

Co-emergence Process on the Humans' Cooperation for Walk-Support

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Abstract

We analyzed the Co-emergence process on the cooperative walks between two humans. As the results, we found the cyclic process based on the following two control processes. One is the process to realize the footsteps' coherence between the cooperative walkers. The other is the process to control the coherence by the mutual relations with the fluctuations of the arms' swing, connected with the attention. Additionally we found that the arms' fluctuations take flexible synchronizations between the cooperative walkers. These results suggest that the synchronization of the cyclic process realize the Co-emergence of the cooperative walk flexibly.

1 Introduction

According to the situation, humans are able to realize the suitable relation by mutual adaptation simultaneously. In this study, we propose the new man-machine system by regarding such kind of "Co-emergence" process[1] as ideal. As an example of it, we have focused on the humans' walk-support by cooperative walk between the therapist and the elderly handicapper, and have proceeded with the development of the walk-support technology which base on the cooperative walk[1]. In this paper, we report about the results of the analysis of the Co-emergence process on the humans' cooperative walk based on the technology.

On these days, the machines have the ability to do the walk-support, which only humans have been able to done, with the development of them. As the examples of them, there are "Powered wheelchair", "Intelligent prosthesis"[2], "Power assisted walking support device"[3], "Powered suits"[4]. They are not the support tools such as the walking stick or walking flame, but the machine that have the motive power and the control mechanism. Thus the machines provide the necessary functions, which the machines have already contained, to the users. At this case, there are the advantages to realize the constant support for the user's walking in spite of the handicaps and his ability to use it because the machines are able to reduce the load for the users. However the functions that the machines are able to realize are close to the inside of them, so it is difficult to Co-emerge the suitable functions for the walk-support according to the situations.

To approach such problem, we have proceed the walk-support robot to Co-emerge suitable support for the elderly handicappers through the cooperative walk as the open embodied interaction[1],[5]. From now, as an example of it, we have developed the walk-support machine "Walk-Mate"[6] which realizes the cooperative walk between the users and the virtual robot by the footsteps sounds. Additionally, to clarify the effectiveness of it, we have proceeded the analysis of the

Co-emergence process of the cooperative walk between human and Walk-Mate[7] and the application for the real elderly handicappers' walk-support[8]. However we have never analyzed the Co-emergence process on the cooperative walk between humans as the ideal of such technology. Therefore we analyzed the real Co-emergence process of the cooperative walk between two humans by measuring the body motions of them.

2 Method

2.1 Plan

The purpose of this experiments are to clarify the mechanism of the Co-emergence process on the humans' cooperative walk for the walk-support. Therefore we take up the cooperative walk between two humans as the typical situation on the walk-support, and analyze the mutual adaptation process of it. Especially as the elements of the dynamics, we focused on the motion of the arm and leg, of which the human's walking motions consist, and analyze the dynamic characteristic on the Experiment #1. Then we analyze the mechanism of it by measuring the temporal development of the elements on the Experiments #2 and #3.

2.2 Cooperative walk system

To realize the suitable walk-support by the cooperative walk, it should be important to adapt their tempo of walking mutually according to the situations. To measure the Co-emergence process as the mutual adaptation process of walking motion, we focused on the footsteps as an expression of the walking motion, and develop the system to realize the mutual adaptation of walking motion by the rhythm sound instead of footsteps between the subjects. Incidentally such kinds of walk-support by rhythm sound are applied to the real walk training for the dynamical syndrome represented by the gait disturbance on the patients of Parkinson syndrome[9].

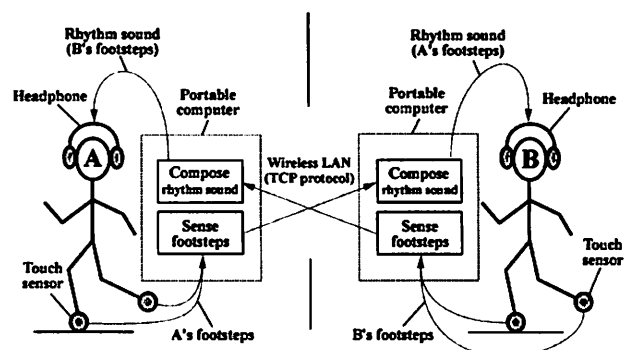


Fig.1 Cooperative walk system.

