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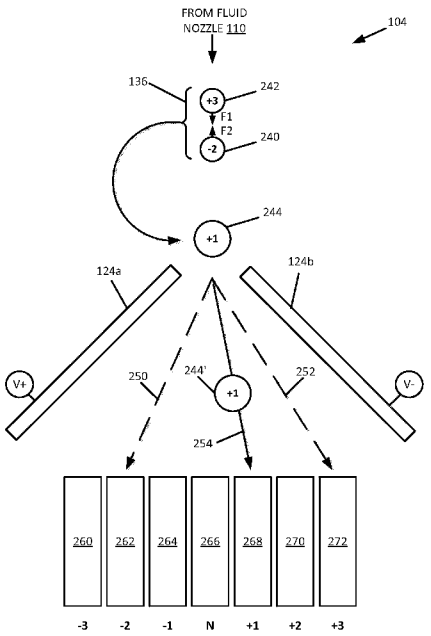
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(54) **Title**: SORTING FLOW CYTOMETER

FIG. 5



(57) **Abstract**: A sorting flow cytometer identifies an undesirable drop charge sequence that is preassigned to adjacent drops before the drops have separated from a fluid stream. An example of an undesirable drop charge sequence is a sequence of adjacent drops that are charged with sufficiently high opposing charges that, after the drops are formed, would result in merging of the adjacent drops. The sorting flow cytometer adjusts the assignment of drop charges to avoid the undesired drop charge sequence.

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