CHAPTER - III

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.01 ‘Tone’ and ‘Point of View’ as Literary Concepts

‘Tone’ and ‘Point of View’ are basically literary concepts rooted in the craft of fiction writing especially narrative fiction. Rene Wallak and Austin Warren (1949) dealing with nature and modes of narrative fiction, analyse the structure of the novelists’ world which includes plot, characters, setting, worldview and tone. They also deal with the relation of the author to his work called ‘point of view’. Later, Percy Lubbock (1921) and Foster, E.M. (1927) analysed ‘tone’ and ‘point of view’ as techniques in fiction-writing. Critics and researchers apply these techniques only to analyse fiction. But letters have a traditionally established identity in language prior to fiction (Rene Wallack and Austin Warren, 1949 : 223). Further the first novel, Richardson’s Pamela was written in epistolary form. Hence it would be reasonable to conclude that ‘tone’ and ‘point of view’ embedded in the language of fiction would have their origin in letters.

The writer’s relationship with the addressee (in letters) and the writer’s relationship with the fiction (in fiction) are identically intricate which could be felt only through ‘tone’ and ‘point of view’ of the writer. The present study specifically focuses on these two concepts in business letters.

3.02 Study of ‘Tone’ and ‘Point of View’ : Objectives

‘Tone’ and ‘Point of View’ are abstract and they are implicit in language. They are expressed through sentence structure, cohesive devices and sentence sequence. One could feel the tone and point of view of the writer. Only those who have proficiency in language can feel and employ them in writing. The writers and researchers have hardly made any attempt to explain them in concrete terms. The writers who deal with letters make a distinction between
personal and impersonal narration. If at all they deal with letters further, they highlight one or two features of tone, leaving out 'point of view' completely. Due to lack of research work, teaching them were also difficult in the classroom.

In the present study, an attempt is made to find out appropriate answers to the following questions so as to concretise 'tone':

a) Wherein lies the 'tone' in business letters related to Engineering profession?

b) How does 'tone' emerge?

c) Is it possible to capture exactly 'the tone' from business letters?

d) Is it possible to analyse 'tone' threadbare and identify the minimum linguistic unit of each component of the tone?

e) Is it possible to teach each component separately and collectively?

If so, how is it to be done? Or what are the required elements or functions of language?

f) Is it possible to evolve a teaching strategy to teach the tone?

**3.03 IDENTIFICATION OF LINGUISTIC COMPONENTS OF 'TONE' AND 'POINT OF VIEW':**

Browsing through the books and researches, the researcher had hardly come across any material which could identify and analyse the linguistic elements of tone and point of view in detail. So the researcher could not get any conceptual model which would serve as a basis to improve upon. Naturally, he has resorted to deductive method to identify the linguistic components of 'tone' and 'point of view'. After giving suitable tasks which would help the students express the desired tone and point of view in letters, 56 sample business letters focusing on 5 different tones, 2 tonal changes and 5 points of view were collected from Electronics and Communication students of
A.C. College of Engineering and Technology, Karaikudi. As these students are selected on the basis of the state level rank in total marks, their level of proficiency in English language would be higher than that of other branch students.

The letters thus collected as samples were grouped under three categories:

- Letters in which the tones and points of view emerge in full.
- Letters in which tones and points of view emerge but only partially.
- Letters in which tones and points of view have not at all emerged.

Then, the responses of the students grouped under category I were analysed to find out how the tone change and point of view had emerged. The responses of the students grouped under category II & III were also analysed to find out why the tone, tone change and point of view had not emerged. The observations have given necessary guidance to the researcher to identify the components of tone, tone change and point of view. In each of the following sections, the method the researcher had adopted to identify the components which concretise tones, tone change and point of view, consolidated list of the components, revalidation of the task are presented.

3.04 #: ANGER TONE

The following is the task given to ECE students in the first English class after they joined the course. They were asked to write only the body of the letter within 40 minutes using about 100 words. The students were not permitted to interact and the teacher’s role was passive observation.

**TASK : 1**

Imagine that you purchased a colour TV worth Rs.12,000/- from a dealer last week. You chose a good company TV thinking that it would work smoothly without giving problems for a few years. But now (within a week),
the video system is not functioning properly and the audio system has failed completely. Write a letter to the dealer seeking suitable remedy. (use angry tone in language).

**RATIONALE**

The task aims at providing a communicative situation in which the students should imagine the role of the customer. Further, the situation demands the students’ imagination of the intensity of the feeling of disappointment which manifest in the form of anger. Though the tone of complaint could be used in this situation, the use of anger tone would be more appropriate because after spending Rs. 12,000/- towards the cost of a TV, if the system fails within a week, anyone will certainly get angry. The raw feeling of anger, if expressed in crude language will only break the customer-dealer relationship. Hence the customer has to select words and structures which will not only reflect his anger in a refined way but also get the expected response from the customer.

**STUDENTS’ RESPONSE TO THE TASK**

The task was given to 56 students and the responses were collected. They were grouped under three categories. One of the responses from category I is given below:

**SAMPLE : 1**

Sir,

I had purchased a colour TV worth Rs.12,000/- from you last week thinking that your products would work properly. I had chosen the costliest TV in your shop. Now, not even a week has passed that the TV does not work properly. The audio system has failed totally and video system is not clear. You advertise a lot about products. Remember, without customer's satisfaction, all advertisements are mere waste. There is no use of running a
shop with home appliances which do not work properly even a year. I request you to replace the TV with a new one.

Yours faithfully,

xx xx

From category III the following response is given as sample 2.

SAMPLE : 2

Sir,

I bought a TV last week. You told that it will work properly since it is the costliest TV. But does not work properly. Now within a week, the audio failed totally and the video not proper function at all. So we angrily asking you to repay the money or to alter the good TV.

Yours faithfully,

xx xx

ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES ON ANGER TONE

A careful study of the responses grouped under category II & III reveals the following reasons for the failure of the tone from emerging:

1. The functions are not properly planned and sequenced.
2. The tone will not emerge in just 25 – 40 words. As the tone emerges gradually, the words and sentences should be adequately used (around 100 words) to give expression to tone.
3. Accuracy of details is essential to justify the anger tone.
4. Unless the negative words (no, not, unfair, improper etc.,) and questions beginning with auxiliary verbs are used, anger tone cannot be expressed effectively.
5. Use of polite expressions such as ‘Please’, ‘Kindly’, ‘Humbly’, etc., nullifies the effect of anger tone.
6. Incomplete sentences and the use of one word questions hinder the tone from emerging.

7. Appropriate words and suitable cohesive devices are also important components of the tone.

8. Adequate reasons for anger should be given. Only then the expression of anger (which follows the reason) would be effective.

Considering the above observation, the following function sequence and the possible exponents are identified as components of the tone:

**FUNCTION SEQUENCE OF ANGER TONE**

- Salutation
- Details of the dealing / transaction
- Problem statement
- Expression of anger
- Sustaining anger
- Solution statement

**Table 3.01: Analysis of the Possible Exponents of the Functions of Anger Tone**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Salutation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sir, (In Indian context, when a person gets angry he/she maintains a distance using ‘Sir’ as salutation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With reference to your supply order ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As per your supply order number ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I purchased a colour TV (vide bill no. ) ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Problem - Statement</td>
<td>I spent Rs. 12,000/- to purchase a colour TV, but the TV does not ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Though I paid more money I could not get a good TV ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contrary to my expectation you supplied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Expression of Anger</td>
<td>I am very much disappointed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I feel that I am cheated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I trusted you but you exploited me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sustaining Anger</td>
<td>It is not fair on your part ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is it fair on your part to ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will any dependable dealer supply poor quality TV?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Solution</td>
<td>I request you to ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I hope you would ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I expect that you would ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As 'anger tone' gets concretised through function sequence, some specific structures and words and cohesive devices, adequate focus should be given to these components in teaching as shown in figure 1.
FIGURE – 1

Exponents of Anger Tone

Function Sequence

Language Focus

i. Use of cohesive devices (But, though, although, even though)

ii. Use of questions beginning with Auxiliary verbs.

iii. Use of Negative Statements.

VALIDATION OF THE TASK

The task, the responses of the students, the function sequence and the possible exponents were given to five mechanical engineering teachers who have more than ten years of teaching experience and 2 educated business men and 3 ELT specialists. They were given the following questionnaire:

Questionnaire

1. Which of the tones would be the natural response of any customer to the given situation in the task
   a) Complaint
   b) Threatening
   c) Anger

2. From the first category of responses given to you, do you think that anger tone emerges in full
   Yes / No
3. Do you think that anger tone can be expressed in a refined way in a single sentence?  
   Yes / No

4. If the sequence is changed, do you think that anger tone could be effectively expressed?  
   Yes / No

5. Do you think that certain specific words/structures would express anger tone effectively?  
   Yes / No

Your views with regard to task, the response of students, the function sequence and possible exponents arrived at are. 

Out of the ten experts to whom the questionnaires were sent eight experts expressed concurrent views. Thus the task was validated and decided as suitable for administering in the classroom.

3.05 Threatening Tone

The threatening tone is used only as a last resort in business letters. When all other methods of getting a problem solved fail, the writer / company uses threatening tone. The terms ‘caution’, ‘warning’ and ‘threatening’ imply different connotations. ‘Caution’ is generally given to a person, who commits a minor crime, that further action will be taken if he/she commits the crime again and to be careful to avoid danger or mistake. Whereas ‘warning’ means informing somebody in advance what may happen especially about possible danger or unpleasant consequences, ‘caution’ and ‘warning’ include the advice ‘not to repeat in future’ and also condoning the present error / mistake/ crime. Threatening is an expression of one’s intention to
punish or harm somebody if he/she does not obey. It indicates the authority’s planned action of serious nature.

In Indian Situation, the writer/ company, usually gives three chances to the addressee to settle the problem i). reminder ii) threat and finally iii) strong note of threat. The willful defaulters never bother to settle the dues in spite of repeated reminders. Hence, the engineering students should be exposed to ‘threatening tone’ to deal with the willful defaulters. The following communicative task is given to the students in the class room.

