

Theta-Gamma Cascades and Running Speed

Abbreviated Title: *Theta-Gamma Cascades*

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44 **Abstract**

45 The local field potentials (LFPs) of the hippocampus are primarily generated by the
46 spatiotemporal accretion of electrical currents via activated synapses. Oscillations in the
47 hippocampal LFP at theta and gamma frequencies are prominent during awake-
48 behavior and have demonstrated several behavioral correlates. In particular, both
49 oscillations have been observed to increase in amplitude and frequency as a function of
50 running velocity. Previous investigations, however, have examined the relationship
51 between velocity and each of these oscillation bands separately. Based on energy
52 cascade models where “...*perturbations of slow frequencies cause a cascade of energy*
53 *dissipation at all frequency scales*” (Buzsaki 2006), we hypothesized that the cross-
54 frequency interactions between theta and gamma should increase as a function of
55 velocity. We examined these relationships across multiple layers of the CA1 subregion
56 and found a reliable correlation between the power of theta and the power of gamma,
57 indicative of an amplitude-amplitude relationship. Moreover, there was an increase in
58 the coherence between the power of gamma and the phase of theta, demonstrating
59 increased phase-amplitude coupling with velocity. Finally, at higher velocities, phase
60 entrainment between theta and gamma becomes stronger. These results have
61 important implications and provide new insights regarding how theta and gamma are
62 integrated for neuronal circuit dynamics, with coupling strength determined by the
63 excitatory drive within the hippocampus.

64 **Introduction**

65 The observation that changes in local field potential (LFP) oscillations correlate with the
66 behavioral state of an animal has a long history (for review, see Buzsáki 2005).
67 Nevertheless, the mechanisms that generate and organize oscillatory activity are still
68 opaque. For example, it has been proposed that different LFP oscillations and their
69 couplings support different processes and network functions (Belluscio et al. 2012; Bieri
70 et al. 2014; Colgin et al. 2009; Gloveli et al. 2005; Lisman and Jensen 2013; Tort et al.
71 2009; Tort et al. 2008). However, the neurophysiological mechanisms responsible for
72 integrating neuron spiking and oscillations across to temporal scales to support
73 cognition have yet to be elucidated. The observation that hippocampal neuron firing rate
74 (McNaughton et al., 1983; Maurer et al., 2005), theta power (Sheremet et al., 2016 and
75 others) and gamma power (Ahmed and Mehta 2012; Chen et al. 2011; Kemere et al.
76 2013; Zheng et al. 2015) all increase with faster running speeds suggest that synaptic
77 potentials organization across the macroscopic scale (theta) to the microscopic level of
78 the single units. Specifically, as slow oscillations can entrain a large volume of neurons,
79 they are in a better position to ‘coordinate’ local events (Buzsáki and Draguhn 2004).
80 Gamma, on the mesoscopic level, is an inevitable pattern when fast excitation and
81 inhibition compete (Buzsaki 2006; Buzsáki et al. 2004; Buzsáki and Wang 2012; Wang
82 and Buzsáki 1996). On the microscopic scale, basket cells appear to be critical in
83 gamma generation given their fast time course and perisomatic terminals onto
84 pyramidal cells (Buzsaki 2006; Freund and Buzsáki 1996). Thus, during theta states,
85 large-scale activation provides the input necessary for inhibitory and excitatory
86 processes to compete on the mesoscale level (generating high amplitude gamma). This

87 input is also seen on the microscopic level with interactions between interneurons and
88 pyramidal cells.

89 Previously, we have demonstrated increases in single unit firing rate with rat-running
90 velocity (Maurer et al. 2005). Furthermore, accompanying the increase in firing rate, we
91 found changes in sequence compression (defined as the ratio of the rate of cell
92 assembly transition to the rat's actual velocity; see Dragoi and Buzsáki 2006; Skaggs et
93 al. 1996) at faster-running speed (Maurer et al. 2012). With respect to the LFP, these
94 changes are accompanied by an increase in theta power, theta frequency, and the
95 number of theta harmonics (Sheremet et al. 2016). Finally, we revealed that pyramidal
96 cells and interneurons interact through putative monosynaptic connection to organize
97 spike firing times (Maurer et al. 2006). Therefore, based on these findings and the role
98 of interneurons in shaping gamma oscillations, we sought to empirically test the
99 hypothesis that theta and gamma inevitably couple in proportion to the amount of
100 activity into the network.

101 Here, we investigate the interaction between gamma (50-120 Hz; Bragin et al. 1995;
102 Chrobak and Buzsáki 1998; Leung 1992; Penttonen et al. 1998; Stumpf 1965) and the
103 6-10 Hz theta oscillation (GREEN and ARDUINI 1954; Jung and Kornmüller 1938;
104 Vanderwolf 1969) across hippocampal CA1 laminae: stratum oriens, pyramidal,
105 radiatum and lacunosum-moleculare. Critically, these different laminae are associated
106 with distinct afferent input. The hippocampus has a highly conserved anatomical
107 organization with afferent input and intrinsic fiber projections terminating in discrete
108 layers. For example, the stratum lacunosum-moleculare region of CA1 neurons receives
109 input from the layer III of the entorhinal cortex (Witter et al. 1988), nucleus reuniens

110 (Wouterlood et al. 1990) and amygdala (Pikkarainen et al. 1999), while the stratum
111 radiatum and oriens receive CA3 Schaeffer collateral and commissural fibers (Hjorth-
112 Simonsen 1973; Ishizuka et al. 1990). Concerning local projections, different
113 populations of interneurons target distinct hippocampal lamina with parvalbumin positive
114 cells synapsing in the stratum pyramidale and oriens while the somatostatin positive
115 cells target the stratum lacunosum-moleculare (Freund and Buzsáki 1996). Together,
116 these data suggest that there should be a laminar sensitivity to theta-gamma oscillatory
117 coupling as a function of movement speed.

118

119 **Materials and Methods** –

120 *SUBJECTS AND BEHAVIORAL TRAINING.*

121 All behavioral procedures were performed in accordance with the National Institutes
122 of Health guidelines for rodents and with protocols approved by the University of Florida
123 Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. A total of five 4-10 months old Fisher344-
124 Brown Norway Rats (Taconic) were used in the present study. This was a mixed sex
125 cohort comprised of r530♂, r538♂, r544♀, r547♂, and r695♀ in order to integrate
126 sex a biological variable and begin to alleviate the disparity in research focused
127 exclusively on males (Clayton 2016). In the present study, we had no *a priori* predictions
128 that sex will alter oscillations of the hippocampus as single unit physiology is relatively
129 consistent in female animals across estrous (Tropp et al. 2005). Upon arrival, rats were
130 allowed to acclimate to the colony room for one week. The rats were housed individually
131 and maintained on a 12:12 light/dark cycle. All training sessions and
132 electrophysiological recordings took place during the dark phase of the rats' light/dark
133 cycle. Training consisted of shaping the rats to traverse a circular track for food reward
134 (45mg, unflavored dustless precision pellets; BioServ, New Jersey; Product #F0021).
135 During this time, their body weight was slowly reduced to 85% to their arrival baseline.
136 Once the rat reliably performed more than one lap per minute, they were implanted with
137 a custom single shank silicon probe from NeuroNexus (Ann Arbor, MI). This probe was
138 designed such that thirty-two recording sites, each with a recording area of 177 μm^2 ,
139 were spaced 60 μm apart allowing incremental recording across the hippocampal
140 lamina. In preparation for surgery, the probe was cleaned in a 4% dilution of Contrad

141 detergent (Decon Contrad 70 Liquid Detergent, Fisher Scientific) and then rinsed in
142 distilled water (Vandecasteele et al. 2012).

143 *SURGICAL PROCEDURES.*

144 Surgery and all other animal care and procedures were conducted in accordance with
145 the NIH Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and approved by the
146 Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee at the University of Florida. Rats were
147 initially sedated in an induction chamber. Once anesthetized, the rat was transferred to
148 a nose cone. The head was shaved with care taken to avoid the whiskers. The rat was
149 then transferred to the stereotax, gently securing the ear bars and placing the front teeth
150 over the incisor bar. The stereotaxic nose cone was secured, ensuring that the rat was
151 appropriately inhaling the anesthesia. During surgical implantation, the rats were
152 maintained under anesthesia with isoflurane administered at doses ranging from 0.5 to
153 2.5%. Next, ophthalmic ointment was applied and “tanning shades”, fabricated out of
154 foil, were placed over but not touching the eyes to minimize direct light exposure.
155 Multiple cycles of skin cleaning, using betadine followed by alcohol was applied prior to
156 the first incision from approximately the forehead to just behind the ears. The remaining
157 fascia was bluntly dissected away and bone bleeding was mitigated through application of
158 bone wax or cautery. Once the location of bregma was determined, the site of the
159 craniotomy was located and a 3x3mm contour was drilled out, but not completed. This
160 was followed by the placement of 7 anchor screws in the bone as well as a reference
161 over the cerebellum and ground screw placed over the cortex. Once the screws were
162 secured, a thin layer of dental acrylic (Grip Cement Industrial Grade, 675571 (powder)
163 675572 (solvent); Dentsply Caulk, Milford, DE) was applied taking care to not obscure

164 the craniotomy location. Finally, the craniotomy location was completed, irrigating and
165 managing bleeding as necessary once the bone fragment was removed. Next a portion
166 of the dura was removed, taking care to avoid damaging the vessels and the surface of
167 the neocortex. Small bleeding was managed with saline irrigation and gel foam (sterile
168 absorbable gelatin sponges manufactured by Pharmacia & Upjohn Co, Kalamazoo, MI;
169 a division of Pfizer, NY, NY). The probe implant coordinates targeted the dorsal
170 hippocampus (AP: -3.2 mm, ML: 1.5 relative to bregma, DV: -3.7 to brain surface).

