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#### UNITIZED RECOGNITION CODES FOR PARTS AND WHOLES: THE UNIQUE CUE IN CONFIGURAL DISCRIMINATIONS

by

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#### Emergence of the Unique Cue in Configural Discriminations

A number of conditioning studies have analyzed how associative strengths of stimuli combine when they are presented in compounds. Results from these studies suggest, on the one hand, that stimulus compounds should be viewed as configurations, or groupings, in their own right, yet on the other hand, also indicate that summation of the effects of separately trained stimuli can occur. For example, in a negative patterning procedure, two stimuli, A and B, are reinforced when presented separately, but not when presented in compound. Such A+, B+, AB- training can lead to responding to A and B when each is presented alone but not to the AB compound (Kehoe & Gormezano, 1980). By contrast, animals that receive only A+ and B+ training may respond more to the AB compound than to A and B separately, even if the levels of responding to A and B are matched in the two training procedures (Rescorla, 1972, 1973; Whitlow & Wagner, 1972).

In conditional discrimination experiments, animals are presented with two stimulus compounds that are reinforced (AC+ and BD+) and two that are not reinforced (AD- and BC-). Thus each of the elements A, B, C, and D is reinforced on half of its presentations. Despite this fact, the reinforced configurations elicit responding but the others do not (Rescorla, Grau, & Durlach, 1985; Saavedra, 1975).

These studies are illustrative of a large conditioning and cognitive literature that implicates the existence of recognition codes wherein multiple groupings, or chunks, of input information can be processed simultaneously. Properties of such recognition codes are described below in a general cognitive setting.

#### Multiple Groupings or Chunks in Unitized Recognition Codes

The chapter by Carpenter and Grossberg (this volume) describes one line of our group's recent progress towards characterizing the self-organization of sensory and cognitive recognition codes using the principles and mechanisms of adaptive resonance theory. The present chapter describes a parallel line of work. In Carpenter and Grossberg (this volume), an

input pattern to level  $F_1$  is globally grouped at  $F_2$  when the  $F_2$  population that receives the maximal input from the  $F_1 \to F_2$  adaptive filter is chosen for short-term memory (STM) storage. Within the total architecture of an adaptive resonance attentional-orienting system, this simple type of  $F_2$  reaction to the  $F_1 \to F_2$  adaptive filter leads to powerful coding properties. On the other hand, at least two major facts show that a level  $F_2$  which makes global choices must be viewed as a special case of a more general design for  $F_2$ .

If the second processing stage  $F_2$  made a choice, then later processing stages that are activated by  $F_2$  alone could not further analyse the input pattern across  $F_1$ . Such further processing stages would therefore be redundant. The coding hierarchy for individual input patterns would end at the choice, or global grouping, stage. This conclusion does not preclude the possibility that globally grouped individual events embedded in regularly occurring temporal lists generate unitized representations of these lists at a higher coding level (Cohen & Grossberg, 1986, 1987; Grossberg, 1985; Grossberg & Stone, 1986).

By contrast, a coding scheme wherein  $F_2$  generates a spatially distributed representation of the  $F_1$  activity pattern, rather than a choice, could support subsequent levels  $F_3, F_4, \ldots, F_n$  for coding multiple groupings, or chunks, and thus more abstract invariants of an input pattern. This possibility raises many issues concerning the properties of these configurations and their invariants, and of the architectural constraints that enable a multi-level coding hierarchy to learn and recognize distributed invariants in a stable and globally self-consistent fashion.

### Unitized Coding of Parts and Wholes in Speech, Visual Object Recognition, and Cognition

The type of circuit design from which  $F_2$ —and by extension higher levels  $F_3, F_4, \ldots, F_n$ —may be fashioned is one whose properties are of equal value for visual object recognition, speech recognition, and higher cognitive processes. Indeed, the same circuit design is important wherever spatially distributed self-organizing recognition codes are used. This type

of parallel neural architecture is called a masking field (Cohen & Grossberg, 1986, 1987; Grossberg, 1978, 1984, 1986; Grossberg & Stone, 1986). A masking field is a multiple scale, self-similar, automatically gain-controlled cooperative-competitive feedback network. The purpose of a masking field is to simultaneously detect, and weight properly in STM, all of the salient parts, or groupings, of an input pattern, including possibly the pattern as a whole, and predicted future patterns of which the present pattern forms a part. Thus a masking field generates a spatially distributed, yet unitized, representation of the input pattern in STM. The type of problem which a masking field solves is clarified by considering how a complex time series, such as speech, is decoded by an experienced observer.