**Task : 2**

Imagine that you are a dealer of Electrical goods. A customer purchased a 5 H.P electrical motor (cost Rs.12,000/-) on credit and signed the documents to the effect that he would pay Rs.550/= every month promptly for 24 months. The customer paid only three dues of Rs.550/- each and thereafter had not responded to your reminders. Already one year had passed. Write a letter to the customer asking him to pay the dues within a week. (use ‘threatening tone’)

**Rationale**

The task provides a communicative situation to the students to imagine the role of the dealer who has to deal with a willful defaulter – customer. The cost of the motor is Rs.12000/- and the customer had paid only Rs.1650/- and the major portion of the money (around Rs.11,000/-) is yet to be paid. The students have to imagine the mental agony of the dealer’, who after investing his money in business, has to wait for the customers till they repay the money. Since the dealer has all the legally valid records, the students who play the role have to understand the dealers’ right to restore the money. The customer has not responded at all. In this situation, the dealer would use only threatening tone. Hence the task is given to the Engineering students.
STUDENTS’ RESPONSE TO THE TASK

The task was administered to 56 students in the class and the responses were grouped under three categories. The following sample is given from the responses classified under category I:

SAMPLE : 1

Sir,

You purchased a 5 H.P motor worth Rs.12,000/- on credit basis from us (vide bill No.32/2002 dt. 15.1.2002). Because of your request we have allowed you to pay the amount in 24 instalments of Rs.550/- each. You have paid only three instalments and thereafter you remain silent. Every month we sent reminders but you have not responded at all. This is to inform you, finally, that if the dues are not paid within a week, severe legal action will be taken against you and we will not entertain any request from you.

Yours truly,

XX XX

The following sample is given from the response taken from category II:

SAMPLE : 2

Sir,

You had bought a 5 H.P. motor worth Rs.12,000/- but you had paid only three dues of Rs.550/- each. I had informed you many times that you had not paid the dues yet. But you did not give any response to my call. This will be the final letter from me. If you don’t pay the dues within this week, I will come to your house and will make noise at the front of your house. I had prepared persons to break your house and restore my motor. Be careful, I will do what I had said and what I did not say. I will blow your house. If you seemed to be
going alone, I will also murder you, when you come out of your house, you will be killed. Keep it mind and pay the dues immediately.

Yours faithfully,

xx xx

**Analysis of the Responses on Threatening Tone**

Responses classified under category II & III were analysed to find out the reasons why the threatening tone has not emerged / only partially emerged. The following are the reasons identified:

1. The functions are not suitably planned and sequenced.
2. Accuracy of details of sale, the writers' repeated reminders, the addressee's willful default are not expressed adequately.
3. Mixing of formal and informal language affects the seriousness of the tone.
4. The writer's plan to indulge in violence will lead to further legal complications and ultimately the purpose of the letter would not be served.
5. Conditional sentence is more effective than the instruction statement.
6. Use of impersonal passive verbs in the conditional sentence adds to the effect of threatening tone.

Based on the above points the following function sequence and the possible exponents of each function are arrived at:

**Function Sequence of Threatening Tone**

1. Salutation
2. Statement of the dealing / Transaction
3. Details of Default

4. Details of reminders sent

5. Indifference of the customer

6. Firm threat

Language is not stereotyped and hence each individual expresses the same content in different ways using different structures. The possibilities of sentence structures and the use of cohesive devices are attempted below.

Table 3.02: Analysis of the Possible Exponents of the Functions of Threatening Tone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Salutation</th>
<th>Statement of Transaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sir, (Salutation usually expresses warnings but the tone used is ‘threatening tone’ and so ‘sir’ is used to distance the customer,)</td>
<td>We supplied 5 H.P motor on credit basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>We hereby remind you that we supplied 5 H.P motor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As per your written request, we supplied...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>You are hereby reminded that you purchased ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>With reference to our bill No. 32/dt. 15.1.2002 we supplied...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement of default</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Though you promised to pay the dues regularly, you did not pay for the past three months.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Since you did not pay the dues for the past 9 months we had sent five reminders.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You promised to pay the dues regularly but you failed to keep your promise.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We hoped that you would pay the dues regularly but you stopped paying money after just three months.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We sent five reminders to you asking for payment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You have forced us to send 5 reminders but remained silent without sending any response.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Left with no other alternative, we sent 5 reminders demanding settlement of the dues.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With the hope that you would settle the dues amicably, we sent five reminders.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Indifference of the Customer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Even then you did not respond ...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You did not bother to reply to any of our reminders.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We never thought that you would willfully stop paying the dues.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The dues could have been paid in easy instalments but you did not want to pay.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You had not only neglected all our reminders but also decided not to pay the dues.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Statement of Threat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If the dues are not settled within a week, you will be sent to the court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unless the dues are settled within a week we will be left with no other alternative except to...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In case you fail to settle the dues within a week severe legal action will be taken against you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the event of your not paying the dues within a week we will take severe legal action against you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your failure to settle the dues will result in initiating legal action against you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
So, threatening tone could be taught in the classroom by focusing on certain specific structures, cohesive devices in addition to function sequence as shown in fig. 2.

**FIGURE – 2**

*Exponents of Threatening Tone*

- **Threatening Tone**
  - Function Sequence
  - Language Focus
    - Conditional Structures
    - Cohesive Devices
      - Unless
      - In the event of
      - In case
      - But,
      - In Spite of
      - Though,
      - Although,
      - Even though ....

**VALIDATION OF THE TASK**

The task, the responses, function sequence and the exponents were sent to 5 teachers handling Engineering subjects (Civil, Electrical, Mechanical, Electronics and Communication and Computer Engineering) and 2 graduates in science and arts who have been engaged in business since 1986 in Karaikudi
town and 3 ELT experts for their response. The following questionnaire was also sent to them.

**Questionnaire**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Do you think that threatening tone would be the response of most people in the given situation (task)?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In Indian Situation, do people use threatening tone to recover the dues from the willful defaulter?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you think that the use of 'please', 'kindly' etc would highlight threatening tone?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Suppose the writer uses just one sentence: If you don't settle the dues as on date, we take severe legal action - Do you think threatening tone would emerge in full?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you agree that sequence in content gradually builds up the tone effect?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Suppose the writer does not use the clauses beginning with - 'If, unless, in case, in the event of your...' Do you think threatening tone' would emerge in writing?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Suppose the writer begins the letter thus; If you don't settle the dues... Do you think that threatening tone will emerge in writing?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Out of the 10 experts to whom the questionnaires were sent, eight experts have expressed concurrent views which clearly reveal the validity of the task.

3.06 Persuasive Tone

Persuasive tone is used both by the companies and by the customers. The companies use persuasive tone to sell the products while the customers use the tone for bargaining. Depending on the writer and the situation the persuasive techniques differ. Similarly, the function sequence, sentence structure and the use of certain specific words differ. Here is a communicative task which demands the use of persuasive tone.

Task: 3

Imagine that you are the dealer of M.G. Refrigerators. A customer has written an enquiry letter for purchasing a refrigerator. Write a letter giving all necessary details using persuasive tone.
RATIONALE

The situation given in the task demands that the students assume the role of the dealer of M.G. Refrigerators. The dealer has an opportunity to sell refrigerator to a customer. Naturally, any dealer would make use of the chance to persuade the customer to buy the item from him. Hence the use of persuasive tone in the sales letter would not only improve his business but also earn a customer. As the future engineering graduates the students may take up position such as area sales engineer, sales manager, purchase manager or dealer in future. The use of persuasive tone in business letters would help them to be successful in their professional career.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSE TO THE TASK

The responses received from 56 students were collected and grouped under three categories. From the first category of letters in which the persuasive tone emerges in full, a sample is given below.

SAMPLE : 1

Dear Mr. Raju,

Thank you for your letter 15.1.2003. We have several Refrigerators manufactured by different companies. The best quality costs Rs.13,000/-. The cost of other company refrigerators range from Rs.9,000/- to 10,500/-. We give two years warranty for the refrigerators purchased from us. Further, we have sold around 500 refrigerators in two years and won the confidence of our customers. We give 5% rebate during off-season i.e from September to January every year. Kindly visit our show room and select the best refrigerator.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

xx xx
The following responses of a student to the task grouped under category II is given below as sample:

**SAMPLE : 2**

Dear Sir,

I have received a letter from you regarding the enquiry for the supply of a refrigerator. I want to make it clear to you that you need not worry about the quality. You need not worry about the payment. You give the money at the time of delivery of the item. Your complaints (if any) will be immediately attended to. I promise to give you a discount of 5% on the total bill. Hope to hear from you soon.

Thanking you,

Yours lovingly,

XX XX

**ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES ON PERSUASIVE TONE**

On analysing the II & III category of letters, the researcher observed the following reasons which obstruct persuasive tone from emerging:

1. The function sequence is not planned carefully.
2. The writer failed to thank the customer while acknowledging the receipt of the letter.
3. As the appropriate cohesive devices are not used, the sentences stand unconnected.
4. Emphasis on variety and quality of the product is not given.
5. Suitable adjectives are not used to arouse interest of the customer.
6. Use of negatives – ‘need not’ reduce the effect of the tone (positive statements would be more effective).
7. Specific details about price, warranty period, taxes, packing and forwarding charges etc., are not mentioned. They are not simply details but very important persuasive factors.

8. Statements such as ‘Don’t worry about quality, payment’ are very vague. The customers would not be persuaded by these statements. They require specific details in writing.

**FUNCTION SEQUENCE OF PERSUASIVE TONE**

Considering the above points the following function sequence and the exponents are identified as the components of persuasive tone:

1. Salutation (using Dear Mr. / Dear Sir)
2. Acknowledgement of the letter (with thanks)
3. Salient features of the product
4. Warranty / rebate / concession statement
5. Statement of after-sales service/customer contact
6. Customer – friendly statement

To express each function, different possibilities of sentence structures are given below. These statements gradually develop the persuasive tone. Further, the creativity of the student is also an important factor in ‘persuasive tone’. Every student has his own idea of how to convince the customer. Naturally, the words and sentence structures reveal the creativity of the students.

**Table 3.03: Analysis of the Possible Exponents of the Functions of Persuasive Tone**

<p>| 1. Salutation       | Dear Mr... ,          |
|                     | Dear Customer,        |
|                     | Dear Sir,             |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Acknowledgement of the letter</th>
<th>Statement of concessions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>We received your letter dated ... thank you very much ...</td>
<td>We give three years warranty for the products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thank you for your letter dated asking us to give ...</td>
<td>(i) We give immediate attention in case of repair / default .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We thank you for your enquiry letter dated ...</td>
<td>(ii) Our service personnel will meet you once in three months regularly and check the functioning free of cost .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>This is the latest available model in ... manufactured by ... company.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. **Statement of after-sales services/customer contact**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services Offered</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We offer 5% discount.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We provide credit facility at 0% interest.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free door delivery.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(i) In case of any defect you can call us over phone,

(ii) Minor defects will be rectified within 24 hours.

(iii) Customers meet is arranged every year. The production manager attends the meeting. The customers can frankly tell the complaints (if any) which will be immediately solved.

6. **Customer-friendly statement (conclusion)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Order Experience</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your valuable order is awaited.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will be very happy to honour your order immediately.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We are ready to provide any other detail if you require.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer satisfaction is our motto. We assure you the best service and co-operation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, persuasive tone could be taught in the classroom by focusing on certain specific structures, cohesive devices in addition to function sequence as shown in fig. 3.
FIGURE - 3

Exponents of Persuasive Tone

Persuasive Tone

Function Sequence

Language Focus

Structures

Adjectives

(i) Concession statements
(ii) Statements of invitation

Use of superior to, the best, lowest, simplest, latest etc.

