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(54) **ULTRASOUND DIAGNOSTIC APPARATUS
AND METHOD OF OPERATING THE SAME**

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See application file for complete search history.

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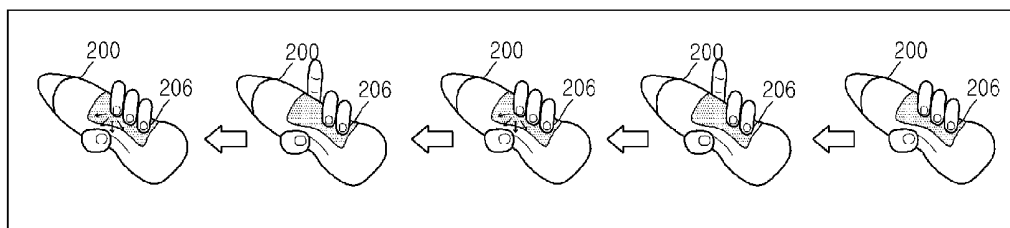
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An ultrasound diagnostic apparatus includes: a communica-
tor including one of an antenna or a cable and configured to
receive, using the one of the antenna or the cable, a signal
from an ultrasound probe including a plurality of sensors,
the ultrasound probe being external to the ultrasound diag-
nostic apparatus; and a controller including an electronic
circuit configured to acquire a plurality of data sets corre-
sponding to sensing results of the plurality of sensors from
the signal, and perform a predetermined operation corre-
sponding to a combination of the plurality of data sets, the
plurality of data sets including information configured to
synchronize timings when the plurality of data sets is
acquired by the plurality of sensors, and the predetermined
operation including transmitting a control signal corre-
sponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets to
the ultrasound probe.

