

# AFRIKAANS PATIENT, Pommy Doctor

By Chris Ellis

She smiled shyly,  
hesitated and spoke.  
"Please excuse the way I speak.  
It's the first time I've been sick in English."

My patients sometimes speak  
to me in Afrikaans.  
I reply in Afrikaans and  
a pained expression comes over their faces  
and they speak in English.

My ear is attuned and the patients know me now,  
so it is a bit of both.  
Britannic Afrikaans in the Eastern Transvaal.

A mother brings in her son.  
"He's got a sore throat, doctor.  
I think it's his tonsils."  
I find myself pausing,  
I am not sure where to look.

A refined lady had phlegm on her chest.  
"Doctor, I've got sperm on my chest."  
I don't think she noticed  
the slight hesitation in the composed  
flow of my interview.

He had a cold.  
"Doctor, my nose is walking"  
His cold was not in a hurry.

She had been bitten by a tick.  
I wanted to know on what part of the body, so  
I asked "Where were you bitten?"  
"In the Karoo," she replied.

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