE corpus

DECTE is a collection of text transcriptions and audio files of interviews with a wide variety of people from the North East of England, dating from 1960 up to and including 2010. It is a diachronic corpus, not only with reference to the span of time across which the interviews have been and continue to be collected, but also as a reflection of the even greater span covered in terms of the lifetimes of the people who have been interviewed. Thus, it encompasses almost a century from around 1895, when the oldest speaker from the 1960s–1970s sub-corpus was born, to 1993, when the youngest speaker in the most recent set of interviews was born.

In total, DECTE currently contains 99 interviews, recording 160 speakers in 804,266 words of text and 71 hours 45 minutes and 43 seconds of audio. The interviews come from three different research projects carried out at Newcastle University. The first and second of these are the *Tyneside Linguistic Survey* (TLS) of the 1960s–1970s and the *Phonological Variation and Change in Contemporary Spoken English* (PVC) project of the 1990s, which were amalgamated between 2000 and 2005 as the *Newcastle Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English* (NECTE). The third constituent part, NECTE2, extends the

corpus into the present with further sets of interviews that have been collected annually since 2007. Table 1 summarises the dimensions of DECTE that we draw on.

**Table 1.** The time-frame for the DECTE Data in our analyses<sup>9</sup>

	TLS (1960s–1970s)	PVC (1990s)	NECTE2 (2010)
Interviews	37	18	26
Informants	37	35	52
Female	20	18	30
Male	17	17	22
Age: 16–20	2	19	21
21–30	9	0	16
31–40	10	0	3
41–50	8	4	4
51–60	2	5	6
61–70	5	6	1
71–80	1	1	0
81–90	0	0	1

### 3.2 Data collection and analysis

Initially, all occurrences and variant forms of *be going to* and *will* were collected,<sup>10</sup> and then, in order to ensure that the contexts in which these cases were occurring allowed for variation, exclusions were made (see Section 3.2.1). Thus, the analysis only focuses on areas in which there is free competition between the variant forms.

#### 3.2.1 Data collected and exclusions

There are a number of contexts (a–e) in which *will* is used exclusively and does not vary with *be going to*. These were excluded from our final analysis:

<sup>9</sup> It is important to bear in mind that while comparison between these three sub-corpora can be considered to be indicative of real time change in the region, the data differs from that which is generated via panel studies, for example. The interview protocols between the TLS sub-corpus and the PVC and NECTE2 sub-corpora are not identical and this may have some impact on the findings.

<sup>10</sup> This included occurrences in which the elements were separated, e.g. “I’m now going to”.

- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| a. | As a marker of habitual present                               | Well I'll you know more or less talk like this all the time (G02/TLS)                              |
| b. | As an epistemic marker referring to the present <sup>11</sup> | He's been on the dole for oh nearly a year now (G27/TLS)   |
| c. | In polite requests  | E-mail saying apologies this that and the other will you please accept an upgrade? (17b/NECTE2)    |
| d. | In tag questions  | Oh you'll be in soon then, will you? (G15/TLS)   |
| e. | In fixed expressions that do not admit variation              | I thought "I don't know if I could like spare the time", right I says "Oh well I'll see" (15a/PVC) |

Many studies of *be going to* concentrate on present tense sentences referring to the future and exclude future-in-the-past uses, such as "I think he was rather gutted because he **was going to** get like a hundred quid" (01a/PVC), as these forms have been shown to be subject to different constraints from their present tense counterparts (e.g. *would*, as the past tense of *will*, is favoured in negative utterances and is disfavoured in main clauses).<sup>12</sup> Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) do include future-in-the-past utterances but discover that the majority of these are from subordinate clauses and thus favour *going to* anyway. For this reason, in her later study, Tagliamonte (2013) excludes future-in-the past sentences, and we will adopt the same practice in our analysis of DECTE.

### 3.2.2 Data analysis

After the initial filtering out of future-in-the-past and non-variable contexts, we are left with 1,416 tokens of *be going to* and *will* altogether.

Each occurrence was categorised for the internal constraints discussed in Section 3 above: grammatical person of subject, animacy, proximity of future, co-occurrence with a lexical verb of motion, clause type and apodoses of *if*-clauses.

### 3.3 Statistical analysis

Following Poplack and Tagliamonte (2010) and Tagliamonte (2013) we have chosen to analyse our DECTE data quantitatively using the variable rule program *GoldVarb X*, which has been the bedrock of the quantitative paradigm in sociolinguistics for some time now. We are naturally aware of its limitations, as

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<sup>11</sup> Used to express supposition (see Gotti 2003 for discussion of the epistemic functions of *will*).

