

A Corpora-Based Analysis of the Collocations of *May as Well* and *Might as Well*

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Abstract—The goal of this paper is to compare the collocations of *May as well* and *Might as well* and to provide an in-depth analysis of the frequency of each expression in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>), the British National Corpus (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>), and the Corpus of Historical American English (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coha>). With respect to the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>), it is interesting to note that *May as well go* is the most preferred by Americans, followed by *May as well get*, and *May as well give*, in descending order. It is also interesting to point out that *Might as well get* is the most preferred by Americans, followed by *Might as well go*, and *Might as well make*, in descending order. With respect to the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>), it is noteworthy that the collocation *May as well go* is the most preferred by the British, followed by *May as well tell (May as well get)*, *May as well make*, and *May as well use*, in descending order. It is also worth noting that *Might as well go* is the most preferable among the British, followed by *Might as well get*, *Might as well make (Might as well take)*, and *Might as well give*, in descending order. Finally, this paper argues that *Might as well* is preferred over *May as well* by both Americans and the British and that the former is slightly different from *May as well* in its use.

Index Terms—COCA, BNC, COHA, *may as well*, *might as well*

I. INTRODUCTION

The corpus is a database of millions of words that can be studied to show how language works. The main purpose of this paper is to compare the collocations *May as well* and *Might as well* and to provide a frequency analysis of each expression in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>), the British National Corpus (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>), and the Corpus of Historical American English (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coha>). The collocation types *May as well* and *Might as well* are synonymously used, but they are slightly different from each other in their use and preference. This paper aims to consider which type is preferred by Americans and the British. We also aim to consider the genre frequency of the types *May as well* and *Might as well* in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>) and BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). Additionally, we examine which type was preferred by Americans from 1820 to 2010. We examine when the types *May as well* and *Might as well* were the most preferable among Americans, as well as when each was considered the least desired. Also, we examine the collocations *May as well* and *Might as well* in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>) and BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). We consider which verb phrase is the most frequently used along with the types *May as well* and *Might as well* in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>) and BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). By using the software NetMiner, we try to visualize the collocations of *May as well* and *Might as well* in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>) and BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). The organization of this paper is as follows. In section 2.1, we argue that just as in the case of *May as well*, *Might as well* is the most widely used expression in the TV/movie genre. In Section 2.2, we contend that *May as well* and *Might as well* are the most widely used in the fiction genre of the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). From this, it is clear that British writers most prefer *May as well* and *Might as well*. It should be noted, however, that *Might as well* may be preferred over *May as well* by the British. In section 2.3, we maintain that the frequency of *Might as well* is three times higher than that of *May as well*. This in turn indicates that *Might as well* may be preferred over *May as well* by Americans. In section 3.1, we argue that *May as well go* is the most preferred by Americans, followed by *May as well get*, *May as well give*, *May as well take*, *May as well try*, *May as well make*, and *May as well start*, in descending order. We further argue, on the other hand, that *Might as well get* is the most preferred by Americans, followed by *Might as well go*, *Might as well make*, *Might as well take*, *Might as well give*, *Might as well start*, *Might as well try*, *Might as well say*, and *Might as well tell*, in descending order. In section 3.2, we maintain that *May as well go* is the most preferable among the British, followed by *May as well tell (May as well get)*, *May as well make*, *May as well use*, *May as well sit (May as well give)*, and *May as well call*, in descending order. We also maintain that *Might as well go* is the most preferred by the British, followed by *Might as well get*, *Might as well make (Might as well take)*, *Might as well give*, *Might as well put*, *Might as well try*, and *Might as well say*, in descending order. Finally, we contend that *Might as well* is slightly different from *May as well* in its use and preference.

II. A FREQUENCY ANALYSIS OF *MAY AS WELL* AND *MIGHT AS WELL*

A. The Genre Frequency of *May as Well* and *Might as Well* in the COCA

In this section, we aim to examine the frequency of *May as well* and *Might as well* in eight genres. We compare the frequency of *May as well* and that of *Might as well* in the COCA (1990-2019 (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>)). Table 1 indicates the genre frequency of *May as well* and *Might as well* in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>):

TABLE 1
GENRE FREQUENCY OF *MAY AS WELL* AND *MIGHT AS WELL* IN THE COCA

| Genre | ALL | BLOG | WEB | TV/M | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | ACAD |
|----------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-----|------|------|
| <i>May as well</i> | 1,809 | 382 | 312 | 385 | 102 | 330 | 161 | 93 | 44 |
| <i>Might as well</i> | 10,518 | 1,498 | 1,150 | 2,670 | 762 | 2,663 | 916 | 697 | 162 |

An important question that naturally arises is “Which type is preferred by Americans?” Table 1 clearly indicates that *Might as well* is preferable to *May as well* in America. The overall frequency of *May as well* is 1,809 tokens, whereas that of *Might as well* is 10,518 tokens. This implies that the type *Might as well* may be preferred over the type *May as well* by Americans. As indicated by Murphy (2016) (Murphy, R. (2016). *Grammar in Use*. Cambridge University Press. Singapore) and Murphy (2019) (Murphy, R. (2019). *English Grammar in Use*. Cambridge University Press. New York), *Might as well do something* means that one should do something because there is no better alternative. There is no reason not to do something. We can also use *May as well* instead of *Might as well*. This indicates that *May as well* and *Might as well* are synonymously used. However, by demonstrating the use of *May as well* and *Might as well* in eight genres, we attempt to specify that they are slightly different from each other in preference and use.

