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Future Tense in Modern American English

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Introduction

English is spoken in Australia, the United Kingdom, America, England, and South Africa as a native language. General American (GA) is one example of an English variation which is spoken in the United States of America. David Crystal points out that there are differences between Received Pronunciation (RP) and GA regarding pronunciation, lexicon and spelling (307).

This paper will scrutinize how the future tense is expressed on *Pimp My Ride*, on *Your World Today* and the speech “I Have a Dream” by Martin Luther King. Firstly, is there any difference in the way that the mechanics and the white anchors, and Dr. King express the future tense? Secondly, are elision and other contracted forms replacing the full future construction? Thirdly, has the future tense construction *shall* + the infinitive been replaced by the future tense *will* + the infinitive in spoken American English as described by David Crystal (194)?

This paper has been divided in four chapters. Chapter one contains the background and theory that was used to answer the aims and questions. Chapter two presents the material investigated and the method that was used to analyze the primary sources in order to study the future tense constructions. In chapter three the findings of the analysis are presented. In the beginning of every subdivision, there are tables which show both how the future constructions were used and who used them. Moreover, examples found in the analysis of the corpus were related with the theories of the grammarians and linguists. In the conclusion, there will be a general discussion about what was found during the analysis and whether answers to the research questions presented here were found.

1. Background

The development of the English language started in the United States in the 16th century. The first English expedition that arrived in the new world was commissioned by Walter Raleigh in 1584. Then, according to Crystal a group of explorers landed near Roanoke Island, where today is North Carolina, to start a new colony. Crystal points out that most of these settlers became Americans and became a new extension of the history of the English Language. While living in this country, the colonists called their settlements Jamestown after James I and the area of Virginia was called after the Virgin Queen, Elizabeth. Later, other colonists followed along the coast and settled on nearby Islands, such as Bermuda.

In 1620, the first group of Puritans who were from the English Separatist Church arrived on the Mayflower. They settled in Cape Cod Bay where they established a settlement at what is now Plymouth, Massachusetts. The settlers who came to America had “diverse regional, social and occupational backgrounds” (Crystal 92). The Pilgrims Fathers came to America searching for a new land to settle to find a new religious freedom because they were persecuted for their church practices in England. They accomplished their goals because in 1640 there were 25 thousand people settled on this area (92).

During the 17th century, new settlers came to America bringing with them a new variety of linguistic characteristics. Pennsylvania was the first American state to be settled by Quakers whose origins were in the Midlands and the north of England. At this time, there were mixtures of accents in the middle Atlantic regions such as in New York. Therefore, the concept of the so called melting pot was introduced in America (93). It was not only people from England who came to influence the language, culture and beliefs of the American people, but also the Spanish who settled on the West and South West. In addition, the Dutch who were from New Amsterdam settled in New York and the French occupied the Northern and Southern territories (94). Crystal says that as a result of slavery trade, a large number of slaves came to the southern part of the United States in the 17th century where they worked on sugar plantations. White slave traders had a policy which said that the slaves who belonged to the same tribe should be separated and transported in different ships, in order to avoid plots against the slave owners.

Ultimately, this slave mixture resulted in the growth of Pidgin forms of English used for communication, particularly between the slaves. Afterwards, black people got married and had children who grew up speaking Pidgin which later developed into Creole English (96). By 1776 the number of slaves had grown to half a million and when slavery was abolished in

1865 there were 4 million emancipated slaves (96). In recent years, the growth of varieties of Black American English has raised much attention because it is “complex, controversial and it is partly understood because it is described as a Creole language, a native -speaker variety descended from a pidgin;... it is a dialect of English based on the varieties the slaves learnt from their masters, which explains its many Southern features... it is derived from West African languages” (Melchers and Shaw 84).

In the 19th century, according to Crystal, “the abolitionist movement focused national attention on Blacks’ civil rights and sympathetic representation of Black English started to appear in literary works such as those by Harriet Beecher Stowe and Mark Twain”(Crystal 97). In addition, Blacks became more successful all over the nation because of their progress in music and education and politics. Martin Luther King became a symbol in the civil rights movement in the United States. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 (Crystal 97).

1.1 Conscious and Unconscious Changes

According to Jean Aitchison there are conscious and unconscious language changes. She explains that people need to understand the differences between these two. So “we find changes which people realize are happening, and actively encourage. These are triggered by pressures from above, that is, above the level of conscious awareness....we also find changes which people do not notice. These are influenced by pressures from below, that is below the level of conscious awareness” (Aitchison 56). She argues that many questions have been discussed regarding language changes, but these questions have not been easy to answer because linguists have not been able to verify how changes occur in a language (6). However, the two main obvious changes are, firstly, geographical and secondly, social variation because everyone is aware that people from different geographical areas display differences in their speech (39). As people move from one place to another, they are likely to speak and articulate differently a language from region to region (40). Secondly, the other type of change is the social variation because these types of variation differences occur not only in pronunciation, syntax and vocabulary, but also in contractions such as *wanna*, *I’d*, *we’ve*, *ain’t* that are becoming more common in casual situations (Aitchison 41). Geographical variation, conscious, unconscious changes and various types of variation occur not only in pronunciation, but also in syntax and vocabulary. She points out that that “*be going to* has become *gonna* in several spoken English dialects” as in: “*I’m going to see Pete* [has become] *I’m gonna see Pete*” (Aitchison 116). “Language varieties are much influenced by changes in

fashion. New words, catch phrases, grammatical usages, pronunciation and orthographic effects can make a variety appear very different over time” (Crystal 392).