VALIDATION OF THE TASK

The task, responses of students, function sequence and possible exponents were sent to 5 engineering teachers (2 electronics and communication engineers, 2 Electrical engineers and one Computer engineer). Further, they were also sent to 3 ELT experts and 3 successful graduate business men. They were given the following questionnaire to write their response:

Questionnaire

1. Do you think that for the task given, only the persuasive tone would be suitable? Yes / No
2. Do you think that in all response letters to enquiries for the supply of items 'persuasive tone' would be suitable? Yes / No
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes / No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Will ‘highlighting the advantages of the item’ be enough to express persuasive tone?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>In Indian context, will ‘rebate’/ ‘discount’ and other such announcements serve as persuasive techniques?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5 | Do you think that the following sequence would reveal persuasive tone letters?  
   1. Salutation (using Dear Mr./ Dear Customer)  
   2. Concessional statements  
   3. Price of the item  
   4. Advantages / Facilities in the item  
   5. Acknowledgment of the letter with thanks  
   6. Offer to help after sales-service.  
   If your answer is ‘no’ please rearrange the above sequence using a, b, c, d, e, f in the margin | Yes / No |
<p>| 6 | Do you think that the task provides opportunity to the students for creativity in selecting the concession, advantages of the item etc? | Yes / No |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.</th>
<th>Do you agree that in persuasive tone two aspects are very significant viz. (a) use of adjectives (in language) and (b) the concessions / advantages / other extra benefits – statement?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggestions (if any) ____________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

Out of eleven experts to whom the questionnaires were sent, nine have given similar views on the above questions. The ELT experts have suggested that more focus should be given in the classroom on the two stages mentioned in question No.7 of the questionnaire. Thus the task is validated and the components are fixed so as to apply them in the classroom.

**3.07 COMPLAINT TONE**

'Complaint' is a statement expressing annoyance, unhappiness, pain, dissatisfaction, grief etc. In business, both the customers and companies face situations in which they express annoyance, unhappiness or dissatisfaction. As a result they express their difficulties / inconveniences. Complaint tone will emerge if the functions are sequenced and exponents of each function is appropriately worded. Before the solution statement, the statement of difficulties / inconveniences should be adequately dealt with.

**TASK: 4**

Imagine that you placed an order on a dealer for the supply of 4 pedestal fans, 8 ceiling fans and 3 table fans for your newly built house. You received the parcel and when you opened the parcel, you were shocked to find 3 pedestal fans, 3 ceiling fans and 8 table fans. Write a letter to the dealer
informing that the number of received items is not the same as that of the
ordered items. Use complaint tone in your letter.

RATIONALE

In this task, the students have to play the role of a customer, who
wants to purchase fans for the newly built house. As a person who has paid
the money, it is quite natural for him to receive the exact number of items as
given in the order. But he did not receive the number of fans as he ordered.
So the customer is annoyed / disappointed / unhappy. Anybody for that
matter will have only such a feeling. The given task provides a situation in
which students have to imagine the role of the customer. He has placed the
order in time for the supply of the items. But the company has failed to supply
the correct items as per the order. The customer requires the items for the
newly built house. The ordered items are not supplied in time and so he will
express his inconvenience / difficulties in the form of a complaint tone. The
students of engineering are expected to know the components of complaint
tone to express in such situations. Hence, the task is given.

STUDENT'S RESPONSE TO THE TASK

The task was given to students in the classroom and the responses were
collected. The responses were carefully studied and the response in which the
complaint tone emerges in full were grouped under category I. A sample from
this category is given below.

SAMPLE : 1

Sir,

I had placed order with you ( refer my order No. HA/1 dt.15.1.03) last
week for the supply of 4 pedestal fans, 8 ceiling fans and 3 table fans. I
received the parcel today. When I opened the parcel I was shocked to find 3
pedestal fans, 3 ceiling fans and 8 table fans. The mistake would have taken
place at the packing section by oversight. I have fixed the house warming ceremony next week. I want to fix the fans at least by the end of this week. I have just 6 days left. Many guests and relatives are expected to attend the ceremony and they will be put to inconvenience if we fail to provide fan facility. Hence I request you to look into the matter immediately and make arrangements to supply the items as mentioned in my order.

Thank you,

Yours faithfully,

XX XX

Some students have written responses in which complaint tone emerges either partially or not at all. Such responses are grouped under category II & III. A sample from category III is given below:

SAMPLE : 2

Sir,

I had ordered 4 pedestal fans, 8 ceiling fans and 3 table fans last week. But you had sent 3 pedestal fans, 3 ceiling fans and 8 table fans. It is very shock to me. You have no stock of the items I ordered. Are you noticed my letters? Before next week I must fix the fans. So you have to supply as I ordered immediately. I hope you will do so.

Thank You,

Yours faithfully,

XX XX

ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES ON COMPLAINT TONE

The reasons for the failure to create the complaint tone in response (sample) III above were analysed and the following points were observed:

1. The writer has not planned the function sequence before writing the response.
2. Details of the order are not specifically mentioned.

3. The nature of the inconvenience caused has not been explained.

4. Brief questions will express anger tone but not complaint tone.

5. Grammatical errors are hurdles which would spoil the effect of the tone.

6. Moving from one idea to another without using appropriate cohesive device breaks the totality of the tone effect.

7. The final solution statement is not properly worded (so you have to ...)


From the points above, an attempt was made to identify the components of the complaint tone.

**FUNCTION SEQUENCE OF COMPLAINT TONE**

On close re-reading of the responses to the task it was concluded that the following function sequence reveals the complaint tone effectively:

1. Salutation
2. Details of the order
3. Statement of the error / mistake
4. Statement of inconvenience caused
5. Solution Statement

To express each function, different possibilities of sentences are provided here. As language is not a stereo typed system, the different possibilities of using multiple structures by individuals are explored and listed.
Table 3.04: Analysis of the Possible Exponents of the Functions of Complaint Tone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Salutation</th>
<th>Details of the order</th>
<th>Statement of the mistake / error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sir,</td>
<td>I have placed order with you for the supply of ............ (vide our letter)</td>
<td>But you have sent ............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dear Sir,</td>
<td>We have ordered ............... (please refer our letter .......)</td>
<td>Whereas you have sent ............</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dear Dealer,</td>
<td>With reference to our order .......</td>
<td>With out referring to my order, you have sent ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As per our order dated :</td>
<td>Your dispatch section has committed a mistake by sending ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>An order was sent, you requesting you to ...............</td>
<td>I was shocked to find the items which I have not ordered for ......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Statement of inconvenience caused</td>
<td>We were put to …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As we could not … we were put to hardships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our reputation would be damaged if …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We will cut a sorry figure if we …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We could not keep our promise to … since you have …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Solution statement</td>
<td>Hence we request you to …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So look into the matter and do the needful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So we expect you to take early action to solve the problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hence we request you to consider the urgency / and take early action considering the seriousness of the problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, complaint tone could be taught in the classroom by focusing on certain specific structures, cohesive devices in addition to function sequence as shown in fig. 4.
VALIDATION OF THE TASK

The task, responses, the function sequence and the exponents were given to 6 teachers of different engineering faculty (civil, electrical, electronics, computer science, mechanical and electro chemical engineering) and 3 ELT experts for their views and suggestions. The following questionnaire was distributed to them.

Questionnaire

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> Is the task suitable for using complaint tone?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Do you think that the task will also yield to the use of 'Anger tone'?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Do you think that only through the use of suitable words and structures 'Anger tone' and 'complaint tone' could be distinguished?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Do you think that the statement of inconvenience caused due to the lapse of a company / individual will reveal the complaint tone?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Do you think questions such as 'Don't you .. Is it .... ? and negative statements such as : It is your carelessness .... would reveal complaint tone?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Do you think that there is difference in the function sequence of anger tone and complaint tone?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Do you agree that the tones 'anger tone' and 'complaint tone' could be distinguished only through the use of some specific sentence structures?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggestions

Seven out of nine experts have expressed identical views on the task and suggest that the function sequence and structure of sentences which distinguish anger tone from complaint tone should be made clear to the students in the classroom as there are more chances of confusing these two tones. Thus the task is decided to be valid for application in the classroom.
3.08 RECONCILIATION TONE

Reconciliation means 'to make peace between', 'make friendly again' which presupposes quarrel / misunderstanding between two parties / individuals. In business transactions delay, inconvenience, wrong despatch of goods, supply of substandard goods / items with manufacturing defects, damage in transit, error in bills / alteration in bills etc. result in quarrel / misunderstanding. To continue business relationship, either of the parties / individuals will have to reconcile. The engineering students have to be taught how to use reconciliation tone in their future professional career when need arises.

As the researcher has selected deductive method to identify the components of reconciliation tone, he had framed a communicative task as given below :

**TASK : 5**

Imagine that you are the chief production engineer of SPM washing machines. Your customer wrote a letter to the company that the washing machine of your company which he purchased a month ago gives problem in operation. Immediately you sent a service engineer who reported that the problem was not due to any mechanical fault but it was only due to interruption in power supply. Write a letter to the customer in reply to his letter (the customer used complaint tone). Use reconciliation tone.

**RATIONALE**

The given task requires the students to play the role of the chief production engineer of a washing machine manufacturing company. When a complaint is received about the product, the chief production engineer will naturally be upset. Till he identifies the problem (that too caused within 2 months from the date of sale) he would be restless. On knowing that the problem is due to interruption in power supply, the chief production engineer
will feel a sigh of relief. More than that, he will be angry with the customer. As a senior officer involved in the production of the company, he / she has to use reconciliation tone in his reply to the customer. Use of any other tone would either be unsuitable or affect the business relationship. Hence the task is given.

**STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO THE TASK**

The responses collected from students have been grouped and from the first category a sample response is given below:

**SAMPLE : 1**

Dear customer,

Thank you for your letter dt. 15.01.03 informing us about the problem in the washing machine. Immediately we sent our service engineer who checked the washing machine thoroughly and reported to the company that the problem is not due to mechanical fault but only due to interruption in power supply. Our products are standard items which are subjected to quality test before they are marketed. Hence we request you to set right the power supply through your local electrician. Still if you have any problem with the machine, you can feel free to write. We are always ready to attend to our customers' grievance at the earliest.