<sup>12</sup> For further discussion see Torres-Cacoullous and Walker (2009: 327).

articulated by Johnson (2009) *inter alia*. Newer models like *Rbrul*, which allow researchers to conduct statistical analyses using mixed effects models, thus offer distinct advantages relating in particular to the fact that *GoldVarb X* and its precursors model discrete, fixed effects only and do not handle continuous factor groups like age especially well. However, the comparison of expressions of futurity in DECTE with that articulated in previous research on other varieties like that of Poplack and Tagliamonte (2010) is a key aim of this paper. As such, our analyses will make use of *GoldVarb X* (Sankoff 1988 and Sankoff et al. 2005) because it is the same tool used in previous studies which investigated these exact variables and it should provide a better means of directly comparing findings.<sup>13</sup>

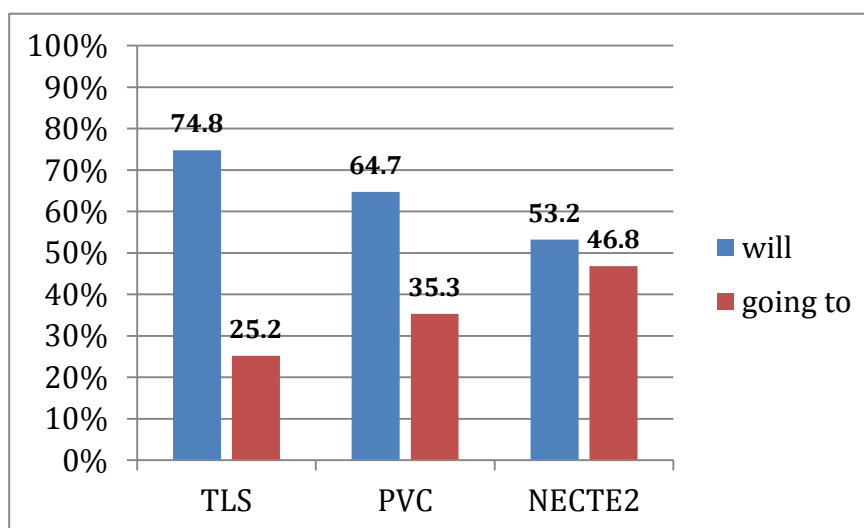
#### 4. Frequency of FTEs in DECTE

An investigation of the frequency of the competing forms shows that, over the three time periods under investigation, the proportion of *be going to* has steadily increased, so that its frequency is now almost on a par with that of *will*.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> We would agree, though, with one of our reviewers that a fruitful avenue for future research on this variable and indeed within the variationist framework more broadly would be the analysis of the same variables in identical data-sets using both *Rbrul* and *GoldVarb*. Such studies could systematically examine the advantages and disadvantages of the two software packages and thus comprehensively evaluate them in practical terms.

<sup>14</sup> In raw numbers, that is 181 for *will* and 61 for *going to* in TLS; 606 for *will* and 330 for *going to* in PVC and 198 for *will* and 174 for *going to* in NECTE2.



**Figure 1.** Frequency distributions of variants over time in percentages; TLS (*will*: N=181; *going to*: N=61), PVC (*will*: N=606; *going to*: N=330), NECTE2 (*will*: N=198; *going to*: N=174).

The increase in frequency of *be going to* in DECTE accords with the findings of much of the current research on FTEs in British and North American English. Indeed, the most recent sub-corpus, NECTE2, shows an even greater proportion of *be going to* than has been previously reported for other varieties of PDE.

## 5. Constraints conditioning variation

Scholars intending to undertake a quantitative variationist study of the distribution of *will* versus *be going to* are advised to be aware of the difficulties that can arise when attempting a semantic and pragmatic investigation into the differences between variant forms (Poplack and Tagliamonte 2000, Tagliamonte 2013). Whether the difference is “co-operative (*will*) versus unilateral decision (*going to*)” (Myhill 1995: 192) or “prior intention (*going to*) versus volition (*will*)” (Nicolle 1997: 372), as already noted, it is very difficult for investigators to categorise such functions impartially, as such nuances “tend to reside in speaker intent and hearer inference, both of which are inaccessible to the analyst” (Poplack and Tagliamonte 2000: 321). Instead, what we need are

concrete grammatical correlates that will provide us with an objective measure of the functions in question. This section provides an outline of such correlates, which have been used in quantitative variationist studies such as Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) and Tagliamonte (2013). In addition to these, we will also investigate some variables, such as clause structure and prefabricated expressions (“frequent collocations” in the terms of Torres-Cacoullous and Walker 2009), which have been shown to be significant in conditioning variation in some studies of *will* versus *be going to* (e.g. Szmrecsanyi 2003, Torres-Cacoullous and Walker 2009). The same variables will form the basis of our analysis of DECTE.

### 5.1 Grammatical subject

As outlined in Section 2.1 above, the original meaning of *will* was one of volition, and it has been argued that this meaning has persisted in some PDE uses of the form (see e.g. Gotti 2003: 286). As expression of attitude is most often found in the first person (see Poplack and Tagliamonte 2000: 335), we would expect *will* to correlate with first person forms. Conversely, if there was no significant correlation between first person and *will*, but a generalisation of *going to* to first person subjects, that would indicate a lack of semantic distinction and therefore an advanced degree of grammaticalisation.

