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COMMON

**MALAY-ENGLISH
IDIOMS**

BY

MD. YUSOFF S.A. RAHIM



EASTERN
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ONE HUNDRED COMMON

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怡和百珍齋
Koh H. Tong Press

Published by DONALD MOORE for



EASTERN UNIVERSITIES PRESS LTD.

SINGAPORE

1960

FIRST EDITION 1960

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Printed in Singapore by the
Malaya Publishing House Ltd.

PREFACE

This little book contains a hundred selected Malay idioms with, as far as possible, their English equivalents.

Its main aim is to provide a selection of common and useful idioms for the non-Malay reader so as to acquaint him with a better understanding of the Malay Language.

The meaning of every idiom found in this little book is clearly explained by a sentence. Thus the reader will be greatly assisted in the use of these idioms.

Md. Yusoff

ADAT RESAM

custom and tradition

Adat resam negeri orang ta' sama dengan negeri kita.

The customs and traditions of other countries are not the same as ours.

AMBIL ANGINto drown care;
to enjoy fresh air

Ah Kow menunggang besikal-nya tiap-tiap petang ka-Padang Kota Lama kerana hendak ambil angin.

Ah Kow cycles to the Esplanade every evening in order to enjoy the fresh air.

AMBIL BAHAGIAN

to take part

Ramasamy akan mengambil bahagian dalam peraduan sharahan itu.

Ramasamy will take part in the contest in oratory.

✓ **AMBIL BÉRAT**

to be at pains

Dia selalu ambil berat hendak menolong saya.

He is always at pains to help me.

APA BOLEH BUAT

what is done cannot
be undone

Kambing kita tergelek motokar. Apa boleh buat!

*Our goat was run over by a car. What is done
cannot be undone!*

BAIK HATI

kind-hearted

Che' Ali suka menolong orang yang susah. Dia
sungguh orang yang baik hati.

*Ali likes to help people in distress. Indeed he is
a kind-hearted man.*

BALAS DENDAM

to take revenge

Jangan-lah awak balas dendam pula. Yang sudah
itu sudah-lah.

*You should not take your revenge. What is over
is over.*

BATU API

to fan the flame

Biar-lah kita buat selēsai tentang pergadohan
mēreka itu. Jangan siapa-siapa pun jadi batu api.

*Let us settle their quarrel and no one should fan
the flame.*

BANGKAI BERNYAWA a living skeleton

Samad itu saperti bangkai bėrnyawa. Sudah bėbėrapa hari dia ta' chukup makan.

Samad looks like a living skeleton. He has not had enough food for so many days.

BAWA NASIB to seek one's fortune

Muthu ta' ada kėrja di-sini. Jadi dia hėndak pėrgi ka-Singapura mėmbawa nasib-nya.

Muthu is jobless here. So he is going to Singapore to seek his fortune.

BEKAS TANGAN one's own work

Bakul yang di-gunakan-nya itu ada-lah bėkas tangan ayah-nya.

The basket which he is using is his father's own work.

BERANIKAN HATI to pluck up courage

Wahab bėranikan hati-nya hėndak bėrjumpa dėngan kėtua pėjabat itu yang bėngis rupa-nya.

Wahab plucks up enough courage to see the head of department who is a fierce-looking man.

BERAT TANGAN

lazy-bones

Orang yang berat tangan selalu rugi.

The lazy-bones will always lose.

BERCHAMPOR GAUL

to get along with

Sahabat saya boleh berchampur gaul dengan orang yang berbagai-bagai chorak.

My friend can get along with all sorts of people.

BERDEBAR HATI

heart throbbing

Dengan hati yang berdebar-debar ia masuk ke-dalam mahkamah.

He entered the court with a throbbing of his heart.

BERDIRI BULU
TENGGOK

the hair standing on end

Berdiri bulu tengkok-nya bila mendengar chërita-chërita hantu itu.

His hair stood on end while listening to stories about ghosts.

BÉRĒNDAM AYER MATA bathed in tears

Pērēmpuan itu bĕrĕndam ayer mata sa-panjang hari sĕbab anak-nya tĕlah mĕninggal.

The woman was bathed in tears throughout the day over the loss of her son.

BĒRI PELUANG to give a chance

Dasar Kĕrajaan sĕkarang ia-lah hĕndak mĕmbĕri pĕluang kapada pĕndudok-pĕndudok nĕgĕri supaya mĕnjawat jawatan tinggi.

The policy of the Government now is to give the local people a chance to rise to the top.

