

## Review Article

A Comparative Analysis of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in Four CorporaNamkil Kang<sup>1\*</sup><sup>1</sup>Far East University South Korea

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**Abstract:** The ultimate goal of this paper is to provide a comparative analysis of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in four corpora. A major point to note is that *take a look at* is preferred over *have a look at* in the TV Corpus from the 1950s to the 2010s. A further point to note is two types reached a peak in the 2010s, which in turn implies that they are the most preferred ones in the 2010s. With respect to the Movie Corpus, it is worth noting that *take a look at* is favored over *have a look at* in the Movie Corpus from the 1930s to the 2010s. It is noteworthy, on the other hand, *have a look at* reached a peak (346 tokens) in the 2000s, whereas *take a look at* reached a peak (1,310 tokens) in the 2010s. This in turn implies that two types were the most preferred ones in those periods. The COCA clearly shows that *have a look at http* is the most preferred one in America, whereas *take a look at it* is the most preferred one. The COCA also shows that 8.88% of forty five nouns are the collocations of both *have a look at* and *take a look at*. The BNC clearly indicates that *have a look at number* and *take a look at trends* are the most preferable ones among the British. With respect to the BNC, it is interesting to point out that only 3.7% of twenty seven nouns are the collocation of *have a look at* and *take a look at*.

**Keywords:** Corpus, type, token, COCA, BNC, TV Corpus, Movie Corpus, *have a look at*, *take a look at*.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

As Murphy (2016, 2019) points out, *have a look at* and *take a look at* are used interchangeably. The main goal of this paper is to provide a comparative analysis of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in four corpora. We consider which type is the preferable one in the TV Corpus and the Movie Corpus. Also, we consider the collocations of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the COCA and BNC. We examine which collocations are the preferable ones among Americans and the British. The organization of this paper is as follows. In section 2, we argue that *take a look at* is preferred over *have a look at* in the TV Corpus from the 1950s to the 2010s. Two types reached a peak in the 2010s, which in turn implies that they are the most preferred ones in the 2010s. In section 3, we maintain that *take a look at* is favored over *have a look at* in the Movie Corpus from the 1930s to the 2010s. Interestingly, *have a look at* reached a peak (346 tokens) in the 2000s, whereas *take a look at* reached a peak (1,310 tokens) in the 2010s, which in turn implies that two types were the most preferred ones in those

periods. In section 4, we contend that *have a look at http* is the most preferred one in America, whereas *take a look at it* is the most preferred one. It is important to note that 8.88% of forty five nouns are the collocations of both *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the COCA. In section 5, we argue that *have a look at number* and *take a look at trends* are the most preferable ones among the British. Additionally, we show that only 3.7% of twenty seven nouns are the collocation of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the BNC.

## 2. The TV Corpus

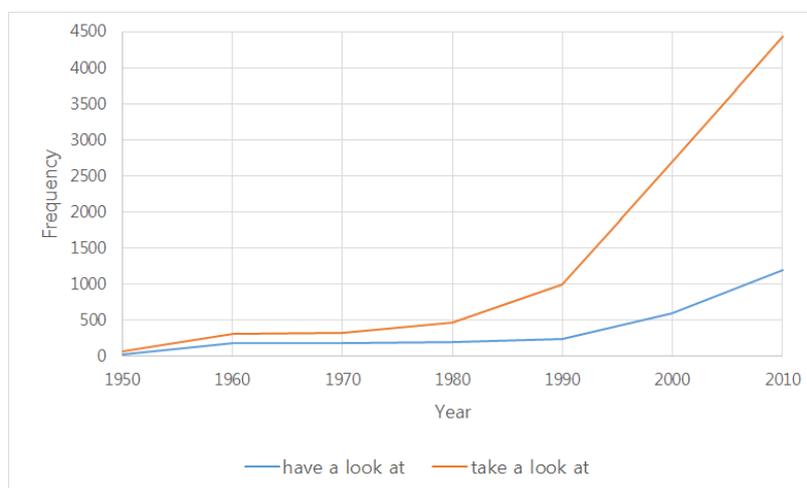
In what follows, we consider a comparative analysis of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the TV Corpus. The TV Corpus includes the TV programs of America, the UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland. In addition, it includes a database from the 1950s to the 2010s. Table 1 shows the use and frequency of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the TV programs of six countries from the 1950s to the 2010s:

