Neural Dynamics
Part 1

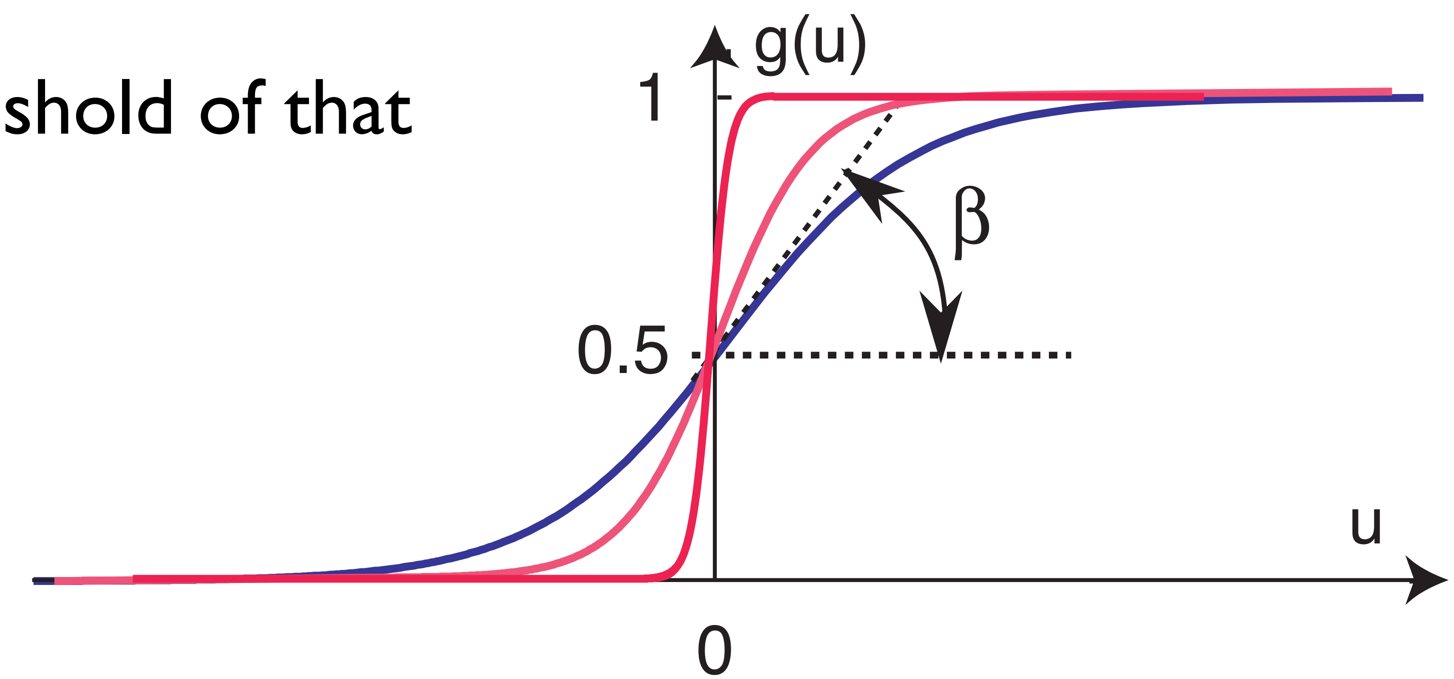
Gregor Schöner
gregor.schoener@ini.rub.de

Activation

- neural state variable activation
  - linked to membrane potential of neurons in some accounts
  - linked to spiking rate in our account
  - through: population activation... (later)

Activation

- activation as a real number, abstracting from biophysical details
  - low levels of activation: not transmitted to other systems (e.g., to motor systems)
  - high levels of activation: transmitted to other systems
  - as described by sigmoidal threshold function
  - zero activation defined as threshold of that function



Activation

- compare to connectionist notion of activation:
  - same idea, but tied to individual neurons
- compare to abstract activation of production systems (ACT-R, SOAR)
  - quite different... really a function that measures how far a module is from emitting its output...

Activation dynamics

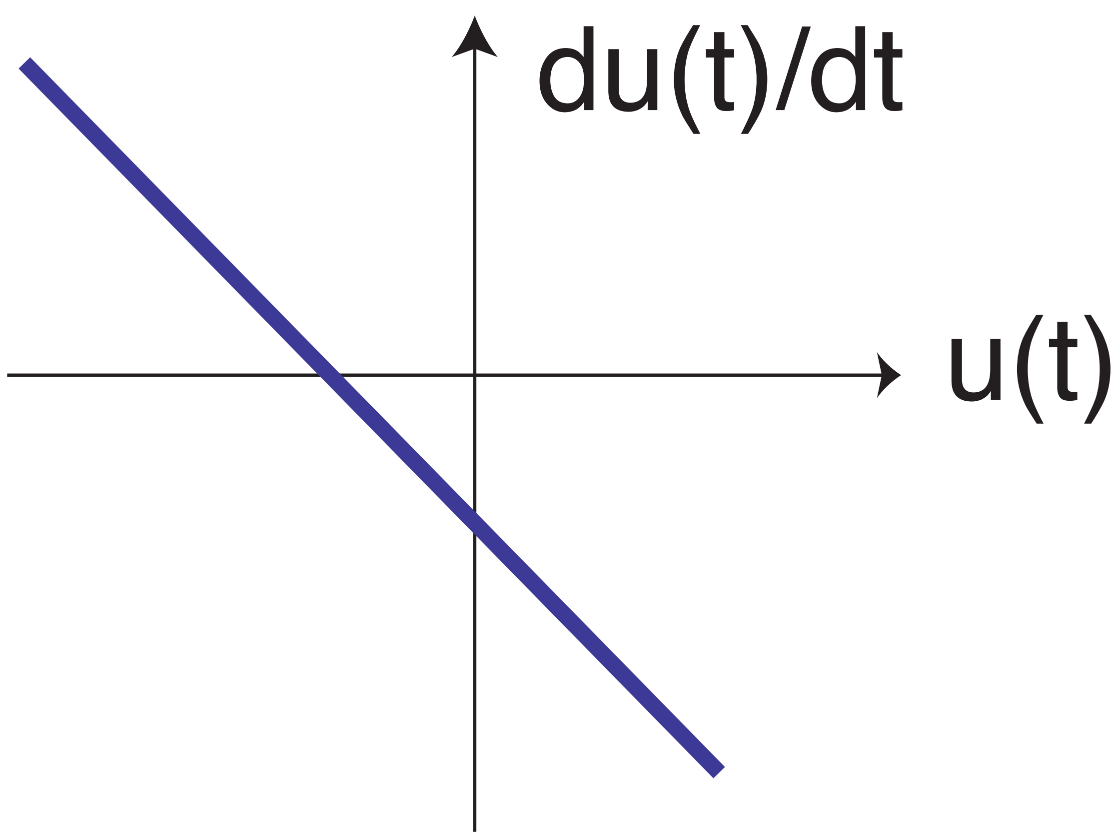
- activation evolves in continuous time
  - no evidence for a discretization of time, for spike timing to matter for behavior

