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(54) **DEVICE FOR DETECTING THICKNESS AND THICKNESS VARIATION OF A SHEETLIKE OBJECT**

G01B 7/08; G01B 7/087; G01B 7/10; G01B 7/107; G01B 11/06; G07D 7/164; G01N 2291/0237; G01N 2291/02854

USPC 324/229-231, 234; 271/262, 263, 271/265.01, 265.04
See application file for complete search history.

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(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

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G01B 5/06 (2006.01)

G01D 5/20 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC **G01B 5/068** (2013.01); **G01D 5/202** (2013.01)

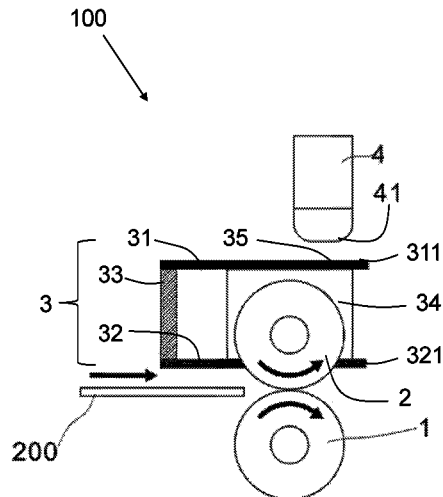
(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC B65H 2511/13; G01B 7/06; G01B 7/063;

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A device for detecting thickness and thickness variation of a sheetlike object, includes at least a first guiding component, a plurality of second guiding components, a plurality of detection units and a position sensor. An up-down displacement occurs between the first guiding component and the second guiding components while the sheetlike object passed through the first guiding component and those second guiding components. The detection units are configured relatively to second guiding components, each of the detection units further comprises a detecting block, a first elastic member, a second elastic member and a fixing member, the first elastic member and a second elastic member connect with the second guiding component via the detecting block, while the displacement occurs at the second guiding component, a sensing face to detected of the first elastic member is having a parallel displacement relative to the position sensor.

10 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets



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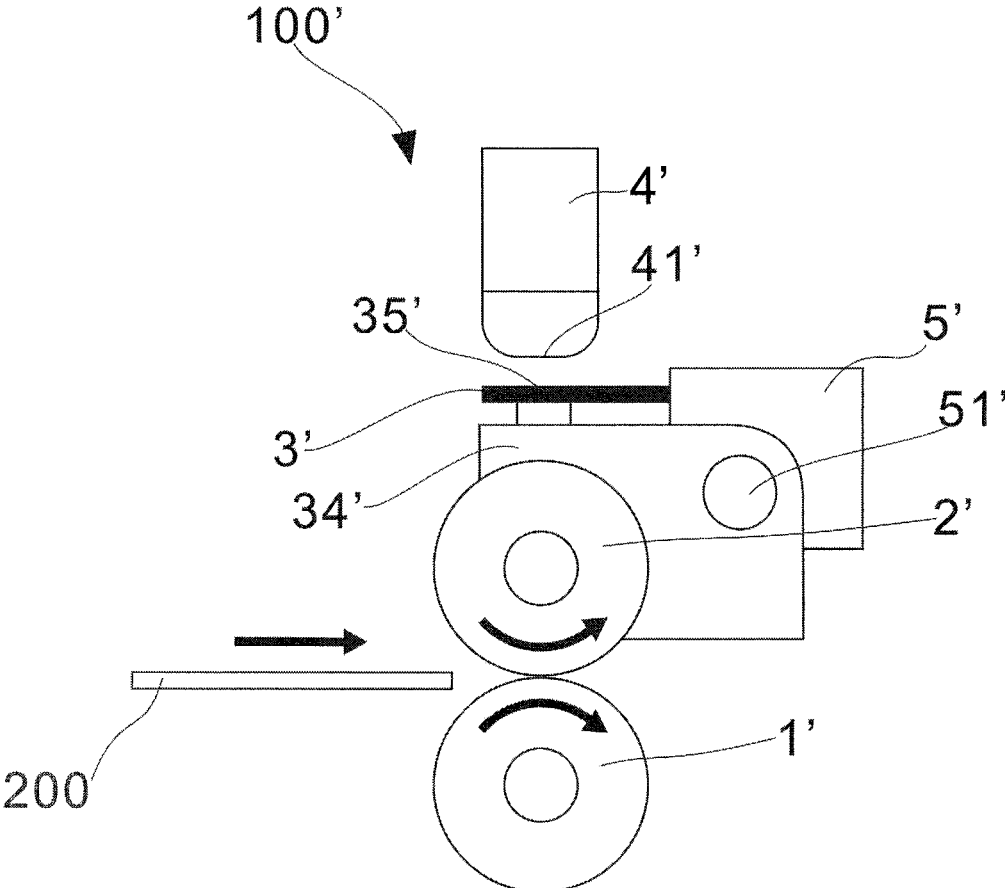


FIG. 1
(Prior Art)

