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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US):
PHONAK AG [CH/CH]; Laubisrütistrasse 28, CH-8712
Stäfa (CH).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **PROBST, Daniel**
[CH/CH]; Drahtzugstrasse 8, CH-8008 Zürich (CH). **HUG,**
Roland [CH/CH]; Alpenblickstrasse 9, CH-8340 Hinwil
(CH).

(74) Agent: **TROESCH SCHEIDEGGER WERNER AG**;
Thomas J. Kreutz, Schwänthenmos 14, CH-8126 Zumikon
(CH).

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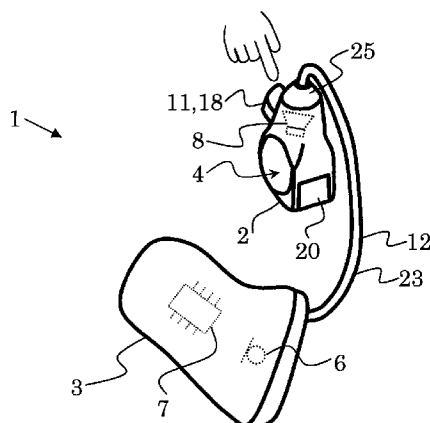


Fig. 2

(57) **Abstract:** The hearing device (1) comprises an outer part (2) to be worn behind a hearing device user's ear (5), an inner part (3) to be worn within the hearing device user's ear (5), and a connecting portion (12) operationally interconnecting said outer part (2) and said inner part (3). An output transducer (8) is comprised in said outer part (2) or in said connecting portion (12). Said inner part (3) comprises an input transducer (6) and, operationally interconnected between said input transducer (6) and said output transducer (8), a signal processing unit (7). Preferably, said connecting portion (12) is detachably connected to said outer part (2) or to said inner part (3) or to both, said outer part (2) and said inner part (3). The connecting portion (12) comprises a tube member (23) for providing guidance for acoustic sound (10) outputted from said output transducer (8) to said inner part (3). Preferably, a wired electrical connection (13) is integrated in said tube member (23), wherein via said wired electrical connection (13), electrical energy is transferred from the outer (2) to the inner (3) part, and wherein signals and data are transmitted via said wired electrical connection (13), preferably using a bus system. The wired electrical connection (13) may furthermore serve as an antenna (22).

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MODULAR HEARING DEVICE

5

Technical Field

The invention relates to a hearing device and to a method
of operating a hearing device. It relates to methods and
10 apparatuses according to the opening clauses of the claims.

Under a hearing device, a device is understood, which is
worn in or adjacent to an individual's ear with the object
to improve the individual's acoustical perception. Such
improvement may also be barring acoustic signals from being
15 perceived in the sense of hearing protection for the
individual. If the hearing device is tailored so as to
improve the perception of a hearing impaired individual
towards hearing perception of a "standard" individual, then
we speak of a hearing-aid device. With respect to the
20 application area, a hearing device may be applied behind
the ear, in the ear, completely in the ear canal or may be
implanted, wherein in particular in the present patent
application, the hearing device may comprise or consist of
different parts which are worn in different ones of the
25 named locations.

Under audio signals we understand electrical signals,
analogue and/or digital, which represent sound.

Background of the Invention

5 From DE 10 2005 006 404 B3, an In-The-Ear hearing device is known, which can temporarily be complemented by a supplementary module attachable to a hearing device user's head. The In-The-Ear hearing device has all components and functionalities required for operation, whereas the
10 supplementary module can change or add functionalities.

In US 5 987 146, an open ear canal hearing aid system is disclosed which comprises a plurality of ear canal tubes sized for positioning in an ear canal of a user so that the ear canal is at least partially open for directly receiving
15 ambient sounds. The hearing aid system comprises a case to which the ear canal tubes are connected and which is designed to fit behind a user's ear. In said case, a sound processor is arranged for amplifying ambient sounds received through one of the ear canal tubes and for
20 producing processed sounds and for supplying the processed sounds to the second ear canal tube. A speaker is arranged within said case, and a microphone is arranged at that end of one of the ear canal tubes which is located in the ear canal.

