

(19)



(11)

EP 3 210 535 B1

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT SPECIFICATION

(45) Date of publication and mention
of the grant of the patent:

18.09.2019 Bulletin 2019/38

(51) Int Cl.:

A61B 5/11 (2006.01)

A61B 5/00 (2006.01)

(86) International application number:

PCT/JP2015/079481

(21) Application number: **15852195.5**

(22) Date of filing: **19.10.2015**

(87) International publication number:

WO 2016/063844 (28.04.2016 Gazette 2016/17)

(54) **DEVICE FOR DETECTION OF CHEWING**

VORRICHTUNG ZUR ERKENNUNG VON KAUEIN

DISPOSITIF POUR LA DÉTECTION DE MASTICATION

(84) Designated Contracting States:

**AL AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB
GR HR HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC MK MT NL NO
PL PT RO RS SE SI SK SM TR**

(30) Priority: **20.10.2014 JP 2014214012**

(43) Date of publication of application:

30.08.2017 Bulletin 2017/35

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Description

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates to a device for detecting a chewing action performed by a person.

BACKGROUND ART

[0002] A device for detecting a chewing action has been conventionally proposed.

[0003] When a person masticates a food and the like, a muscle of an external auditory meatus moves along with a move of a jaw. A device disclosed in Patent Document 1 detects a pressure change in the external auditory meatus resulted from this movement of the muscle by a pressure sensor inserted in the external auditory meatus to measure the number of the pressure change as the masticating number.

[0004] While a device disclosed in Patent Document 2 measures the masticating number using a similar principle, it describes that a low pressure sensor, a piezoelectric sensor and a press sensor are used as pressure sensors.

[0005] While an input device proposed in Patent Document 3 recognizes a state of a countenance, it is described that the input device can also detect a chewing action based on an output of an optical sensor attached to an external ear.

PRIOR ART DOCUMENT

PATENT DOCUMENT

[0006]

Patent document 1: Japanese Unexamined Patent Publication No. H07-213510

Patent document 2: Japanese Unexamined Patent Publication No. H11-318862

Patent document 3: Japanese Patent No. 5543929 Document JP S58 180134 A discloses a detection apparatus of mandibular motion using an optical sensor.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

SUBJECT TO BE SOLVED BY THE INVENTION

[0007] The conventionally proposed devices for detecting chewing respectively have the following problems.

[0008] Since the devices described in Patent documents 1 and 2 use a pressure sensor for detecting a movement of an external auditory meatus, the sensor grows in size and needs to be attached airtightly, and this makes it difficult to attach the devices for a long time.

[0009] On the other hand, while the sensor of the de-

vice proposed in Patent document 3 is an optical sensor and does not have the problems of the devices proposed in Patent documents 1 and 2, there is a problem that since a signal obtained by an optical sensor contains many noises, a chewing action cannot be precisely detected.

[0010] This invention has been made to solve such problems that conventional devices have, and a main purpose thereof is to provide a chewing detecting device that can be worn for a long time and can precisely detect a chewing.

SOLUTION TO PROBLEM

[0011] An invention according to claim 1 is a device for detecting a chewing action performed by a person, the chewing detecting device including: an earphone-type external auditory meatus sensor which has a pair of a light emitting element and a light receiving element and in which the light receiving element receives reflective light of light emitted by the light emitting element into an external auditory meatus to output a voltage signal corresponding to a light receiving amount; association processing means associating an output signal of the external auditory meatus sensor with a motion of a jaw, and outputting a chewing signal showing that the jaw performs chewing; and chewing section sensing means which determines whether or not an output of the external auditory meatus sensor is based on the motion of the jaw (within a chewing section), and which invalidates the output of the association processing means when the output of the external auditory meatus sensor is not based on the motion of the jaw (without the chewing section).

[0012] The chewing detecting device according to the invention comprises a converter converting the output of the external auditory meatus sensor into a digital signal, wherein the converter performs signal conversion so as to output a predetermined number of sample values in a predetermined time.

[0013] Preferably, a pair of the external auditory meatus sensors, the association processing means, the chewing section sensing means and the converters are respectively provided for a left ear and a right ear.

[0014] In the chewing detecting device according to the invention the chewing section sensing means has a determination sensing algorithm which determines the chewing section when a constant rate (predetermined number) or more of sample values among a constant number of sample values input from the converter within a predetermined sensing section is a significant value, and determines not the chewing section when not more than the constant rate (predetermined number) of sample values is a significant value.

[0015] Preferably, the chewing section sensing means includes: means setting a threshold value based on the smallest sample value and/or the largest sample value in the sensing section; and means determining that when a sample value exceeds the threshold value, the sample

value is a significant value.

[0016] Preferably, the means setting a threshold value includes means calibrating a threshold value per user.

[0017] Preferably, the chewing detecting device further includes means counting chewing and the number thereof based on a logical sum output of the association processing means to be output.

[0018] Preferably, the output means includes dead time setting means which, when a chewing signal is fed at an interval shorter than a predetermined time, excludes the chewing signal.

[0019] Preferably, the output means includes command generating means which generates a predetermined command signal and outputs it to outside when a predetermined number of continuous chewing signals are fed at a predetermined interval.

[0020] Preferably, the number of the continuous chewing signals are two.

[0021] Preferably, the external auditory meatus sensor includes: a body attached to an external auditory meatus; a pair of a light emitting element and a light receiving element disposed at a tip end of the body in a manner where air can pass between an inside and an outside of the body; a sound transmitting element disposed in the inside of the body and outputting a sound from the inside to the outside of the body; and an LED incorporated in a rear end of the body and lighting in conjunction with that the light receiving element performs a light receiving function.

ADVANTAGEOUS EFFECTS OF THE INVENTION

[0022] According to this invention, there can be provided a chewing detecting device that inflicts little load while wearing, can be worn for a long time and can precisely detect a chewing while being worn.

[0023] Further, since chewing can be precisely detected, it can also be used as a device outputting various command signals based on intentional chewing. In particular, when the external auditory meatus sensor is also provided with an earphone function, an operation command can be fed to a device offering music and the like which is listened through the earphone, thereby to make a so-called handsfree operation possible.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0024]

Fig. 1 is a block diagram showing a configuration of a chewing detecting device 10 according to one embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a block diagram showing a configuration of a chewing detecting device 10 according to one embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 3 is an illustrative view for illustrating a configuration of an external auditory meatus sensor 11.

Fig. 4 is a circuit block diagram showing a configu-

rational example of a chewing detecting device 10 according to this embodiment.

Fig. 5 is a view illustrating a sensing algorithm performed at a chewing section sensing portion 52.

Fig. 6 is a view showing other example of a sensing algorithm performed at the chewing section sensing portion 52.

Fig. 7 is a view demonstrating a definition of double click.

DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

[0025] One embodiment of this invention is described specifically below with reference to drawings.

[0026] Fig. 1 is a block diagram showing a configuration of a chewing detecting device 10 according to one embodiment of the present invention. The chewing detecting device 10 comprises an earphone-type external auditory meatus sensor (for right ear) 11, an earphone-type external auditory meatus sensor (for left ear) 12 and a body housing 13. The external auditory meatus sensors 11, 12 and the body housing 13 are connected by signal lines 14, 15.

[0027] The body housing 13 incorporates an information processing unit 16 such as an MCU (Memory Control Unit), a wireless communication unit 17 such as BLE, a battery unit 18 and a stereo jack 19.

[0028] Consequently, the chewing detecting device 10 has a relay function relaying music and the like offered from a portable music player 20 by using the stereo jack 19 and a stereo audio cable 21 to connect this portable music player 20, for example.

[0029] Further, when the portable music player 20 is one having a computer function such as a smartphone, communication through a wireless communication function (for example, Bluetooth (registered trademark)) 22 can be established between the body housing 13 and the portable music player 20.

[0030] Further, as shown in Fig. 2, the chewing detecting device 10 is provided with a connector (not shown) (for example, micro USB terminal) in the body housing 13 and can connect an external personal computer 23 via a signal cable 24.

[0031] As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, in this embodiment, the configuration where the body housing 13 and the external auditory meatus sensors 11, 12 are respectively connected by the signal lines 14, 15 is shown. However, it is also possible that the signal lines 14, 15 are omitted and the body housing 13 and the external auditory meatus sensors 11, 12 are connected by wireless communication.

[0032] Fig. 3 is an illustrative view for illustrating a configuration of the external auditory meatus sensor 11. Here, while a configuration of the external auditory meatus sensor 11 is described as an example, a configuration of the external auditory meatus sensor 12 is identical.

[0033] The external auditory meatus sensor 11 has a body 30 which is attached to an external auditory meatus.

The body 30 has a base portion 31 and a projecting portion 32 projecting in a tapered manner tapering forward from the base portion 31, and an inside thereof is a space 33. A tip end of the projecting portion 32 is provided with a pair of a light emitting element 34 and a light receiving element 35. The light emitting element 34 is configured of an infrared light emitting diode, for example.

[0034] The light receiving element 35 is configured of a phototransistor, for example. Light emitted by the light emitting element 34 is reflected on the external auditory meatus, and in order that the light receiving element 35 can receive this reflected light, the light emitting element 34 and the light receiving element 35 are arranged such that they are close and have predetermined positional and angular relations to each other.

[0035] On a side of the tip end of the projecting portion 32, a window 36 is opened so that air in the space 33 can pass to a front outside.

[0036] Further, on the tip end of the projecting portion 32, the window 36, the light emitting element 34 and the light receiving element 35 are covered by an ear pad 37 formed of an elastic material.

[0037] In the space 33 of the body 30, a circuit board 38 and a compact speaker 39 installed on the circuit board 38 are provided with an inside of the base portion 31 centered. The compact speaker 39 functions an sound transmitting element and can output music and the like.

[0038] An LED 41 installed on a substrate 40 is incorporated in the base portion 31 on a rear end side thereof. An upper end of the LED 41 faces outward from a hole 42 formed in a rear end surface of the base portion 31. Thus, light emission of the LED 41 can be observed visually from an outside (rear side) of the body 30. Further, a disk-shaped light guide plate 43 is incorporated to the base portion 31 so as to surround a periphery of the LED 41. Thus, lighting of the LED 41 can be observed visually through the light guide plate 43 also from a side of a side surface of the body 30.

[0039] In this example, the LED 41 provided in the external auditory meatus sensor 11 is configured to light on in conjunction with that the light receiving element 35 performs a light receiving function.

[0040] Fig. 4 is a circuit block diagram showing a configurational example of the chewing detecting device 10 according to this embodiment.

[0041] Referring to Fig. 4, the chewing detecting device 10 has the external auditory meatus sensor (for right ear) 11 and the external auditory meatus sensor (for left ear) 12. A pair of these external auditory meatus sensors 11, 12 have the light emitting element 34 and the light receiving element 35 respectively. Light emitted by the light emitting element 34 is reflected in the external auditory meatus, and the light receiving element 35 receives this reflected light to output a voltage signal corresponding to a light receiving amount.

[0042] The voltage signal to be output is an analog signal and is fed to a converter 50. The converter converts an input analog voltage signal into a digital signal of, for

example, 10 bits. A conversion capacity of the converter is set to, for example, 50 samples/second. Consequently, the converter 50 outputs 50 sample values per second.

[0043] The outputs of the converter 50 are parallelly fed to an association processing portion 51 and the chewing section sensing portion 52. The association processing portion 51 associates the outputs of the converter 50 with a motion of a jaw, and outputs a chewing signal (for example, a pulse signal) showing that the jaw performs chewing.

[0044] On the other hand, the chewing section sensing portion 52 is a processing portion which determines whether or not the outputs of the converter 50 are based on a motion of a jaw (within a chewing section), and which invalidates the chewing signal output from the association processing portion 51 when the outputs of the converter 50 are not based on the motion of the jaw (without the chewing section). In the circuit block diagram of Fig. 4, the chewing section sensing portion 52 has a configuration of operating a switch 53. When the switch 53 is not closed, the chewing signal of the association processing portion 51 is not sent to a later stage, and the output (chewing signal) is invalidated.

[0045] Next, a specific description is made with respect to a manner of determination whether it is within or without the chewing section performed in the chewing section sensing portion 52.

[0046] Fig. 5 is a view illustrating a sensing algorithm performed in the chewing section sensing portion 52. Based on 25 continuous sample values fed from the converter 50, the chewing section sensing portion 52 determines whether or not a sample value next fed is a sample value based on a motion of a jaw, that is, a sample value within the chewing section.

[0047] Specifically, 25 sample values are input from the converter 50 to the chewing section sensing portion 52 during 0.5 second. Then it is examined how many sample values of the 25 sample values are present within a range where a minimum value bufmin in these 25 sample values is added with a predetermined lower limit value ΔV_{min} and a predetermined upper limit value ΔV_{max} . When the number of sample values within this range is 16 or more (64% or more), it is determined that a sample value next fed from the converter 50 is a sample value based on a motion of a jaw, that is, a sample value within the chewing section.

[0048] On the other hand, when only less than 16 sample values of the 25 continuous sample values input during 0.5 second are within the above range, a sample value subsequently input is determined as a sample value which is not based on a motion of a jaw, that is, which is detected without the chewing section, and invalidation processing (processing of opening the switch 53 in Fig. 4) is performed at this timing.