With regards,

Yours Sincerely,

XX XX

Business letters classified under category II & III express reconciliation tone either partially or not at all. One of the responses from category III is given below as sample 2.
Respected Sir,

I sent my service engineer to check your washing machine. He told me that there is no problem in the machine. There is only problem in power supply. There is no fault in the washing machine. Hence you would correct the electricity supply. Then the machine will work properly. So please inform the electrician and clear the problem.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

XX XX

**Analysis of the Responses on Reconciliation Tone**

An analysis of the responses grouped under category II & III, reveals that the following points are the reasons why reconciliation tone has not emerged in the responses:

1. The word ‘respected’ is inappropriate (salutation) in the letter addressed to a customer.
2. The beginning of the letter is abrupt (sample 2 above).
3. Reference to the customer complaint is not made.
4. The functions and the exponents of each function are not in proper sequence.
5. The words and sentences are too inadequate to express the tone.
6. The choice of words such as ‘told’ creates informal atmosphere which is not suitable in business contexts.
7. Appropriate cohesive devices are not used to maintain consistency in tone.
Chapter - III

Conceptual Framework
8. The problem caused should be highlighted followed by willingness to put up with it. Only then reconciliation tone would emerge. These two steps have not been attempted at all in the responses.

9. The final (concluding) statement has not implied the company's readiness to help.

From the above points, the following components of reconciliation tone are identified. The components include functions and the sentences structures as mentioned below:

**FUNCTION SEQUENCE OF RECONCILIATION TONE**

1. Salutation
2. Acknowledgement of the letter
3. Thank the customer for the letter
4. Intimation of the action taken
5. Report of the service engineer
6. Guidance / Suggestion to the customer
7. Readiness to co-operate / help the customer.

For each of these functions, the possible exponents are attempted below:

**Table 3.05: Analysis of the Possible Exponents of the Functions of Reconciliation Tone**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Exponent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Salutation</td>
<td>Dear Mr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dear Customer,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Acknowledgement of the letter</td>
<td>We are in receipt of your letter dated ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>We have received your letters dated ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>We received your complaint letter dated ...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3. Thanks - statement | Your complaint letter dated ... is received  
We hereby acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated ...  
Thank you very much for pointing out the defect.  
We thank you for pointing out the defect in our machine.  
Your effort to bring the defect in our machine is very much appreciated.  
We hereby express our gratitude for pointing out the defect.  
We thank you for giving us the feedback about the machine.  
| 4. Intimation of the action taken | Immediately, we sent ....  
At once we sent ....  
On the very next day itself we sent ....  
Our service engineer was asked to attend to the problem on the same day. |
| 5. Report of the engineer | But our service engineer reports that the problem ....  
|                          | We are informed that the problem is not in ............ but only in ............  
|                          | The report from our service engineer is received in which he says that the problem is no ............ but only in ............  
|                          | The report from the engineer confirms that the fault is not ............ but only in ............  
| 6. Guidance / Suggestion to the customer | Hence we request you to contact an electrician ............  
|                          | So you may contact ............  
|                          | We request you to confirm whether the fault is with the machine before writing a complaint letter.  
|                          | You could have approached an electrician before writing a complaint letter.  
<p>|                          | Hereafter, kindly do not be haste in writing a complaint letter before confirming the defect. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.</th>
<th>Readiness to co-operate with the customer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Though your complaint has put us in an embarrassing situation we are ready to help you at any moment. Kindly approach us for any help.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your complaint has caused inconvenience to us, yet customer satisfaction is our objective. So do not hesitate to approach us.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your complaint has put us in inconvenience. But we feel that it is our duty to attend to you complaint. You can inform us in case of any problem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than anything else, our customers’ satisfaction is important to us. We are ready to help you if you write us.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Though we have incurred some expenditure towards the travel of our engineers, we do not mind spending money to satisfy our customers. So you can feel free to write your complaints to us.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, reconciliation tone could be taught in the classroom by focusing on certain specific structures, cohesive devices in addition to function sequence as shown in fig. 5.
FIGURE – 5
Exponents of Reconciliation Tone

Reconciliation Tone

Function Sequence

Language Focus

Structures

Cohesive devices

Condition class
If, unless, in the event of

At once, immediately, without delay, but, though, although, even though, so, therefore, hence.

VALIDATION OF THE TASK

The task, the response, function sequence and the possible exponents were sent to 4 engineering teachers, 3 ELT experts and 2 graduate business men for getting their opinions and suggestions on the task provided to students. Their responses were collected using a questionnaire.

Questionnaire

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Is the task suitable for expressing reconciliation tone?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Can anger tone be used in the situation given in the task?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Do you think that the use of anger tone would affect the business relationship with the customer?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Should there be at least an indication of the difficulties due to the addressee's action / letter / attitude in letters expressing reconciliation tone?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>The next step could be to express the writer's expression of his readiness to put up with the difficulties caused by the addressee's action / letter / attitude. Do you agree?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Do you think that the group of letters written by the students express reconciliation tone in full?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>What according to you is/are reason(s) for not expressing the tone? Put a ✓ mark Is it because of:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) function sequence</td>
<td>a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) choice of certain words</td>
<td>b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) specific sentence pattern</td>
<td>c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d) all the above said 3 factors</td>
<td>d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Do you think that there is only narrow difference in the use of language and function sequence between complaint tone and reconciliation tone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eight out of nine experts have given similar response to the questions. Hence, the task is decided as valid and could be applied in the classroom.

**TONE CHANGE IN BUSINESS LETTERS**

**3.09 Anger to Persuasive Tone**

In the course of writing a business letter, change of tone becomes necessary for specific purposes. For example if a customer (dealer) asks 50% discount for newly published books, the publisher will naturally get angry. At the same time the publisher will not be ready to lose a customer (dealer). In such a situation the publisher will use anger tone in the first part of the letter and will complete the letter using persuasive tone. Tone can only be changed gradually using appropriate cohesive devices and suitable sentence patterns which is dealt with in the following paragraphs.

To identify the components of tone change (from anger to persuasive tone) a task based communicative situation is given to the students. Their response is studied thoroughly and the responses in which the tone change emerges in full are grouped under the first category.

**Task: 6**

Imagine that you are the sales manager of APTOP LATEH manufacturers Ltd. A customer got quotation from you and placed order for the supply of a lathe at the cost of 2.5 lakhs. After sending the lathe by lorry parcel service, you send the bill for 2.5 lakhs. But the customer demands 5% rebate and refuses to settle the bill. As the sales manager who supplied the lathe, write a
letter to the customer informing him that rebate cannot be given but you are ready to bear the packing and forwarding charges. Write a letter using tone change from anger to persuasive tone.

RATIONALE

The situation involves the sales manager and a customer who ordered for the supply of lathe from the former. The latter had already got the quotation and it is clear from the order that he accepted the rates quoted. Naturally, the sales manager will get angry because he is answerable to the company. He could neither take back the despatched item nor permit 5% rebate. At the same time the customer – company relationship has to be maintained. Hence the manager expresses his anger and then shifts his tone to persuasion. In their future career, the engineering students would face situations such as the one given in the task and hence the task is given.

STUDENTS' RESPONSE TO THE TASK

The task is given to the students and their responses are collected. Then they are grouped under three categories. From the first category of response a sample response is given below.

SAMPLE : 1

Sir,

Last week we despatched a lathe as per your order No.432/01/03 dt.15.3.03 by lorry parcel service. We have also sent the bill as per our quotation. In the meantime, we received a letter from you asking us to give 5% rebate on the total cost. We did not expect this response from you. Only after accepting the rate mentioned in our quotation, you should have placed the order. How can you claim rebate in the rate after placing the order? We cannot give any rebate as per our company rules. Even then, considering our business relationship we are ready to bear the packing and forwarding
expenses. We hope that you will be satisfied with our offer now. We request you to settle the bills as early as possible.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

XX XX

From category III the following sample is given:

SAMPLE : 2

Sir,

We sent a lathe as per your order No.322/P1/03 dt.13.1.03. What is this? You are demanding 5% rebate on the total cost. How can we give? We never promised any rebate in our quotation. Mind you. We have many customers to support us. Do you want to cheat us? No. we will not permit that. Be careful. But we can help you. You need not pay the packing and forwarding charges. Is it O.K. Please settle the bill immediately.

Thank you,

Yours faithfully,

XX XX

ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES ON ANGER TO PERSUASIVE TONE

The letters grouped under II and III were analysed to find why they failed to express the tone change and the components missing in the letters. The following reasons were identified.

1. Functions and the exponents are not well-planned and sequenced.

2. In the introductory part of the letter the deal/terms of business are not explained.

3. Mixing of informal style and formal style spoils the consistency of tone.
4. Short questions and statements imply only the restlessness of the writer but they do not express anger tone at all.

5. Expression of anger using strong terms throughout the letter will only create confrontation but will not solve the problem.

6. Appropriate tone changer is not used.

7. Unless the concluding part of the letter expresses concession statement, the tone change form anger to persuasion will not emerge.

8. In the sample (2) above, careless attitude to the customer is expressed. It has done a serious damage not only to the customer relationship but also to the tone of the letter.

From the above points, the components of tone change from anger to persuasion are identified. The components include functions and the sentences structures.

**Function Sequence of Anger to Persuasive Tone**

1. Salutation
2. Details of Sale / Purchase
3. Problem statement
4. Expression of anger / Reason for anger
5. Use of tone changer (cohesive device) followed by readiness to co-operates / help (statement of concession).
6. Solution Statement

Each of these functions gets revealed through exponents (i.e.) language. The letters analysed clearly prove that the tones get concretised through sentence structures. Hence the different possibilities of sentence structures relating to each of these functions are attempted here.
Table 3.06: Analysis of the Possible Exponents of the Functions of Anger to Persuasive Tone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Salutation</th>
<th>Details of sale</th>
<th>Problem statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sir,</td>
<td>As per your order No.492/P/03 dt. 15.1.2002 we....</td>
<td>But, after (the lathe) is despatched, you demand 5% rebate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dear Mr.</td>
<td>With reference to your order .......... dt .......... we .............</td>
<td>To our great shock, you claim 5% discount after the order is executed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>On receipt of your .......... dt we ..........</td>
<td>As per our company rules we donot ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Details of sale</td>
<td>Thank you very much for your order placed with us for the supply of a lathe. Today we have despatched the lathe by lorry parcel service.</td>
<td>No supplier would accept your demand for ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Problem statement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>Expression of anger / reason for anger</strong></td>
<td>Claim for rebate at this stage is unjustified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>It is not fair to demand rebate...</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Is it fair to claim rebate which we have not mentioned in our quotation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Don’t you know that our company never gives any rebate on the cost of machinery?</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>Use of tone changer followed by readiness to co-operate</strong></td>
<td>However, we are ready to waive the packing and forwarding charges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Anyway, since you have asked for some concession, we offer to waive packing and forwarding charges.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>It’s alright. We are ready to bear the packing and forwarding charges.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td><strong>Solution Statement</strong></td>
<td>We hope that you would be satisfied with our offer. Hence we request you to settle the bill.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As we have offered you some concessions, we request you to settle the bill early.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>We hope that you would appreciate our gesture and settle the bill early.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, tone change from anger to persuasive tone could be taught in the classroom by focusing on certain specific structures, cohesive devices in addition to function sequence as shown in fig. 6.
FIGURE – 6

