

**THE FRENCH MENU:  
THE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF A WEB-BASED APPLICATION FOR CHEFS,  
RESTAURATEURS AND WAITRONS ON THE WRITING AND UNDERSTANDING OF  
MENUS IN FRENCH**

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## **Declaration**

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: 19 November 2007

## **Summary**

This study focuses on foreign language teaching and learning in the professional workplace. A gap was perceived in the catering industry where chefs and waitrons are required to use French cooking terminology in their profession without ready access to the correct usage of this terminology.

The purpose of this study is to address this gap and to offer a solution to the observed need. The study concentrates on the reading and writing of menus in French. The reason for this focus is that this is the area where French cooking terminology is arguably needed, as it is here where the incorrect usage of the French language is most evident.

## **Opsomming**

Hierdie studie is gefokus op internasionale taalonderrig en toepassing in die professionele werksomgewing. 'n Leemte is in die spysenieringsindustrie geïdentifiseer waar sjefs en kelners Franse kookterminologie in hul werksomgewing moet gebruik sonder geredelike toegang tot riglyne oor die korrekte gebruik van sodanige terminologie.

Die doel van hierdie studie is om hierdie leemte aan te spreek en 'n oplossing te bied. Die studie fokus op die lees en skryf van spyskaarte in Frans. Dit is die area waar korrekte Franse kookterminologie die meeste benodig word aangesien die verkeerde gebruik van Frans hier veral opvallend is.

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# Chapter 1

## *Introduction*

### **1.1 Background**

The culinary field is one of the fastest growing industries worldwide, with new avenues of work possibilities continuously being created (Matysik, 2004). These possibilities include the rendering of foodservice assistance to a range of persons in need of food that can be bought instead of self prepared. These people can be found in scenarios including both working parents with the resultant demand for take away foods or food that can be re-heated at home, the increase in life expectancy with the concomitant rise in retirement homes in need of catering and the change in lifestyle that sees an increasing number of restaurant goers and foodies (food lovers) in search of new culinary delights. With many famous chefs appearing on TV “food preparation has also achieved celebrity status” (Culinary Ed, 2006:2).

The catering industry, in its endeavour to meet this growing demand, needs to draw increasingly on chefs and waitrons. This has resulted in more school leavers and persons interested in cooking, pursuing a career in catering (Matysik, 2004). To meet the growing numbers of these prospective learners, Culinary Institutes offer comprehensive courses in food preparation and presentation. Today a career as a chef is a sought-after academic qualification.

The demand for good cuisine has also led restaurants to produce menus that reflect excellence, innovation and sophistication, drawing upon the traditionally accepted and required standards of renowned international cuisine, in particular French cuisine (See Addendum 2). In many cases French culinary terminology is used to capture the refinement and ambience that the chef wishes to create. Eating has become “much more than the fulfilment of a basic bodily need; [and] is often elevated to the level of an art, especially in

association with parties and celebrations of all kinds, in private life and in the public sphere” (Könemann 2004: ‘Foreword’).

## **1.2 Rationale**

Aware of the use of French cooking terminology in food preparation and interested in both French and the Culinary Arts, I decided to determine if French was being taught at culinary institutions. I also looked at menus in restaurants and recipes in cooking books and food magazines to see how French cooking terminology was being employed. I became aware of how much French cooking terminology is used on a daily basis and also of how incorrectly it is used. This incorrect usage led me to investigate if and how the terminology was being taught. My investigation led me to perceive a gap between the usage of French cooking terminology and how it was being taught. Furthermore, I discovered that comprehensive teaching material for French cooking terms was not readily available (see 1.5).<sup>1</sup>

I decided to create the teaching material for French cooking terminology that was lacking. This decision necessitated further research into what would be required, who in the catering trade would best use this material and what the preferred method of presentation would be.

## **1.3 Preliminary Study/Needs Analysis**

The research involved both primary and secondary research procedures.

### **1.3.1 Primary Research**

- Past and present students were interviewed about the French cooking terminology taught to them and were questioned in particular about the content of the subject, the method in which it was taught to them and their motivation to learn the terminology.
- Both national and international Culinary institutes were approached in order to ascertain whether French cooking terminology was still a necessary component of the course and

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<sup>1</sup> For ethical reasons the names of persons, culinary institutions and restaurants will not be given.

furthermore whether it was needed in the professional kitchen and restaurant (Appendix A, B).

- Restaurateurs were also approached in order to verify whether French cooking terms appeared on menus and if French was still used in the workplace.
- Academics working with CALL were questioned with regard to the best software to use and the design of the application (Appendix C).
- The Head of French language at a local High School was interviewed in order to get an idea of the level of French taught at school and in particular the level of French that the average school leaver possesses. This was necessary as there are school leavers who have learnt French and who choose a career in the culinary arts.

### **1.3.2 Secondary Research**

- Books, reviews and articles relating to French grammar, French cooking terminology, Principles of Second and Foreign language learning and teaching, Didactics, CALL and computer software were consulted.
- CALICO Software Reviews were perused in order to find out how the technology could be best applied and to see what common mistakes are made.
- Articles on page design were consulted with regard to layout.
- Recipe books and food-related magazines were consulted so as to get a feel of the current trend of food presentation and food photography.

## 1.4 Results of Preliminary Study/Needs Analysis

The research conducted revealed the following:

French cooking terminology appears on many menus, in recipe books and food magazines. This terminology has been assimilated into the English language and is used in many English speaking countries, where French is not necessarily spoken. Examples include: sauté; brûlé; choux; julienne; parisienne; mirepoix; truffe, ganache; mousse; quiche; Poire Hélène and Crêpes Suzette, to mention a few culinary words.

With many of the French words relating to food sounding very similar, a good knowledge of French culinary terminology is essential, especially when used in restaurants or in recipe books or food magazines. The following words for example are often easily confused: “tourteau (crab) with tortue (turtle), ail (garlic) with aile (a poultry wing), chevreau (young goat) with chevreuil (venison)” (Wells, 2007) and poison (poison) with poisson (fish).

Students enrolled in culinary courses need to know French terminology in order to understand food preparation and to write menus (See Appendix A). Chefs and restaurateurs use this terminology in their profession on a daily basis in using recipes or writing menus. Restaurant goers are often faced with French terminology on menus which they may not always understand and non-professional cooks/housewives encounter this terminology in recipe books that they use.

Access to material on the writing and understanding of menus written in French is not readily available or very limited. Many persons do not have the opportunity, time or money to enrol for French language courses. For those who do enrol, the run-of-the-mill French course or degree, emphasises general and colloquial vocabulary and French literature. Occasional culinary words may be learnt at random with the learning of basic food vocabulary. The possibility also exists that students who are enrolled in culinary courses may not always be stimulated or motivated by the French lessons that they have to attend as part of their course.

As far as I could ascertain, there are no set books for the specific instruction of culinary French terminology. In one culinary institution non-published written lists or audio cassettes

with French terminology and culinary vocabulary are given to students to learn verbatim. At another institution the various teachers, who had taught the subject over the years, compiled a manual that was accompanied by an audio cassette, where the terms were listed orally in French and had to be learnt by rote. In some culinary institutions, the students are taught the terminology using the “Mise en Place” method where culinary terms are incorporated at random into each practical cooking lesson.

After completing the two or three year culinary course, many of the young students work at reputable restaurants or hotels overseas. In their daily line of duty they come across French culinary terminology. Their lack of knowledge in this respect reflects negatively on their qualification and on the institution they attended.

An additional factor that influences the writing and comprehension of French on menus is the increasing tourist demands that restaurants and hotels meet international standards. In many five star hotels, French culinary terminology is a daily occurrence on menus. At the same time there is a demand for French restaurants as the French culture is one that is readily admired and revered.

One could possibly question why a chef or restaurant owner should bother about learning French cooking terminology in his<sup>2</sup> profession. The reply could be given in a humanistic way by quoting James E. Alatis: “Professional ability is not just knowing how to do a job. It means demonstrating in one’s everyday work a total commitment to one’s skill (1983:10)”. In order to meet this commitment the chef would require ready access to the cooking terminology in question. The problem occurs when the relevant material is not easily available or when what is available does not effectively meet the needs of the user.

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that the masculine pronoun ‘he’ and possessive pronoun ‘his’ will be used throughout this discussion for practical purposes. The author, however, acknowledges that the envisaged users of the application will be both male and female

## **1.5 Method of Approach**

### **1.5.1 The Focus of the Study**

The above research, coupled with consultations with persons employed in the catering industry, made me decide to limit the focus of my study to the actual writing of the menu in French. The focus would concentrate on that grammar needed to construct correctly and understand easily a menu item written in French. The pronunciation of the menu item or cooking terms once the correct compilation of a menu item was learnt, was an option to be considered, but would not be dealt with by the application.

The idea of limiting the teaching of French cooking terminology to the menu was considered because it is in the actual writing of the menu item where the incorrect usage of French cooking terminology in the catering industry is most evident. The purpose of this study would be to correct the incorrect usage of French terminology on menus by offering a comprehensive guide for the writing of menus in French. A guide of this nature could also serve the purpose of making members of the catering industry aware that French cooking terminology may be incorrectly being used in the writing of menus in French.

The main aim of this study would be to reply to a perceived need but at the same time to develop something that could be used. Consequent research led to the conclusion that the most effective guide would be an electronic guide, namely a computer or web-based application.

### **1.5.2 The Envisaged Users**

The primary research revealed that the target market that would benefit by my study was very diverse. The following became evident:

- Persons in the catering industry ranged in age from school leavers to persons who were already well established in the industry.

- Chefs, restaurateurs and waitrons differed greatly with regard to academic ability and interest. Some had followed or were following formal culinary instruction, some were born into the trade, having taken over restaurants from parents and others entered the profession out of interest in cooking.
- The range in the knowledge of French ranged from no knowledge to French-speaking. It was interesting to see that mistakes were also made on the menus written by natural French speakers.
- French terminology is “taught as part of the cheffing course as terms are used daily in the kitchen” (see Appendix A).

The target users had the following in common:

- They were either working or studying so time was a factor that had to be considered.
- They had a mutual interest and knowledge of food and its preparation and presentation.

### **1.5.3 The Design of the Application**

The analysis conducted on the envisaged users determined that the design of the application had to take the diverse age, differing academic status and interest, and the varying degree of French language knowledge into account. The design also had to include the findings that all the learners had a common knowledge of food and that time was a possible factor that should be considered.

Research into how the menu item was written revealed that a good knowledge of French grammar was needed in order to be able to compile correctly a menu written in French. The application had to thus cover most aspects of French grammar and at the same time teach the required vocabulary and set expressions used in cooking. This posed a huge problem as the teaching of a course similar to a beginner’s course in French, in order to write a menu correctly in French, was not a viable option because most chefs or restaurateurs would not have the time and perhaps not sufficient interest to enrol. The vocabulary that has to be



acquired is very specific and not easily taught in a general French course. A general French course, therefore, would not readily meet the particular need of writing correctly a menu in French. Furthermore, the specific and traditional rules associated with the spelling and layout of a menu had to be taught.

The design also had to cater for the different academic ability and learning styles of the envisaged users. A good chef or restaurateur was not by implication a good student or good at languages. Another user might need to understand more about the grammar involved in compiling a menu and so forth. It was also realized that the application designed had to motivate sufficiently the user whose main interest was food preparation and presentation.

A sound knowledge of food and food-related terminology was also required as the user of the application would be very knowledgeable in this regard. Also the content had to be comprehensive enough in order to cater as far as possible for all the menu item options and combinations. Aspects such as current food styles of presentation, food photography, colours that were positively associated with food and so forth had to be taken into consideration. In order for the terminology that was taught to be relevant, notice had to be taken of what was currently being served on menus in restaurants. Nor would traditional French dishes be exclusively used either, as it was not French cuisine that was being taught but the way that a menu is correctly written in French.

#### **1.5.4 The Choice of Presentation**

With the research into the perceived problem complete, the envisaged users identified and the relevant content determined, the final step was to choose the best method of presentation. A literature review that included a general reading on theories of foreign language learning and specific readings on the role and the potential of the computer in education had to be conducted (To be discussed in chapter 2 and 3) in order to determine the most effective method of teaching the writing of menu items using French cooking terminology.

Various possibilities that came to mind had to be researched in the literature review, namely whether a web-based application using the concept of hypertext<sup>3</sup> would best meet the envisaged need. Factors such as what the more commonly used computer screen resolution would be, the chunking of the content on the screen, the type of graphics to be used, the amount of options to be given had to be determined (See Appendix C).

Reviews on Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) had to be consulted so as to determine whether the idea of presenting the material to be learnt in an electronic format would work, what preferences, requirements or problems users had identified and what factors had to be considered when teaching a foreign language with the aid of the computer.

The inclusion of testing in the application had to be considered. It was decided that testing, apart from comprehension checks in the exercises so as to determine if the user understands what has been taught (See Appendix C), would not be included but would be left instead as an option to be looked into at a later stage. The diversity of the potential users was too large and it was thought that this could be the topic of a further study.

The use of technology in education such as that of the cell phone was a consideration (To be discussed in chapter 3). One could argue that the user of the envisaged application, namely a chef or waitron, would more than likely be the owner of a cell phone and that there may be occasions when he would require help in writing a menu item but might not have sufficient time to work through the application to get his answer. This was an option to be thought about in the layout of the learning content so that the application could at a later date, if need be, be adapted to be used in cell phone education, part of M-learning (Mobile learning).

The primary research conducted showed that at culinary institutions the curriculum was divided into the study of specific areas of food preparation, such as meats, pastry and so forth. The developer, having noticed the same division in cooking books, decided to follow a similar layout for the teaching of the content in the application. This decision was taken so that the application could also be used in conjunction with the courses in food preparation taught at culinary institutions. However, to keep in theme with the focus of the study, namely the

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<sup>3</sup> Hypertext systems allow authors to create electronic paths through related material, to cross reference other documents, to annotate text and to create notes (Ritchie, 1992:41). To be discussed in detail in 3.3.1.

writing of a menu, the general layout of a menu, which follows a similar but slightly broader division of courses, was finally chosen for the overall structure of the application.

At the same time, because the perceived need was identified in the catering industry, it was decided to use the divisions used to teach food preparation, employed by both institutions and cooking books instead as the sub-structure within the overall structure. It was necessary to keep these divisions because they were known to chefs and made the chunking of the content to be learnt more practical and more easily identifiable.

**1.6 Conclusion**

In deciding upon the topic and the design of the application, it was important for the developer that the application would be in response to a perceived gap in the market where a foreign language is used on a daily basis, and be a possible solution to that identified need.

Chapters 2 and 3 will focus on the literature review that formed the foundation for the teaching component and design of the application, while Chapter 4 will outline the content and design of the completed application. Chapter 5 will discuss the conclusions drawn and problems experienced with the project.

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## Chapter 2

### *Literature Review: Language Learning and Teaching*

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In the research conducted for this project certain theories were identified as being of particular importance to this study. They will be presented in this, and the following chapter.

