

1 **Title:** Distinct networks coupled with parietal cortex for spatial representations  
2 inside and outside the visual field

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38 **Abstract**

39 Our mental representation of egocentric space is influenced by the disproportionate sensory  
40 perception of the body. Previous studies have focused on the neural architecture for  
41 egocentric representations within the visual field. However, the space representation  
42 underlying the body is still unclear. To address this problem, we applied both fMRI and MEG  
43 to a spatial-memory paradigm by using a virtual environment in which human participants  
44 remembered a target location left, right, or back relative to their own body. Both experiments  
45 showed larger involvement of the frontoparietal network in representing a retrieved target on  
46 the left/right side than on the back. Conversely, the medial temporal lobe (MTL)-parietal  
47 network was more involved in retrieving a target behind the participants. The MEG data  
48 showed preferential connectivity in the alpha-band frequency in both networks. These  
49 findings suggest that the parietal cortex may represent the entire space around the self-body  
50 by coordinating two distinct brain networks.

## 51 **Introduction**

52 While planning to reach a target, it is necessary to obtain its location information in the body-  
53 centered reference frame or the so-called “egocentric” spatial coordinates<sup>1-4</sup>. Previous studies  
54 using humans and nonhuman primates indicated the crucial involvement of the parietal cortex  
55 in the representation of egocentric location for sensory perception, motor action, and their  
56 coordination<sup>4-10</sup>. Anatomically, the parietal cortex is located at the late stage of the dorsal  
57 pathway, which is often named the “where” or “how” pathway<sup>11-12</sup>. Perceptual signals,  
58 including visual, somatosensory, and vestibular information, converge on the parietal cortex,  
59 which interacts with the frontal eye field (FEF), the region associated with attention and eye  
60 movement toward a target in the external space around the self-body<sup>13-16</sup>. These anatomical  
61 connection patterns are consistent with those reported by neuropsychological studies, that is,  
62 damage to the parietal cortex results in a form of impaired egocentric spatial awareness  
63 known as hemispherical neglect, which leads to neglect of a target on one side of the field of  
64 vision<sup>17</sup>. Hemispherical neglect appears not only in perception but also in the memory field,  
65 where it is known as “representational neglect”<sup>18</sup>. On the basis of data accumulated from  
66 human imaging studies examining spatial navigation and episodic recollection<sup>19-23</sup>, the  
67 parietal cortex is considered to represent the egocentric space for both perception and  
68 memory.

69 Mnemonic representations of the egocentric space raise the question of whether the  
70 spatial representation differs between the inside and outside of a visual field. While the  
71 former can be represented in both vision and memory, the latter can be represented only in  
72 memory. Previous human behavioral studies reported decreased performance<sup>24</sup> or prolonged  
73 response latency<sup>25</sup> when participants located a target behind them. This phenomenon, known  
74 as the “alignment effect”<sup>26</sup> or “front facilitation,”<sup>27</sup> suggests that the space surrounding our  
75 body is coded heterogeneously by different neural systems depending on the target location

76 along the anterior-posterior axis of the self-body<sup>27</sup>. To explore the neural architectures  
77 responsible for the representation of egocentric space, previous studies mostly examined the  
78 target representation within the visual field; however, one neuroimaging study, which  
79 examined target representation retrieved from memory, suggested that the parietal cortex  
80 codes the whole space around the self-body<sup>28</sup>. However, the representation properties of the  
81 inside/outside of the visual field in the parietal cortex and its interactions with associated  
82 brain areas remain unsolved.

83         To characterize the neural architectures supporting the mental representations of  
84 egocentric space inside and outside the visual field, we applied functional magnetic  
85 resonance imaging (fMRI) and magnetoencephalography (MEG) to a spatial-memory  
86 paradigm using a 3D virtual environment for human participants (Fig. 1a), which we recently  
87 devised<sup>29</sup>. In this paradigm, participants encoded a spatial relationship among three objects  
88 (walking period) in each trial. While the same three objects were used across trials, their  
89 spatial relationships differed pseudorandomly. After the walking period, one of the three  
90 objects was presented in the center of the display with the environmental background, which  
91 prompted the participants to feel as if they were facing the objects in the virtual environment  
92 (facing period)<sup>29</sup>. Then, one of the other two objects was presented on a scrambled  
93 background as the target object (targeting period). The participants remembered the location  
94 of the target object relative to the body. The to-be-remembered targeting locations could be in  
95 the left, right, or back positions of the participants' egocentric spaces (Fig. 1b). This spatial-  
96 memory paradigm allowed us to compare the neural representations of egocentric space  
97 between the inside and outside of the visual field when the participants remembered a target  
98 location, which had been encoded in each trial.

## 99 **Results**

### 100 **Behavioral performance**

101 Nineteen and 12 healthy volunteers participated in the fMRI and MEG experiments,  
102 respectively. The participants performed the spatial-memory task with high accuracy rates in  
103 both the experiments (MRI:  $93.6\% \pm 1.5\%$ ; MEG:  $90.4\% \pm 1.9\%$ ). The performances did not  
104 differ among the three target locations (i.e., right, left, and back) in both fMRI [ $F(2,54) =$   
105  $0.82, P = 0.44$ ] and MEG [ $F(2,33) = 0.08, P = 0.93$ ] experiments (Fig. 2a), indicating that  
106 the participants solved the spatial memory task accurately regardless of the target location.

### 107 **MRI contrast analysis**

108 The neural activity in the fMRI experiment was examined using the 4-s time-window of the  
109 targeting period in which the participants remembered the location of the target object (i.e.,  
110 human character) relative to their self-body in the virtual environment. A contrast analysis  
111 showed a significantly stronger blood-oxygen-level-dependent (BOLD) signal for the  
112 left/right-target condition than for the back-target condition in the parietal cortex, precuneus,  
113 FEF, and SMA (Fig. 3a,  $P < 0.01$ ; initial threshold,  $P < 0.05$ ; cluster-corrected for multiple  
114 comparisons). In contrast, no brain areas showed a significantly stronger BOLD signal for the  
115 back-target condition than for the left/right-target condition in the same statistical condition  
116 with multiple comparisons, although we found a significant cluster for the back-target  
117 location in the right rhinal cortex (entorhinal cortex [ERC] and perirhinal cortex [PRC]) of  
118 the MTL when we used a more liberal threshold (Fig. 3b,  $P < 0.05$ , uncorrected).

119       Regarding the larger activation of the dorsal brain regions under the left/right-target  
120 conditions than the back-target condition, one question might be whether the elevated  
121 activities can be explained by eye movements under different target conditions. To test this  
122 possibility, we examined the participants' gaze positions during the 4-s time window of the  
123 targeting period. The gaze positions did not differ among the egocentric locations of the

124 retrieved targets in the horizontal direction [ $F(2, 51) = 1.7, P = 0.19$ ] or the vertical direction  
125 [ $F(2, 51) = 0.084, P = 0.92$ ] (Fig. 2b). In addition to the average gaze position, we examined  
126 the frequencies of saccadic eye movements (see Methods), but no significant difference was  
127 found between the left/right and back-target conditions during the targeting period [ $F(2, 51)$   
128  $= 0.007, P = 0.99$ ] (Fig. 2c). These results indicate that the increased activity in the dorsal  
129 brain regions was not due to eye movements that may have been induced by the retrieved  
130 egocentric locations. Taken together, these findings reasonably suggest that the frontoparietal  
131 cortical areas were involved in an additional mental process to represent a retrieved target to  
132 the left/right in comparison with that behind the participants' self-body. Similarly,  
133 remembering a target behind the self-body may employ the right MTL more than when the  
134 participants remembered a target to their left/right.

