

## Highlights

- Neural trajectories in the hippocampus exhibited greater variability during a working memory (WM) task compared to those in the entorhinal cortex and amygdala regions.
- The distance of neural trajectories between encoding and retrieval states in the hippocampus was memory-load dependent during a WM task.
- Hippocampal neural trajectories fluctuated between the encoding and retrieval states in a task-dependent manner during both baseline and sharp-wave ripple (SWR) periods.
- Hippocampal neural trajectories shifted from encoding to retrieval states during SWR period.

# Hippocampal neural fluctuations between memory encoding and retrieval states during a working memory task in humans

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## Abstract

Working memory (WM) ~~is a vital component in numerous~~ plays a critical role in many cognitive functions, yet the ~~complex but the intricate~~ neural mechanisms that ~~sustain its operation are not fully understood~~. In particular, ~~support its operation remain elusive~~. Specifically, while the hippocampus and sharp-wave ripple complexes (SWRs) — brief, synchronous neural oscillation observed in the hippocampus — ~~are known~~ are recognized for their roles in memory consolidation and retrieval, their ~~engagement involvement~~ in WM tasks ~~remains unclear~~. Our current research posits that the ~~has not yet been defined~~. Current research suggests that during WM tasks, multiunit activity patterns in the hippocampus ~~exhibit unique dynamism during WM tasks, especially display distinctive dynamics, particularly during SWR periods~~. Our study involved the analysis of a dataset obtained. This study analyzed a dataset derived from intracranial electroencephalogram recordings ~~recorded from~~ made in the medial temporal lobe (MTL) of nine individuals with epilepsy ~~performing during~~ an eight-second Sternberg task. We ~~utilized~~ applied Gaussian-process factor analysis to ~~calculate~~ determine low-dimensional neural representations, or 'trajectories,' within the MTL regions ~~during while performing~~ the WM task. Our results revealed that the neural trajectories showed. The results indicate significant variations in the hippocampus ~~compared to~~ neural trajectories compared to those in the entorhinal cortex and amygdala. Furthermore, ~~Additionally, the~~ distance of the trajectory between the encoding and retrieval phases ~~were memory-load dependent~~. Crucially, ~~was dependent on memory load~~. Importantly, hippocampal trajectories during the retrieval phase ~~fluctuated~~ demonstrated variations between encoding and retrieval stages ~~in a task-type dependent manner, especially showing transitions based on task type, particularly showing shifts from encoding to retrieval states during SWRs~~. Therefore, these observations not only demonstrate ~~the integral role of~~ the hippocampus in ~~executing~~ WM tasks but also ~~put forth a compelling hypothesis~~ for further investigation: the ~~operational~~ state of the hippocampus ~~shifts transition~~ from encoding to retrieval during SWRs.

**Keywords:** working memory, memory load, hippocampus, sharp-wave ripples, humans

## 1. Introduction

Working memory (WM) ~~plays a crucial role in~~ significantly influences everyday life, and ~~its neural underpinnings remain an area of ongoing research~~. The

hippocampus, notably the neural bases of this cognitive process continue to be the subject of intensive research. One key focus of this research is the hippocampus, a structure integral to memory, continues to be a primary focus of this investigation functions [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8] [9]. Gaining insights into the role. A thorough

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understanding of the hippocampus's role in working memory is vital to deepening our understanding essential for advancing our knowledge of cognitive processes ~~;~~ ~~[FIXMECHECKME>]~~ ~~potentially fostering the progression of and fostering advancements in~~ cognitive training and interventions~~[<FIXMECHECKME ENDS]~~.

Current evidence suggests that a transient, synchronized oscillation, ~~referred to as called~~ sharp-wave ripple (SWR) [10], is ~~linked associated~~ with several cognitive functions, ~~such as~~. These include memory replay [11] [12] [13] [14] [15], memory consolidation [16] [17] [18] [19], memory recall [20] [21] [22], and neural plasticity [23] [24]. This ~~evidence indicates the likelihood that SWR could be a critical component~~ association suggests that SWR may be a crucial part of hippocampal processing ~~;~~ ~~contributing that contributes~~ to working memory performance. However, research ~~investigating on~~ the effects of SWRs on working memory ~~remains sparse is relatively scarce~~ [25], and is ~~largely predominantly~~ limited to rodent models ~~participating engaged~~ in navigation tasks ~~where the exact~~, where the timing of memory acquisition and recall is not explicitly distinguished clearly defined.

Recent studies ~~indicate that hippocampal neurons exhibit have found~~ low-dimensional representations in the hippocampal neurons during WM tasks. ~~Notably~~ Specifically, the firing patterns of place cells [26] [27] [28] [29] [30], ~~located found~~ in the hippocampus, ~~are observed to be encompassed have been identified~~ within a dynamic, nonlinear three-dimensional hyperbolic geometry in rat [31] ~~;~~ ~~Moreover~~ space in rats [31]. Additionally, grid cells in the entorhinal cortex (EC) ~~the dominant~~, which is the main pathway to the hippocampus [32] [33] [34] ~~displayed toroidal topology during exploration~~ [35] in rat. Unfortunately, these ~~investigations are confined to~~, exhibited a toroidal geometry during exploration in rats [35]. However, these studies are limited by their focus on spatial navigation tasks in rodents, thus imposing limitations on affecting the temporal resolution of WM tasks ~~[FIXMECHECKME>]~~ like when the animal acquire and recall information such as the timing of information acquisition and recall ~~[<FIXMECHECKME ENDS]~~. The generalizability applicability of these findings to human subjects and beyond navigation tasks ~~remains to~~

~~be established~~ still needs to be confirmed.

~~Given these considerations, the current~~ Considering these aspects, the present study aims to ~~validate investigate~~ the hypothesis that hippocampal neurons ~~exhibit distinctive~~, ~~FIXME>responsible<FIXME~~ representations display distinctive patterns of activity or 'neural trajectories' in low-dimensional spaces, ~~designated as 'neural trajectory,'~~ ~~FIXME>responsible to <FIXME~~ WM tasks, especially within SWR periods. To evaluate this claim, we employed particularly during SWR periods, in response to WM tasks. To test this hypothesis, we used a dataset of patients performing an eight-second Sternberg task with high temporal resolution (1 s for fixation, 2 s for encoding, 3 s for maintenance, and 2 s for retrieval) ; while their intracranial electroencephalography signals with high temporal resolution. Intracranial electroencephalography (iEEG) signals within the medial temporal lobe (MTL) were being recorded recorded for these patients [36]. To ~~investigate examine~~ low-dimensional neural trajectories, we ~~employed utilized~~ Gaussian-process factor analysis (GPFA), ~~a method renowned an established method~~ for analyzing neural population dynamics [37].

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Dataset

~~A publicly available dataset [36] was used, which consists~~ The dataset employed in this study was publicly available and consisted of nine epilepsy patients performing a modified Sternberg task [36]. This task ~~involves encompassed~~ four phases: fixation (1s), encoding (2s), maintenance (3s), and retrieval (2s) [36]. During the encoding phase, participants were ~~exposed to presented with~~ four, six, or eight alphabet letters, ~~referred to defined~~ as the set size. ~~Subsequently, they~~ They ~~[FIXME>]~~ had were required to ~~[<FIXME]~~ decide ascertain whether a probe letter presented shown during the retrieval phase was previously displayed had appeared before (the correct choice for the Match IN task) or not (the correct choice for the Mismatch OUT task). ~~iEEG signals were recorded at a sampling rate of Intracranial electroencephalography (iEEG) signals were captured with a 32 kHz ; within a frequency range of sampling rate within a 0.5–5,000 Hz frequency range,~~

using depth electrodes ~~implanted in the in~~ medial temporal lobe (MTL) regions: the anterior head of the left and ~~the~~ right hippocampus (AHL and AHR), the posterior body of the hippocampus (PHL and PHR), the entorhinal cortex (ECL and ECR), and the amygdala (AL and AR), as ~~illustrated depicted~~ in Figure 1A and Table 1. The iEEG signals were subsequently downsampled to ~~a rate of~~ 2 kHz. Correlations ~~among~~ between variables such as set size and correct rate were ~~investigated examined~~ (Figure ??S1). ~~The timings of multiunit spikes were determined by~~ Multiunit spike timings were determined via a spike sorting algorithm [38] using the Combinato package (<https://github.com/jniediek/combinato>) (Figure 1C).

