1	Prolonged reaction times help to eliminate residual errors in
2	visuomotor adaptation
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# 23 Abstract

One persistent curiosity in visuomotor adaptation tasks is that participants often do not 24 reach maximal performance. This incomplete asymptote has been explained as a consequence 25 of obligatory computations within the implicit adaptation system, such as an equilibrium 26 between learning and forgetting. A body of recent work has shown that in standard adaptation 27 tasks, cognitive strategies operate alongside implicit learning. We reasoned that incomplete 28 learning in adaptation tasks may primarily reflect a speed-accuracy trade-off on time-29 consuming motor planning. Across three experiments, we find evidence supporting this 30 hypothesis, showing that hastened motor planning may primarily lead to under-compensation. 31 When an obligatory waiting period was administered before movement start, participants were 32 able to fully counteract imposed perturbations (experiment 1). Inserting the same delay 33 between trials - rather than during movement planning - did not induce full compensation, 34

suggesting that the motor planning interval predicts the learning asymptote (experiment 2). In the last experiment, we asked participants to continuously report their movement intent. We show that emphasizing explicit re-aiming strategies (and concomitantly increasing planning time) also lead to complete asymptotic learning. Findings from all experiments support the hypothesis that incomplete adaptation is, in part, the result of an intrinsic speed-accuracy tradeoff, perhaps related to cognitive strategies that require parametric attentional reorienting from the visual target to the goal.

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Keywords: sensorimotor adaptation; reaction time; motor planning; asymptote; explicit
strategies;

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## 46 Introduction

One of the persistent curiosities in studying the human mind is the idea of canonical 47 computations, i.e. that the brain applies similar computations to perform a wide range of 48 different tasks (e.g. Miller, 2016; Pack & Bensmaia, 2015). While most examples for such 49 canonical computations, e.g. linear receptive fields (Movshon et al., 1978, DiCarlo & Johnson, 50 2000), divisive gain control and normalization (e.g. Carandini & Heeger, 2011) or soft-51 thresholding of noisy signals (e.g. Ringach & Malone, 2007) have been identified in the fields 52 of neuroscience and artificial intelligence, they have largely eluded scientists in psychology. 53 However, there have been a few but famous instances when psychologists have discovered 54 law-like descriptions of human behavior suggesting the application of similar behavioral 55 algorithms across a wide range of tasks. 56

One example of such a canonical computation in behavior is the speed-accuracy 57 58 tradeoff, that is the inverse relation between the accuracy of an action and the time taken to produce it (for a recent review, see Heitz, 2014). The speed-accuracy tradeoff has been shown 59 60 to shape behavior (a) across domains from motor control (Fitts, 1954; Plamondon & Alimi, 1997) and perception (Grosjean et al., 2007; Ratcliff, 2002) to memory (Hacker, 1980) and 61 mental imagery (Cerritelli et al., 2000; Decety & Jeannerod, 1996), and (b) across species from 62 insects (e.g. Chittka et al., 2003; Ings & Chittka, 2008) and rodents (e.g. Rinberg et al., 2006) 63 to monkeys (Heitz & Schall, 2012) and humans (Wickelgren, 1977). 64

Another example is the law of practice, according to which performance improvements are generally larger early during practice before they become systematically smaller as practice progresses giving rise to a negatively accelerated relationship between performance and the number of practice trials (Snoddy, 1926, Crossman, 1959, Chen et al., 2005). Regardless of its actual parameters, all versions of the law of practice postulate that performance improvements asymptote, at some point, to a specific performance plateau. For complex skills such as swimming or track and field, it is almost impossible to determine *a priori* the absolute maximum level of performance (but see Berthelot et al., 2015). This is not the case in many experimental paradigms, for instance, in novel visuomotor transformation tasks (e.g., force field adaptation or rotations of visual feedback), where individuals have to adapt an existing movement. These simple manipulations allow for the evaluation of performance improvements relative to an absolute maximum, i.e. an ideal, complete compensation of the transformation (Cunningham, , Lackner & Dizio, 1994, Shadmehr et al., ).

Interestingly, one common observation in this context is that of an incomplete learning asymptote. That is, if individuals are required to make reaching movements and counteract a 30° visuomotor rotation, their performance curve tends to asymptote below full compensation, for instance around ~25° (Holland et al., 2018, Huberdeau et al., 2015, Haith et al., 2015, Kooij et al., 2016, van der Kooij et al., 2015). This under-compensation leaves a residual performance error significantly different from zero (Hinder et al., 2010, Shmuelof et al., 2012, Spang et al., 2017, Kooij et al., 2016, van der Kooij et al., 2015, Vaswani et al., 2015).