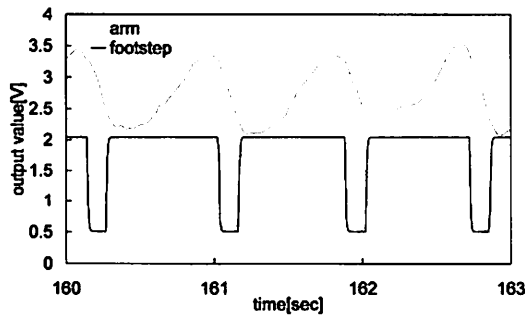


Fig.2 An example of measured data.

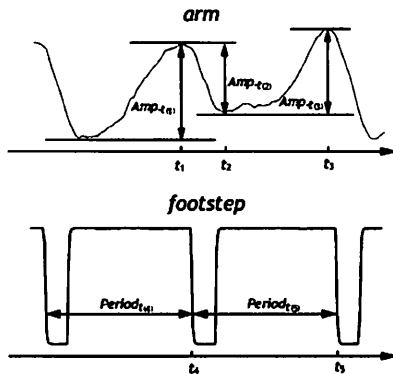


Fig.3 Definition of the measured data.

This system was consisted as Fig.1. The information about the footsteps was measured by the touch sensor (OJIDEN, OT-NO-1) on the heels of the subjects' foot as the step-timings of them. The information was recorded by the portable computer (TOSHIBA, Libretto70), and it transfers to the other subject's portable computer by using TCP protocol on Local Area Network. When the information arrived to the other subject's portable computer, he hears the rhythm sound which correspond to the other subject's footsteps. The accuracy of time constant is less than 0.01sec.

2.3 Measurement system

The purpose of this system is to measure the dynamics of arm and leg simultaneously.

The motion of leg is measured as the data of step timing of foot by the touch sensor mentioned on the last section, and the motion of arm is measured as the data of angular oscillation of elbow, which is measured by angular sensor (NIHON KODEN, EG 511H). These data are sent to telemeter (NIHON KODEN, WEB-5000) by its transmitter (NIHON KODEN, ZB-5812) and converted with 128Hz into discrete voltage data, which can be recorded by the PC (IBM, ThinkPad 570) through the A/D converter (ADTEK, AXP-AD02). Here shows an example of the measured data in Fig. 2. The feet's data was recorded as the time when the measured voltage drop down. The voltage value of the arm's data is proportional to the angular value. The value 0V correspond to the status that the elbow is straight, and the more the value increase, the bent the angle of elbow become. The amplitude of the arm's angular oscillation is defined as Fig.3.

2.4 Experimental conditions

We take 6 subjects (native Japanese, twenties, male, students). At the experiment #1 and #2, 4 of them (A, B, C, D)

formed groups of two (divided into other rooms), and walked along the circular tracks in the enough quiet rooms with the measurements of the touch timing of the feet and the angular oscillation of the arms. And at the experiment #3, the other subject E or F walk with subject A or B whose joint of the right knee was fixed on straighten by the knee orthosis (PACIFIC SUPPLY, 3560) as the condition of the experiment #2. These condition were measure all patterns of groups, which are 6 patterns on the experiment #1 and #2 and 4 patterns on the experiment #3. We had already confirmed that all subjects were able to percept the rhythm sound, and required to concentrate only to hear it during the cooperative walk.

2.4.1 Experiment #1

The motor center that relate the control of the walking motion are classified into the low level nervous system on the spinal cord and the brain stem, and the high level cerebral nervous system on the cerebrum[10]. Especially the latter relate the "attention"[11] for the cognition of the environments, so that suggest it takes very important role to realize mutual adaptation of the walking motion for the walk-support. Accordingly, on this experiment, we analyze the characteristic of the elements of the Co-emergence process by the control of the attention on the cooperative walk.

On this experiment, we set the two conditions (normal and attention condition) and compare them. At the normal condition, the subjects only walk 60sec with the cooperative walk system. On the other hand, at the attention condition, the subjects do the cooperative walk as same as the normal condition with the 5-words-memorization task, which need to waste the attention[12],[13]. This is generally called "Dual-Task method" to reduce the processing ability for primary task as the cooperative walk by make them do the secondly task as the memorization task. The detail of the memorization task was followings; The subjects were showed 5 words which were composed 3~5 Mola Hiragana or Katakana(Japanese letter) 3sec by the computer display just before they start to cooperative walk. Just after that, they do cooperative walk with keeping the memory of these words. Just finish walking, the subjects was required to answer back those with the oral expression.

