

<b>Headline</b>	Don't put OB markers on big words		
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## *Don't put OB markers on big words*

**G**OOD English usage does not mean only an avoidance of big words. The use of little words can also change the meaning. Take "a" and "the", for example. "A" or "an" is used to refer to a single unspecified member or item of a class. "The" is used to indicate that the noun it refers to can be identified.

If we refer to an object which has not been previously mentioned we use "a" and when referring to the object again we use "the".

It would be misleading to give the impression that using only small words makes for a good English algorithm. Big words are not necessarily bad. Some disciplines like medicine have tongue-twisting words.

We should make use of all English words, as far as possible, and inculcate an extensive vocabulary; not concentrating on only the small words and disregarding the big ones but creating our own style of good English with a balanced mix.

Sir Winston Churchill's "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat" epitomises the simple presentation. It was said that when Churchill turned to America for help in World War II he did not say "Supply us with the necessary inputs of relevant equipment and we shall implement the programme and accomplish objectives". All he said was "Give us the tools, and we will finish the job".

What can be more poignant than "Jesus wept"? The word must be chosen, like a painter chooses a colour for a picture or a chef chooses an ingredient to create a dish. We could find a smaller word to replace "poignant" but not with the same semantic intensity or mildness to fit the situation.

If we are to speak or to write comparatively good English there must be no OB markers where big words are labelled out-of-bounds.

The Sar-vivor ditty was concocted to reach everyone. There are no two ways about Singlish. Good English cannot be juxtaposed with it, as the Prime Minister was aware. If we are to come up as a nation of good English speakers, then PCK has to be buried in the rubble of its own jargon.

**DUDLEY AU**