

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR LEAD FOOT ANGLE INSPECTION USING MULTIVIEW STEREO VISION

TECHNICAL FIELD

[001] The present invention relates to a system and method for determining the lead foot angle in Integrated Circuit (IC) packages with leads that extend outward such as Quad Flat Package (QFP) and Thin Small Outline Package (TSOP).

BACKGROUND

[002] Stereo vision is the extraction of three-dimensional information from two or more digital images. It is particularly important to many industrial applications. For example, stereoscopic images are used to analyze and evaluate components of semiconductor chips. Microelectronics are typically made and packaged in large volumes in high-precision manufacturing environments. It is important for each of completed object to be inspected. Because of the small size of the components and large volume of small pieces, the inspection must be automated. Three-dimensional vision is essential because the inspection involves examining specific critical three-dimensional features of each package.

[003] In traditional stereo vision, two cameras are usually displaced horizontally from one another in a manner similar to human binocular vision. For example, U.S. Patent No. 8,107,719 discloses a vision system for the three-dimensional metrology of a rapidly moving semiconductor or packaged electronic objects. The system includes three cameras mounted to a back plate. The cameras are disposed on the same plane and are symmetrically arranged so that one camera is disposed at an acute angle, another camera is disposed at an obtuse angle and the third camera is disposed orthogonally relative to the field of view. This arrangement allows for the determination of the three-dimensional imaging and analysis of an object.

[004] U.S. Patent No. 8,885,040 discloses a stereo vision inspection system for ball and like protrusions of electronic components. It describes a method of full calibration of the stereo vision system, by which both the interior and the exterior parameters of the stereo cameras are determined. A rectified stereo camera system is then established. Conjugate points are detected on the rectified images and are used for reconstruction of the three-dimensional location information. The information is further used for three-dimensional measurement.

[005] U.S. Patent No. 9,594,028 discloses an improved stereo vision inspection system for determining coplanarity of three-dimensional features in integrated circuit packages. The system includes two side view cameras with tiltable lens arranged according to the Scheimpflug principle. The system improves the accuracy of the measurement by producing well-focused images of uniform light intensity.

[006] In the above-mentioned systems, the stereo cameras are all arranged on one plane. While suitable for some uses, these systems have limitations. For example, these systems are not capable of inspecting the lead foot angle of all the leads in a Quad Flat Package (QFP) or similar device. They cannot detect the lead foot angle or a bend in a lead that extends parallel (or nearly parallel) to the cameras plane. As a QFP device has leads extending out on all four sides of its substrate, inspection of the lead foot angle of all the leads requires viewing the device at multiple angles. The inspection of the lead foot angle of all the leads is essential as a bent lead can affect reliability of the circuit and lead to a defective product.

[007] A need, therefore, exists for an improved system and method that overcomes these limitations. It is, therefore, a motivation of the present invention to provide a three-dimensional vision inspection system that allows complete inspection of the lead foot angles of all the leads in the QFP devices. The system should be capable of rapidly inspecting a high volume of objects with high accuracy, precision and reliability.

SUMMARY

[008] We describe a system for analyzing the lead foot angle of an object, such as a Quad Flat Package (QFP) or a Thin Small Outline Package (TSOP). It includes (a) a support, (b) a light source, (c) a first image capturing device, (d) a second image capturing device and (e) a third image capturing device. The first image capturing device is mounted at a first bottom viewing angle that is perpendicular to a plane where the object is placed for capturing a first bottom view image. The second image capturing device is mounted at a second perspective viewing angle from the object for capturing a second perspective view image. A third image capturing device is mounted at a third perspective viewing angle from the object for capturing a third perspective view image. The second perspective viewing angle and the third perspective viewing angle are orthogonal to each other.

[009] In an embodiment, the first, second and third image capturing devices are arranged to form an L-shape or corner-shape. The first image capturing device is on the corner, the second image capturing device is on the left (or right) and the third image capturing device on the front (or back). Each of the image capturing devices includes a lens and a sensor, and has an optical axis passing through the center of its lens and the center of its sensor. The optical axis of the first image capturing device and the optical axis of the second image capturing device form a first alignment plane. And the optical axis of the first image capturing device and the optical axis of the third image capturing device form a second alignment plane. The said first alignment plane and the said second alignment plane are orthogonal to each other. An object such as a QFP with leads on four sides is placed below the first image capturing device. The first image capturing device and the second image capturing device are used to determine the lead foot angles of the leads that extend along the normal direction of the first alignment plane. The first image capturing device and the third image capturing device are used to determine the lead foot angles of the other leads that extend along the normal direction of the second alignment plane.