[0049] Thus, in this embodiment, the chewing section sensing portion 52 has employed a sensing algorithm which determines whether or not a sample value output from the converter 50 is a sample value within the chew-

ing section based on a value of the 25 sample values fed during 500 milliseconds immediately before this sample value is output.

[0050] Since such an algorithm is employed, outputs of the external auditory meatus sensors 11, 12 containing much noise can be favorably filtered, and a signal (sample value) resulted from actual chewing can be correctly extracted, whereby precise chewing detection can be performed.

[0051] More specifically, sample values obtained from the external auditory meatus sensors 11, 12 when a user wearing this chewing detecting device 10 walks and moves the head, for example, but does not do a chewing action, or sample values of the external auditory meatus sensors 11, 12 sensed when a user sings or talks, for example, but does not do chewing can be appropriately determined as sample values without the chewing section, whereby only a sample value within the chewing section can be favorably extracted. Therefore, a device that is practical and without malfunction can be achieved.

[0052] Additionally, sensing of the chewing section is not limited to one performed based on 0.5 second period but may be performed by setting any unit time and based on that unit time.

[0053] In the illustrative view of the sensing algorithm of Fig. 5, it is effective for performing a more precise chewing section detection that the lower limit value ΔV_{min} and the upper limit value ΔV_{max} of a valid range can be calibrated per user.

[0054] Fig. 6 is a view showing other example of a sensing algorithm performed in the chewing section sensing portion 52. As shown in Fig. 5, a change waveform of the sample value output from the converter 50 is not always lower but may be a raised change waveform.

[0055] Therefore, one where the lower limit value ΔV_{min} and the upper limit value ΔV_{max} are set based on the minimum value buf_{min} in a section for sensing (500 milliseconds immediately before) and one where the lower limit value ΔV_{min} and the upper limit value ΔV_{max} are set based on a maximum value buf_{max} in the section may be set to use a logical sum of outputs obtained by these sensing algorithms as a chewing section sensing determination output.

[0056] Referring again to Fig. 4, a configuration and operation of the association processing portion 51 are described. As described above, the association processing portion 51 is a circuit that associates the output signal of the external auditory meatus sensor 11 (or the external auditory meatus sensor 12) with a motion of a jaw and outputs the chewing signal showing that the jaw performs chewing. In this example, the association processing portion 51 is realized by an adder 54, a threshold value element 55 and a rise sensing element 56. The adder 54 subtracts (minus-adds) a minimum value in a section fed from the chewing section sensing portion 52 from the sample value output from the converter 50. Then a sample value after addition is compared to a predetermined threshold value in the threshold value element 55 to be

converted to a binary datum of 0 or 1. The rise sensing element 56 senses a timing where the binary datum output from the threshold value element 55 changes from 0 to 1, that is, a rise timing to make an output.

[0057] These processes performed in the association processing portion 51 are processes of detecting a change point from a valley to a peak of a waveform presented by continuous sample values obtained related to a motion of a jaw, in a manner of speaking, to output the chewing signal.

[0058] The signal detected by the external auditory meatus sensor (for left ear) 12 is also processed in a similar manner. The chewing signals from both circuits are fed to an output portion 60 via an OR gate 57.

[0059] In this embodiment, the output portion 60 is provided with a frequency limiting portion 61 by a dead time. The frequency limiting portion 61 functions as dead time setting means, and when a chewing signal is fed at an interval shorter than a predetermined time, for example, shorter than 0.5 second, the frequency limiting portion 61 serves to exclude the chewing signal with such a short time interval.

[0060] In this embodiment, chewing is detected based on the outputs of both the right and left external auditory meatus sensors 11, 12. However, it has been confirmed experimentally that left and right signals may be output in an unsynchronized manner depending on individuals, and that chewing signals may be output at the number more than an actual chewing number. Therefore, the frequency limiting portion 61 by a dead time is provided to prevent erroneous sensing, whereby the number of chewing can be more correctly detected.

[0061] Additionally, it is also possible to employ a configuration where the frequency limiting portion 61 by a dead time is omitted.

[0062] The output portion 60 may be further provided with a command generating portion 62. The command generating portion 62 is a circuit which, for example, detects the plural number of chewing of a predetermined time interval performed by a user intently and generates a specific command signal based on this plural number of chewing detection.

[0063] Fig. 7 is a view demonstrating a definition of double click. As shown in Fig. 7, two chewing performed at a time interval of 0.5 to 1 second is defined as double click. When this double click is detected, the command generating portion 62 can be configured to generate a predetermined command signal based on the double click and output this to an external apparatus and the like. This command signal is a start signal, a stop signal and the like of the portable music player 20 when the portable music player 20 is used as shown in Fig. 1, for example.

[0064] The command generating portion 62 may generate a predetermined operation command signal when detecting triple click (three chewing performed continuously at a predetermined interval), for example, other than when detecting the above double click.

[0065] Since the chewing detecting device 10 according to this embodiment has the above-described configuration, a wearing load at a time of wearing the external auditory meatus sensors 11, 12 is low and wearing for a long time is possible.

[0066] Further, it is possible that detection signals obtained from these external auditory meatus sensors 11, 12 can be properly filtered to significantly precisely detect chewing actions and the number thereof.

[0067] This invention does not limited to the above-described embodiments, and various modifications are possible within the scope of the claims. Further, since chewing and the number thereof obtained through this embodiment are correctly detected, they can be widely used in various applications.

INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

[0068] Since a widely practical and applicable chewing detecting device capable of performing correct chewing detection can be provided, industrial applicability is high.

LIST OF REFERENCE NUMERALS

[0069]

10 chewing detecting device
 11, 12 external auditory meatus sensors
 13 body housing
 14, 15 signal lines
 16 information processing unit
 17 wireless communication unit
 18 battery unit
 19 stereo jack
 20 portable music player
 21 stereo audio cable
 22 wireless communication function
 23 personal computer
 24 signal cable
 30 body
 31 base portion
 32 projecting portion
 33 space
 34 light emitting element
 35 light receiving element
 36 window
 37 ear pad
 38 circuit board
 39 speaker
 40 substrate
 41 LED
 42 hole
 43 light guide plate
 50 converter
 51 association processing portion
 52 chewing section sensing portion
 53 switch
 54 adder

55 threshold value element
 56 rise sensing element
 57 OR gate
 60 output portion
 5 61 frequency limiting portion
 62 command generating portion

Claims

1. A device for detecting a chewing action performed by a person, the chewing detecting device including:

an earphone-type external auditory meatus sensor (11, 12) which has a pair of a light emitting element (34) and a light receiving element (35) and in which the light receiving element is configured to receive reflective light of light emitted by the light emitting element into an external auditory meatus to output a voltage signal corresponding to a light receiving amount; association processing means (51) for associating an output signal of the external auditory meatus sensor with a motion of a jaw, and for outputting a chewing signal showing that the jaw performs chewing;

characterized in that the chewing detecting device further comprises a converter (50) configured to convert the output of the external auditory meatus sensor into a digital signal, wherein the converter is configured to perform a signal conversion so as to output a predetermined number of sample values in a predetermined time; and

chewing section sensing means (52) which is configured to determine whether or not an output of the external auditory meatus sensor (11, 12) is based on the motion of the jaw, and which is configured to invalidate the output of the association processing means (51) when the output of the external auditory meatus sensor (11, 12) is not based on the motion of the jaw, wherein the chewing section sensing means (52) has a determination sensing algorithm which determines the chewing section when a constant rate or more of sample values among a constant number of sample values input from the converter (50) within a predetermined sensing section is a significant value, and determines not the chewing section when not more than the constant rate of sample values is a significant value.