## 2.2. Calculation of neural trajectories using GPFA

Neural trajectories, also ~~termed referred to as~~ 'factors' (Figure 1D), in the hippocampus, EC, and amygdala (~~Figure 1D~~), ~~were computed were determined~~ using GPFA [37] applied to the multiunit activity data for each session. ~~GPFA was~~, performed with the elephant package (<https://elephant.readthedocs.io/en/latest/reference/gpfa.html>). The bin size was set to 50 ms, ~~with no without~~ overlaps. Each factor was z-normalized across all sessions. ~~The, and the~~ Euclidean distance from the origin ( $O$ ) was then ~~calculated~~ computed (Figure 1E).

For each trajectory within a region, ~~for instance,~~ AHL, geometric medians (i.e., such as AHL, geometric medians ( $g_F$  for fixation,  $g_E$  for encoding,  $g_M$  for maintenance, and  $g_R$  for retrieval phase) were ~~determined by calculating calculated by determining~~ the median coordinates of the trajectory during the four phases (Figure 1D). An optimal ~~dimensionality for GPFA was identified as~~ GPFA dimensionality was found to be three using the elbow method, ~~which was derived by investigating obtained by examining~~ the log-likelihood values through a three-fold cross-validation approach (Figure 2B).

## 2.3. Identifying SWR candidates from hippocampal regions

Potential SWR events within the hippocampus were detected using a widely ~~accepted used~~ method [39]. LFP signals from a region of interest (ROI), ~~such as like~~ AHL, were re-referenced by ~~subtracting an deducting the~~ averaged signal from locations outside

the ROI (~~e.g. for instance,~~ AHR, PHL, PHR, ECL, ECR, AL, and AR) (see Figure 1A). The re-referenced LFP signals were then filtered with a ripple-band filter (80–140 Hz) to ~~identify SWR candidates (= determine SWR candidates, marked as~~ SWR<sup>+</sup> candidates) (see Figure 1B). SWR detection was ~~conducted carried out~~ using a published tool ([https://github.com/Eden-Kramer-Lab/ripple\\_detection](https://github.com/Eden-Kramer-Lab/ripple_detection)) [40], with the bandpass range adjusted to 80–140 Hz for humans [21] [22], ~~different from the original unlike the initial~~ 150–250 Hz range typically applied to rodents.

Control events for SWR<sup>+</sup> candidates, labeled as SWR<sup>-</sup> candidates, were ~~identified detected~~ by randomly shuffling the timestamps of SWR<sup>+</sup> candidates across all trials and subjects. The resulting SWR<sup>+</sup>/SWR<sup>-</sup> candidates were then ~~subjected to visual inspection, as shown in visually inspected~~ (Figure 1).

## 2.4. Defining SWRs from putative hippocampal CA1 regions

SWRs were ~~distinguished differentiated~~ from SWR candidates in putative CA1 regions. ~~Initially, these regions were~~ These regions were initially defined as follows: SWR<sup>+</sup>/SWR<sup>-</sup> candidates in the hippocampus were projected into a two-dimensional space based on overlapping spike counts per unit ~~employing using~~ a supervised method ~~using~~, UMAP (Uniform Manifold Approximation and Projection) [41] (Figure 4A). Clustering validation was performed by ~~computing calculating~~ the silhouette score [42] from clustered samples (Table 2). Regions in the hippocampus, which scored above 0.6 on average across sessions (75th percentile) (Figure 4B), were ~~characterized identified~~ as putative CA1 regions, ~~identifying resulting in the identification of~~ five electrode positions from five patients (Table 3).

SWR<sup>+</sup>/SWR<sup>-</sup> candidates in ~~the assumed these predetermined~~ CA1 regions were ~~classified categorized~~ as SWR<sup>+</sup>/SWR<sup>-</sup>, ~~thus relinquishing and thus they no longer retained~~ their candidate status. The duration and ripple band peak amplitude of SWRs were ~~observed found~~ to follow log-normal distributions (Figure 4C & E). Each time period of SWR was partitioned relative to the time from the SWR center into pre- (at -800 to -300 ms from ~~the~~ SWR center), mid- (at -250 to +250 ms), and post-SWR (at +300 to +800 ms) times.

## 2.5. Statistical evaluation

The Both the Brunner–Munzel test and the Kruskal–Wallis test were performed-executed using the SciPy package in Python [43]. Correlational analysis was performed-conducted by determining the rank of the observed correlation coefficient in-within its associated set-size-shuffled surrogate using a custom-customized Python script. The bootstrap test was implemented using-with an in-house Python script.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. iEEG recording and neural trajectory in MTL regions during a Sternberg task

We leveraged-a publicly-available-dataset-for-this analysis [36].-This dataset encompasses-Our analysis employed a publicly accessible dataset [36], which comprises LFP signals (Figure 1A) from MTL regions (Table 1) during-recorded during the execution of a modified Sternberg task-execution.-We identified-. We extracted SWR<sup>+</sup> candidates from LFP signals filtered-through-that were filtered in the 80–140 Hz ripple band (Figure 1B), originating across-in all hippocampal regions (refer to Methods ).-Correspondinglysection). Meanwhile, SWR<sup>-</sup> candidates were defined at identical timestamps-but-shuffled-the same timestamps but distributed across different trials (Figure 1). The dataset included-also encompassed multiunit spikes (Figure 1C)identified-, recognized via a spike sorting algorithm [38]. By-employing-Employing GPFA [37], and-using-the-we applied this to 50-ms windows of binned multiunit activity with-no-overlaps-, we determined-without overlaps to determine the neural trajectories(or-factors)-, or factors, of MTL regions by session and region (Figure 1D). We normalized each factor by-per session and region, for instance, session #2 in AHL of subject #1. Subsequently,-we-We then calculated the Euclidean distance from the origin ( $O$ ) (Figure 1E).

#### 3.2. Hippocampal neural trajectory correlation with a Sternberg task

Figure 2A illustrates-the-elbow-exhibits a distribution of median neural trajectoriesof-, comprising 50 trials, within the three main factor spaces. We-determined Utilizing the elbow method, we established the optimal embedding dimension for the GPFA model to-be-three-,

using-the-elbow-method-as three (Figure 2B). The trajectory distance from the origin ( $O$ ) (← represented as  $\|g_F\|$ ,  $\|g_E\|$ ,  $\|g_M\|$ , and  $\|g_R\|$ ) → in the hippocampus exceeded surpassed-the corresponding distances in the EC and amygdala (Figure 2C & D).<sup>1</sup>

Similarly, we computed the distances between the geometric medians of four phases, namely  $\|g_{FGE}\|$ ,  $\|g_{FGM}\|$ ,  $\|g_{FGR}\|$ ,  $\|g_{EGM}\|$ ,  $\|g_{EGR}\|$ , and  $\|g_{MGR}\|$ . The results-indicated-Our findings suggest that the hippocampus displayed-showed larger distances between phases than both-those in the EC and amygdala.<sup>2</sup>

#### 3.3. Memory-load-dependent-Memory-load-dependent neural trajectory distance between encoding and retrieval states in the hippocampus

In-terms-of-Regarding memory load in the Stenberg Sternberg task, we identified-observed a negative correlation between the correct rate of trials and set-size-(the set size, which denotes the number of letters to encode) be encoded (Figure 3A).<sup>3</sup> Similarly-Concomitantly, a positive correlation was observed-noted between the response time and set size (Figure 3B).<sup>4</sup> Furthermore,-we found-

Next, we discovered a positive correlation between set size and the trajectory distance between-separating the encoding and retrieval phases ( $\log_{10}\|g_{EGR}\|$ ) (Figure 3C).<sup>5</sup> However, distances between other

<sup>1</sup>Hippocampus: Distance = 1.11 [1.01], median [IQR],  $n = 195,681$  timepoints; EC: Distance = 0.94 [1.10], median [IQR],  $n = 133,761$  timepoints; Amygdala: Distance = 0.78 [0.88], median [IQR],  $n = 165,281$  timepoints.

<sup>2</sup>Hippocampus: Distance = 0.60 [0.70], median [IQR],  $n = 8,772$  combinations; EC: Distance = 0.28 [0.52], median [IQR],  $n = 5,017$  combinations ( $p < 0.01$ ; Brunner–Munzel test); Amygdala: Distance = 0.24 [0.42], median [IQR],  $n = 7,466$  combinations ( $p < 0.01$ ; Brunner–Munzel test).