**Table-1: Frequency of have a look at and take a look at in the TV Corpus**

Type	Have a look at	Take a look at
1950s	17	65
1960s	176	310
1970s	184	325
1980s	187	468
1990s	236	988
2000s	598	2,688
2010s	1,188	4,429
All	2,586	9,273
US/CA	904	8,117
UK/IE	1,548	987
AU/NZ	122	104
Misc	12	65

An important question is “Which type is the preferable one? As illustrated in Table 1, the overall frequency of *have a look at* is 2,586 tokens, whereas that of *take a look at* is 9,273 tokens. That is to say, the frequency of *have a look at* is three times higher than

that of *take a look at*. This in turn suggests that *take a look at* is favored over *have a look at*. The following graph shows how much *have a look at* and *take a look at* are used from the 1950s to the 2010s:



**Fig-1: Frequency of have a look at and take a look at in the TV Corpus**

It is interesting to note that *have a look at* shows a steady rise in its frequency for sixty years. More specifically, there was a rise of 1,171 tokens from the 1950s to the 2010s. More interestingly, *have a look at* had the lowest frequency in the 1950s (17 tokens), which in turn indicates that it was the least preferred one. On the other hand, *have a look at* reached a peak (1,188 tokens) in the 2010s, which in turn suggests that it was the most preferred one in all periods. Most importantly, *have a look at* is the most frequently used in the UK and Ireland. It must be noted, however, that *have a look at* is the least preferred one in Australia and New Zealand.

It is worth pointing out that there was a steady rise in the figure of *take a look at* from the 1950s to the 1980s. More specifically, there was a rise of 403 tokens from the 1950s to the 1980s. After this period, there was a dramatic increase in the figure of *take a look at*. To be more specific, there was an increase of 4,364

tokens from the 1950s to the 2010s. More interestingly, *take a look at* had the lowest frequency (65 tokens) in the 1950s, which indicates that it was the least preferred one in the 1950s. On the other hand, *take a look at* reached a peak (4,429 tokens) in the 2010s, which in turn suggests that it was the most preferred one in all periods. As illustrated in Table 1, *take a look at* was the most frequently used type in America and Canada. On the other hand, it was the least preferred one in Australia and New Zealand. Most importantly, the frequency of *take a look at* was much higher than that of *have a look at* from the 1950s to the 2010s. This in turn implies that *take a look at* was preferred over *have a look at* at all the time. More interestingly, there was a big difference in the figure of two types after the 1990s. To be more specific, there was a sharp increase in the figure of *take a look at* from the 1990s to the 2010s, whereas there was a gradual increase in the figure of *have a look at*. In addition to this, it is important to note that *have a look at* was the most preferred one in the

UK and Ireland, whereas *have a look at* was the least preferred one in Australia and New Zealand. It is also important to point out that *take a look at* was the most preferred one in America and Canada, whereas it was the least preferred one in Australia and New Zealand. We thus conclude that *take a look at* was favored over *have a look at* from the 1950s to the 2015s.