[010] In an alternative embodiment, a fourth and a fifth image capturing device are added to the system. The fourth image capturing device is added on the opposite side of the second image capturing device with respect to the first image capturing device. The fifth image capturing device is added on the opposite side of the third image capturing device with respect to the first image capturing device. The first, second, third, fourth and fifth image capturing devices therefore form a cross-shape centered on the first image capturing device, with the second image capturing device and the fourth image capturing device being on the opposite sides of each other, and the third image capturing device and the fifth image capturing device being on the opposite sides of each other. The optical axis of the fourth image capturing device is on the first alignment plane formed by the optical axis of the first image capturing device and the optical axis of the second image capturing device. The optical axis of the fifth image capturing device is on the second alignment plane formed by the optical axis of the first image capturing device and the optical axis of the third image capturing device. The fourth image capturing device is used together with the first and the second image capturing device to determine the lead foot angles of the leads that extend along the normal direction of the first alignment plane. The fifth image capturing device is used together with the first and the third image capturing device to determine the lead foot angles of the other leads that extend along the normal direction of the second alignment plane.

[011] We also describe a method of analyzing the lead foot angle of the leads on an object with leads on its substrate, such as a Quad Flat Package (QFP), that includes the steps of (1) obtaining a first bottom view image with the said first image capturing device from a first bottom view of the object, (2) obtaining a second perspective view image with the said second image capturing device from a second perspective viewing angle of the object, (3) obtaining a third perspective view image with the said third image capturing device from a third perspective viewing angle of the object that is orthogonal to the second perspective viewing angle, (4) combining the first bottom view image and the second perspective view image to determine the lead foot angle of the leads that extend along the normal direction of the first alignment plane formed by the optical axis

of the first image capturing device and the optical axis of the second image capturing device and (5) combining the first bottom view image and the third perspective view image to determine the lead foot angle of the leads that extend along the normal direction of the second alignment plane formed by the optical axis of the first image capturing device and the optical axis of the third image capturing device. These steps can be repeated with a fourth and a fifth image capturing device (arranged in a cross-shape) to improve the accuracy and robustness of the system.

[012] Further, we describe a method of combining the first bottom view image, the second perspective view image and the third perspective view image to determine the lead foot angle of the leads on an object with leads on its substrate, such as a Quad Flat Package (QFP), that includes the steps of (1) for those leads of the object that extend along the normal direction of the first alignment plane formed by the optical axis of the first image capturing device and the optical axis of the second image capturing device, detecting the lead tip point and at least one additional point that is at a specified distance from the lead tip point on the lead foot in the first bottom view image and the second perspective view image, (2) for those leads of the object that extend along the normal direction of the second alignment plane formed by the optical axis of the first image capturing device and the optical axis of the third image capturing device, detecting the lead tip point and at least one additional point that is at a specified distance from the lead tip point on the lead foot in the first bottom view image and the third perspective view image, (3) reconstructing the three-dimensional coordinates of each lead tip point and each additional point on the lead foot, (4) constructing a reference plane using the three-dimensional coordinates of all the lead tip points, (5) constructing the lead foot line of each lead using the three-dimensional coordinates of the lead tip point and the additional point on the lead foot and (6) determining the lead foot angle as the acute angle between the lead foot line and the reference plane.

INTRODUCTION

[013] A first aspect of the invention is a system and method of three-dimensional imaging that uses three cameras arranged in an "L-shape" or "corner shape."

[014] A second aspect of the invention is a system and method for inspecting the leads in an Integrated Circuit (IC) package such as a Quad Flat Package (QFP) or a Thin Small Outline Package (TSOP) to determine the lead foot angle and whether the package meets particular manufacturing specifications.

[015] A third aspect of the invention is a more accurate and efficient inspection system for determining the lead foot angle in IC packages such as a QFP or TSOP.

[016] A fourth aspect of the invention is a system that uses three cameras arranged in an "L-shape" or "corner shape" to analyze an object such as a QFP or TSOP in three dimensions.

[017] A fourth aspect of the invention is a system that uses five cameras arranged in a "cross shape" to analyze an object such as a QFP or TSOP in three dimensions.

[018] A fifth aspect of the invention is a method of analyzing an electronic package such as a QFP or TSOP using the images obtained by three, four or five cameras arranged to take images of the package from different angles.

