



US 20060250046A1

(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Koizumi et al.(10) **Pub. No.: US 2006/0250046 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Nov. 9, 2006**(54) **ULTRASONIC MOTOR DRIVING DEVICE
AND ULTRASONIC DIAGNOSIS APPARATUS**(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Aug. 8, 2003 (JP) 2003-290801

(75) Inventors: **Jun Koizumi**, Yokohama-shi (JP);
Kazuyoshi Irioka, Sagamihara-shi (JP);
Masao Onozuka, Kawasaki-shi (JP)**Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.**
H01L 41/09 (2006.01)(52) **U.S. Cl.** 310/317

Correspondence Address:

STEVENS, DAVIS, MILLER & MOSHER, LLP
1615 L. STREET N.W.
SUITE 850
WASHINGTON, DC 20036 (US)(57) **ABSTRACT**

A technology, wherein unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor is prevented, when the ultrasonic motor is driven at the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds, and life extension is attempted, is disclosed, and according to this invention, when the ultrasonic motor 3 is driven at a comparatively low-speed during normal driving, unstable operation due to driving at a comparatively low-speed can be prevented and life extension can be attempted by driving the ultrasonic motor at a comparatively high-speed every predetermined period of time.

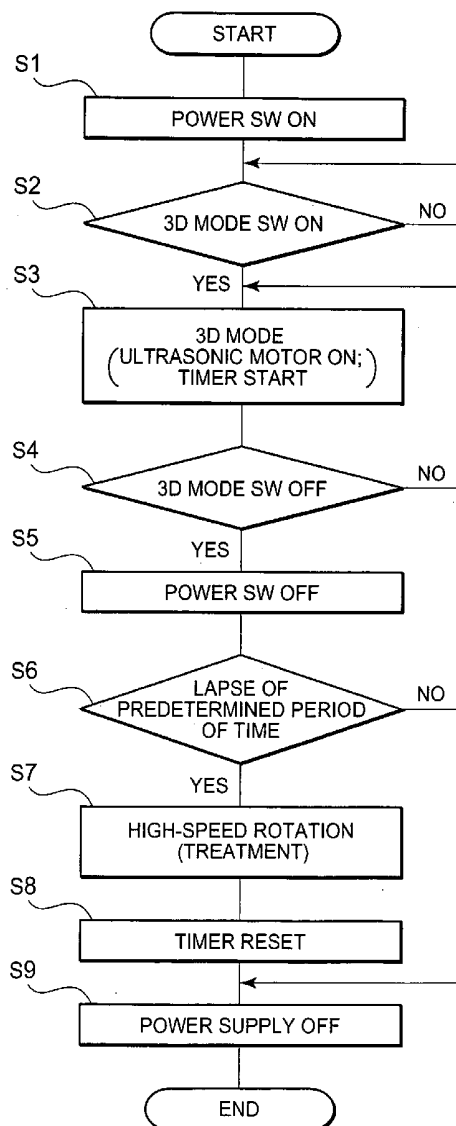
(73) Assignee: **MATSUSHITA ELECTRIC INDUS-
TRIAL CO., LTD.**, Kodama-shi (JP)(21) Appl. No.: **10/566,981**(22) PCT Filed: **Aug. 6, 2004**(86) PCT No.: **PCT/JP04/11639**