2.4.2 Experiments #2 and #3

On this experiment, we measure the temporal development of the elements on the Co-emergence process by the cooperative walk in 600sec as same as the normal condition on the experiment #1, and analyze the relation of the interaction from the results.

3 Results

3.1 Experiment #1

In this chapter, we set the two kinds of the experimental conditions based on the attention. Incidentally from the results of the memory task, the average percentage of the correct answer was 90.83%. So it was confirmed that the subjects attained the task actually.

To analyze the dynamics of the legs, it was calculated the auto-correlation coefficient of the all subjects' period of the footsteps from the lag0 to the lag10 by the way of Fig.4. The average and the standard error were shown in Fig.4. The time

scale of the lag was almost 1sec because the average of walking period in cooperative walk is 1.07sec(Normal condition: Ave.= 1.06sec S.D.=0.03sec, Memory condition: Ave.=1.08sec S.D.=0.03sec). The object area to analyze was the starting time of the cooperative walk after 10sec to 60sec, which duration was 50sec. Then there are no significant correlations and no differences between the normal condition and the memory condition. Thus the temporal developments of the footsteps are relatively random dynamics, which do not have the characteristic structures.

On the other hand, to analyze the dynamics of the arms, the auto-correlation coefficient of the all subjects' angular amplitude of the swing of arms was calculated on these conditions as same way as the footsteps. The amplitude of arms' angular oscillation was defined in almost every half period of the walking motions. Therefore the dynamics was defined at almost half time-scale of the leg's dynamics. Thus the auto-correlation was calculated from the lag0 to the lag20 with the lag2 interval, as shown in Fig.5. From the results, the normal condition took higher value of the auto-correlation coefficient than the memory condition, and that is the differences. In addition, the significant differences were observed in the area between the lag2 to the lag6 ($P < 0.05$). Thus the temporal developments of the arms' swing contain the dynamics based on the attention, which timescale is 1~3sec.

3.2 Experiment #2

From the results of the experiment #1, it was clarified that the dynamics relate the influence from the attention. Accordingly we analyze the temporal development of the mutual interaction between the dynamics by measuring the footsteps' motions and the swing motions of the arms.

The relations between the footsteps of the subjects on the cooperative walk were analyzed as the temporal development of the coherence of the footsteps; which are the smallest time differences $\Delta t(n)$ between the cooperative walkers on each footstep, as shown in eqn. 1.

$$Coherence_{t(n)} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{k=n-4}^n |\Delta t(k) - \Delta t(k-1)|, \quad (eqn. 1)$$

On the other hand, the dynamics of arm was measured by the amplitude of elbow's angular oscillations $Amp_{t(m)}$. However there are the big individual differences on it. Therefore to cancel the differences, we standardize the data by using the average value of the standard walking on each subject as $\bar{Amp}_{t(m)}$. Then the data of arms' motions are analyzed as the fluctuations of the values, as shown in eqn. 2.

$$Fluctuation_{t(m)} = \left| \frac{Amp_{t(m)}}{\bar{Amp}_{t(m)}} - \frac{1}{10} \sum_{k=m-9}^m \frac{Amp_{t(k)}}{\bar{Amp}_{t(k)}} \right|, \quad (eqn. 2)$$

From the measured data, we take up the 120sec durations for the analysis, which every value of the coherence took less than 0.5sec as the duration that seemed to be realized the mutual adaptation well.

As an example of the results, it was shown in Fig.6 the temporal development of the subjects' fluctuation of the arms' amplitudes and of the footsteps' coherence when subject A walk with subject B. It was observed the tendency that there was some points which the arms' fluctuations increased more than 0.5 and the points were occurred cyclically with almost 10~30sec period. In addition, such points were observed in both subjects, and additionally there were the synchronization between the temporal developments of the point. To clarify the tendency, the points where they relate were put the halftone in the figure. At the time when such phenomenon occurred, it was observed the tendency that the coherence of walking period changes the little value to the large value. To clarify the tendency, about the arms' data, the points that correspond the threshold value 0.07 were shown by the dotted line, and the points were regarded as significant if it took more than the value. The dotted circles marked the coherence where the significant fluctuations were observed.

