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## SC@OUT Helps Autistic Children Communicate

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Spanish researchers from the University of Granada have developed free software that may improve the way people with developmental disabilities communicate with the world around them.

The SC@UT system could also be used by adults with cerebral palsy, or by adults who cannot speak for different reasons like heart attack, thrombosis, etc.

SC@UT has been created by a team of researchers including several professors of the Computer Engineering School (ETSI Informatica) and a team of psychologists, psycho-pedagogues and speech therapists including Canas Delgado at University of Granada.



The software for enhancing communication by computer devices (PC's, laptops, PDA's, etc.) is for children with special communication and educational needs, such as those who suffer from autism.

The SC@UT includes a speaker which transmits the 'user's comments' to the listener.

Researchers found that through the SC@UT project, the child can express needs like going to the toilet or hunger, as well as states as being happy, sad, or tired.

Researchers claim that improved communication will lead to a decrease in disruptive behavior in disabled children. Consequently, the use of that display could also diminish aggressiveness in autistic children.

'Many of them injure themselves and present aggressive behavior because they become frustrated when they cannot communicate with others. If they can communicate through SC@UT, this problem would disappear,' Delgado said.

The new device is handy and can be downloaded for free.

'SC@UT technology tries to overcome the problems of the previous systems: it is adaptive, portable, and inexpensive. With a proper device, the user can download the software free of charge,' Delgado added.

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