



US010398377B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Amimori et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 10,398,377 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Sep. 3, 2019**

(54) **CONNECTOR SUBSTRATE, SENSOR SYSTEM, AND WEARABLE SENSOR SYSTEM**

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC *A61B 5/6804* (2013.01); *A61B 5/0024* (2013.01); *A61B 5/11* (2013.01);
(Continued)

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(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC H05K 2201/09227; A61B 5/6804
See application file for complete search history.

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **15/756,410**

(22) PCT Filed: **Aug. 31, 2016**

(86) PCT No.: **PCT/JP2016/075406**

§ 371 (c)(1),

(2) Date: **Feb. 28, 2018**

(87) PCT Pub. No.: **WO2017/038849**

PCT Pub. Date: **Mar. 9, 2017**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2018/0242912 A1 Aug. 30, 2018

(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Sep. 4, 2015 (JP) 2015-174931

(51) **Int. Cl.**

A61B 5/06 (2006.01)

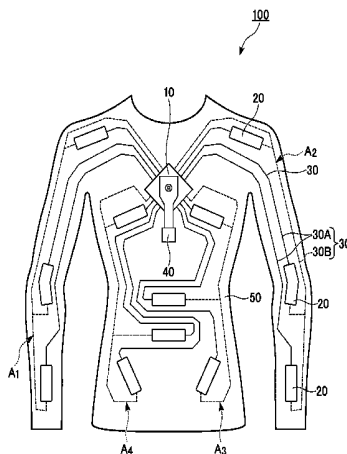
A61B 5/00 (2006.01)

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A connector substrate includes a base material, n first input terminals of m groups (m and n are an integer equal to or greater than 2) which are provided on the base material, n first output terminals which are provided on the base material, first wiring patterns which are disposed on or inside the base material and connect the first input terminals and the first output terminals, m second input terminals which are provided on the base material, m second output terminals which are provided on the base material, and second wiring patterns which are disposed on or inside the base material and connect the second input terminals and the second

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output terminals, in which a first end of each connector wiring constituting the first wiring pattern is connected to one of the n first input terminals constituting each group, and a second end is connected to one of the first output terminals.

10 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets

- (51) **Int. Cl.**
H05K 1/18 (2006.01)
A61B 5/11 (2006.01)
H05K 1/03 (2006.01)
H05K 1/11 (2006.01)
H04Q 9/00 (2006.01)
A41D 1/00 (2018.01)
- (52) **U.S. Cl.**
 CPC *H04Q 9/00* (2013.01); *H05K 1/038* (2013.01); *H05K 1/118* (2013.01); *H05K 1/18* (2013.01); *H05K 1/189* (2013.01); *A41D 1/005* (2013.01); *A61B 5/7267* (2013.01); *A61B 2562/046* (2013.01); *A61B 2562/164* (2013.01); *A61B 2562/166* (2013.01); *A61B 2562/222* (2013.01); *A61B 2562/227* (2013.01); *H05K 2201/09227* (2013.01); *H05K 2201/09445* (2013.01); *H05K 2201/10151* (2013.01)