An immediate question is “In which genre is *May as well* the most frequently used?” Table 1 clearly shows that the type *May as well* is the most widely used in the TV/movie genre. This implies that American celebrities most prefer *May as well* in the TV/movie genre of eight genres. Note, however, that the type *Might as well* may be preferred over *May as well* in the TV/movie genre. This indicates that *May as well* is the most frequently used in the TV/movie genre, but it is less preferred to *Might as well*.

It is interesting to note that the type *May as well* is the second most preferred collocation in the blog genre. A blog is an online journal where bloggers write about their hobbies and experiences. That *May as well* ranks second in the blog genre suggests that American bloggers prefer using the type *May as well*. Note, however, that the type *Might as well* may be preferred over the type *May as well* by American bloggers. Specifically, the frequency of *May as well* in the blog genre is 382 tokens, whereas that of *Might as well* is 1,498 tokens. That is, the frequency of *Might as well* is ten times higher than that of *May as well*. This implies that American bloggers prefer using *Might as well* to using *May as well*.

It is interesting to note that *May as well* is the third most preferred expression in the fiction genre. The frequency of *May as well* is not low compared with that of *May as well* in the TV/movie genre. This suggests that American writers are fond of using the type *May as well* in their novels. It should be noted, however, that the type *Might as well* may be preferred over the type *May as well* by American writers. The frequency of *Might as well* is eight times higher than that of *May as well*. This implies that the type *Might as well* is favored over the type *May as well* in the fiction genre.

It is also worth noting that the type *May as well* ranks sixth in the spoken genre. The frequency of *May as well* in the spoken genre is three times lower than that of *Might as well*. From this, it is clear that the type *May as well* is not as frequently used in the spoken genre. However, this does not mean that Americans do not prefer using this type in the spoken genre. However, it should be noted that the type *Might as well* may be preferred over the type *May as well* in the spoken genre. The frequency of *Might as well* is seven times higher than that of *May as well*. This indicates that Americans prefer using *Might as well* to using *May as well* in daily conversation.

The frequency of *Might as well* will now be explored. An important question is “In which genre is *Might as well* the most commonly used?” Table 1 clearly indicates that just as in the case of *May as well*, *Might as well* is the most widely used collocation in the TV/movie genre. It can be inferred from this that American celebrities prefer using *Might as well* in the TV/movie genre. Moreover, it is reasonable to assume that American celebrities prefer using *Might as well* to using *May as well* in the TV/movie genres as the frequency of the former is higher than that of the latter. It is worth noting that *Might as well* is the second most preferred in the fiction genre. Note that *May as well* is the second most preferred in the blog genre. Clearly, this indicates that the use of the type *Might as well* is slightly different from that of *May as well*.

Might as well is the third most preferred one in the blog genre. Notice that *May as well* is the second most preferred in the blog genre. This indicates that *May as well* is slightly different from *Might as well* in its use. In addition, the frequency of *Might as well* is three times higher than that of *May as well* in the blog genre. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that *Might as well* may be preferred over *May as well* by American bloggers. From this, it is clear that *Might as well* is slightly different from *May as well* in its use and preference.

Might as well ranks sixth in the spoken genre. *Might as well* and *May as well* show the same pattern with respect to the spoken genre of the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>). That is, both *Might as well* and *May as well* rank sixth in the spoken genre. It must be noted, however, that *Might as well* is favored over *May as well*. Specifically, the frequency of *Might as well* is 762 tokens, whereas that of *May as well* is 102 tokens. This in turn implies that Americans prefer using *Might as well* to using *May as well* in daily conversation. We thus conclude that *Might as well* is slightly different from *May as well* in its use and preference.

B. The Genre Frequency of *May as Well* and *Might as Well* in the BNC

We examine the genre frequency of *May as well* and *Might as well* in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). We compare the results from the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>) and those from the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>):

TABLE 2
GENRE FREQUENCY OF *MAY AS WELL* AND *MIGHT AS WELL* IN THE BNC

| Genre | ALL | SPOK | FIC | MAG | NEWS | NON-ACAD | ACAD | MISC |
|---------------|-----|------|-----|-----|------|----------|------|------|
| May as well | 187 | 64 | 74 | 8 | 10 | 7 | 4 | 20 |
| Might as well | 982 | 355 | 390 | 41 | 55 | 48 | 19 | 74 |

An immediate question is “Which type is the preferable expression among the British?” Table 2 clearly shows that the type *Might as well* is preferred by the British. The overall frequency of *May as well* is 187 tokens, whereas that of *Might as well* is 982 tokens. This in turn suggests that *Might as well* may be preferred over *May as well* by the British. As alluded to in Table 1 and Table 2, Americans and the British show the same pattern with respect to the use of *May as well* and *Might as well*. That is, the type *Might as well* is preferred by Americans and the British.

