



(12) **DEMANDE DE BREVET CANADIEN  
CANADIAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(13) **A1**

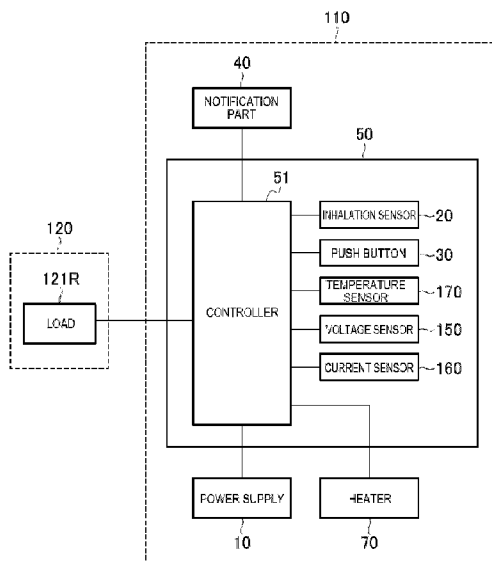
(86) Date de dépôt PCT/PCT Filing Date: 2017/10/18  
(87) Date publication PCT/PCT Publication Date: 2019/04/25  
(85) Entrée phase nationale/National Entry: 2020/04/15  
(86) N° demande PCT/PCT Application No.: JP 2017/037755  
(87) N° publication PCT/PCT Publication No.: 2019/077709

(51) Cl.Int./Int.Cl. *A24F 40/50* (2020.01)  
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(54) Titre : DISPOSITIF DE PRODUCTION DE COMPOSANT D'INHALATION, PROCEDE DE COMMANDE DE DISPOSITIF DE PRODUCTION DE COMPOSANT D'INHALATION, SYSTEME DE PRODUCTION DE COMPOSANT D'INHALATION ET PROGRAMME

(54) Title: INHALATION COMPONENT GENERATION DEVICE, METHOD OF CONTROLLING INHALATION COMPONENT GENERATION DEVICE, INHALATION COMPONENT GENERATION SYSTEM, AND PROGRAM

Fig. 4



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

This inhalation component generation device comprises a load which vaporizes or atomizes an inhalation component source with power from a power supply, and a control unit which is configured to be capable of controlling the supply of power from the power supply to the load. The control unit is configured to be capable of carrying out a first diagnostic function for estimating or detecting deterioration and/or malfunction of the power supply during operation of the load, and a second diagnostic function for estimating or detecting deterioration and/or malfunction of the power supply during charging of the power supply. The first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function contain mutually different algorithms.

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## ABSTRACT

An inhalation component generation device includes a load configured to vaporize or atomize an inhalation component source with electric power from a power supply, and a control unit configured to be capable of controlling supply of electric power from the power supply to the load. The control unit is configured to be capable of performing a first diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during operation of the load, and a second diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during charging of the power supply. The first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function include different algorithms.

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## DESCRIPTION

INHALATION COMPONENT GENERATION DEVICE, METHOD OF CONTROLLING  
INHALATION COMPONENT GENERATION DEVICE, INHALATION COMPONENT  
GENERATION SYSTEM, AND PROGRAM

## TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates to an inhalation component generation device including a load configured to vaporize or atomize an inhalation component source with electric power from a power supply, an inhalation component generation system, a method of controlling the inhalation component generation device, and a program.

## BACKGROUND ART

[0002] Instead of a conventional cigarette, there has been proposed an inhalation component generation device (an electronic cigarette or heated tobacco) used for tasting an inhalation component generated by vaporizing or atomizing a flavor source such as tobacco or an aerosol source with a load such as a heater (PTL 1 to PTL 3). Such an inhalation component generation device includes a load configured to vaporize or atomize a flavor source and/or an aerosol source, a power supply configured to supply electric power to the load, and a control unit configured to control the load and the power supply. The load is, for example, a heater.

[0003] In such an inhalation component generation device, there is room for improvement in the electric control regarding the electric power to be supplied to the load and the charge and discharge of the power supply.

[0004] PTL 4 to PTL 6 each disclose a method of estimating the degree of degradation of a power supply. PTL 7 and PTL 8 each disclose a method of monitoring the abnormality of a power supply. PTL 9 discloses a method of suppressing the degradation of a power supply. PTL 10 to PTL 12 each disclose calibrating a state of charge (SOC) and charge capacitance of a battery when the power supply reaches a full charge under predetermined conditions. PTL 4 to PTL 12 each do not specify that the above-described methods are applied to the

inhalation component generation device.

#### CITATION LIST

##### PATENT LITERATURE

[0005] PTL 1: International Publication No. WO 2014/150942

PTL 2: National Publication of International Patent Application No. 2017-514463

PTL 3: Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 7-184627

PTL 4: Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 2000-251948

PTL 5: Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 2016-176709

PTL 6: Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 11-052033

PTL 7: Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 2003-317811

PTL 8: Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 2010-050045

PTL 9: Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 2017-005985

PTL 10: International Publication No. WO 2014/046232

PTL 11: Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 7-128416

PTL 12: Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 2017-022852

##### SUMMARY OF INVENTION

[0006] A first feature provides an inhalation component generation device including a load configured to vaporize or atomize an inhalation component source with electric power from a power supply, and a control unit configured to be capable of controlling supply of electric power from the power supply to the load, wherein the control unit is configured to be capable of performing a first diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during operation of the load, and a second diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during charging of the power supply, and the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function include different algorithms.

[0007] The second feature provides the inhalation component generation device according to the first feature, wherein the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function each include at least one algorithm for estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and

failure of the power supply, and the number of algorithms included in the second diagnostic function is greater than the number of algorithms included in the first diagnostic function.

[0008] The third feature provides the inhalation component generation device according to the first feature or the second feature, wherein the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function each include at least one algorithm for estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply, and the number of simultaneously executable algorithms included in the second diagnostic function is greater than the number of simultaneously executable algorithms included in the first diagnostic function.

[0009] The fourth feature provides the inhalation component generation device according to the second feature or the third feature, wherein the first diagnostic function includes only one of the algorithms.

[0010] The fifth feature provides the inhalation component generation device according to any one of the first feature to the fourth feature, wherein charging of the power supply is controlled by an external charger separate from the inhalation component generation device.

[0011] The sixth feature provides the inhalation component generation device according to any one of the first feature to fifth feature, wherein the first diagnostic function is configured to be performed while a voltage value of the power supply changing during operation of the load is in a predetermined first voltage range, the second diagnostic function is configured to be performed while a voltage value of the power supply changing during charging of the power supply is in a predetermined second voltage range, and the second voltage range is wider than the first voltage range.

[0012] The seventh feature provides the inhalation component generation device according to any one of the first feature to the sixth feature, wherein only the second diagnostic function out of the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function is configured to be performed when the voltage value of the power supply is lower than a discharge termination voltage of the power supply.

[0013] The eighth feature provides the inhalation component generation device according to any one of the first feature to the seventh feature, further including a plurality of sensors

configured to output a state of the inhalation component generation device, wherein the number of the sensors required to perform the second diagnostic function is less than the number of sensors required to perform the first diagnostic function.

[0014] The ninth feature provides the inhalation component generation device according to the eighth feature, wherein the plurality of sensors include a request sensor capable of outputting a signal requesting an operation of the load, the first diagnostic function is performed using the request sensor, and the second diagnostic function is performed without using the request sensor.

[0015] The tenth feature provides the inhalation component generation device according to the eighth feature or the ninth feature, wherein the plurality of sensors include a voltage sensor configured to output the voltage value of the power supply, and the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function are performed using the voltage sensor.

[0016] The eleventh feature provides the inhalation component generation device according to any one of the first feature to the tenth feature, further including a voltage sensor configured to convert an analog voltage value of the power supply into a digital voltage value using a predetermined correlation, and output the digital voltage value, wherein the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function are performed using the voltage sensor, and the control unit is configured to be capable of calibrating the correlation based on a voltage change of the power supply during charging of the power supply.

[0017] The twelfth feature provides the inhalation component generation device according to any one of the first feature to the eleventh feature, wherein the second diagnostic function includes an algorithm for estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply based on a change in the voltage value of the power supply with respect to an amount of electric power supplied to the power supply during charging.

[0018] The thirteenth feature provides the inhalation component generation device according to any one of the first feature to the twelfth feature, wherein the first diagnostic function includes an algorithm for estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply based on a change in the voltage value of the power supply

during operation of the load.

[0019] The fourteenth feature provides a method of controlling an inhalation component generation device including a load configured to vaporize or atomize an inhalation component source with electric power from a power supply, the method including the steps of performing a first diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during operation of the load, and performing, using an algorithm different from the first diagnostic function, a second diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during charging of the power supply.

[0020] The fifteenth feature provides a program causing an inhalation component generation device to execute the method according to the fourteenth feature.

[0021] The sixteenth feature provides an inhalation component generation system including an inhalation component generation device including a load configured to vaporize or atomize an inhalation component source with electric power from a power supply, and a first control unit configured to be capable of controlling supply of electric power from the power supply to the load, and an external charger including a second control unit configured to be capable of controlling charging of the power supply, wherein the first control unit is configured to be capable of performing a first diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during operation of the load, the second control unit is configured to be capable of performing a second diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during charging of the power supply, and the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function include different algorithms.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0022] [Fig. 1] Fig. 1 is a schematic diagram illustrating an inhalation component generation device according to one embodiment.

[Fig. 2] Fig. 2 is a schematic diagram illustrating an atomizing unit according to one embodiment.

[Fig. 3] Fig. 3 is a schematic diagram illustrating an example of a configuration of an inhalation sensor according to one embodiment.

[Fig. 4] Fig. 4 is a block diagram illustrating the inhalation component generation device.

[Fig. 5] Fig. 5 is a diagram illustrating an electrical circuit of an atomizing unit and an electrical unit.

[Fig. 6] Fig. 6 is a diagram illustrating an electrical circuit of a charger and the electrical unit in a state in which the charger is connected.

[Fig. 7] Fig. 7 is a flowchart illustrating an example of a control method in a power supply mode of the inhalation component generation device.

[Fig. 8] Fig. 8 is a graph showing an example of control of an amount of electric power supplied from a power supply to a load.

[Fig. 9] Fig. 9 is a flowchart illustrating an example of a first diagnostic processing.

[Fig. 10] Fig. 10 is a graph for explaining a predetermined voltage range for the first diagnostic function.

[Fig. 11] Fig. 11 is a flowchart illustrating an example of a control method by a processor of the charger.

[Fig. 12] Fig. 12 is a flowchart illustrating an example of a control method of a control unit in a charging mode.

[Fig. 13] Fig. 13 is a graph for explaining increase in voltage of a normal power supply and a degraded or failed power supply during charging.

[Fig. 14] Fig. 14 is a diagram illustrating a block of a voltage sensor.

[Fig. 15] Fig. 15 is a flowchart illustrating processing for calibration of a predetermined correlation of a voltage sensor.

[Fig. 16] Fig. 16 is a graph showing an example of calibration of the predetermined correlation of the voltage sensor.

[Fig. 17] Fig. 17 is a graph showing another example of calibration of the predetermined correlation of the voltage sensor.

[Fig. 18] Fig. 18 is a diagram illustrating a block of a voltage sensor according to another example.

#### DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

[0023] Hereinafter, embodiments will be described. Note that the same or similar parts are denoted by the same or similar reference signs in the description of the drawings below. However, it should be noted that the drawings are schematic and ratios in dimensions may be different from actual ones.

[0024] Therefore, specific dimensions and the like should be determined with reference to the following description. Moreover, it is a matter of course that parts having different dimensional relationships and ratios may be included between the mutual drawings.

[0025] [Outline of Disclosure]

It is important to estimate or detect the degradation of a chargeable and dischargeable power supply for the safety of the device and the more accurate control. However, it is difficult to accurately diagnose the degraded state of the power supply. Particularly in the inhalation component generation device having no complicated control circuit, the complicate electrical control is difficult, and no attempt is made to estimate or detect the degraded state of the power supply.

[0026] An inhalation component generation device according to one aspect includes a load configured to vaporize or atomize an inhalation component source with electric power from a power supply, and a control unit configured to be capable of controlling supply of electric power from the power supply to the load. The control unit is configured to be capable of performing a first diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during operation of the load, and a second diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during charging of the power supply. The first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function include different algorithms.

[0027] A method of controlling an inhalation component generation device according to one aspect relates to a method of controlling an inhalation component generation device

including a load configured to vaporize or atomize an inhalation component source with electric power from a power supply. The method includes the steps of performing a first diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during operation of the load, and performing a second diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during charging of the power supply, the second diagnostic function including an algorithm different from the first diagnostic function.

[0028] According to the above-described aspect, at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during charging of the power supply and at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during operation of the load are estimated or detected using respective algorithms which are different from each other. This enables estimation or detection of at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply using an appropriate algorithm corresponding to the state of the inhalation component generation device.

[0029] [First Embodiment]

(Inhalation component generation device)

Hereinafter, an inhalation component generation device according to a first embodiment will be described. Fig. 1 is an exploded view illustrating an inhalation component generation device according to one embodiment. Fig. 2 is a diagram illustrating an atomizing unit according to one embodiment. Fig. 3 is a schematic diagram illustrating an example of a configuration of an inhalation sensor according to one embodiment. Fig. 4 is a block diagram illustrating an electric configuration of the inhalation component generation device. Fig. 5 is a diagram illustrating an electrical circuit of the atomizing unit and an electrical unit. Fig. 6 is a diagram illustrating an electrical circuit of a charger and the electrical unit in a state in which the charger is connected.

[0030] An inhalation component generation device 100 may be a non-combustion-type flavor inhaler for inhaling an inhalation component (an inhaling flavor component) without combustion. The inhalation component generation device 100 may have a shape extending along a predetermined direction A which is a direction from a non-inhalation port end

E2 toward an inhalation port end E1. In this case, the inhalation component generation device 100 may include one end E1 having an inhalation port 141 for inhaling an inhalation component and the other end E2 opposite to the inhalation port 141.

[0031] The inhalation component generation device 100 may include an electrical unit 110 and an atomizing unit 120. The atomizing unit 120 may be configured to be detachably attached to the electrical unit 110 through mechanical connection parts 111 and 121. When the atomizing unit 120 and the electrical unit 110 are mechanically connected to each other, a load 121R (described later) in the atomizing unit 120 is electrically connected to a power supply 10 provided in the electrical unit 110 through electrical connection terminals 110t and 120t. That is, the electrical connection terminals 110t and 120t form a connection part capable of electrically disconnecting and connecting the load 121R from/to the power supply 10.

[0032] The atomizing unit 120 includes an inhalation component source to be inhaled by a user, and the load 121R configured to vaporize or atomize the inhalation component source with electric power from the power supply 10. The inhalation component source may include an aerosol source that generates aerosol and/or a flavor source that generates a flavor component.

[0033] The load 121R may be any element capable of generating aerosol and/or a flavor component from an aerosol source and/or a flavor source by receiving the electric power. The load 121R may be, for example, a heat generating element such as a heater or an element such as an ultrasound generator. Examples of the heat generating element include a heat generation resistor, a ceramic heater, and an induction heating type heater.

[0034] Hereinafter, a more detailed example of the atomizing unit 120 will be described with reference to Fig. 1 and Fig. 2. The atomizing unit 120 may include a reservoir 121P, a wick 121Q, and the load 121R. The reservoir 121P may be configured to store a liquid aerosol source or flavor source. The reservoir 121P may be, for example, a porous body made of a material such as a resin web. The wick 121Q may be a liquid holding member that draws the aerosol source or the flavor source from the reservoir 121P using capillary

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action. The wick 121Q may be made of, for example, glass fiber or porous ceramic.

