

## LANGUAGE, BRAIN & COMPUTER.



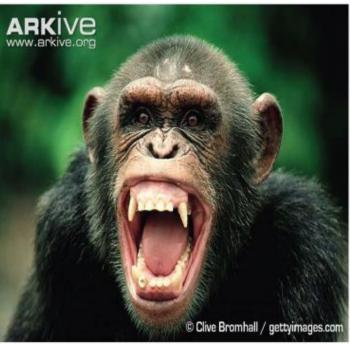
Chinese University of Hong Kong @ Shenzhen presentation on 2019.05.21.

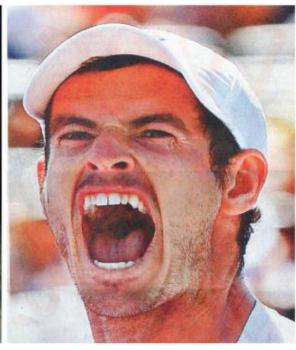
PDF available upon réquest.

#### LANGUAGE, BRAIN & COMPUTER.

Language emerged around 100,000 years ago, when the human brain evolved to its present form. This combination of language and brain enabled our ancestors to collaborate, share information, and change the world in ways unique to our species. The computer was invented only about 100 years ago, causing the world to change at a new and explosive pace. I will draw from the three disciplines: linguistics, cognitive neuroscience, and **COMPUTER** science, to show how they influence each other. While obsolescent computers may be disassembled or discarded, the challenge is much more complex and severe in the case of elderly people with brains that have become dysfunctional. This is an urgent and immense problem our society is now facing, that we must all join forces to solve.







Gorilla

Chimpanzee

Homo

Which two primates are the closest relatives?

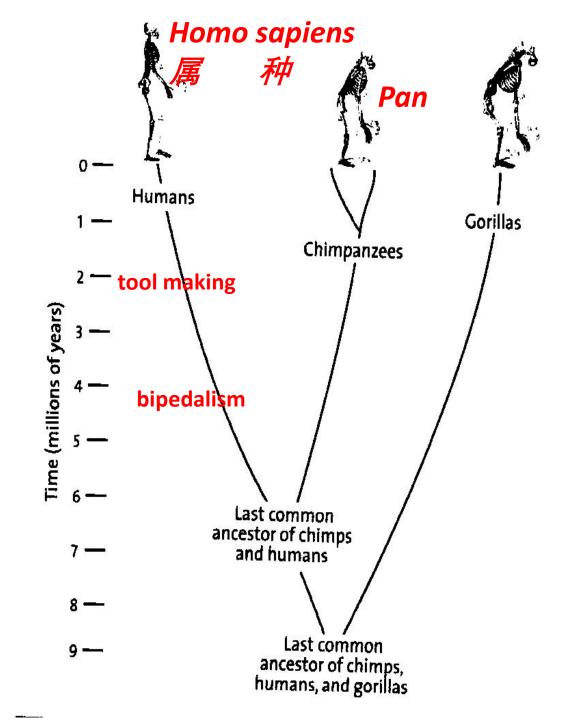
Lieberman, Daniel E. 2013:29.

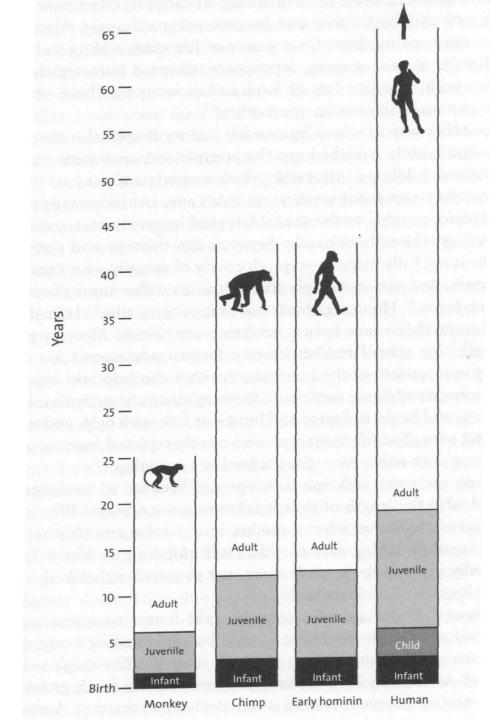
# The Story of the Human Body: Evolution, health, & disease.

Pantheon.

Chimpanzees diverged into two species over a million years ago, separated by the Congo River.

The genus *Pan* divides into *troglodytes* & *paniscus*, with clear physical & social differences.





Lieberman, D.E. 2013. Figure 13.

<u>The Story of the Human Body:</u> <u>Evolution, health, & disease</u>. Pantheon.

Humans have added a stage to their life-span, 'childhood', & prolonged the stage of 'juvenile'. These changes have greatly facilitated young ones to learn language & culture, as these become increasingly cumulative & complex. We have become 'Masters of the Planet' because we are uniquely driven by cultural evolution, which soon outpaced biological evolution by an ever larger margin.



Nowak 2012 Wilson 2012

THE
SOCIAL
CONQUEST
OF EARTH

WE Far from being a nagging exception to the rule of evolution, cooperation has been one of its primary architects By Martin A, Nowak

"物竞天择,适者生存"

"Nature, red in tooth & claw ..."

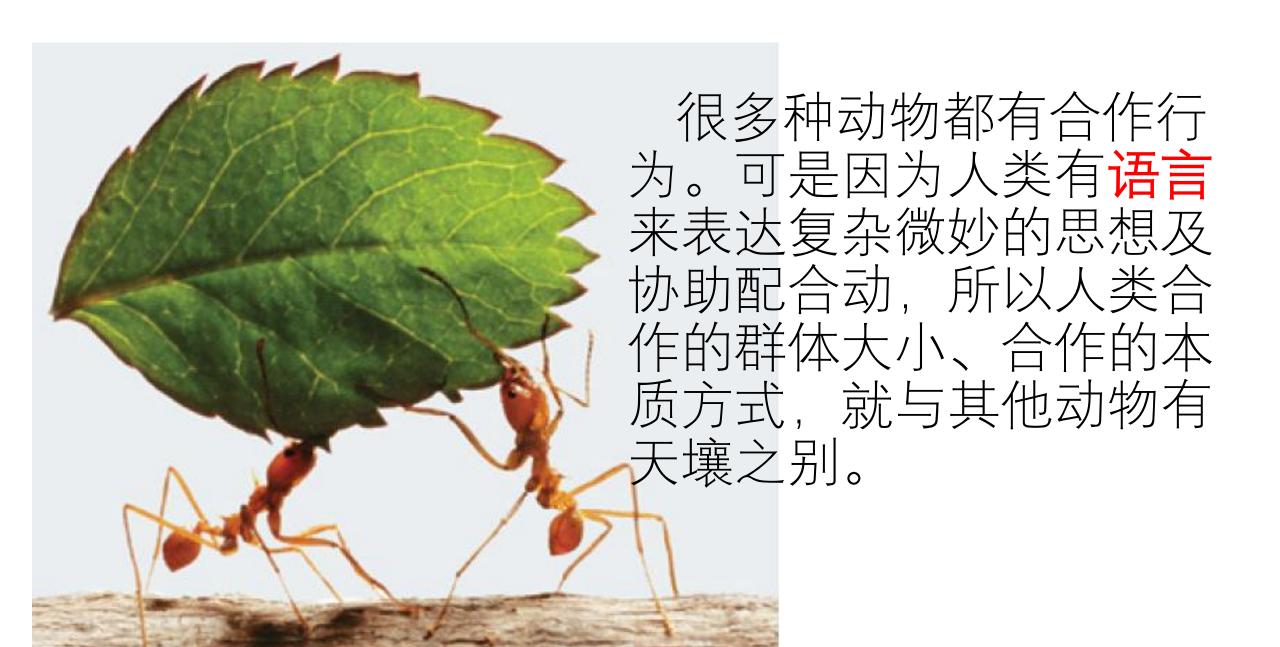
Dawkins 1976



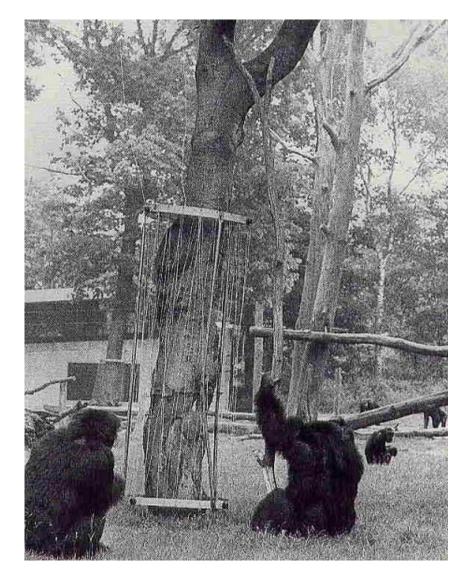
E D WARD
O. WILSON

"A MONUMENTAL EXPLORATION OF THE BIOLOGICAL ORIGINS OF THE HUMAN CONDITION!" - JAMES D. WATSON

演化并不只基于竞争, 合作也能让群体 更具有生存优势。

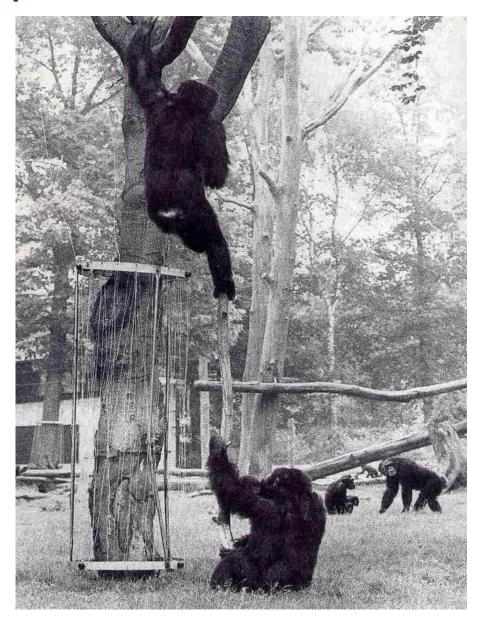


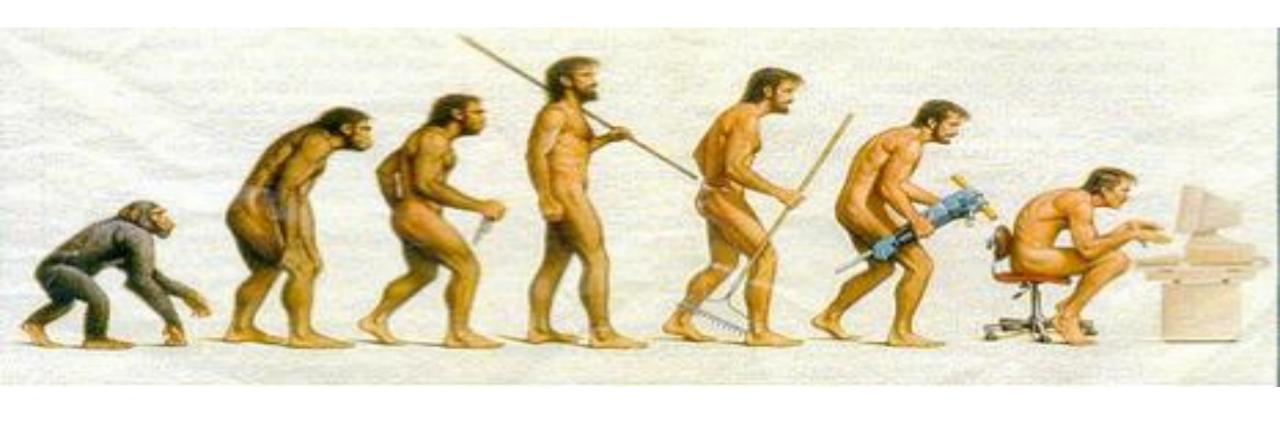
#### Tool Use and Cooperation by Chimpanzees



Frans de Waal

<u>Chimpanzee Politics</u>
1998:194.