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One of the fundamental problem areas in speech and language research, cognitive psychology, and artificial intelligence is the characterization of the functional units into which speech sounds are integrated by a fluent speaker. A core issue is the context sensitivity of these functional units, or the manner in which the perceptual grouping into functional units can depend upon the spatiotemporal patterning of the entire speech stream. Such context sensitivity is evident on every level of speech and language organization. For example, words such as Myself, Inspire, Become, and Forbid are each composed of parts which have very different meanings. A critical problem in speech research concerns the manner in which a word, as a whole, can generate a different code than its parts, and can therefore access a different meaning. Thus, although a word such as Myself is used by a fluent speaker as a unitized verbal chunk, in different verbal contexts, My, Self, and Elf are all words in their own right with their own different meanings. Although an utterance which ended with My would generate one grouping of the speech flow, an utterance which went on to include the entire word Myself could supplant this encoding with one appropriate to the longer word. Thus, in order to understand how context-sensitive language units are perceived by a fluent speaker, one must explain how all possible groupings of the speech flow are analysed through time, and how certain groupings can be chosen in one context without preventing other groupings from being chosen in a different context. The

same problem must be solved, albeit with more abstract codes, on every level of cognitive processing.

The functional units into which a fluent language user groups a speech stream are dependent upon the observer's prior language experiences. For example, a learned code, or unitized representation, for the word Myself does not exist in the brain of a speaker who is unfamiliar with this word. Thus an adequate theory of how an observer parses a speech stream, or other temporally evolving event stream, into context-sensitive cognitive units needs to explain how developmental and learning processes, notably long term memory (LTM) processes, bias the observer to experience some perceptual groupings over others. Within the present theory, such biasing takes place within the LTM traces of bottom-up adaptive filters and top-down learned expectations (Carpenter & Grossberg, this volume).

The same considerations hold when words such as Myself are presented visually, rather than auditorily. Then the problem becomes one of visual object recognition and of figure-ground segmentation. The problem exists also on a finer level of visual processing, since letters such as E contain, as parts, components such as L and F. The masking field design is capable of sensing multiple pattern groupings, which subtend multiple spatial scales, and assigns each of these groupings its proper STM coding weight. The masking field thus offers an alternative approach to the one described by Mumford (this volume) for providing a structural description of temporally or spatially patterned information.

#### Developmental Rules Imply Cognitive Rules as Emergent Properties of Neural Network Interactions

It has been shown how a masking field network can arise through simple rules of neuronal growth (Cohen & Grossberg, 1986; Grossberg, 1986). These rules include random growth of connections along spatial gradients from  $F_1$  to  $F_2$ , activity-dependent cell growth within  $F_2$ , and competition for conserved synaptic sites within  $F_2$  (Figure 1a). Thus the masking field provides an example of how simple rules of neuronal development can give rise

to a system whose emergent properties act as if it obeys complex rules of context-sensitive cognitive coding.

#### place Figure 1 here

The masking field network  $F_2$  selects its unitized representations by performing a new type of multiple scale analysis of distributed activity patterns across its input level  $F_1$ . Network  $F_2$  is activated by an adaptive filter  $F_1 \rightarrow F_2$  that transforms the activity pattern across  $F_1$  into an input pattern to  $F_2$ . Such a network  $F_2$  acts as a content-addressable memory. Network  $F_2$  selects compressed (unitized, chunked) recognition codes that are predictive with respect to the activation patterns flickering across the feature detectors of  $F_1$ , and competitive inhibits, or masks, codes which are unpredictive with respect to the  $F_1$  patterns. The individual nodes of  $F_1$  represent items in the temporal sequence, or list, of events that perturb  $F_1$ . Such a list of items generates the total activity pattern across  $F_1$  at any time. Individual  $F_2$  nodes are sensitive to patterns of  $F_1$  activation and thus to contextual information about the list of items that is perturbing  $F_1$ . Consequently, the activity patterns across  $F_2$  are called list codes in STM. Thus the units of  $F_1$  and  $F_2$  are items and lists, not letters and words, as in the McClelland and Rumelhart (1981) interactive activation model. See Grossberg (1984, 1986, 1987) for a discussion of the issues and data relevant to this issue.