Our data from the TLS and PVC sub-corpora of DECTE (1960s/70s and 1990s respectively) show that, in all grammatical persons, *will* is favoured, yet the differing proportions reveal that the favouring of *will* is significantly much stronger in the first person than in the second and third persons. This result is also found in NECTE2 from 2010, and *going to* has come to be preferred most strongly in second person forms (see Appendix, Tables 4–6 for the relative frequencies and Table 25 for the factor weights). Some examples are (9a–c):

- (9) a. I’ll bring a machine home in the summer holidays and I’ll learn how to use this thing properly (11a/PVC)
- b. I thought right I’ll move to the halls...the catered halls (06a/NECTE2)
- c. You’re going to have to drive for like an hour (06a/NECTE2)

## 5.2 Animacy<sup>15</sup>

As outlined in Section 2.2. above, the original meaning of *going to* expressed movement towards a goal, and it therefore only occurred with animate subjects (see 10a). Generalisation to non-animate subjects (see 10b–c) would provide further support for the grammaticalisation of *be going to*. Indeed, in all three sub-corpora of DECTE there is no significant difference between animate versus non-animate subjects with regard to the distribution of the two FTEs (see Appendix, Tables 7–9). Some examples with animate and non-animate subjects are given in (10a–c):

- (10) a. He's going to have a brand new start you know and he's going to have no social life ... he's just going to have his job (17b/PVC)
- b. Your mam said if that car's brakes are going to fail it goes (07a/PVC)
- c. One module next year where I've got to read fifty books ... So that's going to be hell (07a/NECTE2)

## 5.3 Proximity in the future

In addition to movement towards a goal, *be going to* has often been associated with the imminent future (Hopper and Traugott 1993: 82–83). Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) and Tagliamonte (2013) code verbs as imminent, or “proximate”, if the event that is being referred to is inferred to be occurring up to a month after the utterance (see 11a–b). By contrast, they categorise events occurring one year or more after the utterance as “distal” (see 11c–d).

In the earliest sub-corpus of DECTE, the TLS, there is a significant difference between proximate and distal future reference in that *will* is favoured most strongly in distal contexts. This difference disappears, however, in the two later corpora, where proximity of future reference is no longer a significant factor in determining the choice of FTE (see Appendix, Tables 10–12 for the relative frequencies and Table 25 for the factor weights).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Note that not all scholars define this variable in the same way. Some make a three-way distinction between “human animate”, “non-human animate” and “inanimate”. In this paper we follow the distinction made in Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) of “animate = human” vs. “non-animate = non-human”.

<sup>16</sup> We leave aside the possibility that these differences between TLS and PVC/NECTE2 may arise simply on account of divergences between the interview protocols and settings which are more similar in the more recent sub-corpora than between them and the TLS, though we intend to consider these issues further in future research.



- (11) a. We've got custard in a cup. Ok it's going to go everywhere – why can't I proper pour it? (06a/NECTE2)
- b. I've got no idea who that is at the door – well they're going to have to wait aren't they? (12a/NECTE2)
- c. In five years you're going to lose a lot of them jobs just by people retiring (03a/NECTE2)
- d. I want to just put my head down and work hard for two years and then I'm going to see what I want after that (16a/PVC)

Note that Torres-Cacoullos and Walker (2009) use a more fine-grained coding for their analysis of spoken Canadian English (from within a minute, an hour, a day, a week, a month, a year and far future). However, their results yield no significant correlations between the variants and their future time measures. In our analysis of DECTE we follow Poplack and Tagliamonte's (2000) and Tagliamonte's (2013) "proximate versus distal" distinction.

#### 5.4 Lexical verb of motion

As *be going to* originally expressed movement towards a goal, one would not expect it to co-occur with a lexical verb of motion such as *go* or *come*. Thus, if a quantitative analysis reveals that *going to* is avoided with verbs of motion and *will* is preferred, that suggests that the original lexical meaning of *going to* is still persisting to some extent. Conversely, if there is no difference in the use of *will* and *going to* with this type of verb, we can demonstrate that the grammaticalisation of *going to* is relatively advanced.

In all three sub-corpora of DECTE, *going to* is regularly used with verbs of motion (see 12a–c), and there is no significant effect of motion verb contexts on the choice of FTE (see Appendix, Tables 13–15).

- (12) a. So we're going to go like on a cruise next year (17b/PVC)
- b. I've always said I'm going to go nightclubbing (08b/PVC)
- c. In the summer she's going to come back here (10b/PVC)

#### 5.5 Clause type

Royster and Steadman (1923: 400) point out that *going to* is favoured in subordinate clauses, which is linked to the observation that the sense of volition is stronger in main clauses than in dependent ones. Szmrecsanyi (2003: 317),

who also observes a robust clause-type effect in his data, argues that the preference for *be going to* in subordinate clauses is determined by considerations of cognitive economy in language processing: i.e. because *going to* is phonologically longer, it allows speakers more planning time in clauses that are more demanding to process.