15 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets



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FIG. 1A

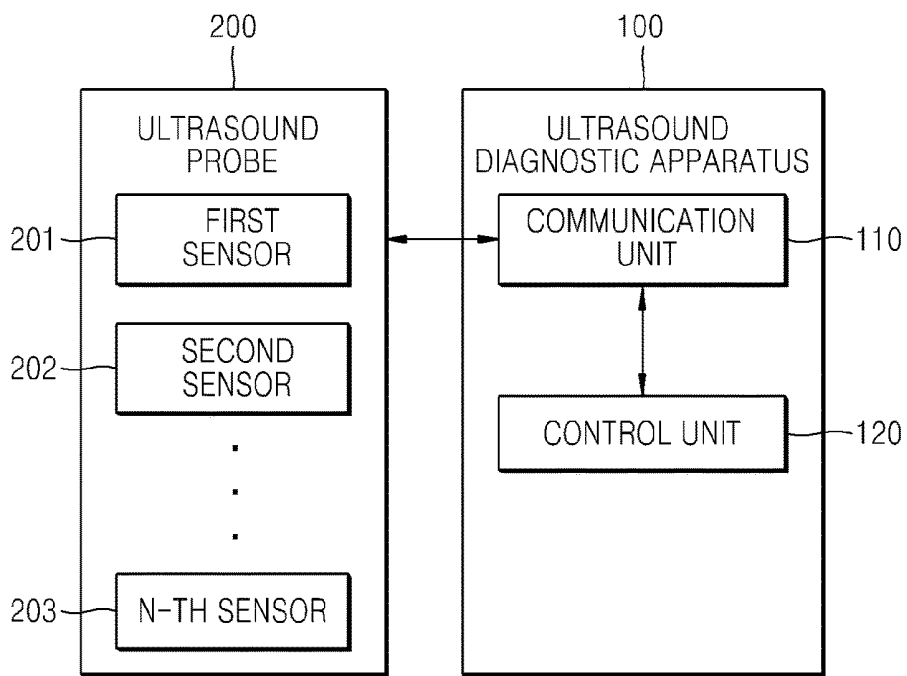


FIG. 1B

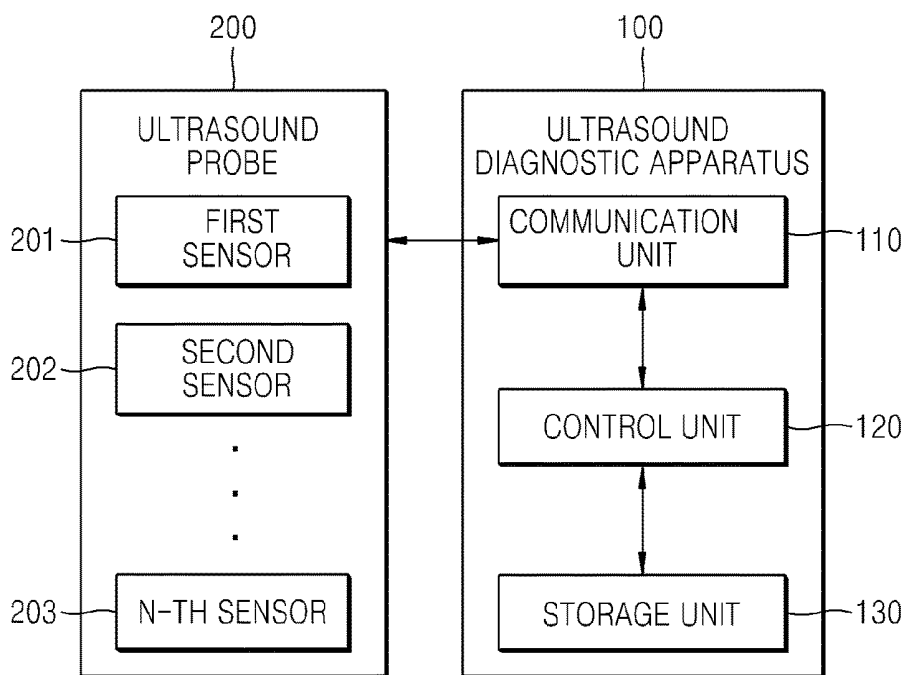


FIG. 2

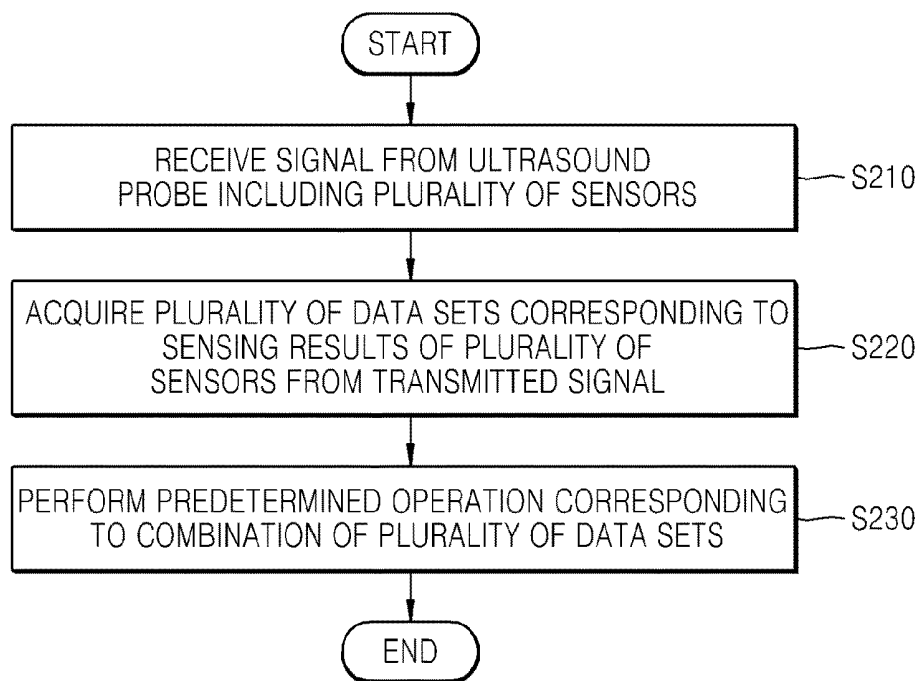


FIG. 3A

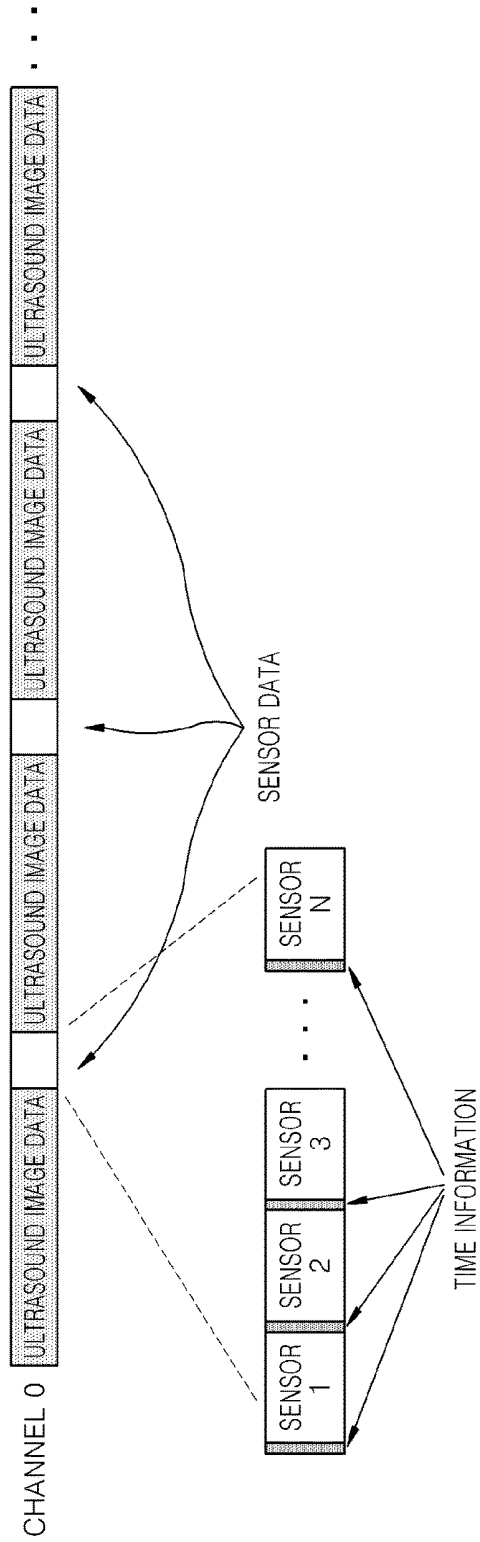


FIG. 3B

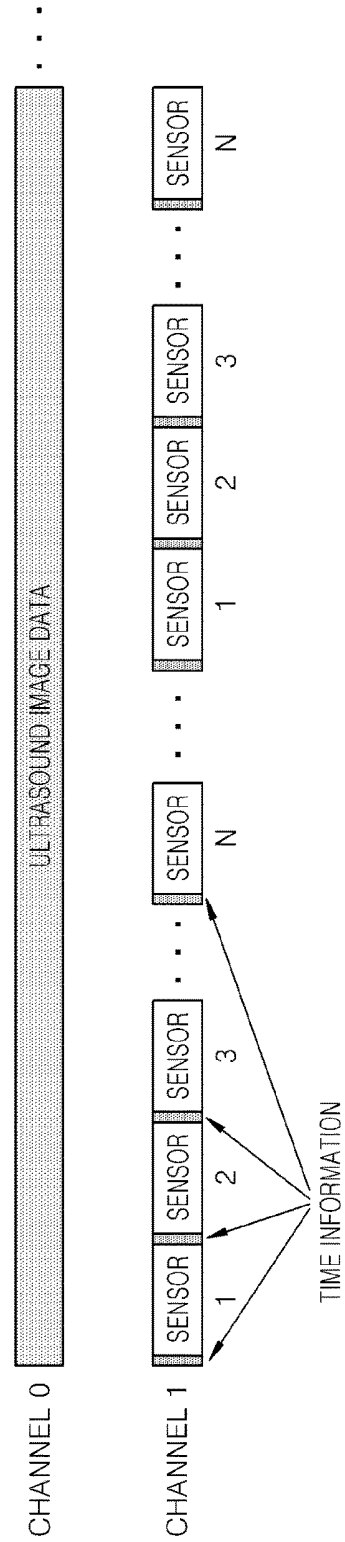


FIG. 4

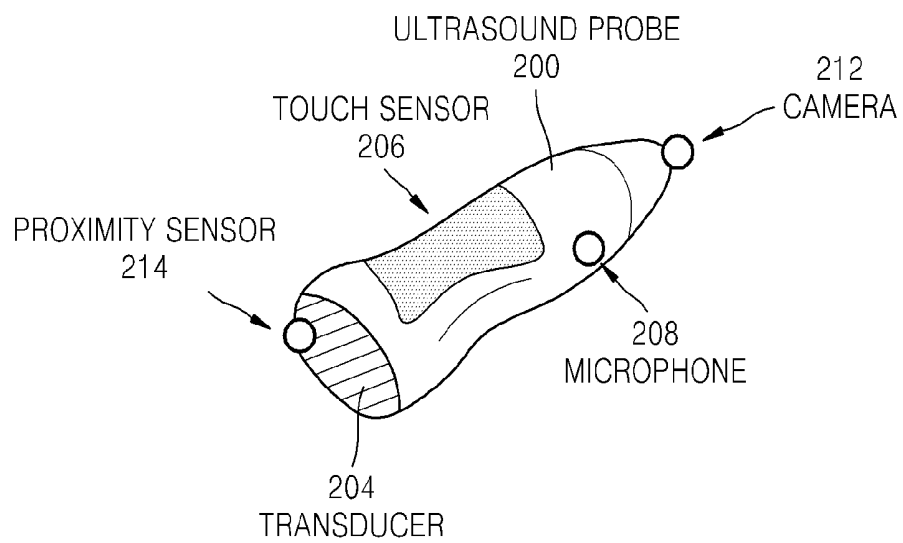


FIG. 5A

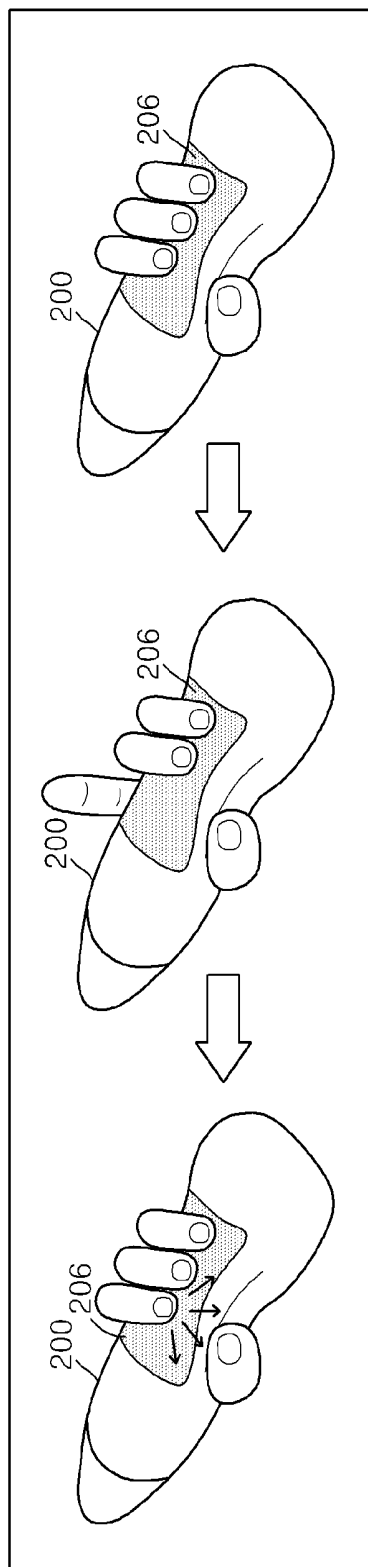


FIG. 5B

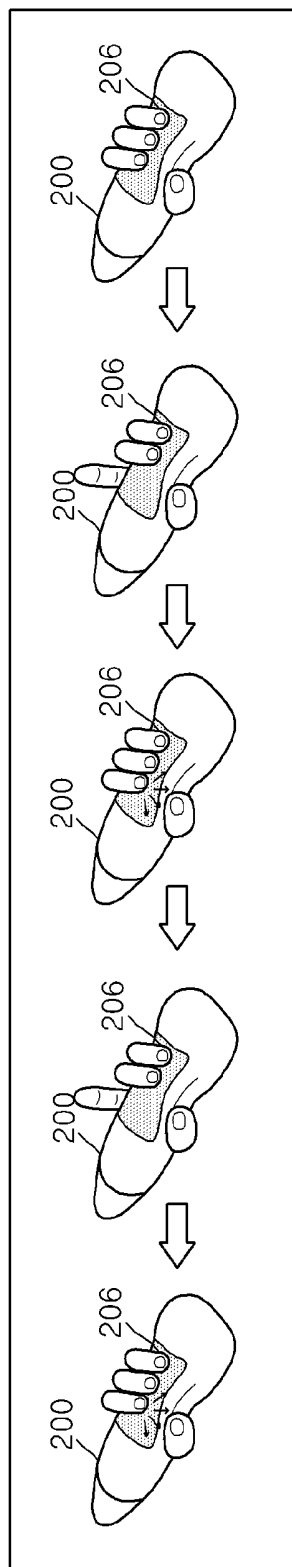
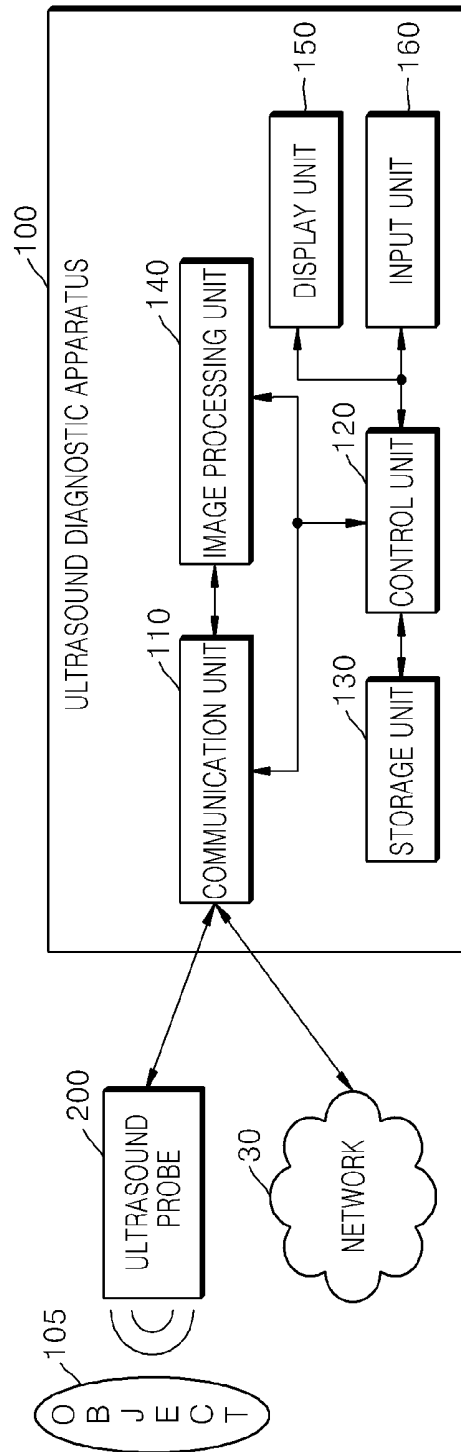


FIG. 6



ULTRASOUND DIAGNOSTIC APPARATUS AND METHOD OF OPERATING THE SAME

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims the benefit of Korean Patent Application No. 10-2013-0103434, filed on Aug. 29, 2013, in the Korean Intellectual Property Office, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein in its entirety by reference.

BACKGROUND

1. Field

One or more exemplary embodiments relate to an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus and a method of operating the same, and more particularly, to an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus which operates based on a combination of a plurality of data sets acquired by a plurality of sensors included in an ultrasound probe, and a method of operating the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus.

2. Description of the Related Art

