

**SPEECH BY MR JASON LEOW, CHAIRMAN, SPEAK GOOD ENGLISH MOVEMENT  
AT THE INSPIRING TEACHER OF ENGLISH AWARD CEREMONY, 7PM, TUESDAY,  
8 OCTOBER 2019, AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY, SINGAPORE**

Ms Low Yen Ling, Senior Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education & Ministry of  
Manpower  
Mayor, South West District

Mr Wong Siew Hoong, Director-General of Education, Ministry of Education (MOE)

Ms Beatrice Chong, Divisional Director, Curriculum Planning and Development Division  
2, MOE

Ms Lydia Lim, Head of the Schools Department, Head of Schools Department,  
Singapore Press Holdings

I also want to say hello to Mr Jeffrey Low, Director, English Language and Literature,  
Curriculum Planning and Development Division 2, MOE. As everyone would know,  
Jeffrey is a former committee member of the Speak Good English Movement and a  
steadfast supporter. Thank you Jeffrey.

Last but not least, our Master Teachers from the English Language Institute of Singapore,  
nominees, winners, family members of award winners and our ITEA alumni.

This is the 12<sup>th</sup> year of the Inspiring Teacher of English Award. In the last 12 years, 95  
teachers have been awarded across two categories – the Teaching Award and the  
Leadership Award.

Tonight, we celebrate the achievements of nine more teachers. Every awardee tonight has something in common. They implement lessons and programmes that not only meet the needs and abilities, but also the interest of their students.

Over the years, we have seen our award-winning teachers rise to their roles, going on to share and inspire others within the English-language fraternity. I would like to thank some of our ITEA Alumni for joining us in the celebrations tonight.

Let me also thank our ITEA Alumni for being a part of tonight's award ceremony.

- Our emcees, Mdm Mischa Leigh Pereira (ITEA 2014 Leadership Award Winner) and Mr Marc Kenji Lim (ITEA 2015 Teaching Award Winner)
- Our presenters Mr Richard Koh Pee Chou (ITEA 2014 Teaching Award Winner) and Mrs Mumtaz Menon-Ibrahim (ITEA 2017 Teaching Award Winner)

They are all ambassadors who have made English-language learning fun.

### **The refreshed Movement**

Fun is what the Speak Good English Movement has hoped to convey through its promotion efforts in the past months.

The Movement's new tagline "Let's connect. Let's speak good English" is an invitation to consider the value of good English in helping us connect with people across cultures and borders.

To bring this tagline to life, the Movement has promoted a new set of colourful posters with catchy headlines such as “Let’s be understood from Marsiling to Melbourne”, “from Eunos to Edinburgh” and “Lakeside to London”. These new posters have been placed island-wide at bus shelters and MRT stations. I hope you have seen them around. I also hope you have heard us in the media when we engaged the support of The Straits Times, Mothership.sg and more.

Our refreshed approach has attracted the attention of many Singaporeans – be it parents, educators, poets or youths.

A parent (Ng Poh Leng) wrote in to The Straits Times on 17 August 2019, “applaud(ing) the approach taken by the Speak Good English Movement”.

Jonathan Tiong, an NUS Communications and New Media student, went to his LinkedIn profile to express his support for the Movement’s refreshed approach. Incidentally, Jon is now my intern at GIC, where I head up the Corporate Affairs and Communications team. Now I promise you his support for the Movement post was not the reason I hired him. He praised the Movement before he joined me.

The taglines on our posters have also inspired Felix Cheong to write poems about them. Gwee Li Sui, another poet and an academic, also took to his Facebook page to express his support for the Movement’s objectives.

Paige Parker, a long-time Singapore resident, made a mention of the Movement's new key visuals, calling them the "clever Speak Good English advertising campaign".

Elsewhere on social media and in blogs, Singaporeans got creative and created their own taglines as inspired by the Movement.

### **Support the Movement**

I am truly heartened by the support that Singaporeans and residents have given the Movement. When the Movement's new steering committee launched the refreshed approach, our hope was that it would trigger some social conversations. It appears this has happened.

I hope this means that Singaporeans believe the Movement has value and relevance. Indeed, speaking good English can foster understanding and friendships. It can also strengthen self-expression, and helps with being understood.

We hope that teachers can continue to support the objectives of the Movement and help to promote it during the Speak Good English week in their schools.

Lastly, I want to congratulate tonight's award winners as well as the nominees. Our winners are the role models not just to their students and fellow teachers, but also to the community.

Thank you for being a part of the Speak Good English community. Help us sustain the conversation. Keep the Speak Good English Movement in Singaporeans' minds.

Enjoy the evening.