#### **2.2 Constructivist Learning Theory**

The Constructivist learning theory emphasizes the uniqueness of learners and of individual learning processes and proposes that learning is “an active process in which meaning is accomplished on the basis of experience” (Sólrún, 2001). This theory states that learners are helped to “construct meaningful and conceptually functional representations of the external world” (Jonassen, 1991:29 cited in Rüschoff, [S.a.]). Learning is viewed as “an active, creative, and socially interactive process”. Students are perceived “as active learners who come to ... lessons already holding ideas ... which they use to make sense of everyday experiences. ...Such a process is one in which learners actively make sense of the world by constructing meaning” (Scott, 1987:4 cited in Rüschoff, [S.a.]). Learners are allowed to “tap into resources and acquire knowledge [instead of being forced] to function as recipients of instruction” (Rüschoff, [S.a.]).

In the initial determination of what the didactic foundation of the proposed project should encompass, the following points proposed by this theory were of particular value:

1. ‘Students are perceived “as active learners” that approach learning with past knowledge, experience and established ideas.

2. Each learner and each learning process is unique which implies that each learner learns in his own individual way and that what is taught may be right for one learner and not for another.
3. Learning is as an “active, creative and socially interactive process”. This statement implies that optimal learning and active and creative participation in the learning event go hand in hand.
4. Learners are “allowed to tap into resources and acquire knowledge” and in so doing take more responsibility for their own learning.
5. New information is best learnt when it can be attached to things already known. For teaching to be effective, learners should be shown how new ideas can relate to old ones (Sólrún, 2001).
6. Adult learners tend to organize the information that they learn. Information to be learnt should thus be presented in an organized manner with an indication how one thing relates to another thing (Sólrún, 2001).

The following ideas were drawn from the above theory and considered with regard to the application.

1. The application would have to engage actively the chef or restaurateur, who could approach the application with some fixed ideas of his own and possibly, in addition, his own way of compiling menu items.
2. Notice had to be taken of the fact that the application may appeal and work for one envisaged user and not another.
3. The learning content would have to be presented in a way that was stimulating and that would encourage active participation by the envisaged user.
4. Both the content presented and the medium of presentation would be best given in a flexible and non-prescriptive manner.

5. The envisaged learners, here persons associated with food preparation, would have a good knowledge of food and cooking, The new information, in this case French cooking terminology would be best learnt if linked to existing knowledge, namely food preparation.
6. The French cooking terminology to be learnt would be ideally presented in an organized manner. It can be given per topic: 'Fish', 'Meats', 'Desserts' and not as lists of unrelated terminology or vocabulary.

### **2.3 Constructivism and Constructionism**

Papert, (1991 cited in Rüschoff) defines Constructivism as “the theory that knowledge is built by the learner, not supplied by the teacher” and constructionism as what happens when the learner is engaged in the construction of something external or shareable such as a computer program, a book etc. (Rüschoff, [S.a.]). “Papert’s concept of constructionism was adopted as a possible basis for putting theory into practice and defining a set of criteria for assessing different kinds of models and materials with regard to using new technologies in vocationally orientated language learning” (Rüschoff & Lund [S.a.]). In this respect, Rüschoff adds:

... constructionism puts a lot of emphasis on task-based learning. It has been stated time and again that the best learning results are achieved if learners work as much as possible with authentic and semi-authentic materials which are being put in the context of authentic, real-world-based situations or at least simulations and thus supported by authentic tasks.

(Rüschoff, [S.a.])

Dieter Wolff suggests that cognitive tools are used when theory is put into practice, especially when new technologies are used in language learning (Rüschoff, [S.a.]). In this respect Jonassen and Reeves note that:

Cognitive tools empower learners to design their own representations of knowledge rather than absorbing knowledge representations preconceived by others. Cognitive tools can be used to support the deep reflective thinking that is necessary for meaningful learning. Ideally, tasks or problems for the application of cognitive tools should be situated in realistic contexts with results that are personally meaningful for learners.

(1996:693 cited in Rüschoff, [S.a.])

In the primary research undertaken, it was identified that the perceived users were given lists of unrelated French cooking terminology to learn. Furthermore, it was evident that they were not being induced to use the material in a constructive way; such as a task-based exercise using the French cooking terminology provided. It is thought, thus, that in order to meet the identified users' needs adequately, the application to be developed should incorporate some activity or task, where the user could apply the learning material in a practical way.

## **2.4 Information Processed and Transformed into Knowledge**

With traditional learning of skills and facts no longer being adequate to address the needs of a technological orientated future, Rüschoff notes that today teaching and learning should aim to help learners develop ways of processing knowledge themselves ([S.a.]). Education can, therefore, no longer be seen as “the act, process, or art of imparting knowledge and skill” (Roget’s Thesaurus cited in Rüschoff [S.a.]). These views imply that the learner must play an active role in constructing his own knowledge. The constructivist approach advocates learning as “an active process in which learners construct new knowledge and awareness based on current and past knowledge and experience” (Rüschoff, [S.a.]).

The research conducted among past and present culinary students, who were being given lists of French cooking terminology to learn verbatim (See 1.4), showed a predominant lack of motivation and interest in learning the terminology needed. These students considered French as a “nice” language to learn but little correlation was made between learning the “boring” terminology and the “cool” language. On the other hand, the practical cooking lessons were enjoyed because the students felt that they “were doing something”.

Looking at the above theory that proposes that information needs to be processed and transformed into knowledge in conjunction with the finding that culinary students were in general not motivated by the way French cooking terminology was being taught to them, the following was considered:

1. That one could no longer regard teaching as the act that transfers knowledge and skill to learners.

2. Learners must take responsibility for constructing their own knowledge.

It was decided that to profit from the above theory and finding, the application content would need to be:

1. Presented in a way that would be stimulating so as to best engage the learner in the learning content.
2. Aware that the presentation of facts, such as lists of food terms, would not suffice as optimal learning would not necessarily result.

## **2.5 Communicative Approach**

In his definition of the Communicative Approach, Theodore S Rodgers (2001) states that learners learn a language when they communicate, that every classroom should aim at achieving authentic and meaningful communication in their activities, and that fluency is an important part of communication. He states further that different language skills are used when people communicate and that language is used creatively with the result that mistakes in language use can occur.

This approach indicated the following that could be taken into consideration in the design of a language based application.

1. Learners learn a language best when real communication is involved in real life situations that they can relate to.
2. That communication which is meaningful to the learner should be sought in the learning event.
3. Fluency is a necessary part of communication.
4. That when people communicate they use different language skills.



With regard to the design of the application it, could be noted, thus:

- a. That the language to be taught, here French, had to be correct and authentic.
- b. That the French cooking terminology would have to be taught in such a way that the learner would be able to use it when writing his menu.
- c. That the grammar content and any additional, relevant information had to be presented in good and fluent language, in this case English, the common language spoken by the perceived users.
- d. That the perceived users would not all learn language in the same way. As identified in 1.5.2, the prospective users do not possess a common academic background but are drawn into the profession in various ways. Therefore, the possibility well exists that there would be users, for example, who would not be interested in learning a language. They could excel as chefs or restaurateurs because of their practical and not academic ability. At the same time chefs or restaurateurs could not be stereotyped and said to be non-academics. It could be concluded, thus, that the perceived users would approach the completed application with differing needs.

The application, therefore, would have to demonstrate a certain amount of flexibility in the way that the content was arranged and taught. One could think of constructing the application in such a way that the grammar could be presented both in a basic and in a more advanced manner. The lessons in the application could concentrate on giving a basic outline of the grammar needed to successfully comprehend and compile a menu item written in French. This could serve to address the needs of the less academically-orientated user. For the more academically-minded user, access could be provided to a comprehensive exposition of the grammar presented in the application. Furthermore, a glossary and grammar aid providing additional terminology and vocabulary could be created as an optional source outside the lessons. The glossary and grammar aid could be used for reference purposes and further self study.

### 2.5.1 Approaches to Teaching Vocabulary

Due to the fact that the envisaged application was language-based, the learning and teaching of vocabulary had to be addressed. In this regard, Healey says the following about the different strategies for learning vocabulary:

... the idea is that when more cognitive resources are used in processing a word or phrase – more attention is paid basically – that the word or phrase is more readily remembered. When a learner's eye passes over a word and letters are recognized, that's one level, and a very shallow one. The keyword method has the learner associate a word with an image or aural cue – some sort of mnemonic device, producing a deeper level of processing. When context is brought to bear, the learner's past experience is associated and schema are active, semantic processing takes place – a very deep level. What Brown and Perry found in their research with Arabic-speaking EFL [English Foreign Language] students learning English was that a combination of keyword and semantic processing methods worked best, depending in part on the language level of the student. (2000)

The above statement advocates the association of the word to be learnt with an “image or aural cue” in order to arrive at optimal language acquisition. When the learner is able to make a link between a new word and something that he knows, a deeper level of recognition and understanding is arrived at. If what he knows can be visualised, then a better connection is made and the new word becomes more deeply anchored in his brain, and then, by implication, the retention of the word is so much the better. The better the word is retained, the better are the chances that the word will be remembered and become part of the learner's knowledge of the language.

The above excerpt also states that when students learn a foreign language a “combination of keyword and semantic processing methods worked best”. In other words, merely providing the foreign word associated with “an image or aural cue” will not suffice. The learner will need to know how the word can be used in a sentence and how it relates to other words.

With regard to the envisaged application, the needs analysis conducted on the perceived users indicated that they all had knowledge of food items. Cooking terminology describes food items and the processes that food undergoes during preparation. This meant that in this specific case, one already had visual images with which to work. The French terminology could be effectively coupled to these images.

However, the French terminology had to be used for a specific purpose, namely understanding and writing menu items (the dishes on a menu) for menus. Therefore, merely providing lists of French terminology that could be identified by the users would not suffice, as seen in the research conducted (See 1.4). A structure indicating how the terminology had to be combined in order to correctly write the menus would have to be provided. This structure would enable the user to understand how the terminology had to be used so that the meaning and then, by implication, the writing of the menu item, could be arrived at. In the same way that a sentence provides the structure for words so that a semantic understanding of the sentence can be achieved, so it was envisaged that, by providing a structure for the French terminology, a menu item could be correctly compiled.

## **2.6 Outcomes-Based Education (OBE)**

The South African Department of Education's National Curriculum Statement for Grades 10 – 12 defines OBE as follows:

Outcomes-based education (OBE) forms the foundation for the curriculum in South Africa. It strives to enable all learners to reach their maximum learning potential by setting the Learning Outcomes to be achieved by the end of the education process. OBE encourages a learner-centred and activity-based approach to education.

(Department of Education, 2003:2)

The developer decided to look at the OBE approach to teaching for the following reasons:

1. In South Africa, most school leavers currently embarking on a career in the Culinary Arts would have been taught using the OBE approach. Cognisance of this method would be invaluable in assessing the point of departure in devising educational material to suit these culinary students' needs.
2. The OBE encouragement of "a learner-centred and activity-based approach to education" which focuses on the learner was of special interest as learner participation and activity was a consideration in the design of the application.

3. Moreover, the National Curriculum statement places emphasis on the development of a “high level of knowledge and skills in learners” (Department of Education, 2003:2, 3).

To address the perceived need of the culinary students, the application "The French Menu" would need to be skills-directed in that its objective would be to teach the culinary students the skill of writing correctly a menu in French.

4. Moreover, the National Curriculum statement, requires learners emerging from the Further Education and Training band to “have access to, and succeed in, lifelong education and training of good quality” (Department of Education, 2003:5).

The perceived users of the application would fall into the category of lifelong learners because some of the identified learners were experienced chefs, restaurateurs or waitrons, who were unable to write correctly a menu in French.

5. In an OBE –based curriculum “subject boundaries are blurred. Knowledge integrates theory, skills and values” (Department of Education, 2003:6).

The aim of the application would be to integrate foreign language learning, here French, with the skill of catering and cooking. The application attempts, thus, the coupling of foreign language learning with the learning or knowledge of a skill.

6. A learning Outcome is “a statement of an intended result of learning and teaching” and outlines the “knowledge, skills and values that learners should acquire” at the end of the lesson (Department of Education, 2003:6).

This approach, used currently in schools in South Africa, was an important point to note in the design of the lesson planning of the application. Recent and current school leavers in South Africa would be used to being taught in this way. It would, furthermore, be a good consideration to construct each exercise in the application with a specific outcome in mind, stating what the user would be expected to have learnt at the end of the lesson.

The construction of a menu item in French is made up of parts of grammar that follow a set sequence. It is important that each step in the sequence is understood and applied in order, so that the menu item can be compiled and written correctly in French. Therefore, the outcome of each lesson must be such that the user understands what he has been taught in a specific lesson before he moves onto the next lesson in the sequence.

## **2.7 Language for Specific Purposes**

This study focuses on the catering industry where chefs, restaurateurs and waitrons need to use French cooking terminology in their profession, without ready access to the correct usage of this terminology as discussed in chapter 1. The focus here is, thus, on language learning with a specific purpose in mind in order to perform a certain task.

### **2.7.1 Needs Analysis**

Richterich defines need analysis as “compiling information both on the individuals or groups of individuals who are to learn a language and on the use which they are expected to make of it when they have learnt it” (1983:2 cited in Jiang, 2000). It is further stated that:

Proponents of the communicative approach argue that the selection of instructional materials should be based on a systematic analysis of learners’ needs for the target language. The rationale behind need analysis is straightforward: people learn a foreign language for different purposes and need it to do different things. The type of language varies along with the learners’ needs for the language. A graduate student learning a second language for academic purpose requires different language skills from a flight attendant. Thus, to design an effective language course, it is critical to know why a learner decides to study a second language and under what circumstances she or he is going to use it.

(Jiang, 2000)

The need identified in this study was very specific, namely that French cooking terminology was not readily available to those persons in the catering industry that needed to use it in the execution of their job. The identified users, here chefs, restaurateurs and waitrons, were also a specific group with a specific need. An in-depth analysis of the situation as described in 1.4 was undertaken so as to determine the very unique needs of this group.

The identified learners who would use this application would use it for the sole purpose of learning to write menus. The application content had thus to focus on French cooking terminology that could be used in compiling menus written. An application teaching French language for a ‘Beginner’s course in French’ would not meet the need of the identified user as the aim would be too general. An even more specific application teaching food vocabulary would not work either, as the particular grammatical knowledge needed to compile the menu item would not necessarily be given.

Therefore to design this particular application it was “critical” to “know why” and “under which circumstances” it was be used.

### **2.7.2 Language Learnt for Occupational Purposes**

As discussed under need analysis (2.7.1), a language learnt for professional purposes is not the same as a language learnt for academic purposes, in that the reason for studying the language may differ. Some features of particular importance in learning a language for professional purposes are:

1. The language learning is goal-directed and is studied as a “service” rather than as a subject for its own sake.
2. The language teaching is based on an analysis of the envisaged learner’s needs.
3. Learners are frequently adults.
4. The time period available for learning is often limited.
5. Homogeneity of subject background or profession may exist.
6. In-keeping with learner’s language and learning needs instructional material is based on the genre of language used in the target situation.

(Robinson, 1991 cited in Jiang, 2000)

The above features, as set out by Robinson, had to be noted and then used in conjunction with the findings as identified in 1.4. The application would teach language but would also operate as a “service” by supplying a possible solution to a perceived need in the catering industry. The needs that were identified in the analysis (1.4) had to be addressed by the application. Verification of the fact that the target users were adults had to appear in the overall make-up of the content, layout and design of the application. In other words, a more adult choice of graphics, wording of instructions and examples, would benefit the theme. Furthermore, the content used had to be comprehensive enough to maintain adult interest.

