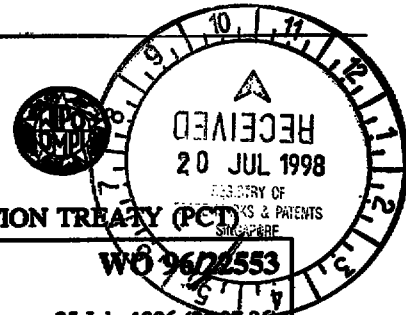


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(54) Title: **METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR COUNTING OBJECTS**

(57) Abstract

The present invention discloses a method and apparatus for counting banknotes including providing a stack of banknotes (20) including at least one surface defined by edges of the banknotes and counting the number of banknotes in the stack using at least one optical sensor (50) and a light source (30) characterized in that the mutual orientation of the banknotes is substantially maintained relative to the at least one optical sensor, the counting step including employing the at least one optical sensor for generally simultaneously viewing at least two separate columns along the at least one surface and receiving an output from the at least one optical sensor and providing an output indication of a number of banknotes in the stack.

