



Unveiling the Nuances of Visual Perception Verbs: A Corpus-Based Study of English Synonyms “GAZE”, “GLARE”, and “GLIMPSE”

Anawin Khlakheang

Business English Program, Faculty of Arts, Dhurakij Pundit University,
Bangkok

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ABSTRACT

This corpus-based study explores the lexical and semantic distinctions among the English verbs *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse*, which are commonly perceived as interchangeable by many EFL learners. The research was motivated by recurring confusion observed in university classrooms where Thai and Chinese students frequently misused these verbs in writing and speaking tasks. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study draws data from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) to analyze the frequency, genre distribution, collocational patterns, and semantic preferences of the three verbs. Quantitative analysis revealed that *gaze* is predominantly found in fictional and narrative texts, *glare* in contexts involving media and intensity, and *glimpse* in academic and abstract discourse. Collocational analysis showed that *gaze* frequently occurs with facial and spatial nouns, *glare* with sources of light and public scrutiny, and *glimpse* with abstract and metaphorical concepts. Semantic preference analysis confirmed that each verb aligns with distinct conceptual domains and prosodic tendencies: *gaze* reflects introspective observation, *glare* conveys confrontation or intensity, and *glimpse* suggests brief or partial insight. These findings highlight the limitations of dictionary-based instruction and underscore the pedagogical value of corpus-informed approaches. By uncovering subtle yet systematic differences, the study provides practical insights for improving vocabulary instruction and enhancing learners' lexical precision. It also recommends further research into learner corpora and classroom-based applications to promote data-driven vocabulary learning in EFL contexts.

Keywords: COCA, Corpus-based Study, Synonyms, Collocation, Genres

Introduction

In English language instruction, the teaching of near-synonyms presents one of the most persistent challenges, particularly when words appear interchangeable in dictionary definitions but diverge significantly in actual usage. Among such problematic sets are the visual perception verbs *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse*, which often confound English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners due to their subtle semantic, pragmatic, and collocational differences. While these verbs all describe acts of looking, they vary greatly in intentionality, emotional tone, and contextual appropriateness.

As a university English instructor working with both Thai and Chinese students in an international academic setting, the researcher has observed recurring confusion and misuse of these verbs. Students frequently substitute one for another in writing and speaking tasks without awareness of their nuanced meanings. For example, one student wrote, “*The baby glared at her mother with love,*” in a composition about family relationships, incorrectly using *glare*—which typically connotes anger or disapproval—instead of *gaze*. Another student described a romantic scene as “*They glimpsed into each other’s eyes,*” when the verb *gaze* would have been more appropriate to convey a sustained and affectionate look. These misusages are not isolated incidents but are frequently observed across proficiency levels.

Such patterns of misuse not only hinder communicative clarity but also reflect deeper issues in lexical acquisition. The problem is exacerbated by the limitations of bilingual dictionaries and vocabulary lists, which often provide simplified translations or equivalences without explaining contextual subtleties or connotative meaning. Without access to authentic usage data, learners—and even instructors—may lack the empirical grounding needed to teach or acquire these distinctions effectively.

Given the pedagogical importance and the ongoing confusion surrounding these verbs, this study aims to conduct a corpus-based investigation into the real-world usage of *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse* in contemporary American English. Drawing on data from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), the research will compare their frequency, genre-based distributions, typical collocations, and semantic prosody. Through this analysis, the study seeks to uncover the nuanced patterns that differentiate these near-synonyms and to provide practical insights for vocabulary instruction in EFL contexts, particularly for learners in Asian educational settings.

Research Objectives

1. To compare the frequency and distributional patterns of *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse* across major genres in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA).
2. To identify and analyze the collocational profiles of each verb in order to uncover their typical lexical environments and contextual usage.
3. To examine the semantic prosody of the three verbs and interpret their affective and evaluative meanings for practical application in English language teaching.

