

Do It Yourself Language Lab

Put your tape recorder to work and learn another language

By BYRON G. WELS

IF YOUR YOUNGSTER IS FACING THE problem of foreign-language study at school for the first time, you know that the largest hurdle is memorizing the necessary words and phrases. In school, the teacher can convey usage and sentence structure. But it's the student's job to learn the words.

At our house, it became the whole family's problem, for whenever an odd minute was available, we had to start vocabulary drill. Something had to be done, and we solved the problem.

To begin with, you need a small tape recorder with a slow speed: $3\frac{3}{4}$ ips is good. $1\frac{1}{8}$ even better. The machine must have capstan drive.

The next step is to buy a couple of packs of file cards. Use the 3" x 5" cards if your machine runs at $1\frac{1}{8}$ ips speed, 5" x 7" for $3\frac{3}{4}$ ips. Remove the head cover from the tape machine, and place a card so it "bottoms" on the tape transport's base plate. Hold the card near the head, and mark the position of the bottom of the head gap on the card, and the location of the top of the gap (see the drawing).

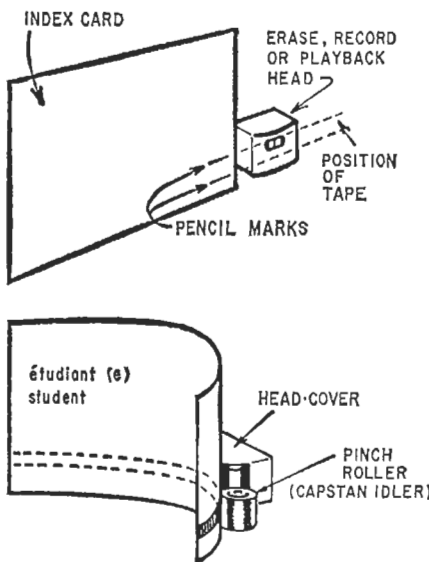
Now stick a length of recording tape across the bottom of the card, placed so it completely covers the gap area. To do this, paint a line of cement (preferably rubber cement) on the bottom of the card. Place the tape (dull side down) on a piece of paper, and smear some rubber cement on the back of the tape. When both the card and tape have dried, pass the tape to the card. Place it right the first time. Tape and card will not readily slip, and they will be bonded permanently. Trim the excess tape off both ends with a razor blade. With the tip of a finger, rub the excess cement from the card. Be sure not to leave any traces of cement on the surface of the tape or card—it can literally gum up the works.

Repeat this on as many cards as you have words to be learned. When you have finished applying the tape to the cards, set up the tape recorder, and remove the supply and takeup reels.

Place a card in the head area, and put the machine in the record mode. Slide the card toward the capstan and capstan idler until the card is caught in the pinch between the two. They will pull the card past the heads and eject it at the other side. While the card is



Languages are easier when correct pronunciation is heard while reading English word.



To prepare language cards, remove tape-head cover and position file card near head and flush with baseplate. Mark top and bottom of playback-head gap on card. Next, apply rubber cement to the card (where marked) and the glossy side of tape. Carefully position tape on card, removing all excess glue. Record words while feeding cards between capstan and capstan idler. Write words on card backs.

moving past the heads, speak the foreign word correctly into the microphone. If your pronunciation, or your youngster's is less than perfect, enlist the aid of someone who pronounces the language correctly.) It is now recorded on the tape at the bottom of the card.

After the card has been expelled out the other side, write the word in English on the card. Continue this procedure until you have recorded all the words in your vocabulary list.

Foreign words often look perplexing when spelled. It is sometimes difficult to tie the spelling to the pronunciation, so it helps to write the word in the foreign tongue on the back of the card.

To use the language lab, take the cards in any order and sit down in front of the tape recorder. Read the English word written on the face of the card. Try to say it aloud in the foreign language. Then slip the card into the tape machine to hear proper pronunciation.

This process makes learning fun, as it should be. Our other kids, quite taken with the system, have asked us to prepare language cards for them.

Ich am having une bon tiempo with the whole chose! **R-E**