



[1] Hassan went to university in Mohammedia. After graduation, he began looking for a job. Like many other young Moroccans, he started work in a bilingual call centre for a couple of reasons. "I want to practise my communication skills and also work in a prestigious call centre," he said. Hassan works for an airline company call centre. His task at the centre consists of receiving calls from passengers who are inquiring about tickets and flights. "My task is to receive all incoming calls and answer inquiries about flights from a computer system. I also make reservations and process clients' payments," he added.

- [2] Apart from working for 45 hours per week, Hassan described the difficulties he encounters on his daily routine as follows: "As a beginner, the four-week training I had wasn't enough to fully understand all the details of the job. The other problem, which many of us in the centre suffer from, is the huge number of incoming calls that we have to process everyday." He added: "All the answers I give to clients are available on the computer system." Furthermore, when asked if <u>he</u> considers his task to be repetitive, he answered with a big "YES."
- [3] Recently, IBM (an international computer company) launched a new computer program called "Watson Engagement Advisor", which can be used in call centres. <u>It</u> can answer calls as it understands plain English and can be operated by a human agent. The program is designed to replace human agents in dealing with customers.
- [4] When asked about the challenges of dealing with huge numbers of incoming calls, Hassan said: "You try to be as friendly as possible, keeping a positive tone, but sometimes you feel annoyed, bored and you can easily get angry." Such qualities are of human nature; however, Watson Engagement Advisor would keep calm all the time and answer all questions easily.
- [5] But when asked if he is for or against the idea of introducing Watson in Moroccan call centres, Hassan was very hesitant: "I'm against **this idea**. I think it will cost a lot of money. There are some clients who make the reservation online through the website; still they call to make sure that it's been done. Moroccans do not trust technology yet; they still need to hear the human voice." Watson wouldn't need any health insurance nor ask for days off. It can work day and night without complaining or fighting over the phone with clients. Watson threatens Hassan and other young agents' source of living. It's true that with the increasing advances in science and technology, machines are making their way to replace humans.

