

FLOOR DEVICE CAPABLE OF UP-DOWN MOVEMENT FOR VESSELS

CROSS-REFERENCE(S) TO RELATED APPLICATION

5 This application claims priority of Korean Utility Model Application No. 20-2010-0010048, filed on September 29, 2010, in the Korean Intellectual Property Office, which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

10 Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a movable floor apparatus for a ship, and more particularly, to a floor apparatus for a ship, which is installed to be vertically movable with a vertical movement of a thruster canister within a vertical trunk of a hull.

15 Description of the Related Art

A ship is equipped with a thruster assembly for implementation of propulsion and position control. Such a thruster assembly is widely used in a ship which frequently moves its position, like a drill ship.

20 In particular, a drill ship is configured to have a self position control function of making the ship maintained stably at a predetermined drilling site on the sea, and to make a voyage with its own power. A thruster assembly, one of propulsion systems, is used as essential equipment for implementation of main propulsion and self position control. For example, three thruster assemblies are installed in a bow side of a drill ship, and three thruster assemblies are installed in a stern side thereof. The respective
25 thruster assemblies are provided with 360-degree-rotatable propellers. Therefore, the thruster assembly can provide both the propulsion and the position control to cause the ship to be propelled, reversely propelled or rotated.

A thruster assembly may include an underwater unit with a propeller, and a

thruster canister installed on the underwater unit. A driving motor for driving the propeller, a hydraulic system, a lubricating device, and so on, are installed in the thruster canister.

5 The thruster canister is installed to be vertically movable within a vertical trunk of a hull. When the thruster assembly is repaired or maintained or the ship passes through shallow water, such as a canal, the thruster canister is lifted up within the vertical trunk of the hull.

10 Meanwhile, an arctic drill ship used in arctic regions is configured such that various loading and unloading operations are carried out within the hull in order to avoid outworking under arctic environments. To this end, a landing floor on which side-dish containers or the like can be landed is required above the vertical trunk in which the thruster assembly is installed, that is, below a main deck of the hull. In particular, it is necessary to configure the landing floor which can avoid interference with a thruster canister which vertically moves within the vertical trunk and can facilitate the loading
15 and unloading operations within the hull.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Embodiments of the present invention are directed to a floor apparatus for a ship, which can facilitate the landing of a container within a trunk which is formed vertically
20 inside a hull.

According to an aspect of the present invention, a floor apparatus for a ship, which is installed within a vertical trunk of a hull, includes: a floor frame installed to be vertically movable within the vertical trunk, wherein the floor frame interlocks with a thruster canister which is installed to be vertically movable within the vertical trunk,
25 such that the floor frame is vertically moved with the thruster canister within at least a predetermined section.

The ship may be an arctic drill ship, the floor frame may be installed in an upper space of the vertical trunk which is adjacent to the bottom of a main deck of a hull, and a

landing of a container may be carried out on the floor frame, whereby a loading and unloading of a cargo contained in the container is carried out within the hull.

The floor apparatus may further include at least one pair of guide frames installed on a sidewall of the vertical trunk to guide the floor frame.

5 The floor apparatus may further include at least one pair of support frames provided under the guide frames to support the floor frame and restrict the downward movement of the floor frame, and the support frames may be installed on a sidewall of the vertical trunk.

10 The floor frame may have a smaller area than that of the top area of the thruster canister, whereby a worker's access to the thruster canister is not disturbed.

The floor apparatus may further include one or more guide posts which are install on the thruster canister and are contactable with the bottom of the floor frame.

The floor apparatus may further include an openable hatch installed in the floor frame.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a configuration diagram of a floor apparatus for a ship according to an embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is an enlarged view of a portion indicated by an arrow A of FIG. 1.

20 FIG. 3 is a view illustrating a state in which the floor apparatus for the ship according to the embodiment of the present invention is moved upwardly by a thruster canister.

