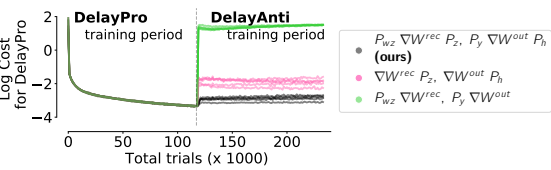


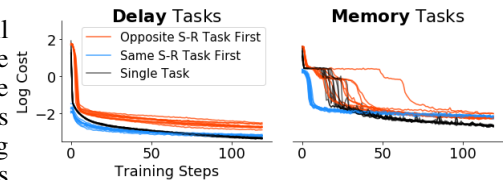
1 We thank the reviewers for their careful reading, feedback and helpful comments and address specific concerns below.

2 **Novelty of contributions.** The novelty of our contribution is
3 two-fold: First, our proposed learning rule with modifications
4 to both sides of the gradient update is novel. This feature also
5 distinguishes our method from OWM (**R3**) and FORCE (**R2**).
6 Following **R3**'s suggestions, we repeat the experiments of Figure
7 3 using one-sided projections and plot the log-cost on test trials



8 throughout training of the 1st and 2nd task. The increase in cost after introducing the second task provides a comparison
9 of the extent of forgetting across methods. Tasks are best retained using the double-sided approach. **R4** raised that
10 they did not understand the motivation for the double-sided learning rule. In brief, both input and output spaces can
11 interfere across tasks unless we project out updates in these dimensions during learning. We hope the additional results
12 are convincing and we will further expand on the motivation offered in lines 107-111 when we revise the text. Second,
13 a key contribution of this work is the dynamical systems analysis of how our learning algorithm shapes the organization
14 of multiple tasks within an RNN. We find that tasks with similar input/output relationships may utilize shared dynamics
15 in aligned subspaces, even when orthogonality was imposed using our learning rule. For example, when a Memory
16 task is learned first, followed by a DeLay task with the same input/output structure (e.g. both Pro tasks), then the
17 DeLay task dynamics can reuse structures of the Memory task without changing the input/output relationships in the
18 Memory task subspace. This leads to alignment across both task-subspaces (Figure 6D) and the existence of a trace of a
19 memory structure (ring attractor) during the performance of the DeLay task (Figure 7A). **R3** felt that we spent little
20 effort discussing training order. In the revised paper, we will make it more explicit that analyses of sections 5.3-5.5 were
21 carried out to better understand training order results (cf lines 164-165). The novel analyses we developed contribute to
22 a better understanding of learned representations in RNNs and how these are affected by our learning algorithm.

23 **Transfer learning and orthogonality.** In response to **R4**, we will
24 update Figure 4 to also include the single task training setting to more
25 clearly demonstrate transfer learning (see right). **R4** also raised the
26 question whether orthogonality was imposed in the same way across
27 experiments. We apply the same learning strategy in all cases, according
28 to Eq.(3)-(5). We agree that saying "were allowed" in line 195 is



29 confusing, since the learning algorithm itself is agnostic to any similarities across tasks. **R4** noted that the case where
30 orthogonality was imposed but the network still used the same subspace, would mean the results of the paper are
31 nontrivial and interesting, and we would like to note that this was indeed the case. We will revise relevant sections in
32 the paper to be more explicit about these points.

33 **Related work and comparisons.** **R2** pointed out similarities with FORCE, which we refer to in lines 252-256 in the
34 discussion. We plan to revise the related work section to focus more explicitly on FORCE and also include a reference
35 to the relevant work in Beer & Barak (2019), as suggested by **R2**. **R3** asked why we focus only on regularization-based
36 approaches in our comparisons. Our work is motivated by the question of how the *same* neural population may be
37 involved in computations relating to multiple tasks (lines 23-24). EWC and SI are appropriate for this setting and
38 represent well-established baselines. Furthermore, SI represents the state-of-the-art on the task-set and architecture we
39 study here (see Yang, 2019). Replay revisits training data, while we consider the setting where training examples from
40 previously learned tasks are inaccessible (lines 54-55). Dynamic network architectures (e.g. Li, 2020 and Cossu, 2020)
41 solve continual learning by growing the network, which is a fundamentally different solution and the reason why we
42 didn't include such methods as baseline comparisons here. However, we thank **R3** for pointing out the above references
43 and other recent work on continual learning in the RNN setting. We were not aware of these recent publications, but
44 agree that they should be discussed as related work in the revised paper.

45 **Other concerns.** **R1,3** noted that our set of tasks were limited. We focus on toy examples so that we may analyze the
46 solutions the network obtains under different training regimes, which we emphasize is a key contribution of our work.
47 We view this as an important first step, but agree that real-world applications (e.g. cart/pole control in multiple settings,
48 or brain machine interface control) should be the ultimate goal. **R2** was interested in fixed point structure change
49 after learning new tasks. Fixed point structures were highly overlapping upon visual inspection in TDR subspaces.
50 All examined subspace angles between fixed point structures before and after learning subsequent tasks were <0.1
51 radians, and q values (cf Beer & Barak, 2019) remained in the same range. Such minimal change is consistent with our
52 learning rule limiting change of dynamics within previously explored subspaces. We will add a discussion of this point
53 to the revised manuscript. **R2** also raised concerns about biological plausibility and known task boundaries. While the
54 motivation for our learning rule is based on orthogonal subspace structure in neural populations, the learning rule itself
55 is not biologically plausible. In the revised manuscript we will clarify that biologically plausible learning, as well as
56 learning without knowledge of task boundaries are interesting and important directions for future work. Regarding
57 reproducibility, we will make code publicly available should the paper get accepted.