

Japanese show robot news readers

28th June, 2014



Japanese scientists have created the world's first news-reading robots. They really look and act like human beings. The android newscaster even sounded human and had a sense of humour. The scientists showed two robots to reporters in Tokyo. One of them is called "Kodomoroid". This word joins the Japanese

for child, "kodomo," with the English word "android". The other robot is called "Otonoaroid" – the combination of the Japanese word for adult with "android". The first pieces of news read by the robots were on an imaginary earthquake in Tokyo and a raid by the FBI. The robots' creator is a leading robotics professor, Hiroshi Ishiguro. He did not say when robots would read the news for real.

Robots are big business in Japan. Many companies spend a lot of money on research and development to make robots better and better. The Japanese have a very positive image of robots. They think they are both helpful and cute. In the West, people think of them as a little scary. They worry that robots will take over the world one day and control us. Professor Ishiguro told reporters that robots are very important. He said: "We will have more and more robots in our lives in the future." He added that robots are now not so expensive and so are increasingly becoming a part of everyday life in Japan: "Robots are now becoming affordable - no different from owning a laptop," he said.

Sources: *NY Daily News* / *Daily Mail*

Writing

Write about three good things and three bad things about robots.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

scientists / robots / androids / sense of humour / newscaster / piece of news / robotics / big business / research / development / positive image / scary / everyday life / laptop

True / False

- Robots are reading the news on Japan's most popular news program. T / F
- The news-reading robots do not look at all human. T / F
- The robots can people laugh with what they say. T / F
- The creator of the robots is actually a real newscaster. T / F
- Japanese people generally think robots are cute. T / F
- People in the West tend to have a not-so-positive view of robots. T / F
- A robotics professor said robots would not be so important for us. T / F
- Robots are now about the same price as a laptop computer. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. created | a. favourable |
| 2. human beings | b. top |
| 3. joins | c. frightening |
| 4. pieces | d. combines |
| 5. leading | e. more and more |
| 6. big | f. made |
| 7. positive | g. costly |
| 8. scary | h. items |
| 9. expensive | i. people |
| 10. increasingly | j. huge |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think of robots?
- Would you like a robot in your house?
- What kinds of robots are there?
- Is there anything about robots to be afraid of?
- What robot movies do you like?
- What do you think of the idea of news-reading robots?
- What will happen if robots become more intelligent than us?
- Do robots need to look and sound human?

Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. They really look and | a. earthquake |
| 2. had a sense | b. of everyday life |
| 3. an imaginary | c. over the world |
| 4. a leading | d. business in Japan |
| 5. robots would read the news | e. of humour |
| 6. Robots are big | f. affordable |
| 7. research | g. robotics professor |
| 8. robots will take | h. for real |
| 9. increasingly becoming a part | i. and development |
| 10. Robots are now becoming | j. act like human beings |

Discussion – Student B

- What's the difference between a robot and an android?
- Why do people in the West have a less-than-positive image of robots?
- What would happen if robots took over the world?
- Would you like robots to do everything for you?
- Would you buy a robot or a laptop computer?
- What do you think of the idea of an android Olympics?
- Will people be less lonely with robots around?
- What would you like to ask Mr Ishiguro?

Spelling

- Japanese sicettinss
- look and act like human gsnieb
- a sense of uomhur (UK) / uohmr (USA)
- the mnabictoino of the Japanese word for...
- an imaginary rataehquek in Tokyo
- a leading robotics sosprfoer
- Robots are big eiusnbss in Japan
- rcerhsae and development
- have a very pvioiest image of robots
- in the uertuf
- not so iepvxenes
- Robots are now becoming afoeaflrdb

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. d	4. h	5. b
6. j	7. a	8. c	9. g	10. e

Role Play

Role A – Cooking

You think cooking is the best use for robots in the future. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their uses. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): being a friend, being police officers or piloting airplanes.

Role B – Piloting airplanes

You think piloting airplanes is the best use for robots in the future. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their uses. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): cooking, being police officers or being a friend.

Role C – Police officers

You think being police officers is the best use for robots in the future. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their uses. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): being a friend, cooking or piloting airplanes.

Role D – Being a friend

You think being a friend is the best use for robots in the future. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their uses. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): being police officers, piloting airplanes or cooking.

Speaking – The future

Rank these with your partner. Put the best uses for robots of the future at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| • performing surgery | • cooking |
| • robot rock bands | • being a friend |
| • android Olympics | • security guards |
| • piloting airplanes | • police officers |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	F	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	T	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.