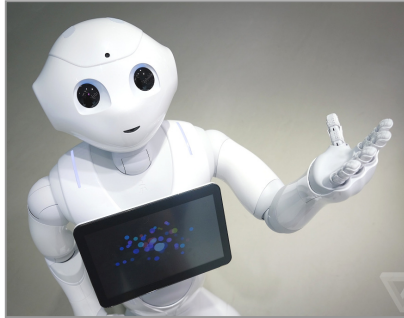


Crossroads

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter August, 2015

ROBOTS - HOW THE FUTURE OF SLAVERY MIGHT LOOK

For decades we have been fascinated by robotics. We love the idea of robots, but not just any robot, we want them to look as much like us as



Pepper – ready to make happy

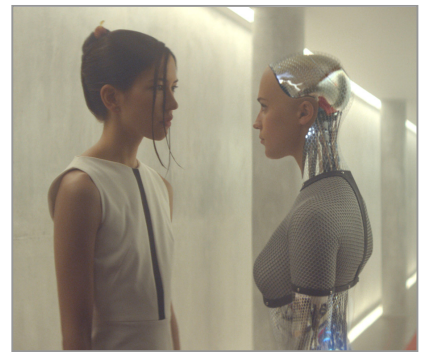
possible. Robots are still not quite at the level of the fanciful imaginings of Hollywood but are becoming more human like in their appearance and functionality with every jump in technology.

For several decades now robots have been replacing humans in the workplace, doing the work that we do not want to or are unable to do. However, these ubiquitous robots bear no resemblance to the human form. So, just how long will it be before humanoid like robots make their entry into our homes?

In 2015 the first step toward robotic house-mates was made when Softbank released *Pepper* for sale in Japan. For just under ¥200,000 and a monthly subscription you can have your own friendly electronic companion. But don't expect Pepper to do any housework for you, Pepper's sole purpose, as stated by its designers is, "to make people happy, have fun with people and connect people with the outside world." In other words, Pepper seems to be little more than a smart-phone on wheels/legs. But this is the kind of technology that is developing rapidly and in the not too distant future it may become difficult to distinguish between a real human and an android.

Once we reach the point of similarity there will be a range of ethical issues to deal with. An android themed TV show called *Humans* recently aired in The U.K. The programme is set in the near future where the latest must-have gadget for any busy family is a synth – a robot eerily similar to a human in nearly every respect. The series explores the emotional impact that comes as the line between humans and machines becomes increasingly blurred. Families become attached to their new house-mates and boundaries are crossed as relationships evolve. A recent movie, *Ex Machina*, takes the storyline from *Humans* one step further. In this movie the android has true AI (artificial intelligence). As its AI develops the droid begins to recognise that it has little more to look forward to than an existence of servitude as a house maid, sex slave and curio. Finding this wholly unappealing it sets about emotionally manipulating and destroying those around it in order to escape from its existence of subjugation.

The technology on display in the aforementioned TV show and movie are not some unrealistic dream. They are technologies already under heavy develop-



Two androids in the movie Ex Machina

ment. The day is fast approaching where a robot of some kind in every house is likely to become a reality. Before that time comes we will have to ask ourselves what boundaries must be put in place (if any) and what the ethical use of those robots might entail. If something looks like a human – should it be treated like a human, or not?

Net News

NET LESSONS: Too busy to come to CROSSROADS?

.... Try our *lessons through the net!*

Read about the adventures of "Hitchbot" and other interesting stories on robots here: <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/robots>

Article by Mark

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua Says: Speaking of robots. Do you think that in the future a robot will ever be able to coach or teach you a second language? Many people nowadays are trying to pick up English, and other languages, through Internet lessons, and web-cam hook-ups with “teachers” living overseas. Such activities can be good supplements for your studies, but they are not enough. A regular lesson with a “live” teacher is essential as he or she can monitor and guide your progress along the way. I wonder if future robots will be able to do that, too?

Junko Says: We are making speaking and listening home-study files to suit a variety of English proficiency levels to keep you busy at home between lessons. Anyone who would like to have these materials, please bring along a computer memory stick and we will download the files for you. When you are ready for the next file, bring in your memory stick again and we will fill it up for you! In time, you should have a nice collection to work at home with....



Mark Says In my home country of New Zealand 27 July – 2 Aug is Maori language week (Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori), NZ's second official language. In the spirit of the week I thought I'd take the opportunity to teach a few mihi (greetings).
 1. Kia ora (hello, goodbye, thank you), 2. Tena koe (hello), 3. Haere mai (welcome), 4. ka kite ano (see you), 5. kei te pehea koe (how are you) Maori vowels and consonants are similar in sound to Japanese so should be easy to pronounce.

Aaron Says: I have noticed the weather is a very hot topic in Japan. Most people comment about how hot it is many times a day, but to me it is not very hot at all. I was raised in a very hot climate, so I am very used to it being too hot to even go outside during the day in the summer! Because of this, whenever I hear my wife, for example, complain about how hot it is outside, I just laugh a little bit.



