

microcapsules 371 received in the lower portion 311a of the reception groove 311 are charged.

[0035] The second electrode 335 is arranged above the electrorheological fluid 370 received in the reception groove 311 to move the particles 373 and 374 received in the lower portion 311a of the reception groove 311 together with the first electrode 330. The second electrode protection film 336 is arranged between the second electrode 335 and the electrorheological fluid 370. The second electrode protection film 336 protects the second electrode 335, separates the lower portion 311a and an upper portion 311b of the reception groove 311, and keeps the microcapsules 371 from being attached to the second electrode 335 when the microcapsules 371 received in the reception groove 311 are charged. The braille pin 340 is arranged above the upper portion 311b of the reception groove 311, i.e., on the second electrode 335, to move upward and downward. Preferably, the braille pin 340 is made of a polymer braille pin. The braille pin protection film 350 is arranged above the braille pin 340 and is preferably made of a polymer film for easy recognition of raised dots.

[0036] FIG. 4 shows a state that an electrical field is not applied to the electrorheological fluid 370 in the lower portion 311a of the reception groove 311. That is, FIG. 4 shows movement of a general particle-dispersed suspension. The electrorheological fluid 370 of FIG. 4 is a suspension in which microcapsules 371 which surround the electrophoresis particles 373 and 374 are dispersed, and the electrophoresis particles 373 and 374 are between about 10 to 500 nm in size. In the present invention, nanosize polymer particles or inorganic particles coated with a polymer material are used as a physical/chemical means to adjust the charge density of the electrophoresis particles 373 and 374.

[0037] The microcapsules 371 are microsized particles in a dispersion system in which an electrophoresis particle 373 (having a positive charge) and an electrophoresis particle 374 (having a negative charge) are dispersed in the electrorheological fluid 375 which is surrounded by a synthetic polymer or natural polymer film. Here, the electrophoresis particles 373 and 374 and the electrorheological fluid 375 are made of materials having the same specific gravity. The microcapsules 371 are between about 10 to 50 volume percent of a volume weight of the total electrorheological fluid 370. A volume weight of the insulating dielectric fluid 372 which constitutes the electrorheological fluid 370 having the microcapsules 371 dispersed therein ranges from about 50 to about 90 volume percent of the total volume weight of the electrorheological fluid 370. A thickness of the polymer film which constitutes the microcapsules 371 ranges from about 0.1 to about 0.3 μm . The polymer film adjusts transmittance according to a density of a crosslink agent when polymerized, and the thickness of the polymer film can be changed according to a polymerization reaction time. Mechanical strength of the polymer film and the size of the microcapsules 371 can be easily adjusted by adjusting a reaction condition.

[0038] FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view illustrating a state of the braille display device when an electrical field is applied, according to one exemplary embodiment of the present invention.

[0039] Referring to FIG. 5, an electrical power is applied to the first and second electrodes 330 and 335 to form an electric field, so that rheological mechanical characteristics of the electrorheological fluid 370 containing the microcapsules 371 change. The electrophoresis particles 373 and 374 in the microcapsules 371 are arranged in a vertical direction due to

an electrophoresis phenomenon (e.g., polarization phenomenon) to form a chain structure. A viscosity of the electrorheological fluid 370 is rapidly increased compared to when an electrical field is not applied, so that the electrorheological fluid 370 shows movement like a solid. Here, the electrophoresis phenomenon is a phenomenon that the electrophoresis particles 373 and 374 respectively move toward the electrodes having a charge of an opposite polarity through a medium when an electric field is applied to the dielectric fluid in which the electrophoresis particles 373 and 374 having charges are dispersed. Due to such a change of the electrorheological fluid 370, the braille pins 340 in the upper portion 311b of the reception groove 311 move upward or downward, thereby expressing various information in the form of raised dots which blind people can feel. At this time, the speed at which the particles move depends on charge density, charge intensity, form and size of the electrophoresis particles 373 and 374.

[0040] FIG. 6 is a cross-sectional view of a braille display device using an electrorheological fluid according to another exemplary embodiment of the present invention. For ease of description, like reference numerals denote like parts, and thus description of those is omitted.

[0041] Referring to FIG. 6, a braille display device 600 according to another exemplary embodiment of the present invention comprises a first base body 610 having a plurality of first insulating reception grooves 611 formed therein, a substrate 320 arranged below the first base body 610, a second base body having a plurality of second insulating reception grooves 616 which are arranged above the first base body 610 to communicate with the corresponding first reception grooves 611, an electrorheological fluid 370 arranged in a lower portion of the first reception grooves 611, first and second electrodes 330 and 335 respectively arranged above and below the electrorheological fluid 370, and a plurality of braille pins 340 arranged on the second electrode 335. Here, the first and second reception grooves 611 and 616 are different in size. Other components and operations therebetween are identical to those of another exemplary embodiment, and thus description of those is omitted.

[0042] One exemplary embodiment of the present invention discloses the braille display device in which the electrorheological fluid and the braille pin are respectively received in the lower and upper portions of a single reception groove, but in another exemplary embodiment of the present invention, the upper base body having the reception groove for receiving the braille pin and the lower base body having the reception groove for receiving the electrorheological fluid are separately formed. Thus, since the base bodies can be separately formed, the reception grooves of a different size can be formed. For example, the reception groove formed in the upper base body can be smaller in size than that in the lower base body, or vice versa. Also, when the base bodies are separately formed, the second electrode arranged above the first base body may be arranged over the entire area as well as areas corresponding to the reception grooves. In one exemplary embodiment of the present invention, the first electrode protection film is formed over the entire surface of the substrate, but in another exemplary embodiment the first electrode protection film may be formed on portion of the first electrode corresponding to the reception grooves.

[0043] As described above, according to the braille display device using the electrorheological fluid of the present invention, the braille pins are installed to be moved vertically by the