Activation dynamics

- activation variables u(t) as time continuous functions...

$$\tau \dot{u}(t) = f(u)$$

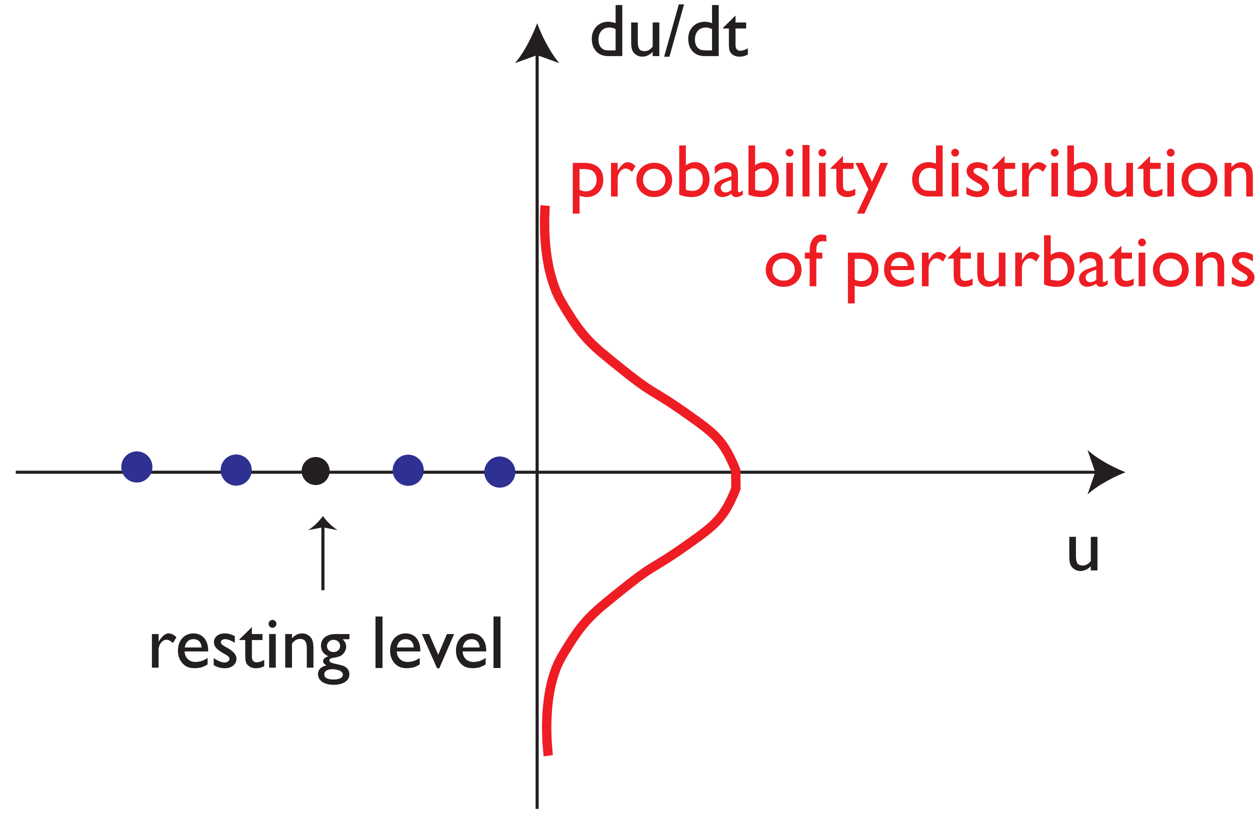
- what function f?