### 3. The Movie Corpus

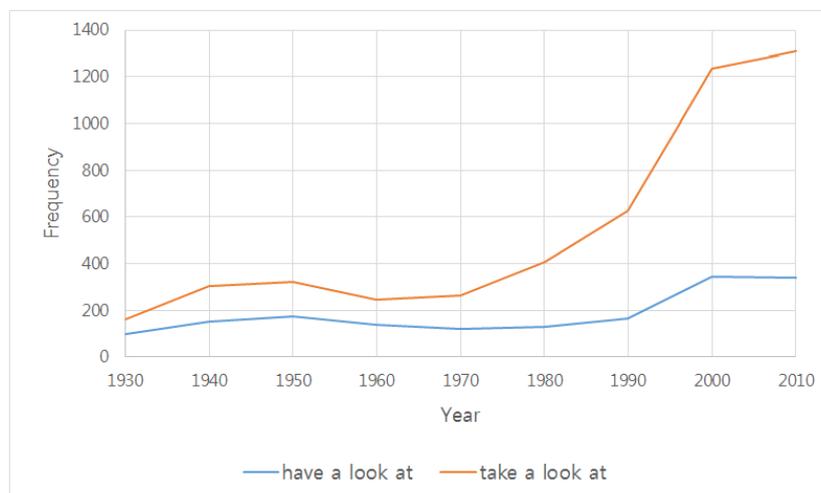
In this section, we consider the frequency of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the Movie Corpus. Also, we provide a comparative analysis of *have a look at* and *take a look at*. Table 2 shows the use and frequency of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the Movie Corpus:

**Table-2: Frequency of have a look at and take a look at in the Movie Corpus**

Type	Have a look at	Take a look at
1930s	98	163
1940s	154	302
1950s	175	324
1960s	139	248
1970s	122	264
1980s	131	406
1990s	166	626
2000s	346	1,234
2010s	339	1,310
All	1,670	4,877
US/CA	775	4,064
UK/IE	689	462
AU/NZ	103	65
Misc	103	286

It is important to note that the frequency of *take a look at* is much higher than that of *have a look at* in the Movie Corpus. More specifically, the overall frequency of *have a look at* is 1,670 tokens, whereas that of *take a look at* is 4,877 tokens. This in turn shows

that *take a look at* is favored over *have a look at* in the Movie Corpus. The following graph shows the use and frequency of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the Movie Corpus:



**Fig-2: Frequency of have a look at and take a look at in the Movie Corpus**

Interestingly, *have a look at* shows a gradual increase in its figure from the 1930s to the 1950s. More specifically, there was a rise of 77 tokens. More interestingly, there was a sudden decline in the figure of *have a look at* in the 1960s. There was a decrease of 36 tokens in the 1960s. Again, there was a gradual rise in the figure of *have a look at* from the 1970s to the 2000s. Interestingly, there was a sudden decrease in the figure of *have a look at* in the 2010s. That is, there was a decrease of 7 tokens in the 2010s. It is noteworthy that

*have a look at* had the lowest frequency (98 tokens) in the 1930s. This in turn implies that it was the least preferred one in the 1930s. It would be worth mentioning that *have a look at* reached a peak (346 tokens) in the 2000s. This in turn suggests that it was the most preferred one in the 2000s. It is interesting to note that *have a look at* was the most preferable one in America and Canada, whereas it was the least preferred one in Australia and New Zealand.

It is interesting to point out that there was a steady increase in the figure of *take a look at* from the 1930s to the 1950s. There was an increase of 161 tokens for twenty years. More importantly, there was a sudden decline of 76 tokens in the 1960s. Again, there was a steady rise in the figure of *take a look at* from the 1960s to the 1980s. Most importantly, there was a sharp increase in the figure of *take a look at* from the 1990s to the 2000s. There was a rise of 608 tokens from the 1990s to the 2000s. After this period, there was a slight increase in the figure of *take a look at* in the 2010s. Interestingly, *take a look at* had the lowest frequency (163 tokens) in the 1930s, which indicates that it was the most undesired type. On the other hand, *take a look at* reached a peak (1,310 tokens) in the 2010s, which in turn implies that it was the most preferred one in all

periods. Interestingly, *take a look at* was the most frequently used one in America and Canada, whereas it was the least preferred one in Australia and New Zealand. It is worth mentioning that *take a look at* was preferable to *have a look at* from the 1930s to the 2010s.