6 Mya

split from chimpanzees

3.5+ Mya

Australopithecus bipedalism

2.8+ Mya . . . .

genus Homo tool making

150+ Kya .....

species *sapiens* **A**natomically Modern

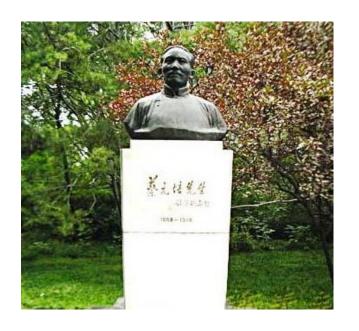
Humans

1940+ C.E.

electronic communication



蔡元培 1868 - 1940



同是动物, 1928.

为什么只有人类能不断的进步,能创造文化?

因为人类有历史,而别的动物没有。 因为他们没有历史,不能够把过去的经 验传说下去。

为什么只有人类能创造历史,而别的动物没有?

因为人类有变化无穷的语言。

## **有子** Xunzi [b.323 BCE] on the origin of words.

- 名无固宜,约之以命,约定俗成谓之宜。
- 名无固实,约之以命,约定俗成谓之实名。
- 名有固善,径易而不拂,谓至善名。
- Words have no intrinsic correctness. The correctness is established by convention. When the convention is established and the custom formed, the words are then correct.
- Words have no intrinsic content. The content is given by convention. When the convention is established and the custom formed, the words then have content.
- Words have intrinsic appropriateness. Those which are direct and not misleading are appropriate words ... to hear it and [thereby] understand it, that is the use of a word.

\_\_\_\_\_\_

Most of language, both vocabulary and grammar, as is much of culture, is based on conventionalization, or 约定俗成.

"And men ought to know that from nothing else ... but from the brain come joys, delights, laughter and sports, and sorrows, griefs, despondency, and lamentations. And by this, in an especial manner, we acquire wisdom and knowledge, and see and hear, and know what are foul and what are fair, what are bad and what are good, what are sweet, and what unsavory... And by the same organ we become mad and delirious, and fears and terrors assail us... All these things we endure from the brain, when it is not healthy ... In these ways I am of the opinion that the brain exercises the greatest power in the man.

This is the interpreter to us of those things which emanate from the air, when it [the brain] happens to be in a sound state."

**Hippocrates** quoted on p.509 of <u>Syntactic Complexity</u>. Givon & Shibatani, eds.2009. Emphasis added. Genetic basis of human brain evolution. 2008.

Vallender, Eric, et al. *Trends in Neuroscience*.

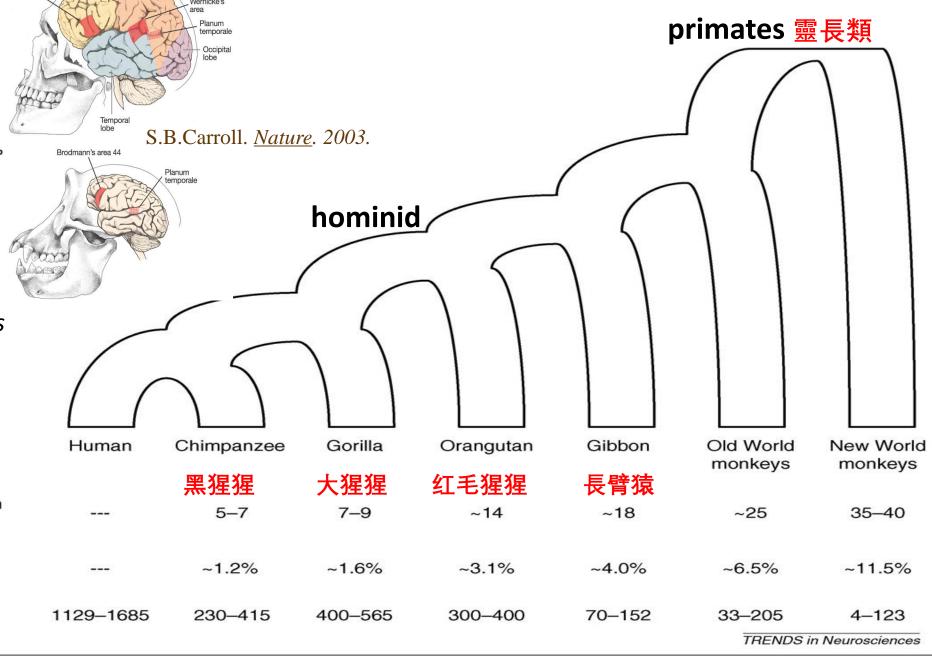
#### hominin

南方古猿 Australopithecus 巧人 Homo habilis 直立人 Homo erectus 智人 Homo sapiens

Millions of years since last common ancestor with human

Genetic difference from human

Brain volume in cm<sup>3</sup>



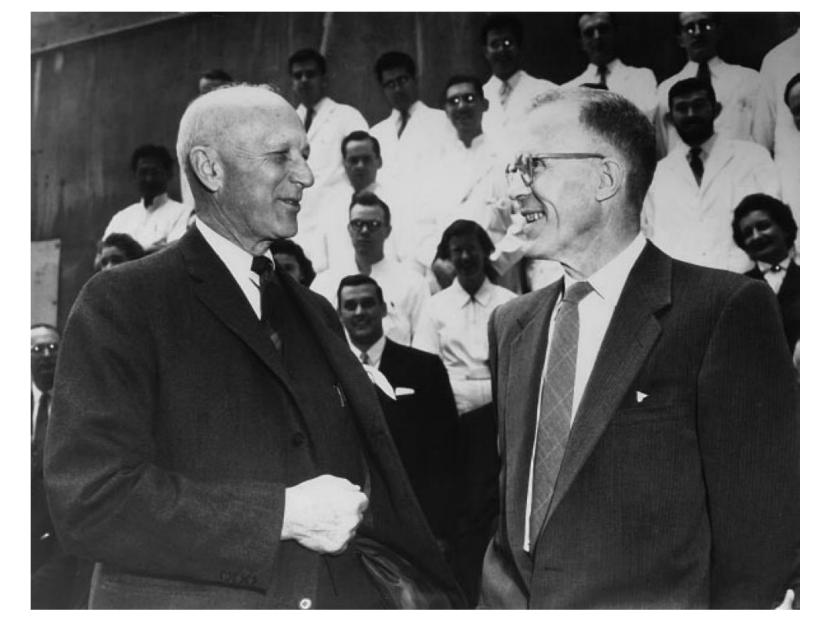


Soemmering, S. T. 1791.

"Does use and exertion of mental power gradually change the material structure of the brain, just as we see, for example, that much used muscles become stronger? It is not improbable, although the scalpel cannot easily demonstrate this."

quoted in *The New Brain* by R.Restak.

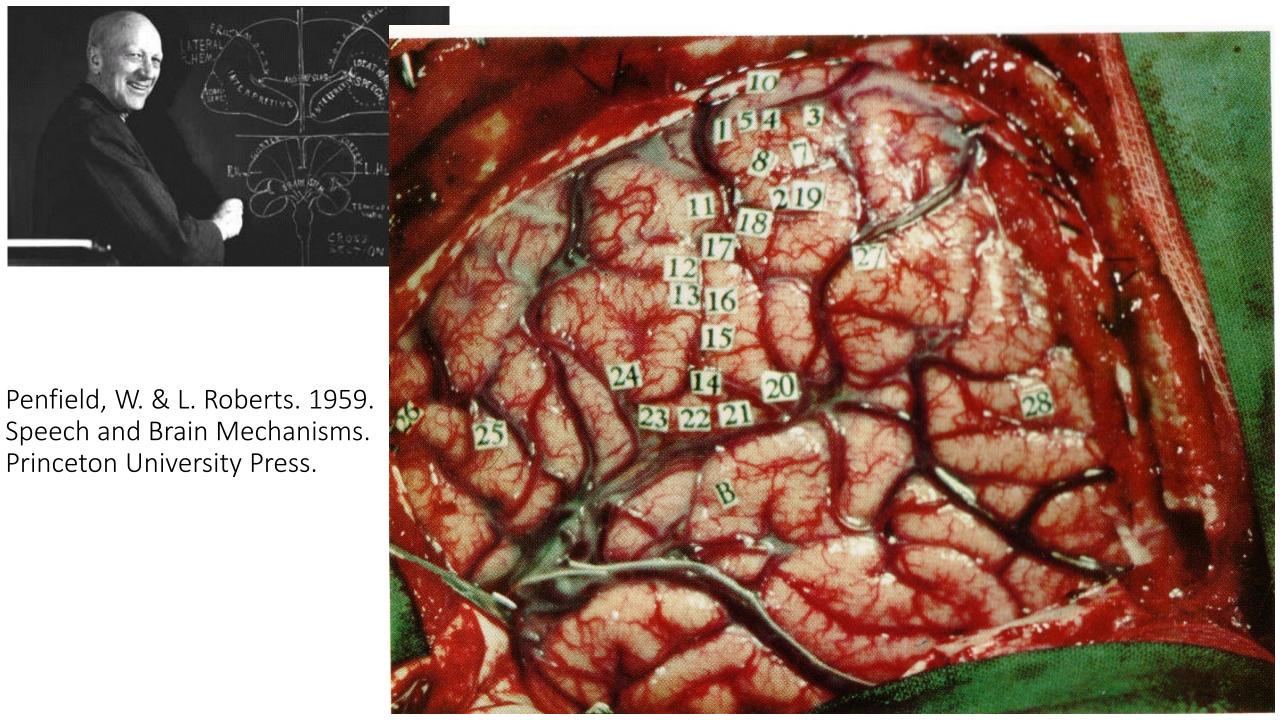
cf. 用进废退。

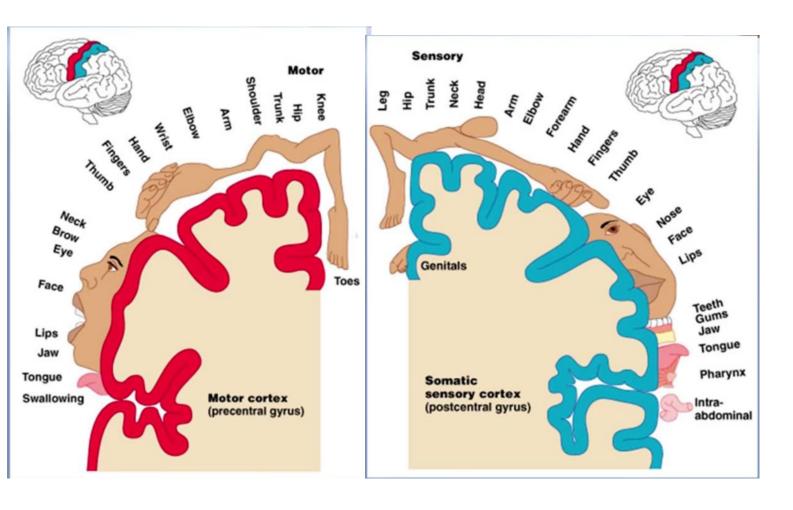


Penfield (1891-1976) & Hebb (1904 –85) in 1958 on the occasion of Hebb delivering the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Hughlings Jackson lecture at the Montreal Neurological Institute.