To evaluate the relation statistically, we compare the coherence of the footsteps between the average of all measured data, before 5sec and after 5sec the point where the arm fluctuate by these average value and standard deviation value of, as shown in Fig.7. From the results, it was significantly observed at all 4 subjects the tendency that the coherence took significant smaller value ($P < 0.05$) than the average of all just before the arm's large fluctuation, then did the larger value ($P < 0.05$) than the before just after the arm's. The results suggest that there is the mutual relation between the arm's fluctuations of arm and the footsteps' coherence

To estimate the synchronization between the arm's fluctuations of the subjects quantitatively, the auto-correlation functions of these time series data about the arm's fluctuations of all groups of the subjects were calculated. In details, the areas for the analysis were divided with the unit of 5sec, and the bit array that took 1 if the arm's fluctuation was large or that took 0 in other case were made for the calculations of auto-correlation function for all groups. The average of the functions and its standard error was shown in Fig.8. The peak points of the function was observed on 0sec. Accordingly it became clear that both time series almost synchronized each

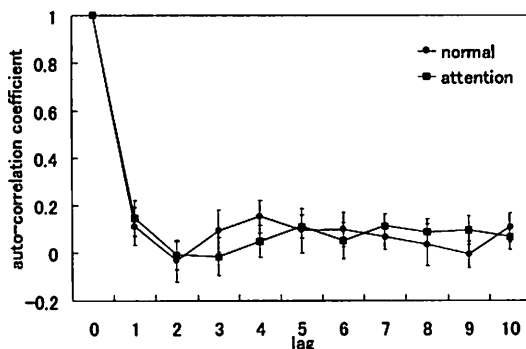


Fig.4 Auto-correlation of leg's footstep period.

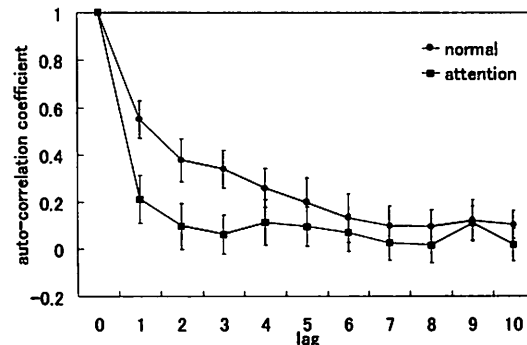


Fig.5 Auto-correlation of arm's amplitude.

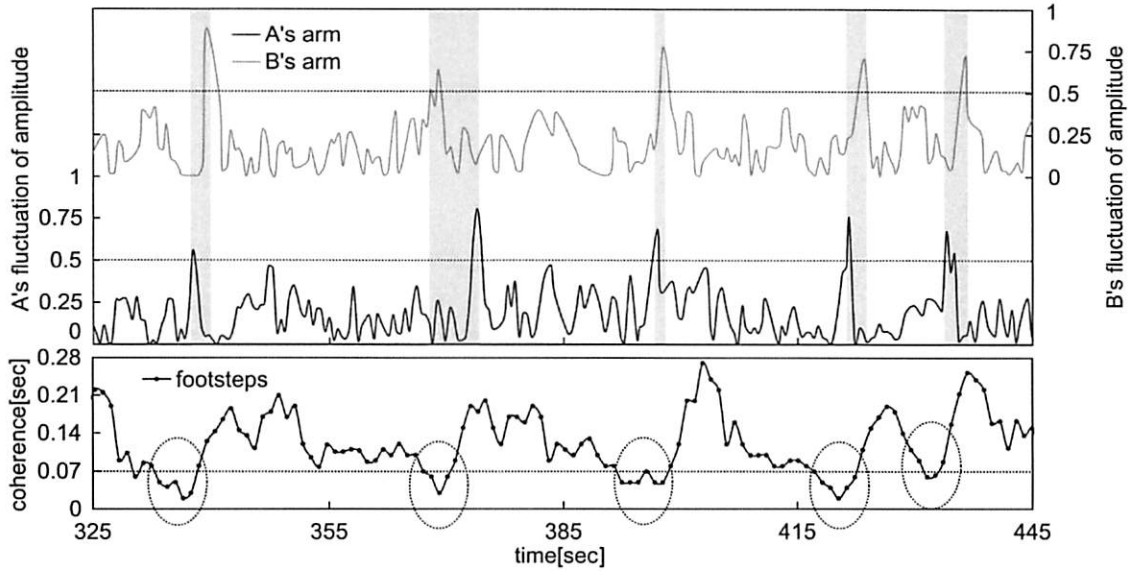


Fig.6 Correlation of swing motions of arm and footsteps' coherence between normal subjects.

other. From the results, it was suggested that both subjects' fluctuations of the arms' swing synchronize each other through the mutual relations with the footsteps' coherence.

