

Let's talk



A NEW KIND OF DIRECT MESSAGING



Hey there tech fans!

This week at Tech Magazine

we've been thinking about the future of communication.

In our lifetime, the invention of the Internet and the smartphone have revolutionised the way we interact. But what's next?

Well, imagine a world where we don't need language to communicate. This might sound like something from a sci-fi movie, but brain-to-brain communication could become a reality sooner than you think! Read on to find out more ...

Have you ever tried to tell someone something, only for them not to fully understand what you mean? **1** There are so many different **elements** involved in spoken communication, such as tone of voice and body language, it's not surprising we struggle to **get our message across** sometimes. But, if we can work out how to communicate directly, brain-to-brain, we won't need to worry about **communication breakdowns** ever again.

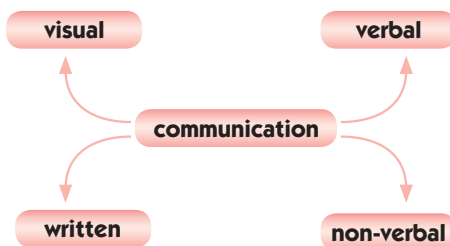
Believe it or not, brain-to-machine communication is already possible. A Brain Computer Interface (BCI) is a form of technology that allows people to control things using only their thoughts and a computer. **2** Clearly, this amazing technology is going to have a massive **impact** on the lives of people who are paralysed. Over the coming years, scientists will be developing this idea further in the hope that, one day, we'll be able to send mind-messages to people as well as computers.

So, how will brain-to-brain communication affect our lives? For one thing, it will be extremely helpful for people who are unable to talk. **3** It will also play an important role in education. In the future, we won't be spending hours studying

Vocabulary

Ways to communicate

- 1** Copy and complete the mindmap with these words: *drawing, eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, speech, touch, text message, video chat, writing, TV & radio, newspapers/magazines.*



Reading & Listening

- 2** Read through the text quickly and decide if this idea about the future of communication seems interesting to you or not.

- 3** Read again and complete the gaps (1-5) with the sentences (A-H). There are three extra sentences which you do not need to use.

Listen and check. Then explain the words/phrases in bold.

- A They will be able to communicate their thoughts and feelings with others quickly and accurately, which will make their daily lives much easier and more enjoyable.
- B This will make education a lot cheaper and available to everyone.
- C An EEG cap is used to record the electrical activity of the brain.
- D Despite these concerns, it's exciting to think what the future holds.
- E Misunderstandings are a common part of everyday life.
- F Many people don't believe that brain-to-brain communication will ever be possible.
- G For example, experiments have shown that it is possible to move a robotic arm using a BCI.
- H Do we really want to live in a world where anyone can access our private thoughts and feelings at any time?

because we'll be learning skills directly from other people's brains! Imagine you're training to become a doctor – what could be more useful than a few brain-to-brain **sessions** with an **expert**? And in the business world, brain-to-brain communication will also be extremely useful. More and more companies are becoming international these days, and communication issues such as language barriers are common. In the future, instead of travelling and using the Internet, we will be doing business across borders through our minds!

But what about the possible dangers? If we don't find a way to govern brain-to-brain communication, we will be **at risk** of things like mind control and unwelcome mind-reading. (4) This could put national security at risk and encourage spies and cheats to commit crimes. Hopefully, by the time this technology exists, we will have **come up with** a way to keep these things from happening.

(5) The possibilities of brain-to-brain communication really are endless. Who knows – perhaps one day people will be reading each other's minds so much that spoken communication won't even exist anymore!



Check these words

interact, tone of voice, paralysed, language barrier, govern, commit crimes

4 PREPOSITIONS Fill in: *across, from, on, of, about, at*. Check in your dictionary.

- 1 It seems that lots of languages are risk of becoming extinct.
- 2 Communicating with other people is an important part everyday life.
- 3 International phone calls are expensive, but the Internet has made communicating borders much cheaper.
- 4 Texting and emojis are having a negative effect children's spelling.
- 5 Brain-to-brain communication will allow us to send messages directly one brain to another.
- 6 Do you ever worry the dangers of social media?