We now examine the genre frequency of *May as well* and *Might as well* in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). The question is, “In which genre is *May as well* the most frequently used?” Table 2 clearly indicates that *May as well* is the most widely used in the fiction genre. From this, it is clear that British writers most prefer *May as well* in their novels. It should be noted, however, that *Might as well* may be preferred over *May as well* by British writers. Specifically, the frequency of *Might as well* is five times higher than that of *May as well*. In this respect, Americans and the British share a commonality. That is, they prefer using *Might as well* to using *May as well* in the fiction genre. However, Americans and the British show a different pattern with respect to the genre frequency of *May as well* and *Might as well*. That is, Americans prefer *May as well* the most in the TV/movie genre, whereas the British most prefer the collocation in the fiction genre.

It is noteworthy that *May as well* is the second most preferred expression in the spoken genre. The difference between the frequency of *May as well* in the fiction genre and that of the spoken genre is 10 tokens. This clearly indicates that the British are fond of using the type *May as well*. A major point to note is that *May as well* ranks sixth in the spoken genre of the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>), whereas it ranks second in the spoken genre of the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). This may imply that the British prefer the type *May as well* more than Americans. A further point to note is that *Might as well* may be preferred over *May as well* by the British. The same applies to the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>). The type *Might as well* may be favored over *May as well* in the spoken genre of the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that Americans and the British exhibit the same pattern with respect to the use of *May as well* and *Might as well* in the spoken genre.

May as well is the fourth most preferred collocation in the newspaper genre. The frequency of *May as well* in the newspaper genre is low compared with that of the fiction genre. In addition, the difference between the frequency of *May as well* in the newspaper genre and that of the spoken genre is 54 tokens. This in turn suggests that *May as well* is not as frequently used in British newspapers. Rather, *Might as well* instead of *May as well* is preferred by British journalists. The evidence comes from the fact that the frequency of *May as well* in the newspaper genre is 10 tokens, whereas that of *might as well* is 55 tokens.

Now let us consider the genre frequency of *Might as well* in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). An immediate question is “In which genre is *Might as well* the most commonly used?” Table 2 clearly indicates that the type *Might as well* is the most widely used in the fiction genre. This indicates that the British most prefer *Might as well* in the fiction genre. It is worth pointing out that *Might as well* ranks second in the fiction genre of the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>), whereas it ranks first in the fiction genre of the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>), hence almost the same pattern. This suggests that American and British writers prefer using the type *Might as well* in their novels. In addition, American and British writers prefer using the type *Might as well* to *May as well* in the fiction genre, thus showing the same pattern.

It is important to note that *Might as well* is the second most preferred collocation in the spoken genre. There is no significant difference between the frequency of *Might as well* in the fiction genre and that of the spoken genre. There is only a difference of 35 tokens between the two genres. It can thus be inferred that the British more frequently the type

Might as well in daily conversation. More interestingly, *Might as well* ranks six in the spoken genre of the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>), whereas it ranks second in the spoken genre of the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). This may imply that the British prefer *Might as well* more than Americans. Thus, Americans and the British show a different pattern with respect to the genre use of *Might as well*. It should be pointed out that *Might as well* may be preferred over *May as well* by Americans and the British. The evidence stems from the fact that the frequency of *Might as well* is higher than that of *May as well* in the spoken genre of the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>) and BNC. Thus, Americans and the British show the same pattern with respect to their preference towards *Might as well*.

Finally, the frequency of *Might as well* in the newspaper genre is low compared with that in the fiction genre. There is a difference of 345 tokens between the frequency of *Might as well* in the newspaper genre and that of the fiction genre. This indicates that *Might as well* is not used as frequently in British newspapers. It should be emphasized, however, that *Might as well* may be favored over *May as well* in British newspapers.

C. The Frequency of *May as Well* and *Might as Well* in the COHA

Below, we examine the frequency of *May as well* and *Might as well* in the COHA (1820-2010 (3 July. 2021. Online. <https://corpus.byu.edu/coha>)).