[019] These and other aspects of the invention will become apparent from the following description, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, wherein, by way of illustration and example, at least one embodiment of the present invention is disclosed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[020] Figure 1 is a perspective view of a preferred arrangement of the components of the system;

[021] Figure 2 is a bottom view of the system in Figure 1 that depicts the arrangement of the image capturing devices;

[022] Figure 3A is a bottom view of an Integrated Circuit (IC) package with leads on four sides;

[023] Figure 3B is a lateral view of an IC package with leads on four sides;

[024] Figure 4A depicts a bottom view image of an IC package taken from the first image capturing device with points of interest on the leads ;

[025] Figure 4B depicts a left perspective view image of the IC package taken from the second image capturing device with the points of interest on the leads ;

[026] Figure 4C depicts a front perspective view image of an IC package taken from the third image capturing device with the points of interest on the leads;

[027] Figure 5A depicts a method for detecting the points of interest on the bottom view image of an IC package captured by the first image capturing device;

[028] Figure 5B depicts a method for detecting the points of interest on the left perspective view image of an IC package captured by the second image capturing device;

[029] Figure 5C depicts a method for determining the lead foot angle in an IC package such as a QFP;

[030] Figure 5D depicts the negative lead foot angle in an IC package such as a QFP;

[031] Figure 6A depicts a method for detecting multiple additional points of interest on the bottom view image of an IC package captured by the first image capturing device;

[032] Figure 6B depicts a method for detecting multiple additional points of interest on the left perspective view image of an IC package captured by the second image capturing device;

[033] Figure 6C depicts a method for determining the lead foot angle with multiple additional points in an IC package such as a QFP;

[034] Figure 7 depicts a bottom view of an alternative embodiment of the invention that includes two additional image capturing devices;

[035] Figure 8 is a flow chart depicting the steps in analyzing the lead foot angle in an IC package such as a QFP.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Definitions

[036] While the invention is primarily described for detecting defects in electronic components, it is understood that the invention is not so limited and can be used to assist with other endeavors that require rapid three-dimensional imaging and/or inspection of objects. For example, the system can be used to analyze the physical condition of any small object, such as its orientation, the dimensions of a particular feature on an object, the presence/absence of features on an object and/or the coplanarity of features on an object.

[037] Reference in this specification to "one embodiment/aspect" or "an embodiment/aspect" means that a particular feature, structure, or characteristic described in connection with the embodiment/aspect is included in at least one embodiment/aspect of the disclosure. The use of the phrase "in one embodiment/aspect" or "in another embodiment/aspect" in various places in the specification are not necessarily all referring to the same embodiment/aspect, nor are separate or alternative embodiments/aspects mutually exclusive of other embodiments/aspects. Moreover, various features are described which may be exhibited by some embodiments/aspects and not by others. Similarly, various

requirements are described which may be requirements for some embodiments/aspects but not other embodiments/aspects. Embodiment and aspect can be in certain instances be used interchangeably.

[038] The terms used in this specification generally have their ordinary meanings in the art, within the context of the disclosure, and in the specific context where each term is used. Certain terms that are used to describe the disclosure are discussed below, or elsewhere in the specification, to provide additional guidance to the practitioner regarding the description of the disclosure. For convenience, certain terms may be highlighted, for example using italics and/or quotation marks. The use of highlighting has no influence on the scope and meaning of a term; the scope and meaning of a term is the same, in the same context, whether or not it is highlighted. It will be appreciated that the same thing can be said in more than one way.

[039] Consequently, alternative language and synonyms may be used for any one or more of the terms discussed herein. Nor is any special significance to be placed upon whether or not a term is elaborated or discussed herein. Synonyms for certain terms are provided. A recital of one or more synonyms does not exclude the use of other synonyms. The use of examples anywhere in this specification including examples of any terms discussed herein is illustrative only, and is not intended to further limit the scope and meaning of the disclosure or of any exemplified term. Likewise, the disclosure is not limited to various embodiments given in this specification.

[040] Without intent to further limit the scope of the disclosure, examples of instruments, apparatus, methods and their related results according to the embodiments of the present disclosure are given below. Note that titles or subtitles may be used in the examples for convenience of a reader, which in no way should limit the scope of the disclosure. Unless otherwise defined, all technical and scientific terms used herein have the same meaning as commonly understood by one of ordinary skill in the art to which this disclosure pertains. In the case of conflict, the present document, including definitions, will control.

[041] The term "optical axis" refers to a line along which there is some degree of rotational symmetry in an optical system such as a camera lens or microscope. The optical axis is an imaginary line that defines the path along which light propagates through the system, up to first approximation.

[042] The term "orthogonal" refers to intersecting or lying at right angles to one another.

[043] The term "Quad Flat Package" or "QFP" refers to a surface mount integrated circuit package with "gull wing" leads extending from each of the four sides.

[044] The term "seating plane" refers to a reference plane upon which to analyze individual leads for lead "foot" angle inspection.

