2009년 가을 학술논문발표회 및 임시총회
창원컨벤션센터
2009. 10. 21(수)~23(금)
Stochastic Spiking Coherence in An Inhibitory Population of Subthreshold Neurons

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We study coherent population dynamics in an inhibitory ensemble of subthreshold neurons. Particularly, stochastic spiking coherence (i.e., collective coherence between noise-induced irregular neural spikings) is investigated. In a range of noise intensity $D$, "stripes" (indicating collective coherence) are found to be formed in the raster plot of spikings. However, these stripes are partially occupied, in contrast to the full occupation for the case of excitatory coupling. Each excitatory neuron fires spikes phase-locked to the global ensemble-averaged potential $V_G$ at every cycle of $V_G$. On the other hand, inhibitory neurons exhibit intermittent spikings phase-locked to $V_G$ at random multiples of the period of $V_G$. Due to this "random spike skipping," partial occupation occurs. To characterize this collective coherence, we introduce a new type of spiking coherence measure $M_s$, based on the stripes in the raster plot. We note that the degree of spiking coherence depends on both the stripe density and the stripe smearing. Hence, the measure $M_s$ is given by the product of the average fraction of firing neurons (representing the average density of stripes) and the average pacing degree of spikings (denoting the average smearing of stripes) per each stripe. In terms of $M_s$, we characterize the stochastic spiking coherence in coupled subthreshold neurons by varying $D$. Such spiking coherence measure $M_s$ is found to reflect the degree of collective coherence seen in the raster plot well.