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FIG. 1

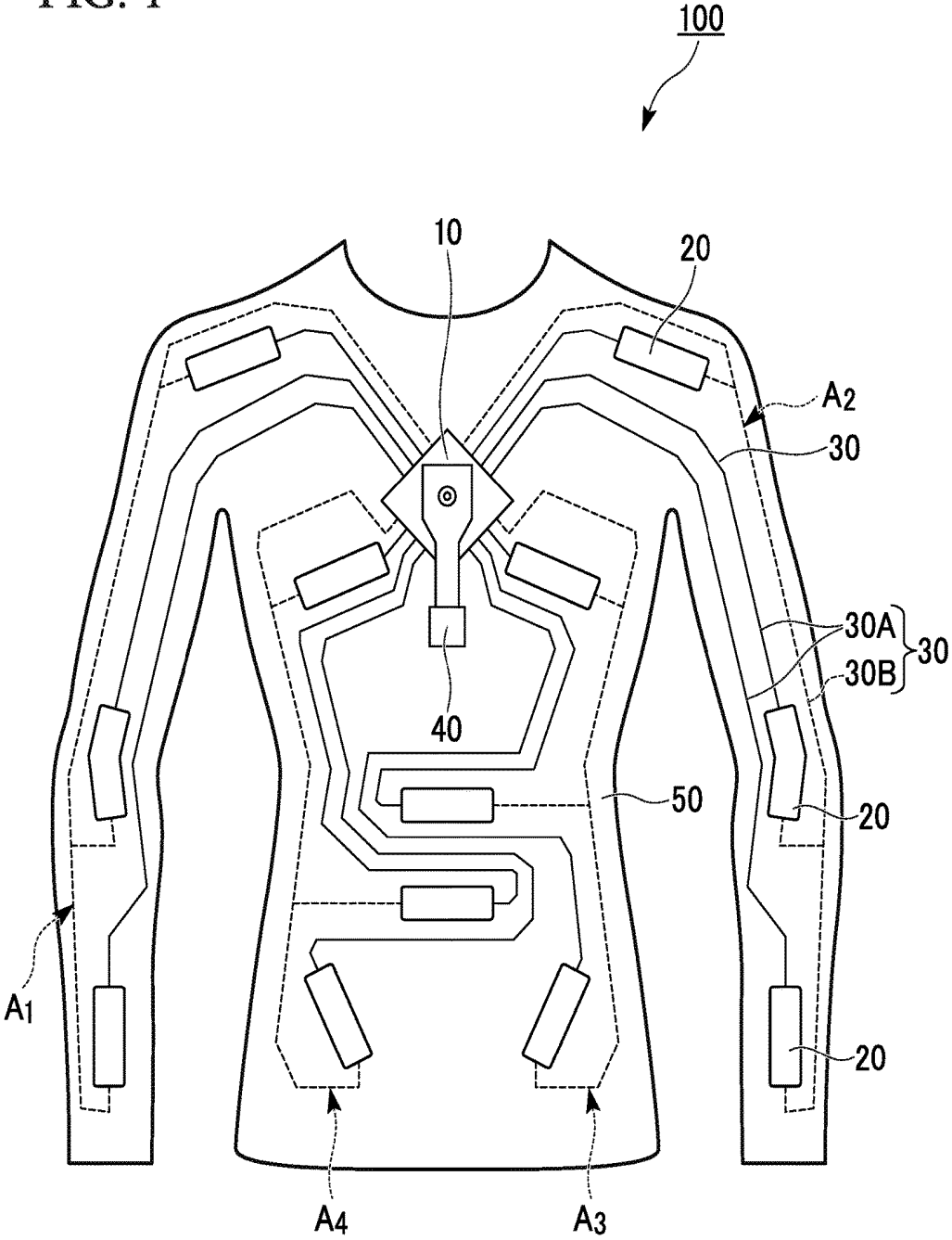


FIG. 2

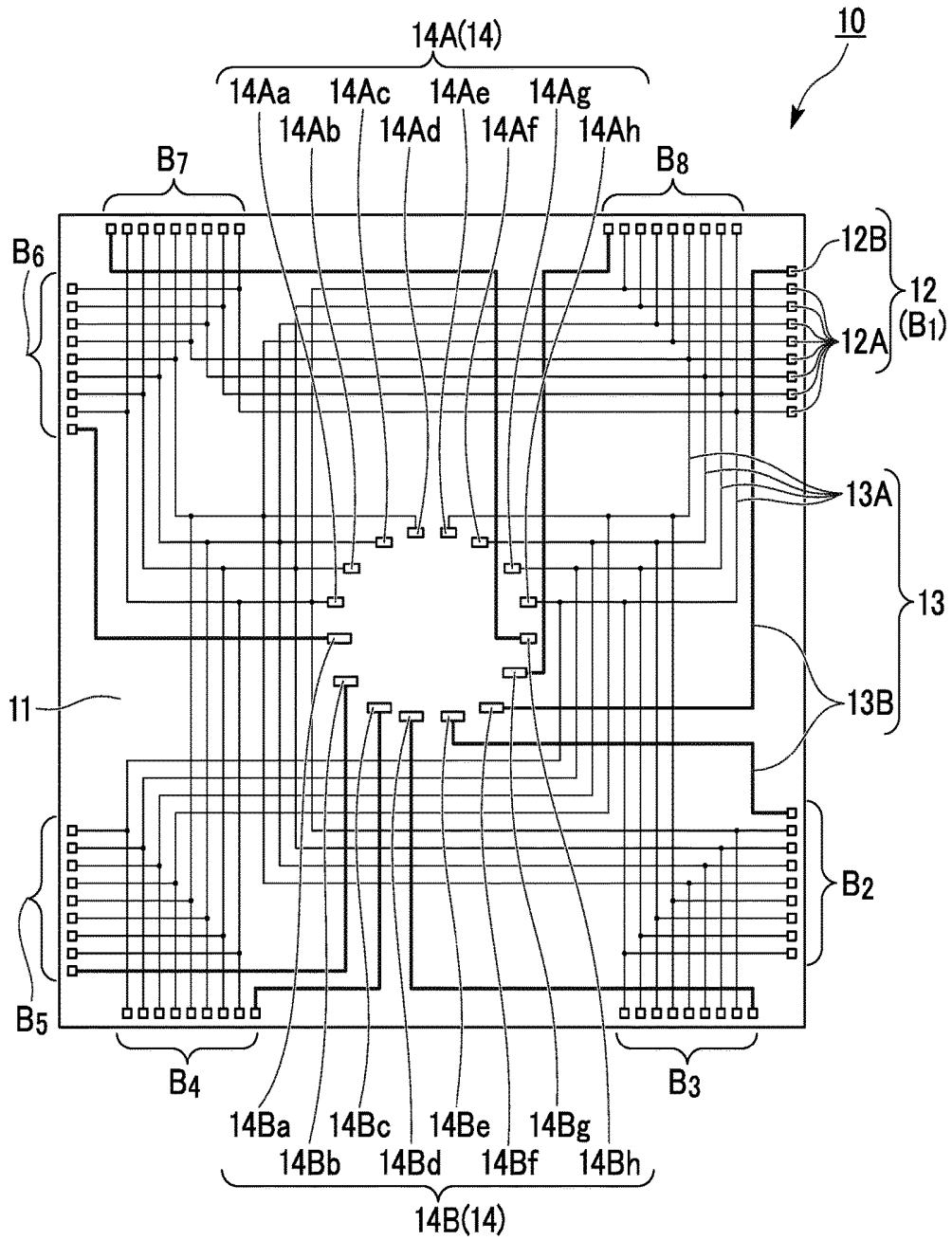


FIG. 3

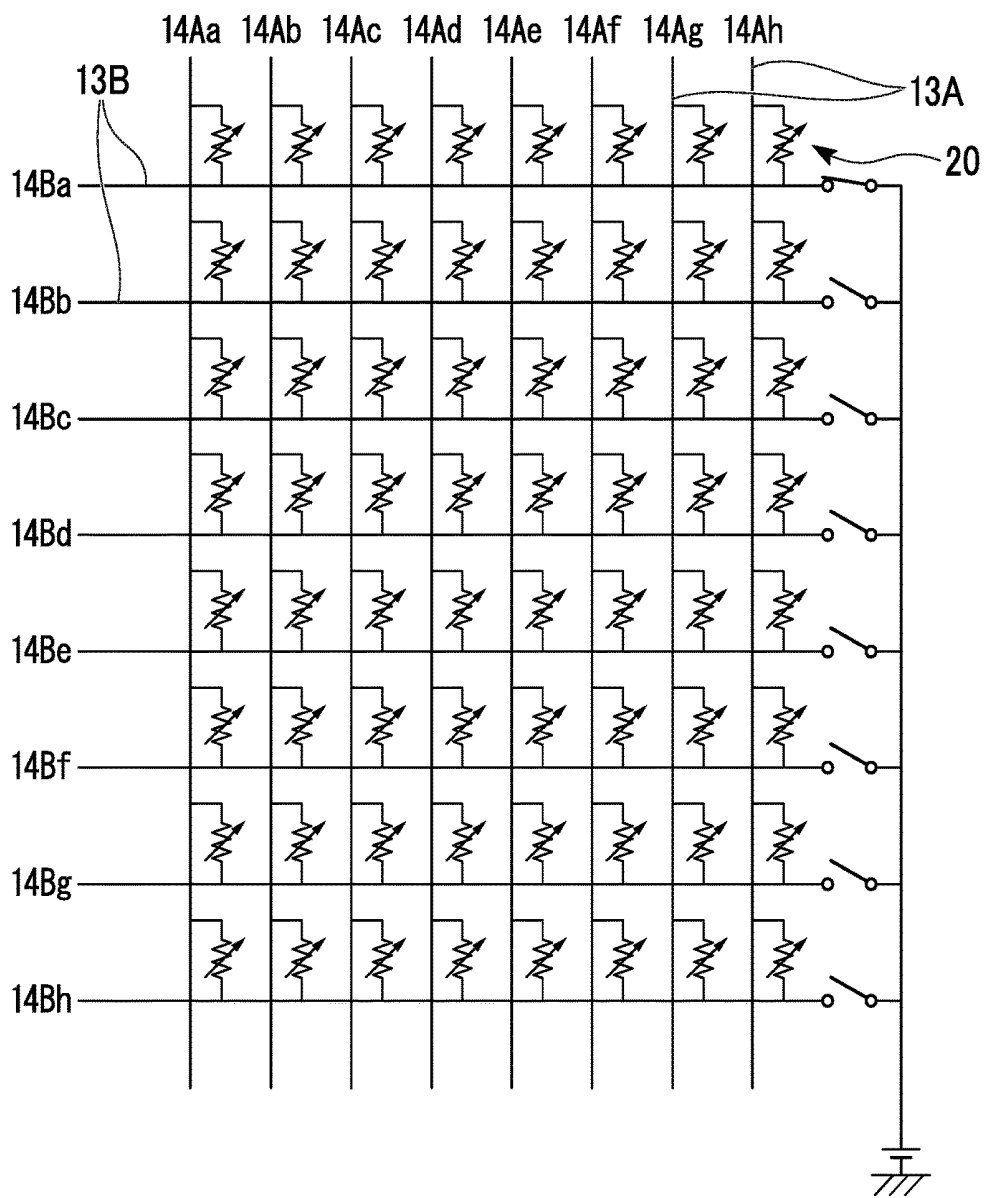
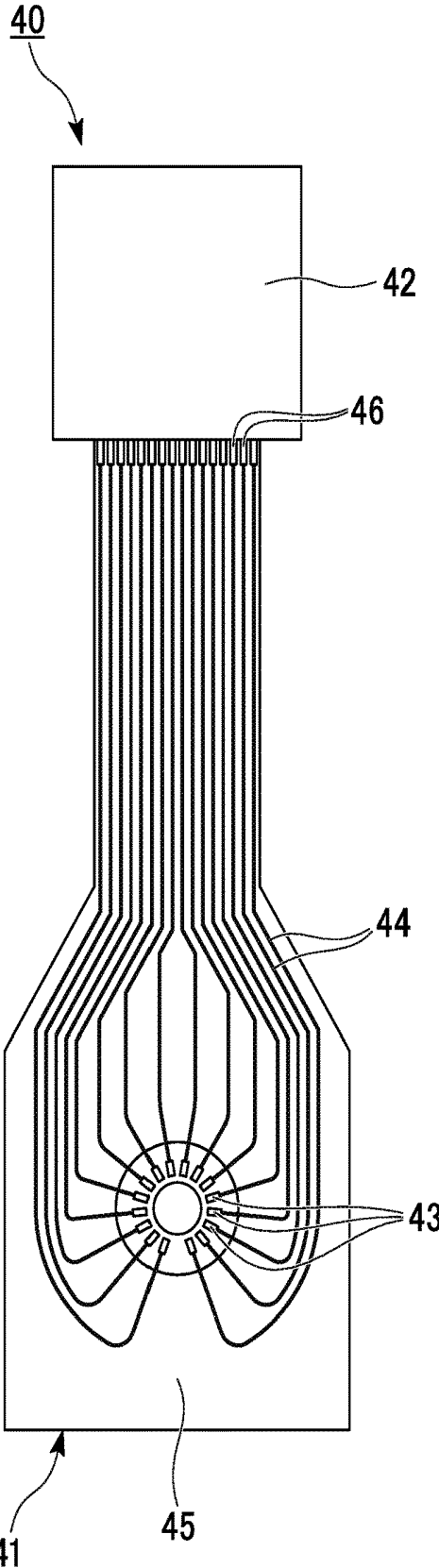