25 In WO 2008/010716 A2, a hearing-aid device is presented, which comprises a device housing intended and adapted to be worn outside an ear of a user and which co-acts with an in-the-ear part. The in-the-ear part is physically separated

from the device housing but electronically connected thereto and comprises a microphone and a loudspeaker. The device housing or the in-the-ear part comprises a digital processing device in which sound picked up by the microphone is processed, and the processed sound is fed to the loudspeaker.

Summary of the Invention

10

One object of the invention is to create an alternative type of hearing device. In addition, a corresponding method for operating a hearing device shall be provided.

Another object of the invention is to provide a hearing device comprising a very small In-The-Ear part.

Another object of the invention is to provide a hearing device with particularly natural directional clues, in particular a hearing device which preserves the hearing device user's heard-related transfer function (HRTF) particularly well.

Another object of the invention is to provide a possibility to individualize a hearing device in a particularly simple way.

Another object of the invention is to provide a possibility to adapt a hearing device to the needs and preferences of a user ("hearing device fitting") in a particularly simple way, in particular in case of varying needs or preferences.

Another object of the invention is to provide a hearing device, components of which can be particularly easily replaced.

Another object of the invention is to provide a
5 particularly failure-insensitive, in particularly corrosion-insensitive hearing device.

Further objects emerge from the description and embodiments below.

At least one of these objects is at least partially
10 achieved by apparatuses and methods according to the patent claims.

The hearing device comprises

- an outer part to be worn behind a hearing device user's ear,
- 15 — an inner part to be worn within the hearing device user's ear, and
- a connecting portion operationally interconnecting said outer part and said inner part;

wherein an output transducer is comprised in said outer
20 part or in said connecting portion, and wherein said inner part comprises an input transducer and, operationally interconnected between said input transducer and said output transducer, a signal processing unit.

The outer part can also be referred to as BTE part (Behind-
25 The-Ear part), and the inner part can also be referred to as ITE part (In-The-Ear part). The inner part can in

particular be an ITC part (In-The-Canal part) or a CIC part (Completely-In-the-Canal part).

The output transducer is a means for generating acoustic sound, in particular from audio signals.

5 Through this, the inner part can be particularly small, since the output transducer is not arranged therein, but arranged in the outer part or in the connecting portion.

Furthermore, with the output transducer arranged in the outer part or in the connecting portion, problems caused by
10 ear wax at or in the output transducer are very unlikely to occur.

Furthermore, from an electronics and a signal transmission point of view, it is advantageous to have the input transducer (which usually generates relatively weak
15 signals) close to the signal processing unit. This reduces the amount of stray signals and electromagnetic interference, thus providing particularly high quality audio signals.

Furthermore, having the input transducer in the user's ear
20 canal or at the entrance thereof ensures that the user has a particularly well and natural hearing experience, because the natural directional clues in particular the HRTFs are largely preserved.

Furthermore, with the output transducer arranged in the
25 outer part or in the connecting portion and the input transducer and the signal processing unit arranged in the inner part, a modular hearing device can be realized which allows to replace or add or remove parts of the hearing

device and corresponding functionalities in a convenient fashion, in particular in conjunction with fitting of the hearing device in which case the hearing device has to be functionally, typically electrically connected to an external unit such as a fitting system.

In one embodiment, the output transducer is an output mechanical-to-electrical converter, in particular a loudspeaker, also referred to as receiver.

In one embodiment, the input transducer is an input mechanical-to-electrical converter, e.g., a microphone.

In one embodiment, the inner part is inoperable without said outer part because no output transducer or no electrical-to-acoustical converter is provided in the inner part.

In one embodiment, no signal processing unit, more particularly no audio signal processing unit is provided in said outer part.

In one embodiment, said outer part is detachable from said inner part. This strongly facilitates a replacement of one of said parts, in particular of the outer part.

In one embodiment, the hearing device consists of said outer part and said inner part and said connecting portion.

In one embodiment, said connecting portion is detachably connected to said outer part or to said inner part or to both, said outer part and said inner part. This strongly facilitates the exchange of parts of the hearing device.

In one embodiment, a part of said hearing device comprising said output transducer is detachably connectable to at

least a portion of said outer part. This strongly facilitates the removal of parts of the hearing device, but still allows to program and fit the hearing device while at least said part is removed.

5 In one embodiment, said connecting portion comprises a plug and said outer part or said inner part comprises a corresponding socket or vice versa, i.e. said connecting portion comprises a socket and said outer part or said inner part comprises a corresponding plug.