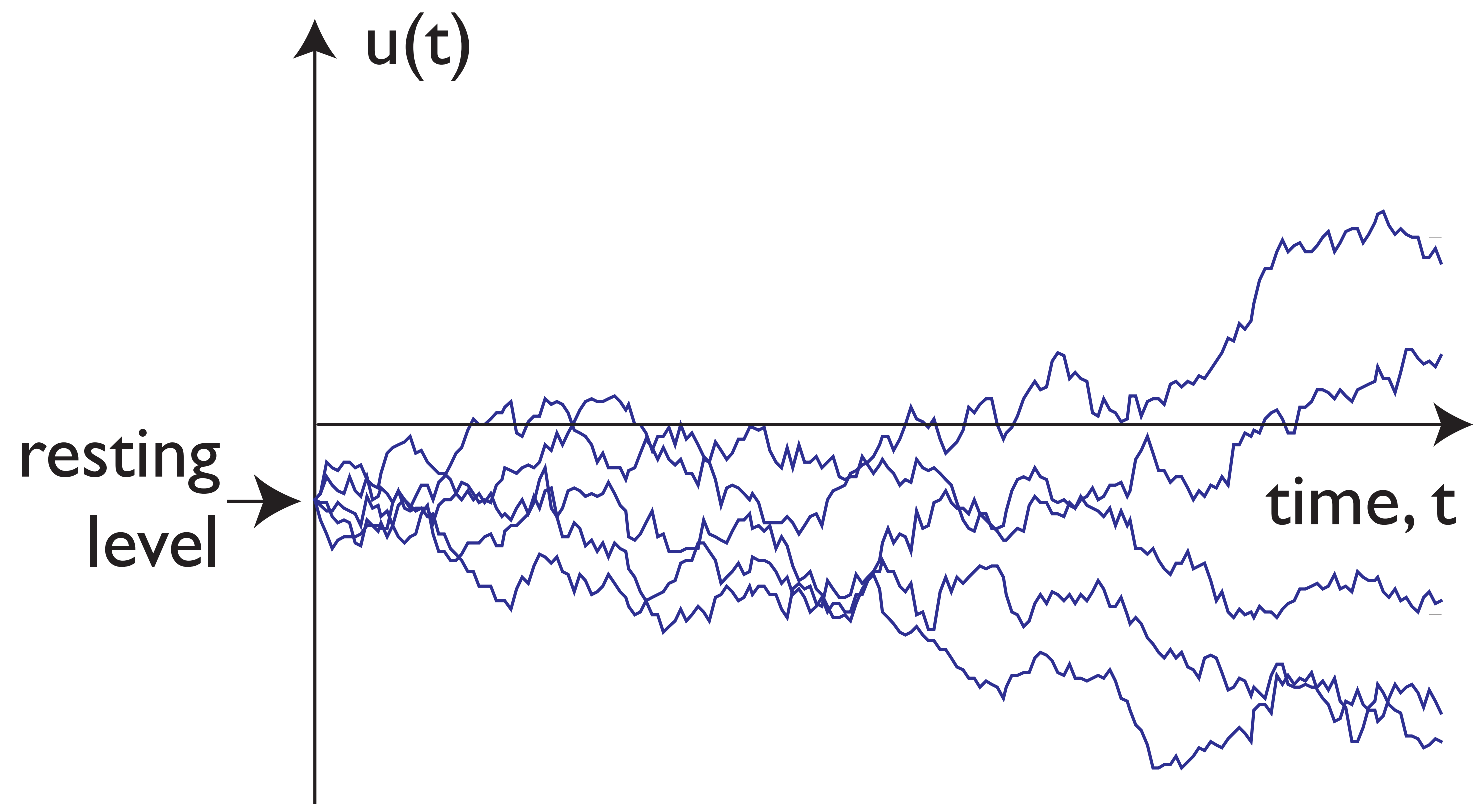


Activation dynamics

- start with f=0

$$\tau \dot{u} = \xi_t$$

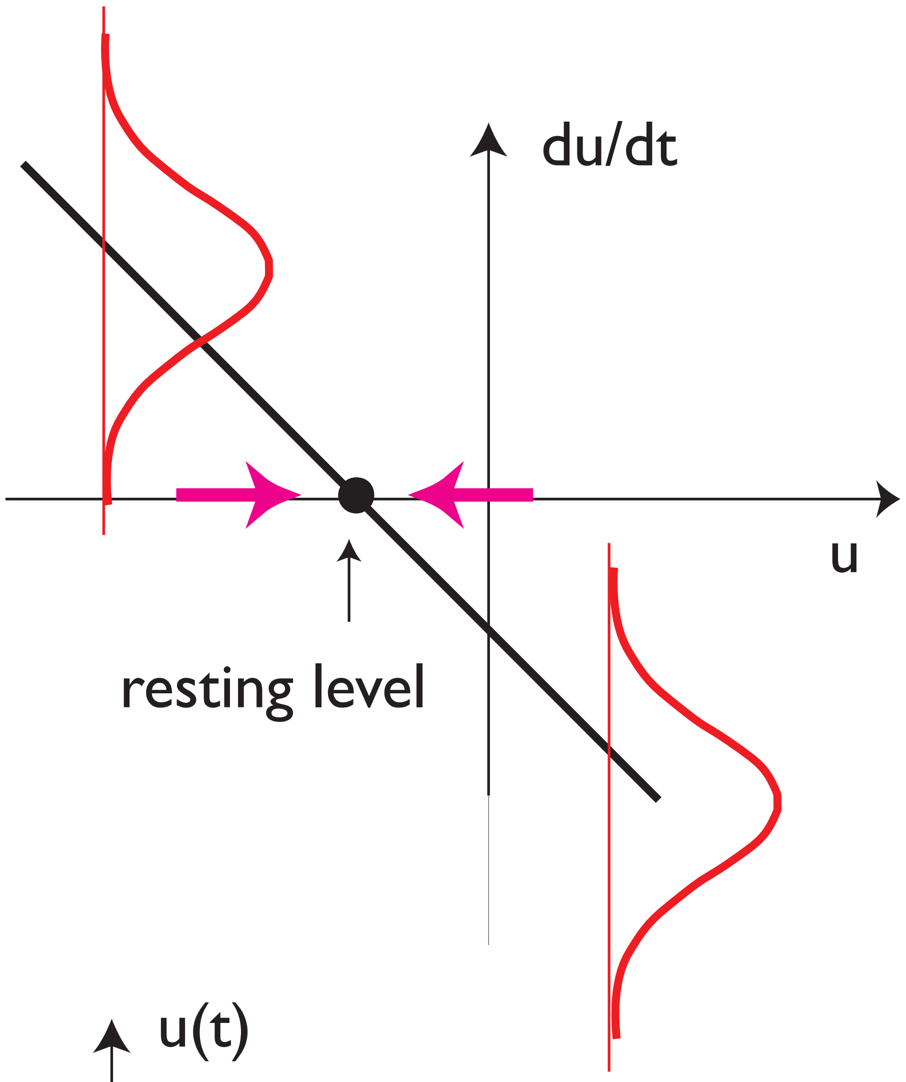


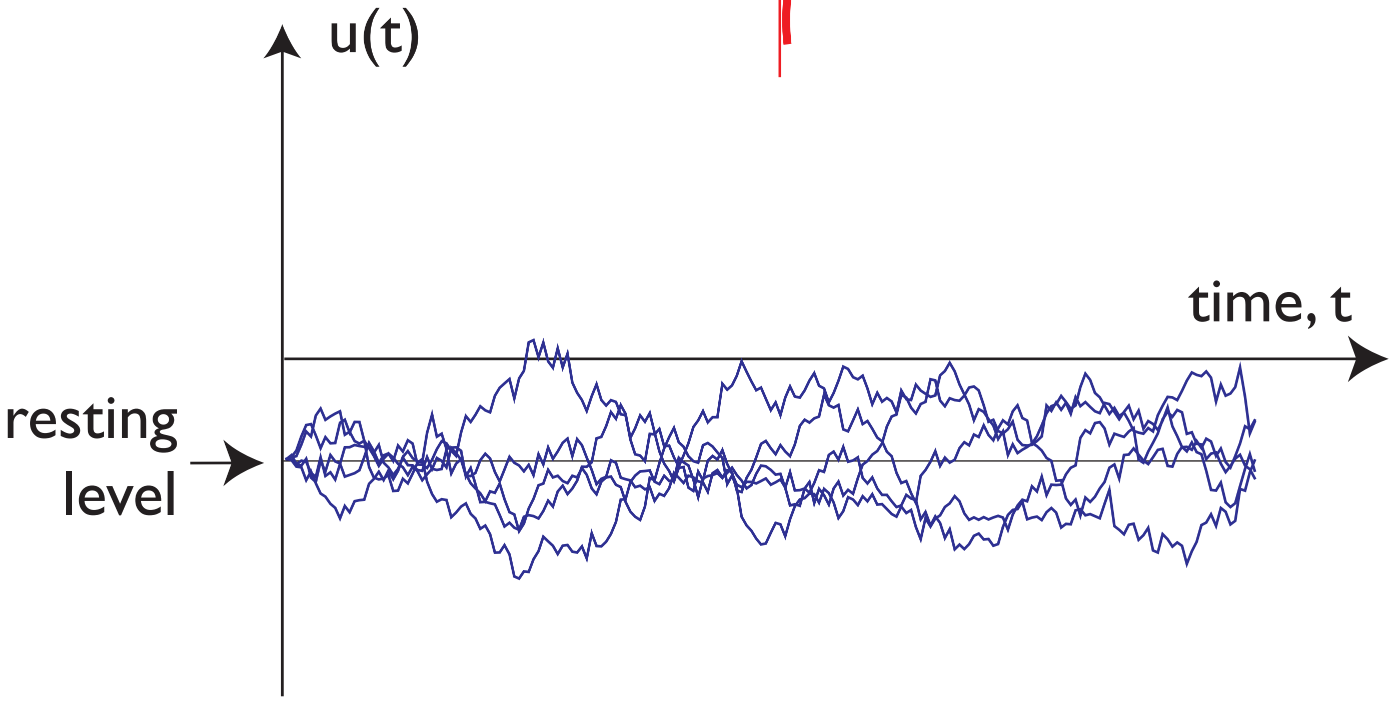


