

# BreakingNewsEnglish - The Mini Lesson

## Japanese show robot news readers

28<sup>th</sup> 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

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

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