### 135 **MRI functional-connectivity analysis**

136 We subsequently investigated the brain regions that interacted with the parietal cortex and  
137 precuneus when the participants remembered the target location to their left, right, and back.  
138 To examine the interactions, we conducted whole-brain functional connectivity analysis  
139 using the anatomical ROIs of the parietal cortex and precuneus as the seeds based on the  
140 AAL (see Methods for details). The results showed that, in addition to a mutual connectivity  
141 between these brain areas, both the parietal cortex and precuneus exhibited a significantly  
142 higher connectivity to the FEF and SMA under the left/right-target condition than under the  
143 back-target condition (Fig. 4a,  $P < 0.01$ , initial threshold,  $P < 0.05$ , cluster-corrected for  
144 multiple comparison). This result indicates the cooperative involvement of the FEF, SMA,  
145 parietal cortex, and precuneus while processing a target object in the visual field, even when  
146 the egocentric object location was not perceived. In contrast, the parietal cortex, but not the  
147 precuneus, showed increased functional connectivity to the right ERC when a retrieved target  
148 location was behind the participants' body (Fig. 4b,  $P < 0.01$ , initial threshold,  $P < 0.05$ ,

149 cluster-corrected for multiple comparisons via small-volume correction using the bilateral  
150 MTL mask). We also examined the functional connectivity using FEF and SMA seeds and  
151 found that these two brain regions exhibited strong connectivity to the parietal cortex and  
152 precuneus in the left/right-target condition but did not show increased functional connectivity  
153 to any other brain regions, including the ERC, in the back-target condition. These results  
154 suggest that our egocentric space is represented by two distinct brain networks: the  
155 frontoparietal network for the target within the visual field, and the MTL-parietal network for  
156 the target outside the visual field.

### 157 **MEG contrast analysis**

158 The fMRI experiments showed preferential involvement of the frontoparietal network in the  
159 left/right-target condition and those of the MTL-parietal network in the back-target condition.  
160 To examine the temporal dynamics of these brain networks, we subsequently conducted an  
161 MEG study using the same spatial memory task that was used for the fMRI study, except for  
162 the time parameters (Fig. 1a).

163 Figure 5a shows the results of the contrast analysis that compared the activity strength  
164 at each sensor between the left/right-target and back-target conditions. We found a cluster of  
165 sensors in the left-posterior area, which showed significantly stronger activity under the  
166 left/right-target condition than under the back-target condition during 0.67–0.85 s after the  
167 onset of the targeting period ( $P < 0.05$ , initial threshold, two tailed;  $P = 0.04$ , spatial-temporal  
168 cluster-corrected for multiple comparison) (Fig. 5b). Conversely, no cluster of sensors  
169 showed stronger activity under the back-target condition than under the left/right-target  
170 condition. In addition to the fMRI study, we examined the participants' gaze positions and  
171 frequencies of saccadic eye movements in MEG experiments. There was no significant  
172 difference among the left, right, and back target conditions during the 1-s time-window of the  
173 targeting period in the eye positions [ $F(2, 27) = 0.32, 0.42, P = 0.73$  and  $0.66$ , respectively,



174 for the horizontal and vertical positions, respectively] (Fig. 2b) nor the saccade frequencies  
175 [ $F(2, 27) = 0.14, P = 0.87$ ] (Fig. 2c). These results were consistent with the results of the  
176 fMRI experiments, indicating predominant spatial representation processing within the visual  
177 field relative to that outside the visual field.

178 To examine the changes in neural activity required for the retrieval of a target  
179 location, we compared the activity strength under back-target, left-target, and right-target  
180 conditions with the control trials, in which a targeting-character was not presented and the  
181 participants were not required to remember a target location (Fig. 5c). Figure 5d shows the  
182 time course of the topographic activity map under each condition relative to that under  
183 control conditions. Increased activity was observed in the left posterior area of the head. This  
184 left-posterior cluster showed a significant increase in activity during 0.5–0.6 s from the onset  
185 of the targeting period under the left-target and right-target conditions ( $P < 0.05$ , initial  
186 threshold;  $P < 0.05$ , cluster-corrected for multiple comparison) although the same trend of  
187 increase in activity was observed under the back-target condition [ $t(11) = 2.42, P = 0.03$ ,  
188 uncorrected]. To localize the brain regions contributing to the significant activity increase in  
189 the left-posterior cluster, we conducted a source analysis of the MEG signal<sup>30</sup>. The source  
190 powers were distributed largely in the parietal cortex and precuneus in the left- and right-  
191 target conditions (Fig. 5e). We also found that the source power for the back-target condition  
192 was distributed in the parietal cortex and precuneus, although the level of source power was  
193 smaller than those under the left -and right-target conditions.

194 To explore the brain regions exhibiting larger neural activity under the back-target  
195 condition than under the left/right-target condition, we conducted a whole-brain analysis to  
196 compare the source power between the two conditions at intervals of 0.2 s after the onset of  
197 the targeting period (Fig. 6a). We found a strong source-power for the back-target condition  
198 in the right MTL, including the ERC, during 0.2–0.4 s after the onset of the targeting period.

199 Using anatomical ROIs of each hemisphere of the whole MTL, we examined the precise time  
200 courses of the source power for the back -and left/right-target conditions relative to the  
201 control trials. The results indicated elevations in the source power after the onset of the  
202 targeting period under both back-target and left/right-target conditions in both hemispheres of  
203 the MTL. However, only the right MTL exhibited a significantly larger source power for the  
204 back-target condition than for the left/right-target condition in the early phase (0.25–0.37 s)  
205 after the onset of the targeting period (Fig. 6b,  $P < 0.05$ , initial threshold;  $P < 0.05$ , spatial-  
206 temporal cluster correction for multiple comparison, two-tailed). We further examined the  
207 source power in the right MTL by using the anatomical masks of its subregions and found  
208 that the source power was larger under the back-target condition than under the left/right-  
209 target condition in all the subregions [HPC:  $t(11) = 3.00$ ,  $P = 0.048$ ; PHC:  $t(11) = 2.98$ ,  $P =$   
210  $0.049$ ; PRC:  $t(11) = 3.22$ ,  $P = 0.032$ ; ERC:  $t(11) = 3.39$ ,  $P = 0.024$ , Bonferroni-corrected for  
211 multiple comparisons ( $n = 4$ )] (Fig. 6c). Collectively, the MEG contrast analyses in source-  
212 power between the back- and left/right-target conditions indicate that the right MTL,  
213 including the ERC, was involved more in the back-target condition than in the left/right-  
214 target condition in the early phase (0.25–0.37 s) after the onset of the targeting period, while  
215 the parietal cortex and precuneus were involved more in the left/right-target condition than in  
216 the back-target condition in the late phase (Fig. 5b, 0.67–0.85 s).

### 217 **MEG functional-connectivity analysis**

218 Next, we examined the connectivity of the parietal cortex with the FEF, SMA, and MTL  
219 areas by calculating the phase lag index (PLI) for the MEG data<sup>31-32</sup>. We chose the two time-  
220 windows of interest (0.08–0.48 s and 0.56–0.96 s after the onset of targeting period, see  
221 method for details) since they could include at least three cycles of alpha-band waves and  
222 cover the early and late phases, which were revealed from the MEG contrast analysis (Figs.  
223 5&6). Figure 7 shows the differences in connectivity between the back- and left/right-target

224 conditions. The connectivity patterns differed significantly between the two time windows in  
225 the alpha band (8–13 Hz) [ $F(1, 132) = 8.24, P = 0.02$ , repeated-measures two-way ANOVA,  
226 Bonferroni-corrected for multiple comparisons,  $n = 4$  for frequency bands], but not in the  
227 other bands. During the early time window, the parietal cortex showed a larger connectivity  
228 with the right ERC and PRC of the MTL under the back-target condition than under the  
229 left/right-target condition, although the difference was statistically marginal [ERC:  $t(11) =$   
230  $2.16, P = 0.06$ ; PRC:  $t(11) = 1.91, P = 0.08$ , uncorrected]. Conversely, we found a larger  
231 connectivity of the parietal cortex with the FEF [ $t(11) = 2.61, P = 0.02$ , uncorrected] and  
232 SMA [ $t(11) = 1.73, P = 0.11$ , uncorrected] under the left/right-target condition than under the  
233 back-target condition during the late time window. These results were consistent with those  
234 obtained with functional connectivity analysis using fMRI (Fig. 4). In contrast to the time-  
235 dependent alpha-band connectivity of the parietal cortex to the MTL and frontal areas, we did  
236 not find a change in the connectivity of the precuneus with any of the ROIs in any frequency  
237 band across the two time windows of interest.

## 238 **Discussion**

239 The present combined fMRI and MEG study showed greater involvement of the fronto-  
240 parietal network when a participant remembered a target location on the left/right side than  
241 on the back of the self-body. Conversely, larger involvement of the MTL-parietal network  
242 was revealed when a target object was behind a participant. These results suggest that the  
243 parietal cortex represents the external space surrounding the self-body in mind by interacting  
244 with the dorsal frontal regions and the MTL.