Literature Review

1. Near-Synonymy and Semantic Distinctions

The study of near-synonyms—lexical items that share core semantic features but diverge in usage and stylistic nuances—has remained a complex and theoretically rich area within lexical semantics. Cruse (1986) and Murphy (2010) emphasize that near-synonyms are not freely interchangeable due to differences in tone, collocational range, register sensitivity, and pragmatic implications. These distinctions become especially relevant in verbs of visual perception, such as *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse*, where seemingly minor shifts in formality, intention, or emotional attitude can lead to significant changes in meaning and communicative effect. Recent corpus-based research by Khlakheang and Cherngroongroj (2025) further demonstrates that even semantically similar verbs like *begin*, *start*, and *initiate* exhibit distinct usage patterns across genres and collocational environments, highlighting the pedagogical importance of data-driven analysis in understanding near-synonymy.

For learners of English as a foreign language (EFL), these subtle distinctions are often overlooked, especially when verbs share similar dictionary meanings. Without authentic contextual exposure, learners may incorrectly treat near-synonyms as interchangeable, leading to pragmatic errors. Prior research, such as Khlakheang and Cherngroongroj (2025), has highlighted usage variations among English synonyms; however, little attention has been paid to visual perception verbs, whose nuances remain underexplored. This gap indicates the need for corpus-driven studies that clarify semantic distinctions to better support EFL vocabulary instruction.

2. Corpus Linguistics and Pedagogical Insights

Corpus-based research has offered powerful tools for examining how synonyms function in actual language use. By analyzing large-scale linguistic data, researchers can empirically observe distribution patterns, genre preferences, and collocational behavior (Hunston, 2002; Biber et al.,

1998). This approach not only clarifies subtle semantic differences but also exposes learners and educators to the ways in which lexical choices are shaped by context.

Recent work has demonstrated the pedagogical value of this methodology. For instance, Cherngroongroj (2023) utilized corpus data to investigate the verbs *show* and *display*, uncovering patterns of genre-based usage that challenge the assumption of full synonymy. The study demonstrated how genre and function play central roles in shaping verb preference—insights that are highly relevant for vocabulary instruction. Similarly, Khlakheang and Cherngroongroj (2024) conducted a comparative study of the verbs *decline*, *decrease*, and *reduce*, illustrating how these words differ not only in frequency but also in their discourse domains and evaluative contexts. Both studies affirm the need for vocabulary pedagogy that is grounded in usage-based evidence rather than intuition or translation alone.

While these contributions have advanced our understanding of synonym behavior in general English usage, there remains a gap in the literature regarding visual perception verbs specifically. Although *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse* are frequently encountered in authentic texts, no comprehensive corpus-based study has yet compared their distribution, collocational profiles, and semantic prosody in detail. This lack of targeted analysis presents an opportunity to enrich the current body of research with findings that are both theoretically meaningful and practically applicable.

3. Semantic Prosody and Collocational Behavior

Understanding how words acquire attitudinal meaning through frequent association with particular lexical environments has become a central concern in semantic prosody research. Introduced by Louw (1993) and later developed by Sinclair (1996), the concept of semantic prosody highlights how repeated co-occurrence can imbue a word with positive, negative, or neutral connotations. For example, while *gaze* may convey neutrality or tenderness, *glare* often signals aggression or disapproval, and *glimpse* tends to suggest brevity or chance. These affective meanings, while not always codified in dictionary entries, become salient through corpus-driven analysis of co-text.

Collocational analysis, long championed by Firth (1957) and Hoey (2005), offers a systematic framework for identifying these associations. Through the examination of frequent word partners, researchers can uncover latent semantic patterns that reveal how words are used in practice rather than theory. In the EFL context, this has important pedagogical implications: learners must be equipped not only with definitions, but with a functional understanding of how words behave in discourse.

