Paper No. 12

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

Ex parte JOHN ANTHONY BEAVEN, AMANDA ELIZABETH CHESSELL, CATHERINE GRIFFIN, IAIN STUART CALDWELL HOUSTON, MARTIN MULHOLLAND, IAN ROBINSON and DAVID JOHN VINES

Appeal No. 2003-1619
Application No. 09/442,888

ON BRIEF

Before FLEMING, SAADAT, and NAPPI Administrative Patent Judges.
SAADAT, Administrative Patent Judge.

DECISION ON APPEAL

This is a decision on appeal from the Examiner's final rejection of claims 1-13, which are all of the claims pending in this application.

We reverse.

BACKGROUND

Appellants' invention relates to data processing in a complex component-based business environment wherein

transactional and non-transactional data processing activities are typically mixed in a system at any given time. According to Appellants, their invention provides for development of a more flexible environment which is limited by the conventional systems where the outcome of the transaction is usually determined by fixed rules.

Representative independent claim 1 is reproduced as follows:

1. Apparatus for processing one or more sets of data processing tasks, said apparatus comprising:

means for receiving inputs indicative of results from one or more participating components of said one or more sets of data processing tasks;

means for mapping each of said inputs to a corresponding mapped value by accessing a mapping table;

outcome processor means for accepting the mapped values as inputs and determining an outcome for said one or more sets of data processing tasks; and

Means, responsive to said means for determining, for transmitting an indicator of said outcome to said one or more participating components;

Wherein the inputs and mapped values of the mapping table are programmably changeable to thus provide a high degree of flexibility with respect to said inputs.

The following references are relied on by the Examiner:

Thai	5,560,007	Sep. 24, 1996
Biegel et al. (Biegel)	5,608,720	Mar. 4, 1997
Herrmann et al. (Herrmann)	5,737,536	Apr. 7, 1998

Claims 1-4, 7-9, 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Herrmann.

Claims 5 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Herrmann in view of Biegel.

Claims 6 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Herrmann in view of Thai.

We make reference to the answer (Paper No. 10, mailed January 29, 2003) for the Examiner's reasoning, and to the brief (Paper No. 9, filed December 26, 2002) for Appellants' arguments thereagainst.

OPINION

With respect to the 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejection of claims 1-4, 7-9, 12 and 13, Appellants argue that Herrmann merely discloses inputs from a user (a human user) interfacing with the system instead of the claimed inputs from participating components (brief, page 4). Referring to the "mapping" table of Herrmann (described as element 140 in col. 9), Appellants point out that the claimed mapping table is different from this table which is used for organizing the sorted information in databases (id.). Appellants further argue that instead of an outcome processor means for accepting mapped values, Herrmann teaches only a conventional I/O operation between the user and the system

(brief, page 5). Additionally, Appellants assert that instead of transmitting an indicator of the outcome to participating components, Herrmann teaches transmitting an indicator to a human user via a network (id.).

In response to Appellants' arguments, the Examiner mainly relies on the database features disclosed in Herrmann and finds various claimed elements to be inherent within the disclosed database (answer, pages 9-12). In particular, the Examiner relies on column 17, lines 29-45 of Herrmann for disclosing a database table and on column 18, line 65 through column 19, line 4 for the mapping functionality and concludes that mapping data tables are also routine in the computer art (answer, page 9). With respect to the claimed accepting the mapped value, the Examiner relies on Figures 1A-1C for showing databases and mapping tables and again, finds it inherent to provide outputs by application software and to process the value from the mapping table in "some manner" (answer, page 11).

A rejection for anticipation under section 102 requires that each and every limitation of the claimed invention be disclosed in a single prior art reference. See Atlas Powder Co. v. Ireco Inc., 190 F.3d 1342, 1347, 51 USPQ2d 1943, 1947 (Fed. Cir. 1999); In re Paulsen, 30 F.3d 1475, 1478-79, 31 USPQ2d 1671, 1673 (Fed.

Cir. 1994). Anticipation is established only when a single prior art reference discloses, expressly or under the principles of inherency, each and every element of a claimed invention as well as disclosing structure which is capable of performing the recited functional limitations. RCA Corp. v. Applied Digital Data Sys. Inc., 730 F.2d 1440, 1444, 221 USPQ 385, 388 (Fed. Cir. 1984).

We observe that Herrmann relates to a database management system for accessing shared information such as a multi-user database system (col. 5, lines 1-9). The database, as depicted in Figures 1B and 1C, includes tables for organizing information (col. 9, lines 9-13) in a desired order, using either index entry or pointers (col. 9, lines 29-38). Therefore, the data table of Herrmann characterized by the Examiner as the "mapping table," merely provides for organizing information and facilitating the user's access to such information. Although it may be reasonable to equate the organization of these tables to some kind of "mapping," contrary to the Examiner's assertion, we do not find that their function as the information tables in a shared database and accessible by multiple users is indicative of the inherency of various claimed features in such database management systems. In fact, the Examiner has neither shown any evidence

that Herrmann teaches the claimed mapping the inputs to mapped values and accepting the mapped values as inputs which together with mapped values are programmably changeable, nor has provided evidence that such features are inherent in the teachings of the reference.

In view of the discussion above, we find that the Examiner has failed to meet the burden of providing a prima facie case of anticipation with respect to claim 1 and claim 8, which recites features similar to those of claim 1. Accordingly, the 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejection of claims 1-4, 7-9, 12 and 13 over Herrmann cannot be sustained.

Turning now to the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection of the remaining claims, we note that the Examiner further relies on Biegel for teaching commit and rollback policies (answer, page 6) and on Thai for disclosing the use of boolean operators for optimized filtering (answer, page 7). However, since the Examiner has not pointed to any teachings in these two references that may relate to the claimed mapping of the inputs and accepting the mapped values, as recited in independent claims 1 and 8, the above discussed deficiencies of Herrmann has not been overcome. Accordingly, we do not sustain the 35 U.S.C. § 103

rejection of claims 5 and 10 over Herrmann and Biegel, nor of claims 6 and 11 over Herrmann and Thai.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, the decision of the Examiner to reject claims 1-4, 7-9, 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and claims 5, 6, 10 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is reversed.

REVERSED

MICHAEL R. FLEMING Administrative Patent Judge	)
MAHSHID D. SAADAT Administrative Patent Judge	) BOARD OF PATENT) APPEALS AND) INTERFERENCES
ROBERT NAPPI Administrative Patent Judge	)

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