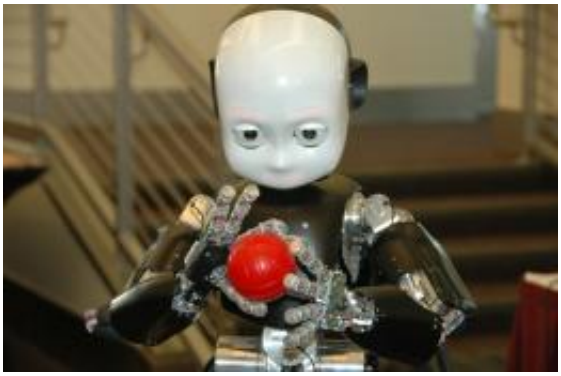
iCub, the Toddler Robot (w/ Videos, Pictures)

September 9 2009, by Lin Edwards



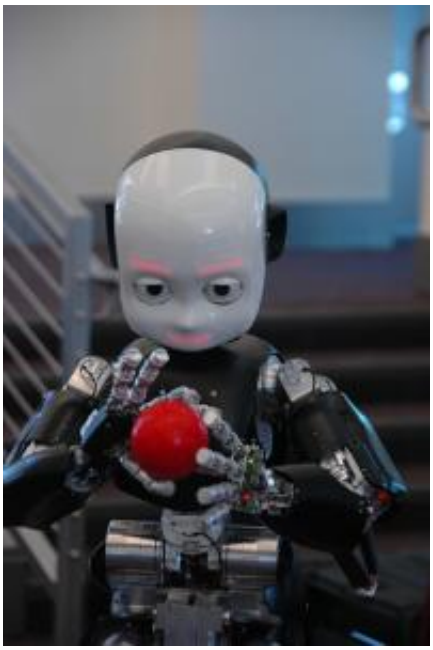
iCub, the Toddler Robot

(PhysOrg.com) -- A little humanoid robot called iCub is learning how to think for itself, bringing the world of science fiction to reality. The major goal of the "RobotCub" project is to study how humans learn and think, using a robot with the size and brain of a toddler, but the study is also expected to have practical applications in the near future.

The robot, with its cute white face and big eyes, is designed to learn from experience and adapt to changes in its environment, just like a human child. As iCub learns, the scientists behind it hope to learn about the development of cognition in humans. According to research director Peter Ford Dominey, the goal is to understand more about the ability of humans to cooperate, work together, and understand what others want us to do.

As well as the scientific advancements expected from iCub studies, the robots may well have practical uses in the future. Suggestions include playing games with hospital physiotherapy patients to help in their recovery, and in the longer term, perhaps even in the next decade, iCub could become a helper in the home, making its own decisions on what needs to be done.

The five year project is supported by the European Commission. The software is open-source and the developers are open to forming further collaborations with laboratories around the world.



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More information: http://www.robotcub.org/