Exponents of Tone change from Anger to Persuasion

Tone change from Anger to Persuasion

Function Sequence

Language Focus

Structures

Cohesive devices

(i) Questions beginning with auxiliary verbs
(ii) Compound sentences

(i) Tone changers – however, anyhow, it’s alright
(ii) but, though, although, even though

VALIDATION OF THE TASK

The task, the response of the students, the identified components of the tone change from anger to persuasion were sent to experts including 6 engineering teachers, 2 ELT specialists and 2 English teachers working in Engineering Colleges (with more than 15 years experience) for their views and suggestions. The following questionnaires were given to the experts and their response is collected.
## Questionnaire

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong></td>
<td>Do you think that the situation such as the one given in the task is natural in business?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong></td>
<td>Do you think that the sales manager will take back the supplied item?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong></td>
<td>Will it be a right decision on the part of the buyer to cancel the order in the situation given in the task?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong></td>
<td>In the given situation in the task, will the threatening tone be suitable?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong></td>
<td>If 'No', Do you think that anger tone would be more suitable / natural than other tones?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.</strong></td>
<td>If anger tone is maintained throughout, do you think that the buyer would settle the bill smoothly?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.</strong></td>
<td>Do you think that anger tone followed by persuasive tone will settle the issue?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.</strong></td>
<td>Do you think that for changing the tone use of appropriate cohesive device, tone changer would make the tone shift natural?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.</strong></td>
<td>Suggestions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eight out of ten experts have expressed identical views for most of the questions and the ELT experts have suggested that the students can use appropriate cohesive devices to reveal the tone shift effectively. Hence the task is decided as valid.

3.10 **Anger to Reconciliation**

In business transaction, problems are quite common in Indian situations. For instance supply of substandard items, delay in supply, delay in settling the bills, damage of items in transit, not supplying the items as per the order, cancelling order without informing the reason, not responding to the reminder letters etc. are situations which irritate the company/customer. If the customer gets angry, he expresses his anger freely depending on his attitude and the extent of loss / hardship. But the company/supplier, even in an irritating situation, tries to maintain control as the business relationship would be strained. The controlled expression of anger will be followed by reconciliation tone. In some situations, the customers also resort to this tone shift (from anger to reconciliation) to continue the business contact.

**Task: 7**

Imagine that you are an authorised dealer of ABT Mixie in Salem District. You got the dealership paying a deposit of 10 lakh rupees. One year after you got dealership, the company informs you that you should pay an additional deposit of 5 lakhs rupees as the company has decided to increase the deposit. Only recently the sale of mixie has improved. As a dealer, you think that the company exploits the situation to extract money from the dealers. At the same time you are not ready forego the dealership. Write a letter to the company using anger tone in the first part of the letter and reconciliation tone in the concluding part.
RATIONALE

The given communicative situation demands role play of a dealer and tone shift from anger to reconciliation (in language). The students have to imagine the role of a dealer of ABT Mixie. The dealership was given only after a deposit of 10 lakhs rupees was paid. But just after one year if the company demands 5 lakh rupees more as deposit, it is quite natural that any dealer will get angry. Mobilising 5 lakhs rupees in a short time would be difficult for the dealer. He has to put up with the difficulty as the sale of Mixie has slowly picked up recently. So his anger tone gradually leads to reconciliation tone. As the output of engineering graduates in India is more and the job opportunity is scanty, large number of engineering graduates will be self-employed in future. Tone shift aimed at in the task would get concretised only through the appropriate sequence of function and the use of some specific sentence structures. Training in tone shift from anger to reconciliation is necessary for a successful future career. Hence the task is given.

STUDENTS' RESPONSE TO THE TASK

The task was given to the students in English language class, and the responses were collected and grouped into three categories. The first category of responses, the students have made the tone shift effectively. One such letter is given below as sample.

SAMPLE : 1

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter no. D1/03 dt. 10.1.03. we got dealership for Salem District only last year paying 10 lakhs rupees as deposit. the past one year we have spent about 1.5 lakhs to give wide publicity for your product in our district. Only now your company mixie has picked up sales slowly. At this stage, you have increased the deposit to 15 lakhs rupees and demand the balance 5 lakh rupees. Do you think that the increase is fair? Won't the dealers
like me be put to financial strain? Definitely, we will face problems in mollising money. Even then, we will put up with the difficulties and pay the balance money in two instalments. We request you to permit us.

Thank you,

Yours faithfully,

XX XX

Responses grouped under category II & III have also been thoroughly studied and a letter from category III is given below as sample.

SAMPLE : 2

Dear Sir

We received your letter of deposit increase to 15 lakhs rupees. We paid 10 lakhs. Our dealer is small dealer, your company mixie not so many sales. Last months two mixie sell. What we do? You ask 5 lakh rupees more. You think we fool? We collect money next year and pay you. Wait, or else reduce your money. You don't believe me, you come and see our shop. Sunday holiday. Other days come.

Thank you,

Yours faithfully,

XX XX

ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES ON ANGER TO RECONCILIATION

The following points were noted from the II & III category of responses of the students.

1. The functions are not planned and sequenced properly.

2. Deficiency in grammatical competence is a hurdle in expressing tone change.

3. Short questions do not express anger tone. On the other hand they reflect colloquial style.
4. The content (ideas) are not connected using cohesive devices. So ideas remain isolated.

5. As ideas are not sequenced, tone change does not emerge.

6. In business letters, instruction - type statements will reflect the writer as superior to the addressee. Naturally, the tone change will not emerge.

7. The words and sentences are too few to develop tone change from anger to reconciliation. Unless adequate number of words (100 – 150 words) are used tone change can not be effectively expressed.

8. The tone changers (However, Even then, It’s alright) are not used to move from anger tone to reconciliation tone.

From the errors and omissions observed in the response of the students, the researcher had identified the components which could express the tone change from anger to reconciliation. The components are given below - Function sequence, and the possible exponents of the functions.

**FUNCTION SEQUENCE OF ANGER TO RECONCILIATION TONE**

1. Salutation
2. Acknowledgement of the letter
3. Details of the company's demand
4. Statement of the grounds for anger
5. Use of tone change - statement of concession requested
6. Willingness to maintain cordial relation, cooperation.
7. Solution statement.
Table 3.07: Analysis of the Possible Exponents of the Functions of Anger to Reconciliation Tone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Salutation</th>
<th>Acknowledgement of the letter</th>
<th>Details of the company's demand</th>
<th>Statement of the grounds for anger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sir,</td>
<td>Thank you for your letter dated ...</td>
<td>You have asked us to .......</td>
<td>You have increased the deposit amount just after one year, Is it fair?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dear Sir,</td>
<td>We hereby acknowledge the receipt of your letter ...</td>
<td>We have been informed that we ...</td>
<td>50% increase in deposit in one year is too heavy for the dealers like us. Don’t you think that the dealers would be put to hardships?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Your letter dt. has been received.</td>
<td>Your decision to increase the deposit as mentioned in your letter would be ...</td>
<td>By imposing 50% increase in deposit, you seem to prosper at the cost of the dealers. Is it the right way?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Use of tone changer – statement of concession request</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We inform you about the problem. However we are ready to pay the deposit in 60 days. We request you to permit us.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We have expressed our difficulties. Anyway, we are ready to pay the deposit in two months.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We have our own financial difficulties. Anyway, we will pay the deposit in two to three months.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.</th>
<th>Willingness to maintain cordial relation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We expect that our business relationship would continue for mutual benefit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As a dealer, I am ready to do all possible help to popularise your product and boost sales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On our side, we are always for mutual co-operation and understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We are ready to co-operate with you and we would like to continue our business relation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.</th>
<th>Solution Statement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So we request you to permit us to pay the balance deposit in two months.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hence we request you to be considerate to us and permit us three months time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Therefore, we request you to extend the last date for the payment of the balance deposit money.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
So, tone change from anger to reconciliation could be taught in the classroom by focusing on certain specific structures, cohesive devices in addition to function sequence as shown in fig. 7.

**FIGURE – 7**

**Exponents of Tone change from Anger to Reconciliation**

- Tone change from anger to reconciliation
- **Function Sequence**
  - (i) Questions beginning with auxiliary verbs
  - (ii) compound sentences
  - (iii) complex sentences
- **Language Focus**
  - (i) Auxiliary verb - type questions
  - (ii) Tone changers - However, anyway, it's alright
  - (iii) So, hence, therefore

**VALIDATION OF THE TASK**

The task, the responses, function sequence and the exponents were given to 3 engineering teachers 3 English language teachers working in engineering colleges and 2 local dealers of electronic items and 2 ELT experts for their opinion were collected in the form of response to questionnaire. The following questionnaire was given to them for writing their response.
## Questionnaire

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Do you think that the situation given in the task arises / will arise to dealers?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Will the task given yield to tone change form anger to reconciliation?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Suppose the dealer uses only anger tone what would be the response of the company?</td>
<td>i. Cancel the dealership/ ii. Express the stand of the company. iii. Company will give time to dealer to pay the deposit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Will it be suitable to use only reconciliation tone?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Do you think that the dealer can express his anger (as there is ground for using anger) and change to reconciliation tone?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Why should he change to reconciliation tone?</td>
<td>a. The sale of Mixie has improved. To continue dealership, the writer has to use reconciliation. b. Use of anger tone throughout the letter will irritate the company. c. The dealer has to seek the help of the company to improve business.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. Do you think that the function sequence to express anger and these used for expressing reconciliation would be enough to reveal tone change? Yes / No

8. Can the tone change be expressed by integrating the functions of the two tones with slight modification? Yes / No

9. Do you agree that the function of the tone changer (cohesive device) is to make a smooth change from anger to reconciliation? Yes / No

10. Suggestions

Out of ten experts, eight have expressed identical views on the task. So the task aimed at expressing tone change from anger to reconciliation is confirmed to be valid.