Ultrasound systems irradiate an ultrasonic signal generated from a transducer of an ultrasound probe onto an internal part of an object and receive information of an echo signal reflected from the internal part of the object, thereby acquiring an image of the internal part of the object. In particular, ultrasound systems are used in medicine to observe the inside of an object, detect a foreign material, and assess an injury.

Ultrasound systems have higher stabilities than those of diagnostic apparatuses using X-rays, display an image in real time, and are safe because there is no exposure to radioactivity, and thus are widely used along with other medical image diagnostic apparatuses.

Ultrasound diagnostic apparatuses generate an ultrasound image by using ultrasonic image data acquired from an ultrasound probe, and display the generated ultrasound image on a screen to provide the ultrasound image to a user. The ultrasound diagnostic apparatuses may include a control panel for controlling an ultrasound system and setting various functions.

In general, a plurality of functional keys for receiving user input, and an input unit such as a keyboard, are mounted on a control panel of an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus. Therefore, in order for the user to control an ultrasound system including an ultrasound probe, various input units on the control panel have to be manipulated, thereby increasing inconvenience when using the ultrasound system. In particular, when the user performs a diagnosis of a patient by using the ultrasound probe, the user may be inconvenienced in manipulating the control panel that is spaced apart from the user and that takes a long time to manipulate.

