

Task 1. You are going to read a magazine article about a new type of hotel. For questions 1-6, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Hotels of the future

Our Travel correspondent Joana Richards reports about a new trend in hotels.

I recently visited a hotel in France which has no visible human staff. This is just one of several hotels in Europe and Asia which runs with apparently no human contact. Most of the services are provided by robots and machines. The concept is to provide an environmentally friendly hotel where staff and running costs kept to a minimum. Personally, I've spent my life away from robots and machines, and so kept having to remind myself that in many parts of the world, it's not unusual for jobs and household tasks to be automated these days.

So I lost no time in booking myself a room at one of these hotels and going to see it for myself. And sure enough, there was the reception desk instead of a friendly receptionist wearing a uniform was a machine.

'I'd like to check in please, I shouted, wondering if the machine would respond to my voice, and feeling thrilled that I was about to have my first ever conversation with a check-in machine. Nothing. I said it again but there was silence. I was hoping the machine would say something like 'If you want to check in, press 1. But then I noticed a written message in the machine's screen. 'Please insert your credit card and key in your booking reference, then follow the instructions.' No conversation. How disappointing.

Staying at the hotel costs from €35 (more if you want a bigger room). That's a bargain for Paris, where a stay in a more conventional hotel can easily cost two or three times that much. And if you did stay there, it wouldn't necessarily be any nicer, and certainly wouldn't be any more memorable. The hotel is located near to the amusement park, Disneyland Paris, which was created as a visitor attraction on the east of the city with lots of amusement rides. In fact, many of the guests book the hotel purely in order to be close to the park.

Back in the hotel, as well as machines to check in, there are vending machines to serve drinks and snacks and vacuum cleaners that work without a human, using sensors to navigate around the rooms. According to the owners, the laundry has robots which do all the washing unaided. Another innovation is the use of face recognition instead of keys to get into your room. A photograph of the guest's face is taken at the reception desk by the check in machines.

With 60 rooms in the building, there is a lot of coming and going. Guests are actively encouraged to stop and get a coffee from one of the machines in the guest lounge with other guests, so there is at least some social interaction. One area where humans are absolutely essential for the hotel is security. There are scanners and CCTV cameras everywhere, and the footage from these is watched by human security guards, no matter whether or not the hotel is full. It is their job to make sure that the guests are safe – and that no-one causes any damage to hotel property, including of course making off with a costly robot.

Critics say that businesses like these automated hotels will mean that people lose their jobs, as more and more roles can be performed by robots and machines. But there are many who see them as a vision of the future and argue that robots can make our lives easier. But this can only happen if higher manufacturing and (line x) operating standards are achieved, and if guests are prepared to put their trust in machines and don't mind the lack of personal contact. Only then will this type of hotel be a success. Time will tell if this is the case.

- 1 The aim of this hotel is to be very
 - A efficient.
 - B friendly.
 - C profitable.
 - D unusual.
- 2 What aspect of the writer's experience at reception was 'disappointing' (line X)?
 - A the appearance of the reception
 - B the time she wasted checking in
 - C the lack of verbal interaction with the machine
 - D the rudeness of the other guests
- 3 What does the writer say about the price of the rooms in the hotel?
 - A The hotel is good value.
 - B The prices are likely to rise.
 - C Other hotels provide better accommodation.
 - D It is not always clear how much a room will cost.
- 4 What is the writer's main point in the fourth paragraph?
 - A There are limits to what robots and machines can do.
 - B Robots and machines can learn a wide range of skills.

- C Different robots and machines are used for different tasks.
 - D Humans make mistakes that robots and machines do not make.
- 5 What risk is mentioned in the fifth paragraph?
- A robots being stolen
 - B security guards being ineffective
 - C the hotel not doing enough business
 - D areas of the hotel becoming too crowded
- 6 What does 'this can only happen' in line X refer to?
- A more roles being performed by robots and machines
 - B many seeing the hotel as a vision of the future
 - C robots and machines making our lives easier
 - D reduction in social human contact

Task 2. You are going to read an article about a language. Six sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences A-G the one which fits each gap (1-6). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

I'm the last speaker of my language

I come from Chile and I've always been interested in my country's history and culture. It all started when I was about eight and I started to learn about the country's indigenous inhabitants. When I first found out about the native people of Patagonia, in the far south, I had no idea that my mother's family was from there and that her grandfather had been a Selk'nam. The last speaker of Selk'nam died in 1974. I really wanted to learn Selk'nam, so relatives on my father's side who live in Punta Arenas, the southernmost town in mainland Chile, sent me dictionaries. (1)..... But I had no idea what these sounded like.

Then, when I was about eleven, I saw a television programme about the Yagán people who lived on the island of Tierra del Fuego, the southernmost tip of South America. The programme interviewed two sisters, Cristina and Ursula Calderón, and said they were the only two speakers of their language left. (2)..... Only later did I discover that the two languages are quite different; that the two peoples couldn't communicate with each other.