Milner, Brenda, Larry R. Squire. & Eric R. Kandel. 1998. "Cognitive Neuroscience & the Study of Memory." *Neuron* **20**: 445-468.

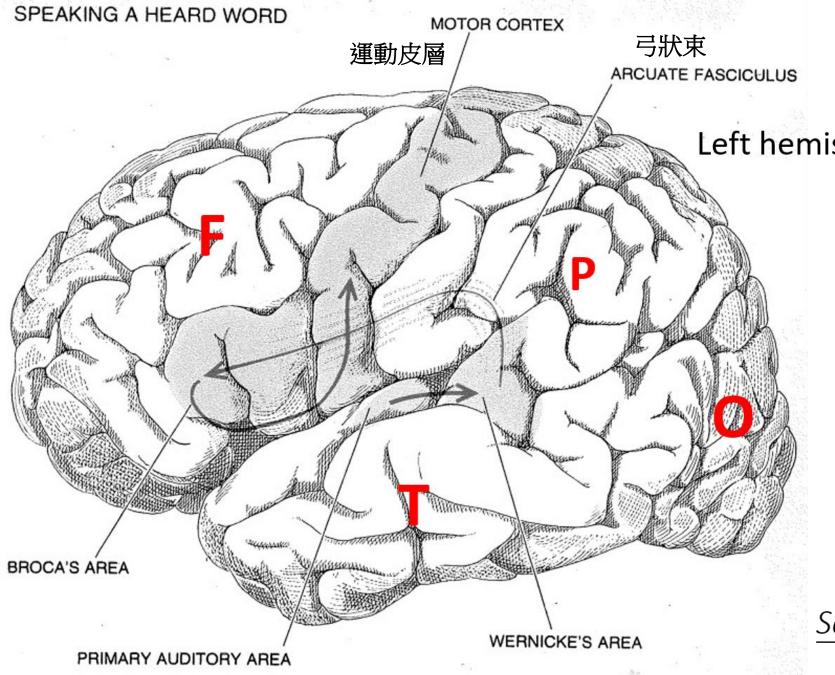
Hebb, Donald O. 1949. <u>The organization of behaviour</u>. John Wiley & Sons. Penfield, Wilder, L. Roberts. 1959. <u>Speech and Brain Mechanisms</u>., Princeton University Press.





Penfield, W. & L. Roberts. 1959. Speech & Brain Mechanisms. Princeton University Press

Penfield, W. 1965. Conditioning the uncommitted cortex for language learning. *Brain* 88.787-98.



Reprinted in 王士元 2008. **語言湧現: 發展與演化.** 中央研究院 語言學研究所.

Left hemisphere & its four lobes:

Frontal, 額葉
Parietal, 項葉
Temporal, 顳葉
Occipital. 枕葉

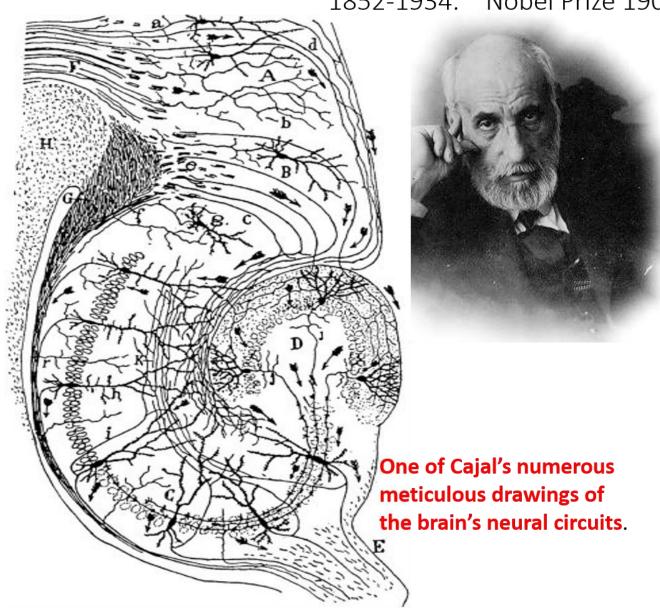
Geschwind, Norman. 1979.

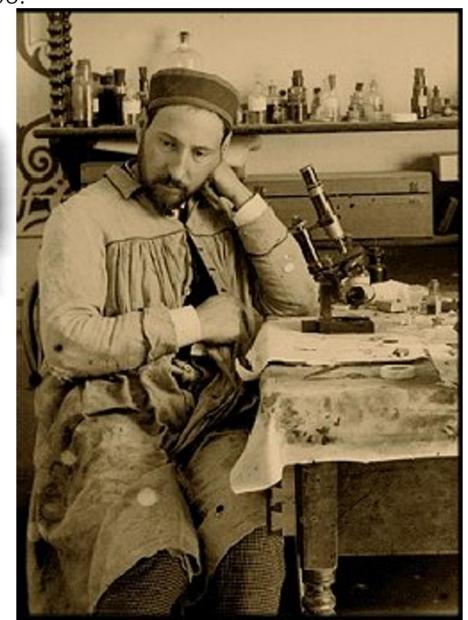
## Specializations of the human brain.

Scientific American 241.158-68.

#### Ramon Santiago y Cajal

1852-1934. Nobel Prize 1906.





#### 1906 Golgi & Cajal **Nobel Prizes** 1932 Sherrington & Adrian 1936 Dale & Loewi 1944 Erlanger & Gasser in Physiology or Medicine 1961 Bekesy 1963 Hodgkin, Huxley, & Eccles for 1970 Katz, Von Euler, & Axelrod Sperry, Hubel & Wiesel 1981 1986 Cohen & Montalcicni **Brain Studies** 1991 Nehr & Sakmann 2000 Carlsson, Greengard, Kandel 2003 Lauterbur & Mansfield 2004 Axel & Buck 2014 O'Keefe, Moser, & Moser Cf. Farndon, John. 2009. Nerve signaling: tracing the wiring of life.

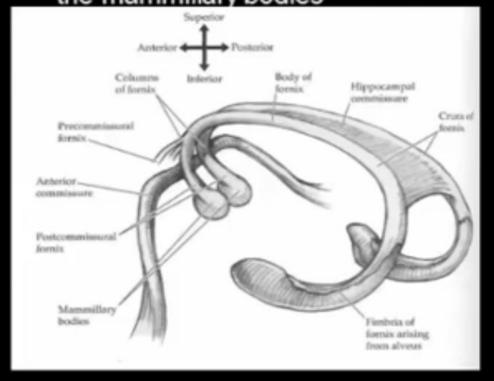
<a href="http://www.nobelprize.org/educational/medicine/nerve\_signaling/overview">http://www.nobelprize.org/educational/medicine/nerve\_signaling/overview</a>

### Hippocampus

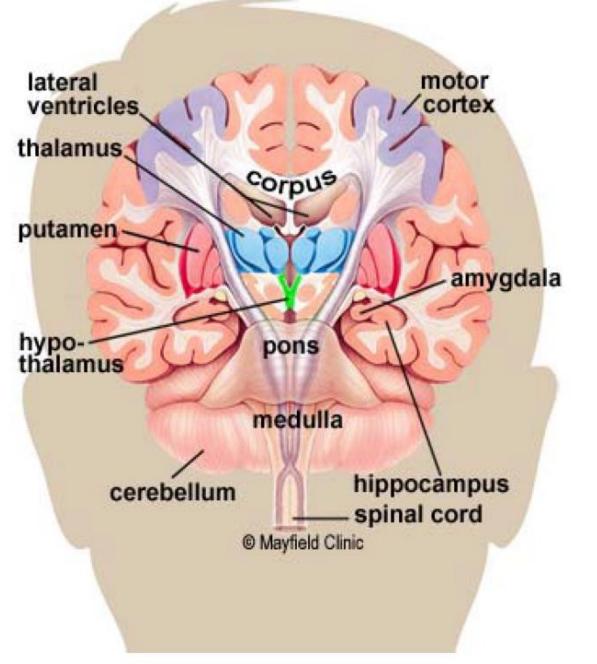


Hippocampus

The fornix connects the hippocampus to the mammillary bodies



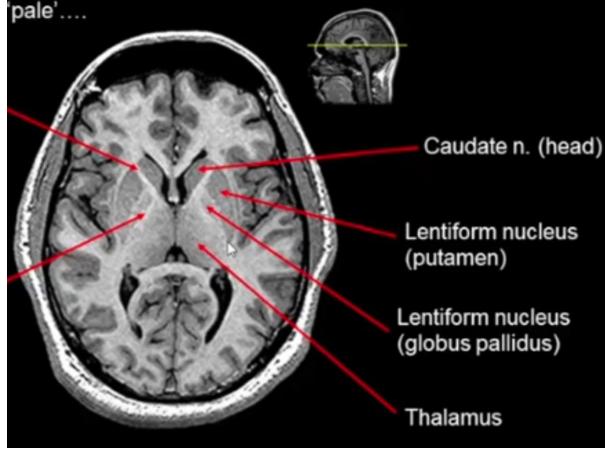
Fornix (the axons of the hippocampal neurons)



### he basal ganglia

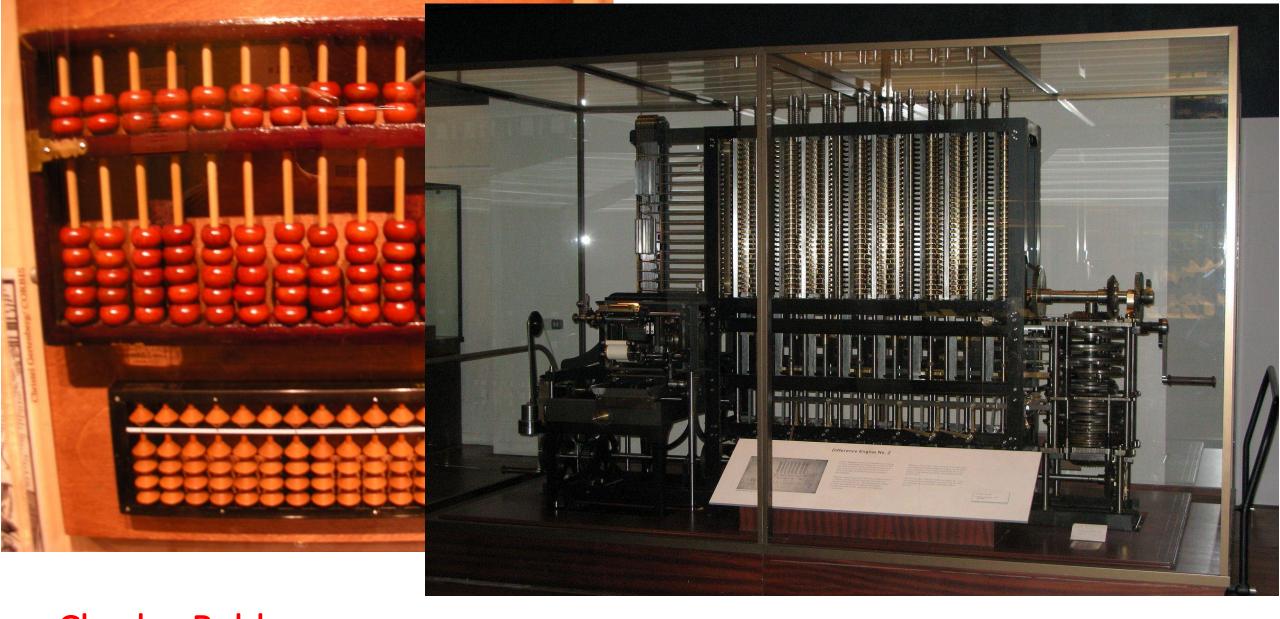
ganglia:

ing into the lateral ventricle is the head of the caudate ped white matter (internal capsule)!