245 A previous human fMRI study using multi-voxel pattern analysis (MVPA) reported  
246 that the parietal cortex codes the egocentric space both inside and outside the visual field<sup>28</sup>,  
247 which is consistent with the findings of our previous MVPA-based study that employed the  
248 same spatial-memory task as the present one<sup>29</sup>. However, Schindler and Barteles<sup>28</sup> did not  
249 find the relationship between BOLD signal strength and egocentric space demonstrated by  
250 the present study. One reason for this discrepancy might be the different types of memory  
251 required for the two studies. Schindler and Barteles<sup>28</sup> intensively trained participants to learn  
252 a fixed spatial arrangement of eight objects for several days before the MRI scans. During the  
253 scans, the participants remembered a target object location based on the knowledge that they  
254 stored as long-term memory in a different room. In contrast, the present study prompted the  
255 participants to encode a trial-specific spatial relationship among the three objects in each trial  
256 (see Methods) and remember a target location from their short-term memory in the same 3D  
257 virtual environment as they encoded during the scan. These different task conditions may  
258 have resulted in different participant retrieval strategies between the two studies, which may  
259 have affected space representations in the parietal cortex.

260 The present study exhibited disproportional spatial representations around the self-  
261 body, with a bias toward the left/right-target location in comparison with the back-target  
262 location. The preferential processing of the left/right-target location relative to the back by

263 the frontoparietal network is consistent with the results of previous behavioral studies that  
264 reported “front facilitation,” i.e., the location of a target in the anterior part of a participant is  
265 more efficiently detected than a target located behind them<sup>24,25,27</sup>. On the other hand, we  
266 found greater involvement of the MTL-parietal network in representing the back target  
267 location than the left/right target location. Interestingly, the present MEG experiment  
268 comparing each target-location condition with the control condition showed that the source  
269 power increased in the MTL not only for the back-target location but also for the left/right-  
270 target location (Figs. 6b). These results suggest that the retrieved target location information  
271 is transmitted from the MTL to the parietal cortex regardless of whether the location was  
272 inside or outside the visual field. These findings are consistent with the results of previous  
273 studies that suggested the involvement of both the MTL and parietal cortex as members of  
274 the core brain system in the recollection of episodic memory<sup>33,34</sup>. We hypothesized that the  
275 MTL-parietal network was involved in the back-target condition more than the left/right-  
276 target condition to generate a mental representation of a retrieved target location because the  
277 representation in the left/right-target condition was also supported by the frontoparietal  
278 network, which might reduce the demand on the MTL-parietal network in comparison with  
279 the back-target condition.

280         While the fMRI experiment suggested the preferential involvement of only the rhinal  
281 cortex, particularly the ERC in the back-target condition, the MEG experiment suggested the  
282 involvement of all MTL subareas. This inconsistency might be due to the ill-posed nature of  
283 the MEG inverse problem (e.g., the “source leakage”), since a limited number of magnetic-  
284 field sensors yielded insufficient activity to discriminate among thousands of source points,  
285 particularly for neighboring regions<sup>35-37</sup>. The MEG source power in the other MTL  
286 subregions might thus be caused by signal leakage from the ERC. Another possibility might  
287 be that the MEG signal reflected synchronized activity at each instantaneous time point and

288 would be more sensitive to transient neuronal operations than fMRI analysis, which is based  
289 on the averaged BOLD signal<sup>38</sup> in each TR (2 s). In either case, the ERC might play a key  
290 role in the MTL-parietal network for the representation of a retrieved target location, which is  
291 consistent with the results of previous studies that examined the spatial properties of the ERC  
292 neurons (e.g., grid cells, head direction cells) in both rodents<sup>22,39-42</sup> and primates<sup>43-45</sup>.  
293 Importantly, the primate ERC reportedly represents the external space according to the gaze  
294 position and even in imagined navigation<sup>46</sup>. In contrast to the ERC, other MTL subregions  
295 may be involved in the retrieval of the target location<sup>47-49</sup>. Considering the high performance  
296 of the present spatial memory task and the fact that post-scan interviews of the participants  
297 showed no strategic efforts for retrieval, the retrieval process might be only transient in the  
298 present experimental paradigm, which could be detected more efficiently by MEG than by  
299 fMRI.

300         The MEG connectivity analysis using PLI revealed a preferential increase in  
301 synchronization at alpha-band frequency (8–13 Hz) for both frontoparietal and MTL-parietal  
302 networks for the left/right-target and back-target conditions, respectively. In contrast, we did  
303 not observe a differential increase in synchronization in the other frequency bands. These  
304 findings were consistent with the results of previous MEG and EEG studies, which suggested  
305 functional roles of alpha-band phase synchrony in long-range communications across distant  
306 brain regions, including the parietal cortex<sup>8,50-53</sup>. One remaining question concerns the  
307 functional significance of the MTL-parietal network in daily life. In the present spatial-  
308 memory paradigm, the participants obtained the egocentric target location from their short-  
309 term memory, either inside or outside the visual field<sup>29</sup>. Instead, we usually locate a target  
310 inside the visual field for a subsequent action by looking at it<sup>54,55</sup>, while we occasionally  
311 retrieve a target behind us from short-term memory. Therefore, the visual modality of  
312 information on the back is always encoded in the past, and the preceding spatiotemporal

313 information is retained in the MTL<sup>56,57</sup>. Collectively, the parietal cortex may represent the  
314 whole space around the self-body by coordinating the MTL-parietal network and the  
315 frontoparietal network, which may equip us with the mental representation of the present  
316 external world interacting with our past (retrieval) and future (action planning).

## 317 **Materials and Methods**

318

### 319 **Participants**

320 Nineteen and 12 right-handed university students with normal or corrected-to-normal vision  
321 were recruited from Peking University for fMRI and MEG experiments, respectively (fMRI:  
322 12 women, 7 men; MEG: 4 women, 8 men). The average age of the participants recruited for  
323 the fMRI and MEG experiments was 24.9 years (range: 18–30 years) and 22.5 years (range:  
324 19–25 years), respectively. None of the participants had a history of psychiatric or  
325 neurological disorders; all of them provided written informed consent prior to the start of the  
326 experiment, which was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Peking University.

327

### 328 **Experimental design**

329 *Experimental design:* The details of the study design have been described previously<sup>29</sup>. A 3D  
330 virtual environment was programmed using the Unity platform (Unity Technologies, San  
331 Francisco). Three animated 3D human characters (Mixamo, San Francisco,  
332 <https://www.mixamo.com>) were placed on three out of four locations pseudo-randomly  
333 across trials (Fig. 1a). Participants performed the task using a first-person perspective with a  
334 90° field of view (aspect ratio = 4:3) and had never seen a top-down view of the virtual  
335 environment. Experimental stimuli were presented through an LCD projector with a  
336 resolution of 1024 × 768 pixels.

337       The spatial memory task included 144 and 72 trials in the MRI and MEG  
338 experiments, respectively. In each trial, participants walked from one of the four starting  
339 locations toward the human characters and stopped on the wood plate in the center of the  
340 environment. After the walking period, participants experienced a “facing period” and a  
341 “targeting period” sequentially. In the facing period, one of the human characters was



342 presented as a facing-character in the center of the display with the environmental  
343 background for 2.0 s (MRI) or 1.0 s (MEG), with the other two characters being invisible. In  
344 the targeting period, a photo of one of the remaining characters (named as the “targeting-  
345 character”) was presented as a target on a scrambled background for 2.0 s (MRI) or 1.0 s  
346 (MEG). Each of the three periods was followed by a 2.0-s (MRI) or 1.0-s (MEG) delay (noise  
347 screen). At the end of each trial, participants indicated the direction of the target relative to  
348 their self-body by pressing a button when a cue was presented.

349 We added head-nodding detection (HND) trials (16 trials for MRI and 36 trials for  
350 MEG) to the spatial memory task. In the HND trials, a photo of one of the human characters  
351 was presented after the walking period, and the participants were then asked to indicate  
352 whether the human character nodded its head during the walking period. Each human  
353 character nodded its head at a probability of 20.6% at a random time point between the start  
354 and end of walking. Because the trial types were indistinguishable during the walking period,  
355 the participants were required to pay attention to the head-nodding of the human characters  
356 during the walking period, which would reduce the possibility of voluntary memorization of  
357 the spatial relationship of the three objects. Post-scanning interviews showed that none of the  
358 participants made efforts to memorize the spatial relationship<sup>29</sup>.