10 In one embodiment, said connecting portion comprises a tube member for providing guidance for acoustic sound outputted from said output transducer to said inner part. In one embodiment, said tube member provides guidance for said acoustic sound through said inner part.

15 In one embodiment, said hearing device comprises a data storage unit comprising data individual to said hearing device user, wherein said data storage unit is comprised in said inner part. In one embodiment, said data individual to said hearing device user comprise signal processing
20 parameter settings individual to said hearing device user.

In one embodiment, no data individual to said hearing device user are comprised in said outer part.

In one embodiment, an energy storage unit suitable for powering said signal processing unit is comprised in said
25 inner part. In one embodiment, said energy storage unit is a rechargeable energy storage unit, e.g., a capacitor or an accumulator. A rechargeable energy storage unit has the advantage that the hearing device user can have at least

two of those, one in use in the hearing device and another one being recharged in the meantime.

In one embodiment, no energy storage unit suitable for powering said signal processing unit is comprised in said
5 outer part. This way, the inner part can be very small.

In one embodiment, said inner part is inoperable without said outer part because of lacking an energy storage unit suitable for powering said signal processing unit.

In one embodiment, only said outer part comprises an energy
10 storage unit suitable for powering said signal processing unit.

In one embodiment, said outer part comprises an energy storage unit, wherein said signal processing unit is configured to be powered by energy drawn from said energy
15 storage unit.

In one embodiment, said outer part comprises an energy storage unit, wherein said signal processing unit is configured to be powered by energy drawn from said energy storage unit, and wherein said energy storage unit is a
20 component of a power supply unit of said hearing device, and wherein at least one further component, e.g., a control circuit or a voltage transformer, is comprised in said inner part.

In one embodiment, the hearing device comprises a wired
25 electrical connection between said inner and said outer part for transferring energy in electrical form from said energy storage unit to said inner part, in particular for powering said signal processing unit.

In one embodiment, said wired electrical connection is comprised at least in part in said connecting portion.

In one embodiment, said wired electrical connection is at least in part integrated in said tube member, more
5 particularly at least in part integrated inside the hollow formed by said tube member and/or within a fringe formed by said tube member (i.e. within material surrounding the hollow of the tube).

In one embodiment, said hearing device comprises a wireless
10 electrical connection between said inner part and said outer part, in particular a wireless electrical connection for transferring energy in electrical form from an energy storage unit comprised in said outer part to said inner part for powering said signal processing unit. In one
15 embodiment, said wireless electrical connection is an inductive connection, i.e. a connection based on inductivity.

In one embodiment, the hearing device comprises a user interface, at least a portion of said user interface being
20 comprised in said outer part. Said user interface can comprise, e.g., a volume control and/or a program selecting control. Since the outer part can be relatively large, this allows to provide a relatively comprehensive user interface and/or a user interface with relatively large user
25 controls.

In one embodiment, said inner part comprises no portion of said user interface, in particular wherein said user interface is fully comprised in said outer part. This way, the inner part can be very small.

In one embodiment, electrical signals generated by means of said user interface are transmitted from said outer part to said inner part via said wired electrical connection. When said user interface is operated, e.g., by turning a volume wheel or by pushing a hearing program selection knob, control signals are generated, and said signal processing unit has to change its operating in dependence of said control signals. Said control signals can be transmitted via said wired electrical connection together with said energy in electrical form, e.g., using modulation. E.g., time multiplexing (time division multiplexing, TDM) or frequency multiplexing (frequency division multiplexing, FDM) may be employed, involving analogue and/or digital signals, the energy transmission from the energy storage unit being at substantially zero Hertz. A bus for data / signal transmission may, of course, be not only based on TDM or FDM or other techniques, but also on combinations of these.

In one embodiment, audio signals outputted from said signal processing unit are transmitted from said inner part to said output transducer via said wired electrical connection.

In one embodiment, said hearing device comprises an antenna for sending or receiving or for both, sending and receiving, data in a wireless fashion, wherein at least a portion of said antenna is comprised in said wired electrical connection.

In one embodiment, the hearing device is configured to establish a bus system on said wired electrical connection.