One accepted approach to explain this phenomenon is to leverage state-space models 85 of adaptation, which are incremental Markovian learning algorithms that balance both learning 86 and forgetting during adaptation (Cheng & Sabes, 2006, Smith et al., 2006, Thoroughman & 87 Shadmehr, 2000). When fit to human learning data, most values of learning and forgetting 88 parameters can produce a steady-state equilibrium at an arbitrary asymptote. Consequently, 89 these models provide a natural explanation of the commonly observed undershoot, via an 90 assumption that some amount of forgetting (i.e., reversion to baseline) is inevitable on each 91 trial of the task. This interpretation suggests that incomplete compensation during motor 92 learning is simply a built-in feature of the underlying learning mechanism. 93

However, Vaswani and colleagues (2015) demonstrated that humans, in principle,
possess the capacity to overcome this incomplete asymptote. In their study, visual feedback of

their movement was "clamped" after learning; that is the cursor controlled by the participant 96 moved in a fixed trajectory toward the target or to a nearby location with participants only 97 controlling the amplitude. When visual feedback was clamped to a slight deviation from the 98 target with no variability, individuals appeared to adopt a new learning strategy that allowed 99 them to fully compensate a novel visuomotor transformation. To explain this, Vaswani and 100 colleagues (2015) postulated an exploratory learning mechanism that is suppressed by error-101 based learning. The putative suppressed process only contributes to performance when error-102 based learning is disengaged, which in their study was caused by a persistent residual error in 103 combination with a contextual change (i.e., the introduction of a lack of natural movement 104 variability) (Shmuelof et al., 2012, Vaswani et al., 2015, Vaswani & Shadmehr, 2013, Wong 105 et al., 2015). 106

In the present study, we propose and evaluate one alternative, perhaps more parsimonious account of how humans might overcome incomplete asymptotic learning: namely, the level of performance achieved at the later stages of visuomotor adaptation may primarily reflect an intrinsic speed-accuracy tradeoff driven by time-consuming movement planning.

In line with this, research in perceptual decision-making has established that choice 112 reaction time reflects a trade-off between waiting for more information and acting early in order 113 to speed up the accumulation of (uncertain) rewards on future trials (Churchland et al., 2008, 114 Cisek et al., 2009, Thura et al., ; Thura & Cisek, 2017). While visuomotor adaptation tasks 115 traditionally are not studied in the framework of decision-making, recent research has 116 highlighted an important role for volitional decision-making strategies in adaptation tasks (i.e., 117 the explicit re-aiming of movements to counteract perturbations; Bond & Taylor, 2015, Heuer 118 & Hegele, 2015, McDougle et al., 2015, Schween & Hegele, 2017, Taylor et al., 2014). Further 119 evidence suggests that in the context of adaptation to a novel visuomotor rotation such 120

strategies may take the form of mentally rotating the aiming direction of the reaching movement (McDougle & Taylor, 2019), which has been known to require long preparation times (Fernandez-Ruiz et al., 2011, Haith et al., 2015, McDougle & Taylor, 2019). Thus, an incomplete learning asymptote could simply arise from hurried movement initiation leading to prematurely terminating mental rotation of an abstract aiming trajectory during movement planning.

We tested our hypothesis over three behavioral experiments where we artificially 127 extended planning time. We predicted that this simple manipulation would alleviate incomplete 128 asymptotic learning. In the first experiment (experiment 1), we introduced a mandatory waiting 129 period between target presentation and movement onset. In experiment 2, we sought to exclude 130 effects of the total experiment duration by emphasizing the role of within-trial movement 131 planning time versus between-trial consolidation. Finally, in experiment 3, we used an aiming 132 report method (Taylor et al., 2014) to promote the application of explicit motor learning 133 134 strategies before movement execution and elucidate their influence on the learning asymptote.

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### 136 Methods

#### 137 Participants

Ninety neurologically healthy and right-handed students from the Justus Liebig University Giessen were recruited as participants (Experiment 1: N = 36, Experiment 2: N = 36, Experiment 3: N = 18) and received monetary compensation or course credit for their participation. Written, informed consent was obtained from all participants before testing. The experimental protocol was approved by the local ethics committee of the Department of Psychology and Sport Science. All participants were self-declared right-handers. Data from one participant (experiment 2) were excluded due to a large number of irregular trials (i.e. 145 premature movement initiation, and moving too fast or too slow).

