

# Like an invention out of Harry Potter, except that Harry's would use a quill

[devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20050914-17](http://devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20050914-17)

September 14, 2005



Raymond Chen

When I heard [this story from Swedish Radio](#), it struck me as the sort of object that would exist in the imaginary world of Harry Potter. Raymond's bad translation follows:

## Pen can help dyslexics

With today's cheaper and cheaper microelectronics, it becomes possible for young inventors to produce new products without a lot of resources. A new idea for a smart-pen for speech synthesis and voice recognition is an example of this.

The pen intended primarily for dyslexics has been produced by Johan Strömbom, a student at the [Chalmers University of Technology](#). It is a pen which produces speech from writing, and which converts your speech into text, explains Johan Strömbom.

"One can read in text from a piece of paper, which is then heard in a headset, also one can speak text into the headset and have it written out," says Johan Strömbom.

He was inspired to invent the pen by his mother who teaches dyslexics. The pen has been nominated for an inventor's prize at the [Technical Fair](#) in October.

Of course, the Harry Potter version would be a quill instead of a pen, and it wouldn't need a headset. Or batteries.

Voice recognition also has a lot of promise for people other than dyslexics. Imagine if you could take a voice recording and send it through a recognizer to produce a transcript. I can read Swedish and German much better than I can listen to it, and having a transcript of a news report as it happens would improve my understanding tremendously.

[Raymond is currently away; this message was pre-recorded.]

[Raymond Chen](#)

**Follow**