FIG. 4



CONNECTOR SUBSTRATE, SENSOR SYSTEM, AND WEARABLE SENSOR SYSTEM

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to a connector substrate, a sensor system, and a wearable sensor system.

Priority is claimed on Japanese Patent Application No. 2015-174931, filed on Sep. 4, 2015, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND ART

In recent years, flexible electronics has various application uses because of softness of their materials and thus has attracted much attention. For example, the flexible electronics has gained attraction as a means for directly obtaining biological information such as the movement of a human body by wearing on the surface of the human body or in the body.

For example, Patent Document 1 discloses clothing provided with a sensor that performs follow-up management of the performance of an individual who is performing motion activity. For example, Patent Document 2 discloses clothing in which a wiring portion is provided integrally with a fabric body. It is disclosed that it is possible to suppress the breaking of the wiring portion and the obstruction of a wearer's action by providing the wiring portion integrally with the fabric body.

Patent Document 3 discloses a sensor in which a plurality of measurement points are disposed in a regular array in order to also obtain planar positional information.

Patent Document 4 discloses clothing in which a plurality of motion sensors, such as acceleration sensors, are disposed over the whole body.

Signals acquired by the sensors are output to the outside and measured. For example, Patent Document 5 discloses that an electrode attached to a subject and a monitoring device are connected to each other by a connector and are output to the outside. Patent Document 1 discloses that physiological data is transmitted and received using a transceiver connected to the sensor, and Patent Document 2 discloses that information is wirelessly transmitted to the outside by using a transmission module connected to the sensor. Patent Document 4 discloses a system which is connected to communication means through a controller.

CITATION LIST

Patent Literature

[Patent Document 1] Japanese Unexamined Patent Application, First Publication No. 2012-214968

[Patent Document 2] Japanese Unexamined Patent Application, First Publication No. 2014-25180

[Patent Document 3] Japanese Patent No. 5535950

[Patent Document 4] United States Patent Application, Publication No. 2014/0135960

[Patent Document 5] Published Japanese Translation No. H11-513592 of the PCT International Publication

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

Technical Problem

The inventors have examined a sensor system capable of measuring the movement of a human body, and have noticed

that there are various problems. There have been demands for a sensor system capable of solving such various problems at once.

One of the problems noticed by the inventors is that a sensor system which is capable of aggregately measuring not only information from a specific position but also information from various positions and has a good feeling of wearing has not been realized.

For example, in Patent Document 1 and Patent Document 2, the sensor is provided at a predetermined position in a human body, and only information on the portion is measured. For this reason, for example, it is difficult to obtain a plurality of pieces of information on the human body's arm, leg, trunk, and the like at once.

In order to obtain the plurality of pieces of information at once, the sensors as disclosed in Patent Document 1 and Patent Document 2 can be simultaneously attached at various positions of the human body. However, it is not realistic to attach the plurality of sensors at once. In order to simultaneously output pieces of information obtained from the sensors to the outside, one transceiver or transmission module is necessary for each sensor, and thus the sensor system becomes extremely large. In Patent Document 4, a plurality of pieces of information are aggregately measured by the controller. However, in order to perform communication by connection of a plurality of acceleration sensors, a wiring or the controller necessarily becomes extremely large.

The large-scale sensor system also results in a problem that the sensor system gives a sense of incongruity to a wearer. For example, in a case where measurement is performed throughout the whole day, or the like, the badness of a feeling of wearing of the sensor system gives an extremely large burden on the wearer. In such a sensor system that causes a sense of incongruity for a wearer, information based on daily life is hardly obtained.

It is also considered that one external output means such as a transceiver or a transmission module is provided, and pieces of information are collectively transmitted to one external output means. However, as a result of the inventor's examination, the inventors have noticed that it is necessary to electrically connect each of the sensors and the external output means to each other in order to integrate information to one external output means, which results in another problem.

In order to electrically connect each sensor and one external output means to each other, connection points corresponding to a number, which is obtained by adding a ground wire to the number of wirings from the sensors, are at least required, and a connector having the connection points is required (for example, FIGS. 3 and 4 in Patent Document 5). As the number of sensors increases, the number of connection points increases.

In a connector having a large number of connection points, it is necessary to separately dispose the connection points, which results in an increase in size of the connector. In a wearable sensor system, such a large connector causes a sense of incongruity during the wearing of the wearable sensor system. In a case where the sensor system is used for clothing and the like, cloth is pulled by the connector, and thus there is a concern that accurate measurement is hindered.

In a connector having a large number of connection points, there is a possibility that terminals to be connected to each other are mistaken. Further, it takes time to perform both an operation of reliably performing connection of all of the connection points and an operation of confirming the

reliable connection of the connection points. That is, it is not possible to easily and simply connect each sensor and the external output means to each other.

The inventors have also noticed that another problem occurs due to an increase in number of connection points of a connector. The problem is that it is difficult to wash clothing and the like in a case where a sensor system is provided in the clothing and the like. Either of wireless type external output means or wired type external output means is required to be removed during washing. However, when the number of connection points of a connector is increased, it is difficult to simply remove the external output means.

In addition, the connector provided on the clothing side is washed together with the clothing during the washing. When the connector increases in size, it is assumed that large stress is applied to the connector during the washing. As a result, there is a strong possibility that the connector is peeled off from the clothing or is broken.

On the other hand, in principle, it is possible to reduce the number of connection points by converting an input signal into a matrix at a stage prior to arrival at the connection point and integrating signals (for example, Patent Document 3 and the like). However, pieces of information from sensor points, which are regularly disposed in a matrix, are electrically processed inside a sensor. In other words, when the sensor points are not regularly disposed, it is not possible to convert the signals into a matrix inside the sensor. That is, it is not possible to integrate the signals from the sensor points that are irregularly disposed. For this reason, this is not usable in a case where pieces of information from various points of a human body or the like are integrated, and thus the degree of freedom as a sensor system is low.

The invention is contrived in view of such situations, and an object thereof is to realize a sensor system which is capable of solving the above-described problems at once. More specifically, an object thereof is to provide a connector substrate which is capable of suppressing a wearer's sense of incongruity during the wearing of the sensor system and facilitating attachment and detachment of external output means. In addition, an object thereof is to provide a sensor system which is capable of measuring pieces of information from sensors at once and suppressing a wearer's sense of incongruity and which is washable.

