

Subthalamic Nucleus - Deep Brain Stimulation deteriorates speech in Parkinson's disease: a machine learning study

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Introduction: Deep brain stimulation of the subthalamic nucleus (STN-DBS) can worsen speech in Parkinson's disease (PD).

Objective: We here examined voice impairment objectively in STN-DBS patients, by using artificial intelligence.

Methods: We enrolled 108 controls and 101 patients (50 with STN-DBS and 51 under the best medical treatment). Voice was clinically evaluated using the Unified Parkinson's Disease Rating Scale part-III subitem for voice (UPDRS-III-v). We recorded and then analysed voices using specific machine-learning algorithms. The likelihood ratio (LR) was also calculated as an objective measure for clinical-instrumental correlations.

Results: Clinically, voice impairment was greater in STN-DBS patients than in those under oral treatment. Machine-learning discriminated voices recorded from STN-DBS patients and those under oral treatments, objectively and with high accuracy. We also found significant clinical-instrumental correlations since the greater LRs, the higher UPDRS-III-v scores.

Conclusions: STN-DBS deteriorates speech in patients with PD as objectively demonstrated by machine-learning voice analysis.