[045] The term "Thin Small Outline Package" or "TSOP" refers to a type of surface mount Integrated Circuit (IC) package. They typically have leads on two sides and are often used for RAM or Flash memory ICs due to their high pin count and small volume.

[046] The term "integrated circuit" or "IC" refers to a small complex of electronic components and their connections that is produced in or on a small slice of material such as silicon.

[047] It will be appreciated that terms such as "left," "right," "front," "back," "top," "bottom," "up," "down," and "below" used herein are merely for ease of description and refer to the orientation of the components as shown in the figures. It should be understood that any orientation of the components described herein is within the scope of the present invention.

[048] Other technical terms used herein have their ordinary meaning in the art that they are used, as exemplified by a variety of technical dictionaries.

Description of Preferred Embodiments

[049] Figure 1 represents an embodiment of the invention for lead foot angle inspection of a Quad Flat Package (QFP) component. The object to be inspected **20** is supported by a pickup head **10**. The object has "gull wing" leads **30** on all four sides of its substrate. The leads extend slightly out, then down and out again.

[050] Here, the object **20** is illuminated by a light source **40** and a diffusive reflector **50**. The light emitted from the light source **40** is reflected by the diffusive reflector **50** to illuminate the object to be inspected **20**.

[051] The system includes at least three image capturing devices. The first image capturing device includes a lens **71** and a sensor **81** and is mounted perpendicular to the object to be inspected **20** to capture a first bottom view image of the object. The second image capturing device also includes a lens **72** and a sensor **82** but is mounted at a slanted angle to the object to capture a second (or left) perspective view image. Likewise, the third image capturing device includes a lens **73** and a sensor **83** and is mounted at another slanted angle to the object to capture a third (or front) perspective view image. The second image capturing device and the third image capturing device are arranged in such a way that the second (or left) perspective viewing angle is orthogonal to the third (or front) perspective viewing angle. Mirrors (**62**, **63**) are included for the second and third image capturing devices.

[052] The optical axis of the first image capturing device (i.e. the line passing through the center of the lens **71** and the center of the sensor **81**) and the optical axis of the second image capturing device (i.e. the line passing through the center of the lens **72** and the center of the sensor **82**) form a first alignment plane.

[053] The optical axis of the first image capturing device (i.e. the line passing through the center of the lens **71** and the center of the sensor **81**) and the optical axis of the third image capturing device (i.e. the line passing through the center of the lens **73** and the center of the sensor **83**) form a second alignment plane. The first alignment plane and the second alignment plane are orthogonal to each other. This is further illustrated in Figure 2.

[054] Figure 2 depicts a bottom view of the arrangement of the three image capturing devices. The three image capturing devices form a "corner shape," "L-shape," or "backwards L-shape" whereby the first image capturing device **81** is in the center, the second image capturing device **82** is on the left side of the first image capturing device **81**, and the third image capturing device **83** is on the front side of the first image capturing device **81**.

[055] The three image capturing devices are calibrated with multi-view stereo vision principles so that the internal parameters of the respective image capturing devices and the exterior parameters or the relative poses of the three image capturing devices can be determined. These parameters are later used to reconstruct the three-dimensional coordinates of the points of interest on the object to be inspected.

[056] Figure 3A and 3B depict an object, such as a QFP, to be inspected **20**. Figure 3A depicts the bottom view of the object and Figure 3B depicts a lateral view. The object has four rows of leads, with each row of leads on one side of the object. The four rows are designated top row of leads **31**, bottom row of leads **32**, left row of leads **33**, and right row of leads **34**. Each lead has a lead shoulder **35**, a lead leg **36** and a lead foot **37**. The end of lead foot is lead tip **38**. Lead foot angle is the angle of the lead foot **37** with respect to a reference plane. The reference plane can be a seating plane formed by the lead tips of the few lowest leads or a least mean square plane fitted through the lead tips of all the leads.

[057] The system can also be used to inspect objects with alternative designs such as Thin Small Outline Packages (TSOP). For example, a chip or an electronic component can have two rows of leads only, such as top row of leads and bottom row of leads, or left row of leads and right row of leads (not shown).

[058] To establish the reference plane, the leads tips of all the leads are detected. For example, refer to the top row of leads **31**. For each lead in the top row **31**, the lead tip point **41** is detected in the bottom view image as shown in Figure 4A. For the same

lead, the lead tip point **51** is detected in the left perspective view image as shown in Figure 4B. The detected lead tip point **41** and the detected lead tip point **51** can be referred to as "conjugate points" which correspond to the same physical lead tip yet in images taken from different cameras. From the detected conjugate points and the calibration results, the three-dimensional coordinates of the physical lead tip of the corresponding lead in the top row **31** can be determined.