[0035] The load 121R atomizes the aerosol source held by the wick 121Q or heats the flavor source held by the wick 121Q. The load 121R is formed of, for example, a resistive heating element (for example, a heating wire) wound around the wick 121Q.

[0036] The air that has flowed in from an inlet hole 122A passes through the vicinity of the load 121R in the atomizing unit 120. The inhalation component generated by the load 121R flows together with the air toward the inhalation port.

[0037] The aerosol source may be a liquid at ordinary temperature. For example, polyhydric alcohol such as glycerin and propylene glycol, water or the like may be used as the aerosol source. The aerosol source itself may contain the flavor component. Alternatively, the aerosol source may include a tobacco raw material that emits an inhaling flavor component by being heated or an extract deriving from the tobacco raw material.

[0038] Note that, although an example of the liquid aerosol source at ordinary temperature has been described in detail in the above-described embodiment, an aerosol source that is a solid at ordinary temperature may be also used instead of the liquid aerosol source.

[0039] The atomizing unit 120 may include a replaceable flavor unit (cartridge) 130. The flavor unit 130 includes a cylindrical body 131 that accommodates the flavor source. The cylindrical body 131 may include a membrane member 133 and a filter 132. The flavor source may be provided in a space formed by the membrane member 133 and the filter 132.

[0040] The atomizing unit 120 may include a breaking part 90. The breaking part 90 is a member for breaking a part of the membrane member 133 of the flavor unit 130. The breaking part 90 may be held by a partition wall member 126 for partitioning into the atomizing unit 120 and the flavor unit 130. The partition wall member 126 is made of, for example, a polyacetal resin. The breaking part 90 is, for example, a cylindrical hollow needle. An airflow path that pneumatically communicates between the atomizing unit 120 and the flavor unit 130 is formed by puncturing the membrane member 133 with a tip of the hollow needle. Here, it is preferable that an inside of the hollow needle is provided with a mesh having a roughness of not allowing the flavor source to pass through.

[0041] According to an example of the preferred embodiment, the flavor source in the flavor unit 130 imparts the inhaling flavor component to the aerosol generated by the load 121R of the atomizing unit 120. The flavor imparted to the aerosol by the flavor source is sent to the inhalation port of the inhalation component generation device 100. Thus, the inhalation component generation device 100 may have a plurality of inhalation component sources. Alternatively, the inhalation component generation device 100 may have only one inhalation component source.

[0042] The flavor source in the flavor unit 130 may be a solid at ordinary temperature. By way of example, the flavor source comprises an ingredient piece of a plant material which imparts the inhaling flavor component to the aerosol. Shredded tobacco or a forming body obtained by forming a tobacco material such as a tobacco raw material in a granular form, may be used as an ingredient piece which is a component of the flavor source. Alternatively, the flavor source may comprise a forming body obtained by forming a tobacco material into a sheet form. Also, the ingredient piece, which is a component of the flavor source, may comprise a plant (for example, mint, a herb, and the like) other than tobacco. The flavor source may be provided with flavor such as menthol.

[0043] The inhalation component generation device 100 may include a mouthpiece 142 having the inhalation port 141 through which a user inhales the inhalation component. The mouthpiece 142 may be configured to be detachably attached to the atomizing unit 120 or the flavor unit 130, or may be configured to be an integral part of the atomizing unit 120 or the flavor unit 130.

[0044] The electrical unit 110 may include the power supply 10, a notification part 40, and a control unit 50. The power supply 10 stores the electric power necessary for the operation of the flavor inhaler 100. The power supply 10 may be detachably attached to the electrical unit 110. The power supply 10 may be, for example, a rechargeable battery such as a lithium ion secondary battery.

[0045] The control unit 50 may include, for example, a controller 51 such as a microcontroller, an inhalation sensor 20, and a push button 30. In addition, the inhalation

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component generation device 100 may include a voltage sensor 150, a current sensor 160, and a temperature sensor 170, where appropriate. The controller 51 performs various types of control necessary for the operation of the inhalation component generation device 100 according to the output values from the voltage sensor 150, the current sensor 160, and the temperature sensor 170. For example, the controller 51 may constitute a power control unit that controls the electric power from the power supply 10 to the load 121R.

[0046] When the atomizing unit 120 is connected to the electrical unit 110, the load 121R provided in the atomizing unit 120 is electrically connected to the power supply 10 of the electrical unit 110 (see Fig. 5).

[0047] The inhalation component generation device 100 may include a switch 140 capable of electrically connecting and disconnecting the load 121R to or from the power supply 10. The switch 140 is opened or closed by the control unit 50. The switch 140 may be comprised of, for example, a MOSFET.

[0048] When the switch 140 is turned on, the electric power is supplied from the power supply 10 to the load 121R. On the other hand, when the switch 140 is turned off, the supply of the electric power from the power supply 10 to the load 121R is stopped. The turning on and off of the switch 140 is controlled by the control unit 50.

[0049] The control unit 50 may include a request sensor capable of outputting a signal requesting the operation of the load 121R. The request sensor may be, for example, a push button 30 to be pressed by a user, or the inhalation sensor 20 configured to detect a user's inhaling operation. The control unit 50 acquires an operation request signal to the load 121R and generates a command for operating the load 121R. In a specific example, the control unit 50 outputs the command for operating the load 121R to the switch 140, and the switch 140 is turned on according to this command. Thus, the control unit 50 is configured to control the supply of the electric power from the power supply 10 to the load 121R. When the electric power is supplied from the power supply 10 to the load 121R, the inhalation component source is vaporized or atomized by the load 121R.

[0050] In addition, the inhalation component generation device 100 may include a stop part

180 configured to shut off or reduce a charging current to the power supply 10, where appropriate. The stop part 180 may be comprised of, for example, a MOSFET switch. The control unit 50 can turn off the stop part 180 to forcibly shut off or reduce the charging current to the power supply 10, even if the electrical unit 110 is connected to a charger 200. Note that even if a dedicated stop part 180 is not necessarily provided, the control unit 50 can turn off the switch 140 to forcibly shut off or reduce the charging current to the power supply 10.

[0051] The voltage sensor 150 may be configured to output a voltage of the power supply 10. The control unit 50 can obtain an output value of the voltage sensor 150. That is, the control unit 50 is configured to be capable of acquiring a voltage value of the power supply 10.

[0052] The current sensor 160 may be configured to be capable of detecting an amount of current that has flowed out from the power supply 10 and an amount of current that has flowed into the power supply 10. The temperature sensor 170 may be configured to be capable of outputting a temperature of the power supply 10, for example. The control unit 50 is configured to be capable of acquiring outputs of the voltage sensor 150, the current sensor 160, and the temperature sensor 170. The control unit 50 performs various types of control using these outputs.

[0053] The inhalation component generation device 100 may include a heater 70 configured to heat the power supply 10, where appropriate. The heater 70 may be provided in the vicinity of the power supply 10, and is configured to be operable according to a command from the control unit 50.

[0054] The inhalation sensor 20 may be configured to output an output value that varies depending on inhalation from the inhalation port. Specifically, the inhalation sensor 20 may be a sensor that outputs a value (for example, a voltage value or a current value) that changes according to the flow rate of air (i.e., a user's puff operation) inhaled from the non-inhalation port side toward the inhalation port side. Examples of such a sensor include a condenser microphone sensor, and a known flow sensor.

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[0055] Fig. 3 illustrates a specific example of the inhalation sensor 20. The inhalation sensor 20 illustrated in Fig. 3 includes a sensor body 21, a cover 22, and a substrate 23. The sensor body 21 is comprised of, for example, a capacitor. An electric capacity of the sensor body 21 changes due to vibration (pressure) generated by air inhaled from an air introduction hole 125 (i.e., air inhaled from the non-inhalation port side toward the inhalation port side). The cover 22 is provided on the inhalation port side with respect to the sensor body 21, and has an opening 22A. Providing the cover 22 having the opening 22A allows the electric capacity of the sensor body 21 to be changed easily, and improves the response characteristic of the sensor body 21. The substrate 23 outputs a value (here, a voltage value) indicating the electric capacity of the sensor body 21 (capacitor).

[0056] The inhalation component generation device 100, more specifically, the electrical unit 110 may be configured to be connectable to the charger 200 for charging the power supply 10 in the electrical unit 110 (see Fig. 6). When the charger 200 is connected to the electrical unit 110, the charger 200 is electrically connected to the power supply 10 of the electrical unit 110.

[0057] The electrical unit 110 may include a determination part configured to determine whether the charger 200 is connected. The determination part may be, for example, means for determining the presence or absence of connection of the charger 200 based on a change in potential difference between a pair of electrical terminals to which the charger 200 is connected. The determination part is not limited to this means, and may be any means that can determine the presence or absence of the connection of the charger 200.

[0058] The charger 200 includes an external power supply 210 for charging the power supply 10 in the electrical unit 110. A pair of electrical terminals 110t of the electrical unit 110 for electrically connecting the charger 200 can also serve as a pair of electrical terminals of the electrical unit 110 for electrically connecting the load 121R.

[0059] When the external power supply 210 is an AC power supply, the charger 200 may include an inverter configured to convert alternating current to direct current. The charger 200 may include a processor 250 configured to control the charging of the power supply 10.

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Furthermore, the charger 200 may include an ammeter 230 and a voltmeter 240, where appropriate. The ammeter 230 acquires a charging current to be supplied from the charger 200 to the power supply 10. The voltmeter 240 acquires a voltage between the pair of electrical terminals to which the charger 200 is connected. The processor 250 of the charger 200 uses the output value from the ammeter 230 and/or the voltmeter 240 to control the charging of the power supply 10. In addition, the charger 200 may further include a voltage sensor configured to acquire a direct-current voltage output from the inverter, and a converter capable of boosting and/or stepping down the direct-current voltage output by the inverter.

[0060] To simplify the structure of the inhalation component generation device 100, the processor 250 of the charger 200 may be configured to be incapable of communicating with the control unit 50 of the electrical unit 110. That is, a communication terminal for communicating between the processor 250 of the charger 200 and the control unit 50 is unnecessary. In other words, in the connection interface with the charger 200, the electrical unit 110 has only two electrical terminals, one for a main positive bus and the other for a main negative bus.

[0061] The notification part 40 issues notification for notifying a user of various types of information. The notification part 40 may be, for example, a light emitting element such as an LED. Instead of this, the notification part 40 may be an element that generates sound, or a vibrator.

[0062] The notification part 40 may be configured to notify a user of at least when a remaining amount of the power supply 10 is not insufficient and when the remaining amount of the power supply 10 is insufficient, based on the voltage of the power supply 10. For example, when the remaining amount of the power supply 10 is insufficient, the notification part 40 issues notification different from that when the remaining amount of the power supply 10 is not insufficient. For example, when the voltage of the power supply 10 is in the vicinity of a discharge termination voltage, the remaining amount of the power supply 10 can be determined to be insufficient.

[0063] (Power supply mode)

Fig. 7 is a flowchart illustrating a control method in a power supply mode according to one embodiment. The power supply mode is a mode in which electric power can be supplied from the power supply 10 to the load 121R. The power supply mode can be performed at least when the atomizing unit 120 is connected to the electrical unit 110.

[0064] The control unit 50 sets a counter (Co) that measures a value related to the operation amount of the load to "0" (step S100), and determines whether to have acquired the operation request signal to the load 121R (step S102). The operation request signal may be a signal acquired from the inhalation sensor 20 when the inhalation sensor 20 detects the user's inhaling operation. That is, the control unit 50 may perform a pulse width modulation (PWM) control with respect to the switch 140 when the user's inhaling operation has been detected by the inhalation sensor 20 (step S104). Alternatively, the operation request signal may be a signal acquired from the push button 30 when it is detected that the push button 30 has been pressed by the user. That is, when the control unit 50 detects that the user has pressed the push button, the control unit 50 may perform the PWM control with respect to the switch 140 (step S104). Note that in step S104, a pulse frequency modulation (PFM) control may be performed instead of the PWM control. A duty ratio in the PWM control and a switching frequency in the PFM control may be adjusted by various parameters such as a voltage of the power supply 10 acquired by the voltage sensor 150.

[0065] When the PWM control is performed with respect to the switch 140 by the control unit 50, aerosol is generated.

[0066] The control unit 50 determines whether to have detected an end timing of the power supply to the load 121R (step S106). When detecting the end timing, the control unit 50 ends the power supply to the load (step S108). When the control unit 50 ends the power supply to the load (step S108), the control unit 50 acquires a value ( $\Delta Co$ ) related to the operation amount of the load 121R (step S110). This acquired value ( $\Delta Co$ ) related to the operation amount of the load 121R is a value in a period between steps S104 and S108. The value ( $\Delta Co$ ) related to the operation amount of the load 121R may be, for example, an amount of electric power supplied to the load 121R for a predetermined time, i.e., in the

period between steps S104 and S108, an operation time of the load 121R, or a consumption amount of the inhalation component source consumed for the predetermined time.

[0067] Next, the control unit 50 acquires an accumulated value " $C_o = C_o + \Delta C_o$ " of the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R (step S112). Then, the control unit 50 performs a first diagnostic function (step S114) as necessary.

[0068] The end timing of the power supply to the load 121R may be a timing when the inhalation sensor 20 detects the end of the operation for using the load 121R. For example, the end timing of the power supply to the load 121R may be a timing when the inhalation sensor 20 detects the end of the user's inhaling operation. Instead of this, the end timing of the power supply to the load 121R may be a timing when the control unit 50 detects the release of the pressing of the push button 30. Furthermore, the end timing of the power supply to the load 121R may be a timing when the control unit 50 detects that a predetermined cut-off time has elapsed since the start of the power supply to the load 121R. The predetermined cut-off time may be preset based on a period required for a general user to perform one inhaling operation. For example, the predetermined cut-off time may be in a range of 1 to 5 seconds, preferably 1.5 to 3 seconds, and more preferably 1.5 to 2.5 seconds.

[0069] If the control unit 50 does not detect the end timing of the power supply to the load 121R, the control unit 50 performs the PWM control with respect to the switch 140 again, and continues the power supply to the load 121R (step S104). Then, when the control unit 50 detects the end timing of the power supply to the load 121R, the control unit 50 acquires the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R (step S110), and derives the accumulated value of the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R (step S112).

[0070] In this way, when the power supply to the load ends (step S108), the control unit 50 can acquire the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R in a period from the acquisition of the operation request signal to the load until the end timing of the power supply to the load 121R, i.e., in one puff operation. The operation amount of the load 121R in one puff operation may be, for example, an amount of electric power supplied to the load 121R in one puff operation. Instead of this, the operation amount of the load 121R in one

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puff operation may be, for example, the operation time of the load 121R in one puff operation.

The operation time of the load 121R may be the total sum of power pulses supplied to the load 121R in one puff operation (also see Fig. 8), or may be a time period required for one puff operation, i.e., a time period from the acquisition of the operation request signal to the load 121R until the end timing of the power supply to the load 121R is detected.

Furthermore, the operation amount of the load 121R in one puff operation may be a consumption amount of the inhalation component source consumed in one puff operation.

The consumption amount of the inhalation component source can be estimated from the amount of electric power supplied to the load 121R, for example. When the inhalation component source is a liquid, the consumption amount of the inhalation component source can be acquired by a sensor configured to measure a weight of the inhalation component source remaining in the reservoir or a height of the liquid level of the inhalation component source. In addition, the operation amount of the load 121R in one puff operation may be a temperature of the load 121R, for example, a maximum temperature of the load 121R in one puff operation, or a heat quantity generated in the load 121R. The temperature and the heat quantity of the load 121R can be acquired or estimated using the temperature sensor, for example.

[0071] Fig. 8 is a graph showing an example of control of an amount of electric power supplied from the power supply 10 to the load 121R. Fig. 8 shows a relationship between an output value of the inhalation sensor 20 and a voltage to be supplied to the load 121R.