An effect of clause type can also be observed in DECTE, but not in all sub-corpora. In the TLS, *will* is favoured in all clauses, but the preference is greater in main clauses. In the PVC there is no significant effect of clause type. However, in the most recent sub-corpus, NECTE2, clause type has a significant effect on the choice of FTE, namely, the favouring of *going to* in subordinate clauses (see Appendix, Tables 16–18 for the relative frequencies and Table 25 for the factor weights). Examples of *going to* in subordinate clauses are given in (13a–c):

- (13) a. She says she's going to stay on (G11/TLS)  
b. I don't know what I'm going to do with it (11a/PVC)  
c. [we got an] e-mail saying apologies ... you will receive an e-mail with the picture of the ship and where we're going to put you within the next day or so (17b/NECTE2)

### 5.6 Apodosis of *if*-clauses

Szmrecsanyi (2003) and Torres-Cacoullous and Walker (2009) both point out that *will* is often favoured over *be going to* in the apodoses of *if*-clauses. Torres-Cacoullous and Walker (2009: 341) observe that these constructions express a future event that is contingent on something else happening, and they suggest that the use of *will* in such constructions may indicate an expression of uncertainty (as opposed to the certainty of a movement future).

Our more recent DECTE data appear to support these findings: in the PVC and NECTE2 there is a significant favouring of *will* in the apodoses of *if*-clauses (see examples 14a–c); however in the TLS there is no significant effect (see Appendix, Tables 19–21).<sup>17</sup>

- (14) a. If I can fit into my eighteenth birthday dress in like thirty years' time, I'll be absolutely chuffed (18b/NECTE2)

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<sup>17</sup> This variable must be treated with caution, however, as there are relatively few tokens, which meant that we had to exclude it from our multivariate analysis (see Appendix, Table 25).

- b. If I'm going to have some kids I'll let the wife stay at home  
(06a/NECTE2)
- c. I'm gan to give you a bullet ... sweet and you'll get a bullet if you get all  
these done (02b/PVC)

### 5.7 Sentence type

Sentence type has also been shown in some studies to play an important role in the distribution of *be going to* versus *will*. Nesselhauf's (2010) diachronic study of the British section of the ARCHER corpus reveals that *will* declines over time in negative contexts whereas *be going to* increases. By contrast, Szmrecsanyi's (2003) results from the BNC demonstrate that negative contexts prefer *will*. Tagliamonte (2013) notes a preference for negative *going to* in two of her southern British dialects, Tiverton and Henfield. However, there appears to be no significant effect in the other dialects.

In none of the sub-corpora of DECTE does sentence type play a significant role in the choice of FTE, with *will* and *be going to* occurring regularly in both affirmative and negative contexts (see Appendix, Tables 22–24). (15a–c) are some examples of both FTEs appearing in negative contexts:<sup>18</sup>

- (15) a. I'm not going to say a clip around the lugs doesn't do anybody any harm  
(G02/TLS)
- b. I had to start all over again through getting my discharge from the forces I  
says right we'll not take it G04/TLS)
- c. It's not going to be worth watching though – it won't be the same  
(09a/PVC)

## 6. Discussion of results

The overall frequency analysis of *be going to* versus *will* reveals that the former has steadily increased from the 1960s sub-corpus to the 2010 sub-corpus and is

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<sup>18</sup> In interrogative contexts, *going to* has been reported to be more frequent than *will* in some synchronic studies. For instance, Tagliamonte (2013) notes that, in York, questions are more frequently rendered with *going to* and Torres-Cacoullous and Walker (2009) find that *going to* is regularly favoured in interrogative contexts in Canada, particularly with second person subjects. Unfortunately, due to the relatively low number of interrogative tokens in DECTE, we were not able to include this variable in our multivariate analysis.

now almost on a par with *will*. However, *will* is still slightly more frequent than *be going to*, which ties in with Mair's (1997: 1541) observation that, despite its increase over the past few decades, *be going to* is still outnumbered by *will*, even in spoken language.

With regard to grammatical person, Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) demonstrate that, in their Canadian data from African American Vernacular English (AAVE) speakers, first person is no longer distinguished from other grammatical persons. However, Tagliamonte (2013) does find a preference for *will* in first person contexts in York, where *will* patterns with first person subjects and *be going to* patterns with second and third persons. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, given that the DECTE data set also reflects the speech of communities in north-eastern England, our findings largely mirror those of Tagliamonte (2013) for York, in that first person contexts favour *will* in all time periods. In DECTE, the favouring of *going to* in second person contexts appears to develop over time, so that by 2010 there is a significant effect of second person on the selection of *going to*.