Activation dynamics

- need stabilization

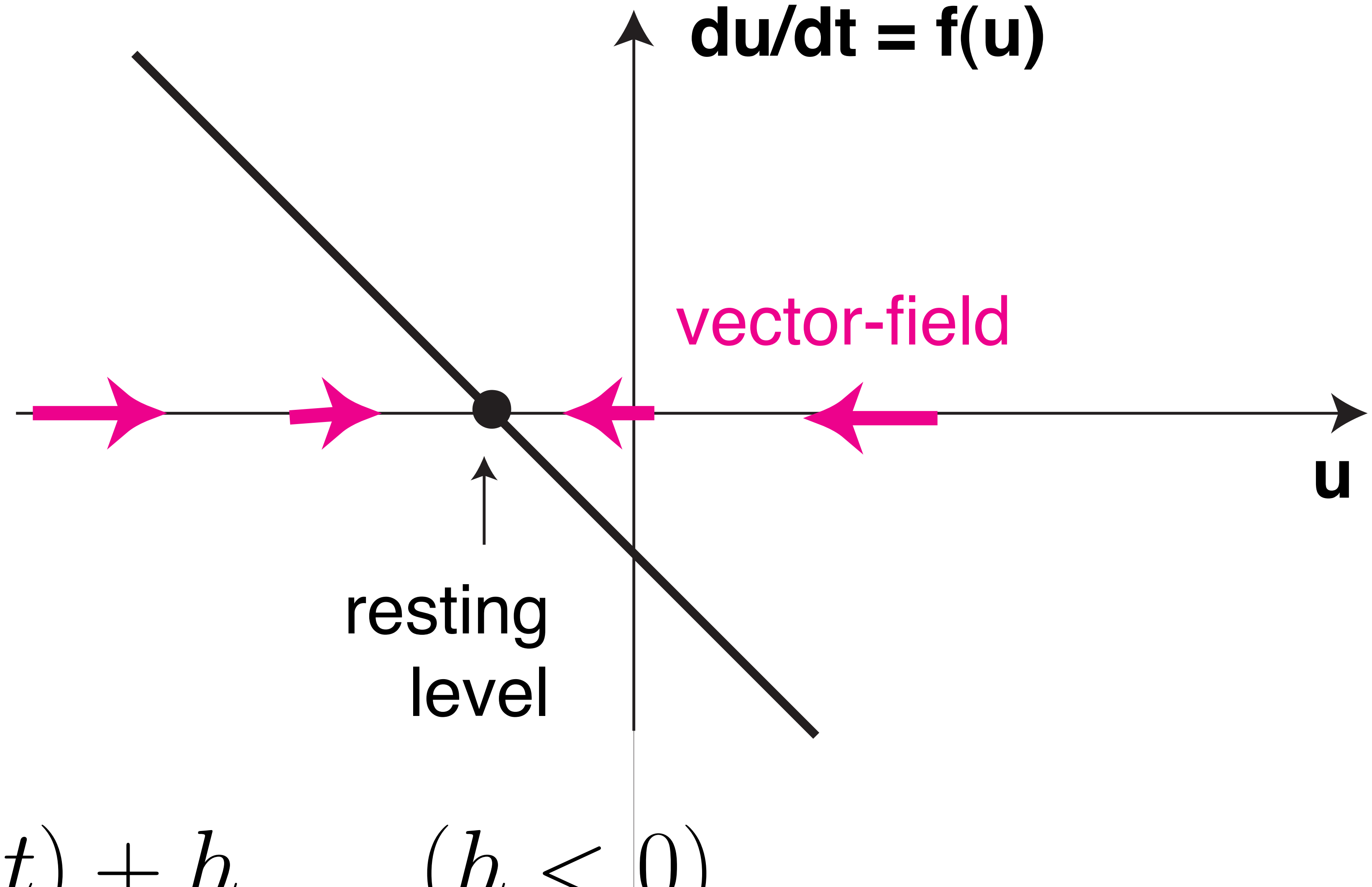
$$\tau \dot{u} = -u + h + \xi_t.$$





Neural dynamics

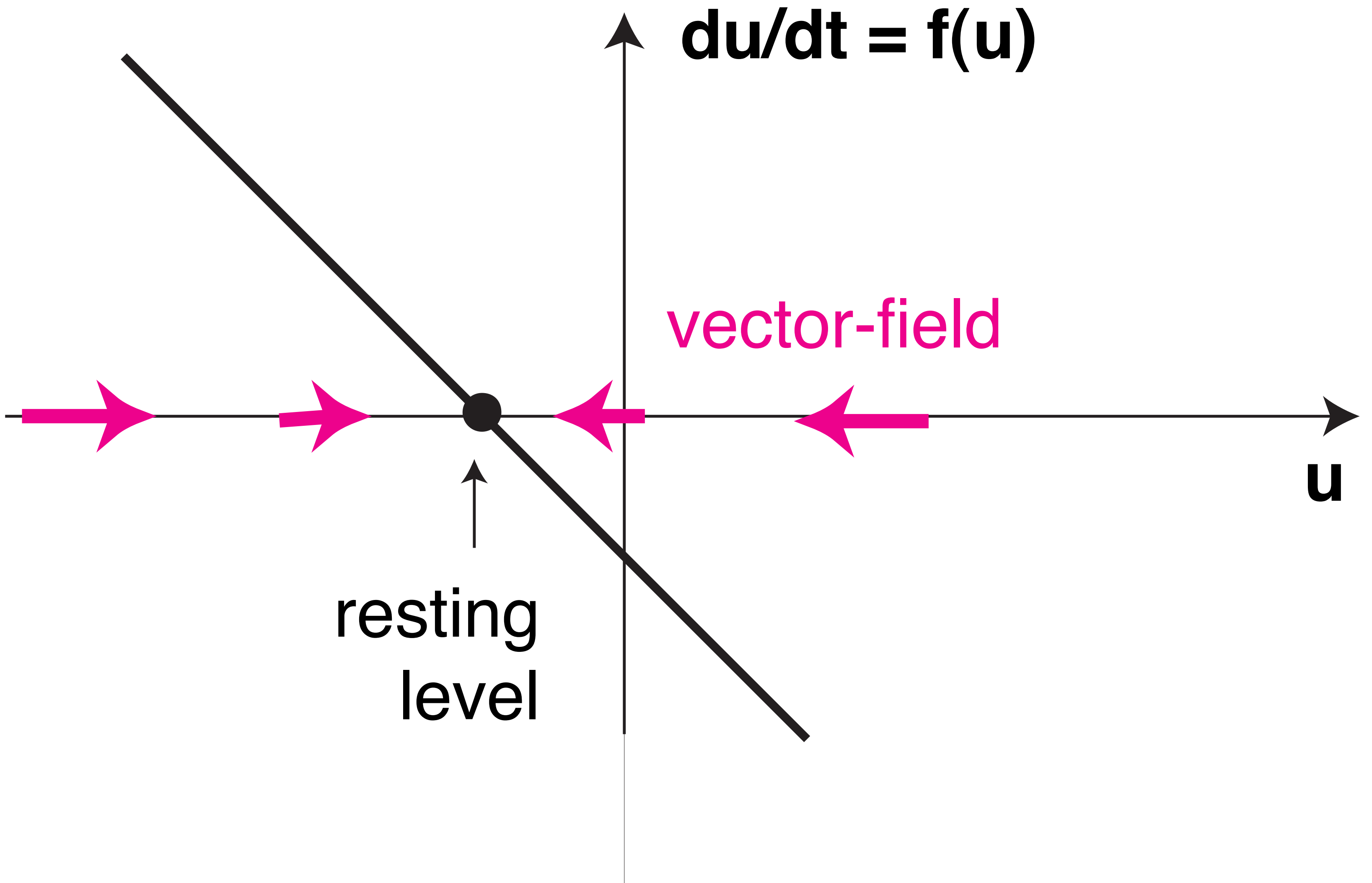
- In a dynamical system, the present predicts the future: given the initial level of activation u(0), the activation at time t: u(t) is uniquely determined



