



## **SGEM 2007 Encourages Singaporeans to Make Speaking Good English a Lifestyle Choice**

The Speak Good English Movement (SGEM) launches their movement and programmes this year with a new theme and graphic. The seventh year of the campaign marks the evolution of SGEM's efforts to have Singaporeans speak and use good English by also looking at the language of the heart.

What is the language of the heart? Do we need that in pragmatic Singapore where good English is just another tool for navigating the world of education and work? How will the SGEM express the language of the heart, in good English that will rock your world? Come join us at Timbre and find out!

### **Our Partners and Programmes**

Through partnerships with **STOMP!**, **Timbre**, **987FM**, **938Live**, **The Straits Times**, **Ministry of Education**, **National Institute of Education**, **Singapore Workforce Development Agency** and **Singapore Retailers Association**, SGEM wants to reach out to more Singaporeans.

By making SGEM visible online, heard on radio, seen in print, expressed in music and performances and through relevant agencies, the Movement hopes that its message will eventually be a natural part of people's lives. When we encounter the use of Standard English in the public mediums of communication, speaking good English will naturally become part of our lives, something that we don't have to think or be conscious about.

The SGEM has designated Timbre Music Bistro and Bar as the official venue for its programmes in 2007. Starting 1 August, there will be **weekly programmes held at Timbre**, organised in collaboration with STOMP! and 987FM. Programmes include live music and drama performances and oratorical contests. Wednesday nights at Timbre will see our youth letting their creative juices flow and having fun, all in good English, of course.

**ComfortDelGro** and **SMRT Corporation Pte Ltd** have come onboard again as sponsors for SGEM. SGEM's new eye-catching graphic and slogan will soon be seen moving around the island on our trusty buses and trains so do look out for them.

Two books will also be launched in conjunction with the launch of SGEM. Pan Pacific Education, a Times Publishing company, will publish "**English As It Is Broken**", a collaboration between The Straits Times, MOE and SGEM. "English As It Is Broken" is a compilation of the weekly column with the same name in The Sunday Times. The book gives humorous and tongue-in-cheek answers to questions regarding everyday English usage.



The second is “**Speak Well, Sell Well: A Retailer’s Guide to Good English**”, an easy-to-use guide book that the Speak Good English Movement has collaborated with the Workforce Development Agency on. It will help retail staff in Singapore use proper phrases in the retail sales process, and can be used as reference or training material for service staff.

“A retail staff member who communicates well gives the customer confidence, knowing that he or she knows the product and business well,” said Mr Ong Ye Kung, Chief Executive of WDA.

“WDA is happy to commission this phrase guide to support the retail and service industry. We hope that this phrase guide will enhance the communication between service staff and their customers, earn them the appreciation and respect from their customers, and raise the professional image of the retail industry. This will in turn lead to more sales and help retailers achieve higher business turnover for their businesses.”

Sharing plans and programmes for this year’s movement, Professor Koh Tai Ann, Chairperson of the Speak Good English Movement, elaborated on the importance of speaking Standard English, explaining that it allows Singaporeans to have a better grasp of the language and in effect, makes it easier for Singaporeans to comprehend and communicate with anybody, in any variant of English, anywhere in the world.

The Speak Good English Movement is inviting all Singaporeans to make speaking Standard English a part of their everyday lifestyle. “Standard English can be found everywhere and Singaporeans wishing to acquire the habit of using good English can immerse themselves in a variety of supportive media where it will be found – in the lyrics of all kinds of music, talk shows, news and other programmes over radio and television, and in print, online media and films,” said Prof Koh.

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### **About the Speak Good English Movement**

The Speak Good English Movement was established to encourage Singaporeans to speak Standard English. This means using grammatically correct English in conversations where rules for constructing sentences are adhered to. It is not about accent, although the pronunciation should be accurate.