[059] Similarly, for each lead in the bottom row **32**, the lead tip point **43** is detected in the bottom view image and the lead tip point **53** is detected in the left perspective view image. From the detected conjugate points **43** and **53**, and the calibration results, the three-dimensional coordinates of the physical lead tip of the corresponding lead in the bottom row **32** can be determined.

[060] For each lead in the left row **33**, the lead tip point **45** is detected in the bottom view image as shown in Figure 4A. For the same lead, the lead tip point **55** is detected in the front perspective view image as shown in Figure 4C. The detected lead tip point **45** and the detected lead tip point **55** are conjugate points. From the conjugate points and the calibration results, the three-dimensional coordinates of the lead tip of the corresponding lead in the left row **33** can be determined.

[061] Similarly, for each lead in the right row **34**, the lead tip point **47** is detected in the bottom view image and the lead tip point **57** is detected in the front perspective view image. From the detected conjugate points **47** and **57**, and the calibration results, the three-dimensional coordinates of the lead tip of the corresponding lead in the right row **34** can be determined.

[062] With the three-dimensional coordinates of the lead tips of all the leads in the rows (**31**, **32**, **33**, **34**) a reference plane can be established in the three-dimensional space. The reference plane can be a seating plane formed by the lead tips of the few lowest leads or a least mean square plane fitted through the lead tips of all the leads. The reference plane will be the base plane for determining the lead foot angle of each lead.

[063] To determine the lead foot angle of each lead, it is necessary to detect at least one more point on the lead foot. Take the top row of leads **31** again as an example. For each lead in the top row **31**, another point **42** on the lead foot, which is at a preset distance away from the lead tip point **41**, is detected in the bottom view image as shown in Figure 4A. For the same lead, a point **52** on the lead foot, which is at the same distance away from the lead tip point **51**, is detected in the left perspective view image as shown in Figure 4B. The detected point **42** and the detected point **52** are conjugate points as well. From the conjugate points and the calibration results, the three-dimensional coordinates of the corresponding point on the lead foot of the corresponding lead in the top row **31** can be determined.

[064] Similarly, for each lead in the bottom row **32**, a point **44** on the lead foot, which is at a preset distance away from the lead tip point **43**, is detected in the bottom view image, and a point **54** on the lead foot, which is at the same distance away from the lead tip point **53**, is detected in the left perspective view image. From the detected conjugate points **44** and **54**, and the calibration results, the three-dimensional coordinates of the corresponding point on the lead foot of the corresponding lead in the bottom row **32** can be determined.

[065] For each lead in the left row **33**, a point **46** on the lead foot, which is at a preset distance away from the lead tip point **45**, is detected in the bottom view image as shown in Figure 4A. For the same lead, a point **56** on the lead foot, which is at the same distance away from the lead tip point **55**, is detected in the front perspective view image as shown in Figure 4C. From the detected conjugate points **46** and **56**, and the calibration results, the three-dimensional coordinates of the corresponding point on the lead foot of the corresponding lead in the left row **33** can be determined.

[066] Similarly, for each lead in the right row **34**, a point **48** on the lead foot, which is at a preset distance away from the lead tip point **47**, is detected in the bottom view image, and a point **58** on the lead foot, which is the same distance away from the lead tip point

57, is detected in the front perspective view image. From the detected conjugate points **48** and **58**, and the calibration results, the three-dimensional coordinates of the corresponding point on the lead foot of the corresponding lead in the right row **34** can be determined.

[067] Figure 5A and 5B illustrate the detailed method of detecting the lead tip point and the additional point on the lead foot for one lead in the top row **31**. Figure 5A depicts the bottom view image and Figure 5B depicts the left perspective view image.

[068] As shown in Figure 5A, a horizontal edge detection window **64** is put near the lead tip. Two edge points **14** and **24** are detected as the sharpest transitions in the vertical projection profile. Let the x coordinate of the edge point **14** be x_1 and the x coordinate of the edge point **24** be x_2 . Let the middle of x_1 and x_2 be x_0 . A vertical edge detection window **66** is put on the lead tip. One edge point **94** is detected as the sharpest transition in the horizontal projection profile. Let the y coordinate of the edge point **94** be y_0 . Then, the x, y coordinates of the detected lead tip point on the lead will be (x_0, y_0) . Another horizontal edge detection window **65** is put at a preset distance **99** away from the lead tip point **94**. Two edge points **15** and **25** are detected as the sharpest transitions in the vertically projection profile. The middle point **95** between the point **15** and the point **25** will be the detected additional point on the lead foot.