Tagliamonte (2013: 132) suggests that the specialisation of *will* with first person subjects is probably a result of influence from the frequent collocation *I'll*, which supports claims made by Torres-Cacoullous and Walker (2009: 340) that, in their Canadian data, frequently used collocations have some influence on variant choice. They argue that, rather than providing evidence for the retention of the original meaning of willingness, which some scholars might argue, the first person effect with *will* is due largely to the frequency of the construction *I'll* + verb. They claim that if it was a case of semantic retention, we would expect more instances of the full form *will* occurring with *I*, which is presumably less semantically bleached than *'ll*.<sup>19</sup>

A survey of personal pronouns with *will* and *'ll* in DECTE reveals that *I'll* is considerably more frequent than *I will* or than any other subject-verb combination (see Table 2 for the number of occurrences of each form). Our data therefore support the argument that the favouring of *will* in the first person is largely determined by the frequency of the collocation *I'll*.

**Table 2.** Personal pronouns with *will* and *'ll* in DECTE

<i>'ll</i>	TLS	PVC	NECTE2	<i>will</i>	TLS	PVC	NECTE2
<i>I'll</i>	92	257	93	<i>I will</i>	8	5	7

<sup>19</sup> Indeed, Nesselhauf (2014) argues that the contracted form is actually grammaticalising differently from the full form.

<i>You'll</i>	18	53	18	<i>You will</i>	0	3	4
<i>He'll</i>	13	31	5	<i>He will</i>	0	1	0
<i>She'll</i>	6	24	1	<i>She will</i>	1	1	2
<i>It'll</i>	16	55	11	<i>It will</i>	3	5	3
<i>We'll</i>	23	54	15	<i>We will</i>	3	1	0
<i>They'll</i>	26	47	11	<i>They will</i>	0	3	3

In their analysis of animate versus non-animate subjects, Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) observe that the animacy effect has been neutralised in most of the AAVE varieties examined in their study, which suggests that the original restriction relating to the use of *be going to* with animate subjects capable of movement towards a goal no longer applies. The form appears to have become more generalised, thus suggesting advanced grammaticalisation. This is also what we see in DECTE, and this process of neutralisation must have occurred before the 1960s, as there is no significant animacy effect in any of the time periods under investigation. Interestingly, in certain dialects in the Ottawa region, the increased usage of *be going to* with non-animate subjects is even more marked, with a tendency for these subjects to favour *be going to* over *will*. This is not the case in DECTE, where both animates and non-animates favour *will*.<sup>20</sup>

The effect of proximity in the future has varying degrees of influence. For instance, Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) observe that the effect of proximity on the choice of *be going to* is strong in the British-origin varieties of their Canadian data, but in the African enclaves this variable proved not to be significant. In addition, Torres-Cacoullous and Walker (2009) report that there are no significant effects of proximity in their Quebec English corpus either. In Tagliamonte's (2013) British dialect data, the effect of proximity seems to differ cross-dialectally. For instance, in York there is a levelled system, where *be going to* has spread to all temporal reference domains, whereas in Cumnock, Northern Ireland, Maryport and Henfield *be going to* is favoured in contexts where there is no temporal reference. Yet another pattern is revealed in DECTE, where *will* is, in fact, favoured with distal future reference, whereas there is no significant difference between the variants in proximate future contexts or in contexts where there is no future reference. This is only valid for the TLS sub-corpus of the 1960s/70s, however, as the distinction disappears in the more recent sub-corpora. By the 1990s we have a similar situation to that of York, where there is no effect

<sup>20</sup> Tagliamonte (2013) does not include animacy in her study of British dialects.

of proximity on the choice of variant, and this situation remains stable up to 2010.

A similar mixed pattern is found in contexts that include motion verbs. Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) report that, in their enclave and rural varieties of AAVE in Canada, there is strong and statistically significant avoidance of *be going to* (and concomitant preference for *will*) with verbs of motion. In urban Ottawa English, on the other hand, the choice of *be going to* with a verb of motion is as likely as with any other verb, suggesting that this variety has proceeded further along the grammaticalisation path than any of the others.<sup>21</sup> In DECTE, *will* is favoured in both contexts with and without a motion verb, which may indicate that the north-eastern English varieties represented by these sub-corpora are further along the path towards grammaticalisation.