TABLE 3
FREQUENCY OF *MAY AS WELL* AND *MIGHT AS WELL* IN THE COHA

| Year | Frequency of <i>May as well</i> | Frequency of <i>Might as well</i> |
|------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1820 | 51 | 63 |
| 1830 | 121 | 124 |
| 1840 | 120 | 148 |
| 1850 | 179 | 190 |
| 1860 | 174 | 229 |
| 1870 | 179 | 289 |
| 1880 | 193 | 282 |
| 1890 | 161 | 244 |
| 1900 | 124 | 335 |
| 1910 | 237 | 434 |
| 1920 | 123 | 439 |
| 1930 | 118 | 637 |
| 1940 | 120 | 606 |
| 1950 | 110 | 696 |
| 1960 | 94 | 632 |
| 1970 | 70 | 518 |
| 1980 | 62 | 458 |
| 1990 | 66 | 554 |
| 2000 | 82 | 580 |
| 2010 | 75 | 535 |
| All | 2,459 | 7,993 |

An immediate question is “Which type was preferred by Americans from 1820 to 2010?” Table 3 clearly indicates that the frequency of *Might as well* is three times higher than that of *May as well*. This shows that *Might as well* may be preferred over *May as well* by Americans.

There was an increase of 70 tokens in the frequency of *May as well* from 1820 to 1830. After this period, there were slight fluctuations in the frequency of *May as well* from 1840 to 1870. Subsequently, there was a steady decline in the frequency of *May as well* from 1880 to 1900. Specifically, there was a decline of 69 tokens from 1880 to 1900. Interestingly, there was a sudden increase in the frequency of *May as well* in 1910. This translated to an increase of 113 tokens that year. After this time period, there was a sudden decrease in the frequency of *May as well*, followed by its gradual decline in the frequency from 1940 to 1980. There was a decrease of 58 tokens. After this period, there were slight fluctuations in the frequency of *May as well* from 1990 to 2010. A major point to note is that *May as well* had the lowest frequency (51 tokens) in 1820. This suggests that the collocation was the most undesired type in 1820. On the other hand, *May as well* reached a peak in 1910. This implies that it was the most preferable expression among Americans in 1910. Finally, it should be noted that *Might as well* was always preferred over *May as well* by Americans from 1820 to 2010.

There was a steady increase in the frequency of *Might as well* from 1820 to 1870. Specifically, there was a rise of 226 tokens from 1820 to 1870. After this period, there was a sudden decrease in the frequency of *Might as well* in 1890 (decline of 45 tokens). Interestingly, there was a gradual rise in the frequency of *Might as well*, up 302 tokens, from 1900 to 1930. There were also fluctuations in the frequency of *Might as well* from 1940 to 1960. Furthermore, the frequency of *Might as well* decreased suddenly in 1970. Subsequently, there was a gradual increase in the frequency of *Might as well* from 1980 to 2000. This translated to an increase of 122 tokens. However, there was a decline of 45 tokens in 2010. Perhaps most interestingly, *Might as well* had the lowest frequency in 1820, which suggests that it was the most undesired type in 1820. On the other hand, *Might as well* reached a peak in 1950, which indicates that it was

the most preferable collocation among Americans in 1950. Finally, it is significant to note that during the entire period (1820-2010), *Might as well* was always favored over *May as well* in America.

III. THE COLLOCATIONS OF *MAY AS WELL* AND *MIGHT AS WELL* IN THE COCA AND BNC

A. The Collocations of *May as Well* and *Might as Well* in the COCA

In the following, we consider the collocation of *May as well* in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>):

TABLE 4
COLLOCATION OF *MAY AS WELL* IN THE COCA

| NUMBER | COLLOCATION OF <i>MAY AS WELL</i> | FREQUENCY |
|--------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | May as well go | 74 |
| 2 | May as well get | 64 |
| 3 | May as well give | 32 |
| 4 | May as well take | 31 |
| 5 | May as well try | 31 |
| 6 | May as well make | 26 |
| 7 | May as well start | 23 |
| 8 | May as well tell | 23 |
| 9 | May as well put | 22 |
| 10 | May as well say | 21 |
| 11 | May as well call | 20 |
| 12 | May as well use | 20 |
| 13 | May as well know | 18 |
| 14 | May as well come | 16 |
| 15 | May as well enjoy | 15 |
| 16 | May as well stay | 15 |
| 17 | May as well ask | 12 |
| 18 | May as well see | 12 |
| 19 | May as well let | 11 |
| 20 | May as well find | 10 |

An important question is “Which verb is the most preferred by Americans?” Table 4 clearly indicates that the verb *go* is the most frequently used along with the type *May as well*. This demonstrates that the collocation *May as well go* is the most preferable among Americans. As alluded to in Table 4, *May as well go* is the most preferred by Americans, followed by *May as well get*, *May as well give*, *May as well take*, *May as well try*, *May as well make*, and *May as well start*, in descending order. It is interesting to point out that the collocation *May as well get* is the second most preferred in America. There is no significant difference between the frequency of the collocation *May as well go* and that of *May as well get* (74 tokens vs. 64 tokens). This in turn implies that Americans most prefer the collocation *May as well go* and like using the collocation *May as well get*. It is worth noting that the everyday expression *May as well try* is the fifth most preferred in America.