2 views of the **basal ganglia**.

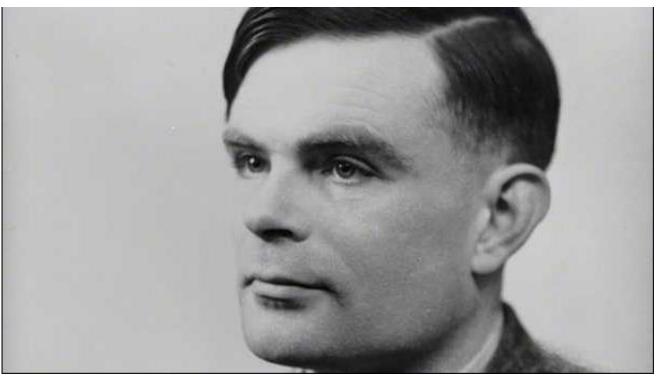
Figure 5. Coronal cross-section showing the basal ganglia.



Charles Babbage announced his invention in 1822 in a paper to the <u>Royal Astronomical</u> <u>Society</u> entitled "Note on the application of machinery to the computation of astronomical and mathematical tables".



John von Neumann 1903 - 1957.



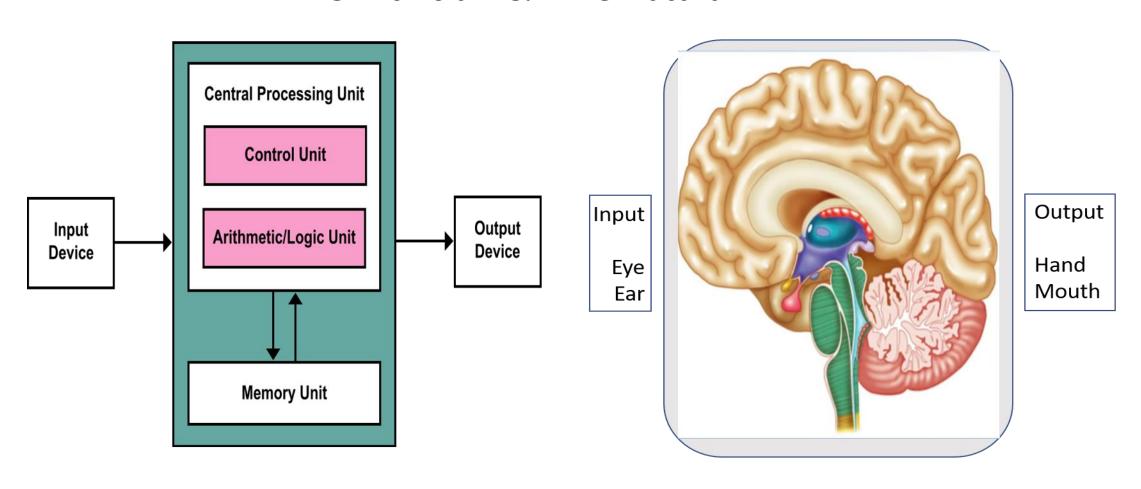
Alan M. Turing

1912—1954. *The Imitation Game* is a 2014 film based on the biography *Alan Turing: The Enigma* by Andrew Hodges.

- \* Turing, Alan M. 1936. On Computable Numbers, with an Application to the Entscheidungsproblem, *Proceedings London Mathematical Society* **42:** 230–265. \* ---. 1938. --- A correction", *Proceedings London Mathematical Society* **43:** 544–546.
- \* ---. 1945. Proposals for Development in the Mathematics Division of an **Automatic Computing Engine** (ACE)," presented to the National Physical Laboratory, UK. Reprinted as ComSci 57, 1972.
- \* ---. 1950. Computing machinery and intelligence." *Mind* **59**: 433-460.
- \* Neumann, John von. 1945. First Draft of a Report on the EDVAC. See also Godfrey M.D. & D.F. Hendry. 1993. The Computer as von Neumann Planned It. *IEEE Annals of the History of Computing* 15: 11-21.
- \* ---. 1958/2000. The Computer and the Brain. Yale University Press. The reprinted version of 2000 has a substantive *Foreword* by Paul & Patricia Churchland of the University of California at San Diego.

#### THE COMPUTER & THE BRAIN

#### The Artificial & The Natural



Architecture by Von **Neumann** 

**Architecture by Evolution** 

### John von Neumann Second Edition with a foreword by Paul M. Churchland and Patricia S. Churchland Computer ind the Brain

Churchland, Paul & Patricia. 2000. Foreword to 2nd edition of *The Computer and the Brain*. 1st edition 1958. Yale University Press.

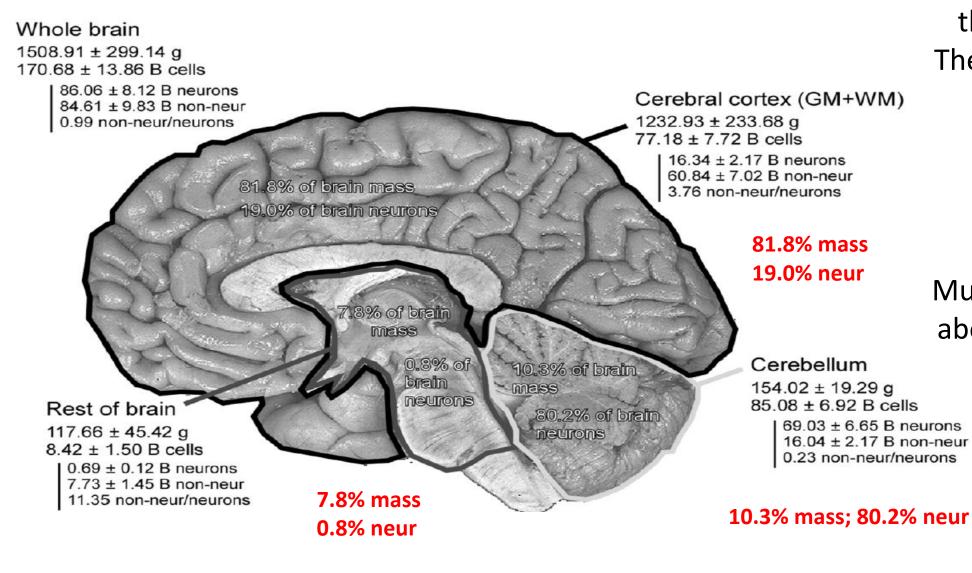
"... If we assume that a neuron can have a "clock frequency" of no better than roughly 10<sup>2</sup> Hz, then the clock frequencies of almost 1,000 MHz (that is, 109 basic operations per second) now displayed in the most recent generation of desktop machines push the neuron's disadvantage closer to a factor of 107. ... If the brain is a digital computer with a von Neumann architecture, it is doomed to be a computational tortoise by comparison. ... Conjointly, these two severe limitations – one on speed, and the other on accuracy — drive von Neumann to the conclusion that whatever computational regime the brain is using, it must be one that somehow involves a minimum of what he calls "logical depth". That is, whatever the brain is doing, it cannot be sequentially performing thousands upon thousands of sequentially computational steps."

27

"... Given the slowness of its neuronal activities, there isn't enough time for the brain to complete any but the most trivial of computations. And given the low accuracy of its typical representations, it would be computationally incompetent even if it did have enough time.

... As we now know, the brain contains roughly  $10^{14}$  synaptic connections, each of which modulates the arriving axonal signal before passing it on to the receiving neuron. ... Most important, these tiny modulatory actions all take place simultaneously. This means that, with each synapse being active perhaps 100 times per second ... the total number of basic information-processing actions performed by the brain must be roughly 10<sup>2</sup> times 10<sup>14</sup>, or 10<sup>16</sup> operations per second. This is a striking achievement for any system, and it compares very favorably with our earlier count on 109 basic operations per second for a cutting edge desktop machine. The brain is neither a tortoise nor a dunce after all, for it was never a serial digital machine to begin with: it is a massively parallel analog machine."

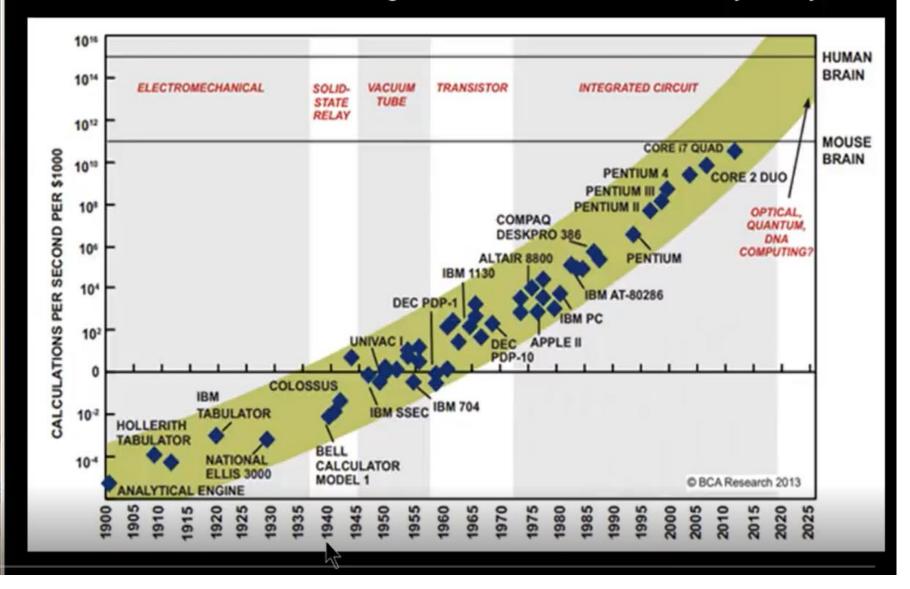
Azevedo, F. et al. 2009. Equal numbers of neuronal and nonneuronal cells make the human brain an isometrically scaled-up primate brain. *Journal of Comparative Neurology* 513.532-41.



Only half of the cells in the brain are neurons. The cerebellum, not the cortex, has most of these neurons. Researchers are now working on typing these neurons. Much less is understood about the non-neurons, though their importance for the functioning of the brain is self-evident.

#### Moore's Law

Number of elements on integrated circuits doubled every 1-2 years



The power of the computer increased steadily as its constituent units changed in structure & size. Successive miniaturization of the units allowed packing innumerable units into the IC board.

The brain, on the other hand, has no such recourse. The neurons are at their most numerous during youth. Failure to replace dysfunctional neurons inevitably result in cognitive decline.

## Can a computer learn?

"A computer program is said to learn from experience *E* with respect to some class of tasks *T* and performance measure *P* if its performance at tasks in *T*, as measured by *P*, improves with experience *E*."

T.M.Mitchell. 1997.

