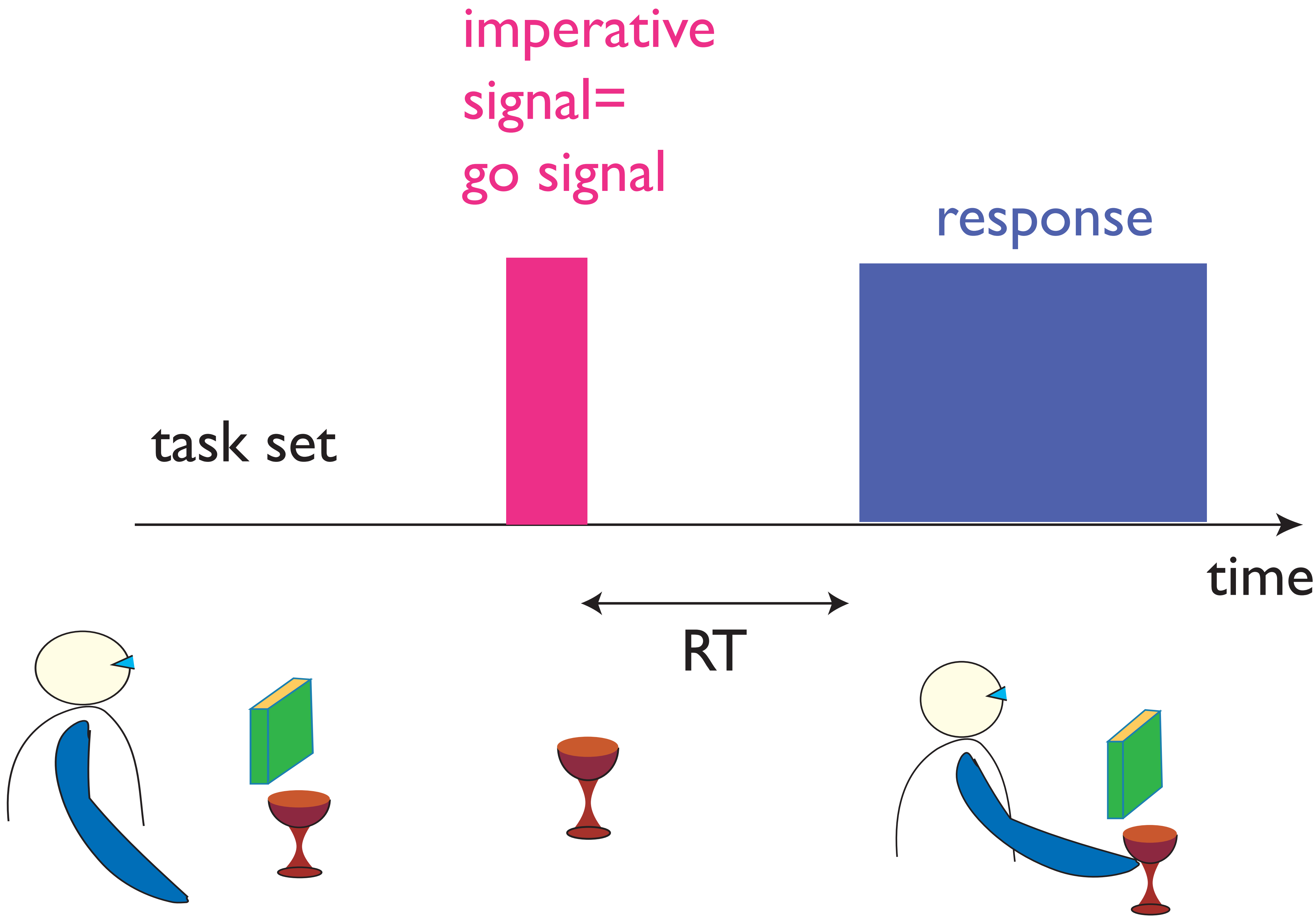
Dynamic Field Theory

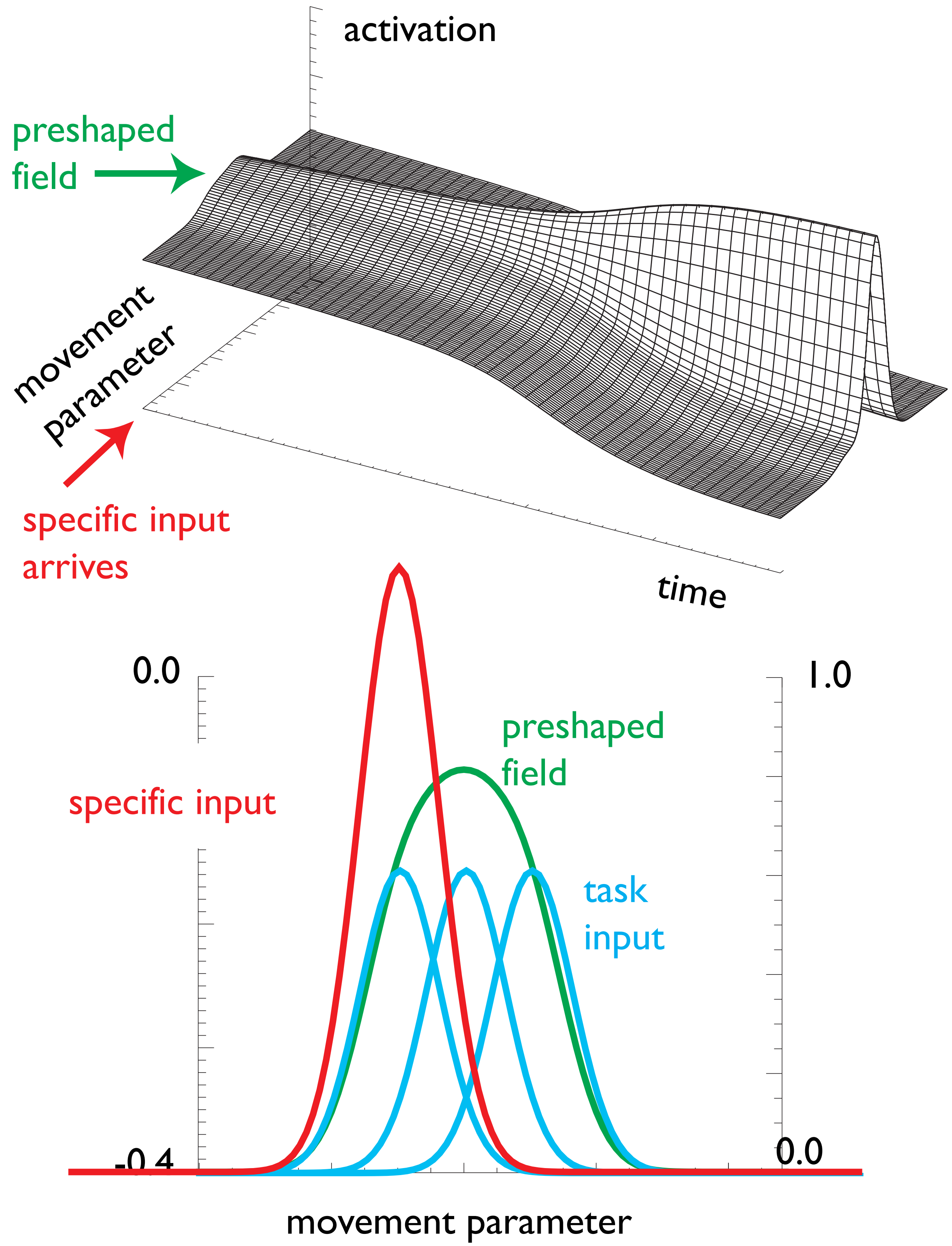
Gregor Schöner
gregor.schoener@ini.rub.de