Therefore, an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus enabling the user to control the ultrasound probe and the ultrasound system easily and conveniently is necessary.

SUMMARY

One or more exemplary embodiments include an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus capable of performing a predetermined operation based on a combination of a plurality of data sets acquired by a plurality of sensors included in an

ultrasound probe so that a user may control the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus and the ultrasound probe rapidly and conveniently.

Additional aspects will be set forth in part in the description which follows and, in part, will be apparent from the description, or may be learned by practice of the presented exemplary embodiments.

According to one or more exemplary embodiments, there is provided an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus including: a communicator configured to receive a signal from an ultrasound probe comprising a plurality of sensors; and a controller configured to acquire a plurality of data sets corresponding to sensing results of the plurality of sensors from the signal, and perform a predetermined operation corresponding to a combination of the plurality of data sets.

The controller may be configured to perform the predetermined operation that includes at least one operation among operations of storing at least one data set of the plurality of data sets, displaying at least one data set of the plurality of data sets, and transmitting a control signal corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets to the ultrasound probe.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus may further include a storage configured to store the combination of the plurality of data sets and operations of the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus such that the combination of the plurality of data sets and the operations are mapped to each other, wherein the controller may be configured to search the operations stored in the storage for the predetermined operation corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets.

The controller may be configured to control the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus to store or display at least one of an acquired picture, a moving picture, and sound according to the sensing result of at least one of the plurality of sensors, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus may be configured to transmit a control signal to the ultrasound probe, the control signal being configured to control the ultrasound probe to acquire ultrasound image data of an object by transmitting or receiving an ultrasound signal to or from the object, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

The signal may further include ultrasound image data of the object, and the controller may be configured to control the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus to store or display at least one data set of the plurality of data sets as information about the object with the ultrasound image data, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

The plurality of data sets may include information configured to synchronize timings when the plurality of data sets is acquired by the plurality of sensors.

The plurality of sensors may include at least one of a touch sensor, a proximity sensor, a microphone, and a camera.

According to another aspect of an exemplary embodiment, there is provided a method of operating an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus, the method including: receiving a signal from an ultrasound probe including a plurality of sensors; acquiring a plurality of data sets corresponding to sensing results of the plurality of sensors from the signal; and performing a predetermined operation corresponding to a combination of the plurality of data sets.

The performing of the predetermined operation may include performing the predetermined operation including at least one operation among operations of storing at least one data set of the plurality of data sets, displaying at least one

of the plurality of data sets, and transmitting a control signal corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets to the ultrasound probe.

The method may further include storing the combination of the plurality of data sets and operations of the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus after mapping the combination of the plurality of data sets and the operations to each other, wherein the performing of the predetermined operation may include searching the operations for the predetermined operation corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets.

The performing of the predetermined operation may include storing or displaying at least one of an acquired picture, a moving picture, and sound according to the sensing result of at least one of the plurality of sensors, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

The performing of the predetermined operation may include transmitting a control signal to the ultrasound probe, the control signal being configured to control the ultrasound probe to acquire ultrasound image data of an object by transmitting or receiving an ultrasound signal to or from the object, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

The signal may further include ultrasound image data of the object, and the performing of the predetermined operation may include storing or displaying at least one data set of the plurality of data sets as information about the object with the ultrasound image data, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

The plurality of data sets may include information configured to synchronize timings when the plurality of data sets is acquired by the plurality of sensors.

The plurality of sensors may include at least one of a touch sensor, a proximity sensor, a microphone, and a camera.

According to another aspect of an exemplary embodiment, there is provided a non-transitory computer-readable recording medium having embodied thereon a program for executing a method of operating an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus in a computer, wherein the method may include: receiving a signal from an ultrasound probe including a plurality of sensors; acquiring a plurality of data sets corresponding to sensing results of the plurality of sensors from the signal; and performing a predetermined operation corresponding to a combination of the plurality of data sets.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

These and/or other aspects will become apparent and more readily appreciated from the following description of the exemplary embodiments, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

FIGS. 1A and 1B are block diagrams of an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 2 is a flowchart of a method of operating an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus, according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIGS. 3A and 3B are diagrams illustrating signals transmitted from an ultrasound probe to an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus, according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIG. 4 is a diagram exemplarily showing an ultrasound probe including a plurality of sensors, according to an exemplary embodiment;

FIGS. 5A and 5B are diagrams illustrating data sets acquired according to sensing results of a touch sensor in an ultrasound probe, according to an exemplary embodiment; and

FIG. 6 is a block diagram of an ultrasound system to which the ultrasound probe and the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus according to an exemplary embodiment may be applied.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Reference will now be made in detail to exemplary embodiments, examples of which are illustrated in the accompanying drawings, wherein like reference numerals refer to like elements throughout. In this regard, the present exemplary embodiments may have different forms and should not be construed as being limited to the descriptions set forth herein. Accordingly, the exemplary embodiments are merely described below, by referring to the figures, to explain aspects of the exemplary embodiments. Expressions such as “at least one of,” when preceding a list of elements, modify the entire list of elements and do not modify the individual elements of the list.

Throughout the specification, when an element is referred to as being “connected” or “coupled” to another element, the element may be “directly connected or coupled” to the other element or “electrically connected or coupled” with intervening elements. When a part “includes” or “comprises” an element, unless there is a particular description contrary thereto, the part may further include other elements, and does not exclude the other elements.

Moreover, each of the terms such as “. . . unit” and “module” described in the specification denotes an element for performing at least one function or operation, and may be implemented in hardware, software or a combination of hardware and software.

The term “ultrasound image” used herein denotes an image of an object acquired by using an ultrasonic wave. Also, the term “object” used herein may be an organic substance or an inorganic substance indicated by the image. The object may include a part of a physical body. For example, an object may include an organ such as a liver, a heart, a womb, a brain, breasts, an abdomen, or the like, or a fetus, and may include a cross-sectional surface of the physical body.

Moreover, the term “user” used herein may refer to a medical expert, and may be a doctor, a nurse, a medical technologist, a sonographer, a medical image expert, or the like. However, the user is not limited thereto.

The exemplary embodiments will now be described more fully with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which exemplary embodiments are shown.

FIG. 1A is a block diagram of an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** according to an exemplary embodiment.

As shown in FIG. 1A, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** according to the present exemplary embodiment is connected to an ultrasound probe **200** through a wire or wirelessly to configure an ultrasound system.

The ultrasound probe **200** transmits an ultrasound signal to an object according to a control signal transmitted from the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**, receives an ultrasound signal reflected by the object (that is, an ultrasound echo signal), and forms a receiving signal. The ultrasound probe **200** focuses the receiving signal to form ultrasound image data, and transmits the ultrasound image data to the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may form and display an ultrasound image based on the ultrasound image data transmitted from the ultrasound probe **200**.

According to an exemplary embodiment, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** and a method of operating the

ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** enable a user to control the ultrasound system rapidly and conveniently.