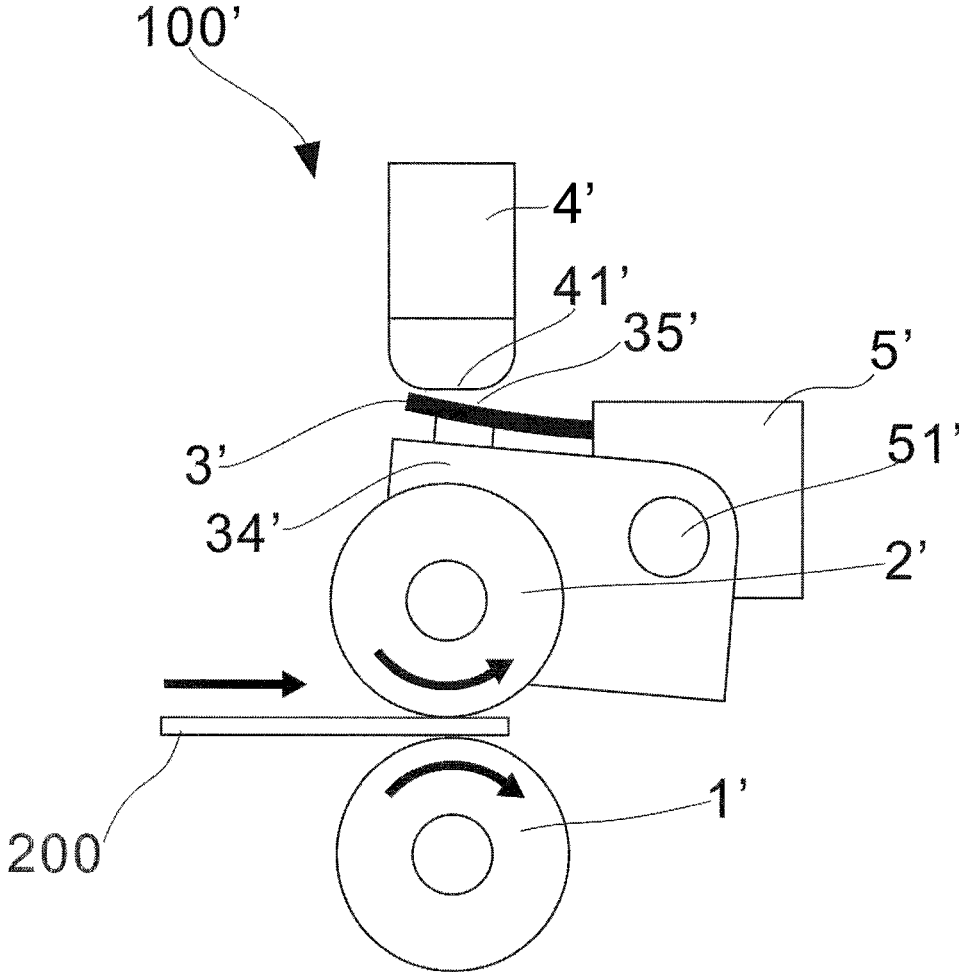


FIG. 2
(Prior Art)

