

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Patent Application of

Mikhail Godkin

Application No. 10/693,394

Filed: October 24, 2003

For: CLOSED-ENDED LINEAR VOICE
ACTUATOR WITH IMPROVED FORCE
CHARACTERISTIC



Group Art Unit: 1651

Examiner: Phylesha L. DABNEY

REPLY BRIEF

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ta-Tanisha L. Henry". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Ta-Tanisha L. Henry

Dear Sir/Madam:

This is a reply to Examiner's Answer in Office Communication dated June 11, 2008, ("Examiner's Answer"). One (1) copy of this reply brief is enclosed.

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Status of Claims

Claims 1 through 40 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 2 have been finally rejected by the Examiner. Claims 2, 3, 5, 7, 10-20, 25 and 26 have been objected to by the Examiner. Claims 34, 36 and 38 are allowed. Claims 4, 6, 8, 9, 21-24, 27-33, 35, 37, 39 and 40 have been withdrawn from consideration. This is an appeal of the rejection of claims 1 and 2.

Grounds of rejection to be reviewed on appeal

The issues on appeal are:

- (1) Whether claims 1 and 2 are unpatentable under 35 USC §102(b) as anticipated by US Pat. No. 5,898,244 to Kotsianas et al. (“Kotsianas et al.”).

Argument

A key disagreement between the Examiner's and Applicant's reading of the prior art centers around the involved claim 1 feature of:

wherein the core includes first and second portions, each including an end face and a cavity formed in the end face having an axis of symmetry along the longitudinal axis of the core, and further wherein the first and second portions are positioned so that the end faces oppose each other and are separated by a gap

(Involved claim 1, emphasis added.)

In the subject application, Figure 4 (reproduced below) illustrates an example of this feature. (See footnotes 7-11, "Summary of claimed subject matter," Applicant's Appeal Brief..)