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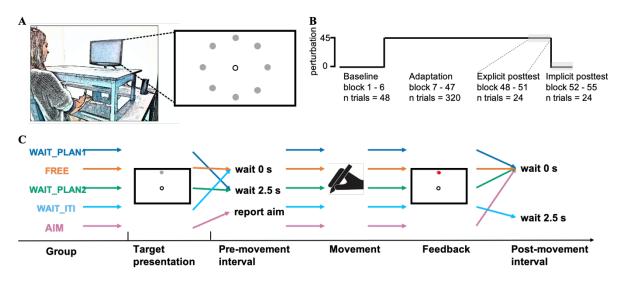
#### 147 Apparatus

Participants sat on a height-adjustable chair facing a 22" widescreen LCD monitor 148 (Samsung 2233RZ; display size: 47,3 cm x 29,6 cm; resolution: 1680 x 1050 pixels; frame rate 149 120 Hz), which was placed on eye level 100 cm in front of them. Their right hand held a 150 digitizing stylus, which they could move across a graphics tablet (Wacom Intuos 4XL). Their 151 152 hand position recorded from the tip of the stylus was sampled at 130 Hz. Stimulus presentation and movement recording were controlled by a custom build MATLAB script (R2017b), 153 displayed above the table platform, thus preventing direct vision of the hand (left panel Figure 154 1A). 155

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157 Task

Participants performed center-out reaching movements from a common start location 158 to targets in different directions. They were instructed to move the cursor as quickly as possible 159 from the start location in the direction of the displayed target and "shoot through it". On the 160 monitor, the start location was in the center of the screen, marked by the outline of a circle of 161 7 mm in diameter. On the table surface, the start location was 20 - 25 cm in front of the 162 participant on the body midline. The target location, marked by a filled green circle of 4 mm 163 in diameter, varied from trial to trial. Targets were placed on an invisible circle with a radius 164 of 100 mm around the start location; target locations were 0, 45, 90, 135, 180, 225, 270, and 165  $315^{\circ}$  (0° is from the start location to the right, 90° is forward, 270° is backward; right panel 166 Figure 1A). On baseline and adaptation trials, visual feedback was given by a filled white circle 167 (radius 2.5 mm). 168



*Figure 1* schematic display of the experimental setup (A), overall protocol (B) and sequence of one trial (C). Each participant performed center-out reaching movements with a stylus on the tablet. Visual stimuli and the cursor were presented on a monitor. The visual cursor was displaced according to the protocol (B). During baseline, cursor and stylus position were veridical, during adaptation, the cursor was rotated 45° clockwise relative to the stylus position. Within-trial timing differed between groups (C). Group dependent differences within one trial occurred either during the pre- or post-movement interval. Whereas the FREE and WAIT\_ITI groups had no specific task during the pre-movement interval, WAIT\_PLAN1 and WAIT\_PLAN2 groups were required to wait 2.5 s and the AIM group reported their movement aim. During post-movement interval, only the participants in the WAIT\_ITI group were required to wait 2.5 s, whereas all other group continued with the next trial immediately. Panel A adapted from (Schween, Taylor, & Hegele, 2018) under CC-BY-4.0 license.

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#### 170 Design and Procedure

The experiment consisted of three phases: baseline training, training with a 45° clockwise (CW) visuomotor rotation, and posttests (Figure 1B). Baseline training had veridical hand-cursor mapping and was organized into three blocks of eight trials each. In experiment 3, baseline training included three additional blocks in which participants had to report their aiming direction prior to movement onset. Each block consisted of a random permutation of the eight target directions without any direction being repeated in successive trials. Training of the visuomotor rotation of 45° CW consisted of 40 blocks of eight trials each.

The posttest phase consisted of two types of trials: an explicit test (see below) comprising three blocks of eight trials each with each target location occurring once per block, and three blocks of eight aftereffect test trials without visual feedback, with the instruction that the cursor rotation would be absent. In the explicit test trials (Hegele & Heuer, 2010,Heuer & Hegele, 2008), start and target locations were presented together with a white line, centered in the start location with its length corresponding to target distance. Initially, the line was presented at an angle of 180° CCW of the respective target's direction. Participants instructed the experimenter to adjust the orientation of the line to match the direction of the movement they judged to be correct for the particular target presented.

Each single-movement trial started with the presentation of a white circle in the center 187 of the screen, serving as the starting position for the subsequent reaching movement. In order 188 to help guide participants' movements back to the start, a white concentric circle appeared after 189 feedback presentation, scaling its radius based on the cursor's distance from the starting circle. 190 191 The cursor was displayed when it was within 3 mm of the start location. Once the start position was held for 300 ms, a tone (440Hz, 0.05 ms duration) was presented, followed by a green 192 target (radius 4 mm) appearing in one of the eight target positions and the start circle 193 disappeared. Depending on the assigned group, participants were either instructed to move 194 freely after the target appeared (experiment 1: FREE; experiment 2: WAIT ITI), to wait 2.5 s 195 for a second tone serving as an imperative ("go" signal) for the movement (experiment 1: 196 WAIT PLAN1; experiment 2: WAIT PLAN2), or to report their movement direction and 197 subsequently initiate the reach (experiment 3: AIM). 198