**POINT OF VIEW**

‘Point of View’ is a person’s particular way of looking at or considering something or his opinion about something. It also connotes the position from which something is viewed / observed / considered (Robert Ilson, 1984). It is a specified or stated manner of consideration or appraisal or stand point; an opinion, attitude to judgement (Jess Stein, 1966). In the present study, point of view as expressed in business letters relating to communication by engineers is analysed.
FUTURE ROLES OF ENGINEERING STUDENTS IN PROFESSIONAL CAREER

After successful completion of the course, the engineering graduates would play roles such as:

1. Government officers
2. Production Engineer
3. Quality control Engineers
4. Sales Engineers
5. Managing Directors
6. Dealers
7. Liaison Officers etc.,

In these roles, they may hold higher / intermediate / lower ranks. Whatever position they occupy, they should use language to suit their position and purpose. Only then the desired objective could be achieved. In written communication, especially in business letter writing, point of view helps them to achieve the desired goal. Though engineers write from different points of view in their professional career, the researcher has chosen only four points of view for teaching and practising. They are:

1. Customer’s point of view (in letters to company)
2. Government officer’s point of view (in letters to company)
3. Company officer’s point of view (in letters to customer)
4. Company officer’s point of view (in letters to another officer of the same company)
3.11 CUSTOMER'S POINT OF VIEW (IN LETTER TO COMPANY)

A customer is an important asset to the company. In case there is any defect / problem in the product, he has got every right to complain to the company. Further, Consumer Protection Act ensures the right of the customer to claim compensation. As an engineering graduate, a person may play the role of a customer. The customer's point of view would be to convince the seller that he requires a standard / good – quality product at a reasonable rate. Further, he may request the seller to offer some concession in rate, free gifts, credit facility etc. in the letter calling for quotation / enquiry letter.

In complaint letters, the customer would express dissatisfaction which may find expression as anger. Generally the customer would try to know the company's response so that he could bargain. In any case, the customer's point of view would be

i) Emphasising his right

ii) Requesting concession and

iii) Seeking information

POINT OF VIEW OF THE CUSTOMER COULD BE CONCRETISED IN TWO STAGES

i) Sequencing the functions and

ii) Using suitable exponents of each function

Point of view emerges gradually. It cannot be expressed in one or two sentences. As the research work and books available on point of view in business letters are few, the researcher has adopted deductive method. A suitable communicative task is given to 56 students in the classroom. They are asked to write a business letter using customer's point of view.

The following is the task given
**Task: 8**

Imagine that you are a customer interested in buying three wet grinders. Write a letter to the sales manager of a wet grinder manufacturing company requesting him to provide all necessary information. Note that you write the letter from customer’s point of view.

**Rationale**

The task is applied to students of engineering who should imagine the role of a customer. The intention of the customer is to buy the wet grinders from a dependable company which would supply standard items. The customer expects information such as cost, warranty, details about the special facilities not found in other wet grinders, packing and forwarding charges, discount etc. The customer is justified in his expectations as he wants to buy three wet grinders at a time. The customer would also expect the company to send the items along with the bills so that he would settle the bills after he is convinced about the working condition. The student writing the letter from the point of view of the customer has to understand the expectation of the Indian customer to be both a successful customer and a successful engineer (who knows the expectations of the customer and how to fulfill them) later in his professional career. Hence this task is given to the students.

**Students’ Response to the Task**

The task was administered to the students in the classroom and the response was collected. They were grouped under three categories.

i) Response in which the point of view is expressed in full

ii) Response in which point of view is only partially expressed and

iii) Response in which point of view is not at all expressed.

A sample is given below from the first category of responses.
SAMPLE : 1

Sir,

We want to buy three wet grinders (10 litre capacity) from you. The wet grinders should be of the latest model involving less physical strain in operation and maintenance. We request you to provide information such as the cost of each wet grinder, packing and forwarding charges, rebate, after-sales service, availability of spare parts etc. Details of warranty and special facilities in your wet grinder may also be provided. We also want to know whether you manufacture the motors for the wet grinder or you use other company motors. As we intend to purchase three wet grinders at a time, we hope that you would give due consideration in the cost of wet grinders and in packing and forwarding charges. We request you to send your quotation at the earliest.

Thank you,

Yours faithfully,

XX XX

SAMPLE : 2

Dear sir,

We want to buy three wet grinders of 10 litre capacity each from your company. You can send your quotation mentioning the cost, warranty, other charges etc. As we buy three wet grinders at a time, please give 10% discount in the total cost. We will be happy if you get the cost in two installments. So please reply early.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

XX XX
ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES ON CUSTOMER’S POINT OF VIEW

An analysis of the II & III category of letters on why the customer’s point of view has not emerged in full:

1. The functions are either not selected properly or jumbled (in the sample (2) above the functions are sequenced correctly).

2. Adequate emphasis is not given to some specific functions which will highlight the customer’s point of view (e.g.: customer’s point of view gets highlighted if the functions – seeking cost, warranty, other charges special features, statement of concession etc).

3. Use of ‘please’ twice in the enquiry letters reflects the customer’s weakness (as if he does not claim anything as his right).

4. Statement of concession (bargaining) gets weakened if the modal verbs are wrongly chosen using negatives (we ‘cannot’, ‘may not’, ‘could not’ weaken the point of view). On the other hand, structures such as (we ‘will + V’, ‘can + V’) reflect the customer’s firm stand in the bargain.

In addition to the above points, the first group of enquiry letters was also analysed as to why they bring out the total effect of customer’s point of view. It was clear that proper function sequence is the first step to reveal the point of view. In language the choice of modal verbs and the structure of sentences are the essential exponents of customer’s points of view.

FUNCTION SEQUENCE OF CUSTOMER’S POINT OF VIEW

The following function sequence is the first essential component revealing the customer’s point of view effectively.

1. Salutation

2. Statement

3. Statement seeking details (cost, warranty, other charges etc).
4. Statement asking for special features / extra facilities.
5. Statement asking for concession.

Each of the above functions could be revealed using suitable exponents as given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Table 3.08: Analysis of the Possible Exponents of the Functions of Customer's Point of View</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Salutation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Statement of Intention</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Statement seeking details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4. Statement asking for features | We like to know the extra facilities....
|                                | Special features of your product may be mentioned .
|                                | We may be informed about....
|                                | We expect that you would give 10% discount...
|                                | We hope that you....
| 5. Statement of concession      | We request you to give....
|                                | Since we buy 3 wet grinders at a time, you could give....
|                                | We hope that your rate, OC would be reasonable ...  
|                                | We request you to mail your quotation....
|                                | We would appreciate your early reply ...
| 6. Concluding remarks          | Please send your quotation....
|                                | Your early response would be given preference.

**Validation of the Task**

The task, selected response of students, the observations and the function – language exponents identified were sent to 3 ELT experts, 3 Engineering Teachers and 2 Graduate Businessmen in the town. They were given the following questionnaire to write their response:
### Questionnaire

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Do you think that the task is suitable to express customer’s point of view?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Request for details about ‘warranty’ reflects the customer’s awareness about his rights. Do you agree?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Is the customer justified in asking details about special features / extra facilities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Do you think that the customer’s language reflects his point of view?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Does the language of the customer explicitly show his right, his demands and bargaining capacity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Do you think that the function sequence listed above best suits the enquiry letter?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Do you agree that the sentence structures relating to each of the functions (listed above) express customer’s point of view effectively?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Suggestions (if any) ____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

Six out of eight experts to whom the questionnaires were sent expressed concordant views. Hence it is concluded that the task, the function sequence and language components are valid tools which could be experimented in the class room.
3.12 Company Officer’s Point of View (In Letters to Customer)

Engineers may be appointed as authorities / officers in companies who attend to complaints / enquiries / representation etc and write suitable reply. As the representative the company, they may have to reply to the following situations:

1. Reply to enquiry / letters of quotation.
2. Intimation about the dispatch of goods & bills relating to supply.
3. Response to complaint letters.
4. Letters connected with after sales service.
5. Debt recovery letters.

In addition to the above letters, the officers / authorities of the companies may also write inter-company, business letters and letters between one officer and another officer (employee) of the same company.

Whether the engineer is an officer or subordinate, his point of view would be related to his position as a representative of the company (as a manager / intermediary position / subordinate). Further, his consciousness of his position in the hierarchy of administration, his loyalty to the company and the prestige of the company form the background from which the point of view originates. The company authorities’ point of view has eluded the researchers and writers. Hence attempt is made to identify the exponents from the response of the students to the communicative situation. The following task is given to his students in the class room.

Task: 9

Imagine that you are the chief Production Engineer of a refrigerator manufacturing company. A customer writes to you informing that the refrigerator he purchased consumes more electric power than other company refrigerators. He also points out that the refrigerator consumes an average of
around 3 units of electricity per day. Write a suitable reply to your customer, (note that you reply from the point of view of the company’s chief production engineer).

RATIONALE

In the given task, the customer represents a genuine complaint informing that the company refrigerator consumes more electric power. The chief production manager has the responsibility to explain the reason for more consumption of power. The task provides room for the following function of the chief production manager.

1. The production manager is responsible for the item produced.
2. As he represents the company, he has to give scientific explanation which is also reasonable.
3. He should give due weight to the query in order to earn his support and at the same time convince him with regard to the quality of the product.

These three points would reveal the company officer / authority's point of view. So, the task is given.

STUDENTS’ RESPONSE TO THE TASK

The task was administered in the classroom and 56 responses were collected and grouped under three categories. From the first category of responses the following sample is given:

SAMPLE : 1

Dear Customer,

Thank you for your letter dated 12.01.2003 informing us that our company refrigerator consumes more electric power than the other company refrigerator. We understand your problem. We are very sure of the efficient functioning of our refrigerators as they are subjected to strict quality control before they are marketed. There is absolutely no chance for more power
consumption. During early stages of operation, it may consume more power but that will be only for a month or two. This is the first time we get a complaint about our refrigerator. Power consumption would be more only under the following circumstances.

1. Opening the front - door frequently or not closing the door properly.

2. Keeping the food stuff when it is still hot. These points are clearly mentioned in the operation manual page No. 8. so kindly operate the refrigerator strictly according to the instruction. In case the power consumption continues to be more, please write to us. We will rectify the problem at no extra cost to you. Do not hesitate to write to us in case of any mechanical defect.

The company regrets the inconvenience caused to you,

Thank you,

Yours faithfully,

XX XX

The following response grouped under second category is given as sample :

SAMPLE : 2

Sir,

We got your letter dated 12.01.03 and noted the contents. We are sorry to say that our refrigerators are excellent. Who told you it takes more electricity? Have you checked it? We sold 100 refrigerators this month alone. No complaint at all. How your refrigerator alone take more electricity. No we don't believe it. You bring it to our company. We repair it and give you O.K?

Thank you,

Yours faithfully,

XX XX
ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES ON COMPANY OFFICER’S POINT OF VIEW

In the letter (Sample 1) the point of view of the chief production manager is communicated effectively but in sample II the point of view has not emerged due to the following reason:

1. The function sequence is not properly adopted.
2. Use of negatives and questions reveal the writer’s anger. A person of chief production manager’s rank would not express anger.
3. The complete sentences sound colloquial and informal which strongly repel the point of view from emerging.
4. The writer’s too many questions have created impression that he finds fault with the customer and thereby fails to give due weightage to the complaint.
5. The writer’s assumption of superiority, suspicion and denial of right of the customer have failed to create the right point of view of the chief production manager.