171 Once the probe was in place, the craniotomy was covered with silastic (Kwik-Sil,
172 World Precision Instruments, Sarasota, FL) and then secured to the anchor screws with
173 dental acrylic. Four copper mesh flaps were placed around the probe providing
174 protection as well as acting as a potential Faraday cage. The wires from the reference
175 and ground screws were soldered to the appropriate pins of the connector. Adjacent
176 regions of the coppermesh flaps were soldered together to ensure their electrical
177 continuity and the ground wire soldered to the coppermesh taking care to isolate the
178 reference from contact with the ground. Once the probe was secured, the rat received
179 10cc of sterile saline as well as metacam (1.0 mg/kg) subcutaneously (the non-steroidal
180 anti-inflammatory is also known as meloxicam; Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica, Inc.,
181 St. Joseph, MO). The rat was placed in a cage and monitored constantly until fully
182 recovered. Over the next 7 days, the rat was monitored to ensure recovery and no
183 behavioral anomalies. Metacam was administered the day following surgery as well.
184 Antibiotics (Sulfamethoxazole/Trimethoprim Oral Suspension at 200mg/40 mg per 5 mls;
185 Aurobindo Pharma USA, Inc., Dayton, NJ) were administered in the rat mash for an
186 additional 5 days.

187 NEUROPHYSIOLOGY.

188 Following recovery from surgery, rats were retrained to run unidirectionally on a circle
189 track (outer diameter: 115 cm, inner diameter: 88 cm), receiving food reward at a single
190 location. For rats 530, 544 and 695, data is only analyzed from the circle track
191 conditions. In order to deal with low velocities from the circle track datasets, additional
192 datasets for rats 538 and 539 from running on figure-8 track (112cm wide x 91cm
193 length) were used. In this task, rats were rewarded on successful spatial alternations.
194 Only datasets in which the rats performed more than 85% of trials correctly were used.
195 The local field potential was recorded on a Tucker-Davis Neurophysiology System
196 (Alachua, FL) at ~24kHz (PZ2 and RZ2, Tucker-Davis Technologies). The animal's
197 position was recorded at 30 frames/s (Tucker-Davis). Spatial resolution was less than
198 0.5 cm/pixel.

199 ANALYSES AND STATISTICS.

200 Velocity was calculated as the smoothed derivative of position. The local field
201 potential data was analyzed in Matlab® (MathWorks, Natick, MA, USA) using custom
202 written code as well as code imported from the HOSAtoolbox (Swami et al. 2003). Raw
203 LFP records sampled at 24 kHz (Tucker-Davis system) were low-pass filtered down to 2
204 kHz and divided into sequences of 1024 time samples (approx. 0.5 s). The analysis of
205 the LFP in the current study was based on standard techniques used for stationary
206 signals (Papoulis and Pillai 2002; Priestley 1981) as previously described in Sheremet
207 et al. (2016). Briefly, we assume that the LFP time series is a stochastic process,
208 stationary in the relevant statistics, and decompose it using the discrete Fourier

209 transform (DFT). The Fourier transform time sequences were reduced to the non-
210 redundant frequency domain of $1 \text{ Hz} \leq \omega \leq 1 \text{ kHz}$ (where ω are the analyzed
211 frequencies), with a frequency increment of 1 Hz.

212 Electrode position along the CA1-dentate axis was determined initially via visual
213 inspection of the LFP, followed by traditional current source density analyses (Bragin et
214 al. 1995; Buzsáki et al. 1986; Mitzdorf 1985; Rappelsberger et al. 1981). Shifts in the
215 phase of theta from stratum oriens to the dentate (Buzsáki et al. 1983; Leung 1984;
216 Winson 1978) as well as the regional distribution of currents – triggered on ripples –

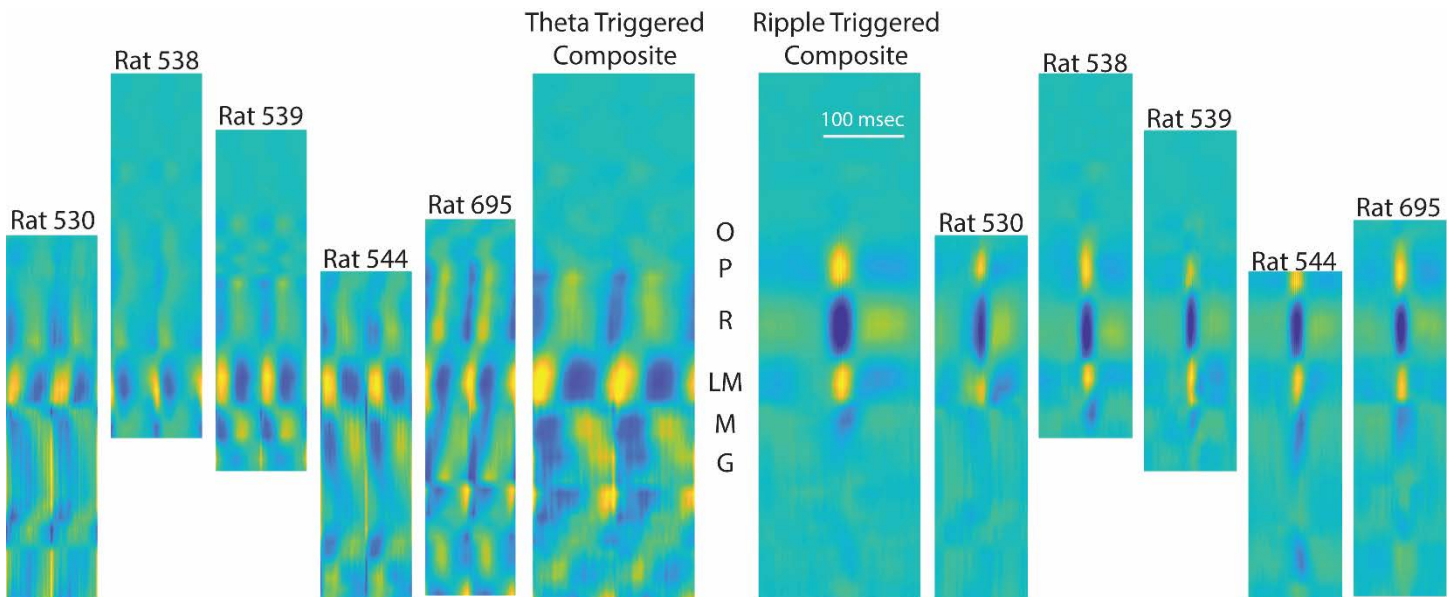


Figure 1: Using current source density for electrode localization across rats. The left side of the figure is the current source density of the raw LFP triggered on the maximum positive deflection of the filtered theta rhythm, with time normalized to two cycles of the hippocampal theta rhythm. On the right are the individual rat current source density plots for the unfiltered LFP, triggered on the maximum positive going ripple in the pyramidal cell layer (sources are warm colors, sinks are cool colors). In order to identify the layers across each rat, composite images (center) were generated with the output compared to prior publications (Bragin et al., 1995; Sullivan et al., 2011; Buzsaki, 2015). Both the theta and ripple current source density analyses were calculated during either awake-behavior or rest epochs. To account for differences in hippocampal size, the current source density images were cross-correlated with each other in order to determine appropriate alignment and compression. For the purposes of the current analyses, the oriens (O), pyramidal layer (P), stratum radiatum (R), lacunosum moleculare (LM), molecular layer (M) and upper granule layer (G) were identified.

217 revealed sources and sinks that directly related to input layers (Fig. 1; Sullivan et al.
218 2011; Ylinen et al. 1995a).

219 **Power-Power Correlations**

220 To investigate the relationship between theta and gamma power, the LFP recordings
221 were down-sampled to 2 kHz and split into 1-s segments. In order to remove epochs
222 with potential noise, an LFP quality control algorithm was applied to remove segments
223 with either 1) too large or too small variance ($>3 \cdot \text{mean}(\text{variance})$ or
224 $<0.1 \cdot \text{mean}(\text{variance})$ or 2) with maximum (or minimum) LFP recording has a 10 STD
225 deviation from the mean ($\text{maximum}(\text{LFP}) > \text{mean}(\text{LFP}) + 10 \cdot \text{std}(\text{LFP})$ or
226 $\text{minimum}(\text{LFP}) < \text{mean}(\text{LFP}) - 10 \cdot \text{std}(\text{LFP})$). The mean velocity for each segment was
227 computed and only segments with mean velocity larger than 5 cm/s were included for
228 this analysis. For each segment, the power spectrum was estimated with the multitaper
229 method. The first three DPSS sequences were used to get the tapered spectrum
230 estimations. Tapered spectrum estimations were computed with 2000 FFT points and
231 averaging over these spectrum estimations generated the multitaper spectrum. The
232 power of the LFP in a given frequency range is the area under the power spectrum
233 curve within that frequency range. Each observation in the power-power correlation
234 analysis is the power of theta (6-10 Hz) and gamma (50-120 Hz) for a 1-s segment.