In light of the theoretical and pedagogical insights emerging from prior corpus-based studies, and grounded in a lexical-semantic and corpus-driven framework (Sinclair, 1991; Hunston, 2002; McEnery & Hardie, 2012), the present research seeks to explore the verbs *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse* through a multi-dimensional analysis of their frequency, collocational tendencies, and semantic prosody in American English. By filling this gap, the study aims to contribute to both linguistic theory and applied vocabulary instruction. Although several corpus-based studies have explored synonymy in general English usage (e.g., *decline* vs. *reduce*; *show* vs. *display*), no prior research has systematically compared visual perception verbs *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse* through COCA. This study therefore fills a critical gap in both lexical semantics and pedagogical application.

Methodology

This study employed a corpus-based mixed-methods approach using data from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The analysis focused on three aspects: frequency and genre distribution, collocation, and semantic preferences.

1. Frequency and Genre Distribution

Normalized frequency data for *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse* were retrieved across all eight COCA genres to examine distributional patterns and register sensitivity.

2. Collocational Analysis

The top 30 noun collocates for each verb were extracted using a span of four words (L4–R4) and a minimum MI score of 3.0. This helped identify typical lexical environments and usage patterns.

3. Semantic Preference Analysis

Concordance lines were examined to determine recurrent semantic associations, focusing on the conceptual categories favored by each verb in actual use.

This study employed a corpus-based approach using the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), which represents a wide range of American English genres. While COCA offers robust data across registers, its scope is limited to American English, and may not reflect usage in other English varieties. To ensure analytic rigor, collocates were extracted using a minimum MI score of 3.0, and representative concordance lines were manually checked to confirm semantic relevance. Patterns were also compared across multiple genres to verify consistency. This triangulated approach strengthened the reliability of the findings and allowed for a nuanced analysis of each verb's usage in authentic discourse.

Results

1. Frequency and Genre Distribution

In alignment with the first research objective—to compare the frequency and distributional patterns of *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse* across genres—this section presents quantitative data from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). Table 1 summarizes both the raw frequency and normalized frequency (per million words) of each verb across the eight major genres. The findings reveal clear contrasts in overall frequency and register sensitivity, highlighting that these near-synonyms are functionally distinct in actual usage.

Table 1 Distribution patterns of “*gaze*,” “*glare*,” and “*glimpse*” across eight genres in COCA

Genre	<i>Gaze</i>		<i>Glare</i>		<i>Glimpse</i>	
	Frequency	Per million	Frequency	Per million	Frequency	Per million
Blog	549	4.27	234	1.82	1,088	8.46
Web	1,102	8.87	371	2.99	1,254	10.09
TV / Movies	326	2.55	148	1.16	465	3.63
Spoken	160	1.27	206	1.63	764	6.06
Fiction	12,061	101.93	2,662	22.5	3,017	25.5
Magazine	1,400	11.1	879	6.97	1,969	15.62
News	579	4.76	353	2.9	1,372	11.27
Academic	1,728	14.43	192	1.6	796	6.64
Total	17,905		5,045		10,725	

The data indicate that *gaze* is significantly more frequent overall, especially in Fiction (101.93 per million), suggesting its strong association with descriptive and introspective language. This aligns with its typical use to express prolonged or reflective looking. *Glare*, by contrast, peaks in Fiction as well (22.50) but is far less frequent overall, indicating a narrower functional scope, often related to emotional tension or confrontation. *Glimpse*, while less frequent than *gaze*, displays a more even distribution across genres, with notable presence in Fiction, Magazine, News, and Web, suggesting versatility and usage in both literal and metaphorical contexts.

These genre-based patterns support the assumption underlying the study that although the three verbs share a general semantic field, their actual usage diverges across registers. This

divergence confirms the need to treat these verbs not as interchangeable synonyms, but as distinct lexical items whose communicative functions are context-dependent—insights which are crucial for teaching nuanced vocabulary use in EFL settings.