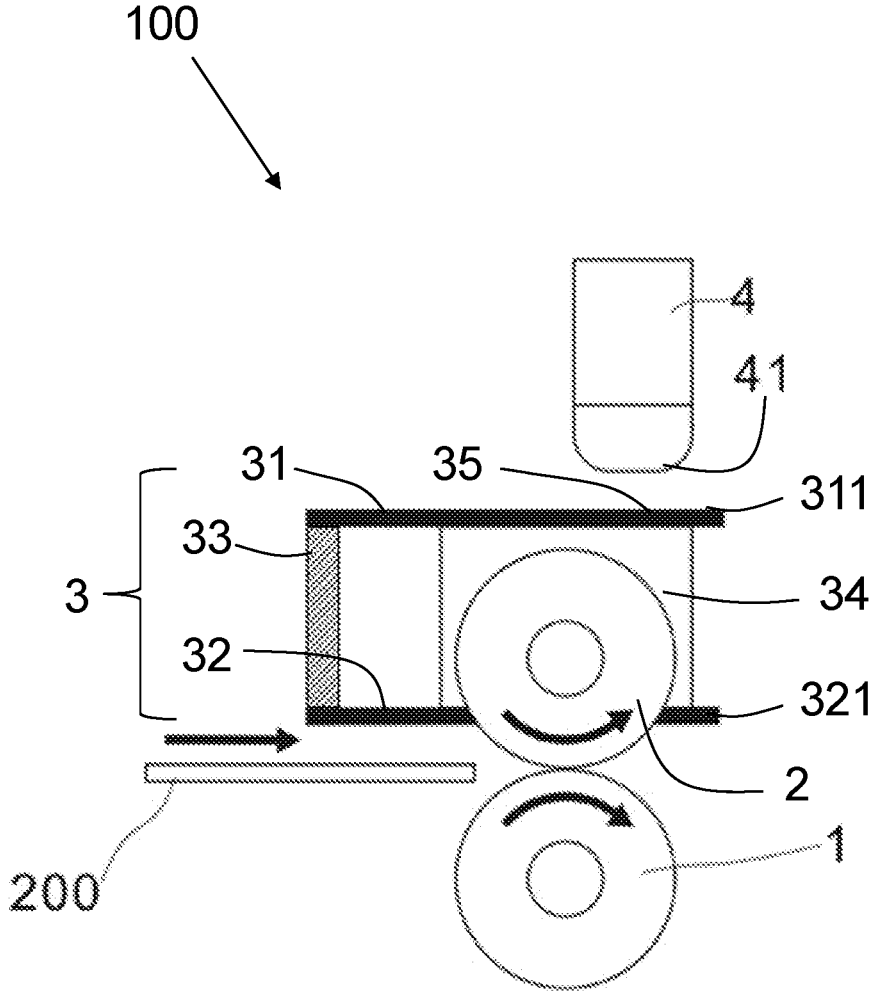


FIG. 3

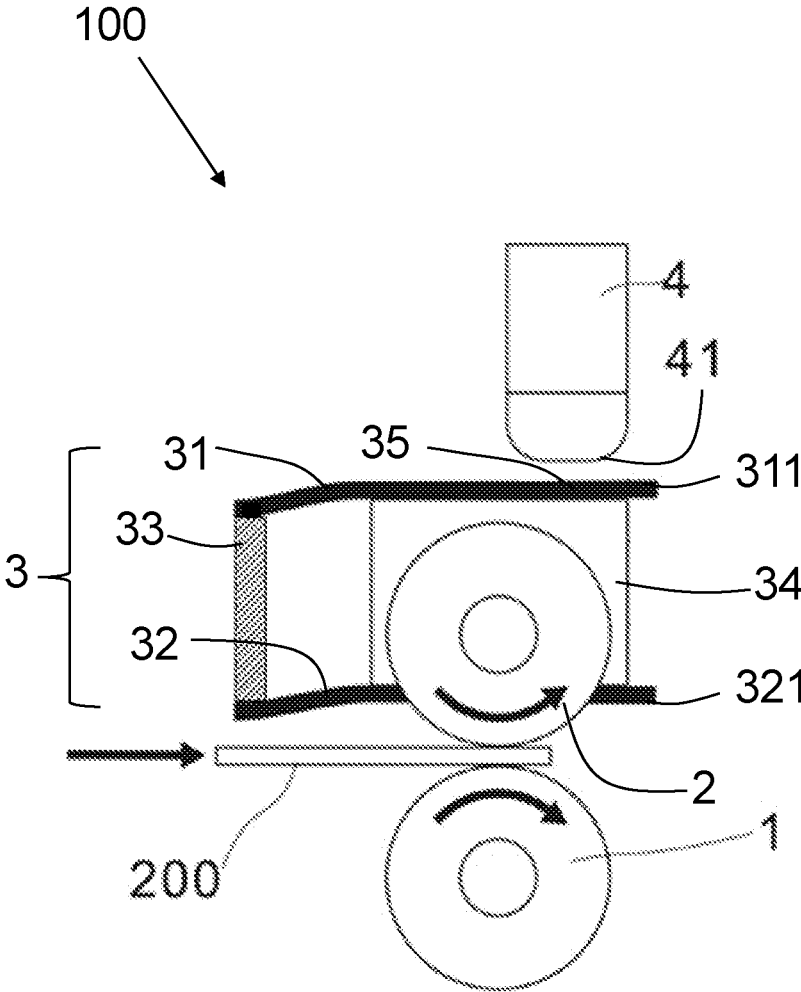


FIG. 4

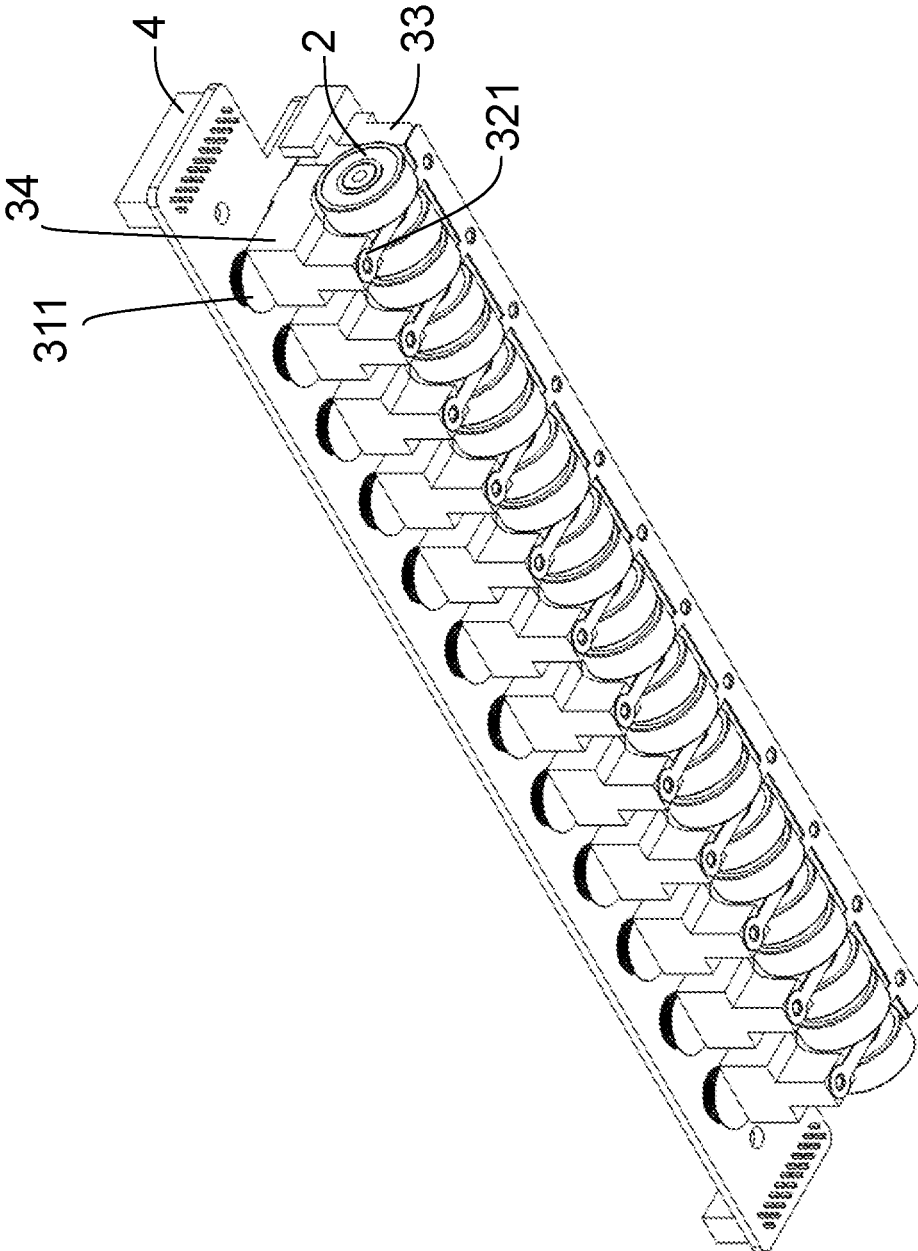


FIG. 5

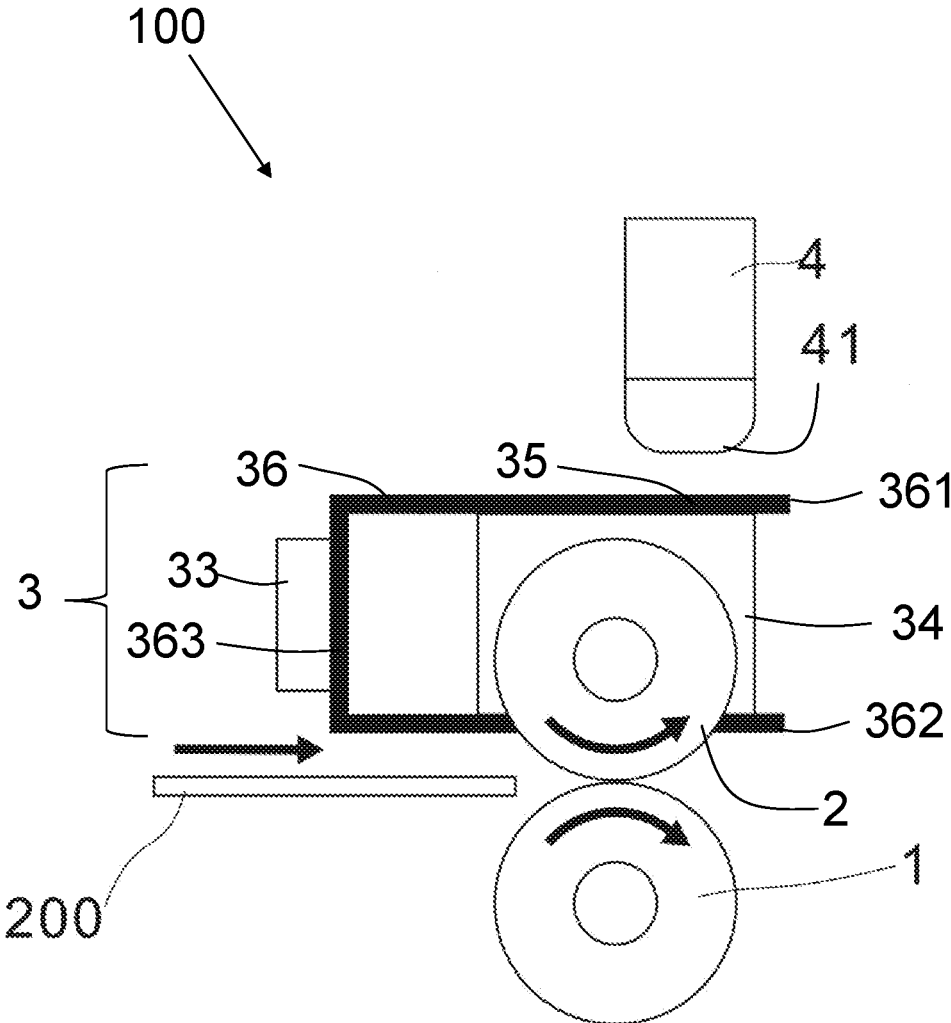


FIG. 6

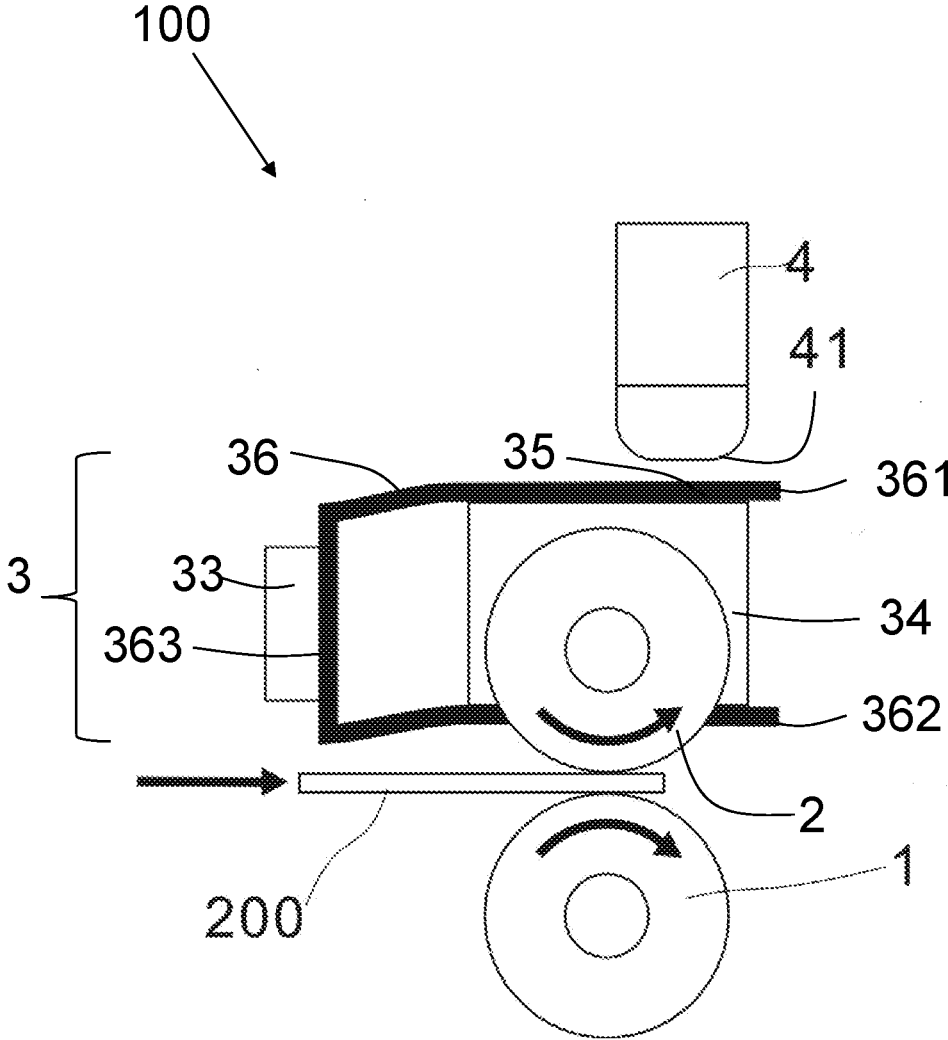


FIG. 7

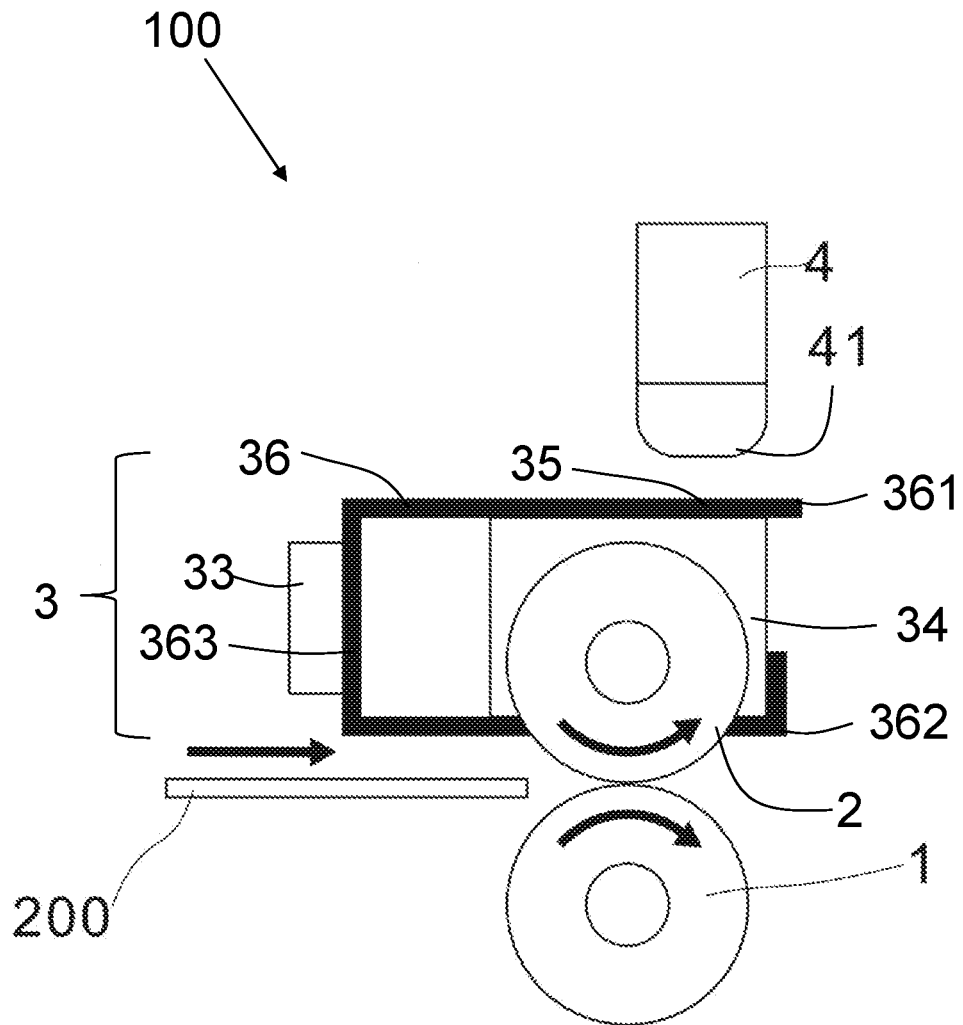


FIG. 8

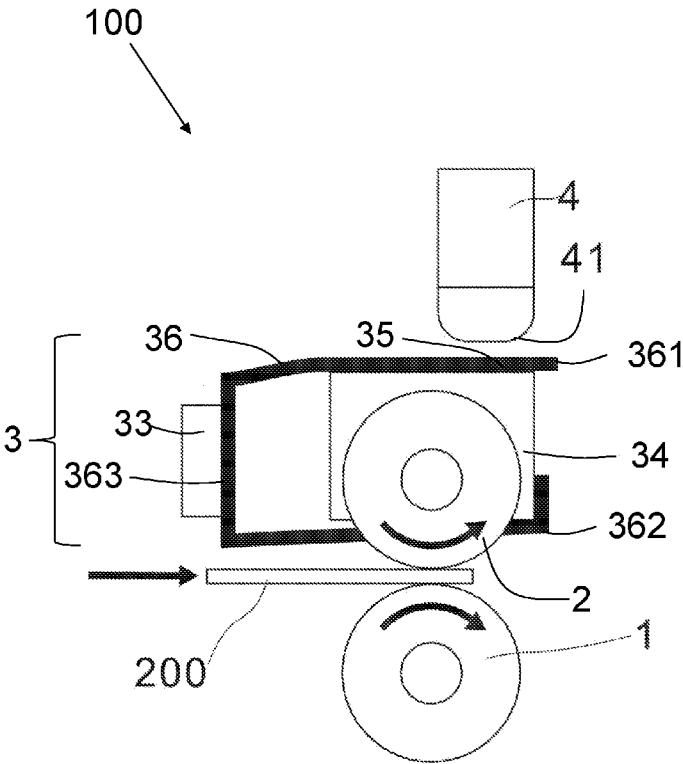


FIG. 9

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DEVICE FOR DETECTING THICKNESS AND THICKNESS VARIATION OF A SHEETLIKE OBJECT

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation-in-part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 15/415,411 filed Jan. 25, 2017 and entitled "DEVICE FOR DETECTING THICKNESS AND THICKNESS VARIATION OF A SHEETLIKE OBJECT" which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is related to a device for detecting thickness and thickness variation, especially related to a device for measuring the thickness or thickness variation of a sheetlike object, such as bill, paper, sheet or bank notes, bank securities, checks, stocks, paper with security signs, certificates, access cards or tickets, lotteries, and also including credit cards, bank automatic teller cards or ID cards or identification cards.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Generally, thickness detection of banknote is a necessary function in the money detecting apparatus and the ATM apparatus, and the tapes, folded corners on the banknote can be used to identify the thickness of the banknote therefore recognize the unqualified banknote.

The most commonly used repair method of a sheet, such as paper, bank notes, etc., is to reattach a layer of material for reinforcement. For example, the broken banknotes are usually using transparent tape to paste to avoid the continuously damage. As the banknotes will go through the recovery process, so the banking equipment would spend lots of time and money developing device for identifying the accuracy of the tape on the banknotes.

The device for measuring the thickness variations caused by adhesive tapes must have a high degree of resolution to determine the thickness variations since the typical thickness of adhesive tapes is very small.