[0072] The inhalation sensor 20 is configured to output an output value that varies depending on inhalation from the inhalation port 141. The output value of the inhalation sensor 20 may be a value (for example, a value indicating a pressure change in the inhalation component generation device 100) according to a flow velocity and a flow rate of the gas in the flavor inhaler as shown in Fig. 8, but is not necessarily limited thereto.

[0073] When the inhalation sensor 20 outputs an output value that varies depending on inhalation, the control unit 50 may be configured to detect the inhalation according to the output value of the inhalation sensor 20. For example, the control unit 50 may be

configured to detect the user's inhaling operation when the output value of the inhalation sensor 20 is equal to or larger than a first predetermined value O1. Accordingly, the control unit 50 may determine to have acquired the operation request signal to the load 121R when the output value of the inhalation sensor 20 has become equal to or larger than the first predetermined value O1 (step S102). On the other hand, the control unit 50 may determine to have detected the end timing of the power supply to the load 121R when the output value of the inhalation sensor 20 has become equal to or smaller than a second predetermined value O2 (step S106). In this way, the control unit 50 may be configured to be capable of deriving a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R, for example, the total time to supply electric power to the load 121R in one puff operation, based on the output of the inhalation sensor 20. More specifically, the control unit 50 is configured to be capable of deriving a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R based on at least one of the detected inhalation period and inhalation amount.

[0074] Here, the control unit 50 is configured to detect the inhalation only when an absolute value of the output value of the inhalation sensor 20 is equal to or larger than the first predetermined value (predetermined threshold) O1. This can prevent the load 121R from operating due to the noise of the inhalation sensor 20. In addition, since the second predetermined value O2 for detecting the end timing of the power supply to the load 121R is a value for performing the transition from a state in which the load 121R is already operating to a state in which the load 121R is not operating, the second predetermined value O2 may be smaller than the first predetermined value O1. This is because false operation of the load 121R due to picking up of noise of the inhalation sensor 20 like the first predetermined value O1, i.e., the transition from the state in which the load 121R is not operating to the state in which the load 121R is operating cannot occur.

[0075] Furthermore, the control unit 50 may include a power control unit configured to control an amount of electric power supplied from the power supply 10 to the load 121R. The power control unit adjusts, for example, the amount of electric power from the power supply 10 to be supplied to the load 121R by the pulse width modulation (PWM) control.

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The duty ratio relating to the pulse width may be a value smaller than 100%. Note that the power control unit may control an amount of electric power to be supplied from the power supply 10 to the load 121R by the pulse frequency modulation (PFM) control instead of the pulse width modulation control.

[0076] For example, when the voltage value of the power supply 10 is relatively high, the control unit 50 narrows the pulse width of the voltage to be supplied to the load 121R (see a middle graph in Fig. 8). For example, when the voltage value of the power supply 10 is relatively low, the control unit 50 widens the pulse width of the voltage to be supplied to the load 121R (see a lower graph in Fig. 8). The control of the pulse width can be performed, for example, by adjusting the length of time from turning on of the switch 140 to turning off of the switch 140. Since the voltage value of the power supply 10 decreases with reduction in a charge amount of the power supply, the amount of electric power is adjusted according to the voltage value. When the control unit 50 thus performs the pulse width modulation (PWM) control, an effective value of the voltage supplied to the load 121R is about the same in both cases where the voltage of the power supply 10 is relatively high and relatively low.

[0077] As described above, it is preferable that the power control unit is configured to control the voltage to be applied to the load 121R in the pulse width modulation (PWM) control having a duty ratio that increases as the voltage value of the power supply 10 decreases. This enables an amount of aerosol generated during the puff operation to be substantially equalized regardless of the remaining amount of the power supply 10. More preferably, the power control unit preferably controls the duty ratio of the pulse width modulation (PWM) control so that an amount of electric power per pulse supplied to the load 121R becomes constant.

[0078] (First Diagnostic Function)

Fig. 9 illustrates an example of a flowchart of the first diagnostic function. The first diagnostic function is processing for estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply 10 based on the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in a period in which the voltage value of the power supply 10 is in a

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predetermined voltage range. Fig. 10 is a graph for explaining the predetermined voltage range for the first diagnostic function.

[0079] Specifically, the control unit 50 acquires a voltage ( $V_{\text{batt}}$ ) of the power supply 10 (step S200). The voltage ( $V_{\text{batt}}$ ) of the power supply 10 can be acquired using the voltage sensor 150. The voltage of the power supply 10 may be an open circuit voltage (OCV) acquired in a state in which the load 121R is not electrically connected to the power supply 10, or may be a closed circuit voltage (CCV) acquired in a state in which the load 121R is electrically connected to the power supply 10. Note that it is preferable that the voltage of the power supply 10 is defined by the open circuit voltage (OCV) rather than by the closed circuit voltage (CCV) to eliminate the influences of changes in internal resistance and temperature due to voltage drop and discharge accompanying electrical connection of the load 121R. The open circuit voltage (OCV) is obtained by acquiring the voltage of the power supply 10 in a state in which the switch 140 is turned off. Note that the open circuit voltage (OCV) may be estimated from the closed circuit voltage (CCV) by known various methods instead of acquiring the open circuit voltage (OCV) using the voltage sensor 150.

[0080] Next, the control unit 50 determines whether the acquired voltage of the power supply 10 is equal to or lower than an upper limit value of the predetermined voltage range (step S202). When the voltage of the power supply 10 is higher than the upper limit value of the predetermined voltage range, the process ends without estimating or detecting degradation and failure of the power supply.

[0081] When the voltage of the power supply 10 is equal to or smaller than the upper limit value of the predetermined voltage range, the control unit 50 determines whether the voltage of the power supply acquired one time earlier, i.e., in the previous puff operation is equal to or lower than the upper limit value of the above-described predetermined voltage range (step S204). When the voltage value of the power supply 10 acquired one time earlier, i.e., in the previous puff operation is higher than the upper limit value of the above-described predetermined voltage range, the control unit 50 can determine that the voltage value of the power supply 10 becomes equal to or lower than the upper limit value of the above-described

predetermined voltage range by the latest puff operation for the first time. In this case, an accumulation counter (ICo) for counting an accumulated value of values related to the operation amount of the load 121 is set to "0" (step S206). When the accumulation counter (ICo) is set to "0," the process proceeds to the following step S208.

[0082] When the voltage value of the power supply acquired one time earlier, i.e., in the previous puff operation is equal to or lower than the upper limit value of the above-described predetermined voltage range (step S204), or the accumulation counter (ICo) is set to "0" (step S206), the control unit 50 determines whether the voltage of the power supply 10 is lower than a lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range (step S208).

[0083] When the voltage of the power supply 10 is equal to or higher than the lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range, an integral value " $ICo = ICo + Co$ " of the values related to the operation amount of the load 121R is derived (step S210). Here, "Co" is a value accumulatively obtained in step S112 illustrated in Fig 7. Then, the process ends without estimating or detecting degradation or failure of the power supply 10.

[0084] When this process ends, the control unit 50 waits until acquiring an operation request signal to the load 121R again (step S102 in Fig. 7). When the control unit 50 acquires the operation request signal to the load 121R again, the control unit 50 derives a value (Co) related to the operation amount of the load 121R in one puff operation, and starts the first diagnostic function S114 again.

[0085] When the voltage of the power supply 10 is within the predetermined voltage range in the first diagnostic function, the control unit 50 accumulates the values related to the operation amount of the load 121R (step S210). Thereby, the control unit 50 can acquire a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in a period in which the voltage value of the power supply 10 is in a predetermined voltage range.

[0086] In step S208, when the voltage of the power supply 10 is lower than the lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range, the control unit 50 determines whether a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in a period in which the acquired voltage value of the power supply 10 is in a predetermined voltage range, i.e., the

above-described integral value of  $ICo$  is larger than a predetermined threshold (step S220). When the above-described integral value of  $ICo$  is larger than the predetermined threshold, the control unit 50 determines that the power supply 10 is normal, and the processing of the first diagnostic function ends.

[0087] When the above-described integral value of  $ICo$  is equal to or smaller than the predetermined threshold, the control unit 50 determines that the power supply 10 is degraded or fails (step S220), and the control unit 50 notifies the user of abnormality through the notification part 40 (step S224). The notification part 40 can notify the user of degradation or failure of the power supply 10 by predetermined light, sound or vibration. In addition, when the control unit 50 determines that the power supply 10 is degraded or fails, the control unit 50 may perform control to disable the power supply to the load 121R as necessary.

Note that in the present embodiment, when the voltage of the power supply 10 is determined to be lower than the lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range (step S208), the value  $Co$  related to the operation amount of the load 121R is not added to the integral value  $ICo$  of the values related to the operation amount of the load 121R. In other words, when step S208 is determined to be affirmative, step S210 is not performed. Alternatively, when the voltage of the power supply 10 is determined to be lower than the lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range (step S208), the value  $Co$  related to the operation amount of the load 121R may be added to the integral value  $ICo$  of the values related to the operation amount of the load 121R. In other words, even when step S208 is determined to be affirmative, the same step as step S210 may be performed. In this case, the same step as step S210 can be performed before step S220.

[0088] As shown in Fig. 10, when the power supply 10 is degraded, the voltage of the power supply 10 rapidly decreases with an increase in the value related to the operation amount of the load, for example, the amount of electric power to the load 121 or the operation time of the load 121. Therefore, the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in a period in which the voltage value of the power supply 10 is in a predetermined voltage range decreases with the degradation of the power supply. This is

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shown by the relationship " $Q1 < Q2$ " in Fig. 10. In addition, "Q1" in Fig. 10 is a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in a period in which the voltage value of the power supply 10 is in a predetermined voltage range when the power supply 10 is a degraded product. On the other hand, "Q2" in Fig. 10 is a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in a period in which the voltage value of the power supply 10 is in a predetermined voltage range when the power supply 10 is new. Therefore, as described above, the control unit 50 can estimate or detect the degradation of the power supply 10 based on the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in a period in which the voltage value of the power supply 10 is in a predetermined voltage range. Note that when the power supply 10 fails, the voltage of the power supply 10 rapidly decreases with an increase in the value related to the operation amount of the load, for example, the amount of electric power to the load 121R or the operation time of the load 121, as in the case where the power supply 10 is degraded. Accordingly, the control unit 50 can estimate or detect the failure of the power supply 10 based on the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in a period in which the voltage value of the power supply 10 is in a predetermined voltage range. That is, the control unit 50 can estimate or detect at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply 10 based on the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in a period in which the voltage value of the power supply 10 is in a predetermined voltage range.

[0089] The predetermined threshold used in step S220 may be determined by experiment in advance according to the type of the power supply 10. The predetermined threshold is set to be lower than a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R by which the new power supply 10 can operate in the predetermined voltage range.

[0090] The value related to the operation amount of the load 121R may be the amount of electric power supplied to the load 121R, the operation time of the load 121R, the consumption amount of the inhalation component source, or the like, as described above.

[0091] Here, as described above, when the pulse width modulation (PWM) control of electric power supplied to the load 121R is performed based on the voltage of the power

supply 10 acquired by the voltmeter 150, a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R is, more preferably, the operation time of the load 121R. In this case, the operation time of the load 121R is a time period required for one puff operation, i.e., a time period from the acquisition of the operation request signal to the load 121R until the end timing of the power supply to the load 121R is detected. Since the amount of electric power supplied to the load 121R per unit time is equalized by the pulse width modulation (PWM) control, the operating time of the load 121R is proportional to the total amount of electric power supplied to the load 121R in a predetermined voltage range. Therefore, when the pulse width modulation (PWM) control of the electric power supplied to the load 121R is performed, the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R is defined by the operation time of the load 121R, thereby high accurate diagnosis of the power supply 10 can be performed with relatively simple control.

[0092] Instead of the example described above, the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R may be the number of operations of the load 121R operated in a predetermined voltage range. In this case, steps S110 and S112 are unnecessary in the flowchart of Fig. 7. Then, in the flowchart of Fig. 9, the number of times that the voltage of the power supply 10 has entered the predetermined voltage range may be counted. Specifically, " $ICo = ICo + Co$ " may be replaced with " $ICo = ICo + 1$ " in step S210.

[0093] Furthermore, instead of the example described above, the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R may be the number of replacement times of the replaceable cartridge containing an inhalation component source, for example, the flavor unit 130. In the inhalation component generation device 100 in which the cartridge needs to be replaced a plurality of times before the charge of the power supply 10 is consumed, the number of replacement times of the cartridge can also be used as a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R.

[0094] When a temperature of the power supply 10 is lower than a first temperature threshold, the control unit 50 may be configured to be capable of changing or correcting an algorithm for estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power

supply 10, i.e., an algorithm for performing the first diagnostic function illustrated in Fig. 9. Specifically, it is preferable that the control unit 50 corrects the predetermined threshold in step S220 to be smaller, and performs the comparison in step S220 based on the corrected threshold. The first temperature threshold may be set, for example, in the range of 1 to 5°C.

[0095] It is known that when the temperature of the power supply 10 is low, the internal resistance (impedance) of the power supply 10 increases. As a result, even when the power supply 10 is not degraded, the operation amount of the load 121R operated in a period in which the voltage value of the power supply 10 is in a predetermined voltage range is reduced. Therefore, when the temperature of the power supply 10 is low, the predetermined threshold in step S220 is corrected to be smaller to alleviate the influence of the temperature and to suppress deterioration in detection accuracy of degradation or failure of the power supply 10.

[0096] Furthermore, when the temperature of the power supply 10 is lower than a second temperature threshold, the control unit 50 may be configured not to estimate or detect at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply 10. That is, when the temperature of the power supply 10 is lower than the second temperature threshold, the control unit 50 does not necessarily perform the first diagnostic function illustrated in Fig 9. Here, the second temperature threshold may be smaller than the first temperature threshold. The second temperature threshold may be set, for example, in the range of -1 to 1°C.

[0097] Furthermore, when the temperature of the power supply 10 is lower than a third temperature threshold, the control unit 50 may heat the power supply 10 by the control of the heater 70. When the temperature of the power supply 10 is low, increasing the temperature of the power supply 10 can suppress deterioration in detection accuracy of degradation or failure of the power supply 10. The third temperature threshold may be set, for example, in the range of -1 to 1°C.

[0098] (Predetermined voltage range for first diagnostic function)

The predetermined voltage range used in the first diagnostic function will be further described with reference to Fig. 10. The predetermined voltage range may be a

predetermined section (voltage range) between the discharge termination voltage and the fully charged voltage. Therefore, the first diagnostic function is not performed when the voltage value of the power supply 10 is lower than the discharge termination voltage.

[0099] It is preferable that the predetermined voltage range is set to a range excluding a plateau range in which a change in voltage value of the power supply 10 with respect to a change in the charged amount or state of charge of the power supply 10 is smaller than other voltage ranges. The plateau range is defined, for example, by a voltage range in which the amount of change in the voltage of the power supply 10 with respect to the change in the state of charge (SOC) is 0.01 to 0.005 (V/%) or less.

[0100] Since the plateau range has a large storage capacity in a relatively small voltage range, the value related to the operation of the load 121R may fluctuate significantly in the relatively small voltage range. Therefore, the possibility of false detection in the first diagnostic function described above is increased. Therefore, it is preferable that the predetermined voltage range is set to a range excluding the plateau range.

[0101] The plateau range in which the predetermined voltage range is not set may be defined by a range including both of a plateau range in which a change in the voltage value of the power supply 10 in a new state with respect to a change in the charged amount or state of charge of the power supply 10 is smaller than other voltage ranges and a plateau range in which a change in the voltage value of the power supply 10 in a degraded state with respect to a change in the charged amount or state of charge of the power supply 10 is smaller than other voltage ranges. As a result, the possibility of causing false detection can be reduced for both of the power supply 10 in the new state and the power supply 10 in the degraded state.