**4. A Collocation Analysis of have a look at and take a look at in the COCA**

In what follows, we consider the collocations of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the COCA. We also provide a comparative analysis of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the COCA. We try to compare the collocation of *have a look at* and that of *take a look at* in terms of the software NetMiner. Table 3 shows the collocation of *have a look at* in the top 25:

**Table-3: Collocation of have a look at in the COCA**

Number	Collocation of have a look at	Frequency
1	Have a look at http	10
2	Have a look at things	3
3	Have a look at page	2
4	Have a look at climate	2
5	Have a look at atheism	1
6	Have a look at articles	1
7	Have a look at apple	1
8	Have a look at work	1
9	Have a look at wiki	1
10	Have a look at way	1
11	Have a look at vm-help.com	1
12	Have a look at charity	1
13	Have a look at carbon	1
14	Have a look at breast	1
15	Have a look at biotechnology	1
16	Have a look at senator	1
17	Have a look at Sen	1
18	Have a look at section	1
19	Have a look at Redlands	1
20	Have a look at photography	1
21	Have a look at par	1
22	Have a look at paintings	1
23	Have a look at numbers	1
24	Have a look at Mr	1
25	Have a look at Mom	1

It is important to note that the expression *have a look at http* is the most frequently used one in America. This in turn suggests that *have a look at http* is the most preferred by Americans. As alluded to in Table 3, *have a look at http* is the most preferable one for Americans, followed by *have a look at things*, *have a look at page* (*have a look at climate*, *have a look at atheism*), and *have a look at articles*, in descending order. It is interesting to point out that the everyday expression *have a look at page* is the third most

preferred one in America. On the other hand, *have a look at articles* is the sixth most preferred one in America. More interestingly, *have a look at climate* ranks third in the COCA. We thus conclude that *have a look at http* is the most preferred by Americans.

Now attention is paid to the collocation of *take a look at* in the COCA. Table 4 shows the frequency of the collocation of *take a look at* in the top 25:

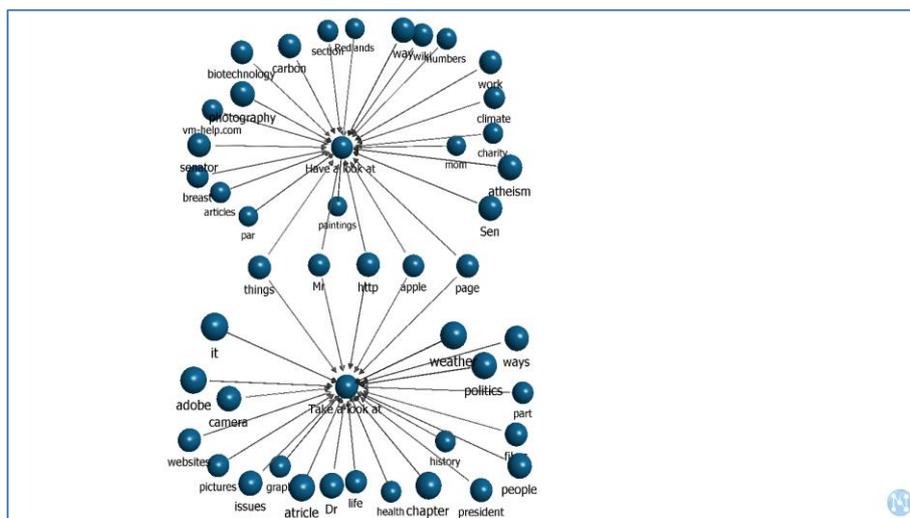
**Table-4: Collocation of take a look at in the COCA**

Number	Collocation of take a look at	Frequency
1	Take a look at it	11
2	Take a look at http	10
3	Take a look at president	10
4	Take a look at Mr	9
5	Take a look at history	8
6	Take a look at people	8
7	Take a look at things	8
8	Take a look at chapter	5
9	Take a look at camera	5
10	Take a look at apple	5
11	Take a look at graph	5
12	Take a look at part	5
13	Take a look at issues	4
14	Take a look at politics	4
15	Take a look at ways	4
16	Take a look at Dr	3
17	Take a look at article	3
18	Take a look at films	3
19	Take a look at health	3
20	Take a look at life	3
21	Take a look at page	3
22	Take a look at pictures	3
23	Take a look at weather	3
24	Take a look at websites	3
25	Take a look at adobe	2