1.2 The Future Tense in Middle English

In Old English future tense was constructed with *sceolan* + a main verb, the simple future verb system was built up in Middle English by means of primary auxiliaries *be* + the infinitive and later with the modal auxiliaries *shall*, and *will*. Ultimately, the future was established in Middle English where it had the function of obligation and desire, but today its meaning is just prediction or futurity, as in: “I shall myself direct you to herbs that will be for your health and for your benefit” (Barber 162). Barber argues that the use of the words is as simple “markers of the future” and that *shall* is used for the first person (162). On the other hand, Aitchison points out that in Shakespeare’s time there was the sudden expansion of *to be going to*, which was used to express the future (109), as in “I *am going to* visit the prisoner meaning that I am on my way to visit the prisoner” (Aitchison 109).

1.3 The Future Tense in Present-day English

There are many ways of expressing the future tense in English. Table 1 shows how the future tense is discussed in present-day English by some linguists. These are future constructions that will be both investigated and later analysed. Table 2 shows that there are also different ways to contract and even to use elision. For example *'ll*+ the infinitive and *gonna* + the infinitive.

Table 1. Future Tense Construction in English

Form	Leech	Beresford	Crystal	Greenbaum	Svartvik & Sager	Allen
Will + the Infinitive	X	X	X	X	X	X
Shall + the Infinitive	X	X	X	X	X	X
Be Going + the Infinitive	X		X	X	X	X
The Present Progressive	X		X		X	X
The Present Progressive Perfective	X					
Be About to + the Infinitive	X		X		X	
Will or Shall +Be + Progressive	X				X	
Will + the Perfect Progressive	X				X	
The Simple Present	X		X		X	

Examples of the future constructions that have been illustrated in table1:

1. *Will* + the Infinitive: "Tomorrow's weather *will be* cold and cloudy..." (Leech 56).
2. *Shall* + the Infinitive: "I *shall make* a note of your request" (Greenbaum 54).
3. *Be going to* + the Infinitive: "She's *going to have* a baby" (Allen 115).
4. *Present Progressive*: "I'm *dining* at the Smith's tonight" (Svartvik and Sager 102)
5. *Present Progressive Perfective*: "She's *getting married* this spring; the Chelsea- Arsenal match is *being played* next Saturday" (Leech 61).
6. *Be about* + the Infinitive: "We *are about to enter*" (Svartvik and Sager 101).
7. *Will* or *Shall* + *Be* + the Progressive: "This time next week they *will be sailing* across the North Sea, Don't phone me at 7 o'clock- *I'll be watching* my favourite TV program" (Leech 66).
8. *Will* + the Perfect Progressive: "When she moves out in August, she'll *have been staying* here in my house for six months" (Leech 58).
9. *Simple Present Tense* with Future Tense Meaning. "Next time *do as she tells you*" (Leech 63)

Table 2 shows the linguists and grammarians who say that in English there are different ways of contracting the future tense *will* + the infinitive, *gonna* + the infinitive and elision of the progressive *-ing* ending to *-in*.

Table 2. Contracted Forms of Future Tense Constructions

Form	Leech	Aitchison	Johansson and Rønnerdal
'll	X	X	
The Progressive-in			X
Gonna	X	X	X

Typical examples are:

1. Contracted form 'll: "I'll be here, you'll be here, he'll be here until five and they'll be here" (Leech 56). Elision can also happen in combination with pronouns as in: "I'm not...you're not...they're not...they don't" (Johansson and Rønnerdal 112).
2. Contracted form *gonna*+ the infinitive: "I'm *gonna see* Pete" (Aitchison 116).
3. *Will* + *Be* + the Progressive form: "Now we're assembling the foam and this one is gonna ... and let us finish it and he *will be pimpin*". (Episode 3)

1.3.1 Will + the Infinitive

The main use of the future *will* + the bare infinitive in English is to both indicate and show prediction, which is something that involves the speaker's judgment. The construction *will* can also be contracted to the form *'ll*. For example: "I'll be here, you'll be here, he'll be here until five and they'll be here" (Leech 56). For example: "Tomorrow's weather will be cold and cloudy, you'll feel better after this medicine, the next budget will need to be a severe one [and] perhaps I'll change my mind after I've spoken to my wife" (Leech 57). Furthermore, *will* is a construction that is usually used with adverbs of definite time to indicate future as in: "By next week I'll be sick of exams, I'll have had eight exams in two weeks" (Leech 58). In American English, *will* + the infinitive is used to express predictions and promises (Leech 58). *Will* + the infinitive is used with, you, I and he to express futurity (57).

1.3.2 Shall + the Infinitive

In Old English the future tense was constructed by *sceolan* + a main verb. The use of auxiliary *shall* + the infinitive was historically the first future construction. Beresford says that *shall* + the infinitive was used in English to express commands as in: "thou *shalt* not kill, promises as in you *shall* go, or threats...you *shall* pay for this" (Beresford 14).

Moreover, Greenbaum points out that *shall* + the infinitive is not only used both to refer to and to express the future in English, but it is nowadays only used in English instead of *will* when the subject of the sentence is "*I* or *we*, [as in] *I shall* make a note of your request" (Greenbaum 54). What has been pointed out by Greenbaum is reflected in how Americans use *shall* + the infinitive in the first-person in questions as the example given by Beresford: "shall I call you?" (Greenbaum 14). Leech declares that *shall* can be used to express predictive meaning if it is used with first person pronoun only as in: "I shall have to tell the truth at last...We shall explore this topic in the next chapter" (Leech 56). To conclude, *shall* + the infinitive has come to be increasingly replaced by *will* in several varieties; *shall* + the infinitive is nowadays hardly used in American English even in conservative southern American English. It is now rare to find *shall* in the second and third person (Crystal 194).

