「研究ノート」

ESP for Art Majors: Development of the Ballet English Corpus (Ver. 1.0)

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Abstract

English for specific purposes (ESP) examines English used in specific fields, such as business, law, science and technology, medicine, nursing, tourism, and aviation (e.g., Parkinson, 2013; Bargiela-Chiappini & Zhang, 2013; Northcott, 2013; Moder, 2013; Ferguson, 2013). In corpus linguistics, specialised corpora describing specific English have been constructed and applied to teaching (e.g., the Air Traffic Control Complete Corpus by Godfrey (1994) and the Nursing Medical Chart Corpus by Ohashi et al. (2020)). However, English used in the arts, such as music, performing arts, fine arts, and dance, especially classical ballet, has been inadequately examined. Among various kinds of dance, classical ballet has been enjoyed for different purposes by people of all ages in Japan. In addition, an increasing number of Japanese classical ballet dancers have been performing with overseas ballet companies, and the number of adults learning and watching classical ballet has been increasing (e.g., Oyama & Umino, 2022; Showa Academia Musicae Ballet Research, 2010; 2022). This study aims to examine a specialised corpus, the Ballet English Corpus (BEC) (Ver. 1.0), which contains approximately 1 million words from written texts in ten different categories related to classical ballet, which involves people of all ages for different purposes. This study describes the corpus design and analyses the wordlist and keyword list in the BEC. The analysis of the BEC indicates that the word *ballet* is frequently used in the contexts of ballet companies, schools, or dancers' ranks and that some multiword units used typically in ballet repertoires or dancers' biographies are found in n-grams. The keyword list indicates that the word *ballet*, the lemma DANCE, French words, repertoire names, role names, and dancers' ranks occur characteristically and that verb keywords are characteristically used in ballet dancers' biographies. In addition, some keywords with specific meanings, such as *principal*, *role*, and *company*, can be found only in classical

ballet contexts.

1. Introduction

English for specific purposes (ESP) can be defined as 'an approach to language teaching that targets the current and/or future academic or occupational needs of learners, focuses on the necessary language, genres, and skills to address these needs, and assists learners in meeting these needs through the use of general and/or discipline-specific teaching materials and methods' (Anthony, 2018:1). The ESP is concerned with English used in various specific fields, such as business, law, science and technology, medicine, nursing, tourism, and aviation (e.g., Parkinson, 2013; Bargiela-Chiappini & Zhang, 2013; Northcott, 2013; Moder, 2013; Ferguson, 2013). An increasing number of ESP textbooks have been published and made available for English teachers to use when teaching specific English to university students or advanced learners with different majors. Among various kinds of corpora in the field of corpus linguistics, specialised corpora, describing specific fields of English, have been constructed and can be applied to analysing frequently used vocabulary and grammar; compiling words, phrases, and grammar lists; revising textbooks; writing question items testing technical terms; and developing teaching platforms (e.g., the Air Traffic Control Complete Corpus by Godfrey (1994) and the Nursing Medical Chart Corpus by Ohashi et al. (2020)). In the fine arts, a specialised corpus containing three different sub-lists (painting, sculpture, and graphic arts) has been constructed (Chatburapanun & Yordchim, 2014). Specialised corpora for dance, specifically for dance notation, have also been constructed (e.g., Bull, 1996; Essid et al., 2012). However, corpora describing the use of English in classical ballet situations remain limited.

Classical ballet has been enjoyed for different purposes by people of all ages in Japan. Young Japanese classical ballet dancers have enrolled in overseas classical ballet schools in increasing numbers to be trained as professional classical ballet dancers. In addition, overseas ballet companies have hired more Japanese classical ballet dancers to perform professionally (e.g., the Association of Japanese Ballet Companies, 2018; 2019; 2020; 2021; 2022). Classical ballet is also popular among non-professional classical ballet learners in Japan, who enjoy it by, for example, learning it as a hobby, doing it as a form of exercise, or simply watching performances (e.g., Oyama & Umi-

no, 2022; Showa Academia Musicae Ballet Research, 2010; 2022).

