Remarks

The Pending Claims

Claims 26-45 are currently pending. Reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

Summary of the Office Action

Allowable Subject Matter

Pending correction of the Reissue Declaration, claims 28-31, 33 and 36-40 will be objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Defective Reissue Declaration

The reissue oath/declaration filed with this application is defective (see 37 CFR 1.175 and MPEP § 1414) because of the following: As per MPEP 1414(11), any error in the claims must be identified by reference to the specific claim(s) and the specific claim language wherein lies the error. The examiner notes that the Applicant correctly identifies original claim 1. However, the error statement does not identify the specific claim language in original claim 1 wherein lies the error. That is, reference to "echo cancellation unit" is considered a narrowing limitation since it was not in original Claim 1. Since the instant reissue is a broadening reissue application, Applicant must identify the language in original claim 1, that the applicant seeks to broaden. The examiner recommends leaving the statement regarding "echo cancellation" in the statement but to also add an original claim limitation (from claim 1) that was broadened.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 251

Claims 26-45 are rejected as being based upon a defective reissue declaration under 35 U.S.C. 251 as set forth above. See 37 CPR 1.175.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 26, 32, 34 and 41-45 are rejected under pre-AIA 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Li et al., "A Portable USB-Based Microphone Array Device For Robust Speech Recognition", in view of Erten US. Patent 6,236,862.

Claims 27 and 35 is/are rejected under pre-AIA 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Li et al., "A Portable USB-Based Microphone Array Device For Robust Speech Recognition", in view of Erten US. Patent 6,236,862, in view of Kim et al. US. Patent Pub. 2009/0279714.

Allowable Subject Matter

The office action states: "**Pending correction of the Reissue Declaration, claims 28-31, 33 and 36-40 will be objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.**"

Applicant appreciates identification of allowable claims by the examiner. However, applicant does not wish to narrow the independent claims as suggested by the examiner. Instead, applicant will present arguments to overcome the rejections under pre-AIA 35 U.S.C. 103(a) without making any amendments to the claims.

The office action further states: "**The reissue oath/declaration filed with this application is defective (see 37 CFR 1.175 and MPEP § 1414) because of the following: As per MPEP 1414(11), any error in the claims must be identified by reference to the specific claim(s) and the specific claim language wherein lies the**

error. The examiner notes that the Applicant correctly identifies original claim 1. However, the error statement does not identify the specific claim language in original claim 1 wherein lies the error. That is, reference to "echo cancellation unit" is considered a narrowing limitation since it was not in original Claim 1. Since the instant reissue is a broadening reissue application, Applicant must identify the language in original claim 1, that the applicant seeks to broaden. The examiner recommends leaving the statement regarding "echo cancellation" in the statement but to also add an original claim limitation (from claim 1) that was broadened."

In response to the above objection, applicant has submitted a new reissue declaration prepared as per guidelines given in the office action. Applicant respectfully submits that the reissue declaration is now compliant as per 37 CFR 1.175 and MPEP § 1414.

The office action further states: "**Claims 26-45 are rejected as being based upon a defective reissue declaration under 35 U.S.C. 251 as set forth above. See 37 CPR 1.175.**"

In response to the above, applicant has submitted a new reissue declaration prepared as per guidelines given in the office action. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 26-45 under 35 U.S.C. 251 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

The office action further states: "**Claims 26, 32, 34 and 41-45 are rejected under pre-AIA 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Li et al., "A Portable USB-Based Microphone Array Device For Robust Speech Recognition", in view of Erten US. Patent 6,236,862.**"

In response to the above, applicant submits that Li, in view of Erten, does not teach or suggest the following limitations in claim 26:

"estimating a location of said target sound signal from said received sound signals by said sound source localization unit;"

"performing adaptive beamforming for steering a directivity pattern of said array of said sound sensors in a direction of said location of said target sound signal by said adaptive beamforming unit, wherein said adaptive beamforming unit enhances said target sound signal and partially suppresses said ambient noise signals;"

Therefore, applicant submits that claim 26 is not obvious over Li, in view of Erten.

By way of explanation, claim 26 discloses a sound source localization unit **202** either as an independent module as shown in FIG. 2 of applicant's originally filed application, or as a module integrated into a digital signal processor (DSP) 1403 as shown in FIG. 14 of applicant's originally filed application.