2. Collocational Patterns

To address the second research objective—to identify and analyze the collocational profiles of *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse*—this section presents the most statistically significant noun collocates of each verb. The collocates were extracted from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) using a span of four words to the left and right (L4–R4) and a minimum Mutual Information (MI) score of 3.0, ensuring that only salient lexical associations were included.

By focusing on the top 30 noun collocates for each verb, this analysis captures the typical lexical environments in which these verbs appear, thereby shedding light on their contextualized meanings and usage tendencies. The patterns revealed by these collocates offer empirical evidence of how each verb occupies a distinct semantic and functional space within the domain of visual perception. These findings contribute not only to a deeper understanding of the verbs’ lexical behavior but also to more effective vocabulary instruction for EFL learners.

Table 2 Noun Collocates with “*Gaze*,” “*Glare*,” and “*Glimpse*”

No.	Gaze			Glare			Glimpse		
	Collocate	Freq.	MI Score	Collocate	Freq.	MI Score	Collocate	Freq.	MI Score
1	Eyes	371	4.27	Sun	344	7.35	Future	293	4.77
2	Face	245	3.43	Eyes	179	5.09	Window	44	3.44
3	Window	175	4.69	Lights	148	7.17	Fans	34	3.36
4	Moment	144	3.27	Media	92	4.7	Sea	30	3.04
5	Direction	95	4.21	Spotlight	90	8.74	Visitors	31	4.39
6	Eye	80	3.35	Light	84	4.17	Sky	28	3.29
7	Duration	69	6.44	Headlights	54	9.53	Heaven	28	4.1
8	Viewer	65	6.58	Publicity	52	7.85	Readers	31	3.39
9	Sky	62	3.72	Rockets	50	7.61	Viewers	24	4.74

Table 2 Noun Collocates with “Gaze,” “Glare,” and “Glimpse” (cont.)

No.	Gaze			Glare			Glimpse		
	Collocate	Freq.	MI Score	Collocate	Freq.	MI Score	Collocate	Freq.	MI Score
10	Gaze	64	5.49	Sunlight	34	6.85	Soul	23	3.25
11	Object	59	4.09	Bombs	31	6.74	Mirror	21	3.79
12	Faces	53	3.92	Star	31	3.78	Reflection	19	4.52
13	Mirror	53	4.38	Afternoon	30	4.45	Workings	20	6.97
14	Intensity	53	5.3	Television	29	4.03	Glimpse	18	5.2
15	Stars	51	3.18	Heat	31	3.94	Scenes	17	3.63
16	Smile	44	3.26	Attention	28	3.2	Interior	16	3.78
17	Ceiling	42	4.67	Screen	33	4.24	Ocean	16	3.02
18	Fixation	35	7.7	Ice	27	4.03	Shadow	14	3.47
19	Lips	34	3.73	Eye	29	3.66	Worlds	11	3.78
20	Expression	35	3.23	Sky	25	4.23	Observers	11	4.07
21	Shoulder	32	3.16	Snow	23	4.38	Possibilities	12	3.57
22	Chest	33	3.32	Tv	23	3.2	Lifestyle	10	3.46
23	Horizon	32	4.64	Lighting	22	6.21	Curtain	10	4.5
24	Breath	32	3.08	Cameras	20	5.23	Deer	10	3.4
25	Stranger	26	4.21	Rocket	19	5.95	Bride	9	4.1
26	Landscape	25	3.43	Moon	18	4.09	Binoculars	8	5.51
27	Crystal	21	4.04	Windows	16	3.48	Psyche	8	5.32
28	Durations	19	8.42	Window	17	3.12	Comet	7	4.57
29	Breasts	20	4.32	Glasses	18	4.97	Footage	7	3.6
30	Instant	19	3.55	Stars	15	3.41	Tourists	7	3.53

The collocational profiles shown in Table 2 provide clear evidence that *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse* occur in distinct lexical environments, reflecting divergent semantic and functional characteristics.