BĒRTOLAK ANSOR to come to a compromise

Pĕrkara itu bukan sĕnang hĕndak dĭ-sĕlĕsaikan. Hĕndak-lah kita bĕrtolak ansor.

It is not easy to settle the problem. We should come to a compromise.

BĒRUMAH TANGGA to settle down
(to a married life)

Saya bĕlum bĕrumah tangga lagi sĕbab saya maseh muda.

I have not yet settled down because I am still young.

BESAR HATI to be pleased

Ia bĕrasa bĕsar hati mĕnĕrima surat itu.

He was pleased to have received the letter.

BESAR KEPALA swollen headed

Orang ta' suka kalau kita buat bĕsar kĕpala.

If we are swollen headed people may not like us.

BUAT ANIAYA to do an injustice

Tuhau akan mĕmbalaskan siapa-siapa yang mĕmbuat aniaya kapada orang.

God will avenge those who do an injustice to others.

BUAT MUKA MASAM to look sour

Apabila di-suruh mĕnchuchikan kain-nya Salmah buat muka masam.

When she was told to wash her sarong Salmah looked sour.

BUAT TEMAN to keep company

Biar-lah Cbe' Hashim datang bĕrsama buat tĕman saya.

Let Hashim come along too in order to keep me company.

BUDAK MĒNTAH

a raw kid

Awak masih budak mēntah lagi. Tapi sēlalu awak 'nak bērkēlahi.

You are still a raw kid and yet you always want to quarrel.

BUNGA TANGAN

present

Kalau kita pērgi ka-rumah Aziz hēndak-lah kita bawa bunga tangan untok anak-nya.

If we go to Aziz's house we should take a present for his son.

BUTA HURUF

illiterate

Kēbanyakan orang-orang kampong itu buta huruf.

Many of the people in the villages are illiterate.

CHABUT LARI

to take to one's heels

Bila mata-mata itu tiba pēnchuri-pēnchuri itu pun chabut lari.

When the police arrived the thieves took to their heels.

CHAKAP ANGIN empty words
Jangan-lah pērechaya chakap-chakap angin yang
sa-macham itu.
You should not listen to such empty words.

CHAKAP BĒSAR to talk big
Orang yang bērchakap bēsar itu sēlalu di-bēnchi
orang.
A person who talks big is always disliked by others.

CHAMPOR TANGAN to interfere
Itu fasal orang; jangan-lah kita champor tangan.
That is his business; we should not interfere in it.

CHARI FASAL to find fault
Sidin suka chari fasal dēngan musoh-nya yang
lama.
Sidin likes to find fault with his former enemy.

CHARI JALAN to find a way
Saya akan mēnchari jalan supaya dapat mēnjawab
so'alan itu.
I shall find a way of answering the question.

CHEPAT TANGAN**light-fingered**

Budak itu sa-orang yang buas dan chepat tangannya. Jaga-lah kedai baik-baik.

The boy is mischievous and light-fingered, so look after the shop properly.

CHULANG CHALING**higgledy-piggledy;
disorderly**

Jangan-lah menulis dengan chulang chaling kerana susah guru hendak membaca.

You should not write in a disorderly manner because it is difficult for the teacher to read.

DARAH GEMUROH**to feel nervous**

Saya berasa takut sedikit hendak berehakat di hadapan orang ramai sebab saya ada darah gemuroh.

I feel slightly scared to speak before the crowd because I have stage-fright.

DĒSAS DĒSUS**rumour**

Saya dengar dēsas dēsus mengatakan Tuan Jackson akan melētakkan jawatan-nya.

I heard a rumour that Mr. Jackson will resign from his post.

DIAM BATU

silent as the grave

Ratnam suka bĕrchakap banyak. Tapi di-rumah Ah Kow dia diam saja sapĕrti diam batu.

Ratnam likes to talk a lot. But at Ah Kow's house he was silent as the grave.

DI-BANGKU SĒKOLAH

at school

Adek pĕrĕmpuan Teik Huat maseh di-bangku sĕkolah.

Teik Huat's younger sister is still at school.

DUDOK SĒNANG LINANG

to live in comfort

Kalau hĕndak dudok sĕnang linang hĕndak-lah kita bĕkĕrja bĕrsungguh-sungguh dahulu.

If we want to live in comfort we should work hard first.

FIKIR MASAK-MASAK

to consider carefully

Kamu hĕndak-lah fikir masak-masak sa-bĕlum mĕngambil langkah itu.

You should consider it very carefully before taking that step.

GAMAK HATI to have the heart to

Gamak hati-nya mēnghalaukan istēri-nya kēluar rumah.

He has the heart to drive his wife from the house.