Recall from last lecture …

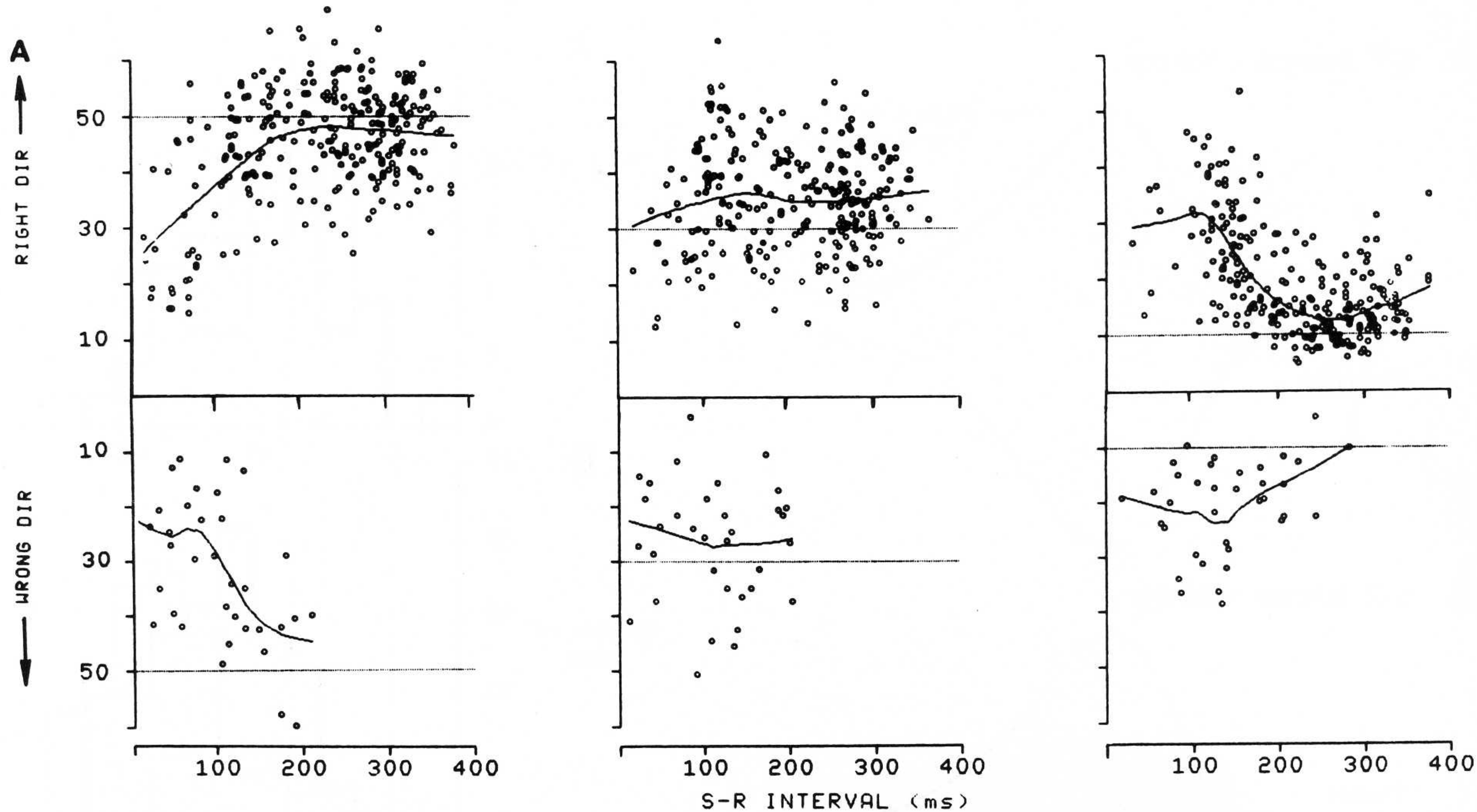
reaction time (RT) paradigm



time course of neural processing

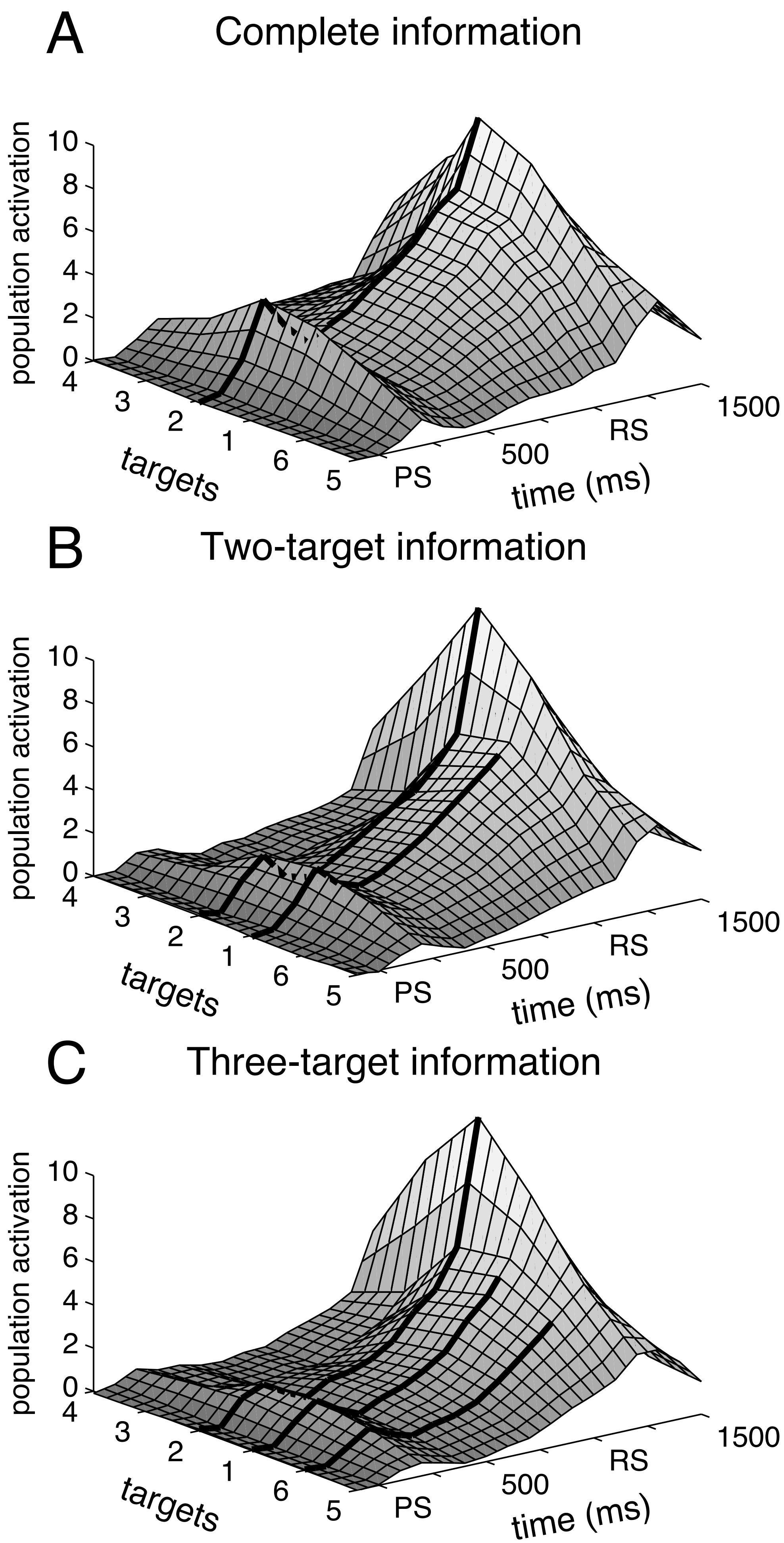


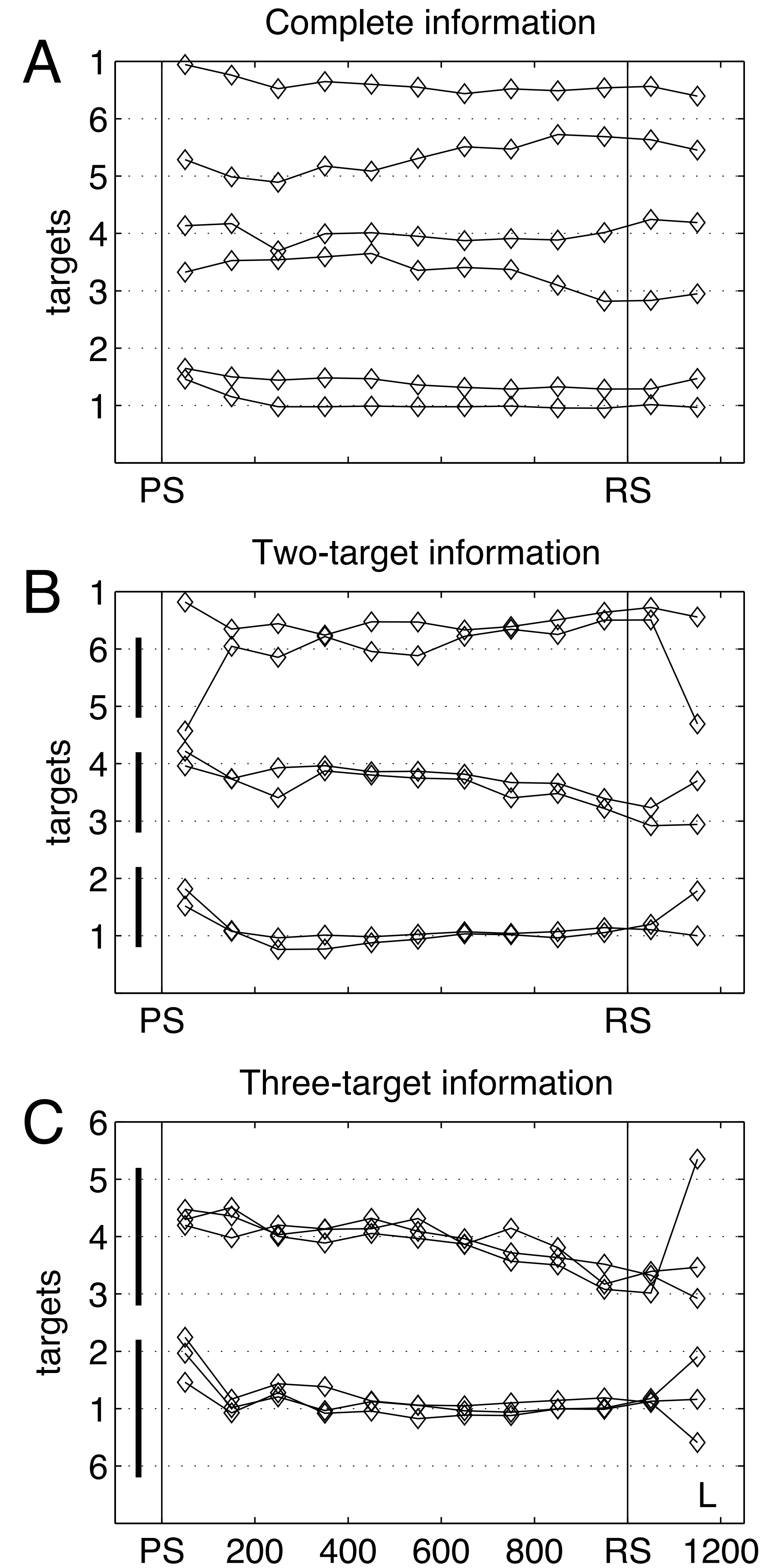
observe the time course of neural processing behaviorally



[Favilla et al. 1989]

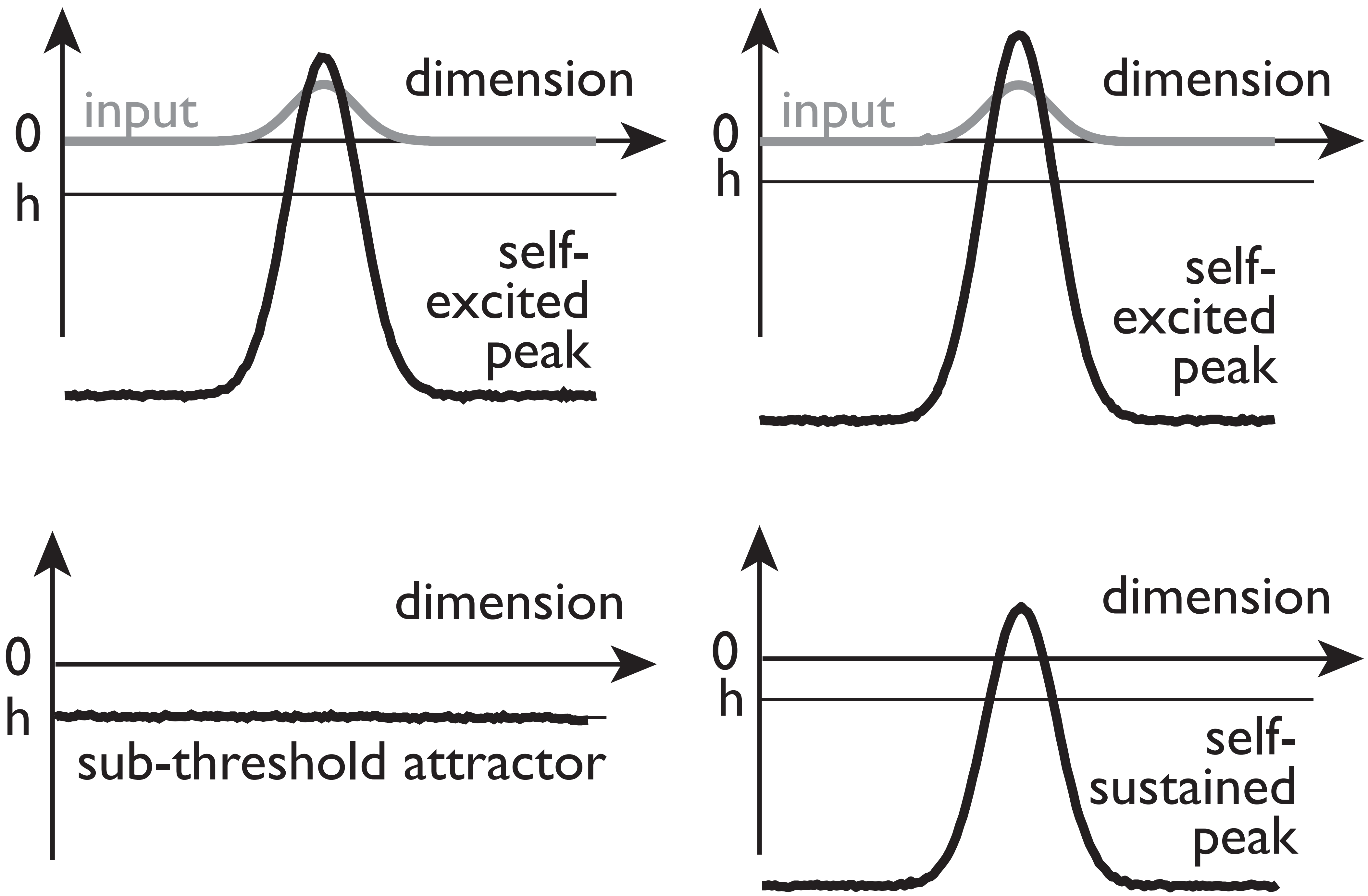
observe the time course of neural processing directly



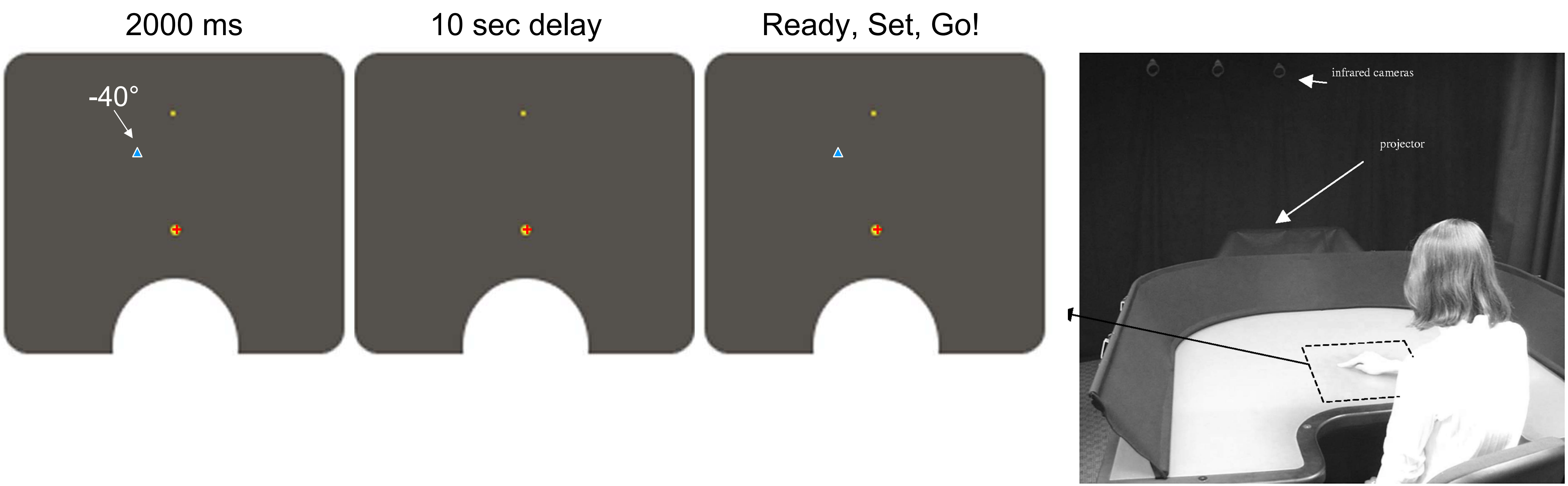


[Bastian, Schöner, Riehle 2003]