$$\frac{du(t)}{dt} = \dot{u}(t) = -u(t) + h \qquad (h < 0)$$

Neural dynamics

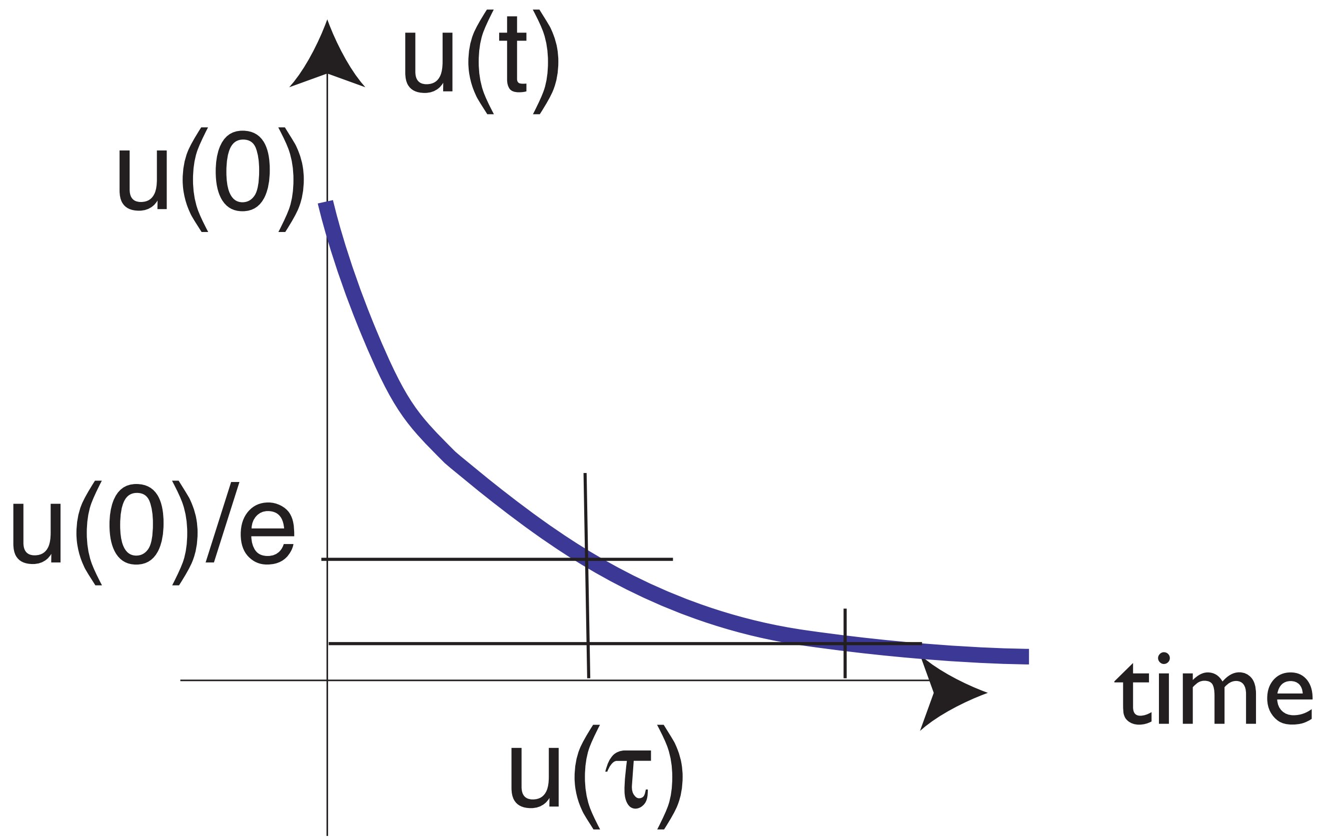
- stationary state=fixed point= constant solution
- stable fixed point: nearby solutions converge to the fixed point=attractor