Solution to Problem

The inventors have found a connector substrate in which signals from sensors are physically classified by a wiring pattern and the number of output terminals can be reduced, as a result of wholehearted examination. In addition, the inventors have found that when the connector substrate is used, a wearer's sense of incongruity is suppressed when wearing a sensor system, and attachment and detachment of external output means are facilitated, and have completed the invention.

That is, in order to solve the above-described problems, the invention has adopted the following means.

(1) According to an aspect of the invention, there is provided a connector substrate including a base material, n first input terminals of m groups (m and n are an integer equal to or greater than 2) which are provided on the base material, n first output terminals which are provided on the base material, first wiring patterns which are disposed on or inside the base material and connect the first input terminals and the first output terminals, m second input terminals which are provided on the base material, m second output terminals which are provided on the base material, and

second wiring patterns which are disposed on or inside the base material and connect the second input terminals and the second output terminals, in which a first end of each connector wiring constituting the first wiring pattern is connected to one of the n first input terminals constituting each group, and a second end is connected to one of the first output terminals.

(2) In the connector substrate according to (1), the base material may be flexible.

(3) In the connector substrate according to (1) or (2), the first input terminals and the second input terminals may be provided in an outer peripheral portion of the base material, the first output terminals and the second output terminals may be provided in a center portion of the base material, and the first wiring patterns and the second wiring patterns may be present at different positions in a thickness direction of the base material inside the base material or on an outer surface of the base material.

(4) According to another aspect of the invention, there is provided a sensor system including the connector substrate according to any one of (1) to (3), a plurality of sensors which are classified into m groups, a first wiring which connects each of the plurality of sensors and the first input terminals of the connector substrate to each other, a second wiring which connects the sensors constituting one group, among the plurality of sensors, and is connected to the second input terminals of the connector substrate, external output means, connected to the connector substrate, for outputting a signal to the outside, and signal processing means which is configured to process the signal which is output by the external output means.

(5) In the sensor system according to (4), the plurality of sensors may be irregularly disposed.

(6) In the sensor system according to (4) or (5), the first wiring and the second wiring may not intersect each other when seen in a plan view until reaching the connector substrate from each of the plurality of sensors.

(7) In the sensor system according to any one of (4) to (6), the connector substrate and the external output means may be connected to each other by a magnet.

(8) In the sensor system according to any one of (4) to (7), the signal processing means may perform machine learning.

(9) In the sensor system according to any one of (4) to (8), the plurality of sensors may cause a change in resistance due to a change in at least one physical quantity selected from a group consisting of sound, light, temperature, pressure, and distortion.

(10) According to still another aspect of the invention, there is provided a wearable sensor system including a fabric body to which the plurality of sensors and the connector substrate in the sensor system according to any one of (4) to (9) are attached, in which the first wiring and the second wiring are provided integrally with the fabric body.

Advantageous Effects of Invention

A connector substrate according to an aspect of the invention suppresses a wearer's sense of incongruity during the wearing of a sensor system, and facilitates attachment and detachment of external output means.

A sensor system according to another aspect of the invention can measure pieces of information from sensors, which are irregularly disposed, at once and can limit a wearer's sense of incongruity, and is washable.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a schematic diagram of a sensor system according to an aspect of the invention.

FIG. 2 is a schematic diagram showing a connector substrate according to the aspect of the invention when seen in a plan view.

FIG. 3 is a schematic circuit diagram showing a matrix scanning circuit which is virtually formed in the sensor system according to the aspect of the invention.

FIG. 4 is an example of a schematic plan view showing external output means.

FIG. 5 is a schematic cross-sectional diagram showing a connection portion between the connector substrate and the external output means.

DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

Hereinafter, configurations of a connector substrate, a sensor system, and a wearable sensor system according to this embodiment will be described with reference to the accompanying drawings. In the drawings used in the following description, characteristic portions may be enlarged in order to facilitate the understanding of the characteristics for convenience, and the dimensional ratio of each component is not necessarily the same as the actual dimensional ratio. Materials, dimensions, and the like illustrated in the following description are merely examples, and the invention is not limited thereto. The materials, dimensions, and the like can be appropriately changed without departing from the scope of the invention.

(Sensor System)

FIG. 1 is a schematic diagram of a sensor system according to an aspect of the invention.

A sensor system 100 shown in FIG. 1 includes a connector substrate 10, a plurality of sensors 20, a plurality of wirings 30, external output means 40, and signal processing means (not shown). The plurality of wirings 30 connect the sensor 20 and the connector substrate 10 to each other. The external output means 40 is connected to the connector substrate 10. The signal processing means processes a signal which is output from the external output means 40.

The sensor system 100 shown in FIG. 1 is a wearable clothing type sensor system in which the sensor 20 is attached to a fabric body 50 and the wirings 30 are provided integrally with the fabric body 50. The sensor system according to the aspect of the invention is not limited to the configuration shown in FIG. 1. For example, the fabric body 50 and the sensor system can be separated from each other. In addition, the sensor system is not limited to a clothing type that covers the whole body as shown in FIG. 1, and may be configured to cover only a portion of the body. In addition, the sensor system may be configured to be worn by an animal in order to confirm an action of an animal, such as a dog, or a robot.

In a case of the wearable clothing type sensor system 100 shown in FIG. 1, a method of attaching the fabric body 50, the connector substrate 10, and the sensor 20 is not particularly limited. For example, the connector substrate 10 and the sensor 20 may be bonded to the fabric body 50 by using an adhesive or the like, or the connector substrate 10 and the sensor 20 may be woven into the fabric body 50. In addition, regarding the sensor 20, a sensor formed using ink may be printed on the fabric body 50.

When the fabric body 50 and the sensor system 100 are integrally formed, it is possible to reduce a sense of incongruity during the wearing of the sensor system 100. The followability of the sensor system 100 with respect to the fabric body 50 increases. As a result, it is possible to perform more accurate measurement. Stress when stretching a fabric body with a sensor by 50% is in a range between one

twentieth and 20 times when stretching only the fabric body, preferably between one tenth and 10 times, and more preferably between one fifth and 5 times.

The plurality of sensors 20 are classified into m groups A_1 to A_m for each region. In FIG. 1, the sensors are classified into four groups A_1 to A_4 . Each of the groups A_1 to A_4 includes n sensors. In FIG. 1, each of $m=4$ groups includes $n=3$ sensors 20. The number of groups and the number of sensors are not limited to this case, and can vary depending on the mode of use.

The wiring 30 includes a first wiring 30A and a second wiring 30B. The first wiring 30A connects each of the sensors 20 and the connector substrate 10 to each other. The second wiring 30B connects the sensors 20 constituting one group, and is connected to the connector substrate 10. That is, each sensor is connected to each of the first wiring 30A and the second wiring 30B.

In FIG. 1, for example, three sensors 20 included in the right arm group A_1 are connected to the connector substrate 10 by the first wiring 30A. In addition, three sensors 20 included in the right arm group A_1 are connected to each other by the second wiring 30B, and integrated into one wiring to be connected to the connector substrate 10. That is, from the right arm group A_1 , the number (four) of wirings 30 obtained by adding one wiring to the number (three) of sensors included in the right arm group A_1 are connected to the multi-point sensor connector substrate 10. This is not limited to the right arm group A_1 , and is the same as in the left arm group A_2 , the left trunk group A_3 , and the right trunk group A_4 . As a result, on the connector substrate 10, a total of 16 wirings 30 including four wirings (three first wirings 30A+one second wiring 30B) by four groups are disposed.