1.3.3 Be Going to + the Infinitive

Be going to + the infinitive as a future form is probably the most common way to express futurity both in spoken and written English, according to Allen (111). Additionally, *be going to* + the infinitive expresses the future with intention of feeling of "probability in the mind of

the speaker” (Allen 117). Therefore, *be going to* is more common with persons than things as in: “He’s going to write to me every week... I’m going to climb to the top [and] she’s going to have a baby” (Allen 115). This future tense construction is very common in informal spoken English because *be going to* is usually reduced to *gonna*, a pronunciation that is also reflected in non-standard English spelling. Leech says that *be going to* in English is both used to express the future of present intention and the future outcome of present intention (58). The future of present intention is illustrated in the following examples by Leech: “What are you going to do today, I ’m going to stay at home and write letters, my ex is going to vote for Pat Buchanan, they are going to get married in a registry office”(Leech 58). The author points out that *be going to* has a “strong expectation that the intention will be carried out [As in] I am going to cut down on junk food is stronger than I intend to cut down on junk food” (Leech 59). The future outcome of present intention is found “with animals and inanimate subjects, as well as with human subjects” (Leech 59).

Gonna is very common in informal spoken English because *be going to* is usually reduced to *gonna*, a pronunciation that is basically reflected in non-standard English spelling (Leech 58). Leech is not the only linguist who points out that *be going to* is usually reduced to *gonna*. Aitchison also points out that *be going to* has become *gonna* in several English dialects as in: “I’m *going to* see Pete [has become] I’m *gonna* see Pete” (Aitchison 116).

The colloquial American form *gonna* + the infinitive is discussed as a clear example of elision which is a further step in the direction of simplification (Johansson and Rönnerdal 97). They also state that elision can happen in word finals specially in faster speech consonants such as t,d which can be dropped as in next and old: “next day, last dance, old man” (Johansson and Rönnerdal 97). They point out that elision is not only happening in examples such as *gonna*, but it is also happening in verbs such as *want to* which is being reduced to *wanna* (97).

According to French linguist Antoine Meillet these changes that have been named above about the future form *to be going to* are called grammaticalization because of all the grammatical changes that languages undergo throughout their existence (Aitchison 112).

1.3.4 The Present Progressive

Leech specifies that the present progressive describes the “nature of arrangement” and that the present progressive is used to “refer to an activity which the speaker will perform alone: [as in] I’m watching TV this evening ... it seems to suggest that watching TV is an arrangement that has been made by the speaker with others” (Leech 62).

1.3.5 The Present Progressive Perfective

As *be going to* is used for future tense in English, the present progressive perfective form refers to a future “happening anticipated in both the present [and] the present progressive is a future event anticipated by virtue of the present plan, program or arrangement” (Leech 61), as the following examples given by Leech: “She’s getting married this spring, the Chelsea-Arsenal match is being played next Saturday” (Leech 61). Leech points out that the “implication of an arrangement [is] already made: the marriage has been arranged, the football match has been fixed” (Leech 61).

1.3.6 The Simple Present Tense with Future Meaning

Leech points out that a “subordinate future of the simple present occurs in dependent clauses introduced by conditional and temporal conjunctions such as: “if, unless, when, as soon as, as, etc” (Leech 63), as the following example: “I’ll tell you if it hurts, when you wake up, you’ll remember nothing [and] next time as she tells you” (Leech 63). The present future can also indicate plan or arrangement in the future [as in] “we start for Istanbul tonight, I get a lump sum when I retire at sixty-five, her case comes before the magistrate next week, the president gives his inaugural address tomorrow afternoon”(Leech 65). What was pointed out earlier by Leech can be related to what Svartvik and Sager argue: that the simple present sentence contains temporal conjunctions to indicate the future such as in: “when I get there, tonight and at six o’clock” (Svartvik and Sager 103).

1.3.7 Be About to + the Infinitive

There is yet another way of expressing the future in English with the periphrasis *be about to*+ the infinitive as in: “We are about to enter” (Svartvik and Sager 101). *Be about to* + the infinitive is also discussed by Crystal who argues that this future construction is another technique to express future (196). The future construction *be about to* expresses a future action as in: “She is about to leave” (224).

1.3.8 Will or Shall + Be + the Progressive

Will and *shall* followed by the progressive infinitive is “often associated with a future point of time [and] can refer to a temporary situation in the future” (Leech 66), as the following example: “This time next week they will be sailing across the North Sea, Don’t phone me at 7 o’clock- I’ll be watching my favourite TV program” (Leech 66).

1.3.9 Will + the Perfect Progressive

There is also a similar construction with *will* which is followed by the perfect progressive. As in the following examples: “When she moves out in August, she’ll have been staying here in my house for six months” (Leech 58).

2. Material Investigated

The material investigated is *Pimp My Ride, Your World Today* and “I Have a Dream” written by Martin Luther King. All speakers studied speak American English. These primary sources were chosen because they showed different ways of expressing the future tense which was the main priority for this study.

Pimp my Ride is an MTV daily American show on which several male black and Latino mechanics entirely repair and transform old vehicles into new ones in California. The language here is colloquial American English. *Pimp My Ride* is also available for purchase as a DVD collation. The following seven episodes which is the equivalent of four hours were analyzed:

- Episode 1 “Wyatt’s 1988 Daihatsu Hi-Jet”.
- Episode 2 “Nile’s 1978 Cadillac Sedan DeVille”.
- Episode 3 “Logan’s 1986 Oldsmobile Cutlass Supreme”.
- Episode 4 “Christine’s 1992 Honda Civic”.
- Episode 5 “Mary’s 1967 Ford Mustang”.
- Episode 6 “Jared’s 1985 Ford Ranger”.
- Episode 7 “Danelle’s 1981 Pontiac Trans Am”.