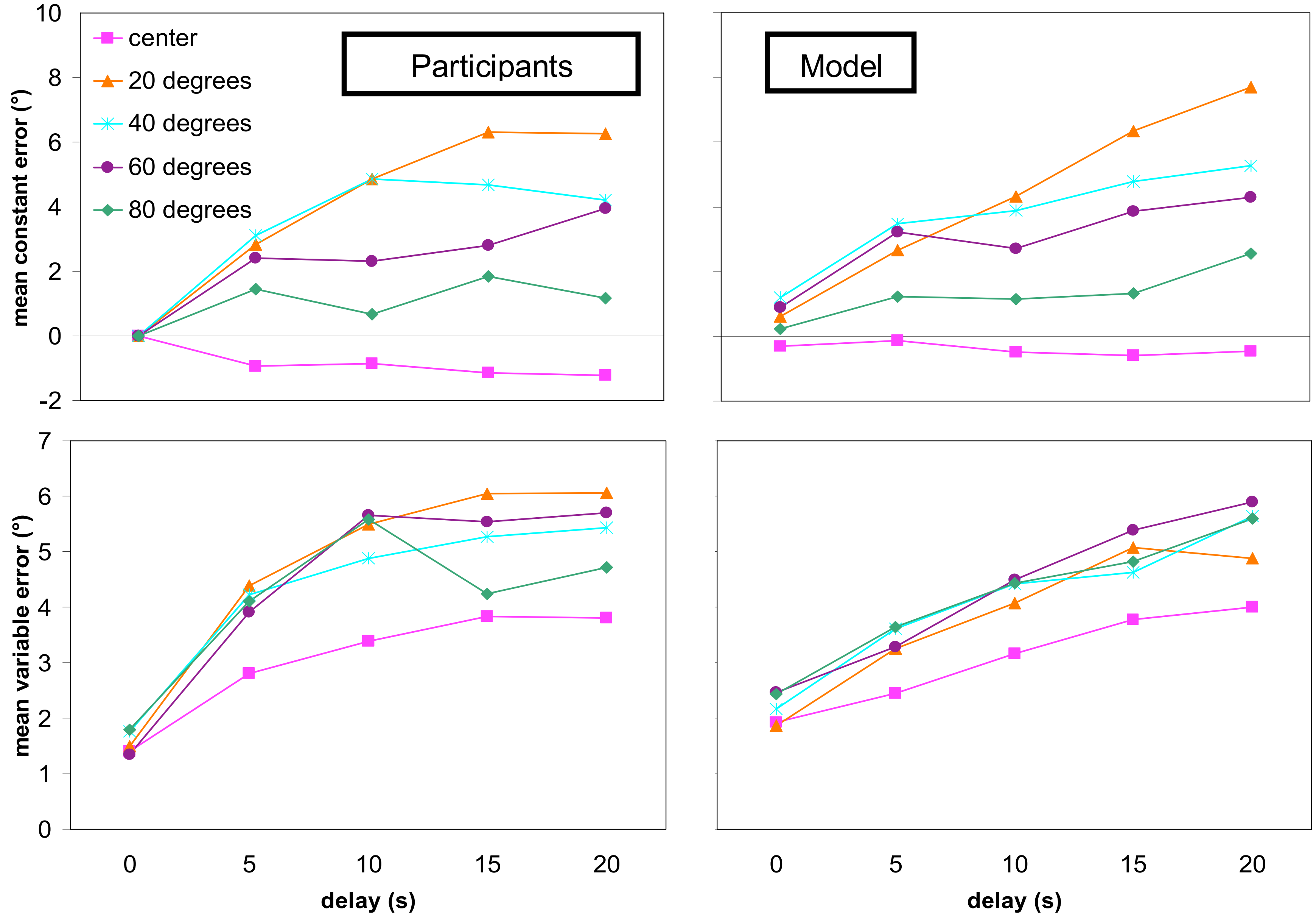
Memory instability



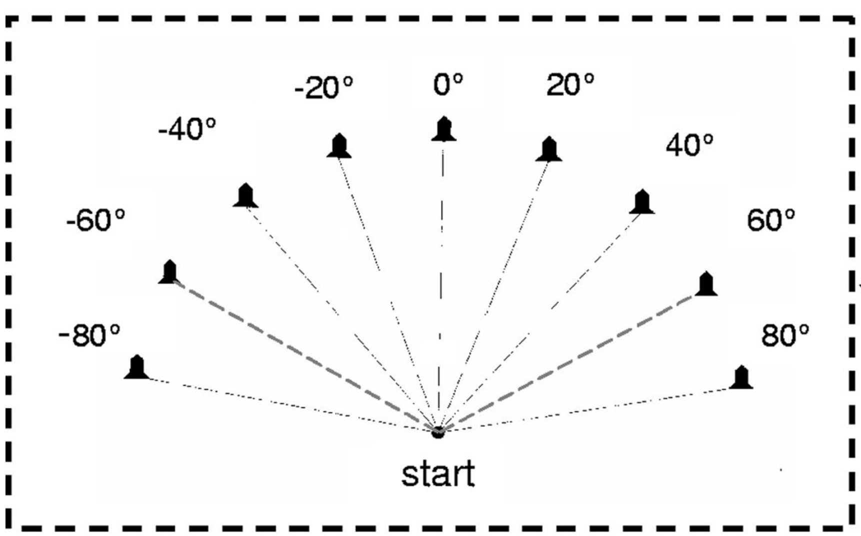
“space ship” task probing spatial working memory

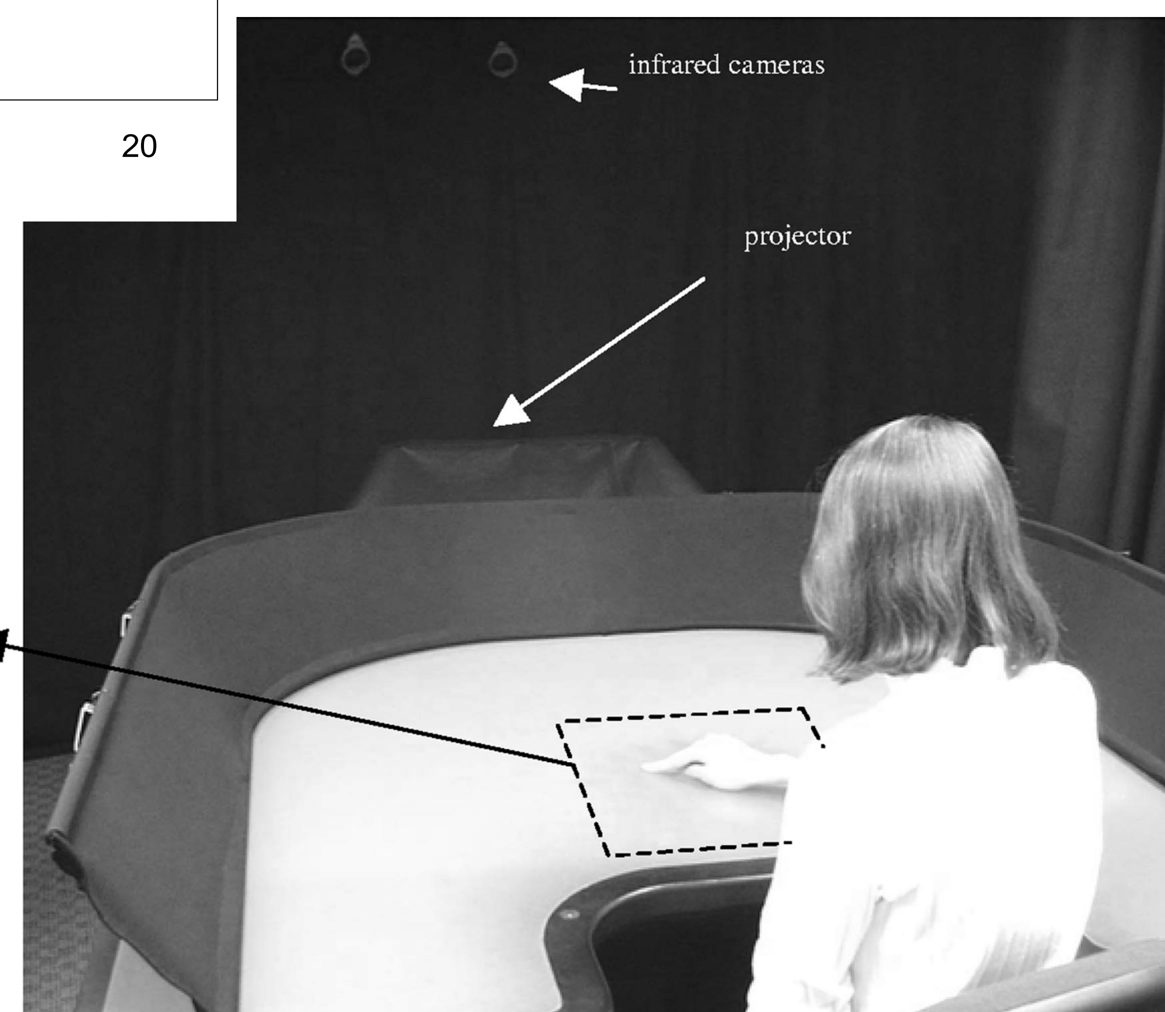


[Schutte, Spencer, JEP:HPP 2009]