235 **Phase-power Coherency**

236 The LFP recordings were down-sampled to 2000 Hz, split into 1-s segments, and
237 sorted according to their corresponding average velocity into 4 classes [0,5], (5,15],
238 (15,35], and >35 cm/s. If $X(t)$ is a 1-s time-series segment that belongs to a given

239 velocity class, the corresponding power time series $Y_{f_1}(t)$ at frequency f_1 was obtained
240 by using wavelet transform. The wavelet transform decomposes $X(t)$ into the time-scale
241 domain, and $Y_{f_1}(t)$ is the modulus square of wavelet transform at the scale whose
242 central frequency is f_1 . The Fourier transforms of time series $X(t)$ and $Y_{f_1}(t)$ are $\hat{X}(f)$
243 and $\hat{Y}(f)$, and the cross-spectrum between $X(t)$ and $Y_{f_1}(t)$ is $\langle \hat{X}(f)\hat{Y}^*(f) \rangle$ where $\langle \cdot \rangle$ is
244 the expected-value operator. The phase-power coherence is defined as the modulus of
245 the cross-spectrum $\langle \hat{X}\hat{Y}^* \rangle$ normalized by the power spectra of X and Y_{f_1} , and the
246 mathematical expression for phase-power coherence is $\left| \frac{\langle \hat{X}\hat{Y}^* \rangle}{((\langle \hat{X}\hat{X}^* \rangle)(\langle \hat{Y}\hat{Y}^* \rangle))^{1/2}} \right|$. Informally, the
247 phase-power coherence measures how much the power time series of frequency
248 component f_1 is modulated by frequency components f in the original signal.

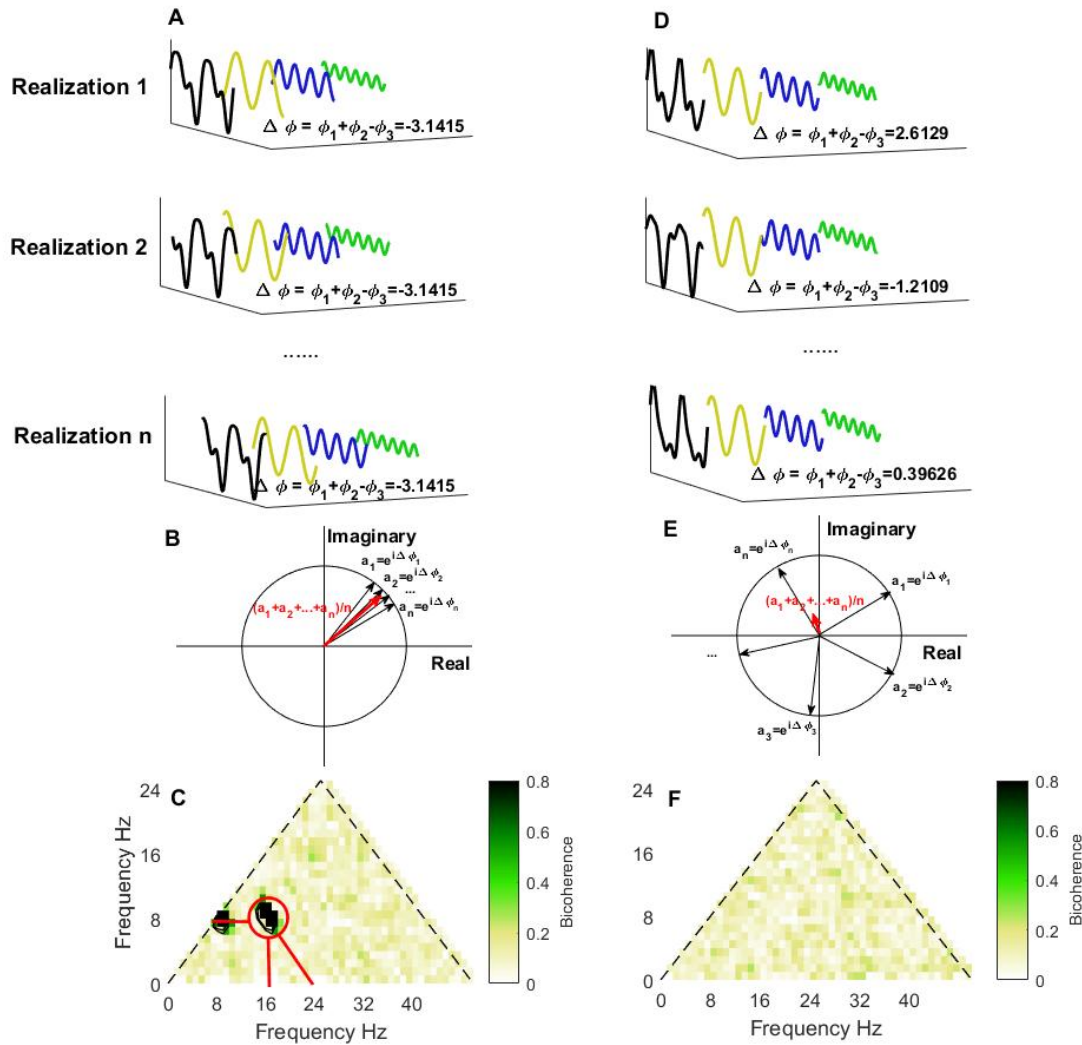
249 **Bispectrum and Bicoherence**

250 The bispectrum has been thoroughly reviewed in terms of both statistical and
251 mathematical background (Harris 1967) as well as its application to nonlinear wave
252 interaction (Kim and Powers 1979). As noted in our prior publication (Sheremet et al.
253 2016) as well as others, bispectral analysis (the Fourier transform of the third order
254 cumulant) quantifies the degree of phase coupling between the frequencies of the LFP
255 while the bicoherence quantifies the degree of cross-frequency coupling independent
256 from the amplitude (Barnett et al. 1971; Bullock et al. 1997; Gloveli et al. 2005; Hagihira
257 et al. 2001; Li et al. 2009; Muthuswamy et al. 1999; Ning and Bronzino 1989; Shahbazi
258 Avarvand et al. 2018; Sigl and Chamoun 1994; Wang et al. 2017). The utility of the
259 bispectrum can be illustrated as follows. In the instances of “no coupling”, three
260 independent waves – ω_1 , ω_2 , and $\omega_1 + \omega_2$, will have statistically independent phases

261 relative to each other, resulting in a random phase mixing when estimated over multiple
262 realizations. In these instances, the bispectrum will take a zero value. When three
263 waves are nonlinearly coupled, however, a phase coherence will exist between ω_1 , ω_2 ,
264 and $\omega_1 + \omega_2$, resulting in a non-zero bispectral value (Fig. 2; Kim et al. 1980). In order to
265 analyze for nonlinear phase coupling between hippocampal LFP frequencies, local field
266 potential the data were analyzed in Matlab® (MathWorks, Natick, MA, USA) using
267 custom written code as well as code imported from the HOSAtoolbox (Swami et al.
268 2003) for bispectral analysis. It is necessary to reiterate that the nonlinearity of a time-
269 series is expressed by the phase correlation across different frequencies. We used the
270 lowest order (third order) phase coupling, described by the bispectrum and first used in
271 ocean waves by Hasselmann (1963), to analyze the hippocampal LFP, as we previously
272 described in Sheremet et al. (2016). It is emphasized here as well as elsewhere
273 (Pradhan et al. 2012; Van Milligen et al. 1995) that the bispectrum measures phase
274 coupling, defined to occur when the sum of phases between two frequencies is equal to
275 the value of a third frequency plus a constant. In order to associate our analysis with
276 speed, the one-second of LFP for the bispectrum was stored with the mean velocity for
277 the same temporal epoch. Based on mean velocities of every segment, we classified
278 each LFP segment into 4 speed ranges: 0.001 to 5 cm/s; 5 to 15 cm/s; 15 to 35 cm/s;
279 and > 35 cm/s. For statistical comparisons, average nonlinearity was calculated for the
280 5 to 15 cm/s speed bin and the > 35 cm/s bin.

