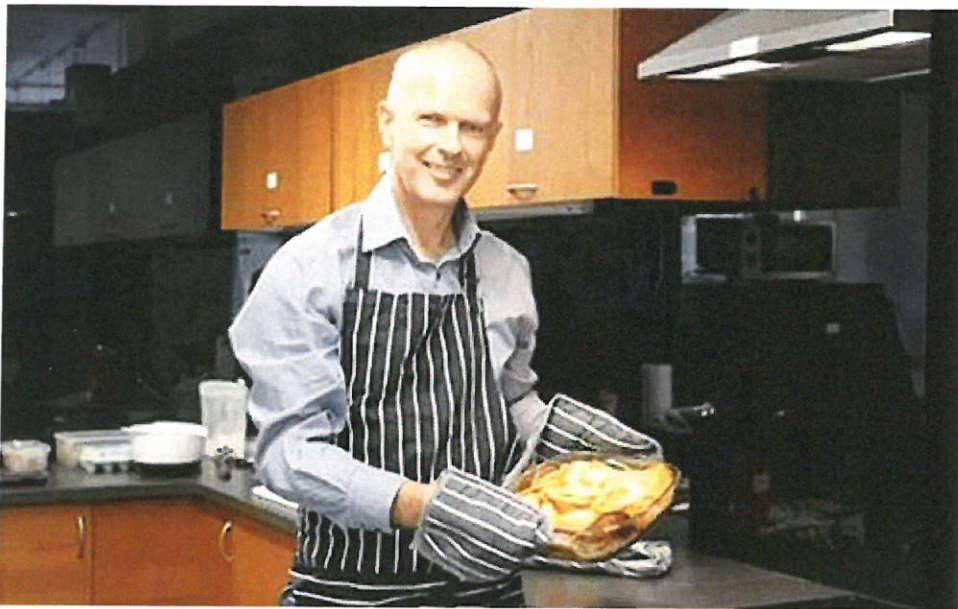


theENGINEER

First for technology & innovation www.theengineer.co.uk

Talking kitchen offers cookery instructions in French

26 October 2011



A kitchen that provides cooking instructions in French has been developed by language experts and computer scientists at Newcastle University.

According to a statement, the user first selects the French recipe they want to follow from their tablet or laptop computer incorporated into the kitchen.

Digital sensors built into utensils, ingredient containers and other equipment then communicate with the computer to make sure the right instructions are given at the right time, or to give feedback to the user if they go wrong.

At any time, the user can ask for an instruction or a piece of information to be repeated — or translated into English — by pressing the touch screen.

All grammar and vocabulary has been selected to ensure that using the kitchen adds to basic proficiency in understanding French.

After a session, the user can test what they have learnt by carrying out a short test on the computer.

Three portable versions of the kitchen, comprising the computer and a set of sensor-enabled kitchen equipment, are now being prepared. These are to be installed in Newcastle College and at Institut Français, a London-based charity dedicated to teaching the French language.

'Our overriding objective is to make language learning more enjoyable, more effective and, by linking it to the development of another valuable life skill, more educational too,' said Prof Paul Seedhouse from the School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences.

The first version of the technology was trialled in the catering kitchens of project partner Newcastle College. The kitchen could be available for schools and universities to use, and for the domestic market, by the end of 2012.

The research was supported by the EPSRC through the RCUK Digital Economy Programme and the Newcastle University team is now working to explore routes to commercialisation.

An EU grant of €400,000 (£348,000) has also been obtained to develop English, German, Spanish, Italian, Finnish and Catalan versions. Ultimately, versions could be developed for any language/cuisine in the world.

[Back to top](#)



Sign up for **FREE**
email services



Advertise
your vacancy