The white cursor was visible until it exceeded a movement amplitude of 3 mm, after 199 which it disappeared. When the participant's hand crossed an invisible circle that contained the 200 target, the cursor froze and turned red, providing terminal endpoint feedback for 1.25 s. 201 Movements that fell outside the range of instructed movement time criteria (MT < 100 ms or 202 > 300 ms) were followed by an error message on the screen and the trial was aborted. Those 203 trials were neither repeated nor used in subsequent analyses. If participants moved too soon in 204 one of the waiting groups (before the target appearance or the go cue, see below), they were 205 reminded to wait, and the trial was repeated. 206

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208 Groups

The three experiments included five different groups: Two groups of participants took 209 part in experiment 1. One group (N = 19) was instructed to move straight to the target after it 210 appeared with no additional time constraints before moving (FREE). The other group 211 (WAIT PLAN1, N = 17) was instructed to wait until they heard a high-pitched tone (1000 Hz, 212 0.05 ms duration) that served as a go-signal. Inspired by previous work indicating that 213 participants are able to mentally rotate their aim 90° off-target within ~1 s (McDougle 214 215 & Taylor, 2019), we chose a 2.5 s wait interval to provide ample planning time for the 45° rotation task at hand. The go-signal was presented after this wait interval. 216

Experiment 2 consisted of two groups: the WAIT PLAN2 group (N = 22) was a 217 replication of the WAIT PLAN1 group in experiment 1. Participants in the WAIT ITI group 218 (N = 20) could initiate movements as soon as the target had appeared on the screen replicating 219 the planning interval of the FREE group from experiment 1. Critcally, the WAIT ITI 220 experienced an additional 2.5 s waiting period after the presentation of the endpoint feedback. 221 Thus, the two groups, WAIT PLAN2 and WAIT ITI, had matched trial lengths but disparate 222 planning intervals. During the 2.5 s inter-trial delay in the WAIT ITI group, only the target 223 was visible on the screen and participants were told to maintain their final hand position. 224

Experiment 3 included a single group of participants who were asked to report their 225 aiming direction prior to movement initiation (AIM group, N = 18); (Bond & Taylor, 2015, 226 McDougle et al., 2015, Taylor et al., 2014). The participants in this group saw a numbered ring 227 of visual landmarks. The numbers were arranged at 5.63-degree intervals, with the current 228 target positioned at the "0" position. Clockwise, the numbers became larger, and 229 counterclockwise the numbers became smaller (up to 32, -32, respectively), forming a circle 230 20 cm in diameter. Participants were instructed to verbally report the number they were aiming 231 their reach at before moving (see (Taylor et al., 2014) for further information on this task). 232

233 Verbal reports were manually registered by the experimenter on each reporting trial.

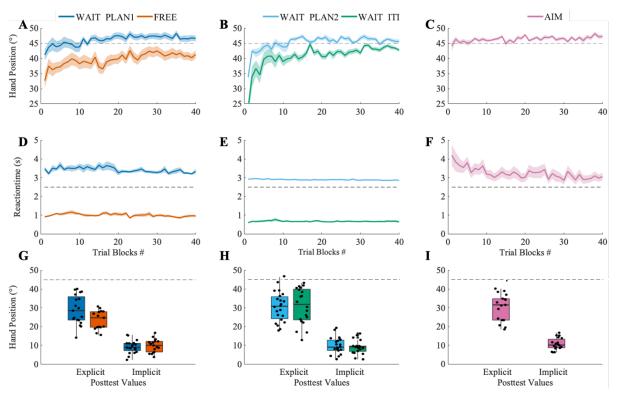
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### 235 Data Analysis

Position of the stylus on the tablet surface was sampled at 130 Hz and each trial was 236 separately low-pass filtered (fourth-order Butterworth, 10 Hz) using Matlab's *filtfilt* command, 237 and then numerically differentiated. Tangential velocity was calculated as the Euclidean of x-238 and y-velocity vectors. Behavior was analyzed in terms of two parameters: reaction time and 239 endpoint error. Reaction time (RT) was calculated as the interval between target presentation 240 and movement onset, which was defined when tangential velocity exceeded 30 mm/s for at 241 least 5 frames (38.5 ms). Endpoint error was calculated as the angular difference between the 242 vector connecting the start circle and the target, and the vector connecting the start circle and 243 the terminal hand position. Endpoint errors were calculated for both training trials and the 244 245 aftereffect trials. The outcome variable of the explicit perceptual judgement test was calculated as the angular difference between the participant-specified line orientation on the screen and 246 247 the vector connecting the start and target positions.

