Engineer Language Defined For Academs

By ED SUMMERS

One of the biggest problems on this campus is that half the people don't understand the language the other half speaks — we refer to engineers and academic students.

To correct this situation, we have read a number of lab reports written by engineers and now proceed to translate into English some of the more difficult idioms of the engineering dialect:

“A correction factor was applied to the recorded data . . .”

“Somehow we did the experiment all wrong and in order to get the answer in last year’s write-up you have to multiply our answers by a finagle constant.

“It was necessary to take the measurements more rapidly than was originally anticipated . . .”

The baseball game starts an hour sooner than we thought.

“It should be noted that the instruments employed in determination of the experimental variables do not reflect the most modern improvements . . .”

We overloaded a circuit and the penny we put in the fuse box let two ammeters burn up.

“Difficulties were encountered in transferring the sample . . .”

We threw the sample at our lab partner and he didn’t catch it.

“The beam did not fall along the lines indicated by theory . . .”

We broke it in compression instead of tension.

“An excessive amount of time was required to repair the experimental apparatus . . .”

The head of the department raided our experiment to get equipment for his research project.

“We decided to work as if in complete ignorance of the subject we were asked to investigate . . .”

Just strike out the “as if.”

“Several unique safety features are included in the experimental procedure . . .”

The Van de Graaf machine caught a graduate student with six million volts in the seat of the pants last week.

“No corrections could be discovered . . .”

We were reading the flowmeter backwards.

“The odor generated by the reactions inhibited our work . . .”

The chemistry building had to be evacuated for three hours.

“Some unusual assumptions were made in order to facilitate the calculations . . .”

Like, water boils at 180 degrees Fahrenheit.

“Given sufficient time, we are sure that more reliable results could be easily obtained . . .”

We didn’t get to lab until three o’clock.

“Difficulty was encountered in obtaining operating information . . .”

The lab assistants were out playing football on the lawn.

“Our results are in close agreement with values found in the literature . . .”

By “close agreement” we mean plus or minus fifty per cent.

“We are prepared to spend as much time as necessary to finish the experiment . . .”

We have a 4-minus lab average, but we are safe because finals start three days after this report is due.