To achieve this, a method of receiving a control command from the user via various kinds of sensors provided in the ultrasound probe **200** is suggested as follows:

As shown in FIG. 1A, the ultrasound probe **200** according to the present exemplary embodiment includes a plurality of sensors. According to an exemplary embodiment, a “sensor” is a device capable of detecting various physical quantities, for example, sound, light, temperature, pressure, etc. The sensor may be included in a mechanical apparatus, although is not limited thereto.

For example, the ultrasound probe **200** may include a first sensor **201**, a second sensor **202**, . . . , and an Nth sensor **203**. Here, the first, second, . . . , and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203** may be different kinds of sensors that may sense different physical amounts, or the same kind of sensors that may sense a physical amount. Hereinafter, a case where the first, second, . . . , and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203** are different kinds of sensors will be described as an example, for convenience of description.

The ultrasound probe **200** according to the present exemplary embodiment may acquire information about an object, information about a user, and information about a status of the ultrasound probe **200** via at least one of the first, second, . . . , and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203**. For example, at least one of the first, second, . . . , and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203** may include a touch sensor, a proximity sensor, a microphone, a camera, or a combination sensor thereof.

In addition, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** of the present exemplary embodiment acquires a control command of the user from sensing results of the first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203** so that the user may easily control the ultrasound system. Also, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** of the present exemplary embodiment may store the sensing results of the first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203** with ultrasound image data of a patient, as patient information. Also, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** of the present exemplary embodiment acquires the sensing results of first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203** as status information of the ultrasound probe **200**, and displays the acquired status information of the ultrasound probe **200** so that the user may monitor the status of the ultrasound probe **200** in real-time.

As shown in FIG. 1A, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** according to an exemplary embodiment includes a communication unit **110** (e.g., communicator) and a control unit **120** (e.g., controller).

The communication unit **110** receives a signal from the ultrasound probe **200** including the first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203**.

The control unit **120** acquires a plurality of data sets corresponding respectively to the sensing results of the first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203** from the signal transmitted from the communication unit **110**. The control unit **120** performs a predetermined operation corresponding to a combination of the plurality of data sets.

According to an exemplary embodiment, the control unit **120** may determine which operation among a plurality of operations, for example, storing at least one of the plurality of data sets, displaying at least one of the plurality of data sets, and transmitting a control signal corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets to the ultrasound probe **200**, is to be performed by the control command of the user, by combining the plurality of data sets.

Also, as shown in FIG. 1B, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** of the present exemplary embodiment may further include a storage unit **130** (e.g., storage).

The storage unit **130** may store combinations of the plurality of data sets acquired by the first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203** and operations that may be performed by the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** after mapping the data sets and the operations to each other.

The control unit **120** may search for an operation corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets acquired from the signal transmitted from the ultrasound probe **200** in the storage unit **130**. The control unit **120** may control the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** to perform an operation identified by the searching.

Hereinafter, a method of operating the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**, according to an exemplary embodiment, will be described with reference to FIGS. 2 through 5.

FIG. 2 is a flowchart of a method of operating the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**, according to an exemplary embodiment.

In operation S210, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** receives a signal from the ultrasound probe **200** including the first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203**. The signal transmitted from the ultrasound probe **200** may include a plurality of data sets corresponding to sensing results of the first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203**. Also, the signal transmitted from the ultrasound probe **200** may further include ultrasound image data of the object.

The first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203** may include at least one of a touch sensor, a proximity sensor, a microphone, and a camera. However, exemplary embodiments are not limited thereto. Also, the ultrasound probe **200** may include a temperature sensor, an illuminance sensor, and a battery capacity check sensor of the ultrasound probe **200** as a sensor.

In operation S220, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** of the present exemplary embodiment acquires a plurality of data sets corresponding to the sensing results of the first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203** from the transmitted signal.

According to an exemplary embodiment, the plurality of data sets may include information about times of acquiring the data sets by each of the first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203**. Therefore, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may synchronize a plurality of data sets that are acquired at the same or similar times by the first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203**.

FIGS. 3A and 3B are diagrams illustrating signals transmitted from the ultrasound probe **200** to the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**, according to an exemplary embodiment.

As shown in FIG. 3A, the ultrasound probe **200** may transmit the plurality of data sets acquired by the plurality of sensors to the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** with ultrasound image data in real-time. The ultrasound probe **200** may configure the plurality of data sets in additional packets to be distinguished from the ultrasound image data. According to an exemplary embodiment, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may temporally synchronize the data sets acquired by the plurality of sensors by using the time information that is transmitted with the data sets acquired by the plurality of sensors.

Also, as shown in FIG. 3B, the ultrasound probe **200** may transmit the plurality of data sets acquired by the plurality of sensors and the ultrasound data via different wireless communication channels. The wireless communication channels

are paths through which predetermined signals are transferred from the ultrasound probe **200** to the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**.

The ultrasound probe **200** may transmit the plurality of data sets and the ultrasound image data by using different wireless communication methods or by using signals of different frequency bands.

As shown in FIG. 3B, even when the plurality of data sets and the ultrasound image data are transferred via different wireless communication channels, the ultrasound probe **200** may transmit the information about the time of acquiring each data set to the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** with the plurality of data sets acquired by the plurality of sensors.

In operation S230, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may perform a predetermined operation corresponding to a combination of the plurality of data sets.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may perform a predetermined operation including at least one operation among operations of storing at least one of the plurality of data sets, displaying at least one of the plurality of data sets, and transmitting a control signal corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets to the ultrasound probe **200**.

For example, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may perform a predetermined operation corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets by classifying the information included in the plurality of data sets or searching for the operations that are stored in advance and which correspond to the plurality of data sets.

According to the present exemplary embodiment, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may classify the plurality of data sets acquired from the ultrasound probe **200** as patient information, status information of the ultrasound probe **200**, and information for controlling the ultrasound probe **200** based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may classify the plurality of data sets acquired by the ultrasound probe **200** as patient information based on the combination of the plurality of data sets. In this case, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may store or display the data set acquired by at least one of the plurality of sensors as the patient information.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may classify the plurality of data sets acquired from the ultrasound probe **200** as status information of the ultrasound probe **200** based on the combination of the plurality of data sets. In this case, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may store or display a location of the ultrasound probe **200**, the remaining capacity of the battery, and a temperature of the ultrasound probe **200** as the status information of the ultrasound probe based on a data set acquired by at least one of the plurality of sensors.

The ultrasound probe **200** may transmit information about another device coupled to the ultrasound probe **200** to the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**. For example, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may store or display a location of a needle used with the ultrasound probe **200** based on a data set acquired by at least one of the plurality of sensors.

Also, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may classify the plurality of data sets acquired from the ultrasound probe **200** as information for controlling the ultrasound probe **200** based on the combination of the plurality of data sets. In this case, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may generate a control signal corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets, and may transmit the generated control signal to the ultrasound probe **200**.