FIG. 1B

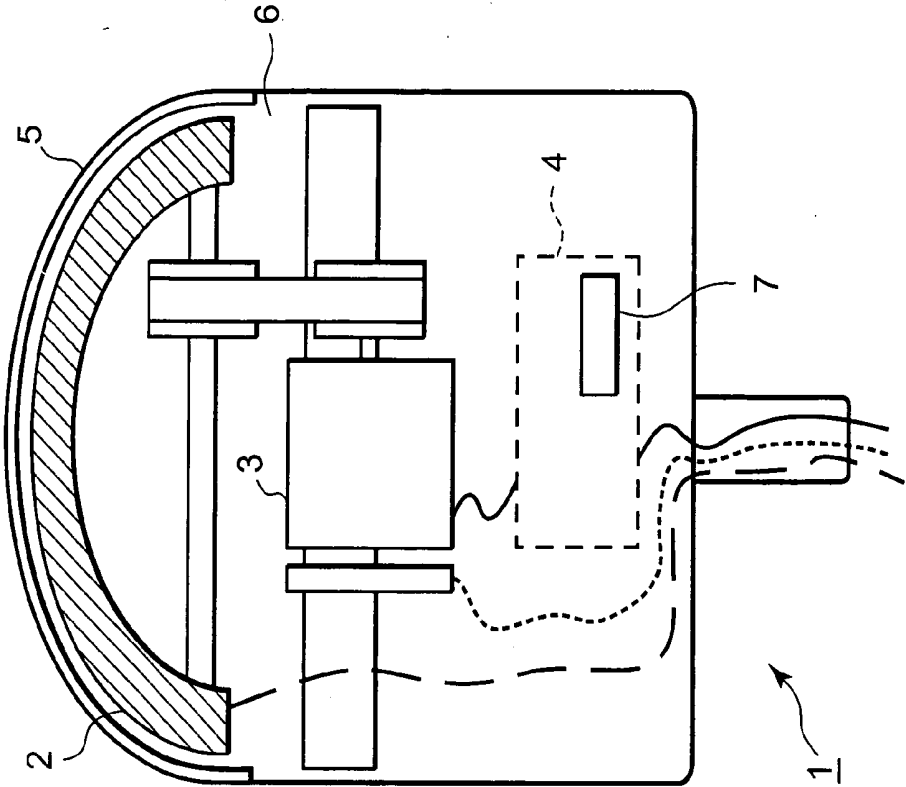


FIG. 1A

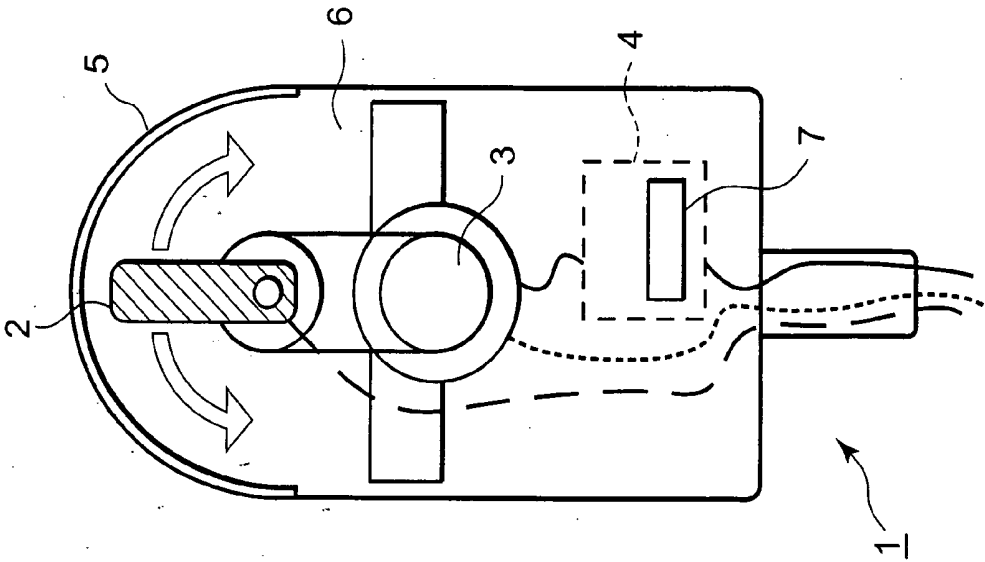


FIG. 2

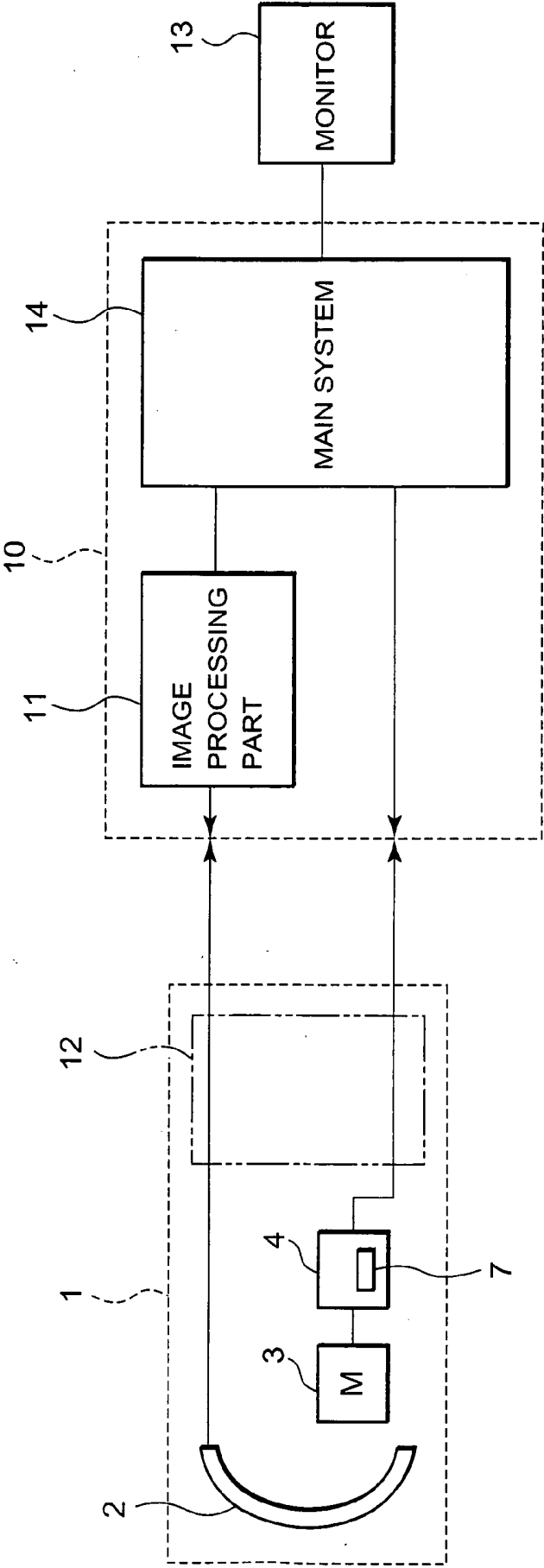


FIG. 3

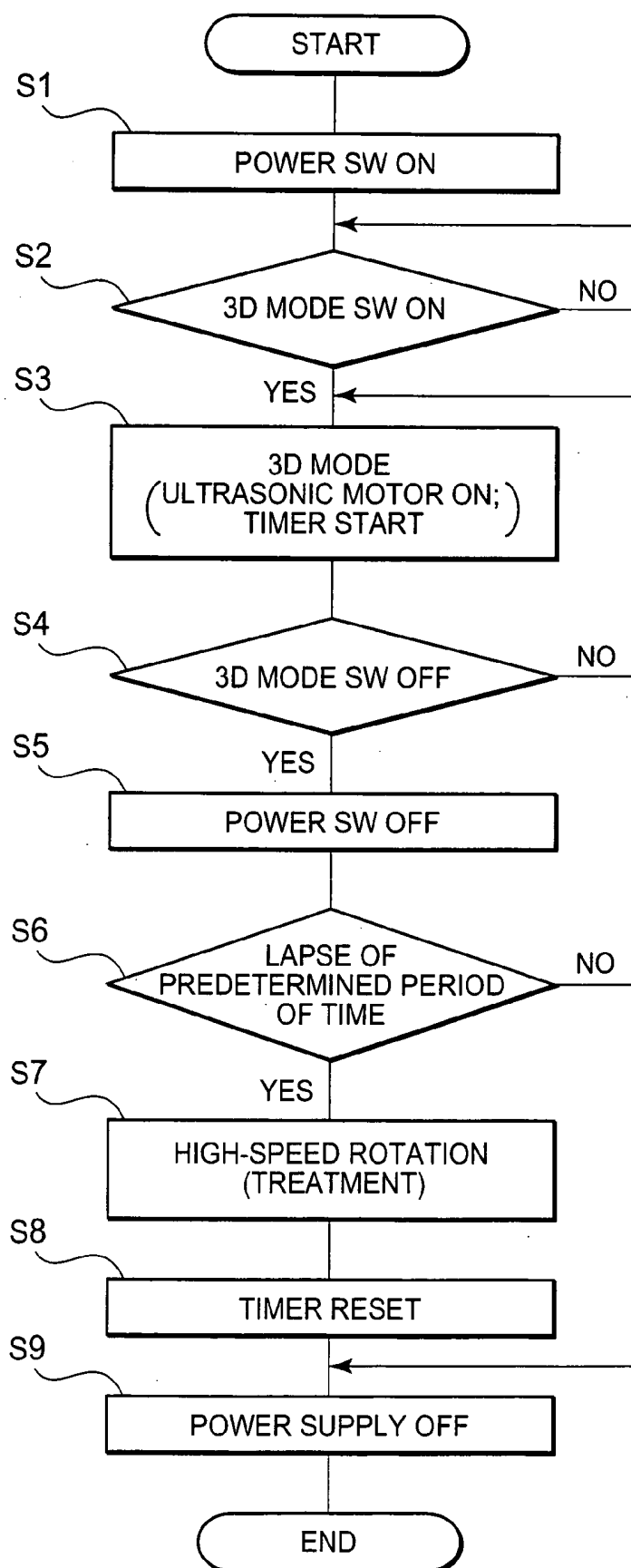


FIG. 4

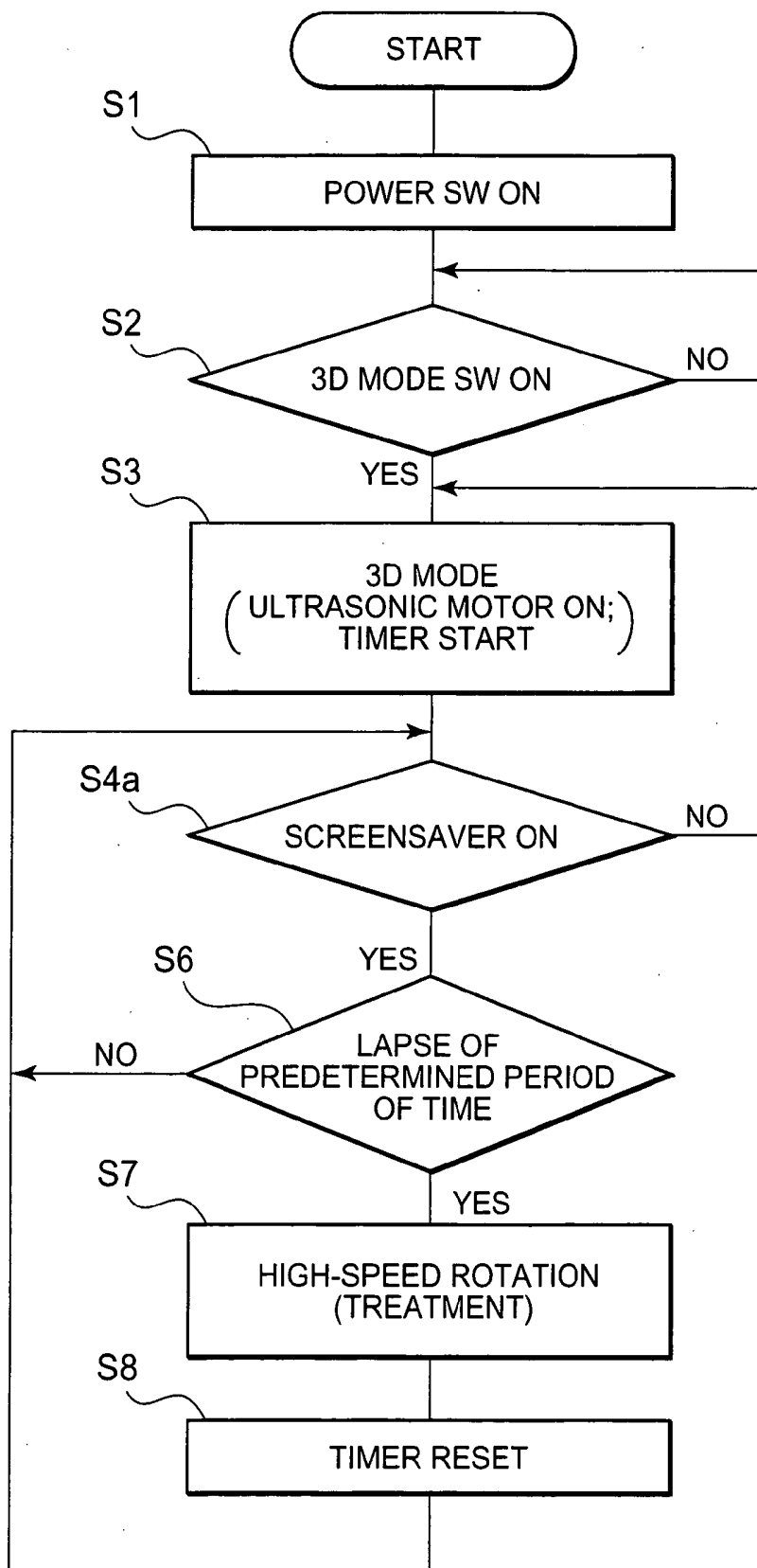


FIG. 5

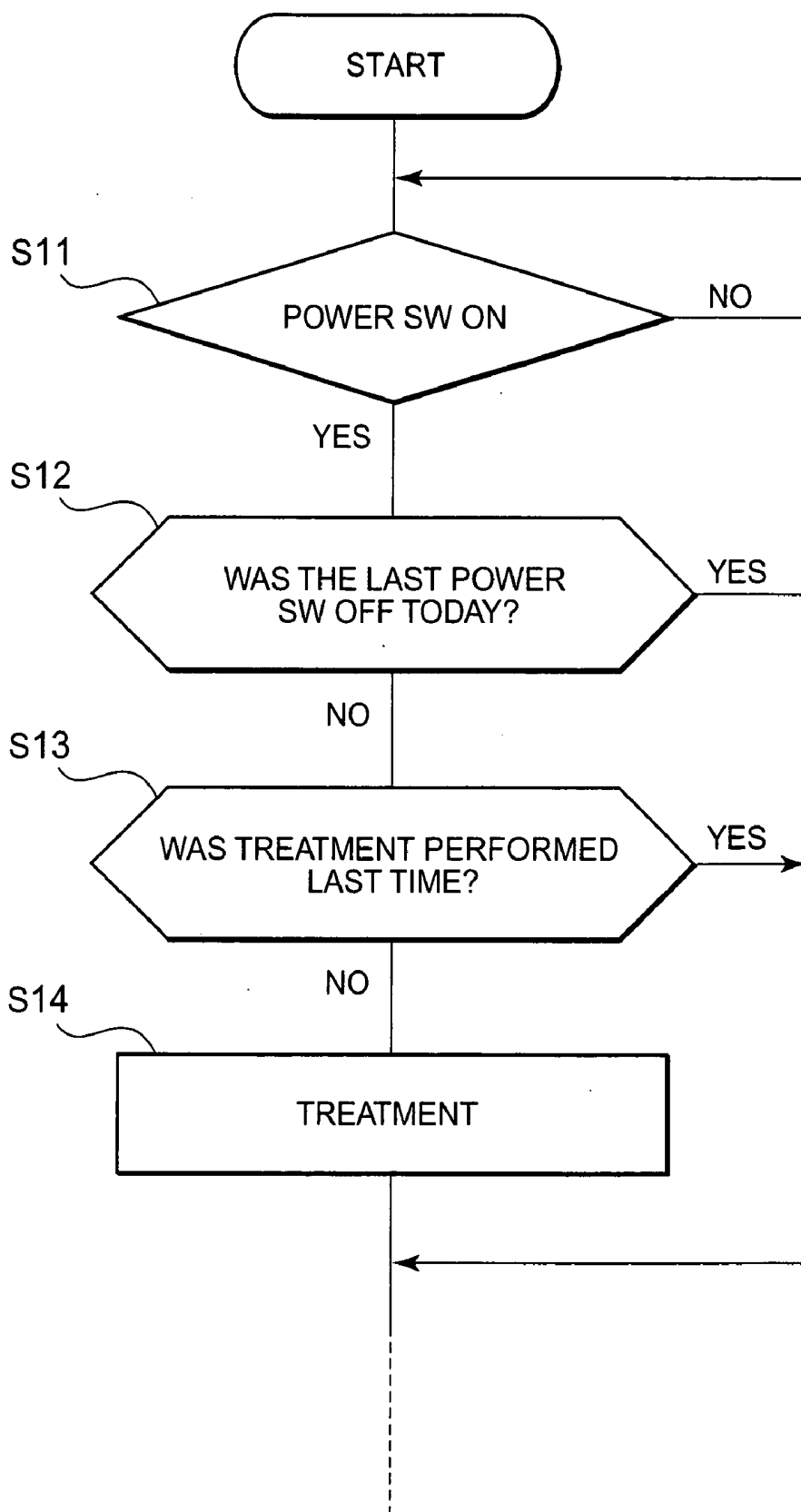


FIG. 6

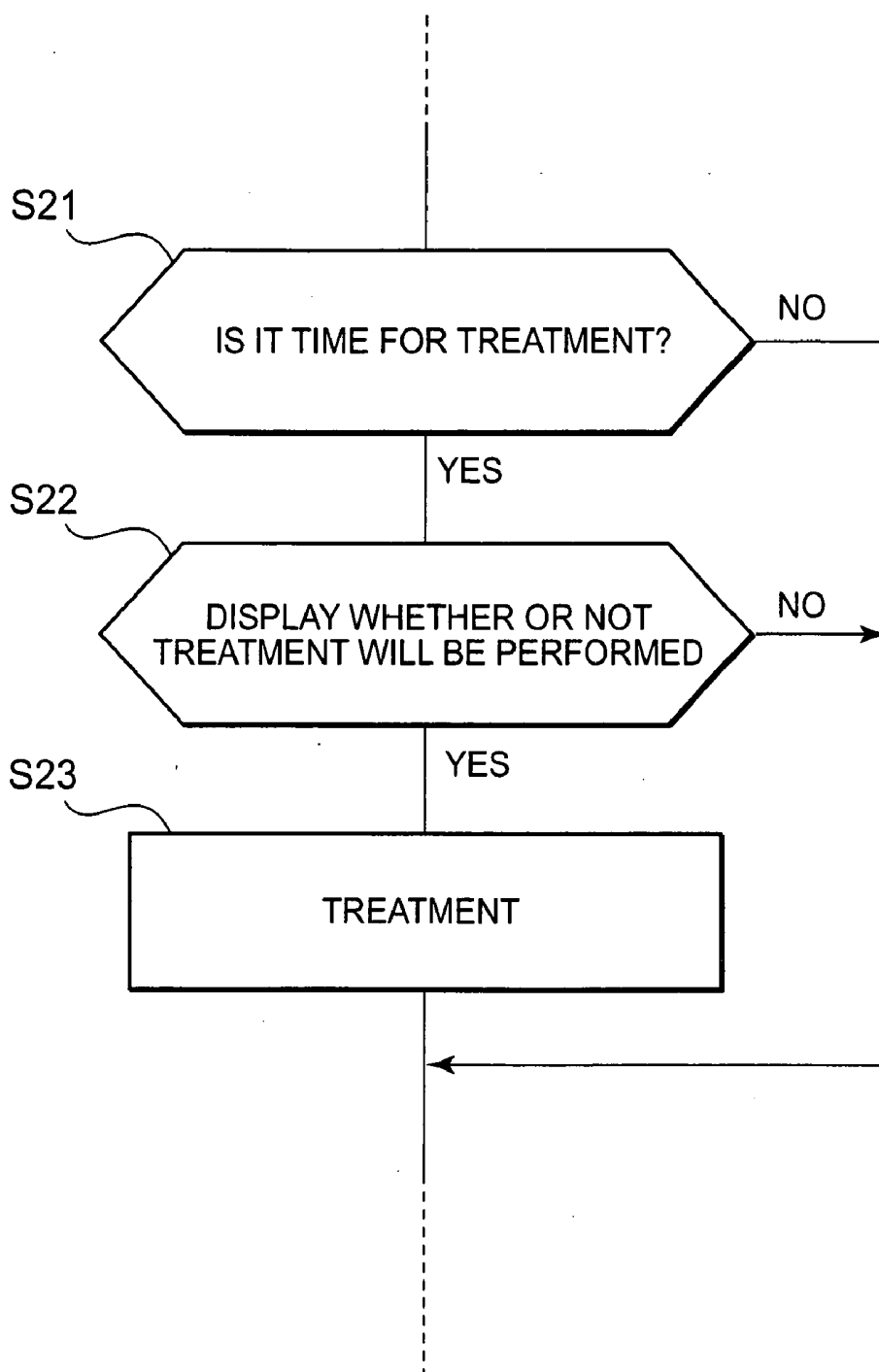
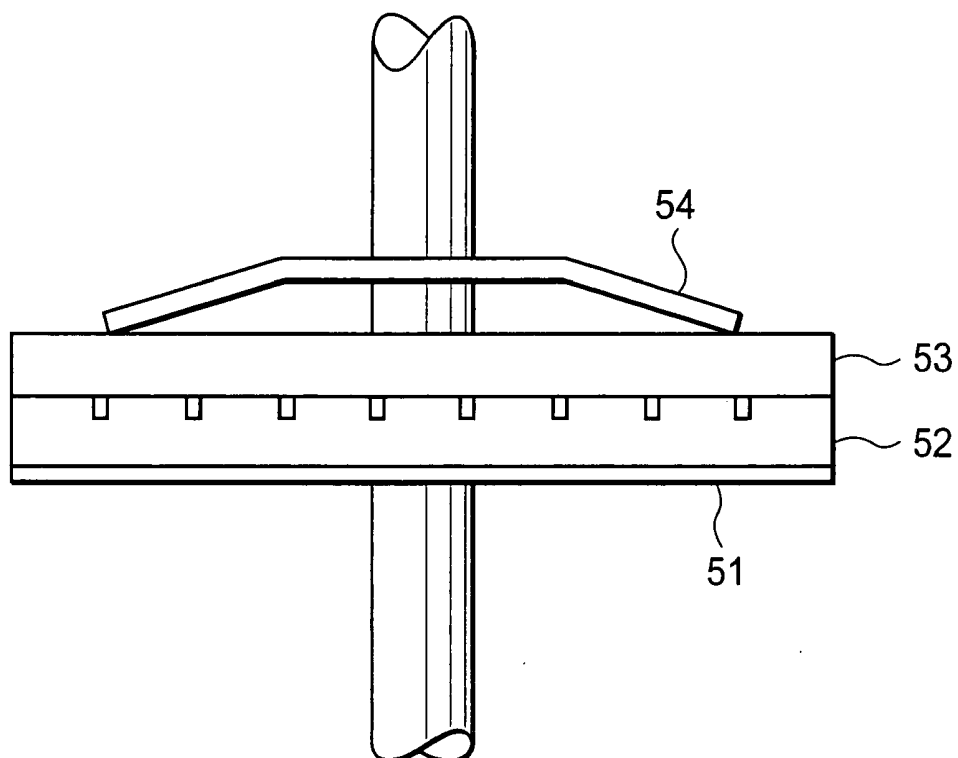


FIG. 7 PRIOR ART



ULTRASONIC MOTOR DRIVING DEVICE AND ULTRASONIC DIAGNOSIS APPARATUS

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates to an ultrasonic motor driving device for driving an ultrasonic motor.

[0002] The present invention also relates to an ultrasonic diagnostic device for obtaining three-dimensional images by scanning sonic elements by driving an ultrasonic motor.

BACKGROUND ART

[0003] An ultrasonic motor generally has a construction such as that described in Patent Reference 1, below. Hereafter, this construction is explained, with reference to the rough cross-sectional diagram shown in **FIG. 7**. In this example, stator **52** and rotor **53** are constructed such as to be pressurized by spring **54** and appressed. The surface of stator **52** which is in contact with rotor **53** is formed as a pectinate, and piezoelectric ceramic **51** is provided on the surface on the opposite side thereof. In a construction as such, traveling wave is generated in piezoelectric ceramic **51** when ultrasonic wave is impressed thereto, and this traveling wave is transmitted to rotor **53** via the pectinate surface and the rotor **53** rotates in the direction of the traveling wave (straight forward movement in case of linear motor). Although, the zoom lens of a camera is common as a use of the ultrasonic motor, the rotor **53** is rotationally-driven at a comparatively high speed (for example, 40 rpm) when utilized for such uses.