For each block of training trials and for the posttest, medians were computed for each 248 participant following screening for outliers. Movements whose endpoint error fell outside three 249 standard deviations of the participants' individual mean endpoint error in that phase were 250 considered outliers and removed (1.4% of all trials). To compare different levels of asymptote, 251 the last five blocks of the training phase were median averaged and compared between groups 252 using a two-sample Wilcoxon's rank-sum test. To interpret the effect size, Pearson's rho and 253 its 95-percent confidence interval was calculated. Statistical analyses were done in Matlab 254 (R2017b) and R (version 3.5.1, http://www.R-project.org/). All results are based on median 255 parametric tests 256

### 257 **Results**



*Figure 2* Mean hand direction (panels A-C) and mean reaction times (panels D-F) during practice plotted separately by experiments and groups. Panel G-I show the median hand direction during explicit and implicit posttests, separately and the individual data from single participants. The horizontal dashed lines in panels A-C and H-I indicate ideal compensation for the 45° cursor rotation. In panels D-F, they indicate the forced waiting times of 2.5 seconds in the WAIT\_PLAN groups. Shaded error bands represent standard deviation of the mean.

#### 258 Experiment 1

Experiment 1 tested the speed-accuracy hypothesis by artificially prolonging 259 movement planning time. To do so, we compared two groups. The FREE group could freely 260 initiate their movement, representing a "standard" adaptation experiment. The WAIT PLAN1 261 group was required to withhold movement initiation until hearing a "go"-signal 2.5 s after 262 target onset. As shown in Figure 2A, the FREE group displayed the typical incomplete 263 the WAIT PLAN1 asymptote, whereas group achieved а greater asymptote 264  $(\text{mean}_{WAIT PLAN1} = 46.66, \text{ sd}_{WAIT Plan1} = 5.85, \text{mean}_{FREE} = 41.15, \text{ sd}_{FREE} = 8.28; \text{ V} = 244, \text{ p} = 1000 \text{ s}_{1000} \text{$ 265 0.001). Hand directions late during practice were significantly less than 45° in the FREE group 266 (V = 32.5, p = 0.018, r = -0.61, 95% CI = [-0.84, -0.21]), while the WAIT PLAN1 group did 267 not differ significantly from  $45^{\circ}$  (V = 108, p = 0.62, r = 0.12, 95% CI = [-0.33, 0.53]). 268

In the explicit judgment test (Figure 2G), the FREE group estimated the rotation to be significantly smaller relative to the WAIT\_PLAN1 group (mean<sub>FREE</sub> = 24.78°, sd<sub>FREE</sub> = 5.45°, mean<sub>WAIT\_PLAN1</sub> = 30.65°, sd<sub>WAIT\_PLAN1</sub> = 8.33°; V = 81.5, p = 0.036, r = -0.36, 95% CI = [-0.62, -0.01]). Implicit aftereffects (Figure 2G) did not differ significantly between the groups (mean<sub>FREE</sub> = 9.99°, sd<sub>FREE</sub> = 3.81°, mean<sub>WAIT\_PLAN1</sub> = 9.35°, sd<sub>WAIT\_PLAN1</sub> = 3.67°; V = 179, p = 0.59, r = 0.09, 95% CI = [-0.24, 0.39]).

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#### 276 Experiment 2

Experiment 1 showed that forcing participants to prolong their planning time before 277 movement onset on each trial led to an increase in asymptotic learning. While this observation 278 is consistent with our speed-accuracy trade-off hypothesis, the WAIT PLAN1 group also 279 exhibited significantly larger amounts of explicit knowledge of the rotation, raising the 280 possibility that this group shows complete asymptote simply because of larger amounts of 281 accumulated explicit knowledge during training. To test this, in experiment 2 we manipulated 282 when the additional waiting time occurred within a trial. If it was a matter of simply building 283 a more elaborate representation of the perturbation by raising awareness and thus accumulating 284 more explicit knowledge of the rotation, then additional processing time between movements 285 should suffice to facilitate complete asymptotic learning. If, on the other hand, the pre-286 movement planning period was crucial, one would expect that adding time to the interval 287 between the appearance of the target and the signal to initiate the movement would lead to 288 better performance than adding time to the post-feedback interval, i.e. the time interval between 289 the disappearance of terminal endpoint feedback and the onset of the next target. Experiment 290 2 tested this by contrasting asymptotic learning in a second group that had to wait for 2.5 s 291 during movement planning (WAIT PLAN2; replication of WAIT PLAN1) with a group that 292 had to wait for 2.5 s after feedback presentation before the next trial started (WAIT ITI). In 293

line with our speed-accuracy-hypothesis, inserting waiting time into the planning phase led to an asymptote not significantly different from  $45^{\circ}$  (V = 235, p = 0.28, r = 0.25, 95% CI = [-0.18, 0.66]) whereas inserting the waiting time into the intertrial interval lead to an asymptote significantly less than  $45^{\circ}$  (V = 63, p = 0.019, r = -0.44, 95% CI = [-0.75, -0.05]). Those two asymptotes were significantly different from each other (mean<sub>WAIT\_PLAN2</sub> = 46.33, sd<sub>WAIT\_PLAN2</sub> = 3.99; mean<sub>WAIT\_ITI</sub> = 43.96, sd<sub>WAIT\_ITI</sub> = 3.01; W = 311, p = 0.011, r = -0.34, 95% CI = [-0.59, -0.05]) (Figure 2B).