Coupled to finding that the perceived users were adults was the fact that they were professionals and presumed to be very knowledgeable in their field. Research into cooking terminology and how cooking terms were used in actual food preparation and presentation would have to be conducted, so that the content that was to be presented would be both relevant and correct.

## **2.8 Language Learning Awareness**

In the learning event when theory is turned into practice, learners are empowered to use their own cognitive processes and “design their own representations of knowledge rather than absorbing knowledge representations preconceived by others” (Jonassen and Reeves, 1996 cited in Rüschoff, [S.a.]).

In the primary research undertaken, it was identified that the culinary institutions approached<sup>4</sup> did not use set books for the specific instruction of French culinary terminology and that the teachers at one of the institutions had decided to compensate for this lack of material by compiling their own manuals. The material was given to the students on tapes and they were told to learn the terminology verbatim (1.4). The problem that could be observed here was the way in which the material was compiled and taught: there was no learner empowerment. The culinary students at the particular culinary school were not afforded the opportunity of putting theory into practice whereby they would be guided to “design their own representations of

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<sup>4</sup> Culinary institutions in the greater Cape Town area, Hermanus and Johannesburg were approached. It was identified that some schools used the ‘Mise en Place method where French cooking terminology is taught at random in the practical lessons while one gave out lists of vocabulary on cassette tapes or as written lists. For ethical reasons the institutions will not be identified.

knowledge, rather than absorbing knowledge representations preconceived by others” (Jonassen and Reeves, 1996 cited in Rüschoff, [S.a.]). They were given the lists of French cooking terminology but were never shown how to combine the terminology provided into something constructive such as writing correctly a menu item in French.

The culinary students had been taught French cooking terminology but they had not been brought to that point where they could make the terminology their own and use it correctly in practice. Thus, it could be proposed that the perceived problem, identified by this study, had its roots in the way the material for teaching French cooking terminology was being compiled and also in the way in which it was being taught to students.

In terms of the application, the above finding meant that in the design and compilation of the content and in its eventual presentation, an awareness of the objective to empower the learner had to be nurtured from the onset. The ultimate objective of the application could, thus, be envisaged as an attempt to enable the user to make the terminology his own and then to use it correctly when writing menus.

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## Chapter 3

### *Literature Review: Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)*

#### 3.1 Definition

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) may be defined as “the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning” (Levy, 1997:1). The three main components of CALL are the learner, language and the computer (Levy, 1997:100). Levy adds that according to Chapelle: “CALL is not one activity but many often differing in function, character and content” (1997:178). These activities, in recent CALL especially, promote “learner centeredness” and give rise to more opportunities for learner autonomy (Levy, 1997:199).

Three phases of CALL were distinguished by Warschauer, (1996), namely:

1. **Behaviouristic:** Here the computer acts as a tutor (see Levy 1997: 205) whereby instructional material is made available to the learner.
2. **Communicative:** The computer assumes various roles, here, depending on the application. For the drill and practice applications, the computer is the “knower-of-the-right-answer” while for communication activities, the computer acts as a stimulus stimulating discussion. It also acts as a tool enabling the student to use language independent of language material in the form of word processors, grammar and spelling checks and concordances (Levy, 1997: 197; Warschauer, 1996). This phase saw a “greater degree of student choice, control and interaction” (Davies, 2007b).
3. **Integrative:** Two significant innovations, namely Multimedia and the Internet were added to this phase. Multimedia refers to computer-based systems that use various types of content such as text, audio, video, graphics, animation and interactivity (Costantinescu, 2007). The Internet builds on multimedia technology, enabling asynchronous (different time) and synchronous (same time) communication to take place (Davies, 2007b).

The power of multimedia lies in the fact that it entails hypermedia. Mark Warschauer defines hypermedia as “multimedia resources [that] are all linked together” enabling learners to “navigate their own path simply by pointing and clicking a mouse” (1996:3).

For language learners a “more authentic learning environment is created” that mimics the “real world”, while skills such as “reading, writing, speaking and listening are combined into a single activity” (Davies, 2007b). Learners also experience greater control over their learning because they can choose which path they wish to follow through the material taught (Davies, 2007b). ‘Motivational’, ‘highly interactive learning environments’ and ‘cross referencing’ are all terms used to describe hypermedia (Warschauer, 1996:3). Warschauer adds that with hypermedia, the focus is not only on the content but at the same time on the language form and learning strategy as well (1993:4).

Many teachers today are not only intimidated by the advances in technology (Levy, 1997:207) but they also believe that they no longer have a vital role to play in education. However, if the computer is put to good pedagogical use, it can prove to be an invaluable assistant in helping the teacher to maximize the educational possibilities that are out there. To best profit in this respect and to ensure that he is guaranteed an indispensable role in education, the teacher needs to be innovative, creative and open to a change in mindset.

In order to assess the use of the computer in education, the teacher should have a clear understanding of the computer’s role in teaching. Levy (1997: 197) differentiates between the computer’s role as a tutor and as a tool. As a ‘tutor’, the computer enters into a one to one relationship with the learner. Content is made available to the learner, the learner’s input is evaluated and new material is accordingly presented (Levy, 1997: 178, 180). As a tool, the computer becomes the mechanism through which the teacher’s methodology is expressed and, thereby, acts as an aid and facilitator in the learning process. The role of the computer as a tool is non-directive and its use is not predetermined (Levy, 1997:181).

It is important to note that the tutor role of the computer implies that the teacher does not necessarily have to be present (Levy, 1997:181). This role may further suggest that the computer replaces the teacher, rendering the latter redundant. It is this very implication that is the thorn in the flesh of the teacher. If the computer is used as the means and not the method

(Garret, 1991:75 cited in Warschauer, 1996), it can be put to good pedagogical use as an integral member of the classroom activities. The imaginative and creative teacher will find inventive ways of incorporating the computer in his teaching methodology. In this way he will learn to capitalize on the tutoring role of the computer, using the computer as a tool that assists in creating that environment where optimal teaching and learning can take place. The issue here is not so much the tutor or the tool but rather what the teacher does with the technology at hand which is crucial (Levy, 1997:184).

Warschauer (1996) notes this versatile role of the computer as both tutor and tool in Integrative CALL. In a multimedia/hypermedia environment, the computer can be used simultaneously as a tutor offering language drills or as a tool for writing and research. In addition, the Internet, by making available authentic materials and enabling communication, allows the computer to go a step further as a medium for communication and as a provider of authentic materials.

For the design of the application, it was noted from the above theory, that the computer could be used very effectively and efficiently to address the observed need and to cater for the identified user. If using multimedia, the content to be taught could be presented in a creative and interesting manner with for example, games, graphics and video included in the learning material. The use of hypertext in the learning content could enable the user to have greater control of how he would like to structure his learning and use the time available to him. The application could also be designed as a web-based application with links to food-related sites, and in this way more authentic material could be added to the application.

### **3.2. Eclectic approach**

Many teachers do not subscribe to one particular approach or method but are eclectic (Levy, 1997:154). Levy mentions that Rivers recommends an eclectic approach “because it allows for the best techniques of all methods to be absorbed and used when appropriate” (1997: 155). In this respect as well, Douglas Brown notes the great importance of the “enlightened, eclectic” teacher’s approach or theory of language learning and states, “Your approach to language teaching methodology is your theoretical rationale that underlies everything that you

do in the classroom” (1994:187). In this way the computer can be used to best “accommodate the specific needs and characteristics of the learner” (Levy, 1997:155).

One cannot emphasize enough the importance of the enlightened teacher in today’s education. With the current snowballing effect of technology that not only affects the information and materials available but also the interest and world view of the learner, the teacher has to be aware of this effect and keep himself as updated as possible. At the same time the teacher must not allow himself to be seduced by technology but to always look out for the optimal “fit” between his view of teaching, the available materials and technology, and the needs of the learner (Levy, 1997:163).

### **3.2.1. Blended Learning (also known as Hybrid Learning or Mixed Learning)**

The definition of Blended learning may also include distance learning where software driven resources are combined with human intervention such as e-mail or chat or non-computer mediated sessions such as ‘face to face’ or telephone, or where software driven resources are integrated with media such as TV, radio, books, magazines, newspapers, tapes etc. Collaborative web-based learning opportunities such as blogs, wikis and discussion boards allow for asynchronous activities while synchronous activities occur when all the participants join in at once, as with a chat session or a virtual classroom or meeting (E-learning, 2005).

Blended learning in a stricter sense:

... is anytime any instructor combines two methods of delivery of instruction. However, the deeper meaning lies in engaging the students of the current generation. Thus a better example would be using active learning techniques in the physical classroom and a social web presence online. Blended learning is a term that represents a shift in instructional strategy.

(Blended Learning, 2007)

The above excerpt highlights the need for learning material to be presented in a way that it appeals to the target market. To meet learner needs effectively, one needs to know more about what their interests are. The following statements note what happens when the interests of students are not taken as part of the initial needs analysis for the design of learning material.

Many universities, however, may be focussing on the wrong target group. The typical university student aged around 18-25 is the least likely person who would want to spend their time studying for a degree sitting in front of a computer screen. Such a student is more likely to want to get away from home and enjoy university life in all its aspects.

(Davies, 2007b)

Established distance-teaching universities have tended to focus on older people (aged 30-plus) returning to education and lacking the time to spend studying in the traditional way. Perhaps this is the group that online courses need to focus on too. “Silver surfers” (aged 60-plus, like myself) are another possible target group.

(Davies, 2007b)

These statements by Davies add a further connotation to ‘the students of the current generation’. One would automatically think, as the universities did, that the students in need of Web-based courses would fall into a specific group, namely 18 - 25 year-olds and would not really consider “silver surfers” as a viable target group to design courseware for. Davies’s observation illustrates the need to re-think how one conducts a needs analysis. If the needs analysis is flawed in the sense that it does not conduct a deep enough study of the target user, then it stands to reason that the application that results from the analysis will not be used, and that a lot of time, effort and money would have been wasted. In the same way that advertising has to tune into what a specific market wants and likes, the application has to tune in with what the identified user not only wants but likes. And this is where the human factor comes into the design of the application. One cannot just think about the cognitive dimension of the learner, namely what the learner is expected to learn from the teaching material, one also has to consider the “social and affective [what the learner likes, his interests, how he feels etc.] dimension” of the learner as well (Mariani, 1992) when designing any form of learning material, courseware included.

Although Bersin is referring to finding the correct “mix” in instruction to a “given business problem”, his observations sum up what must happen in teaching, so that it is relevant, effective and meaningful.

Now we know that different problems require different solutions (different mixes of media and delivery) – and we believe that the key is to apply the RIGHT MIX to a given business problem. Hence blended learning is effectively replacing e-learning.

(Bersin, 2003:1)

The “RIGHT MIX” (the use of capital letters stressing the importance of getting things right) in teaching means a few things. It is not only the right mix of content (the actual learning material) that has to be right, it is also determining the right mix of learning content and learner, so that the content is in synch with the learner’s needs and furthermore, it is also about determining the right mix or blend of presenting the material.

The reason why blended learning is gaining favour (“more respondents declared their approach to be eclectic” (Davies 2007b)) is that it is “descriptive” and not “prescriptive” (Mariani, 1992). In other words blending learning does not set out to teach in a prescribed manner and neither does it expect set results from the learner. Instead it aims to determine what would best fit the learning event. In this way blended learning achieves flexibility and, by being flexible, adds creativity, innovation and imagination to the learning event. At the same time the teacher, who is the one who will bring creativity, innovation and imagination to the learning, establishes a place for himself in the learning that is taking place.

With respect to the design of the application in this study, engaging the learner was an important consideration because it had to be determined how one could teach the content that was strictly grammar based, in a manner that would maintain interest. One could not presume that all the envisaged users, here chefs, restaurateurs and waitrons, would like grammar. The contrary would more than likely be true. The right mix of content (French terminology and food items), user participation with the content (cooking terminology with chefs or restaurateurs etc.), and method of presentation (for the individual chef or restaurateur’s use and/or for the culinary classroom) had to be arrived at.

### **3.2.2 The Use of the Cell Phone in Education**

In 3.2.1 the need to incorporate learner interest in learning material and the learning event was highlighted. In order to “engage the students of the current generation”, the teacher has to look at how the students spend their time. Short text messages (SMS) “continues to be a phenomenal success as the cheapest, quickest and easiest-to-use form of peer-to-peer mobile communication” (Rosy future, 2006). For this reason and because of its growing use in education, research into the use of the cell was deemed necessary and an option to be considered in the design of the application.

The CSIR's Meraka Institute has been working on MobilED, a project "investigating the positive use of mobile technologies and services for formal and informal learning" (Cell phones, 2006). Although the focus of the MobilED project is on cell phone use in schools only at this stage, it is an interesting concept to look at, especially if one is in the language teaching or CALL field. A chat facility such as MXit, a popular instant-messaging service using cell phones, as an example, could be most effectively used in language teaching and learning.

The audio-Wikipedia was the Institute's first module to be developed. This is an online encyclopaedia where anyone can upload and receive information via a cell phone.

Children send a short text message (SMS) with a key word to a cell phone number. In response, they receive a call-back and a speech synthesizer 'reads' an article on the subject. Both the fast forward and rewind functionalities can be used, almost like the old analogue tape recordings. An important addition is that children can also dictate information to the service to add their unique knowledge on a particular subject.

(Cell phones, 2006)

A MMS (mobile messages) content addition and delivery module is also being developed at the Meraka Institute as it is said that today's high-end cell phones have the same computing power of a mid-1990's PC and that many learners in South Africa have access to a cell phone (Cell phones, 2006).

With regard to the cell phone as a learning support tool, Merryl Ford, CSIR research group leader for ICT in Education, Youth and Gender, notes:

It seems a great pity that our children and teachers are not using one of the most accessible, affordable computing devices in the developing world in more positive ways. We ask ourselves whether innovations around this technology and its applications can ultimately lead to it being embraced as a learning support tool in a school environment.

(Cell phones, 2006)

The Mobile Messaging Futures 2007 – 2012 report predicts a good future for mobile messaging technologies, especially instant messaging and mobile email (Rosy future, 2006).

If one considers the above developments in relation to the findings of persons such as Rüschoff and Wolf, for example, who see learning as a process that must be “supported by a rich learning environment rooted in real life and authentic situations” (Buys, 2004:8), then one cannot but see the value of these developments in CALL. The digital age has become an integral part of daily life, education included.

Learning via the cell phone or MXit can take place in any location and at any time. It is a way of giving the learner personal attention and also of addressing his problem in a ‘private way’, as many learners are too shy to admit that there is something that they do not know, especially in front of their peers. In this way there can be a direct transfer of information and the learner can receive that information that is relevant to his particular need instantaneously and also on a one-to-one basis.

Blended learning using SMS is a fun and relevant way of learning and is a good way of stimulating learner motivation. The ability to send, read and respond to messages, reflect on responses, revise interpretations, and modify original assumptions and perceptions is a distinguishing characteristic of online teaching. (Randall *et al.*, 2002) Randall *et al.* add that “SMS is also the beginning of a change in education. Wireless is a particularly attractive option for blended learning” and that “[a] key driver of success in learning is motivation and SMS can achieve this because of its everyday use by students” (2002).