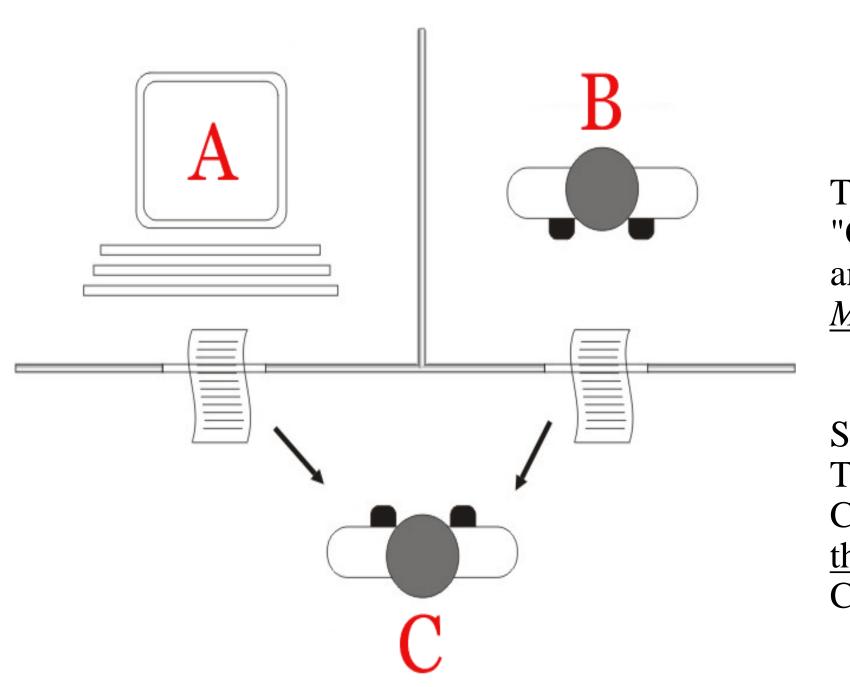
#### Hebbian learning:

"... When an axon of cell A is near enough to excite a cell B and repeatedly or persistently takes part in firing it, some growth process or metabolic change takes place in one or both cells such that A's efficiency, as one of the cells firing B, is increased."

Hebb, D. O. 1949. The organization of behaviour. Wiley & Sons.

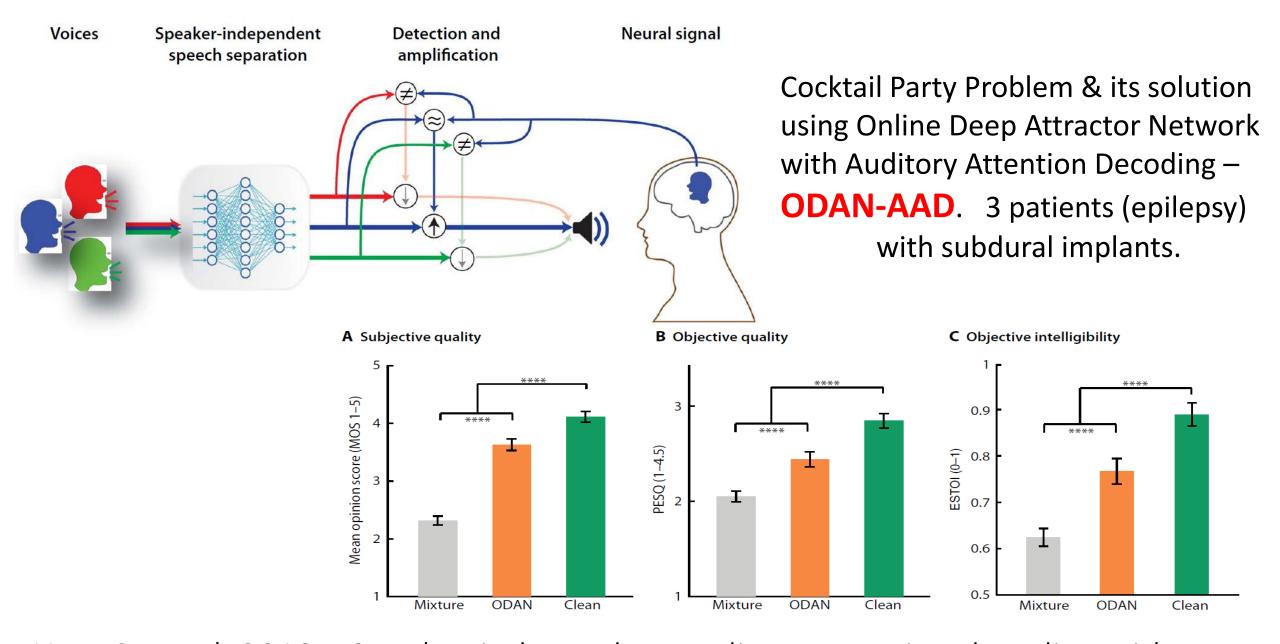
#### "neurons wire together if they fire together"

Löwel, S. & Singer, W. 1992. *Selection of Intrinsic Horizontal Connections in the Visual Cortex by Correlated Neuronal Activity.* <u>Science</u> 255:209-12."



Turing, A. M. (1950). "Computing machinery and intelligence." *Mind* **59**: 433-460.

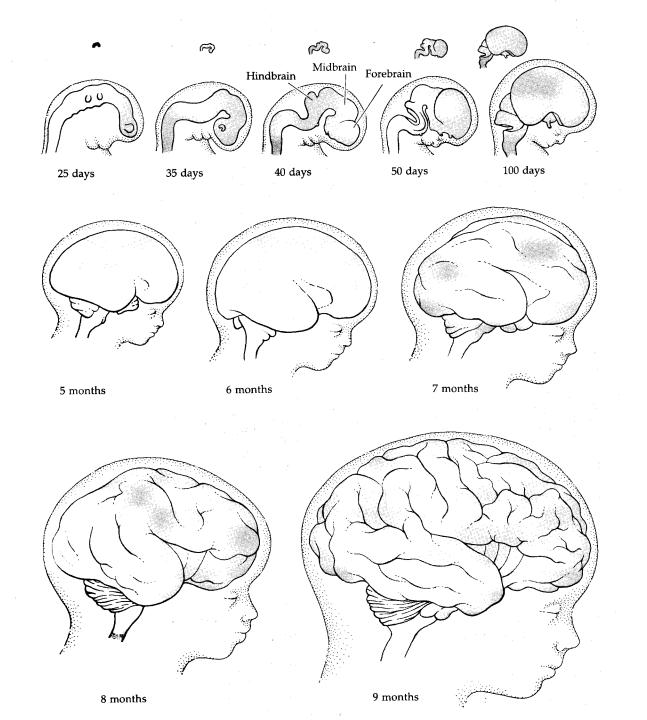
Searle, J. R. (2002).
Twenty-one years in the
Chinese room. <u>Views into</u>
the Chinese Room.
Clarendon Press.

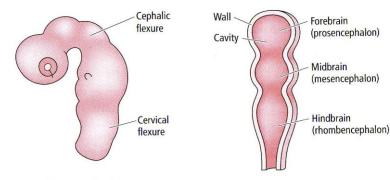


Han, C., et al. 2019. Speaker-independent auditory attention decoding without access to clean speech sources. Sci Adv 5: eaav6134.

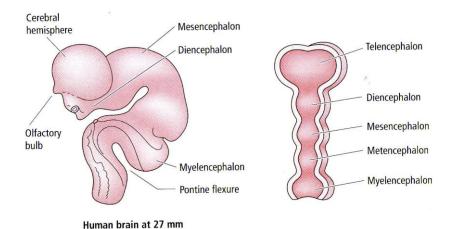
"... the AlphaGo Zero program recently achieved superhuman performance in the game of Go by reinforcement learning from selfplay. In this paper, we generalize this approach into a single AlphaZero algorithm that can achieve superhuman performance in many challenging games. Starting from random play and given no domain knowledge except the game rules, AlphaZero convincingly defeated a world champion program in the games of chess and shogi (Japanese chess), as well as Go."

Silver, D., et al. 2018. "A general reinforcement learning algorithm that masters chess, shogi, & Go through self-play." <u>Science</u> **362**: 1140-1144.





Human brain at 6 mm



Purves, Dale, & Lichtman, Jeff W. 1985: 18. Figure 11.

## Principles of Cognitive Neuroscience.



"Four orofacial gestures of a fetus at approximately 28 weeks GA.

(Top left) Grimacing; (Top right) Finger sucking; (Bottom left) TP to the side; (Bottom right) tongue thrust."

Keven, N. & K.Akins. 2016.

Neonatal Imitation in Context: Sensory-Motor Development in the Perinatal Period.

Behavioral and Brain Sciences Fig.2.

# Imitation by primates & mirror neurons.

Arbib, M. A. 2013. <u>How the Brain got Language:</u> the Mirror System Hypothesis. *Oxford University Press.* 

Gross, Liza. 2006. Evolution of Neonatal Imitation. *PLoS Biology* Vol. 4/9/2006, e311.



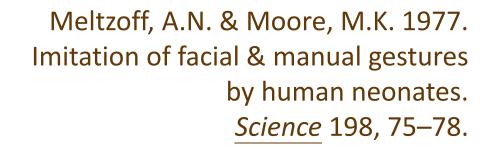












Saffran, J.R., et al. 1996. Statistical Learning by 8-Month-Old Infants. *Science* 274.1926-28.

tupirogolabubidakupadoti padotibidakutupirotupiro golabubidakupadotigolabu bidakutupirogolabupadoti

Saffran, J.R., et al. 1996. Statistical Learning by 8-Month-Old Infants. *Science* 274.1926-28.

tupirogolabubidakupadoti padotibidakutupirotupiro golabubidakupadotigolabu bidakutupirogolabupadoti

Kuhl, P. K., et al. 2008. Phonetic learning as a pathway to language. Phil. Trans. R. Soc. B 363.979–1000.

