

Press Release

For immediate release

Speak Mandarin Campaign launches iHuayu at the annual Campaign Launch

27 July 2012 – The Speak Mandarin Campaign celebrates its 33rd Anniversary this year with a brand new initiative – the iHuayu iPhone app.

This free iPhone app is a useful and accessible resource that offers bilingual terms for business users. With 50,000 terms such as ERP and “hot money” in its database, iHuayu allows users to search for business and Singapore-related terms frequently used in media. Sample sentences and scenarios are also available to show how Mandarin is used in different settings, such as media interviews and business conversations.

iHuayu is developed by the Promote Mandarin Council in partnership with the Singapore Workforce Development Agency, supported by the Translation Standardisation Committee for the Chinese Media, the Media Development Authority and powered by GistXL.

The Speak Mandarin Campaign also introduced a new song – Shuo (说) – as part of its initiatives for 2012. Targeting the mass audience, in particular, the younger generation, Shuo features a catchy melody that immediately captivates everyone who listens to it. The song encourages listeners to speak more and to use the language as it gets easier with use, encouraging the target audience to constantly use Mandarin in their lives.

Singapore Cultural Medallion recipient Iskandar Ismail composed, arranged and produced the song. Shuo is performed by young Singapore artiste, Ms Tay Kewei.

The Speak Mandarin Campaign continues to encourage Chinese Singaporeans to leverage on the opportunities presented in our daily lives to constantly use and practise Mandarin. This will help individuals improve their language skills and create a conducive environment that encourages the use of Mandarin for everyone.

Mr Seow Choke Meng, Chairman, Promote Mandarin Council, said that keeping Mandarin alive in our society is a collective effort. The Council will continue to work with its partners to engage different communities and create fun and enjoyable platforms for Chinese Singaporeans to use the language.

Speaking at the launch, Guest-of-Honour, Minister for Education, Mr Heng Swee Keat called on parents to be supportive of their children's learning. He said that laying a strong language foundation from young helps tremendously in bilingual learning, and will benefit Chinese Singaporeans in the long term.

About the Speak Mandarin Campaign 2011/2012

This year marks the 33rd anniversary of this nationwide campaign that was first launched in 1979 by then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. The objective then was to encourage Chinese Singaporeans to use Mandarin instead of dialects. Over the years, the campaign has shifted its focus to encourage Chinese Singaporeans to both embrace speaking Mandarin and enjoy an appreciation for Chinese culture and language.