281

282



283
 284 **Figure 2:** Bicoherence illustration. **A**, Time series with triad phase coupling (black line) resolved into Fourier
 285 series where the main components are three sinusoidal waves with frequencies: $f_1 = 8$ Hz (yellow), $f_2 =$
 286 16 Hz (blue) and $f_3 = f_1 + f_2 = 24$ Hz (green). The biphas of the three waves is defined as $\Delta\phi = \phi_{f_1} +$
 287 $\phi_{f_2} - \phi_{f_3}$. The biphas is almost constant over realizations. Averaging biphas vectors over realizations
 288 $\frac{\sum_{k=1}^n e^{i\Delta\phi_k}}{n} \approx e^{i\Delta\phi_k}$ gives a complex number which has the norm. close to 1 as shown in **B**. The frequency triad
 289 ($f_1; f_2; f_3$) is corresponding to the significant region (marked with red circle) in bicoherence plot **C**. Figure **C**
 290 shows the modulus of the averaged biphas vectors $\left| \frac{\sum_{k=1}^n e^{i\Delta\phi_k}}{n} \right|$ for all the frequency triads. The contour lines in
 291 **C** outline the 99% significance level on zero bicoherence which is suggested by Elgar and Guza (1985) as
 292 $\sqrt{6/n}$. The marked significant region indicates the frequency of three waves: 8 Hz, 16 Hz and 24 Hz (indicated
 293 with red lines). The $y = x$ boundary of bicoherence plot **C** is imposed by the symmetry property of
 294 bicoherence; and the $x + y = 50$ boundary is imposed by the up limit of frequency range of interested ($f_x +$
 295 $f_y = 50$ Hz). In **C**, there is another significant region (8 Hz, 8 Hz & 16 Hz) which implies this triad is also phase
 296 coupled. **D**, Time series without triad phase coupling (black line) and the Fourier series components with
 297 frequency $f_1 = 8$ Hz (orange), $f_2 = 16$ Hz (blue) and $f_3 = 24$ Hz (green). The biphas $\Delta\phi$ distributes
 298 randomly, and the biphas vectors $e^{i\Delta\phi_k}$ cancel each other when averaging over realizations as shown in **E**,
 299 which gives a bicoherence plot without any significant regions in **F**.

301 **Results:**

302 For a preliminary measure of laminar differences of local field potential, we
303 calculated the power spectral density in the CA1 oriens (Or.), stratum pyramidale
304 (CA1.pyr), radiatum (CA1.rad), and lacunosum-moleculare (LM) as a function of speed
305 (**Fig. 3**). Our observations of the power spectra can be characterized in general as
306 having a power law $f^{-\alpha}$ structure. However, unlike previous reports, the spectral slope
307 α is not constant throughout the entire frequency range. Instead, two or more domains
308 with distinct slopes can be identified, most evident in the LM. Using preliminary
309 analyses across layers of the power spectral density, cross-frequency phase-power
310 coherence and bicoherence analyses, these domains formed rather well-defined
311 frequency intervals that can be associated with theta (6-10 Hz) and its harmonics
312 (16Hz, 24Hz, 32Hz, 40Hz and 48Hz; see nonlinear analysis below); gamma (broadly
313 defined here as ~50-120 Hz similar to Bragin et al. 1995); and fast oscillations (> 120
314 Hz). Adjacent hippocampal layers also exhibited harmonics of theta, although not as
315 prominent as the LM region. In agreement with previous results (Bragin et al. 1995),
316 theta and gamma power are higher in the LM than the other CA1 layers.

317 In the 50-120 Hz frequency range, the distribution of power acquires the form of
318 a front of constant slope shifting to the right, toward higher frequencies as running
319 speed increases (inset in Figure 3). This effect is observed across all layers. While the
320 increase in theta power with velocity is in congruence with models by which theta is
321 driven by an external input (Buzsaki 2002; Holsheimer et al. 1982), the shifting gamma
322 front is indicative of a change in circuit dynamics. Specifically, previous work on central
323 pattern generators suggest that high-frequency oscillations can increase as a function of

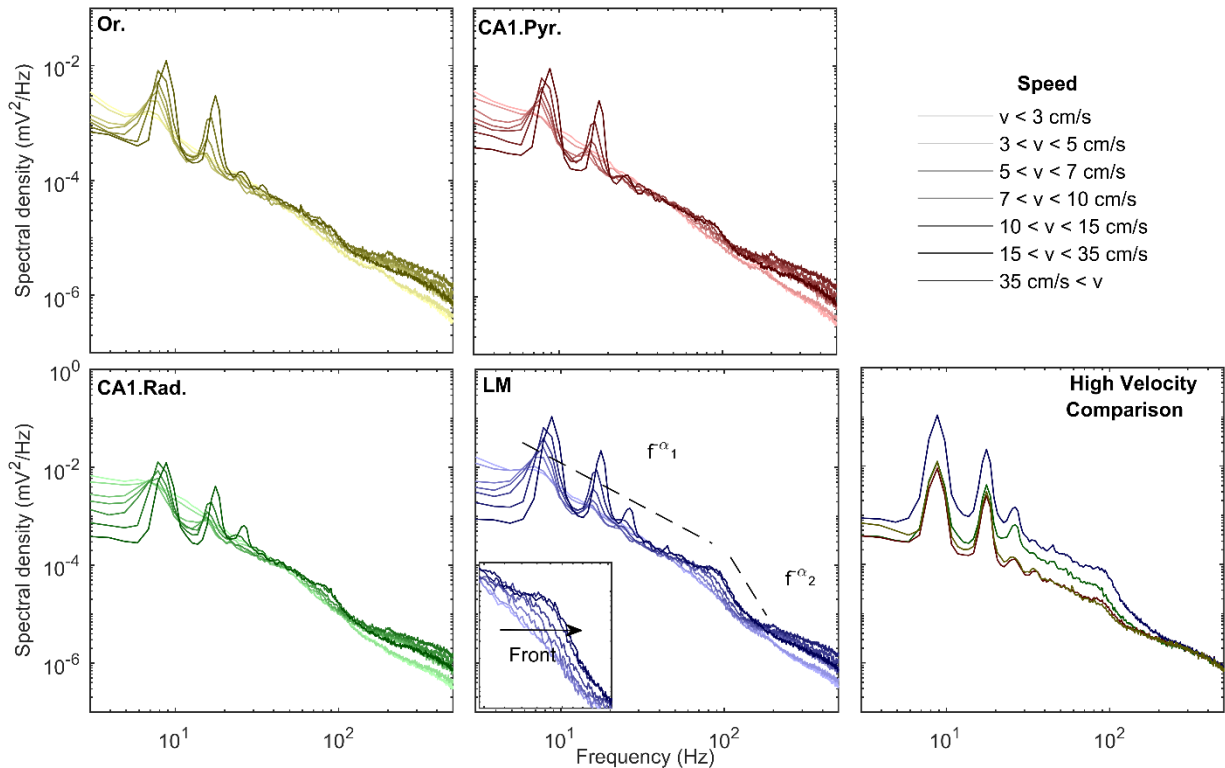
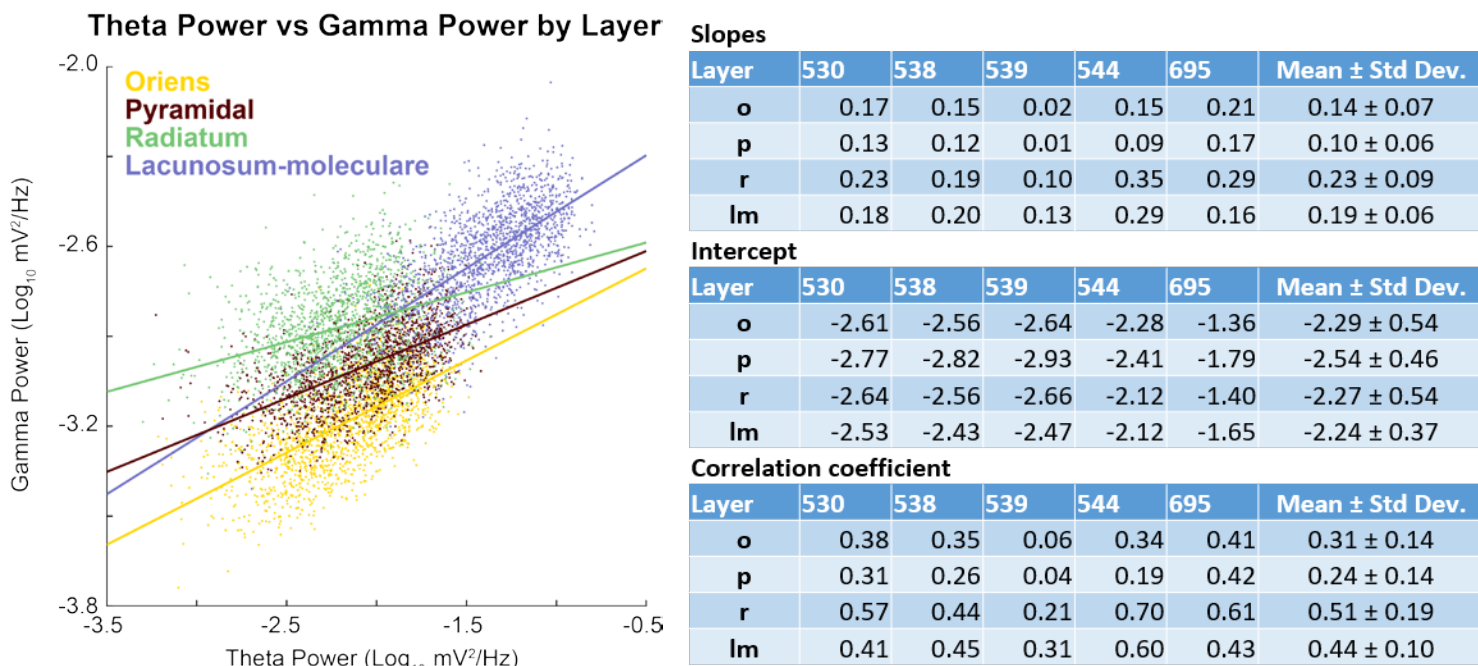


Figure 3. Changes in power spectral density as a function of velocity and CA1 layer (transition from lighter to darker hues indicate low to high velocities). Note that, across all layers, the increases in theta and theta harmonic with speed are associated with an increase in gamma power. Insets show details of the evolution of the gamma range (magnification of gray rectangle area). Spectral shapes in all layers follow a power laws of the type $f^{-\alpha}$. Remarkably, the LM layers exhibits different slopes between the frequency domains that encompass theta and its harmonics and the gamma range. This phenomenon becomes apparent in all regions when comparing all high velocity power spectra across layers (bottom right). Furthermore, as power increases in the gamma range, the spectrum preserves its slope and shifts to the right, creating the appearance of a moving front (inset of LM). Note that, in agreement with prior publications (Bragin et al., 1995), the CA1 oriens and pyramidal layer exhibit the least energetic gamma range of all the layers examined.