According to another exemplary embodiment, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may map the combinations of the plurality of data sets acquired by the first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203** to the operations of the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** in advance, and then, store the mapping results. The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may search for the operations that are mapped with the plurality of data sets and stored in advance, in order to perform the operation corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may store or display at least one of the plurality of data sets based on search results. The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may further receive the ultrasound image data from the ultrasound probe **200**. The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may store or display at least one of the plurality of data sets with the ultrasound image data, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

For example, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may store or display at least one of a picture, a moving picture, and sound acquired according to a sensing result of at least one of the first, second, and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203**, based on the search result. Therefore, the user may, for example, store or display a picture of a patient with the ultrasound image data rapidly and conveniently. Also, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may display status information of the ultrasound probe **200**, for example, the remaining capacity of the battery and a temperature, acquired according to the sensing result of at least one of the plurality of sensors, namely, the first, second, . . . , and Nth sensors **201**, **202**, and **203**, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets. Therefore, the user may acquire information about the status of the ultrasound probe **200** conveniently.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may transmit the control signal about the ultrasound probe **200** to the ultrasound probe **200** based on the search result. The control signal transmitted to the ultrasound probe **200** may be a signal controlling the ultrasound probe **200** to transmit and/or receive an ultrasound signal to and/or from the object and to acquire ultrasound image data of the object.

For convenience of understanding, an exemplary case where the ultrasound probe **200** includes a proximity sensor, a microphone, a touch sensor, and a camera, as shown in FIG. 4, will be described below. It is understood that the exemplary embodiments are not limited to this exemplary case.

FIG. 4 is a diagram of the ultrasound probe **200** including a plurality of sensors, according to an exemplary embodiment. As shown in FIG. 4, a proximity sensor **214** is disposed on a lower portion of the ultrasound probe **200**. A transducer **204** which transmits an ultrasound signal to the object, a touch sensor **206** and a microphone **208** are disposed on side surfaces of the ultrasound probe **200**, and a camera **212** may be disposed at an opposite side to the transducer **204**.

However, exemplary embodiments are not limited thereto, and the ultrasound probe **200** according to an exemplary embodiment may include sensors other than the sensors shown in FIG. 4.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may sense whether the ultrasound probe **200** contacts the patient by using the proximity sensor **214**, and then, may acquire a data set representing whether the user is currently scanning the patient.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may sense sound from the patient or the user by using the microphone **208**,

and may acquire a sound data set as the patient information. The ultrasound probe **200** may include a button for activating or deactivating the microphone **208** in order to sense sound for a predetermined period desired by the user. Also, the ultrasound probe **200** may acquire sound data set only when the sound is equal to or greater than a predetermined volume or is in a predetermined dB range as the patient information, in order to sense the sound within a predetermined time period desired by the user.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** senses whether the user contacts the ultrasound probe **200** by using the touch sensor **206** to acquire information about whether the ultrasound probe **200** is in a usage state. The proximity sensor or the touch sensor may include an illuminance sensor for sensing light.

Also, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may acquire data sets about gestures of the user's hand holding the ultrasound probe **200**, by using the touch sensor **206**.

FIGS. **5A** and **5B** are diagrams illustrating the data sets acquired according to the sensing result of the touch sensor in the ultrasound probe **200**, according to an exemplary embodiment.

For example, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may determine a gesture of the user as shown in FIG. **5A** to be "gesture 1". Specifically, if the ultrasound probe **200** senses five fingers of the user and then senses that an index finger of the user is detached and attached again, the ultrasound probe **200** may generate a data set indicating "gesture 1" according to the sensing result. The ultrasound probe **200** may transmit the data set indicating "gesture 1", which is acquired by the sensing result of the touch sensor **206**, to the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**.

Also, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may determine a gesture of the user shown in FIG. **5B** to be "gesture 2". Specifically, if five fingers of the user are sensed, the second finger is not sensed and then sensed again, and within a predetermined time, the second finger is not sensed and then sensed again, the ultrasound probe **200** may generate a data set indicating "gesture 2" according to the sensing result. The ultrasound probe **200** may transmit the data set indicating "gesture 2", which is acquired according to the sensing result of the touch sensor **206**, to the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may acquire an image data set, that is, a picture, as the patient information, by using the camera **212**. The ultrasound probe **200** may include a button for activating or deactivating the camera **212** in order to acquire the image data set for a predetermined time period desired by the user.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** according to the present exemplary embodiment may perform predetermined operations corresponding to the combinations of the plurality of data sets acquired by the plurality of sensors.

As shown in the following table 1, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may store the combinations of the plurality of data sets acquired by the plurality of sensors **201**, **202** and **203** and the operations performed by the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** after mapping the data sets and the operations with each other.

TABLE 1

Proximity sensor	micro-phone	Touch sensor	camera	Operations to be performed	Content of performed operation
Scanning	OFF	gesture 1	OFF	Transmit control signal	Freeze/unfreeze

TABLE 1-continued

Proximity sensor	micro-phone	Touch sensor	camera	Operations to be performed	Content of performed operation
No scan	OFF	gesture 1	ON	Store patient information	Store image data
No scan	ON	gesture 2	OFF	Store patient information	Store voice data
scanning	ON	gesture 2	OFF	Transmit control signal	Control ultrasound probe based on voice data

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may acquire the plurality of data sets corresponding to the sensing results of the plurality of sensors, from the signal transmitted from the ultrasound probe **200**.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may classify whether the plurality of data sets acquired from the ultrasound probe **200** will be used as the patient information or information for controlling the ultrasound probe **200**, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

For example, a case where the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** acquires a plurality of data sets including information [scanning, microphone off, gesture 1, camera off] from the signal transmitted from the ultrasound probe **200** is assumed. In this case, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may determine that the plurality of data sets will be used as the information for controlling the ultrasound probe **200**, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets. The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** searches for the operation corresponding to the combination of the acquired plurality of data sets in Table 1, and may perform an operation identified by the searching. Referring to Table 1, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may transmit a control signal to the ultrasound probe **200** so as to freeze or unfreeze the ultrasound probe **200**. The operation of freezing or unfreezing the ultrasound probe **200** may denote stopping or restarting the operation of acquiring the ultrasound image data by transmitting and/or receiving the ultrasound signal to and/or from the object. In particular, when the five fingers of the user are all sensed by the touch sensor, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** determines that the user starts manipulation of the ultrasound probe **200**, and then, may enable the ultrasound probe **200** to transmit and/or receive the ultrasound signal. In addition, when it is determined that the user's gesture is "gesture 1", the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** stops the scanning operation of the ultrasound probe **200** so as to stop the operations of transmitting and/or receiving the ultrasound signal by the ultrasound probe **200**.

As another example, when the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** acquires a plurality of data sets including information [no scanning, microphone off, gesture 1, camera on] from the signal transmitted from the ultrasound probe **200**, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may store the picture acquired by using the camera as patient information based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

As another example, when the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** acquires a plurality of data sets including information [no scanning, microphone on, gesture 2, camera off] from the signal transmitted from the ultrasound probe **200**, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may store voice data acquired by using the microphone as the patient information based on the combination of the plurality of data sets. The voice data acquired by the microphone may include voice data of the user recording status of the patient and a diagnosis.