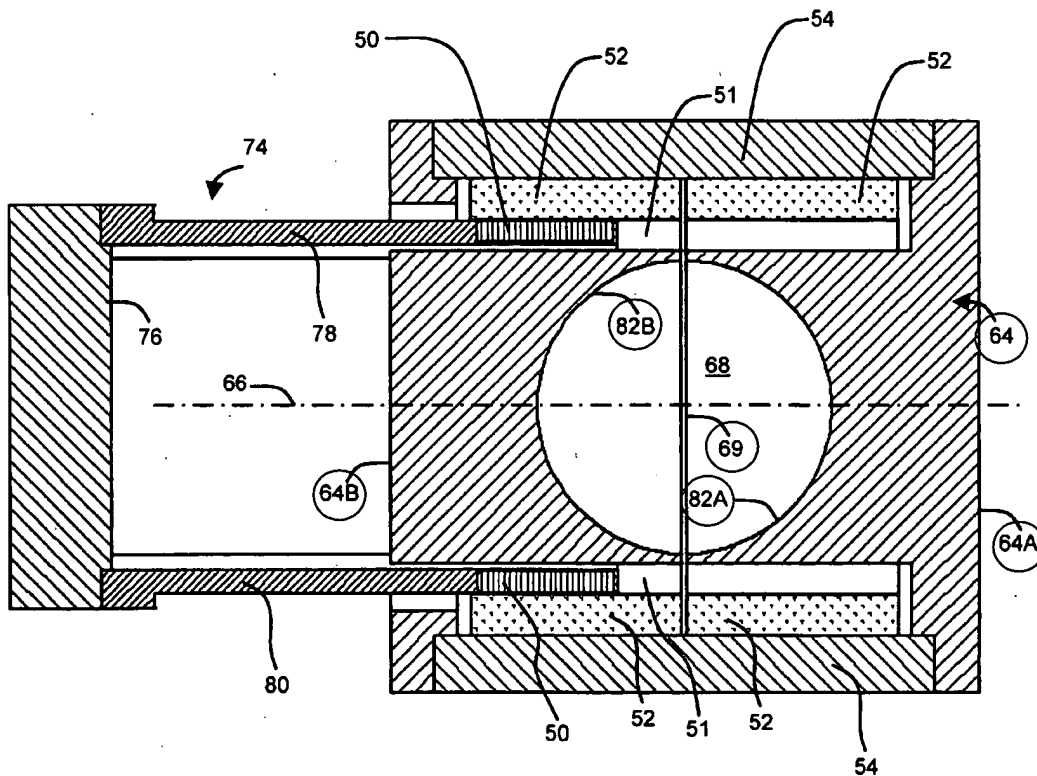
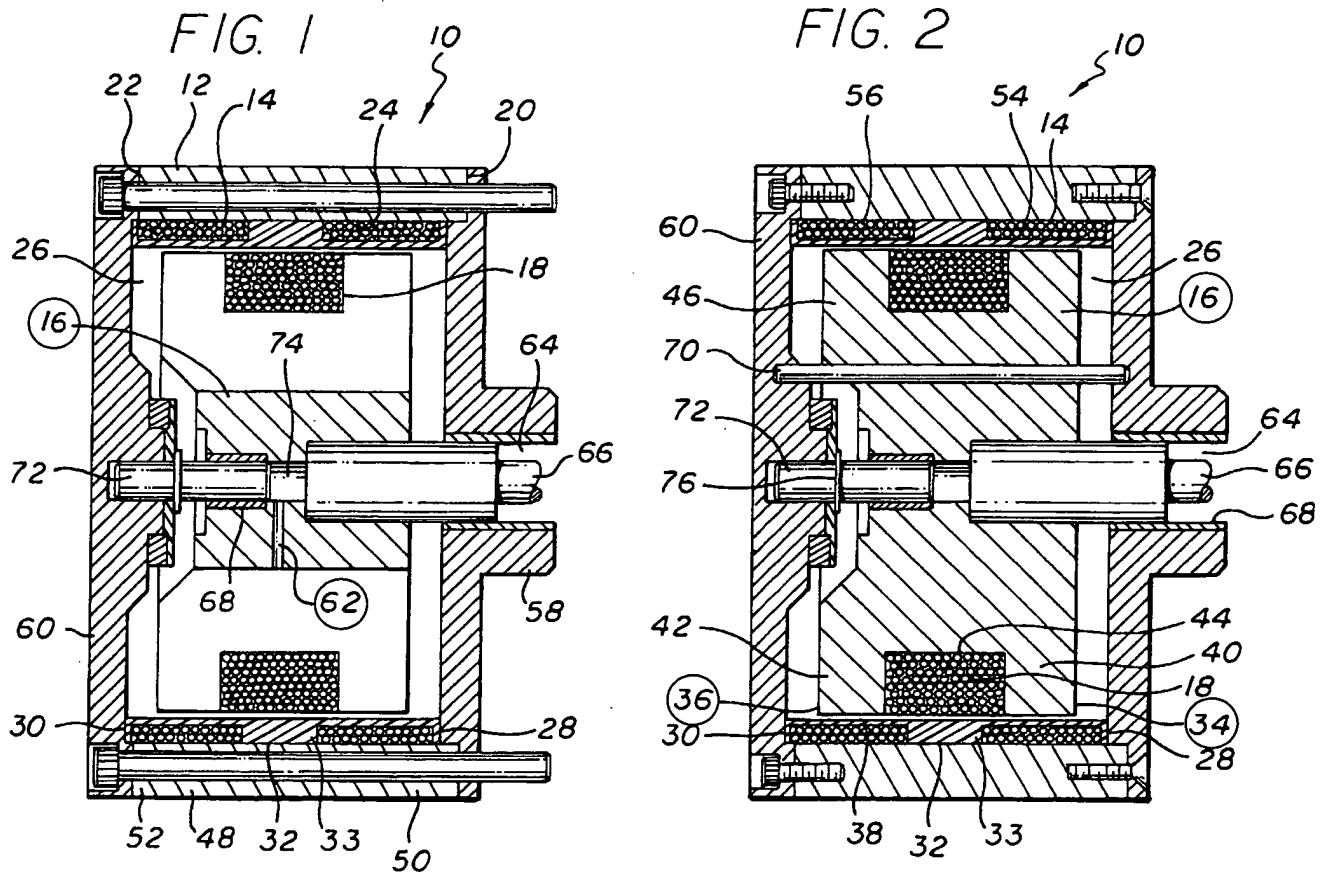


FIG. 4

In the example of Figure 4 (and annotated in red), core 64 has portions 64A and 64B, each with a cavity 82A, 82B, respectively, formed in a respective end face. The portions 64A and 64B are positioned so that the end faces oppose each other and are separated by a gap 69.