When generalizing this, a total of m second wirings 30B respectively obtained from the m groups A_1 to A_m are connected to the connector substrate 10. In addition, the first wirings 30A respectively obtained from all of the sensors 20 included in each of the groups A_1 to A_m are connected thereto. For convenience of description, when the number of sensors included in each of the groups A_1 to A_m is set to be n , $m \times n$ first wirings 30A are connected thereto. That is, the number of wirings 30 connected to the connector substrate 10 is $m \times n + m = m \times (n + 1)$ in total.

<Connector Substrate>

FIG. 2 is a schematic diagram showing a connector substrate according to the aspect of the invention when seen in a plan view.

The connector substrate 10 shown in FIG. 2 includes a base material 11, first input terminals 12A, second input terminals 12B, first wiring patterns 13A, second wiring patterns 13B, a first output terminal 14A, and a second output terminal 14B. Hereinafter, the first input terminal 12A and the second input terminal 12B may be collectively referred to as an external input terminal 12, the first wiring pattern 13A and the second wiring pattern 13B may be collectively referred to as a wiring pattern 13, and the first output terminal 14A and the second output terminal 14B may be collectively referred to as an external output terminal 14.

The base material 11 has an insulating property, and supports the external input terminal 12, the internal wiring pattern 13, and the external output terminal 14. The base material 11 is preferably a flexible material. Here, the term "flexible" means being capable of being freely bent to a degree of a flexible printed circuit (FPC). The base material 11 has flexibility, and thus is hardly damaged even when stress is applied to the connector substrate 10 due to processing such as washing.

Examples of a material used for the base material **11** may include polyimide (PI), polyethylene terephthalate (PET), and the like.

The external input terminal **12** is an electrical contact point formed on the base material **11**. The external input terminal **12** includes the first input terminal **12A** and the second input terminal **12B**. Each of the first input terminal **12A** and the second input terminal **12B** may be disposed on the same surface as that of the base material **11**, or may be disposed on a surface different from that of the base material. The first input terminal **12** can be connected to each of the plurality of sensors **20**. The second input terminal **12B** can be connected to the sensors **20** included in one group. That is, the connector substrate **10** functions as a connector substrate for multi-point sensor which is capable of being connected to a multi-point sensor.

In the external input terminal **12** of FIG. 2, six first input terminals **12A** and one second input terminal **12B** constitute one group, and thus a total of eight groups are provided. The groups B_1 to B_m respectively correspond to the groups A_1 to A_m into which the plurality of sensors **20** in the sensor system **100** are divided for each region.

For example, the group B_1 in FIG. 2 can be connected to the right arm group A_1 in FIG. 1. That is, although only three sensors **20** are shown in FIG. 1 for convenience of illustration, each of six sensors disposed in the right arm group A_1 can be connected to the first input terminal **12A** through the first wiring **30A**. In addition, the second input terminal **12B** can be connected to each sensor **20** disposed in the right arm group A_1 through the second wiring **30B**. Similarly, each of the left arm group A_2 , the left trunk group A_3 , and the right trunk group A_4 in FIG. 1 can be connected to each of the groups B_2 to B_4 in FIG. 2.

In FIG. 2, the external input terminal **12** includes eight groups B_1 to B_8 . For this reason, in a case where the connector substrate **10** of FIG. 2 is used, four groups A_5 to A_8 can also be further provided in the sensor system **100** of FIG. 1.

The number of groups of the groups B_1 to B_m can appropriately vary depending on the number of groups A_1 to A_m provided in the sensor system **100**. In addition, the number of first input terminals **12A** constituting the groups B_1 to B_m can also vary depending on the number of sensors included in each of the groups A_1 to A_m .

The external output terminal **14** is an electrical contact point formed on the base material **11**. The external output terminal **14** includes the first output terminal **14A** and the second output terminal **14B**. The first output terminal **14A** and the second output terminal **14B** may be disposed on the same surface as that of the base material **11**, or may be disposed on a surface different from that of the base material. The number of terminals of the first output terminal **14A** corresponds to the maximum number of the first input terminal **12A** in the groups B_1 to B_m . On the other hand, the number of terminals of the second output terminal **14B** corresponds to the number of groups of the groups B_1 to B_m .

The external input terminal **12** and the external output terminal **14** may be formed of a conductive material, and can be manufactured using, for example, solder, silver paste, copper, or the like.

The wiring pattern **13** is disposed on or inside the base material **11**. The wiring pattern **13** includes the first wiring pattern **13A** and the second wiring pattern **13B**. The first wiring pattern **13A** connects the input terminal **12A** and the output terminal **14A** to each other. The second wiring pattern **13B** connects the second input terminal **12B** and the second output terminal **14B** to each other.

Each connector wiring constituting the wiring pattern **13A** connects the first input terminal **12A** and the first output terminal **14A**. A first end of each connector wiring constituting the wiring pattern **13A** is connected one of the n first input terminals **12A** constituting the groups B_1 to B_m . On the other hand, a second end of each connector wiring constituting the wiring pattern **13A** is connected one of the first output terminals **14A**. That is, each connector wiring constituting the wiring pattern **13A** extends from one of the n first input terminals **12A** of each group, and the connector wirings are disposed so as to be integrated into one until reaching the first input terminal **14A**.

For example, in FIG. 2, the connector wirings extending to the first output terminal **14A** from one of the first input terminals **12A** constituting one group B_1 are connected to the connector wirings extending from one of the first input terminals **12A** constituting each of the other groups B_2 to B_8 , until reaching the first output terminal **14A**. That is, a total of 64 input terminals **12A** are integrated into eight output terminals **14A**.

On the other hand, the second wiring pattern **13B** connects the second input terminal **12B** and the second output terminal **14B**. Connector wirings constituting the second wiring pattern **13B** are not connected to the connector wirings constituting the first wiring pattern **13A** and the other connector wirings constituting the second wiring pattern.

A configuration of the connector substrate **10** has been described above. Subsequently, functions of the connector substrate **10** will be described.

The connector substrate **10** converts pieces of information which are input from $m \times (n+1)$ external input terminals **12** by matrix scanning, and output the information by $m+n$ external output terminals **14**.

The conversion by the matrix scanning is performed in the following sequence. For example, when a subject wearing the sensor system **100** moves the right arm, any one sensor **20** in the right arm group A_1 in FIG. 1 responds. In this case, a number is virtually given to sensors included in the right arm group A_1 . For example, it is assumed that the sensor **20** of number 2 in the right arm group A_1 responds.

Information indicating that the sensor **20** of number 2 in the right arm group A_1 responds is transmitted to the connector substrate **10** by the first wiring **30A** and the second wiring **30B**. In this case, the first wiring **30A** is directly connected to the connector substrate **10**, the information indicating that the sensor **20** of number 2 in the right arm group A_1 responds is transmitted as it is. On the other hand, the second wiring **30B** is also connected to the other sensors **20** in the right arm group A_1 , and thus information indicating that any one sensor in the right arm group A_1 responds is transmitted.

The information transmitted from the first wiring **30A** is input to, for example, the first input terminal **12A**, which is the second terminal from the top in the drawing, in the group B_1 of the connector substrate **10** shown in FIG. 2. The input information is transmitted to the first output terminal **14A** through the first wiring pattern **30A**. Here, connector wirings constituting the first wiring pattern **30A** is also connected to the first input terminal **12A**, which is the second terminal, in the other groups. That is, the information, indicating that the sensor **20** of number 2 in the right arm group A_1 responds, which is transmitted to the first input terminal **12A** is replaced by information indicating that the second sensor **20** in any one of the groups A_1 to A_n responds, at a stage where the information reaches the first output terminal **14A**.

On the other hand, the information transmitted from the second wiring 30B is input to, for example, the second input terminal 12B in the group B₁ of the connector substrate 10 shown in FIG. 2. The information which is input to the second input terminal 12B is transmitted to the second output terminal 14B as it is through the second wiring pattern 13B. That is, information indicating that any one sensor in the right arm group A₁ responds is transmitted to the second output terminal 14B as it is.