[0102] Also, the first diagnostic function may be performed in a plurality of predetermined voltage ranges. It is preferable that the plurality of predetermined voltage ranges do not overlap one another. The control unit 50 can perform the first diagnostic function in the same flow as the flowchart illustrated in Fig. 9 in each predetermined voltage range.

[0103] In the example illustrated in Fig. 10, three predetermined voltage ranges (a first

section, a second section and a third section) are set. In an example, the upper limit value of the first section may be 4.1 V and the lower limit value of the first section may be 3.9 V. The upper limit value of the second section may be 3.9 V, and the lower limit value of the second section may be 3.75 V. The upper limit value of the third section may be 3.75 V, and the lower limit value of the third section may be 3.7 V.

[0104] The control unit 50 may perform the comparison in step S220 in each of the plurality of predetermined voltage ranges, and determine that the power supply 10 has been degraded or has failed when the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R in at least one of the plurality of predetermined voltage ranges is equal to or smaller than the above-described predetermined threshold (see step S220).

[0105] It is preferable that the plurality of predetermined voltage ranges are set to be narrower as the voltage range in which the change in the voltage value of the power supply 10 with respect to the change in the charged amount or state of charge of the power supply 10 is smaller. As a result, the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operating in each predetermined voltage range is equalized, so that the accuracy of the first diagnostic function performed in each predetermined voltage range is equalized.

[0106] Furthermore, the control unit 50 may be configured to be capable of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply 10 based on the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in a period in which the voltage value of the power supply 10 is in a specific voltage range even in the specific voltage range covering one or more of the plurality of predetermined voltage ranges. Specifically, the control unit 50 may set, for example, a voltage range including at least two, preferably three of the first, second and third sections shown in Fig. 10 as a specific voltage range, and perform the diagnostic function illustrated in Fig. 9.

[0107] When the diagnostic function illustrated in Fig. 9 is performed in the specific voltage range covering two or more predetermined voltage ranges adjacent to each other among the plurality of predetermined voltage ranges, it is preferable that the predetermined threshold used in step S220 is smaller than the total sum of the predetermined thresholds used

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in step S220 of the flowchart illustrated in Fig. 9 that is performed in the respective predetermined voltage ranges. For example, the predetermined threshold used in step S220 when the flowchart illustrated in Fig. 9 is performed in the entire section including the first section, the second section, and the third section may be smaller than the total sum of the predetermined thresholds used in step S220 when the flowcharts illustrated in Fig. 9 are separately performed in the first section, the second section and the third section, respectively. As a result, at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply 10 may be estimated or detected in the entire section in some cases, even when at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply 10 cannot be estimated or detected in each of the first section, the second section, and the third section depending on the state of the power supply 10 and how to use the inhalation component generation device 100. Therefore, the accuracy of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply 10 can be improved.

[0108] (Irregular processing of first diagnostic function)

When charging the power supply 10 causes the power supply 10 to be charged to a value larger than the lower limit of the predetermined voltage range and smaller than the upper limit of the predetermined voltage range, and the power supply 10 is typically not charged to the fully charged voltage, the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in the entire predetermined voltage range cannot be acquired, resulting that the first diagnostic function illustrated in Fig. 9 described above does not function properly in some cases.

[0109] In addition, when a long period of time has elapsed since vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source by the load 121R, the power supply 10 may be naturally discharged by a dark current or the like, and the voltage of the power supply 10 may naturally decrease. In such a case, the voltage range that contributes to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source does not become 100% with respect to the predetermined voltage range described above, and may be equal to or less than a predetermined ratio or width. For example, it is assumed that the voltage of the power

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supply 10 decreases from 3.9 V to 3.8 V by vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source, and then the voltage of the power supply 10 becomes 3.65 V after prolonged neglect. In this case, the voltage range that contributes to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source is about 40% with respect to the predetermined voltage range (the second section in Fig. 10). As described above, when the voltage of the power supply 10 significantly decreases regardless of the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source, the first diagnostic function illustrated in Fig. 9 described above does not function properly in some cases.

[0110] Such prolonged neglect can be detected based on an elapsed time obtained by measuring the time period having elapsed since vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source by the load 121R. That is, the control unit 50 may start a timer that counts the elapsed time at step S108 of Fig. 7. Instead of this, the prolonged neglect can also be detected based on the voltage change of the power supply 10 after vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source by the load 121R. In this case, the control unit 50 may acquire the difference between the present voltage of the power supply 10 and the voltage of the power supply 10 previously acquired at the step S200 of Fig. 9. When the difference in voltage exceeds a predetermined value, the control unit 50 can determine that the prolonged neglect has occurred.

[0111] Therefore, as described above, when a situation occurs such that the first diagnostic function does not function properly, it is preferable to correct the algorithm of the first diagnostic function or not to perform the first diagnostic function.

[0112] For example, it is preferable that the control unit 50 does not perform the determination of the degradation or failure of the power supply 10 in the predetermined voltage range when the range contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source in the predetermined voltage range is equal to or less than the predetermined ratio or width. As a result, the control unit 50 can prevent false detection in the first diagnostic function when a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated over the entire predetermined voltage range cannot be acquired due to incomplete

charging, natural discharge, and the like.

[0113] Instead of this, the control unit 50 may correct to reduce the predetermined threshold in step S220 illustrated in Fig. 9 when the range contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source in the predetermined voltage range is equal to or less than the predetermined ratio or width. For example, the first diagnostic function can be performed while suppressing false detection of the first diagnostic function by correcting to reduce the predetermined threshold according to the range contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source in the predetermined voltage range.

[0114] Furthermore, as described above, when the first diagnostic function is performed in a plurality of predetermined voltage ranges, the control unit 50 does not necessarily perform the determination of the vaporization or atomization of the power supply in the irregular range in which the range contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source among the plurality of predetermined voltage ranges is equal to or less than the predetermined ratio or width. That is, in each of the predetermined voltage ranges (for example, the first section, the second section, and the third section), the control unit 50 does not perform the determination of the degradation or failure of the power supply in the section (irregular range) in which a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R cannot be sufficiently acquired due to incomplete charging, natural discharge, and the like.

[0115] Even in such a case, the control unit 50 may estimate or detect at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply 10 based on the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in a period in which the voltage value of the power supply 10 is in a specific voltage range in the specific voltage range covering one or more of the plurality of predetermined voltage ranges. In this case, it is preferable that the specific voltage range covering one or more predetermined voltage ranges is set excluding an irregular range.

[0116] For example, in the example shown in Fig. 10, when the power supply 10 is charged until the voltage of the power supply 10 becomes 4.05 V, the first diagnostic function is not

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necessarily performed in the first section. In this case, at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply 10 may be estimated or detected based on the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in the voltage range of the combined section (3.7 V to 3.9 V) of the second section and the third section.

[0117] In this case, the predetermined threshold used in step S220 in the case of performing the first diagnostic function based on the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in the voltage range of the combined section of the first section and the second section may be configured by subtracting a value equal to or smaller than the predetermined threshold used in step S220 in the case of performing the first diagnostic function based on the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in the voltage range of the third section from the predetermined threshold (specific threshold) used in step S220 in the case of performing the first diagnostic function based on the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated in the voltage range of the entire combined section of the first section, the second section and the third section.

[0118] Furthermore, as described above, when there is an irregular range in a plurality of predetermined voltage ranges, and the first diagnostic function is performed in a wider range including the irregular range, for example, the entire section (the first section, the second section, and the third section), the predetermined threshold used in step S220 may be corrected to be reduced.

[0119] The control unit 50 may correct at least one of the lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range and the predetermined threshold based on the voltage of the power supply 10 contributing to vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source after prolonged neglect in the predetermined voltage range. As an example, the control unit 50 may correct to reduce the lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range (to approach 0 V) to perform the first diagnosis function in the predetermined voltage range without correcting the predetermined threshold. As another example, the control unit 50 may perform the first diagnostic function in the predetermined voltage range by correcting to reduce the predetermined threshold without correcting the lower limit value of the

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predetermined voltage range. As further another example, the control unit 50 may correct both of the lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range and the predetermined threshold to perform the first diagnostic function in the predetermined voltage range.

[0120] Note that the control unit 50 may set a new predetermined voltage range and the corresponding predetermined threshold in step S220 illustrated in Fig. 9 based on the voltage of the power supply 10 contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source after prolonged neglect in the predetermined voltage range and the value related to the operation amount of the load 121R operated until the voltage of the power supply 10 is dropped from the voltage to the lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range. This newly set predetermined voltage range is used in the first diagnostic function at and after the next charging.

[0121] The control unit 50 may correct at least one of the lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range and the predetermined threshold based on the voltage of the power supply 10 contributing to vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source after prolonged neglect in the predetermined voltage range. As an example, the control unit 50 may correct to reduce the lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range (to approach 0 V) to perform the first diagnosis function in the predetermined voltage range without correcting the predetermined threshold. As another example, the control unit 50 may perform the first diagnostic function in the predetermined voltage range by correcting to reduce the predetermined threshold without correcting the lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range. As further another example, the control unit 50 may correct both of the lower limit value of the predetermined voltage range and the predetermined threshold to perform the first diagnostic function in the predetermined voltage range.

[0122] In addition, the control unit 50 may continue to monitor the voltage of the power supply 10 even when the inhalation component generation device 100 is not used, for example, while the load 121R is not operating. In this case, the control unit 50 may perform the first diagnostic function while correcting the predetermined threshold in step S220 illustrated in Fig. 9 as described above even when the voltage of the power supply

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10 falls below the upper limit value of the predetermined voltage range not contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source such as natural discharge. [0123] Instead of this, the control unit 50 may acquire an integral value obtained by integrating the time when the voltage of the power supply 10 has dropped without contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source. If this integral value is converted into a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R based on a predetermined relationship, the first diagnostic function can be performed without correcting the predetermined threshold in step S220 illustrated in Fig. 9 as described above. That is, the control unit 50 may integrate, as an integral value, the time when the voltage of the power supply 10 has dropped without contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source in the predetermined range, and adds a value obtained by correcting the integral value based on a predetermined relationship to the value related to the operation amount of the load. As an example, the integral value may be corrected to be reduced based on the ratio between a current value or power consumption per unit time when the voltage of the power supply 10 drops without contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source and a current value or power consumption per unit time when the voltage of the power supply 10 drops while contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source, and may be converted into a value related to the operation amount of the load 121R. Note that the current value or power consumption per unit time when the voltage of the power supply 10 drops without contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source and the current value or power consumption per unit time when the voltage of the power supply 10 drops while contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source may be actually measured using the voltage sensor 150, the current sensor 160, and the like. Alternatively, these values may be stored in advance in a memory or the like in the control unit 50, and the control unit 51 may read these values as necessary. Note that instead of these values, the ratio between the current value or power consumption per unit time when the voltage of the power supply 10 drops without contributing to the vaporization

or atomization of the inhalation component source and the current value or power consumption per unit time when the voltage of the power supply 10 drops while contributing to the vaporization or atomization of the inhalation component source may be directly stored in the memory.

[0124] (Charge control by processor of charger)

Fig. 11 is a flowchart illustrating an example of a control method by a processor of the charger 200. The processor 250 determines whether to be connected to the electrical unit 110 (step S300). The processor 250 waits until the charger 200 is connected to the electrical unit 110.

[0125] The connection between the processor 250 and the electrical unit 110 can be detected in a known method. For example, the processor 250 can determine whether to be connected to the electrical unit 110 by detecting a change in voltage between a pair of electrical terminals of the charger 200 using the voltmeter 240.

[0126] When the charger 200 is connected to the electrical unit 110, the processor 250 determines whether the power supply 10 is deeply discharged (step S302). Here, deep discharge of the power supply 10 means a state in which the voltage of the power supply 10 is lower than the deep discharge determination voltage lower than the discharge termination voltage. The deep discharge determination voltage may be, for example, in the range of 3.1 V to 3.2 V.

[0127] The processor 250 of the charger 200 can estimate the voltage of the power supply 10 by means of the voltmeter 240. The processor 250 can determine whether the power supply 10 is deeply discharged by comparing the estimated value of the voltage of the power supply 10 with the deep discharge determination voltage.

[0128] When the processor 250 determines that the power supply 10 is deeply discharged, the processor 250 charges the power supply 10 with low-rate power (step S304). As a result, the power supply 10 can be recovered from the deeply discharged state to a state of a voltage higher than the discharge termination voltage.

[0129] When the voltage of the power supply 10 is equal to or higher than the discharge

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termination voltage, the processor 250 determines whether the voltage of the power supply 10 is equal to or higher than the switching voltage (step S306). The switching voltage is a threshold for dividing into a section of constant current charging (CC charging) and a section of constant voltage charging (CV charging). The switching voltage may be, for example, in the range of 4.0 V to 4.1 V.

[0130] When the voltage of the power supply 10 is less than the switching voltage, the processor 250 charges the power supply 10 by a constant current charging method (step S308). When the voltage of the power supply 10 is equal to or higher than the switching voltage, the processor 250 charges the power supply 10 by a constant voltage charging method (step S310). In the constant voltage charging method, charging proceeds and the voltage of the power supply 10 increases, and therefore the charging current decreases.

[0131] When charging of the power supply 10 is started by the constant voltage charging method, the processor 250 determines whether the charging current is equal to or smaller than a predetermined charging completion current (step S312). Here, the charging current can be acquired by the ammeter 230 in the charger 200. When the charging current is larger than the predetermined charging completion current, charging of the power supply 10 is continued by the constant voltage charging method.

[0132] When the charging current is equal to or smaller than the predetermined charging completion current, the processor 250 determines that the power supply 10 is fully charged, and stops the charging (step S314).

[0133] (Control by control unit in charging mode)

Fig. 12 is a flowchart illustrating an example of a control method of the control unit in a charging mode. Fig. 13 is a graph for explaining increase in voltage of a normal power supply and a degraded or failed power supply during charging. The charging mode is a mode in which the power supply 10 can be charged.

[0134] The control unit 50 may perform a second diagnostic function that estimates or detects at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply 10 during charging of the power supply 10 by the charger 200. In the present embodiment, the second diagnostic

function may include a failure diagnosis function that diagnoses a failure of the power supply 10 and a degradation diagnosis function that diagnoses degradation of the power supply 10. As will be described in detail below, the control unit 50 may be configured to be capable of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply 10 based on a time period required for the voltage value of the power supply 10 to reach the upper limit from the lower limit of the predetermined voltage range during charging of the power supply 10. Since the voltage value of the power supply 10 can be acquired by using the voltage sensor 150, the control unit 50 can perform the failure diagnosis function and the degradation diagnosis function described later without communicating with the processor 250 of the charger 200.

[0135] Specifically, first, when the control unit 50 is not activated during charging, the control unit 50 is automatically activated (step S400). More specifically, when the voltage of the power supply 10 exceeds a lower limit value of the operation guaranteed voltage of the control unit 50, the control unit 50 is automatically activated. Here, the lower limit value of the operation guaranteed voltage may be in the range of the deep discharge voltage. The lower limit value of the operation guaranteed voltage may be, for example, in the range of 2.0 V to 2.5 V.

[0136] The control unit 50 determines whether to be in the charging mode (step S402). The charging mode can be determined by detecting the connection of the charger 200 to the electrical unit 110. The connection of the charger 200 to the electrical unit 110 can be detected by acquiring a change in voltage between the pair of electrical terminals 110t.