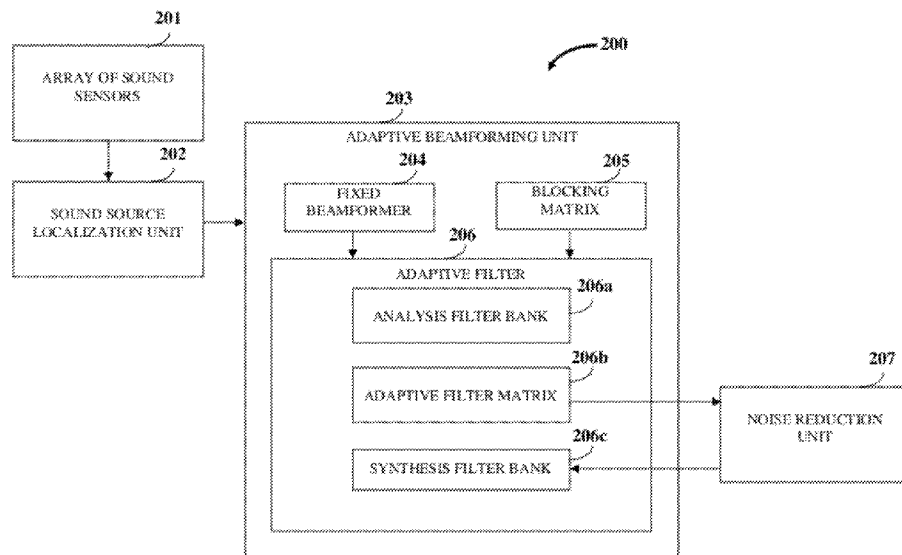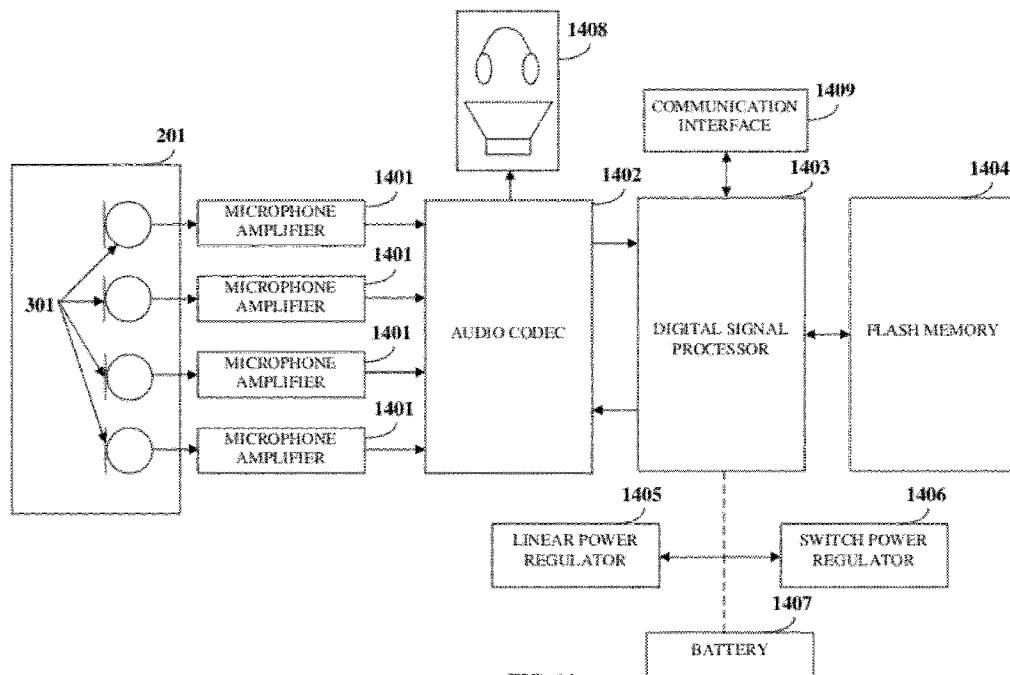Hardware structure of system disclosed in claim 26:

FIG. 2

FIG. 14

FIG. 2 above comprises a sound source localization unit **202**. Furthermore, FIG. 14 comprises a digital signal processor (DSP) **1403**. Furthermore, column 15, lines 27-29 of the originally filed application states: "*The DSP **1403** implements the sound source localization unit **202**, the adaptive beamforming unit **203**, and the noise reduction unit **207**.*"

Furthermore, column 2, lines 30-33 of the originally filed application states: "*The sound source localization unit estimates a spatial location of the target sound signal from the received sound signals, for example, using a steered response power-phase transform*". Furthermore, column 4, lines 31-34 of the originally filed application states: "*FIG. 8 exemplarily illustrates a method for estimating a spatial location of the target sound signal from the target sound source by a sound source localization unit using a steered response power-phase transform.*" After the estimation of spatial location of the target sound signal by the sound source localization unit, the adaptive beamforming unit steers a directivity pattern of the array of sound sensors in a direction of the estimated spatial location of the target sound signal.

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