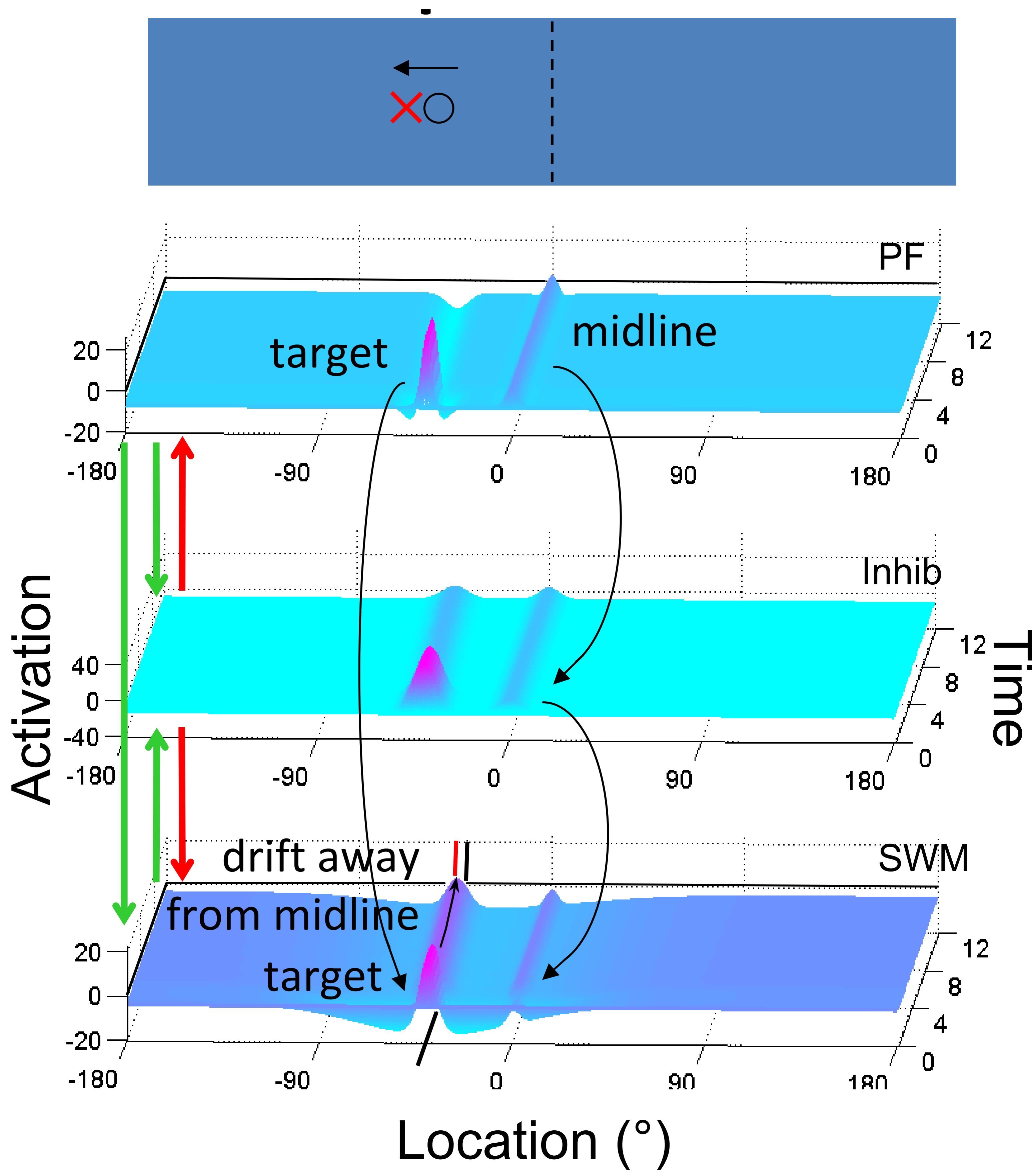
repulsion from mid-line





[Spencer, Schöner, 2006]

- DFT account of repulsion: inhibitory interaction with peak representing landmark

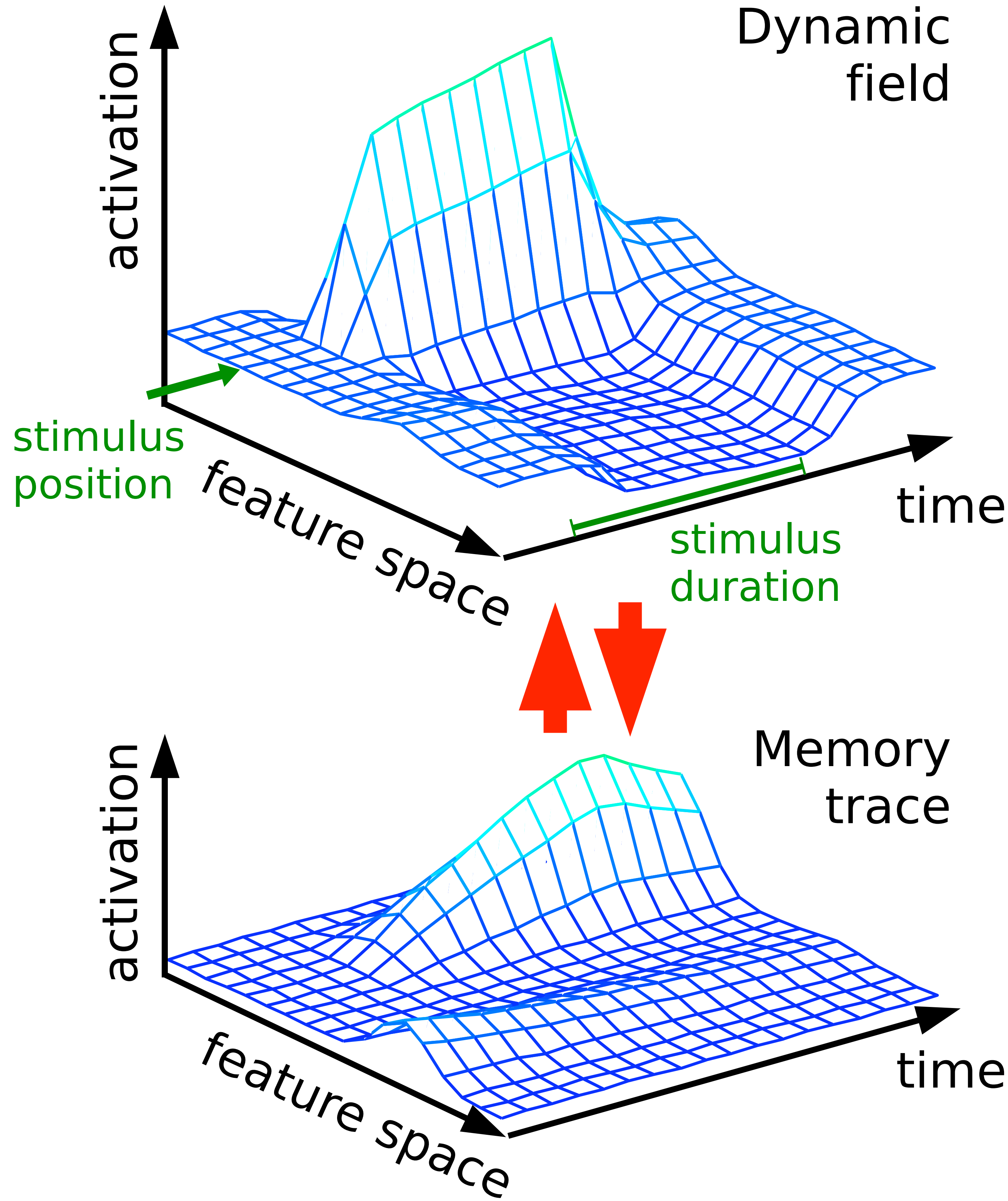


[Simmering, Schutte, Spencer: Brain Research, 2007]

Working memory as sustained peaks

- implies metric drift of WM, which is a marginally stable state (one direction in which it is not asymptotically stable)
- => empirically real..

the memory trace



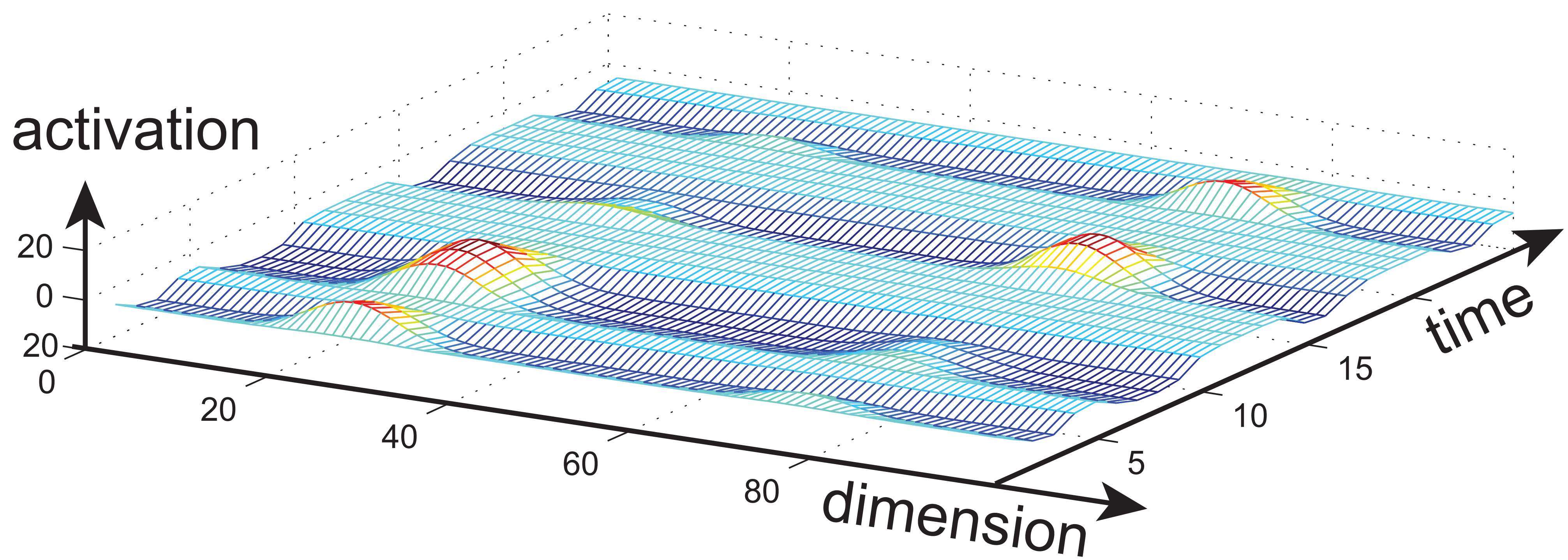
- inhomogeneities from simplest from the memory trace
- ~ habit formation (?) William James: habit formation as the simplest form of learning
- habituation: the memory trace for inhibition..

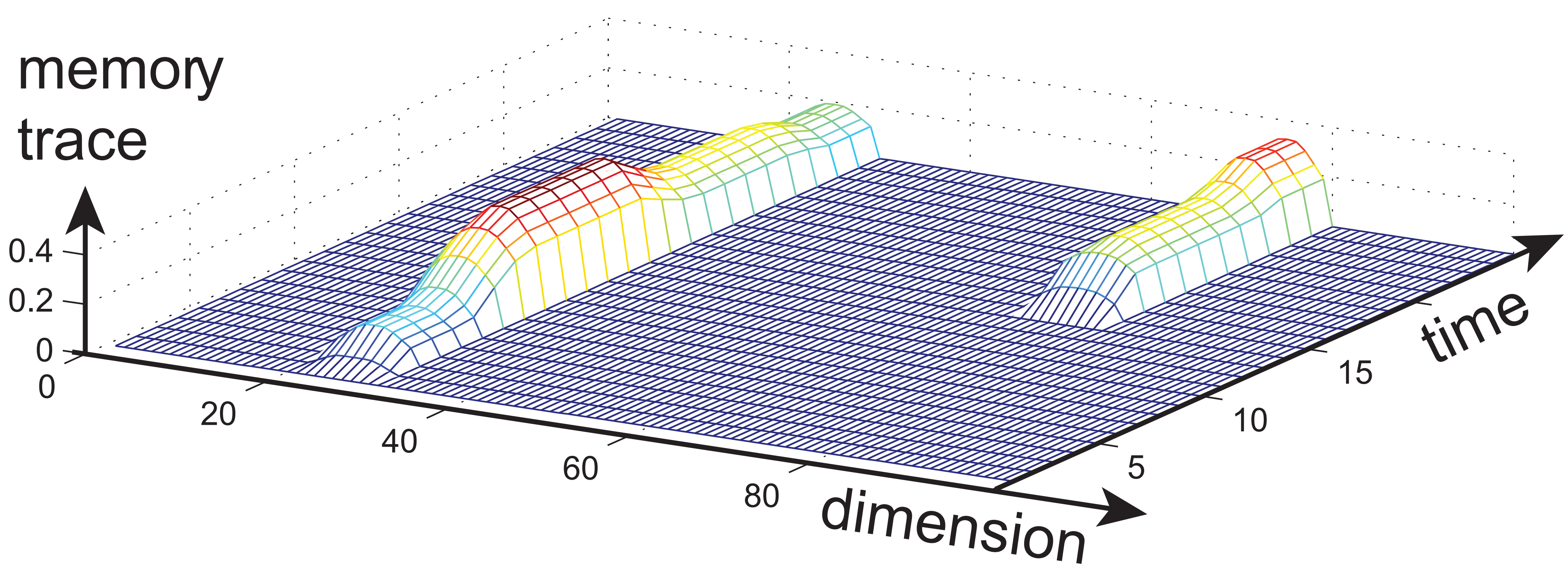
mathematics of the memory trace

$$
\begin{aligned}
\tau \dot{u}(x,t) &= -u(x,t) + h + S(x,t) + u_{\mathrm{mem}}(x,t) \\
&+ \int dx' \; w(x-x') \; \sigma(u(x')) \\
\tau_{\mathrm{mem}} \; \dot{u}_{\mathrm{mem}}(x,t) &= -u_{\mathrm{mem}}(x,t) \\
&+ \int dx' \; w_{\mathrm{mem}}(x-x')\sigma(u(x',t))
\end{aligned}
$$