<sup>3</sup>Correct rate: set size four ( $0.99 \pm 0.11$ , mean  $\pm$ SD;  $n = 333$  trials) vs. set size six ( $0.93 \pm 0.26$ ;  $n = 278$  trials;  $p < 0.001$ , Brunner–Munzel test with Bonferroni correction) and set size eight ( $0.87 \pm 0.34$ ;  $n = 275$  trials;  $p < 0.05$ ; Brunner–Munzel test with Bonferroni correction). Overall-Generally,  $p < 0.001$  for Kruskal–Wallis test; correlation coefficient = -0.20,  $p < 0.001$ .

<sup>4</sup>Response time: set size four ( $1.26 \pm 0.45$  s;  $n = 333$  trials) vs. set size six ( $1.53 \pm 0.91$  s;  $n = 278$  trials) and set size eight ( $1.66 \pm 0.80$  s;  $n = 275$  trials). All comparisons  $p < 0.001$ , Brunner–Munzel test with Bonferroni correction;  $p < 0.001$  for Kruskal–Wallis test; correlation coefficient = 0.22,  $p < 0.001$ .

<sup>5</sup>Correlation between set size and  $\log_{10}(\|g_{EGR}\|)$ : correlation coefficient = 0.05,  $p < 0.001$ . Specific values:  $\|g_{EGR}\| = 0.54$  [0.70] for set size four,  $n = 447$ ;  $\|g_{EGR}\| = 0.58$  [0.66] for set size six,  $n = 381$ ;  $\|g_{EGR}\| = 0.61$  [0.63] for set size eight,  $n = 395$ .



~~combinations of phases did not display phase combinations did not highlight~~ statistically significant correlations (Figures 3D and ??).

### 3.4. Detection of hippocampal SWR from putative CA1 regions

~~For precision improvement in~~ To enhance the precision of recording sites and SWR detection, we ~~estimated approximated~~ the electrode placements in the CA1 regions of the hippocampus using ~~distinct distinguished~~ multiunit spike patterns during the SWR events. SWR<sup>+</sup>/SWR<sup>-</sup> candidates from ~~every each~~ session and hippocampal region were embedded in a two-dimensional space using UMAP (Figure 4A).<sup>6</sup> ~~We used~~ With the silhouette score as a ~~metric for quality of quality metric for~~ clustering (Figure 4B and Table 2). ~~Recording sites with, recording sites demonstrating~~ an average silhouette score exceeding 0.6 across all sessions were identified as putative CA1 regions.<sup>7</sup> (Tables 2 and 3). We identified five putative CA1 regions, four of which were not ~~labeled indicated~~ as seizure on-set zones (Table 1).

Subsequently, SWR<sup>+</sup>/SWR<sup>-</sup> candidates within these putative CA1 regions were labeled as SWR<sup>+</sup> and SWR<sup>-</sup>, respectively<sup>8</sup> (Table 3). Both SWR<sup>+</sup> and SWR<sup>-</sup> ~~exhibited the same duration manifested similar durations~~<sup>9</sup> (Figure 4C) due to their definitions, and followed a ~~log-distribution. We observed an augmentation in SWR<sup>+</sup> incidence during log-normal distribution.~~ During the initial 400 ms of the retrieval phase, we ~~noted an increase in SWR<sup>+</sup> incidence~~<sup>10</sup> (Figure 4D). The peak ripple band amplitude of SWR<sup>+</sup> ~~outpaced surpassed that of~~ SWR<sup>-</sup> and followed a log-normal distribution (Figure 4E).<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>6</sup>Consider the AHL in session #1 of subject #1, ~~for illustration purposes as a case in point.~~

<sup>7</sup>The identified regions were ~~the~~ AHL of subject #1, AHR of subject #3, PHL of subject #4, AHL of subject #6, and AHR of subject #9.

<sup>8</sup>These definitions ~~led to produced~~ equal counts for both categories: SWR<sup>+</sup> ( $n = 1,170$ ) and SWR<sup>-</sup> ( $n = 1,170$ ).

<sup>9</sup>These definitions ~~led to result in~~ equal durations for both categories: SWR<sup>+</sup> (93.0 [65.4] ms) and SWR<sup>-</sup> (93.0 [65.4] ms).

<sup>10</sup>SWR<sup>+</sup> increased against the bootstrap sample; 95th percentile = 0.42 [Hz];  $p < 0.05$ .

<sup>11</sup>SWR<sup>+</sup> (3.05 [0.85] SD of baseline, median [IQR];  $n = 1,170$ ) vs. SWR<sup>-</sup> (2.37 [0.33] SD of baseline, median [IQR];  $n = 1,170$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ; Brunner–Munzel test).

### 3.5. Transient changes in hippocampal neural trajectory during SWR

We ~~computed assessed~~ the 'distance' of the trajectory from the origin ( $O$ ) during SWR events in both the encoding and retrieval phases (Figure 5A). Observing the increase in distance during SWR ~~as shown, as illustrated~~ in Figure 5A, we ~~differentiated categorized~~ each SWR into three stages: pre-, mid-, and post-SWR. ~~Therefore Hence~~, the distances from  $O$  during those SWR ~~periods intervals~~ are identified as  $\|pre-eSWR^+\|$ ,  $\|mid-eSWR^+\|$  ~~among others, and others.~~

The magnitude of  $\|mid-eSWR^+\|$ <sup>12</sup> ~~was greater than exceeded that of~~  $\|pre-eSWR^+\|$ <sup>13</sup>, and  $\|mid-rSWR^+\|$ <sup>14</sup> was larger than  $\|pre-rSWR^+\|$  in both the Match IN and Mismatch OUT tasks.<sup>15</sup>.

### 3.6. Visualization of hippocampal neural trajectory during SWR in two-dimensional spaces

~~Following our observations of~~ Having observed neural trajectory 'jumping' during SWR (Figure 5), we visualized the three-dimensional trajectories of pre-, mid-, and post-SWR events during the encoding and retrieval phases (Figure 6), ~~the distance between which. The distance between these~~ was found to be memory-load dependent (Figure 3).

To provide two-dimensional visualization, we linearly aligned peri-SWR trajectories by ~~assigning setting~~  $g_E$  at the origin (0, 0) and  $g_R$  at ( $\|g_{EGR}\|$ , 0). ~~Post this~~ Subsequently, we rotated these aligned trajectories around the  $g_{EGR}$  axis (the x axis). ~~Thus, ensuring that~~ the distances from the origin in the original three-dimensional spaces and angles from  $\overrightarrow{g_{EGR}}$  are ~~preserved retained~~ in the two-dimensional equivalent.

The scatter plot within these two-dimensional spaces ~~reveals characteristic revealed defining~~ distributions of peri-SWR trajectories based on phases and task types. ~~For instance, A particular example of this is visible in~~ [FIXMECHECKME] one can observe[<FIXMECHECKME] that the magnitude of

<sup>12</sup>1.25 [1.30], median [IQR],  $n = 1,281$  ~~in the~~ Match IN task; 1.12 [1.35], median [IQR],  $n = 1,163$  ~~in the~~ Mismatch OUT task

<sup>13</sup>1.08 [1.07], median [IQR],  $n = 1,149$  ~~in the~~ Match IN task; 0.90 [1.12], median [IQR],  $n = 1,088$  ~~in the~~ Mismatch OUT task

<sup>14</sup>1.32 [1.24], median [IQR],  $n = 935$  ~~in the~~ Match IN task; 1.15 [1.26], median [IQR],  $n = 891$  ~~in the~~ Mismatch OUT task

<sup>15</sup>1.19 [0.96], median [IQR],  $n = 673$  ~~in the~~ Match IN task; 0.94 [0.88], median [IQR],  $n = 664$  ~~in the~~ Mismatch OUT task

$\|\text{mid-eSWR}^+\|$  surpasses that of  $\|\text{pre-eSWR}^+\|$  (Figure 6B), which is consistent with our earlier findings previous observations (Figure 5).

### 3.7. Fluctuations of hippocampal neural trajectories between encoding and retrieval states

NextSubsequently, we examined trajectory 'direction' in relation to  $\overrightarrow{g_{\text{EGR}}}$ . The directions of SWRs were defined by the neural trajectory at  $-250$  ms and  $+250$  ms from their center, *i.e.*,  $\overrightarrow{\text{eSWR}^+}$ . We calculated the consine-cosine similarities between  $\overrightarrow{g_{\text{EGR}}}$ ,  $\overrightarrow{\text{eSWR}^+}$ , and  $\overrightarrow{\text{rSWR}^-}$  in both SWR (SWR<sup>+</sup>) and baseline periods (SWR<sup>-</sup>) (Figure 7A – D).

