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Saya, the robot teacher
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Robot Teacher Trialled at Japanese Elementary School

Android technology developed after 15 years of research

Robots have been developed to serve many purposes, but only few people have thought to bring android technology to education. It's no surprise that the Japanese have done this too, as they are known for their increased interest in robotics. Now, they have come up with the world's first robot teacher, currently being tested in an elementary school in Tokyo.

The humanoid teacher, named Saya, has 18 motors hidden behind her latex face, which can help her express emotions that run the gamut from approval to anger. She can also speak different languages, carry out roll calls and set tasks for her robot-fearing pupils. Apparently, it took science professor Hiroshi Kobayashi 15 years to create Saya. The humanoid was originally developed to replace a variety of workers, including secretaries, in a bid to allow firms to cut costs while still retaining some kind of human interaction. She is one of various robots being designed to take over human jobs in Japan in an effort to deliver a cheaper workforce as the Japanese population ages. Robots have already spread to every aspect of life in Japan, so it was only logical for scientists to take it to the next level. Robots guide traffic, attempt to lure university graduates to sign up to courses and one is even being developed to provide company to Alzheimer's sufferers. The push is because of Japan's aging population - in seven years, one in four Japanese will be over 65 - which means the workforce is declining, pushing up wage costs for businesses and making recruitment difficult. Large companies have already taken measures such as reducing employees' work hours, so that they have more time to spend with their families and make more offspring, but that is definitely not enough to solve Japan's problem in this area. This is why the Japanese government said that, by 2015, it wants a robot in every home and is pouring 35 million dollars into robotic intelligence to make it happen. We are just a few, but there are many of you, Softpedia users, out there. That's why we thought it would be a good idea to create an email address for you to help us a little in finding gadgets we missed. Interesting links are bound to be posted with recognition going mainly to those who submit. The address is .