5 COLLOCATIONS Find the words in the text that describe the following. Then use the phrases to make sentences

- | | | | |
|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| 1 | language | 4 | control |
| 2 | impact | 5 | security |
| 3 | barrier | 6 | life |

6 WORDS EASILY CONFUSED Choose the correct word. Check in your dictionary. Make a sentence with the other option.

- 1 Instant messaging lets us **communicate/express** with people all over the world at the click of a button.
- 2 Can you **speak/say** louder please? I can't hear you.
- 3 I **talk/tell** to my cousin in America at least once a month on Skype.

7 PHRASAL VERBS Fill in the correct particle.

keep down: to make less noise

keep from: to prevent sb from doing sth; to prevent sth from happening

keep on: to continue to employ sb

keep out: to prevent sb from entering

keep up: to maintain sth

- 1 Her parents kept her having a social media account until she was 13.
- 2 The IT company decided to keep Thomas after his internship; he must have made a good impression.
- 3 Bob asked his neighbour to keep the noise because they were being too loud.
- 4 Please keep of the lab. Entrance isn't allowed.
- 5 Keep the good work! Your French is really improving, you're almost fluent.

Speaking & Writing

8 THINK Think of the dangers this type of communication could cause in the future. Can you think of ways to prevent them?

9 Imagine you are in a place where you don't understand the language. Suggest ways to communicate with the locals.


10 ICT "Brain-to-brain communication will improve the way we communicate." Collect information and prepare your argument. Use your notes to have a class debate.

Grammar in Use

Future tenses ► pp. GR8-9

- 1** Read the forum entry. Identify the tenses in bold. Which tense do we use for: *timetables; predictions based on what we think or imagine; predictions based on what we can see or know; fixed arrangements in the near future; action in progress at a definite time in the future; actions that will have finished before a stated time in the future?*

Student Advice Forum

 **James, 1 day ago**
End-of-year assessments **start** next week and I'm **giving** a presentation on Monday. Public speaking makes me really nervous, so I know I'm **going to fail**. I need to work on my communication skills, but I'm not sure how. Please help!

 **Alan, 9 hours ago**
I think an online course in communication skills **will** really **help** you. Many of them are free and don't take long to complete, so you'll **have finished** it before you give your presentation. Trust me, this time next week you'll **be wondering** why you were so stressed.

 **Sophie, 4 hours ago**
Alan is right. Don't worry, you **won't fail!** I did one of those courses and it really helped me. It taught me all about the importance of things like body language. When will you get your feedback? Let us know how it goes!

- 2** Choose the correct tense. Give reasons.

- 1 I don't think people **will ever get/are ever getting** bored of social media.
- 2 On tomorrow's show, we'll **be talking/will talk** about how technology is affecting our ability to communicate face-to-face.
- 3 I **will/'m going to buy** a new smartphone once I've saved enough money.
- 4 The workshop on body language **won't have finished/isn't finishing** before 5 pm.
- 5 We **will have updated/will be updating** the app this evening, so the video call function will be temporarily disrupted.
- 6 The company **launches/will have launched** the new smartphone at 9 am tomorrow.
- 7 Initial sales figures suggest that this new instant translation device **is going to be/will have been** very popular.
- 8 I'm **meeting/will meet** Rachel for a catch-up tomorrow.

- 3** Fill in *will* or *am/is going to*.

- 1 A: We are holding free sign language classes at lunch if anyone's interested.
B: I sign up! I've always wanted to learn.
- 2 A: Mark, I really need to talk to you.
B: I'm busy right now, but I promise I call you this evening.
- 3 A: I stop using social media so much. I know it's having a bad effect on me!
B: I think that's a good idea; it's taking over your life!
- 4 A: John thinks he get by in Vietnam without knowing the language.
B: Really? He should at least try to learn a few words.
- 5 A: Are you free this evening?
B: Sorry, my sister call me tonight; she always calls me on Mondays.
- 6 A: You make a bad impression if you keep frowning like that!
B: I know, I need to relax and remember to smile.
- 7 A: I don't think anyone use a landline in the future.
B: Me neither. Almost everyone has a mobile phone these days.

- 4** Put the verbs in brackets into the present simple or the present continuous. Give reasons.

- 1 My plane (**take off**) at 5 pm so you won't be able to reach me on the phone for a few hours.
- 2 Lisa (**start**) her new job at the local radio station next week. She's so happy!
- 3 The tech shop (**close**) at 6 pm every day so you'd better hurry if you want to get a new phone charger today.
- 4 Uni (**start**) next week. Have you finished preparing for your presentation yet?
- 5 Tech companies in the area (**hold**) a job fair on Saturday.
- 6 He (**attend**) a conference about translation this weekend.