FIG. 4 is a plan view looked in a direction of an arrow B of FIG. 2.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EXEMPLARY EMBODIMENTS

Exemplary embodiments of the present invention will be described below in detail with reference to the accompanying drawings. Throughout the disclosure, like reference numerals refer to like parts throughout the drawings and embodiments of the

present invention.

FIGS. 1 to 4 illustrate a floor apparatus for a ship according to an embodiment of the present invention. As illustrated in FIG. 1, a plurality of thruster assemblies 30 are installed in a bow and a stern of a ship, for example, a drill ship. The thruster assembly 5 30 includes an underwater unit 32 with a propeller 31, and a thruster canister 33 installed on the underwater unit 32. A driving motor for driving the propeller 31, a hydraulic system, a lubricating device, and so on, are installed in the thruster canister 33.

At the bow and stern sides inside the ship, a watertight vertical trunk 35 is vertically formed, and an opening is formed at the bottom of the vertical trunk 35. The 10 underwater unit 32 of the thruster assembly 30 is exposed to the lower portion of the ship through the opening of the vertical trunk 35, and the thruster canister 33 is installed to be vertically movable within the vertical trunk 35. When the thruster assembly 30 is repaired or maintained or the ship passes through shallow water, such as a canal, the thruster canister 33 and the underwater unit 32 are moved upwardly and lifted up within 15 the vertical trunk 35. The vertical movement of the thruster canister 33 may be implemented by a driving mechanism, such as a rack and pinion, which is installed between the thruster canister 33 and the vertical trunk 35. The driving mechanism enabling the vertical movement of the thruster canister may be implemented using any known technique, and it does not limit the present invention.

20 A floor apparatus 10 according to the present invention is installed in an upper space of the vertical trunk 35, that is, a region adjacent to the bottom of a main deck 37 of a hull.

The floor apparatus 10 according to the present invention includes a floor frame 11 installed in the upper space of the vertical trunk 35, that is, above the thruster canister 25 33. The floor frame 11 is installed to be vertically movable along the vertical trunk 35.

A warehouse 36 such as a store is adjacent to the upper space of the vertical trunk 35. In the case of an arctic drill ship which is exposed to an extremely low temperature environment, it is preferable that various loading and unloading operations are carried

out within the hull due to a harsh environment. Therefore, the floor frame 11 is installed such that various loading and unloading operations are carried out from the upper space of the vertical trunk 35 toward the warehouse 36. A container 19 containing various side dishes may be landed on the floor frame 11. When the loading and unloading of the side dishes are completed, the container 19 is removed from the floor frame 11. Thus, no containers are present on the floor frame 11 most of the time during the voyage of the ship. As such, since the space above the floor frame 11 is empty most of the time, interference caused by the container does not occur even though the floor frame 11 is moved upwardly when the thruster canister 33 is moved upwardly.

The floor frame 11 is installed such that the side of the floor frame 11 is vertically moved while being guided along the sidewall of the vertical trunk 35. In particular, at least one pair of guide frames 12 which guide the side of the floor frame 11 are symmetrically installed on the sidewall of the vertical trunk 35.

Support frames 13 are installed under the guide frames 12. The support frames 13 may be provided with at least one pair of support frames installed on the sidewall of the vertical trunk 35. As illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2, the support frames 13 can firmly support lower edge sides of the floor frame 11 when the floor frame 11 is located at the lowermost position. Preferably, the guide frames 12 are configured such that they are not interfered with the thruster canister 33 during the upward movement of the thruster canister 33.

The floor frame 11 is installed to avoid interference with structures disposed on the thruster canister 33. In particular, as illustrated in FIG. 4, the floor frame 11 may be formed to have a smaller area than that of the top surface of the thruster canister 33. Such a configuration makes it easy for a worker to access the thruster canister 33. That is, since the floor frame 11 does not completely block a passage for the thruster canister 33, a worker can easily access the thruster canister 33. Although FIG. 4 illustrates that the floor frame 11 has an approximately T shape, the shape of the floor frame 11 according to the present invention is not limited thereto.