A masking field  $F_2$  can simultaneously detect multiple groupings within the input patterns received by  $F_1$  and assign activation weights to the codes for these groupings which are predictive with respect to the contextual information embedded within the patterns and the prior learning of the system. A masking field automatically rescales its sensitivity as the overall size of an input pattern changes, yet also remains sensitive to the microstructure within each input pattern. Due to its automatic rescaling, the masking field network does not confuse "wholes" with their "parts," yet enables familiar "parts" to emerge as "wholes" in their own right in an appropriate input context, just as events A

and B may be processed individually if they are presented separately or as a compound AB with multiple parts when presented together. Otherwise expressed, the spatial patterning of enhanced STM activities across  $F_2$  embodies a hypothesis about the input stream across  $F_1$ . As will be described in greater detail below, this hypothesis-testing code can predict, or anticipate, subsequent events by assigning activities to groupings which have not yet fully occurred, based on the available evidence. Thus this hypothesis-testing mechanism acts like a real-time prediction, or evidence-gathering, machine. No serial programs or cognitive-rule structures exist within the masking field network to generate these properties. Instead, the model nodes, or neurons, obey membrane equations undergoing shunting (mass action) on-center off-surround (cooperative-competitive) recurrent (feedback) interactions (Figure 1b) that are defined below. The STM code of a masking field is an emergent property of these interactions.

#### Sensitivity to Multiple Scales and Intrascale Variations

The spatial analysis that is performed by a masking field is sensitive to two different types of pattern changes.

#### A. Sensitivity to Multiple Pattern Scales

As a word like Myself is processed, a subword such as My occurs before the entire word Myself is experienced. Figure 2a schematizes this type of informational change. As the word is presented, earlier STM activations of the item representation within  $F_1$  are modified and supplemented by later STM activations. The STM pattern across  $F_1$  expands as the word is presented. After Myself is fully stored within  $F_1$ , parts such as My, Self, and Elf are still (at least partially) represented within the whole. The masking field  $F_2$  can nonetheless update its initial response to My as the remainder of Myself is presented. In this way, the masking field can react to the whole word rather than only its parts.

#### place Figure 2 here

#### B. Sensitivity to Internal Pattern Miscrostructure

The second type of masking field sensitivity is illustrated by the two words Left and Felt. This comparison is merely illustrative. It does not attempt to characterize the many subtle context-sensitive alterations that occur in evolving sound patterns or reading patterns. The words Left and Felt illustrate the issue that the same set of item representations within  $F_1$  may be activated by different item orderings. To distinguish two such activity patterns across  $F_1$ , sensitivity within  $F_2$  to different spatial scales of  $F_1$  is insufficient because both lists may activate the same spatial scale of  $F_1$ . Instead, sensitivity to different STM patterns which excite the same set of items is required (Figure 2b).

#### Hypothesis Formation, Anticipation, Evidence, and Prediction

The dynamics of a masking field express in an abstract language a number of important intuitions about cognitive coding. Consider for definiteness a masking field  $F_2$  that is capable of simultaneously discriminating more than one grouping within a list of events that activates  $F_1$ . For example, a masking field  $F_2$  might respond to the  $F_1$  representation of the word Myself by strongly activating an  $F_2$  population that is sensitive to the whole word and weakly activating  $F_2$  populations that are sensitive to the word's most salient parts. Or it might react to a pair of events A and B by representing the events singly and as a unitized configuration AB. In such a representation, the total STM pattern across  $F_2$  represents the  $F_1$  STM pattern. The relative sizes of  $F_2$ 's STM activities weight the relative importance of the unitized groupings that are coded by the respective  $F_2$  cell populations.

The suprathreshold STM activities across  $F_2$  are approximately normalized, or conserved, due to its competitive feedback interactions (Figure 1b). The STM activities across  $F_2$  thus function like a type of real-time probabilistic logic, or hypothesis-testing algorithm, or model of the evidence that  $F_2$  has about the pattern across  $F_1$ .

Such a masking field also possesses a predictive, or anticipatory, capability. In response to a single item across  $F_1$ , the  $F_2$  population that is most vigorously activated may code

that item. In addition, less vigorous activations may arise among those  $F_2$  populations that represent the most salient larger groupings of which the item forms a part. Such a masking field can anticipate, or predict, the larger groupings that may occur of which the item forms a part.

As more items are stored in STM across  $F_1$ , the set of possible groupings encoded by  $F_2$  changes. In response to additional items, different groupings are preferred within  $F_2$ . Moreover, as more items are stored by  $F_1$ ,  $F_2$ 's uncertainty concerning the information represented at  $F_1$  may decrease due to the emergence of a more constraining overall pattern. As  $F_2$ 's uncertainty decreases, the spatial distribution of STM activity across  $F_2$  becomes more focussed, or spatially localized. This type of spatial sharpening measures the degree of informational uncertainty within the  $F_2$  code. These multiple-grouping properties of a masking field are illustrated by the computer simulations summarized in Figures 3-8.