359 *MEG control conditions:* Two control conditions (36 trials for each) were added to the spatial  
360 memory task in the MEG experiment. In the control conditions, after the walking period, a  
361 white cross was presented instead of a human character during both the facing and targeting  
362 periods or during the targeting period (Fig. 4c). The participants were instructed to rest with  
363 their eyes open and fixate on the white cross. After the targeting period, the participants  
364 pressed a button corresponding to the number presented on the screen during the response  
365 period. The number was determined randomly from one to four in each trial of the control  
366 conditions.

367

368 **fMRI acquisition and analysis**

369 *MRI scanning parameters:* BOLD MRI images were acquired using a 3T Siemens Prisma  
370 scanner equipped with a 20-channel receiver head coil. Functional data were acquired with a  
371 multi-band echo planar imaging sequence (TR: 2000 ms; TE: 30 ms; matrix size:  $112 \times 112 \times$   
372  $62$ ; flip angle:  $90^\circ$ ; gap: 0.3 mm; resolution:  $2 \times 2 \times 2.3 \text{ mm}^3$ ; number of slices: 62; slice  
373 thickness: 2 mm; gap between slices: 0.3 mm; slice orientation: transversal). The signals of  
374 the original voxels (i.e.,  $2 \times 2 \times 2 \text{ mm}^3$ ) were assigned to the corresponding voxels without a  
375 gap ( $2 \times 2 \times 2.3 \text{ mm}^3$ ) to construct participants' native space images. Four experimental  
376 sessions were conducted with 478, 476, 473, and 475 of TRs on average. A high-resolution  
377 T1-weighted three-dimensional anatomical data set was collected to facilitate registration  
378 (MPRAGE: TR: 2530 ms; TE: 2.98 ms; matrix size:  $448 \times 512 \times 192$ ; flip angle:  $7^\circ$ ;  
379 resolution:  $0.5 \times 0.5 \times 1 \text{ mm}^3$ ; number of slices: 192; slice thickness: 1 mm; slice orientation:  
380 sagittal).

381 *fMRI preprocessing:* BOLD images of each scanning session were preprocessed  
382 independently using FSL FEAT (FMRIB's Software Library, version 6.00,  
383 <https://fsl.fmrib.ox.ac.uk/fsl/fslwiki>)<sup>58,59</sup>. For each session, the first three functional volumes  
384 were discarded to allow for T1 equilibration, and the remaining functional volumes were  
385 slice-time corrected, realigned to the first image, high-pass filtered at 100 s, and smoothed  
386 using a 5-mm FWHM Gaussian filter.

387 *Univariate analysis:* The 4-s BOLD signals of the targeting period were modeled using  
388 univariate general linear models (GLM) with the three egocentric directions (left, right, and  
389 back) included as regressors in each experimental session (40 trials) for each participant. The  
390 BOLD signals in the other task periods were modeled by additional regressors, including 12  
391 visual patterns for the 8-s walking period (three spatial arrangements of human characters  $\times$

392 four walking directions), the four types of body rotation for the 4-s facing period (135° and  
393 45° in the clockwise and anti-clockwise directions), the three buttons that participants pressed  
394 during their response for the response period, the time period for the HND trials, and the six  
395 motion parameters. A canonical hemodynamic response function was used for each task  
396 period in GLM. This procedure generated a parameter map for each of the three egocentric  
397 directions (left, right, and back). The parameter maps were averaged across four scanning  
398 sessions for each egocentric direction and registered to a T1-weighted standard image  
399 (MNI152) using FSL FLIRT<sup>60,61</sup> before group-level statistical analyses. The voxel size was  
400 converted into a  $2 \times 2 \times 2 \text{ mm}^3$  resolution during the registration process.

401 *Connectivity analysis:* To conduct whole-brain analyses examining the functional  
402 connectivity of the parietal cortex and precuneus, we first removed several sources of  
403 spurious variance along with their temporal derivatives from the preprocessed functional data  
404 by performing a GLM, which included (1) the mean time courses of the BOLD signal across  
405 voxels within the lateral ventricles; (2) white matter; (3) whole brain; and (4) the six motion  
406 parameters as regressors. The residual signals were bandpass-filtered, leaving signals within  
407 the frequency range of 0.01–0.1 Hz and shifted by two TR intervals (4 s)<sup>62-64</sup>. The signals in  
408 the participant's native space were registered to a T1-weighted standard image (MNI152)  
409 using FSL FLIRT<sup>60,61</sup>. Then, we extracted the TRs during the 4-s targeting period from each  
410 trial and concatenated them with those in the next trial for each of the three egocentric  
411 directions and each session. The BOLD signals in each voxel were z-transformed along the  
412 time course for each direction. Next, we averaged the z-transformed BOLD signals over the  
413 anatomical masks of the brain areas (i.e., the seeds of the parietal cortex and precuneus) on  
414 the basis of the automated anatomical labeling (AAL) template<sup>65</sup>, which generated a regional  
415 time course across trials for each egocentric direction in a session<sup>66</sup>. The regional time course  
416 of each seed was then correlated with the time course of each voxel in the whole brain, which

417 yielded a whole-brain correlation map for the left-, right-, and back-target conditions  
418 separately. The correlation maps were averaged across four scanning sessions (and left-and  
419 right-target conditions) before submitting them to a group-level statistical analysis.

420

#### 421 **MEG acquisition and analysis**

422 *MEG scanning parameters:* Neuromagnetic signals were recorded with a 275-channel whole-  
423 head axial gradiometer DSQ-3500 MEG system (CTF MEG, Canada) at a sampling rate of  
424 1200 Hz. A third-order synthetic gradiometer and linear drift corrections were applied to  
425 remove far-field noise. To measure the head position within the MEG helmet, three head-  
426 position indicator (HPI) coils were attached to the nasion and two preauricular points of each  
427 participant to coregister their head position with the sensor coordinate system. During  
428 scanning, customized chin-rest equipment compatible with MEG was prepared to ensure that  
429 head movements did not exceed 2 mm. After MEG recording, each participant underwent  
430 anatomical MRI scans on a 3T Siemens Prisma scanner (voxel size: 1 mm<sup>3</sup>; flip angle: 9°;  
431 TE: 1.97 ms; TR: 2,300 ms; field of view: 256 × 256 × 176 mm<sup>3</sup>), and three MRI markers  
432 were attached to the locations of the HPI coils to align each participant's anatomical image to  
433 the MEG sensor positions.

434 *MEG preprocessing:* Raw signals from the MEG experiment were preprocessed and analyzed  
435 using the MNE Python toolbox (v0.19; available at: <https://mne.tools/stable/index.html>)<sup>67,68</sup>.  
436 The time courses of the MEG signal were bandpass-filtered between 1 and 100 Hz offline.  
437 Artifacts (e.g., eye movements, eye blinks, and cardiac movements) were removed by  
438 performing independent component analysis (ICA). Then, the MEG signals were visually  
439 inspected and downsampled to 200 Hz to increase the processing speed in later analyses<sup>69</sup>.

440 *Sensor space analysis:* The baseline MEG signal for each trial was calculated by averaging  
441 the signals during the 0.2-s period preceding the onset of the targeting period, and the

442 baseline was subtracted from the signal at each time point during the targeting period in that  
443 trial. Then, the time series of the MEG signal was averaged across trials for each target and  
444 control condition. Contrast analyses were performed to compare the difference between the  
445 left/right-target and back-target conditions, and to test the effects of the recollection in each  
446 of the three target conditions relative to the control conditions. These analyses were  
447 performed on each sensor, and a sensor space was generated for each session. The sensor  
448 spaces were averaged across sessions before submitting them to the statistical test for group-  
449 level statistical analysis.

