A team of researchers has compiled the largest database of human fossils, covering 7 million years of evolution. Using advanced statistical methods and computer modeling, they were able to fill gaps in the fossil record and present the most complete picture of how brain size increased in ancient humans.

Professor Chris Venditti from the University of Reading, a co-author of the study, noted that the research radically changes the understanding of human brain evolution. It was found that brain enlargement occurred not through leaps between species but through gradual changes within each species, similar to software updates.

Previously, it was believed that species like Neanderthals did not change over time. However, the new study showed that brain evolution was much more gradual and continuous. Scientists concluded that major evolutionary changes can occur without abrupt events and changes.

The study also showed that larger species usually had bigger brains, but within a single species, brain size did not always correspond to body size. This indicates that the factors influencing brain development over millions of years are much more complex than those observed within a single species.