It was considered important to embrace the future in the design of the application, so as to prolong the life and thereby the usage of the application. A waitron or Culinary Art’s student would have easier access to a cell phone than to a computer or an Internet connection. The option to get answers quickly and effectively while compiling a menu becomes a reality with mobile messaging technologies. Using SMS or MXit, French cooking terminology could be taught with an element of fun, thereby inducing interest and motivation. As a scenario: students could send each other menus written in French, a Culinary Art’s teacher could ask the students to SMS him what they had for dinner in French or some needed culinary term could be accessed from a web-based application such as the one envisaged in this discussion.



### 3.2.3 The Human Element in Teaching

In CALL and in blended learning in particular, the human element, and specifically the individual human element, is crucial because each learner approaches the learning event with his own particular “weak” and “strong” points and his “own personal working style” (Mariani, 1992).

The importance of blended learning is that a particular blend is created to suit a particular need or style of learning (As described in 3.2.1). Here the human element entails both the teacher/educator and the learner/user. The teacher envisages the needs and characteristics of the target learner and sets out to create that special mix of method and content that will best suit his learner. The learner, in turn, seeks out that blend of content and instruction that will profit him the most in his learning.

The three main components of CALL are said to be “learner, language and computer” (Levy 1997:100). This definition does not include the teacher because the “role of the teacher in the actual implementation of CALL depends very much on the extent to which the teacher has been envisioned as having a significant role to play” (Levy 1997:100). Blended learning, however, establishes the teacher as a necessary component in language learning because the teacher exercises the thought process behind the mix of materials and technology.

The technology used affects the methodology employed and *vice versa*. Levy notes that in order to accommodate and use the new technology effectively, “some rethinking of the methodology is required” (Levy 1997: 222, 77). One needs to determine what works and what is no longer effective in both the method and the software used. A rethinking of established methodology is thus required. In this respect one can add Schaefermeyer cited in Levy (1997:108), who says that the focus should be on the ways of using software. To place the focus on the ‘use’ of the software and not on the software itself, highlights the need for the human element in methodology. The human element includes both the teacher and the learner. It is only the teacher or the learner who is able to determine what is needed or not and how to best use the technology to accommodate or realise that need.

The ways in which software can be used is possibly more important than the software itself. It is the “quality of the ‘match’ between the properties of the medium, the attributes of the users,

and the way in which it is implemented in a given context” that counts (Pennington cited in Levy, 1997:163). When the focus is on the use of technology and not on the technology itself, then the right balance is created and the content occupies its rightful place in the learning or instruction process.

The aim of the application envisaged was to address the specific need of a particular identified group (see 1.3). In order to effectively address the need, the application would have to consider the person/s experiencing the need in the design of both the content and the teaching. The learning style, motivation and characteristics of chefs or restaurateurs, for example, coupled with additional considerations such as their knowledge, or not, of French, their knowledge and experience of food and the time constraints imposed on them by their profession, would have to be taken into consideration, in order to determine how the application would be used.

These particular characteristics constitute the human element that has to feature in the design of the application and can be seen as the “global experiences of the whole personality” that come into play when one learns (Mariani, 1992). In this respect, Mariani (1992) suggests that in order to accommodate the individual learner and his “personal working style”, study skills have to be descriptive and not prescriptive. This implies that a certain amount of flexibility should be built into the application so as to accommodate the unique learning style of each learner.

In designing the application a certain amount of choice would have to be provided, so as to create the flexibility needed to accommodate the individual needs and learning styles with which the various chefs, restaurateurs or waitrons would approach the application. A set structure offering no choice would be too prescriptive and force the identified user into a learning style that would not necessarily be his.

### **3.3 Instructional Design**

The screen layout or design of an application determines how each screen of information will appear to learners and how learners will interact with the computer (Fenrich, 1997:209). Fenrich states that a “successful screen design adds a critical component to a successful

multimedia application” (1997:209). The components of an instructional multimedia application screen are: orientation information; presented material; direction and input area; feedback and error message area and control options (Fenrich, 1997:209). All these components must be presented in distinct, easily identified ways. He advises: “As a general rule, your screen designs should present the simplest possible displays” (1997:210).

Orientation information is necessary to prevent the user/learner from getting lost. It provides a reference point, can include page totals and appears on the screen’s top line (Fenrich, 1997:211). The screen design should incorporate presented material such as text, audio, graphics, video and animation in a “well organized, un-crowded, balanced, and visually interesting” way (Fenrich, 1997:211). Directions should be located in places on the screen where they are easy to find.

Feedback and error messages are important for the user/learner to see clearly his mistake. These messages should not be slotted into small openings between content and should be simple, meaningful and at all times motivational. Control options should also be on the bottom line of the screen, in a window or in a pull-down menu. These options should include some standard choices such as *exit*, *back*, or *forward* (Fenrich, 1997:213). The use of icons and menus must be relevant to the content offered and clearly demarcated.

Berners-Lee notes as well that:

As the size of the underlying information space increases, it becomes very difficult to fit the whole information structure on a screen. If the size is reduced to fit the screen, the details become too small to be seen. An alternative is to browse the large layout by scrolling and arc traversing. However, this tends to obscure the global structure. The goal should be to display both the details and the context smoothly integrated together in a single screen. Just displaying the structure to the user is not enough. To be really useful, the user should be able to get an idea of not only the structure but the actual contents of the nodes and the links by looking at the navigational views.

(1994)

A successful screen layout demands adequate planning in advance. Considerations such as screen size; colour palate; location of screen components; chunking of content, choice of multimedia, menu designs and so forth must be dealt with at the conception phase of the project. Fenrich (1997:221) advises that screen designs be set and tested in advance in order

to prevent wasted effort. Furthermore, a well designed application needs to illustrate consistency, predictability and has to be presented in a logical manner. Lynch and Horton (2002) recommend the use of a basic layout grid.

The researcher noted all the above recommendations when planning the application and after much perusal of current food displays and articles, chose to create a 'less is more' look for the overall design and feel of the application. At the same time it was important to her that the application was colourful yet tasteful and elegant and that it illustrated the current trends and look of food preparation and display.

### **3.3.1 Hypertext**

Ian Ritchie's defines 'hypertext' as "the term [that is] increasingly used to describe systems which allow highly interactive electronic documents to be created and published" (1992:41). Hypertext documents are non-linear and they allow links between parts of documentation or text in order to facilitate explanation, comment or criticism (Ritchie, 1992:41). A reader or learner moves from screen to screen following a set of predetermined links (Tolhurst, 1992:18). The links are highlighted 'key words' that the reader has learnt to recognise as being linked to more information (Tolhurst, 1992:18).

Whereas printed text forces the reader to proceed in a sequential manner, 'hypertext systems allow authors to create electronic paths through related material, to cross reference other documents, to annotate text and to create notes (Ritchie, 1992:41). In this respect one can add Tolhurst (1992:18) who states that in education, hypertext applications include electronic encyclopaedias, electronic story books and tutorials with links to explanations of terms and definitions or glossaries and applications with bibliographic information.

Jonassen sees the node, "which consists of chunks or fragments of text, graphics, video or other information" as the "most pervasive characteristic of hypermedia" (1990:5). Nodes or frames are "the basic unit of information storage" (Jonassen, 1990:5). Unlike the book/printed text which presents information as a continuous flow, "hypermedia places information into nodes that are interrelated to each other in some way" (Jonassen, 1990:5).

“One of the great strengths of hypertext, but also a potential source of weakness, is that it is essentially a formless medium. ... In order to help the reader to move about and locate information, the hypertext medium is found to require an extra graphic and ‘navigational’ level” (Walley cited in McKnight, 1993:8).

The “‘navigational’ level” that Walley is referring to, is the use of diagrams or some indication to the user as to where he is at any particular place in the application. There are various ways in which one could indicate the user’s location, namely a heading, banners that depict a section, different sections having different background colours or the use of graphics such as a book with pages that open and indicate where the user finds himself. In this respect one can add from Berners-Lee who states that:

[One] of the major problems with current hypermedia systems is being lost in hyperspace. ... The process of jumping from one location to another can easily confuse the learner. This is primarily a result of the user’s lack of knowledge of the overall structure of the information space. For this purpose overview diagrams or navigational views are very useful.

(1994)

Besides being “lost in hyperspace”, the learner, if afforded too much freedom of choice, may become lost in the content itself. A balance, therefore, should be created between learner control and the guidance that the application must offer (Tolhurst, 1992:20). Linked to the issue of learner control versus learner guidance is the idea of discovery learning or guided discovery learning (Tolhurst, 1992:23).

Discovery learning, (the learner learns by discovering information etc.) may also result in the learner becoming lost, therefore, a certain amount of orientation must be created by providing suitable navigational aids and structure, as well as, a “guided discovery environment” (the learner is guided through the content) (Tolhurst, 1992:23). Guided discovery means that the learner is led through the content but still has choice in what he would like to know. It is not “prescriptive” (Mariani, 1992) in that it does not force the learner through a set pattern and it does not then “focus on the product of the study activities” (Mariani, 1992), expecting a predetermined outcome.

The teacher must also view hypertext and how it can be used effectively and efficiently in education in a balanced and honest way. He must decide whether it is a “technology that will

revolutionise teaching, a useful tool for education, or ‘over hyped and over here’” (Whalley, 1993:7). If the malleability that a Hypertext system offers is used with creativity and thought, it can prove to be a most revolutionary aid in teaching and learning.

A menu has a fixed, traditional structure of its own which was found to be ideal for the underlying skeletal structure and hence navigation of the application. It was thought that a hypertext system could be an option because nodes of content could be effectively and efficiently used to provide the necessary background information required by the application. Information, namely French grammar, that was needed for the understanding of the exercises in the application but which could be considered too cumbersome to be incorporated in detail into the actual web pages, could be linked to and, thus, provide the exact grammatical knowledge at the exact place required. A basic exposition of the relevant grammar could be given on the web-page instead, followed by the relevant exercise.

Moreover, access to additional information ‘outside the exercises’ that could be needed for comprehension of the exercises, such as a Glossary, French to English Culinary Online Dictionary and additional culinary websites, could be just a click away. The use of a hypertext system was deemed an effective way of adding informational depth to the terminology being taught, thereby, stimulating learner motivation and learning.

It was also important to take cognisance of the fact that:

In print a big chunk of text can be scanned easily.... Hypertext does not re-create a print environment on a screen; rather, it offers a wholly different way of moving through and among texts. Because of this, hypertext can vastly improve the usability of texts within a screen (or frame) structure. But because the screen is so different from print, it must be understood that hypertext requires a different handling of text.

(Berners-Lee, 1994)

The application sets out to teach French cooking terminology. The teaching of the terminology entails a lot of vocabulary: for example, lists of expressions such as “*faire une daube*” (to make a casserole), lists of quantities, past participles, adjectives, colours, methods of preparing a dish, to mention some. In addition, the writing and understanding of the menu item does not depend on vocabulary alone but is very dependent on grammar. In order to accommodate everything in a manner that would optimize teaching and the writing of the menu item in French, and still maintain a “user-friendly” and “usable” screen (Hugo

1994:100), much attention has to be given to the layout and chunking of the text on the screen. The use of hypertext may be seen as a viable solution to dealing with a lot of text that has to be taught but that cannot be accommodated effectively and aesthetically on a single screen. This use would create additional screens where the content could be laid out in a manner more digestible to the user and by implication more conducive to learning.

### **3.3.2 The Human Factor in CALL**

It is vital at all times to see the user as the human beneficiary in the application because then an awareness of the human element is created. If this awareness is achieved then the focus is automatically placed on the content and not on the technology (Hugo, 1994:97). Hugo (1994:97) sees human factors and usability as the only proven keys to successful application development. The success or not of the application is mirrored in the critical relationship that develops between it and the user. It is the user who will like the application and use it. If he does not like the application, then he will not use it and the application will then be of no value to him. By implication, then, the application would not have met the user's need that it set out to meet. One can refer to the example that Davies (2007b) gives of the Universities misdiagnosis of student's needs, as mentioned in 3.2.1. They had neglected to include the interests and lifestyle of students, in their needs analysis. Hugo (1994:98) notes the particular importance of the user's personality, attitude, abilities and predisposition in the design of software.

In designing the content and the angle of approach of an application, a mental picture of the user has to be created and held to. One cannot please all users but one needs to aim at pleasing as many as possible. Considering the mental 'picture' of the chef, the restaurateur and the waitron, as well as, the professional ambience in which they work, a decision was made to create a stylistic, refined and uncluttered application, where what was sought, namely the comprehension and practical use of French cooking terminology, occupied the principal focus.

### **3.3.3 Usability**

Hugo draws attention to the difference between 'user-friendly' and 'usability' (1994:100). He states that in practice 'user-friendliness' merely entails making the screen "look more

aesthetically pleasing”. It does not honestly strive to meet the user’s needs. Usability aims to “achieve harmony” “amongst the worker, the task, the tools or facilities and the environment” and may be defined as “the extent to which a user can exploit the potential utility of a system” (Hugo, 1994:100). He notes further that “usability [is] becoming a key design issue, especially for complex interactive systems such as multimedia” (Hugo, 1994:100). Thus, according to Hugo, an interface with a good layout and beautiful graphics does not necessarily indicate that the application will meet the user’s needs and, thereby, be of use to him. Usability, on the other hand, stresses the use of the application that meets the user’s needs. When this is achieved, a balance is created between what the application promises and what the user expects.

Hugo (1994:101) warns that one should not confuse the message and the medium and say that “the medium is the message” because, according to him “the medium is not the message!” In this respect, he quotes *Multimedia Producer*, where it is stated that “the message is the message” and advises that successful applications focus on “presenting the client’s message clearly and cleanly, while minimising the tendency to let high tech glitz interfere” (Hugo, 1994:101). One cannot fall into the trap and believe that because the application looks good that the content will be good and that it will address the user’s needs. In the same way that one cannot always judge a book by its cover, one cannot judge an application by all its bells and whistles.

If the message is clear, then the role of the computer in the instruction is clear and a working relationship results. In other words “[where] the message and the medium are in synch, learning is more likely to occur” (Healey, 2000:2). The goal of a multimedia computer application is to communicate with its user, be it through a game, a tutorial or a video insert. If successful communication is achieved by the application, then everything pertaining to effective and efficient education falls naturally into place: the application acts as the medium for communication, the user benefits pedagogically from it, and the teacher occupies his rightful and natural place as educator.

In the design of the application, the developer would have to place the main focus on what the application sets out to achieve, namely to teach French cooking terminology in order to write menus in French. Any embellishment would have to take second place to the intent. The use



of beautiful graphics, sound and/or video, unless part of the message, would not necessarily guarantee that the intent of the application would be realized.

### **3.3.4 Relevance of Message and Material**

Relevance is a key factor in learner or user motivation (Keller in Alessi, 1991:32). This can be achieved firstly, by ensuring that the content offered supports the focus of the specific subject or discipline, and secondly that the content is relevant to the learner or user's needs.

