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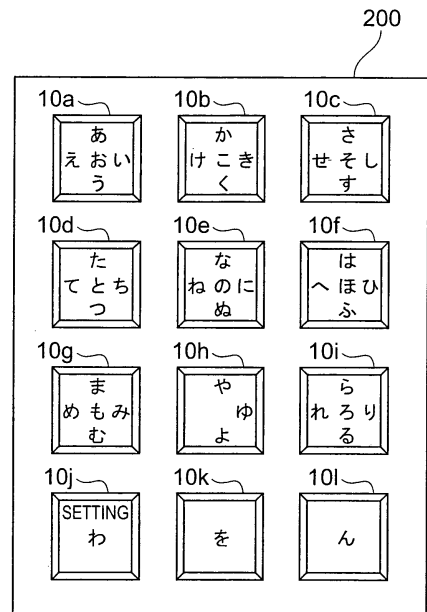
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(54) **Input key and input apparatus**

(57) An input key 10 has a key top 220 which can incline, a key top supported portion 20, a key top supporting portion 30 provided on a support plate 60 and arranged to come into contact with the key top supported portion 20 during a push on the key top and to support the key top supported portion 20 so as to permit the key top 220 to incline in the contact state, at least one inclination detector 54 provided in a direction assigned an input information item, on the support plate 60 or on the key top 220, a push detector for detecting a push on the input key 10, an inclination direction detector for detecting an inclination direction of the key top 220 when a push on the input key 10 is detected, and a symbol determiner for determining an input information item on the basis of the inclination direction.

Fig.1



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| <p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons</p> <p>..... & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p> | | | |

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