GĒLAP GULITA complete darkness

Tēmpat itu gēlap gulita. Susah saya hēndak bērjalan.

The place was in complete darkness. It was difficult for me to walk.

GĒLI HATI to be amused

Gēli hati saya mēlihat kēlakuan budak kēchiil itu.

I was amused by the behaviour of the little boy.

HATI BATU stubborn

Jangan-lah huat hati batu. Dēngar-lah sama nasehat orang.

Do not be so stubborn. You should listen to other people's advice.

HIDONG TINGGI give oneself airs

Orang tiada suka kalau awak buat hidong tinggi.

If you give yourself airs people will not like you.

HILANG AKAL

to lose one's head

Che' Ahmad telah hilang akal; sebab itu-lah boleh dia buat begitu.

Ahmad has lost his head; that is why he could do that.

HURU-HARA

turmoil

Kěadaan nēgēri itu dalam huru-hara sebab penduduk-penduduk-nya mēmbērontak.

The country was in turmoil because of the rebellion by the people.

HUTANG BUDI

to be indebted to;
to be grateful

Maniam sungguh terhutang budi kepada Ah Chong atas pērtolongan yang di-bērikan oleh-nya.

Maniam is very much indebted to Ah Chong for the assistance he has rendered him.

IKHLAS HATI

sincere

Sa-bagai sa-orang sahabat saya suka mēnaschatkan awak dēngan hati yang ikhlas.

I would like to give you my advice with all sincerity as a friend.

IRI HATI

to feel envious

Saya bĕrasa iri hati mĕlihat kĕjayaan abang saya dalam pĕpĕreksaan-nya baharu-baharu ini.

I feel envious of the success of my elder brother in his recent examination.

JANTONG HATI

the apple of one's eye

Dalam surat-nya kapada Che' Fatimah ia mĕngatakan bahawa gadis itu ia-lah jantung hati-nya.

In his letter to Fatimah he told her that she was the apple of his eye.

JATOH HATI

to fall for

Kĕlakuan-nya bĕrubah sĕkarang sĕbab dia tĕlah jatoh hati kapada gadis itu.

His behaviour is now changed because he has fallen for the girl.

JATOH SAKIT

to fall ill

Dia mĕndĕngar khabar mĕngatakan anak-nya yang di-maktab itu tĕlah jatoh sakit.

He heard his son at the college had fallen ill.

KAKI AYAM**barefooted**

Pakai-lah kasut itu bila keluar dari rumah. Jangan berjalan-jalan berkaki ayam.

Wear your shoes when you leave the house. Do not go about barefooted.

KAKI TANGAN**staff**

Kaki tangan pejabat itu akan mendapat cuti pada hari Rabu.

The staff of the Department will get a holiday on Wednesday.

KÉCHIL HATI**to be crestfallen;
downhearted**

Jangan-lah berasa kéchil hati. Saya pèrehaya dia tentu datang melihat ibu awak yang sakit itu.

You should not be downhearted. I am sure he will come and see your sick mother.

LÉMAH SĒMANGAT**faint-hearted**

Muthu sungguh sa-orang yang lemah sĕmangatnya. Ta' bĕrani ia berjalan malam sa-orang diri.

Muthu is a faint-hearted person indeed. He is afraid to walk alone at night.

LĒPAS TANGAN to wash one's hands of

Hal itu ta' boleh awak lēpas tangan begitu sahaja.
You cannot wash your hands of the matter just like that.

LUAR BIASA extraordinary

Banyak orang tēlah tērpēranjat mēlihat kējadian luar biasa yang tēlah bērlaku baharu-baharu ini.
Many people were surprised to see the extraordinary incident which had taken place recently.

MASOK UMOR to come of age

Anak pērēmpuan-nya hēlum masok umor lagi sungguh pun ia nampak bēsar.
His daughter has not come of age although she looks big.

MATA PĒNCHARIAN means of earning a living

Dia hēndak pērgi ka-Singapura sēbab di-sana ada bērmacham-macham mata pēncharian.
He is going to Singapore because there are various means of earning a living there.

MEMBAWA MULUT

to gossip

Membawa mulut fasal orang itu ada-lah suatu tabiat yang tidak baik.

To gossip about other people is a bad habit.

MENAREK HATI

attractive

Anak perempuan pēnghulu kampong itu amat mēnarek hati.

The headman's daughter is very attractice.

**MENCHARI NAFKAH
HIDUP**

to earn a living

Tiap-tiap orang hēndak-lah mēnchari nafkah hidup masing-masing di-dalam dunia ini.

Everyone should earn his own living in this world.