Having decided to limit my enquiry of French culinary terminology to the demands and constraints imposed by a menu written in French, I became aware that the content would have to be chosen with a certain amount of rigour but at the same it needed to be flexible enough to allow for the creative flair of the user. Access to a dictionary of French-English cooking terms and a glossary of French culinary phrases etc. could be provided in the application so that the user could add new terminology to what he already knew, and could thereby adapt, apply and use in the writing of his own menu what he had learnt. It would be desirable if the French cooking vocabulary provided and the French menu construction learnt could become part of the user's 'kitchen equipment' and become the means whereby he could express what he had created with food.

To ensure relevance, the French terminology and vocabulary to be taught, would have to be carefully selected. An analysis would first have to be made of what was being served today on menus in restaurants. This analysis could include both traditional and current dishes. The thought behind this was that the learning material would have to meet the learner's needs, and where relevant, the trends in his profession/field of interest. Besides learning how to write and read a menu in French, the user would have the additional advantage of being able to use the menu items presented in the exercises, immediately and with confidence, in his own menus. By implication, it was thought that the user's confident and correct use of these select menu items would not only foster motivation but would, in addition, encourage further exploration and learning and thus use of French culinary terminology.

### 3.3.5 The Navigation

Next to content, navigation in any learning context is of paramount importance. In printed material the navigation is visual and quickly assessed: the ability to page through the book, the delineation of content, the number of pages, chapter headings and the individual numbering of pages all give an idea of the material and scope of what is being proposed.

In a Web-based multimedia application the navigation is no longer as visual. Special care thus has to be taken so as to enable the user to continuously “see” where he is, how he got there, where he is to proceed and where he has been. The user also has to work out what is in the application, as well, (Gimeno-Sanz, 2006:4) so as to get an idea of the content, in order to ascertain whether he will benefit from it or not. This information must be provided succinctly, usually in the form of buttons, on the home page.

The intuitive placement of buttons, the consistency of commands and key words, and clear instructions, all facilitating and promoting user friendly navigation, should result in the confident involvement of the learner with the content. Optimal learning can also only take place if the learner has full confidence in how to use the technology in front of him. “The energy of the learner [(user)] should be devoted to the content of the materials and not to understanding how to use them” (Gimeno-Sanz, 2006:4). Learner confidence is maintained when he does not have to experience the frustration of being unable to successfully and efficiently navigate the application.

Therefore, when designing an application, careful notice should be taken of the underlying navigation of the content. Each lesson should be individually structured from a set point of departure (what the learner already knows); towards an end goal (what the learner is expected to have learnt at the end of the lesson). Then each lesson, in turn, should be linked either linearly or hierarchically so as to form the greater unit, namely the overall content that is to be learnt. The value of the content depends on the value of each lesson. In other words each lesson must be so structured that it not only enhances the learning value of the content as a whole but also that it does not detract from the value of the whole by being poorly constructed or irrelevant. At the same time, each lesson must be part of the idea behind the content. In order to arrive at the successful realisation of the idea, an underlying navigational structure has to be conceived from the onset and adhered to. Gestalt theory has it that the whole

determines the nature of its parts, but at the same time the “parts cannot be understood if considered in isolation from the whole” (Levy, 1997:66).

The French cooking terminology to be acquired contains a lot of vocabulary, specific culinary phrases, quantities and so forth. Initial investigation of the problem identified by this research revealed the unsuccessful practice of presenting the Culinary Art’s student with lists of unstructured French cooking terminology to learn. Taking this finding into consideration, it could be proposed that in order to present the terminology in question, in a manner inducible to successful learning, a structure would have to be found, so that the terminology could be grouped in such a way that it could be learnt meaningfully, thereby making it easier to remember and use.

A ready-made and traditionally accepted navigational structure is available in the layout of the various courses on a menu. In addition, the primary research undertaken for this project (1.4) revealed that the teaching of cooking theory and food presentation is divided into accepted modules or study courses such as ‘Fish’, ‘Desserts’, ‘Cheeses’ etc. In other words, the menu and Culinary Art’s curriculum each has an inherent navigational structure of its own. Both these structures could be incorporated very successfully and effectively into the overall design of the application envisaged, readily providing both the general and the specific navigation.

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## Chapter 4

### *Application Content and Design*

#### **4.1 Introduction**

*The French Menu*, an interactive, multimedia web-based application that is information orientated, teaches the specific skill of writing a menu in French. It provides French culinary vocabulary and terminology required to write menu items. The general rules needed for constructing menus are also given.

The grammar required to understand how the menu item has to be constructed, is presented in an easy to comprehend manner with examples. Interactive exercises are provided with each grammatical explanation. The instructions and teaching content are in English. The culinary vocabulary and terminology is given in French with the English translation.

A comprehensive Grammar Aid, that provides additional in-depth information on the grammar taught in the application, is readily available. The English to French per topic Food Glossary provides the French translation for most of the vocabulary and terminology needed to compile a menu in French, while the French to English Food Glossary is a comprehensive list of French culinary vocabulary and terminology with English translation. Advice on how to consult a French Dictionary is also given. A Grammar Glossary is provided as an update on grammatical terms referred to in the application.

The structure of the application follows the traditional layout of a menu, namely ‘Starters’, ‘Fish’, ‘Main Course’, ‘Cheeses and Salads’, and ‘Desserts’. The grammar taught is course specific enabling the application to be used for reference purposes as well.

The software used to compile the application is Dreamweaver MX 2004.

## 4.2 Content

### 4.2.1 Grammar Background

Unlike English nouns, all nouns in French have gender. Nouns are either masculine or feminine. Nouns that refer to males (people or animals) are regarded as masculine and nouns that refer to females (people or animals) are regarded as feminine. Masculine nouns are accompanied by the definite masculine article *le* (the), while feminine nouns are accompanied by the definite feminine article *la* (the) (Coffman, 1973:1). The gender of inanimate objects is determined by word endings, for example a word ending in *aison* (*la maison* – house) will be feminine while a word ending in *eau* (*le couteau* – knife) will be masculine. In French mistakes in gender are serious and should be avoided (Whitmarsh. 1971:255).

The plural of most nouns is formed by adding *s* to the noun. The plural definite article for both male and female nouns is *les*.

#### 4.2.1.1 *The gender and number of the menu item*

The principal element in the menu item is the main portion, part or piece that is undergoing the cooking or preparation process. It can be fish, a meat, a dessert etc. This principal element is the most important part in writing a menu item because all the cooking terminology used, describes this item. In the menu item ‘roast leg of lamb’, ‘lamb’ is the principal noun with the words ‘roast leg’ providing information about the lamb, for example what cut it is and that it has been roasted.

In French, before one can even begin to describe the main item, the gender of the item has to be determined. This step is very important in menu item compilation because the gender that is determined here, affects the entire writing of the item. Every part of the sentence that is to describe the noun must agree with it in gender. It is therefore crucial to get the gender right.

At the same time that the gender of the noun is being determined, the number of the noun must also be determined. One has to see if the noun is singular or plural. To determine

whether the noun is singular or plural is as important as determining the gender of the noun. All articles and adjectives that are used to describe the noun, must agree with it in gender and number.

Gender and number are the most important aspects in writing a menu item because if a mistake is made here, it affects the entire menu item. Most mistakes in menu compilation occur here and result from either the gender or the number of the article or adjective not being in agreement with the noun. The use of a dictionary is recommended to determine the correct gender and number of the noun.

The grammatical content of the entire application revolves around agreement in gender and number with the noun.

#### ***4.2.1.2 The structure of the menu item***

When describing a menu item the following structure can be used as a guideline:

**Principal element + method of preparation + accompanying garnishes**

The principal element consists of the determinant, the adjective, the noun (portion, piece, cut or preparation) and ‘of something’, for example: The small fillet of fish. The determinant, in turn, consists of the definite article, the indefinite article and the partitive (portions of something). The method of preparation consists of the adjective, colours and past participles. It must be noted that in French there are adjectives that precede the noun and others that follow the noun. The accompanying garnishes describe what the noun is made of, or served with. This structure of the menu item is illustrated in Table 1 below:

<b>Determinant</b>	<b>article that precedes noun</b>	<b>noun</b>	<b>made of something</b>	<b>adjectives that follow noun and past participles</b>	<b>served with</b>
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**Table 1: Structure of the Menu Item**

The structure depicted in Table 1 also shows the order in which the learning content and exercises have been arranged. The user works through the content in the above set order. The exercises are specifically arranged in the depicted order so as to allow the user to get a feel for the flow of the menu item, and to get the correct order right. In this way, with use, the feel for the order of the menu item, becomes a mental template that the chef fills in with different vocabulary, to suit the various dishes that he prepares. The new terminology will be added to the known structure of the menu item, resulting in better retention (Sólrún, 2001). The chef will recall *le civet de lapin* (wild rabbit stew) far better than the individual words *civet* (stew) and *lapin* (wild rabbit).

#### 4.2.2 The Structure of the Content

The literature review conducted with regard to language learning and teaching for this study indicated that “learners were active participants in the learning event”<sup>5</sup> and highlighted the need for authentic tasks<sup>6</sup> to be provided by the teaching. Furthermore, it indicated that optimal language learning occurs when the word to be learnt is associated with an “image” or “aural cue”<sup>7</sup>.

The identified, envisaged users of this application were adults and the language to be acquired was being learnt for professional reasons (See 1.5.2). The readings for the literature review indicated that adult learners tend to organize the information that they learn<sup>8</sup> and that knowledge of how the application is to be used<sup>9</sup> was essential.

Taking the research findings into account it was decided to structure the content around what the envisaged users were familiar with, namely the traditional layout of a menu and the manner in which food is classified in cooking books and taught in culinary institutions, as was

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<sup>5</sup> “Learning is viewed as “an active, creative, and socially interactive process” (Scott, 1987:4 cited in Rüschoff, [S.a]). (See ‘Constructivist Learning Theory’: 2.2)

<sup>6</sup> “[The] best learning results are achieved if learners work as much as possible with authentic and semi-authentic materials which are being put in the context of authentic, real-world-based situations or at least simulations and thus supported by authentic tasks (Rüschoff, [S.a]). (See ‘Constructivism and Constructionism’:2.3)

<sup>7</sup> “When context is brought to bear, the learner’s past experience is associated and schema are active, semantic processing takes place – a very deep level” (Healey, 2000). (See ‘Approaches to Teaching Vocabulary’:2.5.1)

<sup>8</sup> Adults tend to organize the information that they learn. Information to be learnt should be presented in an organized manner with an indication how one thing relates to another thing (Sólrún, 2001). (See ‘Constructivist Learning Theory’: 2.2)

<sup>9</sup> “Thus, to design an effective language course, it is critical to know why a learner decides to study a second language and under what circumstances she or he is going to use it” (Jiang, 2000). (See ‘Needs Analysis’:2.7.1)

identified in the primary research. The structure inherent in the menu and the accepted classification of food provided a framework into which the learning content could be arranged in a systematic and practical fashion.

The traditional dinner menu is divided into five courses: 'Starters', 'Fish', 'Main Course', 'Cheeses and Salads' and 'Desserts'. It was decided to use the layout of the menu as the overall structure for the French cooking terminology to be learnt in the application. The terminology grouped in this way would make it more comprehensible and more manageable to learn. Instead of providing lists of unrelated French cooking terminology, the structure provides sections of interrelated vocabulary. In the 'Main Course' section, for example, the user would find vocabulary that relates to meat, such as 'grilled', 'rare' or 'fillet'. One would not use these words to describe a cake or a salad. Conversely a meat would not be 'frosted' (to describe a cake) or 'tossed' (to describe a salad): words located in the sections 'Desserts' and 'Cheeses and Salads' respectively.

In addition, the idea of using the layout of the menu as the main structure for organizing the content is in theme with the application's objective, namely the writing and understanding of menus written in French. The content is divided into two sections: the French cooking terminology to be learnt and the grammar required to arrange the terminology so that a menu item (dish) can be written correctly and described adequately. The grammar and terminology are taught in an organized way so as to appeal to the identified adult users (Sólrún, 2001).

Furthermore, the grammar is taught as part of a menu item so that the learner always sees the structure of the menu item. In addition, the user will be able to re-use the menu items taught in the application when writing his menus, as the items chosen are general dishes that can appear on any menu. French dishes were not chosen exclusively, because the aim of the application is the writing of menus in French and not French menus or French cuisine. In the needs analysis research was conducted to see what was appearing on menus in restaurants today, so that the content offered would be relevant, thereby more effectively meeting the chef's needs.



### 4.2.3 Lessons and Exercises

As mentioned above, the overall content to be learnt is divided into the five sections that represent the traditional layout of a dinner menu: ‘Starters’, ‘Fish’, ‘Main Course’, ‘Cheeses and Salads’, and ‘Desserts’. Each of these sections is in turn divided into six sub-sections: ‘Determinant’, ‘Adjectives that precede the noun’, ‘Noun’, ‘Of something’, ‘Adjectives that follow’ and ‘Made with/served with’. These six sub-sections are the steps needed to compile and write a menu item correctly in French, and form the grammar teaching component of the content. The six steps are repeated in each main section and the same teaching content is used throughout. The terminology taught is arranged per section: terminology used for puddings is to be found in ‘Desserts’, while that used for shellfish will be found in the section ‘Fish’, to give examples.

The content taught is identical for each section so that it forms a study unit of its own. This has been done to accommodate the way the curriculum is structured at a culinary art’s institution. The application can, thus, be used by the student to tie in with the module that he is studying. In other words, if the student is learning about fish and the preparation of fish dishes, he need only work through the section ‘Fish’ to acquire the terminology he needs.. He would not have to work through the entire application first. At the same time, he will be taught how to compile and understand menu items pertaining to fish, written in French.

Should the user work through the entire application, section by section he will be taught the same grammar but different French cooking terminology. In this way the grammar will be revised each time so that it will be understood and learnt better. To prevent the content from becoming boring, different French cooking terminology is presented per section. It is important that the grammar is revised because the correct sequence needed to write the menu item has to be learnt and adhered to. ‘The Location Table’, indicating this sequence appears at the top of each page so that the learner is constantly made aware of the order that needs to be followed. Mistakes in menu compilation occur when the sequence under discussion is not adhered to.

It must be noted here, that some food items may be used for more than one section, as indicated by ‘shrimp’ in both tables 2 and 3 below. This had to be considered in the arrangement of the terminology so as to best represent what happens in practice: the chef

might decide to use shrimps as a starter for one menu, and as part of a fish dish in another menu.

#### The Definite Article - *L'article défini*

SINGULAR	SINGULAR	SINGULAR	PLURAL
Masculine	Feminine	Before a vowel or mute 'h'	
<b>le</b>	<b>la</b>	<b>l'</b>	<b>les</b>
<b>le melon</b> (melon)	<b>la crevette</b> (shrimp)	<b>l'escargot</b> (land snail)	<b>les pâtés</b> (pâtés)

**Table 2: The Definite Article for 'Starters'.**

#### The Definite Article - *L'article défini*

SINGULAR	SINGULAR	SINGULAR	PLURAL
Masculine	Feminine	Before a vowel or mute 'h'	
<b>le</b>	<b>la</b>	<b>l'</b>	<b>les</b>
<b>le calmar</b> (calamari)	<b>la crevette</b> (shrimp)	<b>l'écrevisse</b> (fresh water crayfish)	<b>les filets de poisson</b> (fish fillets)

**Table 3: The Definite Article for 'Fish'.**

The terminology used in all the exercises is, as far as possible, section specific with the menu items being carefully selected. Each menu item was chosen with the following considerations. It had to represent the section being dealt with, i.e. it had to be a 'meat' dish to be in the 'Meat' section, for example, it had to be a dish that could be used by the user in his menu, and it had to effectively and adequately reflect the grammar being taught in the step.