#### Masking Field Equations

The differential equations for the masking field which we have simulated are

$$\frac{d}{dt}x_{i}^{(J)} = -Ax_{i}^{(J)} + (B - x_{i}^{(J)})\{\sum_{j \in J} I_{j}p_{ji}^{(J)}z_{ji}^{(J)} + D \mid J \mid f(x_{i}^{(J)})\} - F(x_{i}^{(J)} + C)\frac{\sum_{m,K} g(x_{m}^{(K)}) \mid K \mid (1 + \mid K \cap J \mid)}{\sum_{m,L} \mid K \mid (1 + \mid K \cap J \mid)}$$
(1)

and

$$\frac{d}{dt}z_{ji}^{(J)} = \epsilon f(x_i^{(J)})(-z_{ij}^{(J)} + LI_j)$$
 (2)

where the variables  $x_i^{(J)}$  are activations, or short-term memory (STM) traces, of  $F_2$  nodes and the variables  $z_{ji}^{(J)}$  are adaptive weights, or long-term memory (LTM) traces, of the pathways within the  $F_1 \to F_2$  adaptive filter. The symbols J and K denote unordered sets of items at  $F_1$ . Symbols |J|, |K|, and  $|J \cap K|$  denote the number of items in the respective sets J, K, and  $J \cap K$ . Thus  $x_i^{(J)}$  is the STM trace of the ith  $F_2$  node which receives input pathways from the set J of items at  $F_1$ .

Term  $\sum_{j\in J} I_j p_{ji}^{(J)} z_{ji}^{(J)}$  in (1) denotes the total input from  $F_1$  to node  $v_i^{(J)}$  of  $F_2$  via

the adaptive filter in response to the inputs  $I_j$  across  $F_1$ . The coefficient  $p_{ji}^{(J)}$  is the path strength from node  $v_j$  of  $F_1$  to node  $v_i^{(J)}$  of  $F_2$ . Term  $D \mid J \mid f(x_i^{(J)})$  in (1) denotes a positive feedback signal from node  $v_i^{(J)}$  to itself. Term  $g(x_m^{(K)}) \mid K \mid (1+\mid K \cap J \mid) [\sum_{m,K} \mid K \mid (1+\mid K \cap J \mid)]^{-1}$  in (1) describes a negative feedback signal from node  $v_m^{(K)}$  to node  $v_i^{(J)}$ . The derivation and parameter choices for these equations are found in Cohen and Grossberg (1986, 1987). In the simulations reported here, no learning was allowed to occur. Thus we chose  $z_{ji}^{(J)} \equiv 1$  in equation (1) and did not use equation (2).

#### Computer Simulations

Figures 3-8 illustrate how presentation of a list through time can update the unitized chunks in an  $F_2$  field that is capable of simultaneously storing several sublist groupings in STM. In Figure 3, item  $\{0\}$  most strongly activates the  $\{0\}$  nodes of  $F_2$ , but also weakly activates other  $F_2$  nodes that represent groupings that include item  $\{0\}$ . The  $F_2$  nodes that receive an item pathway only from  $\{0\}$  have a maximal activity of .130. The  $F_2$  nodes that receive two item pathways, including a pathway from  $\{0\}$ , have a maximal activity of .07. The  $F_2$  nodes that receive three item pathways, including a pathway from  $\{0\}$ , have a maximal activity of .017. These activity weights characterize the degree of "evidence" that the masking field possesses that each grouping is reflected in the input pattern.

#### place Figure 3 here

In Figure 4, item  $\{1\}$  is presented to  $F_1$ . It most strongly activates the  $\{1\}$  nodes of  $F_2$ , but also weakly activates other  $F_2$  nodes that represent groupings that include item  $\{1\}$ .

#### place Figure 4 here

In Figure 5, the  $\{0,1\}$  spatial pattern across  $F_1$  most strongly activates a node within the  $\{0,1\}$  subfield of  $F_2$ , but also weakly activates other nodes of  $F_2$  that receive inputs from  $\{0\}$ . The activity levels are .187 and .07, respectively. A comparison of Figures 3

and 4 with Figure 5 shows that  $F_2$  can distinguish wholes from parts. Although items  $\{0\}$  and  $\{1\}$  form the parts of the  $\{0,1\}$   $F_1$  pattern in Figure 5, level  $F_2$  reacts to  $\{0\}$  and  $\{1\}$  as parts of the whole  $\{0,1\}$  in Figure 5 very differently than it reacts to  $\{0\}$  and  $\{1\}$  as wholes in their own right in Figures 3 and 4. This comparison illustrates the sensitivity of a masking field to multiple spatial scales.