In addition, one or more hatches 14 are openably installed in the floor frame 11. The hatches 14 may be used as a passage through which a worker accesses the thruster canister 33 in order for maintenance of equipments. A hand rail and a grating plate may be further provided on the floor frame 11 for the purpose of safety.

5 As illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2, when the thruster assembly 30 is moved downwardly within the vertical trunk 35, that is, the underwater unit 32 of the thruster assembly 30 protrudes below the hull, the floor frame 11 and the thruster canister 33 are spaced apart from each other by a predetermined distance.

When the thruster assembly 30 is moved upwardly, as illustrated in FIG. 3, the
10 thruster canister 33 is close to the bottom surface of the floor frame 11 and pushes up the floor frame 11 while the top surface of the thruster canister 33 contacts the bottom surface of the floor frame 11. Accordingly, the floor frame 11 is moved upwardly.

According to one embodiment, one or more guide posts 34 may be installed on the top surface of the thruster canister 33. When the thruster canister 33 is moved
15 upwardly and is close to the bottom surface of the floor frame 11, the guide posts 34 contact the bottom surface of the floor frame 11. Accordingly, the floor frame 11 is easily moved upwardly while interlocking with the upward movement of the thruster canister 33.

The guide posts 34 may be replaced with shock absorbing members (e.g., rubber)
20 which are installed on the top surface of the thruster canister 33.

If the thruster canister 33 is moved downwardly in the state of FIG. 3, the floor frame 11 is moved downwardly while being stably supported by the guide posts 34 of the thruster canister 33.

The floor frame 11 may be configured to move together in an entire section or at
25 least a predetermined section of the vertical movement of the thruster canister 33. If the floor frame 11 moves together in a predetermined section, as illustrated in FIG. 2, the floor frame 11 and the thruster canister 33 do not contact each other when the thruster canister 33 is moved downwardly. However, as illustrated in FIG. 3, the thruster

canister 33 contacts the floor frame 11 on the way while the thruster canister 33 moves upwardly. Then, the thruster canister 33 moves together with the floor frame 11 while pushing up the floor frame 11. At this time, when the thruster canister 33 is moved downwardly, the downward movement of the floor frame 11 may be restricted by the support frames 13.

According to the embodiments of the present invention, since the floor apparatus disposed above the thruster canister is configured to vertically move with the vertical movement of the thruster canister within the vertical trunk of the hull, it is easy to land the container within the vertical trunk. Therefore, the loading and unloading operation within the hull can be facilitated in a harsh environment such as an arctic region.

While the embodiments of the present invention has been described with reference to the specific embodiments, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that various changes and modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the following claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A floor apparatus for a ship, which is installed within a vertical trunk of a hull, the floor apparatus comprising:

- 5 a floor frame installed to be vertically movable within the vertical trunk,
wherein the floor frame interlocks with a thruster canister which is installed to be vertically movable within the vertical trunk, such that the floor frame is vertically moved with the thruster canister within at least a predetermined section.

- 10 2. The floor apparatus according to claim 1, wherein,
the ship is an arctic drill ship,
the floor frame is installed in an upper space of the vertical trunk which is adjacent to the bottom of a main deck of a hull, and
a landing of a container is carried out on the floor frame, whereby a loading and
15 unloading of a cargo contained in the container is carried out within the hull.

3. The floor apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising at least one pair of guide frames installed on a sidewall of the vertical trunk to guide the floor frame.

- 20 4. The floor apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising at least one pair of support frames provided under the guide frames to support the floor frame and restrict the downward movement of the floor frame, wherein the support frames are installed on a sidewall of the vertical trunk.

- 25 5. The floor apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the floor frame has a smaller area than that of the top area of the thruster canister, whereby a worker's access to the thruster canister is not disturbed.

6. The floor apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising one or more guide posts which are install on the thruster canister and are contactable with the bottom of the floor frame.

5 7. The floor apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising an openable hatch installed in the floor frame.