[069] Similarly, the lead tip point **97** and the middle point **98** on the lead foot of the same lead are detected in the left perspective view image as shown in Figure 5B. A horizontal edge detection window **67** is put near the lead tip. Two edge points **17** and **27** are detected as the sharpest transitions in the vertical projection profile. A vertical edge detection window **69** is put on the lead tip. The edge point **97** is detected as the sharpest transition in the horizontal projection profile. The middle of the x coordinates of the edge points **17** and **27** will be the x coordinate of the detected lead tip point on the lead. The y coordinate of the edge point **97** will be the y coordinate of the detected lead tip point on the lead. Another horizontal edge detection window **68** is put at the same preset distance **99** away from the lead tip point **97**. Two edge points **18** and **68**

are detected as the sharpest transitions in the vertically projection profile. The middle point **98** between the points **18** and **28** will be the detected additional point on the lead foot.

[070] The lead tip point **94** on the bottom view image in Figure 5A and the lead tip point **97** on the left perspective view image in Figure 5B are conjugate points. They correspond to the lead tip of the same physical lead. From the conjugate points **94** and **97**, and the calibration results, the three-dimensional coordinates of the physical lead tip **91** as shown in Figure 5C can be reconstructed.

[071] The point **95** on the lead foot on the bottom view image in Figure 5A and the point **98** on the lead foot on the left perspective view image are conjugate points. They correspond to the same physical point on the lead foot of the same lead. From the conjugate points **95** and **98**, and the calibration results, the three-dimensional coordinates of the physical point **92** on the lead foot as shown in Figure 5C can be reconstructed.

[072] As shown in Figure 5C, the physical point **92** on the lead foot and the physical lead tip **91** form a three-dimensional line in the three dimensional space. This is the lead foot line of the lead. The acute angle between the three-dimensional lead foot line and the three-dimensional reference plane **90** will be the lead foot angle **93** of the lead.

[073] The lead foot angle of a lead can be positive or negative. With a positive lead foot angle, the lead foot is directed toward the reference plane **90** as shown in Figure 5C. With a negative lead foot angle, the lead foot is directed away from the reference plane **90** as shown in Figure 5D.

[074] Multiple additional points on the lead foot can be detected to improve the accuracy and the robustness of the method as shown in Figure 6A, Figure 6B and Figure 6C. In this case, a three-dimensional lead foot line is fit through the three-dimensional coordinates of all the detected points. The lead foot angle is the acute

angle between the three-dimensional lead foot line and the three-dimensional reference plane.

[075] As described above, for the top row of leads **31** and the bottom row of leads **32**, whereby the direction of the leads are along the normal direction of the alignment plane formed by the bottom viewing angle and the left perspective viewing angle, the additional points on the lead foot are detected in the bottom view image and the left perspective view image respectively. Whereas, for the left row of leads **33** and the right row of leads **34**, whereby the direction of the leads are along the normal direction of the alignment plane formed by the bottom viewing angle and the front perspective viewing angle, the additional points on the lead foot are detected in the bottom view image and the front perspective view image.

[076] The reasoning behind this method is as follows. The additional point on the lead foot is defined as a point at a preset distance away from the lead tip. As shown in Figure 4B, for the top row of leads **31** and the bottom row of leads **32**, the point on the lead foot are defined at a certain distance away from the lead tip along the y axis or in the vertical direction. As the distance is a preset fixed value, it does not contain any three-dimensional information. So the three-dimensional information for the point on the lead foot can only be extracted along the x axis or in the horizontal direction. The left perspective view image contains this information.

[077] Take the top row of leads **31** as an example. As shown in Figure 5B, the point **98** is the additional point defined on the lead foot. The distance from the point **98** to the lead tip point **97** is preset, which is the offset of the y coordinate of the point **98** with respect to the point **97**. So, the y coordinate of the point **98** has no three-dimensional information. The offset of the x coordinate does contain the three-dimensional information on the left perspective view image.

[078] Similarly, as shown in Figure 4C, for the left row of leads **33** and the right row of leads **34**, the point on the lead foot is defined as a point at a certain distance away from

the lead tip point along the x axis or in the horizontal direction. So the x coordinate does not contain the three-dimensional information of the point. The three-dimensional information of the point must be extracted along the y axis or in the vertical direction. The front perspective view image contains this information exactly.

[079] This also helps explain the L-shape arrangement of the three image capturing devices in the system. The combination of the bottom view image capturing device and the left perspective view image capturing device is used for lead foot angle inspection for the top row of leads and the bottom row of leads. The combination of the bottom view image capturing device and the front perspective view image capturing device is used for lead foot angle inspection for the left row of leads and the right row of leads.