2. A chewing detecting device according to claim 1, wherein a pair of the external auditory meatus sensors, the association processing means, the chewing section sensing means and the converters are respectively provided for a left ear and a right ear.

3. A chewing detecting device according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the chewing section sensing means includes:

means for setting a threshold value based on the smallest sample value and/or the largest sample value in the sensing section; and means for determining that when a sample value exceeds the threshold value, the sample value is a significant value.

4. A chewing detecting device according to claim 3, wherein the means setting a threshold value includes means for calibrating a threshold value per user.

5. A chewing detecting device according to any one of claims 1 to 4, further including means for counting chewing and a number thereof based on a logical sum output of the association processing means to be output.

6. A chewing detecting device according to claim 5, wherein the output means includes dead time setting means which, when a chewing signal is fed at an interval shorter than a predetermined time, excludes the chewing signal.

7. A chewing detecting device according to claim 5 or 6, wherein the output means includes command generating means which generates a predetermined command signal and outputs it to outside when a predetermined number of continuous chewing signals are fed at a predetermined interval.

8. A chewing detecting device according to claim 7, wherein the number of the continuous chewing signals are two.

9. A chewing detecting device according to any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein the external auditory meatus sensor includes:

a body attached to an external auditory meatus; a pair of a light emitting element and a light receiving element disposed at a tip end of the body in a manner where air can pass between an inside and an outside of the body; a sound transmitting element disposed in the inside of the body and outputting a sound from the inside to the outside of the body; and an LED incorporated in a rear end of the body and lighting in conjunction with that the light receiving element is configured to perform a light receiving function.

Patentansprüche

1. Vorrichtung zum Erfassen einer von einer Person ausgeführten Kauaktion, wobei die Kau erfassungs- vorrichtung Folgendes beinhaltet:

einen externen Gehörgangsensor (11, 12) vom Typ eines Ohrhörers, der ein Paar eines lichtemittierenden Elements (34) und eines lichtaufnehmenden Elements (35) aufweist, und wobei das lichtaufnehmende Element konfiguriert ist, um reflektiertes Licht von Licht, das vom lichtemittierenden Element emittiert wird, in einen externen Gehörgang zu empfangen, um ein Spannungssignal auszugeben, das einer Lichtaufnahmemenge entspricht; Assoziationsverarbeitungsmittel (51) zum Zuordnen eines Ausgangssignals des externen Gehörgangssensors zu einer Bewegung eines Kiefers und zum Ausgeben eines Kausignals, das anzeigt, dass der Kiefer kaut;

dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass die Kau erfassungsvorrichtung ferner einen Wandler (50) umfasst, der konfiguriert ist, um den Ausgang des externen Gehörgangssensors in ein digitales Signal umzuwandeln, wobei der Wandler konfiguriert ist, um eine Signalumwandlung durchzuführen, um eine vorbestimmte Anzahl von Abtastwerten in einer vorbestimmten Zeit auszugeben; und Kaubereichsabtastmittel (52), die konfiguriert sind, um zu bestimmen, ob ein Ausgang des externen Gehörgangssensors (11, 12) auf der Bewegung des Kiefers basiert oder nicht, und die konfiguriert sind, um den Ausgang der Assoziationsverarbeitungsmittel (51) zu invalidieren, wenn der Ausgang des externen Gehörgangssensors (11, 12) nicht auf der Bewegung des Kiefers basiert, wobei die Kaubereichsabtastmittel (52) einen Bestimmungsabtastalgorithmus aufweisen, der den Kaubereich bestimmt, wenn eine konstante Rate oder mehr von Abtastwerten aus einer konstanten Anzahl von Abtastwerten, die vom Wandler innerhalb eines vorbestimmten Abtastabschnitts eingegeben werden, ein signifikanter Wert ist, und nicht den Kaubereich bestimmt, wenn nicht mehr als die konstante Rate von Abtastwerten ein signifikanter Wert ist.

2. Kau erfassungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei ein Paar der externen Gehörgangssensoren, die Assoziationsverarbeitungsmittel, die Kaubereichsabtastmittel und die Wandler jeweils für ein linkes und ein rechtes Ohr vorgesehen sind.

3. Kau erfassungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1 oder 2, wobei die Kaubereichsabtastmittel Folgendes bein-

halten:

Mittel zum Einstellen eines Schwellenwerts basierend auf dem kleinsten Abtastwert und/oder dem größten Abtastwert in dem Abtastabschnitt; und

Mittel zum Bestimmen, dass, wenn ein Abtastwert den Schwellenwert überschreitet, der Abtastwert ein signifikanter Wert ist.

4. Kauerfassungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 3, wobei die Mittel, die einen Schwellenwert einstellen, Mittel zum Kalibrieren eines Schwellenwerts pro Benutzer beinhalten.

5. Kauerfassungsvorrichtung nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 4, ferner mit Mitteln zum Zählen des Kauens und einer Anzahl davon basierend auf einer logischen Summenausgabe der Assoziationsverarbeitungsmittel, die auszugeben ist.

6. Kauerfassungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 5, wobei die Ausgabeeinrichtung Totzeit-Einstellmittel beinhaltet, die, wenn ein Kausignal in einem Intervall zugeführt wird, das kürzer als eine vorbestimmte Zeit ist, das Kausignal ausschließen.

7. Kauerfassungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 5 oder 6, wobei die Ausgabeeinrichtung Befehlserzeugungsmittel beinhaltet, die ein vorgegebenes Befehlssignal erzeugen und nach außen ausgeben, wenn eine vorgegebene Anzahl von kontinuierlichen Kausignalen in einem vorgegebenen Intervall zugeführt wird.

8. Kauerfassungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 7, wobei die Anzahl der kontinuierlichen Kausignale zwei ist.