Via said bus system, e.g., audio signals outputted from said signal processing unit and/or electrical signals originating from a user interface or other signals or data can be transmitted from said outer part or from said
5 connecting portion to said inner part and/or from said inner part to said outer part or to said connecting portion.

For the transmission of different data and/or signals via the same wires such as said wired electrical connection,
10 e.g., frequency multiplexing/FDM and/or time-domain multiplexing/TDM may be employed, which may involve analogue and/or digital signals.

In one embodiment, the hearing device comprises another input transducer comprised in said outer part. In one
15 embodiment, said other input transducer, together with the microphone comprised in said inner part, can form or be comprised in a directional microphone.

In one embodiment, the hearing device is programmable using a programming system or programming device external to the
20 hearing device, in particular, the hearing device comprises a connector for connecting the hearing device to said programming system in a wirebound fashion. Such a connector, e.g., a socket, can be comprised in said inner part or in said outer part or in said connecting portion.
25 It is even possible to provide two or more such connectors, each one in a different part / portion of the hearing device.

The method for operating a hearing device comprising an outer part to be worn behind a hearing device user's ear,

an inner part to be worn within the hearing device user's ear, and, interconnected between said outer part and said inner part, a connecting portion, comprises the steps of

- transducing incoming acoustic sound into audio signals
5 by means of an input transducer comprised in said inner part;
- processing said audio signals or audio signals derived therefrom in a signal processing unit comprised in said inner part;
- 10 — transducing the so-obtained processed audio signals or audio signals derived therefrom into outgoing acoustic sound by means of an output transducer comprised in said outer part or in said connecting portion.

Said outgoing acoustic sound usually is acoustic sound to
15 be perceived by a user of the hearing device.

In one embodiment, the method comprises guiding said outgoing acoustic sound to said inner part, in particular through said inner part.

The invention comprises methods with features of
20 corresponding hearing devices according to the invention, and vice versa.

The advantages of the methods correspond to the advantages of corresponding apparatuses and vice versa.

Further embodiments and advantages emerge from the
25 dependent claims and the figures.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Below, the invention is described in more detail by means of examples and the included drawings. The figures show:

- 5 Fig. 1 a partially block-diagrammatical illustration of a hearing device;
- Fig. 2 a partially perspective illustration of a hearing device;
- Fig. 3 a block-diagrammatical illustration of a hearing
10 device;
- Fig. 4 a block-diagrammatical illustration of a hearing device.

The reference symbols used in the figures and their meaning are summarized in the list of reference symbols. The
15 described embodiments are meant as examples and shall not confine the invention.

Detailed Description of the Invention

20

Fig. 1 shows a partially block-diagrammatical illustration of a hearing device 1. The hearing device 1 comprises an inner part 3 worn within a user's ear 5, more particularly within the user's ear canal 16, and an outer part 2 worn
25 behind the user's ear, more particularly behind the user's concha. The hearing device 1 furthermore comprises a

connecting portion 12, which is symbolized in Fig. 1 by a dotted arrow, and which provides an operational connection between inner part 3 and outer part 2.

The inner part 3 comprises an input transducer 6 such as a microphone or a microphone arrangement, and a signal processing unit 7 such as a digital signal processor (DSP). There is no battery and no other energy storage unit comprised in said inner part 3.

The outer part 2 comprises an output transducer 8 such as a loudspeaker, an energy storage unit 4 such as a battery, and a user interface 11 comprising two user controls, a volume control 19 and a program select button 18. As indicated by reference number 28 (thick dotted line), a portion of outer part 2 comprising output transducer 8 is detachably connected to the rest of outer part 2. This allows, e.g., to detach a portion of outer part 2 for fitting the hearing device 1 to the hearing needs and preference of the hearing device user. E.g., the same detachable connector could be used for connecting said portion of outer part 2 comprising output transducer 8 to said rest of outer part 2 and for connecting said portion of outer part 2 comprising output transducer 8 (and therewith connecting also connecting portion 12 and inner part 3) to a fitting system or fitting device such as a computer with a suitable software. During fitting, an energy storage unit 4 within the hearing device 1 can be dispensed with since energy can be provided via the detachable connection, e.g., from the fitting system, and user interface 11 can be dispensed with, too, since the

corresponding functions can be controlled via the detachable connection, e.g., using the fitting system. A useful and high degree of modularity can be obtained by means of said detachable connection (ref. 28).