450 *Source space analysis:* To reconstruct the spatial-temporal activity from the sensor space to  
451 the anatomical space, the forward model was created using a single-compartment (inner  
452 skull) boundary-element method on the basis of each participant's anatomical image, and the  
453 spatial-temporal activity was then inversely modeled using the dynamic statistical parameter  
454 map at each source point and time<sup>30</sup>. The source space was estimated using a subsampling  
455 strategy, which involved subdividing a polygon (oct6) using the spherical coordinate system  
456 provided by FreeSurfer, producing 4098 source points per hemisphere with an average source  
457 spacing of 4.9 mm (assuming a surface area of 1000 cm<sup>2</sup>/hemisphere)<sup>67,70</sup>. The source space  
458 of each participant was morphed to an average surface. The percentile ranks of source-power  
459 strength from the top 5% to 1% was calculated for each egocentric location in comparison  
460 with the control condition or the contrast between the left/right and back conditions. For ROI  
461 analysis, we manually delineated each of the medial temporal lobe (MTL) subareas  
462 (hippocampus [HPC], parahippocampal cortex [PHC], perirhinal cortex [PRC], and  
463 entorhinal cortex [ERC]) on the participant's native space using established protocols<sup>71-74</sup> as  
464 well as the delineating software ITK-SNAP ([www.itksnap.org](http://www.itksnap.org)). The mean source power  
465 within the MTL subareas was calculated by averaging the source power within each mask for  
466 each egocentric location before submitting it to a group-level statistical analysis.

467 *Connectivity analysis:* To assess the connectivity of the parietal cortex and precuneus with  
468 the frontal lobe (FEF/supplementary motor area [SMA]) and MTL subareas in each temporal  
469 period revealed by the MEG contrast analysis (i.e., “early” [0.25–0.37 s after the onset of  
470 targeting period] for the back-target condition and “late” [0.67–0.85 s] for the left/right-target  
471 condition), we examined the phase synchronization of the MEG time series for the following  
472 four frequency bands: alpha (8–13 Hz), beta (13–30 Hz), low-gamma (30–60 Hz), and high-  
473 gamma (60–99 Hz) bands. For this purpose, we first calculated the powers of the MEG signal  
474 in a time window of 400 ms centering iteratively at each of the time points within the two  
475 time periods. The 400-ms time window was applied in this analysis to ensure that at least  
476 three cycles of the source time series could be covered in the alpha band<sup>75</sup>. The powers at  
477 each time point were averaged across trials including all target locations and a control  
478 condition for each participant, and the grand-mean of power across participants was  
479 calculated. We selected the centering time point of the time window that had the maximum  
480 grand-mean power for each time period. This procedure yielded two time-series (the time  
481 window of 0.08–0.48 s corresponding to the centering point of 0.28 s and the time window of  
482 0.56–0.96 s corresponding to the centering point of 0.76 s for the “early” and “late” periods,  
483 respectively). Phase synchronization was tested among the eight ROIs (parietal cortex,  
484 precuneus, FEF, SMA, and right MTL subareas) for each time series, condition (left, right, or  
485 back), and frequency band using PLI<sup>31,32</sup> and the built-in function of the MNE Python  
486 toolbox<sup>67,68</sup>. In each frequency band, we calculated the difference in the connectivity of each  
487 time series for each ROI between the back- and left/right-target conditions before group-level  
488 statistical analysis.

489

490 **Statistical analysis**

491 For the MRI univariate and connectivity analyses, an initial threshold of  $P < 0.01$  was applied  
492 to each voxel, and the reliability of clusters was tested using a nonparametric statistical  
493 inference that did not make assumptions about the distribution of the data<sup>22,66,67</sup>. The test was  
494 conducted with the FSL randomize package (version v2.9,  
495 <http://fsl.fmrib.ox.ac.uk/fsl/fslwiki/Randomise>) with 5000 random sign-flips, and clusters  
496 with a size higher than 95% of the maximal supra-threshold clusters in the permutation  
497 distribution were then reported. Data obtained by ROI analysis of the MRI BOLD signal,  
498 MEG source power, and MEG connectivity analysis were tested using either a  $t$ -test with  
499 Bonferroni correction or repeated-measures two-way ANOVA. The MEG sensor space  
500 analysis used either a spatial-temporal cluster permutation test or a spatial-cluster  
501 permutation test. All statistical tests were two-sided unless otherwise noted, and significance  
502 was determined when the corrected  $P$  value was less than 0.05.

503

#### 504 **Data and code availability**

505 The datasets and code supporting the current study are available from the  
506 corresponding author (Yuji Naya, [yujin@pku.edu.cn](mailto:yujin@pku.edu.cn)) upon reasonable request.

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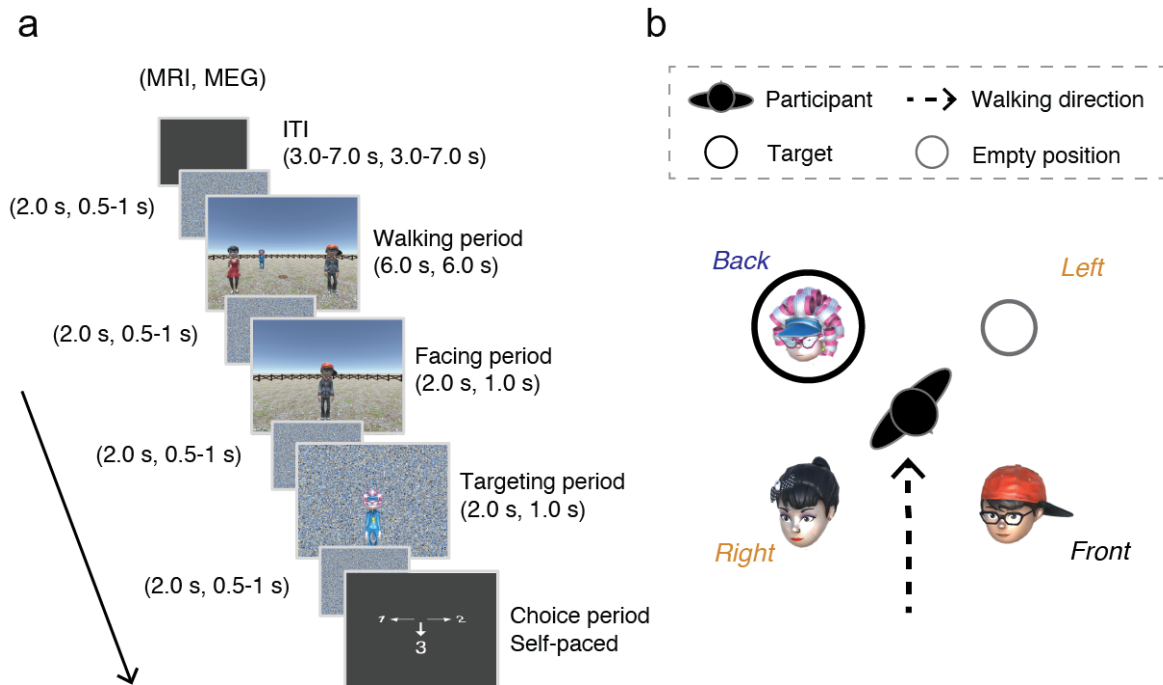
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695 **Figures**

696



697

698 Figure 1. a) Spatial-memory task paradigm. Each trial consisted of four periods. Walking

699 period: participants walked toward three human characters using the first-person perspective

700 and stopped on a wood plate in the center. Facing period: one of the human characters is

701 presented, indicating the participant's current self-orientation. Targeting period: a photo of

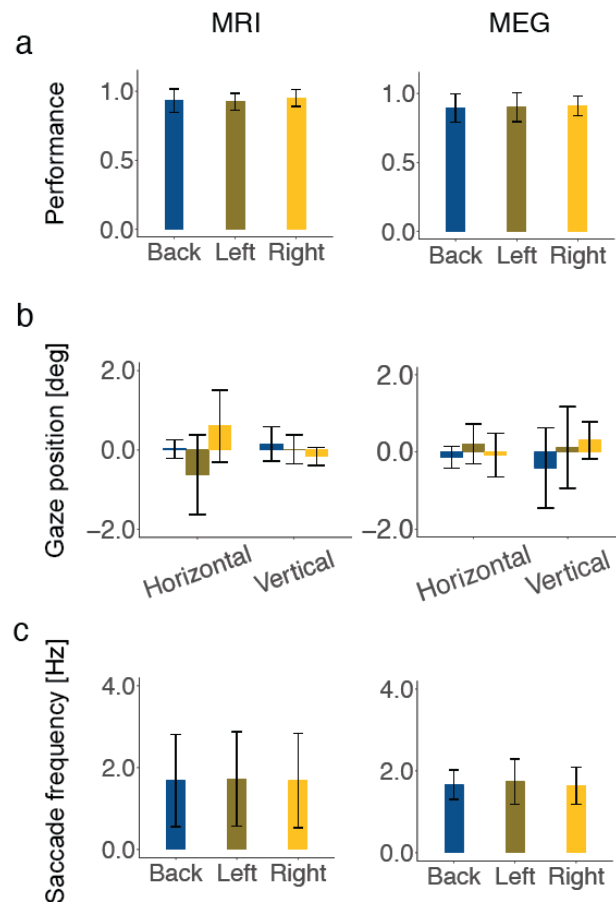
702 the target character was presented on a scrambled background. Choice period: the

