

“Communicating with Engineers Using English as a Second Language”

Nick Real

Professor Nick Real, a trained engineer in Germany and the United States and now a professor at Cerritos College, California presented a lecture on “Communicating with Engineers using English as a Second Language.” Professor Real, whose native language is French, learned German and English in order to study engineering. While he spoke fast during his presentation, and some of the words he used difficult to understand, most of the students agreed that his PowerPoint presentation was very easy to understand and useful, his pronunciation was clear and charming, and his hand and body gestures and movement throughout the audience a nice touch to the presentation. Students were impressed by this form of presentation and felt like studying harder to improve their listening ability and presentation ability as a result. Professor Real also gave a lot of helpful hints about how to study English in this presentation. He instructed the audience that the findings of Charles Kay Ogden that we can understand 90% of the basic concepts in sentences by learning 850 key words is still very important to know today. He was kind enough to donate a copy of Ogden’s book to Science and Technology’s English library. He also told students that tests like TOEFL and the Cambridge English Language Test are important for measuring one’s ability. Finally, he told students that they should use music CDs with easy lyrics to understand like those of Peter Cincotti, read books like Technical English, The Ancient Engineers, and To Engineer is Human, watch technical English shows like Discovery Channel American Choppers, and read up about the Society of Manufacturing Engineers and use Yahoo! to learn more about different engineering chat groups. Finally, he suggested students can improve their English by playing engineering video games. Overall, students felt that this lecture was a very good addition to the summer English training course.