As a result, in signal processing means to be described later, information, indicating that a predetermined sensor in any one group, which is output from the first output terminal 14A is compared with information, indicating that any one sensor in a predetermined group, which is output from the second output terminal 14B, and thus it is possible to read that a predetermined sensor in a predetermined group responds. In this case, the comparison between the pieces of information can be determined by comparing potential differences of the first output terminal 14A and the second output terminal 14B with each other.

FIG. 3 is a schematic circuit diagram showing a matrix scanning circuit which is virtually formed in the sensor system according to the aspect of the invention. A variable resistor in FIG. 3 corresponds to each sensor 20 in FIG. 1. Terminals 14Aa to 14Ah and 14Ba to 14Bh in FIG. 2 correspond to ends in row and column directions in FIG. 3.

In FIG. 3, when any one sensor 20 responds, a resistance value of the variable resistor changes. Information indicating the change in the resistance value is also transmitted in any of the row and column directions. In this case, information transmitted in the column direction is information, indicating that a predetermined sensor in any one group responds, which is converted by the first wiring pattern 30A in the above description. On the other hand, information transmitted in the row direction is information, indicating that any one sensor in a predetermined group responds, which is converted by the second wiring 30B.

Here, regarding voltage measurement by a passive matrix circuit as shown in FIG. 3, the generation of a current in an OFF line which is referred to as a sneak current may become a problem. However, as a solution therefor, for example, Takahashi, Y et al., 2005 IEEE/RSJ Int. Conf. Intell. Robot. Syst. IROS 1097-1102 (2005) is known.

As described above, the wiring 30 in the sensor system 100 and the wiring pattern 13 in the connector substrate 10 virtually perform matrix conversion of information. For this reason, in the connector substrate 10, it is possible to reduce $m \times (n+1)$ external input terminals to $m+n$ external output terminals.

Specifically, in FIG. 2, signals from a total of 64 sensors of the first input terminal 12A and the second input terminal 12B can be output by a total of 16 output terminals of the first output terminal 14A and the second output terminal 14B. Normally, a total 65 external output terminals obtained by adding up 64 sensors and an earth are required, while the number of external output terminals is drastically reduced to 16 by using the connector substrate 10 according to the aspect of the invention. The principle of the conversion is the same as a principle used when the number of external output terminals is reduced using matrix conversion in which information from sensors disposed on a matrix based on a CCD or the like is read out by wirings disposed in a matrix.

Here, it is preferable that the sensors 20 are irregularly disposed. The phrase "irregularly disposed" means that the sensors are not disposed in a matrix. For example, with respect to the connector substrate 10, a case where the

sensors are provided at a plurality of locations at equal distances does not correspond to "regular disposition" in this specification.

In principle, a reduction in the number of output signals by conversion of input signals into a matrix has also been performed in the related art (for example, Patent Document 3 and the like). However, this is used when signals from sensors regularly disposed in a matrix are processed, and is not applicable to the processing of signals from sensors irregularly disposed. In the connector substrate 10 according to the aspect of the invention, even signals from the sensors 20 irregularly disposed can be arranged again in a virtual matrix by converting the signals into a matrix of m rows by n columns by the wiring pattern 13. That is, unlike matrix scanning being regularly performed on signals regularly disposed, signals irregularly disposed are virtually and regularly disposed and matrix scanning is performed thereon. The phrase "signals from sensors irregularly disposed are arranged again in a virtual matrix" is not conceivable from sensors regularly arranged.

The application of such a function to the connector substrate 10 is conceivable only by the inventors who have found that it is necessary to reduce the number of connection points of the connector substrate 10 in order to solve a problem that it is necessary to facilitate attachment and detachment and to realize a washable sensor system.

In the connector substrate 10, it is preferable that the external input terminal 12, the internal wiring pattern 13, and the external output terminal 14 are disposed as shown in FIG. 2. That is, it is preferable that the first input terminals 12A and the second input terminal 12B included in the external input terminal 12 are disposed in the outer peripheral portion of the base material 11, and the first output terminals 14A and the second output terminals 14B included in the external output terminal 14 are disposed in the center portion of the base material 11. The number of terminals of the external input terminal 12 is larger than the number of terminals of the external output terminal 14. For this reason, the external input terminal 12 is disposed in the outer peripheral portion having a large area allowable for disposition, and the internal wiring pattern 13 is disposed so as to converge toward the external output terminal 14 in the center position, so that it is possible to efficiently use the base material 11 and to reduce the size of the connector substrate 10.

It is preferable that the first wiring pattern 13A and the second wiring pattern 13B are disposed at positions of different depths in the thickness direction of the base material 11. For example, the first wiring pattern 13A can be disposed on one surface of the base material 11, and the second wiring pattern 13B can be disposed on a surface opposite to the surface.

The first wiring pattern 13A and the second wiring pattern 13B are disposed at positions of different depths in the thickness direction of the base material 11, and thus it is possible to prevent the wiring patterns from being electrically connected to each other. When the first wiring pattern 13A and the second wiring pattern 13B are electrically connected to each other, it is not possible to appropriately read out the sensor 20 which is driven. In addition, the connector wirings constituting the first wiring pattern 13A can also be disposed at positions of different depths in the thickness direction of a base material so as not to be electrically connected to each other.

The wiring pattern 13 can be formed on the base material 11 by patterning. The wiring pattern 13 may be formed using a mask having a predetermined opening by deposition,

sputtering, or the like, or may be formed by wet etching or dry etching after a metal film is formed. In a case where the base material **11** has a laminated structure, the base material **11** having the first wiring pattern **13A** formed thereon and the base material having the second wiring pattern **13B** formed thereon may be bonded to each other by processing, such as heating, so that the respective connector wirings thereof are not electrically connected to each other.

<External Output Means>

The external output means **40** is connected to the connector substrate **10**. The external output means **40** includes a connector portion **41** connected to the connector substrate **10** and a signal transmission unit **42** that outputs an input signal to the outside through the connector portion **41**. FIG. **4** is an example of a schematic perspective view showing the external output means.

The connector portion **41** shown in FIG. **4** includes a plurality of terminals **43**, wirings **44**, a base material **45**, and external terminals **46**. The plurality of terminals **43** are connected to the connector substrate **10**. The wiring **44** is connected to each of the terminals **43**. The wirings **44** are covered with the base material **45**. The external terminal **46** is connected to a side of the wiring **44** which is opposite to the terminal **43**, and is connected to the signal transmission unit **42**.

The terminals **43** correspond to the external output terminals **14** of the connector substrate **10** on a one-to-one basis. It is desirable that the number of terminals **43** is the same as the number of external output terminals **14**. In FIG. **4**, the number of external output terminals **14** is 16. The terminal **43** may have conductivity, and can be formed using a material which is the same as those of the external input terminal **12** and the external output terminal **14**.

The wiring **44** transmits information from the terminal **43** to the signal transmission unit **42** through the external terminal **46**. The wirings **44** are required to be electrically separated from each other. In order to also avoid a short circuit of the wiring **44**, it is preferable that the wirings **44** do not intersect each other when seen in a plan view.

The base material **45** can electrically separate the wirings **44** from each other. In addition, it is preferable that the base material has flexibility, and the base material can be formed using a material which is the same as that of the base material **11** of the connector substrate **10**. The wirings **44** may be disposed inside or outside the substrate **45**.

The signal transmission unit **42** may be a wired communication device or a wireless communication device as long as the signal transmission unit can transmit a signal to the outside. It is preferable that the signal transmission unit is a wireless communication device from the viewpoint of reducing a sense of incongruity during wearing. For example, communication standards such as Bluetooth (registered trademark), Zigbee (registered trademark), and Wi-Fi (registered trademark) can be used. The signal transmission unit **42** may be mounted with a microcomputer for processing, a lithium battery, or the like.