- 5** **SPEAKING** Expand the sentences, as in the example. Use *will*, *going to*, present simple or the present continuous (future meaning). Compare with your partner.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 What a terrible film! <i>When will it finish?</i> 2 It's raining! 3 The bus hasn't come yet. 4 Can I borrow your jacket tonight? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5 I can't come with you. 6 Hurry up! 7 Can you buy me some flour? 8 I'm hungry. |
|---|--|

Skills in Action

Vocabulary

Textspeak

1 a) Match the abbreviations to their meanings.

THX! 😊
u2 😊
LOL! 😂
idk 😊
tbh 😊

1	<input type="checkbox"/>	BB	a	away from keyboard
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	BRB	b	I don't know
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	CUL	c	thanks
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	IDK	d	at the moment
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	F2F	e	to be honest
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	ATM	f	bye-bye
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	AFK	g	call you later
8	<input type="checkbox"/>	BBS	h	face to face
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	tbh	i	be back soon
10	<input type="checkbox"/>	thx	j	be right back

SMS/MMS

b) Explain what the following mean. Check online.

- | | | |
|--------|-------|-------|
| 1 NP | 4 PLZ | 7 HF |
| 2 ASAP | 5 JK | 8 GR8 |
| 3 WB | 6 L8R | 9 BTW |

2 Do you use textspeak when you send messages? Why? Tell your partner.

Listening

3 a) You will hear four people talking about the pros and cons of textspeak. For questions 1-4, choose the best answer (A, B, or C).

- You will hear a teenage boy talking about textspeak. He likes it because
 - he can talk privately with his friends.
 - everyone can understand it.
 - he uses the Internet a lot.
- You will hear a school teacher speaking about textspeak. She believes that it is
 - having a negative effect on the way kids talk.
 - the main reason why kids' spelling is getting worse.
 - only appropriate online.
- You will hear a middle-aged man talking about textspeak. He uses it because it is
 - useful in certain situations.
 - not difficult to understand.
 - too simple and robotic.
- You will hear a university student talking about textspeak. She thinks that it isn't as
 - effective as body language.
 - intelligent as people think.
 - simple as it seems.

b) How does textspeak affect language in your opinion? Discuss.

Everyday English

Agree/disagree – Express doubt

4 Why is Jim confused about the message?

Listen and read to find out.

Max: What's the matter, Jim? You look a bit confused.

Jim: I've just received this text message from my grandson, but I've got no idea what it says.

Max: He's used textspeak. It says: "Hi Granddad, how are you? Looking forward to seeing you later. Meet me at 6pm. See you."

Jim: Really? It looks like nonsense to me!

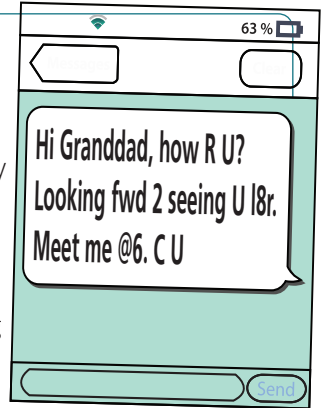
Max: I can see why you'd think that, but it's quite simple really. He's used letters, numbers and symbols that sound like words.

Jim: I see. But why is he writing like this?

Max: Well, I guess it saves time and space.

Jim: I don't know about that but this isn't proper English!

Max: Well, I guess it's OK but I'm sure it's affecting spelling.



5 Act out a dialogue between two parents about their son's hobby of podcasting similar to the one in Ex. 4. Use language from the box and the prompts below.

Agreeing	Disagreeing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I completely agree. That's for sure. You have a point. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not necessarily. I don't think so. I know what you mean, but ...
Expressing Doubt	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Really? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I don't know about that.

pros – develops research skills & chats with the viewer

cons – spends too much time in front of PC, doesn't socialise enough

Intonation: expressing feelings

6 a) Listen and match the speakers (1-4) with the feelings (a-d).

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| a irritation | c uncertainty |
| b enthusiasm | d agreement |

b) Practise expressing different feelings using these words: *Yeah!, Hey!, Right!.*

Reading & Writing

- 7 a) Read the essay and fill in the topic sentences (1-4). Two sentences do not match.