We now present the visualization of the collocation of *May as well*:

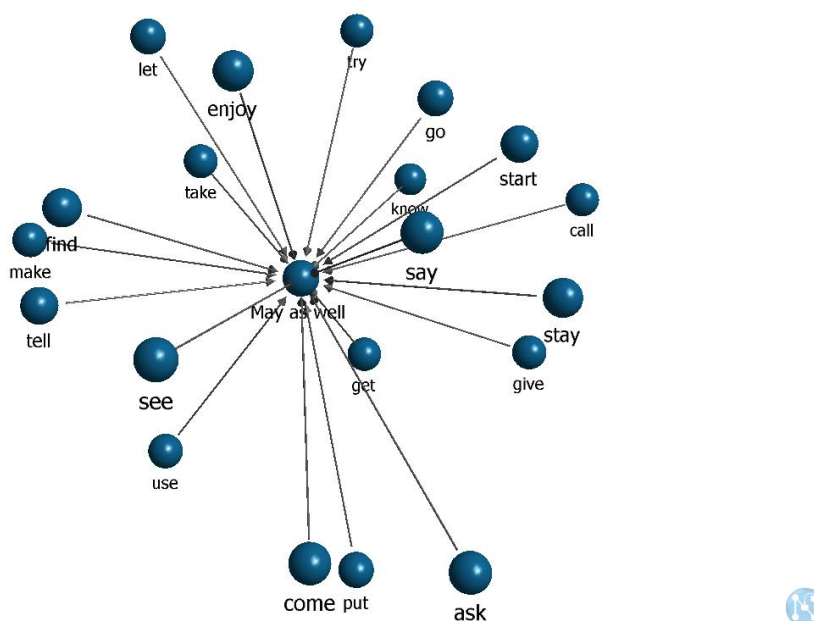


Figure 1. Visualization of *May as well* and Verbs in the COCA

As shown in Figure 1, we visualized the collocation of *May as well* in the top 20. A 3D visualization of the collocation of *May as well* was performed. As indicated in Figure 1, each verb is linked to the type *May as well*. This indicates that each verb has a collocation relationship with the type *May as well*.

Below, we examine the collocation of *Might as well* in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>).

TABLE 5
COLLOCATION OF *MIGHT AS WELL* IN THE COCA

| Number | Collocation of <i>May as well</i> | Frequency |
|--------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | <i>Might as well get</i> | 518 |
| 2 | <i>Might as well go</i> | 441 |
| 3 | <i>Might as well make</i> | 197 |
| 4 | <i>Might as well take</i> | 181 |
| 5 | <i>Might as well give</i> | 176 |
| 6 | <i>Might as well start</i> | 158 |
| 7 | <i>Might as well try</i> | 150 |
| 8 | <i>Might as well say</i> | 132 |
| 9 | <i>Might as well tell</i> | 124 |
| 10 | <i>Might as well put</i> | 113 |
| 11 | <i>Might as well come</i> | 80 |
| 12 | <i>Might as well use</i> | 80 |
| 13 | <i>Might as well enjoy</i> | 79 |
| 14 | <i>Might as well call</i> | 74 |
| 15 | <i>Might as well stay</i> | 72 |
| 16 | <i>Might as well ask</i> | 68 |
| 17 | <i>Might as well let</i> | 68 |
| 18 | <i>Might as well throw</i> | 68 |
| 19 | <i>Might as well keep</i> | 62 |
| 20 | <i>Might as well know</i> | 57 |

An immediate question is “Which verb is the most frequently used in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>)?” Table 5 clearly shows that the collocation *Might as well get* is the most widely used in America. This suggests that *Might as well get* is the most preferable among Americans. As illustrated in Table 5, *Might as well get* is the most preferred by Americans, followed by *Might as well go*, *Might as well make*, *Might as well take*, *Might as well give*, *Might as well start*, *Might as well try*, *Might as well say*, and *Might as well tell*, in descending order. It should be pointed out that the collocation of *Might as well* may be preferred over that of *May as well* by Americans. This stems from the fact that the frequency of the collocation of *Might as well* is higher than that of *May as well*. The collocation *May as well get* is also the second most preferred in America, whereas *Might as well get* is the most preferred in America. On the other hand, the collocation *May as well go* is the most preferred in America, whereas

Might as well go is the second most preferred in America. This in turn indicates that the collocation of *May as well* is slightly different from that of *Might as well*. It is interesting to point out that the collocation *Might as well say* ranks eighth in the top 20.

Below is a visualization of the collocations of *Might as well* and *May as well*.