MENCHUCHOK HIDONG to be led by the nose

Dato' Abu sa-orang yang bijak. Siapa-siapa pun ta' boleh mēnchuchok hidong-nya.

Dato' Abu is a shrewd man. Nobody can lead him by the nose.

MENINGGAL DUNIA

to pass away

Ibu Mei Ling tēlah mēninggal dunia tiga bulan yang lalu.

Mei Ling's mother passed away three months ago.

**MENJATOHKAN AYER
MUKA**

to put to shame

Ia mēnjatohkan ayer muka sahabat-nya dēngan bērchakap bohong.

He put his friend to shame by telling lies.

MERĒNDAH DIRI

to be humble

Ali tahu ambil hati orang tua-tua. Bila ia bērchakap-chakap dēngan mēreka itu sēlalu ia mērēndahkan diri.

Ali knows how to please the elderly people. He always likes to be humble when he talks to them.

MUKA TĒBAL.

thick-skinned

Si-Ali itu bētul-lah muka tēbal. Dia pērgi ka-majlis pērkahwinan itu dēngan tidak di-jēmpui.

Ali is really thick-skinned. He went to the wedding without being invited.

NAIK MUKA to take advantage

Bapa Si-Salleh tērlampau sayang kapada-nya.
Naik muka-lah dia.

*Salleh's father loves him very much. He takes
advantage of it.*

NAIK PANAS to lose one's temper

Kalau saya naik panas buku itu akan saya koyak-
kan sampai hancor.

If I lose my temper I shall tear the book to bits.

OTAK UDANG dumb-bell

Kira-kira yang mudah pun awak ta' faham. Awak
ini sungguh-lah otak udang.

*You cannot even understand simple arithmetic.
You are really a dumb-bell.*

PÉLOK TUBOH to fold one's arms

Kerja itu tentu ta' dapat kita sëlésaikan kalau
awak bērpelok tuboh sahaja.

*We certainly cannot complete the work if you
just fold your arms.*

PASANG TELINGA to direct the attention to

Pasang-lah telinga awak bila saya bercakap.

You should direct your attention to me when I am talking.

PUAS HATI to feel satisfied

Puas hati-nya sebab ia telah lulus dalam pēpēreksaan itu.

He feels satisfied because he has passed the examination.

PUTEH MATA to look blue;
to become disappointed

Puteh mata-nya sebab wang yang di-bērikan oleh ayah-nya telah hilang.

He became disappointed because the money which his father had given him was lost.

RAMAH TAMAH get-together

Kita hēndak-lah mēngadakan suatu ramah tamah untok mēnyambut hari lahir-nya.

We should hold a get-together to celebrate his birthday.

RINGAN TULANG**hard working**

Budak itu sungguh ringan tulang-nya. Ta' pernah dia buang masa dengan sia-sia.

The boy is really hard working. He does not waste his time unnecessarily.

SAMPAI MASA**high time**

Si-Abu itu sudah besar. Sudah sampai masa-nya dia mēnchari nafkah hidup-nya.

Abu has now grown up. It is high time that he should be earning his living.

SUDAH BASI**out-of-date;
stale**

Ta' usah-lah bawa pērkhabaran yang sudah basi itu.

Do not bring news that has become out-of-date.

SUSAH HATI**sick at heart**

Sēmēnjak kēhilangan kēkaseh-nya Che' Halimah sēlalu susah hati.

Since the loss of her lover Halimah has been sick at heart.

TA' DAPAT TIDAK without fail

Awak terpaksa tinggalkan tempat ini dengan ta' dapat tidak.

You must leave this place without fail.

TAHI ARAK drunkard

Kalau awak kuat minum arak nanti jadi tahi arak.

If you take too much strong drink you will become a drunkard.

TANAM DI-KĒPALA to bear in mind

Sĕgala nasehat orang tua-tua hĕndak-lah kita tanamkan di-kĕpala.

We should bear in mind the advice given by our elders.

TANGAN TĒRBUKA with open arms

Datang-lah ka-rumah saya. Saya akan mĕnunggu kĕdatangan tuan dĕngan tangan tĕrbuka.

You should come to my house. I shall be waiting with open arms.

TUMBOK RUSOK

to bribe

Che' Hassan mēnasehatkan kawan-nya supaya jangan tumbok rusok kērana itu suatu kēsalahan yang bēsar.

Hassan advised his friend not to bribe because it is a serious offence.

ZAMAN SILAM

ancient times

Banyak tēmpat-tēmpat di-dalam dunia ini tidak di-diami oleh manusia pada zaman silam.

Many parts of the world were not inhabited in ancient times.