703 participants chose the direction of the target character relative to their body upon the

704 presentation of a response cue. b) The spatial relationship between the participant and the

705 human characters in the example trial of Fig. 1a, with the target location behind the

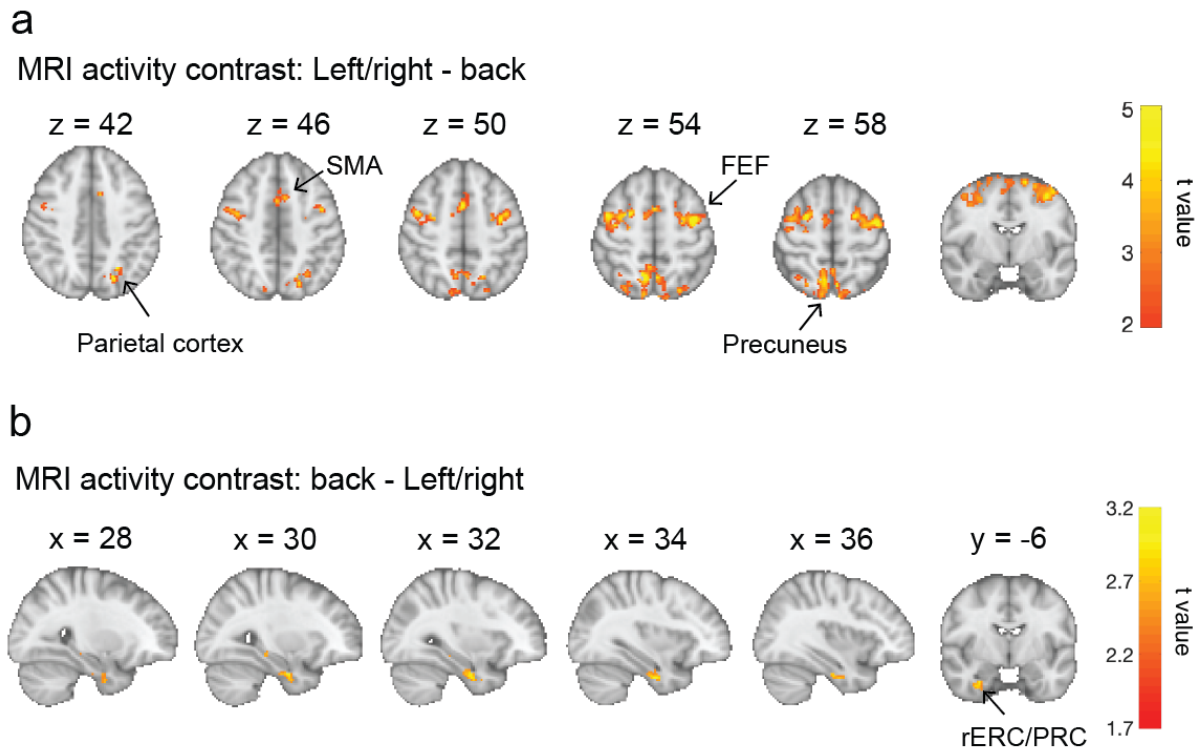
706 participant's self-body (*black circle*).



707

708 Figure 2. a) Performance of participants for the three egocentric target locations in the MRI  
709 (n = 19) and MEG (n = 12) experiments. A statistically significant difference was not  
710 detected in the performances of the target locations by repeated-measures one-way ANOVA  
711 in the MRI [ $F(2,54) = 0.82, P = 0.44$ ] or MEG [ $F(2,33) = 0.08, P = 0.93$ ] experiments. b)  
712 Gaze positions of the participants during the targeting period (4 s for MRI, 1 s for MEG)  
713 were shown for each target condition. No significant difference was found among the left,  
714 right, and back-target conditions in the MRI experiments [horizontal:  $F(2, 51) = 1.7, P =$   
715  $0.19$ , vertical:  $F(2, 51) = 0.08, P = 0.92$ ] or the MEG experiments [horizontal:  $F(2, 27) =$   
716  $0.32, P = 0.73$ , vertical:  $F(2, 27) = 0.42, P = 0.66$ ]. c) No significant difference in the  
717 frequencies of saccadic eye movements was found among the three conditions during the  
718 targeting period [MRI:  $F(2, 51) = 0.01, P = 0.99$ ; MEG:  $F(2, 27) = 0.14, P = 0.87$ ]. Error bars  
719 indicate standard deviations.

720



721

722 Figure 3. a) MRI contrast for the “left/right-target” – “back-target” condition: significant

723 clusters were observed in the parietal cortex, precuneus, FEF, and SMA ( $P < 0.01$ , initial

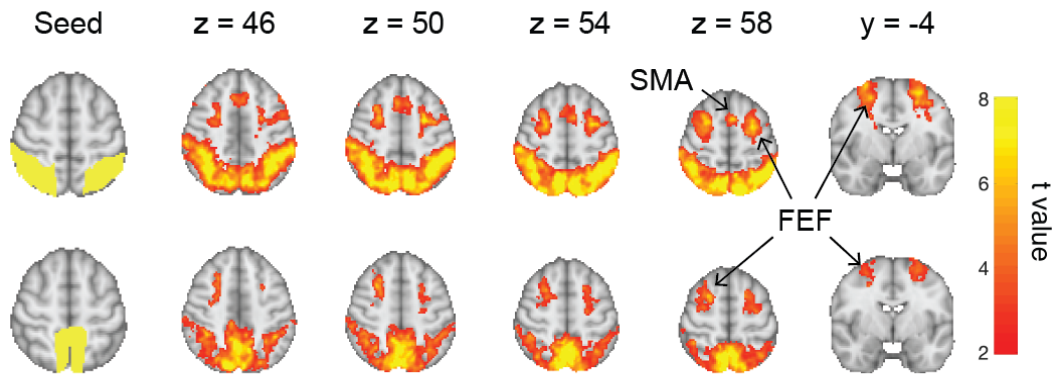
724 threshold,  $P < 0.05$ , cluster-corrected for multiple comparison). b) MRI contrast for the

725 “back-target” – “left/right-target” condition: a cluster was observed in the right rhinal cortex,

726 including the entorhinal cortex (ERC) and perirhinal cortex (PRC) ( $P < 0.05$  uncorrected).

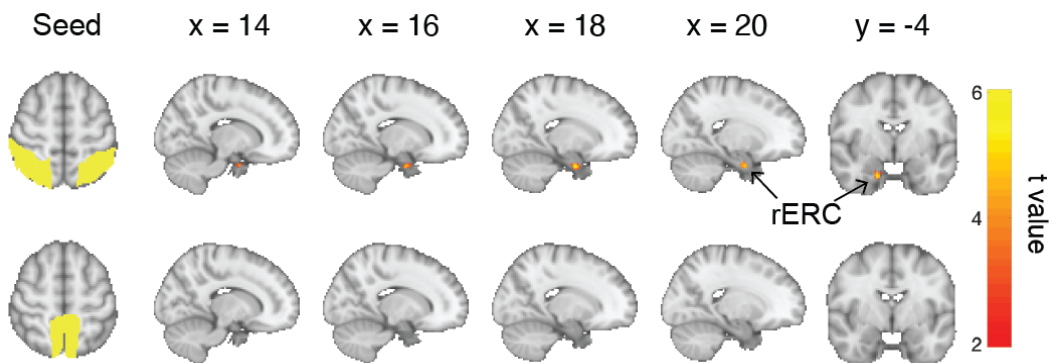
a

MRI connectivity contrast: Left/right - back



b

MRI connectivity contrast: back - Left/right



727

728

729 Figure 4. MRI connectivity analysis using the parietal cortex and precuneus as seeds. a)

730 Connectivity contrast for the “left/right-target” – “back-target” condition: significant

731 connections were found in the parietal cortex, precuneus, FEF, and SMA for both seeds ( $P <$