9. Kauerfassungsvorrichtung nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 8, wobei der externe Gehörgangsensor Folgendes beinhaltet:

einen Körper, der an einem externen Gehörgang angebracht ist;

ein Paar eines lichtemittierenden Elements und eines lichtaufnehmenden Elements, das an einem Spitzenende des Körpers in einer Weise angeordnet ist, in der Luft zwischen einer Innenseite und einer Außenseite des Körpers hindurchtreten kann;

ein Schallübertragungselement, das im Inneren des Körpers angeordnet ist und einen Schall von innen an das Äußere des Körpers abgibt; und eine LED, die in ein hinteres Ende des Körpers integriert ist und in Verbindung damit leuchtet, dass das lichtaufnehmende Element konfiguriert ist, um eine lichtaufnehmende Funktion auszuführen.

Revendications

1. Dispositif permettant de détecter une action de mastication exécutée par une personne, le dispositif de détection de mastication comprenant :

un capteur de conduit auditif externe du type oreillette (11, 12) qui possède une paire constituée d'un élément électroluminescent (34) et d'un élément récepteur de lumière (35) et dans lequel l'élément récepteur de lumière est configuré pour recevoir la lumière réfléchie de la lumière émise par l'élément électroluminescent dans un conduit auditif externe afin d'émettre en sortie un signal de tension correspondant à une quantité de réception de lumière ;

des moyens de traitement d'association (51) permettant d'associer un signal de sortie du capteur de conduit auditif externe avec un mouvement d'une mâchoire, et permettant d'émettre en sortie un signal de mastication montrant que la mâchoire réalise une mastication ;

caractérisé en ce que le dispositif de détection de mastication comprend en outre un convertisseur (50) conçu pour convertir la sortie du capteur de conduit auditif externe en un signal numérique,

dans lequel le convertisseur est configuré pour réaliser une conversion de signal de façon à sortir un nombre prédéfini de valeurs d'échantillon dans une durée prédéfinie ; et

des moyens de détection de section de mastication (52) qui sont configurés pour déterminer si une sortie du capteur de conduit auditif externe (11, 12) est basée ou non sur le mouvement de la mâchoire, et qui sont configurés pour invalider la sortie des moyens de traitement d'association (51) lorsque la sortie du capteur de conduit auditif externe (11, 12) n'est pas basée sur le mouvement de la mâchoire,

dans lequel les moyens de détection de section de mastication (52) possèdent un algorithme de détection de détermination qui détermine la section de mastication lorsqu'un taux constant de valeurs d'échantillons ou plus parmi un nombre constant de valeurs d'échantillons entrées depuis le convertisseur (50) dans une section de détection prédéfinie est une valeur significative, et ne détermine pas la section de mastication lorsque le taux constant de valeurs d'échantillons ou moins est une valeur significative.

2. Dispositif de détection de mastication selon la revendication 1, dans lequel une paire des capteurs de conduit auditif externe, les moyens de traitement d'association, les moyens de détection de mastication et les convertisseurs sont respectivement fournis pour une oreille gauche et une oreille droite.

3. Dispositif de détection de mastication selon la revendication 1 ou 2, dans lequel les moyens de détection de section de mastication comprennent :
 - des moyens permettant de définir une valeur seuil sur la base de la valeur d'échantillon la plus petite et/ou de la valeur d'échantillon la plus grande dans la section de détection ; et
 - des moyens permettant de déterminer que lorsqu'une valeur d'échantillon dépasse la valeur seuil, la valeur seuil est une valeur significative.
4. Dispositif de détection de mastication selon la revendication 3, dans lequel la définition par les moyens d'une valeur seuil comprend des moyens permettant d'étalonner une valeur seuil par utilisateur.
5. Dispositif de détection de mastication selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 4, comprenant en outre des moyens permettant de compter des mastications et un certain nombre de celles-ci sur la base d'une somme logique sortie des moyens de traitement d'association à sortir.
6. Dispositif de détection de mastication selon la revendication 5, dans lequel les moyens de sortie comprennent des moyens de définition de temps mort qui, lorsqu'un signal de mastication est introduit à un intervalle plus court qu'un temps prédéfini, exclut le signal de mastication.
7. Dispositif de détection de mastication selon la revendication 5 ou 6, dans lequel les moyens de sortie comprennent des moyens de génération de commande qui génèrent un signal de commande prédéfini et l'émettent en sortie vers l'extérieur lorsqu'un nombre prédéfini de signaux de mastication continus est introduit à un intervalle prédéfini.
8. Dispositif de détection de mastication selon la revendication 7, dans lequel le nombre des signaux de mastication continus est deux.
9. Dispositif de détection de mastication selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 8, dans lequel le capteur de conduit auditif externe comprend :
 - un corps fixé à un conduit auditif externe ;
 - une paire constituée d'un élément électroluminescent et d'un élément récepteur de lumière disposés au niveau d'une extrémité de pointe du corps d'une manière où l'air peut passer entre une partie intérieure et une partie extérieure du corps ;
 - un élément de transmission de son disposé dans la partie intérieure du corps et sortant un son provenant de l'intérieur vers l'extérieur du corps ; et

une DEL incorporée dans une extrémité arrière du corps et s'allumant conjointement avec le fait que l'élément récepteur de lumière est conçu pour réaliser une fonction de réception de lumière.

