

<b>Headline</b>	Don't codeswitch to Singlish, please		
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<b>Description</b>	<p>Speak Good English Movement-When speakers of standard English codeswitch to a non-standard form (Codeswitching), poor speakers will think there is no need to increase their proficiency, "Codeswitching is actually condescending, akin to talking down to someone, according to chairman of the Speak Good English movement (SGEM) Mr Goh Eck Kheng. he hope to cultivate speaking good English as the norm in Singapore.</p>		

## *Don't codeswitch to Singlish, please*

IT MAY seem like good manners to turn on the Singlish when communicating with a countryman who can speak only the patois, but think again.

You are doing him a disservice, not a favour, because his language skills will never improve, said the chairman of the Speak Good English movement (SGEM), Mr Goh Eck Kheng.

When speakers of standard English codeswitch to a non-standard form, poor speakers will think there is no need to increase their proficiency.

Codeswitching is actually condescending, akin to talking down to someone, Mr Goh added.

He hopes to cultivate speaking good English as the norm.

"Immersing Singaporeans who cannot speak English well in this environment will give them the incentive to speak good English all the time. It's like sending them to London or New York where generally there's a good English-speaking environment."

There are three groups being targeted: Singaporeans who can speak standard English, those who cannot but want to, and those who speak bad English but see no need to improve.

The movement wants those in the first group to be role models, and will

help the second group by providing more resources.

As for the third, it hopes to change their mindsets through its public awareness campaign and with the help of standard speakers.

Ex-national debater Jonathan Pflug felt role models would not work – not because the idea is bad, but because Singaporeans will not bother when it comes to simple actions like ordering hawker food. "When you interact with people in daily life, those interactions are just functional. I don't think people think of them as educational opportunities," he said.

Another reason could be the homely familiarity of Singlish.

"It's comfortable, and you can express a lot of things colloquially which may not have the same impact or meaning as English," said Mr Gaurav Keerthi, president of the local chapter of the Debating Association.

English schoolteacher Anne Lua felt speaking Singlish to speakers of bad English is not condescending, but a case of "building rapport".

She said: "If I speak in proper English to hawkers, they may think I'm showing off or better than them. That may affect service and people's self-esteem."