324 neural drive (Shik et al. 1969). To test this hypothesis relative to the hippocampus, we
 325 examined power- power correlations between the theta and gamma bands. If the
 326 gamma frequency component of the LFP is excited by the same input as theta, the two
 327 oscillatory frequencies should exhibit “power-power” correlations. Therefore, we
 328 calculated power for hippocampal theta (narrowly defined as 6-10Hz for this analysis)
 329 relative to gamma power (using a range from 50-120Hz) in 1-second windows. By
 330 correlating the power of the hippocampal theta rhythm against the power of the gamma
 331 within the same region, it is possible to determine whether a power-power relationship



332 exists (**Fig. 4**). Across lamina and rats there was a significant relationship between theta
 333 power and gamma power with, on average, 16% of the variance in gamma power being
 334 explained by theta power ($p = 0.04$). Interestingly, the correlation coefficients between
 335 theta and gamma power significantly differed between hippocampal lamina ($F_{[3,12]} =$
 336 10.21, $p = 0.001$). In fact, the correlation between theta and gamma power was highest
 337 in the CA1.Rad ($r = 0.51$) and lowest in the CA1.Pyr ($r = 0.24$). Simple orthogonal
 338 contrasts comparing the CA1.Rad to the other CA1 lamina indicated that the theta-
 339 gamma power correlation was significantly greater in the CA1.Rad compared to the Or
 340 ($F_{[1,4]} = 19.74$, $p = 0.01$) and the CA1.Pyr ($F_{[1,4]} = 16.98$, $p = 0.02$). In contrast, the
 341 correlation between theta and gamma power was not significantly different between the
 342 CA1.Rad and LM ($F_{[1,4]} = 2.11$, $p = 0.22$). These data indicate that theta and gamma
 343 power are strongly correlated across all layers, and that this relationship is particularly

344 evident in the CA1.Rad and LM.

345 The slope of the relationship between theta and gamma power provides
346 information regarding the rate at which activity transfers across frequency bands. The
347 slope was significantly different across hippocampal laminae ($F_{[3,12]} = 7.52$, $p = 0.004$).
348 The slope was greatest in the CA1.Rad ($b = 0.23$ where b stands for the slope) and
349 smallest in the CA1.Pyr ($b = 0.11$). Simple orthogonal contrasts comparing the CA1.Rad
350 to the other CA1 lamina indicated that the slope of the theta-gamma power relationship
351 was significantly greater in the CA1.Rad compared to the Or ($F_{[1,4]} = 10.64$, $p = 0.03$)
352 and CA1.Pyr ($F_{[1,4]} = 14.63$, $p = 0.02$). In contrast, the slope of the theta-gamma power
353 relationship was not significantly different between the CA1.Rad and LM ($F_{[1,4]} = 2.11$, p
354 $= 0.22$). This observation is not trivial as it runs counter to contemporary models in
355 which neural oscillations considered to be independent and multiplexed (Akam and
356 Kullmann 2014; McLelland and VanRullen 2016). Multiplexing implies that different
357 frequencies, supported by orthogonal populations of neurons (e.g., Gloveli et al. 2005),
358 can vary their activity independently of each other (which would be evident should theta-
359 to gamma-power exhibit little to no correlation). Rather, these observations indicate
360 that, across layers, gamma increases power in proportion to the amount of theta
361 activity, supporting the hypothesis that external neural drive (theta) provides the activity
362 that supports the amplitude of the gamma oscillation.

363 Although there was a significant, positive correlation in between theta and
364 gamma power and power increases with velocity, it may be argued that these results do
365 not fully encompass cross-frequency interactions, let alone demonstrate dependency.
366 Therefore, we investigated the average cross-frequency phase-power coherency

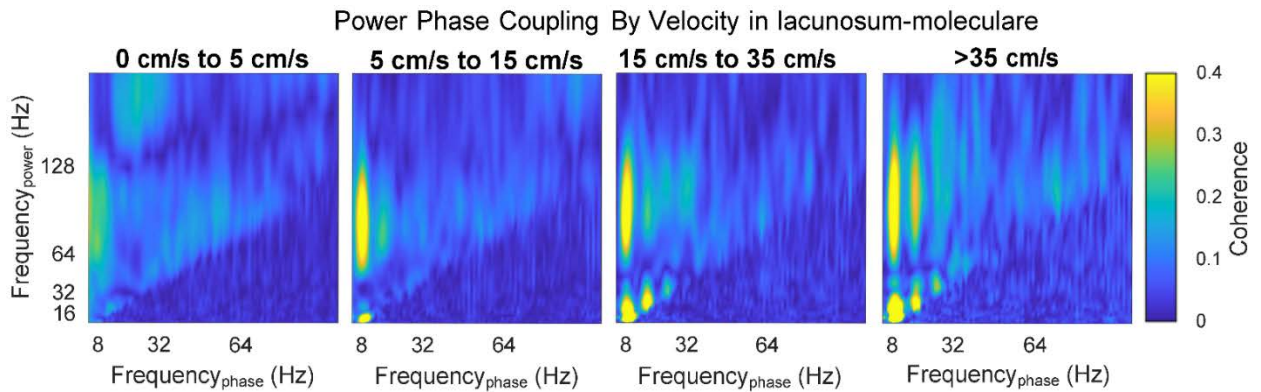


Figure 5: Example cross-frequency coherence between oscillatory power and oscillatory phase as a function of velocity for the lacunosum-moleculare. Note that, as velocity increases, there are low frequency interactions between theta and its harmonics (sub 40Hz). As harmonics by definition are integer, phase locked components to a fundamental oscillation, and the deformation of theta from sinusoid to sawtooth increases with velocity (Buzsáki et al. 1983; Sheremet et al. 2016; Terrazas et al. 2005), this effect is to be expected. Interestingly, there is a notable increase in the coupling between theta phase and gamma power – as well as theta harmonic phase and gamma power- with velocity.

367 (Colgin et al. 2009) as a function of velocity. Across layers, gamma power-theta phase
368 coherence increased as a function of velocity (**Fig. 5**). As theta transitions from a
369 sinusoidal oscillation to a “saw-tooth” shape with increasing velocity, higher-order
370 harmonics are cast in the spectral decomposition (Buzsáki et al. 1983; Sheremet et al.
371 2016; Terrazas et al. 2005). Notably, phase-power coherence also increased between
372 the harmonics of theta with velocity as well as between the phase of the 16Hz harmonic
373 and the power of gamma. As the 16Hz is not an independent oscillation from theta, but
374 simply an oscillatory deformation, the interaction between theta and gamma
375 encompasses both the 8hz and 16Hz component. Therefore, in order to quantify the
376 power-phase coherence increase with velocity, the average coherence was calculated
377 for theta phase (8Hz)-gamma power and 16Hz harmonic phase-gamma power.
378 Calculating the difference between the high velocity bin (>35 cm/s) and low (5-15 cm/s)
379 revealed a consistent increase in gamma power and the phase of the theta complex
380 (**Fig. 6**).

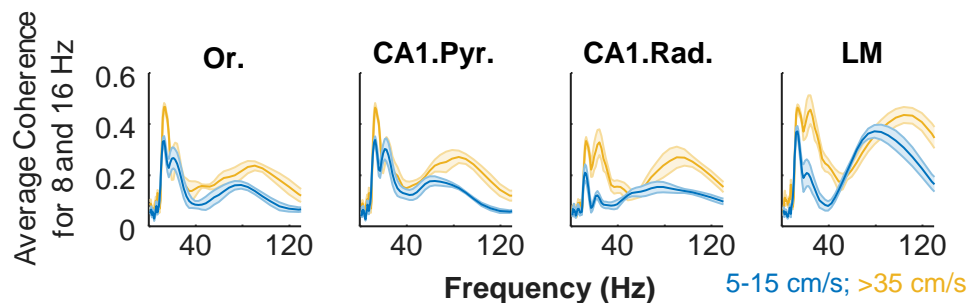


Figure 6: Average cross-frequency coherence for theta and the 16Hz theta harmonic phase. By averaging the coherence for these specific phases, there is a considerable change in cross-frequency coherence with velocity. Each subplot shows the individual layers of the hippocampus with yellow as the high, >35 cm/s velocity bin and blue as the 5-15 cm/s bin (Or., oriens; CA1.Pyr, pyramidal layer; CA1.Rad., radiatum; LM, lacunosum-moleculare). The shaded errorbars depict the mean and standard error of the mean (n = 5). Note that in the gamma range, greater than 50Hz, there is both an increase in coherence that is associated with a shift of the maximum value to higher frequencies (see Fig. 3). The changes in the low value frequencies, less than 40Hz, are attributed to the higher order harmonics of theta (e.g., 24 and 32Hz; see bicoherence analysis below).