Your World Today is a TV news program where there are white female and white male anchors who read written news in daily broadcast on CNN. The program is aired between 16.30 PM and 19.30 PM. *Your World Today* brings the top world stories of the day. It gets beyond the headlines, to the why, how and what next of current topics. People can expect penetrating analyses, provocative questioning and clear explanation. *Your World Today* was recorded for four hours on CNN on a DVD.

The speech called “I Have a Dream” written by Martin Luther King was also analyzed to see how the future tense is expressed by the speaker. The speech was delivered at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. In this speech, he speaks about the human rights that black Americans should have in the United States. He also criticizes the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence because it promises that all white and black people should be treated equally in America. He also says that he wants freedom and justice for blacks and for all God’s children. The duration of the speech is 16 minutes and 10 seconds. The language of the speech can be classified as high style rhetorical American.

3. Method

There is one aim and three research questions being investigated in this paper. This investigation will be supported by the primary sources and secondary sources to be able to get the answers to the aims and research questions presented below. The examples extracted from the primary sources will be correlated with the explanations and conclusions of the future tense constructions presented by Leech, Beresford, Crystal, Greenbaum, Allen Svartvik and Sager.

To be able to get the answers to the aim and the research questions, the three primary sources *Pimp My Ride*, *Your World Today* and in the Martin Luther King speech “I Have a Dream” were chosen. It was there that all the future tense constructions would be investigated according to their type constructions, as explained in table 1.

The overriding aim is to scrutinize how the future tense is expressed on *Pimp My Ride*, on *Your World Today* and in the Martin Luther King speech “I Have a Dream”. This aim can be achieved successfully by selecting the examples that were extracted from the primary sources, according to the criteria for future constructions provided by the secondary sources.

The first research question was, are there any difference in the way that the mechanics and the white anchors, and Dr. King express the future tense? This question was answered by following the same steps as above.

The second question was if elision and other contracted forms are replacing the full future construction. This question can also be answered by comparing the relevant primary material data with the findings of the secondary sources.

The third question was if the future tense construction *shall* + the infinitive has been replaced by the future tense *will* + the infinitive in spoken American English as described by David Crystal (194), Leech, Greenbaum and Beresford. On *Pimp My Ride* and on *Your World Today* the mechanics and white anchors speak contemporary American English. The Martin Luther King speech “I Have a Dream” is a contrast to *Pimp My Ride* and *Your World Today* because the mechanics and the anchors speak contemporary American English, whereas Martin Luther King’s speech was given 45 years ago. Therefore, it can be classified as an older variant of American English. As a result of this, the speech may have an impact on the results of this linguistic investigation.

As suggested, the main method used for the analysis is to identify the future tense constructions presented in table 1, followed by the investigation and discussion of results.

There are three primary sources that are being investigated according to the same order of future tense constructions as presented in table 1.

1. *Will* + the Infinitive.
2. *Shall* + the Infinitive
3. *Be going to* + the Infinitive.
4. *The Present Progressive*.
5. *The Present Progressive Perfective*.
6. *Be about to* + the Infinitive.
7. *Will* or *shall* + be + the Infinitive.
8. *Will* + the perfect progressive Infinitive.
9. *The Simple Present with Future Meaning*.
10. *Gonna* + the Infinitive.

The results will be presented in the analysis for one source at a time. Tables containing the total future tense constructions found will show the total number first, and then each construction type will be discussed regarding difference in use by separate speaker categories. Finally, the example extracted will be related to the theories and knowledge presented in chapter 1.

4. Analysis

4.1 Pimp My Ride

Table 3 shows the total numbers of times and the types of future form constructions that have been discovered during the analysis on *Pimp My Ride*. Table 3 indicates that no examples of *shall*, *be going to*, *present progressive*, *present progressive perfective*, *will + the perfect progressive* and the *simple present tense with future meaning*. Therefore, what will be discussed below are those constructions types found in the primary sources.

Table 3. Future Construction Types Used

Future Constructions	Number	Percentage
Will + the Infinitive	10	7 %
Shall + the Infinitive	-	-
Be Going to + the Infinitive	-	-
The Present Progressive	-	-
The Present Progressive Perfective	-	-
Be About to + the Infinitive	22	15.3 %
Will or Shall + Be + the Infinitive	1	0.7 %
Will + the Perfect Progressive	-	-
The Simple Present with Future Meaning	-	-
Gonna	110	77 %
Total	143	100

4.1.1 Will + the Infinitive

Table 4. Will + the Infinitive

Will + the Infinitive	Number	Percentage
Black Mechanics	7	70%
White Mechanics	3	30%
Latino Mechanics	-	-
Total	10	100%

Crystal points out that *shall* + the infinitive has come to be increasingly replaced by *will* + the infinitive in several varieties and that *shall* + the infinitive is nowadays hardly used in the American English (Crystal 194). What was pointed out is verified throughout the analysis of *Pimp My Ride* because there are only ten examples of prediction *will*+ the infinitive found. Throughout the analysis of *Pimp My Ride* no examples of the future construction *shall* + the infinitive was found.

Typical examples of prediction are:

1. “I think if I go to a job interview in this car, it *will* definitely give more respect, next time you see this car”. (*Episode 1*)
2. “It *will* be officially pimped, let’s put a river in the car ... and then everything *will* be all wet, I have a problem with the river. I have to admit it ... but I *will* get it next time, we’ll definitely have some fun with this one”. (*Episode 2*)
3. “I figured it out that I need air pressure regulators, once those are installed I think it *will* be good to go and ... it *will* be worth a lot more”. (*Episode 3*)
4. “I have a problem with the river. I have to admit ... but I will get it”. (*Episode 2*)

Examples (1) and (2) contain adverbs of definite time such as *next time* which, according to Leech, is a construction that is usually used with adverbs of definite time to indicate the future, as in: “by next week I’ll be sick of exams, I’ll have had eight exams in two weeks” (Leech 58). In example (4), there are three first-person pronouns, which according to Leech *will* + the infinitive is used with (57).