A In today's modern world, there are many different ways in which we can communicate with each other. With videoconferencing, instant messaging and email, it has never been easier to keep in touch. But can technology ever replace talking face-to-face?

B In the first place, we can see the person's facial expressions and body language. This makes it easier to know how someone is feeling. In addition, it is more personal. For instance, if someone is talking about a problem, we are better able to comfort them in person, as opposed to through an email or text message.

C Firstly, it takes more time to meet someone in person. Sending a message is a lot quicker and easier. Secondly, it can sometimes be difficult or impossible to speak to someone face-to-face. For example, if they live far away you might not see them very often so other modes of communication are necessary.

D In conclusion, I believe that face-to-face communication is highly effective. Despite the fact that it takes more time and can be difficult, it allows us to read non-verbal clues and better understand people.

- 1 It's impossible to say what kind of communication is the best.
- 2 There are many arguments in favour of communicating face-to-face.
- 3 Face-to-face communication is no longer necessary.
- 4 However, there are some negative aspects to face-to-face communication.



Writing Tip

Topic/Supporting sentences

In essays, each main body paragraph should begin with a topic sentence that introduces or summarises its main idea. A topic sentence should be followed by supporting sentences, which further develop the main idea of the paragraph.

- b) Think of other topic sentences to introduce the two main body paragraphs.

Linkers

- 8 Look at the underlined linkers in the essay in Ex. 7a. Which are used to: *express contrast; add points; list points; conclude; give examples?* Can you think of other synonymous ones?

Writing (a for-and-against essay)

- 9 a) Read the task and underline the key words. Answer the questions.

You have had a class discussion about textspeak. Now, your teacher has asked you to write an essay presenting the pros and cons of using textspeak. Write your essay (120-180 words).

- 1 What are you going to write? Who for?
- 2 What are you going to write about?
- 3 What style should you write in?

- b) Match the arguments (1-4) to their justifications/examples (a-d). Which are for/against the topic?

Arguments	Justifications/Examples
1 <input type="checkbox"/> promotes misspelling	a faster and takes up less space
2 <input type="checkbox"/> convenient way to communicate	b older people might not understand it
3 <input type="checkbox"/> excludes and confuses people	c affect schoolwork
4 <input type="checkbox"/> fun and creative	d chat with friends and invent new abbreviations

- 10 Use the ideas in Ex. 9b as well as your own ideas to write your essay. Use appropriate linkers. Follow the plan.

Plan

- Para 1:** state the topic
Para 2: arguments for (with justifications/examples)
Para 3: arguments against (with justifications/examples)
Para 4: summary of arguments; express opinion

Communication



British Body Language

Hey there globetrotters! Are you planning a trip to the UK? Not sure which gestures and greetings to use? Never fear – we've got you covered! Avoid **awkward** social situations or misunderstandings by reading our advice on British body language before you go ...



A As any seasoned traveller will know, body language and the way people greet each other **varies** from country to country. From a bow of the head to a handshake, a high-five, a hug and a kiss (or two!), we all have different **non-verbal** ways of communicating with one another. And while variety is the spice of life, sometimes all this variation can lead to confusion and misunderstandings. It can be difficult to read the body language of a person from another country, or to know which greeting is **appropriate** to use in which country.

B The type of greeting people use in the UK **tends** to differ depending on whether the situation is formal or informal. A handshake is an appropriate greeting for formal situations, such as business meetings or when meeting someone for the first time. When **greeting** a close friend or family member, however, a hug is more **typical**, although some people (usually men) are still traditional about physical contact and prefer to shake hands instead. Having said that, the European kiss on the cheek is now becoming more common in the UK among some friends and families.

C Making eye contact while you're talking to someone is important, but it can be tricky to get the balance just right. Too much eye contact can

look like you're staring, which is rude, while no eye contact at all makes it seem as though you're not interested in what the person is saying. Try to look into a person's eyes most of the time while they're speaking, but **glance** away every so often so that it's not too uncomfortable. Smiling and nodding your head are also polite signs that you're listening to a person and that you understand what they're saying.

D Hand signals are a kind of body language that can differ **greatly** from place to place. For example, holding up your fingers to indicate a number when ordering food or drinks. In Britain if you do this with the back of your hand facing the other person it is extremely rude. So use your words not your hands.

