Objective quantification of tic expression in Tourette syndrome patients

Yocheved Loewenstern, Noa Benaroya-Milshtein and Izhar Bar-Gad

1The Gonda Multidisciplinary Brain Research Center, Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan, Israel
2The Matta and Harry Freund Neuropsychiatric Tourette Clinic, Schneider Children’s Medical Center of Israel, Petach Tikva, Israel
3Sackler Faculty of Medicine, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, Israel

Correspondence: yloewenstern@gmail.com

Tourette syndrome (TS)

- A childhood-onset disorder characterized by the presence of involuntary, repetitive stereotyped movements or vocalizations termed tics.
- Tics typically follow a waxing and waning pattern of severity, intensity and frequency.
- Tic expression is modulated by behavioral states and environmental factors.
- Quantifying tic expression can provide insights to the modulation factors influencing tic expression, supply clinicians with a powerful tool for patient follow-up and assist in evaluating the efficacy of current therapeutic options.

Current methods for measuring tics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yale Global Tic Severity Scale</th>
<th>Video recordings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ Clinician report</td>
<td>• Labor intensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Taken periodically</td>
<td>• Observer’s perception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ Subjective</td>
<td>• Limited duration</td>
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</table>

Research goal

To create an automatic objective measure for quantifying tic expression. This goal is part of a larger project: quantifying behavioral state modulation of tic expression in Tourette syndrome patients.

Experimental setup

Participants
- 13 patients
- Males and females (≥ 6 years old)
- Chronic motor/vocal tic disorders (TS or other chronic tic disorders)

Sessions
- 42 sessions
- Patient’s home
- 1-4 sessions per patient
- 30-60 min per session
- Metis app

Landmark detection

Neural network for detecting and tracking keypoints on faces to reduce the dimensionality of video data.

Stacked hourglass network:

Detection validation over entire video

Summary

- Smartphones provide useful tools for collecting clinical data from natural environments.
- Our current algorithm can detect over 90% of tics from videos.
- Further analysis will include classifying different types of tics, testing the model on new sessions and patients that it has not been trained on, and comparing to other algorithms.
- Contributions of this study will include examining the efficacy of therapeutic options.

Acknowledgements

We thank K. Belelovsky, K. Zinkovskaiia and the rest of the IBG lab for all of the technical help. We also thank the all the members of the Tourette clinic in Schneider’s children hospital for their contribution to the study.