4.1.2 Be About to + the Infinitive

Table 5. Be About To + the Infinitive.

Be About to + the Infinitive	Number	Percentage
Black Mechanics	22	100%
White Mechanics	-	-
Latino Mechanics	-	-
Total	22	100%

The future tense in English can be expressed with the periphrasis *be about to* + the infinitive as in: “We are about to enter” (Svartvik and Sager 101). Throughout the analysis of *Pimp My Ride* 22 examples of this type of future construction were found. Typical examples are:

5. “That *is about to change* because he has no idea....”(Episode 1)
6. “I’m *about to pimp* his ride....” (Episode 7)
7. “Wyatt has no idea *am about to* take his jack to a whole lot high. I’m *about to pimp* your ride....” (Episode 1)

These are examples of elision as described by Johansson and Rønnerdal who not only say that the colloquial American form *gonna* + the infinitive is a clear example of elision but is also a

further step in direction of simplification (97). This can also be verified in example (6) where the vowel *a* is missing and in example (7), where the mechanic says *I'm* instead of saying *am*.

4.1.3 Will or Shall + Be + the Progressive

Table 6. Will or Shall +Be+ the Progressive

Will +Be+ the Progressive	Number	Percentage
Black Mechanics	-	-
White Mechanics	-	-
Latino Mechanics	1	100%
Total	1	100%

Leech says that the future construction *will + be + the progressive* is “often associated with a future point of time [and] can refer to a temporary situation in the future.” (Leech 66), as the following example given by Leech: “This time next week they will be sailing across the North Sea, Don’t phone me at 7 o’clock- I’ll be watching my favourite TV program” (Leech 66). One example of *will* followed by *be + the progressive* was found in the analysis, as in:

8. “Now we’re assembling the foam and this one is gonna ... and let us finish it and he *will be pimpin*”. (Episode 3)

In example (8) there is an example of elision in the progressive form of the verb *pimping* as explained by Johansson and Rönnerdal (97).

4.1.4 Gonna + the Infinitive

Table 7. Gonna + the Infinitive

Gonna + the Infinitive	Number	Percentage
Black Mechanics	89	81%
White Mechanics	21	19%
Latino Mechanics	-	-
Total	110	100%

Throughout the analysis of *Pimp My Ride*, the use of the informal future tense construction *gonna* is evident when the mechanics express the future tense in English. These examples of *gonna* are clear evidence of what Leech says: that *be going to + the infinitive* is usually reduced to *gonna*, a pronunciation that is basically reflected in non-standard English spelling (58), as in examples (9), (10) and (11). Typical examples are:

9. “Antwon is not *gonna* believe that this is his car”. (*Episode 5*)
10. “First we *gonna* get that cheap paint off that car ... I think it’s *gonna* look real good, she is *gonna* love it....”(Episode 2)
11. “We’re *gonna* put a ... CD player, MP3 player....” (*Episode 2*)

The examples above are clear representations of what Allen says: that *to be going to* + the infinitive is the dominant future form in English and that it is probably the commonest ways of expressing futurity both in spoken and written English (Allen 111).

This is proven correct and it can be related to Allen’s theory because the black mechanics use the future informal tense 77 % and the white mechanics only 24 %. Therefore, *be going to* is more usual with persons than things, as illustrated by Allen: “he’s going to write to me every week...I’m going to climb to the top [and] she’s going to have a baby” (Allen 115). This linguistic investigation completely agrees with Allen because in many of the examples that were found throughout the analysis *be going to* + the infinitive is used with things and persons, as in the examples:

12. “We are *gonna* look for Christine....” (*Episode 4*)
13. “I think the man is *gonna* lose his mind....” (*Episode 7*)
14. “Logan is *gonna* be a successful business man....” (*Episode 3*)

Additionally, Leech specifies that *be going to* + the infinitive has a “strong expectation that the intention will be carried out” (Leech 59), as the following examples: “*I am going to cut down on junk food is stronger than I intend to cut down on junk food*” (Leech 59). What has been concluded by Leech is clearly perceived in example (15):

15. “I’m *gonna* put like sixteen inches on the wall, this one is the one we *gonna* use to wire stuff”. (*Episode 3*)

It is not only Leech who says that *be going to* + the infinitive is usually reduced to *gonna*. Aitchison also does so when she points out that *be going to* + the infinitive has become *gonna* in several English dialects (116). Furthermore, the results of the analysis of *Pimp My Ride* can be related to what French linguist Antoine Meillet says about changes such as the future form *to be going to* being called grammaticalization because of all the grammatical changes that languages undergo throughout their existence (Aitchison 112).

The examples above are also clear representations of elision. As Johansson and Rönnerdal point out, elision is not only happening in examples such as *gonna*, but also in word final consonants *t,d*, which can be dropped as in: “next day, last dance, old man” Johansson and Rönnerdal (97). But it is also happening in verbs like *want to* which is being reduced to *wanna* (Johansson and Rönnerdal 97), as in examples (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), (14) and (15) where *-ing to* is reduced to *-a* in *gonna* + the infinitive.

4.2 Your World Today

Table 8 shows the total number of future constructions discovered during the analysis of *Your World Today*. No examples of the future construction *shall* + the infinitives were found in the analysis. No examples of *will* + the perfect progressive were found. Therefore, what will be discussed below are those construction types found.