One day, my mother told me that although she was born in the capital, Santiago, her grandfather was a Selk'nam from the north of Tierra del Fuego. Nobody had ever told me anything about this before. When I asked why, she said that when she was young she had been teased for looking different, and so she had just kept quiet about it.

When I was thirteen, I went to the south for the first time on my own to meet Cristina Calderón. (3)..... I discovered that there used to be four thousand Selk'nam in Tierra del Fuego. They were hunters of wild cats and foxes. The Yagán lived further south and travelled by canoe all the way down to Cape Horn, but the Selk'nam moved on foot. Settlers from the north arrived in the nineteenth century and introduced diseases like measles and typhoid, which affected the local people very badly. Now, there's no way back. I got hold of some recordings of a Selk'nam shaman from the 1960s and started to study them. (4)..... Gradually, however, I began to understand how the words sounded and began to reproduce them.

The Selk'nam express themselves using lots of prefixes and suffixes, and the sounds are guttural, nasal and tonal. (5)..... For example, it has lots of different words for the weather. The hardest thing in Selk'nam, however, is the verbs – they all sound a bit the same. There are some English loanwords, such as 'bread' and 'money'. Others are descriptive: 'read' translates as 'playing with words' and 'drum' as 'vibrating leather'. Then there are words for modern things – for 'telephone', you have to say 'speak from afar', and 'car' is 'go on four wheels'. I speak the language well now. Cristina's husband spoke Selk'nam and apparently I sound just like him.

Because music is something that reaches lots of people, I started composing traditional songs in Selk'nam and formed a band with two friends. This meant that they had to learn some words, too. (6)..... I need to teach my language to more people because if something happened to me, it would die out all over again.

- A I felt a sudden desire to learn that one too.
- B It was slow because I had no one to talk to.
- C Yagán is quite different, however, because it has more vocabulary.
- D This meant that I was able to start learning words, verbs and expressions.
- E This was good because I didn't want to be the only one.
- F These turned out to be rather hard for me to pronounce, however.
- G The trip seemed the best way to find out about my roots.

Task 3. You are going to read an article in which six students talk about their university. For questions 1-10, choose from the students (A-D). The students may be chosen more than once.

Which student

- 1 is studying at a university that was not their first choice?
- 2 has found it easier to make friends at university than they had expected?
- 3 wishes they had more time to take part in social activities?
- 4 chose their university partly because a relative had recommended it?
- 5 complains about the travelling time from their accommodation to the city centre?
- 6 wants to continue studying at the same university after they graduate?
- 7 praises the approach to teaching at their present university?
- 8 decided to study at the university because of its location?
- 9 sought the opinions of current students before choosing a university?
- 10 is finding student life less expensive than they had expected?

My university

Six first-year students say what life is like at their universities.

A Zehra Erdogan

There's a club here for just about every sport or social activity you can think of, and they're a great way to get to know other students. I'd wondered whether I might feel lonely here with my family so far away, but I needn't have worried. There's a group of us who get on really well, and two are already talking about doing research here once they've finished their first degrees. That's my aim too.

B Ben Robertson

I had to take out a loan to cover my costs as a student here, but I quickly found there were all kinds of expenses I hadn't thought of, such as the cost of getting into town and back from the student village, where I live. The buses aren't cheap and it takes ages to get there, too, but I didn't check that when I chose this university. That's something I could have done quite easily online, but unfortunately I didn't. Actually, the main reason I came here was to be with my friends, who applied at the same time as I did.

C Anika Mishra

I found it relatively easy to settle in here, just as I thought I would, really. I'd done some research on the various places offering the course I wanted to do, and what I found particularly helpful were the online comments by people actually studying in each one. Actually, this one had always appealed to me as my aunt did a research degree here and said it was a good place to live and study, though unlike her I think I'll move onto another university once I've graduated.

D Lotte Peeters

Before I came here, people had been telling me I'd find it hard to live on my government grant, but that hasn't really been the case because during my free time I'm nearly always in the halls of residence with the other students. There's so much to do there that it doesn't matter that they're quite a long way from the university, which is right in the centre of town. In fact, I can't do half the things I'd like to do because I'm a medical student and I'm just too busy studying to join any more societies or clubs.

E Pablo Flores

Universities in different parts of the world tend to be quite similar in some ways, such as the international mix of students, the atmosphere and even the buildings, but something I like about studying here is that you spend a lot of your time in seminars with a tutor. So, nearly a year on, I'm actually quite relieved I had my application rejected by the top university on my list: if I'd gone there I would have spent all day taking notes in lectures. The only downside is that the cost of living is quite a bit higher in this country.

F Maxim Kuznetsov

As I have family and friends living in several nearby countries, I needed to be somewhere close to an airport offering budget flights. So studying here looked ideal, and though I've noticed prices are quite high in the city, there's plenty to do on campus and I rarely need to go there. Actually, the only time I do that is when some of my old friends come to visit me, and on those occasions we take the train. There's a good service into town, and I can get a discount by using my student card.