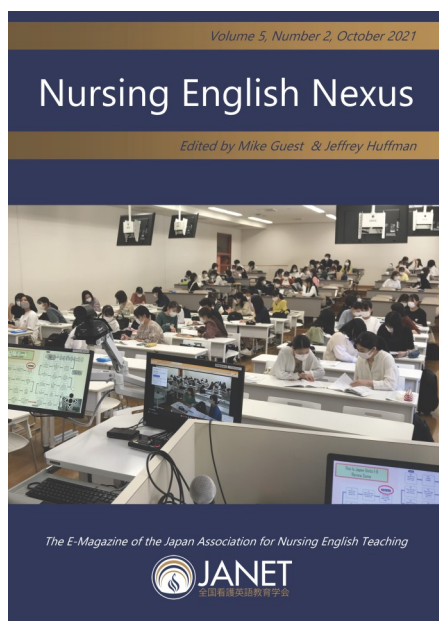


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Review of *English Conversation for Nurses*

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Book information: ナースの英会話 (English Conversation for Nurses) by E. H. Jego. Tokyo: Gakken, 2011. pp. 208. ¥2,420. ISBN: 978-4-05-303389-5

English Conversation for Nurses, available as ナースの英会話 (Na-su no Eikaiwa), is part of the 基礎から学ぶ語学 (Kiso kara Manabu Gogaku) [Languages Learned from the Basics] series published by Gakken. This review is based on the original 2011 edition, but the structure and content have not changed substantially in the more recent editions. The series contains a large number of books for teaching a wide variety of languages. The books in this series tend to be introductory books aimed at teaching foreign languages for specific purposes. For example, the series includes books on such topics as English for phones and emails, business Chinese, and introductory German phrases.

The author of the book is Eric Jego, who has had a long and distinguished career in teaching English for Medical Purposes (EMP) in Japan. He is currently an Associate Professor at Nihon University School of Medicine, and in that capacity he also teaches in the Nursing College of Nihon University.

The book is organized much like a phrasebook and comes with two CDs. It is divided into five color-coded sections. The first section deals with the basic patient interactions that are likely to occur when a patient first goes to a hospital or clinic. This includes finding out what languages the patient can speak, giving directions to different sections of the hospital, and taking a basic patient history.

The second section focuses on examinations and symptoms. It contains practical vocabulary that would be used during physical examinations and when getting detailed information on

symptoms. There are also units on vocabulary based on specific medical issues such as broken bones, childhood illnesses, and vaccinations.

The third section focuses on diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, as well as medication and payment. It starts by introducing phrases related to such topics as urine tests, ECGs, and X-rays, and then lists a wide variety of other tests that can be inserted to make new sentences. This is followed by a list of useful phrases to explain therapeutic procedures such as attaching IV drips and giving injections. There is also a very detailed list of medications as well as example sentences that can be used to explain the medication to patients. The section ends with a short unit on phrases related to payment.

The fourth section addresses hospitalization, surgery, rehabilitation, and discharge. It includes useful phrases needed while staying at the hospital related to such topics as dietary requirements, bathing, and visiting hours.

The fifth and final section is structured differently from the previous four, as it consists of a variety of patient information forms, starting with forms designed to gather basic information such as name and address, and moving on to those eliciting more specialized information based on patients' chief complaints. These include forms related to internal medicine, pediatrics, and orthopedics. There is also guidance for patients undergoing various procedures, such as surgery or CT scans.

The major strength of this book is its content. It covers a wide variety of conditions, procedures, and medical contexts that nurses are likely to encounter on the job throughout their careers. It is very logically ordered and is easy for students to use. The audio is professionally created with natural-sounding voice actors. Each section has a

wide variety of phrases that are incorporated into conversations that can be practiced in groups or alone. There are also some paragraphs written in Japanese that offer advice for specific situations. For example, one of these encourages students to “try speaking Japanese first, and, if they don't understand, then try changing to English”. Teachers who like their entire course to be conducted exclusively in English may not approve of these sections; however, they are very useful for Japanese students as they provide guidance on topics such as how to communicate with and care for foreign patients, and are not meant as language practice.

There are several limitations to this book that I feel need to be addressed. The first point relates to the atypical katakana use. The author has stated that he did not want to include any katakana in the book; however, the publisher argued that including katakana would increase sales. A compromise was reached allowing the author to include katakana that he believed sounded as close to standard spoken English as possible, which led to some potentially confusing phonology. For example, the English word “the” would commonly be written in katakana as ザ (za), but in this book it is written as タ (da). Therefore, students should be encouraged to listen to the audio to help with pronunciation rather than rely on the katakana representations.

The next limitation is that the book seems to be created largely for self-study. It is a great resource for nurses to study in their free time or to keep at the hospital as a reference for situations in which English-speaking patients need treatment, but, due to the lack of activities, it is not suited for classroom use. If it is going to be used in classrooms, the teacher could make use of the phrases and vocabulary and construct a lesson from these, but it would demand considerable thoughtful adaptation to optimize its use as a classroom text. Finally, although the book comes with two CDs, it might be useful to provide links to

online audio files as students may not have a CD player.

In conclusion, this book is useful for reference but has some limitations if the intended purpose is classroom use. Teachers can use the information in this book as a foundation for creating activities based on the vocabulary and clinical scenarios, but they might struggle to use it as a traditional textbook due to the lack of activities. However, for both practicing nurses and nursing students this could be a very useful resource, as it contains a large amount of thematically-organized medical vocabulary and phrases for a variety of situations that occur in healthcare. It can be used either for individual study or for reference while communicating with English-speaking patients.