FIG. 1

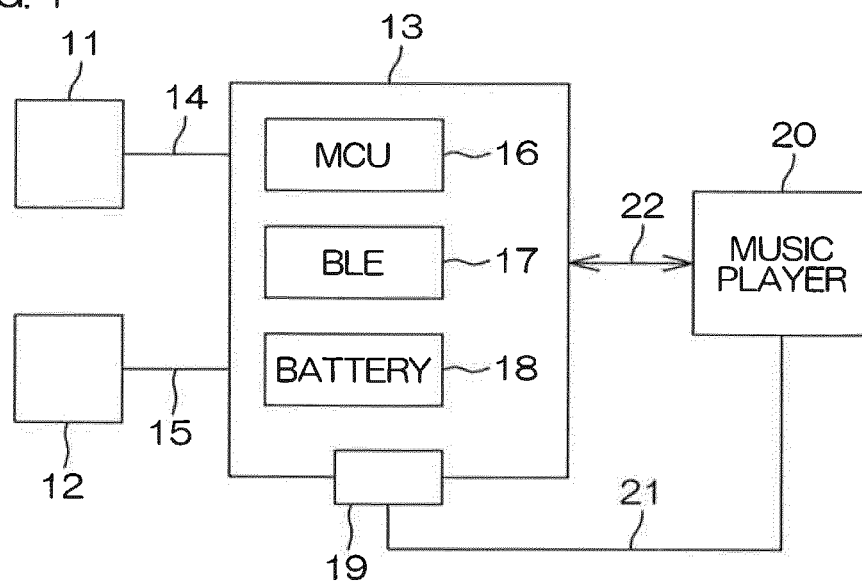


FIG. 2

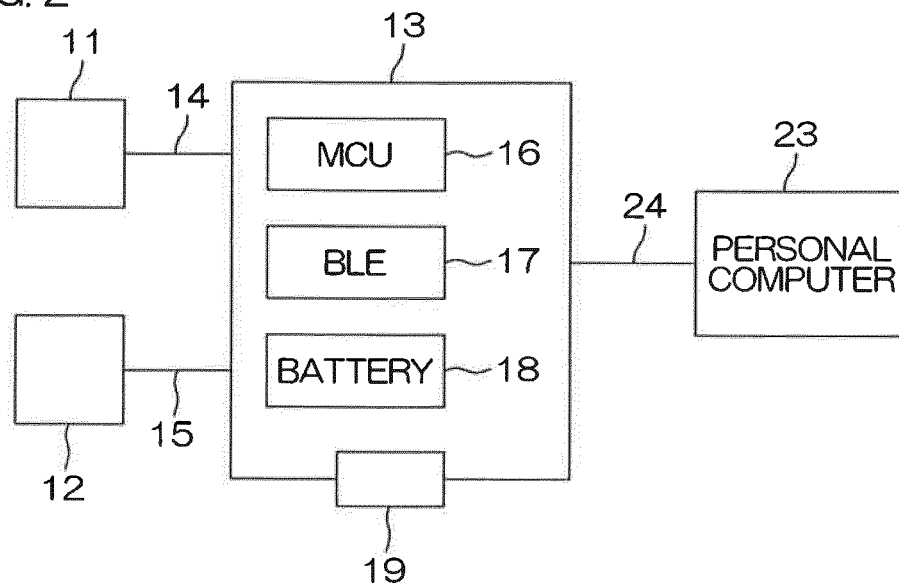


FIG. 3

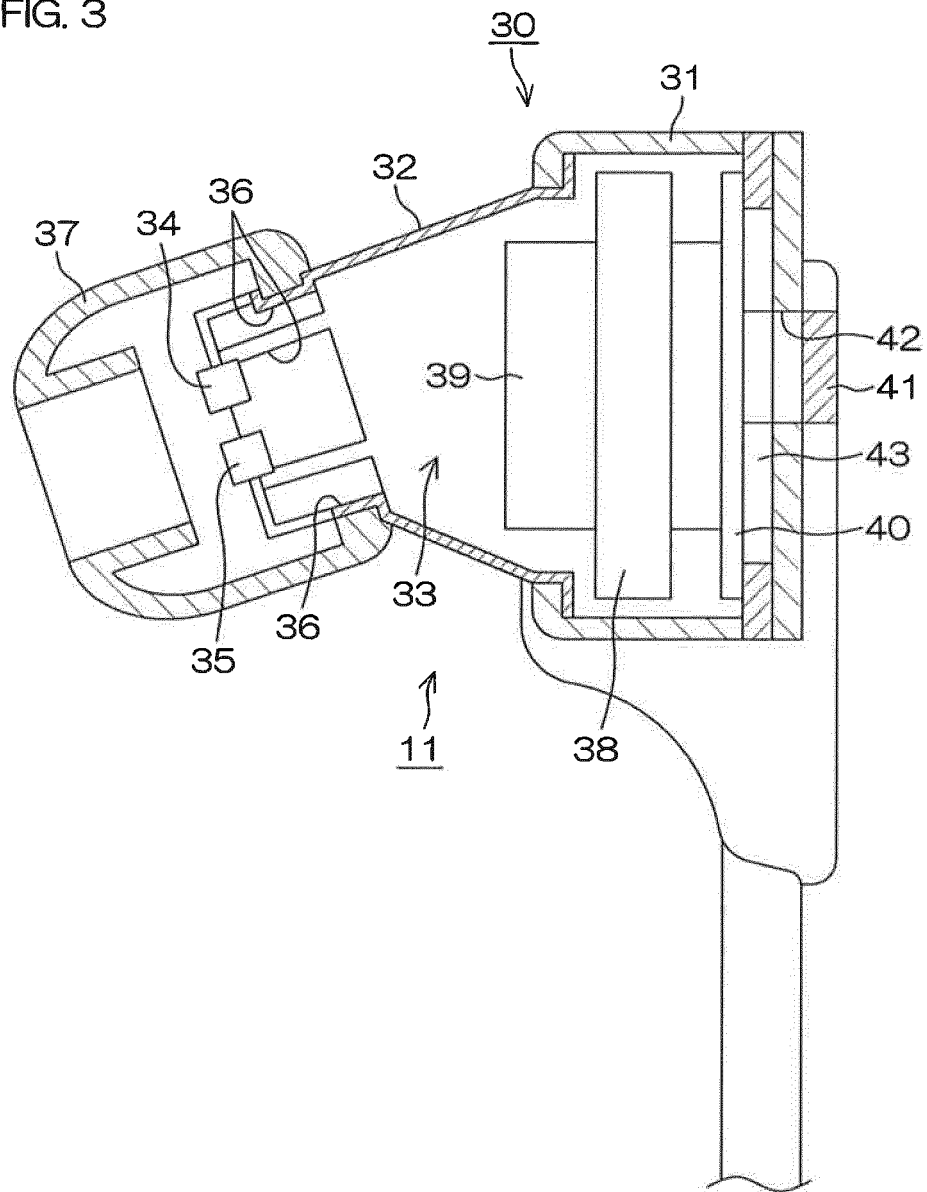