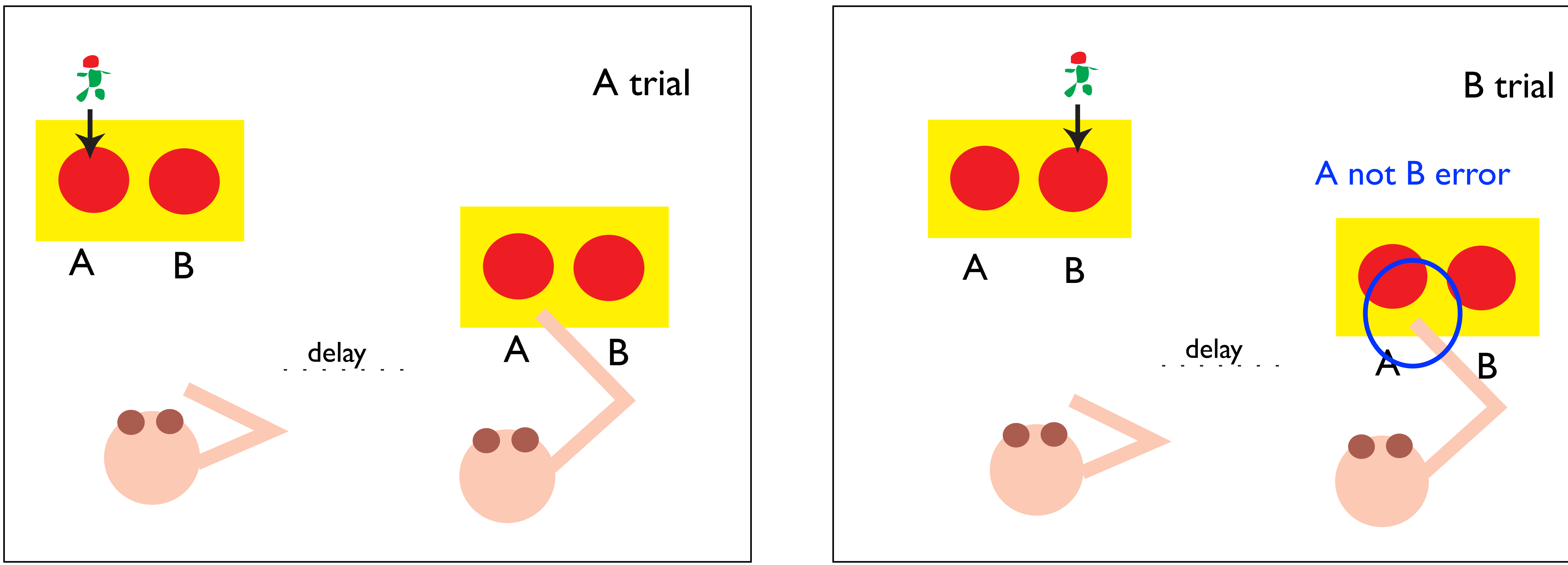
- memory trace only evolves while activation is excited
- potentially different growth and decay rates

memory trace reflects history of decisions formation





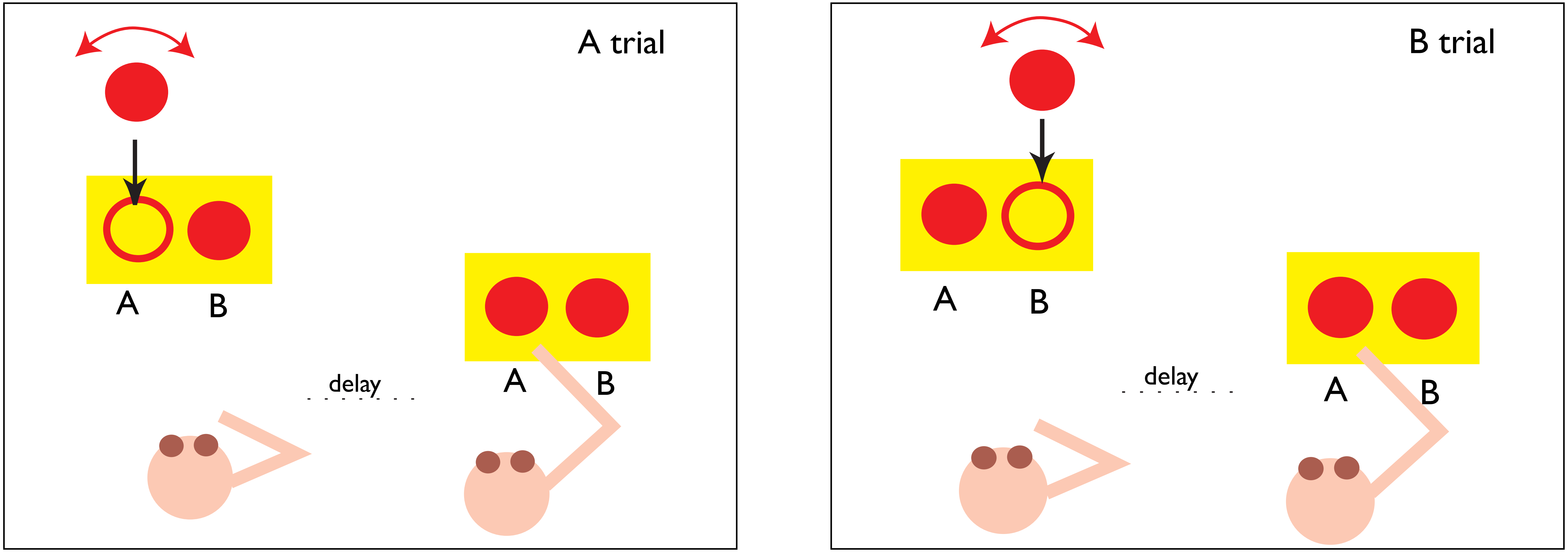
Piaget's A not B paradigm: "out-of-sight -- out of mind"



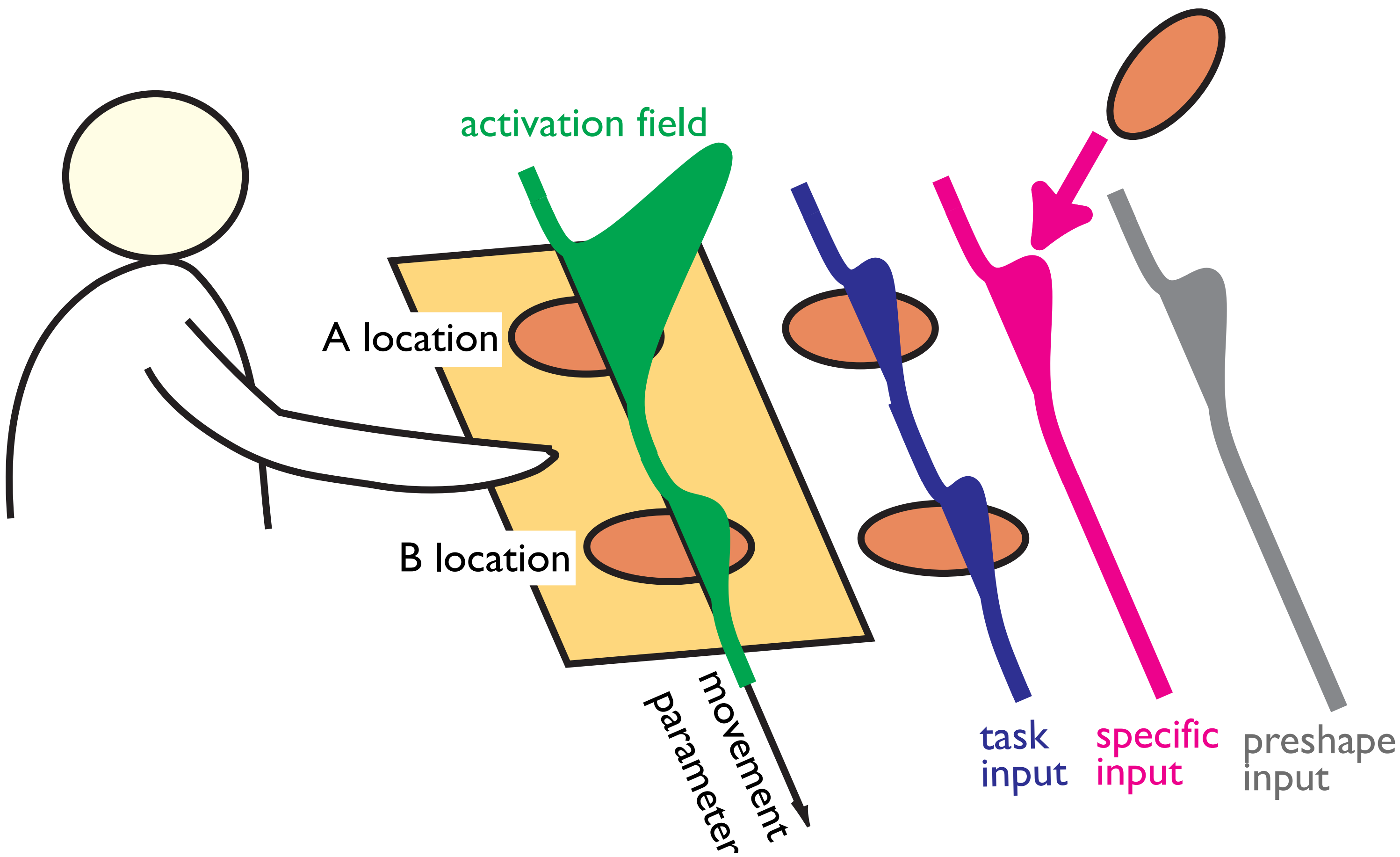
Toyless variant of A not B task

[Smith, Thelen et al.: Psychological Review (1999)]

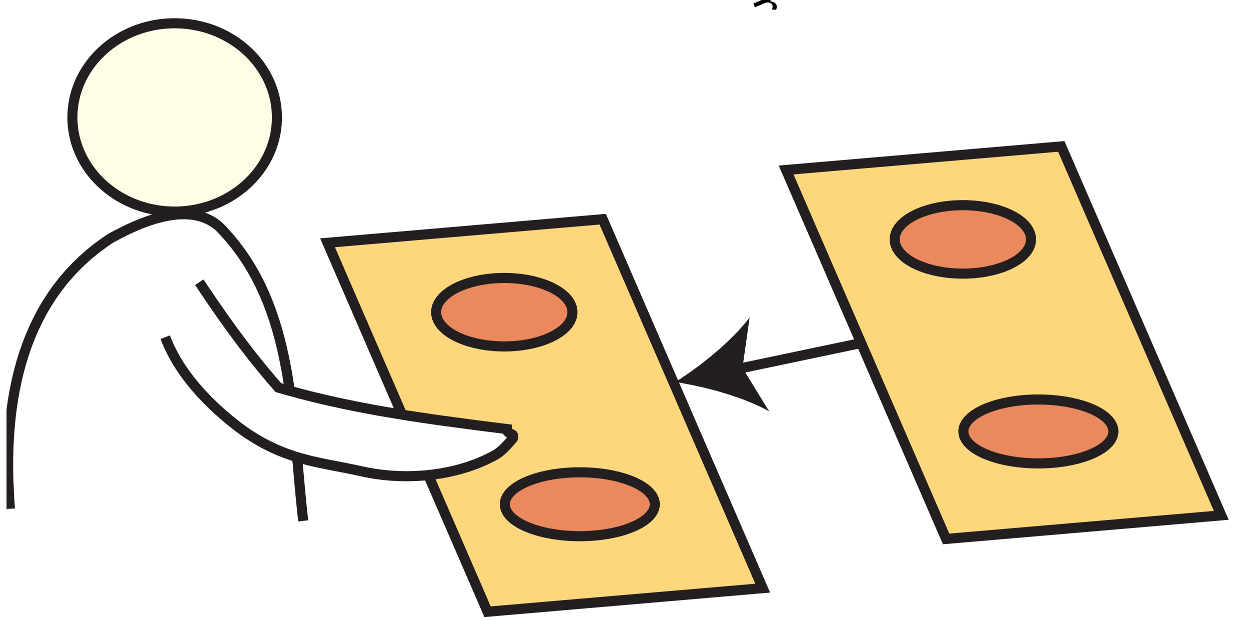
Toyless variant of A not B task reveals that A not B is essentially a decision task!