5 Basic functions of the hearing device 1 are to convert incoming acoustic sound 9 into audio signals S1, which is accomplished by input transducer 6, and to process these audio signals S1 in dependence of hearing needs and preference of the user, which is accomplished by signal
10 processing unit 7, and to convert the so-obtained audio signals S2 into outgoing sound 10, which is accomplished by output transducer 8. The outgoing sound 10 will reach the user's ear drum 17 in order to be perceived by the user.

The signal processing taking place in signal processing
15 unit 7 can be adjusted by the user by means of the user interface 11.

Fig. 2 shows a partially perspective illustration of a hearing device 1. Most of the reference symbols have already been explained above in conjunction with Fig. 1.

20 The shape and size of outer part 2 is strongly influenced by the largest comprised component, i.e. by the battery for which a battery door 20 is provided. The outer part 2 can be considerably smaller than conventional BTE hearing devices, since signal processing unit 7 and input
25 transducer 6 are comprised in inner part 3.

The inner part 3 can be considerably smaller than conventional ITE hearing devices such as ITC and CIC hearing devices, because neither the energy storage unit 4 nor the output transducer 8 has to be comprised in inner

part 3. This results in a high wearing comfort. And, the outer shape of inner part 3 can rather easily be designed to be very well adjusted to the user's ear, more particularly to the shape of the user's ear canal. It is well possible to provide a custom-made shell for the inner part which is individually shaped for each user's ear canal shape. But it is also possible, in particular due to the smallness of the inner part, to provide an inner part which is only in part or even not at all individually selected for the user or adjusted to the user's ear canal shape: E.g., the inner part could be the same for all users or for each user of one of a couple of groups of users, while it is provided with a compliant or resilient material such as a soft foam or some other soft elastic material, e.g., a suitable silicone, so as to adjust itself to each user's individual ear canal shape.

Connecting portion 12 comprises a tube member 23 and a plug 25 fitting into a socket provided by outer part 2 allowing to easily separate outer part 2 from inner part 3. Tube member 23 allows to guide acoustic sound generated by output transducer 8 to inner part 3. Furthermore, connecting portion 12 provides a wired connection integrated in tube member 23 which allows to transmit data and/or signals between inner part 3 and outer part 2. Alternatively or additionally, it is possible to provide a wireless connection between inner part 3 and outer part 2 for transmitting data and/or signals between inner part 3 and outer part 2.

Fig. 3 shows a block-diagrammatical illustration of a hearing device 1 emphasising operational aspects and showing additional components.

In addition to the components shown in Figs. 1 and 2,

5 Fig. 3 shows an additional input transducer 15, comprised in the outer part 2, which generates audio signals S1', a data storage unit 14 comprised in inner part 3, comprising data individual to the hearing device user, a control unit 21 comprised in inner part 3, which alternatively
10 could be comprised in outer part 2, and a transceiver 24 comprised in inner part 3, which also could alternatively be comprised in outer part 2, and an antenna 22 for use in conjunction with transceiver 24.

Electrical energy is transmitted from energy storage unit 4
15 in outer part 3 to signal processing unit 7, to control circuit 21 and (not indicated in Fig. 2) to transceiver 24, via wired connection 13. A wireless connection, e.g., using induction, could also be used for that purpose.

The operational connection for transmitting audio
20 signals S1' and/or S2 and/or electrical signals from user interface 11 can be provided by wired connection 13.

A bus system can be established on wired connection 13 for transmitting audio signals S1' and/or S2 and/or said control signals. This is an elegant way of communicating
25 signals and/or data between inner part 3 and outer part 3.

Control circuit 21 controls signal processing unit 7 and transceiver 24 and exchanges data with data storage unit 14. It furthermore receives electrical signals from user interface 11.

Data storage unit 14 is preferably comprised in inner part 3 which facilitates the exchange of data with signal processing unit 7. The data individual to the hearing device user can comprise, e.g., data descriptive of the user's hearing loss and/or data descriptive of signal processing parameter settings adjusted to the hearing needs and preferences of the user.