FUNCTION SEQUENCE OF COMPANY OFFICER’S POINT OF VIEW (IN HIS LETTER TO THE CUSTOMER)

After a thorough analysis of the response of the students to the given task, researcher observes that the components of the company officer’s point of view could be grouped as

i) Function sequence and

ii) Exponent of the functions.

The exponents include –

1. Choice of words,
2. Structure of sentences and
b) Suitable use of linking device. The following function sequence is noted to be suitable to express the point of view of the company officer:

1. Salutation
2. Acknowledgement of the letter with thanks
3. Statement of the quality of the product
4. Company's stand on quality control
5. Probable reason for the problem
6. Conclusion – Expressing co-operation & regret for the inconvenience.

The possible exponents of each of the above functions are given below:

**Table 3.09 : Analysis of the Possible Exponents of the Functions of Company Officer's Point of View**

| 1. Salutation                  | Sir,  
|                               | Dear Sir,  
|                               | Dear... |
| 2. Acknowledgement of the letter (with thanks) | Thank you very much for your letter dt...  
|                               | We thank you for....  
|                               | We are very happy to receive your letter dt.  
|                               | Informing....  
<p>|                               | We hereby acknowledge the receipt of your letter dt.... |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Statement of the quality of the product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>We are very sure of the quality of our products.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our company products are of standard quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We supply only standard items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our customers prefer our products for the quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We do not compromise with quality under any circumstance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Company's quality Control method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Our company maintains very strict quality control procedure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We subject all our company products to strict quality tests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As we manufacture all the spares ourselves we are sure of the quality of our products.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Probable reason for the problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>It may be due....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There is a possibility of ....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Such problems will arise if....</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The problem may not be due to mechanical defect but due to.... (maybe, might be, is, because of, due to, should be)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Conclusion (operation & regret)

We are ready to help ...
You don’t hesitate to write ...

We will be happy to co-operate with you.

Our service cell is ready to attend to your problems at any time as and when you will.

We regret the inconvenience caused to you.

The inconvenience caused to you is regretted.

### VALIDATION OF THE TASK

The task, the response of the students (2) the function sequence and the identified exponents were sent to 3 ELT experts, 5 engineering teachers for their opinion and suggestions. The following questionnaires were sent to them.

**Questionnaire**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Do you think that the task is suitable for expressing point of view of the chief production manager (representing the company)?</th>
<th>Yes / No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Do you think that the chief production manager will accept the defect in the company products when a customer points out without proof?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The first effort of the chief production manager would be to defend the company product. Do you agree?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Do you think that by writing about quality control measures the writer can defend the product?  

| Yes / No |

5. Use of 'may be', 'might be', 'should be', 'due to', 'because of', 'it is possible that', 'there is a possibility / chance' could reveal the probable reason – Do you agree?  

| Yes / No |

6. Structures such as – we maintain..., we are very strict in..., we test the products thoroughly before...., express company authority's point of view – Do you agree?  

| Yes / No |

Suggestions (if any) ____________________________________________

______________________________________________________

Seven out of eight experts have expressed similar views. Thus the validity of the task and the exponents of the company authority's point of view (in the letter to the customer) is confirmed.

3.13 Government Officer’s Point of View (in Letters to Companies)

Engineering graduates are employed in various departments such as PWD, TWAD, TNEB, TNHB, Highways, Railways, Police (signals), Central Workshops, Airlines, Shipping Corporations, Telephone etc. in Government service. They are vested with administrative and executive powers. With regard to private companies, the responsibilities of engineers in Government service include issue of licence and ensure the functioning of the companies with in the framework of the rules and regulation prescribed. They write letters to private companies in situations such as:
a) Giving details / clarification / inspection reports etc. for the issue of licence.

b) Intimation of the Governments' decisions / rules.

c) Informing the company about the lapses and asking them to set right within a prescribed time.

d) Calling for explanation for violation of rules.

e) Intimation of the action taken against the company based on the inspection report.

The engineers in Government service, as rule-enforcing authority, are conscious of their official positions. They have to be very specific, unbiased and rule-conscious in their letters to companies. At the same time, they should also act within the powers vested with them. Naturally, their point of view would be focused only if their language is authoritative. Students of engineering assuming the role of Government officer, have to choose words and structures to suit the situation, for instance, co-operation, expression of assistance, statements of condition, statements of relaxation of rules etc. The attitude of encouragement and co-operation towards the entrepreneurs and rule-abiding companies and uncompromising stand against the companies which violate the rules should be reflected in the letters to companies. The Government officers' point of view is thus abstract and so the exponents have to be fixed before teaching. An attempt is made to select the exponents from the response of students to the given task.

**Task: 10**

Imagine that you are the Inspector of factories (Government Officer). When you inspected a rice mill, you observed the moving belts are unguarded. As per the rules relating to safety measures, the moving belts should be guarded to ensure adequate safety to the workers. You write a letter to the
mill owner calling for explanation for violating the rules. Give a strict warning that if arrangements are not made to guard the moving belts within 30 days, the permit would be cancelled.

**RATIONALE**

The engineers appointed as Government officers are expected to help the companies and at the same time be strict in enforcing the rules. The officer holds two responsibilities at the same time – Administration and supervision. Naturally he has to make right choice of words and structures to express his point of view in letters to companies as the rule enforcing authority. Hence the students of engineering require adequate exposure to the language of authority. The companies are bound to follow the rules. If they do not follow the rules, enforcing the rules becomes unavoidable. As the engineering students would be employed in Government service it would be necessary for them to learn to express the Governments officer's point of view in letters to companies is found to be useful. Hence, the task is given to the students.

**STUDENTS' RESPONSE TO THE TASK**

The response of the students are grouped under three categories and one of the letters from category I is given below as sample.

**SAMPLE : 1**

Sir,

On 19th January 2003 at 3.30 p.m. I inspected your mill. Your son and 5 operators were found working in the mill. The mill was functioning at that time. During inspection it was noted that the moving belts were left unguarded. Further, it was also observed that you used 40 HP Electric motor with 6000 rpm for the operation of the mill. As per rule 15 of Indian Factories Act 1957, the moving belts should be guarded and adequate safety to workers should be ensured. But you have willfully violated the rules of the said Act by leaving the
fast moving belts unguarded. You are hereby called upon to explain within 15
days why action should not be taken against you. Besides, if you do not make
arrangements to guard the moving belts within 30 days from the receipt
of this letter we will seal your mill without further notice.

One of the responses of students grouped under category II is given
below as sample:

**SAMPLE : 2**

Sir,

Inspection was made in your mill on 19th January 2003. Your rice mill
belts were running without fence. It is against rules. Dangerous for worker's
lives. I will cancel your licence. If workers meet belt accident you will pay
money. You follow government rules. No problem so please arrange fence for
belts within 30 days or I will close the mill right?

**ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES ON GOVERNMENT OFFICER’S POINT OF VIEW**

An analysis as to why the point of view of the Government officer has
not emerged fully (in sample (2)) reveals the following points:

1. The functions are not properly planned & arranged

2. Lack of accuracy of necessary details (such as who inspected, time of
inspection etc)

3. Incomplete sentences

4. Polite request ('please') is not suitable in this context. As a government
officer, he has to exercise his authority.

5. Appropriate cohesive devices are not used and the sentences stand
isolated

6. The number of sentences used are very minimum (50 words) with these
limited sentences, point of view cannot be expressed effectively. Details
of inspection should be adequately dealt with. The next part would be to
remind the govt. rules and finally a note of threat (consequence) should be given. As these three stages are not dealt with appropriately, the sample letter (II) has failed to evolve govt. officers’ point of view.

7. He has written in active voice – use of passive voice reflects the authority of the officer better. Based on the above observations, the function sequence is suitably arrived at as follows:

**FUNCTION SEQUENCE OF GOVERNMENT OFFICER’S POINT OF VIEW**

1. Salutation
2. Details of inspection (Date time & those present).
3. Statement of charges (Specific statement of violation of rules)
4. Statement of reminding *the rules*.
5. Statement of concession
6. Concluding statement (note of consequence / Threat)

Each of the above functions could be explained using different sentence structures (exponents) as given below:

**Table 3.10 : Analysis of the Possible Exponents of the Functions of Government Officer’s Point of View**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Salutation</th>
<th>Details of inspection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Sir, (The inspection authority, generally, would not use 'Dear Sir')</td>
<td>I / We inspected your mill on ________, at ________ in the presence of your ________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Based on the complaints received from public, we inspected your will on ________ at ________, ________, ________, ________ were present at the time of inspection.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During annual inspection made in your mill on [date] at [time], it was noted that

3. Statement of charge

- The moving belts are not guarded
- The safety of the public & workers is not ensured as the belts are left unguarded.
- By leaving the belts unguarded, the safety of the public & the workers is neglected.
- Your willful negligence of safety rules is clear from the unguarded belts.

4. Statement regarding the rules

- As per the rule 16 of factory Act, 1957, the moving belts should be properly fenced.
- Rule 16 of factory Act 1957, clearly mentions that adequate safety measures should be followed in factories / mills.
- The management / owner is responsible for providing safety to public / workers in factories (Rule 16, factories act 1957)

5. Statement of concession

- However, you are given 30 days time to fence the moving belts
- Anyway, you are given 30 days time to guard the moving belts
- Even now you are given 30 days time to arrange fence to guard the belts
As a last chance, 30 days time is given to you to make arrangements to guard the belts.

If you do not meet the requirements within 30 days your mill will be sealed

If you do not make arrangements to guard the belts within 30 days you will be charge sheeted

In case you do not fence the belts in 30 days you have to undergo 6 months rigorous imprisonment

In the event of your not following the safety rules within thirty days, severe legal action will be taken.

**VALIDATION OF THE TASK**

The task, the response the functions and the possible exponents were sent to 2 ELT Experts, 3 Engineering College Teachers and 3 State and central govt. officers for their response and suggestions. They were given questionnaires to write their response.

**Questionnaire**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Do you think that the task is suitable to express Government officers point of view?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Will the use of threatening tone throughout the letter express the point of view?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table of Questions and Answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes / No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Do you think that the function sequence arrived at will form a suitable lay out to express the point of view?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Should a concession clause be preceded by a cohesive device?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Will a statement of threat be suitable in the concluding part of the letter?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Use of ‘Please’, ‘kindly’ etc will weaken the point of view of the Government authority – Do you agree?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Do you think that the use of passive voice verbs will reflect the authority of the officer?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Lack of accuracy of details will affect the point of view of the authority?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suggestions**

Out of the eight experts who responded to the questions, seven have expressed similar views. Hence it is concluded that the task is valid. As the exponents of the point of view of the Government officers are identified, it could be taught in the classroom and the performance could be assessed.