3.3 Experiment #3

Using the dummy handicapper subjects whose joint of the right knee was fixed on straighten, this experiment was performed more closely to the real walk-support. As an example of the results, it was shown in Fig.9 the temporal development of the subjects' fluctuation of arms' amplitude and of the footsteps' coherence when the dummy handicapper subject B walk with the normal subject D.

It was observed that there were the mutual relations between the arms and the legs on both subjects as same as on the experiment #2. However the time scales of the B' cycles of the arms' fluctuation were longer than the time scales of the D's.

To estimate such tendency, we compare the frequency rate of the arms' fluctuations between the dummy handicapper subjects and the normal on this experiment with the rate between the normal subjects on the experiment #2. Fig.10 shows the averages of the frequency rates on the experiment #2 and #3. Then we found that the rates on the experiments #2 and #3 took almost 1.2 and 0.5 respectively. That means the relations of the time scales of the arms' cycles on the experiment #3 were more asymmetric than on the experiment #2 with almost twice the rate. Thus it was suggested that the asymmetry of the subjects' characteristics make the cycles of the arms' fluctuations asymmetric on each group. Additionally to clarify the relations of the cycles on this experiments, the auto-correlation functions of these time series data about the arm's fluctuations of all groups of the subjects were calculated as same as the experiment #2, in Fig.11. As the results, there are the significant peaks on ± 10 sec about all the groups. The results suggest that the normal subject synchronized with the dummy handicapper more weakly than the normal with twice the rate.

4 Discussion

In this paper, to analyze the Co-emergence process, the experiments of the cooperative walk by the interactions of the footsteps were performed. Generally the cyclic and involuntary motion such as walking motions are mainly generated by the self-excited oscillation mechanism called CPG (Central Pattern Generator) [14] on the spinal nervous system.

Thus such mechanism relates the motions of the arms and the legs we measured. However from the results of the experiment #1, the dynamics of arms' swing motions contain the characteristic fluctuations influenced from the attention. The result suggest that the control of the swing motions of the

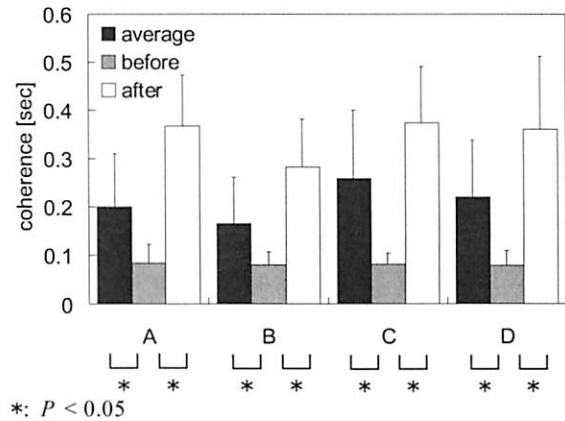


Fig.7 Correlations of footsteps' coherence.

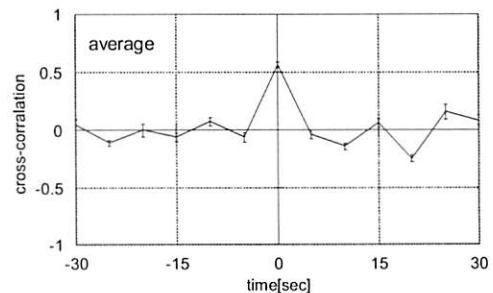


Fig.8 Auto-correlation coefficients between normal subjects.