This study aims to describe a specialised corpus created by the author, the Ballet English Corpus (BEC), which can be applied to the study of the specific field of English used in classical ballet contexts and could be helpful for both professional and non-professional classical ballet learners and dancers in Japan. The BEC (Ver. 1.0) currently contains approximately 1 million words from written texts used in ten different contexts related to classical ballet (ballet techniques, companies, studios, history, schools, theatres, people, narratives, repertoires, and miscellaneous), which involves people of various ages for different purposes. This study provides details of the corpus design and analysis of the n-grams and keyword list in the BEC.

2. Literature Review

2.1 English Textbooks and Specialised Corpora for English for Art

There are many ESP textbooks in circulation targeting various genres. In fact, according to this survey examining ESP textbooks available in Japan in 2022 and published by 11 Japanese and overseas publishers for university English, 11 ESP textbooks for art, 12 ESP textbooks for music, and as many as 45 ESP textbooks for movies have been published. However, most ESP textbooks for music teach English in restricted contexts, such as understanding song lyrics.

In addition to ESP textbooks strictly available for university teachers and students, several English conversation textbooks have been published. They can be accessed by anyone involved with or interested in music, such as music majors in high school and university (Kubota & Orui, 2014, 2017; Kanda et al., 2016). These textbooks help those interested in learning English conversation in music learning contexts, such as music lessons, accompanying musical instruments, and concerts. However, only one English conversation textbook has recently been published for dance and theatre studies, especially classical ballet, targeting only children interested in learning classical ballet overseas. The textbook aims to help them learn English in the form of conversations by providing valuable words and phrases that they can use in various contexts related to classical ballet, such as when attending classes, watching performances, shopping for dancewear in ballet stores, and participating in school activities (Ito, 2021).

In the corpus linguistic field, specialised corpora describing specific fields of English have been constructed. Examples of such corpora include the Air Traffic Control Complete Corpus by Godfrey (1994) and the Nursing Medical Chart Corpus by Ohashi et al. (2020). Nesi (2013) points out that ESP corpora can be utilised in teaching, such as examining and analysing concordance lines and obtaining wordlists, keywords, and n-grams for teaching materials as well as test design and data-driven learning (e.g., Yang, 1986; Harwood, 2005). Regarding the fine arts, a specialised corpus containing three different sub lists (painting, sculpture, and graphic arts) has been constructed and applied to ESP, especially in creating teaching and learning platforms (Chatburapanun & Yordchim, 2014). Specialised corpora, specifically for dance notation, have also been constructed (e.g., Bull, 1996; Essid et al., 2012).

2.2 Popularity of Classical Ballet in Japan

Within the performing arts field and among various kinds of dance, classical ballet has been especially popular in Japan across different age groups. According to a survey conducted every five years (in 2011, 2016, and 2021) by Showa Academia Musicae Ballet Research (2022), approximately 256,000 people, 0.20% of the total Japanese population, learned classical ballet in Japan in 2021. Unlike other countries, Japan has no national classical ballet schools or universities. Therefore, most classical ballet learners learn at studios run privately (71.6%) or by companies (22.3%) (Oyama & Umino, 2022; Showa Academia Musicae Ballet Research, 2022). Showa Academia Musicae Ballet Research (2022) surveyed the ages of students at classical ballet studios. More than 80% of classical ballet studios teach children in elementary school or younger, while the number of classical ballet studios that teach junior and high school students is slightly lower. More than 70% of classical ballet studios teach adults in their 40s and 50s. Comparing the population of children and adults, that of classical ballet learners under three years of age and over 70 years of age is much lower than the rest of the age groups. Therefore, classical ballet can be learned by people of all ages, from children aged four to senior citizens under 70.

Some classical ballet learners have been practising classical ballet since they were children to become professional dancers. More and more children typically learn classical ballet in Japan until junior high school, and then transfer to an overseas classical ballet school. They adopt this strategy because no nationally qualified classical

ballet schools or universities exist in Japan and they would like to be hired and perform with overseas ballet companies after graduating. Approximately 13% of the classical ballet studios have graduates who dance with overseas classical ballet schools and companies. They start their career as professional dancers in their late teens or early twenties, either at overseas or Japan-based ballet companies. (Oyama & Umino, 2022; Showa Academia Musicae Ballet Research, 2022). Therefore, young classical ballet learners must prepare their resumes and application forms and then audition in English to apply to overseas ballet schools or learn classical ballet (e.g., simply taking classical ballet lessons or studying its background) overseas at English-speaking classical ballet schools.