Subsequently, connection of the connector substrate **10** and the external output means **40** will be described. FIG. **5** is a schematic cross-sectional diagram showing a connection portion between the connector substrate and the external output means. As described above, the external output terminals **14** of the connector substrate **10** and the terminals **43** of the external output means **40** are connected to each other on a one-to-one basis.

Each of the connector substrate **10** and the external output means **40** has a fitting portion, and it is preferable that the external output terminals **14** and the terminals **43** are con-

nected to each other through the fitting portions. For example, any one of the connector substrate **10** and the external output means **40** is processed to have a concave shape, and the other one is processed to have a convex shape. The connector substrate **10** and the external output means **40** are processed in this manner, and thus a portion processed to have a convex shape is fitted to a portion processed to have a concave shape. In this manner, it is possible to prevent contact points of the external output terminal **14** and the terminal **43** from being shifted by providing the fitting portions.

In addition, as shown in FIG. **5**, a guide member **47** having an opening may be provided between the connector substrate **10** and the external output means **40**. The guide member **47** is provided, and thus it is not necessary to process both the connector substrate **10** and the external output means **40**. When a convex portion processed to have a convex shape is provided in any one of the connector substrate **10** and the external output means **40**, the convex portion can be fitted to the opening of the guide member **47**. It is preferable that the convex portion is provided on the external output means **40** side where the terminal **43** is formed. This is because the number of wirings is smaller in the vicinity of the terminal **43** than in the vicinity of the external output terminal **14**.

It is preferable that a reference point for determining a position in the circumferential direction thereof is provided in the guide member **47**. Since the external output terminals **14** and the terminals **43** correspond to each other on a one-to-one basis, connection of different terminals makes signal processing means process an erroneous signal. The reference point is provided, and thus it is possible to prevent a correspondence relationship between the external output terminals **14** and the terminals **43** from being shifted. As the reference point, for example, a protrusion portion **47A** provided in the guide member **47**, and the like can be used as shown in FIG. **5**. The protrusion portion **47A** is matched to a cut portion **47B** provided in the convex portion to be fitted to the opening of the guide member **47**, and thus it is possible to match positional relationships between the external output terminals **14** and the terminals **43**.

The reference point is not limited to a case where the guide member **47** is provided, and it is preferable to provide the reference point also in a case where a convex portion is formed in any one of the connector substrate **10** and the external output means **40** and a concave portion is formed in the other one.

In addition, it is preferable that the connector substrate **10** and the external output means **40** are connected to each other by a magnet **48**. The connection of thereof is performed by the magnet **48**, and thus it is possible to further facilitate attachment and detachment. The magnet **48** can be formed on a surface opposite to a surface connected to the external output means **40** of the connector substrate **10** and can be formed inside the external output means **40**, for example, as shown in FIG. **5**. Alternatively, the terminal **43** can also be formed of a conductive magnet.

<Sensor>

The sensor **20** is appropriately provided at a location desired to be measured, as shown in FIG. **1**. For this reason, the sensors are not required to be regularly arranged with respect to the connector substrate **10**, and may be irregularly disposed with respect to the connector substrate **10**.

The type of sensor **20** does not particularly matter. For example, a photodiode, a temperature sensor, a distortion sensor, a pressure sensor, or the like can be used. In addition, a sensor different for each location may be used.

The sensor is not particularly limited as long as a current or a voltage of the sensor changes in association with a change in a physical quantity. However, from convenience of a circuit, but it is preferable to use a variable resistor type sensor in which a resistance changes depending on a physical quantity and voltages at both ends thereof change. As the physical quantity, at least one selected from a group consisting of sound, light, temperature, pressure, and distortion can be used. In this case, it is preferable that a resistance value of the resistance of the sensor is equal to or greater than 50 times that of a wiring resistance of the wiring 30 which is to be described later. Although distance between the connector substrate 10 and the sensor 20 varies depending on a location, the resistance of the sensor is set to be 50 times the wiring resistance, and thus it is possible to exclude the influence of the wiring resistance of the wiring 30.

It is preferable to use a sensor using aqueous ink for the sensor 20. The sensor using aqueous ink is ink obtained by mixing conductive particles with a water dispersion of elastomer. Printing using the ink and drying are performed, and thus conductive particles being randomly dispersed in an elastomer film are obtained. In the sensor, a distance between the conductive particles changes due to pulling, compression, or thermal expansion and contraction due to a change in temperature, and thus resistance at both ends of the sensor changes. The sensor using aqueous ink has an extremely small thickness and has high followability with respect to an object to be measured. For this reason, it is possible to perform accurate and stable measurement.

<Wiring>

The wiring 30 is a conductor that connects each sensor 20 and the connector substrate 10 to each other. Considering processing such as washing or the influence of a wearer's sweat or the like, it is preferable that the vicinity of the wiring 30 is coated with an insulator.

The wiring 30 is constituted by conductive yarns, and it is preferable that the wiring is woven into the fabric body 50. The wiring 30 is woven into the fabric body 50, and thus the wiring 30 can follow the movement of the fabric body 50.

It is preferable that the wiring 30 is disposed on a side opposite to a surface contacting a human body or the like. The disposition of the wiring 30 having conductivity in a portion contacting the human body or the like results in an increase in a concern that a short circuit occurs due to sweat or the like. For this reason, it is preferable that the wiring 30 is disposed at a position separated from the portion contacting the human body or the like.

As the conductive yarn used for the wiring 30, it is possible to use a metal material such as iron or stainless steel, or a material obtained by coating the surface of a general yarn with gold, silver, copper, nickel, copper sulfide, or the like. Among these, the yarn coated with gold, silver, or copper has a small electrical resistance, has safety against a living body, and has strength and twist being freely selectable, and thus is preferable because of a relatively small variation in electric resistance even in a case where the fabric body 50 is washed, and high productivity of a sewing machine or the like.

Regarding the wirings 30, as shown in FIG. 1, it is preferable that the wirings 30 do not intersect each other when seen in a plan view until reaching the connector substrate 10 from the sensors 20. Here, the phrase "do not intersect each other when seen in a plan view" means that the wirings 30 do not intersect each other when seen from the outer surface side where the sensor system is formed.

The wirings 30 connect the sensors 20 and the connector substrate 10 to each other, and thus are disposed in a wide

range and are required to have followability with respect to an action. For this reason, the material, thickness, and the like of the insulator with which the wiring 30 can be coated are limited. A sufficient insulating property may not be obtained with such an insulator, and thus there is a concern that a short circuit occurs in a portion where the wirings 30 intersect each other. Particularly, in a case where the wearer sweats or when processing such as washing is performed, a concern for a short circuit increases prominently.

On the other hand, it is possible to use polyimide or the like having a high insulating property for the base material 11 used for the connector substrate 10, as described. For this reason, even when the wiring patterns 13 of the connector substrate 10 intersect each other when seen in a plan view, a short circuit does not occur.

That is, the wirings 30 do not intersect each other when seen in a plan view until reaching the connector substrate 10 from the sensors 20, and thus it is possible to prevent the plurality of wirings 30 from being short-circuited.

<Signal Processing Means>

The signal processing means processes a signal which is output to the outside by the external output means 50. Specifically, potentials of the corresponding first output terminal 14A and second output terminal 14B of the connector substrate 10 are measured, and actions of the sensors 20 are detected from results of the measurement. Biological information such as a motion, electrocardiogram, myoelectricity, and respiration of the body are obtained from information regarding the obtained actions of the plurality of sensors 20.