Patent Reference 1: Japanese Patent Application Publication H2-261077

[0004] Incidentally, generally, in three-dimensional ultrasonic diagnostic devices, by rotating an arc-shaped sonic element in a direction orthogonal to the arc direction within an ultrasonic probe and scanning, a three-dimensional image in the arc direction of the sonic element, the scanning direction due to rotation, and the depth direction, can be obtained. In addition, although, in recent years, the ultrasonic motor has been utilized as a driving means for rotating sonic elements, the rotor **53** is rotationally-driven at a comparatively low speed (for example, 10 rpm or less) when utilized for such uses.

[0005] However, if the ultrasonic motor is driven for a long period of time at a comparatively low speed, problems occur in that, roughness occurs on the pectinate surface of stator **52**, on the side in contact with rotor **53**, and in addition, a stable operation can no longer be attained because the fine particles of this stator **52** are transferred to the contact surface of the rotor **53**, and life is shortened. Furthermore, in an ultrasonic diagnostic device utilizing this ultrasonic motor, a three-dimensional image cannot be obtained because stable operation can no longer be attained.

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

[0006] In light of the foregoing issues, an object of the present invention is to provide an ultrasonic motor driving device which prevents unstable operation when the ultrasonic motor is driven at a low speed, out of at least two types of speeds, and aims to extend life.

[0007] The object of the present invention is to also provide an ultrasonic diagnostic device which prevents

unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor without affecting diagnostic operation by the user and aims to extend life.

[0008] In order to achieve the foregoing objects, the present invention, in an ultrasonic motor driving device for driving an ultrasonic motor,

[0009] has a speed control means for driving the ultrasonic motor at at least two types of speeds and

[0010] has a construction characterized by driving at a low speed, the slower out of the two types of speeds, during normal drive.

[0011] Through the foregoing construction, unstable operation can be prevented when the ultrasonic motor is driven at the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds and life extension can be attempted.

[0012] In addition, in order to achieve the foregoing objects, the present invention, in an ultrasonic diagnostic device for obtaining three-dimensional images by scanning sonic elements by driving an ultrasonic motor, has a construction, wherein

[0013] whether or not the ultrasonic motor was driven for a predetermined period of time, at the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds, when the power switch of the ultrasonic diagnostic device has been turned OFF, is determined, and if it was driven, the ultrasonic motor is driven at the higher speed out of at least two types of speeds, for an arbitrarily set period of time.

[0014] Through the foregoing construction, unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor can be prevented without affecting the diagnostic operations by the user and life extension can be attempted.

[0015] In addition, in order to achieve the foregoing objects, the present invention, in an ultrasonic diagnostic device for obtaining three-dimensional images by scanning sonic elements by driving an ultrasonic motor, has a construction, wherein

[0016] whether or not the ultrasonic motor was driven for a predetermined period of time, at the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds, when the screensaver of the monitor which shows the three-dimensional image has been turned ON, is determined, and if it was driven, the ultrasonic motor is driven at the higher speed out of at least two types of speeds.

[0017] Through the foregoing construction, unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor can be prevented without affecting the diagnostic operations by the user and life extension can be attempted.

[0018] In addition, in order to achieve the foregoing objects, the present invention, in an ultrasonic diagnostic device for obtaining three-dimensional images by scanning sonic elements by driving an ultrasonic motor, has a construction, wherein

[0019] whether or not the ultrasonic motor was driven for a predetermined period of time, at the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds, is determined when the power switch is turned ON for the first time within one day, and if it was driven, the ultrasonic motor is driven at the higher speed out of at least two types of speeds.

[0020] Through the foregoing construction, unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor can be prevented without affecting the diagnostic operations by the user and life extension can be attempted.

[0021] In addition, in order to achieve the foregoing objects, the present invention, in an ultrasonic diagnostic device for obtaining three-dimensional images by scanning sonic elements by driving an ultrasonic motor, has a construction, has a construction, wherein

[0022] the user is asked whether or not the driving function in the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds should be turned on, by driving the ultrasonic motor at the higher speed out of at least two types of speeds, when the ultrasonic motor is driven for a predetermined period of time at the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds, and if the user selects this function, a means for turning on this function is provided.

[0023] Through the foregoing construction, unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor can be prevented without affecting the diagnostic operations by the user and life extension can be attempted.

[0024] According to the present invention, unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor can be prevented when the ultrasonic motor is driven at the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds and life extension can be attempted.

[0025] In addition, according to other embodiments of the present invention, unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor can be prevented without affecting the diagnostic operations by the user and life extension can be attempted.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0026] FIG. 1A is an internal configuration diagram of an ultrasonic probe according to the present invention, viewed from the side;

[0027] FIG. 1B is an internal configuration diagram of the ultrasonic probe according to the present invention when viewed from the front;

[0028] FIG. 2 is a block diagram showing an ultrasonic diagnosis device according to the present invention;

[0029] FIG. 3 is a flowchart explaining the processing of the ultrasonic diagnosis device according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

[0030] FIG. 4 is a flowchart explaining the processing of the ultrasonic diagnosis device according to a second embodiment of the present invention;

[0031] FIG. 5 is a flowchart explaining the processing of the ultrasonic diagnosis device according to a third embodiment of the present invention;

[0032] FIG. 6 is a flowchart explaining the processing of the ultrasonic diagnosis device according to a fourth embodiment of the present invention; and

[0033] FIG. 7 is an explanatory diagram showing a rotation-type as an example of the operational principles of an ultrasonic motor.

BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

[0034] Descriptions are hereinafter given of the embodiments of the present invention, with reference to the drawings.