The number of Japanese classical ballet dancers working in overseas classical ballet companies has gradually increased between the 2017–2018 and 2021–2022 seasons (the Association of Japanese Ballet Companies, 2022). Therefore, adult professional classical ballet dancers must also design their resumes and biographies and audition at overseas classical ballet companies in English. Once they get hired at these classical ballet companies, they take classical ballet lessons and attend rehearsals in English. Sometimes they discuss the repertoires or roles they have performed or will perform with their colleagues in English.

Regardless of age, most classical ballet learners and dancers enjoy classical ballet by watching performances. Non-professional classical ballet learners take classical ballet lessons as a hobby or for exercise (Showa Academia Musicae Ballet Research, 2010). Furthermore, most non-professional classical ballet learners might want to watch classical ballet performances performed by overseas ballet companies or take classical ballet classes or private lessons from international classical ballet teachers in Japan or in foreign countries.

3. Ballet English Corpus (Ver. 1.0)

Increasing numbers of young classical ballet learners and dancers are enrolling in overseas classical ballet schools or performing with overseas classical ballet companies and using English for auditions, class lessons, and rehearsals. Furthermore, non-professional classical ballet learners and dancers are taking lessons in English or watching classical ballet performances in foreign countries. Therefore, the author

constructed a specialised corpus—the BEC—so that English texts collected from around the world and generally used in the classical ballet contexts can be examined.

The first step involved developing the Ver. 1.0 of the BEC started with constructing ten different categories with which professional and non-professional classical ballet learners and dancers of all ages would likely be familiar (shown in Table 1). These categories were based on the book *Ballet: The Definitive Illustrated Story* (Durante, 2018), which contains a wealth of information as well as books and websites on classical ballet. As many books and websites as possible written in English on classical ballet, which are accessible only in Japan were collected based on the categories. All the words in the books excluding tables of contents, indexes, glossaries, pictures, and photos were manually typed into text files. Subsequently, the pages and chapters of the same books and websites were categorised into appropriate text files according to the categories.

Table 1. Total numbers of words across ten categories in the BEC (Ver. 1.0)

Category	Ballet basics	Company	Dance studio	History	Narrative	People	Repertoire	School	Theatre	Miscellaneous	Total
Total	54,336	179,300	18,552	4,888	13,432	427,056	228,863	44,965	7,635	39,051	1,018,078

In Table 1, the category ‘ballet basics’ contains texts on basic classical ballet techniques taught in bar and centre lessons and other dance forms, such as character dances and *pas de deux* (‘dance for two’). The category ‘repertoire’ contains texts on classical ballet performances such as *Swan Lake*. The categories ‘company’, ‘dance studio’, ‘school’, and ‘theatre’ contain texts on professional ballet companies, dance studios where anyone can enjoy dancing, ballet schools to train classical ballet dancers, and theatres where classical ballet is performed, respectively. The category ‘history’ contains texts on classical ballet history, while the category ‘narrative’ contains stories related to classical ballet for children. The category ‘people’ contains texts on biographies of known figures related to classical ballet, both current and retired (e.g., classical ballet dancers, choreographers, directors, teachers, and ballet music composers). ‘Miscellaneous’ contains texts related to classical ballet that cannot be classified into the above categories (e.g., costume designs, pointe shoes, lightning, and stage).

By far, ‘people’ has the largest number of words obtained primarily from web-

sites, accounting for almost half the total. The second and third largest categories are 'repertoire' and 'company', respectively. The categories 'ballet basics', 'school', and 'miscellaneous' are small, and 'history' and 'theatre' are even smaller. While the ratio of each category is biased, the result of the initial step in developing BEC (Ver. 1.0) (collecting the largest possible number of English books and websites accessible only in Japan) would be a relatively realistic representation.