As the signal processing means, known signal processing means can be adopted. Among the signal processing means, signal processing means that performs machine learning when performing conversion into biological information is preferable. The phrase "machine learning" means that learning for associating the state of a specific living body with the value of the sensor 20 at that time is performed, and the value of the sensor 20 is reversely converted into biological information from a result of the learning. For example, the sensor 20 in a human's arm, leg, or trunk is deformed by the human's motion, which results in a change in a signal. Only in a case of the arm, a signal generated in the sensor 20 is different for each action such as bending, stretching, or torsion. In other words, it can be said that a signal generated in a specific portion by a specific action also includes pieces of information regarding the portion having the signal generated therein and the action. Consequently, whenever the pieces of information are processed, a computer is caused to learn the information, so that the computer itself can more appropriately process a signal when the same action occurs in the same portion. That is, the signal processing means performs machine learning, and thus it is possible to rapidly obtain more pieces of information at the same time.

The connector substrate 10 according to the aspect of the invention is used, and thus it is possible to virtually perform matrix conversion of signals from the sensors 20 provided in various portions of a human body or the like. As a result, even when the sensors 20 are irregularly disposed, signals can be integrated into the connector substrate 10.

In addition, matrix conversion of signals is performed in the connector substrate 10, and thus it is possible to reduce the number of terminals of the external output terminal 14 with respect to the number of terminals of the external input terminal 12 within the connector substrate 10.

When the number of external output terminals 14 can be reduced, for example, the following advantageous effects are

produced. For example, when the number of external output terminals **14** is reduced, the size of the connector substrate **10** is reduced. When the size of the connector substrate **10** is small, it is possible to reduce a sense of incongruity during the wearing of the sensor system **100**. In addition, connection of the connector substrate **10** and the external output means **40** is facilitated.

In addition, even when an external force is applied due to the connector substrate **10** due to washing or the like, it is possible to reduce an area to be deformed, in a case where the size of the connector substrate **10** is small. As a result, it is possible to avoid a concern for damage or the like due to an external force. When the connector substrate **10** is flexible, the effects become more prominent.

The sensor system **100** according to the aspect of the invention includes the above-described connector substrate **10**, and thus the degree of sense of incongruity during wearing is low. In addition, it is easy to attach and detach the external output means **40**, and thus it is possible to easily perform processing such as washing. In particular, the wirings **30** are prevented from intersecting each other in portions other than the wiring pattern **13**, and thus it is possible to avoid a short circuit and the like in an operation, such as washing, to which moisture is added.

REFERENCE SIGNS LIST

- 10: CONNECTOR SUBSTRATE
- 11: BASE MATERIAL
- 12: EXTERNAL INPUT TERMINAL
- 12A: FIRST INPUT TERMINAL
- 12B: SECOND INPUT TERMINAL
- 13: WIRING PATTERN
- 13A: FIRST WIRING PATTERN
- 13B: SECOND WIRING PATTERN
- 14: EXTERNAL OUTPUT TERMINAL
- 14A: FIRST OUTPUT TERMINAL
- 14B: SECOND OUTPUT TERMINAL
- 14Aa to 14Ah: TERMINAL
- 14Ba to 14Bh: TERMINAL
- 20: SENSOR
- 30: WIRING
- 40: EXTERNAL OUTPUT MEANS
- 41: CONNECTOR PORTION
- 42: SIGNAL TRANSMISSION UNIT
- 43: TERMINAL
- 44: WIRING
- 45: BASE MATERIAL
- 46: EXTERNAL TERMINAL
- 47: GUIDE MEMBER
- 50: FABRIC BODY

What is claimed is:

1. A connector substrate comprising:
 - a base material;
 - n first input terminals of m groups which are provided on the base material, m and n being integers equal to or greater than two;
 - n first output terminals which are provided on the base material;
 - first wiring patterns which are disposed on or inside the base material and connect the first input terminals and the first output terminals;
 - m second input terminals which are provided on the base material;
 - m second output terminals which are provided on the base material; and

second wiring patterns which are disposed on or inside the base material and connect the second input terminals and the second output terminals,

wherein a first end of a first connector wiring constituting one of the first wiring patterns is connected to one of the first input terminals constituting each group, and a second end of the first connector wiring is connected to one of the first output terminals,

the first connector wiring extends from the one of the first input terminals of the each group, and a plurality of first connector wirings constituting the first wiring patterns being disposed to be integrated as one piece extending from the first input terminals to the first output terminals, and

second connector wirings constituting the second wiring patterns are not connected to the first connector wirings constituting the first wiring patterns and third connector wirings constituting a part of the second wiring pattern.

2. The connector substrate according to claim 1, wherein the base material is flexible.

3. The connector substrate according to claim 1, wherein the first input terminals and the second input terminals are provided in an outer peripheral portion of the base material,

the first output terminals and the second output terminals are provided in a center portion of the base material, and

the first wiring patterns and the second wiring patterns are present at different positions in a thickness direction of the base material inside the base material or on an outer surface of the base material.

4. A sensor system comprising: the connector substrate according to claim 1; a plurality of sensors which are classified into the m groups;

a first wiring which connects each of the plurality of sensors and the first input terminals of the connector substrate to each other;

a second wiring which connects two or more sensors of the plurality of sensors to each other, the two or more sensors constituting a group and the second wiring being connected to the second input terminals of the connector substrate;

external output circuit connected to the connector substrate, for outputting a signal;

a signal processor circuit which is configured to process the signal which is output by the external output circuit.

5. The sensor system according to claim 4, wherein the plurality of sensors are irregularly disposed.

6. The sensor system according to claim 4, wherein the first wiring and the second wiring do not intersect each other in a plan view from each of the plurality of sensors until reaching the connector substrate.

7. The sensor system according to claim 4, wherein the connector substrate and the external output circuit are connected to each other by a magnet.

8. The sensor system according to claim 4, wherein the signal processor circuit performs machine learning.

9. The sensor system according to claim 4, wherein the plurality of sensors cause a change in resistance due to a change in at least one physical quantity selected from a group consisting of sound, light, temperature, pressure, and distortion.

10. A wearable sensor system comprising: a fabric body to which the plurality of sensors and the connector substrate in the sensor system according to claim 4 are attached,

wherein the first wiring and the second wiring are provided integrally with the fabric body.

* * * * *

专利名称(译)	连接器基板，传感器系统和可穿戴传感器系统		
公开(公告)号	US10398377	公开(公告)日	2019-09-03
申请号	US15/756410	申请日	2016-08-31
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IPC分类号	A61B5/06 A61B5/00 H05K1/18 A61B5/11 H05K1/03 H05K1/11 H04Q9/00 A41D1/00		
CPC分类号	H05K1/038 H05K1/118 H04Q9/00 H05K1/189 H05K1/18 A61B5/0024 A61B5/6804 A61B5/11 H05K2201/09227 H05K2201/09445 H05K2201/10151 A61B5/7267 A61B2562/164 A61B2562/222 A61B2562/046 A61B2562/166 A61B2562/227 A41D1/005		
优先权	2015174931 2015-09-04 JP		
其他公开文献	US20180242912A1		
外部链接	Espacenet		

摘要(译)

连接器基板包括基底材料，m个基团的n个第一输入端子（m和n是等于或大于2的整数），其设置在基底材料上，n个第一输出端子设置在基底材料上，第一布置在基材上或内部并连接第一输入端子和第一输出端子的布线图案，设置在基材上的m个第二输入端子，设置在基材上的m个第二输出端子，以及第二布线图案设置在基材上或内部并连接第二输入端子和第二输出端子，其中构成第一布线图案的每个连接器布线的的一端连接到构成每组的n个第一输入端子中的一个，第二端连接到第一输出端之一。