The noun collocates of *gaze* are dominated by concrete and anatomical terms such as *eyes, face, lips, and shoulder*, as well as spatial or perceptual nouns like *window, horizon, and direction*. These collocates suggest that *gaze* is often used in narrative or descriptive settings to depict sustained or deliberate visual focus, frequently associated with emotional or introspective tone.

In contrast, *glare* collocates frequently with intense light sources and objects that emit or reflect brightness—*sun, lights, spotlight, screen, glass, and television*. This lexical pattern supports the interpretation of *glare* as having a literal sense of harsh brightness as well as a figurative sense of scrutiny, hostility, or attention, particularly in public or media-related contexts.

For *glimpse*, the collocates span both visual and abstract domains. Words such as *future, psyche, possibilities, and soul* indicate its frequent metaphorical use in describing brief access to ideas, feelings, or future events. Other collocates like *window, mirror, and shadow* preserve the visual origin of the verb while contributing to its figurative range. This supports the understanding of *glimpse* as a verb that commonly implies incompleteness, brevity, or suddenness—both literal and conceptual.

3. Semantics

These findings underscore that while the three verbs belong to the same semantic field of visual perception, their usage diverges substantially in terms of both lexical companions and implied meaning. Such insights are highly relevant for vocabulary instruction, especially in EFL contexts where learners often rely on surface-level definitions without understanding the deeper collocational and semantic constraints of near-synonyms.

To further explore how these verbs behave in authentic discourse, the next section examines their semantic preferences, focusing on the recurrent conceptual categories they tend to co-occur with.

Table 3 The semantic preferences of nouns that collocate with *gaze*

No.	Semantic preference	Noun collocates of <i>gaze</i>
1	Body parts / facial features	eyes, face, lips, shoulder, chest, expression, eye, faces
2	Visual surfaces / orientation	window, mirror, horizon, sky, direction, landscape
3	Psychological states	fixation, intensity, moment, breath, smile
4	Duration / time	duration, instant, durations
5	Human presence	stranger, viewer, object

Table 4 The semantic preferences of nouns that collocate with *glare*

No.	Semantic preference	Noun collocates of <i>glare</i>
1	Light / brightness	sun, lights, light, spotlight, sunlight, heat, glasses, ice, snow
2	Technology / screens	screen, television, TV, lighting, cameras
3	Publicity / media	media, publicity, attention
4	Military / space	bombs, rockets, rocket, moon, star, stars
5	Observation	eyes, eye, windows, window

Table 5 The semantic preferences of nouns that collocate with *glimpse*

No.	Semantic preference	Noun collocates of <i>glimpse</i>
1	Abstract concepts / insight	future, possibilities, psyche, soul, lifestyle, workings
2	People / observers	visitors, viewers, readers, fans, observers, bride, tourists
3	Visual barriers / perspective	window, mirror, curtain, shadow, scenes, interior
4	Nature / world	sea, sky, ocean, worlds, comet, deer
5	Optical devices	binoculars, footage, reflection

The semantic preference analysis presented in Tables 3, 4, and 5 addresses the third research objective—to identify the semantic preferences and prosodic tendencies of each verb—by providing a cross-lexical comparison of the conceptual domains in which *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse* typically occur. Although these verbs share the overarching category of visual perception, their underlying semantic associations diverge significantly, offering insight into how each verb functions within natural discourse.

Gaze demonstrates a strong tendency toward anatomical and spatial entities, such as *eyes*, *face*, *window*, and *horizon*. These collocates suggest that *gaze* is primarily used to express sustained, deliberate visual engagement, and its semantic preferences are often linked to introspective or emotionally nuanced contexts, especially in narrative genres.

In contrast, *glare* co-occurs most frequently with light-emitting or reflective sources, including *sun*, *lights*, and *spotlight*, alongside nouns related to technology and media, such as

screen and *television*. These preferences reflect a dual function: a literal sense involving harsh illumination and a figurative sense associated with confrontation, social evaluation, or scrutiny. The negative prosody of *glare* is clearly embedded in these semantic patterns.