Applicant understands the Examiner's position to be that in Kotsianas et al., the features 34, 36 (referred to as "core end 34" and "core end 36" at col. 3, lines 55-56) are "end faces" that "oppose each other," and that they are separated by the feature "62" which the Examiner considers to be a "gap." (See Examiner's Answer, page 4, last paragraph.) Applicant respectfully submits that the core ends 34, 36 of Kotsianas et al. cannot be said to "oppose each other" and cannot be said to be "separated by a gap." Figures 1 and 2 from Kotsianas et al. are illustrative:



In the above Figures, core ends 34, 36 (circled in red) are located at distant, opposite ends of the same core 16 (circled in red), so that instead of being positioned to "oppose each other" they face away from each other. Further, they are positioned on and are linked together by the same body of core 16 (Figure 2, cross hatching), so they are not separated from each other. As to

the feature labeled 62 in Figure 1 which the Examiner asserts is a “gap” that separates core ends 34, 36, Applicant respectfully submits that such feature is simply a shaft-like structure which allows air movement to or from the air gap between shaft 66 and pin 72 when shaft 66 moves relative to pin 72. (See e.g., Column 5, lines 5-14.) The shading of the feature 62 in the cross section shown in Figure 1 is respectfully submitted to be indicative of a shallow depth or small diameter, and not of a feature which separates core ends 34, 36 of core 16 from each other. Further, the absence of such feature in the cross section shown in Figure 2, confirms that such feature is of limited extent, and does not, and cannot operate to separate core ends 34, 36.

Simply put, the core ends 34, 36 in Kotsianas et al., instead of being positioned to “oppose each other,” face away from each other, and, instead of being “separated” from each other “by a gap,” are positioned on and are linked together by the same body of core 16. For the reasons set forth above and in Applicant’s Appeal Brief, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is patentable over Kotsianas et al., and that the Examiner’s rejection of claim 1 must be reversed.

Regarding the Examiner’s position on involved claim 2, that the “outer core section (48)” of Kotsianas et al. corresponds to “core flanges” which support a housing (58, 60) (see Examiner’s Answer, page 5, first paragraph), it is respectfully submitted that claim 2 is patentable as dependent from a patentable base claim 1, and further, that “outer core section (48)” is not a “core flange.” First of all, nowhere in Kotsianas et al. is “outer core section (48)” referred to as a “flange,” much less a “core flange.” In Kotsianas et al., the closest association of feature 48 with the feature labeled 16 in Figure 1, is found at col. 3, lines 64-65, where it is stated that “[t]he core 16 may also be defined as having an inner core member 46 and an outer core member 48.” However, it is respectfully submitted that the fact that inner core member 46 (Figure 2) is moveable with respect to outer core member 48 (see col. 4, lines 3-8) prevents it

from being a “flange” of inner core member 46. There are further indications that feature 48 is not operatively a part of inner core member 46 (core 16). As can be seen from Figure 1, and described at col. 3, lines 36-46, the same structure to which reference number 48 points is described as a case 12, having an interior wall 24, and that a conductive coil 14 is coextensively adjacent interior wall 24. Thus, as a case 12, feature 48 can hardly be seen as a core flange supporting a housing as recited in involved claim 2. Also, conductive coil 14 is the same coil that the Examiner asserts corresponds to the claim 1 feature of “a coil shaped for movement along the longitudinal axis of the core.” (See Examiner’s Answer, page 3, last paragraph.) Thus, feature 48 (case 12) in Kotsianas et al. is physically associated with the “conductive coil 14” rather than the core 16 (inner core member 46).

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that feature 48 in Kotsianas et al. is not a “core flange,” that claim 2 is patentable as dependent from patentable base claim 1, and that the Examiner’s rejection of claim 2 must be reversed.

Conclusion

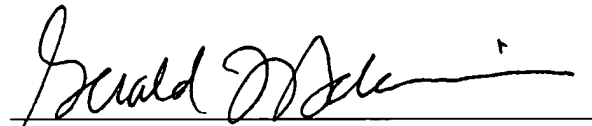
For the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that Kotsianas et al. do not teach or suggest the invention claimed in claims 1 and 2, and hereby requests that the Board reverse the Examiner's rejections and affirm the patentability of the claims on appeal.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: July 25, 2008

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