381 As the power and phase of theta both exhibited a strong effect on gamma
382 power, which increases in magnitude as a function of velocity, it suggests that the two
383 oscillations are in fact part of a unitary process. Rather than the hippocampal spectra
384 being akin to decomposition of an orchestra, with different frequencies attributable to
385 specific, non-interacting instruments, it appears that there is a direct dependency that is
386 analogous to ocean waves in which waves of different length form a cooperative system
387 in which they sustain each other (e.g., Longuet-Higgins 1992). Stated simply, the LFP of
388 the hippocampus reflects a multiscale phenomenon, driven by a flow of energy from low
389 to high frequencies across the spectrum (Buzsaki 2006). In this energy cascade
390 framework, it would suggest that theta-gamma interactions are dependent, with the
391 degree of phase-phase interactions directly proportional to energy/activity in the
392 network. However, the analytical approaches of cross-frequency phase-phase coupling

393 have been recently called into question, due to distortions in filtering and not accounting
394 for harmonic (Scheffer-Teixeira and Tort 2016). As described in the methods,
395 bicoherence has been used extensively to quantify the degree of cross-frequency
396 phase-phase coupling in the LFP, investigating the relationship between a wide band of
397 frequencies and can be implemented to directly identify harmonics. Therefore, we
398 investigated the degree of phase coupling within hippocampal layers as a function of
399 velocity using bicoherence analyses.

400 As previously reported, bispectral estimates of theta and the respective
401 harmonics show significant variability with rat running speed, with limited significant
402 interactions at velocity < 10cm/s (**Fig. 7**). In contrast, at higher running speeds (i.e.,
403 velocity > 40 cm/s, **Fig. 8**) the bispectral map shows a rich phase-coupling structure. In
404 agreement with the observations of power spectral density evolution (Fig. **3**), strong
405 phase coupling develops between theta (theta frequency $f_{\theta} \approx 8$ Hz) and its harmonics (
406 f_{θ} , with $n = 2,3,4, \dots$), with peaks detectable at frequencies below ~50 Hz, at various
407 strengths, across all layers. It is worth emphasizing that the development of theta
408 harmonics strongly coupled to theta indicates a nonlinear deformation of the theta
409 rhythm toward positive skewness and asymmetry and should not be attributed to the
410 generation of additional, statistically independent rhythms. Rather, the saw-tooth shape
411 of theta causes a 48 Hz frequency to register in the oscillatory decomposition of LFP.

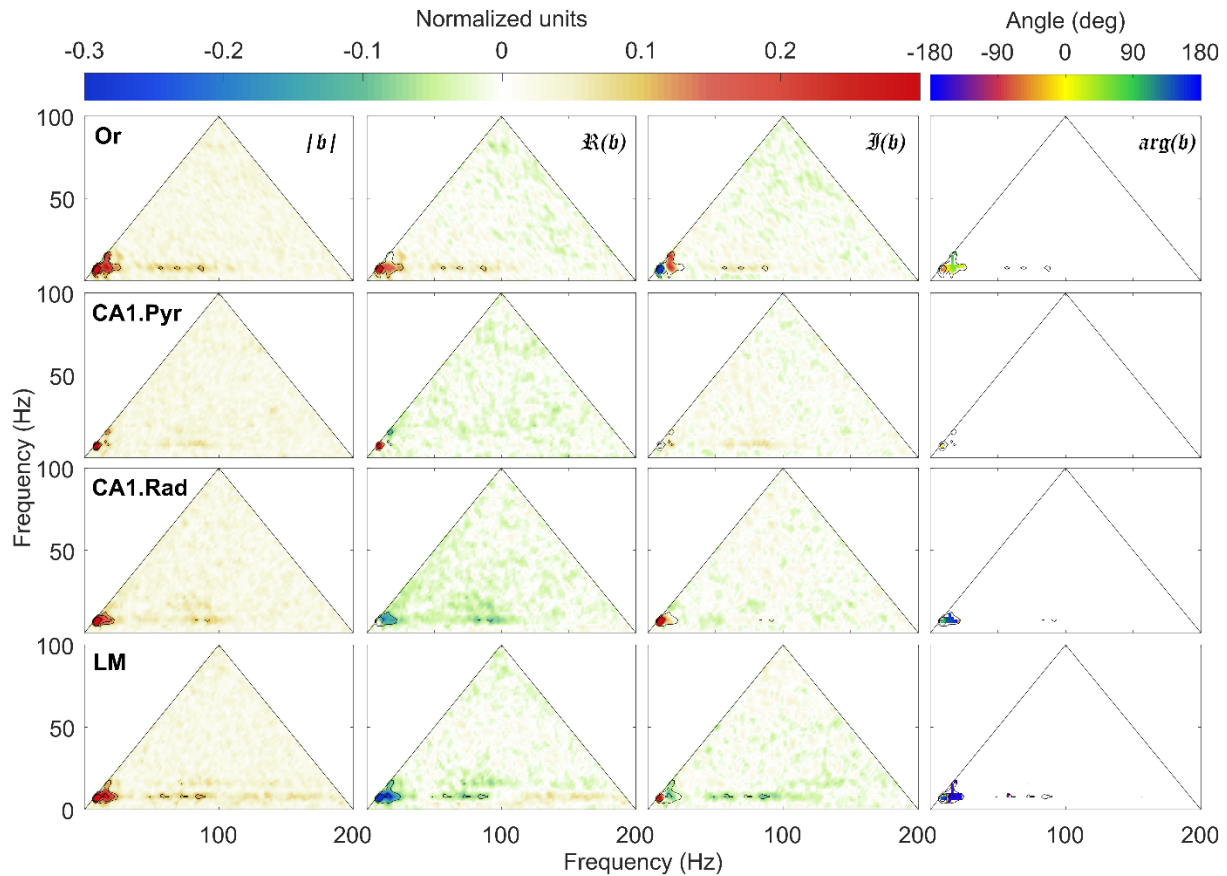
412 Furthermore, the increase of theta power and nonlinearity is accompanied by the
413 development of significant phase coupling between theta and gamma oscillations,
414 related to interaction between rhythms, rather than to nonlinear shape deformation.
415 Theta-gamma coupling covers the entire gamma frequency band (the wide bands

416 located at $50 \text{ Hz} < f_1 < 100 \text{ Hz}$ and $f_2 \approx 8 \text{ Hz}$). The effect is again strongest in the
417 LM, where interacting triads of the form $(f_\gamma, f_\theta, f_\gamma + f_\theta)$, and $(f_\gamma, 2f_\theta, f_\gamma + 2f_\theta)$ are
418 obvious, where f is a frequency in the gamma band. As the location and magnitude of
419 the bicoherence peaks identify and measure the intensity of cross-phase interactions,
420 the strength of the nonlinear coupling can be quantified by integrating the bicoherence
421 over the region of interest (**Fig. 9**). In agreement with the results presented in Sheremet
422 et al. (2016), the nonlinearity was significantly greater at faster running speeds ($F_{[1,16]}$
423 $=31.09$, $p = 0.001$; repeated-measures). Moreover, nonlinearity also varied significantly
424 as a function of CA1 laminae ($F_{[3,16]} = 11.96$, $p = 0.001$), with the LM being significantly
425 more nonlinear compared to the other 3 laminae ($p < 0.002$ for all comparisons, Tukey
426 HSD). The bicoherence values across the Or, CA1.Pyr and CA1.Rad, however, were
427 not significantly different ($p > 0.76$ for all comparisons). The difference in nonlinearity
428 between low and high velocities did not significantly interact with layer ($F_{[3,16]} = 0.21$, $p =$
429 0.89), indicating that the impact of faster speeds on nonlinearity was similar across all
430 CA1 laminae.