Glimpse, on the other hand, exhibits a preference for abstract and introspective concepts, including *future*, *psyche*, and *possibilities*. Many of its collocates denote transient or partial perception, both in literal terms (e.g., *shadow*, *mirror*) and metaphorical senses (e.g., *soul*, *interior*). These patterns suggest that *glimpse* functions as both a visual and cognitive verb, frequently used to express momentary insight or elusive understanding.

Concordance Line Examples

The interpretation of these semantic preferences is supported by representative concordance lines from COCA. For example, *gaze* frequently appears in relational or descriptive contexts, as in:

1. *She gazed into her mother's eyes with a sense of comfort.*
2. *He gazed at the horizon, lost in thought.*

In contrast, *glare* is often used in evaluative or confrontational settings:

1. *The politician glared at the camera during the heated debate.*
2. *She glared at him with undisguised anger.*

Finally, *glimpse* regularly collocates with abstract concepts or fleeting impressions:

1. *The discovery offered scientists a glimpse of the future of renewable energy.*
2. *Through the window, he caught a glimpse of the shadow moving quickly across the room.*

These concordance lines provide qualitative evidence that supports the quantitative results, confirming that the three verbs occupy distinct semantic and discourse domains.

In summary, the findings reveal that each verb exhibits distinct semantic preferences and prosodic tendencies: *gaze* is predominantly associated with sustained, contemplative observation; *glare* correlates with intensity, hostility, or social judgment; and *glimpse* evokes transience, insight, and metaphorical abstraction. These results go beyond simple lexical differentiation and point to deeper cognitive and pragmatic dimensions encoded in collocational behavior. The contrast among these verbs demonstrates how even near-synonyms are distributed unevenly across experiential domains—physical, social, and psychological—suggesting that learners must navigate not only meanings but also the subtle evaluative stances embedded in real-world usage.

Such insights contribute to a broader understanding of how language reflects and constructs perception, emotion, and interaction. From a pedagogical perspective, this synthesis of corpus-based evidence offers a more nuanced framework for teaching vocabulary in EFL contexts, particularly by highlighting usage patterns that are often opaque in traditional definitions or textbook examples. Ultimately, the study reinforces the pedagogical value of integrating corpus linguistics into synonym instruction to cultivate learners' lexical sensitivity and communicative precision.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study explored the frequency, collocational behavior, and semantic preferences of three near-synonymous English verbs—*gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse*—through a corpus-based approach using the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The research was motivated by recurrent challenges observed in university classrooms, where Thai and Chinese EFL learners frequently misused or conflated these verbs despite being able to recite dictionary definitions. Such issues highlight the inadequacy of traditional vocabulary instruction in capturing subtle semantic distinctions among near-synonyms. Similar concerns were addressed in the study by Khlakheang and Cherngroongroj (2025), which demonstrated that even verbs with close definitional meanings—such as *begin*, *start*, and *initiate*—exhibit markedly different usage patterns when examined through corpus data. Their findings reinforce the need for empirical, usage-based analysis to support more accurate and nuanced vocabulary instruction in EFL contexts, a need that the present study seeks to address within the semantic field of visual perception verbs.

The findings offer concrete, data-driven insights that directly address this instructional gap. The frequency and genre-based analysis revealed that while *gaze* is highly frequent in fiction and descriptive writing, *glare* tends to occur in contexts involving intensity or confrontation, and *glimpse* appears in both literal and metaphorical expressions across varied genres. These usage patterns help explain why students often choose the wrong verb for a given context: they may associate all three with “looking” but fail to grasp their distributional constraints and discourse functions.