Table 8. Future Construction Types Used

Future Constructions	Number	Percentage
Will + the Infinitive	68	58 %
Shall + Infinitive	-	-
Be Going to + the Infinitive	8	6.9 %
The Present Progressive	6	5.2 %
The Present Progressive Perfective	-	-
Be About to + the Infinitive	3	2.6 %
Will or Shall + Be + the Infinitive	1	0.8 %
Will +The Perfect Progressive	-	-
The Simple Present with Future Meaning	3	2.6 %
Gonna	28	24 %
Total	117	100%

4.2.1 Will + the Infinitive

Table 9. Will + the Infinitive

Will + the Infinitive	Number
White Anchors	68
Total	68

Leech points out that the future construction *will* + the infinitive is used in English to express prediction (56). The following examples of prediction are exemplified by Leech: “tomorrow’s weather will be cold and cloudy, you’ll feel better after this medicine, the next budget will

need to be a severe one [and] Perhaps I'll change my mind after I've spoken to my wife" (Leech 57). In examples (16), (17), (18), (19), (20) and (21) there are patterns of prediction. This is exactly as pointed out and exemplified by Leech. Typical examples are:

16. "*In the weeks to come we will begin a great debate about the future of this country ... but in this election we will offer two different visions....*" (*Your World Today*).
17. "*We'll be back in a minute*" (*Your World Today*).
18. "Barak Obama ... ultimately, he *will* be the candidate who will prevail on the democratic side...." (*Your World Today*).
19. "We've won enough nominees [and] with great sense of responsibility that I *will* be the Republican nominee for president of the United States" (*Your World Today*).
20. "Later this month McCain *will* go to Europe and also he *will* go to the Middle East...." (*Your World Today*).

Furthermore, the construction *will* + the infinitive is usually used with adverbs of definite time to indicate future as in: "By next week I'll be sick of exams, I'll have had eight exams in two weeks" (Leech 58). These adverbs of indefinite time such as in *two weeks* and *in a minute* have also been found in examples (16), (17), (20) and (21), as pointed out by Leech (58).

In Example (17) there is a contraction *'ll*. In examples (18), (20) and (21) the subject is a personal pronoun before the future constructions *will* + the infinitive; according to Leech, *will* + the infinitive is usually used with personal pronouns such as *I*, *you* and *he* to express "futurity" (Leech 57).

21. "*Will they talk or will they fight that is the question on a Latin American summit that is going on in the Dominican Republic....*" (*Your World Today*).

4.2.2 Be Going to + the Infinitive

Table 10. Be Going to + the Infinitive

Be Going to + the Infinitive	Number
White Anchors	8
Total	8

Be going to + the infinitive as future form is probably the commonest way to express futurity both in the spoken and written English, according to Allen, as in the following examples: "He's going to write to me every week ... I'm going to climb to the top [and] she's going to

have a baby” (Allen 115). What has been said by Allen can be related to the following examples (22) and (23) because they contain personal subjects.

22. “We’re going to tell you about Israel response to these charges” (*Your World Today*).

23. “Check out Saturday it is going to be more snow there” (*Your World Today*).

Be going to + the infinitive is both used to express the future of present intention and the future outcome of present intention as the example given by Leech: “what are you going to do today, I’m going to stay at home and write letters, my ex is going to vote for Pat Buchanan”(Leech 58). In examples (22) and (24) there are clear characteristics of the expression of the present intention. Moreover, Leech’s theory can be related to example (24) because the linguist points out that *be going to* + the infinitive has a “strong expectation that the intention will be carried out” (Leech 59).

24. “I do think it is going to continue for the coming days” (*Your World Today*).

The future outcome of present intention is basically found “with animals and inanimate subjects, as well as with human subjects” (Leech 59), so Allen’s claim that *be going to* +the infinitive is mostly used with personal subjects will have to be amended. This has been verified in the analysis of *Your World Today* because the examples presented below contain inanimate subject such as *the housing and the declaiming*: Typical example are:

25. “The housing crisis *isn’t going to* get any better any time soon” (*Your World Today*).

26. “The declaiming of the dollar will get another record low on Thursday, economist agree that the housing crisis and the inflation *are going to* get even worse” (*Your World Today*).

Finally, in examples (25) and (26) elision takes place once again in *we’re, isn’t*. Exactly as exemplified by Johansson and Rönnerdal:” I’m not...you’re not...they’re not...they don’t” (Johansson and Rönnerdal 112).

4.2.3 The Present Progressive

Table 11. The Present Progressive

The Present Progressive	Number
White Anchors	6
Total	6

The present progressive form usually refers to a future action which is “happening anticipated in the present ... the present progressive futurity is future event anticipated by virtue of the present plan, program or arrangement” (Leech 61), as in the examples given by Leech: “She’s getting married this spring, the Chelsea- Arsenal match is being played next Saturday” (Leech 61), and as in examples (27), (28) and (29), which contain adverbials such as *next month* and *156 days to go, to Wyoming and Mississippi*.

27. “Zimbabwe *is rolling up* the red carpet and putting it away ahead of *next month’s* general election there” (*Your World Today*).
28. “We’re *counting down* the days to the Begin Olympic Games only *156 days to go*” (*Your World Today*).
29. “Senator Barak Obama *is making* new arrangements for his campaign... he is moving to *Wyoming* as well as *Mississippi*” (*Your World Today*).

Leech points out that the *present progressive* can be used for “implication of an arrangement” (Leech 61). He specifies that the “nature of arrangement” is used to “refer to an activity which the speaker will perform alone [as in] I’m watching TV this evening ... it seems to suggest that watching TV is an arrangement that has been made by the speaker with others” (Leech 62). This can be correlated with the example below where the present progressive form is both used to express the nature of arrangement, and to “refer to an activity which the speaker will perform alone” (Leech 62), as pointed out by Leech. Typical examples of the present progressive:

30. “Well the Democrats *are looking* ahead to the next big contest that is in Pennsylvania in April ... because the contest there is not over” (*Your World Today*).

