

Факультет иностранных языков
Специальность «Перевод и переводоведение»
английский язык
Дополнительное вступительное испытание
Устная часть

Прочитайте текст, передайте его содержание на иностранном языке, ответьте на вопросы экзаменатора по тексту.

MOBILE MAD

There are good reasons to be worried about children and mobile phones. Sociologists in Japan, where mobiles have been common among the young for some time and offer sophisticated services, see an alarming trend.

Tokyo, for example, one-quarter of all four to fifteen-year-olds has a mobile phone. Well over half of Japan's high school students own one, many of them Internet enabled. Half the children polled recently said their lifestyle 'required' them to have a mobile phone, while 41.5 percent said their parents 'forced' them to have one.

An informal survey conducted on the Tokyo streets by Japan Today magazine, however, suggests that the nations' teens have other reasons for keeping hold of 'their best electric friend'. "If I can't find my phone I feel really isolated from my friends," says a 16-year-old. Another teenager agrees, adding: "It's great talking to friends about gossip I don't want my parents to hear." Another survey also revealed that about 22 percent said they talked at least ten times per day, while 45 percent said they used their mobile to send two or more text messages each day.

Parents were also surveyed, with more than a third feeling their children spend too much time on the phone, while 23 percent said the mobile made it difficult for them to keep a check on who their children were communicating with. Tokyo parents may have good reason to be worried, since 26 percent of the

children said they were regularly corresponding with people they had never met.

Such density of mobile ownership, especially among the young, has led to a new type of neurosis, say sociologists. Japanese teens, in particular, have become fanatical about being 'always available'. "Teens can be seen taking advantage of every spare minute to touch base with their friends. It is not the content of the communication but the act of staying in touch that matters. Indeed, many become extremely uneasy if unable to contact their peers countless times each day, fearing they are becoming socially isolated", writes the sociologist Hisao Ishii, the author of *The Superficial Life of Japan's Mobile Phone Addicts*.

"If this trend continues", he adds, "two things are likely to happen. One is mobile phone addiction, where a person is incapable of forming and maintaining relationships without the help of mobiles. The second: Genuine conversation will be driven out by superficial communication, in which the act of contacting one another is all that matters, leading to deterioration in the quality of relationships. Indeed, the very fabric of society may be threatened".

One sociologist has also suggested that children read books less and less, as they are too busy playing with their technological tools. As well as this, it may be that academic performance is being effected: 68 percent of children who responded to the DoCoMo survey and owned a mobile phone said they got poor grades at school.

In addition to this, a recent UK government report has highlighted the increased health risk to children under sixteen using mobile handsets and a circular sent to school suggests that children below this age should be allowed to make calls only in emergencies.

On the other hand, there are clear benefits for children, particularly if their connection is Internet enabled. One company has recently produced a revision/mock exam question service for delivery via SMS, and teachers are already using texting and mobile email to keep in touch with pupils.

QUESTIONS

1. What sophisticated services do mobile phones offer now?
2. What are the reasons for having one or more mobile phones, according to teenagers?
3. What health risks for children are connected with mobiles?
4. What sociological risks are presented by mobile phone addiction?
5. What is done by school authorities to prevent mobiles overuse at school?
6. What advantages of mobile phones can teachers gain?