The software package, #LancsBox (http://corpora.lancs.ac.uk/lancsbox/index.php), which was developed at Lancaster University, was used to analyse the BEC (Ver. 1.0). The Words (for wordlists), Ngrams (for n-grams), and KWIC (for concordances) functions available in #LancsBox were used in this research.

Using the BEC (Ver. 1.0), this study examines what words, multiword units, and keywords are generally used and are helpful for classical ballet learners and dancers regardless of their ages and whether they are professional or non-professional. The research questions addressed in the following sections are: Which 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-grams frequently occur, and what keywords are found in the BEC (Ver. 1.0)?

4. Analysis

4.1 N-grams in the BEC

First, in order to examine which single words and multiword units are frequently used in the BEC (Ver. 1.0), 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-grams were obtained using #LancsBox. As Table 2 shows, articles (*the* and *a*), a conjunction (*and*), and prepositions (*in*, *of*, *to*, *with*, *for*, *as*, *at*, *on*, and *by*) frequently occur under the list of 1-grams, and multiword units composed of a preposition or conjunction + article (*of the*, *in the*, *at the*, *to the*, *and the*, *with the*, *for the*, *as a*, and *on the*) frequently occur under the list of 2-grams. In addition, *be* verbs (*was* and *is*) and second and third personal pronouns, such as *her*, *she*, *you*, and *he*, with slightly more third personal pronouns of female (*her* and *she*), appear frequently.

As expected, words related to classical ballet occur: *ballet* is ranked 7th and *dance* 18th. The word *ballet* appears in 2-, 3-, and 4-grams as the names or part of the names of ballet companies or schools (*royal ballet*, *ballet school*, *national ballet*, *the royal ballet*, *english national ballet*, *royal ballet school*, *the royal ballet school*, *new york city ballet, of the royal ballet*, *at the royal ballet*, *the national ballet of*, *national*

ballet of canada, and *school of american ballet*), and dancers' ranks (*corps de ballet*, *the corps de ballet*, *corps de ballet in*, *dancer corps de ballet*, and *ballet dancer corps de*). The French word *de* is used as the names or part of the names of steps (*pas de* and *pas de deux*) and dancers' ranks (*corps de ballet*, *the corps de ballet*, *corps de ballet in*, *dancer corps de ballet*, *of the corps de*, and *ballet dancer corps de*). Multiword units more specific to ballet used as the names or part of the names of the repertoire occur (*the nutcracker*, *swan lake*, *the sleeping beauty*, and *romeo and juliet*). Therefore, professional and non-professional classical ballet learners and dancers would generally be likely to encounter these words and multiword units in classical ballet situations.

Other multiword units used specifically in dancers' biographies can be found, indicating age (e.g., *the age of*, *at the age*, and *at the age of*), membership (e.g., *a member of the*, *member of the corps*, and *as a member of*), and ticket information (e.g., *more tickets & info* and *tickets & info July*) as follows:

> She began dance classes at the age of three. (BEWWAP118)
> He joined the Company as a member of the corps de ballet in November 2017. (BEWWAP382)
> Upcoming Performances July 1, 2021 8:45 pm Indestructible Light MORE TICKETS & INFOR July 4, 2021 8:00 pm. (BEWWAP060)

In addition, the multiword unit *was born in*, followed by the birthplace of dancers or company staff, and the multiword unit *was promoted to* occur followed by the dancers' rank, such as principal, soloist, or artist. One more characteristic multiword unit *under the direction of* occurs followed by teachers, mothers, directors, or choreographers, as seen below:

> She joined Boston Ballet that year and was promoted to soloist in 2001 and principal in 2003. (BEWWAP404)
> She performed as Clara in Brian Reeder's The Nutcracker under the direction of Ethan Stiefel. (BEWWAP635)

As analysed above, their age, dancers' ranks, ticket information, hometown, promotion, teachers, directors, and choreographers tend to be specifically mentioned in