The teaching content for each step in each section is given on a separate page with the appropriate banner (The banner will be discussed under 'The Design' in 4.3.1.3). A basic exposition of the grammar needed to comprehend the step in the menu compilation is provided. A more detailed version of this grammar is to be found in the 'Grammar Aid'. Two levels of comprehensiveness and difficulty are presented, thus, so as to best accommodate both the non-academic and the more academically-minded user as discussed in 2.5 d.

These grammar options allow for flexibility to be built into the application. The learning content is structured in such a way that the teaching provided is “descriptive” and not “prescriptive” (Mariani, 1992) so as to best meet the individual learning style of the envisaged chef, restaurateur or waitron. Further flexibility in presentation and learning option is achieved in the application through the use of hypertext. The user is not forced through a set pattern or path (Mariani, 1992) and may choose what he would like to know. This consideration was an important factor in determining how the application is to be used. Depending on his need, the chef can use the application for both study and reference purposes.

In the application each section of teaching material is concluded with the relevant exercise. The exercises are presented on a different page so as to provide the user with the option of completing the exercise or not. If the application were to be used later as a reference source, the user, once he has completed the application, might not wish to redo the exercises.

The rationale for the exercises will be discussed here with the teaching content, because it facilitates description of them. The discussion will focus on the first section, namely ‘Starters’. The same teaching material and method was also used for ‘Fish’, ‘Main Course’, ‘Cheeses and Salads’ and ‘Desserts’. These sections will not be discussed here to avoid repetition.

#### ***4.2.3.1 Exercises in the ‘Starters’ lesson***

##### **4.2.3.1.1 Determinant**

The determinant section is divided into four parts: ‘Gender and the Definite Article’, ‘Plural’, ‘Indefinite Article’ and ‘The Partitive’. An introductory page to the section with links to the four parts of the lesson is provided.

The reason for this division is that each part necessitated its own explanation and it would have been too confusing for the learner to have it presented as one lesson. In addition, this would have resulted in a lot of text on one screen, forcing the user to scroll through the material, thereby causing him to become frustrated with the application. Too much learning

content presented in the first lesson, would also make the user think twice about continuing with the application, especially if he were not inclined to like grammar.

In the ‘Determinant’ all the exercises follow the same format. It was decided to keep the same exercise format so that the focus would be on the content to be learnt and not on how to do the exercise. A time limit of two minutes has been set for the exercises to make them more challenging. General feedback is given.

### **Determinant/ Gender**

In this lesson, the user is introduced to gender in French. The definite article is described with gender because the two go together. Tables are provided for explanation and reference purposes. The user’s attention is drawn to using a French dictionary because the use of a dictionary is important in order to correctly determine the gender of the noun.

The exercise is a matching exercise where the user has to determine which definite article to use. The aim of the exercise is to enable the user to make the necessary connection. He will have to choose the masculine definite article *le* if the noun is masculine singular and the feminine definite article *la* if the noun is feminine singular. He is also introduced to the contracted form of the article, *l’*, before a vowel or mute ‘h’.

### **Determinant/Plural**

In this lesson, the user is introduced to the plural. The user has to get the both the gender and number of the noun correct before he can proceed to compile the menu item. A table showing how the plural ending is formed is provided.

In the exercise the user has to determine which plural article matches which plural noun. He must take particular note of the noun endings because this is what he must look out for in order to determine the number of the noun.

The developer had to decide whether to teach the definite and indefinite article and the partitive before or after introducing the plural. She thought it best to teach the plural

immediately after the gender in order to promote the concept of 'gender' and 'number' always going together in menu item compilation.

### **Determinant/ Indefinite article**

The user is introduced to the indefinite article in the same way that he has been introduced to the definite article. The method of presentation remains the same with just the content changing. Tables are provided as in the previous exercises and the user is reminded to look out for both gender and number.

### **Determinant/Partitive**

The partitive has to be taught when teaching cooking terminology because one eats part of something, for example, some grapes, some yoghurt. The presentation of the content is the same as was done in the preceding lessons and the exercise operates in the same way as the previous exercises. Once again the user is told to look out for gender and number.

#### **4.2.3.1.2 Adjectives that precede the noun**

Once the noun, (portion, part, piece, cut or preparation) and its gender is determined, the next step is to describe the noun. In French there are a few adjectives that precede the noun, but the majority follow the noun. A list of the adjectives that precede the noun is provided in the content. The user is told the golden rule, namely that all adjectives must agree in gender and number with the noun. The user is shown how to make the adjective feminine and plural.

The exercise concentrates on making the adjective agree in gender and number. The exercise consists of six questions, each with four possibilities: masculine singular, feminine singular, masculine plural and feminine plural. These are the four possibilities that the noun can be. The user has to choose the adjective that agrees with the noun in both gender and number. Explicit feedback is provided in this section because it is crucial that the learner knows how to make the agreement.

Should the user want to know more about adjectives, a link is provided to the Grammar Aid where a more detailed explanation of the adjective is given, as adjectives need to be used constantly to describe the portion, piece, cut or preparation.

#### **4.2.3.1.3 The noun**

The noun is the most important part in menu compilation. Everything must agree with it in number and gender. Therefore, the first step that must be taken before one can start compiling the menu item is to determine the number and gender of the noun. This is best done by consulting a dictionary as there are words that pertain to food that sound the same but are written differently. There are also nouns that vary in meaning according to gender and some food items may only be written in the plural. The user's attention is drawn to this and examples are provided.

The exercise is a dictionary-based exercise where the user has to look up the noun he needs. The format is a crossword and the clues are the English food items. The user has to go to the section specified in the English to French per topic Food Glossary and find the French translation. This exercise has the dual purpose of making the user look up the vocabulary that he needs and also shows him how to use the English to French per topic Food Glossary.

General feedback is provided in this section.

#### **4.2.3.1.4 Of something**

In menu compilation the main noun must come first. It is followed by *de* and then the noun epithet. The noun epithet describes the preceding noun and provides information about the dish, for example what it is made of.

In the content the user's attention is drawn to how *de* is used and examples are given. The warning is also given that the user must not confuse *de* with the partitive *du* or *de la* or *des*. The exercise given is a mixed-up sentence exercise. The user must learn where *de* comes in the menu item.

#### **4.2.3.1.5 Adjectives that follow the noun**

The same exercise is given as was provided for the adjectives that precede the noun. It was decided not to introduce another exercise in case it confused the user and this exercise worked well because explicit feedback could be given on agreement in gender and number. The most important consideration in the exercise is to get the agreement in gender and number correct. Colour and past participles are also used in the exercise to describe the noun. In French most colours and all past participles that describe the noun, follow the noun.

A link to the past participle section is available. No link to a specific past participle group is made because the past participles fall into groups such as dairy, eggs, vegetables and the past participles for fish, meat and poultry can also be used in more than one section. It was thought that the better option would be to provide a link to the past participle section in ‘Grammar Aid’, so that the user can choose which past participles he wants to use.

#### **4.2.3.1.6 Made with/served with**

The word ‘with’ is usually translated as ‘avec’ in French. When describing the accompaniment to a meal, ‘with’ is written as ‘à’ and is followed by the appropriate definite article: *le, la, l’* or *les*. Examples are given how to use this construction and the necessary tables are provided.

The exercise is a mix and match exercise as was used in the ‘Determinant’ exercises. The same exercise was kept because it worked well. The aim of the exercise is to make the correct match in terms of gender and number.

#### **4.2.3.1.7 Compiling your menu**

The concluding chapter in the teaching content is ‘Your Menu’. Here the user is provided with the format of a menu and the five courses that he has worked through are given in one lesson. This lesson stands on its own and does not form part of the five sections that are addressed in the content. Four exercises are provided for each of the courses taught. The exercises are mix up sentence exercises as were given in the section ‘Of something’. The aim

of this exercise is for the user to put all that he has learnt into the correct order and to successfully compile a menu item. The menu items chosen can be used by the chef when compiling his menu. He will finish the application having gained something that he knows how to use and which he can adapt, using the knowledge gained in the lessons. The aim of this lesson is, thus, to conclude the learning content and to enable the user to consolidate his learning by applying all that he has learnt. As a conclusion, it creates a balance with the introduction that precedes the teaching section.

The exercises were created with 'Hot Potatoes'. This software enables the developer to create interactive Web-based teaching exercises which can be delivered to any computer, equipped with a browser that is connected to the Internet.

#### **4.2.4 Grammar Aid**

A Grammar Aid has been provided to augment the content provided in the teaching section of this application. A more comprehensive version of the content is thus available. In the lesson content of the application, only that information that was necessary to understand the six steps of menu compilation is given. The user, after having worked through the content and the exercises provided in the application, will be able to construct the menu item that he needs. However, should there be some content that he wishes to know more about, the 'Grammar Aid' is always available to him.

##### ***4.2.4.1 Lesson content***

The 'Grammar Aid' provides a more comprehensive look at the determinant, all adjectives, nouns, 'Made of something' and 'Served with/ made with'. A section on verbs and past participles is provided. The French verb is not addressed in the content as it does not have any direct bearing on the compilation of a menu item. The reason for its inclusion here is that the past participle is formed from the verb. A past participle is the second part of the compound past tense of the verb. This section provides background information on how the past participle is formed. A comprehensive list of past participles that are used to describe food is provided. The user can always refer to the list while he is writing his menu.



#### **4.2.4.2 Grammar terminology**

This section is an update for grammar items such as articles and nouns. It gives information on the French definite and indefinite article, contractions, how to use capital letters for writing menu items, and information on h-aspirate and mute. This is background information that is useful to the content.

#### **4.2.4.3 Past participles**

Direct links to the following past participle groups are given: ‘Dairy’, ‘Eggs’, ‘Fish’, ‘Meat’, ‘Poultry’, ‘Soups and Vegetables’. In each of these links examples are given how to form the past participle. The user can either access the past participles here or via the verb section

#### **4.2.4.4 Seasons, months, days**

Vocabulary for seasons, months and days is provided as these terms are often used in menus. The chef might want to prepare a menu for a fiftieth birthday or to celebrate a special time of the year such as Spring, and create a ‘Spring Menu’. In some restaurants the menus change on a daily basis with a menu for Monday or a menu for Friday, as examples.

#### **4.2.4.5 Numbers**

Vocabulary for numbers is provided for use in menu item compilation. Numbers may be used to describe a dish such as a ‘Three fruit flan’ (*Tarte aux trois fruits*).

#### **4.2.4.6 Colours**

A table of the various colours used in menu compilation is provided. Colours operate as adjectives in menu compilation as they are used to describe food for example: a green salad (*une salade verte*), red currants (*les groseilles rouges*), black coffee (*le café noir*) or a French (green) bean (*un haricot vert*).

#### ***4.2.4.7 Table of terms for use in menu compilation***

Useful set expressions that can be used in menu compilation are provided. Expressions such as ‘in the style of (my mother)’ (*à la façon de (ma mère)*), ‘from the garden’ (*du jardin*) are given.

#### ***4.2.4.8 Typing of French accents***

Advice and a table for typing French accents are provided. Often menus items are correctly compiled but typed without the words that require accents being accentuated. This occurs especially with writing the preposition *à*. Without an accent ‘a’ is a verb (third person singular of the verb ‘*avoir*’ – ‘to have’).

#### ***4.2.4.9 The use of the dictionary***

The use of a French/English dictionary in menu compilation is recommended because one has to determine the correct gender and number of the noun before one can start to construct a menu item. The dictionary gives the gender and number of the noun. It also states whether the word is a culinary word and gives examples of its use.

Advice is provided in the Grammar Aid on how to use a French/English dictionary and how to look up a culinary word. A link to the above is made in the ‘Noun’ section of the exercises, because the use of a dictionary is suggested here in order to ascertain the gender and number of the noun.

#### **4.2.5 Glossary**

In the glossary section of the application, the English to French per topic food glossary is provided. Here vocabulary is arranged per topic: ‘mushrooms’, ‘sugar and pastry related spices’, ‘parts of a bird’ and so forth. In the section relating to ‘parts of a bird’, for example, the French vocabulary for ‘wings’, ‘breasts’, ‘thighs’ and ‘drumsticks’ is given. The user goes straight to the topic that he needs the vocabulary for and chooses what he requires.

Set culinary expressions and terminology are provided. Should the chef wish to know the French for ‘a sauce with lemon juice and parsley’, he can go to the section on ‘Sauces’. Here he will find that the name for his sauce is ‘*la sauce poulette*’.

**Velouté sauce with tomato purée:** *la sauce Aurore*  
**Velouté sauce with white mushrooms :** *la sauce allemande* (allemand = German (feminine))  
**Sauce suprême with meat glaze (ivory coloured):** *la sauce ivoire*  
**Sauce with lemon juice and parsley:** *la sauce poulette*

**Figure 1: English to French per Topic Food Glossary**

In the French to English Food Glossary, French cooking vocabulary is listed alphabetically. If the chef wishes to know the English translation for an ingredient or dish, he finds the name of his ingredient or dish with the English translation next to it.

**Aneth:** dill.  
**Anise étoilé:** (Anis étoilé) star anise; also called badiane,  
**Ange à cheval:** angel on horseback; grilled bacon-wrapped oyster.  
**Anglaise, à l’:** English style, plainly cooked.  
**Anguille (au vert):** eel; (poached in herb sauce).

**Figure 2: French to English Food Glossary**

(Wells, 2007)

### **4.3 The Design**

*The French Menu* is a web-based application that makes use of hypertext. Links are created that allow the user to navigate with ease through the learning content.

The application is divided into seven sections: An introduction, five content sections and a conclusion. The Introduction: ‘The French Menu’ provides general background information on the menu. The five content sections, as discussed above, are: ‘Starters’, ‘Fish’, ‘Main Course’, ‘Cheeses and Salads’ and ‘Desserts’. The conclusion ‘Your Menu’ enables the learner to apply what he has learnt in the content section. Optional links are provided to a ‘Grammar Aid’ and ‘Glossary’.

### 4.3.1 The Look and Feel of the Application

The developer wanted the design of the application to capture the refined elegance that epitomizes what fine dining and French cuisine represent, with an appeal for the professional in the culinary arts industry. The aim of *The French Menu* is to teach the specific skills of understanding and writing a menu in French.

The design of the application is information orientated in that French cooking terminology can be quickly accessed from the 'Glossary' and 'Grammar Aid'. At the same time the content is strictly grammar based with the fundamentals of French Grammar, with the exception of the French verb, being taught. The approach to the teaching is firmly grounded in the didactic principles that pertain to foreign language teaching with emphasis on language learnt for occupational purposes.

#### 4.3.1.1 CD cover



Figure 3: The CD Cover

The user's first meeting with the application occurs when he sees the application's cover (Fig. 3). The design of the cover is important because it is here that the first impression of the application and course is created. This initial impression will influence the user's approach to the content. If the cover piques his interest, he will be more positively inclined to know what is inside and *vice versa*.