[Smith, Thelen et al.: Psychological Review (1999)]



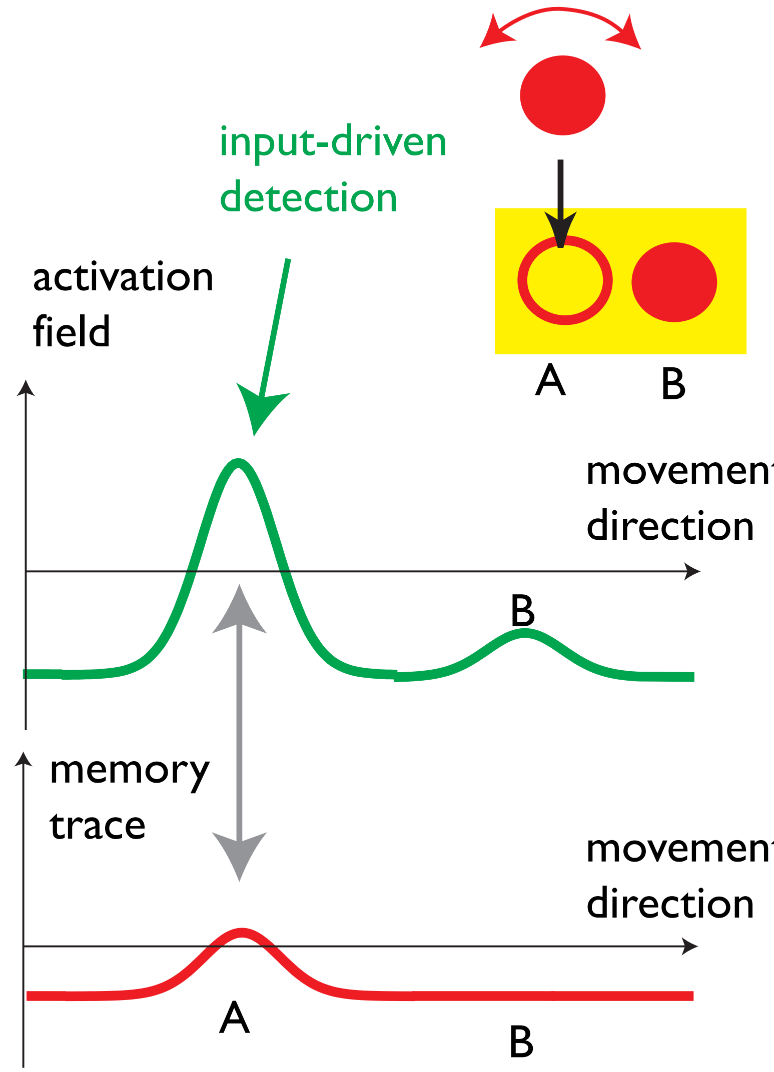
[Thelen, et al., BBS (2001)]



[Dineva, Schöner, Dev. Science 2007]

Instabilities

- detection: forming and initiating a movement goal
- selection: making sensori-motor decisions
- (learning: memory trace)
- boost-driven detection: initiating the action
- memory instability: old infants sustain during the delay, young infants do not



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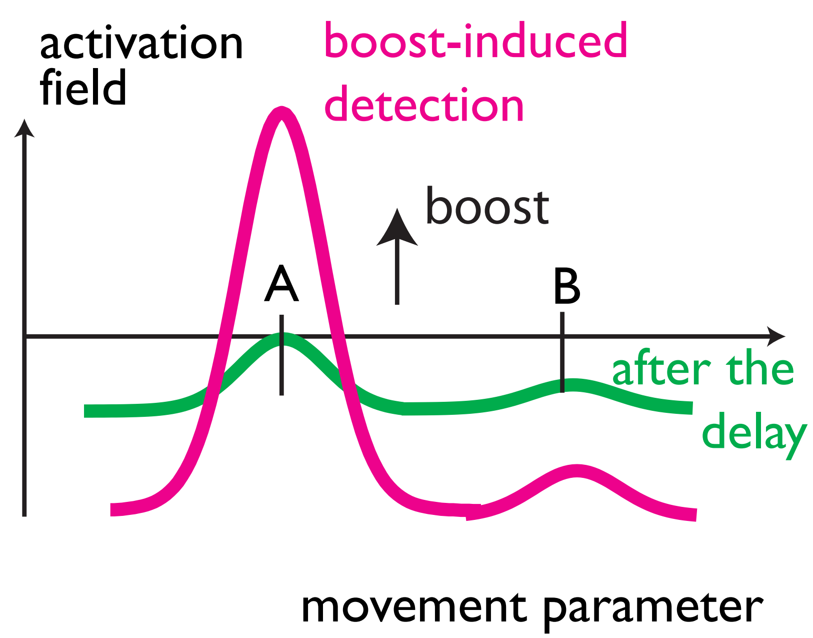

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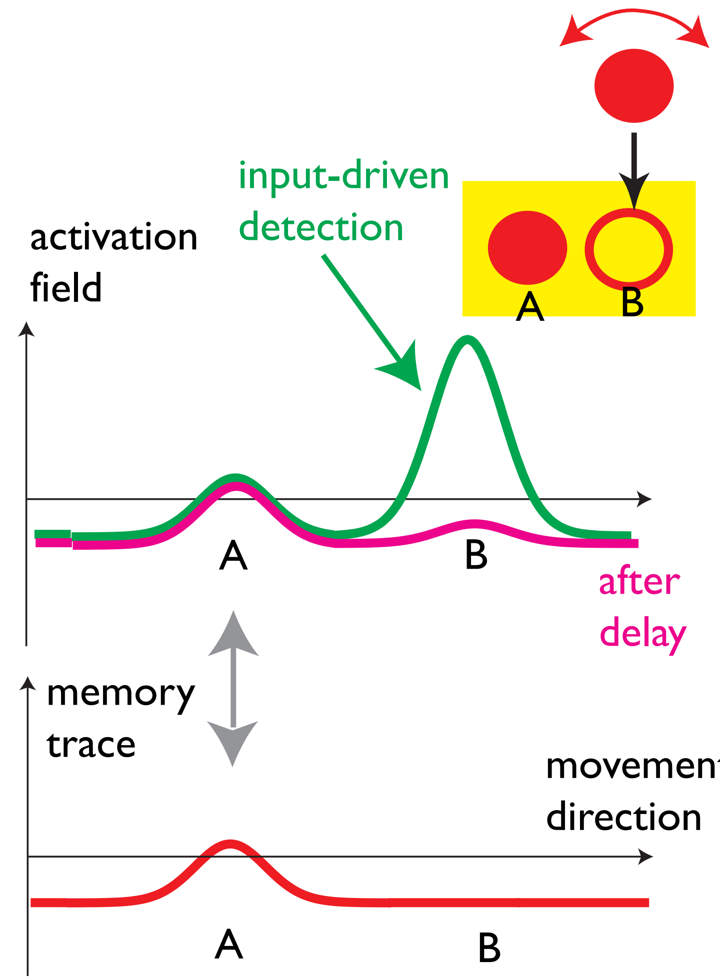
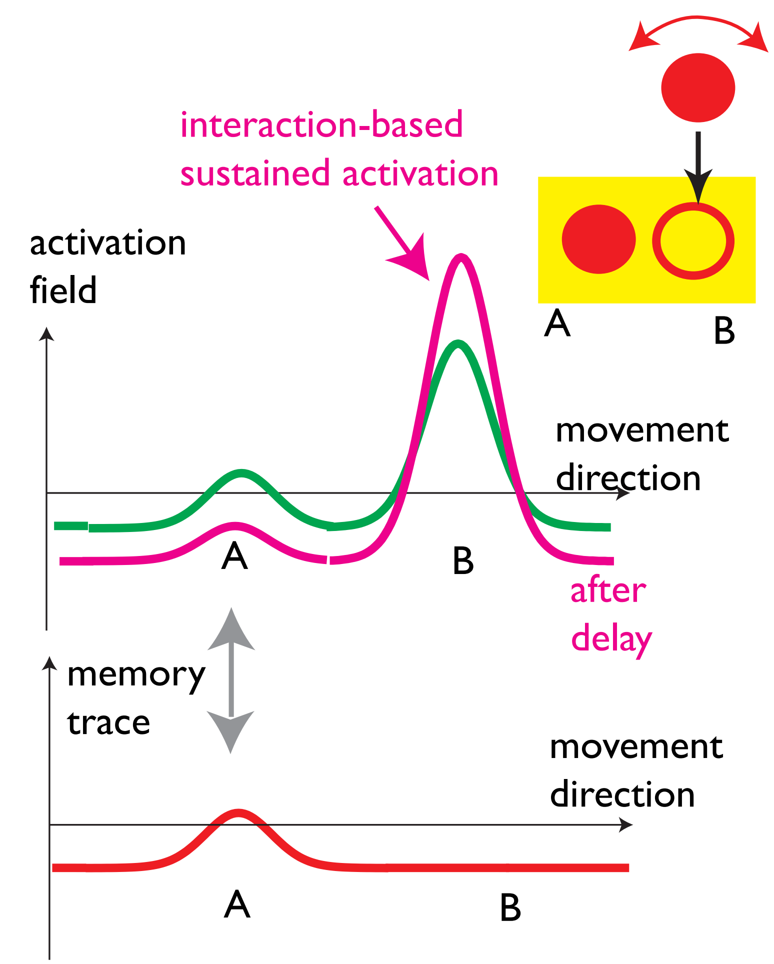
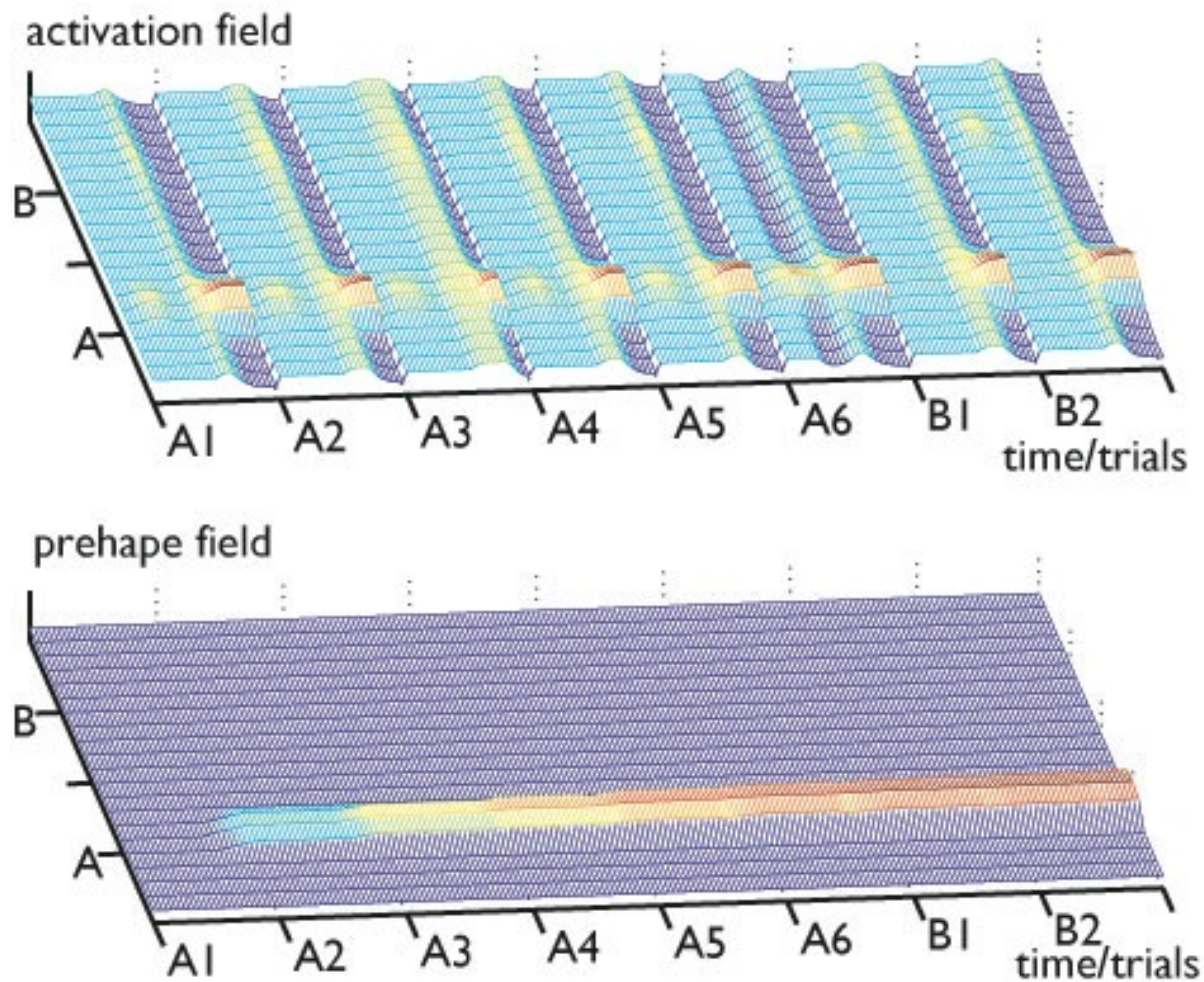
young



old



DFT of infant perseverative reaching



[Dinveva, Schöner, Dev. Science 2007]