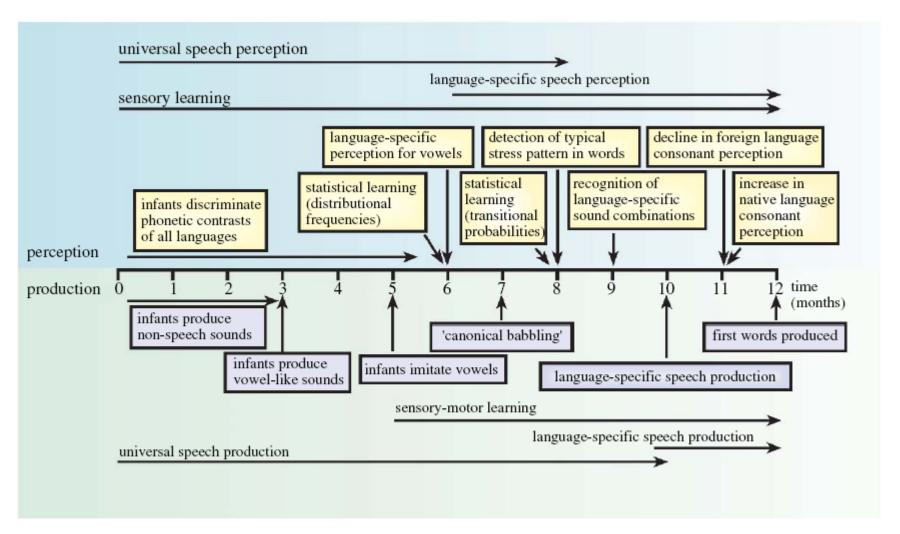
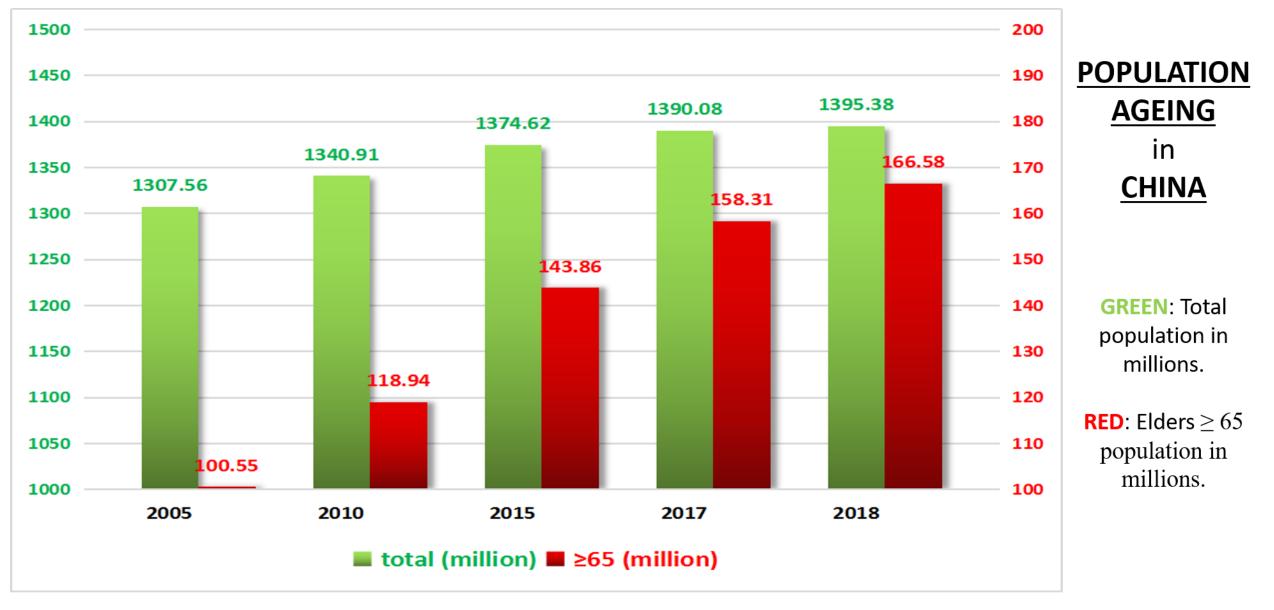
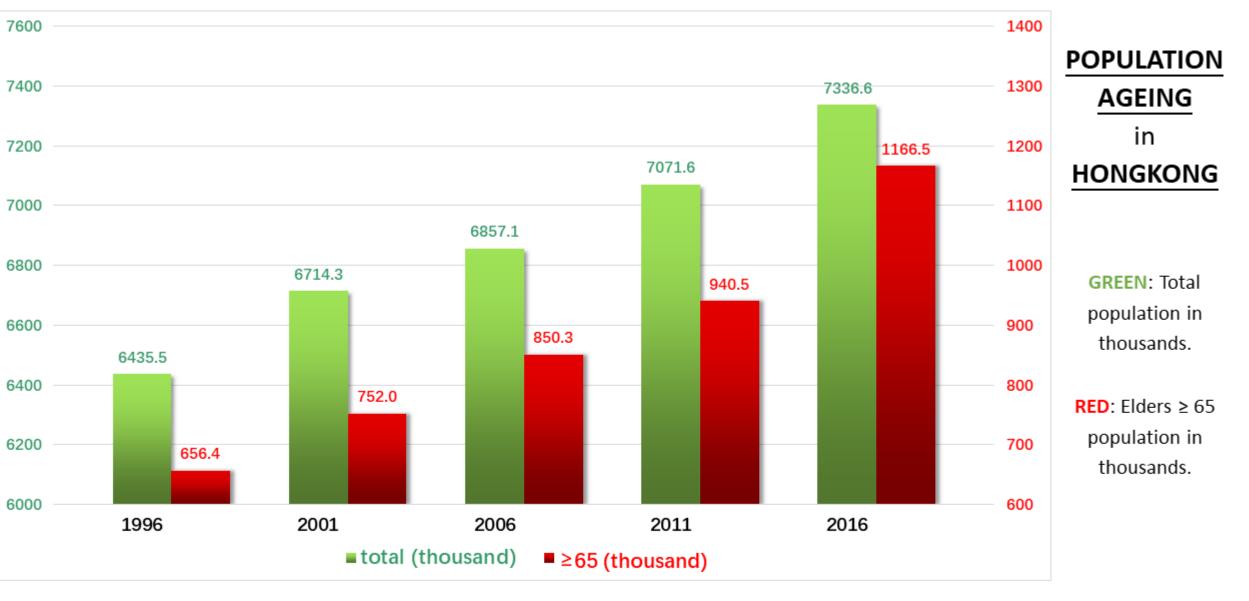


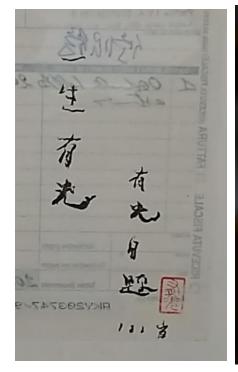
Figure 1. Universal timeline of infants' perception and production of speech in the first year of life. Modified from Kuhl (2004).



In 2005, elders  $\geq$  65 were 8% of the total population; in 2018 they have risen to 12%. Over this period, the total population has risen by 7%; the elders have risen by 66%. Government survey: <a href="http://data.stats.gov.cn/easyquery.htm?cn=C01&zb=A0305&sj=2017">http://data.stats.gov.cn/easyquery.htm?cn=C01&zb=A0305&sj=2017</a>.



In 1996, elders ≥65 were 10% of the total population; in 2016 they have risen to 16%. Over this period, the total population has risen by 14%; the elder has risen by 78%. Government survey: <a href="https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp150\_tc.jsp?productCode=B1120017">https://www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp150\_tc.jsp?productCode=B1120017</a>.





Zhou Youguang, 周有光, 1906 – 2017. Advocate of

Hanyu Pinyin.

The longest human lifespan is that of

## **Jeanne Calment**

of France (1875–1997), who lived to the age of 122 years, 164 days.

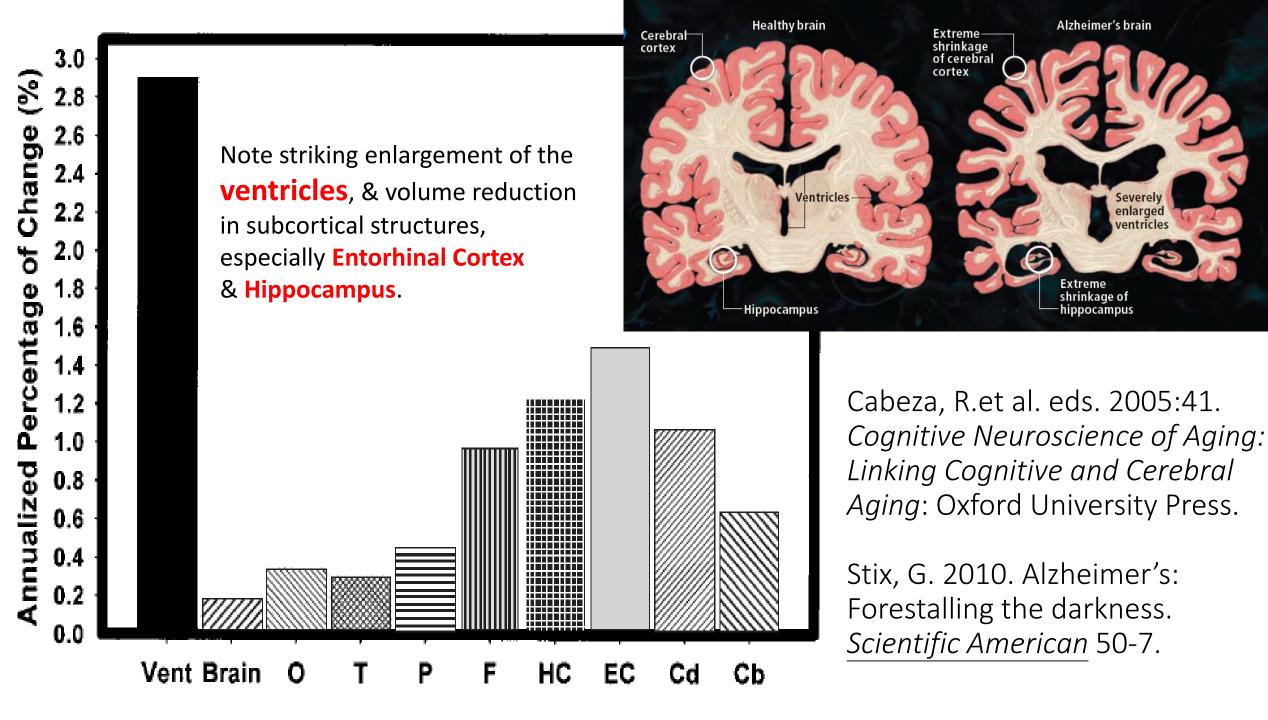


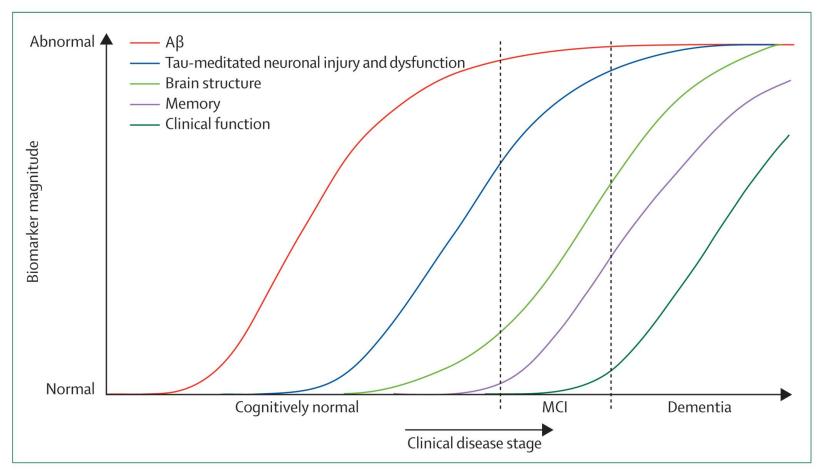
Professor Charles Kuen Kao (高銀) (1933-2018), was the recipient of a Nobel Prize in Physics in 2009, & was known as the "Father of Fibre Optics".
He had **Alzheimer's Disease**, as did his

father.





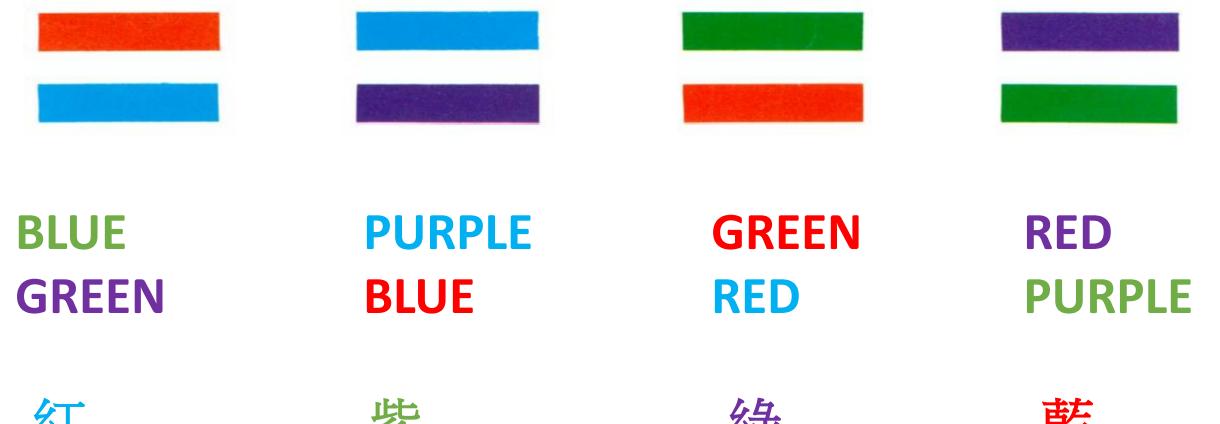




Jack, C.R., et al. (2010). Hypothetical model of dynamic biomarkers of the Alzheimer's pathological cascade. *Lancet Neurol.* 9(1), 119-128.