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As another example, when the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** acquires a plurality of data sets including information [scanning, microphone on, gesture 2, camera off] from the signal transmitted from the ultrasound probe **200**, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may determine that the plurality of data sets will be used as the information for controlling the ultrasound probe **200** based on the combination of the plurality of data sets. The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** searches Table 1 for an operation corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets, and may perform an operation identified by the searching. Referring to Table 1, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may transmit a control signal for controlling the ultrasound probe **200** based on the acquired voice data. For example, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may determine the meaning of the voice command of the user by analyzing the voice data, and may transmit a control signal corresponding to the voice command of the user to the ultrasound probe **200**.

FIG. 6 is a block diagram of an ultrasound system to which the ultrasound probe **200** and the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** according to an exemplary embodiment may be applied.

The ultrasound system of FIG. 6 may include the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** and the ultrasound probe **200** according to an exemplary embodiment.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may include a communication unit **110**, a control unit **120**, a storage unit **130**, an image processing unit **140**, a display unit **150**, and an input unit **160**.

The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may be implemented as a portable type, as well as a cart type. A portable type ultrasound diagnostic apparatus may include a picture archiving and communication system (PACS) viewer, a hand-carried cardiac ultrasound (HCU) device, a smartphone, a laptop computer, a personal digital assistant (PDA), a tablet PC, or the like.

The communication unit **110** may perform wired or wireless communication with the ultrasound probe **200**. The communication unit **110** may transmit a control signal provided from the control unit **120** to the ultrasound probe **200**, and may receive ultrasound image data transmitted from the ultrasound probe **200**.

Also, the communication unit **110** may be connected to a network **30** via wires or wirelessly to communicate with an external device or a server. The communication unit **110** may transmit and/or receive data to and/or from a hospital server or other medical devices in the hospital through a PACS system. Also, the communication unit **110** may perform data communication according to a digital imaging and communications in medicine (DICOM) standard.

The communication unit **110** may transmit and/or receive data relating to the diagnosis of the object, such as ultrasound images, ultrasound data, or Doppler data of the object, via the network **30**, and may receive medical images captured by other medical apparatuses, such as a computed tomography (CT) apparatus, a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) apparatus, or an X-ray apparatus. Moreover, the communication unit **110** may receive information about a medical history or a treatment schedule of the patient from the server to use the information to diagnose the object. In addition, the communication unit **110** may perform data communication with a portable device of a doctor or a patient, as well as the server or the medical apparatus in the hospital.

A short distance communication technology used by the communication unit **110** may include a wireless LAN

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(WLAN), Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, Zigbee, Wi-Fi direct (WFD), ultra wideband (UWB), infrared data association (IrDA), Bluetooth low energy (BLE), near field communication (NFC), or the like, but is not limited thereto.

Also, a wired communication technology that the communication unit **110** may use may include a pair cable, a coaxial cable, an optical fiber cable, Ethernet cable, or the like.

The communication unit **110** may use a mobile communication technology to transmit and/or receive wireless signals to and/or from at least one of a base station, an external terminal, and a server on a mobile communication network. According to an exemplary embodiment, a wireless signal may include a voice signal, a video call signal, or other various types of data according to text and/or multimedia transmission, as well as other types of transmissions.

The control unit **120** may control overall operations of the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**. That is, the control unit **120** may control operations of the ultrasound probe **200**, the communication unit **110**, the storage unit **130**, the image processing unit **140**, the display unit **150**, and the input unit **160** shown in FIG. 6.

The storage unit **130** stores various types of information processed by the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**. For example, the storage unit **130** may store medical data related to the diagnosis of the object such as input/output ultrasound data, ultrasound images, and the like, and may store algorithms or programs executed in the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**.

The storage unit **130** may be implemented as various kinds of storage media such as a flash memory, a hard disk, and electrically erasable and programmable read only memory (EEPROM). Also, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may manage a web storage or a cloud server configured to perform a storage function of the storage unit **130** on the web.

The image processing unit **140** may generate and display an ultrasound image through a scan conversion of the ultrasound image data transmitted from the ultrasound probe **200** via the communication unit **110**. In addition, the ultrasound image may be a grayscale ultrasound image obtained by scanning the object according to an amplitude (A) mode, a brightness (B) mode, and a motion (M) mode, and a Doppler image showing movement of the object. The Doppler image may include a blood flow image (or a color Doppler image) representing blood flow, a tissue Doppler image representing movement of tissue, and a spectral Doppler image representing a moving velocity of the object as a waveform.

The display unit **150** displays and outputs the generated ultrasound image. The display unit **150** may display various types of information processed by the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**, as well as the ultrasound image itself, on a screen as a graphical user interface (GUI). The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may include two or more display units **150**.

The input unit **160** is a unit for receiving data input for controlling the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** from the user. The input unit **160** may include hardware configurations such as a keypad, a mouse, a touch panel, a touch screen, a trackball, and a jog switch, but is not limited thereto. That is, the input unit **160** may include various types of input units such as an electrocardiogram (ECG) measuring module, a respiratory measuring module, a voice recognition sensor, a gesture recognition sensor, a fingerprint recognition sensor, an iris recognition sensor, a depth sensor, a distance sensor, and the like.

Some or all of the ultrasound probe **200**, the communication unit **110**, the control unit **120**, the storage unit **130**, the image processing unit **140**, the display unit **150**, and the input unit **160** may be implemented by software modules; however, exemplary embodiments are not limited thereto, and, some of the above components may be implemented by hardware. Also, at least some of the communication unit **110**, the storage unit **130**, and the image processing unit **140** may be included in the control unit **120**; however, exemplary embodiments are not limited thereto. Also, at least some of the communication unit **110**, the control unit **120**, the storage unit **130**, and the image processing unit **140** may be included in the ultrasound probe **200**; however, exemplary embodiments are not limited thereto.

The ultrasound probe **200** may transmit an ultrasound signal to an object **105** according to a control signal transmitted from the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**, and may receive an echo signal reflected by the object **105**. The ultrasound probe **200** includes a plurality of transducers that vibrate according to an electric signal to generate ultrasonic waves having acoustic energy.

The ultrasound probe **200** generates pulses for forming a transmission ultrasonic wave according to a predetermined pulse repetition frequency (PRF) through the control signal transmitted from the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100**. The ultrasound probe **200** applies a delay time for determining transmission directionality to the pulses. Each of the pulses, to which the delay time is applied, corresponds to each piezoelectric vibrator included in the transducers. The ultrasound probe **200** applies the pulses corresponding to the plurality of piezoelectric vibrators at timings corresponding to the pulses to which the delay time is applied.

The ultrasound probe **200** may generate the ultrasound image data by processing the echo signals reflected from the object **105**. The ultrasound probe **200** may amplify the echo signals with respect to each channel, and perform an analog-digital conversion on the amplified echo signals. The ultrasound probe **200** applies the delay time for determining reception directionality to the echo signals that are converted to digital signals, and then, the ultrasound probe **200** may add the echo signals to which the delay time is applied together to generate ultrasound image data.

As described above, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** according to exemplary embodiments may acquire the control command of the user from the sensing results of the plurality of sensors included in the ultrasound probe **200**, and thus, the user may easily control the ultrasound system. In addition, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** according to an exemplary embodiment may store the sensing results of the plurality of sensors as patient information with the ultrasound image data of the patient. Also, the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus **100** may acquire the sensing results of the plurality of sensors as the status information of the ultrasound probe **200** and may display the status information of the ultrasound probe **200**, and thus, the user may monitor the status of the ultrasound probe **200** in real-time.

