



SPEECH BY MR GOH ECK KHENG, CHAIRMAN, SPEAK GOOD ENGLISH MOVEMENT, AT THE MEDIA BRIEFING FOR THE SPEAK GOOD ENGLISH MOVEMENT 2010, 31 AUGUST 2010, 10.30 AM AT YA KUN, ORCHARD CENTRAL.

Good morning everyone.

The Speak Good English Movement turns 11 this year. Our objectives have not changed. We still stress the importance of Standard English, and encourage Singaporeans to use it effectively.

Last year, I participated in a forum on the English language. One of the panelists was a Taiwanese lady who, towards the end of the discussion, said something that left me speechless. She said: "We have a saying in Taiwan: If you want to learn English, don't go to Singapore."

That statement said so much about the English-language environment here.

Thus, in this next phase of the Movement, we are expanding our scope to ask those who can speak Standard English to help us create an environment where good English is spoken and used everywhere.



Take a look around us. Here at Ya Kun, everything you see, from the attractive posters on the walls to their signs and menu are in good English. This is the effort of Adrin and Jennifer Loi. As proud Singaporean entrepreneurs, they have created, in Ya Kun, an environment of good English. I commend them because they did this on their own initiative.

The Movement's key focus for 2010 is to encourage all Singaporeans who speak good English to help us create environments like this throughout Singapore.

To do this, Singaporeans – those of us who speak well, and those who are weak in English – need to be conscious of our use of English at all times.

Thus, the tagline for this year is “Get It Right!”

For those who are trying to improve, “Get It Right!” is a motto to remind them that whenever they use English, they should try to use it correctly.

“Get It Right!” is also a rallying cry for us – those who are proficient in English – to collectively and consciously raise the standard of English in Singapore.



The Movement is introducing an activist kit to help us correct poor **written** English we come across – at work, in public places and even at home. A key item in the kit is the “Get It Right” sticky-note pad. Use the sticky notes to correct wrongly expressed signs and incorrect writing. This will not only draw attention to mistakes, but also give the correct forms. We'll tell you more and show you the whole kit on 7 September.

From correcting errors in written English, **speaking** good English consistently is another key factor in creating an environment of good English. By doing so, those who are weak in the language can become immersed in good spoken English and can learn by example. We therefore need to consciously break our tendency to speak broken English to those who do not speak English well. We can all be good role models.

Each year, the Speak Good English Movement works with a spectrum of partners that provide programmes and opportunities for those who wish to improve their English. We cannot do without them. Thank you, partners, for your support.

In a short while, our partners will share with you their programmes and efforts to promote good English in Singapore for this year.



Most importantly, I would like to thank you, our media partners, for supporting the Speak Good English Movement. The media has a huge role to play in creating an environment where Standard English is seen and heard all the time. Your support makes our goal of getting Singaporeans to express themselves in good English possible.

Thank you.