## Tzeng, O. J. L. and W. S.-Y. Wang. 1983. The first two R's. American Scientist 71: 238-243.

Stroop, J. R. 1935. Studies of interference in serial verbal reactions. Journal of Experimental Psychology 18: 643-662.



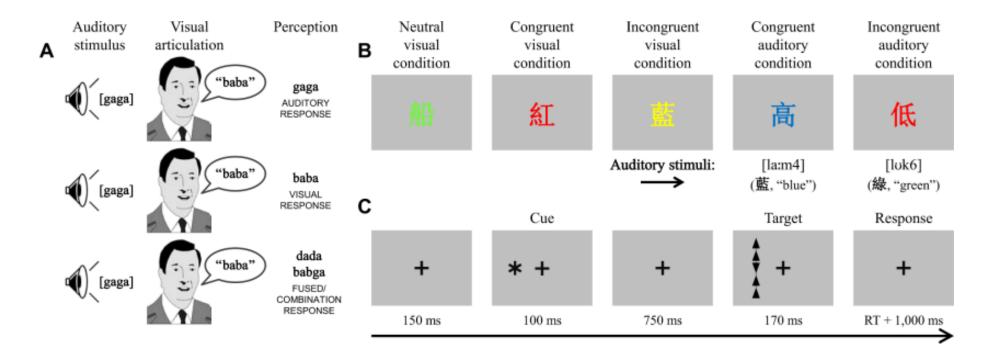
紅 藍







# Multi-sensory Integration: Stroop, McGurk, Eriksen Flanker Tasks



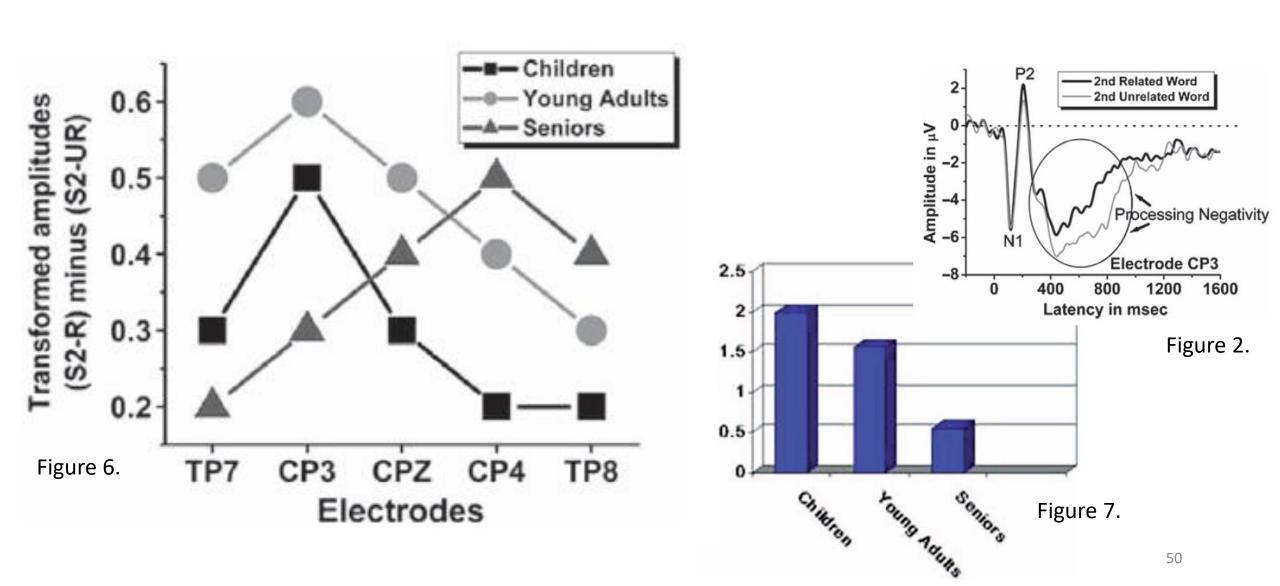
McGurk, H, & MacDonald, J (1976). *Nature* 264:746-8. Stroop, JR (1935). *Journal of Experimental Psychology* 18(6):643-62. Eriksen, BA, & Eriksen, CW (1974). *Perception and Psychophysics* 16:143-9.

Cabeza, R. 2002. Hemispheric asymmetry reduction in older adults: the HAROLD model.

Psychology & Aging 17:85-100.

Mehta, J. & Jerger, J. (2014). Variation in semantic priming across age groups: An AERP study.

International Journal of Audiology 53:235-242.



## **ARTICLES**

https://doi.org/10.1038/s41593-019-0371-x

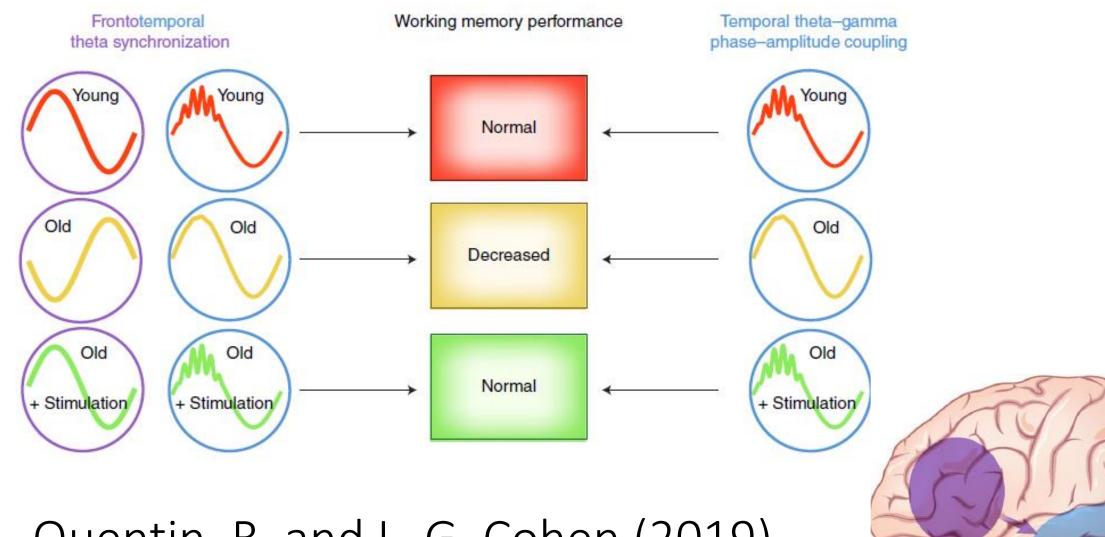


# Working memory revived in older adults by synchronizing rhythmic brain circuits

Robert M. G. Reinhart \* and John A. Nguyen

**Nature Neuroscience 22**: 820-827, May 2019.

Understanding normal brain aging and developing methods to maintain or improve cognition in older adults are major goals of fundamental and translational neuroscience. Here we show a core feature of cognitive decline—working-memory deficits—emerges from disconnected local and long-range circuits instantiated by theta-gamma phase-amplitude coupling in temporal cortex and theta phase synchronization across frontotemporal cortex. We developed a noninvasive stimulation procedure for modulating long-range theta interactions in adults aged 60-76 years. After 25 min of stimulation, frequency-tuned to individual brain network dynamics, we observed a preferential increase in neural synchronization patterns and the return of sender-receiver relationships of information flow within and between frontotemporal regions. The end result was rapid improvement in working-memory performance that outlasted a 50 min post-stimulation period. The results provide insight into the physiological foundations of age-related cognitive impairment and contribute to groundwork for future non-pharmacological interventions targeting aspects of cognitive decline.



Quentin, R. and L. G. Cohen (2019). Reversing working memory decline in the elderly. *Nature Neuroscience* **22**: 686-688.

52

"China already has a population of elderly of around 178 million (surpassing that of the number of elderly in all the European countries put together). It is estimated that by 2040 people aged 60 and older will make up about 28% of the population - in absolute numbers 397 million people ... Worries about the impact that the growing ranks of elderly will have on the economy and on individual families have been dubbed in China as the 4-2-1 problem because... a single person in China will soon be expected to support two parents and four grandparents. The media are only now beginning to expose the ignorance and stigma long associated with dementia in China ..."

Lock, M. 2013. <u>The Alzheimer Conundrum: Entanglements of Dementia and Aging</u>. Princeton University Press. p.16.

Vol 466|1 July 2010 **nature** 

## OPINION

# Most people are not WEIRD

To understand human psychology, behavioural scientists must stop doing most of their experiments on Westerners, argue **Joseph Henrich**, **Steven J. Heine** and **Ara Norenzayan**.

"... Experimental findings from several disciplines indicate considerable variation among human populations in diverse domains, such as visual perception, analytic reasoning, fairness, cooperation, memory and the heritability of IQ. This is in line with what anthropologists have long suggested: that people from Western, educated, industrialized, rich and democratic (WEIRD) societies — and particularly American undergraduates — are some of the most psychologically unusual people on Earth. So the fact that the vast majority of studies use WEIRD participants presents a challenge to the understanding of human psychology and behaviour. A 2008 survey of the top psychology journals found that 96% of subjects were from Western industrialized countries — which house just 12% of the world's population. Strange, then, that research articles routinely assume that their results are broadly representative, rarely adding even a cautionary footnote on how far their findings can be generalized. ... "

Cabeza, R. (2002). "Hemispheric asymmetry reduction in older adults: the **HAROLD** model." <u>Psychology and Aging</u> **17**(1): 85-100. hemispheric-asymmetry reduction in older adults.

Davis, S. W., et al. (2008). "Que' PASA? The Posterior--Anterior Shift in Aging." Cerebral Cortex 18: 1201-1209. posterior—anterior shift in aging.

Reuter-Lorenz, P. A. and K. A. Cappell (2008). "Neurocognitive Aging & the Compensation Hypothesis." <u>Psychological Science</u> **17**(3): 177-182. compensation-related utilization of neural circuits hypothesis. (**CRUNCH**)

\_\_\_\_\_

It is crucial for us to know how much of current knowledge, derived primarily from WEIRD studies, is applicable to Chinese language and culture.