Transceiver 24 allows to establish communication connections with devices separate from the hearing device 1. The antenna 22 can be comprised in the inner part 3 and/or in the connecting portion 12 and/or in the outer part 2. Preferably, antenna 22 is comprised fully or in part in connecting portion 12. An elegant way to comprise antenna 22 in connecting portion 12 is to use electrical connection 13 as antenna 22 or as a part thereof. A direct current provided by energy storage unit 4 will not interfere with antenna signals. Furthermore, it is also possible to separate antenna signals from other signals possibly transmitted via wired connection 13 such as audio signals S1', S2 and control signals from user interface 11.

The antenna 22 can be used, e.g., for programming (fitting) the hearing device in a wireless fashion, i.e. without galvanically connecting a programming system or device (such as a computer with a suitable programming software) with the hearing device.

The hearing device 1 according to the invention can be considered a modular hearing device. It is possible, confer, e.g., to Fig. 3, to distribute the hearing device

components in such a way that predominantly components which are rather individual to the hearing device user are comprised in the inner part 3, which usually will have a shape that is more or less individually adapted to the user's ear (in particular the user's ear canal), whereas components which can or have to be easily replaced are predominantly comprised in the outer part 2. This way, servicing the hearing device is simplified. It is possible, e.g., even to replace the whole outer part 2 by a different outer part having a different shape or color, or by one suitable for a different battery type or with a different user interface, or by one with or without a wired or wireless connectivity. Such a connectivity can be a connectivity to and/or from external devices or systems such one or more microphones, consumer electronics devices (such as music players), communication devices (such as mobile phones), one- or two-way radio equipment, testing hearing device equipment, hearing diagnostics equipment, hearing device fitting equipment, hearing device programming equipment. Said wireless connectivity can be based, e.g., on FM (frequency modulation).

Fig. 4 shows a block-diagrammatical illustration of a hearing device, illustrating another possible way of providing a useful modularity. Most reference numbers have already been explained above. Whereas in the embodiments of Figs. 1, 2 and 3, the output converter 8 is arranged in the outer part 2, in the embodiment of Fig. 4, it is integrated in connecting portion 12. Connecting portion 12 is detachably connected to at least one of outer part 2 and inner part 3, in particular to both, outer part 2 and inner

part 3, as indicated by reference numbers 26 and 27, respectively. Preferably, connecting portion 12 and therewith output transducer 8 is detachably connectable at least to outer part 2. This allows, in a very comparable
5 way to what was explained above with reference to Fig. 1, to fit (adjust) the hearing device to needs and preferences of a hearing device user having a plug or socket connected at 26 (with energy storage unit 4 and user interface 11 removed) so as to provide a connection to an external
10 fitting system, while input transducer 6, output transducer 8 and signal processing unit 7 being still available. For example, output transducer 8 could be integrated in a plug belonging to connecting portion 12 such as - referring to Fig. 2 - plug 25.

15 In general, detachable connections 26, 27, 28 can be realized, e.g., in form of plug-and-socket connections, a plug in one of the interconnected parts and a socket in the other.

Aspects of the embodiments above have been described in
20 terms of functional units. As is readily understood, these functional units may be realized in virtually any number of hardware and/or software components adapted to performing the specified functions.

List of Reference Symbols

	1	hearing device
5	2	outer part
	3	inner part
	4	energy storage unit, battery
	5	ear
	6	input transducer, microphone
10	7	signal processing unit, DSP
	8	output transducer, loudspeaker
	9	incoming acoustic sound
	10	outgoing acoustic sound
	11	user interface
15	12	connecting portion
	13	wired electrical connection
	14	data storage unit
	15	input transducer, microphone
	16	ear canal
20	17	ear drum
	18	user control
	19	user control
	20	battery door

21 control unit, control circuitry

22 antenna

23 tube member

24 transceiver

5 25 plug

26,27,28 detachable connection, connector

S1,S1',S2 audio signals

Patent Claims:

1. Hearing device (1) comprising

— an outer part (2) to be worn behind a hearing device
5 user's ear (5),

— an inner part (3) to be worn within the hearing device
user's ear (5), and

— a connecting portion (12) operationally
interconnecting said outer part (2) and said inner
10 part (3);

wherein an output transducer (8) is comprised in said outer
part (2) or in said connecting portion (12), and wherein
said inner part (3) comprises an input transducer (6) and,
operationally interconnected between said input
15 transducer (6) and said output transducer (8), a signal
processing unit (7).