$\overrightarrow{\text{rSWR}^-} \cdot \overrightarrow{g_{\text{EGR}}}$  displayed-exhibited a biphasic distribution. By takingBy computing the difference between the distribution of  $\overrightarrow{\text{rSWR}^+} \cdot \overrightarrow{g_{\text{EGR}}}$  (Figure 7A & B) and that of  $\overrightarrow{\text{rSWR}^-} \cdot \overrightarrow{g_{\text{EGR}}}$  (Figure 7C & D), we were able to determine the contributions of SWR (Figure 7E & F) were calculated, which revealed, which indicated a shift in the direction of  $\overrightarrow{g_{\text{EGR}}}$  (Figure 7E & F: red rectangles). Moreover

Furthermore,  $\overrightarrow{\text{eSWR}^+} \cdot \overrightarrow{\text{rSWR}^+}$  was less than  $\overrightarrow{\text{eSWR}^+} \cdot \overrightarrow{\text{rSWR}^-}$  solely in strictly in the Mismatch OUT task (Figure 7F: pink circles). In simpler terms other words,  $\overrightarrow{\text{eSWR}^+}$  and  $\overrightarrow{\text{rSWR}^+}$  pointed in the opposite direction only in-exclusively in the Mismatch OUT task but not in the Match IN task (Figure 7E: pink circles).

## 4. Discussion

## 5. Discussion

This study hypothesized that within hypothesizes that in low-dimensional spaces during a WM-working memory (WM) task in humans, hippocampal neurons form unique trajectories, particularly during SWR primarily during sharp wave-ripple (SWR) periods. Initially, the multiunit spikes in MTL-the medial temporal lobe (MTL) regions were projected onto three-dimensional spaces during a Sternberg task using GPFA Gaussian-process factor analysis (GPFA) (Figure 1D–E D – E and Figure 2A). The distance-of-the-trajectory trajectory distance across WM phases ( $\|\overrightarrow{g_{\text{FGE}}}\|$ ,  $\|\overrightarrow{g_{\text{FGM}}}\|$ ,  $\|\overrightarrow{g_{\text{FGR}}}\|$ ,  $\|\overrightarrow{g_{\text{EGM}}}\|$ ,  $\|\overrightarrow{g_{\text{EGR}}}\|$ , and  $\|\overrightarrow{g_{\text{MGR}}}\|$ ) was notably significantly larger in the hippocampus than in the EC

compared to the entorhinal cortex (EC) and amygdala (Figure 2E), indicating dynamic neural activity in the hippocampus during the WM task. FurtherAlso, in the hippocampus, the trajectory distance between the encoding and retrieval phases ( $\|\overrightarrow{g_{\text{FGE}}}\|$ ) exhibited-a positive correlation-correlated positively with memory load (Figure 3C–DC — D), reflecting WM processing. The hippocampal neural trajectory was found-to diverse transiently transiently expanded during SWRs (Figure 5). FinallyLastly, the hippocampal neural trajectory switched-alternated between encoding and retrieval states, moving-transitioning from encoding to retrieval during SWR events (Figure 7). These findings not only explain facets-explain aspects of hippocampal neural activity during a WM task in humans but also and offer [FIXME>]new insights into SWRs as a state-switching observation-element in hippocampal neural states[<FIXME].

We found that theThe distance of the neural trajectory across the phases was greater-significantly longer in the hippocampus compared to that in the EC and amygdala, even when considering the distance from  $O$  in these regions (Figure 2C–EC — E). This supports-establishes the involvement of the hippocampus in the WM task, aligning-with previous reports-of corroborating previous studies indicating hippocampal persistent firing during the maintenance phase [3] [4] [5] [6]. However, when we applied-applying GPFA to multiunit activity during a 1-second-one-second level resolution of the WM task, we observed-revealed that the neural trajectory in low-dimensional space showed presented a memory-load dependency between the encoding and retrieval phases, symbolized-denoted as  $\|\overrightarrow{g_{\text{EGR}}}\|$  (Figure 3). These findings corroborate-support the association of the hippocampus with WM processing.

Our analysis was confined to putative CA1-focused on putative Cornu Ammonis (CA)1 regions (Figure 4), which was bolstered-reinforced by several factors. This specific focus stems-results from established observations that SWRs synchronize with spike-bursts-of interneurons-and pyramidal-neurons-interneuron and pyramidal neuron spike bursts [44] [45] [46] [47], potentially within a  $50 \mu\text{m}$  radius of the recording site [48]. We furtherFurthermore, we identified an increased incidence of SWRs during the first 0–400 ms of the retrieval phase (Figure 4D). This finding harmonizes-aligns with

previous reports of heightened SWR occurrence preceding spontaneous verbal recall [21] [22], supporting our results under a triggered retrieval condition. The observed log-normal distributions of both SWR duration and ripple band peak amplitude in this study (Figure 4C & E) ~~is in accordance with the coincide with the current~~ consensus in this field [39]. ~~As a result~~ Consequently, our decision to ~~restrict limit~~ recording sites to putative CA1 regions likely contributed to ~~enhancing improving~~ the precision, or true positive rate, of SWR detection. ~~However, the increase in trajectory distance~~ Although, the trajectory distance increase from  $O$  during SWRs (Figure 5) might ~~have been skewed be artificially inflated~~ towards higher values due to channel selection. ~~However~~, this potential bias does not substantially challenge our ~~primary main~~ findings.

Interestingly, during the retrieval phase, ~~the trajectory directions oscillated trajectory directions alternated~~ between encoding and retrieval states during both baseline and SWR periods in a task-dependent manner (Figure 7C & D). ~~Moreover~~ Additionally, the balance of this oscillation ~~shifted transitioned~~ from encoding to retrieval state during SWR events (Figure 7 E & F). These results ~~are consistent with previous reports align with previous studies~~ on the role of SWR in memory retrieval [21] [22]. Our findings ~~highlight a new understanding~~ , suggesting introduce a novel understanding indicating that SWRs occur when the hippocampal representation transitions from encoding to retrieval states. Therefore, these results reveal novel aspects of hippocampal representations, including (i) neuronal oscillation between encoding and retrieval states during a WM task and (ii) SWR serving as a transition trigger for changing neural states.

~~Furthermore~~ Moreover, our study ~~uncovered noted differences specific to the WM-task type-specific differences type~~ between encoding- and retrieval-SWRs (Figure 7E–F). Notably, opposing movements of encoding-SWR (eSWR) and retrieval-SWR (rSWR) were not observed in the Match IN task but were apparent in the Mismatch OUT task. ~~These observations can be explained by the memory~~ Memory engram theory [49]. ~~Particularly, might explain these observations~~: the Match In task ~~provided presented~~ participants with previously ~~presented letters, contrastingly, shown letters~~, while the Mismatch OUT task introduced a new letter ~~not present absent~~ in the encoding phase. ~~These~~

~~interpretations underscore~~ This explanation underscores the significant role of SWR in human cognitive processes.

In conclusion, ~~the present investigation demonstrated that this study demonstrates that during a WM task~~, hippocampal activity oscillates between encoding and retrieval states ~~during a WM task and uniquely transitions and transitions uniquely~~ from encoding to retrieval during SWR ~~incidents events~~. These findings provide ~~meaningful insight significant insights~~ into the neural ~~counterparts correlates~~ and functionality of working memory in the hippocampus.

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## Contributors

Y.W. and T.Y. conceptualized the study; Y.W. performed the data analysis; Y.W. and T.Y. wrote the original draft; and all authors reviewed the final manuscript.

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## Declaration of Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

## Data and code availability

The data is available on G-Node (<https://doi.gin.g-node.org/10.12751/g-node.d76994/>).

The source code is available on GitHub

(<https://github.com/yanagisawa-lab/hippocampal-neural-fluctuation-during-a-WM-task-in-hum>)

## Inclusion and Diversity Statement

We support inclusive, diverse, and equitable conduct of research.

## Declaration of Generative AI in Scientific Writing

The authors employed ChatGPT, provided by OpenAI, for enhancing the manuscript's English language quality. After incorporating the suggested improvements, the authors meticulously revised the content. Ultimate responsibility for the final content of this publication rests entirely with the authors.

