



TEACHING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO COOK

Stanko Blatnik
IPAK Institute, Velenje Koroška 18, Slovenia
blatnik@ipak-zavod.si

Mladen Blatnik
IPAK Institute, Velenje Koroška 18, Slovenia
mladen@ipak-zavod.si

Sanja Selimović
Inova4t, 75000 Tuzla, Trg oslobođenja 6, Bosnia and Herzegovina
selimovic@inova4t.com

Amila Mujezinović
Inova4t, 75000 Tuzla, Trg oslobođenja 6, Bosnia and Herzegovina
mujezinovic@inova4t.com

Edina Šarić
University Tuzla Fakultet za educaciju i rehabilitaciju Bosnia and Herzegovina

Abstract

It is general opinion that people with disabilities cannot learn to cook. At same time cooking is important activity, which can make people happier and more independent. In last few years we were trying to learn people with disabilities to cook. We got excellent results although strongly dependent on type of disabilities. In the framework of project iLearn (www.ilearn-project.eu) co financed by EU we systemize our efforts, which results in the Cooking Handbook which contains the simple instruction for people with disabilities how to select and how to prepare food for themselves. The handbook is accompanied by short video clips which are illustrating basic operations and preparation of selected food. Using this materials it is easy to teach people with disabilities to cook. At same time materials could be useful to anyone who wants to learn to cook.

Keywords: eLearning, cooking, handbook, people with disabilities

INTRODUCTION

There is general opinion that people with disabilities cannot perform some everyday activities like cooking for themselves. Our experience in supporting people with disabilities is different because with appropriate support they can learn how to prepare simple food and take care for themselves. Of course people with different type of disabilities can learn to cook on different level. Using our positive experience we decided to develop in the framework of iLearn project (ICT based Learning and Social Network for People with Disabilities and Volunteers) the educational course Teaching People with Disabilities to Cook. iLearn is a project co-financed by the European Commission in the framework of the Lifelong Learning Programme with the aim to foster social inclusion, lifelong learning and voluntary work. iLearn wants to offer a fruitful opportunity to learn, share experience and connect to each other to people with disabilities, parents or caretakers, volunteers and local authorities. The course of cooking was developed with the aim to to facilitate social inclusion of people with disabilities using accessible ICT tools both for learning and networking parents and caretakers and to provide them with fruitful occasion to learn from different countries and practices.

The Learning Course

Person with disabilities should principally become familiar with space in which they will learn to cook. It is important to teach them to manage around the room and understand the most important spatial concepts (i.e.

on, under, next to, below, above) that will be used when operating in the kitchen. The user is to be taught to take advantage of the adapted kitchen and its elements which are suitable for persons with different types of disabilities.

It is necessary to adopt some basic concepts of cooking for people with disabilities namely:

- assigning basic kitchen appliances (appointing and naming kitchen units, worktops, drawers and shelves),
- assigning kitchen appliances (stove, microwave, refrigerator, blender, strainer, toaster),
- assigning cooking means (bowls, casseroles, plates, ovens, pans, cutlery),
- assigning basic cooking operations (thermal food processing and food preparation),
- assigning liquid and weight measures (distinguishing liquid measures – large/small cups, and measures of weight – large/small spoons),
- assigning measures of temperature (adopting and assigning measures of temperature for burner and oven),
- distinguishing measures of temperature – learning how to distinguish the difference between high and low burner heat),
- distinguishing dishes (distinguishing sweet and sour dishes, appetizers, main dishes, salads),
- assigning the simplest dishes.

Once we have taught a person to manage around the room and once the kitchen furniture, appliances, tools and action are assigned, and to perform basic cooking operation we proceed with the steps for using the cookbook. It is necessary to learn how to use the cookbook, which means that a person needs to associate the adopted concepts with symbols represented in the cookbook and remember them.

On figure 1 some of symbols used in the cooking book are presented.