Table 2. 1-grams, 2-grams, 3-grams, and 4-grams in the BEC

Rank	1-gram	Freq.	2-gram	Freq.	3-gram	Freq.	4-gram	Freq.
1	the	56,264	of the	5,625	written website people	1,567	at the age of	457
2	and	33,624	in the	4,564	the royal ballet	1,431	the corps de ballet	368
3	in	26,660	at the	4,123	corps de ballet	1,026	more tickets & info	358
4	of	21,668	the royal	2,514	the sleeping beauty	1,000	the royal ballet school	297
5	to	20,624	to the	2,378	pas de deux	803	corps de ballet in	281
6	a	18,722	royal ballet	2,224	royal opera house	655	a member of the	272
7	ballet	18,305	and the	2,208	the royal opera	597	new york city ballet	267
8	with	8,732	with the	1,915	english national ballet	597	dancer corps de ballet	258
9	for	8,605	written website	1,884	romeo and juliet	532	of the corps de	249
10	as	7,845	for the	1,741	the age of	531	tickets & info july	248
11	at	7,761	as a	1,669	written book child	476	member of the corps	240
12	was	6,633	ballet school	1,572	at the age	470	as a member of	223
13	is	6,032	website people	1,567	new york city	470	of the royal ballet	215
14	her	5,853	the nutcracker	1,411	royal ballet school	467	at the royal ballet	204
15	she	5,748	pas de	1,281	was born in	454	ballet dancer corps de	195
16	you	5,538	ballet in	1,248	at the royal	453	the national ballet of	189
17	he	5,496	ballet dancer	1,237	of the royal	441	under the direction of	181
18	dance	5,044	on the	1,201	as well as	436	the company as a	180
19	on	4,918	national ballet	1,186	was promoted to	430	national ballet of canada	173
20	by	4,666	swan lake	1,167	one of the	426	school of american ballet	172

dancers' biographies. Therefore, these multiword units would be worth presenting and teaching to young classical ballet learners, dancers, and professional classical ballet dancers who must write their own biographies in English.

4.2 Keyword List in the BEC

Next, in order to examine which single words are characteristically used in the BEC, a keyword list was obtained, comparing the word list of the BEC with that of the BNC2014-baby containing 5,024,072 tokens of written and spoken British English from the period 2010–2017 stored in the #LancsBox.

The word *ballet,* by far, is characteristically used with the highest keyness,

approximately five times more than the second word in the rank. Compared with Table 2, the lemma DANCE is used variously as different parts of speech and verb forms (*dance*, *dancer*, *dancers*, *danced*, and *dancing*). Similarly, diverse words related to ballet companies or schools (*royal*, *opera*, *company*, *theatre*, and *school*) and more varied French words (*de*, *pas*, *corps*, *la*, and *deux*) occur as keywords. Furthermore, different words used as the name or part of the names of a repertoire occur as keywords; *nutcracker* from *The Nutcracker*, *swan* and *lake* from *Swan Lake*, *giselle* from *Giselle*, *romeo* and *juliet* from *Romeo and Juliet*, *beauty* and *sleeping* from *The Sleeping Beauty,* and *cinderella* from *Cinderella*. Those related to roles or characters classical ballet dancers portray (*prince, roles, fairy*, and *role*) and the rank of classical ballet dancers in the company (*principal*, *soloist*, and *artist*) occur as keywords.

Table 3. Keyword list in the BEC

Rank	Word	Stats.	Rank	Word	Stats.	Rank	Word	Stats.	Rank	Word	Stats.
1	ballet	160.87	11	pas	13.79	21	written	11.32	31	artist	9.58
2	dance	34.71	12	prince	13.19	22	romeo	11.17	32	dancing	9.50
3	dancer	34.40	13	giselle	13.16	23	juliet	11.17	33	repertoire	9.37
4	royal	19.32	14	corps	13.11	24	fairy	10.97	34	theatre	9.34
5	nutcracker	19.20	15	roles	12.19	25	ballets	10.74	35	la	9.25
6	de	16.68	16	website	12.18	26	beauty	10.56	36	deux	8.87
7	principal	15.13	17	lake	11.97	27	danced	10.16	37	classical	8.78
8	dancers	15.07	18	opera	11.90	28	performed	9.93	38	role	8.49
9	swan	14.89	19	company	11.89	29	sleeping	9.83	39	featured	8.30
10	soloist	14.35	20	joined	11.42	30	cinderella	9.80	40	school	8.27