[0137] When the control unit 50 detects the connection of the charger 200 to the electrical unit 110, a timer is activated, and measures the time from the start of charging or the activation of the control unit (step S404).

[0138] Next, the control unit 50 performs the failure diagnosis function of the power supply 10. Specifically, the control unit 50 acquires the voltage ( $V_{\text{batt}}$ ) of the power supply 10, and determines whether the voltage ( $V_{\text{batt}}$ ) of the power supply 10 is larger than the deep discharge determination voltage (step S406). The voltage ( $V_{\text{batt}}$ ) of the power supply 10 can

be acquired by using the voltage sensor 150. The deep discharge determination voltage is as described above, and may be, for example, in the range of 3.1 V to 3.2 V (discharge termination voltage). Note that, during the charging of the power supply 10, the control unit 50 periodically acquires the voltage of the power supply 10.

[0139] When the electrode structure or the electrolyte of the power supply 10 is irreversibly changed due to deep discharge, the electrochemical reaction during normal charging does not proceed inside the power supply 10 even in charging. Therefore, when the time period in which the voltage ( $V_{\text{batt}}$ ) of the power supply 10 is equal to or lower than the deep discharge determination voltage exceeds a predetermined time period, for example, 300 msec, from the activation of the timer, the control unit 50 estimates or detects that the power supply 10 has failed due to deep discharge (steps S408 and S410). In addition, even if the time period required for the voltage value of the power supply 10 to reach the deep discharge determination voltage from the activation of the timer exceeds a predetermined time period, for example, 300 msec, the control unit 50 determines that the power supply 10 has failed due to deep discharge (steps S412 and S410).

[0140] When the control unit 50 estimates or detects that the power supply 10 has failed due to deep discharge, the control unit 50 may perform a predetermined protection operation (step S414). The protection operation may be, for example, an operation in which the control unit 50 forcibly stops or restricts the charging of the power supply 10. Forced stop or restriction of charging can be achieved by disconnecting the electrical connection between the power supply 10 and the charger 200 in the electrical unit 110. For example, the control unit 50 may turn off at least one of the switch 140 and the stop part 180. The control unit 50 may notify the user of an abnormality through the notification part 40 when the control unit 50 estimates or detects that the power supply 10 has failed due to deep discharge.

[0141] As described above, the control unit 50 may perform the failure diagnosis function based on a time period required for the voltage value of the power supply 10 to reach the upper limit from the lower limit of the predetermined voltage range during charging of the power supply 10.

[0142] The lower limit of the predetermined voltage range may be, for example, the lower limit value of the operation guaranteed voltage of the control unit 50. In this case, as described above, the control unit 50 performs the failure diagnosis function based on the time period required to reach the deep discharge determination voltage (a predetermined threshold) from the activation of the timer after activation of the control unit 50. Instead of this, the lower limit of the predetermined voltage range may be set to a value lower than the discharge termination voltage of the power supply 10 and larger than the lower limit value of the operation guaranteed voltage of the control unit 50. In this case, the timer may be activated when the voltage of the power supply 10 reaches the lower limit of the predetermined voltage range.

[0143] It is preferable that the failure diagnosis function described above is configured to be infeasible when the inhalation component generation device 100 is in a mode other than the charging mode. As a result, when the voltage of the power supply 10 temporarily decreases to deep discharge due to factors such as falling to a very low temperature state in the power supply mode, the failure diagnosis function can be prevented from being erroneously performed.

[0144] In addition, the failure diagnosis function described above may be configured to estimate or detect a failure of the power supply when the voltage value of the power supply 10 is lower than the discharge termination voltage of the power supply 10 during charging of the power supply 10.

[0145] When the time period required for the voltage value of the power supply 10 to reach the deep discharge determination voltage from the activation of the timer is a predetermined time period, for example, 300 msec or less, it is determined that the influence of deep discharge is small, and charging of the power supply 10 may be continued (step S416). In this case, the control unit 50 may further perform the degradation diagnosis function described below. It is preferable that the control unit 50 is configured not to simultaneously perform the failure diagnosis function and the degradation diagnosis function to prevent hunting of the failure diagnosis function and the degradation diagnosis function.

## CLAIMS

1. An inhalation component generation device, comprising:
  - a load configured to vaporize or atomize an inhalation component source with electric power from a power supply; and
  - a control unit configured to be capable of controlling supply of electric power from the power supply to the load,wherein the control unit is configured to be capable of performing a first diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during operation of the load, and a second diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during charging of the power supply, and
  - the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function include different algorithms.
2. The inhalation component generation device according to claim 1, wherein
  - the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function each include at least one algorithm for estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply, and
  - the number of algorithms included in the second diagnostic function is greater than the number of algorithms included in the first diagnostic function.
3. The inhalation component generation device according to claim 1 or 2, wherein
  - the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function each include at least one algorithm for estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply, and
  - the number of simultaneously executable algorithms included in the second diagnostic function is greater than the number of simultaneously executable algorithms included in the first diagnostic function.
4. The inhalation component generation device according to claim 2 or 3, wherein

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the first diagnostic function includes one of the algorithms.

5. The inhalation component generation device according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein

charging of the power supply is controlled by an external charger separate from the inhalation component generation device.

6. The inhalation component generation device according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein

the first diagnostic function is configured to be performed while a voltage value of the power supply changing during operation of the load is in a predetermined first voltage range,

the second diagnostic function is configured to be performed while a voltage value of the power supply changing during charging of the power supply is in a predetermined second voltage range, and

the second voltage range is wider than the first voltage range.

7. The inhalation component generation device according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein

only the second diagnostic function out of the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function is configured to be performed when the voltage value of the power supply is lower than a discharge termination voltage of the power supply.

8. The inhalation component generation device according to any one of claims 1 to 7, further comprising:

a plurality of sensors configured to output a state of the inhalation component generation device,

wherein the number of the sensors required to perform the second diagnostic function is less than the number of sensors required to perform the first diagnostic function.

9. The inhalation component generation device according to claim 8, wherein

the plurality of sensors include a request sensor capable of outputting a signal requesting an operation of the load,

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the first diagnostic function is performed using the request sensor, and

the second diagnostic function is performed without using the request sensor.

10. The inhalation component generation device according to claim 8 or 9, wherein the plurality of sensors include a voltage sensor configured to output the voltage value of the power supply, and

the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function are performed using the voltage sensor.

11. The inhalation component generation device according to any one of claims 1 to 10, further comprising:

a voltage sensor configured to convert an analog voltage value of the power supply into a digital voltage value using a predetermined correlation, and output the digital voltage value,

wherein the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function are performed using the voltage sensor, and

the control unit is configured to be capable of calibrating the correlation based on a voltage change of the power supply during charging of the power supply.

12. The inhalation component generation device according to any one of claims 1 to 11, wherein

the second diagnostic function includes an algorithm for estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply based on a change in the voltage value of the power supply with respect to an amount of electric power supplied to the power supply during charging.

13. The inhalation component generation device according to any one of claims 1 to 12, wherein

the first diagnostic function includes an algorithm for estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply based on a change in the voltage value of the power supply during operation of the load.

14. A method of controlling an inhalation component generation device including a load

configured to vaporize or atomize an inhalation component source with electric power from a power supply, the method including the steps of:

performing a first diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during operation of the load; and

performing, using an algorithm different from the first diagnostic function, a second diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during charging of the power supply.

15. A program causing an inhalation component generation device to execute the method according to claim 14.

16. An inhalation component generation system, comprising:

an inhalation component generation device including a load configured to vaporize or atomize an inhalation component source with electric power from a power supply, and a first control unit configured to be capable of controlling supply of electric power from the power supply to the load; and

an external charger including a second control unit configured to be capable of controlling charging of the power supply,

wherein the first control unit is configured to be capable of performing a first diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during operation of the load,

the second control unit is configured to be capable of performing a second diagnostic function of estimating or detecting at least one of degradation and failure of the power supply during charging of the power supply, and

the first diagnostic function and the second diagnostic function include different algorithms.