## Tables

| Subject ID | of sessions | AHL | AHR | PHL | PHR | ECL | ECR | AL | AR | SOZ                  |
|------------|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|----------------------|
| 1          | 4           | ⊖   | ✕   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ✕   | ⊖  | ✕  | "AHR, LR"            |
| 2          | 7           | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖  | ⊖  | "AHR, PHR"           |
| 3          | 3           | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖  | ✕  | "AHL, PHL"           |
| 4          | 2           | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖  | ⊖  | "AHL, AHR, PHL, PHR" |
| 5          | 3           | ⊖   | ✕   | ✕   | ⊖   | ✕   | ✕   | ⊖  | ✕  | DRR                  |
| 6          | 6           | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖  | ⊖  | "AHL, PHL, ECL, AL"  |
| 7          | 4           | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖  | ⊖  | "AHR, PHR"           |
| 8          | 5           | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖  | ⊖  | ECR                  |
| 9          | 2           | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖   | ⊖  | ⊖  | "ECR, AR"            |

**Table 1 – Distribution of Electrodes within the Dataset** Electrode Distribution within the Dataset

This figure ~~represents~~denotes the ~~electrode~~placements of electrodes and ~~the~~seizure onset zones. Regions ~~designated~~marked with ~~were~~available~~included~~ in the dataset, ~~whereas~~while those ~~marked~~imprinted with ~~were~~not present~~absent~~. ~~Abbreviations include~~The abbreviations used are as follows: AHL, left hippocampal head; AHR, right hippocampal head; PHL, left hippocampal body; PHR, right hippocampal body; ECL, left entorhinal cortex; ECR, right entorhinal cortex; AL, left amygdala; AR, right amygdala; ~~and~~SOZ symbolizes~~represents~~ the seizure onset zone.



| Subject | AHL         | AHR         | PHL         | PHR         |
|---------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1       | 0.60 ± 0.14 | n.a.        | n.a.        | 0.1 ± 0     |
| 2       | 0.21 ± 0.16 | 0.17 ± 0.21 | 0.18 ± 0.22 | 0.20 ± 0.15 |
| 3       | 0.40 ± 0.42 | 0.83 ± 0.12 | n.a.        | n.a.        |
| 4       | 0.10 ± 0.00 | 0.10 ± 0.00 | 0.90 ± 0.00 | 0.10 ± 0.14 |
| 5       | n.a.        | n.a.        | n.a.        | n.a.        |
| 6       | 0.63 ± 0.06 | n.a.        | n.a.        | 0.27 ± 0.06 |
| 7       | 0.10 ± 0.00 | 0.35 ± 0.35 | 0.37 ± 0.47 | 0.10 ± 0.00 |
| 8       | 0.13 ± 0.10 | n.a.        | 0.28 ± 0.49 | n.a.        |
| 9       | n.a.        | 0.85 ± 0.07 | 0.15 ± 0.07 | n.a.        |

**Table 2 – ~~Silhouette score of UMAP clustering for  $SWR^+$  candidates and  $SWR^-$  candidates~~ Silhouette score of UMAP clustering for  $SWR^+$  candidates and  $SWR^-$  candidates**

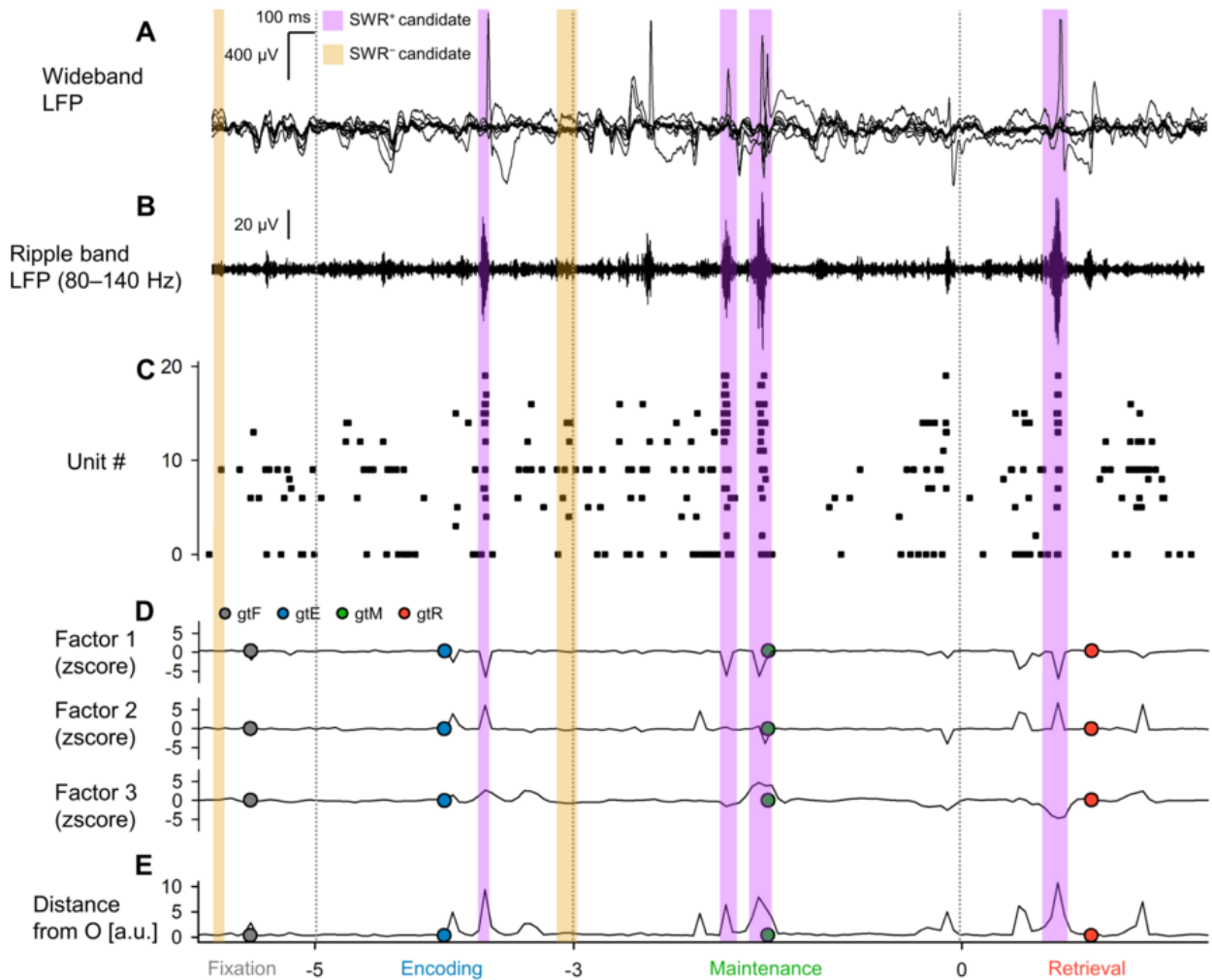
The silhouette scores (mean ±SD across sessions per subject) for UMAP clustering of

| Subject ID | of sessions | of trials                     | ROI                     | of SWRs | SWR incidence [Hz] |
|------------|-------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---------|--------------------|
| #1         | 2           | 100                           | AHL                     | 274     | 0.34               |
| #3         | 2           | 97                            | AHR                     | 325     | 0.42               |
| #4         | 2           | 99                            | PHL                     | 202     | 0.26               |
| #6         | 2           | 100                           | AHL                     | 297     | 0.37               |
| #9         | 2           | 97                            | AHR                     | 72      | 0.09               |
| Total = 10 | Total = 493 | Total = <del>1,170</del> 1170 | 0.30 ± 0.13 (mean ± SD) |         |                    |

**Table 3 – Summary of Detected SWR Events**

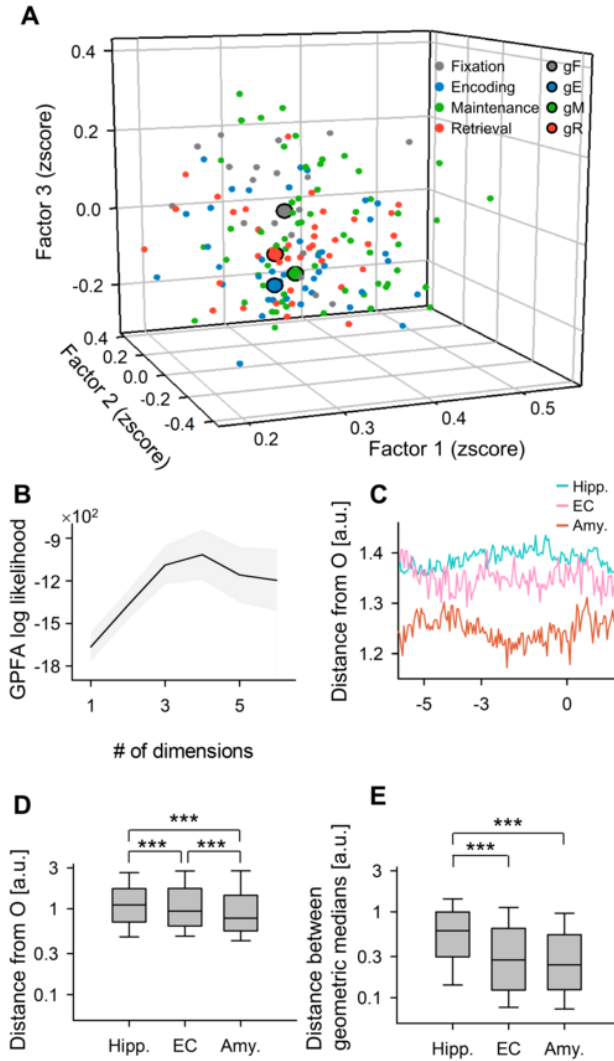
The table ~~coHates~~ provides statistics of ~~putative~~ presumptive CA1 regions and SWR events. Only the ~~first~~ initial two sessions (sessions 1 and 2) from each subject were ~~analyzed~~ included in our analysis to ~~minimize~~ reduce sampling bias.