### 3.14 COMPANY Officer’s Point of View to COMPANY Officer
(OF THE SAME COMPANY)

The engineering graduates are appointed in different departments of the company namely, Finance, Administration, Sales, Purchase, Production, Quality
Control, Public relation etc. They will communicate not only with those who have some contact with the company but also with the other employees / officers of the same company. Inter-Departmental communication are usually in memo form. But in some situation such as the following letters are preferred.

1. MD's letter to different departments of the company
2. Managers' response / replies to the M.D.
3. Sales Managers' letter about the response of the customer to the M.D
4. Sales manager's letter to production manager about the complaints of the customer
5. Sales managers' letter to the Sales representative
6. Production Manager's letter to the purchase managers

The letters written by officer of higher rank will reveal authority while the officers of lower rank (in their letter to higher officers) will maintain language of submission. For instance, the Managing Director of a company in his letter to the production manager will use 'instruction -type' sentences which reveal his position. When the latter responds he will use 'explanation -type' sentences revealing his position in the hierarchy of administration. The relationship between these two officers (M.D. & Production Manager) may be friendly but in written communication, the point of view reveals their position.

The students of engineering need to be trained in using language appropriate to express point of view of the officers in different position of hierarchy. The contribution of writers and research scholars is observed to be scanty and to the researcher attempts to identify the components of the point of view of the officer of a company (lower rank) to the officers of the higher rank from the responses of students to the task given in the classroom.
Task: 11

Imagine that the Managing Director of Beauty fans Ltd., which is a reputed company engaged in manufacturing and marketing electrical fans, received complaint letters from customers stating that friction sound is heard in the ceiling fans purchased just a month ago. The sales managers have also reported about the customers’ complaint in their areas. Imagine you are the production Manager. Write a letter to the Managing Director explaining the reason for the complaint and the steps you would take to rectify the problem.

Rationale

In companies, the engineers who are in charge of sections such as production, sales, purchase, manpower etc will be asked to respond to the letters of the higher officers. They are expected to maintain correct point of view as officer of lower rank. Position / hierarchy may not be a matter of concern in western countries, but in India consciousness of one’s position is crucial in selecting appropriate words and structures. There are chances of misunderstanding among officers if proper point of view is not maintained. Considering the significance of learning the point of view of the company officer of lower rank, the task is given to the students.

Students’ Response to the Task

The task was applied to 56 students in the classroom and the response was collected. They were grouped under three categories and one response is given below from category I as sample.

Sample: 1

Sir,

I received your letter dt. 15.1.2003. I am really shocked to know that a customer has complained about our company ceiling fans. I submit that the production section takes utmost care in manufacturing and assembling the
fans. We manufacture all the spare parts of the fans except the bearings. Till November 2002 we were purchasing bearings from Ramco Ball Bearings Ltd., Hyderabad. The bearings were of superior quality but the cost was higher than the other company bearings. So the board of directors, in the meeting held on November 24, 2002 decided that the bearings should thereafter be purchased from AKM Bearings. I am very sorry to bring it to your notice that the bearings are of poor quality. This is the main reason for the complaints. The quality of our fans can be assured only if we get good quality bearings. Hence I request you to take up the matter with the board of directors and issue necessary instruction to the purchase section for the purchase of good quality bearings early.

Thank you,

Yours Sincerely,

xx xx

One of the responses classified under category II is given below as sample.

**SAMPLE : 2**

Dear Sir,

I hereby acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 15.1.2003 in which you mentioned about the complaints. It is totally wrong complaint. The sales managers should sell high of our product. But they only ask the people to write complaints. I think the sales managers spoil our company product name you suspend them and put new sales managers. Then our product sales will go up. I tell definite, you see, we changed the bearing supplier last month. The bearings are super quality. Our fans are very nice. You take action against sales managers, sir.

Thank you,

Yours Sincerely,

xxxx
ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES ON COMPANY OFFICER’S POINT OF VIEW

Responses of second and third category of letters were analysed to find out why the point of view of a company officer (in his letter to higher officer) has failed to emerge / emerge only partially. The following reasons are identified.

1. The function sequence is not properly planned.
2. Mixing of formal and informal language
3. Use of colloquial words.
4. Use of adjectives which are nebulous in meaning (e.g. nice)
5. In writing letters to higher officers, the letter should be written using explanatory type sentences. But in the above letter instruction type sentences are used (e.g. you take action .... ) The point of view of the subordinate officer.
6. Finding fault with other employees would weaken the point of view of the officer (company)
7. Rejecting the complaints of the customers as wrong with out proper explanation is not generally expected of an officer of a company. Such a downright rejection has interfered with the gradual emerging of the company officers’ point of view.

FUNCTION SEQUENCE OF COMPANY OFFICER’S POINT OF VIEW

From the above points the following function sequence was arrived at as suitable to the task.

1. Salutation
2. Acknowledgement of the letter
3. Statement of the commitment of the employees in the section
4. Statement of explanation for the complaint

5. Suggestion of Solution


The following are the possible exponents of each function

**Table 3.11: Analysis of the Possible Exponents of the Functions of Company Officer’s Point of View**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Salutation</td>
<td>Dear Sir, (Generally, in Indian context the officer of higher rank is addressed as sir,)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Acknowledgement of the Letter</td>
<td>I received your letter dt...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thank you for your letter dt...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I submit that I have received your letter dt...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Statement of the Commitment of the employees in the section</td>
<td>Employees in the production section are committed employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I assure you that these employees in our section are really hard working and sincere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In the production section we take utmost care to maintain quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Our products (fans) are popular only because of the quality ensured by our employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement of Explanation for the Complaint</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>But, the problem may be due to....</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The substandard bearings are the main cause for the problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I request you to bear with me for explaining our problems in using the new bearing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I submit that the bearing which we purchase from other companies is the main reason for the complaint.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Suggestion of solution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We could maintain good quality if the bearings are of standard quality.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Please arrange to purchase good quality bearings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I request you to convince the board of directors about the quality of bearings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our employees could achieve good quality of fans if they are supplied with good quality bearings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Therefore, I kindly request your early action.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>So Please take action to purchase bearings of standard quality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May I request you take early action, sir?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VALIDATION OF THE TASK

The task, the response of the students and the observations from the response, the derived function sequence and the possible exponents were sent to 2 ELT experts, 5 engineering teachers for their views and suggestions. The following questionnaire was given to them to write their response.

**Questionnaire**

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Is the task suitable for expressing company officer's (of lower rank) point of view to the officer of higher rank?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>If the officer of higher rank moves in a friendly way in the company, will it be appropriate if the officer of lower rank uses informal language?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Do you think that the statement of explanation would reveal the point of view of the company officer (of lower rank) better?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Is the responsibility of the officer of lower rank to give suitable solution in the form of suggestion statement to the company officer (of higher rank)?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Use of the words 'submit', 'request', 'please', 'kindly', 'I am sorry' 'may I request you' etc reveal the consciousness of the writer's position in the hierarchy of administration.</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Will the use of passive voice verbs be more suitable to express company officer’s (lower rank) point of view in his letter to higher officer of the same company?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Short question, expression such as ‘you see’ ‘o.k’? right? ‘Who?’ ‘sure’, etc are colloquial expressions which are not suitable to express the point of view of the officer of lower rank – Do you agree?</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suggestions**

Out of the seven responses received from the experts, 6 experts have expressed similar views to the question. Hence the task, the functions desired and the possible exponents are considered valid. Since the functions and exponents of the point of view of the company officer lower rank are concretized they could be taught in the classroom and the response could be assessed.

To sum up, a diligent study of the responses of 56 students to the given task on five tones two tone changes and four points of view reveal the following implications which are presented as findings:

1. At the surface level ‘tone’ and ‘point of view’ look difficult to express. But the study revealed that they lend themselves to scientific analysis. Hence, tone and point of view, which are abstract and embedded in language can be easily concretised through functions and language.
2. Tone emerges slowly and gradually if the function sequence and exponents of each function are meticulously followed.

3. If the writer leaves out any function and moves to the next or alters the sequence of functions, the tone emerges only partially. The deficiency in the total effect of tone could be identified by the reader.

4. Anger tone is revealed if the functions are sequenced in ascending order and the sentence structures (exponents in Table 3.01 pp.33-34) are used appropriately.

5. Threatening tone emerges only towards the end of the letter. Its emergence depends upon the careful following of functions mentioned in pp. 39-40 of this chapter. With regard to exponents conditional structure should be followed.

6. There is room for emergence of "persuasive tone only when the positive aspects of a product are mentioned and appropriate language components are used. But for the highlighting of the special features the way to persuasive tone will prove to be difficult. (Please refer the function sequence of persuasive tone in p. 48).

7. Complaint tone is the result of the inconveniences faced by the writer. So complaint tone emerges only if the inconveniences / problems / consequences which affect the writer are focused. Further, the sequence of functions should be followed.

8. After highlighting complaint tone if questions beginning with auxiliary verbs and negative statements are used, anger tone emerges. If the statement of inconvenience / difficulties caused by the action of the addressee is followed by the statement expressing the writer's readiness to put up with it, reconciliation tone emerges.
9. Point of view depends upon the point from which a thing is looked at. The Engineering graduates are placed in positions such as production engineer, sales engineer, quality engineer, purchase managers etc., in companies / industries and in Government service as junior / senior engineers (in PWD, TWAD, Highways, Transport Corporations etc.) as persons occupying senior positions they use language which is expressive of instruction.

10. Letters written on behalf of the company (by officers of the company) to the customers justify the product / decisions / action of the company. The interest of the company is implied in every exponent of the function.

11. The point of view of the customer (in his/her letter address to the company) gets expressed gradually through the sequence of functions and content reflecting the writer's right to claim.

12. In letters written by subordinates to officers of higher rank (point of view) statements of explanation / appeal / submission / acceptance are used. The point of view gets expressed only if the above statements are framed using words which express submission / politeness. The functions mentioned in pp. 113-114 are to be followed.

13. A writer of a business letter could reveal his point of view in isolation if he uses grammatically correct sentences in continuous writing. But careful planning of the function sequence leads to effective and specific point of view.

14. There is a natural order in the emergence of tones and tone change as mentioned below:
   
i. Anger tone can follow complaint tone
   
ii. Threatening tone will always follow anger tone
   
iii. Persuasive tone is followed by reconciliation
iv. Complaint tone can be followed by persuasive and reconciliation tones

v. Complaint tone can be followed by anger tone

vi. Anger tone will shift to persuasive and reconciliation tones.

Thus, the abstract terms 'tone' and 'point of view' are concretised under two sections, namely functions and exponents. The theoretically consolidated material can be applied in the classroom situation and the results could be analysed. Further, for experimentation the research methodology need to be clearly stated. Hence, this chapter is followed by research methodology.