4.2.4 Be About to+ the Infinitive

Table 12. Be About to + the Infinitive

Be About to + the Infinitive	Number
White Anchors	3
Total	3

There is yet another way of expressing the future in English with the periphrasis *be about to+* the infinitive as in: “we are about to enter” (Svartvik and Sager 101). This theory can be

related with examples (31) and (32) where the periphrasis *be about to*+ the infinitive is used as explained by Svartvik and Sager. Typical examples are:

31. “We are at the University of Pennsylvania Students’ Union and she *is about to* take the stage where she is treated like a rock star” (*Your World Today*).
32. “Paul is one of the Republican candidates ... and now he *is about to* withdraw himself” (*Your World Today*)

4.2.5 Will or Shall + Be + the Progressive

Table 13. Will or Shall + Be + the Progressive

Will or Shall + Be + the Progressive	Number
White Anchors	1
Total	1

The future tense constructions *will* or *shall* + be + the progressive infinitive is “often associated with a future point of time [and] can refer to a temporary situation in the future” (Leech 66). As in: “this time next week they will be sailing across the North Sea, [and] Don’t phone me at 7 o’clock- I’ll be watching my favourite TV program”(Leech 66). What Leech illustrates is found in example (33):

33. “We don’t know what the White House, the Republican Party and McCain himself *will be saying* tomorrow” (*Your World Today*).

4.2.6 The Simple Present Tense with Future Meaning

Table 14. The Simple Present Tense with Future Meaning

The Simple Present Tense with Future Meaning	Number
White Anchors	2
Total	2

Leech points out that a subordinate future of the simple present occurs in dependent clauses introduced by conditional and temporal conjunctions such as: “if, unless, when, as soon as, as, etc” (Leech 63). Leech illustrates this with: “I’ll tell you if it hurts, *when* you wake up, you’ll remember nothing [and] next time as she *tells you*” (Leech 63). As in example (34) which contains the conjunction *if*:

34. “*If* Hillary Clinton *gets* the nomination she’ll be on a lot of pressure to pick Barak Obama” (*Your World Today*).

What was verified by Leech is supported by Svartvik and Sager when they argue that the simple present tense with future meaning contains temporal conjunctions to indicate the future, as in: “*when I get there, tonight and at six o’clock*” (Svartvik and Sager 103). These descriptions can be related to the examples extracted from *Your World Today* because they contain temporal conjunctions such as *as* and *Saturday*. Typical examples are:

35. “You know what they say, *as* Chicago goes so goes the Nation, well this nation is coming back, and so is this campaign” (*Your World Today*).

4.2.7 Gonna + the Infinitive

Table 15. Gonna + the Infinitive

Gonna + the Infinitive	Number
White Anchors	28
Total	28

This future tense construction is very common in informal spoken English because *be going to* + the infinitive is usually reduced to *gonna*, a pronunciation that is basically reflected in non-standard English spelling (Leech 58). What has been said by Leech and Aitchison can be seen throughout the 28 examples that were found when the TV anchors use the future form. They choose the informal future construction tense *gonna*. Examples:

36. “Just ahead we’re *gonna* get some perspective from Iran’s Ambassador ... don’t go away you’re watching CCN” (*Your World Today*)
37. “They don’t believe that all these four contests are *gonna* make all that much difference in the end” (*Your World Today*).
38. “I got a lot to do, but *am a* find time to help and I can help raising money” (*Your World Today*).
39. “He is *gonna* be sitting behind that desk making decisions on war and peace....” (*Your World Today*).
40. “It is very clear how they are *gonna* be able to get out of it ... no one knows exactly what to do or who is *gonna* pay for it” (*Your World Today*).
41. “All right we’re *gonna* take a short break here we’ll be right back” (*Your World Today*).
42. “Why not take these shots, wait a couple of months to get the other two shots, who knows that is *gonna* provide ... that is a possibility” (*Your World Today*).

It is not only Leech who points out that *be going to* + the infinitive is usually reduced to *gonna*; Aitchison also points this out and reinforces Leech's theory because Aitchison says that *be going to* has become *gonna* in several English dialects as in: "*I'm going to see Pete* [has become] *I'm gonna see Pete*" (Aitchison 116). Finally, what Aitchison and Leech declare is basically reinforced by Johansson and Rönnerdal who do not provide any thesis about the colloquial form *gonna*, but they mention that the colloquial American form *gonna* is a clear example of elision (Johansson and Rönnerdal 97) which is a "further step in the direction of simplification." (Johansson and Rönnerdal 97).

4.3 "I Have a Dream"

Table 16. Future Construction Types Used

Future Construction Types	Number	Percentage
Will + The Infinitive	24	86 %
Shall + The Infinitive	4	14 %
Total	28	100 %

4.3.1 Will + the Infinitive

Table 17. Will + the Infinitive

Will + the Infinitive	Number
Will + the Infinitive	24
Total	24

The main use of the future *will* + the bare infinitive in English is to both indicate and show prediction which is something that involves the speaker's judgment (Leech 56). Prediction can be noticed in the examples extracted from the speech. Typical examples are:

43. "I am happy to join today ...in what *will go* down in history...as the greatest demonstration of freedom" (*I Have a Dream*).
44. "This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent *will not pass* ...and *will now be content will have* a rude awaking" (*I Have a Dream*).
45. "We refused to believe that there are insufficient ...that *will give* us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice" (*I Have a Dream*).