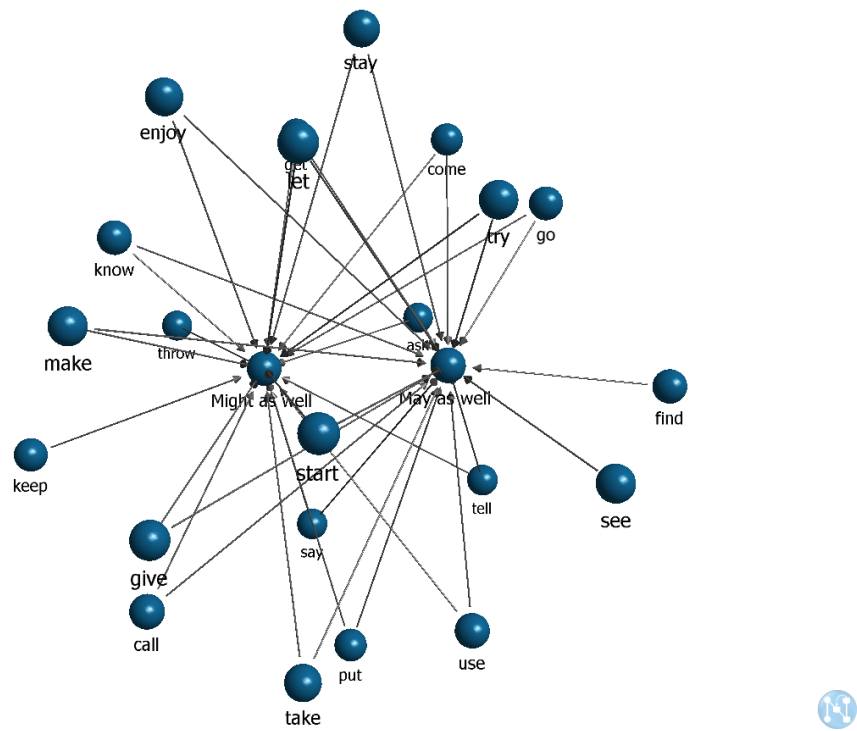


Figure 2. Visualization of the collocations of *Might as well* and *May as well*

As illustrated in Figure 2, we visualized the collocations of *Might as well* and *May as well*. Each verb is linked to the types *Might as well* and *May as well*. As indicated in Figure 2, particular verbs are linked to *Might as well* and *May as well* twice. This indicates that these verbs are a collocation of *Might as well* and *May as well*. The software NetMiner captures these collocations of *Might as well* and *May as well*.

B. The Collocations of *May as Well* and *Might as Well* in the BNC

In this section, we aim to examine the collocations of *May as well* and *Might as well* in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). Table 6 indicates the frequency of the collocation of *May as well* in the top 20.

TABLE 6
COLLOCATION OF MAY AS WELL IN THE BNC

| Number | Collocation of <i>May as well</i> and verbs | Frequency |
|--------|---|-----------|
| 1 | <i>May as well go</i> | 11 |
| 2 | <i>May as well tell</i> | 10 |
| 3 | <i>May as well get</i> | 10 |
| 4 | <i>May as well make</i> | 7 |
| 5 | <i>May as well use</i> | 6 |
| 6 | <i>May as well sit</i> | 5 |
| 7 | <i>May as well give</i> | 5 |
| 8 | <i>May as well call</i> | 4 |
| 9 | <i>May as well start</i> | 4 |
| 10 | <i>May as well take</i> | 4 |
| 11 | <i>May as well stay</i> | 3 |
| 12 | <i>May as well accept</i> | 3 |
| 13 | <i>May as well say</i> | 3 |
| 14 | <i>May as well let</i> | 3 |
| 15 | <i>May as well forget</i> | 3 |
| 16 | <i>May as well ask</i> | 3 |
| 17 | <i>May as well buy</i> | 2 |
| 18 | <i>May as well come</i> | 2 |
| 19 | <i>May as well cut</i> | 2 |
| 20 | <i>May as well adopt</i> | 2 |

An important question is “Which verb is the most commonly used along with *May as well* in the UK?” Table 6 clearly shows that the collocation *May as well go* is the most widely used in the UK. This suggests that *May as well go* is the most preferable collocation among the British. As alluded to in Table 6, the collocation *May as well go* is the most preferred by the British, followed by *May as well tell* (*May as well get*), *May as well make*, *May as well use*, *May as well sit* (*May as well give*), and *May as well call*, in descending order. It is interesting to point out that both Americans and the British most prefer the collocation *May as well go*. Moreover, *May as well get* is the second most preferred in America, whereas it is the third most preferred in the UK. From this, it is evident that Americans and the British show almost the same pattern with respect to the use of the collocation *May as well*. It should be noted, however, that the collocation *May as well tell* ranks eighth in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>), whereas it ranks second the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>), which in turn suggests that Americans and the British show a different pattern with respect to the use of the collocation *May as well tell*. More interestingly, the collocation *May as well make* ranks sixth in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>), whereas it ranks fourth in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>), which suggests that Americans and the British show a similar pattern with respect to the use of the collocation *May as well make*.