431 When the quantification of nonlinearity was restricted to the theta (6-32 Hz) and
432 gamma (50-120 Hz) frequency ranges (Fig 7), there was also a strong effect of velocity
433 on nonlinearity ($F_{[1,16]} = 38.53$, $p = 0.0001$; repeated measures). Within the theta and
434 gamma frequency ranges there was also a significant effect of layer on nonlinearity
435 ($F_{[3,16]} = 19.87$, $p = 0.001$), that did not significantly interact with velocity ($F_{[3,16]} = 0.48$, p
436 $= 0.70$). Interestingly, the theta-gamma bicoherence values in the LM were significantly
437 greater than the other 3 laminae ($p < 0.001$ for all comparisons; Tukey HSD). The

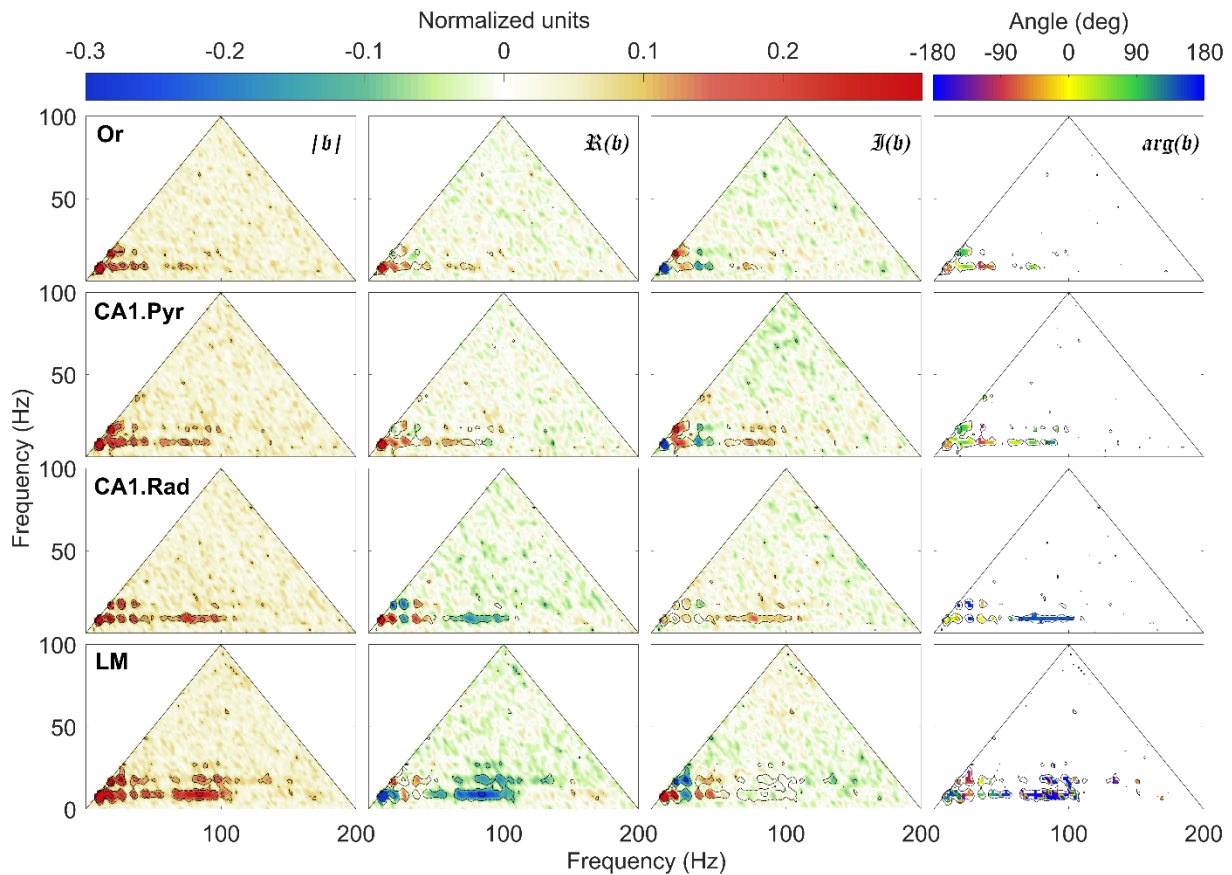
438 nonlinearity between the Or, CA1.Pyr and CA1.Rad was not significantly different,
 439 however ($p > 0.32$ for all comparisons; Tukey HSD).

440



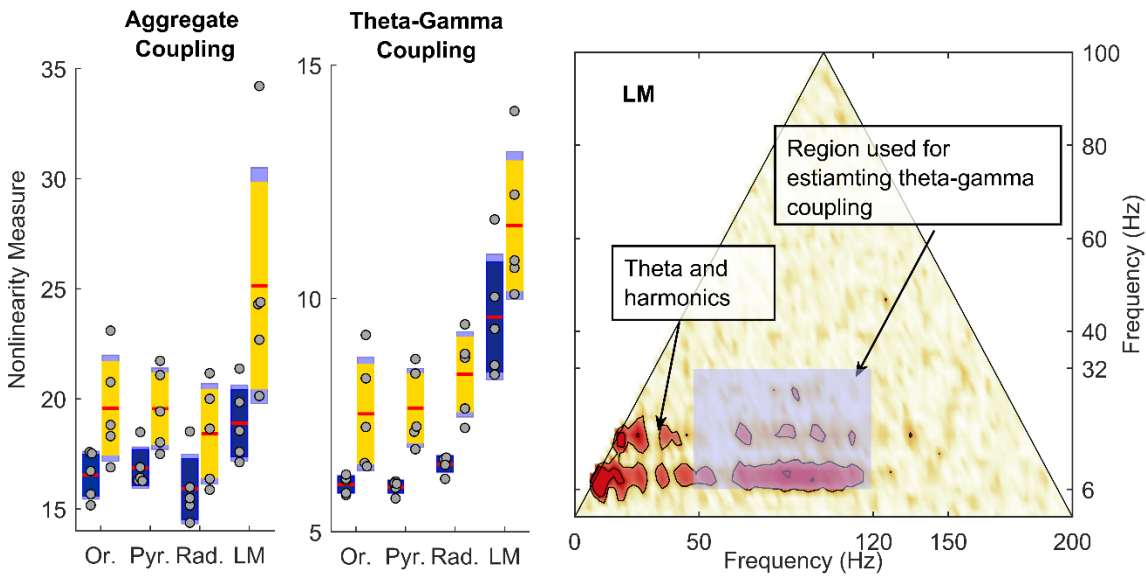
441 **Figure 7:** Normalized bispectrum (equation 11) at low speeds ($v < 10$ cm/s). An in-depth explanation of
 442 the bicoherence plot can be found in Sheremet et al. (2016) Briefly, the triangular region represents the
 443 area containing non-redundant information for the discrete Fourier transform. Columns (left to right) show
 444 the bicoherence $|b|$, the real $\Re(b)$ and imaginary $\Im(b)$ parts of the normalized bispectrum b , and the
 445 biphase $\arg(b)$. The first three can be interpreted as nonlinearity strength, and measures of the
 446 contribution of different triads to the skewness and asymmetry of the LFP. Peak in the bispectral estimate
 447 represents a phase-coupled triplet $(f_1, f_2, f_1 + f_2)$, where $f_j, j = 1, 2$ are frequency bands in the Fourier
 448 representation. The observations in each row correspond to a given hippocampal layer. For each layer,
 449 black contours mark the significant bicoherence value of 0.1 (with 300 DOF, zero-mean bicoherence is
 450 < 0.1 at 95% confidence level.
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Figure 8. Normalized bispectrum at high speeds ($v > 35$ cm/s). Same organization as in figure 5. Note the development of multiple regions of high bicoherence $|b|$, notably: 1) θ (theta frequency $f_\theta \approx 8$ Hz) and its harmonics (nf_θ , with $n = 2, 3, 4, \dots$), with peaks detectable up to 48 Hz across all layers, and 2) θ and a wide gamma band spanning approximately the interval between 60 Hz to 100 Hz. The LM exhibits the richest nonlinear structures of the four layers examined with gamma coupling to the first harmonic of θ .



462

463 **Figure 9.** Estimate of nonlinear cross-frequency phase coupling. Left: Total overall strength of
464 nonlinearity, estimated by summing the bicoherence over its entire definition domain. Estimates are
465 shown for 5-15cm/s speed bin (blue) of >35cm/s speed bin (yellow). Middle: Strength of nonlinear
466 coupling between theta (and harmonics) and gamma rhythms estimated by summing the bicoherence
467 values in the shaded rectangle of right panel. The LM exhibits a significant larger coupling strength
468 compared with the other layers. Both total and strictly theta-gamma coupling strength show significant
469 variability as a function of rat speed and hippocampal layer. Note that the y-axis differs between
470 nonlinearity measures in order to optimize for display of the theta-gamma-gamma nonlinearity. Red is the
471 mean, solid dark blue or yellow is 1.96 of the standard error of the mean (S.E.M.) and light blue denotes
472 the boundaries of 1 standard deviation. Right: Region used for estimating the strength of theta-gamma
473 coupling is a rectangle covering the intervals [6 Hz, 32 Hz] for theta and [50 Hz, 120 Hz] for gamma.

474 **Discussion:**

475 The current paper reports the novel finding of power-power, phase-power, and phase-
476 phase coupling between theta and gamma oscillations that is dependent on velocity,
477 which varies in a layer dependent manner. Macroscopically, bouts of input at theta
478 frequency provide the excitation/inhibition to organize synaptic activity rhythmically.
479 Neurons within the entorhinal-hippocampal circuit are tuned to resonate at theta
480 frequencies, evident in the ability of the hippocampus to locally generate theta when
481 provided sufficient input (Bland et al. 1988; Fraser and MacVicar 1991; Kamondi et al.
482 1998; Kocsis et al. 1999; Konopacki et al. 1987). Therefore, when strongly driven, local

483 circuits find a temporally stable interaction. This drive, in turn, activates small circuits,
484 which – when “kicked hard”- provide a mechanism for endogenous timing. For example,
485 this theta paced drive could conceivably cause basket cells to fire gamma frequency
486 bursts at theta frequency (Bragin et al. 1995; Ylinen et al. 1995b). The consequence of
487 this organization is that neuronal activity of both pyramidal cells and interneurons are
488 organized to both the relatively slow theta oscillation and the faster gamma oscillation
489 (Buzsáki and Chrobak 1995).

