Communication Skills in the ESP Classroom

ENGLISH NZ 2017

17th November 2017
Helping migrant professionals to deliver quality communication outcomes

• Poor communication vs great non-native speakers

• Practical classroom strategies

• Audience participation!
When communication goes wrong.

- Marmite or marmalade?
- Your experiences
- Negative impact
Great non-native speakers

- Success stories
- Your experiences
- Equip students with the language they need
What candidates say

‘OET helped me in gaining communication skills with patients and other health professionals. Now I can use some expressions in calming patients, showing empathy which I knew but never used before’.

‘As an employee (nurse) in a hospital you are expected to function a hundred precent from day one; you are expected to understand both patients and staff. Preparing for OET helped a lot’.

Source: Stakeholders’ Perceptions of Occupational English Test (OET)
Confidence after preparing for OET

Figure 1: Confidence after preparing for the OET

Source: Stakeholders’ Perceptions of Occupational English Test (OET), Vidakovic & Khalifa (2013)
“OET test takers are perceived as effective communicators able to communicate on matters that are both technical and emotional and who can use lay language so that patients can easily understand what they are saying.”

Source: Stakeholders’ Perceptions of Occupational English Test (OET), Vidakovic & Khalifa (2013)
Employability of healthcare workers

Figure 8: Reasons for unsuitability (% of employers who had unsuitable applicants)

- Insufficient work experience: 70%
- Inadequate communication or teamwork skills: 61%
- Inadequate qualifications: 52%
- Unable to work shifts: 50%
- Poorly spoken English: 49%
- Poor personal presentation: 41%
- Poorly written or presented application: 38%
- Interest in job: 35%
- No referees, previous work history or poor reference: 28%
- Did not attend interview: 22%
- Inability to work independently: 14%
- Did not possess police check: 6%

Source: Department of Employment, Personal Care Workers Survey, November 2013

Source: Australian Labour Market Research and Analysis Branch Department of Employment – Nov 2013
Ability of OET test takers to use English in a health-related workplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The employees/colleagues who have taken OET...</th>
<th>Percentage agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>... use English effectively in their health-related workplace.</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... communicate well with their patients.</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... communicate well with their colleagues.</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... understand well what they are told by their colleagues.</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... understand well what they are told by their patients.</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... perform well at the writing tasks in their health-related workplace.</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>... understand well what they read in their health-related workplace.</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Stakeholders’ Perceptions of Occupational English Test (OET), Vidakovic & Khalifa (2013)
Classroom strategies.

- Teach in students’ contexts
- Scaffold conversations
- Draw out useful language
- You don’t need to be a SME
Example speaking role-play.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANDIDATE CARD NO. 1</th>
<th>DENTISTRY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SETTING</td>
<td>Suburban Dental Clinic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DENTIST</td>
<td>The patient – who has a perfect set of teeth – is complaining of sore gums, particularly behind the lower left molar. You diagnose wisdom teeth coming through and suspect that they are impacted (a tooth has failed to emerge fully into its expected position).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| TASK                 | • Explain the problem to the patient.  
                      • Explain the potential problems caused by impacted wisdom teeth (e.g., causing pain, swelling, jaw stiffness; damaging adjacent teeth; destroying surrounding structures, etc.).  
                      • Suggest an X-ray to find out if the teeth are impacted.  
                      • Stress the importance of removing the teeth before they interfere with the second molars. |

© Cambridge Boxhill Language Assessment (2014) Sample Test
Your turn to have a go

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**DENTIST**

- The patient – who has a perfect set of teeth – is complaining of sore gums, particularly behind the lower left molar. You diagnose wisdom teeth coming through and suspect that they are impacted (a tooth has failed to emerge fully into its expected position).

**TASK**

- Explain the problem to the patient.
- Explain the potential problems caused by impacted wisdom teeth (e.g., causing pain, swelling, jaw stiffness; damaging adjacent teeth; destroying surrounding structures, etc.).
- Suggest an X-ray to find out if the teeth are impacted.
- Stress the importance of removing the teeth before they interfere with the second molars.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROLEPLAYER CARD NO. 1</th>
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**PATIENT**

- You have had some pain in the back of your lower jaw (left side). The gum behind the molar seems red and sore. You have a perfect set of teeth and cannot imagine that you could have any problems with them. You have come to the dentist for advice on your gums.

**TASK**

- Find out what the dentist means by ‘impacted’ wisdom teeth. Express doubt that they could cause any problems.
- Express some concern at having an X-ray which may be unnecessary.
- Explain that you would prefer to wait and see. (You don’t approve of extraction: it seems so out of character for you.)
- Be difficult to convince, but eventually agree to consider the recommended option.
What is OET PPP?

The OET Preparation Provider Programme (PPP) is a comprehensive, hands-on training process designed to give teachers and educational institutions the knowledge and tools needed to run high quality OET preparation courses.

PPP has been developed to ensure OET preparation course quality assurance for teachers, schools and students.
What is in OET PPP?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>What you will do</th>
<th>How you will be assessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Information Guide</td>
<td>Read the Information Guide</td>
<td>Answer multiple choice questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Teaching Skills</td>
<td>Watch the teacher training and Masterclass videos</td>
<td>Answer multiple choice questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Teaching Assessment</td>
<td>Read the model sub-tests and rationales and listen to two audio recordings</td>
<td>Outline how you would use the official OET materials to teach in your learning environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Materials Construction</td>
<td>Read the Material Making Guide and other readings and listen to two audio recordings</td>
<td>Critique a series of poorly-written tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Materials Creation Assessment</td>
<td>Use the Material Making Guide to plan and create six sample sub-tests:</td>
<td>Submit for assessment six sample sub-tests comprising:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Writing</td>
<td>3. Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Speaking</td>
<td>4. Speaking</td>
</tr>
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Benefits of PPP

**Schools**
- Higher quality course and teaching skills
- Increased support and promotion from OET
- Increased candidature
- Professional development for teachers

**Students**
- Increased pass rate
- Improved workplace performance
- Improved language learning skills
- Access to quality assured preparation courses