The linguistic constraint which appears to be the most geographically widespread in its ability to influence the choice of FTE is clause type. Poplack and Tagliamonte (2000) find that, in all of the AAVE varieties under investigation, subordinate clauses have a favouring effect on the selection of *be going to*, although this is less significant in urban Ottawa. Subordinate clauses are also found by Torres-Cacoullos and Walker (2009) to favour *be going to* in Quebec and similar results for British English are presented in Szmrecsanyi (2003), who suggests that the use of *be going to* in subordinate clauses is motivated by online processing constraints. Most of the British dialects under investigation in Tagliamonte (2013) demonstrate a significant effect for the selection of *be going to* in the context of subordinate clauses. Her investigation of older versus younger speakers in York reveals that the favouring of *be going to* in such contexts increases as speakers get younger, indicating a change in apparent time. Our analysis of DECTE provides supporting evidence, with subordinate clauses significantly favouring *going to* in the 2010 sub-corpus. In the earlier two sub-corpora, *will* was favoured in both main and subordinate clauses (albeit to a lesser extent in subordinate clauses). This suggests that the tendency to choose *be going to* in subordinate clause contexts may have developed over time in Tyneside.

A similar effect can be found for the apodoses of *if*-clauses. Szmrecsanyi (2003) and Torres-Cacoullos and Walker (2009) observed for British and Canadian English, respectively, that *will* is often favoured over *be going to* in the apodoses of *if*-clauses. This effect is also found in DECTE and, interestingly, it appears to be a relatively recent phenomenon. In the 1960s/70s sub-corpus *will* is

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<sup>21</sup> Tagliamonte (2013) does not discuss motion verbs in her analysis of British dialect data.

favoured irrespective of whether it occurs in the apodoses of *if*-clauses or not. However, in the more recent sub-corpora, the apodoses of *if*-clauses significantly favour *will*.

Torres-Cacoullos and Walker (2009: 341) suggest that one could interpret the preference for *will* in the apodoses of *if*-clauses as signifying that it expresses a certain degree of uncertainty, as *will* is used in contexts where the future event that it expresses is contingent on something else happening. The *be going to* future, being purportedly associated more with intention, is less able to express uncertainty and is therefore avoided in these contexts. On the other hand, Torres-Cacoullos and Walker (2009) point out that the motivation could be merely structural: i.e. these sentences are following a common collocation pattern “if *p*, then ... will *q*”. In DECTE, the apodoses of *if*-clauses often occur before the *if*-clause as well as after (see 14c), which would suggest two different collocation types (“if *p*, then ... will *q*” and “... will *q*, if *p*”).

There has been disagreement in the literature as to how much effect sentence type has on the distribution of *be going to* versus *will*. With regard to negation, Nesselhauf’s (2010) diachronic study of the British section of the ARCHER corpus reveals that *will* declines over time in negative contexts whereas *be going to* increases. Tagliamonte (2013) notes a preference for negative *be going to* in two of her southern British dialects, Tiverton and Henfield; however, there appears to be no significant effect in the other dialects. By contrast, Szmrecsanyi’s (2003: 305) results from the British National Corpus (BNC) demonstrate that speakers prefer *will* in negative contexts, and he argues that this is largely explained by the frequent use of the contraction *won’t*. In DECTE, negation appears to exert no significant effect in any of the sub-corpora under investigation. The result that Szmrecsanyi reported for *won’t* would not necessarily be expected in our data set, of course, as the particular variety which this corpus represents typically has a high proportion of uncontracted negatives (Beal and Corrigan 2005). Interestingly, the proportion of contracted to uncontracted negatives increases sharply between the TLS sub-corpus of the 1960s/70s and the PVC sub-corpus of the 1990s (see Table 3).

**Table 3.** Contracted versus uncontracted negatives in DECTE

	TLS	PVC	NECTE2
<i>Will not/ 'll not</i>	45 (62.5%)	44 (32.1%)	10 (32.3%)
<i>Won't</i>	27 (37.5%)	93 (67.9%)	21 (67.7%)

This, however, is not mirrored by an increase in the preference of *will* in the 1990s PVC sub-corpus. The relative frequency of *will* in affirmative and

negative sentences is roughly the same for all three time periods. These results put Tyneside English on a par with similar dialects such as York and Wheatley Hill, which show no significant effect for negation on variant choice (Tagliamonte 2013).

## 7. Conclusion

In the hundred years between the birth dates of the oldest speakers in the TLS sub-corpus and those of the youngest speakers in NECTE2, it has been possible to investigate processes of grammatical change in real time. Our results with respect to the rise in frequency of *be going to* show a clear progression throughout the different time periods. There have also been some interesting findings with respect to constraints on the use of *will* versus *be going to*. Some processes of grammaticalisation appear to have already occurred before the earliest diachronic data available to us: i.e. the generalisation of *be going to* with both animate and non-animate subjects, and with motion verbs. Other effects observed within the time-span of our data include the generalisation of *going to* to contexts of distal time reference, the specialisation of *going to* in subordinate clauses and the rise in the frequency of *will* in the apodoses of *if*-clauses. The latter two results tie in with those of Torres-Cacoullous and Walker (2009) for spoken Quebec English, who argue that the functionally equivalent variants *be going to* and *will* exhibit a distribution pattern that is determined by small “niches”. Moreover, some of these might be influenced by frequent collocations, such as *I’ll* for first person *will*, which deserve further investigation. Of interest too in future research will be ascertaining whether *be going to* really is on course to become the dominant FTE or whether the division of labour between *will* and *be going to* is now stable and likely to remain so.

