

MEDIA RELEASE

MOVIES, MUSIC AND METAPHORS

“华语 COOL” Celebrates the Richness of Chinese Culture

23 October 2006, Singapore – Maintaining its objective of engaging English-speaking Chinese Singaporeans, in particular the post-65 generation, the 27th Speak Mandarin Campaign is encouraging this segment of the population to develop a grasp of the language beyond just its functional use, and gain a better appreciation of the language, Chinese culture and tradition.

“We want to encourage the English-speaking post-65ers to go deeper into the use of Mandarin, not just for day-to-day communication, but for a better understanding of the rich Chinese heritage,” said Kenneth Tan, Chairman of the Promote Mandarin Council.

He added, *“The Campaign will continue to use a lifestyle-oriented approach, revolving around movies, music and metaphors, extending the theme of “华语 COOL”. We are working with our partners to engage the audience in their daily lives, for example tapping into the wide appeal of Mandarin songs and movies, as well as attracting their interest with the beauty of idioms and metaphors.”*

MOVIES

In the area of movies, Eric Khoo’s Zhao Wei Films with director Royston Tan has produced a short clip, which will preview at the upcoming Speak Mandarin Campaign launch on 30 October to promote Mandarin in a creative way.

Golden Village will continue to encourage Singaporeans to enjoy and watch Mandarin movies to immerse themselves in the language and via osmosis, learn the language.

Singapore's 5C Films is also partnering the Speak Mandarin Campaign to promote Mandarin in a fun and accessible way. Their film *Singapore Dreaming* garnered both local and international accolades.

MUSIC

In the area of using music to promote Mandarin, one of the partners Speak Mandarin Campaign has collaborated with its local company Music Net. They are producing a Mandarin song book with *Han Yu Pin Yin* for each song, which will be especially useful for English-speaking music-lovers who might find it difficult to read Chinese.

The Speak Mandarin Campaign has also tied up with the popular K BOX KTV to encourage young Singaporeans to immerse themselves in Mandarin through karaoke singing and a series of exciting programmes like Mandarin Rocks @ K BOX.

METAPHORS

In line with developing a deeper understanding of the richness of the language, Speak Mandarin Campaign has tied up with several partners to make learning idioms and metaphors accessible to the target audience.

For example, Panpac Education Pte Ltd has produced a book of Chinese idioms with English explanations. Ngee Ann Polytechnic will organise an advertising slogan competition targeting Secondary Schools and Tertiary Institutions. Eduplus Language Centre has created an exciting Parents' Storytelling Competition where in a refreshing way, children will be the judges for the Competition and will cast votes for the winning parents.

Building on the success of "Cool Speak!" in Sunday Times, the newspaper will develop the column further to showcase the practical usage and richness of the language. Mediacorp's 938LIVE will also in a collaborative effort be actively promoting the beauty of the language by their DJs following the launch of the Campaign. The Singapore Media Academy will organise a Mandarin Carnival at year end to entertain both young and old, where graduates of the Academy will be showcasing their acting and performing skills in Mandarin.

The National Library Board will continue to run programmes at libraries across the island on Chinese language and culture in support of the Speak Mandarin Campaign.

Some of the other partners include ComfortDelgro, Lianhe ZaoBao, Mediacorp TV, STOMP, Tong Shui Café and the SAF Music & Drama Company. Please visit www.mandarin.org.sg for more details and regular updates.

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About Speak Mandarin Campaign

Now into its 27th year, the Speak Mandarin Campaign was first launched in 1979 by then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, with the main objective of encouraging Chinese Singaporeans to speak Mandarin as a common language, instead of using dialects. This proved to be very successful, and since the 1990s, the campaign shifted its focus towards encouraging professionals and young people to learn and speak Mandarin.

Apart from promoting Mandarin as an avenue to understanding one's roots and Chinese culture, the campaign also highlights the importance of Mandarin for economic and business competitiveness. A lifestyle-oriented approach – with the tagline ‘华语 COOL’ – is being used to reach out and engage more English speaking Chinese Singaporeans, particularly those in the ‘post-65 generation’, to speak and use Mandarin in their daily lives. Please visit www.mandarin.org.sg for more information.