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Workers in microchip implant trial

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16 February, 2006

THE ARTICLE

Workers in microchip implant trial

An American company has started testing a new programme aimed at increasing security. Three workers from CityWatcher.com, a company that provides security camera equipment, have volunteered to be electronically monitored. They will have a silicon chip put inside their arms. The tiny device is the size of a grain of rice and will send out radio signals. These will provide information to a central monitoring system that will give the workers access to secure areas of the workplace. The chips were originally designed for medical purposes and rescue workers used them after Hurricane Katrina.

Sean Darks, CEO of CityWatcher, said the chips were like identity cards. He said the only difference is that they are inserted inside the person's body. He added they are very different from Global Positioning Satellite technology, which allows people's location to be monitored. Mr. Darks insisted that they were not dangerous and even decided to have a chip implanted in his own body. However, many people are worried about the issue of privacy. Many believe the technology could be abused and that new laws will have to be made. Mr. Darks said his workers can always choose to have the chips removed.

WARM-UPS

1. MICROCHIPS: Talk about microchips. List the things you have or own that contain them – What would life be like without these things? List the everyday things you see around you that contain microchips. What would happen if they all stopped working?

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

American companies / increased security / camera equipment / silicon chips / rice / rescue workers / ID cards / satellites / implants / technology / privacy / new laws

Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

3. MY STORY: Look at the words in the “Chat” section above and create your own story. Do this with your partner(s). Use the words to predict what this lesson’s article will be about. Change partners and compare your stories. Who do you think will be closest to the real story?

4. TRACKING: Do you think implanting microchips in people to track them is a good idea? What are the benefits (or otherwise) of inserting chips in the following people?

- Employees
- Presidents and Prime Ministers
- People with criminal records
- Children
- Grandmothers
- Doctors
- Soldiers
- Boyfriends / Girlfriends / Partners...

5. OPINIONS: Do you agree with these opinions on microchips?

- a. Microchips have made the world a nicer place.
- b. Microchips will be replaced by a newer and smaller technology.
- c. Everyone should have a microchip implanted in his/her body.
- d. Microchip implants will one day mean we do not need to carry cash.
- e. Microchips will one day create a totally state-controlled society.
- f. I want a microchip in my loved ones so I know their whereabouts.
- g. Microchip implants are essential to track former criminals and keep society safer.
- h. Criminal activity would increase if people were implanted with microchips.
- i. Society would move quicker if we were all fitted with microchips.

6. SECURITY: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word “security”. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. Workers are in court for implanting microchips into their colleagues. T / F
- b. Staff from a security company are testing a microchip tracking device. T / F
- c. Workers have had microchips implanted into their arms. T / F
- d. The same chips were used after Hurricane Katrina. T / F
- e. The chips are the same size as regular identity cards. T / F
- f. The chips work in an identical way to GPS technology. T / F
- g. The security company CEO agreed to be implanted with a chip. T / F
- h. Many people are worried the chips may be abused. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| a. aimed at | concerned |
| b. monitored | ID |
| c. send out | whereabouts |
| d. access | reasons |
| e. purposes | implanted |
| f. identity | opt |
| g. inserted | designed to |
| h. location | observed |
| i. worried | emit |
| j. choose | entry |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. testing a new programme aimed | electronically monitored |
| b. a company that provides | the issue of privacy |
| c. volunteered to be | designed for medical purposes |
| d. The tiny device is the size | security camera equipment |
| e. The chips were originally | people's location to be monitored |
| f. they are inserted | could be abused |
| g. technology which allows | at increasing security |
| h. many people are worried about | of a grain of rice |
| i. the technology | to have the chips removed |
| j. his workers can always choose | inside the person's body |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

Workers in microchip implant trial

An American company has started _____ a new programme aimed at increasing security. Three workers from CityWatcher.com, a company that provides _____ camera equipment, have _____ to be electronically monitored. They will have a silicon chip put inside their arms. The tiny _____ is the size of a grain of _____ and will send out radio signals. These will provide information to a _____ monitoring system that will give the workers _____ to secure areas of the workplace. The chips were originally designed for medical purposes and _____ workers used them after Hurricane Katrina.

central
device
security
rescue
testing
rice
access
volunteered

Sean Darks, _____ of CityWatcher, said the chips were like _____ cards. He said the only difference is that they are _____ inside the person's body. He added they are very different from Global Positioning Satellite technology, which allows people's _____ to be monitored. Mr. Darks insisted that they were not dangerous and even decided to have a chip _____ in his own body. However, many people are worried about the issue of _____. Many believe the technology could be _____ and that new laws will have to be made. Mr. Darks said his workers can always _____ to have the chips removed.

inserted
implanted
abused
CEO
privacy
choose
identity
location

LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Workers in microchip implant trial

An American company has started _____ a new programme aimed at increasing security. Three workers from CityWatcher.com, a company that _____ security camera equipment, have volunteered to be electronically monitored. They will have a _____ chip put inside their arms. The tiny device is the size of a grain of rice and will _____ radio signals. These will provide information to a _____ monitoring system that will give the workers access to secure areas of the workplace. The chips were originally _____ for medical purposes and rescue workers used them after Hurricane Katrina.