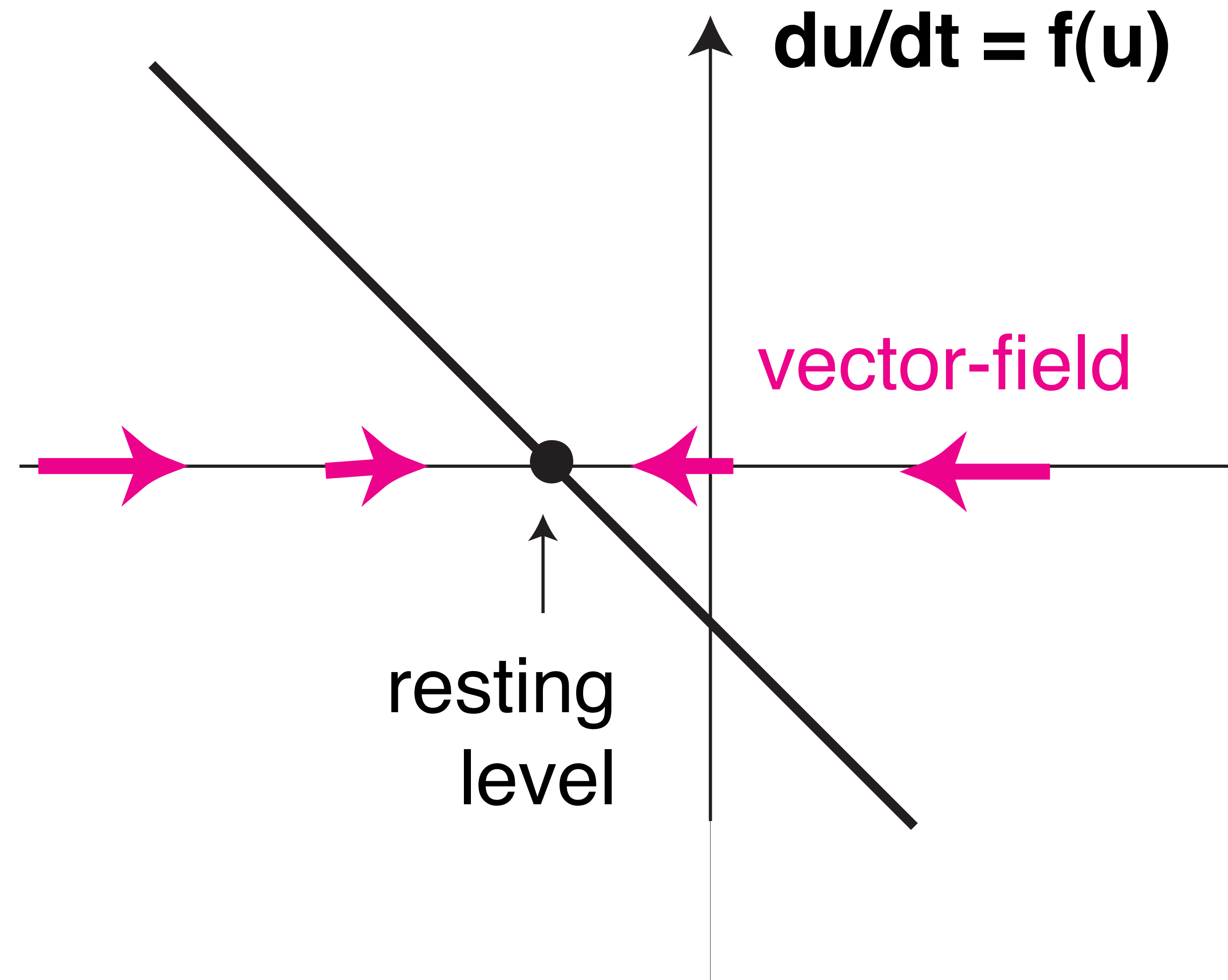


$$\frac{du(t)}{dt} = \dot{u}(t) = -u(t) + h \qquad (h < 0)$$

Neural dynamics

- exponential relaxation to fixed-point attractors
- => time scale

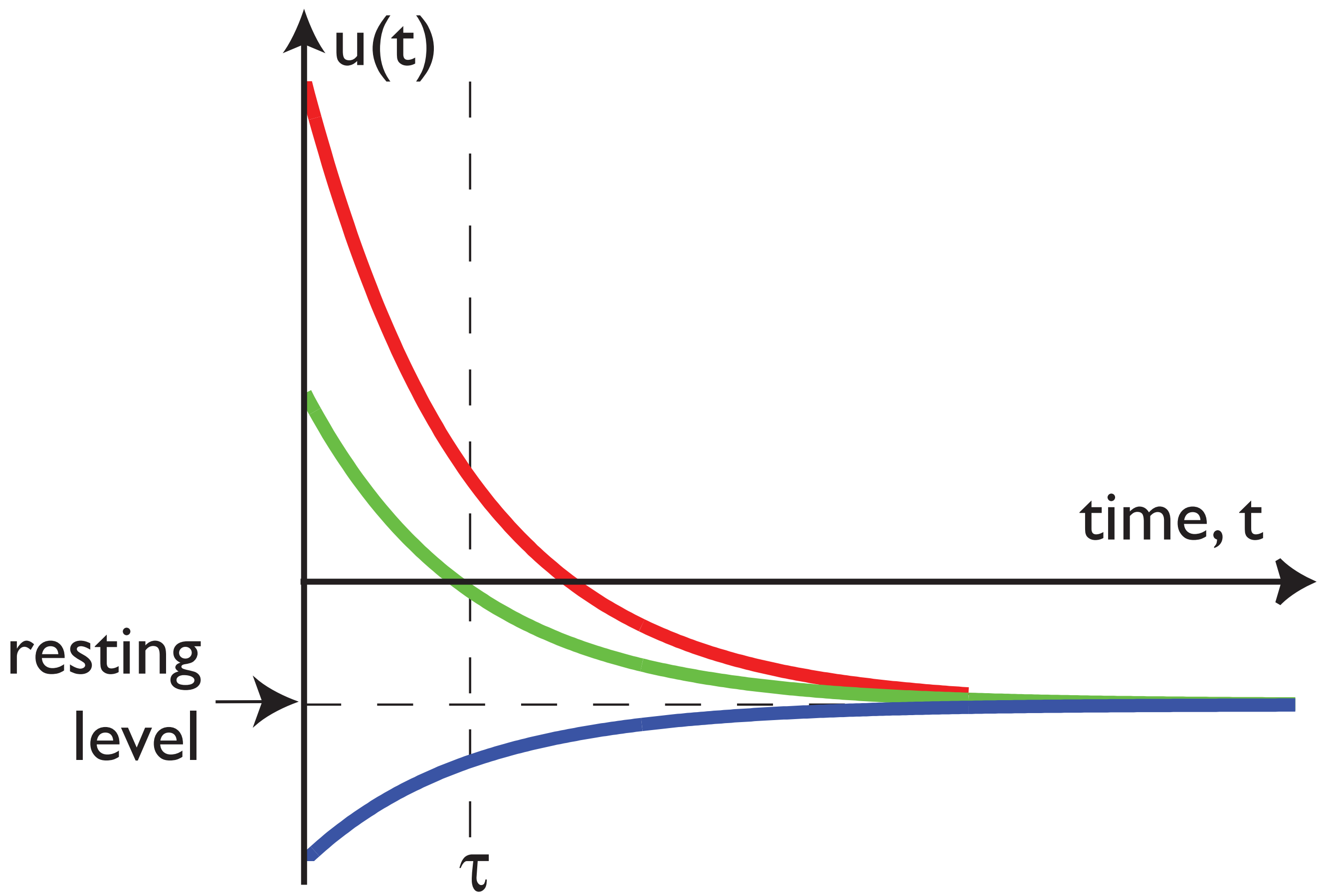


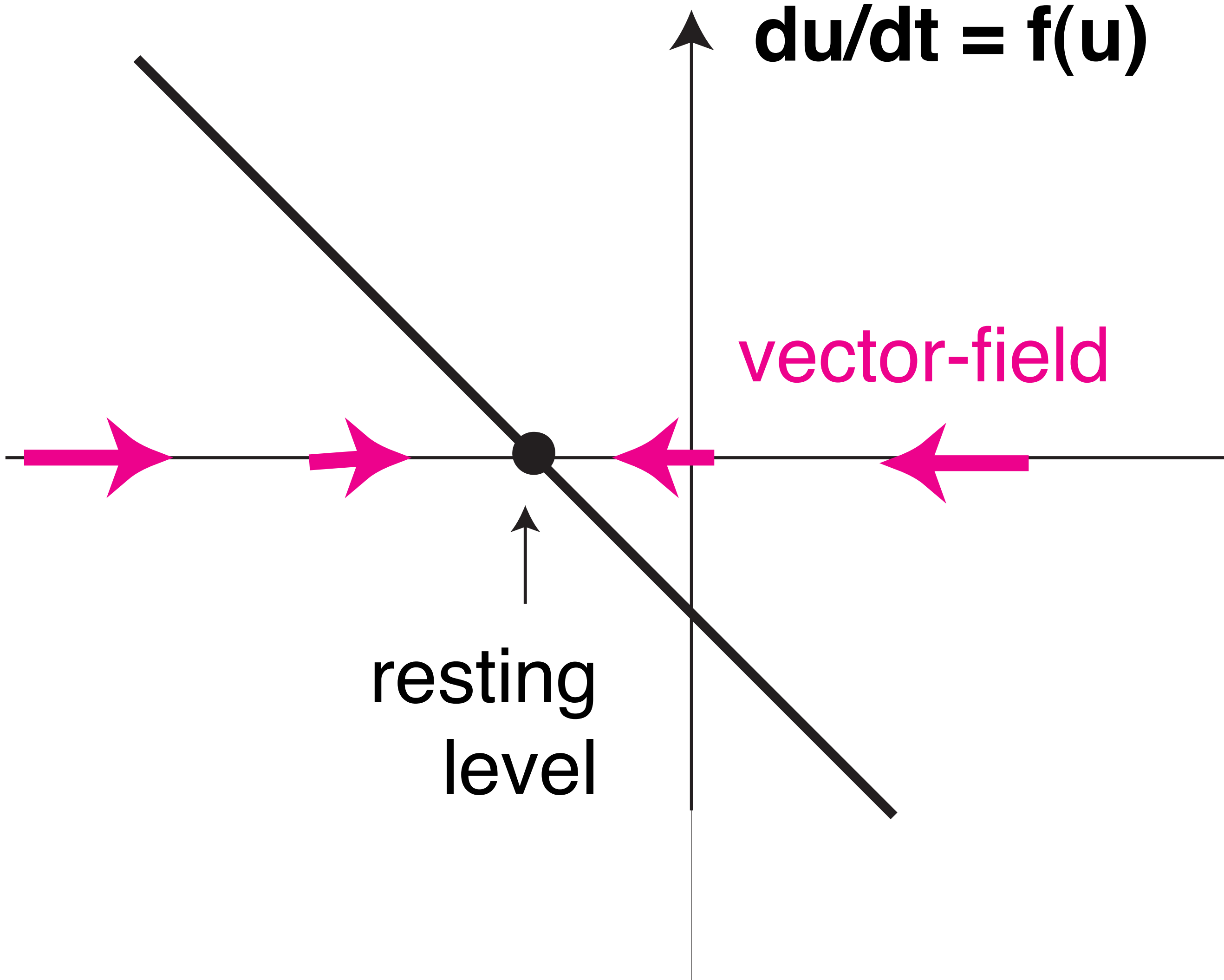


$$\tau \dot{u}(t) = -u(t) + h$$

Neural dynamics

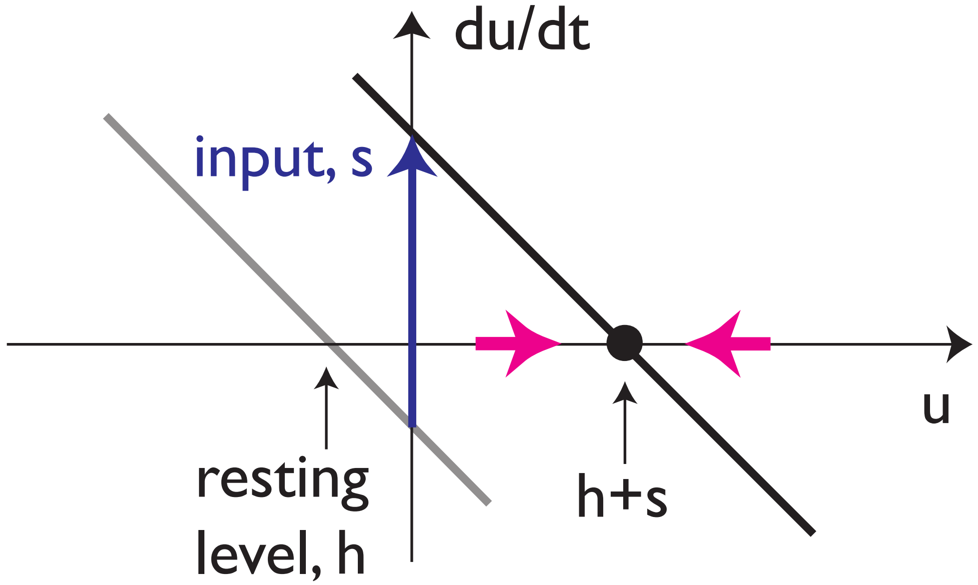