The cover must provide some clue to the application, and to what the application promises to deliver. The cover of *The French Menu* has only two graphics on it: the picture of the chef with a satisfied look on his face and the finished product, the finely crafted dish on a neatly set table. The glass of red wine, suggestive of French dining, occupies its rightful place on the table.

The name of the application stands proudly on the cover, written in such a way that the word 'Menu' occupies the principal focus, and the word 'French', the secondary focus. The main focus of the application is to teach the French in the menu, and not the French menu itself. Between the chef and his proudly prepared dish, are two gold lines. The gold colour of the lines ties in with the gold colour used throughout the application's content. The colour gold was identified to be very much present in the recipe books and menus currently in use (Dangereux, 2004, Morris, 2006 and McGrath, 2003), illustrating the refined elegance of the good cuisine that is in demand.

Between the two gold lines stands the intent of the application, namely teaching the writing and understanding of the menu written in French: the identified solution to the perceived gap in the catering industry. Two lines are given, symbolic of the bridge which the application aims to be. A single line would have illustrated a dividing line, not the intent of the application. This use of these lines is continued in the banners to maintain consistency.

At the back of the cover is the tiny gold fleur-de-lis, the royal coat of arms of France, placed there in dedication of the refinement and elegance that the French have brought to cuisine.

The background colour of the CD cover was identified as being currently very much in use in the websites of both national and international boutique hotels and restaurants. The same colour was observed in many recently published cookery books (McGrath, 2003). It is a warm, yet subtle colour that is positively associated with sophisticated dining.

It is important to place the instructions on how to start the application in the CD cover, so that the user knows exactly how to start the application. The instructions given must be precise and concise. For this application the instructions were: 'Place the CD in the CD drive, 'Open CD folder' and 'Start the application by double clicking on Index.html'.

#### 4.3.1.2 The Home Page



**Figure 4: The Home Page**

The Home page, as illustrated in Figure 4, depicts the plate ready to add the menu item, namely the food to be plated in the restaurant. With regard to the application this ‘menu item’ is by implication, the content that has been made available to teach French cooking terminology for the writing and understanding of menus written in French. On the plate are the various links to the content.

The first link ‘The French Menu’ introduces the user to the application. This introduction is followed by the five courses where the teaching component of the application occurs, namely: ‘Starters’, ‘Fish and Shellfish’, ‘Main Course’, ‘Cheeses and Salads’ and ‘Desserts’. The final section of the application is ‘Your Menu’. This section combines the grammar taught and a few menu items for each of the five courses are compiled.

The plate and the banner were composed as a single graphic. The reason for this was that the developer wanted the sauce drops to be arranged as they would be on an actual plate. The use of tables in Dreamweaver resulted in a structured and artificial look, which the developer did not want. The plate is superimposed above the banner because the plate has to be the main focus and has to stand out. The exact workings and layout of the teaching component of the

application is illustrated on the plate. This gives the user an overall idea of what to find in the application. The user clicks on the link of his choice to enter the application. The content is structured in such a way that the user may either work through the various sections following the order found in the traditional layout of a dinner menu or may decide to use the various sections depicted on the plate independently.

The user, depending on his need, might only want to use the application to find out the terminology for ‘Desserts’. On another occasion, he might want cooking terminology for ‘Starters’. The content was set out in this way so as to tie in with the practical teaching component of a cooking course, identified in the primary research, as some of the perceived users are current and former Culinary Art’s students.

The use of this format also allows the user to use the application for reference purposes. The user, having worked through the application will know what it contains. He will be able to return to the application on an *ad hoc* basis and use it in the same way that one uses a dictionary or a manual, i.e. to look up something specific. At the same time, if he wishes to compile a new menu item and needs to verify some aspect of the grammar, he will be able to return to the application and go directly to the section required. In this way the application remains a continuously used item.

#### **4.3.1.3 The banner**



**Figure 5: The Layout of the Banner**

The graphics in the application are displayed in a banner (Figure. 5) which heads each page. It was decided to separate the graphics from the content on the page because of the way the content is laid out. There is a lot of text and tables showing examples of the grammar being taught on the page. The emphasis here is on the grammar and the terminology required by the user to be able to compile a menu item such as a starter, and not on the starter itself. The application is not a recipe book that makes use of food pictures to use them as examples for

the recipes that they present. Instead it gives the background information, namely the grammar, to enable the user to give the dish a name. The application does not inform the user how to make the dish, as this is not its intention.

The role of the graphics in the application is to give an identity to the particular section being taught. The user must know that one section of vocabulary and terminology can be used for fish, another for cheeses and so forth. With reference to figure 5, the graphics depicting food, which he will quickly recognize as starters, coupled with the written word ‘Starters’, will enable the envisaged user to link cognitively and visually the French cooking terminology to the graphic with the word ‘Starters’ written on it. With the graphics being placed in a banner that heads each page, it not only allows the user to link the content to the graphic, it also gives each page a “unique visual identity” (Lynch & Horton, 2002).

To create a ‘visual identity’ for each page was important, because when using hypertext, there are a lot of pages that are interrelated but that can also be used randomly. In other words, the user could be working in ‘Nouns’ for fish but might wish to refer back to the section on the ‘Indefinite Article’ for fish. The banner depicting the graphics and words ‘Fish and Shellfish’ will automatically allow the user to confirm that he is in the right section.

If the graphic is always in the same place, it not only allows the user to locate himself, it also promotes consistency and balance, resulting in the user’s confidence in the site and content being increased (Lynch & Horton, 2002). Choosing to use a banner in the initial design phase worked well because it allowed the developer to “plug in” the different graphics needed for each section of the application and made the overall design of the site so much easier (Lynch & Horton, 2002). A basic template was created and then by changing the banner, the particular template for each section was created. This kept the size and the layout of the banner consistent.

The banner is constructed in a specific way. The far left has a graphic of a table setting with the application’s logo (‘The French Menu’) superimposed on it. Immediately next to the table setting is the image of a satisfied looking chef. The graphic and image illustrate the



underlying objective of the application, namely to empower<sup>10</sup> the chef to do his job to the best of his ability. It will be noticed that the same graphic, image and font have been used on the CD cover. The re-use of these on the CD cover, has been done to link the cover to the application, because the aim of the cover is to provide a general feel of what to expect inside the application.

The graphic and image take up a third of the banner. With the words ‘The French Menu’ superimposed on the table, the logotype for the application is created. The logotype gives the application its identity. It will confirm to the user that he is working in this application and not another: a consideration that has to be taken into account when working with Web-based applications.

The remaining two thirds of the banner depict food items relating to the section under discussion. This has been done in order to provide a sense of orientation in the application and also to provide a graphic that can be cognitively associated with the content provided. The banner, illustrated above, tells the user that he is in the section called ‘Starters’ and that the terminology will be related to writing a starter. This detail ensures user-friendliness and promotes user-confidence and in addition, enables the learner to associate the new terminology with what he already knows about starters, thereby facilitating his learning.

The graphics chosen for the five teaching sections of the application are carefully selected food pictures. They are general dishes that one would find on any menu and are not French dishes *per se*. The reason for their selection is they must be easily identifiable dishes that the new terminology can be readily associated with. The aim of the application is to enable the envisaged user, namely the chef, restaurateur or waitron, to write his own menu in French, using the French cooking terminology and grammar given.

The banners for the other sections that are ancillary to the lessons have graphics that pertain to the section, for example the ‘Home’ page depicts the chefs working in the kitchen, preparing the various dishes. In a like manner the plate, plated with links to the content, prepares the user for what is to be found in the application. The ‘Preface’, which informs the user how the

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<sup>10</sup> In the learning event when theory is turned into practice, learners are empowered to use their own cognitive processes and “design their own representations of knowledge rather than absorbing knowledge representations preconceived by others” (Jonassen and Reeves, 1996 cited in Rüschoff, [S.a]).

application has been compiled, has graphics illustrating the initial preparation phase of the meal. The hands depicted, demonstrate the range in age of the envisaged users of the application, namely the young chef in the making to the experienced adult chef. The 'Grammar' banner shows cooking utensils and raw ingredients. In the same way that utensils and ingredients are needed in the preparation of a meal, grammar is needed in order to correctly compile a menu item.

The 'Glossary' banner depicts a bouquet garni, composed of the various herbs needed to add flavour to food. Similarly, the French culinary terminology presented in the glossary is needed to be able to write the menu item in French. The 'Introduction' banner depicts the general pots and pans that one uses in cooking, hanging ready for use in the kitchen. In the application the 'Introduction' section provides the background information about the French menu and gives general rules that can be used for the correct spelling and layout of the menu.

The 'Compiling the Menu' banner depicts the various plates ready for use. Once the user has completed the application, he will have been given the knowledge needed to understand and write the menu in French. In the 'Compiling the Menu' section, he is shown how to combine what he has learnt so that he can put this knowledge to use. The banner for the 'Exercise Answer' section depicts an open recipe book. In this section the answers to the various exercise sections are provided. The chef can jot down the correct answers in his own recipe/menu book, to be used when he compiles his menus.

#### ***4.3.1.4 Background colour***

It was initially decided to colour each section a different colour so as to enable the user to differentiate visually between the various courses. 'Fish' would be one colour, 'Main Course' another and so on. The colours chosen were subtle blends of the colour used on the CD cover. The use of colour worked well on the CD cover but had the opposite effect in the application. It made the pages look too busy and gaudy and did not enhance the simple, yet elegant look that the developer wished to achieve. What worked well on paper did not necessarily work well on the screen. It was decided to leave the background colour on the CD cover because a contrast had to be made between the chef's white jacket and the white tablecloth depicted on the cover.

Colours were, however, chosen for the ‘Glossary’ section. This section did not have all the grammar instructions and use of gold on the page. It was decided to keep the colours in this section because the purpose of the ‘Glossary’ is for reference only. The ‘Glossary’ is not part of the grammar teaching *per se*, but is an important addendum to the teaching.

#### ***4.3.1.5 The gold vertical line and footer***

The gold colour was chosen because of its current use in cooking books and food-related graphics (Dangereux, 2004, Morris, 2006 and McGrath, 2003). It adds richness and elegance to the design and is a colour that goes well with good food and fine dining.

The practical use of the gold vertical line is to separate the content from the side menu, so that the focus on the content is not interrupted by the wording on the side menu. It provides continuity in design between those pages that have the side menu and those that do not. Its use provides structure and order to the page in an elegant and simple manner and does much to define the ‘less is more’ look in the design that was important to achieve, especially in an information-orientated application. It acts like a graphic and in this instance, defines but does not clutter the page.

Combined with the footer, the content has a neat, organized look that promotes user confidence in the content. This layout allows the content to be displayed so that it is not dependent on screen size. It fits neatly in the middle of the page. Because the page has been left white, it blends in with whatever background colour that the user has on his screen.

The vertical line placed where it is on the page reduces the amount of text on the page. With the banner above, it allows for “a stronger visual structure with better contrast and visual entry points” (Lynch & Horton, 2002).

The links were changed to an olive green colour to match in with the gold font used on the page and the gold vertical line and footer.

### **4.3.1.6 The font**

In this application font plays an important role and is used in various ways.

#### **4.3.1.6.1 Edwardian script**

Edwardian script is used for the logo ‘The French Menu’ and on the writing of the CD cover. This font was chosen because it has a classical and elegant appearance and adds the desired French look and feel to the application. It is continued in the banners so as to provide consistency within the application, and also to offer relief from a lot of regular text used on the main screen.

The rich burgundy colour, of the Edwardian script used, blends in with the wine in the glass on the table in the logo. It adds richness to the text and is a colour that is often used in dining rooms because of it being very positively associated with food.

On the ‘Home’ page, the white Edwardian script that is in the background adds texture and interest to the plate. Without the text, the plate appears rather hard and does not blend in well with the tablecloth that was chosen for its texture and interest.

#### **4.3.1.6.2 Default font**

The default font, that Dreamweaver Mx 2004 uses, was kept as a precaution so that the content could be safely displayed on most browsers.

With the graphics being concentrated in the banner, the main screen is filled with text. A way had to be found to draw the user into the content and furthermore to present the content in a legible manner. The page of regular text appears dull and undifferentiated (Lynch & Horton, 2002), while a page of bold text is too hard on the eye. It was decided to differentiate the text by organizing the content into normal, bold, italics and bold italics.

Regular font is used for the English instruction and bold italic for French throughout the application except in the ‘Glossary’. In the ‘English to French per topic Food Glossary’, the English is in bold and the French in italics. In the ‘French to English Food Glossary’ the French is in bold italics and the English is in regular font. Italic font was chosen for the

French vocabulary and terminology so as to blend in with the Edwardian script used in the logo and banners. Regular text was preferred to italics for the delineation of content.

The main colour used for the font is black. Gold is used for headings to break the black text and also to tie in with the vertical line, the footer and gold lines in the banner. Red is used to highlight important content. Tables are used to organize and emphasize specific and important content and also in order to provide a break for the user from the text. In these tables the bold regular font is used to make headings in the tables stand out more.

The same default font is used for the side and top menu. An olive green colour was chosen for the links and they were underlined so as to identify them as links. Font colours are kept to a minimum use in the application, so as to promote consistency and, furthermore, to limit distraction from the content.

**4.3.1.7 The arrangement of the top menu**

The screenshot shows a website interface for 'The French Menu'. At the top is a banner with a chef and a dessert, with the word 'Desserts' written in a decorative red script. Below the banner is a horizontal menu bar with four links: 'Home', 'Preface', 'Grammar', and 'Glossary', all in olive green and underlined. To the left of the main content area is a vertical sidebar with a gold border, containing a list of menu categories: 'Determinant', 'Preceding adjective', 'Noun', 'Of something', 'Adjectives that follow', 'Made with / served with', and 'Exercise Answers'. The main content area below the menu bar features a heading 'Compiling the menu item' in olive green, followed by a table with six columns: 'the article', 'preceding adjective', 'the noun (portion, piece or cut)', 'de', 'adjective/colour/past participle', and 'made/served with'. The first row of the table has the text 'You are here' in red under the 'the article' column. Below the table is another heading 'The indefinite Article' in olive green, followed by a paragraph of text explaining the use of indefinite articles in French.

the article	preceding adjective	the noun (portion, piece or cut)	de	adjective/colour/past participle	made/served with
You are here					

**The indefinite Article**

In French the indefinite articles (**a**, **an** in English) is **un** for the masculine singular noun and **une** for the feminine singular noun. The plural form is **des** and like the definite article plural **les** does not contract unless the construction is negative.

**Figure 6: The Arrangement of the Menu Bars**

The top menu depicted in Figure 6 consists of the links: ‘Home’, ‘Preface’, ‘Grammar’ and ‘Glossary’. These links connect to pages that are not part of the content but are necessary to the working of the application. They are placed in a particular order in the application.

The ‘Home’ link is placed where it normally appears on a website. It has to occupy a focal place on the screen because the user will use the ‘Home’ button to return to the ‘Home’ page in order to enter another content section of the application or as an exit. The ‘Home’ page provides the overview of the application content because all the links to the learning sections are found there. The ‘Preface’ link was placed next to the ‘Home’ link as it also serves an introductory purpose. The ‘Preface’ introduces the user to the application, telling him what to expect and gives him an idea of how to work through the application.

The ‘Grammar Aid’ and ‘Glossary’ were placed next and together because they both deal with the content of the application. The ‘Grammar Aid’ provides additional grammatical information of use to the content, while the ‘Glossary’ gives the terminology and vocabulary needed for writing menu items.