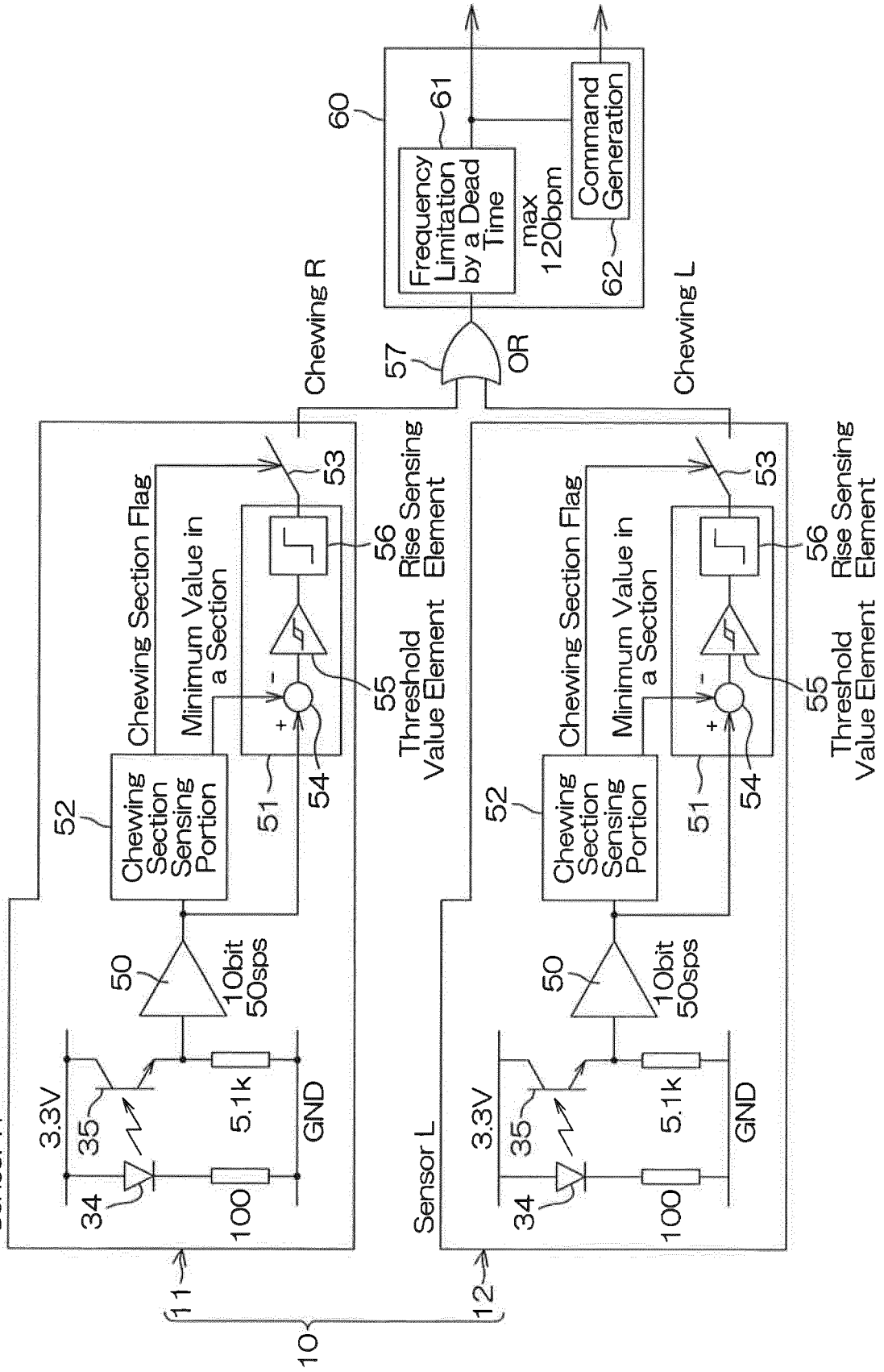
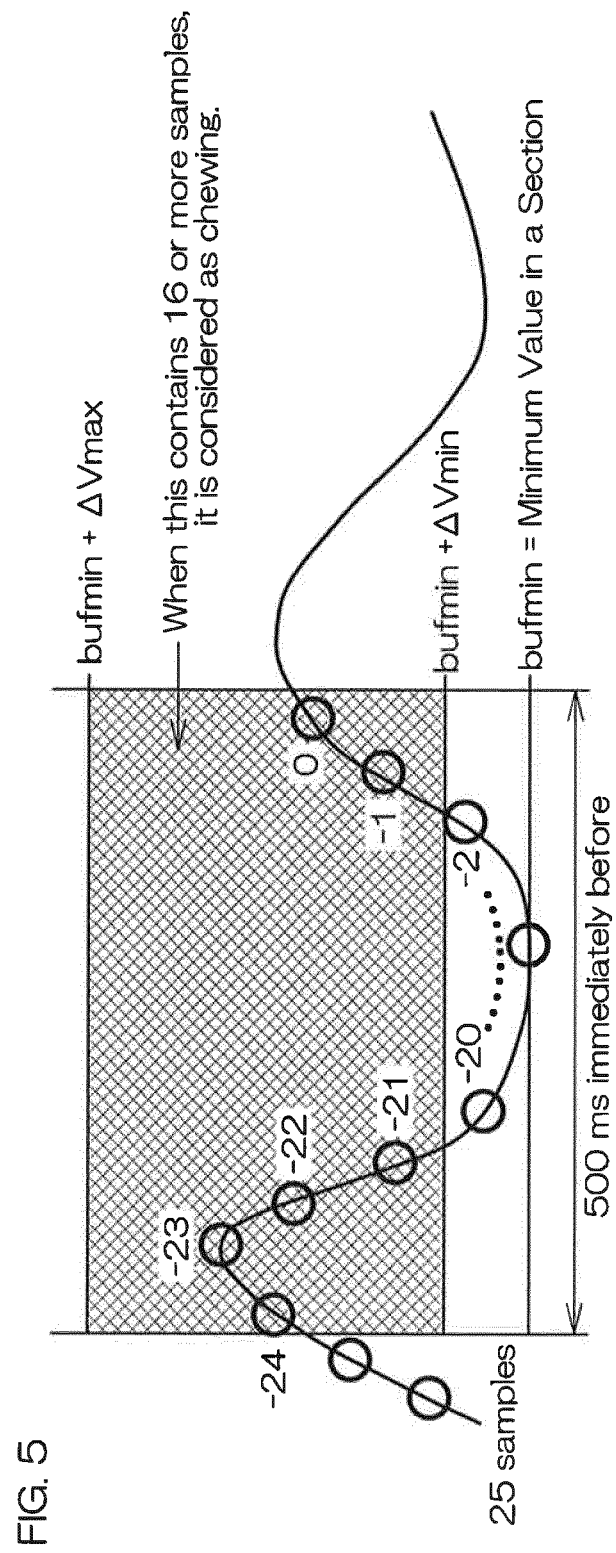
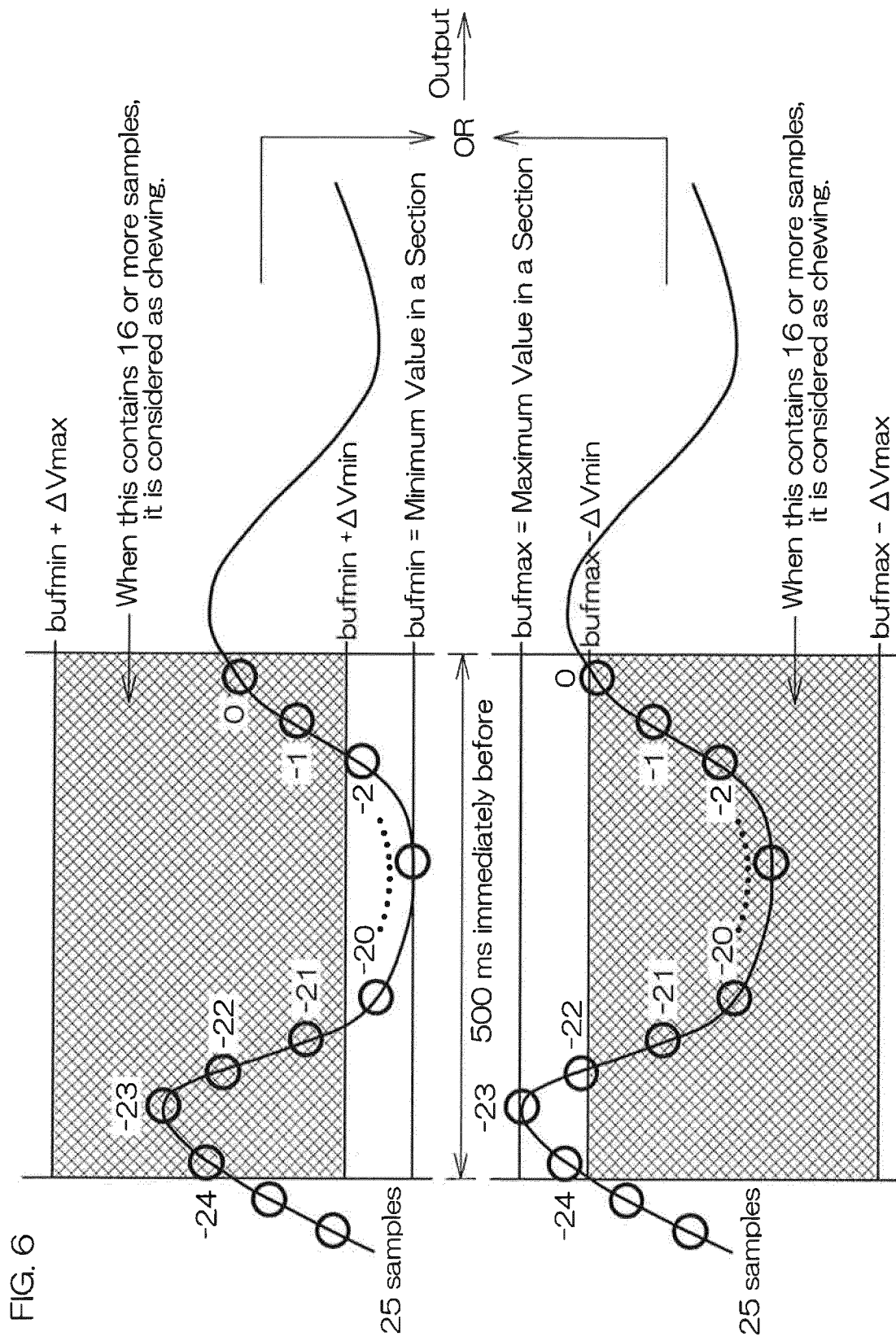
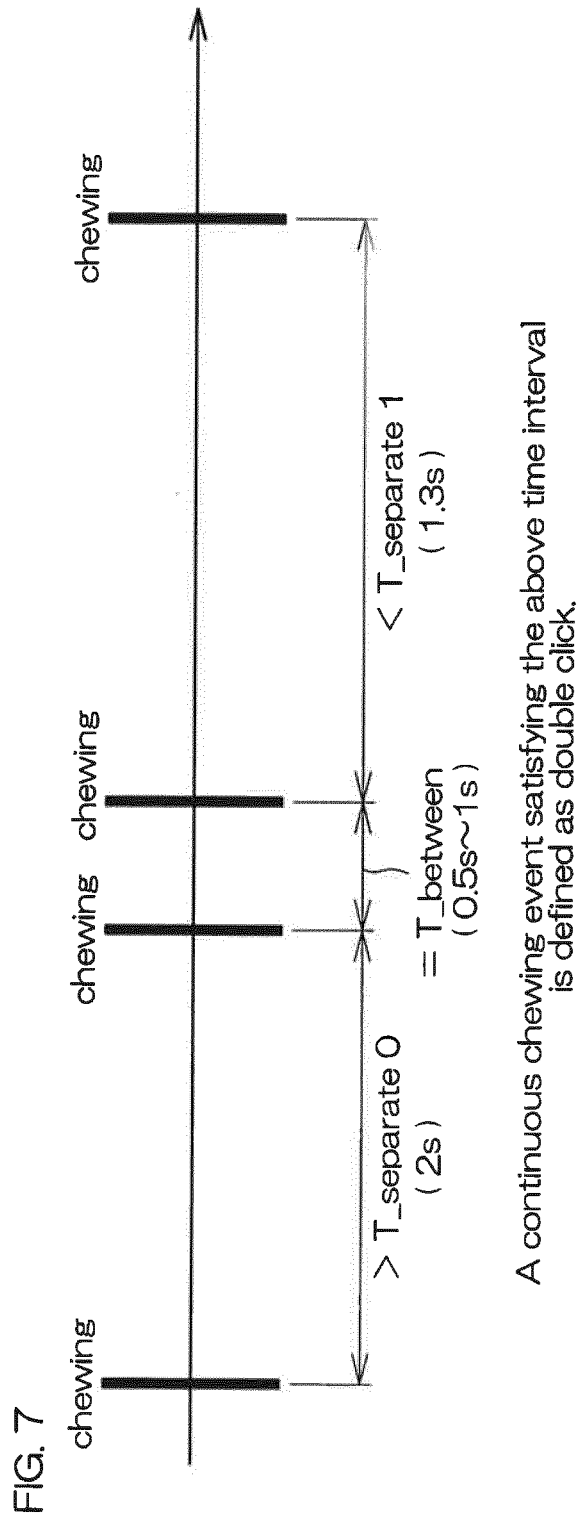