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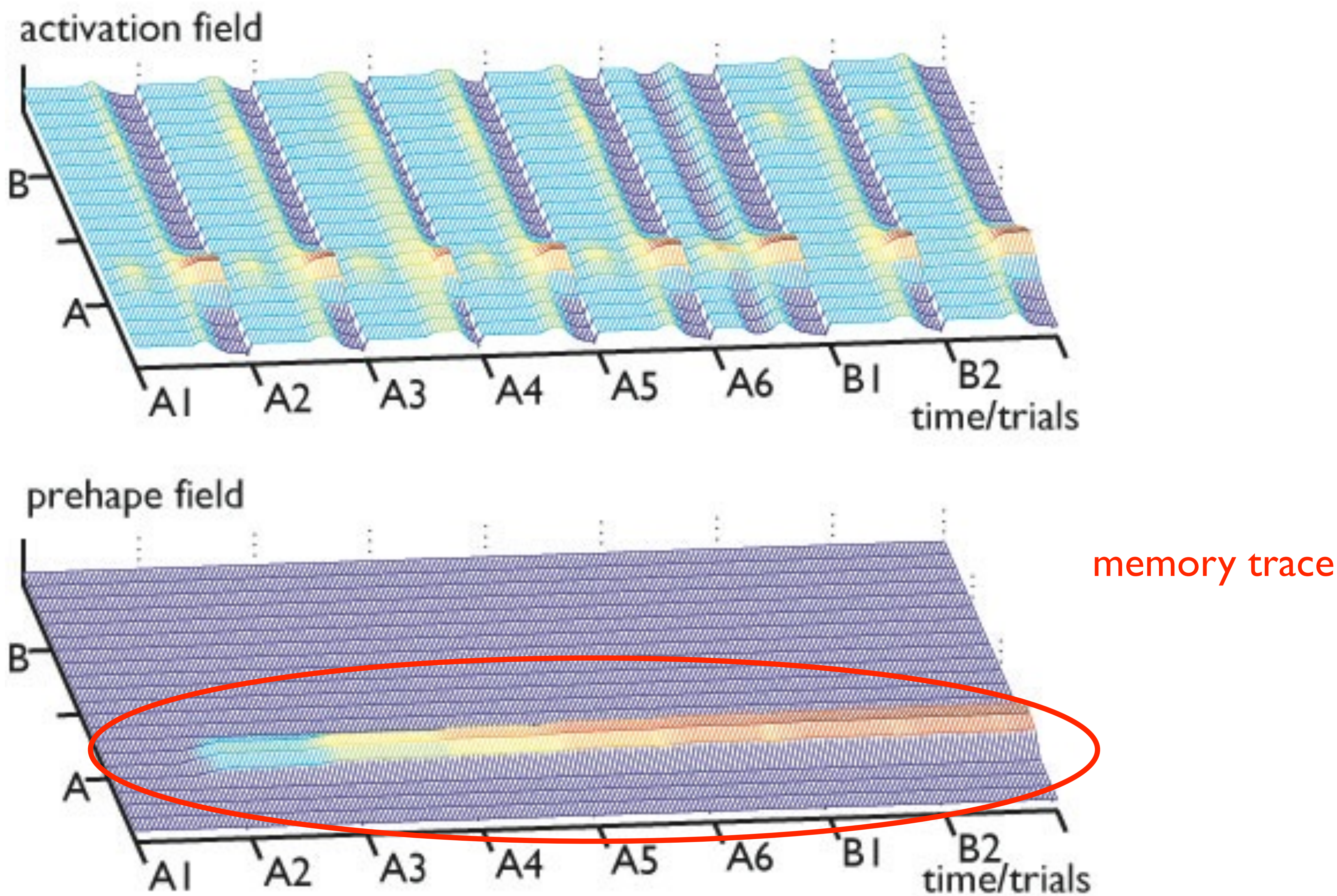
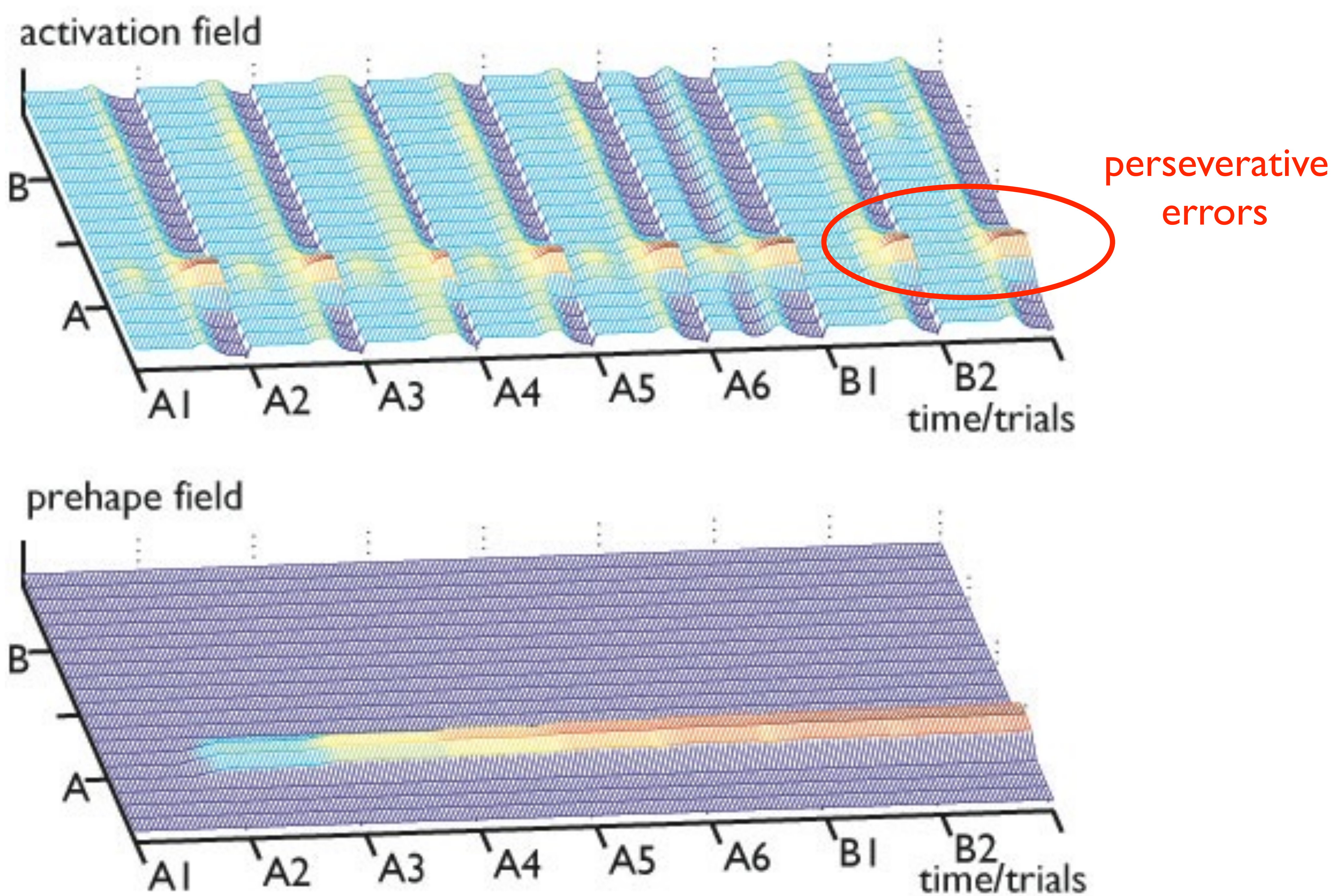


[Dinveva, Schöner, Dev. Science 2007]

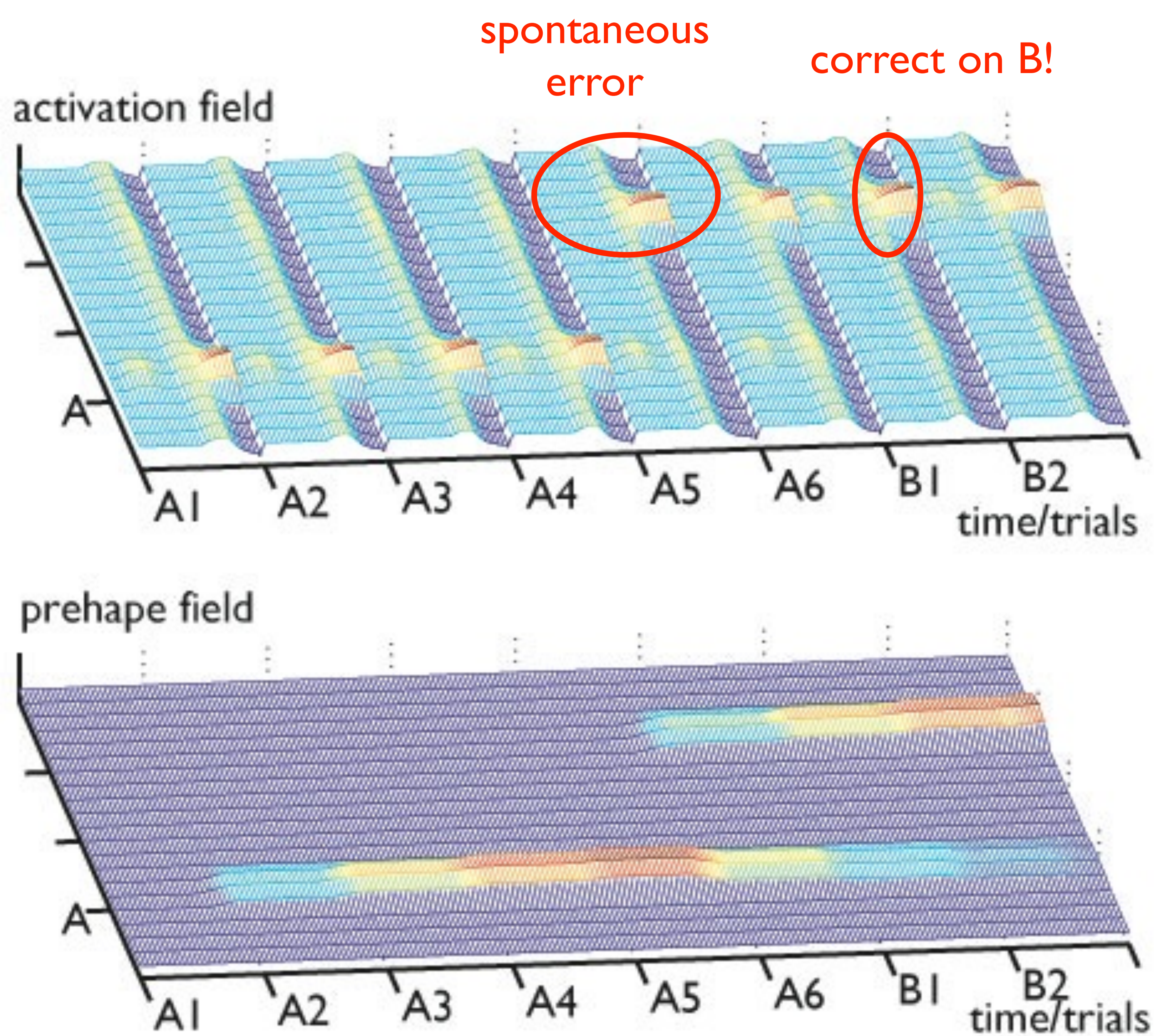
DFT of infant perseverative reaching



[Dinveva, Schöner, Dev. Science 2007]