Now let us observe the visualization of the collocation of *May as well* in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>):

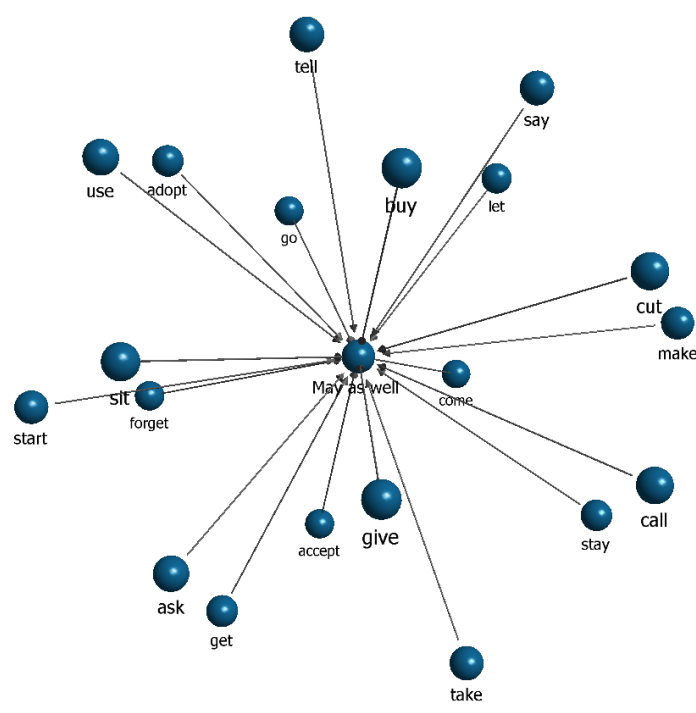


Figure 3. Visualization of the collocation of *May as well* in the BNC

As illustrated in Figure 3, we visualized the collocation of *May as well* in the top 20. Each verb is linked to the type *May as well* and it is the collocation of the type *May as well* in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). A 3D visualization of the collocation of *May as well* was performed.

In the following, we consider the collocation of *Might as well* in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>):

TABLE 7.
COLLOCATION OF *Might as well* IN THE BNC

| Number | Collocation of <i>May as well</i> | Frequency |
|--------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1 | <i>Might as well go</i> | 75 |
| 2 | <i>Might as well get</i> | 65 |
| 3 | <i>Might as well make</i> | 19 |
| 4 | <i>Might as well take</i> | 19 |
| 5 | <i>Might as well give</i> | 18 |
| 6 | <i>Might as well put</i> | 17 |
| 7 | <i>Might as well try</i> | 16 |
| 8 | <i>Might as well say</i> | 15 |
| 9 | <i>Might as well come</i> | 13 |
| 10 | <i>Might as well let</i> | 11 |
| 11 | <i>Might as well buy</i> | 11 |
| 12 | <i>Might as well tell</i> | 11 |
| 13 | <i>Might as well ask</i> | 10 |
| 14 | <i>Might as well stay</i> | 9 |
| 15 | <i>Might as well use</i> | 8 |
| 16 | <i>Might as well leave</i> | 7 |
| 17 | <i>Might as well know</i> | 7 |
| 18 | <i>Might as well enjoy</i> | 7 |
| 19 | <i>Might as well wait</i> | 7 |
| 20 | <i>Might as well forget</i> | 6 |

Table 7 indicates the frequency of the collocation of *Might as well* in the top 20. An important question is “Which verb is the most frequently used along with *Might as well* in the UK?” Table 7 clearly shows that the verb *go* is the most widely used along with *Might as well*. This implies that the collocation *Might as well go* is the most preferred by the British. As illustrated in Table 7, *Might as well go* is the most preferable collocation among the British, followed by *Might as well get*, *Might as well make* (*Might as well take*), *Might as well give*, *Might as well put*, *Might as well try*, and *Might as well say*, in descending order. It is interesting to note that Americans most prefer *Might as well get*, whereas the British most prefer *Might as well go*. On the other hand, it is worth noting that *Might as well go* is the second most preferred in America, whereas *Might as well get* is the second most preferred in the UK. This indicates that Americans and the British show a similar pattern with respect to the collocation of *Might as well*. Additionally, it should be pointed out that the collocations *Might as well make* and *Might as well take* rank third in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>), whereas *Might as well make* ranks third in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>) and *Might as well take* ranks fourth in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>). From this, it is evident that Americans and the British show almost the same pattern with respect to the collocations *Might as well make* and *Might as well take*. With respect to *Might as well give*, the expression ranks fifth in America and the UK, hence the same pattern.