FIG. 4









REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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专利名称(译)	检测咀嚼的装置		
公开(公告)号	EP3210535B1	公开(公告)日	2019-09-18
申请号	EP2015852195	申请日	2015-10-19
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IPC分类号	A61B5/11 A61B5/00		
CPC分类号	A61B5/0082 A61B5/1126 A61B5/6817 A61B5/7214 A61B5/7271 A61B5/11 A61B5/6803		
代理机构(译)	WITTE , WELLER & PARTNER专利律师MBB		
优先权	2014214012 2014-10-20 JP		
其他公开文献	EP3210535A4 EP3210535A1		
外部链接	Espacenet		

摘要(译)

存在由光学传感器获得的信号包含许多噪声并且不能精确地检测咀嚼动作的问题。咀嚼检测装置包括：耳机型外耳道传感器11、12，其具有一对发光元件34和光接收元件35，并且其中光接收元件35接收由光发射出的光的反射光元件34进入外耳道以输出对应于光接收量的电压信号。关联处理装置51将外耳道传感器11、12的输出信号与颞的动作相关联，并输出表示颞进行咀嚼的咀嚼信号。咀嚼部分感测装置52确定外耳道传感器11、12的输出是否基于颞的运动（在咀嚼部分内），并且当咀嚼部分感测装置52的输出无效时，使关联处理装置51的输出无效。外耳道传感器11、12的输出不是基于颞的运动（没有咀嚼部分）。