There are many methods for measuring the thickness variations caused by adhesive tapes, which can be divided into two types: non-contact type method and contact type method. In the non-contact portion, ultrasound (U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,446,735 and 7,748,274) or capacitive sensing (U.S. Pat. No. 8,028,990) are the most common methods. However, both methods are susceptible to non-banknote factors, such as mechanical high-frequency or humidity. Thus, people prefer to use the contact type method for measuring the thickness variations caused by adhesive tapes.

The contact type method can be divided into friction type and roller type. The friction type method, such as U.S. Pat. No. 8,651,481, and then using the piezoelectric element to output the signal. The roller type method can be presently the main design direction, such as U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,550,252, 4,693,010, 6,913,260, 7,743,523, 8,091,889, 8,496,246, 8,582,123, and 8,610,441. In these patents, rollers are used to contact the objects to measure the thickness variations and represent the value on the wheel displacement; the roller would generate a rotational displacement due to the limitation of external rotation axis. The different patents use different sensing elements to output the signals of thickness variations.

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In the constraint condition of the rotation axis of a link mechanism, the roller type thickness variation detector would generate a rotational displacement (angular movement) in existing devices. Without adding any mechanical components, such as connecting rods, the side face, signal measuring items (such as metal plate) and the detecting components would generate a relative rotational displacement (angular displacement) and cannot generate a completely parallel or vertical displacement t. If coils type sensor is used, the detection accuracy of the displacement detector is decreased.

For example, the device for detecting thickness and thickness variation of existing device **100'** (please refer to FIG. 1 and FIG. 2, which is a schematic diagram of U.S. Pat. No. 8,496,246). which is used for detecting thickness and thickness variation of a sheetlike object **200**, includes: first guiding component **1'**, second guiding component **2'**, and the sheetlike objection **200** is delivered between the first guiding component **1'** and second guiding component **2'**, wherein the second guiding components **2'** are opposite to first guiding component **1'**, and the second guiding components **2'** are arranged in line, a deviation which is the second guiding component **2'** related to the first guiding component **1'** while the sheetlike object **200** passed through the first guiding component **1'** and those second guiding components **2'**, due to the thickness variation of the sheetlike object **200'**; a flat spring **3'**, having a sensing face **35'** which connects with second elastic displacement **2'** through movable fixing component **34'**, and the flat spring **3'**, the sensing face **35'**, movable fixing component **34'** and the second guiding component **2'** are connected and fixed with a stable fixing component **5'** through a rotation axis **51'**; when the second guiding component **2'** has a deviation in relation to the first guiding component **1'**, the displacement of sensing face **35'** occurs immediately, position sensor **4'** on which sensor coil **41'** is used to detect the displacement of sensing face **35'**. However, the flat spring **3'** generates an angle of deviation grounded on rotation axis **51'** in relation to the position sensor **4'**, and the sensing face **35'** cannot generate parallel or vertical displacement; particularly the tilt of the sensing face **35'** causes a decrease in accuracy of the sensor coil **41'** for detection.

In view of the above-mentioned problem, how to develop a device for improving the accuracy of displacement measurement without any angular displacement or inclined displacement is an urgent problem in relevant field.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Technical Problem to be Solved

In the constraint condition of the rotation axis of a link mechanism, the roller type thickness variation detector would detect a rotational displacement in the money detector apparatus or in an ATM apparatus. The side face, signal measuring items (such as metal plate) and the detecting components would generate a relative rotational displacement and cannot generate a completely parallel or vertical displacement, so as to decrease the detection accuracy of the displacement detector. Thus, the detection accuracy is an urgent problem in the relevant technical fields.

Technical Means to Take

The present invention provides a device for detecting thickness and thickness variation of a sheetlike object, comprises: at least a first guiding component and a plurality

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of second guiding components, wherein the second guiding components are opposite to first guiding component, and the second guiding components are arranged in line, an up-down displacement occurs between the first guiding component and the second guiding components while the sheet-like object passed through the first guiding component and those second guiding components, due to the thickness variation of the sheetlike object; a plurality of detection units arranged to correspond with the second guiding components, each of the detection unit comprises: a detecting block, wherein each of the second guiding components is connected with the detecting block, when the second guiding component occurs the displacement, the corresponded detecting block also occurs the displacement; a first elastic member comprising a first displacement end, wherein the first displacement end comprises a sensing face to be detected; a second elastic member comprising a second displacement end, wherein both of the first displacement end and the second displacement have a plane disposed thereto and served to connect with each side of a detecting block, so as to keep the shape of the first displacement end and the second displacement end; and a fixing member for fixing the another side of the first displacement end of the first elastic member and the another side of the second displacement end of the second elastic member; and a position sensor configured at a fixed position to detect a displacement of the sensing face, when the deviation occurs on any one of second guiding components, the relative first displacement end and second displacement end also occur the deviation, and the sensing face has a parallel displacement relative to the position sensor.

Efficacy Achievement

The present invention provides a connected guiding components through a elastic member rather than using a rotation axle to keep the shape of sensing face without bending or inclined deformation, so as that the sensing face could have a parallel displacement relative to the position sensor without any angular displacement. The rotational displacement and angular displacement of sensing face is improved, when the traditional device detects the thickness and thickness variation. The present invention provides a sensing face for parallel displacement to improve the accuracy of thickness detection and thickness variation detection, to solve the problem of the prior art.

Accordingly, the present invention accomplishes a device for detecting thickness and thickness variation over a longer period of time for design and development to solve the above problems.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a schematic diagram showing a cross section of the device for detecting thickness and thickness variation of prior art.

FIG. 2 is a schematic diagram showing another cross section of the device for detecting thickness and thickness variation of prior art.

FIG. 3 is a schematic diagram showing a cross section according to the first embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 4 is a schematic diagram showing another cross section according to the first embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 5 shows a schematic diagram of a combination of detection units and second guiding components in first embodiment.

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FIG. 6 is a schematic diagram showing a cross section according to second embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 7 is a schematic diagram showing another cross section according to second embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 8 is a schematic diagram showing a cross section according to third embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 9 is a schematic diagram showing another cross section according to third embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The following descriptive embodiments and the corresponding figures and symbols in the embodiments are illustrative description for the examiners of USPTO and the persons skilled in the art to understand the spirit of the present invention completely.