[0035] FIG. 1A shows the internal configuration of an ultrasonic probe 1 according to the present invention when viewed from the side, and FIG. 1B shows the internal configuration of the ultrasonic probe 1 when viewed from the front. In FIG. 1A and FIG. 1B, the ultrasonic probe 1 is connected to an ultrasonic diagnostic device main unit 10, shown in FIG. 2, via cable, such as to enable connection and detachment. In the inner part which is separated from the outer part by window 5 at the tip of the ultrasonic probe 1, an arc-shaped sonic element 2 is supported by an ultrasonic motor (M) 3, such as to enable back and forth rotation within coupling fluid 6 in the direction perpendicular to the arc direction. Ultrasonic motor 3 is driven by providing driving electrical power from the ultrasonic diagnostic device main unit 10, shown in FIG. 2, via an ultrasonic motor driving device 4 which contain a speed control means 7. Then, as shown in FIG. 2, the output of sonic element 2 is transmitted to the ultrasonic diagnostic device main unit 10, processed by an image processing part 11 into a three-dimensional image in the arc direction, scanning direction and depth direction of the sonic element 2, and this three-dimensional image is shown on monitor 13.

[0036] Here, when an ultrasonic motor, such as that shown in FIG. 7, is driven at a comparatively low speed (for example, 10 rpm or less), problems occur in that, roughness occurs on the pectinate surface of stator 52, on the side in contact with rotor 53, and in addition, a stable operation can no longer be attained because the fine particles of this stator 52 are transferred to the contact surface of the rotor 53, and life is shortened. The reason for this is thought to be because the surface of the stator 52 on the side in contact with rotor 53 is formed as a pectinate and stator 52 and rotor 53 are appressed, in order to transmit the traveling wave generated in stator 52 to rotor 53.

[0037] Incidentally, it has been found that, if an ultrasonic motor which cannot be stably operated is rotated at a comparatively high speed (for example, 40 rpm), the roughness of the pectinate surface of stator 52 and the contact surface of rotor 53 can be improved, such as to return to the original state, and rotation becomes normal. The reason for this is thought to be because an abrasive effect on the foregoing contact surface occurs due to high-speed rotation, reducing the roughness, and additionally, fine particles are released into the grooves between the teeth of the comb. Thus, the present invention has a speed control means 7 for driving the ultrasonic motor by switching between at least two types of speeds, and when operating the ultrasonic motor, if a comparatively low-speed normal operation is performed for a predetermined period of time, a comparatively high-speed operation (hereinafter, treatment) is performed. Although speed control means 7 is provided within the ultrasonic probe 1 in FIG. 1A and FIG. 1B, it can also be provided within ultrasonic diagnostic device main unit 10.

First Embodiment

[0038] FIG. 3 is a flowchart showing an embodiment applied to the ultrasonic diagnostic device shown in FIG. 1A, FIG. 1B, and FIG. 2, as one example, and the operation of a main system 14 of the ultrasonic diagnostic device main unit 10. Incidentally, if the device-side performs a treatment on its own while the user is performing an ultrasonic diagnosis, this interferes with the diagnosis. Therefore, in a

first embodiment, under the premise that the user is not performing a diagnosis, the speed control means 7 switches and controls the speed from low-speed to high-speed when the user has turned the power SW off, and the treatment is performed.

[0039] In FIG. 3, first, the power SW (unillustrated) of the ultrasonic diagnostic device main unit 10 is turned ON (step S1), a state enabling ultrasonic diagnosis is entered; furthermore, when 3D mode SW (unillustrated) is turned ON (Y in step S2), ultrasonic diagnosis in 3D mode begins, ultrasonic motor 3 is ON, and the timer starts (step S3). Next, whether or not the 3D mode SW has been turned OFF is determined (step S4), and if it is not OFF, ultrasonic diagnosis in 3D mode is continued (step S4→S3); on the other hand, if 3D mode SW is turned OFF (step S4→S5), the timer is turned OFF, and the amount of time the ultrasonic diagnosis was performed is recorded. This timer records the cumulative time ultrasonic diagnosis was performed. If ultrasonic diagnosis in 3D mode completed and the power SW of the ultrasonic diagnostic device is subsequently turned OFF (step S5), treatment is performed (step S6→S7), the timer is reset (step S8), and power supply to the ultrasonic diagnostic device is turned OFF (step S9), only when the cumulative time recorded by the timer exceeds a predetermined period of time (for example 90 minutes). If the cumulative time recorded by the timer does not exceed a predetermined period of time (step S6→S9), power supply to the ultrasonic diagnostic device is turned OFF (step S9) without performing treatment.

[0040] Through the foregoing construction, unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor can be prevented without affecting the diagnostic operations by the user and life extension can be attempted.

Second Embodiment

[0041] Next, a second embodiment is described with reference to FIG. 4. In the second embodiment, under the premise that the user is not performing a diagnosis, treatment is performed when the screensaver function of monitor 13 is in operation. In FIG. 4, first, the power SW (unillustrated) of the ultrasonic diagnostic device main unit 10 is turned ON (step S1); furthermore, when 3D mode SW (unillustrated) is turned ON (Y in step S2), ultrasonic diagnosis in 3D mode begins, ultrasonic motor 3 is ON, and the timer starts (step S3). Next, whether or not the screensaver has been turned ON is determined (step S4a), and if it is not ON, ultrasonic diagnosis in 3D mode is continued (step S4a→S3); on the other hand, if the screensaver is turned ON, it is determined whether or not the predetermined period of time elapsed on the timer (step S4a→S6). Then, if the predetermined period of time has elapsed, treatment is performed (step S7), the timer is reset (step 8), and subsequently, the processing returns to step S4a. This predetermined period of time can be determined based on experiments or can be set arbitrarily by the user, within a range which does not affect the diagnostic operation, by providing a setting input means.