#### place Figure 5 here

The sensitivity of a masking field to the microstructure within each scale is illustrated by comparison of Figures 5 and 6. In both figures, the set  $\{0,1\}$  of items activates  $F_1$ , but the spatial patterning of STM activities across these items differs. Level  $F_2$  senses this difference and groups the  $F_1$  patterns differently in Figures 5 and 6.

#### place Figure 6 here

The sensitivity to pattern microstructure is also illustrated by the more demanding examples in Figures 7 and 8. In Figure 7, the set  $\{0,1,2\}$  of active items across  $F_1$  most strongly activates a node within the  $\{0,1,2\}$  subfield of  $F_2$  (with activity .184), but also weakly activates the  $\{0\}$  subfield of  $F_2$  (with activity .004). A different STM pattern over the same set  $\{0,1,2\}$  of items is processed by  $F_2$  in Figure 8. Level  $F_2$  groups the  $F_1$  patterns of Figures 7 and 8 differently.

#### place Figure 7 here

A comparison of Figures 3, 5, and 7 provides an expanded illustration of the sensitivity to multiple spatial scales. A comparison of Figures 3-8 illustrates how the STM activity pattern across  $F_2$  becomes more focussed as increasing information due to an expanded temporal (or spatial) context reduces predictive uncertainty.

#### place Figure 8 here

#### Directions of Future Research

The next stage in the development of the adaptive resonance theory can now easily be stated in formal terms: Replace the global choices made by  $F_2$  in the Carpenter and Grossberg chapter with a masking field capable of sensing multiple groupings of an input pattern; extend the  $F_1 \leftrightarrow F_2$  hierarchy to multiple coding levels  $F_1 \leftrightarrow F_2 \leftrightarrow F_3 \leftrightarrow \ldots \leftrightarrow F_n$ ; and analyse the recognition invariants that are self-organized by such an expanded attentional-orienting system in biologically important examples. This program, although now easy to state in formal terms, includes as special cases several of the most difficult outstanding problems in cognitive psychology.

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#### FIGURE CAPTIONS

Figure 1. (a) Selective activation of a masking field: The nodes, or cell populations, in a masking field  $F_2$  are organized so that longer item sequences in  $F_1$ , up to some optimal length, activate  $F_2$  list nodes which possess more potent competitive, or masking, properties. Individual items, as well as item groupings, are represented by the list nodes of the masking field. The desired relationship between item field, masking field, and the intervening adaptive filter can be self-organized using simple developmental rules. Cells from an item field  $F_1$  grow randomly to a masking field  $F_2$  along positionally sensitive gradients. The nodes in the masking field grow so that larger item groupings, up to some optimal size, can activate nodes with broader and stronger inhibitory interactions. Thus the  $F_1 \rightarrow F_2$  connections and the  $F_2 \leftrightarrow F_2$  interactions exhibit properties of self-similarity. (b) The interactions within a masking field  $F_2$  include positive feedback from a node to itself and negative feedback from a node to its neighbors. Long term memory (LTM) traces at the ends of  $F_1 \rightarrow F_2$  pathways (designated by hemidisks) adaptively tune the filter defined by these pathways to amplify the  $F_2$  reaction to item groupings which have previously succeeded in activating their target  $F_2$  nodes.

Figure 2. Two types of masking field sensitivity: (a) Masking field  $F_2$  can automatically rescale its sensitivity to react differentially to activity patterns that activate variable numbers of  $F_1$  cells. It hereby acts like a "multiple spatial frequency filter." (b) A masking field can differentially react to different  $F_1$  activity patterns that activate the same set of  $F_1$  cells. By (a) and (b),  $F_2$  acts like a spatial pattern discriminator that can compensate for changes in overall spatial scale without losing its sensitivity to pattern changes at the finest spatial scale.

Figure 3. List coding of a single item: Network  $F_1$  encodes in short term memory (STM) a spatial pattern of activation over item representations. In this figure, the single item  $\{0\}$  is activated. Network  $F_2$  encodes in STM the pattern of sublist chunks that are

activated by  $F_1$ . The first three rows depict the inputs from  $F_1$  and  $F_2$ . They are broadly distributed across  $F_2$ . The List Code in STM depicts the STM response to these inputs. The correct  $\{0\}$  is preferred in STM, but predictive list codes which include  $\{0\}$  as a part are also activated with lesser STM weights. The prediction gets less activation if  $\{0\}$  forms a smaller part of it.