It is interesting to note that the expression *take a look at it* is the most commonly used one in America. This in turn implies that *take a look at it* is the most preferable one for Americans. As illustrated in Table 4, *take a look at it* is the most preferred one in America, followed by *take a look at http* (*take a look at president*), *take a look at Mr*, and *take a look at history* (*take a look at people*), in that order. It is worth noting that *have a look at http* is the most preferred one in America, whereas *take a look at http* is the second most preferred one. It is also worth pointing out that *have a*

*look at Mr* is the sixth most preferred one in America, whereas *take a look at Mr* is the fourth most preferred one. More interestingly, *have a look at things* is the second most preferred one in America, whereas *take a look at things* is the fifth most preferred one. We thus conclude that the expression *take a look at it* is the most preferred one in America.

Now let us turn our attention to the visualization of the collocations of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the COCA:



**Fig-3: Visualization of the collocations of has a look at and takes a look at in the COCA**

As exemplified in Figure 3, particular nouns are linked to *have a look at* and *take a look at*, respectively. Most importantly, five of forty five nouns are linked to both *have a look at* and *take a look at*. Five nouns linked to two types are *http*, *Mr*, *things*, *apple*, and *page*. This in turn implies that 8.88% of forty five nouns are the collocations of both *have a look at* and *take a look at*. From this it is clear that *have a look at* and *take a look at* are low similarity synonyms.

### 5. A Collocation Analysis of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the BNC

In what follows, we examine the collocations of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the BNC. We compare the collocation of *have a look at* and that of *take a look at* in the BNC. We also capture the subtle difference between *have a look at* and *take a look at* in terms of the software NetMiner. Table 5 shows the frequency of the collocation of *have a look at* in the top 25:

**Table-5: Collocation of *have a look at* in the BNC**

Number	Collocation of <i>have a look at</i>	Frequency
1	Have a look at number	3
2	Have a look at Mr	2
3	Have a look at things	2
4	Have a look at pages	2
5	Have a look at women	1
6	Have a look at while	1
7	Have a look at wall-papers	1
8	Have a look at mummy	1
9	Have a look at tetanus	1
10	Have a look at swings	1
11	Have a look at SA	1
12	Have a look at rule	1
13	Have a look at Romans	1
14	Have a look at punctuation	1
15	Have a look at percentages	1
16	Have a look at people	1
17	Have a look at mother	1
18	Have a look at jacket	1
19	Have a look at houses	1
20	Have a look at heaven	1
21	Have a look at graphs	1
22	Have a look at fractions	1
23	Have a look at equations	1
24	Have a look at dos	1
25	Have a look at dolly	1

It is significant to note that the expression *have a look at number* is the most preferred one in the UK. This in turn implies that *have a look at number* is the most preferable one among the British. As alluded to in Table 5, the expression *have a look at number* is the most preferred by the British, followed by *have a look at Mr* (*have a look at things*, *have a look at page*), and *have a look at women*, in descending order. It is important to note that the expressions *have a look at*

*things* and *have a look at page* are the second most preferred ones in the UK. Interestingly, *have a look at rule* and *have a look at percentages* rank fifth in the BNC. We thus conclude that *have a look at number* is the most preferable one for the British.

