[0237] 5.3 Directional Microphone

[0238] When the driver of a vehicle is using a cellular phone, the phone microphone frequently picks up other noise in the vehicle making it difficult for the other party to hear what is being said. This noise can be reduced if a directional microphone is used and directed toward the mouth of the driver. This is difficult to do since the position of drivers' mouths varies significantly depending on such things as the size and seating position of the driver By using the vehicle interior identification and monitoring system of this invention, and through appropriate pattern recognition techniques, the location of the driver's head can be determined with sufficient accuracy even with ultrasonics to permit a directional microphone having, for example, a 15 degree cone angle to be aimed at the mouth of the driver resulting in a clear reception of his voice. The use of directional speakers in a similar manner also improves the telephone system performance. In the extreme case of directionality, the techniques of hypersonic sound can be used. Such a system can also be used to permit effortless conversations between occupants of the front and rear seats Such a system is shown in **FIG. 10**, which is a system similar to that of **FIG. 2** only using three ultrasonic transducers **231**, **232** and **233** to determine the location of the driver's head and control the pointing direction of a microphone **355**. Speaker **357** is shown connected schematically to the phone system **359** completing the system. Note, although the transducers are illustrated as being mounted on the A-pillar and headliner, better performance is achieved when the transducers are mounted spaced apart as discussed in Varga et. al. U.S. Pat. No. RE 37,260, which in incorporated herein by reference.

[0239] The transducers **231** and **232** can be placed high in the A-pillar and the third transducer **233** is placed in the headliner and displaced horizontally from transducers **231** and **232**. The two transducers **231** and **232** provide information to permit the determination of the locus of the head in the vertical direction and the combination of one of transducers **231** and **232** in conjunction with transducer **233** is used to determine the horizontal location of the head. The three transducers are placed high in the vehicle passenger compartment so that the first returned signal is from the head. Temporal filtering is used to eliminate signals that are reflections from beyond the head and the determination of the head center location is then found by the approximate centroid of the head returned signal. That is, once the location of the return signal centroid is found from the three received signals from transducers **231**, **232** and **233**, the distance to that point is known for each of the transducers based on the time it takes the signal to travel from the head to each transducer. In this manner, by using the three transducers, all of which send and receive, plus an algorithm for finding the coordinates of the head center, using processor **101**, and through the use of known relationships between the location of the mouth and the head center, an estimate of the mouth location, and the ear locations, can be determined within a circle having a diameter of about five inches (13 cm). This is sufficiently accurate for a directional microphone to cover the mouth while excluding the majority of unwanted noise.

[0240] 6. Glare Reduction

[0241] The headlights of oncoming vehicles frequently make it difficult for the driver of a vehicle to see the road and safely operate the vehicle. This is a significant cause of accidents and much discomfort. The problem is especially severe during bad weather where rain can cause multiple reflections. Opaque visors are now used to partially solve this problem but they do so by completely blocking the view through a large portion of the window and therefore cannot be used to cover the entire windshield. Similar problems happen when the sun is setting or rising and the driver is operating the vehicle in the direction of the sun. The vehicle interior monitoring system of this invention can contribute to the solution of this problem by determining the position of the driver's eyes. If separate sensors are used to sense the direction of the light from the on-coming vehicle or the sun, and through the use of electro-chromic glass, a liquid crystal device, suspended particle device glass (SPD) or other appropriate technology, a portion of the windshield, or special visor as discussed below, can be darkened to impose a filter between the eyes of the driver and the light source. Electro-chromic glass is a material where the color of the glass can be changed through the application of an electric current. By dividing the windshield into a controlled grid or matrix of contiguous areas and through feeding the current into the windshield from orthogonal directions, selective portions of the windshield can be darkened as desired Other systems for selectively imposing a filter between the eyes of an occupant and the light source are currently under development. One example is to place a transparent sun visor type device between the windshield and the driver to selectively darken portions of the visor as described above for the windshield.

[0242] **FIG. 11** illustrates how such a system operates for the windshield. A sensor **410** located on vehicle **402** determines the direction of the light **412** from the headlights of oncoming vehicle **404**. Sensor **410** is comprised of a lens and a charge-coupled device (CCD), of CMOS light sensing or similar device, with appropriate electronic circuitry that determines which elements of the CCD are being most brightly illuminated. An algorithm stored in processor **101** then calculates the direction of the light from the oncoming headlights based on the information from the CCD, or CMOS device. Transducers **231**, **232** and **233** determine the probable location of the eyes of the operator **210** of vehicle **402** in a manner such as described above in conjunction with the determination of the location of the driver's mouth in the discussion of **FIG. 10**. In this case, however, the determination of the probable locus of the driver's eyes is made with an accuracy of a diameter for each eye of about 3 inches (7.5 cm). This calculation sometimes will be in error especially for ultrasonic occupant sensing systems and provision is made for the driver to make an adjustment to correct for this error as described below.

[0243] The windshield **416** of vehicle **402** is made from electro-chromic glass, comprises a liquid crystal, SPD device or similar system, and is selectively darkened at area **418** due to the application of a current along perpendicular directions **422** and **424** of windshield **416**. The particular portion of the windshield to be darkened is determined by processor **101**. Once the direction of the light from the oncoming vehicle is known and the locations of the driver's eyes are known, it is a matter of simple trigonometry to determine which areas of the windshield matrix should be darkened to impose a filter between the headlights and the driver's eyes. This is accomplished by processor **101**. A separate control system, not shown, located on the instru-