

Assistive technology at home with a robot to support psychologists' work with autistic children

LOCATION: Espartinas, Sevilla

DURATION: 1'39"

SUMMARY: This is Social Robot IO, created by an engineer from Seville called Bernardo Ronquillo, who is interested in psychology and artificial intelligence. The robot is designed as a therapeutic tool, which through programming certain exercises, the user and family can work on the development of social and language skills, areas in which people with autism have particular difficulties.

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Bernardo is an industrial engineer with 20 years of experience in the aeronautical industry. He combines his passion for artificial intelligence with psychology. The result is a robot which will help psychologists to work with young people with autism spectrum disorders.

BERNARDO RONQUILLO **Creator of Social Robot IO**

"I noticed that in various studies worldwide, there have been studies proving that social robotics could help to develop the skills of children with autism."

The project is supported by Finodex, the business incubator of the European Commission. It will be launched onto the market in a year's time. Then, therapists will be able to programme the robot according to the needs of the user so that, with their families, they will be able to continue working. One in 160 people, according to experts, are born with autism.

BERNARDO RONQUILLO **Creator of Social Robot IO**

"There will be interactive activities for speech, following eye movements, recognising emotions..."

AMBIENCE: -"How old are you?"
- "Five years, ten months, forty five days right now."

It only speaks in English at the moment. When it is put together, it will cost just 10% of other similar tools already on the market. The secret is in the technology used; an open source hardware that costs 35 euros.

MARCOS ZAMORA **Technical Director Assoc. Of Autism** **Sevilla**

"It will always be supervised by a professional who marks out the objectives and most importantly establishes the use of computer science in such a way to make it a stepping stone to then develop social skills."

BERNARDO RONQUILLO **Creator of Social Robot IO**

"Just like in education they are making the most of technology, why don't we apply the same to the world of psychological treatment?"

And this is what Bernardo does... accessible technological innovation available to everyone.

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