Figure 4. List coding of a single item: The correct list code  $\{1\}$  in  $F_2$  in response to item  $\{1\}$  at  $F_1$  is preferred in STM, but the predictive list codes which include  $\{1\}$  as a part are also activated with lesser STM weights.

Figure 5. List coding of an STM primacy gradient across two items: A primacy gradient in STM across two items of  $F_1$  generates an even broader input pattern to  $F_2$ . A list code of type  $\{0,1\}$  is maximally activated, but part codes  $\{0\}$  and predicted codes which include  $\{0,1\}$  as a part are also activated with lesser STM weights. Comparison with Figure 3 shows that  $F_2$  can update its internal representation of input configurations in a context-sensitive way.

Figure 6. List coding of an STM recency gradient across two items: A recency gradient in STM occurs across the same two items of  $F_2$ , rather than a primacy gradient. A different  $\{0,1\}$  list code population is preferred, as are different part and prediction codes. Thus  $F_2$  can distinguish different spatial patternings among the same items.

Figure 7. List coding of an STM primacy gradient across three items: In this figure, a primacy gradient in STM occurs across three items of  $F_1$ . The input pattern to  $F_2$  is even broader than before. However, the STM response of  $F_2$  retains its selectivity. The list code in STM strongly activates an appropriate  $\{0,1,2\}$  list code. Part groupings are suppressed due to the high level of predictiveness in this masking field, since each  $F_2$  node receives input pathways from at most three  $F_1$  item nodes. Comparison of Figures 3, 5, and 7 shows that as the item code across  $F_1$  becomes more constraining, the list code representation becomes less distributed across  $F_2$ .

Figure 8. List coding of an STM recency gradient across three items: In this figure, a different spatial pattern across the same three items in  $F_1$  generates a different selective STM response among the  $\{0,1,2\}$  nodes at  $F_2$ , thereby illustrating  $F_2$ 's sensitivity to  $F_1$  pattern microstructure.