Fig. 1

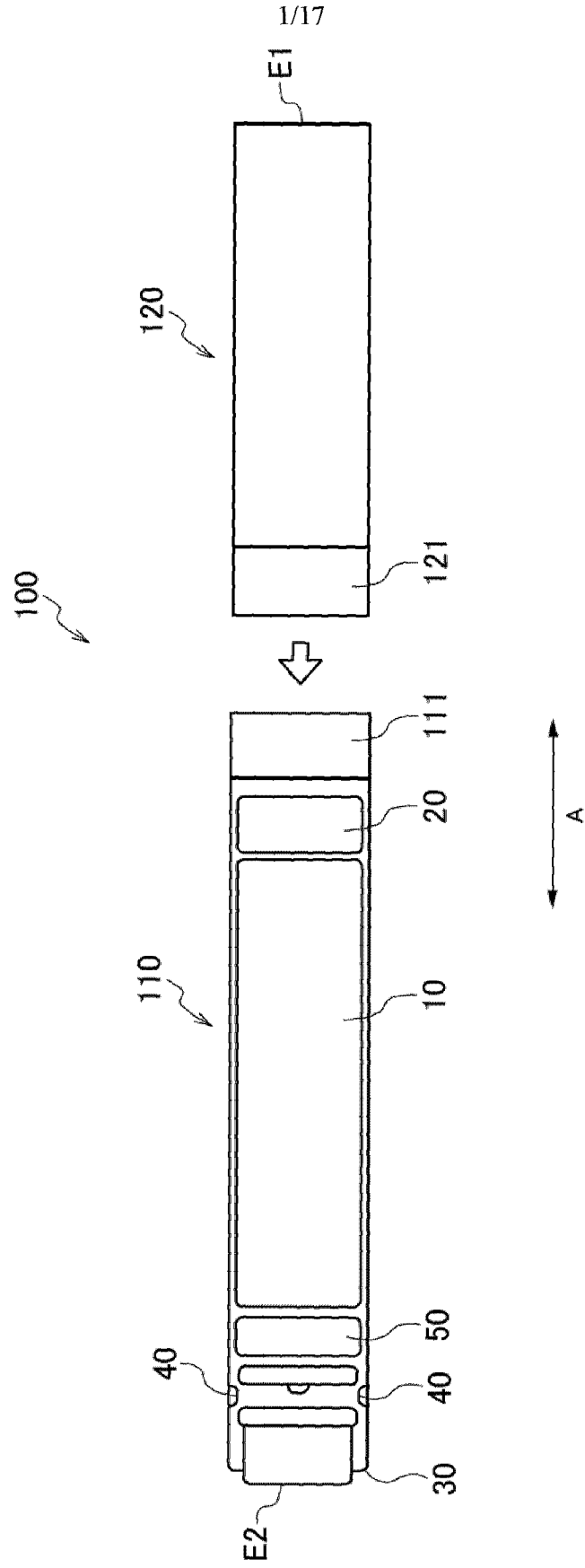


Fig. 2

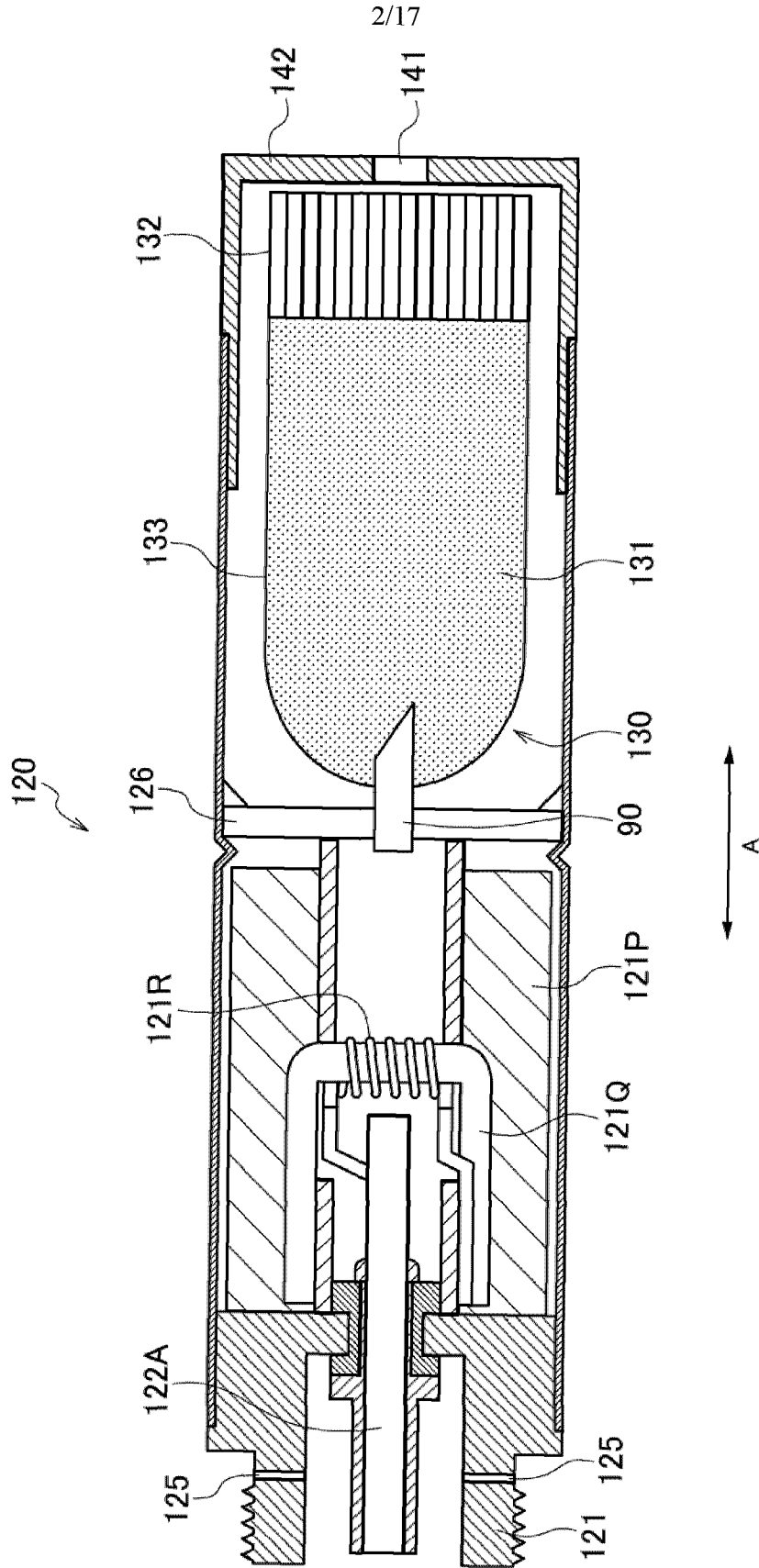


Fig. 3

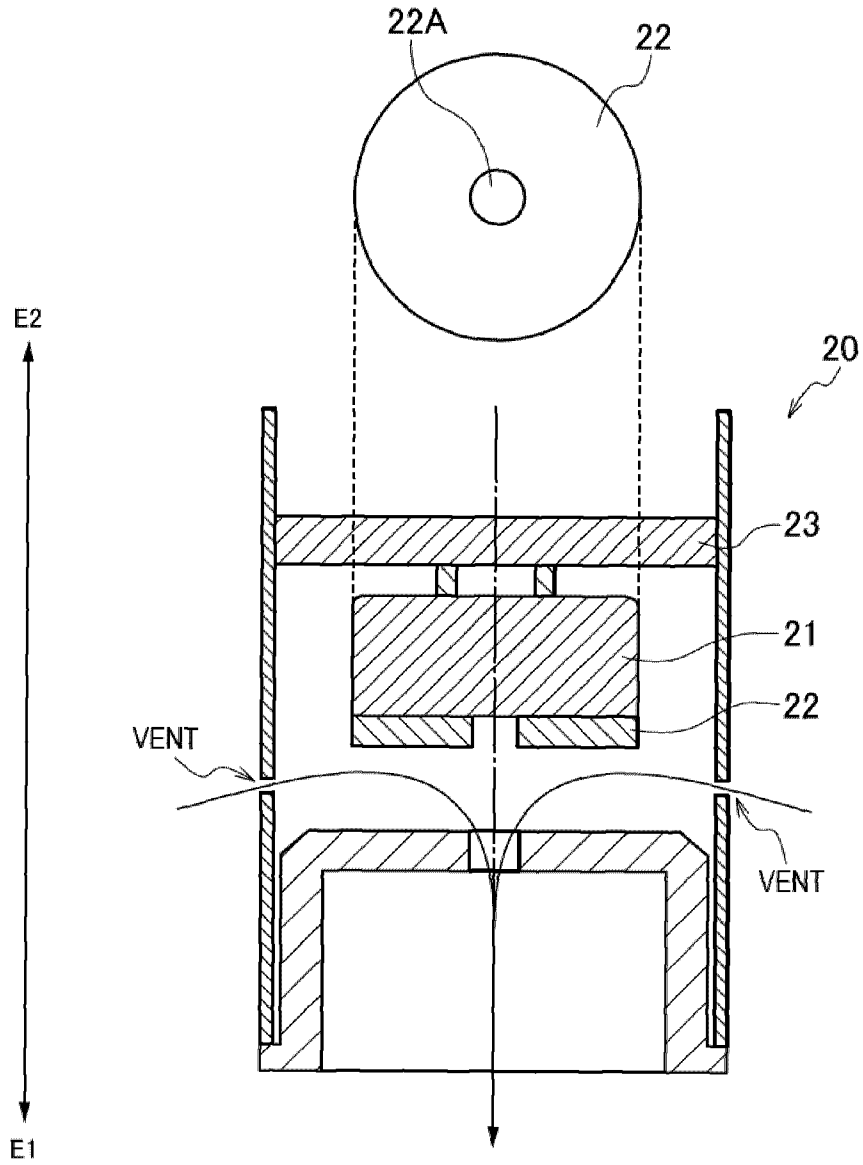


Fig. 4

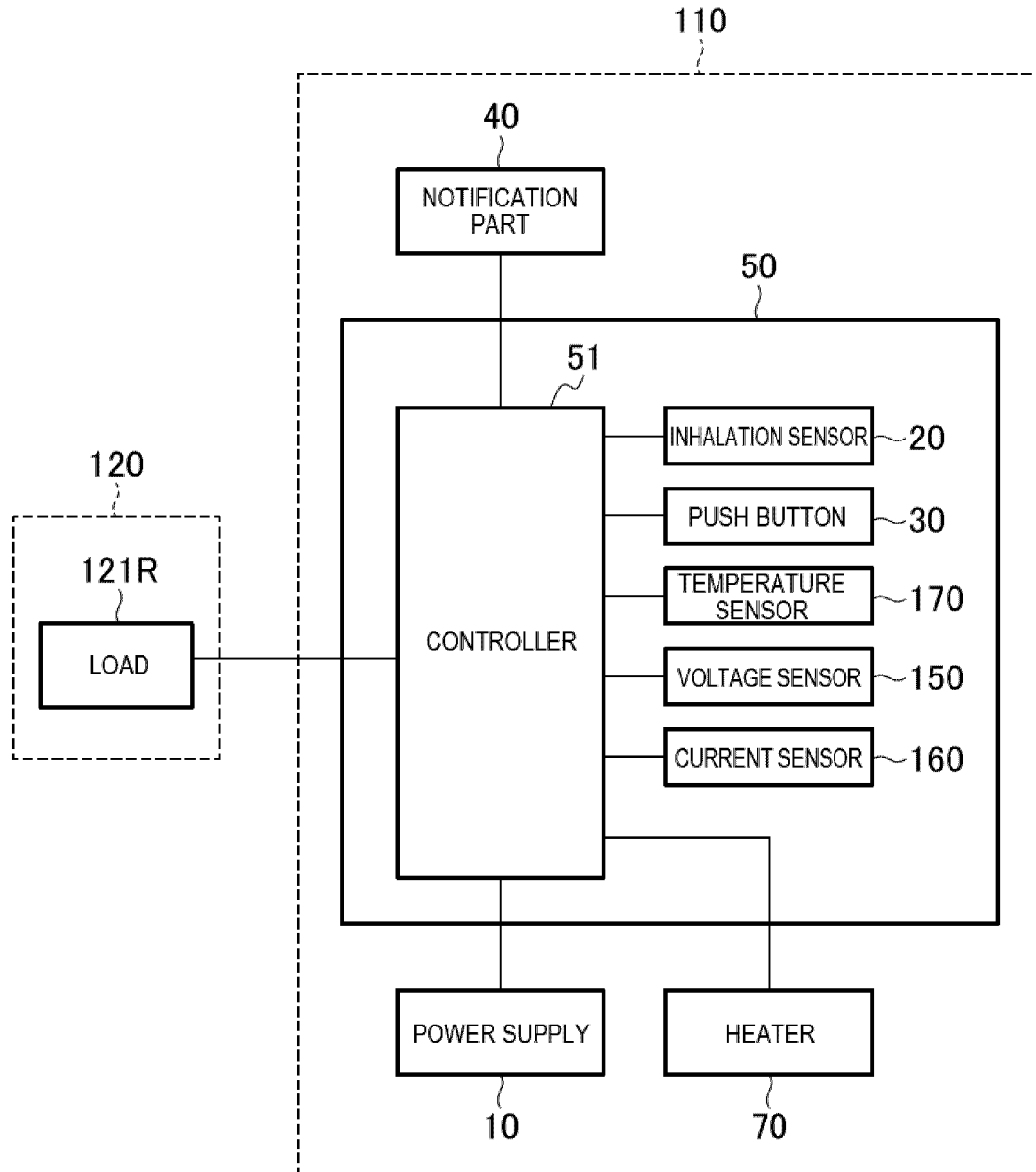




Fig. 6

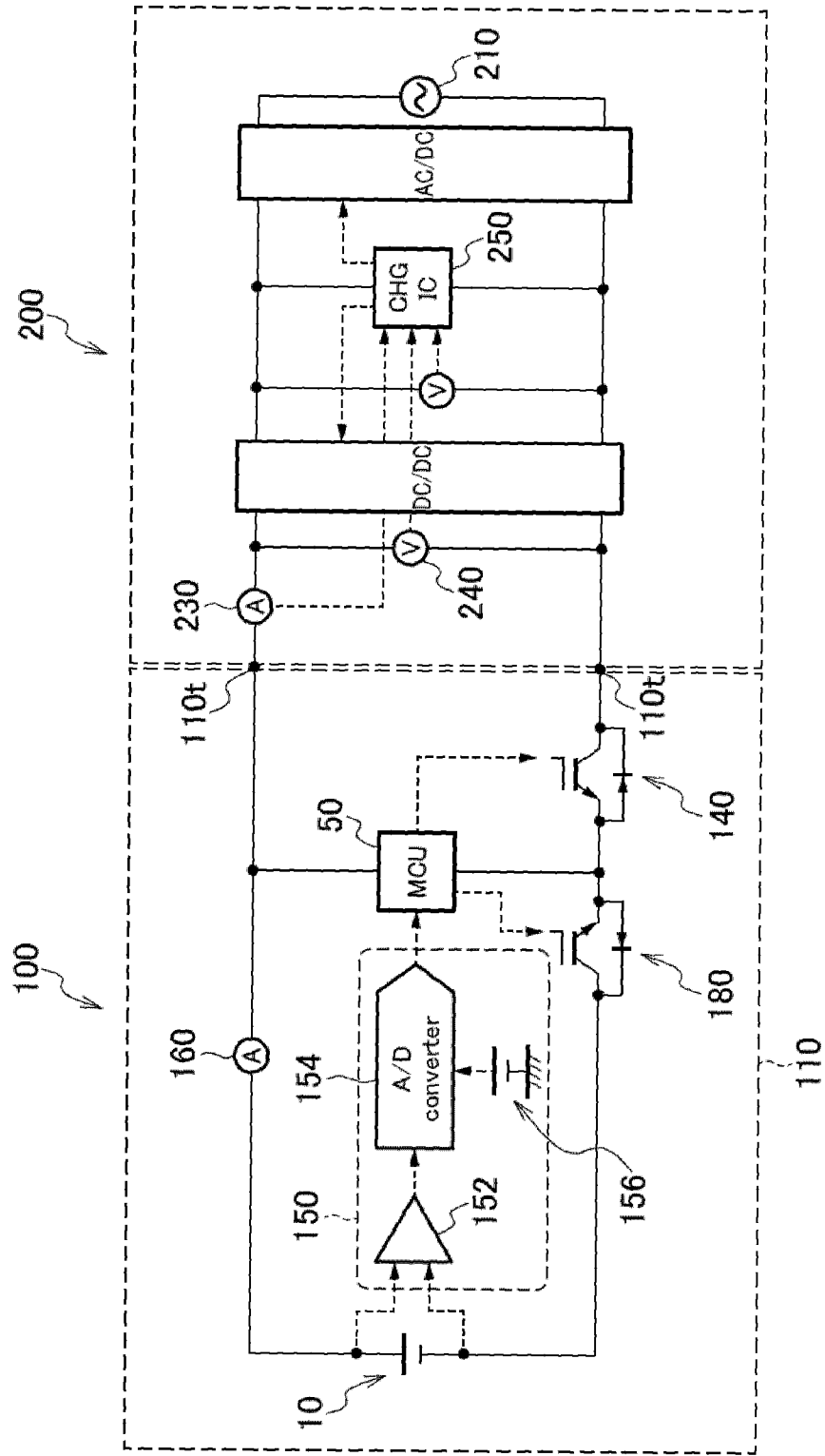


Fig. 7

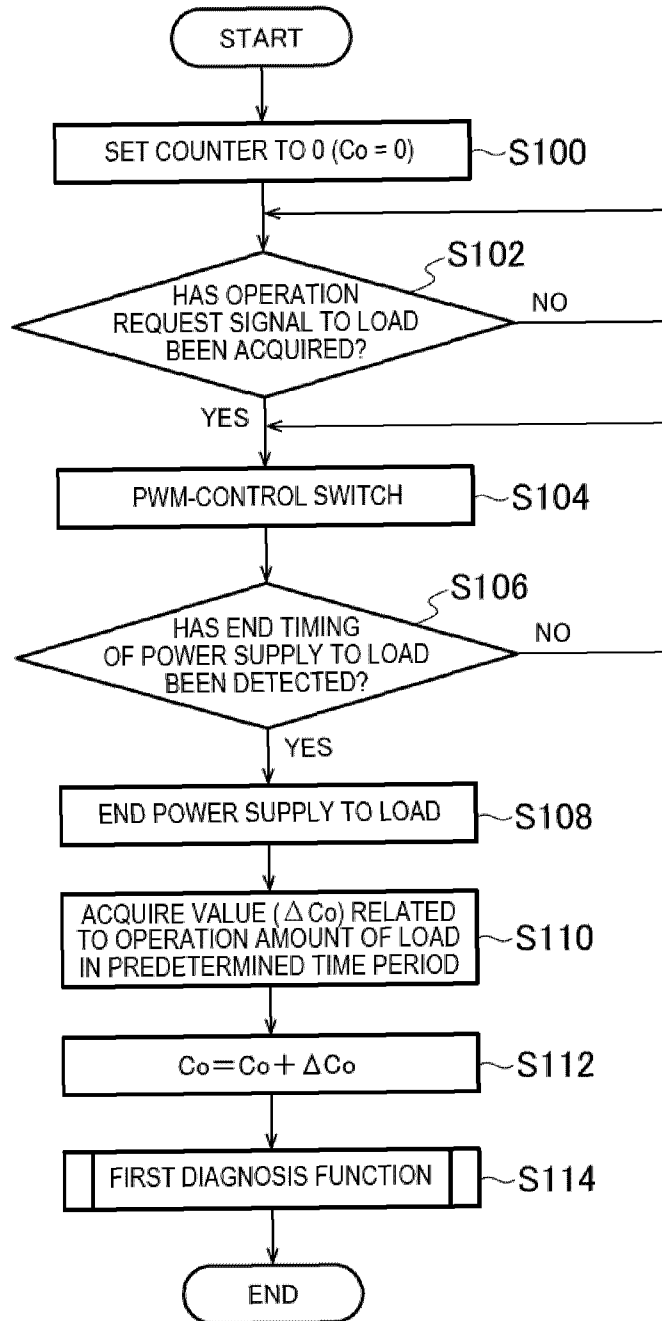
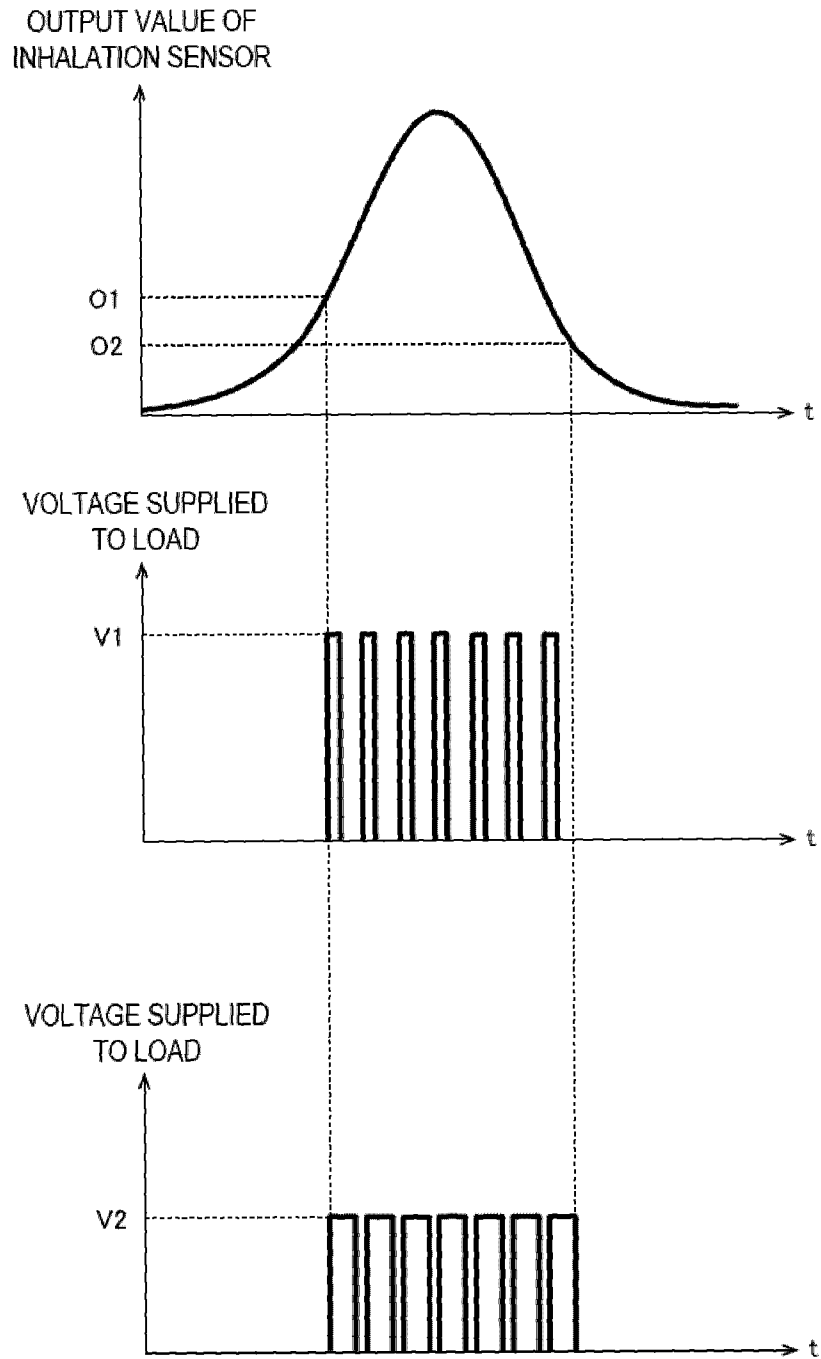


