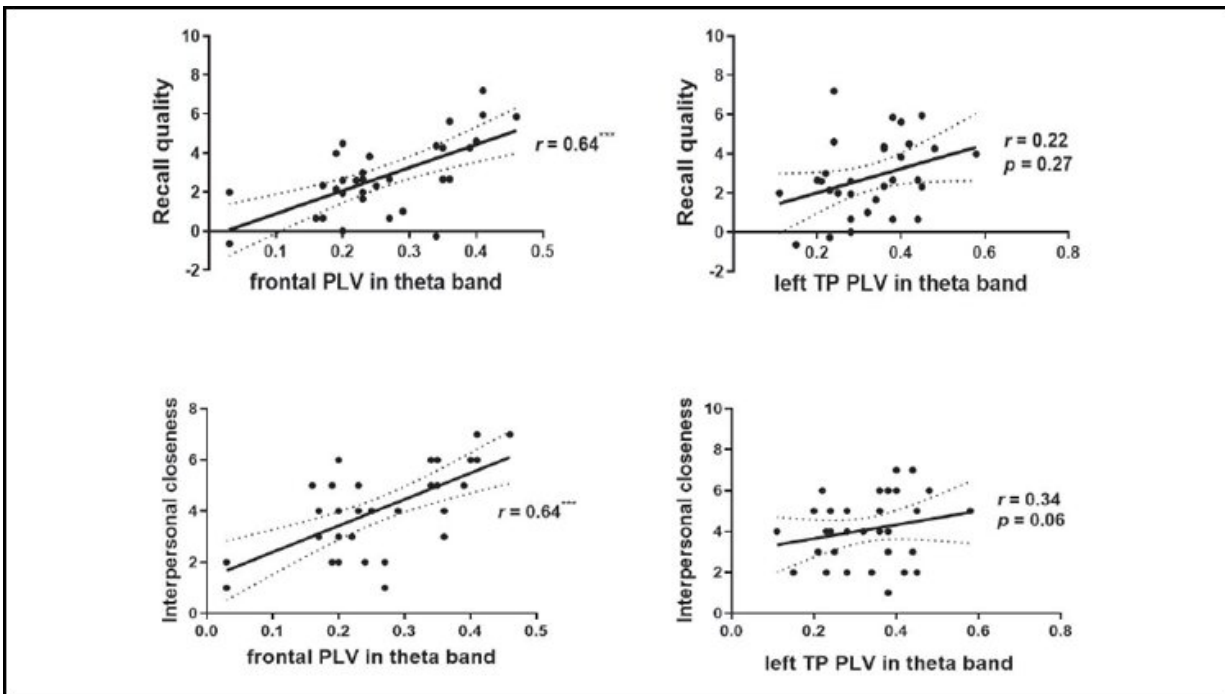


# Happy stories synch brain activity more than sad stories

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Correlation between behavioral results and interbrain synchrony. Credit: Xie et al., *eNeuro* 2021

Successful storytelling can synchronize brain activity between the speaker and listener, but not all stories are created equal. Sharing happy stories increases feelings of closeness and brain synchrony more than sad stories, according to new research published in *eNeuro*.

Researchers from East China Normal University compared how emotional stories impact interpersonal connection and communication. In the study, one participant—the speaker—watched happy, sad, and neutral videos and recorded themselves explaining the contents of the videos. Participants—the listeners—listened to the narration and rated how close they felt to the speaker afterward. Both the speaker and the listeners completed their tasks while researchers measured their brain activity with EEG.

Sharing happy stories produced better recall in the listeners, as well as higher ratings of interpersonal closeness. The increased closeness was linked to increased synchrony between the [brain activity](#) of the [speaker](#) and [listener](#), particularly in the frontal and left temporoparietal cortices. These regions are involved in emotional processing and theory of mind, respectively. Brain synchrony could become a measure of successful connection and communication.

**More information:** Sharing Happy Stories Increases Interpersonal Closeness: Interpersonal Brain Synchronization as a Neural Indicator, *eNeuro*, [DOI: 10.1523/ENEURO.0245-21.2021](https://doi.org/10.1523/ENEURO.0245-21.2021)

Provided by Society for Neuroscience

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