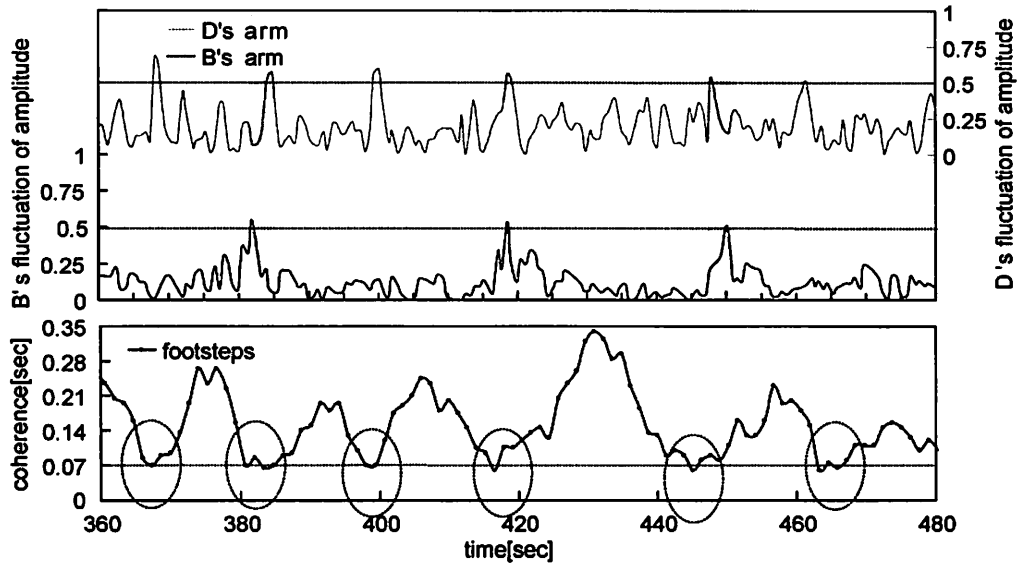


Fig.9 Correlation of swing motions of arm and footsteps' coherence between normal subject and dummy handicapper subjects.

arms relate not only the CPG but also the sensory processing system by the high level cerebral nervous system on the cerebrum such as the attention. On the other hand, it was clarified that the attention did not influence the footsteps' dynamics directly. Therefore those suggest that the arms and the legs have different dynamics and that the mutual relations between the arms and the legs are necessary for the analysis of the Co-emergence process.

On the experiments #2 and #3, analyzing the temporal developments of these motions, we found the dynamics to realize the coherence on the footsteps' interaction between the cooperative walkers. Additionally we may say that the dynamics was performed by the low level nervous system such as CPG because the dynamics of the footsteps do not relate the attention mechanism.

On the other hand, it was found that the characteristic fluctuations clarified on the experiment #1 occur on every 10~30secs and that there are the mutual relation with the footsteps' coherence. The result suggests that there should be the processes to control the coherence of the footsteps with the attention by the mutual relation with the arms' fluctuations.

Thus these results suggest the dynamics of the cooperative walk should have the two kind of control mechanisms about the footsteps' coherence between the humans, as shown in Fig.12.

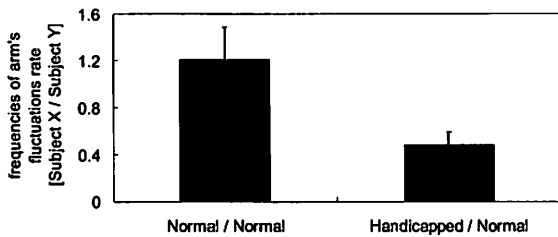


Fig.10 Frequency of the arms' fluctuation rate.

