



Grammys gobbledegook report no laughing matter: stroke expert

By Danny Rose

When footage of a US TV reporter delivering her Grammys report in apparent gobbledegook was posted on YouTube it went viral, prompting a rash of online jokes at her expense.

But the video should fuel concern, not laughs, a stroke expert says.

Serene Branson's garbled attempt to deliver a Grammy Awards report during the CBS2 news on Sunday has been watched the world over via the online video-sharing site, where it has sparked numerous parody videos.

Professor Linda Worrall said the reporter showed the classic signs of having a "mini-stroke" on camera. The immediate reaction to it showed widespread ignorance about stroke, she said.

"Stroke is the third-biggest killer in the Western world and the most disabling disease in the Western world," Professor Worrall said.

"What you're seeing is that it doesn't normally happen to young beautiful women on the TV, at the Grammys, in full

camera. But it is a very common disorder."

Professor Worrall is professor of speech pathology at the University of Queensland, and her research has focused on communicative disorders and rehabilitation. She said the TV reporter showed the telltale signs of aphasia – an interruption to the part of the brain which controls speech – as well as dysarthria or paralysis affecting the face, lips, tongue and jaw.

"You could see the left side of her face start to have a facial droop as well," Professor Worrall said.

The situation echoes events on Queensland television in late 2006 when rugby league great turned sports newsreader Wally Lewis experienced an on-air freeze, and appeared to be disoriented, during a broadcast of Brisbane's Nine Network News.

Lewis later revealed he had epilepsy and was on medication to control seizures. He went on to have brain surgery in early 2007.

AAP



GARBLED: Serene Branson tries to report.