2. The hearing device (1) according to claim 1,

characterized in that said connecting portion (12) is

20 detachably connectable to said outer part (2) or detachably
connectable to said inner part (3) or detachably
connectable to both, said outer part (2) and said inner
part (3).

25 3. The hearing device (1) according to claim 1 or
claim 2, characterized in that a part of said hearing
device (1) comprising said output transducer (8) is

detachably connectable to at least a portion of said outer part (2).

4. The hearing device (1) according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that said connecting portion (12) comprises a tube member (23) for providing guidance for acoustic sound (10) outputted from said output transducer (8) to said inner part (3).

5. The hearing device (1) according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in comprising a data storage unit (14) comprising data individual to said hearing device user, wherein said data storage unit (4) is comprised in said inner part (3).

6. The hearing device (1) according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that no energy storage unit suitable for powering said signal processing unit (7) is comprised in said inner part (3).

7. The hearing device (1) according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that said outer part (2) comprises an energy storage unit (4), wherein said signal processing unit (7) is configured to be powered by energy drawn from said energy storage unit (4).

8. The hearing device (1) according to claim 7,
characterized in that said hearing device (1) comprises a
wired electrical connection (13) between said inner (2) and
said outer (3) part for transferring energy in electrical
5 form from said energy storage unit (4) to said inner part.

9. The hearing device (1) according to claim 8 and to
claim 4, characterized in that said wired electrical
connection (13) is at least in part integrated in said tube
10 member (23).

10. The hearing device (1) according to one of the
preceding claims, wherein the hearing device (1) comprises
a user interface (11), at least a portion of said user
15 interface (11) being comprised in said outer part (2).

11. The hearing device (1) according to claim 10, wherein
said inner part (3) comprises no portion of said user
interface (11).

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12. The hearing device (1) according to one of claims 8
to 9 and to one of claims 10 to 11, characterized in that
electrical signals generated by means of said user
interface (11) are transmitted from said outer part (2) to
25 said inner part (3) via said wired electrical
connection (13).

13. The hearing device (1) according to one of claims 8 to 9 and to one of claims 10 to 12, characterized in that audio signals (S2) outputted from said signal processing unit (7) are transmitted from said inner part (3) to said output transducer (8) via said wired electrical connection (13).

14. The hearing device (1) according to one of claims 8 to 9 and to one of claims 10 to 13, characterized in that said hearing device (1) comprises an antenna (22) for sending or receiving or for both, sending and receiving, of data in a wireless fashion, wherein at least a portion of said antenna (22) is comprised in said wired electrical connection (13).

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15. The hearing device (1) according to one of claims 8 to 9 and to one of claims 10 to 14, characterized in that the hearing device (1) is configured to establish a bus system on said wired electrical connection (13).

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16. Method for operating a hearing device (1) comprising an outer part (2) to be worn behind a hearing device user's ear (5), an inner part (3) to be worn within the hearing device user's ear (5), and, interconnected between said outer part (2) and said inner part (3), a connecting portion (12), said method comprising the steps of

- transducing incoming acoustic sound (9) into audio signals (S1) by means of an input transducer (6) comprised in said inner part (3);
- 5 — processing said audio signals (S1) or audio signals derived therefrom in a signal processing unit (7) comprised in said inner part (3);
- 10 — transducing the so-obtained processed audio signals (S2) or audio signals derived therefrom into outgoing acoustic sound (10) by means of an output transducer (8) comprised in said outer part (2) or in said connecting portion (12).

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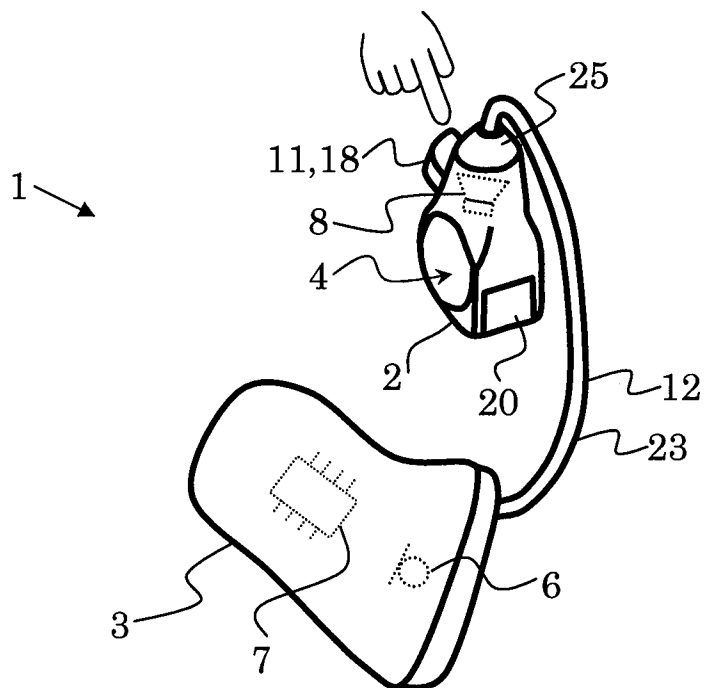


