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Vocabulary: Work 词汇: 工作

Will your job be done by a robot in the future? Bank of England economists predict that almost half of all UK jobs are under threat of **automation**. Those most **at risk** involve repetitive **manual labour**, such as factory **positions**. But could even the venerable **profession** of teaching soon have to compete against powerful electronic educators?

At first glance, teaching might seem **impervious** to replacement by robots. Teachers use a range of **soft skills** that machines find hard to replicate. They **gauge** pupils' needs and **tailor feedback** accordingly. They adapt materials to make them more engaging and effective. And they provide pastoral care: looking out for students who **lag behind** or disrupt the class.

Nonetheless, some believe the future of education will be technological. In an interview with Business Insider magazine, futurist Thomas Frey predicts that "by 2030 the largest company on the internet is going to be an education-based company that we haven't heard of yet."

He thinks that 'bots' – online robot teachers – will make education so efficient that students will be able to **compress** an entire undergraduate degree into six months of learning. A bot learns what your "**idiosyncrasies**" "interests" and "reference points" are, "and it figures out how to teach you in a faster and faster way over time," according to Frey.

Whether or not such incredible speeds will be reached, over the last decade there has been a huge increase in online learning platforms. Companies such as Udemy and Khan Academy produce courses that allow millions to learn at home for free, at their own pace. But there are limitations. Without the face-to-face stimulation of a classroom environment, the **overwhelming majority** of students fail to complete online courses. How to sustain motivation to learn is one more skill that online teachers will need to **master**.

Indeed, Frey admits there is some way to go: "Nobody has quite **cracked the code** for the future of education." What do teachers themselves think about this? Professor Donald Clark from Derby University in the UK thinks that we should **embrace change**, even though people will lose their jobs.

"**Artificial intelligence** will destroy jobs - so why not use it for a social good such as learning?" he asked.

## 词汇表

|                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>automation</b>              | 自动化                |
| <b>at risk</b>                 | 面临风险               |
| <b>manual labour</b>           | 体力劳动               |
| <b>position</b>                | 工作，职位              |
| <b>profession</b>              | （需专业知识技能的）职业       |
| <b>impervious</b>              | 不受影响的              |
| <b>soft skill</b>              | 软技能，如与人相处的能力和沟通能力等 |
| <b>to gauge</b>                | 判断（人的感受）           |
| <b>to tailor</b>               | （根据需要）调整           |
| <b>feedback</b>                | 反馈意见               |
| <b>to lag behind</b>           | 落后                 |
| <b>to compress</b>             | 压缩、缩短              |
| <b>idiosyncrasy</b>            | 个人特征、习性            |
| <b>overwhelming majority</b>   | 压倒性多数，绝大多数         |
| <b>to master</b>               | 掌握                 |
| <b>to crack (a) code</b>       | 找到解决问题的办法          |
| <b>to embrace change</b>       | 积极接受改变             |
| <b>artificial intelligence</b> | 人工智能               |

## 测验与练习

### 1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. What are some of the soft skills that teachers use?
2. How do bots teach?
3. What has been one of the main failures of online courses so far?
4. Which verb means 'to copy'?
5. True or false: Frey believes we have already developed powerful robot teachers.

### 2. 请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. Marcus \_\_\_\_\_ French in just four months. He has such a talent with languages.

|            |          |        |          |
|------------|----------|--------|----------|
| compressed | mastered | gauged | tailored |
|------------|----------|--------|----------|

2. You need to show your \_\_\_\_\_ as well as your knowledge and experience at job interviews.

|          |             |            |                |
|----------|-------------|------------|----------------|
| feedback | soft skills | profession | idiosyncrasies |
|----------|-------------|------------|----------------|

3. Sue \_\_\_\_\_ her class when she was young, but worked hard and got into a good university.

|        |          |               |          |
|--------|----------|---------------|----------|
| lagged | mastered | lagged behind | fed back |
|--------|----------|---------------|----------|

4. Heavy smokers are \_\_\_\_\_ of lung cancer.

|       |      |         |         |
|-------|------|---------|---------|
| risky | risk | at risk | risking |
|-------|------|---------|---------|

5. We have a number of \_\_\_\_\_ available at our company this month.

|         |             |             |           |
|---------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| labours | professions | employments | positions |
|---------|-------------|-------------|-----------|

## 答案

### 1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. What are some of the soft skills that teachers use?

**Teachers gauge pupils' needs, tailor feedback and provide pastoral care.**

2. How do bots teach?

**Bots learn your idiosyncrasies, interests and reference points, and use this information to figure out how to teach you as fast as possible, according to Frey.**

3. What has been one of the main failures of online courses so far?

**The majority of students fail to complete online courses because they struggle to maintain motivation without the face-to-face stimulation of a classroom environment.**

4. Which verb means 'to copy'?

**To replicate.**

5. True or false: Frey believes we have already developed powerful robot teachers.

**False. He believes that nobody has "cracked the code" for the future of education yet, but is confident that we will.**

2. 请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. Marcus **mastered** French in just four months. He has such a talent with languages.

2. You need to show your **soft skills** as well as your knowledge and experience at job interviews.

3. Sue **lagged behind** her class when she was young, but worked hard and got into a good university.

4. Heavy smokers are **at risk** of lung cancer.

5. We have a number of **positions** available at our company this month.