732 0.01, initial threshold,  $P < 0.05$ , cluster-corrected for multiple comparison). b) Connectivity

733 contrast for the “back-target” – “left/right-target” condition: a significant connection was

734 observed between the parietal cortex and right ERC ( $P < 0.01$ , initial threshold,  $P < 0.05$ ,

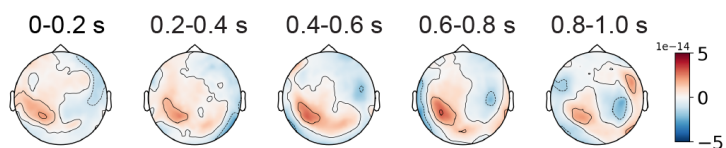
735 cluster-corrected for multiple comparisons via small-volume correction using the bilateral

736 MTL mask); no connection was found between the precuneus and MTL regions.

737

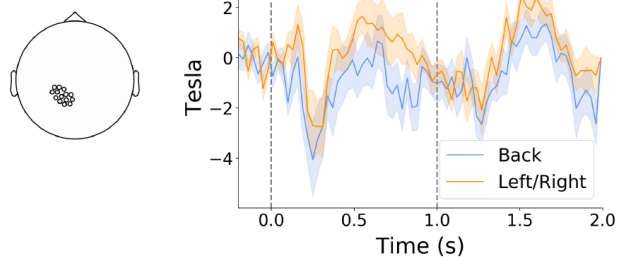
**a**

MEG contrast: Left/right - back



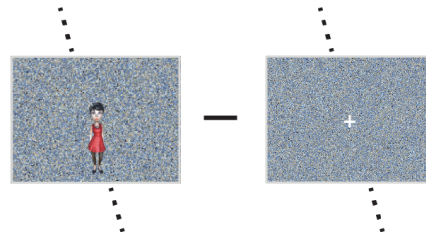
**b**

0.67-0.85 s



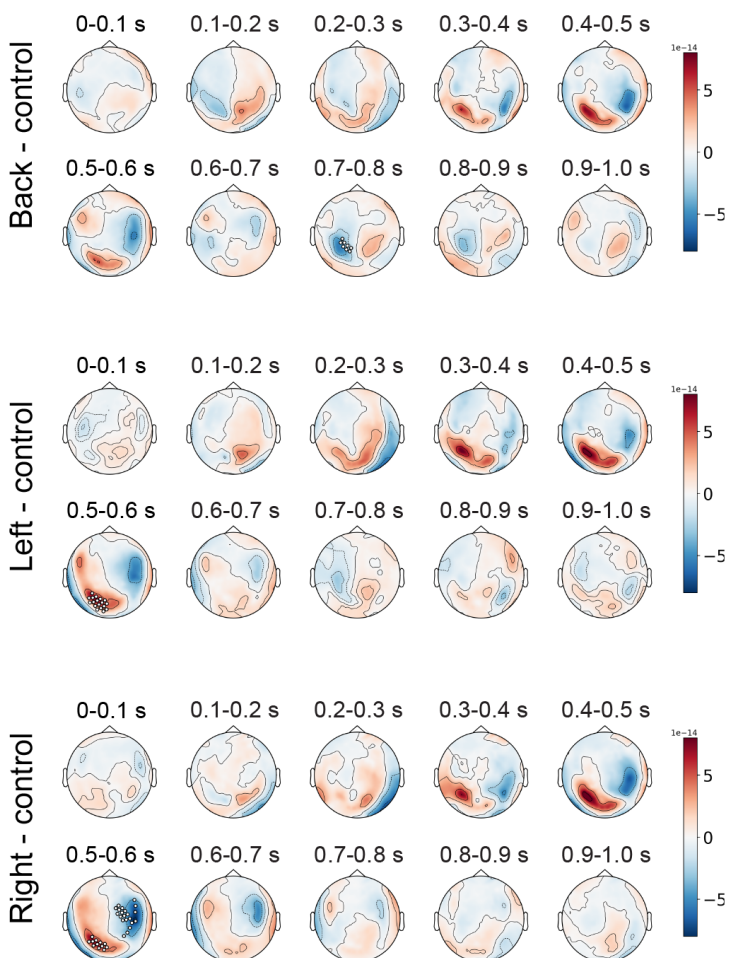
**c**

SMT (MEG)    Control (MEG)