The collocational profiles further clarify these differences. *Gaze* clusters around facial features and spatial orientation, suggesting calm and prolonged observation. *Glare* connects with sources of brightness and media contexts, evoking emotional tension or social scrutiny. *Glimpse*, meanwhile, frequently collocates with abstract concepts and fleeting impressions, aligning it with partial insight or metaphorical seeing. These distinctions are essential for helping students not only

choose the appropriate verb but also understand the communicative implications of their lexical choices.

The semantic preference analysis reinforces these patterns by identifying dominant conceptual categories associated with each verb. *Gaze* is emotionally neutral or reflective, *glare* is often confrontational or evaluative, and *glimpse* emphasizes brevity and abstraction. By making these patterns explicit, instructors can guide learners toward more precise and context-appropriate usage—something that anecdotal teaching and dictionary consultation alone often fail to accomplish.

For the researcher as an instructor, these insights provide a much-needed empirical basis for revising instructional materials and classroom explanations. Rather than relying on intuition or prescriptive rules, future lessons can incorporate corpus-informed materials that illustrate genre-sensitive and semantically grounded usage. For example, real-sentence concordances or semantic clustering tasks can help learners see that *glimpse the future* and *glare at the media* are not only correct but communicatively meaningful.

Beyond the immediate classroom context, this study contributes to the broader field of corpus-informed pedagogy by exemplifying how corpus-based methods can diagnose and resolve learner difficulties with near-synonymy. The approach and findings may be applied to other problematic verb groups, or extended to learner corpora to investigate how such distinctions are acquired or misused in learner output.

In addition to pedagogical implications, the findings can also be interpreted through a cultural-cognitive lens. *Gaze* is culturally framed as an act of intimacy and introspection, often mapping onto the conceptual metaphor “looking as bonding or deep attention.” This explains its strong association with body parts and relational contexts such as eyes and faces. In contrast, *glare* reflects confrontation and evaluative pressure, drawing on the metaphor “light as power” and frequently appearing in public or media-related discourse. Finally, *glimpse* embodies the metaphor “seeing as knowing, but only partially,” which highlights the fleeting and incomplete nature of knowledge. Its frequent collocations with abstract domains such as future and psyche confirm this function. By situating the corpus results within these cultural-cognitive frames, the study contributes not only to applied pedagogy but also to broader theoretical discussions of how metaphor and perception interact in shaping lexical meaning.

In conclusion, the study affirms that *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse*, though often treated as interchangeable in traditional resources, display systematic differences in frequency, collocation,

and semantic preference. Recognizing these patterns enables instructors and learners alike to move beyond superficial synonymy toward deeper lexical awareness—an essential step in fostering more nuanced, accurate, and communicatively effective language use. For language educators, these findings offer a practical framework for designing vocabulary instruction that highlights not only word meaning but also usage constraints, contextual evaluations, and prosodic tendencies. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate corpus-based examples and collocation profiles into their lesson plans to promote learners' sensitivity to semantic nuances that are otherwise obscured in conventional materials. Importantly, this study addresses a significant gap in both theoretical and applied research by providing the first systematic corpus-based comparison of visual perception verbs using COCA. It contributes to lexical semantics by uncovering how near-synonyms distribute across cognitive and social domains, and it enhances EFL pedagogy by offering concrete, data-driven insights into effective synonym instruction.

Recommendation for Further Studies

Future research may explore how EFL learners actually use *gaze*, *glare*, and *glimpse* in their own writing or speech by analyzing learner corpora. This would help identify common misuse and reveal how closely learner usage aligns with native-speaker patterns. Further studies could also investigate other near-synonyms in the domain of visual perception to extend the findings beyond this triad. In addition, experimental or classroom-based research could be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of corpus-informed instructional materials in enhancing learners' understanding of subtle semantic and collocational differences. Such studies would contribute both to applied linguistic theory and to practical advances in EFL pedagogy.

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ผู้เขียนบทความ

Anawin Khakheang. Lecturer of Business English Program, Faculty of Arts, Dhurakij Pundit University, Bangkok. Email: anawin.khl@dpu.ac.th