[080] Additional image capturing devices can be added to improve the accuracy and the robustness of the apparatus. As shown in Figure 7, a fourth image capturing device **84** can be added and be mounted in a position symmetric to the second image capturing device **82** with respect to the first image capturing device **81**. And a fifth image capturing device **85** can be added and be mounted in a position symmetric to the third image capturing device **83** with respect to the first image capturing device **81**. As a whole, the five image capturing devices form a cross-shape. The fourth image capturing device **84** captures a right perspective view image of the object to be inspected. The fifth image capturing device **85** captures a back perspective view image of the object to be inspected.

[081] In the cross-shape configuration, the combination of the bottom view image, the *left perspective view image* and the *right perspective view image* is used to inspect the lead foot angle of the top row of leads and the bottom row of leads, and the combination of the bottom view image, the front perspective view image and the back perspective view image is used to inspect the lead foot angle of the left row of leads and the right row of leads.

[082] Each of the fourth and the fifth image capturing device has a lens and a sensor as well. The optical axis of the fourth image capturing device (i.e. the line passing through the center of the lens and the center of the sensor), the optical axis of the first image capturing device and the optical axis of the second image capturing device form a first alignment plane.

[083] The optical axis of the fifth image capturing device (the line passing through the center of the lens and the center of the sensor), the optical axis of the first image capturing device and the optical axis of the third image capturing device form a second alignment plane. The first alignment plane and the second alignment plane are orthogonal to each other.

[084] The cross-shape configuration can be more accurate and more robust than the L-shape configuration.

[085] The steps of analyzing the lead foot angle are depicted in Figure 9. First, the lead tip is detected in the bottom view image and the left (or front) perspective view image as depicted at step **105** and **110**. The three-dimensional coordinates of the lead tip are reconstructed using stereo vision techniques as depicted at step **115**. Repeat the steps **105**, **110** and **115** for all the other leads. Using the three-dimensional coordinates of the lead tips, a reference plane can be established in the three-dimensional space **125**.

[086] Next, one or multiple additional points on the lead foot area are detected in the bottom view image and the left (or front) perspective view image as depicted at step **130** and **135**. The three-dimensional coordinates of the additional points are reconstructed using stereo vision techniques as depicted at step **140**. By connecting the lead tip and the additional points, the lead foot line can be constructed as depicted at step **145**. The acute angle between the lead foot line and the reference plane will be the lead foot angle as depicted at step **150**. Repeat the steps (**130**, **135**, **140**, **145**, and **150**) for all the other leads **155**.

[087] Finally, the object such as the QFP is determined to be accepted or rejected based on lead foot angles as at step **160**. A lead bent beyond a specific angle (positive or negative) can indicate a defective or damaged QFP. When the lead foot angles of all the leads are within the desired tolerance, the QFP is acceptable.

What is claimed is:

1. A system for analyzing the lead foot angle of an object comprising:
 - a) a support for the object;
 - b) a light source;
 - c) a first image capturing device comprising a first lens and a first sensor and being mounted at a first bottom viewing angle that is perpendicular to a plane where the object is placed for capturing a first bottom view image,
 - d) a second image capturing device comprising a second lens and a second sensor and being mounted at a second perspective viewing angle from the object for capturing a second perspective view image,
 - e) a third image capturing device comprising a third lens and a third sensor and being mounted at a third perspective viewing angle from the object for capturing a third perspective view image,

wherein the first, second and third image capturing devices form a corner shape with the first image capturing device in the center, the second image capturing device on a left side of the first image capturing device and the third image capturing device on a front side of the first image capturing device;

wherein a first optical axis of the first imaging capturing device (i.e. a line passing through the center of said first lens and the center of said first sensor) and a second optical axis of the second image capturing device (i.e. a line passing through the center of said second lens and the center of said second sensor) form a first alignment plane, and

wherein said first optical axis of the first imaging capturing device and a third optical axis of the third image capturing device (i.e. a line passing through the center of said third lens and the center of said third sensor) form a second alignment plane, and

wherein said first alignment plane and said second alignment plane are orthogonal to each other.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the object is an integrated circuit package such as a Quad Flat Package (QFP) or a Thin Small Outline Package (TSOP).