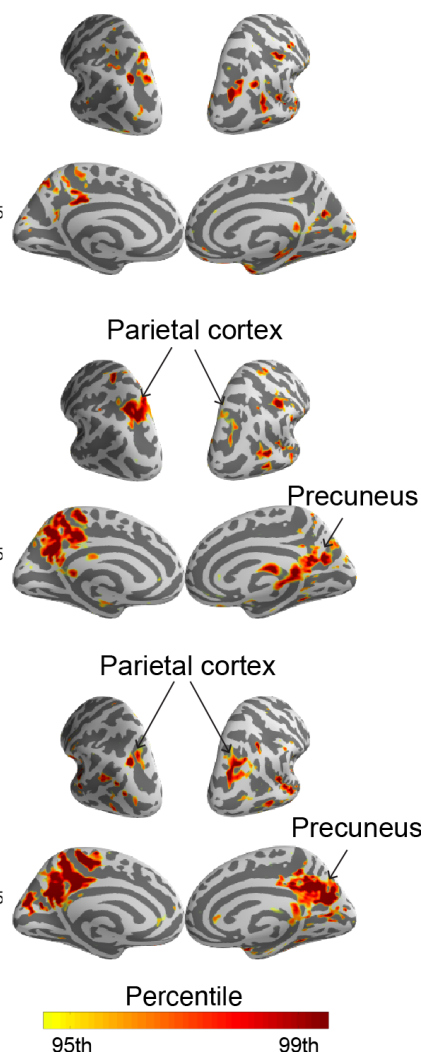
**d**

MEG contrast: back, left, right - control

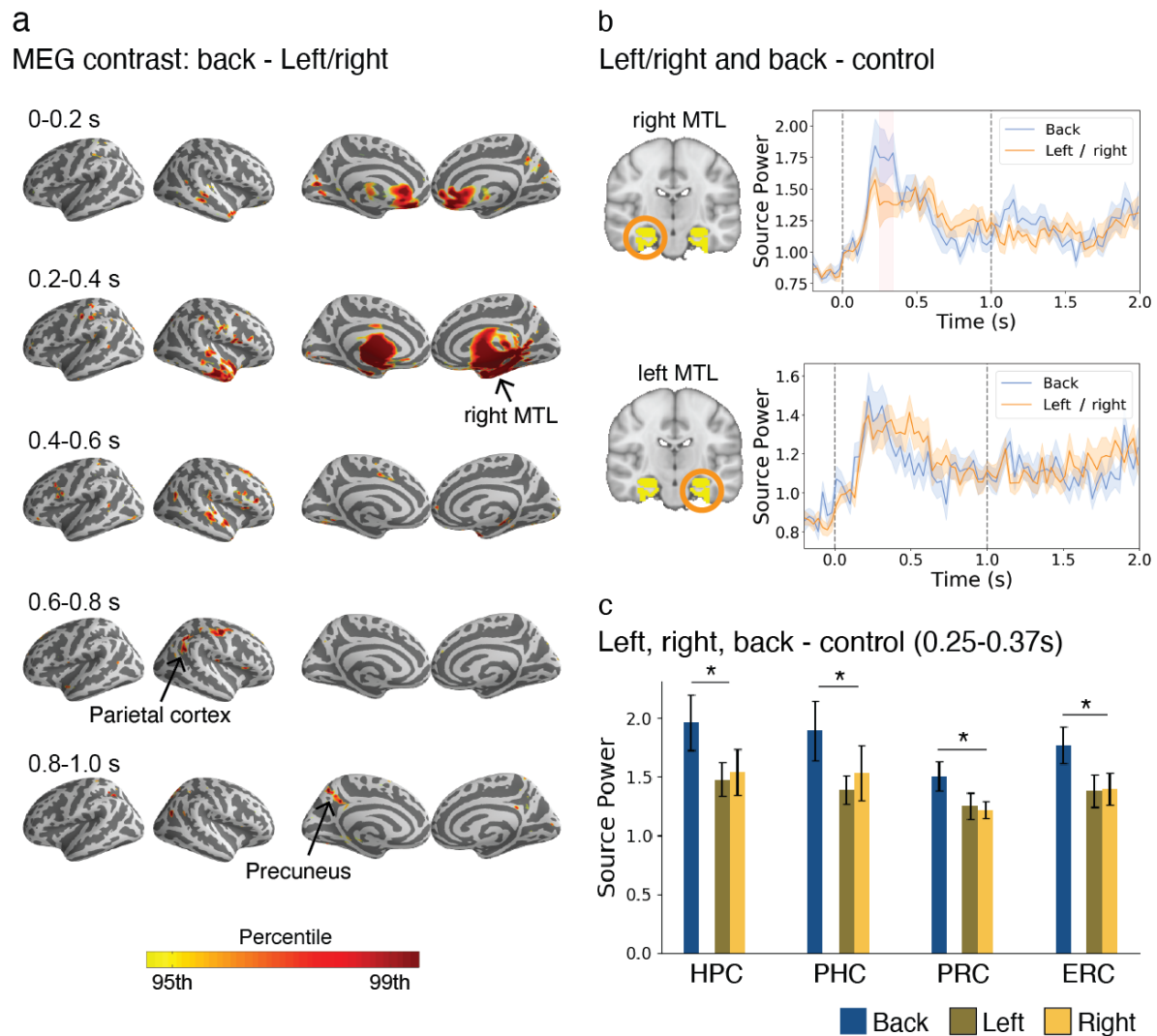


**e**

Source power in 0.5-0.6 s

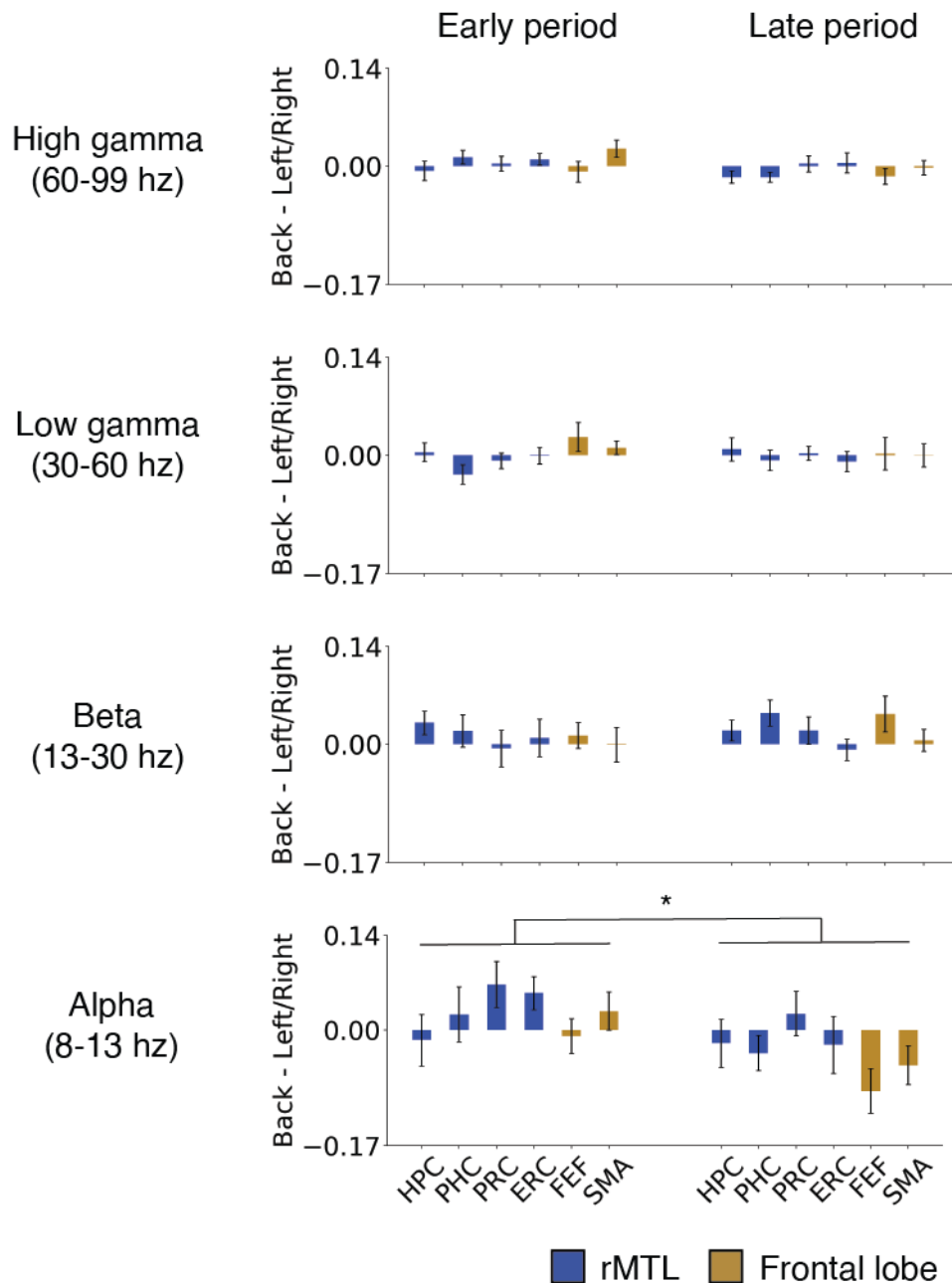


739 Figure 5. a) Mean topographic map for the MEG contrast of “left/right-target” – “back-  
740 target” condition for every 0.2 s during the targeting period. b) Time courses of the signal  
741 strength on the left-posterior cluster of sensors in the back-target and left/right-target  
742 conditions. A significantly higher activity was found for the left/right-target condition  
743 relative to the back-target condition during 0.67–0.85 s after the onset of the targeting period  
744 ( $P < 0.05$ , initial threshold,  $P < 0.05$ , spatial-temporal cluster correction for multiple  
745 comparison, two tailed). c) A comparison between the spatial-memory-task (SMT) trials and  
746 the control-condition trials in the MEG experiment. d) Mean topographic map for the left-  
747 target, right-target, and back-target conditions relative to the control condition for every 0.1 s  
748 during the targeting period. Significant clusters were found in the left-posterior from 0.5 to  
749 0.6 s for the left-target and right-target conditions ( $P < 0.05$ , initial threshold;  $P < 0.05$ ,  
750 cluster-corrected for multiple comparison, two tailed), but not for the back-target condition.  
751 e) Source-power distribution on the brain surface for each of the three conditions relative to  
752 the control condition within 0.5–0.6 s. Color bar represents the percentile rank of source-  
753 power strength.



754

755 Figure 6. a) MEG contrast for the “back-target” – “left/right-target” condition in source-  
 756 power for every 0.2 s during the targeting period. The color bar represents the percentile rank  
 757 of source-power strength. b) Time courses of the source-power in the anatomical ROIs for  
 758 both hemispheres of the MTL. The shaded area (right MTL, 0.25–0.37 s after the onset of  
 759 targeting period in the top panel) indicates a significantly higher source-power in the back-  
 760 target condition than in the left/right-target condition ( $P < 0.05$ , spatial-temporal cluster  
 761 correction for multiple comparison, two tailed). c) ROI analysis of the source-power in each  
 762 of the right MTL subregions for each condition.  $*P < 0.05$ ,  $t(11) = 3.00, 2.98, 3.22,$  and  $3.39$   
 763 for HPC, PHC, PRC, and ERC, respectively, “back” vs. “left/right,” two-tailed, Bonferroni-  
 764 corrected for multiple comparisons ( $n = 4$ ). Error bars represent SEMs.



765

766 Figure 7. MEG connectivity contrast for the “back-target” – “left/right-target” condition  
 767 using the parietal cortex as a seed. The connectivity with each of the six anatomical ROIs was  
 768 estimated for alpha, beta, and gamma frequency bands using PLI during the early phase  
 769 (0.08–0.48 s) and late phase (0.56–0.96 s). \* $P = 0.02$ ,  $F(2, 132) = 8.24$ , a main effect of  
 770 time-windows (early vs. late), repeated-measures two-way ANOVA with brain areas as  
 771 another main effect, Bonferroni-corrected for multiple comparisons of frequency bands ( $n =$   
 772 4). Error bars represent SEMs.