We now compare the collocations of *May as well* and *Might as well* in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). Note that *May as well go* and *Might as well go* rank first in the UK, respectively. On the other hand, *May as well get* ranks third in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>), whereas *Might as well get* ranks second. *May as well make* is the fourth most preferred in the UK, whereas *Might as well make* is the third most preferred. Clearly, the British show a similar pattern with respect to the collocations of *May as well* and *Might as well*. It should be noted, however, that *May as well take* ranks tenth in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>), whereas *Might as well take* ranks fourth, thus revealing a different pattern.

Finally, we examine the visualization of the collocations of *May as well* and *Might as well* in the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>):

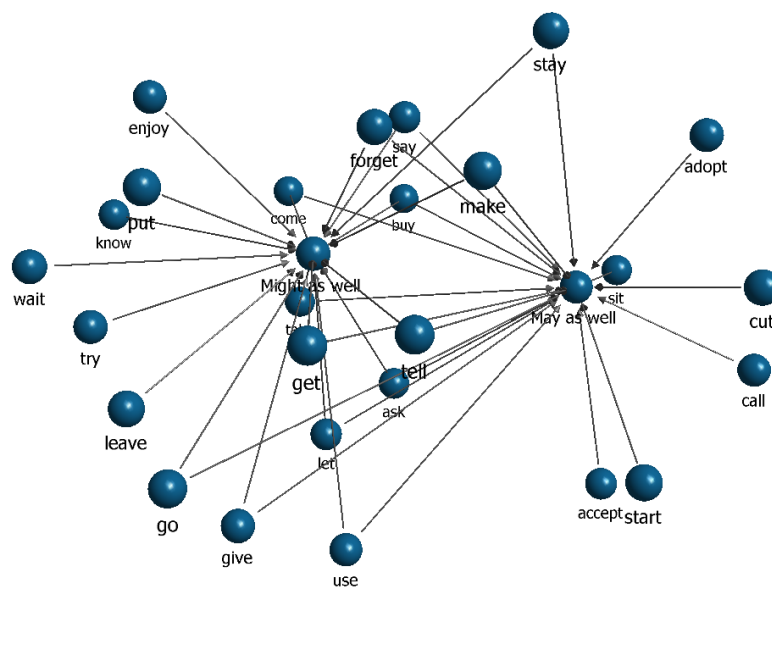


Figure 4. Visualization of the collocations of *May as well* and *Might as well* in the BNC

As indicated in Figure 4, a 3D visualization of the collocations *May as well* and *Might as well* was performed. Each verb is linked to *May as well* or *Might as well*. Many verbs are linked to both *May as well* and *Might as well* twice. This indicates that these verbs are a collocation of both *May as well* and *Might as well*. However, many verbs are not linked to both *May as well* and *Might as well* twice. This suggests that these verbs are not a collocation of both *May as well* and *Might as well*. As shown in Figure 4, there are several verbs that are linked to *May as well*, but not linked to *Might as well*. Conversely, there are several verbs that are linked to *Might as well*, but not linked to *May as well*. This in turn implies that *Might as well* is slightly different from *May as well* in its use.

IV. CONCLUSION

In summary, we have compared the collocations *May as well* and *Might as well* and provided a frequency analysis of each in the COCA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coca>), BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>), and COHA (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/coha>). In Section 2.1, we have argued that just as in the case of *May as well*, *Might as well* is the most widely used in the TV/movie genre of eight genres. It can thus be inferred that American celebrities prefer using *Might as well* in the TV/movie genre. In Section 2.2, we have contended that *May as well* and *Might as well* are the most widely used in the fiction genre of the BNC (3 July. 2021. Online <https://corpus.byu.edu/bnc>). From this, it is clear that British writers most prefer *May as well* and *Might as well*. In Section 2.3, we have maintained that the frequency of *Might as well* is three times higher than that of *May as well*. This indicates that *Might as well* may be preferred over *May as well* by Americans. We have also maintained that *May as well* reached a peak in 1910. This implies that the collocation was the most preferable among Americans in 1910. On the other hand, we have argued that *Might as well* reached a peak in 1950, which indicates that it was the most preferable among Americans that year. In Section 3.1, we have argued that *May as well go* is the most preferred by Americans, followed by *May as well get*, *May as well give*, *May as well take*, *May as well try*, *May as well make*, and *May as well start*, in descending order. On the other hand, we have further argued that *Might as well get* is the most preferred by Americans, followed by *Might as well go*, *Might as well make*, *Might as well take*, *Might as well give*, *Might as well start*, *Might as well try*, *Might as well say*, and *Might as well tell*, in descending order. In Section 3.2, we have maintained that the collocation *May as well go* is the most preferred by the British, followed by *May as well tell* (*May as well get*), *May as well make*, *May as well use*, *May as well sit* (*May as well give*), and *May as well call*, in descending order. We have also maintained that *Might as well go* is the most preferable among the British, followed by *Might as well get*, *Might as well make* (*Might as well take*), *Might as well give*, *Might as well put*, *Might as well try*, and *Might as well say*, in descending order. Finally, we have contended that *Might as well* is slightly different from *May as well* in its use.

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