DFT of infant perseverative reaching

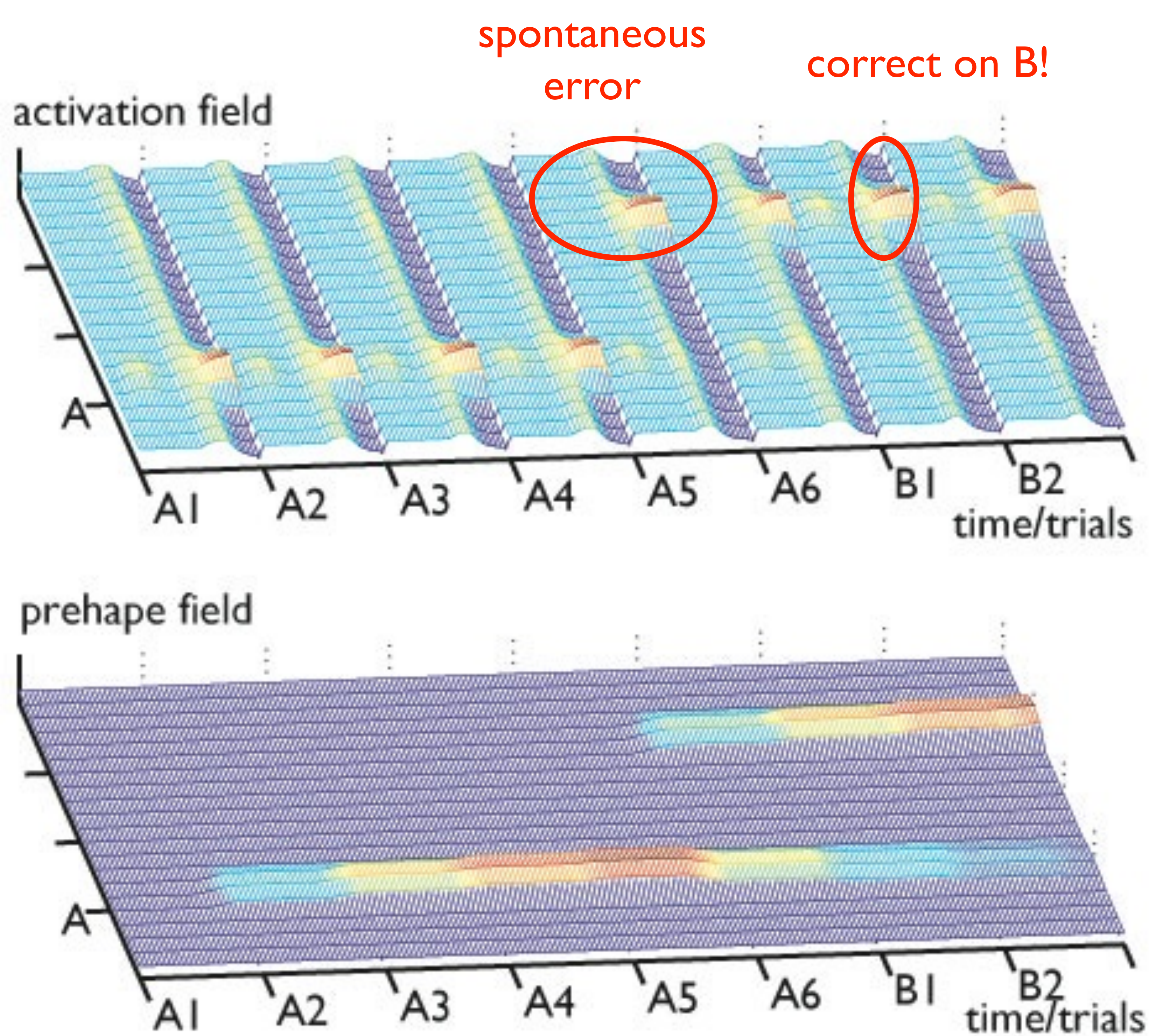
- in spotaneous errors, activation arises at B on an A trial
- which leads to correct reaching on B trial



[Dinveva, Schöner, Dev. Science 2007]

DFT of infant perseverative reaching

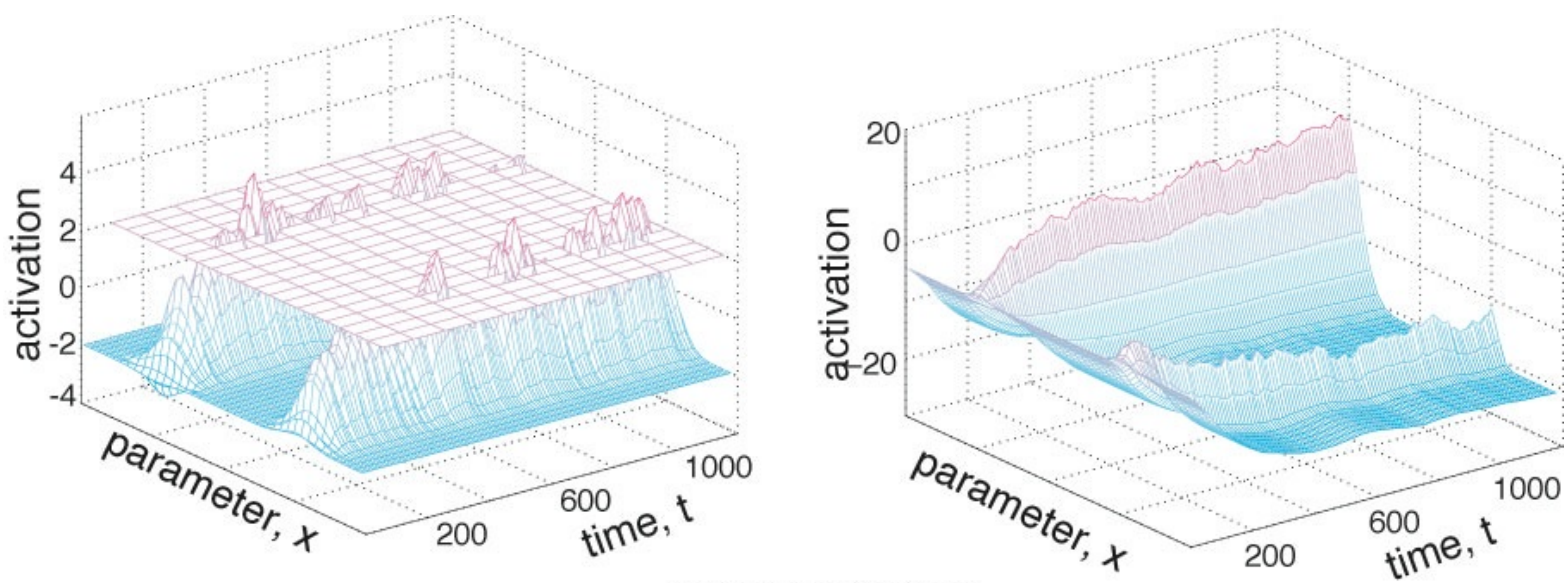
- that is because reaches to B on A trials leave memory trace at B



[Dinveva, Schöner, Dev. Science 2007]

DFT is a neural process model

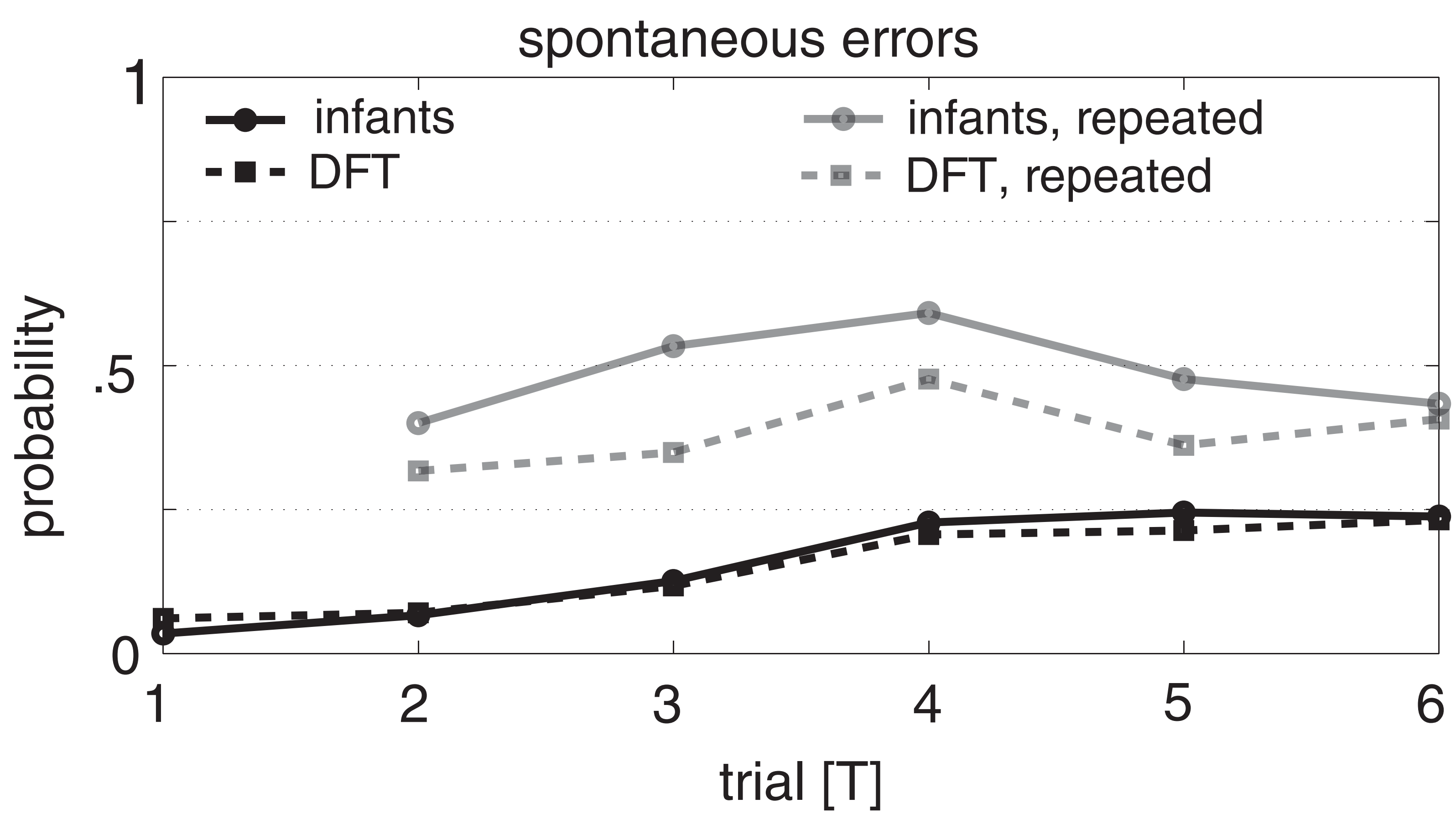
- that makes the decisions in each individual trial, by amplifying small differences into a macroscopic stable state
- and that's how decisions leave traces, have consequences



[Wilimzig, Schöner, 2006]

Decisions have consequences

- a spontaneous error doubles probability to make the spontaneous error again



[Dineva, Schöner: Connection Science 2018]

Conclusions

- action, perception, and embodied cognition takes place in continuous spaces. peaks = units of representation are attractors of the neural dynamics
- neural fields link neural representations to these continua
- stable activation peaks are the units of neural representation
- peaks arise and disappear through instabilities through which elementary cognitive functions (e.g. detection, selection, memory) emerge

The conceptual framework of DFT