Every language has phrases or sentences that cannot be understood literally. Even if you know the meaning of all the words in a phrase and understand the grammar completely, the meaning of the phrase may still be confusing. Many clichés, proverbs, slang phrases, phrasal verbs, and common sayings offer this kind of problem. A phrase or sentence of this type is usually said to be idiomatic and may be termed a phraseological unit.

Our paper deals with the study of the pragmatic potential of phraseological units and the way it could be realized in written texts. The examples that illustrate this were chosen from different works of English writers, notably A. Christie and J. Fowles. Special types of phraseological units – slang, folksy, informal – in some situations, especially in writing, are often used most effectively when they are not quite appropriate. Their pragmatic potential is culturally bound and is tied to personality traits such as sense of humour, risk-taking, position or rank, and many other factors.

Phraseological meaning is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon, and one of the main roles in that system is assigned to connotation. Connotation consists of emotive-estimative and expressive components which depend on each other.

Connotation plays a leading role in the semantics of idioms, and as a result, a pragmatic aspect appears. Meanwhile the function of vocal influence by means of estimation is the main component of pragmatics expression.

We have come to the conclusion that, first of all, idioms while realizing the usage meaning influence the expressivity and the pragmatic context orientation; and in the second place, emotive context is capable to influence the idiom as well.

Practical value of the work is that the results of the study can be applied in the process of teaching advanced English learners to analyse and interpret original texts.