[0042] Through the foregoing construction, unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor can be prevented without affecting the diagnostic operations by the user, even if it is in the middle of a day, and life extension can be attempted. The time remaining until the completion of a treatment or a

warning display can be shown by numbers or an indicator. If the screensaver is terminated, the treatment can be forcibly terminated, or the user can be urged to wait by displaying the time until treatment completion.

Third Embodiment

[0043] Next, a third embodiment is described with reference to FIG. 5. In the third embodiment, treatment is performed immediately after the user has turned the power SW ON for the first time within one day. In FIG. 5, first, when the power SW (unillustrated) of the ultrasonic diagnostic device main unit 10 is turned ON (Y in step 11), it is determined whether or not the previous power SW OFF was today, or in other words, whether or not it was yesterday or before (step S12). Then, if the previous power SW OFF was yesterday or before, it is determined whether or not treatment was previously performed (step S12→S13), and if it was not performed, treatment is performed (step S13→S14). The determination step of step S13 can be omitted, and treatment can be performed unconditionally when the user has turned the power SW ON for the first time within one day.

[0044] Through the foregoing construction, unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor can be prevented without affecting the diagnostic operations by the user and life extension can be attempted.

Fourth Embodiment

[0045] Next, a fourth embodiment is described with reference to FIG. 6. If the ultrasonic diagnostic device-side performs the treatment (high-speed rotation), diagnosis cannot be performed until the treatment is completed. Therefore, in the fourth embodiment, when it is time for treatment, the user is asked, beforehand, whether or not treatment should be performed, for example, by showing "perform"/"do not perform" treatment [a display part (lamp) can be provided in the probe main unit, or can be shown on the main unit display part] (step S21→S22), and treatment is performed (step S23) only when the user selects "perform".

[0046] Through the foregoing construction, unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor can be prevented without affecting the diagnostic operations by the user and life extension can be attempted.

Fifth Embodiment

[0047] Incidentally, in the ultrasonic diagnostic device, a plurality of ultrasonic probes 1 can be connected to the ultrasonic diagnostic device main unit 10, and the user generally selects and uses one out of these. Therefore, treatment can be performed on ultrasonic probes 1 which are not in use.

[0048] Through the foregoing construction, unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor can be prevented without affecting the diagnostic operations by the user and life extension can be attempted.

INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITY

[0049] According to the present invention, unstable operation of the ultrasonic motor can be prevented, when the ultrasonic motor is driven at the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds, and life extension can be attempted.

1. An ultrasonic motor driving device for driving an ultrasonic motor, comprising:

a speed control means for driving the ultrasonic motor at at least two types of speeds: and which

drives at a low speed, the slower out of the two types of speeds, during normal drive.

2. An ultrasonic diagnostic device for obtaining three-dimensional images by scanning sonic elements by driving an ultrasonic motor, wherein:

whether or not the ultrasonic motor was driven for a predetermined period of time, at the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds, when the power switch of the ultrasonic diagnostic device has been turned OFF, is determined, and if it was driven, the ultrasonic motor is driven at the higher speed out of at least two types of speeds, for an arbitrarily set period of time.

3. An ultrasonic diagnostic device for obtaining three-dimensional images by scanning sonic elements by driving an ultrasonic motor, wherein:

whether or not the ultrasonic motor was driven for a predetermined period of time, at the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds, when the screensaver of the monitor which shows the three-dimensional image has been turned ON, is determined, and if it was driven,

the ultrasonic motor is driven at the higher speed out of at least two types of speeds.

4. An ultrasonic diagnostic device for obtaining three-dimensional images by scanning sonic elements by driving an ultrasonic motor, wherein:

whether or not the ultrasonic motor was driven for a predetermined period of time, at the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds, is determined when the power switch is turned ON for the first time within one day, and if it was driven, the ultrasonic motor is driven at the higher speed out of at least two types of speeds.

5. An ultrasonic diagnostic device for obtaining three-dimensional images by scanning sonic elements by driving an ultrasonic motor, wherein:

the user is asked whether or not the driving function in the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds should be turned on, by driving the ultrasonic motor at the higher speed out of at least two types of speeds, when the ultrasonic motor is driven for a predetermined period of time at the lower speed out of at least two types of speeds, and if the user selects this function, a means for turning on this function is provided.

* * * * *

专利名称(译)	超声波电动机驱动装置和超声波诊断装置		
公开(公告)号	US20060250046A1	公开(公告)日	2006-11-09
申请号	US10/566981	申请日	2004-08-06
申请(专利权)人(译)	松下电器产业有限公司.		
当前申请(专利权)人(译)	柯尼卡美能达，INC.		
[标]发明人	KOIZUMI JUN IRIOKA KAZUYOSHI ONOUKA MASAO		
发明人	KOIZUMI, JUN IRIOKA, KAZUYOSHI ONOUKA, MASAO		
IPC分类号	H01L41/09 A61B8/00 A61N7/02 G01S15/89 G10K11/35 H01L41/04 H02N2/14		
CPC分类号	A61B8/00 A61B8/12 A61B8/4461 A61B8/4483 A61B8/445 A61N7/022 G01S15/894 G10K11/355 H02N2/14 A61B8/483		
优先权	2003290801 2003-08-08 JP		
其他公开文献	US7375455		
外部链接	Espacenet USPTO		

摘要(译)

本发明公开了一种技术，其中，当超声波马达以至少两种速度中的较低速度被驱动并且试图延长寿命时，防止超声波马达的不稳定操作，并且根据本发明，当超声波马达时在正常驱动期间以相对低的速度驱动电动机3，可以防止由于以相对低的速度驱动而导致的不稳定操作，并且可以通过在每个预定的时间段以相对高的速度驱动超声波电动机来尝试延长寿命。。