490 Increasing the total amount of activity into a network will have multiple consequences
491 including more coincident synaptic events (reflected as increases in local field potential
492 power). There is a dramatic increase in firing rates across hippocampal neurons with
493 velocity (Hirase et al. 1999; Maurer et al. 2005; McNaughton et al. 1983). Moreover,
494 running speed alters hippocampal sequence compression of place cell spikes (Maurer
495 et al. 2012). Because the single units change their dynamics, and the LFP is generated
496 by membrane events, it stands to reason that there must be associated changes in LFP
497 power and gamma frequency (Ahmed and Mehta 2012; Chen et al. 2011; Kemere et al.
498 2013; Zheng et al. 2015). It is worth noting that there is a low fraction of observed
499 gamma locking between CA3 or entorhinal LFP and CA1 pyramidal neurons
500 (Schomburg et al. 2014). These observations support the idea that gamma can provide
501 a measure of upstream temporal dynamics but fails to entrain the individual units
502 (Buzsáki and Schomburg 2015). Rather, as the distal dendrites operate as a low-pass
503 filter (Golding et al. 2005), theta-gamma paced synaptic input in the lacunosum-
504 moleculare or radiatum are reverted to just theta at the soma (Vaidya and Johnston
505 2013). Nevertheless, the lacunosum-moleculare exhibited the highest theta-gamma

506 coupling as a function of velocity suggesting that theta-modulated gamma inputs are
507 conveyed from the entorhinal cortex (Fernández-Ruiz et al. 2017), which exhibits a high
508 amount of sensitivity to path-integration and self-motion (Kropff et al. 2015; Moser and
509 Moser 2008; Sargolini et al. 2006).

510 The interplay between theta and gamma rhythms as a function of velocity is not to
511 suggest that theta is a required prerequisite for gamma. There are two considerations
512 with respect to this point. First, the power spectra density of the local field potential
513 demonstrates and $\sim \frac{1}{f^\alpha}$ slope, indicating that any frequency has the potential of being
514 isolated. Power will exist across all frequencies, with low frequencies exhibiting the
515 highest amplitude. Therefore, while there may not be a large peak in theta power, there
516 still may be enough activity in the network that leads to local circuit entrainment at
517 gamma frequency. Experimentally, this has been observed in situations in which
518 severing the fimbria fornix or lesioning the entorhinal cortex severely diminished theta
519 power, but yielded increases in gamma power (Bragin et al. 1995; Buzsáki et al. 1987).
520 This highlights the second consideration, that it is the characteristics of neurons and the
521 local network that defines the ability to capture the incoming activity. In the absence of
522 entorhinal input, it is tenable that the network undergoes reorganization to compensate
523 for the loss of input. This compensation results in an easier entrainment of local circuits
524 (gamma) that occurs with weak, low frequency input across the population. Other
525 aspects theoretically modulate the ability of local circuits to capture the global input
526 including age-related synaptic changes and pharmacological manipulation.

527 The current manuscript links prior findings of theta-gamma interaction in the service of

528 cognition (e.g., Jensen and Colgin 2007; Lisman and Jensen 2013; Montgomery et al.
529 2008; Tort et al. 2009; Tort et al. 2008) to other studies that have observed layer
530 dependent theta-gamma effects during exploration (Belluscio et al. 2012; Lasztóczy and
531 Klausberger 2016; or using datasets with and with out a mnemonic requirement
532 Schomburg et al. 2014). The current data, however, point to a new perspective. In
533 opposition to the idea that gamma and theta are driven by minimally overlapping
534 mechanisms that couple under certain behavior conditions, we propose that coupling is
535 enhanced in situations in which there is increased input into the network. Under
536 increased input into the network, which occurs at faster running speeds or instances of
537 high cognitive load, theta-gamma coupling could be utilized by local circuits to support
538 higher-cognitive processes. For example, over the course of learning, theta paced
539 inputs may result in higher power gamma oscillations through experience-dependent
540 plasticity. In this manner, in the awake-behaving animal, theta and gamma are
541 interdependent, coupled by the cascade of energy across spatial and temporal
542 (frequency) scales (Buzsaki, 2006).

543 This perspective, however, runs counter to the recent theory of oscillatory multiplexing
544 in the brain, where individual frequencies carry different components of information
545 (e.g., Akam and Kullmann 2014; McLelland and VanRullen 2016). For example, it has
546 been suggested that communication across brain regions may occur in a frequency
547 specific manner and aspects of cognition can be determined through calculating cross-
548 regional coherence, with different bands conveying different psychological components
549 (Knight and Eichenbaum 2013; Siegel et al. 2012; Watrous et al. 2013). Moreover,
550 neuron populations with heterogeneity in the preferred phase coupling frequency would

551 theoretically provide a mechanism to communicate and organize the spike firing times
552 of multiple, distant cell assemblies in a frequency specific manner (Canolty et al. 2010).
553 However, this entrainment by oscillatory coherence may be an over-simplification. For
554 example, the dendrites of hippocampal pyramidal neurons operate as a low pass filter
555 (Golding et al. 2005; Vaidya and Johnston 2013), which would suggest that gamma
556 frequency activity within the lacunosum-moleculare (the afferent input layer of the
557 entorhinal cortex) has little consequence on the gamma frequency activity within the
558 pyramidal layer. This is evident in the relatively low coherence of gamma frequencies
559 between the medial entorhinal cortex and pyramidal layer when compared to theta
560 coherence between the same two regions (~0.3 and ~0.85 respectively, Colgin et al.
561 2009). Therefore, rather than coherence, external inputs entrained at gamma may
562 instead provide the necessary input to coordinate the phase of theta within a network
563 (Lopez-Madrona et al. 2018). Tersely, entorhinal input at gamma frequency supports
564 theta paced dynamics, and the energy cascade begins again. This line of reasoning
565 raises the critical consideration that marginal coherence values (stated differently,
566 incoherence) may not be biologically meaningful and coupling measures may risk
567 interchanging correlation for consequence. Rather, it may not be the frequency of
568 communication that is important, but the total amount of activity into the network.

569 The cascade theory suggests that it is improvident to assign a particular psychological
570 process to a specific frequency for the reason that, in the awake behaving animal, the
571 gamma rhythm is shaped by the activity in the theta band making the two oscillations
572 interdependent. Indisputably, the iterative processing and nonlinearity of neural circuits
573 make it implausible to assign a cause and effect relationship between a cognitive

574 process and a narrow oscillatory band. The local field potential, however, is diagnostic
575 of the underlying interactions, providing information to the experimenter with respect to
576 *how the network is predisposed to organize*. In fact, synaptic events – contributing the
577 ionic flux that shapes the LFP – have no knowledge with respect to whether they are
578 supporting “gamma” or “theta.” Parsing oscillatory frequencies to specific biophysical
579 mechanisms, circuits or behavioral correlations for the purposes of higher-cognition
580 loses relevance if the nervous system does not make the distinction (unless it is done
581 for diagnostic purposes as described in the condition).

582 While assigning certain frequency oscillations may be gratifying to the experimentalist,
583 Fourier decomposition is an analytical tool, far removed from synaptic or circuit
584 dynamics. For example, often it is tempting to construct a power spectra and ask a
585 question regarding deviations away from the $\frac{1}{f^\alpha}$ slope (e.g., after whitening). In the
586 current manuscript, we demonstrate that the spectral slope α is not constant throughout
587 the entire frequency range, demonstrating a methodological flaw to standard whitening
588 techniques. Moreover, our spectral decomposition revealed 16, 24, 32, 40 Hz and
589 higher harmonics of theta (Sheremet et al. 2016). While the decomposition “uncovers”
590 these oscillations, the harmonics are the consequence of a single aggregate process in
591 which theta changes from a sinusoid into a sawtooth with high asymmetry and
592 skewness. Furthermore, there is an associated loss of power between ~1-6 Hz as
593 running speed increases (Fig. 3). Interestingly, the loss of lower frequency power along
594 with the development of the harmonics suggests that, as the amount of input increases,
595 the initial effect will not necessarily be the entrainment of local circuits at gamma
596 frequency, but increasing the network activity in the theta band This hypothesis is

597 supported by the observation of inhibition dependent theta resonance (Stark et al.
598 2013). When there is little to no input, interneurons that resonant at theta frequency will
599 express incoherent entrainment between 1-6 Hz. As input increases, these neuron
600 begin to resonate, with power redistributing into theta. Finally, as hippocampal activity
601 increases with velocity, the oscillatory energy begins to extend beyond the theta
602 resonance and begins to entrain local circuits at gamma frequency.

603 This theory of energy cascade is not novel. In fact, it shares similarity with the
604 concepts of self-organized criticality (Bak et al. 1987). Self-organized criticality was
605 broadly used to describe any system in which there is an inverse correlation between
606 oscillatory power and oscillatory frequency. This concept later found an analogous
607 home in neuroscience, describing both the shape of the power spectra as well as
608 neuronal avalanches (Beggs and Plenz 2003; Beggs and Timme 2012; Plenz and
609 Thiagarajan 2007). With these insights, it is possible to consider the mechanisms by
610 which the brain gives rise to cognition by relating activity through neural circuits.

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