The first embodiment of the present invention is shown in FIG. 3 and FIG. 4, which shows a device **100** for detecting thickness and thickness variation of a sheetlike object **200**, includes: at least a first guiding component **1**, a plurality of second guiding components **2**, a plurality of detection units **3**, and a position sensor **4**. The second guiding components **2** are opposite to first guiding component **1**, and arranged in line. One or more second guiding components **2** occurs an up-down displacement relative to the first guiding component **1** while the sheetlike object **200** passed through the first guiding component **1** and second guiding components **2**, due to the thickness variation of the sheetlike object **200**.

The detection units **3** are configured relatively to second guiding components **2**, wherein each of the detection unit **3** comprises a detecting block **34**, a first elastic member **31**, a second elastic member **32**, and a fixing member **33**. Each of second guiding components **2** is connected with the detecting block **34** respectively. When an up-down displacement occurs at anyone of the second guiding components **2**, the relative detecting block **34** also occurs the up-down displacement. The first elastic member **31** comprises a first displacement end **311**, wherein the first displacement end **311** has a sensing face **35**; second elastic member **32** comprises a second displacement end **321**, wherein the first displacement end **311** and second displacement end **321** has a plane disposed respectively and served to connect with each side of a detecting block **34**, so as to keep the first displacement end **311** and the second displacement end **321** in shape, wherein the fixing member **33** is used for fixing the another end of the first elastic displacement end **311** of the first elastic member **31**, and another end of the second displacement end **321** of the second elastic member **32**, and connects a frame (not shown) of device **100**, so as to achieve a stable structure. A position sensor **4** is configured to detect a displacement of the sensing face **35** on a fixed position. When the first displacement end **311** and the second displacement end **321** generate up-down displacement relative to the second guiding component **2**, the sensing face **35** has a parallel displacement relative to the position sensor **4** (As shown in FIG. 4).

As shown in FIG. 5, a combination of detection units and second guiding components in first embodiment is disclosed. FIG. 5 shows twelve detection units, but the invention is not limited to the disclosed embodiments. Thus, one skilled in the art would know while the sheetlike object **200** passed through the first guiding component **1** and second guiding components **2**, due to the thickness variation of the sheetlike object **200**, one or more up-down displacement

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occurs at the second guiding component **2** in relation to the first guiding component **1**. The distance of the up-down deviation is detected by position sensor **4** to evaluate the thickness of each parts of object **200**.

Preferably, in the first embodiment of the present invention, the first guiding component **1** is a roller, and the second guiding components **2** are bearings, wherein the axle of the second guiding components **2** and the axle of the first guiding component **1** are parallel arranged. Therefore, the detection units and the axle of the first guiding component are parallel arranged.

Preferably, in the first embodiment of the present invention, the first elastic member **31** is made of a conductive material, and the sensing face **35** is a conductive surface.

Preferably, in the first embodiment of the present invention, the first elastic member **31** is made of metal.

Preferably, in the first embodiment of the present invention, the first displacement end **311** further comprises a material selected from the group consisting of pure metal and composite metal.

Preferably, in the first embodiment of the present invention, the position sensor **4** may be an eddy current displacement sensor, a magnetoresistive displacement sensor or other contactless displacement sensors.

Preferably, in the first embodiment of the present invention, the position sensor **4** comprises a plurality of sensor coils **41**, wherein the detection units **3** are correspondingly configured with a sensor coil **41**, each of sensor coils **41** is configured in relation to the sensing face **35** of the first elastic member **31** of the detection units **3**. Preferably, the sensor coils **41** may be Air Coils.

Preferably, in the first embodiment of the present invention, the position sensor **4** comprises an alternating current device (not shown) for inspiring the sensor coils **41** to generate alternating magnetic field.

Preferably, in the first embodiment of the present invention, device **100** for detecting thickness and thickness variation of a sheetlike object **200**, further comprises a processing unit (not shown) used for calculating the effect of the sensing face **35** of first displacement end **311** on the alternating magnetic field of sensor coils **41** to obtain the displacement distance of the sensing face **35** and determine thickness and thickness variation of the sheetlike object. In this embodiment, processing unit (not shown) can be linked to sensor coils **41** directly or indirectly. The processing unit may be one or more processor, microprocessor, or other device that is capable of data processing and computing.

Preferably, in the first embodiment of the present invention, the first displacement end **311** is fixed on a side of detecting block **34** by screw-lock, and the second displacement end **321** is also fixed on another side of detecting block **34** by screw-lock. In the present invention, the displacement end can be locked by other common types of rigid connections, not limited to screw.

Preferably, in the first embodiment of the present invention, the another side of the first elastic member **31** relative to the first displacement end **311** is fixed at the fixing member **33**, and the another side of the second elastic member **32** relative to the second displacement end **321** is also fixed at the fixing member **33**. In the present invention, the displacement end can be locked by other common types of rigid connections, not limited to screw.

Preferably, in the first embodiment of the present invention, the sensing face **35** in alternating magnetic field of sensor coils **41** existing area is not having any other magnetic material to avoid any reduced effect on the accuracy of detection.

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As shown in FIGS. **6** and **7**, the present invention provides second embodiment. A device **100** for detecting thickness and thickness variation of a sheetlike object **200**, includes: at least a first guiding component **1**, a plurality of second guiding components **2**, a plurality of detection units **3**, and a position sensor **4**. The second guiding components **2** are opposite of first guiding component **1**, and arranged in line. A deviation occurs on the second guiding component **2** in relation to the first guiding component **1** while the sheetlike object **200** passed through the first guiding component **1** and second guiding components **2**, due to the thickness variation of the sheetlike object **200**.