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the first image capturing device and the second image capturing device are used to determine the lead foot angles of the leads of an integrated circuit package that extend along the normal direction of said first alignment plane.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the first image capturing device and the third image capturing device are used to determine the lead foot angles of the leads of an integrated circuit package that extend along the normal direction of said second alignment plane.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein a fourth image capturing device comprising a fourth lens and a fourth sensor is mounted at a fourth perspective viewing angle for capturing a fourth perspective view image, and a fifth image capturing device comprising a fifth lens and a fifth sensor is mounted at a fifth perspective viewing angle for capturing a fifth perspective view image;

wherein the first image capturing device, the second image capturing device, the third image capturing device, the fourth image capturing device and the fifth image capturing device, form a cross-shape centered on the first image capturing device;

wherein the second image capturing device and the fourth image capturing device are on opposing sides of the first image capturing device;

wherein the third image capturing device and the fifth image capturing device are on opposing sides of the first image capturing device; and

wherein a fourth optical axis of the fourth image capturing device (i.e. a line passing through the center of said fourth lens and the center of said fourth sensor), said first optical axis of the first image capturing device, and said second optical axis of the second image capturing device form a first alignment plane; and

a fifth optical axis of the fifth image capturing device (i.e. a line passing through the center of said fifth lens and the center of said fifth sensor), said first optical axis of the first image capturing device, and said third optical axis of the third image capturing device form a second alignment plane; and

said first alignment plane and said second alignment plane are orthogonal to each other.

6. The system of claim 5, wherein the first image capturing device, the second image capturing device and the fourth image capturing device are used to determine the lead foot angles of the leads of an integrated circuit package that extend along the normal direction of said first alignment plane.

7. The system of claim 5, wherein the first image capturing device, the third image capturing device and the fifth image capturing device are used to determine the lead foot angles of the leads of an integrated circuit package that extend along the normal direction of said second alignment plane.

8. A method of determining the lead foot angle of the leads on an integrated circuit package using the system of claim 1, comprising the steps of:

- a) Presenting an integrated circuit package using said support;
- b) Illuminating the integrated circuit package with said light source;
- c) Obtaining a first bottom view image of the integrated circuit package with said first image capturing device;
- d) Obtaining a second left perspective view image of the integrated circuit package with said second image capturing device;
- e) Obtaining a third front perspective view image of the integrated circuit package with said third image capturing device;
- f) for those leads that extend along the normal direction of said first alignment plane formed by said first optical axis and said second optical axis, detecting the lead tip point and one or multiple additional points at preset distances from the lead tip on the lead foot in the first bottom view image and the second left perspective view image;
- g) for those leads that extend along the normal direction of said second alignment plane formed by the first optical axis and the third optical axis, detecting the lead tip point and one or multiple additional points at preset distances from the lead tip

on the lead foot in the first bottom view image and the third front perspective view image;

- h) reconstructing the three-dimensional coordinates of each lead tip point;
- i) reconstructing the three-dimensional coordinates of each additional point on the lead foot;
- j) constructing a reference plane with all the lead tip points;
- k) constructing a lead foot line by fitting through the lead tip and the one or multiple additional points on the lead foot; and
- l) determining the lead foot angle as the acute angle between the lead foot line and the reference plane.

9. A method of determining the lead foot angle of the leads on an integrated circuit package using the system of claim 5, comprising the steps of:

- a) Presenting an integrated circuit package using said support;
- b) Illuminating the integrated circuit package with said light source;
- c) Obtaining a first bottom view image of the integrated circuit package with said first image capturing device;
- d) Obtaining a second left perspective view image of the integrated circuit package with said second image capturing device;
- e) Obtaining a third front perspective view image of the integrated circuit package with said third image capturing device;
- f) Obtaining a fourth right perspective view image of the integrated circuit package with said fourth image capturing device;
- g) Obtaining a fifth back perspective view image of the integrated circuit package with said fifth image capturing device;
- h) for those leads that extend along the normal direction of said first alignment plane formed by said first optical axis, said second optical axis and said fourth optical axis, detecting the lead tip point and one or multiple additional points at preset distances from the lead tip on the lead foot in the first bottom view image, the second left perspective view image and the fourth right perspective view image;

- i) for those leads that extend along the normal direction of said second alignment plane formed by said first optical axis, said third optical axis and said fifth optical axis, detecting the lead tip point and one or multiple additional points at preset distances from the lead tip on a lead foot in the first bottom view image, the third front perspective view image and the fifth back perspective view image;
- j) reconstructing the three-dimensional coordinates of each lead tip point;
- k) reconstructing the three-dimensional coordinates of each additional point on the lead foot;
- l) constructing a reference plane with all the lead tip points;
- m) constructing a lead foot line by fitting through the lead tip and the one or multiple additional points on the lead foot; and
- n) determining the lead foot angle as the acute angle between the lead foot line and the reference plane.