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## Appendix

**Table 4.** Grammatical person in TLS (chi-square: 8.282, d.f.: 2, p=0.0159)

Person		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
1st	N	85	16	101
	%	84.2	15.8	43.9
2nd	N	9	7	16
	%	56.2	43.8	7.0
3rd	N	81	32	113
	%	71.7	28.3	49.1
Total	N	175	55	230
	%	76.1	23.9	

**Table 5.** Grammatical person in PVC (chi-square: 8.173, d.f.: 2, p=0.0168)

Person		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
1st	N	286	119	405
	%	70.6	29.4	46.8
2nd	N	60	32	92
	%	65.2	34.8	10.6
3rd	N	224	144	368
	%	60.9	39.1	42.5
Total	N	570	295	865
	%	65.9	34.1	

**Table 6.** Grammatical person in NECTE2 (chi-square: 21.617, d.f.: 2, p=0.0000)

Person		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
1st	N	101	50	151
	%	66.9	33.1	47.0
2nd	N	19	40	59
	%	32.2	67.8	18.4
3rd	N	57	54	111
	%	51.4	48.6	34.6
Total	N	177	144	321
	%	55.1	44.9	

**Table 7.** Animacy of subject in TLS (chi-square: 0.205, d.f.: 1, p=0.6510)

Subject		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Animate	N	145	47	192
	%	75.5	24.5	83.5
Non-animate	N	30	8	38
	%	78.9	21.1	16.5
Total	N	175	55	230
	%	76.1	23.9	

**Table 8.** Animacy of the subject in PVC (chi-square: 0.022, d.f.: 1, p=0.8820)

Subject		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Animate	N	475	247	722
	%	65.8	34.2	83.5
Non-animate	N	95	48	143
	%	78.9	21.1	16.5
Total	N	570	295	865
	%	65.9	34.1	

**Table 9.** Animacy of subject in NECTE2 (chi-square: 0.197, d.f.: 1, p=0.6570)

Subject		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Animate	N	146	116	222
	%	55.7	44.3	81.6
Non-animate	N	31	28	59
	%	52.5	47.5	18.4
Total	N	177	144	321
	%	55.1	44.9	

**Table 10.** Proximity of future reference in TLS (chi-square: 9.954, d.f.: 2, p=0.0069)

Future time reference		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Distal	N	39	2	41
	%	95.1	4.9	17.8
Proximate	N	73	29	102
	%	71.6	28.4	44.3
Neither	N	63	24	87
	%	72.4	27.6	37.8
Total	N	175	55	230
	%	76.1	23.9	

**Table 11.** Proximity of future reference in PVC (chi-square: 0.069, d.f.: 2,  $p=0.9660$ )

Future time reference		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Distal	N	47	23	70
	%	67.1	32.9	8.1
Proximate	N	284	149	433
	%	65.6	34.4	50.1
Neither	N	239	123	362
	%	66.0	34.0	41.8
Total	N	570	295	865
	%	65.9	34.1	

**Table 12.** Proximity of future time reference in NECTE2 (chi-square: 1.871, d.f.: 2,  $p=0.3924$ )

Future reference		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Distal	N	29	17	46
	%	63.0	37.0	14.3
Proximate	N	105	95	200
	%	52.5	47.5	62.3
Neither	N	43	32	75
	%	57.3	42.7	23.4
Total	N	177	144	321
	%	55.1	44.9	

**Table 13.** Motion verbs in TLS (chi-square: 0.773, d.f.: 1,  $p=0.3792$ )

Verb		<i>Will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Motion	N	20	4	24
	%	83.3	16.7	10.4
Other	N	155	51	206
	%	75.2	24.8	89.6
Total	N	175	55	230
	%	76.1	23.9	

**Table 14.** Motion verbs in PVC (chi-square: 0.329, d.f.: 1, p=0.5662)

Verb		<i>Will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Motion	N	51	23	74
	%	68.9	31.1	8.6
Other	N	519	272	791
	%	65.6	34.4	91.4
Total	N	570	295	865
	%	65.9	34.1	

**Table 15.** Motion verbs in NECTE2 (chi-square: 0.385, d.f.: 1, p=0.5348)

Verb		<i>Will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Motion	N	17	11	28
	%	60.7	39.3	8.7
Other	N	160	133	296
	%	54.6	45.4	92.2
Total	N	177	144	321
	%	55.1	44.9	

**Table 16.** Clause type in TLS (chi-square: 4.412, d.f.: 1, p=0.0357)

Clause		<i>Will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Main	N	144	38	182
	%	79.1	20.9	79.1
Subordinate	N	31	17	48
	%	64.6	35.4	20.9
Total	N	175	55	230
	%	76.1	23.9	