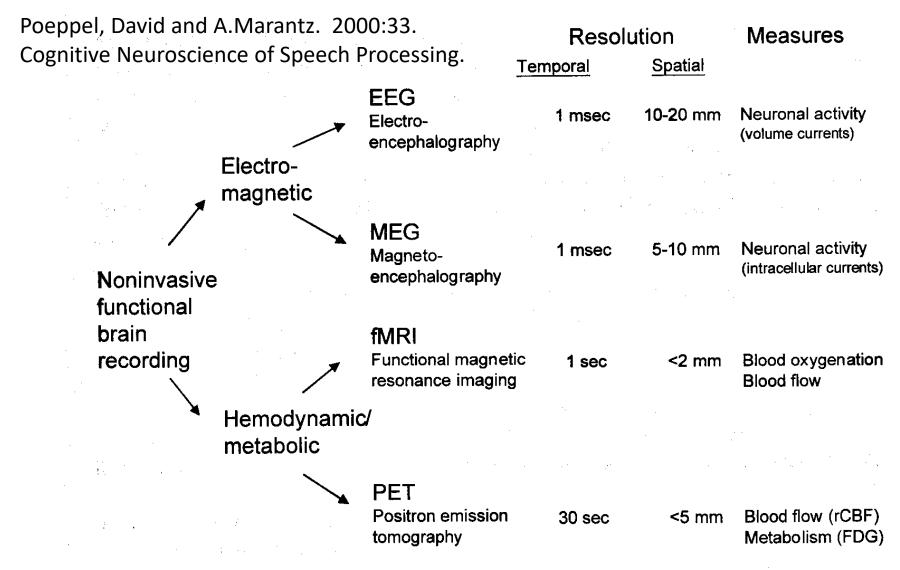
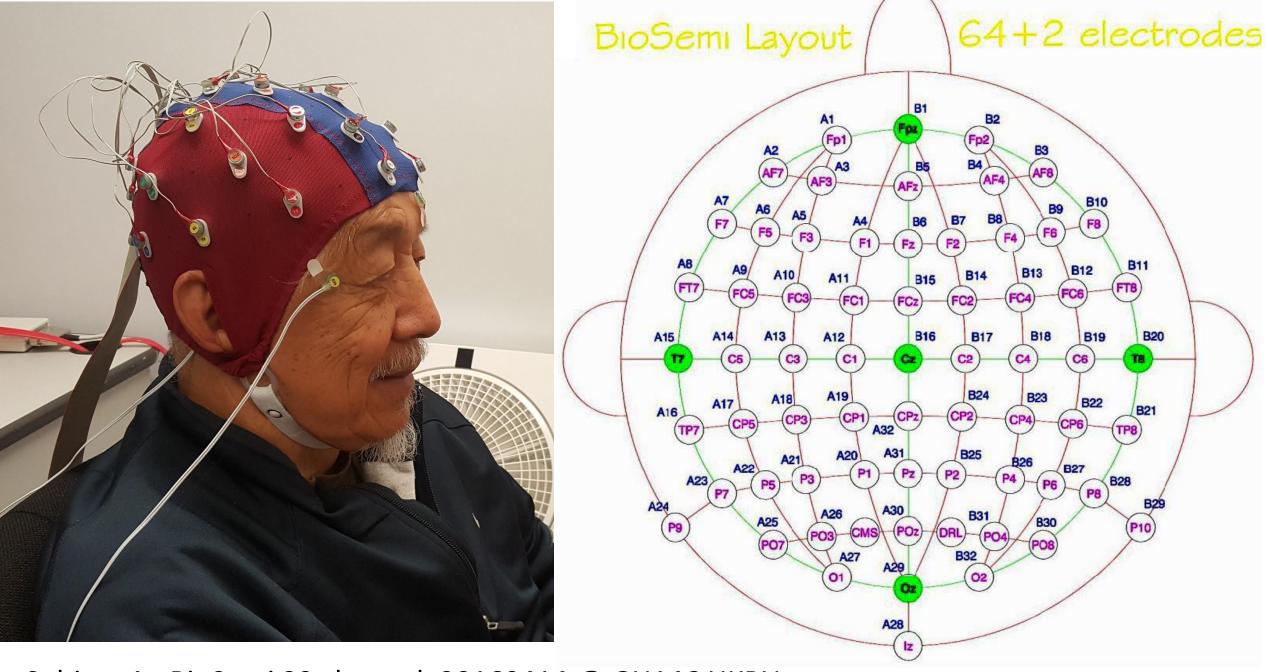


Figure 2.1
Summary of imaging methods.



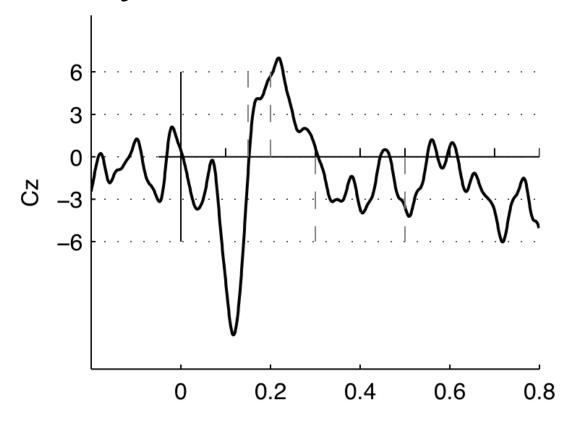
Subject A. BioSemi 32 channel. 20160414 @ GH146 HKPU



→ Fp1	3
→ F3	9
⊕ F7	3
⊕ Fp2	3
⊕ F4	3
⊕ F8	3



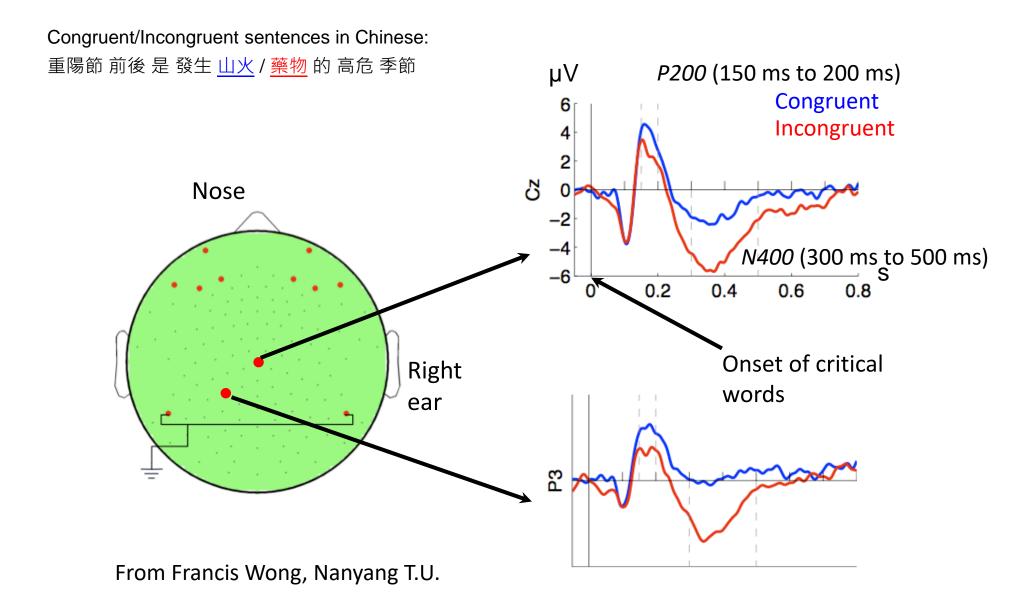
## Reducing intra-subject variations



From EEG to single subject ERP: Averaging over: 1, 2, 3, ... 10, 15, 20, 25 trials

### Congruent/Incongruent sentences in English:

The time of the year around Chung Yeung Festival is traditionally a high-risk period for hill fires / drugs

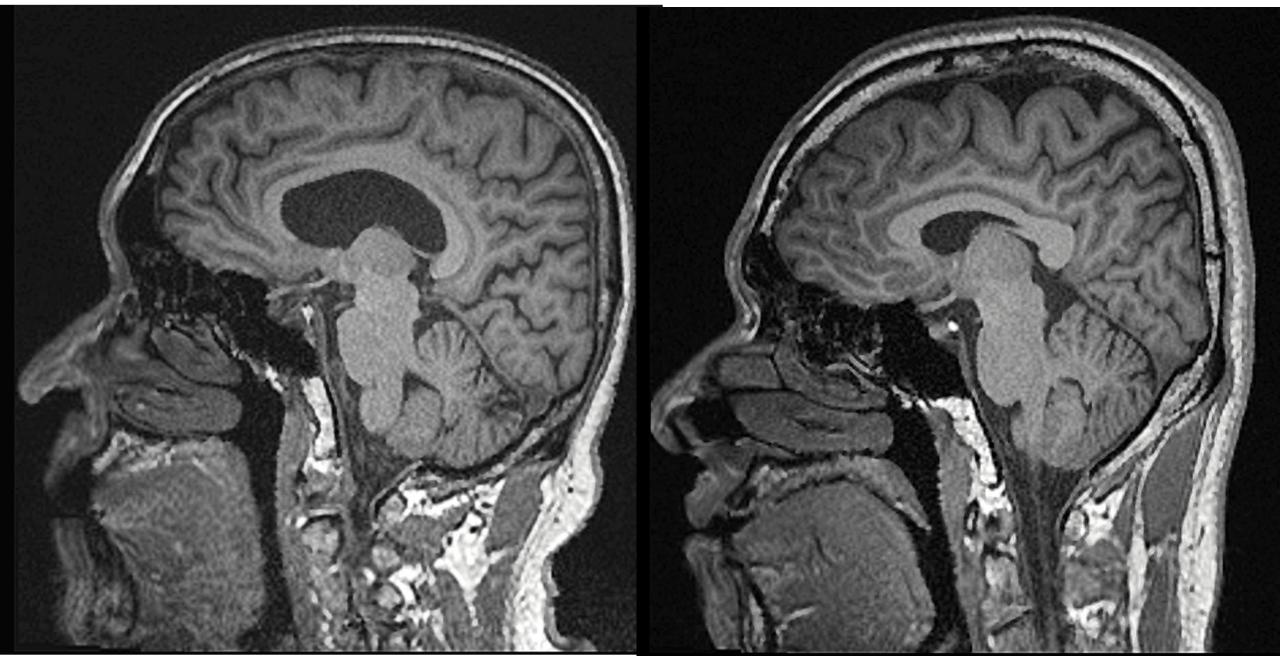


ID: 17.10.10-14:42:17-STD-1.3.12.2.1107.5.2.32.35432 **TrioTim HFS** \* 10/10/1933 Study 1 10/10/2017 2:44:58 PM 1 IMA **ARF** SP R94.4 FoV 240\*240 SL 0.9399999761581 256\*256 Sag>Cor(2.6)>Tra(0.5) TE 2.29 W: 526 TR 2000 TI 900 C: 260

Subject: WSYW. 2017.10.10. @ S.I.A.T. Experimenter:

MCMF.

Frame number = 91 5,256 c.m.



## LANGUAGE, BRAIN & COMPUTER.

Language emerged around 100,000 years ago, when the human brain evolved to its present form. This combination of language and brain enabled our ancestors to collaborate, share information, and change the world in ways unique to our species. The computer was invented only about 100 years ago, causing the world to change at a new and explosive pace. I will draw from the three disciplines: linguistics, cognitive neuroscience, and **COMPUTER** science, to show how they influence each other. While obsolescent computers may be disassembled or discarded, the challenge is much more complex and severe in the case of elderly people with brains that have become dysfunctional. This is an urgent and immense problem our society is now facing, that we must all join forces to solve.

王士元. 2011.

# 语言、演化与大脑•

北京,商务印书馆.

2014.

## 語言、演化與大腦.

台北: 高等教育出版社.



语言、演化与大脑





#### 作者简介

#### 王士元

王士元於美國密西根大學取得博士學 位,曾擔任美國加州大學柏克萊分校 國語言學學會首屆會長。1973年創辦 國際期刊《中國語言學報》並任總編 輯至今。目前為中央研究院院士、北 京大學榮譽教授、香港中文大學語言 周人類複雜系統聯合研究中心主任。

#### 叢書總主編

#### 鄭錦全

中央研究院院士、國立臺灣師範大學華語文教學系暨研究所講座教授

計算語言學、漢語方言學、數位華語

#### 張國恩

國立臺灣師範大學校長、資訊教育研

網路化企業訓練、電腦模擬式學習

#### 執行總主編

### 宋曜廷

國立臺灣師範大學教育心理與輔導學 系教授、心理與教育測驗研究發展中 心主任、教育部邁向頂尖大學計畫執

教育心理學、測驗與評量、電腦輔助 學習與評量、華語文特徵分析





謝謝!

**3q!** 

For PDF file, email:

wsywang@polyu.edu.hk