

Eds

Reviewers this issue: Giuseppe de Benedictus, D

Title Speaking French
Publisher Private Tutor
Machine Model B/
 Electron
Price £7.95

There is much scope in the educational software market for products that are useful to the holiday maker or the casual learner. This cassette provides a beginning to learning the useful phrases for "les vacances en France" without having to resort to the chore of night school or "learning from le book".

The cassette has two programs — a short leader which when loaded performs a passable version of the Marseillaise (though a bit short) and then automatically chains the second program, which is the main one.

Once this second program has loaded a menu of 20 options is shown which represent the different categories, within which helpful phrases are provided. Examples of these are Directories, Hotels, Eating, Motoring, Time and Numbers.

Once an option is selected a screenful of phrases is shown. In most cases there are seven of these phrases consisting of the English with the French translation below. On some screens there are more, where space permits, eg Numbers. Once this screen has been studied the pupil goes on to the test screen for that same option. This screen provides each of the phrases, firstly in English and then, after some ten seconds (or by pressing a key), the French equivalent. On completion of the test hitting the Return key takes the student back to the main menu.

Of great importance in educational software is the accuracy and clarity of the information provided. I found only a couple of very minor errors. The difficulty of dealing with non-ASCII characters such as accents, circumflexes and cedillas was well dealt with.

The author is to be congratulated on including a section on Letter Writing. This covers phrases to do with asking for rooms on various floors with views. Also included are phrases

such as "yours faithfully", "by return of post" and "looking forward to hearing from you".

Had a small booklet covering the phrases and perhaps a little grammar also been included it would have been excellent. However, if you are thinking of spending a weekend in Paris or a week in St Tropez, you won't go far wrong buying this.

Private Tutor titles are also available covering German, Italian and Spanish. G.B.

Ratings Table:

GRAPHICS	80%
DOCUMENTATION	70%
VALUE FOR MONEY	80%
OVERALL	90%