Importantly, for explicit knowledge (Figure 2H), the temporal locus of the additional 301 waiting time did not have a significant effect: Both groups appeared to accumulate equivalent 302 amounts explicit knowledge (meanwAIT ITI = 30.53°, sdwait iti = of 8.57°, 303 mean<sub>WAIT PLAN2</sub> =  $30.88^{\circ}$ , sd<sub>WAIT PLAN2</sub> =  $10.21^{\circ}$ ; W = 209, p = 0.79, r = -0.04, 95% CI = [-304 0.36, 0.25]), but showed greater explicit estimations than the FREE group in experiment 1, 305 whose trial structure did not contain any additional waiting interval (FREE ~ WAIT PLAN2: 306 W = 85, p = 0.031, r = -0.37, 95% CI = [-0.63, -0.06]; FREE ~ WAIT ITI: W = 93, p = 0.027, 307 r = -0.37, 95% CI = [-0.63, -0.08]). As for implicit aftereffects, both groups in experiment 2 308 achieved similar results (mean<sub>WAIT ITI</sub> = 8.45°, sd<sub>WAIT ITI</sub> = 4.77°, mean<sub>WAIT PLAN2</sub> = 7.63°, 309 sd<sub>WAIT PLAN2</sub> = 3.87°; W = 214, p = 0.89, r = -0.02, 95% CI = [-0.34, 0.36]). 310

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### 312 Experiment 3

In the last experiment, we sought to account for the possibility that it is not time per se, but the increased participation of explicit processes that raises the level of asymptote. We thus instructed participants to verbally report their movement aim prior to movement execution trial-by-trial (Taylor et al., 2014), potentially priming the explicit component of adaptation. We reasoned that this procedure serves as an opportunity to replicate our findings in a procedure that requires active explicit engagement during the planning interval. Compensation for the rotation reached asymptote around  $46.63^{\circ}$  (sd =  $4.12^{\circ}$ ), which was significantly larger than  $45^{\circ}$ (V = 125, p = 0.045, r = 0.41, 95% CI = [-0.08, 0.75]), suggesting that adaptation at asymptote was complete and, in fact, overcompensated for the rotation (Figure 2C).

Explicit judgements of required compensation (mean = 28.32, sd = 10.95) (Figure 2I) 322 were significantly less than  $45^{\circ}$  (V = 0, p < 0.0002, r = -0.88, 95% CI = [-0.88, -0.87]) but 323 significantly greater than 0° (V = 170, p < 0.0002, r = 0.87, 95% CI = [0.82, 0.88]). Implicit 324 aftereffects (mean = 9.38, sd = 3.4) were also significantly different from both  $0^{\circ}$  and  $45^{\circ}$ 325 (V = 171, p < 0.0001, V = 0, p < 0.0001, r = -0.87, 95% CI = [-0.88, -0.88], r = 0.87,326 327 95% CI = [0.87, 0.87], respectively). If we assume that the explicit and implicit components are the two main elements in a fully additive model that generates adaptive behavior, the 328 implicit component can be calculated by subtracting the hand position from the aim report 329 (Figure 2L). Comparing those values to the posttest values, we do not find a significant 330 difference, neither in explicit nor in the implicit component (W = 123, p = 0.22; W = 129, 331 p = 0.31, respectively). 332

To test whether the reporting task influenced the outcome of the explicit judgement 333 tests, we compared the posttest values between the AIM group and those of the other groups 334 in experiments 1 and 2. There was a significant difference in the explicit judgements between 335 the AIM group and the FREE group from experiment 1 (W = 197.5, p = 0.025, r = 0.39, 336 95% CI = [0.05, 0.6]) but none between the WAIT PLAN and AIM (W = 160.5, p = 0.76, r = -337 0.05, 95% CI = [-0.36, 0.27]). Across the AIM group and WAIT PLAN2 and WAIT ITI 338 groups in experiment 2, there were no differences in the explicit judgement tests (W = 160, 339 p = 0.57, r = -0.09, 95% CI = [-0.39, 0.22]; W = 190.5, p = 0.85, r = -0.03, 95% CI = [-0.34, 340 0.28]). Similar results were observed for the implicit aftereffects: Neither the FREE group, the 341 WAIT PLAN1 group from experiment 1, nor the WAIT PLAN2 and WAIT ITI groups had 342 significantly different aftereffects relative to the AIM group (W = 140.5, p = 0.69, r = -0.07, 343

95% CI = [-0.38, 0.28]; W = 167.5, p = 0.93, r = -0.01, 95% CI = [-0.35, 0.29]; W = 227.5, p = 0.08, r = 0.19, 95% CI = [-0.13, 0.45]; W = 265.5, p = 0.05, r = 0.25, 95% CI = [-0.07, 0.54], respectively). These results suggest that experimentally querying the explicit process of adaptation does not qualitatively alter the explicit/implicit learning balance but does act to improve the adaptation asymptote by slowing down planning.