Sean Darks, CEO of CityWatcher, said the chips were like _____ cards. He said the only difference is that they are _____ inside the person's body. He added they are very different from Global Positioning Satellite technology, which allows people's _____ to be monitored. Mr. Darks insisted that they were not dangerous and even decided to have a chip _____ in his own body. However, many people are worried about the issue of _____. Many believe the technology could be abused and that new laws will have to be made. Mr. Darks said his workers can always choose to have the chips _____.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'silicon' and 'chip'.

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT "MICROCHIP" SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about microchips, security and privacy.

- Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
- Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| • aimed | • identity |
| • camera | • body |
| • monitored | • location |
| • grain | • decided |
| • access | • issue |
| • medical | • choose |

DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a. Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- b. What would life be like without microchips?
- c. What are microchips?
- d. How many microchips do you think are around you right now?
- e. Do you think the world is a better place because of microchips?
- f. What do you think of the idea of having microchips implanted in your body?
- g. What dangers do you see in putting microchips in people's bodies?
- h. What laws do you think should be made to protect people from abuses of microchip implants?
- i. Do you think it's a good idea to implant children with microchips so parents can keep track of them?
- j. Can you see a future in which everyone must have a microchip implanted into his/her body?

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a. Did you like reading this article?
- b. What do you think about what you read?
- c. Do you think the CityWatcher.com scheme is a good one?
- d. Would you volunteer to take part in such a scheme?
- e. Would you prefer to have a microchip implant instead of carrying a wallet?
- f. Microchip implants in the future could create a cashless, cardless, keyless society. What do you think of this?
- g. Microchip implants could be mobile phones and storage for personal information, photos, movies and music. What do you think of this?
- h. What would you think if your government asked everyone to have a microchip implanted in his or her body?
- i. Do you think governments might misuse microchip implants?
- j. Did you like this discussion?

AFTER DISCUSSION: Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

- a. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
- b. Was there a question you didn't like?
- c. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
- d. What did you like talking about?
- e. Which was the most difficult question?

SPEAKING

IMPLANTS: In pairs / groups, talk about the usefulness of having a microchip implanted in your body. Do you think there are more pros or cons in the following cases?

	PROS	CONS
Tracking people's whereabouts		
Society's safety		
No need for keys		
Permanent storage for digital data (info, photos, songs...)		
On-the-spot information for medics in emergencies		
Traffic safety		
Easier shopping		

Change partners / groups. Tell each other what your previous partner(s) said. Decide whether you are in favor or against implanting all members of society.

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find information about microchip implants. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

3. PRIVACY: Write the new United Nations Rule on Microchip Implants. Include in it what can and cannot be stored on microchips implanted into people's bodies and for what purposes the chips can be used. Show your rules to your partner(s) in your next class. Did you all write about similar things?

4. MY CHIP: Your government has implanted a microchip in your body. You don't know the real reasons why. Write a letter to your government explaining your thoughts. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Did everyone write about similar things?

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. T c. T d. T e. F f. F g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| a. aimed at | designed to |
| b. monitored | observed |
| c. send out | emit |
| d. access | entry |
| e. purposes | reasons |
| f. identity | ID |
| g. inserted | implanted |
| h. location | whereabouts |
| i. worried | concerned |
| j. choose | opt |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. testing a new programme aimed | at increasing security |
| b. a company that provides | security camera equipment |
| c. volunteered to be | electronically monitored |
| d. The tiny device is the size | of a grain of rice |
| e. The chips were originally | designed for medical purposes |
| f. they are inserted | inside the person's body |
| g. technology which allows | people's location to be monitored |
| h. many people are worried about | the issue of privacy |
| i. the technology | could be abused |
| j. his workers can always choose | to have the chips removed |

GAP FILL:

Workers in microchip implant trial

An American company has started **testing** a new programme aimed at increasing security. Three workers from CityWatcher.com, a company that provides **security** camera equipment, have **volunteered** to be electronically monitored. They will have a silicon chip put inside their arms. The tiny **device** is the size of a grain of **rice** and will send out radio signals. These will provide information to a **central** monitoring system that will give the workers **access** to secure areas of the workplace. The chips were originally designed for medical purposes and **rescue** workers used them after Hurricane Katrina.

Sean Darks, **CEO** of CityWatcher, said the chips were like **identity** cards. He said the only difference is that they are **inserted** inside the person's body. He added they are very different from Global Positioning Satellite technology, which allows people's **location** to be monitored. Mr. Darks insisted that they were not dangerous and even decided to have a chip **implanted** in his own body. However, many people are worried about the issue of **privacy**. Many believe the technology could be **abused** and that new laws will have to be made. Mr. Darks said his workers can always **choose** to have the chips removed.