Linguist Shows New Learning Method

A linguist who in approximately two hours can decipher an obscure foreign language of which he had no previous knowledge demonstrated his revolutionary technique at MIT last Tuesday, in the Compton lecture hall (Room 26-100).

Key Elects

The following sophomores were elected to Beaver Key this week: Bill Bsholman, Greg Brown, Tony Brax, Thomas C. Bayen, John Carole, Ted Engler, Charles W. Gambler, Curtis Hoffman, Robert Haff, Ethiopia Ippen, David Koch, William Koch, Edward Hoffman, Robert Huff, Erich Ippen, Engler, Charles W. Gamble, Curtis Thomas G. Burns, John Costello, Jed Compton lecture hall (Room 26-100)

American Institute of Physics elected Wyman.

The MIT Student Section of the American Institute of Physics elected the following officers: President Miltosevich, equally as unfamiliar to the subject, one of MIT's foreign students, whose native language was completely unfamiliar to him.

The technique, which Professor Pike has dubbed "language by gesture," involves "asking" questions by pointing to parts of the body, walking across the room, opening doors, and other such universal motions. His subject replies in words, which Professor Pike proceeds to chart phonetically into a kind of "language map"--patterns of word units from which he builds phrases and finally whole sentences.

Because he believes the normal noise of talking to be helpful, Professor Pike asks his questions in some language such as a Mexican-Indian dialect, equally as unfamiliar to the subject as the latter's tongue is to him. But it is through gesture and expression that he makes his intent known, and from the fairly obvious answers that he is able to construct a word pattern. Once the pattern is identified, Professor Pike says, it is only a matter of time before fluency can be attained.

A highly trained prelinguist, Professor Pike described his method as part of a now general philosophical research called "synchronic slice." A synchronic slice is a cross-section of a language and is currently spoken.

Kenneth L. Pike, professor of linguistics at the University of Michigan, has developed a method of acquiring in a very short space of time, a limited, but ever-increasing, understanding of any foreign language without the use of English. He illustrated his technique at the MIT lecture hall with the subject, one of MIT's foreign students, whose native language was completely unfamiliar to him.

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