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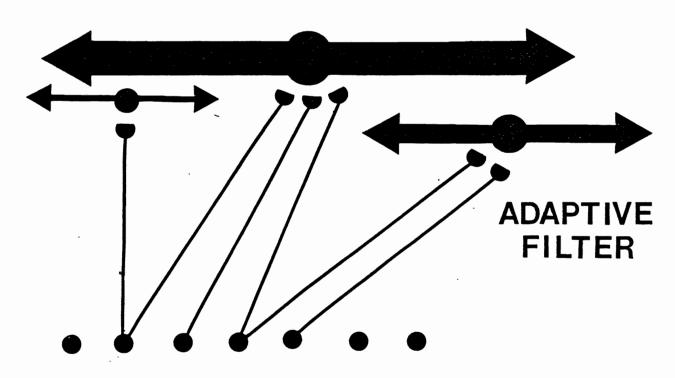
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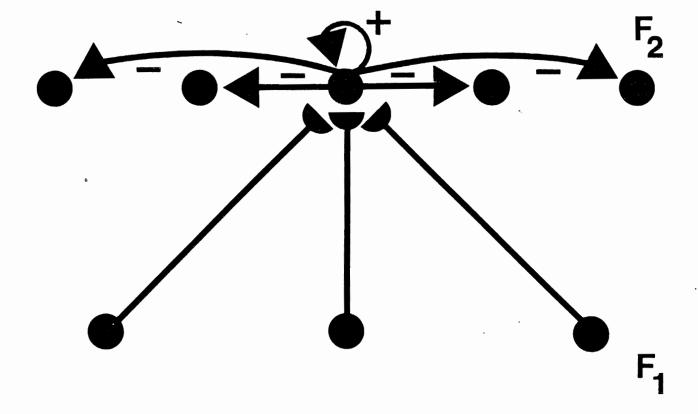
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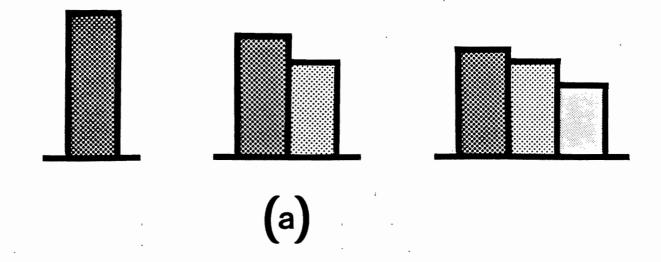
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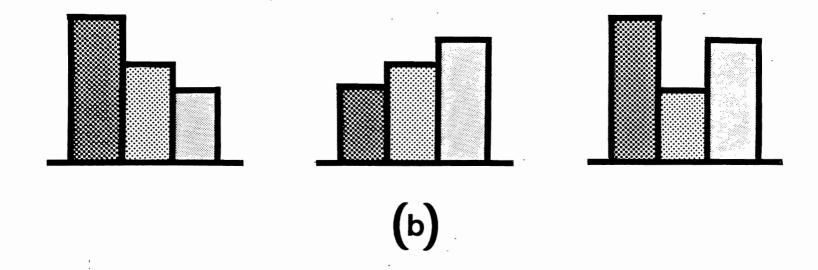
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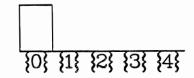
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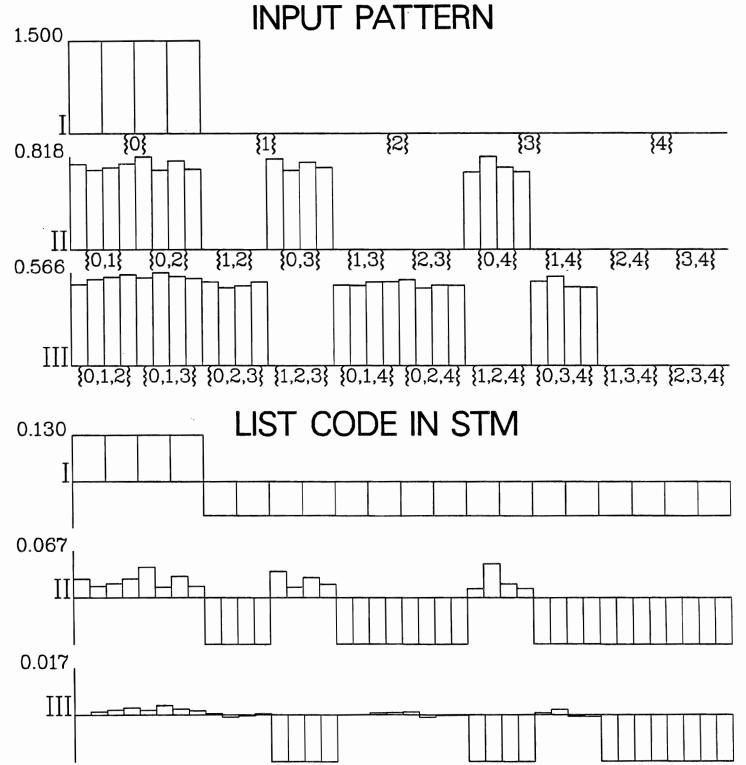




