

Use English with Greater Mastery

A Dictionary of
English-Persian Idioms

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FOREWORD

The present book has come into being at the initiative of a feeling, born some years back, that Iranian learners of English lack access to a proper book of idioms which could help them use the language with greater mastery. The idea was, however, brushed aside as quickly as it had come to be, due to a lack of enthusiasm and time which made it impossible for us to see this difficult task through. It was only recently that a new hope sprang within us, helping us surmount the belief that this project was never meant to be executed. That this dictionary has been completed says much about the extraordinary power of that hope and to it we extend our humblest gratitude.

This book does not claim to be enjoying encyclopedic all-inclusiveness and as such cannot pretend to fulfill the functions of a comprehensive dictionary of idioms. Rather, it focuses on idioms that have wide currency and which constitute a significant part of the totality of what is called "English". To this end, we have included those phrasal verbs, terms and sayings that are likely to be of the most service to the Iranian students of English. It goes without saying that in this attempt many common idioms may have unknowingly slipped through our fingers, but the justification – which we hope the reader will kindly choose to approve – is that any huge undertaking of the sort naturally involves ignorance on the part of the writer(s) to provide all idioms that are central to the language. There is another apology: we have opted to set aside those slang idioms with dubious denotations. Judged by any standard, slang idioms are vital constituents of informal English but to have included them would have been flying in the face of decorum. This point serves as another reminder that this book has a more limited scope than a standard dictionary, but perhaps for the very same reason we might be able to claim that it has a greater focus. This work will certainly benefit from the close critical readings of its readers, enabling us to tackle its shortcomings in the subsequent editions.