Danielle dit; Le mois de juillet est fini. Les juilletistes, les personnes qui partent en vacances en juillet, vont croiser les aoûtistes, ceux qui partent en août, donnant lieu à de monstrueux embouteillages sur de nombreuses routes de France. Sans doute un des week-ends les plus chargés de toute l'année. Malheureusement, la très forte canicule subie au mois de juillet ne semble pas tout à fait terminée et août semble également menaçant.

ACROSS

- 1 see or hear differences
- 6 not attractive or appealing
- 8 forced to serve a master
- 11 forced submission
- 12 a logical result or outcome
- 13 quickly
- 14 something unusual and interesting
- 15 a machine that closely resembles a human being
- 16 not clear, hazy

DOWN

- 2 a useful device or tool
- 3 being present everywhere at once
- 4 not based on facts
- 5 capable of serving a purpose well
- 7 being only one
- 9 similarity of appearance
- 10 having the characteristics of a human being

Play A Game!

(print version [here](#))

NOTICE BOARD

Here is the 7th installment of Ren's "My stay in China", series 2:

The university's first semester finally finished. I passed all of my exams without any problems. The Chinese New Year's vacation is quite long, so I decided to travel, because it was a very rare chance for me to take time off.

First, I went to a very cold place, Haerbin. To be honest, I'd been afraid it would be too cold. But I eventually decided to go because my Japanese friends in Beijing invited me. The place was incredibly cold. We visited the ice festival there at night. It reached -28 Celsius. But the atmosphere of the festival was amazing. The trip was quite short, just 2 nights and 3 days.



Ice festival in Haerbin

After that short trip, I stayed on a little longer and journeyed alone for 3 weeks. Because Beijing's winter is so cold, I decided to go south: Taiwan, Hong Kong, Guanzhou and Kunming.



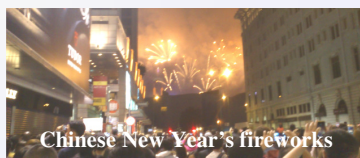
Maokong's gondola station

I stayed in Taiwan for 5 days. This was my second visit to Taipei, so I was already a little familiar with it. I felt that half of Taiwan's culture is really Japanese. I quite often saw Japanese stuff. Moreover, I even saw an advertisement for Eastern Japan Railway on TV. It was strange to see this in Taiwan. By the way, I have a friend there. He went around in Taipei for some days. He is a serious Christian. He took me to a church to pray several times. During my stay in Taipei, my favorite place was a hill located in a suburb named Maokong. I went there by subway and gondola. There is a house on the hill that looked pretty and the atmosphere was relaxing. I like the scenery there.



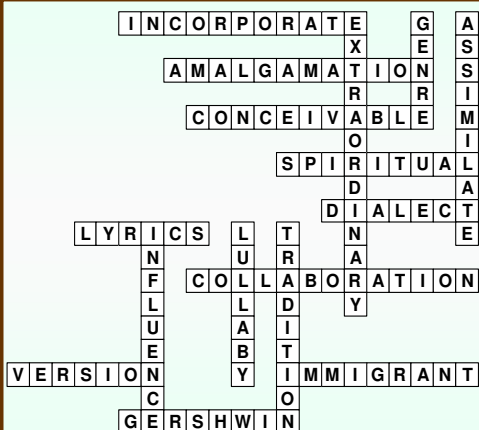
Night view in Hongkong

Next, I went to Hong Kong. Hong Kong is a very modern city. I spent 1 week here. There are so many tall buildings in a very small area in the center of the city; I couldn't even see the sky because of them. I spent the end of Chinese New Year here. So many people gathered in the streets to see fireworks and street parades. I needed about 30 minutes to make my way forward, even 100 meters, because the street was fully packed. The night view of the city is really beautiful. I got the impression that Hong Kong is a very small but convenient city. The room that I stayed in was really small. One bed almost occupied the whole space. I didn't have any space to change my clothes. I wonder how they got the bed into that room. It was apparently impossible. I believe it was the smallest room I have ever stayed in.



Chinese New Year's fireworks

Anyway, I found a very good book about hiking around Hong Kong Harbor in a tourist info. center. By hiking, I was able to enjoy seeing a lot of natural scenery. I walked a lot on this visit. It was good exercise for me. I think Hong Kong is a very good city to travel to, but a little bit inconvenient for students, because the prices for commodities are quite expensive. (To be continued)



Last Month's puzzle Solution

ACROSS

- 1 join, unite or merge into a whole
- 5 a combination of two or more
- 6 able to be imagined
- 7 an African-America religious song
- 8 a unique use of language
- 9 the words to a song
- 13 the act of working together
- 14 something a little different from the others
- 15 a person who moves to a new country permanently
- 16 a famous music composer from the 1930's

DOWN

- 2 greater than usual or normal
- 3 a distinct class, style or type of art
- 4 to incorporate or become part of
- 10 to have an effect on something or someone
- 11 a soft, quiet song sung to a child
- 12 a long standing practice



Don't forget... Our SPECIAL 1+1 Campaign offer! Up to 50% off!!

See our notice board, or ask Junko in our office, for the details.