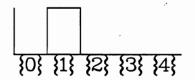


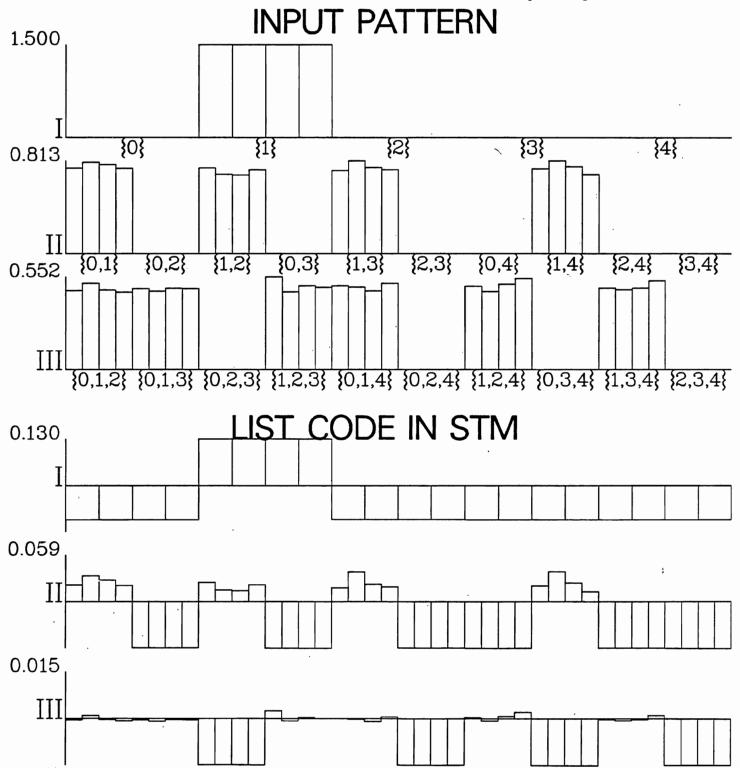
TEMPORAL ORDER OVER ITEMS IN STM



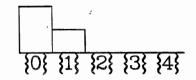


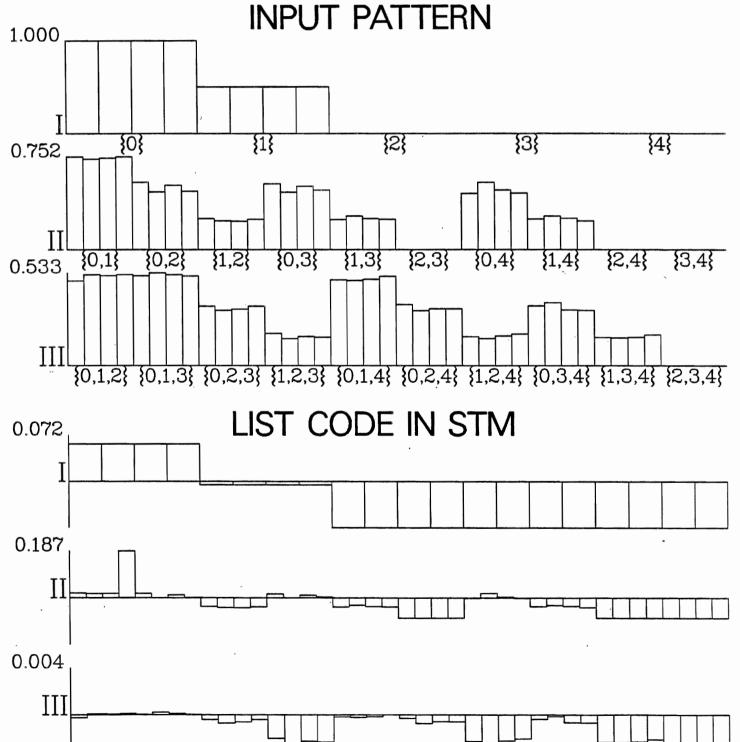




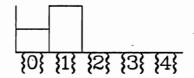


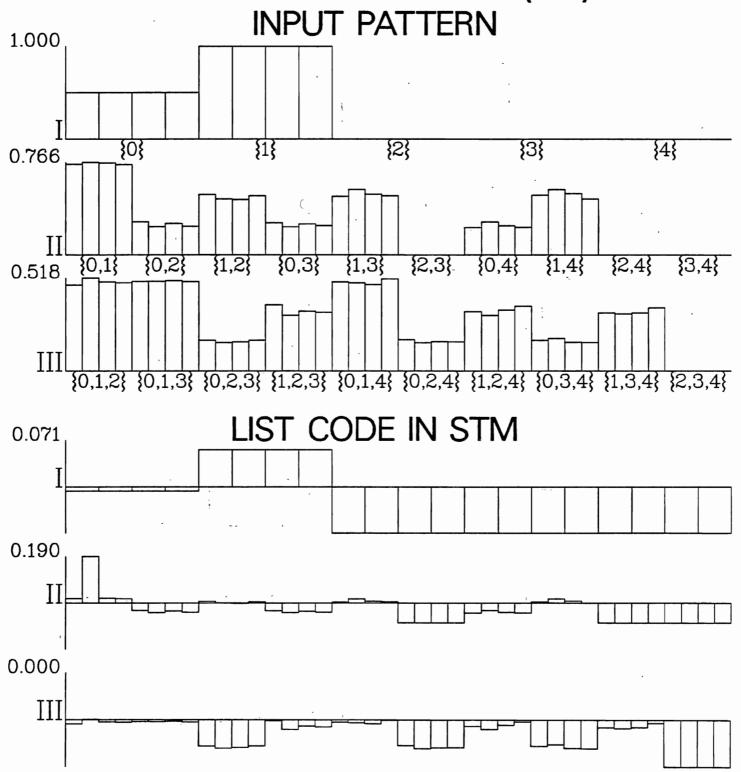
TEMPORAL ORDER OVER ITEMS IN STM











TEMPORAL ORDER OVER ITEMS IN STM



