

speed shown FIG. 15A. In this example, like FIG. 15A, the pushing judgment threshold  $F_{th}$  is preliminarily set with respect to the input detection signal  $S2$  obtained from the input detector means 45. The CPU 32 controls the actuator vibration circuit 37 so that a vibration pattern  $Pa$  is generated at a time  $t12$  at which the rising waveform of the input detection signal  $S2$  goes across the pushing judgment threshold  $F_{th}$  and a vibration pattern  $Pb$  is generated at a time  $t22$  at which the falling waveform of the input detection signal  $S2$  goes across the pushing judgment threshold  $F_{th}$ .

[0173] In this case, the input detector means 45 detects the press force  $F$  caused when the button icon or the like is pushed at a speed faster than the reference pushing speed, and, when the CPU 32 or the like detects the relationship: pushing judgment threshold  $F_{th} < \text{press force } F$ , the haptic stimulus "A" can be started. On the other hand, when the CPU 32 or the like detects the relationship: pushing judgment threshold  $F_{th} > \text{press force } F$ , the haptic stimulus "B" can be started. Between the vibration pattern  $Pa$  and the vibration pattern  $Pb$  is formed a blank term  $T_x = T_2$  ( $T_2 < T_1$ ) with no vibration.

[0174] Even when pushed at a pushing speed faster than the pushing speed set at the design, the haptic stimulus "A" is propagated on the first stage to achieve a load having a feeling of clicking, and the haptic stimulus "B" is propagated on the second stage to achieve a stroke having a feeling of clicking. In this example, when the pushing judgment threshold  $F_{th}$  is 100 (gf), a haptic stimulus of a classic switch can be obtained.

[0175] Next, an example of the information processing in the mobile phone 400 is described. FIG. 17 is a flowchart showing an example of the information processing in the mobile phone 400 according to the fourth embodiment.

[0176] In this example, the mobile phone 400 has the touch panel supporting vibrator 100, 200, or 300 according to the first, second, or third embodiment, and information is input by pushing the input detection surface on the display screen of the mobile phone 400 by means of a finger 30a of an operator. The mobile phone 400 has a function (algorithm) such that a waveform is processed using press force  $F$  caused by the finger 30a of the operator or the like as a parameter in the same vibration mode. The CPU 32 calculates press force  $F$  from the input detection data  $D2$ , and judges it according to the driving requirements a, b shown in FIG. 15A, making it possible to generate an appropriate haptic stimulus according to the pushing action during the input operation in the same vibration mode for any types of inputs.

[0177] Under the above information processing conditions, in a step G1 in the flowchart shown in FIG. 17, the CPU 32 waits for a power source ON. For example, the CPU 32 detects power source ON information to start the system. The power source ON information is generally generated when a clock function or the like works and the power source switch of a mobile phone or the like in a sleeping state is turned ON.

[0178] The procedure then goes to a step G2 and the CPU 32 controls the display means 29 so that an icon image is displayed. For example, the CPU 32 feeds display data  $D4$  to the display means 29 to display input information on the display screen. The input information displayed on the display screen is made visible through the input detector means 45 having an input detection surface. The procedure then goes to a step G3 and the CPU 32 divides the control according to a button icon input mode or another processing mode. The button icon input mode is an input operation of pushing an icon button 29a or the like on the input detection surface when selecting a button icon.

[0179] When the button icon input mode is selected, the button icon 29a or the like is pushed, and hence the procedure goes to a step G4 and the CPU 32 calculates press force  $F$  on the basis of the input detection data  $D2$ . In this instance, the force detector means 55a to 55d detect the press force  $F$  of the finger 30a of the operator in the pushed position on the input detection surface to output an input detection signal  $S2$  to the A/D driver 31. The A/D driver 31 A/D-converts the input detection signal  $S2$ , and transfers the A/D-converted input detection data  $D2$  to the CPU 32.

[0180] The procedure then goes to a step G5, and the CPU 32 compares the press force  $F$  with the pushing judgment threshold  $F_{th}$  and judges whether or not the relationship:  $F > F_{th}$  is satisfied. When the relationship:  $F > F_{th}$  is satisfied, the procedure goes to a step G6 where the haptic stimulus "A" is started. The haptic stimulus "A" is obtained by vibrating the input detection surface by means of the piezoelectric actuators 25a and 25b in accordance with the vibration pattern  $Pa$  corresponding to the press force  $F$  of the finger 30a of the operator.

[0181] In the haptic stimulus "A", for example, with respect to the frequency  $f_x$ , amplitude  $A_x$ , and number  $N_x$  shown in FIG. 14A, the input detection surface is vibrated with a vibration pattern of  $[f_x A_x N_x] = [50 \ 5 \ 2]$  on the first stage  $i$  for about 0.1 second and vibrated with a vibration pattern of  $[f_x A_x N_x] = [100 \ 10 \ 2]$  on the second stage  $ii$  for about 0.1 second. In this case, different vibration patterns can be generated according to the "press force" of the operator (driving requirement a).

[0182] The procedure then goes to a step G7 and the CPU 32 further detects press force  $F$ . The press force  $F$  is detected by the force detector means 55a to 55d when the operator is removed from the button icon 29a subsequent to pushing the button icon 29a. In this instance, the force detector means 55a to 55d detect press force  $F$  generated when the finger 30a of the operator is removed from the pushed position on the input detection surface to output the input detection signal  $S2$  to the A/D driver 31. The A/D driver 31 A/D-converts the input detection signal  $S2$ , and transfers the A/D-converted input detection data  $D2$  to the CPU 32.

[0183] The procedure then goes to a step G8, and the CPU 32 compares the press force  $F$  with the pushing judgment threshold  $F_{th}$  and judges whether or not the relationship:  $F < F_{th}$  is satisfied. When the relationship:  $F < F_{th}$  is satisfied, the haptic stimulus "B" is started. The haptic stimulus "B" is obtained by vibrating the input detection surface by means of the piezoelectric actuators 25a and 25b in accordance with the vibration pattern  $Pb$  corresponding to the press force  $F$  of the finger 30a of the operator. In the haptic stimulus "B" caused when the button icon 29a is released, for example, as shown in FIG. 14B, the input detection surface is vibrated with a vibration pattern of  $[f_x A_x N_x] = [80 \ 8 \ 2]$  on the first stage  $i$  for about 0.1 second and vibrated with a vibration pattern of  $[f_x A_x N_x] = [40 \ 8 \ 2]$  on the second stage  $ii$  for about 0.1 second. In this case, different vibration patterns can be generated in accordance with the "press force" of the operator (driving requirement b).

[0184] The procedure then goes to a step G10 where the input is settled. In this instance, the CPU 32 settles the input information displayed in the pushed position on the input operation surface. The procedure then goes to a step G12. When another processing mode is selected in the step G3, the procedure goes to a step G11 and another processing mode is executed. Another processing mode includes a telephone