## Figures



**Figure 1 – Local Field Potentials (LFP), Multiunit Activity, and Neural Trajectories in the Hippocampus During a Modified Sternberg Task**

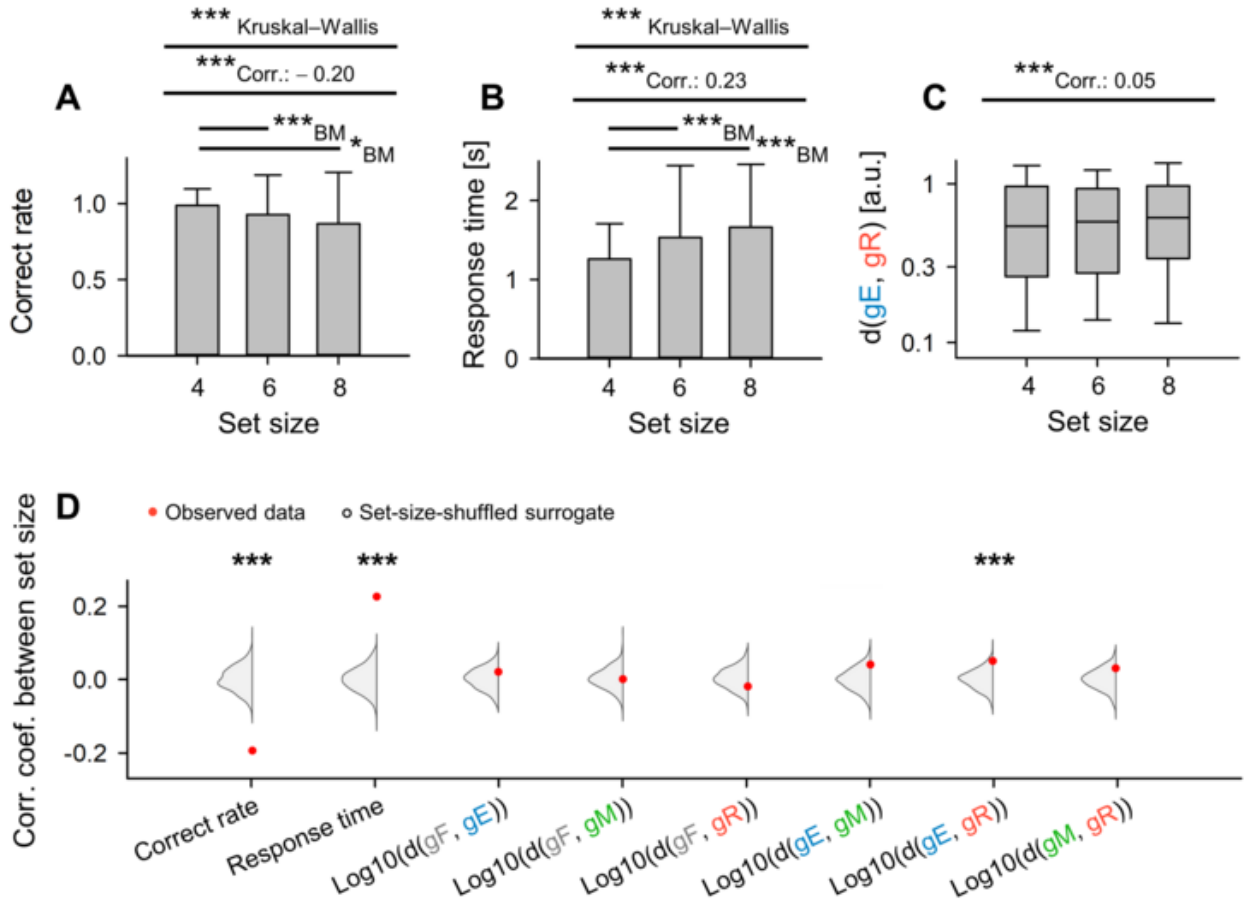
A. ~~These traces show representative~~ Representative wideband LFP signals for intracranial EEG (iEEG) signals recorded recording from the left hippocampal head. The subject performed a modified Sternberg working memory task, which includes fixation (1 s, gray), encoding (2 s, blue), maintenance (3 s, green), and retrieval (2 s, red). B. ~~We then present the~~ The corresponding ripple band LFP traces. Note that purple and yellow rectangles indicating the timings for SWR<sup>+</sup> candidates and SWR<sup>-</sup> candidates (control events for SWR<sup>+</sup>), respectively. C. The raster plot depicts multiunit spikes taken from the LFP traces, sorted using a spike algorithm [38]. D. ~~Subsequently, we illustrate the neural~~ Neural trajectories, which are calculated by GPFA[37] on spike counts per unit with 50-ms bins. Each phase's geometric median is marked by the dot circles. E. The trajectory's distance of neural trajectory from the origin O is portrayed, with purple and yellow rectangles indicating the timings for SWR<sup>+</sup> candidates and SWR<sup>-</sup> candidates (considered as controls for SWR<sup>+</sup>), respectively.



**Figure 2 – State-Dependent Trajectories of Hippocampal Neurons**

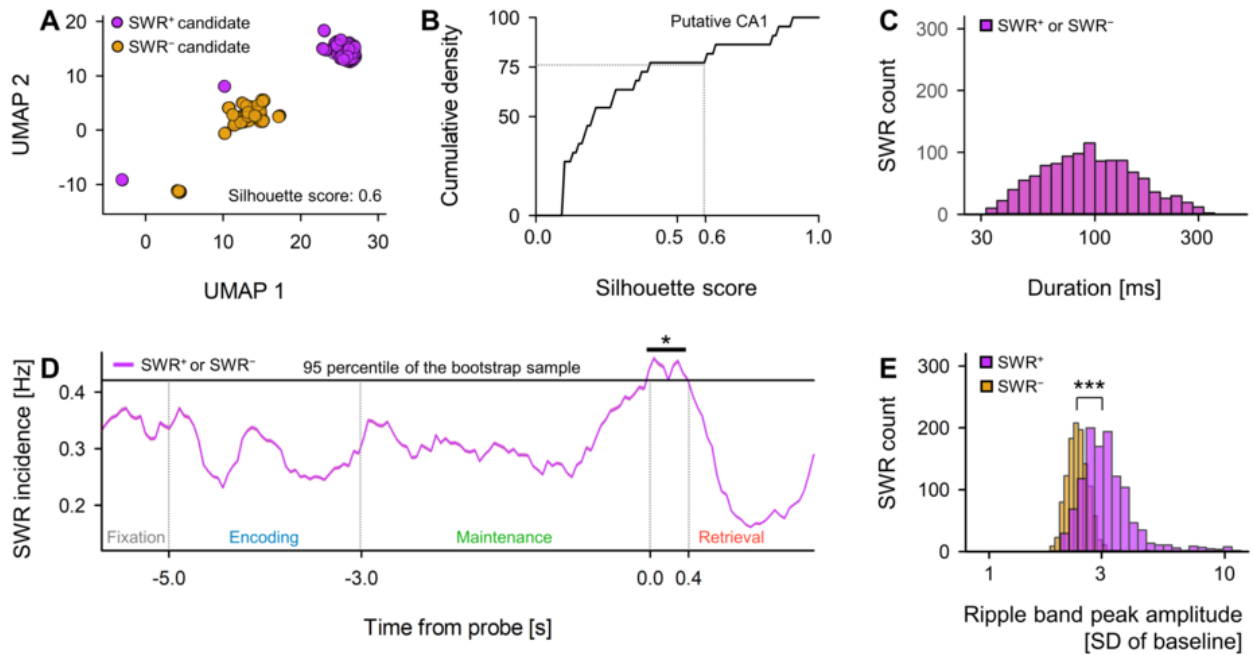
A. Neural trajectories as a point cloud within the initial three-dimensional factors derived from ~~the Gaussian Process Factor Analysis (GPFA )-are displayed~~<sup>[37]</sup>. The smaller dots correspond to coordinates of 50-ms neural trajectory bins, while the larger dots with *black edges* ~~signify show~~ the geometric medians for respective ~~stages-phases~~ in the Sternberg working memory task: fixation (~~||g<sub>F</sub>||~~, gray), encoding (~~||g<sub>E</sub>||~~, blue), maintenance (~~||g<sub>M</sub>||~~, green), and retrieval (~~||g<sub>R</sub>||~~, red). **B.** The figure conveys the log-likelihood of the GPFA models versus the count of dimensions used to embed multiunit spikes found in the medial temporal lobe (MTL) territories. In specific, the elbow method pinpointed the optimal dimension to be three. **C.** This panel illustrates the distance of the neural trajectories from the origin (*O*) for the hippocampus (Hipp.), entorhinal cortex (EC), and amygdala (Amy.), against the time elapsed from the probe onset. **D.** The distance of the trajectory from *O* within MTL regions is displayed. The hippocampus shows the farthest distance, followed by the EC and the Amygdala. **E.** The box plot represents inter-phase trajectory distances within the MTL regions. **Abbreviations:-**