Fig. 8





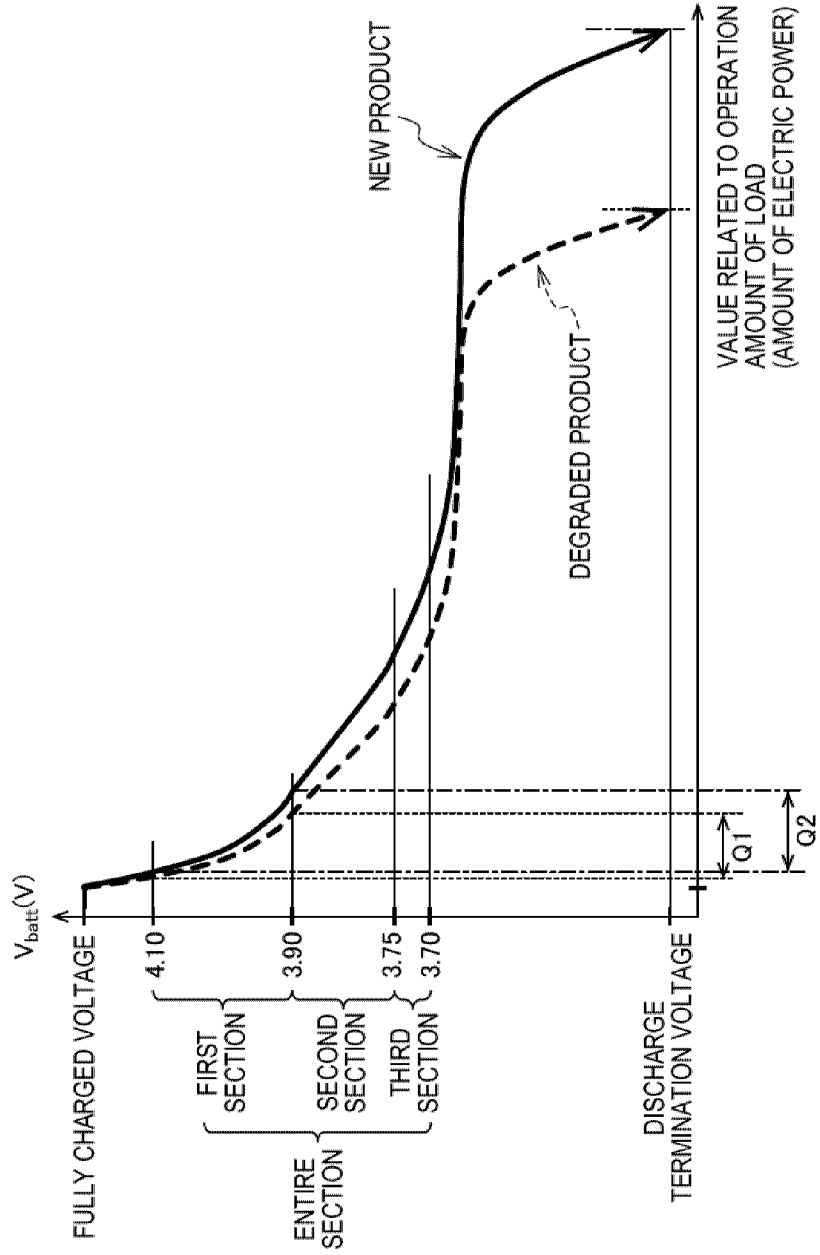


Fig. 10

Fig. 11

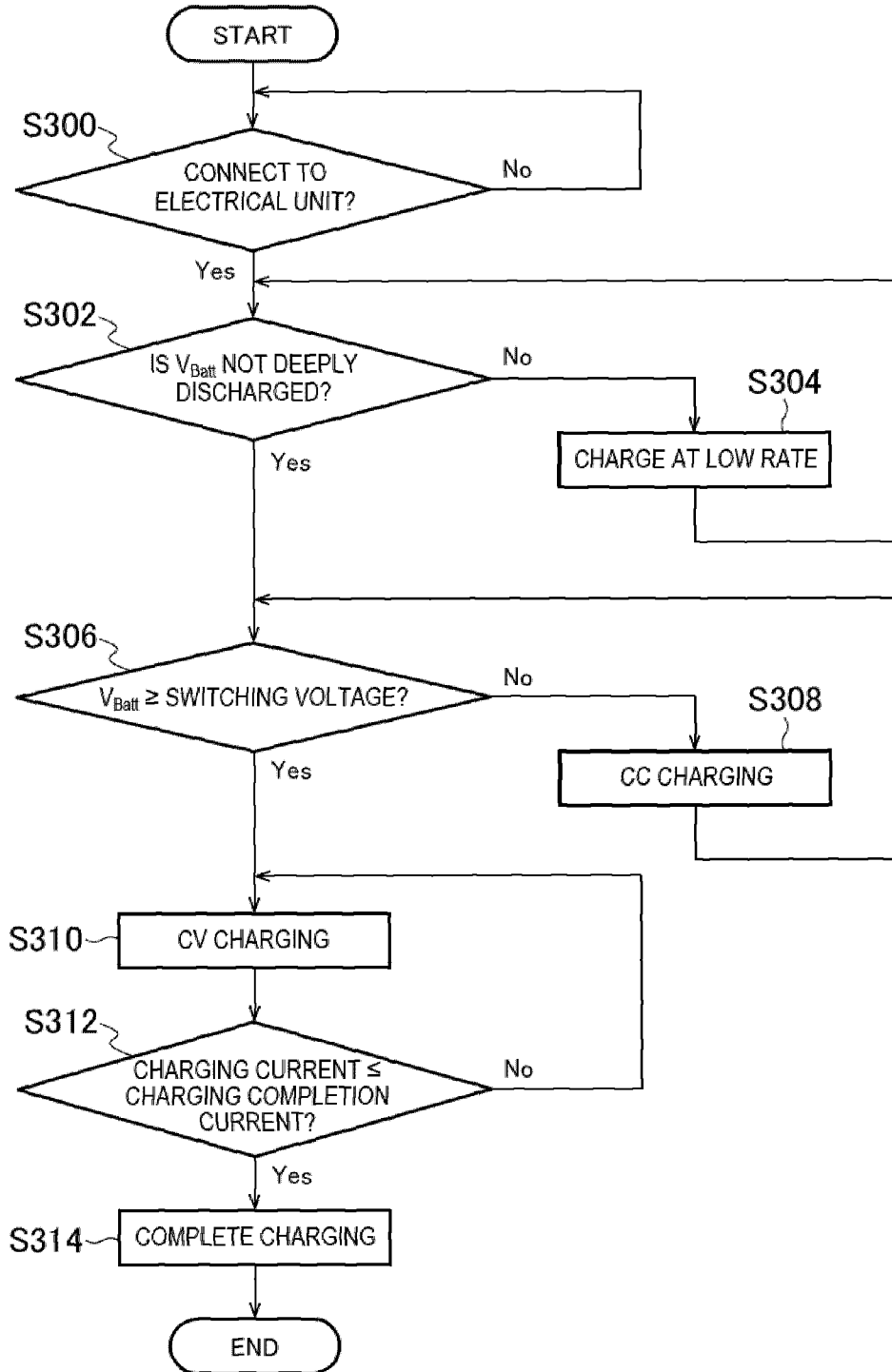


Fig. 12

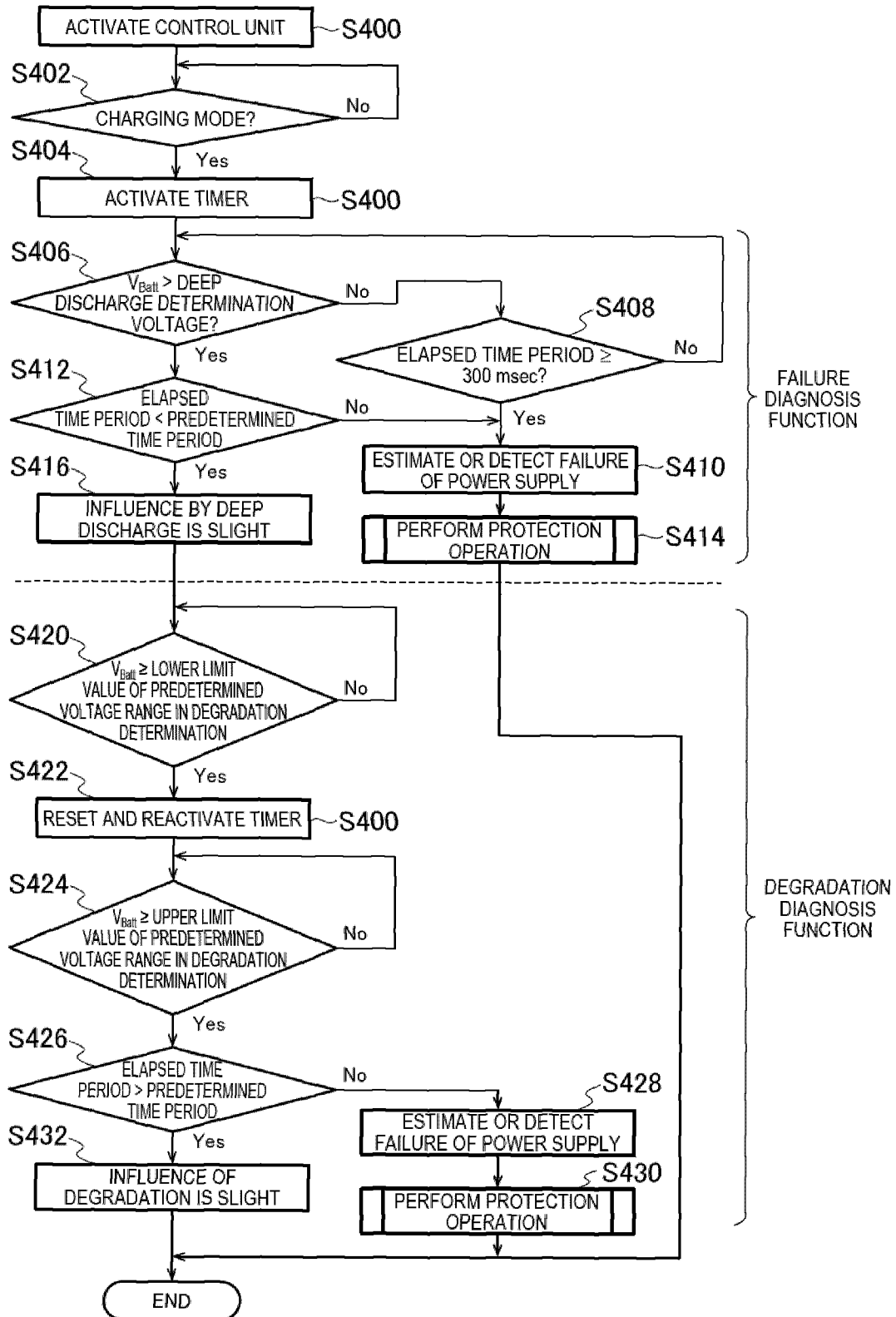


Fig. 13

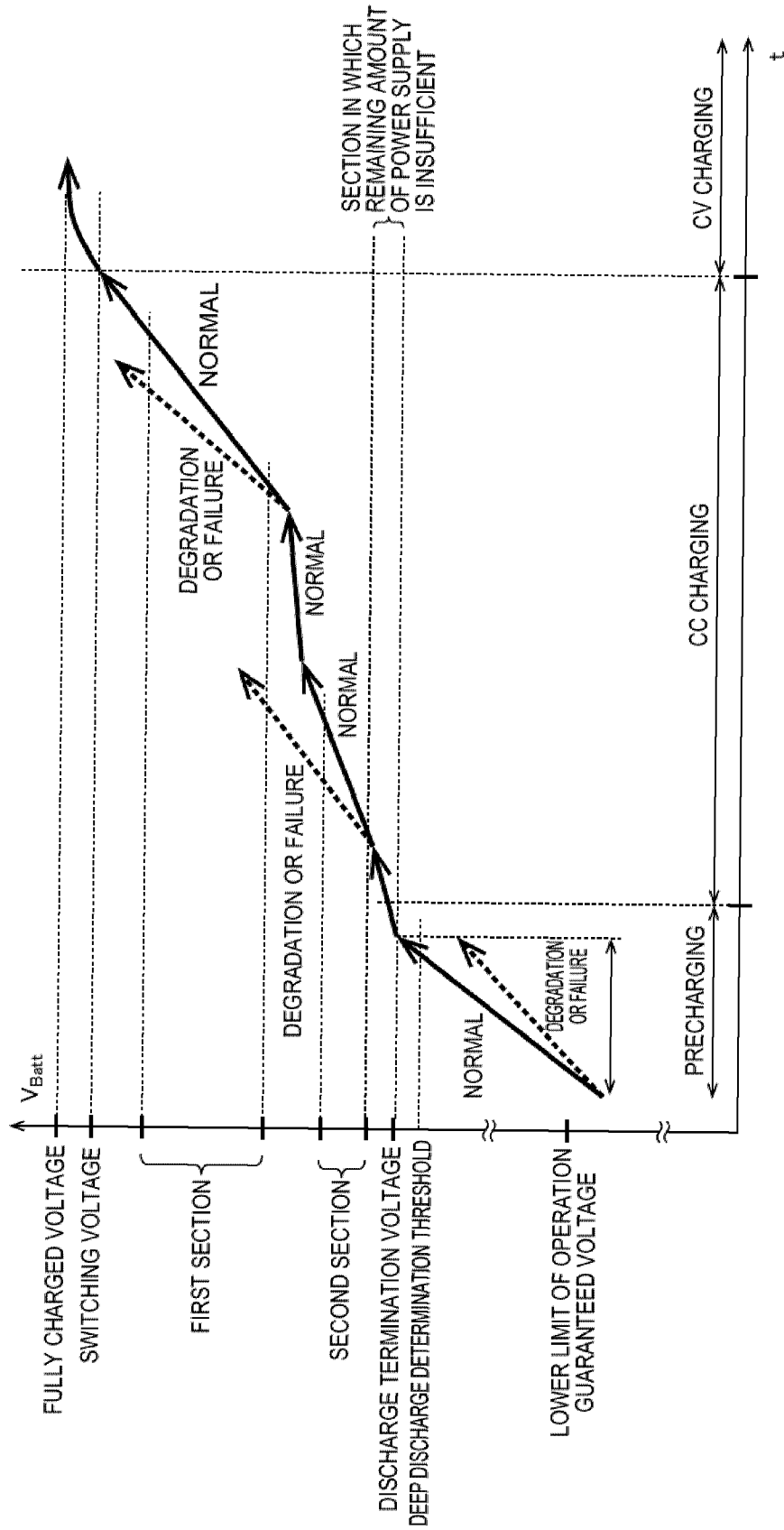


Fig. 14

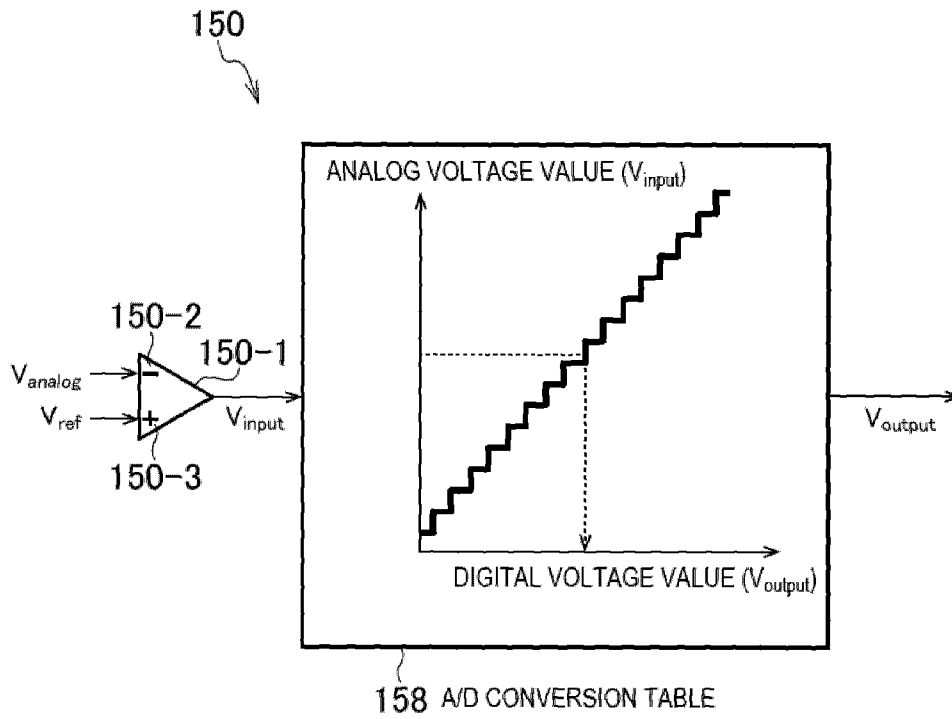


Fig. 15

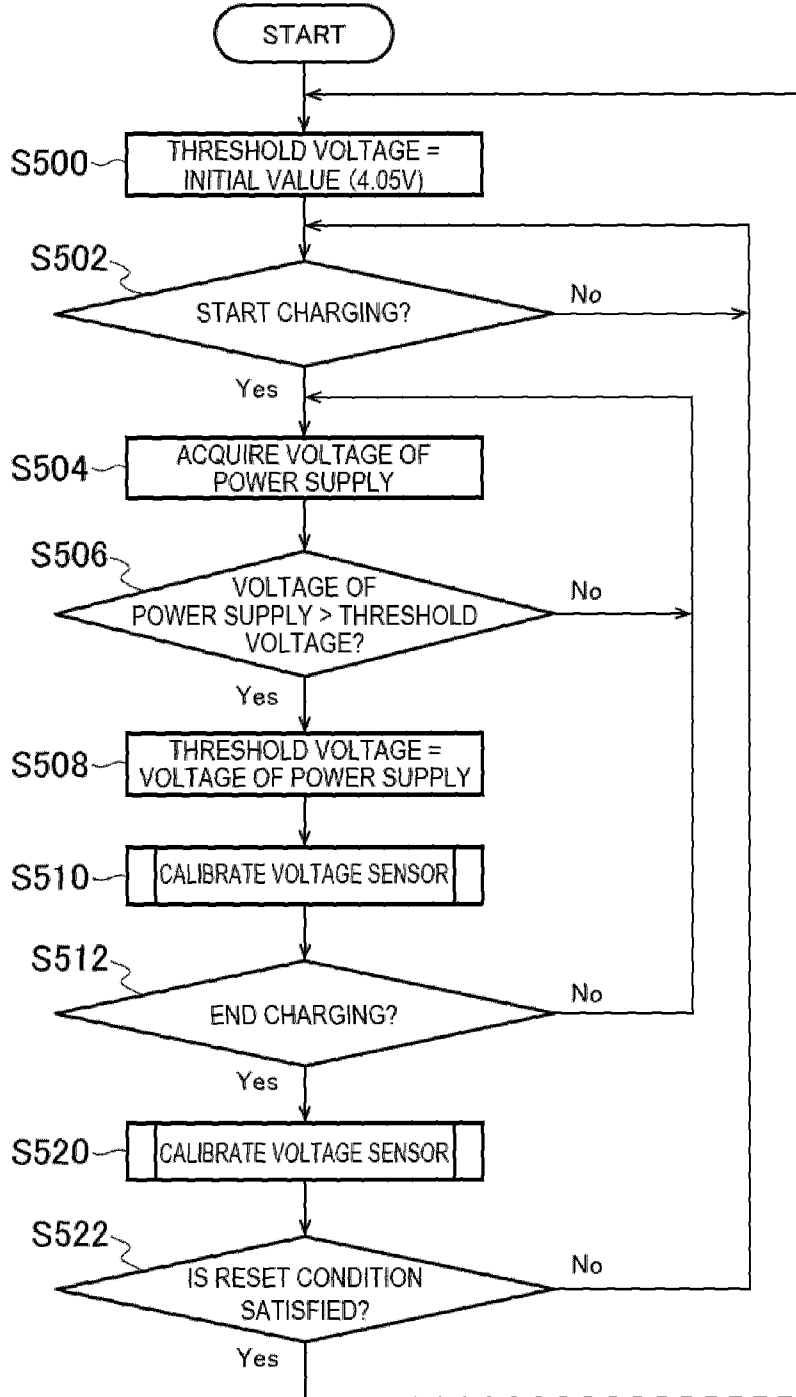


Fig. 16

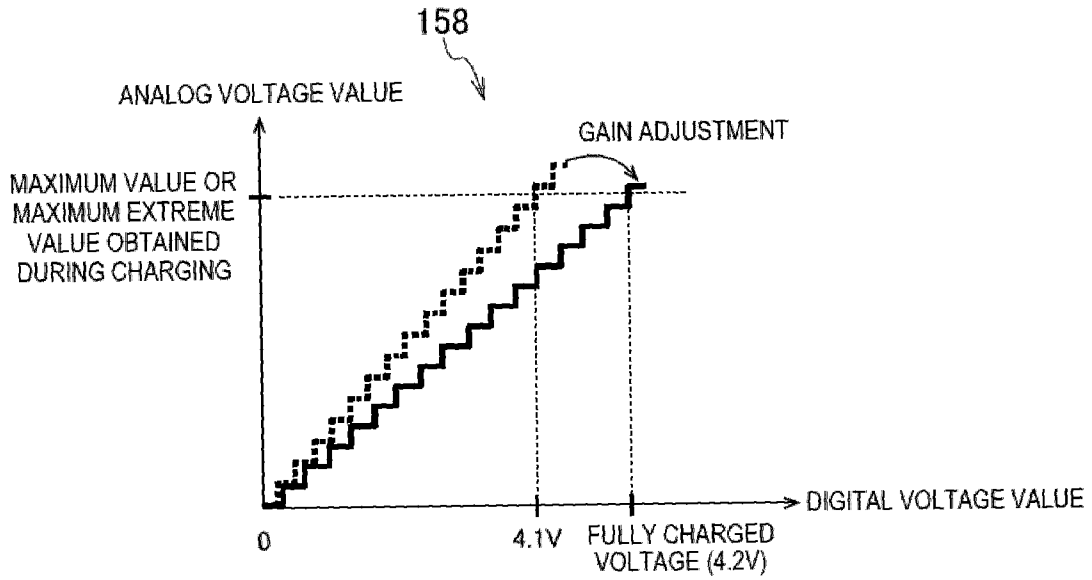