The exemplary embodiments can be implemented as digital electronic circuits, computer software, firmware, hardware including structures disclosed in the present specification or equivalent structures thereof, or a combination thereof. The computer-readable recording medium is any available medium accessible by the computer, volatile and non-volatile media, and isolation and non-isolation type media. Also, the computer-readable recording medium may include computer storage media and communication media. The computer storage media include volatile and non-volatile and isolation or non-isolation type media embodied

by a certain method or technology for storing computer-readable commands, data structure, program modules, or other data. The communication media typically include computer-readable commands, data structure, program modules, or modulated data signals, or other transferring mechanisms, and may include any information transfer medium.

While the exemplary embodiments have been particularly shown and described with reference to certain exemplary embodiments thereof, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes in form and details may be made therein without departing from the spirit and scope of the exemplary embodiments as defined by the appended claims. The exemplary embodiments should be considered in a descriptive sense only and not for purposes of limitation. Therefore, the scope of the exemplary embodiments is defined not by the detailed description but by the appended claims, and all differences within the scope will be construed as being included in the exemplary embodiments.

What is claimed is:

1. An ultrasound diagnostic apparatus comprising:
 - a communicator comprising one of an antenna or a cable and configured to receive, using the one of the antenna or the cable, a signal from an ultrasound probe comprising a plurality of sensors, the ultrasound probe being external to the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus;
 - a controller comprising an electronic circuit configured to acquire a plurality of data sets corresponding to sensing results of the plurality of sensors from the signal, and perform a predetermined operation corresponding to a combination of the plurality of data sets; and
 - a storage configured to store information mapping a plurality of combinations of data sets from among the plurality of data sets to a plurality of operations of the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus, respectively, the plurality of combinations of data sets being different from each other and the plurality of operations of the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus being different from each other,
 wherein the plurality of data sets comprises information configured to synchronize timings when the plurality of data sets is acquired by the plurality of sensors, and wherein the predetermined operation includes transmitting a control signal corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets to the ultrasound probe,
 wherein the plurality of sensors comprises:
 - a transducer configured to transmit an ultrasound signal; and
 - at least one sensor other than the transducer, the at least one sensor being a type of sensor different from the transducer and being configured to transmit a signal of a type different from the ultrasound signal.
2. The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus of claim 1, wherein the predetermined operation further includes at least one operation among operations of storing at least one data set of the plurality of data sets and displaying at least one data set of the plurality of data sets.
3. The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus of claim 1, wherein the controller is configured to search the plurality of operations stored in the storage for the predetermined operation corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets.
4. The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus of claim 1, wherein the controller is configured to control the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus to store or display at least one of an acquired picture, a moving picture, and sound according to a sensing result of at least one of the plurality of sensors, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

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5. The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus of claim 1, wherein the control signal is configured to control the ultrasound probe to acquire ultrasound image data of an object by transmitting or receiving an ultrasound signal to or from the object, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

6. The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus of claim 1, wherein the signal comprises ultrasound image data of an object, and the controller is configured to control the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus to store or display at least one data set of the plurality of data sets as information about the object with the ultrasound image data, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

7. The ultrasound diagnostic apparatus of claim 1, wherein the plurality of sensors further comprise at least one of a touch sensor, a proximity sensor, a microphone, and a camera.

8. A method of operating an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus, the method comprising:

receiving a signal from an ultrasound probe including a plurality of sensors, the ultrasound probe being external to the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus;

acquiring a plurality of data sets corresponding to sensing results of the plurality of sensors from the signal;

performing a predetermined operation corresponding to a combination of the plurality of data sets, and

storing information mapping a plurality of combinations of data sets from among the plurality of data sets to a plurality of operations of the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus, respectively, the plurality of combinations of data sets being different from each other and the plurality of operations of the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus being different from each other,

wherein the plurality of data sets comprises information configured to synchronize timings when the plurality of data sets is acquired by the plurality of sensors, and wherein the performing of the predetermined operation comprises transmitting a control signal corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets to the ultrasound probe,

wherein the plurality of sensors includes a transducer configured to transmit an ultrasound signal and at least one sensor other than the transducer, the at least one sensor being a type of sensor different from the transducer and being configured to transmit a signal of a type different from the ultrasound signal.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the performing of the predetermined operation further comprises performing at least one of storing at least one of the plurality of data sets and displaying at least one of the plurality of data sets.

10. The method of claim 8,

wherein the performing of the predetermined operation further comprises searching the plurality of operations for the predetermined operation corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets.

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11. The method of claim 8, wherein the performing of the predetermined operation further comprises storing or displaying at least one of an acquired picture, a moving picture, and sound according to a sensing result of at least one of the plurality of sensors, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

12. The method of claim 8, wherein the control signal is configured to control the ultrasound probe to acquire ultrasound image data of an object by transmitting or receiving an ultrasound signal to or from the object, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

13. The method of claim 8, wherein the signal further comprises ultrasound image data of an object, and the performing of the predetermined operation further comprises storing or displaying at least one data set of the plurality of data sets as information about the object with the ultrasound image data, based on the combination of the plurality of data sets.

14. The method of claim 8, wherein the plurality of sensors includes at least one of a touch sensor, a proximity sensor, a microphone, and a camera.

15. A non-transitory computer-readable recording medium having embodied thereon a program for executing a method of operating an ultrasound diagnostic apparatus in a computer, wherein the method comprises:

receiving a signal from an ultrasound probe including a plurality of sensors, the ultrasound probe being external to the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus;

acquiring a plurality of data sets corresponding to sensing results of the plurality of sensors from the signal;

performing a predetermined operation corresponding to a combination of the plurality of data sets; and

storing information mapping a plurality of combinations of data sets from among the plurality of data sets to a plurality of operations of the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus, respectively, the plurality of combinations of data sets being different from each other and the plurality of operations of the ultrasound diagnostic apparatus being different from each other,

wherein the plurality of data sets comprises information configured to synchronize timings when the plurality of data sets is acquired by the plurality of sensors, and

wherein the performing of the predetermined operation comprises transmitting a control signal corresponding to the combination of the plurality of data sets to the ultrasound probe,

wherein the plurality of sensors includes a transducer configured to transmit an ultrasound signal and at least one sensor other than the transducer, the at least one sensor being a type of sensor different from the transducer and being configured to transmit a signal of a type different from the ultrasound signal.

* * * * *

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[标]申请(专利权)人(译)	三星电子株式会社 三星麦迪森株式会社		
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摘要(译)

一种超声诊断设备，包括：通信器，包括天线或电缆中的一个，并且被配置为使用天线或电缆中的一个接收来自包括多个传感器的超声探头的信号，超声探头在外部。超声诊断仪；控制器，包括：电子电路，被配置为从所述信号中获取与所述多个传感器的感测结果对应的多个数据组，并执行与所述多个数据组的组合对应的预定操作，所述多个数据组包括：信息被配置为在多个传感器获取多个数据集时同步定时，并且预定操作包括将对应于多个数据集的组组合的控制信号发送到超声波探头。