In American English, *will* + the infinitive is used to express predictions and promises (Leech 58). *Will* + the infinitive is used with, you, I and he to express futurity (57), as in example (43).

4.3.2 Shall + the Infinitive

Table 18. Shall + the Infinitive

Shall + the Infinitive	Number
Shall + the Infinitive	4
Total	4

Crystal points out that *shall* has come to be increasingly replaced by *will* in several varieties and that *shall* is nowadays hardly used in American English. Even in conservative southern English, it is now rare to find *shall* in the second and third person (Crystal 194). This correlates with Crystal findings because no examples of *shall* + the infinitive were found either on *Pimp My Ride* nor on *Your World Today*, but four solitary examples of *shall* + the infinitive were found in the “I Have a Dream” speech which is illustrated in example (46).

46. “I have a dream that one day every valley *shall be* exalted and every hill and mountain *shall be* made low....and the glory of the Lord *shall see* revealed and all flesh *shall see* it together ” (*I Have a Dream*).

Leech declares that *shall* + the infinitive can be used to express predictive meaning if it is used with first person pronoun only as in: “I *shall* have to tell the truth at last...We *shall* explore this topic in the next chapter” (Leech 56), exactly as in example (46) which contains a first personal pronoun *I*. In example (46) there are signs of threats and promises as explained by Beresford who says that *shall* + the infinitive was used in English to express commands as in: “thou *shalt* not kill, promises as in you *shall* go, or threats...you *shall* pay for this” (Beresford 14).

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to scrutinize how the future tense is expressed on *Pimp My Ride*, on *Your World Today* and in the speech “I Have a Dream” written by Martin Luther King. The results of this investigation show that on *Pimp My Ride* the black, white and Latino mechanics use four types of future tense constructions:

1. *Will* + the Infinitive 7 %.
2. *Be about* + the Infinitive 15.3 %.
3. *Will* or *Shall* + Be+ the Progressive 0.7 %.
4. *Gonna* + the Infinitive 77 %.

On *Your World Today* there was definitely more variation in how the future tense is expressed because the anchors used seven different future tense constructions:

1. *Will* + the Infinitive 58 %.
2. *Be going to* + the Infinitive 6.9 %.
3. Present Progressive 5.2%.
4. *Be About* + the Infinitive 2.6 %.
5. *Will* or *Shall* + Be + the Infinitive 0.8 %.
6. The Simple Present with Future Meaning 2.6%.
7. *Gonna* + the Infinitive 24 %.

In Martin Luther King’s speech “I Have a Dream” two types of future tense constructions were found:

1. *Will* + the Infinitive 86 %.
2. *Shall* + the Infinitive 14 %.

The first question to be studied was if there is any difference in the way that the white anchors presenting the news, the black mechanics working in the shop and Martin Luther King’s speech “I Have a Dream” use the future tense constructions. This question was answered during the analysis of the material investigated. On *Your World Today*, the anchors used the following future tense constructions:

1. *Will* + the infinitive more frequently than the black mechanics because the anchors used it 58 % and the mechanics used it 7 %.
2. *Be going to* was the other big differentiation because the anchors used the formal future construction 6.9 %, whereas the black, white and Latino mechanics used it 0%.
3. The present progressive was used by the anchors 5.2 %, whereas, the mechanics did not use it at all.
4. *Be about to*+ the infinitive was used by the mechanics 15.3 %, whereas the anchors used other future expressions such as: *be on our way to*, *due to* and *be about to* + the infinitive 2.6 %.
5. *Will* + the infinitive or *shall* + the infinitive was used by the mechanics and the anchors 0.8 %.
6. *Gonna* + the infinitive was the big difference because the mechanics used the informal future construction *gonna* + the infinitive 77 %, whereas the anchors used it 24 %.
7. The simple present tense with future meaning was used by anchors 2.6 %, whereas the mechanics did not use it at all.
8. *Shall* + the infinitive was only used by Martin Luther King because neither the mechanics nor the anchors used *shall* + the infinitive.

This study concludes that the anchors used seven different future constructions; the mechanics used only four future tense constructions and Dr. King uses two different types of future tenses not found in the analysis of *Pimp My Ride* and *Your World Today*.

The second question to be investigated in this paper was if elision and other contrasted forms are replacing the future construction *to be going to* + *the infinitive* on *Pimp My Ride*, on *Your World Today* and in the “I Have a Dream” speech written by Martin Luther King.

The results of the three corpuses investigated show that elision is taking place because the mechanics used *gonna* 77 %, whereas the white anchors used it 24 %. In “I Have a Dream” there were no examples of elision. The results of *Pimp My Ride* and *Your World Today* are completely in accordance with what Johansson and Rönnerdal say because they claim that the colloquial American form *gonna* is a clear example of elision which is a further step in the direction of simplification (97). In addition, Leech reinforces what Johansson and Rönnerdal say because he says that *gonna* is very common in informal spoken English because *be going to* is usually reduced to *gonna*, a pronunciation that is basically reflected in non-standard English spelling (58). Furthermore, Aitchison points out that *be going to* has become *gonna* in

several English dialects as in: “I’m *going* to see Pete [has become] I’m *gonna* see Pete” (Aitchison 116).

The third question to be investigated was if the future tense construction *shall* + the infinitive is being increasingly replaced by the future tense *will* + the infinitive in spoken American English as described by Crystal (194). The analysis of *Pimp My Ride* and *Your World Today* has concluded that what has been argued by Crystal correlates when he says that *shall* + the infinitive has come to be increasingly replaced by *will* + the infinitive in several varieties and that *shall* is nowadays hardly used in the American English even in conservative southern English (194). No examples of *shall* + the infinitive were found throughout the analyses of the two TV programs. They were, however, found in the Martin Luther King speech from 45 years ago.

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