349

## 350 **Discussion**

This study was designed to investigate whether previously reported findings of 351 incomplete asymptotic visuomotor learning may be reframed, at least in part, as an instantiation 352 of a ubiquitous canonical computation in human information processing: the tradeoff between 353 the speed and accuracy of actions. In line with this hypothesis, artificially prolonging the 354 waiting period prior to the onset of a goal-directed movement elevated asymptotic learning and 355 356 appeared to eliminate residual errors. This benefit was specific to prolonging motor planning, the time interval between the appearance of the visual target and the go-signal. Prolonging the 357 358 interval between visual feedback and the start of the next trial (the intertrial interval) did not provide the same benefit to learning. Our results provide support for a parsimonious 359 explanation that time-consuming planning processes are potentially the main driver of 360 incomplete asymptotic learning. 361

Why did hasty planning result in consistent undershooting rather than both undershooting and overshooting (i.e., greater movement variability)? We propose that parametric mental computations in visuomotor rotation tasks could explain the undershooting phenomenon: In visuomotor rotation tasks, participants' reaction times increase linearly with the magnitude of the imposed rotation (Georgopoulos & Massey, 1987, McDougle & Taylor, 2019), reflecting a putative mental rotation process (Shepard & Metzler, 1971). Thus, in our framework, undershooting is the consequence of participants not taking the time needed to fully complete a mental rotation of their planned reach trajectory. This view is further supported by the results of our third experiment, in which emphasizing the application of explicit aiming strategies prior to movement initiation led to qualitatively similar asymptotic learning as in the groups with prolonged planning intervals. Note that delaying movement initiation did not only cause full compensation, but induced overcompensation suggesting that implicit processes superimposed onto an accurate explicit rotation strategy may have caused reach angles to drift, gradually adapting the hand further in the direction of compensation (cf. Mazzoni, 2006).

The idea of a speed accuracy tradeoff prematurely interrupting putative mental rotation 376 processes during motor planning also provides an explanation for previously observed age-377 related differences in visuomotor learning. Hegele & Heuer (2013) used explicit instructions 378 and cognitive pretraining prior to learning a novel visuomotor rotation to boost explicit 379 knowledge of the transformation. Older adults with full explicit knowledge of the 380 transformation turned out to be less efficient in applying it for strategic corrections of their 381 382 aiming movements. This age-related difference with respect to the behavioral exploitation of explicit knowledge became manifest only when participants had almost perfect explicit 383 knowledge, but not when they had only poor explicit knowledge and thus a small range of 384 associated strategic adjustments at different levels of exploitation. Given the present results, 385 one could speculate that the reduced exploitation of explicit knowledge for strategic corrections 386 in older participants is due to a combination of age-related slowing in mental rotation and the 387 premature termination of (slowed) mentally rotating their aiming direction during motor 388 planning. 389

Traditionally, the incomplete asymptote phenomenon was explained by state-space models of adaptation (Cheng & Sabes, 2006, Smith et al., 2006, Thoroughman & Shadmehr, 2000), according to which the adapted state reaches an equilibrium between learning from error and decaying towards baseline in each trial. As subsequent studies indicated that this model alone is insufficient for explaining incomplete asymptotic behavior, alternatives were proposed: For example, Vaswani and colleagues (Vaswani et al., 2015) suggested that a process that learns from spatial error feedback suppresses other mechanisms that could drive full compensation (Shmuelof et al., 2012). In our study, participants in all groups received similar spatial error feedback. Thus, a potential suppression should have affected all groups equally, suggesting that spatial error feedback suppressing other learning mechanisms would not be sufficient to explain the modulations in asymptote we observed.