- attractor structures ensemble of solutions=flow



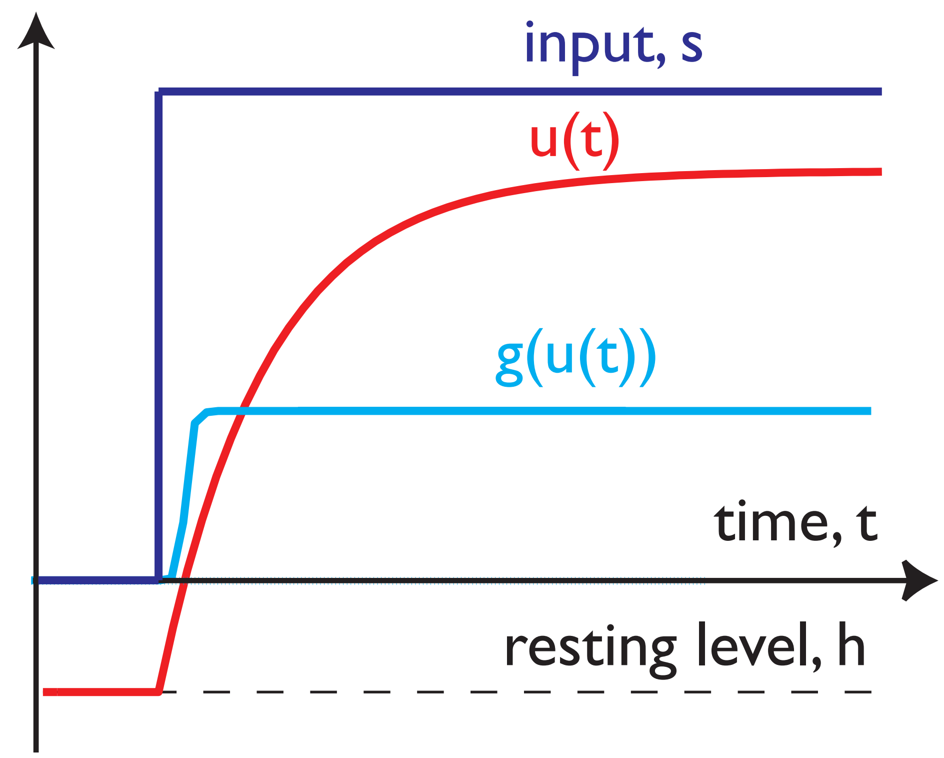


$$\tau \dot{u}(t) = -u(t) + h$$

Neuronal dynamics



- inputs=contributions to the rate of change
  - positive: excitatory
  - negative: inhibitory
- => shifts the attractor
- activation tracks this shift (stability)



$$\tau\dot{u}(t) = -u(t) + h + \text{ inputs(t)}$$