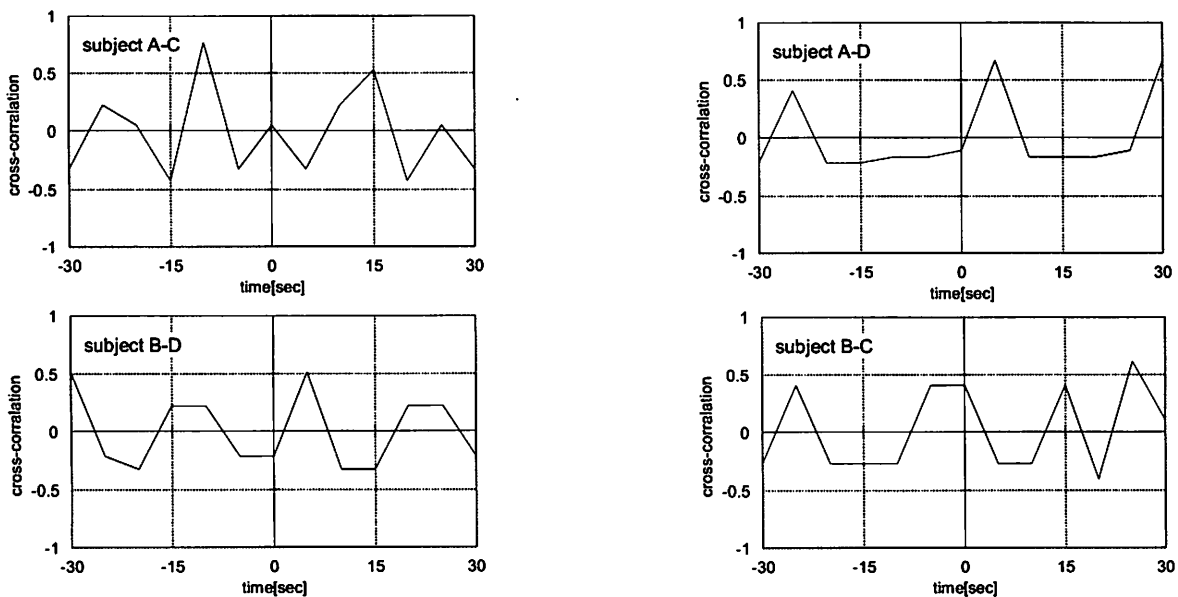


Fig.11 Auto-correlation coefficients between normal subject and dummy handicapper subjects.

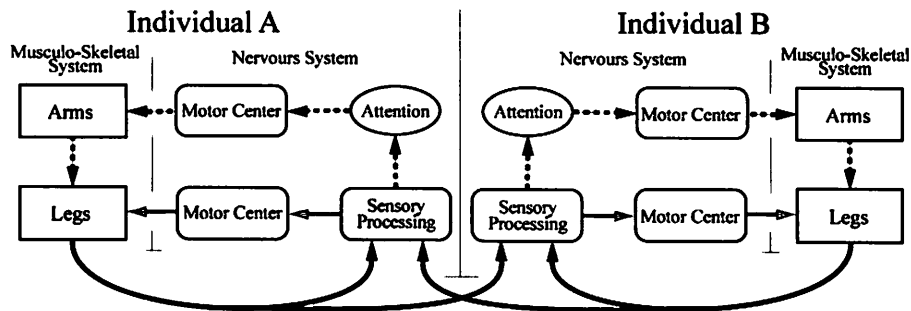


Fig.12 Control process under the cooperative walk : at the case between the individual A and B.

Control Process #1: Coherence process of footsteps

Sense the footsteps' informations (black arrow), and then control the Musculo-Skeletal system (gray arrow) through the low level motor system.

Control Process #2: Mutual process between arm and leg

According to the footsteps' coherence, sense the footsteps' informations (black arrow), and then change the coherence of the footsteps by the arm's fluctuations (dotted arrow) through the sensory process with the attention.

Also, the results suggest these two processes are connected each other through the footsteps' coherence. Thus it is suggested that these two processes are realized alternately as the cyclic processes with the cycles of the arms' fluctuations.

In addition, it was clarified that the cycles of the arms' fluctuations synchronize between the cooperative walkers, from the results of the Experiment #2. And, from the experiment #3, we found that the normal subject synchronized with the dummy handicapper more weakly than the normal with twice the rate.

These results suggest that such synchronizations processes were realized flexibly by the cyclic process based on the two control processes according to the combinations of cooperative walkers' characteristics. Thus we may say that the cyclic process realize the Co-emergence processes of the cooperative walk flexibly according to the situations.

5 Conclusion

In this paper, we performed the experimental analysis of the Co-emergence process on the cooperative walk between two humans. As the results, it was clarified that there is the cyclic process based on the mutuality of the two kinds control processes for the footsteps' coherence. It was suggested that the suitable cooperative process, according to the combinations of the subjects' characteristics, was Co-emerged by the cyclic process.

Our research group has ever focused on the emergence of the functions on the human's communications, and suggested that it was realized by the mechanisms called "Duality"[1]; expressed by the dynamics of consciousness and unconsciousness. On this experiments, the two kinds of control process on the different nervous level realize the cooperative walk. Therefore it was suggested that these mechanism of the Co-emergence relate the Duality.

In future works, to perform the analysis of the Co-emergence process of the real walk-support, we plan to extend the

experimental condition.

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