

Sole Source Certification (Continued)

Please use the following sections to continue documentation if needed.

B. continued

In lay terms, this means that the treadmill can measure how much a person “pushes” on the ground to move. In addition, the treadmill has two belts (one for each leg) that can be independently and precisely controlled. This functionality allows us to induce disturbances to walking balance, such as slips and trips. My research is focused on understanding how individuals with various musculoskeletal and neurological pathologies control their balance during movement (e.g., standing, walking, running, etc.). The data from experiments using this treadmill will allow us to quantitatively compare how pathologic and non-pathologic individuals move and respond to balance challenges, which can inform surgeries and rehabilitation protocols to improve and restore function.

C. continued

For example, we can simulate a slip during walking by quickly changing the speed of a single belt when the foot hits the ground. Feature 1 is required because the side-by-side force plates allow us to determine when each foot hits the ground. This defines when the “slip” should start. Feature 2 is required because the “slip” is simulated by changing the speed of only one of the treadmill belts (similar to one foot slipping when unexpectedly stepping on a patch of ice). The third feature (speed/acceleration control) is required to enable the quickly speed changes with high enough velocity and acceleration levels for the disturbance to feel like a “slip”. And finally, the fourth feature (custom motor control) is required to integrate each of the previous features together to control the treadmill belts to move as desired.

There are two primary competitors that have split-belt instrumented treadmills (Features 1 and 2), but they don't meet our research requirements for speed/acceleration (Feature 3) and custom motor control (Feature 4). Only one of the competitors has an option for custom motor control, but their software does not allow us to write custom written code in common computing languages.

D. continued

E. continued

F. continued