

Headline	Have a list of common errors in English		
Date	26 April 2004		
Media Title	Today	Section	Letters
Page No	8	Size	2colx10cm

Have list of common errors in English

THE clarion call of the Speak Good English Movement alone is not enough to effect positive change, without people first being made aware of pervasive mistakes that have become second nature.

Here are some examples:

Wrong pronunciation

- Flight attendants on Singapore Airlines used to pronounce the word "seat belts" as "sit belts" during their announcements until feedback highlighted this problem.
- "December" is often pronounced as "Dezember", even by professional newscasters.
- "Three" is pronounced as "tree" by most Singaporeans.
- "Little" and "handle" are erroneously pronounced as "litter" and "hander".
- "Children" is often pronounced as "chew-ren".
- We often emphasise the wrong syllable. For example, the accent on the word

"lavender" is at the beginning, but it is often pronounced with the emphasis in the middle.

Wrong usage

- NTUC FairPrice prints "regularly" on its receipts to refer to the prices of items before discount. "Regularly" means at regular times. The correct usage here should be "originally".
- A hawker stall indicated "out of order" on an item on its menu to mean "sold out".

I hope that the Ministry of Education will compile a more exhaustive list of common errors in spoken and written English and start teaching our children the correct way to speak and write English in a focused and consistent manner.

We need to start now, before our standard of English becomes abysmal.

Ms Liu I-Chun