

TAILPIECE

THAT'S ENGLISH?

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A STRANGE new language has appeared in the Far East. It is called English.

To be more precise, a better name for it would be fractured English – because of the way the Chinese, Japanese, Indonesians, Thais and other Asians inadvertently assault the King's English, it gets wounded, injured, disfigured, mutilated, mangled, defaced, scarred and massacred.

Here are some howlers to start off with:

- In northern Thailand is a sign advertising a donkey-ride for tourists: 'Would you like to ride on your own ass?'
- Not to be one-upped by private enterprise, the Thai Government has a notice posted near the Burma border asking foreigners for their coöperation: 'Please give us your hand in order to correct statistics'.
- In a Kowloon hotel: 'Is forbidden to steal hotel towels. Please if you are not person to do such is – please not to read notice'.
- An official notice at Osaka's Expo '70 some years back: 'When ticket do not come out, push the button to back your money'.
- At that same Exhibit there were also some grammatical boo-boos such as 'Prohibit with shoes on', 'No passage this way for the walker' and 'Here purchasing babble gun'.
- But the best that year was the Japanese Garden poster which informed visitors that 'Japanese garden is the mental home of the Japanese'.
- Another hotel bedroom notice in Tokyo: 'The flattening of underwear with pressure is the job of the chambermaid. To get it done, turn her on'.
- From an article in a Japanese English-language magazine: 'The banana are a great remarkable fruit. He ware constructed in the same architectural style as the honourable sausage. Difference being skin of sausage are habitually consumed while it is not advisable to eat rapping of banana. Perhaps are also intrissing the following difference between the two objects. Banana are held aloft while consuming, sausages are usually left in reclining

position. Banana are first green in culler, then gradual turn yellowish'.

Taiwan is another place that would make Noah Webster spin in his lexicographical grave, as witness these two corkers:

- On the box of an alarm clock you are told: 'Thank you to perfection of alarming mechanism, you are never awake when you are sleeping'.
- Then a sign on a Taipei building near the Leofoo Hotel lets you know that you can have your eyes examined while you wait!
- Near Bangkok's Temple of the Reclining Buddha was this dire warning: 'It is forbidden to enter a woman even a foreigner if dressed as a man'.
- Downtown Bangkok a sign advises you to 'Visit our bargain basement – one flight up!' Enter, and you will find 'Pork handbags' on sale.

And how's this for a literary lulu? One of Singapore's restaurants, which specializes in English dishes, offers on its menu a 'Sir Lion steak with potato sheeps'.