The detection units **3** are configured to correspond to second guiding components **2**. Each of the detection unit **3** comprises: a detecting block **34**, an elastic member **36**, and a fixing member **33**. Each of the second guiding components **2** is connected with the detecting block **34**, respectively. When a displacement occurs at one of the second guiding components **2**, it also occurs at the relative detecting block **34**. The elastic member **36** is formed into U shape, as shown in FIG. **6**, which comprises a first displacement end **361**, second displacement end **362**, and a fixed sector **363**, wherein the first displacement end **361** has a sensing face **35** to be determined, and the first displacement end **361** and second displacement end **362** separately have a plane disposed thereto and served to connect with each side of the detecting block **34**, so as to keep the form of the first displacement end **361** and second displacement end **362** in a shape. The fixing member **33** is used for fixing the fixed sector **363** of the elastic member **36**, and connects a frame of device **100**, so as to achieve a stable structure. The position sensor **4** is configured at a fixed position to detect a displacement of a sensing face **35**. When an up-down displacement occurs at any one of the second guiding components **2**, the relative first displacement end **361** and second displacement end **362** also have up-down displacement, and the sensing face **35** has a parallel displacement relative to the position sensor **4** (as shown in FIG. **7**).

Preferably, in the second embodiment of the present invention, the angel between two curves of elastic member **36** may be 90°, but the present invention is not limited thereto.

Preferably, in the second embodiment of the present invention, the fixed sector **363** of the elastic member **36** is fixed at the fixing member **33** by screw-lock, but the present invention is not limited thereto. The other features of second embodiment are not repeatedly disclosed because these are similar to the first embodiment.

As shown in FIGS. **8** and **9**, the present invention provides third embodiment which is a device **100** for detecting thickness and thickness variation of a sheetlike object **200**. The difference between first embodiment and second embodiment is the shape of elastic member **36**. In the elastic member **36** of second embodiment, the U shape of elastic member **36** has an extension segment on one end and form three curves. The first displacement end **361** and second displacement end **362** are fixed on both vertical sides of the detecting block **34**, and the extension segment of the second displacement end **362** also fixed at the detecting block **34**, so as to keep the shape of the second displacement end **362** without bending or inclined deformation. When a displacement occurs on any one of second guiding components **2**, the relative first displacement end **361** and second displacement end **362** also generate the upward displacement, and the sensing face **35** has a parallel displacement relative to the position sensor **4** (as shown in FIG. **9**).

As mentioned above, when the device of the present invention detects thickness and thickness variation of a sheetlike object, the side face can keep a shape without bending or inclined deformation. When a displacement occurs, the sensing face has a parallel displacement relative to the position sensor, and would not generate a rotational displacement to increase the detection accuracy and solve the problems of the prior art.

Although preferred embodiments are disclosed as above, they cannot be used to limit the present invention, and anyone skilled in the art can make some changes and modifications without exceeding the spirit and scope of the present invention, and thus the scope of the present invention will be limited only by the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A device for detecting thickness and thickness variation of a sheetlike object, comprises:

- a first guiding component and a plurality of second guiding components, wherein the second guiding components are opposite to the first guiding component, and the second guiding components are arranged in line, a displacement occurs between the first guiding component and the second guiding components while the sheetlike object passes through the first guiding component and the second guiding components, due to the thickness variation of the sheetlike object;
- a plurality of detection units relatively arranged to the second guiding components, each detection unit includes:
 - a detecting block connected with one of the second guiding components, when the second guiding component occurs the displacement, the corresponding detecting block also occurs the displacement;
 - a first elastic member comprising a first displacement end, wherein the first displacement end comprises a sensing face to be detected;
 - a second elastic member comprising a second displacement end, wherein both of the first displacement end and the second displacement end have a plane disposed thereto and connected with each side of the detecting block, so as to keep the shape of the first displacement end and the second displacement end; and
 - a fixing member for fixing another side of the first displacement end of the first elastic member and another side of the second displacement end of the second elastic member; and
 - a position sensor configured at a fixed position to detect a displacement of the sensing face, when the displacement occurs on any one of the second guiding components, the relative first displacement end and the relative second displacement end also occur the displacement, and the sensing face has a parallel displacement relative to the position sensor.

2. The device of claim 1, wherein the first guiding component is a roller and the second guiding components are bearings, wherein the detection units and the axle of the first guiding component are arranged in parallel.

3. The device of claim 1, wherein the first elastic member is made of a conductive material, and the sensing face is a conductive surface.

4. The device of claim 1, wherein the displacement sensor comprises a plurality of sensor coils, and each detection unit is configured with a sensor coil.

5. The device of claim 4, wherein the sensor coils are air coils.

6. The device of claim 4, wherein the position sensor comprises an alternating current device for inspiring the sensor coils to generate alternating magnetic field.

7. The device of claim 6, the device further comprises a processing unit used for calculating the effect of the sensing face of the first displacement end on the alternating magnetic field of the sensor coils.

8. The device of claim 1, wherein the first displacement end is fixed on a side of the fixing member by screws, and the second displacement end is also fixed on another side of the fixing member by screws.

9. A device for detecting thickness and thickness variation of a sheetlike object comprises:

- a first guiding component and a plurality of second guiding components, wherein the second guiding components are opposite to the first guiding component, and the second guiding components are arranged in line, a displacement occurs between the first guiding component and the second guiding components while the sheetlike object passes through the first guiding component and the second guiding components, due to the thickness variation of the sheetlike object;
- a plurality of detection units relatively arranged to the second guiding components, each detection unit includes:
 - a detecting block connected with one of the second guiding components, when the second guiding component occurs the displacement, the corresponding detecting block also occurs the displacement;
 - an elastic member comprising a first displacement end, a second displacement end, and a fixed sector, wherein both of the first displacement end and the second displacement end respectively has a plane connected with each side of the detecting block, so as to keep the shape of the first displacement end and the second displacement end; and
 - a fixing member for fixing the fixed sector of the elastic member; and
 - a position sensor configured at a fixed position to detect a displacement of the sensing face, when the displacement occurs on anyone of the second guiding components, the relative first displacement end and the relative second displacement end also occur the displacement, and the sensing face has a parallel displacement relative to the position sensor.

10. The device of claim 9, wherein the elastic member is fixed at the fixing member by screws.

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