Now let us turn to the collocation of *take a look at* in the BNC. Table 6 shows the frequency of the collocation of *take a look at* in the BNC:

**Table-6: Collocation of *take a look at* in the BNC**

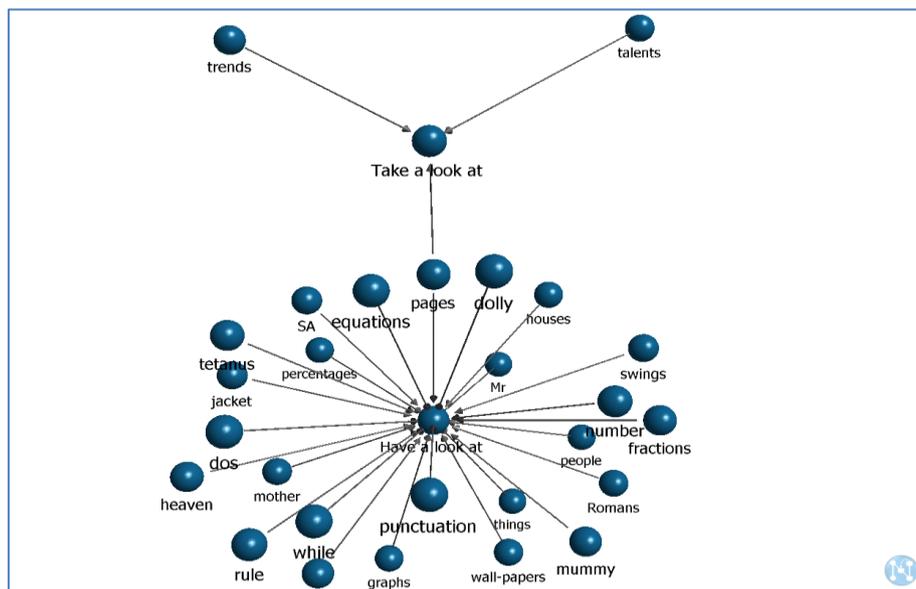
Number	Collocation of <i>take a look at</i>	Frequency
1	Take a look at trends	2
2	Take a look at talents	1
3	Take a look at pages	1

It is interesting to point out that *take a look at trends* is the most frequently used one in the UK. It implies that the expression *take a look at trends* is the most preferred one in the UK. As illustrated in Table 6,

*take a look at trends* is the most preferred by the British and followed by *take a look at talents* (*take a look at pages*). It would be worth mentioning that *have a look at* is preferred over *take a look at* by the British. This

comes from the fact that the BNC includes only rank-three in the case of the collocation of *take a look at*. Note, however, that the BNC includes many collocations in the case of *have a look at*.

Now let us turn our attention to the visualization of the collocations of *have a look at* and *take a look at*:



**Fig-4: Visualization of have a look at and take a look at in the BNC**

As exemplified in Figure 4, twenty seven nouns are linked to *have a look at* and *take a look at*, respectively. Most importantly, one of twenty seven nouns is linked to both *have a look at* and *take a look at*. This in turn indicates that only 3.7% of twenty seven nouns are the collocation of *have a look at* and *take a look at*. From all of this, it is clear that *have a look at* and *take a look at* are low similarity synonyms.

## 6. CONCLUSION

To sum up, we have provided a comparative analysis of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the TV corpus, the Movie Corpus, the COCA, and the BNC. In section 3, we have argued that *take a look at* is favored over *have a look at* in the TV Corpus from the 1950s to the 2010s. Interestingly, *have a look at* reached a peak (1,188 tokens) in the 2010s. On the other hand, *take a look at* reached a peak (4,429 tokens) in the 2010s. This in turn implies that two types are the most preferred ones in the 2010s. In section 4, we have maintained that *take a look at* is favored over *have a look at* in the Movie Corpus from the 1930s to the 2010s. More importantly, *have a look at* reached a peak (346 tokens) in the 2000s, whereas *take a look at* reached a peak (1,310 tokens) in the 2010s. This in turn shows that two types were the most preferred ones in those periods. In section 5, we have contended that *have a look at* *http* is

the most preferable one for Americans, whereas *take a look at it* is the most preferable one for them. Additionally, it is interesting to note that 8.88% of forty five nouns are the collocations of both *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the COCA. In section 6, we have argued that *have a look at number* is the most preferable one among the British, whereas *take a look at trends* is the most preferable one among them. Finally, we have shown that only 3.7% of twenty seven nouns are the collocation of *have a look at* and *take a look at* in the BNC.

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