Fig. 17

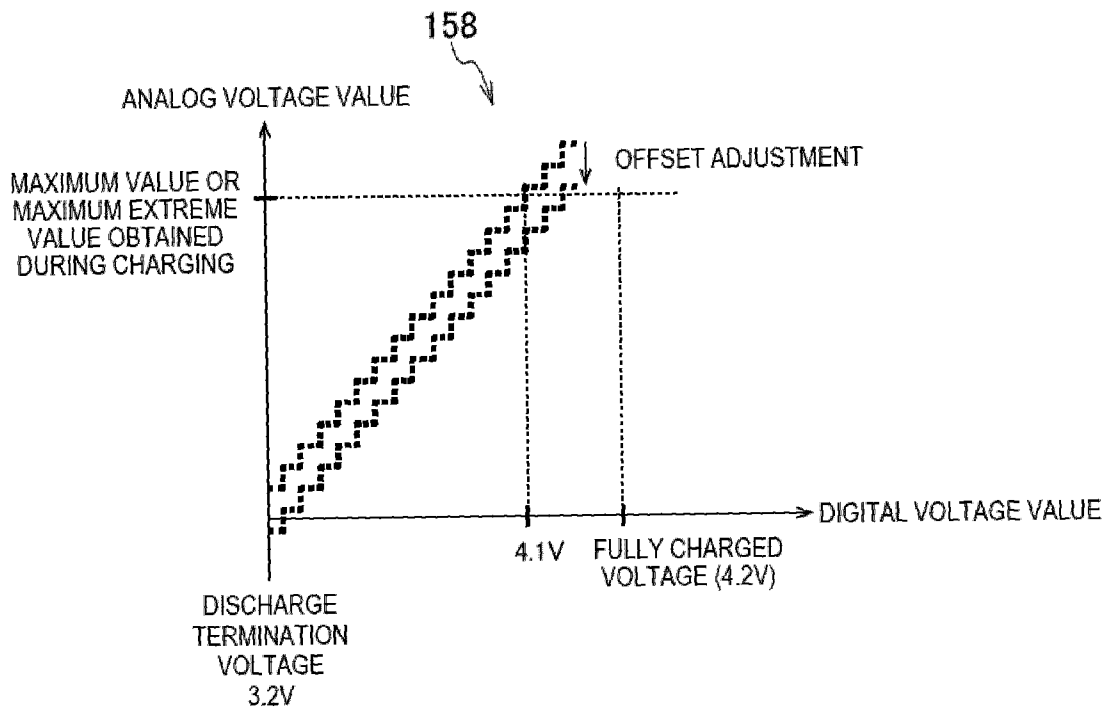
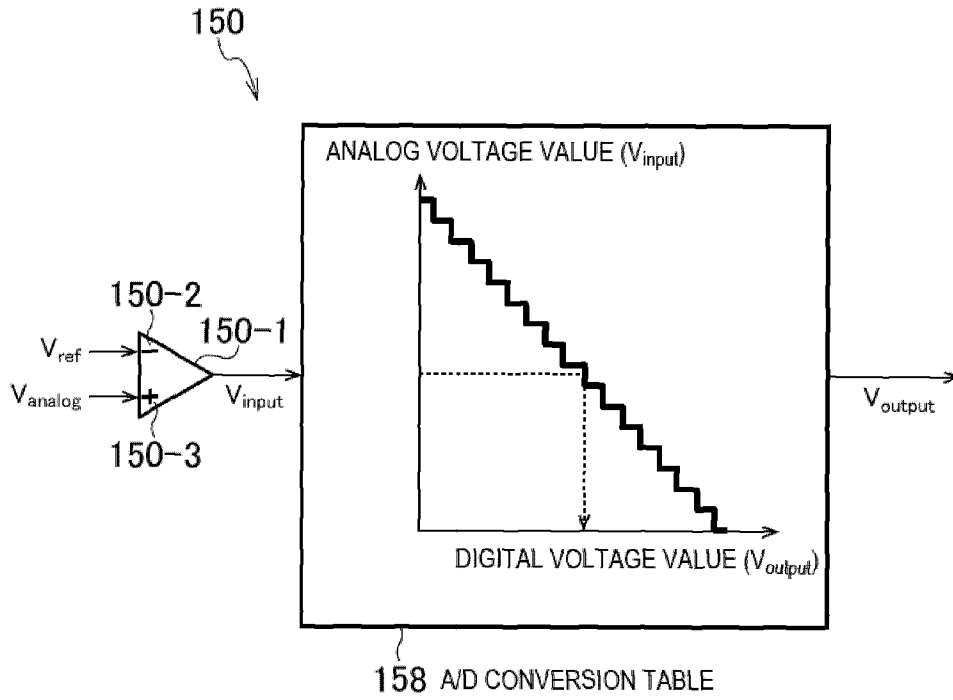
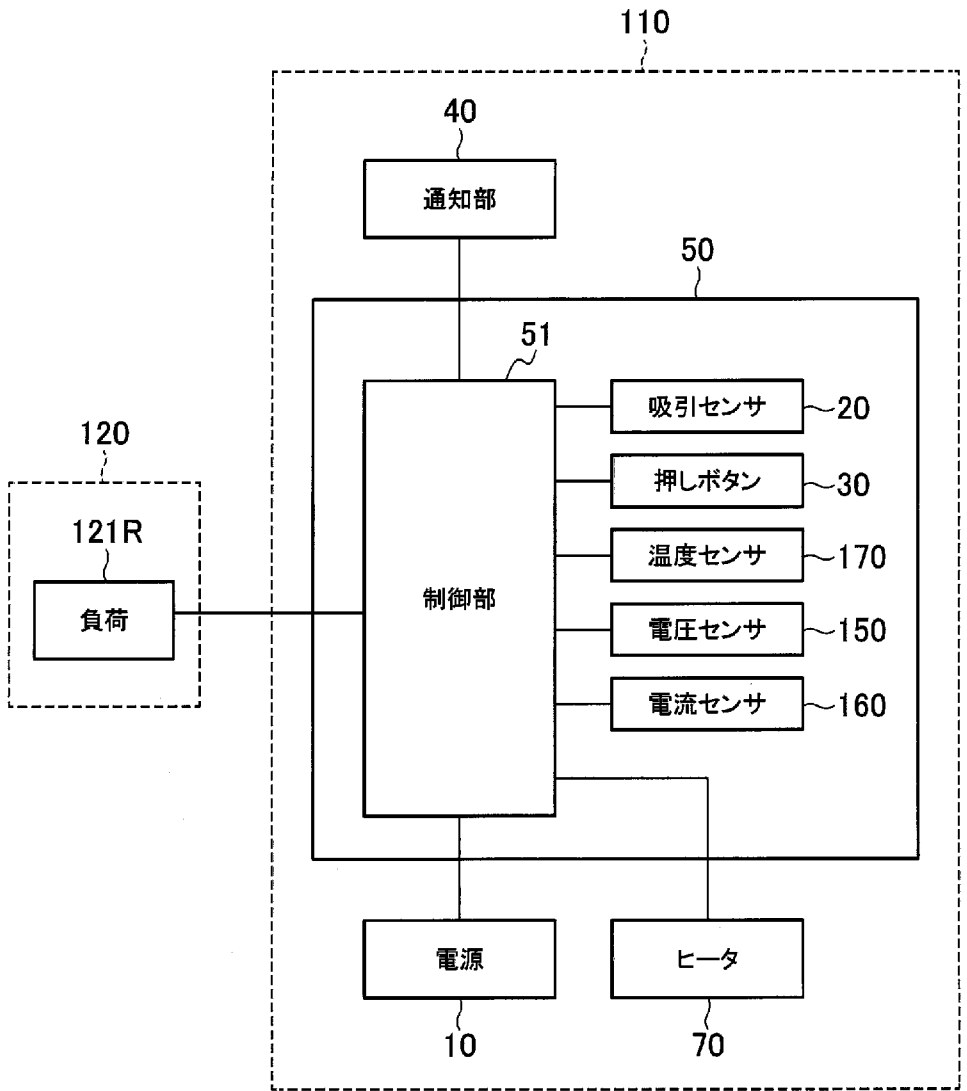


Fig. 18





- 10 Power supply
- 20 Inhalation sensor
- 30 Push button
- 40 Notification unit
- 51 Control unit
- 70 Heater
- 121R Load
- 150 Voltage sensor
- 160 Current sensor
- 170 Temperature sensor