E In the UK, people generally don't like it if you stand unnecessarily close to them. Of course, sometimes this can't be avoided, like on a busy bus or train. But in a large, comfortable environment such as an office, try not to stand or sit too close to someone, especially if you don't know them very well. If someone is **leaning** their body away from you, this might mean they're uncomfortable with how close you are. Try to keep an arm's length of space between yourself and the person you're talking to.

Body language is a hugely important part of communication. Being able to read a person's non-verbal signals is almost as crucial as being able to understand the language they are speaking. So, even if you're a **fluent** English speaker, remember to pay attention to body language while you're in the UK!



Check these words

globetrotter, seasoned, bow, variety is the spice of life, balance, stare, nod, crucial

Listening & Reading

1 Look at the pictures. What do you think each gesture means? When do the British use them?
 Listen and read to find out.

2 Read the text and match the paragraphs (A-E) to the headings (1-6). One heading is extra. Then explain the words in bold.

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| 1 Conversation | 4 Hidden Meaning |
| 2 Personal Space | 5 Saying Hello |
| 3 Cultural Differences | 6 Gestures |

Speaking & Writing

3 **THINK** Compare body language in the UK to body language in your country. Can you mention some gestures that are different?

4 **ICT** Collect information about gestures and body language that people in your country use. Use your notes to prepare and give a presentation to a group of foreign people visiting your country.

Vocabulary

1 Choose the correct word.

- We would like to **communicate/express/speak** our deepest gratitude to everyone who called in with information about the incident.
- Mr Jones is great at public speaking; look how expressive his **body/business/mind** language is!
- Did you **say/talk/tell** Mark that we're having a team meeting this afternoon?
- There was a communication **barrier/impact/breakdown** at the office and the project wasn't finished on time.
- I can tell when Bob is annoyed by the **tone/impact/session** of his voice – he sounds so serious when he's angry.

(5 x 2 = 10)

2 Fill in: *get, commit, access, come, interact*.

- We've up with an amazing new app to help tourists overcome language barriers.
- Do you really want anyone to our private thoughts?
- When you're giving a presentation, visual aids can help to your message across.
- It is clear that animals with each other, even though they don't have language like humans.
- Technology could help more criminals crimes.

(5 x 3 = 15)

3 Fill in: *at, about, from, on, down*.

- Please keep the noise! I need to make an important phone call.
- Loss of signal kept me phoning home while I was camping.
- Looking at your phone screen late at night can have a negative effect your ability to sleep.
- Some languages are risk of disappearing.
- Do you worry the effect that textspeak is having on your children's spelling?

(5 x 3 = 15)

Grammar

4 Choose the correct tense.

- She **is meeting/will have met** John for lunch tomorrow – they arranged it last night.
- The Italian course for beginners **begins/will begin** next week.
- I **buy/am going to buy** a new smartphone now that I have enough money.
- Listen to that person shouting! He **will/is going to lose** his voice!
- Jane **will be working/will have worked** this time tomorrow afternoon.

(5 x 4 = 20)

5 Put the verbs in brackets into the correct future tense.

- Textspeak **(change)** completely by the time my kids are teenagers.
- Gemma **(drive)** home between 3 and 4 pm this afternoon so don't call her then.
- This translation device looks really cool. I **(take)** it!
- I hope someone **(invent)** a universal language in the future.
- Beth **(learn)** sign language. She starts lessons next month.

(5 x 4 = 20)

Everyday English

6 Match the exchanges.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> It's textspeak. It says "See you tomorrow". | a Really? I don't think so. |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Why is he doing this? | b I think he enjoys it. |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> It's very convenient. | c I've got no idea what this message says. |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> What's the matter? You look confused. | d Are you sure? It looks like nonsense to me! |

(4 x 5 = 20)

Total 100

Competences

GOOD ✓

VERY GOOD ✓✓

EXCELLENT ✓✓✓

Lexical Competence

understand words/phrases related to:

- ways to communicate
- textspeak
- body language
- feelings

Reading Competence

- understand texts related to communication (read for cohesion and coherence – gapped text; read for gist – match headings to paragraphs)

Listening Competence

- listen and understand dialogues about textspeak (listen for specific information – multiple choice)

Speaking Competence

- agree-disagree/express doubt

- have a debate

Writing Competence

- write a for-and-against essay