**Table 17.** Clause type in PVC (chi-square: 0.908, d.f.: 1, p=0.3407)

Clause		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Main	N	449	224	673
	%	66.7	33.3	77.8

Subordinate	N	121	71	192
	%	63.0	37.0	22.2
Total	N	570	295	865
	%	65.9	34.1	

**Table 18.** Clause type in NECTE2 (chi-square: 6.108, d.f.: 1, p=0.0135)

Clause		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Main	N	148	104	252
	%	58.7	41.3	78.5
Subordinate	N	29	40	69
	%	42.0	58.0	21.5
Total	N	177	144	321
	%	55.1	44.9	

**Table 19.** Apodoses of *if*-clauses in TLS (chi-square: 0.067, d.f.: 1, p=0.7959)

Clause		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Apodoses of <i>if</i> -clauses	N	11	4	15
	%	73.3	26.7	6.5
Elsewhere	N	164	51	215
	%	76.3	23.7	93.5
Total	N	175	55	230
	%	76.1	23.9	

**Table 20.** Apodoses of *if*-clauses in PVC (chi-square: 4.697, d.f.: 1, p=0.0302)

Clause		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Apodoses of <i>if</i> -clauses	N	40	10	50
	%	80.0	20.0	5.8
Elsewhere	N	530	285	815
	%	65.0	35.0	94.2
Total	N	570	295	865
	%	65.9	34.1	



**Table 21.** Apodoses of *if*-clauses in NECTE2 (chi-square: 4.769, d.f.: 1, p=0.0290)

Clause		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Apodoses of <i>if</i> -clause	N	19	6	25
	%	76.0	24.0	7.8
Elsewhere	N	158	138	296
	%	53.4	46.6	92.2
Total	N	177	144	321
	%	55.1	44.9	

**Table 22.** Sentence type in TLS (chi-square: 2.236, d.f.: 1, p=0.1348)

Sentence Type		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Affirmative	N	154	44	198
	%	77.8	22.2	86.1
Negative	N	21	11	32
	%	65.6	34.4	13.9
Total	N	175	55	230
	%	76.1	23.9	

**Table 23.** Sentence type in PVC (chi-square: 0.220, d.f.: 1, p=0.6394)

Sentence type		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Affirmative	N	484	254	738
	%	65.6	34.4	85.3
Negative	N	86	41	127
	%	67.7	32.3	14.7
Total	N	570	295	865
	%	65.9	34.1	

**Table 24.** Sentence type in NECTE2 (chi-square: 0.267, d.f.: 1, p=0.6053)

Sentence type		<i>will</i>	<i>be going to</i>	total
Affirmative	N	157	125	282

	%	55.7	44.3	87.9
Negative	N	20	19	39
	%	51.3	48.7	12.1
Total	N	177	144	321
	%	55.1	44.9	

**Table 25.** Multivariate analysis: Factors contributing to the choice of *be going to* over *will* in all three sub-corpora<sup>22</sup>

	TLS		PVC		NECTE2	
Input	0.197		0.340		0.447	
Total N	230		865		321	
Log likelihood	-112.107		-550.998		-207.845	
	<b>Factor weight</b>	<b>%</b> <b>N</b>	<b>Factor weight</b>	<b>%</b> <b>N</b>	<b>Factor weight</b>	<b>%</b> <b>N</b>

<sup>22</sup> Proximity of future reference, grammatical person and clause type are the three variables that proved to be significant in the multivariate analysis. However, not all linguistic constraints were significant in all three sub-corpora, and square brackets are used in Table 25 to indicate scores that are not-significant (e.g. proximity of future reference was only significant in the earliest sub-corpus, the TLC). The apodosis of *if*-clauses was significant according to chi-square tests. However, the numbers in this category were too low to include in the multivariate analysis.

<b>Proximity of future reference</b>									
Proximal	0.665	28.4	102	[0.509]	34.4	433	[0.536]	47.5	200
Neither proximal nor distal	0.534	27.6	87	[0.492]	34.0	362	[0.474]	42.7	75
Distal	0.120	4.9	41	[0.488]	32.9	70	[0.388]	37	46
<i>Range</i>	54.5								
<b>Person</b>									
2 <sup>nd</sup>	0.641	43.8	16	0.509	34.8	92	0.726	67.8	59
3 <sup>rd</sup>	0.616	28.3	113	0.555	39.1	368	0.520	48.6	111
1 <sup>st</sup>	0.350	15.8	101	0.448	29.4	405	0.392	33.1	151
<i>Range</i>	29.1			10.7			33.4		
<b>Clause type</b>									
Non-main clause	0.657	35.4	48	[0.526]	37	192	0.613	58	69
Main clause	0.457	20.9	182	[0.493]	33.3	673	0.469	41.3	252
<i>Range</i>	20						14.4		

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