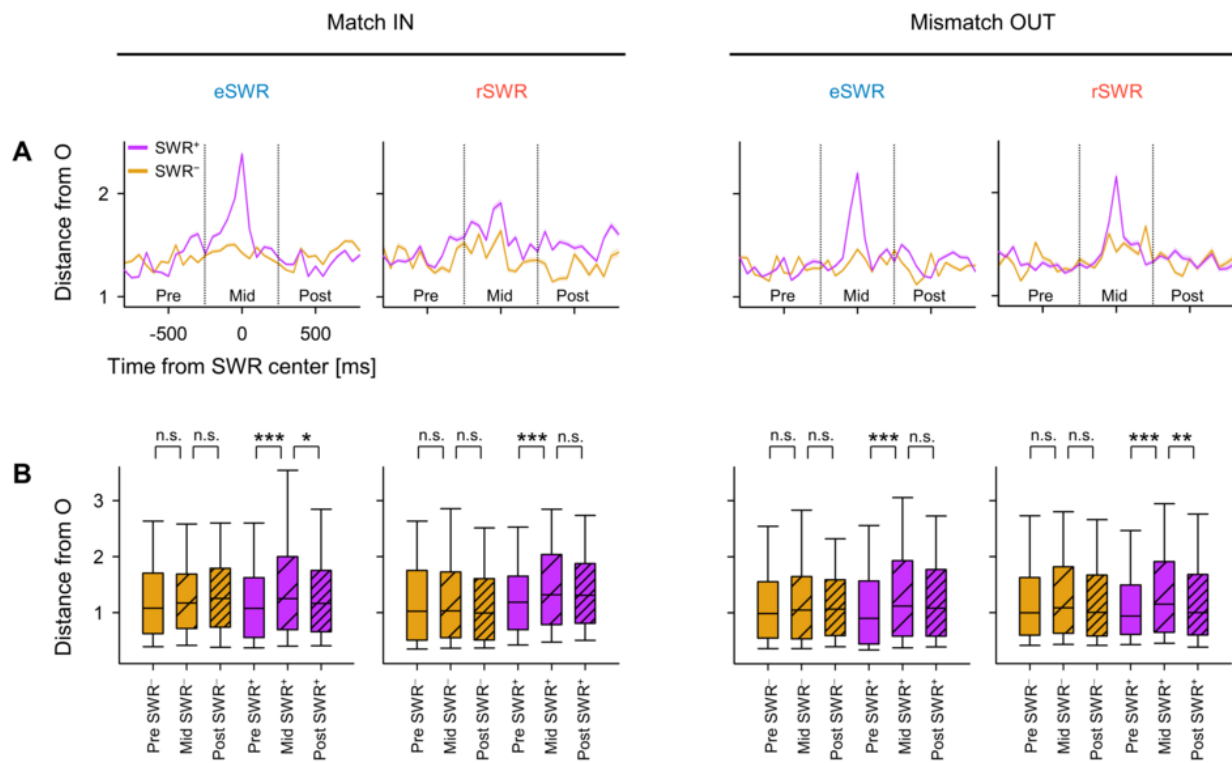
**Figure 3 – Dependency of Trajectory Distance on Memory Load: Encoding and Retrieval States in Hippocampus**

**A.** The relationship between set size (number of letters that need to be encoded) and correct rate in the working memory task (coefficient = -0.20, \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ ). **B.** The correlation between set size and response time (coefficient = 0.23, \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ ). **C.** The impact of set size on the inter-phase distances between the encoding and retrieval phases ( $\|g_E g_R\|$ ) (correlation coefficient = 0.05, \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ ). **D.** Red dots represent experimental observations of correlations between set size and the following parameters: correct rate, response time,  $\log_{10} \|g_F g_E\|$ ,  $\log_{10} \|g_F g_M\|$ ,  $\log_{10} \|g_F g_R\|$ ,  $\log_{10} \|g_E g_M\|$ ,  $\log_{10} \|g_E g_R\|$ , and  $\log_{10} \|g_M g_R\|$ . The gray kernel density plot illustrates plots illustrate the corresponding set-size-shuffled surrogate ( $n = 1,000$ ) (\*\* $p_s < 0.001$ ).



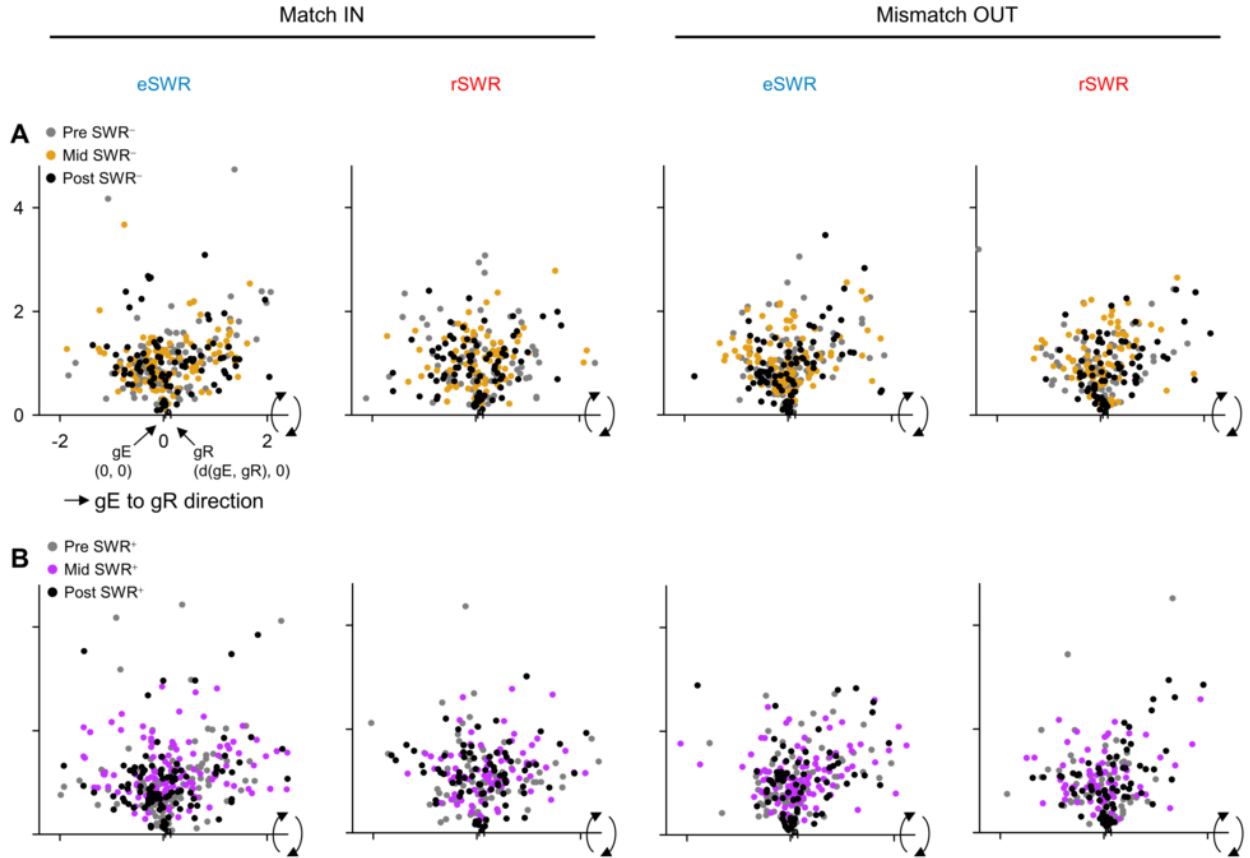
**Figure 4 – Detection of SWRs in Presumptive CA1 Regions**