Furthermore, verb keywords used specifically in dancers' biographies, such as *joined*, *performed*, and *featured*, can be found. For example, the word *joined* tends to be followed by a year (sometimes preceded by a colon), a company name, and a dancers' rank, the word *performed* tends to be followed by a date, a role, or *with* + a company name, and the word *featured* tends to be followed by a preposition + media or by the word *role*, constructing the multiword unit *featured role*, as follows:

Born: Toledo, Ohio Trained: Canada's National Ballet School Joined: 2014

(BEWWAP970)
He joined Birmingham Royal Ballet in 2007. (BEWWAP113)
She joined as an apprentice in 2011. (BEWWAP749)
He performed the role of Prince in The Nutcracker for two years. (BEWWAP697)
She performed with the New York City Ballet in George Balanchine's The Nutcracker. (BEWWAP778)
She was featured in Dance Magazine in 2018. (BEWWAP785)
She created a featured role in Dream within a Dream (deferred). (BEWWAP048)

Therefore, the information on when they joined the company, mentioning the dancers' rank, which role they performed when and in which company, and in which media the dancer was featured, using key verbs such as *joined*, *performed*, and *featured*, would be likely included specifically in dancers' biographies.

In addition, some keywords used with meanings specific only to classical ballet contexts would be worth presenting to classical ballet learners and dancers. For example, the word *principal*, generally the head teacher in school, refers to top-ranked dancers in classical ballet English contexts. The word *role* refers to the role or character that classical ballet dancers perform and portray in classical ballet repertoires. The word *company*, meaning an office in usual contexts, indicates a ballet company. Therefore, learning the meanings of words used specifically in classical ballet contexts will be valuable for classical ballet learners and dancers.

5. Conclusion and Future Research

This paper described the corpus design and briefly analysed a specialised corpus, the version 1.0 of the BEC. Professional and non-professional dancers and learners enjoy classical ballet for different purposes. Therefore, the author constructed the BEC to examine English texts collected used in classical ballet situations worldwide. Currently, the BEC (Ver. 1.0) contains approximately 1 million words grouped into ten categories, with most words classified under 'people'.

The analysis of the 1-, 2-, 3-, and 4-grams indicates that articles, a conjunction, prepositions, and *be* verbs, as well as second and third personal pronouns, frequently occur. Words related to classical ballet (*ballet* and *dance*) appear frequently. Multiword

units indicating ballet companies, schools, or dancers' ranks with the word *ballet*, and ballet step names or dancers' ranks with the French word *de* occur frequently. Specifically in dancers' biographies, multiword units concerning age, membership, dancers' ranks, ticket information, hometown, promotion, teachers, directors, and choreographers tend to be presented frequently.

The keyword list indicates that the word *ballet* appears with the highest keyness, and the word *dance* is used in different parts of speech and verb forms. Furthermore, more varied words of ballet companies or schools and French words occur as keywords. Words concerning roles or characters portrayed by classical ballet dancers and those concerning their ranks in the company occur as keywords. In addition, specifically in dancers' biographies, verbs *joined*, *performed*, and *featured* occur characteristically as keywords, followed by specific words. Furthermore, some keywords used with specific meanings only in classical ballet contexts can be found.

At the moment, the BEC (Ver. 1.0) currently contains 1,018,078 words only from written texts used in classical ballet situations. In the future, the BEC will be expanded by adding spoken texts transcribed from recorded classical ballet classes and rehearsals and written texts from more books, pamphlets, or leaflets in theatres which can also be made available for purchase by those buying tickets to the show, sometimes referring to the *Ballet Archive* developed by Showa Academia Musicae (https://ballet-archive.tosei-showa-music.ac.jp).

In future research, the BEC (Ver. 1.0) can be used to teach English to art majors. The BEC consists of ten different categories, and each category should have specific features. Words or multiword units frequently used in each category can be identified for different purposes. Based on analyses of words, multiword units, and keyword lists, vocabulary lists and textbooks can be compiled for young classical ballet learners who intend to learn classical ballet overseas, as well as professional classical ballet dancers working at overseas ballet companies.

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