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(54) **Title:** AUTO-FOCUS IMAGE SYSTEM

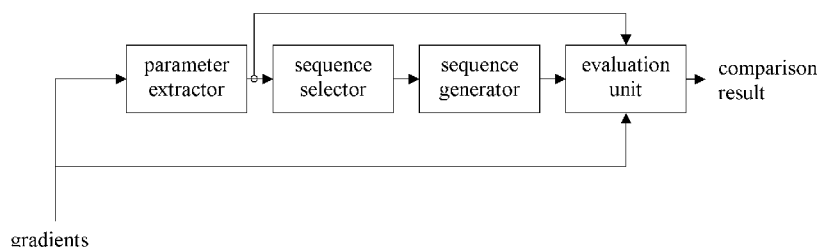


FIG. 36

(57) **Abstract:** An auto focus image system that includes a pixel array coupled to a focus signal generator. The pixel array captures an image that has a plurality of edges. The generator generates a focus signal that is a function of a plurality of edge-sharpness measures measured from each of the plurality of edges. The generator compares a sequence of gradients across the edge with one or more reference sequences of gradients and/or reference curves defined by data retrieved from a non-volatile memory. The generator determines to reject or de-emphasize the edge from contributing to the focus signal on basis of finding dissimilarity between the sequence of gradients with the reference sequences or reference curves beyond a predetermined threshold.