**A.** Two-dimensional UMAP (~~Uniform-Manifold-Approximation-and-Projection~~) [41] projection of multiunit spikes during SWR<sup>+</sup> candidates (*purple*) and SWR<sup>-</sup> candidates (*yellow*). **B.** Cumulative density plot ~~shows~~ *showing* silhouette scores, indicative of UMAP clustering quality ~~for hippocampal regions~~ (see Table 2 ~~for reference~~). Note that hippocampal regions with silhouette scores greater than 0.60 (equivalent to the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile) were ~~identified~~ *defined* as ~~possible~~ *putative* CA1 regions. SWR<sup>+</sup> and SWR<sup>-</sup> candidates recorded from these ~~speculative~~ *putative* CA1 regions were respectively classified as SWR<sup>+</sup> and SWR<sup>-</sup> ( $ns = 1,170$ ). **C.** The identical distributions of durations are presented for SWR<sup>+</sup> (*purple*) and SWR<sup>-</sup> (*yellow*), owing to their definitions (93.0 [65.4] ms, median [IQR]). **D.** SWR incidence for both SWR<sup>+</sup> (*purple*) and SWR<sup>-</sup> (*yellow*) obtained relative to the probe's timing is illustrated as a mean  $\pm$  95% confidence interval. However, as the intervals may not be visible due to their narrow ~~ranges~~ *ranges*, note that a significant increase in SWR incidence was detected during the initial 400 ms of the retrieval phase (0.421 [Hz],  $*p < 0.05$ , bootstrap test). **E.** The distributions of ripple band peak amplitudes for SWR<sup>-</sup> (*yellow*; 2.37 [0.33] SD of baseline, median [IQR]) and SWR<sup>+</sup> (*purple*; 3.05 [0.85] SD of baseline, median [IQR]) are delineated ( $***p < 0.001$ , the Brunner–Munzel test).



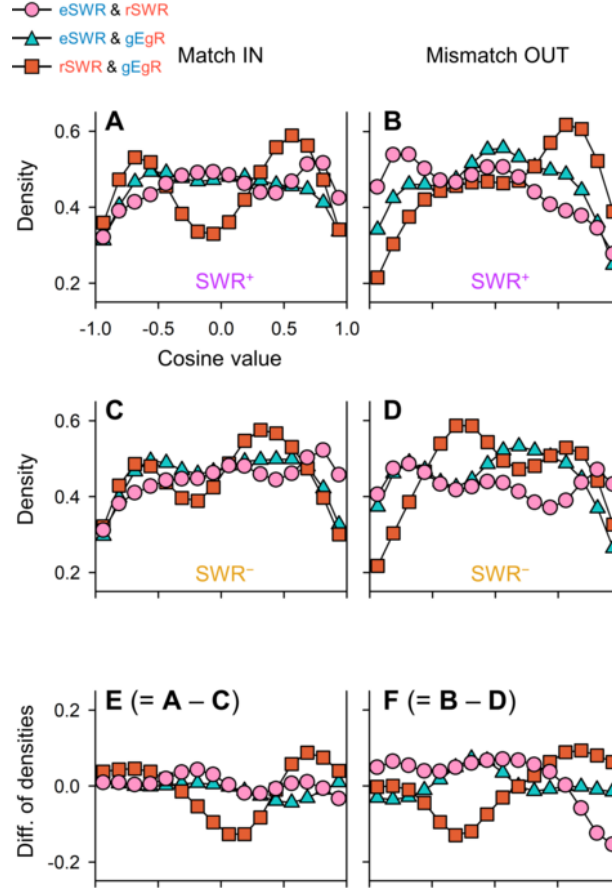
**Figure 5 – Transient Alterations in Neural Trajectory During SWR Events**

**A.** Displayed is the distance from origin (*O*) of the peri-sharp-wave-ripple trajectory (mean  $\pm$  95% confidence interval). The intervals may not be apparent due to their slender-narrow ranges. **B.** Shown is the distance from the origin (*O*) during pre-, mid-, and post-SWR periods (\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ ; assessed using the Brunner–Munzel test). Abbreviations: SWR, sharp-wave ripple events; eSWR, SWR during the encoding phase; rSWR, SWR while in the retrieval phase; SWR<sup>+</sup>, positive SWR event; SWR<sup>-</sup>, control events for SWR<sup>+</sup>; pre-, mid-, or post-SWR denote the time intervals from –800 to –250 ms, from –250 to +250 ms, or from +250 to +800 ms, all relative to the center of the SWR.



**Figure 6 – Visualization of Neural Trajectories during SWR in Two-Dimensional Spaces**

The panels display hippocampal neural trajectories during SWR as projected onto two-dimensional spaces. **A.** Indicates hippocampal neural trajectories as point clouds during pre-SWR<sup>-</sup> (gray), mid-SWR<sup>-</sup> (yellow), and post-SWR<sup>-</sup> (black). **B.** Represents the equivalents for SWR<sup>+</sup> as opposed to SWR<sup>-</sup>. The  $\|g_E g_R\|$  varied among sessions. The projection was applied in the following manner: First, a linear transformation positioned  $g_E$  at the origin  $O(0,0)$ , and  $g_R$  at  $(\|g_E g_R\|, 0)$ . The point cloud was then rotated around the  $g_E g_R$  axis (equivalent to the x axis) for fitting into two-dimensional spaces. Therefore, within these two-dimensional spaces, both the distances from  $O$  and the angles preserved the original makeup of for the  $g_E g_R$  axis from are preserved the original three-dimensional three dimensional spaces in GPFA. Abbreviations: SWR signifies sharp-wave ripple events; eSWR denotes SWR during the encoding phase; rSWR indicates SWR during the retrieval phase; SWR<sup>+</sup>, marks an SWR event; SWR<sup>-</sup> refers to control events for SWR<sup>+</sup>; pre-SWR, mid-SWR, or post-SWR, reference the time intervals from  $-800$  to  $-250$  ms, from  $-250$  to  $+250$  ms, or from  $+250$  to  $+800$  ms from the center of SWR.



**Figure 7 – Directions of Neural Trajectories during SWRs Based on Encoding and Retrieval States**

**A–B** Kernel density estimation (KDE)-distributions of  $\overrightarrow{\text{eSWR}^+} \cdot \overrightarrow{\text{rSWR}^+}$  (pink circles),  $\overrightarrow{\text{eSWR}^+} \cdot \overrightarrow{\text{gEgR}}$  (blue triangles), and  $\overrightarrow{\text{rSWR}^+} \cdot \overrightarrow{\text{gEgR}}$  (red rectangles) in Match IN (A) and Mismatch OUT tasks (B). **C–D** Present the corresponding distributions of  $\text{SWR}^-$  instead of those of  $\text{SWR}^+$  in A and B. **E–F** Depict the differences in the distributions of  $\text{SWR}^+$  and  $\text{SWR}^-$ , illuminating the SWR components ( $E = C - A$  &  $F = D - B$ ). Note the biphasic distributions of  $\overrightarrow{\text{rSWR}^+} \cdot \overrightarrow{\text{gEgR}}$ , suggesting fluctuations between the encoding and retrieval states during the Sternberg task. Moreover, inverse directionality between  $\overrightarrow{\text{eSWR}^+}$  and  $\overrightarrow{\text{rSWR}^+}$  was observed (pink circles) in the Mismatch OUT task, but not in the Match IN task (E–F) but in Mismatch OUT task F). Finally, shifts from the retrieval to encoding states were evident are acknowledged in the SWR components in both the Match IN and Mismatch OUT tasks (red rectangles in E and F–F).