Fig. 2

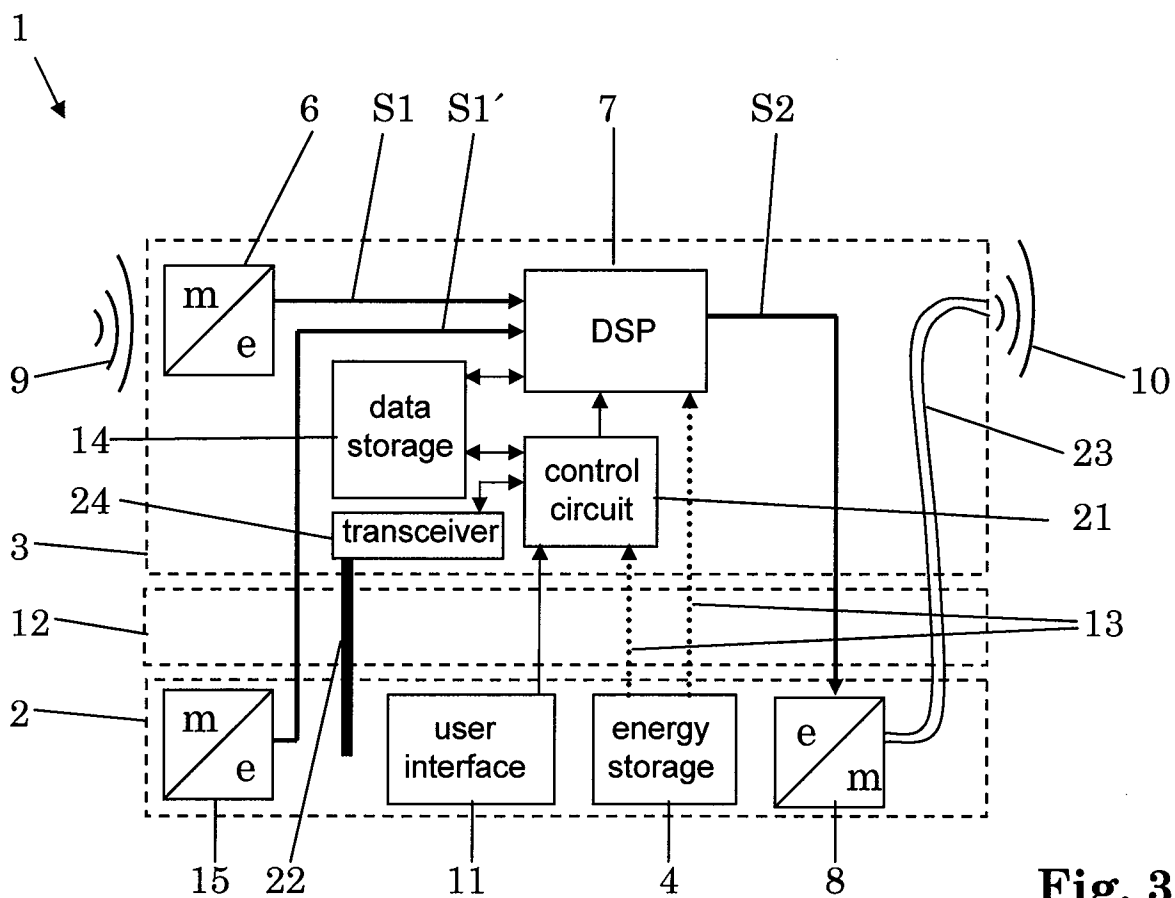


Fig. 3