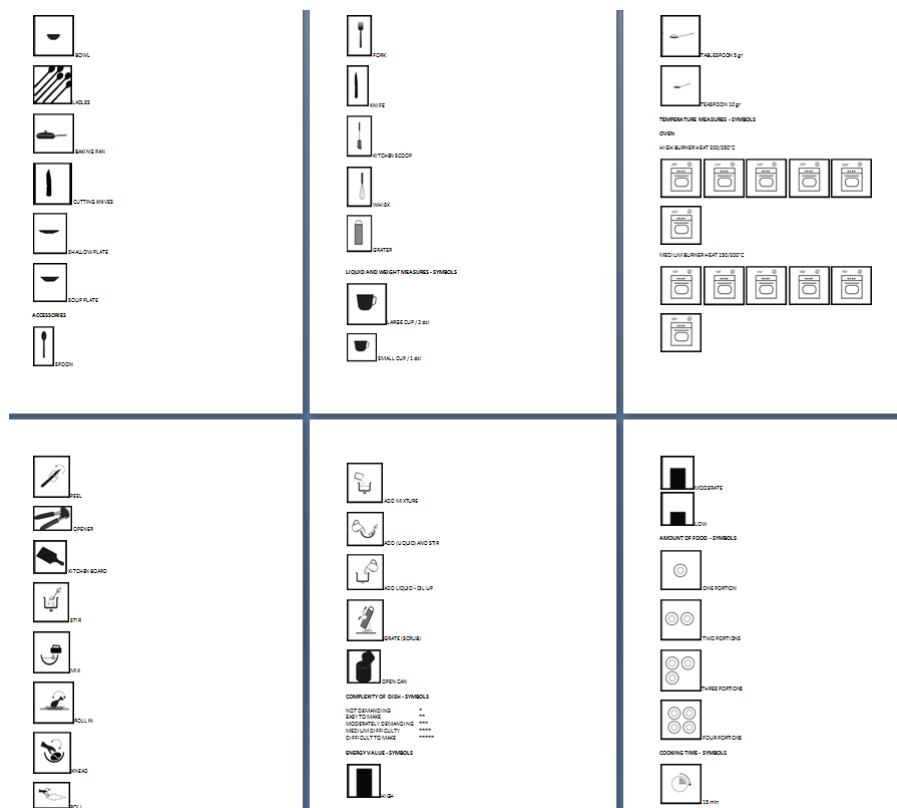


Fig. 1 Screen for cooking symbol

After they have adopted each individual symbol, persons with disabilities should familiarize with the form of recipes and learn the steps for preparation of each food item separately.

The user must know in which part of the table the symbols are associated with the necessary ingredients, portions, preparation time, tools, and which part contains images of initial appearance and end result of the ingredients and symbols for preparation of the item.

Once a person with special needs has adopted and memorized the symbols, we teach them to perform simple actions of food preparation individually. For example, we take one food item from the recipe and ask the user to choose the ingredients and perform the actions according to the symbols. At the beginning we should choose food items that require fewer steps to operate and fewer ingredients. Cooking should start from simple recipes, i.e. those that require less food items, tools and action to prepare.

On figures 2, 3, and 4 a simple recipe for cooking Bosnian (maybe Turkish original) food called satarash is presented:

SATARAŠ







PHOTO AND NAME OF THE DISH	INFORMATION ON THE DISH		
<p>SATRA</p> 	PREPARATION TIME		
	SERVINGS		
	COMPLEXITY	***	
	ENERGY VALUE		
	INGREDIENTS		
	ACCESSORIES		

Fig.2 recipe for satarash start

As it could be seen the first part of recipe in handbook is showing the basic data about dish: preparation time, servings, complexity, energy value, ingredients and accessories using symbols and photos and almost not any text to make it easier to use.














INITIAL STATE	FOOD PROCESSING PROCEDURE		FINAL STATE
<p style="text-align: center;">1. ONION</p>   		WASH HANDS	 
		PEEL	
		WASH	
		CHOP	
		ADD OIL	
		DEEP FRY	
		MODERATE HEAT	
		WASH HANDS	

Fig. 3 recipe food processing procedure

For each ingredient the cooking operations are illustrated by symbols, corresponding keywords and if necessary with photos as could be seen from the figures 3, 4, and 5. With such presentation it is much easier for trainers, caretakers, parents as well as people with disabilities to learn to cook and prepare simple dishes. The handbook is accompanied with short videos illustrating basic operations in food processing, and some simple dish preparation. With such approach we made the handbook different than existing books covering this subject (Berriedale-Johnson & Davies, 1993).

So the course of teaching people with disabilities is based on intensive and efficient use of visual materials, explaining all crucial elements of cooking. The dishes selected to be described are simple and can be prepared by people with disabilities. However because there are several types of disabilities with different levels it is necessary to customize the learning materials and approach to each person with disabilities we want to teach to prepare own food, and become more independent and more included in the local community. The materials developed so far allow such approach so we believe it will be widely used in project partner's countries.

<p>2. GOURD</p>  		PEEL	
		WASH	
		CHOP	
		ADD TO THE POT	
		STEW	

Fig. 4 recipe food processing












<p>3. TOMATO</p>  		WASH HANDS	 
		WASH	
		CHOP	
		ADD TO THE POT	
		STEW TOGETHER FOR 15-20 MINUTES ON MILD HEAT AND STIR OCCASIONALLY	
			
			

Fig. 5 recipe food processing



CONCLUSION

The approach and educational materials developed in framework of iLearn project can be efficiently used in the teaching people with disabilities to cook. The handbook developed so far was translated in the Bosnian, Croatian, Slovenian and English language. There will be more recipes from different countries included in the handbook so it will become useful educational for trainers, parents, caretaker of people with disabilities. At same the slightly modified handbook can be used by people with disabilities directly. For a moment several pilot courses are running in participating countries. The feedback from these courses will be used for improvement and further development of programme and educational materials.

WJEIS's Note: This article was presented at 4th International Conference on New Trends in Education and Their Implications - ICONTE, 25-27 April, 2013, Antalya-Turkey and was selected for publication for Volume 3 Number 2 of IJONTE 2013 by WJEIS Scientific Committee

REFERENCES

Berriedale-Johnson M. and Davies A. (1993). Cook it Yourself: Cooking with a Physical Disability. New York: Hutchinson.