A new approach to the state-space model is that residual errors in adaptation paradigms 401 are caused by implicit processes that tune the sensitivity to errors until it reaches the 402 equilibrium with constant forgetting (Albert et al., 2019). The authors in this recent study 403 manipulated the variability of the perturbation and found that residual errors increase with the 404 perturbations' variance. We note that, whereas our hypothesis could potentially be adapted to 405 account for these variations in asymptote (e.g. experiencing perturbation variability could 406 affect the benefit that learners expect from planning, and thus the time they spend on it), we 407 did not consider this possibility *a priori* in hypothesis generation. However, we note that in one 408 experiment, this study also showed a speed-accuracy tradeoff by obtaining larger residual 409 errors when the reaction time is artificially shortened compared to free reaction times, 410 regardless of the variance of perturbation. Thus, we argue that additional planning time is an 411 essential element in eliminating residual errors to achieve full compensation, though it need 412 not be the only thing determining the exact asymptotic value. 413

Moreover, we also note that consistent undershooting relative to the perturbation, as observed here and in previous studies, is critically not seen in experimental paradigms designed to isolate the implicit component of visuomotor adaptation (Morehead et al., 2017)– indeed, even when rotational perturbation are as small as ~1.75, implicit adaptation appears to asymptote around ~15° (Kim et al., 2018). These results suggest that claims of an incomplete asymptote within, specifically, the implicit adaptation mechanism must define the asymptote relative to an intrinsic capacity of the system, rather than the size of the visual error. Thus, it may be that incomplete compensation relative to the visual error (i.e., task error) mainly involves cognitive processes like speed-accuracy tradeoffs, as argued here, but incomplete asymptotic performance of the implicit system relative to its own capacity (i.e., responses to sensory prediction error) requires a separate explanation.

Recent accounts have framed motor planning as a time-consuming optimization process 425 from which a reduction in movement accuracy arises naturally when constraints are imposed 426 (Al Borno et al., 2019). Our findings suggest that similar principles apply when one is 427 intentionally choosing to perform a movement in another direction than the one implied by the 428 target presented, and that learners naturally constrain their planning time even in seemingly 429 unconstrained conditions. Haith and colleagues (Haith et al., 2016) recently showed that 430 movement preparation and initiation are independent i.e. that, instead of complete preparation 431 triggering movement initiation, humans appear to determine a time for movement initiation 432 based on when it expects planning to be completed. This view naturally implies the possibility 433 to initiate a movement that has not been sufficiently prepared. The planning time chosen may 434 therefore trade off the accuracy it expects planning to achieve within a given time and an 435 urgency to move on (e.g. fueled by a desire to increase reward rate; Churchland et al., 2008, 436 Cisek et al., 2009, Thura et al., , Thura & Cisek, 2017). 437

Many of the common explanations for incomplete asymptote outlined above imply that it is a fundamental property of learning. Psychology and kinesiology traditionally distinguish learning effects from performance effects, where underlying knowledge can be identical in different cases, but retrieval processes in specific test conditions can lead to different performance profiles (Magill & Anderson, 2017, Schmidt & Lee, 2011). Whereas our experiments were not specifically designed to distinguish learning from performance effects,

our findings suggest that both may contribute to incomplete asymptote in adaptation. 444 Specifically, explicit knowledge of the rotation magnitude was increased with added planning 445 time in experiment 1, suggesting that some of the benefit of longer planning times may come 446 about by learners honing their explicit knowledge. However, the observation that explicit 447 knowledge was similarly increased regardless of whether additional time was added at the 448 beginning or end of a trial in experiment 2 indicates that this learning effect may be a non-449 specific consequence of longer ITIs, and that the remaining increase in asymptote is a 450 performance effect. A recent paper analyzing preparatory neural states in rhesus monkeys 451 452 performing visuomotor learning tasks also found that longer preparation times not only yielded smaller variance on the current trial, but also smaller errors on the subsequent trial, supporting 453 a learning effect (Vyas et al., 2020). Future research could attempt to better delineate learning 454 from performance effects in human motor adaptation. 455

Lastly, we do not claim that other mechanisms affecting learning do not contribute to 456 asymptotic behavior (Albert et al., 2019), or that a state-space model with gradual decay 457 towards zero is generally invalid (Brennan & Smith, 2015). What we suggest is that one 458 potentially major aspect determining the magnitude of asymptotic errors is a speed accuracy 459 trade-off. Since this decision process is likely to be relevant across a broader range of motor 460 tasks, we speculate that our results extend beyond motor adaptation and that simple 461 interventions, like explicitly prolonging reaction times to allow for complete planning, could 462 improve asymptotic performance in a range of motor learning tasks. 463

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**465** Author Contribution

LL, JM, MH, SDM and RS conceived and designed research; LL collected data; LL, JM, MH, SDM and RS analyzed data; LL, JM, MH, SDM and RS interpreted results of experiments; LL prepared figures; LL drafted manuscript; LL, JM, MH, SDM and RS edited Al Borno, M., Vyas, S., Shenoy, K. V., & Delp, S. L. (2019). High-fidelity Musculoskeletal

and revised manuscript; LL, JM, MH, SDM and RS approved final version of manuscript

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