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# Scientists develop system to control artificial hands just by thinking

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Scientists have developed a system that can read brain signals to help users control an artificial hand just by thinking -- an advance that could help stroke patients regain the ability to move their fingers.

0 comments

Spinal injuries or stroke often leaves a person partially paralysed. Such

ities leave them disconnected heir families and community. ant to give them a life where. the technology, they can fulfill asic needs, such as getting a of water or typing on the screen, r Haider Raza, from University of in the UK, one of the scientists orked on the system. am, which includes researchers ndian Institute Technology (IIT) r. developed a brain-computer interface (BCI) that can 'read' a



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Their research was recently published in the Journal of Biomedical and Health informatics, Transactions on Cognitive and Developmental systems, and Journal of Neuroscience Methods

"BCI is technology by which we control the computer using the mind. My focus is on rehabilitation - to treat those whose brain is injured," Raza told PTI. Currently, physiotherapists try to restore movement in patients physically moving the paralysed body parts, while asking the patients to 'imagine' making those movements.

"For example, if somebody just imagines moving their hands, a part of their brain gets activated. If we do this imagination exercise on a regular basis, there is a possibility of reactivating those regions," Raza said.

"However, just imagining is not enough -- active practice is also needed, which is what physiotherapists do," he said.

For this purpose the researchers designed an exoskeleton for the hand, which is connected with the computer.

"A stroke patient, who has lost his ability to move his hand, will imagine moving his hand. The BCI algorithm -- which reads the brain signals -- will detect that the patient is trying to move their hand," said Raza.

The command from the computer will move the robotic exoskeleton.

"This will give the patient both mental practice and physical practice." Raza said. "We have tested the system on 21 patients. Out of which, 14 patients have shown improvement," he said.

The team is now trying to improve the technology to build a complete exoskeleton.

Source: gadgetsnow.com

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