#### ***4.3.1.8 The arrangement of the side menu***

The side menu (See Figure 6) depicts the six divisions of content, namely: ‘Determinant’, ‘Preceding Adjective’, ‘Noun’, ‘Of something’, ‘Adjectives that follow’ and ‘Made with/served with’. These are the six steps and order that one needs to follow when compiling a menu item.

The answers to the various exercises have also been placed here because they relate to the six divisions of content.

### 4.3.1.9 The location table

Table for menu compilation

the article	preceding adjective	the noun (portion, piece or cut)	de	adjective/colour/past participle	made/served with
				You are here	

Table 4: Table for menu compilation

The location table (Table 4) depicting the six steps in menu compilation, appears on the top of each page in the teaching sections. Its purpose is always to inform and remind the user where the content, that he is busy with, fits into the six steps of menu compilation. The indicator ‘You are here’ changes according to the section, in which the user is working. The table also reminds the user of grammar needed to compile a menu item and its order.

### 4.3.2 Future considerations incorporated into the design

The design of the application was carefully planned so as to make any future additions possible. Each lesson is constructed so that it can be used easily in mobile messaging (3.2.2). An audio option can be added easily to both the ‘Glossary’ and ‘Exercise Answers’ section. A suggestion would be to use a few natural French speakers, male and female, to provide variety in these sections as there is a lot of text. In this way the user will also be exposed to different accents and pronunciations.

The application is designed both as a comprehensive and complete unit, and as an auxiliary to augment learning in a culinary classroom.

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## Chapter 5

### *Conclusion*

The purpose of *The French Menu* is two-fold: It is first and foremost a reply to a perceived need in the catering industry where a veritable gap exists, namely the incorrect usage of French in the writing of menus written in the language. It is, at the same time, an enquiry into the possibility of teaching foreign languages for professional and occupational reasons. The developer wanted to investigate the combination of foreign language learning with a skill in order to determine whether a foreign language can be taught effectively and successfully outside the walls of the traditional language classroom.

The needs analysis conducted, in order to constitute the reply, revealed that the envisaged market was very diverse in age, qualification and profession. The observed common factor was a dominant interest in food and its preparation. Coupled to this observation was notice of the increasing appeal for things culinary: the request for good food that meets international standards and the prestige and acclaim that a culinary qualification commands today, all which served to emphasize the need for a solution to be found that would address this problem in an adequate and satisfactory manner.

In order to add educational value to the envisaged application, a comprehensive literature reading was conducted into learning techniques and prerequisites. The research highlighted the need for the learner to be involved actively in his learning and that what he learns must be both meaningful and useful to him. It advocated combining both theory and practice in teaching. Added to the above, were the findings that the user approaches the learning content with already established ideas, interests, preferences and experiences and that new information is best learnt when attached to things known. With the perceived problem being foreign language related, cognisance also had to be taken of how a foreign language is optimally learnt. The literature review indicated that communication, the ultimate aim of language learning, foreign language included, occurs best when language learners are involved in real life situations that they can relate to.



Having established an idea of the problem, the envisaged user and how language is best taught, the method of presentation and the relevant content to be used in the teaching had to be determined. In other words, the “RIGHT MIX” (Bersin, 2003:1) of material, method and user had to be found and used creatively so as to best address the observed need. The developer decided to begin with what was available: the users’ knowledge of food and her knowledge of language teaching. Research into the most favourable way of presenting the reply to the problem revealed that a Web –based application would cater best for the diverse group and its varying needs.

A Web-based application makes use of hypertext and to prevent the user being “lost in hyperspace” (Berners-Lee, 1994) a well planned navigational structure had to be conceived in the initial stages of planning. The developer was fortunate to have at her disposal, three ready-made structures: the layout of a dinner menu, the way food is classified and the sequence in which the menu item is written in French. Optimal use has been made of these in the application.

The layout of the menu and the broader classification of food into divisions such as ‘fish’, ‘dairy’ etc. provided both the framework for the application, and a structure into which the teaching material could be placed in an organized and aesthetically pleasing manner that was conducive to learning and usability (Hugo, 1994:100). The menu layout was chosen for the delineation of menu items, while the broader classification of food items was used to organize the copious amount of French cooking terminology into alphabetically-arranged, topic related divisions that were easily manageable. In addition, the framework supplied a well defined navigational system and created the order in learning that adult learners, the envisaged users, tend to adopt (Sólún, 2001).

The menu layout, the generally accepted classification of food and the dishes chosen to be described and translated by the French cooking terminology can all be readily recognized by the perceived users and, thereby, provide the foundation upon which the target language can be constructed. The new information, French cooking terminology and French grammar can, thus, be associated effectively and successfully with what is already known.

The French grammar content to be learnt was divided into the six steps that are needed in order to compile a menu item correctly in French. A broad exposition of French grammar, with the exception of the French verb, is taught in the lesson sections. To accommodate both the non-academic and the more academically-minded user, two levels of French grammar complexity and comprehensiveness are offered. The content is provided in a descriptive and non-prescriptive manner (Mariani, 1992) that affords the user greater choice and control, illustrating thereby, “one of the oft-stated benefits that the computer brings to language learning is greater learner autonomy” (Levy, 1997:199). Furthermore, the application is constructed in such a way that the user can choose to use it as a complete study course, for ancillary purposes with a culinary module or, if preferred, on an *ad hoc* basis for reference purposes.

Davies notes that a “common criticism levelled at Web-based teaching and learning materials is that they are uninspiring” (2007b). To inspire the perceived user: the chef, restaurateur and waitron, much attention was placed on the overall appeal of the application. Colour, gold in particular, and graphics that captured the ambience of fine dining and the professional kitchen were carefully selected so as to create a ‘professional’ allure. A wide choice of culinary terms that the envisaged user could use in his menu, were chosen. In the lessons, a basic exposition of French grammar is presented so as to provide sufficient information without making the application exclusively grammar orientated, which could create possible user frustration or intimidation. The exercises explore the grammar taught in a varied yet practical way, with every example given, being an item that can be re-used in the compilation of a menu written in French.

The underlying concern, thus, which is built into every facet of the application, is the eventual use that the user is to make from all that is provided. The application has a very clear objective, namely the writing correctly of menus in French. It is thought that this strong, practical aim can inspire and motivate the envisaged user to use the Web-based application and above all, to acquire the target terminology.

An awareness of future considerations has been built into the design of the application. The delineation of content is such that it can be effectively and efficiently used in mobile messaging, mobile-e-mail included (Rosy future, 2006) while the ‘Glossary’ and ‘Exercise

Answer' sections can be easily adapted to include an audio component, where natural French speakers pronounce the cooking terminology.

In this application the developer believes that she has demonstrated that foreign language teaching can be taught successfully either to augment a known skill or in conjunction with the teaching of a skill. The Culinary Arts is just one of the many real-life situations that can benefit by the teaching of a foreign language. There are many other instances where foreign language can be taught successfully so that a profession may be enhanced and an additional language learnt and used.

Possible areas where a foreign language may be acquired for professional or occupational reasons include amongst others: the tourist industry, the wine industry, the car manufacturing industry and the hotel industry. Foreign language learning can also take place in conjunction with a hobby such as gardening, fishing or sculpture. It is hoped that more language learning courses focus in the future on using real-life situations as possible scenarios for foreign language teaching.

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## **Addendum**

APPENDIX A. E-mail: Warwick's Chef School. 2006.05.02

APPENDIX B. E-mail: Monique Lorist. 2006.10.06

APPENDIX C. E-mail: Robert Fisher. 2006.07.31

## APPENDIX A

**julia kulenkampff**

---

**From:** <rdt@sun.ac.za>  
**To:** "julia kulenkampff" <julia@uninet.co.za>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 24, 2006 12:07 PM  
**Subject:** FW: French cooking terminology questions

I had a phone call from this lady this morning and she was very pleasant and also prepared to help in future.  
 Regards,  
 Renate

---

RO du Toit  
 Department of Modern Foreign Languages  
 University of Stellenbosch  
 Private Bag X1  
 7602 Matieland  
 South Africa  
 Tel. 021-808 2050  
 Fax 021-808 2035

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**From:** Warwick's Chef School [mailto:warwicks@hermanus.co.za]  
**Sent:** 24 May 2006 10:00 AM  
**To:** Du Toit RO <rdt@sun.ac.za>  
**Subject:** French cooking terminology questions

Dear Julia

In response to your e-mail, here are our answers to your questions.

1. *Is French cooking terminology usually taught as part of the curriculum in a culinary course?* **YES**
2. *If so, do the learners need to have a background knowledge of French?* **NO** Do the learners already have a knowledge of French? **SOMETIMES**
3. *If they have a background knowledge of French, how extensive is their knowledge or how extensive does their knowledge have to be?* **THEY WILL HAVE A KNOWLEDGE ONLY IF THEY COME FROM A FRENCH SPEAKING FAMILY OR COUNTRY OR IF THEY HAPPEN TO TAKE FRENCH AT SCHOOL.**
4. *If the terminology is taught, is it taught as a separate section of the course?* **IT IS TAUGHT AT PART OF THE CHEFFING COURSE AS TERMS ARE USED DAILY IN THE KITCHEN.**
5. *Is a knowledge of the French cooking terms required if you want to pursue a career in the culinary arts?* **IT WILL BE NEEDED.**
6. *What would be the average age of the learners?* **18 - 25 YEARS.**
7. *Would you be able to provide me with an existing curriculum / lesson plans?* **UNFORTUNATELY NO.**

In answer to you question - *Is it necessary to learn French terminology or not?* **FOR THE CHEFFING INDUSTRY - DEFINATELY.**

I do hope the above has helped you, but do feel free to contact us should you have any further questions.

5/24/2006

## APPENDIX B

**julia kulenkampff**

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**From:** "Monique Lorst" <bookings@themarine.co.za>  
**To:** "julia kulenkampff" <julia@uninet.co.za>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 06, 2006 10:28 AM  
**Attach:** Xmas Menu 1950.TIF; Christiaan Campbell press release.doc  
**Subject:** RE: French Menus

Dear Julia

Thank you for your reply. In answer to your questions:

1. I started working in the hotel industry in 1997, having during the last 8+ years undergone extensive in-house training as well as attending courses and workshops with regards all aspects of hotel management and food & beverage.
2. French terminology used would not be from my side as our menus are created by our Executive Chef, Christiaan Campbell (his profile is attached). I merely do the grammar checks, designs and if necessary research of the menus.
3. If you were to study menus of a number of fine establishments you would always find french terminology as words like "jus", "veloute" etc are international food terms. A good example would be to have a look at the food dictionary on [www.epicurious.com](http://www.epicurious.com). I have attached a menu dating from 1950, which I thought you might find interesting as it is riddled with french terms! There will always be a need for French cooking terminology as long as Chefs worldwide are taught these terms during their training.
4. Depending on the type of menu ie if we were to do a function and the host requests a "French menu" or seems like the type of person who would require such a menu...

Just on a general note...I have seen things come and go during my short time in the food & hotel industry and certainly history repeats itself.

Something like escargots have disappeared altogether from the upmarket menus but is now being served at the Spur! and over the end bit of last year the Avocado Ritz has made an unbelievable come back! So you might find excessive use of French Terminology back in full swing in a couple of years!

At the moment however most upmarket restaurants have moved away from the "fine dining" concept associated with French Cooking and we are now in a more experimental "era"...Some time back the description for your accompaniments to a dish would be "served with" - the "served" now having fallen away in most cases whereas it only reads "with" and some menus not having any additional wording except the actual ingredients.

Please note that the above is based on my personal experience and opinions only. Your best bet would be to contact a food critic/chef with international experience to get more insight on the above. Having just reread your below email I noticed you mentioned "governing rules" and you are quite right in saying that menu writing is pretty much "freestyle" nowadays. What I would like to know is what is the actual internationally accepted definition of a house wine as there seem to be many conflicting theories out there...this is something that came up during last weekend....

Hope I have helped in some way...

Kind Regards

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10/6/2006

## APPENDIX C

**julia kulenkampff**

**From:** "Fischer, Robert A" <RFischer@txstate.edu>  
**To:** "julia kulenkampff" <julia@uninet.co.za>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 31, 2006 6:27 PM  
**Subject:** RE: Information on French Cooking Terminology for CALL program

Thank you for your message on your project in French. I am currently in Europe finishing a study abroad program, so I don't have a lot of information with me to answer your question.

Based on what you mentioned in your message, I think you may be taking on too much in the program you envision. I would recommend narrowing the scope of the menu idea to fewer options because doing the programming for a lot of options would take a very long time.

There must be some articles on working with recipes somewhere, but I cannot think of any at this time. With respect to a teaching method, you have already developed ideas for annotating unknown expressions and using multimedia in a sensible way. The one thing I noticed missing in your proposal is a section that verifies that students have in fact understood what they read. It would be a good idea to include some comprehension checks to ensure that students do in fact understand.

Robert Fischer

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**From:** julia kulenkampff [mailto:julia@uninet.co.za]  
**Sent:** Mon 31/07/2006 06:50  
**To:** exccdir@calico.org  
**Subject:** Information on French Cooking Terminology for CALL program

Dear Dr Robert Fischer

I was referred to you by Ruth Sanders.

I wonder if you could please help me. I am a postgraduate student at the University of Stellenbosch and am doing a Mphil degree in Hypermedia for Language Learning. We have to create a two hour computer application/program where a foreign or second language is taught. I decided that I would like to teach French cooking terms to English mother tongue speakers, who are involved in the hospitality trade such as chefs, waitrons etc. I thought of concentrating on the understanding, reading and writing of menus written in French. This is a research based project where the emphasis is on the foreign/second language that is to be taught, the teaching method/s and the applicable computer software. The end product is for academic purposes only and cannot be sold. I need to know the following, if possible.

1. Do you know of any articles/books that I could read on this topic.
2. What teaching method would you suggest that I use.

I thought of a combination of the communicative approach and a "buffet" approach. I would present the learner with authentic material such as authentic menus, recipes, culinary art articles etc. and work out exercises, translations and so forth around them, always introducing the necessary French vocabulary. I would also use a range of authentic speakers in a role play situation, for example asking what is on the menu or what they would suggest for lunch. This will be done using video/sound. The learners would then type in answers, respond verbally and so forth.

The navigational layout would follow the normal layout of a menu, approximately five/six sections. Each section of the menu e.g.. "Les Desserts" will be further subdivided into five graded sections, where the last section will be a fun filled challenge section. Each exercise will be introduced with the relevant grammar needed, as a more detailed grammar section will form part of the appendix. There will also be a dictionary in the appendix. Where possible there will be links between the exercises and the grammar appendix. The exercises, vocabulary will be relevant to each section.

The "buffet" approach will be considered in order to allow the user more freedom of choice. If a student chef is doing a pastry course, for example, his/her interests will be predominantly catered for in the dessert section

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and not for the soup section. He/she need not go through the entire program in order to learn what they need to know. Also having a more flexible approach will enable the program to slot in better with various curricula

Due to time constraints I have decided to make this a web-based program and use Macromedia "Dreamweaver M X" as the authoring tool

Should you have any suggestions, I would really appreciate it

Kind regards  
Julia Kulenkampff